

**IDAHO
FARM BUREAU**

Quarterly

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Market continues
to grow
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The Zipline

Farmers ready for long overdue ESA reform

By Zippy Duvall
President American Farm Bureau Federation



We're always looking to farm better for the good of our families, businesses, communities and country.

Farmers and ranchers can't afford to hang on to equipment and practices that aren't working. We economize and fix our trucks and tractors until we must replace them. We adopt new technology and farming techniques that make our businesses more efficient and environmentally friendly.

That's what makes it even more frustrating when our federal government holds on to run-down practices that stopped working decades ago — or maybe never worked in the first place. When I think of government regulations that are not only broken-down but also hurting America's farms and ranches, the Endangered Species Act is at the top of my list.

The ESA is long overdue for reform. Protecting our country's wildlife is an important goal, and one that farmers and ranchers share. We get to spend every day out in God's creation, and we take the charge of

See DUVALL, page 8

The President's Desk

Farmers support talks over tariffs

By Bryan Searle
President Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



Gregg Doud, chief agricultural negotiator in the office of the United States Trade Representative, gave a very sobering presentation on tariffs and trade agreements.

While attending recent meetings in Washington, D.C., with other state Farm Bureau presidents and the American Farm Bureau Federation professional staff, the hot topic was trade.

Although we all agree that we have been taken advantage of by other countries when it comes to trade, the question was asked why agriculture has to be at the tip of the sword.

Farmers and ranchers support President Trump's attempt to level the playing field with other nations when it comes to trade.

However, they also support talks over tariffs and the escalating trade spats with some of our most important trading partners are beginning to cause some unease in farm country.

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Inside Farm Bureau

1973 was a good year... And, things have changed

By Rick Keller
CEO Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



world, a title that it held for 25 years.

During 1973, many good things happened. Gasoline started out at 40 cents a gallon and a dozen eggs were about the same price.

The cost of an average new home was \$32,500. The Sears Tower opened in Chicago and would reign as the tallest building in the

The same year, Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs competed in "The Battle of the Sexes" exhibition tennis match. Secretariat became the first horse since Citation in 1948 to win the Triple Crown.

There were also some not-so-good things that happened in 1973. The Watergate hearings began, Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) announced the price of oil was to increase by 200 percent and a recession began in Europe as a result.

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Cover: People shop at the Boise Farmers Market July 21. Since the food- and farm-centric market was created six years ago, crowd counts and business has steadily increased. See story on Page 4.





Photo by Sean Ellis

People walk through the Boise Farmers Market, which has seen a steady increase in crowd numbers since it was created six years ago.

Boise Farmers Market flourishing after split

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE – Six years after leaving Idaho’s largest farmers market and forming their own a few blocks away, vendors at the Boise Farmers Market say they are flourishing.

Crowd counts at the BFM have steadily increased since the split from the Capital City Public Market, said Meadowlark Farms owner Janie Burns, chairwoman of the Boise Farmers Market board of directors.

Business is up as well for the BFM’s 70 vendors, she said, and it’s jumped significantly so far this year.

“All of the vendors say their business is up and not just a little bit,” said Burns, one of the founding members of the market. “It’s up substantially this year, about 20 percent.”

Burns attributes the increased business and crowds to two things: the rapid population growth in the Boise area and more people becoming aware the city actually has two farmers markets.

During its first year, in 2013, BFM crowd counts reached about 3,500 during peak season and they peaked at 6,000 last year, said BFM Executive Director Karen Ellis. They had already reached 6,000 early this year.

Based on that, it’s reasonable to assume they will peak at about 7,000 or 8,000 this year, she said.

“It’s going well,” Ellis said. “It seems like each year we get busier and we add a few more vendors.”

While the CCPM, which is still Idaho’s largest farmers market, attracts crowds of more than 15,000 during peak season, the farmers who left that market and formed the BFM felt the CCPM focused too much on artisans and not enough on farming and food.

So they created a farm-centric market focused solely on agriculture and food. The BFM has now gained a reputation as the city’s foodie market, while CCPM attracts a good mix of customers who are both looking for food and browsing.

“Food was not the focus of (CCPM),” Burns said. “We chose to become a true ‘farmers’ market. That’s very important to us, to have the farmers here be the spark for the market.”

BFM vendors who were previously part of the Capital City Public Market started feeling lost in that market, said JoAnne Smith, owner of Smith Berry Farm and one of the founding members of the BFM.

“It had become so large and dominated by other than fresh produce and meats,” she said. “We felt that we needed a market that would concentrate on being an actual farmers market, so we established this market with that purpose.”

People that visit the BFM “are shoppers,” Smith said. “They’re buyers. They come here with a shopping list and they purchase food for the week.”

Rob Stokes, owner of Malheur Meats, was at the CCPM for three years before switching to BFM, where he has remained for the past five years.

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People shop for produce at the Boise Farmers Market July 21.

Photo by Jake Putnam



Photo by Jake Putnam
Cherries, blackberries and blueberries are for sale at the Boise Farmers Market July 21.



Photo by Jake Putnam
Carrots are for sale at the Boise Farmers Market July 21.

FARMERS MARKET

Continued from page 4

“The other market just got to be so busy and people were always in such a big hurry to get through it,” he said. “At this market, people are coming here specifically looking for food.”

“Not to say that market isn’t a good market,” he said about CCPM. “It is still a good market. It just has a different customer base.”

The two markets are separated by about three blocks and feed off each other, as throngs of potential customers flow from one to the other.

“People all day long are going back and forth between the two markets,” Ellis said. “People that want to shop just for food can come here and people that have multiple things they want to do can go to both markets.”

Burns said she has no regrets about the switch.

“Absolutely not,” she said. “Choosing a food-centric focus for this market has been a real smart move. People want to buy food here. If they want to look at art, they have another place close by they can go and look. The two markets are very compatible.”

Smith admits BFM vendors didn’t know for sure how their new market would work out, but she said that starting it has turned out to be a great move.

“It’s worked out very well,” she said. “I can’t grow enough strawberries to meet the demand at this market.”



Photo by Jake Putnam

Boise Farmers Market July 21.

Farmers market vendors pursuing year-round facility

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE – The Boise Farmers Market is making plans to create a year-round farmers market in the greater downtown area.

“We have some ambitious plans for an indoor-outdoor, permanent year-round location,” said Meadowlark Farms owner Janie Burns, chairwoman of the BFM board of directors.

Burns is one of the market’s 70 vendors, who created the Boise Farmers Market in 2013 after splitting from the Capital City Public Market, which is also located in downtown Boise.

Burns said BFM officials aren’t ready to release specific details of the plan but she did say, “Things are moving along on that. We’re working on a concept that will have a year-round farmers market and a food hub all as part of one concept.”

The plan calls for an outdoor farmers market in the summer and an indoor market during the winter months. Burns said the facility would have somewhere around 10,000 square feet of indoor space and 30,000 square feet of outdoor space.

The market’s board of directors is working on a strategic plan for a year-round facility, said BFM Executive Director Karen Ellis. She said the board wants to have a place secured by 2020 and is surveying vendors to find out what their top priorities are for such a facility.

She said the idea of an indoor farmers market in Boise is not new and some of the veteran farmers market vendors in the area have been wanting to pursue one for a long time.

“Some of us have been singing that song for 25 years,” Ellis said.

With the rapid population growth occurring in the Treasure Valley, she said, “It seems that for Boise, the time is right.”

“Farmers markets are a very popular part of people’s lifestyles any more in cities,” said Smith Berry Farm owner JoAnne Smith, one of the BFM’s founding members.

A lot of farmers markets in larger cities have been fortunate to have a permanent place that accommodates a year-round market, she said. “Our expectation is to get to that point.”



Photo by John O'Connell

University of Idaho graduate student Jacob Bevan makes wheat crosses in the field. Researchers with the university's wheat breeding program hope to release six new varieties in five different market classes this fall.

University of Idaho plans to release six new wheat varieties

By John O'Connell

For Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

ABERDEEN – Officials with University of Idaho's wheat breeding program hope to release six new varieties in five different market classes this fall, delivering high yields, good end-use quality and resistance to regionally significant insects and diseases.

Collectively, the new varieties offer growers resistance to Hessian fly, dwarf bunt, Fusarium head blight and stripe rust.

UI wheat breeder Jianli Chen said it will take two to three more years to expand seed of the forthcoming varieties before

commercial growers will have access to certified seed.

Furthermore, Chen said growers continue to expand planted acreage of three of her program's recent releases – UI Stone, UI Platinum and UI Sparrow.

Chen believes her promising experimental soft white winter wheat, IDO 1708, will be an upgrade for area growers now planting SY Ovation. Ovation and another soft white winter wheat, Brundage, are among the most popular varieties in Southern Idaho. But they're both susceptible to stripe rust, which is spread by airborne spores and can cause losses ranging from 50 to 100 percent in severe cases.

She said IDO 1708 yields comparably with Ovation and has strong stripe rust resistance. She said the experimental line, which is ideal for irrigated fields, also has the perfect plant height and good milling qualities.

Her program's hard white winter wheat awaiting release, IDO 1506, fills a niche for growers who irrigate with wheel lines, she said. Although the variety is just an average yielder, it produces short plants. Most other varieties grow too tall for farmers who use wheel lines. It also resists stripe rust and dwarf bunt.

Chen said IDO 1405, a soft white spring wheat, is high yielding, has good end-use

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DUVALL

Continued from page 2

environmental stewardship seriously. We want to be part of the solution when it comes to wildlife recovery, but the ESA has failed to solve anything in the more than four decades since it became law.

