Title: Extension and Outreach Activities

PI: Bill Pan

Co-PI’s: Karen Sowers (fully funded), Dennis Roe (partially funded)

Duration: Fall 2007-present

Background: The Extension and outreach portion of the Washington Biofuels Cropping Systems Research and Extension Project (WBCS) has developed and expanded significantly since the inception of the project six years ago. An initial emphasis on the biofuel production potential of numerous oilseed and cellulosic crops led to general outreach activities during existing field days, legislative tours and other events to inform the public about the scope of the WBCS project and early findings. More recently, the focus of research is shifting to address specific goals of how to develop successful cropping systems with the inclusion of an oilseed crop, while outreach has adjusted to accommodate all skill levels of producers and crop consultants. Outreach efforts now span a much broader geographic range, as well as a wider audience base as oilseed acreage continues to increase annually.

Objective: Provide growers, agriculture industry, university and agency personnel, the general public, and other stakeholders with relevant and updated information from the WBCS Project.

Methods: A large-scale, two day oilseed production and marketing conference; canola field tours; presentations at workshops and field days; on-farm visits; written and online publications; a dedicated website; phone contacts; and academic and industry meetings are utilized to disseminate information locally, regionally and nationally.

Results and Discussion: A major focus of Extension and outreach in 2013 was planning and conducting a two-day oilseed production and marketing conference held in Kennewick in late January. Keynote speakers were invited from around North America to provide perspectives and strategies of oilseed production in other areas that were applicable in the Pacific Northwest. Faculty from WSU, UI, and OSU; oilseed producers from the PNW; industry leaders; and state and local agency representatives all took part as conference speakers in both general and breakout sessions. The conference was very successful, with more than 200 people attending, and very positive evaluations and feedback.

University and industry canola variety trials and research field tours during May and June proved very effective in attracting primarily growers and crop consultants to get a closer look at current performance of canola in different production zones and to interact directly with WBCS faculty and staff. WBCS faculty gave presentations at various meetings and field days throughout the year about topics ranging from basic canola production to managing residual Group 2 herbicides with canola in rotation.

Requests for speaking engagements about oilseed production continued to increase in 2013, as did phone calls from producers, agency and industry asking for advice or information. The annual compilation of oilseed supply and delivery locations in the PNW is a popular resource mentioned by
growers and industry alike. With increased canola acreage and the opening of Pacific Coast Canola (PCC) in Warden, WA in early 2013, more local elevators are recognizing the importance of providing storage for canola producers who do not have space on their farms. An example of collaboration with industry involved WBCS faculty maintaining contact with processors, crop consultants and canola seed industry reps during 2013. The communication resulted in sponsorship of refreshments at all WSU canola field tours, and invitation to speak at industry meetings later in the year.

**Impact/Potential Outcomes:** Canola acreage more than doubled from 2012 to 2013, and projections are positive for another significant increase in 2014. Increasing canola acreage coupled with many growers who are just starting with canola production demands that WBCS faculty and staff continue to meet the needs for education at basic and advanced levels via field events, meetings and other venues. Data from the 2013 Oilseed Conference include:

- 200 attendees
  - 70 growers
  - 70 ag industry (from 32 different companies)
  - 60 university and agency
- 65 speakers
- 22 vendor booths
- 16 research posters
- $17,200 sponsor monies
- Television, newspaper and ag press coverage
- More than 2500 views of conference presentation videos posted on the WBCS website and on YouTube.

From onsite clicker surveys, 88% of attendees indicated they learned at least one new concept they can use in future production practices, while 80% of attendees indicated they will try growing oilseeds in the future. Over 50% of attendees believe market price and economics are the single-most limiting factor in oilseed production. More than 70% of canola producers had observed at least a 6% yield increase in the following wheat crop; half of the producers observed an 11-20% yield increase.

Within a few weeks of the conference, a crop consultant invited WBCS Extension faculty to give a presentation about canola at a grower meeting in early spring. The crop consultant later reported a significant increase in spring canola seed sales in the annual cropping region after the meeting. The PNDSA approached WBCS team member following the 2013 oilseed conference and requested a joint conference for 2014, suggesting many production goals, strategies and topics were similar between the two groups.

