MONTANA WHEAT AND BARLEY COMMITTEE

Fall Board Meeting Minutes
In-Personal & Virtual Meeting
300 Park Drive South, Suite 104, Great Falls, MT 59405
November 9, 2026 – November 10, 2026

MONTANA wheat & barley

The following were present for either a portion or the entire meeting:

DIRECTORS

Terry Angvick, Chairman, District 1
Logan Anderson, Director, District 2
Jim Bjelland, Director, District 3
Lee Dahlman, Director, District 4
Cindy McKamey, Director, District 5
Courtney Herzog, Director, District 6 (remote)
Brett Dailey, Director, District 7

EX-OFFICIO DIRECTORS

Dr. Sreekala Bajwa, Vice President, Dean & Director, MSU
Jake McFarlin, Industry Trade Representative
Jillien Streit, Director, Montana Department of Agriculture

STAFF

Kent Kupfner, Executive Director
Lori Wickett, Director of Engagement
Sabrina Lahaderne, Office Manager
Skye Smith, Ag Program Manager

GUESTS

Tristan Bradford, State Grain Lab
Doug Holen, MSU Foundation Seed Program
BranDee Johnston, MSU Foundation Seed Program
Mitch Konen, President, National Barley Growers Association
Klayton Lohr, President, US Durum Growers Association
Shawna Severson, Executive Vice President, Montana Grain Growers Association
Dr. Ryan Thum, Department Head, Plant Sciences & Plant Pathology, MSU
Dr. Blake Wiedenheft, Winifred Asbjornson Plant Sciences Chair, MSU
Zach Coccoli, Deputy Director, Montana Department of Agriculture (remote)

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Andy Fjeseth, Department of Agriculture (remote)
Sheri Glazier, Executive Director, National Wheat Promotion Board (remote)
Kari Hahn, Chief Operations Officer, Montana Department of Agriculture (remote)
Barry Jacobsen, Consultant (remote)
Anna Kecskes, Chief Attorney, Montana Department of Agriculture (remote)
Wade Thomason, Consultant (remote)
Dave Tweet, Barley Consultant (remote)

Monday, November 9, 2026

Chairman Terry Angvick called the meeting to order at approximately 8:30 AM. Roll call was conducted, establishing a quorum with all seven district directors present (six in-person, one remote). In-person and online participants completed self-introductions.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Chairman Angvick called for additions or corrections to the agenda. Hearing no changes, Director Lee Dahlman moved to approve the agenda as presented, Director Jim Bjelland seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of June 23, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the June 23, 2026 Summer Board Meeting were presented for review. Director Lee Dahlman moved to approve the minutes as presented, Director Cindy McKamey seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Call for Public Comment

Chairman Angvick opened the floor for public comment. Director Jim Bjelland expressed appreciation for the recent office upgrades. Kent Kupfner recognizes Sabrina Lahaderne and staff for painting, modernizing furniture, and refreshing the interior. No further public comments were made.

National Barley Growers Association Update
Mitch Konen

Mitch Konen reported on national barley industry conditions and organizational integration efforts. U.S. beer consumption and craft brewing demand continue to face headwinds, heavily impacted by alternative ready-to-drink beverages and flavor trends. Off-grade barley finds secondary destinations in feedlots, pet food markets, and distilleries when protein is high. Kent Kupfner addressed prior concerns regarding uncollected check-offs on feed barley moving direct to feedlots or across the Canadian border. Inter-agency coordination on Department of Agriculture import permits, commodity dealer licensing checks, and outreach to major entities and the committee

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is now capturing an estimated 85% of feed barley check-offs. Mitch detailed ongoing discussions between the National Barley Growers Association and the American Malting Barley Association to streamline administration and reduce costs. Three integration options were evaluated including, minimal integration, moderate integration, and high integration. Growers remain cautious about high integration due to the risk of strong-armed industry influence on policy and the dilution of the producer voice in Washington, D.C. A final decision is anticipated around the February winter board meetings. Mitch highlighted lobbying efforts regarding reference prices under farm programs, noting challenges with delayed price reporting structures that rely on historical multi-year forward contracts.

