



Inducted: 2007

Based in London, Charles Broadwell was the general manager of The Ontario Bean Producers' Marketing Board for 26 years. In this position he traveled to over 70 countries marketing the \$50M per year crop of white, pea and yellow-eyed beans grown by Ontario farmers. During this time, he expanded his marketing talents as a 6-year president of the International pulse Trade and Industry Confederation. Mr. Broadwell was president of the Canadian Bean Council, president of the Agricultural Institute of Canada and he served on numerous other agricultural-based boards and committees both before and after his retirement in 1993. Through his involvement with the Forest City Kiwanis, he firmly established the Western Fair's 4-H Achiever of the Year award.

CHARLES E. BROADWELL

1931-2007

Charles Broadwell can be considered a unique Hall of Fame inductee; he did not grow up on a farm. Born an only child to parents whose careers were in sales, Mr. Broadwell was raised in the small town of Kingsville in Kent County. However, summer work could be found on farms and his love of the agricultural business began with his summer jobs on a market garden and greenhouse farm.

From there, Mr. Broadwell attended the Agricultural College in Guelph (now the University of Guelph) based on the rave reviews the school received from several of his friends who also attended. At Guelph, he focused on marketing-related subjects and worked for three different canning companies during the summers. It was also in Guelph where he met his future wife Noreen. She attended the MacDonald Institute.

After graduating with his B.S.A. in 1954, Charles found employment with The Canada & Dominion Sugar Company in Chatham, first as a fieldman, then in various positions of responsibility. In 1968, the sugar company closed when it was purchased by Tate & Lyle of England. The company offered both Charles and his mentor Mr. Bev Easton, who had groomed him for future management positions, consulting jobs with the firm. However, Charles decided to accept the job as General Manager of the Ontario Bean Producers' Marketing Board, one of seven offers he had received. The board office was in London, which meant relocating his young family from Kent County, where Charles was vice-chair of the school board and very active in the Kiwanis Club.

The marketing board was undergoing a new beginning at that time after having had its powers suspended by the government in 1966. Charles became its first general manager after the board re-organized, adopting agency marketing and pool pricing. It was during his first year at the helm that he recalls selling over \$1 million worth of beans in one day, and then he went home with a raging headache and, as his wife told him, red ears. He wondered at the time if he had sold the product too cheaply but time proved he had made a good move.

Ontario bean producers raise the vast majority of Canadian white beans, and of them, about 80 percent is exported through a network of several companies to more than 70 countries worldwide. Mr. Broadwell travelled extensively around the world during his 26 years as general manager, making approximately \$50 million per year in sales on behalf of Ontario's white bean growers.

He recalled during many trips overseas, one of the most significant venues chosen to gather brokers, buyers, and canners was Leeds Castle, rented one time for three days. "We told the people gathered there that the drawbridge was up and would not be lowered until they made significant purchases of beans. Our sales in those three days totaled multiple millions of dollars and we lowered the drawbridge. By that time, I no longer developed red ears and headaches over sales."

As part of his job, Mr. Broadwell started the bean producers' own publication, called *The Emerging Bean*. He edited that publication and took the photos for it as well. He had already had some experience in the business of publishing, having worked for the sugar beet publication called *Up and Down the Rows*. After retirement, he and his wife Noreen continued to keep their hands in publishing, taking care of the four-page Kiwanis newsletter on a monthly basis.

As if he wasn't busy enough, the Broadwells bought a small hobby farm and provided work for their teenagers Heather, Lynn and Mark raising and selling squash and other products from a booth at the end of the lane and at the Strathroy Farmers' Market on Saturday mornings. After a lifetime in the agriculture business, Charles could finally call himself a farmer!

Through his position as the bean marketing board general manager, Mr. Broadwell also became active with The International Pulse Trade and Industry Confederation, which was established to enforce trade standards on a worldwide basis to protect both the buyers and sellers of pulses (a generic term for peas, beans and lentils). He served three two-year terms as president and was the only Canadian to serve in that capacity. In the six years he was president, the confederation was able to increase the number of member countries by a third.

His involvement in furthering the interests of agriculture did not stop there. He was a president of The Agricultural Institute of Canada and its Research Foundation. He was past-president and a charter member of the Ontario Institute of Agrologists, served on the Federal Task Force on Agri-food Trade Developments, and many others groups.

After retiring in 1993, Mr. Broadwell chaired the Farm Organizations Accreditation Tribunal and was a member of the Drainage Tribunal and Crop Insurance Tribunal. He was an active director of the Western Fair Association for eight years. He served on and chaired many other committees such as the London Area Good Food Project Inc.

Active as well with the Kiwanis Club of Forest City-London, and having led many 4-H clubs over the years, Mr. Broadwell spearheaded the establishment of the 4-H Achiever of the Year Award. The Western Fair Association matched the Kiwanis' \$1,000 award so that on behalf of the two organizations, two winning 4-H Achiever recipients are each awarded \$1,000, all thanks to Charles Broadwell's efforts.

In addition to being named to the Middlesex County Agricultural Hall of Fame, Mr. Broadwell was inducted into the Kent County Agricultural Hall of Fame in 1994. He received the Ontario Institute of Agrologists' Distinguished Agrologist Award in 1989; in 1996, he and Noreen became the only husband and wife team to receive the Norry-Hilliard Award for the promotion of Agrology in Ontario, and they are also Honourary Companions of the University of Guelph.