

WHEAT LIFE

The official publication of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers

FEBRUARY | 2025



OLYMPIA DAYS 2025

Washington wheat growers
plant seeds of advocacy
during lobbying trip

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President's Perspective



WAWG: A legacy of advocacy, impact

By Jeff Malone

President, Washington Association of Wheat Growers

There's an old saying around here that "it takes two to tango." I'm sure most of you have heard it tossed around the coffee shop or used one way or another. In the Washington state wheat industry, it's more accurate to say that it takes three to tango. Three organizations, the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG), the Washington Grain Commission (WGC), and the

Washington Wheat Foundation (WWF), represent all of you in policy, advocacy, transportation, trade, marketing, and education, to name a few areas. Learn more about the roles the WWF and the WGC play on pages 18 and 41, respectively.

For the generation of farmers who survived the devastating years of the Great Depression, the need for an organization to advocate for their industry was apparent. Farm policy (the farm bill), crop insurance, and commonsense regulations were needed if agriculture as a whole was going to survive the coming years. Thus, in 1954, WAWG was formed to address these concerns for Washington wheat growers. In the following years, as international trade began to outpace domestic use, it was apparent that the future demanded an agency to address concerns there. In 1958, many of WAWG's founding members formed the WGC. This group, which is voted in by farmers, is funded by assessment dollars and helps fund the other two industry organizations.

The relationship between WAWG, the WGC, and the WWF is one of collaboration and mutual support. While the WGC focuses on trade and market development, WAWG complements these efforts by addressing the policy side through lobbying and grower advocacy. For example, the WGC meets with international customers to showcase the quality and reliability of Washington wheat, while WAWG lobbies at the state and national levels to secure trade-friendly policies that enable growers to meet this demand. Together, the organizations work to address shared priorities, such as transportation funding and trade-friendly legislation. The WWF's focus is on public education.

Beyond its legislative work, WAWG plays a crucial role in fostering community and industry connections. The association works closely with the WWF, particularly through the foundation's ambassador program. This initiative uses high school seniors to educate the public about wheat production and highlight the importance of the industry to Washington's economy.

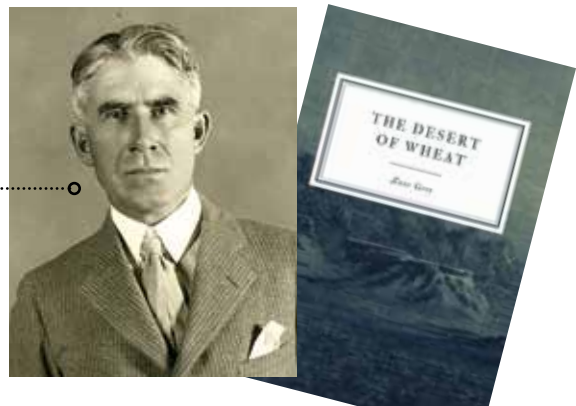
Additionally, through publications like *Wheat Life*, WAWG keeps growers informed about legislative developments, industry trends, and association activities. This outreach ensures that growers stay connected and engaged in the broader efforts to advance their industry.

For over seven decades, WAWG has been a steadfast advocate for the state's wheat growers. From its early days of forming the WGC to its ongoing efforts to secure trade-friendly policies, protect the lower Snake River dams, and lobby against unfavorable legislation, WAWG has proven its commitment to protecting and enhancing the industry. But the work is far from over. Continued support from wheat producers is essential to sustain WAWG's efforts. As challenges evolve — whether in the form of new trade agreements, transportation issues, or environmental regulations — WAWG remains dedicated to ensuring that the voices of Washington's wheat growers are heard loud and clear. ■

Cover photo: Washington growers spent two days in Olympia last month visiting legislators from both sides of the aisle to talk about wheat industry priorities. See article and photos beginning on page 20. All photos are Shutterstock images or taken by *Wheat Life* staff unless otherwise noted.

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Non-Voting Membership						
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WAWG's current top priorities are:

- ✓ Preserving the lower Snake River dams.
- ✓ Fighting mandatory climate/carbon regulations.
- ✓ Lobbying the state Legislature for a seasonal overtime exemption.
- ✓ Maintaining a strong, reliable safety net by preserving crop insurance and making sure farm commodity programs work.
- ✓ Maintaining a safe, sound transportation system that includes rail, river and roads.

If these priorities are important to you, your family and your farm operation, join WAWG today and help us fight.

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- National Wheat Grower updates
- State and national legislative updates



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WAWG board approves legislative priorities

At the first Washington Association of Wheat Growers' (WAWG) state board meeting of 2025, the main order of business was reviewing and approving legislative priorities in preparation for upcoming lobbying trips to Olympia and Washington, D.C.

Top state priorities include maintaining a viable agricultural industry in Washington state, preserving Washington agriculture's economic competitiveness, and preserving the lower Snake River dams. See more on WAWG's state priorities and the Olympia Days trip on pages 20-25. National priorities include passing a farm

bill that does no harm to crop insurance and adjusts reference prices for the Price Loss Coverage and Agriculture Risk Coverage programs, full implementation and enforcement of existing trade agreements, and protecting our transportation infrastructure.

The next WAWG state board meeting is scheduled for Feb. 26, beginning at 10 a.m., at the Washington Wheat Foundation building in Ritzville, Wash.

See more on WAWG's trip to Washington, D.C., and the national priorities the group advocated for on pages 26-31.

WAWG lobbyists Diana Carlen and Mark Strueli called into the meeting to discuss the 2025 Washington State Legislative Session that had begun just the day before. This will be a long, 105-day session with a big focus on budgets. The state is expected to face a \$10 to \$12 billion deficit, with varying opinions on how to make that shortfall up. Outgoing Gov. Jay Inslee proposed a budget that relied on new revenue from a wealth tax and an increase in the B&O tax. Incoming Gov. Bob Ferguson has suggested he will seek budget cuts before considering new or higher taxes.

Carlen said she expects issues agriculture will likely face this session to include labor, raising the minimum wage, and allowing striking workers to get unemployment. She also doesn't see the ag exemption for overtime making any headway this session.

In national legislation, WAWG officers and staff were preparing to head to Washington, D.C., to take part in the National Association of Wheat Growers' (NAWG) winter board meeting and make Hill visits. There are several new members of Washington's congressional delegation,

so WAWG is looking forward to developing a relationship with those offices and staff. WAWG board members approved a letter to nominate WAWG Past President Andy Juris to NAWG's Budget Committee.

Since the last board meeting in November, Michelle Hennings, WAWG executive director, said she has participated in several podcasts and interviews focused on the lower Snake River dams and the region's transportation system. She will be leading a team of river stakeholders to Washington, D.C., in February to meet with members of Congress.

Andy Pittenger, the agriculture program manager for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), attended the meeting. DNR's leadership has changed, with the election of Dave Upthegrove as commissioner of public lands, and Pittenger said, as with most departmental leadership changes, there is a need to educate the new leadership on the differences between cash rents vs. cost share.

Ben Thiel, director of the Risk Management Agency's Spokane regional office, said he is seeing a trend in Washington of growers signing up for the Supplemental Coverage Option and the Enhanced Coverage Option, especially with a recent change that made the subsidies the same for both programs. He told growers who typically are higher yielding than the county average that these programs might be beneficial and urged growers to discuss them with their insurance agent. Thiel also touched on dual sales closing dates. Currently, Washington only has a Sept. 30 sales closing date, but for farmers who primarily plant spring wheat, having a second sales closing date in the spring might be helpful. Thiel estimated that only about 5% of the growers in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho would be affected if a dual sales closing date was available in the region.

Jon Wyss, Farm Service Agency state executive director, was also in attendance at the board meeting. Because Wyss is a political appointee, he will be tendering his resignation on Jan. 20. The deputy state executive director, Chris Werner, will direct the office until the new administration appoints a state director. Wyss said the agency is waiting for details on the economic aid and disaster aid passed by Congress in December as part of the funding bill. A March deadline was included in the legislation. The

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board thanked Wyss for all he has done for wheat farmers during his time leading the agency.

Casey Chumrau, CEO of the Washington Grain Commission (WGC), told growers that two new commissioners have been announced: Nicole Berg for Wheat District 5 and Art Schultheis as the Barley District 6 representative. The WGC will be attending a large number of grower meetings over the next few months to talk about HB4, the transgenic wheat that has been approved, and to get grower feedback. See the following report from the Franklin County meeting for more on the WGC presentation.

Since the last WAWG board meeting, the WGC has hosted a government trade team from Indonesia, which is one of Washington's top markets. The country requires double fumigation for wheat shipments, which is unnecessary. The trade team was able to see all parts of wheat production to reassure them that they don't need the extra fumigation.

The WGC's annual research review will be held Feb. 11 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Pullman. All growers who attend will have the opportunity to help decide which research projects will receive funding. Growers who are interested in attending should contact the WGC office at (509) 456-2481.

Finally, the board approved executive committee members Charlie Mead from Columbia County, Ryan Poe from Grant County, and Andy Juris from Klickitat County. Committee chairs are Ryan Poe for national legislation, Andy Juris for transportation, Jeff Malone for state legislation, Jim Moyer for research, Marci Green for public information, Howard McDonald for membership, Larry Cochran for natural resources, and Matt Horlacher as the National Barley Growers Association representative.

The next WAWG state board meeting is scheduled for Feb. 26, beginning at 10 a.m., at the Washington Wheat Foundation building in Ritzville, Wash. ■

Franklin County growers give feedback on transgenic wheat

The January meeting of the Franklin County growers featured representatives from the Washington Grain Commission (WGC) talking about HB4, the transgenic wheat first released by Bioceres Crop Solutions in 2020 in Argentina.

The WGC will be attending numerous grower meetings through spring, looking for feedback and answering growers' questions on HB4. Growers are reminded that

conversations and questionnaires regarding GMO and GE wheat are to inform the Washington Grain Commission on the future direction of research and marketing efforts and should not be an indication of a pro-GMO or anti-GMO stance.

HB4 contains a drought-tolerant gene derived from studies on sunflowers. There is no yield drag when drought conditions are not present. The wheat is already being grown commercially in several South American countries. The trait was approved by both the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration in 2024, and Bioceres has approached universities in other states for collaboration to develop locally adapted varieties with an emphasis on hard red wheat.

Casey Chumrau, CEO of the WGC, pointed out that approval and commercialization are two different things, but the trait is out there. Many of the PNW's top customers are strongly opposed to buying transgenic wheat.

In 2012, U.S. Wheat Associates and the National Association of Wheat Growers put together a list of requirements that any company wanting to sell transgenic wheat seed would have to comply with. Bioceres has publicly committed to those "Principles of Commercialization," which clearly lay out the major export markets where approval has to be obtained before commercializing the trait. A major export market is defined as any country that represents at least 5% of the normal export volume for a class of wheat. Other requirements include identifying which buyers are willing to accept a transgenic wheat; appropriate tolerances for transgenic wheat in nontransgenic shipments must be established and accepted in major export markets; and an accurate, economical, and timely trait detection test must be provided by the trait developer prior to commercialization.

Chumrau emphasized that the wheat industry is committed to providing customer choice, whether it's non-GMO or not. Growers need to consider the pros and cons of transgenic wheat, whether it is HB4 or another trait. Pros could include:

- Yield.
- Pest/disease management.
- Drought or weather tolerance.
- New weed control possibilities.

Cons could include:

- Threat to export markets.
- Consumer resistance.
- Potential seed cost.
- Potential to depress prices due to oversupply. ►

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"We need growers' feedback because the WGC directs grower dollars, and this is a transformational topic for the global industry," Chumrau said. Growers filled out a survey on the topic.

Franklin County growers also heard about changes to Washington State University's variety testing program. Clark Neely will no longer be in charge of the program. Mike Pumphrey, spring wheat breeder, will temporarily take over the spring wheat trials, while club wheat breeder Kim Campbell will take over the winter wheat trials. The university will be looking to fill the position permanently.

The meeting wrapped up with county business and the treasurer's report. Ben Cochrane stepped down as president, and Andrew Schafer was elected to replace him.

The next county meeting is scheduled for Feb. 13 at the Kahlotus Grange. ■

Whitman County growers auction off tournament tickets

It may be the dead of winter outside, but Whitman County growers were already talking about seeds at their January meeting in Colfax.

Clark Neely, Washington State University researcher, reviewed results of research on seed size and seeding rates. He said the team saw consistent yield increases in both spring and winter wheat with larger seed. An increased seeding rate generally resulted in better stands, especially in lower rainfall areas, which also helped control weeds. He recommended growers use the seeding rate tool on smallgrains.wsu.edu to help them figure out optimal seeding rates for their operation.

Randy Seuss, president of the Washington Wheat Foundation, encouraged growers to help support the Washington wheat industry by purchasing an engraved floor tile in the foundation annex building in Ritzville. Growers voted to purchase a floor tile for Whitman County.

Michelle Hennings, executive director of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG), reviewed the association's 2025 legislative priorities, which include riparian buffers, pesticides, farm bill, and trade.

The meeting ended with growers taking care of business by electing officers. Dave Swannack will remain president, Randy Suess as vice president and Tom Kammerzell as secretary/treasurer. Leslie Druffel will cover transportation issues, Dave Harlow will cover research, and Steve

Van Vleet will cover natural resources. Growers also auctioned off tickets for the women's NCAA basketball tournament and a gift card to Northern Quest Casino. Van Vleet made the winning bid. ■

WAWG remembers Past President Dixie Riddle

Dixie was born Aug. 27, 1933, to William and Frances Riddle in Spokane. He passed, peacefully returning to the loving arms of our Lord on Dec. 17, 2024.

His passion for farming started as a small child, beginning on the family dairy farm in Deer Park, transitioning to Peone Prairie when the family moved there to begin a grain, hay, and cattle operation. Dixie graduated from Mead High School and then Washington State University (WSU), receiving a B.S. in agriculture. While attending WSU, Dixie joined the R.O.T.C., serving our country and retiring as a captain in the U.S. Army. The summer after graduating from college, Dixie



married Carol Ann McCarty. She joined him in Georgia; had their first daughter, Vicki; and then transferred to California, where their son, Greg, was born. After retiring from the Army in 1957, they moved back to Peone Prairie. Once back on the farm, their family grew to seven children, three boys and four girls. Dixie liked to brag they had "seven kids in six years," the last two being twin girls.

Dixie used his education and childhood farming experience to work in agriculture for his entire career, following in his father's footsteps.

In addition to growing grains and hay, Dixie, Carol, and the kids enjoyed raising farm animals. This led to his and Carol's participation in ag education for youth, hosting farm tours for Spokane City's first-grade children. He was well respected by many and made a large impact in the agriculture industry while serving on local and national boards, beginning in 1961 with Inland Farmers. He sat on multiple ag-related boards in his lifetime, building valued friendships. These boards included Cenex, Land of Lakes, and Spokane County Soil Conservation.

Dixie served on the board of the Ronald McDonald House of Spokane.

Even in retirement, Dixie helped launch the first Spokane Ag Exposition, volunteering with the organization well into his 80s.

Dixie and Carol had a special social life, traveling to many destinations with family, friends, and fellow board members. Together, they built many beautiful lifelong relationships and memories through their years involved in international, national, and local agriculture communities.


