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Minnesota Crop Improvement Association
Presents Premier Seed Grower Award to Larry Rivard

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, January 12, 2022  Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) today recognized Larry Rivard, of Grand Forks, North Dakota, with the Premier Seed Grower Award. The award, presented annually since 1928, recognizes MCIA members for their dedication to the production and distribution of quality seed, as well as their involvement in MCIA and other organizations.

Larry Rivard received the award, along with fellow Premier Seed Grower awardees, Duane and John Pazdernik, Richard (Dick) Stangler, and Harmen Tande, during 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.

Larry Rivard, of Grand Forks, North Dakota, has been a part of the seed industry for over 50 years. He grew up on a farm west of Argyle, where his father, Bert, grew and conditioned certified seed. The family owned and operated Rivard’s Quality Seeds in Argyle for many years. Following graduation from the Northwest School of Agriculture in Crookston, Larry joined the family business.

Initially, Larry’s responsibilities centered on seed conditioning—cleaning and bagging certified seed of wheat, oats, barley, and soybeans, along with a little flax, durum, and annual canary grass.

Rivard’s also mixed and packaged turf grass seed. By the 1990s, this side of the operation had become large enough that it required a full-time manager. Larry took on that responsibility and the business continued to grow with the addition of native seed and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) mixes.

By 2006, Larry took the business out on its own, creating Rivard’s Turf and Forage. Based in Argyle initially, they are now located in Grand Forks. Today the business includes mixing and packaging turf and forage seed, natives and cover crops, and specialty products. From 3-pound bags of lawn seed for homeowners, 50-pound bags of grass seed for golf courses, and cover crop mixes for 1,000 acres, they serve a wide range of customers in Minnesota and the Dakotas. In addition to seed, they also supply fertilizer and chemicals needed by their customers.

As an MCIA member, they are part of the MnDOT Approved Seed Vendor Program, creating mixes specifically for various road projects. Larry describes it as “a real good program that has benefited seed providers, MnDOT, and MCIA.”

In addition to MCIA, Larry has been active in various organizations in the seed industry, including the North Central Turfgrass Association, Western Seedsman, Northern Seed Trade, and other groups. Locally, he has served on the school board, church finance council, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, and American Legion.

Larry has enjoyed working with a wide variety of customers over the years. From farmers, golf course superintendents, to those planting CRP acres, he has appreciated all the interactions.

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.

If you would like more information on this topic, please contact Roger Wippler at 612-625-7766 or wippl002@umn.edu.