

**Finding Aid to the Plant Sciences Department,  
College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources**

**Plant Sciences Department**

Plant Sciences Department records, 1908-2009

Record Group 10.4.7

20 linear feet

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**OVERVIEW**

**Links:** [College of Agriculture, Food Systems and Natural Resources records, 1892-present](#)

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**ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY**

Plant Science is rooted in the origins of the university. The first catalog, May 1892 has listed the study of crops for the third term of the freshman year within the Department of Agriculture. The Department of Horticulture and Forestry is also listed in the first catalog. By the 1893-1894 catalog, grasses and grains (agronomy) are listed as a course of study under the Department of Agriculture. As of

the 1905-06 catalog, the Department of Agronomy is listed as well as the Department of Horticulture and Forestry. It is not until the 2004-06 catalog that the Department of Plant Sciences is found.

The Department of Plant Sciences is a diverse department with regional, national, and world-respected expertise. The department offers two majors and also cooperates in the interdisciplinary majors in Biotechnology and Plant Protection. The Crop and Weed Sciences major offers options in production, agribusiness, weed science, biotechnology and science. The Horticulture major offers options in production, science, biotechnology, landscape, and urban forestry and parks.

## ARRANGEMENT

The records came to the Archives in two donations, with the second being far larger than the first. The records of the second donation are arranged into the following series.

Series 1 Research, 1913 – 1987

Series 2 Administrative Records, 1908 - 1988

The records of the first donation are arranged into the following series.

10.4.7.1 Departmental Background, 1890 - 1987

10.4.7.5 Curriculum, 1965 - 1987

10.4.7.6 Reports and Documents, 1973 - 1988

10.4.7.7 Subjects, 1990 - 2004

10.4.7.8 Publications, 1962 - 2002

10.4.7.9 Recruitment, 1960 - 1999

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The records in the second donation consist primarily of the papers of William Wiidakas (NDSU corn breeder, 1932 – 1971, Field Assistant in Agronomy, 1933 – 1937, Assistant Agronomist, 1937 – 1951, Associate Agronomist, 1951 – 1971)) and Harold Cross (Assistant Professor of Agronomy, 1971 – 1977, Associate Professor of Agronomy, 1977 -1984, Professor of Agronomy, 1984 – 2000). Other contributors are Clarence M. Swallers , P. J. Olson (Acting Professor of Agronomy and Assistant Dean, 1924 – 1937), Harlow Leslie Walster (Agronomist, 1919 – 1934, Dean, School of Agriculture, 1924 – 1953), Gustav N. Geiszler (Assistant Plant Breeder, 1930 – 1933, Extension Soil Conservationist, 1937 – 1945, Superintendent, North Central Agricultural Station, 1945 – 1970), and Albert A. Schneiter (Assistant Professor of Agronomy, 1974 – 1978, Associate Professor, 1978 – 1984, Professor, 1984 – 2008, Chair, 1998 – 2008).

The records in the second donation are separated into two series. Series 1, Research, contains 27 subseries. **Hybrid Corn Field Trials & Hybrid Corn Performance Tests** (HCFT 1938 – 1966 & HCPT 1967 - 1987) includes correspondence, blank and completed reporting forms, raw data between NDSU and North Dakota farmers, Extension/Experiment Stations and Substations, Agronomy

