

You are Reading the Last Agri-Focus Newsletter

This will be the last issue of the Agri-focus newsletter. Over the next few months, we will be transitioning to a new communications system. Instead of a newsletter covering topics from all across irrigated agriculture, the new system will allow us to deliver to you only the information you want to receive. Information overload, both of good and bad information, is a problem for all of us. Eventually this new system will allow you to take control of your information by customizing what you receive and how and when you receive it. The first step will be for you to subscribe to a WSU email delivery system. This will be the heart of the new system and will allow us to get information to you in a timely, efficient manner. In addition to the e-mail system, we plan to have a new website, event calendar, and other means of delivering information. Our goal in creating this system is for you to have tools to manage your information flow from WSU and other sources.

We are also changing how Extension delivers information to our irrigated ag clientele. Instead of producing a newsletter out of the Grant/Adams Extension office, the new system will be a combined effort of several Extension offices. Our team will eventually cover all aspects of irrigated agriculture in Eastern Washington. This will make our services more comprehensive and eliminate duplicated efforts.

Finally, for those of you who do not have access to e-mail or the internet, we will be offering a similar service. However, because of printing and mailing costs, this will require payment of a yearly fee. We will be sending out details by July. If you have suggestions or comments on this effort, please do not hesitate to contact us at WSUExtensionIrrigatedAg@wsu.edu (after June 11) or amcguire@wsu.edu, or call Andy McGuire, 509-754-2011 ext. 413. A. McGuire

Columbia Basin Sheep and Goat Information Day Scheduled for June 24

The 2010 CBSP Sheep Information Day is scheduled for Thursday, June 24, at the Parker's Ranch on Mae Valley Rd in Moses Lake, WA. This year's Informational Day will have specific topics of interest to both sheep and goat producers. This educational session is designed for area sheep and goat producers and 4-H/FFA members involved with sheep and goat projects.

Speakers will provide information about animal health, animal handling, economic values of various sheep and goat products, fitting and showing, herding dogs, and much more. Sheep and goat producers of all sizes and 4-H/FFA youth producers are invited to participate. The CBSP will provide a lamb dinner from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., with concurrent educational sessions starting at 6:00 p.m. The 2010 Grant/Adams Goat and Sheep Information Day is sponsored by the Columbia Basin Sheep Producers and Washington State University Extension. For complete event information please contact the WSU Grant/Adams Extension office. S.M. Smith

Columbia Basin Sheep Producers Wool Contracts Due

Wool Contracts for the Columbia Basin Sheep Producers (CBSP) Annual Pool to be held in July are available from Nina Richardson at 509-765-9735 or may be picked up at the Grant/Adams Area Extension Office. Individuals wishing to market their wool through the pool must complete and return a contract to the CBSP. In order to market the wool more efficiently and receive the best possible prices for its members, wool pool organizers need to know the amount and type of wool they will be receiving. Early and accurate contracts will also help keep freight prices to a minimum and ensure enough trucks are requested for shipment. The 2010 wool pool has been sold to Utah Wool Marketing at the following prices: fine white face wool, \$1/lb; black face white wool, \$0.45/lb; lamb's wool, \$0.30/lb; black wool, \$0.10/lb; and tags \$0.10/lb. All producers selling wool through the pool must include a bag of tags with other allotment. A wool handling fee of \$.03/lb for contracted and \$.06/lb for non-contracted wool, based on space availability, will be assessed.

Wool producers are eligible for marketing assistance or an LDP on their 2010 wool clip. Producers MUST sign-up for the payment PRIOR to selling their wool. To sign-up for the 2010 wool clip it is important that producers fill out the proper forms (form CCC-633) PRIOR to selling or risk losing beneficial interest in their wool. If you lose beneficial interest in your wool before signing up for the program, then you will miss out on the program for that year. It is important to note: The LDP you receive is not tied to what you actually get for your wool. It is tied to the weekly posted repayment price when you sign up. S.M. Smith

Cherry Field Day

The WSU Cherry Field Day is scheduled for Friday June 18 at 3:00 p.m. at the WSU Roza Experimental Orchards in Prosser. Topics of discussion/demonstration will include: Orchard Systems, PNW Cherry Breeding Program, Plant Growth Regulator Trials, Fruit Set/Pollination Biology, Harvest Technologies and Thinning Research. A BBQ will held at the Main IAREC Campus beginning at 6:00 p.m. For additional information contact Matt Whitting 509-786-9260 or mdwhitting@wsu.edu. K.M. Lewis

Managing Alternative Pollinators Now Available from SARE

During the past 50 years, America has witnessed an almost 50 percent decline in the number of managed honey bee colonies. With two-thirds of the world's crops requiring pollination, beekeepers and growers are seeking pollination alternatives and ways to bring honey bees back from the brink.

