



MDA Joins Montana Organic Association Farm Tour at Tiber Ridge in Ledger, MT

Continuing the focus on highlighting the diversity in Montana's agricultural ecosystem, Director Clark and representatives from the Montana Department of Agriculture took to Ledger, Montana today where they visited Tiber Ridge Organics to highlight their impact on Montana agriculture as part of the Montana Organic Association Summer Farm Tours.

"John's operation at Tiber Ridge Organics is a perfect of example of farmers and ranchers that make Montana, Montana. The risk, innovation, entrepreneurial spirit, and passion for not only raising high-quality commodities but the dedication to the regeneration of the land is outstanding to see. From his commitment to the family farm to serving on several ag committees and boards, it is thanks to individuals like John that we continue to have a strong and robust agricultural ecosystem here in Montana," Director Clark said.



Tiber Ridge Organics Farm, located just south of Chester in Montana's Golden Triangle, is owned, and operated by John Wicks. In 2005, Wicks moved back to the farm at the age of 21 to take over operations after the passing of his father. Unlike the majority of conventional farms in the triangle, Wicks has found success in converting the farm to certified organic raising wheat, lentils, and more. Although the transition from conventional to organic does not happen overnight, Tiber Ridge has managed to obtain organic certification on every crop grown at the farm. Furthermore, the transition to organic has increased profitability per acre, reduced input costs, substantially improved soil health, and allows them to manage pests and weeds by proper crop rotation practices.

<https://montanaorganicassociation.org/>



Montana Wheat & Barley Update: Summer Trade Teams in Full Swing

The Montana Wheat and Barley Committee (MWBC) recently hosted a trade team from the Taiwan Flour Miller’s Association (TFMA). The team, which included representatives from five of the largest flour mills in the country, was in Montana to get a firsthand look at current crop conditions, receive market updates and meet with representatives of the grain industry. The agenda was jam-packed with tours of commercial grain elevators, farm visits, and a stop by the State Grain Lab. While the TFMA team was visiting Big Sky Country, the Association purchased 56,000 metric tons (2.1 million bushels) for shipment in August!

Taiwan, with a population of 23.5 million, is a loyal and consistent buyer of U.S. wheat. Given the country’s limited domestic production, annual purchase volumes are approximately 1.3 million metric tons (47.8 million bushels). Year-over-year, 80%-90% of this wheat volume originates in bulk vessels of US origin, with the balance primarily shipping in containers from Canada and Australia.

TFMA was founded in 1952 and currently includes 15 active members with flour mills located throughout the country. The TFMA procurement group is responsible for over 98% of all US wheat imports, including Hard Red Spring, Hard Red Winter, and Soft White Winter. Hard Red Spring represents the largest portion (56%), followed by Hard Red Winter (33%) and Soft White Winter (11%). Most of the hard wheat bushels are produced by Montana’s wheat farmers.

Taiwan is one of the most quality-driven buyers in the world, with some of the most challenging specifications for exporters to meet. TFMA purchases guaranteed 14.5% protein Dark Northern Spring (DNS), which must be a minimum of 75% DHV. The HRW must be a minimum of 12.5% protein.



We are thankful that Taiwan represents a reliable and consistent market for high-quality wheat such as that grown in Montana. Montana's wheat growers and the grain industry remain committed to meeting this demand on a reliable and consistent basis.

-- Sam Anderson, Market Development Director, MWBC

Now Hiring

The Montana Department of **Agriculture** is accepting applications for our **Marketing & Communications Director** of the **Wheat & Barley Committee**

This position is responsible for the administration of the marketing and outreach activities the MWBC (Montana Wheat & Barley Committee) engages in, as well as content development and communications efforts for the MWBC. More details online.



Primary obligations include planning and implementation of domestic marketing and international trade efforts aimed at increasing purchases of Montana grown wheat and barley. The incumbent manages the communications and outreach efforts of the Committee and is responsible for all branding related efforts.

For more information,
please visit:
<https://mtstatejobs.taleo.net/>





MDA and MSU Extension Join New USDA Regional Food Business Center Partnership

Montana Department of Agriculture and Montana State University Extension were recently announced as partners in a \$30 million U.S. Department of Agriculture effort to establish a regional center to create opportunities for food producers and increase food security.

Co-led by Colorado State University and Oregon State University, the new Northwest and Rocky Mountain Food Business Center is part of a larger effort nationwide, for which the USDA announced \$400 million in funding last September.

“This funding represents a great opportunity to both identify and fill gaps that need attention while leveraging the strengths that exist within Montana’s food supply chains,” said Andy Fjeseth, Bureau Chief of the state of Montana’s Agricultural Finance, Trade and Development Bureau.

