Peace Returns, Research Accelerates
1946-1970

Dean T. H. Fenske with the Superintendents from all the Experiment Stations in 1955. They are left to right: Allen Edson, West Central School and Station, Morris; Thomas M. McCall, Northwest School and Station, Crookston; Robert Hodson, Southern Experiment Station, Waseca, Theodore H. Fenske, associate dean, Institute of Agriculture, St. Paul; Clarence L. "Stub" Cole, North Central Experiment Station, Grand Rapids; Albert C. Heine, Rosemount Experiment Station; and Ralph S. Grant, Northeast Experiment Station, Duluth.

Research Gains in Importance

The research area saw O.M. Kiser, animal scientist, feeding surplus potatoes to his beef herd. Dr. Olaf Soine experimented with radioactive fertilizer elements, traced them through uptake and plant development and noted more effective combinations of phosphate.

O. M. Pilkey ranged his turkeys. Many faculty members helped organize judging contests at the Winter Shows. Livestock sales set records at the Shows.

Sunflowers are now recognized as being an important crop in the Red River Valley. This crop was viewed with caution in 1947. Soine wrote an article titled "Sunflowers—A New Crop in the Red River Valley." He stated, "This crop has its place now during the critical shortage of edible oils, but the future will depend on the price of other competing crops and the return of prewar sources of oil." He continued, "Because there are no processing plants in this area, all the seed will have to be shipped out. This may be a factor in the future production because the seeds are rather bulky."

Bruce C. Beresford was appointed head of the horticulture department in 1947. Formerly of Urbana, Illinois, Beresford left a teaching position at the University of Illinois to take the teaching a research spot left vacant by the resignation of O.C. Turnquist. Beresford received his B.S. degree in horticulture at Iowa State College and his M.S. degree in horticulture with a major in vegetable crops at the University of Illinois. Beresford was responsible for significant cooperative research efforts with the St. Paul horticulturists including: vegetable variety trials and hail damage studies.
Research Efforts Coordinated

Dr. T. H. Fenske, superintendent of the West Central School and Experiment Station, Morris, Minnesota, was promoted to Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics with responsibility for all the Schools of Agriculture and outstate Experiment Stations in the State of Minnesota in 1948.

The research effort for agriculture across the state needed more coordination as the efforts of research staff from the St. Paul Campus and the branch stations increased in scope and complexity after WWII. Education and training requirements for research and administrative personnel at the branch stations were upgraded generally to include a Ph.D. degree.

A popular commencement speaker at high schools and colleges across Minnesota, T.H. Fenske, died enroute to deliver the commencement address to the last senior class graduating from the West Central School of Agriculture, Morris, March, 1963.

'Andrew' and 'Zephyr' oats and 'Moore' barley were released to approved growers in 1949. The small grain elevator built in 1913 was still turning out tons of pure seed to certified growers. Martin Rud, elevator and cleaner operator for many years, was still on duty into the nights when seed was flowing.

In 1949, Herman Skyberg of Fisher, a 1916 graduate of NWSA, was elected as a University of Minnesota Regent. Skyberg had won distinction as a certified seed grower and as a leader in the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association where he had served as president for two years. He was a director of the Red River Valley Co-op Power Association, Farmers Cooperative Marketing Association of East Grand Forks, and the Crookston Production Credit Association, among others. With his relation to farming, Skyberg's support for agricultural research on the Station was strong and appropriate.

1950 Floods

The area floods of 1950 were a historic event. May precipitation amounted to 7.24 inches, the greatest amount for any one month since records had begun to be kept 50 years before. Boats were utilized on campus to get people to work. Damage to farm land came from the long duration of the flood (four to seven weeks), which delayed all crops and prevented the seeding of many.

Leaders in the Red River Valley Livestock Association in the early 1950's.
Seat ed left to right are: Lloyd Spielman, Eddie Gronseth, Rex Haugen, J.L. Delmore, James Muzzy, Bernard Ward, and (unable to identify).
Standing left to right are: Ron Baker, Sam Strand, William Strickler, (unable to identify), Bennie Strickler, Benton Rindahl, Delmar Hagen, Paul Billberg, Dennis Forsell, and Odin Hanson.
O. M. Kiser retired in June 1952 after 35 years on the staff. Kiser had been heavily involved with the swine project at the Station. He was replaced by Homer Fausch who was finishing his Ph.D. in animal science at the University of Minnesota.

Institute of Agriculture

In January of 1953, the University Board of Regents changed the name of the Agriculture Department to "Institute of Agriculture." Dr. Harold Macy, former director of the University Experiment Station, became new Dean of the Institute on January 1.

Rudy M. Stolen was appointed to the staff of the School and Experiment Station in 1953 to handle the dairy herd and research. Stolen came with degrees from the University of Minnesota in animal husbandry. He had been a county agent for a short time, then joined the Land O'Lakes Creameries, Inc. becoming manager of the Herd Improvement Division. He left after a brief tenure at the Station.

