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OREGON WHEAT

An Official Publication of the Oregon Wheat Industry

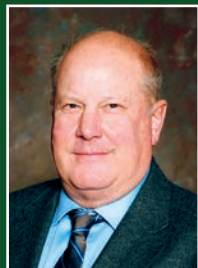
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ON THE COVER: Photo by Ben Maney

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Harvesting the Rewards of A Year's Work

Collin Crocker

President

MY TWO CENTS WORTH



Everything moves quickly this time of year with harvest. The exception to the quick pace is when we are broke down, at which point everything tends to move painfully slowly in getting parts and getting everything back up and running. Knock on wood, my farm operation and yours will keep the trucks moving and the grain flowing from the field with minimal slow-down.

All of the decisions we made on the farm over the year come down to this month with the results. Most of it is largely out of our control in the weather, but for the things in our control for wheat such as variety selection, planting date, and fertilizer application, it all winds down to the yield and quality at harvest. In my area, we have been pretty lucky with the weather. Heading into harvest, our fields were looking really good. I have continued to develop a larger appreciation for variety development and the impact of selection during my time on the League Board of Directors.

I find that attending field days and crop tours provides the best opportunity to see how new and old varieties are performing and best understand their adaptability to different areas of the state and the conditions of a given year. While I missed the Pendleton Field Days this year, the League Board and staff were there to engage in discussions with researchers and cap off the event with the traditional ice cream social.

In addition to variety selection for yield, I also have a better understanding of the importance of continuing to actively protect and enhance Oregon and PNW wheat quality. In June, I had the opportunity to meet with a trade team in Portland. While we talked about everything from how I decide when to sell wheat to how I manage increased costs, one of the major topics was wheat quality and the importance of the preferred varieties list. 'Why can't other countries do the same?' one of the team members asked. They can, but we have the advantage of decades of investment into variety development, continued education for our members on quality selection factors, and independent grading services to ensure our customers receive what they contract for in grain specifications. This investment cannot be discounted on the importance of the return it provides to our growers in markets.

As I look at our future markets, there are a lot of areas for growth. This spring I travelled to South Africa with my wife and a few friends for a hunting expedition. It was a once in a lifetime

experience. It also left me with an appreciation of the challenges in expanding in new markets that are facing fundamental infrastructure challenges. While in South Africa, we experienced the repeated rolling blackouts that have been troubling the country. It has an impact to communities, but also to industry as regular 4+ hour blackouts cause mills to shut down and restart. The benefits that low-moisture quality wheat from Oregon can provide are tempered by the impacts of the inability of a mill to operate as efficiently as possible when it is largely compromised by energy shutdowns. It was a warning to us as well on the implications of policy decisions and the importance of energy consistency.

As you roll into harvest, I hope you are feeling confident in the decisions you have made and are continuing to take advantage of the resources available through the League, Commission and our University partners. We have a good team working collectively for Oregon wheat farmers: from the state lobby side with Dalton Advocacy, to the federal lobby side with NAWG, to the market development with US Wheat, to the League and Commission boards and staff. Like harvest, these teams engage in their own versions of 'planting' and 'cultivating' throughout the year to 'harvest' on that work during things like a very frenzied end to state legislative sessions. In the end, that work is tough but worthwhile- just like farming.



The 2023 Legislative Session in Review

Nicole Mann, Dalton Advocacy Inc.

The 2023 legislative session included 27 new lawmakers, nearly 3,000 pieces of legislation, a Capitol under construction, Secretary of State Fagan's resignation, and the longest walkout in Oregon's history.

In a refreshing departure from previous long sessions, we did not see attacks on farmers' toolboxes, major product bans, or attempts to raise taxes on the agricultural industry. A welcomed change, particularly for wheat producers, who continue to grapple with employer mandates such as paid family medical leave and agricultural overtime, both of which took effect on January 1.

We were also pleased to bring back Wheat Day at the Capitol after a three-year hiatus due to virtual sessions and construction on the building. The return included hosting our first Wheat Day Legislator Reception, which presented Board members with the unique opportunity to connect with over a dozen legislators and share the League's legislative priorities in a relaxed setting.

But legislative sessions are nothing if unpredictable, and this year proved no different. As mentioned above, this year saw the longest walkout in Oregon's history, as Senate Republicans refused to provide a working quorum in protest over bills related to abortion and Second Amendment Rights. Even as the unprecedented walkout dragged on, the League's lobby team continued to advocate for industry priorities in the House and in legislative committees, which ultimately positioned us well when an agreement was finally reached. The walkout came to an end just over a week before the constitutional adjournment date, with Republicans and Democrats agreeing to make a series of amendments to the bills that led to the standoff and the promise of a bipartisan end to the session.

After a ten-day sprint to the finish line, the 2023 Session officially adjourned on June 25th. Below are a few highlights of key legislation the League engaged in this session:

Key Agricultural Legislation

Estate Tax Relief for Agriculture and Natural Resource Property – SB 498

A proactive priority bill for the League this session, the bill creates an estate tax exemption of up to \$15 million for any interest in a natural resource property that is held by a decedent for at least five years prior to death and is transferred, at the time of death, to one or more family members of the decedent. Additionally, the property must be owned by that family member for five consecutive calendar years following the decedent's death. We believe this exemption will assist farm and other natural resources-based businesses in reaching the next generation.

Carbon Sequestration on Natural and Working Lands – SB 530

The League's lobby team has worked on this legislation extensively over the last two years and although we would have preferred a larger allocation of funding go directly to agricultural producers, we appreciate the changes made by Senator Dembrow (D-Portland) to help neutralize the negative impact the legislation could have had on wheat producers. Key pieces of the legislation include:

- Bringing more balance to the Oregon Global Warming Commission's Natural and Working Lands Committee membership.
- Establishing a carbon sequestration baseline of 1990. The baseline is important to capture practices already implemented by wheat producers and recognize at least a portion of the early adopters for these practices.
- Establishing the *Natural and Working Lands Fund* to provide incentives and financial assistance to help landowners, land managers, and environmental justice communities to adopt natural climate solutions.

Note: SB 530 did not pass, but the contents on the bill are included in an Omnibus Climate Policy Package which did pass.

Increase in Acres for Solar Siting in Eastern Oregon – HB 3179

The League played a key role at the negotiation table on this bill to ensure removal of language which would have designated dryland wheat ground as low value land. Ultimately, the bill allows for an increase to the acres counties are allowed to site for solar projects.

