

Keith Olsen, former president of the Nebraska Farm Bureau, and Ted Doane, a former longtime University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty member, have been named Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement honorees.

Olsen and Doane will be honored at a banquet April 19 at the university. Nine new members will be welcomed to the organization.

Olsen was raised on the family farm near Venango. Now in its fourth generation, the Olsen farm is located in Perkins County, about 20 miles southwest of Grant.

His family moved to Perkins County in the 1920s from the Nebraska City area. They survived the Dust Bowl years by raising summer fallow wheat, chickens, hogs, cattle and planting a kitchen garden and did other work available, on or off the farm.

Olsen attended the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. He met his future wife Doris, then a student at Immanuel School of Nursing, on a blind date.

Following graduation from NU with a degree in agriculture economics in 1967, Olsen joined his parents in farming. His father died in 1969 and later that year he married Doris and together they operated the Olsen farm.

Today, the farm is a no-till, dryland operation raising certified seed wheat, wheat, dry peas and corn.

Son Jeff joined the operation in 2000. By using the latest technology and equipment available, they have diminished weed pressure and increased ground moisture and improved soil composition by rotating crops and not tilling the land.

Olsen has a long and distinguished career of contributions to Nebraska agriculture. He served as Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation president from August 2002 to December 2011, having been elected to the NFBF Board in 1992.

He has supported Nebraska agriculture in this role by seeking beneficial public policies, telling agriculture's story, encouraging young people to consider careers in agriculture and by supporting international trade opportunities and economic development.

Olsen has been a passionate spokesman for Nebraska agriculture to the media, Farm Bureau members, other ag organization colleagues and policy decision makers.

Olsen also has been involved with FFA, 4-H and the Nebraska Agriculture in the Classroom program. He serves as an Ag in the Classroom pen pal to a kindergarten class in Lincoln, writing letters to the class and also visiting them regularly. As Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation president, Olsen traveled thousands of miles on international trade missions with the governor, other state officials and American Farm Bureau Federation leaders meeting with foreign government officials and farmers to promote the opportunity to open new markets to farmers and ranchers in this state and nation.

He has also made efforts to improve communications with city and civic leaders in Lincoln, Omaha and throughout Nebraska to help with understanding and misconceptions of rural Nebraska and agriculture.

Olsen has been a staunch proponent of the importance of the Nebraska State Fair, Husker Harvest Days and the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources with particular attention to the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

He also served on the search committee for the president of the University of Nebraska system, building strong relationships with both President J.B. Milliken and UNL Chancellor

Harvey Perlman. He is highly respected among IANR officials having served on department advisory boards and other search committees.

Following retirement as president of Nebraska Farm Bureau, Olsen is helping his son on the farm. He is still involved by serving on the boards of the Ag Builders of Nebraska and Blue Cross/Blue Shield, as well as on the National Steering Committee of the 25x25 groups, whose goal is to have 25 percent of the nation's energy come from renewable sources by 2025.

The Olsens have three sons, Craig, Jeff and Curtis. They belong to the United Methodist Church in Grant, where he has served as a certified lay speaker.

Ted Doane's service to Nebraska ranges from Dawson County extension educator, where he began in 1955, to being Nebraska State Grange president today. He was raised on an Oklahoma farm, graduated from Oklahoma A&M in 1952 and received his M.S. at Kansas State University in 1953. In 1956 he joined the UNL Animal Science Department, retiring in 1996.

He has served as an advisor, 4-H leader, and teacher. He has many honors to his credit and was an active contributor to many university committees. He and his wife, Alice, have two daughters.