Grain and Rain

The average price of soft white wheat at Portland was $10.05 in November and $12.39 in December. The club wheat brought an extra 2 cents in November and 1 cent in December. Barley in Portland averaged $251 per ton in November and $254.20 for December.

Precipitation as reported at the Sherman Experiment Station was 1.75 inches in November and .72 inches in December.

Report Rain in Statewide System

George Taylor, director of the Oregon Climate Service is looking for volunteers to report their rainfall in a new statewide system of volunteer reporters. The effort will focus on the daily observations. It is part of a larger collection service that began in Colorado and presently collects data from 6500 reporters in 26 states.

While we have a number of cooperators in the Mid-Columbia who willingly share their totals (which are available on our websites) the data is reported monthly. The daily information will play an important role in helping better understand the world of microclimates and how topography affects the predictability of precipitation. It will allow a better understanding of the Oregon weather and result in better precipitation charts. The only requirement is a cylindrical rain gauge available from the network at $22 plus shipping. Then add regular readings at the same time each day.

For more info, or to sign up contact Taylor at: taylor@coas.oregonstate.edu

Maps Available

Do you farm in Sherman County or have old ties to places within the county? You can obtain aerial photo maps taken in 1937 and 1949 of most places in Sherman County. The maps were used at the AAA and ASCS offices of the day. There is a suggested donation of $25 per map and all proceeds go to the Library Building Fund. Contact Sheri Carlson (333-2543) or Lowell Smith (333-2297) for more info.
Continued Farm Succession Planning Workshop

The third in a series of Farm Succession and Estate Planning workshops for farm families will be held in The Dalles, Tuesday, January 8th. The workshop will be held from 11:30 am to 5:00 pm in the 3rd Floor Auditorium in Building #2 at the Columbia Gorge Community College in The Dalles. This workshop follows sessions held this past year.

Topics will include tips for making the best use of appointments with an attorney, discussion on how to transfer non-titled property and important personal possessions, and what to do if there is a sudden death in the family. There will also be a discussion amongst workshop participants about what it takes to get started on farm succession planning and what has worked well for them in the process. The workshops are open to everyone interested, even if they missed the earlier meetings.

The Dalles workshop will also include a hosted lunch so pre-registration is required. For further information and to register please contact the Wasco County Extension Office at 541-296-5494.

Class for Pesticide Applicators

A class for pesticide applicators will be offered on Thursday, January 17, 2008. The class will be held from 8:00 am to 12:30 pm in the 3rd Floor Auditorium in Building #2 at the Columbia Gorge Community College in The Dalles.

The class should count as “Core” credits for those who need the Core requirement for the license; otherwise it will count as four hours of “other” certified hours. A private applicator can earn up to eight re-certification hours per year. Credit hours have been requested but not yet confirmed for both Oregon and Washington.

The class is also designed for those wishing to obtain an applicators’ license. The class is a good refresher. A proctor will be on hand to administer the exams beginning at 1:30 pm.

The $10 registration for the class is payable at the door, but those wishing to take the exam need an extra $20 plus a picture identification. Those needing to take the exam are requested to signup with the Wasco County Extension Office by calling 296-5494.

PURS Reporting Time!

If you have not yet done so, you have until January 31 to report any pesticide use you had in 2007. This is the Oregon law and applies to both restricted use pesticides and general use ones, to licensed applicator and non-licenses applicator. Pesticides applied by a commercial applicator will be reported by that applicator. Reporting is done on-line only so if you don’t have internet access at home, check out a public computer at a library or Extension office.

This is a newer more simplified and less invasive system that makes it nearly impossible to track an individual’s property and what was applied.

Go to: [http://oregon.gov/ODA/PEST/](http://oregon.gov/ODA/PEST/) and follow the links on the left side to PURS (pesticide use reporting system).
The 2007 Census of Ag input survey was mailed in late 2007 to farmers and ranchers. It is important you complete these and get them back before February 4, 2008. These detailed surveys are conducted every five years and impact decisions such as Farm Programs and emergency or disaster bills. As an alternative, this is the first year you can enter data via the internet. Tap into: www.agcensus.usda.gov to respond online.