Solar Sighting on Agricultural Land Workgroup – HB 2408

After robust discussions, an agreement for a longer conversation around renewable energy siting was agreed to by all stakeholders. The bill formalizes that conversation by directing the State Department of Energy and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to convene a stakeholder advisory committee focused on Renewable Energy Siting on Agricultural Land. At the League's request, DLCD and the Energy Facilities Siting Council are required to solicit and consider recommendations from agricultural producer associations when selecting members to serve on the advisory committee. We plan to participate on the committee in preparation for legislation during the 2024 session.

Tax on Tires, Diesel, and Off-Road Machinery – HB 3158

A reintroduction of a concept we've defeated in previous sessions, this proposal would have imposed a suite of new taxes to pay for upgrading older medium and heavy-duty trucks in and around the Portland-Metro area. The League was opposed to the bill and members engaged on this legislation early in session, sharing the impact the taxes would have on farm operations. As a result of the robust opposition, the bill died in its policy committee.

Policy Packages

For the first time, we saw the creation of 'policy packages' this session. Each package is composed of several policy bills relating to the same topic and includes significant financial investments. Two packages of note for wheat producers are Water & Drought and Climate Resilience.

Among the successes were also some losses. The League worked to pass a change to the existing minimum wage law, a fix to the new agricultural overtime law, and an increase to the Corporate Activity Tax threshold. Unfortunately, we were unable to gain momentum on the bills and they each died in their policy committee.

Key Employment Legislation

Overall, labor and employment issues were not as contentious as in previous sessions and the final bills that made it across the finish line largely represent negotiated agreements between labor and employers.

OSHA Investigations & Workplace Fatalities – SB 592

Directs the Director of DCBS/ OSHA to conduct a comprehensive workplace inspection when an accident investigation reveals a violation caused or contributed to a work-related fatality or when three or more willful or repeated violations occur within a one-year period at a place of employment. The measure also significantly increases the civil penalties the agency can attach

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

to the violation to align with federal civil penalties, see below for changes:

- Current amount of ‘not less than \$50’ to ‘not more than \$15,625, but not less than \$1,116 for each violation’
- If the violation is found to have contributed or caused the death of an employee, the amount is changed from ‘not more than \$50,000’ to ‘not less than \$20,000’ for each violation.
- Willful and repeated violations will be assessed at not more than \$250,000 and not less than \$50,000.

Psychological Abuse in Workplaces – SB 851

The original proposal introduced by labor advocates would have created a new adverse employment action for employees to pursue claims against their employer for “toxic work environments.” The League’s lobby team worked with the Senate Labor and Business Committee Chair and the bill proponents to negotiate alternative language which simply directs BOLI to prepare a model respectful workplace policy that employers may adopt along with informational materials.

Oregon Family Leave Act & Paid Leave Oregon Alignment – SB 999

We worked alongside employer and labor representatives to take initial steps to better align Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA) with the state’s paid family and medical leave insurance program, Paid Leave Oregon (PLO). As a reminder, OFLA allows people who work for companies with at least 25 employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year for qualifying reasons. Beginning September 3, PLO, an insurance program, will allow people who work for companies


of any size to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave per year for qualifying reasons. Without legislative changes, it would have been difficult for employers to juggle the administration of these programs, which differ in important ways that include, among other things, their plan years, definitions, qualifying conditions and job protections. After months of negotiations, the bill makes some changes to both programs and represents an important step in better aligning the two. However, future work remains to ensure comprehensive alignment that will best serve both workers and employers.

2023-25 Program Funding

At the start of session, we were bracing for budget cuts across all state agencies as current service levels were anticipated to outpace revenue by \$560 million. However, as the session progressed, there was a surprising improvement in the revenue outlook and by mid-May the fear of cuts and vacancies to programs and services League members depend on had eased.

Both the Department of Agriculture and Oregon State University research and extension services were allocated funds exceeding current service levels. We are encouraged by this investment and hope that it signifies a renewed commitment from the legislature to support the long-term growth and prosperity of Oregon’s agricultural sector. Thank you to all the Board members that advocated for funding, we look forward to seeing these dollars at work for you.

Looking Ahead

With the session behind us, we now turn our attention to interim and regulatory activity within state agencies. Rulemaking for legislation recently passed has already started and your lobby team will continue to ensure the voice of wheat producers is at the table. 

Wheat Applauds Introduction of the American Farmers Feed the World Act

We were pleased to see the introduction of the ‘American Farmers Feed the World Act of 2023’ in June. This bipartisan effort is designed to ‘keep food in America’s international food aid programs.’ U.S. Wheat Associates (USW), the National Association of Wheat Growers and the North American Millers Association have been the driving leaders of this effort, with more than 100 meetings conducted to educate Congressional offices on the importance of these programs for U.S. wheat farmers.

Peter Laudeman, USW Director of Trade Policy, represented USW in the effort to push the legislation forward. He lauded U.S. wheat farmers for their long history of supporting international food assistance programs.

“American wheat farmers produce some of the best, high quality, nutritious wheat in the world. [...] The reforms in the American Farmers Feed the World Act of 2023 will ensure that more food gets to more people in need throughout the world, without spending any additional resources. American agriculture has played a critical role in addressing global hunger going back to the beginning of Food for Peace in 1954. We are excited to see this bill restore that role as Congress has always intended.”

The Oregon Wheat Growers League signed on to support the legislation which has direct connection to a major destination for Oregon wheat. 

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Agricultural Labeling Uniformity Act Introduced

The Agricultural Labeling Uniformity Act (H.R. 4288) was introduced in June. The League supported the bipartisan bill which focuses on Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) pesticide labeling uniformity. The Act would reaffirm that EPA is the primary, federal authority under FIFRA for making pesticide findings and decisions, and

that states may regulate their use, but not impose additional labeling or packaging requirements. It would protect the ability of farmers, land managers, and other users to produce an abundant food, feed, and fiber supply, combat public health threats, implement important conservation practices, and maintain vital transportation and utility infrastructure. 

Industry Leaders Testify on 2023 Farm Bill

Tayleranne Gillespie, Rushlight Agency

As Fall approaches, eyes are on Washington, D.C., and the status of the 2023 Farm Bill. The significant omnibus bill is renewed approximately every five years, exerting substantial influence on the livelihoods of farmers, the methods of food production, and the types of crops cultivated across the country. The current bill, the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, is set to expire in 2023.

