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Series Tour**

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# Winter Named North Dakota Stockmen's Association Top Hand

The North Dakota Stockmen's Association (NDSA) awarded McKenzie County cattleman Keith Winter, a 49-year NDSA member, with the organization's most prestigious award, the Top Hand Award, at the banquet during its annual convention in Watford City. The Top Hand Award recognizes Winter's unselfish concern for the land, the country and the cattle industry. Winter joined the exclusive class of 26 ranchers who have received this elite award over the NDSA's 94-year history when he accepted his bronze statue.

The lifelong rancher and longtime grazing association officer is a leading expert on federal lands issues and grazing and has been looked to by ranchers and state and federal lawmakers alike for his perspective and expertise in this area.

"My grandparents homesteaded our operation back in 1905," explained Keith, who returned home to continue his family's ranching tradition 55 years ago in 1968. Before he returned to the ranch, Keith received an engineering degree and worked on the West Coast. "My Great-Uncle Dave had a big influence on me, my life and my ranching career," he recalled. "Ranching is my hobby and my passion and has been my entire life."

Keith loves what he does every day. "Whether it's haying or feeding calves in the middle of winter, I enjoy what I do," he said. "I enjoy working on the ranch. To be a part of production agriculture is not an opportunity many people in this world get. I am fortunate to be given the chance to be involved in our livestock operation and be in the small percentage."

Today, Keith and his wife Patricia operate an Angus-Charolais-cross cow-calf operation near Cartwright. They ranch with their sons, John and David. "We have a permit with the McKenzie County Grazing Association," he said. "I enjoy ranching with my sons. I couldn't do it without them." Keith and Patricia have five kids and 12 grandkids. "In the future, I hope that my sons and grandchildren continue the tradition and pass it on."

Keith reflected on how he got involved in industry organizations: "My late neighbor, Dale Greenwood, sat down in the kitchen of our one-bedroom house 49 years ago and wanted to talk about me becoming more involved," he explained. "He is the one that signed me up as a member of the NDSA and helped me become more active in the McKenzie County Grazing Association."

An active member he has surely been, serving 34 years as McKenzie County Grazing Association president, an important role considering the unique ownership and management of the federal grazing lands.

In North Dakota, the federal grasslands are not reservations from the public domain, like the U.S. Forest Service's national forests established by Congress. Instead, they were purchased during the Dust Bowl era of the 1930s from homesteaders in the region.

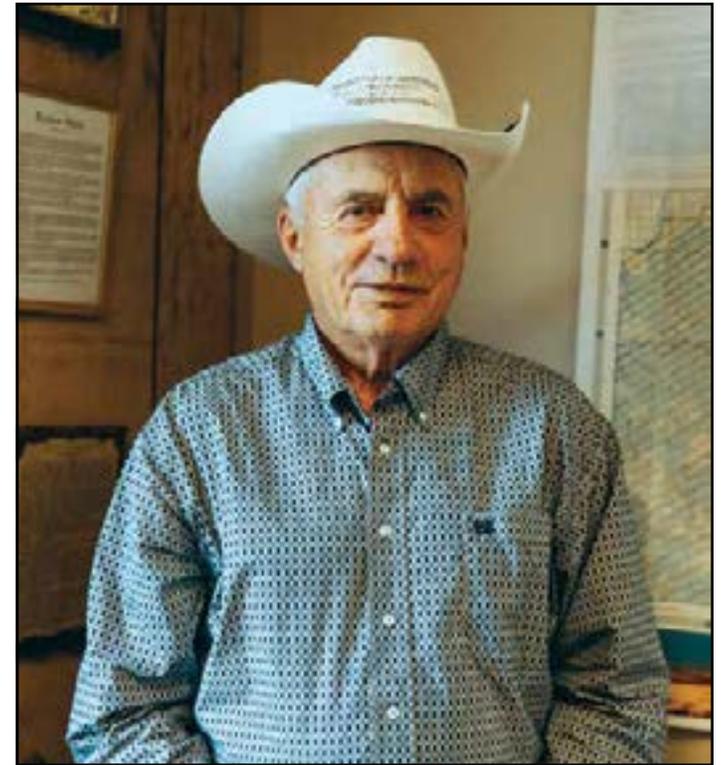
The McKenzie County Grazing Association, based in Watford City, the NDSA's birthplace, operates on about half of McKenzie County, North Dakota. McKenzie County has 1.8 million acres in the county and the landscape features a wide diversity of physical features, ranging from sugar beet fields bordering the Missouri River at the north-west corner of the county to rugged Badlands near the Little Missouri River in the south, where Theodore

Roosevelt National Park and the Little Missouri River National Grasslands are located. The association has been supporting the livestock industry and championing the value of grazing since its inception in 1937. It issues 210 permits and encompasses 930,000 acres. "One of our main goals is to make the U.S. Forest Service live up to the agreement they made in the 1930s – that the lands would be used for agriculture," Keith explained. "There's a difference between most federal lands and the land in McKenzie County."

He is proud of the grazing association's accomplishments and the stewardship of its ranchers. "Our preference numbers for cattle on the grasslands haven't been reduced," he explained. "We have kept the right amount of cattle on the right amount of acres, and we have kept our fellow ranchers and their operations viable in this county."

Besides his local grazing association service, Keith has also served as the Public Lands Council president, which actively represents livestock producers who hold public lands grazing permits on the national level, and was the chairman of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Federal Lands Committee.

