

Newsletter

July- August 2022



Garfield
County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



Welcome to the WSU Garfield County Extension Newsletter!

This is an electronic newsletter highlighting events and topics of interest to residents of Garfield County and the surrounding area. This newsletter can also be viewed on our website: <https://extension.wsu.edu/Garfield/>

Do you have an event or subject you would like added to our newsletter or website? Would you like to be removed from our Extension Newsletter email list?

Contact the Extension Office

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(closed 12:00-1:00)

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Washington State University helps people develop leadership skills and use research based knowledge to improve their economic status and quality of life. Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension Office.

How Deep is Too Deep to Plant Winter Canola?

Winter canola establishment has always been a challenge in Washington. Canola prefers to be seeded shallow (0.5-1.5”) and in good moisture. The dry summers of the Inland Pacific Northwest that cause moisture to recede deeper into the soil profile can lead to poor germination and emergence. One strategy for improving stand establishment is to target early seeding dates. However, early seeding dates can increase the susceptibility of the canola to fall drought and winter kill. When considering later seeding dates, the challenge is to put the canola seed into moisture without going too deep.

The optimal seeding depth for canola is between 0.5-1.5” deep. However, in a dry year such as 2021, you may be forced to chase moisture when seeding your canola. Canola seeds must be placed in good moisture with good soil to seed contact for the seeds to imbibe water and germinate. Canola seeded to a depth of 2” in field trials has not suffered reductions in yield. However, seeding canola to a 2” depth has been shown to decrease stand density and increase the time from seeding to emergence. The increased emergence time may reduce the efficacy of seed treatments in protecting the seedlings from insect damage. Additionally, canola which emerges slowly will not compete as effectively with weed pressure. Anecdotally, canola has been shown to emerge from depths of up to 2.5”, but there is not rigorous experimentation for depths greater than 2”.

In a project funded by the Washington State Oilseed Commission, WSU researchers are assessing the best management practices for early seeded winter canola. The treatments in this trial include planting date, seeding rate, and plant growth regulators. On July 15th, 2021 canola was seeded at a soil depth of 2” into good moisture and plants had begun emerging by July 26th, 2021 (figure 1). At the same location, additional canola was seeded at a depth of 2” into variable moisture conditions (figure 3). The third planting date will be near August 15th, 2021. The focus of this trial is to study the effects of seeding date on winter survival, but these results also illustrate the effect of a dry year on stand establishment.

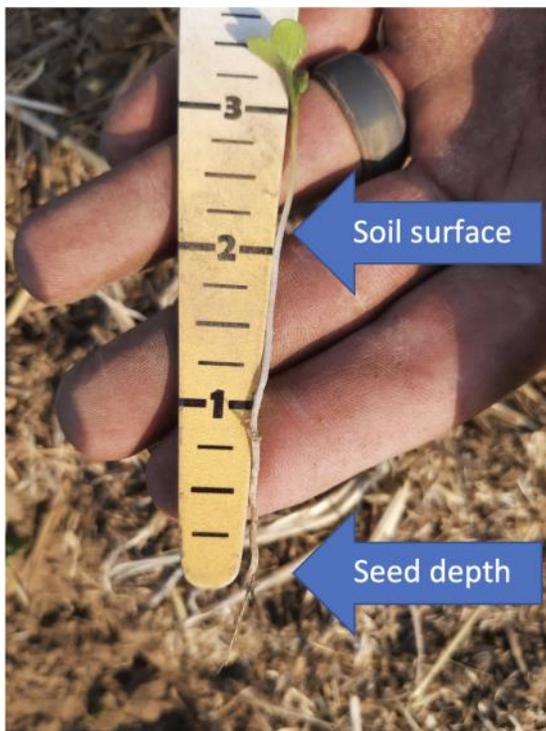


Figure 1: Canola seeded 7/15/2021 into good moisture near Davenport, WA. The seeds were placed 2” beneath the soil surface, but thick residue at this location means caused additional elongation.