Departments at universities in other states, and commercial seed producers, and publication drafts. Published results may be located in the *Main Library, State Documents, SB191.M2 N9*, among other locations. Related to these activities are **Seed Shipments** (1938 – 1971) and **Seed Requests** (1952 – 1981). **Regional Uniform Tests** (1945 – 1971) includes cooperative research projects with other states in order to establish the genetic provenance of lines of corn and to compare the results from different locations. Related to these activities are the series **Genetic Crosses (Single, Double, Selfed, etc.)** (1931 – 1968), **Cooperative Uniform Comparisons of Corn Hybrids** (1934 – 1955), **Foundation Seed** (1962 – 1984), and **Inbred Release Data** (1962 – 1984). Work at the NDSU fields and green house is detailed in **Planting Plans** (variously called Cropping Plans) (1927 – 1967), **Daily Diaries** (1945 – 1968), which give a day-by-day account of the work of Clarence M. Swallers and Harold Z. Cross, **Nursery Reports** (1959 – 1975), **Calendars** (1966, 1971 – 1973, 1982 – 1992), again tracking the work of Clarence M. Swallers and Harold Z. Cross, and **Seed Files** (1928 – 1969), which include information on the Seed House, seed inventories, treatments, improvement, and certification. **Experiment Stations** (1907 – 1979), also called Extension Stations and Substations interchangeably in these files, as well as work at other locations; include correspondence, raw data, reports, and annual reports. Some data is aggregated (1929 – 1962, with gaps). The locations which are covered include North Dakota Development Farm, Bismarck (ca. 1930, 1970); Bowbells Development Farm (ca. 1930); Casselton Seed Farm (1954, 1965); Dickinson Substation (1907, 1922, 1938 – 1946, 1948, 1953); Edgeley Experiment Station (1913 – 1919, 1939, 1940, 1942, 1944, 1947, 1952); North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, Fargo (1944); Hettinger Substation (1927 – 1931, 1944, 1948, 1953); Langdon Substation (1909 – 1914, 1927 – 1932, 1939 – 1945, 1947, 1948, 1953); Larimore Grain (1965); Lawton (1927); Northern Great Plains Field Station, Mandan (1927 – 1929, 1931, 1934, 1936, 1938 – 1945, 1964, 1965); North Central Experiment Station, Minot (1947, 1948, 1953, 1960, 1961); Oakes Experiment Station (1978, 1979); Park River Substation (1940 – 1946); Richland County (1941, 1965); Sheldon (1965); and Williston Experiment Station (1927 – 1931, 1938 – 1945, 1947 – 1953, 1962, 1968 – 1972). **Field Days** (1947 – 1987, with gaps) describe activities, contests, and demonstrations at Fargo and other locations. Research on **Corn** is most extensive, but the collection includes a small amount of research on **Barley, Flax, Hay, Oats, Potatoes, Sorghum, Soybeans, Sunflowers, Sweet Clover, and Wheat**. **Research data** (1907 – 1969) consists of an alphabetical arrangement of research topics, information, notes, and reports.

Series 2, Administrative Records, contains 26 subseries. It includes **Annual Reports** (1937, 1939, 1947, 1953, 1955, 1966) and Biennial Reports (1929 – 1931), **Awards** for the Agriculture Faculty/Staff (2002), Horticulture and Forestry Club (1990), and Scholarship Recognition (1993, 1995, 1997 – 2010); **Biographies** for American Men of Science; and correspondence and folders dealing with the **Brethren Service/Eastern European Agricultural Exchange Program** (1980 – 1981). **General Correspondence** (1930, 1931, 1936, 1940, 1942, 1948, 1949, 1953 – 1955, 1957 – 1959, 1962, 1965 – 1969, 1971 – 1973, 1975), **Correspondence, G. N. Geiszler** (1932 – 1933), **Correspondence, Clarence M. Swallers** (1945 – 1949); **Correspondence, William Wiidakas** (1949); and **Correspondence, Harold Z. Cross** (1971) are specifically recognized, but a great deal of correspondence exists in other research folders. **Equipment Manuals** details equipment owned or offered to the department, along with repair records. **Examiner's Reports** record progress and comments on grants. **Extension Regulations** (1933) provides the investigative structure for distance research. **Honorary Societies** provides information on three Honor Societies relating to science: Alpha Zeta, Dakotah Chapter (1977 – 1978), Gamma Sigma Delta (1974), and Sigma Xi (1975). **Inventories** (1951 – 1962 with gaps) provides lists of

