

SUMMER 2025

I D A H O

THE IDAHO GRAIN PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE

G R A I N



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Soda Springs, ID

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Idaho Grain Producers Association
702 W. Idaho Street, Ste. 322, Boise, ID 83702



VIEWS



**BY JONATHAN ROSENAU
PRESIDENT**

Hello all, I hope spring is finding you all well and spring work for you all is in full swing. On the Camas Prairie we found that our spring “came in like a lamb and went out like a lion.” Where a day of 72 degrees with beautiful sun turned into 30 degrees and 2 inches of snow the next day. All of us here on the prairie were trying to turn the wheels and get seed in the ground between the rain and snowstorms. As I am sitting and writing this, we are finally getting some dirt stirred and fields sprayed with some warm days. We are abnormally dry though so hopefully once seeding is done we can get some rain and nice growing weather.

In my last letter I didn’t have a chance to give you a look into my life. In 1905 my great grandfather moved to Genesee Idaho from Blue Earth Minnesota to continue his farming career. My Great Grandfather sold the Genesee farm in 1937 and bought our current farm and moved his family to the prairie near the town of Winona, Idaho. The farm he bought was actually condemned due to the weed Hoary Cress (white top), which at the time, there were no herbicides, so it was very uncontrollable and he got a great deal. I am the eldest of 3 boys. I was definitely the cause of much (they would say ALL) of my Mother and Fathers gray hairs and Pepto-Bismol use. After high school I attended the University of Idaho for 2.5 years but ended up finishing my Bachelor’s degree at Lewis-Clark State College in Business Administration with a minor in Marketing.

My involvement with Idaho Grain Producers goes deep. My father William (Bill) Rosenau had an active role in Idaho Grain Producers and since I was with him most of the time, it rubbed off on me and I continued his role as director of Idaho County. My father-in-law, Tom Zenner, is a past president. I became reacquainted with my future wife, his daughter Christy, at an Idaho Grain Producers Convention in Boise during his outgoing year. Together, the 4th generation, Christy and I farm and ranch the family farm while chasing our two children, Caleb (11) and Lillian (7), around with their many activities. We enjoy camping, fishing, skiing, sxs rides and family trips. On our farm we raise wheat, barley, oats, canola, bluegrass for seed, alfalfa, orchardgrass for seed, peas, chickpeas, lentils and much more. We raise Braunvieh cattle in a cow calf operation and have chickens, pigs, and a horse.

I have been blessed to continue a tradition that is as old as time, being a steward of the environment and the animals that are on it. I know that

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EDITOR'S NOTE



these times are tough in Agriculture but one thing I know that is true, the grit of the American farmer and rancher runs deep and this way of life is worth the grind and the fight. I pray that you find your spring to be a safe one. God bless and be tough! ■



BY AMAYA AGUIRRE-LANDA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I visited Bonners Ferry for the District 1 meeting in December, IGPA Past President Ty Iverson said to me, “I think this legislative session is going to be a doozy.” Whether that was sage wisdom or pure speculation, I’m not sure - but he was on to something.

My first legislative session as the Executive Director of IGPA is one I won’t forget. It was memorable for many reasons, but mostly for the unique mix of challenges - both positive and negative.

The session adjourned sine die on April 4, and as I’ve taken time to reflect, I’m especially grateful for the team IGPA has built to support growers and the industry. I encourage you to read Elizabeth Criner’s summary of the 68th legislative session on page 4. I’m also thankful for the work of our affiliated organizations, see Paul Arrington’s recap of water legislation on page 14; and for the legislators who continue to advocate for agriculture in Idaho’s evolving political landscape. You can learn more about Representative John Shirts and his work in our next issue.

Although the legislature has adjourned, our work continues. IGPA remains committed to engaging with coalitions and lawmakers throughout the year to ensure the voices of Idaho’s wheat and barley producers are heard - locally, nationally, and globally.

As I travel across the state for summer district meetings and field days, I look forward to meeting more of you, visiting your farms, and learning firsthand about this industry that is such an integral part of Idaho’s identity. ■



Idaho 2025 Session Overview

BY ELIZABETH CRINER

The 68th Idaho Legislature officially adjourned Sine Die on April 4th, 2025. The session lasted 89 days. About 2969 drafts of bills were created and 1,036 of those drafts became RSs prepared to introduce. Only 790 were introduced, with 342 of those bills, memorials and resolutions passing both bodies. Out of the bills that passed both bodies, only one bill was vetoed by Governor Little (S1023aaS).



The 2025 Legislative Session officially convened on Monday, January 6th with Governor Little delivering his State of the State Address and introducing his “Keeping Promises Plan,” which outlines significant investments in education, infrastructure, public safety, and economic growth. The following is an overview of the major issues IGPA either monitored or worked on during this past session.

Budget: The Legislature passed an FY2026 budget totaling \$5.62 billion, which is about a 6.8% increase over FY2025. The budget for FY2026 will begin July 1, 2025. For the fourth year in a row, we’ve seen significant investments in road and bridge maintenance, \$275 million for FY2026. Other major investments include \$30 million for surface and ground water management and \$10 million for water infrastructure grants. The Legislature also ensured that Idaho’s primary “rainy-day” fund is at its statutory maximum.

Regulatory Reform: Idaho legislators introduced their version of “DOGE” (HB364), which created an interim committee to review all state code and regulations, examine agency base budgets, and use AI to support the process. The DOGE bill passed the House but did not move through the Senate. Legislative leaders recently announced plans to move forward with a DOGE Task Force to work through the interim on options to streamline state government and make key recommendations for the 2026 legislative session. On a related front, legislation was signed into law, HB14, that requires state agencies to review their titles and chapters of Idaho Code for any “unnecessary, obsolete, and outdated provisions.” This is aligned with Governor Little’s Zero-Based Regulation executive order from



2019 to reduce and right-size regulations. Agencies are to report to the Legislature their recommendations for removing unnecessary laws by September 1, 2025. IGPA will be monitoring efforts at the ISDA and other state agencies as this effort unfolds.

Taxes: Three measures providing tax relief for income, grocery, and property were all signed into law. HB40 is the largest income tax cut in state history. It reduces Idaho’s flat tax for both individuals and corporations from 5.695 percent to 5.3 percent. It also expands Idaho’s income tax exemption on U.S. military pension income for certain disabled veterans. The total cost is \$253 million. HB231 increases the grocery tax credit for all individuals to \$155 starting FY26. The bill also gives Idaho income tax filers the option to take the \$155 tax credit per person or receive a larger refund based on actual sales tax paid on groceries up to \$250. If choosing this option, the income tax filers must itemize their grocery expenses on their annual income tax returns. For property taxes, HB304 propose an additional \$100 million in annual relief, split between the School Facilities Fund and the Homeowner Property Tax Relief Account. Programs originally created in the 2023 session under HB 292.

General Agriculture Issues: S1033aaS adds to Idaho’s Right to Farm law. When a lawsuit alleging nuisance is filed against a lawfully conducted agricultural operation where the agricultural operation prevails, they are entitled to recover their attorney’s fees. It also includes fines and penalties for the filing of meritless complaints within applicable state and local agencies. Idaho’s Right to Farm Act includes a broad range of



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farming, agribusiness and food industries. HB104 standardizes definitions and exemptions for agricultural buildings statewide. Both bills were signed into law this session. S1133aaS provides incentives for agricultural landowners to voluntarily apply for the Agricultural Protection Area designation (APA). Following some concerns from the Counties, S1187 was introduced as a trailer bill to S1133aaS. The bill aligns the process for adding parcels to an existing APA with the process for establishing an APA. S1133aaS and S1187 were both signed into law.

Immigration and Workforce: Several bills were introduced this session related to immigration. Ultimately only one bill moved through the process and was signed into law, HB83aaS. The bill focused on addressing dangerous criminals and granting the state authority to act when such individuals are detained for crimes beyond unlawful presence in the U.S. The bill is only engaged as a secondary action to a criminal investigation under Title 18. Therefore, motor vehicle violations would not be included. There was a significant amount of work in both the House and Senate that ended in this legislation, and that resulted in support from a broad range of business, agriculture and industry groups, including IGPA. HB252

mandates E-Verify for employers and HB297 proposed a unique state-managed guest worker program for agriculture; most likely the first of its kind. Both of these bills failed to advance this session. We anticipate seeing future bills regarding the E-Verify program and will continue to work with our colleagues in agriculture and industry as these issues are debated. A strong workforce for Idaho is essential to the strength of our industry and the state's economy.

Hemp: The Idaho House Agriculture Committee held an informational hearing on two proposed hemp-related bills, HB456 and HB478. Both bills were sponsored by House Agriculture Chairman Kevin Andrus. HB456 would allow hemp producers who are growing for fiber or grain to work under the same regulatory limits as the federal regulations governing industrial hemp production. HB478 would require retailers of hemp-derived products to obtain a license through the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. Key concerns from the committee included federal testing procedures, the mitigation process for hemp slightly over the THC limit and ensuring clarity in regulatory compliance. We anticipate working on these proposals during the interim and legislative action in 2026.

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Fences: S1053 clarified that private landowners who wish to prevent livestock from entering their property from adjacent federally managed lands are solely responsible for constructing and maintaining boundary fences. The bill is a restatement of existing policy. The bill passed the Senate but was ultimately held at the desk on the House side, preventing further action. During the session we had meetings with bill proponents. We look forward to having additional conversations on the broader issue during the interim.

