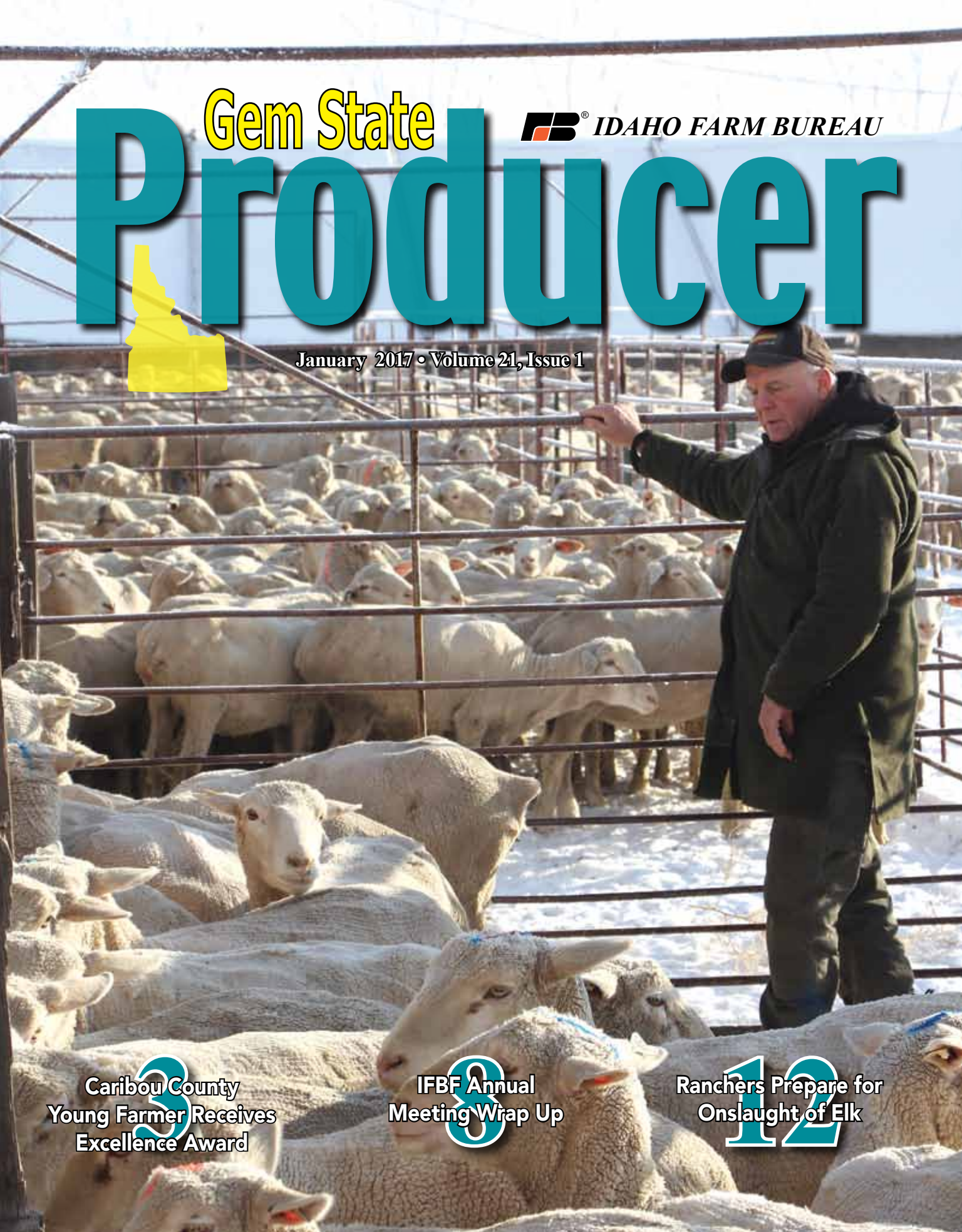


Gem State Producer

 IDAHO FARM BUREAU



January 2017 • Volume 21, Issue 1



Caribou County
Young Farmer Receives
Excellence Award

IFBF Annual
Meeting Wrap Up

Ranchers Prepare for
Onslaught of Elk

Farmers United in Our Resolve for Reform in 2017



By Zippy Duvall
AFBF President

As I look back on 2016, I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for the opportunity to work alongside you and serve as your American Farm Bureau president. I am proud of the work our nation's farmers and ranchers do, day in and day out. I am equally proud of how our state and national

Beyond the Fencerows



Farm Bureau staff work just as tirelessly to ensure farmers and ranchers can continue to feed and fuel our country and the world for generations to come.

When I addressed you for the first time as your American Farm Bureau president in Orlando last January, I committed to working with you all to solve the problems facing agriculture—and that's just what we're doing.

This year, I've had the privilege of visiting 33 states—and counting—across our great country to meet with Farm Bureau members face-to-face. Each region, every state and all types of agriculture have unique challenges. I have been heartened by one common thread; a reminder of just how critical the reforms Farm Bureau is fighting for are to rural fami-

See DUVALL, page 6

A New Beginning



By Bryan Searle
President Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Last month we focused on end of the year issues. Now that it's January we need to direct our ef-

forts toward making the most of a new year.

One of the takeaways from last year was when we work together and establish common goals, we are formidable. Yet when we are fragmented and our efforts aren't coordinated, our policy goals are marginalized. This new year, 2017 is unique because we have new leadership at the national level. We also have new ratified policy at both the state and national level bringing us new

challenges and opportunities. Who among us will sit back and critique and who will engage and help IFBF move forward? I can tell you that I will be among the latter.

As farmers engaged in the production of crops and livestock, we are responsible for all of the necessary steps along the way to bringing high quality commodities to the marketplace. We plant and irrigate, we sample the soil,

See SEARLE, page 6

The Need for Legislative Advisors



By Rick Keller
CEO Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

In Idaho's Capitol, lobbyists are referred to as legislative advisors.

The term lobby has roots in the physical structure of the British Parliament, in which there was

a transitional covered room outside the main hall. People pushing an agenda would try to meet with members of Parliament in this room, and they came to be known as lobbyists.

The term "lobbying" can describe a wide variety of activities, and in its general sense, suggest advocacy or promoting a cause. In this sense, anybody who tries to influence any political position can be thought of as "lobbying." In the legal sense, lobbyists are professional interces-

sors between member organizations and lawmakers.

Since government has grown increasingly complex, the task of writing rules has become more complex. Legislative advisors spend considerable time learning the ins and outs of issues and can use their expertise to educate lawmakers and help them cope with difficult issues. A lobbyist's knowledge has been considered an intellectual subsidy for lawmakers.

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Cover: John Peterson of Gem County sorts ewes recently in preparation for lambing in early January. Photo by Steve Ritter



Chris Banks from Caribou County received the Young Farmers and Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award during the Idaho Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Photo by Steve Ritter

Innovator Recognized by IFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers

By Jake Putnam

Caribou County Rancher Chris Banks was recognized as an agricultural innovator during the Idaho Farm Bureau Annual meeting in early December.

The Idaho Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher Committee awarded Banks the Excellence in Agriculture Award. It's an honor that has put an exclamation mark on a burgeoning career in agriculture and conservation.

Banks is breaking new ground as a red tape and technological innovator by embracing regulation compliance rather than cursing it.

"I've made a living out of helping fellow landowners here in Idaho," said Banks. "Agriculture is big to me, always has been, always will be."

After graduation from Idaho State University, Banks worked for the State of Idaho writing daily load implementation plans and rapid watershed assessments. He saw first-hand how fellow farmers struggled with new rules and regulations. He perfected farmer-friendly compliance plans and in 2014 he set out on his own, starting

See BANKS page 4





Banks and his wife Autumn own cattle and a small conservation business that helps ranchers solve environmental challenges. Photo by Steve Ritter

a new business called Conservation Basics. Where others saw mountains of paper and red tape, he saw opportunity.

“What those documents do is provide farmers a guideline for implementation of best management practices,” said Banks. “They’re daunting if you get caught up in the language but they’re not that hard. They’re beneficial to operations because they make them stronger but also preserve and enhance natural resources at the same time.”

Growing up on a ranch gave Banks the insight needed to work through complicated compliance rules. Bureaucrats often lack rancher insight but Banks knows what farmers and ranchers need to know and how to do it.

“We present the rules and regulations to a Basin Advisory Group and the EPA funds the program the following year,” he said. “They’re federal funds. They start at the EPA and they allocate a certain amount of money to every state in the Union. Idaho gets about \$1.8 million a year that goes into these conservation projects. That money not only helps conservation but improves farms and ranches. It’s a great deal and we get to tap into it.”

Banks often pulls up on a job in his pickup truck. It’s his office on wheels and in the back he has all his tools of the trade including another powerful innovation, a high tech drone. It’s outfitted with a high definition camera and GPS for mapping and getting bird’s eye view of his fieldwork. The

drone not only solves compliance problems, but effectively documents them.

