

Official Publication Of The Washington State Hay Growers Association



March 2008

HAY NEWS

WSHGA Scholarship

The Washington State Hay Growers Association is pleased to offer two \$250 scholarships for the 2008/09 school year. The WSHGA will give preference in the following order –

- 1) Members of the WSHGA (and family) in agriculture
- 2) Non members in agriculture, and
- 3) Members in other fields.

For a scholarship application and additional guidelines, please visit www.wa-hay.org or contact us at (509) 585-5460.

Application deadline is April 30, 2008. Announcement of scholarship winners will be made in June, 2008.

President's Letter

It's going to be a fun year with many challenges. We need to price our hay to be competitive with the commodity markets, we need to stop being the banker and demand more money down for our product, and we need to keep praying for sunshine!

The winter rush of meetings is over now and everyone is busy in the fields. I hope everybody got the chance to attend the hay conference or one of our chapter meetings. The information I received at these events this year was far more valuable this year than in the past due to the rising costs of inputs. The social network at the conference is also invaluable in my mind. It is time to take what we learned this winter and apply it to our farming and business practices.

Your board has two new members, Keith Callaway of Rainier Seeds Inc. and Lance Cline with the USDA Market News. Welcome aboard gentlemen. I would also like to thank Keith Rupprecht and Aaron Hull for their years of service to the hay association. Both gentlemen have moved on to other avenues outside of the hay industry and are no longer on the board.

The board has just finished our evaluation of the 2008 conference. We are making plans for 2009 already. If you have any suggestions for next year, please contact me or one of your board members. We felt 2008 was a success but are trying to make improvements still. We are working on up-dating the website, remember to advertise your hay for sale there. There will be no cost to advertise your hay on the website this year for grower members, so please try it out. Les Wentworth and I have been working with the Back Country Horseman to develop a wilderness hay program that will meet the legislative requirements. We hope to have all the necessary paperwork done to have the program in place by mid-summer.

I wish everybody the best of luck this year and keep producing clean green Washington hay!

Shawn Clausen—President

WELCOME! LANCE CLINE—USDA MARKET NEWS SERVICE

Hi Everyone, My name is Lance Cline with the USDA Market News Service. I grew up ranching/farming and raising registered Angus and Simmental cattle on the family operation in Northeast KS near the town of Onaga. I attended Kansas State University in Manhattan, KS majoring in Animal Science and Industry. I was transferred to Moses Lake on Feb 1, 2008 from the Greeley, CO office. This is beginning my fifth year of service with the USDA.

I have visited with several of you and met a few, and look forward to meeting many more in the future. As new crop hay comes near I'll be calling on everyone seeking out the market and I hope to have some positive news to share with you as well. My door is always open and I always look forward to hearing from you. If I can be of service to you in any of your agricultural commodity pricing needs, feel free to give any of us at the USDA Market News office a call—(509) 765-3611.

**WSHGA
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
AND TRADE SHOW
JANUARY 14-15, 2009
THREE RIVERS
CONVENTION CENTER
KENNEWICK, WA**

WSDA News: Future of Farming Project—Aimed at Keeping Agriculture Profitable

OLYMPIA - What can our state's policy leaders do to help Washington's farming families stay profitable over the next 20 years? To help sort out the challenges and the opportunities, farmers, ranchers and others in the industry are encouraged to help develop a strategic plan through the Future of Farming project.

"It's been over 20 years since we drafted our last strategic plan for Washington agriculture," said WSDA Director Valoria Loveland. "While the economic picture today looks very bright with high commodity prices and growing exports, we must always be thinking ahead to anticipate tomorrow's challenges. Some people need to be reminded that farming is a business, not a hobby. A family must make a living to keep that land in production. We want to help the next generation succeed on the farm."

A project steering committee representing a broad cross-section of the industry has met to develop a framework for prioritizing discussions. WSDA has hired an agricultural economist, Jennifer Harte, to coordinate the project. As opportunities and challenges are identified, private and public sector economists, agronomists, educators and other specialists will provide detailed input where appropriate. During the spring and summer, listening sessions with farmers, food processors and other members of the public will be held throughout the state. **WSDA is currently requesting input through an online survey on the project's Web site: www.agr.wa.gov/fof.**

The project's final report will be delivered to the Washington State Legislature before the end of the year. The strategies identified in the report will be structured to assist the Legislature and other governments to enact policies that benefit agriculture. The 2007 Legislature provided funding for the project.

On May 12th in Moses Lake there will be a public meeting for forage growers to provide ideas for how the state prepares for the next 20 years in agriculture. We know it will be right in the middle of first cutting for some of us but we need a presence at the meeting.

THIS MAY BE A CHANCE TO EFFECT CHANGE AT A LEVEL WE DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO MOST OF THE TIME!

The meeting will be at Big Bend Community College from noon to 5pm on May 12th. Two sessions are planned, with the first being potatoes at 12:30pm (lunch will be served) and the second **session for forage will begin at 3pm** (snacks/beverages supplied.)

If you are interested in attending, please contact Sheri Nolan at the Association office (509) 585-5460 or snolan@agmgt.com so you can be updated on any changes to the scheduled times.

Les Wentworth, WSHGA Board member has volunteered to participate on the steering committee for this project giving a voice to the Washington State Hay Industry.



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