Energy: HB395aaH required entities needing more than 10 megawatts of power from a service provider pay for the full cost of the energy generated. The bill also included provisions regarding infrastructure that raised concerns regarding the potential for overall system cost increases that could impact all customer categories. A wide range of organizations and industries raised concerns regarding the bill. While it was amended to increase the megawatt use from 10 to 30, it did not progress in the Senate. HB415 prohibited foreign governments and out of state government entities from owning Idaho's electrical transmission infrastructure. This bill also raised concerns about how it could impact infrastructure costs. We worked with a number of groups and raised concerns regarding both bills and neither moved forward this session. Unfortunately, neither did HCR19. HCR19 was a proposed interim study committee that would have been a good opportunity to better understand the concerns behind both bills. These are important utility policy issues that will impact Idaho ratepayers and the state's economy. There are a wide range of groups concerned about both bills and we anticipate working on this issue during the interim.

Foreign Ownership: We saw several bills adding new limits on foreign ownership of Idaho's agriculture and resource lands related to "foreign adversaries." The effort was to amend code passed in 2023 that prohibits foreign governments from having controlling ownership of agriculture and resource lands. Four versions of the bill were introduced this session, with HB356aaS being the final version that successfully went through the legislative process and was signed into law. The bill prohibits foreign adversaries, as defined in federal code, from owning agriculture and resource lands, water or mineral rights. The bill includes forced sales within 180 days of notice or forced foreclosure. The bill also

We saw several bills adding new limits on foreign ownership of Idaho's agriculture and resource lands related to "foreign adversaries."

has a bounty provision where 30% of the proceedings from a forced sale of the property would go to a whistle blower, but limits it to a "qualified whistle blower." We successfully worked with several groups to get language included for an exemption for entities that have an approved agreement under the federal government's Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS). After passing the House, the bill was amended in the Senate to include water rights on the list foreign adversaries can't own. They also deleted language in subsection (9) that could have affected current legal agreements nullifying "Any current deeds, contracts, rental agreements, or other legal agreements in conflict with this law shall be deemed invalid from the date of adoption unless otherwise provided."

The Senate introduced S1149aaS which addresses the same underlying section of code. It remains limited to foreign government controlling ownership and outlines an orderly process for addressing divestment of property should the issue of foreign government controlling ownership arise. The bill was amended to include a provision for the attorney general to investigate acquisitions of interests in real property.

Additionally, the bill now includes a sentence on how to disperse excess proceeds. S1149aaS was also signed into law.

We also worked on a number of successful water bills during the 2025 session. We work closely with the Idaho Water Users Association and Paul Arrington, so be sure to see his update in the magazine on S1083, which was a multi-year effort successfully passed this session.

Water: The following bills have passed both bodies and were signed into law by the Governor:

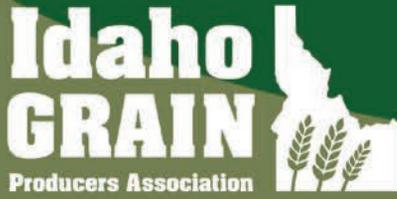
- S1061 mandates the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) to issue any new water rights methodology by December 1 of the preceding year, providing farmers certainty before planting season.
- S1082 clarifies that irrigation district assessments have priority lien status, aligning them with canal companies and groundwater district liens.
- S1083a enhances domestic well management by requiring subdivisions in critical groundwater areas to consolidate wells rather than allow individual wells for each property.

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Continued from previous page

- S1084 adjusts rules regarding the forfeiture of water rights placed in the Water Supply Bank, clarifying that the five-year forfeiture clock restarts when a water right is removed from the bank.
- HB194 updates Idaho’s water laws by allowing groundwater districts to create new divisions when adding land to their boundaries. The bill also moves the deadline for filing assessment liens and delinquency records from January to February. This will adjust the timeline for processing overdue payments without changing how assessments work.
- HB445 is the Department of Water Resources enhancement budget for FY26. This appropriation bill contains \$30 million in ongoing funds for

critical water infrastructure projects.

- S1040 provides flexibility for irrigation districts seeking to enter contracts for aquifer recharge.
- S1041 includes “canal company or other irrigation entity” in the list of authorized entities and to make the appointment of a manager of distributing lateral by irrigation entities optional.
- SCR110: Supports the 2024 Settlement Agreement between Surface Water Coalition and Groundwater Districts, endorses state efforts to address water supply challenges, and increases the state-funded aquifer recharge goal from 250,000 to 350,000 acre-feet annually. The resolution was adopted by both the House and Senate. ■

Get To Know New Executive Board Member Jeff Hood

IGPA member Jeff Hood is the newest member of the Executive Board, replacing outgoing e-board member Ty Iverson in District 1. He wholeheartedly jumped into his service on the board, and we are excited to have him as part of the team.

Jeff, his cousin Tim Dillin and the Houck Farms crew farm about 2,000 acres in Northern Idaho three miles south of the US/Canadian border in the Kootenai River Valley where they grow wheat, barley, canola, Timothy for hay and seed, alfalfa, timber as well as red Angus cattle. He was raised in Moscow and spent time at his mom’s family farm in Porthill just north of Bonners Ferry. This, he says, is where his love of farming started.

How was your operation established and how did you get into farming?

The Houck Family moved to Porthill, ID in 1924 and began farming the land which is still all held by family descendants. Tim Dillin (my second cousin) is the operator and has been on the farm for 40+ years. Growing up we spent a lot of time on the farm with my grandparents. Over the last 15 years I started spending more time working remotely to spend time with my parents. Dad’s passing in 2019 precipitated a transition from Dallas, TX to Idaho full-time where I worked the farm with our extended family.

What is your upbringing/childhood?

My parents raised my brother Mike and I in Moscow,



ID. My dad’s father started the Ford Tractor dealership in Moscow in the 40’s. I worked in that business while going to school, with my dad and uncle until it was closed in 1988. Often growing up, we spent time where Mom was born and raised at Houck Farms in Porthill, ID north of Bonners Ferry. I always found the business and operational side of farming fascinating. Going to the farm and spending time with Grandpa, uncles and cousins was a large portion of our upbringing. Time on the farm, in the timber, with family tackling lots of interesting projects all made great memories.

How did you meet your spouse?

My wife Stephanie and I were married at the farm in 2022. We met on a blind date arranged by Tim Dillin’s



wife Julie and Stephanie's mom Helen--we owe it all to them. Stephanie, her daughter Ana and I have ridden through a lot in life together. They are incredibly patient with me and the farm--I wouldn't do it without them.

How do you market your grain?

A portion of our grain is milled on the farm into Farm to Market Grain products. We market barley to local feed mill operators. Wheat is marketed to ADM and PNW Farmers Cooperative. We have also grown some barley sold into Asian markets.

What are the guiding principles of your operation?

Family. We have focused for as long as I can remember on making sure the farm stays Houck Farms, a family operation. Care has been taken over the years to educate the family landowners when they visit about current crops, practices, weather, prices etc. so they understand the farming pressures.

What do you do for fun?

I like spending time with family, reading and snowmobiling. I enjoy spending time with my wife Stephanie and step-daughter Ana. My brother, his family and Mom always have great times on the farm. Working in efforts larger than myself--the farm has always seemed that way to me, family fits that too.



How did you get involved with IGPA?

My cousin Tim Dillin is a past President of IGPA and a two-term Idaho Barley Commissioner. During his time in office, I attended several meetings trying to learn and better understand the industry. I believe in IGPA's mission--industry protection and market facilitation through policy work are critical to keeping Idaho agriculture healthy.



I have learned so much about how much our voices, as growers, really matter and how much an organization like IGPA does for us. I've met several people I now call friends am excited about the future and really throwing myself into the work of IGPA as an Executive Board member. 🇺🇸





NRCS: History and Farm Bill Programs Explained

BY MINDI RAMBO AND SHELBY CALLOWAY

It is said that you can't really know where you're going until you know where you have been. Since April 27, 2025, marks the 90th anniversary of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), we'd like to take you back to the official beginning.

In 1935, the United States was in the middle of a natural disaster now remembered as the Dust Bowl. High crop prices and a series of wet years in the 1920s led farmers to plow up native grasslands and plant crops on the usually arid Great Plains, which would contribute to what was to come. By the 1930s, an unrelenting drought accompanied by merciless winds hit the area, particularly in the southern plains. As crops withered, the land, now bare of both crops and native vegetation to hold the soil, simply blew away. Huge dust clouds blew across the Great Plains, dumping Midwestern soil on Eastern cities and even on ships far out into the Atlantic Ocean. An ongoing series of severe dust storms in the early '30s destroyed farms, killed people and livestock, and contributed to the economic ruin and displacement of thousands of people who were forced to abandon their homes and farms.

In the midst of these storms, Hugh Hammond Bennett, the "father of soil conservation" led the US government's nationwide effort to halt the "national menace" of unchecked erosion. Bennett campaigned for a coordinated attack against soil erosion long before the Dust Bowl era, having seen the threat posed by water erosion early in his career as a soil surveyor for the USDA's Bureau of Soils. He observed firsthand how unchecked sheet and rill erosion slowly degraded fields and pastures, reducing the land's ability to sustain agricultural productivity and support the rural communities who depended on it for their lives and livelihoods. Moreover, he recognized soil as a strategic natural resource and that its wastage on private lands harmed not just farmers but the wider public and the nation as a whole. As the nation's foremost advocate for a country-wide plan of research and action to attack the "national menace" of excessive soil erosion, he led the temporary Soil Erosion Service (SES) from 1933 to 1935.