“I’ve been using this drone for two years,” he said. “It allows us a neat way of showing before and after aerial photos of all these projects. You can see the aesthetic changes and improvements. I think a photograph is worth a thousand words but an aerial photo is worth a million.”

Banks got his first taste of ranch conservation work back in the late 1990s when representatives from the USDA and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) visited their ranch.

“We had a stream flow through a corral system,” Banks said. “At first we were afraid they were going to come with heavy

sanctions and fines. But they came with alternatives and solutions and worked with us to move the corrals to a new place.”

The experience lit a fire under the then teenager.

“I wanted to help other landowners look at their operations. To help them understand the red tape they faced and look for ways they could enhance their natural resources. Not only for themselves but the generations of ranchers coming after them and all the time improving their bottom line,” said Banks.

Last fall in Caribou County a rancher faced a dilemma involving habitat, irrigation and conservation compliance.

“This landowner has a beaver dam complex on a creek in the foothills above his operation. The beavers are working well, doing what they do best, damming up the water. But the rancher has a water right and wants to use it to the fullest potential without ripping dams out,” explained Banks.

Banks flew the dam complex with the drone and found that the beaver habitat was storing water. That storage is perfect for the long, dry summer in the region. The beaver ponds release the water slowly over the months, but sometimes too slowly. After Banks had a chance to look at photos and video over the area and did the ground work, they installed pond levelers and now the dams are used as irrigation at a rate that works perfectly for irrigation and stock water.

“We’re going to put in water troughs. We’re going to pull the cattle away from the stream and utilize feed away from the creek and that will greatly improve his grazing management plan while supplying adequate livestock water. We’re doing a lot of these things for landowners,” said Banks.

Through innovation, his ranch and bureaucratic background, Banks helps landowners understand that compliance doesn’t have to be a bad thing. He’s making an impact in southeastern Idaho and ranchers who once dreaded compliance now embrace it.



A drone and various other high-tech tools help solve complicated conservation problems that ranchers sometimes face. Photo by Steve Ritter

“The perception out there is that government is bad,” said Banks. “If someone from the government shows up and says I’m here to help, the initial reaction is to turn and run. I think the way to overcome that barrier is communication. If you can sit down and both parties talk and discuss goals, most of the time the goals match, we can then look at agencies differently.”

Chris Banks still runs cattle when he is not flying the drone and helping fellow ranchers. He says from his viewpoint, both parties just want to do the right thing.

“The ranchers I work with want to be pro-

active and I want to be proactive on my operation too. We all want to improve the ranch and enhance what we’re utilizing so those improvements will produce for my cattle and produce for our crops as well. It’s good business,” explained Banks.

Banks and his wife Autumn won a trip to the American Farm Bureau Annual Convention in Phoenix, January 5th. While there he will compete in the Excellence in Agriculture competition where the best and brightest in U.S. agriculture will gather. It’s a group Banks earned acceptance with through hard work and dedication.

DUVALL

Continued from page 2

lies and farm businesses.

Looking ahead to 2017, we see a clear need for regulatory and tax reform that frees farmers and ranchers to keep their businesses running and gives them flexibility to invest in their local economies. We need to put a stop to regulatory overreach that threatens to put a choke hold on farmers. We need greater access to markets around the world and a stable, legal workforce to ensure we continue leading the world in agricultural production. But none of these reforms will happen if we don't unite around the table and speak up.

As I've traveled our great country, I've been reminded time and again of how much we can accomplish when we learn from our differences and work together. America's farmers and ranchers aren't defined by our struggles. We're defined

by what we do best: we lead and feed and fuel the world.

“The great story of American agriculture is one of hard work, ingenuity and passion, and it's a story best told by the folks who live it.”

We didn't take up the work of farming and ranching because we expected it to be easy. While agriculture is our business, it is also our calling. We are called to take up this work out of love for our family and our neighbors. It's a mission we take seriously because we believe we've been given a unique task to care for the land and animals entrusted to us by our Creator. We have a responsibility to consumers as we grow the highest quality food, fiber and fuel while pro-

tecting our precious natural resources. We must continue to earn consumer trust as we strive for continuous improvement in everything we do.

The great story of American agriculture is one of hard work, ingenuity and passion, and it's a story best told by the folks who live it. Farmers and ranchers made their voices heard in 2016, but we need to keep telling our stories if we want to be at the heart of shaping the policies that will impact our businesses and way of life. The close of one year ushers in new goals for the next, and I am confident that working together through Farm Bureau offers us that common platform for progress. During this new year, I will continue to learn about your challenges and your triumphs, and like 2016, I look forward to hearing many of your stories face-to-face.

SEARLE

Continued from page 2

we scout crop progress, we brand and vaccinate, diagnose and treat sick animals and hundreds of other tasks that are all important parts in the progression of coaxing a living from the land. We have to be engaged, and in fact, laser-focused on these tasks if we expect success at the end of the season.

Advocacy work on behalf of agriculture is no less important. In fact, a synergy exists between the two that many people don't realize. Many of us, as Farm Bureau members and leaders, understand that the winter months are a time to attend meetings, to share ideas with colleagues and to seek out information about politics, trade, regulations, changes in government agencies, marketing, advancing technology related to crop and livestock production and hundreds of other topics. Being inquisitive and taking the time to learn about the

changing world around us informs us and helps us be better advocates for this vibrant, demanding industry that we love and depend on.

As farmers and ranchers, I believe a common thread that weaves through all of our lives is we seek a challenge. We want to be tested and we never want to stand still. We realize that if we aren't progressing toward common and worthwhile goals we are stagnating.

You may have noticed a theme in recent columns that filled this space. I have issued a series of challenges to Idaho Farm Bureau members over the past year. Most were related to involvement in the political process. I want to thank all of you who stepped up, and with regard to consistency, here is another challenge: I'd like you to speak with your neighbors and encourage any of them who aren't Farm Bureau members to take a closer

look at the organization. At present we have a strong, active membership but an opportunity exists for us to recruit more farmer and rancher members into our ranks. We would like to see this organization continue to grow and we see potential for growth among our regular or farmer / rancher members. Neighbor to neighbor is probably the best way to recruit new members.

During our recent annual meeting held in Boise I offered \$20 to anyone who had memorized and could recite this organization's mission statement. I still have that \$20 but am hoping to give it away soon. I'll leave you with the following, our mission statement:

“The Idaho Farm Bureau is a voluntary, grassroots organization dedicated to strengthening agriculture and protecting the rights, values and property of our member families and their neighbors.”

KELLER

Continued from page 2

Lobbying depends on cultivating personal relations over many years. It includes historical knowledge of substantive areas. Effective lobbyists must have personal credibility. Farm Bureau's legislative advisors simply want to make sure elected officials hear and understand both sides of an issue before making a decision. Farm Bureau's advisors generally address multiple issues.

Generally, the image of lobbyists and lobbying in the public sphere is not a positive one. Lobbyists have been described as "hired guns" without principles or positions. Just like doc-

tors, attorneys, and teachers, the vast majority of legislative advisors are professionals who provide an honest and important service.

Farm Bureau is unique among organizations and special interests. Its policy is developed and adopted by its membership. The president and board of directors of Farm Bureau are charged with implementing that grassroots policy. Much of the implementation comes from the efforts of professional staff. In addition to its own legislative advisors, Farm Bureau enhances its advocacy by involving producer

members in advancing their interests. The members contact their own legislators, provide testimony before committees, and socially campaign the policies and issues of Farm Bureau. This combination makes Farm Bureau more effective and different.

Former President John F. Kennedy described the work of legislative advisors in a positive light, saying they are "expert technicians capable of examining complex and difficult subjects in clear, understandable fashion. Because our congressional representation is based upon geographical boundaries,

the lobbyist who speak for the various economic, commercial and other functional interests of the country serve a useful purpose and have assumed an important role in the legislative process."

The First Amendment of the Constitution protects our freedom of religion, freedom of the press and free speech. It also protects our right "to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." The public needs advocates who can represent their free exercise of that right, and that is the role of the legislative advisors.

Notice of Annual Meeting of Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. of Idaho

To all policyholders: The 2016 annual meeting for policyholders of Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. of Idaho will be held on Friday, Feb. 3, 2017, at 10 a.m. at the company's home office at 275 Tierra Vista Drive in Pocatello, Idaho. You are invited to attend.

Rick D. Keller
Secretary

Notice of Stockholders Meetings

The following annual stockholders meetings will take place Friday, Feb. 3, 2017, at the Idaho Farm Bureau home office, 275 Tierra Vista Drive in Pocatello, Idaho.

The board of directors for each company will be elected at these meetings.

10:45 a.m. - Farm Bureau Marketing Association of Idaho
11 a.m. - FB Development Corporation of Idaho

Rick D. Keller
Executive Vice President, CEO

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77th Annual Idaho Farm Bureau Convention

IFBF Recognizes Past President at 77th Annual Meeting



Frank and Susan Priestley receive the Idaho Farm Bureau President's Cup during the organization's 77th Annual Meeting in Boise.

