

Idaho Farm Bureau. Quarterly

Spring Issue • Volume 22 Issue 2

SPECIAL ELECTION EDITION

CANDIDATES ANSWER FARM BUREAU QUESTIONS



Inflated prices hitting farm country, too



We are all feeling the pressures these days of rising costs, from the grocery store to the fuel pump.

Most Americans are already making adjustments here and there. Some might drive less, take a family vacation closer to home, or cook a few more meals rather than dining out.

But finding small ways to save can only go so far when your very livelihood depends on goods that keep getting more expensive, sometimes skyrocketing in price.

When you need to plant crops, tend to them

and care for animals to keep the farm running, you have to find a way to make it work, and many American farmers are hoping to at least hold on until relief in the supply chain comes.

As a beef and poultry farmer, I am a price taker, and that's the same story for farmers of all commodities across the country.

Most consumers don't know that the higher prices they're paying in the grocery store these days don't mean higher profits for my farm or yours. This year's input cost spikes have been

See DUVALL, page 21

The President's Desk

By Bryan Searle

President Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

The reason for this special election edition



It is obvious from the front page alone that this edition of Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's Quarterly magazine is a special election edition.

Voting is the cornerstone of democracy and it's a way for We the People to ensure our elected officials adhere to and enforce constitutional limits.

My first message to IFBF members, and every other person in the state, is to make sure to vote during the upcoming primary election, which will be held in Idaho on May 17.

Voting is not only a civic responsibility; it is the

exercise of a precious right that should never be taken for granted.

The importance of selecting good candidates who understand and who will adhere to the Constitution is so great that voting almost borders on being a duty.

It's always a bit disappointing to me to see how small of a percentage of people actually vote in our elections and also how few people are actually educated about the various important issues our state faces and where candidates stand on those

See SEARLE, page 20

Inside Farm Bureau

By Zak Miller

CEO Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

It starts with food



A keystone of civilization is when some members of a population are not required to engage in agriculture. When members of a group can engage in non-agriculture activities because others create a food surplus, civilization is said to begin.

Put another way, Alfred Henry Lewis (1855-1914) said, "Every nation is about nine meals away from anarchy."

As revolutionary as excess food for one person was in allowing civilization to begin, the tower of civilization can topple just as quickly when this

fundamental is lost.

Luckily for most Idahoans, we have never come slightly close to knowing the desperation of true hunger. This is not true throughout the world.

The machinations of a modern tyrant in Russia may cause more poor countries to begin to flirt with anarchy if hungry stomachs cannot be fed. Ukraine, often referred to as the breadbasket of Europe, accounts for 40% of the World Food Program's wheat.

It is not hard to see the blessing of America

See MILLER, page 20

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Welcome to Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's 2022 special primary election edition

In the pages of this edition of IFBF's Quarterly magazine, you will find information about candidates running for elected positions in Idaho, including those running for the Idaho Legislature, as well as people running for the statewide offices of governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state and superintendent of public instruction.

We hope the information you can find in this magazine will assist you in making an informed decision about who to vote for in Idaho's upcoming May 17 primary election.

Voting is one way for the people to ensure elected officials share our values, adhere to the Constitution and represent our interests.

IFBF asked 15 candidates running for statewide offices five questions we feel are important to Farm Bureau members. Their answers to those questions can be found in the pages of this magazine.

We did not edit their responses.

This allows you to hear straight from those candidates, unfiltered.

We have also included the names of legislative candidates that Agra-PAC, the political action committee of IFBF, feel are most philosophically aligned with the policies that Farm Bureau members have adopted.

Those legislative candidates were interviewed by county Farm Bureau organizations across the state to determine which candidates to recommend for support through Agra-PAC.

Some pages in this magazine are also dedicated to highlighting state legislators who received IFBF's "Friend of Agriculture" award, which is the highest award that Farm Bureau presents to legislators.

These are the legislators who have done the best job of supporting Farm Bureau member positions on selected bills over the past two years.

You, of course, will ultimately decide who you choose to vote for, but we hope the information provided in this magazine can assist you in making that important decision. ■

Statewide Candidate Questionnaire Responses

Farm Bureau believes it is important for you to have relevant information upon which to base your vote when you consider candidates for statewide elected offices.

Each qualified candidate in a contested primary race was given the opportunity to answer questions on topics selected by the IFBF Board of Directors.

The answers are in the candidate's own words and have not been edited. This information is provided here for you so you can make an informed decision at the polls on May 17.

We also gave the candidates the opportunity to provide longer answers on our website.

Please visit ifarmivoteidaho.com and select Statewide Candidate Questionnaire Responses or scan the QR code below.



Steven Bradshaw- Running for Governor



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

The global population is estimated to increase over the next five years and beyond. The biggest challenge I see the agriculture sector facing is meeting the demands of growth and the increasing global environmental pressure while maintaining sustainability and profit. The Idaho agriculture industry has proven the ability to overcome challenges while continuing to produce a majority of Idaho's domestic product in a global market. Idaho farmers and ranchers need a decrease in nonsense regulations and increase in incentives to meet the demands of growth, output and environmental challenges they face.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- The Federal Government holds title to over 40% of Idaho land. All private citizens have an interest in property rights as it represents domicile, forestry, grazing, mining and recreation. The federal land management directly affects the State of Idaho's livelihood. Transferring of title of these properties to the State would allow for better management of these lands to the benefit of local community economic and social welfare. Special environmental interest groups should be evaluated as to motives for land management and how those interests would impact local communities and economic social welfare of those communities.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- The rule of law speaks to a good neighbor policy in which land title can be retained by the federal government but specific land management is managed by local appointed or elected officials. This would apply rights based principles on which the land would best be used for the benefit of the land user and local community.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- Idaho water ways are a right to use. Due to extreme drought in Idaho it is imperative that water shortages are allocated under the rule of law as outlined in the prior appropriation doctrine pointing to the date the water right was acquired. With that stated, there are circumstances in which this doctrine may be challenged or appealed. One example of this could be an agricultural need over a manufacturing need as outlined in the Idaho State Constitution, Article XV "Water Rights".

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-The more serious answer is the US Constitution provides all US Citizens the right to freedom of movement. It's up to Idaho residents to teach the newcomers what Idaho is about, what freedom and liberty actually looks like and to respect the rights of their new neighbors. Additional legislation toward something like this is pointless and would be overbearing and would wreak of big government.

