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**Pesticide Collection**

Nobody really seems to know when the last agricultural pesticide collection in Malheur County but I can tell you when the next one will be. On October 22, 2014 Simplot Grower Solutions in Ontario will be gracious enough to host an unwanted pesticide collection from 10AM to 4PM that is being administered by Clean Harbors Environmental Services and funded by the Oregon Dept. of Ag and the Oregon DEQ. All of the growers I have spoken to about this all are embracing the opportunity to get some of their old, outdated inventory safely out of their storage! In order to make sure that this collection goes smoothly, Clean Harbors requires a pre-registration process to better schedule the materials arriving and to insure they have enough room on the truck. That form is available at our website right here: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/malheur/

Clean Harbors prefers that you scan/email or fax the registration to the contact information. Please read the entire flier at this link to make sure you are on the right page. There is a 500lb product limit on each individual grower. There is also an empty container collection at the same time. You do not have to register your empties and there is no limit. Just make sure they are properly washed (triple-rinsed!). Nobody wants the extra 1/2” of fungicide that is so hard to get out!

**National Soil Health leader Gabe Brown is featured speaker at Idaho Sustainable Ag Symposium**

Gabe Brown owns and operates a 5,000 acre farm in North Dakota with his wife and son. For Brown, improving soil health is a priority. He “farms in nature’s image” by using a diverse cropping strategy including cover and companion crops. The Browns also integrated grazing into the no-till system and raise natural grass fed beef, poultry, and sheep. Farming this way for over 20 years has allowed Brown to eliminate synthetic fertilizers, fungicides, and pesticides.

You can hear more from Gabe Brown at the Regional Sustainable Agriculture Symposium in Nampa, ID on Tuesday November 18, 2014. The Idaho Center for Sustainable Agriculture sponsors the event that includes Joel Salatin as a featured speaker and concurrent sessions exploring topics of soil management, water management, composting, livestock grazing, permaculture and more.

The other keynote speaker at the symposium is Joel Salatin, a full-time farmer in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley. He operates the farm his parents purchased in 1961. At that time it was a worn-out, eroded, abused piece of ground. Disregarding conventional wisdom and using nature as a pattern, the Salatins worked to heal the land. They planted trees, built huge compost piles, dug ponds, and moved cows daily with portable electric fencing. The innovative farm now supports three generations.

To learn more about the symposium visit the website at www.idahocsa.org/. The Idaho Center for Sustainable Agriculture is a 501(c)(3) organization formed to promote local and sustainable food communities through research, collaboration with farmers, and the expansion of local food distribution.
Random Ramble

How many places can you drive 10-15 miles and see the bevy of harvesting that we see here? Never mind, I don’t want to hear your answer because somebody is always willing to argue with statements like this but our valley is amazing to watch this time of year. A simple tour down our local roads will reveal a wide variety of crops being dutifully reaped by amazing harvesters and one wave of trucks after another. Talking with several growers, the feeling has been that yields have been about average. In the face of short water, maybe we should be feeling pretty good about average. A lot of adjustments went into crop rotation, some fields were left empty and shorter season crops were planted. Using these alterations, we lurched along and it appears as though we have got where we were going. Already, the attention is turning toward next year with fall field preparation taking place all over. I hear a lot of discussion about what we can do to find new crops to create new avenues of profitable crop production. Then I wonder about other options for the crops that are already grown here today. One of the opportunities could be organic. I have had a couple of companies contact me to inquire how much organic production is taking place in this region. It might be worth putting a pin in this and keeping it in mind. Crops like wheat and dry beans grow pretty well in this area and opening an organic market would be very similar to establishing a new crop without some of the uncertainty. Something to keep in mind!

Go Beavers!

Recordkeeping

I know I have mentioned this in previous newsletters but keeping track of costs, yields and revenue for your specific operation is very important. There are two reasons I write about this today. One you will care about and one I will care about.

1) While we are rattling through these years of drought, there is a good chance that your yields may have varied and that your crop rotation/selection has as well. For the purposes of establishing good crop histories, we need to be very detailed in recording what is happening. Somewhere down the line, you might need to revisit these years to help guide future decisions. Also, while I hope nobody ever has to worry about such things, properly recording yields and inputs would be very beneficial in potential litigation. I was contacted last week by a law firm looking for county baseline levels for a lawsuit they were a part of. They were trying to develop crop histories for their client who had not done a great job of keeping that.

