

# Notes & Quotes

Fall 2014

## Montana Seed Growers Association

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## Production Fees Are Now Due

It's that time of year again folks, production fees for seed harvested from all crops are payable within 30 days after harvest. The first round of invoices will be sent in November. Fees for the 2014 cropping season must be received by April 15, 2015. **Fees are due on all crops which have passed the field inspection even if they do not pass final lab analysis or are not carried through certification beyond field inspection.** Growers may not receive an invoice for crops grown under contract with a seed dealer. All fees should be calculated on a clean seed basis. To determine "clean seed" production on an uncleaned lot, deduct 10% (average cleanout) from total uncleaned production (on large seeded crops). Contact the MSGA for cleanout questions on small seeded crops.

### Prices are as follows:

Wheat-Flax-Kamut-Rye-Spelt-Triticale	.05/bu on clean seed
Barley-Oats-Buckwheat-Peas-Lentils	.08/cwt on clean seed
Oil Seeds	.12/cwt on clean seed

### Perennial Crops—

All Grass Varieties	.005/lb
Perennial Legume Crops	.005/lb
Flowering Saltbush	.25/cwt
Field Beans—No production fees are due on bean seed production.	

## Elections for Districts 2 & 3

Ballots are being sent for Directors for District 2, currently held by Rod Kitto of Toston and comprised of Granite, Powell, Lewis & Clark, Deer Lodge, Silver Bow, Jefferson, Broadwater, Meagher, Park, Gallatin, Madison, Beaverhead and Sweetgrass counties; and District 3, currently held by John Wold of Laurel and is comprised of Stillwater, Carbon, Yellowstone, Big Horn, Treasure, Rosebud, Custer, Powder River, Carter and Fallon counties. All growers enrolled in the program in Districts 2 and 3 for the 2014 growing season are eligible to vote, and any grower living within the two districts who has been a member/grower of MSGA for the last three consecutive years (as shown by signing an Application of Certification) may be elected to serve as director. The term of office for each director is three years. The three candidates with the most votes in the primary election will then move on to the general election. **Please be sure to cast your vote for your representative!**

*NDSU Research Fees  
are now due. If you  
have not turned those in  
please do so at this  
time.  
Thank You*

## MSGA News: From Manager Ron Larson

In the 2014 crop season, MSGA experienced its 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of acres applied for certification in its 102 year history, with 100,094 acres applied for. The 2013 record number was over 103,000 acres. Inspections are done, but all fields may not yet harvested, especially in the flood and rain-damaged northeast part of the state. The crop season began in promising fashion with mid-summer predictions that crop yields and quality could be excellent. But heavy rain and wet weather in August, across the state, then began to cause problems for many of the crops that were not harvested prior to the rain event. The results were reduced yields and quality, including sprouting, reduced test weight, and potential for germination problems. Since this initial damage, an early September hard frost added to the potential for further deterioration of crops still standing. Additionally, late season hail damage was reported in some areas. Some producers and seed dealers used falling numbers and percent sprout lab results from State grain lab in Great Falls or other labs to help identify and dispose of problem seed lots. Others have submitted samples of suspect seed lots to the State Seed Lab for testing for germination.

An important question that will need to be answered is how much damage from sprout and frost can be tolerated and still end up with seed lots that will germinate and have adequate vigor to develop the next year's crop. We have received many inquiries about this issue and have endeavored to help answer questions with the information we have available. Some have used falling numbers and sprout data from the State Grain Lab and other places and on that basis have perhaps already removed some questionable seed lots of wheat and barley. For a lot of seed that has sprout damage or perhaps a relatively low falling number value, it is advisable to obtain a fall germination test to initially verify an acceptable level of viability. Seed lots that are too low in the fall can then be moved to the grain/feed channel. For saved seed lots, a spring germination test prior to sale and planting should be performed to again verify an acceptable level of viability. There is a possibility that sprouted seed will deteriorate over winter in storage.

## New Pulse Diagnostic Lab

Dr. Bright Agindotan has recently been selected as laboratory manager for the new Regional Pulse Crop Diagnostic Laboratory here on the MSU Campus. The development of this lab is a result of a USDA grant received by Dr. Mary Burrows, MSU Extension Plant Pathologist. Dr. Agindotan brings much expertise in the area laboratory analysis of plant viruses as well as other plant disease pests. This lab is located next to the State Seed Lab (in the MSU Marsh Lab complex). Additionally, some lab space from the seed lab will also be shared with his lab for certain testing procedures. Current plans call for samples that are submitted for analysis to the pulse diagnostic lab to be logged in to the PureHarvest software database by seed lab personnel. One advantage of this lab being closely associated with the State Seed Lab will be a one-stop-shop approach for anyone submitting samples - for purity and germination as well as all of the disease testing procedures that may become available. We look forward to working with Dr. Agindotan as he develops testing procedures to meet the plant pathology needs and challenges of the rising pulse crop production industry in Montana and other states in the region.



