

# WHEAT LIFE

The official publication of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers

MAY | 2025



## The controversy around Spring Flat Creek

*Farmers, Ecology at odds over Whitman County waterway*

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### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

2025 Wheat College welcomes 'Wheat Pete'

WSDA report details ag resilience efforts

2024 winter wheat variety trial results

Wheat Ambassador Zach Klein reflects  
on Olympia Days trip

# WHEAT LIFE

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# President's Perspective



## Grower involvement matters

By Jeff Malone

*President, Washington Association of Wheat Growers*

In the midst of global uncertainty, volatile markets, shifting regulations, and a growing disconnect between consumers and producers, there's one thing I believe more than ever: grower involvement matters. It matters because our voices are needed now more than ever. Farming communities are shrinking. Many small and mid-sized operations have disappeared. Corporate ownership and large-

scale land buys are changing the face of agriculture, and we're losing not just acres but also the personal stories, values, and traditions that have long defined the American farmer. That's exactly why we need to be out there showing up, speaking up, and making sure our side of the story is told, not by folks who haven't lived this life, but by us, the people who are living it every day. When we don't speak, others will speak for us, and more often than not, they get it wrong.

I've been asked on more than one occasion if I actually write these monthly articles or if someone else does it for me. I write every word, because I want readers to hear directly from a farmer — not from an editor, not from someone unfamiliar with the ag industry, but from someone who's in the thick of it. Someone who's poured blood, sweat, and tears into the soil. Someone who knows firsthand the challenges and triumphs that come with this life. I believe that matters.

Being involved with the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG) has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. It's not just about knowing what's happening, it's about being on the front line of it. When news breaks, whether it's policy shifts, tariffs, or funding changes, I'm not reading about it secondhand. I'm part of the conversation, and that's given me the chance to make better decisions for my farm and my family. But more than that, it's about the people. The relationships I've built through WAWG have been incredibly meaningful. From D.C. to Olympia to Ritzville, I've met farmers, lawmakers, and ag leaders who are all working toward the same goal — to make sure the future of farming in Washington is viable and strong. That's not just inspiring, it's energizing. It reminds me that we're not alone, and that there's still a great deal of respect out there for what we do, as long as we're willing to tell our stories.

We are a dying breed. I don't say that to be dramatic, I say it because it's true. The numbers don't lie. But instead of fading quietly, I believe we should be stepping up, because the fewer of us there are, the more vital it is that we are involved. Every active farmer carries more weight today than ever before. And when we step up, when we get involved, we create a ripple effect that can reach far beyond our fields and fence lines.

If you've ever thought about getting involved with WAWG, the Washington Grain Commission, or the Washington Wheat Foundation, now is the time. When you're involved, you're not just informed, you're influencing the future of wheat farming in Washington. Your story matters. Your voice matters. And your perspective might just be the one that changes a conversation.

I never expected this role to be as fulfilling as it has been. But it's shown me that being a farmer today means more than producing wheat. It means advocating for our way of life, defending our rural communities, and ensuring that agriculture has a future in this state and in this country. Let's make sure Washington's wheat growers are not just part of the conversation, but leading it. ■

**Cover photo:** Ecology wants riparian zones; growers want data that shows exactly what is happening in Spring Flat Creek. See page 20. All photos are Shutterstock images or taken by *Wheat Life* staff unless otherwise noted.



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**Zach Klein**, 2024-25 Washington wheat ambassador  
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# WAWG MEMBERSHIP FORM

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<b>Family \$250</b> (2 family members)	X	X	X			X
<b>Partnership \$600</b> (1-5 family members)	X	X	X	X		X
<b>Convention \$720</b> (2 individuals)	X	X	X		X	X
<b>Lifetime \$3,000</b> (1 individual)	X	X	X	X		X
<b>Non-Voting Membership</b>						
<b>Student \$90</b>	X	X	X			
<b>Industry Associate \$250</b>	X	X	X			

## 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.*

## More member benefits:

- Greensheet ALERTS • WAWG updates
- Voice to WAWG through opinion surveys
- National Wheat Grower updates
- State and national legislative updates



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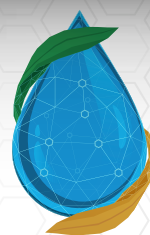
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## Growers testify in state committee hearings

On March 31, **Michelle Hennings**, executive director of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers, testified in front of the Washington State Senate Ways and Means Committee opposing SB 5794, which would eliminate tax preferences for transporting agricultural commodities.

Hennings told the committee that the elimination of these provisions threatens the viability of the state's wheat industry by imposing a new public utility tax on the transportation of grain to market. More than 90% of Washington's wheat is exported; most of it travels to ports on the West Coast.

"If this tax preference is eliminated, essentially, wheat will be taxed at every stage of transportation, and it will be farmers who are forced to eat this cost," Hennings said. "Farmers are already operating on razor-thin margins and barely breaking even. For example, farmers are getting around \$5 for a bushel of wheat, and it costs them currently an average of 85 cents to transport that wheat to market. Rising input costs are making it harder for our industry

to be viable. Farmers are price takers and cannot pass on costs. We need this tax preference to remain competitive."

The committee reinstated the tax preferences for transporting ag commodities before passing the bill out of committee on April 18. The bill passed out of the Senate on April 19.

On March 25, Grant County wheat grower **Ryan Poe** testified before the Washington State Senate Committee on Environment, Energy and Technology in support of HB 1912, concerning the exemption for fuels used for agricultural purposes in the Climate Commitment Act.

Poe told the committee most wheat farmers are now able to get carbon fee-free fuel and acknowledged the work the Washington State Department of Licensing has done on establishing a rebate program for farmers who paid those fees in 2023 and 2024. One of the ag industry's main priorities for the bill is to make the exemption for fuels used for the purpose of transporting agricultural products on public highways permanent. Unfortunately, the





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current bill doesn't do that, but it does push the exemption out through December 2029. Wheat growers are also supporting language in the bill that defines the Columbia and Snake rivers as public highways.

"... We agree with Ecology's interpretation of "public highways" to include public waterways for the on-road exemption. Barges transporting our wheat on the Snake and Columbia rivers are critical, and each one takes about 134 trucks off the road," Poe said.

The bill passed the Senate on April 16 with minor changes. The House must agree to the Senate changes before it goes to Gov. Ferguson to sign. See page 14 for more legislative updates. ■

## May board meeting scheduled

The next Washington Association of Wheat Growers'

(WAWG) board meeting will take place on May 13, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Washington Wheat Foundation annex building in Ritzville, Wash. WAWG board meetings are open to the public. ■

## Ag fuel rebate program extended to cover 2024

The Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL) announced they are expanding the Agriculture Support Program to producers and transporters who purchased fuel for agricultural purposes between Jan. 1, 2024, and Dec. 31, 2024.

Producers and transporters of agricultural products who paid a surcharge on fuel used for exempt purposes are eligible. The surcharge was imposed by a fuel supplier



**BENTON COUNTY FARM FAIR.** Marci Green (left), chair of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers' (WAWG) Public Information Committee, and Andrea Cox, WAWG conservation coordinator, spent a day sharing wheat's story with Tri-Cities fourth graders at the 2025 Farm Fair, organized by the Franklin County Farm Bureau.



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or retailer as a result of the Cap and Invest program. If a producer did not pay the surcharge because they have an agreement with their fuel supplier or retailer, they may not qualify. When applying, producers will need to provide:

- Individual and/or business details.
- Gallons of fuel used to produce and/or transport agricultural products for the 2024 calendar year.
- Type of agricultural products produced and/or transported.
- Documentation to ensure you are an agricultural producer and/or transporter.

Qualifying agricultural producers and transporters can apply online or by mailing in a paper application, both found at <https://dol.wa.gov/agriculture-support-program>. Paper applications may take up to 10-14 days longer to process due to mailing and manual handling. ■

## Washington wheat sends letter to trade ambassador

In March, Michelle Hennings, executive director of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG), and Casey Chumrau, CEO of the Washington Grain Commission (WGC), sent a letter to Ambassador Jamieson Greer from the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) expressing concerns regarding proposed actions under Section 301 in response to Chinese vessel dominance, including proposed port entrance fees.

“Our competitive edge lies in the excellent milling and baking quality of our wheat and the reliability of timely delivery. Like all U.S. wheat, Washington is rarely the low-cost wheat supplier. However, many of our markets are cost-sensitive and additional costs inadvertently inflicted by the proposed 301 actions would depress prices, decrease export demand, and negatively impact farmers already facing a challenging economic environment,” the letter said.

With prices already below break-even, Washington farmers cannot take another hit. Many of the inputs used to grow wheat are sourced from overseas, and any cost increase to ship those inputs will be passed through to the farmer who does not have the ability to pass cost increases on. The economic impact of Washington’s agriculture industry is substantial. In 2022, the Washington wheat industry alone contributed over \$3.1 billion to the state’s economy and supported thousands of jobs. About half of the U.S. wheat crop is exported each year, including

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around 90% of wheat grown in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and parts of Montana.

Both of the wheat industry’s national organizations, U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) and the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG), also raised concerns to USTR. Besides the entrance port fees, growers were worried about the mandate to transport U.S. goods on U.S.-built vessels, saying that such requirements would be logistically infeasible for commercial wheat exports.

In April, USTR finalized its Section 301 proposed changes after taking into consideration feedback from stakeholders and advisors. After 180 days, fees will be imposed on Chinese vessel owners and operators based on net tonnage per U.S. voyage; fees on operators of Chinese-built ships based on net tonnage or containers; and fees on foreign-built car carrier vessels based on capacity.

NAWG and USW released a statement thanking USTR for targeting the proposed Section 301 actions in ways that protect U.S. farm commodity export competitiveness.

“We appreciate USTR’s understanding of the impact the original proposals could have had on wheat growers and the grain trade. The uncertainty about the proposals was already causing problems for overseas customers who were hesitant to make purchases with additional port fees looming,” the national organizations said in a press release. ■

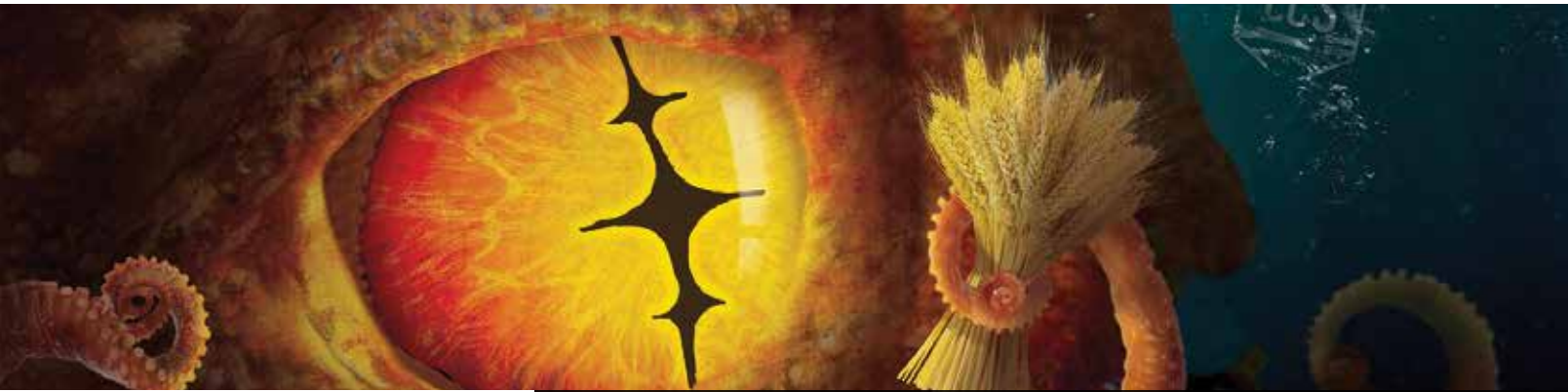
## Washington growers to plant more wheat, less barley in 2025

According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, wheat producers in Washington expect to plant 2.35 million acres of wheat in 2025, up 2% from last year. Winter wheat planted acres are expected to total 1.85 million acres for this year, up 3% from 2024. Spring wheat area planted is estimated at 500,000 acres, up 1% from last year.

Idaho is estimated to have 1.19 million acres planted to



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wheat this year, down 2% from 2024. Winter wheat acres planted are estimated at 790,000 acres, up 4% from last year. Spring wheat planted acres, excluding durum, are expected to total 400,000 acres, down 11% from last year. Total acres planted to winter wheat in Oregon are estimated at 750,000 acres for 2025, up 1% from 2024.

Nationally, all planted wheat acres are expected to total 45.4 million acres, down 2% from 2024. Winter wheat acres are estimated at 33.3 million acres, down slightly from 2024. Durum wheat planted acres in the U.S. for 2025 are estimated at 2.02 million acres, down 2% from the previous year. All other spring wheat is estimated at 10 million planted acres, down 6% from 2024.

Barley planted area in Idaho for 2025 is estimated at 530,000 acres,

unchanged from 2024. Oregon barley growers are expected to seed 30,000 acres, down 3% from last year. In Washington, area planted to barley is estimated at 68,000 acres, down 15% from the previous year. Total barley planted area in the U.S. is estimated at 2.32 million acres for 2025, down 2% from 2024. ■



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# POLICY MATTERS

## Legislators pass budgets; 2025 session ends on time

By Diana Carlen

*Lobbyist, Washington Association of  
Wheat Growers*

The Legislature adjourned on the 105th day of the 2025 Legislative Session on April 27 at 6:30 p.m. In the final week of the session, the Legislature adopted the 2025-2027 operating, capital, and transportation budgets. However, it is unknown if Gov. Ferguson will sign the operating budget, veto it, or partially veto it.

The main focus of the session was how to respond to the budget shortfall. Originally, Democrat budget writers had proposed \$21 billion in new taxes over four years, but the governor was critical of relying on a wealth tax and the large amount of taxes proposed. Democrat budget writers went back to the drawing board and proposed \$12 billion in new taxes over four years, but again, the governor said that was too high. The final operating budget passed by the Legislature on the final days of the session landed on almost \$9 billion in new revenue. The governor has not publicly stated whether he supports the final budget.

The Legislature also spent the final week passing bills. In total, the Legislature passed over 400 bills during the long session. A final report summarizing all major legislation impacting farmers will be posted at [wawg.org](http://wawg.org).

Once a bill passes the Legislature, it is delivered to the governor to be signed into law, vetoed, or partially vetoed (he has the authority to remove entire sections of a bill, but



not specific sentences). The governor has five days, excluding Sundays, to act on bills, unless the Legislature is within five days of adjournment, in which case the governor has 20 days to act. He has until May 20 to act on the budgets.

One of the bills the Washington Association of Wheat Growers has been following closely is the Agricultural Fuel Exemptions, sponsored by Rep. Tom Dent (R-Moses Lake). The final bill requires Ecology to publish a directory by Oct. 1 to notify farmers of retail fuel sellers that sell exempt fuel used for agricultural purposes. The bill also declares it is the legislative intent to continue the rebate program similar to the budget proviso from last year through June of 2027 for farmers who are not able to get exempt fuel. Finally, it extends the exemption for fuel used to transport agricultural products on public highways until Dec. 31, 2029. The final bill clarified that all propane used for agriculture is exempt until 2030. The House concurred on Senate amendments by a vote of 94-2 on April 24. The bill has been delivered to the governor for his signature. This was a top priority of Gov. Ferguson, and he is expected to sign it.

