



Grain fills a semitrailer.

Ben Lonergan/EO Media Group File

# Wheat prices fall to pre-war levels

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**  
Capital Press

Wheat prices have dropped to the level they were before the Russia-Ukraine war began, market analysts say, citing a lack of demand.

Soft white wheat is \$9 per bushel on the Portland market, down from \$11 to \$11.50 per bushel a month ago.

“A drop going into Northern Hemisphere harvest isn’t super surprising,” said Byron Behne, senior merchant at Northwest Grain Growers in Walla Walla, Wash. “Getting below the price of wheat prior to the start of the war while the war’s still going on is pretty surprising, though.”

“We’ve had a major correction,” said Dan Steiner, grains merchant at Morrow County Grain Growers in Oregon. “I think this market has got to go down to find some demand.”

Last week, the U.S. exported 18,000 bushels of soft white wheat. The industry needs to ship roughly 3 million bushels per week, Steiner said.

“We’ve got a crop coming off, and it’s going to be a crop — I’m not going to say a bumper crop, but it’s going to be nice — and we



**Byron Behne**



**Dan Steiner**

don’t really have any sales to put it against,” he said.

In a normal year, 25% of the newest crop would already be marketed by July 1, but Steiner said this year it’s about 15% marketed. That’s roughly 22 million bushels, 10% of an average crop, that needs to hit the cash market in the next month and a half, he said.

“Number one, we had tight supplies; number two, we had high-priced supplies,” said Darin Newsom, a market analyst in Omaha, Neb. “Now we’ve just got supplies with nowhere to go.”

Because it’s an election year, the federal government could step in and buy 10 million bushels to donate in food aid. That would provide a shock to the market, Steiner said.

“That kind of thing — totally plausible, could happen — would turn this thing right around,” he said. “We have to find some demand. We have to.”

He points to the high price of freight for U.S. wheat compared to competing countries, and a strong U.S. dollar.

“We now have some of the cheapest wheat in the world, but you have to put a big fat asterisk next to that,” Steiner said. “The exchange rate is backwards for exports right now. If that trend continues or stays in place, it’s going to make it that much harder.”

Steiner said prices could continue to drop, particularly in the next six weeks.

Behne’s been expecting a rebound at some point, but said prices dropped by another dollar while he anticipated a bounce.

Newsom doesn’t see prices dropping much farther, but said they could go about \$1.50 per bushel lower.

“That seems an extreme, but it’s certainly a possibility,” he said. “If we see that demand develop ... there’s a chance we could go up. We’re not going to get back to where we were a couple months ago. That’s just not going to happen. Or, it shouldn’t happen.”

“Wheat is grown for only one reason, and that’s to turn it into cash,” Steiner said. “We’ve got to find somebody who’s got money who wants to pay for it.”



An adult emerald ash borer.

Oregon Department of Agriculture

## Invasive emerald ash borer found in Oregon — first sighting on West Coast

By **SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN**  
Capital Press

FOREST GROVE, Ore. — The emerald ash borer, an invasive wood-boring beetle that infests and kills North American ash trees, has been found in Oregon.

The discovery was the first known sighting on the West Coast, according to Oregon Department of Agriculture.

The beetle was found on June 30 by Dominic Maze, an invasive species biologist for the City of Portland.

Maze was in Forest Grove, Ore., waiting to pick his kids up from summer camp, when he noticed several unhealthy-looking ash trees. Upon closer examination, he recognized the distinctive D-shaped holes that adult emerald ash borers make as they exit an infested tree.

“When my kids arrived, I asked them to look for adult beetles,” said Maze. “My son promptly found

one crawling on him. Knowing how many millions of ash trees across the country these beetles have killed, I felt like I was going to throw up.”

Maze was rightly worried.

The notorious emerald ash borer — native to Asia — has left widespread destruction in its path across the U.S., so its arrival on the West Coast concerns biologists. ODA calls the emerald ash borer the most destructive forest pest in North America.

According to a 2022 study in the academic journal Sustainability, since it was first found near Detroit, Mich., in 2002, the beetle has killed more than 8 billion native ash trees.

The beetles have infested much of Canada and the U.S., spreading out from the Midwest.

Native North American ash trees are not resistant to emerald ash borers, so nearly all infected trees will prematurely die if

left untreated.

State officials say Maze played a crucial role in alerting the state to his discovery so that agencies can try to track and curb the beetle’s spread.

