



The Dynamics of Native Seed Production: A Growers Perspective

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L & H Seeds, Inc.
Herrman Northwest, Inc.

Connell, WA

Company Overview

- L & H Seeds, Inc.
- Herrman Northwest, Inc.
 - Located in Southeastern Washington
 - Land was developed in 1958
 - Native seed production began in the mid 1980's
 - Current production of around 80 different crops
 - Vertically integrated
 - Production, cleaning, and marketing

Northern Basin and Range Basin Wildrye
Leymus cinereus



Dry River Basalt Milkvetch
Astragalus filipes



Aridlands Western Prairieclover
Dalea ornata



Crooked River National Grassland Bottlebrush Squirreltail
Elymus elymoides



Combining



Swathing



Mechanical harvest of whole plant

Unloading into metal bins for small lots



Small lot seed cleaning



Seed blending/ Mixing



Large scale seed cleaning



Seed Drying



Uncompahgre Plateau Production



UP Dry Fork Germplasm Western
Yarrow

Achillea millefolium

UP Sims Mesa Germplasm Prairie
Junegrass

Koeleria macrantha syn. Cristata

White River Indian Ricegrass

Achnatherum hymenoides

CP-UP Colona Muttongrass

Poa fendleriana

Wild Collected Stock Seed

- Blended seed lots
 - Differing maturity
 - Harvest timing
 - Producers are making selections
- Evaluation for production potential
 - Production practices
 - Harvest and cleaning ease
 - Can it provide the amount and quality of seed needed for restoration projects?

Seed Zones

- New research to determine seed zones by species
- Still in development
- Example: Blue Mountains
 - 4 preliminary Seed Zones for Mt. Brome
 - Allocation of production resources
 - Scale of production
 - Risk and reward

Information Sharing

- Producers should be provided with Technical Guides
 - Establishment
 - Cultural Practices
 - Harvesting
- Reporting on experiments and trials
 - Making connections
 - Communication

Herbicides

- Lack of registered herbicides for use with native grasses and forbs
- Third Party Labeling
 - Working with Corey Ransom
 - We need a united voice in order to get results
- Increased cost will limit production

Contracts

– Current IDIQ's

- Small scale production of local Source ID Seed
 - What do you do when there is a large scale fire event?
- Fixed period of time
 - Doesn't factor in long term investment in land and resources
- Established, healthy, productive field
 - Keep field in and market on your own
 - Rotate field out

Reality Check: Crop Rotation

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
 - Fall 2010 Brought many changes
 - Increase demand for seed
 - Emphasis on creating habitat for native pollinators
 - Result
 - A shift in how land and resources were delegated for Fall 2010 planting

Commodity price increase

- Limits the pool of native seed growers
 - Growers want low risk, low input, high payoff crops
- Increased competition for land
 - Higher rents



Bottom Line: Help us, help you

- Screening for traits that lend themselves to agronomic production
- Improved communication
- Agreement on seed transfer zones
- Herbicide research and labeling
- Contracts that consider investment and risk
- Consideration of exterior influences



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