MONTANA NEWS
wheat & barley

November 4, 2024

Gleanings From Kent

JAPANESE TRADE TEAMS -- During October, MWBC hosted members from four of the top five Japanese flour milling companies including Nisshin, Nippn, Showa Sangyo and Chiba Flour Milling Company. These companies account for more than 70 percent of all Japanese wheat imports, so their impact on the Montana wheat industry is substantial. Depending on Montana's annual production results, these customers purchase between 30 percent and 50 percent of Montana's entire winter wheat crop! While not as statistically impressive, Japanese demand is also a very important component of the spring wheat balance sheet. Each of our domestic and export customers are important, but the Japanese market presence cannot be understated.

Trade team participants largely arrive from procurement, quality control, flour production and new product innovation departments. While their interests vary, they focus on crop size and availability; quality factors such as protein, test weight and falling number; and milling and baking characteristics. Most visitors are also interested in what varieties are being planted and what new varieties are in the development and release stages. The outlook for 2025 winter wheat seeding progress and crop conditions was also of great interest. In MWBC shared multiple farm visits, flour mill and bakery tours, and stops at the State Grain Lab as part of an overall experience. Most trade teams request a visit to at least one shuttle elevator and the commercial grain industry is always accommodating.

Even though much of the agenda items is second nature to producers, these visits to Montana wheat country are completely foreign and eye opening for our guests. The opportunity to stand in a newly planted field of winter wheat, drive a tractor, observe the size of a sprayer or combine, and grab a handful of wheat from farm storage is often a highlight of their trip to Montana. Meeting producers at their

farms and the chance to observe multiple generations working the land always leaves a positive impression.

GRANT REQUESTS, 2025 BUDGET & MONTANA PRODUCTION -- MWBC received 41 grant requests which will be reviewed and considered as we develop the 2025 budget during our October and December board meetings. Our annual budget parameters are primarily driven by Montana wheat and barley production results. All wheat production for 2025 totaled 172 million bushels which is a seven percent reduction from last year's 184 million bushel all wheat crop. Winter wheat production was 91.5 million, up seven percent, and spring wheat production (61 million) is down 23 percent from the 79-million-bushel crop produced in 2023. Durum production, estimated at 19.8 million bushels, is down five percent from the 20.9 million bushels produced last year. Barley production, estimated at 36.2 million bushels, is down 28 percent from the 50.5-million-bushel crop produced in 2023.

[Photos ~ Top: Chiba members pose after a stop at Wheat Montana Bakery for lunch and a behind-the-house tour. Next: Charlie Bumgarner, Great Falls, explains planting decisions from winter wheat to spring wheat.]

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS -- As part of fulfilling our mission, MWBC holds a seat at the table at a myriad of industry-related meetings. I have been participating in state administrator gatherings with peers from other wheat producing states. We discuss common issues ranging from new technology, GMO wheat, transportation, research efforts, potential new uses for wheat, demand developments and sustainability. This group is nearing completion of a guiding principles document that is dedicated to increasing profitability for the American wheat farmer through targeted initiatives that advance the US wheat industry. We have also been active as stakeholders in recruiting the next MSU Endowed Chair, pressing the need for how critical this role is for the entire wheat industry. Lori Wickett and I enjoyed attending MGGA's October board meeting presenting updates to the group on MWBC activities and hearing from growers around the state about crop results, seeding progress and the overall outlook from the farmgate.

FINAL THOUGHTS -- Montana growers are nearing the finish line planting the 2025 winter wheat crop. Like most years, seeding conditions and crop conditions are highly variable around the state. Most reports are guardedly optimistic as we near dormancy and the need for additional moisture is a consistent observation.

I'll be travelling to Japan, Korea, China and Taiwan in November as part of a US Wheat Associates trade team. We will be visiting customers and presenting 2025 crop quality data to customers in each country. I have been tasked with discussing

crop quality as it relates specifically to US hard red winter wheat. I'm going to miss the Cat-Griz game, but I'll look forward to reporting back on the success of this rigorous trip and hope to see everyone at the rapidly approaching MGGA convention.

SEEDING SEASON -- Although Montana can always use more moisture, winter wheat seeding is progressing near the five-year average pace with seeding well over 50 percent complete at the end of September. Seeding conditions are variable around the state, but most producers report adequate to very good seeding conditions. Fall moisture and chem fallow practices are contributing to mostly favorable conditions. The USDA will report final 2024 production results on September 30, and we'll look forward to commenting on those results in October.

Kent Kupfner
Executive Director, MWBC

Across Montana

MSU SCIENTISTS TO STUDY HOW WILD OATS BECOME RESISTANT TO HERBICIDES

With new funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, scientists in Montana State University's Department of Plant Sciences and Plant Pathologywill seek to fill knowledge gaps surrounding an agricultural weed that has caused problems for Montana producers for decades. ~*Northern Ag Network*

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WIN A POLARIS, HONE AG ISSUE KNOWLEDGE IN FARM BUREAU COMPETITION

The Montana Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher Committee encourages any voting Farm Bureau member ages 18-35 to compete in the Young Farmer and Rancher Discussion Meet, which takes place Tuesday, November 19 during the MFBF Annual Convention in downtown Billings. The winner of the Discussion Meet will receive the keys to a new Polaris Ranger 570, and an expense-paid trip to participate in the national Discussion Meet held during the American Farm Bureau Annual Convention January 2025 in San Antonio TX. ~*Western Ag Reporter*

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BOARD MEETING NOTICE:
Monday, Dec. 2, 2024
Great Falls
Prior to the 69th annual Montana Grain Growers Association convention Dec. 3-5

CELEBRATE AG @ MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY NOV 6-9
Celebrate Ag serves as a platform to honor the state's agricultural heritage while celebrating its present and future leaders, producers and students. This week-long event features seminars, networking and MSU Bobcats vs. Sacramento State on Saturday, 1pm.