Following Carol's passing, Dixie married longtime family friend, Mary Hoerner. The family grew substantially, and he loved each of them. They were both grateful to have found a second love later in their lives.

Dixie was preceded in death by his wife of 52 years, Carol Ann McCarty; second wife, Mary Hoerner; and his siblings, Marian and Lowell. He is survived by his last living sibling, Lois Banta; seven amazing children and their spouses: Vicki and Dan Lynch, Greg and Teresa Riddle, Tim and Cathy Riddle, Jerry and Michelle Riddle, Marci and Dennis Stover, Lisa and Mike Sullivan, and Linda and Jeff Greene; 18 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; multiple nieces and nephews; cousins; and many other relatives from a Grand family. He loved and cared for each one individually to the moon and back.


Our father greeted everyone with a big friendly smile and hardy hello. He had a gentle soul. He was loving, kind, fair, and respectful to all he knew. He was the most honest and giving man. His funny, yet witty sense of humor made him unforgettable. He will be missed by many.

May Dixie's memory bring joy and comfort to all that knew him.

Services were held at St. Joseph's Parish in Colbert on Dec. 27. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Ronald McDonald House of Spokane, Catholic Charities, or the organization of your choice. ■




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2025 Workshop Schedule

FEB 13 Farm Bill Webinar

Speaker: Jake Westlin – NAWG Vice President of Policy and Communications
11:30 am

FEB 19 / 21 USDA Program Updates from NRCS and FSA

Featured Speakers: NRCS State Conservationist Roylene Comes At Night and FSA Acting State Director Chris Werner
February 22 • 9:30 am • Washtucna Lions Building, Washtucna, Wash.
February 27 • 9:30 am • USDA Headquarters, Spokane Valley, Wash.

FEB 20 Global and Local Wheat Markets

Speakers: Allison Thompson of "The Money Farm" and Dr. Randy Fortenbery, WSU
9:30 am • Hampton Inn – Garden Springs, 2010 S. Assembly Rd., Spokane, Wash.

FEB 27 Healthy Mind, Healthy Farm

Speaker: Darla Tyler-McSherry
9:30 am • Hampton Inn – Garden Springs, 2010 S. Assembly Rd., Spokane, Wash.

JUN 4 2025 Wheat College

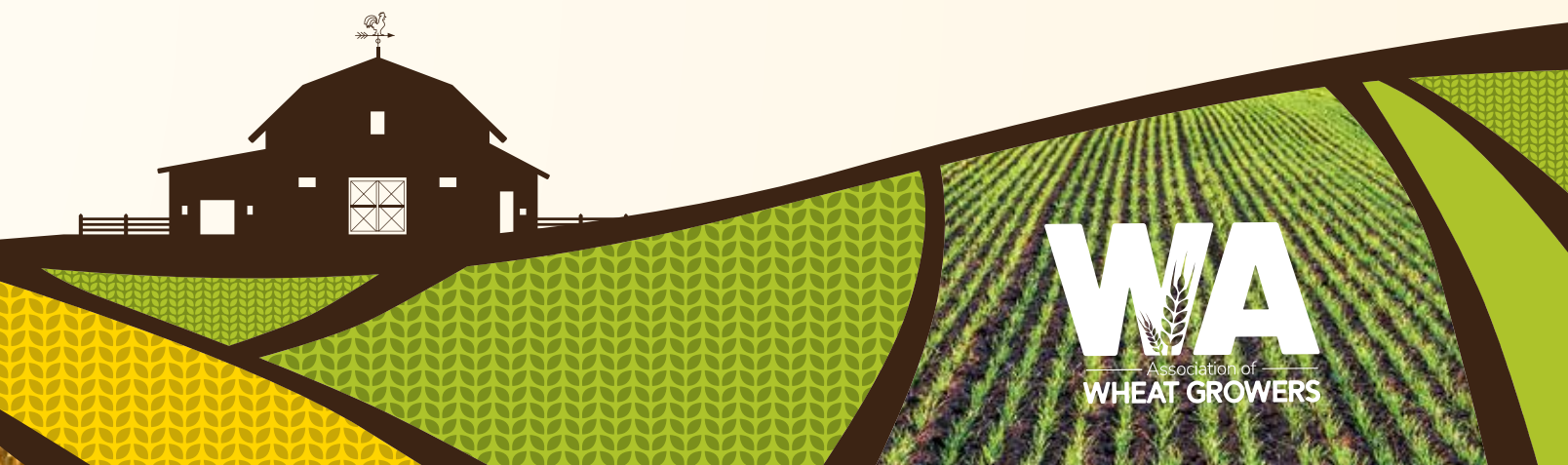
Speaker: Peter (Wheat Pete) Johnson
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POLICY MATTERS

Legislators hit ground running as 2025 session begins

By Diana Carlen

WAWG Lobbyist

The 2025 Washington State Legislative Session kicked off on Jan. 13, 2025. As this is a “long session” year, the session is expected to last 105 days, ending on Sunday, April 27, 2025.

There are a lot of new faces in Olympia. This is the first time in 12 years that Washington state has a new governor — Democrat Bob Ferguson. Washington state will also have a new attorney general, Nick Brown (D), Washington commissioner of insurance, Patty Kuderer (D), and Washington commissioner of public lands, Dave Upthegrove (D). In addition, more than 30 newly seated legislators were sworn in. Some are brand new to the Washington State Legislature, while others moved from positions in the House to the Senate.

Democrats continue to control both chambers, with the Senate having 30 Democrats and 19 Republicans, and the House of Representatives having 59 Democrats and 39 Republicans.

As we are in a long session year, the primary task of the Legislature is to write a state budget for the next two years. This will be challenging this year as the state has a projected budget shortfall of \$10 billion to \$12 billion over the next four years. Democratic legislators have indicated that they are considering a wide variety of new or increased taxes, including a wealth tax, B&O tax hike on all businesses, head tax on larger employers with highly paid employees, road usage charge



for transportation funding, and others to fill the budget shortfall. Outgoing Gov. Jay Inslee released his proposed budget in December 2024, which included a proposed wealth tax and increased B&O taxes. Newly sworn-in Gov. Ferguson has surprised many by proposing to cut \$4.4 billion from the state budget over four years. In Gov. Ferguson’s inaugural speech, he emphasized the need for cutting spending before seeking new or higher taxes and that he would veto any bill that involved major spending that is delayed beyond four years. In addition, he wants the state to rely on more conservative revenue estimates for budget planning.

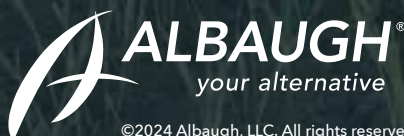
Legislators hit the ground running with dozens of committee hearings and packed agendas. Over 1,100 bills were introduced in the first two weeks of session. The first legislative deadline is Feb. 21, 2025, when all bills must be voted out of their respective policy committees to remain alive.

While growers were in Olympia for their annual Olympia Days visit (see page 20), Andy Juris from Klickitat County and Michele Kiesz from Adams County testified in support of House Bill 1188, sponsored by Rep. Mary Dye (R-Pomeroy), before the House Environment & Energy Committee on Jan. 20. This bill requires local government and tribal approval for the siting of wind and solar energy facilities in Washington state. The bill mandates that the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) submit its siting recommendations to the relevant county legislative authority and affected federally recognized tribes simultaneously with its submission to the governor. Approval by both the county and each affected tribe, via resolution, is a prerequisite for the governor’s final approval. The bill also establishes a process for requesting reconsideration of EFSEC recommendations and includes an emergency clause, making it effective immediately upon passage. WAWG signed in in support. ►

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For more detailed information and weekly legislative updates, visit wawg.org. ■

Chapman, Reeves named chairs of state ag committees

Rep. Kristine Reeves (D-Federal Way) has been named chair of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee for the 2025 session.

"I am deeply honored to have the confidence of my colleagues as we work together to steward our state's agricultural legacy and protect our natural resources for future generations," Reeves said in a press release. "Washington's farms, forests, fisheries, and rural communities are at the heart of what makes our state unique. I look forward to collaborating with stakeholders to address the challenges and opportunities in these vital sectors."

Reeves grew up in Moses Lake and attended college at Washington State University. Her professional background includes serving as U.S. Sen. Patty Murray's Kitsap, Olympic, and South Puget Sound district director.

On the Senate side, Sen. Mike Chapman (D-Port Angeles) has been named chair of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. He previously chaired the same committee for four years in the state House of Representatives.

"It's a real honor to be selected for this position," said Chapman. "Washington's agricultural and natural resource economy are a crucial part of our state's history, culture, and rural development. I look forward to doing everything I can to help folks earn a living in every corner of the state." ■

NAWG elects new officers; Juris joins budget committee

In mid-January, the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) elected Pat Clements as president during their 2025 Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. Clements is a 6th generation wheat grower and livestock farmer from Springfield, Ken., and has spent 47 years in the farm supply business. Clements has previously served as chairman of the Kentucky Seed Improvement Association board, chairman of the Kentucky Small Grain Growers Association Promotion Council, and has served 12 years on the local school board.

"It is an honor to be elected as president of NAWG. I look forward to working with fellow wheat growers and

lawmakers to build a better future for farmers and rural America," Clements said. "As we enter the 119th Congress, it is critical that we continue to urge lawmakers to quickly pass a long-term farm bill that strengthens the farm safety net and provides long-term certainty for our country's producers."

NAWG's Board of Directors elected its new board of officers, with Jamie Kress of Idaho elected as vice president, Nathan Keane from Montana as treasurer, and Chris Tanner of Kansas as the new secretary. Keff Felty of Oklahoma will transition into the past president position. Andy Juris of Washington was also elected to the NAWG budget committee.

"NAWG appreciates the time and service Keff Felty dedicated during his term as NAWG president. Keff has been an excellent representative for NAWG at ag industry events across the country this past year," said NAWG CEO Chandler Goule. "I know our incoming President Pat Clements will continue to be a champion for wheat growers and advance NAWG's policy priorities. We look forward to continuing to work with Keff and Pat as we urge members of Congress to get a long-term farm bill passed this year." ■

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Third leg helps keep small grains industry stable

By Randy Suess

President, Washington Wheat Foundation

The Washington Wheat Foundation (WWF) is considered the third leg of support for Washington's small grain industry. It is comprised of a group of 16 volunteers who help determine projects to fund and future directions. While the Washington Grain Commission (WGC) does marketing and research, and the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG) does the lobbying, the WWF's mission is to work with programs and activities to increase public awareness of what we do in our industry. We want to emphasize the safe production of our food by supporting industry partners to attain our goals.

Read more about the roles WAWG (page 2) and the WGC (page 41) play in our industry.

I would venture to say that few people understand how we farm, what we grow, or realize the value of our wheat to the state's economy. Educating the public has led to a new video that is being compiled by all three organizations. It is called "The Seasons of Farming" and will show what farmers do during an entire year.

Currently, the WWF funds grants to the Northwest Natural Resources Institute, Ag Forestry, FFA Foundation, Home Baking Association, North by Northwest, and research projects at Washington State University. One of our biggest efforts is to provide high school students entering their senior year with scholarships in what is known as the Washington Wheat Ambassador Program. These students learn more about our industry by travelling to Olympia on the

annual WAWG lobbying trip, attend various meetings within the state, and learn how to be an advocate for our issues.

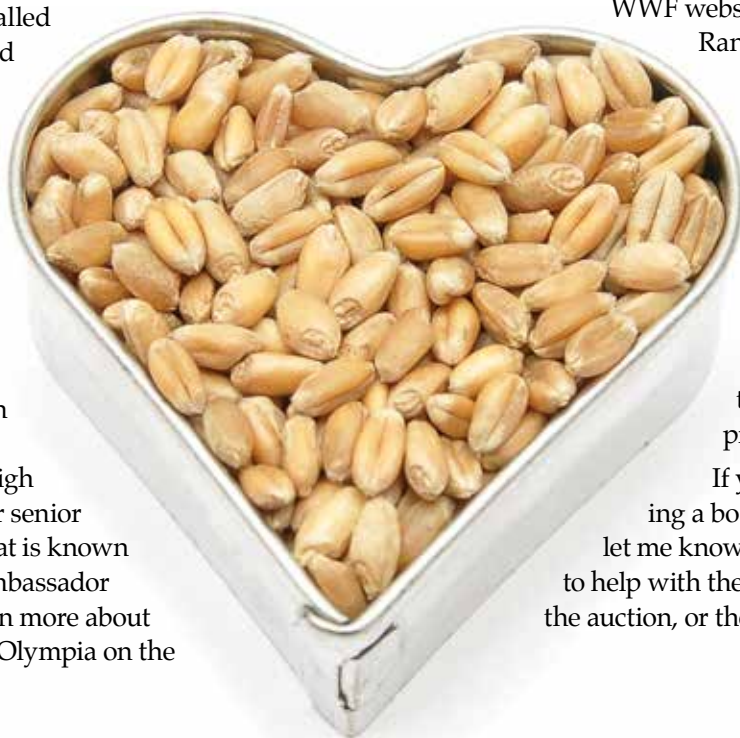
How do we fund all of these activities? We have several sources, but mainly through the WGC, interest income from charitable contributions, building rental, and an auction at the annual wheat growers convention. We solicit donations for the auction and use the proceeds to primarily fund the ambassador program. Two recipients receive a scholarship for either \$4,500 or \$5,000.

Currently, we are reviving an old project that was utilized to raise capital to build the annex of the WWF, which is located behind the WAWG building in Ritzville. We are selling customized floor tiles that can be engraved with your name, farm name, or in memory of a loved one. We have gone quite a few years since those original floor tiles were installed. Please consider adding to our project, which will definitely provide support for all of our programs. To get further details on this project, visit the

WWF website at wawheat.net or contact Randy Suess at (509) 413-2043.

Also on the website you can learn how to contribute to the WWF with planned giving. The WWF is a charitable 501(c)(3) organization, therefore contributions in the form of property, stocks, or cash are tax deductible. You can even target your gift to a special project or area of research.

If you are interested in becoming a board member for WWF, please let me know. We always need volunteers to help with the booth at convention, with the auction, or the ambassador program. ■



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The Washington Wheat Foundation works to economically advance the small grains industry by building support for programs and activities that increase public awareness of farming's responsible approach to the essential production of our safe food supply, and the development of new knowledge about environmentally sound farming practices.

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Wheat heads to Olympia

GROWERS VISIT WITH LEGISLATORS TO DISCUSS REAL-WORLD RAMIFICATIONS OF LEGISLATION

By Trista Crossley

Editor, *Wheat Life*

Last month, wheat representatives visited state legislators and agencies to talk about the industry's priorities during the Washington Association of Wheat Growers' (WAWG) annual Olympia Days trip. Cookies were involved.

"Growers spent two impactful days in Olympia, advocating for critical issues like tax exemptions and the Climate Commitment Act fuel rebate. With over 20 farmers, board members, and lobbyists in attendance, we held an impressive 51 meetings with legislators and agencies, effectively sharing our story and emphasizing the importance of our industry," said Jeff Malone, WAWG president. "One of the highlights was a reception attended by many lawmakers, providing valuable, one-on-one opportunities for them to ask questions about our farming practices and gain a deeper understanding of the challenges we face."

