



Director Clark Joins Gov. Gianforte on 56 County Tour Ag Visits

Continuing the focus on highlighting the diversity in Montana's agricultural ecosystem, Director Clark and representatives from the Montana Department of Agriculture joined Governor Gianforte in Chester, Montana yesterday where they visited with local farmers and ranchers at Stricks Ag to talk about the growing season, local challenges, and the upcoming harvest.

"Tyler and Jill Streit of Stricks Ag are leaders here in Montana's agricultural ecosystem. Every operation has bottlenecks. It is great to get out and listen to these producers to learn how we can help eliminate those bottlenecks for further success and future generations," Director Clark said.



Stricks Ag is a merchandiser of Montana's high-quality and high-demand grains out of Chester, Montana. Along with owning multiple grain elevators and a state-of-the-art processing facility, Stricks Ag sends their Montana grains all over the United States and abroad.

While on the Hi-Line, Director Clark attended the Molson Coors Barley Days dinner in Choteau, Montana. Barley Days is an annual celebration that brings together the Montana barley growers for Molson Coors where they can recognize, thank, and congratulate the farmers behind the Molson Coors brands.



Director Clark pictured with her grandson and Peter Coors at the Stage Stop Inn, Choteau, MT



Director Clark Joins Gov. Gianforte in Highlighting Ag Innovation in Power, MT

Director Clark and representatives from the Montana Department of Agriculture joined Governor Gianforte in Power, MT to visit Farm Power Malt as part of the Governor's 56 County Tour.

Farm Power Malt is operated by the Pfeifle family who has farmed in Power, MT for over 100 years. For multiple generations, the Pfeifle's have raised barley for industrial breweries. Ryan Pfeifle and his wife Janna are currently running the family farm and saw the opportunity to create a value-added product through their operation.

In early 2022, the Pfeifle's started construction on a single malt whiskey distillery they call "Farm Alazana". In June of this year, construction was completed on "Farm Alazana", where the Pfeifle's plan to distill their own single malt whiskey using grain grown on their farm, adding value to their 107-year-old family operation.

"A large part of success in our agricultural industry is due to innovation. It takes substantial commitment and risk to invest in infrastructure needed to create a finished Montana product. It is great to see Ryan and Farm Power Malt taking those innovative steps for their operation that has such a deep history in Power and Teton County," Director Clark said.

