

# Idaho officials warn against blending sprout-damaged wheat

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

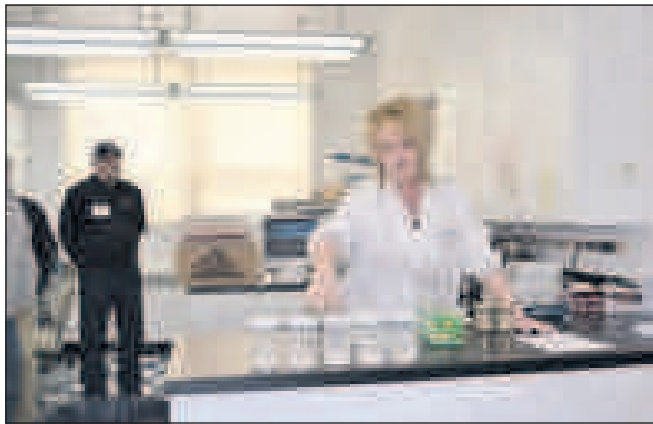
ABERDEEN, Idaho — Idaho Wheat Commission officials warn growers they risk compromising an entire load of wheat when they blend in just 1 percent sprout-damaged grain.

Concerned growers may be tempted to blend this season's grain with carryover wheat from last year's harvest, which sustained widespread sprout damage, the commission has scheduled a webinar on the topic for 8 a.m. June 17.

The link is <http://connect.cals.uidaho.edu/wheat>.

Blaine Jacobson, the commission's executive director, advises growers to sell any remaining sprout-damaged wheat to the feed market.

The commission will also soon release a video of a demonstration hosted March



Submitted by Idaho Wheat Commission

Linda Jones, a lab technician with the Cereals Laboratory at the University of Idaho Aberdeen Research and Extension Center, demonstrates the power of alpha amylase enzyme to lower falling number in wheat. The Idaho Wheat Commission is warning growers not to blend sprout-damaged wheat from last season with this season's crop, based on concerns about low falling numbers.

12 at the University of Idaho's Aberdeen Research and Extension Center Cereals Laboratory to help Idaho grain elevators educate growers about the risk

of blending sprout-damaged wheat.

The demonstration featured laboratory staff conducting a low falling numbers test,

which measures levels of a starch-degrading enzyme that ruins milling quality. Millers typically don't accept grain with a falling numbers score below 300, based on the number of seconds it takes for a rod to fall through a flour-and-water mixture.

The demonstration confirmed a single kernel with a falling numbers value of 60 was enough to lower the score of 2,600 high-quality kernels by 100 points, to a level that millers wouldn't accept, said Cathy Wilson, the commission's director of research collaboration.

"We're talking 1 to 2 percent is enough bad grain to lower the falling number of a whole load below what is acceptable," Wilson said. "The damage was done. Now it could be minimized, or it could become bigger."

Wilson said sprout dam-

age is uncommon in Southern and Eastern Idaho, and as grain elevators have made plans to step up testing this season, many growers have acknowledged they'd never heard of low falling numbers before.

She said growers are accustomed to blending grain to proper protein levels and may not understand blending doesn't work with an active enzyme. Wilson said enzyme levels can be elevated in grain with no visible symptoms, and a large volume of good grain harvested before last season's storms was blended with bad grain that appeared to be in good shape, ruining entire storages.

Wilson said some elevators have discussed purchasing on-site falling numbers testing equipment.

Larry England, marketing assistant with Scoular Grain,

said it can take a few days for off-site falling numbers test results to come back, and grain may already be commingled by then. For now, he considers education to be the best approach to preventing a problem.

"We've been telling everybody we do business with not to try to blend it," England said.

Don Wille, CEO of Thresher Artisan Wheat, said mills and grain buyers made special provisions that won't be repeated last year to utilize sprout-damaged grain.

"This next year, they're not going to be as acceptable of anything under 300 falling numbers," Wille said. "I expect a lot of (growers) are going to expect I am not telling them the truth, and they are going to be, unfortunately, very upset when they get caught."

## Egg farm honored by Oregon economic development agency

Wilcox is in its fourth generation of family operation

By ERIC MORTENSON  
Capital Press

Wilcox Farms, a 106-year-old family business, was selected Agri-Business of the Year by the Strategic Economic Development Corporation of Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties.

The award from SED-COR, the lead economic development group for the three counties in Oregon's Willamette Valley, is presented annually to a business that achieves excellence in agri-business and maintains the role of ag in

the economy.