### Final Operating Budget

Senate and House Democrat budget writers unveiled their final operating budget on the second-to-last day of session. The final budget raises taxes by about \$9 billion over the next four years while also reducing spending to address the \$16 billion budget shortfall. The final operating budget appropriates nearly \$78 billion in spending for the 2025-2027 biennium, almost \$6 billion higher than the current two-year budget. This is an 8.2% increase in spending from the previous biennium.

The final budget does not include some previous tax proposals that had been floated earlier, including a payroll tax on businesses with payroll expenses of





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Rubisco Seeds' Hybrids									
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MERCEDES	5145	4419	4359	3756	3881	5393	MERCEDES	4945	6569
AKILAH						5876	AKILAH	5686	5455
PHOENIX CL	4900	4611	4043	3398	3454	5093	DRIFTER	4856	6795

Data courtesy University of Idaho, Control Mean= Athena, Dwarf Essex, Ericka

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\$7 million or more. It also does not include a full-blown wealth tax, but Democrats proposed a slimmed down version to test its legality in the courts. The final budget funds pay raises for state employees, but does not include furloughs for state employees as Gov. Ferguson and the Senate had previously proposed. The final budget also includes \$100 million to help cities and counties hire and retain police officers, which was a top priority for the governor. The final budget also leaves the rainy day fund untouched in response to the governor's concerns about not leaving enough reserves.

The budget includes the largest tax increases in the state since the early 1980s. The final budget includes raising B&O tax rates on a variety of industries and applies an extra surcharge for businesses with more than \$250 million in gross Washington state income. It also applies the sales tax to a variety of services, raises the capital gains tax and estate tax, repeals certain tax preferences, and includes a tax aimed at Tesla. It also includes a 50% increase in the Discover Pass to access state parks, 38% increase in hunting and fishing licenses, and 50% increase in liquor licenses.

The operating budget passed the Senate by a vote of 28-19 and the House by a vote of 52-45.

### Final Capital Budget

The Legislature passed the bipartisan 2025-2027 capital budget on the last day of session. The \$7.5 billion budget funds construction and infrastructure projects across the state. Highlights include:

- Over \$60 million for the Columbia River Water Supply Development Program, including the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program.
- More than \$50 million for Yakima River Basin Water Supply.
- \$8.5 million to repair and rebuild the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation Canal.

### Final Transportation Budget

On the final day, the Legislature also passed a \$15.5 billion transportation plan, including a 6 cent gas tax increase for the first time in almost a decade. The gas tax will jump to 55.4 cents per gallon from its current 49.4 cents. Diesel drivers will also be impacted with diesel seeing a 6 cent total hike — 3 cents in 2025 and another 3 cents in 2027. Beginning in 2026, most fuel taxes would automatically increase 2% per year based on inflation. Diesel, too, will see its inflation-based costs increase starting in 2028. The Senate passed the bill by a vote of 34-13 and the House by a vote of 80-18. ■

## NAWG urges sound science in crop protection decisions

The National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG), alongside a coalition of agricultural stakeholders, sent a letter to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Brooke Rollins, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lee Zeldin, and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., urging their support for a congressional letter led by Sen. Pete Ricketts (R-Neb.), Sen. Deb Fischer (R-Neb.), Rep. Mark Alford (R-Mo.), and Rep. Randy Feenstra (R-Iowa). The letter emphasizes the need for sound science and risk-based analysis to guide crop protection decisions within the HSS and the EPA. It also stresses the importance of ensuring agriculture has a voice in policy discussions, particularly with the Make America Healthy Again Commission. The letter garnered strong bipartisan backing, with 79 members of Congress signing in support.

"Our crop protection tools are vital assets to farmers throughout America. If we fail to utilize sound science and risk-based analysis in our decision making, we risk undermining our domestic agriculture production," said NAWG CEO Chandler Goule. "NAWG is grateful for this congressionally led letter highlighting the importance of using sound science and risk-based analysis as the Make America Healthy Again Commission works to find common ground. The future of American agriculture relies on access to safe, affordable inputs to help feed the U.S." ■

## Murray joins USTR letter regarding tariffs, agriculture

In April, U.S. Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) joined Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) and 17 colleagues asking U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ambassador Jamieson Greer for information on how the administration's tariff taxes will impact farmers across the nation.

"We write with great concern about the impact of the administration's reckless tariff agenda on our nation's farmers. Farmers not only have billions of dollars in commodities from last year waiting to be sold, but also have started spring planting and rely on stable markets for their planning," the letter said. "As farm organizations and economists have been warning for months, key trading partners will continue to retaliate against U.S. agricultural products as a result of President Trump's tariffs. The direct economic impact and uncertainty on America's farmers stands to change the future of agricultural trade relationships for generations." ■



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# TOPPING THE CHARTS

**National Wheat Yield Contest Winners**

<b>1st Place</b> Winter Wheat (Washington) Garrett Warren <b>LCS Shine/Jefe</b>	<b>1st Place</b> Winter Wheat (Idaho) Clint Zenner <b>LCS Shine</b>	<b>Bin Buster</b> Winter Wheat (Dryland) Steve Van Grunsven <b>LCS Shine</b>	<b>Bin Buster</b> Winter Wheat (Irrigated) Phillip Gross <b>LCS Jet</b>	<b>2nd Place</b> Winter Wheat (Idaho) Harlan Zenner <b>LCS Shine</b>	<b>3rd Place</b> Winter Wheat (Idaho) Mike Stout <b>LCS Shine</b>
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## A look behind the fields: Why farmers use pesticides, fertilizers

For those unfamiliar with life on the farm, the use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers might seem concerning or confusing. But for wheat farmers and others who grow our food, these tools are essential in raising healthy, abundant crops while caring for the land that sustains them. Let's break down why farmers use these inputs and how they play a vital role in feeding a growing population — ethically, safely, and sustainably.

### Protecting crops = protecting food

Just like weeds can choke out your backyard garden, they can also overrun wheat fields, stealing sunlight, nutrients, and moisture from the crop. Herbicides allow farmers to protect wheat and other crops from invasive plants that would otherwise reduce yields and quality. Similarly, insecticides are used to protect plants from destructive pests that eat or damage the crop.

Without crop protection products, it's estimated that global crop yields could decrease by 30 to 40% due to pests alone<sup>1</sup>. These tools allow farmers to reduce food loss in the field and grow more food using fewer acres — something that's especially important today as farmland shrinks and population grows. Beyond improving yields, pesticides and herbicides also help reduce labor and fuel use, because fewer tractor passes are needed to manually manage weeds or pests<sup>2</sup>.

Importantly, modern crop protection products go through extensive scientific testing before reaching the market and are regulated to ensure they are applied safely and responsibly<sup>3</sup>.

### The role of fertilizers

As crops grow, they pull nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium from the soil. These are essential for plant health, just like vitamins and minerals are for humans. But soil can't naturally replenish these nutrients fast enough to support consistent food production. That's where fertilizers come in.

Fertilizers help replenish the soil, ensuring that each season's crop has access to the nutrients it needs to grow strong, healthy, and nutritious<sup>4</sup>.

There are two main types:

- Synthetic fertilizers are made in a lab and offer quick, targeted nutrients.
- Organic fertilizers come from natural sources like compost or manure and work more slowly.

While organic fertilizers are preferred by some, they are typically more expensive and less efficient, which is why many farmers use synthetic options. The good news? Consumers can choose based on their values and preferences — organic and conventionally grown foods both have a place in today's food system.

### Striking a balance

Today's farmers are not trying to produce the absolute most they can at any cost. Instead, they aim to optimize production — growing enough to meet demand while protecting natural resources for future generations. Farmers care deeply about their land. After all, if the soil suffers, so does their livelihood.

Investing in soil health, irrigation efficiency, crop rotation, conservation tillage, and new technologies is not just good stewardship, it's smart business. But it all depends on farmers being able to stay financially viable. Without a return on their investment, they can't reinvest in better equipment, cleaner technology, or regenerative practices.

The bottom line: crop protection tools and fertilizers are not shortcuts. They are essential parts of a complex, thoughtful approach to modern farming. And at the heart of it all are farmers who care deeply about their crops, their communities, and the land that feeds us all. ■

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> CropLife, "How Insecticides Are Shaping the Future of Agriculture," <https://www.croplife.com/crop-inputs/insecticides/how-insecticides-are-shaping-the-future-of-agriculture>

<sup>2</sup> Nebraska Corn Board, "Why Farmers Use Pesticides and Herbicides," <https://nebraskacorn.gov/cornstalk/research/why-farmers-use-pesticides-and-herbicides>

<sup>3</sup> National Library of Medicine, "Health and Environmental Effects of Pesticides," <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7908628>

<sup>4</sup> EOS Data Analytics, "Organic vs. Synthetic Fertilizers," <https://eos.com/blog/organic-vs-synthetic-fertilizers>

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# Spring Flat Creek controversy

FARMERS, ECOLOGY AT ODDS OVER WHITMAN COUNTY WATERWAY

By Trista Crossley  
Editor, *Wheat Life*

A Whitman County stream, parts of which run dry in the summer, is causing tensions between landowners and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology).

Whitman County landowners who own land along Spring Flat Creek are being told by Ecology that they are polluting the waterway and will have to take steps to remedy that — mainly by putting in riparian buffers — or face hefty fines. Landowners want to see the water quality data Ecology has gathered that proves the agency's case.

## Background

Spring Flat Creek runs between Pullman and Colfax, Wash., and drains approximately 13,200 acres of primarily dryland agriculture and rangeland. Much of the creek runs parallel to Highway 195 and doubles as a roadside ditch in some places. The creek meets up with the South

Fork Palouse River just outside of Colfax, where the concrete flood control channel begins. Much of the upper portion of the waterway is considered an intermittent creek, with the majority of water that moves down it coming from snowmelt or heavy rainstorms. During summer, the water in the creek tends to be stagnant with little flow, while in the upper reaches of the watershed, the creek is completely dry.

In August of 2024, Ecology published a straight to implementation strategy internal work plan for Spring Flat Creek to address three things that Ecology says don't meet the state's water quality standards (especially for aquatic life): temperature, low dissolved oxygen, and high pH.

The most well-known option for a water cleanup plan is a total maximum daily load (TMDL) calculation, but there are a few other options that are less time consuming and expensive, such as the straight-to-implementation (STI) effort, that can get to cleaner water faster.



It's not unusual that the part of Spring Flat Creek that runs through the Germain family's land runs dry nine months out of the year. Photo courtesy of Steve Germain.



“Straight to implementation is a strategy that we use in particularly small watersheds where the sources of pollution are nonpoint, and the fixes are readily identifiable,” said Chad Atkins, watershed unit supervisor for Ecology’s Eastern Region Office. “The problems and the fixes are well known, and we feel like we can get to clean water without having to do a really significant investment in a TMDL.”

In Spring Flat Creek’s case, Ecology has determined that “all violations of water quality standards are the result of land uses that cause nonpoint pollution,” such as agriculture and stream channelization. There are no point source dischargers on Spring Flat Creek. Ecology concluded that the water quality failures are primarily due to:

- The lack of low soil disturbance tillage practices (direct seed and no-till) in upland crop production areas.
- The lack of appropriate setbacks/buffers from adjacent land uses on watershed streams.
- The lack of appropriate setbacks/buffers from adjacent land uses along stormwater conveyance features.
- Inadequate/poor riparian condition and structure throughout the watershed.

Ecology identified approximately 345 riparian acres of Spring Flat Creek as being used for dryland crop production; 88 riparian acres being impacted by livestock; 47 riparian acres are in perennial grasses; and 34 riparian acres are roadways or impervious surfaces. In all cases, Ecology’s best management practices point to woody buffers as the best solution, followed by conservation tillage and residue management in the case of dryland crop acres. While buffer widths may vary depending on the channel width, growers are



Robert Germain (right) is one of the landowners along Spring Flat Creek that has been notified by the Washington State Department of Ecology that he is polluting the creek. Due to health issues, his son, Steve, is communicating with the department on his father’s behalf. Photo courtesy of Steve Germain.

likely looking at a minimum of 60 feet on each side of the creek beginning from the ordinary high water mark.

### **What the growers say: Steve Germain**

In mid-2023, Germain received a call from Ecology with some disturbing news. Germain, whose father owns just over 100 acres near the headwaters of Spring Flat Creek, was told his father would have to put in 100-foot buffers immediately and be solely responsible for the cost of building and maintaining them. The family rents out their ground to a local farmer who grows wheat, garbs, and peas. The farmer direct seeds with one tillage pass every three years. Due to his father’s health issues, Germain has been communicating with Ecology on this issue.

When Germain pressed for more information, he was directed to the Revised Code of Washington that simply states one is not allowed to pollute any waterway in the state of Washington. The Ecology employee told Germain that a field condition evaluation had been done, and Germain filed a public records request to find out exactly what information had been collected. He said it consisted of six pictures taken from the road right after spring runoff and a spreadsheet with values in it, but no real information. Through emails, Germain kept pressing for more information.

“He (the Ecology employee) continued to point back to the RCW, point back to the ‘your dad has to do this right now, or there’s going to be fines against your dad from the Department of Ecology,’ and I just kept saying that I needed more information,” Germain said. “You need to tell me what the criteria is. Where are your water tests that show what’s going on in Spring Flat Creek? Because I knew and all the farmers will tell you, that Spring Flat Creek, especially at the headwaters where my dad’s farm is, is dry nine months out of the year. They had taken their field evaluation at the right time in March, right in the middle of spring runoff so they could get these pictures that show water running through drill tracks. It was very frustrating because it really felt like they were gathering

information and making decisions based on very broad strokes.”

Another thing that troubled Germain was he was being told that riparian zones would have to be established up in the draws away from the creek. Two years later, he said he still hasn’t seen any reports that clearly spell out what is happening in the watershed with data to back it up.

In October 2024, Germain received a warning letter from Ecology. The letter told him to contact the department to discuss his options for resolving the issue or face fines. At this point, Hallie Ladd had taken over as Ecology’s Palouse Water Implementation lead. Germain said he exchanged emails with Ladd, once again requesting information, but received no solid answers.

In December 2024, Ecology held a meeting for Spring Flat Creek landowners. Germain said growers were told, again, that they needed to work with Ecology and the local conservation districts to come up with a plan to install riparian buffers. Ecology also disclosed that there was some funding available to help install the buffers, as well as funding to compensate growers for the land that would be taken out of production. However, the amount of funding and how long it will last was unclear.

For Germain, who had read Ecology’s STI internal work plan, one thing stood out. According to the plan, the STI strategy does not include an initial water quality study to establish baseline conditions and to model the load reductions needed.

“So, the one question I had at the meeting was, if you have no baseline to establish what the pollutant is, much less what was going on before the pollutants started, how are you going to base the results of your implementation plan on that?” he said.



Spring Flat Creek in mid-April as it runs through Robert Germain’s land.

Another concern raised at the meeting came from a Farm Service Agency employee who pointed out that if riparian zones are installed, that acreage could be permanently lost from a farmer’s baseline acres.

