

# Idaho's Labor Shortage



**Yields  
down, 3**

**Intermodal  
facility, 4**

**Specialty crop  
grants, 18**

## Working together to find solutions



**W**hen you hear about what is going on in Washington, you often hear about the battle between political parties or special interests.

Sometimes it's easy to pick a fight with another group. But what's harder—and often more productive—is working with groups that don't always agree with you to find common ground.

Over the past few years, I've been proud that Farm Bureau has taken a seat at the table with many other organizations so we can help build a better future for agriculture and the communities our

members live in.

By bringing people with different viewpoints together, we achieve much more than any one group could accomplish on its own. We see the truth of this in our individual communities as neighbors help neighbors.

It's that spirit that led us a few years ago to partner with National Farmers Union and Farm Credit to launch a training program to help spot the signs of stress on the farm and offer help.

Unfortunately, farmers and ranchers are more

See **DUVALL**, page 6

## The President's Desk

By Bryan Searle

President Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

### We must keep pushing forward



**W**hen it comes to ensuring the long-term success and viability of Idaho's agriculture industry, we must never rest on the industry's collective laurels.

We as a group – farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses – must never stop pushing toward a better tomorrow.

Take the recent opening of Idaho's first intermodal rail facility as an example. Known officially as Savage Railport-Southern Idaho, the facility is owned and operated by Savage, a global supply chain company.

The facility in Pocatello transfers metal shipping

containers between trucks and Union Pacific trains destined for ports in Tacoma and Seattle, Wash.

Because it cuts down on the distance agricultural commodities grown in Idaho, such as hay, have to travel before being loaded onto trains destined for major markets, the facility promises to be a big boon to the region's farming industry.

But it didn't happen overnight or by accident.

In fact, there were some people who, when they first heard about the idea, assumed it would never happen if only because the idea of building an

See **SEARLE**, page 6

## Inside Farm Bureau

By Zak Miller

CEO Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

### A tale of two governments



**I**would like to share with you a comparison of two government agencies and I'm going to begin by sharing what they publicly state their purposes to be, in their own words.

Government agency 1: "equitably serving all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans."

Government agency 2: "to serve and regulate this cornerstone industry."

Both statements encourage a humble taxpayer with the hope that money collected from indi-

vidual citizens will then be used wisely to benefit the greater good. One of the hallmarks of a stable society and, by extension, the government is the belief by its citizens that it can trust its leaders.

On to the comparison of the two agencies, with recent examples:

Government agency 1: Less than 30 days away from important deadlines that farmers need to meet, in a county classified as "extreme drought," this government agency used armed guards to escort two long-time employees who are popular

See **MILLER**, page 7

**IFBF Officers**

President..... Bryan Searle, Shelley  
Vice President..... Richard Durrant, Meridian  
Executive Vice President/CEO ..... Zak Miller

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Dan Garner..... Clifton  
Austin Tubbs..... Malad  
Fred Burmester..... Downey  
Scott Steele..... Idaho Falls  
Stephanie Mickelsen..... Idaho Falls  
Travis McAfee..... Howe  
Darren Taber..... Shoshone  
Rick Pearson..... Hagerman  
Rick Brune..... Hazelton  
Cody Chandler..... Weiser  
Galen Lee..... New Plymouth  
Matt Dorsey..... Caldwell  
Marjorie French..... Princeton  
Tom Daniel..... Bonners Ferry  
Tom Mosman..... Craigmont  
Melissa Durrant..... Meridian

**STAFF**

Executive Assistant..... Cara Dyer  
Director of Operations..... Justin Patten  
Operations Assistant..... Peggy Moore  
Assistant Treasurer..... Tyler Moore  
Director of Member Relations..... Brody Miller  
Dist. I Regional Manager..... Ott Clark  
Dist. II Regional Manager..... Camron Hammond  
Dist. III Regional Manager..... Zack Lanier  
Dist. IV Regional Manager..... Naomi Anderson  
Dist. V Regional Manager..... Bob Smathers  
Boise Office Manager..... Quinne Russell  
Dir. of Governmental Affairs..... Russ Hendricks  
Energy/Natural Resources..... Braden Jensen  
Governmental Affairs Representative..... Chyla Wilson  
Director of Information..... Joel Benson  
Project Specialist..... Kristy Lindauer  
Publications Editor/Media Contact..... Sean Ellis  
Broadcast Services Manager..... Jake Putnam  
Videographer..... Michaela Andrus  
Member Benefits Manager..... Betty Inskip

Printed by: Adams Publishing Group, Pocatello, ID

**GEM STATE PRODUCER**

USPS #015-024, is published monthly except February, May, August and November by the IDAHO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION, 275 Tierra Vista Drive, Pocatello, ID 83201.

POSTMASTER send changes of address to: GEM STATE PRODUCER

P.O. Box 4848, Pocatello, ID 83205-4848.  
Periodicals postage paid at Pocatello, Idaho, and additional mailing offices.  
Subscription rate: \$6.00 per year included in Farm Bureau dues.

**MAGAZINE CONTACTS:**

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation  
EDITOR (208) 239-4292 • ADS 208-239-4384  
E-MAIL: seanellis@idahofb.org  
ADS: advertising@idahofb.org  
web: www.idahofb.org



Photo by Sean Ellis

Potatoes are planted in a Bingham County field earlier this year. A recent USDA crop production report confirmed what many people already suspected: Idaho crop yields will be down significantly this year compared with 2020.

# Idaho crop yields down significantly

By Sean Ellis  
*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

POCATELLO – USDA’s Sept. 10 crop production report provided the first glimpse of just how harsh this year’s growing season in Idaho was.

Because of severe drought conditions and unusually high temperatures across the state, yields were expected to be down significantly for many crops.

The crop production report confirmed that.

“This is the first glimpse of a bad yield year in Idaho,” said University of Idaho Agricultural Economist Garth Taylor.

Last year’s growing season in Idaho was close to ideal in terms of water availability and weather conditions and several crops grown on a large scale in the state set records for average yield in 2020.

That won’t be the case this year.

“What a difference a year and drought and heat make,” Taylor said.

The Sept. 10 report by USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service shows that the average yield for large chickpeas grown in Idaho was 800 pounds per acre in 2021, down 670 pounds per acre or 46 percent compared with 2020.

Average yield for small chickpeas grown in Idaho declined from 1,870 pounds per acre in 2020 to 800 pounds per acre in 2021, a 57 percent drop.

Average yield for lentils grown in Idaho dropped 29 percent, from 1,300 pounds per acre last year to 920 pounds per acre this year, and average yield for dry edible peas declined 30 percent, from 2,500 pounds per acre in 2020 to 1,760 pounds per acre in 2021.

Photo by Sean Ellis

**COVER PHOTO: Idaho’s agricultural industry is finding it increasingly difficult to find workers. See story on page 8.**

See YIELDS, page 19

# Make hay

## Intermodal facility already helping Idaho hay industry

By Sean Ellis

*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

POCATELLO – Idaho’s first intermodal rail facility went operational earlier this summer and is already paying off for one of Idaho’s top agricultural commodities: hay.

“It has right out of the chute in these last couple of months significantly impacted our bottom line already, in transportation costs,” Driscoll Management Co. CEO Dirk Driscoll told dozens of people who attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony Sept. 1 for the intermodal facility.

The facility, located along a Union Pacific rail line in Pocatello, transfers metal shipping containers between trucks and UP trains destined for Northwest Seaport Alliance ports in Tacoma and Seattle, Wash.

The ag commodities contained in those containers are ultimately destined for export to Asia and other global markets.

The facility, officially known as Savage Railroad-Southern Idaho, is owned and operated by Savage, a global supply chain company.

Before the facility opened, Driscoll, which owns Driscoll Top Hay, was sending containers by truck to the nearest intermodal facility in Salt Lake City, where they were put on trains and backtracked through Pocatello on their way to West Coast ports to be exported.

Driscoll, which buys and presses hay at its facility at the Pocatello Airport, is saving money by having the hay loaded directly onto rail cars in

Pocatello rather than having to truck it to Salt Lake City first.

Driscoll officials were among those included in early discussions 2.5 years ago with Savage and Union Pacific Railroad about the possibility of locating an intermodal facility in Pocatello.

Before the Savage facility opened, Driscoll was sending on average 80 containers of hay to Salt Lake City per week.

“This really is an answer to prayer,” Driscoll said during the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which included local, regional and state elected officials, ag industry leaders and economic development officials. “We are excited and grateful for what has taken place (here).”

Hay is Idaho’s No. 5 agricultural commodity in terms of total farm-gate receipts, behind dairy, cattle, potatoes and wheat.

Idaho hay farmers brought in \$460 million in

See **SAVAGE**, page 11

Submitted photo

**A shipping container is loaded onto a rail car in Pocatello at the new Savage intermodal facility, which loads shipping containers of ag commodities onto Union Pacific rail cars destined for West Coast ports in Washington.**





# DUVALL

*Continued from page 2*

likely to commit suicide than those in any other occupation. The inability to control the cost of supplies, the weather and the price for their products can take a tremendous toll on a farmer's mental health.

Not to mention, farming can be rather solitary and it's natural for us to keep fears and feelings bottled up. No one should feel hopeless or that they have to go it alone.

Partnering with these organizations, we reached more people than we could have on our own – and our communities are better off because of it. I have no doubt that lives have been saved thanks to that partnership.

Another issue that we have been working with a diverse group of stakeholders is around climate policy. A few years ago, it became clear this was a rising topic in both the public and private sectors.

Farmers and ranchers have made notable strides in reducing our environmental impact and in caring for our soil and water.

At the American Farm Bureau, we stepped up to engage more fully in the conversation. We're putting a spotlight on advances in climate-smart farming to better tell the world our story.

And together with other agriculture, forestry, food processing and environmental groups, we formed a historic alliance: the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance.

This coalition represents people who may not always think alike. Still, we focus on areas where we agree, without compromising our grassroots' policies, and put forward responsible policy solutions to support farmers and ranchers as we work together to achieve sustainability goals.

Because of it, the focus in Washington is very different from a decade or so ago, with much talk of respecting farmers and ranchers as partners.

A much broader conversation is underway about advancing climate-smart farming. There are groups far removed from the farm, like the United Nations, that seek to set goals for farmers.

Unfortunately, the UN has a track record of omitting some facts and failing to fully rely on science, in addition to closing its doors to U.S. farmers and ranchers.

We must have a seat at the table if we hope to set the record straight and stop damaging policies and commitments.

Coalitions like U.S. Farmers and Ranchers in Action are also doing important work to ensure agriculture is represented and farmers have a seat at the table.

If we want the UN to recognize the remarkable leadership shown by U.S. agriculture in advancing sustainability goals, then we darn well better have a seat at the table.

One thing farmers and ranchers know how to do is work together. We work to improve our communities and push for policies that will help us successfully deliver the food, fiber and fuel our country needs.

From our work ensuring food bank shelves were restocked early in the pandemic, to packing meals for kids to replace school lunches and even sewing masks to donate when there was a shortage, our commitment to giving back continues.

Our Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee is coming up on 20 years of working together to give back through our Harvest for All program.

In 2020 alone, YF&R programs across the country donated nearly 52 million pounds of food, spent 22,570 hours volunteering, and donated over \$1.4 million to their local food banks.

Bottom line, that spirit of cooperation inspires me.

Whether it's improving our communities or improving the policies that impact us and our communities, I am proud to take a seat at many different tables to represent agriculture as we work to find solutions. ■

# SEARLE

*Continued from page 2*

intermodal facility in Pocatello had been raised, unsuccessfully, several times in the past.

But it did happen this time and it happened because a small but determined core group of people worked hard to ensure it would come to fruition.

Members of the region's hay industry began working closely with UP officials on the idea 2.5 years ago.

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation wrote a letter supporting the concept.

The project's supporters never gave up and because of their perseverance, Idaho's agricultural industry in this region has received a shot in the arm because the intermodal facility has the ability to, in effect, move the state's farms closer to market.