As Congress works to fine-tune the next iteration of the farm bill, advocates from across Oregon are making their priorities and positions on the proposed bill clear. Leadership from the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) and the Oregon Wheat Growers League have participated in various meetings, sharing priorities and testifying on behalf of wheat growers.

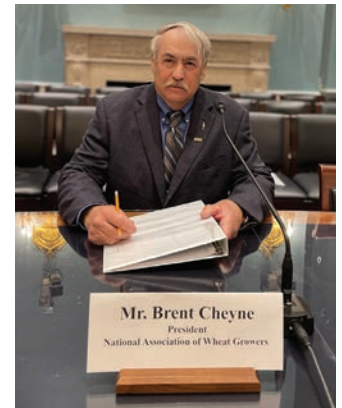
Washington, D.C. Advocacy

In the spring, Brent Cheyne, President of the National Association of Wheat Growers, traveled to Washington, D.C. to advocate on behalf of the nation's wheat growers and provide a producer's perspective on the 2023 Farm Bill.

Cheyne delivered testimony before the House Agriculture Committee Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities, Risk Management, and Credit outlining the top priorities of the nation's wheat producers. He then testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee Subcommittee on Commodities, Risk Management, and Trade.

In his testimony, Cheyne outlined NAWG priorities, including the association's position on the crop insurance program. He illustrated why crop insurance is vital to producers by sharing his experiences as a fourth-generation family farmer in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Cheyne highlighted the high cost of maximum coverage, sharing that it is unaffordable for many family farmers. Additionally, Cheyne said crop insurance provides benefits to more than just the farmers who need the safety net, it also impacts rural communities as farmers are able to keep buying equipment, supplies and other necessities even in years when production or prices fall. "Crop insurance is not just important to farmers, it's essential to the survival of rural America," Cheyne stated. Cheyne stressed the importance of the program, stating that further cuts will jeopardize the partnership between the federal government and the private insurance industry that delivers this essential risk management tool. "We encourage this subcommittee to avoid further cuts and even look at ways to enhance the program through better affordability," said Cheyne.

In testimony, NAWG also proposed a number of changes to Title I and outlined priorities to enable farmers to better ensure their wheat and livelihood, including seeking a




meaningful increase to the statutory reference price for wheat. Cheyne stressed that NAWG is not only proposing these changes to help wheat farmers, but to provide a better safety net to all farmers and to ensure faster reaction time to account for the volatility of commodity markets, as well as the ever-increasing cost of production.

Oregon Advocacy

In May, Oregon Congresswomen Lori Chavez-DeRemer and Andrea Salinas hosted a listening session on the 2023 Farm Bill. The U.S. House Agriculture Committee Chair Glenn “GT” Thompson, and other committee members, joined the bipartisan session in Albany, Oregon. The committee reported that more than 50 individuals testified during the meeting.

Erin Hansell Heideman, Secretary/Treasurer of the Oregon Wheat Growers League, testified on behalf of the

League. As a fifth-generation farmer, Heideman knows firsthand the hardships farmers face, making her a strong advocate for Oregon producers. Like Cheyne, Heideman stressed the importance of the Crop Insurance program and the value of maintaining and growing export markets for Oregon wheat. “Every year is challenging. Crop insurance does not make us whole, but it allows us to continue operations into the next year. Our farm is an important legacy to pass on to my children as the next stewards of the land.”

Her closing statement to the committee drove home why this bill really matters, and why so many show up to make their voices heard. “With every decision we make on the farm, my husband and I are considering the long-term success and health of the land. I know you are doing the same for all of our farmers as you work towards a bipartisan, multi-year, and comprehensive Farm Bill. Thank you.” 

Variety: The Spice of Life; And the Quality of Wheat

Tana Simpson, Associate Administrator

The results from the annual Oregon wheat variety survey for 2023 are now available and we see some notable changes in planted varieties. This survey helps the Commission gain a better understanding of varieties that are preferred by Oregon wheat producers and is used to guide the Commission in research funding decisions and the Oregon State University breeding program’s variety development.

The 5-year average class distribution is 91% soft white winter, 5% soft white spring, 3% hard red winter and 1% hard red spring. In recent years, over half of Oregon’s acres have been planted to UI Magic. This year, the 2-gene Clearfield varieties are still preferred, but we now see a wider distribution of varieties with four of the top five soft white wheat varieties being Clearfield. The survey results indicate that these top five planted varieties comprise 55% of the wheat grown in the state and are all desirable or most desirable on our Preferred Varieties Brochure (PVB) list.

This year, we are seeing more CoAxiom varieties in the market, making up 8% of the soft white wheat crop and 54% of the hard red winter crop. The hard red winter varieties that dominated were LCS Helix AX and Eclipse AX which, along with LCS Jet and LCS Evina, make up 94% of the Oregon hard red winter grown.

Although much smaller in total acreage, the soft white spring leaders were Ryan and Seahawk, both of which are rated Most Desirable on the Preferred Varieties list. The top three hard red spring varieties are Espresso, Kelse and Alum and the top three planted barley varieties are Lavina, Lenetah and Haybet Beardless.

2023 Top Oregon Planted Soft White Varieties




Thank you to the Oregon seed dealers for once again collaborating with the Oregon Wheat Commission to compile the annual variety survey. 

Going Above and Beyond: Nominate for Oregon Wheat Awards

We all know someone who deserves acknowledgment for their tireless efforts supporting Oregon wheat. Tell us about them! Each year the Oregon Wheat Growers League recognizes contributions from those who support the industry and are instrumental to our success. Awardees are recognized at the annual gala at the Tri-state Grain Convention. We encourage you to consider nominations for the 2023 Oregon Wheat “Above and Beyond” award and “Distinguished Service” award.

- Above and Beyond: Presented to an individual or individuals who have repeatedly stepped up for Oregon’s Wheat producers and gone the “extra mile.”
- Distinguished Service: Presented to an individual or individuals for their dedication and service to the Oregon wheat industry.

Nominations are due by September 1, 2023 to info@owgl.org. Nomination forms and more information (including details on past winners) can be found at owgl.org/awards. 

2023 PHOTO CONTEST

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2022 winning photo - Emmalee Demianew



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ROB SHARKEY is better known as the SharkFarmer, he is a risk taker and out of the box thinker who believes everyone has a story to tell. His authentic interview style and ability to tackle controversial issues has catapulted him on to Sirius XM, PBS, Acres TV and six seasons of SharkFarmer TV.