“In effect, they are saying that once you take that land out of production, you can never get it back,” Germain said. “That’s plain dirty there, especially knowing that Spring Flat Creek is empty nine months out of the year. I understand that you’re going to get runoff in the wet parts of the year; that’s why we have storm drains.”

At the meeting, Ladd told landowners where on Ecology’s website they could find data from water sampling sites along Spring Flat Creek. Germain found a site just downstream from his family’s property, but it showed that no information had been gathered for that site. Germain confirmed that fact with Ladd in January 2025. That was Germain’s last contact with Ecology. He is concerned that once the buffers are installed, there’s no guarantee that Ecology won’t come back and ask for more.

“There’s no facts that any of what they’re asking the farmers to do is really going to make an impact,” he said. “The pros of it are that they’re trying to protect water, and I agree with that. I think we do need to do our part. The cons of it are they’re not giving any data to say that what they want the farmers to do will really impact the water. This is them really using any means they feel necessary to move their agenda forward at the cost and impact to the farmers.”





Spring Flat Creek runs through one of the fields owned by Craig Kincaid (right) and his brother, Marty. The Kincaids worry that if they install the buffers required by Ecology, they will lose the ability to farm a larger part of this field.

### What the growers say: Craig Kincaid

The Kincaids grow wheat, canola, and some chickpeas using a mix of conventional tillage and direct seeding. One of their fields borders Highway 195 and has about a half mile of Spring Flat Creek running through it. Kincaid got his initial letter from Ecology in July 2023.

“The letter kind of came out of the blue,” he said. “Obviously, it’s a visible stream, and I think it’s probably why it was targeted. I don’t know that it would have any higher priority than any other watershed. It’s not unique in my opinion. I think its proximity to the highway makes it an easy target.”

Like Germain, Kincaid said the creek tends to have minimal water in it in summer and fall, and he’s never seen any fish in there. He acknowledges that the creek could benefit from some riparian zone work, but doesn’t think that the buffers Ecology wants are the only answer. In fact, he believes that if his family were to install Ecology’s buffers, they would cause more problems.

“What Ecology wants is 60-foot buffers on both sides of the stream, and they want them covered in bush and trees. That’s really where, at least for us, the problem lies,” Kincaid said. “The trees will make doing ditch maintenance pretty much impossible. We will end up with a giant flood plain. And not only that, but we have bridges that cross the creek. We have lots of access points. All these things that’s going to cause a ton of trouble when we can’t keep that ditch clean. We know we will have to do something, maybe, but does it need to be their way? What if a 15-foot grass buffer strip would accomplish what they wanted?”

Kincaid anticipates that if the creek starts spreading out and flooding, the fields surrounding the area won’t be able to drain as well and will become less viable for farming. He was also at the December meeting in Colfax, where he

said Ecology didn’t provide any additional answers.

“They say there’s a problem, but I haven’t seen any information, any actual testing information. They tell you they have it, but they haven’t produced it, to my knowledge,” he said.

### Ecology’s response

According to Atkins, before Ecology performs a watershed evaluation, data has been collected that confirms that the watershed is polluted. In the case of Spring Flat Creek, that data dates back to 2006 when the department began establishing TMDLs for the South Fork Palouse River Watershed. In 2023, Ecology prioritized the Spring Flat Creek watershed and performed a watershed evaluation, where department employees visually inspected the waterway from public roads and documented conditions that the department says are known to cause nonpoint source pollution, such as gully formation; signs of sheet and rill erosion; and destabilized banks from tillage practices.

“We use specific criteria that the science tells us is associated with pollution, and then we go out in the watershed, and we prioritize parcels where pollution is occurring,” Atkins said. “We’ve done an exhaustive review of the science at our agency on things like riparian health and tillage practices. That science has identified those criteria that we use in the field. It’s a combination of past experience as well as a really thorough review of the existing literature.”

Watershed evaluations were also done in 2024 and 2025. Ladd said the evaluations generally happen in the spring.

“We’re looking at the runoff that is typical of the pollution that we’re looking at for nonpoint sources, and

it helps us document and tell our story and also explain to the landowners or the producers what we're seeing that is contributing to pollution of the water body," Ladd said.

Ten landowners in the Spring Flat Creek Watershed have been notified by Ecology since 2023 regarding nonpoint source pollution.

Ecology has a database that shows water quality monitoring, current and historic, and includes data on Spring Flat Creek. The data includes Ecology's own data and data submitted to them. The department has five data point collections on Spring Flat Creek: a groundwater monitoring well near Landfill Road and Highway 195 and four on the south end of Colfax, where the creek enters the flood control channel. The mapping system the agency uses also shows a monitoring point near where Carothers Road joins Highway 195, but as Germain pointed out, it has no data associated with it; Ecology confirmed that it is not one of their sites.

Atkins and Ladd pushed back on landowners' claims that Ecology has not produced data that proves farmers are causing problems in the watershed and therefore can't establish a baseline to track improvements.

"I think there's a misperception that if we grab a sample, that tells us where the pollution is coming from," Atkins said. "That's not the tool that the science tells us is most useful to identify pollution sources; that is our watershed evaluation work. We go out and identify pollution sources using that tool. Our straight to implementation plan has a monitoring strategy built into it. We will be



Part of Spring Flat Creek runs alongside Highway 195 between Pullman and Colfax, Wash.

doing monitoring work as we implement improvements in the watershed to see where we stand."

According to Ladd, Ecology is finalizing a grant with the Palouse Conservation District to collect data at monitoring stations along the creek. That data collection will include stage height, water temperature, and dissolved oxygen and is designed to monitor the watershed as a whole, not individual parcels or properties. However, Atkins cautioned that Ecology doesn't expect the best management practices that farmers implement to affect water quality data immediately.

"Nonpoint pollution is episodic. It's dynamic. It's accumulative. It takes time

To see data collection points on Spring Flat Creek, not all of which are Ecology's, go to [apps.ecology.wa.gov/waterqualityatlas/wqa/map](https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/waterqualityatlas/wqa/map). Click on "Add/Remove Map Data" on the left. In the Map Layers box, select "EIM Locations" and click on the go button. Zoom into the area you are interested in. The data point collections are represented by little squares; click on one to see information associated with it.





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for the benefits of those efforts to be realized in the data,” he explained.

Ecology is standing firm on what they want done along the creek. Atkins said buffers less than the minimum width — 60 feet on each side — or grassy strips will not meet Ecology’s best management practice requirements. In cases where the buffers make it hard to farm an area, such as between the buffer and a road, the department will work with the landowner to come up with a strategy.

Despite the intermittent nature of Spring Flat Creek, it still falls under Washington’s definition of “waters of the state.” So do the creek’s ephemeral draws. Ladd said the department isn’t ruling out requiring riparian buffers in the draws, but those would be site specific.

“Right now, for Spring Flat Creek, we are focusing on the main stem. However, if there’s other practices, like converting to no till that could help with the erosion of those draws, or if I’m on-site with a landowner and we could see that the draw is heavily eroded and is contributing significant sediment to the main stem of Spring Flat Creek, we’d want to work with them to also protect that area to help reduce pollution,” she said.

There is funding for landowners to install and maintain the riparian buffers. There’s also a buffer incentive plan that pays up to \$350 per acre per year for land in the buffer; however, that’s only available if the full riparian management zone is buffered. Producers who install just the minimum 60-foot buffer will get paid up to \$300 per acre. Contracts will last for 15 years. Although the work is funded by Ecology, landowners will work with the local conservation districts.

Ladd said she will continue to follow up with Spring Flat Creek landowners through phone calls and

emails. She anticipates sending out more letters after analyzing the results of the 2025 watershed evaluation. Regarding the warning letters some producers have already received, enforcement action isn’t necessarily the next step.

“We haven’t made any decisions in that regard, and we want to absolutely continue to work with people and are committed to getting out there, doing site visits and working with them to protect water quality,” she said. “I just want to make it clear that we will continue to work with them. I know there’s a lot of questions out there, and (producers) can contact me at any time. I’m happy to talk with them on the phone, email, do a site visit, if welcomed.”

“We recognize that agriculture is an important industry in the state, and we believe strongly that we don’t have to choose between clean water and a healthy agricultural industry,” Atkins added. “That’s in our minds as we go about doing our nonpoint work. Those two things do not need to be mutually exclusive, and we have lots of examples, statewide, where water quality is being protected, and we have productive farms and ranches.” ■

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# 2025 Wheat College preview

ONTARIO CEREAL SPECIALIST WILL BE FEATURED SPEAKER

By Trista Crossley  
Editor, *Wheat Life*

**Peter “Wheat Pete” Johnson** will be the featured speaker at this year’s Wheat College, which will be held June 4 at the Wheatland Fairgrounds in Ritzville, Wash.

Johnson is the resident agronomist with Real Agriculture, where he hosts a weekly podcast, “Wheat Pete’s Word.” He spent 30 years as the Ontario cereal specialist and operates a small farm near Lucan, Ontario, where he constantly tries out new production ideas. While Johnson plans to cover a range of topics at Wheat College, he’s hoping growers’ questions and feedback will play a major role in what he talks about.

“Come loaded for bear with questions, and we’ll let the questions and what the audience wants to learn direct the presentation,” he said.

One of the topics that will feature prominently in Johnson’s presentation is lessons learned from the Great Lakes Yield Enhancement Network (YEN) program. The program, which is based on a similar program in the UK, was started by the Michigan Wheat Board and the Grain Farmers of Ontario in 2021. According to Johnson, the YEN program flips the traditional “researchers doing small plot research on the farm” and, instead, takes yield data from farmers’ crops and tries to figure out what things matter. The Great Lakes YEN includes farmers not only from the Great Lake states and Ontario, Canada, but states like Missouri, Kentucky, New York, and, for the first time, a farmer in Washington state. However, Johnson is clear that this isn’t just another yield contest.

“In a yield contest, whoever has the best soil wins, you know? The dairy farmers always win because they have alfalfa and manure in the rotation,” he said. “This particular program looks at percent of potential yield. That really gives a nice benchmark for a grower to say, ‘wow,



I’m really doing a good job of capturing the resources available to me’ or ‘oh my gosh, where am I slipping the clutch?’”

In the YEN concept, it’s the yield vs. the potential yield that is most important. Growers use an equation based on a location’s solar radiation and rainfall to come up with a potential yield number that they then compare to their actual yield. In their meetings, growers in the YEN will compare yields from farms with similar soils and talk through what the growers did during the growing season. Johnson said that discussion is

a phenomenal way to engage growers and helps researchers sort out what the critical components to good yields are. There is also a Canadian Maritime YEN that includes growers from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, which Johnson will also talk about.

Washington dryland wheat growers might wonder how well the data from the Great Lakes region or the Maritime region will translate to Eastern Washington. Johnson acknowledged that the specifics might be different, but it’s the process of figuring out the important factors that matters most.

“Let’s figure out which ones of these are important, make the most difference,” he said. “You have to look in your own jurisdiction at the components that matter and figure out what those are and then come back and say, okay, if it’s heads per meter squared, if that is what drives my yield, how do I get more heads per meter squared? Or, if it’s seeds per head or whatever that answer is, you can zero in and try to do a better job on the things that matter most in your area.”

One of the factors the Great Lakes YEN is exploring is splitting data by latitude, north vs. south, because they’re finding significant differences.

“When you say the dry area of Washington state, well, okay, it’s dry, but your climate isn’t necessarily all that

## 2025 Wheat College, June 4, Wheatland Fairgrounds in Ritzville

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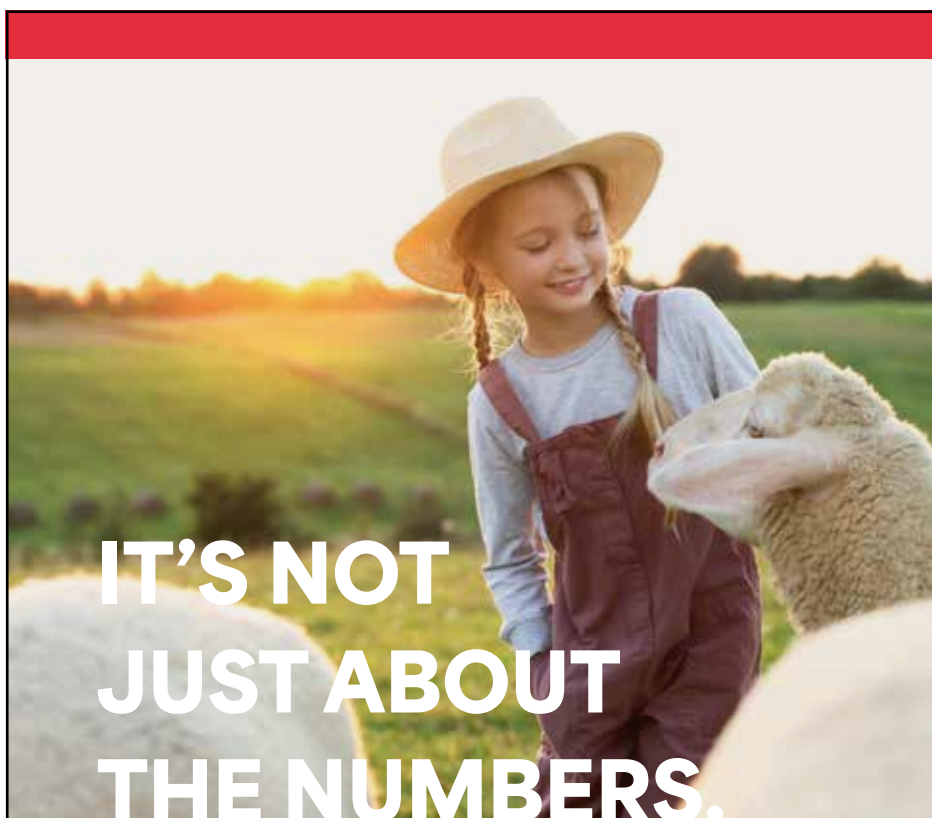
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different than the climate in Ontario because of your elevation,” Johnson pointed out. “And if moisture is always (the limiting factor), that’s the beauty of percent of potential yield; we look at that moisture calculation. How much moisture do you have in the soil at the start of the year? How much rainfall do you get? And if you’re moisture limited, we take that into account when we do your potential yield.”

Johnson calls farming the “art of applying the science” and says a good farmer is both an artist and a scientist. His podcast is available at [realagriculture.com/wheat-petes-word/](http://realagriculture.com/wheat-petes-word/).

Following Johnson’s presentation, growers will hear industry updates followed by lunch. The afternoon session of Wheat College will include a rotation of topics from researchers and industry stakeholders that will include a drone demonstration, using nutrient management to produce high-yielding wheat, and a look at how seed care impacts the crop.

Wheat College is free of charge and open to all growers. You do not have to be a member of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG) to attend. Please preregister by filling out the form at [wawg.org/ammo-workshops/](http://wawg.org/ammo-workshops/) or by calling the WAWG office at (509) 659-0610. RSVP by May 15 to be entered in multiple prize drawings. Registration, networking, and doughnuts will begin at 9:30 a.m., with the main event beginning at 10 a.m. ■



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# Helping farmers bounce back

REPORT DETAILS WSDA EFFORTS TO TACKLE AG VIABILITY IN THE FACE OF A CHANGING CLIMATE

By Trista Crossley  
Editor, *Wheat Life*

In a recently released report, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is tackling ag viability in the face of a changing climate and figuring out ways to help farmers come out ahead.

