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## Idaho

# Idaho Wheat Commission will re-submit 'grower information' rule change in 2018

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

BOISE — The Idaho Wheat Commission will hold off until next year on a proposed rule that would provide the commission access to the names and contact information of all wheat producers in the state.

The IWC originally proposed the rule in 2016 but withdrew it after some grain elevators objected to it. The commission had planned to re-submit it this year but decided to delay the proposal another year at the request of some grain elevators.

The IWC does plan to re-submit the rule during the 2018 Idaho Legislature, executive director Blaine Jacobson told lawmakers this week.

Idaho statute gives the commission authority to have the names and contact information of wheat growers but the commission currently lacks the mechanism to collect it.

The proposed rule would require first purchasers of Idaho wheat, such as elevators, to provide the names and addresses of growers to the commission.

About half of the elevators in the state currently provide the commission that informa-



A wheat field in southwestern Idaho is shown in this June 28, 2016, photo. The Idaho Wheat Commission will hold off until 2018 to re-submit a proposed rule change that would give it the ability to collect the names and contact information of all wheat producers in the state.

tion, Jacobson said, but Idaho is the only state with a wheat commission that doesn't have the ability to gather the contact information of all wheat growers.

That puts Idaho at a disadvantage when it comes to building the state's wheat industry, he said.

Jacobson said having that information would also enable the commission to inform wheat producers of timely and important information, such as disease outbreaks or price premiums, as well as allow the

commission to show growers how their wheat checkoff dollars are spent.

"This is something we're going to be asking your help with next year," Jacobson told members of the House Agricultural Affairs Committee. "It's something that needs to be fixed."

The IWC proposed the rule during the 2016 Idaho legislative session but after some elevators opposed it, the commission withdrew the rule and entered into negotiated rulemaking with the elevators.

During the negotiated rulemaking meetings, some elevators, including Thresher Artisan Wheat, which owns grain elevators in Eastern Idaho, asked the commission to hold off on proposing the rule for a year to give them time to contact the producers they purchase wheat from to see if they are OK with the information being released to the commission.

Thresher CEO Don Wille said the company is in the process of asking growers that question and a majority have responded.

"A few have said 'no' but the majority are saying 'yes,'" he said.

Thresher believes the release of grower information to the commission should be voluntary, Wille said.

"I don't think it needs to be mandatory," he said. "We'll do this voluntarily, but I need to protect the identity of my growers if they want me to."

IWC board member Bill Flory, a North Idaho wheat grower, said the names and contact information the commission receives from elevators is guarded closely and only used to communicate with and educate growers.

"That list is protected judiciously. It's tightly controlled," he said.



Courtesy of Jim Rice  
Idaho Senate Agricultural Affairs Committee Chairman Jim Rice, R-Caldwell, holds an Idaho license plate that was placed in a lake in another state infested with invasive aquatic mussels. Rice said the plate has helped him find support to increase state funding for boat check stations that keep mussels out of Idaho water.

## ISDA head concerned about invasive species bill

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

BOISE — The head of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture has mixed feelings about a group of bills aiming to help the state better respond to the spreading threat of invasive aquatic mussels.

ISDA Director Celia Gould credited state appropriations leaders for "thoughtful" bills that would significantly step up funding for check stations that prevent out-of-state boats from bringing invasive mussels into the state.

But Gould also voiced strong concerns about HB 274, which would create a new invasive species coordinator position within the Governor's Office and broaden the definition of invasive species to also include noxious weeds. Gould believes the bill would usurp power from county weed superintendents and create a needless new layer of bureaucracy that could come into conflict with her staff.

She said ISDA already performs the functions of the proposed coordinator, who would be tasked with collaborating with surrounding states to stop the spread of invasive species.

"I recognize everyone has the best of intentions, but I'm fearful the legislation as presented has unintended consequences that would outweigh the good it would do," Gould said, adding she also has concerns about related bills SB 1068 and HB 256.

A check station on U.S. Highway 93 near Twin Falls detected the season's first boat harboring live mussels on March 20. The boat, now being held for decontamination, had been in Lake Havasu, located on the California-Arizona border, and was bound for Alberta, Canada. Two other boats harboring dead mussels were also detected this season, according to ISDA.

Last summer, 19 boats harboring mussels, including one boat with viable mussels, were detected from 90,000 inspections. Water bodies in Utah and Nevada are known to be

infested with mussels — which are tough to eradicate and clog irrigation infrastructure — and infestations were recently discovered in Montana reservoirs.

