

## **Vernon J. Racz 1968 College 2020 Honorary Life Membership**

Vern was born in Broadview, SK and raised on the family farm near Kipling, SK. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture (Animal Science) in 1968. Vern began working for the Department of Municipal Affairs in Regina in 1968 but returned to the University of Saskatchewan to take his M. Sc. in Animal Science from 1969-71. Following that, he worked as a livestock specialist with Saskatchewan Agriculture in Yorkton until 1980. He then moved to Saskatoon to work as the Provincial Swine Specialist with Saskatchewan Agriculture until 1984.

In 1984, Vern became the director of the Saskatchewan Feed Testing Laboratory at the University of Saskatchewan, where he initiated the use of advanced analytical technologies, such as near-infrared analysis and atomic absorption spectroscopy. Under his leadership, annual submissions to the lab doubled to over 10,000 samples per year. In 1998, Vern was appointed as the Executive Director of the Prairie Feed Resource Centre at the University of Saskatchewan. In this role, he led feed research and development activities, and extended production and research information to both livestock producers and feed industry personnel on a domestic and international basis. Feed resource utilization and development from an industry perspective was his primary interest utilizing feedstuffs such as barley, cereal grains, pulses, canola, flax, forages, ethanol co-products and grain screenings. The center later became the Feeds Innovation Institute. Vern retired from the U of S in 2011 and continued work as a forensic agrologist.

Vern served in an advisory capacity on many national and international committees, including Canadian feed commodity groups and companies in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and South America. In 2018, he was inducted into the Saskatchewan Agriculture Hall of Fame for recognition of his contributions to the industry. Also in 2018, Vern received the Prime of Life Achievement Award from the University of Saskatchewan.

Vern was an active member of the Saskatchewan Agricultural Graduates Association. He served on the Executive numerous times and was the Membership chair from 2008 to 2019. In addition to professional and volunteer work, Vern began his true passion of farming in the mid 1990's near Foam Lake, SK with his wife, Charlene. Vern and Charlene have 3 children and 7 grandchildren.

Vern passed away on Oct. 19, 2019.