equipment and supplies held by the department. **Manuscripts** (ca.1930 – 1967) contains research notes and drafts of publications written by members of the department, primarily for NDSU publications. **Memos** (1955, 1963 – 1972, 1974 – 1986) includes general communications from department chairs, the President's office, and other departments to members of the department. **Pamphlets holds** a miscellaneous collection of folders. **Publications** includes *Agronomy News* (1928 – 1930, 1965, 1969 with gaps), *Bimonthly Bulletin* manuscripts and notes (1939 – 1954, 1960 – 1962 with gaps), and *Farm Facts* (1957, 1961 – 1970), a memo-style communication to farmers which only intermittently has this title. **Radio Programs** (1932 – 1937, ca. 1975 with gaps) includes notes for broadcasts and several scripts. **Reports** (1915 – 1971) consists of 16 reports on a variety of research topics. **Reprints** includes both reprints of articles written by faculty members and others which they requested or were sent for their own information. **Miscellaneous** (1928 – 1969) consists of 18 folders of fairly minor but interesting events/activities of the department members, such as the Genetics Bowling Team roster, unclassifiable research, newspaper clippings, and meetings. **Education includes** North Dakota Agricultural College Bulletin, Summer Session (1952); Short Course in Agriculture (1955); Planned Schedules Winter and Spring Quarters (1978 – 1979); and Curriculum in Agronomy (1969 – 1972). **Agronomy Curriculum** includes notes and lectures for Agronomy 301 (undated), Agronomy 532 (1954, 1955, 1957, 1959 – 1963, 1965, 1967, 1966 – 1975, 1969 – 1981 ), Agronomy 417 (1954, 1955, 1957, 1959 – 1963, 1965, 1967), Agronomy 598 Seminar (1966 – 1975), and the Genetics Seminar (1940, 1945). There is also a program, *Ten Lectures and Discussions on Science: Its History, Philosophy, and Relation to Democracy* (1939) which may or may not have been taught at NDSU, and includes a transcript of a letter from Albert Einstein. **Personal Educational Files of Faculty/Staff** (1908 – 1988) consists overwhelmingly of the class notes taken by William Wiidakas during his studies (1931 – 1940). They also include the thesis of Harlow Leslie Walster (1908), notes for dissertation by Albert A. Schneiter (1970), and notes/handouts of various computer classes taken by Harold Z. Cross (1971 – 1988). **Professional Meetings and Activities** are the minutes and reports from various professional organizations to which faculty members either belonged, planned, or actively participated. These include American Association for the Advancement of Science (1935, 1961, 1984), American Genetic Association (1974 – 1975), American Institute of Biological Sciences, American Seed Trade Association (1951, 1967, 1976 – 1981), American Society of Agronomy (1939 – 1951, 1969, 1975 – 1986), Computers in Education (1971), Conference of Research and Extension Workers Interested in Corn Investigations (1937), Cooperative Research Investigations Annual Planning Conference (1954), Corn and Sorghum Research Conference (1970); CAST: Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (1973 – 1977); Crop Science Society of America (1977); Dakota Academies of Science (1979); Forage Crops Breeding Conference (1947); History of the Red River Valley of the North First Annual Conference (1970); International Congress of Genetics (1983); Interregional Corn Improvement Conference (1972); FAO Hybrid Maize Meeting (1953); Maize Genetics Conference (1965 – 1966); Maize Geneticists (1975 – 1977); Midwest Barley Improvement Conference (1954); National Academy of Sciences (1953); North Dakota Higher Education Association; North Dakota State Corn Show (1938 – 1945, 1947, 1949, 1950); North Dakota Winter Show (1947 – 1961); Northwest Farm Managers Association (1933, 1947, 1949, 1954, 1955, 1957, 1961, 1977); Little International Livestock Show Saddle and Sirloin Club (1939); Reunion de Maiceros de la Zona Andina (1978); Soil Science Meeting (1940); State Corn Husking Contests (1941); United States Durum Show (1970); Interregional Corn Conference (1972); North Central Corn Breeding Research Committee (1956, 1958 – 1968, 1971); North Central Regional Hybrid Corn Technical Committee (1951, 1956); NCR-2 (1965, 1969, 1970, 1974 – 1979); NCR-46, Corn Rootworm Technical Committee Meeting (1964, 1967);

Association of Western Forestry Clubs (1940); Corn Improvement Conference (1941 – 1943, 1949 – 1951, 1953); Northeastern Corn Improvement Conference (1945 – 1948, 1951, 1952, 1956, 1957, 1959 – 1962, 1964 – 1971); Southern Corn Improvement Conference (1939 – 1954); Soil Microbiology Conference (1954). The Oversize Collection consists of **Calendars** (1966, 1971 - 1973, 1982 – 1992) holding information on planting, meetings, and other departmental activities, three posters, and the *Fargo Forum* for April 8, 1938, with the lead article “Massed Students Scourge Board’s “Politics” As AC Loses Accreditation”

