



SUNBASIN  
GROWERS



# Growers' Connection



## The Future Is Coming Quick, Plan for It Now

By Tyson Chick, General Manager, [Tyson.Chick@chsinc.com](mailto:Tyson.Chick@chsinc.com)

Have you ever looked around and thought, “Wow, where did the time go?” I walked into our living room the other day to see pictures scrolling across the TV from when the kids were younger. I would never have thought the years could go so quickly. Next year, I’ll have a senior in high school. That doesn’t quite seem possible.

It’s easy to get so caught up in what’s going on now that we miss what’s coming next. Hard to believe the agronomy and spring planting season will soon be right on top of us. This winter is an excellent time to preplan your needs with your Agronomy Sales Rep (ASR). If you haven’t had a demonstration yet of the Agellum™ farm planning software, now is a great time to ask your ASR to see how it can help your farm. It’s also a good time to set up your MyCHS account so you can access all your account information online 24/7. We have also updated our billing statements so they can be sent directly to your email account.

CHS is also planning for your future needs by making investments that directly impact your farm. This winter we made an investment in Wolf Trax™ fertilizer technology at the Warden fertilizer hub and finalized plans for a major grain facility upgrade at Kennewick. You may never physically see the investments at Kennewick as all of them impact the interior workings of the facility, but we are sure you will notice them come harvest. The investments being made are designed to increase your speed, reduce labor and make the elevator a safer place to work.

We would like to invite you to our customer meeting on Feb. 25 at Michael Jays in Connell. The meeting will start at 8 a.m. and will have speakers from grain, energy and agronomy,

finishing with lunch. I hope you’ll be able to join us there.

Patronage rates are not yet finalized for FY19 but you should see them in the mail in late February or early March. From the early estimates I have seen, I think you will be very happy.

Finally, please know that I want to hear from you on how we can improve our services. It’s a tough ag environment and we are changing along with it. In some cases, this meant consolidating operations. In others, it meant making investments, such as taking over operation of the barge facility at Lower Monumental Dam and the upcoming improvements in Kennewick. We’ve also continued to invest in new technology, such as Wolf Trax in our agronomy group and the replacement of aging pumps and trucks in energy.

I look forward to hearing what is important for you. ■

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# Plan Now to Protect Yields

By Austin Davis, Agronomy Sales Rep,  
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Some of you may already have seen the stripe rust forecast from Dr. Chen at Washington State University. Given our weather to date, he is issuing a Severe Epidemic warning for susceptible varieties. That means a possible yield loss of 40-60% if not addressed.

There are many potential yield-robbing sources out there, and one of the most important things you need to protect is your flag leaf. Remember: the flag leaf, and the leaf just below it, provide 75-80% of the photosynthesis your wheat plant takes through head fill. If you use an Azoxystrobin at flag leaf emergence, you will not only protect against stripe rust but also get a stress-reduction effect and longer “stay green” for head fill.

Early herbicide application is timed to stack the deck in your favor and stop the yield-robbing potential of weeds. It's also a great time to add in a fungicide to clean up and protect your crop potential. For the irrigated winter wheat farmers, another tank partner to consider at that time is a growth regulator for standability. When using an 8-10 ounce rate of Syngenta's Palisade®, we regularly see a yield bump of 7-15 bushels per acre, which makes adding that to the mix an easy decision.

Another yield-robbing pest to scout for is cereal leaf beetle, which can do tremendous damage and has an affinity for the flag leaf. With how much heavy lifting the flag leaf does, don't forget to keep an eye out for this pest!

Every year we find varying amounts of fusarium head scab in Columbia Basin fields. Likely, you won't fight it every year, but it is out there. Corn is a common vector for the disease, but it is not the only one. After a mild winter such as this, I've found it following potatoes. In more severe instances, a yield loss of 50% can be expected, and possible rejection of the crop if the toxic byproducts of the disease get out of hand. This is a disease predominantly found in, but not limited to, spring wheat. Prevention is possible with something like Prosaro® or Miravis® Ace at early flowering, but there is no cure once infection has occurred.