Since its creation as a permanent agency in 1935, the agency has developed wide-ranging technical solutions to help farmers and ranchers dramatically reduce soil erosion.



On March 21, 1935, with the SES's temporary funds set to expire soon, Bennett testified before Congress about the need for a permanent, national, interdisciplinary approach to combating excessive erosion. The same day, a major dust storm from the Midwest hit Washington, D.C., shrouding the Capitol in a "clay colored veil." The arrival of this well-timed dust storm drove

home the wisdom of Bennett's urging, and Congress moved quickly to pass legislation for a permanent conservation agency. Just over a month later, on April 27, the President signed the Soil Conservation Act (PL 74-46). The act created the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) at the United States Department of Agriculture and Hugh Hammond Bennett became its first Chief.

Since its creation as a permanent agency in 1935, the agency has developed wide-ranging technical solutions to help farmers and ranchers dramatically reduce soil erosion and to be good stewards of all our shared natural resources. Shortly after its founding, the agency expanded its scope beyond soil to include the conservation of water, wildlife, and a host of other natural resource concerns as the country's lead voluntary conservation agency for private lands. To reflect this expansion, the agency was renamed the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 1994.

Today, farmers, ranchers and forest landowners can find help through a number of NRCS financial



assistance programs, which are made available through the Farm Bill. The most recent version of the law, the 2018 Farm Bill, provides for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP, and Agriculture Conservation Easement Program Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE).

EQIP

EQIP is NRCS' flagship program. It is the most well-known and utilized among producers. There is no limit on how many applications a producer can submit, and each one can focus on a different conservation effort. Typically, EQIP contracts last for one year, but can go longer. EQIP pays for a portion of the cost to install a practice. Payment is typically made once the practice is installed and certified by NRCS staff.

CSP

If you are interested in taking your conservation to the next level, we recommend that you look into CSP for long-term conservation practices. CSP is the largest conservation program in the United States, covering more acres than any other conservation program offered through USDA. CSP helps thousands of producers build on their existing conservation practices and strengthen their operations as a whole.

CSP is a five-year program that offers financial assistance through annual disbursements, with the option for renewal at the end of a contract. Producers can pick one or bundle multiple enhancements that best address the conservation concerns on their property.

Here are a few ways CSP may help grain growers: increase cover crops to improve soil health, implement buffers to enhance water quality and management to improve water efficiency.



ACEP-ALE

ACEP-ALE can help ensure your farmland stays farmland. This is a voluntary program that protects agricultural land from becoming non-productive land. ACEP-ALE is a permanent easement that is recorded on your deed and will remain valid even through ownership changes.

Financial Program application deadlines can be found on our website at www.nrcs.usda.gov/ID. However, applications are taken year-round.

NRCS staff are here to help you plan and implement conservation practices to improve your practice and enhance your property. All it takes to get the ball rolling is to call or visit your closest field office. You can find that number or address by visiting www.nrcs.usda.gov/ID and use the Locate Your Local Service Center feature.

Agency history courtesy of Shelby Calloway, NRCS Historian. Program information provided by Mindi Rambo, NRCS Idaho State Public Affairs Specialist.

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Grain and Gain

BY MICHAEL PARRELLA, J.R. SIMPLOT ENDOWED DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND LIFE SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

This spring will mark the first large-scale commercial planting of UI Gold, which is an extremely high-yielding hard white spring wheat cultivar with excellent baking qualities that our wheat breeding program released in 2022. UI Warrior, a soft white spring wheat

cultivar released in 2024 and licensed to Ririe Grain and Feed Co-op, should be a popular, high-yielding option among Idaho growers in a couple of years. Looking further ahead, Jianli Chen, the university's

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Blaine Jacobson endowed professor of wheat breeding, based at the U of I Aberdeen Research and Extension Center, has prioritized incorporating resistance to a destructive pest, Hessian fly, and a damaging fungal disease, fusarium head blight, into her top cultivars. Chen also focuses on nutritional aspects in her breeding such as specific starch traits shown to confer health benefits including improved insulin sensitivity. For Idaho wheat farmers, varieties released through the U of I pipeline equate to improved profitability through better yields, reduced inputs and fewer losses from pests and diseases. The university, in turn, benefits from the opportunity for faculty and students to do meaningful work, as well as from royalties generated through sales of our varieties and reinvested into our research programs. Royalty funding, for example, has covered the renovation of campus-based greenhouses used for cereal research. Our wheat breeding program is but one of the many examples of a thriving, mutually beneficial partnership between the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and our state’s grain producers. “I have worked with the grain industry very closely,” Chen said. “Anything they need I will immediately incorporate into my breeding program.”

Cereal production is crucial to Idaho’s economy. Idaho is the No. 1 barley producing state, with cash receipts from the crop totaling \$398 million in 2024, according to “The Financial Conditions of Idaho Agriculture,” published by UI Extension agricultural economists Brett Wilder and Rita Du. Wheat is also among Idaho’s top commodities, bringing in \$564 million in annual cash receipts, according to the report. Since the IWC’s inception, the organization has contributed about \$18.7 million toward CALS faculty endowments and grants, and that support will be crucial moving forward, as the college faces an uncertain budgetary outlook. The IWC has endowed three CALS positions – Chen’s endowment, the Potlatch Joe Anderson wheat agronomy endowed professorship held by Juliet Marshall and the Bill Flory endowed chair in commodity risk management held by Xiaoli Etienne. We also have the Idaho Barley Commission’s endowed barley agronomy professorship held by Jared Spackman. These endowments have provided a visible and positive return on the growers’ investments. Marshall is quick to sound the alarm when pests and diseases – such as cereal cyst nematode, fusarium head blight and dwarf bunt – surface in the state. She also advises growers on when to spray pesticides, which varieties to use or avoid in the face of specific threats and the importance



of diverse crop rotations. She works closely with Jim Peterson, a former wheat breeder with Limagrain Cereal Seeds and Oregon State University who now serves as an IWC research consultant. Peterson’s experience has assisted the breeding research through his understanding of varietal traits, end-use qualities and minimum specifications demanded by industry. Etienne is tasked with identifying core risks in the agricultural and energy sectors and offering solutions to address these risks. I’ve participated in these tours (recently led by Etienne) spanning from the Snake River dams at the Port of Lewiston to export terminals and the Wheat Marketing Center in Portland, Oregon. The intent of the tours is to give our students (and faculty/administration) a real-world glimpse of Idaho’s grain industry and the logistics of how grain is shipped. Spackman’s research focuses on sustainable irrigated and dryland barley production strategies with emphasis on soil nutrient management for yield, end-use quality, plant health and soil and water quality.

During my time as Dean CALS has made some extraordinary investments to build and grow programs benefiting cereal production and Idaho agriculture in general. On May 29, we will celebrate the soft opening of the Deep Soil Ecotron – a facility that will enable us to study soils at greater depths than anywhere else in the world, helping farmers better understand the connection between crop and soil health. In the fall of 2023, we opened the 9,600-square-foot Idaho Center for Plant and Soil Health in Parma, which contains laboratory space for research in nematology, pomology, plant pathology, microbiology and hops quality. The facility promises to advance crop science



and technology and help farmers adapt to a changing world. The Rupert-based Idaho Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment, which will include largest research dairy in the U.S., will have an adjacent demonstration farm, where researchers will study connections between plant and animal agriculture. We've also added the Sandpoint Organic Agriculture Center, where we conduct research into organic food production, into our portfolio, and we're nearing completion of the Meat Science and Innovation Center Honoring Ron Richard, which will be a 12,750-square-foot abattoir serving the important livestock industry.

As my retirement in June draws nearer, I know CALS is a college on the rise. In addition to adding impressive new facilities, we've recruited our top four freshman classes during the past four years, and

niche.com recognized CALS as the 13th best college of agricultural science in the U.S. in its 2025 rankings. CALS also played a large role in helping U of I become an R1 Research Institution under the Carnegie Foundation's 2025 rankings, recognizing "very high research spending and doctorate production." It's clear to me that agriculture is the engine driving our economy, and grain is a core component of our agriculture sector. Thank you grain producers for your steadfast support throughout the years, and for having our back as we strive to remain on the cutting edge of research and Extension into the future. You've helped make our college's accomplishments possible. Together, we can grow Idaho's economy, ensure food security for Idahoans and keep our state's crop production economically and environmentally sustainable for generations to come. ■

Invasive Species and Applicator Updates

BY CHANEL TEWALT, DIRECTOR, IDAHO STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

While 2025 has presented its challenges, it's also been a year of progress for many of our programs. As we move through the growing season, we remain focused on supporting the industry that drives our state's economy, addressing both immediate challenges and long-term resilience through ongoing efforts such as protecting our state from invasive species and reducing regulatory friction.



The detection of quagga mussels in the Snake River in 2023 and 2024 prompted an urgent response from ISDA along with several other state agencies. As many of you know by now, the invasive mussels pose a serious threat to agriculture by clogging irrigation systems, disrupting water flow, and damaging aquatic ecosystems critical to farming and ranching operations.

ISDA is continuing the fight against quagga mussels in the Snake River. Following the October 2024 chelated copper treatment, we conducted a follow-up potassium chloride treatment in February 2025. This follow-up specifically targeted still water pools within the complex river system. The treatment plan underscores ISDA's ongoing commitment to using every available tool in the effort to eradicate quagga mussels.

Combating invasive quagga mussels continues to be a top priority. ISDA's Invasive Species Program has significantly expanded its efforts – we have doubled waterbody monitoring across the state, we increased watercraft inspections by 50 percent and we have enhanced public outreach initiatives. Our agency's efforts combined with the cooperation and compliance of the public, are crucial to protecting Idaho's waters and way of life.