"Keith Winter is very deserving of this prestigious award," said Mark Voll, a longtime NDSA member, McKenzie County Grazing Association permittee and Keith's neighbor. "He does such a great job as president of the McKenzie County Grazing Association, because his motives are all about ranching – he is a very intelligent person, a dedicated listener, and important resource, and a truly good friend to have."



Keith Winter. (Photo submitted)



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## NDSA Annual Convention Cattlemen's Education Series Tour



XTO Energy engineering operations manager Chris Frazier explains to local stockmen the gas lift system at an XTO well site.



Jason Leiseth, Arnegard, North Dakota Stockmen's Association president, discusses his experiences with representatives from Targa Badlands LLC Little Missouri Gas Plant. Targa representatives spoke to cattlemen attending the 94th Annual North Dakota Stockmen's Association Convention last week in Watford City. The Cattlemen's Education Series Tours were conducted via 2 busloads of interested individuals.



Pete Best, Watford City rancher, speaks on the introduction of the McKenzie County Grazing Association, Watford City, His Black Leg Ranch is a part of the federal grasslands adjacent to the Badlands.



Nikki Darrington, NRSC, along with the McKenzie County Soil Conservation Service employees, demonstrates the functionality of 1" of rainfall on different grasslands, beginning with conventional grassland with no grass, hayland, native ag grazing land, rotational grazing land and over grazing at the North Dakota Stockmen's Association Convention held in Watford City Sept. 30.



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Wed, Oct 18th .....	All Class Cattle Sale 8:00
Wed, Oct 25th .....	Feeder Calf & Yearling Special Only, Featuring Red Angus 8:00
Sat, Oct 28th .....	Weigh Ups & Bred Cow Special Only 8:00
Wed, Nov 1st.....	Feeder Calf Special Only, Featuring Black Angus 8:00
Sat, Nov 4th.....	Weigh Ups & Bred Cow Special 8:00
Wed, Nov 8th .....	Feeder Calf Special Only 8:00
Sat, Nov 11th.....	Weigh Ups & Bred Cow Special 8:00
Wed, Nov 15th .....	Feeder Calf Special Only 8:00
Sat, Nov 18th.....	Bred Cow Special & Weigh Up Special 8:00
Wed, Nov 22nd .....	NO SALE – Happy Thanksgiving
Wed, Nov 29th .....	Feeder Special & All Class Cattle Sale 8:00
Sat, Dec 2nd .....	Bred Cow Special & Weigh Up Special 8:00
Wed, Dec 6th .....	Feeder Special & All Class Cattle Sale 8:00
Sat, Dec 9th.....	Bred Cow Special & Weigh Up Special 8:00
Wed, Dec 13th .....	Feeder Special & All Class Cattle Sale 8:00
Sat, Dec 16th.....	Bred Cow Special & Weigh Up Special 8:00
Wed, Dec 20th .....	Feeder Special 9:00



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# Prairie Fare: Nourish Your Body & Mind With Fall Foods & A New Class Series

**Nourish class series is free nutrition education program for adults.**

## By NDSU Agriculture Communication

Fall is my favorite season of the year. Our outside environment becomes a feast for our eyes as leaves change from green to gold, orange or red and float in the breeze.

We are greeted by farmers markets and store displays with colorful red apples. Many varieties of squash are available. Some are green, others are orange or gold, and their rinds may be smooth or bumpy.

I always enjoy the grocery store squash displays that look like a still-life portrait that has come to life. I almost do not want to disturb the artistry of the set-up.

Many grocery stores have a handy reference book. You can look up information about the produce you are buying and learn how to prepare and store the food.

Next time you see a squash assortment, test yourself to see how many types of squash you can name. Can you identify an acorn squash? Can you find a butternut squash or a buttercup squash? Can you pick a sugar pumpkin out of the lineup?

Squash have many cousins in the overall “Cucurbitaceae” family. Cucurbit means “gourd” in Latin.

In fact, more than 800 species of plants would show up to a cucurbit family reunion. Some references say at least 900 “gourds” are part of the extended family.

Cucumbers, summer squash (zucchini), watermelons and other melons are plant relatives of squash.

Winter squash, including buttercup, butternut and hubbard, have fairly long storage lives of three to six months in cool places (50 - 55 degrees Fahrenheit).

While we call squash a “vegetable” on the menu, technically, they are the fruit of the plant. Regardless of what you call them, try some squash.

The orange flesh of squash signals they are a good source of beta-carotene. Squash is literally a feast for our eyes as well as the rest of our body. Our bodies can convert beta-carotene to vitamin A, which is healthy for our eyes (in helping prevent night blindness). Vitamin A is good for our skin, immune system, lungs and heart.

A deficiency in vitamin A can cause “xerophthalmia” or the inability to see in low light.

If you do not like squash, you have some other options to meet your needs. Green leafy vegetables such as spinach, carrots, broccoli, cantaloupe, eggs, salmon, and fortified milk and cereal are other vitamin A sources.

One half cup of squash will not undo a weight-loss diet with its 42 calories. The fiber content in squash is filling and good for your digestive system.

If you want to save some squash for winter, you can you cook and mash squash and seal in freezer bags or freezer containers. However, canning mashed pumpkin is not recommended for safety reasons, because the heat cannot fully penetrate the thick mashed pumpkin.

You can, however, can chunks of squash if you use a pressure canner and current guidelines. See the food preservation information at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/food](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/food) for details.

