

Washington

Researcher: Falling number problems 'mild' this year

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

Low falling number test results have posed only a "mild" problem for Northwest wheat farmers this year, a researcher says.

Falling number is a test that measures starch damage in wheat that reduces the quality of baked goods and noodles.

Farmers were caught off guard in 2016 when roughly 44 percent of soft white wheat samples and 42 percent of club wheat samples tested below 300, the industry standard.

The industry estimates the damage last year cost farmers more than \$30 million in lower prices.

This year, Camille Steber, a USDA Agricultural Research Service molecular geneticist in Pullman, Wash., reported



Capital Press File

Camille Steber, a USDA Agricultural Research Service molecular geneticist, speaks at a field day last year. She reports that low falling number test results are far less frequent this year compared to last year.

the lowest falling number test scores in several soft white wheat field trial locations: 265 in Anatone, 275 in Connell, 284 in Lind, 274 in Dusty, 289

in Pullman and 217 in St. Andrews.

No falling numbers below 300 were reported in Ritzville, Pasco or Dayton.

Steber believes the cause of low test scores was likely late maturity alpha amylase, an enzyme required for wheat seed germination.

It is caused by large temperature swings the last week of June, a critical point in wheat development.

Rain before harvest can cause sprout damage and also lead to low falling number test results.

Some of the usual-suspect wheat varieties were below 300, but the numbers are much higher than those in 2016, Steber said.

She called the data "encouraging."

"It is possible that enough farmers switched over to resistant varieties that the high falling number grain will be enough to dilute out the grain that is a bit below falling num-

ber," she said. "I have my fingers crossed that Northwest farmers will have a good, profitable year in 2017."

Steber hopes there's enough high falling number wheat that growers won't be docked for their wheat with low falling numbers.

"It's just a mild problem, it looks like this year, unless it rains a great deal," she said. Steber recommends harvesting early.

Phil Garcia, manager of the state grain inspection program, said the tests his agency has run this year have been very "generic," with the number of samples going down "dramatically."

"We're in the hundreds rather than the tens of thousands of samples run," he said.

That's normal, he said. "It's business as usual."

Garcia said requests for falling number tests typically dwindle by the end of harvest.

"But you never know," he said.

For next year, if a high-risk variety performs well for a farmer, Steber recommends also planting a low-risk variety, but keeping them separate during harvest.

She posts data about wheat variety performance on her website, <http://steberlab.org/project7599data.php>.

For the development of future wheat varieties, Steber hopes to identify the genes that lead to low falling number test results.

"If I'm successful, no one will know, because there won't be a problem," she said.

Japanese buyers consider Washington wheat during tour

Company interested in end-use quality

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

Buyers from a Japanese flour company got a whirlwind look at wheat in Washington and the Pacific Northwest as they look for new varieties to develop new products.

Representatives of the Ma-

suda Flour Milling Co. Ltd. met with representatives of the Washington Grain Commission to discuss variety availability and quality, and learn more about the wheat production system.

"Masuda is a small percentage of their market share, but as a mid-sized Japanese company, they're one of the most progressive and most important," said Dana Herron, a board member on the commission. "We don't get a

chance to visit with them very often, so this meeting was very productive."

Masuda often looks to fine-tune its wheat purchases, Herron said. The company is a big user of club wheat, a subclass of soft white wheat primarily produced in Washington state. It is often blended with regular soft white wheat as Western white wheat when exported overseas.

Masuda buys varieties that have specific end-use quali-

ties from grain sheds, Herron said.

"They're very much interested in the functional end-use quality of our wheat," he said.

Herron believes Masuda will look to buy more wheat from the U.S.

"This year is a little easier to sell than most because our quality is exceptional, our dockage and foreign material is very low and protein is right at the sweet spot, so we

don't have any quality problems," he said.

Japan is the second-largest buyer of soft white wheat. They purchased nearly 784,000 metric tons during the 2016-2017 marketing year, said Glen Squires, CEO of the commission. Japan purchased 2.86 million metric tons of U.S. wheat for the same period.

Herron expected the visitors to also tour Washington State University in Pullman

and an export facility in Portland, Ore.

Masuda seeks a way to differentiate itself in a highly competitive market, Herron said.

"This meeting was as important for them as it was for us," he said. "The relationships that exist between the commission and our customers are just as important as the farmer's relationship with his banker. It's a relationship, it's not all about the money."

