

Elmer Laird inducted into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame

A group of proud organic supporters celebrated Elmer Laird this weekend as he was inducted into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame. It's been a long time coming, so it's all the more sweet that Elmer's monumental commitment to organic agriculture is being widely recognized by such a mainstream agriculture group.

Elmer's contribution has been vast. Many of Saskatchewan's leaders in organics, many of our most experienced organic producers were brought into organics by Elmer. All of us have been influenced by him one way or another. His has been a persistent, strong voice, and a worthy, precious example. We are so proud of you, Elmer.



**Honourable Dr. Gordon L. Barnhart, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan presenting Elmer Laird with a plaque commemorating his induction into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame.
(Photo courtesy of Cathy Holtslander)**

The following is from the induction ceremony:

"Elmer Laird is an outspoken champion of organic farming. Born on a farm near Swift Current in 1924, he began farming organically in 1969 and is considered the grandfather of organic farming in Saskatchewan.

Following service in the air force in the Second World War, he began farming near Davidson. He was elected a director of the Saskatchewan Farmers Union in 1952 and served until 1964. He was one of the founders of the National Farmers Union in 1965.

In 1964 Elmer was a key participant in an agricultural study in Ghana and Nigeria aimed at strengthening trade, educational and agricultural ties between those nations and Canada.

In 1973 Elmer and his wife Gladys, formed the Back to the Farm Research Foundation to research organic farming methods. In 1983 Elmer and Gladys formed the first certified organic farmers co-operative that milled flour and marketed organic grains and oilseeds in North America and abroad.

When they retired the Lairds donated use of their land to the Back to the Farm Research Foundation to serve as a research and demonstration facility. The farm offers, free of charge, advice on all aspects of organic agriculture."