After finding the emerald ash borer in Forest Grove, Maze immediately called the Oregon Department of Forestry’s Forest Health Unit to report the sighting.

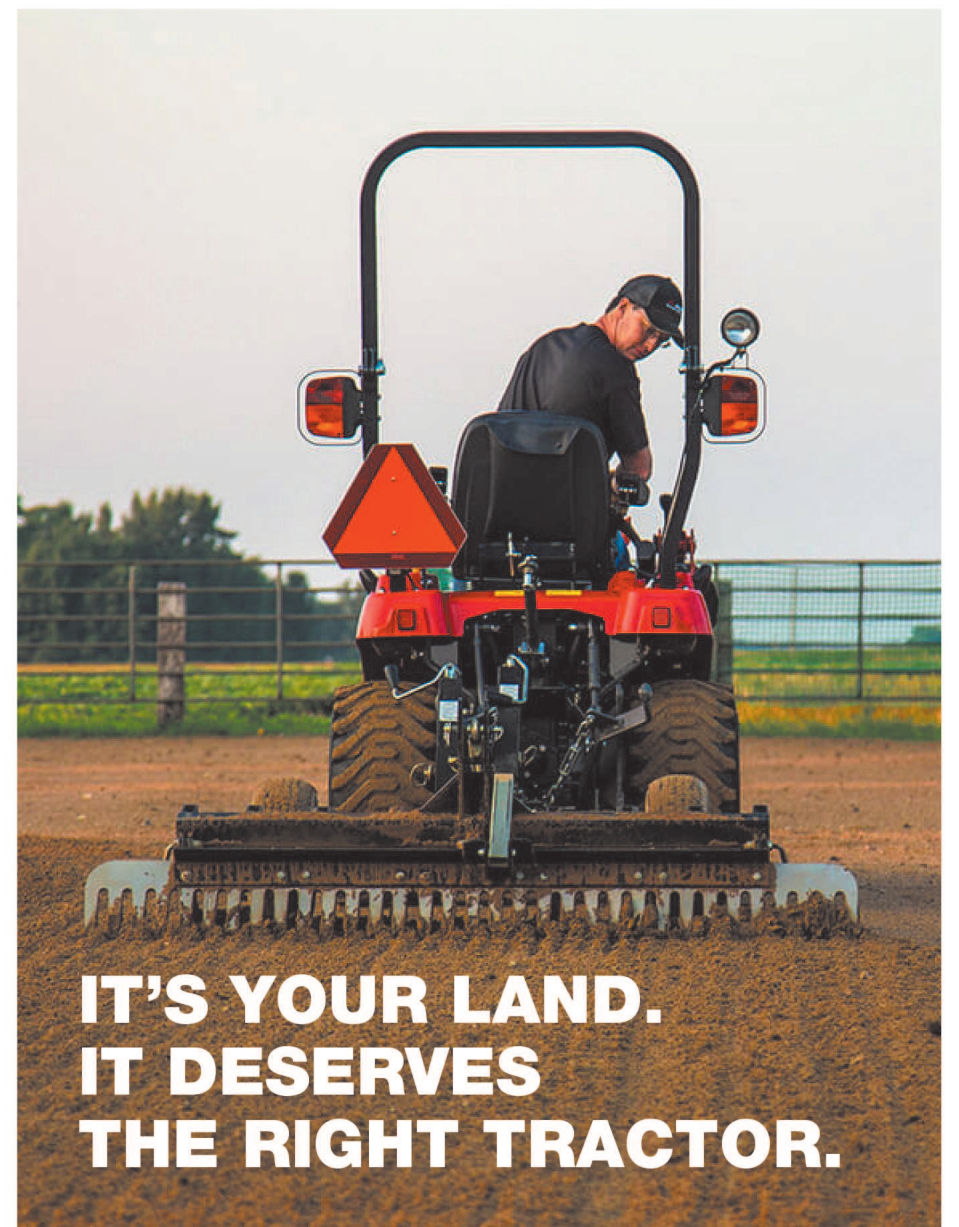
ODF forest entomologist Christine Buhl drove to the site and identified an adult emerald ash borer, known for its metallic, shiny green color. Her identification was later verified by two more invasive species specialists.

Within 48 hours of the discovery, officials cut down and chipped the infested trees.

Officials urge the public to learn what an emerald ash borer looks like and report sightings online at the Oregon Invasive Species Council hotline. More information can be found on ODA’s Emerald Ash Borer webpage.



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