In total, the USDA will establish 12 regional food business centers to serve all areas of the country.

“Montana is lucky to have a robust technical assistance network within this space. I am excited to see how this funding can establish new partnerships and help move our food and ag industries forward,” Fjeseth said.

The Northwest and Rocky Mountain Food Business Center will support farm, ranch and food businesses, as well as broader food supply chain enterprises, through:

- Technical assistance programs, curricula and one-on-one business support.
- Direct investments in projects and professional development for regional food system leaders and innovators.
- Coordination via strategic sharing of resources and coordinated action across the region, and between USDA and regional stakeholders.

More information about the Northwest and Rocky Mountain Food Business Development Center can be found at:

NWRockyMountainRegionalFoodBusiness.com.



Thank You to Sean Mulla for 19 Years of Service to the Montana Department of Agriculture

June 2nd, 2023 marked Sean Mulla's last day at the department after 19 years of dedication and service. We thank Sean for his passion and commitment to Montana agriculture and its producers.



The Montana Department of Agriculture wishes Sean the best in his new ventures!



Detection of Palmer Amaranth Confirmed Near Shelby, Montana

The Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) confirmed Palmer amaranth in a residential planter near Shelby, Montana. This is the first case of Palmer amaranth confirmed in Montana.

Palmer amaranth (*Amaranthus palmeri*), a fast-growing, prolific-seeding pigweed, has been confirmed in Montana for the first time. A single male plant was found growing in a residential planter near Shelby, MT, most likely introduced from contaminated birdseed; no seed was produced. The site will be monitored for the next several years to ensure no additional plants emerge.

Palmer amaranth has smooth stems, long leafstalks (petioles), long, thin seedheads, and it tends to grow much taller than other common “weedy” pigweeds. Palmer amaranth is dioecious, meaning it has both male and female plants, which allows it to quickly become genetically diverse and easily develop herbicide resistance. Common vectors of spread include millet, sunflower screenings, and farm equipment.

The Montana Department of Agriculture recommends using caution when moving around equipment or purchasing seed and feed, especially when it is from Palmer amaranth infested states. There is a zero tolerance for Palmer amaranth seed in Montana stated in ARM 4.12.3011 and the Palmer Amaranth Task Force is willing to help landowners identify and manage all populations.

To report a suspected Palmer amaranth 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. Identification is difficult, so most suspected plants are genetically tested.

For additional resources and contact information, visit the Early Detection, Rapid Response webpage here: agr.mt.gov/Noxious-Weeds.



2023 Ag Research Center Field Days

Through a network of seven Research Centers plus facilities and scientists at the MSU central campus in Bozeman, the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) conducts basic and applied research problems that address Montana's agricultural and natural resource economies. MAES research spans the depth and breadth of animal health, animal science, agronomy, horticulture, range sciences, agricultural economics, plant sciences, and natural resource and pest management.

Date	Time	Research Center	Location
Wednesday, June 14, 2023	11:30 a.m.	Southern Agriculture Research Center	Huntley
Wednesday, June 28, 2023	8:15 a.m.	Central Agricultural Research Center	Moccasin
Thursday, June 29, 2023	3:00 p.m.	Northern Agricultural Research Center	Havre
Thursday, July 6, 2023	10:00 a.m.	Western Triangle Agricultural Research Center	Conrad
Tuesday, July 11, 2023	8:00 a.m.	Eastern Agricultural Research Center	Sidney
Thursday, July 13, 2023	11:00 a.m.	Northwestern Agricultural Research Center	Creston
Wednesday, July 19, 2023	8:00 a.m.	Post Farm	Bozeman
Thursday, July 27, 2023	4:30 p.m.	Western Agricultural Research Center	Corvallis

More information at: <https://agresearch.montana.edu/fielddays.html>



MDA Reminds Producers Montana State Hail Insurance is Available for Purchase

In light of recent storms, the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) is reminding producers that applications for State Hail Insurance Policy are now available through MDA's State Hail Insurance Program.

Producers can insure crops against hail damage at the maximum coverage rate of \$75 per acre for dryland and \$114 per acre for irrigated land. Rates charged are a percentage of the insured amount and vary by county. A detailed list of rates by county and crop can be found online by visiting the MDA website. State policies are available for purchase until August 15, 2023.

Producers who previously purchased state hail insurance will receive applications in the mail. Application forms are also available online or by calling the MDA office. Staff are available to process policies, file claims, and help answer any questions producers may have regarding coverage options. Completed forms can be emailed, mailed, faxed, or used as a reference when contacting the office by phone.