Edward Humphreys - Running for Governor



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- Farmers and ranchers currently face drought, overregulation from government, a massive increase in fuel costs, erratic commodity prices, supply chain shortages for essential parts and products, and threats from anti-American activists. In short: the livelihood of the entire Ag community is under serious threat. Food production in our state is not only vital for the wellbeing of our families, but also a vital national security issue. As Governor, I will put the interests of farmers and ranchers in our state as a top priority.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- We must protect the individual's exclusive right to use their resources as they see fit. As an elected official, one of my most important responsibilities is to make sure that no law and no executive order in any way harms or interferes with the property rights of farmers and ranchers and their ability to feed our nation. We must be vigilant to insure that existing and new laws, codes, agency regulations do not infringe upon these rights. Therefore I have made it a priority that our state agencies and administrative rules operate within the confines of the US and Idaho Constitution.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- Roughly 61 percent of Idaho is federal land. I favor an effort to cede federal lands back to the state and put them into permanent iron-clad land trusts. The lands should be wisely managed and available for use by the people of Idaho. The ongoing strategy of the State Land Board is multiple use, but greater protections are needed for farmers and ranchers. State land is constitutionally mandated for use to generate revenues for Idaho's Education Endowment; therefore, a legal precedent has been established that favors the "highest bidder" for leasing public lands. In 2021, a sheep rancher on the Idaho Wool Grower's Board lost his grazing lease because he was outbid by the wellfunded Western Watershed Project, a radical environmental organization. The current State Lands "objection process" did not provide grounds so that people could object. I will work to prevent further loss of grazing land which is crucial in drought years.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- I strongly support the first in time, first in right priority doctrine. It is one of the bedrock principles to maintain the orderly use of Idaho's limited water resources. Drought conditions fuel the potential for conflicts over water usage. Farmers and ranchers need to know that those in charge of administering the lawful distribution of water have adequate resources to protect their rights.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-My candidacy represents a bold new approach. Career politicians are ruining our state and our country. We must stop putting our tax dollars into private organizations that promote leftist ideas. Let's do something different and bring fresh ideas into a government mired down in mediocrity. We need a plan that offers real solutions to problems in education, housing, the labor force, and infrastructure.

Brad Little - Running for Governor



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- Idaho's incredible growth comes with many opportunities but also challenges for Idaho's important agricultural industries. Just to name a few - federal regulation, water, and competing resources. Growth is best managed at the local level, and we need to make sure local communities are planning for "smart growth." Farms feed America and power Idaho's economy, and family farms need to remain part of the fabric and heartbeat of our local communities. During my first term we have made unprecedented strategic investments in water

infrastructure and quality. These investments will better position Idaho to combat some of the excessive regulations coming down from the Biden administration.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- Property rights are enshrined in Idaho law. As Governor, I have worked hard to protect and maintain the lightest hand of government on private property owners. As blue states around us continue to disregard private property rights, Idaho will continue protect the dream of most Americans to feel safe and secure in the ownership of their property.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- Idaho has abundant and vast public lands, and we need work to increase access for recreation and pragmatic resource management. Idahoans depend on these lands for their livelihoods, and I will continue to push on the Biden administration for the responsible management of our lands in Idaho.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- As a rancher and farmer, I understand the scarcity and importance of water in Idaho. Without the priority doctrine we would not be able to prioritize the delivery of water in a way that safeguards our property rights. Some of my investments in water include more efficient storage and delivery systems to stretch this finite resource as far as possible.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-We need to continue investing in our rural communities and promote responsible and reasonable land management because our communities rely on it. Farmers, ranchers, loggers, and mill workers depend on continued, predictable access to our natural resources. During my first term I reduced regulatory friction at the state level and made Idaho one of the friendliest places to do business. In fact, we cut or simplified a remarkable 95-percent of regulations since I took office! I am proud that Idaho now claims the title of "least regulated state in the country." My family has a long history in Idaho agriculture, and I understand firsthand the negative impacts of excessive regulation. With our efforts to cut red tape, we are removing rocks from the shoes of small business in Idaho.

Janice McGeachin- Running for Governor



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- Across the country, we are seeing the loss of traditional family farms due to the increase in corporate farming, and a shift in priorities and values in younger generations. We are also facing increased foreign competition that is driving down the value of American agricultural products. I support America First policies that prioritize our country, our products, and our economy. We must make sure that American farmers (and manufacturers) aren't competing with slave labor in Communist China. In Idaho, we must do more to remove tax burdens and regulatory obstacles that stand in the way of traditional farming.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- A robust defense of property rights is one of our country's foundational principles. Idaho must take care to protect property rights from being weakened by federal intrusion or by radical groups seeking to use the court system to prevent property owners from using, enjoying, and developing their property. We must make sure that in Idaho, protecting property rights always remains a top priority.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- The federal government has done a poor job of managing land and frequently ignores stakeholder input. We have seen roads and trails closed without sufficient justification. I support increased access to and productive use of Idaho land in a manner consistent with Idaho values. One of the most important ways for Idaho to balance these needs is to shift management of federally-controlled land to the state. I would add that one of the more significant challenges with land management policy overall isn't balancing the needs of all land USERS; it's protecting our right to USE our land from those who don't want it used at all. I support the responsible development of Idaho's rare earth minerals, and I would like to see the University of Idaho School of Mines reopened.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- Protecting water rights must remain a priority in Idaho. I support the priority doctrine as it preserves the value of and usability of longstanding water rights. Idaho has done fairly well in managing water rights, but I am always willing to sit down with stakeholders and discuss their ideas for how things could be improved.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

- There are two main kinds of people who move to Idaho. There are those who appreciate Idaho values and who decided to move here because of them. Then there are the folks who come here and bring failed ideas from places like Oregon or California with them. I believe in the principles of individual liberty, state sovereignty, and traditional conservative values. I believe that those who share these values will be more comfortable in our state. Obviously, we can't deny entry to those who don't share these values, but we can continue to adopt policies that make it clear what we believe in here in Idaho. One example is firearm rights. Washington State recently passed a law limiting magazine capacity to just ten rounds. Leaving aside the questionable constitutionality of this law, folks who like such policies should really choose to live in Washington or California, not move to Idaho and try to change our strong, pro-gun culture. In Idaho, we defend the sanctity of life, stand up for gun rights, and protect property rights. We shouldn't shy away from these beliefs. Our state legislature should continue to pass laws that are consistent with Idaho values, not make excuses and put good, conservative bills in the drawer just because a loud minority opposes them. We saw that happen multiple times this session including important bills to defend children against abusive medical procedures, and to protect children from obscene materials and unlawful sex education in public schools. As Governor, I will encourage the legislature to pass legislation that protects our traditional conservative values while also reducing taxes and regulations, so that our farmers, ranchers, miners, and small business owners can prosper. Idaho should be the state where conservative families feel most at home, and I look forward to making that happen.