As we transition into fall and enjoy colorful sights and foods, I have a special invitation for readers of this column. I promise there will be colorful handouts and recipes provided.

We are launching a free online nutrition program called “Nourish” on Oct. 16. We especially want to reach adults 50 plus, but adults of any age are welcome. Sign up at the same time as a friend or family member and nurture each other’s

progress as you learn about nourishing your body.

Each class will focus on one topic, such as how to keep your eyes healthy. Other topics include how to keep your heart, brain, digestive system, skin, bones and joints healthy – and strategies for getting more sleep.

We ask that you try to finish the self-paced classes before the end of 2023. A steady pace of one module a week will get you there. You can participate online at any time, so that is perfect for night owls or early birds.

We provide recipes to try and websites to visit for more information. We will have prize drawings for those who finish the series of classes along with the survey evaluations.

Visit [www.ag.ndsu.edu/nourish](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/nourish) to register for the free web-based classes or face-to-face classes (if offered in your community in North Dakota).

As the temperature dips in autumn, nourish your body with a creamy soup served with freshly baked whole-grain bread, a spinach salad and some baked apples for dessert.



**The orange flesh of squash signals they are a good source of beta-carotene. (Pixabay photo)**

## Creamy Squash Soup

- ¼ cup butter
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 6 cups butternut squash, peeled and cubed
- 3 cups chicken broth (plus extra to adjust consistency if needed)
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper (or to taste)
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper (or to taste)
- ¾ teaspoon dried rubbed sage (or to taste)
- 16 ounces light cream cheese

In a large saucepan, sauté onions in butter until tender. Add squash, chicken broth, cayenne and black pepper, and sage. Bring to a boil and cook 20 minutes or until squash is tender. Puree the squash mixture and cream cheese in a blender or food processor in batches until smooth, or use an immersion blender. Return to the saucepan and heat through. Do not allow to boil. If the soup needs thinning, add additional chicken broth until the desired consistency is reached.

Makes eight servings. Each serving has 250 calories, 14 grams (g) fat, 9 g protein, 21 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber and 360 milligrams sodium. Note: This recipe was analyzed with reduced-sodium chicken broth.

(Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D., is a North Dakota State University Extension food and nutrition specialist and professor in the Department of Health, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences.)

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# Rural Leadership North Dakota Selects New Advisory Council Members

**Kristi Schultz has been selected to serve a three-year term on NDSU's Rural Leadership North Dakota Council. (Photo courtesy of Kristi Schultz)**



**Brady Pelton has been selected to serve a three-year term on NDSU's Rural Leadership North Dakota Council. (Photo courtesy of Brady Pelton)**



## **Submitted by NDSU Agriculture Communication**

Kristi Schultz and Brady Pelton have been selected to serve a three-year term on North Dakota State University's Rural Leadership North Dakota (RLND) Council. In addition to providing overall program direction, council members also develop policies and procedures, advocate for the program, maintain appropriate fiscal policies, and assist with class selection.

"The RLND Council serves to help steer the program towards the future and ensures RLND continues to prepare and develop effective leaders to strengthen rural North Dakota," says Katie Tyler, NDSU Extension specialist and program director for RLND.

Kristi Schultz is an RLND Class VII alum. She currently serves as a learning and development facilitator and coach at Border States. She has served as a member of the North Dakota Soybean Council Communication Committee (2016-2019), the secretary for North Dakota Cattlewomen (2017-2019), the president of the RLND Alumni Association (2022-2023), a program advisor for the Women in Leadership Program at University of North Dakota, and as parish secretary for two congregations (2014-current). The Schultz family farms near Embden, and she works diligently to strengthen the community.

Brady Pelton is the vice president and general counsel for the North Dakota

Petroleum Council, where he advises on legal matters and advocates for Council membership on key issues affecting the oil and gas industry. Prior to this role, Pelton was the deputy executive director of the North Dakota Association of Oil and Gas Producing Counties (today the Western Dakota Energy Association), acting as the organization's lead lobbyist and representing the interests of western North Dakota's counties, cities and school districts. Pelton is also an active member of the Bismarck Rotary Club, the State Bar Association of North Dakota, the North Dakota Lobbyist Association and the Landman's Association of North Dakota. He also serves as a trustee of the Fairview Cemetery Association.

"It is with great pleasure we welcome Kristi and Brady to the RLND Advisory Council," says Cory McCaskey, chair of the RLND Council. "We look forward to their involvement and commitment as we continue to advance leaders, communities, and agriculture throughout North Dakota."

The RLND Program is a statewide leadership development program that includes seminars with experts; on-site tours and presentations; meetings with agriculture, business, and government leaders; an international experience and personal skills development. The RLND Program is dedicated to strengthening the agriculture community, communities, and the state of North Dakota for the future.

## Montana Horse Breeders Promote Quarter Horse Genetics In Europe

The Montana Department of Agriculture had the unique opportunity to partner with the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) and the American Paint Horse Association (APHA) to conduct a horse genetics trade mission to Spain and Germany during the first week of September. MDA recruited Mahlstedt Ranch of Circle and Weaver Quarter Horses of Big Sandy to participate in the trade mission. The AQHA sent Tate Eck, International Activities Director, and the APHA sent a judge and clinician for the Spain show, Tony Burris.

This first ever trade delegation from Montana to promote American Quarter Horses and Montana horse genetics was led by Weston Merrill with the Montana Department of Agriculture. Representing Mahlstedt Ranch Quarter Horses were Tana Canen & Alexis Canen and Stan and Nancy Weaver represented Weaver Quarter Horses.

