Canola Gains Attention

Marlin Johnson, Area Extension Agent, Crops and Soils, reported that the oil crop canola is gaining attention in the northern regions of Minnesota and North Dakota because of increased opportunity for production contracts in 1988.

Canola was developed from oilseed rape by Canadian agronomists. It is a recent development with the first variety licensed in 1974. Acreage of canola has grown to six million acres annually in Canada.

The varieties ‘Global’ and ‘Wester’ have been top yielders in University of Minnesota testing at Roseau, Minnesota.

Dr. John Lamb was involved in 1988 with the National Wind Erosion Project which was started at the Northwest Experiment Station. Because of the Food Security Act of 1985, conservation plans had to be implemented to limit soil erosion to a tolerable level by 1992 for producers to qualify for government programs. A need was identified for a more site specific method to estimate soil loss from wind and water erosion.

The grain and feed handling facility on the Station.

The new grain and feed handling facility started in early summer of 1988 was nearing completion. The facility contains a fully automated, computerized grinder-mixer for livestock rations that is fed from eight 1,250-bushel overhead bins. The ground experimental rations can then be transferred to eight holding bins of various sizes located in the building or transferred to other ration bins located around the Station.

Five 10,000-bushel storage bins, with full floor aeration, are available for storing the Station's grain production. Grain from these bins can be transferred or mixed via a leg system to the grinding-mixing area, other bins or delivery vehicles. An 80,000 pound electronic scale used to record grain and forage production rounds out the facility.

The facility was completed in November, 1988.

Dr. Allen Appointed

In 1988, Dr. C. Eugene Allen was appointed acting vice president for the Institute of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics, and acting director of the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station.

Dr. Bobby Holder, assistant professor of soils in UMC's Agriculture Division, accepted a joint appointment with the Northwest Experiment Station beginning March, 1988. Holder was the project leader of the water quality research and pesticide (herbicide, fungicide and insecticide) research programs on the Northwest Experiment Station.

Holder is originally from Southern California. He received his B.A. from Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington; M.S. from Michigan State University with majors in biological sciences and water resources; and Ph.D. in 1982 from Michigan State University in soil fertility and soil chemistry.

James Cameron, started at the Station in 1975 and worked in the agronomy department with Dr. John Weirsma, has spent the last 10 years with Dr. Holder as a senior research plot technician.