Along with planning ahead for disease prevention, fertility timing is equally important. Nutrient uptake isn't an overnight affair, and they will take more than a few days to be positioned in the plant. If you wanted to give your plants 20 units for stem elongation, make sure you aren't just applying it a few days before that event will happen.

Be sure to ask your CHS agronomist about farm planning in Agellum. It's a great way to sit down and plan out various strategies and cropping options to let you see the costs and returns possible in your operation. ■

## Markets Quiet, Uneasy

By Camron Bishop, Grain Department Manager,  
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Happy New Year! Hope your holidays were enjoyable. It's been quiet in the grain markets over the last couple months. Uncertainty over how much grain China will buy under the newly signed trade agreement, impeachment proceedings and tensions in the Middle East have been creating unease in the markets. Australia had a smaller wheat crop of 16 million metric tons (MMT) this year due to drought, but Ukraine is forecasted to pick up the slack with a bigger crop of 75 MMT versus 70 MMT last year. No big worry spots currently, but keep an eye on South America and Russia as there are some dry spots starting to pop up.

### Corn

At this time, there are about 8% of U.S. corn acres still standing in the field which represents about 1 billion bushels. The USDA will be resurveying production in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois as that is where a large portion of the unharvested corn remains.

Early reports on acres for this coming year show we could see a 4 million acre increase in corn, but there are still a lot of minds to be made up. Currently, the USDA is pegging carryout of 1.89 billion bushels of corn, which equates to a 13.4% stocks-to-use versus last year at 15.5%. Getting tighter, but a lot depends on the weather and acres of this year's crop. U.S. quarterly stocks were a little lower than expected at 11.389 billion bushels on the January report with last year's number being 11.937 billion.

Look for corn prices to remain on the steady/firm side this year with China looming in the background.

### Wheat

The USDA has pegged HRW carryout at 489 million bushels with a stocks-to-use of 56.5% versus their last report of 483 million bushels and stocks-to-use of 55.5%. On the bright side of winter wheat, they have the lowest planted acres since 1909! Stocks-to-use can change quickly with a bad crop and really low acres. On the spring wheat side, the USDA has numbers relatively unchanged year-over-year with our carryout predicted at 264 million bushels versus last year at 263 million bushels.

We will be in a more competitive spot this year versus Canada on exports of spring wheat into Japan as we have a new trade agreement with them. This should help us dig into the 46.2% stocks-to-use we have currently. Soft white wheat is currently sitting at 30.4% stocks-to-use and is the lowest of any variety of wheat grown in the U.S. Sales of SWW have been enough to keep it out of the burdensome stocks situation the other types of wheat are facing.

As you can see, we have plenty of wheat on hand and need more exports. China could be just what we need if they start buying more U.S. ag products, including wheat. Let's hope for an early end to winter and start of spring so we can get back to feeding the world. Happy farming! ■



Three-time Bin Buster Award winner Phillip Gross and the Warden Hutterian Brethren.

## Pushing the Wheat Yield Boundaries

By Roland Wynhoff, Agronomy Sales Rep,  
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Established in 2015, the National Wheat Yield Contest helps show U.S. wheat growers the potential of new varieties available through both public and private genetics providers. It has also helped growers pay more attention to wheat and how to care for it so it will perform at its optimal level. Over the last two decades, the PNW has taken advantage of public and private breeding advances and planted well over 90% of our acres to Certified Seed.

In 2016, I was working with Phillip Gross, who entered the contest in the Irrigated Winter Wheat category. We went through the registration process, learning all the ins and outs of the rules, arranging the independent observers to verify the area harvested met the contest standards and independently verifying the weight harvested was accurate. It was time-consuming during harvest, but well worth it: Phillip won the first Bin Buster Award (overall high yield) with 192 bushels per acre (bu/A), with the WestBred variety Keldin.

In 2017, Phillip entered again, this time with LCS Jet. The weather played out much differently and the contest plots only came in at 184 bu/A — still good enough to win the 2017 Bin Buster Award. Two for two wasn't bad.

