



Connell 509-234-2500  
Fax 509-234-2502  
www.tristatseed.com

P.O. Box 1229 • 1000 N. Columbia Ave. • Connell, WA 99326

## Tri State Seed Co. Summer 2014 Newsletter

Wheat harvest is just starting and things are heating up, literally. It seems like the only thing constant in agriculture is the rate of change. Change in the climate, market prices, rotations, varieties, chemicals and the political environment. Wheat is truly a global business and many things that impact us are out of our control. That is why we should be aware of what is changing and why, so we can at least manage our operations and adjust to the change that happens. Our job at Tri State Seed Co. is to make you money, more money than you can make somewhere else. We have listed below some of the things we think you should be aware of to help make your operations more relevant in today's environment. We have a very diverse clientele so just pick out the topics that interest you and ignore the rest.

### Post-Harvest Weed Control

Dryland low rainfall areas are experiencing some of the poorest yields in recent years. The sad thing is a good crop is the cheapest to raise – and a poor crop never stops costing money. Many of us will have to address the weed pressure after harvest. The worst thing that could happen is to allow all those Russian Thistles to go to seed. We have two recommendations. Parazone (Paraquat), in combination with Methylated Seed Oil is the first line of defense. This is the Holy Grail because of the immediate burn down that occurs. Two pints of Parazone per acre and two pints of Meth Oil in 15 gallons of water per acre will do the trick. Some pilots won't fly with MSO because it hangs in the air too long. Make real sure to use the proper PPE with the Parazone, protect your skin from any contact with the Paraquat. The weeds we can miss with this are the Prickly Lettuce biotypes that have the ability to regrow from the crown after you burn off the tops. Smaller plants of Prickly Lettuce will be eliminated, but the older ones are quite tough. Recommendation number 2, is Glyphosate and Sharpen. 40 ounces of 6 lb. Glyphosate and 1 oz. of Sharpen per acre is also quite effective. Make sure to use one gallon / 100 gallons of spray solution of Meth Oil to penetrate the waxy cutin of that tough Russian thistle and Ammonium Sulfate at 2.5 gallons / 100 gallons of spray solution. If you can't use a ground applicator, then use at least 5 gallons by air on both the above.

### Dryland Variety Observations

When you walk as many fields as we do some things become very obvious. Otto SWW wheat is rapidly showing us that it is a great risk management tool. It is an Eltan derived variety with the pch-1 foot rot gene in it. That means no more spraying for *Pseudocercospora herpotrichoides*, commonly known as Sharpe Eyespot. In the dryland areas of Washington State it is very common to have enough background infection of this disease that the casual observer would not notice the damage done by this silent fungus. The yield drag can be substantial, but can be mitigated with Topsin Fungicide. Otto on the other hand is genetically resistant to the fungus and also has better stripe rust resistance and yield capacity. It has the emergence of Eltan and also the same winter hardiness. Some of our best looking fields this summer are Otto, and from the preliminary yield results it should be a favorite for planting this fall.

### Two New Clearfield Winter Wheat Offerings for < 16" Precip Zones

Washington State University released two new winter wheat varieties this fall. WA8143 recently named Curiosity CL+ and WA8155 now called Mela CL+. These are the first two 2-gene Clearfield soft white winter wheat varieties released by the university. We have been watching them with interest for some time. They are both roughly based on Eltan. Mela is best suited for the drier climates of the lower basin and the Curiosity is made to order for the highway 2 corridor and north. Curiosity has performed very well in the Waterville and

Mansfield area exhibiting very good yield and snow mold protection. These varieties are specifically designed to replace ORCF 102 and ORCF 103 in less than 16 inch rainfall areas. Curiosity is a candidate for replacing ORCF 102 in the <20" rainfall production area in Washington, except for Walla Walla where it can lodge. The beauty of both of these cultivars is that they have two placement events with resistance to the herbicide Beyond. This means that now a grower can use the max rate of 6 oz. of Beyond with an MSO for additional control of hard to kill weeds without the risk of crop injury normally associated with the single gene varieties like ORCF 103 and 102. They exhibit equal to or better winter hardiness, stripe rust resistance, and emergence as Eltan. Neither carries the pch-1 foot rot gene that Otto and Madsen do. The yield of both, in their respective areas of adaptation, is better than Eltan consistently. All in all, both Curiosity and Mela are going to be valuable tools for us to consider in the future. Tri State Seed has small increases of both varieties in the ground for sale the fall of 2014. I would like to tell you more about them but the actual release document was 134 pages long. Call us and we will discuss the various management options with you. The link to find all of the data on these two new varieties is: <http://variety.wsu.edu>.

