



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Lentil Festival Awards 2017 Lentil Family of the Year

Pullman, WASH.—The National Lentil Festival awarded the Kurt and Chris Braunwart family from Othello, WA the 2017 Lentil Family of the Year at the Western Pulse Growers Association’s annual meeting on Dec. 14.

Kurt began his career as a fieldman for Rogers Seed Company in 1974 in Twin Falls, Idaho. In 1980 he moved to Colfax, Washington as Plant Manager and later to Othello, Washington as Operations Manager. In 1995 Kurt and Chris purchased and carried forward a dry pea breeding program from Rogers Seed Company. This business became ProGene Plant Research in 1996 when Kurt and Chris bought out Stubbs Seed Service's interest.

This past year, Kurt supported several International Year of Pulses events and activities, both domestically and at the international level. He and his crew planted plots next on the Moscow-Pullman Highway next to the USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council Industry Office. The plots featured a wide variety of pulses, each labeled and a sign inviting the public to check out the plots up close. Nearly every day, all summer, there were visitors stopping to investigate the different varieties planted.

Kurt serves on several USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council and US Pea & Lentil Trade Association committees and is a loyal supporter of the pea, lentil, chickpea and dry bean industry. Over the years, Kurt has helped with the Grower meeting with plant breeding demonstrations, pulse passport activities and presented a variety of information for the growers.

“Kurt and Chris have such a passion for the pulse industry,” said Britnee Packwood, festival director. “It was truly inspiring to see that passion and dedication today during the presentation, and we are honored to award the Braunwart family with this distinction.”

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Since its beginning in 1989, the National Lentil Festival has brought national attention to Pullman. The Palouse region of farmlands in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho has a reputation for producing the highest quality lentils in the United States. We think that is worth celebrating!