Besides depth, drill type and packing intensity should be considered when chasing moisture with winter canola. In clayey soils, intense packing has been shown to reduce emergence. In fine-textured soils, packing has been shown to increase stand establishment through better seed to soil contact. Careful consideration should be given to both soil type and packing pressure when deciding on canola seeding depth.

For questions or comments, contact Isaac Madsen via email at isaac_madsen@wsu.edu or via phone at (360) 448-9081.



Figure 2: Canola seeded 2” deep into marginal moisture near Davenport on 7/30/2021.

Experts recommend steps to avoid spread of avian influenza

https://news.wsu.edu/press-release/2022/05/13/wsu-experts-recommend-steps-to-avoid-spread-of-avian-influenza/?utm_source=WSUNews-ewsletter&utm_campaign=wsunewsnewsletter&utm_medium=email

PULLMAN, Wash. – Several cases of the H5N1 avian influenza virus in birds have been confirmed in Washington state, and animal disease experts at Washington State University are asking the public to take measures to avoid its spread.

The Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (WADDL) has now identified six cases in Washington state backyard poultry operations in the past eight days and is cautioning the public to keep wild birds away from backyard flocks. The virus was detected in Idaho April 15, Alaska April 30, and in Oregon on May 5. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the virus is now confirmed in 34 states.

“Persons with birds of their own, whether commercial or backyard flocks, should take appropriate precautions to protect their birds, primarily by keeping wild waterfowl birds from comingling with and infecting your flock,” said Tim Baszler, WADDL executive director.

As with past avian influenza outbreaks, WADDL on the WSU Pullman campus and Puyallup Research and Extension Center, conducts regular testing for the virus in Washington, Idaho, and Alaska.

Since 2020, when the H5N1 virus, a highly pathogenic strain of avian influenza (bird flu), arrived in the United States from Europe, it has made its way west, mostly through wild waterfowl migration and private poultry flocks. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 37.7 million domestic and wild birds have died in the U.S. alone, making it the deadliest avian flu since 2015.

Although highly pathogenic avian influenza is a highly contagious disease among birds and can cause significant mortality among poultry, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the risk of the virus spreading to people is very low.

With no vaccine or treatment available for bird flocks, currently the only way to control the virus spread among commercial or backyard flocks is to euthanize or depopulate the flock as soon as tests are



confirmed, according to experts across the state. This is the best way to contain the spread and decrease overall animal deaths.

Baszler said there are a few other things the public can do to reduce the spread of the avian flu. First, he said, keep domestic birds away from wild birds. If possible, birds should be kept in their coups or other indoor poultry facilities. He said fairs, shows, and any event where birds aggregate also pose heightened risk of bird flu transmission among birds.

“I know it is tempting for backyard bird owners to feed wild birds, or have wild birds mingle with your birds but it’s absolutely what you should not do right now,” Baszler said.

Bald eagles and other raptors are especially susceptible to the virus, as they often feed on small birds that may be infected.

The threat does not appear to stop at just birds. According to the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, the disease was also detected recently in two dead wild red fox kits in Ontario. “It makes sense that predators that eat infected birds may contract the virus,” Baszler said.

Avian influenza is characterized by ruffled feathers, tremors, respiratory issues, nasal discharge, diarrhea, struggling to walk or waddling, neurological problems (such as lack of fear of humans, head shaking, etc.), coughing, sneezing, and sudden death.

Washington state residents can report possible avian influenza cases in wild birds to the Washington Department of Fish Wildlife. Those concerned about their flock should contact the Washington State Department of Agriculture’s Sick Bird Hotline at 1-800-606-3056. Anyone outside of Washington should contact their veterinarian or local wildlife agency.

Lawn Alternatives

Drought? Water bill too high? Tired of mowing and lawn care all summer? Here are some alternatives you can choose from and still have a green space around your home.