Dr. Bright Agindotan



## *The Seed – Point*

Bill Grey - Montana Foundation Seed

Happy Ghouls Month. The goblins already came this summer with wild weather and yet October is and has been one of the nicest that I can recall. Overall a good summer with the moisture and if you subscribe to the state meteorologist, we are into a 30 year pattern with cool and wet, something like this year (hey, I heard it on Ag Live). What's it mean for seed? Sounds like an opportunity to continuous crop, try new crops and varieties and learn a whole lot more about new weeds, fertility requirements and a chance to buy new equipment (more toys).

The new weather landscape is already upon us and it has brought with it a new pest epidemic, the orange wheat blossom midge. This soil inhabiting midge likes the wet summers during flowering for infection of the developing flower and it thrives under conditions that allows for continuous and recrop wheat. Sadly, it just won't cooperate during emergence from the soil so that we can knock it out with an insecticide. Fortunately, and to begin with the good news, we have a decent tool in plant genetics that functions as an antibiotic that flat out kills larvae that feed on the developing kernels. Bad news, as usual, is that antibiotic is so effective that if a field is planted to 100% of a variety with the super plant gene, then it is very, very likely that an individual midge resistant to the antibiotic will be selected for and survive to replenish the population. This would leave us with a whole pile of resistant midge and this variety may as well be placed on the shelf with other historical varieties that are of no economical use. The key to avoiding this disaster is to deploy a variety without the gene as a mixture with the resistant variety. The plant mixture actually maintains a midge population in the field that can be controlled on a continued basis with the deployment of the plant resistant gene. We don't lose the tool that knocks out the midge while we manage the overall epidemic. Sounds crazy, but we are inviting, feeding and sustaining the survival of a bad house guest.

So what's in store for 'Egan' the new spring wheat that has the gene, good yielder and excellent quality. We propose a bold, new approach to the release and deployment of this variety from the MSU that will require a new stewardship agreement. The plan is to release foundation seed this spring, 2015, to qualified seed producers where the variety will be expanded under 'pure seed' requirements of the certification program. We are asking these seed producers to raise the registered and certified classes in an area without a history of the midge. Then certified seed will be blended at the point of sale with a recommended variety that is susceptible, in a ratio of 9:1 with Egan. The certified seed sold will be labelled with two tags, one will be for the Egan and the other the variety chosen for the blend. Then, we aren't done yet, the plan is for the purchaser to agree with a Certified Seed Only requirement and not to plant back any seed from the harvest. If you think about it, there is no point in saving seed from a field that is devastated by the midge, as all the susceptible plants will not produce seed and the remainder of the seed lot is comprised of resistant plants. If this lot was to be planted, there is a huge potential for selection of a resistant midge and thus the loss of the only known plant gene that breeders have discovered that kills the midge.

This is going to take a lot of talking among the seed producers and growers, as it is a whole new way of operating with MSU varieties. We have a great tool in the form of a plant variety that will control the orange wheat blossom midge and with the stewardship agreement this gene should be effective for the next 30 years, or whatever the meteorologist has in store for us.

<http://plantsciences.montana.edu/FoundationSeed/varietyrelease/2014/TalbertCAP400release.pdf>

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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## MT State Seed Lab News

The Montana State Seed Lab will be gearing up for doing the Clearfield Confirm seed testing as approved by BASF. Lab staff must finish a training course and be approved by the company prior to offering this test. Hopefully the training will be finished by the end of December, with the possibility of offering the test by early January of 2015. The lab has had a very busy fall season with a 50% increase in the number of samples processed compared to the same time period in the previous several years. Additionally, we have had to learn aspects of a newly revised software program, which was a challenge since it came at such a busy time for the lab.

As we have considered the ways in which the lab could improve, one thing that may improve our efficiency with the sample log in process is if we could have those who submit samples include the customer account numbers with their sample information. That Customer Account Number is at the top center of both the lab report and invoice. Finally, we would like to thank all of our customers for their business, and for bearing with us as we waded through the changes to the software program.

