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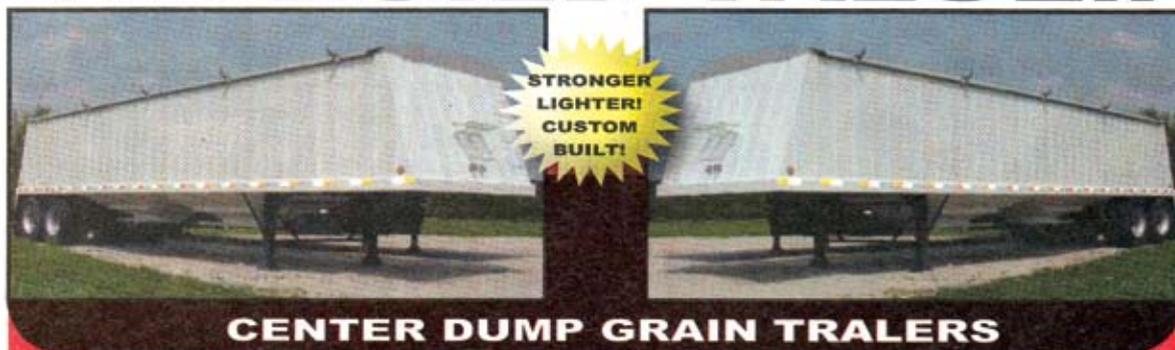


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ON THE COVER

Barley harvest in Washington's Palouse Hills.
Photo courtesy of USDA Agricultural Research Service.

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fertilizer recommendations that quickly became popular with growers and form the basis for nearly all fertilizer applications in the intermountain west area. Stukenholtz Laboratory clients include growers from all neighboring states and several foreign countries including Australia, Canada, Egypt, Russia, Mexico and New Zealand.

Stukenholtz Laboratory provides 1 to 2 day service, including picking up and delivery time, across Southern Idaho from St. Anthony and Grace to Parma and Homedale. Results can be delivered, mailed, faxed, or pulled from the Laboratory's webpage: www.stukenholtz.com. To improve their service, Joyce and Dale Stukenholtz expanded the laboratory 11 years ago, installed the latest in computerized instrumentation and quality control, and made it the most modern and well equipped agricultural laboratory in their market area.

Critical to the success of Idaho's most efficient laboratory and largest field consulting firm has been its personnel. Dr. Stukenholtz has had a PhD in Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition since 1964 and

his son and Laboratory Manager Paul has nearly completed his own. Consulting agronomists include J.P. Kruckeberg of American Falls, a 29 year veteran of field consulting and the most successful single agronomist in the state, and Bart Kunz. The Laboratory and office staff are equally good.

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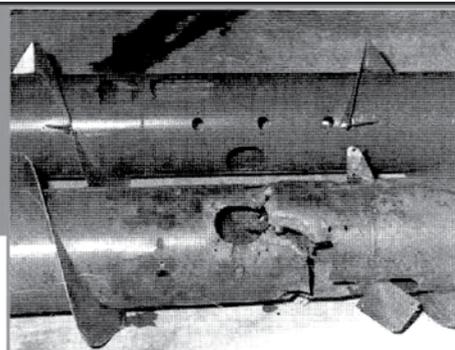


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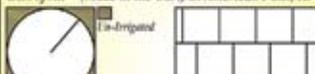


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Considerations for growth and success with Canela Russet

By: Robert Davidson, CSU Extension Seed Potato Specialist

Canela Russet has been grown by SLV growers for the past few years, sometimes with great success, but often with problems related to its **individual** cultivar characteristics. **This cultivar has the potential for producing a high percentage of US No 1 tubers in a very tight size profile**, but overall yields may be less than other cultivars. Even though yields may be less (380 cwt/a +) Canela Russet has the potential for long term storage and has been very profitable for many growers when sold late season (early May to late June). This cultivar, however, has seen its share of problems in the last couple of years. This article will help to put some of these issues into perspective and, hopefully, provide some insight into understanding the cultivar so that each grower will have a greater chance for success.

Late storage to early season: Canela Russet is a cultivar which has a long dormancy (147 days average from the time of harvest to sprouting) which translates



into a need to warm the tubers prior to planting (**50-550F for two weeks**) to assure proper germination. This is especially critical when deciding to cut the tubers to help promote growth of each eye. Cutting is problematic since the tubers are very smooth and have few eyes, with more eyes concentrated near the

bud end of the tuber. It is very easy to cut the seed too small producing seed pieces with no more than one eye. This in turn produces a crop with a high percentage of single stems. During the early trials for this cultivar, the number of stems per plant was 1.9. This is quite low, so efforts must be made to increase the number of stems per plants from 1.9 to near 3.0. **This requires the use of slightly larger seed pieces (3.0 to 3.5 oz) and cutting no larger than splitters when available.** Additionally, warming the seed prior to planting and avoiding fresh cutting the tubers can pay big dividends in terms of stem numbers.

Growing season: Nitrogen management is critical during the season. **Total N rates should not exceed 140 to 160 units total for the season including residual from soil and N from irrigation water.** These levels appear to be critical

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for proper growth during the season and also for the finishing of the vines during the late summer. We know that **excess N applied later in the season has a dramatic effect on the vine maturity and on tuber maturity coupled with skin set.** The past couple of years, late season environmental factors have delayed vine maturity on those fields with **excess N** present and made for very difficult tuber skin set conditions.