Scott Bedke - Running for Lieutenant Governor



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- I believe water rights are a major issue that will continue to be front and center for Idaho's agricultural industry. I've had success in mediating and settling longstanding water disputes that have plagued Idaho for decades. Between summer droughts and Idaho's growth, these issues will likely continue, and I am committed to using my experience to find solutions that will work for all parties. Whenever we can avoid these costly legal battles through negotiation and legislation, we should do so. I also believe federal regulatory issues will be a challenge going forward. We must ensure that federal agencies, like the EPA, USFS, and BLM are not encroaching upon the rights of farmers and ranchers.

Currently, federal fiscal policy has resulted in unsustainable price increases. This kind of inflation raises our basic input costs in a way that we cannot sustain for long. That leads me to my last issue of concern, labor. Finding and retaining a skilled work force has become increasingly difficult. We need to look for opportunities to expand our workforce development, beginning in our public school system, to make sure that Idaho always has a well-educated workforce.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- Protecting property rights is the main reason I entered politics. To make a long story short, a federal bureaucrat threatened to run my family ranch out of business over water rights and other issues. The BLM and USFS tried to take away our right to utilize the water on public land. Under Idaho's Constitution, all water in the state must be put to beneficial use. The federal agencies tried to claim that they qualified for the water right by using our livestock. Eventually the court upheld our water rights claim to utilize our state-based water right on public land. It has always been, and will continue to be, my priority to protect private property rights, because that is the foundation on which everything else is built.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- Like many other issues, the best way to balance the needs of all is by ensuring an honest and open line of dialogue where all stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process. Since 1976, the multiple use concept has served us well. As Idaho grows, there will be increasing demands on the amenities that we have all come to expect from the public lands in Idaho. Cooperation, coordination, and communication have been the keys to our success to this point and will continue to be so in the future.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- Living in the arid West means that the use and conservation of water will always be a driver in our policy decisions. In Idaho, we conjunctively manage the surface water and the ground water as one resource. Our water policy is predicated on the principles of "first in time is first in right." I support this. As water users, we have proven that we can negotiate and solve the inevitable conflicts that arise as scarce water resources are allocated. This will continue to require our best efforts. I believe that my experience in this area uniquely qualifies me to be a useful contributor in water policy decisions going forward.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-By electing conservative, pragmatic, proven leaders. Idaho didn't fall its way to the top. We are the fastest-growing state in the Union, both in population growth and in economic activity. Our state has been discovered for a reason: because Idaho is the best place to live, work, and raise a family. As Speaker of the House, I've led the charge to cut red tape and make Idaho the least regulated state in the nation. By doing this, we've bolstered an already probusiness environment that benefits small and large businesses.

Priscilla Giddings - Running for Lieutenant Governor



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- Government overreach is now causing serious problems for agriculture. For example, excessive regulation and grossly inappropriate domestic policy will bring severe inflation, skyrocketing fuel prices, and ever higher fertilizer prices along with supply chain issues which will affect every element of agricultural production. Idaho needs strong leadership, especially in the Executive, to counteract rampant government overreach and lower taxes and production costs to normal levels.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- The right to work toward property ownership has been at the root of the American dream from the founding of the country. In a time when fewer and fewer people make their living off the land, the progressive agenda is to keep increasing property taxes to fund their social programs. If it is fully realized, the end state of the progressive agenda is full communism, with all property owned and managed by the state. For this reason, individual property ownership is the root of our conservative principles, our financial independence, and our freedom; property rights are and always will be the antithesis of liberal ideologies. Idaho needs strong leadership in the Executive, and as Lt. Governor I will continue to advocate for property rights and use my influence to oppose carveouts for international businesses (i.e. Facebook) that transfer tax burdens onto property owners.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- As the state continues to fill up with refugees fleeing from the socialism infecting our neighboring states, we will need to expand the opportunities for those refugees to interact with our treasured outdoor spaces. At the same time, those vast public spaces are and must remain the backbone of our economy. Mining, logging, farming, livestock, and most of all the independence, work ethic, and conservative values of the people pursuing them made us a state that people flock to when their homes are overrun by woke policies. A huge part of the solution is fostering an honest desire and intention to see the land carefully and responsibly used. Too many state and federal bureaucrats are motivated by a clear desire to see the land closed and left unused and desolate, or blackened by the endless fires brought on by terrible management. We must faithfully steward the wonderful land resources we have in Idaho, with a full intention of seeing the land preserved through use.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- First in time, first in right was written into the constitution, and with it we have the guiding principle established which, must continue to be followed and protected. Idaho needs to take a proactive approach to increase water storage, invest in recharge efforts, encourage conservation where it is possible, and in general strive to get the most and best use out of this precious resource. We must fiercely resist outside interests if they try to dictate our water use, but also attempt to work with Federal agencies and other entities to maximize the storage, irrigation, power generation, and wildlife potential of our water. There will only be increasing demand for our water as we continue to grow and prosper, so we will continue to need to carefully balance the addition of new uses with the protection of the old uses.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

- Constitutionally, government exists to safeguard the rights of the people. The way to avoid excess regulation is to return government to its constitutionally limited role. According to our Founding Fathers, government's purpose is to secure the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness (our Founders expressly included property rights in the last). Government which is required to stay within the bounds of this carefully defined role is not able to create excess regulation. We must fight to keep government in check, but we also need to continue to welcome new business and people, at the same time we make it clear that this is a state by, for, and of conservatives who value hard work, independence, and self-reliance.

