MESSAGE FROM

PAULA MOORE,
SEED PROGRAM
MANAGER

I was officially appointed the program manager in August 2019, after serving in the position in an acting capacity for the previous year.

This role allows me to stay connected to national seed certification issues and global export needs, learn new laboratory skills, and manage an outstanding group of dedicated staff.

2020 has been an unusual year, to say the least. Since March, we have continued to offer all our services through the COVID-19 restrictions on in-person meetings, and out-of-state and non-essential travel. All Seed Program services are deemed essential, so our work has carried on.

Our administrative team teleworked through July. More recently, as business needs increased, they have been returning to the office. Beginning in September, the entire team is onsite through the busy lab season.

Our Yakima building closed to the public in March, but our program has provided mail service for daily deliveries. Since July, all staff are taking their temperatures and self-assessing for symptoms before starting work. All office staff wear masks and practice social distancing. Field staff who normally work alone don masks whenever they are around others.

Continued on page 2

QUICK SEED MINUTE REVIEW 2019-2020

Short on time? Read these high-level bullet points

Open house February 2019
• Celebrated 20 years at our current location and 100th anniversary of AOSCA
• If you missed it, we will have more; stay tuned

Launched continuing education opportunities in 2019
• February -- Open house and seed lab tour
• April – Pure Harvest Database training
• October – Field end-of-season meeting
• November – Grain seed school at WSCIA annual meeting

Seed Advisory Committee revitalized
• Twelve-member committee established October 2019
  – Two meetings conducted before COVID restrictions
• Two advisory non-voting members are industry experts

Launched a new A/R accounting system July 2020
• Invoices will email from PISCES
• Statements will email from Great Plains (GP)

Unknown seeds from China appeared in July 2020
• Send seed to: USDA-APHIS-PPQ – Attn: Jason Allen, Seattle Plant Inspection Station. 835 South 192nd Street, Bldg D, Ste 1600, Seatac, WA 98148
• WSDA Facebook post reached 30 million people over the first weekend!

In-training laboratory positions created with performance benchmarks
• Started January 2020
• Ready for AOSA testing within two years

Completed facility remodel March 2020
• Seed storage moved
• Field supply created and inventory reporting system established
• Conference area moved
• New purity lab space created for three staff, cubicle walls were recycled
• Seed reference library moved to lab space
• Office administration cubicles reconfigured – added two spaces and moved all program files into cabinets outside of personal space

Review of quarantine rules
• Crucifer quarantine meeting held January 28, 2020 at Mt. Vernon
• Bean quarantine meeting held February 27, 2020 at Othello

Meetings canceled due to COVID travel restrictions
• Western AOSCA, April   • National AOSA, June
• National AOSCA, June   • National AASCO, July
MEET OUR STAFF IN NEW ROLES

Erikajoy Clayton, QMS/ISO Coordinator

Before joining WSDA in 2017, I worked in the medical field. Piloting a temporary position in the Seed Program led to being offered my current fulltime position. I was drawn to this job, because it challenges me to ways to understand our stakeholders needs and develop effective quality control processes. I love a good challenge!

Jolie Robinson, Laboratory Assistant - Purity

I was previously a manager at a hair salon for five years. However, having grown up on a farm, I’ve always been interested in agriculture. I was drawn to this job because of its necessity to the agriculture industry and it gives me the ability to learn and grow daily.

Juan Ballesteros, Laboratory Assistant - Purity

During my time at the University of Washington, I studied environmental science. My capstone project was based on restoring a community park to a more natural setting by removing invasive species and planting native species to enhance wildlife habitat. After living in the Seattle area, I returned to the Yakima Valley and worked with the Yakama Nation wildlife/range program. I joined the Seed Program in early 2020.

Alene Clements, Laboratory Assistant - Viability

Before joining WSDA, I was working in an apple warehouse on my way to becoming a fruit inspector. Initially I was hired on with the Seed Program in 2019 as the breakdown assistant and eventually moved into viability. I grew up in Alaska, so agriculture and natural resources have always been an interest of mine.

Richard Gilbert, Commodities Inspection Field Supervisor

My promotional appointment took effect on July 1, 2020. I started with WSDA in 2016 as a field inspector after a career within industry as a fieldsman wearing many hats. I also have years of experience in the grass seed industry as a producer and understand the field needs for industry. I hold USDA ACO, ISTA sampler and USDA SAC sampler endorsements.

