

Mini-Cassia Conservation Update

East Cassia, West Cassia, & Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Volume No. 2018.2
Summer 2018

SUPERVISOR HONORED FOR 25 YEARS SERVICE TO EAST CASSIA SOIL DISTRICT

Ken Woodworth operates a dryland and irrigated farm with his family in Heglar. They raise sugar beets, oilseeds, and grain while utilizing strip till and direct seeding methods. Ken is a 3rd generation Woodworth to farm in the Heglar area since 1916. Some of Ken's concerns include wind erosion and irrigation induced erosion. Ken is also concerned about the need to educate the general public about practical conservation practices and the benefits of cover crops.

Ken has served on the board for 25 years; 10 years as a board member, 2 years as an associate member, 3 years as Chairman, and the past 10 years as the Secretary/Treasurer. Ken is married to Cinda and they have four children and three grandchildren. Ken, thanks for 25 years of service to the East Cassia Board.



25 Year Service Award presented to Ken Woodworth (left) by East Cassia Chairman Mark Webb (right).

WEEDS - POSE SERIOUS THREAT

Noxious weed species spare no segment of society--rancher, fisher, and biker alike--and when unmanaged, they spread rapidly, unceasingly, and silently. Noxious weeds severely impact beauty and cause widespread economic losses. Noxious Weeds are problems for urban as well as rural areas; for private, state, and federal lands as well. Noxious weeds pose a serious threat to all Idahoans and to the land we call home.



*Control and management of noxious weeds requires an understanding of the problem, and that begins with detection and identification of noxious weeds. Weeds cost millions of dollars to our State by: Degrading wildlife habitat,
Choking streams and waterways,
Crowding out beneficial native plants,*

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MINIDOKA BOARD HONORS 3 SUPERVISORS

Minidoka Soil & Water Conservation District honored 3 of their Supervisors with 5-Year Service Pins. Board member Aaron Firth (pictured on right) presented pins to Secretary/Treasurer Dusty Wilkins, Vice Chairman Russ Suchan, and Chairman Brian Kossman (pictured left to right) at the District's Annual Awards Banquet. These board members have worked diligently to support FFA and Ag education.



District Board of Supervisors

	<u>East Cassia SWCD</u>	<u>West Cassia SWCD</u>	<u>Minidoka SWCD</u>
Chairman.....	Mark Webb.....	Richard Kunau.....	Brian Kossman
Vice-Chair.....	Steve Ward	Ken Black.....	Russ Suchan
Sec/Treasurer.....	Ken Woodworth.....	Kathy Poulton.....	Dusty Wilkins
Member.....	Brook Holtman.....	Brent Stoker.....	Aaron Firth
Member.....	Jonathan Harper.....	Jordan Searle.....	Luke Adams
Associate Members.....			Justin Hunter

District Employees

Megan Heward.....Cassia Administrative Assistant
 Sharon H. Wilmot.....Minidoka Administrative Assistant
 Jessica Anderson.....Cassia Office Assistant
 Doreen McMurray.....Cassia Information & Education Specialist
 Madi Patterson.....Boat Inspection Station Manager

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Personnel

David Mabey.....District Conservationist
 Carolyn Firth,ISWCC Ag Program Specialist
 Dinah Reaney.....Soil Conservationist
 Connor White,Range & Wildlife Conservationist
 Haydn Carson.....Soil Technician
 Nathan Huber.....Soil Conservationist



NEWSLETTERS

are available by
e-mail!

If you are interested in receiving this and future newsletters electronically, send your e-mail address to:
ewcswcd@pmt.org

Type "NEWSLETTER" in the subject box.

If you want your name removed from the newsletter mailing list, just let us know.

SUPERVISOR BOARD MEETINGS

Supervisors for the Soil and Water Conservation Districts are landowners in Cassia and Minidoka Counties who volunteer their time. They are interested in farming issues and want to make a positive difference in their communities.

Serving as a Supervisor is a great opportunity to learn how to improve your own operation as well as helping to make a difference within our community.

If you are interested in serving on the Soil & Water Conservation District in your area, contact a current board member or call one of the NRCS offices for information.