Contact Information:

Montana State Hail Insurance Program

P.O. Box 200201 Helena, MT 59620

Phone: (406) 444-5429

Email: agrhail@mt.gov

Toll Free: 1 (844) 515-1571

Fax: (406) 444-9442

Loss claims are due to the office by October 1, 2023, and must be submitted within two weeks of the hail damage occurrence. Forms are available online or by request.

More information at: <https://agr.mt.gov/I-Want-To/Apply/Hail-Insurance-Applying>



Montana State Grain Lab Update:

June sample volume increased about ten percent over the previous couple of months. The official samples we collect all around the state are up over fifty percent as compared to June in 2022. Some of the highest volume has been coming from CGI in Plentywood, Sweet Grass, Chinook and Great Falls, and CHS in Cut Bank and Glasgow, also at the top is Belle Pulse, Montana Specialty Mills, the Redwood group and Stricks Ag. The top crops this month included Chickpeas, Barley, Lentils, Peas and Canola.



The Grain Lab is getting geared up for harvest by beginning to hire and train new seasonal staff for sampling and lab work. The lab typically hires 3 to 4 people to collect official samples and to work in the lab to get samples ready for grading by performing sample breakdown and testing such as moisture, test weight, falling numbers and protein.

It was a busier month than normal for tours and presentations. Adam Gutzwiler gave presentations on grading Wheat, Barley, Peas and Split Peas to 40 Columbia Grain employees at their annual regional meetings on June 6th and 7th. Patti Hedges gave a tour of the Plentywood lab to the Pulse Committee on June 8th. Jeff Hofstad and Adam Gutzwiler provided a tour and demonstrations of the Great Falls lab processes to about 10 members of the Taiwan trade on June 15th. Next month the Great Falls lab will host the USDA Risk Management group from Washington DC and Billings as well as the trade team from southeast Asia.



July Pesticide Container Recycling Event in Havre

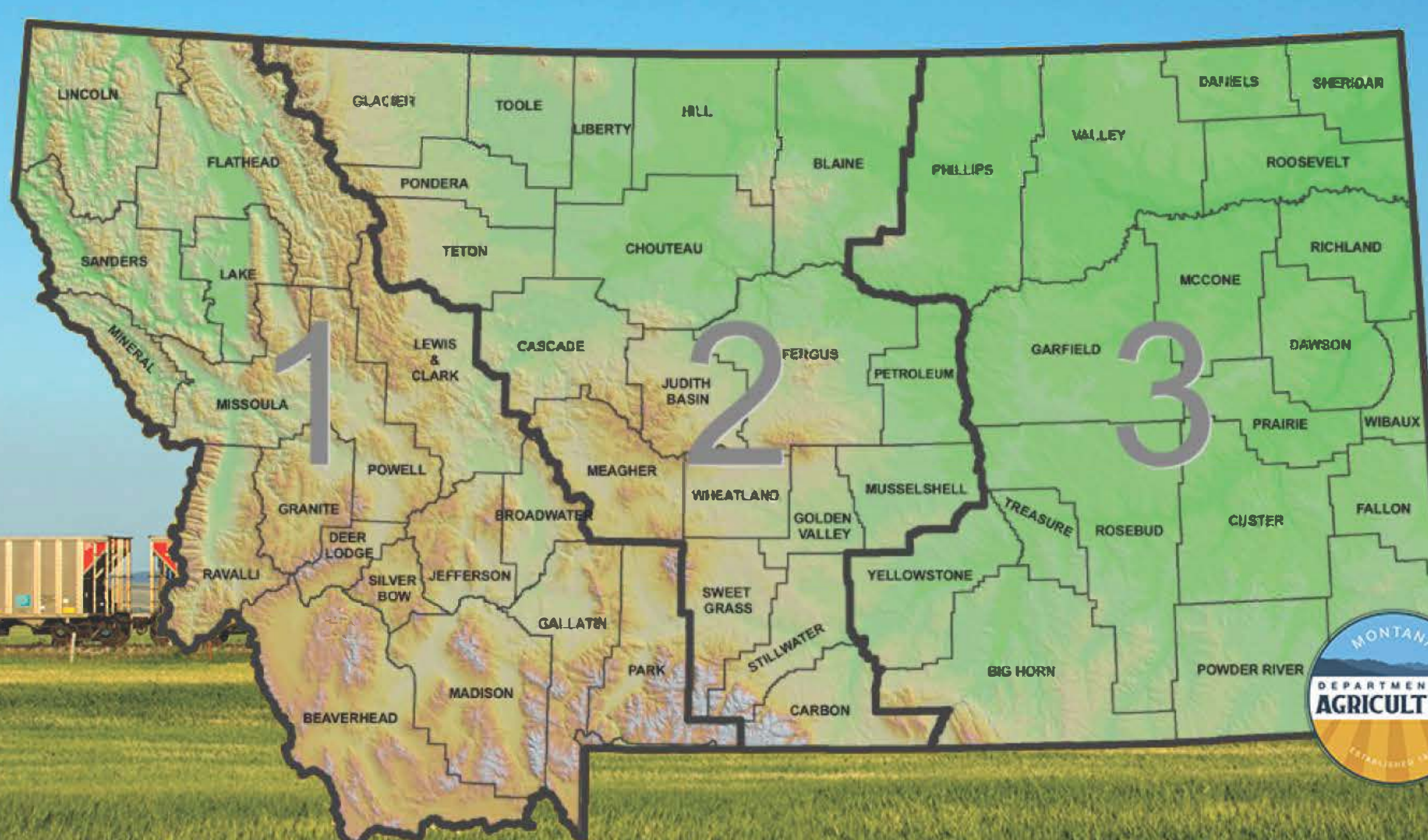
The Montana Department of Agriculture is encouraging the community to bring your clean pesticide containers to the **Mountain View Coop in Havre, 1720 Hwy 2 East on July 17th** for “Recycling Day”.

