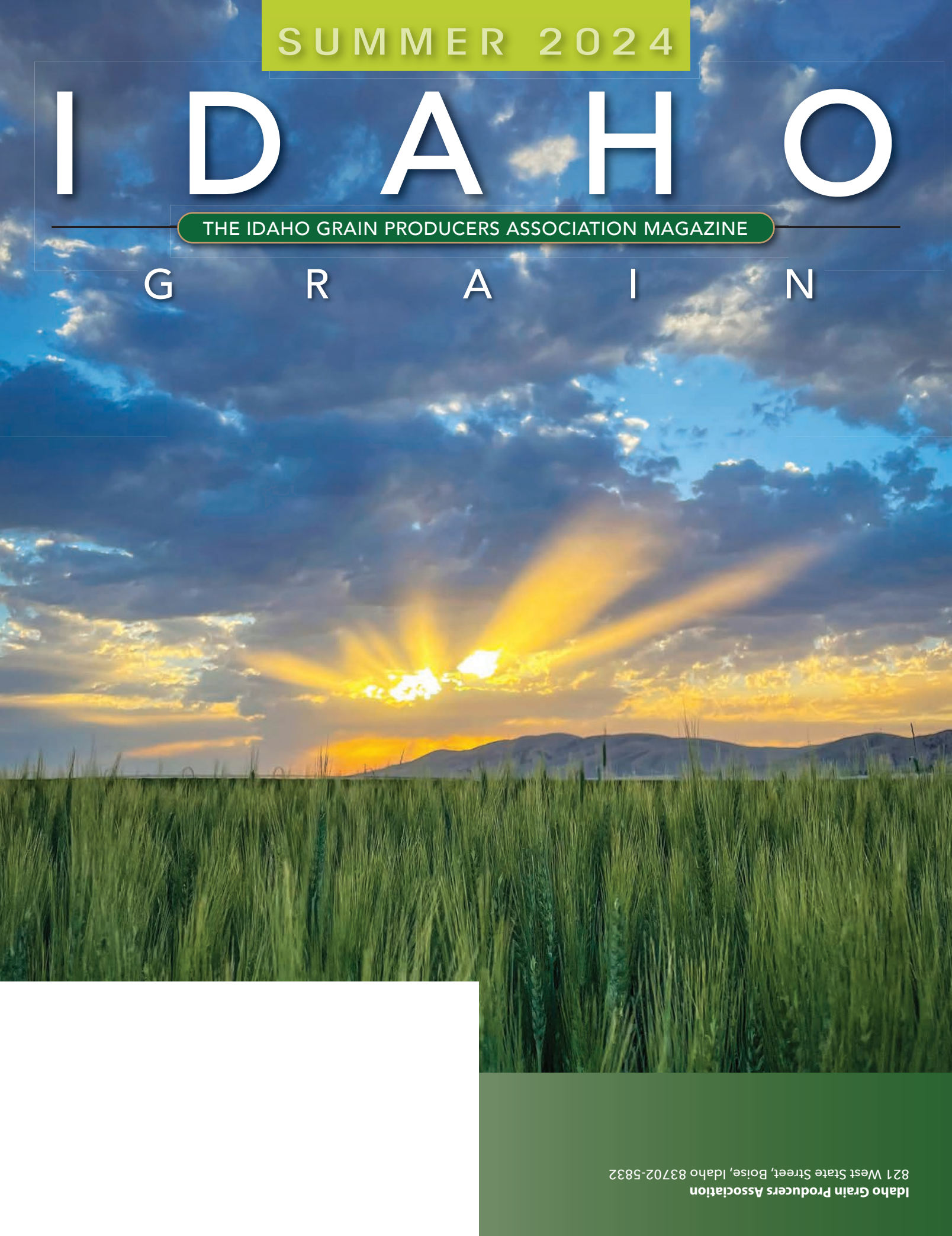


SUMMER 2024

IDAHO

THE IDAHO GRAIN PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE

GRAIN





VIEWS



**BY JUSTIN PLACE
PRESIDENT**

Farmers are mystical creatures! Generally humble, quiet, and private individuals who don't like to toot their own horns or cause a stir beyond their circles. The farmers' noble occupation deems them trustworthy; right there alongside military and police. Yet, they are so misunderstood!

Once on an Uber ride, the driver commented, "It's a good thing we have farmers; their food is so much healthier than the other stuff we eat." Where do you think the taters in your tots come from?!

My son worked at a city grocery store. When he informed one shopper they were out of baby carrots, she sternly demanded he go in the back and "make some more".

We shake our heads and mutter about these kinds of experiences. It's not their fault; they don't know. Our end-consumers are the general public who don't understand where their food comes from. This is why we need to be advocates for agriculture. Yes, it requires stepping outside of our comfort zone. But if we don't tell our story, someone less informed or misinformed will.

Recently on social media I read an article accusing Round-Up of contributing to lymphoma. I curiously scrolled through the comments. One particular woman was not hesitant to share how upset she had been and had resorted to calling her congressman. The staff member confirmed the social media myth. I weighed in and explained Round-Up's safety record and explained how and why farmers use it. She was relieved and thanked me for my clarifying explanations from a grower perspective. This is just another of endless examples showing that even the educated and influential are so far removed from agriculture as not to understand it.

For the eclipse of 2017, the path of totality passed right over my farm. A tour bus came down our road looking for a place to view the phenomenon, and we let them watch from our place. Probably 40 people anxiously disembarked the bus, complete with tin-foil-hat and bongo drums. Then, the driver casually asked me why "farmers drench their crops in Round-Up" as he had learned about on social media. I explained to him that the chemical in question was a plant killer, not a growth regulator, and how it works. We discussed what kind of quality produce I would want to feed my own family. I brought wheat samples from the combine and freshly dug potatoes from the field. Their tin foil hat party became a teaching opportunity. My new friends left wiser and I acquired a new social media

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follower who has thanked me many times over the past few years for clarifying various rumors she has encountered.

There are a lot of misunderstandings about agriculture. These myths are resolved as we stick our necks out on social media, with our neighbors, and with news outlets; as we step up and share our story; and in our daily conversations. It is up to us, as the producers and experts in the field (pun intended) to advocate for agriculture. ■



BY STACEY KATSEANES SATTERLEE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We've all heard it before – how important it is for farmers to tell the story of agriculture. Sometimes I think we are making progress – there's some great social media accounts that have attracted large followings, we do media training to build confidence so folks who are naturally inclined to be more quiet and private (ahem, farmers) are more comfortable speaking up. Unfortunately, during this last legislative session, we realized how much work we all still have to do in educating decision-makers about what it takes to feed the world.

Why did the legislative session feel so different this year? There were several factors – one was the redistricting that took place in 2021. With the growth in our state and the increasing size of Idaho's urban areas, we lost rural districts and rural voices in the legislature. That shift is sure to continue, and we'll see even more rural seats lost when redistricting occurs next (in 2031). Also, there are fewer people engaged in agriculture and people are getting further away from generational agricultural roots. So fewer people know first-hand about farming and ranching. This year is also an election year, which can heighten tensions in the legislature as more headline making, hot-button issues take the forefront so people can go home and campaign on them.

Here are a few specific examples where we needed to be better at talking about agriculture from this session. We've been trying for years to update Idaho's fencing laws. I had more than one legislator ask, "is this is a real problem." Yes, it is a real problem. And even though we passed a first step toward a solution this year by updating the stray cattle statute in Idaho's code, it's still going to be a problem. We need to keep telling that story.

Another example: some of the chemicals farmers typically use are under attack. A bill was introduced in the Senate that would try to limit the liability of the companies who manufacture those chemicals. Did you know every bottle of

Continued on next page



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Round-Up starts in Soda Springs, Idaho? Farmers need access to pesticides – that’s the bottom line. We had legislators who didn’t know if glyphosate was a liquid or a powder, how or when or why it is applied. One of the most useful things we accomplished this legislative session was that we worked with Food Producers of Idaho to host legislators for a meal and educate them on the process a chemical undergoes to be approved for use by the EPA in the U.S. and then to educate them on how, when, and why farmers use pesticides. We were unsuccessful in passing legislation, which tells me there’s more work to do.

And finally, IGPA supported the Idaho Farm Bureau’s push to get Agricultural Protection Areas through the

legislature. The amount of educating and negotiating to get that across the finish line was unreal. It showed how little understanding there is of farming, and showed a real bias many legislators have toward development. While a bill was passed and signed into law, there’s definitely more educating to do there.

When we’re talking about modern agriculture, I think to myself, no one would walk into a hospital and say, I want health care from the 1950s. Why would anyone expect agriculture to look like it did in the 1950s? Just like everything else, farmers and farming have evolved. And we have to let people know about it.

We also have to elect legislators who will stand up and vote for agriculture – I sure hope you voted in the Primary Election on May 21! 🇺🇸

Spotlight: IGPA Executive Board Members

Have you met your five-member Executive board team for IGPA for 2024? They’re your friends and neighbors and they’re folks that care about the work of IGPA enough to dedicate their own time to our great cause. The IGPA Executive Board is a five-year commitment with movement upward in the chain of command with one representative from each of the five regions.

President: Justin Place Hamer, ID

As executive board president, Justin’s job is to lead the team during meetings and events as well as work with staff on budgeting, IGPA’s stance on issues, meeting agenda items and overseeing the organization’s operations as a whole. Justin and his wife Tara farm 1,250 acres of barley, wheat, mustard and alfalfa in Hamer and are proud parents to four boys and one grandson. Justin is always ready to help and usually the first one to either send or reply (sometimes to questionable group texts). In his free time, Justin likes to spend time with family and keeps busy in his community serving on a variety of boards and associations.



Quote: “Always be willing to try something new on your farm. Adapt and adjust as needed. Also, we can do hard things!”

Vice President: Jonathan Rosenau Nezperce, ID

As vice president of the board, Jonathan works hard to support his fellow e-board members and make sure IGPA has a seat at the table. In his real life, Jonathan and his wife Christy farm 2,100 acres in Nezperce where they grow wheat, blue grass, barley, oats, alfalfa, garbanzo beans, peas, and lentils. He’s dad to two kids (Caleb, age 10, and Lillian, age seven) and spends his weekends attending their basketball and baseball games, trapshooting, and driving to ballet lessons and horse-riding lessons.



Quote: “Get the job done and do it right the first time.”

Secretary/Treasurer: Kyle Wangemann Soda Springs, ID

Kyle is the money guy on the board and makes sure IGPA is using grower dollars wisely. Kyle and his wife Emily grow barley in Soda Springs as





well as raising three boys, ages 15 and twins who are 13. Kyle is busy on his farm growing both wheat and barley and works daily with his uncle and cousin. In his free time Kyle can be found planning his next Disney trip, looking for the best dessert in town, or watching a Hallmark Christmas movie.

Quote: “It’s sort of in your blood. You don’t think about the long hours or the money. You do it because you love it.”

**Executive Member:
Larry Hollifield
Hansen, ID**



As the executive team’s newest member, Larry is responsible for lending another voice and another point of view to the group. An avid Vandal fan and alumni, Larry is a third generation farmer in Hansen where he grows sugar beets, barley, wheat, alfalfa, dry beans, and corn. In addition to becoming more involved with IGPA, he is also involved with Farm Bureau and Leadership Idaho Agriculture. He stays busy with his two teenage daughters who keep him on his toes with their sports and theater productions.