AMBASSADOR KIP TOM served as the U.S. Ambassador to United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture and the chief of the United States Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome from 2019 to 2021. He is the Managing Member of Toms Farm in Indiana. Ambassador Tom will be discussing trade issues and status of the 2023 Farm Bill.



ERIC SNODGRASS is the Principal Atmospheric Scientist for Nutrien Ag Solutions, where he develops predictive analytical software to help ag producers manage weather risk. His frequent weather updates focus on how high-impact weather events influence global ag productivity.

Watch wawg.org/convention for additional speakers and breakout topics.

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Twinkle, Twinkle Oregon Wheat

Amanda Hoey, Oregon Wheat CEO



There is a distinct twinkle in the eyes the first time an individual who has only ever seen the grain or flour from Oregon Wheat sees a wheat field. It is a look from new trade team members that I never tire of witnessing. This year, we have enough twinkles for a full constellation, with a steady stream of visitors. Funding through market access programs,

combined with a looming expiration of Ag Trade Promotion funds in September 2024 (accelerated in part to 2023 with expenditure requirements) resulted in a full set of inbound technical and trade teams in the state. It also resulted in an increase in our outbound activities to participate in buying and marketing conferences.

Teams representing each of the top ten markets have been – or will be- in the state from spring through fall. For the marketing year 2023, ending May 31, the major customers for Oregon Wheat remain unchanged in the top ten, even as the individual positions changed slightly.

Returning in our #1 market is the Philippines. We hosted a team visit in June for a group representing the major millers and roughly 80% of the purchasing power in the country. A primary issue in this market is related to the renewal (or non-renewal) of tariffs to address Turkish flour dumping. While set to expire later this year, the Philippine Association of Flour Millers, Inc filed a request with the Tariff Commission for the Republic of the Philippines to extend the anti-dumping duties. With that filing, the duties will remain in place until a ruling is made. The Tariff Commission is reviewing, with audits of mills already completed.



Japanese Flour Millers visit the OWC offices.



Moving up into the second highest purchasing level for U.S. soft white wheat was China, which has seen more volatility in year-over-year purchases. However, China has become the world's largest wheat importer and the June World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates place them at record import levels. U.S. Wheat Associates reflects: "As U.S. wheat competitiveness began to improve early in calendar 2023, China entered the market," with their purchases surging above the year prior.

Japan returned as a long-term steady market in the number three position, with multiple teams and individual company visits. Executives from top Japanese flour mills joined the Oregon Wheat Commission in May, kicking off the first trade team visit of the season. Toshiaki Yokoyama, Japan Flour Millers Association Chair and Director of Nisshin Flour Milling Inc., expressed appreciation during his visit with U.S. Wheat Associates, citing the stable and consistent supply of high-quality wheat even amid challenging times and conditions. He noted that "the relationship between U.S. wheat and Japan has not wavered." Our constant vigilance in addressing potential areas of concern, such as continuing to ensure buckwheat-free wheat for export, and engaging in preferred variety testing was noted as an area of appreciation.

Overall, sales have been slow in comparison to crop production from the past year, so bolstering purchasing options from steady and expanding markets is critical. Included in that focus is Korea, which came in at #4 in the ranking this completed market year. As a steady customer with an emphasis on the quality of wheat, returning local demand and growing their market has been the intent of our

engagement for teams. Providing appropriate flour blends and expanding options for use led to individual course trainings at the Wheat Marketing Center. We were able to bring in five separate Korean groups for trade team visits and technical trainings- all of which included on farm visits with producers. The theme of conversations is that the success of our millers and bakers in Korea translates to the success of Oregon wheat producers.


Particularly with our management teams from steady markets, conversations around genetically modified (GM) wheat has been a recurring topic, due to the release of the GM variety from Bioceres that has gained approval in a number of international markets. While approved by FDA as safe for consumption in the U.S., it is not approved for production. Our position remains that we will not support GM wheat production unless there is acceptance from each of our markets representing a major share of our wheat exports. That is not the case, and our Oregon wheat production is fully non-GMO.

In addition to steady markets, there are several growing markets now consistently in the top ten. We will have a group traveling to Oregon at the end of July, just in time to visit harvest operations in Sherman County. The group will represent individuals from some of the top ten purchasing countries for U.S. soft white: Indonesia (#5 in the last market year), Vietnam and Thailand, as well as those marking just outside the top ten (Myanmar). Rounding out markets, we supported a visit from the Taiwanese Flour Millers in June. Taiwan is a remarkably consistent buyer year-over-year. Finally, in the list we see a destination for Oregon wheat




Korean group through the Department of State shows their love for Oregon ag with the 'finger heart' sign.

returning for the use of international food aid: Yemen. We had an opportunity at the end of June to take representatives from Oregon Department of Agriculture and Oregon State University to an export terminal to watch a ship being loaded with wheat destined for Yemen.

While most of these visits are supported through our partnership with U.S. Wheat Associates and the Wheat Marketing Center, we also leverage beyond. Partnership programs through the Foreign Ag Service, World Oregon, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Department of State and many others expand our reach. They have offered plenty of opportunities to practice flashing my 'finger heart' sign. I truly do appreciate the opportunities these groups bring. Wishing everyone a strong harvest for that quality Oregon wheat! 

Young Farmers: Apply for Free Grain Convention Registration!

Oregon Wheat Growers League is offering four (4) scholarships for first time attendees to the Tri-State Grain Growers Annual Convention. The 2023 Convention is scheduled for November 14-16, 2023 in Coeur d'Alene, ID. Young farmers under 40 are encouraged to talk with their County President about their eligibility for the scholarship and submit an application. Applicants must be a dues paying member of the League or become a member to receive the scholarship. The scholarship will pay for convention registration and lodging, however applicants are responsible for getting to the convention. Please complete the form online at www.owgl.org/convention by September 15 for consideration. 



