Show and related dairy production activities at the annual Winter Show. It was the first livestock association to step up as a serious cooperator.  

*Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association* -- Providing Crops Show premiums, recognition plaques and the like soon became a problem for the first organizers and leaders of the Farm Crops Show. While business, banks, newspapers and other industry were very generous in the first two or three years of the show, such an annual provision became a burden on a few individuals.

Conrad Selvig, superintendent of the station, was the kind of person that thrived on getting the job done despite the problems along the way. He envisioned the Winter Shows as a northwestern Minnesota educational and agricultural developmental force. Through his efforts, county governments became interested in the Red River Valley Winter Shows, and after some enabling legislation, the counties were authorized to appropriate monies to help with selected operational needs. No county funds, however, could be used for constructing new buildings.

In these early years there wasn't any legal organization to receive such monies. Consequently a Red River Valley Development Association was established; its purpose was to promote and develop the industry of agriculture through the efforts of the Winter Shows. A constitution and by-laws were developed which called for each county board to appoint a citizen in the county to the membership board of the Development Association. The responsibilities of the board were and still are to expend the appropriations by each of the 14 counties for those projects at the Winter Shows which are sponsored by the Red River Valley Development Association. The superintendent of the Agricultural Experiment Station has always been a director-at-large.

In the 1920's and 30's, the Red River Valley Development Association was also active in matters of general public concern to northwestern Minnesota. For instance, in matters of drainage, soil conservation, water management, and Red River Valley Winter Shows management, the board of the Development Association could make recommendations and forward resolutions to appropriate agencies. Today that kind of action does surface from time to time; however, the major effort of the board of directors is confined to the several projects which they underwrite at the Winter Shows. The Association was officially incorporated as a nonprofit agricultural rural life development association in the 1950's when Dr. Olaf Soine was president. The new name adopted was Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association, Inc.

Today the board is organized with an executive committee and a project committee to carry out the policies of the full board. Each of the counties in northwestern Minnesota has one person on the board who serves for a period of three years. One-third of the board members are re-elected or replaced in accordance with the wishes of the county commissioners each year. The officers are elected at the annual meeting held each year during the Winter Shows schedule. Currently, they are expending a budget of about $13,000 annually, provided jointly by each of the 16 county units in northwestern Minnesota. The Development Association now concerns itself with four human resource recognition and development projects as well as with the Crops Show section of the Winter Shows. The Red River Valley Development Association has adopted a philosophy of recognizing civic leadership at the grassroots level. These people are recognized as the real builders of life in the Red River Basin.

The Valley Farmer and Homemaker Honors Banquet is 46 years old and still a top event of each show. Here a farm couple is honored, usually a man and his wife, who have largely made it in the business of farming. They are selected by a committee of their peers...