

# Growing Montana

FALL 2020



**GREAT  
MONTANA  
AG RALLY**

**INNOVATION IN  
FOOD AND  
AGRICULTURE**

**WHO IS THE  
FARMER OF  
THE FUTURE**

*A Publication of*  
**MONTANA AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

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# MABA OBJECTIVES:

- To encourage the proper use of all pesticides, plant food, seeds and other agricultural products.
- To promote educational programs to bring together those who are associated with the aforementioned practices and uses.
- To provide a means for an exchange of information and ideas among persons associated with agricultural business.
- To encourage and support research and educational programs.
- To cooperate with local, state, regional and national agencies, both public and private, in the solution of problems and/or in the proposal of legislation relating to all such practices.
- To sponsor desirable laws and law changes that would be beneficial to the Association and its members.
- To serve as a clearing house for the legislative requests of various organizations regarding programs affecting the Association.



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## A Message from the President

Whether your role is senior management of a major chemical or fertilizer manufacturer, owner of a private crop consulting business, sales agronomist with an independent retailer, or technical representative with a seed company, I think it's safe to say everyone is ready to focus on our "normal" challenges in the industry after 2020's wild ride!

To say the least, the pandemic has caused major disruption in Ag Business. And that's putting it lightly. It's made us all get creative on how to handle day to day business.

But events like business consolidations, tech advancements, marketplace changes, government regulations, legislative proposals, regional agronomic issues, and hundreds of other factors affecting your business don't halt while the Covid situation plays out. It's MABA's duty to stay "in the know" and relay info to our members while you have other things on your mind. And that's what we will continue to do!



**Luke Dighans**

*President*

*Montana Agricultural  
Business Association*

## ANNUAL CONVENTION PLANS

One of the biggest values MABA should bring to its membership is the annual convention. And I've heard from several in the industry who participate in other state organizations' events that Montana's is one of the best! Whether it's the educational opportunities, networking, business planning, or relationship building with customers and co-workers, we realize that value is irreplaceable by a virtual experience alone. I think I speak for many by saying how extremely disappointing it is that the traditional in-person convention and trade show cannot happen in 2021. Trust me, the decision to cancel the in-person event was not taken lightly by the board – many factors went into the ultimate decision.

**BUT...** There's been *tremendous time and effort* put into brainstorming a way to continue to bring that value to the membership in the best way possible in 2021. Hence, the idea of the Great Montana Ag Rally was born. See elsewhere in this issue for more details, but here's the general breakdown:

**Phase 1: Education.** Rather than putting on a 3 day virtual event of dozens of webinars back to back (especially in a webinar-saturated season), we will have 14 sessions spread from December through early

*President continued on page 14*

## 2020 MABF Scholarship Winners

The Montana Agricultural Business Foundation would like to congratulate the following 2020 scholarship recipients: Haley Olsen, Ann Killen, and Derik DeFrance.

Your accomplishments are to be commended and we wish you continued success in this coming school year. ■



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## MABA – New Look and New Value

MABA is in the process of transitioning to a new member management platform — **MemberClicks**. This upgrade will include a refreshed website, a members only section of the website, electronic invoices, online registration for events, online membership directory that members can access, a members only job board for posting positions, and many other new and improved elements. One great benefit of MemberClicks is that it allows you as members to update your company and employee information as changes occur. This will enable MABA to better communicate with our membership with timely and important information.

As this new process unfolds, we are hopeful that the transition is flawless but recognize that there may be challenges. When you receive your first notification please take some time to double check that all your locations are included and that the proper membership is associated with your account.

If you face challenges with the new system or have questions please don't hesitate to reach out to the MABA office at [mabamgea@gmail.com](mailto:mabamgea@gmail.com) and we will get your concerns addressed. ■

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## Participate in the Future of YOUR Association

Even though COVID 19 has changed the way MABA is operating your involvement in YOUR association is still critical. One of the most important agenda items in Phase 1 of the Great Montana Ag Rally is the Annual Meeting! MABA exists to serve the needs of its membership and it is critical that MABA membership provide feedback and guidance to the Board.

The MABA Annual Meeting will give you an opportunity to hear about the work conducted during the previous year, objectives for the upcoming year, financial health of the association, selection of board members, and a general discussion to bring everyone up to date.



Please become an ACTIVE member in YOUR association by registering for the Annual Meeting Webinar so that MABA can continue to thrive and represent Montana's agricultural businesses.

MABA Annual Meeting ZOOM Webinar – **January 19, 2021**

**Registration information for the Annual Meeting will be available on the MABA website [www.mtagbiz.org](http://www.mtagbiz.org).** ■



# Montana Agricultural Business Association

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATION FORM



The MABA Board of Directors works diligently to represent, support, and protect Montana's agricultural businesses and all the associated issues. Active participation from MABA Membership is crucial to having a board that represents all facets of this diverse and exciting industry.

Serving on the MABA Board is a great opportunity to increase your (or a coworker's) understanding of environmental, legislative, and regulatory issues facing Montana businesses! This is a great leadership opportunity that will benefit the individual board member but also the company that they represent. Please take a minute and nominate an individual to serve a 3 year term on the MABA Board of Directors.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Send your form to [mabamgea@gmail.com](mailto:mabamgea@gmail.com) or MABA, PO Box 7325, Helena, MT 59604

After receipt of the nominations from membership the MABA Nominating Committee will identify 2 for each open position and one where members will run against current board members whose 3-year terms are expiring. MABA does not have a limit on the number of terms that a board member may serve. ■

## Congressional Comments

### U.S. SENATOR JON TESTER

Things aren't easy for small-scale farmers and ranchers right now. Between stagnant grain prices, price-fixing by meat packers, the Administration's trade wars, and COVID-19 causing an unprecedented economic crisis, folks in rural America are under a lot of financial stress.

On top of that, many face significant isolation, substantial travel times to get basic health services, lack of broadband to access telehealth, and stigmas against receiving counseling. This is causing a mental health crisis in rural America where the suicide rate is 45 percent higher than in urban areas.

That's why I wrote my *Seeding Rural Resilience Act*. It'll create a voluntary mental health training for farmer-facing USDA employees, work to reduce the stigma around getting mental health care, and direct USDA to assemble a mental health task force.

My bill has already been green-lighted in the Senate and the House versions of the must-pass annual National Defense Authorization Act, now, I'm urging the Armed Services Committees to ensure that it's in the final version as the chambers work to reconcile the differences between the two.

This bill could save the lives of our friends, family, and neighbors, and we need to get it to the President's desk ASAP. ■



**Jon Tester**  
United States Senator  
For the State of  
Montana





# GREAT MONTANA AG RALLY





# GREAT MONTANA AG RALLY

*As you all know – the challenges of holding events with the ever changing COVID situation is significant. The MABA/MGEA Annual Convention will look a little bit different this year. MABA and MGEA have decided to approach the annual joint convention from different perspectives for 2021. MABA and MGEA will be holding separate and distinct events.*

*The MABA Board recognizes that the annual convention provides significant benefits to our membership for a multitude of reasons:*

- (1) GET YOUR POINTS – Both MT Department of Agriculture Points as well as Certified Crop Advisor Points.*
- (2) NETWORKING – Providing individuals and companies the opportunity to interact and improve their business relationships.*

**To meet these two very important elements, the MABA Annual Event will be split into two phases:**

## PHASE 1: Continuing Education

Bi-monthly webinars on pertinent issues facing our industry. The first webinar series will be held on December 1. See below for program outline. MABA feels that providing educational opportunities to our members is very important and through partial financial assistance through the MT Department of Commerce we can offer the webinars FREE OF CHARGE!

## PHASE 2: Summer Social/Golf Tournament

The culmination of the Great Montana Ag Rally 2021 will be a summer social and golf tournament held the midway through Summer 2021. There will be many opportunities for networking and relationship building. MABA will also hold an auction like what members are used to seeing at Convention. This event promises to be fun with golf tournament, excursions, and most likely a barn dance! More information on the Great American Ag Rally 2021 Summer Event will be provided as soon as it is available.

## REGISTRATION/SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

**Phase 1:** To register for Phase 1 please go to the MABA website and

click on the registration link. You will need to register for each of the 1 hour sessions per webinar. If you have issues or concerns please send an email to [mabamgea@gmail.com](mailto:mabamgea@gmail.com).

New registration links will be uploaded to the website before each of the bi-monthly sessions.

**THERE IS NO COST TO REGISTER FOR THE PHASE 1 SESSIONS.**

To sponsor a session please go to [www.mtagbiz.org](http://www.mtagbiz.org) and click on the sponsorship link. The sponsorship slots will be filled on a first come first served basis. You will be assigned a session based on availability. Your continued support of MABA through sponsorship of the Great Montana Ag Rally is critical to the association's ability to serve membership going forward and to help create a bridge to the 2022 Convention.

**Phase 2:** Information on registering for the Summer Social/Golf Tournament will be sent out to membership in early spring. Registration information will include details on golf tournament registration, side trips that are available, and other pertinent information.

