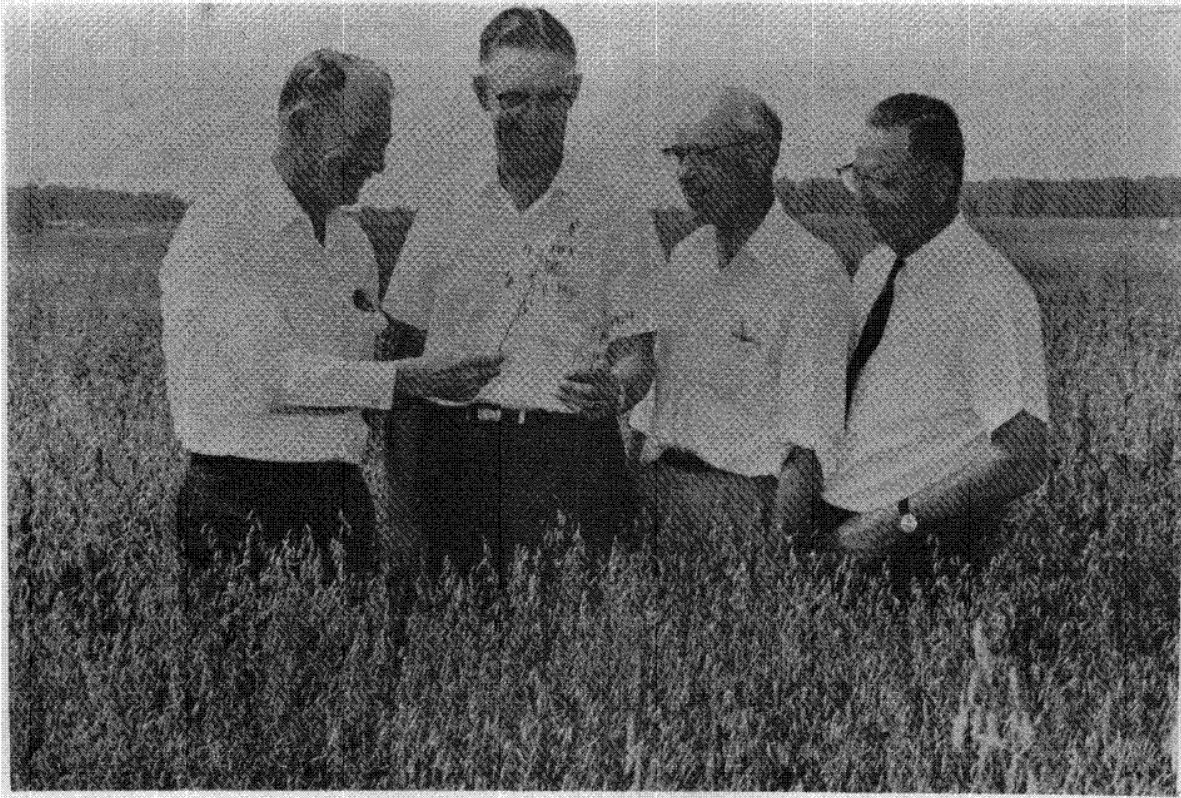


From the Oat Newsletter, volume 23, 1972:



**Mr. Dallas E. Western and Friends**

"Real portraiture, the interpretation of a personality, is far more than the mere recording of a face." Thus, no real portrait of Dallas Western is possible without his favorite crop and some of the associates he worked with to improve that crop. This picture of Mr. Western (left) and his friends, Dr. H. C. (Pat) Murphy, Dr. Ralph M. Caldwell, and Dr. Kent Ellis examining an improved oat cultivar at Purdue is a true portrait of Dallas Western. Unfortunately, one ingredient important in his life is missing, Mrs. Irene Western (But the oat cultivar is 'Diana!').

**DEDICATION**  
To Mr. Dallas E. Western

On October 1, 1972, an era came to an end. The era began with oats of low quality, decimated by rusts and smuts, and badly contaminated with barley and mixed varieties; it ended with superior, disease resistant, high test weight, 150 bushel, 25% protein oats an actuality or in the offing. It is no accident that this era coincided with the active professional career of Mr. Dallas E. Western. It is to this man who "moved mountains" to facilitate oat improvement that, on the occasion of his retirement, this 1972 Oat Newsletter is dedicated.

Dallas E. Western was born September 1, 1907. He grew up on a farm in Union County, Iowa, and attended a one-room country school. Graduating from Creston High School in 1925, he enrolled at Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa, planning to study business administration. But, because of his interest in agriculture, he transferred to Iowa State College to study vocational agriculture and education. In 1929 he graduated from Iowa State with a Bachelor of Science degree.

Mr. Western began teaching vocational agriculture at Jesup, Iowa, August 1, 1929. As coach of a 4-H Club, he developed a champion demonstration team at the Waterloo Dairy Congress. In December, 1933, he moved to Independence, Iowa and became County Extension Director of Buchanan County. He foresaw the benefits of Rural Electrification and was directly responsible for the establishment of the R.E.A. in his county. He also organized a county crop improvement council. He enlisted the cooperation of elevator operators in the county to work toward improving the quality of grain grown in their county. This crop improvement council was instrumental in the establishment of an experimental farm near Independence. Impressed by his crop improvement work, the Quaker Oats Company in January, 1939, hired Mr. Western to establish a Grain Development Department at its headquarters in Chicago.