Phil McGrane - Running for Secretary of State



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- Idaho is one of the fastest-growing states in the nation. Our quality of life and conservative values are attracting people from all over. As our population grows, it increases some of the challenges facing agriculture in our State, namely: Urban Encroachment – As the demand for housing rises, so does the demand for our land. As a state, we need to be constantly mindful of the value of our productive agricultural land while also respecting private property rights. This requires community engagement and decision-making at the local level. Finite Resources – Water, Land, and other resources in our State are limited. With the growth

comes a much greater demand for the natural resources we rely upon for farming, ranching, and more. We need to ensure we have policymakers willing to recognize the importance of food security and our agricultural roots. Private Property Rights As we grow, we need to continue to protect and respect personal property rights. We need to limit the interference of government and recognize these rights. Urban sprawl and development can create both pressures and opportunities for property owners, including farmers

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- In Idaho, we believe in limited government. This is best recognized by respecting private property rights. Each landowner should feel secure in determining what is best for their land. As we grow, we need to protect these rights and ensure that those coming to our State respect these rights as well. Whether maintaining a farm or selling one's land, we need to respect the rights of landowners.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- Our lands are some of our most cherished resources. It's one thing they aren't making more of. The Idaho Land Board plays a vital role in helping maximize the use of our land while also working with users and partners to ensure the many benefits of these lands in the long term. I am proud to have the support of the Idaho Logging Contractors PAC and the Idaho Cattleman's PAC. Both are key partners who rely upon our state and federal lands for timber harvests and grazing. They each recognize the mutual benefit that comes from working together to ensure we protect our lands and maximize their return. Some of the biggest challenges we face are protecting our lands from fire and environmental policies restricting their use. The Land Board is a leader in working with our neighboring landowners to protect what we have. It's important that we continue to advocate for the expansion of the good neighbor authority to assist in managing the federal land in our State to help reduce the risk of fire and other dangers that impact neighboring landowners in Idaho.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- As a fourth-generation Idahoan, I learned the importance of water in this State at a young age. When attending law school I made it a point to study water law. I recognize the importance of the prior appropriation and the beneficial use doctrine. Water is the lifeblood of so much of our State, especially agriculture. As we grow, we need to continue recognizing our existing water rights while also ensuring that we maximize the beneficial use of this finite resource. This will become an increasing challenge as more people move into our State and create new demands for power and tech that will compete with the food producers of our State for our water. I am committed to working with our Farm Bureau to ensure that future generations can benefit from what has been built in our State.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-My grandfather taught me the value of living off the land, helping a neighbor when they need a hand, to be fiscally conservative, and the value of a hard day's work. These weren't his values; these are Idaho's values. I want my children to share these values as they grow up in this State. As people move in and outside groups attempt to influence our State, we need to be vigilant about protecting these values. As Secretary of State, I am committed to ensuring transparency in our campaign finance laws and holding those accountable who try to influence our State.

Dorothy Moon - Running for Secretary of State



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- Water is the biggest issue. We as a state need to focus on recharging our aquifers and reservoirs. Infrastructure projects should prioritize repair of our water reservoirs while improving aquifer recharge where and whenever possible. We cannot support removing the lower Snake River dams. The dam's irrigation, power and recreational opportunities and habitat enhancement are key contributors to Idaho's economy, prosperity, and ways of life. Even though the dams are downstream their removal would send shock waves with serious consequences for all Idahoans, especially those in agriculture.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- Property rights are fundamental rights from which all other rights originate. We cannot be free and prosperous people without the security of private property. People's homes are they're largest asset while all prosperity comes from the land in one form or another. The protection of private property is paramount in any free society. Today property rights are under attack from exceedingly high taxes and regulations that loom over all owners. The burden is so great that many fear losing their homes, their farms, and ranches either through excessive taxation or debilitating regulation. The elderly are especially at risk. Many have lived in their homes for decades and now face eviction because property taxes have priced them out. We need to reduce property taxes so people can remain in their homes and enjoy the blessings they have acquired over their accumulated lifetime. A reduction in government spending is where we need to begin. Growing government has significantly contributed to many underlying problems we face. We as a State should work to become independent of federal funds and the mandates they attach to our economy. Dependency is never a pathway to independence.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

-I have always encouraged public land managers to open access to our public lands for use and enjoy instead of closing forest roads or locking off areas in travel plans, overlays, and study areas. Federal and state government agencies should manage our endowment and federal lands working for the many interests of the people of Idaho.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- I strongly believe Idaho water rights should be first in time, first in right. The real issue in my mind is of beneficial use. Idahoans should benefit from Idaho water use first. We should not allow the selling of water and rights where water goes down the river without priority of beneficial use.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-I would encourage growth to move into areas that have little productive agricultural use. Explosive growth in the Treasure Valley and elsewhere is impacting productive lands that will hurt agriculture in the long run. Idaho has a live and let live mentality which has drawn many refugees from California, Oregon, and Washington. Idaho should wisely regulate growth when it comes to water availability and competing agriculture uses in high growth areas. Increases in population will have negative aquifer drawdown consequences that will affect all Idahoans. Careful study is necessary.

Mary Souza - Running for Secretary of State



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- Major challenges to agriculture in Idaho are inflation, fuel costs, and a serious shortage of available labor. The drought last year was also serious, and may continue into future years, especially in the southern part of our state. Other threats come from our governmental policies, such as proposals to remove dams on the lower Snake River, tax decisions, business regulation, fee structures on endowment grazing lands, and water containment, conservation, and distribution. Elections Matter! We must continue to push against unreasonable Federal regulation, support improvements to our immigration policies, and protect our transportation, including waterways. As Vice Chair of Senate

Commerce, I have been active in reducing regulations on all business, especially Agri-business, which is the lifeblood of our economy. Our legislature removed many career-entry obstacles for professions such as veterinarians, hydrologists, truck drivers, and wild land firefighters. As Secretary of State, I will bring my experience as a business owner of 37 years, along with my 8 years of Senate experience and strong working relationships. The SOS's Business Division registers businesses, certifies documents, prepares important UCC filings, holds many registries including a registry of Agricultural certified seeds, and more.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- Property rights are a high priority in Idaho. We passed extensive legislation on trespass, protecting land rights and controlling unauthorized use or damage to lands. We have also passed residential property rights legislation, including important home defense protections. Continued focus on property rights protection will be needed as Idaho's population increases and technology advances.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

-I am a candidate for Secretary of State, so as a member of the Land Board, the top priority is the maximum revenue from endowment lands to the beneficiaries, as is clearly outlined in the Idaho Constitution. The Idaho Department of Lands manages the state lands, and activities on the lands, such as timber sales, grazing leases, farming, recreation, mining, and conservation. IDL has policies for these diverse uses and the enforcement of rules to protect both users and resources. This legislative session we had an important bill to provide hazard pay for wild land firefighters when they are working on an active fire. These workers are essential to our grazing land fires, forest fires, and protection of our valuable natural resources. My second opponent for the SOS job, Rep. Dorothy Moon, voted NO on this bill and also NO on the budget for IDL.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- I do support and endorse the water priority doctrine because it offers an organized, predictable method of water distribution. Having served in the Senate for 8 years now, I know that water is like liquid gold in our state. This is true from the timbered areas of North Idaho, to the livestock and feed sectors of southern and eastern Idaho. Last year's serious drought was damaging to grazing lands, livestock, forests, and our economy.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-The best way to protect our Idaho culture is to elect effective, conservative public officials who are beholden only to the citizens, not to any outside group. Elections Matter! In 2020, Facebook money came into Idaho to operate our elections. My opponent, Ada County Clerk Phil McGrane, took \$500,000 of this money, without consulting the SOS or reporting to the state. I was the first lawmaker alerted to this problem and the first in the US to draft legislation blocking this kind of dark money to run our elections. You can read more about Zuck Bucks on my website: marysouzaforidaho.com So, are elections safe in Idaho? Heritage Foundation's new Election Integrity Scorecard ranks Idaho #38 out of the 50 states. We can do better. It's like leaving your barn door open—even if the horses didn't get out, you close the door when it is discovered. Let's fix the weaknesses in our election system so we can build public trust that every vote counts!

