

IDAHO BARLEY NEWS BRIEF

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The IBC website provides producers with quick access to a wide range of agronomic and marketing tools that can help them sharpen and fine-tune their farm management strategies.

Some of these barley web resources include:

- ◆ Handbook on How to Develop a Grain Marketing Plan (first edition Dec. 2004, updated March 2011).
- ◆ Weekly Idaho Grain Market Report.
- ◆ Best Management Practices for Tackling Rising Input Costs.

The IBC website can be found at

www.idahobarley.org.

USDA releases key reports on planting intentions and stocks (3/31/2011)

No big surprises from USDA on projected 2011 acres - the corn and spring wheat acres came in higher than the average pre-report trade estimate, while soybeans and cotton were below. Barley acres were stronger than many barley grower organizations had expected, due largely to solid prices and revenue insurance guarantees this year. The key right now is to get these acres planted - particularly spring wheat - in light of expected flooding and planting delays this spring across the Northern U.S.

(million acres)	USDA 2011	Trade Est.	USDA 2010
Barley	2.95		2.87
All Wheat	58.0	57.2	53.6
Other spring wheat	14.4	13.7	13.7
Corn	92.2	91.8	88.2

Quarterly stocks were lower than expected for both corn and soybeans, providing evidence of a robust demand pace and a signal to the marketplace that prices will need to go higher in order to ration demand if stocks tighten further.

U.S. wheat stocks were pegged at 1.42 billion bu on March 1, up 5% from a year ago, and above the **average pre-report trade estimate of 1.399 billion bu**. The indicated disappearance for the period December through February was 508 million bu, up 20% from the same period a year ago. Idaho wheat stocks are pegged at 39.9 million bu, unchanged from a year ago.

U.S. corn stocks were 6.524 billion bu, down 15% from a year ago, and below the **average pre-report trade estimate of 6.69 billion bu**. The indicated disappearance for the period December through February was 3.53 billion bu, up 10% from the same period a year ago.

U.S. barley stocks were 138 million bu, down 12% from a year ago. The indicated disappearance for the period December through February was 42.4 million bu, down 14%, for the same period a year ago. Idaho barley stocks are pegged at 26.8 million bu, down 14% from the same period a year ago.

Two Idaho grain producers take the leadership reins of national barley and wheat groups this year

2011 HAS USHERED IN BOTH A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY AND A RESPONSIBILITY FOR TWO DISTINGUISHED GRAIN PRODUCERS FROM SOUTHERN IDAHO who have been elected by their peers to lead their national barley and wheat producer advocacy organizations. **Wayne Hurst**, a wheat and sugar beet producer from Burley, ID, began a one year term as president of the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) in early March and **Scott Brown**, a barley and wheat producer from Soda Springs, ID, is set to begin a two-year term as president of the National Barley Growers Association (NBGA) in July.

Wayne Hurst has operated a diversified farm in the Burley area since 1980. As an officer of both the Idaho Grain Producers Assoc. and the NAWG board, Hurst has been involved in wheat policy issues for more than a decade.



Scott Brown farms 8,500 acres of dryland barley and wheat in south-eastern Caribou County in partnership with his father, son and son-in-law. Scott also is currently serving as immediate past president of the Idaho Grain Producers Association.



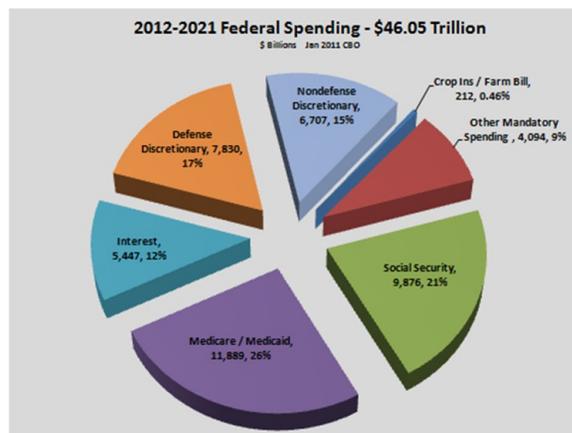
We were pleased to recently interview these two national grain producer leaders from Idaho on opportunities and challenges facing barley and wheat producers across the country and how their national associations can help shape federal policies that will benefit their producers.

Q1. Rising federal budget deficits are at the top of the 2011 congressional agenda and may dramatically reshape many federal programs, including farm supports and agricultural research. How are NBGA and NAWG positioning for what might be large cuts in nondefense discretionary spending?

Scott Brown – NBGA is reviewing all federal farm programs that affect barley producers to help us better understand how we can embrace these tough budget decisions without seriously impacting our producers. We think a stronger crop insurance program might be one way to help save scarce federal dollars while assuring producers a strong safety net.