A soil improvement forum in 1953 attracted more than 375 farmers, and 1,000 attended the Station's Crops and Soils Day. More than 4,000 people attended "Hay Field Day" at the Station to look at the changing systems and machines coming into being. Special "forage days" would continue for 20 years as farmers adapted to new systems.

The Station received a grant from the A. O. Smith Harvestore Company to research the new "oxygen limiting" capability of the "big blue" units.

A. M. Faker, superintendent of buildings and grounds and engineer, retired in 1954 after 37 years of service. Faker, like McCall, had served through two world wars and the Great Depression. Buildings received a minimum of maintenance over these years. The budget for repair on the farm was not one a superintendent of buildings could "crow" about. Steam joints in the heating tunnels needed repairs, the southwest corners of all of the major buildings, repaired somewhat after the great drought of the 30's, were all again cracked and sagging.

E. C. "Gene" Miller joined the staff in 1954. He came with education and building construction experience from undergraduate days at The Stout Institute, Menomonie, Wisconsin.

After pilot training and service in WWII, Miller completed his B.S. degree. He taught two years at Perham, Minnesota, then spent two years working with young veteran farmers at Fergus Falls in the On-Farm Veterans Program, as shop and building instructor. At Fergus Falls he was heavily involved again with flying, working vacation time and weekends crop spraying with West Central Airways of Fergus Falls.

He attended the University of Minnesota, and completed a M.S. degree before heading for Waseca to teach in the new Southern School of Agriculture in 1951. Upon arriving at Crookston, he was asked by local farmers to use his flying and crop spraying experience to help fight an army worm infestation.

New Leadership for the Station

Bernard E. Youngquist appointed Superintendent. At the January, 1956, meeting of the University Board of Regents, B. E. Youngquist was appointed Superintendent to succeed T. M. McCall, who would retire in June after 45 years with the Northwest School and Experiment Station.

Youngquist, a native of Finlayson, Minnesota, received his B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Minnesota. He had taught agriculture in Starbuck from 1939 until 1941. He served in the U.S. Navy in the European and Pacific Theaters during World War II.

Youngquist joined the University staff in 1946 at the West Central School and Experiment Station at Morris and served there until becoming principal at the Southern School of Agriculture in Waseca in 1952. He became superintendent of the Northwest School and Experiment Station in 1956.

Dr. Homer Fausch left the Station in 1956, accepting a staff position at Polytech College in Pomona, California.

Dr. Fausch was replaced by Dr. Diedrich Reimer, a native of Canada. Reimer graduated from the University of Manitoba, received a M.S. degree from the University of Minnesota and had completed most of his doctorate in animal breeding at University of Minnesota when he was hired.

The 47th annual Red River Valley Winter Shows took place in 1957. The theme for one day during the meetings was "Use of Airplanes in Agriculture."
A.M. Pilkey, poultry husbandman, retired in 1961 after 39 years of service. His most outstanding research had been the tracing of blackhead disease in turkeys caused by organisms in old turkey lots. Systems of lots, which were moved frequently, along with some new medications, were proven to thwart the spread of “blackhead” long plaguing turkey growers. The blackhead research allowed an explosion of turkey production during the 1940's and 50's in Minnesota. Pilkey's major assistant was Richard W. “Winston” Johnson who completed more than 30 years with the Station.

Dr. Edward Frederick was appointed in 1957 to strengthen the Station’s dairy research. His herdsman was Martin VonRuden. Frederick, directed the project involving testing of bulls and their semen. Four pairs of twin bulls were acquired for the project. Assistant farm animal technician, Marvin Chandler, monitored these bulls around the clock and collected semen at the proper intervals.

Frederick was involved with early forage projects which were very important for farmers changing over from baled hay to ensiled forages. One year was so droughty, wild oats were harvested in a field near Beltrami, Minnesota, and ensiled for feed.

Frederick left in December, 1963, to convert the Southern School of Agriculture at Waseca to a two-year college.

Dr. George Marx was appointed to the Northwest Experiment Station staff on January 1, 1964. Marx earned his B.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin, River Falls, a M.S. from South Dakota State University, Brookings, and his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota.

He completed the bull stud project started by Frederick. The information from this project changed the way bull stud...
enterprises were run around the world, saving millions of dollars. He continued work on "immunized milk" which he had helped with as a graduate student at the University of Minnesota.

Marx continued a dairy steer feeding project. Dairy farmers had often killed bull calves at birth, the value of a non-breeding males seemingly nil. During the 60's, the value and carcass grades of dairy steers completely turned around.

Martin VonRuden, herdsman, left in 1966. His replacement was Marlyn "Jake" Jacobson. Jacobson completed his B.S. degree in dairy science at the University of Minnesota. It was the first effort to place a well trained assistant with each of the research heads at the Station.