It seems the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has gotten very good at listing species, but the same can't be said for recovery of endangered species. In fact, the recovery rate for the ESA is about 5 percent. I don't know about you, but that sounds more like a death sentence to me.

The ESA is a failure and an expensive one at that. The "protections" it offers cost \$1.4 billion in federal expenditures in 2016 alone. That price tag doesn't include the heavy burden the ESA places on family farms and ranches either. Its far-reaching restrictions can limit

access to water, prohibit normal farming practices, and even cost financial tools like loan guarantees. In the agriculture industry, we can't simply pass on the cost to the consumer, which means farmers and ranchers take on the strain of the added cost.

Often farmers bear the brunt of ESA restrictions as the land around them becomes more urbanized, and their farmland is seen as a "last refuge" for wildlife in the area. I recall meeting with a cranberry farmer in Massachusetts who could not farm sections of his own land, in order to leave a designated habitat for the endangered box turtle. Meanwhile, the area surrounding his land has been developed with no such restrictions. This same farmer has not seen a box turtle on his land in 20 years.

Many more farmers and ranchers across the country have their own stories of how the ESA has threatened their farms and livelihoods. I've met with farmers and ranchers from the West to New England who are facing regulations that add financial burdens to their families and threaten the sustainability of their businesses.

Farmers and ranchers from the Rockies to the Great Lakes can't protect their own animals from predators like the gray wolf because of ESA restrictions. Many farmers in California were left out to dry in the recent drought because of strict protections for a small fish. (And those are just to name a couple.) I've heard your stories of how your livelihoods are getting stripped away while your hands were tied by regulations that completely disregarded the irre-

placeable work of America's farmers and ranchers.

Of course, no one wants to see American wildlife disappear from our landscape, but it is time for common sense reform that brings farmers and ranchers to the table.

The upcoming package of House bills on ESA reform are a breath of fresh air to agriculture. It's time for an ESA that brings clarity and certainty, encourages voluntary conservation work, increases local involvement and charts a path for real recovery and delisting of species.

The ESA was created for the public good, and Congress needs to get it on that path before farming and ranching becomes the ESA's next victim.

KELLER

Continued from page 2

Whatever happens, good or bad, often people or things do not remain constant. Things change or modify over time. As an example of something that has changed in 45 years, just imagine attending this year's 45th class reunion of the high school graduating class of 1973. In many circumstances, a great deal of change has happened and, in some instances, even name tags fail to recognize a semblance.

Also, in 1973, Congress enacted the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It was intended to protect species believed to be on the brink of extinction. When the law was first passed, there were 109 species listed for protection. Today, there are nearly 1,661 domestic species on the list, with 29 species considered as "candidates" for

listing. Since the ESA creation 45 years ago, the law has had many shortcomings, especially for agriculture.

One reason for this is that farmers and ranchers own most of the land where plant and animal species are found. The land is open, unpaved and relatively undeveloped, so that it provides actual or potential habitat for listed plants and animals. Often farms or ranch practices enhance habitat, thereby attracting endangered or threatened species to those properties.

Unlike other industries, farm and ranch land is the principal asset used in these businesses. ESA restrictions are especially harsh for farmers and ranchers because this prevents them from making productive use of their primary

business asset. Farm and ranch families also live on the land that they work. Restrictions imposed by endangered species concerns also adversely impact farm and ranch quality of life.

The ESA is one of the most far-reaching environmental statutes ever passed. It has been interpreted to put the interests of species above those of people, and it can restrict a wide range of human activity in areas where species exist or may possibly exist. Furthermore, it allows private special interest groups to sue anyone who they allege to be in violation of the act. Currently, sue-and-settle tactics employed by radical environmental groups have required the government to make listing decisions on hundreds of new species.

Farm Bureau believes that farmers and ranchers will respond to incentives to protect species and habitat on their privately-owned lands. Instead of being forced to feed and shelter listed species on their own, farmers and ranchers should receive technical and financial help to accomplish this.

There is currently a bill in Congress, the first in many years, designed to amend and update the ESA to accommodate the needs of both endangered and threatened species and humans with complete respect for private property rights.

The clear shortcomings of the current ESA law need to be reformed. Everything else has changed in 45 years. The ESA should, too.

The resulting tit-for-tat tariff battles that seem to be ratcheting up slowly but methodically will make U.S. farm and other products more expensive in those markets. It's important to note that these tariffs in many cases are in addition to existing tariffs those nations impose on U.S. agricultural products.

That this is happening during a time of depressed farm commodity prices – U.S. farm income has fallen by more than half since 2014 – heightens the concern.

The United States currently is in some type of tariff “war” with several trading partners, including Canada, Mexico and China, which happened to be the top three markets for Idaho agricultural exports in 2017. Whether you are directly involved in agriculture or are a consumer of food, these tariffs have a rippling effect on all of us. Ag dollars get turned over in the economy more times than any other dollar. When agriculture does well, farmers spend those dollars to the benefit of all businesses in the nation.

Besides the short-term pain a tariff battle with important trading partners could cause, farmers are also concerned about the impact of losing customers in those markets long-term.

All that said, we understand that the Trump administration is pushing these nations on trade to try to secure a more level playing field for U.S. businesses.

A quick example: During testimony to Congress recently, friend and colleague Russell Boening, president of Texas Farm Bureau Federation, pointed out that China's minimum support price for

‘Here’s an idea: How about no tariffs and no trade barriers for any nation. That truly would result in a fair and level playing field for everyone.’

corn, rice and wheat in 2015 was estimated at \$100 billion above levels that nation committed to when it joined the World Trade Organization.

That total in illegal subsidies that China provides to just three crops exceeds the entire amount the United States will spend on its entire farm safety net for every crop in the nation over the life of the farm bill, Boening said.

This nation's trade deficit with China totaled \$376 billion last year and our trade deficit with the world was \$800 billion. That makes other nations' claims that the United States fired the first shot in these trade wars somewhat laughable.

Another presenter, Ted McKinney, Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs, said, “We need free, fair and reciprocal trade.”

Here's an idea: How about no tariffs and no trade barriers for any nation. That truly would result in a fair and level playing field for everyone.

Clearly, the administration is using the threat of tariffs as a way to gain trade concessions from other nations and U.S. businesses stand to benefit if the administration's attempts at negotiating better trade deals with other nations succeed.

But in the meantime, producers are starting to get concerned

about the impact the tariffs could have if they last longer than a few months.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue has said that President Trump has directed him to ensure U.S. farmers and ranchers are protected from the results of any trade wars and we appreciate that.

But as a fellow Farm Bureau member recently said during a

media interview, “Farmers want trade, not aid.”

So, while farmers and ranchers understand and support the administration's attempt to ensure American farmers and other businesses can compete on a more level playing field with their counterparts in other countries, we also urge the nations to find some workable solutions as quickly as possible so these spiraling tariff wars can end.

Our hope is that in the end, a more level playing field for U.S. producers will indeed exist and American farmers and ranchers can compete against farmers in other nations solely on their own merits.



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Gene editing could increase innovation in agriculture

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s recent announcement confirming its stance on plants developed through innovative new techniques collectively known as gene editing sent a jolt of excitement through the research and agricultural community.

Gene or genome editing has the potential to unleash a new wave of innovation in agriculture and

result in a slew of new, beneficial crop traits, according to researchers and industry leaders interviewed for this story.

Think better looking and tasting fruits and vegetables, crops with increased disease, pest and drought resistance, increased nutrient efficiency or prolonged shelf life.

With gene editing, “There are lots of possibilities,” said University of Idaho Plant Pathologist Juliet Marshall.

In a statement released March

28, USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue confirmed the department has no plans to regulate gene-edited plants the same way it regulates plants developed through genetic modification. “Under its biotechnology regulations, USDA does not regulate or have any plans to regulate plants that could otherwise have been developed through traditional breeding techniques as long as they are not plant pests or developed using plant pests,” the USDA statement said. “This includes a set of

new techniques [such as gene editing] that are increasingly being used by plant breeders to produce new plant varieties that are indistinguishable from those developed through traditional breeding methods....”

That is significant because a company typically spends more than \$100 million to commercialize a plant developed through genetic modification. There are only a handful of these so-called GMO crops on the market.

Gene editing, on the other hand, uses a simpler and far less costly method to create desirable traits in crops.

Because the cost is only a fraction of what it costs to develop a GMO or genetically engineered crop, it opens the door for smaller companies and public researchers to use gene editing techniques.

USDA's March announcement that it would not regulate gene-edited crops the same way it regulates GMO crops underscores the difference between gene editing and genetic modification.

Genetic modification involves introducing a non-native gene or foreign DNA into another species.

Gene editing only involves making changes in a plant's existing DNA.

"There will be those that say they are one and the same thing," said Charlie Arnot, CEO of The Center for Food Integrity. "No, they are not the same thing."

The changes that can be developed through gene editing can occur naturally or through traditional plant breeding methods. Gene editing speeds up the normal plant breeding process.

"You haven't modified the plant in an unnatural way. It's a completely natural modification," Marshall said. "We're not transferring genes between species or within species. We're using direct changes to modify what's already there."

Gene editing is a way to make very precise changes to a plant's existing genome, Jane DeMarchi, vice president of governmental affairs for the

American Seed Trade Association, told Idaho dairymen last November during Dairy West's annual meeting in Boise.

She likened gene editing to removing a period from a book.