Photo by Steve Ritter

BOISE - Delegates from 36 counties met in early December during the 77th Annual Meeting of the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation to set the organization's course for the coming year.

Former Idaho Farm Bureau President Frank Priestley and wife Susan were awarded the IFBF President's Cup for service to the organization. They served with distinction for over 30 years.

IFBF President Bryan Searle said the Priestley's mentored him for decades as a Young Farmer and Rancher, then as a Board Member and now as President.

"Whenever I see them, all I can think of is what an inspiration they've been to me," Searle said. The Priestley's served on the Franklin County Board and the State Board of Directors. Frank Priestley was elected President of the organization in December of 1997.

"It started way back in the Young Farmer and Rancher program when we served on the County Board. Later I became Vice President and then President, then ran for the State Board and the rest is history," said Frank Priestley. "After serving for so long and finally sitting in the President's chair, it was humbling."



Delegates from 36 county Farm Bureaus set policy for 2017 during the Idaho Farm Bureau's 77th Annual Meeting in Boise.

Photo by Steve Ritter

77th Annual Idaho Farm Bureau Convention



Erica Louder of Jerome County won the 2016 Young Farmer and Rancher discussion meet. She received a Polaris 450 HD ATV and an all-expense paid trip to Phoenix, Arizona to compete in the American Farm Bureau Discussion Meet in January. The Polaris was donated by Idaho Polaris dealers. Also pictured is Polaris representative Andy Mills.

Photo by Steve Ritter



Chris and Autumn Banks, center, of Caribou County, won the Young Farmer and Rancher Excellence in Agriculture Award. They received a check for \$1,500 and a trip to the American Farm Bureau convention in Phoenix, Ariz. Also pictured on the left is Cole Smith, outgoing Young Farmer and Rancher chairman and on the right is Kyle Wade, District 1 YF&R chairman.

Photo by Steve Ritter

Farm Bureau's annual banquet drew more than 350 members.

Delegates reviewed the organization's entire policy book updating positions and adding new policy on a wide range of agriculture, natural resources and other topics. Delegates adopted new policy on wolf management, tax credits for new farmers and ranchers, managing the state's constitutional defense fund, pension spiking and several others.

Farm Bureau Delegates elected Austin Tubbs of Oneida County and Bob Konen of Nez Perce County as new members of the State Board of Directors. Re-elected as State Directors were Scott Steele of Bonneville County, Rick Brune of Jerome County, and Cody Chandler of Washington County. Alton Howell of Bonner County and Mark Harris of Bear Lake County left the State Board and were recognized for their service as State Directors

LaNae Nalder of Minidoka County was elected YF&R Chairman and will also serve on the Idaho Farm Bureau Board of Directors for a two-year term beginning in 2017.

Winner of this year's Young Farmer and Rancher discussion meet was Erica Louder of Jerome County. Louder won a Polaris 450 HD ATV and an all-expense paid trip to Phoenix, Arizona to compete in the American Farm Bureau Discussion Meet in January. Marquee Ricks of Madison County was a runner up in the competition.

Chris and Autumn Banks of Caribou County won the Young Farmer and Rancher Excellence in Agriculture Award. Travis Beckstead of Franklin County received the Young Farmer and Rancher Achiever Award. The Banks' received a \$1,500 check while Beckstead won a Polaris 570 Ranger. The Banks' and Beckstead will travel to the American Farm Bureau Convention in Phoenix next month to compete in the national Excellence in Agriculture and Achiever competitions.

Dealers from 16 Idaho Polaris Dealerships donated the 570 Ranger, valued at \$10,000.

The Women's Leadership Committee recognized four women as part of their Woman of Year program. This year's winners include April Toone of Caribou County, Suzanne Takasugi of Canyon County, Jo Anne Kay of Teton County, and Emy Darrington of Cassia County.

77th Annual Idaho Farm Bureau Convention



Travis Beckstead of Franklin County received the YF&R Achiever Award. He is pictured center, seated, with his wife Kerri. Beckstead won a Polaris 570 Ranger and a trip to the American Farm Bureau Convention in Phoenix, Ariz., to compete in the national competition. Pictured at left is Polaris representative Andy Mills and YF&R Chairman Cole Smith, right. *Photo by Steve Ritter*



Idaho Farm Bureau Women of the Year for 2016, pictured left to right: Emy Darrington of Cassia County, Suzanne Takasugi of Canyon County, April Toone of Caribou County and Jo Anne Kay of Teton County. *Photo by Steve Ritter*

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New Discounts For Idaho Farm Bureau Members

Case IH Tractor & Equipment Incentive Program: Farm Bureau members can now take advantage of Case IH equipment discounts thanks to a new membership value program. Eligible Farm Bureau members will receive an incentive discount – from \$300 to \$500 – when purchasing qualifying Case IH equipment from participating dealerships. The discount is stackable, meaning it can be used with other discounts, promotions, rebates or offers that may be provided by Case IH or a Case IH dealership. A current Farm Bureau membership verification certificate must be presented to the Case IH dealer in advance of product delivery to receive the incentive discount.

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A stack yard in the Lemhi Valley that received damage from elk last winter. Most stack yards in the area are fortified with wire panels and posts but when large numbers of elk want hay, they often find a way in.

Ranchers Anticipate Elk Depredation

By John Thompson

Ranchers in the Lemhi Valley lost about \$170,000 in feed last year to marauding elk and with winter coming on fast, they don't want to see that happen again this year.

The \$170K figure was calculated by Wes Mackay, a member of the Lemhi County Farm Bureau Board of Directors. Most of the damage came from elk tearing up fences and eating pasture grass. Mackay said they didn't try to calculate the loss of hay from stacks, which was considerable. There were about 15 ranchers that called in with damage claims.

Mackay figured an elk eats about 20 pounds of forage per day. He valued an animal unit month (AUM) at \$15 based on local winter grazing rates. "Guys would call in and report how many elk they had on their property for how long and then we calculated it from there," Mackay said. "But it's not a real good way to calculate the damage because the animals go back and forth between neighbors' places."

Custer County Farm Bureau President Rod Evans said ranchers around Challis have been building new fences and fortifying their stack yards over the last few months. Idaho Fish and Game has hired an employ-

ee to chase elk off private land with a four-wheeler. He has earned the nickname "the crazy hazer."

Evans said it's hard to tell if he is helping the situation or making it worse. When a large herd of elk gets moving the first few will jump a fence but the bulk of the herd just run through the wire and scatter the fence like matchsticks.

Last winter payments for crop damage to landowners from the Idaho Fish and Game Department increased to \$359,100 from an average of \$250,000. So far this year F & G has spent \$500,000 on fencing materials to keep elk out of stack yards.



Most damage to haystacks occurs at night. Elk eat around the bottom of the stacks sometimes causing the stacks to topple.

Elk herds in many urban interface areas around the state are growing, while herds in backcountry areas are more static according to Greg Painter, F&G Salmon Region wildlife manager. It's a function of herd dynamics, he explained. In the backcountry there is more pressure from predators and the cows tend to be older because they aren't harvested by hunters nearly as often, which reduces cow to calf ratios. Herds in urban interface areas, in spite of more hunting pressure, are growing and tend to have higher cow / calf ratios because the cows are younger.

Evans says the urban interface elk are difficult to deal with because hunters can't fire high-powered rifles in areas dotted with houses, barns and other structures.

"We have too many entitlement elk in this area," said Custer County Rancher Tim Kemery. "We need to cut the numbers in

half and make use of the meat by putting it in freezers. We've asked Fish and Game to come up with a plan to reduce the herd sizes but they haven't."

Painter says elk herds in the Salmon Region are close to the established objectives set up in the F&G long range plan. But from a livestock producer perspective, the population objectives are too high. F&G management objectives are established to provide hunters with plenty of opportunity to harvest elk. Hunters want high numbers of elk and F&G is funded by the sale of hunting licenses and tags. The management plan has helped build big elk herds in several areas around the state. But has come at a steep cost to livestock producers in several counties.

Kemery believes elk are finding refuge in urban interface areas along the Salmon River because of pressure from preda-

tors – namely wolves. In a meeting last winter held in Salmon, F&G Salmon Region Supervisor Tom Curet admitted that wolves are changing elk behavior and that last winter wolves were holding elk in the Lemhi Valley.

"Elk provide their (F&G) income stream," Kemery said. "But it has to change. It's a subterfuge for an unknowing public that like to drive and see elk but it takes away from the impact of wolves. Fish and Game has some good people who are trying to walk a fine line between maintaining high numbers of elk and hunt-able populations but ranchers are paying a high price."

He added that it's not only the cost of damaged fences, raided haystacks and depredation on pastures, but the time it takes to manage elk on private land is considerable.

