

FALL 2024

# IDAHO

THE IDAHO GRAIN PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE

G R A I N



Idaho Grain Producers Association  
821 West State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702-5832



# VIEWS



BY JUSTIN PLACE  
PRESIDENT

In 1937, a young boy named Gene began his legacy in a humble tent house with a dirt floor, of which he shared with his family members. Many years and experiences later, Gene moved to Eastern Idaho where he purchased some ground on a desert entry program, a price of \$1.25 per acre. A lot of sweat, perseverance, and determination went into clearing the untamed lands to develop workable farm ground.

Gene was my father. I still farm those acres in addition to the acres we have gained through the years. A photograph of that humble tent house hangs on the wall of my office with the words “Lest we forget”. Dad worked hard to establish a foundation. Together, we labored to make the dream flourish. Now, with utmost humility for the legacy left behind, I continue to expand and make the most of the position in which I find myself. I found a key component of that to be a continuous search for new knowledge, resources, and connections with fellow farmers.

“Idaho State Wheat Growers Association” was a grass-roots organization established in 1957 to give voice to the Idaho farmer. Later the name was changed to Idaho Grain Producers Association and the commissions were established. The foundation has grown into the success we know today. I would like to personally thank Stacey Satterlee for the hard work and determination she’s put into helping the organization to flourish over the past 9 years. We wish her well in her next endeavor, and look forward to welcoming a new executive director as we anxiously watch the organization continue to grow and prosper. May we, as an association, continue working with unyielding gratitude while expanding the established legacy ever-forward. ■



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Cover photo  
by Noel Cole

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BY STACEY KATSEANES SATTERLEE  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

It's hard to believe that I've been writing this quarterly piece in the Idaho Grain magazine for nine years – and that this is my final update as Executive Director. I've loved my time with Idaho Grain – I started this job just as I was coming off maternity leave with Ben, our youngest, and our twins were five. Now, we have a nine-year-old and two fourteen-year-olds. It's true what they say: the days passed slowly, but the years flew by.

I'm proud of the work we've done together. I'm proud of the leaders that have been developed and the issues we've tackled. I'm proud of the mentors we've taken to Washington, DC. and of the close relationship we have with the Idaho Wheat Commission and the Idaho Barley Commission. I'm also proud of our relationship with the National Cotton Council and the Multi-Commodity Education Program we've partnered on. I'm proud of the commitment and dedication of the board and especially of the executive board. They work hard to represent you and fight for Idaho's wheat and barley growers. I'm proud that Idaho has leadership in Washington, DC, between having NAWG and USW board members and national officers. There's a lot to be proud of.

Your voice is more important now than ever. Our state is facing critical water issues (read more on page 11). We'll have lots of new faces in the legislature this coming session (read about one legislator, Senator VanOrden on page 6). And the work in Washington, DC to pass a Farm Bill continues tirelessly. IGPA is working on your behalf every day on policy issues that impact your bottom line – it's a great group to be a part of. If you aren't already a member – join today.

I'm so thankful for the friendships I've made over these last nine years that I'll take with me.

My hope is that I'm leaving the organization better than it was when I started here. IGPA has an excellent staff and tremendous grower leaders in place. The future looks bright – and I'm so grateful I got to be part of it. ■





## How NRCS Farm Bill Programs Can Help a Producer Like You

BY EMILY LAGRONE, USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE, IDAHO

Under the 2018 Farm Bill, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers a variety of programs that can help producers with their conservation concerns. Additionally, the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) is making it easier for producers to achieve those goals.

For 89 years, the NRCS has been proudly providing farmers, ranchers, garden growers and forest landowners with technical and financial assistance. From start to finish, NRCS personnel are here to help you plan and implement conservation practices to improve your practice and enhance your property.

You can find help through a number of NRCS financial assistance programs. These include: the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), EQIP Conservation Incentive Contracts (EQIP-CIC), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Agriculture Conservation Easement Program Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE). The IRA provides additional funding to each of these programs for specific conservation practices that may apply to you.

### EQIP

EQIP is NRCS' flagship program. It is the most well-known and utilized among producers. There is no limit on how many applications a producer can submit, and each one can focus on a different conservation effort. Typically, EQIP contracts last for one year, but can go as long as five. EQIP pays for a portion of the cost to install a practice. Payment is typically made once the practice is installed and certified by NRCS staff.

### EQIP-CIC

EQIP-CIC is available to select priority resource concerns. For cropland in Idaho, this includes soil

To learn more about the EQIP, EQIP-CIC, CSP, ACEP-ALE and IRA, reach out to your local NRCS service center about how these programs can help you. A conservationist will tour your property and design a customized conservation plan that can help you address your needs. That plan will outline the practices that may help improve and protect the natural resources on your property.



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

quality limitation, field sediment nutrient and pathogen loss, and wind and water erosion. EQIP-CIC a five-year contract that gives producers the flexibility to implement conservation practices on a portion of their land like EQIP instead of the entire operation like CSP requires. This is a stepping-stone for farmers to start implementing conservation practices with EQIP before committing to a whole farm conservation practice with CSP. Producers get an implementation payment once the conservation practice is certified followed by annual payments for the remainder of the contract.

### CSP

If you are interested in taking your conservation one step further, look into CSP for long-term conservation practices. CSP is the largest conservation program in the United States, covering more acres than any other conservation program offered through USDA. CSP helps thousands of producers build on their existing conservation practices and strengthen their operations as a whole.

CSP is a five-year program that offers financial assistance through annual disbursements, with the option for renewal at the end of a contract. Producers can pick one or bundle multiple enhancements that best address the conservation concerns on their property.

Here are a few ways CSP may help grain growers like you: increase cover crops to improve soil health, implement buffers to enhance water quality and management to improve water efficiency.



## ACEP-ALE

The ACEP-ALE can help ensure your farmland stays farmland. This is a voluntary program that protects agricultural land from becoming non-productive land. ACEP-ALE is a permanent easement that is recorded on your deed and will remain valid even through ownership changes.

## IRA and What it Can Do for You

The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) is an investment in climate and clean energy solutions. This includes helping producers reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon storage in their soil and trees. This law provides additional financial assistance to NRCS' oversubscribed conservation programs. However, the funds can only be used for specific conservation practices, including: soil health, nitrogen and nutrient management, irrigation and water management. These funds help support applications in NRCS financial assistance programs.