MESSAGE FROM PAULA MOORE, CONTINUED...

We had to modify daily cut-offs for tag printing and phytosanitary certificates to allow time for final services to go through quality control check by remote staff. We did work through a few initial hang-ups and continue to work out the bumps.

Despite all the challenges this year, we continue to plan for the future. Since becoming program manager, I have identified four primary objectives for our leadership team:

• Revitalize the seed regulatory program.
• Re-establish the Seed Advisory Committee.
• Update the Quality Management System and ISO accreditation.
• Succession planning and cross-training in all critical function areas.

Our theme for the years to come is “uniformity” in policy and practices. Our staff is working to reduce slang terminologies when engaging industry, responding quickly and consistently to questions, and increasing the quality of our services.

Unfortunately, this planned report was delayed due to the unprecedented circumstances around responding to COVID-19. However, I plan to communicate regularly with you to assure transparency of our services and business practices. As a fee-based program, you want to know that your seed assessment dollars are invested to meet your business needs.

Our program has a long-term vision and is committed to collaborating with the seed industry. Please feel free to contact me with your questions or concerns.
FIELD UPDATE 2019/2020

BY RICHARD GILBERT, SEED PROGRAM FIELD SUPERVISOR

We hired three new, year-round field inspectors during the 2019 season. Julio Galvan (Othello), Denise Race (Kennewick) and Dane Henze (Waitsburg) joined Mark Jolley (Yakima) and myself (Kennewick). Additionally, Gary Slagg returned and Jacob Laroque joined as seasonal inspectors in Spring 2019. Seven seasonal corn inspectors started in June.

Julio, Denise, and Dane earned their ISTA sampler accreditation from Oregon State University in November 2019, giving us six ISTA samplers on staff.

Overall, the 2019 field inspection season went smoothly and many stakeholders commented on how timely the inspections were. We inspected 87,655 certified acres and 19,562 phytosanitary acres.

Field staff were kept busy with grass and alfalfa seedling inspections during the fall and winter season. Inspectors looked at approximately 65 percent of newly planted fields and continued to inspect fall-planted crops until prevented by snow canopy and weather. Many of the remaining fields were too small or immature for inspection through the winter.

The 2020 season is now wrapping up. We had 100,250 certified acres inspected and 48,824 phytosanitary field acres to inspect. Of these acres, 30,481 acres were new certification seed acreage. The total number of phytosanitary field applications were 1,234. From 2019 to 2020 our acres increased by 34 percent for certified seed production and 149 percent for phytosanitary acres to inspect.

We held our 4th annual End-of-Season Field Meeting by Skype this year to virtually share the field-season happenings with industry. Thirty-nine participants discussed field inspection topics during the two-hour meeting. ★

OFFICE UPDATE 2019/2020

BY THERESA OTTO, SEED PROGRAM OFFICE SUPERVISOR

The Seed Program experienced many changes during 2019, starting with the appointment of a new program manager. We have also improved a number of processes.

The office hired a full-time, permanent ISO coordinator, as well as a part-time, permanent office assistant 3.

Office staff received intense cross training, which has allowed us to continue to operate smoothly when staff is out sick or on scheduled leave.

By the numbers, the Seed Program office accomplished much in 2019, including:

- Received 6,985 seed samples.
- Emailed 11,962 lab reports.
- Issued 3,150 rush samples (testing started in 3 days).
- Issued 651 super-rush samples (24-hour turnaround).
- Issued 1,185 federal phyto certificates.
- Issued 837 re-export phyto certificates.
- Issued 17 state phytos.
- Issued 3,035 seed-lot tags.

In addition, we are consistently sending monthly invoices to stakeholders within the first week of the month. The program has migrated to the Great Plains (GP) A/R system and launched the new billing processes in July 2020.

Office staff established a new way to track lab report cards as well as a “super rush” tracking system. We’ve reestablished the way germination cards are tracked, to eliminate missed germination results. ★
LAB UPDATE 2019/2020

BY NANCY JONES, SEED PROGRAM LAB SUPERVISOR

During the 2019 busy season from May to December, purity and viability technicians worked a high number of overtime hours, and the number of samples received was up considerably from the previous year.

