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## Idaho

# Wheat budget: \$210K for falling number research

## Commission aims to solve issues with five research projects

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

BOISE — The Idaho Wheat Commission's fiscal year 2018 budget is down slightly from fiscal 2017 but provides \$210,000 for five projects aimed at helping growers solve the low falling number issue.

The IWC's five-member commission set the fiscal 2018 budget at \$3.18 million, down 6 percent from the

\$3.38 million budgeted for the current fiscal year.

The 2018 budget includes \$1.43 million for various research projects. This is the first time a significant amount of money has been included for falling number research.

Falling number tests measure wheat quality and growers get less money for test results below 300.

IWC Executive Director Blaine Jacobson said the smaller budget this year is due to the commission having paid its final installment toward two \$1 million University of Idaho research endowments.

Accounting for that, the

budget actually increased \$100,000 and most of that additional money went toward research, he said.

"Research is very vital to our industry," said IWC Commissioner Jerry Brown, a Southeast Idaho grower. "The only way we're going to be competitive in the world market is by spending some money on research."

In 2014 falling number problems in Eastern Idaho were caused by pre-harvest sprouting due to heavy rains. Last year they were caused by late-maturity amylase in Northern Idaho.

"...We've got projects that are addressing both of those,"

Jacobson said. "Hopefully, we can make some significant progress on this issue ... and get some solutions put together."

There's a lot the industry doesn't know or understand about the phenomenon, Brown said.

"Low falling number is getting to be a real issue, especially if you're impacted by it," he said. "It can be very painful ... if it happens to you. That's an area ... we are going to continue to put some emphasis on down the road."

More research dollars were also directed toward pest management projects this year, including \$48,000 for a new

wireworm control project.

The new budget includes \$805,501 for market development.

That includes \$25,000 to send sample containers of soft white wheat to millers in Peru as part of a cooperative project between Idaho, Oregon and Washington to encourage Latin American millers to blend soft white wheat with hard red wheat when making tortillas.

More money was budgeted this year to host international trade teams. The commission is expecting five and possibly six teams to visit the state this year, up from three or four during an average year.

Commissioners approved \$833,000 for projects and programs listed under grower communication and education, including \$20,000 for a digital marketing specialist to revamp the commission's website and Facebook pages, produce video clips and develop digital platforms such as Twitter.

The budget includes \$36,000 to help UI's Moscow breeding station purchase a new head row planter and \$37,500 to help researchers in Aberdeen purchase a GPS-controlled auto pilot so their planting and harvesting can be more precise, Jacobson said.

## Proposed Idaho rule results in closer wheat commission-industry working relationship

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

BOISE — A proposed rule change by the Idaho Wheat Commission, which has been opposed by some elevators, has resulted in the commission working more closely with the industry.

The IWC has proposed amending its enabling legislation to require first purchasers of Idaho wheat to submit the names and contact information of all wheat producers in the state to the commission.

The commission argues this is needed to enable it to fulfill its statutory duty to communicate with, inform and educate wheat growers in Idaho.

Most elevators in the state already submit that information but some don't and they say they should be able to do that voluntarily if their growers OK releasing that information.

The IWC held five negotiated rule-making meetings last year and one of the results of those discussions has been a closer working relationship between the commission and industry.

At the request of the industry, the commission began inviting two industry members to its regular meetings. That has resulted in discussions with elevator representatives that otherwise wouldn't have occurred.

"I appreciate the industry interface we have had today," IWC Commissioner and North Idaho wheat farmer Bill Flory said during the commission's quarterly meeting last week. "It's always good to hear from our industry partners. I think it's time well spent."

Ken Blakeman of CHS Primeland and BoDee Udy of J.C. Management attended last week's meeting and joined the discussion on several issues.

J.C. Management Owner Clark Johnston said Udy gained a lot of insight at the meeting.

"He got to meet some people he didn't know before and he said (the commissioners and IWC staff) are really knowledgeable," Johnston said. "I think it's a good thing to have people get together and get to know each other so nobody's the enemy."

Another suggestion that arose during last year's negotiated rule-making meetings was that the IWC host a cereal school in southwestern Idaho. The commission offers cereal schools in North and East Idaho, where most of the state's wheat is produced, but has never held one in southwestern Idaho.

During the IWC's regular quarterly meeting last week, commissioners approved funding for a cereal school in that part of the state starting in 2018.



Sean Ellis/Capital Press

Essie Fallahi, who heads the pomology program at the University of Idaho's Parma Research and Extension Center, speaks about some of the many fruit-related research projects conducted there June 21 during the Parma center's first all-station field day in a decade.

## Parma research station hosts first all-station field day in a decade

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

PARMA, Idaho — About 80 people attended the first all-station field day in a decade at University of Idaho's Parma Research and Extension Center June 21.