<https://www.farmpowermalt.com/>



Montana Wheat & Barley Update: 2023 USDA Acreage and Stocks Report

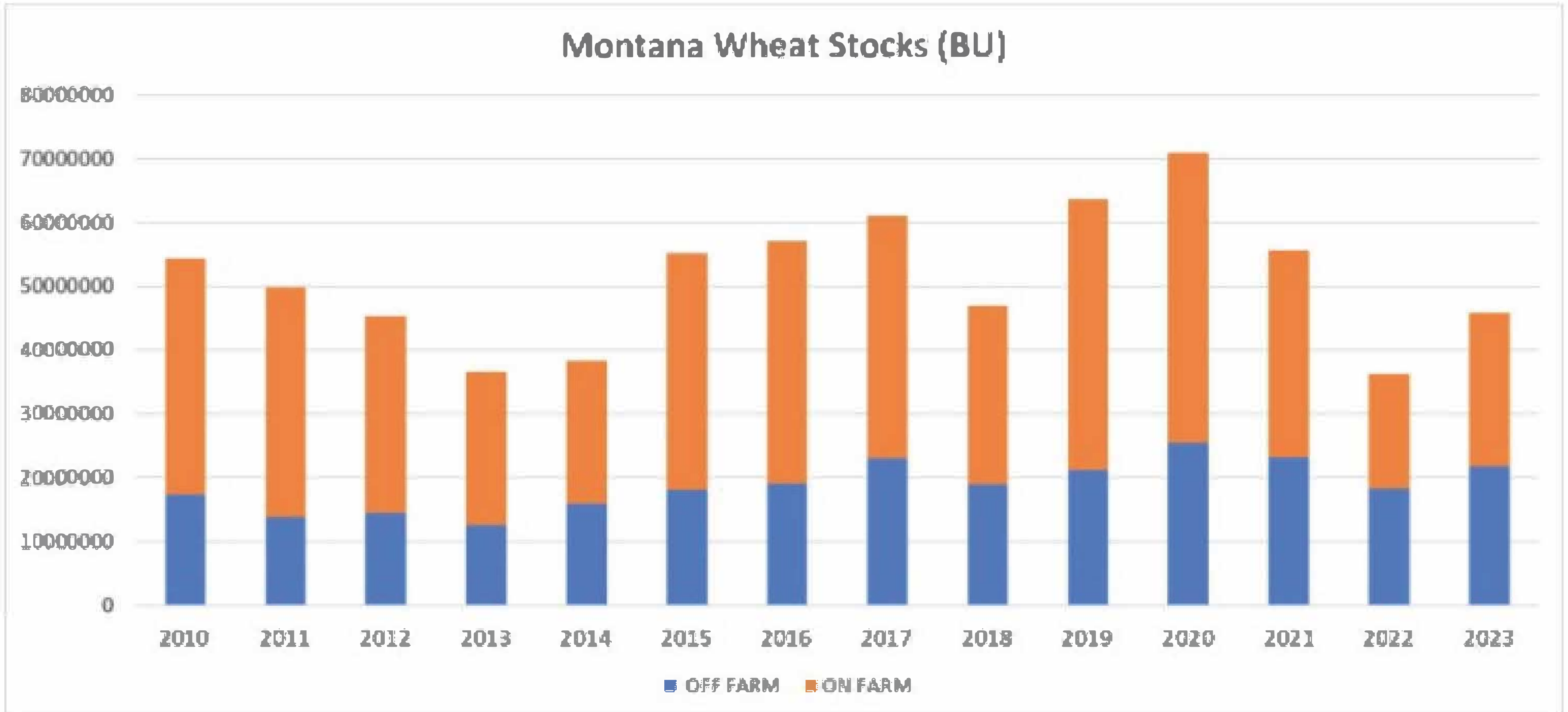
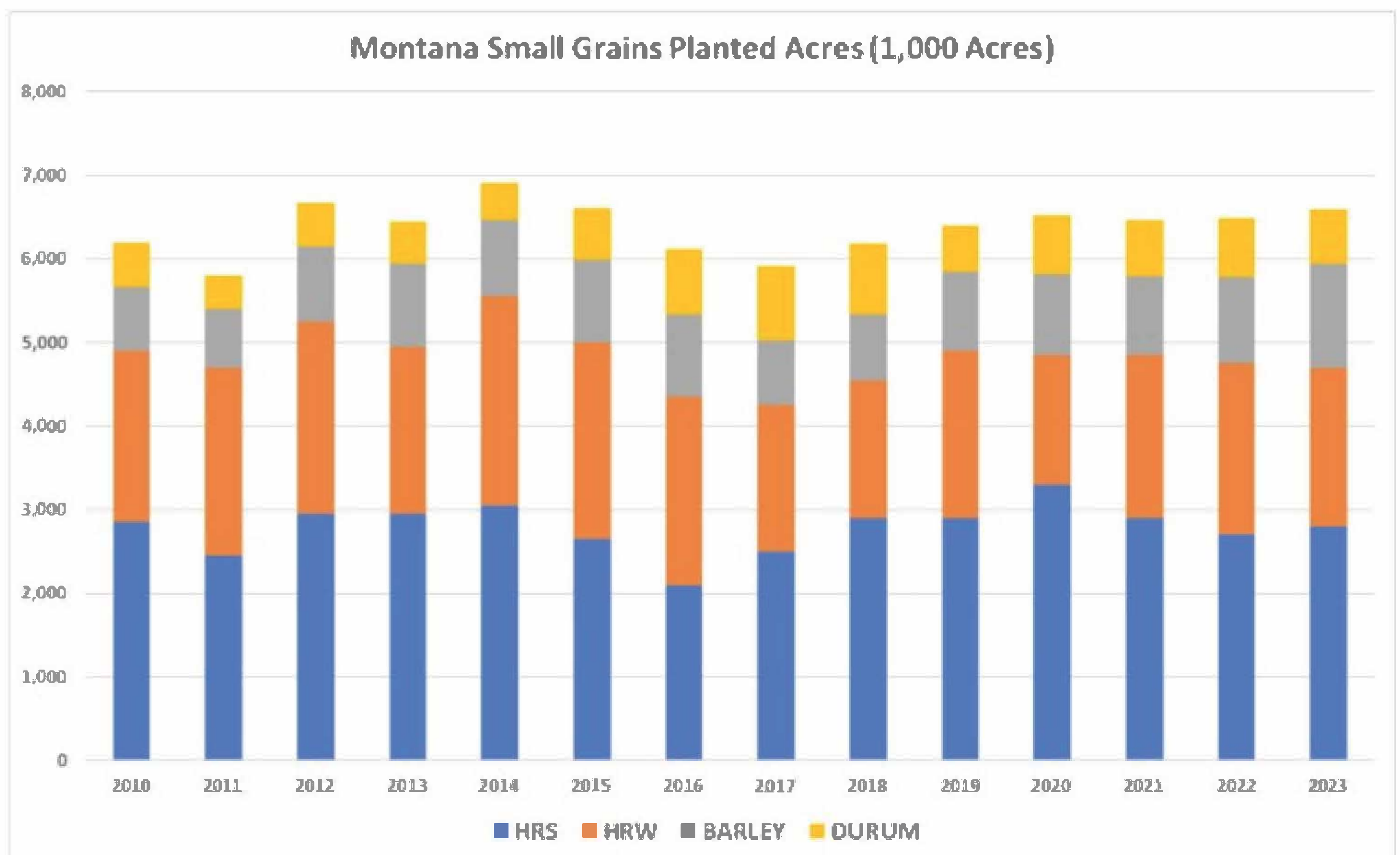
Wheat prices have remained volatile, with the bear news of the 2023 USDA acreage and stocks report. Rain fell on the corn belt, and wheat prices dropped 50-97 cents last week.