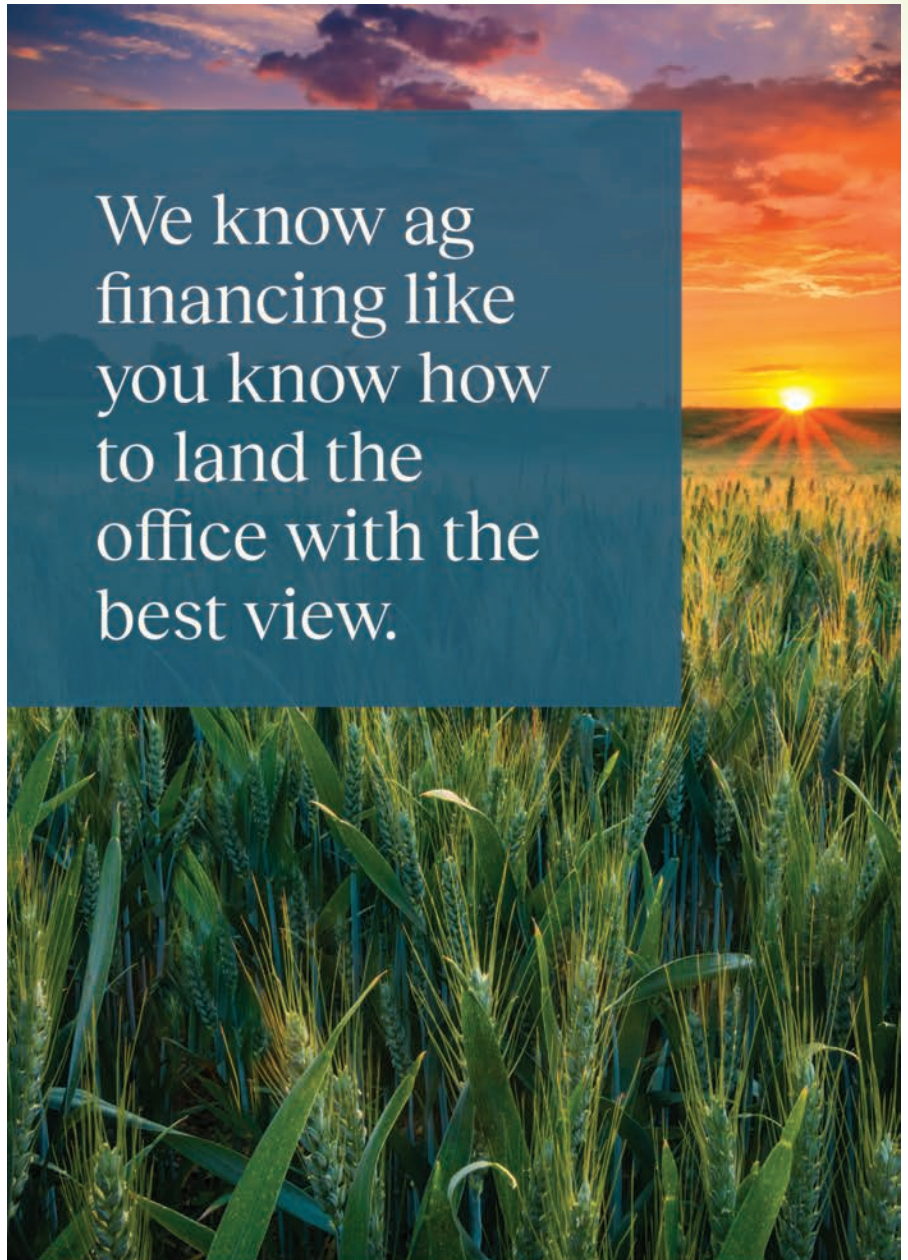
To learn more about the EQIP, EQIP-CIC, CSP, ACEP-ALE and IRA, reach out to your local NRCS service center about how these programs can help you. A conservationist will tour your property and design a customized conservation plan that can help you address your needs. That plan will outline the practices that may help improve and protect the natural resources on your property.

“Helping people help the land is what we do,” said Lori Kassib, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs for NRCS Idaho. “No matter your resource concern, our field staff is prepared to help you meet your goals.”

Program deadlines for Fiscal Year 2024

- EQIP Sign up 1: October 4, 2024
- EQIP Sign up 2: April 4, 2025
- CSP Sign up 1: February 28, 2025

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SENATOR  
**Julie VanOrden**



PINGREE, ID • DISTRICT 30

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

I grew up on a farm in Bingham County, that is still in my family. My husband is Garth VanOrden. I currently live in Pingree with my sons living “across the street” and “on the other side of the pasture”.

**Who had the greatest influence on you during your childhood?**

My dad, Masa Tsukamoto, was the biggest influence in my life. His patience with me was my most memorable part of my life, he taught me life’s lessons without demeaning me. My parents also were examples of community members, they socialized with many people and there never seemed to be any bias.

**How about a happy memory from your childhood?**

One of the best memories of my childhood was being a cheerleader in junior high school. The cheerleader advisor was Mrs. Rodonna Katseanes (Stacey’s Grandma!). She was also my home economics teacher, that was one of my favorite classes. I guess you could say she was one of my favorite teachers.



**Education?**

I graduated from Blackfoot High School and continued my education at College of Southern Idaho. I received a certificate from Idaho State University’s Vocational Technical College in data entry.

**Tell us about your family.**

Garth and I have four children: Shaun, Dillon, Jason (deceased), and Lisa. Shaun and Dillon are partners with us on the farm. Shaun’s wife, Mishell, does much of the farm audit bookwork and compliance work. Dillon’s wife, Cassandra, is a nurse administrator at a dialysis center. My daughter, Lisa, works at a university in Kyoto, Japan and is pursuing a masters in IT informatics. I have three grandchildren and a great granddaughter.

**How did you meet your spouse?**

My husband and I met through mutual friends, our first official date was to the LDS church Pingree 1st ward family bizarre. He wanted me to meet his mother who was helping with the event. Evidently, I must have been impressed.



**What do you do in your free time?**

I train for and participate in competitive horse reining. I try to be a full-time participant but my political job is somewhat full time too. My husband and I have also taken up horse breeding and foaling.

**What one word would you use to describe yourself?**

Independent.

**Why did you decide to run for office?**

I ran for office to be involved in state decision making as I feel I have life experiences that will help me bring a unique perspective. When I was in the House of Representatives, I had just finished being on my local school board so I naturally went on the education committee. It has been a steep learning curve to be on the Health and Welfare committee and an even greater challenge to fit the Finance committee into the mix. I truly believe that my previous experience with policy making in the House helped me to make this transition.

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

I have served on the following committees: Joint

I ran for office to be involved in state decision making as I feel I have life experiences that will help me bring a unique perspective. When I was in the House of Representatives I had just finished being on my local school board so I naturally went on the education committee. It has been a steep learning curve to be on the Health and Welfare committee and an even greater challenge to fit the Finance committee into the mix.