Quote: “You better be at the table or you’re probably on the menu.”

**Past President: Ty Iverson
Bonners Ferry, ID**



When your four years on the e-board are up, you get to move into the coveted “Past President” position and take it easy for a while. All kidding aside, Ty continues to work hard for the grain growers of Idaho, attending and hosting meetings in his neck of the woods and representing Idaho on the NAWG board. We thank Ty for his years of service and are happy he’s still sticking around for a while. When he’s not farming or representing IGPA, Ty can be found hanging with his family, wife Lisa and son Colton, cheering on their beloved Bonners Ferry HS and the Idaho Vandals.

Quote: “A good farmer is not simply a man or a woman who can drive a tractor, run cows, work ground or grow

food. A good farmer is a steward of their family, their faith and their community. Good farmers are those who get up to make pancakes at the monthly community breakfast. Good farmers are those who wouldn’t pass a piece of trash on the ground without picking it up. Good farmers go to work for something every day—whatever that might be. They are those who take a strong care for those around them and are not complacent, entitled or selfish.” ■



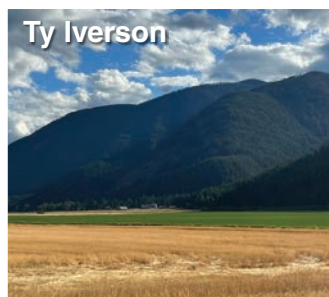
Larry Hollifield



Kyle Wangemann



Justin Place



Ty Iverson



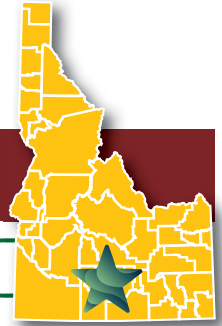
Jonathan Rosenau



REPRESENTATIVE

Chenele Dixon

TWIN FALLS, ID • DISTRICT 24



Tell us a little bit about your hometown, where you grew up and where you live now?

I grew up in Peoria, Arizona (near Phoenix) which was a lot more rural back then. I loved the weather as a kid and was outside a lot but I like the seasons now of Idaho. I met my husband (who is a 5th generation Idahoan from Twin Falls) during college at BYU. We moved to Oregon for his medical school training, then to Iowa for residency and finally moved back to Idaho to start our careers and raise our family. I live in Kimberly now and I love it. I love Idaho.

Tell us about your family; spouse, kids, grandkids? What do they all do?

We have two girls who are both grown. Our oldest, Emily, lives in Texas and is working on her Master of Accounting through BSU. She and her husband have one daughter—my granddaughter Geneva. She is turning eight this summer and we are planning for her to come up to Twin Falls for “Grandma Camp” where we will do all the fun things—bake, go to the park, rodeo, swim, whatever she wants to do. We will probably take her up to Boise for some zoo time and maybe the museums too. Our youngest daughter is Anavey. She graduated from BYU in nursing. She and her husband live in Knoxville where he attends PA school and she is doing her Nurse Practitioner schooling online through NNU. They will do their clinicals here so will come home for that and hopefully stay in Idaho.

What did you want to be when you grew up and is that what you currently do for work?

I graduated from BYU with a degree in English. When I first graduated, I tutored high school kids with their writing. I stayed home with our girls so this was a great fit at the time. Later on, I taught in home school co-ops with our groups. I really enjoyed helping the kids with their senior projects –it was fun to see what they wanted to do. I would try to do fun activities to give them some ideas as well and would organize tours with community



members who did different types of jobs to give kids an idea of what they might like to do in the future. We met with a physicist friend of mine, lawyers, doctors, farmers, etc. It was a great experience for the kids and for me.

Now I do all sorts of things. In 2016 I helped the Kimberly School District work on a school bond campaign, then moved to the school foundation. I have served as the president of the foundation now for the past few years. Then in 2017 I went to real estate school and do real estate a bit on the side, when I’m not in session or campaigning.

Who had the greatest influence on you during your childhood?

I would say both of my parents. I am the oldest of four kids (2 brothers and 1 sister). My next sibling is seven years behind me so I was kind of an “only child” for quite a while. I think it made me more independent.

Happy memory from your childhood?

Oh yes. I loved going on bike rides with my Dad when I was a kid. We would go out on a Saturday morning on bike paths around Peoria and stop and get a donut. I loved doing that.

Was there a teacher or educator during your early years that had an impact on your life?



Yes there were lots which is why I went into education and specifically English. Probably my second grade teacher Miss Hackert as she was so sweet and encouraging. She loved all her students. One time I wrote a story about a turtle and she was very encouraging with my writing even at that young age. In high school I loved my English teachers. One in particular my junior year. I always got A's and this time I got a C on a paper. She pulled me aside and talked to me and told me she knew I could do better. That was a life-changing experience; she saw my potential and believed in me.

Where did you go on your first date?

Our first date was very spontaneous. I had invited his apartment over to watch a football game and he was the only one who came and my roommates left too. He brought cookies over and then we went to dinner at a Mexican restaurant and had nachos. For our first official date we hiked up to Bridal Bill Falls in Provo Canyon.

What do you do in your free time and other things you do in your community?

Lots of foundation work (see above). I also used to be the Director of CSI Music Festival Music Camp (a summer camp for kids 12-18). I liked organizing that event, even though I don't play a musical instrument. They asked if I would take it over at one point, so I did that for quite a few years. We would bring music teachers from across the state in for the event, organized all the kids activities and really got to know a lot of people.

I was also the BYU Alumni Chair for the Magic Valley area for many years and would organize football watch parties, bring in musical groups, bring in speakers, etc. People from the community would come too.

I also worked with the Music Club board through the community and was the Magic Valley Youth Orchestra secretary for a time when my girls were involved as young kids.

And of course I have been involved in party politics for a long time. I served as precinct person, county secretary for the Republican party, state committee woman for the county at the state level, and Senator Risch's regional person during one of his elections. I guess you could say I like to stay busy!

What word would you use to describe yourself?

Servant leader. I try to look at it that way.

Why did you decide to run for office?

Well you know I have always been fascinated by politics. I like the process. I always try to be a contributor in my community and I love the Magic Valley so when redistricting happened a seat opened up. My people were Laurie Lickley and Clark Kauffman and I wasn't going to go against them, so when that seat opened up I thought it was a good opportunity. My kids were grown (this would be hard to do with kids at home) and I talked to lots of people and got lots of support so I went for it. I just finished my first two-year term (elected in 2022).



Tell us about the committees you have served on and your path to leadership?

I sit on Health and Welfare, Judiciary and Rules, and Local Government committees. I'm not on Ag but I sure do live in an ag powerhouse area of state. I thought I could bring a good perspective to Health and Welfare being married to a physician and seeing that process every day. Though Education makes sense for me, there's already lots of great folks on that committee.

What challenges do you think the state faces in 2024 and beyond?

Navigating the growth our state is seeing with our agricultural base is a challenge. We need to be smart about it. We have water issues, we have our economy largely based in agriculture and we must preserve our ag tradition and heritage—especially in the Magic Valley. It makes the people who they are here in Idaho and it's a big part of our economy.

What do you love most about Idaho?

People. I love the people. I remember before I moved here and would meet Idahoans I always thought, "wow, they are so nice up in Idaho."

Future political ambitions?




It is just an honor to serve—we will just see where things go. I love the people I get to serve with and the folks I represent. I wouldn't have gotten to know so many people that I now call friends had I not made the decision to serve. ■



IGPA Industry Partnership Program

IGPA has been hard at work this past year growing our Industry Partnership Program and adding several companies to our list of incredible partners. We value their input and all they do for our ag community. Our industry partners understand that their success and the success of Idaho’s grain growers is intertwined – similarly, being successful on the advocacy front is as important to them as it is to you. Industry partners

are offered space in our magazine in a featured article, social media postings, invitations to various IGPA meetings throughout the year, recognition in our bi-weekly newsletters, and much more. No matter the level, we value our industry partnerships and realize we can do more together than we can apart. Partnerships are what make the ag community so great and we appreciate all our amazing industry partners. ■

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The Arthur Companies – Partnering in Agriculture

BY JIM ROONEY, SENIOR GRAIN MERCHANDISER

Growers have many options on who they sell their grain to – one of the best gauges on whether you have a partner in growing vs just another grain dealer, is how you are treated when your crop is compromised by weather or insects. Recently, in the 2023 harvest, rains damaged Eastern Idaho’s grain crop. Arthur helped growers’ market this crop regardless of quality. There were



By supporting IGPA, The Arthur Companies has shown its support for growers in more ways than just its bottom line. The Arthur Companies has become a platinum partner with IGPA, showing significant support for IGPA’s overall mission of serving growers at the federal, state, and local levels. We encourage you to take a good look at The Arthur Companies and see if they are good fit for your operation.



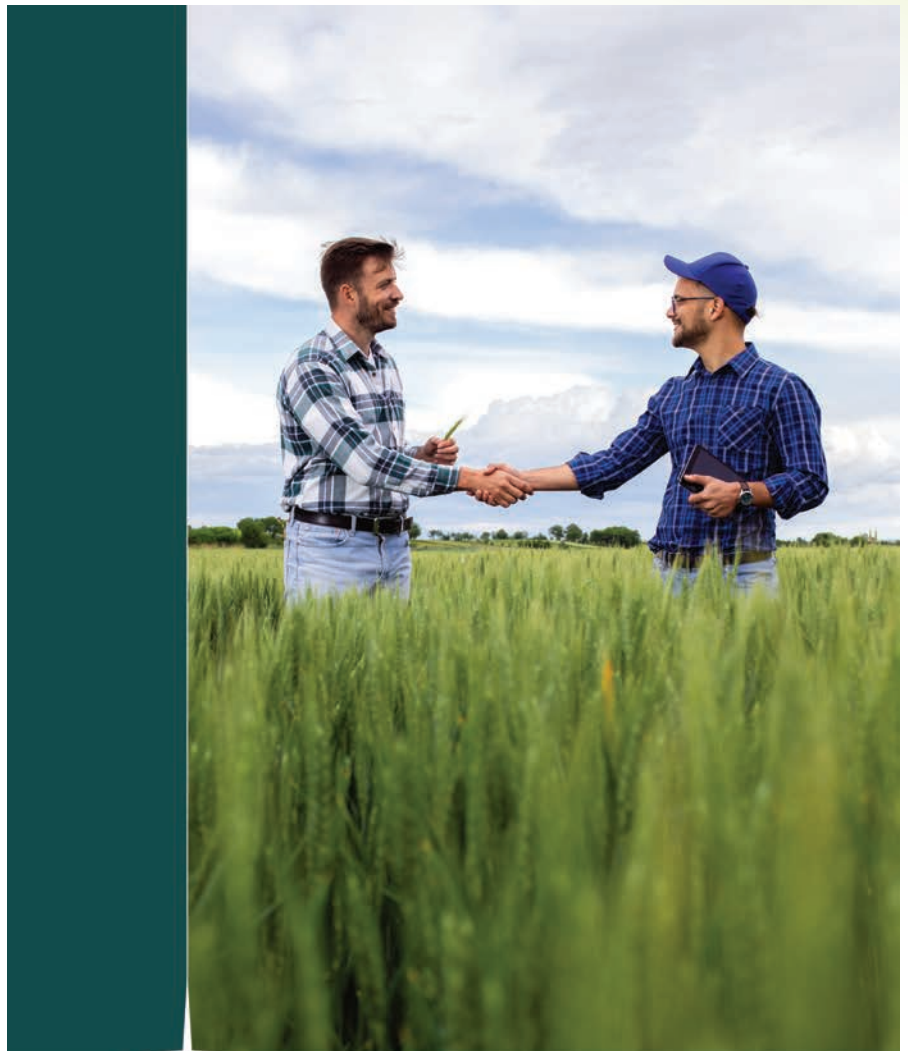
discounts and some had to go to feed, but growers had a home for their grain and were not taken advantage of.

