

WSDA Fertilizer Advisory Committee Meets

October 11, 2018, Ellensburg, WA. Four staff members from the Fertilizer Division at the Washington State Department of Agriculture met for nearly four hours with industry representatives from Simplot, Verdesian Life Sciences, GS Long, McGregor, Winfield, Senske, Wilbur Ellis, Saddle Mountain, Western Mountain Ag, AG Link, Inc., AG Enterprise and others.

Staff discussed the modernization process from the existing FERTON system to the WALTeR System expected to be complete and fully operational by 2020 which will expedite the registration of products and make available more tools for its users. In 2017, 8,673 fertilizer products were registered, up 5% which was up 5% from the previous year. There were 1206 new fertilizer products registered in the previous 12 months, an increase of 4%. In addition, WSDA renewed and approved 274 revised labels. There are an anticipated 419 companies who will renew during the existing cycle which is 2018-2020.

The committee requested that electronic access be given to the list of labels which were not renewed and products that were issued a STOP order. WSDA accepted and will consider the recommendation. WSDA reported that the average registration renewal was 12 days over the past 12 months and 63.2 days for new products over the same period. A new staff person has been hired which should dramatically reduce the time requirement in the near future.

A WSDA staff member who is going through the leadership chairs within AAPFCO gave an update on issues being discussed and worked on, including Bio-Stimulants.

A report was given regarding tonnage of fertilizer brought into the state. In 2017 two new records were realized. Inspection fees exceeded \$500,000.00 and tonnage reached 1.6 million. WSDA has improved their ability to conduct audits and found 335,178 tons had not paid tonnage fees resulting in a collection of \$100,553 additional dollars in revenue. For questions about tonnage fees that are required when fertilizer enters the state contact WSDA.

Far West was asked to give an update on the petition it has filed with DOE to remove Ammonium Sulfate from the Toxic Air Pollutant list. We were able to report that the rulemaking to update the air toxics rule has begun. FWAA members are welcome to participate in the rule development. More information can be found here: [Rule-making website](#).

Here is access to the [Air toxics rulemaking email list](#). The list is used to keep people informed about the stakeholder meetings and other activities related to the air toxics rule.

There will be a discussion regarding ammonium sulfate at the December 11 meeting.

DOE plans to post the agenda and supporting materials in advance of the meeting on the rulemaking website. We encourage our members to participate in this meeting in-person if possible, however a call-in number will be provided. The date conflicts with our December Conference in Kennewick, WA, so please review who may be able to attend which event. FWAA will try to get the December 11th meeting rescheduled.

FWAA also gave a presentation regarding underground Fertilizer Piping requirements. The committee supported an action to request a policy change within WSDA and details will be provided at a later date.

- Jim Fitzgerald

Far West Urges NO on Washington's I-1631

The Far West Agribusiness Association is urging a NO vote this fall on Initiative 1631, the carbon tax measure, and has officially joined the NO on 1631 Coalition.



I-1631's deeply flawed, unfair energy tax would place an additional financial burden squarely on the shoulders of farmers, small businesses, families and consumers. A state analysis shows that I-1631 would cost Washington consumers \$2.3 billion in the first five years alone. In addition, I-1631 would add hundreds of millions of dollars to ratepayers' energy bills for higher costs for utilities. I-1631's taxes would continue to automatically increase every year — indefinitely, with no set cap.

Independent studies estimate that I-1631 would increase the cost of gasoline by up to 14 cents per gallon in the first year alone, increasing annually with no cap, quickly adding up to almost 60 cents more per gallon within 15 years.

I-1631 also exempts many of the state's largest manufacturers, businesses and polluters, leaving the cost burden to fall on small businesses, farmers and families.

Equally troubling is the glaring lack of accountability and its disincentive against meeting the initiative's stated goals. I-1631 would create an unelected board of political appointees, with no real accountability to voters or even the Legislature. This board would have broad authority to spend billions in taxpayer dollars, with no responsibility for outcomes, no specific plan, and no requirements that the money be spent specifically to reduce greenhouse gases.

We [encourage our members to join the NO on 1631 Coalition](#) and to consider [making a financial contribution today](#) via the NO on 1631 campaign website. It's important that Washington voters receive information about this costly, unfair energy tax.

- Jim Fitzgerald