The night before meetings with legislators began, growers met with lobbyists Diana Carlen and Mark Strueli to go over WAWG's priority list and develop talking points. Former legislator Kevin Van De Wege was also on hand to give tips and advice to growers about talking to legislators.

Besides the legislative meetings, wheat growers handed out sugar cookies adorned with WAWG's logo and coffee in the Capitol Building to legislators and staff. Legislators were also invited to an evening reception at a local restaurant where more informal discussions could be held. The growers group included the 2025 Washington Wheat Ambassadors, Karly Wigen from Colfax and Zach Klein from Ritzville.

"We appreciate all the growers who took time away from their farms to participate in this year's event. It makes a huge impression when a legislator can talk directly with a grower and hear the real-world impact a piece of legislation might have," Hennings said. "We had some very good discussions with legislators on both sides of the aisle."

WAWG's priorities for the 2025 Washington State Legislative Session include:

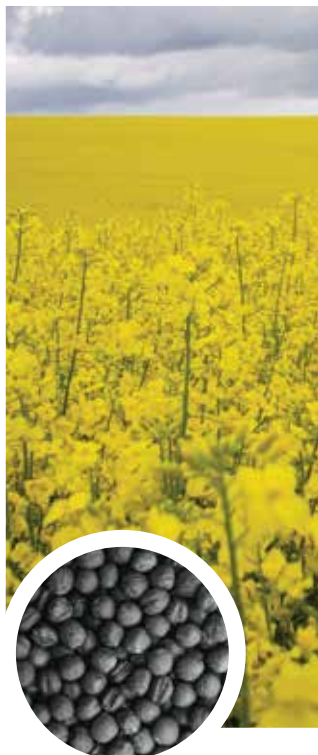
Maintaining a viable agricultural industry in the state is vital for food security, the state's economy, and environment stewardship. With a yearly economic contribution valued at \$51 billion and 160,000 jobs, Washington farmers and agricultural businesses make up an essen-

tial and often overlooked segment of the state economy. However, we are losing family farms in the state at an alarming rate. Between 2017 and 2022, our state lost 3,717 farms and ranches. Rising production costs, such as labor and energy costs, are making it more difficult to have viable family farms in the state. Farmers are not like other businesses since they are price takers (i.e. they don't set their own prices) and cannot pass on increased production costs like other businesses can to consumers. WAWG *urges the Legislature to remember the uniqueness of the industry when crafting public policy that may result in increased production costs and further threaten the viability of family farms in the state.*

Preserving Washington's economic competitiveness. Carbon policies should ensure Washington State retains its economic competitiveness and does not disadvantage Washington farmers. When the Legislature passed the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), it exempted certain agriculture fuel uses for on the farm and transporting ag products. However, when the CCA became effective last year, many fuel suppliers began tacking on a carbon fuel surcharge for their compliance obligations under the law. Many fuel suppliers and distributors have implemented their own methods of exempting farmers, resulting in a patchwork that does not cover all producers. Ensuring there are mechanisms approved by Ecology to ensure all producers receive the exemption is critical to ensure that farmers do not see increased fuel prices as agriculture relies heavily on fuel and, as a price taker, cannot pass on these costs. During the 2024 Legislative Session, legislators appropriated \$30 million to compensate farmers who paid the carbon fuel surcharge. WAWG *urges the Legislature to leave those funds available for farmers and remove the cap for reimbursement so they can apply for full reimbursement for all gallons they purchased with the surcharge included.*

Protecting the future viability of agriculture through voluntary conservation programs. WAWG is supportive of voluntary conservation programs that offer flexibility and fairly compensate farmers for riparian protection. WAWG stands in firm opposition to new regulatory requirements such as mandatory riparian buffers based on site potential tree height as it threatens the future viability of agriculture by removing significant portions of productive farmland out of production. In addition, mandatory buffers also jeopardize federal conservation funding. WAWG supports the continuation of the Governor's Riparian Task Force to continue discussions on protecting salmon while also ensuring the viability of

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agriculture. WAWG also supports full funding of voluntary conservation programs like Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and the Voluntary Stewardship Program.

Preserving the lower Snake River dams. WAWG supports keeping the lower Snake River dams intact as they are vital to Washington and the nation's economy and transportation infrastructure. WAWG also supports funding for maintaining the Columbia-Snake River System. Removal of the four lower Snake River dams would significantly increase carbon emissions that contribute to climate change and jeopardize health, safety, and livelihoods in already economically fragile local and regional economies. WAWG supports the findings in the current 2020 federal EIS and opposes any state, legislative, or administrative effort to remove or disrupt the Snake River dam system, including the recent U.S. Government's Commitments in support of the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative.

Pesticide safety. Access to pesticides is essential to keeping Washington agriculture productive and globally competitive. WAWG supports the professional use of crop protection products that have been shown to be safe and effective through science-based research.

Providing seasonal flexibility to benefit both work-

ers and farmers. Agricultural workers became eligible for overtime pay in 2021 after the Legislature removed the agricultural overtime exemption and adopted a phased-in approach. Unfortunately, Washington's overtime requirement does not address the seasonal needs of Washington agriculture given the time-sensitive nature of growing and harvesting mature field crops and vegetables. The agricultural industry is unique from other types of industry because of pressures on farmers, ranchers, and workers caused by issues mainly out of their control, such as uncertainty of weather, yields, calving, national and international shifts in trade policy, and transportation inconsistencies. In addition, the overtime requirement has unintended consequences for farmworkers. A recent examination of California's overtime requirement for agriculture conducted by a professor at UC Berkeley found that as a result of the overtime law, California farmworkers worked a total of 15,000 to 45,000 fewer hours and earned a total of \$6 to \$9 million less. WAWG supports legislation allowing farmworkers to earn money for up to 50 hours per week for 12 weeks of the year before overtime provisions kick in. This legislation will allow agricultural employers limited flexibility to shape work schedules during a narrow window of time to best fit the peaks of labor demand,

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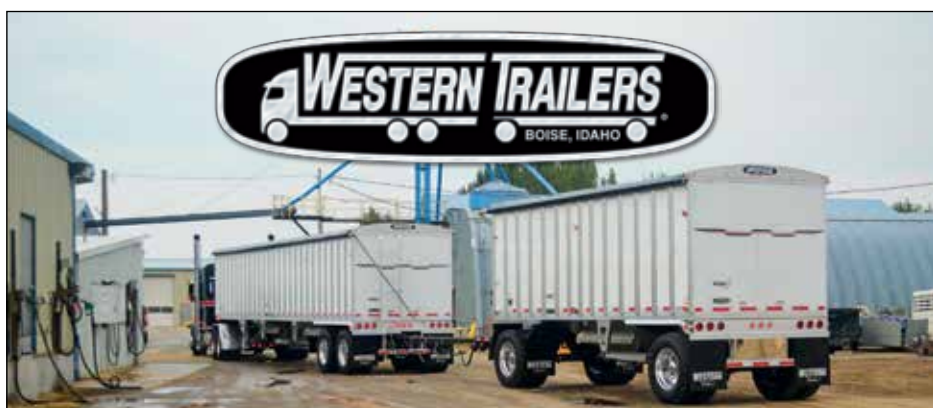
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thereby providing them some ability to weather the unpredictability of agricultural work and ensure that Washington's second largest industry remains vital and strong while also ensuring security for farm workers.

Protecting existing tax policy.
Retaining all food and farm-related tax incentives are critical to the agricultural industry. Agriculture tax incentives are a valuable benefit to our economy and offer farmers a more level playing field with other ag production states. Incentives are intended to be a long-term state investment into the agricultural industry.

See photos on page 24. ■



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Olympia Days 2025

Wheat visits D.C.

WASHINGTON GROWERS VISIT CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, USDA; PARTICIPATE IN NAWG MEETINGS

Advocacy for Washington wheat growers doesn't happen just at the state level. The Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG) also spends time in Washington, D.C., visiting with the state's congressional delegation and working with the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) on concerns at the national level. Wheat growers' first trip of the new year to the nation's capital took place in mid-January, where they took part in NAWG's winter meeting and presented Washington growers' national priorities to members of Congress during Hill visits.

"It was a very successful trip and a great way to kick off the new year," said Michelle Hennings, WAWG's executive director. "We have several new House members representing Washington that we introduced ourselves to. Our main message to Congress was the importance of getting farm bill legislation passed. While we are thankful for the one-year extension, that is a temporary fix, and farmers need the certainty that a farm bill provides."

During their congressional visits, wheat growers discussed the state of the ag economy, commodity prices vs. input costs, the importance of trade agreements to Washington wheat growers, and the need for continued

research funding. Growers reiterated the importance of the lower Snake River dams to the region's economy and transportation network. Growers also met with several U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies, including the Farm Service Agency, the Risk Management Agency, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

NAWG activity included meetings of several committees and a board meeting. WAWG President Jeff Malone sits on the Domestic Trade Committee, and WAWG Past President Anthony Smith sits on the Environment and Research Committee. Klickitat grower Andy Juris was elected to serve on NAWG's Budget Committee.

At the January WAWG board meeting prior to leaving for D.C., board members refined and voted on this year's national priorities. Those priorities cover food security, wheat growers' markets, the environment, infrastructure, research, and pesticides.

Preserving food security

WAWG strongly supports modernizing future farm bills and continuing to offer agriculture and nutrition support programs. ▶



The group of Washington growers who visited Congress included (front row, from left) Mary Palmer Sullivan, vice president of the Washington Grain Commission (WGC); Ben Barstow, WGC chairman; Nicole Berg, WGC commissioner; Casey Chumrau, CEO of the WGC; and Michelle Hennings, executive director of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG). Back row, from left, are Andy Juris, a grower from Klickitat County; Ryan Poe, a grower from Grant County; Jeff Malone, WAWG president; Anthony Smith, WAWG past president; Mike Carstensen, WGC commissioner; Gil Crosby, WAWG vice president; and Jake Liening, WGC market development specialist.

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WAWG supports a do-no-harm approach, which includes maintaining the current structure of the crop insurance program and current cost-share levels. Farmers pay their portion of the crop insurance premium, and without cost-share support, coverage would be cost-prohibitive, and the system would not function effectively. Without that safety net, it causes uncertainty for the future of agriculture and for the safe, reliable, and abundant food supply the American public currently experiences.

WAWG supports the reauthorization of the farm bill and to make necessary adjustments to Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) so they can function effectively. The price and yield functions of ARC formulas should be adjusted so it can be a viable option for producers. The current \$5.50 PLC reference price is not an adequate safety net for wheat production. It neither covers the cost of production, nor does it take input costs into account.

WAWG supports prioritizing working lands conservation programs in the conservation title. Voluntary programs have functioned well and provided an incentive to producers to undertake practices that are good for the environment and for their operations.

Protecting our markets

Funding through the Agricultural Trade Program (ATP) has been a boost to USDA cooperators, such as U.S. Wheat Associates, to help them operate at the needed capacity to maintain robust market presence for U.S. wheat farmers in the face of well-funded global competitors. WAWG supports continued and increased strong federal funding through the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) Program to maintain the progress achieved with the ATP funds.

WAWG supports purchasing U.S. wheat for U.S. food aid programs, rather than purchasing wheat from competitors.

WAWG supports full implementation and enforcement of existing trade agreements to allow fair trade to occur within the export marketplace.

WAWG strongly supports the enforcement of sanitary and phytosanitary agreements with its trade partners.

Protecting our environment through sustainable practices

WAWG supports climate or sustainability legislation that is voluntary, incentive-based, and recognizes the unique and varied landscapes and climates of wheat production. The wheat industry should be fully involved in discussions of any policy or legislation relating to climate change, and sound science demonstrating agriculture's environmental benefits should be considered.

Promoting and protecting our infrastructure

WAWG supports keeping the lower Snake River dams intact as they are



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vital to Washington and the nation's economy and transportation infrastructure. WAWG also supports funding for maintaining the Columbia River System. Removal of the four lower Snake River dams would significantly increase carbon emissions that contribute to climate change and jeopardize health, safety, and livelihoods in already economically fragile local and regional economies. WAWG supports the findings in the current 2020 federal EIS and opposes any state, legislative or administrative effort to remove or disrupt the Snake River dam system.

WAWG supports funding to maintain and improve Washington road, river, and rail systems.

WAWG supports action regarding the Columbia River Treaty, which protects the viability of U.S. navigation, hydropower, irrigation, and flood control.

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Washington, D.C., hill visits, January 2025

The Washington Association of Wheat Growers thanks all of the members of the state's congressional delegation who took the time to meet us to discuss issues our members are concerned about.





Facing page, clockwise from top are Sen. Maria Cantwell (holding folder); Sen. Patty Murray (center); Rep. Kim Schrier (in red); Rep. Michael Baumgartner (center); and Rep. Dan Newhouse (second from right). This page, clockwise from top are Sen. John Boozman (second from left), chair of the Senate Ag Committee; Sam Gottlieb (fourth from left) legislative aid for Rep. Rick Larson; Rep Emily Randall (holding dog); and Rep. Marilyn Strickland (standing on left).

New NRCS conservation practice available

PRACTICE TO OPTIMIZE AMOUNT, ORIENTATION, DISTRIBUTION OF PLANT RESIDUE

By Ian Carver

Public Affairs Specialist, Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service in Washington (NRCS-WA) has begun to implement Conservation Harvest Management (NRCS Interim Conservation Practice Standard 809) to help increase sustainable agricultural practices in the wheat producer community.

The conservation practice focuses on harvest or management techniques that optimize the amount, orientation, and distribution of plant residue left standing or laying on the ground.

This practice requires a variation in harvesting activities to retain maximum standing vertical residue by implementing the use of harvest operations equipment like the stripper headers that can optimize yield while maintaining the health and integrity of the soil, water, and surrounding ecosystem.

“Having any plant material residue left on the field,

standing or laying down, helps to reduce erosion from wind and rain, increase soil organic matter, and moderate soil temperatures,” said Dr. Steven Lee, Plant Materials Center manager for NRCS-WA. “These techniques also help to reduce soil compaction, which has the benefit of helping the soil absorb more moisture.”

By implementing a stripper header for harvesting, wheat producers are able strip the grain from the stalk and still leave most of the plant residue intact and anchored in the field. The residual plant matter left intact in the field allows for greater moisture retention and yield stability by acting as a natural mulch, thus reducing evaporation and helping to retain soil moisture.

The benefits of using a disc drill in combination with the standing residue comes primarily by preserving soil structure, reducing compaction, and improved water absorption. Healthier soils require less chemical input over time, reducing costs associated with fertilizers and pesticides. Additionally, healthier soils are more resilient to climate variability, offering long-term economic benefits. Disk



Klickitat County wheat grower Andy Juris uses a stripper header that leaves more plant residue in his fields than regular headers do. A new Natural Resources Conservation Service practice can help growers who want to invest in this type of equipment.