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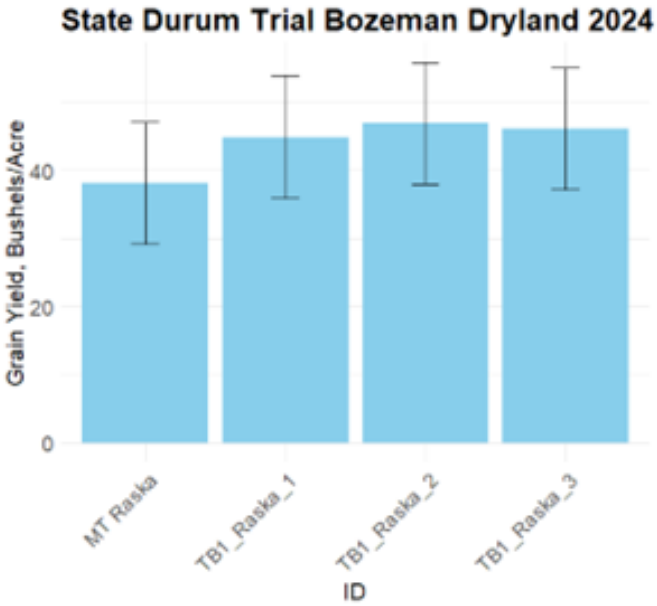
MSU Research Rundown

By Mike Giroux --The durum breeding project selects for agronomic yield, protein content, test weight, disease resistance and pasta quality. Agronomic yield is impacted by seed number per head and productive tiller number. One of our basic projects is to test the impact of primary tiller number upon yield under different rainfall levels and different planting densities. To do this, we have crossed mutated alleles of the gene *Teosinte Branched-1 (TB1)* into Montana adapted durum wheat, spring wheat, and forage winter wheat cultivars.

Duclair Background	Grain Yield	Tillers at Maturity	Productive Heads	Height	Protein
Genotype	Bu/Acre	per ft	per ft	cm	percent
Wildtype	71.2	59.9	58.4	**77.5**	14.6
TB-A1+TB-D1 Mutant	**77.2**	**69.3**	**67.9**	75.9	14.5
Pairwise Comparison P-Value	.019	.008	.005	<.001	.795

Durum lines have been tested over the past three seasons in

four different locations, while spring and winter wheat lines have been tested for one summer in one location. Our results demonstrated that *TB1* mutations increase productive tiller number and seed size across all environments and varieties tested. If conditions are good for crop growth and development after the jointing stage, *TB1* mutant lines also show increased grain yields of up to 16 percent, with no significant decrease in protein content. When conditions are poor, *TB1* mutant alleles do not have any negative impact on grain yield or quality. Because of the increase in tiller number, these lines are also able to be planted at lower seeding rates while maintaining high yield potential.



Data from High Tillering Raska experimental lines vs. MT Raska included in the Bozeman State Durum Trial.

Bozeman 2023, TB-B1 Mutant Raska High Tillering lines (left two rows), and wildtype MT Raska (right two rows).

TB1 mutations backcrossed into adapted durum varieties will be tested in the Intra-State Durum trials and analyzed for semolina quality with the goal of a new variety release. Additionally, *TB1* mutations have been integrated into durum, spring, and winter wheat breeding populations to create new experimental lines within Montana wheat breeding programs that have high tillering potential.

Additional story credits: Caleb Hale, PhD Candidate; Andy Hogg, MS, Assistant Durum Breeder

Mike Giroux is the department head and durum breeder for Montana State University's Plant Sciences & Plant Pathology. His research focus includes molecular genetics and cereal chemistry of small grain quality.

Outside the Big Sky

WHEAT MARKETS CONTINUE TO IGNORE POOR GLOBAL OUTLOOK

Wheat markets have sold off during the past two weeks, and one would think that crop prospects have dramatically improved since last month.

Have the Southern Hemisphere harvest prospects dramatically improved? Maybe the 2025 winter wheat planting conditions in the Northern Hemisphere have turned around the situation at the last minute. Neither situation has occurred, but wheat seems to be content to take guidance from the bearish stance in the corn markets. ~*The Western Producer*

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GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR GMO WHEAT ON THE HORIZON

For 20 years, genetically-modified wheat traits were set on the back burner, but now GMO wheat is back on the brain and the possibilities, as well as potential challenges, are abuzz. GMO wheat started making headlines once again after a drought-tolerant wheat trait recently deregulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is making headlines after 20 years of minimal progress toward introducing genetically modified wheat traits. ~*High Plains Journal*

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Recipe Harvest!

November might be the best food month ever. Turkey Day is upon us! We are focusing this month on baking the good stuff:

- My Favorite Apple Pie Recipe
- Pumpkin Cookies

- Hummingbird Cake
- Pecan Pie Bars
- Bobby Flay Parker House Rolls
- Better Than Starbucks Pumpkin Bread

Email: wbc@mt.gov ~ (406) 761-7732

WEBSITE

At the **Montana Wheat & Barley Committee,** we promote local research and develop trade markets around the world.

Montana Wheat and Barley Committee | 300 Park Drive S Suite 104 | Great Falls, MT 59405 US

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