Shifting to another important area of our work, ISDA's Agricultural Resources Division has implemented two key updates in 2024 that are especially relevant to applicators and chemigators.

Private applicator credits have changed to account for slightly smaller blocks of time for credit hours. This more accurately reflects the course requirements that align with credit approval from neighboring states, ensuring courses remain under 60 minutes.

For chemigators, the licensing process has been streamlined. A Private Applicator License is no longer required unless you are applying restricted use pesticides. Instead of having to take an exam, applicators now have a number of easier options to gain a license. Training is one option, and it is available through in-person sessions or an online module,

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ensuring that applicators have the knowledge needed to operate safely and effectively.

You can find more details about these two changes at agri.idaho.gov.

Our mission remains centered on advancing, protecting, and promoting Idaho agriculture through a balanced approach that supports both industry and consumers. Just because a practice has been in place for years doesn't mean we won't reassess its effectiveness. We're always open to feedback and conversations about how we can better serve Idaho agriculture.

In fact, we are reassessing additional reforms we can make to pesticide licensing to potentially allow for longer licensing periods and additional competency assessments (beyond just exams). Throughout this process, close collaboration with industry will be our priority.

During the very busy season to come, I hope you also get some time to enjoy what many consider the best part of the year in Idaho: being out in the fields, alongside your families, doing the work that makes our state proud. ■

Idaho Legislature Passes Law Amending Idaho's Domestic Use Exemption Statutes

BY PAUL ARRINGTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IDAHO WATER USERS ASSOCIATION

For three years, members of the Idaho Water Users Association's (IWUA) legislative committee have engaged stakeholders in a discussion of Idaho's domestic exemption statutes.

During this time, IWUA asked the question: Considering all the money spent and disputes over declining water supplies, is it time for a change in the way Idaho's treats domestic wells. For three years, IWUA members have said yes. In 2025, Idaho's Legislature agreed.

S1083a passed the Senate (32-1-2) and House (63-2-5) and was signed into law by Governor Little. Below is a summary of S1083a.

Background

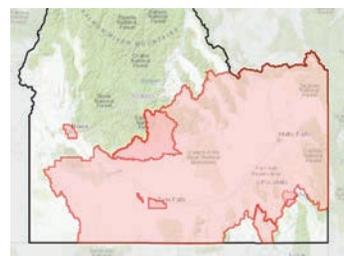
Under Idaho law, an application for permit is required for any new uses of water. Following a lengthy process, which may include legal challenges, the permit becomes a vested water right that is administered in priority – including

Year	Dom. Wells
2004	4,184
2005	4,508
2006	4,143
2007	3,805
2008	2,449
2009	1,650
2010	1,344
2011	1,131
2012	1,144
2013	1,665
2014	1,955
2015	2,120
2016	2,338
2017	2,319
2018	2,512
2019	2,859
2020	3,520
2021	4,295
2022	4,102
2023	3,653
TOT.	55,696

potential curtailment in times of shortage.

Importantly, Idaho's legislature has carved out an exemption to the permitting requirements for "domestic uses." Idaho code defines these uses to include water for 1 home, ½ acre of irrigation and up to 13,000 gallons per day. If a use meets each these criteria, a permit is not required, and the use will not be subject to any management by the state – including priority administration. Such uses are often referred to as "domestic exempt uses."

In recent years, Idaho has seen a dramatic increase in domestic exempt uses, with over 55,000



Moratorium Areas in Idaho



GWMA / CWMA in Idaho



originating since 2004. Considering that each use authorizes up to ½ acre of irrigation, this equates to over 27,500 acres of unregulated irrigation.

For many in the water user community, this level of unregulated use is unacceptable. Idaho faces groundwater challenges throughout the state – including the Eastern Snake Plain, the Wood River Valley, Mountain Home, and several North Idaho aquifers. In many of these areas, the Idaho Department of Water Resources has designated Ground Water Management Areas or Critical Ground Water Areas or has issued moratoriums on new water right development. Further, the State and water communities have spent tens of millions of dollars addressing declining aquifer through recharge, infrastructure upgrades, and fallowing acres.

Summary of S1083a

After extensive discussion on these challenges, the stakeholder workgroup determined that it was time to do something different. Four issues were identified and resolved through S1083a.

Issue #1 – Fairness in Administration: Each year, the State and water users spend millions of dollars to address declining ground water supplies. Since 2004, over 27,500 acres of domestic exempt irrigation has been developed in Idaho. These domestic exempt uses are not subject to administration and do not contribute to efforts to resolve ground water challenges. This creates concerns about fairness – consider the farmers told to shut off their wells, while thousands of homes continue irrigating lawns and landscaping in the same area.

To address this, S1083a does the following:

- In areas designated as Ground Water Management Areas, Critical Ground Water Areas, or Moratorium Areas, the domestic use exemption in subdivisions will only apply to in-home and livestock uses.
- In these areas, any irrigation or other uses would require an Application for Permit, including possible mitigation, and will be subject to administration.
- Outside of these areas (and outside of subdivisions in those areas), the domestic use exemption will remain unchanged.

Issues #2 – Water Quality: Concern was raised that each new unregulated well an additional opportunity for contaminants to reach Idaho’s aquifer. To address this issue, S1083a does the following:

- Creates section 42-111(3) to allow multiple domestic exempt uses for in-home purposes to be combined into 1 well. Historically, separate wells were required for each use.
- Permitting requirements for shared / community wells and public water systems remains unchanged

Issues #3 – Enforcement: Workgroup members questioned by IDWR doesn’t do more to enforce compliance with the domestic use exemption. In discussing this concern, the workgroup learned that current statutory authorities are ineffective at enforcing compliance with the domestic use exemption. S1083a does the following to address this concern:

- Creates new section 42-1701C, which establishes a streamlined process for ensuring compliance with the domestic use exemption. Elements include:
 - Notice of possible violation
 - Opportunity to respond and correct any violation
 - Increased penalties for failure to correct noncompliance

Issue #4 – Local Government Clarity: The workgroup identified a need to clarify local government authorities relative to development and water. S1083a does the following:

- Requires compatibility for systems installed within 1-mile of municipal service area
- Requires that irrigation water remain with the land following development
- Authorizes local governments to consider water conditions in planning efforts

Conclusion

It is humbling to see the hard work of many lead to success. This was truly a team effort. Appreciation is warranted for the following:

- Speaker Moyle, Pro Tempore Anthon, Senator Harris and Representative Pickett – who sponsored the legislation and led the way in advocating for S1083a in the legislature.
- Representatives from the water users, cities, counties, well drillers, home builders, realtors, Farm Bureau and others who engaged on this process for three years. ■



Survey and Identification of Plant Parasitic Nematodes in Cereal Fields of Southeastern Idaho

BY JULIET MARSHALL AND POORIA ENSAFI, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

Cereals are an important food source throughout the world and a major crop in the Pacific Northwest. Estimated annual crop losses from plant parasitic nematodes (PPNs) result in over 80 billion US dollars in worldwide damage to agricultural crops. The impact on cereals, particularly wheat and barley, is substantial. Cereal cyst nematode (CCN) alone has been responsible for damages amounting to over £3 million in the UK, AU\$72 million in Australia, and \$3.4 million in the Pacific Northwest. Worldwide, more than 100 species from 28 genera have been reported from cereal fields, either parasitic to cereals or rotational crops associated with those fields. The large number of genera affecting wheat and barley each may have multiple species and races with very different levels of damage, making species-level identification of nematodes a fundamental step for accurate disease diagnosis and effective management.

In Idaho, our knowledge of plant parasitic nematodes (PPN) has traditionally been based on general surveys across multiple crop types. In 2023, we initiated a targeted study to improve our understanding of the diversity of PPN species and soil population densities within cereal fields. This will improve integrated management strategies for wheat and barley production and focus the efforts of breeding for resistance.



Figure 1. A female cereal cyst nematode (*Heterodera avenae*) (A), and a juvenile stage 3 (B) stained with acid fuchsin. Nematodes feed from a food chamber called a syncytium that develops inside the cereal root.



Figure 2. A spring wheat field in St. Anthony ID heavily infested with *Heterodera avenae*. Patches of yellow and pale green plants are visible in the uneven fields.

A total of 92 soil samples were collected shortly after harvest from cereal fields across southeastern Idaho counties, including Fremont (Ashton, St. Anthony, Parker), Teton, Madison (Sugar City, Rexburg), Jefferson (Rigby), and Bonneville (Ririe) counties. Fields in rotation with other major crops, such as potato and sugar beets, were prioritized for sampling.

Using a combination of morphological and molecular diagnostic techniques, we identified several key PPN genera at the species level:

- **Cereal cyst nematode (*Heterodera avenae*):** CCN are detected consistently across grain fields, with the highest population densities recorded in Fremont County (Figure 1). Heavy infestations manifest as uneven plant growth and patchy distribution, characterized by pale green or yellow patches and stunted plants with reduced tillering (Figure 2). The optimal window for soil sampling and detection is approximately two weeks post-harvest.
- **Root Lesion Nematode (*Pratylenchus* spp.):** Frequently detected throughout grain fields, root lesion nematodes (RLN) can cause noticeable



damage to barley and wheat cultivars (Figure 3). In most cereal production fields surveyed, CCN and RLN coexisted. Previous studies have shown that high combined soil populations of these two nematodes are associated with extensive yield losses.

