

# *nrc assistance to universities*

Six major financial awards have been made this year by the National Research Council of Canada under its program of Negotiated Development Grants. This type of university assistance was initiated by the Council in 1967 to assist universities to develop new or interdisciplinary research centres, particularly in fields relevant to the scientific, economic and resource development of Canada.

The six awards for 1969 bring the number of grants awarded since the program was introduced to 16. There were three grants in 1967 and seven in 1968.

Subject to the availability of funds, the Council will make \$376,000 available to the University of Manitoba over the next five years to help strengthen the University's cereal research program conducted by the University's Cereal Chemistry Group.

The grant will assist the university to develop a centre of specialization for multi-disciplinary studies of the inheritance of quality in cereals; and secondly, will help fill the gap that now exists because no Canadian university offers a graduate degree in cereal chemistry. Winnipeg is an internationally recognized centre for cereal research and extension of current plant breeding programs to studies of the quality of the varieties of cereals produced may be of great significance in the face of a world food problem.

A grant of \$300,000 has been awarded to the Laboratory of Molecular Biology of the University of Montreal to aid the university to develop a program of interdisciplinary research in the field of fundamental biology. The funds will be made available over a three-year period.

The initial project will be an interdisciplinary study of macromolecule synthesis in developing and differentiating cells. This work will play an important role at the national level by encouraging young people to become specialists in the study of fundamental problems in biology.

A third grant has been awarded to the University of Toronto to undertake a major program of computer systems research. During the next four years the university will receive \$1,230,000 to help it establish a Computer Systems Research Group to be jointly administered by the University's Department of Computer Science and the Department of Electrical Engineering.

The use of computers now is extensive in Canada and is growing at a rapid rate. Canadian universities alone are currently spending \$11,500,000 annually on equipment, and costs are increasing at a rate of at least 40 per cent a year. A major weakness in this otherwise healthy growth is that not enough effort is being put into the study and development of more efficient and more effective means of using this equipment.



*Cereal research at the University of Manitoba led to the development of Triticale (left), a grain that is bigger and has a higher percentage of protein than Manitou wheat (right).*

*Résultat des recherches sur les céréales à l'Université de Manitoba, le triticale (à gauche) l'emporte sur le blé dit Manitou (à droite) non seulement en grandeur mais aussi en concentration de protéine.*