The group attended the Ranch Versatility Show hosted by AQHA España at El Sombrero Ranch in Cobeña, Spain, a small community 25 minutes just outside

Madrid. Participants and breeders came from all over Spain to compete and interact with the U.S. delegation. Day one was a Ranch Versatility Clinic put on by Tony Burris. Day 2 and 3 were competition days that included ranch reining, trail, cutting, cow work, and team penning competitions. The Spanish participants were eager to interact and learn from the American delegation and the friendships formed over the three days will have a lasting impact. Tana and Alexis both commented on the expert level of horsemanship exhibited, while at the same time there is a need for the Spaniards to have opportunities to work more with cattle to understand those events. Alexis was definitely impressed with, "Every person who brought a horse to the show had a deep love and appreciation for their horse. They don't take lightly the privilege of owning a horse!"

After the show, the group toured a cattle ranch and an AQHA horse breeder's ranch before heading to Germany for the second leg of the mission. Cabaña Lopez Colmenarejo owned by Francisco Lopez is located 20 minutes north of Madrid and

is the largest Limousin seedstock operation in Spain. The ranch runs 250 registered mother cows and sells around 60 bulls and 60 bred females per year. Later we visited the ranch of Santiago Menedez. Santiago has five brood mares and a registered AQHA stallion.

For the final two days of the mission the group travelled to Friedrichshafen, Germany for the Americana horse show. This is the largest Ranch Versatility Show in Germany with competitors from all over Europe including, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, The Netherlands, Germany, and Austria. This show was a totally different experience than in Spain. There were five trade show pavilions filled with vendors from western wear to ranch equipment dealers. The Deutsche Quarter Horse Association (DQHA) has been an affiliate of the AQHA for nearly 50 years so the industry is very mature in this part of Europe. The trip confirmed that the demand for the Western lifestyle in Europe is exploding. Not only for horse breeders but the general public. The Canens expect that not only will their horses see demand from Europe, but their ranch's agritourism enterprise as well. Tana commented, "While the beauty of our horses (and numbers) was interesting to those we met, it was nothing compared to the thought that they could come vacation on our ranch. I think the European visitation will be a significant part of our future. 'Montana' is romantic no matter where we go!"

U.S. Livestock Genetics Export Inc. (USLGE) is the USDA cooperator to promote U.S. livestock genetics throughout the world. USLGE receives Market Access Program (MAP) funding from the USDA, via the Farm Bill, to conduct trade and promotion activities throughout the world. MDA, through its membership to USLGE, has access to MAP funding to help Montana producers promote their genetics internationally. If funding is approved, the AQHA, APHA, and MDA will be hosting a buyer's mission to Montana in 2024 with buyers from Spain and Germany. You can learn more about Mahlstedt Ranch at their website: [www.mahlstedtranch.com](http://www.mahlstedtranch.com)



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# Fall Weed Management

By Tim Seipel, MSU Extension Cropland Weed Specialist and Marley Voll, MSU Richland County Extension

As harvest wraps up it is time to consider your fall weed management plan. There are many factors to consider including what your next crop will be, what weeds you are targeting, and what your crop rotation is.

During the fall, winter annual weeds like cheatgrass, tansy mustard, and marestalk germinate and begin growing. A study out of NDSU found that early rosette is when marestalk control is most effective. The rosette stage can often be found in fields in late September and early October depending on moisture and temperature. Herbicide options include Xtendimax + Valor, Sharpen, Sharpen + Valor, and Gramoxone + Valor. Glyphosate and 2,4-D can control many small winter annual weeds and Valor can be tank mixed to provide residual control. For kochia control through early spring, fall applications of soil-residuals herbicides including Valor, Spartan, Fierce, or Sonalan and Prowl can reduce kochia by killing seedlings as they emerge in the spring. Apply these herbicides after Oct. 15, and for better efficacy, application can be timed with precipitation, which allows the herbicide to be incorporated into upper 1 inch of the soil especially in no-till. Also, in the fall, mowing down some of the kochia may be an option. Mowing reduces the chance that kochia will blow across the field during Chinook season. Tumbling kochia puts seeds back in the field you have been trying to keep clean.

In pulse crops we have been reliant on herbicides like Sharpen, Spartan, and Valor but recently in North Dakota, kochia resistant to those modes of action were identified. Because herbicide options are limited in pulse crops, minimizing the spread of these resistant weed populations should be a priority. Be on the lookout for populations and contact your extension agent if you suspect resistance. Carefully managing them can reduce the spread of herbicide resistant weeds.

Two other very important weeds to scout for are water hemp and Palmer amaranth. These large pigweeds have been found a couple of times in Montana and continue to spread toward us. Palmer amaranth has been found now in its second county in Montana – Daniels County. Fortunately, the plants that were found were in flower and had not yet produced seed. These pigweed species have characteristics that make them more problematic than other pigweeds including rapid growth, prolific seed production with hundreds of seeds per plant, and resistance to multiple herbicide modes of action. Additionally, these pigweeds cause extreme economic impacts and major yield losses. Main vectors of contamination are seed, especially millet, and farm equipment. Continue to be on the lookout for Palmer amaranth and water hemp and contact the Richland County Extension Office or your agronomist if you suspect you've found seeds or plants.

