



SEED OF THE YEAR
recognizing public seed research

NEWS RELEASE

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Page 1 of 1

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2009/2010 Seed of the Year West – Scholarship Winner Announced

Seed of the Year West announced Harrington barley, as the winner of the 2009/2010 Seed of the Year West in November. We are now happy to announce this year's Seed of the Year scholarship winner is Lasantha Ubayasena from the University of Saskatchewan. Lasantha is currently in his 5th year of a Ph.D program and is currently finalizing his thesis.

Lasantha's main area of study is genetic characterization and identification of genomic regions controlling the visual quality traits of field pea. Part of the western award is a scholarship for \$4000 that is awarded to a student enrolled in a western Canadian university and currently completing a masters or Ph.D in plant breeding or genetics. The scholarship aspect contributes to the education of a new generation of plant breeders.

Bryan Harvey one of the breeders responsible for Harrington Barley noted "all the scholarship candidates were indeed worthy but we were persuaded by Mr. Ubayasena's excellent academic record, his experience in both molecular and conventional plant breeding and with his involvement in assisting fellow graduate students as well as the community in general. Harrington is a reminder of the importance of the cooperative nature of the Canadian public system. We rely on other breeders for germplasm and testing sites, we rely on pathologists for disease reaction information and we rely on chemists, maltsters and brewers to evaluate the quality of our lines. We then rely on seed growers and farmers to take it the rest of the way to market."

Seed of the Year is designed to provide recognition to publicly developed 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 over time. It is important to recognize the value of the contributions of our public plant breeding programs, as well as encourage the entry of new plant breeders to the industry.

Seed of the Year would also like to acknowledge its sponsors: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Alberta Barley Commission, Canterra Seeds, Cargill, Canadian Wheat Board, Parrish & Heimbecker Limited, Canadian Seed Growers Association, Viterra, Richardson International, SeCan and Western Grains Research Foundation. We would also like to acknowledge and thank the judges and the other applicants who applied.

For more information on Seed of the Year, as well as application forms for next year please visit www.seedoftheyear.ca/west

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