Managing Alternative Pollinators: A Handbook for Beekeepers, Growers and Conservationists is a first-of-its-kind, step-by-step, full-color guide for rearing and managing bumble bees, mason bees, leafcutter bees and other bee species that provide pollination alternatives to the rapidly declining honey bee.

Written by Eric Mader of the Xerces Society Pollinator Conservation Program; Professor of Entomology Marla Spivak; and Elaine Evans, author of *Befriending Bumble Bees*, the book includes expert information on the business and biology of pollination, and how-to guidance on raising the alternative bee species.

The book is ideal for:

- Beekeepers: Detailed information on each alternative pollinator's biology, disease, pest and chemical susceptibility, and step-by-step instructions on how to rear and manage.
- Growers: Guidance for understanding the business of pollination, matching pollinators to crops, and deciding how best to pollinate for successful agriculture and pollinator protection.
- Concerned Citizens: Easy-to-understand accounts of the honey bee's plight, the business of pollination, and what we all can do to protect pollinators and our food systems.

Download SARE's *Managing Alternative Pollinators* for free at www.sare.org/publications/pollinators.htm. To order print copies (\$23.50 plus \$5.95 s/h) visit www.sare.org/WebStore, call 301-374-9696 or write to SARE Outreach, PO Box 753, Waldorf, Maryland 20604-0753. (Please specify title requested when ordering by mail.) Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. Call 301-374-9696 for more information on bulk, rush or international shipments. A. McGuire

What is Sustainable Agriculture?

Say the word "sustainable," and most people in agriculture agree it means increased profits, sound stewardship of the air, water and soil, and improved quality of life for farming communities. But how do you get there? There are almost as many ways to achieve these goals as there are farms and ranches in America.

That is why the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program created *What is Sustainable Agriculture?*, a 12-page sampler of best practices in sustainable production. Along with descriptions of techniques, this full-color publication includes eight profiles from around the country of producers, researchers and educators who have implemented them to reap success.

What is Sustainable Agriculture? illustrates many of the tried-and-true methods for making agriculture more sustainable, including grazing, cover crops, on-farm energy conservation and production, marketing, conservation tillage, and more. In one profile, an Oregon couple used riparian buffers and rotational grazing strategies to triple their beef production while reviving their waterways. In another, a Connecticut Extension agent is showing local vegetable growers how to save money by slashing their pesticide use. In a third, a Texas researcher has spent years showing producers that they can help overcome a looming water crisis by establishing integrated cotton, forage and livestock systems.

What is Sustainable Agriculture? is not meant as a strict prescription for attaining better profits, better stewardship and better communities. Rather, readers will find it a concise and informative introduction to the widely varied landscape of sustainable agriculture. Hopefully, it will inspire producers across the country to see that they, too, can begin implementing sustainable practices on their farms and ranches.

Download *What is Sustainable Agriculture?* free at www.sare.org/publications/whatis.htm. To order print copies visit www.sare.org/WebStore, call 301-374-9696 or write to SARE Outreach, P.O. Box 753, Waldorf, Maryland 20604-0753 (please specify title requested when ordering by mail). Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. Call 301-374-9696 for more information on bulk, rush or international shipments. A. McGuire

Alfalfa Damage from Rain after Harvest

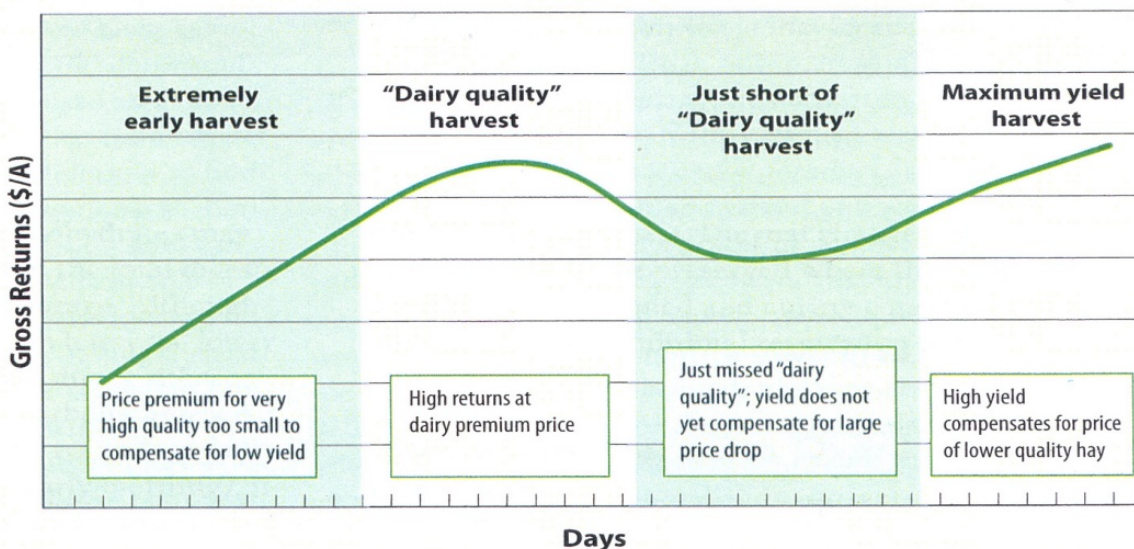
What does rain on cut alfalfa do that is so damaging? According to Putnam et al. in *Irrigated Alfalfa Management for Mediterranean and Desert Zones* rain reduces the level of available carbohydrates or available energy by leaching soluble components from the plant. It also decreases forage quality by increasing leaf shatter. Since soluble components are typically 100 percent digestible, leaching decreases the energy value significantly, as well as protein content and dry matter. The extent of leaching is influenced by stage of maturity, forage moisture at the time of the rain, amount and intensity of the rain, and condition of the hay during the rain event. Rain can increase dry matter losses caused by leaching and leaf shatter from 10 to over 50 percent, depending on the amount of rainfall. P. Petersen