Alongside Phillip, James Getzinger, a spring wheat farmer just west of Moses Lake, also entered in the Irrigated Spring Wheat category with WestBred's Solano. He ended up placing third nationally and was top in the state with 152.92 bu/A. The way the rules worked then, this category was yield versus county average, so James took third nationally with the highest overall yield in the Spring Wheat Category.

We saw an exceptional year in 2018, and once again Phillip signed up for Irrigated Winter Wheat with LCS Jet. The yield plot was measured, harvested and verified independently and he once again topped the nation, this time with 202.58 bu/A. Phillip was the first grower in the U.S. to top 200 bu/A and a new standard was set. That was three for three for the nation's top yield.

That same year, Phillip's brother Keith Gross entered in the Irrigated Spring Wheat category with WestBred 9662, a variety that can be planted in fall or spring. At harvest, it yielded 172.56 bu/A, earning Keith a second-place finish nationally and first place in the state.

James Getzinger placed second in the state with 168 bu/A with WestBred Solano but was just edged out nationally.

2019 has come and gone, and the contest was revved up a bit. For the first time, Phillip was not the Bin Buster Winner. That honor went to Rick Pearson of Twin Falls, Idaho, with a yield of 211.59 bu/A. As you can tell, the bar is being raised as more growers are learning that with a little effort you can get a much better return on investment with wheat.

Phillip took a new variety from Bayer WestBred, WB 4394, and weighed in at 200.48 bu/A for second place nationally in the Irrigated Winter Wheat category. These are brand new genetics and we are just learning its potential, but we're hopeful for even better results in 2020.

In 2019's contest, we worked with Derek Friehe of Friehe Farms, Moses Lake, and entered a harvest plot of WestBred 9668 in the Irrigated Spring Wheat category. Derek placed first in both the state and nation with 180.77 bu/A.

What the producers and I have challenged each other on throughout this process is how to protect and take advantage of the potential of these new genetics. We have put in large strip trials for over eight years, putting new and established varieties to the test (as many pre-released varieties as we can get our hands on), seeing their characteristics, how they grow and trying to get the input timing correct to maximize their potential.

These newer varieties have even greater potential than the older genetics, and if you treat them like the older varieties, you will get a higher yield. But if you increase the fertility, having it available at the right time, you can see even more substantial yield increases. If you are aware of the limiting factors, what is needed to make the macro nutrients available to the plant and make sure the plant has what it needs before it needs it, 200-plus-bushel wheat is possible. If the plant doesn't have everything it needs in an available form when each growth stage hits, that plant will not reach its true potential. ■



Derek Friehe, the 2019 First Place, High Yield, Irrigated Spring Wheat winner, and his family.

## Fuel Contracting for the New Year

By Dale Michelsen, Energy Department Manager,  
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As we start out the new year, this is the time to think about contracting some of your fuel needs. Year-over-year data says the middle of December through February is the best time to look at contracts.

There are two different ways we can contract fuel for your needs. One is a NYMEX fixed-price contract. They are sold in 42,000 or 21,000 amounts. With these contracts, you pick the month or months you want to take delivery and quantity amounts.

Another more flexible type we offer is a storage contract. You can contract small or large amounts — whatever your operation needs. You can place farm and road diesel with the same contract. You get to decide when the market is right to pull your gallons. You get one month of free storage, then it's two cents per month per gallon. Your contract has to be pulled by the end of October, and some customers in the past have saved 20 to 30 cents per gallon.

This is another tool to help control your expenses. Give us a call with your contract needs and let us set up a program specifically for you. You can reach us at the office, 509-765-3465, or speak to our Certified Energy Sales team. ■



Transform fertilizer into innovative, customized micronutrient solutions with Wolf Trax DDP® Nutrients. Patented EvenCoat™ Technology allows our DDP Nutrients to coat onto N-P-K granules, ensuring blanket-like distribution across the field for earlier plant availability. It's a smart way to deliver crop nutrition that's good for your growers and for your business.

Add opportunity by blending with Wolf Trax DDP Nutrients.

