Minnesota Crop Improvement Association
Presents Premier Seed Grower Award to Harmen Tande

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, January 12, 2022  Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) today recognized Harmen Tande, of Moorhead, 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.

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

Harmen Tande, of Moorhead, started growing certified seed to add value to his crop production operation. Over forty years later, he is still raising certified seed. His primary seed crop has been spring wheat, but he has also grown barley and soybean seed. He enjoys the annual rituals of growing a crop and takes great pride in producing high quality seed.

After high school Harmen joined the US Airforce and worked on aircraft electronics. He was fortunate to be stationed in Grand Forks, North Dakota, where he could make regular trips back home to help on the farm. After his stint in the Airforce, Harmen returned home to the crop and livestock farm where he grew up.

His father and mother had moved to the Moorhead area in 1946 and paid a whopping $75 an acre for the 220-acre farm. His first years back on the farm were challenging, with flooding one year and drought the next. Over the years, Harmen has added acres to the farm while raising small grains, edible beans, corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. He has also steadily made improvements to the farm by upgrading buildings and adding drainage tile to the land.

He got his start in seed production with encouragement from Ernie Krabbenhoft of Sabin and has worked with a host of seed conditioners. He has cooperated with Lee Bean and Seed, Ada Feed and Seed, Heartland Seed, and Tobolt Seed. In the beginning he grew Era and Marshall wheat. Through the years, he has produced many other varieties.

With a degree in industrial technology from Moorhead State University, Harmen likes building, fixing, and modifying things. Among his major projects was building a workshop together with his late wife, Kristi. Family has been and continues to be especially important to Harmen. He and his son work together, including a special hay making operation where they bale up small squares for sale to local horse owners.

Harmen has actively supported agriculture in his local community, serving on the board of the Clay County Crop Improvement and the County Soybean Growers group. He also served on the Farmers Union Oil Company board for many years and is a member of the Farm Bureau and the Minnesota wheat and soybean grower’s organizations.

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.