National Wheat Promotion Board Update
Sheri Glazier (remote)

Sheri Glazier provided an update on the Wheat Foods Council, which is officially undergoing an organizational reset and transitioning its public name to the National Wheat Promotion Board, effective in December. Following a strategic reset under prior leadership and a vacancy, Glazier stepped in as Executive Director on August 18, 2026. Comprehensive bylaw revisions are currently out for review and a final vote in December, ensuring the organization remains strictly producer-led with voting membership restricted to farmers. The refreshed vision centers on a secure future for U.S. wheat farmers supported by strong domestic demand and public confidence. The mission focuses on advancing domestic demand by elevating farmer voices, connecting farmers with consumers, fostering innovation, and aligning the industry around clear, unified messaging. Utilizing data from the International Food Information Council, Sheri emphasized consumer interest in knowing where food comes from and building trust by providing a face to agriculture. Strategies include leveraging the resurgence of artisanal baking/sourdough, simplifying messaging around food science and nutrition, and capitalizing on opportunities within high-protein, high-fiber diets including relevance to GLP-1 weight-loss trends. Highlighting successful immersive programs like Oklahoma's Grown event which takes dieticians and nutrition students through the full supply chain from farm to miller to restaurant, Sheri noted plans to create similar opportunities for growers. The organization's funding model relies heavily on central states, with historical miller and industry contributions currently missing. Sheri invited continued collaboration and feedback from the Montana board ahead of their December funding reconsideration

Montana Department of Agriculture Update
Jillien Streit & Andy Fjeseth

Director Jillien Streit reviewed key agency updates ahead of the 2027 legislative session. The department proposed lowering the minimum passing score for commercial applicators from 80% to 70% to match regional standards and improve commercial reciprocity with neighboring states and provinces. Public comments reflected opposition to the reduction from commercial operators, and rulemaking is on hold until January pending further discussions. The department is carrying three primary legislative items including re-authorizing funding for the Growth Through Agriculture program for another six years without increasing the total appropriation. Next, streamlining GTA loan requirements by removing matching fund requirements for loans. And finally, proposing the repeal of the antiquated 1980s Commodity Dealer License law due to underfunding, high administrative costs for industry, and

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inadequate bonding protection for growers which current bonds cover only 2% of prior gross sales, yielding pennies on the dollar during bankruptcies. Jillien emphasized that repeal will not be forced if growers are uncomfortable, and a grower/industry working group headed by Shad Schwartzbach alongside MGGA is actively exploring replacement options. Following implementation issues with the Accela system, the department is migrating agricultural registration and licensing to the familiar Ag Enterprise software, providing online user portals. A redesigned Department of Agriculture website is also launching soon to replace the legacy filing cabinet layout. Jillien reported on recent outbound trade missions to India and Chile while noting positive feedback on Montana wheat quality from a Chilean flour miller. Andy Fjeseth discussed GTA grant allocations, Specialty Crop Block Grants and coordinating federal changes, and Cattle Beef Innovation Initiative grants continue to deploy successfully.

State Grain Lab Update
Tristan Bradford

Tristan Bradford presented an operational and financial update on the State Grain Lab, highlighting significant turnaround improvements and cultural shifts since taking over in June 2024. Last year's severe harvest quality issues and heavy insurance claim loads resulted in turnaround delays of up to 90 days. Through aggressive recruitment and training, licensed inspectors increased from 5 to 11, and total commodity licenses expanded from 25 to 47. Consequently, turnaround time for the current harvest has dropped to 8 to 14 days behind, with routine samples turning around in 2 to 4 days. The lab replaced the outdated MS-DOS-based AgTrax software with the Grain Inspection Program platform, which is a huge improvement. Certificates are now automatically emailed instantly upon completion rather than requiring manual logins. The lab is partnering with digital imaging and AI companies to help establish federal grading standards for wheat and explore rapid, consistent quality evaluation. Operating at an ongoing loss, the lab plans to update its fee schedule in 2027 since the last major revision was in 2022, to ensure fiscal solvency. Future expansion goals include adding wheat and pulse grading capabilities and unit train inspection services in Plentywood. Directors commended the dramatic improvement in grain lab responsiveness.

