FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Minnesota Crop Improvement Association Presents Awards

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, January 12, 2022  Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) today presented its highest honor, the Achievement in Crop Improvement Award, to Wayne Capistran, whose family-owned and operated business, Capistran Seed Company, is located in Crookston, Minnesota. The award, presented annually since 1972, recognizes exemplary service to the seed industry as well as outstanding leadership in agriculture. Wayne Capistran is committed to producing high quality certified seed, provides honest information to his customers, and has a long record of service to the seed industry.

MCIA also recognized five Premier Seed Grower awardees, Duane and John Pazdernik of Waubun, Larry Rivard of Grand Forks, North Dakota, Richard (Dick) Stangler of Kilkenny, and Harmen Tande of Moorhead. Each year since 1928, MCIA has presented this award to recognize individuals or partners involved in quality seed production, active in MCIA, and who provide excellent service to the seed industry.

Journalist Andrea Johnson and University of Minnesota professor Kevin Smith were the recipients of MCIA’s Honorary Premier Seed Grower Award, which recognizes individuals not directly involved in seed production but who have actively supported the seed industry, MCIA, and their local community. MCIA has presented this award annually since 1930.

The awards were presented at the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association’s 119th Annual Meeting. The virtual event was hosted at MCIA’s office in St. Paul, Minnesota, January 12, 2022.

Achievement in Crop Improvement Award

Wayne Capistran, of Crookston, has a passion for producing high quality certified seed. His dedication to quality has made Capistran Seed a very successful business. Capistran’s participates in MCIA’s Seed Certification, Organic Certification, and Approved Facility programs. Wayne has been producing and selling certified seed for over 40 years. The Capistrans represent several seed companies and conduct their own variety test plots. Wayne’s straightforward, honest approach has earned him the respect of seed companies and customers alike. Wayne is a member of the Polk County Crop Improvement and the wheat, soybean, and sugar beet grower organizations. Wayne and his wife Nancy have three children and their son Kevin is a key part of the family farm and seed business.

Premier Seed Grower Awards

Duane and John Pazdernik, of Waubun, have been growing and conditioning certified seed for over 30 years. Together, the brothers have a combined 100 years of farming experience. The Pazderniks often attend the Prairie Grains Conference, Small Grain Updates, and local county crop meetings. One of the greatest benefits of their seed business is that of community. Their customers are neighbors and friends, and they truly value those relationships.
Premier Seedsman Awards, continued

Larry Rivard, of Grand Forks, has been in the seed industry for over 50 years. His father, Bert, was a founder of Rivard’s Quality Seeds in Argyle. There, Larry learned to condition certified seed. Today, his business, Rivard’s Turf and Forage, of Grand Forks, offers turf seed, conservation mixes, and cover crop seed. Larry has been active in various seed industry and local organizations.

Richard (Dick) Stangler, of Kilkenny, in Le Sueur County, has spent his entire life working with seed. He is the third generation in the business and works with his son Nick and daughter Becky. He participates in MCIA’s Seed Certification, Approved Facility, and the Noxious Weed Seed–free Forage and Mulch programs. He grows and conditions soybeans, oats, wheat, and cover crops seed.

Harmen Tande, of Moorhead, has been a certified seed grower for over 40 years. Ernie Krabbenhoft, of Sabin, encourage him to start growing seed. Over the years, Harmen has enjoyed working with several area seed conditioners. His primary seed crop is spring wheat, and he takes great pride in producing high quality seed. He has been active locally in the Clay County Crop Improvement and the county soybean growers group.

Honorary Premier Seed Grower Awards

Andrea Johnson, of Appleton, has been writing about agriculture for over 30 years. She grew up on a farm near Canby and cultivated her interest in writing. Andrea joined the Farm & Ranch Guide in 1998 and helped launch the Minnesota Farm Guide. A great supporter of MCIA, Andrea authors a significant article each year for the Minnesota Seed Guide. Her work highlights MCIA, the seed industry, and Minnesota agriculture.

Dr. Kevin Smith has been the barley breeder at the University of Minnesota since 1998. His breeding work now includes winter, two-row, and hulless barley. In addition to barley, he rebooted the oat breeding program, which produced MN-Pearl, and is breeding silflower, a perennial oilseed. The Smith research team works closely with MCIA, including planting and care of the MCIA small grain grow-outs. Kevin also teaches classes and advises several graduate students.

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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