Finance and Appropriations, Health and Welfare and Natural Resources. My path to leadership involves being a good example of an intentional listener. I purposely don't take my cell phone into a committee that I am chairing. I hope never to let a problem become more important than a person.


**What challenges do you think the state faces in the next few years?**

I believe the challenge Idaho will face is a looming recession. Idaho's constitution calls for a annual balanced budget, to make that happen the legislature will face the prospect of using rainy day funds and making hard decisions.

**What do you love most about Idaho?**

I love the cleanliness of Idaho and the independence of its people.

**What are you most passionate about and/or hope to accomplish during your time in the legislature?**

I would like to see more student literacy accomplishment happen. Working on updating our state budget to address wasteful spending. Put in place a subsidy system that addresses real needs, in real time and rewards self-reliance. 



# VOTE IDAHO

## Make a Plan to

# VOTE

### November 5, 2025 General Election

#### **VOTE** Election Day

Vote in person at your polling place on Election Day from 8 am - 8 pm. Visit [Voteldaho.gov](http://Voteldaho.gov) to find your voting location.

#### **VOTE** Early

or visit an early voting location from October 21 to November 1. Visit [Voteldaho.gov](http://Voteldaho.gov) to find out when early voting begins in your county.

#### **VOTE** Absentee

or visit [Voteldaho.gov](http://Voteldaho.gov) to request an absentee ballot by October 25.

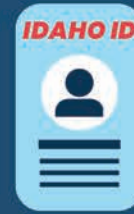
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# VOTE IDAHO.gov

## WHAT TO BRING WHEN YOU VOTE

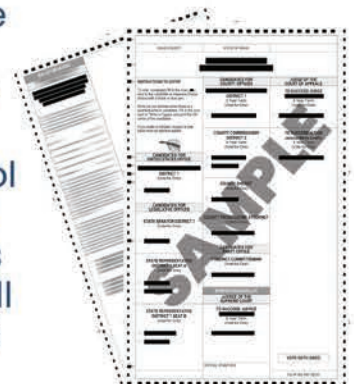
You must show a valid photo ID when you vote. Make sure you bring ONE of the following with you to your polling place:



- Idaho Driver's License or Identification card
- U.S. Passport or Federal Photo Identification card
- Tribal Identification card
- Concealed weapons license issued by a county sheriff in Idaho

## New! Sample Ballots Available!

What races are on the ballot in your county, city, school district, or neighborhood? The new sample ballot tool at [Voteldaho.gov](http://Voteldaho.gov) lets you preview the races and questions that will appear on your ballot before you vote.



PHIL McGRANE

IDAHO SECRETARY OF STATE





# Nutrien Ag Solutions – An Expanded Services Partner in Idaho Agriculture

**Tell us about your business, company history? How long have you operated in Idaho? What role does your company play in the grain value chain?**



Nutrien was founded in Canada in early 2018 after the merger of Agrium and PotashCorp. Expansion into the US retail market began as Nutrien Ag Solutions in 2019 via a merger with Crop Production Services and Western Farm Service. While the current form of the company has only been operating in Idaho for the last five years, our predecessors that we are comprised of have been serving the agricultural community for multiple decades. Idaho grain producers can count on Nutrien to provide them with the best products and solutions to ensure that they're able to sustainably maximize the production on every acre, year after year.

## How many people does the company employ?

Globally, the company employs approximately 26,000 people. Within Idaho specifically, Nutrien Ag Solutions employs roughly 150 people from traditional labor roles (truck drivers, warehousemen) to more specialized roles (agronomists, precision ag specialists). While we



are a larger company, we maintain that small, local, approach to business as many of the employees at our branches worked for the acquired companies and have often been raised in those locations. As a result, because of our long-standing local knowledge, we are able to provide sound advice that makes sense for your specific location.

## Where are you located/how many locations?

Nutrien ag solutions is comprised of approximately 1,700 locations across North, Central and South America and Australia. In Idaho, we have 15 retail locations that stretch throughout the Snake River Valley from Parma to Idaho Falls. No matter where you farm, odds are there's a Nutrien Ag Solutions branch near by, ready to help you meet your production goals!

## What services do you offer?

The core of Nutrien Ag Solution's business is the sale of agricultural inputs from crop nutrition and crop protection products to seed and adjuvants. In addition to carrying all the seed and crop protection products from the industry's top manufacturers, we also have proprietary lines of crop nutrition, protection and seed products via Loveland Products and DynaGro Seed. Unique to the Snake River region, we have our own wheat breeding program that is focused on development of varieties specifically bred to excel in the growing regions found in Idaho and across the greater Snake

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River region. Through experimentation at a number of small plot yield trial locations, only top yielding varieties with the highest end use qualities are released. No matter your growing conditions or end use, there is a DynaGro wheat variety that will undoubtedly be a top performer on your acres. For more information on the wheat breeding program and variety availability, please contact Ryan Holt at [Ryan.Holt@nutrien.com](mailto:Ryan.Holt@nutrien.com).

Beyond the sales of products, our crop consultants and agronomists provide our growers with sampling services, sound agronomic advice, and over-all exemplary customer service. But what really sets us apart from the rest is that we also provide other value-added services to our growers that help increase profitability in and out of the field. These services range from precision ag and digital agronomy support that help growers leverage the latest in ag tech innovation on their farms, lending options through Nutrien Financial, to sustainable ag programs that bolster their economic, social and environmental resiliency. These sustainable ag programs are centered on helping growers access new revenue streams and market opportunities through leveraging of their existing products and practices, or through exploration of new products and practices that help them make more money beyond the yield gains.

Currently, sustainable ag program opportunities exist for corn, wheat and barley growers that are interested in evaluating and improving their nitrogen application practices via the Sustainable Nitrogen Outcomes program. This program encourages growers to explore minor reductions in their nitrogen application rates through the incorporation of cutting-edge nutritional and soil health products. Doing so allows them to maintain or improve yields via improved nutrient use efficiency all while earning additional money for their reduced nitrous oxide emissions. Another program, specifically for wheat growers, is with an industry partner of ours, Ardent Mills. They are paying growers to share how they farm their crop and manage their land via recording their production process in Nutrien’s sustainable ag platform, Agrible. This unique program allows growers to showcase their stewardship and tell their story at a regional scale via Ardent Mill’s marketing channels. As a key point, involvement in this program does not require any changes in current management practices.

While these are the two primary programs we have to offer Idaho growers, we are always exploring new



opportunities with industry partners that will benefit the producers of the state. For more information on the sustainable ag programs with Nutrien, please email me at [seth.mulder@nutrien.com](mailto:seth.mulder@nutrien.com) or call/text me at 916-616-5102.