Raúl Labrador - Running for Attorney General



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- In an increasingly integrated global economy, for Idaho's agriculture economy to remain competitive we will have to ensure that our farmers have access to a stable labor force; modern and affordable equipment; and the least-restrictive regulatory structure. Legal questions are an important part of these issues, including legal questions related to water rights; predatory commodity dumping from overseas; and burdensome federal regulations. As Idaho's Attorney General, I will work to make sure that legal obstacles that stand in the way of Idaho agriculture are simplified and that Idaho is aggressively defending the agricultural "backbone" of our state economy.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- The Founding Fathers recognized property as the essential basis of a free republic. A government that does not recognize private property rights will not recognize any limitation on its power. As Idaho's next Attorney General, I will work to keep private property rights at the center of our state law and, where appropriate, I will bring suit in state or federal court to vindicate the property rights of Idaho's people. Also, I will also stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Idahoans who fight in the courts to vindicate their rights, or the rights of their fellow-citizens. We have a Constitutional Defense Fund designed to compensate Idahoans who prevail in litigation. I'll ensure this fund compensates Idahoans fairly for the rights they defend or vindicate for our people.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- Idaho's elected policymakers in the legislature must work to balance the interests of land users through carefully crafted law and minimal regulation. As your Attorney General, my job will be to enforce those laws and ensure that all interested parties also follow the law.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- With Idaho's growth there will be increasing pressure on one of our most precious--but limited--resources: water. If the fights occurring throughout the West are any guide, it is likely that the future of water rights in Idaho will be contentious. But with the right leadership -- and the power to convene opposing parties or disparate interests -- we can navigate the future without falling into the pitfalls that have been disastrous for many of our neighbors. I am the right leader to do so. I respect the doctrine of "first-in-time is first-in-right" as a cornerstone of our state law and that should form the starting point for any discussions about what the future will look like.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

- Our beautiful home has been discovered. This is a blessing and a burden. The Idaho Way of Life is now a proven standard such that many of our fellow Americans want it for their families. But we must manage this growth and ensure it does not destroy the strength of our communities, our agricultural heritage, or the beautiful and rugged landscape of our state. The first trap we must avoid is thinking that growth can be reversed or eliminated. Next, we must ensure that we remain nimble excessive regulation or onerous laws that penalize our economy or undercut Idaho's traditional industries, like agriculture, will drive Idaho in the wrong direction. Instead, we must maintain what makes Idaho such a great place to live while remaining vigilant and responsive to the changes that come with our state's current growth. Policymakers in the legislature and county and municipal leaders throughout the state will have the primary role in shaping how we respond to growth. As Idaho's Attorney General I will ensure that the policies and regulations implemented by the legislature and local elected leadership are consistent with our constitution and laws and are fairly enforced.

Arthur Macomber - Running for Attorney General



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- I see challenges in husbandry practices, land-use practices, water, and a diminishing respect for private property rights. In my view, husbandry practices must remain under the control of the individual farmer or rancher. Idahoans are under severe regulatory pressures. Land use practices since Idaho's Local Land Use Planning Act of 1975 (LLUPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) have resulted in a steady erosion of private property rights negatively affecting farmers and ranchers on both private and public lands. The Attorney General should have a focus on the transition back to the federal land disposal policies that ruled until 1976. A multi-decade transition must occur, if

Idaho is to regain access to its full natural resource base. Water uses are under attack. The notion of removing three Snake River Dams is a direct assault on the agricultural stability of Idaho families and Idaho's economy. The dams must remain. The new Attorney General of the State of Idaho must have a deep understanding of water issues.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- Private property rights are the anchor and underpinning to Idaho's prosperity. Rights to the use and disposal of real and personal property by owners with title or lessees allows the most productive uses to occur. Private owners learn their lands over time and its management toward sustainability better than outsiders, whether government officials or private interlopers like environmental organizations. Further, private property rights and the values that support a clear understanding of them can best be transferred to future generations by families. Fathers and mothers are the best people to train their children in the values and importance of the rights and usages of the private property that undergird our Idaho Republic.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- Multiple use and sustained yield are the watchwords of FLPMA, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. This includes the idea that a strict land use management plan for federal lands is required, including a policy of non-disposal and the repeal of the several mining and homestead acts of the last century or two. Oil and gas leasing on public lands in Idaho should be reopened. Idaho is the Gem State, and mining of silver, gold, cobalt, and the creation and enrichment of nuclear fuels, thorium, and other more reliable fuel sources must be encouraged. Navigation through the law can come from the Attorney General's Office. Fewer regulations would be a good place to start, which is why I propose as Attorney General to fire some staff and give the legislature back the attorneys that it lost in 1997. With a Legislative Counsel's Office, the Constitutional Amendment I wrote in 2018, which is Section 29 of Article III of the Idaho Constitution can be given some teeth. The 722 sets of IDAPA regulations must be cut down to size.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- The traditional rule of "first in time, first in right" has served Idaho well. I see no reason for changing it. Idaho's State Attorney General must rise to fight attempts from any sector to alter or dispose of that policy. While water markets may be useful in certain basins, the core doctrine must always be respected and unabridged by the State, federal, or Title 42 district powers. I am a strong supporter of Idaho's priority doctrine.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

- I plan a "strike team" of attorneys who will look for federal and State instances where Idaho must assert its sovereignty, either in existing lawsuits or in new ones to be initiated. In this way, Idaho's Attorney General will be leading the fight for Idaho. Avoiding excessive regulation can occur by allowing the new Legislative Counsel's Office to vigorously undertake IDAPA rule review, see Section 29 of Article III, Idaho Constitution.