## Great Montana Ag Rally 2021 | Calendar of Events | Phase 1 Educational Events

**December 1, 2020 | 9-11 AM**

Session 1: Fundamental Agronomy

Sponsor:

Session 2: Soil Acidity in Montana

Sponsor:

**December 15, 2020 | 9-11 AM**

Session 1: Field Technology

Sponsor:

Session 2: Problems in Chem Fallow

Sponsor:

**January 5, 2021 | 9-11 AM**

Session 1: Pulse and Oilseed Pests

Sponsor:

Session 2: Pulse Crop Diseases

Sponsor:

**January 19, 2021 | 9-11 AM**

Session 1: MSU College of Agriculture, Montana Agricultural Experiment Station & Congressional Updates

Sponsor:

Session 2: MABA Annual Meeting

Sponsor:

**February 2, 2021 | 9-11 AM**

Session 1: "I Applied 10 gallons of Water; Why didn't my Herbicide Work?" Spray Coverage Myths & Realities - Tom Wolf

Sponsor:

Session 2: "Spraying Technology Preview for 2021: What's Hot, What's Not" - Tom Wolf

Sponsor:

**February 16, 2021 | 9-11 AM**

Session 1: Nutrient Management in Oilseeds - Kent McVay

Sponsor:

Session 2: Mental Health in Agriculture

Sponsor:

**March 2, 2021 | 9-11 AM**

Session 1: Spring 2021 – Challenges and Opportunities

Sponsor:

Session 2: Safety First

Sponsor:





# GREAT MONTANA AG RALLY

Thank you to all our vendors and sponsors who have supported the MABA/MGEA Annual Convention and Trade Show over the years!

Even though our event will look a bit different this year, we believe that the Rally will not only educate our membership but bring our community closer together as everyone struggles to move forward in these uncharted waters.

Your continued support of MABA through sponsorship of the Great Montana Ag Rally is critical to the association's ability to serve membership going forward and to help create a bridge to the 2022 Convention.

## **Sponsorship Opportunities**

Phase 1 Sponsorship details are outlined below. Phase 2 Sponsorship details will be made available in the spring.

Phase 1 Sponsorship (limit of 14)

Phase 1 Sponsors

Sponsorships will be accepted for each one hour session throughout the Phase 1 Rally program.

### ***Sponsors will receive:***

1. Logo prominently displayed on all marketing and meeting invites for that session.
2. 10 minutes at the beginning of the session to interact directly with attendees.
3. Logo prominently displayed during virtual presentation.
4. Recognition on MABA website and recorded virtual presentation page.

Cost: \$1,000

A listing of all sessions is on the reverse of this page. **PLEASE GO TO [www.MTAGBIZ.org](http://www.MTAGBIZ.org) and click on the sponsorship link to sponsor a session.**

***Thank you for your continued support of MABA!***

# ASTA: Management of Treated Seed and Products Practices

As harvest wraps up across the country, ASTA wants to take the opportunity to remind seed companies about the importance of taking precautions to ensure surplus treated seed is managed properly, and to remind seed companies of a number of resources available to them in connection with the stewardship of treated seeds.

Managing treated seed properly is not just a good practice: it is critical to maintain access to seed treatment products that are under increasing scrutiny. For example, in public comments to EPA in June, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)



alleged that “EPA has failed to consider the significant environmental risks and costs of the use of neonic-treated seed to produce ethanol.” While ASTA does not necessarily agree with NRDC’s allega-

tions, and some of the language in the comments regarding seed treatments is misleading and taken out of context, we want to draw your attention to specific references to allegations of improper disposal of treated seed at an ethanol plant in Nebraska (see page 6 of the comments).

Regardless of the disposal method utilized, disposal of treated seed requires special handling and permitting. **Seed companies should verify that anyone accepting treated seed for disposal possesses the proper city, state and federal permits.** Specifically:

1. Consult with your state and local authorities to ensure that your disposal plan is in compliance with all appropriate regulations.
2. Disposal facilities will, in many cases, be required to have an EPA permit, or a permit issued by a State or local agency, to dispose of pesticides, pesticide contaminated rinse

water, or pesticide treated seed. Whether a facility has the proper permits to dispose of a particular quantity of a “particular pesticide” can only be determined by directly contacting the specific facility or the applicable State or local agency.

3. Properly permitted ethanol plants can use treated seed as an alternate power source. However, a very limited number of ethanol plants have the permits necessary to ferment treated seed. In all situations, byproducts from the ethanol production process cannot enter the food or feed channels and no measurable pesticide residues are allowed. The same situation applies for wastewater and air emissions, as well.
4. Seed companies should practice due diligence in ensuring the entire pathway of treated seed disposal is complete and complies with all applicable laws, regulations and label instructions.

Note that some states may have more stringent regulations than others. In addition, treated seed, and resultant seed dust, are subject to solid waste regulations at the state and/or local levels. Always check state and local regulations prior to disposing of treated seed or dust.

## RESOURCES FOR OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS:

ASTA and other stakeholder groups have developed a set of recommendations to assist those involved in the process of treating, handling, transporting, or planting treated seeds. These recommendations can be found in a number of new and redesigned communication resources. A one-pager graphically displays the five steps for stewardship of treated seed, and outlines why and how seed treatments are used,

*ASTA continued on page 11*



# EPA Finalizes Methodologies to Improve Drinking Water Assessments for Conventional Pesticides

After a thorough review of the best available science and carefully considering scientific peer review and public comments, EPA has released the final version of three new methodologies to improve drinking water assessments for conventional pesticides. Collectively, these new methods use advanced modeling approaches to incorporate the best available surface water modeling, spatial and historical data on pesticide use. These methods are designed to improve the accuracy, consistency and transparency of pesticide drinking water modeling. Specifically, the new methods:

- Build new scenarios (a combination of crop, soil type, and weather data) for use in EPA's Pesticide in Water Calculator, the standard water exposure model for both drinking water and aquatic wildlife;
- Better account for variability in the agricultural area within a watershed that may contribute to a drinking water intake (Percent Cropped Area (PCA)) and incorporate data on the amount of a pesticide applied within a watershed for each use (Percent Crop Treated (PCT));
- Outline methods to confidently use surface water monitoring data;

- Derive and integrate pesticide-specific sampling bias factors to address temporal challenges with available monitoring data; and,
- Use a weight-of-evidence approach to evaluate the relevance of monitoring sites to drinking water watersheds to address spatial limitations with available monitoring data.

Approaches for the Quantitative Use of Surface Water Monitoring Data in Drinking Water Assessments were presented to the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act Scientific Advisory Panel in Fall 2019 and the other two methods underwent contract peer review and public comment this past winter. EPA plans to incorporate these new methods into future drinking water assessments when appropriate. In addition to finalizing these methods to improve drinking water assessments, EPA is also releasing a Framework for Conducting Pesticide Drinking Water Assessments for Surface Water, which describes EPA's robust, tiered process designed to efficiently screen out pesticides that do not pose a potential risk to human health from those requiring more highly refined analyses to better understand potential risks. Read about the new methodologies on our webpage. ■



*ASTA continued from page 10*

including what the crop protection and seed industries are doing to ensure their safe use. A set of videos explore topics including: improving performance and safety with seed treatments; the five steps for stewardship of treated seed; and how seed treatments support sustainability.

For more information, visit: [seed-treatment-guide.com](http://seed-treatment-guide.com). ■

# We Need Innovation in Food and Agriculture

Some of our most beloved foods — bananas, chocolate, wine, coffee and orange juice — are under serious threat from diseases, insects, and climate change. Thanks to advances in science and our understandings of DNA, a variety of new tools and technologies to protect and strengthen these food favorites are available to farmers.

With gene editing and the latest in plant breeding innovation, farmers can grow stronger and more resilient crop varieties that are developed in years rather than decades.

But history has taught us that consumers are often skeptical about technology. That's why we need to have an open and inclusive dialogue about these exciting advancements.

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) and the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) jointly launched Innovature. This new platform is sparking an important and thoughtful dialogue around innovation in food and agriculture and the tangible benefits it is bringing to our planet, our health, and our food.

## INSPIRING CONSUMERS WITH THE POWER OF SCIENCE

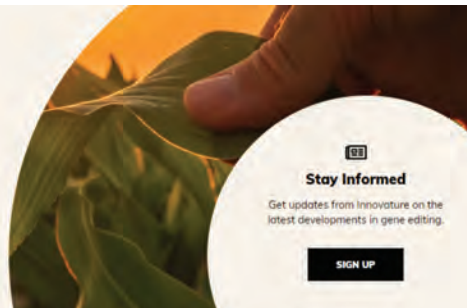
A world without orange trees or coffee plants has significant implications. At a consumer level, many of us rely on bananas, coffee, or orange juice to help us get our day started off right. At an economic level, farmers around the world rely on the harvesting of these crops for income. At a humanitarian level, communities around the world are suffering from lack of access to healthy foods due to diseases and insects that ravage these crops.