- Other species of parasitic nematodes, although generally less destructive, were detected at high population densities. Preliminary results indicated a high level of species diversity within certain genera, including spiral nematode *Helicotylenchus* spp. Other important species, although detected at lower frequencies, included stubby root nematode (*Trichodorus* sp.), pin nematode (*Paratylenchus minor*), stunt nematode (full identification through molecular identification and sequencing is in progress), stem nematode (*Ditylenchus* spp.), foliar nematode (*Aphelenchoides* spp. and root-knot nematode *Meloidogyne* spp.

This survey underscores the necessity of species-level nematode identification to inform both breeding efforts



Figure 3. Root lesion nematodes *Pratylenchus* sp. (A), and eggs (B) stained with acid fuchsin inside the root of a spring wheat cultivar, St. Anthony ID.

and management practices, ultimately enhancing cereal crop productivity in Idaho and comparable production systems. 🇺🇸

Getting to Know Your Idaho Wheat Commissioners: Clark Hamilton – District 4

District 4 commissioner Clark Hamilton and his wife, Kristi, own and operate Triple C Farms, a diverse 6,000-acre family farm in Bonneville County. A third-generation farmer, Clark has been farming in Idaho since 1999. He holds a bachelor's degree in plant science with a minor in biology from Utah State University.

Clark was appointed to the Idaho Wheat Commission by Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter in 2015 and was reappointed for a second term by Governor Brad Little in 2020. Before his appointment to the Commission, he served five years on the board of the Idaho Grain Producers Association. Along with being a commissioner, Clark also serves as chairman of U.S. Wheat Associates, the overseas marketing organization for the U.S. wheat industry.

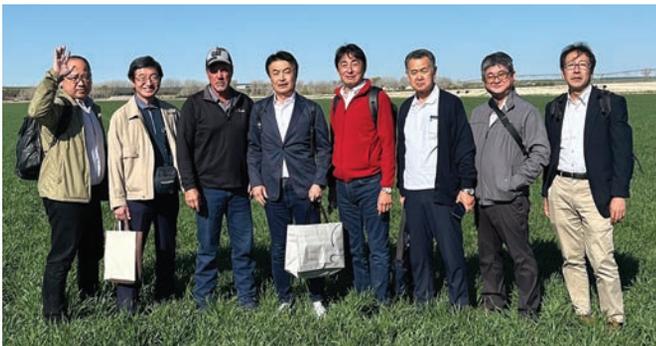
Tell us about your family.

I was raised on a farm in Utah, where I had the privilege of farming alongside my grandpa, dad, uncle,



and brother. My wife Kristi and I have been married for nearly 38 years. In 1999, we moved to Ririe, Idaho, and have been farming here and in Swan Valley ever since. We're proud parents of four children. Two of our sons live nearby and work with us on the farm. Our daughter and her family live in Smithfield, Utah, and a son who resides in Caldwell, Idaho. We've been blessed with 11 grandchildren—nine boys and two girls.

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What do you like to do for fun off of the farm?

I am a private pilot and enjoy flying for recreation and checking the farm from the air. I also enjoy motorcycling, hunting, and traveling with Kristi.

Tell us about your farm and what you grow.

Our farm consists of irrigated and dryland acres, on which we grow wheat, barley, potatoes, oilseeds, and alfalfa.

What is your favorite wheat food product?

My favorite wheat food product is bread.

What is your favorite part about growing/working with wheat?

I enjoy growing wheat because I like all wheat-based products, and I know it is such an essential part of the world's diet.

Do you have a favorite memory of working on the farm?

My favorite memories of working on the farm are with my children and watching them as they learn, grow, and develop a passion for agriculture.

How have advancements in farming technology or practices impacted your operation?

GPS technology has improved our precision and accuracy in all farming applications. With satellite and digital systems, we can now remotely control irrigation and grain handling operations, increasing efficiency and productivity. Specialized equipment for direct seed practices has also improved our efficiency, reduced erosion, and improved soil health.

What role does the Idaho Wheat Commission and/or other industry organizations play in supporting Idaho's wheat farmers?



The mission of the Idaho Wheat Commission is to enhance grower profitability by investing in market development, research, and education. Each of these areas plays a critical role in the long-term success of Idaho's wheat industry. Producer assessments are carefully invested, and the commitment of everyone involved ensures those funds are used effectively to benefit wheat growers.

What motivated you to take on a leadership role with U.S. Wheat Associates?

Idaho exports roughly half of its wheat crop, and similarly, about half of the U.S. wheat crop is exported. So, I've always understood how vital the export process is to the success of Idaho's wheat industry. Supporting strong export markets keeps our industry healthy, and that's what sparked my interest in becoming involved with U.S. Wheat Associates.

What advice would you give your younger self?

Through the years, I have learned the importance of the relationship between the family business and the family. The family depends on the business's success, but nothing compares to the importance of family. The balance between business and family is critical. I would have taken more time to study and learn how to balance this relationship. 🇺🇸



2025 Northern Idaho Field Days

Date	Time	Event	Place
June 10 th	7:30am *Hosted Lunch	Weed Science Tour	UI Parker Farm, Moscow
June 11 th	7:30am *Hosted Breakfast	Winter Canola Tour	Craigmont Legion Hall
June 16 th	10:00am	UI/LCS Collaborative Crop Tour	Genesee
June 16 th	5:00pm	Lewiston Twilight Tour	Henricksen Farm 2810 Powers Ave. Lewiston
June 18 th	TBD	UI/McGregor Crop Tour	Bonnars Ferry
June 24 th	TBD	Prairie Area Crop and Conservation Tour	Nezperce, Craigmont, Greencreek
June 25 th	TBD	UI/Palouse CD Conservation Tour	Uniontown to Kambitsch

2025 Southern/Eastern Idaho Field Days

Date	Time	Event	Place
July 8 th	9:30 – 11:00am	Winter and Spring Trials	Rupert/Minidoka
July 9 th	8:30am – 12:00pm	Aberdeen/LCS Field Day	Aberdeen Research & Extension Center
July 10 th	9:30 – 11:00am	UI Seed Dealer Event – Invitation only	Aberdeen Research & Extension Center
July 11 th	9:30 – 11:00am	Rockland Field Day	Kress Farm, Rockland
July 17 th	9:30 – 11:00am	Idaho Falls	Idaho Falls
July 22 nd	10:00am – 12:00pm	Winter and Spring Trials	Soda Springs
July 23 rd	10:00am – 12:00pm	Tetonia R&E Center	Newdale

For more information, please visit www.uidaho.edu/extension



Section 301 Determination: Opportunity for U.S. Wheat Buyers

BY USW MARKET ANALYST TYLLOR LEDFORD

In recent weeks, the risk of Section 301 actions targeting China’s shipbuilding industry have hung heavily over the wheat exports. The proposed actions and associated risks have dampened exports, with new crop wheat sales sitting 18% below last year’s level, as of April 10. However, after weeks of uncertainty, the April 17 determination offered crucial insights and clarity that should ease freight risks.

Concurrently, U.S. wheat prices have stabilized, a stark contrast to the unprecedented volatility of recent years driven by war, drought, and economic uncertainty. The absence of a discernible downward trend further suggests that the markets have stabilized at their current levels. Notably, the spread between U.S. HRW and the cheapest global origins has narrowed in recent months, positioning U.S. wheat classes at their most competitive price levels since 2020.

Bulk Wheat Shipping Sheltered

On April 17, the office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) issued final determinations on the Section 301 actions, considering Federal Register comments and public input. These determinations will implement phased fees on Chinese vessel operators and owners, as well as on Chinese-built vessels based on net tonnage,

taking effect in 180 days and increasing incrementally over three years. Notably, Chinese-built bulk vessels under 80,000 tons deadweight or those arriving empty in the U.S. are exempt.

While the market is still assessing the exact implementation of the rulings, wheat vessels are generally expected to be exempt from significant impacts. U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) and the National Association of Wheat Growers applauded the USTR for adjusting the proposed remedies that help protect U.S. export competitiveness.

U.S. Wheat Increasingly Competitive

As noted earlier, U.S. wheat competitiveness has steadily increased throughout 2025. Notably, U.S. soft red winter (SRW) has been the most competitive global origin since early March 2025, the longest competitive window since before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. U.S. soft white (SW) is a close second, priced approximately \$10/MT above SRW. Moreover, the spread between U.S. Gulf hard red winter (HRW) and the cheapest global origin (Russian) was over \$56/Mt in April 2024. In April 2025, the spread between HRW and the low-cost origin (U.S. SRW) has narrowed to \$23/MT. U.S. Gulf HRW also remains competitively

Overview of Section 301 Determinations, April 17, 2025

Fee Type	Based On	Target	Initial Fee	Incremental Increase	Exemptions	Fee Remission
Phased fee on Chinese vessel operators and vessel owners	Net tonnage of the vessel	Any vessel with a Chinese operator or owned by an entity of China	\$0 for the first 180 days, \$50/net ton (NT) on 10/14	\$30/NT increases over the next three years, capped at 5 assessment/year	N/A	N/A
Phased fee on Chinese-built vessels	Net tonnage or per container	Chinese-built vessels	\$0 for the first 180 days, \$18/NT on 10/14	\$5/NT increases over next three years, capped at 5 assessment/year	Vessels arriving empty, vessels below 80,000 dwt, short sea shipping, certain U.S.-owned companies' vessels, specialized export vessels (Lakers Vessels)	Eligible for up to three years if orders and takes delivery of a U.S.-built vessel of equivalent size



priced against other origins, trading within \$6/MT of French and Argentinean wheat, within \$11/MT of Ukrainian wheat, and \$2/MT to \$6/MT below competing wheat classes from Russia, the Baltic Sea, Germany, and Poland on a Free on Board (FOB) basis.

