



Dr. Michael (Mike) S. McMullen retires from North Dakota State University

Mike McMullen retired from NDSU's Plant Sciences Department on September 1st, 2025, after 49 years of service. A quiet man, Mike still loves people, as has been evident throughout his [teaching career](#). He has always been very involved with the oat community as well, attending (and hosting) many conferences, and being [editor of the Oat Newsletter](#) for a time.

Mike's scientific achievements have also been exceptional. The most famous variety from his oat breeding program would have to be '[HiFi](#)', which not only incorporated the *Pc91* crown rust resistance gene from the synthetic oat 'Amagalon', but was also bred to have higher beta-glucan levels than the other cultivars available at the time. 'HiFi' is in the pedigree of many important oat cultivars.

In 2014, Mike received the award for "Distinguished Service to Oat Improvement" from the American Oat Workers' group. More about Mike and his career can be read in [this biography](#).

We wish Mike all the best in his retirement, and hope to still see him at conferences!



Mike after receiving his DSOI award; L-R: Jennifer Mitchell Fetch, Steve Harrison, Cathy McMullen, Mike, Pamela Zwer, Sam Weaver, and Howard Rines.



Mike as breeder, teacher, and valued colleague:



First International Oat Conference at Penn State, 1982



American Oat Workers' Conference

July 23-26
2006

Fargo
North Dakota

Hosted by Mike
McMullen, NDSU



USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913.
Illustrated flora of the northern states and Canada. Vol. 1: 218.







Mike at his retirement party:



