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# November 2025 The GOVERS GUIDE

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Number 6





**By KYLE ODEGARD** Capital Press

ONEROCK, Ore.

— Rancher Anthony
Campbell cut fences
as the Lone Rock
Fire raged so cattle could escape the
flames, but didn't know exactly
where cows were grazing.

"It was pretty stressful," he said. His cousin Jason Campbell recalled how the fire burned for two weeks starting July 13, 2024, scorching a swath of rangeland roughly 30 miles long and 10 miles wide.

"Picture everything black for as far as you can see," he said. Then imagine charred terrain continuing until the next horizon, and the horizon after that, he added.

The Lone Rock Fire burned 137,000 acres and destroyed more

than 300 miles of fencing.

It would have cost local ranchers far too much to rebuild their fencelines — roughly \$9.5 million — even if enough workers were available.

Before the blaze was extinguished, officials, researchers and ranchers started forming a plan to augment fixed fencing with virtual fencing, where GPS collars are put on cows to monitor and control their movement.

With the Campbells' system, if cattle approach the invisible barrier, collars emit warning beeps. Cows that cross the line receive electrical shocks.

"You have to train the cattle to do it, but it works," said Tom Campbell, Jason Campbell's father.

Thanks to grant funding, six Gilliam and Morrow County ranches now are using virtual fencing to manage nearly 1,100 head of cattle on more than 100,000 acres.

"It's a novel solution to a wild-

fire. The whole community basically came together to figure this out," said Herb Winters, Gilliam Soil and Water Conservation District manager.

Tom Campbell said agencies should use the response as a guide for how to help ranchers after a fire.

Ranchers and farmers typically wait for neighbors to try new technology.

"We didn't have a choice," Jason Campbell said.

Still, the Campbells said they'll use virtual fencing moving forward because of the benefits.

#### 'Tragedy into triumph'

The high-tech solution was detailed during a presentation and tour held Oct. 20 by the Gilliam SWCD, Sustainable Northwest and the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts.

"This was tragedy into triumph," said Gilliam County Judge Cris

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The Growers' Guide

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#### Fences:

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Patnode.

The event started in Condon, Ore., before moving to Lonerock, Ore., and about 45 people attended, including several state legislators and curious ranchers.

A few ranches in the John Day River territory were early adopters of the technology before the fire, but officials view recent efforts as a test project.

Winters, with the Gilliam SWCD, wants to move toward countywide adoption and greater use throughout Eastern Oregon.

"We see this technology as being an absolute gamechanger on the range," he said.

Though the price of wire fencing has been increasing, people are leery of new technologies.

Experts said due to significant upfront costs of virtual fencing, more financial and technical support is needed to help ranchers switch.

Oregon State University researcher Dustin Johnson said virtual fencing is being incorporated into the Farm Bill, which could provide federal assistance.

"I think we're at a time where we could see a lot of adoption of this technology," Johnson added.

#### **Emergency financial assistance**

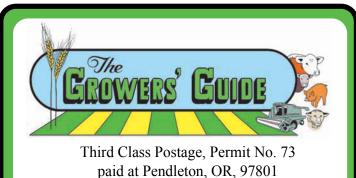
After the Lone Rock Fire, ranchers quickly received about \$258,000 in emergency funding to help purchase virtual fencing equipment, including \$150,000 from Gilliam County, \$75,000 from the Ford Family Foundation, and \$33,000 from the Gilliam SWCD.

Local FFA students also pitched in, assembling 10 mobile tower systems to send signals to the collars.

"This all happened really fast. I was very impressed," Jason Campbell said.

For the firm the Campbells went through, the towers

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## **NOVEMBER 2025**

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'11 JD R450 WINDROWER, 1216 Engine/836 Hea	der Hrs,



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(2) FIRESTONE 28L-26 DIAMOND TIRES	\$500 EA
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Motor	\$1 <b>8,95</b> (
BELTAVATOR, 60'	\$500
MATHEWS 60' X 8" AUGER, Electric Drive	\$100



'96 KINZE GRAIN CART, 30.5X32 Diamond Tires	.\$10,000
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CIH 3020-35' Flex Head & Cart	
'11 CASE IH 8120 LEVEL LAND 4016 Sep Hrs., Luxury Cab.	
PARTING OUT, 1/2 OF NEW	ı
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13 CIH 3020 FLEX HEAD, 35', Cart	\$11,950
11 CIH 2162 FLEX DRAPER HEAD, 40, Top Auger,	Transport
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#### **Fences:**

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cost \$10,000 each. Collars were leased for \$40 each, plus \$10 per battery.

About two batteries are needed per collar annually, the Campbells said.

With grant funding, they only had to pay for batteries.

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board has added \$116,000 for technical assistance, and other organizations have chipped in with their expertise and personnel.

More funding is being sought from public and private sources.

#### A revolutionary tool

Researchers said virtual fencing was a revolutionary tool akin to barbed wire in the 1800s.

Ranchers can control herds remotely, steering cows away from riparian areas or sensitive burned acreage that is recovering.

Virtual fencing also can keep cattle on underutilized ground, control invasive weeds, or aid with other land management goals through targeted grazing.

Experts said targeted grazing on a corridor with virtual fencing can remove grass fuels and create a firebreak.

The technology also offers more flexibility than physical boundaries that are difficult to adjust. Ranchers joked that as soon as you finish a real fence, you realize it's in the wrong place.

Location tracking also



Jason Campbell, left, and his cousin Anthony Campbell discuss virtual fencing during a tour Oct. 20. Campbell family members said they had to adopt the high-tech tool in the aftermath of a fire, but it brought several benefits, including reduced herd gathering time. (Kyle Odegard, Capital Press)

typically reduces herd gathering time by 50%, researchers said.

## Location tracking reduces workload

Anthony Campbell never had a computer, but now he goes online first thing every morning and looks for his herd. He also checks his computer before settling in at night.

In the past, he and cowhands rode every day to push cattle away from streams.

Now he keeps cows away from waterways with a few clicks.

He said GPS collars saved manpower and horses when retrieving cows from 51,000 acres of U.S. Forest Service land between Heppner, Ore. and Ukiah, Ore.

That area is packed with lodgepole pine and difficult to move through.

Most years, he's missing 50-75 head in the fall.

"Right now, we're short three cows and I know where they're at," Anthony Campbell said.

"We got most of them in five days with three riders," he added. It usually takes two or three weeks or more with six cowhands.

"It's been pretty unreal," Anthony Campbell said.

If there's another fire, he'll know exactly where his cattle are, thanks to GPS collars.

## Limitations of virtual fencing

Experts said virtual fencing won't work 100%, but then again, neither do real fences.

Roughly 2% to 5% of cows wander beyond the invisible barriers, but they can reenter without repercussions and often return to

the herd.

Ranchers are notified if livestock leaves the boundary.

Researchers said virtual fencing is more likely to be used as interior fencing rather than perimeter fencing—especially near roadways where containment is critical.

However, virtual fencing can be overlaid atop physical fencing, creating redundancy. If an elk herd or a fallen tree destroys a fence, cows will mostly stay put with an invisible barrier.

Squeezing cattle into tight areas can be difficult with virtual fencing because cows "break" the boundary to follow calves, which can't wear collars.

Ranchers also need to follow the lay of the land and reduce attractants beyond lines — cows grav-

itate toward shade, and water should be available within grazing areas.

Producers can adjust virtual fencing on the fly, but that can take up to 12 hours based on the ruggedness of the terrain and tree cover.

"It's not a joystick for your cows," Jason Campbell said.

Still, shifting virtual fencing can slowly move cattle across the landscape.

The Campbells said virtual fencing has a learning curve, but they receive plenty of IT support from their provider.

## Tower placement and coverage

Virtual fences often need a good cellular signal, which can be hard to come by in Gilliam County, and terrain also can be an issue.

The Campbells said they needed a line of sight from their four towers for their collars to work.

Jason Campbell drove an ATV along ridgelines to find the best spots.

"Once we got those towers up and going, the coverage was way better than I thought it would be," he said.

Multiple herds can run off the same tower, allowing different businesses to share the infrastructure.

Even if the herds mix, cows could be tracked.

#### Still on the virtual fence

Ross Ryno, a rancher near Mitchell, Ore., said three fires in 2024 destroyed

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#### **Fences:**

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possibly replace in a few years.

"Budget or timewise, it's just not there. ... I need to get back on some pastures that I can't use," Ryno said.

That might drive him to virtual fencing, but he's doubtful how much he'll take the plunge.

"I'm cautious because I don't know if it will provide coverage for my herd," he said.

He ranches acreage full

of mountains and deep canyons.

"Even without that we're more fencing than he could in such a cellular dead zone. There are so many areas with nothing. The collars are so reliant on cellular communications," Ryno added.

> Lowell Forman, who ranches near Antelope, Ore., and Burns, Ore., also is on the fence about virtual fencing and he'd like to get more opinions from ranchers using the technology.

> It could be helpful for him to split up certain pastures, especially those that

are irrigated.

Without financial assistance, partnering across fencelines with a neighbor to lower costs would be beneficial. Forman said.

Ryno expects virtual fencing will improve and be able to cover the toughest terrain in the future.

Forman also thought virtual fencing technology would continue to advance and one day could largely replace fixed fences.

"You never replace anything completely, but it will sure make a big difference," Forman said.



Herb Winters, Gilliam Soil and Water Conservation District manager, speaks during a virtual fencing presentation Oct. 20 in Condon, Ore. "We see this technology as being an absolute game-changer on the range," Winters told the crowd. (Kyle Odegard, Capital Press)





### **NEW 42' SCHULTE FX-742 ROTAR**

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equal angle hitch cat4, walking axles, fixed knives w/updraft blades and shrouds, hydraulically actuated outer wings, safety light kit 1 3/4" x 20 spline, IF280/70R15 CALL BKT stubble-proof tire



The Growers' Guide November 2025

## Kitchen corner: November is turkey time

#### By DANA

November means it's time for a Thanksgiving turkey and all the leftovers. Here are some recipes from the Minnesota Turkey Growers Association.

#### Maple bourbon Thanksgiving turkey **Brine**

4 quarts water, divided 2 cups dark brown sugar 1 cup soy sauce

1 cup maple syrup <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup course salt

1 tablespoon roasted garlic paste

6 bay leaves

2 teaspoons ground thyme

2 teaspoons cracked black peppercorns

1 cup bourbon

#### **Turkey**

1 10-12 pound whole turkey

1 cup maple syrup



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2016 Freightliners, Cummins ISX, 450 hp, Eaton Autoshift, AC, Diff Lock, Low miles ......\$34,900



2011 IH 8600 Day Cab, Cummins 350hp, Allison 6 speed automatic, Cold ......\$29,900



2007 Volvo Day Cab, Volvo D12, 435 hp, 10 spd, AC, super clean, engine brake. Great harvest truck .\$17,900



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Maple boubon turkey

1/2 cup bourbon

1-2 teaspoons liquid smoke (optional)

2 teaspoons paprika

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

5 minced garlic cloves

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon thyme

1 pinch cayenne pepper

2 apples, quartered

2 onions, quartered

3 tablespoons butter, cut into pieces

Sea Salt

#### **Directions**

**Brine:**Combine 2 quarts water with remaining ingredients in a large pot, stir to dissolve salts and sugar. Bring to a boil.

Remove from heat and add remaining 2 quarts

Allow brine to cool before

using. Submerge whole turkey in the brine and let sit in the fridge over night.

**Turkey:** Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.

Combine maple syrup, bourbon, liquid smoke, paprika, pepper, salt, garlic, onion powder, thyme, and cayenne pepper in a bowl. Mix well and set aside.

Remove turkey from brine and place in roasting

Cut 6 slits in the skin of the turkey, making a pocket between the skin and the meat. Place peices of butter in the pockets.

Place the quartered apples and onions inside the cavity of the turkey.

Sprinkle sea salt over the turkey.

Pour glaze mixture over

the turkey.

Cover and roast turkey 2.5-3 hours, removing when internal temperature reaches 165 degrees F.

Let turkey rest 5-10 minutes before slicing.

#### Roast turkey, stuffing and gravy

Ingredients 10-12 lb. Turkey 1/2 cup Butter

Stuffing

8-10 cups dry bread

1 ½ cup celery diced

1 ½ cup onion diced

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon fresh ground pepper

1 teaspoon poultry seasoning

1 teaspoon ground sage

1 - 2 cups chicken or tur-

See Kitchen, Page A7

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Roasted turkey, stuffing and gravy

#### **Kitchen:**

continued from A6

key broth

Gravy

pan drippings from the roasted turkey

2-3 1/2 cups chicken broth

1/3 cup flour

1/2 - 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning

1/2 - 1 teaspoon ground sage

salt pepper

#### **Directions**

Remove the giblets and neck from the turkey. Rinse with cold water. Pat dry with paper towel. Generously season the inside of the turkey with salt and pepper.

In a skillet add a stick of butter and sauté the onions and celery until softened.

Add the onion and celery mixture to the bread cubes and combine.

Season with poultry seasoning, sage, salt and fresh ground pepper. I also add a touch of rosemary, thyme, and basil. Keep tossing as you season to ensure all the bread gets a bit of seasoning.

Add the chicken broth a bit at a time to moisten the bread cubes. You want the bread cubes moistened, but not soggy.

Stuff the cavity of the turkey and upper breast. Pull the skin over the stuffed cavities and secure with skewers. Tie with kitchen string or skewer legs together and secure wings to the side of

the turkey.

#### Roasting the turkey

Preheat oven to 350° F. (Cook 13 minutes per pound at 350 F)

Place the stuffed turkey on the rack of the roasting pan. Loosen the skin from the breast and add cubes of butter. Rub butter over the turkey and generously season with salt and pepper. I usually place the neck in the bottom of the pan as this adds extra flavor to the drippings used for making gravy.

Add a bit of chicken or turkey broth to bottom of pan. (about 1/2 inch up pan)

Place in oven and baste the turkey about every 30 minutes for the first hour of roasting.

If the legs begin to brown too much or the turkey breast is golden brown cover with foil or with roaster pan cover.

Turkey is cooked when the meat thermometer reads 165°F and the juices run clear. Insert meat thermometer in the thickest part of the inner thigh but not touching the bone.

Remove the turkey from the oven when done and let stand for 20 minutes to allow the juices to set.

#### **Gravy instructions**

Transfer the drippings from the roasting pan to a sauce pan or you can use the same roasting pan. Add 1-3 cups of chicken broth. This will vary depending on how

much liquid is leftover from the roasted turkey.

In a small jar mix ½ cup flour and ½ cup of broth and shake vigorously to ensure no lumps.

On the stovetop heat the drippings and broth to a boil, gradually whisking in the flour mixture and return to boil. Repeat until flour mixture is gone. Reduce

heat and simmer until gravy thickens. Continue whisking as needed.