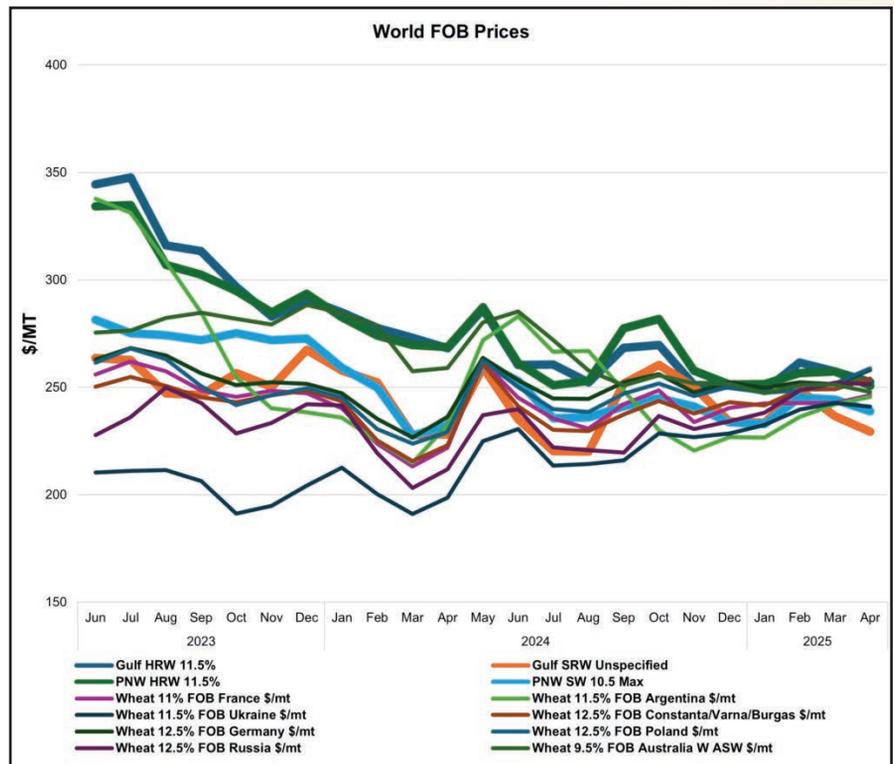
Relative to corn, SRW sits just \$8/MT above Gulf corn on a FOB basis, the tightest margin since September 2023. Similarly, the spread between Ordinary U.S. SW and PNW corn is also \$8/MT, nearing levels that stimulated South Korean feed demand during the 2024/25 season.

Other Factors

Given competitive pricing and reduced freight risks, U.S. wheat presents an attractive option for importers, particularly with the 2025 harvest approaching. Seasonal trends suggest that basis levels will generally decrease further, typically reaching seasonal lows during harvest. Timely moisture remains crucial in U.S. HRW growing areas and the Black Sea due to existing weather risks, and ongoing trade policy shifts add further uncertainty.

Nevertheless, the combination of a weaker dollar, decreasing basis, normalized price trends, and eased

freight risks offers an opportunity for international buyers to capitalize on the recent competitiveness. Backed by exceptional quality and USW’s superior customer service, U.S. wheat offers outstanding and timely value. ■



Gfri analysis gives enriched/fortified refined grains their due

BY RUSSELL REDMAN, SENIOR EDITOR, MILLING & BAKING NEWS
(COURTESY OF SOSLAND PUBLISHING CO.)

Foods based on enriched and fortified refined grains remain a linchpin of US diet quality and have more than proved their value historically as core contributors to Americans’ nutrition, according to a new white paper from the Grain Foods Research Institute (GFRI).

Titled “History and Public Health Benefits of Enrichment and Fortification of Refined Grains,” the paper spotlights the pivotal role that enrichment

and fortification of refined grains has played in addressing public health concerns and shortfalls in vital nutrients — particularly in lowering the incidence of micronutrient deficiency diseases and related health risks. The report noted that enriched and fortified grain products have provided an affordable, effective way to raise the intake of underconsumed nutrients and improve diet.

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Against the backdrop of new leadership in Washington and rising government and intensifying public scrutiny of processed foods, the paper emphasized that reduced US consumption of enriched and fortified refined grains would negatively impact micronutrient intake and public health outcomes. That observation is key as the nation awaits the release of the final 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) later this year, said Erin Ball, executive director of the Grain Foods Foundation (GFF), GFRI's sister organization.

"I want to educate public health folks, and I want to educate experts who are making nutrition policy or making recommendations about nutrition policy in the US," Ball said in an interview on the white paper and why it was published. "This paper will serve to remind all of us, why do we enrich the products that our investors make, and what has that meant for public health in America. So it was two reasons: one related to policymakers and those who were advising policymakers, and one related to the fact that many of us — myself included — couldn't recite to you the history of how we got here with refined enriched grains. We need to be able to tell that story."

Enriched/fortified grains: Lost in the crowd?

Enrichment involves replenishing nutrients naturally found in a food that were lost or reduced during processing, often in greater amounts than originally found, GFRI explained in the report, released in late March. Fortification, on the other hand, entails the addition of nutrients not naturally found in a food to meet a specific health need.

In the US diet, enriched and fortified grain products are a significant source of micronutrients such as folic acid, B vitamins and iron, along with fiber, the paper said. The refined grains category covers a broad range of products, from "staple" grain foods that are enriched and fortified — with limited to no saturated fat or added sugar (such as bread, cereal and pasta) — to "indulgent" grain foods with higher fat and sugar content (including cakes and other bakery items).

Observational studies and the DGA, however, typically haven't made a distinction between these types of grain-based foods, even though most refined grains consumed

Enrichment involves replenishing nutrients naturally found in a food that were lost or reduced during processing, often in greater amounts than originally found.



by Americans are staple grain foods, the report noted. Less than a quarter are indulgent grain foods, such as flour-based desserts (9.6% of that subgroup), stuffing/breading (5%), quick bread (3.9%), biscuits (2%), pie and pastry crusts (1.9%) and croissants (0.6%).

"This has been the end of a five-year Dietary Guidelines for Americans cycle, which means the advisory

committee has been working together for two years, and a lot of the dialogue is very negative about refined grains," Ball said. "There's never a definition of refined grains discussed. It's always just 'refined'; they often don't use the term 'refined enriched.' At the end of this cycle, and even mentioned in their scientific report, which was published in December, the (DGA) committee recommended enrichment of whole grains because enrichment is so essential, but they have a very negative view of refined grains."

Meanwhile, critics of ultra processed foods have become vocal critics of processes like enrichment and view the addition of vitamins to food as "part of the ultra-processed foods problem," Ball added.

While the GFF has responded to criticisms within the DGAC and from bashers of ultra-processed foods, Ball concluded more efforts were needed.

"I said, 'OK, what's next?' It's a white paper," she explained.

History of success stories

GFRI's paper highlighted flour enrichment and folic acid fortification as historical examples of where



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enriched and dietary changes that paid big dividends for US nutrition and health.

Refined grain enrichment with B vitamins and iron was proposed in the early 1900s amid elevated rates of B vitamin deficiency diseases such as pellagra (niacin deficiency), beriberi (thiamin deficiency) and riboflavin deficiency disease. Bakers began voluntarily adding high-vitamin yeasts or synthetic vitamins to their bread in the late 1930s. The term “enriched” was officially adopted by the Food and Drug Administration by the end of 1940, and the Food and Nutrition Board officially began urging the enrichment of flour and bread the following year.

In 1943, the War Foods Administration started requiring the enrichment of all bread and flour, essentially making enrichment mandatory nationwide. After World War II, the FDA created two standards of identity: “flour” and “enriched flour.”

“From a public health perspective, the enrichment of refined grains with B vitamins served to effectively eliminate pellagra, beriberi and riboflavin deficiency disease among the general US population,” the

paper said. “Pellagra-attributed mortality declined significantly in the 1940s and 1950s compared to peak levels in the late 1920s, with it being virtually eradicated in the US by 1960. Analyses of pellagra-attributed morbidity and mortality trends have concluded that cereal grain enrichment played a significant role in its eradication.”

Likewise, both beriberi and riboflavin deficiency disease are now extremely rare in the United States, with GFRI noting that clinically diagnosed vitamin deficiencies and disorders overall “are now rare in representative samples of the US population.”

“Even for folks in the industry, very few remember the story, the history, of why enrichment (of refined grains) came to be,” Ball said.

The fortification of refined grains with folic acid has seen similar success. According to the paper, that effort emerged in the 1980s and 1990s in response to a rising understanding of the etiology and prevalence of neural tube defects (NTDs), severe and debilitating birth defects of the brain and spine, including spina bifida and anencephaly.

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In 1992, the US Public Health Service recommended the intake of folic acid for all women of child-bearing age via fortification, supplementation and diet to prevent NTDs. The Institute of Medicine issued a similar recommendation in 1998. But GFRI’s paper said raising folate intake through folic acid supplements proved challenging. That led to the identification of enriched grain products — a widely consumed food — as a vehicle to boost folic acid intake. In 1996, the FDA amended the standard of identity for enriched grain products to include folic acid, and folic acid fortification of enriched cereal grain products was mandated for 1998.

“The introduction of mandatory folic acid fortification of refined grain products produced a clear public health benefit with a reduction in the incidence of NTDs in the general population,” the white paper said.

