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Oregon State University Extension Service

MID-COLUMBIA FARMER'S NEWSLETTER
February 2008

Grain and Rain

The average price of soft white wheat in Portland for January was $14.33 per bushel, while club wheat averaged $14.34. Barley in Portland averaged $260.98 per ton

Precipitation as measured at the Sherman Experiment Station was 1.28 inches.

Juniper and Abortions

With shortage of grass this past year, livestock may be searching for other sources of foods, which may include some Western Juniper. However, recent trials at the poison plant center in Logan, Utah of our Western Juniper, revealed presence of Isocupressic Acid (ICA). In fact, it contained the highest concentrations of any poisonous plants tested for this known abortion causing agent.

Testing is continuing to find out how many days of one pound of consumption are needed to cause an abortion. Seasonal testing of Juniper will also be conducted to assert if there is a season that may be more unsafe than others. Parts of the berries, bark and needles were submitted for testing. Additional testing will include determining the stability of the compound in downed trees over time.

Take precautionary measures if running cattle in lots with Western Juniper present, and make sure they have plenty of feed options.

Congrats to Local Ag Leaders

A special congratulation is due to Ron Graves, Jim Bishop and Dusty Eddy for receiving an award from The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce for being the face of agriculture and making significant impacts in Wasco County in their roles.

A second congratulation goes to Dusty as he was also named the Pioneer Direct Seeder Award winner from the non-producer sector. This award was again for the impact he’s had in leading the charge, converting so much of Wasco County to direct seeding. The award was presented at the Direct Seed Conference in Kennewick, Washington.

And for a younger set of leaders, the week of February 18 kicks off the annual National FFA Week. This is something special for the Sherman County FFA as 2008 marks their 50th Anniversary, a milestone achievement in anybody’s book. Sherman FFA President Logan Padget notes the chapter has some big plans for later in the spring but will be celebrating the week with events at the Sherman Junior Senior High. The original charter lists 31 members, many still tied to agriculture.
**Neighborhood Meetings/After Hours**

Once again the popular small group get-together sessions are happening in February. Both counties feature short presentations by reps from FSA, SWCD, NRCS and Extension. Meetings are generally less than two and a half hours in length or less.

The Wasco County Neighborhood Meetings feature several open sessions on the calendar. These include February 7, at the Catholic Parish Hall in Dufur, from 1 pm to 3:30 pm; February 8, from 10 am to 12:30, at the Community Center in Antelope; and February 12 in Maupin, at the Legion Hall from 9 am to 11:30; and from 1 pm to 3:30 in Wamic, at the Sportsman Pub and Grub.

In Sherman County, the only open meeting for the After Hours Gatherings will be Tuesday, February 19, beginning at 1 pm, in the Senior Center in Moro.

Both counties have other sessions scheduled but at host farms where you need to be invited. If you do not receive a call, plan to attend one of the open sessions. The small group atmosphere has encouraged good exchanges of information in each county.

**SWCD Meetings Combine Good Food, Good Speakers**

Both the Sherman SWCD and Wasco County SWCD annual meetings offer something special of interest to all, and you may feel free to attend both.

The Sherman County SWCD Annual Meeting is Tuesday, February 12 at the Senior Center in Moro, beginning with a social hour at 5, and dinner at 6 pm. Paradise Rose Catering is serving tri-tip steak and the District is only charging $7 if you call the office (565-3216) and confirm your reservation. The speaker is the state climatologist and highly sought Dr. George Taylor of OSU. Taylor is often quoted in the newsletter as he has a means of talking weather events and climate in an understandable style. Sometimes challenged as controversial, he’s more often right than not. Plan to attend this entertaining meeting with your neighbors.

Wasco County’s SWCD follows with their annual meeting on Thursday, February 14, beginning at 5:30 pm with a social hour and followed by dinner at 6 pm all at the Discovery Center. Dinner is a choice of herb and pepper encrusted prime rib or cranberry-thyme baked salmon, for only $22.50. Call In your reservation to Tammy at 296-6178 ext 3 by February 11. Dinner speaker is Dr. John Baker, a New Zealander and inventor of the Cross Slot Drill. Dr Baker will have walked many local fields and will address what he finds in his talk.

Both events are sure to be educational and practical. Plan to attend.

**Cross Slot Drill Inventor to Visit**

Dr John Baker, inventor of the Cross Slot Drill, is coming to Wasco County February 14. He will meet with growers at a special breakfast meeting, beginning at 9 am at Cousin’s Restaurant in The Dalles. He will talk until noon and will identify 50 different seeding problems most direct seeders encounter from time to time. But he also offers solutions for these issues. Then he will travel to several fields in Wasco County, beginning at 1 pm, and ending by 4 pm.