Just like the Savage facility, every new

“win” for the state's agricultural industry, whether it be a potato or milk processor adding more capacity or a grain company seeking to expand acres of a certain crop in Idaho, began as an idea in someone's head.

It was pushed to fruition by a group of people who committed to the concept even though the challenges and hurdles might have initially seemed daunting.

I would encourage every farmer and rancher and agribusiness in Idaho to continue to seek new and innovative ways to help the state's agricultural industry succeed and thrive.

Today's world is changing quickly and we need to continue to innovate and adapt to those changes if we are going to remain relevant in the world marketplace into the future.

Much like the way Farm Bureau policy is created, every new innovation and success in Idaho's agricultural industry begins as an idea in an individual's head. That person then pitches the idea to others and if that person convinces enough people that it is a good

concept, it begins to come to life.

Then it's up to the people who are committed to that idea to keep working to ensure it happens.

I wonder, how many other projects like the Savage intermodal facility are there out there, just waiting for a person to birth it in their mind and then work to make it happen?

Every farmer and rancher who has been in this business of feeding the nation and world for any amount of time has a lot of ideas floating around in their head on how to make things better or more efficient.

Many of them might not be feasible or even practical. But some of them might and that's exciting to think about.

I would encourage every one of you to continue to think of ways to improve your own operation as well as your entire industry.

We must never stop struggling to find innovative ways to benefit the state's important agricultural industry. Remember, as goes agriculture, so goes Idaho. ■

Continued from page 2

with the community out of the local building in Malad due to what the agency described as an employee matter.

Farmers and ranchers, showing support for the employees and raising their concern over the ability to process their applications before a looming Sept. 30 deadline, met about 100 strong in front of the local government building to ask questions.

No answers were given. No leader of this agency chose to engage with the public as a group or individually.

To add insult to injury, the organization's leaders instead closed the office for two business days and issued a statement that said, in part, the closing was "to ensure the safety of employees and customers...."

The office has since reopened and producers are being assisted, although the two employees who were removed by armed guard are not there.

According to local farmers and ranchers, those two employees have been vital for decades in ensuring producers meet deadlines and accurately fill out applications.

In fairness, because it is a personnel issue, they should not be there until that employee matter can be resolved. But producers have received no information on why they were removed or when the matter might be resolved.

Producers continue to worry about the office remaining open and adequately staffed and want to be acknowledged.

Unfortunately, no leaders of this government agency, from the local to the national level, will engage with them.

The efforts of Idaho Farm Bureau Federation to get answers and a solution for these affected producers have fallen on deaf ears also.

Apparently, for this agency, "serving all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners" does not require communicating with any of them.

Our people deserve to be looked in the eye in small-town Idaho, even if the answer is not the one they want.

On to the other government agency.

Government agency 2: Amid widespread drought and tight budgets, this agency has found itself severely short-staffed, a familiar position in this current labor market.

This agency responds to the needs of the industry by finding ways to free up all available employees. People who wore one or two hats before are now wearing four or five.

From the director down, everyone in this government agency is making time to walk fields, perform inspections, and take all other necessary steps to allow our state's farmers and ranchers to bring in the harvest.

Despite its major labor challenge, this agency remembers its commitment "to serve and regulate this cornerstone industry." The agency has taken the stance of, the work must be done, no matter what, with harvest afoot.

In case you haven't guessed by now, government agency 1 is

the USDA's Farm Service Agency and government agency 2 is the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

Government works best when those that lead remember their sacred duty to serve the citizens the government represents. Of course, government cannot always give the citizens all they desire, especially in an employment dispute. But a good government always attempts to communicate with the stakeholders and respect the citizenry.

To ag producers in Oneida County, I hope that the Farm Service Agency honors its mission and serves you with equity and respect. As of this writing, I hope the armed guards have left and you feel respected again.

Thank you, frontline FSA employees, for your work and dedication to all the farmers and ranchers in our state. How challenging it must be when a bureaucratic policy from afar limits your abilities to do what you know must be done.

How proud we all can be that the Idaho State Department of Agriculture is focused on its stakeholders. From Director Celia Gould on down to the frontline employees, how impressive that when challenges arise, you have kept your eye on the farmers and ranchers and continue to serve.

We live in a blessed land with a blessed form of government, especially when our public servants choose to not live in fear of the citizenry but instead choose to serve it. ■

1961 2021  
60 YEARS

**Idaho Farm Bureau  
Financial Services**

275 Tierra Vista Drive Pocatello, ID 83205 208.232.7914  
4122 E. Cleveland Blvd. Caldwell, ID 83605 208.455.1626  
2732 Kimberly Road Twin Falls, ID 83301 208.733.7212  
806 E. Polston, Suite A Post Falls, ID 83854 208.618.2200  
1250 S. Allante Ave. Boise, ID 83709 208.947.2519

**Celebrating 60 Years**  
WITH LOW-INTEREST RATE LOANS.

To celebrate our 60th anniversary in 2021, we've reduced interest rates on all new (and many other) loan products.

**CARS | MOTORCYCLES | BOATS | ATVS  
HOME IMPROVEMENTS MORE!**

**Ask us today how we can help!**

Apply online at [www.idfbfs.com](http://www.idfbfs.com)



Photos by Sean Ellis

Farm workers harvest wine grapes in a Caldwell vineyard last fall. Farmers, as well as other businesses in Idaho, are having an increasingly difficult time finding enough workers.

# Finding workers in Idaho becomes even tougher

By Sean Ellis

*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

POCATELLO – Idaho’s agricultural industry has struggled to find enough workers for years. But this year, the state’s ag labor supply is extremely tight.

Williamson Orchards and Vineyards had to raise the average wage it pays its laborers by \$1 an hour last year to get enough workers to complete the harvest. This year, the Caldwell business had to raise its average wage another \$2 an hour.

“The labor supply is pretty tight,” said Williamson manager Michael Williamson. “It’s really critical at this point.”

He said the company has for a few years now considered bringing in foreign workers through the federal H-2A agricultural guest worker program but hasn’t because of the additional cost involved.

But the labor supply situation has reached such a critical point that “we’re really considering it this year,” Williamson added.

LaNae Nalder, who raises cattle on irrigated pasture in Rupert, said she has had unfilled job postings for the past 2.5 months.

“It’s a struggle to find qualified applicants willing to work,” said Nalder, who also is part of her family farm in Butte County. “There is just no labor.”

She said the situation is at a point now where more automation to make labor jobs go further is almost a must.

“We have to have it,” Nalder said. “It has become a necessity. It’s impossible to find workers.”

Idaho’s tight labor supply is not only an issue for the state’s agricultural industry.

Across many sectors of the economy, businesses are finding it extremely difficult to fill positions, said Georgia Smith, communication and research administrator for the Idaho Department of Labor.

“It’s not just agriculture; it goes much deeper than that,” she said. “Labor is the No. 1 issue for businesses as a whole.”



It's also not just an Idaho issue.

"It is an increasing challenge nationwide," said Craig Shaul, a research and analyst supervisor for the IDL.

But it's reached a crisis point in Idaho in large part because the state's economy is doing so well, he said.

Idaho's unemployment rate was 2.9 percent in August, a level that many economists consider to be full employment, Smith said.

As of Sept. 17, there were 50,000 unfilled job postings in Idaho and 26,400 people who were unemployed, Shaul said. That means that even if all those unemployed people suddenly found work, there would still be more than 23,000 unfilled job listings in the state.

"Idaho's labor force is as tight as it was before the pandemic hit," Shaul said. "The labor force that was available to some industries is no longer there."

That's good for employees but not so great for employers, as workers can shop around for a higher wage or "ideal" job.

"It's not even just ag competing with ag for workers right now," Shaul said. "It's the ag industry competing with everybody else at this point."

As Idaho's harvest gets rolling in August, peak employment for full-time and temporary positions at the Idaho State Department of Agriculture is around 550 workers. But this year, the ISDA could only fill about half those positions, said ISDA Deputy Director Chanel Tewalt.

As a result, department heads and even ISDA Director Celia Gould have been out walking fields doing inspections this year, in addition to their other duties.

"We're at a point where everyone wears multiple hats," Tewalt said. "You're not wearing two hats anymore; you're wearing four hats."

In addition to fulfilling its statutory duties, the state ag department also must do things, such as field inspections, that the state's farming and ranching industry has asked it to do, she said.

"We're just figuring out creative ways to get work done," Tewalt said. "We understand that our job with industry keeps the wheels of commerce moving. They count on us to perform duties such as inspections ... so when we have a job to do, we'll get it done."



**Top: Workers harvest wine grapes last fall in southwestern Idaho. Bottom: Onions are sorted at a processing facility in southwestern Idaho in this Idaho Farm Bureau Federation file photo. Farm laborers are becoming increasingly scarce in Idaho as well as across the nation.**

In a way, when it comes to labor availability, Idaho's economy has been a victim of its own success, Smith said. The state's economy is doing so well that it has created a serious labor shortage.

Idaho was the first state in the nation to return to its post-pandemic job level, Smith said. The state has added 7,000 new

businesses since the onset of the pandemic and the new Amazon distribution center in Nampa alone hired more than 2,000 people.

"Anyone who wants a job can have a job," Smith said. "A lot of this is because our economy is doing so well."

Some businesses are struggling just to stay open because they can't find enough



Onions are sorted at a processing facility in southwestern Idaho in this Idaho Farm Bureau Federation photo. The state's available labor force is extremely tight right now.

workers, said Dan Cravens, director of Idaho State University's Bengal Solutions Consulting, which consults with businesses.

"I work with a lot of employers who are having difficulty finding workers, especially for lower-paying jobs," he said. "It's very hard for a lot of employers to find folks. It's a struggle and it's a significant problem."

Smith said labor is the No. 1 issue for businesses as a whole.

It's also the top issue for farmers and ranchers across the nation, American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall told Idaho Farm Bureau Federation members in June during his visit to the state to learn about the importance of dams.

"As I've traveled America, labor is the biggest issue we face in agriculture," he said during a stop in Caldwell. "Labor is so hard to come by (and) the labor situation probably concerns me more than anything across the board."

Duvall said AFBF continues to try to find a solution.

"We've beat our heads on that issue for 20 years," he said. "We're working on it. I'd love to find a solution to it."

Shaul said Idaho's very tight labor situation is a result of several factors, including people retiring early, COVID concerns, some people staying on the sidelines for a variety of reasons and people shopping around for a higher wage.

Several factors "all at the same time are contributing to this," he said.

Until that changes, he added, "employers will be facing some stiff competition for workers and maybe even a threat to their business because they can't get workers." ■

farm-gate revenue last year. A lot of hay is used on-farm so the total value of hay produced in Idaho is significantly more than that.

While hay is the Idaho agricultural commodity that is benefitting the most right now from the new facility, the intermodal operation has the potential to improve the transportation situation for other Idaho ag commodities as well, speakers during the Sept. 1 ribbon-cutting event said.

Leaders of Idaho's wheat industry were on hand for the event with an eye for how the facility could potentially help Idaho wheat farmers in the future.

The logistics of moving wheat grown in southern Idaho via rail are complicated and getting more expensive, said Idaho Wheat Commission Executive Director Casey Chumrau.

"We are looking for new and diversified modes of transporting our wheat," she said. "If this facility could somehow facilitate new and additional ways for us to be able to get our wheat exported, we would be very excited about that."

The new intermodal facility is certainly a positive for the region's wheat industry, said Rockland farmer and IWC Chairman Cory Kress.

"The more options we have to get our wheat out of southern Idaho, the better," he said.

Early in the process when people first started discussing the possibility of locating an intermodal facility in Pocatello, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation was an enthusiastic supporter of the concept, said IFBF President Bryan Searle, a farmer from Shelley.

"We were happy to see it come to fruition," he said. "We see this is a regional boon to all of agriculture."