US Durum Growers Association Update
Klayton Lohr

Klayton Lohr reported on durum industry challenges and upcoming events. The International Durum Forum and crop outlook is scheduled for November 17–18 in Minot, ND. Durum producers face severe structural disadvantages under Risk Management Agency crop insurance, including inadequate price discovery, high test-weight deduction thresholds, and lack of insurance coverage for falling numbers and HVAC losses. Klayton noted instances of growers holding grain in bins for over two years without cash market movement. Due to low base prices and contracting frictions, regional durum acreage is projected to drop significantly, estimated down to 60–70% of previous years in the Golden Triangle, as producers pivot toward winter wheat.

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Montana Grain Growers Association Update
Shawna Severson

Shawna Severson provided her first report as Executive Vice President. MGGA leaders attended the National Association of Wheat Growers fall board meetings in Albuquerque, finalizing resolutions on fertilizer availability, trade, and federal farm policy. A working group was formed regarding the Department of Agriculture's proposed Commodity Dealer License repeal to evaluate current bonding protections and explore producer-backed alternatives. MGGA is working with Wildlife & Parks on potential wildlife management legislation to address severe crop damage caused by overpopulated elk herds. Other monitored issues include pesticide drift concerns, the federal Fortress Act, and local prairie dog infestations. Completing a membership survey for the first time since 2016 with plans to produce a new strategic plan. The annual MGGA Convention is scheduled for December 1–2 in Great Falls, preceded by the Partners in Ag reception on November 30 featuring Dr. Blake Wiedenheft. Convention highlights include a Best Bread in Montana baking contest, an antique farm toy tractor display, and an ag tech panel. Scholarship applications open December 1 with 96 applications and $26,000 awarded last year.

MSU College of Agriculture & MAES Update
Dr. Sreekala Bajwa

MSU College of Agriculture and MAES research expenditures reached an all-time high of $60.6 million in the last academic year, ranking near the top nationally among land-grant institutions. The new combined state lab housing the Department of Agriculture, Department of Livestock, and MSU Wool Lab opened in July. Planning is underway for the Soil Plant Seed Lab and value-added pilot plant equipment upgrades. State-funded variety testing personnel have been added including Peggy Lamb, Simon Fordyce, Megan Wong, and expanded support in Sidney. Federal advocacy priorities focus on protecting and increasing formula funding with the Hatch Act to close the growing investment gap relative to international competitors like China and the EU. Enrollment is up, and MSU launched a workforce development program placing high school students in summer research jobs with guaranteed college support, with the first cohort of six students enrolled.

MSU Plant Sciences & Plant Pathology Update
Dr. Ryan Thum

Over 70 applications were received for the agronomic entomology position succeeding David Weaver, transitioning from LRES to PSPP, with interviews slated for early spring. Two new positions are being hired in the Cereal Quality Lab. A new 200-level course on brewing and malting science launches this spring. A record 12 graduate students are defending and graduating this fall. The annual Variety Release Meeting is scheduled for February 3.

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Winifred Asbjornson Plant Sciences Chair, MSU
Dr. Blake Wiedenheft

Dr. Blake Wiedenheft provided an update one year into his endowed chair role, focusing on novel genetic and biological approaches to control the wheat stem sawfly. His lab successfully sequenced telomere-to-telomere complete genome sequences for wheat stem sawflies across Montana, showing 99% genetic identity statewide along with draft genomes for parasitic wasps. Overcoming the slow growth cycle of plants, the lab developed artificial synthetic stems in the lab that successfully support sawfly larvae through complete metamorphosis. Researchers are testing RNA interference methods via synthetic feeds to induce targeted mortality. The goal is to deploy multi-pronged biological and transgenic control strategies simultaneously to prevent insect resistance.