Published in March 2025, the “WSDA Climate Resilience Plan for Washington Agriculture” is designed to support the state’s ag viability and vitality through ongoing and future climate change. WSDA worked with stakeholders, including the Washington wheat industry; reviewed science, climate plans, and reports; and assessed the current state of the department’s programs and activities to gather information. The report is intended to guide the “efficient, effective, and equitable distribution of resources to maximize the adaptive capacity of Washington agriculture.”

“I think resilience is really the ability of a farm to withstand a disruption to the system and not just withstand, but really thrive through it,” explained Dani Gelardi, WSDA senior soil scientist and climate coordinator. “The disruptions we’re talking about in this plan are about climate change, whether that be extreme weather, changing temperature patterns, or changing water supply. It’s the ability of a farm to withstand them. It’s really about viability. Can you still turn a profit, support your farm community, pay your workers, and have a sort of mean-

ingful livelihood off of this work?”

The report finds that some of the climate change-related on-farm risks to Washington’s agriculture include:

- **Changes to the water supply.** Warming temperatures and shifts in precipitation patterns are expected to significantly alter the timing and volume of water available. Water supply is expected to increase early in the growing season and decrease later in the growing season. Changing temperatures may change crop growth patterns, leading to changes in the timing and quantity of water demand.
- **Increased threat to water quality.** Flooding and heavy rainfall can cause erosion and soil runoff, leading to increased nutrient loads and sediment in waterways.
- **Increased impact and losses from extreme events, drought, and fire,** which can cause significant losses to crops, livestock, buildings, and equipment. The report finds that insurance programs may need to evolve to protect against damages, but will likely become more expensive, increasing financial stress on producers.
- **Risks to crop and forage quality.**
- **Increased impacts from pests, weeds, and disease.** Many pests and weeds benefit from warmer tempera-





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tures and increased carbon dioxide. Increased weed pressure may exacerbate the growing problem of herbicide resistance.

• **Changing crop suitability.**

Producers reported a need for information about crops and practices that are resilient to multiple climate stressors, including drought and extreme temperatures.

Off-farm risks include increased threats to transportation and utility infrastructure; increased regulatory costs, risks, and market volatility; and lack of climate data, research, technical support, and equipment.

The plan sets out six goals, complete with strategies and actions, and WSDA's role in addressing risks and enhancing agricultural resilience. The goals are to:

- Increase agriculture's preparedness for, response to, and recovery from climate-related extreme events.
- Support the adoption of climate-resilient agricultural practices.
- Safeguard a sufficient quantity of high-quality surface and groundwater for people, farms, and aquatic ecosystems.
- Prepare the agricultural workforce for a changing climate.
- Minimize impacts from pests, weeds, and disease.
- Ensure that laws, policies, and regulations efficiently work towards climate-resilience and agricultural viability.

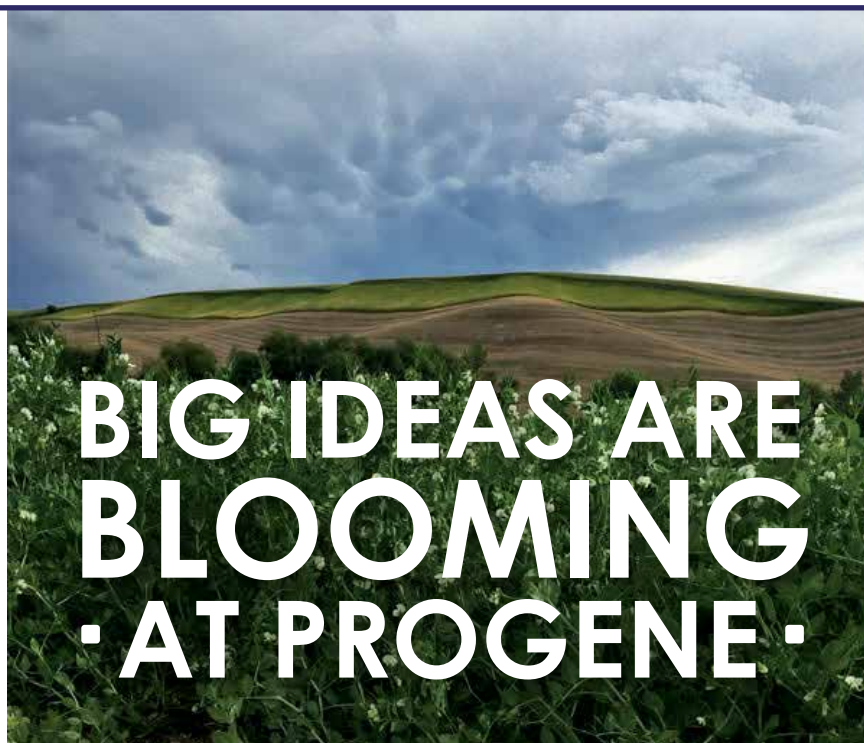
Gelardi said the department is already incorporating elements of the plan into its programs. For example, WSDA's nutrient management technical services program is looking at reassessing dairy lagoon storage specifications to accommodate projected climate changes. The Washington Soil Health Initiative

is exploring programs that increase soil organic matter so that farms are less susceptible to drought conditions and increased pest pressure. Other goals will require more funding and likely more staff.

"A lot of what we identify (in the plan) is a part of our normal book of work, but, of course, there are other proposed actions that require more funding and focus and more resources, and that is a little bit to be seen," she said. "We have a state budget deficit. I don't think we're proposing anything massively expensive, but we are saying that this needs to be a priority of the state, to support farmers. Let's put resources towards the things we think are important."

The report was funded by the Climate Commitment Act, which has generated millions of dollars in revenue for the state, but Gelardi said farmers haven't seen much of that funding come their way. She hopes the plan is a way to direct more dollars to addressing growers' climate-related concerns.

"We think that's a huge opportunity to support the state economy, the state



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landscapes, farmers, rural livelihoods. There's a huge opportunity there," she explained.

While climate change is usually presented as doom and gloom, the report found a few advantages for Washington growers. For example, the state's relatively temperate climate, surface water availability, extensive irrigation systems, and variety of crops increase the potential for Washington to become an even more agriculturally important region even as other regions are more severely impacted. Emerging technologies, increased climate investments, and advances in climate science and research funding may help increase farm resilience.

Stakeholder engagement was especially illuminating to the team. They talked to more than 400 farmers and 200 farmworkers. Throughout the document, quotes from stakeholders are used to highlight key points.

"We can look at the data and see the temperature and the precipitation shifts, but when someone says this is how it impacts me and my land and my family, those stories never get old and are really important for people to hear," Gelardi said. "There were some surprising elements, like hearing that people are as concerned about the impacts of climate change as they are climate-related regulations and market pressures. That's really important for people to hear because it's tough to make it in farming, and there are a lot of burdens that people are being faced with."

While the plan may be aimed more at the institutions that support agriculture, farmers may find it useful as a source to cite when applying for grants and for finding out about WSDA's existing resources and current projects. For example, if a grower is concerned about changing pest pressures, the plan includes a list of all the resources that are available. (Check out the Goals, Strategies, and Actions portion of the plan.)

"A lot of our programs have been at the intersection of environmental health and farm profitability since the beginning. I think what this does is raise the visibility of our climate work and aggregates our work under a more cohesive narrative and directs future resources," Gelardi said. "Sometimes, people hear climate change or climate resilience and think it's some kind of niche environmental concern. And what I really hope the report illustrates is that climate resilience is economic viability and environmental health and worker safety and community livelihoods. It's so much more than a niche issue, and it touches all of us."

A copy of the report can be found at [agr.wa.gov/washington-agriculture/climate-resilience-plan-for-washington-agriculture](http://agr.wa.gov/washington-agriculture/climate-resilience-plan-for-washington-agriculture). ■



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# NRCS staff working to put farmers first

Grower meetings, workshops continue to provide conservation feedback

By Andrea Cox

*Conservation Coordinator, Washington Association of Wheat Growers*

Winter and early spring grower meetings have provided a great opportunity for me to continue to meet growers, have conversations about programs, and visit fields to see practices that they've implemented. I've been pleased with the number of growers that have reached out to me with questions and feedback on Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs and the number of invitations I've received to visit farm operations and see firsthand practices and funding that have been implemented.

An example of funding that several of our Garfield County producers had the opportunity to utilize this spring was the Act Now disaster recovery funding. That effort was recently written up in Washington Weekly, a round up of state NRCS happenings (see sidebar).

I've also been getting a lot of feedback from growers at events. During our Agricultural Marketing and Management Organization winter sessions, which included NRCS updates, several growers expressed concerns regarding the lack of program options for growers in low rainfall areas in Eastern Washington. These concerns are now being discussed at the state level by leadership to see if there are additional program funding options that can assist growers. In addition, there have been a lot of conversations surrounding this year's boom in weeds and growing chemical resistance among these weeds.

This winter, I also had the opportunity to attend and learn more about the local workgroup meetings. Participants reviewed natural resource priorities, land uses, and geographic areas of priority. Planned work in specific areas and opportunities to collaborate with or partner with are also discussed. Attendees discussed specific practices needed to address resource concerns. Local working groups are NRCS' way of listening to people in natural resources and agriculture in order to best serve local communities across Washington. Growers are always welcome to attend these meetings and provide feedback.

Moving into the summer months, I'll continue working to stay up to date on any program changes and program deadlines and share those with growers. In addition, I'll be keeping tabs on the pesticide mitigations for endangered species as these requirements evolve.

The new administration has brought several changes to NRCS-WA. Our public affairs team out of Spokane, whom I work directly with, had two key positions cut over the past few months. Several field offices also lost probationary employees and others to two rounds of the deferred resignation program. Some of the probationary employees have been hired back to help staff local offices, but other offices are left with little or no staff. Although there is underlying uncertainty surrounding funding and restructuring, our team continues to work to spread the word about NRCS programs and any essential updates. Field staff are working hard to take care of growers, get money on the ground, and put farmers first. ■

## EQIP in action

A fire ignited the lower end of the South Deadman Creek drainage northeast of Pomeroy in late July 2024.

The fire consumed 14,382 acres of standing winter and spring wheat, range ground, livestock infrastructure, and two residential structures after severe winds caused the fire to quickly spread east and northeast to the Snake River Breaks.

Natural Resources Conservation Service in Washington (NRCS-WA) employees contacted producers affected by the fire to see if they would like to apply for assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Nine producers applied for assistance. Eight needed assistance with reseeding range ground, and one needed assistance to rebuild their livestock infrastructure. All nine were funded through the FY25 Act Now Disaster Recovery fund pool, with the total obligation amount coming in at \$977,625.

The range reseeding contracts include the range seeding, herbaceous weed treatment to control noxious weeds during establishment, and a deferred grazing plan to keep livestock off the seeded acres until the stand has been established. A total of 4,492 acres of range ground was seeded the week of March 3 to 7, 2025.

"I think this project is a great example of how impactful the Act Now fund pools can be for our producers who are in need of assistance in a short, timely manner," wrote Mitch Ruchert, a resource conservationist with NRCS-WA, in an email. ■



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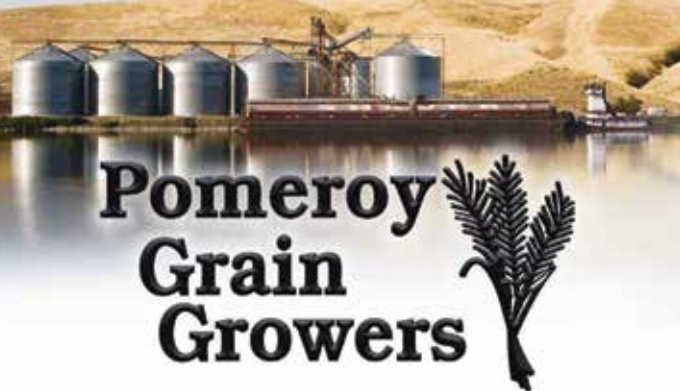
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## Network keeps the weather forecast local for Washington growers

### Washington State University's AgWeatherNet

By Trista Crossley  
Editor, *Wheat Life*

In a state known for its microclimates, Washington State University's AgWeatherNet has been providing localized weather information to growers for more than 40 years.

According to Lav Khot, director of AgWeatherNet, the system dates back to the 1980s when rudimentary weather stations were deployed, mainly in central Washington, to help tree fruit and grape growers predict extreme weather events, such as a frost, that could damage crops. Since the 80s, the system has grown substantially, expanding into western Washington and the dryland regions of Eastern Washington. In 2008, there were 139 stations. Today, the network has 228 open field weather stations, and it is one of the largest automated agricultural weather networks in the country. Stations report raw data, such as air and soil temperature, relative humidity, rainfall, wind speed and direction, soil moisture, and solar radiation, every 5 to 15 minutes. That data is checked for quality before being posted to AgWeatherNet's website, [weather.wsu.edu](http://weather.wsu.edu), which is updated every 15 minutes.

Keeping up with technology can be difficult, and weather data collection is no exception. AgWeatherNet has begun modernizing its equipment and has installed 57 33-foot towers to map mesoscale weather within a 25-mile radius. Using funding from the Washington State Department of Agriculture, AgWeatherNet is installing an additional 35 towers. Khot hopes to eventually have one in every county. The system has also expanded its data collection.

"We have added air quality sensors that quantify particulate matter and wildfire smoke-related hazardous volatiles as this has become an issue to stakeholders," he said. "And importantly, we have now temperature coming from 30 feet, also wind at 33 feet. That helps us to get better temperature inversion mapping."

In addition to its own stations, AgWeatherNet also collects data from 140 grower-owned private stations and networks. Growers can install their own hardware at a site of their choosing and send in data. AgWeatherNet uses the same quality control protocols on the private network that it does on their own network. AgWeatherNet sends alerts to growers if there's an issue with the quality of the data, such as a misreporting temperature probe or a clogged rain gauge. The private network offers AgWeatherNet decision support that is tied to the grower's preferred private weather station. These stations also improve spatial coverage of AgWeatherNet in the Pacific Northwest.

"We do our best to be in each county, but we are resource constrained, and in those scenarios where we cannot put our station in at a given site or anywhere that a grower wants, then they can add their station to supplement what we have as our network in that county or in that region," Khot explained.

Khot said over the years, the information that farmers need from AgWeatherNet has stayed pretty consistent. Fruit growers want to know about extreme temperature events for heat or frost, growing degree days and the phenological models, and pest management scenarios. Dryland wheat growers want to know what the soil mois-



AgWeatherNet's Fairfield, Wash., station.



AgWeatherNet's Maryhill, Wash., station.



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AgWeatherNet's Mossyrock, Wash., station.

ture is, and how much rain accumulated in a region. What has changed is data delivery, especially around extreme weather events.