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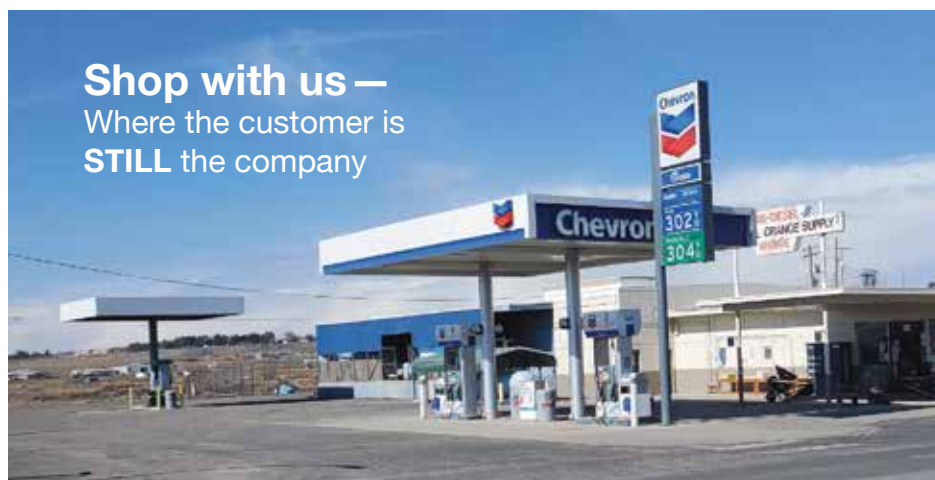


drills in this system also can be used to meet the Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) 329 or Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till CPS345.

There are additional benefits to using the stripper header and disc drill in that they can help reduce fuel and labor costs. Stripper headers and disc drills reduce the number of field passes and the amount of tillage required. This translates into financial savings on fuel and labor. This practice also greatly reduces “hair pinning” of residue and poor stand establishment sometimes associated with no-till seeding into conventionally cut, horizontal residue. Financial benefits reported in a 2023 study involving six Montana wheat producers indicated an average savings of \$4.40 per acre/year. If interested in learning more, the Montana based study can be found at nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-11/Montana-Economics-of-Stripper-Header-and-Disc-Drill-Adoption.pdf.

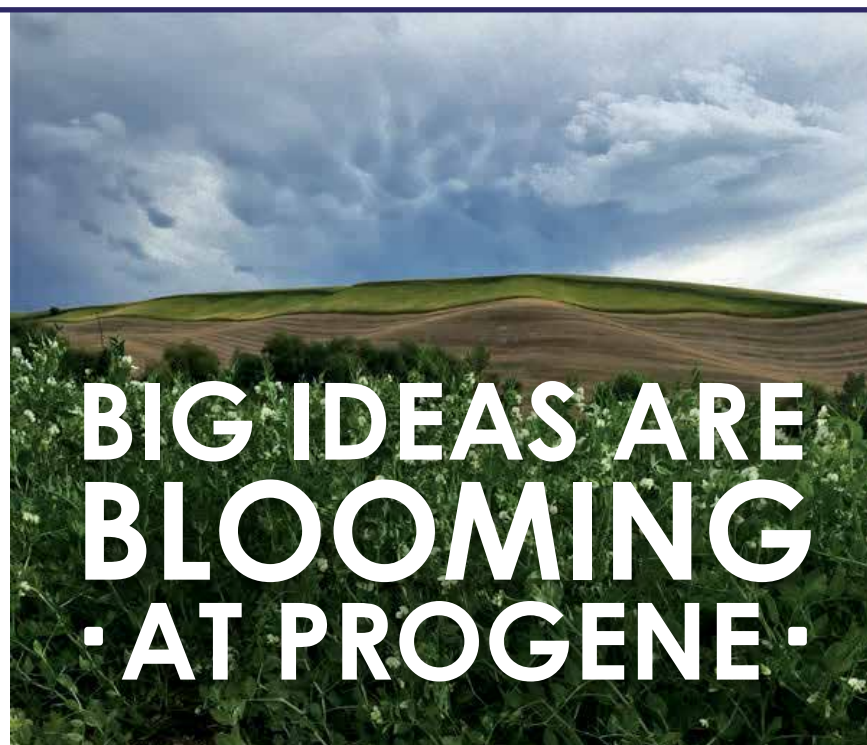
With the addition of the equipment required to adhere to this conservation practice comes increased cost requirements. Both stripper headers and disc drills represent a significant initial capital investment. NRCS-WA can help with equipment costs to make implementation of this practice more financially feasible using their Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). By working with NRCS, producers who choose to implement Conservation Harvest Management (NRCS Interim Conservation Practice Standard 809) would receive EQIP payment incentives on a per-acre basis.

If you are interested in learning more about this practice and how NRCS can help you help your land, contact your local NRCS-WA service center. ■



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Colfax business takes advantage of Whitman County's bounty

Jaimie Appel, owner of Appel Heights

By Trista Crossley
Editor, *Wheat Life*

Jaimie Appel was admiring the view of wheat fields from her home in Whitman County when the idea for a new business started to germinate.

"I love being part of a farming family, but I wanted something of my own. My dad or my husband suggested making flour out of wheat. I thought, 'well, yeah,'" Appel said. "I started to research it. It's incredible how we don't eat more just wheat kernels. We (Whitman County) are the nation's leading producer of wheat, but you don't go to a restaurant and order a wheat salad. I wanted to bring that back."

In 2023, Appel began stone milling different varieties of whole grain flour and selling it in a shared space on Main Street in Colfax. She also sold dried products such as garbanzo beans, wheat berries, and split peas. In September of that year, the other business moved out, and Appel took over the space, opening her storefront, Appel Heights.

Appel doesn't have to look far to find her raw ingredients. She is a 5th generation wheat farmer who married into a wheat farming family. Her father, Jim Hughes, and uncle-in-law, Neil Appel, are her main suppliers. What they can't grow, she sources as locally as possible.

"I just wanted to be the farmer, the miller, the baker, all of it. I wanted to cut out the middle man," she explained. "I think it's really important to be right there beside them as they grow and harvest the grain. I know all farmers do a great job, but here, I can see the process from start to finish."









Jaimie Appel took inspiration for her business, Appel Heights, from the wheat fields surrounding her family's home. She sells stone-milled flour, baking mixes, and other local products in her downtown Colfax, Wash., store. Also pictured are husband, Mark; daughter, Raegan (8); and sons, Harlan (6) and Blake (1). Photo courtesy of Jaimie Appel.

Early on, educating the public on how to prepare dried wheat berries and learning how to mill different varieties of wheat were two of the obstacles Appel had to overcome. She decided on a stone mill, believing it makes a healthier whole grain product. She discovered that hard red wheat tends to shatter, which impacts gluten development, and white wheat tends to get more powdery. She also mills garbanzo beans and uses the different flours to make dry cookie, pancake, and waffle mixes. She said having recipes in the store is extremely helpful in giving people ideas on how to use her products.

"The general public, they walk into the store, hold up a bag of wheat berries and ask what they are supposed to do with it," Appel said. "If you show them that you can hydrate these berries, add some seasoning, it sparks something, and they'll try it."

Besides her own products, Appel also carries other local products such as dried soup mix, candles, and dairy products. She also has an online store at appelheights.com.

Social media has been one of the keys to growing Appel Heights' visibility. One of Appel's Instagram posts last fall on potential ready-to-bake products led her to the Washington State Department of Agriculture's Farm to School Program, which connects schools with local farmers and puts nutritious, locally grown food on students' plates. Appel used her whole wheat flour to make products that were taste-tested by students at schools in Garfield, Colton,

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Palouse, and Colfax. Usually, Appel tests out new products on her family who enjoy whole wheat products, but for this, she had to dial in recipes that would appeal to kids who weren't used to whole wheat flour. In the end, the students enjoyed her products, and Appel Heights will be supplying some of the local schools with whole wheat pizza dough, rolls, and cookies.

"I had no idea about the Farm to School Program. It lit a whole new fire under me. I was fortunate to grow up eating good food," Appel said. "I told Neil that I hope whatever he has seeded is ready to roll!"

Providing healthy, great-tasting food is important to Appel, and she's keen on making sure her customers know her products are grown sustainably, using regenerative farming practices. She believes most wheat farmers, whether they are selling into the commodity market or turning their crop into value-added products, like flour, are doing their best to take care of the land and soil.

Appel Heights is currently open from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesdays and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays. More information is at appelheights.com. ■



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WASHINGTON GRAIN COMMISSION

By Ben Barstow



As farmers, we're stewards of the land, business managers, and guardians of a generational legacy. It's no small task to keep our operations running while also navigating the broader challenges facing our industry. That's why organizations like the Washington Grain Commission (WGC) are so vital to our success. The WGC works to ensure our wheat remains competitive on the world stage, that we have the best available science, and that our export markets stay open.

The wheat organizations in our state share a common goal of enhancing and advancing Washington's small grains industry. The WGC specifically pursues strategic investments in research, marketing, and education. The WGC's primary audiences include overseas wheat buyers, scientists for state and federal research programs, and stakeholders in maintaining our essential river system. This is different from the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG), which primarily lobbies lawmakers and policy influencers, or the Washington Wheat Foundation (WWF), which focuses on educating domestic consumers and voters. For more on those two organizations, see pages 2 and 18.

Let's start with research. Every year, the WGC allocates significant funds to support advancements in variety development, plant protection, and cropping systems. This work keeps our farms productive and profitable. Take variety development, for example. The WGC's support for the Washington State University's (WSU) Variety Testing Program ensures that we're growing wheat and barley varieties that meet the needs of millers and bakers worldwide. Similarly, investments in plant protection research help us combat pests and diseases. We know this is very likely to be a bad year for rust because the WGC's long-term investment in rust research has resulted in a predictive model that tells us how bad rust is going to be in the coming year.

These research efforts aren't just about solving today's problems; they're about ensuring the future viability of our industry. When you're selecting seed or implementing new practices on your farm, there's a good chance that WGC-supported research played a role in making those options available to you.

Marketing is another cornerstone. As one of the top wheat-exporting states in the nation, Washington depends on strong relationships with overseas buyers. The WGC partners with U.S. Wheat Associates and other organizations to provide technical support, host trade teams, and promote the quality and reliability of Pacific

Northwest wheat. These efforts help maintain and expand markets, ensuring that our wheat remains the top choice for millers in places like Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines.

Another critical aspect of this marketing work is maintaining our river transportation system. The Columbia-Snake River System is the backbone of our export infrastructure. Keeping this system open and efficient is essential for getting our grain to market. The WGC works closely with partners like the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association to support river transportation. Without this work, our grain's competitiveness would be at serious risk.

Education is the third pillar of the WGC's mission. The commission works to promote and provide education that highlights farmers as good stewards of the land while showcasing the high quality of our small grains. Programs like Wheat Week and the STEM Academy teach K-12 students the science of agriculture and the importance of farming in their daily lives.

For farmers, the WGC's educational efforts include sponsoring resources like WSU farm management best practices publications and WAWG's Agricultural Marketing and Management Organization programming. These programs help growers adopt innovations and become effective self-advocates. Whether you're learning about new market opportunities or exploring ways to improve your operation's efficiency, these resources are here to support you.

I encourage you to participate in the commission's activities and see how they benefit your operation. Attend a field day, participate in an AMMO workshop, or simply reach out to your WGC district commissioner to ask questions. Your input and engagement are crucial for ensuring that the commission's work aligns with the needs of farmers across our state.

The challenges we face as wheat and barley growers are significant, but they're not insurmountable. The WGC, WAWG, and the WWF together are a comprehensive support system, and if you've never connected with one of our state's wheat organizations before, now is the time.

The future of Washington's small grains industry depends on all of us. The more you engage, the more you'll see the value these groups bring to our industry. By working together and leveraging our resources and expertise, we can ensure the future will be bright. ■

REVIEW

WASHINGTON GRAIN COMMISSION



Nicole Berg



Art Schultheis



Ben Barstow



Brit Ausman

Growers receive commission appointments

The Washington Grain Commission (WGC) is pleased to announce the appointments of growers Nicole Berg and Art Schultheis as WGC commissioners starting in 2025.

"Nicole and Art will be great additions to the commission. In addition to being highly respected farmers, they bring a breadth of leadership experience that will undoubtedly benefit the grain growers of Washington," WGC CEO Casey Chumrau said.

Wheat District 5 (Benton, Franklin, Kittitas, Klickitat, and Yakima counties): Nicole Berg

Berg received her degree in agriculture communications from Washington State University. She returned to the family farm near Paterson in 1997. She also serves on the board for the Washington Association of Conservation Districts, the Red Cross, and Community First Bank. She is a past president of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers and the National Association of Wheat Growers.

Barley District 6 (Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Klickitat, Walla Walla, Whitman, and Yakima counties): Art Schultheis

Schultheis is a fifth-generation wheat farmer who is currently farming land homesteaded by his family in 1874 near Colton. He received his degree in agriculture mechanics from Walla Walla Community College and farms with his son, Kyle, and daughter-in-law, Stacie. They grow winter wheat, spring wheat, malt barley, food barley, lentils, peas, oats, garbanzo beans, canola, and bluegrass seed using a direct-seed system in Whitman County. Art is also an owner/producer for Shepherd's Grain, a grain handling and milling company that maintains an identity-preserved supply chain for wheat that is produced by certified regenerative farming practices. Art and his wife, Sue, have two children and four grandchildren. ■

Commissioners receive reappointment

In addition to Berg and Schultheis joining the commission this year, two board commissioners received reappointment letters from Washington State Department of Agriculture Director Derek Sandison in December.

Wheat District 2 (Whitman County): Ben Barstow

Whitman County is the nation's leading wheat producing county. Barstow farms near the town of Palouse. He was previously one of two barley representatives for the WGC and served as the board chairman from 2023-24. He succeeds Gary Bailey, who retired from the commission at the end of 2024. Barstow was appointed to the WGC in 2019 and serves as a commissioner for the Palouse Rural Fire District #4, as a board member for the Palouse Grain Growers, and is on the organizing committee for the Palouse Cabin Fever Brewfest.

Wheat District 3 (Columbia, Walla Walla, Garfield, Asotin counties): Brit Ausman

Ausman is a wheat grower representing four counties that make up the southeast corner of the state. He was appointed to the commission in 2012 and serves on the board of directors for the Wheat Marketing Center in Portland, Ore., and is a school board member for the Asotin-Anatone School District. ■

Franklin County grower recognized for commission service

The Washington Grain Commission (WGC) is recognizing Brian Cochrane for his service to the commission and celebrating his contributions to the Washington wheat industry.

A Kahlotus-area wheat grower, Cochrane represented Wheat District 5 from 2019 to 2024. He wanted to join the commission to represent the low-rainfall, wheat-fallow region and ensure commission-funded research at Washington State University (WSU) continues to provide innovation and support for farming practices in the driest of dryland regions. During his time on the commission, he served on the Wheat Advisory Committee and the Grain Royalty Advisory Committee for WSU, the WGC's Grain Inspection Program Advisory Committee and Snake River Dam PNW Task Force, as well as the board for the Washington Wheat Foundation.

"Our advantage in the low rainfall region is the easier transportation of wheat to market, and I saw it needed to be represented and protected," Cochrane said.

Cochrane is a retired U.S. Air Force officer who flew for 23 years before returning to the farm in 2007. He retained his involvement in the wheat industry during his Air Force career, using vacation time to return home to harvest with his brothers. He has only missed five harvests over his lifetime.

Cochrane brought that same dedication to his role on the commission.