Prior to the 2016 season, the invasive species program operated on a \$1.4 million annual appropriation from state invasive species boating stickers. The Legislature appropriated \$1 million to expand the program through last fall, and SB 1112 — which would award \$1 million through the end of Fiscal Year 2017 to fund three new stations near the Montana border, expand hours of all 18 state check stations and staff them with police — awaits Gov. Butch Otter's signature.

The Legislature has appropriated \$4.3 million to continue offering the expanded program for the fiscal year beginning July 1 — with \$3.1 million coming from the General Fund and \$1.2 million coming from sticker revenue.

Furthermore, HB 211 would generate about \$100,000 in annual revenue through a \$7 increase on non-resident boating stickers.

Senate Agricultural Affairs Committee Chairman Jim Rice, R-Caldwell, said his committee members unanimously supported increased funding for invasive species stations after hearing an ISDA presentation last year.

"We were essentially playing roulette with boats coming in and not being inspected," Rice said. "Stations were not open enough hours."

Clair Bosen, president of Twin Lakes Canal Co. in Franklin County, Idaho, is dismayed that there appears to be no plan to allocate dollars protecting two of his company's reservoirs — Twin Lakes and Glendale.

"(Mussels) just make it so you can't run anything through pipes or head gates. They just plug them up," Bosen said, adding his company would likely have to drain its reservoirs for two years if they were to become infested. "This year, without some funding, we are not going to be able to open those reservoirs (to boating)."

## Idaho quinoa buyer outgrowing processing facility

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho — A local businessman who has established Eastern Idaho as the major U.S. production area for quinoa says recent contracts have maxed out his processing capacity, and he intends to build a much larger facility.

Last October, Jeremiah Clark opened his current small plant, capable of processing up to 2 million pounds per season of the gluten-free grain. His next quinoa processing facility could be operational by the fall of 2018, with the capacity to clean and polish between 50 million and 100 million pounds per season.

Clark contracted with regional growers for about 600 acres of quinoa last year. His goal for this season is to work with up to 20 growers and increase production to about 2,000 acres. Clark said he'd need to contract for about 30,000 acres to supply 60 million pounds of quinoa.

"We're going to need to do an expansion if we're going to grow more for 2018," Clark said. "I figured this was our pilot system. We saved where we could and got used equipment, and I think it's bared out to the point that, yes, this is going to be a good market, and it's going to be worth doing it right."



John O'Connell/Capital Press  
Jeremiah Clark evaluates a quinoa crop in Shelley, Idaho, in August of 2016. Clark hopes to contract for 2,000 acres of quinoa this season, which would max out the capacity of his processing facility.

Clark declined to quote a current contract price but said grower returns for a good quinoa crop should top wheat or barley.

Clark said he's now convinced quinoa isn't a fad, and demand should continue to grow as food companies seek healthy, gluten-free ingredients.

Bill Day, who is in charge of the grains division with Nampa-based HB Specialty Foods, said his company recently signed a contract with Clark, impressed by the quality and color of his quinoa. Day said his employer, which has been buying qui-

noa from South America for making gluten-free flours and breeding to supply to food manufacturers, tested Clark's quinoa last year. Day has encouraged Clark to develop black and red quinoa varieties, in addition to the white quinoa he currently markets.

"I can tell you now, we can sell anything he can grow," Day said.

Growers spanning from American Falls through Ashton, who have thus far planted mostly small, 5-acre plots of quinoa, will be asked to plant 40- to 50-acre fields this season. Some growers, including Wyatt Penfold of



Courtesy of Jeremiah Clark  
Quinoa is bagged and stacked, awaiting shipping, at Jeremiah Clark's quinoa processing facility in Idaho Falls.

Driggs, intend to raise full pivots. Penfold, who raised 20 acres of quinoa last year and will plant at least 120 acres this year, said producing the crop on a larger scale should provide growers insight on management practices, such as controlling weeds without approved herbicides.

"We're trying to get the field management and all of those things figured out with just a few of us before a whole bunch of people jump into it," Penfold said. "We don't want to have a major train wreck with a whole bunch of people."

Clark's growers have been raising a blend of white varieties he selected from Colorado seed. Clark has further developed a single variety from the Colorado seed, called Kailey, and intends to apply for variety protection. University of Idaho is now expanding Kailey seed in a greenhouse, and Penfold will further expand Kailey seed supplies in the field this season.

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