See ELK DEPREDATION page 14

ELK DEPREDAATION

Continued from page 5

F&G provides depredation tags to ranchers to help offset damage and encourage elk to move on. But Kemery explained that the management tools are also costly for ranchers.

“There are nights when I go out two or three times to spook elk and putting on depredation hunts is time consuming as well,” he said. “Yet back in the Middle Fork, in the wilderness area, they don’t have hunt-able populations of elk.”

According to F&G’s long range elk management plan, backcountry zones have experienced severe declines in elk numbers over the past 20 years. The stated reasons in the plan are as follows: “In many cases, these zones are limited by both predation and habitat quality, and the ability to improve elk populations in these zones can be severely affected and limited by access, remoteness, and federal land-use restric-

tions. . . Elk populations and IDFG are facing new and ever changing opportunities and challenges, including: 1) the return of wolves to the landscape; 2) continued declines or instability of elk herds in the backcountry; 3) elk population expansion in southern Idaho, limited by the amount of crop and property damage that can be sustained; 4) habitat loss and modification; 5) declining elk hunter numbers; and 6) increased importance of the social aspects of elk hunting to elk hunters. Although elk populations have declined in some management zones over the last decade, other zones have been experiencing an influx of animals into the urban-rural interface and agriculture-sagebrush-steppe interface where conflicts occur, and appear to be increasing. Multiple factors may be influencing these conflicts, including, but not limited to, increased growth in agriculture, increasing human populations,

habitat suitability, wild fires, changes in landowner support, and predator prey relationships.

Painter said predation is definitely limiting elk numbers in the backcountry, but from F&G’s perspective it’s not just wolves. “Lots of folks are pointing fingers at wolves, but it’s not like we are seeing elk from the Middle Fork moving back into the front range during the winter. The elk population fluctuations are based on lions, bears, wolves and weather. Elk on the front range are more productive and those herds are growing much faster. I won’t say wolves aren’t a factor but we have depredation situations all over the state where the same things happen if we have wolves there or not.”

Another fairly recent problem Painter

See ELK DEPREDAATION page 16

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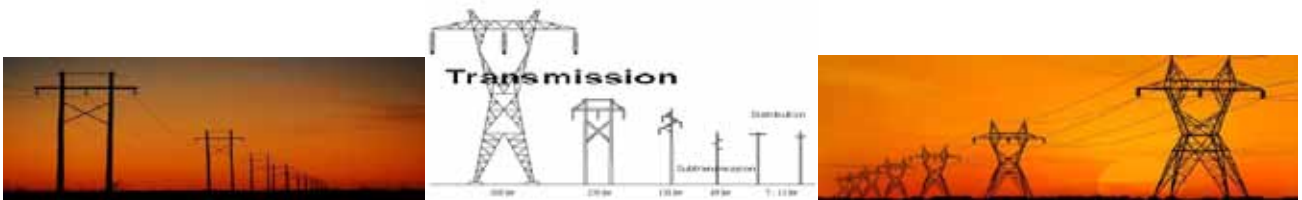
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ELK DEPREDAATION

Continued from page 14

pointed out is that some landowners are creating refuge situations for elk. "We would like to rid the area of these refuges for elk but one individual bought property up here to have elk on it," he said. "We've gone ahead with depredation hunts and taken out 25 cows in the last couple of weeks but a growing number of people living in the area don't like seeing it happen. We are seeing a lot of push back from people who don't want the elk killed."

Ranchers are encouraged to contact F&G at the earliest sign of elk depredation. Painter said it's easier to find solutions to these problems before large numbers of elk show up.

According to the F&G long range elk management plan, elk are considered one of agency's flagship species, with more than 80,000 hunters spending in excess of \$6.1 million annually on tags (20 percent of IDFG's annual license and tag revenue). While non-resident elk tags represent only 10 percent of total elk tags, they provide 60 percent of elk-tag revenue. Additionally, direct hunting expenditures (e.g., fuel, meals, lodging, etc.), based on Cooper et al. (2002), indicate elk hunters contribute more than \$70 million annually; much of it in small, rural economies dependent on tourism dollars.



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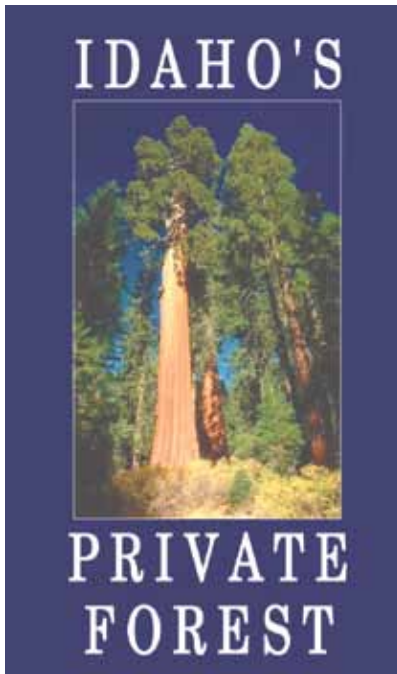
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Ten tips for burning slash piles

Article and photos by Chris Schnepf

Slash is organic material left on forest site after a harvest or thinning effort. Slash treatment is often necessary after harvesting in Idaho forests, to reduce fire hazard and comply with Idaho slash management laws. Piling and burning is the most common slash treatment method. Here are ten pointers on effectively reducing slash hazard through piling and burning . . .

1. Do you need to pile and burn? Right away? Some landowners pile and burn slash almost automatically, but for light thinning or other treatments that produce relatively small amounts of slash, lopping and scattering may be all that is needed, especially on small units. Where piling and burning is required, leaving the slash distributed across the site for one winter will capture more of its nutrients for the site, if feasible.

2. Locate piles in good places. Avoid building piles within 10-20 feet of the driplines of trees you want to keep. Trees too close to a pile can be scorched and either killed outright or stressed and subsequently killed by insects taking advantage of that stress. Trees need more space from larger piles than smaller piles. Slash piles can also damage the soils underneath them. A very



Burning slash piles should be carefully monitored

small percentage of the site is usually damaged by pile burning. But re-using areas that have already been impacted by past burn piles will reduce potential impacts, much as re-using designated skid trails reduces soil compaction. Machine piling on dry or frozen soils also reduces soil impacts.

3. Build piles tall and compact. A given amount of slash will burn more completely in a tall, small foot-printed pile than a broader, looser pile. Tightly built piles (just enough air space for drying) burn more completely.

4. Keep dirt out of the pile. Slash piles with lots of dirt are harder to burn. They



Coarse, woody debris is best left out of slash piles.

can hold smoldering fires long after they are ignited – even into the next fire season. Building piles by hand, using excavators, or piling with a brush blade all help reduce soil in a pile. Building a 2-10 foot wide fire line (scrape away the duff down to mineral soil) around each pile helps to insure against fire escape.

5. *Avoid putting coarse woody debris in the*

pile. Under Idaho law, the only slash that has to be treated to reduce fire hazard is material smaller than 3 inches in diameter. There can be some fire hazard associated with larger materials, depending on the volume, but small fuels ignite and carry fire more readily. It can be difficult to keep large diameter material out of piles, when slash is piled mechanically, but leaving the

coarse woody debris out of piles, means fewer, smaller piles which burn more readily because coarse material takes longer to dry out. Leaving coarse woody debris scattered across the woods benefits both forest soils and wildlife. It can also provide micro-site advantages to seedlings and inhibit cattle and big game browsing.

6. *Keep the tinder dry.* Slash piles are often burned when the adjacent forests are too moist to burn, to reduce forest fire risk. Putting some plastic or tar paper on a third or more of top of a newly constructed pile insures some dry material to get the pile burning later.

7. *Got a permit?* Depending on the time of year and current fire conditions, you may need a permit to light piles. Permits are required by Idaho code May 10-Oct 20. Local jurisdictions may have additional requirements. Permits are usually secured through your local fire protection district office.

8. *Got the necessary tools?* On the day you light piles, it is important to have firefighting tools (e.g., Pulaski, shovel, and ideally, at least 100 gallons of water in a tank) to tend the fire and deal with any spot fires that might escape from the piles. Wearing appropriate clothing for tending fires such as long sleeved shirts and gloves is also important. For a more complete burn, tend the fire by using a shovel to move unburned materials at the perimeter of the pile to the center. Monitor the fires until they are out cold.

9. *Is it a good day to burn?* Most piles are burned in the fall, when they are dry and coming wet, cold weather will help to make sure the fire is out after most of the fuel is consumed. Avoid windy days, to make sure fire stays in the piles. Beyond the season of burning, ask your local fire protection district or the fire warden at your local Idaho Department of Lands office about current burn conditions, as these offices are working with other forest owners who are burning slash piles as well. Ask them if it is a good time to burn regarding air quality. Many in the forestry community are con-

See UI FORESTRY page 31

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Focus on Agriculture

American Agriculture Brings People Together over the Holidays

Christmas and other December holidays are steeped in a variety of traditions, but perhaps there is no other time of the year when celebrations revolve so strongly around U.S. agricultural products and thoughts of farm life.