Dietary debate

A key point in GFRI’s paper is that refined grains are “often misclassified and/or grouped with” red and processed meat, sugar-sweetened foods and beverages, fried foods and high-fat dairy products identified as part of an “unhealthy” or “Western” dietary pattern, flagged in epidemiological studies as having a higher risk for adverse health outcomes. But when analyzed individually, refined grain intake wasn’t linked to an increased risk of all-cause mortality, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension or cancer, the report noted.

“The Grain Foods Foundation was formed in response to the Atkins diet craze in the late ’90s and early 2000s,” Ball said. “And I think, in general, the way carbohydrates very broadly have been maligned has fed into this issue with refined grains.

“Also, public health and nutrition folks have really moved away from talking about individual foods and sometimes even individual nutrients. They talk about dietary patterns. In some ways, it’s helpful. It’s a way to describe a whole diet without focusing so much on one ‘miracle’ food or one ‘villain’ food. However, when you talk about dietary patterns, refined grains are always included in what’s called the unhealthy Western dietary pattern. And that pattern includes refined grains, red and processed meat, fried foods, full-fat dairy and sugar-sweetened beverages.”

Citing National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) analyses, the paper said enriched



and fortified grain-based foods supply a “substantial amount” of the daily intake for micronutrients like thiamin (45%), riboflavin (25%), niacin (28%), iron (38%) and folate (50%) and have demonstrated their “essential role” in helping Americans meet recommendations for those micronutrients.

Enriched and fortified refined grains, too, remain a core source of fiber — described in the GFRI paper as an “underconsumed nutrient of public health concern” — and are one of the most affordable, widely consumed food groups, including staples like bread, rolls, tortillas, pasta, rice and ready-to-eat cereals.

“A reduction in refined grain consumption,” the paper concluded, “could potentially pose greater harm by reducing the intake of folate, thiamin, niacin, riboflavin and iron below the EAR (estimated average requirement) for large percentages of the US population — in addition to exacerbating already low intakes of dietary fiber, worsening diet quality and reversing public health successes, such as increasing the rate of NTDs and associated medical costs.”

The 2025 DGA committee’s report suggests encouraging “mostly whole grains and lower refined grains” versus the current guideline to consume “at least half” of total grain servings as whole grains and, implicitly, the other half as refined (enriched) grain foods.

“We hope that the actual 2025-2030 guidelines, once released, will do more to meet people where they are, rather than recommending a decrease in foods that Americans love that also promote nutrient adequacy,” Ball said. “While Americans are certainly not reaching targets for whole grain consumption, working on that challenge is a project that has taken decades and is ongoing. Let’s support US consumers’ health with messages promoting ‘both halves’ of current grain foods recommendations.”



Consumption data show that people are mostly eating staple grain foods — bread, pasta, cereal, etc. — yet eating treats in moderation, she added.

“That’s actually what the data shows, which I think underlines that people get it,” she said. “They

understand, ‘lean into the staples and enjoy treats in moderation.’ I don’t think many public health folks have connected actual consumption data with their own negative perceptions of refined enriched grains. And that has, unfortunately, driven the dialogue.” ■

The Idaho Wheat Commission wants to take YOU out to the ballgame!

We are teaming up with Idaho Barley and the Idaho Grain Producers Association for Idaho Grain Night with the Idaho Falls Chukars on Saturday, July 19, 2025. The

first pitch will be thrown at 7:05pm. Scan the QR code and reserve your FREE tickets now. ■

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Boot Check Time for Mental Health

BY JASON VICKREY, THE JAE FOUNDATION

The Jae Foundation, established in 2022 in Twin Falls, Idaho, is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting mental wellness and suicide prevention.



The foundation was established by Jason Vickrey and his wife, Paige, in memory of Jason’s childhood friend, Jae Bob Bing. Jae was adopted from South Korea and grew up in Pinedale, Wyoming, where he was known for his love of cowboy boots and his high-energy, joyful personality.

Tragically, Jae took his own life in March 2016, which inspired Vickrey to create the foundation to honor his friend’s memory and to help others struggling with mental health issues. While attending the funeral of Jae, Vickrey noticed a majority of those in attendance were wearing cowboy boots.

Months after the funeral, Vickrey returned to Pinedale to visit with the Bing family. It was then that he decided to do something using boots to honor his friend.

In a world full of technology and distractions the idea was simple. What if we took an hour out of our day to slow down and share Jae’s story, gift someone a pair of cowboy boots, and check-in and see how they are actually doing. Love them and make some commitments. Once someone receives their Jae Boots, they serve as a reminder to check-in on those around us, be bold enough to have conversations around mental health, and even give us strength to put our boots on and ask for help if needed.

The primary mission of the Jae Foundation is to provide “Boot-Check Moments,” which are opportunities for people to check in on each other’s mental well-being. The foundation distributes Jae boots, a symbol of their mission, to remind people to have conversations about mental health. Over the past few years, they have given away 16,000 pairs of Jae boots.

The Jae Foundation strives to create hope and a future by taking a transformational approach to mental health awareness, suicide prevention, and providing healing for those who have lost loved ones. They achieve their



Courtesy of the Jae Foundation

goals through 12 major initiatives and a heavy focus on youth. The foundation’s top priority is their High School Senior Boots Initiative, where they were able to take over 4,000 high school seniors through the Jae Foundation experience and provide education, tools, and resources for the Class of 2025 Wyoming and Idaho students.

In terms of their impact on the agricultural community, the Jae Foundation has been actively involved in promoting mental wellness in Idaho and Wyoming, particularly in rural and agricultural areas. Their efforts include hosting several retreats throughout the summer with a focus on youth, leaders, families that have lost loved ones, musicians, and athletes. The foundation loves the cowboy way of life, and each summer, over 250 people spend time on horseback as part of these retreats, experiencing the western way of life.

Since its creation, the foundation has hosted an auction every spring to raise funds for operation, boot giveaways, team building excursions and wellness



information campaigns in Idaho and Wyoming. Over \$1 million was raised in 2023 and there were more than 900 participants at the 2024 event. The Jae Foundation team works with other organizations around the state and region to provide information helping adults needing suicide prevention resources. This is especially valuable information for the agricultural community for farmers and ranchers facing significant financial, production, and personal pressures.

Creating Boot-Check moments is why the foundation exists. We have heard and seen countless stories of how something so simple can do such amazing things. Some call that a cowboy boot, some call it a magic boot. Here at the foundation, we call it a Jae Boot.

The foundation's work is deeply rooted in their core values of being bold, inclusive, nimble, and generous. Their four strategic anchors of "Rope them in, Spend time in the Saddle, Take the Reins, and Raise Boot Loads of Money" allow the foundation to succeed in executing their mission. If you would like to learn more



Courtesy of the Jae Foundation

about the Jae Foundation, please visit their website at www.jaefoundation.com.

It's Boot-Check Time! 🇺🇸

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Idaho Barley Commission Hosts U.S. Grains Council Asian Craft Malt Brewers Team in Eastern Idaho

In a continued effort to strengthen global market relationships and showcase Idaho’s world-class malt barley, the Idaho Barley Commission (IBC) recently hosted a U.S. Grains Council (USGC) Craft Malt Brewers Team from Japan, China, and Southeast Asia.

The team first attended the Craft Brewers Conference and BrewExpo America in Indianapolis, Indiana, where they participated in craft malting seminars, explored the trade show, and heard from industry-leading keynote speakers. The team also visited with U.S. growers and exporters there to learn about their services, including Cold Stream Malt of Washington who sources Idaho barley, and Two Track Malting of North Dakota, both USGC members. Following the conference, the team traveled to the Idaho Falls area for multiple immersive tours focused on U.S. barley production, new barley varieties, craft malt capabilities and procurement practices.

The team’s Idaho visit was designed to connect international brewers and malt buyers with Idaho barley growers, craft maltsters and craft brewers, providing a firsthand look at the quality, sustainability and innovation that define Idaho’s high-performing barley industry.

“This dual-focused initiative was aimed at delivering



Jake Burtenshaw, founder of Mountain Malt, hosted the USGC Asia Craft Malt team at Palisades Reservoir to showcase the importance of irrigation water throughout Eastern Idaho.



USGC Asia Craft Malt team visits Walters Farms in Newdale, ID.

comprehensive education and facilitating networking opportunities between the beer supply chain and prospective international buyers of U.S. barley and malt,” said Tommy Hamamoto, USGC director from Japan.

“In spite of current tariff challenges with most countries around the world, continuing to build trade relationships and develop potential export markets is vital,” said IBC Executive Director Laura Wilder. “Trade is a long game and ongoing relationship development is crucial to position Idaho to take advantage of export opportunities when favorable market pricing and logistics come together. IBC is focused on increasing market opportunities to benefit Idaho growers and hosting international buying groups is a good way to promote Idaho barley.”

The tour included a stop at USGC member Mountain Malt in Ucon, hosted by Jake Burtenshaw, founder of Mountain Malt. Burtenshaw led the team through the malthouse, sharing the history of the facility, explaining the malting process, and highlighting Idaho’s unique irrigation practices that make the region ideal for growing high quality barley.