Rolling Through Fields of Wheat

Dana Tuckness

OWC Chair

Ever had a field of winter wheat in the Spring, and you're not sure what to do with it? I suspect most of us have. I had one such field this year. This field was planted in late October about the same time I drilled the rest of my wheat crop. It had good moisture, but got off to a slow start. Around mid-March much of it hadn't emerged yet, my other fields were considerably further along and all of the neighbors' fields looked much better. My wife, Kathy, asked "is that field going to be okay?" My reply, "it will be fine, it's just slow due to the cool weather." Fast forward to mid-April and that field didn't look much better. Maybe I was wrong, and it's time to start looking at what options I have. Too late to replant with spring wheat, and I tried drilling




spring wheat into a thin field of winter wheat years ago with no success. My only other option, it seemed, would be to plant a crop of dry beans. Not wanting to dust off the bean equipment, I decided to roll the dice, let the crop be, and see how it would turn out. As of this writing (mid-June) the field looks much better than I had expected (even after a bout with Cereal Leaf Beetles in mid-May), definitely not a bin-buster, but I believe it will be close to an average yield. Once the threshing machine hits the field, I will know for sure. The resilience of a wheat crop and the way it fills in thin spots after tillering can be quite amazing. In this area, I anticipate that harvest will start about two weeks later than usual. In other areas of the state, the heat brought the crop to a more normal harvest timeline.

Oregon Wheat Commission staff and several commissioners have been extremely busy with trade teams recently, and that looks as though it will keep everyone engaged through the rest of the summer. On that note, since they have entertained many of these teams at their farm over the years, I would like to acknowledge the commitment Darren and Brenda Padgett have made. Darren is rotating off the U.S. Wheat Associates Board this year. He has done a lot of domestic and foreign travel and been a strong voice for Oregon, as well as all of the U.S. wheat industry. I would also like to thank Jordan Van Zante, as he has termed out of the Oregon Wheat Commission as one of the two handlers. Jordan has been a wealth of information and I have enjoyed working with him over the past few years.

We officially have a new professor to head the wheat breeding program at Oregon State University! Dr. Margaret Krause will be starting work in November after finishing up her work at Utah State University, where she has a long list of achievements. It has been a long process to find the right person for this position, and I am confident we have found the perfect fit.

As I have been ending my articles with famous (or not so famous) quotes, I feel I need to give credit where it is due. My predecessor, Jerry Marguth, always ended with a great quote, which I think is a good idea, so I have continued to do so. Hope you all have a safe and prosperous harvest.


"In holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite." (Dwight David Eisenhower) From his farewell address. 

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Transitions

Dr. Bob Zemetra, Emeritus Professor, Wheat Breeding and Genetics

The Oregon State University Wheat Breeding and Genetics program has gone through several transitions in my 38 years of wheat breeding in the Pacific Northwest. From Dr. Warren Kronstad to Dr. Jim Peterson, Dr. Jim Peterson to myself in 2011, and now from me to Dr. Margaret Krause this fall. While the wheat breeder has changed, the goal of the OSU wheat breeding program has remained the same; improve agronomic performance, disease resistance, and end-use quality of the wheat grown in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest by releasing improved wheat varieties and improved germplasm for use by regional public and private breeding programs. This holds true for the breeding program in this transition year, with new combinations (crosses) being made in the greenhouse this winter, all generations in the field at test sites in western and eastern Oregon, and several breeding lines under consideration for release this fall or winter.



Figure 1.

namely stripe rust and Septoria leaf blotch. New races of both diseases evolve each year and only through deployment of new combinations of genes using germplasm for Oregon, Washington and Idaho can new varieties be developed that maintain their resistance despite the evolution of new races of these two diseases.

To identify the breeding lines with the right combination of genes to produce varieties with improved agronomic performance, durable disease resistance and superior end-use quality, multiple years of field evaluation is necessary. Even in a transition year, it is necessary to grow and evaluate every generation of the breeding program in multiple locations so no time is lost in the selection and development of new varieties. This includes growing multi-generation yield trials in locations such as Corvallis, Cornelius, Pendleton-Ruggs, Moro, Hermiston, Wasco, Lexington, LaGrande and Milton-Freewater. In addition, nurseries selecting for specific traits such as disease (sbWMV-Irrigon) and herbicide resistance are grown where selection can be reliably done each year (Figure 1).

This includes evaluation of the first CoAxiom herbicide resistant hard red winter and soft white winter breeding lines in Corvallis, Pendleton and Moro.

The OSU wheat breeding program is like a pipeline, producing potential new varieties for release and production of Foundation seed. This year is no exception. In terms of soft white winter wheat there are three lines under consideration. Two advanced breeding lines with improved Septoria leaf blotch resistance (OR2160243 and OR2180377) are under preliminary increase in western Oregon (Figure 2).

Both lines have performed well in trials in western Oregon where Septoria leaf blotch is a perennial problem. Of the two, OR2180377 shows the most promise based on results from Forest Grove and Corvallis last year. The advanced soft white winter wheat breeding line, OR2170559, is a sbWMV resistant line that shows excellent disease resistance and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Researchers' Names and Titles:

Bob Zemetra - Emeritus Professor, Wheat Breeding and Genetics

2023 Grant Titles and Funding Levels:

Developing Improved Winter Wheat Cultivars for Oregon, \$210,394

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

agronomic performance under sbWMV disease pressure in the Irrigon disease trial. This line would provide Oregon and Washington growers a soft white winter wheat option if they find sbWMV in their field. Two herbicide resistant soft white winter wheat advanced breeding lines, (OR2190025 CL+ and OR2190027 CL+) are in preliminary seed increase for potential release this fall. Both breeding lines have excellent herbicide resistance, earlier heading than most Clearfield varieties, good stripe rust resistance and good to excellent yield potential. Of the two, OR2190025 CL+ has better end-use quality which may be the deciding factor on which line is released. Both are targeted at the low to intermediate rainfall zones of Oregon where earlier heading may be an advantage in drought years. Two winter club wheat lines, OR5180071 and OR5180072, are being considered for release. Both lines show good yield potential and have acceptable to good end-use quality based on evaluation by the Pacific Northwest Quality Council. The two lines are currently undergoing further evaluation including being grown in the nursery in Pullman, WA to determine if the Oregon winter club lines have the end-use quality desired by the primary customer of PNW club wheat.