Gene editing is one breakthrough that can help address some of the world's most pressing challenges, such as climate change, sustainability,

### Gene editing innovations can benefit our planet, our health, and our food.

We believe in what's possible when innovation and nature work together to help sustain our planet for generations to come.

LEARN THE BASICS



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hunger, and improving health and wellness. We can help protect our food future with agriculture innovation.

## ADDRESSING WORLD'S MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES

Currently, Innovature's focus is on gene editing in plants, animals, and microbes. For example:

- Recent innovations in gene editing can save crops like bananas, oranges, cocoa beans, coffee beans, and wine grapes from harmful diseases that have the potential to render them extinct.
- Through modern agricultural technology, farmers can grow food more efficiently and more sustainably, in ways that use less water, soil, and pesticides.
- Researchers are engineering naturally occurring microbes in the soil to route more key nutrients, like nitrogen, to plants, lessening the need for synthetic fertilizers.
- Advancements are also enhancing animal health and well-being, making livestock heat tolerant and resistant to diseases like African Swine Fever, Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS), Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD), and avian influenza.
- Technology also plays a role in making our diets healthier. Scientists can create soybeans with higher levels of healthy oils, grow crops that are richer in nutrients, as well as protect vitamin-rich crops from pests and diseases.

Through Innovature.com and other efforts, BIO and ASTA aim to engage the ag community, food influencers, policymakers, and consumers in a dialogue around shared values.



You can explore Innovature.com and engage in the conversation on Innovature's social properties (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram).



Take a look, read, learn, contribute, and join the community. We all have a role to play in supporting science in food and agriculture. When innovation and nature work together, we all reap the rewards. ■

*President continued from page 3*

March that will cover a variety of topics. Dealer, applicator, and CCA points will be available and you can sign up for any or all sessions you choose. This includes the MABA Annual Meeting.

**Phase 2: Social and Golf Event.** Interaction with your customers, team, and friends in the industry is extremely important and no webinar can replace that. Let's get through the dreary winter months and look forward to the opportunity to try something new that can bring everyone together once again!

In agriculture, learning how to make lemonade when life hands you lemons isn't a new concept. So we are excited to be able to offer this new hybrid convention during these strange times. But we NEED YOUR HELP! Income will be challenging without an in-person event or an auction, so we are relying on sponsorship of each session. This will be a great opportunity to have 10 minutes of time prior to the session to get your company's message out. We sincerely appreciate your support in "traditional" years and in these adverse ones!

### OTHER FOCUS POINTS

- **Improving industry's relationship with the MSU College of Agriculture** – Dr. Bajwa joined the board at our Bozeman meeting and we discussed ways MSU and the ag business industry could collaborate more when looking at research projects. It was an excellent conversation and we were very impressed with Dr. Bajwa's background, viewpoint, and vision going forward.
- **Keeping an Eye on Legislation** – staying ahead of legislation (on local, state, and federal levels) that paints a negative picture of our industry is an absolutely critical function of MABA. Talking with policymakers and even the general public about what we do is crucial in today's world.
- **Increased communication and collaboration with the MT Dept of Ag** – We were excited to meet with a lot of the new staff from the Department of Ag at our Helena meeting this spring. They were very open to our suggestions and input on pesticide and applicator licensing processes and other regulatory issues. Looking forward to more open dialogue between the Dept and industry!
- **Improving communication with membership** – We are re-vamping the system of tracking company contacts to ensure

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our Member Directory is accurate. If you are not receiving emails from us and you work for one of our member companies, please send your address to [mabamgea@gmail.com](mailto:mabamgea@gmail.com) so timely communications (such as the ones that took place this spring during the Covid uncertainty and Hours of Service issues) can reach you! As a reminder, there's a complaint and suggestion form on the website, should you feel the need to voice your concerns.

- **Container Recycling** – An increasingly common dilemma amongst ag retail and distribution companies is the build-up of empty chemical totes and shuttles. MABA addressed that issue directly with the National Container Recycling Association and the two have been actively working on black and white, detailed steps to take in order to get your stockpile into the hands of a private recycling company. There are still details to work out, but the goal is to make this as close to free of charge to the retailer or wholesaler as possible.
- **Exploration of the 4R program** – See elsewhere in this issue. MABA is working with TFI on the details of developing a 4R Nutrient Program in Montana that rewards fertilizer stewardship. The program needs to be designed to not only reward great stewardship but is something attainable and economically advantageous for the member who wants to take part. Stay posted!

As always, please reach out to me at [ldighans@procoopag.com](mailto:ldighans@procoopag.com) or 406-783-8549 with any questions or concerns! Stay safe! ■



**Know what's below.  
Tap, Click, or Call  
811 Before you dig.**

# New Faculty in the Montana State University College of Agriculture

By Dr. Mary Burrows



**Dr. Mary Burrows**

*Associate Director  
Montana Agricultural  
Experiment Stations and  
Research Development*

The Montana Agribusiness Association has a long history of collaboration with the Montana State University College of Agriculture. Continuing in that longstanding tradition are several new faculty members at Montana State University who will serve Montana agriculture from the main campus and at our research centers across the state.

Dr. Mary Burrows, an Extension Plant Pathologist with MSU since 2006, was recently appointed Associate Director of the Montana Ag Experiment Station and Research Development, replacing Dr. Anton Bekkerman. Dr. Burrows has extensive experience in Extension, directs two MSU labs that serve Montana citizens, and coordinates an applied research program on diseases of cereals and pulse crops.

The Schutter Diagnostic Laboratory processes thousands of plant samples each year which are sent to Bozeman from agricultural and urban communities across the region. The Schutter Lab diagnoses plant diseases, identifies insects and plants and helps growers determine the causes of disorders such as herbicide injury and environmental damage.

The Regional Pulse Crop Diagnostic Laboratory focuses on seed testing and research associated with pulse crops including peas, lentils and chickpeas. Staff in this lab monitor for plant diseases, changes in pathogens including fungicide resistance, and pathogens of phytosanitary concern that may impact international trade. The Pulse Crop Lab has been at the forefront of helping Montana become the leading producer of pulses in the United States and providing the scientific context necessary for developing these newer crops.

In her new role, Dr. Burrows is looking forward to many new opportunities. These include facilitating faculty professional development, continuing to coordinate interdisciplinary research to benefit Montana and increasing communication between the College, University and stakeholder groups such as MABA. Current priorities for MAES include infrastructure concerns due to deferred maintenance and enhancing the quality of our laboratory spaces to make cutting edge research possible at Research Centers. Quality facilities are needed to hire and retain faculty and staff and to assist Montanans in being at the forefront of

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rapidly changing technologies to enhance the environmental, economic and product quality advantages in agriculture we already have.

One example of new facilities that have already been approved is new greenhouses at the Southern Ag Research Center in Huntley and the Western Triangle Ag Research Center in Conrad. These greenhouses will help enhance essential research including variety and new crop development, herbicide resistance and many other studies. Current needs include wet labs at five of our research centers, a new horticulture research building at the Western Agriculture Research Center, and a new wool lab at Bozeman. Maintenance needs on the horizon include sanitation facilities to support student learning and research at the Horticulture Farm, city water supply to BART farm in Bozeman and continued repairs and maintenance to keep our current facilities in top shape.

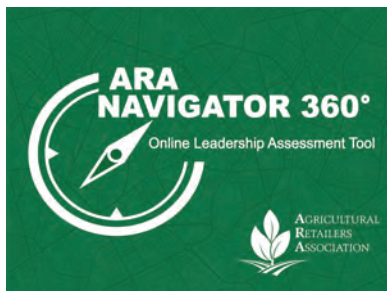
We are thrilled to welcome a number of other new faculty to the MSU agriculture family this academic year. New faculty at our Research Centers include Dr. Lovreet Shergill at SARC, who will focus on weed science; Dr. Clint Beiermann at NWARC, who will focus on cropping systems and lead the stations' small grains variety development program in conjunction with campus-based plant breeders; and Dr. Justin Vetch at WTARC, who will serve as Superintendent, focus on agronomy and lead the stations' small grains variety development program in conjunction with campus-based plant breeders.

On the Bozeman campus, we welcomed Dr. Nick Hagerty (Natural Resource and Agriculture Economics) and Dr. Yang Yu (Food Economics, Industrial Organization, Agricultural Marketing) in the Agricultural Economics and Economics Department; Dr. Jared Beaver (Extension Wildlife Management Specialist), Dr. Amanda Bradbery (Equine Nutrition and Physiology), Dr. Rodrigo Marques (Ruminant Nutrition), and Dr. Chris Posbergh (Sheep Production) in the Animal and Range Sciences Department; Dr. Frank Stewart in the Microbiology and Immunology Department; and Ms. Abi Saeed (Extension Horticulture Specialist) in the Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology Department.