Armando Tirado, Savage's vice president and industrial rail unit leader, told Idaho Farm Bureau Federation the potential is there for the Pocatello facility to handle a lot more ag commodities in the future.

"As this gets up and going more, I think the potential is really limitless for what we could do from here and what we intend to do from here," he said.

Gov. Brad Little, a rancher and farm-



This is an aerial view of Savage's intermodal facility in Pocatello, which loads shipping containers of ag commodities onto Union Pacific rail cars destined for West Coast ports in Washington.

Submitted photo

er from Emmett, said Idaho farmers and ranchers have always faced transportation challenges to get their products to market in an efficient and timely manner.

At the same time, he said, the railroad needs to be efficient in order to be profitable. "Savage has basically figured out a way to make that model work for everybody," Little said.

What the facility does, he added, "is it moves our farm families in Idaho closer to the ultimate consumer ... The minute you take a farm in Aberdeen and move that grower's commodity to either a national market or an international market in this case, it makes farming more profitable and more sustainable."

For now, the rail cars that travel through the intermodal facility can handle hay and other non-refrigerated agricultural products.

But leaders of Idaho's potato industry have been looking at the possibility of the facility loading refrigerated ag commodities, such as spud products, onto refrigerated rail cars in the future.

Shawn Boyle, president of the Idaho Grower Shippers Association, which represents potato growers and shippers in Idaho, has visited Idaho potato warehouses over the past few years to get their feedback on that possibility.

"Any routes that get us closer to our major markets would be a big deal for Idaho potato growers," Boyle said.

Idaho's entire ag industry, including potato growers, could realize a big benefit through the Savage intermodal facility in the future

by organizing to show UP officials the total volume of farm products that come out of Idaho, he said.

Boyle said he's not sure what UP's long-term goals are, "But our goal has been, with Savage, to position ourselves and show the value in coming to Idaho with those rail cars."

Savage is a global provider of industry infrastructure and supply chain services and has 4,500 employees in 200 locations around the world.

Savage's Pocatello intermodal facility is the company's most recent project.

"This is a fantastic new location for us," said Savage President and CEO Kirk Aubry.

He said the facility is an access point that can provide farmers and other shippers in land-locked Idaho an economical way to get their products to market.

"This railport brings Idaho families, Idaho businesses, closer to their markets," Aubry said. "That's what this is all about."

Shipping containers coming from the East Coast and headed for the Seattle and Tacoma ports are often empty, said Don Myer, a Port of Tacoma commissioner and managing member of the Northwest Seaport Alliance.

Meyer, who was born and raised on a farm, said exporting empty containers is unacceptable to him because he knows they can be filled with ag products on their way to West Coast ports.

"Instead of air, I want to see ag products in those empty containers," he said. "There is one priority that I as a ... managing member of the Seaport Alliance have and that priority is ag products." ■



# Fall calving boosts survival rates for some Idaho ranchers

By Dianna Troyer

*For Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

Instead of calving during frigid February or a March blizzard, several eastern Idaho ranchers say they are relieved to have switched to a more comfortable and profitable fall-calving season.

“We’re starting to see a little more interest in fall calving in Idaho,” said Dr. John Hall, University of Idaho extension beef specialist and superintendent of the university’s cow-calf research center in Carmen.

For ranchers who are thinking of transitioning to fall calving, he suggests doing an economic and marketing analysis to ensure cash flow isn’t negatively impacted.

“Talk to fall-calving producers and work with a team of extension professionals, nutritionists, lenders and financial advisers,” Hall said.

For ranchers near Leadore and Mackay, a fall calving season means less labor checking on cows, higher calf survival rates, more choices for marketing calves, and no longer dealing with crooked calf syndrome, a disorder caused when cows eat lupine early in pregnancy.

“It’s not for everyone, but it has worked well for us,” said Merrill Beyeler, who raises Black Angus cattle near Leadore. “For many producers who made the switch, it’s the difference between running a break-even ranch to owning a profitable business.”

To minimize the impact on cash flow of his calf crop, Beyeler took about six years to change his breeding program and transition to a fall-calving herd.

“This fall, the transition will be complete for us, and we haven’t looked back,” he said.

Several factors convinced him to begin calving in mid-August through September instead of February.

“Calving in the fall instead of spring is a more efficient use of labor,” he said. “After you start calving in February and are finally done, you have to start farming right away. You really don’t get a break. It’s an intense crazy six months.”

During spring calving, moving cows and calves to pastures is arduous.

“We’re at about 6,000 feet, so snow lingers,” he said. “When

we were calving in February and March, we placed pairs in different pastures based on the calf's age. It was time-consuming, labor-intensive, and expensive for us to clear roads of snow, then haul the pairs in stock trailers to the different pastures."

With fall calving, that task is eliminated.

"When moving cows that don't have calves at their side on the range, you don't worry about cows and calves mothering up, or a calf running back to where it sucked last," he said. "Put the cows through the gate, load up, and go home looking forward to a good night's rest uninterrupted by worrisome thoughts of what you will find the next day."

Beyeler said by calving in fall, he loses fewer calves to cold weather or wolves.

"Our survival rate is 4 to 5 percent better in the fall," he said. "There have been a couple of years that at the end of the calving season we have had a few more calves than cows due to twins. This never occurred when we were calving in February, regardless of twins."

During August and September, his calves were easy prey for wolves, especially on the range.

"This was one of the major factors for moving to a fall program," he said. "Calves no longer spend time on the range."

Fall calving also gives Beyeler more marketing options.

"We used to sell our calf crop in early November when most others did, too," he said. "A fall program gives us more and better marketing opportunities. We can market our calves as grass calves in the spring or sell them in the fall as yearlings. Spring and early summer is the best time to sell cows that didn't get pregnant, which has made a significant positive difference for us. Fall calving requires a little more hay to feed through winter, but it's offset by the prices we get in spring and summer."

**Crooked calf syndrome**

To the west of Leadore, in the Lost River Valley south of Mackay, Bo and Lewene Clark's Red and Black Angus herd has been calving in October and November for about five years.

The Clarks switched their calving season from the early months of the year to fall due to wolf depredation and crooked calf syndrome.



Photos courtesy of Merrill Beyeler

**Merrill Beyeler says he hasn't lost calves to wolves since his cows started giving birth in fall.**

**OPPOSITE PAGE: Since switching to a fall instead of a spring calving season, Merrill Beyeler of Leadore says he has more flexibility selling his calf crop.**

"Fall calving has helped us move from breaking even to making a living," Clark said. "We realized we can't keep doing business like grandpa did and expect to make a profit."

Crooked calf syndrome occurred in the herd after lupine grew prolifically on their ranges following a wildfire. When cows eat lupine between the 40th and 100th day of gestation, an alkaloid in the plant decreases the fetus' movement. As a result, calves are often born with joints that are fused at awkward crooked angles or are stillborn.

"We sent some tissue samples to two university labs and both confirmed that alkaloid in lupine caused the deformity," Clark said.

Cows can graze on lupine safely in the fall when the plants are in the pod stage.

"Switching calving seasons has been a gradual change for us for the past 23 years," Clark said. "About 10 years ago, we started getting more intense about it until the entire herd was calving in fall for the past five years."

One of the hardest adjustments "is realizing you don't have to check on your cows through the night, worrying if a calf will freeze to the ground," Clark said.

"You don't have to watch them like a hawk," Lewene said. "Most give birth fine during the daytime."

Clark said he noticed calves born in good weather are heavier at weaning than those born in cold weather.

"Our calves that have two weeks of good weather after they're born weigh about 100 pounds more than those that were born in cold weather even though they're only two weeks apart in age," he said.

For the Clarks, feeding cows and their 100- to 200-pound calves through winter is minimal.

"The calves are getting most of their nutrition from the cow, not hay, during winter," Lewene said.

Clark said fall calving allows him to take advantage of the seasonality of cattle prices and like Beyeler, he generally sells in spring.



“It varies, though,” Clark said. “We sell when the market and weather tells us to. Last year a drought was forecast, so we adjusted.”

Another positive factor is that after their bulls are done breeding in late fall and early winter, Clark leases them for several months in late spring to a neighbor who has a conventional calving season.

“We get paid to have our bulls taken away, fed and cared for,” he said.

Clark said while fall calving works at his ranch, “it’s not one-size fits all and might not be feasible for others.”

Buying a fall herd

Last year, the Clarks’ neighbors, Bill and Holly Seefried, transitioned to fall calving.

“We were blessed to be able to sell nearly half of our older spring calving cows and buy a fall-calving Red Angus herd from someone who wanted to get out of the business,” Seefried said. “Our calf losses have declined considerably since we switched.”

They even had seven sets of twins the first year.

Seefried said during the fall, almost all

of their cows give birth during the day.

“It’s amazing and a relief,” he said. “Calving in winter and spring is always cold and miserable, especially with checking on them at night.”

Before switching, the Seefrieds had calved in February and March and sold their calves in mid-October.

“But the last couple of calving seasons have been awful,” Holly said. “It seemed like we were up all night long, and every calf was getting sick. Everyone was crabby and tired and heartsick. Having cattle wasn’t fun anymore.”

They brainstormed about what could be done differently.

“It was either change or get out of the cattle business entirely,” Holly said. “That’s when we really started looking into fall calving.”

They talked to the Clarks for advice.

“We were fortunate to find a fall-calving herd,” Holly said. “Switching calving seasons is a huge deal. You either have to switch gradually, about a month a year for several years, or skip a year with your calf

crop. That is really hard to do with cattle because they have such a long gestation period and you have so much money invested in them. That’s why most people don’t change.”

Holly said she would not recommend “switching the way we did. We took a big step of faith and did not turn out any bulls in the spring like we usually do. Then we started praying. We’re so thankful it all worked out.”

Advice from beef specialist

There are pros and cons to fall calving, Dr. Hall said.

In general, ranchers who switched from a spring to fall season saw improvements in weaning rates, cow nutrition, and pregnancy rate.

The downside is the need for additional hay during winter. To reduce fall and early winter feed costs while allowing cows to rebreed successfully, cow-calf pairs can be grazed on hay aftermath.

“Another constraint is how that switch might interface with permits on public lands,” he said.



Hall describes the advantages of a fall-calving season.

Fall calves tend to realize a 2% to 5% increase in weaning rate because they thrive without weather stresses and will consume colostrum in greater amounts, bolstering their immune system.

Fall-calving cows build body condition throughout the summer, enabling them to cycle more rapidly than spring-calving cows.

Cull cow prices are higher from May through early September versus other times of the year, which adds value to open fall-calving cows.

Instead of marketing calves at weaning, most fall-calving ranchers shift to marketing weaned calves or yearlings. Calves are weaned in early spring to take advantage of cheap gains and high growth rates on summer forage. Seasonal price highs for 700- to 800-pound calves are July through September.