The mission of The Arthur Companies is to enable growth and prosperity with our producers, partners, and communities we serve through integrity, service, pioneering and excellence. As a grain company that sells seed and buys and sells wheat, barley, corn, and other grains directly from the producers who farm in the communities across Eastern Idaho, the above mentioned are critical to developing lasting partnerships with those producers and the ultimate end users in the grain value chain.

Arthur’s partnerships with the top wheat seed breeding companies allows them to provide the latest genetics of all classes of wheat to their producers. They participate in their own trials as well as those done by the breeders and the University of Idaho. Data from these trials help determine the best varieties for the milling customers in terms of wheat quality and for the producers in terms of yield, protein, and disease resistance on various soil types. Arthur partners with WestBred, Syngenta, AgriPro, Lima Grain Cereal Seeds and the University of Idaho to offer their genetics and technologies to their customers. Arthur has invested in state-of-the-art seed treating systems that allow for custom treating applications. These, along with their top-of-the-line cleaning equipment, provide some of the highest quality seed in the region.

Growers always want to know what the market is going to do. From day to day, anything can happen in the grain markets, and it is commonly said that, “Everything we know today is priced into the futures market.” There are trends and measurements that drive markets such as weather, stocks to use ratios, world supply and demand reports. The biggest factor in the last few years impacting the price of U.S. wheat has been the loss of exports

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at the expense of the increases in exportable wheat coming from Russia. The United States has become the world's storehouse for wheat and, therefore, typically the highest price. The smartest thing growers can do is to sell when the market rallies. It is important to know your cost of production and make sure to sell more when markets are above that.

Another unique aspect of Arthur's business is in our Blackfoot facility. The conditioning plant, one of only two such plants in the U.S., provides cleaned, sized, and tempered wheat berries through a plant that provides complete food grade credentials. This plant provides Soft White Wheat and Durum to a large portion of the breakfast cereal market through two of the largest cereal makers in the U.S. Complete with state-of-the-art color sorters, magnets, de-stoners, density separator, aspiration, x-ray technology, this plant delivers wheat or barley in food grade cars to plants around the U.S. that is ready for them to process directly into the products they offer. Growers in Eastern Idaho can be proud that their wheat is being used in the most important meal of the day.

Being family-owned and coming from upper Midwest roots, community support and partnership is at the core of Arthur's value system. Arthur's has 54 full-time and about 20 seasonal employees in Idaho, most of which were born and raised in the small towns where we operate. Arthur supports 4H programs, rodeos, and local sports and offers internships for college students that help in the

Relationships with growers and end users are the single most important part of their business. Open, honest, and sincere communications provide the integrity needed for successful partnerships.



summer with seed production fields. The merchandising team at Arthur Companies have a combined 140 years of experience.

"We have been very pleased with our venture into the Idaho grain industry. It has been such a great addition to our portfolio. With our local teams and our customer base, we truly believe these businesses are not only sustainable but can grow and provide even more value-added opportunities for all stakeholders," said Seth Heidorn, VP Grains.

"As a more than century-old agriculture company, we will bring a long-term approach to helping producers in the Snake

River Valley grow their businesses by leveraging our expertise in marketing, seed and agronomy. We are focused on stability and success within this new market and believe that our approach to enabling the growth of our customers will allow our company to grow alongside them." -James Burgum, CEO at The Arthur Companies ■

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IGPA 2024 Legislative Session Wrap Up

On Monday, January 8, 2024, the Second Regular Session of the Sixty-seventh Idaho Legislature convened. After 94 legislative days and 1,238 pieces of legislation introduced, on Wednesday, April 10, the legislature adjourned *sine die*.

The session was overall a success for Idaho Grain and our membership, though it felt like a bit of a rollercoaster ride. Let's take look at some highlights and lowlights of the session.

The session began with Governor Little's State of the State address where he presented his Idaho Works plan. This included historic investment in school facilities, the Idaho Launch Program, transportation, water, public safety, health care, and fiscal conservatism. **HB 722**, the appropriation to the Workforce Development Council, provides enhancements to the FY 2025 maintenance budget that includes funding for the **Idaho Launch Program**. HB 722 passed the House and the Senate and was signed into law. **HB 521** provides the largest state investment in school facilities through three main avenues. First, it dedicates \$125 million in ongoing sales tax revenue to the new School Modernization Facilities Fund for bonding; second, increases the funding to the School District Facility Fund; and third, reduces income taxes from 5.8% to 5.696%. HB 521 passed the House and Senate and was signed into law.

Pesticides: SB 1245, introduced by Senator Mark Harris, amends Idaho Code, Title 22, Chapter 34 and Idaho Code, Title 48, Chapter 6 regarding pesticides and the Idaho Consumer Protection Act. Pesticide labeling is regulated by state and federal laws under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). This legislation clarifies that existing regulations of pesticide labels shall be sufficient to satisfy any requirements for a warning regarding health or safety of such products. IGPA has policy that supports the use of crop protection tools, and the science-based process by which those products are rigorously tested and brought to market. Unfortunately, SB1245 died on the Senate floor 15-19-1.

Then a second version of the pesticide bill was introduced, **HB 653**, by Rep. Megan Blanksma. One of the reasons SB 1245 died on the Senate floor was due to concerns it went too far and that circumstances exist where litigation may be needed to compensate folks harmed by chemicals – so HB 653 was more limited in scope.

Finally a third pesticide bill was introduced in the Senate. **SB 1432** says that existing regulations for

pesticide labeling shall be sufficient for a cancer warning unless a plaintiff can demonstrate in court that they were actually harmed by the product or that a company fraudulently withheld important safety information from regulators. SB 1432 applies only to existing products and their existing classification as of July 1, 2024. Also, SB 1432 includes a three-year sunset. Frustratingly, we could not get enough votes to move SB 1432 off the Senate floor.

Columbia/Snake River System: Another critical issue to Idaho's grain industry – **SJM 103** was introduced by Senators Burtenshaw and Harris in support of the dams on the Columbia-Snake River System. It was supported by IGPA, the Idaho Water Users Association, the Idaho Consumer-Owned Utilities Association, the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, and Food Producers of Idaho. The Joint Memorial was adopted by both the House and the Senate and delivered to the Secretary of State.

Agricultural Protection Areas: Rep. Andrus introduced **HB 608**, a bill that establishes Agricultural Protection Areas. The Idaho Farm Bureau Federation took the lead on developing this concept and the resulting bill. IGPA testified in support of the incentive-based, voluntary program created by this bill. Just like counties plan for development, they should plan for agriculture – and this bill allows that to happen in a more meaningful way. The bill passed the House, was amended in the Senate, and ultimately was signed into law.

Estray Cattle: IGPA has worked closely with the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, the Idaho Cattle Association, and Senator Mark Harris to update Idaho's fencing laws – for the past couple of years, we've worked to update the barbed wire fence statute without success. This year, we decided to work the issue from a different angle – to update the stray or estray cattle statute. Rep. Andrus introduced **HB 707** on stray cattle. The bill amends existing law to revise provisions regarding certain time requirements, penalties and damages, and charges for care and adds to existing law to establish provisions regarding willfully allowing estrays. An updated bill was then introduced, **HB 712**. The bill passed the House, then Senate made two small amendments to the bill, which ultimately passed and was signed into law.

Grain Bin Sales Tax Exemption: Late in the session, Reps. Doug Pickett and Melissa Durrant introduced **HB 751**, a bill that clarifies that the structures and equipment used in the storage of small grains are

exempt from sales taxes, including grain bin structures, augers, dryers, fans, sweep augers, as well as equipment and supplies used in quality control functions. It ended up being a “going home” bill, one of the pieces of legislation that had to get done before the legislature could finish their work – it passed both the House and the Senate and became law.

Chemigation: Rep. Melissa Durrant introduced **HB 549**, a bill to streamline requirements for chemigation applicators. Idaho law currently aligns licensing for all pesticide application types with federal regulation, even though the federal regulation does not mandate chemigation licensing. It passed the House and the Senate and Governor Little signed it into law.

Commission Issues: There were two bills that would have complicated the important work of Idaho’s commodity commissioner. The first bill, **HB 416**, introduced by Rep. Heather Scott, prohibits the use of tax dollars by public officers, public employees, and subdivisions of government for membership fees or dues to any organization unless required to maintain professional licensure for state employment. That bill was sent to General Orders for amendment and died there. **HB 603**, introduced by Rep. Monks, prohibits

state departments from donating to and or sponsoring non-governmental organizations unless specifically required by law or unless previously approved by the Governor or the chief executive office.

Immigration: Good news on the immigration front: we saw the adoption of **SJM102**, introduced by Senators Jim Guthrie and Kelly Anthon. This Joint Memorial calls for comprehensive immigration reform with a year-round guestworker program for agriculture, while simultaneously securing our borders and stemming the tide of illegal migration. The Memorial passed the Senate and the House and was adopted.

Bad news on the immigration front: Rep. Hawkins and Sen. Zuiderveld introduced **HJM 8**, which agriculture opposed and failed, then introduced **HJM 11**. We opposed HJM 8 and 11 because they sought to place blame on agriculture’s labor force for human and drug trafficking problems. We also saw multiple bills on mandatory e-verify, like **HB 510** and **HB 756**, that were stopped.

We appreciate all the support from our members as we engaged on these critical issues! 



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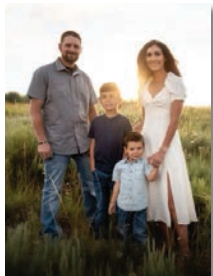
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Malting Barley and Using Crop Insurance

BY NOEL COLE, CROP INSURANCE AGENT / FARMER
FOLLOW HER ON INSTAGRAM @WHEATAT5000FT

Malting barley has recently humbled me, not only as a farmer but also as a crop insurance agent. The adage “never stop learning, because life never stops teaching” comes to mind.



My own farm uses the Malting Barley Endorsement to insure our barley acres and many of the insureds that I work with also use it. For those of you that are unfamiliar with the Malting Barley Endorsement (MBE), I will provide a brief summary in my own words. The MBE provides additional quality protection, it uses malt contracts to establish projected and harvest prices, and rejection of production by the buyer for failure to meet the standards contained in the contract can be an insured cause of loss as long as certain conditions are met. One of those conditions is that the production must be sampled and quality determinations must be made no later than 90-days after the insurance period. The MBE is available in selected counties in 13 states including Idaho. It is a wonderful risk management tool for those that contract malting barley, but it is not absolutely bullet proof.

My schooling started after we received a considerable amount of moisture during harvest, 2023, in the southeastern part of the state. This moisture led to pre-germination (non-visible sprouting) also known as chitting. Pre-germination reduces barley’s ability to maintain a high level of germination especially during long storage. It still can produce good quality malt but it must be used soon after harvest.