Christmas and holiday cards, trees, meals—all focal points of the holiday season—have strong ties to American agriculture. Although relatively few Americans have personal connections with farms, rustic farm scenes remain popular images on Christmas and holiday cards symbolizing a warm, nostalgic view of the life people long for during the holiday

season.

Most holiday traditions begin on the farm, as each year, some 25 million to 36 million fresh-cut Christmas trees find their way into American homes. The trees are supplied by some 15,000–20,000 tree farms, found in almost every state.

Food from America's farms and ranches provide the social centerpiece for holiday gatherings, whether it's the hors d'oeuvres for the holiday party, crackers and cheese for visiting friends, or the main holiday meals that bring families together.

American holiday meal traditions trace

their origins to the meals served in the home countries of immigrants who have come to America, but the evolution of agriculture has continuously improved the assortment on the holiday table.

Most holiday meals are built around meat. Turkey, beef, goose, lamb, venison, rabbit, duck and pheasant, and pork, were popular in England, and appeared on American Christmas dinner menus as early as the 1600s. Turkey, ham and roast beef remain the most popular meats served at American holiday meals. Hams have been fea-

See FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE page 25

USDA Announces Incentives for Conservation Reserve Program Participants

In an effort to improve wildlife habitat and the health of private forest lands, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) recently announced additional incentives available for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants to actively manage forest lands enrolled in the program.

“Many CRP forests were initially established to conserve soil and protect water quality, but there is also a critical need to restore wildlife habitat” said Brad Pfaff, FSA Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs. “Over the years as trees grow and the forest canopy closes, the quality of wildlife habitat for many species declines. These new incentives are intended to reverse that trend, while also maintaining healthy forests.”

The announcement was made at a CRP forest site near Jackson, Miss. In addition to Pfaff, those in attendance included FSA Mississippi State Executive Director Michael R. Sullivan; Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist Kurt Readus; and Office of Senator Thad Cochran Constituent Services Representative Jo Ann Clark.

Under the provisions of the 2014 Farm Bill, \$10 million is available nationwide to eligible CRP participants. Those selected will be encouraged to thin, prescribe burn or otherwise manage their forests in order to allow sunlight to reach the forest floor. This will encourage the development of grasses, forbs and legumes, benefitting numerous species including pollinators and grassland-dependent birds such as the northern bobwhite.

“The program is a win-win for landowners and wildlife as it supports enhanced wildlife habitat on lands already removed from agricultural production, while promoting forest sustainability, soil conservation, and water quality protection,” said Pfaff.

Eligibility is limited to landowners and agricultural producers already enrolled in CRP with conservation covers primarily containing trees. Incentive payments, not to exceed 150 percent of the cost to implement a particular customary forestry activity as described, have been established. CRP participants meeting eligibility requirements and interested in making offers to participate should visit their local FSA county office.

For more information about FSA conservation programs, visit the FSA office at the local USDA service center or go to www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation. To locate the nearest FSA office, go to <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Throughout the Obama Administration, USDA has generated thousands of critical partnerships to conserve and protect our natural resources on working landscapes, while enrolling a record number of acres in conservation programs. Seventy-percent of the nation’s land is owned and tended to privately, and America’s farmers, ranchers and landowners have willingly stepped up to address the growing impacts of a changing climate. With USDA’s support, they are working to implement voluntary practices that improve air and water quality, prevent soil erosion and create and protect wildlife habitat. Since 2009, USDA has invested more than \$29 billion to help producers make conservation improvements, working with as many as 500,000 farmers, ranchers and landowners to protect land and water on over 400 million acres nationwide. Read more about USDA’s record conservation outcomes under Caring for our Land, Air and Water: Preserving Precious Natural Resources for Tomorrow.



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Use the Correct Tools to Assist in Marketing Commodities

By Clark Johnston

With the holiday season behind us one might say that it is time to get back to work. Having said that I realize that your work is never done but, it is good to be able to reflect on the blessings that we have received over the past year and then once again get after it.

The fall wheat did get in the ground and up in pretty good shape in most areas. Some was a little later than producers would have preferred due to dry conditions but, it is still in the ground and up. As far as spring crops are concerned we could be only sixty days away from beginning spring work in some of our local areas.

The next sixty to ninety days we will see producers get serious about contracting their old crop grain that is still being stored on the farm. The fact of the matter is that come March, producers will be too involved with the spring work to think about marketing grain that is still in the bin. I may or may not be talking directly to you but, this is a fact that we run into every spring.

Producers have been asking quite a few questions as to the future of commodity prices and the new administration. Everyone would like to know about the direction of the US Dollar as well as new trade agreements or if we will keep the agreements already in place or try to amend some of the language in those agreements.

The fact of the matter is this; all we can do is take care of the segments of the com-

modity markets that we have some control over. It is wise to keep up to date on the current news in the markets and if the federal government can change or tweak what is already in place but, we need to still be willing to contract or sell our commodities when the market is telling us to do so.

We can really only contract our commodities based on what we know today. Let's look at just a few of the questions we need to continually keep in mind. What is the condition of the new crop as well as the carryover stocks and where are those stocks. At this time China holds the lion's share of the corn, wheat and soybean stocks in the world. What they will do with these stocks is still the question the trade would like to have answered.

One thing to keep in mind is that China usually hasn't dumped their commodities on the market during times of cheap prices. However, they could very well move some of their stocks on the short term rallies in the futures markets during the year. Does this sound like something we all should be watching over the next few months?

For now it doesn't look as though we will see the markets move to the upside for any lengthy period of time, rather we will see the market strengthen for short periods of time and then fall back to within an established trading range.

The segments in the market that we should continue to watch will be the futures markets, keeping an eye on some of the technical studies to help us determine if the market is overbought or oversold. This will



Clark Johnston

help you determine a good time to contract your commodities. The other major factor that needs to be watched is the local basis. Remember, basis is a good indicator of the local supply/demand. You may not like the cash bid but, by watching the basis and futures separately you will be able to market your commodities better than if you just watch the cash bids.

I know I continually preach this concept but, it is important for the continued success of your operation that you at least know the different tools that are available to assist you in your decision making process.

Different administrations will continue to come and go in the years ahead but, basic marketing concepts will continue to be constant and will continue to help your operation be successful for years to come. Don't overlook the seasonal trends in the futures markets and your local basis while trying to figure out what is going on in Washington.

Clark Johnston is a grain marketing specialist who is on contract with the Idaho Farm Bureau. He is the owner of JC Management Company in Northern Utah. He can be reached at clark@jcmanagement.net

FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE

Continued from page 22

been featured in December celebrations in many countries for centuries. At one time in the U.S., turkeys were kept on farms because they required little care and could be used to feed a crowd without economic sacrifice. Chickens had more economic value for egg production, as cows did for milk, and the commercial beef industry didn't evolve until the 19th century. Now, modern farming practices make them all readily available.

By the late 1700s, holiday menus included ice cream, acorn squash, lima beans, sweet potatoes, raisins and nuts, cranberries, plums, peaches, and apples and cherries for pies.

In the pioneer days, American Christmas menus depended on location, economics, home situations, and heritage. People in

larger cities—as well as those living on or near farms—tended to have more access to a broad range of food items than those living in outposts, camps or wilderness areas. By the early 1900s, agricultural expansion made it possible to incorporate lettuce, oranges, celery, grapefruit and other fresh fruits and vegetables into holiday meals.

Although Americans spend more on food in December than any other month, a traditional holiday meal with all of the trimmings remains a bargain. A holiday meal with turkey as the centerpiece costs about \$5-\$6 per person—less than the price of a burger, fries and soft drink at a fast-food restaurant. Dinner with ham, roast beef or prime rib is slightly higher, but still as little as \$10-\$12 a person, and less than the cost of lunch at a fast-casual

restaurant.

While still a bargain, the real value of a holiday meal is priceless: the true worth comes from the fellowship and joy of gathering family and friends around the table to celebrate. From the scent of a Christmas tree to the smells and tastes of a holiday meal, America's farmers and ranchers are happy to play their role in making it all possible.

On behalf of America's farmers and ranchers, and all involved in American agriculture, have a joyous and safe holiday season, and best wishes for the New Year.

Robert Giblin writes, speaks and consults about agricultural and food industry issues, policies and trends.

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Idaho Farm Bureau Federation Commodity Conference February 15, 2017 Riverside Hotel, Boise, Idaho

9:15 a.m. **Commodity Conference Breakout Sessions**

Cover Crops - Lauren A. Golden, University of Idaho Extension Specialist

What are cover crops and how can every farm develop a beneficial plan?

Forage Evaluation Through the eyes of a Dairy Nutritionist - Dr. Shane Holt, Cargill

How does a dairy want their feed to look? What are some considerations to make if you are a buyer or a seller of forage?