As you can see, at Nutrien Ag Solutions, we have the ability to bring far more to the farm than just crop nutrition and chemistry!

### **Company mission/goals?**

We at Nutrien Ag Solutions strive to be the leading agricultural inputs company helping to “Feed the Future” through supporting growers in maximizing their production and profitability in and out of the field via innovative products, solutions, programs and grower-focused customer service.

### **What do you want Idaho’s grain growers to know about your company?**

Nutrien Ag Solutions is committed to the success and longevity of the agriculture industry in Idaho and beyond. From the products we sell to the sustainable ag programs we offer, we are focused on ensuring the continued growth and success of all producers in Idaho. To find your local branch, visit <https://nutrienagsolutions.com/find-location> and to learn about the sustainable ag program offerings that will open new doors for your operation, visit <https://nutrienagsolutions.com/sustainable-ag>. ■



# OPINION: Idaho’s Water is in Trouble and Farmers, Not Government Mandates, Are the Solution

ORIGINAL PUBLISH DATE: WEDNESDAY AUGUST 14, 2024. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION. BY GOVERNOR BRAD LITTLE



Most people don’t know it, but Idaho has a problem – a big problem only Idahoans can solve.

Idaho is facing a water shortage underground. It’s a tough message to convey because Idaho is in a good water year, but this is not about the water you can see. It is about the water you can’t see.

The Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) is rapidly dwindling. It has been for decades.

Said another way, the water budget is out of balance. There has been more water coming out of the aquifer than going in. The aquifer, larger than the size of Lake Erie, has been steadily declining for 60 years. How much water have we lost? Since 1952, we have lost the equivalent of five TRILLION gallons of water – enough for the domestic use for the total population of Idaho for the next 75 years.

Why do we need to turn this around and get aquifer levels headed in the right direction?

Because the aquifer is our most important source of water in the state. It sustains agriculture across Idaho, especially in eastern Idaho. It is the sole source of drinking water for most municipalities on the plain and countless domestic wells. It feeds the Snake River, our lifeblood for agriculture, recreation, energy, fisheries, and many other uses.

I am committed to the success of Idaho agriculture, especially in eastern Idaho. I have personally been fully engaged since the start of my administration to invest in water infrastructure and bring the right folks to the table to solve the problem. The Legislature and I put half a billion dollars toward water quantity investments over the past three years.

And we aren’t just throwing money at the problem without results. Recent data suggests that the Idaho Water Resource Board’s Managed ESPA

Recharge Program is helping to turn the ship around, albeit slowly.

In addition, I hosted a statewide water summit in August of 2023 with hundreds of Idaho stakeholders to identify challenges and potential solutions to water issues in Idaho. I directed the Idaho Department of Water Resources to create the ESPA Groundwater Management Plan Advisory Council which has met regularly since 2023 with a goal of creating a groundwater management plan that will help us balance our aquifer’s checkbook.

And just weeks ago, I signed an executive order, the Protecting Idaho Water Sovereignty Act, which charts a path forward on a new agreement that is driven by Idaho farmers – NOT the government. Several negotiation meetings have taken place over the summer, and I’m confident that farmers will create the solutions that will avoid future water shortages no matter where you farm.

But let me be clear about something: I will not mandate a government solution.

Why?

Because the ONLY solution that is acceptable to me is one that is crafted by farmers. If we don’t do this together, then the EPA or the courts (or worst, Congress!) will determine our water destiny.

Idaho farmers, not the feds, must come up with the solution. And that is exactly what is happening. Just last week, I sat down with water users from all over the Eastern Snake Plain and watched what happens when farmers collaborate. Their ingenuity far outpaces any government idea.

But again, the threat of losing control of our water management and decision-making to the feds is more real than ever. The most conservative U.S. Supreme Court in our nation’s history just blocked an agreement between rural western states in a ruling that allows the

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federal government to assert control of water in times of disagreement.

We don't want that to happen in Idaho.

Agriculture is too important to risk handing our water over to anyone but our own.

Folks, this is not about "us versus them" or eastern Idaho water users versus Magic Valley water users. In fact, a quarter of senior surface water users in the

state are located in eastern Idaho. Idaho law is meant to protect Idahoans and our water. It might not always be pretty, but it protects property rights and maintains our water sovereignty.

As Governor, my job is to protect Idaho water and everything and everyone that depends on it. I encourage all Idahoans to join me in this effort.

I will fight tooth and nail against the federal government to retain control of our water for eastern Idaho's agricultural economy and future generations. That means farmers making decisions for themselves. ■

## Idaho Wheat Variety Survey: Your Input is Needed!

The Idaho wheat industry needs your help identifying the most popular winter and spring wheat varieties planted in Idaho. The information you share will be safeguarded and kept confidential.



### Confidentiality Assurance

Data is aggregated across counties within each production region, as defined by NASS reporting districts. Production figures are reported as percentages

of total surveyed acres, ensuring no specific operation is identifiable.

### Purpose of the Data

The Idaho Wheat Commission will utilize this data to guide breeders, seed dealers, and grain buyers in their research and market development efforts, all while maintaining strict confidentiality of identifying information.

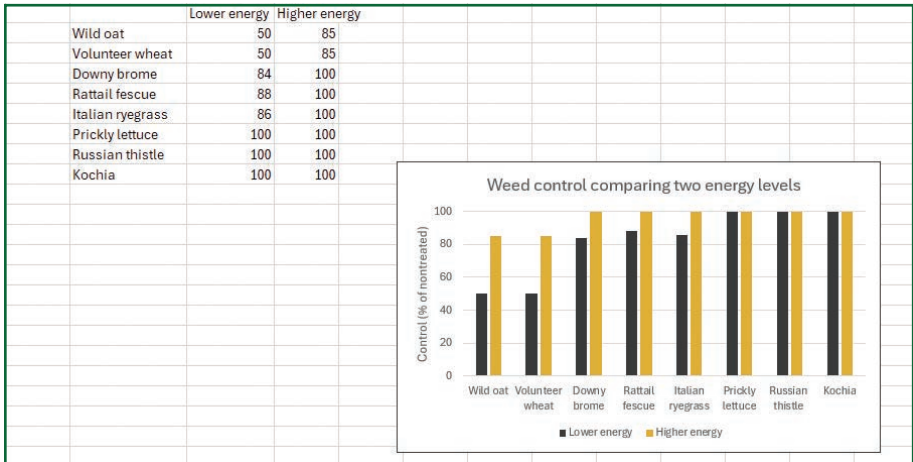
Your participation will help Idaho Wheat make industry decisions that will increase farmer profitability. ■