Acceptable items include #2 HDPE plastic pesticide containers rinsed of product with lids and labels removed as well as rinsed 30–50-gal plastic pesticide drums cut down into 1/8th sections.

For more information, please call 406-465-0531 or visit the Montana Department of Agriculture’s Pesticide Container Recycling Program web page:

<https://agr.mt.gov/Topics/N-P/Pesticide-Pages/Pesticide-Disposal-Pages/Container-Recycling-Program/Pesticide-Container-Recycling-Program>

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- TBD

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.



MDA On the Road & Where to Catch Us

- MSU Field Day - Conrad, MT | July 6th
- MSU Field Day - Sidney, MT | July 11th
- US Wheat Summer Meeting - Minneapolis, MN | July 10th - 13th
- USDA Risk Management Grain Lab Tour - Great Falls, MT | July 12th
- MSU Field Day - Creston, MT | July 13th
- MSU Field Day - Bozeman, MT | July 19th
- Molson Coors Field Day - Power, MT | July 19th
- PNWER Annual Summit 2023 - Boise, ID | July 16th - 21st
- WASDA Regional Meeting 2023 - Denver, CO | July 23rd - 26th
- NACRW Workshop - Fort Lauderdale, FL | July 22nd - 27th
- Malt Europe Field Days 2023 - Great Falls, MT | July 25th - 27th
- Montana Summer Hemp Summit - Fort Benton, MT | July 25th - 27th
- U.S. Grains Council Annual Board of Delegates - Calgary, AB | July 25th - 28th
- MSU Field Day - Corvallis, MT | July 27th
- EPA National Workshop 2023 - Philadelphia, PA | July 30th - Aug. 4th
- SE Asian Trade Team Grain Lab Tour - Great Falls, MT | July 30th - Aug. 1st
- AAFCO Annual Meeting 2023 - Baltimore, MD | July 31st - Aug. 1st

