Grain and Rain

The average price at Portland for soft white wheat and club wheat in April was $10.26 per bushel. Barley at Portland averaged $209 per ton for the month.

Precipitation as reported at the Sherman Experiment Station in Moro was .35 inches for April, putting us 1.8 inches below normal for the crop year. Anticipated cooler temperatures in May will be a blessing for the crop.

Long Term Experiment Field Day May 13

Don’t miss this one! The Long Term Experiments at the Sherman Station are a unique trove of information dealing with crop rotations, direct seeding and tillage systems in our dryland area. Many things we think we know may be proven or blown away by the holistic research by scientists at these plots.

The May 13 session begins at 8:30, at the Experiment Station in Moro, and the whole morning focuses on the plot area dedicated to testing various methods and rotations. Talks will address the weed shifts of various rotations, the effects on water infiltration, earthworms and soil aggregates, relationships between crop management and root health, the pitfalls and benefits of direct seeding, how each treatment stands under RUSLE II (the erosion estimator formula used by NRCS), the productivity of direct seeding and cropping systems and the economics of the systems… which choice yields the best net dollar value?

Following the program, the researchers will retire to a location in greater downtown Moro to meet informally with growers over a no-host lunch.

Credit hours for Oregon applicators and Certified Crop Advisors are available. But more importantly, this is a chance to learn about how these systems and rotations are holding up as ecologically and economically sustainable.

This field day replaces the Sherman County Crop Hop this year but does not replace the regular Station Field Day held in June.
Wasco Co Crop Hop May 21

The annual Crop Hop happens Wednesday May 21, beginning at the Auction yard with donuts and a talk on the winter grain mite. Carpool to the first stop, Kelly’s, and see how they are using the Undercutter to control perennial weeds and set a moisture line. Next up, discuss options on setting a Great Plains drill, then hop over the hill to discuss camelina and mustard plantings, their advantages, and how to address weed, insect and disease issues.

The tour stops next to discuss ORCF 101 and compare it on fallow and recrop acres. That is followed by a general discussion of ORCF 101 and 102, wheat disease identification and nematode management and what is available in CSP payments. The last stop is at the Remington Ranch to demonstrate the Overlap Reduction Sprayer technology and how it can reduce your spray bill.

Three Oregon pesticide credits have been granted; Washington credits have been applied for, but not confirmed.

Sherman FFA Turns 50

The Sherman FFA turns 50! And to celebrate this special anniversary of the oldest club at Sherman High School, current members invite all former members to join them for dinner at their annual banquet, Wednesday, May 21, beginning at 6:30 pm.

President Logan Padget requests that you RSVP by calling the school office, at 565-3500, so they don’t short anyone on the dinner.

Livestock Risk Protection Insurance

The USDA Risk Management Agency has expanded their Livestock Risk Protection Insurance to Oregon producers of fed cattle, feeder cattle, lambs and swine.

After approval of your application, you have the option to purchase Specific Coverage Endorsements (SCE) ranging from 13 to 52 weeks depending on the expected marketing time of your livestock. Coverage for the SCE may range from 70 to 100% of the market for the day.

Producer premium is based upon number of head insured, expected ending value, weight and share of animal. Ownership is required to participate. Payments are made if the Actual Ending Value is less than the Expected Ending Value. If the reverse occurs, no payment to producer is made.

This risk management tool deserves your attention and you can learn more from your crop insurance carrier. It’s worth checking, especially as we look at the grass available this summer.
Clean Up For Hazardous Waste

The summer schedule for Hazardous Waste Collection events has been announced and it serves the whole Tri-County area. Dates to plan for:

- **May 17** Moro (Community Clean Up Day)
  - 10 am – noon Ag and CEG only (by appointment)
  - 1 pm – 3 pm household only
- **May 24** Dufur 9am – 2pm
- **June 14** Tygh Valley 10 am – 2pm
- **Sept 13** The Dalles 9am – 2 pm

Note that the Sherman Collection Event in Moro includes the morning session for only agricultural wastes and CEG’s (Commercially Exempt Generators). The CEG’s are those businesses that produce a limited amount of hazardous material each year and meet certain DEQ restriction and definition. The first $400 worth of disposal costs are covered, but you must pre-register to participate, by calling PSC (the disposal contractor): 1-800-228-7872. Let them know what material (if it is known) and approximately how much. They will determine the cost to dispose and let you know if it exceeds the $400 target. Extra costs may be charged at about $1.25 per pound.

The afternoon at Moro and all the other events are for household materials. This includes oil based paints (not water based), antifreeze, lawn/garden sized fertilizer or pesticides, fluorescent lights, cleaners, solvents and other household-sized materials.

Getting rid of hazardous materials, whether from the farm or the house, helps make things safer for emergency service providers and kids. It’s a great time to clean out Grandpa’s garage.

For more information, contact Pat Bozanich at the Wasco-Sherman Public Health Department, 506-2636.

Enterprise Facilitator Now Available

Meet Greg Hohensee, our new Enterprise Facilitator serving a multi-county region in the north-central part of Oregon, including Sherman County and Wasco County (from Tygh Valley and south). Greg is specially trained to offer assistance to those seeking to manage a small business by connecting you with resources you need, or helping you to analyze the possibility, if you are just starting.

Enterprise facilitation is different from the Small Business Development, but you will find they do compliment each other in many ways without duplicating services.

Greg (541-728-6528 or greg@wyeast-ef.org) is just starting to set up his network of contacts but can meet with you individually by appointment and hopes to have a regular place to meet in each community he serves. As with the Small Business Development, all appointments and conferences are confidential.
Cost of Driving Your New Diesel Pickup

Yep, somebody had to figure it out. You sold your wheat for three times the highest price ever and bought a new $40,000 diesel pickup, only to have to burn $4.00 diesel to giddy-up down the road with it.

Three livestock agents from Oregon, Nevada and Montana collaborated on a practical, but eye-opening study. They converted a Texas A&M software design to calculate costs on a vehicle to fit their pick up study. On a used pick-up with $4 diesel, the cost per mile to operate it ran at $0.67 per mile, while on a new truck, the cost per mile escalated to $0.91.

In further studies the cost per mile was impacted more by the number of miles driven annually than it was by even a dollar increase in fuel prices. From 10,000 to 25,000 miles annually the cost per mile dropped from $0.90 to $0.62. Increasing the fuel price from $3.50 per gallon to $4.50 raised the cost per mile from $0.63 to $0.70. Changing the fuel miles per gallon from 10 MPG to 20 MPG also decreased the cost per mile from $0.80 to $0.60…another reason to check your tire pressure, toss out extra weight and slow down.

So what if you parked your diesel except for the big jobs, such as hauling your trailer, and used a smaller truck for your everyday just getting around driving? While it raises the cost per mile on the diesel ($1.36 per mile), operating the smaller truck ($0.34 per mile) means the cost to operate the pair actually saves nearly $1,464 over the diesel alone.

Your decisions will have consequences. The study is one you might want to hide from your spouse, unless you show that a second truck can save you money, but if the spouse still cannot understand why you can’t re-model the bathroom, then maybe it’s best not to bring it up at all. (see consequences)

If you’d like a complete copy of the study, email me (sandy.macnab@oregonstate.edu) and we’ll return it to you. The study includes a link to the Texas calculator if you’d like to perform your own estimates on your vehicles at various input levels.