



# HAY NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WASHINGTON STATE HAY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

July 1, 2005 - Are we having fun yet? No? Well, maybe? This has been an interesting year for alfalfa harvest in WA, OR, ID and CA.

Washington had a difficult first cutting harvest because of rain again this year. Prior to the "fun" we enjoyed, California went through similar rain soaked hay. Then Idaho and Oregon got the same treatment. There was a shortage (and still is) of high quality dairy hay available and some buyers that prefer first cutting are looking at high quality second and other cuttings.

It appears that demand is up and acreage is down. Because this is the second year of rain influenced production we have seen overall higher prices for hay and have just begun to fill needs for the export market.

High quality Timothy was produced in the Columbia Basin this year during a short break in the rain. Timothy production will continue to be good rotation crop for alfalfa. If planted at proper seeding rates it can be a very good substitute for wheat. Timothy seed is inexpensive and not difficult to establish. However, caution should be used in

the cleanliness of the field and the harvest operations. Rain can be just as difficult as with alfalfa. Low quality timothy will not measure up to the dollar return of a good wheat crop.

Now is the appropriate time for seed variety selection for summer and fall planted alfalfa. Remember a high quality, known seed does not cost—it pays. It is possible to return the entire cost of your fall seed with increased tonnage, quality and stand the first cutting the first year. Don't be afraid to ask your seed dealer for an actual germ test from bags of seed you will be buying. If you need help with germ tests contact Benton Franklin WSU extension agent, Tim Woodward or Grant County WSU extension agent, John Kugler.

On June 14, 2005, USDA granted Forage Genetics and Monsanto the permission to sell Roundup Ready alfalfa seed in the USA. The seed will be limited in amounts and is approved only for use in domestic alfalfa hay production and has not been approved for export. Forage Genetics does expect approval for 2006 and expects to have ready an inexpensive and reliable test kit available to detect Roundup Ready

alfalfa in baled hay.

WSHGA annual meeting will be January 18 & 19, 2006, at the Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick, WA. This will be bigger and better than last year's convention. There will be new and more vendors than last year, luncheon speakers, discussion on weed control, hay preservatives and methods. Please plan to attend; this is for you the grower.

A reminder of the "Hay for sale" on the WSHGA web site @ [www.wa-hay.org](http://www.wa-hay.org)

Chep Gauntt, President WSHGA



Chep Gauntt, at a recent board meeting, presents WA Director of Ag, Valoria Loveland with an appreciation plaque for her continued dedication and service to the industry.

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

**ROUNDUP READY ALFALFA  
APPROVED FOR U.S. MARKET**

Roundup Ready alfalfa is now approved for sale in the U.S., according to Jennifer Garrett, Monsanto Public Affairs. "The agreements for licensees and dealers will be completed over the next month," says Garrett. "The USDA, FDA and EPA approvals for the use of Roundup over the top of Roundup Ready alfalfa apply to alfalfa produced only in the U.S. In turn, dealers will be signing agreements to ensure that the Roundup Ready alfalfa forage will be used on farms in this country only, and not grown for export. The actual sales process will start in time for fall planting."

The amount of seed available this fall will be very limited, but Garrett expects the seed to be fully available next year. "Forage Genetics International is our partner and has done a great job of working with us to ensure we have the Roundup Ready trait in the best varieties for this limited supply of seed this year, and to make sure there will be a good supply of seed the following year," says Garrett. "Forage Genetics is working to broadly license this trait to a large number of companies."

Although the initial seed supply is limited, Garrett says Monsanto and Forage Genetics want growers to get experience with Roundup Ready alfalfa as soon as possible. The pricing has not yet been announced.

Garrett says more information will be made available to eHay Weekly readers in coming weeks. She can be contacted at 636-448-3870.

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