Season to taste with

See Kitchen, Page A8

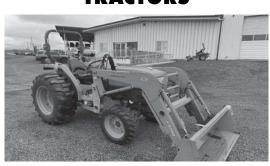


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steel booms. Micro bin. Auto greaser, Electric roll tarp...



2018 TIMPTE DRY TRAILER, 40' aluminum hopper trailer contained gas engine, electric roll over tarp, sight glass v 



Turkey wild rice soup

#### Kitchen:

continued from A7

ground sage, poultry seasoning, salt and

Continue to simmer for 10-15 minutes.

#### Turkey wild rice soup **Ingredients**

- 1 cup diced sweet onion
- 2 cups sliced carrots
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 5 cups turkey broth
- 1 cup wild rice

2–3 cups shredded cooked turkey breast

#### **Directions**

In a large pot over medium heat add

Once the butter is melted, add vegetables with salt, pepper and one cup of turkey broth. Cook until veggies are softened.

Then add the garlic, and cook for 5 minutes.

Add the remaining 4 cups of the turkey broth and rice.

Bring to a simmer and cover for 30 minutes.

Add in the turkey and simmer uncovered for another 30 minutes.

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November 2025 The Growers' Guide

## It's the Pitts: Am I crazy?

n this column I'm going to reveal a secret that may destroy my career as a cow columnist. It's so bad that my fellow cowboy friends may boot me from their ranks. My wife says I should just hobble my lip and never reveal my secret but I think I'm being dishonest in not leveling with you.

So here goes.

I can't eat beef that I raised. Just can't do it. No, I'm not a vegetarian or a vegan and I've never eaten a Beyond Beef burger or a fake piece of Impossible beef. No cheeseburgers without beef for me. Here's the thing: I could always eat lambs and hogs I raised and in fact, I quite liked them. One of my biggest projects in the FFA was raising cute little white bunny rabbits for meat and I had no trouble whacking them on the neck and I found them to be quite tasty. I'm NOT kept awake at night by nightmares of those bunnies looking at me with their cute little pink eyes.

In FFA I even raised a couple Mallard ducks that I named Chester and Charley. I know the old adage that says you're not supposed to name an animal you intend to eat but those two ducks



were the best comedians in the barnyard and they gave me many hours of enjoyment just watching them. A smile comes to my face even now when I think of them. And yet I had no trouble gobbling them down and let me tell you, beef is the only thing better than duck with a little orange sauce.

I hate to admit this but we also raised lots of chickens both for their meat and for their eggs but this isn't the big admission I mentioned at the start of this column. I gagged down the tough hens but I refused to eat their eggs. To this day if I see someone break the yellow yoke of an egg and mix it with perfectly good potatoes, ham and pancakes, it's enough to make me spew.

I've gobbled down trout I caught and had no trouble eating anything I hunted but not because I melt like a snowflake when I gaze into deer's sad eyes, it's just that I don't care for venison. To me it's almost as bad as eating liver which is the single worst tasting thing I've ever eaten in my life except for lima beans. Yuck!

As a kid I was raised on one acre of ground which I transformed into a huge garden. While I'm not a big fan of radishes, beets and turnips I didn't hear them scream when I jerk them from the ground. And I don't dislike every tuber as I absolutely LOVE potatoes. And to this day I still have a wonderful taste left in my mouth by homegrown sweet corn, cantaloupe, broccoli and green beans. There's no better refresher in the world than home-raised cold tomatoes with salt on them.

Yet I couldn't eat any of the steers I raised... and I absolutely love beef. Even as a rancher later in life I much preferred my neighbor's beef to that of my own and I think there's something wrong with me psychologically that I can't enjoy beef from cattle I raised. Is it just because I'm a big old pansy or is there something mentally wrong with me? Could I be I crazy?

I decided to seek professional help. I've never understood the difference between a psychologist and a psychiatrist but I took advantage of the fact that a psychologist moved close by. One day I casually asked her about my beef-eating problem but she said she was not the one to ask as this was beyond her realm of study. "But based on what I've observed just watching you from afar," she said, "and now hearing this about you, my professional opinion is that yes, you are nuttier than a wood rat and belong in an insane asylum. And not just because you can't eat your own beef. But just to make sure I think you should see a psychiatrist."

"But what's the difference between a psychiatrist and a psychologist?" I asked.

"About \$150 an hour," she replied.



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A10 The Growers' Guide November 2025

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#### 1999 INTERNATIONAL 8100,

305hp, C10 Cat, 10spd., PS, AB, PTO, 18K front, 40K rears, air ride, 17' double frame, 90% 22.5 tires, 345K miles



#### 2008 FORD F350 4X4 SERVICE TRUCK

6.4L Powerstroke, AT, PS, PB, AC, one owner, tow package, enclosed service body with drawers on both sides, 60% tires 189K miles, runs and drives great



#### 2005 JLG G6-42A 4X4X4 TELEHANDLER,

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#### 1992 FORD L9000 WATER TRUCK,

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#### 1992 FORD LST9000 WATER TRUCK,

2200 gal. tank, pto pump, front, rear & side spray, 350hp Cat 3406B, 7spd, AC, PS, Locker, 50% 11r24.5's runs and sprays great



#### 1999 INTERNATIONAL 4700 5YD DUMP,

26K gvw, 210hp DT466e, 7spd, AC, AB, PS, 10' dump box, runs and drives great



#### 1992 VOLVO WG TRACTOR,

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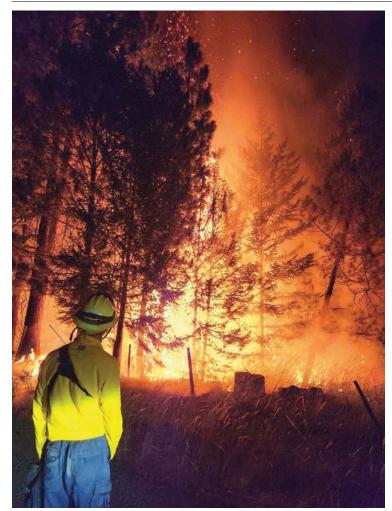
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A firefighter stands by his engine as trees burn in July 2024 during the Lone Rock Fire. The fire remains under investigation, and the cost of fighting the blaze was nearly \$30 million, according to the Oregon Department of Forestry.

## Lone Rock Fire raises ag land sale concerns

By KYLE ODEGARD Capital Press

LONEROCK, Ore. — Authorities continue to investigate the Lone Rock Fire, which scorched 137,000 acres in Eastern Oregon's John Day River territory during the summer of 2024.

The fire highlighted tensions over large farmland sales in remote areas and concerns they can contribute to disasters.

Gilliam County, Ore., locals said the Lone Rock Fire started at a massive ranch property now used mainly for leisure.

"Land prices are so high and these people come in and buy it for recreation and take it out of production," said rancher Anthony Campbell.

The result is limited grazing and a buildup of dangerous fire fuels on rugged landscapes, Campbell and other ranchers said.

During a presentation about the fire and high tech solutions Oct. 20, researchers said Oregon has seen more wildfires and more intense blazes in recent years because of fuel buildups.

Experts said annual grasses on rangeland are predictive of fires — shrubs play a role, but flames spread from bush to bush via grass.

Anthony Campbell didn't blame people for wanting to put a house on a few acres in the country. "But 4,000 acres?" he asked.

Campbell family members wondered if there were policy or tax code changes that could promote grazing or farming on agricultural lands, or discourage those lands from being taken out of production.

#### Fire cost agencies \$30 million

The Oregon Department of Forestry is the lead agency in the investigation of the Lone Rock Fire.

ODF spokeswoman Jessica Neujahr said in an email that few details can be released about the cause and origin of the fire at this time, and there's no timeline for when the investigation will be complete.

If a responsible party is identified in causing a wildfire and determined to be liable at the conclusion of the investigation, authorities will move to cost recovery measures and potential litigation.

"The estimated total incident cost was \$29,931,281, with the cost being split between ODF, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service," Neujahr wrote.

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'23 CASE IH 580 QUAD, PTO, 36", 6v, 1620 hrs	\$535,000
'22 CASE IH 580 QUAD, PTO, 36", 6v, 2552 hrs	<sup>\$</sup> 495,000

#### DRILLS

'22 CASE IH 550T with liquid kit	<sup>\$</sup> 265,000
NEW CASE IH 550T	CALL
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'11 CASE IH 2162 40' FLEX	<sup>\$</sup> 36,000
'24 BRANDT 1320XT 36" TRACKED CART LOADED	<sup>\$</sup> 190,000
'04 DEGELMAN SM7000 50' 5 tine, 8 bar-flex	<sup>\$</sup> 27,000
(2) '22 HILLCO 84FT 16BAR HARROW	\$68,000 EA
LANDOLL 6231 30" & 36' DISCS	CALL

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A12 The Growers' Guide November 2025

## Washington forestry leader sees allies in agriculture

**By DON JENKINS**Capital Press

OLYMPIA — Ben Franklin supposedly told colonists to hang together or get set to hang separately. Jason Spadaro has a similar, if not quite as dire, message for timberland owners and farmers.

Washington timber companies are fighting a proposal that would prohibit logging in some places within 75 feet of streams without fish in Western Washington. The current standard is commonly 50 feet, and in fewer places.

If loggers are pushed back, farmers could be next, said Spadaro, executive director of the Washington Forest Protection Association.

And if loggers and farmers lose land, rural counties, rural schools, rural fire districts and rural residents will take a hit, too, he said.

"We're at a crossroads in the state," Spadaro said. "We have to band together."

Spadaro, 58, directs a trade association whose members own 4 million acres of forestland in Washington. He succeeded the late Mark Doumit, a commercial fisherman and ex-Democratic legislator, who died in 2021.

Previously, Spadaro managed SDS Lumber Company in Bingen, Wash. He still manages the Boughton Lumber Company, is a forestry consultant and owns farm-



Washington Forest Protection Association executive director Jason Spadaro says the rural-urban divide is widening and the natural resource industries need to band together. (Don Jenkins/Capital Press)

land in Klickitat County, in addition to his job with the forest protection association.

Spadaro's career began during the timber wars over the northern spotted owl. Decades later, timber companies are again in a struggle over environmental issues.

The Forest Practices Board, an appointed body, is scheduled to vote Nov. 12 on whether to widen riparian buffers. The state Department of Ecology argues the current buffers are too narrow and short to shade non-fishing bearing streams.

Timberland owners — big and small — mounted a campaign to stop the rule. They dispute Ecology's conclusion that the current buffers don't fulfill the Clean Water Act.

Timberland owners also make an economic argument. The wider and longer buffers would take 200,000 acres out of production in Western Washington. That would lock up enough timber to build 15,000 houses a year, according to the forest protection association.

About one-third of Washington timberland is privately owned. As state and federal policies cut logging on public lands, private lands become more important, Spadaro said. "We have to manage our private timberlands more intensively."

Spadaro said that in this and other battles the wood-products industry has a handicap — the political landscape has changed since the 1990s.

"We're going through the next version of timber wars, and I don't know if people value us as much as they did back then," he said.

"People still live in wood houses, but I just see a change of values in Washington state — reflected in the Legislature, reflected in JASON SPADARO

**Age:** 58

**Position:** Washington Forest Protection Association executive director

**Education:** Bachelor's degree in forestry, University of Washington; Master's degree in business administration, University of Oregon.

universities, reflected in the governor's office, reflected in our state agencies."

In round numbers, Washington has 22 million acres of forestland and 14 million acres of farmland. The entire state is about 42 million acres, so 6 out of every 7 acres is a forest or farm.

Also, 29 of Washington's 39 counties meet the state's definition of "rural." Yet, heavily urbanized Puget Sound controls statewide elections and the traits of the Legislature.

Few Evergreen state legislators dig in to understand forest policy, Spadaro said. "It's almost impossible to get people's attention on things like this," he said.

"Probably the biggest factor is the number of urban legislators who don't have many people in their districts working in the natural resources industries," he said.

"The Legislature should really be paying attention," he said. "They should be asking, 'What are the benefits? What are the costs?'" Urban residents treat rural areas as playgrounds, he said. Spadaro said he's heard for a long time that rural areas can thrive on tourism and recreation. "It has never worked," he said.

According to Ecology's analysis of the 75-foot buffer rule, the wider and longer buffers are likely to prevent any measurable increase in the temperatures of most non-fish bearing streams.

The rules already prohibit timber harvests from causing streams to warm above a certain temperature. Timber groups argue that making the standard no measurable change in water temperature is radical.

"That is a massive, massive shift," Spadaro said. "How do we have human presence on the landscape if no change is allowed?"

Farm groups are paying attention. Mandatory riparian buffers on farmland are always being kicked around in Olympia.

Farm groups sent a letter to Ecology opposing the wider buffers. "Its flawed approach would set a dangerous and counterproductive precedent for all agriculture," the letter stated.

Agriculture's opposition to Ecology's rule is an example of coalition building, and it's needed badly, Spadaro said. "The rural-urban divide keeps widening and widening."



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President Donald Trump with President Xi Jinping of China. (White House photo)

## Trump makes trade deals in Southeast Asia

By DON JENKINS **Capital Press** 

Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia have agreed to eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers on U.S. agricultural goods, according to the Trump administration.

The White House announced the four trade deals Oct. 26 to coincide with President Trump's trip to a U.S.-Southeast Asia summit in Malaysia.

Tump signed the trade deals with Malaysia and Cambodia. The U.S. will finalize the agreements with Vietnam and Thailand in the coming weeks, the White House said.

The four countries agreed to accept U.S. food safety standards. Thailand will buy \$2.6 billion in U.S. goods such as feed corn, soybean meal and distiller grains, an ethanol byproduct.

"These landmark deals demonstrate that America can maintain tariffs to shrink the goods trade deficit while opening new markets for American farmers, ranchers, workers and manufacturers," U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said in a statement.

U.S. agricultural exports to Vietnam in 2024 totaled \$3.4 billion, or 2% of exports worldwide. Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia combined bought \$2.3 billion in U.S. farm goods.

Farm groups see potential for growth in Southeast Asia.

Livestock industries in Vietnam and Thailand are growing and are critical markets for U.S. soybeans and corn, according to farm groups. Soybean farmers have been shut out of China for the past several months.

Apple exports to Vietnam have been hampered by an 8% tariff, and cherry and pears face a 10% tariff, according to the Northwest Horticultural Council.

U.S. beef exports to Vietnam have been hit with a 30% tariff, while Australia, New Zealand and Canada import beef to Vietnam duty free.

"We have worked closely with the Trump Administration to gain better access to growing markets in Southeast Asia and these agreements are a big win for our members," Meat Institute Julie Anna Potts said in a statement.

The U.S. will impose a 20% tariff on most goods from Vietnam, and 19% tariffs on most goods from Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia.