Harvest/Storage: It is crucial for this cultivar to have the appropriate length of time for good skin set, assuming that the vines are actually maturing and ready to go down. **Four weeks is not too long for skin set, so proper planning is essential in terms of N management and vine killing.** In the past two to three years many growers have experienced problems relating to Fusarium spp. and tuber dry rot. **After much investigation, we believe that these problems are related to harvesting immature tubers which bruise more easily and provide wound areas for the pathogen to enter.** Additionally, very cool late season harvest temperatures set the tubers up for greater wounding and, thus,

more potential for dry rot. While this cultivar is not resistant to dry rot, it is no more susceptible than many other common cultivars raised by growers in the San Luis Valley. There is one notable difference, however. It appears that Canela Russet takes slightly longer to heal than for example, Russet Norkotah, which can provide greater likelihood of Fusarium spp. becoming established in the tuber. Also, keeping early storage temperatures in the 500F range for longer than two to three weeks can have a very detrimental effect on the amount of dry rot seen in the crop, especially when dealing with immature tubers. Finally, growers should recognize that this cultivar will store for a very long period, but only if the crop has been properly managed during the season and the tubers are mature.

The use of Canela Russet as a long term storage alternative for producers can be very successful when following the appropriate management guidelines. Please keep in mind a few rules as you produce this cultivar. Larger seed, more eyes/seed piece, warming seed prior to planting, N management,

proper vine maturity and vine kill with plenty of time for skin set, good harvest practices and proper early storage management. Following some of these practices can help you become more successful with this cultivar and increase both yields and profits. **6**

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Healthy Grown Still Growing Wisconsin Potato Growers Make Strides in Conservation and Sustainability

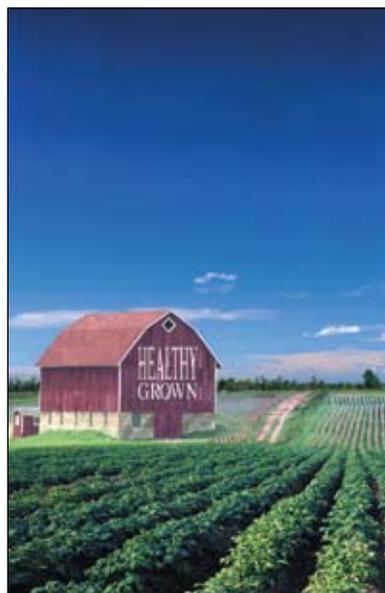
“Large-scale agriculture plays a critical role in the health of our ecosystem,” notes Deana Knuteson, BioIPM Field Coordinator for the Wisconsin Eco-Potato partnership. “A wide range of variables—tilling, pest- and weed-control, irrigation, crop rotation, remnant lands—impact the environment,” notes Deana Knuteson. “Minimizing that impact was the motivation behind developing the Wisconsin Eco-Potato partnership and the Healthy Grown® eco-label.”

Established in 1996, the Wisconsin Eco-Potato partnership is a collaboration between the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association (WPVGA) and the University of Wisconsin. The International Crane Foundation, the Defenders of Wildlife and the World Wildlife Fund are also part of the partnership. The science-based team helps potato growers reduce the use of crop protection inputs such as nutrients, pesticides and other additives, by adopting integrated pest management (IPM) alternatives—biologically based pest management systems that do not harm the environment. The partnership also works to reduce impacts on water, conserve and restore biodiversity to natural ecosystems, and increase productivity without genetic modification of the produce. The partnership has resulted in the Healthy Grown® potato eco-label.

With over 350 eco-label products on the market, consumers and businesses are growing more wary of “greenwashing”—exaggerated or misleading claims about eco-friendliness—according to the World Resources Institute (WRI). WRI notes that in response, both the Federal Trade Commission and the Security Exchange Commission have begun paying attention to green claims, and Senator Dianne Feinstein has begun developing legislation focusing on eco-labeling.

As part of its transparent eco-labeling process, all Healthy Grown growers are certified and audited each year by Protected Harvest—an independent oversight organization that ensures strict adherence

to sustainable agricultural standards. Growers must pass annual field-by-field certification with a farm audit and pesticide, fertility, and bio IPM record requirements. All certification standards are documented as proof that Healthy Grown practices are taking place in the field. All packers and shippers are also certified by Protected Harvest. Unique to eco-label products, Healthy Grown has



compiled an eight-year database tracing IPM and pesticide use. In addition, farmers maintain on-farm statistics that record both the progress of, and challenges to, their sustainable whole-farm methods.

“Healthy Grown is a science-based, measurable, transparent label that provides a process that can ultimately examine the whole farm,” notes Jeb Barzen, International Crane Foundation Director of Field Ecology. “Though the Healthy Grown standard does not yet measure all resources that come from a farm, we’ve accomplished much in the past decade to bring us closer to that point.”

“Healthy Grown is also modular, which makes it easy to add components, or resources, as science allows,” says Barzen.

“This is a huge accomplishment, especially given the current nationwide efforts that are underway.”

One of the modules critical to the Healthy Grown whole-farm sustainable approach is the ecosystem restoration part of the standard. Growers work with various researchers from the University of Wisconsin and the International Crane Foundation to restore biodiversity to degraded natural areas within the farms. “Agriculture comprises the largest land-use in North America, and we have to realize that farms do more than simply provide produce. Large-scale agriculture impacts natural ecosystems. That’s why Healthy Grown uses a whole-farm approach, so we can address biodiversity, climate change, water use, and soil erosion simultaneously on the same farm that produces our food,” explains Barzen.