On the Montana side, the situation is mixed with bears and bulls. There will be plenty of barley for feed and malt, with a 21% increase in planted acres over last year. Winter wheat acreage is down to 1.9 million acres, spring wheat up to 2.8 million acres, and the head-scratching durum acreage is down from last year at 620,000 acres. Limited durum export opportunities keep the price at par with spring wheat in the \$7.50-\$8.00 BU cash range.

All wheat stocks in Montana are up 27% from a year ago. Durum stocks surged up 76% from last year as producers wait for that magic price, driven by exports into the EU.

Many producers are patiently waiting, tuning up their combines, fishing, hiking, and hoping for one or two more big rains before harvest. The basis is rising rapidly in the wrong direction, as much as \$-1.50.

-- Sam Anderson, Market Development Director, MWBC





Coccoli Joins Agriculture Directors Roundtable at Pacific Northwest Economic Region Summit

The Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) Annual Summit was held July 17-20 in Boise, Idaho. PNWER is a statutory public/private non-profit created in 1991 by the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and Washington, and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan to increase the economic well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the region while maintaining and enhancing our natural environment.

Deputy Director Coccoli participated in the Agriculture Directors Roundtable discussing opportunities and challenges to increase exports across the region, how innovative practices and technologies are changing the way we do business, and sharing information on how our region is leading the effort to meet expanded global food demand while addressing challenges such as labor, drought, and other climate impacts.



“PNWER features state and local elected officials from across the region along with industry representatives from agriculture, mining, energy, tourism, emergency management, railroads, and technology,” said Coccoli.

“Panelists covered topics from the impacts of the war in Ukraine to the necessity of US critical mineral mining to meet the electrification goals of many states and jurisdictions. Idaho Governor, Brad Little, spoke critically of federal energy project permitting and described a vision for a more resilient PNW energy mix incorporating advanced nuclear and other integrated energy systems. Little also pointed out Idaho is home to the first nuclear-powered city (Arco), the deepest canyon, the largest wilderness, Albertson’s, a woman designed flag (male and female figures depicted on state flag are of equal stature), and home to a US Navy submarine base (Bayview).

From other speakers, I learned that most Canadians support 2% GDP to NATO (1.5% currently), 90% of disaster losses are buildings (75% homes), more tough choices to come in western water allocation, damage caused by feral pigs is well in excess of \$1.5B annually, and we are headed toward electric grid crisis without necessary infrastructure (20 year process), but access to hydrogen may be the better fuel source of the future for farming and long-haul trucks.

No trip to Idaho would be complete without a deep dive into potatoes and I was fortunate to tour Simplot’s 380,000 sq ft state-of-the-art potato processing plant in Caldwell, Idaho. We witnessed production from ‘Field to French Fry’, as truck drivers unloaded directly onto five 24-hour dedicated processing lines. Potatoes were sorted for size and foreign material before being steamed and propelled by pressurized water at 60 mph through fixed metal blades. The product was again scanned and sorted before being fried, entering flash freezers, then bagged, boxed, and palletized – all autonomously by robots and machines while a handful of workers monitored cameras and sensors from above the factory floor. Simplot claims 30% of McDonald’s fry and hashbrown production, dating back to the long entrepreneurial relationship between John Simplot and Ray Kroc, along with the exclusive supply for Shake Shack, Sysco, Trader Joes, Ore-Ida, and many many other brands of frozen potato products.