Monthly Board Meetings: (Public Welcome)

East Cassia SWCD - 1st Tuesday of ea month

West Cassia SWCD - 2nd Tuesday of ea month

Minidoka SWCD - 2nd Thursday of each month

CONTACT OUR OFFICES:

Rupert Field Office 208-436-4202

Burley Field Office 208-572-3369

Minidoka e-mail: minidokaswcd@gmail.com

Cassia e-mail: ewcswcd@pmt.org

Web page: www.minicassiaswcd.com

Spanish translation is available in the office upon request.



The "Conservation Update" is published 3 times a year by the East Cassia, West Cassia, & Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation Districts and mailed to approximately 1,100 landowners. The distribution mailing list is maintained by the Information & Education Specialist in Burley, Idaho. Names may be added to or removed from the mailing list for the next publication by calling 208-878-5556.

East Cassia, West Cassia, & Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation Districts are non-profit organizations. All programs and services of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

WATERSHEDS - OUR WATER, OUR HOME

Topic for Poster & Speech Contests

Water is a natural resource that we all need every day. Less than 1% of the water on Earth is fresh useable water for our daily needs. So, it is important that each of us does our part to keep it clean. Join members of your community when there is a city, roadside, or river clean-up day. Each citizen can take responsibility for keeping our water bodies and our roadways clean. Take a look at a parking lot in our community; do you see oil and litter? Where do you think it will go when it rains? It could be a nearby river or stream. This is just one of the many areas you can help clean up to protect the watershed in Cassia and Minidoka Counties.

America's network of 3,000 conservation districts across the country are working every day with local farmers, ranchers and landowners to protect our soil and water for future generations. Conservation districts have been involved in delivering locally-driven conservation across America for more than 70 years.

Our local conservation districts have worked on several local projects such as the Direct

Seed & Cover Crop Project, the annual Soil Health Workshop, and local Cover Crop Tours. Educational activities include the Annual Speech Contest for high school students, and the Poster Contest for students in 5th & 6th grades. The Speech and Poster contests will be held in October 2018 and will use the Watershed theme.

2018 marks the 63rd year of the National Association of Conservation Districts Stewardship Week. **Help us celebrate National Soil and Water Stewardship Week by planning a conservation project. Help us celebrate - Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home — April 29 through May 6.**



NRCS can “HELP YOU, HELP YOUR SOIL”

By Haydn Carson, Soil Technician (Burley Office)

“Soil health, No-Till, Cover Crops” These are just a few of the buzz words circulating around the farming community. But what do they really mean? How do they help farmers? What good are they? Do they work here in Southern Idaho?

Cover crops are really taking off in Southern Idaho, thanks in part to the Conservation Districts hosting both the Cover Crop field days and the Soil Health Workshops. With guest speakers like Gabe Brown promoting No-Till and Cover Crops, we have farmers and land owners climbing on board and trying it out on their property and incorporating it into their rotation.

Think about your operation and what happens to your soil after harvest and before planting again in the Spring. Our soils are exposed to the ravages of the wet and windy weather that abounds in Southern Idaho from Fall to Spring. Planting a cover crop protects your soil from the fierce winds that would blow it away and covers also help collect precious moisture that falls on your field. Implementing no-till helps keep your soil structure intact which aids in moisture retention. There is a myriad of other benefits to using no-till and planting cover crops such as: nutrient availability, water retention, weed suppression, grazing, erosion control, wildlife forage and cover, and many more.

We at the NRCS want to “help you, help your soil” through funding available for farmers wanting to incorporate cover crops or reduced tillage into their operation through the EQIP program. If you are interested, please come into your local NRCS office and discuss the options available to you.





FUNDING FOR HIGH TUNNEL SYSTEMS

By Nathan Huber, Soil Conservationist Burley Office

Do you want to get the most out of your garden? Do you want to grow specialty crops for market? Do you want to increase your growing season by starting earlier and continuing later? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then through the NRCS EQIP program, you can sign up to participate by installing a High Tunnel system.

The definition for the NRCS High Tunnel is, “an enclosed polyethylene, polycarbonate, plastic, or fabric covered structure that is used to cover and protect crops from sun, wind, excessive rainfall, or cold, to extend the growing season in an environmentally safe manner.”