For more specific information about fall calving, Hall may be contacted at 208.756.2749 or [jbhall@uidaho.edu](mailto:jbhall@uidaho.edu). ■



Photo courtesy of Merrill Beyeler

**Merrill Beyeler says it is easy to move cows and calves to different pastures during a fall-calving season.**

**TOP: In the Lost River Valley, Bill and Holly Seefried have had several sets of twins since they switched to a fall-calving season. (Photo by Holly Seefried)**

# Statement of ownership

## UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**  
**GEM STATE PRODUCER**

1. Publication Title: GEM STATE PRODUCER  
 2. Publication Number: 01510241  
 3. Filing Date: October 2021  
 4. Issue Frequency: 8 months of the year when quarterly is not produced: 8 (EIGHT)  
 5. Annual Subscription Price: \$6.00  
 6. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4): 275 TIERRA VISTA DRIVE, POCATELLO, ID 83201-5813  
 7. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer): 275 TIERRA VISTA DRIVE, PO. BOX 4848, POCATELLO, ID 83205-4848  
 8. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank):  
 Publisher (Name and complete mailing address): ZAK MILLER, PO BOX 4848, POCATELLO, ID 83205-4848  
 Editor (Name and complete mailing address): SEAN ELLIS, PO BOX 4848, POCATELLO, ID 83205-4848  
 Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address): SEAN ELLIS, PO BOX 4848, POCATELLO, ID 83205-4848  
 9. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)  
 Full Name: IDAHO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION  
 Complete Mailing Address: 275 TIERRA VISTA DR, POCATELLO, ID 83201-5813  
 10. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box:  None  
 Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Complete Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 11. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)  
 The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:  
 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months  
 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 4 of 4) See instructions page 4j | PSN: 7530-01-000-9051 | PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com

## UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**  
**GEM STATE PRODUCER**

13. Publication Title: GEM STATE PRODUCER  
 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: October 2021

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation

		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
<b>a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)</b>			
		11058	10867
<b>b. Paid Circulation (PS Mail or Outside the Mail)</b>			
(1)	Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	11022	10831
(2)	Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	0	0
(3)	Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	0	0
(4)	Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	4	6
<b>c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))</b>		11026	10837
<b>d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15c (1), (2), (3), and (4))</b>			
(1)	Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	0	0
(2)	Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	0	0
(3)	Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)	12	12
(4)	Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	10	8
<b>e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3), and (4))</b>		22	20
<b>f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)</b>		11048	10857
<b>g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page 83))</b>		10	10
<b>h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)</b>		11058	10867
<b>i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)</b>		99.7	99.7

\* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 2 of 4)

## UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**  
**GEM STATE PRODUCER**

16. Electronic Copy Circulation

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	0	0
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	0	0
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	0	0
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100)	0	0

I certify that 90% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership  
 If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the October 2021 issue of this publication.  
 Publication not required.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner  
 Signature: *Sean Ellis*  
 Title: Managing Editor  
 Date: October 1, 2021

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 3 of 4) | PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com

## LOW INTEREST LOANS FOR IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

**1% - 1.5% Terms 7-15 Years Up to \$600,000**

- Sprinkler Irrigation
- No-Till Drills
- Fences
- Livestock Feeding Operations
- Solar Stock Water Pump Systems

swc.idaho.gov (208) 332-1790

## Country Chuckles

By Jonny Hawkins

Copyright 2020





**A good story  
sticks with you.  
So do your  
financial  
decisions.**

**As you close the books on this year, you know your choices are shaping your financial future.** Let us help you make the best decisions for you and your family.

**Contact your agent or advisor to discuss year-end financial strategies that could benefit you now and for years to come.**



It's your future. Let's protect it.®

Financial Planning | Retirement Funding | Life Insurance | Mutual Funds | College Funding

Securities & services offered through FBL Marketing Services, LLC, 5400 University Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50266, 877/860-2904, Member SIPC.

Advisory services offered through FBL Wealth Management, LLC + Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company\*/West Des Moines, IA. \*Affiliates. \*Company provider of Farm Bureau Financial Services. WM030 (9-21)

# Idaho gets additional \$2.8 million in specialty crop grant money

By Sean Ellis

*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

POCATELLO – An additional, significant amount of grant money will be available to Idaho's specialty crop industry this year.

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture in December will begin accepting applications for an additional \$2.8 million in grant money available through its annual specialty crop block grant program.

It will be the second time this year the ISDA has accepted applications for the block grant funding, which can be used to promote, market and conduct research for the state's specialty crop industry.

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

That \$2.8 million is in addition to a separate pot of \$2 million the ISDA received earlier this year through USDA for the program.

The \$2 million was provided through USDA's normal specialty crop block grant program.

The \$2.8 million was provided through a COVID-relief bill.

The deadline to submit applications seeking funding for the initial pot of \$2 million closed this spring and ISDA expects to announce grant recipients for that funding in September.

The state's ag department will accept applications for the \$2.8 million in funding from Dec. 1 through the end of January. The department expects to announce grant recipients for this additional round of funding next spring.

ISDA Deputy Director Chanel Tewalt said the department will begin conducting outreach to the state's specialty crop industry in September to give farm groups plenty of time to put together applications for projects.

"It is a significant amount of additional funding," she said. "Most folks don't know about this and they don't necessarily have projects developed, so we want to give a lot of lead time so people can put some good projects together."

The application guidelines for the additional pot of money available through the COVID-relief bill are basically the same as for the regular specialty crop program funded annually through USDA.

But they do include a somewhat expanded scope, Tewalt said, and that could enable industry groups to put together some unique, innovative projects.

For example, projects available for the \$2.8 million in funding could include ones seeking to mitigate impacts related to COVID-19, although they don't have to.

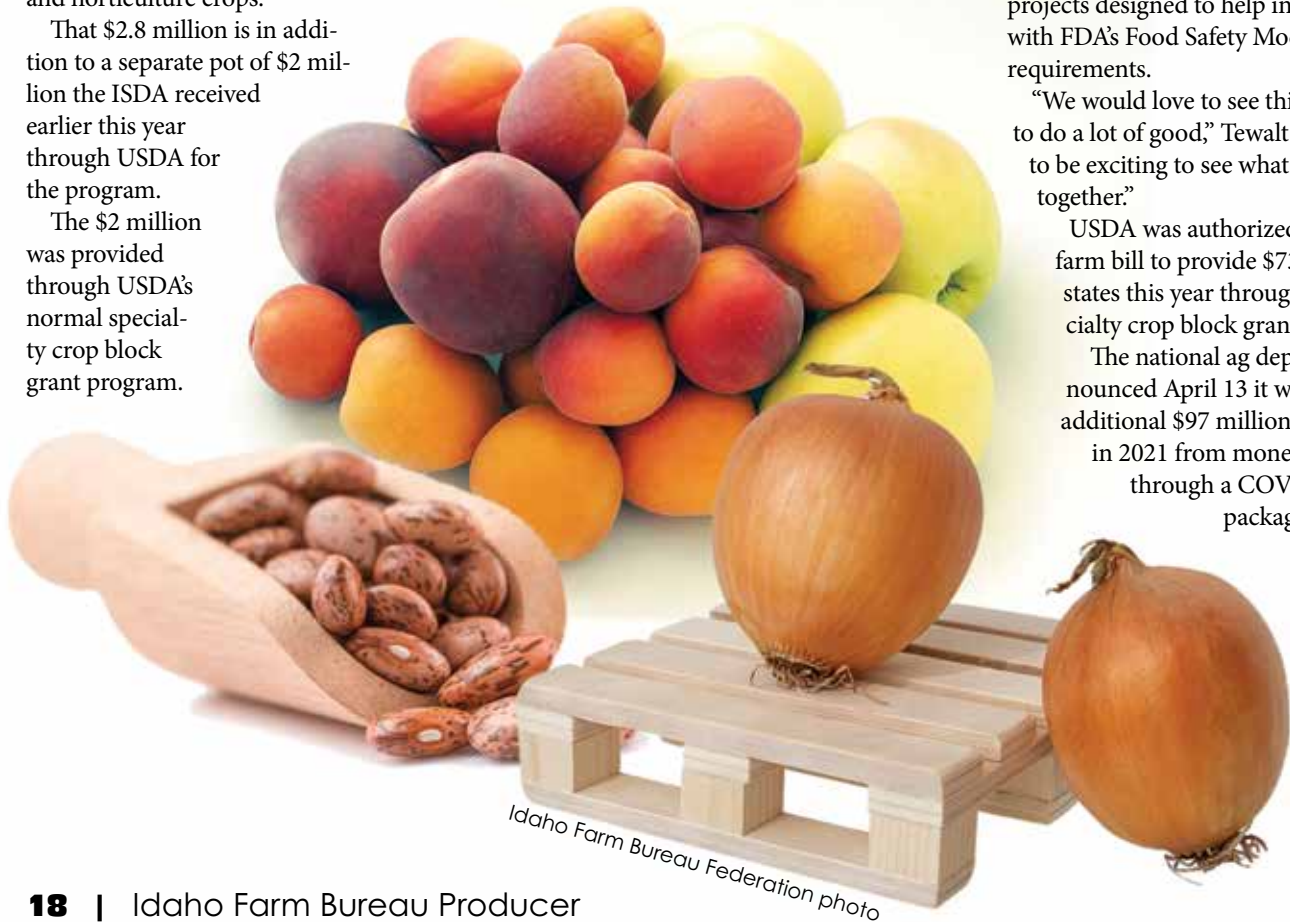
The extended scope could also include projects designed to help industry deal with FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act requirements.

"We would love to see this money be able to do a lot of good," Tewalt said. "It's going to be exciting to see what industry puts together."

USDA was authorized through the farm bill to provide \$73 million to states this year through its annual specialty crop block grant program.

The national ag department announced April 13 it would provide an additional \$97 million for the program in 2021 from money available through a COVID-19 stimulus package.

Since the specialty crop



*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation photo*

block grant program was created in 2009, ISDA has awarded \$17 million to 163 projects designed to benefit specialty crop farmers in Idaho.

Idaho's potato industry has received a significant amount of funding through the program, as it should since the amount a state receives in specialty crop block grant funding from USDA is based on specialty crop acreage and cash receipts. Idaho, which ranks No. 1 in the U.S. in potato acreage and production, receives a significant amount of total funding compared to other states its size because of its potato industry.

The money has proved especially valuable to many of Idaho's smaller farm commissions because it has allowed them to fund research, promotion and other projects they otherwise couldn't afford to.

That's the case with Idaho's dry bean industry, which, through the Idaho Bean Commission, has funded a lot of promotion, marketing and research projects over the years it otherwise wouldn't have been able to, given its \$200,000 annual budget.

"This program has been a huge boon to our dry bean industry in Idaho," said IBC Administrator Andi Woolf-Weibye. "Because we are a small commission with limited funding, we couldn't do nearly as much research and other projects without that funding." ■



Idaho Farm Bureau Federation photo

**An additional, significant amount of grant money will be available to Idaho's specialty crop industry this year.**

## YIELDS

*Continued from page 3*

"Genesee" Joe Anderson, a dryland farmer in North Idaho, said yields for his canola crop were less than half of normal this year, and his wheat and pea yields were about half of normal.

Much of North Idaho typically gets a good amount of rainfall but this year was far from normal. Anderson said he feels fortunate to have got what he did this year in terms of yields given the severe drought and high temperatures farmers in his region faced in 2021.

"With no rain to speak of since Easter, I think we feel surprisingly blessed to have half a crop," he said.

About the only major crops grown in Idaho that are expected to see higher yields this year are sugar beets and corn.

NASS' Sept. 10 report forecasts that yields for Idaho sugar beets would average 41.1 tons per acre this year, up slightly from 40.5 tons last year.

Sugar beets won't be harvested until later

this fall but so far, the crop looks good, said Brad Griff, executive director of the Idaho Sugarbeet Growers Association.

"It appears the high temperatures didn't have an adverse effect on beets," he said. "We're on track for a good year."

Griff said most sugar beet farmers in Idaho had adequate water supplies this year and growers who had tight supplies prioritized water for beets if they needed to.

"Once beets get established, they are very hardy and can handle a lot of weather variations," he said.

The NASS report also forecasts yields for Idaho corn grown for grain will be up slightly, from 199 bushels per acre in 2020 to 209 bushels per acres this year.

"Corn does well when it gets hot," Taylor said.

Yield estimates for other major Idaho crops will be released later but they likely won't be great.

Idaho potato growers expect yields to be down significantly.

Taylor said he spoke with an Idaho onion grower who expects his onion yields to be down at least 25 percent this year.

"He's singing the blues. It's not good," Taylor said.

Yields for both barley and wheat grown in Idaho set records last year but this year will be a very different story.

The average yield for wheat grown in Idaho was 96.7 bushels per acre last year, which was 5 percent greater than the previous record of 91.9 bushels per acre set in 2018.

Idaho barley yields averaged a record 110 bushels per acre last year, beating the previous record of 107 bushels per acre set in 2016.