So, even though the program's leader changes, the OSU wheat breeding program continues on but with modifications. Each new breeder brings in new or improved methods of breeding that tweak the program, improving efficiency and/or productivity. As Dr. Krause takes over the breeding program, do not be surprised if the program changes in both size and



Figure 2.

approach. This does not mean that the overall goals of the OSU wheat breeding program will change. The goals will still be to develop wheat cultivars that meet the needs of the Oregon wheat producers and improve the overall germplasm of wheat grown in the Pacific Northwest to maintain its position as the producer of the best soft white winter wheat in the world. In closing, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the contributions of the wheat producers in Cornelius / Forest Grove, Irrigon, Lexington, LaGrande, Milton-Freewater, and Pendleton who let the OSU wheat breeding program evaluate advanced breeding lines on their farms to insure that the wheat varieties released by the breeding program meet the needs of the Oregon wheat industry. At some locations, the breeding program has had nurseries on these farms for decades, spanning generations. My hope is this synergy between OSU and Oregon wheat producers continues through this transition. 🌾

Wheat Talks Cover Overtime, Farm Bill, Conservation

Jason Flowers, Program Director

The League held its spring Wheat Talk Series with three sessions for our members to hear from agency staff and elected officials. Our April Wheat Talk featured a discussion with NRCS on funding for conservation programs through the Inflation Reduction Act. The current list of approved Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry conservation activities includes conservation cover, conservation crop rotation, residue and tillage management, cover crop, field border, filter strips, mulching, stripcropping, vegetative barriers, herbaceous wind barriers, and nutrient management, just to name a few. The activity list should become more dynamic in the future.

U.S. Representative Lori Chavez-DeRemer joined for our May Wheat Talk to discuss the upcoming Farm Bill and her role on the U.S. House Agriculture Committee. The discussion focused on the importance of crop insurance, a

request to support increased funding for trade programs, the need for increasing statutory reference price for wheat, and the ability to get funds in the Farm Bill.

In June, members heard from Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industries Agricultural Compliance and Education Unit, on Oregon's agricultural overtime law. Under the new law, employers must pay agricultural workers overtime after they work 55 hours in one workweek starting January 1, 2023; after January 1, 2025, that drops to 48 hours and then down to 40 hours on January 1, 2027. The discussion focused on what qualifies for exemptions from the law and limitations for use of the exemptions.

The series will pause during the summer with harvest and start back up in October. League members who missed the Wheat Talks can watch the recordings on the League website. 🌾

Strengthening Long-Term Relationships Abroad

Devon Lyon, the Rushlight Agency

In May 2023, Oregon Wheat Commissioners Tyler Hansell, Darren Padget, and Jordan Van Zante represented the industry at the South and Southeast Asian Marketing Conference in Phuket, Thailand. Immediately following the marketing conference, Commissioner Padget continued on to attend the 50th Anniversary of U.S. Wheat's office in Seoul, South Korea. Although not programmatically connected, each event continued the ongoing commitment of Oregon and the United States to strengthening wheat markets and partnerships abroad.

South & Southeast Asian Marketing Conference

The South and Southeast Asian markets of Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines collectively account for 25% of U.S. wheat's annual total exports. The Philippines alone was the primary market destination for soft white wheat from Oregon in the last marketing year. The Oregon Wheat Commission recognizes the importance of these markets and is dedicated to engaging with, and fostering relationships with each country in a meaningful way.

Commissioner Hansell underscored this commitment when he stated, "In order for us to continue to be successful here as growers, we need people over in those important markets to carry our voice." The commissioners emphasized that business, market stability and growth take more than just conferences. Commissioner Padget stated, "Business done in person is always the first choice, and we had roughly 200 attendees, so it was very well attended. That personal contact that U.S. Wheat Associates is noted for is finally back on track, post Covid." Commissioner Hansell went on to elaborate that, "Trust and long-term relationship building is critical. And it is so important that all through the entire channel we build that trust with each other."

The South and Southeast Asian Marketing Conference is the first of three important international conferences scheduled in 2023, with the Latin America Buyers Conference taking place in July in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, followed by North Asia Marketing Conference in Bali, Indonesia in August. Dana Tuckness, Chair of the Oregon Wheat Commission and Amanda Hoey, CEO of Oregon Wheat, will represent the industry at the Latin America conference. For the August conference in North Asia, Commissioner David Brewer will attend, as will CEO Hoey, who is scheduled to speak at both conferences.

50th Anniversary Celebration of U.S. Wheat in South Korea

As the wheat industry relates to South Korea, U.S. milling wheat is now the country's fifth largest commodity



SW Asia Marketing Conference participants.

import. Vince Peterson, U.S. Wheat Associates President, in a recent article stated that the South Korean milling and baking industry has seen "astounding growth today when [South Korea] import[s] an average of 1.4 million metric tons of U.S. wheat and export ramen products valued at more than \$750 million."

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Attending the event in Seoul provided a celebration for several reasons. One reason was to recognize not only the current market demands and business opportunities in South Korea, but also to honor the longstanding relationships, and their importance on both an industry-wide as well as a local, personal level.

“It was the 50th Anniversary of U.S. Wheat working with Korea, which is usually our number five market overall, and a top market for soft white wheat. I personally know many of the Koreans, and have many out on my farm. I saw a lot of familiar faces I hadn’t seen for three years, and once again made those connections,” stated Commissioner Padgett.

In the end analysis, time and resources must continue to be invested in these critical markets for Oregon wheat. But even more so, the industry, our elected officials and the general public should understand the importance of honoring long-term relationships, not just at the national/diplomatic level, but at the more granular, personal level. These relationships matter. People count on them. They trust them. And as the industry weathers the natural peaks and valleys of agricultural commerce, they become even more important.



U.S. Wheat celebrates 50 years in Korea.

Commissioner Padgett summed it up well when he stated “It’s important to have a reliable supply from people that are passionate about what they do. But the bottom line is there are a lot of passionate people on both sides, and passion isn’t something you can buy. It’s like any business, it’s all about relationships.” 🌾

Making the Cut: The Importance of Wheat Quality Screening from Early Generations to Variety Release

Alecia M. Kiszonas, Cultivar Development Manager and Acting Director of the Western Wheat Quality Lab, USDA-ARS

Craig Morris, the renowned cereal chemist and former Director of the Western Wheat Quality Lab, would often describe wheat varieties with a professional sports metaphor. Many kids start out playing T-Ball in their early elementary school years and the vast majority will go on to play Little League. Over time, however, the competition gets more difficult and by high school, there is a smaller but more elite set of young athletes competing for spots on college and professional baseball teams. Of the children who started out playing T-Ball, only a tiny fraction will move all of the way up to the World Series. This process is very similar to how wheat begins with a genetic cross and ends up with a released variety, although hopefully with fewer skinned knees and tears.



