



Montana Department of Agriculture Highlights Hi-Country in Lincoln, MT on Value-Added Ag Tour

Director Clark and representatives from the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) continued their focus on highlighting the diversity in Montana's agricultural ecosystem yesterday where they headed to Lincoln, MT to visit Hi-Country Snack Foods as part of the MDA's value-added ag tour.

"Hi-Country is investing in their product quality, infrastructure, processes, as well as their people. I am excited to see where this company goes and what they do in years to come," said Director Clark. *"Their innovation and commitment to Montana and its agricultural producers is making a substantial positive impact and will only continue to grow from here"*

Director Clark said.



Hi-Country Snack Foods Inc. was started back in 1976 by founder Jim Johnson and has become known around the state and beyond for their popular beef jerky product. In 2019, the company was sold to Travis Byerly who has made substantial investments in equipment to automate many integral processes that have been done by hand in the past.

“Hi-Country has made major capital improvements in our packaging automation and we’re currently in the process of installing more production automation to quadruple our local product purchases,” said Travis Byerly. After purchasing Hi-Country in 2019, Byerly has pivoted the company towards producing a 100% U.S.A. sourced and made product with the next goal being 100% sourced and made in Montana. *“Value-added agriculture in Montana is the lifeline for producers to have the potential to take a larger share of profits from each animal and we are committed to expanding that,”* said Byerly.



Despite the unexpected challenges that COVID-19 brought to Hi-Country, the company has managed to maintain 29 employees making them the largest employer in Lincoln, MT. Along with their beef jerky, Hi-Country also produces seasoning mixes, sausage sticks, and plans to continue product diversification to utilize the whole animal.

“Our future is bright,” said Byerly. *“Hi-Country has developed new product offerings to purchase a wide range of locally grown products leading to substantial opportunities for long-term partnerships with ranchers and farmers across the state.”*