'It's allowing us to reach the same end point much more quickly and more precisely than with traditional plant breeding. This is a powerful tool that can benefit agriculture.'

"It's allowing us to reach the same end point much more quickly and more precisely than with traditional plant breeding," she said. "This is a powerful tool that can benefit agriculture."

As a concrete example of how gene editing could help farmers, Marshall is working with USDA researchers to try to use gene editing to solve the fusarium head blight problem in grain.

The disease can result in massive yield losses in wheat and barley fields and while the impact of the disease in Midwestern states has been tremendous for many years, it's starting to become a big issue in Idaho as well.

"The potential to control this disease would have a tremendous impact to our producers directly," Marshall said.

"The genome or gene editing technique offers advanced options for breeders to develop new genetic lines," said Joe Kuhl, a plant molecular biologist at University of Idaho. "It's a new tool that hasn't been available until recently."

Another example of how gene editing can benefit agriculture,

Arnot said, involves a project where researchers are using the tool to try to develop a way to allow microbes to capture atmospheric nitrogen and fertilize a plant with it. That would reduce or replace the need for

supplemental nitrogen applications.

Perdue's March announcement was confirmation of USDA's existing stance on gene editing and provided some much-needed certainty to industry and researchers, Kuhl said.

The announcement was not a change in USDA policy but it kind of codified the signals the department had been putting out for the last few years, he said.

"It's reassurance to industry that USDA is not going to change what they've already indicated," Kuhl said.

Arnot said there has already been a phenomenal amount of research done using gene editing techniques.

"It's essentially being done in just about every sector of agriculture," he said. "There are thousands of researchers all over the world involved in doing research using gene editing."

USDA's announcement, he said, clears a path to bring that research to market.

While some researchers believe gene editing could revolutionize agriculture, Kuhl is a bit

more cautious when it comes to its potential.

Drought tolerance, disease resistance and improving color, texture or taste traits have all been researched and studied a long time, he said.

"They are very complex and difficult traits to work with and having an additional tool does not change that fact," Kuhl said. "The traits that are genetically difficult to deal with will continue to be genetically difficult to work with."

The techniques could be ground-breaking, he said, "but I'm a little bit more cautious about their real-world application."

Arnot said researchers and the agricultural industry must be prepared to explain to consumers what gene editing is and how it will benefit them.

Besides increasing agricultural productivity, gene editing could also benefit the environment because of its potential to develop crops that require less water and fewer chemical inputs, researchers said.

The Center for Food Integrity is conducting a communications outreach effort and will develop a simple kit that others can use to explain gene editing, Arnot said.

"The potential for this technology to do great things for consumers, the environment and farmers and animals is tremendous," he said. "Consumers are going to want to know, how is this technology going to benefit society and how it is going to benefit me? We have to be willing to have that conversation."

17 Idaho specialty crop projects slated to receive \$1.8 million

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – The Idaho State Department of Agriculture plans to award \$1.8 million to 17 projects designed to benefit the state's specialty crop industry.

The money will be used for marketing, promotion and research activities for Idaho's potato, apple, wine, onion, cherry, nursery, dry bean, pea and tree nut industries.

The money is available through ISDA's specialty crop block grant program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Idaho's 2018 funding plan must still be approved by USDA and final approval is expected by September.

The Idaho agriculture department program is designed solely to benefit specialty crops, which include vegetables, fruits, tree nuts, dried fruits, nursery and horticulture crops.

ISDA received 20 applications this year seeking a total of almost \$2.4 million in funding.

In 2017, the ag department received 26 applications seeking specialty crop grant program funding and ISDA awarded 13 of the projects a total of \$1.5 million.

In 2016, ISDA received 18 applications and awarded a total of \$1.9 million to 15 projects.

ISDA has awarded 120 projects a total of \$11 million since the program began in 2009.

This year's round of funding includes \$247,000 for the Idaho Wine Commission to improve consumers' perception of wine produced in the Gem State by conducting a marketing communications campaign targeting Idahoans and the national wine media.

The wine commission is also slated to receive a \$52,000 grant to help fund research and to conduct an economic impact study.

Boise State University will receive \$97,000 to create a statewide wine grape vineyard weather and soil monitoring network and digital atlas. The data will be stored and



The Idaho State Department of Agriculture has selected 17 projects to receive a total of \$1.8 million in grant funding designed to benefit the state's specialty crop industry.

available to the public.

The Idaho Potato Commission will receive \$141,000 to develop and deploy advanced detection methods for bacterial ring rot in potatoes. Bacterial ring rot is the most devastating bacterial disease of potatoes and can cause yield losses of more than 50 percent.

The potato commission is also set to receive \$124,000 to help fund a research project by University of Idaho scientists that seeks to find a way to control nematodes in potato production.

University of Idaho will receive a \$114,000 grant from ISDA to study ways to control the spread of potato virus Y in seed, fresh and process potatoes.

The Idaho-Eastern Oregon Onion Commit-

tee will be awarded \$122,000 to help fund a research project that seeks to use state-of-the-art sensing tools to detect onion bulb rot in storage.

IEOOC will also receive a \$72,000 grant for a project designed to increase exports by building and enhancing international markets.

ISDA will award the U.S. Dry Pea and Lentil Council, which is based in North Idaho, \$149,000 for a research project that seeks to better understand seed-borne mosaic virus in peas and develop antibodies or molecular-based diagnostic assays.

University of Idaho's pomology program is slated to get a \$136,000 grant for a project

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a lot in
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Photo by Jake Putnam

A sign advertises organic produce at the Boise Farmers Market July 21. The number of certified organic operations in Idaho has expanded rapidly in recent years.

Idaho's organic industry experiencing significant growth

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – Idaho's organic industry has expanded rapidly since 2014, spurred by continued growth in consumer demand as well as farmers looking for other options in a time of low commodity prices.

The number of crop and livestock operations in Idaho certified organic has grown from 169 in 2014 to 240 in 2017, a 42 percent increase.

"Idaho has seen an enormous change since 2014 in the number of organic operations in the state," said Johanna Phillips, Idaho

State Department of Agriculture's organic program manager.

A lot of factors have driven that growth and one of the main ones is depressed commodity prices, according to Phillips and other people involved in that industry.

"You look at commodity prices, we're not exactly in boom times," said ISDA Chief of Operations Chanel Tewalt. "That incentivizes producers to look at different kinds of options, organic being one of them."

Organic producers agree.

"The recent organic growth in Idaho has primarily been driven by low commodity prices on the conventional side of agricul-

ture," said Nate Jones, who grows a wide variety of organic row crops and has an organic cow-calf operation in Glens Ferry. "Farmers are looking for a niche or a way toward profitability and organic seems to" offer a way toward that.

Jones and other organic producers pointed out that consumer demand for organic food products continues to soar and the industry is experiencing solid growth across the country, not just in Idaho.

Total organic acres in Idaho increased 7 percent from 2015 to 2016, while they increased 13 percent nationally during that same period, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

“The organic industry has grown a lot everywhere over the last several years,” said Mike Heath, who grows several organic row crops near Buhl.

According to NASS, there were 179,000 certified organic acres in Idaho in 2016 – up from 167,000 acres in 2015 – ranking the state No. 7 in the nation in that category.

Total organic sales in Idaho increased from \$85 million to \$98 million from 2015 to 2016, according to NASS.

The industry has grown so quickly in Idaho that the ISDA has had to put a cap on new organic certifications so it can focus on providing quality service to existing organic operations in the state.

“You can’t keep taking on folks if you can’t take care of the ones that you have,” said Tewalt.

The cap, which was instituted last year, is still in place but ISDA officials said they hope to soon be able to lift it with the introduction of two new program inspectors.

Tewalt said it’s important to note that while ISDA is the main organic certifying agency in Idaho – 81 percent of the organic operations in Idaho have been certified through the ISDA – there are other certifying

organizations, so producers who want to become certified still have other options while the cap is in place.

Fifty-two percent of Idaho’s organic sales in 2016 were from the crop sector, 41 percent were livestock products and 7 percent were livestock.

According to NASS, hay was the top organic crop in Idaho in 2016 in terms of sales, with \$21.5 million, followed by row crops, mostly potatoes but also green onions, watermelon, cantaloupes and celery, at \$10.6 million, wheat (\$5.5 million), barley (\$4.7 million) and dry beans (\$1.8 million).

On the livestock products side, organic milk sales totaled \$39.8 million in 2016, representing 100 percent of that category.

According to ISDA, Southwestern Idaho (everything west of Custer and Camas counties) has the most certified organic operations with 77, followed by Southcentral Idaho with 71, Eastern Idaho with 44, Central Idaho with 40, Southeastern Idaho (everything south of Bingham County), with 24, and North Idaho (everything north of McCall) with 19.

While the state’s organic industry has grown substantially, Idaho is still a conventional agriculture state and conven-

tional agriculture still accounts for the vast majority of the farm products produced in Idaho.

While the conventional vs. organic agriculture topic pops up from time to time, in Idaho that debate has mostly faded, said ISDA Director Celia Gould.

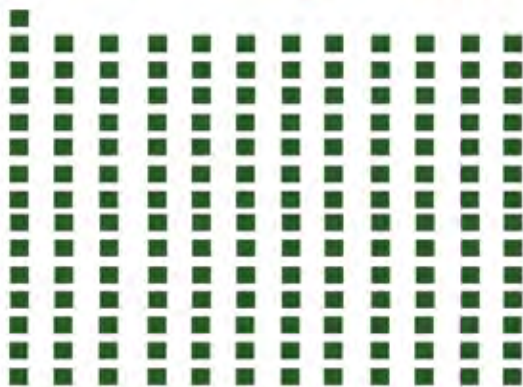
“Organic is a niche market that can complement conventional agriculture and we see a number of people doing both,” she said. “I think both sides try to co-exist and not downplay each other’s importance.”

