

# People & Places

## A new market for landrace grains

Don Scheuerman's company raises ancient varieties unique to region

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**  
Capital Press

ENDICOTT, Wash. — Don Scheuerman believes the future of farming lies in the grains that were grown in the past.

Scheuerman co-founded Palouse Heritage with his brother, Richard, seven years ago, and incorporated in 2014. The company sells ancient landrace grains.

Ancient grains technically are early grasses such as emmer, spelt and einkorn. Landraces are the strain of grains that developed in specific locations, Scheuerman said.

The early landrace grains are like the "great-great grandparents" of today's modern wheat varieties, he said, adding they require little fertilizer.

The company fills a specific niche, Scheuerman said.

"Our markets are the 49 percent of the people in Washington, Oregon and California who voted for mandatory GMO (genetically modified organism) labeling," he said.

The company is not organic, but is aiming toward organic practices, Scheuerman said.

He stresses that the compa-



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Don Scheuerman, co-founder of Palouse Heritage Grains, stands on the top of the hill overlooking his farm April 6 near Endicott, Wash. The company sells landrace grains to high-end restaurants and is collaborating with brewers.

ny is not against conventional agriculture.

"These are complicated issues without simplistic answers," he said. "We don't come down on (a particular side). We just picked our way and we don't look back."

The company also has a 30-acre seed farm, and three other farmers grow for the company, for a total of roughly 100 tons produced on 100 acres, Scheuerman said.

Scheuerman wants to enhance the farm's value per acre, with an emphasis on sustainability and soil health.

"We really view ourselves as transitioning into soil that grows crops, as opposed to growing crops in soil," he said.

The company sells the rare grains to a handful of high-end restaurants and collaborates with brewers.

The Scheuermans worked with Washington State University researchers, including Steve Jones, director of the bread laboratory in Mount Vernon, Wash., to identify historically relevant grains that have the desired characteristics for baking and brewing.

Newer heritage wheats with higher yields need to be identified to provide communities with access to regional food that is minimally processed, Jones said.

"The idea that commodity white wheat is the future has been with us for over 100

years," Jones said. "Anything that does not go along with that old idea can have an impact."

Jones appreciates Scheuerman's approach.

"I really like the idea of somebody doing something," he said. "Don is doing something."

Scheuerman is a partner and co-founder of the new Grain Shed cooperative in Spokane with brewers Joel Williamson and Ted Benson and miller-baker Shaun Thompson Duffy in Spokane's Perry District. It is slated to open at the end of April.

The co-op recently received approval for a brew-



**Western Innovator**

**Don Scheuerman**  
Title: Co-founder, Palouse Heritage  
Age: 68  
Hometown: Endicott, Wash.  
Education: Attended Washington State University for three years  
Family: Daughter, Nicole  
Website: <https://www.palouseheritage.com/>

ery, Scheuerman said. In five years, he hopes to have "Grain Shed" beer in every store in the state.

The co-op is based on the "five pillars of grain" — bread, beer, pasta, pizza and spirits, he said.

Farmers sell landrace, heirloom and ancient grains at a premium into the co-op.

The co-op isn't interested in getting bigger, Scheuerman said. Its members want to get the model to a point where other small farmers can replicate it for their own food shed, he said.

"We're trying to reconnect the rural to the urban," he said.

## National runner-up in YF&R Discussion Meet receives her tractor

Prize donated by Case IH

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**  
Capital Press

After finishing as national runner-up in the Young Farmers & Ranchers Discussion Meet at the 2018 American Farm Bureau Federation convention in Nashville, Jenny Freeborn arrived Thursday at Ag West Supply in Rickreall, Ore., to claim her prize.

Freeborn, who chairs the Oregon Farm Bureau's Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee, received a Farmall 50A tractor donated by Case IH for her impressive showing at the event. Matt Mollard, territory sales manager for Case IH, was also on hand to give Freeborn the key.

"This is literally something



George Plaver/Capital Press

Jenny Freeborn, Young Farmer and Rancher chairwoman for the Oregon Farm Bureau, is presented with a Case IH Farmall 50A tractor by Matt Mollard, territory sales manager for Case IH after she received national runner-up in the Discussion Meet competitive event at the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual convention in Nashville.

"I've been working on since I was 15 years old," Freeborn said of competing in the national Discussion Meet. "It really is a dream come true for me. The fact that this actually happened is incredible."

The Young Farmers & Ranchers Discussion Meet is a competitive event that simulates a committee meeting, with members swapping information and ideas on a pre-determined topic. The list of

topics for Freeborn included:

- Round 1 — With a growing demand for U.S. farm products abroad, how can agriculture overcome public skepticism of foreign trade to negotiate new trade agreements and open new world markets?

- Round 2 — How can Farm Bureau help members with increasing legal and regulatory obstacles so they can focus on farming and ranching?

- Sweet 16 — How can farmers and ranchers maintain their buying power with the continued trend of input supplier and provider consolidations?

- Final Four — Farmers are a shrinking percentage of the population. How can Farm Bureau help first-generation farmers and ranchers get started in agriculture?

The night before the Final Four, Freeborn said she couldn't eat or sleep. Her sister, Kathy Hadley, who also made the Sweet 16 in 2016, stayed with her to provide support.

Above all else, Freeborn said she was thrilled to shine a spotlight on the good work being done by the Oregon Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee.

"That was the best part of it for me, knowing that I am bringing attention and notoriety to our state," she said.

Freeborn, who lives on the family farm in Rickreall, was appointed chairwoman of the committee in December 2017. The group is specifically for Farm Bureau members between the ages of 16 and 35.