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TRACTORS	TRACTORS	TRACTORS
 <p>JD 5085M, 2016, 566 hours, cab, MFWD, 16X16 PR trans., dual mid remotes, 3 rear remotes..... \$53,400 Fall River Mills #GG400287</p>	 <p>JD 8370R, 2015, 1133 hours, premium cab, ILS, IVT, full auto track, rear 620-46 duals, front 480-34 duals, all new..... \$292,000 McMinnville FD101233</p>	 <p>Challenger MT575B, 2008, 1900 hours, susp. cab, susp. MFWD, CVT, 4 remotes, 480-46 singles, 380-34 frt singles..... \$82,500 Madras T079072</p>
 <p>JD 8270R, 2014, 1091 hours, premium cab, IVT, MFWD, 5 remotes, A/T ready, 800-38 duals, 600-30 frt tires..... \$226,000 McMinnville 91340</p>	 <p>JD 9360R, 2013, 596 hours, premium cab, PS trans., 4 remotes, bareback 520-42 duals, front weights...\$211,200 Madras DP008265</p>	 <p>Case IH 290, 2011, 2714 hours, deluxe cab, MFWD, PS trans., 5 remotes, 380-54 rear duals, 380-34 frt duals..... \$124,900 Walla Walla BRD02229</p>
 <p>JD 8530, 2006, 9856 hours, premium cab, IVS, ILS, 4 remotes, 480-46 rear duals, 380-34 frt duals..... \$88,500 McMinnville OD001850</p>	 <p>JD 9420, 2003, 5284 hours, premium cab, PS trans., 4 remotes, bareback, 800-38 duals, front weights..... \$115,000 Tangent OP011006</p>	 <p>Case IH 195, 2009, 5740 hours, deluxe cab, MFWD, PS trans., 3 remotes, 480-42 rear duals, 380-30 frt tires..... \$65,000 Fall River Mills ABH40541</p>
 <p>Case IH 340, 2015, 622 hours, premium cab, susp. axle, CVT, 480-54 duals, 380-38 frt duals, 4 remotes..... \$225,000 Tekoa ERF06413</p>	 <p>Case IH 600Q, 2014, 2255 hours, lux cab, 36" tracks, PS trans., twin flow pump, 8 remotes, auto guidance..... \$320,000 Tangent EF139730</p>	 <p>Case IH 4350, 2009, 4472 hours, premium cab, PS trans., 36" tracks, 1000 PTO, high flow hyd., 4 remotes..... \$215,000 Tekoa 8F112520</p>
TILLAGE	TILLAGE	TILLAGE
 <p>Salford 8211 plow, 2013, 11 bottom pull plow, 6 and 5 bottom in tandem, demo unit like new..... \$52,000 Merrill 130143</p>	 <p>Great Plains TC5111 tillage, 2015, 16' vertical tillage tool, rigid frame, rear clod crumbler, like new..... \$34,900 Madras A1758X</p>	 <p>Landoll 7431 tillage, 2013, 26' wing-fold vertical tillage, rear clod crumbler..... \$39,500 Harrisburg J1203522</p>
 <p>Wilrich V957DD ripper, 14' 9" shank disk ripper..... \$25,000 Merrill 457580</p>	 <p>JD 2210 cultivator, 2014, 28' folding field cultivator, C shanks, rear tine harrow..... \$45,000 Donald D0755492</p>	 <p>Case IH 730C ripper, 2010, 16', 7-shank disk ripper, shear bolt triop, rear rolling basket, 22" blades..... \$37,900 McMinnville H0037240</p>
COMBINES	COMBINES	COMBINES
 <p>JD 9770 combine, 2010, 2232 hours, rotary, small grain, JD 615P BPU platform..... \$156,500 Salem A0738937</p>	 <p>JD 5670, 2014, 464 hours, small grain, A/T ready, Pro Drive, JD 615P belt pickup platform..... \$290,400 Merrill 765545</p>	 <p>JD 5680, 2012, 664 hours, small grain, 35% Rahco leveler, 635F platform and cart, A/T ready..... \$347,600 Walla Walla 747035</p>
 <p>JD 9670 combine, 2008, 2046 hours, rotary, small grain, 615P BPU platform, sidehill cleaning shoe..... \$182,000 McMinnville 05725903</p>	 <p>JD 5680, 2013, 881 hours, small grain, 35% Rahco Leveler, 635F platform and cart, A/T ready..... \$388,700 Four Lakes 755668</p>	 <p>Case IH 7088, 2010, 1726 hours, small grain, AFX rotor, duals, 24' unloading auger, combine only..... \$127,000 Tekoa AG003915</p>
<p>JD 9670 combine, 2008, 2747 hours, rotary, small grain, 615P BPU platform, sidehill clearing packages..... \$150,000 Salem 05726119</p>	<p>Case IH 2188 combine, 1996, 4691 hours, rotary, small grain, 1015 BPU platform..... \$55,000 Harrisburg C0193663</p>	<p>Case IH 2188 combine, 1997, 5133 hours, rotary, small grain, 1015 BPU platform..... \$55,000 Harrisburg C0195413</p>

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Fruit companies dump old apples

By **DAN WHEAT**
Capital Press

WENATCHEE, Wash. — Tree fruit companies are dumping some old crop apples on the ground, but probably not near the amounts they dumped two years ago.