Dr. Harvey Windels, who completed his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees at University of Minnesota. He arrived in September, 1964, to complete the Northwest Experiment Station's Animal Science Department. Windels was added to direct the beef, sheep and swine operations. At the time the Station was heavily involved in the last series of swine breeding for the Minnesota # 2, # 3's.

William F. Hueg Jr. was appointed professor and assistant director of the University of Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station in 1962. He was appointed to professor and director in 1966.

Hueg's specialization in forage physiology and management resulted in a management system for improved forage harvesting.

Past Superintendent T.M. McCall died March 21, 1965 at the age of 77. His funeral was held at Kiehle Auditorium on campus. A. M. Foker also died that year.

1965 - Division of Duties, "The Education Arm and The Research Arm"

Superintendent B. E. Youngquist's in-depth study of agricultural schools during the 50's, indicated these schools were outmoded. It was recommended that the agricultural high school be phased out and a two year technical college replace it.

In this plan, education and research, were directed into a "new age".

The University appointed Dr. Bernard E. Youngquist to head the research at the Northwest Experiment Station. Dr. Stanley D. Sahlstrom was appointed director of the new technical institute in the fall of 1965. Sahlstrom had been director of field services at St. Cloud State College. Sahlstrom was given the responsibility for directing the development of curriculum at Crookston, and of administering activities that would lead to the opening of the University of Minnesota Technical Institute in the fall of 1966.

Agricultural Research Reorganized

Offices in the new Agricultural Research Center were reorganized and Dr. Youngquist began a new era in agricultural research at the Station. His research team consisted of Dr. George Marx, animal science, dairy; Dr. Harvey Windels, animal science, beef, sheep and swine; Dr. Olaf Soine, agronomy and soils, and E. C. Miller, agricultural engineer. Juel Torvi, farm foreman, carried much responsibility for getting field work done and research plots planted. The era of special equipment for plots at the station was just beginning.

Margaret Fylling was principal secretary for Youngquist. In early years of the Winter Shows, Fylling, along with her desk, typewriter, and file, would be moved downtown to the Winter Shows. She retired in 1970 after 45 years of service.

She was followed by Beverly Johnston, Linda Brown, and later Patti Malme.

Earl Carlson, senior general mechanic, became responsible for maintenance at the Experiment Station. Carlson had joined the school-station maintenance department in 1964. George Weiland, senior general mechanic, transferred from the general school and shop area.
The Northwest Experiment Station was housed in new and remodeled facilities. The Auditorium (left) was added to the old Animal Products Building. The Agricultural Research Center office (right) was built in 1967.

Superintendent B. E. Youngquist presided over the final NWSA graduation on March 22, 1968, at which time 42 seniors received their diplomas. This signaled the finale of the 63-year-old school. Dr. A.A. Dowell, superintendent from 1927 to 1937, was a guest at the final graduation. The Northwest School graduated 5,433 students during this era.

The Transition Continues

The period of phasing out the Northwest School of Agriculture, initiating the new Technical College, and extending the research arm was supported by the University Administration and the Institute.

Research demands soon exceeded staff, land, buildings, and equipment at the Northwest Experiment Station. Superintendent Youngquist and the research staff assisted in the NWSA's phasing out and the beginning of the Technical College, for a brief period Station staff taught collegiate courses.

Priority was given to meet the challenges of research in sunflowers and sugarbeets, improve existing general crops research capabilities, strengthen the livestock projects, acquire much needed land resources, and replace outmoded buildings.

Flocks, herds, and fields of the station were made available to college teaching needs only when they did not interfere with the research in progress. The ever present demand for outreach extension teaching by research personnel left little time for teaching courses in the college.

Minnesota Extension Service

The transition of the College’s Experiment Station staff gave thought to new relationships with the Agricultural Extension Service. The Agricultural Research Center was built and attached to the Animal Products Building. Marlin Johnson, Area Extension Crops and Soils Agent, was housed in the updated facility.

Sunflower Research Grows at the Northwest Experiment Station

Dr. Freeman Johnson was appointed to the research staff on July 1, 1963. Dr. Olaf Soine had opened the door to sunflower research. Superintendent Youngquist was convinced that sunflowers were due to be an important crop in northwest Minnesota. Against the advice of others in the Institute, he hired Johnson to research the world order of sunflowers to prepare the way for new selections. The sunflower industry followed early research leads. They soon had huge research programs of their own. Cargill, Inc., Vegetable Oils Division, followed Johnson’s work on the Station. They hired Johnson for their research program. In 1966, Youngquist thought, that after only three years, the Station could reduce some aspects of sunflower research.

Dr. James Lofgren joined the staff April 1, 1967. There were still a few questions and research ends in the sunflower area left to conclude. Lofgren pursued these problems until March 31, 1971, when he also joined the industrial trek to become head researcher at Dahlgren’s Inc., Crookston.

The Third International Sunflower Conference was held August 13-15, 1968, at Northwest Experiment Station.