So, in theory, a farmer who samples their barley shortly after harvest would be within all contract specs for germination and sprout, but that same sample months later might be out of spec due to the barley losing germination capacity, and this is exactly what I witnessed this year. A rapid visco analysis, or RVA, can help predict whether barley is at risk of losing germination energy for malting. This is not definite because storage conditions and moisture content at harvest should also be used to predict safe storage time.

Most of the barley in my area is farm stored. Some do not finish delivering their barley until right before



harvest the following year, which is far past the 90-day condition set forth in the Malting Barley Endorsement. To navigate this, samples are taken at harvest time and evaluated by the maltsters. Any quality issues discovered at this time can easily be managed. Pre-germination is a bit tricky, as we discussed earlier. In 2023, I had insureds believe that that all of their barley was within contract spec based on the initial sample. They were later blindsided at delivery time because the barley was no longer viable due to poor germination. Linking this to an insurable cause of loss and proving that it was not caused by improper handling or storage conditions is where the water becomes muddy.

Pre-germination has caused a conundrum. I have researched and reached out to multiple sources over the past few months to try and come up with the best way to navigate it. Sending samples to a third-party lab has been brought up multiple times; I don’t think you can have too many samples especially if you suspect quality issues. Sampling at harvest and again right before the 90-day deadline might be helpful in detecting changes in germination and sprout. Delivering barley as soon as possible after harvest is not always achievable, but working with the maltster to move anything that is chitted or is known to be a susceptible variety can be advantageous. Inquiring about RVA values and working with the maltster to come up with the best storage solution moving forward was recommended. The reoccurring theme is that a good rapport with the maltster is imperative. A change to existing policy or a new storage endorsement has also been suggested.

It is always nice to hear experiences from other farmers on how risk management tools are helping their operation. Discussing shortcomings and trying to brainstorm solutions is not always pleasant; however, it



is important. IGPA’s Risk Management Committee is a great asset to grain farmers and has been successful in taking things up the chain. I am sure there are many that would like to file grievances against malting barley after the 2023 crop year. It is my hope that we can use them as traction to facilitate change.

This is a very brief and condensed summary of the Malting Barley Endorsement in my own words, it is not the complete policy. Policy language is continually being updated. For further information about risk management needs, contact a crop insurance agent. ■



Local Working Groups Help NRCS Focus Conservation Efforts in Communities

BY CARLY WHITMORE, USDA-NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

You may have heard from your local USDA service center about the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs being locally-led. But, what does “locally-led conservation” mean? In Idaho, NRCS is committed having communities direct where they want federal conservation dollars go. To accomplish this, communities across Idaho meet annually to discuss resource concerns and problem areas, and to decide what are the most important natural resource issues in their area for NRCS to focus its funding on.

These local working groups (LWGs) meet annually in the summer and fall and, depending on where you live, sometimes in the spring. Anyone may attend and contribute ideas. The beauty of LWGs is how diverse they are, both in terms of agricultural products and viewpoints. Attendance should include a variety of producers – ranging from livestock and poultry raised in the area, to crops of all kinds and private forest landowners. Additionally, representatives from other government agencies may join the conversation, as well as private industry groups or individuals who are curious as to the priorities of the region. A diverse group helps NRCS employees gather ideas and opinions, and can produce creative requests and solutions that fit the needs of those involved.

In Idaho, there are 17 NRCS Conservation Delivery Teams – each with their own local working group. There is also a working group for Tribes and Tribal members. LWG numbers vary in size, from only a handful of attendees to a packed conference room, with attendees joining virtually if that option works best for them.

What does an LWG discuss during their meetings? Anything related to conservation and USDA conservation programs! The group’s responsibilities include:

- Developing a conservation needs assessment to identify conservation solutions to natural resource problems;
- Identifying priority resource concerns that can be address by NRCS programs;
- Assisting NRCS and the local conservation district(s) with public outreach and information efforts; and
- Identifying education and informational needs of the community.

Local working groups address a wide swath of topics, and welcome input from anyone. Meetings are a directed discussion, and may be supported by outside facilitators in order to help groups better meet their objectives. These facilitators are not always a member of the community, but they are always committed to the working group’s goal: to commit to a common vision of conservation.

Local working groups are an important part of Idaho’s commitment to conservation, and you’re invited to join your local meeting and provide your input. To learn more about NRCS local working groups or to find yours, visit nrcs.usda.gov/idaho or stop into your local USDA Service Center. ■

University of Idaho Researcher Creates Variety Trial Database

BY JULIA PIASKOWSKI, DIRECTOR OF STATISTICAL PROGRAMS, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO CALS

Four years ago, the Idaho Wheat Commission funded a statewide database of wheat variety trials that expanded across the region to include Washington and Oregon, and additional crops of barley, canola, and cool season legumes. The University of Idaho in collaboration with Oregon State University and Washington State University has combined and organized these data sets into a set of tools collectively called “WAVE” - the Western Agricultural Variety Explorer.

There are two major outputs:

A web interface consisting of an online database of raw trial data.

A mobile app for trial summaries. These are different tools intended for distinct audiences.

The Web Interface

The online database contains raw data down to the plot level whenever possible. This data can be searched by program (e.g. Southeastern and Southcentral Idaho), location, year, and market class. Anyone is welcome to use this resource, but it is intended for researchers. There is extensive trial metadata. Our goal was for every trial to include the planting date, harvest date, plot number, and trial design, in addition to year and location. When possible, we also captured exact geocoordinates of each trial, soil test information, fertilizer and other chemical applications, tillage

regime, and planter type. We were also able to capture additional information on row and range position of each plot in the trial which enabled us to conduct spatial analysis of each trial.

Extensive efforts were made to ensure that the data is correct and consistent terminology is used. We defined acceptable limits for many numeric variables (for example, falling number must be between 60 and 600) and standardized many categorical variables so that data sets across programs could be combined. The user guide provides more details on how to access and use the database.

We have had over 2000 trials conducted across 69 locations over 20 years. Data this extensive can be used for many research applications; understanding varietal changes over time, predicting performance of trialed cultivars into a new environment that they have not previously been evaluated, evaluating how timing of planting and harvesting has changed over time, and other applications have helped us understand wheat production across Pacific Northwest production zones and how we can improve on that. The data here reflects the raw information used to populate the information in the phone app.

Mobile App

The target audience for the mobile app are producers and industry representatives who want to look at final results from individual variety trials. The three functions of the app are single trial, multiple years, and cultivar explorer.

Single Trial

This is for examining individual trials conducted within the last 5 years. There is a filter that can be used to drill down to the program, market class, location, and year. Each trial was analyzed with a mixed model where cultivar is a fixed effect and block is a random effect. When possible, spatial covariate was included in the model to improve the accuracy of the estimates and recover more reliable rankings between the evaluated cultivars and candidate cultivars. Available trial metadata is displayed along with information for key performance indicators: yield, test weight, protein content, days to heading, falling number, and plant



height. This information is not always available for all traits and trials. Data can be sorted by trait data, and users can select which traits to display or plot.

Multiple Years

This data is for a single location over multiple years. Like in the single trial tab, there is a filter to choose the program, market class and location of trial to view. This data is also the product of a linear mixed model, using the estimates from the single trial analyses. Cultivar is a random effect, year is a fixed effect, and the estimates are weighted by the reciprocal of their standard errors from single trial analysis, so high precision results are weighted higher than lower precision trials. The results from these analyses are presented in plots and tables similar to what is shown in the single trial tab. The analysis is conducted across the last 5 years, but only years selected by the user will be shown.

We are working to build similar resources for barley, cool-season legumes, and canola. Our homepage and long-term landing page for WAVE is www.westernagdata.org. Please check here for project updates and links to the database instances and web apps.

Cultivar explorer

This tab is for finding information for a specific cultivar. The results shown in this tab are derived from the analyses of individual trials and are limited to released cultivars only. Users must apply filters for market class only, then can search on cultivar name. All trials where the cultivar was tried will be shown in the filter that the user can further narrow if they want. A small number of cultivars have been trialed across a large number of locations and years, most cultivars were trialed for a few years.

The phone app is available in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

We are working to build similar resources for barley, cool-season legumes, and canola. Our homepage and long-term landing page for WAVE is www.westernagdata.org. Please check here for project updates and links to the database instances and web apps.

Northern Idaho Field Days

Date	Time	Event	Place
May 23 rd	8:40 AM	Bus Departs Cottonwood Community Hall: 506 King Street	Winter Canola Tour Cottonwood, Idaho
June 13 th		UI Weed Science Tour	Moscow, Idaho 1025 Plant Science Rd.
June 18 th	5:00 – 7:00 PM	UI Extension/LCS Collaborative Twilight Crop Tour	Lewiston, Idaho
June 21 st	10:00 – 3:00 PM	Boundary County Collaborative Crop Tour UI Extension/The McGregor Company	Houck Farms on Farm to Market Rd-Bonnors Ferry
June 24 th	8:00 – 12:00 PM	Soil Health and Cropping Systems Tour	Genesee, Idaho
June 26 th		Prairie Area Crop and Conservation Tour	UI Extension

Southern/Eastern Idaho Field Days

Date	Time	Event	Place
June 18-19	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Western Wheat Workers Meeting	Idaho Falls/Aberdeen Registration needed
July 9 th	9:30 – 11:00 AM	Seed Dealer Event (Invite only) Lunch Provided	Aberdeen
July 10 th	9:30 – 11:00 AM	Winter Trials & Spring Trials Meridian Rd and 500 N 650 N and 100 E	Rupert/Minidoka
July 16 th	8:30 AM – 12 PM	Aberdeen LCS Field Day 1693 S 2700 W Lunch Provided	Aberdeen
July 18 th	4:00 PM	Idaho Falls West on Sunnyside Rd 2550 S 45 th West	Idaho Falls
July 23 rd	4:00 PM	Winter Trials ¾ Mile north of High School, Government Dam Rd.	Soda Springs
July 25 th	10:00 AM – 12 PM	Tetonia R&E Center	Newdale



Active Canopy Sensors to Prescribe In-Season Supplemental Nitrogen for Wheat

BY DR. JARED SPACKMAN, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AND EXTENSION SPECIALIST

The University of Idaho's wheat and barley production guides were last updated in the early 2000's. Since then, Southern Idaho has experienced significant changes in irrigation management, small grain variety development, nutrient management, and field management practices. Further, given the high cost of nitrogen (N) fertilizers, improving N use efficiency is an important aspect of a farm remaining economically viable. Although I grew up in Burley, Idaho, I decided to learn about other cropping systems and attended graduate school at the University of Minnesota where I studied N management strategies for corn. Besides experimenting with various N fertilizer sources and rates, I also conducted experiments that evaluated split fertilizer applications as a tool to improve N use efficiency and reduce the overall application rate. One of the challenges with split applying fertilizer is knowing how much additional N to apply that will satisfy the crop needs. One method commonly advocated is to utilize crop canopy sensors that measure differences in crop canopy greenness. The general theory behind this technology is that the crop leaf greenness is an indicator of the crop's N status and is an integrator of soil N fertility, genetics, and growing season conditions. The difference in canopy greenness between an area of the field that is N deficient and N sufficient is used to prescribe variable supplemental N fertilizer rates across a field. However, calibrated algorithms are needed to ensure the correct rate is applied. Algorithms have been developed for Midwest states but differences in growing conditions, soils, and historically lower yields require that algorithms be specifically developed for Idaho conditions.