"Being on a professional organization requires the need to think about others' best interests over my own sometimes," he said. "We were always trying to have the best balance of assessment funds between research, marketing, and outreach (education), the original tenants of the grain commission."



Brian Cochrane (right) with Washington State University (WSU) Crop and Soil Sciences researcher Zhiwu Zhang (ZZ) before the field tours at the WSU Lind Farm field day in 2022. A Franklin County grower, Cochrane represented Wheat District 5 for five years on the Washington Grain Commission. Zhang held the Washington Wheat Distinguished Professorship from 2022-23. He is an expert in statistical genomics and is part of the research team looking for new ways to measure falling numbers in wheat. The distinguished professorship rotates among scientists at WSU depending on pressing research needs of the moment. It is currently held by soil chemist Joao Antonangelo (not pictured).

When it comes to what he hopes the WGC will continue to work on, "thinking two to three steps ahead" is an important factor to keep on top of emerging trends and new technologies and to take "a thoughtful, powerful approach to strategic issues" that could help Washington growers stay sustainable for future generations. Research supporting wheat production, discovering new dynamic markets, and preserving our wheat transportation systems are the areas where Cochrane believes the WGC can continue to play a critical role.

"We must protect food security and take seriously that we will be even more responsible for feeding the world in the future," he said. "Cookie cutter or status quo approaches don't always work."

His advice for the next generation stepping into leadership roles — be accountable. Admit mistakes but learn from them so you don't repeat them.

"People are always looking up to you to be their best representative, especially when times are difficult, and decisions are hard," Cochrane said. "I am honored to have had the opportunity to represent my colleagues and neighbors in District 5. Thank you!"

Brian continues to serve as a trustee to the Franklin County Mosquito Board, as a supervisor on the Franklin County Conservation District, and as an appointee to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Task Force on Ag Air Quality Research. He is also a lifetime member of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers. ■

Meeting Mexico's market needs

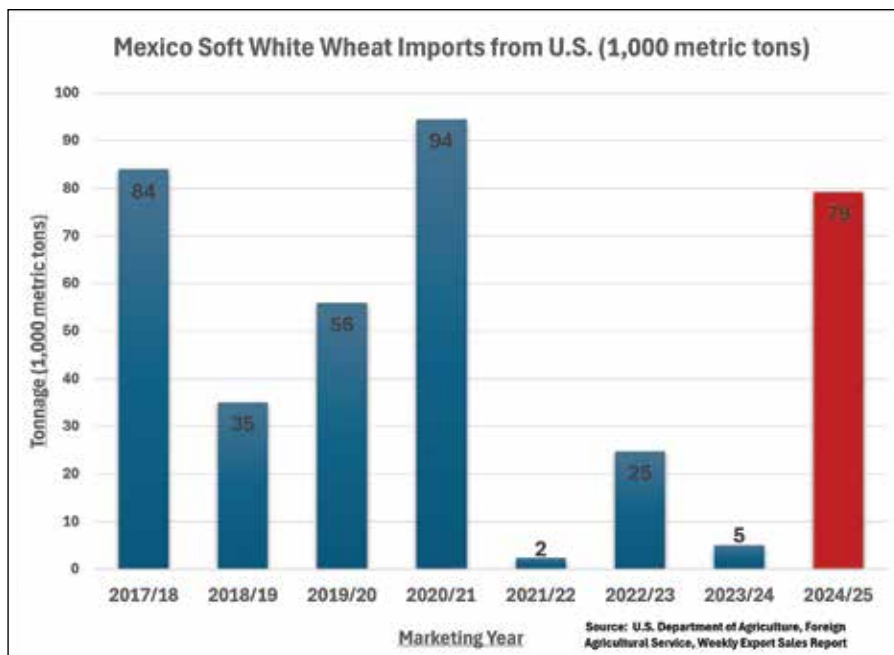
WASHINGTON WHEAT IS A RISING FAVORITE FOR SOUTHERN NEIGHBOR'S SOFT WHITE MARKET

By Jake Liening

Market Development Specialist,
Washington Grain Commission

While Mexico was the No. 1 importer of U.S. wheat overall in the 2023-24 marketing year, it has historically leaned towards red wheat varieties over white wheat, largely due to the relationship that proximity and price have. Mexico is geographically closer to the consolidation point, and this proximity allows for lower transportation costs, making it a more competitive option for buyers in Mexico. From 2017 to 2024, Mexico's total purchases of U.S. soft white (SW) wheat amounted to 11.06 million bushels (301,000 metric tons (MT)), with a five-year average of 1.32 million bushels (36,000 MT). In contrast, its five-year averages for red wheat are significantly higher. For hard red winter wheat, its five-year average is 72.05 million bushels (1.96 million metric tons), hard red spring wheat is 25.1 million bushels (683,000 MT), soft red winter wheat is 32.11 million bushels (874,000 MT).

The current 2024-25 marketing year, however, has seen a remarkable shift. As of Dec. 26, 2024, Mexico had purchased 2.9 million bushels (79,000 MT) of SW — compared to its 183,000 bushels (5,000 MT) total for 2023-24. This year's sales have already surpassed the country's five-year average by more than double, positioning Mexico to set a recent memory record for SW purchases with four months



remaining in the marketing year if this sales pace continues.

A shift driven by price and promotion

Several factors have contributed to this significant uptick in SW imports. Last year, high SW prices limited Mexico's purchases. With prices now at more competitive levels, Mexican buyers are finding SW a more attractive option. This return to more favorable pricing has normalized purchasing behavior, paving the way for a surge in demand. Another key factor has been the proactive promotion of SW wheat by U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) and its Mexico City office.

"We've been working to promote soft white wheat through various activities, including the 2023 trade team to Idaho, annual (crop quality) seminars sharing soft white wheat quality and pricing, and other technically driven work on end products," said Stephanie Bryant-Erdmann, assistant regional director for USW in Mexico City. These efforts have been instrumental in building awareness of SW's quality and versatility among Mexican millers and food producers.

Mexico's robust cookie and cracker industries rely heavily on consistent, high-performing flour. SW meets these specific production requirements and aligns with the country's increasing emphasis on high-quality end-use products. Mexico is home to Grupo Bimbo, the world's largest baking company,

headquartered in Mexico City.

Additionally, SW's unique milling properties make it particularly well-suited for use in cookies, crackers, and other baked goods, all of which are staples in the Mexican diet. By addressing this demand with a targeted strategy, USW has ensured that SW remains top-of-mind for Mexico's millers and food producers.

Long-term implications

The 2024-25 marketing year may represent a turning point in Mexico's relationship with U.S. white wheat. While historically considered a niche market for white wheat, Mexico's strong buying behavior this year could signal a shift in its long-term demand. If Mexico continues to expand its use of white wheat, this market could develop into a significant growth area for Washington's wheat growers.

The success of USW's promotional efforts underscores the importance of sustained engagement with foreign markets. Washington grower dollars and commissioner participation directly contribute to USW's ability to combine technical education, trade missions, and direct outreach for consistent customer support, which prepares our buyers to take advantage when competitive pricing opportunities arise.

Mexico's surge in SW purchases this year reflects many variables, including the impact of strategic market development and competitive pricing. With its robust baking industry and a renewed focus on quality, Mexico could become a consistent and growing market for U.S. SW in the years to come. ■



Mike Pumphrey (left) and Clark Neely present the spring wheat variety test plot performance data to farmers at the Washington State University Lind Farm field day in June 2024.

Timing matters

2024 spring wheat variety trials show result of high temps

By Mike Pumphrey

Spring Wheat Breeder, Washington State University

By Clark Neely

Associate Professor, Washington State University

By Vadim Jitkov

Scientific Assistant, Washington State University

Washington grain growers know well part of the underlying message in Ecclesiastes 3, "For everything there is a season," and timing within that season matters. In 2024, the timing of heat waves during grain fill on spring-planted cereal grains was the most significant limit to crop yields and associated grain quality traits in Eastern Washington. Nonetheless, spring grain production was up over 15% in 2024 compared to 2023, on similar planted acres, but lower than some years prior to 2023 with a combination of better moisture and lower temperatures during grain fill.

In total, approximately 945,000 acres of spring wheat were planted in the tri-state Pacific Northwest (PNW) region in 2024, with another 641,000 acres of barley, leading to a production total of approximately 60 million and 61 million bushels, respectively (nass.usda.gov).

The Washington State University (WSU) Variety Testing Program has a mission to provide growers with unbiased information on variety performance and relevant traits to help support optimal on-farm production. Spring wheat trials were successfully conducted at 12 sites in 2024, with both soft white and hard red trials at each site. Tough field conditions limited our ability to use results from four locations where yields were too variable to be reliable, notably

Table 1. 2024 WSU Extension Spring Wheat Variety Trial Summary

Precipitation Zone=>20"									
VARIETY	2024 CERTIFIED SEED ACRES	FAIRFIELD	FARMINGTON	PALOUSE	AVERAGE YIELD	2-YR AVG. YIELD	AVERAGE TEST WEIGHT	AVERAGE PROTEIN	
		-----Yield (Bu/A)-----				Lb/Bu	%		
Bush		50	59	45	52	63	60.4	9.0	
Hedge CL+ ¹	4,500	54	58	58	57	63	60.3	10.7	
Roger ¹	5,000	54	56	51	54	62	59.5	9.4	
Tekoa	62,000	54	58	52	55	60	60.3	9.7	
Melba ¹	1,000	53	56	49	53	59	59.0	9.1	
Ryan	173,000	52	59	54	55	59	59.0	9.5	
TMC Lochaven		49	51	52	51	59	59.7	10.3	
WB6211CLP	15,000	50	56	45	50	57	59.2	10.4	
Seahawk	24,000	53	56	49	53	56	58.6	9.6	
Butch CL+		40	51	48	46	56	58.4	9.7	
Louise	50,000	55	57	40	51	55	59.4	9.1	
JD ¹		46	51	44	47		60.1	9.9	
		-----Yield (Bu/A)-----				Lb/Bu	%		
WA8408		56	58	53	56	65	59.5	9.3	
WA8384		61	60	52	58	64	59.4	9.5	
WA8327		53	54	44	50	62	58.9	8.8	
WA8380 CL+		55	58	49	54	61	60.0	9.6	
WA8433		56	61	54	57		59.9	9.9	
WA8434		56	52	54	54		60.9	10.0	
BZTW20-345		57	55	51	54		59.0	8.9	
BZTW20-343		58	54	47	53		58.7	9.5	
WA8435 CL+		53	53	53	53		60.2	10.7	
BZTW20-303		48	52	41	47		60.4	9.7	
Average		53	56	50	53	60	59.5	9.6	
LSD (0.05)		7	5	7	4	3	0.4	0.5	
CV %		8	5	9	8	8	1	5	

2024 Fairfield, Farmington, Palouse
2023 Fairfield, Farmington, Palouse, Pullman
¹Club Wheat

Precipitation Zone=16-20"											
VARIETY		2024 CERTIFIED SEED ACRES	DAYTON	MAYVIEW	PLAZA	ST. JOHN	WALLA WALLA	AVERAGE YIELD	2-YR AVG. YIELD	AVERAGE TEST WEIGHT	AVERAGE PROTEIN
SOFT WHITE SPRING			-----Yield (Bu/A)-----						Lb/Bu	%	
	Bush		55	42	67	63	81	61	61	59.3	10.7
	Roger ¹	5,000	49	31	69	74	81	61	59	59.3	9.9
	Ryan	173,000	47	44	62	68	81	60	59	57.4	10.5
	TMC Lochaven		46	37	64	67	76	58	57	58.7	11.4
	Melba ¹	1,000	50	36	59	61	68	55	56	56.3	10.4
	Butch CL+		45	35	66	67	78	58	55	59.1	11.1
	Tekoa	62,000	41	41	62	62	77	57	55	58.7	11.1
	Seahawk	24,000	48	40	64	61	76	58	55	59.0	10.8
	Hedge CL+ ¹	4,500	50	37	61	59	66	54	54	58.8	11.2
Louise	50,000	46	37	66	59	68	55	54	56.6	10.9	
WB6211CLP	15,000	41	33	61	56	67	52	53	55.0	11.3	
JD ¹		47	34	54	55	70	52		58.9	10.9	
EXPERIMENTAL SOFT WHITE SPRING			-----Yield (Bu/A)-----						Lb/Bu	%	
	WA8384		51	41	68	64	83	61	61	58.8	10.6
	WA8408		47	41	67	67	85	61	59	58.9	10.8
	WA8327		52	41	65	64	82	61	59	58.9	10.7
	WA8380 CL+		43	42	68	52	73	56	56	58.2	10.4
	WA8433		47	45	70	65	81	62		57.5	11.1
	WA8434		52	42	66	65	81	61		59.0	11.0
	BZTW20-343		47	37	72	62	74	58		56.0	11.1
	WA8435 CL+		46	38	70	59	72	57		59.3	11.2
	BZTW20-345		47	38	65	58	73	56		56.7	10.7
BZTW20-303		46	34	63	61	71	55		55.5	10.5	
Average		47	39	65	63	76	58	56	57.9	10.8	
LSD (0.05)		5	9	10	6	9	3	2	1.1	0.6	
CV %		7	14	9	5	7	8	8	3	6	

2024 + 2023, Dayton, Mayview, Plaza, St. John, Walla Walla
¹Club Wheat

in lower precipitation areas that were strongly affected by untimely heat.

Data is available on the WSU Small Grains Extension website (smallgrains.wsu.edu/) for each site. We are updating the variety selection tool, so look for that this spring as well. Of course, yield is not the only factor to consider when selecting wheat varieties. Data on quality rankings, pest and disease resistance reactions, aluminum tolerance, test weight, protein, falling numbers, and other traits are available from WSU Extension as well as from the Washington Grain Commission, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service's Western Wheat Quality Laboratory, Washington State Crop Improvement Association, and other sources.

Data for soft white spring wheat variety performance are summarized and sorted based on two-year average

yields. The top performing soft white based on two-year averages in each precipitation zone is Bush, a new 2024 release from WSU's spring wheat breeding program with some commercial availability in 2025. Second-year experimental soft white spring entries WA8327, WA8384, and WA8408 grouped with Bush at the top of yield performance across all precipitation zones.

After Bush, familiar spring club and common varieties Hedge CL+ (club), Roger (club), Ryan, TMC Lochaven, Tekoa, Butch CL+, and Melba (club) ranked average or better across each precipitation zone. Based on the acres currently seeded to these varieties, inland PNW growers are doing well at planting high-quality wheat varieties with top yield performance on the vast majority of soft white spring acres.

Hard red spring wheat varieties were planted on about 33% of the spring wheat acres in Washington in 2024.

