Dr. Dale Lindgren, Professor of Horticulture at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's West Central Research and Extension Center, (WCREC) officially retired Dec. 31, 2009, after almost 34 years.

Lindgren has witnessed many changes in the horticulture industry since 1976. These include the introduction of biotechnology, including gene manipulation, the introduction of computers and the Internet, and changed methods of introducing new plants into the nursery trade.

Lindgren said he has worked with many different types of plants over the years and he counts his work with Penstemon among the highlights of his career.

His 'Husker Red' penstemon was named Perennial Plant of the Year in 1996. Penstemon cultivars developed at the WCREC now grow all over the world.

Carnations, clematis, prairie clovers and several grasses developed at WCREC, have also received national attention.

Lindgren helped evaluate dry edible beans at WCREC. He has been co-developer of about 20 breeding lines and cultivars of dry beans. The dry edible bean team, of which he was a part, received the UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources Team Effort Award.

Lindgren considers the 1977 start-up of the North Platte Farmers' Market, in conjunction with Larry Benner, among the most significant impacts he has had locally.

Other programs that allowed him to have an important influence include organization of the Master Gardener program in west central Nebraska in 1988 and being the first chairman of the North Platte Tree Board.

Lindgren said that working with good people at the WCREC and Extension personnel across the state; community friends in North Platte and the surrounding area; and colleagues and plant lovers throughout the world has been a major source of enjoyment for him.

Lindgren still has several graduate student committee commitments to finish and will assist in the final release procedures for several new plants. He and his wife Joanne, plan to remain in North Platte. They hope to have more time to visit their two sons in Washington