

A Convergence of Ideas, of Hopes, of Dreams

It is a great pleasure to represent Iowa State University Extension here today. I am doubly pleased to be present at this groundbreaking, which exemplifies our strong partnerships in northeast Iowa. But today's events have greater significance than launching the Norman Borlaug Learning Center and surpass the importance of the Northeast Research Farm. These proceedings mark **a convergence of ideas, of hopes, and of dreams for the future of Iowans and for the people of the world**. Indeed, Norman Borlaug recognized that integrating the ag research into sustainable farming systems was the key to fighting hunger. And Iowa State University and ISU Extension have been creating, sharing, and bringing research-based knowledge to the ag community for 150 years. Here, today, these ideas are working together and becoming a reality in which feeding our people, protecting our natural resources, and strengthening our economy are attainable.

Borlaug has been called the father of the Green Revolution, as well as "the man who fed the world."¹ But he is quick to acknowledge the many others who also played a role. As Borlaug said, "I am but one member of a vast team made up of many organizations, officials, thousands of scientists, and millions of farmers — mostly small and humble — who for many years have been fighting a quiet, oftentimes losing war on the food production front."² Borlaug was humble and modest in his many achievements and knew when to share credit where credit was due. I will follow his example today.

Let me acknowledge that retired ISU Extension crop specialist Kay Connelly was a co-chair, along with Bruce Clark, of the group that raised \$200,000 in private funds for the construction of this center. One might say old Extension workers never die — or retire — they just find new ways to serve their communities and the people of Iowa. Many thanks to Kay, to Bruce, and all who helped make this center a reality.

So after we've moved the dirt and put the shovels away, we must move on to the bigger story. And the bigger story here today is research — the UNBIASED RESEARCH that comes about because of the partnership of the Experiment Station, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Extension. Field days provide a chance for you to see research projects in progress and talk with the people involved in the experiments. It's also an opportunity to view the latest in modern agriculture. So as you participate in today's field day, take note of all the research that's taking place at the Northeast Iowa Research and Demonstration Farm. Norman Borlaug has called the Green Revolution a success, but notes that it is "a never ending job."³ Much work remains to be done. It is very fitting that this new learning center be named for Borlaug. It will be a fine place to carry on the "never ending job" of the Green Revolution.

¹ <http://www.agbioworld.org/biotech-info/topics/borlaug/unsunghero.html>

² http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/n/norman_borlaug.html

³ <http://www.reason.com/news/show/27665.html>