Commodities such as coffee, nutmeg, paprika, cinnamon, pineapples, coconuts and bananas will be eligible for dutyfree access to the U.S.

In another trade development, Trump said Oct. 27 he will impose a 10% tariff on Canada on top of existing tariffs because the Ontario government re-ran a television ad during the World Series criticizing tariffs.

The 60-second ad featured Ronald Reagan saying tariffs fail in the long run. The province lifted the 1987 audio clip from a five-minute address on why Reagan imposed 100% tariffs on Japan.

Trump called the ad "dirty pool." He told reporters he didn't know when he would implement the additional 10% tariff. The U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments Nov. 5 on whether Trump's use of tariffs to leverage trade deals is legal.

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ROBERT AMSTRUP, SALES MANAGER (701) 226 8958 A14 The Growers' Guide November 2025

## Octogenarian could lose farm over state fines

**By DON JENKINS and MATTHEW WEAVER** CAPITAL PRESS

DEER PARK, Wash. — Bob Greiff has spent his whole life farming and at the age of 85 is deep in debt to the Washington Department of Ecology.

Ecology has fined Greiff three times for irrigating a 69-acre parcel on his farm in Spokane County. The fines total \$121,000. Greiff hasn't paid, and Ecology has placed a lien on the farm.

Ecology portrayed Greiff in a press release as an uncooperative offender of water law. Public records tell a more complex story. And the person most informed about the case, longtime waterrights consultant Tim Reierson, calls the fines the "worst abuse of power I've seen from Ecology in my career."

With no lawyer, Greiff has missed deadlines to appeal the fines. Still, he said he wishes he could tell his story to a judge.

"I'm not stealing water from anyone," he said. "To say they're going to take my land ... I'm ready to die on that land."

Greiff grew up on the farm. On it, he grows alfalfa, hay and grains, and opened the North Spokane Farm Museum. His troubles with Ecology began in 2019, according to public records.

Ecology told him he didn't have a permit to irrigate south of a road that runs through his farm. This was news to Greiff. He and his father before him had irrigated the parcel since the early 1950s. "For 70 years nobody complained," he said.

Once he heard from Ecology, Greiff didn't irrigate the 69 acres for



Robert Greiff, 85, stands beside his farm field near Deer Park, Wash., the morning of Oct. 29. The Washington State Department of Ecology is fining Greiff \$100,000 for allegedly irrigating the field without a water right. (Matthew Weaver/Capital Press)

two years. Meanwhile, on behalf of Greiff, Reierson prepared an application to spread the same amount of water over 100 acres, so Greiff could keep farming both sides of the road.

"Everything I submitted in that application was by the book," said Reierson, who has worked on water rights since 1989, including seven years as an Ecology employee.

The Spokane County Water Conservancy Board approved Reierson's plan on Aug. 22, 2022. The farm could continue its historic irrigation, but without using any more water than it had before, according to the board's decision.

The board's decision went to Ecology for review. "What happened after that was inexcusable and inexplicable," Reierson said.

Ecology rejected the board's decision.

Greiff's application was incomplete, according to Ecology. The department was apparently concerned that each water right had not been adequately evaluated, according to public records. The water board withdrew its decision and turned the matter over to Ecology.

Reierson said he tried to reason with Ecology, but the department dug in. Against Ecology's order, Greiff resumed irrigating south of the road. "We can't exist without water on that side," he said.

Ecology spokeswoman Stephanie May said in an email Oct. 31 that because of the illegal water-

ing Ecology was unable to get the information it needed. Because of this, Ecology was unable to process the application, she said.

Ecology fined Greiff \$6,000 in June 2024, \$15,000 in August 2024 and finally \$100,000 last August. Ecology used the 2024 fines to obtain a lien on the farm. "We hope Greiff will pay the 2025 fines and will explore options if he declines to do so," May said.

When it issued the \$100,000 fine, Ecology issued a press release. "For years, we've seen repeated violations and a disregard for bringing this property into compliance," Ecology water resources section manager Jaime Short said.

Greiff said he isn't sorry he went ahead and irrigated the 69 acres.

"There is no reason in hell water from the north side of the road can't be put on the south side of the road," he said. "It's just asinine. I'd like to tell a judge that."

The Pollution Control Hearings Board is the forum for examining Ecology's claims. Greiff said he was interested in appealing, but didn't get the paperwork in.

Reierson said he's sorry he couldn't do more for Greiff.

"Ecology had the discretion to approve the use of water south of the road and instead they chose to pursue punitive regulatory action, with potentially devastating consequences for the Greiff family," he said.

"Mr. Greiff deserves to be able to continue farming, with his water right amended," Reierson said. "I have all the respect in the world for him. Ecology can try to take his farm away, but they'll never take away his dignity and self-respect."

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## Idaho Potato Commission welcomes new members

By BRAD CARLSON **Capital Press** 

The Idaho Potato Commission welcomed new board members Scott Mickelsen, Doug Ruff and Brad Russell.

The new commissioners were sworn in Oct. 22 at IPC headquarters in Eagle.

"We are thrilled to welcome Scott, Doug and Brad to the commission," President and CEO Jamey Higham said in a news release. "Each of them brings invaluable experience, perspective and passion for Idaho's potato industry. Their leadership will help ensure Idaho potatoes continue to set the standard for the quality customers expect and prefer."

Together, the new commissioners "bring a wealth of experience and deep ties to Idaho's potato industry, continuing IPC's longstanding commitment to promoting and protecting the world-famous Grown in Idaho seal," according to the release.

Mickelsen is business manager at Rigby Produce, where he brings decades of hands-on experience in the potato industry. Having grown up working alongside his father and brothers, he has been immersed in



New Idaho Potato Commission members Scott Mickelsen, Doug Ruff and Brad Russell. (Courtesy IPC)

Idaho's potato business since childhood. His family has been in the industry for more than 60 years.

Russell is director of global potato procurement for Simplot Global Food, based in Boise. He brings 28 years of experience in potato processing and procurement including 10 in fry processing and 18 in procurement. A fifth-generation Idahoan and an Oregon State University graduate, Russell "brings a wealth of knowledge and leadership to Idaho's potato industry," according to the release.

Ruff owns and operates Ruff Times Farms, which he runs alongside his sons. A third-generation farmer and a University of Idaho graduate, he is a Certified Public Accountant and "brings a unique blend of expertise and agricultural experience to the Commission," according to the release. He "looks forward to helping promote and protect the state's world famous potato industry."

IPC's nine commissioners represent Idaho potato growers, shippers and processors. They are nominated by industry peers and appointed by the governor.

Other members of the commission board are chairman Daren Bitter of Bittersweet Farms, vice-chairman Brian Jones of Sun Valley Potatoes, Eric Jemmett of J&S Farms Inc., Mark Darrington of Big D Farms, Brian Lundquist of Idahoan, and Mike Telford of Sun Valley Seed.

The new commissioners succeeded Klaren Koompin, Bryan Wada and Paul Saito.



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#### **COMBINES & HEADS**

## **2020** JOHN DEERE S790



SM GRAIN, PRWD, HILLCO LEVELER, OVERHAULED, HOURS: 1888

				_			
Year	Make	Model	Description	Hours	Ad Price	Location	
2013	JD	635F	635F PLATFORM W/ CART	N/A	\$13,999	COLFAX	
2010	MD	FD70	MACDON FD70 40' PLATFORM	N/A	\$27,999	TEKOA	
2018	MD	FD75	MACDON FD75 45' PLATFORM	N/A	\$68,999	COLFAX	
2020	MD	FD140	MACDON FD140 40' PLATFORM	N/A	\$93,999	MOSCOW	
2021	MD	FD145	MACDON FD145 45' PLATFORM	N/A	\$101,999	COLFAX	
2011	CA	7088H	CASE IH, SM GRAIN, PRWD, HILLCO LEVELER, PLATFORM	3387	\$119,999	COLFAX	
2019	JD	S780	SM GRAIN, PRWD, HILLCO LEVELER	1873	\$422,999	FOUR LAKES	
2021	JD	S780	SM GRAIN, PRWD, HILLCO LEVELER	846	\$479,999	MOSCOW	
2023	JD	S780	SM GRAIN, 2WD, DUALS, LEVEL LAND	317	\$552,999	FOUR LAKES	
2021	JD	S780	SM GRAIN, PRWD, HILLCO LEVELER	483	\$578,999	MOSCOW	

#### SPRAYERS & IMPLEMENTS

#### **2024** JOHN DEERE 612R

SPRAYER, 120' STEEL BOOM, SEE & SPRAY, EXACTAPPLY, FLOATERS, HOURS: 156

				Denne	THE OWNER OF THE OWNER,	200	
Year	Make	Model	Description	Hours	Ad Price	Location	
1996	JD	455	455 DOUBLE DISK DRILLS 35'	N/A	\$23,999	COLFAX	
2023	DM	LT42	DEMCOSPRAYTRAILER, QUICK-DRAW, PUMP REMOTE START HONDA	N/A	\$116,999	COLFAX	
2014	JD	1890	AIR DRILL, 40FT, 7.5" SPACING, SEED BOX, STARTER KIT	N/A	\$169,999	FOURLAKES	
2015	JD	1890-1910	AIR DISC DRILL, 36FT, 75° SPACING, 1910 CART	N/A	\$169,999	TEKOA	
2022	JD	N540C	AIR DRILL, 40FT, 7.5" SPACING, CCS	N/A	\$193,999	COLFAX	
2022	AP	4712-SL	AGPRO 4712-ALNO-TILL DRILL	N/A	\$304,999	COLFAX	
2021	JD	R4044	SPRAYER, 132' CF BOOM, EXACTAPPLY	2048	\$324,999	FOUR LAKES	
2020	JD	R4045	SPRAYER,120'STEELBOOM,FLOATERS	1096	\$349,999	COLFAX	
2023	JD	N550-1910	DAIR DRILL, 50FT, 7.5" SPACING, STARTER, 1910 CART	N/A	\$379,999	TEKOA	
2019	JD	R4045	SPRAYER, 120'CF BOOM, EXACTAPPLY, DUALS	1014	\$399,999	TEKOA	

\$589,999

MOSCOW: 208-882-0303 | COLFAX: 509-397-4377 | TEKOA: 509-284-2501

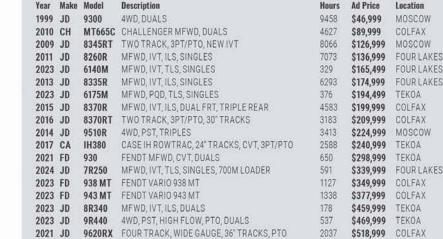
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#### TRACTORS

#### **2024** KIOTI HX1151

TEKOA

KIOTI MFWD, LOADER, 115 HP, HOURS: 203



#### HAY EQUIPMENT

#### **2023** JOHN DEERE W235M

FOUR LAKES

WINDROWER 16' HAV HEAD STEEL CONDITIONER HOURS: 215

Year	Make	Model	Description	Hours	Ad Price	Location
2007	JD	348	BALER, SQUARE	11000	\$11,999	PONDERAY
2015	JD	830	MOWER CONDITIONER 9'8" CUT WIDTH	NA	\$18,999	TEKOA
2016	MD	M155E4	WINDROWER, 16' DOUBLE AUGER HEAD	2101	\$65,999	TEKOA
2018	JD	L341	LARGE SQUARE BALER, TANDEM	N/A	\$87,999	FOUR LAKES
2017	NH	SR260	NEW HOLLAND WINDROWER, 16' HAY HEAD, URETHANE	1003	\$119,999	FOUR LAKES
2019	JD	W260	WINDROWER, 16' HAY HEAD, STEEL CONDITIONER	1667	\$136,999	FOUR LAKES
2020	JD	W235	WINDROWER, 16' HAY HEAD, STEEL CONDITIONER	635	\$163,999	MOSCOW

\$180,999

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CASE 416C BACKHOE W/7783 HRS ......\$19,500





CAT 966C LOADER ......<sup>\$</sup>25,000



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MCFARLANE 70' 16-BAR FLEX HARROW, 5 1/2" teeth, good shape ..... \$25,000

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**1979 MERRITT 45' ALUMINUM CATTLE TRAILER,** also has hog panels, brakes 75%, floors 30%, 11×24.5 radials



**2015 VOLVO D13 500 HP,** auto trans, 804,500 miles .......s15,000



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2000 IH 4200 GALLON, stainless steel, 9 sp, Cummins, approximately 635,000 miles, front & rear spray, pumps ......s40,000







2004 IH WATER TRUCK, 4200 gal stainless steel tank, auto trans, Cummins N14, 370 hp, approximately 128,000 miles .......\$40,000

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2009 JD 9770 W/2017 30' DRAPER HDR & CART, 4WD, 3693 hrs ... \$110,000





1994 WILSON 45' 3-AXLE HOPPER BOTTOM GRAIN TRAILER W/TARP.....







**2012 JD S680 LEVEL LAND COMBINE, DUALS,** 2029 sep hrs, w/2012 MacDon 40' D65-S Draper header & cart........\$114,500



2013 BRENT 882 GRAIN CART, 30.5×32 tires in good shape, well maintained

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'23 CASE IH 580Q, 1257 Hrs, PowerShift Transmission, 36" Tracks, Luxury Performance Cab, Cold Weather Starting Aid, Engine Brake, Front Bumper Weights, True Ground Speed Radar, RH Armrest, AFS Pro 1200, High Cap Hyd Pump, Power Beyond Supply and Return, Performance Lighting, Dual Beacon, LED Cab Roof Work Lights, 2 Pumps Smart Torque, 6 Electric Remotes, 1000RPM 

**19 CASE IH 580Q,** 5130 Hours, Powershift, Deluxe Cab, LED Cab Roof Work Light Package, Single Beacon Light, RH Window Bar Display, Guidance Ready, Telematics, Cold Weather Starting Aid, Engine Compression Brake, True Ground Speed Sensor, Back-up Warning Alarm, High Capacity Draw Bar, High Capacity Hydraulic Pump, 6 Electric Remotes, Power Beyond Supply & Return, Hi Capacity Bar w/Diff Lock, Undercarriage Scrapers, 36" CAMSO, 650 AG Tracks, Front Bumper Weights......

'18 CASE IH 580Q, 4398 Hours, PowerShift, Deluxe Cab, LED Cab Roof Work Light Package, Single Beacon Light, RH Window Bar Display Ready, Telematics, Cold Weather Starting Aid, True Ground Speed Sensor, High-Capacity Draw Bar, High-Capacity Hydraulic Pump, 6 Electric Remotes, Power Beyond Supply & Return, Hi Capacity Bar w/Diff Lock, Drive Wheel Scrapers, 

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'08 JD 9430, 6250 Hrs, 710/70R42 Tires, Hyd Flow 44 GPM, 4 Hyd Outlets, AutoTrac Ready, 1000 PTO, 3PT....... 159,900 \$149,900

'98 CASE IH 9370Q, 9711 Hours, Powershift, 4 Remotes, Trimble EZ-Steer, FM750, 2000 hours on reman Engine, Good Tracks,

CASEIH 9380Q, 13,000 Hour, 36" Tracks, 4 Remotes.