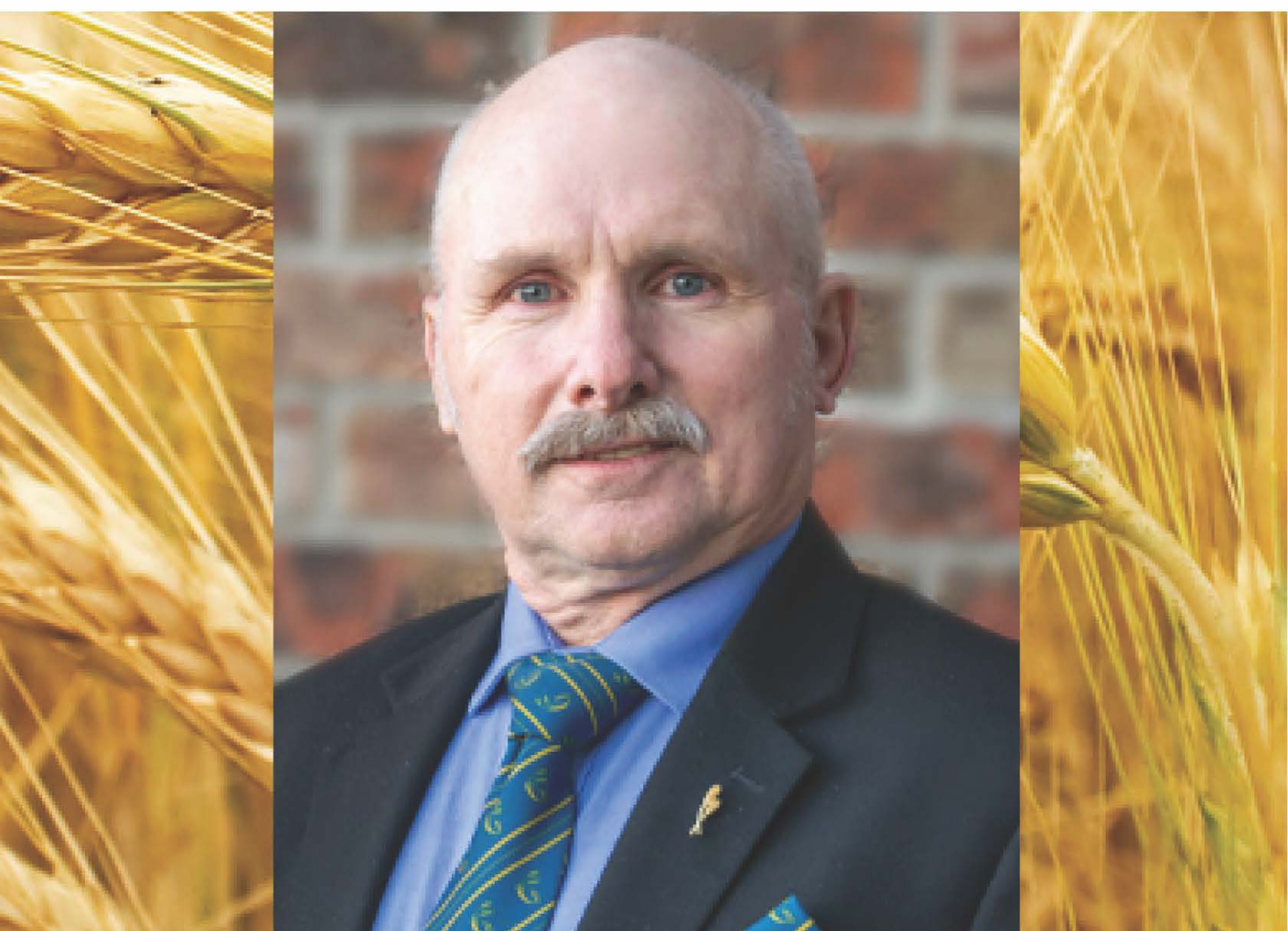


MGGA's Konen to Join National Barley Growers Association as Vice President

"I'm pretty proud of this achievement and I hope that I can do the job well for them with the issues surrounding malting barley and barley as a whole whether it is feed grain or helping out with brewers and craft brewers. I'll do my best to keep all those issues in line."

Konen credits his time on the board with National Barley as well as the [Montana Grain Growers Association \[mgga.org\]](http://mgga.org) with helping him prepare for this opportunity and attain the respect needed to secure a nomination from other member states.

Montana Grain Growers Association Executive Vice President Alison Vergeront commented that the group was "over-the-moon excited" to see their former leader selected to this role. Vergeront she believes this will mean great opportunities for Montana.



With the upcoming Farm Bill, Konen mentioned the importance of National Barley Growers in making sure Barley is considered a recognizable food and feed source so that it can be well protected in the safety net that crop insurance provides.

-- Words by Alison Vergeront | Northern Ag Network



What We Have Been (responsibly) Drinking Lately:

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

Communications Officer, Logan Kruse, shared with us his “oldy but goody” for those warmer temperatures.

“A recent rediscovery for me is the Whitewater Cream Ale from Bridger Brewing. Most Thursdays after class while attending MSU Bozeman, I would love stopping by Bridger Brewing for a slice of pizza and a Mad Mile (I think that combo was \$5 before 5pm).

I am usually a boring beer guy but this cream ale is infused with fresh cucumber and honeydew melon and is too refreshing to ignore on a warm summer day!”



What We've Been Listening To Recently:



Wheat & Barley Committee's Communications and Marketing Director, Jason Laird's Playlist for your July Listening Pleasure:

1. Frank Sinatra – That's life
2. Garth Brooks – Much too young to feel this damn old
3. Montgomery Gentry – One in every crowd
4. ZZ Top – Sharp-dressed man
5. LeAnn Times – One-way ticket
6. Dave Clark Five - Because
7. Lesley Gore – Maybe I know
8. Frankie Valli – Opus 17
9. Ray Price – Funny how time slips away
10. Faron Young – Wine me up
11. Floyd Cramer – Last dance

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 July Friends!