"The National Weather Service does the forecasting of the region, and growers can look at that, but Washington has these rolling hills and all these microclimates that differ from what is forecasted by the National Weather Service," he explained. "Growers rely a lot more on either their measurements or the nearest station. We have responded to that need by doing a 10-day, station-specific weather forecast."

Stakeholders have also been asking for more decision support tools. AgWeatherNet now includes tools such as a cold hardiness model that gives tree fruit and grape growers information on how varieties might tolerate low temperatures. Another tool, the cattle comfort index, gives cattle growers high temperature alerts so they can adjust the animals' diets as necessary. And wheat growers can now use the aforementioned inversion data to help schedule chemical applications.

"We now have real time inversions mapped on each tower station, and we also do the forecast of the inversion for the next three days," Khot said. "Ideally, what you get



AgWeatherNet's Moxie, Wash., station.

to do is choose a station near you, and it will tell you what the best time windows to spray are."

The team at AgWeatherNet is also working on a way for growers to use a custom group of sensors to monitor a specific area using a private sensing network. For example, a tree fruit farmer who just wants to monitor temperature, humidity, or soil moisture on a 10-acre block can now add those networks within AgWeatherNet. These networks have been rolled out for a few farmers in central Washington who are using them for frost mitigation.

To take full advantage of AgWeatherNet's data and tools, growers will need to create a sign-in. By having users sign into the website, the team can track which stations are being used, which helps them plan preventative maintenance. It also stops private companies from poaching AgWeatherNet's data. Without a sign-in, visitors to the website can see the station map and get basic weather facts from specific stations. There's also a 10-day weather forecast.

"AgWeatherNet is one of the best resources growers have, and everything is free," Khot said. "We try our best to deliver good quality data and decision support. A lot of growers don't know about us." ■

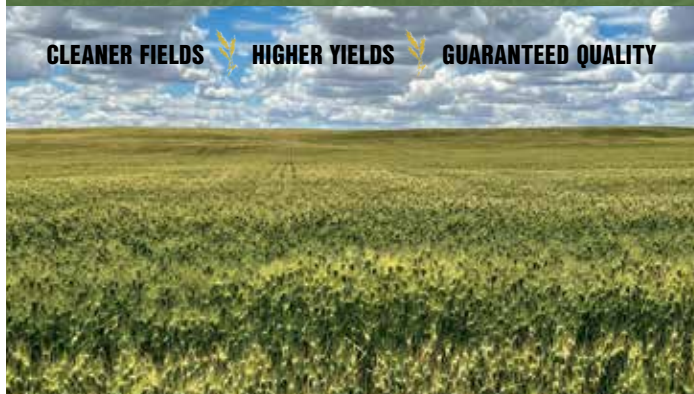




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Winter wheat  
in Whitman County.







## Preparation work is important, both on and off the field

Spring is here, which is an extremely busy time of the year for farmers. As I am currently writing this, we have just started seeding spring wheat and are trying to keep the sprayer moving, applying Roundup to the fields a week ahead of when the drill will be seeding. So far this year, we've been fortunate to catch some nice spring rains every once in a while.

A lot of decisions have to be made as we get ready to start planting and taking care of this year's wheat and barley crops, such as how much fertilizer to use, which crop variety and seeding rate, tracking what chemicals we used in the past that would prevent certain crop rotations, and what chemicals will we use this year. Of course, this year we are also trying to figure out how to balance our input costs without hurting our yields and then trying guess what the weather is going to be like from now until harvest.

Over the winter months, I have attended grower meetings that covered a lot of the issues I just mentioned. A lot of planning goes into the crop before we ever put the seed in the ground! And as a farmer, I have used my best judgement, but who knows what will actually happen.

As I have been thinking back over the winter months and all the meetings I attended as a commissioner, it has reconfirmed in my mind that the work the Washington Grain Commission puts in is important, too. As commissioners, we sit on different committees to represent the grain producers, provide input as to what will have the most impact on the farm, and bring back information that will help us determine priorities in our budget-making process. We try, as much as possible, to evenly cover the three areas of marketing, research, and education.

For example, commissioners represent growers on several Washington State University committees, including the variety release committee and the variety testing advisory committee. Growers also have commission representation at the PNW Wheat Quality Council, and we serve as a board member to the Wheat Marketing Center.

I represent Washington barley as a director to the National Barley Growers Association (NBGA). The NBGA is focused on enhancing and maintaining the profitability of the U.S. barley industry. They do this by providing a unified voice through grassroots producer involvement.

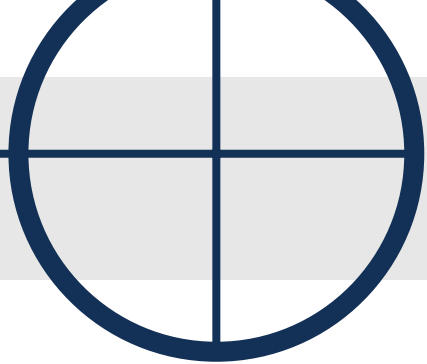
Wheat District 1 Commissioner Mike Carstensen represents Washington on the U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) executive committee, and Wheat District 2 Commissioner Ben Barstow serves on the USW board of directors. USW is the export market development organization for the U.S. wheat industry and promotes the reliability, quality, and value of all six U.S. wheat classes to wheat buyers, millers, bakers, food processors, and government officials in more than 100 countries around the world. Since the majority of Washington's wheat is exported every year, the USW activities our commissioners and staff participate in are vital to maintaining our state's wheat exports.

In May, we will be approving our budget for the coming year. For as long as I have been serving, the annual budget approval has been in the \$6.8 to \$8.6 million range. Yes, we do ensure some flexibility for additional projects that tend to come up throughout the year. We have never overspent our budget, but we have chosen to use our reserves to bolster the budget in low crop years that result in a lack of assessment revenues. This is why our reserve funds are essential for sustaining commission business. Some call it a "rainy day" fund, although in Washington wheat country, rain isn't so negatively associated with tough financial times.

The past couple of months, we have had two priority-setting sessions, in addition to our regular meetings, for working through a longer-range strategic plan that the employees of the grain commission can use as a working document for planning, budgeting, and focusing on outreach in the three areas mentioned earlier. We will be able to reference this and see where investment priorities need to be as we try to constantly improve how we utilize assessment dollars.

As commissioners, we are trying to be receptive to current and future issues as we work through the budget process. Just like with our on-farm decisions, your commissioners will use their best judgement to do what's in the best interest for Washington wheat and barley growers. The best way for you to ensure that your voice is represented in our work is to be engaged, attend meetings, and connect with your district's representative if you have questions or concerns.

I hope your spring fieldwork goes smoothly and that Mother Nature blesses us with timely rain showers. ■



# REPORTS

WASHINGTON GRAIN COMMISSION

## 2024 winter wheat variety trial results

RESEARCHERS DEALT WITH LACK OF MOISTURE, LATE COLD SNAP, EXTREME HEAT



**Kimberly Garland-Campbell**  
Research Geneticist and Club  
Wheat Breeder, USDA-ARS,  
Washington State University



**Karl Effertz**  
Lead Technician,  
Washington State University's  
Variety Testing Program

We are well into the 2025 winter wheat season, and the spring crop is in the ground. This year is shaping up with favorable growing conditions around most of the state, at least for now. As one of the Washington Grain Commissioners said during a recent meeting, "We only have five more months for the weather to kill the wheat." A lot can happen to the crop during the 10-month growing season. This was evident in the results of the 2024 Washington State University (WSU) Extension winter wheat trials. Dry weather at planting in the fall of 2023 impacted emergence at Lind and Connell. Those trials were abandoned in the spring. A sudden cold snap in February 2024 severely damaged some varieties, especially at Harrington, Ritzville, and Walla Walla. We made it through a cold, wet spring with only moderate stripe rust. The crop was looking good until extreme heat in July terminated grain fill at Pullman and the Palouse; grain was shriveled, with low test weight and high protein at harvest.

The total winter wheat trial effort is large, including 35 separate yield trials through Eastern and Central Washington. As in the past, the soft winter wheat varieties and experimental lines were divided into low and high rainfall zones. Entries were grown in their most representative zones. The CLOAX trial was made up of soft winter wheat carrying the Clearfield or CoAXium herbicide resistance. For consistent fertility management, the hard winter wheat trials contain hard red, hard white, and the herbicide-resistant hard wheats.





**Table 1: 2024 WSU Extension Soft Winter Wheat Variety Trial Summary, Precipitation Zone= $\leq$ 12"**

Variety (Club)	Grain Yield	Test Weight	Grain Protein
LCS Shine	87.7	60.4	8.3
ARS Crescent	82.8	61.1	8.4
Norwest Duet	79.9	61.4	8.7
Devote	78.4	62.9	9.4
LCS Hulk	78.0	61.4	9.2
AP Exceed	78.0	62.7	8.7
Pritchett	77.9	61.4	9.0
Norwest Tandem	77.5	61.2	8.4
WB1621	76.1	63.0	8.7
Jameson	75.7	61.1	8.9
Castella	75.2	60.6	8.5
WB1720	75.1	62.0	8.5
Otto	74.3	61.0	8.7
Nimbus	72.5	60.9	8.1
WB1922	71.2	62.5	8.8
Windust	69.8	61.6	8.9
TMC M-Press	69.0	60.9	8.4
GS Bounty	68.5	62.0	9.0
TMC M-Pire	58.9	61.4	9.3
Rollie	58.0	61.6	8.9
WB1545	25.4		
<b>Average</b>	<b>73.4</b>	<b>59.9</b>	<b>8.5</b>
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>CV %</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>7.7</b>

- 2024 Douglas, Harrington, Ritzville.
- Winter injury was severe on sensitive lines at these locations in 2024: Harrington, Ritzville.
- WB1545 test weight and protein could not be calculated at Harrington and Ritzville due to winter injury.

In the soft white winter wheat trials for the less-than-12-inch rainfall zone, LCS Shine, along with the older varieties, ARS Crescent, Norwest Duet, and Devote, had higher grain yields; several other varieties were ranked similarly above average. Protein concentration were acceptably low, for soft white wheat, and test weights were high (see Table 1). Average grain yields were higher than normal in the 12-to-16-inch rainfall zone due to superior yields at Reardan and Creston (Table 2). A group of several varieties including LCS Jefe, LCS Hulk, WB1621, Norwest Duet, Norwest Tandem, LCS Kamiak, and AP Exceed ranked higher than others. Test weights were a bit low on average. Grain yields of LCS Shine and Castella were impacted by game feeding at Anatone and Creston.

As we moved into the higher rainfall zones, the earlier maturing varieties, including Norwest Tandem and TMC M-Pire, had better performance for grain yield and test

**Table 2: 2024 WSU Extension Soft Winter Wheat Variety Trial Summary, Precipitation Zone=12-16"**

Variety (Club)	Grain Yield	Test Weight	Grain Protein
LCS Jefe	108.0	60.2	9.1
LCS Hulk	102.4	60.5	9.8
WB1621	101.0	59.9	9.1
Norwest Duet	100.7	60.4	9.7
Norwest Tandem	100.4	60.4	9.7
LCS Kamiak	100.1	60.9	10.5
AP Exceed	99.1	61.5	9.6
SY Dayton	98.9	59.7	9.7
Nimbus	98.8	60.1	9.8
TMC M-Press	97.6	60.1	9.3
Rollie	96.2	60.8	9.4
TMC M-Pire	96.2	61.1	10.0
WB1922	95.6	60.8	10.4
Jameson	95.1	59.5	10.0
GS Bounty	94.6	60.6	10.2
WB1545	93.2	60.9	10.3
AP Olympia	93.1	61.5	10.0
AP Iliad	92.5	60.0	9.7
Pritchett	91.5	59.2	9.6
ARS Crescent	89.8	59.2	9.9
LCS Shine	89.7	60.0	9.1
Devote	89.1	61.3	10.6
Castella	84.2	59.8	9.4
<b>Average</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>60.3</b>	<b>10.0</b>
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>CV %</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>5.0</b>

- 2024 Anatone, Creston, Eureka, Reardan.
- No 2024 protein data for Creston and Reardan.
- Winter injury was severe on sensitive lines in 2024 for Creston.
- Wild game feeding occurred in 2024 on awnless lines at Creston.

weight, although protein concentrations were creeping up. The warm July temperatures shortened the grain filling period (Table 3). The effects of the July heat were more evident in the greater-than-20-inch rainfall zone, where average grain yield was lower than observed in the 16-to-20-inch zone (Table 4). Test weights were low, and protein concentrations were high for the same reason. LCS Shine had the highest grain yields followed by Norwest Duet.

In the CLOAX trials, the herbicide-resistant soft winter wheat varieties with the Clearfield resistance trait had similar grain yields to each other, except for Mallory CL+, which was impacted by cold injury (Table 5). Top performers with the Clearfield trait were Sockeye CL+ and Piranha CL+ in the low rainfall zones, while VI Encore CL+ and Sockeye CL+ joined the group in the high rainfall zones. Top performers with the CoAXium resistance trait were LCS Kraken and Nova AX in the

**Table 3: 2024 WSU Extension Soft Winter Wheat Variety Trial Summary, Precipitation Zone=16-20"**

Variety (Club)	Grain Yield	Test Weight	Grain Protein
Norwest Tandem	132.4	60.7	11.1
TMC M-Pire	132.0	61.9	11.2
LCS Jefe	128.1	60.7	10.6
Inspire	127.3	59.8	11.2
LCS Blackjack	127.1	58.6	11.0
TMC M-Press	126.2	61.1	10.8
LCS Shine	124.9	60.2	10.9
LCS Kamiak	123.2	61.4	11.2
AP Iliad	122.7	60.1	11.6
VI Gem	122.1	60.4	10.6
LCS Hulk	120.2	60.3	11.6
AP Exceed	120.1	61.6	10.9
LCS Artdeco	119.8	59.4	10.2
Purl	119.7	60.5	11.4
GS Bounty	117.8	59.4	11.6
Norwest Duet	117.7	60.4	10.8
AP Olympia	117.7	61.3	11.2
WB1621	116.1	62.4	10.9
WB1922	114.4	60.5	11.7
Rydrych MZ	113.6	61.0	11.7
SY Dayton	110.4	60.3	11.4
Nimbus	108.1	60.5	11.7
SY Assure	103.4	60.9	11.6
Cameo	102.5	58.5	12.5
Castella	95.2	60.5	11.1
<b>Average</b>	<b>121.4</b>	<b>60.5</b>	<b>11.2</b>
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>CV %</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>

- 2024 Dusty, Mayview, Walla Walla.
- Winter injury was severe on sensitive lines at 2024 Walla Walla.
- Wild game feeding occurred in 2024 on awnless lines at Mayview

less-than-12-inch rainfall zone. Nova AX continued to perform well in the other rainfall zones, but most of the varieties carrying the CoAXium trait had lower grain yields than the Clearfield lines and the LCS Shine check. The CoAXium trait has been more challenging to move into soft white wheat because it was originally available as a hard red winter wheat. All these trials had similar trends for test weight and protein concentrations across rainfall zones as described above in the soft winter wheat trials.