The MSU College of Agriculture and MAES would like to express our continued gratitude for MABA's support of our programs over many years. Without critical stakeholder groups such as MABA, we would not be able to conduct the interdisciplinary and cutting-edge research that we are so proud to produce. Your continued support and partnership is vital to the college as we continue to strengthen our ongoing research and educational programs, and expand to new areas such as precision agriculture to align with MSU's grand challenges and national agricultural agenda on agriculture innovation. The people of the state are the

*New Faculty continued on page 19*

## ARA Launches New, Affordable Professional Development Tool



An organization's ability to thrive in challenging times is largely determined by the quality and effectiveness of its leadership. Organizations can change their future by developing their indi-

vidual leadership talent to meet current and future needs. The Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA) has partnered with NuVue Business Solutions to create a leadership assessment – called the **ARA NAVIGATOR 360°** (360-Degree Feedback Instrument) – built specifically for the agricultural industry.

As a diagnostic feedback instrument, ARA NAVIGATOR 360° adds value for individual leaders by powerfully highlighting what skills they need to

develop or deploy. This assessment shows the gap between the individual's leadership skills and the leadership the organization needs. By recognizing these needs, it will help chart a path for the overall effectiveness of the leadership development investment. For individual leaders, learning strengths and weaknesses is a foundation to developing into better leaders.

The ARA NAVIGATOR 360° is an online tool that collects and interprets feedback for employees at all levels. You can order one ARA NAVIGATOR 360° or have all leaders with your company participate and receive a report on your organization.

Special pricing is available to ARA members. Visit [www.ARADC.org/NAVIGATOR](http://www.ARADC.org/NAVIGATOR) for more information. ■

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## EPA Provides Information About Reducing Pesticide Impacts to Endangered Species

EPA is providing materials to help the public and pesticide applicators protect endangered species and their critical habitats. Information on possible risk reduction measures, such as best management practices to reduce exposures and impacts to federally threatened and endangered species, can now be found on our website. These materials came out of EPA's consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on registrations of pesticide products containing the insecticides chlorpyrifos, diazinon and malathion. In December 2017, NMFS issued a final biological opinion on these three chemicals as part of a consultation process. Read the biological opinion at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/biological-opinion-pesticides-chlorpyrifos-diazinon-and-malathion>. A biological opinion provides a view of whether the pesticide's registered use is likely to jeopardize a species, and if so, describes alternatives to avoid jeopardy. EPA re-initiated consultation with NMFS to allow for consideration of additional information. The Agency remains in consultation with NMFS as they revise their biological opinion. Additional information on the re-initiated consultation is available on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) with the docket number EPA-HQ-OPP-2018-0141. Review the new materials at: <https://www.epa.gov/endangered-species/tips-reducing-pesticide-impacts-threatened-and-endangered-species>. ■



# Office of Pesticide Programs Update



## EPA Proposes Registration of New Herbicide to Aid in Resistance Management

EPA is proposing to register a new active ingredient, tiafenacil, a contact herbicide.

EPA proposes tiafenacil for pre-plant and pre-emergence burndown use in corn (all types except sweet corn), cotton, soybeans and wheat. Proposed post-emergence uses include directed burndown in grapes, burndown in fallow and non-crop areas, and as a crop desiccant in cotton. There are no residential uses for tiafenacil proposed in this decision.

Tiafenacil is expected to be useful for herbicide-resistance management. It provides an alternative for controlling glyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth in cotton, suppressing glyphosate-resistant marestail in corn and soybeans, and controlling waterhemp in corn and soybean.

The need for additional tools such as tiafenacil to manage these resistant weeds is growing, as herbicide resistance presents a significant financial, production and pest management issue for growers throughout the nation.

EPA assessed tiafenacil for registration on soybean, corn and cotton as a workshare with Canada's Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), with both agencies conducting separate assessments and then sharing results.

The database for tiafenacil indicates the chemical is generally low risk to non-target organisms other than plants, so most mitigation measures deal with avoiding contact with non-target plants. No other substantial risk mitigation was deemed necessary for the proposed uses.

EPA has not identified any dietary, residential, aggregate or occupational risks of concern for human health; therefore, no mitigation is being proposed.

Tiafenacil is proposed to be registered as one technical product and two end-use products.

The public comment period for this proposed decision will be open for 30 days, closing on Aug. 30, 2020. Visit Docket No. EPA-HQ-OPP-2019-0413 to read more and submit comments. ■

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### *New Faculty continued from page 17*

reason for our land-grant mission, and we value our commodity boards, industry partners and advisory groups for all that they do in helping to shape and direct the questions we seek to answer every day in order to maximize benefit to Montanans and the field of agriculture. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with questions, feedback or ideas for future projects. ■

# Ag Container Recycling Update

## SHUTTLE AND LARGE CONTAINER RECYCLING

*As you all know, the Montana Department of Agriculture Container Recycling program has limitations on sizes of containers that can be accepted. To help keep Ag Containers out of local landfills, shops, and tree rows, MABA has put together the following information to help our membership find a new home for used containers.*

### Basics:

1. This is FREE for companies provided the containers being returned meet the receiving company's standards. \*\*
2. No big surprise – cost of transportation is a significant challenge. It is important to work together as businesses to make a “full load” for those coming to pick them up. This is generally 60 shuttles. If you are including 135's in the shipment, then of course it would be more than 60 but keep that in the back of your mind.
3. These programs are for the standard one-way cage tanks (generally 250's and 135's) and the Bayer program is for the old Monsanto 120's and 150's.
4. Both companies outlined below collect the containers with the goal of REUSING the container. Therefore there are fairly strict requirements on the condition of the containers they are willing to pick up.
5. The process is initiated when YOU submit a pickup request form to the company. You will need to outline how many, what each of them contained, etc.
6. Not all totes are required to be triple rinsed. Once you submit your request form the company will tell you which ones have to be triple rinsed.
7. If you are bringing in or accepting shuttles, etc., from growers please make sure that you understand the condition requirements of the recycling company so that you don't end up with a yard full of shuttles that can't be recycled in the programs.

*\*\* UPDATE: Not all companies are offering free transportation. Make sure and double check with the company regarding freight rates for returning the containers.*

### CENTURION

Company and Program Overview and Ag Pickup Request Form can be found on the Centurion website: [www.centurionibc.com](http://www.centurionibc.com) or by contacting:

Larry Bricco, Director - Agricultural Division  
Centurion/Core Plastech  
847 987 8476  
[larry.bricco@c-containers.com](mailto:larry.bricco@c-containers.com)

### SCHUTZ

Company and Program Overview can be found on their website at [www.schuetz.net](http://www.schuetz.net) or by contacting:

Laurie Fritzinger  
Reco North Branch  
Tel.: +1 908-526-6161 ext 1145  
E-Mail: [laurie.fritzinger@schuetz.net](mailto:laurie.fritzinger@schuetz.net)

### GPS AG RECYCLING

Company and Program Overview can be found on their website at [www.gpsagrecycle.com](http://www.gpsagrecycle.com) or by contacting:

Trevor Harding  
p: 678-232-6047  
e: [tharding@gphillipsandsons.com](mailto:tharding@gphillipsandsons.com)

### BAYER

If you have the old Monsanto/Bayer 120's or 150's, please follow up with your Bayer Rep so that they can facilitate a pickup. Your Rep will provide details regarding any changes to the program for 2020. ■



# Montana Pesticide Product Registrations

Please contact Jerin Borrego, Pesticide Registration Specialist for the Montana Department of Agriculture at 406-444-5471 or [jborrego@mt.gov](mailto:jborrego@mt.gov) for further information.

## PESTICIDE REGISTRATIONS

The Montana Pesticide Act requires that any pesticide sold, distributed, offered for sale, purchased, given away, used, or applied in the state must be registered by the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA). Pesticides registered by the state include:

- Algacides (to control algae)
- Aquatic herbicides (to control plants in water)
- Avicides (to control birds)
- Disinfectants, sanitizers, and antimicrobials (to control bacteria or viruses)
- Fungicides (to control fungus)
- Fumigants (to control pests in soil or structures)
- Herbicides (to control plants)
- Insecticides (to control insects)
- Nematocides (to control nematodes)
- Predacides (to control predators)
- Piscicides (to control fish)
- Rodenticides (to control rodents)
- Repellents (to repel pests such as insects or mammals)
- Wood preservatives (to control pests that harm wood products)

## FEDERAL REGISTRATION

Pesticides are registered on a federal level with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prior to being registered individually in each state. The federal process can take several years and can require significant investments in terms of time, money, and required human and environmental testing. See the EPA's 2019 cost estimates for the studies required for federal pesticide registrations EPA Cost Estimates Document . If a product requires registration under FIFRA, then it must be registered on a federal level prior to it being registered or used in any state.

