



Shepherd's Grain Producers  
Newsletter #20 May, 2006

I heard a quote the other day from a gentleman living in this area who said "I slept in last Sunday and I missed spring". I think this was true for most if not all of our production area this past month. The change from cold and wet went straight to hot and dry or summer like temperatures. Fortunately this past weekend we received a good measure of rain and temperatures moderated to allow the crops to continue their positive growth.

The enthusiasm within the family of Shepherd's Grain producers is ever present but even this author can still get very excited about what we are doing. I was in Condon Oregon last week and had one of those moments that continue to solidify "why we do what we do". I just awoke from a restful sleep at the Hotel Condon (a jewel in this area of Oregon) and met Matthew Buck to walk across the street to the Country Café. Matthew who is the assistant director of the Food Alliance, myself, and Hans Kok from WSU/UI were in Condon to put on a seminar entitled "Reconnecting the producer and the consumer" to a group of grain producers from the region. As the story goes on, we walked across the empty street at 6:30am and said hello to a couple who were sitting on a bench and they said hello back and gave us a smile. We walked into the café with a few tables and a counter mostly taken up by the local community members. The waitress, who we later found to be one of the owners, asked Matt how he wanted his eggs. After a few minutes describing how the yolks and whites would look over easy, Matt chose over medium. Then the discussion centered on whether the bacon should be crisp or limp and the most important question, what kind of toast would he like. As that was going on, I looked out the window and saw a pickup go by pulling a hay baler. This view was framed by the buildings across the street, a funeral home and a movie theater. All this combined with a few laughs and friendly banter from the counter set up that moment when it became very clear to me that this is where sanity lives.

The real meaning of Shepherd's Grain is the partnerships of the family of producers and the family of buyers supporting these small communities which combined with agriculture based food production make up the rural fabric of our society. This part of society is slowly eroding away and we must make every effort to sustain this vital resource base. The market place is the only long term solution to this revitalization and your support is the key. You have become a family of Shepherd's Grain supporters and your activism in spreading the word through your product and actions. This effort has opened the door for all of society to partake in preserving the image seen by this author that day in Condon Oregon. That is why we try to end each newsletter with;

Thank you for your support of Shepherd's Grain.

Sincerely,  
The Shepherd's Grain Producers