

## **2020 Kernza call series: Current and prospective growers, industry, partners**

**Date:** February 17, 2020

**Attendees:** Kristi Purcell & Alan Kraus (Cannon River Watershed Partnership), Colin Cureton (UMN), Jake Jungers (UMN, agronomist), Connie Carlson (UMN), Tessa Peters (The Land Institute), Jerry Liepold, Laura DeBeer (Pipestone/SW MN SWCD), Sara Jennin (ND prospective grower), Linda Meschke (Rural Advantage), Blaz - Slovenia (researcher/prospective grower), Kristin Duncanson (MN), Harold Stanislawski (AURI), Luke Peterson (current grower), Mark Welch (prospective grower and end-user), Stan Vanderkooi (current grower), Ben Penner (likely 2020 grower, driving some local marketing efforts), Aaron Meyer (MRWA), Claire Keene (NDSU), Tony Munstertegier (prospective grower, Oglevie MN), Brett Peterson (prospective grower, SW MN), Peter LaFontaine (FMR), Jen Wagner (AURI) & Larry (potential growers), Suzanne Rhees (BWSR), Dale Anderson (Cambridge MN, likely grower), Helene Murray (UMN MISA), Jess Gutknect (UMN, soil scientist), Jim Anderson (UMN, Breeder), Manbir Rakar (UMN, post-doc), Brad Gordon (Great River Greening), Brandon Dingman (current grower), Aaron Reser (GLBW), and others- +40 people total

### Kernza Trademark Licensing (Tessa, TLI)

- MN Clearwater is first variety of Kernza released
- Growers apply online to be licensed growers. \$5/acre royalty required after the first harvest of grain. Applications are reviewed by Tessa or UMN. When approved licensing and IP program requirements will be sent for grower review and signature. Important because buyers are also entering into a licensing in order to use the trademark on their products. Fees goes back to research on the crop.

### UMN Role (Colin): 2020 MN-Clearwater supply, licensing terms, vetting process

- Advancing Kernza through Forever Green to advance continuous living cover.
- MN-Clearwater was released in 2019, concurrent seed increase process
- This year, 2020: 20-25K lbs available; enough to add +1000 acres. (Total current acres globally: 2300 or so)
- Seed price: \$4/lbs; 5 - 20lbs/acre, depends on row spacing, germ rate, management systems. Plant in mid-late August, by first week of September at the latest
- Licensing terms are similar to 2019. Early adopter market, limited seed/high demand.
- See letter distributed for all details and link to submit a grower inquiry

### Stan Vanderkooi

#### Planting spring vs. fall?

- Jake: seed requires vernalization. Won't get a yield in year 1. When you plant in fall you usually get 2-3 years of yield, spring planting would eliminate that. Forage/cattle might be a good option for spring planting.

### Claire Keene

Is FGI going to be facilitating marketing?

- Colin: We can facilitate, but the idea is that communities and leaders take initiative/momentum.
- Tessa: We will connect growers. UMN or TLI will not take or buy grain. Our work is building the ecosystem.
- Ben Penner: Hoping to be a grower in 2020. Has his own supply chain for his grain, not a buyer but working on a role to develop growers/buyer connections. Still in a chicken/egg scenario.
- Kristi: Recap of events in Northfield, including two events in partnership with Imminent Brewing, UMN, TLI, Patagonia, and others
- AI (also Northfield): Working with 2 growers on impact of fall grazing of growth. Grant through MDA. One grower is looking at 50 acres in Faribault DWSMA.

Claire Kenne (NDSU)

Small scale supply chain -- who is cleaning?

HFI/Valley City

- Kristi: We purchased our seed through Tessa; we are working on develop that supply chain;
- Colin: this work is on-going; AURI is a partner on this work; putting together specs for the grain for cleaning, dehulling, milling, and malting. UMN is in talks with 3-5 existing seed cleaners and grain processors, as well as emerging businesses pursuing capital about coming online in 2020/2021

Stan Vanderkooi (Buffalo MN, 15 acres planted 2019)

- Planted into wheat, tilled in the kernza, did some crisscross planting. Growing nice in the fall, good stand, planted in late September.
- Harvest - Swath and pick up combine, can put in hopper bins to dry down.
- Has a sponge drive on his planter, no problem with planting.

Brandon Dingman (Central MN; Cold Spring)

- Planted in 2018. UMN was looking for seed increase acreage. 18 acres (2018); first harvest in 2019
- Farming in DWSMA; planted additional 20 + 20 acres (two separate); going to AURI this fall. Took in additional Kernza through the state to dry.
- Swathed in 2019; does have the equipment to straightcut, but heard there might be issues doing that. 16-17% moisture when harvested
- Most of biomass was baled and is being fed to cattle right now. Quality seems better than a small grain straw but not as good as a meadow hay. It's working well in my ration

Luke Peterson (Western MN)

- Needed a grass agitator drill the first time they planted; didn't need it in 2019.

- Brandon had the same experience- 2018 the seed kept plugging, 2019 seed went smoothly this year.

Stan Vanderkooi

- Brandon: How did you bale? To whom?
- Round bale and feeder; working well in ration.

Jake Jungers - any questions about forage quality?

Stan Vanderkooi

- What is the fertilizer plan?
- Brandon: Ballpark; 65N; 15 AMS, UREA

Ben Penner

- Is there any way we can compile production notes?
- Kernza Growers Guide is available; all the data produced from trials are compiled in the grower guide. We can make all of that available to everyone on this call. We think it would be helpful
- Aaron: Grower Guide is available on the TLI site.

Tony (Oglevie)

- Has anyone grazed it in the Spring?
- Jake: UMN Morris grazing experiment; it's logistically challenging to move cattle before the grain stems. Doesn't have a perceptible affect on the grain-- doesn't boost or harm. More flexibility in the fall. Does produce moderate quality forage late in the year.

Dale Anderson (Cambridge, connected with distiller)

- Any expected yield on Anoka Cty sand plains
- Jake: In general Kernza performs fairly well on those soils, about as well as elsewhere