## MONTANA STATE REGISTRATION

Pesticides are registered on an annual basis by the chemical registrants. Registration costs \$233 per product per year for registration in the state of Montana for most products. The initial registration process is more intensive as products are heavily scrutinized before they are initially allowed for use in the state. See Infographic One below for a generalized look at the state registration process. If the company makes changes to their product or label after initial registration, they must submit the changes for acceptance by MDA. If the registration application is received with all the required documents (label, safety data sheets, EPA documentation, and possibly additional studies) then application response times are generally between 7 to 14 days from January 1 to November 1. From November 1 to December 31 response times may be slower (up to 30 days) to new applications as all previously registered products are re-registered for the up-coming year during this time. See the table below for current registration numbers for the state of Montana as of August 2020. To search for currently registered pesticides in Montana, please visit <https://agr.mt.gov/SearchPesticideProducts>.

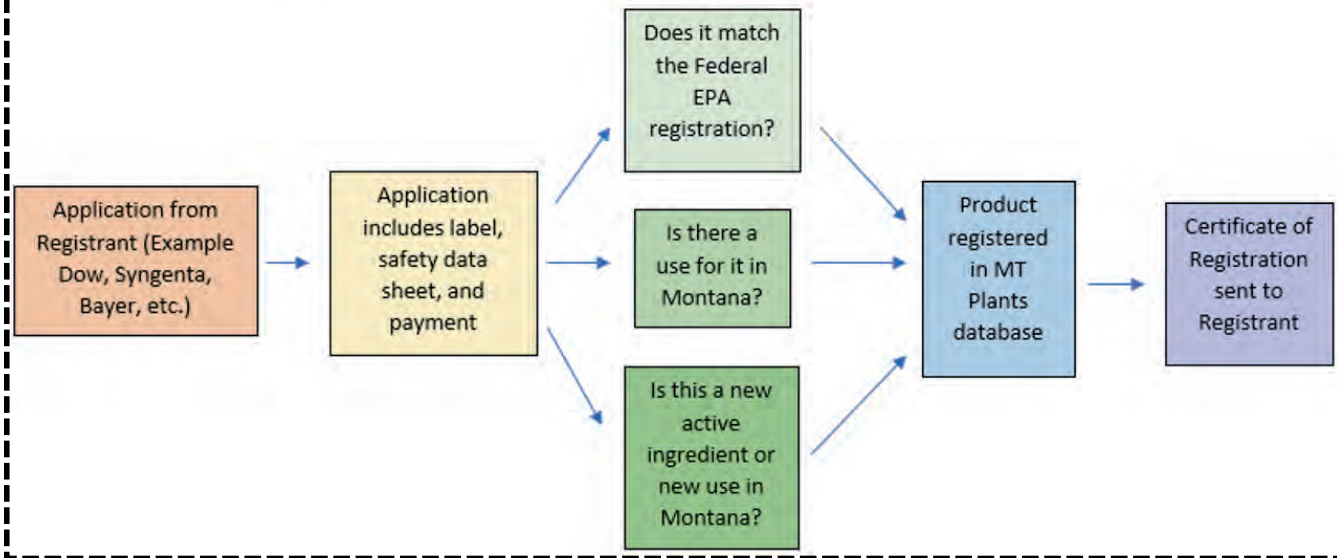
PESTICIDES CURRENTLY REGISTERED IN THE STATE OF MONTANA		
Registration Type	Explanation	2020 Numbers (as of Aug 2020)
Section 3	Regular (majority of pesticides)	11,487
Section 5	Experimental Use	0
Section 18	Emergency Exemption	0
Section 24(c)	Special Local Need	33
Section 25 (b)	Federally Exempt	643
<b>Total Products Registered</b>		<b>12,163</b>
<b>Total Companies</b>		<b>1,285</b>

*Registrations continued on page 22*



# State Registration Process

## INFOGRAPHIC 1



### EPA REGISTRATION NUMBERS

Each product registered federally with the EPA must have an EPA Registration Number that appears on the product label. Infographic Two below shows how to decode an EPA Registration Number. A company that is registering a pesticide is assigned an EPA Company Number that stays with that company

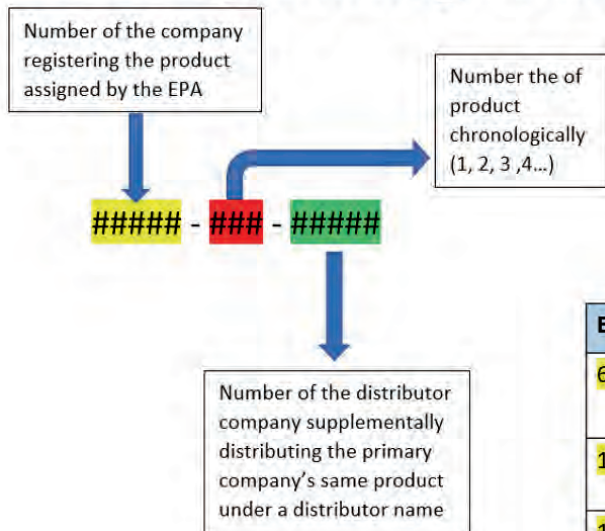
and identifies their products for the duration of the company’s existence (shown in yellow below). Companies that sell their own products will only have the yellow and red numbers shown in Infographic Two. Occasionally a secondary company will sign an agreement with the primary company to supplementally distribute the primary company’s product. In this case, there will be a third number (shown

# Decoding EPA Registration Numbers

## INFOGRAPHIC 2

### Example Company Numbers:

- 100 = SYNGENTA
- 264 = BAYER
- 538 = SCOTTS
- 7969 = BASF
- 62719 = DOW



EPA Reg #	Meaning	Trade Name
62719 - 519	Dow’s 519 <sup>th</sup> product	Milestone
100 - 1275	Syngenta’s 1275 <sup>th</sup> product	Azoxy 0.31 Granular
100 - 1275 - 538	Scott’s marketing Syngenta’s 1275 <sup>th</sup> product as their own	Scott’s Fungus Control



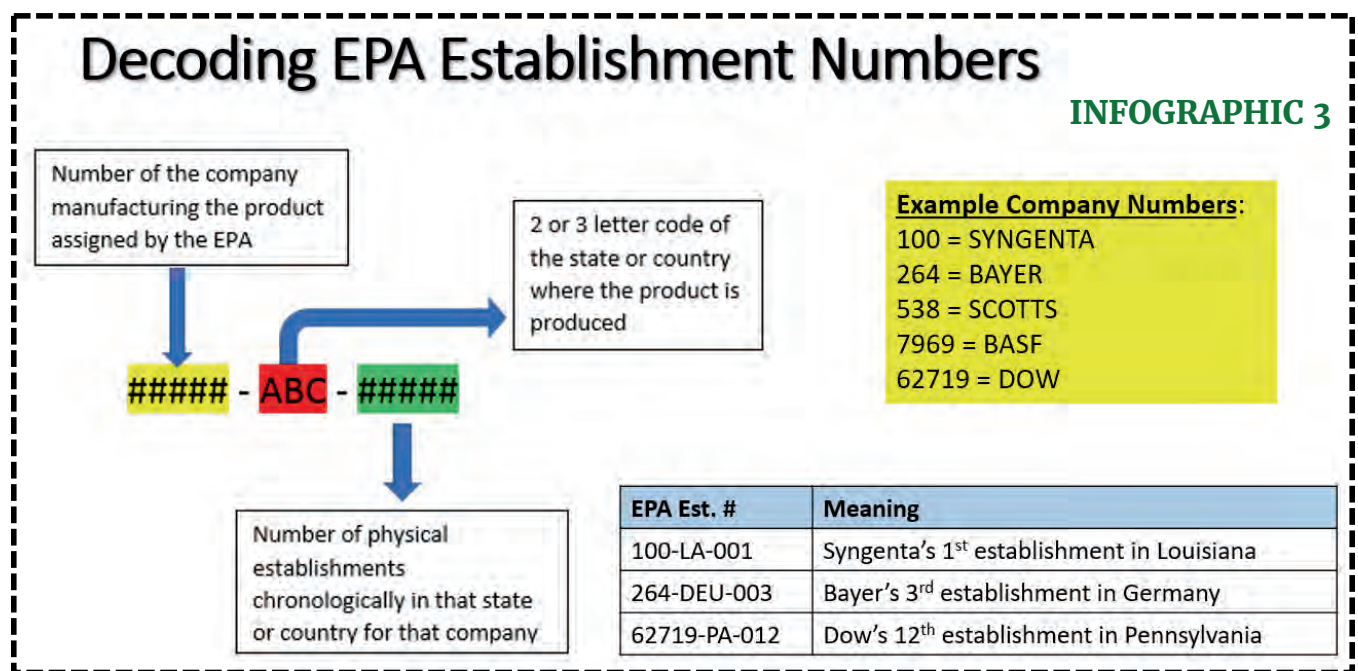
in green below) to indicate the secondary company is selling the primary company's product under a distributor name. Supplemental distributor products can be a way to find alternate products for the same use especially if the primary product is unavailable.

