



Montana Seed Growers Association

# Notes & Quotes

July 2008

## MSGA Board Members:

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Bear Whitmer—Vice. Pres.  
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John McDonnell  
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## A REQUEST:

Please return any completed bulk certificates that you may still possess. We need to stay current in recording these sales and your cooperation is appreciated.

## Notes From the Manager

Crops across Montana appear to be maturing much more slowly in general than they did a year ago. Many places had abundant moisture and cool season conditions well into June. Seed Certification acreage has increased by approximately 11% to 67000+ acres this season. Producers in some areas are seeing potentially higher yields, especially with winter wheat. Spring crops, especially spring wheat in many dryland areas may need more moisture to develop the crop. Other areas are still reporting dry conditions in general.

Some items of interest need to be passed on from our recent Field Inspector Update. Every once in a while an inspector has noticed that directions have not been followed with regard to flagged off areas or parts of fields. Inspectors do allow parts of fields to be left, thus making it possible for the parts of a field that meet standards to be kept in the certification program. If we find that producers are failing to follow directions on a field as written on the inspection forms, it is our option to declare the entire field rejected. Also, it may be to a producer's advantage to consider splitting fields into more than 1 seed lot for storing, cleaning and testing purposes, especially if a part of a field appears questionable. This may be suggested by the inspector or undertaken by the producer.

All MSGA Inspectors qualified for Noxious Weed Seed Free Straw inspections under the Montana Department of Ag. Program during the update.

Persian Darnell is a concern in some fields, presence of which could result in rejection for certification by the inspector.

MSGA is planning on sponsoring 2 seed schools this fall and winter for Montana cleaning plant and handling facility operators, as well as seed growers. One is planned for Williston, ND November 18-19 and the other is in Great Falls, MT, January 20-21. We hope to cover principles of seed conditioning, Combine clean-out, seed storage, seed treatment (with chemical license points available), Plant Variety Protection, Seed Certification issues, Regulatory information, and more. Cosponsors include MSGA, Montana Department of Ag., North Dakota State Seed Department, MSU Extension and the Montana Seed Trade Association. More information should be coming as we continue to develop the programs.

## Have Fields Inspected Before Harvest!!!!

If a field is not inspected prior to harvest, no certification will be allowed on the production from that field. The field inspector who is listed for your county should be contacting you before inspection, but if you do not receive a call or note, please call the inspector to set up an inspection time or contact the MSGA office at 994-3516. It is the grower's responsibility to make sure his/her fields have been inspected.

## 2008 Field Inspectors

<b>Bob Bristol</b> (406) 644-3099 (406) 529-3388 Cell	Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, Sanders Counties
<b>Bob Nelson</b> (406) 378-2424 (406) 390-2695	Fergus, Judith Basin (Works with Terry Metcalfe)
<b>Brian Bedord</b> (406) 463-2475 (406) 590-9092 Cell	Northern Lewis & Clark, Cascade, Teton Counties
<b>Carli Lofing</b> (406) 994-2141 Office (406) 321-0294 Cell	Gallatin County
<b>Earl Belcher</b> (406) 648-5549 (406) 600-9860 Cell	Garfield, McCone, Phillips, Valley Counties
<b>Erin Miller</b> (406) 434-5943	Pondera, Glacier, Chouteau, Liberty, Toole Counties
<b>Gary Schaff</b> (406) 488-6149 (406) 489-0522 Cell	Daniels, Dawson, Richland, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Wibaux Counties
<b>Hugh Brookie</b> (406) 527-3476	Garfield, McCone, Phillips, Valley Counties (Works with Earl Belcher)
<b>Jim Bott</b> (406) 234-3848 (406) 951-1324 Cell	Carter, Custer, Powder River, Prairie, Rosebud, Treasure, Bighorn, Fallon Counties
<b>John Ranney</b> (406) 656-7795 (406) 656-8066 Office	Small Grains in Yellowstone, Musselshell, and Petroleum Counties
<b>Milt Munson</b> (406) 442-1756 (406) 459-8888 Cell	Broadwater, Lower part of Lewis & Clark, Powell Counties
<b>Ole Sherwood</b> (406) 328-6617 (406) 321-0324 Cell	Beans & Alfalfa in Yellowstone, Musselshell, Petroleum, Small Grains in Carbon Counties
<b>Roger Brookie</b> (406) 527-3345 (406) 527-7570 Cell	Hill, Blaine Counties
<b>Ron Larson</b> (406) 994-5124 Office (406) 581-2327 Cell	Beaverhead, Madison, Deer Lodge, Silver Bow, Jefferson, Granite, Meagher, Wheatland, Park, Sweet Grass, Stillwater, Grasses & Legumes in Carbon Counties
<b>Terry Metcalfe</b> (406) 423-5580 (406) 366-0023 Cell	Fergus, Judith Basin Counties

## Notice to Growers of SeCan Varieties

By agreement with SeCan of Canada, a royalty must be collected on seed sold or seed planted. If that seed has been produced under the MSGA Certification program in 2007, those fees are now due. The fee amount for Harrington barley is \$0.44 per bushel of seed sold. The fee amount for AC Metcalfe is \$0.77 per bushel of seed sold. These rates apply for seed sold July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. We will be collecting these fees in September of this year. A notice will be sent to producers and contractors of SeCan varieties.