Simplot holds 63 different patents for its potato manufacturing lines including the thick-cut curly fry called Sidewinder. I was proud to know that many of these great products started their journey as seed potatoes in Montana.”



September Pesticide Container Recycling Event in Kalispell, Hamilton, Helena, & Three Forks

The Montana Department of Agriculture is encouraging the community to bring your clean pesticide containers to the September “**Recycling Days**” .

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- 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:

July inspection volume has been about the same as the previous year, near 200 samples per week. Official sampling has been slower with a number of Elevators performing annual maintenance or waiting for rail cars or new product. We have started seeing new crop samples of peas and winter wheat with producers now dropping off samples daily. The new crop is looking good in the Great Falls area, nice large wheat kernels but with lower protein as expected. Predictions of various harvest yields of up to 40% over last year is welcomed news.



Two new Great Falls staff members were added in July for seasonal sampling. Ron Dunlap and Maryrose Payne are both off to a great start and will be integral in helping permanent staff get through another harvest season. Staff in Great Falls were treated to a pre-harvest lunch that Stephanie Cordeiro arranged through Smoked, a local barbeque restaurant and Dan Reimer was able to have lunch at Cassidy's with the Plentywood team. The workload typically triples, or more, throughout August and September so the breaks will be few and far between.





The USDA Risk Management team out of Washington DC and Billings toured the lab this month. Shelia Schenk, Deputy Director – Billings, arranged the group's multi day trip to area businesses and farms. The group included Marcia Bunger, Risk Management Agency Administrator and her staff as well as Eric Bashore, Director of the Billings regional office and staff. Adam Gutzwiler and Jeff Hofstad provided a well-received tour highlighting the benefits of the Federal Grain Inspection Service system. The Southeast Asian Trade Team will be touring the Great Falls lab at the end of July.





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/>





MDA On the Road & Where to Catch Us

- 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
- Honey Bee Colony & Drought Loss Training - Helena, MT | Aug. 4th
- Patagonia Producer Tour - Multiple Locations, MT | Aug. 7 - 9th
- Tri-National Agricultural Accord - Saskatoon, SK | Aug. 14 - 16th
- Value-Added Ag Visit - Lincoln, MT | Aug. 23rd
- MSGA T-Bone Classic - Billings, MT | Aug. 23 - 24th
- Japan National Millers Coop. Trade Team - Great Falls, MT | Aug. 17 - 20th
- MDA All-Staff Meeting - Helena, MT | Aug. 31st



Missouri River Brewing Co. Presents: 2023 East Helena Smoke Show BBQ Competition

Helena value-added ag brewery and local watering hole, Missouri River Brewing Co., is hosting the first annual Kansas City BBQ Society sanctioned BBQ event in the greater Helena area.

The 2023 East Helena Smoke Show BBQ Competition is Saturday, August 5th and Sunday, August 6th (Competition from 11am-5pm) at the Missouri River Brewing Co. in East Helena, MT. This event came from the minds of Russ Radliff, Will Israel, and Adam Hutchinson as a way of bringing good people together to eat great BBQ and enjoy time together with family.

This competition is a sanctioned "Kansas City BBQ Society (KCBS) Event" and it is a "Master Series" event where Chicken, Pork Ribs, Pork Butt, and Brisket will be judged and with cash prizes up to \$1,000. Deputy Director Zach Coccoli has been selected as this year's "Celebrity Judge".

Hosted by "Missouri River Brewing Co" in East Helena, MT and proceeds will go to Impact Montana Nonprofit to support service members, veterans, first-responders, and their families ability to thrive.