The two best performing varieties in the less-than-12-inch hard winter wheat trials were Kivari AX and Whistler but they were not entered into other rainfall zones. LCS Jet out-performed all other hard winter wheats when averaged over all dry locations (Table 7). Grain yields at both the Douglas and Ritzville locations were significantly higher than normal. Although

**Table 4: 2024 WSU Extension Soft Winter Wheat Variety Trial Summary, Precipitation Zone=>20"**

Variety (Club)	Grain Yield	Test Weight	Grain Protein
LCS Shine	123.7	58.1	10.8
Norwest Duet	119.8	59.1	11.2
LCS Jefe	117.2	58.2	10.5
LCS Kamiak	115.9	59.7	11.7
LCS Blackjack	115.5	56.4	11.3
LCS Hulk	114.2	58.7	11.2
AP Olympia	112.8	59.6	11.4
Inspire	112.5	57.5	11.3
AP Exceed	110.8	59.1	11.1
Norwest Tandem	110.6	58.0	11.1
Nimbus	110.3	58.3	11.6
GS Bounty	109.7	58.7	11.2
VI Gem	109.1	58.2	11.0
LCS Artdeco	107.0	56.6	10.7
SY Dayton	105.9	58.3	11.1
TMC M-Press	105.3	58.7	11.2
Rydrych MZ	104.2	59.4	11.7
Purl	102.6	58.8	11.1
AP Iliad	102.2	58.0	11.6
Cameo	101.8	58.0	12.4
Castella	99.7	60.1	11.6
SY Assure	99.2	59.3	11.9
TMC M-Pire	98.5	58.7	11.5
<b>Average</b>	<b>106.5</b>	<b>58.3</b>	<b>11.4</b>
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>
<b>CV %</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.7</b>

- 2024 Colton, Fairfield, Farmington, Pullman

test weights were high, the protein concentrations were quite low, likely due to grain yields that were much higher than the fertility program applied to the plots. Walla Walla was the only location for hard wheat in the 16-to-20-inch rainfall zone. Grain yields averaged almost 140 bushels per acre, and both test weight and protein were high. This trial received adequate amounts of fertilizer for hard winter wheat. LCS Blackbird, Scorpio, LCS Missile, and LCS Jet were the top performers. In the greater-than-20-inch region, LCS Jet continued to exhibit why it occupies more hard winter wheat acreage than other hard wheats in Washington. This trial at Pullman had high protein but low test weights, likely due to the July heat as mentioned earlier. Data for the high rainfall zones is averaged in Table 8.

Full results from the 2025 winter trials are on the Small Grains website at [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety). ►





The 2024 plot tour in Harrington, Wash.



U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service club wheat breeder, Kimberly Garland-Campbell, speaks to growers during the 2024 Harrington, Wash., plot tour.

**Table 5: 2024 WSU Extension CLOAX Winter Wheat Variety Trial Summary, Precipitation Zone=<16"**

Variety	Grain Yield	Test Weight	Grain Protein
LCS Hydra AX	82.4	61.6	9.2
LCS Kraken AX	83.9	61.1	9.5
LCS Scorpion AX	73.3	60.2	9.3
Mallory CL+	70.7	60.0	9.5
Nova AX	86.0	60.3	9.1
Piranha CL+	85.3	60.5	9.4
Sockeye CL+	88.1	60.2	9.2
VI Encore CL+	83.9	60.8	9.3
VI Presto CL+	79.1	62.1	9.8
<b>Average</b>	<b>81.7</b>	<b>60.8</b>	<b>9.5</b>
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>CV %</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>4.5</b>

- 2024 Anatone, Creston, Douglas, Eureka, Harrington, Reardan, Ritzville.
- Data averaged over entries in all trials listed above.

**Table 6: 2024 WSU Extension CLOAX Winter Wheat Variety Trial Summary, Precipitation Zone=>16"**

Variety	Grain Yield	Test Weight	Grain Protein
Appleby CL+	112.5	60.1	11.5
LCS Dagger AX	103.8	61.1	11.9
LCS Hydra AX	105.4	61.2	10.9
LCS Kraken AX	105.1	60.3	11.5
LCS Reaper II AX	94.1	60.5	12.1
LCS Scorpion AX	105.1	59.5	11.1
LCS Shine	129.8	59.8	10.5
Mallory CL+	109.2	59.4	11.5
Nova AX	115.3	59.3	11.3
Piranha CL+	119.0	59.1	10.9
Resilience CL+	113.5	59.2	11.6
Sockeye CL+	123.5	58.9	10.8
Stingray CL+	118.0	58.3	12.1
VI Encore CL+	123.8	60.0	11.3
VI Voodoo CL+	116.9	58.7	11.4
<b>Average</b>	<b>116.5</b>	<b>59.7</b>	<b>11.3</b>
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>CV %</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3.5</b>

- 2024 Colton, Dusty, Fairfield, Farmington, Mayview, Pullman, Walla Walla.
- LCS Shine is a non-Clearfield, non-CoAXium check.
- Data averaged over entries in all trials listed above.

**Table 7: 2024 WSU Extension Hard Winter Wheat Variety Trial Summary, Precipitation Zone=<16"**

Variety	Grain Yield	Test Weight	Grain Protein
Canvas	78.0	63.4	11.2
Gemini	83.2	61.1	11.6
GSHR5	75.5	61.3	12.9
Keldin	81.5	62.7	10.7
LCS Eclipse AX	69.7	59.7	10.7
LCS Jet	87.6	61.4	10.8
LCS Missile	81.1	61.6	11.0
Scorpio	81.4	61.6	11.2
WB4311	76.6	62.9	11.7
WB4394	78.7	63.2	11.1
WB4510 CLP	76.8	63.7	10.7
WB4640	82.3	62.6	11.3
<b>Average</b>	<b>77.5</b>	<b>62.1</b>	<b>11.2</b>
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>CV %</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>5.2</b>

- 2024 Anatone, Douglas, Eureka, Reardan, Ritzville.
- Data averaged over entries in all trials listed above.

**Table 8: 2024 WSU Extension Hard Winter Wheat Variety Trial Summary, Precipitation Zone=>16"**

Variety	Grain Yield	Test Weight	Grain Protein
Canvas	81.6	57.1	14.4
Kairos	95.6	55.8	15.2
Keldin	91.0	56.1	15.7
LCS Blackbird	89.0	52.9	15.8
LCS Eclipse AX	69.9	50.8	14.2
LCS Jet	97.7	55.9	15.0
LCS Missile	89.1	56.0	15.8
Scorpio	89.8	55.4	14.8
WB4394	78.3	54.6	14.5
WB4510 CLP	74.2	57.1	15.2
WB4640	79.0	55.3	15.3
<b>Average</b>	<b>83.9</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>14.9</b>
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>CV %</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2.7</b>

- 2024 Pullman, Walla Walla.
- Data averaged over entries in all trials listed above.





Washington State University winter wheat breeder, Arron Carter, speaks to growers at the 2024 Spillman Field Day.

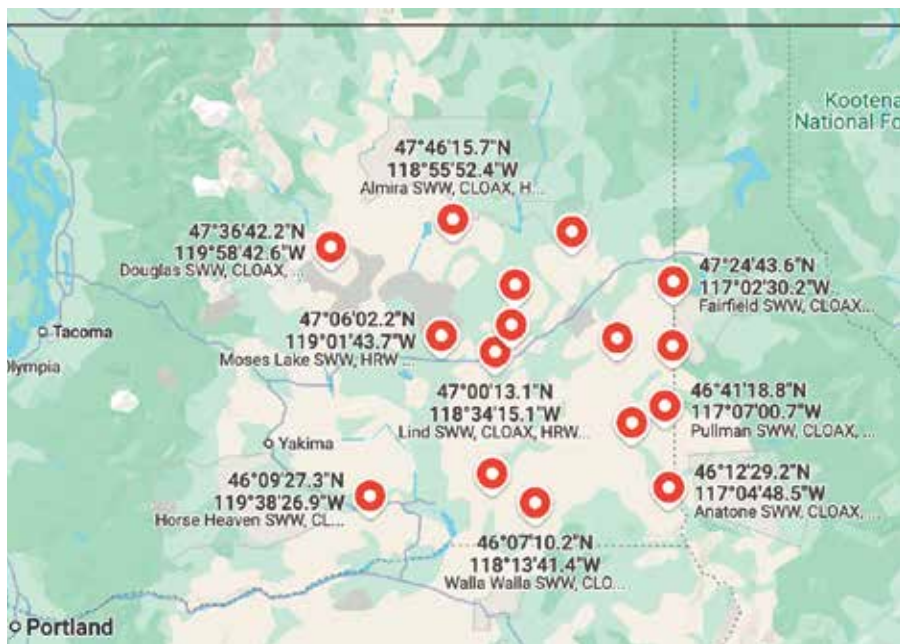


2024 test plots in Harrington, Wash.



The data is posted online in a different format this year due to Washington state accessibility requirements. Rather than individual PDF tables posted for each location, tables are now embedded within the website, and multiple locations are combined within precipitation zones. Single-year and two-year averages are provided for each table. Trial data is summarized by rainfall zones: less-than-12 inches, 12-to-16 inches, 16-to-20 inches, and greater-than-20 inches of annual rainfall.

Of course, grain yield isn't the only trait that is used for variety selection. We have been updating and upgrading the WSU Variety Selection tool for wheat and barley. Through links on the WSU Small Grains website, you will be able to search the trial data by location, by region, or by a custom set of locations. For each variety, data, including multiyear yields, test weight and protein, disease ratings, winter survival index, and end-use quality, can be selected and used to determine the best varieties for your own production. The originator of the variety and seed availability will also be regularly updated. We are linking this selection tool to the variety testing database so that it will remain up to date. This site was our most visited before we had to update it due to changes in WSU information technology. Our goal is to keep it more accessible and useful than ever.



The 2025 winter wheat trials were planted in the fall of 2024. We have been out to visit all sites, and most look good or at least like the local fields. Locations are marked in the map above, and specific GPS coordinates are available on the Small Grains Variety Testing website at <https://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/>.

Our dryland Extension team has worked with the technicians who are managing the variety testing program to put the finishing touches on our summer plot tour schedule. Plot tours are scheduled at 23 locations in June and early July. Events and field days in Oregon and Washington are also listed for ease in planning. Many

of the plot tours will be led by the lead technician for variety testing, Dr. Karl Effertz. Contact him if you have questions about tours and plans for the fall. The tour schedule is also on the WSU Small Grains website where you can check for changes or updates. Let's hope the next five months remain kind to the 2025 wheat crop, and we hope to see you in the field in 2025. ■

*Acknowledgements: Funding for the WSU Extension Uniform Cereal Variety Testing Program is provided by the Washington Grain Commission. Variety trials are made possible by the contribution of land and time from farmer cooperators where the trials are located.*



2024 test plots at the Spillman Farm in Pullman, Wash.





WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

# 2025 PNW Crop Tour Schedule

## WSU Variety Testing Program

The 2025 crop tour season will begin soon and provides opportunities to view field trials and interact with WSU personnel. The list below provides an outline of the time and location of each tour. Please check with the contact listed prior to the tour to verify the time, location, and agenda or reach out to your local county wheat growers association or other co-sponsor. Location maps for the WSU Extension Cereal Variety Trials are available online at <https://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/>.

Thank you to the Washington Grain Commission for funding to support the trials and tours as well as the county wheat growers associations and co-sponsors for programs and meals associated with the field days. Finally, a big thank you to all the grower cooperators for their time and resources to host the variety trials. We truly appreciate all the continued support.

*-The WSU Cereal Variety Testing Team*

Date	Start Time	Tour	Starting Location	GPS	Contact
29-May	8am	Western Wheat Workers Meeting Field Tour**	Spillman Agronomy Farm	46°41'45.5"N 117°08'50.0"W	Alison Thompson, 509-335-7850
3-Jun	8am	Horse Heaven: Winter and Spring Wheat	Horse Heaven Community Hall 37301 County Well Rd, Prosser, WA	46°11'12.2"N 119°34'29.6"W	Karl Effertz, 701-471-2063
5-Jun	9am	Ritzville: Winter Wheat	47°09'42.1"N 118°25'35.8"W	47°09'42.1"N 118°25'35.8"W	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
9-Jun	10am	Harrington: Winter Wheat*	47°23'42.1"N 118°24'00.6"W	47°23'42.1"N 118°24'00.6"W	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
10-Jun	7:45am	Pendleton, OR (OSU/ARS)	CBARC Station 48037 Tubbs Ranch Rd, Adams, OR 97810	45°43'06.0"N 118°37'31.6"W	Debbie Sutor, 541-278-4405
11-Jun	1:30pm	WSU Weed Tour	Palouse Conservation Field Station (PCFS) Pullman, WA	46°45'39.3"N 117°11'08.5"W	Drew Lyon, 509-335-2961
11-Jun	7:45am	Moro, OR (OSU/ARS)	66365 Lone Rock Rd, Moro, OR 97039	45°28'56.6"N 120°43'34.3"W	Debbie Sutor, 541-278-4405
12-Jun	8:30am	Lind Field Day	781 E. Experiment Station Road, Lind, WA	47°00'04.3"N 118°34'05.0"W	Samantha Crow, 509-677-3671
13-Jun	TBD	Douglas County	TBD		Karl Effertz, 701-471-2063
16-Jun	9am	Moses Lake: Winter and Spring Wheat	CHS Wheeler Office 3132 Rd O, Moses Lake, WA	47°07'56.2"N 119°10'20.3"W	Andy McGuire, 509-754-2011
17-Jun	9am	Mayview: Winter and Spring Cereals*	VT Winter Site: 46°35'19.9"N 117°23'50.7"W	46°35'19.9"N 117°23'50.7"W	Karl Effertz, 701-471-2063
17-Jun	1pm	Mayview: Spring Canola	46°35'49.8"N 117°24'15.7"W	46°35'49.8"N 117°24'15.7"W	Jesse Ford, 509-990-6313
18-Jun	7am	Fairfield: Winter and Spring Cereals	Harvest Moon Restaurant, Rockford, WA	47°27'06.3"N 117°07'55.7"W	Ken Fucchs, 509-220-0891
18-Jun	1pm	Farmington: Winter and Spring Cereals	VT Winter Site: 47°02'20.0"N 117°02'55.4"W	47°02'20.0"N 117°02'55.4"W	Karl Effertz, 701-471-2063
20-Jun	10am	Palouse: Spring Cereals	46°55'58.4"N 117°13'12.2"W	46°55'58.4"N 117°13'12.2"W	Karl Effertz, 701-471-2063
20-Jun	1pm	Cook Agronomy Farm Spring Canola Tour	Cook Research Farm 4001 Whelan Rd, Pullman, WA	46°46'42.4"N 117°05'38.4"W	Jesse Ford, 509-990-6313
20-Jun	2:30pm	Whitman County Growers Campus Tours	WSU Wheat Facilities Tour, Pullman, WA	46°43'56.3"N 117°09'16.6"W	Randy Suess, 509-595-3907
23-Jun	9am	Eureka (WSU/OSU): Winter Wheat	46°17'34.3"N 118°35'40.6"W	46°17'34.3"N 118°35'40.6"W	Rachel Wieme, 509-524-2685
23-Jun	1pm	Walla Walla (WSU/OSU): Winter and Spring Cereals*	VT Winter Site: 46°07'10.2"N 118°13'41.4"W	46°07'10.2"N 118°13'41.4"W	Rachel Wieme, 509-524-2685
23-Jun	3pm	Waitsburg: Spring Canola	46°10'52.6"N 118°18'19.1"W	46°10'52.6"N 118°18'19.1"W	Jesse Ford, 509-990-6313
24-Jun	11am	Reardan: Winter and Spring Cereals*	VT Winter Site: 47°42'02.0"N 117°54'25.5"W	47°42'02.0"N 117°54'25.5"W	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
24-Jun	3pm	Almira: Winter and Spring Cereals*	McKay Seed Almira 39355 Sorensen Rd. N, Almira, WA 99103	47°50'06.9"N 118°53'40.8"W	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
26-Jun	8:30am	WSU Wilke Farm Field Day	47°39'23.1"N 118°07'54.4"W	47°39'23.1"N 118°07'54.4"W	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
26-Jun	8:30am	WSU Potato Field Day	Othello Research Station 1471 W. Cox Rd	46°47'42.7"N 119°02'52.5"W	Mark Pavec, 509-335-6861
27-Jun	9am	Dayton: Spring Cereals	46°23'00.6"N 117°51'02.0"W	46°23'00.6"N 117°51'02.0"W	Rachel Wieme, 509-524-2685
30-Jun	9am	St. John: Winter and Spring Cereals	VT Winter Site: 47°05'02.0"N 117°31'08.8"W	47°05'02.0"N 117°31'08.8"W	Karl Effertz, 701-471-2063
1-Jul	10am	Bickleton: Spring Wheat	46°02'19.6"N 120°15'46.8"W	46°02'19.6"N 120°15'46.8"W	Karl Effertz, 701-471-2063

\*Falling Numbers presentation from Dr. Alison Thompson and Dr. Amber Hauvermale

\*\*Breakfast and Lunch only included if you register for meeting

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information, or reasonable accommodation need to contact the coordination person listed under Contact above at the telephone number listed at least two weeks prior to the event. Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.

