



September 23, 2009

Hello Vegetable Seed Growers and Vegetable Seed Company Representatives:

2008 Columbia Basin Vegetable Seed Survey

Enclosed is the 2008 vegetable seed acreage and estimated yield survey for the Columbia Basin. I'm sure many of you will find it of interest.

Summarized below are some of the trends for vegetable seed acreage in the Columbia Basin for the past ten years (1998-2005* vs. 2008). *The survey data from 2006 and 2007 is incomplete and therefore has not been included in these comparisons.

- There were 1,089 acres of carrot seed harvested in 2008. Carrot seed acres were down 40% (-729 acres) in 2008 compared to the period from 1998-2005. Hybrid carrot seed acres were down 53% (-289 acres) and open pollinated carrot seed acres were down 35% (-440 acres). But, 2008 is not the smallest carrot seed crop (acres) on record for this ten-year period; only 852 acres of carrot seed were harvested in 2004 due to extensive winter damage. FYI: Carrot seed production in Central Oregon is reported to be near 2,500 acres (similar to Columbia Basin carrot seed acreage in the late '90's).
- There were 25 acres of dill seed harvested in 2008. Dill seed acres were down 55% (-30 acres) compared to the period from 1998-2005. This does not necessarily indicate a downward trend in dill seed production, however, because acreage has varied greatly from year to year.
- There were 443 acres of coriander (cilantro) seed harvested in 2008. Coriander seed was not reported on the annual survey until 2005. Coriander seed was one of the largest (acres) of the small-seeded vegetable seed crops in the Columbia Basin last year; only carrot seed and onion seed were produced on more acres in 2008.
- Only 416 acres of radish seed (all) were harvested in 2008. Radish seed acreage was down 68% (-901 acres) compared to the period from 1998-2005. No daikon seed was reported for 2008 (-292 acres), and round red radish seed acres were down 49% (-395 acres). The 2008 radish seed crop is by far the smallest on record for this ten-year period.
- Acreage of other Brassica vegetable seed crops (collard, kale, kohlrabi, and turnip) was in line with production over the past ten years. Acreage of these crops tends to vary greatly from year to year.

- At 753 acres, onion seed acreage was up 29% (+218 acres) in 2008 compared to the period from 1998-2005. Hybrid onion seed acres were up 36% (+112 acres), open pollinated onion seed acres held steady, and bunching onion seed acres were up 44% (+101 acres). This was the second largest onion seed crop (acres) on record for this ten-year period.
- There were 3,014 acres of small-seeded vegetable seed crops harvested in 2008. This total is down 22% (-867 acres) compared to the period from 1998-2005. But, fewer acres of small-seeded vegetable seed were produced in 2002 and 2004. These numbers do not include canola seed and mustard seed crops.
- Canola seed production has been increasing in the Columbia Basin. Estimated acreage of hybrid canola seed was more than 1,400 acres in 2008. Canola seed production is pinned at the Extension office.
- Sugar beet seed acres are also increasing in the Columbia Basin. Producers of sugar beet seed in the Basin participate in the pinning program.

A ten year history of Columbia Basin vegetable seed acreage (1996-2005) can be obtained from the WSU Grant-Adams Extension office.

Thank you to all of the Columbia Basin vegetable seed companies for providing harvested acreage and yield estimates for 2008. The summarized data is forwarded to the Washington State Department of Agriculture to compile statistics for the state. Vegetable seeds are a high value crop and are an important part of Washington agriculture.

Federal Judge Overturns Government Approval of Roundup Ready Sugar Beets

Here is some new information that could impact sugar beet seed production in the Columbia Basin and the Willamette Valley in Oregon... On Tuesday, U.S. District Judge Jeffrey White found that USDA-APHIS violated the National Environmental Policy Act by failing to take a "hard look" at whether Roundup Ready sugar beets would eventually spread their genes to other crops. He noted that pollen from genetically modified sugar beet could be blown by the wind long distances to related crops, such as chard and table beets. The judge has ordered USDA-APHIS to produce an environmental impact statement examining the issue. The judge has scheduled a meeting on October 30, 2009 to discuss the remedies phase of the case. At that time, the organic farmers, food safety advocates, and conservation groups that brought the lawsuit will ask the judge for an injunction banning new plantings until the re-examination is done.

Sincerely,



Carrie H. Wohleb
Area Extension Educator – Vegetable and Vegetable Seed Crops

If you have any questions or comments feel free to phone or e-mail me at (509) 754-2011 ext. 413 or cwohleb@wsu.edu.

We would like to send this newsletter electronically. If you have an email account, please respond to jkerner@wsu.edu or call (509) 754-2011 ext. 413 to add your address to our e-mail listserv.

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Cooperating agencies: Washington State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Grant and Adams Counties. Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local extension office.

2008 Columbia Basin Vegetable Seed Acreage and Yield Estimate¹

CROP	TYPE	ACRES	AVG. YIELD (lb/A)	ACRES 1998-2005 ²	
				Average	(min – max)
Carrot	Hybrid	254	237.9	543	(390-913)
	OP	835	569.6	1,275	(462-2,156)
	(All)	1,089		1,818	(852-3,069)
Parsley		0	-----	10	(0-29)
Dill		25	-----	55	(21-78)
Coriander (Cilantro)		443	1,180.9	-----	-----
Radish	Round Red	406	853.6	801	(401-1,068)
	Daikon	0	-----	292	(105-541)
	Other	11	-----	-----	-----
	(All)	416		1,317	(687-1,471)
Collard		44	1,352.1	59	(25-104)
Kale		110	1,959.6	95	(0-167)
Kohlrabi		20	-----	16	(0-50)
Turnip		113	2,035.7	170	(66-257)
Onion	Hybrid	308	215.8	196	(64-334)
	OP	213	554.0	208	(101-368)
	Bunching	232	620.2	131	(25-361)
	(All)	753		535	(317-856)
Leek		0	-----	3	(0-10)
Total Acres³		3,014³		3,881	(2,764-5,262)
Canola	Hybrid	1,407	1,081.4	-----	-----
Mustard	Yellow & Oriental	127	-----	-----	-----

¹ Harvested acreage and yield estimates as supplied by Columbia Basin vegetable seed companies. This survey does not include vegetable seed crops that are not pinned at the WSU Grant-Adams Extension office (such as seed peas, seed beans, and seed corn). This survey also does not include sugar beet seed.

² Average number of acres harvested from 1998 to 2005, and the minimum and maximum number of acres harvested from 1998 to 2005.

³ Canola and mustard seed acres have not been included in the total.