This project was jointly funded by the Idaho Wheat Commission and a United States Department of Agriculture NIFA AFRI Sustainable Agriculture Systems Grant and was conducted from 2021 through 2023 by Drs. Jared Spackman, Albert Adjesiwor, Olga Walsh, and University of Idaho county Extension educators Mr. Joseph Sagers (Jefferson and Clark Counties) and Mr. Reed Findlay (Bingham and Bannock Counties). The objectives of this project were to:



Image 1. Nitrogen deficiency is evidenced by light green to yellow colored leaves whereas N sufficient plants have dark green leaves. Nitrogen is a mobile nutrient and will move from older leaves and tissues into newer, younger leaves. This contrasts sulfur deficiency where the younger leaves will turn yellow and the older tissues will remain green. In this image from June 9, 2023, in Aberdeen, the patchwork light and dark green plots indicate differences in N availability. The center front plot received no nitrogen whereas the plots to either side had received 110 lb N/ac at planting.

1. determine the optimal pre-plant N rate required by irrigated hard red, hard white, and soft white spring wheat to optimize grain yield while meeting grain protein requirements.
2. Determine the optimal N rate required by irrigated hard red, hard white, and soft white spring wheat to optimize grain yield while meeting grain protein requirements when the fertilizer was split applied at planting and mid- to late-tillering.
3. Evaluate the Greenseeker, Crop Circle, and SPAD chlorophyll meter canopy sensors as tools for N management.

We conducted field experiments at the Aberdeen and Kimberly Research and Extension Centers from



2021 through 2023. To understand how responsive the three classes of wheat are to N availability, we applied five to seven different N rates at planting and five to seven additional treatments where we applied approximately 40% of the total N needed (based on current University guidelines) at planting and topdressed varying rates of N fertilizer at mid- to late-tillering that likely created environments of N deficiency, sufficiency, and excess. Hard red and hard white wheat also received an additional 40 lb N/ac at heading. Soil samples were collected before planting from the first and second foot and analyzed for total inorganic N and other nutrients.

At mid-tillering, handheld crop canopy sensors were used to assess each treatment plot's canopy's greenness. Greenseeker measurements are done by holding the sensor over the crop canopy. When the trigger is held, the sensor emits red and near-infrared light that reflects off the canopy and is measured by the sensor. Many measurements can be quickly taken as the operator walks or drives across the field. The CropCircle and Apogee chlorophyll sensors have a clamp-like apparatus that emits red and near-infrared light that measures the relative amount of chlorophyll in a leaf. To collect a measurement, each leaf must be clamped in the CropCircle and the Apogee chlorophyll sensors, and many (at least 30) leaves should be sampled to have a representative estimate of the health of the field (or section of the field). Because the wheat leaves are narrow and the plants are short at mid-tillering, we found these sensors to be more difficult to use than the Greenseeker. Because the annual response of the crop to the N rate is independent of previous years or locations,

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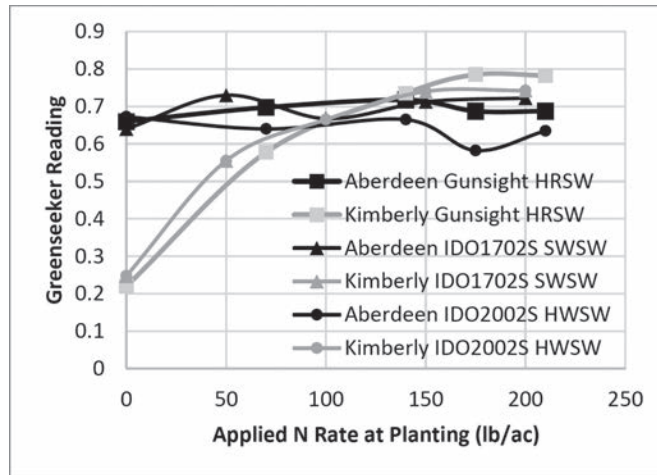


Figure and Table 1. Greenseeker measurements were taken at mid-tillering in 2021 at Aberdeen and Kimberly for hard red (HRSW), soft white (SWSW), and hard white spring wheat (HWSW) in response to the applied N rate at planting. Aberdeen had 150 lb/ac of residual N at planting in the top 2' of the soil while Kimberly had 50 lb N/ac. Using the highest applied N rate as our N sufficient reference strip within each variety and location, the Greenseeker predicted that approximately 140-175 lb N/ac applied at planting was sufficient for SY Gunsight and IDO2002S (HRSW and HWSW) and 150 lb N/ac applied at planting was sufficient for IDO1702S (SWSW) at Kimberly and that generally no additional N was required at Aberdeen.

Applied N Rate (lb/ac)	Aberdeen	Kimberly
SY Gunsight		
0	96%	28%
70	101%	74%
140	104%	94%
175	100%	100%
210	100%	100%
IDO1702S		
0	89%	33%
50	101%	75%
100	92%	90%
150	99%	100%
200	100%	100%
IDO2002S		
0	106%	26%
70	101%	72%
140	105%	94%
175	92%	97%
210	100%	100%

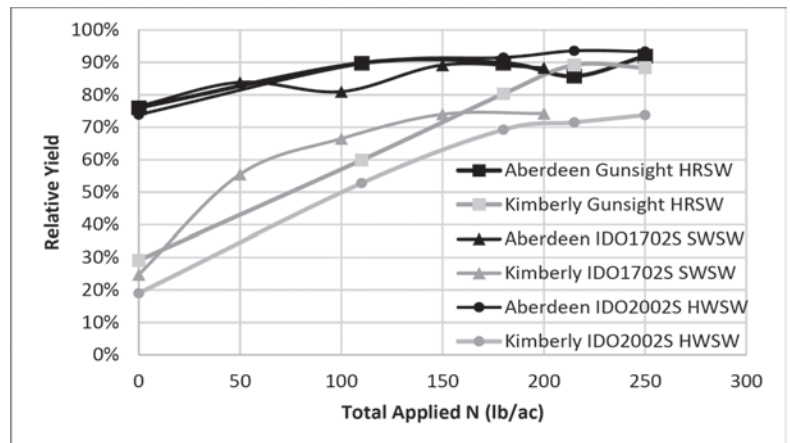


Figure 2. The relative yield (yield of each plot divided by the highest yield of the study within a location and wheat class) response of each wheat class to the total applied N rate at planting and heading (for hard wheat) at Aberdeen and Kimberly in 2021. These results indicate that wheat at Aberdeen may have benefitted from 0 to 75 lb N/ac but any higher rates would likely have not resulted in an economic return on the fertilizer investment. At Kimberly, the hard wheat classes required approximately 175 to 200 lb N/ac to optimize yield while soft white wheat required no more than 150 lb N/ac. These results are similar to those observed when using the Greenseeker at mid-tillering.

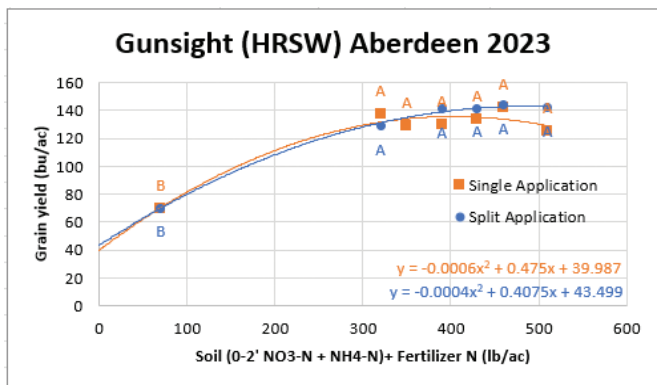


Figure 3. In Aberdeen 2023, the grain yield response of SY Gunsight to total available N when applied as a single application at planting or a split application done at planting and tillering. Data points with the same upper case letter (irrespective of color) indicate that there are no significant differences between treatment means at $\alpha < 0.05$. Orange letters correspond to the single application points and blue letters correspond to the split application points.

Continued from previous page

an N-sufficient reference strip is essential to calibrate crop sensors. A sufficiency index is calculated as the crop sensor reading in a plot (or area of a field) divided by the reference strip reading * 100%. Values less than 95% suggest supplemental N is required. Using this approach, we have found that the Greenseeker was generally able to correctly identify plots that would likely be N deficient. We will continue to analyze the sensing data we collected to further understand the opportunities and limitations associated with canopy sensing tools.

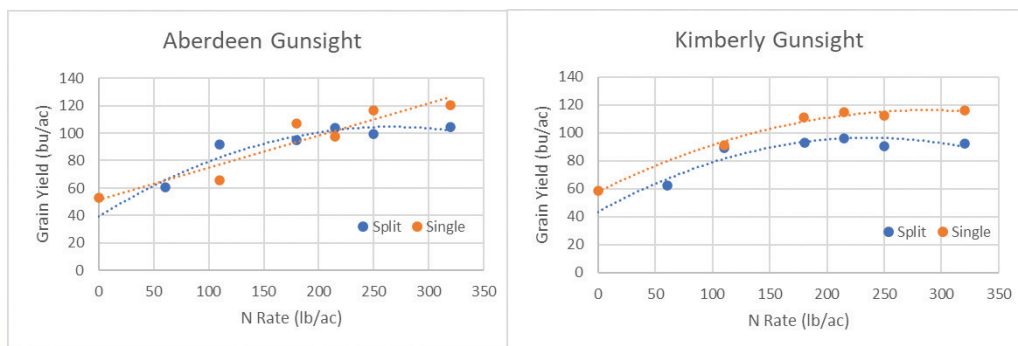


Figure 4. In Aberdeen and Kimberly 2022, the grain yield response of SY Gunsight to the applied N rate was done as a single application at planting or a split application done at planting and tillering. At Aberdeen, a single and split application performed similarly at equivalent total N application rates whereas the single application consistently outyielded a split application at Kimberly. Similar results were observed for the other two market classes of wheat tested at these sites during the 2022 growing season.

