

**2024 American Oat Workers' Conference  
Award for Distinguished Service to Oat Improvement**



**Harold E. Bockelman, PhD**

From 1990 to 2023, Harold oversaw all USDA-ARS National Small Grains Collection (NSGC) activities, including acquisition, maintenance, distribution, and evaluation of accessions. During that time, the NSGC increased in size from 115,000 accessions to more than 150,000 in 2023. Harold traveled to numerous countries to help facilitate germplasm exchange, including Canada, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, Russia, and South Korea. In 1999, he participated in a plant exploration trip to the Crimea. He cooperated extensively with the international research centers, including BIOVERSITY, Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz y Trigo (CIMMYT), International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA), and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). Harold served as a member of the Technical Steering Group for the GRIN-Global project and on the National Plant Germplasm System GRIN-Global Advisory Committee from the adoption of GRIN-Global.

As genebank curator, Harold Bockelman interacted daily with scientists worldwide who were requesting germplasm from the NSGC. Several hundred requests for small grains germplasm were processed each year in GRIN-Global. Over the 33 years of his tenure, the average was over 600 requests/year, totaling over 1.3 million accession items shipped. Safety backups were routinely provided to the USDA-ARS National Laboratory for Genetic Resources Preservation in Ft. Collins, CO. Field and greenhouse regeneration nurseries were organized on a seasonal basis. Characterization/observation data and voucher images were regularly organized and uploaded to GRIN-Global.