Learn more at [wolfrax.com/dealerinfo](http://wolfrax.com/dealerinfo).



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 *Compass Minerals*

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Compass Minerals is the proud supplier of Wolf Trax Innovative Nutrients.

Not all products are registered in all areas.

Contact [wolfrax@compassminerals.com](mailto:wolfrax@compassminerals.com) for more information.

Product depicted is Wolf Trax Iron DDP coated onto urea fertilizer.

Other DDP Nutrients may not appear exactly as shown.

## Flexible Credit for your Farming Operation

By Jamie Nguyen, Credit Manager, [Jamie.Nguyen@chsinc.com](mailto:Jamie.Nguyen@chsinc.com)

Last October, many customers received a letter and credit application in the mail. This is part of our continuing efforts to review credit on an annual basis to help protect your assets within CHS SunBasin Growers. It is my top priority to make this review process as convenient as possible. If you have not completed and returned this application, please do so at your earliest convenience.

Producer financing is an important part of planning for your crop season. CHS SunBasin Growers wants to partner with you to make sure you have options available that include short-term and long-term financing.

We had an increased number of customers who used the season-long crop input financing in 2019. The customers that participated provided great feedback on how easy and convenient the program was. This program allows you to

purchase our products and take advantage of season-long financing, with a payment due date that aligns with your crop income.

The Autumn Rewards program is another great way to get very competitive interest rates for the purchase of specific products, with a Dec. 15, 2020, due date. Reach out to your sales representative for a list of qualified products. One important note: interest rates vary depending on the timing of your application and the credit rating.

If you are interested in any of our financing options, please call me at 509-787-3511 or email me. My office is in Quincy, but I will travel to meet with you at any of our CHS SunBasin Grower locations.

I look forward to working with you! ■

# Chemical Storage on the Farm

By Rodney Rosin, Safety Specialist, [Rodney.Rosin@chsinc.com](mailto:Rodney.Rosin@chsinc.com)

Improper chemical storage on the farm can lead to dangerous situations. Where we put our open containers is often an afterthought. All these choices can lead to spills, possible misuse or misapplication of chemicals because the label degrades.

Organization is key to keeping your chemicals safe for use. Some of the common chemicals used on a farm are glyphosate, aluminum or zinc phosphide (fumigants), organophosphate, pyrethroids, methyl bromide, sodium fluoroacetate (1080 bait) strychnine, paraquat and diquat.

Maintaining the proper labeling is paramount to proper storage. If you transfer to another container, it must be labeled to reflect what it contains.

Suggestions for the safe storage of chemicals include:

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper storage.
- Keep chemicals in their original containers and do not pour into smaller bottles.
- Do not remove labels from containers.

- Store chemicals in a locked, well-ventilated shed with floors that will contain spills.
- Store chemicals and appropriate personal protective equipment in different locations.
- Store the filter(s) from masks separately from contaminated protective equipment when not in use – i.e., in a zip-locked bag or an ice-cream container.
- Do not store liquid chemicals above solids.
- Separate different classes of chemicals to prevent reactions.
- Store animal feeds, seeds and fertilizers separately from other chemicals.
- Have mop-up materials on hand, such as sand, soil or absorbent.
- Keep ignition sources well away from chemicals.
- Keep a record of the chemicals you buy, store and use.

Some chemicals are very dangerous and can cause severe reactions if not handled or stored correctly. Take the extra time to manage your chemicals as required. ■

## MyCHS Customer Resources

By Tasha Gentry, Accounting Specialist, [Tasha.Gentry@chsinc.com](mailto:Tasha.Gentry@chsinc.com)

Last July, CHS rolled out a re-vamped customer resource site called MyCHS, bringing all the business you do with CHS together into one easy-to-read-and-navigate source.

The homepage gives a quick snapshot of what you have going on. You can see your unpaid invoices, bookings, grain contracts and more. Or use the navigation bar to dive deeper into each of the categories for more information.

