

SIFTINGS

Volume 22 Issue 1
May 2013

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO SEED GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Spring 2013

The spring of 2013 has arrived which brings a new season of challenges for us involved in Colorado agriculture. Wheat is a major crop with planting and variety selection occurring just once a year. Likewise, as a farmer, your variety selection decisions only occur once a year and with wheat planting only five months away the upcoming growing season would be a good time to begin to study and collect information. This will help you as farmers and seedsmen to make better informed and educated variety selection decisions. So why not get started on your wheat variety decision homework today and be ready this fall!

The annual survey of the Colorado Ag Statistics Service indicated that 2.2 million acres of winter wheat were planted in Colorado in the fall of 2012. This was 200,000 less acres planted to winter wheat than in 2011. However, there has been a continuing trend of farmers increasing their purchases of Colorado Certified seed. Most often, the first Certified Seed that a farmer often purchases are the newly released varieties. Farmers often rely on their past experiences while at the same time consult other informational resources to make more informed and educated decisions with regards to their seed purchase decisions. Farmers have experienced increases in grain yields over time as a result of continued research and development of new wheat varieties. As the cost of an average farming operation continues to increase, better management decisions can make significant differences in the bottom line at the end of the year.

There are many reasons why farmers purchase Certified Seed regularly and it is worthwhile to recognize these benefits. It is important to identify the short- and long-term benefits of using Certified Seed every year.

The short-term benefits for farmers of purchasing Certified Seed are the following:

- ~ Farmers are able to maintain grain sales and reduce their risk when storing grain for seed use.
- ~ Farmers do not have to transport, store, handle and condition the grain intended for seed.
- ~ Farmers do not have to be concerned about purity, weeds, and germination of their saved grain.
- ~ Farmers are able to purchase a more desirable variety with superior agronomic traits.
- ~ Farmers are able to purchase the most productive varieties available.
- ~ Farmers are able to purchase seed that has been field inspected for weeds and genetic purity.
- ~ Farmers will receive a seed tag providing documented verification of the purity and germination.
- ~ Farmers have the option in many cases to have seed treatment applied to their purchased seed.
- ~ Farmers are able to save time and labor and purchase the exact amount of seed required.
- ~ Farmers are given the opportunity to grow Identity Preserved varieties for specialty markets.
- ~ Farmers often will experience an increase in their productivity by using Certified Seed.

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If the short-term benefits are not enough of a reason, then you should recognise these long-term benefits of Certified Seed as well:

- ~ Farmers have experienced an increase in average grain yields over a number of years.
- ~ Farmers are able to select and plant varieties with significantly improved agronomic traits.
- ~ Farmers have witnessed breeding programs making large investments in plant varietal development.
- ~ Farmers have captured value from Identity Preserved program products in the market place.
- ~ Farmers have seen several new technologies adapted in varietal development.
- ~ Farmers have and will continue to see genetic improvement in varieties as a result of these technologies.

Purchasing Certified Seed provides the needed funding that supports research and varietal development for the future. The development of new varieties generally took 10-12 years in the past, but with the implementation of new technologies in the area of wheat breeding, such as Double-Haploid and Genetic Marker-Assisted selection, the timeline of bringing new varieties to the farmer is continually being reduced. Therefore, each time that a farmer makes a decision to purchase Certified Seed they are also supporting research and varietal development. At this time of the year wheat is really just beginning to grow and develop. In just a couple of months many of the University or private wheat breeding teams will be getting their research and demonstration plots ready for the summer field plot tours in Colorado. If you are growing wheat or just interested in wheat as a crop, mark your calendar and attend a Field Day in your area. This is one of the best ways for you to become informed about wheat varieties while getting hands-on experience of the differences between varieties in a field plot setting. The first-hand experience of attending a field day along with a review of the individual trial results after harvest will help you make informed variety selection decisions. I would like to repeat myself once more, mark your calendars and spend a couple of hours observing and learning at one of the Wheat Field Days in your area. As a farmer, use field plot information as another tool in your toolbox to help you achieve your goal of operating a successful farming operation!

The 2013 Field Application packets were mailed a few weeks ago (Alfalfa, Canola, Grasses, Perennials and Winter Wheat)! Please call or visit us online for more forms or if you did not receive a packet!

970-491-6202
<http://www.seeds.colostate.edu>

Foundation Seed News from Aaron Brown!

Agronomy Foundation Seed (AFS) has implemented year in advance orders for all older varieties that will only be produced on a contract basis. Only Antero, Byrd, Brawl CL Plus, Denali, Hatcher, and Snowmass will be maintained without year in advance orders. Year in advance orders can also be placed on the maintained varieties to better help AFS meet demand. If you have any question please give Aaron Brown a call at 970-222-4335. AFS has had a good couple of years allowing us to make some equipment upgrades, thanks to seed growers support. This year's production was looking very good for the most part until the last couple of weeks when the extreme cold has set things back. We should be alright but we have had a lot of die back, at least we did finally receive some much needed moisture. Each year presents its own challenges and we continue through, I hope we all will have a productive and good year.



Colorado Seed Lab Update!

The Colorado Seed Lab is a busy place, with a growing staff, a consistent volume of test requests on a wide range of species and continuing education. There are now three Certified Seed Analysts in the lab, Sunny Hanley, CSA Purty & Germination, Pam Bridgeman, CSA Germination and Laurie Thoma, CSA Germination. Laurie just attended the National Native Seed Conference in Santa Fe, NM, where she met with seed growers, BLM representatives and analysts from around the country to trouble shoot and to foster the lab's connections. Pam will be attending the AOSA/SCST Annual Meetings this May in Boise, ID to listen, learn and to vote on key changes in order to take another step toward consistent test results. The lab continues to work with the Bureau of Land Management to ensure the quality of seeds being purchased and used for reclamation, the Colorado Department of Agriculture for regulatory testing and to keep the Colorado Seed Act up to date. Continual partnerships with Colorado State University researchers and other seed labs, allows for open communication for the betterment of seed testing nationwide. We are pleased to serve you, and welcome your business. Contact us at 970-491-6406 or visit us on the web at seedlab.colostate.edu.

Dates To Know!

May 27th ~ Memorial Day, CSGA Office Closed
June 10th - 17th ~ Wheat Field Days
July 4th ~ Independence Day, CSGA Office Closed

Full Field Day Schedule:

<http://www.extsoilcrop.colostate.edu/CropVar/documents/winterwheat2013/2013WheatFieldDays.pdf>

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Knowledge to Go Places

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