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Dr. Michael S. McMullen
Award for Distinguished Service to Oat Improvement



Dr. Michael McMullen received his Bachelor's Degree from Illinois State University in 1969, his Master's Degree from Colorado State University in 1973, and his PhD. from the University of Minnesota in 1976. He was advised and mentored in oat research by both Dr. Deon Stuthman and Dr. Ron Phillips. Upon completion of his PhD, he joined the faculty at North Dakota State University as an oat breeder and teacher. During his teaching career, he has taught Cytogenetics, Plant Breeding, and Grain Grading to large numbers of undergraduate and graduate students, many of whom continued on in careers in plant science, and tell wonderful stories about Dr. McMullen's classes.

His plant breeding work has been extensive and highly prolific. He has released 27 oat cultivars to date, and has generated and developed extensive volumes of germplasm with multiple crown rust resistance genes that continue to be used by other oat breeders in several countries. He has also developed a considerable volume of oat germplasm with improved nutritional traits; in particular, some of the highest beta glucan lines available today. Michael is a well-known and highly respected speaker at many extension meetings, and is known for his "common sense" approach to oat production issues. His expertise and advice is sought out by many in both the public and private crop science and plant breeding arenas.

Besides his prolific oat breeding and teaching career, Dr. McMullen's accomplishments are extensive. He was an active member of the American Oat Association from 1984 to 1995, and, during this time, made many trips to Washington D.C. and other cities advocating and lobbying for USDA and state support of oat breeding. That important

work has continued on since the American Oat Association merged with the North American Millers Association, and Michael continues to be a strong advocate for oat research. Michael has written over 50 publications and book chapters as author or co-author, and was the editor of the Oat Newsletter from 1984 to 1989. He has been a member of both the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America since 1970. He also holds a Plant Breeder certification from the Canadian Seed Growers Association. Michael has registered several patents on oat varieties, received plant variety protection certifications, and been granted Plant Breeder's Rights in both the U.S. and Canada.

Michael's career and accomplishments to date have been enviable, and highly respected by not only the oat industry, but also both the plant breeding and teaching communities. He is obviously highly deserving of being recognized with the "Distinguished Service Award of the American Oat Workers" in 2014. In his own words, Mike states that, "Most of all, I have enjoyed the relationships with other oat breeders, scientists, students and graduate students, interaction with growers, and the friendship of many people in the oat industry."