During the last NRCS funding period, two separate High Tunnel Systems were funded in Cassia County and

one in Minidoka county. If you are interested in the program keep in mind that it can only be implemented on previously tilled ground suitable for growing crops, such as your current garden plot or another farmed area (i.e a corner).

The application deadline for this next year is in October so if you are interested, please come into your local NRCS office and talk with us about your plans.

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Cover Crop Seed information:
minicassiaswcd.com

REID BOWEN MINIDOKA’S CONSERVATION STEWARD OF THE YEAR

Reid Bowen was chosen as Minidoka’s Conservation Steward of the Year for 2017. Reid grew up working on the family farm. His high school years were filled with Ag related studies and activities. He traveled with FFA and competed nationally. He also took classes in welding and fabrication. Reid holds a Bachelors degree in Ag Economics from University of Idaho.

Reid began working for Amalgamated Sugar in 2011. During this year, he rented his first farm ground and his farming operation grew from there. Reid is a field man for growers in western Minidoka County, where he has been instrumental in introducing no-till sugar beets into production in the area.

Reid is a soil health champion, writing articles and teaching about soil health. Currently, Reid raises dry beans, wheat, alfalfa, and field corn. Reid is a progressive farmer, constantly reviewing and testing new farming methods focused on conserving and building soil health. Reid and his wife Lacy are raising 4 children. Congratulations to Minidoka’s Conservation Steward of the Year - Reid Bowen.



(Left to Right) Lacy & Reid Bowen, Conservation Steward of the Year, with Minidoka SWCD Chairman Brian Kossman.

Minidoka SWCD WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER LUKE ADAMS

Luke Adams was born and raised in Rupert, Idaho. His parents, Timm and Barbara Adams, instilled in Luke a love of farming at an early age. After graduating from Utah State University with a degree in Economics, Luke began a career as a civilian procurement officer for the U.S. Air Force. He and his wife, Sara (Johnson) Adams, spent the next 12 years traveling and working with the USAF. In 2012, they decided to move back home to farm.

Luke developed a strong interest in soil health and cover crops right away. He worked with his local soil conservation district and the University of Idaho on soil health initiatives and began incorporating these practices into their own farming operation. Luke is a strong advocate for cover crops, reduced tillage and water reduction practices that will increase the sustainability of our local and national resources.

Luke hopes his work with the MSWCD Board will help promote the sharing of best practices and resources for soil health and successful farming. Luke and Sara have two children and enjoy spending time outdoors exploring beautiful Idaho.



New Minidoka Board Member Luke Adams (left) with Minidoka SWCD Chairman Brian Kossman (right).

5 YEAR SERVICE AWARD - KEN BLACK

Ken Black was raised in Almo and moved to Burley as a boy. He is a life-long resident of Cassia County. He attended Utah State University majoring in mechanical engineering and then pursued a business degree from CSI. Ken still operates his great grandfather's Homestead Ranch in Almo. He is the owner of BLACK LIVESTOCK and is partner with his son Spencer. Together they run 2,000 acres, 350 cows, and a 1,200 cow feedlot.

Ken has served 17 years on the Idaho Ag Credit Association Board and is currently serving as Chairman. He has been a 4-H Leader & served on the Burley Ag Advisory Committee. He is active in church and scouting. He is married to Nina and together they have 2 children and 4 grandchildren.

Ken's priorities for the district include the seedling tree sale, farm safety education, and soil conservation. In his free time, Ken loves to golf. Thank you for 5 years of service on the West Cassia Board.



Ken Black (left) receiving 5-Year Service Pin from West Cassia Chairman Richard Kunau (right).

West Cassia SWCD WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER - JORDAN SEARLE

West Cassia Soil District Board welcomes Jordan Searle. Jordan graduated from ISU with a degree in Instrumentation and Automation. Jordan grew up on the family farm the View area and has a passion for farming. Jordan is a volunteer EMT for Declo QRU and West Cassia QRU. He enjoys meeting people in the community and being involved. Jordan is concerned about protecting our soil and water resources. He is interested in finding and implementing practices that will benefit our natural resources and would like to educate and share what he learns with others.