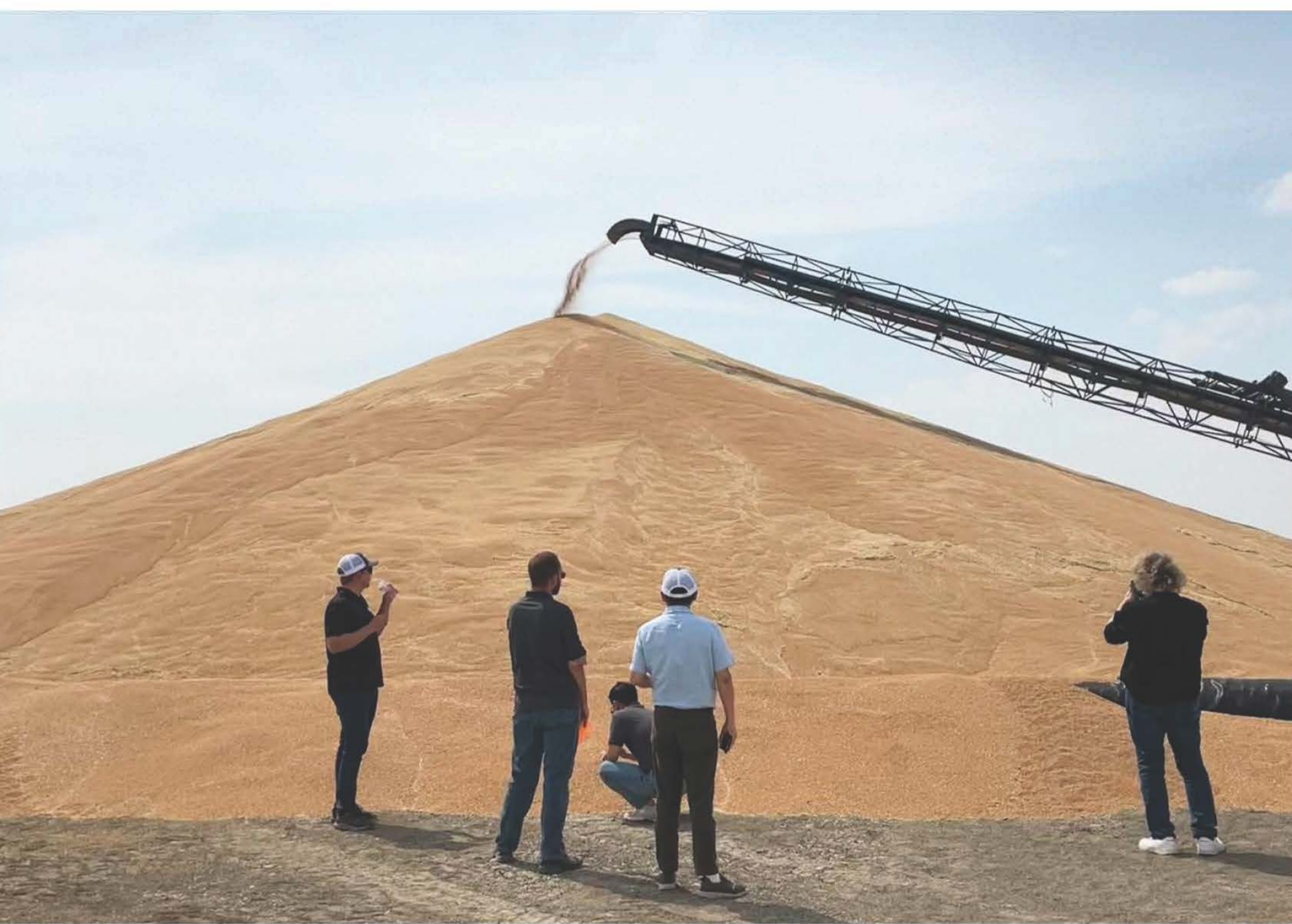




Montana Wheat & Barley Committee (MWBC) Hosts Trade Delegation from South Korea

Continuing the focus on expanding market development opportunities for Montana's Wheat & Barley producers and highlighting the high-quality traits of one of Montana's top commodities, MWBC Executive Director, Kent Kupfner and representatives from the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee welcomed a trade team delegation from SPC Group Korea. Kupfner and the Korean delegation visited Lee Dahlman at Dahlman Farm & Ranch as well as the United Grain Corporation (UGC) Elevator in Conrad, MT.

SPC Group is a South Korean food company based out of Seoul, South Korea. SPC manufactures food, bread, confectionary products, and has been doing so since 1945. SPC Group operates market-leading franchise brands such as BR Korea (Dunkin' Donuts and Baskin Robbins) and Paris Baguette. For 10+ years, SPC Group has been sourcing their high-quality grains from Montana.



"SPC Group from South Korea, mills about the equivalent of about 1,000 acres of Montana-grown wheat every day. Yearly visits from this purchasing team are structured around preparing them for this year's new crop quality and a celebration of this long-lasting partnership. The Montana Wheat & Barley Committee is honored to host this group and want to extend our gratitude to all the hard-working elevator employees and farmers who make this business happen," Executive Director Kupfner said.

While in the Golden Triangle, the delegation visited the United Grain Corporation Elevator in Conrad, MT. Elevator Manager, Tyler Krause, shared the process, quality check, and route grains go through before being loaded on rail car for export.



Montana Wheat & Barley Update: USDA NASS Releases Wheat & Barley Variety Survey

The 2023 Wheat and Barley Variety Survey report was released yesterday by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Mountain Regional Office. Funded by the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee (MWBC), this survey generates vital information to assist breeding programs around the state and beyond select varieties for seeding with the goal of increasing farm profitability.

"In the Treasure State, one of the most impactful bottom-line decisions a wheat and barley farmer can make is varietal selection. There are hundreds of choices, each adapted for specific purposes and environments. Farmers will use various methods to select a variety based on performance data, agronomists, and seed dealers. The goal of this survey is to help uncover the reasoning behind a varietal selection, and to provide valuable feedback to the industry," said Sam Anderson, Market Development Director at the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee.

In collaboration with the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service funded by the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee (MWBC), over 2,940 farmers responded to the survey and the results can be seen here:

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/>



2023 Montana Wheat and Barley Top Varieties

Vida is once again the leading spring wheat variety in Montana for 2023. Vida accounts for 22.5 percent of the 2.80 million acres of spring wheat planted in 2023. The top five varieties account for 56.4 percent of the spring wheat planted in 2023. Montana continues to rank second in spring wheat acreage in the United States, with 24.7 percent of the spring wheat planted in 2023.

Warhorse is again the leading winter wheat variety planted in Montana for 2023. Warhorse accounts for 18.7 percent of the 1.9 million acres of winter wheat planted. The top five varieties account for 59.4 percent of the winter wheat planted for 2023. Montana ranks fifth in winter wheat planted acreage in the United States with 5.2 percent of the 36.8 million acres planted.