As summer approaches are you concerned about the overuse of our precious water supply for the sake of having a green lawn? We Americans are in love with the look of a green space around our home; but with some [maybe hard] work you can replace your typical lawn with these alternatives and still have a green space for kids to play on, hosting backyard bar-b-ques, and looking like you are still “keeping up appearances” for your neighbors, if that is important to you.

Kill the grass with an herbicide listed for killing grasses, or cover with cardboard, do not water and smother the grass out in 2 months, be patient as the grass dies and starts to decompose and enrich your soil.

- Start a garden where your lawn used to be, share with the neighbors if you get discouraging stares
- Consider drought resistant grasses, such as:
 - Buffalo Grass: drought resistant, requires infrequent mowing, cold tolerant. Will go dormant over our winter, turning brown; will not withstand heavy, constant traffic. <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/buffalograss-lawns-7-224/>
 - Or choose these grass alternatives:
 - White Clover: drought resistant, rarely gets tall enough to mow, cold tolerant, it will outcompete weeds. It will attract pollinators, so as a lawn for children (of all ages) to walk over it barefoot may result in the occasional sting, or plan to mow it before it goes into blossom stage.
 - Micro Clover: moderately drought resistant, requires rare mowing, cold tolerant varieties available, it will outcompete weeds. Has rare blooms, so pollinators are not an issue like white clover. Best choice for a typical lawn appearance but you will need to mix with a type of grass for high impact areas, such as play areas. Cost is an issue, \$80 for enough seed for a 1000 sq feet of lawn. As this alternative gains in popularity, we hope to see the price come down. This is a frequent choice for lawns in European countries, now becoming more popular in the U.S.
 - Stepables: if you have a small area, you can remove your grass and plant one of the stepable plants. <https://www.stepables.com/> is one site that I found. I cannot vouch for its reliability, but certainly gives you lots of options! The choices I see listed are correct for the areas listed. Unless you are patient and wait for the “plugs” to grow in, this can be an expensive choice. But if you are willing to care for them and get it established and be patient, these are great choices.
 - Tapestry Garden: Choose a little of everything, vary the colors and textures for a unique lawn alternative.
 - Native plants: This may not allow a play area, but you can replace most of your space with native plants and choose a smaller area for a more typical “lawn.” There are a wide variety of choices, look at this site: <https://www.wnps.org/native-plant-directory> for a listing of options.

There you go, have a wonderful Summer!
Your WSU Garfield County Master Gardeners.





Master Gardener Plant Clinics

Free diagnosis and advice! Bring your questions and specimens by the **WSU/Garfield County Extension**

Every Wednesday

June 1st through August 31th

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

757 Main Street, Pomeroy, WA

509-843-3701

mbartlow@wsu.edu

<http://extension.wsu.edu/garfield/>

Mental Health for Farmers



Just like a Crop, Farmers' Mental Health Needs Nurturing

Washington Wheat Foundation
WAWHAT.ORG (509) 659-1987
Wheat Life June|2022

We Want to take a moment to consider and discuss the harrowing difficulties that many farmers face each and every day.

According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), those in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations are nearly twice as likely to commit suicide than those in the general population. Unlike other workers who can quit or look into other options when facing unpredictability, farmers and agricultural workers must persevere because all aspects of their livelihood are woven into their occupation—legacy, identity, finances, and housing, to name a few. Farming is an arduous occupation with a tremendous amount of responsibility that often leaves farmers feeling incredibly lonely, especially in rural areas where

there are fewer mental health resources available. This is combined with that fact that the future of farming is, quite literally, uncertain and often a gamble. Factors such as devastating economic events and worsening weather conditions make the longevity of farming uncertain and a risky occupation. These are all elements that are out of farmers' control.

However, even with all the challenges they may face, farmers around the world are still experiencing an all-time high demand for the crops they produce. No matter the circumstances, farmers and agricultural workers sacrifice their time, finances, and Mental health in order to feed families around the globe. Farmers are a tough bunch, but it's easy to understand why their suicide rate has increased with such a taxing occupation. Death by suicide doesn't occur in a vacuum, but usually involves a multitude of triggering events that lead a father, son, mother, daughter, friend, or neighbor down a dark path. So please reach out and offer support if you see a farmer struggling. Receiving support from family and friends is just as important to a person as seeking out professional

mental health resources.