At Walters Farms and Produce Company in Newdale, Shawn Walters walked the team through on-farm infrastructure and practices that support barley

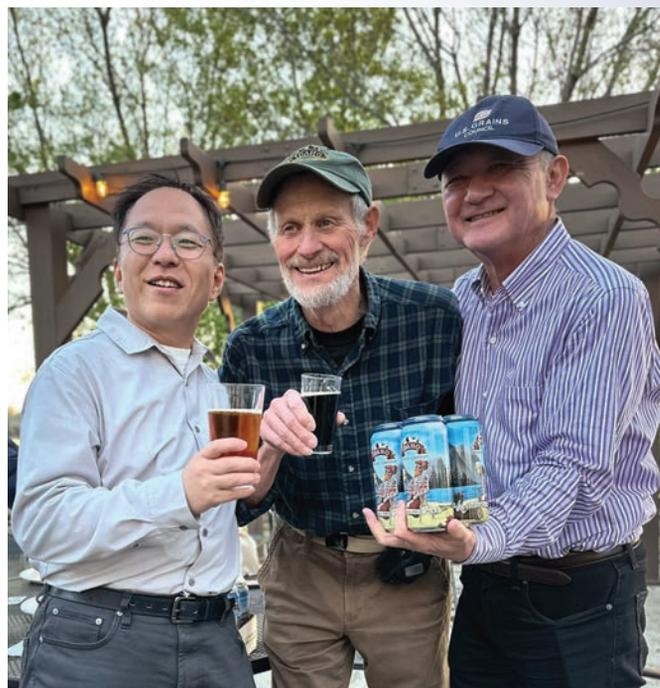


production, including irrigation systems, crop rotations and farm machinery, as well as a look at potato processing – another staple of Idaho agriculture.

To gain a broader understanding of the state’s water management system, the group traveled to Palisades Reservoir and the headwaters of the Great Feeder Canal, where they learned about the origins, storage, and distribution of irrigation water that sustains crops across eastern Idaho.

The tour also featured visits to several craft breweries utilizing Idaho-grown barley and malt, including Citizen 33 Brewery, Idaho Brewing Company, Grand Teton Brewing Company, and Snow Eagle Brewing. These stops allowed the participants to witness Idaho malt being used in the final product – and to discuss flavor, quality and consistency with other craft brewers.

Throughout the tour, team members engaged directly with growers, maltsters and brewers to better understand Idaho’s favorable growing conditions, sustainable farming practices, and long-standing commitment to resource stewardship. For many of the attendees, this was their first time visiting Idaho. The immersive experience not only offered a fresh perspective on U.S. agriculture, but also helped to bridge the gap between consumer-facing international market demands for American producers. The visit reinforced Idaho’s reputation as the top barley-producing state in the U.S. while creating valuable business connections in the growing global craft beer market.



(L to R): Yasuhiro Chiba, Brewmaster at Maruhachi Real Estate; Leon “Wolf” Wolfram, Founder and Brewmaster at Idaho Brewing Company; and Tetsuo Hamamoto, USGC Japan Director.

The IBC and USGC remain committed to promoting Idaho and U.S. barley in global markets and supporting market development initiatives that benefit growers across the state. ■

Idaho Barley Commission Collaborates with Local Chef at Idaho Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Annual Meeting to Promote Food Barley

The Idaho Barley Commission (IBC) proudly served as a sponsor of the 2025 Idaho Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (IAND) Annual Meeting held in Boise in April by providing a barley- focused speaker and hosting a lunch featuring barley. This annual gathering



brings together registered dietitians, nutritionists, health professionals, and graduate students from universities across the state to explore the latest in food science development, public health and culinary trends.

In addition, IBC hosted an educational booth featuring the nutritional diversity and benefits of barley and the role this versatile grain can play in heart-healthy, fiber-rich diets. During a break- out session, attendees had the opportunity to grab a bag filled with barley samples,

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Nate Whitley, executive chef and owner of Terroir Bistro in Boise, Idaho, and James Beard Award finalist.

Continued from previous page

recipe cards and nutritional information. They also had the chance to ask questions about incorporating barley into a wide range of meals, how barley is grown in Idaho and enter to win a door prize.

To elevate barley’s profile and diversity, IBC coordinated a live cooking demonstration with Chef Nate Whitley, Executive Chef and Owner of Terroir Bistro in Boise, Idaho. Chef Whitley, a James Beard finalist, showcased creative and approachable ways to cook barley with superb recipe development. The demonstration was both informative and interactive as participants were able to inquire about the best practices to cook various types of barley and other flavors that complement the grain. His dishes emphasized barley’s nutty flavor, chewy texture and adaptability in everything from salads, risottos to crêpes.

During his presentation, Chef Whitley, discussed his experiences in developing barley recipes while preparing for this event, and discovering new recipes featuring barley that he plans to incorporate into his menus.

IBC’s participation underscored its commitment to promoting the versatility of Idaho-grown barley not just for brewing and livestock feed, but also as a powerhouse whole grain for human consumption. With nutritionists and registered dietitians at IAND playing a vital role in shaping the public’s perception around food and nutrition, engaging directly with this audience



IBC Communications and Program Manager, Sydney Anderson, and Executive Director, Laura Wilder, at the Commission’s booth during the IAND Annual meeting. The team shared samples, hosted a raffle and highlighted the versatility and health benefits of barley to attending dietitians and nutritionists.

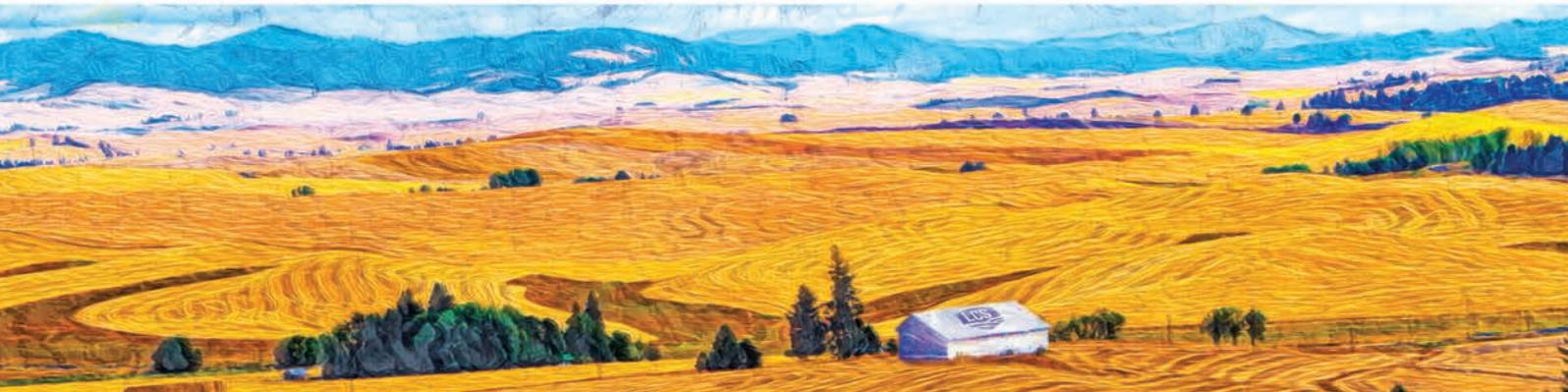
is a strategic investment in barley’s future and IBC’s strategic plan.

Through events like this, the Idaho Barley Commission uses grower dollars to continue diversifying the story of barley by building new awareness and appreciation for this ancient grain among key influencers in the health and nutrition field and help strengthen marketing opportunities for Idaho growers. ■



Barley Crêpe Galettes – a savory recipe crafted with barley flour by James Beard Award finalist Chef Nate Whitley. Find the full recipe on Pinterest @eatbarleyusa.

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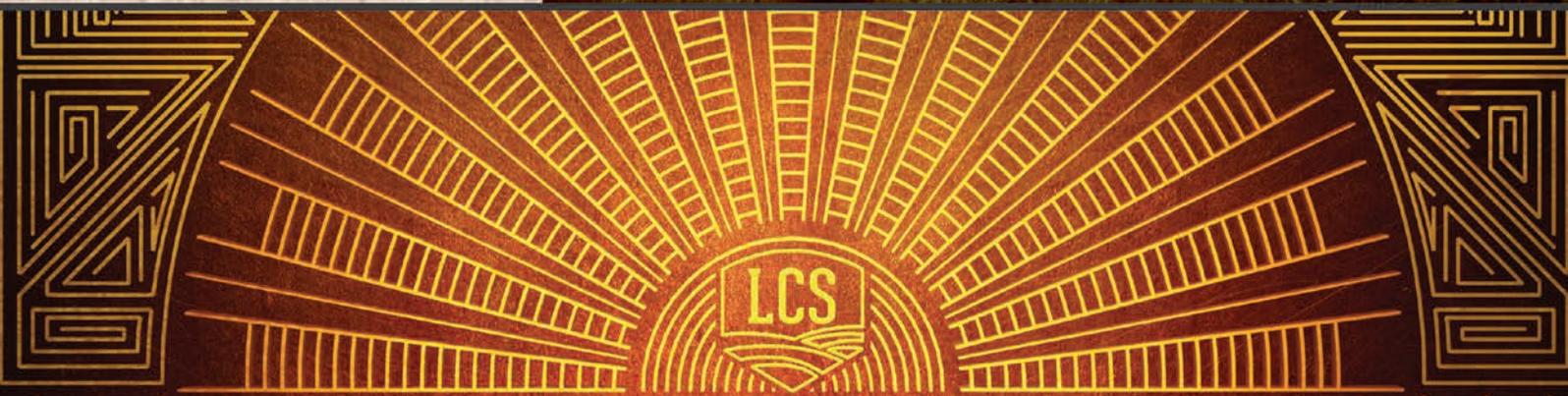
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