Quality Alfalfa and Cutting Schedule

As we conduct "Hay King" contests we get the opportunity to discuss cutting schedules with a number of alfalfa growers in the state. There are various ideas about how and when one should cut alfalfa depending upon the market you are planning to sell into. The chart below is from the U.C. Davis book *Irrigated Alfalfa Management for Mediterranean and Desert Zones*. The chart simplifies the concept and points out the relationship between yield and quality and the target market. Care needs to be taken that one does not cut so early that low yields seriously impact potential profitability even though high quality alfalfa is produced. The chart also points out the danger of just missing "dairy quality" yet not getting maximum yield at harvest. Even though weather, acres needed to be harvested, and other responsibilities make the ideal difficult to achieve, it is valuable to clearly understand the relationships. I think this chart does that well. P. Petersen

FIGURE 13.8

Gross returns as affected by alfalfa cutting schedules. Although there are several possible outcomes, a typical curve shows that early growth produces high quality but insufficient yields, followed by an optimum combination of yield and quality, and subsequently a decline in gross returns due to loss in quality. Under some market conditions, very high yields at long cutting schedules may result in a recovery of gross returns.



Carrie H. Wohleb

Carrie H. Wohleb: Vegetables, Vegetable Seed
 Phil Petersen: Agronomy, Forage
 Sarah M. Smith: Animal Science
 Andy McGuire: Ag Systems, Cereal Crops
 Karen M. Lewis: Tree Fruit, Grape Horticulture
 Diane Russo: 4-H, Youth Development
 M. Christine Price: County Director, Family and Consumer Sciences

Layout and design provided by Jenelle Kerner, a member of the WSU Grant/Adams Extension team.

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Resources:

Unless stated otherwise, you may request a print version of these resources:

None

Underlined resources are available online through links from our homepage:

<http://grant-adams.wsu.edu>

The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by County Extension is implied.

Cooperating agencies: Washington State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Grant and Adams Counties. Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.

World Class. Face to Face.



Calendar 2010

June

- 10 Cattle Producers of Washington**, Airway Heights Longhorn BBQ, 7611 W Sunset Hwy, Spokane, 7:00 p.m., no-host dinner 6:00 p.m. Contact Teresa King 509-632-5358.
- 18 WSU Cherry Field Day**, 3:00 p.m. WSU IAREC – Roza Station. Contact Matt Whitting, 509-786-9260 or mdwhitting@wsu.edu.
- 24 WSU Potato Field Day**, WSU Othello Research Center. Call Carrie Wohleb, 509-754-2011 ext. 413 for details or see <http://potatoes.wsu.edu>.
- 24 Sheep and Goat Information Day**, Parker's Ranch on Mae Valley Rd in Moses Lake, WA. Lamb dinner at 5:00 p.m., with concurrent educational sessions starting at 6:00 p.m. Contact the Extension office for more information, 509-754-2011, ext. 413.
- 29 OSU Hermiston Potato Field Day**, HAREC in Hermiston, 8:30 to 12:30

July

- 26-28 34th International Carrot Conference**, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick. Visit www.pnva.org for more information.

August

- 31 OSU Hermiston Sweet Corn Field Day**, HAREC in Hermiston, 8:30 to 12:30

September

- 2 WSU Extension Onion Field Day**, Contact Carrie Wohleb 509-754-2011 ext.413 or cwohleb@wsu.edu

Pesticide Container Recycling Schedule

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|----------------|--|
| June 8, AM | Warden, Wilbur-Ellis, Roldan Capetillo, 509-349-7905 or 750-0766 cell |
| June 9, AM | Othello, Othello Airport Applicators, Mark Conner, 509-488-2921 |
| June 10, AM/PM | Royal City, Harvest States/Royal Flying Service,
Ted Freeman, 509-346-2213/ Jock Warren, 509-346-2417 |
| June 11, AM | Royal City, B&G Farms, Bruce Moore, 509-930-1624 |