Adds AJ Bussan, Associate Professor in the Department of Horticulture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, “One of Healthy Grown’s greatest strengths is the collaboration between researchers, conservationists and growers. Healthy Grown emerged from a targeted set of specific sustainability standards, but all of us continue to challenge those standards. The standards will continue to evolve as we find better ways to manage pests and invasive plants, restore natural ecosystems, support native animals, improve production and minimize impacts. It’s a work that’s always in progress because we use science as the basis for our certification of the Healthy Grown eco-label.”

Healthy Grown is anything but stagnant. Since its inception, the interest in and regard from international conservation groups has grown, as has the interdisciplinary participation of University of Wisconsin-Madison researchers, including production, soils, ecosystem and social science faculty. Other Healthy Grown highlights include:

Sustainable whole-farm agriculture

- Reduced pesticide risk to both human

and environmental health by 32 percent among certified fields.

- Banned 11 pesticides from Healthy Grown farms that are of particular concern, as well as established a list of “use with restriction” materials. This list goes above and beyond current legal requirements.

- Increased use of IPM and other preventative pest tactics by 50 percent.

- Managed fields with equal yields and quality of product to non-Healthy Grown farms with less impact on human and environmental health.

- Consistent annual expansion of research, education and software programs for growers.

- Successful use of cover cropping, mulching, organic soil amendments and experimental solarization to control soil borne diseases and improve soil and water quality.

Eco-label transparency

- Development of data management system to provide historical farm-level data of all whole-farm sustainability and conservation efforts, including data concerning pesticide use, fertility and water use, and biodiversity tracking.

- Database of documented research-based eco-label standards which illustrate whole-farm sustainability improvement trends and challenges over time.

Current biodiversity and conservation research

- Successful implementation of biodiversity conservation to restore endangered and rare ecosystems in Wisconsin. Healthy Grown farm land parcels (over 400 acres) now being restored to native prairie, savanna and wetland ecosystems.

- According to Emily Aker’s Master of Science thesis, “Monitoring Vegetation Response to Ecosystem Management in Agricultural Landscapes Under an Eco-label Scheme”:

- Positive trends were recorded in native plant diversity on nearly all of the endangered prairie and savanna ecosystems on Healthy Grown farms.

- Overall, the longer a unit was enrolled in the Natural Community Standard, the higher the site scored in terms of floristic quality—the presence of conservative plant species.

- Management activities have been implemented in the natural community

areas to control exotic or invasive species, and to promote the growth of native species. Activities such as prescribed burning, invasive species removal, and planting of native species have advanced restoration efforts.

- Large-scale ongoing research projects, funded by the USDA-NRI program, to gauge the importance of natural ecosystem restoration in relation to crop quality and production. The projects include research concerning:

- Scientific assessment of the biodiversity of plant, bird and insect species in both agricultural and non-agricultural adjacent lands.

- How agricultural and non-agricultural landscapes interact and what the optimal balance is between farmed and non-farmed lands.

- Examination of the distribution of bird species in non-agricultural portions of the Healthy Grown farms and potential benefits of preservation of these avian habitats.

- University of Wisconsin, Department of Entomology seed predation research project to assess effect of insect diversity on agricultural and non-agricultural lands.



Awards and honors

- USDA Secretary’s Honor Awards for Maintaining and Enhancing the Nation’s Natural Resources and Environment

- World Wildlife Fund Gift to the Earth Award

- International IPM Award of Achievement

- International Crane Foundation Good Egg Award for Excellence

Going forward, Healthy Grown is examining the possibility of expanding its eco-label and farm certification to other vegetable crops. Notes Knuteson, “Our data continues to illustrate that it’s economically feasible to grow in a sustainable manner. The more we learn about ecologically-sound alternatives and the

benefits of increasing biodiversity on non-agricultural plots of land located on the farms, the more everyone benefits. It’s a process of trial and error, but we have a comprehensive database to guide our course. We’ve certainly had our fair share of challenges over the past decade, but every one of us is committed to the research-based standard.”

Adds Ann MacGuidwin, Professor of Nematology and Plant Pathology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, “The on-farm research the Healthy Grown growers contribute is a constant motivator. The growers are so savvy when it comes to testing new biorational practices and products. They’re committed to research and will design and implement trials themselves, as well as partner with University researchers.”

Nick Somers, Healthy Grown grower agrees. “After all these years, there is still a commitment to move forward. As growers, we’re always asking ourselves what more we can do to improve sustainability. We have a science-based, transparent, certifiable product and we know that it’s good. We need to keep moving forward and tackle other sustainability issues to become better.”

Concludes Knuteson, “Everything in the Healthy Grown® standard is research-based. We document changes over time not only to see what we’ve accomplished, but as a means of improving standards in the future. We’re always looking beyond what we’re doing today—working to maintain, and then surpass, the high research bar we have set for ourselves.”

About Healthy Grown®

The Healthy Grown® eco-label, established in 2001, is a product of the Wisconsin Eco-Potato partnership between the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association (WPVGA) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The International Crane Foundation, World Wildlife Fund and the Defenders of Wildlife are also part of the partnership. The Healthy Grown standard is designed to help growers reduce impacts on water, conserve natural ecosystems, increase biodiversity and improve productivity through researched-based sustainable and IPM processes. Healthy Grown sustainable farming practices are overseen by Protected Harvest, an independent oversight organization. 

Elston Manufacturing

From Sanders to Gopher Getters

In 1925, Rue R. Elston, the founder of the Elston Company and his wife, Clara, and son, Wendell, moved to Sioux Falls, SD from Spencer, Iowa. Rue found employment with the Manchester Biscuit Company. The next



year his son Jack was born. In 1927 Rue, wife Clara, and two sons, Wendell and Jack moved to Minneapolis, MN where Rue found work as a bus driver for Twin City Motor Bus.