**Always read and follow the product label that came with the product when it was purchased.**

### EPA ESTABLISHMENT NUMBERS

Each location or "establishment" that produces a pesticide or active ingredient must be assigned a unique EPA Establishment Number. The EPA Establishment Number must be on the label for identifi-

has been established or on a non-food/non-feed crop or site for use in a special local need situation. 24(c) registrations are for state specific pesticide uses that do not have a regular Section 3 registration. These registrations require a more extensive review process than most registrations as they include product uses that have not been reviewed and approved by the EPA. A special local need could include: new application method or timing, different rate, new crop, new pest, less hazardous formulation, prevention of pesticide resistance, or application to a different soil type. Special pesticide registrations are initiated by Montana growers or grower associations in cooper-



cation. Infographic Three shows how to decode the EPA Establishment Number on the product label or container.

### SPECIAL LOCAL NEED (SLN) SECTION 24(C) REGISTRATION

The Montana Department of Agriculture has the authority under Section 24(c) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) to register an additional use of an already federally registered pesticide with EPA acknowledgment. This could be on a food/feed crop for which a tolerance

with MDA, specialists in pesticides and pest management, and pesticide registrants. Special Local Needs 24(c) labels are ongoing registrations designed to fit Montana pest and environmental needs. They are available for a maximum of five-years but may be renewed for another five years if the need is still present. Applicators are required to have the 24(c) label in their possession when making an application. To view the current 24(c) registration in Montana, visit <https://agr.mt.gov/PesticideReg-24c>.

*Registrations continued on page 24*

*Registrations continued from page 23*

## MINIMUM RISK 25(B) EXEMPT STATE REGISTRATIONS


In 1996, the EPA exempted certain pesticides from the requirements of federal EPA registration if they met six conditions that qualified them as “minimum risk pesticides.” These products are called 25(b) pesticides as they are exempt from FIFRA under Section 25(b). The products may only be made of a mixture of active and inert ingredients found on the EPA’s 25(b) active and inert lists. Examples of possible ingredients include citric acid, corn gluten meal, garlic, or mint oil. While they are exempt from Federal registration, 39 states (including Montana) require these minimum risk products to be registered on a state level. States have found that some products claiming to be 25(b) minimum risk products are making false or unsubstantiated claims, misleading consumers, do not have adequate precautionary language for protection of people and the environment, or contain ingredients that are not considered minimum risk. More information on 25(b) pesticides can be found at <https://agr.mt.gov/PesticideReg-25b>. To search for 25(b) products registered in Montana visit <https://agr.mt.gov/SearchPesticideProducts> and select “with 25(b)” in the 25(b) drop down menu.

## SECTION 18 REGISTRATIONS

Under Section 18 of FIFRA, MDA can apply for an emergency exemption from federal registration in order to allow the use of an unregistered pesticide in an emergency situation. The EPA must approve all Section 18 registrations. An emergency situation must be urgent and non-routine and could include: an outbreak of a new pest, development of resistance to existing pesticides, unusual weather conditions that caused a pest outbreak, or product cancellation. Section 18 registrations may be approved for a maximum of one year and renewal applications for additional years are rare. Montana currently has no emergency registrations as of August 2020 but did have three from 2018 to 2019. Section 18 registrations required extensive coordination between MDA, the registrant, local university experts, Montana associations, and the EPA. For more information visit <https://agr.mt.gov/PesticideReg-Section18>. ■




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## **FACT SHEET: SAFETY AND SECURITY PRECAUTIONS FOR AMMONIUM NITRATE**

On August 4, an explosion in Beirut, Lebanon, reportedly involved approximately 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate. The Fertilizer Institute (TFI) and Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA) extend our thoughts and prayers to all of the people in Lebanon. As we continue to learn more about the factors that contributed to this tragic event, TFI, ARA, and our members remain committed to ensuring the safety and security of our employees, their families, and the communities in which they operate.

The fertilizer supply chain in the United States operates with the highest possible standards to promote safety and security. Ammonium nitrate, which is used in both mining and agriculture activities, is highly regulated at the state and federal level, including by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS),<sup>1</sup> the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA),<sup>2</sup> the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA),<sup>3</sup> and the Department of Transportation (DOT).<sup>4</sup>

TFI and ARA have jointly developed industry-led safety and security initiatives such as the Guidelines for Storage and Transportation of Ammonium Nitrate and the ResponsibleAg program. ResponsibleAg ensures that agricultural retailers understand and are in compliance with the numerous federal regulations that apply to their facilities, including those administered by EPA, OSHA, DHS, and DOT. Since its creation over five years ago, over 3,400 audits have been completed and over 1,300 facilities have been certified by the ResponsibleAg program.

TFI, ARA, and OSHA also created the Fertilizer Safety and Health Partners Alliance to advance our shared commitment to safety and the engagement of the fertilizer and agricultural retail industries with OSHA and other federal agencies. Moreover, TFI,

ARA, and our member companies work with safety experts such as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to ensure its codes reflect industry advancements and best practices for product safety and storage.

The following information may also be of interest:

- As with other plant nutrients, ammonium nitrate helps us grow the food, fuel and fiber that feeds our world. Half of crop yields are attributable to fertilizer, hence its importance to farmers and food production.
- Ammonium nitrate is a dry, solid material primarily in granular form and comprises approximately 1 percent of all fertilizer nutrients utilized in the United States.
- Ammonium nitrate is used by farmers for its agronomic and environmental benefits. It is used primarily on pastureland, hay, fruit, and vegetable crops.
- Ammonium nitrate fertilizers are safe when handled in accordance with U.S. regulations and industry guidelines. As indicated by the U.S. Chemical Safety Board during Congressional testimony, there have been no accidental detonations of ammonium nitrate where facilities complied with existing federal regulations.<sup>5</sup> ■

<sup>1</sup> 6 C.F.R. Pt. 27 (CFATS) and 33 C.F.R. §105 (U.S. Coast Guard)

<sup>2</sup> Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA)

<sup>3</sup> 29 C.F.R. § 1910.109(i); OSHA Fertilizer Industry Guidance on Storage and Use of Ammonium Nitrate

<sup>4</sup> 49 C.F.R. Parts 171-178, DOT Hazardous Materials Regulations

<sup>5</sup> Statement-Response of U.S. Chemical Safety Board Chairman Rafael Moure-Eraso; "Oversight of Federal Risk Management and Emergency Planning Programs to Prevent and Address Chemical Threats, Including the Events Leading Up to the Explosions in West, TX and Geismar, LA", Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, June 27, 2013 (Page 221)

# Zinc is Important for Crop Yield & Consumer Health



**Clain Jones**

*Soil Fertility Specialist  
Montana State University  
Extension*

Farmers and their crop advisers should consider nutrients other than only nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium when soil sampling to determine fertilizer rates for the 2021 growing season. Micronutrients, such as chloride, copper, iron, and zinc, are used in smaller amounts than the big three and insufficient soil levels are less often the cause of reduced production, making them easy to forget. However, they are critical for grain yields and consumer health.

Zinc in particular is important for human growth, strong immune systems, and even reducing violent moods. Children and adolescents are especially affected by zinc deficiency. The International Zinc Nutrition Consultative Group estimates at least 20% of the world's children suffer stunted growth due to zinc deficiency. Twenty-six countries have a mandatory minimum wheat grain zinc concentration standard (average 47 ppm); of these 26 countries, the Asian countries' average standard is 38 ppm (Global Fortification Data Exchange). Montana's grain could contribute to nourishing its consumers worldwide.

As grain yields per acre increase with newer crop varieties, the amount of micronutrients removed with each harvest increases. On average, a 45 bushel per acre crop of wheat removes 0.13 pound zinc, barley removes 0.06 pound, and canola 0.25 pound. If no micronutrients are added as conventional fertilizer, impurities in phosphorus fertilizer, or through the addition of manure, it is a matter of when, not if micronutrients become deficient. Of almost 13,000 Montana soil samples analyzed by AgVise laboratory in 2017, 32 percent contained below 0.5 ppm zinc, which is the critical level for most crops.

Biofortification is the use of fertilizer to increase

grain nutrient content. Foliar zinc application has been found more effective than soil applications to boost grain zinc concentration. Smaller amounts of zinc are required to fortify the grain than increase yields.

A study at the Eastern Agricultural Research Center in Sidney, Montana, evaluated foliar zinc application on durum wheat on soils with 0.3 to 0.5 ppm zinc. One pound zinc per acre at heading increased grain zinc concentration by 17-47 percent and yields by 5 percent (Afshar et al. 2020). Two applications of 1 pound zinc per acre each, one at heading and a second at flowering increased grain zinc concentration by 35-93 percent and yields by 14 percent. To reliably bring grain zinc concentrations above 40 ppm required two zinc applications.

An additional benefit of foliar zinc is to decrease durum grain cadmium levels, an important measure for some export markets. A study at Eastern Agricultural Research Center (Eckhoff 2010) found 1 pound zinc per acre foliar at boot stage helped decrease grain cadmium concentrations to below 0.2 ppm, the current International standard of maximum cadmium levels in wheat (Codex Alimentarius).