MSU Foundation Seed Program Update
Doug Holen & BranDee Johnston

Doug Holen opens with how Fall 2026 seed movement was robust due to strong winter wheat planting economics. Meadowlark continues to capture significant acreage previously sown to Warhorse, and Bobcat was in high demand. Forage varieties such as Ray and Cash moved in high volumes both in-state and out-of-state. Foundation seed is producing seed for private partnerships including Clearstone, Circle Diamond, Premiere Genetics, while maintaining priority supply for Montana producers. The seedhouse conditioning plant was expanded by 35 feet, a $200,000 project, to improve operational efficiency, and two tandem grain trucks and 4 new bins were added. BranDee Johnston highlighted extensive grower outreach, field day participation, and coffee-shop engagement, generating strong early interest in the upcoming red-chaffed, sawfly-resistant spring wheat variety MT Sunrise. Website upgrades are planned. MT Sheridan Gold will be planted at Williston research center and MT Robust will be licensed privately.

Industry Report: Barley
Dave Tweet (remote)

Total U.S. barley production dropped from 142 million bushels last year to 116 million bushels, driven by lower yields, down to 72 bu/acre. Montana bucked the trend, increasing seeded acres by 70,000 and total production to approximately 36 million bushels, nearly matching Idaho. Heavy rainfall in southern Montana caused significant sprouting issues, whereas North Central Montana fared better. Miller Coors worked proactively with growers to salvage sprouted barley; Anheuser-Busch maintained a strict 1% sprout tolerance spec. Anheuser-Busch opened 2027 contracts at $6.35/bu (up $1.00 from 2026), though prices softened locally to $5.71 amid broader commodity drops. Coors opened at $6.60/bu with expanded contract acreage and quickly filled quota. MSU needs a strong voice in AMBA.

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Industry Report: Markets & Grain Trade
Jake McFarlin

U.S. export commitments remain severely depressed, total wheat exports down 28% year-over-year; hard red spring down 23%, and hard red winter down 40%. Massive price spikes following Black Sea escalation in July caused U.S. prices to outpace global competitors such as Canada and Argentina, driving buyers away. Secondary shuttle freight values have dropped near zero. Futures dropped roughly $2.00 from their September peak, yet cash carry spreads tightened, signaling underlying commercial nervousness regarding near-term physical supplies. Driven by favorable moisture and an $8.11 crop insurance base price, massive winter wheat acreage has been planted across the country, including non-traditional areas leading to plantings seed shortages in some areas. This is a very challenging year to sell export HRW. Frost damage in many areas negatively impacted yields in Montana.

District Director Reports

District 1, Terry Angvick
Reported dry conditions and wind erosion early, followed by timely rains that saved crops. Sheridan and Roosevelt county dryland yields averaged 25–30 bu/acre with lower test weights, 52–54 lbs, due to rapid late-season growth, though northern areas saw 40–50 bu yields. Increased winter wheat acreage has been seeded under excellent fall moisture conditions.

District 2, Logan Anderson
Reported strong spring crops and better-than-expected winter wheat yields. Excellent fall moisture led to heavy winter wheat planting with strong emerging stands.

District 3, Jim Bjelland
Timely June rains rescued crops after a dry spring. Hosted Taiwanese and Philippine trade teams at the farm showing them farm records, see-and-spray equipment, and grain bins. Noted the Conrad Research Center is revitalizing under new management.

District 4, Lee Dahlman
Average winter wheat crop, though some fields were sprayed out due to poor moisture timing. Sawfly pressure and Russian wheat aphids remain concerns. Participated in trade missions and meetings with USW and Cerveza Mexico in Monterrey and Mexico City. Hosted three trade teams. Naomi from Wiedenheft Lab collected WSS from farm. Increased HRW planting with good moisture conditions.

District 5, Cindy McKamey
Severe drought and freeze events impacted harvest in the Judith Gap area. Participated in Wheat Marketing Center board meetings, exploring AI quality forecasting, and joined trade teams visiting District 3. Also attended USW meeting.

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District 6, Courtney Herzog (remote)
Newly seeded winter wheat emerged with excellent stands, and top-dressing fertilization is underway. Hay supplies remain tight.

District 7, Brett Dailey
Patchy winter wheat and extremely short hay supplies. Substantial winter wheat has been seeded, utilizing ground previously slated for pulses.