Jordan and his wife Amanda returned to the family farm with the hope of raising their family in the View area. Jordan and Amanda have 2 children, Sadee and Ty. They enjoy being outside, riding horses, 4-wheeling, and snowmobiling. Welcome to the West Cassia Board - Jordan Searle.



Jordan Searle (left) welcomed by West Cassia Chairman Richard Kunau (right).

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Braylund and Hannah Sanders (left), and Rulon Spear, with East Cassia Chairman Mark Webb (right) presenting the Cover Crop Pioneer Award.

Cover Crop Pioneer Award **S&H Farms**

East Cassia District honored S&H Farms with their Cover Crop Pioneer Award. S&H Farms is owned by Rulon Spear. Rulon's daughter Hannah and her husband Braylund Sanders help to run the operation. Much of S&H Farm ground has a steep slope and incline which resulted in much irrigation run-off. Six-seven years ago, Rulon started experimenting with cover crops. He could see the benefits right away. The number one benefit of the cover crops was the help with irrigation and water erosion issues. The cover crops stopped the irrigation run-off. Each year they have increased the amount of acres where cover crops are planted.

Now that run-off is under control, their new goal is to improve soil organic matter. Another benefit provided by their cover crops is the feed provided for grazing their cow herd. They also have a few sheep and are planning to add chickens to their operation soon.

S&H Farms have participated in several Cover Crop Tours with the Soil & Water Conservation Districts. They are excited to share what they have learned with others. Hannah says the direction they are going is exciting to see! The cover crops help them so much - they are very beneficial. Her favorite thing is the soil science they are learning and implementing, and the changes they have made.

S&H Farms are examples of Good Stewards of the land. Thank you for being willing to share what you have learned. East Cassia's Cover Crop Pioneer Award goes to:

S&H Farms - **Rulon Spear, and Hannah & Braylund Sanders.**

THE PURPOSE of the Mini-Cassia Direct Seed/Cover Crop Project is to increase education in:

- ♦ The use of **direct seed farming**,
- ♦ The use of **cover crops**,
- ♦ How to **improve Soil Health**,
- ♦ To provide access to **equipment, seed information**, and **seed rebates** toward implementing these practices.

Direct Seed Drill Information

can be picked up in either the Rupert or Burley USDA offices, or can be found online at ***www.minicassiaswcd.com***.

Cover Crops Provide:

- **less soil disturbance**,
- Increased **water holding capacity** in soil,
- Increased **organic matter** in the soil,
- **Decreased wind erosion**,
- **Decreased water erosion**,
- More **soil stability**,
- Natural **Weed control**, and
- **Increased nutrients in the soil** provided by certain cover crop varieties chosen ie: legumes for nitrogen or plants with long tap root systems which pull mobile nutrients and moisture back up to the surface from lower layers of the soil and provide moisture pathways.

Cover Crops Provide Diverse Benefits to Soil.



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WEEDS - POSE SERIOUS THREAT (continued from p.1)

*Creating fire hazards in our forests and on our ranges,
Poisoning and injuring livestock and humans,
Fouling recreation sites from use, and
Invading crop lands.*

*At this time of year we are concerned with all noxious weeds but the one I want to bring to all of your attention is **puncturevine**. It is getting to be a problem in and around farm ground. At this time farmers concentrate on harvest and not weeds. I encourage you to go around fields starting middle of June till September looking for and treating puncturevine. (It loves the heat.) If you let one plant go it will get on tires, feet, etc. and be quickly spread throughout your fields thus creating a devastating problem.*

Please manage the control or eradication of noxious weeds on your property. If you see any issues that need addressed or need advice on how to manage certain noxious weeds please call Cassia County Noxious Weed Control @ 208 878-4043.

Michael T. Ottley
Cassia County Noxious Weed Superintendent
Invasive Species Superintendent



CANAL COMPANY & IRRIGATION DISTRICT **HONORED FOR THEIR WORK ON THE PIPELINE PROJECT**



The West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District presented a plaque to the Oakley Canal Company & Goose Creek Irrigation District for their work on the PIPELINE PROJECT. West Cassia Chairman Richard Kunau (right) introduced the award, David Mabey-District Conservationist (left) presented the award, and Noland Critchfield told about the project and introduced his team. Congratulations for their work on this difficult and important project!