### **Release SC by Valent**

This seed amendment is designed to increase the rate of emergence of wheat seedlings. It is a 4% Gibberellic Acid solution using an alcohol carrier. Gibberellic acid is a naturally occurring growth hormone in wheat. It is partially responsible for the plant's ability to elongate the coleoptile as it emerges from the meristematic tissue in the germ of the seed piece. We watched the addition of this seed treatment have very significant effects on the rate of emergence on deeply planted seed last fall. This amounted to several days differential in emergence. We don't have to tell you what this means for a dryland deep furrow application. We have a feeling this fall we are only going to get one chance to get the crop out of the ground. An untimely rain may cancel our plans for a successful crop if it happens at the wrong time. Why not get the crop out of the ground and off to a good start? We have noticed that, because the coleoptile is growing so rapidly, it takes an extra day or two for the photosynthetic activity of the plant to catch up and develop some chlorophyll in the first true leaf. So don't get too excited when the leaf remains white for a day or two. We also have antidotal evidence that Release will break post-harvest dormancy on some varieties, thinking here about Farnum. Sometimes it wants to take its own sweet time emerging especially when we are dealing with new crop seed.

### **Treater Upgrades Now Complete**

We had some lines last year waiting to get seed, and that bothered us. We like to wait just about as much as you do so we decided to do something about it. Craig has masterfully designed a system that will speed up the treated wheat delivery process by at least two times. We will have one system for red wheat and a separate system for white. This will save a lot of time cleaning down the system between loads and therefore get you back to the field more quickly.

### **CRP Pricing Holding Steady**

Although the PNW is experiencing many fires this summer, native grasses are holding their pricing fairly well, so far. I think federal and state budgets are taxed to the limit and I doubt if any significant allocation of new money will be available for reseeding public lands this fall. We are still concerned about the total supply and are encouraging you to make your arrangements early for any seeding of CRP contracts this fall.

### **Alfalfa Seed Prices Climbing**

Alfalfa seed is experiencing regional shortages. Some of the more popular varieties are already sold out until new crop comes off this fall. I hear that the Midwest is very short of seed. This makes sense to us because of the higher demand in the southern states and California as a result of the continuing drought.

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### **Sprinter HRW Wheat**

If dryland seeding is delayed this August because of receding moisture in the summerfallow, Sprinter HRW and others that are day length sensitive like Sprinter may have a real fit this year. Sprinter is day length sensitive which means it will head out so many days after it breaks dormancy. Consequently it has the potential to be a great late seeded wheat this fall. Sprinter has very good yield capacity and end use quality. It is early in maturity and has the ability to utilize nitrogen very efficiently when making protein.

### **SY Clearstone CL HRW**

SY Clearstone is another very good alternative for later than normal seeding in the <12" rainfall areas of the state. It is a two gene Clearfield HRW which we like because of the flexibility it gives us in controlling grassy weeds in the crop. Clearstone is a marked improvement over AP503 CL2 in yield and durability.

### **Irrigated Variety Rocks This Year**

**Esperia HRW** has been the star of the early season wheat crop. We have had several reports of yields in the Pasco area approaching 175 bushels and many that have made 165 bu/ac. The test weight of Esperia has been hovering around 65 lbs/bu with one at 65.7 lbs/bu and the protein has been 12% and above. The beautiful thing about this Italian HRW is its maturity; it is a full 10 days ahead of Sinope and NW553. So those of you wanting to grow a second crop should have the ability to get it in and growing faster by using this tool in your rotation. Call us for more details.