10:25 a.m. **Commodity Committee Presentations**

Beef: Veterinary Feed Directive (What the producer needs to know) - Dr. Elizabeth Kohtz

Potato: TBD

Sugar: TBD

Dry Bean and Pulse: TBD

Dairy: Nutrient Management (Phosphorus) - Rick Naerebout & Stephanie Kulesza Ph. D.

Hay and Forage: Plant health, what factors give the biggest bang for the buck? - Simplot Alfalfa Genetics

Wheat and Feed Grains: Milling Quality Standards

Noon **Lunch** - Welcome by President Searle

Topic: New President New Agriculture? - Clark Johnston

What is making the markets move throughout the year and the potential effect of the Trump Presidency?

1:05 - 1:50 p.m. **Commodity Committee Business Meeting**

Committee meetings- *this is a change from previous years, committees will meet after lunch.*

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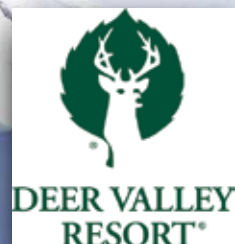
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Idaho Farm Bureau Reaches Membership Quota



Idaho Farm Bureau President Bryan Searle, left, receives congratulations from American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall. IFBF reached its membership goal during 2016 and helped AFBF gain 14,835 new member families.

UI FORESTRY

Continued from page 19

cerned about additional burning restrictions in the future due to air quality issues. To the extent prescribed fires reduce

wildfire risk, public health risk is reduced (a little smoke, when we can control it vs. a lot of smoke filling a whole valley weeks at a time). Burning when

environmental conditions are good for air quality will help reduce pressure for additional regulations.

10. Multiple piles? If you have

many piles to burn, don't light them all at once. Just light enough of them for you to handle, in case anything gets out of hand. Since fires usually burn up-hill, it is also smart to light the piles on the top of the hill first, then work your way down to the lower piles. Lighting the piles on the perimeter of the unit first is also helpful because once they are consumed they provide some fire break between the interior piles and the rest of the forest.

Chris Schnepf is an area extension educator – forestry – for the University of Idaho in Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai and Benewah counties. He can be reached at cschnepf@uidaho.edu.



Covering a slash pile allows for more efficient burning if fire risk is low.

Legislation Authorizes Port Investments

Just before wrapping up the second session of the 114th Congress, the House and Senate approved the Farm Bureau-supported Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act (S.612). The measure includes the Water Resources Development Act of 2016, which authorizes investment in America's ports, channels, locks, dams and other infrastructure that supports the maritime and waterways transportation system and provides flood protection for communities.

Included in the legislation is a 75 percent federal share on harbor-deepening projects up to 50 feet. The federal share previously dropped to 50 percent when new con-

struction went deeper than 45 feet. Also included is a new provision ensuring that each year, the revenues that go to harbor maintenance will be at least 103 percent of the previous year's amount.

The WRDA title of the bill also authorizes projects included in the Army Corps of Engineers Chief's Reports received since the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014.

Another of the bill's three titles addresses the drought in California and elsewhere in the West.

"Part of the bill's natural resources title aims to bring some relief to the West,

where farmers, ranchers and many others have been confronted with serious drought conditions. The bill updates some water storage and delivery projects and provides some flexibility to some states to get water to struggling farmers in rural communities," Walmsley explained.

Also in the plus column for the legislation, according to Walmsley, it gets Congress back into a two-year cycle of considering WRDA legislation, ensuring proper congressional oversight of the Army Corps of Engineers and reasserting Congress' role in addressing water infrastructure needs.

Join the AFBF Outreach Team

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is building an Outreach Team to get the word out about the Foundation's educational resources. As members of the team, farmers, ranchers, teachers, volunteers, Farm Bureau committee members, ag leaders and industry reps can help others learn what the Foundation has to offer by presenting at regional and state events.

Foundation Outreach Team members will receive advance notice on grants and new materials, be featured in new resources, have opportunities to pilot new programs and influence the development of new resources.

Becoming part of the team is a three-step process:

Complete "Planning with the Pillars: Part

1" and "Planning with the Pillars: Part 2" eLearning courses on Farm Bureau University.

Conduct one classroom visit, fair or other event presentation using AFBFA materials and complete a reflection survey.

Attend one Outreach Team Culminating Workshop at Annual Convention, at FUSION, or via a virtual webinar.

Farmers, Ranchers Welcome EPA Selection

Farmers, ranchers and many others cheered President-elect Donald Trump's choice of Scott Pruitt to lead EPA. In his position as attorney general in Oklahoma, Pruitt has stood up for common-sense, effective regulation that protects the environment and the rights of the regulated community, according to American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall.

Trump's selection of Pruitt "is welcome

news to America's farmers and ranchers—in fact, to all who are threatened by EPA's regulatory overreach—and should help provide a new degree of fairness for U.S. agriculture," Duvall said in a statement.

Noting farmers' appreciation for Pruitt's effective legal work in response to EPA's overreaching Waters of the U.S. rule, Duvall said AFBF anticipates that as EPA administrator, Pruitt will pay attention to

the concerns of farmers and ranchers and others who work with the nation's natural resources on a daily basis.

Pruitt led attorneys general from several states in filing one of a number of lawsuits challenging EPA's WOTUS rule.

The EPA administrator must be confirmed by the Senate.

Ohio Farmer Combats Misconceptions about Agriculture

Frustrated with the misconceptions that plague the public's perception of farming and ranching, fourth-generation Ohio farmer Brenda Hastings opened her family farm, Hastings Dairy, to the public five years ago. Hastings, whose family milks 550 Holsteins, also thought the tours she provides would help generate additional income to partially offset the dairy industry's shrinking margins.

Hastings has always enjoyed talking to people about her farm. She's especially passionate about setting the record straight on animal care, and what better way to do that than show people how well her animals are treated?

"Our barn has a free-stall system. We take people through on a wagon and they can see what a pleasant and comfortable environment it is for our healthy cows," Hastings said.

Hastings hosts tour groups of all ages, from kindergarteners to 65-plus. She said people are often struck by how clean and quiet the facility is.

"We clean multiple times a day," she explained. "And the cows are so quiet because all their needs are being met."

Antibiotic use is another frequent topic.

"People assume all milk has antibiotics. We explain that every load of milk is tested before being processed before it leaves the farm to make sure there are no antibiotics."

Though most of Hastings' milk is used to make cheese, tour participants' requests to sample the milk prompted the family to build a small on-farm bottling facility, Rowdy Cow Creamery. Now, not only do tour participants get a sample, they can buy half-gallon and pint containers to take home. The milk is also sold at 20 local



Brenda Hastings fields questions about all aspects of her dairy farm, including the use of antibiotics and the cleanliness of her barn.



The Chugga Chugga Moo Moo Train is a treat for the farm's littlest visitors.

stores.

In addition to the guided tour of the milking parlor, smaller visitors can pet and interact with calves, take Chugga Chugga Moo Moo Train rides, play on a farm-themed outdoor playground, use pedal tractors and play games like corn hole and ring toss.

Find Hastings Dairy online at <http://hastingsdairy.com/index.html>.

Find Rowdy Cow Creamery online at <http://hastingsdairy.com/hastings-dairy-rowdy-cow-creamery.html>.



Agricultural economics students and UI Barker Capital Management and Trading Program professors, from left, Director Terry Grieb, senior Blake Michler of Elgin, Oregon; junior Austin O'Neill of Stanwood, Washington; senior Brett Wilder of Meridian, Idaho; graduate student Joseph «Cody» Cook of Idaho Falls, Idaho; and Associate Director Ekaterina Vorotnikova.

UI Team Rounds Up a Second in National Contest

University of Idaho students converted a class exercise into cash with a second-place finish in a national simulated trading contest that drew 726 teams from 233 schools across 49 states.

The agricultural economics students on the Cattle Drive team were enrolled in College of Business & Economics professor Terry Grieb's introduction to market trading and funded trader

seminar classes. His students entered the online brokerage's thinkorswim Challenge sponsored by TD Ameritrade, which gives teams \$500,000 in virtual money to trade options contracts on a range of equities.

"This is a great example of students participating in an experiential learning program that they took to heart and in the end got amazing results," Grieb said. "That is entirely to their

credit, and it shows how strong the educational component can be for dedicated students like Cattle Drive."

"That is absolutely awesome! Congratulations Cattle Drive - we are incredibly proud of you," said Cathy Roheim, head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

The team rang up a 124 percent return during the four-week contest, turning the original stake into more than \$1.1 million — on paper. The UI students won \$20,000 for the university and each won \$2,000 in a TD Ameritrade brokerage account and an iPad.

The team of agricultural economics students included senior Brett Wilder of Meridian; grad student Joseph “Cody” Cook of Idaho Falls; senior Blake Michler of Elgin, Oregon; and junior Austin O’Neill of Stanwood, Washington.

