Spring-time and Weeds

When our spring has finally sprung after this arduous winter, we can count on one constant arrival as the snow recedes. A variety of weeds will be taking advantage of the soil moisture and warmth to take off and start doing their thing. From the little Bur Buttercup to the massive Scotch Thistle to the noxious (obnoxious?) White Top and others, we will need to be ready to do battle. With the fast growing annuals (and all undesirables) one goal will be to control them before they flower and produce seed. Control can include mechanical, manual, and/or herbicides. With Bur Buttercup, they grow and flower quickly it might be easiest to just hoe them out along your sidewalk as they grow. For large issues you may want to implement some sort of herbicide program. When turning to the sprayer, there are some important things to remember:

1. Know what you are targeting! Proper identification of the issue can help result in optimal control. Know the enemy. Use a crop consultant or one of us in the extension office if you have questions on what it is you are wanting to control.
2. Know what you are using. Read the label of the product and understand how to best use it. Be aware of the proper rate and stay within that range! It also helps to understand the mode of action. As an example, glyphosate can be pretty slow to act in warm weather. Spraying in the spring when it can be cool for days in a row can result in the product working properly but very slowly. Do not despair if it does not appear to be working for several days after applying! Be patient.
3. Have a plan to provide desirable plants. One way to help alleviate pressure from the bad guys is to encourage the growth of the good guys. Having an expanse of soil with no beneficial plants will only encourage the constant cycle of weeds invading and your subsequent control efforts.

In Malheur County and many other places, weeds are recognized as a threat to the way we do business and enjoy our natural and scenic beauty. To help protect the good in the county, we have a Weed Inspector to help in the battle. Here is the link so that you can learn more about the battle on the bad guys: http://www.malheurco.org/weed-inspector/

Check out the website and you will find a whole pile of information about most everything to do with weed control. In addition to ID’ing pictures and noxious weed lists, you can even find some materials to help you calibrate your sprayer and be an even more efficient combatant to the unwanted plants in your yard.

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Reminder to Report
The Extension Office is the designated place to report your structural or livestock losses from this winter. Our man Stuart Reitz is the caretaker of this list and wants to encourage people to report their losses to gain a clear picture on the total extent of the damage. Give us a call at 541-881-1417 to take part.

Daylight Savings Time starts on March 12!

Growing Awareness!
This is a repeat from the last two newsletters but it continues to be something to discuss:
Worker Protection Standard Revisions: EPA is implementing stronger protections for the nation’s two million agricultural workers and their families working on farms, forests, nurseries, and greenhouses. These revisions to the 1992 Agricultural Worker Protection Standard will afford farmworkers similar health protections that are already afforded to workers in other industries.

Here are a couple of important notes: You can be a certified trainer of the WPS if you have a pesticide applicator’s license. Oregon is not going to enforce any of the new regulations until January of 2018. Even when considering these two caveats, I would encourage employers to attend trainings or at least read up on the new regulations. They are going to be of issue eventually.

What are the Major Changes for Farmers and Farmworkers?
Annual mandatory training to inform farmworkers on the required protections afforded to them. *Currently, training is only once every 5 years.*

- Expanded training includes instructions to reduce take-home exposure from pesticides on work clothing and other safety topics.
- First-time ever minimum age requirement: Children under 18 are prohibited from handling pesticides.
- Expanded mandatory posting of no-entry signs for the most hazardous pesticides. The signs prohibit entry into pesticide-treated fields until residues decline to a safe level.
- New no-entry application-exclusion zones up to 100 feet surrounding pesticide application equipment will protect workers and others from exposure to pesticide overspray.
- Requirement to provide more than one way for farmworkers and their representatives to gain access to pesticide application information and safety data sheets—centrally-posted, or by requesting records.
- Mandatory record-keeping to improve states’ ability to follow up on pesticide violations and enforce compliance. Records of application-specific pesticide information, as well as farmworker training, must be kept for two years.
- Anti-retaliation provisions are comparable to Department of Labor’s (DOL).
- Changes in personal protective equipment will be consistent with DOL’s standards for ensuring respirators are effective, including fit test, medical evaluation and training.
- Specific amounts of water to be used for routine washing, emergency eye flushing and other decontamination, including eye wash systems for handlers at pesticide mixing/loading sites.
- Continue the exemption for farm owners and their immediate families with an expanded definition of immediate family.