One snowy night, Rue saw a young man get hit by a car while spreading sand with a shovel at a bus stop. The man lost his leg in the accident. After seeing this accident, Rue thought a unit could be manufactured to mount in front of the drive wheels of a bus and be electrically controlled by the driver. Such a unit could help eliminate this type of accident by spreading sand in front of the drive wheels of the bus. After extensive testing and engineering, the first units were installed on Greyhound buses.

In 1938 a corporation was formed to manufacture the Elston Electric Sander. Today sanders are used on city buses such as those in Seattle, Washington and are mandatory on school buses in many Northern States. They are also used on fire trucks and a special design for railroad trains.

In 1952 Rue, and his son Jack, engineered and designed the Elston Cargo Space heater, a unit that controls the inside temperature of semi-trailers that transport products that cannot



be frozen. Through the years several models have been designed. These units are sold in the United States, Canada, and parts of Europe. 

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The H & M Gopher Control PERC system (Pressurized Exhaust Rodent Controller) uses carbon monoxide from pressurized engine exhaust to kill burrowing rodents such as gophers, ground squirrels, prairie dogs, moles & voles.



According to the company, exhaust gas has long been one of the most lethal and least expensive methods to kill burrowing rodents. But until now there hasn't been an economical, efficient delivery system.

Company owners, Allen Hurlburt and Virginia Massey, said that the PERC system involves a narrow steel wand that is used to probe the burrow and inject pressurized exhaust that fills the burrow in two minutes with lethal concentrations of carbon monoxide before the rodent has a chance to either escape or block the burrow.

An internal combustion engine generates the carbon monoxide and drives a compressor pump that pressurizes the exhaust gas to 115 psi in a storage tank. An air hose and a hand held probe inject the gas directly into the burrow without any digging.

Brand new to the PERC lineup is the PERC 620, a trailer-mounted unit with a 20 hp motor and six reels - each with a 50' hose and hand probe. The 620 features a tandem axle with turf tires. It sells for \$12,950 plus S&H.

The PERC 412 is a trailer-mounted unit with a 13 hp motor and four reels each with a 50' hose and the hand probe. The 412 features turf tires and is designed to be pulled behind an ATV. It sells for \$7,249 plus S&H.

The PERC 206 is a skid-mounted unit with a 6.5 hp engine, two reels with 50' hoses and hand probes. It sells for \$4,595 plus S&H.

The PERC 206T is the skid unit mounted on its own special trailer. It sells for

\$4,995 plus S&H.

The PERC system is simple to use and safe for the operator as well as wildlife since there is no poison bait or explosion involved. Crop stands are not damaged during treatment. No other control method is as effective, efficient and as inexpensive to operate as the PERC.

A PERC system can treat moderately infested alfalfa fields at about 3.5 acres an hour with a single operator. Each probed location requires only about 1 to

2 minutes injection time.

Units have been shipped to customers from Southern California to central Canada and as far east as Florida. Though most of the market has been with alfalfa growers, orchard and specialty crop growers have also purchased units. The PERC system is the best solution anywhere burrowing rodents are a problem.

For more information call (530) 667-5181 or visit the website www.handmgophercontrol.com

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MORE RIGHT THAN RAIN

Grazing Grass On Irrigated Farms

By: Don Hijar – Pawnee Buttes Seed Inc.

Agriculture is changing and today's landowners are looking for a different way to enjoy the land and still make a profit. Growing grass in the arid west under irrigation can be profitable if done correctly. The first step is to study how grass grows to understand what it requires to stay healthy. Doing your homework by reading, attending range management seminars, and visiting an actual irrigated grass operation can be very beneficial. Once you have done all this research you need to determine what you want this irrigated grass to do for your operation. An experienced range scientist, agronomist or individual educated in land, grass and cattle can help you plan this second step.

You need to select the field you want to convert to irrigated grass and decide if spring or fall planting would be best for your operation. Now it is time to prepare a seedbed. The seedbed should be firm and weed free. The grass seed should be planted with a grass drill designed to handle all grass seed types and able to control the depth the grass seed is planted. Grass seed should be planted $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep. Planting the grass seed deeper reduces emergence by 80%.

Planting a warm season cover crop in June will out compete weeds, firm up the seedbed and provide protection against soil erosion is a good investment. Harvest the cover crop in August, spray the regrowth with Roundup and drill the grass seed directly into the standing stubble.

Seed can also be planted March – May, or if planting in the fall it is the best to plant straight grass prior to October 1st. A grass/

legume mix or straight legume should be planted at least 30 days prior to the average historical freeze date. Legumes are less tolerant of frost than grass, and any plant needs to have time to get big enough to survive the winter. You also want to ensure you have good soil moisture prior to winter.

The newly seeded grass needs water within the first seven days. If rain showers do not occur within 2-3 days after planting; begin irrigating.

Fertilizing to establish grass is not as important as it will be when the grass is more mature and you're expecting high forage production. Grass requires 150-200 lbs of nitrogen per acre per year applied in 2-6 applications. Phosphorus requirements range from 40-80 lbs/Ac/year. The best way to determine fertilizer requirements is to take a soil sample and ask the lab to make recommendations based on a desired yield of 5-7 tons of hay/acre.