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# Rural Leadership North Dakota Announces 10th Class; 17 People Have Been Selected To Participate

## Submitted by NDSU Agriculture Communication

Rural Leadership North Dakota (RLND) is a North Dakota State University Extension leadership development program designed to empower individuals from across the state, fostering their growth as leaders for rural communities and equipping them to navigate agricultural and rural policy and emerging trends that may impact North Dakota's future.

Class X encompasses a wide array of talents and expertise, with members from various sectors such as ranching, farming, agricultural research, manufacturing, community services, agricultural marketing, local food initiatives, government, and rural development. The class is set to embark on their 18-month leadership development journey in November 2023.

Those selected for Class X are:

- J. Andresen, Hillsboro
- Anna Ross, Belcourt
- Audrey Kalil, Williston
- Barbara Mothershead, Rolette
- Brandon Baity, Moorhead
- Christie Jaeger, Esmond
- Denise Andress, Mandan
- Emily Ptacek, Verona
- Florija Naas, McVille
- Heather Schneider, Grand Forks
- Hilde van Gijssel, Valley City
- Katie Jane Mairs, Lisbon
- Kyle Klapper, Hillsboro
- Melinda Goodman, Minot
- Trinity Nelson, Valley City
- Emma Cook, Killdeer
- James Zorn, Cavalier

"These individuals from across the state share a desire to make their communities, industries and the state of North Dakota stronger," says Katie Tyler, NDSU Extension specialist and RLND program director. "They are ready to enhance their own leadership skills while fostering a culture of mutual learning and growth amongst themselves."

Class members will engage in a series of experiences, including seven in-state workshops featuring tours of agricultural and community businesses, a regional seminar and national seminar, providing opportunities to interact with influential figures in agriculture, business, and government. Additionally, an international study tour will allow them to gain insight into global agricultural policies and rural development, following the footsteps of previous classes who explored countries such as Brazil, Costa Rica, Panama, Thailand, Vietnam, Chile, and Spain.

"The graduation gala to celebrate Class IX in November 2023 will bring the total RLND graduate count to over 150 individuals," says Tyler. "This marks a significant milestone, with these accomplished leaders making a lasting impact throughout North Dakota."



The ninth class of Rural Leadership North Dakota gathers at the state capitol for a seminar on agriculture and rural policies (NDSU photo).

Admission to the program remains highly competitive, involving a formal application and interview process. Applications for the next RLND class will open in January 2025.

The funding for the RLND program is provided by NDSU Extension, participant tuition fees, and generous contributions from agribusinesses, farm organizations, program alumni, and others supporting the program. The comprehensive budget for the RLND program amounts to approximately \$16,000 per class member over the course of the two-year program cycle. These contributions cover the majority of program expenses, with participant tuition fees contributing to the remaining portion. Each participant contributes \$4,000 in tuition fees towards their participation in the program.

# Now Available: Draft Missouri River Operating Plan; Possible Fort Peck Test Flow; Fall Public Meeting Schedule

By Eileen Williamson

Ahead of fall public meetings, the Draft Missouri River Mainstem Reservoir System Annual Operating Plan for the 2023-2024 runoff season is now available for public comment.

The Missouri River Water Management Division has made the draft 2023-2024 Annual Operating Plan available at: <https://www.nwd.usace.army.mil/MRWM/Public-Meetings/>.

The public comment period on the draft plan will close Nov. 30.

The draft plan will be presented to the public in six meetings to be held in early November.

Included in the plan is the possibility for test flows from Fort Peck Dam.

"The purpose of the test flows is to evaluate the potential for achieving Pallid Sturgeon spawning and recruitment in the upper Missouri River using periodic forecast releases that better replicate historic flows and temperatures and would be conducted to comply with the 2018 Biological Opinion," said John Remus, Missouri River Water Management Division Chief.

The basic forecast shown in the draft Annual Operating Plan indicates the

reservoir may be above the 2227-foot elevation next spring, which is necessary prior to the initiation of the test flows.

Staff from the Omaha District will be available at the public meetings to answer questions related to implementing and monitoring of potential test flows.

Fall public meetings provide an update on current year's runoff and reservoir operations as well as planned operations for the next year's runoff season.

The Northwestern Division will host the series of public meeting on Nov. 7-9. The dates and locations of the meetings are shown below.

- Nov. 7, Poplar, MT @ 10 a.m. MT – Fort Peck Community College, 605 Indian Ave
- Nov. 7, Bismarck, ND @ 5 p.m. CT – Bismarck State College, National Energy Center of Excellence (NECE), Bldg. 15, Bavendick Stateroom 1200 Schafer Street
- Nov. 8, Pierre, SD @ 10 a.m. CT – Ramkota Hotel, 920 West Sioux Avenue
- Nov. 8, Lower Brule, SD @ 1 p.m. CT – Lower Brule Community Center
- Nov. 9, Smithville, MO @ 11 a.m. CT – Jerry Litton Visitor Center, Smithville Dam 16311 DD Hwy
- Nov. 9, Bellevue, NE @ 6 p.m. CT – Bellevue University, Hitchcock Humanities Center, 1040 Bruin Blvd

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# NDSU Provides Guidance For North Dakota Corn Harvest & Drying

## Submitted by NDSU Agriculture Communication

Variability in moisture content and maturity of corn in the fields will impact harvest decisions this season, according to Ken Hellevang, North Dakota State University Extension agricultural engineer and grain drying expert.

“There is considerable variation this year due to the challenging spring, variation in rainfall, planting date, maturity rating, and growing degree days, so it is important to check each field and even various areas in a field,” says Hellevang.