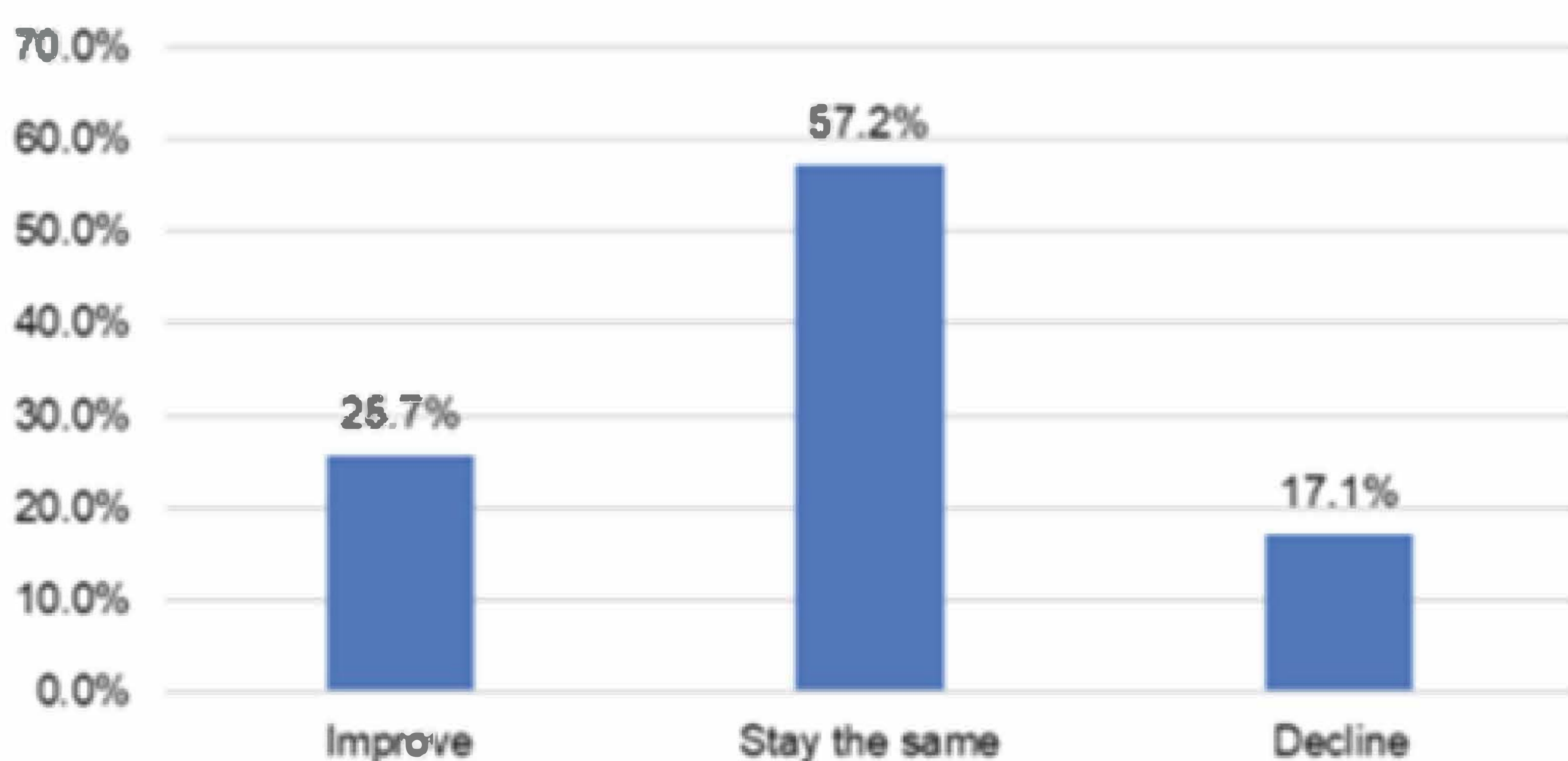
Alzada is the leading Durum wheat variety in Montana for 2023. Alzada accounts for 18.5 percent of the 650,000 acres planted. The top varieties account for 69.5 percent of the Durum wheat acreage in Montana for 2023. Montana continues to rank second in Durum wheat planted acreage in the United States with 35.3 percent of the nation's estimated 1.48 million acres planted in 2023.

AC Metcalfe is once again the leading barley variety in Montana for 2023. AC Metcalfe accounts for 25.5 percent of the 1,200,000 acres planted in 2023. The top five varieties account for 62.4 percent of the barley planted in 2023.

Profitability of Operation

Growers of both barley and wheat were asked about their expectations concerning the profitability of their operation over the next 12 months. Farmers who expect the profitability of their operation to improve was 25.7 percent. No change in the profitability of their operation was expected by 57.2 percent of farmers and those who expected their operation profitability to decline stood at 17.1 percent.