Perhaps a child starts out with very athletic parents and has a great swing at the stationary baseball on a tee, but they would never just be plunked into an All-Star game on those

attributes alone. They all get tested and trialed along the way. This system holds true for wheat as well. Regardless of the genetics of the original cross (which tend to be strong to begin with as a cross made by a talented breeder), wheat lines need to be tested and trialed in all different environments and conditions before they can be released into wide production and eventually export. The wheat lines need to prove they can hold up to multiple seasons, not just one particularly good year that makes all of the lines look great. The early- and mid-generation screening of wheat lines aims to provide breeders with a broad range of quality data parameters to advance the best material on to later generation field testing and subsequent baking. The more efficient the early generation testing is, the more efficient the breeding selection. This efficiency raises the caliber of quality in the wheat lines in later generation screening, allowing for simultaneous strong yield selection pressure along with strong quality selection pressure.

Ultimately the goal of wheat quality testing is to provide breeders with information that will help them to release varieties with superior end-use quality to meet the demands


and expectations of our largely export-based market. Although we in the quality world are well aware that growers do not get paid on quality per se, the strength of our export market depends heavily on our ability to provide consistently high quality wheat varieties to our customers' doorstep, or port, as it were. Most of this quality testing process is behind-the-scenes, with scores of data generated and given to breeders to make quality selections. By the time the varieties reach a fairly elite level, they are entered into Variety Testing and both agronomic and quality data are highly visible to the wheat community at large. The extensive testing that goes into those lines, both from a quality and agronomics standpoint, hopefully ensures that the lines in the Oregon, Washington, and Idaho Variety Testing trials are competitive for yield and for quality. This more public 'tryout' phase brings together the years of greenhouse testing, headrow harvesting, plot selection, and tough breeding decisions, especially in the case of the public university and government breeding programs. The better we are all able to obtain early- and mid-generation data, the better the lines are that get entered into Variety Testing.

At this point in development, many experimental lines that are strong candidates for release go into what we think of as the All-Star game of the Pacific Northwest Wheat Quality Council. Up to forty varieties each year can be entered into the Council and are milled on a pilot scale mill and sent to ~25 domestic and international cooperators for their direct assessment and feedback. Along with public wheat quality programs from the USDA, multiple universities, and private quality labs, large companies like Ardent Mills, Grain Craft, ADM, General Mills, Mondelez, Bay State Milling, and Krusteaz/Continental Mills participate in the evaluation process. Each year our primary export customers also evaluate samples from the PNW Wheat Quality Council. US Wheat Associates chooses two companies each year to serve as international collaborators. For example, in recent meetings, we have hosted representatives from Japan, Thailand, the Philippines, South Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Malaysia. The Quality Council serves two purposes: providing information back to variety



A cake with poor volume and crumb structure (left) compared to a cake with high volume and high-quality crumb structure (right).

developers and ensuring that the industry is familiar with the characteristics of new varieties. Each milling and baking company evaluates the flour for functionality using their own specific lab analyses. In January each year all of the cooperators get together and discuss results of the baking evaluations. Each line is discussed extensively and is truly a make-or-break moment for many of the lines. Many major players in the milling and baking industry participate in the Wheat Quality Council meetings and give their feedback, also getting a preview of the new lines they may see in their operations in the years to come. It is also at this elite level that extra attention is paid to the final products made using the Wheat Quality Council flour. For the breeding and Variety Testing samples, measurements for the standard products include bread volume and crumb, cookie diameter, and cake volume. In this All-Star game, cookies are evaluated not only on their diameter, but also the top grain appearance. Cakes are assessed for volume, but also cut open and the crumb scored. These assessments are more time- and expertise-heavy, but are necessary at this elite level of evaluation to separate the good from the best. Following three years of data including 15 observations, released varieties are published in the Preferred Wheat Varieties list, widely distributed to growers, seed dealers, and domestic and international customers.

The generous funding from the Oregon Wheat Commission is truly an investment in this vital process of screening wheat lines from an early generation to the widespread adoption of the high quality lines that eventually make the cut. It is only through this wide screening of early generation material, extensive testing of elite material, and broad evaluation of All-Star material that we as a region continue to bring superior quality wheat to our export partners. The continued strength of these export partnerships is what allows us to add tremendous value to the growers and ensure that they continue to have a reliable and profitable outlet for their wheat. 

Researchers' Names and Titles:

Alecia M. Kiszonas, Cultivar Development Manager and Acting Director of the Western Wheat Quality Lab, USDA-ARS

2023 Grant Titles and Funding Levels:

Advancing wheat grain quality in Oregon state, Quality of varieties & pre-release lines: Genotype & Environment 'G&E' study, One-third cost of Miag pilot flour milling for PNW-WQC; Project 1: \$22,317; Project 2: \$36,996; Project 3: \$5,250


U.S. Wheat Associates Hires Luke Muller as Assistant Director in West Coast Office

U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) has hired Luke Muller as Assistant Director of its West Coast Office in Portland. Muller, who began his new role on May 30, comes to USW with a broad set of skills and experience in agricultural research and economics.

Muller graduated with a master's degree in agricultural and resource economics from Michigan State University and dual undergraduate degrees from Oklahoma State University in plant and soil science and agribusiness.



Prior to joining USW, he served as a consultant for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome and performed food insecurity research in collaboration with the National Science Foundation in Kenya. He was raised on his family's wheat, cotton, and grain sorghum farm in southwest Oklahoma.

"Luke's expertise in agricultural economics, coupled with his understanding of wheat farming and his excellent communication skills, will undoubtedly strengthen our efforts to support and promote the U.S. wheat in the overseas market," said Steve Wirsching, Vice President and Director of USW's West Coast Office. 

OWC Welcomes New Commissioner, Rob Rye

Dylan Frederick, Rushlight Agency


The Oregon Wheat Commission welcomed Rob Rye as its newest Commissioner, effective July 1. Rye takes the position previously held by Jordan Van Zante. Van Zante served in the Handler Position #2 on the Commission since 2016, and as the Treasurer since 2021.

Rob Rye was raised on a family farm in Ohio. He attended Murray State University where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture. He furthered his education when he earned a Master's Degree in Agricultural Economics from the Ohio State University. Currently, Rye serves as the Vice President of Commodity Marketing at Pacificor, LLC. He has over 30 years of experience in managing commodity-based programs, and food ingredient programs in both domestic and international markets.