Organic growers and industry leaders urged farmers thinking of becoming certified organic to make sure they have a market for their product lined up before they do and to proceed slowly.

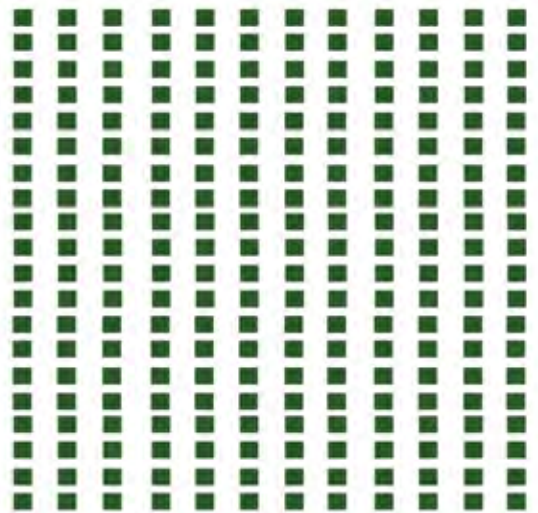
“We do have producers who get into organic who don’t know where they are going to sell their product,” Phillips said. “Make sure you have a market for your crop.”

“Don’t bet the farm on organic,” Heath said. “If you have no experience in the organic industry, don’t go completely organic immediately. Just kind of learn as you go. It is a different management technique for sure.”

Certified Organic Crop and Livestock Operations in Idaho



2014: 169 Operations



2017: 240 Operations

Idaho Farm Bureau Online

Idaho Farm Bureau Homepage
www.idahofb.org

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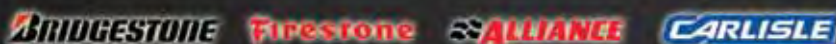
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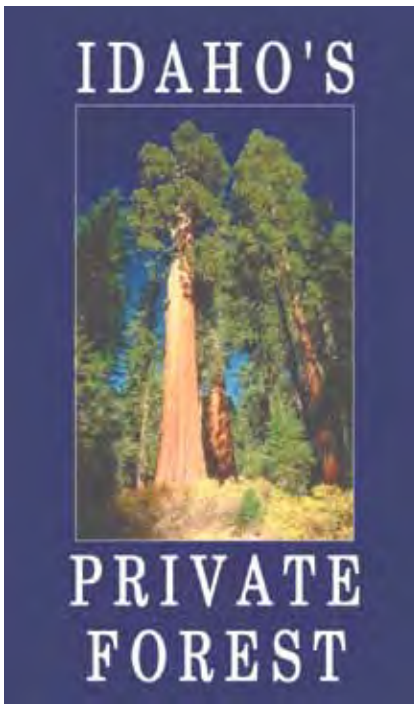


Photo by Yvonne Barkley

Land trusts work with private landowners in developing conservation easements that maintain working farms, ranches and forests while preserving water quality, protecting wildlife and conserving natural areas.

Land trusts and conservation easements

By Yvonne C. Barkley

UI Extension Forestry

There are a lot of us reaching the age where we can no longer ignore the dreaded task of estate planning. The complexity of such plans usually increases with the number and worth of assets – especially when some of those assets are land.

Idaho family forests, farms and rangelands can be owned by individuals, married couples, family estates and trusts, or other informal groups. And whether that land is forest or rangeland, harvested, grazed or farmed, chances are that your dearly beloved heirs will have varying opinions about how that land should be treated once you are gone.

The primary goal of estate planning is the accumulation and conservation of wealth, including its transfer to heirs and other

beneficiaries. The state of Idaho has laws in place to direct the division of your assets should you pass on without a will. State plans are fairly general and often fail to address a number of considerations. Land, in particular, is a unique asset and a poor fit for a one-size-fits-all approach.

Estate planning is a process. An analysis of your family situation, including current and future lifestyle desires and financial needs, should be discussed with your spouse and, if you choose, other heirs. Developing objectives for the care and management of your land is an important part of these discussions and usually where conflicting ideas are expressed about the future uses of your forest or farm. It is not uncommon for family members to have widely conflicting ideas. Even if all of your heirs agree on how your land should be managed and sustained into the future, you may want to look for ways to protect your land assets from federal and state estate taxes and development

by future heirs.

Conservation easements

One way to ensure that your family farm, forest or rangeland are protected in perpetuity is a conservation easement. Conservation easements are voluntary, legal agreements between a private landowner and a land trust and vary based on the landowner's vision and objectives. Conservation easements are an extension of your private property rights and can be a valuable tool for farmers, forest owners and ranchers who want to retain ownership of their property while forever protecting certain values.

Land trusts

Land trusts are private, independent, non-profit organizations and are not a branch of any governmental entity. Idaho land trusts work with private landowners in developing conservation easements that maintain working farms, forests and ranches while



Photo by Chris Schnepf

A conservation easement is a voluntary, legal agreement between a private landowner and a land trust and can vary based on the landowner's vision and objectives.

preserving water quality, protecting wildlife habitat and conserving natural areas.

Most conservation easements typically limit some uses of private land, including subdivision for residential or commercial activities, industrial uses and surface mining. The landowner continues to own and manage the land and can continue to live on and enjoy the property. The property may still produce crops, hay, livestock, timber, and other commodities, with the landowner making all management decisions and continuing to pay property taxes. The landowner may still sell the property or pass it on to family or friends.

Conservation agreements are recorded as part of the property deed. If your property has a state agricultural exemption, your

easement can be written in such a way as to not change your exemption. Wildlife habitat property tax exemptions on conservation easement lands may also apply in certain circumstances. Recreational access for the public is not legally required by state or federal laws; that decision is made by the landowner while negotiating the terms of their agreement.

A landowner may consider a conservation easement for several reasons. Because conservation easements restrict commercial, industrial and residential subdivision development of the property, landowners who have an easement may be eligible for federal income and estate tax benefits.

Some land trusts also own land and manage it for the benefit of the public while

protecting its natural resources. Landowners can choose to sell, rather than donate, a conservation easement, usually at prices well below the appraised fair market value of the property. In these cases, the difference between the fair market value and the bargain sale price may allow the landowner to claim a charitable income tax deduction.

Aside from tax benefits, landowners donate or convey a conservation easement to a land trust for more personal reasons. Mostly, the landowner has such a strong bond with their land that their dearest wish upon their passing is to continue to have the property managed and enjoyed as they have done, forever.

See FORESTRY, page 23

Irrigators, state reach agreement that could end flood control fight

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE – Treasure Valley irrigators and the state have reached an agreement that could end a long-running court battle over how flood control releases from Boise River system reservoirs are accounted for.

As a result, the parties have agreed to put an appeal before the Idaho Supreme Court on hold. That case has been stayed until Nov. 30, 2019.

If certain provisions of the agreement are met, the case before the state's highest court will be dismissed. If the provisions are not met, either side could continue with the appeal.

Both parties confirmed an agreement has been reached but did not reveal its details.

The flood control issue affects Water District 63, which spans from Boise to Parma in southwestern Idaho. About 350,000 acres in the region are irrigated by water from the Boise River system's reservoirs

The Idaho Department of Water Resources and a group of Treasure Valley water users have fought over the issue for years.

In seven out of 10 years, water is released from the reservoirs in the winter to prevent spring flooding in the state's most populous area.

The irrigators, who own the most senior water rights in the valley, say flood control releases should not be counted against their reservoir water storage rights because they happen during a time when canals and irrigation ditches aren't operating and they can't use the water.

They say the IDWR's way of accounting for flood control releases could result in a catastrophic situation where farmers and other irrigators run out of water in the middle of the summer.



IFBF file photo

Water is released from the Boise River reservoir system for flood control purposes in this file photo. Treasure Valley irrigators and the state have reached an agreement that could end a long-running court battle over how flood control releases from Boise River system reservoirs are accounted for.

IDWR officials argue their flood control accounting system actually protects the storage water rights of all water right holders, senior and junior, and ensures the water is used for maximum benefit.

Judge Eric Wildman, presiding judge of the Snake River Basin Adjudication Court, ruled in favor of the state in 2016. That ruling was appealed to the Idaho Supreme Court and oral arguments were scheduled to begin June 20.

But the recent agreement reached between the two sides puts that appeal on hold. As long as certain conditions of the agreement are met, the case will be dismissed, officials from both sides said.

"The appeal before the Supreme Court has been delayed and if those actions (in the agreement) are successful, the appeal will be dismissed," said IDWR Director Gary Spackman.

One of the provisions of the agreement is that lawmakers next year pass a proposed bill that updates Idaho Code to make it clear that the filling of any future new water storage projects will not have priority over existing reservoir storage rights.

Some lawmakers had called for a special legislative session this summer to pass that proposed bill but the postponement of the case before the ISC means that the bill can be addressed during the 2019 Idaho legislative session, which begins in January.

That will give lawmakers time to fully review the legislation and gather input from their constituents, Spackman said.

The agreement also hinges on whether Wildman approves of the details, said Roger Batt, executive director of the Treasure Valley Water Users Association, which is representing irrigators on this issue.

He said irrigators "are confident that this settlement agreement will protect both senior and junior water rights."

Irrigators have spent about \$1.5 million to date on the case, Batt said.

