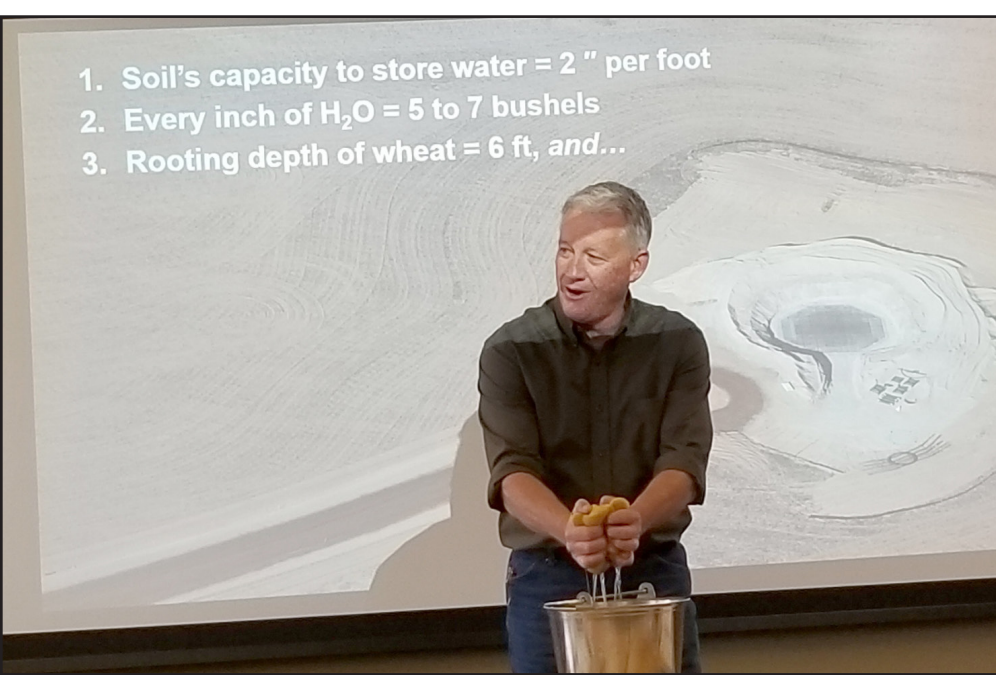


Was a 'good year', says county agronomy agent

Wheat averaged 55 bushels per acre



Morrow County OSU Extension Agent Larry Lutchter demonstrates with a sponge how important it is for water to be absorbed into the soil for a good wheat crop. Lutchter was giving a presentation about this year's crop to the county commissioners last week.

By David Sykes

Morrow County Extension Agent Larry Lutchter says this year's wheat crop was above average and he attributed it to the extra moisture we received. Luther said he knows last year's late snow made it more difficult for livestock operators, but it was a "great thing" for the wheat

growers.

Lutchter says a rough average for the county is 35 to 40 bushels per acre and this year they produced 55. "The quality was good; protein targets were good. It was just a good year," he told the commissioners during a presentation at their meeting last week. He also said that disease and

pest problems were minor or "non-existent". Now if we just get a decent price," he added. Wheat prices are currently down about a dollar a bushel to \$4.90 from this same period last year.

Lutchter explained that when the county gets above average snow on its wheat ground like it did this past year, the melting water

Gutierrez to run for re-election

Gayle Gutierrez, Morrow County Treasurer, has announced she will run for re-election in the 2020 election.

Gutierrez has worked for Morrow County for nearly 30 years. She began working in the public works office in Lexington in 1989. She also worked

in the tax, assessment and finance departments prior to being elected to the office of treasurer in 1996.

"I have enjoyed my work in county government immensely and would like to continue to do so. It is an honor and privilege to serve the citizens of this county," she told the Gazette-Times.



Gayle Gutierrez

Heppner Community Bank scheduled to close

Based on current economic factors and shifting banking landscape, Community Bank has decided to consolidate the operations of its Heppner branch with the bank's Hermiston location. Effective January 10, 2020, the Heppner branch of Community Bank at 127 N. Main Street, will be closed permanently and consolidated with the Hermiston branch at 50 E. Theater Lane.