'20 JD 9520RX, 3511 Hrs, 36" Tracks, PTO, High Flow Hydraulics, 5 Valves, Premium Cab w/Leather, Refrigerator, Premium Lighting w/Front and Rear HID Lights, Autotrac Ready with 4600 Processor .......\$379,000 '11 NH T8.360, 6150 Hrs, 4WD, Duals, Front Weights, Deluxe Cab, Consigned.

'23 CASE IH STEIGER 470 AFS CONNECT, 981 hrs Luxury Performance Cab, PowerDrive, Engine Brake, Cold Weather Starting Aid, True Ground Speed Radar, RH Armrest, AFS Pro 1200, High-Capacity Pump, Power Beyond Supply & Return, Performance Lighting, Dual Beacon, LED Cap Roof Work Lights, 710/70R42 R1 Duals, Wheel Weights, Ballast Package, Rear Weight Support, ...<del>\*368,00</del>0 \$358,000

'23 CASE IH STEIGER 500 AFS CONNECT, PowerShift Heavy Duty Version, Engine Brake, Cold Weather Starting Aid, True Ground Speed Radar, RH Armrest AFS Pro 1200, High Capacity Hydraulic Pump, Power Beyond Supply & Return, Performance Lighting, Dual Beacon, LED Cab Roof Work Lights, Luxury Performance Cab, PTO, Hitch Drawbar, 4 Rear Remotes, Parallel Flow Hydraulic AutoGuidance, Connectivity, Front Ballast, Rear Ballast, Wheel Weights, Rear Weight Support, Tow Cable, 710/70R42 Duals

'08 JD 8530, 8200 Hrs, 420/85R34 Fronts, 480/80R50 Rear Duals, '22 CASE IH 500W, 1352 Hours, Luxury Cab, Power Drive, HHP, Engine Brake, Cold Weather Starting Aid, True Ground Speed Radar, RH Armrest AFS Pro 1200, High Capacity Hydraulic Pump, Power Beyond Supply and Return, Performance Lighting, Dual Beacon, LED Cab Roof Work 

**B1** 

'22 CASE IH PUMA 150, 668 HRS, Mechanical Cab Suspension, BlueTooth Radio, 2 Tele/Heat/Rem Adjustable Mirrors, ISOBUS Class 3 Speed Control, 200 Amp Alternator, 3 Electronic Rear Remotes,

'12 CASE IH 450W, 4654 Hrs. Luxury Cab. 16 Speed Powershift. 1000 RPM PTO, High Capacity Hydro Pump, 4 Hydraulic Remotes, 710/70R38 Tires, Wheel Weights......\$215,900 \$199,900

'21 CASE IH MAXXUM 125, 1585 Hours, Active Drive 4 Suspended Cab, Telescoping Mirrors, Roof LED's, 200 Amp Alternator, Grid Heater, Rear Wheel Weights, L105 Loader, 3 rd Function, 480/65R28 Fronts, 600/65R38 Rears, Consigned

'14 KUBOTA M59TL, BT 1200 Backhoe, 84" Bucket, 3 Range Hydro-Shuttle, Consigned .....

'21 MF 1835E, 124 Hrs, Hydro, 4WD, Loader, Palletforks, Post 

'81 YANMAR 1610, 4WD, Rear Blade, Good Tires, 16HP, 3PT,

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'07 FLEXI-COIL 4350, 6430 Bushels, Variable Dual Fan, 10" Auger, Velocity '03 FLEXI-COIL 5000HD, 45' single shoot, liquid deep band set-up, 12" spacing, 5.5" rubber press wheels, 5" paired row boots....... \$68,900

'02 FLEXI-COIL 3450, Tow Behind Air Cart, Variable Rate Dual Fan, Consigned.. ..\$15,900 JD 1910, 3 Tank, 12" Conveyer, Tow Between, New Fan Housing

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JD 946, Mower Conditioner, 13' Cutter Bar, Center Pivot, Flail Conditioner, Hydraulic Angle Adjust, Regular Maintenance,

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'16 CASE IH 4440, 4100 Hours, 120' Boom, AccuBoom Section Control, AutoBoom Height Control, Pro 700, AIM Command, Foam Marker, Alliance 650/65R38 .....<del>\*179,9</del>00 <sup>\$</sup>154,900

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234 Sep Hrs....

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(2) '23 Case IH 8250, Luxury Cab w/Leather Seat, Harvest Command, w/Camera, Power+ CVT Drive, Yield Monitor, Pro 700 Nav Controller

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The Growers' Guide November 2025

## Farmers face financial ruin due to contract violations

**By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI Capital Press** 

Oregon farm regulators have warned an administrative judge that farmers face financial jeopardy unless enforcement proceedings over alleged grass seed contract violations proceed speedily.

During recent preliminary hearings, the Oregon Department of Agriculture asked for several "contested cases" to be resolved as soon as possible to recover money that seed dealer DLF USA allegedly owes growers.

"ODA's role is to protect the grass seed industry and it views this as having paramount importance to that industry," said Erika Hamilton, an attorney for the state government.

Farmers have already been waiting since the May 1 due date to be fully paid for tall fescue seed grown in 2024, and DLF's under-



An Oregon grass seed dealer is being accused of trying to conceal underpayments to growers by forcing them to sign nondisclosure agreements. (Courtesy Oregon Department of Agriculture)

payments of up to \$100,000 significant impact on growper grower are having "a ers in the Oregon grass seed industry," Hamilton said during the Oct. 29 hearing.

"Our understanding is that a number of growers are actually going to be delinquent on their loans as a result, and potentially facing bankruptcy from DLF's failure to pay under these contracts," she said. "These loans are coming due, in my understanding, basically now, so the agency wants to move these actions forward as quickly as possible to try to protect these growers."

So far this year, ODA has

issued 11 "notice of payment demand" letters to DLF, alleging the company paid farmers only 80 cents per pound of tall fescue seed, or 12 cents less than required by contract, totaling more than \$200,000 in alleged underpayments.

Eight of those cases are already subject to the "contested case" process and ODA expects that DLF will also challenge the remaining three "notice of payment demand" letters issued

See Grass seed, Page B3

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November 2025 The Growers' Guide

### **Grass seed:**

continued from B2

by the agency.

The agency has also undertaken separate enforcement proceeding threatening to suspend DLF's seed dealer's license — prohibiting it from new seed transactions — unless it honors the negotiated price order of 92 cents per pound of the crop, which would help compensate growers even if they hadn't filed complaints against the company.

Brian Kiolbasa, attorney for DLF, said the company disagrees with the ODA's characterization of the situation and plans to file a "dispositive motion" asking an administrative law judge to rule in its favor based entirely on the law, before evidence is submitted.

Kiolbasa said he did not yet want to disclose the substance of that argument but asked an administrative judge to allow the company until early December to submit that motion, before witnesses and evidence are examined during individual hearings on each case.

The company is scheduled to submit a motion opposing ODA's price order enforcement by Dec. 8 and wanted the individual cases filed on behalf of farmers to move on the same timetable, but ODA objected to that proposal.

Hamilton, the attorney representing the ODA, said the agency wants to proceed with the individual contested cases in early November, arguing that such a motion should not be allowed to "slow down the time frame," as DLF can make those legal arguments during each hearing.

It's also unnecessary to delay the proceedings for DLF to request documents from ODA, as the company already has access to all the necessary materials related to the grass seed contracts, she said.

"I have not heard them articulate any relevant information they can ask the department for. The information is all in their own hands," she said. "There's no files the department has that are potentially relevant

"OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT A
NUMBER OF GROWERS ARE ACTUALLY
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THEIR LOANS AS A RESULT, AND
POTENTIALLY FACING BANKRUPTCY
FROM DLF'S FAILURE TO PAY UNDER
THESE CONTRACTS."

—Erika Hamilton, an attorney representing the state of Oregon

to this hearing at all."

DLF also had the opportunity to consolidate all the individual cases involving Oregon's "slow pay/no pay" law, which enforces payment terms, but that motion was "vigorously opposed" by the company and denied by an administrative law judge, Hamiton said

Now the company is "flipping the script" in trying to get all the enforcement cases to move along a parallel track with the price order enforcement, she said. "They can't have their cake and eat it, too. They said these were different. We're now proceeding separately under all these cases."

Ultimately, the parties

agreed for the eight individual "slow pay/no pay" to be cases to be heard by an administrative law judge during four hearings scheduled between Dec. 1-11, with the administrative hearing on ODA's price order enforcement scheduled for Feb. 17-18.

In previous statements, DLF has not directly addressed the underpayment allegations but said the world is oversupplied with tall fescue seed, which is why the company is working with growers to reduce inventories of the crop.

In its most recent financial report, DLF said the "seed market was characterized by oversupply" in the Northern Hemisphere,

spurring the company to make "adjustments to improve the balance of production and inventory levels relative to the future sales volume a expected."

However, DLF — which is based in Denmark and operates in several countries around the world — said its financial results are "a testament to the strength of our global platform and our strong relationship with business partners."

The company reported revenues of 7.6 billion Danish krone, with a consolidated net income of 260 million Danish krone— a nearly three-fold profit increase from the prior year. In U.S. dollars, those numbers are equivalent to \$1.18 billon in revenues and \$40.4 million in profits.

"The Board of Directors considers the results for the year very satisfactory in light of a challenging business environment characterized by geopolitical factors and a highly competitive market," the annual report said.



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The Growers' Guide November 2025

## Rollins says USDA committed to screwworm fight

By JOE BEACH **Capital Press** 

#### **INDIANAPOLIS**

Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins said she will meet with Mexican officials next week to discuss efforts to thwart the New World screwworm, a parasitic fly that endangers livestock.

The U.S. and Mexico eradicated the screwworm in the 1980s. Last year, however, the parasite, endemic in Central America, reappeared in Mexico.

Mexican authorities reported Sept. 21 detecting the parasitic fly in an 8-month-old cow at a feedlot in Sabina Hidalgo in the state of Nuevo Leon, 70 miles from the border. Prior to that, the closet detection to the U.S. was 370 miles south of the border in July.

The pest lays eggs in cattle openings and wounds, and the hatched maggots burrow deeper into the tis-

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sue like a screw. According to USDA, the maggots can cause deadly damage to the infested animal.

During a press conference following her address Oct. 30 to the National FFA Convention here, Rollins said the administration's willingness to invest \$1 billion in eradication efforts at a time it's trying to reduce government spending is an indication of its commitment to protect the U.S.

"We take this incredibly seriously," she said.

The USDA closed the border to imports of cattle, bison and horses from Mexico after the discovery in September. That blocked thousands of head of cattle destined for the U.S. from entering at a time when the U.S. herd is at an all-time low. Mexican officials want the border reopened.

"I'm not convinced it's under control," Rollins said.

HILLCO

On other topics:

· Rollins said she understood why U.S. cattle producers were concerned over the administration's plan to allow increased imports of beef from Argentina.

Using less-strident language than Trump used last week when he responded to producer criticism, Rollins said that producers are enjoying a rare boom time and were understandably concerned that imports could drop prices they are receiving.

"They felt threatened," she said.

However, she said, the president's proposal allow 20,000 metric tons in from Argentina would represent a "very small amount" of traditional beef imports.

Rollins said U.S. beef consumption is about 12 million metric tons a year, but U.S. beef production is only 10 million metric tons.

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Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins addressing reporters in Indianapolis on Oct. 30. (Joe Beach/Capital Press)

She noted that the administration has a multi-point plan to boost the domestic industry, that includes a \$100 million ad campaign to encourage consumers to buy U.S. beef.

 Rollins acknowledged that the administration's tariffs have impacted farm income, but said farmers and ranchers will reap the benefits of the strategy as

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it produces more advantageous trade deals. She cited recently announced trade deals in Asia, and a reduction in tariffs between the U.S. and China that had been announced by the president that day.

"We remain very committed to our farmers and agriculture," she said.

• The USDA remains committed to moving 2,000 of the department's 4,600 D.C.-based workforce to five hubs in cities across the country, including Indianapolis.

Rollins said the plan is designed to move the staff closer to the people they

"Why do we have thousands, and thousands of workers who haven't set



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The Growers' Guide November 2025

## Expert: Disputes persist despite new WOTUS standard

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI **Capital Press** 

Despite the new "waters of the U.S." definition, the Clean Water Act's regulatory reach will likely continue generating legal controversy, according to an agricultural law expert.

Two years after the U.S. Supreme Court created a new standard for WOTUS, disputes are already flaring up over the revised legal language, said Brigit Rollins, staff attorney with the National Agricultural Law Center.

The definition of WOTUS determines which wetlands, ponds and channels are subject to Clean Water Act regulations, and while the nation's highest court has cleaned up some ambiguities, there's plenty of "wiggle room" left for lawyers to argue over, Rollins said.

"I see some folks going, 'Oh God, not again.' Yeah. WOTUS is just an unending carousel. Just when you think that the ride has stopped — ha ha, no, the music starts again, and around we go," Rollins said at the recent annual conference of the Oregonians for Food and Shelter agribusiness group.

Under an earlier Supreme Court precedent governing the Clean Water Act, the statute extended to wetlands and channels that have a "significant nexus" to traditionally navigable waterways fitting the definition of WOTUS.

However. a dispute between the federal government and an Idaho couple building a home in an alleged wetland convinced



Brigit Rollins, staff attorney with the National Agricultural Law Center. (Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press)

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Supreme Court to override that case law in 2023. It ruled that wetlands and channels must be "indistinguishable" from traditionally navigable waterways — meaning they must have a "continuous surface connection" to be subject to the Clean Water Act.

#### **Questions still persist**

While it was originally

hoped that the new standard would eliminate the need for highly complex case-by-case analysis of Clean Water Act jurisdiction, that may have been overly optimistic due to the nuances of hydrology, Rollins said.

The new WOTUS definition will probably reduce the number of intricate case-bycase evaluations, but determining whether a "continuous surface connection" exists is not necessarily simple in every instance, she said.