Wayne Hurst – We understand that the federal deficit and debt are out of control and must be dealt with, but we oppose efforts to re-write carefully balanced farm support programs that have been authorized through 2012. We urge congressional leaders to consider proportionate spending cuts that will not damage our economy. Americans need to understand that agriculture is really a very small part of federal expenditures and should not be expected to shoulder a disproportionate burden in deficit reduction.

USDA spending, including nutrition programs, represents only 2% of total federal spending, while farm programs represent only 7% of USDA’s budget and less than one-half of one percent of total federal expenditures.



Idaho growers ascend to top barley and wheat leadership posts, continued from page 3**Q3. How do you envision NBGA and NAWG working together to achieve your federal policy goals?**

Scott Brown – If there were ever two commodities that have more in common in terms of production and political interests it is barley and wheat. Our two organizations have always worked well together at both the state and national levels but the stakes are even higher today. As a relatively small commodity on the national scene, barley is particularly mindful that we need to stretch our limited resources by forging alliances. There is strength in numbers and a more concise, unified message will give us more weight in fighting all of these critical political battles.

Wayne Hurst – For the past year my staff and I have been meeting frequently with other major commodity leaders to find common ground on strategies to defend American agricultural interests. Each of our organizations bring a unique grass roots perspective and while we may have some significant differences, we also have many things in common that bind us together. It has been my personal goal to ensure that barley has a place at this commodity table because in many cases we are representing the same growers. We will all be more effective when we are unified.

Q4. What, if anything, can the government do to blunt the effect of rising energy costs, which drive producers' production costs higher?

Scott Brown – Our country needs to set aside its political differences and craft a comprehensive, common sense energy policy that fosters local energy sources. This will require a combination of tools, including a significant investment in innovative technologies and streamlined regulations that will allow responsible utilization of the resources that we have.

Wayne Hurst – The government can't do much in the short term to affect oil and gas prices, but we should emphasize more domestic exploration of natural gas and increased use of home-grown biofuels. This includes government incentives to jump start the emerging cellulosic ethanol industry that converts wheat and barley straw into fuel.

Both Brown and Hurst acknowledge that many of these domestic energy incentives could be eliminated by various deficit reduction strategies under consideration, but both agreed that now was not the time to eliminate funding for programs that increase U.S. energy security and help fuel the U.S. farm economy.

Q5. What are the greatest challenges and opportunities you face today as leaders of your national barley and wheat organizations?

Scott Brown – Barley's biggest challenge is declining acreage and the loss of viability as a national organization and clout in the political arena. And our biggest immediate opportunity is related - we must strengthen our relationship with our various industry partners to identify actions that we can take together to turn this production ship around. I often like to say that no barley means no beer and American brewers understand that all too well. They don't want to rely on imported barley, which makes them increasingly vulnerable to supply disruptions and higher input costs, so they are eager to work with NBGA.

Idaho growers ascend to top barley and wheat leadership posts, continued from page 4

Wayne Hurst – The federal budget crisis and increasing environmental regulations are wheat's biggest immediate concerns. NAWG and wheat growers have a real opportunity to show leadership during these difficult times, and by working together we have the chance to build unity in our agricultural community. Advanced technologies, including favorable prospects for genetically modified wheat which delivers real benefits to both producers and consumers, is another significant opportunity for wheat. The NAWG leadership team participates in periodic summits involving all segments of the wheat supply chain from researchers to producers to processors that helps us identify joint strategies that we can undertake to strengthen our industry. I am thankful to have this chance to make contributions that will help shape our industry for decades to come.



Producer Toolbox – Taking Another Look at Barley Seeding Rates

Recommended seeding rates for irrigated spring barley can be as high as 120 lbs pre acre (40-60 pounds/acre dryland), but in reality most of today's barley varieties compensate well at lower seeding rates by increased tillers per plant. In research conducted at Aberdeen, when seeded at optimal planting dates, there were little to no differences in yield of barley planted at 60 lbs/A for irrigated versus 120 lbs/A. Malting/brewing companies recommend establishing a plant stand of 750,000 plants per acre to optimize both yield and grain quality. Depending on the 1,000 kernel weight and germination percentage of the variety being planted, this may equate to 70-80 lbs of seed per acre.

Seeding depth -- Producers can achieve more uniform emergence and improved yields if they take more care in setting their drills and working the seedbed. The optimum seeding depth is 1 - 1 1/2 inches, not the typical 1 1/2 - 2 inch depth commonly used across the state.

Fertilizer applications should be monitored very carefully, too much N usually means too high of protein in malting barley. Take soil tests to calculate your available nitrogen (carryover + applied). **For more discussion on optimizing barley fertility we encourage producers to watch a recorded webinar presented on January 27, 2011 by Dr. Brad Brown, University of Idaho Parma Research & Extension Center. This webinar can be found at <https://connect.cals.uidaho.edu/p38298986> or a link can be found at the IBC website at www.idahobarley.org.**