



# IDAHO BARLEY NEWSBRIEF

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## Idaho barley check-off dollars at work... UI Barley

**Agronomist search underway-** IBC is serving on a 5-member selection committee for the **new University of Idaho CALS barley agronomist position that was created as a result of the IBC's one million dollar research endowment with the University of Idaho.** This search committee is chaired by UI Associate Professor Juliet Marshall, cereal agronomist in Idaho Falls. The committee will interview four candidates from across the country in the March-April timeframe and hope to have a final selection made by the end of April. The new Barley Agronomist will work directly with barley growers on optimizing production practices to achieve economic sustainability.

## Anheuser Busch invests in smart water technology for Idaho barley producers

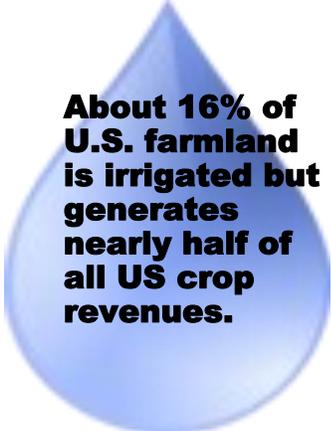
**More water is used for agriculture than any other use in Idaho and the U.S.** When supplies become tight which is the case in drought-affected areas of the Western U.S., more emphasis must be placed on water conservation strategies. According to the NRCS National Water and Climate Center, early indications are that this region will continue to see abnormally dry conditions for the rest of 2014. Due to favorable late season precipitation, Idaho's water outlook has improved significantly since early February. **See more details on the April 1 Idaho Water Supply Outlook on page 3.**

**To help Idaho barley producers meet water availability challenges and rising power costs, Anheuser Busch has made a substantial investment in AgriMet weather stations in several eastern Idaho locations. These stations will generate real time data needed for a new innovative Irrigation Scheduler program created by Washington State University with collaboration from the University of Idaho.**

According to Tim Pella, Busch Ag's Idaho Falls manager, "this is an important investment in helping keep barley production competitive and economically viable in our key growing regions of southern and eastern Idaho. Barley production is critical to our company's success so we are willing to support anything that we can to make it viable for our growers."

Pella says Anheuser Busch has launched a new partnership with the Bureau of Reclamation and University of Idaho to expand the use of AgriMet weather states in eastern Idaho to provide growers with real-time data to improve/reduce their irrigation water use. **Busch has committed to fund the construction and maintenance of 6 new weather stations in Grace, Shelley, Osgood, Rigby, Ririe and Terreton.** Data from these stations will be readily available to growers to use with a new irrigation scheduling tool developed by WSU that is designed to boost efficient water use.

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**About 16% of U.S. farmland is irrigated but generates nearly half of all US crop revenues.**

## Anheuser Busch's invests in smart water management technologies in Idaho, continued from page 1...

**UI irrigation engineer evaluating enhanced water management strategies-** In addition to investing in AgriMet weather stations, Anheuser Busch is funding a two year scientific study being conducted by Dr. Howard Neibling, UI irrigation engineer based in Twin Falls, to investigate how well certain malting barley fields perform in terms of yield and quality using enhanced water management strategies, including the use of this *Irrigation Scheduler* tool.

***Irrigation Scheduler Mobile*** is a unique smart-phone enabled irrigation scheduling tool available to help growers increase yields, improve crop quality, decrease fertilizer use, save pumping costs, conserve water and reduce runoff / non-point source pollution.

This tool is fully integrated with a wide variety of agricultural weather networks so that daily crop use (ET) estimates and rainfall data are automatically incorporated into smart water management decisions.

### **Features include:**

- ◆ Tracks simple water balance based on ET
- ◆ Functions with any desktop browser or smartphone
- ◆ Sets up field accounts easily
- ◆ Retrieves ET data from select automated weather stations
- ◆ Generates seven day crop water use (ETc) forecasts
- ◆ Calculates hours of irrigation run time instead of inches of applied water
- ◆ Notifies users via email or text

**Growers can download *Irrigation Scheduler* at [www.weather.wsu.edu/is/](http://www.weather.wsu.edu/is/).**

### **Links to other important resources...**

Recorded webinar presented by UI Irrigation Engineer Howard Neibling on Irrigation Efficiencies in a Water Short Year.... at <http://connect.cals.uidaho.edu/p88owiek00j/>

<http://irrigation.wsu.edu>

**April 1 Idaho Water Outlook** – Back-to-back months of above average precipitation across most of Idaho boosted the water supply outlook according to the April report released by the Idaho Natural Resources Conservation Service. March precipitation amounts ranged from 103% to 190% of normal.

“The water year started with four dry months from October to January,” said Ron Abramovich, Water Supply Specialist with the Idaho Natural Resources Conservation Service. “The water supply made an amazing recovery due to the February and March precipitation.”

“However, despite good precipitation the last two months we are predicting water shortages in several areas,” said Abramovich. Predicted water supply shortages will occur in the Big Wood, Big Lost, Little Lost, Oakley, Owyhee, and Salmon Falls basins.