EMPLOYEE HONORED FOR 25 YEARS with East Cassia & West Cassia SWCD Districts

Doreen McMurray has worked as the Information & Education Specialist for East & West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation Districts for 25 years. She has been instrumental in planning activities for the districts like Soil Health Workshops, Field Tours, banquets, awards, picnics, and other meetings and District activities. She has been heavily involved with and the Mini-Cassia Direct Seed & Cover Crop Project Grant and related project activities.

Doreen has been involved with the annual seedling tree sale for many years and also prepares the soil district newsletters (called the "Mini-Cassia Conservation Update"). She also handles district publicity and covers a variety of other district activities.

Agricultural and educational programs for youth within the county are another major element of her work with the Soil Districts. Doreen works as the Site and Arrangement & Site Coordinator for the Idaho State FFA & 4-H Land & Soil Evaluation Event, and local speech, & poster contests.

Doreen loves working for the Soil District boards. She and her husband Kerry have 6 children and 6 grandchildren. Doreen is active in church and community volunteer work. Her hobbies include family, quilting, sewing, and gardening. Thanks for 25 years of dedicated service.



Doreen McMurray (left) receiving honor for 25 years, presented by Mark Webb - East Cassia Chairman (right).

WELCOME NEW CASSIA EMPLOYEE JESSICA ANDERSON

Jessica Anderson is new to our Burley office. Jessica is originally from the northern Idaho panhandle. Jessica and her husband Dagan both grew up in small communities. After living in Boise, they decided they wanted to get out of the city and return to their roots of more rural living.

Jessica brings with her excellent office skills and high motivation. In her spare time she enjoys cooking, canning, and camping & fishing with her family, husband, son, and their 2 dogs. Jessica is excited to explore this part of Idaho. Welcome aboard Jessica.



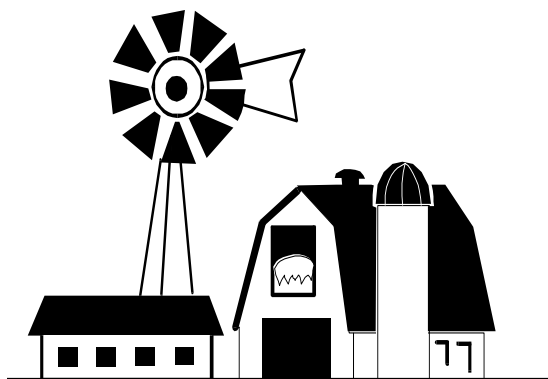
New East & West Cassia Employee Jessica Anderson (right) being welcomed by East Cassia Board Chairman Mark Webb (left).

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Keeping weeds at bay is an ongoing issue. Spraying weeds is the common cure to our problem - or so we think. Spraying without a plan for the future leads to the same treatment, spraying more herbicide.

The objective of cover crops is to build soil health which reduces the need for toxic inputs such as herbicide and synthetic fertilizers.

In other words, in farming, as in life, if we keep doing the same thing over and over while expecting different results, that is insanity. Change the farming/gardening practice and the situation will change also.





COVER CROP SEED REBATES AVAILABLE

Seed rebates are available to landowners who have rented one of the Soil District's no-till drills and have planted a minimum 3-seed cover crop mix (See office for complete details). The direct seed/no-till drills can be used for any planting but are excellent for **Direct Seeding** into stubble from the previous harvest. Assistance with seed recommendations is available by contacting the NRCS offices.

Minidoka and Cassia Soil & Water Conservation Districts continue working together to help educate farmers on soil health issues and the benefits of planting cover crops. Supervisors from all 3 local Soil Districts donate their time to serve on the **Direct Seed/Cover Crop Project** Committee to run and supervise the project which provides education to landowners, seed reimbursements, and access and rental use of direct seed drills for cover crop plantings.

