

Note from the Superintendent

The new decade brought major staffing changes to the Klamath Experiment Station (KES). In April, Dr. Donald Clark joined our staff as an Assistant Professor and Research Agronomist responsible for forage and cereal research programs. Don completed his doctorate program at Texas Tech University in late 1999. In May, Greg Chilcote resigned his 18-year position as a Research Technician on our Klamath County funding to pursue new challenges as the Oregon State University computer support person for Eastern Oregon. Greg will service all county extension offices and branch experiment stations east of the Cascade Mountains out of his Bend, Oregon office.

In August, Gail Quick retired from the Office Specialist position to join her husband, Dick, in his retirement from a long and distinguished career with the Oregon Air National Guard (42 years). On November 31, Jim Rainey III retired after 21 years of service to KES as our Biological Sciences Research Technician III supporting forage research projects. We wish Gail, Jim, and Greg success as they move on to new challenges and pursuits, and we thank them for their many contributions to KES.

We have been fortunate to replenish our staff and make adjustments in several positions to accommodate changing programs and activities. Jimmie Goodrich joined us in a newly established 9-month, county-funded Farm Worker position in May. Jewel Haskins assumed the duties of Office Specialist in August. Jim Smith joined us in the new Faculty Research Assistant position created as a result of legislative support for the statewide cereals

research and extension programs. The future of the position Jim Rainey held is still uncertain and will depend on support for statewide research programs during the 2001-2002 legislative session.

With staffing changes, cereal and forage research activities were scaled down in the past 2 years. A shift in emphasis to explore water quality in the basin also reduced row crop research emphasis. Finally, two 2000 sugarbeet research projects were abandoned after severe spring frosts killed original plantings and mid-May replantings. KES experience with frost damage to sugarbeet crops mirrored commercial experience, in which over 8,000 acres planted in 2000 were reduced to less than 4,000 acres harvested.

The net result of these factors is a downsizing of our annual research report for 2000. However, we have published a summary of our water quality investigations in a separate volume as Special Report 1023. Interested parties can obtain a copy of the report, "Nutrient Loading of Surface Waters in the Upper Klamath Basin: Agricultural and Natural Sources" by calling, writing, or contacting us by e-mail at kenneth.rykbost@orst.edu. The report is also posted on our Internet web page at <http://www.orst.edu/dept/kes>.

We take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to our many colleagues who cooperate in research activities, industry and organizations who provide financial support for research projects, members of our station Advisory Board for their counsel, and to Klamath County for continuing support for staffing, facilities, and equipment. Where appropriate, cooperators and financial support are

Research in the Klamath Basin

acknowledged in project reports. Finally, I thank all KES staff for their efforts during this time of transition.

As this report goes to press in early June, the future of the agricultural industry in the Klamath Basin is very tenuous. On April 6, the Bureau of Reclamation announced an operations plan for the Klamath Irrigation Project that did not include any diversion of water from Klamath Lake or Klamath River for irrigation. This decision was based on Biological Opinions from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requiring maintenance of high lake elevations to protect endangered sucker species in Klamath Lake and from the National Marine Fisheries Service requiring high flows to lower Klamath River to protect threatened Coho Salmon.

This decision has eliminated surface water irrigation supply for about 170,000 acres of cropland in the Klamath Irrigation Project. Immediate consequences have included forced sales of livestock because of loss of irrigated pasture, a doubling of local rental rates for pastures with irrigation capability, and a doubling of hay prices in the local area. Contracts for processing onions and chipping potatoes have been significantly reduced. Local potato seed producers were forced to sell much of their 2000 seed crop through fresh market channels at less than 20 percent of the value for seed. Potato acreage, planted in fields with well water supplies, is about 30 percent of the 2000 acreage.

Long-term consequences of changing management of the Klamath Irrigation Project remain to be seen. However, the stability and sustainability of the local industry and outlying communities it has supported for decades are at severe risk. Agricultural land values have plummeted, as the security of irrigation

supply has been lost. Our 2001 research programs at KES will be very limited. We have secured a field with well water supply for maintaining limited cooperative variety-development projects for cereals and potatoes. With no well at KES, newly established forage research projects are at risk. This year will present unprecedented challenges for the region.

Kenneth A. Rykbost
Superintendent
Klamath Experiment Station

Major Cooperators in KES Research Programs

Oregon State University

Mr. Mylen Bohle, *Crook County Cooperative Extension Service*
Mr. Phil Hamm, *Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center*
Dr. Dan Hane, *Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center*
Dr. Patrick Hayes, *Department of Crop and Soil Science*
Dr. Russell Ingham, *Department of Botany and Plant Pathology*
Mr. Steve James, *Central Oregon Agricultural Research Center*
Dr. Russ Karow, *Department of Crop and Soil Science*
Dr. Kerry Locke, *Klamath County Cooperative Extension Service*
Dr. Alvin Mosley, *Department of Crop and Soil Science*
Dr. James Petersen, *Department of Crop and Soil Science*
Dr. Clinton Shock, *Malheur Experiment Station*
Mr. Rodney Todd, *Klamath County Cooperative Extension Service*

University of California

Dr. Harry Carlson, *Intermountain Research and Extension Center*
Mr. Donald Kirby, *Intermountain Research and Extension Center*
Mr. Herb Philips, *Department of Vegetable Crops*
Dr. Ron Voss, *Department of Vegetable Crops*
Dr. Lee Jackson, *Department of Agronomy and Range Science*

Others

Dr. Chuck Brown, *USDA-Agricultural Research Service, Prosser, Washington*
Dr. Dennis Corsini, *USDA-Agricultural Research Service, Aberdeen, Idaho*
Dr. Steve Fransen, *Washington State University*
Dr. David Holm, *Colorado State University*
Dr. Stephen Love, *University of Idaho*
Dr. J. Creighton Miller, Jr., *Texas A&M University*
Dr. Richard Novy, *USDA-Agricultural Research Service, Aberdeen, Idaho*
Dr. Robert Thornton, *Washington State University*
Dr. Darrell Wesenberg, *USDA-Agricultural Research Service, Aberdeen, Idaho*

We deeply appreciate their involvement and contributions to KES research efforts.

Advisory Board and Staff

KES Advisory Board Members

Mr. Rod Blackman, *Chairman*
Mr. Rocky Liskey, *Vice-chairman*
Mr. Sam Henzel
Mr. Steve Kandra
Mr. Kirk Kirkpatrick
Mr. John Kite
Mr. Ron McGill

Ex-Officio Members

Dr. Kenneth A. Rykbost, *Secretary,
Superintendent KES*
Dr. Ron Hathaway, *Chairman, Klamath
County Cooperative Extension Service*
Mr. Steve West, *Chairman, Klamath County
Board of Commissioners*

KES Staff

Dr. Kenneth A. Rykbost, *Superintendent,
Professor of Crop and Soil Science*
Dr. Donald R. Clark, *Assistant Professor of
Crop and Soil Science*
Mr. George E. Carter, *Associate Professor,
Emeritus*
Mr. Brian A. Charlton, *Faculty Research
Assistant*
Mr. Jimmie Goodrich, *Farm Worker
(Klamath County)*
Mrs. Jewel Haskins, *Office Specialist II*
Mr. Lawrence Johnson, *Facility
Maintenance Leadworker (Klamath
County)*
Mr. Jim E. Smith, *Faculty Research
Assistant*