

Mustard provides multiple benefits

By **HEATHER SMITH THOMAS**
For the Capital Press

This family farm near Ririe, Idaho, has supported several generations.

"My granddad homesteaded near here and bought this farm in 1900. My son, Andrew, is farming with me now," Gordon Gallup said.

"My dad and granddad tried various crops and had potatoes awhile," he said.

Then they switched to wheat, barley and alfalfa, and his father had a small dairy at one time, and beef cattle.

"We still have a small beef herd but with the high cattle prices I decided it was a good time to sell the older cows," he said. "Some were 16 to 18 years old and I got three times what I paid for them, so I didn't feel bad about selling them!"

The farming evolved over

the years, as they tried different methods.

"We went to no-till in about 1985, and since then we've added more leased acres. Most of our fields including the original farm are dry-farmed, but we have some irrigation on the leased acres, using wheel lines," Gordon said.

He and his son Andrew manage everything, except for taking on extra help during harvest.

Having seven sons really helps at harvest time, he said. They come home to help. They all live close by, except for one son who lives in Casper, Wyo.

Gordon and his wife have 12 grandchildren. The oldest is 16.

"They all love to come to the farm and ride the machinery, so I may have more help coming on. It's good



Heather Smith Thomas/For the Capital Press

Gordon Gallup is the third generation of his family to farm in Eastern Idaho.

to have them around," he said.

The crops are grown in rotation. Decisions on what

to plant depends a lot on prices.

"We've started putting some mustard in the rota-

Gallup Farm

Owner: Gordon Gallup

Farming: More than 40 years

Crops grown: Wheat, barley, alfalfa, mustard

Acres: 5,000

tion during the past four years, to help break disease cycles with the other crops and hopefully take care of the wire worm that can be a problem in grain," he said. "Wire worms eat the seed kernel or cut off the young growing plants."

Mustard contains a natural fumigant that impedes the worms and can be used as a form of biological control, without the use of pesticides.

The mustard is harvested for use in making mustard for seasoning — in liquid form to squirt onto your hot dog, dry mustard, or the whole

seed as a spice.

"We sell our mustard crop to Bill Meadows who owns Mountain States Oilseed at American Falls. He has contracts with Beaver Mustard, a company that makes powdered mustard, dry mustard and whole seed spices," Gordon said.

This will be their fifth year growing mustard.

"We think we're starting to see some benefits from it (as a natural pesticide) and also have a good market for it," he said.

The plan is to rotate mustard across the farm, a different field each year, to control wire worms while growing a marketable crop.

"Canada has been the major mustard producer, but they went away from this a little bit and that's why we've been able to grow some down here," said Gordon.

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