**Expected Profitability of Operation
Montana Barley and Wheat Growers: 2023**



As farmers wrap up harvest this year, the Wheat & Barley Committee and the Montana Department of Agriculture encourage all producers to reach out to extension agents, agronomists, and seed dealers to discuss available options for growing the highest quality grain possible.



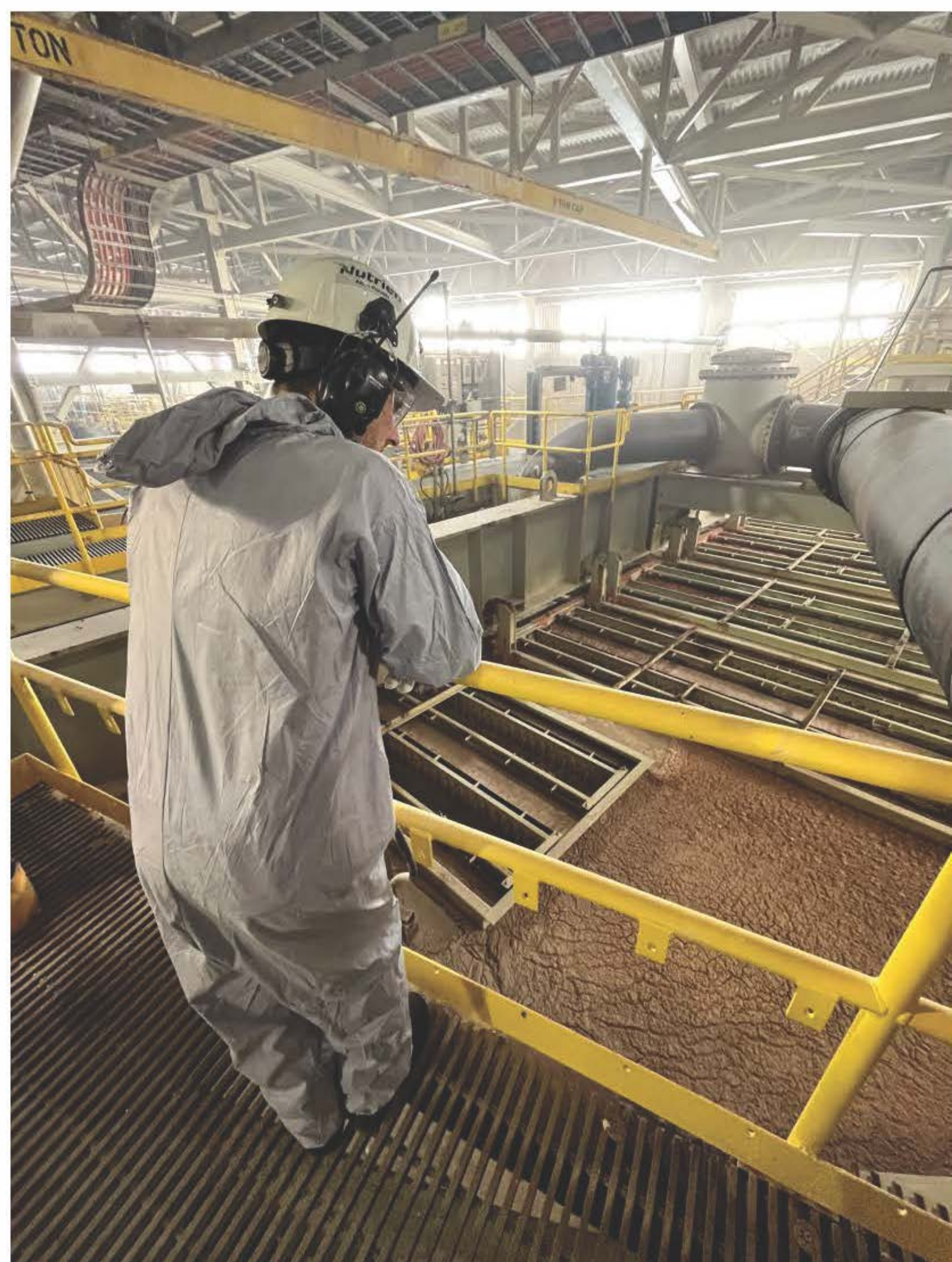
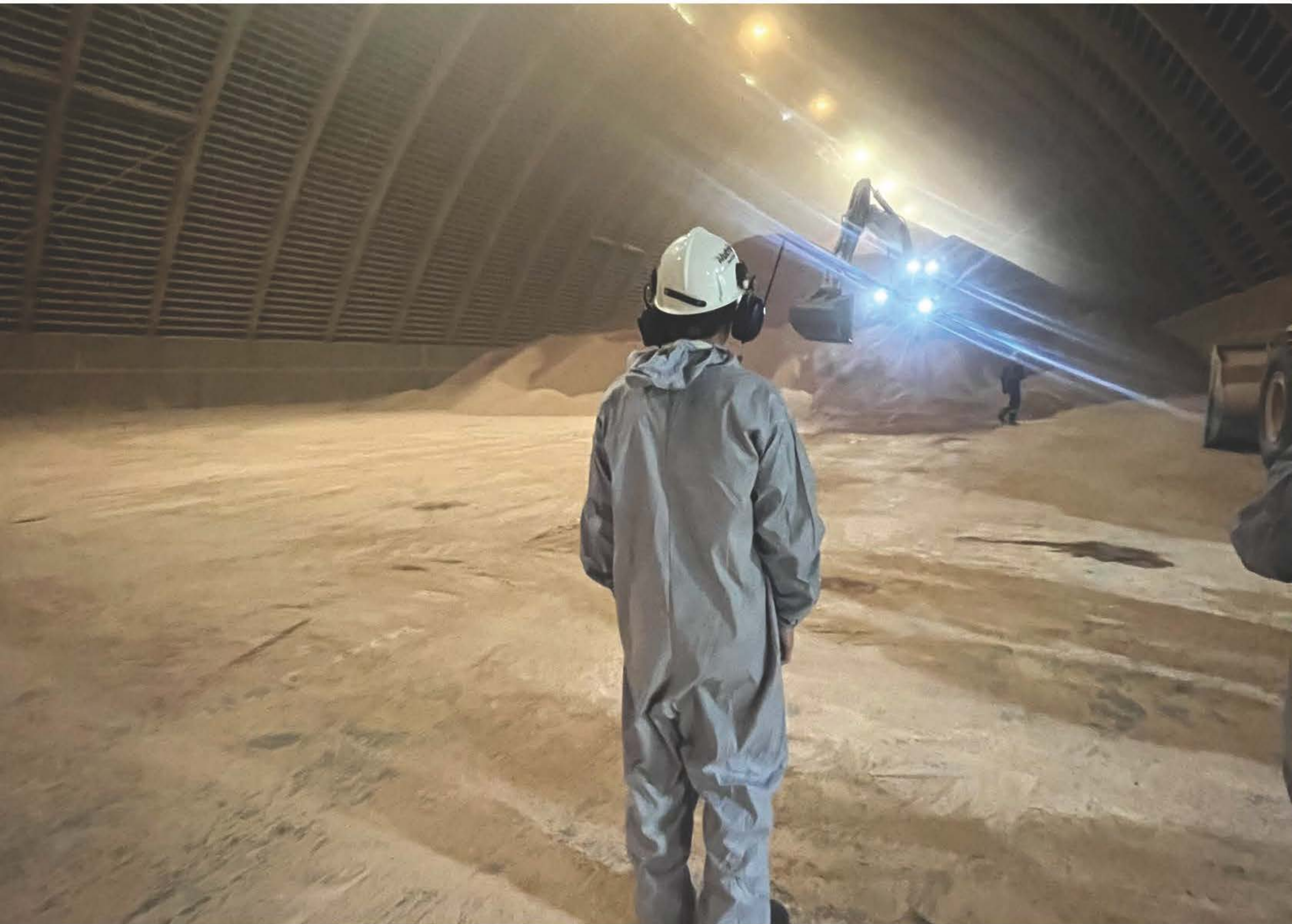
Coccoli Joins Ag Leaders at Tri-National Ag Accord and U.S. Grains Council in Canada