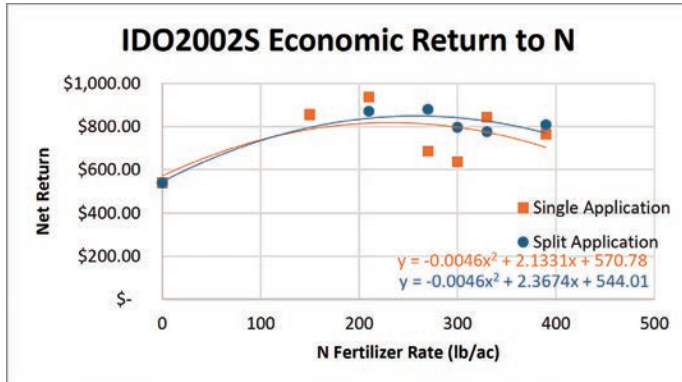
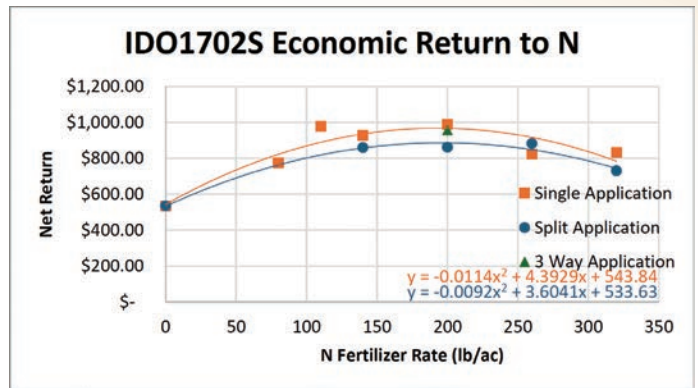
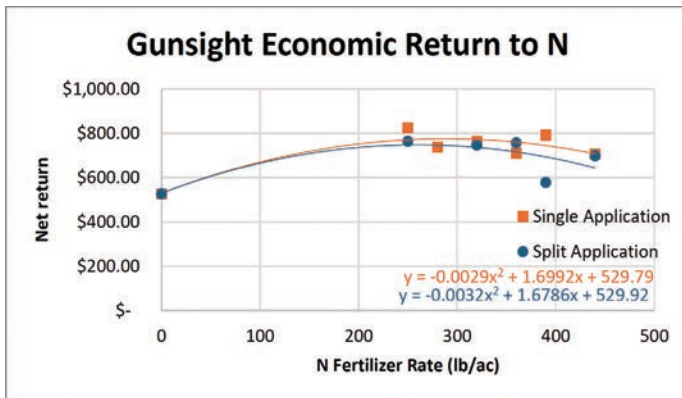
Yield comparisons between a single and a split fertilizer application

Across the three years of this study, we have observed split applications underperforming, performing as well as, and outperforming single applications in terms of grain yield. For example, at Aberdeen in 2023, there was no difference in yield between the single or split fertilizer applications when the total applied N rate was the same (Figure 3). In contrast, in 2022, the single application done at planting consistently out-yielded the split application at Kimberly (Figure 4).

Under rainfed conditions, a split application may be less desirable if there is insufficient precipitation to incorporate the fertilizer into the root zone. In contrast, under irrigated settings, soluble N fertilizer can readily be incorporated into the soil and taken up by the crop. When topdressing N fertilizer, urea and ammonium-based fertilizers should be rapidly incorporated to minimize ammonia volatilization loss potential. Urea can be treated with a urease inhibitor to help extend the window of incorporation and reduce volatilization losses. Generally, 0.25” to 0.5” of irrigation/precipitation is required to move the fertilizer deep enough into the soil profile to minimize volatilization loss potential. Urea and nitrate fertilizers are readily water soluble and will move with soil water through the soil profile. In contrast, ammonium binds to soil particles and is immobilized. Hence, a product like urea ammonium nitrate, if applied as a fertigation event, will segregate where the ammonium will remain near the soil surface and the urea and nitrate will move with the wetting front. In our studies, we topdressed our N fertilizer as urea and incorporated the fertilizer with

irrigation within 3 hours of application.

While yield response to available N is an important component of determining the optimal N rate for wheat production, economics also play a role. The economic N return rate (return to N) was calculated by subtracting the cost of the applied N fertilizer (assumed \$0.83 per unit of fertilizer N) from the value of grain yield [assumed wheat was \$7.50/bu (average of 6 months reported in AgProud Journal) irrespective of the wheat class]. The



Figures 5,6, and 7. The economic return from N fertilizer additions for the single and split application treatments done at Aberdeen 2023.

application returned an additional \$80/ac relative to the split application.

Because growers are willing to accept different levels of risk, the economic N rates reported in Table 2 also contain a range of N rates shown in parentheses. These ranges of N rates indicate how much less or more N could be applied that would reduce the net return by \$1. The reported ranges in this study are 20 to 38 lb N/ac wide indicating that near the economic optimal N rate, there is a fair bit of flexibility in N application rates that will minimally impact net return. In the future, we will further examine these results by incorporating grain quality dockage factors (e.g., test weight and protein) and in-season application expenses into the economic analysis.

If there are specific research topics related to barley or wheat production that you would like the University of Idaho to address, please reach out to Dr. Spackman jspackman@uidaho.edu, other University of Idaho researchers, or your county Extension educator. ■

net economic return values for each treatment were regressed against the applied N fertilizer rate. The response of the net return to the applied N rate was quadratic across all classes of wheat and application timings (Figures 5,6,7) The point at which net return was maximized is considered the economic optimal N rate. This quick analysis does not account for the costs to apply N fertilizer that would vary depending on the application method (e.g., fertigation, aerial application, spreader). Accounting for these additional application costs would reduce the economic optimal N rate for the split applications.

For Gunsight, the economic optimal N rate was 31 lb N/ac greater for the single application than the split application and returned an additional \$29/ac (Table 3). In contrast, for IDO2002S the economic optimal N rate was 25 lb N/ac less for the single application and returned -\$31/ac compared with the split application. For IDO1702S, the economic optimal N rate was similar between the two timings, but the single

	Single Application			Split Application		
	N Rate (lb/ac)	Soil + Fert N rate (lb/ac)	Net Return (\$/ac)	N Rate (lb/ac)	Soil + Fert N rate (lb/ac)	Net Return (\$/ac)
Gunsight	293 (274-312)	363 (344-382)	\$ 779.00	262 (245-280)	332 (315-350)	\$ 750.00
IDO2002S	232 (217-247)	302 (277-317)	\$ 818.00	257 (242-272)	327 (312-342)	\$ 849.00
IDO1702S	193 (183-202)	263 (253-272)	\$ 967.00	196 (185-207)	266 (255-277)	\$ 887.00

Table 2. The amount of N fertilizer (N Rate) or soil N plus fertilizer N (Soil + Fert N Rate) required to maximize the economic return for a single or split application done in each wheat class evaluated at Aberdeen 2023. The values in parentheses indicate the range of N rates that would give a -\$1 net return on investment.



Where Did Your Wheat Dollars Go?

An annual accounting of grower assessment dollars by the Idaho Wheat Commission

BY BRITANY HURST MERCHANT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IDAHO WHEAT COMMISSION

The mission of the Idaho Wheat Commission is to increase farmer profitability through the development of markets for Idaho wheat growers, investing in the advancement of wheat research and variety development, and providing outreach and education for Idaho wheat growers.

The Idaho Wheat Commission (IWC) is a self-governing state agency guided by five wheat-grower commissioners representing each of the five wheat-producing districts throughout the state of Idaho. The current commissioners are Wayne Hurst, Chairman, Declo; Cliff Tacke, Vice-Chairman, Greencreek; Clark Hamilton, Ririe; Cory Kress, Rockland; and Joseph Andersen, Lewiston. The chairmanship rotates annually on July 1, the start of the IWC fiscal year. It is important that decisions of the Commission are made by a board of farmers who can understand and represent fellow wheat growers appropriately.

While wheat acres across the United States have been declining in favor of soybeans and corn, Idaho's wheat acres have remained stable, hovering around 1.2 million acres planted each year between winter wheat and spring wheat classes and varieties. Likewise, Idaho's wheat production is just under 100 million bushels each harvest. This number used to be 100 million or more, but the drought in harvest year 2021 and the protracted snow cover during the 2022-2023 winter season brought Idaho's production average down to 94 million bushels over five years. However, Idaho continues to hold down the number five or number six spot in the United States in production.

With a three-and-a-half cent per bushel assessment, the Idaho Wheat Commission was able to direct more than \$1.32 million toward wheat research and variety development during fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023). Additionally, just under \$1.1 million was spent on outreach, communication, and programs to educate Idaho's wheat producers. The smallest piece of the pie was market development at just under \$1 million, in part because many customers still had



pandemic restrictions in place in the second half of 2022.

In addition to the programs of the Commission, IWC leverages wheat grower dollars by partnering with and funding other organizations that help further the IWC mission. By supporting these sister organizations, IWC draws upon expertise within the industry to address the needs of Idaho's growers more efficiently. The national wheat organizations – U.S. Wheat Associates, National Association of Wheat Growers, Wheat Marketing Center, Pacific Northwest Waterways Association, and Wheat Foods Council – are funded by wheat-producing states across the country, a collective effort that benefits and supports wheat-growing families and, with support from multiple states, provides more value per dollar invested.

Market Development

About 50% of Idaho's wheat is exported to overseas markets each year and the remaining 50% is used domestically. Idaho Wheat commissioners and staff spend a great deal of time cultivating relationships at home and abroad to ensure that farmers have markets open to them to supply Idaho wheat. Foreign market development has looked very different since the pandemic, and IWC is delighted that COVID restrictions have eased, enabling us to promote Idaho wheat in person. IWC commissioners and staff spent a busy year catching up on market development efforts, hosting five trade teams with millers and bakers from Mexico, Japan, Colombia, Chile, Taiwan, Singapore,



and the Philippines – our largest markets – and participating in marketing conferences and crop quality tours. In all, Idaho Wheat commissioners and staff were able to promote Idaho wheat in person to flour millers and end-users in 25 countries throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, North and Northeast Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and Africa.

Research

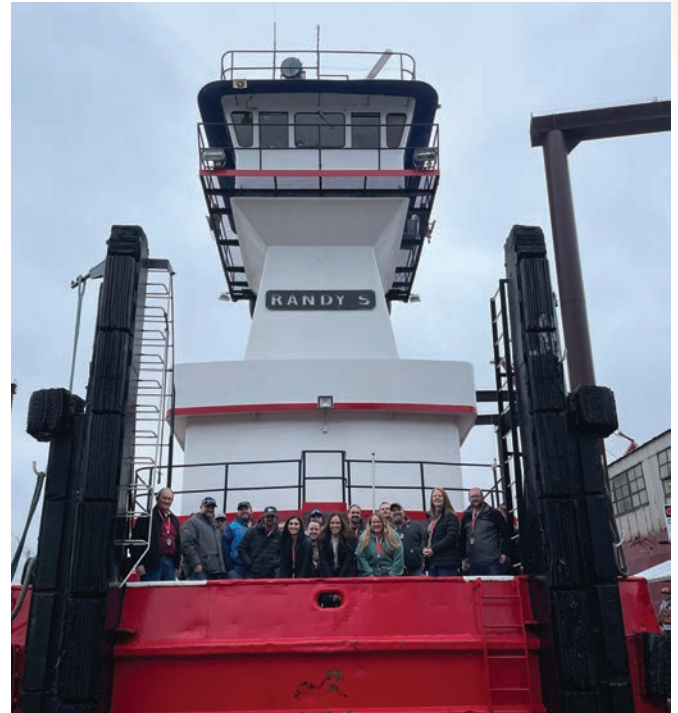
Approximately one-third of the Idaho Wheat Commission budget is directed toward funding wheat research and variety development at the University of Idaho and other public and private institutions. Idaho wheat producers have contributed more than any other commodity to the University of Idaho College of Agriculture and Life Sciences with a total investment of \$17.29 million over the past 25 years.

Included in this investment are three University of Idaho endowments meant to fill a gap recognized by the wheat industry. Grower dollars have been invested into two endowed professorships dedicated to wheat breeding and cereal agronomics, each a \$1 million investment, and \$2 million invested in the Bill Flory Endowed Chair of Risk Management shared between the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Business and Economics. The Idaho Wheat Commission continues to support Varsity Idaho, a wheat breeding collaboration between the University of Idaho and Limagrain Cereal Seeds. These variety development programs ensure Idaho's growers have the high yielding, pest and disease resistant wheat best suited to their specific growing area.