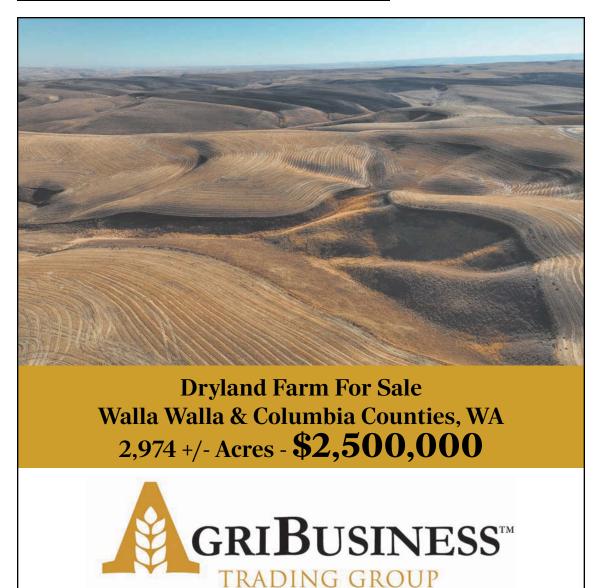
in Florida wanted to convert about 10 acres to agricultural use but was sued by the federal government for allegedly filling in wetlands that abutted and had a surface connection with a navigable waterway.

Last year, a federal judge dismissed the government's lawsuit, finding that "any water located on the wetlands is below ground level" and thus insufficient to establish a surface connection with a navigable waterway.

The case illustrates the dif-

See Water, Page B7

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November 2025 The Growers' Guide

## Japan deal doesn't address potato access

By BRAD CARLSON
Capital Press

A trade agreement between the U.S. and Japan does not include fresh market access for U.S. potatoes, leaving producers disappointed.

An Oct. 28 meeting between President Donald Trump and Japan Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi did not include any mention of U.S. fresh potato access, and follow-up statements did not refer to the issue, according to a National Potato Council news release.

"It's very disappointing that the U.S. was unable to use President Trump's tariff leverage to push past Japan's protectionism and finally open this valuable market," council CEO Kam Quarles said.

In talks between USDA and Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries earlier in October, Japan did not provide a timeline for concluding the request, which dates back about 30 years.

"Despite this disappointment, we were pleased by U.S. chief agriculture negotiator nominee Julie Callahan's comments (Oct. 29) before the Senate Finance



Idaho potatoes are harvested in this file photo. A recent trade deal between the U.S. and Japan didn't include access for U.S. fresh potatoes. (Capital Press file photo)

Committee, where she acknowledged Japan's delaying strategy is a non-tariff trade barrier," Quarles said. "This has been stated by our industry for years, and we very much appreciate Dr. Callahan's clear assessment and focused intent to open this market to benefit family farms across the U.S."

With low commodity prices and increased input costs this year, the potato sector and specialty crops in general are facing a "major economic crisis," according to the NPC release.

"The loss of this opportunity in Japan deepens this crisis and increases the imperative for the administration and Congress to provide meaningful economic relief to U.S. specialty crop grow-

ers," said Idaho grower Dean Gibson, NPC vice president of legislative affairs.

Should the U.S. be successful in achieving access, Japan's market for U.S. fresh potato exports is estimated at \$150 million annually, according to the council, which said lack of access puts increased pressure on positive outcomes on tariffs and non-tariff barriers for potato products in other valuable export markets for the U.S.

Japan already allows U.S. processing and chipping potatoes. For U.S. fresh, table-stock potatoes, phytosanitary issues have been a sticking point in annual negotiations since 2019.

#### Water:

#### continued from B6

ficulties that can arise in determining at what depth water creates a surface connection to a regulated waterway, Rollins said.

In that example, the wetland was ruled not to be subject to Clean Water Act jurisdiction, but hydrological changes throughout the year can give rise to other complications in interpreting the new WOTUS standard, Rollins said.

Under current regulations interpreting the Supreme Court's ruling, tributaries of navigable waterways are considered WOTUS if they are "relatively permanent, standing, or continuously flowing," she said.

That interpretation can run into problems in the West, where "there are major bodies of water there that do not flow continuously throughout the year," including the Colorado river, which may not reach the ocean during droughts, Rollins said.

#### Watch the states

Farmers and other landowners should also keep in mind that state governments also regulate waterways and have their own definitions of what they can regulate, Rollins said.

State governments may interpret their own jurisdiction over water more broadly in reaction to the Supreme Court's more limited definition, or even enact new regulations, such as Colorado has, Rollins said.

"Just because the definition of WOTUS for purposes of the federal Clean Water Act has changed, does not mean that any state water permitting programs have been altered," she said. "And in fact, some states have beefed up their state permitting programs."







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## Strong livestock sector provides modest lift to Purdue ag barometer

By KYLE ODEGARD
Capital Press

The Purdue University-CME Group Ag Economy Barometer edged slightly higher in October for the second straight month thanks to livestock sector optimism.

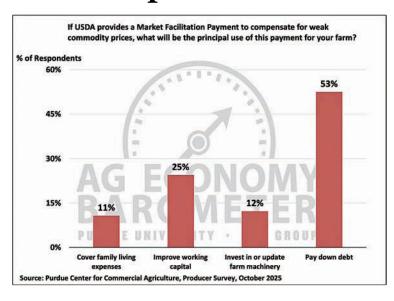
The reading of 129 was 3 points higher than the previous month.

Livestock producers remain very positive about current conditions on their farms, fueled in part by record-high profitability in the beef sector.

Crop producers have a notably more negative view of the situation due to poor profit margins across all major crop enterprises.

Both ranchers and growers expect their scenarios to persist for a while, said Michael Langemeier, director of Purdue's Center for Commercial Agriculture, in an online analysis.

The October barometer survey of 400 producers took place from Oct. 13-17, and included growers of



corn, soybeans, wheat and cotton, as well as producers of beef cattle, hogs and dairy.

## How USDA payments could be spent

In previous surveys, producers overwhelmingly said they expect the USDA to provide compensation for weak commodity prices.

This month's barometer included a question about how producers planned to use a supplementary payment from the USDA.

More than half (53%) said it would be used to

pay down debt, while 25% said it would be used to strengthen their farm's working capital position.

"So 78%, almost eight out of 10, are probably doing what a good farm management adviser would tell them to do," said James Mintert, Purdue University professor emeritus in the department of agricultural economics.

"Both of those strategies are very logical," Langemeier added.

About 12% said they would invest in machinery and 11% said they

would cover family living expenses with a USDA payment.

## Responding to weak corn prices

Corn producers were asked in October about how they would respond in 2026 to weak operating margins, and a third didn't plan to make any production practice changes.

However, 29% said they plan to reduce applications of phosphorus, 27% said they plan to adopt lower-cost seed traits or varieties, 16% said they plan to reduce nitrogen applications.

Only 11% said they plan to reduce their corn seeding rates, which Langemeier said might not bring much benefit.

"Fertilizer prices are relatively high right now, particularly phosphorus, but also for nitrogen compared to last year at this time," Langemeier said.

## Policy uncertainty remains a factor

Policy uncertainty continues to impact farmer

sentiment.

The October survey asked producers if they expect the increased use of tariffs by the U.S. to strengthen or weaken the agricultural economy in the long run.

The October survey showed that 58% of producers expected tariffs to strengthen the economy, up from 51% in September.

Still, that was lower than the 70% in April and May.

About 26% said tariffs will weaken the U.S. economy in the long-run.

While the percentage of those who think the outcome is uncertain has nearly doubled since spring, that only sits at 16%.

The percentage of farmers who say the U.S. is headed in the "right direction" still is hovering near 70%. Producer responses have been extremely consistent, Mintert said.

"They're still fairly confident in that long-run policy environment. ... A lot of people think that's going to turn out in our favor," Langemeier said.



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## UI's new ag dean addresses budget challenges, opportunities

**By MATTHEW WEAVER**Capital Press

Reductions in funding are creating "opportunities and challenges" for University of Idaho's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, its new dean told wheat farmers.

Leslie Edgar, new J.R. Simplot Endowed Dean for CALS, took her post in June.

Edgar spoke during the Idaho Wheat Commission's From the Field webinar Oct. 30.

"We can go through hard times, we're going to be fine," Edgar said. "The one thing agriculture is is resilient. We will make sure we're standing here in the next two decades and long after. We can only do that if we're working together."

Funding in the One Big Beautiful Bill would allow universities to meet deferred maintenance needs while conducting cutting-edge science, Edgar said.

"You are asking us to do 21st-century science in 20th-century buildings with 20th-century equipment,"



Leslie Edgar, dean of the University of Idaho's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

she said. "I see true opportunity for us to make sure we're partnering well with all of our stakeholders and making sure we are aligning priorities with those funding needs."

Edgar used as an example the way that the U.S. poultry industry decided in the 1980s and 1990s to focus expertise into five centers of excellence nationwide.

"That's our opportunity to start considering, what types of things do we want to do best, because we no longer can do everything," she said. "We really need to prioritize: What are we going to be the best at? Obviously, wheat and grains will be high on our list for Idaho."

Budget cuts and delayed

ires

When Edgar arrived, the college faced holds on state funding, which turned into permanent reductions.

The college faces a 3% state budget cut for the 2027 fiscal year, about \$1.2 million. CALS receives about \$3.5 million from general funds for academic programs, teaching 47 undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

"When we thought it was just a holdback, what we did was intentionally delay hires," Edgar said, with plans to re-fill key faculty positions closer to the end of the fiscal year, between January and April.

Extension and research operations also took a hit, impacting travel, limiting researchers' and extension agents' ability to visit sites, she said.

CALS is now looking at the removal of multiple "critical" hires and not filling extension positions or department heads, Edgar said. It also affects the hiring of temporary workers. USDA capacity funds represent about \$6 million at the university in the form of grants. UI is not able to submit funding requests because of the government shutdown, but Edgar expects they will be in place this year.

Federal capacity funds have not increased for at least 10 years, she said.

"If we track federal funding and state funding on inflation rates, we're actually down significantly across both research and extension," Edgar said.

"It's not our science that's flawed, it's our inability to communicate our science that's flawed," said Edgar, whose background is in agricultural communications. "As more and more individuals from the general public become separated from agriculture, that is more and more important. Higher education and research is under attack in the United States."

Share success stories

UI Extension can communicate science to farmers in an understandable way, Edgar said. It can also

share information with the public, decision makers and other communities, as the state emphasizes return on investment.

Since beginning at UI, Edgar has been able to visit about 20% of county offices, and 80% of research and extension centers. Her statewide listening tour "continues," she said.

Edgar urged farmers to convey the value of CALS and land-grant universities to lawmakers and the general public.

"If there was an extension program or research project that really had impact in the work that you do in your operation, share that," she said. "Share that with your neighbors, with your elected officials."

She pointed to new wheat varieties, drought or pest resistance and specialty wheats as examples.

"If we don't have the resources at the state level to conduct this research, then the science you all rely on, we can't produce it for you," Edgar said.

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**B10** The Growers' Guide November 2025

## All in for agriculture

By MATTHEW WEAVER **Capital Press** 

Washington State University has entered a new era of leadership.

Elizabeth "Betsy" Cantwell became president April 1.

"This institution has proudly been one of the pre-eminent land-grant, agriculturally-focused universities in the U.S. since its inception in 1890," Cantwell told Capital Press. "We haven't lost the bubble on that, and we won't. That's why we hired Dean Khosla."

Raj Khosla became the new Cashup Davis Family Endowed Dean of WSU's College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences Sept. 1.

"I'm a proud product and champion of landgrant institutions," Khosla told Capital Press. "I want to make sure CAHNRS



Washington State University President Elizabeth "Betsy" Cantwell and College of Agriculture, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences Dean Raj Khosla Oct. 20 at the Ida Lou Anderson House on the Pullman campus of Washington State **University.** (Robert Hubner/Washington State University Photo Services)

accessible, nimble responsive."

Cantwell and Khosla spoke to Capital Press for their first interview together during a Zoom

and WSU Extension are meeting the morning of Oct. 8, 2025. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

> **Q:** What is the biggest agricultural need?

Cantwell: The future of

food globally is one of the most potentially significant crisis areas.

We can see it coming, we can see global challenges and we know we have the capacity to address many of those by getting in front of some of the climate-related problems or food production, disease-related problems.

For me, that is one of the key areas — to make sure that we are always engaged in being in front of challenges in global food, and global health associated with food.

Khosla: ... Through-

out my career, I have collaborated and partnered with communities. I was an extension specialist, and you know extension is not a one-way thing. We address pressing challenges for our communities we serve.

We do that by understanding the challenges they are dealing with and then working closely with them to identify opportunities, how we can co-create solutions that address their core challenges.

I couldn't agree with President Cantwell more. Recently in one of her blogs and newsletters, she talked about, "Instead of managing change, let's co-create solutions to lead change."

Cantwell: Yes. And that change can be everything, from federal funding shortor long-term blips on the screen to adapting to tariffs.

... My answer to everything is — for instance, how do we do this, how do we manage with that, how do we deal with a budget cut – the first thing we do is say some version of yes: Yes, we can figure this out. Maybe we have to back off. That's fair; we might have to come back and say, 'That part is really hard, but we'll do this part.' But we always start with, 'We'll figure this

See WSU, Page B11





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#### **WSU:**

#### continued from B10

out.' None of these things are existential for us, at this point.

Q: How does WSU's budget look?

Cantwell: We're really working hard not to adversely impact those areas of the university that are critical to the future of the state of Washington. Agriculture absolutely is. We've really worked hard not to have an adverse impact on CAHNRS.

The other budget cut kind of challenge that all of us in higher education are dealing with is at the federal government research level.

We do a beautiful job already of partnering with our growers and ranchers and the large conglomerates in the state, asking everybody to think more about research as a partnership between the university and growers, farmers and companies.

Instead of always expect-



Washington State University President Elizabeth "Betsy" Cantwell became the 12th president April 1. "My answer to everything is - the first thing we do is say some version of yes," Cantwell said. "Yes, we can figure this out."" (Washington State

ing the federal government to be both either the funder or the generator of problems or the arbiter of the research we do, we're now going to be working together much more tightly.

I think we're going to see that nationally, but Washington can lead in demonstrating how important and impactful those direct partnerships can be on the agri- are studying this shortage. cultural sector.

**Q:** WSU's veterinary hospital closed to agricultural animal emergencies and after-hours services in July. Several prominent Washington veterinarians voiced their concerns about the change, and the general shortage of large animal vets. WSU and the state

What are your thoughts? Cantwell: At the top level, people like me look at utilization of all the capacities at the university. When we think about taking budget cuts, we are in no way arbitrary. So if the utilization of our afterhours, emergency services for large animals is really low, then it makes sense to say, "We will basically take the resources that have been utilized for that" and augment other capacities in vet med. So we are hardly reducing our capacity to serve rural vet medicine.

It is an all-hands-ondeck moment for rural veterinary service, but our

See WSU, Page B12



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#### **WSU:**

continued from B11

choice was really made on the basis of very low utilization of that service.

There are other challenges that don't come from budget cuts, but come from the whole systemic challenge of serving rural populations, whether it's veterinary medicine or traditional, humanbased community medicine.

We are really thinking a lot about how we create systems that make it easier to be people who live in rural areas, companies that perform in rural areas and businesses that are successful in rural areas. We are inviting the whole state of Washington to come to the table with

I, frankly, personally think there are ways we can all think about the future of the combination of technology and human beings in these low-density population areas, that will make those areas much more successful.