Breakfast and tour transportation are on your own, but this promises to be an interesting day. They will have you back in time for the Annual Meeting that evening.
SAIF Workshop Feb 12

The SAIF Corp is hosting their second Safety Seminar of the winter, in The Dalles, February 12, at the Discovery Center. It is followed by a Spanish version on Feb.13. The meeting has a safety guard and orchard aspect to it for this go, but is still useful information that applies to any ag employer or employee. The Feb 12 meeting starts at 9:30 and runs until 2, and they will provide a lunch for you. You need to contact them to pre-register at www.saif.com or by calling 1-800-285-8525.

Attendees receive a certificate excusing them from random OSHA inspections and an hour of re-certification credit.

Agri-Pedia Ready

The Oregon Department of Ag has released a one in all resource book for your reading enjoyment. Actually the Agri-pedia replaces three former publications. This updated resource begins by showing the commodity information in the state by commodity, acreage and numbers, and dollar value for the ’05 and ’06 years (’07 data is not yet available). That’s followed by a set of ag regulations and summaries and finally a directory of every agency or commodity group related to ag and their contact information.

You can score a copy from the Department by requesting it by calling 503-986-4550 or just ask to look at the copy at your County Extension office.

IPM for Dryland Wheat Producers

Here’s your big chance to participate in a grand opening especially for you. Dr Paul Jepson of OSU will be in both counties on Wednesday, February 27, to introduce a new grower’s guide for implementing integrated pest management techniques into your grain production. Pesticide recertification hours have been requested for this program.

The Sherman County session begins at 8:30 am at the 4H Pavilion at the Fairgrounds in Moro. The Wasco County program repeats at 1 pm at the Catholic Parish Hall in Dufur.

Program Extended for Sherman County Producers

Sherman County growers will want to stay for the rest of the day on Wednesday, February 27, to catch some more news of interest. Following the IPM guideline discussion, something growers should find useful for meeting conservation guidelines and requirements and reducing pesticides and their associated issues, we’ll hear from Paul Schanno and Dave Wilson about how they employed technology to reduce their cost of chemicals and fertilizer, Tom McCoy will discuss why the strength of the dollar is so important in the wheat marketing world, BLM will share some thoughts they have regarding proposed management of BLM lands and review their fire fighting policies, and we’ll hear about the latest in wind projects in the county, what’s been done to date, what’s planned and how the taxes are benefiting the whole county.

Registration for the February 27 program, at the Fairgrounds in Moro, is $10, payable at the door. Lunch will be included. Pesticide re-certification credits have been requested.
Oilseeds and Direct Seeding

Oilseeds and Direct Seeding will be the focus of a workshop offered at the Gilliam Co. Fairgrounds, Monday, February 11. The meeting runs from 9 am to 4 pm. The morning session focuses on Camelina production, oilseed marketing and on-farm biodiesel production. The afternoon portion draws in flex-cropping crop decision models, Undercutter utilization, and a discussion about the future of OWEB.

For more information, contact the Gilliam Co Extension, 541-384-2271

OSU Offers Pesticide Courses

If you are really serious about gaining your pesticide credits in a day or two, OSU continues to offer a series of pesticide classes across the state during the winter term. Remaining classes include: a Weed Shortcourse in Eugene, Feb 5-6, for $90, but 12 credit hours; an Urban Pest Management Course in Oregon City for $75 and 8 credit hours; a Non-Crop Vegetation Management course, Feb 12-13, in Corvallis for $115 and 15 credit hours; a course on Pesticide Chemistry, Toxicology and Policy in Ontario for $65 and 12 credit hours and finally, a Pest Management Course in Bend, February 15, for $70 and 8 hours of credits.

These are generally in greater detail than course we offer locally, but interesting and worth the effort and time. Contact your local Extension Office for more details and registration material.

Closer to home, a Core Pesticide training is being offered in The Dalles, February 26, time and location to be announced (541-296-5494). The morning session will be conducted in English, the afternoon in Spanish.

Marketing on Second Thursday

Don’t forget the statewide marketing session for cereal producers is the second Thursday of each month, at your County Extension Office, beginning at 8 am. Again, these are a bit different from the regular local marketing breakfasts, but interesting. Be sure to attend the session February 14 at an Extension office near you. Wasco County does require a pre-registration call to 296-5494.

Long Term Experiment Reports May 13

This is the first notice to plan on attending a special field day, May 13, at the Sherman Experiment Station in Moro. This field day is in addition to the regular field day, June 11. This special field day will focus only on the work done by research teams in the Long Term Experiment plots at Moro. These plots started with the most comprehensive base data gathering ever conducted at the Station, in order to measure actual impacts of the various ecological and economical trials. This includes chemical, rotations, and tillage management. Nearly all the researchers regularly involved have been testing on these plots so we have good comparative data for how the management affects so many aspects of management.

Plan now to attend this session May 13.