The company is based in Roy, Wash., and has egg farm operations there and in Aurora, Ore., and a processing facility in Great Falls, Mont. Its products are sold at Fred Meyer, Safeway, Roth's, Lamb's, Natural Grocers, New Seasons, Costco and LifeSource Natural Foods stores.

Wilcox was founded in 1909 and now is in its fourth generation of family operation.

In recent years the company has committed itself to raise chickens in a cage-free environment and on organic feed. It has been certified by Certified Humane, Food Alliance, Salmon Safe and Oregon Tilth.

## U.S. ag exports expected to fall \$12B

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS  
Capital Press

The strength of the U.S. dollar is expected to put a significant damper on annual exports of U.S. agricultural products in fiscal year 2015.

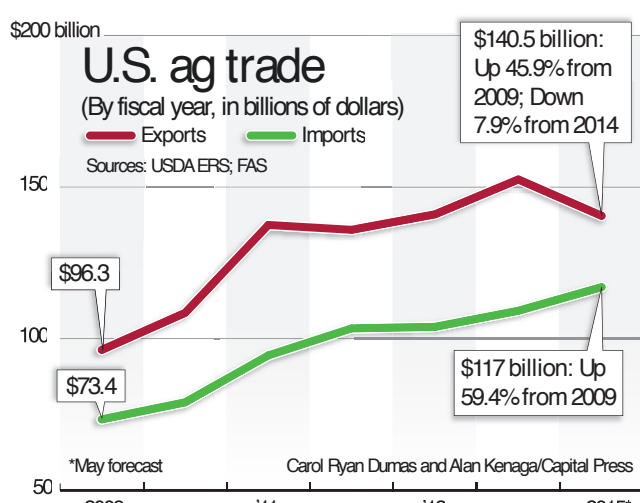
USDA forecasts a \$12 billion decline from FY 2014, from \$152.5 billion to \$140.5 billion.

The value of exports of grains and feeds are forecast to fall nearly \$6 billion. Oilseed exports are expected to decline nearly \$4 billion, and livestock, poultry and dairy are expected to drop by \$2.5 billion.

If realized, FY 2015 would be the lowest level of exports since FY 2012.

U.S. imports of ag products are forecast at a record \$117 billion, an increase of \$7.8 billion over FY 2014.

Appreciation of the dollar has accelerated significantly in the largest U.S.



agricultural export markets, reflecting the relatively strong and stable U.S. economy. The dollar is expected to appreciate almost 25 percent against the euro, USDA reported in its most recent Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade.

"Movements in exchange rates are a leading factor explaining movements in U.S. exports since they are a key determinant

of the relative price of U.S. agricultural products in global markets," USDA's Economic Research Service and Foreign Agricultural Service reported.

While long-term growth in ag exports is largely driven by growth in foreign income, changes in exchange rates are primary factors determining year-to-year variations in exports, according to ERS.

Low energy prices and steady world growth, however, will partly offset the impact of a strengthening dollar on U.S. agriculture, the agencies reported.

Lower energy prices in the U.S., expected to continue below world levels this year, will provide farmers, fertilizer producers and ag exporters, among others, a lower cost environment in 2015, they added.

The agencies' lowered their outlook for ag exports \$1 billion since February's report, with nearly all of the decline on lower exports of high-value, non-bulk products — processed fruits and vegetables and other horticulture products.

Fewer exports of dairy products due to strong global competition and reduced poultry exports due to greater trade restrictions also figure into the decline since February.

## Senate approves nursery shipping revocation authority

Bill also raises maximum license fees, millage rate on revenues

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
Capital Press

The Oregon Senate has approved a bill giving farm regulators the authority to revoke nurseries' shipping permits to prevent the spread of plant diseases.

Senate Bill 256, which also raises the Oregon Department of Agriculture's cap on nursery license fees, passed 23-5 during a Senate vote on June 2.

The Oregon Association of Nurseries supports the bill, which the group has likened to a "nuclear deterrent" against nursery producers who ignore plant health standards.

The risk is that a diseased shipment from a negligent company will create an out-of-state outbreak and endanger Oregon's entire nursery industry, according to OAN.

The maximum license fee on nurseries would increase from \$20,000 a year to \$40,000 a year under SB 256 and the millage rate on their revenues would increase from five to 10 mills. A mill is a tenth of one percent.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture's inspection authority is also revised under the bill to allow for a more "document-heavy" approach that focuses on prevention and auditing rather than on-the-ground inspection.

The legislation will now be considered by the Oregon House.

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