Individual researchers at the southwestern Idaho agricultural research station have held crop-specific field days for members of industry over the last decade but the center hadn't held an all-station tour for members of the public and industry for 10 years, said superintendent Jim Barbour.

"We have some new faculty on station now and it seemed like a good time to do this field day again," he said.

The 200-acre center focuses on research and extension activities related to vegetables, cereals, forages, hops,

mint, fruit and seed crops.

Researchers presented field day participants the highlights of projects they are working on.

Barbour, an entomologist, gave an overview of a project designed to help alfalfa seed growers deal with the lygus bug, one of the crop's main production challenges, without also killing the bees needed to pollinate the crop.

Lygus attack the plant at the same time bees are pollinating it, making it difficult to kill the former without harming the latter, Barbour said.

"If you lose a crop because you have lygus or because you don't have bees, it's the same loss," he said. "We are looking at ways to spray and chemicals to use to help control lygus without killing the bees."

Barbour also shared the latest results of a research project

looking at ways to help hop growers control spider mites, which move rapidly and can destroy a hop crop quickly if not dealt with properly.

"We have a lot of miticide studies going on right now looking at different modes of action so we can rotate through chemistries so we don't run into a situation where the mites develop resistance to a (certain chemistry)," he said.

Saad Hafez, a nematologist, discussed his research aimed at finding alternatives to fumigation to manage nematodes in mint. His past research has already resulted in grower recommendations for using green manure crops such as mustard and oil seed radish as natural fumigants to control nematodes in potatoes and sugar beets.

"It's cheaper and it's bet-

ter for the soil because you're adding that much organic matter and you don't need to add as much fertilizer because you get natural nitrogen out of (those crops)," he said.

Plant scientist Mike Thornton shared the results of a just completed two-year study that showed that heavy thrips damage and the resulting infection with iris yellow spot virus increased the susceptibility of onion bulbs to decay in storage.

While the exact reason for the increase in decay is unknown, it appears to be associated with premature death of the plant before the necks soften and fall over naturally, Thornton told Capital Press in an email.

Thornton is testing several new fungicide formulations this year to see if they can reduce the incidence of decay.



Sean Ellis/Capital Press

CHS Primeland General Manager Ken Blakeman, second from left, participates in the Idaho Wheat Commission's quarterly meeting June 6 in Boise. A proposed rule change by the IWC has resulted in a closer working relationship between the commission and industry.

## Tour offers update on research progress

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS  
Capital Press

KIMBERLY, Idaho — About 120 growers, field men, chemical company representatives and researchers turned out for the recent University of Idaho Snake River Pest Management Research tour at the Kimberley Research and Extension Center.

The weather was hot and so were the topics, ranging from weed-control trials, insect management studies and irrigation research.

Most of the results of this year's trials will be shared later this summer, but researchers wanted to update industry members on what's taking place at the research center this season.

Don Morishita, UI weed scientist and superintendent of the research center, explained trials on broadleaf weed, wild oat and foxtail control in

spring wheat comparing different herbicides.

So far, broadleaf weed control looks "pretty darn good" although kochia control with Quelex is not as good as expected. Combining it with an adjuvant is showing a big benefit, however, he said.

Some differences are being seen in wild oat control, with a Rimfire Max mix visually looking the best at this point, but the plots didn't have a lot of wild oat pressure this year, he said.

Another study is looking at the potential horsetail effects of four herbicides on sugar beets. The trials are focused on the beneficial effects of low doses of herbicides that would be toxic at higher doses.

As sugar beet yields continue to increase, sugar factories are about to hit the amount of biomass they can handle. The trials are looking at the use of low doses of herbicide

to increase sugar content without adding biomass.

"We hope we can improve sugar yield more than the biomass or the roots," Morishita said.

With no new herbicides for sugar beets coming down the pike in the near future, another research project is looking at sugar beet tolerance to ethofumesate and herbicides not registered for sugar beets.

In bean research, trials are continuing on the effects of adjuvants on Basagran, as well as weed control in dry beans using narrow rows, different seeding rates and different tillage methods. Researchers are also looking at the effects of tillage and irrigation on garden seed bean production and herbicide tolerance in two garden seed bean varieties.

Research is also continuing on hairy vetch control in cover crops, and new research is looking at safflower tolerance

to sulfentrazone.

The tour also highlighted insect-management studies, including the timing and development of zebra chip infection in potatoes; evaluation of potato psyllid insecticides; and potato psyllid behavioral response to resistant potato germplasm.

Insect studies are also being done on the response of sugar beet germplasm to sugar beet root maggots and the effects of aphids on sugar beets. Wireworm resistance and preference in crops and the use of trap crops and biologic controls are also being studied.

Research continues on final research timing and the effects of polymers in sugar beets and potatoes, as well as the effects of irrigation with different irrigation methods and rates, different tillage methods and the use of cover crops in dry beans.

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