Idaho Barley Commission Executive Director Laura Wilder said that based on grower reports, average barley yields in Idaho will be down 15-25 percent in 2021 compared with 2020.

Members of Idaho's wheat industry expect yields to decline in the 20 percent range. ■

# Idaho Farm Bureau

For detailed information go to: [www.idahofbstore.com](http://www.idahofbstore.com)

## THEME PARKS



## RENTAL CARS



## OIL CHANGE



## TRANSPORT



## HOTELS



## WINTER SKIING



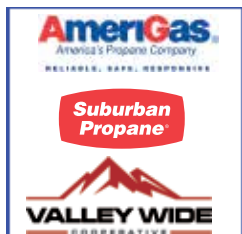
## INSURANCE



## SUPPLIES



## PROPANE



## MOVIE TICKETS



## HEALTH / MEDICAL



## VEHICLES



## AGRICULTURE



## MACHINERY



## LIFE FLIGHT



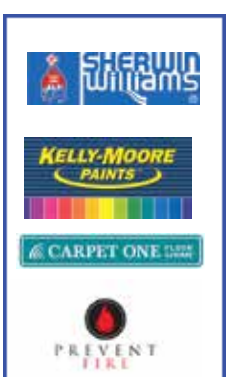
## IDENTIFY THEFT



## SMART HOME TECHNOLOGY



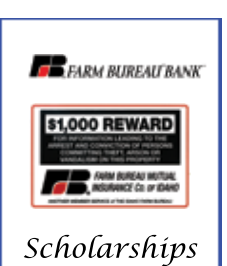
## HOUSEHOLD



## APPAREL



## FINANCIAL



Scholarships

## FOOD STORAGE



## SEED



# Member Benefits

(208) 239-4279

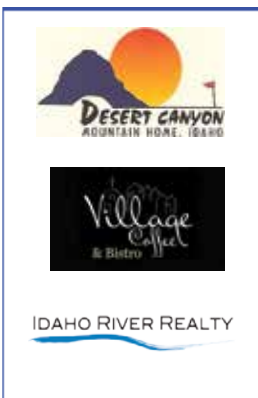
## CENTRAL IDAHO



## EASTERN IDAHO



## SOUTHWEST IDAHO



## SOUTHCENTRAL IDAHO



## NORTH IDAHO





After the

BURN

# Forest fires leave a lot of work in their wake

By Audra Cochran  
University of Idaho

It seems that anytime you turn on the news or open a newspaper lately, the headlines revolve around the wildfires that swept the country this fire season.

The National Interagency Fire Center reports that over 5.6 million acres across the states have burned to date. A recent visit from President Biden to the Western U.S. brought national attention to the issue of increasing size and scale of wildfires in our region.

His visit prompted people from all sides of the topic to join in conversations to discuss the fire aftermath, mitigation efforts for the future and the potential for political action that may follow.

Not surprisingly, our office has been engaging in many of the same conversations lately. Many are asking the question, what do we do with our forest “after the burn?”

Dealing with the aftermath of a fire can be confusing, stressful, and leave you in a fog of questions. What is left behind? Will our trees survive? Where should we start with rehabilitation or harvesting efforts? How do I connect with contractors?

And so on and so forth.

Our goal in Extension Forestry is to help you find answers to these questions and provide you with information and resources to help you navigate decisions, so that you can start afresh after a fire.

## Assessing your forest after a wildfire

Initially, we suggest that landowners start with revisiting their forest management plan. Whether your goal is timber production, silvopasture, scenic views, wildlife habitat, or something else, a

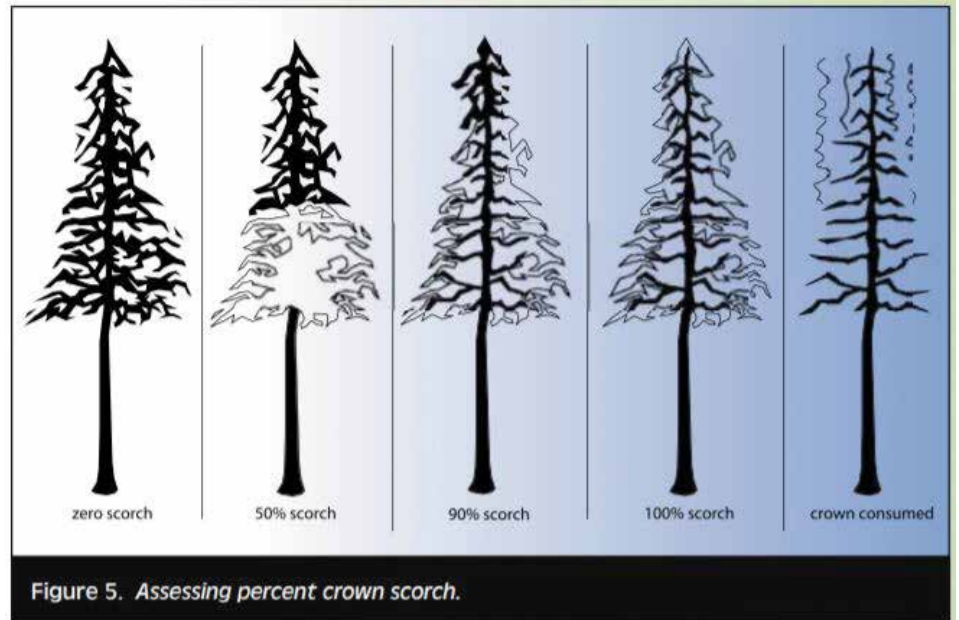


Figure 1: Assessing percent crown scorch figure (out of “After the Burn” publication by Yvonne Barkley.)

## OPPOSITE PAGE

This is a glimpse of charred trees in Louse Creek after the Bedrock Fire blazed through the area. (Photo by Audra Cochran)

forest management plan can provide an inventory of what was there before the fire.

Revisiting your plan can also help refocus management goals prior to assessing the damage. When discussing management options, some aspects have documented market value (timber, grazing), while others are more aesthetic values (wildlife, views).

Having an inventory and knowing the value will allow landowners to better focus on what they want to restore, prioritize what they want to invest in, and decide on a plan of action for how to achieve it all.

If you do not have a plan currently in place, we recommend seeking the advice of a consulting or Idaho Department of Lands forester to help you develop one.

## Predicting mortality

When assessing the damage to your trees after a fire, though obvious, you need to determine which trees are dead and which are still alive. Several variables go into calculating the chances that a tree will survive, including species type, diameter, burn severity, and more.

Though there is not one guaranteed method to predict mortality, one method that is commonly used is to assess the

percentage of crown scorch (see figure 1).

David C. Powell, a forest silviculturist from the Umatilla National Forest, developed a table that predicts tree mortality rate based on the species and diameter, and the percentage of crown that has been scorched (see figure 2).

This can help give you an idea of which trees will survive if they aren't immediately charred after the fire.

#### What to do with burned timber

The number one question we get asked in the post-wildfire season, is what can we do with our burned timber? To answer that question, landowners once again need to think about their management goals.

Whether your goal is to salvage merchantable timber or to let natural regeneration take its course, knowing the percentage of live vs. dead trees is paramount.

Even forests with high tree survival rate only have approximately two years before tree mortality, whether from insect infestation, fungal outbreaks, stress or other secondary causes, affects the remaining live trees.

If planning for natural regeneration, this loss will be part of the process and you'll see more seedlings and plant materials fill in the space.

If your goal is to salvage any merchantable timber, it is recommended to plan a harvest operation within six months to one year before bark beetles and other insects attack the trees or the wood quality declines to make the wood unmerchantable.

Table 2: Probability of fire-induced mortality for ponderosa pine.

DBH	CROWN SCORCH VOLUME (PERCENT)									
	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
5	49%	53%	60%	68%	78%	86%	93%	97%	99%	99%
6	42%	46%	53%	62%	72%	83%	90%	95%	98%	99%
7	36%	40%	46%	55%	67%	78%	88%	94%	98%	99%
8	30%	34%	40%	49%	61%	74%	85%	93%	97%	99%
9	25%	28%	34%	43%	55%	69%	82%	91%	96%	99%
10	21%	24%	29%	37%	49%	64%	78%	89%	95%	98%
12	15%	17%	21%	28%	39%	53%	69%	84%	93%	97%
14	11%	12%	10%	21%	30%	43%	61%	77%	90%	96%
16	8%	9%	7%	16%	23%	35%	52%	71%	86%	94%
18	6%	7%	6%	12%	18%	29%	45%	65%	82%	93%
20	5%	5%	4%	10%	15%	24%	39%	59%	78%	91%
22	4%	4%	4%	8%	13%	21%	34%	54%	74%	89%
24	3%	4%	3%	7%	11%	18%	31%	50%	71%	87%
26	3%	3%	3%	6%	10%	16%	28%	47%	69%	86%
28	3%	3%	3%	6%	9%	15%	27%	45%	67%	85%
30	3%	3%	3%	6%	9%	15%	26%	44%	67%	85%

Sources/Notes: Table developed by David C. Powell, Forest Silviculturist, Umatilla National Forest, Pendleton, OR. These values are probabilities, expressed as a percent, of ponderosa pines of various diameters being killed by fire. They are based on an equation from Reinhardt and Ryan (1989) and a bark thickness factor from Keane et al. (1989). See Steele et al. (1996) for a description of the calculation methodology. White values on a blue background denote combinations of crown scorch and DBH with a mortality probability  $\geq$  50%.

Figure 2: Fire mortality – Probability of fire-induced mortality for ponderosa pine.

#### After the burn

In last month's article, Chris Schnepf wrote about the numerous Extension publications available for the public to access. One publication that discusses this topic at length is a publication by Yvonne Barkley titled, "After the Burn: Assessing and Managing Your Forestland After a Fire."

In its nearly 80 pages, "After the Burn" discusses how fire responds to and impacts all parts of your forest, from soils and wildlife to watersheds and vegetation.

If you were impacted by wildfire this year, I highly encourage you to pick up a copy of this publication and contact a

consulting or IDL forester to help develop a plan and outline the best course of action for your forest.

As devastating as it can be, fire can also be a great reset that allows you to work on creating a healthy forest space that will last for years to come.

You can visit the University of Idaho Extension Forestry website ([www.uidaho.edu/extension/forestry](http://www.uidaho.edu/extension/forestry)) to find fire-related publications and many other resources.

(Audra Cochran is an associate extension forestry educator at the University of Idaho. She can be reached at [audrac@uidaho.edu](mailto:audrac@uidaho.edu)). ■

*'Dealing with the aftermath of a fire can be confusing, stressful, and leave you in a fog of questions. What is left behind? Will our trees survive? Where should we start with rehabilitation or harvesting efforts? How do I connect with contractors?'*



Farm Bureau® members save

**20% OFF**

**Budget Truck Rentals**

Moving can be stressful.  
Renting the vehicle to make the move shouldn't be.  
Put truck rental at the bottom of your list of worries.  
Rent from one of 1,000 locations today!



**26' Truck**  
5-8 rooms  
1,698 cubic feet

**16' Truck**  
3-4 rooms  
830 cubic feet

**12' Truck**  
1-2 rooms  
443 cubic feet

**Cargo Van**  
1-2 rooms  
357 cubic feet

**Farm Bureau®**  
Member Benefits

Terms and Conditions: Reservation is required by calling 1-800-566-8422 and mentioning the Farm Bureau® Member Account # 56000127747 or booking online at [www.budgettruck.com/partner/farmbureau](http://www.budgettruck.com/partner/farmbureau). Offer is subject to availability at participating locations and some blackout dates may apply. Discount applies to truck rental only and may not be combined with any other discounted rate or promotional offer. Rate may vary by location and seasonality. Taxes, surcharges, fees, refueling, moving supplies and optional items are extra. Renters must meet Budget age, driver and credit requirements. Offer void where prohibited by law and has no cash value. Budget Truck Rental reserves the right to void this offer without notification.