Normally, optimum harvest moisture content is about 20%. Moisture content greater than 20% increases drying cost and less than 20% increases harvest mechanical damage and field loss.

The amount of drying in the field depends on parameters such as corn maturity, hybrid, moisture content, air temperature, relative humidity, solar radiation, and wind speed. The current forecast for October is slightly above normal temperatures and normal precipitation. Field-drying, normally, is more economical until mid to late October, in North Dakota, and mechanical high-temperature drying, normally,

is more economical after that, Hellevang notes.

Natural-air and low-temperature drying using an airflow rate of at least 1.0 cubic ft. of air per minute, per bushel, are limited to an initial corn moisture content of about 20-21% and a corn depth of 20-22 ft. Even at that moisture content, air-drying is limited in the northern states during the fall due to the colder outdoor temperatures in late October and November. Estimated drying time is about 40 days in October and 70 days in November. The moisture-holding capacity of air is very small at temperatures below about 40° F. Expect to store the wet corn over winter by cooling it to between 20-30° and drying in the spring when outside temperatures average above 40°.

There are several types of dryers and options for high temperature corn drying. There are cross-flow dryers with and without corn turners and vacuum or heat reclaim cooling. There are also mixed-flow dryers and in-bin dryers. Each has specific features and benefits. Typical drying cost per point of moisture removed can be estimated by multiplying the propane cost per gallon by 0.02. For example, if propane is \$2/gal., the propane cost for drying is about \$0.04 per bushel per point of moisture removed.

Corn should be dried to about 15.5% moisture for storage over winter and about 13% to 14% if being stored into next summer. Cool the corn to between 20-25° for winter storage. Hellevang supports using temperature cables to assist with monitoring the corn, but technology does not replace management. He still recommends monitoring the corn moisture content, inspecting for insects and observing the corn quality.

Remember safety when working around grain. Protect yourself from grain dust with an N95 mask. Do not go into a grain bin while the grain is moving. It only takes a couple seconds to become helpless in flowing grain. Use the lock-out tag-out system to assure that you do not get hurt while working on grain drying and handling equipment.

For more information on corn drying and storage, search online for NDSU grain drying and storage.



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Variability in moisture content and maturity of corn in the fields will impact harvest decisions this season. (NDSU photo)

# Montana 4-H Enrolling New Members, Seeking Volunteers

By Christine Hodges,  
Curriculum and Communication Specialist,  
4-H Center for Youth Development,  
MSU News

Bozeman — Youth across Montana who would like to enroll in Montana 4-H are invited to do so during the month of October.

Montana 4-H is the youth development program of Montana State University Extension. It offers a range of choices and opportunities for youth to learn and grow, such as cooking or sewing, learning about conservation and robotics, or raising an animal, while instilling employable life skills. In all, Montana 4-H offers more than 200 different projects and experiences that engage youth in learning. It is the largest out-of-school youth development program in the state, reaching nearly 20,000 youth in all 56 counties each year.

In general, individuals aged eight to 18 are eligible to participate in Montana 4-H. Some counties also offer a program known as Cloverbuds for children ages five to eight.

The cost to join varies by county; in many counties in Montana, it is about \$20. More information is available at [www.montana.edu/extension/4h/join/index.html](http://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/join/index.html).

Montana 4-H is also seeking adult volunteers to work with 4-H youth as partners in hands-on learning. Volunteer enrollment is ongoing.

According to Todd Kesner, director of the 4-H Center for Youth Development, volunteers are vital to carrying out the program's mission and vision. Montana's 4-H youth development program relies on volunteers with varying schedules and interests to:

- Provide expertise in educational project areas such as photography, agriculture, food and nutrition, rocketry, robotics, public speaking and more.
- Guide youth in learning and exploration.
- Engage youth in service opportunities in communities.
- Ensure leadership for 4-H club management.
- Build a safe, caring and nurturing environment and relationships with youth.

Volunteers must be 19 years or older; in addition, some age restrictions apply for chaperoning responsibilities. More information is available at [www.montana.edu/extension/4h/volunteer/index.html#How](http://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/volunteer/index.html#How).

Youth and adults interested in joining or volunteering for Montana 4-H are invited to contact their local MSU Extension office. For more information about Montana 4-H, visit [montana.edu/4h](http://montana.edu/4h).



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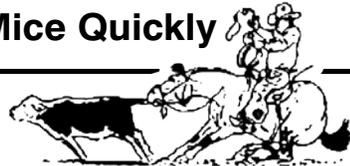
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# NDSU Offers Advice For Soybean Harvest & Drying; Moisture Content & Temperature Are Important Factors When Harvesting & Storing Soybeans

## Submitted by NDSU Agriculture Communication

Harvest timing and soybean moisture content can have a huge impact on soybean shatter losses, according to North Dakota State University Extension agricultural engineer Ken Hellevang. “There is considerable variation this year due to the challenging spring, variation in rainfall, planting date, maturity rating and growing degree days, so it is important to check each field,” says Hellevang. “There may also be considerable variation within a field.”

Soybean moisture content in the field will fluctuate depending on drying conditions and air humidity. Moisture content can increase by several points with an overnight dew or rain event, and it can decrease by several points during a day with low humidity and windy conditions.

“Field losses, splits, and cracked seed coats increase as moisture content decreases,” Hellevang says. “Shatter losses have been shown to increase significantly when seed moisture falls below 11% and when mature beans undergo multiple wetting and drying cycles.”