Table 2. 2024 WSU Extension Hard Red Spring Wheat Variety Trial Summary

Precipitation Zone=<16"								
VARIETY	2024 CERTIFIED SEED ACRES	BICKLETON	EDWALL	ENDICOTT	AVERAGE YIELD	2-YR AVG. YIELD	AVERAGE TEST WEIGHT	AVERAGE PROTEIN
		-----Yield (Bu/A)-----				Lb/Bu	%	
SOFT WHITE SPRING								
Bush		24	27	53	35	41	59.7	8.9
Melba ¹	1,000	24	26	47	32	38	57.9	9.1
Tekoa	62,000	26	25	46	32	38	59.4	9.3
TMC Lochaven		21	24	54	33	38	59.3	10.2
Roger ¹	5,000	27	24	54	35	37	60.1	9.4
Hedge CL+ ¹	4,500	26	25	51	34	37	59.6	9.7
Louise	50,000	23	26	47	32	36	57.5	9.5
Ryan	173,000	27	24	50	34	36	59.1	9.2
Butch CL+		25	22	54	34	36	60.5	9.9
Seahawk	24,000	24	25	50	33	36	58.6	9.7
WB6211CLP	15,000	23	21	44	29	36	57.4	10.1
JD ¹		22	23	48	31		59.6	9.5
		-----Yield (Bu/A)-----				Lb/Bu	%	
EXPERIMENTAL SOFT WHITE SPRING								
WA8384		27	28	55	37	40	59.8	9.4
WA8408		27	23	58	36	39	60.2	9.3
WA8327		25	29	52	35	39	59.0	9.3
WA8380 CL+		22	25	43	30	38	58.4	9.9
WA8433		25	27	56	36		58.4	9.4
BZTW20-343		23	26	52	34		57.9	9.9
BZTW20-345		25	28	47	33		58.4	9.2
WA8434		23	23	53	33		59.2	9.8
WA8435 CL+		23	27	46	32		60.1	9.8
BZTW20-303		23	22	45	30		58.3	9.2
Average		24	25	50	33	37	59.0	9.5
LSD (0.05)		4	3	7	3	1	0.6	0.5
CV %		9	7	8	9	8	1	5

2024 Bickleton, Edwall, Endicott

2023 Bickleton, Almira, Endicott, Horse Heaven, Lamont, Lind, Reardan

¹Club Wheat

Leading varieties based on two-year yield performance include Hale, MT Carlson, MT Dutton, and Net CL+ across precipitation zones. Second-year experimental hard red IDO 2105S was also among yield leaders across precipitation zones.

While Washington barley planted acres remained steady in 2024 at 85,000 acres, harvested acres declined by 17% down to 70,000 acres according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service. Still, overall production statewide was 4% higher due to higher yields in 2024.

The only malt varieties with two or more years of data include BC Lexy, LCS Diablo, and BC Leandra. Of these three, LCS Diablo was the only one landing in the top yielding group on the two-year average in all three precipitation zones. Growers should pay attention to test weight with LCS Diablo, though, as it often comes in last in the trial. BC Lexy also landed in the top group in the

Precipitation Zone=>20"										
VARIETY		2024 CERTIFIED SEED ACRES	FAIRFIELD	FARMINGTON	PALOUSE	PULLMAN	AVERAGE YIELD	2-YR AVG. YIELD	AVERAGE TEST WEIGHT	AVERAGE PROTEIN
			-----Yield (Bu/A)-----						Lb/Bu	%
HARD RED SPRING	Hale	5,000	55	64	50	50	55	60	59.4	13.0
	WB9623		59	58	47	47	53	58	57.7	13.1
	MT Dutton		54	61	49	49	54	58	56.7	13.3
	MT Carlson		53	59	48	48	52	58	57.8	12.9
	Net CL+	12,000	56	58	48	48	52	57	60.1	13.2
	Alum	18,000	55	58	46	46	51	56	58.5	13.1
	Glee		50	62	45	45	51	56	58.4	12.7
	Kelse	16,000	51	53	45	45	49	55	58.0	13.6
	CP3322		49	59	44	44	49	55	57.1	12.5
	Chet	2,000	54	58	47	47	51	54	59.3	13.5
	WB9668	28,000	44	51	39	39	44	50	58.6	14.1
	BZTR20-115		59	64	51	51	56		58.4	12.4
	CP3099A		55	61	43	43	50		55.4	11.8
	LCS Hammer AX		47	62	45	45	50		58.5	12.1
	WB9636		48	58	43	43	48		57.5	13.0
	WB9662	14,000	43	57	45	45	47		58.0	13.9
	BZ920-136		43	53	46	46	47		58.4	12.8
AP Venom	44,000	45	56	43	43	46		56.7	13.3	
Allegiant 6765		48	59	37	37	45		56.1	13.0	
Allegiant 6633		44	56	39	39	45		58.0	13.1	
CP3915		42	44	33	33	38		59.0	13.7	
EXPERIMENTAL HARD RED SPRING			-----Yield (Bu/A)-----						Lb/Bu	%
	IDO2105S		57	61	50	50	55	61	58.0	12.4
	MT2030		53	63	58	58	58		58.3	13.1
	WA8436 CL+		55	58	50	50	53		59.5	13.5
	WA8393		55	64	47	47	53		59.7	11.7
	ORS226518		49	56	49	49	51		59.4	13.9
	ORS227913		51	54	49	49	51		58.1	13.7
	WA8437 CL+		49	54	45	45	48		60.0	13.3
	WA8407		48	53	45	45	48		60.2	13.7
	WA8406		51	50	41	41	46		57.4	13.3
	Average		51	57	46	46	50	54	58.3	13.1
LSD (0.05)		5	3	5	5	2	2	0.7	0.4	
CV %		6	4	6	6	5	6	1	4	

2024 & 2023 Fairfield, Farmington, Palouse, Pullman

greater-than-20-inches zone and 12-to-16-inch zone over two years.

KWS Enduris was a new malt entry in 2024 and yielded exceptionally well, landing in the number one spot in all three precipitation zones. This new malt release from KWS is a few days later maturing, similar height, and has similar straw strength compared to AAC Connect. Malt varieties BC Elinor and BC Marietta both yielded close to the trial average in all precipitation zones. AAC Connect, AAC Synergy, BC Leandra and LCS Odyssey

Table 2. 2024 WSU Extension Hard Red Spring Wheat Variety Trial Summary

Precipitation Zone=16-20"									
VARIETY	2024 CERTIFIED SEED ACRES	MAYVIEW	PLAZA	ST. JOHN	WALLA WALLA	AVERAGE YIELD	2-YR AVG. YIELD	AVERAGE TEST WEIGHT	AVERAGE PROTEIN
		-----Yield (Bu/A)-----						Lb/Bu	%
MT Carlson		39	52	62	72	56	57	58.8	14.2
Hale	5,000	37	47	61	73	54	54	59.7	14.6
MT Dutton		35	46	53	63	49	53	57.0	14.8
Net CL+	12,000	37	53	49	71	52	53	59.3	14.9
Chet	2,000	36	49	49	66	50	51	58.8	15.4
WB9623		34	45	51	63	48	51	57.1	14.6
Alum	18,000	35	47	49	67	50	51	58.3	14.7
Kelse	16,000	30	50	46	67	48	50	58.3	15.3
CP3322		31	46	38	57	43	49	54.1	15.4
Glee		31	40	54	70	49	49	58.3	14.5
WB9668	28,000	30	40	49	64	46	46	59.0	15.5
BZTR20-115		35	56	48	71	53		57.9	14.4
Allegiant 6633		33	48	49	67	50		58.2	15.3
WB9636		34	47	49	67	49		57.1	14.7
BZ920-136		28	49	49	70	49		59.5	14.2
Allegiant 6765		31	47	47	68	48		56.5	14.7
LCS Hammer AX		29	48	51	63	48		57.8	13.8
WB9662	14,000	29	42	48	61	45		57.9	14.8
AP Venom	44,000	31	44	38	62	44		56.1	15.0
CP3099A		32	42	46	55	44		52.2	14.1
CP3915		28	40	44	56	42		55.7	15.6

Precipitation Zone=16-20"									
VARIETY	2024 CERTIFIED SEED ACRES	MAYVIEW	PLAZA	ST. JOHN	WALLA WALLA	AVERAGE YIELD	2-YR AVG. YIELD	AVERAGE TEST WEIGHT	AVERAGE PROTEIN
		-----Yield (Bu/A)-----						Lb/Bu	%
ID021055		36	54	51	64	51	53	58.3	14.2
MT2030		41	62	61	68	58		58.9	14.2
WA8436 CL+		34	57	55	75	55		59.9	14.8
WA8393		30	47	61	72	52		60.5	12.6
WA8437 CL+		34	48	53	69	51		60.2	14.7
ORS227913		32	48	53	73	51		58.7	15.3
ORS226518		29	45	53	69	49		60.3	15.4
WA8407		30	47	49	64	48		59.8	15.5
WA8406		26	36	54	65	45		58.5	14.6
Average		33	47	51	66	49	50	58.1	14.7
LSD (0.05)		4	7	7	7	3	2	1.7	0.6
CV %		8	9	8	6	8	7	3.2	4.5

2024 Mayview, Plaza, St. John, Walla Walla
2023 Dayton, Mayview, Plaza, St. John, Walla Walla

Precipitation Zone=<16"									
VARIETY	2024 CERTIFIED SEED ACRES	BICKLETON	ENDICOTT	LAMONT	AVERAGE YIELD	2-YR AVG. YIELD	AVERAGE TEST WEIGHT	AVERAGE PROTEIN	
		---Yield (Bu/A)---					Lb/Bu	%	
MT Carlson		32	43	57	44	40	58.6	12.3	
MT Dutton		28	40	58	42	40	58.3	12.0	
Net CL+	12,000	26	42	44	37	37	58.4	12.3	
Hale	5,000	29	40	52	40	36	58.0	12.0	
Alum	18,000	24	41	52	39	36	57.1	12.5	
Chet	2,000	22	39	52	38	36	57.9	12.7	
WB9623		26	43	46	38	35	57.3	12.7	
CP3322		17	30	46	31	35	57.1	12.4	
Glee		29	42	53	41	35	57.5	12.4	
Kelse	16,000	23	41	46	37	35	57.3	12.9	
WB9668	28,000	25	35	48	36	30	57.3	12.5	
LCS Hammer AX		29	41	57	42		57.9	11.5	
BZ920-136		30	39	56	42		58.3	12.7	
WB9662	14,000	28	41	52	40		57.8	12.8	
BZTR20-115		28	44	47	40		55.9	12.2	
Allegiant 6765		27	39	51	39		57.3	12.3	
WB9636		28	39	47	38		57.9	12.4	
AP Venom	44,000	24	38	46	36		57.0	12.0	
Allegiant 6633		27	31	45	35		56.5	12.7	
CP3915		22	37	40	33		58.0	12.6	
CP3099A		19	36	32	29		53.8	12.6	

Precipitation Zone=<16"									
VARIETY	2024 CERTIFIED SEED ACRES	BICKLETON	ENDICOTT	LAMONT	AVERAGE YIELD	2-YR AVG. YIELD	AVERAGE TEST WEIGHT	AVERAGE PROTEIN	
		---Yield (Bu/A)---					Lb/Bu	%	
ID021055		25	44	52	40	38	56.4	12.6	
MT2030		36	45	60	47		58.2	11.5	
WA8393		29	41	61	43		59.0	11.6	
ORS227913		31	41	53	42		58.3	12.3	
WA8436 CL+		29	42	49	40		58.1	12.2	
ORS226518		28	37	50	39		59.4	12.2	
WA84061		21	38	53	37		57.8	12.4	
WA8437 CL+		26	41	44	37		59.0	12.3	
WA8407		25	39	45	37		60.1	11.9	
Average		27	40	50	39	36	57.7	12.3	
LSD (0.05)		3	4	8	3	2	2.3	1.0	
CV %		7	6	9	8	9	3.5	6.9	

2024 Bickleton, Endicott, Lamont
2023 Bickleton, Almira, Endicott, Horse Heaven, Lamont, Lind, Reardan

are the only malt varieties in the trial that currently reside on the approved list of malting varieties as posted by the American Malting Barley Association.

On the feed side, Carleton and Successor are the two newest released varieties, both having been in the trial since 2023. Carleton is a feed barley release developed by Highland Specialty Grains, which yielded very well in the high precipitation zone in 2024 and made it into the top grouping on the two-year average. It landed number two overall in the 16-to-20-inch zone and above average

in the 12-to-16-inch zone. It also received a resistant rating for barley stripe rust and shows good straw strength. Bred by Oregon State University, Successor is another IMI-tolerant variety intended to replace Survivor, however, yields were consistently less than Survivor for a second straight year. It typically has one of the best test weights in the trial, and heading dates were typically five to seven days earlier compared to Survivor.

Older feed varieties like Lenetah and Altorado continue to be competitive in the lower and intermediate pre-

cipitation zones, whereas Claymore topped the trial in the high precipitation zone.

While a summary of 2024 and two-year yield data are presented in this article, growers are always encouraged to spend more time looking at multiyear data for a better representation of variety performance when available. Additional information, ratings, and yield data can be found at our website, smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety. ■

Acknowledgements: Funding for supplies, travel, and technical support for the WSU Extension Cereal Variety Testing Program is provided by the Washington Grain Commission. Facilities, salary, and equipment are



Washington State University variety trial plots in Bickleton.

provided by WSU administration. We are grateful for the many on-farm cooperators we partner with to conduct these trials around the state. They are essential for producing quality data and their donations of land, time, and resources are appreciated.

Table 3. 2024 WSU Extension Spring Barley Variety Trial Summary

Precipitation Zone=>20"						
VARIETY		FARMINGTON	PALOUSE	PULLMAN	AVG. YIELD	2-YEAR AVG. YIELD
MALT		Yield (Bu/A)				
	BC Lexy	3690	3920	2810	3470	3710
	LCS Diablo	3130	3810	3150	3360	3710
	BC Leandra	3770	3740	3230	3580	3650
	KWS Enduris	3730	4050	3460	3740	
	LCS Odyssey	3450	4160	3310	3640	
	ACC Synergy	3370	3750	3140	3420	
	LGBU17-1320A	3610	3780	2870	3420	
	BC Elinor	3540	3630	3000	3390	
	BC Marietta	3100	3600	2950	3220	
DH131756	3050	3590	2810	3150		
AAC Connect	2850	3040	2720	2870		
FEED	Claymore	3660	3600	3190	3480	3820
	H0516-429	3120	3950	2960	3340	3770
	Survivor	3270	4060	3120	3490	3700
	Lenetah	3260	3890	3120	3420	3700
	Altorado	3570	3800	3140	3500	3680
	Carleton	3670	4220	3230	3710	3660
	YU518-415	3290	3550	3160	3340	3590
	20WAM-783.1	3390	3890	2880	3390	3530
	20WAM-721.1	3200	3750	2920	3290	3530
	20WAM-248.1	3200	3260	2610	3020	3260
20WAM-487.1	2990	3390	2580	2990	3230	
Successor	3060	3640	2890	3200	3220	
X20024-41	3390	3810	3170	3450		
Average	3350	3750	3020	3370	3570	
LSD (0.05)	420	650	370	290	220	
CV %	8	11	9	9	9	

