

Introduction

The Central Oregon Agricultural Research Center (COARC) faculty and staff are pleased to present a summary of research activities conducted during 2013. The twenty-nine reports in this publication focus on grass seed (7), vegetable seed (4), potatoes and peppermint (4), forages and cereals (2), rangeland (8) community projects (3) and weather data for 2013 (1). We invite you to look through the report, read a few abstracts and perhaps read entire reports on topics of particular interest.

Beginning in 2011, COARC and the central Oregon agricultural community implemented a collective response to the OSU College of Agricultural Sciences Dean's challenge to local beneficiaries of the branch experimental stations around the state to provide 25 percent of the current base budget. Local growers and industry representatives, recognizing the economic value provided by COARC, developed a multi-faceted plan for voluntary contributions to support the station.

Growers across the three counties of central Oregon are being asked to voluntarily contribute \$1/irrigated acre for non-contracted crops. Suggested grower contributions of \$10/acre for carrots, parsley and onions, and \$3/acre for grass seed have been accepted by the large majority of growers in Jefferson County. In addition, there have been annual contributions based on \$4/acre of wheat burned, and seed contractors and agricultural dealers are also committed to providing meaningful annual contributions.

We are humbled and gratified by the level of support COARC has received across central Oregon. This places a high level of responsibility on COARC to meet the needs of local agriculture and ensure we are working to add value to your operation or business, and to the local community.

Your collective support sends the College of Agriculture a strong message that COARC is a valued partner in the local agricultural community. This also gives the college incentive to continue to invest in COARC, and is the reason COARC is often cited around the state as an example of strong local support.

Transfer of funding from the COARC Support Fund at the OSU Foundation to the COARC budget is under the control of local grower representatives. Specific transfers of dollars must be formally requested by the COARC Director, discussed by the COARC Advisory Council and a recommendation made to the committee of six. The intent is to maintain a pool of funds without allowing it to grow beyond a comfortable cushion to meet expected needs.

Each year, the COARC Advisory Council meets with individual researchers to review their projects from the previous year and preview those they are planning for the coming year. We are inviting each person who donated to the COARC Support Fund to provide their input as well. If you are a COARC Supporter, you are receiving a questionnaire seeking your input to be shared with the Advisory Council and COARC faculty and staff. Be assured your thoughts will be taken seriously as we work to continually earn your respect and support.

COARC's economic impact upon the local agricultural community is seen through applied research, product registrations, educational programs and services, and new crop evaluation. COARC is proactive about addressing agricultural issues in the region, and providing an incentive for growers to support our research and educational activities.

A recent example is ongoing research being conducted on the movement of nitrogen fertilizer in the soil and Kentucky bluegrass grown for seed. Essentially all the nitrogen applied was recovered one and two years later either in the plant or top two feet of soil. A similar project was initiated on winter wheat during the fall of 2013.

A companion research project determined the amount of ammonia volatilization that occurs with urea-based fertilizers under central Oregon conditions. Losses in the 25 percent range, or 40 pounds nitrogen per acre, are common when urea is applied to bluegrass seed fields following the last irrigation in mid-October. What is being learned from these projects is changing the way agricultural dealers and growers are doing business related to fertilizer handling and crop nutrition.

A second example is the initiation of an alfalfa variety evaluation in August, 2011 that includes both conventional and Roundup Ready cultivars. For the first time, this four-year project will provide independent feed value testing (ADF, NDF) for each of the four cuttings, in addition to the protein and yield data provided in the past. We have been successful at making the results available in near real time to assist in your management decisions. This research is being funded by entry fees from the seed companies, at no cost to local alfalfa growers.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts, answering any questions, discussing your concerns, or sharing ideas on how to collectively increase COARC's positive economic impact on the central Oregon agricultural community. Feel free to give me a call at 541-475-7107.

Marvin Butler, Director
Central Oregon Agricultural Research Center

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