

NEWS RELEASE

Dr. Gordon Rowland receives 2011 Plant Breeding and Genetics Award



Niagara Falls, ON Monday, July 18, 2011 – Dr. Gordon Rowland is the 2011 recipient of the Canadian Plant Breeding and Genetics Award. This award is presented annually by the Canadian Seed Trade Association and *Germination* magazine to a researcher who has made outstanding contributions to the advancement of Canadian plant agriculture. Dr. Rowland was recognized by his peers for his world class application of plant breeding and genetics in the flax industry; and for his significant contribution to increasing flax productivity.

Dr. Rowland has worked for almost four decades as a flax breeder with the Crop Development Centre (CDC) in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. During that time he has had remarkable success in science, variety development, market share and extension. He also served a five-year term as the director of the CDC, supervising a staff of 150.

Industry members know Dr. Rowland for his excellent communication skills with farmers and his ability to bridge the gap between researchers, grain producers and the grain industry. “I have seen that it is Dr. Rowland’s friendly personality and scientific ability which make him an invaluable resource to Canadian agriculture,” says Jim Downey, Research and Development Manager for SeCan. “Dr. Rowland’s impact on western Canadian agriculture is an accomplishment that few scientists achieve in their career.”

Dr. Rowland has indeed left his mark on the Canadian flax seed industry. One particular variety he worked on, CDC Bethune, is estimated to have 60 per cent of the market share in western Canada. CDC Bethune’s excellent agronomic traits include strong straw, high grain yield and good oil quantity and quality.

As an international leader in the flax genetics industry, Dr. Rowland is the lead scientist for an \$11 million dollar Genome Canada/Genome Prairie project known as Total Utilization of Flax GENomics. Under Rowland’s leadership, research teams from Asia, Europe and North America are working to develop a set of genomic resources that will help improve the seed and fibre traits of oilseed flax.

Dr. Rowland’s passion for the flax industry is evident through his mentoring of many graduate students over the years and through his participation on the Board of the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission. “Gordon is an innovator and farmer at heart – one only needs to review his career to feel the passion he has displayed over the years,” says Allen Kuhlmann, Chair of the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission.

Dr. Rowland received his award at the 88th annual meeting of the Canadian Seed Trade Association held in Niagara Falls, ON. Congratulations Dr. Rowland.

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Headquartered in the nation's capital, the Canadian Seed Trade Association (CSTA) represents the interests of 127 corporate members engaged in all aspects of seed research, production and marketing, both domestically and internationally.

Germination is Canada's first and only magazine aimed specifically at Canada's seed industry, and features the latest technological developments, breeding breakthroughs and more.