Precipitation Zone=16-20"					
VARIETY		ST. JOHN	WALLA WALLA	AVG. YIELD	2-YEAR AVG. YIELD
MALT		Yield (Bu/A)			
	LCS Diablo	3840	5270	4560	4160
	BC Lexy	4090	4950	4520	4000
	BC Leandra	3700	4750	4220	3930
	KWS Enduris	4200	5830	5020	
	LCS Odyssey	3850	5400	4620	
	ACC Synergy	3840	5140	4490	
	BC Elinor	3890	4980	4430	
	LGBU17-1320A	3590	5170	4380	
	BC Marietta	3910	4770	4340	
AAC Connect	3070	4720	3890		
DH131756	2920	4590	3750		
FEED	Lenetah	4260	5490	4870	4330
	Carleton	3920	5030	4480	4210
	Survivor	3740	5520	4630	4210
	Altorado	3720	4770	4250	4140
	YU518-415	3600	5330	4470	4130
	H0516-429	3170	4890	4030	4030
	Claymore	3800	4740	4270	3960
	20WAM-783.1	3280	4660	3970	3890
	20WAM-721.1	3510	4230	3870	3790
	20WAM-248.1	3810	4470	4140	3710
Successor	3710	5050	4380	3690	
20WAM-487.1	3710	4620	4160	3640	
X20024-41	3400	4670	4030		
Average	3690	4960	4320	4000	
LSD (0.05)	600	660	440	200	
CV %	10	8	9	7	

Precipitation Zone=<16"					
VARIETY		ENDICOTT	LAMONT	AVG. YIELD	2-YEAR AVG. YIELD
MALT		Yield (Bu/A)			
	BC Lexy	3150	5530	4340	3540
	LCS Diablo	3350	4810	4080	3530
	BC Leandra	3090	4760	3930	3420
	KWS Enduris	3520	5870	4700	
	LGBU17-1320A	3400	5450	4430	
	LCS Odyssey	3340	5450	4390	
	BC Marietta	3090	4950	4020	
	BC Elinor	2780	5230	4000	
	ACC Synergy	2880	5040	3960	
DH131756	2370	4730	3550		
AAC Connect	2530	4170	3350		
FEED	Lenetah	3220	5580	4400	3630
	Altorado	2940	5600	4270	3530
	YU518-415	2830	5400	4120	3490
	Carleton	2880	5470	4180	3440
	Survivor	2360	4620	3490	3410
	Claymore	3040	5280	4160	3410
	20WAM-721.1	2680	4980	3830	3250
	H0516-429	2280	4380	3330	3230
	20WAM-783.1	2370	4630	3500	3180
	20WAM-248.1	2660	4960	3810	3130
20WAM-487.1	2480	4280	3380	3030	
Successor	2600	4710	3650	2910	
X20024-41	2670	5430	4050		
Average	2860	5050	3950	3380	
LSD (0.05)	450	680	400	180	
CV %	10	8	9	8	

2024 Farmington, Palouse, Pullman
2023 Fairfield, Farmington, Pullman

2024 St. John, Walla Walla

2024 Endicott, Lamont

WHEAT WATCH

WASHINGTON GRAIN COMMISSION

IGC predicts fewer harvested acres in 2025

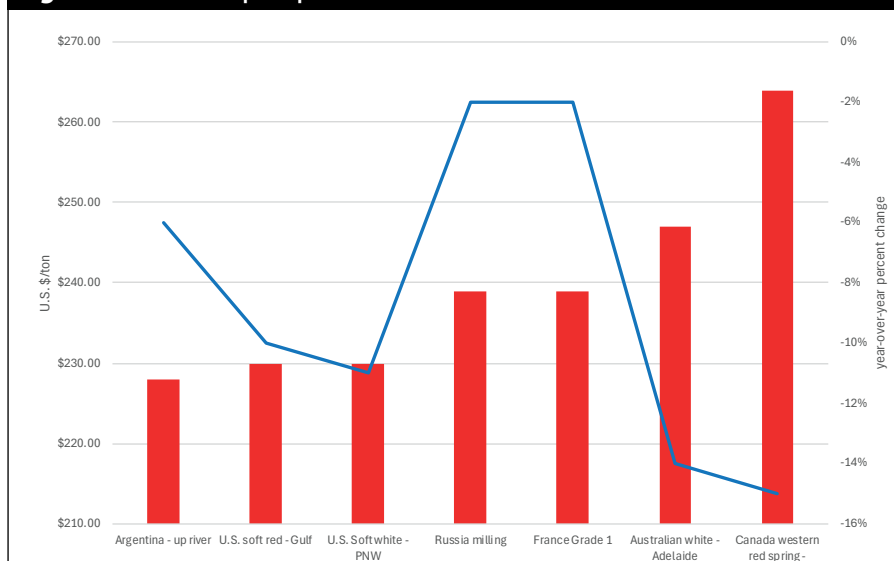


By T. Randall Fortenbery
Professor and Tom Mick Endowed Chair, School of Economic Sciences, Washington State University

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the International Grains Council (IGC) are both forecasting a reduction in world wheat ending stocks for the 2024-25 marketing year. Even though global wheat production this marketing year represents the second largest crop on record, IGC estimates global wheat ending stocks will be the lowest in six years at the end of 2024-25 (IGC's wheat marketing year runs from July 1, 2024, through the end of June 2025; USDA's wheat marketing year runs from June 1 through the end of the following May). IGC is currently expecting a year-over-year reduction in world wheat stocks of 3%, while USDA is estimating a 4% reduction.

Generally, we would expect a year-over-year drop in world stocks to be price positive, but both USDA and IGC have also estimated that total world trade of wheat will fall short of last year's trade. USDA is forecasting world wheat trade to be down about 6% this year compared to 2023-24, while IGC is forecasting an 8% reduction year-over-year. As a result, export prices for most major wheat exporters are lower compared to year ago levels. Figure 1 shows the percentage price changes for select wheat exporters between mid-January 2024 to mid-January

Figure 1. Wheat export prices



2025. In the case of Australian white wheat, current prices represent a 52-week low. For most other exporters, prices are above their lowest marketing year levels, but still in the bottom half of the price range for the year.

In contrast to the world wheat balance sheet for 2024-25, fundamentals for the U.S. wheat market point to an increase in ending stocks for this year. Based on the January 2025 World Agricultural Supply Demand Estimates (WASDE), USDA expects U.S. wheat ending stocks to increase by 15% this year. IGC estimates the increase in U.S. ending stocks will be closer to 17%. As a result, USDA has lowered their forecast of the U.S. average marketing year wheat price (the price that determines whether a Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payment is made to farmers that signed up for PLC). The current USDA forecast is for a marketing year price of \$5.50 per bushel, down 5 cents from the December WASDE forecast, and \$1.41 below last year's price. The trigger price for a PLC payment is \$5.50 per bushel, so even with the recent price reduction, USDA is still not anticipating PLC payments for the 2024 harvested crop.

IGC recently released their global wheat outlook for the 2025-26 marketing year. While there are some measurable changes for individual countries, in aggregate, global harvested acreage is expected to be down only 0.3% from 2024-25. However, primarily because of improved growing conditions in the EU in late November and December, EU harvested wheat acres are projected to increase by over 5% in 2025-26. As a result, IGC expects next year's global wheat production to be up 1%. Harvested acres for the other major exporters are expected to decline in 2025. Russian harvested acreage is forecast down 1.8% from last year, but they may suffer an even greater decline due to lower expected profitability and unseasonably dry weather during and after the fall planting season. Ukraine, Australia, Canada, and the U.S. are also fore-

cast to harvest fewer wheat acres in 2025 compared to 2024. IGC forecasts Canadian wheat acres harvested will fall 3.3%, and U.S. harvested acres will be down 2.2%.

USDA will provide their first forecasts for the 2025-26 wheat marketing year on Feb. 27 at the USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum. However, they did release their estimate of total U.S. winter wheat seedings for the 2025-26 marketing year on Jan. 10, 2025. They currently estimate winter wheat plantings were up 2% last fall compared to 2024. Washington winter wheat producers are estimated to have increased acreage by 3% this year compared to last.

Over the last 10 years, U.S. winter wheat acres have accounted for about 76% of total U.S. wheat acres. If this ratio holds for 2025-26, then total U.S. wheat acres would be about 44.9 million, a reduction of 1.2 million acres, or 2%, from last year.¹

On average, the U.S. harvests about 82% of planted wheat acreage (Figure 2). If this holds in 2025, then U.S. harvested wheat acres in 2025 would total 36.8 million, down 4% from last year and below the current IGC forecast. Given trend yields, this would result in a U.S. wheat crop of 1.9 billion bushels, or 781 million bushels less than the 2024 wheat harvest. If this forecast is realized and demand for U.S. wheat in 2025-26 is similar to 2024-25 demand, the production forecast is price neutral — it does not point to a significant increase in prices unless there are significant changes in the world balance sheet for next year.

Through Jan. 17, futures prices for the 2025 U.S. wheat crop have dropped by over \$.20 per bushel since the Tri-State Grain Growers Conference held the third week of November. In contrast, white wheat prices in Portland remained stable over the same time period. They were, however, about \$.56 per bushel lower on

¹In 2024-25, winter wheat accounted for a larger percentage of total wheat acres compared to the 10-year average, just over 78%. If we revert to the 10-year average, then total wheat acres can decline relative to last year even with an increase in winter wheat acres.

Figure 2. U.S. wheat acres

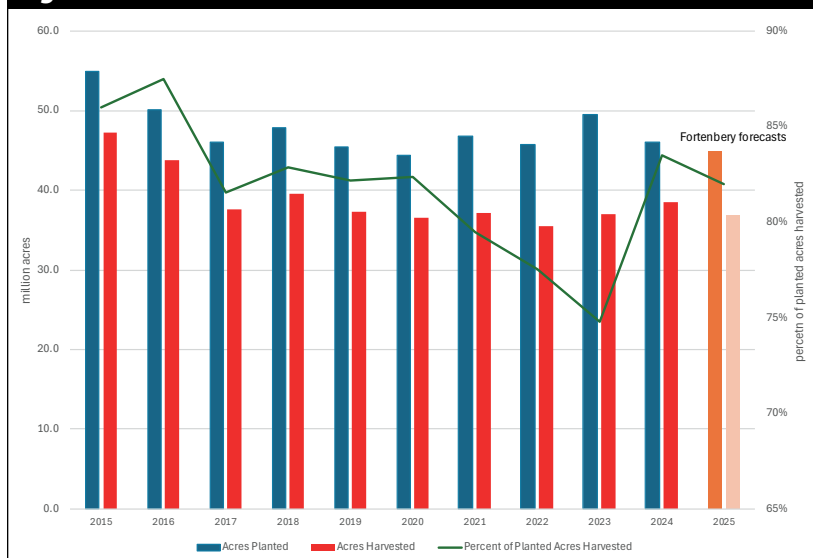
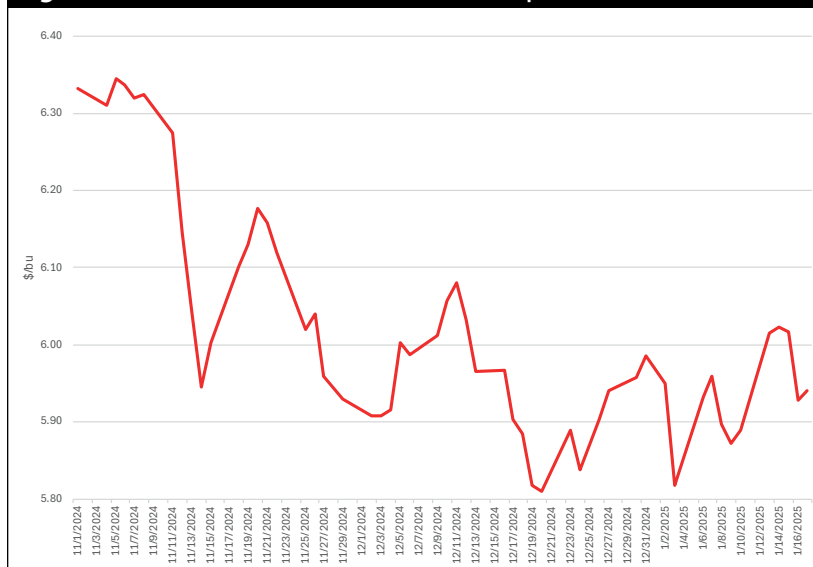


Figure 3. December 2025 red wheat futures prices



Jan. 17 this year than they were on the same date in 2024.

Figure 3 shows the trading range of the December 2025 soft red wheat futures contract from Nov. 1, 2024, through Jan. 17, 2025. Based on options trading activity, as of Jan. 17, traders assigned a 75% probability to December futures closing below \$6.90 per bushel at contract expiration, and a 25% probability December prices would not close below \$4.90 per bushel at expiration. Without a major change in the global wheat outlook, producers might want to consider starting to price some of their 2025 production if December futures prices move towards the top end of this range (above \$6.70 per bushel for example). ■

Randy Fortenbery holds the Thomas B. Mick Endowed Chair in Grain Economics at Washington State University. He received his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign.

THIS WONDERFUL PLACE

ZANE GREY'S NORTHWEST AND THE DESERT OF WHEAT | BY RICHARD SCHEUERMAN

Best-selling Western author and conservationist Zane Grey (1872-1939) is considered the father of the modern Western novel. He wrote some 300 short stories and 80 books. Grey's writing was known for idealizing the American frontier spirit with archetypal characters inhabiting moral landscapes who exemplified the Code of the West — integrity, friendship, loyalty. These attributes are also vividly expressed in Grey's remarkable 1919 best-seller about Columbia Plateau rural life, *"The Desert of Wheat,"* which weaves rural romance and Northwest farm life against the backdrop of labor unrest and World War I.

In July of 1917, Grey, his wife, Dolly, and several companions journeyed through the region during a trip to Glacier National Park and the Pacific Northwest. Many of the places in *"The Desert of Wheat"* were based on places the Greys visited in Eastern Washington. Historian Richard Scheuerman has written about Grey's visit. Photos of the trip that appear here were discovered in a scrapbook bought at auction by a collector. The scrapbook was donated to the Zane Grey West Society and later donated to the University of Oregon's Knight Library Special Collections. Here is an excerpt from Scheuerman's paper, *"This Wonderful Place: Zane Grey's Northwest and The Desert of Wheat."*

Grey begins *"The Desert of Wheat"* with soaring prose that moved a contemporary Boston reviewer to comment, "His opening landscape lingers in the mind: nobody has so painted just that scene." To be sure, few American novelists of prominence had ever visited the Inland Pacific Northwest, but Grey's "pictorial sense" was the full measure of any who could conjure a mystical terrain laden with grain and earth: "A thousand hills lay bare to the sky and half of every hill was wheat and half was fallow ground, and all of them, with the shallow valleys between, seemed big and strange and isolated. The beauty of them was austere, as if the hand of man had been held back from making green his home site, as if the immensity of the task had left no time for youth and freshness."

The book includes numerous references to actual places across the Columbia Plateau, like Spokane, Connell, and Kahlottus. Fictitious communities are also named but with sufficient geographical description to indicate locations like Ruxton in Golden (Walla Walla) Valley and Neppel (Moses Lake). Grey also references the work of notable agriculturalists like Frederick D. Heald at the State Agricultural College and Experiment Station in Pullman, present-day Washington State University. Grey's original version, now in the Library of Congress, also mentioned other communities including Ritzville, Odessa, and Marlin. Subsequent insight by local historians regarding the book's principal families also sheds light on the inclusion of particular individuals and farms. Grey is thought to have visited areas in Grant, Adams, Whitman, and Franklin counties in 1917, and traveling from Pullman to Connell by train or automobile would have led through Colfax, Hooper, Washtucna, and Kahlottus.