Irrigated grass requires $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" of water per week for optimum to maximum production. The source of water can be precipitation or irrigation. Total annual requirements is 24-30"/year. Cool season grasses should be watered from March 1st to November 1st for maximum yield. Cool season grass under irrigation can produce more forage annually than warm season grass because the growing season for cool season grass is March 1st to November 1st as compared with May 15th to September 15th for warm season grass. Grass planted on irrigated ground should be watered adequately to recoup the benefits of irrigation. Grass watered less than adequately produces much

less forage and may never pay for the investment.

A Grazing Management System accounts for 12 months of grazing with a cow-calf operation. If the operation is yearlings the operation needs to be flexible to allow for the peak periods of grass production, summer slump and increased weight of the stockers as time progresses. In other words, a stocking rate of 1500 lbs of beef per acre in April using three 500 lb yearlings may be correct but 60 days later assuming a rate of gain of 2 lbs/head/day would mean each animal is now weighing 620 and the stocking rate is now 620 lbs/animal x 3 head or 1860 lbs/acre.

The pasture is now overstocked and as day length increases and daytime temperatures increase the grass will produce less forage and the stocking rate should be reduced from 1500 lbs of beef/acre to as low as 1100 lbs of beef/acre depending how hot it is, amount of irrigation applied and amount of fertilizer and usage. The more a pasture is abused the less forage it produces.

The key elements of a grazing plan are proper stocking rate, having at least 6 paddocks, six or less days of grazing per paddock and 25 – 35 days of rest between grazing periods. For example, eight paddocks grazed 4 days each would take 32 days to graze all paddocks and each paddock would receive 28 days of rest. The grass should not be grazed less than 4". Reserve is very important to the plant.

With all of these elements in place, grazing on irrigated grass has much more of a chance of being successful and profitable. 



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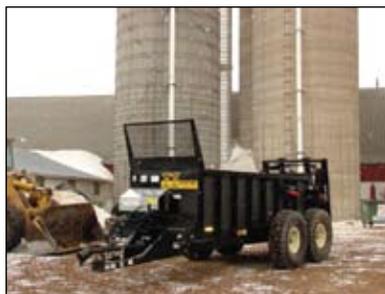
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Delta-Tooth Harrow The Shape Of The Future

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Distributed by Hi-Valley Manufacturing in Kremmling Colorado, the Delta-Tooth Harrow is custom assembled to each customer's exact need. We offer three bolt patterns, and custom widths to fit every budget. For more information please contact Dave or Chris Sammons 970-724-9488. 

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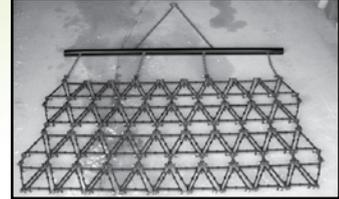


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Tuesday, February 1, 2011 Is Deadline To Apply For Fred Stout Experience Awards

High school graduates who have a strong desire to pursue a career in managing and/or marketing Registered Jersey™ cattle are encouraged to apply for the 2011 Fred Stout Experience awards.

The awards are presented annually in memory of Fred J. Stout Jr., Mt. Carmel, Ill., a lifelong Jersey breeder and member of the Jersey Marketing Service staff from 1978 to 1997 who believed that the best learning experiences happen in the everyday world.

Two awards will be offered: (1) a minimum 10-week summer marketing internship with Jersey Marketing Service, Reynoldsburg, Ohio, and (2) a minimum 10-week on-farm, structured internship in Jersey herd management.

To apply, specify which experience (marketing internship, on-farm internship) is preferred, or indicate if you are interested in both opportunities. Submit a one-page résumé listing previous work experience, skills and other qualifications, plus a separate cover letter stating your ambitions, goals and career aspirations, including plans for achieving them. The letter must also explain how and why the Fred Stout Experience will be of benefit in achieving future goals. A summary of involvement with and interest in Registered Jersey™ cattle is required.

Two letters of support are required, one from an active breeder of Registered Jersey™ cattle, excluding immediate family members; and the other from a teacher, mentor or past employer. These must be mailed directly by the supporters to the AJCA office.

Applications and letters of support must be postmarked no later than February 1, 2011 and addressed to Fred Stout Experience, American Jersey Cattle Association, 6486 E. Main Street, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068-2362. They may be sent by email to info@usjersey.com.

Previous recipients of the Fred Stout Experience Award are Tara Bohnert, Il-

linois (2003), Allison Waggoner, South Carolina (2004), Dan Bauer, Wisconsin (2005), Aaron Horst, Pennsylvania (2006), Jacob Pieper, Maryland (2007), Katie Albaugh, Maryland (2008), Brady Core, Kentucky (2009), and Kim Wilson, Oklahoma and Ivy Roberts, Florida (2010).

Financial support is provided by a permanent endowment created in 2001 by friends and colleagues of Fred Stout. For more information on the Fred Stout Experience, contact Dr. Cherie L. Bayer, AJCA Director of Development, at email cbayer@usjersey.com or phone (614) 322-4456.

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says Michael Turwitt, President & CEO of 2GCENERGY Power Systems Technologies Inc.

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Headquartered in Orange Park, FL, 2G - CENERGY Power Systems Technologies Inc. is a US Corporation owned by 2G Bio-Energy Technology Corporation (2G Bio-Energietechnik AG) Germany, MAGNA Venture Capital & Investment, LLC, United States, and CENERGY's senior management team. 2G is a long-established company publically traded at the Frankfurt Stock Exchange. 2G Bio-Energietechnik AG is one of Germany's leading manufacturers of combined heat and power (CHP) systems, with more than 1200 cogeneration plants installed. The company's CHP power plants guarantee extreme high energy efficiency, extracted and generated from biogas, landfill gas, sewage gas, coal mine gas, natural gas, syngas and biofuels. 2G-CENERGY provides technologically advanced and clean systems to generate electricity and heat, while reducing CO2 emissions and greenhouse gases. All plants are designed and manufactured "connection-ready".

