



SEED OF THE YEAR

NEWS RELEASE

- for immediate release

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Seed of the Year West Awarded to AC Navigator

Seed of the Year West is pleased to announce that AC Navigator was selected as 2017-18 winner. AC Navigator was developed by Dr. John Clarke and the wheat breeding team at AAFC Swift Current along with collaborators at the Canadian Grain Commission Grain Research Laboratory and AAFC Winnipeg. Dr. Clarke is the programs first two-time recipient of the award.

AC Navigator was granted interim registration in 1998 to market-test a stronger gluten quality type in international markets. AC Navigator brought price premiums to the grower along with better genetics. AC Navigator has helped put and maintain western Canadian durum at the forefront in the global grain trade.

“AC Navigator represented a considerable departure from main-stream Canada Western Amber Durum end-use quality at the time,” said Dr. Clarke. “AC Navigator was the result of discussions with Italian and French millers and pasta manufacturers in the mid-1990s who felt that the gluten strength of Canadian durum should be considerably higher than it then was.”

“AC Navigator has been an excellent option for western Canadian durum producers for close to two decades,” said Ryan McCann, Director of Seed at Crop Production Services Canada. “The breeding program around AC Navigator durum continues to be strong and demand for this impressive variety remains steady. This is a true testament to Dr. Clarke and his team for their commitment to this class. Crop Production Services is proud to have this variety as part of the Proven® Seed lineup and to have been part of its success.”

Seed of the Year is designed to provide recognition to varieties that have made a significant contribution to the economy, agriculture, and the Canadian public in general. Although the name, Seed of the Year, indicates the contribution in a particular year, the program is much broader reaching and considers total lifetime achievement and contribution. Seed of the Year believes it is important to recognize the value of our public plant breeding programs, as well as encourage the entry of new plant breeders to the industry.

This year due to added sponsorships, Seed of the Year West was able to offer two \$4000 scholarships to students enrolled in a western Canadian university and currently completing a Masters or PhD in plant breeding or genetics. Akshaya Vasudevan, in the second year of her M. Sc program in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Saskatchewan and Surendra Bhattarai a PhD student also at the University of Saskatchewan were selected as this year’s scholarship recipients by Dr. John Clarke.

The Seed of the Year award was presented at the Prairie Grain Development Recognition Luncheon in Banff, Alberta on February 28th, 2018.

Seed of the Year West would also like to acknowledge its sponsors: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Alberta Barley, Alberta Wheat Commission, Canterra Seeds, Cargill, Canadian Seed Growers Association, Canadian Seed Trade Association, FP Genetics, CPS Canada, Richardson International, SeCan, Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission and the Western Grains Research Foundation. We also wish to thank the judges and other applicants.

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