## Harvest Weed Seed Destroyer with Infrared and Blue Light

BY JOAN CAMPBELL AND TRACI RAUCH, WEED SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

University of Idaho weed scientists are testing a prototype harvest weed seed control (HRWC) tool, the Weed Seed Destroyer (developed by Global Neighbor, Inc.) Directed energy in the form of mid-range infrared energy (IR) and high intensity LED blue light is used to kill weed seeds contained in the chaff of a combine. This system is similar to HRWC impact mills attached to the back of a combine. The chaff, which contains most of the weed seed, is separated from the straw in both systems. The impact mills kill seeds by physically

destroying the chaff and seed turning them into a fine dust. The Seed Destroyer exposes seed and chaff to energy for several seconds at an intensity 20 times that of sunlight. The combination of IR energy and blue light affects cell structure that controls initial root growth. The seed is unable to produce a seedling. IR energy is converted from thermal heat in this system. It is not the thermal heat that is killing the seed. Both blue light and IR energy are needed to kill the seeds. Four barrel-heaters convert the heat to IR and are alternated



compared to nontreated was about 85% at the highest level tested. All broadleaf weeds were controlled 100% at the lower level tested. Downy brome, rattail fescue, and Italian ryegrass control were 84, 88, and 86% with the lower energy tested, respectively. Wild oat and wheat control was less than 50% with the lower energy tested.

The equipment was recently modified to increase control. These include grouping the IR sensors together and replacing the steel tube with aluminum to concentrate energy and expose seeds more uniformly. The modified Weed Seed Destroyer is under investigation.

along the tube with LED blue lights. This technology is a non-chemical approach to stop or reduce the growth of weed seeds which is particularly important for herbicide resistant weeds.

Wild oat, downy brome, rattail fescue, Italian ryegrass, kochia, Russian thistle, and prickly lettuce were tested with a bench top model that is about 1/12th the size of a commercial unit. Wheat chaff and seed were run through the system with two levels of IR energy together with blue light. This was compared to chaff and seed run with no IR or light energy. The IR energy is converted from 300 F and 350 F heaters. The seeds are not exposed to the high heat. Chaff and seed collected were mixed with potting soil and placed in flats in the greenhouse. Emerged seedlings of weeds and wheat (seed contained in the chaff) were counted. Downy brome, rattail fescue, Italian ryegrass, prickly lettuce, Russian thistle, and kochia were controlled 100% at the highest energy level tested. The reduction of wild oat and volunteer wheat seedlings grown

The Weed Seed Destroyer uses about 10 times less energy than the HWSC impact mills. Class 8 or greater combines are needed to effectively run the impact mills and fuel use is increased with the impact mills. The impact mills also require the combine to slow down at times. The Weed Seed Destroyer just runs on electricity from an alternator. With both systems, only weed seeds that enter the combine will be controlled. Any weed seed that is shattered before harvest or doesn't enter the combine will not be killed.

The HWSC equipment was purchased with funds from the federally funded Herbicide Research Initiative and Idaho Wheat Commission contributed funds towards the experimentation. HWSC techniques can provide a necessary tool for controlling weeds with an emphasis on herbicide resistant weed populations. ■





# Lockout/Tagout Each Time, Every Time

As harvest gets into full swing, the Idaho Wheat Commission wants to remind you that grain bin accidents are a leading cause of death and injury in the agricultural community each year. Basic precautions can prevent accidents, so as the kids say, LOTO for YOLO: *Lockout/tagout because you only live once.*

Grain bins are essential for Idaho farmers, offering a secure way to store and manage harvested crops, but these structures come with significant risks if safety measures are not followed. Following appropriate grain bin safety protocols protects Idaho farmers, their families, and employees, and safeguards the quality of the stored crop. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides critical guidelines and regulations aimed at preventing accidents and injuries associated with grain storage.

## Understanding the Risks

Grain bins pose several hazards, with the most significant being the risk of entrapment, eventually leading to suffocation. Suffocation can occur quickly when an operator becomes buried by grain. Moving grain acts like quicksand and can bury a person in seconds as they walk on moving grain or attempt to clear grain built up on the inside of a bin. “Bridged” grain and vertical piles of stored grain can also collapse unexpectedly, which is why precautions should be taken by adults and children not to stand, walk, or play on stored grain. Even with assistance, the weight and nature of shifting grain make it extremely difficult and often impossible to escape. The natural human response to panic when under threat of being buried by shifting grain increases the likelihood of inhalation of grain or grain dust and faster, less predictable movement of grain. Other risks include dust explosions, falls from heights, and exposure to toxic gases.

## Preventing Accidents

Perhaps the most important practice is lockout/tagout. This simple act provides at-a-glance warnings for anyone working near grain bins at any time. Making a habit of locking and tagging prevents accidents by ensuring that machinery cannot be operated with someone in the bin. Communication always suffers when things get busy on the farm. Lockout/tagout picks up the slack by alerting everyone in the vicinity of a bin that someone is inside and machinery must remain turned off.



For example, two employees talk about checking the auger in the bin but don’t communicate who will check or when. One of the employees goes into the bin to evaluate the auger that is turned off; the other employee also decides to check the auger and flips the switch to turn it on. The employee checking the auger inside the bin loses an arm or leg in the auger, or the grain starts to move, and he/she drowns in the grain. Accidents like this can be prevented with a LOTO system in place that everyone on the farm understands and practices.

For operations with multiple people working in or around the bins, each individual should have a lock. This is another visual that everyone is accounted for and out of the bin before any power supply to the bin is turned on. All power sources should be disconnected and locked in the “off” position with each person’s personal lock. Power should only be restored to machinery after all locks and tags are accounted for. Protecting yourself, your family, and your employees should be your biggest priority.

Tags can be very simple as long as they grab attention and as long as everyone involved on the farm understands the purpose of the tag. Lack of communication, being in a hurry, and overconfidence all contribute to the growing statistic of grain bin accidents each year – accidents that take an emotional toll on farming communities and can easily be prevented with simple LOTO practices.



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### Other Safety Protocols to Implement

- 1. Training and Education:** Proper training is crucial for anyone working with or around grain bins. Farmers, family members, and employees should be educated about the risks and trained in safe operating procedures.
- 2. Regular Maintenance and Inspections:** Grain bins should be regularly inspected and maintained to ensure structural integrity and proper functioning of all safety equipment. This includes checking for signs of wear and tear, ensuring that ladders and walkways are secure, and verifying that ventilation systems are working correctly to prevent the buildup of toxic gases.
- 3. Safe Grain Handling Practices:** Implementing safe grain handling practices can significantly reduce the risk of entrapment. This includes avoiding entry into bins while grain is being loaded or unloaded and using grain bin entry permits.