At the time Mr. Western began his new job, most oats going to market were of very poor quality. Production practices were poor and rusts and smuts ravaged much of the crop. Disease resistant varieties were becoming available, however, and Mr. Western felt that the answer to the problem was to convince farmers to grow these improved varieties and follow recommended production practices. In 1942, he presented the plan to his company and a massive educational program was begun. He presented his story on the radio, in newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and on posters. Although this program was sponsored by the Quaker Oats Company, the company's name was never mentioned.

The complete absence of any form of advertisement of the Quaker Oats Company and the close cooperation between science and industry represented an entirely new concept. In the four-year period from 1942 to 1946, midwestern farmers switched, almost entirely, to improved varieties and, by 1946, most oats going to market were of high quality. This program represented a new standard of public service and Mr. Western received national recognition from such sources as Time Magazine and Business Week.

As the need for such an educational program diminished, Mr. Western devoted more time to support agricultural research. He started a practice of using Quaker Oats funds to support graduate assistantships on oats and corn improvement. Through this contribution many young scientists have obtained graduate training at Purdue University, University of Minnesota, Iowa State University, University of Wisconsin, University of Illinois, University of Missouri, Kansas State University and other educational institutions, his primary objective being to enable promising young agronomists and plant pathologists to obtain graduate education. Men and women

trained under his program have become leaders in agricultural research in the United States and throughout the world from Cambodia to Colombia.

Mr. Western used Quaker Oat funds and his own time in a constant effort to support and encourage agronomic research. This support was provided in diverse ways. For example, he used Quaker funds to finance the publication of the Oat Newsletter from its inception to the present time. For many years he wrote a weekly summary of the condition of major crops in the United States and Canada which was read by nearly 2000 agricultural workers and quoted by major news services. His final crop summary, published each year at Christmas, was a masterpiece. He wrote, with W. R. Graham, Jr., a chapter in the A.S.A. Oat Monograph: "Marketing, Processing, Uses and Composition of Oats and Oat Products." (p. 552-578. In. F.A. Coffman (*Ed.*). 1961. Oats and Oat Improvement. Am. Soc. Agron. Monograph 8. Madison, Wisc. 650 pp.)

Mr. Western's interest in the improvement and maintenance of high yielding, high quality cereal crops was not limited to the United States. His influence extended into Mexico, South America, and India. He collaborated with the Rockefeller Foundation in Mexico and Colombia in oat improvement work. Mennonite farmers in Chihuahua, Mexico, are growing superior new oats instead of inferior 50-year-old varieties as a result of his alertness to their needs. He was active in obtaining support and in establishing cereal rust nurseries in Puerto Rico for testing with new, virulent races of wheat and oat rusts.

Mr. Western has appeared repeatedly before Congressional Committees to request increased funds for field crops research in the United States Department of Agriculture. This effort resulted in the establishment of several new research positions and in the achievement of which he is most proud, getting "all the money" to establish the USDA oat quality laboratory at Madison, Wisc. His life-long concern with quality also resulted in grants from his company (to Iowa State, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) to improve oat protein percentage. This rare ability to "get the job done," fortuitously coupled with the discovery of sources of high protein and disease resistance in Avena sterilis, and the scientific knowledge, enthusiasm, and leadership of his life-long friend, the late Dr. H. C. (Pat) Murphy, make possible the statement in the opening paragraph about the type of oat that is in the offing.

Because Dallas Western "got things done," he received many honors and held many prominent positions with local, state, and federal agencies and organizations. His many activities included a term as President of the Student Council at Iowa State University in 1928; President of the Agricultural Council of the Chicago Association of Commerce in 1948; member of the American Farm Bureau Federation from 1929 to the present; President of the Grain Improvement Council in Minneapolis, 1953-54; member of the Agricultural Business Committee, Illinois State Chamber of Commerce from 1944 to the present; Chairman, Illinois State Chamber of Commerce for two years; member of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Advisory Committee for Grain and Marketing Research, 1958-62 (Vice-Chairman: 1961, Chairman 1962); member of the Agricultural Relations Council from 1958 to 1970; member of the Agricultural Advisory Committee of the

Grocery Manufacturers of America from 1946 to 1972 (Chairman 1959-62); trustee of the Renner Research Foundation in Texas; and other assignments.

Mr. Western is an active member of the Iowa State University Alumni Association and served as chairman of that organization in the Chicago area. In 1964 he received the Iowa State University Club Service Key. Iowa State University presented him with an Alumni Merit Award in 1967. The Quaker Oats Company established the Dallas E. Western Assistantship in Agriculture at Iowa State University in 1968 in recognition of his numerous significant contributions to progress in agriculture. Kansas State University named him recipient of "The Distinguished Service in Agriculture Award" in 1967. Mr. Western is a member and Fellow (1956) of the American Society of Agronomy, and received the Society's Agronomic Service Award in 1963. He is a member of Gamma Sigma Delta, the honor society of agriculture. In 1970 he was recognized and honored for "Distinguished Service to Oat Improvement" by the National Oat Conference. An outstanding oat cultivar, 'Dal,' was named in his honor.

Nearly 200 friends and colleagues from Quaker, agricultural experiment stations, and government agencies gathered in Chicago September 21, 1972, to honor Dallas and Irene Western on the occasion of his well earned retirement from Quaker. His frank but friendly council and annual visits to our nurseries and national and regional meetings will be missed. But the industry-state-federal cooperation he started will continue, and his example of "moving mountains" to facilitate needed crop improvement cannot be forgotten. His larger oat family wishes Dal and Irene a long and happy retirement at their new home in Florida, on their Wisconsin lake, and on their continuing travels about the world.