\*Cargo Vans available at select locations. The truck specifications above are based upon the most common fleet rented by Budget Truck Rental and are not the exact measurements of all fleets. Specifications may vary based upon make, model and year of truck

©2021 Budget Truck Rental, LLC.

For reservations, visit  
[BudgetTruck.com/FarmBureau](http://BudgetTruck.com/FarmBureau)

or call **1-800-566-8422**  
and provide the  
**Farm Bureau®**  
Account # **56000127747**

Providing this Member Discount  
Account Number, will  
automatically provide a  
**20% OFF**  
on your next truck rental



**Your referral, like  
Lucille's, could  
be worth \$525.**



**Farm Bureau  
INSURANCE**

\*You're automatically entered into our \$500 drawing when you refer a friend, even if they don't purchase a policy.  
Visit: [idahofarmbureauinsurance.com/refer-a-friend-get-a-gift](http://idahofarmbureauinsurance.com/refer-a-friend-get-a-gift) for complete rules and restrictions. Above left:  
Lucille Moore, the winner of our second quarter Refer A Friend, Get A Gift \$500 drawing, with agent Jason Gardner.



Photo by Joel Benson

Oneida County farmers and ranchers meet Sept. 16 at the Malad Fire Station to discuss the recent removal from office of two long-time employees at the USDA Farm Service Agency office in Malad.

# Oneida County farmers meet to discuss FSA issue

**By Sean Ellis**

*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

MALAD – Oneida County farmers and ranchers are still looking for answers as to why two long-time and well-liked employees in the USDA's Malad office were removed from their jobs and what that means for the county agricultural producers going forward.

So far, they're not getting them.

About 25 ranchers and farmers met at the Malad Fire Station Sept. 16 to discuss

the situation, which began when two employees at USDA's Farm Service Agency service center in Malad were escorted out of the building by armed guards.

FSA, an agency under the U.S. Department of Agriculture, implements federal agricultural policy and handles farm credit and loan programs and manages disaster, commodity, conservation and farm marketing programs.

Agricultural producers in this county said the employees knew important and detailed information about their opera-

tions and as a result, were able to effectively and quickly help them navigate important farm programs.

Sept. 30 is the deadline to complete paperwork for many important USDA farm programs and Oneida County producers are concerned that they might not be able to meet the deadline because of the absence of those two employees.

After 100 farmers and ranchers met in front of the FSA office Sept. 8 to discuss the issue and seek answers, acting Idaho FSA Director Charles Newhouse respond-

ed by closing the office Sept. 9-10.

The office was reopened Sept. 13 without the two recently removed employees. While the office is open again, with an armed guard present, producers here are still looking for answers and they say they are still not getting them.

State Sen. Mark Harris, a rancher from Soda Springs, told the farmers and ranchers that met at the Malad Fire Station Sept. 16 that he has been asking a lot of questions about the situation but getting very little information.

“I haven’t gotten anything, other than an assurance the office will stay open,” he said. “It’s frustrating to me. I can imagine how frustrating it is to you.”

Jay Hansen is an elected member of the four-person Oneida County FSA committee. He was put on administrative leave after speaking his mind on the issue.

He told farmers and ranchers Sept. 16 that he, too, isn’t getting answers.

“There is just no communication, no open dialogue, no, ‘Let’s come together and work this out,’” he said. “There is absolutely none of that at all.”

Harris said he’s been told by representatives of Idaho’s congressional delegation that the issue surrounding the employee firings is being investigated and attorneys are involved.

Harris’ advice to Oneida County farmers and ranchers was to be patient but keep pressing the congressional delegation to stay involved in the issue.

“Hopefully, they can help get this resolved quickly,” he said. “I think we let the attorneys do their thing at this point. I’ll keep poking and prodding where I can and see what I can find out.”

This year’s severe drought has had a major impact on many producers in the county who will rely on some farm programs to help mitigate their losses. There is some serious concern among many producers here whether they will be able to meet the Sept. 30 deadline for those programs because of the loss of the two employees.

“This has happened at probably the worst possible time ever,” Harris said. “It’s



Photo by Joel Benson

**State Sen. Mark Harris (third from left), a rancher and farmer from Soda Springs, speaks to other agricultural producers Sept. 16 at the Malad Fire Station. They met to discuss the recent removal from office of two long-time employees at the USDA Farm Service Agency office in Malad.**

the worst time of the year in one of the worst years we’ve ever had.”

FSA sent local media a statement attributed to Newhouse that said the Malad service center was closed Sept. 9-10 “in order to ensure the safety of employees

by closing the office and locating an armed guard there is a major concern to farmers and ranchers here.

“That’s an insult to me as a producer to have an armed guard at an FSA office,” Harris said. “That’s deeply disturbing. It’s not right what happened here.”

“We’re not an angry mob; we’re concerned producers and friends of the two people who were fired,” said Malad farmer and rancher Tracey Davis.

Farmers and ranchers who met at the fire station said their biggest long-term goal is to make sure the two employees receive due process.

“Our biggest concern is they get a fair shake on what they are accused of,” said Tim Keller, an Oneida County farmer and rancher.

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, there were 422 farms in Oneida County in 2017 and 320,000 total acres of land in farms.

The county’s farmland was split evenly between cropland and pastureland and producers brought in \$36 million in farm-gate receipts during the census year. ■

*“We’re not an angry mob; we’re concerned producers and friends of the two people who were fired.”*

— Tracey Davis,  
Malad farmer and rancher

and customers...” The statement said the move was taken “because of a disturbance related to personnel decisions.”

The fact that FSA responded to farmers’ concerns about the employee suspensions

# Beets offer Idaho farmers promise amid tough growing season

By John O'Connell

*Intermountain Farm and Ranch*

Though extreme summer heat and dryness wreaked havoc on major Idaho crops such as potatoes and grain this season, the state's farmers are optimistic they'll at least harvest a solid sugar beet crop.

Mike Garner, chairman of the board of Snake River Sugar Cooperative, which is the grower-owned cooperative that owns and operates Amalgamated Sugar Co., anticipates the 2021 beet crop will produce "stable" tonnage and "highly encouraging" sugar content.

The company's growers are wrapping up their early beet harvest, and Garner, who farms in the Raft River area, said it's clear that the beets withstood the summer heat better than many in the industry anticipated.

"The tonnage looks to be normal. ... I don't think it's going to be a record year," Garner said. "You're seeing some reports that yields are down and some reports that yields are up."

Garner explained beet growers didn't have to make nearly as many replants this season as they did in 2020, but they coped with a challenging spring, with frosts and strong winds. He said the wind dried soil and hindered crop emergence.

"Then at the first of June the crop seemed to take off pretty well," Garner said. "The heat set in for June and July, and I was pleased by the way the crop grew through the heat. ... They seemed to size up really well through August."

Garner said beets don't fare as well as corn in extreme heat, but they tend to handle hot weather better than potatoes and grain.

Cool nights throughout September have helped beets accumulate a higher percentage of sugar, and Garner said sugar levels should continue increasing well into October, absent an early hard frost.

"All and all, we're off to a good start,"



Idaho Farm Bureau Federation file photo  
**A sugar beet is lifted from a Magic Valley field in this Farm Bureau file photo. Idaho sugar beet farmers are optimistic they will have a good sugar beet harvest this year.**

Garner said.

Declo farmer Mike Wheeler said his malt barley crop was about 10 bushels per acre below average, but he's much happier

with his beet fields.

"They look excellent, they really do — very few weeds," Wheeler said.

See **SUGAR BEETS**, page 30

# Water board concludes aquifer recharge study

By John O'Connell

*Intermountain Farm & Ranch*

The Idaho Water Resource Board has concluded its study of three options for creating a large-scale managed aquifer recharge site in the Upper Snake River Valley, and officials acknowledge cost estimates have come back higher than hoped.

Idaho has conducted an intensive managed recharge program for about five years, diverting Snake River surface water into strategically located unlined canals or adjacent spill basins to allow water to seep into the aquifer.

The state's program has set a goal of averaging 250,000 acre-feet of annual recharge, seeking to reverse decades of declining groundwater levels.

The Eastern Snake Plain aquifer has declined by an estimated 13 million acre-feet since the early 1950s due to the combination of drought, new wells and conversions to efficient sprinkler irrigation systems, which leave little excess volume to filter into the groundwater.

Two of the state's proposals would entail building pipelines and pumping water to a spill basin — adding power bills to the cost of recharging water.

One pipeline would pass beneath Interstate 15 and transport water to a spill basin within the lava flows of Hell's Half Acre, located between Blackfoot and Idaho Falls.

The second pipeline would pump water from the Roberts area to a spill basin near Mud Lake.

The third project would avoid the need for pumping. Water would be gravity fed east of the state's current Egin Bench recharge site into a spill basin within lava fields.

All three project sites have been strategi-



Photo courtesy of Idaho Department of Water Resources  
**A head gate on the Great Feeder Canal releases recharge water during the 2017 recharge season. Idaho recently received a report evaluating options for adding new Upper Snake River Valley recharge capacity.**

cally selected to retain water in the aquifer for as long as possible.

The study evaluated three options for building a pipeline to Hell's Half Acre. The options would all have a power demand of 2,250 horsepower and would recharge 200 cubic feet per second of water into a basin covering between 550 acres and 582 acres.

The three options evaluated range in cost from \$23.8 million to \$31 million.

The Mud Lake project would recharge 500 CFS of water into a 588-acre basin. The power demand would be 9,800 horsepower, and the estimated cost of the pipeline would be \$178.5 million.

A secondary benefit of the Mud Lake site is that the state would have the option to increase the pipeline's capacity and deliver a greater volume of surface water

to supplement Mud Lake area irrigators' groundwater use.

The study evaluated three options for an Egin Lakes recharge site. The options would increase the existing recharge capacity on the Egin Bench by roughly 150 CFS to 350 CFS.

The options call for building a new canal ranging from 11,000 linear feet to 13,000 linear feet, and they range in cost from \$2.33 million to \$3.38 million.

Wes Hipke, the water board's program manager, said cost estimates ran high due in large part to increasing material costs — especially of metal needed for making pipelines.

"The raise in cost is definitely something the IWRB will have to consider when

See **STUDY**, page 30



## Where to begin.

Are you a young or beginning producer with dreams of a successful future in agriculture?

You've come to the right place. Our AgVision program provides financing for producers age 35 or younger, or who have less than 10 years in the business. Qualified applicants have less restrictive loan underwriting standards, a mentor and an abundance of educational resources.

Ready to build a life in agriculture? We're ready to help.

208.552.2300 | [northwestfcs.com](http://northwestfcs.com)

Equal Housing Lender  
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Here to Help You Grow®

# SUGAR BEETS

*Continued from page 28*

Wheeler said he's also been relieved that extremely smoky skies throughout much of the summer haven't seemed to hurt his beet yields.

"If anything, it's kept temperatures down," Wheeler said of the smoke.

In Rupert, Duane Grant said beet yields are coming in at or above his farm's budget projection in early harvest.

"Sugar content is a percentage higher than I would have anticipated at this time of the year," Grant added.

Grant is optimistic that both yields and sugar levels will exceed his projections when he conducts his late-season beet harvest.

"It looks like beets are going to be the crop that did best in the extreme heat this year. We think corn silage will also be good," Grant said. "Everything else is off 10 to 15 percent — small grains, potatoes, mustard, onions."

Grant said it's also good news for beet growers that acreage contracts that were cut by 5 percent two years ago due to capacity constraints at the processing plant have been fully restored this season.

Early beet harvest started a bit sooner than normal this year to help the Amalgamated processing plant get a jump on slicing and boiling beets. Investments are being made to further bolster plant capacity, Grant said.

American Falls farmer Andy Povey started his early beet harvest on Aug. 31, which was the earliest date he's ever dug beets.

Though his wheat yields were down by about 15 percent due to the heat, his beets are a bright spot on his farm.

He said general harvest was scheduled to start on Oct. 4.