O Canada!

“The latter parts of July and mid-August called me north for engaging and productive conversations at both the 63rd Annual US Grains Council Board of Delegates Meeting and the 32nd Tri-National Agricultural Accord. US Grains Council is a membership-driven organization representing barley producers (in addition to corn, sorghum, and agribusiness organizations) in advancing global trade and policy interests to develop markets, enable trade, and improve lives. With Montana barley growers busy harvesting their crops and Kent and Sam balancing multiple trade teams, I appreciated the opportunity to learn about the work of the US Grains Council across the globe, share Montana crop updates, and meet key partners working together to advance barley interests.



The Tri-National Agricultural Accord represents a longstanding commitment among the senior state and provincial agricultural officials of Canada, the United States, and Mexico to work together collaboratively on agricultural trade and development issues. Major topics of lengthy debate included cross-border regulatory harmonization for handling African Swine Fever, Mexico's failure to base their genetically modified corn ban on scientific evidence (an alleged violation of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada free trade agreement), and the ongoing dispute over Canada's dairy tariff-rate quotas.



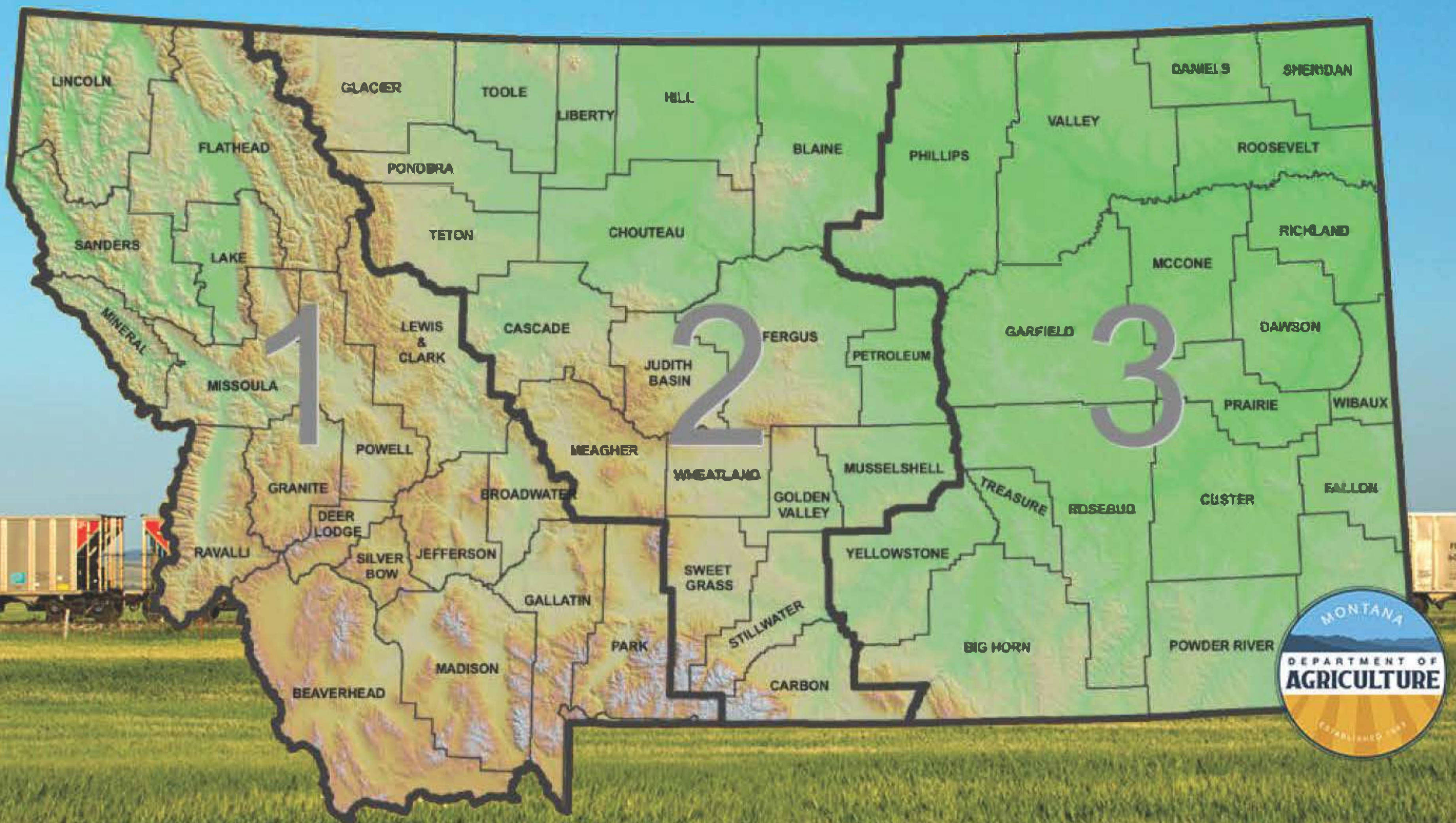
While in Saskatoon, Communications Director, Logan Kruse and I joined a tour with Colorado Farm Bureau representatives at the Nutrien Allan Potash Mine. There we traveled 1km underground and then several miles by truck to witness the 3-man boring machine extract mineral from North America's largest potash deposit and enter the system of conveyor belts back to the surface for milling and refinement. Saskatchewan has the largest potash industry in the world, accounting for 45% of known global reserves. By conservative estimates, Saskatchewan could supply world potash demand at current levels for hundreds of years. It's reassuring to know we aren't entirely dependent on Russia for all our fertilizer requirements in Montana.

Have a safe and enjoyable Labor Day weekend!"