We know that wheat farming can be an isolating and difficult profession. However, we are hopeful the development of new ag technologies and growing advocacy on social media and the internet will create a future for farmers that's less stressful, full of promise and allows them to instill a legacy the generations that follow can be proud of.

If you or someone you know may be considering suicide, contact the national suicide prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255.

Washington Wheat Foundation Meeting, scheduled for Oct. 3 2022, at the Wheat Foundation Building in Ritzville, Washington.

A graphic box containing social media information. At the top, it lists 'WAWHEATFOUNDATION' with an Instagram icon, '@WAWHEATFOUNDATION' with a Facebook icon, and '@WHEATFOUNDATION' with a YouTube icon. Below this is a large QR code that, when scanned, likely leads to the organization's website. At the bottom of the box, the website 'WAWHEAT.ORG' is printed in a bold, sans-serif font.



FFA



2022-23

Pomeroy FFA Chapter Officers:

Trevin Kimble	President
Kendall Dixon	VP
Jillian Herres	Secretary
Katie Boyer	Treasurer
Chase Caruso	Representative
Kaylee Schmidt	Sentinal
Stacia Bowen	ASB Rep

2022 FFA Awards

- Outstanding Freshman: Izzy Field
- Outstanding Sophomore: Stacia Bowen
- Outstanding Junior: Kendall Dixon
- Outstanding Senior: Troy Steele
- Advisor's Award: Katie Boyer
- Alumni Scholarships: Trent Gwinn, Keegan Gerking, Elizabeth Ruchert, Nayely Larios, Troy Steele & Keely Maves.
- Janine Ledgerwood Memorial Scholarship: Troy Steele
- Larry Wilson Memorial Scholarship: Nayely Larios

FFA STATE

8 State FFA Degrees were awarded at state convention: Kendall Dixon, Trevin Kimble, Trent Gwinn, Colton Slaybaugh, Keegan Gerking, Nayely Larios, Keely Maves, and Troy Steele
 Kendall Dixon was a State Star Finalist in Placement
 Agronomy was 8th place in state
 Parliamentary Procedure was 8th place in state
 Livestock Evaluation was 5th place in state



Parli Team: Katie Boyer, Kaylee Schmidt, Chase Caruso, Trevin Kimble, Jillian Harres, Kendall Dixon, & Kyle Kimble



Kendall Dixon with her Dad & Mom
John & Laura Dixon



Agronomy Team: Michael Debord, Carolina Martinez, Molly Warren, Lucian Setzer, Carmen Fruh, & Kristina Knebel



Livestock Evaluation Team: Kendall Dixon, Jillian Harres, Trevin Kimble, Stacia Bowen, Nayely Larios, Kyle Kimble, & Troy Steele not in Photo

FFA Summer Destination Education

The Pomeroy FFA Alumni helped send 9 members to Texas A&M for a livestock judging camp. For 3 days our students learned from and competed against some of the best and brightest livestock judges across the US. Levi Henderson placed 9th in Hog Evaluation and 8th in Overall Placing, and Kyzer Herres was recognized as the Most Improved intermediate camper. We had a great time in College Station, TX.



Back Row: Levi Bowen, Levi Henderson, Colby Ledgerwood, Gunner Magill, Rylan Hayes, Kyzer Herres
Front Row: Garyson Slaybaugh, Treton Kimble, Stacia Bowen, Ellie Poshnik



Washington Leadership Conference

-Isabella Field

I just got back from the annual FFA Washington Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. Our local FFA Alumni very graciously sends students to this every year, and I was blessed with the opportunity to attend this conference with seven other students: Jillian Herres, Chase Caruso, Natalia Larios, Trevin Kimble, Katie Boyer, Kendall Dixon, and Kaylee Schmidt.