# WHEAT WATCH

WASHINGTON GRAIN COMMISSION

## Trade keeps attention on core market drivers



By Allison Thompson  
*Owner, The Money Farm*

The wheat market today is unpredictable, fast moving, and full of shifting dynamics. Yet, in this uncertain environment, wheat markets have shown real grit. That resilience is a clear signal that, despite the short term swings, underlying fundamentals matter most. For producers, it's a reminder to stay informed, remain flexible and focused on long-term opportunities — even when the road ahead looks uncertain.

Trade tensions continue to loom over wheat exchanges, with shifting export policies, tariffs, and geopolitical tensions potentially altering global trade flows. While tensions with key wheat-importing countries like Mexico and other top buyers of U.S. wheat appear to have eased in the near term, questions persist about the longer-term ramifications. Traditionally, negative news — such as the imposition of tariffs or trade restrictions — would drive prices lower across affected commodities. However, the wheat market has not followed that predictable pattern. Rather than plummeting, wheat exchanges are seemingly finding support. This price stability is indicative of strong underlying support, signaling a potential shift in market sentiment. For producers, this development is noteworthy and should not be overlooked, as it may point to future opportunities amid ongoing volatility.

There are many possible reasons for this type of action. First, it's important to remember that grain markets, including wheat, are a discount mechanism. This means that the futures price can be reduced or “discounted” in anticipation of market forces or future events. For example, if favorable weather conditions or bumper crops in key producing regions signal a potential oversupply, the market may lower prices in anticipation of the excess, even before the supply is realized (harvest). Similarly, geopolitical tensions and shifting trade relations can trigger price adjustments to reflect expected risk and uncertainty.

This discount mechanism allows the market to quickly absorb and price in fresh information. In doing so, it helps smooth out supply and demand fluctuations and offers valuable insight into future trends and overall market sentiment. For producers, understanding this dynamic is key; it helps cut through the market “noise” and

keeps the focus on what truly drives long-term value: supply and demand fundamentals. While trade relations can certainly influence the fundamental outlook, the market appears increasingly comfortable navigating headline risks. In many cases, these topics are swiftly evaluated, priced in, and then moved past, as the trade shifts its attention back to core drivers like U.S. production, global stocks, and exports.

On March 31, 2025, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released its prospective plantings report, projecting total U.S. wheat acreage for the 2025 harvest at 45.35 million acres — down 2% from last year. If realized, this would mark the second-lowest total wheat acreage planted in the U.S. since 1919. The primary driver behind the decline is a notable drop in spring wheat acreage. NASS estimates just 10 million acres of spring wheat will be planted this year, the smallest since 1970. Winter wheat acreage is projected at 33.3 million acres, down slightly — 0.2% — from 2024. Of that, about 23.6 million acres are expected to be hard red winter (HRW) wheat; 6.09 million acres in soft red winter (SRW); and 3.66 million acres of white winter (WW) wheat. Durum wheat seedings are also projected to decline by 2% to approximately 2 million acres. These historically low acreage levels could have significant implications for supply expectations and price discovery moving forward.

U.S. wheat ending stocks remain a vital indicator in shaping the market outlook, providing a snapshot of how tight or comfortable supplies may be heading into the new crop year. While U.S. wheat stocks have increased in recent years, they still remain well below historical averages — a trend that points to tighter overall supply conditions. With acreage and yield for the upcoming season still uncertain, maintaining adequate supply levels will be crucial. When stocks are low, the market becomes more sensitive to production risks and shifts in demand, often leading to sharper price fluctuations. For producers, this presents both risks and opportunities. While tighter stocks can support higher futures prices, they also make the market more volatile, creating potential for both profit and loss. Alongside U.S. stocks, global wheat inventories will also play a key role in shaping market dynamics, as shifts in global supply levels can directly impact competition and pricing.

While U.S. ending stocks remained relatively tight,

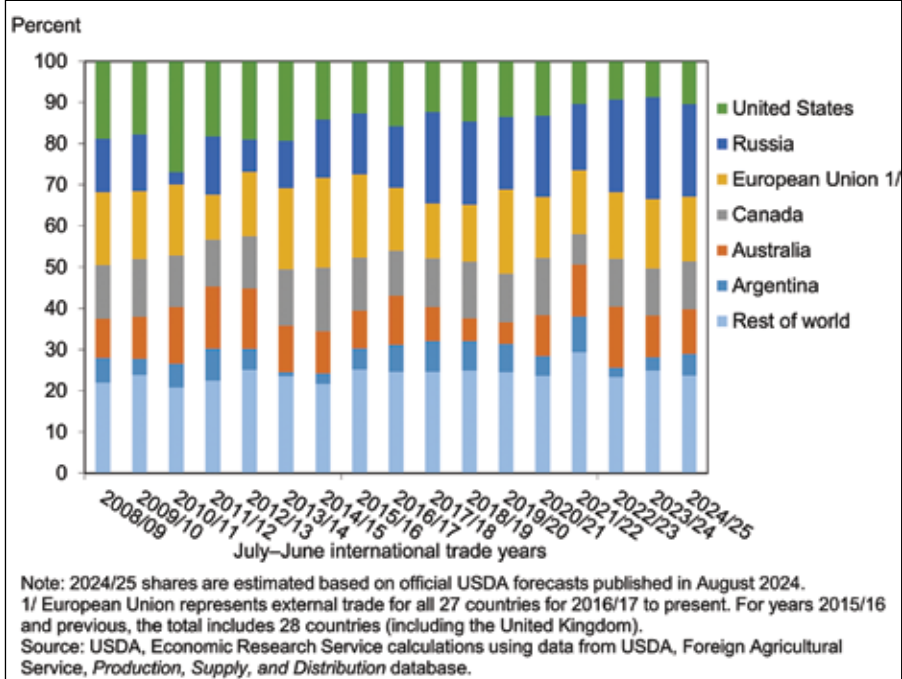


global inventories — especially those held by major exporters — remain more comfortable, though unevenly distributed. A significant portion of the world's wheat stocks are held by China and India, much of which is not readily available to the export market. When looking at exporter-held supplies — those actually available to meet global demand — the picture becomes much tighter. Countries like Russia, the EU, and Australia (see chart) have recently carried more of the export load, and any production hiccups in those regions could quickly tighten global availability. For U.S. producers, it's important to watch not just domestic supply, but how global exporter stocks shift, because that's where real competition and price pressure exists. In years where global exporter stocks tighten, U.S. wheat tends to become more competitive, opening the door for stronger export demand and price support.

The recent decline in the U.S. dollar has also provided notable support to wheat prices, especially in the global export market. As the dollar weakens, U.S. wheat becomes more competitively priced for international buyers, enhancing demand from key importers. This price advantage makes U.S. wheat more attractive compared to other major exporters, helping to maintain or even increase export sales despite the ongoing tariffs and trade barriers that have, at times, complicated global trade. For producers, the lower dollar can create a favorable pricing environment, as increased export demand often translates into higher futures prices and stronger cash markets. As long as the U.S. dollar remains weak, this trend may continue to provide price support for wheat, offering an opportunity to capture value in a potentially volatile market.

The outlook for wheat markets,

### Share of global wheat exports by country, 2008/09-2024/25



as we enter the U.S. growing season, is shaped by a complex mix of factors, including ongoing trade relations, tariffs, and both global and domestic production prospects. For instance, the U.S. has faced trade challenges with key wheat importers like China and Mexico, where tariffs and trade barriers have influenced export volumes. However, the recent weakening of the U.S. dollar has provided a counterbalance by making U.S. wheat more competitively priced, offering an advantage in markets like the EU and North Africa, where demand remains strong. At the same time, domestic production prospects are uncertain, as drought conditions in the Plains could impact yield, while global production shifts — such as reduced wheat output in Ukraine — further complicate the supply picture. For producers, navigating this landscape requires staying informed about these interconnected dynamics, remaining flexible in their marketing strategies, and focusing on long-term opportunities, such as capitalizing on shifts in export demand or hedging against production risks.

For producers navigating the uncertainties of the wheat market, hedging strategies are an essential tool to manage risk and lock in favorable prices. Futures contracts allow producers to secure a selling price for their wheat before it's harvested, providing price protection against potential market downturns. Options contracts can also be useful, offering flexibility by allowing producers to benefit from upward price movements while limiting losses if prices fall.

With the market's volatility influenced by factors like weather conditions, trade relations, and currency fluctuations, hedging offers a way to manage these variables without taking on excessive risk. By using these tools, producers can safeguard their revenue streams and focus on optimizing production, knowing they have a strategy in place to mitigate some of the uncertainties ahead. ■

**Allison Thompson** is the owner of The Money Farm, a grain marketing advisory service located in Ada, Minn. She is also still actively involved in her family's grain farm, where her husband and father grow corn, soybeans, and wheat.

# My Olympia Days experience

By Zach Klein

2024-25 Washington Wheat Ambassador

Before the Olympia Days trip, I wasn't quite sure what to expect. I knew we would be meeting with legislators, talking about issues that matter to our communities, and learning more about how the state government works. Not only did I learn more about how the government works, but the experience provided an unexpected learning moment about myself and my connection to the issues we discussed. I was honored to be able to attend the trip as a wheat ambassador for the Washington wheat industry.

During one meeting with Sen. Mike Chapman (D-Port Angeles), the conversation turned toward the topic of dam removal. I had been thinking about this issue for a long time, especially since all the threats recently to remove them. Many people don't realize that dams are not just concrete structures, but they represent irrigation, energy, history, and transportation for many ag commodities. So when Chapman said, "The dams won't be taken out in this generation, or even yours," it was a very reassuring



ing thing to hear because growing up in a rural area, I've always understood how closely tied we are to the land. We don't just drive past fields — we work them. I've helped with planting, harvesting, and caring for animals, and I've seen how much effort and care goes into keeping a farm running. Prices for supplies keep going up, and unpredictable weather makes everything more stressful. If irrigation became unreliable because of dam removal, it would push a lot of farms past the breaking point.

Furthermore, one thing that was meaningful and surprising was seeing how the legislators were willing to listen to our entire group as we brought up the issues that mattered most to us. It didn't feel like we were just checking a box or being rushed through a meeting. Instead, the legislators gave us their full attention and really listened to what each person had to say. Whether someone was talking about the impact of dam removal on farming, concerns about affordable housing, or access to clean water in rural communities, the legislators or staff in the room were taking notes, asking thoughtful questions, and showing respect for our perspectives. It was clear they weren't just hearing us — they were



trying to understand. That made a huge impression on me.

I also learned something unexpected about how the Legislature works. From the outside, the government can seem slow and full of rules and procedures that don't always make sense. But during our meetings, I realized that the people in these positions — senators, representatives, staffers — are just that: people. They have personal stories, local connections, and, most of all, they care. I had this idea that politicians were distant or unapproachable, but I learned that many of them truly want to hear from students and community members. They may not always agree with us, but they respect our experiences and what we bring to the table.

I realized in a different meeting how disconnected some decision-makers can be from rural life. I don't mean that in a bad way, just that a lot of people making policies live in urban areas and may not fully understand how much we depend on these systems. It reminded me how important it is for organizations like the Washington Association of Wheat Growers to bring those personal experiences into the room. Legislators can read data all day long, but when someone looks them in the eye and tells them what it's like to run a family farm, it makes the issue real.

What I'll take with me from Olympia Days is the many new things I learned. I've realized that leadership doesn't mean having all the answers — it means being willing to speak up, listen carefully, and stand by what you believe in, even when it's not easy. It means connecting with people, sharing stories, and finding common ground, even in the face of disagreement.

In the future, I plan to take what I learned from this experience and apply it to my own aspirations. Whether I end up working on the farm, in policy, or in another field, I now know that making one's voice heard matters. The moments with the legislators reminded me that the struggles I face as part of a farming family are not just personal, they are part of a larger, collective experience that deserves to be heard. Moving forward, I will continue to advocate for the things that matter to me and other farmers, and I will use the skills and confidence I gained during Olympia Days to make a positive impact on issues.

Ultimately, it was a privilege to be a part of the trip as a wheat ambassador. The trip taught me not just about the legislative process, but about the importance of speaking up and sharing our stories, no matter how personal or difficult they may be. ■

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# THE BOTTOM LINE

## Turbulent economics: It's a time to buckle up

By Dr. David M. Kohl  
*Professor Emeritus, Virginia Tech*

With over 10 million miles of air travel — equivalent to 18 trips to the moon and back — I still find turbulence unsettling. The same applies to managing an agricultural business amid today's economic uncertainties, driven by geopolitics, conflicts, societal trends, and Mother Nature. Navigating this requires a focus on controllable factors and adaptability to external disruptions. Like flying through turbulence, economic uncertainty can trigger decision paralysis. In such times, taking a deep breath and seeking perspective can help maintain sound short- and long-term decision-making.

### **Government payments: A cautionary approach**

Government payments, particularly in the grain industry, provide welcome financial relief but should be handled with care. These funds should be considered one-time infusions, not recurring revenue.



Depending on your financial situation, they may cover past losses, fund current inputs, or be set aside as working capital for future downturns. Avoid making long-term investments or taking on new debt based solely on receiving these payments. Adjust your budgets and break-even projections accordingly — these are windfalls, not guaranteed income. As the saying goes, “easy come, easy go.”