More information at: <http://www.2g-cenergy.com> Contact: Michael J. Turwitt, President & CEO, e-mail: mturwitt@2g-cenergy.com Tel: +1-904-579-3217 and +1-904-579-3057

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Rocky I

A true story about a very brave little alpaca

Story by Mary C. King
Photographs by Lindsey R. Annan



hopeful and thought that if I stayed to keep him stimulated and breathing long enough to give the treatments time to work he may have a chance. Larry went home and told me he would pick me up when I was ready to come home.

That night, I visited with Dr. Bohnhoff and asked questions until after midnight. I told him that Rocky had a very strong will to live. I believe he got this strong



Rocky's first night in the hospital

Editor's Note:

This is part 2 of 2 taken from the book *Alpaca King's Rocky I*. Part 1 appeared in our Summer/Fall edition of the *Western Farm Ranch and Dairy Magazine*.

Rocky was dehydrated, his body was eating its own proteins, his body temperature was 94°, he was suffering from malnutrition, and the doctor thought he had pulmonary

edema. Dr. Bohnhoff inserted a tube for oxygen, a tube for fluids, and another tube for meds.

It was heart breaking to see our frail little Rocky suffering this way.

I felt very sad for Rocky because he had tried so hard to live and now he was dying. I told Larry that I wanted to stay at the hospital with him for the night. I decided that if he was going to die, I didn't want him to be alone. I tried to be

will from his sire, Denver Rio Grande. I also believe that a strong desire to live is the critical medicine that cannot be prescribed, cannot be bought, and cannot be ignored. That spirit must be honored and not cut off with hasty intervention.

Dr. Bohnhoff decided to run several tests but gave me little hope. At 1:00 am he announced that he was going home and suggested I do the same. At this time I was laying in a stall on a bed of straw

with Rocky. I asked the vet assistant if I was breaking any rules by staying. She told me I wasn't, so I told her I wanted to stay. Through the night the assistant checked on Rocky every 30 minutes. He was the only patient in the hospital so they gave him special care. It was cold in the stall. I laid Rocky's head on my chest so he could hear my heart beating and feel me breathe and I wrapped my coat around both of us. Several times through the night Rocky gasped for air and twisted his head around in contortions in the manner of dying animals. I pulled his head forward, stroked him a few times, and he became relaxed and quieted. Part of the night I sang a lullaby to him and sometimes I just talked to him and tried to stimulate good feelings. A couple times when I thought he stopped breathing, I rubbed his head and back and he seemed to feel comforted.

The next morning, December 26th, at 8:00 am, Dr. Bohnhoff returned and was surprised to find me there with Rocky—still alive. Even though Rocky was alive the doctor still didn't give me much hope. Dr. Bohnhoff agreed to perform one last test to check his oxygen levels



Rocky with tubes in his nose

but said if the test shows a bad result he would suggest we put Rocky down. I decided to go home and get some sleep. When I left CSU, I fully expected them to call by midmorning for permission to euthanize Rocky. His temp was 96.5° (up from 94°), his eyes were glazed, and he was unable to even lift his head. They had already opened the euthanasia conversation, so I was prepared for the worse.

After a short nap I got a call from CSU. I was nervous about the call, but I listened carefully. The oxygen tests showed that Rocky was utilizing his oxygen much better than they thought. They decided that he did not have pul-

monary edema. This was good news! Since he had a good oxygen level, they decided to move forward with a packet of high powered nutrition and electrolytes, which the tests showed he needed. More good news! They cautioned me



Rocky with head held high

not to get my hopes up, but I couldn't help but be optimistic.

I went back to CSU that afternoon. As soon as I began talking with Dr. Bohnhoff, Rocky moved his head and his ears went up. The doctor and his assistant said they had not seen a response from him like that, so they were pretty excited. I knelt down and held his head in my hands and rubbed his back and he continued to respond in a positive way. Several times while I was there, he picked his head up for a few seconds and his eyes followed me. Sue Johnson was with me and he also responded to her. His progress began moving up on a very slow curve. We wanted to give him every chance possible, so I brought my Photonic red light for this visit. (This is called red light therapy; it's like acupuncture without the needles.) I gave him red light treatments at every visit and asked the vet tech to give him treatments as well. We have had good results with red light therapy in other situations and were hopeful that it would help Rocky through this difficult time.

Once again, Rocky was all alone. This is hard for alpacas because they are herding animals. Without companions they don't do well. We wanted to comfort him as much as possible and decided to make his stall at the hospital more like our barn at home. Sue suggested that I take a radio for him on my next visit so he would have something to listen to. I always play Country Western music in my barn, but Sue and Ellen have told me that my alpacas would be much happier

if I would switch to Rock'n Roll!

Larry and I went back to CSU in the evening and took our granddaughters for a visit. They had played with Rocky in the barnyard and wanted to see him. We set up the radio for him. When he heard our voices, he raised his head and held it up for more than a minute.

The girls hugged him and he continued to hold his head up on his own and even tried to move around. At this time his body temperature was up to 102.8°. Dr. Bohnhoff was very pleased with this because it showed Rocky's body was finally beginning to fight and function properly.