Grey's journal of the trip has not been located, so his exact mid-July itinerary and schedule cannot be documented with precision. But in 2019, a collector of Zane Grey fishing literature and lore acquired several of the author's scrapbooks at auction, and one was of



Zane Grey with combine sack sewers.

his and Dolly's 1917 trip to the Pacific Northwest. The new owner kept the other items relevant to his interests and donated the Northwest collection to the Zane Grey West Society, a national organization devoted to the promotion of interest in the celebrated author. Among the scrapbook's 50 photographs of Glacier Park and other locations were several showing the Grey party visiting Eastern Washington harvesting operations. One image shows them stopped in the rural hamlet of Wheeler several miles east of present-day Moses Lake, indicating they traveled from Spokane in automobiles to visit various unidentified locations in the region.

The photographs show Grey and the ladies exploring all facets of the work. They inspect the clean-grain elevator apparatus of a horse-drawn combine and the dusty work. The smiling, muscled sack-sewers and "mule-skinner" — the highly regarded "jerkline" driver of the enormous team of draft animals — were likely surprised and delighted by the visit



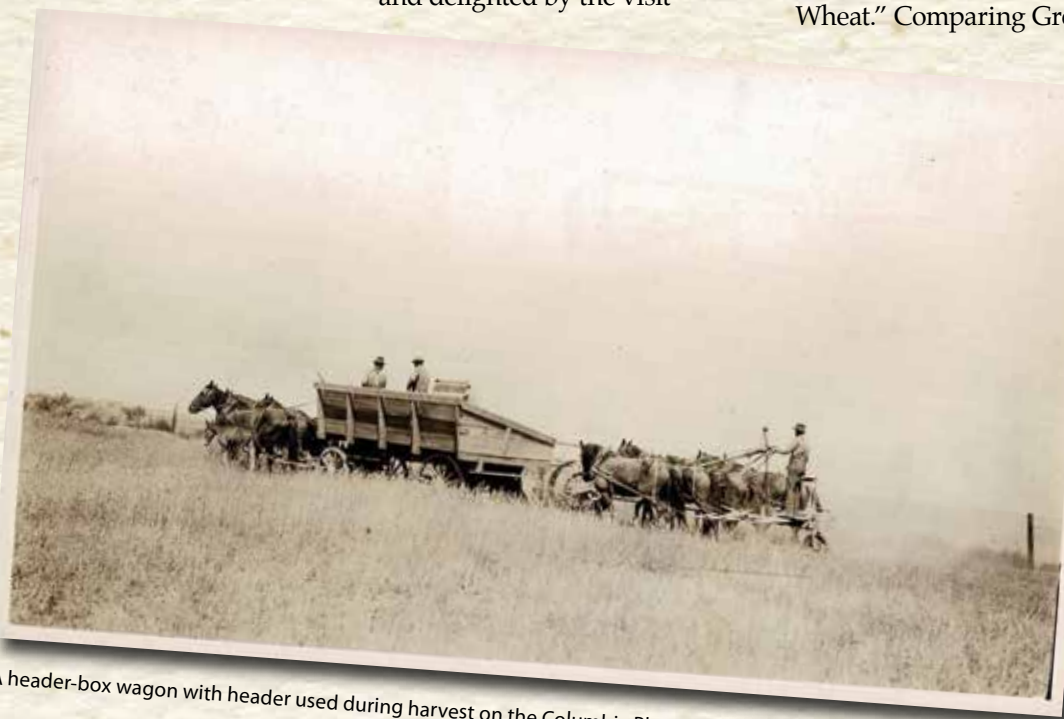
Dolly Grey, Dorothy Ackerman and Mildred Ferguson observe grain sacks being filled for sewing.

of such distinguished guests. Another image shows a horse-powered push-header to cut the grain approaching a header-box wagon that would receive the cuttings and transport them to a nearby steam-powered stationary thresher.

The contrast between the formally attired Easterners and workers veiled in dust and chaff is striking. But they also attest to Grey's interest in close-up inspection to better understand the people, machinery, and crops that would become core elements for "The Desert of Wheat." Comparing Grey's possible itinerary with travels

in the book by the Dorns and Andersons and events reported in the local press suggests that some characters were composite figures drawn in part from the author's personal interactions during his visit.

Much of the book's action takes place at the Anderson-Dorn farm, a place of Grey's imagination, but, according to local lore, modeled in part on a Franklin County ranch owned in 1917 by R. F. Anderson and located approximately nine miles south of Connell. (The property was later owned by the Kenneth Owsley family.) Like Lenore Anderson's father,



A header-box wagon with header used during harvest on the Columbia Plateau.

R. F. Anderson was a prominent local businessman who also owned property in the Walla Walla Valley. Connell had been platted in 1883 as "Palouse Junction" for a spur of the main Northern Pacific transcontinental line that tapped the fertile Palouse Hills grain district to the east. Later named Connell for a railroad official and pioneer resident, the town had long served as an important grain storage and transfer point with substantial timbered flat-houses along the rail line for storing sacked grain, a thriving main street business district, and local newspaper, the *Connell Tribune-Register*.

The tableland surrounding the Anderson farm would have presented Grey with a stunning vista with Oregon's Blue Mountains to the east and flaming sunsets beyond the grass- and sage-covered Horse Heaven and Frenchman Hills rising in the west. The farmstead included a two-story main house that remains on the site and substantially conforms to Grey's description of the Dorn home, numerous outbuildings, crenelated water tower and windmill, and a 60 foot by 110 foot barn that was enormous even by Big Bend standards. The property was situated along the area's principal north-south "Central Washington Road" and had served in earlier days as a waystation for stagecoaches who tended and exchanged teams of horses in the capacious barn.

According to local tradition, Grey visited the Anderson place and spoke and witnessed harvest field labors firsthand. On July 20, the *Tribune-Register* reported on the commencement of field operations: "Harvest has begun already and will be in full swing here by the middle of next week. While the hot, dry weather has interfered somewhat with the later grain crop, the fields which matured earlier are in splendid condition and promise a good yield."

Grey, the meticulous researcher, gleaned material for the new book throughout his July journey and visits with



A horse-pulled combine during harvest on the Columbia Plateau.

Northwest farmers and rural community residents. The travelers then boarded the train for Portland and connections to California. The route down along the lower Columbia River took them literally beneath the shadow of railroad tycoon Sam Hill's imposing Maryhill Ranch House high on a forlorn bluff near Wishram. Hill, who had been raised Quaker, had spent lavishly on the mansion and envisioned a nearby farm colony of residents similarly devoted to the principles of nonviolence. The remote location prevented fulfillment of Hill's dreams, but he did construct the nation's first World War I monument a short distance east of Maryhill. The structure, dedicated on July 4, 1918, and completed in 1926, is a full-scale replica of ancient Stonehenge, which Hill had visited on one of his many visits to Great Britain. ■

Richard Scheuerman was raised on the family farm near Endicott, Wash., and graduated from Washington State University in 1973 with degrees in history and education. He served for 35 years as a public school teacher, administrator, and college professor. Scheuerman retired from education in 2015 and then directed the Franklin County Historical Society and Museum in Pasco, Wash. His most recent creative endeavors have included the "Harvest Project," a three-volume study published by Triticum Press on agrarian themes in world art, literature, and music. Scheuerman plans to publish the full manuscript of "This Wonderful Place: Zane Grey's Northwest and The Desert of Wheat" in the near future.



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THE BOTTOM LINE

Exploring crop insurance subsidies

By Curtis Evandenko
McGregor Risk Management Services

Glad tidings and happy new year! Yes, we're into February, but it's still the new year, yes? I don't believe "you have just 330 +/- shopping days until Christmas" would be preferred, though I've been wrong before.

Let's chat about premium subsidies for multiperil crop insurance and the basic premise surrounding it. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) was created in 1938, following the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. Initially, this was an experiment. Crop insurance was limited to the major crops and primary production areas. Crop insurance remained an experiment until the passage of the Federal Crop Insurance Act of 1980.

The 1980 act expanded the program to additional crops and regions of the country. The expansion was to encourage participation to replace the free disaster coverage offered under farm bills in the 1960s and

Subsidy Factor	Coverage Level							
	0.50	0.55	0.60	0.65	0.70	0.75	0.80	0.85
Basic Unit	0.670	0.640	0.640	0.590	0.590	0.550	0.480	0.380
Optional Unit	0.670	0.640	0.640	0.590	0.590	0.550	0.480	0.380
Enterprise Unit	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.770	0.680	0.530

70s, which was a direct competition to the experimental crop insurance program. The 1980 act authorized a subsidy of 30% of the crop insurance premium at 65% coverage. My career began in the Homeland (North Dakota) under the 1980 act, when premium calculation was an easy, three-step process.

While additional producers enrolled in the program after the passage of the 1980 act, participation did not reach the level Congress had hoped for. Ad hoc disaster assistance was authorized after the drought of 1989, and additional ad hoc relief bills were passed in 1992 and 1993. We sustained drought conditions for crop years 1987, 1988, and 1989. The enactment of the Federal Crop Insurance Reform Act of 1994 was the result of ad hoc dissatisfaction and continued competition with ad hoc disaster monies — there was always a crop loss somewhere and a congressperson seeking re-election.

The 1994 act made crop insurance participation mandatory for producers to be eligible for U.S. Department of Agriculture benefits, such as direct payments, loans, etc. The Risk Management Agency (RMA) was formed to administer FCIC programs. Catastrophic coverage was also created at this time with a 100% subsidized premium; the producer paid a \$50 per crop fee for coverage of 50% of average yield and 60% of the established price. This is also when premium subsidies were increased and maximized at the 75% coverage level. Mission accomplished — by 1998, three times the acres were insured when compared to 1988.

In 1996, Congress repealed the mandatory participation requirement; however, producers were required to purchase crop insurance or waive their eligibility for any disaster benefits made available for the crop year.

In 2000, Congress passed legislation that increased subsidies of higher coverage levels, encouraging producers to purchase higher levels of crop insurance coverage. Coverage levels at 80% and 85% were born.

Premium subsidies continue to be a point of budgetary fodder. I would argue that the policy subsidies are only realized by the insured when a payable crop loss occurs. If an insured producer has a payable loss, only then will the insured realize a subsidized premium. In a nonloss year, the insured producer pays the premium owed at a reduced cost; the cost remains the cost, policy premium is not gratis.

Premium subsidies are based upon the percentage of the coverage level, like your auto coverage — the lower the deductible, the higher the premium cost. The maximum premium subsidy available is at 70%. Increased coverage levels or a lower deductible decreases the premium subsidy from RMA. The appetite

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for risk helps determine the coverage level for an insured — the lower the risk tolerance and the greater the need for financial protection, the higher the coverage level selected.

To the best of my knowledge, premium subsidies are the same for all crops, in all counties in the U.S. The chart on the opposite page shows the subsidy made available by level and unit plan.

The premium subsidy is applied after the acres are reported and accepted by RMA and reflected on the summary of coverage received from the crop company and

your agent. The summary of coverage will state a base premium dollar amount and an insured premium dollar amount, which will be base premium less subsidy to equal the insured premium. The insured premium will also have an administrative fee of \$30 per crop per county.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions regarding subsidies. ■

Curtis Evandenko serves as a risk management advisor with McGregor Risk Management Services. He can be reached at (509) 540-2632 or by email at cevanenko@mcgregorrisk.com.

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(Above) The Swannack farm crew from the Lamont area are (from left) Jim Swannack Jr, Colby Swannack, Don Swannack, Bob Swannack, Pete Swannack, Jacob Swannack, and Owen Swannack. Photo by Amy Swannack.



(Left) Bridger Abel (9), Flint Abel (7), Cannon Abel (8), Chloe Abel (6), and Caiden Abel (2) helping out during harvest at Broughton Land Company in Dayton.



Evening at Sievers Farm, just east of Spangle, after a day of wheat hauling. Photo by Marshall Howard.



Scott Ford was first on the scene to help put out a standing grain fire three miles west of Prescott on Highway 124 last July. A few minutes later the Fire District #7 crew from all around Prescott showed up. What could have been over 100 acres was only a 10-acre estimated loss of grain. Farmers and all volunteer fire crews are true heroes in Eastern Washington. Photo by Chris Oliver.



Harvest near Walla Walla. Photo by Mitch Frazier.

HAPPENINGS

*All dates and times are subject to change.
Please verify event before heading out.*

FEBRUARY 2025

4-6 SPOKANE AG SHOW. The largest farm machinery show in the Inland Northwest. More than 250 agriculture suppliers and service companies all under one roof. Held at the Spokane Convention Center. agshow.org

13 FARM BILL UPDATE. AMMO webinar with the National Association of Wheat Growers, Thursday, Feb. 13, beginning at 11:30 a.m. wawg.org/ammo-workshops/

19 NRCS AND FSA UPDATE. AMMO workshop. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. at the Lions Club in Washtucna, Wash. Lunch is provided. No charge for WAWG members; cost for nonmembers is \$25. Preregister by calling (509) 659-0610 or print out and mail form at wawg.org/ammo-workshops/

20 GLOBAL AND LOCAL WHEAT MARKETS. AMMO workshop with Alison Thompson, owner of The Money

Farm, and Washington State University's Randy Fortenbery. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. at the Hampton Inn Garden Springs in Spokane, Wash. Lunch is provided. No charge for WAWG members; cost for nonmembers is \$25. Preregister by calling (509) 659-0610 or print and mail form at wawg.org/ammo-workshops/

21 NRCS AND FSA UPDATE. AMMO workshop. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. at the USDA headquarters in Spokane Valley, Wash. Lunch is provided. No charge for WAWG members; cost for nonmembers is \$25. Preregister by calling (509) 659-0610 or print and mail form at wawg.org/ammo-workshops/

26 WAWG BOARD MEETING. Meeting starts at 10 a.m. at Washington Wheat Foundation Building, Ritzville, Wash. (509) 659-0610, wawg.org

27 HEALTHY MIND, HEALTHY FARM. AMMO workshop with Darla Tyler-McSherry focusing on mental health. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. at the Hampton Inn-Garden Springs in

Spokane, Wash. Lunch is provided. No charge for WAWG members; cost for nonmembers is \$25. Preregister by calling (509) 659-0610 or print and mail form at wawg.org/ammo-workshops/

MARCH 2025

2 SAUSAGE FEED. All meals will be to go. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Menu includes homemade sausage, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, green beans, roll, applesauce and pie. Uniontown Community Center, Uniontown, Wash. facebook.com/groups/2523604837767404/

7-9 SPRING ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOW. Professional artists and crafters from across the Northwest will display and sell their fine art, hand crafts and specialty foods. Spokane Fair and Expo Center, Spokane, Wash. custershows.com

18 WAWG BOARD MEETING. Meeting starts at 10 a.m. at Washington Wheat Foundation Building, Ritzville, Wash. (509) 659-0610, wawg.org ■



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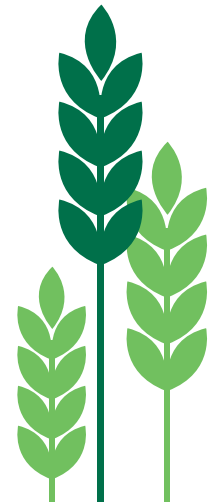
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