When asked about his primary goal for serving on the commission, Rob says he wants to help expand markets for Oregon Wheat and create more value for growers. "Recent times have become more-and-more challenging. We continue to see more competition from other regions. That's going to be a challenge moving forward. We will need to find ways to continue to differentiate Oregon Wheat in markets that are becoming much more competitive," Rob said.

The Oregon Wheat Commission is excited to bring Rob Rye's expertise to the Commission for the Handler Position #2 and expresses appreciation to outgoing Commission Van Zante. Since joining the Commission, Van Zante has been an



invaluable member that offered expertise and knowledge in wheat markets and trade. He was a frequent speaker for the Grower Workshop, providing insight to the impacts of global factors on the market for Oregon wheat. "The Oregon Wheat Commission could not be more grateful to Jordan Van Zante for his service to the commission over the last 7 years," stated Oregon Wheat Commission Chair, Dana Tuckness. "Jordan has offered a thoughtful perspective and solid advisement from the trade which have ultimately helped us to strengthen the wheat industry in Oregon." 

Oregon Wheat Welcomes Dr. Margaret Krause as OSU Assistant Professor of Wheat Breeding and Genetics

Jessica Chambers, Rushlight Agency

Oregon State University College of Agricultural Sciences announced the selection of Dr. Margaret Krause to join the Department of Crop and Soil Science. Dr. Krause will serve in a leadership role for the Wheat Breeding and Genetics research and teaching program as Assistant Professor beginning November 1, 2023.




Dr. Krause earned a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Plant Science from the University of Minnesota, and her Ph.D. in Plant Breeding from Cornell University. She currently serves as Assistant Professor and Small Grains Breeder in the Department of Plants, Soils and Climate at Utah State University. Dr. Krause's research program there focuses on the development, evaluation, and application of breeding methods and emerging technologies that can make plant breeding more efficient, and genetic resistance to the dwarf bunt disease in wheat caused by the soil-borne pathogen *Tilletia controversa*. The program at Utah State University also has active breeding pipelines for dryland winter wheat, irrigated winter wheat, and winter barley.




"This position serves a critical role for Oregon wheat producers," stated Oregon Wheat Commission Chair, Dana Tuckness. "I am excited about the energy and expertise Margaret will bring to the position, and I look forward to engaging with her as she continues to build the wheat breeding program."

On the search committee, OSU included two Oregon Wheat commissioners, Chair Dana Tuckness and former commissioner Walter Powell. This gave industry stakeholders an opportunity to be part of the formal review, in addition to the stakeholder meet and greets and presentations conducted during the process. Commissioner Tuckness stated that there was a strong pool of candidates for the position, and he was impressed by the range of skills, as well as the dedication of the committee to find the best fit for OSU's next wheat breeder.

"We are thrilled with the selection of Dr. Krause for this role," said Oregon Wheat CEO, Amanda Hoey. "Her background and expertise make her an ideal fit for continuing this vital role for wheat producers in our state and across the


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Pacific Northwest. We are excited to welcome her to Oregon."

Dr. Krause will further develop lines for the OSU wheat breeding program that was most recently led by Dr. Bob Zemetra, who retired this year. He began his tenure at OSU in 2011 after serving as the wheat breeder at University of Idaho. Dr. Zemetra has had a productive career, releasing varieties, training graduate students and teaching at the University. He also served as the chairman of the National Wheat Improvement Committee, the Western Wheat Workers, the OSU College Variety Release committee, as well as several departmental committees. Oregon Wheat looks forward to working with Dr. Krause moving forward and thanks Dr. Zemetra for his years of service to the wheat industry. 

1 Be Aware

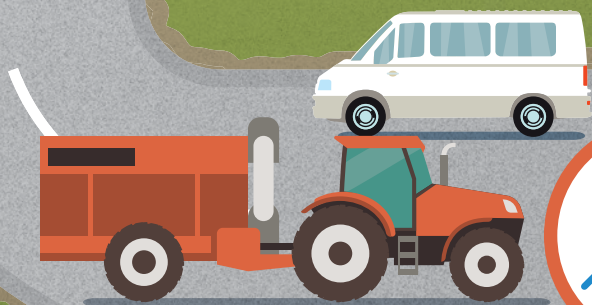
- Farm equipment is typically wider than a car, and may be wider than a typical road lane. Large equipment is designed to travel at speeds of 15 to 25 miles per hour.
- If you are driving 55 mph and come upon a tractor that is moving 25 mph, it only takes 8 seconds to close a gap the length of a football field.
- If you see red or orange slow-moving vehicle emblems, start to slow down immediately.
- If you see a vehicle with flashing lights, slow down and move over. It is likely they are flagging for larger equipment ahead.



Ensuring Road Safety During Harvest Season

With harvest season approaching, understanding and abiding by road safety in rural areas is critical for the safety of both you and farm equipment operators.

Here are some helpful tips and suggestions to ensure you have the best possible experience sharing the road with ag producers through the duration of this harvest season.



2 Be Patient

- Sometimes farm equipment must be driven on highways to move between fields. Just as motorists can use public roadways, farmers can legally operate equipment on these same roads.
- Farmers understand your trip is being delayed, so they will typically pull off to the side of the road or a safe location to allow you to pass.
- Don't assume the farmer can immediately move aside. Roadway shoulders can often be wet, soft, or steep, and this can cause equipment to tip.

3 Be Prepared

- If you decide to pass farm equipment on the road, do so with caution and be watchful of vehicles behind you that may also be attempting to pass.
- If you enter the oncoming lane of traffic, do not proceed unless you can see clearly ahead of both you, and the farm equipment.
- If there are any curves or hills ahead that may block your view or the view of the oncoming vehicles, do not pass.



4 Drive Smart

- Most farm equipment operators will regularly check to see if there is traffic behind them. However, the driver must spend most of the time looking ahead to keep the equipment safely on the road, and watch for oncoming traffic.
Don't assume that the driver knows where your vehicle is or that you are visible behind them.
Do not pass if you are in a designated "No Passing Zone" or within 100 feet of any intersection, railroad grade crossing, bridge, elevation structure, or tunnel.
- Be aware that farm equipment, including trucks, are larger vehicles and do not stop as quickly as a car. Pulling out in front of a truck puts you and the farm operator in danger.



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