



HAY NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WASHINGTON STATE HAY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

RR ALFALFA IN WASHINGTON STATE

Relayed below is a letter sent to Forage Genetics and Monsanto on August 15, 2005 regarding the release of Roundup Ready alfalfa in Washington State. A copy of this letter along with copies of the letters submitted by the exporters can be reviewed on our website at www.wa-hay.org.

The Washington State Hay Growers urgently requests that you do not release Roundup Ready alfalfa in the state of Washington until there is written verification from our export customers that they will accept Roundup Ready alfalfa. It is important that such acceptance be assured by the actual alfalfa buyer in Japan and also in other export markets. Acceptance by the Japanese government in and of itself is NOT sufficient since such approval does not equate to acceptance by the importer there. Enclosed are copies of letters from all of the major alfalfa export companies in the state expressing support for this request and delineating their concerns about the release of RR alfalfa in the state. These companies have people at the forefront of doing business with the Pacific Rim countries where virtually all of our export markets are located. Their conclusions on this matter are based on their own personal experience in these markets and must be carefully considered by all parties.

Washington is unique as a state in our position regarding this matter. Exports of alfalfa are a vital part of our market. In 2003, total production of alfalfa in the state was 2,700,000 tons. 70% of this production was in the Columbia Basin and it's estimated that 35% to 50% of that production is exported, the majority going to Japan. A number of growers in the Columbia Basin export in excess of 75% of their production. These figures clearly point out what is at stake in this matter to the producers of the majority of Washington alfalfa. Anything that jeopardizes their export market also jeopardizes their very existence as growers. If they lose their export markets, they will be out of business. Further, it is felt that a healthy export market has a "spill over" effect on the domestic market, helping keep it healthy also. Loss of the export market would have detrimental effects on all Washington alfalfa producers.

By making this request we are not taking a position in opposition to the RR technology. We understand the benefits associated with it and believe that it will likely be an integral part of the industry in the future. We are asking for the delay in the release here in Washington so that all questions relating to it's acceptance in our export markets can be fully resolved.

Please let us know what your company's position on this request is as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your time and for your consideration of our situation.

Best regards,

Chep Gauntt
President

**2006 WSHGA CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW
JANUARY 18-19 – THREE RIVERS CONVENTION CENTER, KENNEWICK, WA**

JOIN US AT OUR BOARD MEETING - THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

The WSHGA Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, September 15, 2005 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Hallmark Inn in Moses Lake in the Sage Room which is located downstairs. All who are interested are welcome to attend.

Directions to Hallmark Inn:

- From **Seattle**, traveling east on I-90, take Exit 176 in Moses Lake. Turn left onto Broadway, and then take the next left to Hallmark Inn.
- From **Spokane**, traveling west on I-90, take Exit 176 in Moses Lake. Turn right onto Broadway, and then take the next left to Hallmark Inn.

Contact our office with any further questions at (509) 585-5460 or by emailing agmgt@agmgt.com.

WSHGA/WSU ALFALFA STRIP TESTS

In cooperation with Gauntt Farms, the Washington State Hay Growers Association and Washington State University has established two alfalfa strip tests. One of them was planted in late summer in 2004 on 45 acres of land and demonstrates 14 varieties. The other was planted this August and demonstrates 6 varieties on about 30 acres. The entries are varieties that have performed exceptionally well in the WSHGA/WSU alfalfa variety tests over the past years. The purpose of the strip tests is to get an idea of variety performance under a typical farm management program. There are also plans to sample each variety in the haystack for forage quality.

Often forage quality for variety differences is measured by taking a fresh sample from a small plot. By taking samples from the bale, forage quality is measurement of the true quality of the hay to be marketed and would factor in farm management such as raking a baling. Maps of the varieties are posted at the site and all are welcome to visit. A map to the location is on the WSHGA web site at www.wa-hay.org.

William T. W. Woodward

**WASHINGTON STATE HAY
GROWERS ASSOCIATION**
100 N. Fruitland, Suite B
Kennewick, WA 99336

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