In another study at Eastern Agricultural Research Center (Mohammed and Chen 2018) 1.5 pound zinc per acre was sprayed on pea as soon as there were enough leaves to catch the spray. At one site where soils were above critical levels, pea grain yield increased by 6 bu/acre with zinc but pea grain zinc concentration did not respond to foliar zinc. At the other site, where soils were below critical levels, one year saw no yield increase and small grain zinc concentrations increase with foliar zinc, but concentrations did not reach 40 ppm. In the second year, foliar zinc did not increase yields and all treatments, with or without foliar zinc, had equal grain zinc concentrations above 40 ppm. Therefore, soil tests alone are not conclusive on whether there will be a response in yield or grain zinc concentration.



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Visual deficiency symptoms (middle leaves show interveinal chlorosis similar to iron deficiency which is seen in youngest leaves; see Plant Nutrient Functions and Deficiency and Toxicity Symptoms), can indicate zinc deficiency. However, once symptoms are visible, yields may have already been compromised. Also, not all crops respond equally to zinc fertilization (Rigas Karamanos, personal communication; low response in alfalfa, oat, pea, wheat, canola, medium in barley, clover, sugar beet, and high in corn), even if soil test levels are low and plants show deficiency symptoms. Therefore, the best way to determine zinc need is through yield or grain concentration response in on-farm strip test trials.

A challenge with micronutrients is to get even distribution of a tiny amount of fertilizer. Plant available sources such as sulfates or chelated fertilizers can be broadcast and incorporated in the spring or applied foliar. Note that glyphosate and metal micronutrients should not be combined in spray, as they can inactivate each other. Oxides need to convert in the soil before being plant available and should be applied in fall. Seed-placed or subsurface band is not recommended due to high localized concentrations leading to toxicity. Manure is another option to provide micronutrients.

Micronutrient fertilizers should be used judiciously. The net economic return with one zinc application to wheat was negative \$0.40 per acre, with the double application the net return was \$5.25 per acre (Afshar et al. 2020). Price incentives for grain with higher zinc levels would help encourage farmers to grow more nourishing grains.

Contact Clain Jones at [clainj@montana.edu](mailto:clainj@montana.edu), 406-994-6076, with questions about this or other soil fertility topics. ■

## References

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Rigas Karamanos, Agronomist, Koch Agronomic Services



It's possible to project what customers are likely to be in business in 20 years. That's the result of extensive research done by strategic intelligence firm Aimpoint Research.

"If you can answer who are the farmers of the future, you will know how to charge forward with your business based on what that customer will require of you over time," says Brett Sciotto, CEO, Aimpoint Research.

The firm kicked off its Farmer Of The Future research in April 2018, which included interviewing farmers and ranchers. The capstone to the research was designing a psychographic study to understand the personalities in the industry.

"There are lots of ways to segment customers. We focused on the psychographic to deeply understand who the farmers are," he explains. This answers questions such as:

- How do they make decisions?
- How do they think about agriculture?
- How do they view the world?
- How do they approach their businesses?
- Who do they rely on?

The Aimpoint team distilled five personalities of

farmers: independent elites, enterprising business builders, classic practitioners, self-reliant traditionals and leveraged lifestylers.

"In every one of these segments, there are large-scale farmers and smaller-scale farmers, and there are older farmers and younger farmers," Sciotto says. "There's more to a farmer's success than their size. Their history, mentality, and willingness to adopt drive their approach to business."

### **SO WHO WILL BE YOUR 2040 FARMER-CUSTOMERS?**

Sciotto says predicting the future is an art and a science, but the top takeaway is that today's tremendous pressures felt in agriculture will continue during the next 20 years. That will lead to two groups as the future of farming: the independent elites and enterprising business builders.

"These farmers have the qualities and characteristics to allow them to navigate to a successful position in 2040," Sciotto says. "They have the business IQ and adaptability. They are innovators and are collaborative."

Given the other categories are decreasing, you can assess how you serve them accordingly.





## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

“We have to get ahead in our thinking. Otherwise, we will find ourselves further behind,” he says. “We need transformative leaders in ag today. Businesses should explore how to evolve and continue to be relevant to who will be the farmer of the future.”

Sciotto shares four actions will be table stakes in the future: find new ways to serve the value chain, innovate, gain efficiencies and integrate new standards.

Although you can’t directly shift a farmer from one

category to another, as a trusted adviser, you can set them up for success.

“You can coach farmers and provide the business tools and services they need to adopt,” Sciotto says. “There are clear lessons you can share. Their implementation is up to them—but you can make them available.”

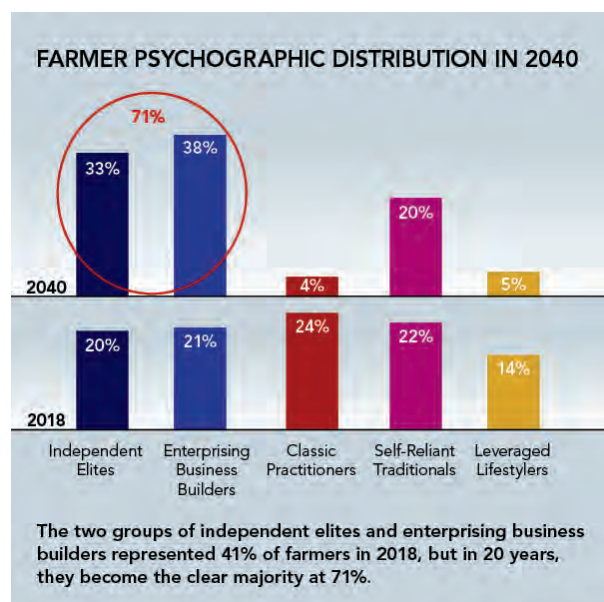
## RED ALERT FOR EVERYONE

Although the top farmers demonstrate a strong springboard for the future, many are lacking a key part—a succession plan.

“We should all be concerned about the lack of succession planning. Even for independent elites, only 51% have a succession plan,” Sciotto says. “This planning is critical to their business and to those who serve farmers.”

## HOW TO SHORE UP YOUR BUSINESS

At the 2020 Ag Retailers Association Virtual Conference, The Scoop and Aimpoint Research will present proprietary research completed earlier this fall. They will detail useful insights into the Farmer Of The Future, how COVID-19 has changed the ag retail industry and how you can harness this knowledge for a successful blueprint for the future. Register at [ARAdc.org/conference](http://ARAdc.org/conference). ■



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# INSPECTION GUIDANCE

## GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING FDA FACILITY INSPECTIONS



ASTA developed the following guidelines for its members to address how to handle regulatory inspections by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or state regulatory agencies conducting inspections on FDA's behalf. This manual is specific to inspections conducted by FDA or a state regulatory agency on FDA's behalf and does not cover inspections by the agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

*The information ASTA provides in this document is accurate and factual to the best of our knowledge, but ASTA does not provide any warranties of any kind regarding the content of this document. The information in this document is guidance and does not constitute legal advice. Because inspections are inherently tied to enforcement of legal obligations, it is generally advisable to engage with legal counsel regarding any questions, concerns, or other issues that may arise in connection with FDA inspections. ASTA reminds its members that they each bear an independent responsibility to comply with all applicable laws and regulations.*

### BACKGROUND

**General FDA Authority.** U.S. FDA inspectors (called “investigators” by the agency) are lawfully authorized to enter and inspect any facility, warehouse, establishment in which foods are manufactured, processed, packed or held for shipment into interstate commerce or any vehicle used to transport or hold such food. The term “food” includes seeds destined for animal consumption. An inspection may include an examination of the building, equipment, raw ingredients and materials, in-process or finished products, containers, labeling, and certain records.

**Purpose.** FDA conducts inspections to determine compliance with legal requirements. During an inspection, FDA collects evidence (including records and samples) to potentially use if an enforcement action is deemed necessary. Inspectors are particularly looking for compliance with the Preventive Controls for Animal Food (PCAF) rule, 21 CFR Part 507, (both the current Good Manufacturing Practice (cGMP) and preventive control requirements) and violations of the adulteration provisions in Section 402 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA).

### FSMA-RELATED TALKING POINTS

When FDA conducts inspections of seed production facilities for compliance with the FDA Food Safety

Modernization Act (FSMA) regulations, you may encounter questions relating to your facility's compliance obligations. ASTA has prepared the following Q&As to help you during the inspection. Note, however, that these discussion points need to be tailored to each facility's operation and FSMA compliance strategy.

- Why is your establishment registered with FDA?
- Materials such as cracked, damaged, culled, or excess seeds from our facility are sent for animal consumption. Historically, FDA has advised through guidance that an establishment that conditions seed for planting purposes must be registered with FDA if the owner, operator, or agent in charge of the establishment reasonably believes that the seed is reasonably expected to be directed to a food use, including animal food use or as an ingredient in animal food.
- Is your facility subject to the PCAF regulation?
- No, because FDA is exercising enforcement discretion for seed conditioning facilities that send discarded seed materials for consumption by either animals or humans. The enforcement discretion applies to both the Preventive Controls and cGMP regulations.