Communications and Programs

For 39 years, Idaho wheat-growing families have provided fourth graders throughout the state the opportunity to learn about wheat production and nutrition through Bread in a Bag, a hugely popular hands-on learning program. Bread in a Bag has continued to grow each year, and this year participation increased by 50 schools and 1,300 students.

Every two years, the Idaho Wheat Commission partners with the Idaho Grain Producers Association to host Idaho legislators on a Pacific Northwest (PNW) Export Tour, which showcases the path Idaho's wheat takes to markets around the world. A substantial part of this process and the tour is the Columbia Snake River system, the most efficient and cost-effective infrastructure available to get wheat to customers.



Educating legislators is an important step in protecting and maximizing the profitability of Idaho's farmers and Idaho's economy. A tugboat ride down the river delivers a unique location for meaningful conversations and relationship building, and the Wheat Marketing Center provides a hands-on approach to learning about quality testing. Legislators also learn about market development efforts from U.S. Wheat Associates, better understanding the challenges and opportunities of the wheat industry.

IWC hosts 10-12 farmers every January on an expanded PNW Export Tour; a three-day educational deep dive into where wheat goes after it leaves the farm and the path it takes to overseas customers. In June, IWC takes the same group of farmers on a Domestic Marketing Tour in southern Idaho and northern Utah, giving producers the full picture of their role in the wheat value, supply, and production chain. Participants visit the Graincraft flour mill and Arthur Company conditioning facility in Blackfoot, local bakeries, and perhaps the most popular stop – the Campbell's Snacks/Pepperidge Farm bakery where Goldfish crackers and Pepperidge Farm cookies are made with Idaho wheat. This year, IWC also partnered with Bayer to give farmers a look at the Bayer phosphate mine and the neighboring facility where phosphate is refined and prepared to be added to glyphosate.

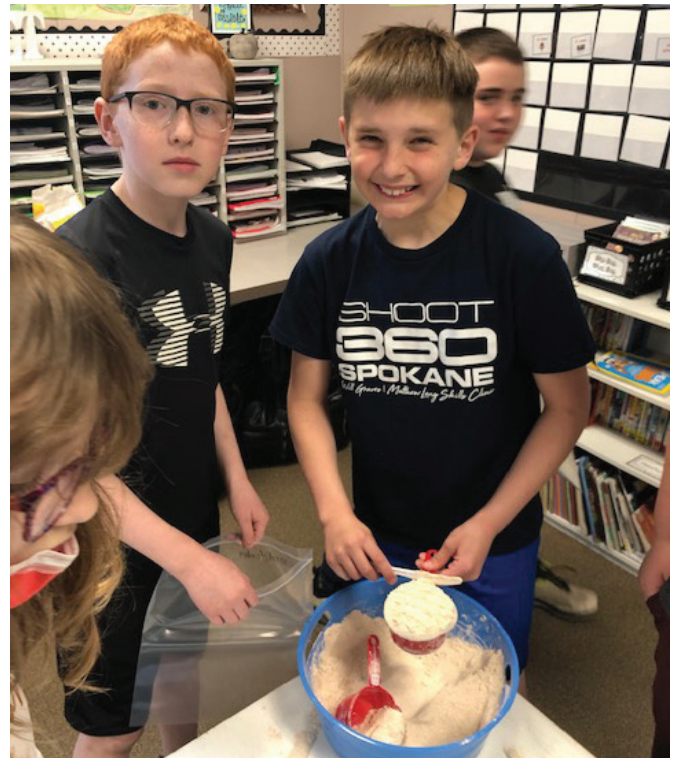
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IWC also provides growers and industry stakeholders with educational information in the Idaho Grain Magazine, published quarterly by the Idaho Grain Producers Association. Twice each month, IWC hosts From the Field: Farm Chat with Idaho Wheat, a web-based conversation enabling growers to connect and network with experts in a wide range of topics, including research, markets and marketing, farmer health and safety, estate planning, weed and pest control, and soil health. These webinars are recorded and posted to the Idaho Wheat Commission website, YouTube channel, and podcast channel, which can be found across all podcast platforms.

The Idaho Wheat Commission is continuing to find ways to improve upon past efforts to support Idaho’s wheat farmers and invest grower dollars in ways that maximize returns to wheat-growing families. Questions and/or concerns about how the wheat assessment is being managed, or interest in participating in Commission programs, can be directed to IWC staff and leadership at wheat@idahowheat.org. 



Understanding the Why Behind Idaho Wheat Research Efforts

BY RYAN MORTENSEN, COMMUNICATIONS AND PROGRAMS MANAGER, IDAHO WHEAT COMMISSION

Idaho is known for its distinct landscape and diverse agricultural production, which provides researchers a unique opportunity to study different growing conditions and their impact on wheat cultivation and then develop innovative solutions to enhance wheat productivity and sustainability. With the help of Idaho wheat growers and industry partners, innovative research is shaping the future of wheat farming in the Gem State, thus ensuring Idaho’s worldwide status as a reliable producer of quality wheat.

The Idaho Wheat Commission (IWC) has an important role in investing grower dollars to support research and extension efforts that improve wheat quality, sustainability, and profitability for Idaho growers. Through IWC, Idaho wheat-growing families provide vital funding for research in private and public programs. About one-third of the IWC budget is directed toward the funding of agronomic research for

wheat quality and breeding of new varieties of spring and winter wheat. Though a relatively small portion of total project budgets, these dollars provide flexibility to address short-term production problems, support long-term applied research, and can be used as collateral to attract larger federal grants. Projects are conducted at leading institutions including the University of Idaho, USDA-ARS, Oregon State University, Washington State University, Utah State University, and the Wheat Marketing Center.

Research funding is strategically targeted each year to address issues of the greatest importance to Idaho growers. A formal research review is held during the IWC winter board meeting, where results from current projects are updated and new projects are reviewed for potential funding. Funding decisions are made by IWC commissioners with input from Dr. Jim Peterson, IWC Research Consultant, and farmers throughout the state.



IWC then communicates results to growers and industry partners through newsletters, webinars, and support for research bulletins and meetings.

“As grower representatives, Idaho wheat commissioners provide valuable input and direction to researchers through their project reviews and funding decisions,” said Jim Peterson. “The feedback loop helps researchers focus on current production issues, conduct relevant on-farm trials, and understand the economic impact of their research.”

IWC’s dedication to research stems from a long-term commitment to enhance crop productivity, sustainability, and resilience in the face of evolving agricultural challenges. Funded research spans various topics including but not limited to:

End-Use Quality: The University of Idaho Wheat Quality Lab in Aberdeen conducts rigorous testing on wheat breeding selections and varieties, evaluating essential flour and baking attributes. These evaluations are important to maintaining the high quality standards expected of Idaho wheat varieties. Collaborations between the University of Idaho Wheat Quality Lab, USDA-ARS Western Wheat Quality Lab in Pullman, the Wheat Marketing Center, and private labs, are important to successful marketing of premium Idaho wheat. They provide important guidance to growers to promote production practices that yield exceptional wheat.

Variety Development: Idaho wheat farmers grow five of the six classes of wheat, which is something that sets Idaho apart from other states across the country. Dr. Jianli Chen – based at the Aberdeen Research and Extension Center – leads an internationally recognized



wheat breeding and genetics program. Emphasis is placed on the accelerated development of spring and winter wheat cultivars adapted to both dryland and irrigated agriculture. This includes breeding for traits such as disease resistance, drought-tolerance, increased yield, and easy threshing. These traits meet the demands of overseas consumers while ensuring farmers have access to improved seed varieties suited for local environments. In Northern Idaho, the breeding of soft white winter varieties is conducted in collaboration with Limagrain Cereal Seeds, and high-yield varieties from the Varsity Idaho collaboration are widely grown throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Pest and Disease Management: IWC funds research to identify and mitigate the impact of dozens of potential pests and diseases that can damage wheat crops and reduce yields. Studies on pest behavior, integrated pest management strategies, and biological control methods, have helped farmers minimize crop losses and reduce reliance on chemical pesticides.

Soil Health and Nutrient Management: Maintaining healthy soil is crucial for sustainable wheat production. Investing in studies of soil composition, nutrient dynamics, soil acidity, and soil management practices optimize and enhance crop yields. This research aids farmers in making informed decisions regarding fertilization, irrigation, and soil conservation techniques.

Weed Management: Researchers provide important guidance on applications and rotation of herbicides in cropping systems. Researchers conduct surveys and track populations of resistant weeds and are developing new strategies for control. Insights on rates, timing, mixes, and compatibility of chemicals are important



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for wheat growers to develop effective and economical mitigation strategies.

“The Idaho Wheat Commission stands firmly in support of impartial research. We neither sell nor profit from the findings. Our primary goal is to finance research that sustains the competitiveness of Idaho wheat growers,” said Wayne Hurst, Idaho

Wheat Commission Chair. “The research we support significantly enhances our ability to cultivate quality wheat, increase yields, and ultimately increases long-term profitability for farmers.”

By investing grower assessment dollars into public and private research, IWC is committed to empowering farmers with innovative solutions to optimize crop yields, improve quality standards, and contribute to the sustained prosperity of the Idaho wheat industry. ■

Analyzing Idaho Crop Input Costs and 2024 Projections

BY PAT HATZENBUEHLER; EXTENSION SPECIALIST – UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO AND XIAOLI ETIENNE; ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND IDAHO WHEAT COMMISSION ENDOWED CHAIR IN COMMODITY RISK MANAGEMENT – UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

We’re taking a look at Idaho crop economics with a breakdown of input costs such as seed, fertilizer, and labor, along with projections for 2024, offering valuable insights for grower planning.

As the crop-planting season approaches for most regions in Idaho, understanding what operating costs will look like in 2024 is crucial for farm businesses. This article provides a background discussion on categories of operating costs of the greatest importance for crops grown in Idaho and an assessment of the 2024 operating cost projections from the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS). The first part provides insights regarding the input prices that can have the greatest influence on a farm business’ profitability.

Before beginning, it is important to note that most Idaho crop producers have rotations spanning four to six years, meaning crops aren’t planted consecutively in the same field each year. Thus, the mix of inputs purchased for planting each year varies along with their rotation.

Differences in operating costs across crops

To investigate which types of input costs are most important for crops grown in Idaho, operating cost estimates for south-central Idaho were obtained from the University of Idaho AgBiz Crop Budgets from 2001 to 2019. The crops selected for analysis were alfalfa hay, barley (malt), potatoes, sugarbeets and wheat (SWW). Seven operating cost categories were

TABLE 1
Cost category shares (in %) of total operating costs for producing Idaho crops

Cost category	Alfalfa hay	Barley (malt)	Potatoes	Sugarbeets	Wheat (SWW)
Seed	0%	7%	23%	13%	5%
Fertilizer	15%	17%	26%	18%	26%
Pesticides	3%	12%	17%	11%	9%
Custom and consultants	45%	15%	6%	6%	17%
Irrigation	28%	28%	8%	17%	24%
Machinery	3%	9%	9%	17%	8%
Labor	7%	11%	11%	19%	11%

considered for each crop, including seed, fertilizer, pesticides, custom operations and consultants, irrigation, machinery and labor.

For each year in which there were cost estimates, the cost for each category was divided by the total operating costs. Multiplying the value of an individual component cost (e.g., fertilizer) divided by the total operating cost by 100 provides an estimate, in a percentage, of the share of total operating costs that are accounted for by each category. Lastly, these percentage values for each category and year were averaged to obtain an average percentage of total operating costs for each category over the observation period.