"The yields look good and the sugars are excellent. It should be a nice crop," Povey said. ■

# STUDY

*Continued from page 29*

deciding what projects to move forward with," Hipke said.

In about half of years — those years in which flood-control releases are necessary — Hipke explained recharge water is available for about 30 days during the spring in the upper valley.

He said the state needs much more capacity to take greater advantage of those releases.

"The analysis we have done shows the recharge program has had a significant impact on the aquifer," Hipke said. "With the current drought this has been a hard year related to water supply, which would have been worse without all of the work that's been done concerning the recharge program and all of the work that's been done by the groundwater districts to conserve water." ■

# Study the markets and do what's best for your operation

**G**rain harvest is now over and depending on your area, you are all focusing on digging spuds and beets as well as preparing and planting for next year.

Things have definitely changed over the past couple of years as the malt companies are now being very aggressive with bids for the 2022 crop, as they need to increase their acreage to once again fill their storage and pipeline.

At this time, those bids are looking pretty good and should be considered as we look into next year. At this time, the bids are higher than the current bids for new crop soft white wheat. Having said this, I still feel that you should plant the commodities that produce well for you in your area.

The nearby basis for soft white in Portland continues to be very strong, keeping the domestic market also strong. We are seeing the flour mills relax their standards slightly but they also have put into place discounts for the wheat that is a little off-grade.

It has been a long time since we have seen soft white that has graded number one. The feed wheat market in southeast Idaho remains good but we are seeing the feedlots once again looking at feeding at least some corn. The quality of the wheat that is available could have a lot to do with this



decision.

If you have soft white that will work into a local flour mill, you need to continue to be actively watching this market. The mills for southeast Idaho are currently satisfied with their position for soft white from now through the end of the year.

The current bids are for January forward and it just might not take too much for them to fill their demand for the January-February-March time frame.

The current discounts for soft white with protein levels above 11 percent are steep in Portland and could increase as we move forward. We aren't seeing much wheat if any grading at less than 11 protein.

The market for hard white remains steady, with the basis strengthening over the past few weeks. The challenge for producers is not getting caught up in the fact that soft white is being bid at a premium to your wheat.

This just happens at times but this won't be the norm from year to year. Keep focused on your wheat and your market and contract when the opportunity presents itself.

The local demand in southeast Idaho for dark northern spring wheat (DNS) is very thin and the bids are for the wheat to move into the Port-

land market. This flow into the Portland market should continue to be the normal direction for the future.

One of the flour mills in Ogden isn't posting a bid for DNS for any time frame into and including next harvest. Chances are that they will need some wheat before then but at this time they just don't know how much and when.

The hay market stabilized slightly as we saw more quality hay being put up the later in the season we moved. The dairies became a little more particular on the quality they were willing to contract.

Premium hay strengthened a little toward the middle of September, pulling all hay up with it. I am still of the opinion that depending on the market that you sell into I don't want to be the last person owning hay as we move into late winter.

We are beginning to see a few more producers marketing their hay in small bales. This is a little more labor-intensive but for a few it is worth the extra labor for the reward.

Even with all that is going on right now, it is a good time to be working on your marketing plan for next year. Should you forward contract or just wait and see? Should you hedge using futures at the current levels for next harvest?

Remember, none of these options are perfect. They all have an upside and a downside. Just study the market and then do what works for you.

*Clark Johnston is a grain marketing specialist and owner of JC Management Co. of Ogden, Utah. He can be reached at [clark@jcmanagement.net](mailto:clark@jcmanagement.net). ■*



Photo by Sean Ellis

Sugar beets are harvested in a field near Rupert in this Idaho Farm Bureau Federation file photo. Minidoka County is the top sugar beet producing county in Idaho and it's also the top sheep-producing county in the state.

# Minidoka County is king when it comes to sugar beets

**By Sean Ellis**

*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

RUPERT – When it comes to sugar beet production, Minidoka County is the big dog in Idaho.

No big shocker there. The county is home to the nation's top producing sugar beet factory, which is located in Paul.

"Beets are a big deal in this area," says Heyburn farmer Cloy Jones. "There are more sugar beets grown in Minidoka than

any county in the state."

But it could come as a surprise to many people involved in the state's farming industry to learn that Minidoka is also the state's top county in terms of total sheep.

In fact, the county ranks No. 4 in the United States in that category, according to the 2017 Census of Agriculture.

"We've been one of the top sheep-producing counties for a long time," says Larry Johnson, who owns a cow-calf operation in Paul and also grows hay, vegetable seed,

seed oats and 2 acres of strawberries.

In fact, a lot of ag commodities are produced in Minidoka County, which ranks No. 3 in Idaho in terms of total farm-gate receipts and No. 8 in total farm revenue when livestock is included.

According to the 2017 census, the county's farmers and ranchers brought in \$354 million in farm-gate receipts during the 2017 census year.

According to the ag census, there were 50,351 acres of sugar beets grown in the



*“We can grow almost anything here and we do.”*

— Larry Johnson, Minidoka County Farm Bureau president



Photo by Brad Griff

**Brent Griffin plants sugar beets near Rupert earlier this year. Minidoka County is the top sugar beet producing county in Idaho and it's also the top sheep-producing county in the state.**

county in 2017, 48,697 acres of forage crops, including hay, 47,296 acres of barley, 31,969 acres of wheat and 29,174 acres of vegetables, including potatoes.

The county also had 103,660 sheep and lambs, 42,141 cattle and calves, 783 goats, 354 broilers and other meat-type chickens and even a few dozen turkeys.

The county's dairy farmers brought in \$64 million in farm-gate revenue in 2017, making Minidoka the state's ninth largest milk-producing county.

“We can grow almost anything here and we do,” says Johnson, who serves as the Minidoka County Farm Bureau president.

But sugar beets are king in Minidoka County and the Amalgamated Sugar Co. processing facility in Paul processes about 18,000 tons a day at full capacity, according to Brad Griff, executive director of the

Idaho Sugarbeet Growers Association.

“No doubt about it, Minidoka County is a big sugar beet county,” he says. “They are the big dog.”

Agriculture itself is big in the county and underpins its economy and way of life, says LaNae Nalder, who raises cattle on irrigated pasture near Rupert.

Minidoka County is home to several potato processing companies, several cheese processing companies and a lot of other big agribusinesses, she says.

When it comes to economic activity, everything of significance in the county “all comes from ag commodities,” Nalder says. “Agriculture is the lifeblood of the county. Minidoka County agriculture is very well diversified and successful.”

The Minidoka County Farm Bureau spends a lot of its money and resources

supporting the community, in particular its FFA and 4-H programs, says Nalder, a member of MCFB's promotion and education committee.

“We do a lot of support work in our community with youth education programs,” she says. “There is a very good relationship between our board and the FFA programs right now and we put a lot of focus and money there.”

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, there were 620 farms in Minidoka County in 2017 and 267,567 total acres of land in farms.

The average sized farm in the county was 432 acres, just under the statewide average of 468 acres. But the average farm in the county brought in \$572,000 in total farm-gate receipts during 2017, well above the statewide average of \$303,000. ■

# Classifieds

## FARMING / EQUIPMENT

Tractor case, 1190, 50hp. Always housed, 745 hours, one owner, 12 forward, 3 reverse, 3point lift in great shape. \$5,000. Dr Wood Chipper PTO driver like new \$500. Rexburg, ID 208-705-5248

Challenger MT 755, 2209 hrs, annual service by Western States, Trimble A/S, (reduced) \$119500.00. 500hp US Motor, 480 volt, hollowshaft irrigation motor, \$19750.00. American Falls, ID 208-220-5588 or e-mail: deeqt@aol.com

New John Deere straight metal seat \$900. Set of new tire chains for 28' wheel. Roll of barbedwire \$20.00. Hayburn, ID 208-431-7401.

1973 Veermer M450 Gas, trencher, blade, hoe. \$4,250 Firm. Gem County Idaho 208-631-3230

Complete sheep operation. 20 head polypay ewes and two rams. Sydell working equipment, grooming stand, and cards. Bonners Ferry, ID Gordon 208-304-3288

Fordson Major Diesel. 42HP, 6 speed transmission, 3pt hitch, very good tires, fluid plus wheel weights at the rear. Included: shop manual, drawbar, top link and rear chains. Engine overhaul 2020. \$5,950. Moscow, ID Call or Text Douglas 208-892-1887.

1954 Ford farm tractor, model NAA. Tractor has a hydraulic front loader and manure bucket. Includes 5-foot PTO brush mower, 7-foot rear 3-point blade, rear wheel chains, tank

heater, spare generator and other parts, runs well. \$4,800. Email calgillis@outlook.com for pictures. Garden City, ID Calvin 208-229-1547

Balewagons: New Holland self-propelled or pull-type models, parts, tires, manuals. Also interested in buying balewagons. Will consider any model. Call Jim Wilhite at 208-880-2889 anytime.

Waterwheel pumping system no electricity required. Your water source with 3 to 5 ft of drop. Pump will lift 600 ft with unlimited distance. Irrigation or domestic use to 6000 gal per day. Sagle ID. 208-255-4581.

Five-hole double depth drawbar fantail \$90. Three-hole winch fantail \$50. Both for \$125. 1905 Davis Safe \$110. Lewiston, ID 743-9204

Alfalfa seed, \$2.70/lb., Dormancy 4. Tests well with great persistence and winter hardiness. Inoculated in 50lb. bags. Kuna, ID. Contact Dave 208-890-1066 or Jessica 208-761-2720 or email seed@davereynoldsfarms.com

20Ga. Reloading Supplys. 2# Alkan AI-7-\$30. Lee Loader & Accessories \$15. Wads&Casings \$10 Orofino, ID 208-476-5767

## MISCELLANEOUS

Two little sheep camp stoves. – Two 10 speed bikes \$30.00. – Fifth wheel hitch – Old shaving mugs. – New square dress and slips size medium. – Two old metal wagon wheels. Chubbuck, ID Sharon 208-339-7847

Build your ideal log structure. We have both pine and fir logs and can assist with any carport, barn, house, or shop design. Oftentimes cheaper than metal buildings. Cabins too! We design, deliver, and install. Just call - John 208-781-0691.

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.

331/3 LP Records-60`s-70`s-80s. Tub Enclosure Shower Doors—FREE Orofino, ID 208-476-5767

## VEHICLES

2007 Harley Highway Patrol 21k miles Blk-Wh. \$9,950. 2018 MC Sidecar, new Mgf. Rocketeer \$2,950. Orofino, ID 208-476-5767.

1990 White 600 Conventional Kenworth Semi Tractor, Cummings Diesel 270, 5 speed with 2 speed axle, bumper hitch/5th wheel parts, single rear axle, passenger seat, 188,838 original miles. \$12,000 OBO American Falls, ID call 208-317-5131

## WANTED

Vintage snowmobiles pre 1980s. Mercury snow, trail twisters, Polaris, txt xl, star rires, Yamaha, GPX, SRX, Exciters, Ski doo, TNT, Rvs Bizzard, Ripp, Nitro or other performance sleds. Kimberly, ID Text call or email Craig 208-539-1264 dginder@gmail.com

Paying cash for old cork top embossed bottles and some telephone insulators as well as other vintage and antique items. 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. 208-405-9338.

Pre-1970 Idaho License Plates Wanted: Also Revere Ware and Solar-Sturges Permanent cookware, and old signs. Will pay cash. Please email, text, call, or write. Gary Peterson, 115 E D St, Moscow, ID 83843. gearlep@gmail.com. 208-285-1258.

## 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 is 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. Proofread your ad. Ads must be received by October 10 for the November Quarterly.

Mail ad copy to:  
FARM BUREAU PRODUCER  
P.O. Box 4848, Pocatello, ID  
83205-4848  
or email Kristy at  
knlindauer@idahofb.org

# BLUE JACKET

# The Gift of Blue



**BRIGHT FUTURE**

This symbolic blue corduroy jacket is far more than just a piece of Official Dress, it is an icon of American tradition— instilling pride and responsibility in our next generation of leaders. However, not everyone can wear the jacket. Not because they don't deserve to, but because they can't afford to.

