

**Washington Grain Commission  
Wheat and Barley Research Annual Progress Reports and Final Reports**

**Project #:** AWD004714

**Progress Report Year:** 2 of 3

**Title:** Extension Education for Wheat and Barley Growers

**Cooperators:** Joao Antonangelo, Cassandra Bates, Aaron Esser, Randy Fortenbery, Richard Koenig, Carol McFarland, Timothy Murray, Clark Neely, Surendra Singh, Dale Whaley, and Rachel Wieme

**Executive summary:** A new accessible and more mobile-friendly Wheat and Small Grains website was launched in 2023. Twenty-six new episodes of the WSU Wheat Beat Podcast were posted in 2023, a new episode every other week. There were also 42 new Timely Topics and 18 new Weeders of the West articles posted. The 2023 WSU Wheat Academy was held for the second time following the two-year break during the COVID-19 pandemic. We had 70 paid registrations and 64 attendees in 2023, which is ten more than in 2022, but still short of our 72-person limit.

**Introduction:** The Extension Dryland Cropping Systems Team was formed in 2013. Members of the team include extension specialists located on the Pullman campus and County Educators located in various counties in eastern Washington. The Team was formed in response to the loss of Extension Specialist positions because of university budget cuts and to provide increased coordination of educational efforts.

**Approach:** One of the first tasks of the Team was to build a website that would serve as a one-stop shop for information on wheat and barley production. Prior to the development of the Wheat and Small Grains website ([smallgrains.wsu.edu](http://smallgrains.wsu.edu)), clientele complained of their inability to find information that was scattered amongst a wide array of individual websites. The Wheat and Small Grains website is designed to provide growers and consultants with easy access to this information.

**Results:** A new accessible and more mobile-friendly Wheat and Small Grains website was launched in 2023. This was no small task, as this website is one of the largest at WSU. The WSU Wheat Academy was held in 2023 for the second time since the two-year break during the COVID-19 pandemic. We had 70 paid registrations and 64 attendees in 2023, which is ten more than in 2022, but still short of our 72-person limit.

Vacant county positions on the Extension Dryland Cropping Systems Team remained a problem in 2023. Although the Walla Walla County position was filled in 2023, the former Columbia, Spokane, and Whitman County positions remain unfilled. We did add three new specialists to the team in 2023: Surendra Singh (Dryland Cropping Systems), Joao Antonangelo (Applied Soil Chemistry), and Richard Koenig (Soil Fertility).

**Impact:** For the 11-month period of January through November 2023, the site had 68,389 sessions with 50,812 unique users; this compares to 66,714 sessions with 52,639 unique users for the same period in 2022, and 63,417 sessions and 52,822 unique users for the same period in 2021. There were 107,718 pageviews, which is an increase from 98,580 pageviews in 2022 and 104,950 pageviews in 2021. We have 1,066 subscribers to our listserv. We have 1,154 followers (10.3% increase from 2022) on X (formerly Twitter), and 774 followers (7.5% increase from 2022) on Facebook. Most of the sessions from the US (42,506) were initiated from the state of Washington (14,640). From January through November, the WSU Wheat Beat Podcast had a total of 14,416 plays (39.5% increase from 2022). Through November, the Weeders of the West Forum had 9,282 pageviews (5% increase from 2022) and 101 people are subscribed to the forum listserv. Those who attended the 2023 WSU Wheat Academy rated the program highly (4.64 out of 5 based on 40 returned surveys).

**WGC project number: TBD**

**WGC project title: Extension Education for Wheat and Barley Growers**

**Project PI(s): Drew Lyon**

**Project initiation date: July 1, 2022**

**Project year (X of 3-yr cycle): 2**

Objective	Deliverable	Progress	Timeline	Communication
Add new resources to the Wheat and Small Grains website, including new publications, decision support tools and calculators, videos, and quizzes.	New and updated Extension publications, decision support tools and calculators, videos, and quizzes will be developed. Decision support tools and videos will be prioritized. An article will be written annually for Wheat Life magazine on our Extension activities.	A new accessible and more mobile-friendly Wheat and Small Grains website was launched in 2023. This was no small task, as this is one of the largest websites at WSU. Five new wheat variety videos from Lind were added to the website in 2023. Added the Straw removal Calculator Guide to supplement the Straw Removal Calculator.	This will be an ongoing process throughout the duration of the project.	The development of new resources will be shared with growers through Timely Topic posts on the Wheat and Small Grains website, email messages sent to the smallgrains listserv (1,066 subscribers), social media platforms (X and Facebook), an annual article in Wheat Life magazine, and at various education events held throughout the year.
Provide Timely Topics, podcast episodes, and blog posts on a regular and frequent basis.	We will post at least one Timely Topic every other week and one podcast episode in the alternate weeks so that we have at least one new item on the home page every week. A new blog article will be posted every other week.	In 2023, we posted 42 Timely Topics, 26 podcast episodes, and 18 Weeders of the West posts.	This will be an ongoing process throughout the duration of the project.	Timely Topics, Wheat Beat Podcast episodes, and Weeders of the West Blog posts will be posted to the home page of the Wheat and Small Grains website on a regular basis.
Develop a new one-day educational program along the lines of the Wheat Academy that can be held outside of Pullman.	A new one-day educational program held each year in at least one location outside of Pullman.	We struggled to identify the best approach for this objective. Our first one-day educational event will be held in 2024.	The first one-day program will be held in Davenport in early 2024. We will adjust future programs based on what we learn at this inaugural Wheat Academy on the Road.	Information on the new educational event will be communicated to growers and crop consultants through Timely Topic posts and in future advertisements for the program, including advertising in Wheat Life.
Respond to issues of concern to the wheat industry with educational programming that is timely and relevant.	In-depth educational programs, publications, articles, videos, and decision support tools as called for by the particular issue.	We increased interactions with the GROW project, a national herbicide-resistance project led by the USDA-ARS in Beltsville, MD. Claudio Rubione, Outreach and Extension for GROW, interviewed and filmed four Washington wheat growers with impact mill systems. Links to these case studies and videos were added to our website and were promoted through our social media accounts. The PNW is recognized as the leader in impact mill adoption by growers in the US.	This will be an ongoing process throughout the duration of the project.	Educational resources and programming developed to address issues of concern will be shared with growers through Timely Topic posts on the Wheat and Small Grains website and at education events throughout the year.

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