Though the two parties have reached an agreement, the legislature and judiciary both operate independently and will have a say in the issue, Spackman said.

However, he said, "I'm hopeful that the terms of the agreement can be implemented and the appeal (dismissed)."

WHEAT VARIETIES

Continued from page 7

quality for millers, is tolerant to Fusarium head blight and offers improved stripe rust resistance over another popular soft white spring wheat released recently by her program, UI Stone.

Three experimental spring lines – the hard red line IDO 1603, the soft white line IDO 1702 and the hard white line IDO 1704 – will combine stripe rust and Hessian fly resistance, Chen said.

Cathy Wilson, director of research collaboration with the Idaho Wheat Commission, is especially pleased that Chen's program is breeding for dwarf bunt and Hessian fly resistance, explaining that private breeding programs have largely ignored those threats.

Wilson said seed treatments are effective against dwarf bunt, but resistance is useful because the pathogen can persist on volunteer plants. Furthermore, she said resistance traits protect organic growers from yield hits. At the moment, Wilson said, UI and Utah State University have the only programs that are focusing on dwarf bunt resistance.

Wilson said Hessian fly is common in Or-

egon and has surfaced in isolated patches throughout Southern Idaho. She suspects it may be coming into the region on dairy straw imported from Oregon.

"It's out there. It hasn't blown up like it is in Northern Idaho, but

(Chen) is breeding in anticipation of the problem, which could blow up at any time in Southern Idaho," Wilson said.

In addition to UI Stone, Chen said UI Platinum, a hard white spring wheat released in 2014, and UI Sparrow, a soft white winter wheat for dryland production released last year, should enjoy considerable acreage increases in coming years.

Certified seed is now available for the first widespread planting of Sparrow to occur this fall. Sparrow is high yielding, with excellent end-use quality, and resists stripe rust and dwarf bunt. Growers who plant it also see a reduction in winter kill.

"This is very unique," Chen said. "UI Sparrow not only performed good on dryland in Southeast Idaho, but it was also very good in Northern Idaho and Washington."

Chen said UI Platinum has been one of the

highest yielding spring wheats this season, and it has excellent end-use quality.

Limagrain Cereal Seeds has the exclusive license to market UI Stone.

The company also has the rights to market UI Platinum, and is partnering with Lansing Trade Group, which contracts with growers to buy back Platinum grain for delivery to Grain Craft in Blackfoot.

Frank Curtis, Limagrain's chief operating officer, explained many growers plant hard white varieties that yield better than UI Platinum but can't match its exceptional milling quality. Curtis said mills have been blending other hard white varieties, such as Dayn from Washington State University, with UI Platinum to meet their flour-quality standards, and more UI Platinum is needed.

"There is a really good reason for growers to raise Platinum," Curtis said.

Curtis said Limagrain has had good luck in local trials of a Spanish hard white spring variety, 12SB0224, and plan to release it in the U.S. next spring. Curtis said the Spanish variety yields similarly to Dayn but has much better end-use quality.

SPECIALTY CROP

Continued from page 12

that is looking at the possibility of establishing almonds and walnuts as commercial crops in Idaho.

The Idaho Bean Commission will use a \$72,000 grant for a UI project that will study soil-borne diseases of dry beans and develop rapid diagnostic tools and disease management practices.

Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa was awarded a \$65,000 grant for a project that will seek to improve early season fruit yield estimates using artificial intelligence

techniques.

The Idaho Apple Commission will receive \$54,000 to help build awareness of Idaho apples and increase demand and sales thorough retail promotions and the use of local media.

The Idaho Cherry Commission will use a \$41,000 grant to create awareness of and increase sales of Idaho cherries through in-store promotions and social media.

ISDA will award the Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association an \$87,000 grant to domesticate, propagate and commercialize a

new generation of native plant products for the Idaho nursery industry.

INLA will also receive \$71,000 for a project that will look at four bacterial amendments in an effort to develop an eco-friendly method to improve the growth of greenhouse and nursery crops.

Idaho Preferred, an ISDA program, will receive \$188,000 to market Idaho specialty crops through digital advertising, social media, public relations and retail promotions.



By John O'Connell

Harold Bockelman, supervisory agronomist with Small Grains and Potato Germplasm Research for USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Aberdeen, Idaho, center, leads a tour of his facility's collection for 13 cotton farmers visiting Idaho.

Cotton farmers learn about Idaho agriculture

By John O'Connell

For Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

ABERDEEN – Though Wesley Spurlock raises corn and cotton in Stratford, Texas, he's learned he has a lot in common with Idaho farmers when it comes to stretching a tight water supply.

Spurlock was one of 13 farmers from major cotton-producing states who participated in a June 24-29 tour of Idaho agricultural production areas. The Multi-commodity

Education Program, administered by the National Cotton Council, began in 2006, with funding from John Deere, and is aimed at promoting camaraderie and dialogue among U.S. farmers in different growing regions.

"It's designed to help agricultural leaders gain a better understanding of the economic and agronomic challenges that their peers face in different regions of the country," explained John Gibson, the National Cotton Council's director of member ser-

vices.

Spurlock irrigates with Low Energy Precise Application – involving elongated hoses on pivots to apply water below the crop canopy to minimize evaporation and drift. During the tour, he saw a very similar irrigation approach in use at Justin Place's farm in Hamer. While Spurlock has adjustable nozzles on his LEPA system, switching from a spray setting to a drip setting after the crop is established, Place uses spray nozzles all season long.

“None of us has got the best way of doing something, so we’re going to find out what works and how it does work,” Spurlock said. “There’s always knowledge we can take back. I’m not sure what all of the knowledge is yet, but when we get home and look at all of the pictures, there’s going to be something we will be able to glean out of all of this, and we will use it in our production.”

During a tour stop at USDA’s Agricultural Research Service in Aberdeen, Spurlock said he was particularly impressed by the diversity of Idaho crops, as well as how Idaho growers can face extremely different growing conditions within a small area. The group also heard a presentation on Idaho water rights and toured dryland and irrigated farms, the Monsanto plant in Soda Springs, trout farms, an Amalgamated Sugar Co. facility, a cattle ranch, a fresh potato packing operation, a dehydrated potato plant and a malt plant.

“Idaho is a more diverse state than I thought,” said Keith Allen, of Latta, S.C. “I thought they just grew potatoes here, and maybe barley.”

Allen believes the program serves a vital function by helping farmers cooperate to achieve goals.

“We all have to work together to have a unified voice in Washington, D.C. If we’re split, we’ll wind up with nothing,” Allen said.

The program alternates between sending a team of cotton growers to a northern state and sending northern growers south to cotton country.

The Idaho Barley Commission and Idaho Grain Producers Association set the agenda and recruited Idaho growers to ride the bus and spend time with the cotton farmers.

“It’s important that everyone in agriculture have a broad understanding so they can be supportive of others in agriculture as the Farm Bill or other issues come up,” said incoming Idaho Barley Commission Administrator Laura Wilder. “I’ve seen a lot of great dialogue this week among (cotton) growers with the local hosts about different practices in the South versus how they’re done here.”

The program visited Idaho once before, in 2016.

Scott Brown, a Caribou County dryland grain farmer, invited the group to his cabin for a prime rib dinner. Brown was among the Idaho growers who visited cotton farms in Lubbock, Texas, through the program early last winter. During the trip, he became friends with another grower, who provided him sorghum seed, which Brown included in the cover crop blend he planted this spring to improve soil health and reduce erosion.

“Those people are just like we are. They’re the salt of the earth and the fiber of America,” Brown said.

The program has made Brown realize that farmers in different regions raise different crops and face different challenges, but also share important concerns, such as Farm Bill renewals, trade, weather and commodity markets.

“When it gets to Farm Bill time, we have an appreciation and understanding for the cotton industry’s issues and sorghum’s issues,” Brown said.

FORESTRY

Continued from page 19

Idaho Coalition of Land Trusts

Because of the federal tax implications of conservation easements, easements can only be held by qualified land trust organizations. The Idaho Coalition of Land Trusts (ICOLT) is a group of 19 Idaho nonprofit land trust organizations and two local and state government-sponsored programs who support voluntary private land conservation and conservation agreements throughout the state. Created in 2010, ICOLT members protect close to 60,000 acres of Idaho’s private lands under conservation easements.

All land trusts are not the same – each have their own mission and goals. Many of the

land trusts in Idaho work with landowners in defined geographical areas; others have state-wide goals, such as working with private landowners whose property is within federally designated wilderness areas. Some Idaho land trusts protect lands critical to specific wildlife species, such as elk or grizzly bears. In addition, some local and state government sponsored entities are involved in land conservation work and several national and international conservation organizations have state chapters in Idaho.

To learn more about each of these organizations, go to the ICOLT website at: www.idaholandtrusts.org/.

Owning land in Idaho is viewed by most as a privilege and scared trust. Being a good land steward is an important part of many Idahoans’ lives, and having a plan for the continued management and conservation of the land you care for can be of great comfort. Protecting and caring for your family forest, farm and/or rangelands not only gives you, the landowner, peace of mind, but also safeguards our natural wonders, provides clean and plentiful water, wildlife habitat and remarkable recreational opportunities, and benefits us all, in some way, forever.