Martha Smith of Colorado won the discussion meet. Jared Knock of South Dakota placed third, and fourth place went to Matt Jakubik of Michigan.

## Oregon agriculture leader Phillip Walker dies at 64

By **MITCH LIES**  
For the Capital Press



Phil Walker

Phillip Walker, a Salem tree fruit and nut grower who held leadership positions in the agricultural industry for many years, died of cancer April 6. He was 64.

Walker served on the Oregon Hazelnut Commission from 1991 to 1997 and from 2003 to 2009, including serving as chairman for three years and treasurer for three years. From 1987 to 1991, Walker was a member of the Nut Grower Society Board, serving as president of the society in 1991. He received the Nut Grower of the Year award in 1997.

Walker served as a Polk County commissioner in 1998 and from 2003 to 2005. He served a stint on the Polk

County Budget Committee, on the Polk County Citizens Advisory Committee for Corrections Facilities and on the West Salem Little League Board of Directors.

Walker served on the board of Oregon State University's Agricultural Research Foundation, from 1991 until his death, including serving as president of the foundation from 2009 until his death.

"Phil was a great leader," said Ralph Fisher, who is taking over as president of the foundation and who worked with Walker throughout Walker's tenure as foundation president. "He was one of those guys that when he spoke, you

listened, just because of his depth of knowledge on topics and his organizational understanding.

"His passing is a great loss for agriculture and the community of Salem and the state of Oregon," Fisher said.

"Phil was frank and fair and an inspiration to his peers, and certainly to me," said Polly Owen, director of the Hazelnut Industry Office, who worked with Walker for more than two decades. "He was a master at ensuring that all points of view were clear before decisions were made regarding the industry."

"I am thankful for all the opportunities I have had through the years to work side-by-side and for Phil," Owen said.

"The hazelnut community has lost an important voice

and a very special friend," she said.

Walker grew up working the family's orchards west of Salem and returned to the farm after graduating from the University of Oregon in 1975.

He took over management of Walkdale Farms from his father, Gordon, in the mid-1980s.

Orchardist Doug Olsen pointed out that Walker also was "very involved in the cherry industry, being one of the valley's largest growers."

"Most of all," Olsen said, "he was a great friend and will greatly be missed."

Walker's family's legacy in Oregon agriculture dates back six generations to when his ancestor, Michael Henry Walker, traveled the Oregon Trail from Iowa in a covered wagon and started farming

near Independence in the mid-1800s.

Walker is survived by his wife of 38 years, Rebecca; his sons Marcus, William and Joseph; his stepmother Nancy Walker; his sisters Rachel Walker, Karen Walker and Susan Glaze; and his grandchildren Payten Walker and Rocco Walker.

A memorial service for Walker will be held at Zenith Vineyard, 5657 Zena Road N.W., Salem, on May 4 at 2 p.m., with a reception to follow.

The family is asking that donations in Phil's memory be made to the Agricultural Research Foundation at OSU, 1600 S.W. Western Blvd., Suite 320, Corvallis, Ore. 97333, or to the Boys and Girls Club of Salem, 1395 Summer St. N.E., Salem 97301.

### Calendar

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### Through Sunday April 22

Puyallup Spring Fair. Washington State Fairgrounds, 110 Ninth Ave. SW, Puyallup, Wash. Website: <http://www.thefair.com/spring-fair>

### Saturday, April 21

Oregon Women for Ag Auction and Dinner. 5:30 p.m. Linn County Fair and Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road, Albany, Ore. This exciting event is a fundraiser for Oregon Women for Agriculture. Web: [owonline.org](http://owonline.org)

Tree School East. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Baker High School, 2500 E St., Baker City, Ore. This year the school will offer 29 classes. Sponsored by OSU Extension, the Oregon Forest Resources Institute and the Oregon Small Woodlands Association. Cost: \$50, \$20 for 18 and younger with an adult family member. Website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/baker/>

[oregonstate.edu/baker/](http://www.oregonstate.edu/baker/)

### Monday-Tuesday April 23-24

Goat Workshop. WSU Jefferson County Extension classroom, 97 Oak Bay Road, Port Hadlock, Wash. The 12 hours of instruction is useful to goat owners and people thinking about raising goats. Cost: \$40. Website: [www.brown-papertickets.com](http://www.brown-papertickets.com)

### Sunday-Wednesday April 22-25

California FFA State Convention. Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. Website: <http://www.calaged.org/stateconvention>

### Monday, April 23

Changing Hands: A Workshop on Farm Succession Planning and Access to Land. 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. OU Higher Education Center, 101 South Bartlett St., Medford Ore. Rogue Farm Corps will bring together aspiring and retiring farmers for a full day of training on land access and succession planning. Cost: \$20 Website: [www.roguefarmcorps.org/planning](http://www.roguefarmcorps.org/planning)

### Friday-Saturday April 27-28

2018 California Beef Cattle Grazing School. 8:30 a.m. UC Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center, 8279 Scott Forbes Road, Browns Valley, Calif. This two-day grazing school

provides participants with practical experience. Cost: \$180. Website: <http://unanr.edu/2018grazingschool>

Horsedrawn Vehicle and Equipment Auction. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Yamhill County Fairgrounds, 2070 NE Lafayette Ave., McMinnville, Ore. Auction starts both days at 10 a.m. Website: [www.pacificoverlandauction.com](http://www.pacificoverlandauction.com)

### Friday, April 27

Governor's Conference on Agriculture. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Clark County Government Center, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nev. Sponsored by the Nevada Department of Agriculture. Website: <http://govcon.buynevada.org/>

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