Lawrence Wasden- Running for Attorney General



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- Agriculture has many challenges including water, labor and market pressures. The drought is taking a huge toll and competition for water will only intensify. Agriculture is innovative and efficient in using water. We need strategic and targeted investment in water storage and delivery. Other states complicate the labor market, Idaho must ensure that we are not making the labor market more difficult. Feed, fuel and fertilizer costs are rising. We must continue to curb unfair competition. Last year, I asked USDA to investigate consolidation among meat packing and processing companies. I will continue to challenge burdensome federal regulations.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- Property rights are the backbone of our republic. One of the reasons we declared our independence was to end the absurd property privileges of the monarchy. America was founded on the principle that all men are created equal and part that equality is property ownership and the right to deal with your land as you choose. If self-determination is a precept of liberty, then liberty rings hollow without private property rights. My office publishes the Regulatory Takings Guide to help evaluate the regulatory burden of government action. I consistently push back on the federal government's unnecessary regulations through objections to EPA regulations, limiting the impact of federal policies such as WOTUS, and insuring that application of the ESA does not infringe upon private property rights.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

- Idaho's lands are critical assets. These lands and the waters that flow over and under them are the backbone of our economy. We best manage them by remembering that if we spoil the water or the land, then we spoil someone's way to earn a living—and most likely the effect will be much broader. But we also must be mindful of the significant impact of government regulation and carefully balance competing interests. For example, a farmer may look at a river and see an irrigation source, while a river guide sees a rafting resource, and they both may look to the river for fishing. The water both divides and connects us through these uses. If there are no farms, we risk starvation. This means we must consistently insure that we balance our regulatory actions in a manner that protects our ability to feed society. Idaho is currently confronting a loss of farmland because it is more lucrative to subdivide and develop land than it is to farm it. We must be mindful of the incentives created by government regulations and their long-term impacts on our ability to feed ourselves.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- Article XV, § 3 of the Idaho Constitution guarantees prior appropriation as the water law of the state of Idaho. My duty is to uphold the Constitution and to follow the rule of law—since prior appropriation is constitutionally the law of Idaho, my duty is to defend and uphold it. I have done so and will continue to do so. Prior appropriation ensures that water is used orderly and efficiently. I have consistently and continuously defended Idaho's prior appropriation system. Through my leadership, my office has assisted stakeholders in navigating the adjudications in the Snake River, Bear Lake, Palouse River, and the Northern Idaho Basins. Water is the lifeblood of our state and Idaho's success in managing this precious resource is the envy of the West and the Federal Government. I am committed to protecting Idaho's waters from any attempts to encroach upon or to take it by other states or the federal government.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

- Idaho must adapt to rapid growth by protecting our core principles. We must be careful that as newcomers arrive, Idaho doesn't turn into the places they left behind. Government must have the lightest touch possible upon our, farmers, ranchers, and citizens. The law often flows to the lowest common denominator—meaning the law is often written because someone did something someone doesn't like. The temptation is to regulate every set of circumstances. We must resist that temptation and encourage self-regulation. I will continue to protect Idaho.

Debbie Critchfield- Running for Superintendent of Public Instruction



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- We must protect Idaho's agricultural economy with the continued growth and changes to our state economy. There will be competition for every drop of water. Productive farm ground is being converted to subdivisions and parking lots at alarming rates as our agricultural base is reduced and the growing public is further removed from the knowledge and appreciation for food production. The costs of inputs, like fuel and fertilizer add to current challenges. The labor shortage is no small matter. There are challenges associated with national and global agriculture markets. We must sustain Idaho's agricultural way of life through an emphasis on skills and job-related training in our school for a trained workforce. We must link

Idaho students with Idaho careers, which helps provide our agricultural communities a trained workforce. For the rising costs of doing business, we need a new president. For water, we must not give up our control, particularly that which is available to production agriculture. Whether it's managing our dams or supporting innovation in efficient water use, a better educated workforce and consuming public will provide long term support for Idaho agriculture.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- Property rights are the foundational piece of our personal rights and our free market system. Government has a tendency to infringe on these rights, whether it's through increased taxation, the expansion of regulation, or the pursuit of policies that subordinate property rights. The most important thing I can do to uphold Idaho property rights is ensure taxpayers are receiving value in education and a return on their investment. We need a statewide discussion about local property taxes and the impact on communities with supplemental levies and bonds. Until we have a new and more fair system for funding education, every education dollar must get to students and teachers in the classroom.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

-We see the challenges of federal mismanagement of lands. Catastrophic wildfires on our federal lands clearly illustrate this point. Livestock grazing and logging are not only important industries that sustain our rural economies while providing food and fiber to the public, but should be recognized and utilized as effective tools in reducing fuel loads on federal and state lands. Idaho's growing population combined with the challenges brought on by COVID has created skyrocketing numbers of recreating public on state and federal lands. We must mitigate the effects of increased recreation pressures while facilitating better managed opportunities for the public to enjoy the beauty of the state. My perspective will be to balance the needs of all land users while supporting those uses that generate the resources and revenues necessary to sustain local economies and local schools. Local communities must have more input on the day-to-day management of public lands. The state must continue its efforts to drive more active management of state lands, providing an example for the federal government on properly managing federal lands in Idaho. We must also work to get greater say over the management of our federal lands.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- I support water rights as administered by the priority doctrine. We must continue building water storage across Idaho as our future is dependent on these efforts. We are concerned with proposals and growth that threaten the existing water infrastructure.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-When I look at other states with excessive regulation, I think a big problem is their citizens' views on the proper role of government and respect for free market capitalism. They elect officials that create policies and laws that erode our Constitutional principles. Idahoans have a healthy skepticism of government overreach and regulation and this is reflected in its elected officials. As Superintendent, I intend to support local control and pursue efforts that reduce red tape for parents, schools and educators. Local trustees and families should be leading our schools, not bureaucrats in Boise.