To enable these students to have a jacket of their own, we need donations from generous supporters like you. When you give the gift of blue, you are opening the door for a member to be a part of something larger than themselves, forge their path, and leave their mark on history. After all, the blue corduroy jacket is more than just a jacket, it is a ticket to a future unlike any other.



“My FFA jacket is a reminder of how being in FFA has positively affected my life and helped shape me into the person I am today.” - Katy Doumit, 2021 Idaho FFA National Officer Candidate

**Make a difference in the life of an Idaho FFA member by giving a jacket for \$125!**

I would like to sponsor a jacket for an FFA member!

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of jackets at \$125/jacket.

Total donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Jackets sponsored through this program include a tie or scarf, a gift of blue program patch on the inside, and shipping

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail check & form to:  
Idaho FFA Foundation  
P.O. Box 827  
Star, ID 83669**

*Please submit your Gift of Blue Sponsorship by **October 31st** for the 2021-2022 school year!*



Questions? Contact Marcia Jedry  
[marcia@growidahoffa.org](mailto:marcia@growidahoffa.org)  
208-869-6594

# Columbia Grain opposes dam breaching proposal

By Jeff Van Pevenage  
*Columbia Grain International*

We add our voice to those who support maintaining the lower Snake River dams.

Here at Columbia Grain International we have been supplying the world with grain, pulses, edible beans and oilseeds for over four decades.

Our supply chain stretches across the northern tier of the United States, from North Dakota to Washington, cultivating the growth of our farmers' crops to safely nourish the world.

We operate nine grain elevators in Eastern Washington, own or participate in loading grain at three lower Snake River terminals and are the majority owner in two export terminals in the Columbia River district.

It's an understatement to say that we have a vested interest in this topic.

Removing the lower Snake River dams as part of Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson's \$33.5 billion framework doesn't promise to bring back Idaho's salmon, but it will have devastating effects on our farmers who rely on this river system to successfully transport their crops to key export terminals to supply the international markets.

The Columbia River system is the nation's single largest wheat export gateway, transporting 50% of all U.S. wheat to markets overseas.

Simpson's Northwest Infrastructure Proposal will slow international trade, including the distribution of wheat, soy, corn, wood, autos, mineral bulks and cruise tourism, and has the potential to eradicate the 40,000 local jobs that are dependent on this trade.

For us, it will endanger the economic viability of at least two Portland-based export terminals, which rely heavily on barges and don't have the land footprint to expand rail placement capacity.

The removal of the dams will cause transportation methods to shift toward truck and rail, creating greater instability in freight costs, and exposing farmers to potentially higher transportation costs for grain shipments to destination markets, particularly during the fall when corn and soybean shipments from the Midwest are heavy.

The evidence is clear. If the dams are breached, our farmers will be paying more and making less at the end of the day.

For over 40 years, the Columbia-Snake River system has successfully served our communities, providing our regions with clean power, jobs, efficient transportation, irrigation, flood control and more.

It is critical now more than ever to keep this region stable and competitive in a time of global economic and social uncertainties.

We are committed to cultivating the continued growth of our farmers and our Pacific Northwest communities and have serious doubts about the inherent cons which we feel drastically outweigh the pros of this proposal.

Proponents of the proposal argue that removing the dams is necessary to restore salmon populations. However, studies show that salmon survival rates may be greater now than if no dams existed.

This all goes back to the life cycle of fish, and the fact that they spend

most of their lives in the ocean. As we learn more about ocean conditions from NOAA Fisheries, West Coast wild salmon and steelhead runs are struggling, and the commonality is the ocean.

When considering dam removal, I've studied the statistics which came from 40 years of research by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bonneville Power Administration and were compiled by retired Fish and Wildlife biologist John McKern.

McKern spent much of his 30-year career researching fish survival and developing and implementing fish passage improvements at the Snake and Columbia river dams.

He found that after the fish leave the Columbia River, about 88% of the remaining fish die during their first two or three years in the ocean from predators, adverse ocean conditions and commercial fishing.

The Frazier River in Canada is very similar to the Columbia River system. It and other rivers along the West Coast of the U.S. and Canada have no dams and have the same fish problems as the Columbia River system.

Currently, we have done quite well stewarding fish and protecting them every step of the way as they move and make their journey on the river.

Removing the dams will have grave implications for our vital farm communities that depend on this transportation system to feed the world. We hope people consider that there are a lot of other things taking place that are impacting our fish.

*(Jeff Van Pevenage is president and CEO of Columbia Grain International.) ■*



Photo by Sean Ellis

Idaho is on pace to set a record for total agricultural export value for a calendar year.

# Idaho ag export value on pace for record in 2021

By Sean Ellis

*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

POCATELLO – Idaho is on pace to set a record for total agricultural export val-

ue, according to at least one set of data.

Through the end of June, \$535 million worth of Idaho farm products were sold to other countries, according to U.S. Census Bureau data compiled by the Ida-

ho State Department of Agriculture.

That total represents a 12 percent increase over the same period calendar year 2020 and it puts the state on pace to break the previous record of \$1.02

billion, set in 2014.

The total value of Idaho's farm product exports in 2020 was \$927 million, which was up 3 percent compared with 2019.

According to the recent Census Bureau data, Idaho ag export value during the first half of 2021 was up double-digits to the state's top four trade destinations for farm exports.

Idaho's ag industry sold \$171 million worth of farm products to Canada, the top destination for Idaho ag exports, during the first half of 2021. That represents a 31 percent increase over the same period in 2020.

Idaho's top ag export category to Canada during the first half of the year was "edible vegetables," which totaled \$35 million and included mostly legumes and potatoes. Idaho businesses also sold \$30 million worth of live animals to Canada.

Idaho ag exports to Mexico totaled \$109 million during the first six months of the year, up 17 percent over 2020, and they totaled \$37 million to China, up 18

percent.

Idaho's top ag export category to Mexico was "milling, malt and starch" at \$36 million worth of sales, followed by "cereals," which totaled \$26 million and included mostly wheat. Idaho businesses also sold \$16 million worth of prepared vegetables to Mexico, mostly potato products, and \$11 million worth of "oil-seeds," mostly melon seed.

The top Idaho export category to China during the first half of 2021 was dairy at \$22 million.

Idaho ag product exports to the Netherlands rose 60 percent to \$33 million during the first half of the year.

"Overall, it's very encouraging," Laura Johnson, who heads ISDA's marketing division, said about the Idaho ag export numbers. "We could very well end up with a record this year."

Idaho export values have increased in 2021 consistent with the increases in commodity values generally, said Doug Robison, the Idaho president for Northwest Farm Credit Services.

"The trade-weighted U.S. dollar index is lower in relation to the year ago period, which is supportive of exports," he said. "The period from a year ago also included the initial negative impacts of the pandemic, which weakened commodity values, strengthened the U.S. dollar, and slowed export activity."

The Idaho ag export data was not all rosy.

Total Idaho ag export value to the state's No. 5 and 6 markets for farm products, Japan and South Korea, decreased substantially during the first half of the year compared with the same period in 2020.

Idaho farm product exports to Japan dropped 18 percent to \$27 million and they declined 42 percent (\$24 million) to South Korea.

"Dairy" was the top ag export category for Idaho during the first six months of 2021 at \$104 million, a 9 percent increase over the same period in 2020.

According to the U.S. Dairy Export Council, U.S. dairy exports were up 13

# Farm Bureau Members Pay Less For Choice Hotels!

A **\$70** room will be closer to



**\$56**

A **\$90** room will be closer to



**\$72**

A **\$120** room will be closer to



**\$96**

**CHOICE**  
HOTELS™



**1.800.258.2847**

FARM BUREAU DISCOUNT CODE

**00209550**

ADVANCED RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

percent during the first six months of this year compared with 2020.

Much of the demand for dairy exports, according to USDEC, was driven by China, which is particularly hungry for whey exports.

“In June, U.S. whey exports to China were up 39 percent and are up 75 percent through the first half of this year,” USDEC stated in an analysis.

According to that analysis, “whey for feed has been the key driver for Chinese sweet whey and whey permeate imports, as the pork industry consolidates into more commercial operations and continues to rebuild its pig herd following the devastation of African Swine Fever.”

The “edible vegetables” category, Idaho’s No. 2 farm product export category, dropped 9 percent to \$72 million through the first half of 2021 and the “oilseeds” category increased 25 percent to \$60 million.

The “milling, malt and starch” category decreased less than half a percent to \$56 million and the “prepared vegetables” category increased 12 percent to \$42 million.

The “live animals” category soared 40 percent to \$34 million and \$30 million worth of the live animals from Idaho exported during the first half of the year went to Canada.

The Census Bureau data is released monthly and is based on what state a commodity is exported from, so it doesn’t capture all of Idaho’s farm product exports. For example, it doesn’t capture the wheat from Idaho that is exported out of Portland.

But it does show trends and from a percentage standpoint, matches closely with USDA data that is released annually. The USDA data captures more of the state’s farm exports but it is not as timely as the Census Bureau data.

The USDA Idaho ag export data for 2020 will be released this fall.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture on May 26 projected that U.S. farm exports will hit a record \$164 billion during fiscal year 2021, which ends Sept. 30. That would be up 8 percent over the previous record of \$152 billion set in fiscal 2014.

If realized, that \$164 billion total would be an increase of \$28 billion, or 21 percent, over the fiscal 2020 total. ■

*“Overall, it’s very encouraging. We could very well end up with a record this year.”*

— Laura Johnson, head of ISDA’s marketing division



## Sign your vehicles up for the Idaho Farm Bureau/Jiffy Lube Signature Service Oil Change \$10 Discount\* program.

\*This is a stand alone discount and is not stackable with any other Jiffy Lube promotions or discount offers. Once an Idaho Farm Bureau membership is confirmed on the first oil change, the discount remains in effect for that specific vehicle (using fleet #102851).

### Present A Valid Idaho Farm Bureau Membership Card Or Proof Of Insurance to One Of The Following Participating Idaho Jiffy Lube

#### AMERICAN FALLS

2830 POCATELLO AVE

#### AMMON

2523 E SUNNYSIDE RD

#### BLACKFOOT

933 MARKET ST

#### BOISE

1206 BROADWAY AVE

3606 W STATE ST

#### BOISE (cont.)

1484 S WEIDEMAN AVE

5007 OVERLAND RD

8401 W FRANKLIN RD

#### CALDWELL

1204 CLEVELAND BLVD

#### CHUBBUCK

4674 YELLOWSTONE AVE

#### EAGLE

1516 E. STATE STREET

#### FRUITLAND

903 NW 16TH ST

#### HAYDEN

8655 N. GOVERNMENT WAY

#### IDAHO FALLS

185 S WOODRUFF AVE

570 PANCHERI DR

1546 W BROADWAY ST

#### MERIDIAN

360 E FAIRVIEW AVE

1645 S SPRINGVALLEY LANE

#### MOSCOW

326 TROY ROAD

#### NAMPA

1130 CALDWELL BLVD

824 12th AVE RD

#### POCATELLO

588 YELLOWSTONE AVE

#### POST FALLS

1650 EAST SELTICE WAY

#### TWIN FALLS

947 BLUE LAKES BLVD N

2362 ADDISON AVE E

142 WASHINGTON ST N

# MEMBER DISCOUNTS

PAGES 20 & 21

 Idaho  
Farm Bureau.  
P.O. Box 4848  
Pocatello, ID 83205-4848



Find discount partners inside the magazine!

## New benefits added quarterly

Companies such as hotel, rental cars, movie theaters, and theme parks offer discounts and packages to Idaho Farm Bureau members. In recent years, more small town businesses have also started offering discounts. See pages 20-21.

Details also available at [idahofbstore.com](http://idahofbstore.com)

 Idaho  
Farm Bureau.