Contact either office for details: Burley (208-572-3369) Rupert (208-436-4202)

NRC CAMP

Natural Resource Workshop Camp is an opportunity for students to learn about our natural resources in a hands-on experience. They attended the week long camp near Ketchum, Idaho, participating in activities like forestry, wildlife, soils, water, and also participated in fun interactive activities.

NRC students from the Mini-Cassia area were Hudson Kunau, Drayke Bair, and Sage May. Scholarships were provided to help students attend the camp.

Hudson and Drayke (pictured below) both attended the Soil District Summer Picnic and shared their experiences with District Supervisors from their NRC Camp.



FAIR BOOTH DISPLAYS

Fair Booth Displays were set up at both the Cassia County and the Minidoka County Fairs.

One of the District's main concerns is education to landowners. The Fair Booth displays included a variety of educational helps along with information on upcoming and past district events and activities.

District Calendar

September 4	East Cassia Board Meeting
September 4	Direct Seed Committee Mtng
September 11	West Cassia Board Meeting
September 13	Minidoka Board Meeting
October 2	East Cassia Board Meeting
October 9	West Cassia Board Meeting
October 11	Minidoka Board Meeting
October 10	Land & Soil Evaluation Event
October 16	Poster Contest Deadline
October 18	Speech Contest
October 30	Division IV Meeting

NRCS EMPLOYEE DINAH REANEY HONORED

Minidoka Soil & Water Conservation District honored Dinah Reaney, NRCS Soil Conservationist for her service and work with landowners in their area. Dinah grew up in Idaho – born and raised on the range, and graduated from Emmett High School. She is the youngest of 3 sisters and graduated from U of I. Her first job was with DEQ in Boise, then to Twin Falls DEQ. For the past 13 years she has been with NRCS.

Dinah and her husband Wade have 2 children. Her hobby is riding horses. Dinah likes seeing growers try conservation techniques and being innovative. In appreciation for her work, the Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District presented Dinah with a saddle horn bag. Thank you Dinah for your dedicated work.



Dinah Reaney (left) being presented with appreciation award by Minidoka Chairman Brian Kossman (right).

SCHOLARSHIPS PRESENTED TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Scholarships were presented to six high school graduates from Minidoka and Cassia Counties. Each student received their scholarship to be used in an Ag related field of study this fall. Scholarship recipients were recognized at the Soil District's Annual Summer Family Picnic. Students receiving scholarships were: Jaydon Landau - Minidoka SWCD, Colby Wilkins - Minidoka SWCD, Makayla Taylor - East Cassia SWCD, Luca Delis - East Cassia SWCD, Brittany Hardy - West Cassia SWCD, and Jonathan Brumley - West Cassia SWCD.

Scholarships are provided each year to selected qualifying students. For scholarship information, see our website at www.minicassiaswcd.com and click on the Educational Programs tab and then College Scholarships.



EAST CASSIA, WEST CASSIA, & MINIDOKA
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District Board Meetings: Public welcome.

East Cassia — 1st Tuesday of each month.

West Cassia — 2nd Tuesday of each month.

Call 678-1225 x100 for details.

Minidoka — 2nd Thursday of each month.

Call 436-4202 for details.

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**Watersheds—Theme for
Speech & Poster Contest**

East & West Cassia SWCD
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Minidoka SWCD
98B South 200 West Rupert
Phone: 208-436-4202
minidokaswcd@gmail.com

www.minicassiaswcd.com

RESERVE Direct Seed DRILLS NOW

Renting a Direct-Seed/No-Till Drill is a great way to try out direct seeding and cover crop practices on your farm. The benefits are many. Drill rental information is available in both the Burley and Rupert NRCS offices and on our web page at www.minicassiaswcd.com.

The upcoming 2019 Soil Health Sustainability Workshop is also a good place to learn from experts and farmers currently working with cover crops. You may sign up to receive workshop information by calling the Burley office at 208-572-3369.

Both Cassia and Minidoka offices are taking direct seed drill reservations for the Summer/Fall planting season. They will work with you around weather conflicts.



Call the Cassia office
at 208-572-3369
or call the Minidoka
office at
208-436-4202 to
schedule one of the
drills.