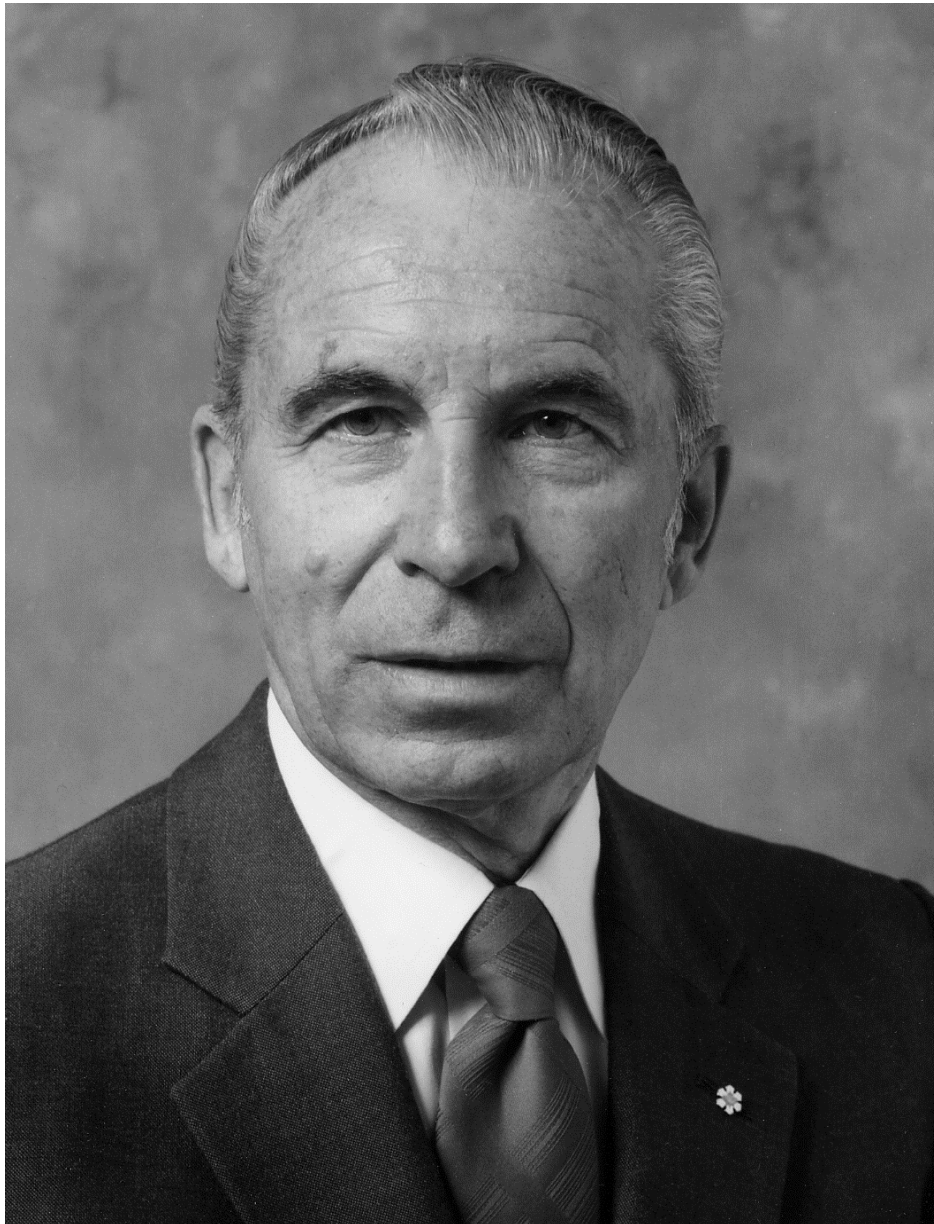


**Leonard H. Shebeski**  
**1914-2010**



Dr. Leonard Hylary Shebeski, B.S.A. (University of Manitoba), M.Sc. (University of Manitoba), D.Sc. Hon (University of Manitoba, Warsaw Agricultural University of Poland, Queen's University), LL.D. Hon. (University of Saskatchewan), Dean Emeritus, died on August 3, 2010, in Victoria, BC, two days before his 96th birthday. He was born in Aubigny, Manitoba on August 5, 1914, and at the age of three, he and his family moved to a farm just outside of Arborg Manitoba. His father operated a Dominion Government Illustration Farm, where farmers demonstrated results of experimental work that advanced Canadian agriculture.

Following his undergraduate degree, Len served in the R.C.A.F. - first as an Observer - and then as a Pilot-Instructor. In 1944, he was mentioned in Despatches, a recognition of meritorious service. After the war, he completed his M.Sc. in Plant Science at the University of Manitoba and then began doctoral studies in genetics and plant breeding at the University of Minnesota. He taught in the field husbandry department at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon from 1947 until 1953, when he became Department Head of Plant Science at the University of Manitoba. In 1965, he was appointed Dean of Agriculture at the University of Manitoba, where he continued as Dean until his retirement in 1979. He was appointed Dean Emeritus in 1981.

Len consulted widely for the Canadian International Development Agency in Africa and Southeast Asia, on projects ranging from wheat breeding to rice research. One of these concerned the establishment of the Agricultural Faculty of Khon Kaen University in Thailand; the other was a wheat improvement project at the National Plant Breeding Station in Kenya. Both of these were considered highly successful projects in aiding developing nations in their progress toward self-sufficiency in food. In 1982-83, he was deputy director general and director of research at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Len was a strong believer in inter-disciplinary cooperation in research and was influential in establishing agricultural development on an international scale. He earned acclaim for spearheading an international program between the University of Manitoba and the Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maíz y Trigo (CIMMYT) aimed at the improvement of the wheat-rye hybrid triticale. Triticale is still produced for its high protein content and is used by plant breeders to produce desirable traits in other cereal grains. He was also a key player in the development of Canada's first utility wheat variety, Glenlea. He published over 40 scientific papers and over 100 general publications during his career.

Len was an excellent teacher of both undergraduate and graduate courses. His lectures stimulated as well as informed, and he sought to foster a questioning attitude. He was always eager to debate and equally willing to listen. Lectures began in the traditional classroom setting but did not end there; after class they spilled into hallways and offices where other students and staff members were drawn into the discussions as they passed by.

His professional activities in Canada included positions with the National Research Council, Science Council of Canada, Agricultural Institute of Canada and the Canadian Agricultural Research Council. He also served the Canadian Seed Growers Association, the Manitoba Weeds Commission and the National Advisory Committee on Agriculture for Expo '67. He was an Honorary Director of the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair in Brandon.

Len was made a Fellow of the Agricultural Institute of Canada and the Royal Society of Canada (1968), an Honourary Life Member of the Canadian Seed Growers' Association, an Honourary Life Member of the Genetics Society of Canada and a foreign member of the Lenin All-Union Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Moscow. He received the Distinguished Agrologist Award from the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists, was inducted into the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame and received the Canadian Red Cross Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Shebeski also received the Queen Elizabeth Jubilee Medal and in 1977, he became an Officer of the Order of Canada. The citation read: "A teacher, administrator, and scientist who has gained an international reputation by his achievements in agricultural science, particularly in plant breeding."

Len was predeceased by his wife Laura, his two brothers, and one daughter. He will be remembered by three daughters and their families, including his grandson and great-granddaughter. Len is also survived by two sisters and by nieces, nephews, extended family, and many good friends and colleagues.

*Credits to the University of Manitoba*