Branden Durst - Running for Superintendent of Public Instruction



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- There are a variety of challenges facing Idaho agriculture in the next five years. Federal government intrusion in the form of the EPA and USDA, water scarcity issues, labor shortages, growth and more. To address these problems, we will need strong leadership that first and foremost recognizes the value of Idaho Agriculture and the Idaho way of life. As a former member of the House and Senate Ag Committees and a recipient of the Idaho Ag All-Star award, I can be a trusted partner and advocate to fight for our Idaho values.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- Property rights are fundamental to our republican form of government. As state superintendent, I will ensure that decisions on the Land Board reflect the important role private property ownership plays in protecting our freedoms and liberties.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

-As a member of the Land Board, this will be front and center in my mind when making decisions. I fully support the "multiple-use" doctrine of our state and federal lands. To that end, I support slowly and deliberately migrating federal lands to state management and then to state ownership. Everyone, including ranchers and farmers, need access to these lands and I'll ensure that they do.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- Water rights in Idaho are the undercurrent to every political decision (pun intended). I believe that the first in time, first in right policy is the correct and fair policy. However, I do think it is important that we don't forget about the need to balance these considerations with the need to maintain quality agriculture. As cities grow, their need for water will also. This will bring the need for balance into greater focus and may require us to consider how Idaho's policy is serving all of Idaho, not just those who live in our more populous regions.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

-First, we need to acknowledge that maintaining our values and principles is a priority. The proper role of government is to have the lightest possible touch on individuals, families and industry. To that end, we must defend our republican form of government. To those who are choosing to make Idaho home, we should welcome them with open arms and remind them why they left their old home to come to Idaho. Our conservative, traditional values are the bedrock of our communities, and they must stay that way. As a fourth generation Idahoan, I am committed to fighting to protect our Idaho values. An education system that reflects these values is crucial to maintaining them. I am committed to doing everything within my power as state superintendent to make sure we don't lose our values as we grow. Nothing would be worse than waking up ten years from now and seeing we've lost our Idaho.

Sherri Ybarra - Running for Superintendent of Public Instruction



1. What challenges do you see facing agriculture in the next five years? What is the best way to address those challenges?

- As a member of the Idaho Land Board, I have a voice in future use and of state-owned lands, and I have learned a lot about balancing land productivity, revenue, and conservation – and about valuing the input and views of the farmers who are stewards of our land. For example, adequate space and revenue for farmers, safe and nutritious food for our public, and protecting our environment are all challenges. I can assist by being involved with agriculture and informed on the issues and connected to stakeholders; so, when policy issues arise that may negatively affect our farmers, such as greatly increasing the grazing

rate that the Idaho Land board was considering (I voted "NO") I, and my fellow land board members, can help agriculture stay on a positive path.

2. Why are property rights important and what can you do as an elected official to help preserve property rights in Idaho?

- On public and private lands, the Idaho farmers and cattlemen of Idaho have enjoyed a stable environment to meet our breadbasket needs. Property rights must be protected to continue this balance of current needs, and a promising tomorrow for all. And as Superintendent of Public Instruction, one of the vital services my department provides is safe and nutritious food for schoolchildren through our Child Nutrition Programs, which take advantage of fresh, locally produced foods. One of our most popular programs – and a priority my department shares with the Farm Bureau -- is the administration of Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program grants to schools throughout our state. Another way our public school system can help protect Idaho's agricultural programs is through Career Technical Education, which trains the agribusiness employees of the future. My department's Advanced Opportunities program has extended its dual credit offerings to encourage high school students to pursue career training for credit while still in high school.

3. How can Idaho best balance the needs of all land users when it comes to multiple uses on state and federal lands?

-Balancing our public lands is vital as our greatest beneficiaries are Idaho's public-school children. This involves fire management, recreation, and working lands, and conservation efforts. Education and outreach are vital to this process, so are informed policy makers, such as I insist on being.

4. What is your position on Idaho water rights and the priority doctrine (first in time, first in right)?

- That rule, rooted in our past, helps Idaho guarantee a bright future; and although this is not a topic that is usually in the wheelhouse of K-12 education, I make a point of keeping up on issues of Idaho water rights and other public resources.

5. With the rapid growth in the state, how does Idaho maintain its values and principles and avoid excess regulation?

- Idaho has been the envy of many other states in the nation for its economic stability and great culture. However, our rapid growth demands-- both predictability of policy, and planning foresight from our politicians. Smaller but better government can be achieved, with respect for our agricultural traditions. One thing in our favor is that Idaho has a strong history of minimizing regulation and preserving local control, and our current state government is continuing that philosophy.

Continued from page 2

issues.

My second message is to make sure you truly know who you are voting for and understand where they stand on the various issues.

Selecting who to vote for is not the same as selecting who to be friends with.

While it helps to have someone in office who is likeable and friendly, it's also of great value to have someone who has the correct philosophy of government and supports the beliefs and policies of Farm Bureau members.

With that in mind, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation also understands most people do not have the time, or ability, to find out pertinent information from candidates when determining who to support.

IFBF has helped do that for you by printing responses from 15 candidates for statewide office – governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general and superintendent of public instruction – to five questions about important issues

MILLER

Continued from page 2

and Idaho all around us. Witnessing the tragedy playing out in Ukraine only emphasizes what we have and the need to support the fundamentals of our great country.

We have important decisions before us in this upcoming primary election. In this edition of Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's Quarterly magazine, you will find a lot of information about candidates that could help you decide who to vote for.

Only four other states have a larger share of their total Gross Domestic Product that comes from agriculture. Put another way, agriculture is so vital to Idaho that only four other states' economies depend more on the farming and ranching industry than Idaho does.

We need to elect leaders who understand, defend, and work for agriculture.

'It is up to We the People to elect good, honest, and wise people who will represent us well.'

that Farm Bureau asked them.

This allows you to hear straight from these candidates, unfiltered, and help you have the information you need to make your own decisions.

In this magazine, you will also see the names of legislative candidates that Agra-PAC, the political action committee of IFBF, believes will be most philosophically aligned with Farm Bureau members and the policy they have adopted.

County Farm Bureau organizations across the state designate "county evaluation committees" that interview candidates and then make recommendations to the state Agra-PAC committee on who to support.

Some pages in this magazine are also dedicated to showcasing state legislators

who received IFBF's "Friend of Agriculture" award, which is the highest award we present to legislators. These are the legislators who have voted in line with our members' policy over the past two years.

We hope you will read through the pages of this magazine and learn something about the candidates running for the Idaho Legislature and those running for statewide office.

It is up to We the People to elect good, honest and wise people who will represent us well.

In the end, of course, it is up to you to decide who to vote for. We hope you will put some serious thought into that choice and that is the purpose of this special election edition. ■

'The more this world changes, the more it proves we need farmers, and we need your help as we work all the time to ensure farmers and ranchers are allowed to thrive.'

Simultaneously, we need leaders that understand infrastructure, health care, education, balanced budgets, and the list goes on and on.

Farm Bureau was started to give farmers a voice, and it continues to work to be the "Voice of Idaho Agriculture."

The more this world changes, the more it proves we need farmers, and we need

your help as we work all the time to ensure farmers and ranchers are allowed to thrive.