Any grower has the option of becoming a SECAN member and obtaining the varieties directly from a Canadian grower. In which case the grower would not need to pay any royalties to MSGA, but would be required to pay them directly to SECAN. If you have questions on this, please feel free to call the MSGA office.

# Challenges in Growing Commercial Seed of Cereal Forages

Dennis Cash

Hay is produced on over 500,000 acres of cereals in the northern Great Plains. Many early common varieties of winter wheat and spring wheat spring were awnless, and used for the dual purpose of grain and forage for livestock and draft animals. Modern semi-dwarf, high-yielding early-maturity wheat varieties are typically not suited for dry hay production. Breeding programs for hooded barley (Haybet, Hays, Westford, etc.) and awnless varieties of winter wheat or triticale have made some significant improvements in forage production and feeding quality.

The ideal forage cereal plant is fairly tall, leafy, fine-stemmed, with good adaptation to broad dryland environments. Haybet barley and Willow Creek winter wheat are good examples of "ideal annual forages" with one common drawback – neither is a particularly high grain-yielding variety. In 2006 and 2007, Willow Creek was included in the dryland Montana variety trials at Bozeman, Havre, Sidney, Kalispell, Moccasin, Huntley, Conrad and Williston, ND. Willow Creek was compared to 33 elite winter wheat varieties, and was markedly different from the grain varieties in maturity, crop height, and grain yield (Table 1). Across the 16 station-years of data, Willow Creek had the lowest grain yield (51.5 bu/A), 23% lower than the trial average (67.3 bu/A).

**Table 1. Grain yield and agronomic performance of 34 winter wheat varieties in the 2005-Montana statewide testing program at eight dryland locations.**

	Heading Date	Height at Maturity (in)	Grain Yield (bu/A)	Test Weight (lb/bu)	Grain Protein (%)
Yellowstone	June 7 <sup>b</sup>	34.4 <sup>c</sup>	75.9 <sup>a</sup>	60.5 <sup>b</sup>	12.7 <sup>c</sup>
Genou	June 5 <sup>b</sup>	35.8 <sup>b</sup>	65.9 <sup>b</sup>	61.4 <sup>a</sup>	13.3 <sup>b</sup>
Willow Creek	June 15 <sup>a</sup>	48.4 <sup>a</sup>	51.5 <sup>c</sup>	59.6 <sup>c</sup>	14.5 <sup>a</sup>
<i>Ave. 34 Varieties</i>	<i>June 6</i>	<i>34.2</i>	<i>67.3</i>	<i>61.3</i>	<i>12.9</i>

<sup>a, b, c</sup> Values within a column followed by different superscripts are significantly different  $P = 0.05$ ).

The conclusion from these trials was that Willow Creek is not truly a dual-purpose (hay or grain) variety. At the time of planting, the grower has made the decision that Willow Creek will be for forage production.

For growers of Registered, Certified or commercial seed, we were concerned that low grain yield potential, potential lodging or harvestability issues could limit the the success of Willow Creek. For this reason, a survey was conducted in 2007 of growers producing Willow Creek seed (see accompanying article).

## Willow Creek Winter Wheat Seed Production Survey

J. P. Tanner, Dennis Cash, and Ron Carlstrom

Montana livestock producers use annual forages widely. Montana State University has been evaluating different annual forage species for forage value and viability in Montana. One of the promising annual forages is 'Willow Creek' winter wheat. This is an awnless forage winter wheat that can be grown for hay and possibly spring pasture.

Willow Creek is a tall, late-maturing wheat that is different from current winter wheat varieties. While originally released as potential dual-purpose (hay or grain) wheat, the largest limitation to this new variety is its low grain production. In short, as Willow Creek has entered seed production channels, it appears to be similar to the previous situation with 'Haybet' barley – a good forage variety with low grain (seed) potential.

A statewide survey was conducted with producers who grew Willow Creek seed in 2007 to determine their experience in growing this annual forage. The number of acres varied from 20 acres planted to as many as 110 acres. Producers indicated that they heard of this variety from several different sources.

All producers felt that this wheat was taller than other varieties of wheat, and the heading date was later. Despite its height, there were limited problems noted with lodging or seed shatter. However, they were disappointed by the poor seed yields (30 to 36 bu/ac) compared to other grains grown during 2007.

Willow Creek seed produced in 2007 was grown as Certified or common seed for sale to hay growers for 2008 forage production. The price for seed varied among the producers (\$14/bu to \$18/bu). All producers but one commented that Willow Creek appeared to be economical to grow as a seed crop, despite its low production.