**MISSOURI RIVER
BREWING CO.**



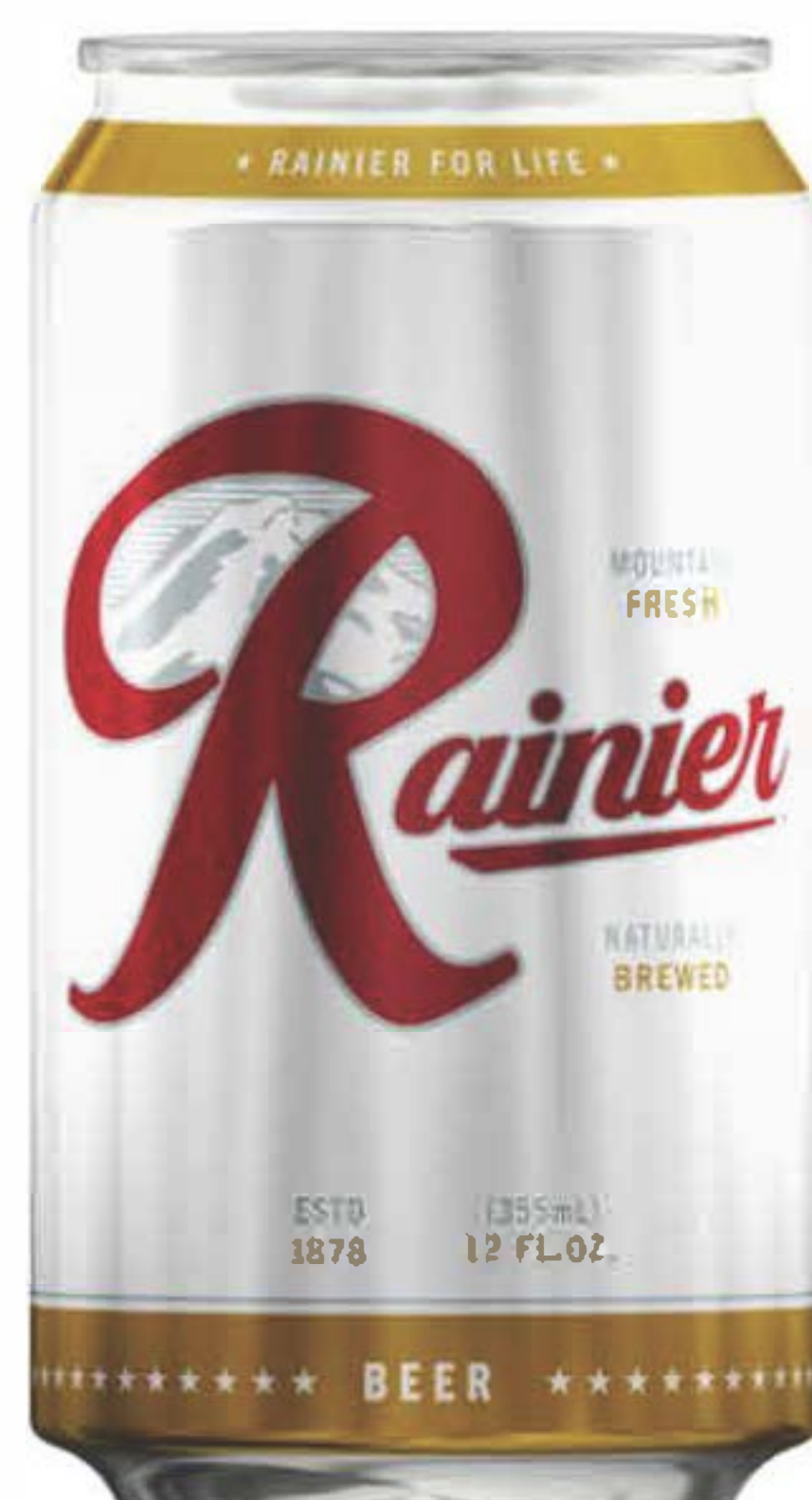
What We Have Been (responsibly) Drinking Lately:

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

Commodity Services Bureau Chief, Ed Evanson , shared with us his “Vitamin of Choice.”

“Only pop gold tops. Rainier, Vitamin R, Rainy, Rain Dogs, ‘Rawnyay’ (the French pronunciation) a crisp, refreshing, and delicious beer, perfect to beat the summer heat. Rainier is an American Adjunct Lager (AAL), for the beer snobs out there. Some say it tastes the same as every other AAL – Bud, Coors, Miller, Pabst – but to me it tastes like home.

I recommend trying it on tap locally (Helena) at The Hopper or Brothers Tapworks on the walking mall. Cans can be found at most local retailers, but they taste better if you get them from the B&B Market on Rodney Street.”



What We've Been Listening To Recently:



Wheat & Barley Committee's Market Development Director, Sam Anderson's Playlist for your August Listening Pleasure:

1. Hesitate - Judah & the Lion
2. Our Love - Judah & the Lion
3. Heart Medicine - Judah & the Lion
4. Things are Looking up - Judah & the Lion
5. Be Here Now - Judah & the Lion
6. Gratitude - Bears Den
7. One Night - Isaac Gracie
8. The Dark - Eddie Vedder
9. Highway Tune - Greta Van Fleet
10. Meeting the Master - Greta Van Fleet

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 August Friends!