- 4. Proper use of Safety Equipment:** Utilizing appropriate safety equipment, such as harness and lifelines, can be lifesaving. These should be used in conjunction with lockout/tagout procedures to ensure that machinery cannot be operated while someone is in the bin.
- 5. Emergency Preparedness:** Having a well-defined emergency response plan is essential. This plan should include rescue procedures, contact information for emergency services, and regular drills to ensure that everyone on the farm knows how to respond in case of an emergency.

For Idaho wheat farmers, grain bins are a critical component of farm operations. Practicing correct and mindful grain bin safety saves lives and provides longevity to your operation and the industry. By prioritizing safety through education, regular maintenance, and safe handling practices, farmers can create a safer working environment around on-farm storage. Careful adherence to grain bin safety procedures will maintain the sustainability of Idaho's farming communities. ■



# Breaking the Silence and Seeking Help

BY RYAN CRAGG, LICENSED CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR

In the fields where our state and nation’s food supply is cultivated, there is a hidden crisis taking root, one that threatens not just the crops, but the very lives of those who tend them. While farming is often pictured as a peaceful and rewarding way of life, the reality is far more complex. Farmers face immense pressure from unpredictable weather, fluctuating markets, and the heavy weight of sustaining both their lands and livelihoods. These stressors have led to a significant, yet overlooked, mental health challenge in the farming community.

Asking for help is tough, especially for me, a licensed counselor. Seeking help with emotional issues? That’s on a whole other level. I’ve had the privilege of being a counselor for over 20 years. It’s an honor because I personally understand the challenge of facing the stigma and admitting the need for help.

Throughout my 49 years, I’ve struggled with shame. Brené Brown is a renowned research professor, author, and public speaker, known for her work on topics such as vulnerability, courage, shame, and empathy. She explains the difference between guilt and shame. Guilt means I have done something wrong. Shame means there is something wrong with me. For all of us, it’s not guilt that destroys us. Guilt urges us to take responsibility, apologize, make amends, and move forward. Shame, however, corrodes us from within, telling us we’re losers, disappointments, and that we’ll never overcome the deep-seated pain. Shame isolates us in our sadness, leading to dark thoughts and, all too often, the belief that the only solution is to remove ourselves from the world.

Depression, anxiety, and suicide rates have reached all-time highs, and for farmers, the struggle is even more intense. We often internalize our battles, hiding them from the outside world, along with harsh and unspoken self-criticism. If I had recognized each time I labeled myself a “loser” as a warning sign, I might have uncovered the deeper issue sooner. The effects of poor mental health among farmers extend far beyond the

Depression, anxiety, and suicide rates have reached all-time highs, and for farmers, the struggle is even more intense. We often internalize our battles, hiding them from the outside world, along with harsh and unspoken self-criticism.



individual, impacting their families, communities, and the agricultural industry as a whole.

I run a company called Metanoia, an ancient Greek word meaning “a fundamental change in one’s beliefs.” I had to discover the truth about myself, shedding the distorted patterns of self-criticism. The truth is you were put here for a reason. You bring life to people daily through your hard work, often without recognition.

Focus on small, short-term wins to build undeniable momentum. Don’t hide in your discomfort, and more importantly in any shame. Take ownership of your life by recognizing that you are not those distorted thoughts, but can learn, grow, and move forward with the opportunity to live in true peace. I am not one that says you should trust all people and simply share your struggle. The most important piece, intentionally seek those key people that can be part of

your walk in life. We were not made to live in isolation, but in community. The farming community is unique, and vital to ALL life. Use each other for support. Talk, don’t hide. If need be, seek out a counselor that can be a sounding board to the struggle. Too many of us are living lives of desperation and untapped potential, simply because we are afraid to ask for help. Don’t become another statistic, become an overcomer that can then speak life into the coming generations. You matter. ■





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## Pacific Northwest wheat commissions statement on APHIS approval of genetically modified wheat trait

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced today its decision to deregulate the drought-tolerate HB4<sup>®</sup> trait in wheat. The wheat commissions of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, representing Pacific Northwest (PNW) wheat producers, provided the following statement to address some of the questions that may arise from this announcement, especially from our valued customers around the world:

"The PNW wheat industry supports and encourages new technologies that increase producer profitability and will help feed the growing world population. At the same time, we remain committed to providing our customers with the quality and reliability they have come to expect from PNW wheat.

"It is important to understand that the APHIS approval process is different than commercialization. This announcement provides a pathway to future commercialization of the HB4<sup>®</sup> trait in wheat in the United States, however the scientific process is lengthy, and it is unlikely that the trait will be commercially grown or available for at least three to five years. We can still confidently say that no genetically modified (GM) wheat is currently being cultivated commercially in the United States.

"The PNW wheat industry has always been a global leader in wheat quality by focusing on the high standards for end-use characteristics driven by our export customers. PNW wheat breeding has been acutely focused on, and responsive to, the needs of our export markets. The region will continue to provide a reliable supply of high-quality grains and wheat foods that customers know and expect."

### From the U.S. Wheat Associates

"The farmer leaders of USW are confident that the HB4<sup>®</sup> trait has the potential to deliver significant producer and consumer benefits," wrote the U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) in a statement released earlier today. USW is the export market organization for the U.S. wheat industry. USW believes in using a science-based approach for wheat breeding technologies while meeting the specific needs of importing customers.

"Our organization has established a productive dialogue with Bioceres, and we appreciate that the company understands the importance of our joint wheat industry principles," said USW Director of Trade Policy Peter Laudeman. "I have traveled with growers to Argentina to see HB4 wheat in the field and they were impressed by its performance. We believe the trait represents good science with positive potential to improve food security in a more sustainable way."

USW is supportive of science-based regulatory approval for biotechnology wheat products in the United States in line with its joint Wheat Industry Principles for Biotechnology Commercialization with the National Association of Wheat Growers.

HB4<sup>®</sup> wheat is a transgenic wheat trait owned and sold by the Argentine company, Bioceres Crop Solutions. The trait incorporates drought tolerance transferred through a sunflower gene. According to results reported by the company in the drought conditions experienced by Argentina in 2022, HB4<sup>®</sup> wheat demonstrated up to a 43% yield improvement in targeted environments.

Bioceres Crop Solutions applied to the USDA in September 2022 for cultivation approval. USDA's APHIS approved the import of HB4<sup>®</sup> grain for food and feed use in 2022. Prior to today's APHIS announcement, transgenic traits in wheat were not approved for cultivation within the U.S.

According to USW, there is no known HB4<sup>®</sup> wheat present in the United States in any capacity at this time.