-- Deputy Director, Zach Coccoli



Waste Pesticide Disposal Districts



2023 Pesticide Waste Collection Dates and Locations

Tuesday, September 19th- Kalispell, MT

Wednesday, September 20th- Hamilton, MT

Thursday, September 21st- Helena, MT

Friday, September 22nd- Three Forks, MT

All Participants must pre-register by September 14, 2023 on the Montana Department of Agriculture's website: <https://agr.mt.gov/Topics/N-P/Pesticide-Pages/Pesticide-Disposal-Pages/Pesticide-Waste-Disposal-Program/Participant-Registration>

The MDA program was designed to assist individuals with disposing of any pesticides that are unusable as originally intended, or cannot be used for any other purpose, in an environmentally responsible way. In effect, the pesticide and waste disposal program protects Montana's ecosystems and groundwater, as well as families, pets, livestock and drinking water from potentially hazardous materials.

Registrations for pesticide waste collection events are accepted on a first come, first-serve basis. There is no charge for the first 200 pounds of material; amounts over 200 pounds are assessed at \$1.00 per pound, and products are weighed on site. Additional fees may apply to pesticides with dioxins or dioxin precursors.



Montana State Grain Lab Update:

Harvest changes everything. The State Grain Lab's sample volume typically peaks from August through October and this year it is running 20% higher than the past couple of years. In these 3 months the lab will process over 40% of its total annual volume. Inspection volume this August has steadily increased by more than 50% each week with weekly totals running 400% higher than those in July. The large increase in workload equates to working longer hours, having less time off, less training and projects, and getting extra help from seasonal staff. Lab staff also gets to see many more customers in person when they drop off samples and then say, see you next year! Total samples processed this August will be over 2,600 from 160 customers. Dominating the 29 different classes of samples received was winter wheat, peas, lentils, spring wheat, and barley.



Visitors to the lab this month included Connor McAllister, a legislative aid from Senator Daines office, accompanied by Allison Vergeront of Montana Grain Growers. Connor and Allison stopped by for a general tour seeing harvest in action at the grain lab. Ryan Gamboa of KRTV News, Montana Ag Network, also visited this month and shot a segment on the harvest at the Grain Lab. Visitors next month will include a Japanese trade team and the Great Falls Leadership Class of 2023.





APPLY NOW

The Montana Department of Agriculture is accepting applications for a **Licensed Grain Inspector** located in Plentywood, MT.

*Open until filled with first review of candidates
August 7, 2023.*



The State Grain Lab, located in Plentywood, is responsible for the operation of a statewide grain and commodity inspection program. Accurate and unbiased sampling inspections and testing are performed in compliance with federal and state grain standards.

**For more information,
please visit:**

<https://mtstatejobs.taleo.net/>





Detection of Garden Loosestrife Confirmed in Western Montana

The Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) confirmed Garden Loosestrife at two different sites in Western Montana. These are the first cases of Garden Loosestrife confirmed in Montana.

Garden loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*), an aggressive non-native wetland plant, has been found in western Montana. In July 2023, approximately 0.1 acres along the Stillwater River, west of Kalispell, and an additional 0.2 acres along the Bitterroot River in Hamilton were mapped and treated by local land managers and MDA's Early Detection, Rapid Response (EDRR) Program. Monitoring will be conducted on both sites and adjacent lands for the next several years.

Garden loosestrife is a Class A (highest priority) noxious weed in Oregon, a Class B (second highest priority) in Washington and is invasive and problematic in several other states. It is a rhizomatous perennial forb that grows three to six feet tall and can form dense stands along waterways and in riparian areas. The leaves are opposite or whorled in groups of three to five, lance-shaped, three to five inches long and softly hairy, which gives them a slightly grayish-green tinge. Flowers are yellow, have five petals, appear in clusters at stem ends toward the top of the plant, and bloom in July or August.

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), a Montana-listed Priority 1B noxious weed, has many shared physical characteristics and occupies the same type of riparian areas. Montana has two closely related natives, also with yellow flowers: fringed loosestrife (*Lysimachia ciliata*) and water loosestrife (*Lysimachia thyrsoflora*).

To report a suspected Garden Loosestrife plant, contact your local county weed district, MSU Extension agent, or the Montana Department of Agriculture. Leave the plant in the ground so it can be correctly identified, take plenty of pictures, record GPS coordinates, and arrange for a site visit as soon as possible. For additional resources and contact information, visit the Early Detection, Rapid Response webpage here: agr.mt.gov/Noxious-Weeds.