The records in the original donation are separated into six series. **Departmental Background** consists of histories of the horticulture and forestry department, the agronomy department, barley production and improvement, and a short history on the agronomy student wives. **Curriculum** includes a laboratory guide for Agronomy 301 (c.1965-1970), aquatic plant studies for Horticulture 419 (1983), and course notes, labs, circulars and reprints for Agronomy 301 (c.1987). **Reports and Documents** contains evaluation reports for the Agronomy Department (1987), a perspective of agronomy (1987), crop and weed sciences annual reports (1988), horticulture and forestry research reports (.1973, 1985, 1986) and the Department of Forestry annual report (1988). **Subjects** include a brochure from the 1990 Karl Lecken Memorial Lecture, a lecture notice for “Lectures on community Botanic Gardens” by Swasey, J. (1998), and an article on the NDSU Arboretum & Daylily Garden (2004). **Publications** consist of a Handbook for Graduate Students in Agronomy (1962), the Absaraka land research site brochure with history of the department (c. 1980s), Agronomy Newsletters (January 1982, January 1983), and *Blizzard Watch* – Crop & Weed Sciences Department newsletter – 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993; *Blizzard Watch* – Department of Plant Sciences – 1995-2000, 2002. **Recruitment** includes agronomy/ crop and weed science brochures and fact sheets (c. early 1960s, c.1973, 1986, 1993), bacteriology brochure (c.1970s) and fact sheet (1986), biotechnology – facts (1986, 1993, 1999) and brochure (1999), horticulture fact sheets (1986, 1993), plant protection brochure (1997) and a plant sciences brochure (1996).

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- 12/49 Flanigan Hope Breeding Projects
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- 12/53 Kernel Red Streak of Corn, 1966 – 1967
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- 12/55 Moore and Graves Plot, 1927
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- 13/23 Soybean Varieties, 1948
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- 13/31 Wheat Yields, 1913 – 1936
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- 13/37 Crop Data, 1936 – 1939
- 13/38 Crop Data, 1939
- 13/39 Crop Rotation and Wheat Yields, ca. 1924
- 13/40 Crops – Wheat Requirements, 1946 – 1954
- 13/41 Fargo Seed House
- 13/42 Fertilizer, 1945 – 1947
- 13/43 Fertilizer Experiments. Green House, 1937
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- 13/49 Hogs
- 13/50 Insect Control in Greenhouses
- 13/51 Manure, Crop Rotation, 1924 – 1929
- 13/52 Milling and Baking Data, 1931
- 13/53 Miscellaneous, 1947 – 1957
- 13/54 NES Silage
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- 13/56 North Dakota Soil Conservation Districts
- 13/57 North Dakota Soil Test Summary, 1953 – 1963
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- 13/61 Plan of Fargo Nursery, 1930 – 1931
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- 13/63 Recommended Varieties of Field Crops, 1936
- 13/64 Report of the Committee on Uniform Methods of Recording Differential Insect Injury in Plantings of Corn Strains, 1949
- 13/65 Sand Cultured Green House

- 13/66 Scale for Estimation of Rust
- 13/67 Score Cards
- 13/68 Silage, 1957
- 13/69 Some Records of Farmers in North Dakota, 1907 – 1935
- 13/70 Temperature Data, 1940 – 1945
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- 13/73 Tillering in Wheat, ca. 1928
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- 14/2 Agronomy Department Annual Report, 1939
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- 14/4 Annual Report Notes, 1953
- 14/5 Annual Report Notes, 1955
- 14/6 Annual Report Notes, 1966
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- 14/11 Awards – Scholarship Recognition, 1993, 1995, 1997 – 2010
- 14/12 Biographies
- 14/13 Brethren Service/Eastern European Agricultural Exchange Program, 1980 – 1981
- 14/14 Correspondence, 1930
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- 14/37 Correspondence A – B. G. N. Geiszler, 1932 – 1933
- 14/38 Correspondence C – D. G. N. Geiszler, 1932 – 1933
- 14/39 Correspondence E – F. G. N. Geiszler, 1932 – 1933
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- 14/43 Correspondence M – N. G. N. Geiszler, 1932 – 1933
- 14/44 Correspondence R – S. G. N. Geiszler, 1932 – 1933
- 14/45 Correspondence T. G. N. Geiszler, 1932 – 1933
- 14/46 Correspondence U – V – W. G. N. Geiszler, 1932 – 1933
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- 14/55 Correspondence. Harold Z. Cross, 1971
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- 14/59 Examiner's Report, 1939 – 1946
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- 15/2 Manuscripts, 1950
- 15/3 Manuscript and Notes “Adapted Hybrids Are More Dependable”, 1967
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- 15/10 Memos
- 15/11 Memos, 1955
- 15/12 Memos, 1963
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- 18/3 Conference of Research and Extension Workers Interested in Corn Investigations, 1937
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- 18/23 North Dakota State Corn Show, 1938 – 1945, 1947, 1949, 1950
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- 18/50 NCR, 1960
- 18/51 NCR-2 Agendas, Correspondence, etc., 1965, 1969
- 18/52 NCR-2 Uniform Inbred Line Evaluation Trial, 1970
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- 18/55 NCR-2 Meeting, 1974
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- 19/28 Report of the Twenty-Second Northeastern Corn Improvement Conference, 1967
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- 19/47 10.4.7.6 Agronomy Department – Evaluation Report – Faculty Vitas A – H – 1987

