

Weekly Ag Report
Tom Getts, UCCE Weed Ecology and Cropping Systems Farm Advisor
June 10, 2015

Good day, my name is Tom and I have been lucky enough to move to the beautiful Susanville area. I look forward to working as the new Weed Ecology and Cropping Systems Extension Advisor for Lassen, Modoc, Sierra and Plumas counties. I wanted to introduce myself and tell you a bit about where I come from, what I have done, and what I am hoping to work on as your extension advisor.

I was born and raised on the Front Range of Colorado. I grew up camping, hiking, biking, and fishing in the Rocky Mountains. My parents love to garden, so there were always chores to be done in the yard. Looking back on it, I didn't necessarily enjoy pulling weeds in the perennial beds, or mowing the yard, but I did love the feeling of the bluegrass between my toes. My upbringing naturally instilled a love for the outdoors, and with time I developed a curiosity about plants and what part they play in ecosystems.

When I graduated high school I was accepted to Colorado State University where I studied forestry, with an emphasis in management. Serendipitously I landed a part time job during the school year working at the weed research laboratory/greenhouse on campus. During this time I was able to work for numerous professors and graduate students on different projects. My time as hourly worker exposed me to many types of agricultural weeds, crops, invasive plants, ecosystems and management techniques. I realized how important weeds can be to people in agriculture, and natural ecosystems. Whether it is an herbicide resistant weed in a farmer's field, or an invasive grass that alters fire regimes, both have detrimental impacts.

After I graduated with my B.S. in Forestry, I started a master's degree in Weed Science at Colorado State University. I wanted to study the impacts and control methods of weeds. My main two research projects focused on Russian olive tree control with herbicides and the tolerance of restoration species to herbicide applications. However, I also worked on numerous other research projects. I sprayed experimental herbicide trials evaluating both crop safety and weed control. I conducted geo-referenced mapping of invasive species in the mountains of Colorado. I helped collect, map, and test suspected herbicide resistant weeds from agricultural fields.

My expertise is in weeds, and I am just getting familiar with some of the challenges weeds pose to the agricultural and ecosystems in northeastern California. I was also hired to advise on the cropping systems within the area, and I look forward to learning how I can help. I want to work on studying how to control the worst weeds in the area, as well as practices that can help improve yields in irrigated pasture and alfalfa. So far the first weed anyone has talked about is Whitetop, and it seems to be everywhere! However I have been told there are plenty of other weeds out there, cheatgrass, thistles, knapweeds, you name it.

I am new to the area, and I need you to tell me what your biggest management challenges are. So please give me a call down at the extension office (530-251-2650), shoot me an email (tigetts@ucanr.com), or just drop in (707 Nevada Street, Susanville). If you have something specific you would like to show me, it would be great to come out and take a look at it in person. I look forward to meeting you, and getting to know agriculture and ecosystems here in northeastern California!