Doug England, manager of Manson Fruit Cooperative, said no one likes to talk about it but companies dump fruit every year because processors are more strict about not taking any decay in apples culled out on packing lines. He said the cooperative dumped about 200 tons this season.

A little bit is dumped all season but it can be more at the end of the season, he said.

England said he knows of no fruit good enough for packing that has been dumped, but that it could happen.

A record 143.6 million, 40-pound-box crop in 2014 was reduced from 155 million boxes, partially by the dumping of millions of boxes of mostly Red Delicious. The dumping occurred through the spring and summer of 2015.

A huge crop coupled with a work slowdown at West Coast seaports and Russia banning Western produce caused prices to drop to a point where some sizes and grades of apples were deemed unprofitable to pack and were dumped, Bruce Grim, manager of the Washington Apple Growers Marketing Association, said that year.

Bob Mathison, chairman of the board of Stemilt Growers LLC, Wenatchee, posted a photo on Facebook Aug. 29



Courtesy of Bob Mathison

Lavonne van Someren Greve, sister of Bob Mathison, board chairman of Stemilt Growers, looks at apples on ground at a Stemilt orchard near Quincy, Wash., in early August.

of a large amount of apples on the ground at a Stemilt orchard near Quincy.

"We were surprised that someone dumped a (storage) room full of last year's apples on the field we're going to plant next year. Trees won't live there," Mathison wrote in the post.

Later, he told Capital Press that company officials told him the apples were not old crop from storage but late thinning of new crop Honeycrisp.

Crews normally drop apples they are thinning right on the ground where they are thinning. Being late, they had too many to leave in the orchard so they hauled them out, he said.

"It was an internal mistake that they were dumped on ground to be planted next spring, so they will be cleaned

up," Mathison said.

Young trees won't grow in ground high in acid and ethylene from too much rotted fruit, he said.

While agreeing it looks like far too much fruit for thinners to carry to the end of rows to dump, Mathison said that's the company story.

"The real story is the lack of labor to get cherries picked. We had to switch workers over from thinning to get cherries picked and thinning didn't get done," he said.

Stemilt built housing for 1,200 beds in the last three to four years for domestic and foreign guestworkers to be able to hire foreign guestworkers and will build that many more in the next three years, Mathison said.

The company has enough workers to harvest its apples, he said.

Settlement reached in dairy pay lawsuit

By **DAN WHEAT**
Capital Press

YAKIMA, Wash. — A \$600,000 settlement has been reached in a lawsuit against a Sunnyside dairy for its alleged failure to pay employees for meal and rest breaks and for all time worked.

A Yakima County Superior Court judge granted preliminary approval to the settlement for 281 dairy workers on Aug. 25, according to Columbia Legal Services, which filed the lawsuit last year against DeRuyter Bros. Dairy.

"We are pleased with the proposed settlement, which provides fair compensation to workers for the alleged failures to provide meal and rest periods and to pay workers for all work performed," said Lori Isley, a Columbia Legal Services attorney in Yakima.

The settlement did not cover alleged unpaid overtime or the lawsuit's challenge of a state law that exempts farmworkers from overtime pay, CLS said in a news release.

The overtime challenge may ultimately be decided by the state Supreme Court, said Marc Cote, a Seattle attorney and co-counsel on the case.

Jake and Genny DeRuyter sold the 6,200-head dairy at the end of May because they were nearing retirement and had health concerns, Genny DeRuyter told Capital Press at that time. She said the lawsuit was a challenge but not the reason for selling.

"The sale motivated the parties to reach agreement. We are grateful DeRuyter stepped up to the plate to resolve these claims for the workers," Cote said.

Under the settlement, each milker will receive a proportional share of damages based on the number of shifts worked between Dec. 8, 2013, and Dec. 31, 2016. The settlement also covers the workers' attorney fees and the costs of notifying workers of the settlement to ensure the payment of wages owed.

Workers will receive written notices stating the estimated amounts they are owed and giving them until Oct. 9 to opt out of the lawsuit or to object, CLS said.

Workers will likely be paid before the end of the year if the court grants final approval at the end of October. People who worked as milkers at the dairy in the three years and don't receive a notice by the end of September may contact CLS in Yakima at 800-631-1323, ext. 805.