*Yvonne Barkley is an associate extension for-
ester for the University of Idaho. She can be
reached at yvonnec@uidaho.edu*

WORD SEARCH: POTATO VARIETIES

C	H	I	E	F	T	A	I	N	O	R	K	O	T	A	H
A	E	D	T	U	A	P	M	D	C	W	N	D	C	S	L
S	T	N	G	N	I	L	R	E	G	N	I	F	U	Y	P
C	I	H	T	W	R	P	B	E	H	G	S	R	M	E	A
A	H	M	S	E	B	E	R	L	D	P	D	U	N	L	D
D	W	T	G	P	N	O	D	N	F	L	F	B	K	L	I
E	T	N	D	N	I	N	A	F	O	M	A	Y	N	O	R
T	A	F	E	R	G	L	I	G	H	J	K	S	P	W	O
R	P	K	E	S	R	W	N	A	T	R	H	A	O	K	N
K	M	P	G	O	C	O	B	B	L	E	R	N	N	D	D
G	U	T	N	R	K	N	A	B	R	U	B	T	T	L	A
S	P	E	R	U	V	I	A	N	P	S	I	I	I	R	C
D	H	F	Y	E	L	L	O	W	F	I	N	N	A	U	K
N	A	G	A	T	A	P	D	C	R	S	T	A	C	S	B
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Russet
Burbank
Norkotah
Ranger
Goldrush
Centennial

Purple-Blue
Peruvian
Majesty
Adirondack Blue

Yellow
Yukon gold
Yellow Finn
Agata
Santina
Bintje

Red
Chieftain
Norland
Red La Soda
Pontiac
Ruby

White
White Rose
Cascade
Superior
Kennebec
Cobbler

Fingerling
Petite

ANSWERS ON PAGE 29

Idaho hop acres increase by 18% in 2018

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – Idaho farmers added an additional 1,224 acres of hops this year, an 18 percent increase over 2017, while U.S. hop acres increased 4 percent to a record 55,339.

Idaho for the first time ever took over as the nation's No. 2 hop producing state last year, surpassing Oregon in total production but not acres. This year, Idaho, which typically enjoys higher hop yields than Oregon, will be No. 2 in acres and production.

Idaho growers strung 8,217 hop acres for harvest in 2018, up from 6,993 in 2017, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, which released the numbers July 2.

Oregon farmers strung 7,849 hop acres, 2 less than during 2017.

Washington remained the unchallenged No. 1 hop state with 39,273 hop acres, a 2 percent increase over the 38,438-acre total for that state in 2017.

According to NASS, Idaho farmers produced 13.7 million pounds of hops last year from 6,993 acres, while Oregon growers produced 11.9 million pounds from 7,851 acres. Idaho hop yields averaged 1,968 pounds per acre in 2017 compared with 1,517 in Oregon.

U.S. and Idaho hop acres have expanded at a rapid rate in recent years, driven by soaring demand for aroma hops from the craft brewing industry.

Idaho hop growers strung

2,423 acres for harvest in 2012 and that number grew to 3,376 in 2013, then to 3,745 in 2014 and then to 4,863 in 2015, 5,648 in 2016 and 6,993 in 2017.

Prior to 2018, U.S. hop acreage increased 80 percent since 2012 and production by 77 percent.

But the supply and demand situation has begun to balance out and according to Hop Growers of America's annual Statistical Report, released in February, "many industry leaders cautioned against additional acreage being added in the U.S. for the 2018 crop."

But this year's increase in acreage didn't surprise industry leaders, who expected a slight bump because of previously entered hop contracts.

"I think a lot of the increase is due to contracts that people already had in place," said Idaho hop farmer and Idaho Hop Commission Chairman Brock Obendorf.

HGA Administrator Ann George agreed, saying the increase in acres this year has mostly to do with growers fulfilling multi-year contracts. It took awhile for enough planting stock, particularly for

newer hop varieties, to become available to fulfill those contracts, she said.

"Now we're seeing the last of those acres go in," George said. "It wasn't surprising. We knew those were in the pipeline."

As many contracts come up for renewal next year, it's likely that U.S. hop acres will level out in 2019 or even decrease, George said.

"As we move into next year, I think we'll probably see things stabilize at this level or pull back somewhat," she said.



Photo by Sean Ellis

Farm workers prepare a hop yard near Wilder earlier this year. Gem State farmers planted an additional 1,224 acres of hops in 2018 and Idaho this year will solidify its ranking as the No. 2 hop producing state in the nation, a spot it nabbed in 2017.



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Next generation water leak detection and prevention



The Water Hero Wi-Fi connected system detects leaks, sends alerts and automatically shuts off water.

By Joel Benson

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – Fire probably tops the list of every homeowner’s greatest fears, but a far more common cause of property damage is water. One in 55 homes in the United States has a severe water leak each year and each leak has the potential to cause catastrophic damage.

Leaks can spring from many sources including burst pipes and water-using appliances such as dishwashers, washing machines, toilets, and water heaters. Just as it’s essential to have smoke detectors to prevent fire damage, having a leak detection system in your home can prevent water damage before it starts.

To help our members protect their property from water damage, the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation is working with Water Hero, a leak detection system that monitors and controls your home’s plumbing system. The system consists of a smart water meter in line with a motorized ball valve

water shutoff. The system is plumbed into water pipes right where water first enters your home.

Water Hero wirelessly connects to your home internet, allowing remote monitoring and control. It also includes a temperature sensor. As soon as the sensors detect a problem – the temperature drops below a trigger you set or water usage levels exceed your preset limits – it can instantly send an alert to your smartphone and automatically tell the motor to shut off your water.

Water Hero can also detect slow leaks, which can save money on your water bill. Many Water Hero customers have detected leaks immediately after installation, leading to a return on their investment in a matter of weeks or months.

Water Hero even works in agricultural settings. One rancher uses Water Hero to monitor his water usage through seven water troughs and miles of water pipelines. With Water Hero he can tell if a float is stuck open or a break in a line has occurred. Before installing Water Hero, this

rancher’s last leak cost him hundreds of dollars and well over 80,000 gallons of wasted water.

The system described above regularly sells for \$649, but Farm Bureau customers can save \$100 off of this price through Farm Bureau’s member benefits program.

“The Idaho Farm Bureau Federation is excited to be working with Water Hero to help our members protect their property from water damage while potentially reducing their water bills,” says Joel Benson, director of IFBF’s information division.

Farm Bureau members can purchase the Water Hero system described above and other models (all models are available in .75” and 1” pipe sizes) by visiting www.waterheroinc.com.

To receive the discounted price, enter the Farm Bureau Member Benefits Discount Code “FB100” (without quotes) in the discount box on the page where you enter your shipping address during checkout. If you have any questions, you can call Water Hero directly toll free at (877) 662-4496.

Eradication program makes serious dent in Japanese beetle numbers

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE – An Idaho State Department of Agriculture eradication program has resulted in a massive drop in the number of Japanese beetles detected around Boise.

The program was initiated in 2013 after a high number of the invasive pests were detected around the Warm Springs neighborhood in northeast Boise.

The insects can destroy turf, landscape and ornamental plants and they feed on more than 300 types of plants, including fruit and a broad range of field crops.

Besides preventing the beetles from spreading in Boise, the ISDA eradication program was also intent on keeping the pest from spreading to nearby farm fields.

Japanese beetles can spread to new areas at a phenomenal rate if outbreaks are not treated, according to ISDA officials.

“They reproduce quickly and can decimate crops,” said ISDA Chief of Operations Chanel Tewalt.

According to ISDA officials, the number of Japanese beetles detected in the Boise area has declined 99.3 percent since peaking at just over 3,000 in 2013.

“We’ve had huge decreases in the insect’s numbers; the program is working,” Tewalt said. “It was found in Boise, it stayed in Boise and the numbers are decreasing in the right direction.”

The program has prevented the shiny, metallic green insects, which have copper-colored wing covers, from gaining a foothold in Idaho farm country and it has also drastically reduced the pest’s numbers in Boise, said ISDA Director Celia Gould, a rancher.



A Japanese beetle is shown in this photo provided by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

“It’s been a hugely successful program,” she said. “It could have been devastating to agriculture and it could also have been devastating to the nurseries in Boise and the homeowners in Boise that take pride in their landscapes.”

The infestation occurred in an area that was difficult to manage because it was not in an agricultural area, where farmers and ranchers understand why the department would need to come in and spray pesticides to control a pest, Gould said.

“It was in an area where people are not used to the department of agriculture coming in and telling them, ‘There is a pest problem and we need to do some eradication here,’” she said.

But program managers did a great job allaying people’s fears and making sure the right control measures were taken and area legislators also played a key role in speak-

ing to people about the necessity of the program, Gould said.

Several Boise area legislators “really stepped up and helped people not familiar with the department of agriculture become familiar with us and they calmed some fears for us,” she said.

The insects are native to Japan and were first detected in the United States in 1916. They are now found in almost every state east of the Mississippi River.

The ISDA has trapped for the beetles since 1991 and before the recent outbreak, typically didn’t detect more than one or two a year.

Ag department officials believe the beetles came to Idaho from nurseries that received infected plants from Midwestern states that have established Japanese beetle populations.

TOP FARM BUREAU AGENTS



Agent of the Month
Gilbert Tuning
 Ada County



Rookie of the Month
Steven Zamora
 Kootenai County



Region of the Month
 North Idaho Region
Ben Rae, Regional Manager

WORD SEARCH

ANSWERS from page 25

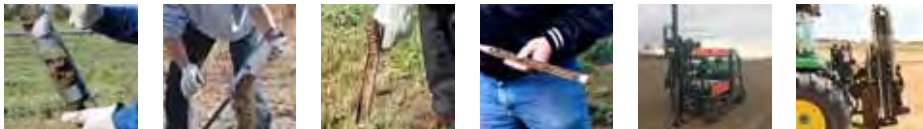
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Planning a gift to Idaho FFA can be an exciting and rewarding experience. The process involves asking yourself a few questions:

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- What is the best way to make my gift and fulfill both my family and my charitable objectives?