Wilder is a funded trader for the Barker Capital Management and Trading Program and helps manage several portfolios that include agricultural commodities and energy totaling nearly \$500,000 in assets. The program was funded by Rotchford “Rotchy” Barker, who graduated from UI and went on to fame at the Chicago Board of Trade.

Grieb is director of the Barker program, which is based in the College of Business and Economics. The program recently expanded to include an emphasis on agricultural commodity risk management led by the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

“We are proud that our students did

so well in the competition,” said Ekaterina Vorotnikova, assistant professor of agricultural economics and Barker program associate director. “Understanding markets is critical to the success of agricultural enterprises today from family farms to global agribusinesses.”

“What I think set Cattle Drive apart was the communication, the teamwork, discipline, and ability to control one’s own emotions – very important qualities for successful traders,” Vorotnikova said. “They had a structure of everybody working hard and effectively. They were all putting in time, they all had a role to play and they made our dream of winning in this competition a reality.”

The UI team led the field during most of the competition, falling into second place to the winning team from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill during the last 30 minutes of trading.

An early trade of Alcoa stock put the team on its way, Wilder said. With half of the contest remaining, the team’s returns were 35 percent ahead of any other competitors. At that point, the UI students took a conservative approach

to preserve a top-three finish, which would put them in the money.

“Our strategy was that since we were ahead, other teams would have to make riskier trades to try to make up the difference. We leveraged our position so we didn’t have to make risky trades, and we could at least get second,” Cook said.

Team members got up at 5:30 a.m. before markets opened and talked after they closed, spending about three hours a day on the competition.

The students watched corporate earnings reports and tried to anticipate how market sectors might fare.

“We were taking the big wins, cutting the small losses and over time making more than we lost,” Wilder said.

“One week, Brett texted everyone and said there are 100 earnings reports coming out this week and we need to make a play on all of them,” Cook said. In response, team members made 20-some trades in 30 minutes.

“That was the week we made \$200,000 in a day. It kind of catapulted us to the front, and we stayed there,” Wilder said.



Potato Size and Grade Summary – 2016 Crop

The following statistics were obtained from the 2016 Potato Objective Yield Survey.

Sample plots were located in potato fields randomly selected using a scientifically designed sampling procedure. Field workers recorded counts

and measurements within the field and then harvested six hills per sample. Potatoes were sent to laboratories for sizing and grading according to accepted United States fresh grading standards. Data in these tables are rounded actual field counts from this survey.

Idaho: Long potatoes (Russet only) weighing 10 oz. or more comprised 29.1 percent of the total, down from

33.7 percent in 2015. Potatoes that met the 2.0 inch or 4 oz. minimum size and grade requirements for U.S. No. 1 potatoes were 82.0 percent of the total, up from 73.7 percent last year. Processing grade and U.S. No. 2 potatoes, with a 1.5 inch minimum, accounted for 13.4 percent of the 2016 crop.

FARM BUREAU COMMODITY REPORT

GRAIN PRICES	11/18/2016	12/22/2016	Trend
PORTLAND:			
White Wheat	4.68-5.03	4.42-4.50	- .26 to - .53
11% Winter	4.68-4.78	4.48-4.73	- .20 to - .05
14% Spring	6.29-6.44	6.40-6.60	+ .11 to + .16
Oats cwt	225.00	225.00	Steady
OGDEN:			
White Wheat	3.88	3.67	- .21
11% Winter	3.83	3.65	- .18
14% Spring	5.44	5.35	- .09
Barley	5.85	5.50	- .35
BLACKFOOT/ IDAHO FALLS			
White Wheat	3.30	3.30	Steady
11.5% Winter	3.65	3.65	Steady
14% Spring	4.95	4.95	Steady
Hard White	4.75	3.75	- 1.00
BURLEY:			
White Wheat	3.55	3.32	- .23
11% Winter	3.50	3.50	Steady
14% Spring	5.10	5.15	+ .05
Barley	5.00	5.00	Steady
MERIDIAN:			
White Wheat (cwt)	3.60	3.56	- .04
LEWISTON:			
White Wheat	4.45	4.15	- .30
H. Red Winter	4.73	4.91	+ .18
Dark N. Spring	6.14	6.45	+ .31
Barley	101.50	96.50	- 5.00

LIVESTOCK PRICES

	11/20/2016	12/21/2016	Trend
FEEDER STEERS			
Under 500 lbs	120-174	125-188	+ 5 to + 14
500-700 lbs	95-152	105-152	+ 10 to steady
700-900 lbs	90-124	97-132	+ 7 to + 8
Over 900 lbs	80-111	95-115	+ 15 to + 4
FEEDER HEIFERS			
Under 500 lbs	105-153	104-164	- 1 to + 11
500-700 lbs	95-125	100-143	+ 5 to + 18
700-900 lbs	89-114	95-120	+ 6 to + 6
Over 900 lbs	76-86	No test	N/A
HOLSTEIN STEERS			
Under 700 lbs	61-87	62-79	+ 1 to - 8
Over 700 lbs	61-82	65-75	+ 4 to - 7
COWS			
Utility/Commercial	40-66	43-66	+ 3 to steady
Canner & Cutter	32-55	39-62	+ 7 to + 7
Stock Cows	600-1125	625-1475	+ 25 to + 350
BULLS			
Slaughter	44-80	55-85	+ 11 to + 5
BEAN PRICES:			
Pinto	30.00	29.00-30.00	- 1 to Steady
Small Red	27.00-28.00	Not Established	NA
Garbanzo	34.00-36.00	35.00-36.00	+ 1 to Steady

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IDAHO HAY REPORT

USDA Market News, Moses Lake, WA December 23, 2016

Compared to last Friday: Feeder grade Alfalfa and export quality Timothy hay steady in a light test. Trade remains slow with light to moderate demand as the upcoming holidays have many interests waiting until after the first of the year to resume business. Retail/feed store/horse Timothy hay steady with good demand from back east interests. All prices are dollars per ton and FOB the farm or ranch unless otherwise stated.

	Tons	Price	Wtd Avg	Comments
Alfalfa				
Mid Square				
Fair	200	60.00-60.00	60.00	Rain Damage
Utility	500	50.00-50.00	50.00	Bottom Bales
Timothy Grass				
Mid Square				
Premium	900	200.00-200.00	200.00	Retail/Stable
Fair/Good	900	120.00-120.00	120.00	Export

Timothy Grass				
Small Square				
Premium	900	200.00-200.00	200.00	Retail/Stable
Fair/Good	900	120.00-120.00	120.00	Export
Oat				
Mid Square				
Good	100	45.00-45.00	45.00	

Alfalfa hay test guidelines, (for domestic livestock use and not more than 10% grass), used with visual appearance and intent of sale. Quantitative factors are approximate and many factors can affect feeding value.

	ADF	NDF	RFV	TDN-100%	TDN-90%	CP-100%
Supreme	<27	<34	>185	>62	>55.9	>22
Premium	27-29	34-36	170-185	60.5-62	54.5-55.9	20-22
Good	29-32	36-40	150-170	58-60	52.5-54.5	18-20
Fair	32-35	40-44	130-150	56-58	50.5-52.5	16-18
Utility	>35	>44	<130	<56	<50.5	<16

POTATOES & ONIONS

December 20, 2016

Potatoes

UPPER VALLEY, TWIN FALLS-BURLEY DISTRICT, IDAHO--- 845-786-824 (includes exports of 9-5-4) --- Movement expected to decrease due to holiday shortened shipping schedules. Trading bales fairly active, others moderate. Prices Norkotah carton 60-100s lower; others generally unchanged. Russet Burbank U.S. One baled 10-5 pound film bags non size A mostly 5.50; 50-pound carton 40-80s mostly 6.50, 90-100s mostly 6.50-7.00; Norkotah U.S. One baled 10-5 pound film bags non size A mostly 5.50; 50-pound carton 40-50s 5.00-5.50, 60-100s 5.50-6.00.

The region is experiencing extremely low temperatures, therefore limiting the movement of potato supplies to the packing sheds.

Onions - Dry

IDAHO AND MALHEUR COUNTY OREGON--- 344*-365-362---Movement expected to decrease due to holiday shortened shipping schedules. Trading Whites fairly active, others moderate. Prices generally unchanged. Yellow Spanish Hybrid U.S. One 50-pound sacks super colossal mostly 5.50-6.00, colossal mostly 4.50-5.00, jumbo mostly 4.00, medium 4.50-5.00; White U.S. One 50-pound sacks jumbo 10.00-11.00, medium 9.00-10.00; Red Globe Type U.S. One 25-pound sacks jumbo mostly 6.00, medium mostly 5.00. *revised.