Most of the producers said they would grow Willow Creek winter wheat again as a seed crop. Due to its excellent potential as a forage crop, there will continue to be a demand for reliable seed sources. Interestingly, several of the seed growers for Willow Creek wheat have cattle herds, and these producers will continue to grow this winter wheat for seed for sale or for their own use to produce hay. Producers appear to be excited about this crop as annual forage for producing hay for livestock.

Sales and production of Willow Creek are likely down in 2008 due to promising grain futures, however an adequate supply of seed should be available for fall plantings in September 2008.

More information about Willow Creek wheat is available at:

[http://www.animalrangeextension.montana.edu/articles/forage/2007\\_willowcreek.pdf](http://www.animalrangeextension.montana.edu/articles/forage/2007_willowcreek.pdf)

## Notice on Cancelled Acres:

**NOTE: IF YOU HAVE A FIELD YOU WANT TO CANCEL FROM CERTIFICATION, PLEASE LET THE FIELD INSPECTOR KNOW AHEAD OF TIME SO THE INSPECTOR WILL NOT HAVE TO MAKE A TRIP TO THE FIELD. IF YOU CANNOT MAKE CONTACT WITH THE INSPECTOR, PLEASE CALL THE MSGA OFFICE AT 406-994-3516.**

ANY GROWER WHO CANCELS ANY FIELD BEFORE INSPECTION WILL RECEIVE A REFUND OF ACREAGE FEES FOR THE CANCELLED ACREAGE. Parts of fields may be canceled for a partial refund of fees. It is definitely to the grower's advantage to check out those fields before the inspector comes to determine if the whole field or any parts of the field should be canceled.

## Seed Lab News by Carli Lofing

The Montana State University Seed Lab has ended the 2008 fiscal year with approximately 4260 samples. There are just a few reminders as begin our new year.

- We will begin to pre-chill germinations on 2008 crops at the end of July.
- Please remember to indicate when you send in a new 2008 crop so that we can pre-chill those samples and not old crops.
- Pre-chill takes an additional 5 days on the germination so please expect that those germs will take longer than normal.
- If you have re-germs, the summer months are a great time to send them in!

The Montana State Seed Lab website has been updated so feel free to visit it if you have any questions.

Good Luck in the harvest season and we look forward to continuing to serve you during the summer and fall seasons!

## Roguing of Fields

We try to include this item each year as a reminder of some basic preparation that needs to be done before field inspection. All fields should be rogued at least once for off-type plants and contaminating weeds before the inspector arrives. This also gives growers the opportunity to cancel fields before inspection and receive an acreage fee refund. Note: refunds will not be given if the inspector has to drive to your field before you cancel, unless you are only canceling part of a field.

Alfalfa fields should be basically free of Yellow and White sweet clover prior to inspection. **NOTE: A count of more than 10 sweet clover plants per acre at inspection time is a basis for rejection of your alfalfa seed field.**

Alfalfa and other legumes need to be in bloom for proper inspection. Cereal grains and grasses must be in the ripening stage before they can be inspected to detect off-types and other contaminating crops (best done within 2 weeks of harvest especially on small grains).

## Wild Oats in Grain Fields

A special reminder is in order for growers of small grains. If there are wild oats in a field, they must be rogued out. The field inspectors will be rejecting fields estimated to have more than 5 wild oat plants per acre. Please note that fields of tame oats containing wild oats of any amount will likely be rejected, since wild oats cannot successfully be removed from this crop by conditioning plants. A grower may have a field re-inspected, but MSGA reserves the right to charge a re-inspection fee.

**The best policy is to rogue out all wild oats before the inspector arrives.**

MSGA also reserves the right to require that certified growers swath parts of fields (or otherwise mark out such parts) that are declared non-eligible due to wild oats or other contaminants. Discovery of comingling of such areas with otherwise certified parts of fields will be cause for rejection of whole fields. MSGA is determined that field inspection instructions will be followed as closely as possible.

**MONTANA SEED GROWERS  
ASSOCIATION**

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## FYI or was that “Farmer’s Yield Initiative”?

MSU has signed the contract to be a sponsoring member of the Farmer’s Yield Initiative. FYI is a partnership among the public and private small grain breeding programs, crop improvement associations and businesses, to promote the value of pure seed. There will be a “hotline” for reporting PVP violations that will be handled by professionals in the business of protecting intellectual property rights. This is very hot off the press and more details will follow. Keep your eyes out for the brochure coming directly to your mail box with all the exciting information on pure seed and enforcement of PVP.

Certified seed production and acres planted in Montana are definitely on the increase. You may not realize that the number of grain acres planted with pure seed is also on the rise. My crude calculations with a dull pencil, show 32% of the acres planted for MSU protected varieties, were done so with certified seed in 2007. Ron Larson and Heather Rimel also did some whittling with their pencils and figured around a third of the public/private acres were sown with pure seed. In my book, that makes Montana a pure seed friendly state. Let’s keep the pure seed pipe line flowing with top varieties to fuel the grain market.

Here’s to a successful seed harvest,

Bill Grey

Montana Foundation Seed Page, Bill Grey