The regulatory status review from APHIS can be found online here:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/biotech-regulatory-status/regulatory-status-review-table>

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# Idaho Wheat Commissioner Seated as Chairman for U.S. Wheat Associates

Idaho Wheat Commissioner Clark Hamilton, Ririe, will serve as the chairman of U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) for fiscal year 2025. Hamilton was elected during the USW board meeting in January in Washington, D.C. and transitioned into the role at the USW board meeting in July. He previously served as vice chairman of the organization.



Hamilton and his wife, Kristi, own Hamilton Triple C Farms, a diversified family farm in Eastern Idaho that they operate with their two sons, Jordan and Logan. Hamilton grows four of the six classes of wheat, barley, potatoes, pulses, canola, and alfalfa.

“Clark has been very active and has had tremendous impact since joining the Board of Directors two years ago,” said USW President Vince Peterson. “He brings a solid perspective to the work we do, and he is good at engaging and interacting with customers of U.S. wheat around the world. Clark is naturally curious about the operations and businesses of these customers, and he is equally good at sharing with them the story of his family farm in Idaho. Serving as Chairman requires time, effort, and patience, as well as an ability to work closely with others to make important decisions. Clark is a good fit for the role, and the entire USW staff looks forward to his term as Chairman.”

Hamilton is currently serving as an Idaho Wheat Commissioner, appointed by Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter in 2015 and reappointed by Governor Brad Little in 2020. From 2010-2013 Hamilton was a member of the executive board of the Idaho Grain Producers Association (IGPA) and was elected president of IGPA in 2013. He was a USW board member from 2015 until his election to the USW executive committee in 2022. Hamilton was a board member of the Ririe Grain and Feed Cooperative for many years and remains active in

“This is a great opportunity, and I am happy to be a part of U.S. Wheat Associates. I don’t take this opportunity lightly. I will build upon our past work, enhance our marketing efforts, listen to our customers, and strengthen our relationships.”

**Clark Hamilton, USW Chairman**



Left to right: Michael Peters, Past Chairman; Clark Hamilton, Chairman; Jim Pellman, Vice Chairman; Gary Millershaski, Secretary-Treasurer

volunteer leadership roles in his community.

“I feel incredibly fortunate to be able to do what I love every day and to work alongside family,”

Hamilton shared. “I believe it is my responsibility to improve and preserve the future of farming so my grandkids and generations to come will have the option to make a living and life on the farm.”

USW is the export market development organization for the U.S. wheat industry, promoting the reliability, quality, and value of all six wheat classes to buyers, millers, bakers, food processors, and government officials in more

than 100 countries. Hamilton has represented the United States wheat industry on several trade missions around the world and has hosted many trade teams on his farm in Ririe from Asia and South America.

“This is a great opportunity, and I am happy to be a part of U.S. Wheat Associates”, said Hamilton. “I don’t take this opportunity lightly. I will build upon our past work, enhance our marketing efforts, listen to our customers, and strengthen our relationships.”

Hamilton accepted the USW chairman’s gavel from 2023-24 Chair Michael Peters of Okarche, Oklahoma.



# IWC Scholarships

Idaho wheat growers invest in the future of agriculture by committing assessment dollars to scholarships for students pursuing careers in the agriculture industry. Each year, the Commission makes scholarships available at both University of Idaho and Utah State University, as well as two scholarships through the FFA foundation. The following students received scholarships for the 2024-2025 academic year.

## Stryder Childs

Utah State University

My name is Stryder Childs, and I am from Caldwell. I was born and raised in the agricultural industry, and this has taught me valuable life lessons. I love agriculture, especially row crop production. My family and I specialize in growing mint, wheat, corn, and hay in the Treasure Valley. I am studying Agribusiness with an emphasis in Farm Management, and a minor in Agronomy. I plan to be a farmer and to help feed this growing nation and world. The Idaho Wheat Commission scholarship will greatly help with my education. This scholarship allows me to focus more on my education and less about tuition costs. I love the education and high-quality programs at Utah State. My favorite part is being involved with my friends in the clubs and ag week. My professors have made a tremendous difference and are always encouraging me to do more. Thank you so much for this generous offer. I take my education very seriously, and I greatly appreciate your investment in my future.



## Tucker Hansen

University of Idaho

I am beginning my junior year at the University of Idaho majoring in Crop Science. After graduation I plan to move back to Southeast Idaho and work in agriculture. During summer 2024, I had the great opportunity to be a field intern for Simplot Food Group looking over the year's potato crop. As



an undergraduate, I am involved with the Collegiate Young Farmers and Ranchers club, currently serving as president. I am so grateful for the scholarship provided to me by the Idaho Wheat Commission.

## Baylor Blewett

University of Idaho

For generations, my family has maintained a farm in the south Palouse, producing grains, canola, and legumes to provide for the surrounding community and to support Idaho agriculture. Their commitment to the land and its products inspired me to have an interest in plants and their biological components. I am majoring in Biotechnology and Plant Genomics at the University of Idaho, intending to contribute to the field of plant science by finding methods to combat disease and increase harvest yields. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Idaho Wheat Commission for the scholarship. I am very grateful for all they do and will utilize their gift as best I can.



## Kaisa Marks

University of Idaho

I have a passion for learning about and nurturing plants that led me to study Horticulture at the University of Idaho. In my free time I enjoy using my creativity to make jewelry, paint, and write. I also love caring for my small garden on my apartment's balcony as well as my indoor plant collection. I enjoy the practical aspects of using herbs that I have grown in my cooking, as well as the beauty and colors of my flowers and foliage. I am excited for every step that leads me closer to a successful and rewarding career in horticulture and am thankful for everyone who has helped me get here including the Idaho Wheat Commission. ■





# Cozy Up This Fall with Hearty Barley Recipes



## Barley-Stuffed Squash

*This Barley Stuffed Squash is a celebration of autumn's bounty. By combining the nutty flavors of barley with the natural sweetness of roasted squash it's a delicious way to celebrate the flavors of fall. Rich in fiber and essential nutrients, barley provides a hearty and healthy base, while the squash is packed with vitamins A and C. This recipe is not only a delicious blend of flavor, but also a visually eye-catching centerpiece at your next gathering.*

**Prep Time:** 10 minutes

**Cooking Time:** 1 hour and 50 minutes

**Total Time:** 2 hours

**Servings:** 4

### Ingredients:

- 1 Cup barley (pearl, hulless, or hulled)
- 1/2 Cup chopped onion
- 1/2 Cup chopped celery
- 1 Cup shredded carrot
- 4 Teaspoon butter
- 3 Cups chicken broth
- 1/2 Teaspoon thyme
- 2 medium acorn squash (about 1 lb. each), halved and seeds removed
- salt to taste

### Instructions

1. In large saucepan over medium heat, sauté barley, onion, celery and carrot in 2 tablespoons butter until barley is lightly browned.