*ASTA continued on page 32*

- The enforcement discretion was announced by FDA on January 4, 2018 in the document: *Guidance for Industry: Policy Regarding Certain Entities Subject to the Current Good Manufacturing Practice and Preventive Controls, Produce Safety, and/or Foreign Supplier Verification Programs*. The enforcement discretion applies to our operation because it is dedicated to harvesting, packing, and/or holding raw agricultural commodities. FDA specifically provided in its Guidance that “facilities engaged in conditioning seed for cultivation that solely pack and hold seed for use in animal food” are intended to fall within the scope of this enforcement discretion.

*o Note:* If the inspector disagrees and is pushy on this point, contact ASTA. The Association may be able to intervene with FDA on your behalf.

- Are your silage operations “manufacturing” activities that trigger application of the Preventive Controls regulation? [*Note, other operations could be inserted here in place of silage.*]
- Through the American Seed Trade Association, we have shared a detailed description of our activities with FDA’s Center for Veterinary Medicine and received confirmation that none of the activities constitutes “manufacturing.” For example, chopping cobs and husks is a “harvesting” activity because they are activities traditionally performed on farms for the purpose of removing raw agricultural commodities from the place where they were grown.
- What is your compliance date for the PCAF regulation? Choose the applicable statement: > Because we have more than 500 full-time equivalent employees company wide, we are classified as a “large business.” Our compliance dates were September 19, 2016 for cGMPs and September 18, 2017 for Preventive Controls.
- Because we have fewer than 500 full-time equivalent employees company wide, we are classified as a “small business.” Our com-

pliance dates were September 18, 2017 for cGMPs and September 17, 2018 for Preventive Controls.

- Because we average less than \$2,500,000 (adjusted for inflation) in average annual in sales of animal food, plus the market value of animal food manufactured, processed, packed, or held without sale, we are classified as a “very small business.” Our compliance dates were September 17, 2018 for cGMPs and September 17, 2019 for Preventive Controls.
- Can we see your Food Safety Plan?
- Because FDA is exercising enforcement discretion for seed conditioning facilities, we are not required to have a Food Safety Plan.

## ACTUAL INSPECTION

### 1. Inspector Arrival

When an FDA inspector arrives at a facility, security or the receptionist should welcome the inspector as any other business visitor and treat the inspector with courtesy. Security or the receptionist should immediately notify the plant manager and the most senior person on-site.

### 2. Pre-Inspection Meeting

**Greet the inspector promptly.** This should be done by the site manager or the most senior person on-site. Try not to keep the inspector waiting for more than 20 minutes. **Review and record the inspector’s credentials and Notice of Inspection.** An FDA inspector will present Form FDA 482. A state inspector will have their own form. If an FDA inspector presents credentials with the designation “200-D” (these are criminal investigators) or if he/she presents a Form FDA 482c (Notice of Inspection and Request for Records), consider contacting legal counsel.

**Request a pre-inspection conference.** Ask the inspector to explain the purpose of the inspection. It could be a routine inspection, a follow-up to complaint, or an inspection conducted for some other reason. Probe as to whether this inspection is being conducted to assess compliance with FSMA, the Bovine Spongiform





Encephalopathy (BSE) regulations, or for some other specific purpose. An inspector may mention FSMA (and provide you with FSMA-related fact sheets) even if they are not conducting a FSMA inspection.

**Explain the company's policies and procedures regarding visitors/inspections.** For example, inspectors often are expected to follow company policy regarding GMPs and obey all safety signs and precautions.

- Communicate the company's policy regarding the use of photographic equipment. Each company should decide on their policy on this issue in advance of the inspection and communicate it to the site. There is no express legal authority for FDA to take photographs during facility inspections, but investigators will push hard on this point and cite case law that they believe provides them with authority. Some state laws do permit inspectors to take photographs, so you should know the applicable rules before you push back on a state inspector.
- If company policy prohibits the use of photographic equipment—
  - Be prepared for the inspector to insist that he/she has the authority to take photographs. Ask what the inspector wishes to photograph and if issues escalate consider elevating the request to legal counsel.
  - Make it clear the company is not denying the inspection, only the ability to take photographs.
- If company policy authorizes the use of photographic equipment—
  - Ask the inspector to mark all photos as “confidential commercial information” and take both a similar photograph to the one the inspector takes, as well as a broader photograph depicting the surrounding area.

**Ask the inspector to direct any questions during the inspection to the facility's designated representatives accompanying the inspector.** The facility manager or the

most senior person on site should accompany the investigator throughout the inspection of the facility.

### 3. The Facility Inspection

#### General.

- Knowledgeable, trained, and previously designated employees should accompany the inspector at all times. The inspector should never be unaccompanied. If there is more than one inspector, each should be accompanied by a designated facility employee. Questions and requests for information should be directed to the designated employees.
- If the inspector identifies an issue of concern and it can be readily fixed or addressed, implement the remedial action and ask that the inspector note the corrective action in his/her report.
- Take copious notes of the inspection including questions asked and answered, observations and comments made, corrections implemented, samples taken, and records requested.

#### Samples.

- FDA inspectors have the authority to take sample of products and labels, as well as to conduct swabs of the environment to test for environmental pathogens. It is unlikely that inspectors will conduct any environmental swabbing during seed facility inspections.
- The inspector will leave a receipt for the samples, Form FDA 484. This is the ONLY form that any employee should sign.
- If the investigator collects samples of products, consider taking duplicate samples from the same lot/location and label the samples.

#### Records.

- The regulations implementing FSMA provide FDA with broad records access. Even if FDA is not inspecting for compliance with the PCAF regulation, the regulation's records access provisions remain effective after your applicable compliance date.

*ASTA continued on page 34*

*ASTA continued from page 33*

- If FDA requests access to records and you have any questions about whether records should be provided to the inspector, consult with legal counsel.
  - FDA may ask to see records that they lack the legal authority to access. The company must decide whether it will voluntarily disclose these records.
- The company has 24 hours to provide FDA with the requested records. It is appropriate to tell the investigator you must first consult with legal counsel before you can determine whether the records will be made available.
- Any copies of records that are provided should be marked “Confidential Commercial Information.”
- Under the Bioterrorism Act (the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002), FDA has expanded access to records in certain “emergency” situations. These situations can include FDA investigations into Class I recalls or reports to the Reportable Food Registry. Specifically, if FDA has a reasonable belief that an article of food presents a threat of serious adverse health consequences or death to humans or animals, any records and other information regarding the manufacturing, processing, packing, holding, distribution, receipt, or importing for either that article of food or any other article likely to be affected in a similar manner, must be made readily available for inspection and photocopying within 24 hours of the request. **FDA must provide written notice on a Form FDA 482c when invoking the records access provisions under the Bioterrorism Act.**

#### 4. Exit Interview

The plant manager and other appropriate facility employees should conduct an exit interview or “close out meeting” with the inspector.

- Ask the inspector to describe the findings and observations, one by one. Ask questions about any findings that are not understood and politely voice any disagreements.
- Discuss any corrective actions taken and ask that they be noted appropriately. Inform the inspector of any planned additional corrective actions and when they are expected to be completed.

If the inspector observed any objectionable conditions or practices, he/she will issue a Form FDA 483—Inspectional Observations. State personnel will have their own version of this document, which has the same import. Make sure you understand the observations on the Form FDA 483, as these are considered deficiencies that need to be corrected.

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- If the inspector left a Form FDA 483, a written response must be submitted to FDA within 15 business days in order for FDA to consider the information when deciding whether to take enforcement action. You may want to consult with legal counsel regarding preparation of this response.

Do not sign or initial any affidavits. If the inspector insists, forward the unsigned affidavit to legal counsel or review and advice. Ask the inspector whether he/she anticipates coming back to conduct a follow-up inspection in the near future.

## 5. Post-Inspection

After the inspector leaves, prepare a detailed report of the inspection for internal purposes. This report should contain:

- Date and time of inspection
- Inspector's name and credentials
- Copies of any documents provided by FDA (e.g., Form FDA 482)
- Company personnel accompanying the inspector(s)
- Whether photographs were taken, areas photographed, and duplicate photos • Areas of the plant inspected
- A list of all forms, labels, samples, documents, or records provided (and preferably copies of these documents).
- Questions asked by the inspector and answers provided
- Observations and comments by the inspector
- Corrective actions taken during the inspection
- Details on samples taken and testing to be performed
- Records requested, reviewed and copied

Following the inspection, the inspector must prepare an Establishment Inspection Report (EIR) (a much more detailed report than a Form FDA 483). If the facility does not receive a copy within 2 months of the inspection, contact the inspector and ask for a copy.

After the EIR is received, review with the plant manager and the head of food safety. Consider submitting a blinded Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request (not on company letterhead) requesting a copy of the EIR to make certain FDA has deleted all proprietary information. If proprietary information has not been deleted, you should follow-up with FDA. ■



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*Thank you!*