Website access increased in 2013, with 8,245 page views from 36 countries (up 71%), 43 states (up 39%) and 64 cities in Washington (up 42%). Events throughout the year attracted more than 1550 participants (see table below).

**Affiliated projects and funding:** REACCH (Climate Change); NSF-NSPIRE; AFRI/USDA - Switchgrass

**Publications**

**Extension:**


Abstracts:


Invited presentations:


Sowers, K. *Canola Production Overview*. June 2013. Oral presentation given during WSU Cereal Variety Trial Tour. Mayview, WA.

Sowers, K. *Canola Production Overview*. June 2013. Oral presentation given during WSU Cereal Variety Trial Tour. Anatone, WA.


Other publications:


Internet:

Newspaper interviews:


Proposed Future Extension and Outreach for 2014/2015:
- Planning is underway for a multi-day conference in conjunction with the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association (PNDSA) in late January in Kennewick, WA. There will be general session topics of interest to all attendees, and breakout sessions that will feature oilseed specific and direct seed specific topics.
- Field days featuring canola variety trials, irrigated canola residue management research plots and large scale canola plots (Wilke Farm) in rotation with various crops are planned. A tour of research plots with KCl applied for cold tolerance may occur if visual differences are observed.
- A field diagnostic clinic is proposed for winter and spring canola, and perhaps other oilseed crops to be held as part of WSU farm field days (e.g. Pullman, Davenport). This would allow hands-on, field observation and diagnosis of residual and drift herbicide damage, insect pest identification, nutrient deficiencies, and other production challenges.
- A workshop or meeting geared towards more advanced agronomic strategies, particularly involving the use of decision support tools, may be developed as a standalone product, or as part of the Wheat Academy being developed by the WSU Wheat and Small Grains group.
- Direct Seed breakfasts had a strong canola component in 2013; outreach efforts may involve developing breakfast or lunch meetings via the WBCS project at different locations to have more in-depth conversations about the supply chain of oilseed production.
- Extension publications, primarily fact sheets, from each of the WBCS research projects will be written and published in 2014-15.
- WBCS team members will present posters and oral presentations as part of the U.S. Canola Research Conference in Long Beach, CA in early November 2014.
- Presentations at regional conferences, field days, grower meetings and other events will continue to be the primary means of outreach, as will communication with ag industry and agencies.
- Video of the presentations from the 2014 WSU Oilseed and PNDSA Direct Seed Conference will be posted on the WBCS website, along with poster and powerpoint presentations.
- The WBCS website will be updated to include a section for growers. There will also be an emphasis on reaching out to growers and ag industry about the website by featuring various components of it (e.g. videos from one of the conferences, links to publications).
- We will assist economists in compiling data to develop interactive enterprise budgets for crop rotations including canola in the deep well irrigated region.
- WBCS Extension faculty will continue to serve as correspondents for the PNW to the *U.S. Canola Digest*, published five times a year.
- News stories about WBCS activities will be distributed to CAHNRS and WSU News for publication.

### Events with an oilseed production component held in 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palouse &amp; Clearwater Direct Seed meetings (8)</td>
<td>Colfax/Lewiston</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oilseed Production &amp; Marketing Conference</td>
<td>Kennewick</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilbur-Ellis canola grower meeting</td>
<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSU Cereal Variety Trial tours</td>
<td>Mayview/Anatone</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA Canola/Rapeseed Commission meetings</td>
<td>Phone - quarterly</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-farm visits</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Canola Field Tour</td>
<td>Bridgeport</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Canola Field Tour</td>
<td>Okanogan</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AgVentures NW Winter Canola field tour – Williams farm</td>
<td>Reardan</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twilight canola tour – Schibel farm</td>
<td>Odessa</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Canola Field Tour</td>
<td>Pomeroy</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lind Field Day</td>
<td>Lind</td>
<td>255</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cook Farm Field Day</td>
<td>Pullman</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch meeting with canola growers/industry</td>
<td>Odessa</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legumex Walker/Pacific Coast Canola press tour</td>
<td>Spokane/Warden</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Whitman Co. Tour</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Idaho Field Day – poster presentation</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far West Agribusiness Association annual meeting</td>
<td>Pasco</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilbur-Ellis Crop Meeting</td>
<td>Pasco</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1553</strong></td>
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