MDA On the Road & Where to Catch Us

- European Horse Genetics Outbound - Spain & Germany | Aug. 31 - Sept. 8
- Japanese Management Team Visit - Great Falls, MT | Sept. 4 - 8
- Value Added Ag Tour - Darby/Victor, MT | Sept. 6th
- NASDA Annual Meeting - Cheyenne, WY | Sept. 10 - 14
- Japan Flour Millers Trade Team Visit - Great Falls, MT | Sept. 14 - 16
- Pesticide Waste Disposal Event - Kalispell, MT | Sept. 19
- Pesticide Waste Disposal Event - Hamilton, MT | Sept. 20
- Pesticide Educator Program Update Event - Bozeman, MT | Sept 20 - 21
- Grain Lab Leadership Class - Great Falls, MT | Sept. 21
- Pesticide Waste Disposal Event - Helena, MT | Sept. 21
- Pesticide Waste Disposal Event - Three Forks, MT | Sept. 22
- Region 8 State/Tribal Pesticides Manager Meeting - Denver, CO | Sept 26 - 27
- Montana Rodent Academy - Helena, MT | Sept. 29



Governor Gianforte Proclaims Montana Farmers Market Week

Governor Gianforte proclaimed this week as Farmers Market Week in Montana to honor and celebrate the access to fresh, healthy, locally, and regionally produced foods through farmers markets.

Farmers markets not only support our Montana producers but also strengthen our food systems and local economies. A study commissioned by the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research found Montana farmers markets generated \$17.3 million in revenue for vendors in 2021 and an additional \$10.4 million in new spending from resident wages, tax payments, sales, and investments along with supporting 260 full-time Montana jobs.

STATE OF MONTANA



Governor's Proclamation



WHEREAS, farmers and ranchers provide Montanans with access to fresh, healthy, locally and regionally produced foods through farmers markets; and

WHEREAS, farmers markets strengthen our food systems and local economies, generating revenue that supports the sustainability of family farms and ranches and stimulating business development and job creation; and

WHEREAS, farmers markets and other agricultural direct marketing outlets provide Montana agricultural producers another way to showcase their high quality, made-in-Montana products; and

WHEREAS, a study commissioned by the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research found Montana farmers markets generated \$17.3 million in revenue for vendors in 2021 and an additional \$10.4 million in new spending from resident wages, tax payments, sales, and investments, and supported 260 full-time Montana jobs;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Greg Gianforte, Governor of the State of Montana, do hereby proclaim August 6-11, 2023 as

FARMERS MARKET WEEK

in Montana to encourage Montanans to shop locally at farmers markets.

GREG GIANFORTE
Governor



What We Have Been (responsibly) Drinking Lately:

We like to get our “Drink of the Month” into different hands around the department.

HR & Office Coordinator, Sonya Amman, shared with us her “simple favorite.”

Kahlua and Cream

“Born in Veracruz, Mexico in 1936, Kahlúa comes steeped in history, with a rich and colorful heritage. Made with 100% Arabica coffee beans and rum, Kahlúa coffee liqueur is one of the main ingredients in many of the world’s favorite cocktails.

From the White Russian, Black Russian and Mudslide, to the cocktail du jour... the Espresso Martini! Plus many more classics, old and new.

Brunch, lunch, evening drinks, or whenever—Kahlúa helps turn the average into the extraordinary (and any coffee into a delicious coffee cocktail).

That’s probably why it remains the world’s #1 coffee liqueur*

At least once a year, I would (when living in California) drive down to Tijuana to buy bottles of KAHLÚA and vanilla. Much cheaper and who doesn’t love to buy Mexican products straight from the vendors.

So, go ahead and enjoy. I think you deserve it. My favorite is a simple Kahlua and Cream.”

Kahlua and Cream Ingredients:

- 2 oz Kahlua
- 3 oz light cream or half and half
- Pour over ice



What We've Been Listening To Recently:



Communications Officer, Logan Kruse's Album Pick for your September Listing Pleasure: **Little Songs** by Colter Wall

1. Prairie Evening/Sagebrush Waltz
2. Standing Here
3. Corralling the Blues
4. The Coyote & The Cowboy
5. Honky Tonk Nighthawk
6. For a Long While
7. Cow/Calf Blue Yodel
8. Little Songs
9. Evangelina
10. The Last Loving Words

We'd Love Your Feedback



Agriculture and in specific, Montana Agriculture is all about community. We thought, one does not have to be directly involved with agriculture to be apart of this community. Thus, our external facing monthly newsletter was created. It is meant to inform, inspire, educate, and reach our agricultural community hand out to whomever would like to be a part of the happenings here at the MDA.

Like to see a section that we didn't cover this month? Let us know! We'd love to hear from you.

Until then, happy September Friends!