### MyCHS:

- Converts your information into PDFs or an Excel spreadsheet.
- Customizable to fit your preferences, and your information can be viewed in two different formats – a traditional table format or a card format. You can filter your information to find exactly what you are looking for. Grain shipments can be filtered by date, location, commodity and invoices can be filtered by paid, unpaid, due date and more.
- Constantly evolving to fit the needs of our customers and offer them new features.

Be on the lookout for new reporting features allowing you to generate a Grain Summary or Proof of Yield. Sign up for free at [chssunbasingrowers.com](http://chssunbasingrowers.com) and look for the blue MyCHS button in the top right corner of your screen.

Did you know you can get your CHS SunBasin Growers monthly statement emailed to you? Your statement will be emailed within the first few business days of the month. Please call the office at 509-787-3511 or email [Bobette.Rackley@chsinc.com](mailto:Bobette.Rackley@chsinc.com) to get signed up today. ■





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## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Join CHS employees in creating connections to empower agriculture with a cooperative spirit. CHS is always looking for new talent to drive us forward. Explore CHS career opportunities today.

With spring knocking on our door, CHS SunBasin Growers will be seeking individuals to join our operations team working in our various locations as seasonal CDL truck drivers. Look for openings to start in February 2020. Then as we roll into the summer, we will have opportunities at our Kennewick grain elevator for seasonal laborers through the harvest season. Positions will be opening in June 2020.

To view full descriptions of all our Job opportunities and complete the online application visit [chsinc.com/careers](https://chsinc.com/careers).

# Agronomy Decision Time for 2020

By Rufino Gonzalez, Purchasing Specialist, [Rufino.Gonzalez@chsinc.com](mailto:Rufino.Gonzalez@chsinc.com);  
George Smith, Agronomy Sales Manager, [George.Smith@chsinc.com](mailto:George.Smith@chsinc.com)

As spring approaches, so does the time to make decisions on your farm. One of those decisions may be what to spray for weed control in your alfalfa. While this seems simple, it is not one to take lightly and there are a few points to consider.

When did you plant the stand? Most chemistries have a label for established alfalfa but not new seeding alfalfa. If your tap root is the size of a pencil, or you have taken a cutting, that would be considered established.

How long are you planning to keep the stand in? Check with your ASR for the proper chemical to fit your rotational practices.

Also, talk with your ASR about using the farm planning tools in Agellum where you can plan to maximize your ROI on each field and over the whole farm.

## Early crop nutrition

Micronutrient deficiency in young crops affects plant health, growth and yield. Adding micronutrients to a spring soil application proactively addresses a crop's nutrient needs before deficiency symptoms occur. Equally important, distributing nutrients evenly across the field can help mitigate toxicity, uneven crop maturation or difficulty in timing sprays and harvest.

Wolf Trax™ dry dispersible powder (DDP) nutrients have been recognized by fertilizer retailers and growers around the world as doing a better job of delivering essential macro- and micronutrients, such as zinc or boron, than traditional granular fertilizers. Formulated as a DDP and

designed to coat onto dry fertilizer blends, Wolf Trax DDP nutrient fertilizers use unique, research-tested and field-proven technologies to provide improved nutrient availability to plants.

- EvenCoat® Technology allows Wolf Trax DDP nutrients to coat onto every N, P, K or S granule of a fertilizer blend, resulting in blanket-like distribution across the field. This creates many points of interception for a young crop, making nutrients highly available to plant roots for earlier plant uptake.
- PlantActiv™ Formulation ensures Wolf Trax nutrients are chemically and physically designed to resist soil tie-up and remain plant-available. The nutrient particle size is ideal for plant uptake and each DDP nutrient includes at least two forms of the mineral to deliver the nutrients crops need to perform at their peak.

Wolf Trax DDP nutrients can be customized to suit your specific crop requirements using any combination of the seven individual or three multi-nutrient DDP products, making it easy to deliver the nutrition plants need and optimizing the return on every fertilizer dollar.

## A final note

Remember to get your twine orders in if you haven't already. Most of our twine is in stock and ready to deliver at your earliest convenience. Planning ahead will guarantee that you have your twine when you need it. ■