During this visit, the vet tech tried to draw blood for a test but Rocky jumped up on his front legs and spit. Alpacas spit when they don't like what is going on or if they feel threatened. The tech was shocked and very pleased with another positive response, even though it was a messy one. We stayed for an hour; during that time he was very alert with good eye contact, in a cushed position, with his head up on occasion. We now became cautiously optimistic.



Rocky able to stand on his own

At 10:00 pm, I received a phone call from the vet tech at CSU, who said Rocky had made great improvements since I had left. He had been humming and he jumped up on all four legs and used the poop pile. His body temperature was 102.1°. She said that if he kept improving, they would start him on milk in the morning. By this time, we were given a 50% chance of survival. I knew things could still turn bad; however, we continued to hope and pray for more improvement.

On December 27th, Larry and I were sick all day. We both had bronchitis and flu symptoms, probably from stress and lack of sleep — not to mention the night I slept in the barn. We were miserable but we both wanted to check on Rocky. We made a visit to CSU and took Rocky his organic whole milk and organic whole milk yogurt that he was accustomed to eating at feeding time. When we got there, he was standing and humming and spitting because they were putting a feeding tube up his nose. He now had four tubes in his little body. The doctors were amazed at his progress.

I talked with Dr. Bohnhoff in the afternoon and he told me that Rocky was continuing to move forward. A chest x-ray showed that he had mild pneumonia. However, because of his improvement, they decided to start the process of taking him off oxygen, which he handled well. They started to feed him forage and told me that they would try a bottle the next day. The doctors now believed that he would make a full recovery.

December 28th was Rocky's fourth day at the hospital. He continued to improve and beat the odds. Dr. Bohnhoff told us that Rocky was our Christmas miracle. His oxygen and feeding tubes were removed but they were having a difficult time reducing his glucose to a level within normal limits and getting him to eat and chew up his forage.

I consulted Dr. Wheeler about Rocky's glucose levels. He supported the theory that elevated glucose in camelids is part of the healing process. He thought we shouldn't be concerned about the glucose. They were now calling Rocky a mystery.

Although he was doing well, he had to be able to eat on his own if he was going to survive. He was just so young to be without his mother and to be eating forage for all of his nourishment. I knew we still had a lot of work ahead of us.

The next day, Dr. Bohnhoff called and said that Rocky was still not eating normally. He chewed his forage but didn't swallow. This was not normal. We began to wonder if Rocky's ordeal had caused a retardation or a disorder that was preventing his swallow. Dr. Bohnhoff said that Rocky was much improved but to survive he would have to learn how to eat. Quality of life was always a concern

of mine. What would we have accomplished by saving Rocky if he had brain damage from all the trauma and stress? If Rocky didn't have quality of life, we hadn't done him any favor.

In the course of talking with other breeders and doing some internet research I came across information about dehydration. I learned of a female alpaca that displayed the same eating disorder due to being partially dehydrated. Rocky was dehydrated. When they hydrated her, she ate normally — it took two to three days. We really started to push the electrolytes and hoped that Rocky would begin to eat like a normal alpaca; we soon saw positive results.

Dr. Bohnhoff called on the morning of December 29th and said that if Rocky continued to improve, we would be able to bring him home the next day. We went to CSU and spoke with Dr. Bohnhoff. He told us that Rocky's glucose was back to normal and he was eating and chewing his cud. Dr. Bohnhoff had not seen him chew his cud until now, so he was very pleased. They also decided to wean Rocky off milk since he wouldn't take a bottle without a fight. They encouraged solid food instead.

Dr. Wheeler dropped by CSU to get an update on Rocky on December 29th. After reading his chart Dr. Wheeler could not believe that Rocky was still alive. He told us that Rocky "was definitely a miracle cria."

On December 30th, CSU called and told us that they decided to keep Rocky one more day. His glucose was now a little low and he had dropped .2 of a pound. They just wanted to watch him a little longer.

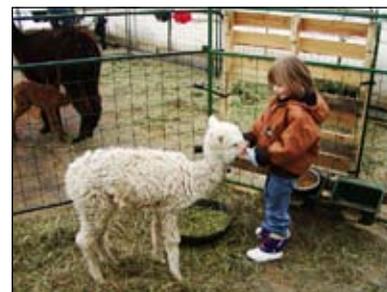
He really liked the mix of pellets they were giving him and was eating well. We hoped to bring him home soon. We decided that when he came home we would take him back to Sue and Ellen's because they had the heated greenhouse for him, and May was there.

They set up creep pens (one inside and one outside) so that only he could enter. If Rocky tried to feed outside a creep pen, he would be forced to compete with older and bigger alpacas, but ultimately he would have lost.

Now that he was able to eat, Rocky was finally gaining weight after four weeks of uncertainty. Rocky weighed 26

pounds when we took him to the hospital and in very poor condition. The day we brought him home Rocky weighed 29 pounds. He had gained three pounds in five days and amazed the hospital staff at CSU. Emerging from this at his young age with no mother showed his heart and determination.

This has been a lesson for us. It is important for those of us who care for animals to give them every chance to survive, especially when they exhibit such determination to live. We do not want them to suffer needlessly, and should end their suffering at the right time, but we must know our animals well enough to accurately determine that time. It cannot always be left to professionals; you need to know your animals better than anyone.



Sydni feeding Rocky

On January 1, 2008, New Years Day, we took Rocky from CSU to the greenhouse where he settled in very well. He was looking good and eating well. Sue and Ellen had to train Rocky how to use his creep pen. They had a young cria named Choco for Rocky to play with and they became fast friends. We were optimistic that we would have a normal alpaca very soon. He was totally weaned off milk and was eating hay, alfalfa, and pellets. Sue and Ellen were very committed to giving him the best care possible. They were in the pen six to eight times a day to encourage Rocky to eat.