I have been asked what my favorite part of this trip was and it's hard to say. I really loved seeing where my mom and dad used to work. They lived there for 12 years, and I and my brother were born there, so it meant a lot to me to see that part of my folks' lives. I also loved the night tour of the National Mall. (The National Mall isn't actually a mall, I learned that while I was there.) They dropped us off and gave us a list of monuments and memorials that we should check out. Although we didn't get to learn a whole lot about the monuments, it will be great to say I've been there when I learn about them in the coming years during history classes.

One of the most memorable parts of this trip was visiting the Library of Congress. It was an incredible experience I will never forget. As we were wandering around viewing different objects in display cases, a very nice elderly lady approached our group. We were in our official dress (corduroy jackets and black bottoms) when she asked us if FFA was related to agriculture. We explained to her our purpose there and what FFA stood for, and she took us to an exhibit that resembled the joining of two cultures and their agriculture. It was a fascinating experience, and I was grateful to have the opportunity to introduce another person to FFA.



Natalia Larios, Isabella Field, Katie Boyer, Kaylee Schmidt, Jillian Harres, Chase Caruso, Kendall Dixon, & Tevin Kimble

Our final day there we did a community service project. For our project we bagged 60,000 meals. As we were packaging the bags it was very powerful to understand how much of a difference we were making. Each minute of our time we packaged a meal for someone in need. Because of our one minute of service someone, wouldn't go hungry that night. As we stood there and did the same thing over and over again, it might not have been the most fun, but we were changing people's lives.

I learned a lot while I was there. We focused on the importance of diversity, especially in agriculture. Without everyone's specific skill sets this world would get nowhere. We learned how to appreciate people's differences and our motto for that session was "curiosity before judgment." This means that before you automatically spot your differences with someone and decide whether or not they are a good person, you should ask questions or get to know them better. Everyone has something going on in their life – something they are wrestling with. It could be the most upbeat person you know and they go to bed hungry every night.

After we discussed the problems we face in this world we came up with our own Living to Serve projects, something we would launch in our community that addresses a specific need. We put a lot of time into these plans and the goal is to actually execute them.

Finally, I think the part about this trip that will stick with me the most is the friendships I developed. My roommates are some of the most amazing people I have met. When we got there we were split into small groups of about 25 students, and that was called our community group. My community group was fantastic. This group of 25 people were so kind, smart, creative, honest, and inspiring. My hope is to keep in touch with all of them and never forget the connections I made. These people have changed my life and the fact that I was put in a group with them is beyond what I could have hoped for.

Now that I am home, I hope to implement what I have learned at WLC and bring it into our community and my FFA chapter. As I go forward, I will use these leadership skills to better me as a person. I am so grateful to have experienced this trip, and I hope more students continue to gain what I have in the coming years as they attend WLC.





Bi-County 4-H Camp

We finally returned to Camp Wooten after missing the last two years of Bi-County 4-H Camp due to Covid-19 restrictions. It was a smaller year than usual but those that were able to attend seemed to really enjoy themselves.

Monday we welcomed our campers to camp and started them out with intro classes to canoeing, archery, and hygiene. Free time options were Volleyball, 9-Square, or fishing. At the evening program our counselors did a fun and messy skit for everyone to enjoy.

Tuesday our campers participated in crafts, archery, life skills, and fly fishing classes. During free time, they could play 3-on-3 basketball or cool off with a slip n' slide. During our evening program we enjoyed laughs while we watched our family groups compete against each other in an intense lip sync battle.

Wednesday our campers had very hands on classes. They were able to shoot off bottle rockets they had made. They had the chance to show off the fly fishing skills they learned the day before on Donnie lake. They made homemade ice cream in zip lock bags. They learned about eating healthy foods from the garden. During this class they made their own garden pizza's as well as planted seeds they could take home. We also had the

awesome experience of having horses visit us at camp. We learned about the impact horse therapy can have on people. For the evening program the campers participated in a Camp Carnival. There were many different carnival games and activities, such as face painting, ring toss, and much more. Although, the booth everyone looked forward to was the dunk tank. Everyone wanted the chance to dunk the counselors.



