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**Minnesota Crop Improvement Association  
Presents Premier Seed Grower Award to Larry Riopelle**

**ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA, January 24, 2024** The Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) today recognized Larry Riopelle, of Argyle, with the Premier Seed Grower Award. The award, presented annually since 1928, recognizes individuals or partners involved in quality seed production, active in MCIA, and who provide excellent service to the seed industry.

Larry Riopelle was honored, along with fellow Premier Seed Grower awardees, Scott Lee, Merle Schwenzfeier, and Roger Schwenzfeier, during the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association's 121st Annual Meeting. The event was hosted at the Holiday Inn and Suites in St. Cloud, Minnesota, January 24, 2024.

Larry Riopelle grew up near Argyle, Minnesota, and at a very young age was working on the farm. He attended school in Argyle and when he wasn't playing football, he was often bagging seed and farming. He graduated in 1981 and was already well seasoned in seed production. He studied farm management at East Grand Forks College for two years while continuing to help on the farm.

The Riopelle Seed Farm was started by his father and uncle. Larry and his cousin were a large part of the farm and within nine years were operating it on their own. During this time, Larry worked with and also for Rivard's Seed in Argyle. In the 1990s, Larry continued producing certified seed along with selling corn and soybean seed. Additions to the farm included bulk seed handling and seed treating, which have continued to grow with the farm and seed business.

Larry and his wife Peggy have been married for 27 years and have worked side by side farming, producing seed, and raising their family. They have four children and five grandchildren. Peggy has been busy at home and in the field operating tractors, combine, and anything else needed throughout the growing season. Their son, Josh, started working on the farm in high school. After graduation, he worked a few jobs but was soon back farming with his family.

The farm continues to grow all classes of certified wheat seed including producing foundation seed for MCIA. Other crops grown are soybeans, corn, and sugar beets. Riopelle Seed Co. is now operated by Josh and his business partner, Adam. They have expanded to selling corn, wheat, and sugar beet seed along with seed treatment and seed additives.

Larry has served on many boards including the Argyle Coop Elevator, Argyle Lions, and Farm Service Agency County Committee. He is a member of the Minnesota Wheat and Soybean associations.

Larry and Peggy enjoy fishing on Lake of the Woods, golfing, playing pool, spending winter in Arizona, and their family.

Josh accepted the Premier Seed Grower Award on his father's behalf, thanking MCIA for the honor and recognition.

Since 1903, Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) has provided programs and services to meet the needs of an ever-changing agricultural world. These services include seed certification, organic certification, foundation seed production, and a variety of customized third-party verification programs for seed and identity-preserved grains. MCIA operates from facilities on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus with field staff located throughout Minnesota.

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If you would like more information on this topic, please contact Kris Folland at 218-791-2156 or kris.folland@mncia.org.