2. Add chicken broth and thyme. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 45 minutes (50-55 is hulless or hulled barley) or until barley is tender and liquid is absorbed.
3. In the meantime, place squash halves in greased baking dish, cut side down.
4. Bake at 400° F for 30 minutes or until squash is tender.
5. Remove squash from oven and turn, cut-side up. Sprinkle lightly with salt.
6. Spoon equal portions of cooked barley mixture into centers of squash. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons melted butter.
7. Return filled squash halves to oven. Bake at 350° F for 20 minutes longer.



## Turkey Barley Soup

*Plan your holiday leftovers ahead by up cycling your leftovers with this great Turkey Barley Soup. Perfect for all chilly fall and winter days ahead. Tender chunks of turkey immersed in a flavorful broth enhanced by the earth and nutty notes of barley. With its nourishing grains and protein and medley of autumn vegetables, this soup is not just comforting but also incredibly nutritious, making it a go-to option for a healthy, hearty meal.*

**Prep Time:** 20 minutes

**Cook Time:** 35 minutes

**Total Time:** 55 minutes

**Servings:** 12 cups



### Ingredients

- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 2 cups celery, sliced
- 2 cups carrots, chopped
- 2 cups turkey, shredded
- 1 cup barley
- 12 cups chicken broth

### Instructions

1. In a dutch oven, sauté the onions until golden brown.

2. Add in the celery and carrots and sauté until tender.
3. Pour in chicken stock and bring to a boil.
4. Once boiling, add in barley and turkey. Simmer for 30 minutes or until barley is tender.
5. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and herbs of choice.

### Notes

To cook in a crockpot, simply place all ingredients I the crockpot and cook on high for 4 hours.

For more recipes, visit us at [EatBarley.com](http://EatBarley.com) ■

## Idaho Barley Assessment Increases

The Idaho Barley Commission (IBC) voted during their annual budget meeting on June 6, to approve a half cent per hundredweight increase to the Idaho barley assessment beginning July 1, 2024. This increase brings the assessment to \$0.04 per hundredweight, up from \$0.035 per hundredweight. The new rate is equal to \$0.0192 per bushel; however, it is collected by hundredweight per Idaho statute which allows the commission to collect up to \$0.04 per hundredweight.

After reviewing the substantial increased costs for commission programs, and through careful consideration of how to best serve Idaho barley growers, the four-member IBC board (three barley growers and one industry representative) voted unanimously for the half-cent increase. The last assessment increase was in 2023 when the rate was raised from \$0.03 to \$0.035 per hundredweight.

This increase will impact the state's 1,500 barley growers, who pay the assessment to fund marketing, research and grower education programs conducted by the Idaho Barley Commission. The assessment increase will bring in about \$125,000 in additional funds per year.

Idaho Barley Commissioner Mike Wilkins of Rupert made the motion to increase the assessment one half cent per hundredweight. "The commission must be proactive on finances to ensure we keep up with the needs of Idaho growers and in advancing the Idaho barley industry," said Wilkins. "Through our strategic planning process, we've identified research and market development priorities and this boost to the assessment will provide the additional income to invest in these programs to benefit Idaho barley growers."



IBC is a self-governing agency of the State of Idaho that serves to enhance the profitability of Idaho growers through research, market development, promotion, information and education. This is accomplished by identifying and utilizing available resources as well as partner organizations to further develop the barley industry in the state including Idaho Grain Producers Association, National Barley Growers Association, U.S. Grains Council, National Barley Improvement Committee and others.

Idaho leads the nation in barley production with Idaho growers typically producing more than 50 million bushels of barley on over 500,000 acres harvested annually. ■



# Chinese Craft Brewers and Importers Visit Idaho

In July, the Idaho Barley Commission (IBC) joined Cold Stream Malt and Grain Company – a joint venture between Clearwater Farms based near Craigmont and Horlacher Farms based in Washington, and Mountain Malt of Idaho Falls in hosting a U.S. Grains Council (USGC) team of Chinese craft brewers and importers to Idaho to foster business relationships and showcase the high quality of Idaho barley available for export to China.

The team traveled across Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho and Washington and visited barley and hops farms, breweries and malt production facilities in Idaho where they were able to gain helpful insight into the advanced technologies, research and processes utilized in transforming high-quality Idaho barley into malt, a key ingredient in the brewing industry.

In addition, during the visit to Idaho, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between Cold Stream Malt and Grain and a Chinese malt distributor. The MOU is a ceremonial statement of intent between the parties to foster mutual understanding and cooperation to strengthen their existing trade relations and friendship.

“China is home to the world’s largest beer industry, including a growing craft beer sector that is looking for ways to differentiate their products, and the Council has been working diligently over the past several years to develop market access for U.S. barley there,” said Sadie Marks, USGC manager of global strategies and trade. “Experiencing the full U.S. brewing supply chain from U.S. barley and hop farms, malting facilities and breweries enhanced attendees’ understanding of the industry’s value chain and built trust that will enable significant trading opportunities in the future.”



Mountain Malt hosted the team of Chinese craft brewers and importers at their facility and nearby farms in Idaho Falls, showcasing the quality of Idaho barley.



From left, a Chinese importer signs an MOU with Matt Horlacher and Chris Riggers of Coldstream Malt and Grain Company at Clearwater Farms near Craigmont as a ceremonial statement of intent between the parties to foster mutual understanding and cooperation to strengthen their existing trade relations and friendship.

The U.S. Grains Council is an important market development partner for IBC, and both Coldstream Malt and Grain Company and Mountain Malt recently became members of USGC as well.

China’s craft beer industry has witnessed a steady growth in the past few years. In 2021, the market size of craft beer in China surpassed 78.5 billion yuan with expectations to grow to 210 billion yuan by 2026 (Statista 2024). With craft brewing on the rise in China, these individuals are at the forefront of the trending curve. By witnessing Idaho’s advanced agricultural practices and high-quality barley firsthand, the delegation can foster greater trust and appreciation for Idaho barley in the Chinese market. This visit paves the way for future trade partnerships and economic growth of the state’s agricultural sector.

“We were excited to host the USGC Chinese Trade Team and showcase the excellence of Idaho’s barley production and malting industry,” said Laura Wilder, Executive Director of the Idaho Barley Commission. “This visit underscores the importance of international collaboration and highlights the opportunities for growth and partnership between Idaho’s barley producers and Chinese markets.” ■

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