### **Buckling up the financial seat belt**

An economic downcycle sometimes requires financial discipline or tightening the belt for the economic and the financial turbulence. A positive is that these challenging economic times can lead to practices that are very beneficial when the economic business cycle turns to the positive.

A key first step in weathering tight economic times is good, old-fashioned goal setting, yet, 80% of Americans skip this important practice. Only 4% commit to writing down their goals. Written goals provide direction and stability; those without them are more vulnerable to turbulence.

A pre-COVID Canadian study found that farmers with written goals and business plans had twice the mental resilience. Balancing mental, physical, and financial well-being is crucial in navigating uncertainty.

### **The power of budgeting**

Taking ownership of and understanding your numbers — costs, breakevens, and potential outcomes — is mission-critical. A solid operational plan should account for production goals, marketing strategies, and risk management.

I recently spoke with a young producer who mapped out financial scenarios, from worst case to best case. Knowing these guardrails provided peace of mind

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and allowed for informed decisions. By benchmarking past economic cycles, he avoided emotional swings, staying level-headed in both good and bad times.


### Pure accountability

Many professionals now turn to peer groups for insight and accountability. These networks — both local and global — offer unfiltered, real-time information and fresh perspectives. Regular check-ins can confirm conditions, inspire new strategies, and maintain a proactive mindset.

Yes, economic storm clouds loom for many in the indus-

try, but those who buckle up and stay focused on business and financial fundamentals will be positioned to thrive when smoother skies return. ■

**Dr. David Kohl** is an academic hall-of-famer in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va. Dr. Kohl is a sought-after educator of lenders, producers and stakeholders with his keen insight into the agriculture industry gained through extensive travel, research and involvement in ag businesses.

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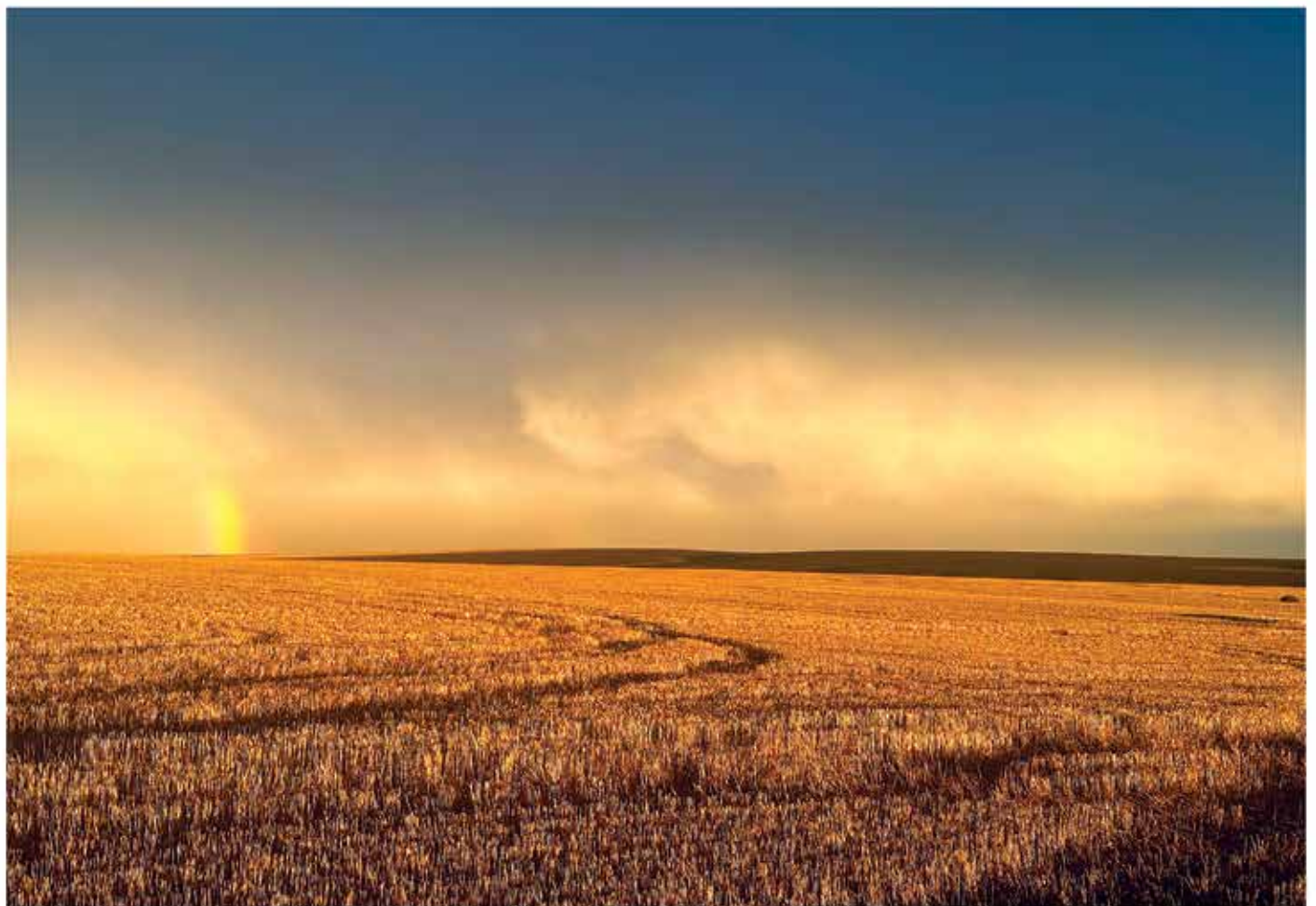




Enjoying harvest in Douglas County on L & M Farms are Jillian Whitehall Loesack (front) and from left to right, Blakely Loesack (6), Hunter Loesack (4), Nora Loesack (2), and combine driver Nathaniel Whitehall. Photo by Kevin Whitehall.



Rylee McKeirnan (6) checks her dad, Dave McKeirnan's, harvest progress on the family's farm near Pullman. Photo by Debbie Kelly.



February wheat fields in Grant County. Photo By Marlene Poe.



# Your wheat life...

Email pictures to  
[editor@wawg.org](mailto:editor@wawg.org).

Please include location of  
picture, names of all people  
appearing in the picture and  
ages of all children.

Ben Swannack taking a ride  
with Mike Glorfield in Lamont.  
Photo by Kerri Mays.



In Hay, Beau (2.5) and Miles (1) Hannas are waiting for a  
ride. Photo by Lindsey Hannas.



After-harvest visitors near Plaza.  
Photo by Chrissy DeGon.



# HAPPENINGS

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

## MAY 2025

**3-4 RENAISSANCE FAIR.** Music, entertainment, food, arts and crafts and maypole dances. East City Park, Moscow, Idaho. [moscowrenfair.org](http://moscowrenfair.org)

**4 BLOOMSDAY.** Spokane, Wash. [bloomsdayrun.org](http://bloomsdayrun.org)

**9-11 WINTHROP '49ER DAYS.** Parade, cowboy songs and poetry, dancing, Saturday dinner, Sunday breakfast. Winthrop, Wash. [winthrop.washington.com/events/old-west-festival/](http://winthrop.washington.com/events/old-west-festival/)

**13 WAWG BOARD MEETING.** Meeting starts at 10 a.m. at Washington Wheat Foundation Building, Ritzville, Wash. (509) 659-0610, [wawg.org](http://wawg.org)

**15-18 SELAH COMMUNITY DAYS.** Carnival, car show, entertainment, vendors. Selah, Wash. [selahdays.com](http://selahdays.com)

**16-18 WAITSBURG CELEBRATION DAYS.** Classic car show, cornhole tournament, street dance, vendors, parade, soap box derby, music. Waitsburg, Wash. [waitsburgcd.com](http://waitsburgcd.com)

**17 WATERVILLE COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE.** Event runs from 8 a.m. to approximately 3 p.m. Maps and a list of addresses will be available for pick up on W. Locust Street. The event is sponsored by Waterville Main Street Association. [historicwatervillewa.org/](http://historicwatervillewa.org/)

**22-25 MOSES LAKE SPRING FESTIVAL.** Three on three basketball tournament, car show, parade, carnival, entertainment. McCosh Park in Moses Lake, Wash. [springfestivalinmoseslake.com](http://springfestivalinmoseslake.com)

**23-25 LAST STAND RODEO.** Cowboy breakfast, fun run, parade, entertainment. Coulee City, Wash. [laststandrodeo.com](http://laststandrodeo.com)

**24-26 METHOW VALLEY RODEO.** Saddle bronc, bareback, bulls, barrel racing, team roping and junior events. Held at the rodeo grounds, about halfway between Twisp and Winthrop beginning at 1 p.m. [methowvalleyrodeo.com](http://methowvalleyrodeo.com)

## JUNE 2025

**3 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP TOUR.** Horse Heaven, Wash., at 8 a.m. For information call Karl Effertz at (701) 471-7850 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**3 WAWG BOARD MEETING.** Meeting starts at 10 a.m. at Washington Wheat Foundation Building, Ritzville, Wash. (509) 659-0610, [wawg.org](http://wawg.org)

**4 WHEAT COLLEGE.** AMMO workshop featuring Peter "Wheat Pete" Johnson. Registration starts at 9:30 a.m. Preregister by calling (509) 659-0610. No charge, and lunch will be provided. Wheatland Fairgrounds in Ritzville, Wash.

**5 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP TOUR.** Ritzville, Wash., at 9 a.m. For information call Aaron Esser at (509) 659-3210 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**7 REARDAN MULE DAYS.** Three on three basketball tournament, poker ride, car show, parade, vendors. Reardan, Wash. [reardanmuledays.com](http://reardanmuledays.com)

**6-7 ROSALIA BATTLE DAYS.** Community festival, parade, car show, vendors market, pin-up contest, fun run, kids activities, family games and more. Rosalia, Wash. [rosaliabattledays.info](http://rosaliabattledays.info)

**9 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP TOUR.** Harrington, Wash., at 10 a.m. For information call Aaron Esser at (509) 659-3210 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**10 PENDLETON STATION FIELD DAY.** Event begins at 7:45 a.m. at Pendleton Station on Tubbs Ranch Road outside Pendleton, Ore. For information call Debbie Sutor at (541) 278-4405.

**11 WSU WEED TOUR.** Palouse Conservation Field Station in Pullman, Wash., at 1:30 p.m. For information call Drew Lyon at (509) 335-2961 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**11 MORO FIELD DAY.** Event begins at 7:45 a.m. at Sherman Station on Lone Rock Road outside Moro, Ore. For information call Debbie Sutor at (541) 278-4405.

**12 LIND FIELD DAY.** Event begins at 8:30 a.m. at the WSU Dryland Research Center in Lind, Wash. For information call Samantha Crow at (509) 677-3671 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**13-14 DEMOLITION DERBY EXTRAVAGANZA.** Combine demolition derby, parade, barbecue. Lind, Wash. [lindcombinederby.com](http://lindcombinederby.com)

**13-15 PROSPECTORS' DAYS.** Three on three basketball, soap box derby, vendors, classic car show, music. Republic, Wash. [republicchamber.org/prospectors-days](http://republicchamber.org/prospectors-days)

**13-15 ALL WHEELS WEEKEND.** Car show, music, food. Dayton, Wash. [historicdayton.com/all-wheels-weekend](http://historicdayton.com/all-wheels-weekend)

**14 SNAKE RIVER FAMILY FESTIVAL.** Celebrate the lifeblood of the Palouse and enjoy a free lunch and ice cream, live music, favorite exhibitors, and kids' activities. Boyer Park and Marina, Colfax, Wash., 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. [portwhitman.com/snake-river-family-festival](http://portwhitman.com/snake-river-family-festival)

**14-15 UNION GAP OLD TOWN DAYS.** Washington state's biggest civil war reenactment. Trading post, blacksmith shop, train rides, games and wagon tours. Fullbright Park in Union Gap, Wash. [centralwaagmuseum.org/old-town-days-union-gap.asp](http://centralwaagmuseum.org/old-town-days-union-gap.asp)

**16 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP TOUR.** CHS Wheeler Office in Moses Lake, Wash., at 9 a.m.. For information call Andy McGuire at (509) 754-2011 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**17 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP TOUR.** Winter, spring cereals. Mayview, Wash., at 9 a.m. For info call Karl Effertz at (701) 471-7850 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**17 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP TOUR.** Spring canola. Mayview, Wash., at 9 a.m. For information call Jesse Ford at (509) 990-6313 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**18 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP TOUR.** Fairfield, Wash., at 1 p.m. For information call Karl Effertz at (701) 471-7850 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**20 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP TOUR.** Palouse, Wash., at 10 a.m. For information call Karl Effertz at (701) 471-7850 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**20 WSU COOK AGRONOMY FARM SPRING CANOLA TOUR.** Cook Research Farm in Pullman, Wash. For information call Jesse Ford at (509) 990-6313 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**20-22 WENATCHEE RIVER BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL.** Adults/children workshops, food, vendors, live music. Chelan County Expo Center in Cashmere, Wash. [cashmerecoffeehouse.com/wrbfest.htm](http://cashmerecoffeehouse.com/wrbfest.htm)

**21 SPRINT BOAT RACING.** Enjoy 5 grass terraces, two beer gardens and a great atmosphere in St. John, Wash. Fun for the entire family! Bring the lawn chairs, sunscreen and blankets. 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or until racing is finished. [webbslough.com](http://webbslough.com) or (509) 553-1014.



### 23 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP

**TOUR.** Eureka, Wash., at 9 a.m. For information call Rachel Wieme at (509) 524-2685 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

### 23 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP

**TOUR.** Walla Walla, Wash., at 1 p.m. For info call Rachel Wieme at (509) 524-2685 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

### 23 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP

**TOUR.** Spring canola in Waitsburg, Wash., at 3 p.m. For information call Jesse Ford at (509) 990-6313 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

### 24 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP

**TOUR.** Reardan, Wash., at 11 a.m. For info call Aaron Esser at (509) 659-3210 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

### 24 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP

**TOUR.** Almira, Wash., at 3 p.m. For info call Aaron Esser at (509) 659-3210 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

**25 SLIPPERY GULCH DAYS.** Chamber breakfast, fun run, tractor show, parade, music, vendors, fireworks. Tekoa, Wash. [slipperygulch.com](http://slipperygulch.com)

### 26 WILKE FARM FIELD DAY.

Davenport, Wash., at 8:30 a.m. For information call Aaron Esser at (509) 659-3210 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

### 27 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP

**TOUR.** Dayton, Wash., at 9 a.m. For info call Rachel Wieme at (509) 524-2685 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/)

### 28-29 GAS ENGINE SHOW AND

**SWAP MEET.** Eastern Washington Agricultural Museum on the Garfield County Fairgrounds in Pomeroy, Wash. [ewamuseum2008@gmail.com](mailto:ewamuseum2008@gmail.com)

### 30 WSU VARIETY TESTING CROP

**TOUR.** St. John, Wash., at 10 a.m. For info call Karl Effertz at (701) 471-7850 or [smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu/variety/) ■

## Submissions

Listings must be received by the 10th of each month for the next month's *Wheat Life*. Email listings to [editor@wawg.org](mailto:editor@wawg.org). Include date, time and location of event, plus contact info and a short description.



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