As you review your situation and explore the different ways to give, the Idaho FFA Foundation would welcome the opportunity to assist you with information about planned giving opportunities with Idaho FFA.

The type of asset you give will determine the tax and financial benefits resulting from your gift.



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In addition, the Idaho FFA Foundation works with the Idaho Community Foundation in establishing endowment funds to permanently provide for our mission of promoting premier leadership, personal growth and career success of Idaho FFA members and agricultural education students by providing strategic financial resources for the Idaho FFA Association, or as designated.

The Idaho FFA Foundation accepts and establishes Named Endowment Funds with a minimum gift of \$25,000. Named endowment funds allow donors to leave a personal legacy or honor specified individuals, and provide important funds for either general Idaho FFA program use, or specific designated Idaho FFA state or local programs, forever. In addition, these funds provide a venue for others to add memorial or honor gifts. The total gift for establishing a named fund may be given over a 5-year period.

Current Named Idaho FFA Foundation Endowment Funds:

- Idaho FFA Foundation Wayne and Blanche Kuhlman Kuna FFA Scholarship Fund, 2013
- Idaho FFA Foundation Sara Braasch Schmidt Endowment Fund, 2016
- Idaho FFA Foundation Don and Mary Johnson Kuna FFA Scholarship Fund, 2016
- Idaho FFA Foundation Pete and Freda Cenarrusa Endowment Fund, 2017

To learn more, contact Marcia Jedry, Idaho FFA Foundation Executive Director at mjedry@idffafoundation.org or 208-869-6594. Or, visit www.idffafoundation.org.

FFA—Growing Leaders, Building Communities and Strengthening Agriculture

Medicaid expansion on the ballot

By Russ Hendricks

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Recently, professional signature gatherers and others, primarily funded by out-of-state backers, secured enough signatures to put a measure on the ballot this November seeking to expand Medicaid far beyond its original purpose.

Originally intended to provide medical care for the poorest children in the nation and the disabled, Medicaid was designed to be a healthcare safety net for those least able to provide for themselves, who truly need assistance.

This measure, however, seeks to extend Medicaid to healthy, able-bodied adults with no children in the home, who earn less than \$12,140 annually.

Medicaid has filled a need for those it was originally designed to help. Farm Bureau policy supports the original intent of Medicaid and seeks to strengthen and reform the program by requesting Congress provide block grants of federal dollars so states can administer Medicaid more effectively, supports active prosecution of Medicaid fraud, and opposes expanding Medicaid eligibility so all the resources go to those truly in need.

Initiative supporters say these healthy, able-bodied adults simply can't afford medical care after paying rent, buying groceries, paying other bills, etc. That may sound plausible. However, once you begin to dig into the details, the narrative quickly falls apart.

Looking back, Obamacare assumed all states would expand Medicaid, authorizing states to enroll anyone who makes less than \$12,140 per year. Consequently, federal subsidies for private health insurance through Obamacare are only available to those earning more than this amount. Therefore, without expanding Medicaid, healthy, able-bodied adults earning below this level are no better or worse off than they were before Obamacare.

Some quick math reveals anyone earning minimum wage needs only work 33 hours per week to qualify for these generous federal health care subsidies. If they earn \$10 per hour, they only need to work 24 hours per week. That's hardly unachievable, especially with 3 percent unemployment.

At this minimum income level, a silver-level health insurance plan on the exchange will only cost about \$11 per month, while nearly all bronze-level plans are subsidized 100 percent. Therefore, without even working full-time, they could "earn" coverage just as good or even better than Medicaid, all without saddling Idahoans with millions in additional expenses.

Yes, they are being subsidized at this income level, but they are beginning to work their way toward independence.

This is exactly why the Idaho Legislature has wisely declined to expand Medicaid on multiple occasions.

If approved, Idaho's share of the expanded Medicaid cost is

projected to be \$40 million-plus annually, yet no funding mechanism is identified. Legislators will be left with the extremely tough choice of how to fund the expansion. There are only two options: either raise taxes or cut funding for other services. Schools or other welfare programs would be likely targets.

According to the White House, healthy, able-bodied adults already comprise 59 percent of all housing subsidy recipients, 67 percent of food stamp recipients and 61 percent of Medicaid recipients nationwide.

Programs that began with good intentions, to assist those truly in need, have morphed into hand-outs to those who are fully capable of providing for themselves. As it becomes even more lucrative to not work, more people will choose not to work.

In this economy, with historically low unemployment rates, jobs are literally everywhere. Work is the elevator that will lift these healthy, able-bodied adults, not hand-outs.

Furthermore, during the past 12 years, Idaho's population has grown about 17 percent, while the existing Medicaid budget has grown more than 100 percent. Medicaid spending growth has far outstripped spending on public schools and roads. What would happen if it is expanded even further?

There will be lots of slick TV, radio and print ads, again funded primarily by out-of-state backers, attempting to convince you that it is your moral responsibility to vote yes. However, which



Russ Hendricks

is more compassionate, building self-reliance or fostering dependence?

Clearly, the supporters have the upper hand in this battle. They appear to be gallantly assisting the needy. While it is a virtue to voluntarily assist those truly in need, this effort falls short of that ideal. Their rhetoric sounds caring, but it is really trapping the poor in a cycle of poverty rather than helping to lift them out of poverty.

Meanwhile, arguments against the measure do not lend themselves well to soundbites. Unfortunately, the folly of this approach must be explained in detail. This takes time, effort and resources. We invite everyone to do your own research before voting. Please share what you learn with your friends and family.

In the end, Idaho values of work, independence and self-reliance will once again help Idahoans to resolve this age-old issue.

A brief glimpse of Idaho agriculture

These various farming photos were taken throughout the state by Idaho Farm Bureau Federation Video Services Manager Steve Ritter.

They show some of the many facets of Idaho agriculture, which is the top sector of the state's economy, according to a University of Idaho study.

About 20 percent of the state's total sales each year are generated by agriculture and its related food and beverage processing industries.

From potatoes to milk to beef cattle, hay, wheat, barley, peppermint, chickpeas, wine, onions, beans, trout and a wide variety of vegetable seed, Idaho's 24,000 farms and ranches produce almost \$8 billion worth of farm commodities each year.

Most of those commodities are shipped to other states or exported. If Idahoans had to consume all the ag products produced by the state's farmers, they would have to eat 49 potatoes, two onions, 2 pounds of cheese, 195 slices of bread, 1.5 pounds of beef and 3 cups of beans, every day.

Idaho farmers and ranchers produce 185 different commodities and the state ranks in the top 10 in 30 of those commodities. Idaho ranks No. 1 in potatoes, barley and trout, No. 2 in sugar beets and hops and No. 3 in cheese production.



A bubbler boils up irrigation water on the Emmett bench in Gem County. The water boils up and drops through a screen to remove debris from the water before feeding into ditches and onto crops.



A semi-truck gets loaded with grain in Gem County as the grain harvest begins in the Treasure Valley. The truck is hauling Washington potatoes to Idaho and Idaho wheat back to Washington.



First crop hay in Canyon County lays in windrows drying in the sun before getting baled and put up into a stack until needed later for winter feed.



Baling Timothy hay at Daman Farms near Tensed, Idaho. The family farm will put up 3,000 acres of the premium hay, with most of it headed to overseas markets.



Crop duster Matt Mossman does his spring farm work from the air in Lewis County.



Hop vines in Canyon County begin the climb up tied-down strings at Obendorf Hop Farm. By harvest time, the vines will reach the top lines and be full, with the hop flowers used to brew beer.



A field of onion seed in Gem County in June. The crop will be harvested in mid-August.



Pink blooms on Ranger variety potatoes in Canyon County.



An aerial view of a hop yard in Canyon County. Idaho is now the No. 2 hop producing state in the nation, behind Washington.

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Source: USDA-ERS – America's Diverse Family Farms, 2016 Edition
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County Happenings

Shana Mickelsen, Teton County Farm Bureau's "Farm Woman of the Year," is shown in a 4th of July parade in Victor. Mickelsen and her granddaughters handed out cheese sticks, little cows and bracelets to people along the route. Mickelsen and her husband, Ted, raise cattle and hay on their 160-acre ranch near Driggs. Shana has been involved in farming since she was a child helping her father on their dairy in Pingree. She operated her own dairy for 15 years and has also raised chickens, geese, pigs and a lamb.



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Idaho Food Page



Enrich your diet with ‘super grain’ barley

By Laura Wilder

Idaho Barley Commission administrator

The health and nutrition benefits of barley have been well documented by human and animal scientists and nutritionists. The human health benefits include reduced cholesterol and associated risk of health disease, regulation of blood-glucose levels, reduced glucose intolerance and insulin resistance, weight control and improved gut health.

Barley foods are great for all occasions. Consumers may purchase barley in several forms. Pearl barley is sold in most supermarkets. Barley flour, flakes, and grits may be found in health food and specialty stores. Barley is also used as a commercial food ingredient in breakfast cereals, soups, pilaf mixes, cookies, crackers, and snack bars.