Rocky was doing very well, but, he was only eleven weeks old. Cria usually nurse from their mothers for six months, so he still had a tough road ahead unless he found another miracle, and that is exactly what happened.

On January 3, 2008, May, our bay black female, had her baby. We named him Samson. As soon as Rocky saw that she had milk he started to nurse, and May allowed him.

We had to remove Rocky for 24 hours so Samson could get the first colostrum. Then we returned Rocky, and May took him as her own. Rocky finally had a family that loved him and gave him companionship. Rocky was no longer alone, a result of very ironic circumstances. May had never been accepted in this herd where Marcella was head, yet she saved the life of Rocky, Marcella's exceptional cria. Marcella seemed to think he had no value; May accepted

him without hesitation.

This is a life lesson for everyone. We all know someone who has experienced circumstances, similar to Rocky's, that they cannot control. Something deep within him cried out for survival because he knew living was worth the fight. He seized every opportunity and made the most of it. Ultimately he found his reward with renewed health and acceptance in a new family. May's example for us is obvious.

Watch for Rocky II. See how Rocky progresses with May and Samson; how a sweet, mentally challenged alpaca became his companion and contributed to his rehabilitation; how reuniting with his mother and the herd goes; his first shearing, etc.

Note: In January of 2009, the very first year that Alpacas were allowed in the National Western Stock Show in Denver, CO, Rocky took home the blue ribbon for Alpacas. 

Local Athletes Prepare to Compete at the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games North America Joins 58 Countries in Submitting Short Lists of their Finest Athletes

National Federations for 58 countries have submitted nominated entries for the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games to be held in Lexington, KY., from September 25 – October 10.

Athletes on the short list to represent North America at the eight world championships include:

- Megan Benjamin, Vaulting, Saratoga, CA
- Sue Blinks, Dressage, Encinitas, CA
- Blake Dahlgren, Vaulting, Santa Clarita, CA
- Alicen Divita, Vaulting, Redwood City, CA
- Jan Ebeling, Dressage, Moorpark, CA
- Mary Garrett, Vaulting, Seal Beach, CA
- Kenny Geisler, Vaulting, Sunnyvale, CA
- Lindsay Graham, Endurance, Napa, CA
- Barbara Grassmyer, Para-Equestrian, Placerville, CA
- Marisa Hamar, Vaulting, Visalia, CA
- Leslie Hamar Taylor, Vaulting, Visalia, CA
- Emily Addison Hogue, Vaulting, Ben Lomond, CA
- Mari Inouye, Vaulting, Redwood City, CA
- Elizabeth Ioannou, Vaulting, Saratoga, CA
- Devon Maitozo, Vaulting, Woodside, CA
- Mary McCormick, Vaulting, Woodside, CA
- Karly Frankel Newman, Vaulting, Woodside, CA
- Cassidy Palmer, Vaulting, Half Moon Bay, CA
- Colton Palmer, Vaulting, Half Moon Bay, CA
- Kimberly Palmer, Vaulting, Half Moon Bay, CA
- Steffen Peters, Dressage, San Diego, CA
- Shannyn Poer, Vaulting, Venice, CA
- Heather Reynolds, Endurance, Los Gatos, CA
- Jeremy Reynolds, Endurance, Los Gatos, CA
- Katie Richie, Vaulting, San Luis Obispo, CA
- Kristian Roberts, Vaulting, Moss Beach, CA
- Grace Robinson, Vaulting, Palo Alto, CA
- Ruby Robinson, Vaulting, Palo Alto, CA
- Rosalind Ross, Vaulting, Aptos, CA
- Michele Roush, Endurance, North San Juan, CA

- Richard Spooner, Jumping, Agua Dulce, CA
- Patrick Stevens, Vaulting, Martinez, CA
- Clay Thomas, Vaulting, Newtown, VA
- Alexandra Thrasher, Vaulting, Redwood City, CA
- Susan Treabess, Para-Equestrian, Winters, CA
- Katharine Wick, Vaulting, Hillsborough, CA

In total, the nominated entries list includes more than 900 athletes and more than 1,300 horses. This list will decrease some when definite entries for each discipline are submitted to the World Games 2010 Foundation beginning in mid-September, following verification and approval of horse and rider qualifications.

Four nations are currently scheduled to field athletes for all eight disciplines—Australia, Canada, Germany and the United States. Additionally, 19 nations have submitted teams or individual competitors in five or more disciplines.

For a complete list of participating nations for each discipline, click here.

Tickets to the world championship competitions are still available for all eight disciplines. Purchase tickets to see your favorite athlete or team today at www.alltechfeigames.com/tickets, at www.ticketmaster.com, at your local Ticketmaster outlet, or through 1-888-934-2010.

The Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games are the world championships of eight equestrian disciplines recognized by the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). The Games are held every four years, and this will be the first occurrence in the United States. Global animal health and nutrition leader Alltech is the proud title sponsor.

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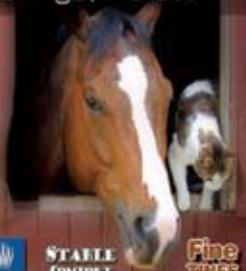
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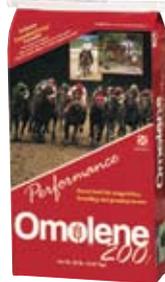
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