A session to Train the Trainer will be held on March 7, 2017 at the Malheur County Extension Office. This will take most of the day (8:00-4:45). We will have enough materials for 30 attendees. If we exceed that, operations with multiple representatives might have to share among themselves. Please RSVP (541-881-1417), we will take a lunch break but that will be on your own. It is free to attend.
Can you imagine if you saw something like this today?
This was sent to me by somebody who thought it was really amazing. In 1918, this was some of the work being done to prevent squirrel damage in California. To read up more about the background of this campaign recruiting children in the war on squirrels, please check out this link: [http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/in-1918-california-drafted-children-into-a-war-on-squirrels?utm_source=Atlas+Obscura+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=ca105a3003-Newsletter_11_29_2016&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f36db9c480-ca105a3003-63159149&ct=t(Newsletter_11_29_2016)&mc_cid=ca105a3003&mc_eid=0096306ff3](http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/in-1918-california-drafted-children-into-a-war-on-squirrels?utm_source=Atlas+Obscura+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=ca105a3003-Newsletter_11_29_2016&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f36db9c480-ca105a3003-63159149&ct=t(Newsletter_11_29_2016)&mc_cid=ca105a3003&mc_eid=0096306ff3)

Thinking about the rules and regulations we have today compared to 100 years ago is quite striking!
OWEB
For those of you wanting to learn more about the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and their mission, here is an opportunity to visit with folks face to face. Or, maybe you know their mission and have some input that you feel would be constructive to the work they are doing.


Snow mold concerns?
As the snow pulls back and starts to reveal all that it protected this winter, there has been some questions about snow mold in wheat. Snow mold is a white fungal mat (maybe a little slimy) found on plants when the snow melts. The level of damaged is indicated by how quickly the symptoms disappear when temperatures rise and sunlight increases. Sometimes, the plants appear to recover fully and maybe not so much on other situations. Brad Brown, retired soil scientist from the U of Idaho and an all-around smart fellow mentions that we can have some concerns where the snow was on the ground for a long time and the soil was not frozen. Check and check. However, if there is no mold inoculum present, then it will most likely not be an issue anyway. Crop rotations heavy in cereals may help build up inoculum but we are mostly in a “wait and see mode” at this point. Please feel free to report snow mold if you think you are seeing it. My experience is limited with it and I would like to keep tabs on it this spring.
Coming Attractions

**February 28-March 3, 2017** Artificial Insemination Class, Owyhee County Extension Office (Marsing). Contact Sergio in our office for more information

extension.oregonstate.edu/malheur/2017-cattle-artificial-insemination-training-school

**March 7, 2017** WPS Train the Trainer, Extension Office, (read more on page 2)

**March 16, 2017** Chamber of Commerce Ag Forum. Malheur Extension Office. (See page 4)

Check out the full calendar of events at our website.

www.extension.oregonstate.edu/malheur/

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**Pest Alert Website**

Hard working folks like Jerry Neufeld over at the Canyon County Extension Office have maintained a website for years helping get the word out on important happenings in our growing region. Check out this website: [http://pnwpestalert.net/](http://pnwpestalert.net/). You can sign up to be on the distribution list for when alerts are posted and this service is free of charge. For that, we can thank our industry supporters for helping to keep this service viable and helpful. You will be asked to check the categories you are interested in so you will only receive alerts pertinent to your interests. Insect occurrence, disease outbreaks, important meetings and conference announcements are just some of the ways this website is used to help get the word out. I encourage all folks involved in production agriculture to sign up and use this tool to help stay on top of what is going on!

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**When This Winter Will Wither Away….**

Eventually, we will have bare ground. That great smell of drying soil on a warm spring day, the whistle of ground squirrels and parents telling their kids to get out of the house and play! While it seems like spring totally comes out of nowhere some years, we are all impatiently waiting here in 2017. We hope the snow and rain come off slowly but it will be great not to hear a squishy sound whenever we step off the sidewalk. Last year, I wrote a blurb about being careful when digging during spring projects. With the amount of structural clean-up that needs to be done this spring, it might bear repeating. Water, electrical, and natural gas lines, may be suddenly in harm’s way when we start putting things back together again. We are all going to feel pressed and behind when spring tillage starts, structures are being cleared and irrigation projects get started. Chances are, you hoped to have that irrigation improvement project done and that may not have worked out this winter.

There are services that are happy to come out and make sure the previously buried items are located with something other than a backhoe. By clicking on the link: [http://dig SafelyOregon.com/](http://dig SafelyOregon.com/) homeowners and professionals alike can submit requests to have pipelines or wires marked before they are found the hard (and exciting) way. Another site that is a means to the same end is [http://call811.com/](http://call811.com/) as this link indicates, you can also call 811 and use phone technology to accomplish the same goals. Please be safe out there as we plunge ahead to the 2017 growing season!
The Oregon State University Extension Service engages the people of Oregon with research-based knowledge and education that strengthen communities and economies, sustain natural resources, and promote healthy families and individuals. The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

March/April 2017

Chamber Ag Forum
The next Ontario Chamber of Commerce Ag Forum is March 16th at 7am at the Malheur County Extension Office. Our feature speaker will be Dr. Stuart Reitz from the OSU Extension Office. Forums are open to anybody who wants to attend and there will be coffee and some sort of sugary confection available as well. This is a nice, informal setting providing folks a chance to be updated on local happenings and a little bit of fellowship as well. We try to keep it to an hour for those that need to go on with their lives by 8am.

For More Information:
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