EPA to Flyover CAFO

EPA has announced that it will inspect Concentrated (Confined) Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) in Oregon this winter. Even though the Oregon legislature passed House Bill 2156 in 2001 (and the subsequent agreement with EPA) that put the Oregon Department of Ag (ODA) in charge of regulating CAFO’s in Oregon, the EPA maintains regulatory over site for compliance with the Clean Water Act. As part of their over site authority, they will be conducting aerial and on-ground surveys of CAFO’s and feeding areas in Oregon during this winter.

What is a CAFO? It is an area where animals may be confined for 45 days (and these need not be consecutive days) during the year. It must be devoid of reasonable vegetation. It is typically limited to 300 or more beef; 200 mature dairy; 750 swine; 150 horses or 3,000 sheep, but if it appears that significant amounts of pollutants are entering the waterway of the state then any number even below these listed could be suspect to CAFO.

EPA proposes to use the aerial surveys to find livestock operations that may be in violation of the law. They are looking for lots that are close to water and livestock have direct access to that water or there is evidence of runoff from the lot to the water. When they find a suspect in violation, they will follow up with a ground inspection. These inspections will be unannounced.

Should they find violations, they may issue a warning letter or a fine of up to $11,000 per day. Even if you do not qualify as a CAFO, feeding areas are still subject to SB 1010, which designates the ODA to be the lead agency for developing water quality management plans for each basin. These plans are all available for each watershed at: http://Oregon.gov/ODA/NRD/ but be sure to have a good book ready as it seems very slow to download. These water quality plans were designed to reduce pollution from agricultural and rural lands.

Camera Raffle

Thank you to all who purchased chances to win the Canon Rebel XT digital camera and lenses. The raffle was to support the efforts of the Oregon County Ag Agents in hosting their 2009 national conference.

The camera was won by Gordon Cook of LaGrande. Cook is a retired County Agent who served in Hood River, Sherman and Union Counties.
OWGL Leadership Grows

Congratulations to Darren Padget of Grass Valley who was elected to serve as the secretary/treasurer for the Oregon Wheat Growers League. Padget has most recently served as chairman of the Board for MCP and was an active committee chair for the OWGL’s marketing committee.

Wheat Marketing Meetings Continue

Even though there is not much wheat left to sell from the 2007 crop, you should be planning on how to manage your sales for the years of 2008, 2009 and 2010. If you have family members even thinking about coming back to the farm you should get them involved. There are two options that can fit your schedules.

First there are the statewide marketing sessions that are offered over an interactive TV session. These happen at your County Extension Office on the second Thursday of each month beginning at 8 am. These sessions utilize the expertise of grain marketers from MCP, Morrow County Grain Growers and Pendleton Grain Growers to explore the unique marketing systems and trends that impact your grain prices.

If you’re looking for a more specific marketing strategy, turn to the bi-weekly marketing breakfasts. These local meetings are held every other Friday in Moro at the Senior Center or Dufur every other Tuesday morning at the Kramer’s Market. Wasco County regulars will want to note the change in venue for the Dufur meeting. Both meetings start at 7 am.

Next regularly scheduled meeting is January 8 in Dufur and January 11 for Sherman County. If you miss one feel free to drive across the border and catch the other.

SAIF Repeats Popular Program

SAIF Corporation is offering a repeat session of their ag safety workshop in The Dalles at the Discovery Center on Tuesday February 12, 2008 but you need to pre-register to participate. This is the same program they conducted earlier in December.

The session runs from 9:30 am to 2 pm and lunch is included. To register, call 1-800-285-8525 or on-line at: www.saif.com

One hour of pesticide recertification is offered and the certificate for participants exempts you from random OR-OSHA inspections if you meet one of the four requirements.

An all Spanish session follows the next day but at earlier times. Contact SAIF for details.

Direct Seed Conference Jan 23-24

The annual Direct Seed Conference will be January 23-24 at Kennewick, Washington. Mark your calendars now.