Q: How does WSU address gaps as longtime experts depart or retire?

**Khosla:** The ebb and flow of experts is nothing new to our college and not unique to us, this is happening across our nation.

Even in uncertain times, I know our university is investing dollars where our mouth is. We do not want to lose capacity or competencies near and dear to the stakeholders we serve.

... We are working on funding a new professorship for Christmas tree research. In addition, as of (the week of Oct. 6), we're doing a cluster hire of three endowed positions — one focused



Washington State University College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences Dean Raj Khosla at Spillman Agronomy Farm Sept. 5 in Pullman, Wash. "I'm coming from a state where we have half a dozen commodities to a state that has 300 commodities," Khosla said. "So I don't even know right now what I don't know. But there is positive momentum." (Robert Hubner/Washington State University Photo Services)

#### **WSU AT A GLANCE**

- Number of students system-wide: 25,477 in fall
- Number of students in CAHNRS: Approximately 2,500 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled across 13 academic units, 22 undergraduate programs and 27 graduate programs.
- CAHNRS employs more than 450 faculty members and 600 staff.
- Cantwell: WSU's 12th president and first woman to hold the position. She previously was Utah State University president and held leadership positions at University of Arizona, Arizona State University and U.S. national security.
- Khosla: Previously head of the Department of Agronomy at Kansas State University. A primary focus has been precision agriculture, using spatial and temporal variability in agri-ecosystems to improve management decisions for producers.
- Budget: WSU's total annual budget for the 2026

ing program.

diate thumbs up.

to get approval from my

higher-ups. I had an imme-

This is rare, this does not

fiscal year is \$1.3 billion, including all five physical campuses, research centers and county extension office operations. The three largest contributors to that total include: 26% from state appropriations, 19% from student tuition and fees and 13% from federal grants and contracts.

#### CAHNRS budget for the 2026 fiscal year is \$214.9 million.

• Federal funding: WSU faces a projected \$24 million loss if the federal indirect cost rate is capped at 15%; \$7.3 million in terminated funding and \$1.3 million subject to stop-worker orders or having funds frozen.

In the 2025 fiscal year CAHNRS received 625 external awards with a total value of \$111.6 million. In the wake of federal policy changes, eight CAHNRS awards were terminated, totaling \$4.6 million. The remaining balances on these awards at termination totaled \$3.02 million.

Source: Washington State University News and **Media Relations** 

happen in every institution. on weed research, another on weed extension and yet Typically we wait for indianother on the weed teachviduals to (exit) out of those positions before we would approve hiring a position. This is something I alone as a dean cannot do. When I But I have a green light to go forward and fill those present this proposal, I have

positions.

Anywhere from eight to nine months is very typical, because we're talking about going out and hiring the best talent we have in our nation, or elsewhere. To help them not just build the program up, but hit the ground running from day one.

**Q:** How does agriculture research funding look?

Khosla: Federal funding has been impacted, there's no question about it, but here's the good part of that.

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture has been a very big supporter of our research. They have released much of the funding that was in a pause mode. I can't tell you how critical that funding is for sustaining our agricultural research programs.

Our faculty are actively pursuing grants to support innovation in all facets of agricultural sciences.

The USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant program is now accepting proposals for 2026. Our institutions, particularly CAHNRS, have been a big beneficiary of that

program.

In fact, ever since USDA announced that they have opened up the next round of proposals, our faculty proposals are just raining in to the pre-grants office. That's what they tell me, 'How are we going to process all of these proposals?' But that's another challenge.

Do you have a message for Washington farmers and ranchers?

Khosla: As stewards of the land-grant mission, I and we will remain committed, now and more than ever, to service and partner with our agricultural producers, ranchers, land managers and foresters. I know they have depended on WSU and CAHNRS, and we will fulfill our mission to continue to produce a work force that is ready for work.

We continue to work on generating research that increases productivity, efficiency and profitability while keeping a firm eye on sustainability, by improving quality, fighting disease and plant pest pathogens; tackling new challenges, feeding the population.

We're good at that and we will continue to do that and keep agriculture and the state of Washington competitive and innovative, making the state an example so others can emulate and follow us. We are the leaders, and will maintain our leadership.

Cantwell: We have an amazing new dean and they should pay attention to him. He will touch their lives a lot more than I do.

The core message is, we so very much continue to be all in on the value of the work and the lives (of) everybody in Washington who is involved in agriculture, from the support of the agricultural mission and the support of the people who live in and work in our agricultural areas.

When money feels like it's tentative, people in rural areas worry that they're going to be left behind. We are very committed to that mission and believe there are solutions that don't necessarily mean just throwing more money.

We are the innovators that can bring those solutions to the table, for agriculture and for rural people in the state of Washington.



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## No reason given for firing of Washingon FSA director

**By MATTHEW WEAVER**Capital Press

Jon Wyss, executive director of the Washington office of the USDA Farm Service Agency, has been fired.

Wyss declined to comment. Capital Press has reached out to USDA for comment.

Andy Juris, Bickleton, Wash., wheat farmer and president of Yakima-Klickitat County Grain Growers, received a phone call from Wyss Oct. 29 during which Wyss said he had been "summarily dismissed."

Juris said he had not heard an official reason for Wyss's dismissal, and that Wyss had not been given one, either.

"They just thanked him for his service and told him to clean out his stuff," Juris told Capital Press.

"Frankly, I think it's a mistake," Juris added. "Jon was the first FSA director at the state level that would sit down with you and he'd listen to your complaints and



Jon Wyss has been fired from his post as Washington director of the Farm Service Agency. No reason has been given by USDA, and Wyss has not commented.

concerns. His overall goal was to administer FSA programs legally and correctly, but also figure out what works for the farmer."

"There's many ideas and much speculation — anything I said on the record would just be pure opinion and probably incorrect," said Chris Herron, Connell, Wash., area wheat farmer, retired from nearly 15 years on the FSA Franklin County committee and other public

service roles.

Herron suspects the reason is "internal."

Wyss will be greatly missed, said Brit Ausman, Washington Grain Commission board member. Ausman said he had no knowledge of the reason for Wyss's firing.

"It came as a surprise, frankly, to the industry," Ausman said. "He is a strong advocate for ag production throughout all of Washingthroughout the state. I wish him well in the next chapter of his career."

**B13** 

#### **Answering farmers**

The agency's service aspect was important to Wyss, Juris said.

"If there was something the farmer wants to do that just wasn't going to fit with the program, you walked away with the confidence you got the straight-up truth," Juris said. "Whatever situation you were facing, you had a direction to go."

"I'm very disappointed," Herron said. "I really respected Jon for his ability to listen to farmers and have the wherewithal to answer the phone when we had a question."



ton State. He worked tire-

lessly to assure that policy

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November 2025 The Growers' Guide

## Oregon farmers launch network for small-scale growers in arid regions

By KYLE ODEGARD **Capital Press** 

The newly-formed Western Arid Grower Network aims to help small-scale vegetable farmers by collecting research and holding educational events.

Co-founder Nella Mae Parks said there are plenty of books for small farms, but most focus on temperate regions such as the Willamette Valley.

The climate for two-thirds of Oregon is completely different, said Parks, who operates Nella Mae's Farm in Cove in Eastern Oregon.

"We just weren't getting



Nella Mae Parks working at her booth at a farmers market in La Grande, Ore. (Courtesy Nella Mae Parks)

the resources we need," she said.

"We live in really arid places that get very little summer rain. Because of that, we're really dependent on ditchwater and groundwater for irrigating crops.

We have really short grow- is critical for resilience, espeing seasons," Parks added.

The biggest issue for Pacific Northwest regions temperature swings of 40-50 degrees in a day during the growing season.

#### **Creating resilience through** small farms

Parks created WAGN with Katie Swanson of Sweet Union Farm in Klamath Falls, Ore., and Maud Powell, an Oregon State University Extension Service small farms faculty member in Southern Oregon.

Powell said the practical information farmers can share

cially as the West sees hotter and drier conditions.

Parks said a diverse agricultural base increases resilience with other problems, such as supply chain issues during the pandemic.

Plus, local small farms provide fresher produce for residents. Vegetables from the Willamette Valley might be 10 days old before they reach Eastern Oregon shoppers, Parks said.

"The more small farms we have out there in the world the better," Parks said.

#### Federal grant funds lettuce study

WAGN received \$30,000 USDA grant to temperature study humidity impacts on lettuce, which is a critical crop for small farms, but extremely difficult to grow in arid regions.

Tests will determine the effects of low tech row covers and overhead irrigation.

The grant will fund two years of experiments, equipment purchases and help pay speakers to share research on various topics.

Parks said humidity was her new "hobby." During a recent summer, she used row covers over leafy greens to fight against flea beetles when canola fields are harvested, the pests move to nearby acreage.

The row covers inadvertently boosted humidity and production.

Parks said growers always have been told humidity leads to pests and diseases.

"That advice is coming out of research and svstems in other climates," she added.

#### **Forming connections** between farmers

While WAGN may periodically seek grants, connections between farmers are far more important, Powell said.

"These networks are really helpful to keep people in business, not just with the information sharing, but for the solidarity and support when things get hard," said Powell, a small farm owner.

Swanson wanted more community among high desert, small-scale vegetable growers.

"We are dealing with difficult conditions, we are often isolated and we need to talk to each other to help each other out," she added, in a news release.

Once a network is running, they're easy and efficient to maintain, Powell said.

Though WAGN was created in Oregon, its founders want growers and scientists in other states to join.

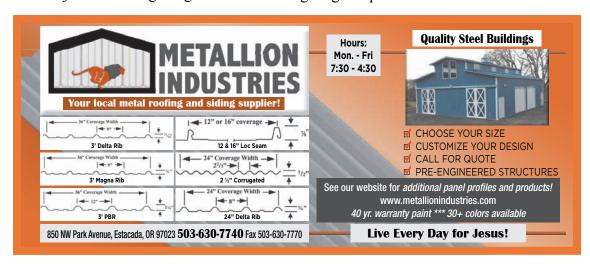
#### Meetings set to start in December

WAGN will hold three online meetings for growers starting in December and each will feature a presentation followed by farmer-tofarmer discussions.

The Dec. 8 presentation features Casey O'Leary of the Snake River Seed Cooperative, who will discuss the importance of seed selection for arid vegetable production.

The Jan. 12 meeting will focus on strategies to improve summer planting success and Feb. 9 will cover humidity, temperature and soil water tension monitoring.

For more information on WAGN and its upcoming meetings, go to https:// aridgrowers.org/.



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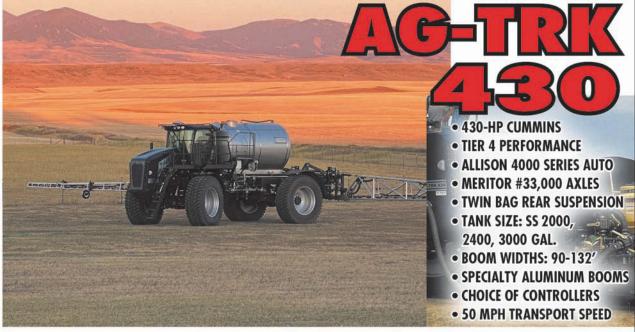
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The Growers' Guide C2 November 2025

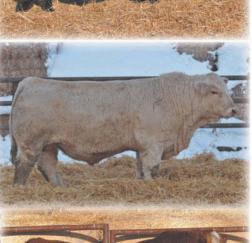


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November 2025 The Growers' Guide

## Implications of Oregon 'climate resilience' order raise concerns

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI **Capital Press** 

Natural resource groups are concerned about the implications of Oregon Gov. Tina Kotek's recent executive order that aims to "accelerate climate protections for lands and waters."

Kotek's recent directive instructs state agencies to "take urgent action to promote promote the resilience" for working lands and waters to prepare for the impacts of climate change.

In broad terms, the order says state agencies should identify the resilient characteristics of lands and waters and use existing tools and incentives to prioritize their protection, such as through improved permitting and grant-making for restoration projects.

Among the directive's specific goals, agencies are told to "protect, conserve, connect or restore" an additional 10% of lands and waters in the state within 10 years and to update their "key performance measures" to reflect the governor's climate resilience



Oregon Gov. Tina Kotek. (Capital Press file photo)

#### "IT'S CERTAINLY APPROPRIATE TO FOCUS ON CLIMATE RESILIENCE. WE'RE NOT OPPOSED TO THAT."

- Katie Murray, executive director of Oregonians for Food and Shelter

priorities.

While saying the governor's overall objectives may be commendable, natural resource groups have criticized the executive order for being overly ambiguous and prone to multiple interpretations.

"It's certainly appropriate to focus on climate resilience. We're not opposed to that," said Katie Murray, executive director of the Oregonians for Food and Shelter agribusiness group. "As always, the devil is in the detail and this is a 10-page order which has a

lot of detail in it."

The Oregon Forest Industries Council, which represents timber interests, is concerned the "state agency hierarchy" laid out in the directive "undermines the Department of Forestry's expertise in state forest management and their designation as management agency for the largest stateowned natural resource."

The organization also worries that aspects of the order could end up "locking up critical water resources and exacerbate excess fuel loading in the name of temporary carbon sequestration without any meaningful or observable additionality," sad Sara Duncan, its communications director, in an email.

Murray of OFS of said the "lack of outreach and engagement" to natural resource industries before the order was issued is unfortunate, as these sectors "didn't really get a lot of detail or discussion" in the document.

Another concern is the "shifting agency priorities" that may occur as a result of the directive, as "realigning priorities towards these resilience goals" may sap time and resources from the core work of budget-strapped agencies, including the Oregon Department of Agriculture, she said.

"What is that going to mean for them when they're

See Kotek, Page C4

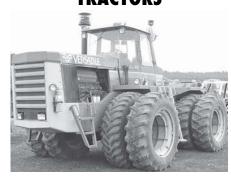




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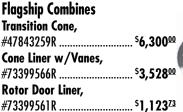


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### **Kotek:**

continued from C3

under-capacity in many areas that are serving producers, and then we're asking them to refocus on goals which in this order are not well-defined?" Murray said.

It's also unclear from the order who will set the priorities and through what processes they'll be achieved, as the directive contains many terms "that lack definition and are open to wide interpretation," she said.

Such concepts as "sustainable stewardship" of resources are the subject of numerous interpretations and opinions about how they should be applied to forestry and agriculture, she

The executive order appears to imply that "more resilience is needed" without recognizing the existing practices and structures in natural resource sectors, which are typically the first to be affected and respond to environmental emergencies and disasters, Murray said.

In regard to specific provisions, such as conserving an additional 10% of lands and waters in 10 years, ""there's a lot of questions around that and not a lot of answers" regarding the practical effects, she said.

