



Funding Sources

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an opportunity for farmers to learn more about growing and harvesting buckwheat and other alternative crops and to add value to these crops by processing and marketing as a group of growers.

VISION

Farmers growing buckwheat and other alternative crops will work together to produce high-quality crops, both organic certified and transitional, will market these crops as a group of growers, *cooperatively*, as feed for livestock, as seed for harvest and cover crops or plowdowns, and as grain for human consumption and as processed products including buckwheat groats, grits, and flour. Producers will increase their net profit by patronizing the Co-op. Producer patronage will sustain producers, the rural community and the Co-op.

STRUCTURE

The Buckwheat Growers Association of Minnesota is a Farmer Owned and Operated Cooperative. (*Criteria affecting Capper-Volstead qualifications are that every individual member must be a farmer.*)

OFARM (Organic Farmers Agency for Relationship Marketing) The Buckwheat Growers Association of Minnesota is a member of OFARM.

In 1996-98, Tom Bilek received grant funds from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture – Energy and Sustainable Agriculture Program (MDA ESAP) to facilitate meetings with farmers interested in growing alternative crops, especially buckwheat, to share production, harvesting and marketing information and to market as a group of growers.

With partial funding received from the Agriculture Utilization and Research Institute (AURI) for Assessment of Value Added Buckwheat Products and additional funding from USDA North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE), through the Sustainable Farming Association of CENTRAL MN, the Buckwheat Growers Assn of Central MN continued to collect, compile and share production, harvesting and marketing information.

With partial funding from AURI and a loan through MDA ESAP the BGA purchased a grain cleaner to add value through the cleaning process.

In August 2000, a feed mill in Wadena MN was purchased with additional loan funds from MDA ESAP.

Grain bins were purchased in the fall of 2001 with a loan through Mid-Central Federal in Wadena MN.

In 2001 funding was received from the MDA Value Added Processing Program for research on marketing buckwheat and developing a business plan and accounting system.

In 2000-03, the BGA members researched production and marketing of “flour corn” as an alternative crop with funding from MDA ESAP.



BUCKWHEAT GROWERS ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA

Feed for Livestock
Seed & Supplies
Grain Cleaning
Grain Storage & Corn Drying

Organic Certified by OCIA Intl.
to Process/Manufacture
Feed for Poultry, Dairy, Swine and
Cleaning/Bagging Grain

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Tom Bilek, Chairman
218-445-5475 (H) 218-639-2312 (C)
Al Holmquist, Vice Chairman
Jeff Nardello, Secretary/Treasurer
Directors: Marv Freiborg, Floyd Hardy
and Rodney Mursu

Hairy Vetch is a winter annual legume that increases soil tilth and can provide enough nitrogen releasing bio-mass for crops that follow, such as corn. Breaks soil compaction, scavenges trapped soil phosphorus and releases it and its stored nitrogen when returned to the soil. Plant 20-30 LB/A in late August . Seed costs \$1/LB retail. Average yield: 100—200 LB/A.

Hulless Oats for livestock feed has a high (16%) protein and oil content. High test weight at 45 LB/Bu. Straw can be used as a forage. Plant 75 LB/A in early spring. Seed costs \$11—\$12/ 75 LB. Average yield: 40 B/A Market as feed for livestock.

Flax was one of the first crops domesticated by man. Important as a health food because of its high amount of polyunsaturated fatty acids in the oil. Is an excellent protein source for livestock feed containing about 35% crude protein. An annual plant that grows to a height of 12 to 36". Plant early 42-50 LB/A Seed costs: \$20-@28/Bu (56 LB/Bu) Average yield: 20 B/A Contract for human consumption market. Price varies.

Field Peas can be used as a plow-down for nitrogen, as forage, or as a grain for protein in livestock feed. Plant early spring 100-180 LB/A Seed costs \$10—\$12/Bu (60 LB/Bu) Average yield: Unknown at this time.

Winter Rye as a cover crop and a nitrogen scavenger with allelopathic properties. Will smother and shade out most weeds. Plant 90 LB/A in August or September. Seed costs \$4.50-\$6.50/Bu (56 LB/Bu) Average yield: 40 B/A

NOTE: All seed costs and yield numbers are estimates and are subject to change.



BUCKWHEAT

PRODUCTION METHODS

For HARVEST, plant one bushel (50 lb)/ acre —mJune 15th to July 10th;

Blooms in 30 days; 70—80 days to harvest; Average yield 850 lb/acre;

For PLOW DOWN plant up to 120 lb/acre;

As COVER CROP in gardens, plant three pounds of seed for 1,000 sq. ft.

MARKETING OPTIONS

HUMAN CONSUMPTION

The market price has varied from \$.09/lb to \$.30/lb, depending on the year and how it is sold. Ship to market by semi (800 - 1200 Bu) or railroad car of four containers, each equals 44,000 lb or 4,000 Bu.

SEED

Seed cost has been from \$.20/lb to \$.30/lb (\$10 - \$15/acre or 50 lb). Seed can be shipped through the post office or on a pallet through a local trucking company.

LIVESTOCK FEED

Beneficial when used as part of ration for feeding poultry, sheep, swine and cattle especially because of a high lysine content.

The Buckwheat Growers Assn of MN owns and operates an organic certified feed mill and grain cleaning facility in Wadena Minnesota, offering feed for livestock; seed for harvest, cover crop, and plow-down; Grain cleaning, grain storage and corn drying.

- BGA MN
Membership Fee: _____
NEW \$100
RENEW \$25/Year ... _____
- OFARM
Membership Fee:
\$60/Year..... _____

Organic Certification Agency:

**Make Check Payable to:
Buckwheat Growers Assn of MN**

Date: _____ Check #: _____

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner _____

Farm Name: _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

E-Mail _____

Mail to: The BUCKWHEAT GROWERS
ASSOCIATION of MN
206 Aldrich Ave SE
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