- 19/48 10.4.7.6Agronomy Department – Evaluation Report – Faculty Vitas J – Z – 1987  
 19/49 10.4.7.6“A Perspective on Agronomy, NDSU” – Jack F. Carter, Chairman – 1987  
 10/50 10.4.7.6Crop and Weeds Sciences – Annual Report – 1988  
 19/51 10.4.7.6Horticulture & Forestry – Research report, various authors, c.1973  
 19/52 10.4.7.6Horticulture & Forestry – Variety Trials – Vegetables, Fruits, Flowers – 1985  
 19/53 10.4.7.6Horticulture & Forestry – Variety Trials – Vegetables, Fruits, Flowers, Woody  
 Ornaments – 1986  
 19/54 10.4.7.6Department of Forestry – Annual Report: 1988

**Box 20**

- 20/1 10.4.7.7Karl Lecken Memorial Lecture – brochure – 1990  
 20/2 10.4.7.7Lecture notice: “Lectures on Community Botanic Gardens” by Swasey, J. – April 1988  
 20/3 10.4.7.7Article on Arboretum & Daylily Garden – 2004  
 20/4 10.4.7.8Handbook for Graduate Students in Agronomy – 1962  
 20/5 10.4.7.8Horticulture and Forestry. Absaroka land research site brochure with history of  
 department – c.1980s  
 20/6 10.4.7.8Agronomy Newsletters – January 1982, January 1983  
 20/7 10.4.7.8*Blizzard Watch* – Crop & Weed Sciences Department newsletter – 1989, 1991, 1992,  
 1993  
 20/8 10.4.7.8*Blizzard Watch* – Department of Plant Sciences – 1995 – 2000, 2002  
 20/9 10.4.7.9Agronomy – brochures – c. early 1960s, c.1973; fact sheets – Agronomy (1986), Crop &  
 Weed (1993)  
 20/10 10.4.7.9Bacteriology – brochure – c.1970s; fact sheet – 1986  
 20/11 10.4.7.9Biotechnology – facts: August 1986, April 1993, July 1999; brochure, 1999  
 20/12 10.4.7.9Horticulture – fact sheets – 1986, 1993  
 20/13 10.4.7.9Plant Protection – brochure – 1997  
 20/14 10.4.7.9Plant Sciences – brochure - 1996

**Box 21 (Oversize)**

- 21/1 Wall Calendars, some decorative, with meetings and dates written in 1966, 1971, 1972, 1973,  
 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992  
 21/2 Poster. 11” x 16”. “40 Days for Corn to Catch Up”. Reprint from Wallaces’ Farmer and Iowa  
 Homestead, Issue of June 21, 1947  
 21/3 Poster. 14” x 24”. North Dakota State Seed Department & North Dakota Crop Improvement  
 Association. “STOP LOOK LISTEN” “They’ll be around again!” warning against  
 unscrupulous seed salesmen  
 21/4 Poster. 18” x 24.5”. “20<sup>th</sup> Annual Richland Count – State Corn Show. Wyndmere, North  
 Dakota. Fri & Sat., Sept. 25 & 26”  
 21/5 Newspaper. The Fargo Forum Vol. 60, No. 123, April 8, 1938. Evening Edition. Pgs. 1 – 16.  
 “Massed Students Scourge Board’s “Politics” As AC Loses Accreditation”