4-H



Thursday our campers had a class from PSE. Other classes they participated in taught them karate; shooting safety and the art of shooting sports and how to build a shelter when camping gear is not available. The kids had free time to do the fun activities they had been doing all week or they could participate in a kickball game. During the evening program we honored Sheree Ledgerwood our camp administrator, who is retiring, after 32 years of service. Sheree is going to be very missed. She does a lot of work to make sure BI-County Camp runs smoothly. Even though she is retiring we hope she will still come visit us at camp in the years to come. After the evening program cabins meet together for their cabin party to eat junk food and bond even further.

Every evening there was a dance that the kids could go get their boogie on. It was great to see the kids having fun and it was always interesting to see how they would dress up for each night's dance themes. Over the four evenings there were a variety of themes to choose from, Hawaiian, nerd, sports, decades, USA, western, camo, neon, and white out. Those who didn't want to dance could go watch an outdoor movie.

Friday morning camp was over and everyone left tired but in good spirits because we had a wonderful week at camp. Thank you to the adult volunteers, cabin parents, counselors and camp staff...especially our Camp Administrator, Sheree Ledgerwood!



Tom House, Aiden Burglund, Brooklyn Laughery, Sadie Klaveano, Caroline McKeirnan, Peyton Cannon, Caleb Barron, Cayle Davis, Richie Vecchio, Makenna Barron, Wyntr McCauley, Taylor Gilbert, Jaden Steele

“It was a great week of camp and a good camp to retire on thank you to all who made it possible.”
-Sheree Ledgerwood



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Did You Know “About 90% of the bluegrass seed used in the world is grown in the Inland Northwest?”

Full article: Turfgrass farm debuts grasses of tomorrow with inaugural field day
By Seth Truscott, College of Agricultural, Human, & Natural Resource Sciences
June 3, 2022

https://news.wsu.edu/press-release/2022/06/03/new-wsu-turfgrass-farm-debuts-grasses-of-tomorrow-with-inaugural-field-day-june-9/?utm_source=WSUNews-enewsletter&utm_campaign=wsunewsnewsletter&utm_medium=email



Growing tall just east of Pullman, experimental grasses have the potential to produce seed prolifically, save water, and become beautiful additions to Northwest landscapes. Thursday, June 9, in Pullman, grass seed producers and members of the public got their first chance to see these trials and tour Washington State University’s new Perennial Grass Breeding and Ecology Farm.

The new farm replaces the program’s previous home on Fairway Road, now under commercial development. It gives scientists a place to breed and study improved varieties of Kentucky bluegrass and other promising grasses in service to seed producers in eastern Washington and northern Idaho. The best performers could wind up in lawns, sports fields, highway margins, and land reclaimed from industrial use or natural disasters, worldwide.

Neff, a professor with WSU’s Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, said “With our cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers, we have an ideal climate for high quality seed production.” Neff seeks desirable qualities such as a great appearance, low maintenance and water needs, and tolerance for drought, acidic, or salty soils. Kentucky bluegrass needs a significant spate of cold winter weather to properly flower, so an exciting development for Neff’s program is bluegrass that can flower in milder conditions. That could help farmers facing warmer winters.

Scientists are also looking at the use of plant hormones to repair damaged turf, such as heavily used sports fields, and studying several native grasses for use on reclaimed land or highway margins. One, Prairie Junegrass, can grow in a desert thanks to its very low water needs.

At the farm, Kate Kraszewski, stormwater ecologist in WSU’s Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture, has been testing different grass blends to see which are the most resilient. Future experiments will examine how pavers made with living grasses can handle vehicle traffic and capture road runoff. “Ultimately, grass can provide a healthy alternative to traditional parking lots,” Kraszewski said.



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