### **In Row Fertilization Works**

For the last three years we have advocated for you to use dry fertilizer in the row with your seed. It is a perfect way to get phosphate into the plant early in the life cycle. Many of us have phos deficient soils and this year the healthier the plant's root system was the better it survived the winter. We are recommending 11-52-0 or the more complete formula represented in the Agrium micro essentials product 12-40-10-1. Fertilizer prices are dropping so call us for current pricing. Because of the placement and the availability of these nutrients, we think this is one very good way to insure your crop gets off to the right start. If we are seeding later this year, it will be even more important with colder soils and smaller plants going into the winter.

### **Alfalfa the Right Way**

There is some commonality of methods among successful producers who consistently attain top yields of alfalfa. It all begins with variety selection. I can't help but stop here to tell you just how we select the alfalfas we sell. Without going into a lot of detail, we travel to the actual breeding facility where the alfalfa is developed and talk to the plant breeder. We study the plot data and all of the attributes that we believe make a variety adaptable to the Columbia Basin. Pre-mature leaf senesce, disease profile, fall dormancy, winter hardiness, crown architecture, crown depth, root structure and of course yield. There is a lot more to variety selection than looking at a catalog and making a recommendation. We routinely plant our own trials in the basin after we select the cultivars that pique our interest. This costs us thousands of dollars. Some of our fellow competitors like to experiment on your dollar, making recommendations without a clue of the outcome. Guess who pays for that one? Price should be the last criteria for variety selection. You should always ask for referrals of who has already planted the variety and what the results were. Vet your salesman every time. By this I mean ask what his qualifications are. If someone had done this about 7 years ago we wouldn't have the idiot president we have today.

Fungicide application before first cutting is a much maligned management gem. Yes, I said gem! Using a fungicide like Headline is a lead pipe winning formula for more yield that will pay dividends for all four cuttings. The fact the first cutting is usually so heavy and the potential for yield limiting diseases like black spot, stem rot and leaf blotch are so great should be reason enough to try some. The other management key



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is to include your micro-nutrients with the fungicide. Not only do you save an application cost by making the application at the same time, you are foliar feeding Zinc, Boron and Sulfur at a critical time of the plant's development. **The product is Ample ZSB.** This always pays. I have listed below just what the nutrient withdrawal is for each ton of alfalfa you remove from the field. This is not BS, it is called agronomy 101.  
Nitrogen – 51 lbs. Phosphate – 12 lbs. Potassium – 49 lbs. Sulfur- 5.4 lbs.  
Magnesium – 4.5 lbs. Calcium – 19 lbs. Copper – 0.01 lbs. Manganese – 0.05 lbs.  
Zinc – 0.04 lbs. Boron – 0.05 lbs. Iron – 0.21 lbs.

So you want a good stand of alfalfa – seed more seed per acre. Unless your seed bed is perfect, always seed 25 lbs. acre. The additional few dollars you spend will be more than returned the first cutting you take. Stop and look at this from a more holistic view point. What is the greatest determining factor in deciding to take out a stand of hay – thin stands! If you begin the process with a denser stand of alfalfa, it takes longer to thin it out under any scenario of biotic or abiotic stress you can envision. The bottom line here is this – use reputable dealers with a proven track record and take the guess work out of producing alfalfa. Our system and our varieties work... call us and I will give you the names of the farmers in Pasco and Ritzville who consistently attain 10 tons/acre. Our poster child is Mark Larson. Mark Farms in Sunnyside and uses a lot of dairy nutrients (that is BS) to enhance his organic matter and plant nutrition. He consistently gets 11 to 11.4 tons/acre of alfalfa yield using a green chop removal system. YES, alfalfa yields better in the presence of nitrogen. Ask Mark what is wrong with 11.4 tons and he will say “not much!” With alfalfa prices heading toward \$275.00 we think he is right.

Thanks for you continued support of Tri State Seed Co. We look forward to serving you this year. You can reach us at the office on this number: 1-509-234-2500, or on the following emails, [dana@tristateseed.com](mailto:dana@tristateseed.com) or [craig@tristateseed.com](mailto:craig@tristateseed.com).