5 YEAR GRAIN COMPARISON

Grain Prices..... 12/26/2012..... 12/20/2013..... 12/23/2014..... 12/16/2015..... 12/22/2016

Portland:					
White Wheat.....	8.27	6.86	No Bid.....	No Bid.....	4.42-4.50
11% Winter.....	8.94-9.07	7.43-7.63	No Bid.....	5.56-5.66	4.48-4.73
14% Spring.....	9.51	8.12	No Bid.....	6.25-6.45	6.40-6.60
Corn.....	288-291.25	No Bid.....	265.00.....	265.00.....	4.37-4.40

Ogden:					
White Wheat.....	8.40	6.25	6.95	5.23	3.67
11% Winter.....	8.21	7.07	6.69	4.51	3.65
14 % Spring.....	8.83	7.50	7.50	5.45	5.35
Barley.....	11.20	7.45	5.45	6.98	5.50

Pocatello:					
White Wheat.....	7.80	5.90	6.75	4.88	3.30
11% Winter.....	7.37	6.13	7.09	4.55	3.65
14% Spring.....	8.02	6.48	7.11	5.13	4.95
Barley.....	11.67	No Bid.....	7.24	5.00	3.75

Burley:					
White Wheat.....	7.40	5.95	6.80	4.95	3.32
11% Winter.....	7.53	6.47	5.90	4.01	3.50
14% Spring.....	7.95	6.80	7.61	5.01	5.15
Barley.....	12.25	7.50	5.20	6.00	5.00

Nampa/Meridian:					
White Wheat (cwt)	12.65	10.17	10.16	9.50	5.75
(bushel).....	7.58	6.10	6.10	5.70	3.56

Lewiston:					
White Wheat.....	8.19	6.75	6.85	5.15	4.15
Barley.....	224.50	141.50	156.50	131.50	96.50

Bean Prices:					
Pintos.....	35.00-36.00	38.00-40.00	25.00-27.00	25.00-27.00	29.00-30.00
Pinks.....	40.00-42.00	40.00	No Bid.....	No Bid.....	No Bid
Small Reds.....	40.00-42.00	40.00	38.00-40.00	38.00-40.00	35.00-36.00

MILK PRODUCTION

December 20, 2016

October Milk Production up 2.7 Percent

Milk production in the 23 major States during October totaled 16.5 billion pounds, up 2.7 percent from October 2015. September revised production, at 16.0 billion pounds, was up 2.3 percent from September 2015. The September revision represented a decrease of 6 million pounds or less than 0.1 percent from last month's preliminary production estimate.

Production per cow in the 23 major States averaged 1,903 pounds for October, 43 pounds above October 2015. This is the highest production per cow for the month of October since the 23 State series began in 2003.

The number of milk cows on farms in the 23 major States was 8.67 million head, 31,000 head more than October 2015, but 2,000 head less than September 2016.

October Milk Production in the United States up 2.5 Percent

Milk production in the United States during October totaled 17.6 billion pounds, up 2.5 percent from October 2015.

Production per cow in the United States averaged 1,880 pounds for October, 42 pounds above October 2015.

The number of milk cows on farms in the United States was 9.34 million head, 15,000 head more than October 2015, but 2,000 head less than September 2016.

5 YEAR LIVESTOCK COMPARISON

	12/26/2012	12/20/2013	12/23/2014	12/16/2015	12/21/2016
Feeder Steers					
Under 500 lbs.....	126-198	157-235	255-351	155-234	125-188
500-700 lbs.....	116-166	134-187	210-284	137-203	105-152
700-900 lbs.....	112-150	121-167	195-237	120-165	97-115
Over 900 lbs.....	116-135	129-145	150-198	111-130	95-115
Feeder Heifers					
Under 500 lbs.....	117-172	155-214	225-337	136-213	104-164
500-700 lbs.....	117-148	133-173	201-281	130-170	100-143
700-900 lbs.....	110-135	115-158	153-218	115-155	95-120
Over 900 lbs.....	119-120	122-143	149-192	108-133	no test
Holstein Steers					
Under 700 lbs.....	65-101	90-123	120-212	90-120	62-79
Over 700 lbs.....	75-106	80-115	150-185	85-115	65-75
Cows					
Utility/Commercial.....	55-79	60-87	89-127	51-76	43-66
Canner & Cutter.....	50-71	60-78	81-114	42-63	39-62
Stock Cows.....	800-1500	950-1400	1250-2200	775-1950	625-1475
Bulls – Slaughter.....	63-89	63-97	105-140	85-100	55-85

CATTLE ON FEED

December 23, 2016

United States Cattle on Feed Down 1 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for the slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 10.7 million head on December 1, 2016. The inventory was 1 percent below December 1, 2015.

Placements in feedlots during November totaled 1.84 million head, 15 percent above 2015. Net placements were 1.77 million head. During November, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 470,000 head, 600-699 pounds were 490,000 head, 700-799 pounds were 425,000 head, and 800 pounds and greater were 458,000 head.

Marketings of fed cattle during November totaled 1.79 million head, 17 percent above 2015.

Other disappearance totaled 69,000 head during November, 13 percent below 2015.

CATTLE OUTLOOK

December 23, 2016

USDA's December Cattle on Feed report said there were 1.4% fewer cattle in large feedlots on December 1 than a year ago. It said placements were up 15% and marketings were up 16.6% in November. Placements were the highest for any November since 2013. Marketings were the highest for any November since 2006.

These numbers were in line with the pre-release trade forecast which predicted placements were up 13.3% and marketings were up 16.5% year-over-year. The trade expected the number on feed December 1 to be down 1.4% from last year. November steer and heifer slaughter was up 17.5% year-over-year. The calculated average placement weights in November were slightly higher than a year ago. The increased placements were mostly in the 600-800 pound categories.

The Livestock Marketing Information Center has estimated the average loss for closeouts at southern plains feedlots was \$91.06 per head in November. That compares to a loss of \$203.71/head the month before and a loss of \$490.87/head a year ago.

Fed cattle prices were higher this week on heavy sales volume. Through Thursday, the 5-area average price for slaughter steers sold on a live weight basis was \$115.14/cwt, up \$4.91 from last week's average, but down \$8.36 from a year ago. The 5-area dressed steer price averaged \$179.79/cwt, up \$9.48 from the week before and down \$19.81 from a year ago.

Beef cutout value was also higher this week. This morning, the choice boxed beef cutout value was \$199.01/cwt, up \$4.24 from the previous Friday and \$1.38 higher than a year ago. The select carcass cutout this morning was \$187.07/cwt, up \$6.37 from last week.

This week's cattle slaughter totaled 572,000 head, down 4.5% from last week, but up 41.6% from the same week last year, which included Christmas Day.

The average steer dressed weight during the week ending on December 10 was 908 pounds. That is down 5 pounds from the week before and down 1 pound from a year ago.

Stocker and feeder cattle prices were steady this week at the Oklahoma City auction. Prices for medium and large frame #1 steers by weight group were: 400-450# \$153, 450-500# NR, 500-550# \$137.50-\$156, 550-600# \$134, 600-650# \$127.50-\$134.50, 650-700# \$129.50-\$136, 700-750# \$129-\$137, 750-800# \$123-\$132.50, 800-900# \$125-\$137.50, and 900-1000# \$125-\$131.50/cwt.

Cattle futures were higher this week. The December live cattle futures contract settled at \$114.57/cwt today, up \$2.25 for the week. February live cattle gained 95 cents this week and closed at \$116.30/cwt. The April contract settled at \$114.32, up 72 cents for the week.

The January feeder cattle futures contract ended the week at \$131.12/cwt, up \$1.22 from a week earlier. March feeder cattle gained 87 cents this week to settle at \$127.17/cwt. April feeder cattle settled at \$126.62/cwt.

University of Missouri

CLASSIFIEDS

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4430 John Deere tractor, 4 wheel drive, power shift. \$10,000. Good condition, St. Anthony, ID. 208-624-7796.

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60 acres plus. Approximately 250ft hwy frontage, spring and timber. 20 miles north of New Meadows, Id on hwy 95. Term \$85,000. Minimum \$20, 000 down. 208-253-6135.

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Lot for Sale - 1/2 Acre Country Lot. City water, Gas, Utilities available. Must obtain permits for water & septic system. Shelley area. Call 528-5337.

Vehicles

2004 Yamaha Viper 700 Triple \$2,000; 1998 Skidoo Summit 670 Rotax \$1,800, Snowmobiles. 3444 International Loader tractor, Great snow removal \$4,995, 1990 ford 7.3 diesel flatbed dually \$4,995/ A; rim good, make offer. Preston, ID 208-681-3581.

1997 4 door emerald green (Northstar) Cadillac. Cream colored leather interior. Nice interior. 147,000 miles. New front tires. Good rear tires. Crack in the engine \$1,500 obo; 1997 Ford extended cab 4x4 truck. 460 engine, 5 spd tranny. Good for parts. Make offer. Call between 10 am and 6 pm 208-242-7716.

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January 20 FOR NEXT ISSUE.

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Paying cash for German & Japanese war relics/souvenirs! Pistols, rifles, swords, daggers, flags, scopes, optical equipment, uniforms, helmets, machine guns (ATF rules apply) medals, flags, etc. 549-3841 (evenings) or 208-405-9338.

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