Like other grains, pearl barley requires cooking time for water absorption. Regular pearl barley should be cooked for about 40 to 45 minutes. “Quick” cooking barley has been rolled and steamed and requires only about 12 minutes cooking time. To save time on busy cooking days, prepare barley in advance and freeze for later use. Use your microwave for quick defrosting (cook on high for 2 to 2 1/2 minutes for 1 cup of frozen cooked barley).

Quick Ideas to fiber-up prepared foods

It’s easy to fiber up prepared foods quickly and easily with heart-healthy pearl barley. Here are a few ideas to get you started. To keep prep time down, cook pearl barley ahead of time, divide into one-cup portions and refrigerate or freeze until ready to use.

Add a cup of cooked pearl barley to a package of fresh or frozen stir-fry Oriental vegetables. For added crunch, toss in cashews or sliced water chestnuts.

Stretch your favorite meatloaf or meatball recipe with a cup of cooked pearl barley. Don’t forget to give burgers a fiber boost, too.

Make good canned soup even better by adding a cup of cooked pearl barley. Tomato, vegetable, split pea, beef, chicken and minestrone soups are all especially good with the addition of this wholesome grain.

For a quick whole-meal salad, gently toss a cup of cooked pearl barley with 1-1/2 cups cooked and cubed chicken or turkey, 1 cup halved green grapes and 1/2 cup each sliced celery and water chestnuts. Dress with your favorite salad dressing and garnish with toasted almonds.

Easy Barley Greek Salad

Looking for a great summer salad? Try this hearty, refreshing Greek Barley Salad. Add cooked barley to any summer salad for a delicious and nutritious dish that is sure to turn heads at your next get together. For this recipe and more check out the Nature's Hearty Grain website at: <http://www.naturesheartygrain.com/recipes.html>.

- 1 cup pearl barley
- 3 cups water
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. dried leaf oregano, crushed
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh parsley
- 2 medium tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1 small green or red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- lettuce leaves, washed and chilled
- tomato wedges or lemon slices



Place barley, water and 1 teaspoon salt in medium saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook 45 minutes or until barley is tender and liquid is absorbed. Combine olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar, oregano and 1/4 teaspoon salt; pour over hot cooked barley. Cool to room temperature. Gently stir in onions, parsley, tomatoes, bell pepper and cheese. Serve salad chilled or at room temperature on lettuce-lined plates. Garnish each serving with tomato wedges or lemon slices, if desired. Makes 6 servings.

Per serving: 266 calories, 5g protein, 15g fat, 30g carbohydrate, 8mg cholesterol, 6g fiber, 558mg sodium.

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Photo by Steve Ritter

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation President Bryan Searle speaks with Blaine-Camas County Farm Bureau President Sidnee Hill during IFBF's annual County Presidents' Summer Conference, which was held July 17-18 in McCall.

IFBF welcomes Blaine-Camas County Farm Bureau

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

MCCALL – The newly formed Blaine-Camas County Farm Bureau was welcomed into the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation fold during IFBF's annual County Presidents' Summer Conference July 17-18.

People in Blaine and Camas counties had gone without a formal county Farm Bureau for several years. But several county members from those communities elected a first president and board members at the end of June and held their firm board meeting July 19.

Now Blaine-Camas joins the

other 36 county Farm Bureaus in the state.

"We welcome you," IFBF President Bryan Searle told Blaine-Camas County Farm Bureau President Sidnee Hill. "We're excited about the great things that will come from there going forward."

During the two-day event, Justin Patten, IFBF's director of organization and member services, went over the details of the membership agreements that county Farm Bureaus have entered into with IFBF.

County Farm Bureaus need to ensure they abide by the IFBF bylaws and articles of incorporation, he said. In turn, he said,

"Idaho Farm Bureau Federation is here to support and help you any way we can."

Lt. Gov. Brad Little told county presidents that IFBF and farmers and ranchers need to be ready and willing to adapt to meet the seemingly unending array of challenges facing the industry.

"Change is inevitable. Adaptation and survival are optional," he said. "In agriculture, the change and challenges just seem like they keep coming all the time."

He also encouraged IFBF to remain engaged in the political world because, "If you're not at the table, there's a good chance

you're on the menu. It is really important that our voices are heard collectively."

Little said there are plenty of challenges facing the state's agriculture industry and rural Idaho, including internet capacity, wolves, water, sage grouse and trade issues.

But, he added, "I'm incredibly optimistic about the future of Idaho."

Paul Roberts, CEO of Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. of Idaho, told county presidents the organization remains in a strong position financially despite what are described in the insurance business as "catastrophic events" in 2017 and

2018: heavy snow damage to hundreds of homes and structures in southwestern Idaho last year and a freak hail storm in the Idaho Falls area in April.

Before that, the company had gone without a catastrophic event since 1987.

Despite those events, “The insurance company is doing well,” Roberts said. We have a very strong balance sheet and we can certainly withstand this. We will be there for our clients in the event they do suffer some type of loss.”

Roberts shared several messages the insurance company received from clients who were happy with how quickly and fairly their claims were handled.

“We’ve received nothing but positive responses for the most part on how those claims were handled,” Searle said.



County Farm Bureau presidents listen to a presentation during Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's annual County Presidents' Summer Conference, which was held July 17-18 in McCall. *Photo by Sean Ellis*



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Miscellaneous

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Freedom Arms belt buckle 22 pistol w/case, w/buckle. \$400. Pocatello, Id 208-425-3900.

Espresso and Cappuccino coffee maker. "Bellman" stovetop heavy gauge stainless steel. Classic and charming. Excellent condition. \$50. Grangeville, ID 208-983-0599.

Real Estate/Acreage

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Recreational

4 wheelers - 2006 Honda TRx 450. Super clean. 2007 Can Am DS 250. Automatic and OL Red 1986 Honda 250. Make offer on all or just one. Idaho Falls, ID. 208-521-1596.

Vehicles

Completely rebuilt 1991 Chevy Silverado SS-350. Short bed. Must see and drive. \$25,999. 208-887-1554.

1976 Ford Dump Truck - 10 Wheeler. Runs Good. \$6,000. Shelley, Id. 528-5337 Leave Message.

Wanted

Paying cash for old cork top embossed bottles and some telephone insulators. Call Randy. Payette, Id. 208-740-0178.

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.

Old License Plates Wanted. Also key chain license plates, old signs, light fixtures. Will pay cash. Please email, call or write. Gary Peterson, 130 E Pecan, Genesee, Id 83832. gearlep@gmail.com. 208-285-1258.

Our Idaho family loves old wood barns and would like to restore/rebuild your barn on our Idaho farm. Would you like to see your barn restored/rebuilt rather than rot and fall down? Call Ken & Corrie 208-530-6466.

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

Non commercial classified ads are free to Idaho Farm Bureau members. Must include membership number for free ad. Forty (40) words maximum. Non-member cost- 50 cents per word. You may advertise your own crops, livestock, used machinery, household items, vehicles, etc. Ads will not be accepted by phone. Ads run one time only and must be re-submitted in each subsequent issue. We reserve the right to refuse to run any ad. Please type or print clearly. Proof-read your ad.

Mail ad copy to:

FARM BUREAU QUARTERLY
P.O. Box 4848, Pocatello, ID 83205-4848
or email Dixie at
DASHTON@IDAHOFB.ORG

Name: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

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DATES:

ADS MUST BE RECEIVED
BY OCTOBER 20
FOR NEXT ISSUE
OF QUARTERLY

SEND US YOUR
CLASSIFIED ADS!
FREE TO IDAHO
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CHOICE HOTELS

Comfort Inn - Comfort Suites
Quality Inn - Sleep Inn
Clarion - Main Stay Suites
Econo Lodge - Rodeway Inn

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Travelodge - Knights Inn
Wyndam - Wingate Inns
Howard Johnson - AmeriHost Inn
Villager Ramada

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Holiday Inn - Candlewood
Crown Plaza - Staybridge

MOTEL 6

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\$1,000 Vandalism Reward
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Boise, Nampa, Pocatello
Idaho Falls, Coeur d'Alene

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Hertz - Enterprise
Avis - Budget

SUMMER FUN

Lagoon
Silverwood
Roaring Springs
Wahooz Family Fun Zone
San Diego Zoo - Sea World
Knott's Berry Farm

WINTER SKIING

Pebble Creek
Brundage Mtn.
Silver Mountain
Deer Valley Resort, UT

PROPANE

Amerigas
Suburban Propane

MEDICAL ALERT SYSTEMS

LifeStation

LOCALIZED

Cub River Ranch (Preston)
Silver Mountain Resort (Kellogg)
Dwight Baker Orthodontics (Eastern Idaho)
Summit Eyecare (Eastern Idaho)
Felton & Felton Law (Twin Falls)
Village Coffee & Bistro (Boise)
Desert Canyon Golf Course (Mountain Home)
Barking Spot Grooming (Salmon)
Larry Jensen Sod (Pocatello)
Geronimos (Pocatello)
Helping Hands Home Health (Pocatello)
Keller Williams Realty (Eastern Idaho)

OIL CHANGE

Jiffy Lube

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(To or From SLC)

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Lagoon

General Admission Regular Price - \$62.95 w/ tax

Farm Bureau Price

\$45.50 Includes Sales Tax

Purchase at select Farm Bureau offices.

ROARING springs water park

Regular Adult \$33.91 tax included

Farm Bureau Price
\$26.50

*Roaring Springs prices
include sales tax. Purchase
at select offices or online.



Regular Adult \$43.99

**Farm Bureau Online
Discount Price**
\$36.99

Child/ (Under 60") \$36.99

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discounts such as SeaWorld,
San Diego Zoo or
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