Palmer amaranth was added to noxious lists in more states and countries (see map). This caused a significant increase in sending seed out for DNA testing and caused additional expense and service delay for our stakeholders, such as delay in phytosanitary certificates being issued.

We were approached by a couple of companies attempting to develop technology that would determine red from white wheat seed using computer analysis. Currently, this would not be beneficial or accurate, because it would require control samples of every variety of wheat produced. In the comparisons from the computer analysis to a lab analysis, the results were extremely out of tolerance from each other. The computer results could not be used to accurately apply certification standards.

We were fortunate to hire two very reliable and efficient laboratory assistants last year to get us through the busy season and beyond. They have played a critical role, allowing more skilled technicians to focus on higher level analytical testing.

We now have an in-training program with expectations and goals for three new fulltime positions filled beginning in January 2020. This will allow us to better monitor progress and get employees ready to become AOSA/SCST certified in their area (viability and/or purity). They must meet all the requirements of the association before they can test. The pre-requirements to test include documented hours of training and accumulating the required number of continued education points offered by AOSA/SCST.
MESSAGE FROM THE U.S. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM)

REGIONAL SEED WAREHOUSE UPDATE

Subject: Additional information on the seed test result is needed for all Source Identified (SI) seed.

The purpose for this is to coordinate new changes highlighted in BLM Seed Buy solicitation with all of the seed vendors and relay information to all approved seed labs. As you may not be aware, there was change in how the BLM Regional Seed Warehouse will request additional information on the test results for the up and coming BLM Seed Buys. The BLM Regional Seed Warehouse has it stated in the BLM FY 20-1 contract, in addition to all of the information that is currently provided on test results additional information on the seed test result is needed for all Source Identified (SI) seed.

Source Identified (SI) seed for all Sagebrush will need the Eco-Region and Seed Transfer Zone. "Example" (Snake River Plains 10-15 Deg. 6-12 AI). For all other Source Identified (SI) seed will need the indicated G0, County, State, Elevation and Precipitation. "Example" (Humboldt, NV. 5,000', 9-10`). It will be the contractors responsibility to ensure this information is provided to the seed lab and the contractor will continue to pay for all test results completed by approved lab testing facilities. Again, the only time the BLM Regional Seed Warehouse should be billed for any testing, is when we are updating TZ’s on our current inventory and when the BLM is sampling Freezer stored Sagebrush and Forage Kochia. During that time the BLM Regional Seed Warehouse would include an attachment 3 form that clearly states those charges will be paid by the BLM Regional Seed Warehouse. The objective of this new requirement is to make a better determination of where the seed has been collected with indicated the results of the seed.

On another note if seed testing labs will be shutdown for an extended period (more than a week), for example the holidays, please help relay that communication effort to both the Vendors and the BLM Regional Seed Warehouse by email at BLM_ID_Seed_All@blm.gov. WSDA has not been shut down for any period during COVID-19 nor are we closed for any extended holiday break outside of regular federal holiday closures.

The BLM has an expectation that seed sent to a lab, will be processed timely (within 10 days). If you cannot meet this requirement, you need to inform the seed vendor so that a sample can be sent to another lab. WSDA respectfully requests that all seed samples arriving to the lab with all information to not delay finalization of lab results due to missing information.

If you have any questions about the BLM new bid contract process please feel free to contact Ricardo Galvan at 208-384-3278 or by email at rgalvan@blm.gov or the National Seed Coordinator Patricia Roller at 208-373-3802 or email at proller@blm.gov. The Regional Seed Warehouse will continue to make sure new information pertaining to changes in seed testing is disseminated to all approved seed testing labs in a timely manner. ✴
# SEED INSPECTION PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Established October 2019 | 15 members, 13 voting members – two-year terms

* Crop seat held outside industry specialty

## CHAIR:
Paula M. Moore, Washington State Department of Agriculture, pmoore@agr.wa.gov

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## PERFORMANCE MEASURE BACKLOG

![Performance Measure Backlog Chart]

**RUSH Grasses**
avg. days behind

**Non-Rush Grasses**
avg. days behind

**RUSH Grains**
avg. days behind

**Non-Rush Grains**
avg. days behind

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2020 PROGRAM REPORT

COMMODITY INSPECTION DIVISION | SEED PROGRAM | NOVEMBER 2020

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