2) Every winter, extension offices like this one are called upon to “take stock” of the past season. Crop yields and prices are but a couple of the things we talk with growers about. To that extent, we rely on you to help us get this right. These values are then used to help determine our agricultural situation. I know that recordkeeping can be very time consuming but it really does have an important role in your operation. My major professor used to tell me that it is better to collect data and not need it than vice versa. Maybe that is why my office and desktop are piled with so much…………stuff!!!!!
Family Agricultural Enterprise Succession: A Management Transition Seminar

What’s the holdup in transitioning your family farm or ranch to your successors? Could it be communication within the family or management team about which management decisions are transferred to the successors, and when that will happen? Farmers and ranchers tend to focus on ownership transition when, in fact, the current owners may retain some share of ownership for years into their retirement from active farming. And isn’t retirement a goal that both current and future farmers want to see happen? To move towards retirement and transition, the agricultural business needs a plan that outlines the transfer of management and decision making to the successors, whether they be family or unrelated.

OSU will be presenting a two-session seminar series in three Oregon locations, which will bring together multi-generational family farms that are ready to start their transition to the next generation. The two-part format allows necessary time for reflection and discussion within the family. Families will explore future management duties and new systems of ownership. Participants will build genograms or family business trees, set guidelines for family meetings, and build five-year management transition goals. Their work will create a roadmap for retirement, a necessary step in the farm’s transition to the next generation. Both the current owner/manager and the designated or likely successor must participate to increase the chances of a productive transition and pre-registration is required.

The first sessions, all from 9:30 am – 3:30 pm, will be offered in:
Salem, December 2, at Chemeketa Community College’s Eola NW Viticulture Center
Redmond, December 9, at Central Oregon Community College’s Redmond Technology Education Center
Pendleton, December 10, at the Pendleton Convention Center

Participating families will reconvene for a second session, (same times and locations) in March:
Salem, March 3;
Redmond, March 10; and
Pendleton, March 11.

Seminar registration is $325 per family, which includes both workshops, all meals, course notebooks and materials. Registration can be completed by mail or on-line. Forms are available at County Extension offices or on the following web location: http://bit.ly/familyag
How Hot Was July?
I didn’t know that Malheur Reservoir could be so empty and I might not have believed it if I did not see it. It is a great symbol of just how dry things have been. The boat at the bottom is kind of hilarious though. Wonder how long it has been there? Holler at me if you know. I have heard a bunch of people say that July seemed awfully hot and I tend to agree. However, the geek in me wanted to try to verify that so I plowed into the Growing Degree Unit data at the Agrimet website for Ontario. According to that data, July was the hottest from a GDU standpoint since 2007. What in the world is a GDU you ask? Great question! Based on a 50 degree F model the high temperature and low temperature for a given day are added together and divided by two. You then subtract 50 from the value you created. Example: A high of 85 and a low of 50. 84+50=134/2=67. 67-50= 17 GDUs. Growing degree units are not calculated for maximum temps above 86 and minimum temps below 50. There is a school of thought that anything over 86 is actually detrimental to growth and are thus considered counter to optimum conditions. Since 1992, the average GDUs accumulated in July is 700. Why do we have this data? Growing Degree Units are a tool used to chart growing seasons and can be used to help predict pest outbreaks.

Welcome Sean!
This summer, the Oregon Department of Agriculture hired Sean Kretovics to be a pesticide investigator for this area. His office is in the ODOT building by Staples in Ontario. While I recognize that we could probably use the presence of an investigator in this intensive production region, I also hope that he is bored out of his gourd. He seems like a great guy, but let’s do things right and to the best of our ability to make sure he is well practiced at playing solitaire on his computer! If you do want to contact Sean, call him at 541-406-9616 or use electronic messaging: skretovics@oda.state.or.us

Coming Attractions
October 22 – Pesticide Collection Day – Simplot Grower Solutions Ontario, OR. Registration required. Please visit our website for more information and the registration paperwork: extension.oregonstate.edu/malheur/
December 12, 2014 – Pesticide Applicator Training Credit hours available – (registration required)
December 18, 2014 – Treasure Valley Irrigation Conference Nampa Civic Center (registration required)
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.

September/October 2014

Check your pesticide credits. ODA does not send you a summary anymore. You might want to log on and make sure you are covered! There will be some opportunities available for those who need to get credit hours at the last minute. Better to avoid that situation though, if possible! Here is the link:
http://oda.state.or.us/dbs/pest_stat/search.lasso

Helpful Link!!
Check this site out to keep up to date on the drought from a national perspective:
US Drought Monitor
It is not just eastern Oregon!!!