Murray said she's been assured the additional land and water conservation measures aren't "meant to be regulatory" and will instead emphasize "voluntary efforts," but the lack of

definitions has raised questions about impacts to "current practice and existing operations" and who will qualify for any new grant money.

"None of us were engaged in any of these concepts before they rolled out," she

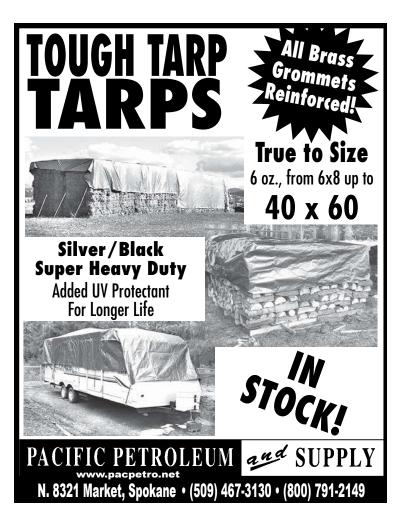
As the executive order is implemented, state agencies will hopefully invite a "more robust discussion" about revising their "key performance measures" and other activities in which natural resource groups can participate, she said.

Murray said she also hopes "there's going to be significant legislative oversight as this rolls out because I feel like it's sort of happening in a vacuum."

The Oregon Forest Industries Council hopes that state agencies will interpret the order and its emphasis on climate resilience to do "everything in our power to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and its impacts to our natural resources and communities," said Duncan, its communications director.

Despite its concerns, OFIC is encouraged that the directive instructs state agencies to rely on "science based" actions, which should prioritize thinning and other treatments to reduce wildfire risks, Duncan said.

"Unfortunately, that requires significant financial investment that this order does not address," she said.



November 2025 The Growers' Guide

# Idaho grain bin transformed into rural Oregon bar

**By KYLE ODEGARD**Capital Press

PRAY, Ore. — Ben's Place, the only bar in this small town, sits along the John Day River in a repurposed grain bin.

Owner Keith Mitchell said his favorite response to the watering hole has been from farmworkers who toiled and sweated in the metal structures. Now they can relax and enjoy a cold beer inside.

"It's really fun to hear their stories," Mitchell said.

Eastern Oregon's John Day River territory is dotted with bins, and the Spray Rodeo also uses renovated bins.

The structure for Ben's Place, however, came from a farm near Emmett, Idaho.

Mitchell said transporting, erecting and renovating the bin — with the help of contractor Josh Jones — was efficient and budget friendly.

"The structure is so solid. The material, it's weatherproof, everything is structurally sound," he added.

The bin stood two rings taller at the Idaho farm, and Mitchell used the extra metal to build an entryway, a picnic shelter and a fire pit ring.

# Filling a need in a small town

Mitchell, an arborist from Brush Prairie, Wash., understood the appetite for food and drink in Spray, population 141.

When the establishment opened in April, the city had been without a bar for about 20 years. The closest was 45 minutes away or more, depending



While Keith Mitchell runs Ben's Place, his daughter Grace Mitchell owns and operates Topwater Pizza, a food cart next door. She said she was initially skeptical about her father's plans, but people come from hours away to see the bar. (Courtesy Andy Cripe)

on the weather.

There also wasn't a local restaurant, so Mitchell created Topwater Pizza, an adjacent food cart now owned and operated by his daughter Grace Mitchell.

Spray resident Brian Gilham said it was great to have the new businesses.

"It's nice to be able to come in and visit with folks and not have to travel very far," he said.

The bar and its backdrop have become local stars, with social media posts attracting visitors from throughout the Pacific Northwest.

"Most people are awestruck, not just because of the craftsmanship of the bin, but because of the views," Gilham said.

# Reusing materials for the bar

The name Ben's Place comes from a joke displayed behind the bar: First name, Ben, last name, Drinking.

Mitchell also has been recycling and reusing, and not just with the bin.

Shelves displaying liquor and the actual bar, which shows brands from nearby ranches, are made out of

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Do you know of an old farm or ranch structure that has been renovated and reused for another purpose? Contact reporter Kyle Odegard at kyle.odegard@capitalpress.com.

reclaimed barn wood.

Wood insulation lining the building's interior was scrap from a mill.

A gazebo next to Topwater Pizza was salvaged from a Washington golf course.

# Catering to rafters, anglers

Part of Mitchell's vision was catering to rafters and fishermen.

"I love whitewater rafting. There's only a couple of rivers my rafting crew and I can tie up, have a beer and keep

See Repurposed, Page C6

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Among the upgrades planned for Ben's Place are a new patio, where people outside can watch musicians playing inside the bar. Owner Keith Mitchell also hopes to build a staircase that would allow rafters and anglers to easily trek up the riverbank. (Courtesy Andy Cripe)

### Repurposed

continued from C5

going," Mitchell said.

Among the upgrades planned for Ben's Place is a staircase that will allow boaters to easily trek up the riverbank.

Mitchell was nearby on a fishing trip when he detoured to Spray to check out a riverfront parcel for sale. He immediately made an offer.

"I'd never been to Spray before that — ever," he said.

Now he's there every

weekend to help run the bar and keep it supplied.

# Small town life suits her

Mitchell's girlfriend, Shari Aldous, a hairdresser, also helps out. She said Mitchell is a risk taker.

"He gets these wild ideas and he'll follow through with them," Aldous added.

Grace Mitchell acknowledged she was skeptical about her father's plans. 'Honestly, I was like, 'Yeah, right.' We floated here for forever and I knew the town was small."

she said.

"Now people come from hours away to see it. I didn't think it would be as big as it is now," she said.

Grace Mitchell, 22, said small town life suits her. "People know your name. They care," she added.

Ben's Place is switching to more limited winter hours on Friday through Sunday as of Nov. 14

Topwater Pizza will switch to take and bake pizzas on Thursday and Friday, for the winter months.



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# Vineyards reach \$125 million smoke settlement with PacifiCorp

**By KYLE ODEGARD**Capital Press

Nearly 100 Willamette Valley wineries and vineyards will share \$125 million in a settlement from PacifiCorp for smoke damage to grapes from the Labor Day 2020 wildfires.

The settlement covers multiple lawsuits involving several of the Oregon wine industry's brightest stars — including Willamette Valley Vineyards, Sokol Blosser and King Estate Winery.

The deal was announced in a news release Oct. 20 by law firms representing the 93 wine businesses.

PacifiCorp unsuccessfully sought to dismiss the cases, and one of the most significant lawsuits was scheduled for a jury trial Nov. 3 in Multnomah County Circuit Court in Portland.

More than 30 wineries in that matter were seeking nearly \$180 million plus punitive damages. King Estate alone listed damage to its grapes and wine from the smoke at \$31.9 million.

Lawsuits claimed negligence, saying PacifiCorp damaged grapes, their harvest and wine sales by allegedly causing 2020 Labor Day wildfires.

According to plaintiffs, PacifiCorp ignored warnings and refused to shut off power lines during dangerNovember 2025 The Growers' Guide



Smoke hovers over a vineyard in this file photo. According to lawsuits, smoke, soot and ash from the 2020 Labor Day fires accumulated in the Willamette Valley when wine grapes had just been harvested or were ready for harvest on the vine, tainting the grapes. (Courtesy Oregon State University)

### **Settlement**

continued from C6

ous fire conditions, didn't properly maintain its equipment, and should have trimmed and removed trees and branches that fell onto lines, sparking fires.

Smoke, soot and ash accumulated in the Willamette Valley when winemaking grapes had just been harvested and were sitting in open-air bins or were mature and ready for harvest on the vine.

Because of smoketainted grapes, plaintiffs claimed they were unable to sell wine through various outlets, creating a cascading effect of lost shelf space and reputation that continued in subsequent seasons.

Attorney Mikal Watts of the Texas-based Watts Law Firm, who represented wine businesses, credited PacifiCorp for changing its practices.

"We have witnessed firsthand the proactive work this company has done to make Oregon a safer state and to make sure the risk of wildfires like this ever occurring again are minimized to the greatest extent possible," Watts said, in a news release.

Robert Julian of Baker-Hostetler, another firm that represented plaintiffs, criticized legislative efforts aimed at ongoing wildfire lawsuits.

"Rather, permitting the parties and the tort system to resolve wildfire cases has a proven track record of success," Julian said, in the news release.

"Moreover, legislation creating a well-funded risk pool providing monies to

pay for wildfire damages has been proven to be effective in California and other states," he added.

The law firm Arnold Gallagher of Eugene, Ore., also represented wine businesses.

PacifiCorp spokesman Simon Gutierrez said in a statement that the utility has reached settlements with approximately 2,700 individuals, businesses and government entities related to the 2020 Labor Day wildfires.

He added that the utility remains willing to settle all outstanding reasonable claims relating to the Echo Mountain, 242 and South Obenchain fires.

However, PacifiCorp will actively defend against claims regarding the Santiam Canyon Fire. An Oregon Department of Forestry report found electrical equipment did not significantly contribute to its spread.

According to its website, PacifiCorp has made settlements of \$299 million with 463 plaintiffs regarding the Archie Creek Fire, \$250 million regarding 10 companies in that same fire, and \$178 million with 403 plaintiffs regarding the Beachie Creek and Echo Mountain fires.

In another class action lawsuit against PacifiCorp regarding the 2020 Labor Day wildfires 101 plaintiffs have been awarded nearly \$552 million in damages as of September.

That figure could grow substantially as the damage trials in that 2023 case are ongoing.

However, PacifiCorp has appealed the verdict.



**C7** 





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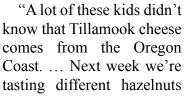
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The Growers' Guide November 2025

# Bend teacher named Oregon ag educator of the year

By KYLE ODEGARD **Capital Press** 

Cameron Glogau teaches second- and third-graders in Bend, Ore., and he hopes to help them make the connection that much of their food isn't produced very far know that Tillamook cheese comes from the Oregon Coast. ... Next week we're





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Bend teacher Cameron Glogau, who has a second and third grade blended classroom at Highland Magnet School, was named the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom 2025 Educator of the Year during a dinner at Oregon State University on Oct. 4. (Courtesy Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom)

from the Willamette Valley," Glogau said.

Later this fall, students will learn about the Columbia River Gorge and sample apple and pear varieties.

Glogau, a teacher at Highland Magnet School, has been named Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom's 2025 Educator of the Year.

He said the honor was surprising and he's excited to share what he's doing in the classroom.

"You can teach agriculture in a way that's fun and engaging, because we're having a blast," Glogau

### The 'Oregon Road Trip'

One of his major efforts to connect students to farm and ranch life is the threemonth "Oregon Road Trip" project.

Students explore major regions across the state, learning how each area's geography, climate and natural resources shape its agricultural industries.

The children create their own agricultural operation from one of the regions, complete with a business name, a list of items they would produce and an advertisement such as a video or social media post.

The students also write a paper about a day in the life of their business, including tasks they'd accomplish in the morning, afternoon and evening.

"What would it be like to be a dairy farmer or work in a hazelnut orchard?" Glogau said.

"We teach at a really special school with a method called Storyline. Kids imagine they are part of this big story," he added.

### A sweet spot for Oregon

Glogau said many of his students haven't traveled extensively in Oregon and aren't familiar with its wildly different regions.

That's partly due to budget restraints for some families, but many Bend residents are relatively new transplants from California.

Though he's a world traveler who has lived in foreign countries, Glogau is thrilled to immerse students in Oregon's landscapes, cul-

See Teacher, Page C9

### **Teacher**

continued from C8

ture and industries. "Being an Oregonian, I really have a sweet spot for our state," he said.

The Oregon State University graduate grew up in Monmouth, Ore., and while he isn't from a farm family, he recalled being surrounded by nature, grass seed fields, orchards and vineyards in the Willamette Valley.

# About the ag educator award

Each year, Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom celebrates a teacher who exemplifies creativity and innovation in their efforts to increase agricultural literacy in Oregon students.

The recognition highlights educators who bring agriculture to life in the classroom through hands-on engaging lessons that connect to Oregon's diverse landscape and resources.

Glogau was given the

award Oct. 4 at the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Fall Auction Dinner at the CH2M Hill Alumni Center at Oregon State University in Corvallis, Ore.

Evelyn Tedrick, Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom's education program coordinator, said the selection committee received several wonderful applications this year, but Glogau stood out.

"We were struck by how well-rounded and all-encompassing Cameron's road trip program is, as well as the potential longevity it seems to have built into it," Tedrick added, in a news release.

This is the second time in three years that Oregon's top ag teacher has been from Deschutes County.

In 2023, the award went to Jennifer Callahan, a first grade teacher at Terrebonne Community School in Terrebonne, Ore.

The 2024 Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Educator of the Year was Hannah McAuliffe, a teacher at North Lake School near Silver Lake, Ore., in rural Lake County.

### Expo

continued from C10

the country and back wasn't easy.

Makenzie, her father and grandfather made the trip, which took 38 hours each way.

Besides stopping for gas, the family had to feed the animals and unload cows every 12 hours for milking.

They also fixed three flat tires along the journey.

Callen and his mother flew out for the event's start. The second-grader was too young to show animals in the arena, but he helped out in the barns.

### Lifelong lessons from raising cattle

Ryan Ferris said participating in the expo promotes his father's dairy farm, as people see the animals are well taken care of and "part of the family."

But the main benefit of his children raising cattle is building responsibility, work ethic and other values that will endure and help no matter their career path.

Callen isn't sure what he wants to be when he grows up but Makenzie wants to become a veterinarian like her parents.

"I love animals. I have a lot of stuffed animals and I pretend that they're real animals," she said.

She performs surgery on her stuffed animals if they get a rip.

Find it all online capitalpress.com

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# Oregon kids win big at World Dairy Expo in Wisconsin

**By KYLE ODEGARD**Capital Press

GERVAIS, Ore. — For their big vacation this year, the Ferris family traveled to the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis., bringing along four cows and seven heifers.

"It seems a little crazy," acknowledged dad Ryan Ferris. Instead of relaxing, there was plenty of hard work.

His children started most mornings at 5 a.m. by grooming and feeding their livestock and were up past 9 p.m. due to the event's schedule.

The long days were rewarding, however.

Makenzie Ferris, 10, and Callen Ferris, 7, brought home seven medals from the expo's Dairy Cattle Show, held Sept. 28 through Oct. 3.

"Hopefully we can make this trip every year," Ryan Ferris said.



Callen Ferris, 7, and Makenzie Ferris, 10, hold up their medals from the World Dairy Expo's Dairy Cattle Show. Their parents are veterinarians and hope raising cattle teaches the children responsibility, work ethic and other values that will stick with them throughout their lives. (Kyle Odegard/Capital Press)

# Award-winning dairy cattle

The children's heifer Syrup took first place in the junior category and second place in the open show for spring calf Guernseys.

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Lippy placed second in the open segment for three-year-old Holsteins.