He recommends that producers try to harvest as much of their crop as possible before the moisture level falls below 11-12%. Producers will receive the best price for their soybeans when the moisture content is 13%. Prices will be discounted for beans at moisture contents exceeding about 13%, and beans are prone to storage problems at higher moisture contents.

Because harvest losses increase, dramatically, when the moisture content is below 11%, harvesting during high humidity or damp conditions may reduce shatter loss, according to Hellevang.

Soybeans at 11-12% moisture have similar storage characteristics as wheat or corn at about 13.5-14.5% moisture, and 13% moisture soybeans might be expected to store the same way as 15.5% moisture wheat and corn. The 13% moisture content is adequate for winter storage, but for summer storage, the moisture content should be closer to 11%.

Soybean moisture variation may lead to storage losses. Operating an aeration fan will help move moisture from wet beans to drier beans. Air going past wet beans picks up moisture, and that moisture will transfer to drier beans as the air goes past them. Moisture movement will be minimal without aeration airflow. Hellevang suggests initially running the fan longer than is required to cool the grain to even out the moisture content. The moisture will not be all the same, but it should become more uniform.

Natural air-drying with an adequate airflow rate of at least 1.0 cubic ft. of air per minute, per bushel of stored grain is feasible during early October, but as average air temperatures drop below 40° F, natural air-drying becomes inefficient and not economical. Adding heat causes the beans on the bottom of the bin to dry to a lower moisture content, and it would increase drying speed only slightly.

Hellevang recommends cooling the soybeans to between 20° and 30° F for winter storage and completing the natural air-drying in the spring. Start drying in the spring when outdoor temperatures are averaging about 40°.

Soybeans can be dried in a high-temperature dryer, but the dryer temperature needs to be limited to minimize damage to the beans. Refer to the manufacturer’s recommendations for maximum drying temperature. Typically, the maximum drying temperature for nonfood soybeans is about 130° F. Even at that temperature, some skins and beans will be cracked. He recommends monitoring the soybean seeds coming from the dryer and managing the dryer temperature based on the amount of damage occurring.



Operating an aeration fan will help move moisture from wet beans to drier beans. (NDSU photo)

Keep the air relative humidity above 40% to minimize cracking of food grade or seed beans. Roughly, with each 20° increase in drying temperature, the air relative humidity is reduced to one-half, Hellevang notes. Air at 40° and 80% relative humidity will have a relative humidity of about 40% when heated to 60°. Therefore, very little heat should be added in a column dryer when drying seed or food grade beans. Food grade soybeans and seed beans must not have damage to the seed coat, so natural-air or low-temperature drying is the preferred drying method, Hellevang says.

Hellevang also warns of the risk of fires when drying soybeans. Soybean pods and other trash can accumulate in the dryer and become combustible. He has this advice to reduce the risk of fires:

- Assure that trash does not accumulate in the dryer.
- Assure that the soybeans continue to flow in all sections of the dryer.
- Monitor the dryer continuously.
- Clean the dryer frequently to reduce the potential for debris to combust.

Cool the soybeans to 20-25° for winter storage. Hellevang supports using temperature cables to assist with monitoring the soybeans, but technology does not replace management. He still recommends monitoring the soybean moisture content, inspecting for insects and observing soybean quality.

Remember safety when working around grain. Protect yourself from grain dust with an N95 mask. Do not go into a grain bin while the grain is moving. It only takes a couple seconds to become helpless in flowing grain. Use the lock-out tag-out system to assure that you do not get hurt while working on grain drying and handling equipment.

For more information on soybean drying and storage, search online for NDSU grain drying and storage.

# Solberg Joins Butler Machinery As Chief Financial Officer

Submitted by Chloe Reichel of Butler Machinery

Butler Corporate Office Fargo, ND | September 5, 2023 Butler Machinery hired Travis Solberg as their new chief financial officer. Solberg most recently worked at Wanzek Construction, Inc., a subsidiary of MasTec. Solberg is a graduate of North Dakota State University and holds a CPA license in North Dakota.

Solberg is also the Landon's Light Foundation President. The foundation was started to carry on the legacy of Solberg's son Landon who lost his battle to cancer.

"We are excited to welcome Travis to the Butler Machinery family. His impressive financial background, combined with his dedication to the community, aligns perfectly with our values. Travis's insights and expertise will undoubtedly contribute to our continued growth," said Twylah Blotsky, president.

Solberg's extensive background makes him an invaluable addition to the Butler Machinery team.

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Travis Solberg. (Photo submitted)

## MDA Seeking Applicants For Montana Hemp Advisory Committee

Submitted by Logan Kruse, Montana Department of Agriculture

Helena, MT – The Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) is seeking applications from hemp growers interested in serving on the Montana Hemp Advisory Committee. The deadline for applications is Monday, Oct. 16.

The advisory committee consists of at least five voting members involved in the production of hemp within the prior three years, one non-voting processing industry representative, and one non-voting representative from the Montana State University System. The Committee is responsible for advising the Department on the use of hemp checkoff funds generated through Montana's Agricultural Commodity Research and Market Development program. Through the program, 1% of the net receipts of all hemp crops produced in Montana can be used to further research, marketing and education activities that advance Montana's hemp industry.

Those interested in serving on the committee can request an application by contacting Dani Jones at 406-444-2402 or [danielle.jones@mt.gov](mailto:danielle.jones@mt.gov).