The estimates from this cost decomposition analysis are shown in Table 1, with the top cost categories highlighted. The highest operating cost category

**TABLE 2**

Projections of changes in barley cost of production between 2023 and 2024

Cost category	Projected change (in %) between 2023 and 2024
Seed	Up 1%
Fertilizer	Down 14%
Pesticides	Down 8%
Custom and consultants	Up 2%
Machinery	Up 5%
Labor	Up 2%
Total	Down 6%

for alfalfa hay is custom operations and consultants (45%), which includes activities such as mowing, raking, baling and stacking.

For barley, the category that accounted for the highest total operating costs was irrigation, which accounted for 28%, and the top category for wheat was fertilizer (26%). For potatoes, which also have the highest total operating costs, the top operating cost category was fertilizer (26%), with seed ranking second at 23%. The operating cost categories for sugarbeets were relatively more evenly distributed, with labor comprising the slightly highest cost category at 19%.

The main message from this analysis is that price increases (or decreases) for some cost categories, such as fertilizer prices for potatoes, are relatively more important for producer profitability than changes in other categories.

Crop input price projections for 2024

Given this context of differences regarding the relative importance of price changes for the profitability of producing a given crop, we next provide projections regarding the changes in several categories of production costs for barley for the U.S. from 2023 to 2024 from the USDA ERS. While the USDA ERS also produces cost of production estimates for wheat (but not the other crops previously assessed), the projected changes are similar for barley and wheat, so we will only discuss barley here. Also, although no estimates

are provided for the other assessed crops, for the other cost categories, except seed, the overall direction of cost change (up or down) will likely be similar to barley, though the magnitudes would vary across crops.

The projections in Table 2 show that seed, custom and consultants, machinery, and labor costs are expected to increase between 1% and 5% in 2024 relative to 2023, while those for pesticides and fertilizer are expected to decline by 8% and 14%, respectively. Overall, total operating costs for barley in 2024 relative to 2023 are projected at 6% lower.

Since fertilizer prices were determined as particularly important for the total operating costs when producing

Since fertilizer prices were determined as particularly important for the total operating costs when producing potatoes and wheat (Table 1), the projected lower fertilizer costs will provide some welcome relief for producers of those crops. Lower pesticide costs will also benefit potato producers. However, with many other production cost categories projected to increase slightly, the cost reduction opportunities for fertilizer and pesticides may likely be offset by increases in other categories.

potatoes and wheat (Table 1), the projected lower fertilizer costs will provide some welcome relief for producers of those crops. Lower pesticide costs will also benefit potato producers. However, with many other production cost categories projected to increase slightly, the cost reduction opportunities for fertilizer and pesticides may likely be offset by increases in other categories.

So far, we presented historical average estimates and projections for 2024. As crop producers know, many things change over time, and there can be substantial variability in individual input prices over the year. Thus, we close by providing strategies that producers can consider implementing to reduce their

risk of incurring substantially higher-than expected input costs.

1. For the relatively higher cost categories, such as fertilizer, it is worth considering whether making purchases multiple times during the year could be accommodated while considering cash flow capacity.
2. Negotiating crop prices as fertilizers, as well as other inputs such as chemicals, are purchased, may also help ensure that profitability is maintained in historically high-input price periods. ■

National Barley Improvement Committee Introduces Resilient Barley Initiative on Capitol Hill

The National Barley Improvement Committee, which represents the U.S. barley community of growers, researchers, processors, users, and allied industries, conducted its annual advocacy trip to Washington D.C. in March. The team of nearly 30 barley enthusiasts from across the country participated in over 100 Hill visits advocating on behalf of federal research funding for the barley industry. Idaho Barley Commissioner Mike Wilkins of Rupert and Executive Director Laura Wilder were part of this effort.

NBIC’s priority ask sought to establish a new research venture with the USDA Agricultural Research Service and Land Grant University partners entitled the Resilient Barley Initiative (RBI). The RBI seeks to address abiotic stressors, related to climate change, that have dramatically impacted yield and quality of the barley crop in recent years. As a result, industry has felt disruptions in supply, resulting in imported barley, which is exacerbated by farmers’ decision to not grow the risk-laden crop.

A collaborative team of researchers across 18 states will accelerate resilient barley line development and variety adoption, taking into account unique geographical needs posed by a changing climate. Improved genetics will promote a greater utilization of inputs, mitigation of risk, and positive ecological impact from crop adoption. Replicated cropping system trials will be deployed to better understand management practices for barley and the systems that can best support input use efficiency. Winter barley is a special focus within both approaches - genetics and management - to better understand the tangible ecosystem benefits provided while producing a high quality and profitable crop for



IBC’s Laura Wilder, left, and Mike Wilkins in Washington D.C. with the National Barley Improvement Committee.



U.S. Barley Industry Representatives joining the 2024 National Barley Improvement Committee in Washington D.C.

farmers. In addition to introducing this new initiative, an annual funding request was made of \$8,000,000 annually to be included in the FY25 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Bill.

NBIC members also advocated for an increase in the funding levels for the Barley Pest Initiative (BPI). The BPI is an effort to strengthen research capacity to address over 20 insects and diseases that impact barley yield and quality through development of new resistant varieties and management strategies. In the most recent spending bill (FY24), the BPI received \$3.5 million in support, but the NBIC team is actively working to secure an additional \$1.8 million to bring the total in FY25 to \$5.3 million annually. Already, in just three years of partial funding, the researchers working on the BPI have made great progress. You can read more about this work on the American Malting Barley Association website. In addition to the RBI and BPI, support was also vocalized for other initiatives and agencies within the USDA that are critical to the barley industry as outlined in their legislative priorities.

“Once again, the NBIC brought a diverse and strong team of barley advocates to the Hill. In a year we were prepared for funding cuts, the increase in funding for the Barley Pest Initiative was welcomed news,” said Ashley McFarland, who serves as executive secretary of the NBIC. “Furthermore, the Resilient Barley Initiative received a warm reception in many offices and we are hopeful in its establishment in FY25.” ■

Idaho Barley Commission Welcomes New Communications and Program Manager

The Idaho Barley Commission is pleased to welcome new Communications and Program Manager, Sydney Anderson.



Anderson, from Nampa is a graduate of the College of Southern Idaho where she earned associate degrees in both Agriculture Business and Equine Studies, and the University of Idaho where she earned a B.S. degree in Agriculture Science, Communication and Leadership Development.

Besides her formal education, she completed a number of successful internships, including working alongside former U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, and serving as an International Relations

Intern for the California Chamber of Commerce, as well as traveling to South Africa for the International Leadership Seminar for State Officers through the National FFA Organization.

In her youth, she was involved in 4-H and FFA programs at the local, state and national level, and she current serves as a local 4-H leader and is active in the Nampa FFA Alumni.

After spending time in Colorado, Anderson is eager to invest in her roots again and expand her passion for service in Idaho agriculture. She looks forward to serving Idaho barley growers and providing resources to educate others on the importance of Idaho barley. We are very excited to have her as part of the IBC team! She can be reached at Sydney.Anderson@barley.idaho.gov. ■

IBC Represents Idaho Growers at Spring U.S. Grains Council Meetings

Idaho barley growers were well represented at the U.S. Grains Council International Marketing Conference and Annual Membership meeting in Guatemala City, Guatemala earlier this spring by IBC commissioners Josh Jones and JC Olson, along with Executive Director Laura Wilder.

USGC is an important market development partner for IBC in adding value back to growers.

This event provided members with an overview of the Council’s strategy for the coming year and included several Advisory Team (A-Team) sessions, where experts in various agricultural commodities and markets come together to conduct market and commodity-specific deep-dives and share experiences relevant to their industry for this year. Both Jones and Olson participated in Western Hemisphere A-Team meetings. U.S. barley sector attendees also met together to discuss barley specific programs.

“Trade is a long game,” said Jones, IBC Chairman. “We are working to establish new markets for barley, as well as maintaining and growing existing trade relationships and our involvement with U.S. Grains Council helps tremendously in these efforts.”



IBC Commissioners Josh Jones, left, and JC Olson, along with Executive Director Laura Wilder at the USGC International Marketing Conference in Guatemala City.

In addition, Wilder joined U.S. Grains Council (USGC) staff from its nine worldwide offices and representatives from other state commodity checkoff partner organizations for the Council’s biannual Global Industry Partners Conference (GIPC) held in Marrakech, Morocco in March.

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GIPC is an important conference for aligning Council staff and state checkoff staff on USGC market development strategies and provided an excellent opportunity for U.S.-based staff and members to connect with international staff face to face and gain detailed knowledge about the Council's programs and strategic vision, as well as work on future joint programming.

Topics for the week centered around Council programming plans that will be possible thanks in part to additional funding opportunities via the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Regional Access Promotion Program (RAPP). Attendees also received updates on the organization's trade policy and sustainability efforts and received market-by-market updates on ethanol and feed grains from directors in its international offices. Wilder presented at the meeting on behalf of the U.S. barley sector. ■

Barley Yield Contest Makes its debut in Idaho – Idaho Entries Open for 2024

In the last decade, the Idaho barley industry has made its mark on the national and international level bringing in record yields. Building on this momentum, the Idaho Barley Commission (IBC), in collaboration with industry partners, has taken the reins to launch the Barley Yield Contest. The 2024 Pilot Program will take place in Idaho, with plans to expand the contest nationally next year.

In 2023, Idaho produced 32.7 percent of the nation's barley supply with 60.48 million bushels on 540,000 acres harvested. It's no surprise Idaho leads the nation in barley production, due to higher yields on primarily irrigated acres compared to the nation's other major barley growing areas. It makes sense that the first-ever Barley Yield Contest is launched in Idaho.

Barley growers can enter in three divisions: Spring Dryland Barley, Irrigated Spring Barley and Irrigated Winter Barley. Entrants will provide information on their management practices and a final yield count recorded on their harvest reports. The grower with the highest yield will be named the state winner and awarded a trip to the 2025 Commodity Classic in Denver, Colorado. The collection of data will create a collaborative report of management practices with seed variety performance. An analysis of these successful seed varieties and management practices will be available for consideration by other growers, industry partners and research programs.

This contest provides more than recognition for growers, it offers the opportunity of collaboration exchanges to create new standards within the barley industry. It serves as a platform for growers to demonstrate their expertise, share best practices, and compete for recognition in producing high-quality barley yields. As a vital part of Idaho's agricultural heritage, barley contributes



significantly to our economy and sustains livelihoods throughout the region. IBC hopes this contest serves as a catalyst to set the standard for yield recognition and research programs.

“The Barley Yield Contest represents an opportunity to showcase the potential of barley in Idaho and beyond. By encouraging growers to push the boundaries of barley production, we're not just celebrating individual achievements but driving the entire industry forward,” said Brett Wilken of Scoular who has been helping to organize the 2024 pilot. “The contest embodies innovation, and I am honored to be part of a program that not only promotes competition, but also showcases the vital role barley plays in Idaho.”

The Idaho Barley Commission invites growers and industry partners to join in this historic event. As the contest unfolds, a new industry standard will be set with more opportunities to follow. Contest details are available now on the Commission's website at <https://idahobarleycommission.org>. ■

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