KItty took third place for fall heifer calves in the Guern-

sey open show.

Tahoe was sixth among Holsteins for winter heifer calves and ninth overall for winter heifer calves in the junior show.

Kate took seventh place among Guernseys for summer yearling heifers.

Callen said Syrup's gold medal with a blue ribbon was his favorite. "This one was the best," he explained.

The children enjoy naming their farm animals, though sometimes results are unusual. Syrup's mom Pancakes was named during breakfast.

Makenzie and Callen's dad and mom, Dora Ferris,

are veterinarians who operate Summit Equine in Gervais, Ore.

Ryan Ferris' father, Rex Ferris, is the owner of Grand Orchard Creamery in Soap Lake, Wash.

The children's award-winning cattle are currently in Eastern Washington while Summit Equine builds a new heifer barn.

Ryan Ferris showed cattle at the expo as a young adult and decided to return once Makenzie was old enough to participate.

This fall was her second chance to show at the event, which had 2,620 cattle — most of them champions — and 1,740 exhibitors from 37 states, seven Canadian provinces and Australia.

Mackenzie wasn't scared, despite the huge scale.

"I know the moo-moos and we go to Salem and Washington. I wasn't that nervous," the fourth-grader said.

The Oregon State Fair and the Washington State Holstein Association show served as tune-ups for the event.

# The road to Wisconsin

The family purchased a semi with a 50-foot livestock trailer partly to travel to the expo, but driving 11 dairy cattle halfway across

See Expo, Page C9





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November 2025 The Growers' Guide

# Idaho grape harvest wraps early in good conditions

By BRAD CARLSON **Capital Press** 

Early warm weather, a relative lack of spring storms and consistent summer heat helped Idaho grape growers produce on-target yields and largely wrap up harvest early according to the state wine commission.

A typical Idaho grape harvest yield is 3 to 4.5 tons per acre for reds and 5 to 6.5 for whites, Jake Cragin, of Skyline Vineyards in the Caldwell-Marsing said in an Idaho Wine Commission news release.

Growers reported that crop yields look to be in line with these averages,



A Snake River Valley vineyard at harvest. (Courtesy Idaho Wine Commission)

according to IWC.

kind of been a Goldilocks "It's been hot, but not so

"Harvest overall has season for us," Cragin said. hot plants shut down ... It's

not been over 95 too many times this season, so grapes have been able to mature right in the zone for a good vintage."

Also in the Sunnyslope growing area between Caldwell and Marsing, Jay Hawkins of Lanae Ridge Vinevards and James Nederend of Koenig Vineyards said their grapes benefited from a season that was early on both ends.

"It was that perfect year

See Wine, Page C12

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<ul> <li>CASE IH 500Q AFS CONNECT, 1800 hrs, PTO, 36" Tracks, 6 Rmt, HO Pump, Lux Cab,#1400</li> <li>CASE IH 500Q AFS CONNECT, 970 hrs, PTO, 36" Tracks, 6 Rmt, HO Pump, Lux Cab#1428</li></ul>	,000,
<b>*23 CASE IH 500Q AFS CONNECT,</b> 970 hrs, PTO, 36" Tracks, 6 Rmt, HO Pump, Lux Cab#1428	,000
<b>'20 CASE IH 500Q,</b> 5140 hrs, PTO, 36" Tracks, 6 Rmt, HO Pump, Lux Cab#1430	,
<b>18 CASE IH STEIGER 620Q</b> , 3300hrs, Lux Cab, 36" Tracks, 6 Rmts, PTO, HO Pump #1435 <sup>5</sup> 395	
	,000
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'23 CASE IH MAXXUM 135 ACT 4, 250 hrs, MFD, 3pt, PTO, #1401	<sup>\$</sup> 150,000
'21 CASE IH MAXXUM 135 ACT 8, 800 hrs, MFD, 3pt, PTO, #1342	\$135,000
<b>'21 CASE IH MAXXUM 135 ACT 4,</b> 871 hrs, MFD, 3pt, PTO, #1398	\$120,000
'20 CASE IH MAGNUM 240 CVT, 1840 hrs, MFD, Susp Axle, PTO, Duals, #1424	\$180,000
'78 STEIGER PANTHER 3, ST325, 4-Remotes, Duals, Cat Engine, ConsD62	\$10,000
<b>13 CASE IH MAGNUM 290,</b> 6300 hrs, PS, Susp axle, 540/1000 PTO, Duals, #1447	
<b>*84 CASE 1494,</b> 3600 hrs, MFD, Cab, 3 point, PTO, Loader, #	

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**C12** The Growers' Guide November 2025



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### Wine

### continued from C11

we all hope for ... It was not a stormy wet spring, so plants bloomed early," Hawkins said. "And an amazing moderate summer led to an early harvest. Everything is ahead of schedule and good quality. We're achieving our sugar and acid levels that winemakers want earlier than normal. Winemakers are going to be really happy with the quality."

Koenig's harvest started Sept. 9, about two weeks earlier than normal, and was expected to end around mid-October instead of the usual late October to early November, Nederend said. "The vineyards stayed healthy, and fruit has been consistent and ripened slowly and evenly."

"Crop load looks really good," he said. "The vines put on plenty of fruit in the spring, but after a few thinning passes, things ended up not being too heavy. This is better for wine quality."

Weather was "perfect for managing the canopy," Hawkins said. "This year has tonnages exactly where we want them in every variety. Nothing heavy or

excessive."

Heat units were good this year, Ron Bitner of Bitner Vineyards, also in the Sunnyslope area, told Capital Press.

"We haven't had especially high temperatures," he said. "The crop is good and the hang time is good," contributing to desired sugar and acidity levels.

Some 85 miles east, Bud Reece of Cold Springs Winery near Hammett said fruit set was "great because of the timing of the season." The interval between pollination and set was ideal, helped by a lack of disruptive weather.

As for quality, "everything is coming to term the way they are supposed to be," he said, referring to his four whites and five reds. His yields appeared to be 10-15% above average as of Oct. 8.

In north-central Idaho, the heat jumped late in the growing season.

At Lindsay Creek Vineyards south of Lewiston, owner and winemaker Art McIntosh on Oct. 8 said the grapes looked good.

"The heat might have affected them some, but I don't think it affected them much, he said.

McIntosh last year lost

"The grapes that froze out last year are back, and producing," he said.

Growing conditions have been good, and "considering the freeze we had a year and a half ago, we're pretty happy with the way the grapes are coming on," McIntosh said.

Idaho growers are "trying to stay dialed into winemaker demand" to address the trend of lower alcohol consumption generally, according to the commission news release.

"We are not growing excess," said Cragin, who grows grapes for 10-12 winemakers in the state. "We're planting enough for what's needed and producing the best quality we can for those volumes. Our industry is smaller, so the impact is more of a ripple in Idaho."

The state has more than 1,300 acres of planted vineyards, 65 wineries and eight cideries, according to the commission's website.

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# Washington farm groups nervously eye forest buffers

By DON JENKINS Capital Press

Washington farm groups are watching to see whether a state board takes timberland out of production, possibly increasing pressure on farmers to do likewise to protect streams.

The Forest **Practices** Board is scheduled to vote Nov. 12 on a rule to widen and lengthen riparian buffers between timber harvests and streams without fish in Western Washington.

The bigger buffers will take 200,000 acres out of production, subtracting enough timber to operate one or two sawmills, according to the wood-products industry.

The board makes logging rules enforced by the Department of Natural Resources. The Department of Ecology, which regulates water quality across the landscape, says wider and longer buffers are needed.

"Our concern is the next step would be to apply it to the agricultural world," Washington State Resources Association executive director John Stuhlmiller said.

"If we raise the standard for forestry, it could slip down to the rest of the natural resources world," said Stuhlmiller, who represents agricultural water users.

Loggers already are generally required to stay 50 feet from half the length of nonfish bearing streams. The new rule would widen buffers to 75 feet and also extend them.

The longer and wider buffers are intended to shade streams and keep water temperatures from rising. The current buffers are inadequate, according to an Ecology analysis.

Timber companies and small forestland owners

call the rule an overreach. Although studies found logging raised water temperatures, stream temperatures normally stayed below acceptable levels.

The Washington Farm Forestry Association, which represents the small forestland owners, says the bigger buffers would be the biggest taking of private timberland since the state forged a buffer agreement with forestland owners in 1999.

"The most heartbreaking thing about this rule is the question I sometimes get from my members, 'Why do they hate us so much?" " the association's executive director, Elaine Oneil, said at a hearing.

At the same hearing, Pacific County landowner Nick Somero said his family has owned timberland since 1940. "I'm looking at 85 years of family legacy going down the tubes," he said.

A state committee on forest and fish policies proposed the rule. Committee members from state agencies, conservation groups and tribes formed the majority.

Timber interests and the Washington State Association of Counties were in the minority. They favored a less-restrictive rule that would have put 44,500 acres off-limits to logging.

The counties are not convinced the science justifies the rule proposed by the majority, policy director Paul Jewell said. "We really want these talks reopened," he said.

"We feel like there are some viable alternatives," Jewell said. "We're thinking about something with less economic impact."

If anything, the buffers should be wider, according to Ecology.



The Washington Department of Ecology says current logging rules are insufficient to prevent timber harvests from raising stream temperatures. Forestland owners oppose wider and longer riparian buffers. (Photo courtesy of Washington Department of Ecology)

"Ecology is supporting the rule even though our analysis shows that the buf-

not big enough to fully prevent warming everywhere

fers in the proposed rule are with high certainty," Ecology spokeswoman Colleen Keltz said in an email.

**C13** 



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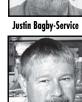
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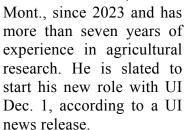
C14 The Growers' Guide November 2025

# UI hires Idaho Foundation Seed Program, Parma R&E Center director

**By BRAD CARLSON**Capital Press

The University of Idaho hired entomologist Chris Caron as director of the Idaho Foundation Seed Program and the UI Parma Research and Extension Center.

Caron has worked as a research technician for the wheat breeding program at Nutrien Ag Solutions in Bozeman,



**Chris Caron** 

Foundation seed is the initial seed generation produced under strict conditions to be used for growing certified seed. Farmers plant certified seed to raise crops with high genetic purity, high germination rates and minimal con-

tamination. Foundation seed is raised from breeder seed, which is the first generation of a new crop variety that has been developed by a plant breeder.

Caron will manage statewide production of foundation seed for the program. The UI program maintains about 120 varieties of wheat, barley, oats, beans, potatoes, chickpeas, lentils, rapeseed, grasses, forbs and forage legumes.

The majority of seed production is done on UI-owned farms by Research and Extension staff, according to the university. All breeder and foundation class seed fields are inspected by the non-profit Idaho Crop Improvement Association.

Caron also will be charged with ensuring rules and regulations are followed in the production of breeder and certified seed while maintaining seed production sites and the storage of seed lots throughout the state, according to the release. And he will over-

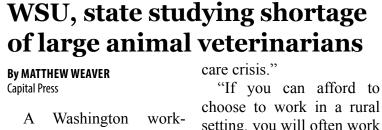
see daily operations at the Parma research facility, which recently opened the Idaho Center for Plant and Soil Health laboratory.

"I'm excited to lead the foundation seed program toward continues growth and excellence, and I look forward to working with all of you in optimizing the Parma station's potential for research, outreach and extension," he said.

Idaho Crop Improvement Association executive vice president Kathy Stewart-Williams served on the search committee, "and I couldn't be happier with how it turned out," she told Capital Press. Caron "will be a great fit for that position."

"I applaud the university for the effort they put into structuring the position and the location to be attractive for a pool of qualified candidates," Stewart-Williams said. "Out of that pool, Chris just rose to the top."

Caron's academic and work background prepare him well for the foundation seed program from a production scale standpoint, and "he's so enthusiastic about the possibilities," Stewart-Williams said.



A Washington working group is examining the shortage of large animal veterinary services.

The state legislature approved the group in July.

The group must provide a preliminary report to the appropriate legislative committee by Dec.1, and a final report by June 30, 2026, said Dori Borjesson, dean of WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine.

Borjesson recently wrote a guest opinion in the Seattle Times calling the shortage of veterinarians a "vicious negative feedback loop" and "looming animal choose to work in a rural setting, you will often work 24/7 due to the scarcity of local colleagues who can share after-hours or emergency work," she wrote. "The long hours, poor salary and lack of work-life balance means many shift to small-animal practices within just a few years of graduation ... Many small rural communities do not have enough work to sustain a full-time veterinarian. As such, communities themselves have to be part of the solution."

The group wants to fully understand the challenges and align stakeholders to the best steps, Borjesson told Capital Press.

"The working group is trying to access as much data as possible, including background on what other states are doing," she said.

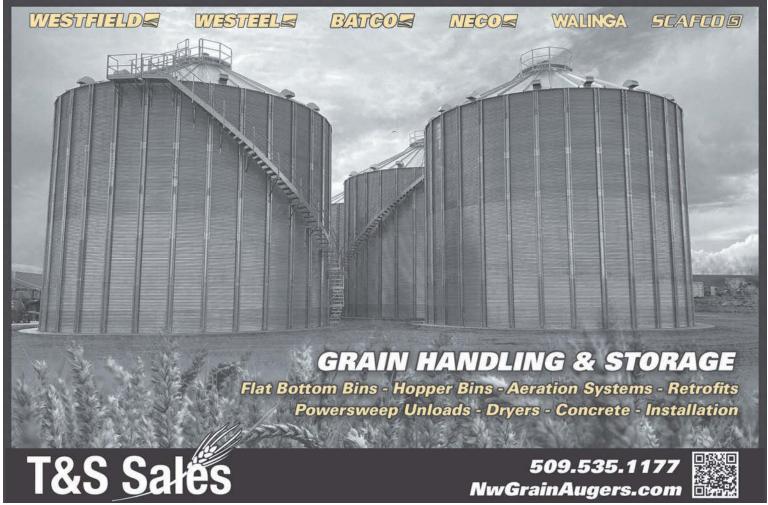
Large issue

WSU regional animal sciences extension specialist Sarah Smith was one of several industry leaders who expressed concern about WSU's veterinary hospital closing to large animal emergencies and afterhours services.

Smith is not a member of the work group, she said.

"I do think any talk, awareness and new ideas to help address this critical issue will help," she said. "The issue is large; (it) is going to take involvement of state and federal policies and funding support."





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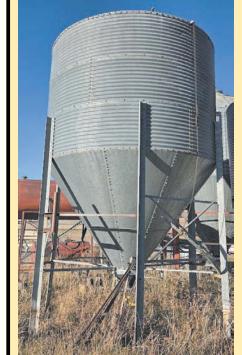


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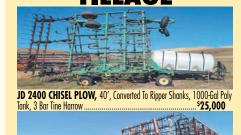
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