



NORTH DAKOTA  
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# GUEST COLUMN



**K. A. Gilles**  
Vice President  
for Agriculture

While the world changes at a swift and sometimes frightening pace, some things remain relatively stable. Agriculture remains North Dakota's number one industry by a large margin. With some 41,000 farms and ranches, perhaps appropriately called "food factories," which provide the base for most of the state's business and industry, agriculture pays a high proportion of the state taxes in most categories. Its produce, mostly its grains, are an important part of the single bright spot in this nation's balance of payments with other nations.

It didn't happen by chance.

North Dakota's unique combination of climate, soil, topography, and sheer distance from population and shipping centers is a formidable barrier to attainment of a high level of agricultural trade. However, the people of this state have proven more than equal to the task. First, we had to find out what we could do. Then, we had to find out what we could do best in this changing world. Then, we have had to continually work at forging ahead wherever possible to provide for all of our people the best living and the best way of life of which we are capable.

Hard working farm and ranch families have been a major part in this North Dakota story. Dedicated scientists have been another major part. Thoughtful legislators providing legislative authorization and financial support are a third major force.

Agriculture production and marketing and processing constitute an interrelated system involving people and technology. Unfortunately, weather and new crop and animal pests can change the agricultural outlook almost overnight. Moreover, events occurring across the globe about which we have absolutely no control also can change our outlook completely for better or for worse. To be successful, these challenges must be met and accommodated. Our people in agriculture, our scientists, and our forward-looking legislators will see to that. We have faith in ourselves and each other and a good record for accomplishment as proof that our system works for us.

One of the major challenges for the future is optimizing our total agricultural production, marketing, and processing capabilities. To produce for a particular market is a desirable goal potentially leading to increased profits. However, subtle as well as rapid changes in domestic and world markets continually occur. Consequently, each of us must become sensitive to the need

**Guest Column Continued on Page 35**

## In This Issue

Barley Crop Survey: A Report on the 1977 and 1978 Six-Row Malting Barley Crops <i>Richard E. Pylar and O. J. Banasik</i> .....	3
Ventilation and Freezing of Sugarbeet Storage Piles <i>L. F. Backer, F. C. Vosper and S. E. Bichsel</i> .....	7
Western Coal: Energy vs Agriculture <i>Wallace McMartin</i> .....	12
Credit Availability for Potential Irrigators in North Dakota <i>Jerry I. Anheluk, Roger G. Johnson and Fred R. Taylor</i> .....	18
Annual Report, 1977-78 — The Agronomy Seed Farm <i>D. C. Ebeltoft, J. F. Carter and L. A. Spilde</i> .....	25
Aflatoxin B <sub>1</sub> in Corn Silage <i>P. E. Haggblom, H. H. Casper, and L. J. Littlefield</i> .....	34

**On the Cover:** Dr. H. Roald Lund has been named the new Dean of Agriculture and Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station at North Dakota State University. (Photo by James Berg)



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BULK THIRD-CLASS

Indeed, how many wheat, barley, or other small grains have we grown in North Dakota that were developed by the major universities which emphasize basic research? The record shows that more than 95% of the acreage of most small grains was planted with varieties produced by the plant breeding team at the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station. Consequently, as a research institution, we plan to move slowly in adapting the new federal research agenda.

Other changes have occurred which we look forward to with anticipation. With this issue of *Farm Research* we introduce a new director of the North Dakota Agriculture Experiment Station and dean of the College of Agriculture. Dr. H. Roald Lund grew up on a North Dakota farm, graduated from North Dakota State University with B.S. and M.S. degrees in agronomy and

with a Ph.D. in agronomy from Purdue University. Returning to NDSU, he taught agronomy and conducted research on corn when he was selected as assistant, later associate, dean and director. Roald succeeds Arlon G. Hazen who has accepted a regional experiment station position after leading our station for 22 years. H. Roald Lund brings to his new position knowledge of the state, enthusiasm for research, and a strong desire to succeed in this new task. We wish him well!

As we go into a new year, a new administration, and a new legislative session, one thing remains certain.

The value of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, the Extension Service, and the NDSU College of Agriculture to the people of North Dakota will continue to increase, meriting their continued support and trust.