Higher elevations accumulated snow while lower elevations got rain. Abramovich notes the mid-elevation snowpack, between 5,000-6,000 feet, was lacking across central Idaho from Weiser in the west to Swan Valley in the east. The mid-elevation snows are important for rangeland and dryland farmers.

As far as streamflow forecasts Abramovich said “the variability across our region is amazing this year.” The lowest predicted streamflows are in the water-starved Owyhee Basin and Camas Creek near Fairfield. Those areas are predicted to have a meager 20% of normal. The best streamflow forecasts are 130-150% of normal in the headwaters of the Upper Snake and Clearwater Rivers.

**The NRCS’ April 1 Water Outlook Report notes that some reservoirs will fill because of adequate snowpack to feed them and others might fill depending on irrigation demand and runoff timing. Reservoirs in the drier parts of the state will not fill. For more details on reservoirs as well as snowpack, precipitation, and streamflow predictions for each basin in Idaho, view the full April [Water Supply Outlook Report](#) online.**

**Upper Snake River Basin** -- Despite current below normal storage levels, water users should expect the reservoirs to fill, or nearly fill, depending on the timing of runoff. The Upper Snake’s water supply is in great shape to handle whatever weather this summer may bring.



## Boyd Coles becomes new Anheuser Busch malting barley field rep in Idaho Falls

Boyd Coles, a 17-year veteran AB seed plant production supervisor, has been promoted by Anheuser Busch to a new Idaho malting barley field representative position based at the Idaho Falls barley elevator. In his new capacity, Boyd will be working directly with AB’s malting barley producers on malting barley crop management issues. His appointment was effective in mid-February but Boyd will remain involved in seed plant operations through May before moving full time to this new field position. This addition of a full time field representative is welcome news and will greatly strengthen Anheuser Busch’s excellent working relationship with its growers and the barley industry as a whole. We congratulate Boyd on his recent promotion and look forward to working closely with him on crop management issues and opportunities, including working with the new UI Barley Agronomist scientist at Aberdeen.



# 2014 Prospective Planting Estimates for 2014

## Highlights of USDA's March 31 acreage report...

**BARLEY** – USDA is projecting 2014 barley planted acres at a multi-year low of 3.165 million, down 4% from the previous year. Idaho barley acres are projected at 660,000, up 5% from last year. These acreage projections suggest will Idaho will once again be largest barley producing state in the country in 2014.

**WHEAT**– USDA is projecting 2014 all wheat planted acres at 55.8 million, down 1% from 2013, including 42.0 million acres winter wheat and 12.0 million other spring wheat. This planted acreage estimate was BELOW the average trade estimate of 56.3 million.

Idaho wheat acres are projected at 1.201 million, down 8% from last year.

**CORN**– USDA is projecting 2014 corn planted acres at 91.7 million, down 4% from last year and BELOW the average trade estimates of 92.748 million. If realized, this will be the lowest corn acres since 2010 but the 5th largest planted corn acres on record.

## Grain Supply and Demand Balance Sheets

### Highlights of USDA's April 9 WASDE report...

**BARLEY** - USDA lowered U.S. barley import estimate this month by 5 million bu to 15 million bu, due to the slow shipping pace so far this year and raised U.S. barley exports by 2 million bu to 12 million bu. This resulted in a 7 million bu cut in barley ending stocks to 83 million bu. The average farm gate price projection for U.S. barley was tightened to \$6.00-\$6.20. **World barley production was cut by 0.4 MMT this month to 145.2 MMT, up 12% from last year, while world ending stocks were increased by 0.5 MMT this month to 23.6 MMT, up 15% from last year.**

**WHEAT** - USDA lowered their U.S. wheat import estimate this month by 5 million bu to 165 million bu due to the slower than expected shipment pace out of Canada thus far this year. As expected, they also lowered their domestic wheat feeding estimate by 30 million bu to 220 million bu, due to large corn supplies and lower prices of competing feed grains. This resulted in a 25 million bu increase in U.S. wheat ending stocks to 583 million which is right in line with the average pre-report trade estimate. The average farm-gate price for U.S. wheat was left unchanged at \$6.75-\$6.95/bu. **World wheat production was cut slightly to 712.5 MMT – up 9% from last year, but ending stocks were increased this month by 3 MMT to 186.7 MMT, up 64% from last year.**

**CORN** - USDA raised their corn export projection by another 125 million bu to 1.75 billion bu, due to the better than expected sales pace in recent weeks. This resulted in an equal cut in U.S. corn ending stocks to 1.331 billion bu, which was BELOW the average pre-report trade estimate of 1.4 billion bu. The average farm gate price for U.S. corn was increased to \$4.40-\$4.80/bu. **World corn production was raised by nearly 6 MMT this month to 973.9 MMT, up 12% from last year, but ending stocks were actually cut slightly this month to 158 MMT, up 18% year-on-year.**