"We appreciate the trust and confidence the Heppner community has

placed in us by utilizing our banking services for the past 10 years," says Community Bank president Tom Moran. Bank customers will not have to perform any action during this transition, unless they have a safe deposit box held at the Heppner branch location. All other services will continue uninterrupted. Customers' account number(s) will not change and they may continue to use debit/credit cards, online banking, the mobile app,

mobile check deposit and to write checks as usual.

Local Heppner branch manager, Judi Hall, will continue working at the bank in Heppner, through the closing date, where she and her staff will be assisting all current customers with questions, safe deposit box closures/transfers or account type changes during the transition.

The official closing will be at the end of regular banking hours on Friday, January 10, 2020, at 5 p.m.

seeps into the ground and, along with rains, contributes to increased soil moisture and a better crop. He said the soil can store water at two inches per foot and for every inch of water added to the soil there is a yield of five to seven bushels of wheat. He also said wheat plants can send their roots down over six feet in search of water. "The soil is like a sponge, but some hold more water than others," he added.

Lutchter also pointed out that the "good stuff" when it comes to soils, "is on the top," and he reminded people when doing excavation work on any type of crop land to always remember to put the top soil back on top when they replace the soils. "The good soil is the top five inches," he explained.

On other crops being looked at or grown in the county, Lutchter said yellow

pea is being considered as an alternative. He said it doesn't need fertilizer, is planted in the fall, harvested in the early summer and is a new and exciting edible crop.

Lutchter also talked about the rush to produce hemp. "People are jumping in," he said. "They think they can make a lot of money." He said it's the Cannabidiol or CBD that has people's interest and the reason growers are looking at the hemp plant. CBD is one of the active ingredients of the marijuana plant and the essential component of medical marijuana. It is derived directly from the hemp plant which is a cousin of the marijuana plant. It does not cause a "high" but is reported to offer some health benefits.

Luther says there are some reports that expect CBD to be a \$22 billion business in three years. It

is about \$600 million now, he says. He explained that regular hemp has about .3 percent THC (the active ingredient in marijuana) and that it is hard to get the THC out of hemp. Industrial hemp plants have the THC bred out of them.

Because of the high interest in hemp and CBD, Lutchter says there are a lot of unscrupulous dealers out there right now and warns people to "be conservative" if they plan on getting into the market. He said people at Oregon State University are working on promoting CBD and want Oregon to be the global market for the product. "This is an infant market right now and it is going to be interesting to watch," he said.

Commissioner Jim Doherty said he heard of people that live downwind from hemp crops reporting an overpowering smell from the plants.

Large crowd attends Ione Education Foundation Dinner



A large crowd attended the annual Ione Education Foundation Dinner Saturday night enjoying prime rib and salmon dinner and then an auction. Over 118 items were auctioned off to raise money for the foundation including an autographed photo of former University of Oregon Heisman quarterback Marcus Mariota (now with the NFL's Tennessee Titans) proudly displayed here by purchaser Jeri McElligott. The framed photo, along with some Oregon Ducks tickets and a gift card to the Duck Store, were donated by Art and Deniece Derbyshire of Hermiston, longtime supporters of the Ione Foundation. -Photo by David Sykes.

Lexington mayor recall ballots go to voters

By David Sykes

An effort to recall Mayor Marcia Kemp of Lexington will go to the voters soon. County Clerk Bobbi Childers told the Gazette-Times Monday that the ballots should be printed and ready in a few days and then will go out in the mail and are due back October 22.

Another vote to recall Lexington Councilmember Bill Beard will have been completed Tuesday of this week after the Gazette publication date, so results were not available at press time.

The recall against Mayor Marcia Kemp was instigated with charges that Kemp failed her oath of office, exceeded her authority as mayor and violated the town charter. One-hundred-ninety-one ballots were mailed out in Lexington for Beard's recall, so it is expected a similar amount will be mailed for Kemp's.

The entire text of the recall reads: "Kemp has failed her oath of office regularly exceeding the authority of the Mayor. Kemp refuses to work with nor even communicate with 3 of our 4 councilmembers

circumventing the authority of the council in absolutely clear violation of the town charter. She has publicly slandered their character and by her own admission based solely on hearsay. She has created an us vs. them atmosphere. Kemp continues to put her own personal feelings, issues and agenda above the whole electorate of the town of Lexington. We deserve better!"

When the Gazette-Times contacted Kemp Tuesday she had "no comment."

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