Finished applications can be sent to MDA:

- Via email at: [danielle.jones@mt.gov](mailto:danielle.jones@mt.gov)
- Via mail at: Montana Department of Agriculture, Hemp Advisory Committee, 302 N. Roberts, Helena, MT 59601.

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# NRCS Sets Conservation Program Funding Application Date For Oct. 27

## Submitted by Jamie Selting, District Conservationist

Bozeman, MT – The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Montana is accepting applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), and Wetlands Reserve Easements (WRE). To be considered for funding in the current cycle, producers and landowners should apply by Oct. 27.

“NRCS provides funding and technical assistance to help farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners implement conservation practices that improve their environmental and economic sustainability,” said Tom Watson, Montana NRCS State Conservationist. “Conservation work focused on local outcomes with the support of local partners and land managers achieves meaningful conservation across a landscape. These opportunities are open to ag operations of any scale.”

Conservation funding is available for the following programs and initiatives:

**Community Agriculture:** Building on the high tunnel initiative available in the past, the community agriculture initiative offers an expanded set of conservation practices tailored to the conservation needs of small-scale ag producers.

**Joint Chiefs’ Landscape Restoration Partnership Projects:** The U.S. Forest Service and NRCS are working together to improve the health of forests and reduce wildfire threats to communities where public forests and grasslands connect to privately owned lands. There are currently five projects in Montana, including the Connecting Fuels Treatments in the Salish Mountains and Whitefish Range Project, Elkhorn Cooperative Management Area, Fire Adapted Bitterroot Project, Gallatin Valley Forest Resiliency, Watershed Health Project, and the Libby Surround Project.

**Migratory Bird Resurgence Initiative:** This initiative is focused on unmanipulated wetlands of two acres or less within working cropland as identified on the National Wetland Inventory. It is aimed at preserving, protecting, and improving habitat for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, neotropicals, and other avian species in the Prairie Pothole Region.

**National On-Farm Energy Initiative:** Agricultural producers work with NRCS-approved technical service providers to develop agricultural energy management plans or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. NRCS may also provide assistance to implement recommended measures identified in the energy audit through the use of conservation practice standards.

**National Organic Initiative:** Producers currently certified as organic, transitioning to organic, or National Organic Program exempt will have access to a broad set of conservation practices to assist in treating their resource concerns while fulfilling many of the requirements in an Organic System Plan.

**National Water Quality Initiative:** This initiative focuses assistance in small watersheds to improve water quality where this is a critical concern. With the help of partners at the local, state, and national levels, NRCS identified priority watersheds in Montana where on-farm conservation investments will deliver the greatest water quality benefits. The two projects in Montana are in the Lower Gallatin watershed (Camp and Godfrey Creeks) and the Shields River watershed.

**Sage Grouse Initiative:** Producers can work with NRCS on three different components to improve sage grouse habitat. One is a general category to implement prescribed grazing management practices. The others are to seed cropland back to perennial species to improve the connectivity for sage grouse that depend on large, intact landscapes and the removal of conifers to increase nest success rates.

**Targeted Implementation Plans:** Montana NRCS targets its investments in very specific areas to achieve clearly defined natural resource goals as identified by local partners. This approach harnesses the power of multiple producers in one area undertaking similar conservation projects to achieve a regional or landscape-scale result. There are more than 100 local projects currently available in fiscal year 2024.

**Conservation Incentive Contracts:** Conservation Incentive Contracts are an option under EQIP, with a focus on climate-smart forestry and agriculture and drought resilience management practices. EQIP-CIC provides financial assistance to adopt conservation activities on working landscapes.

**Regional Conservation Partnership Program:** The RCPP promotes coordination of NRCS conservation activities with partners that offer value-added contributions to expand our collective ability to address on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns. Currently, there are RCPP land management projects in Montana and easement-based projects, including Northern Great Plains Grassland Conservation Project, and the Gallatin Valley Land Trust project, Bitterroot Conservation Connectivity Project, Flint Creek Valley Conservation Partnership Project.

**Wetland Reserve Easements:** Part of the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, WREs help private and tribal landowners protect, restore, and enhance wetlands, which have been previously degraded due to agricultural uses. These easements provide habitat for fish and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species, improve water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, protect biological diversity, provide resilience to climate change, and provide opportunities for educational, scientific, and limited recreational activities.

EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to eligible participants to install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land. In Montana, historically underserved participants, including limited resource, and beginning farmers and ranchers, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers and ranchers will receive a higher payment rate for eligible conservation practices applied.

The CSP is for working lands. For farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners already taking steps to improve the condition of the land, CSP can help find new ways to meet resource and operation goals. All the land in a producer’s agricultural operation must be enrolled to be eligible for CSP. In addition to applying by Oct. 27, 2023, new proposed activities must be selected by Jan. 26, 2024, so the field office conservation planner can complete assessment and ranking of applications.

Producers willing to focus their CSP conservation efforts on solutions which promote climate-related benefits are encouraged to select activities from the Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry Mitigation Activities List. Climate-smart activities directly improve soil carbon, reduce nitrogen losses, or reduce capture, avoid or sequester carbon dioxide, methane or nitrous oxide emissions associated with agricultural production.

NRCS accepts conservation program applications year-round; however, applications for the next funding consideration must be submitted by Oct. 27, 2023. Applications made after that date will be considered in the next funding cycle. Additional information is available on the Montana NRCS website. Visit [www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov) and scroll down to State Programs and Initiatives, or contact your local USDA service center.

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