Financial Report & Office Management
Kent Kupfner & Sabrina Lahaderne

Sabrina Lahaderne reported that refund collections remain steady at approximately 1.6% to 1.7% of total assessments, near historical averages. New online application forms introduced earlier in the year saw balanced utilization with 50% online, 50% phone or mail. Kent Kupfner reviewed year-to-date financials. Assessment revenues exceeded projections 110% of budget due to strong early-season cash marketing and crop volume. Total expenses are running efficiently at 80% of budget, and cash reserves sit at approximately $6.4 million. Sabrina outlined plans for continued office modernization in 2027, including installing doors on open offices for acoustic privacy during remote meetings, upgrading the boardroom table and chairs, and designing a display featuring regional wheat and barley varieties.

Director of Engagement Report
Lori Wickett

Outreach and publications was discussed shifting away from email newsletters due to digital fatigue toward a high-quality physical publication titled Upper Crust. It aims to bridge the gap between scientific research and producers. The publication is targeted for delivery to over 3,000 producers and feature profiles on plant breeders and annual reports. Back-cover sponsorship from Opportunity Bank covers all the mailing costs. Lori highlighted massive growth in Facebook metrics noting over 500,000 views in August and September alone; surpassing the previous 22 months combined. Largely driven from short form video content and harvest reports. Lori hopes to update outdated field guides and developing a new durum variety guide as well as refreshing the spring wheat variety guide and modernizing the rail & production maps in the office.

AG Program Manager Report
Skye Smith

Skye outlined the extensive planning required to host internation trade teams with flight coordination, itineraries, elevator and farm visits, hotels, rentals, and hosting dinners. It was noted that presentations include up to 90 slides covering comprehensive state data and often require more time if interpretation is needed. Participated in trade

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shows including speaking at the Montana Farmers Unions Convention in Bozeman. Skye also reported that the storyboards have been successful and have plans to partner more closely with FFA to engage younger students.

Travel, Events, and Calendar Approval

Kent Kupfner

Kent Kupfner reviewed upcoming travel and events. Director Lee Dahlman moved to approve the travel calendar as presented; Director Jim Bjelland seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Directors discussed upcoming opportunities to attend flour milling courses at the IGP Institute in Manhattan, KS. Wheat Marketing Center Producer Workshops were discussed with group 1 on February 1-4, 2027 and group 2 on February 15–18 2027. Following discussion regarding student schedules and academic calendars, Chairman Terry Angvick moved to set the March Madness and Spring Board Meeting for March 4–5, 2027, in Bozeman, Director Lee Dahlman seconded, motion passed unanimously. Initial planning discussions were initiated regarding the 60th anniversary of the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee in 2027.

Election of Officers

Nominations were opened for Chairman. Director Terry Angvick nominated Lee Dahlman for Chairman, Director Jim Bjelland seconded, motion passed unanimously. Nominations were opened for Vice-Chairman. Director Lee Dahlman nominated Cindy McKamey for Vice-Chairman, Director Brett Dailey seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Budget Discussion & Grant Application Review

Kent Kupfner and Lori Wickett led an initial review of the projected 2027 budget framework.

Projected gross revenue for CY 2027 is estimated at approximately $5.0 million based on 10-year crop averages adjusted for assessment rate increases and production variation. Operating expenditures are budgeted at $998,000, leaving approximately $3.95 million available for research, market development, and education grants while maintaining a one-year operating reserve of $4.5 million.

Call for Public Comment

No public comment was made.

Adjournment

Chairman Terry Angvick adjourned the meeting for the day at approximately 6:30 pm.

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Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Chairman Lee Dahlman reconvened the meeting at approximately 8:30 am by opening with the Pledge of Allegiance and Director Logan Anderson reading the mission statement. Roll call was conducted, establishing a quorum with all seven district directors present (six in-person, one remote), and in-person and online participants completed self-introductions. No public comment was made.

Resume Budget Discussion & Grant Application Review

The board resumed reviewing pending grant applications and budget lines, refining and categorizing items for final action at the upcoming November 30th budget meeting. The board discussed establishing a 3-year baseline funding commitment for primary MSU breeding programs and MAES to provide long-term stability and assist with matching federal grant opportunities. Research priorities, specific project proposals, and funding allocations were systematically evaluated with input from remote advisors and adjudicators, Barry Jacobsen and Wade Thomson

Call for Public Comment

No public comment was made.

Adjournment

Chairman Lee Dahlman adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:00 pm.

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