Food in our stomachs is paramount to our freedom. Our freedom is what has made us unique.

I want people not to have to worry about their food supply so that I can have access to good doctors, buy new tools, enjoy exciting experiences, and sleep in a safe home.

Civilization may be simply enjoying the results of others who discovered and implemented innovative solutions. Let us support agriculture so that it can support the myriad of activities that give us opportunities for safety, security, and freedom.

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation encourages its members and others to put some serious thought into voting for those people you believe are best suited to help achieve that. ■

Continued from page 2

tough, but they are also part of the bigger story of the rising cost of farming.

For livestock farmers in particular, business costs have increased 46% since 2013—those costs include animal care, feed and seed.

Today, those costs continue to rise and with supply chain disruptions, you also have to pray that your farm supplies will arrive in time.

The story isn't much better for farmers growing row crops either. While market prices are high for crops like corn and soybeans, the higher costs for seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and fuel make it tough to balance out.

It's also too early to tell if prices will keep up with farm costs or be swallowed up.

I know everyone is feeling the strain of rising costs, but where it hits differently on the farm is our inability to set prices. A restaurant might adjust its menu and raise prices to keep up, or reduce hours and staff, but those adjustments just don't work on the farm.

Whether you're growing grains, raising livestock or growing fruits and vegetables, you don't set the price you'll receive at harvest unless you're directly marketing your products, and that price can change from the time you're planning and planting to harvest time.

There are no slow times on the farm or margins to reduce employee time. What's more, you can't control when your equipment might break down or worse, when a storm or natural disaster might sweep in.

Farmers and ranchers rise to these challenges each day because we are grounded in our commitment to feed our families and yours.

But the pressures of rising farm costs—from seeds to equipment—are front of mind in every region right now and providing relief in the supply chain must be a top priority for our nation.

At Farm Bureau, we have been calling on the Administration to address the skyrocketing costs of fertilizer, remove import duties, free up port congestion and increase efficiency across shipping channels.

Our team of economists are following market impacts closely and will continue to provide analysis as farmers and ranchers adjust their budgets to keep up.

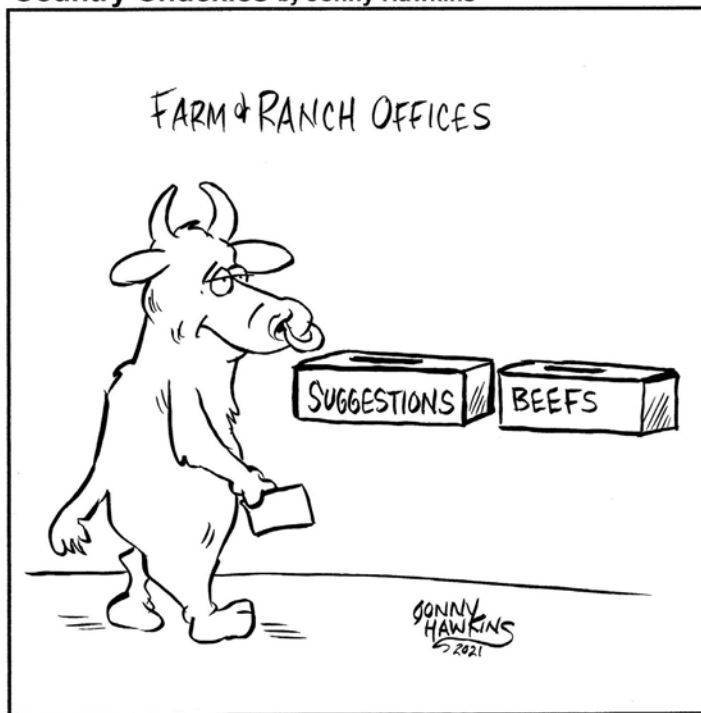
The pressures that keep you up at night on the farm, keep us up looking for solutions and advocating on your behalf here in Washington.

We will weather this storm together, as we work to keep our nation's food supply secure and our farms strong.

The importance of food supply self-sufficiency has become crystal clear in recent weeks as more and more people understand the connection between food security and national security.

The cost of farming may be high, but as global events remind us, the cost of losing America's farms would be even greater. ■

Country Chuckles by Jonny Hawkins



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Idaho Farm Bureau announces support for legislative candidates

The Idaho Farm Bureau Federation has a Political Action Committee named Agra-PAC. The purpose of Agra-PAC is to assist state legislative candidates who are philosophically aligned with Farm Bureau policies and positions to win their election. Based upon recommendations from county Farm Bureaus, the following legislative candidates have demonstrated a commitment to Idaho agriculture, limited government, less regulations and lower taxes and have been endorsed by Agra-PAC.

We encourage you to support them at the polls on May 17!

District 1 Boundary & Bonner Counties



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Senate Seat



Vito Barbieri
House Seat A



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House Seat B

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House Seat A



Jaron Crane
House Seat B

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Jeff Agenbroad
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Idaho Farm Bureau Federation graphic

The U.S. potato industry may be getting close to achieving its long-sought-after goal of being able to export fresh potatoes to all of Mexico.

Could all of Mexico soon be open to fresh U.S. potatoes?

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – The U.S. potato industry may be getting close to achieving its long-sought-after goal of being able to export fresh potatoes to all of Mexico.

That’s a very big “maybe” given the long history between the U.S. and Mexico potato industries over this issue.

The Idaho and U.S. potato industries have fought for more than two decades to try to realize the goal of selling fresh potatoes in all of Mexico but every time it has appeared to be close to achieving that goal, Mexico’s potato industry has successfully put up a roadblock.

Now, it appears Mexico’s spud industry may finally be running out of ways to block fresh U.S. potatoes from being exported to the entire nation.

The U.S. is allowed to export frozen potato products, such as French fries, to all of Mexico, but fresh U.S. potatoes are currently only allowed within a 16-mile

area along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Gaining access for fresh U.S. potatoes to all of Mexico, which has a population of 130 million, has been one of the U.S. potato industry’s top priorities for 25 years.

Despite the current 16-mile border zone restriction, U.S. fresh potato exports to Mexico were valued at \$60 million in 2021, according to the National Potato Council. Having access to the entire nation would provide a market potential to the U.S. potato industry of \$250 million per year, in five years, according to NPC.

Idaho leads the nation in potato production and spuds are the state’s top crop in terms of total farm-gate revenue.

Gaining access to all of Mexico would be a huge win for the state’s fresh potato industry, as well as potato growers across the U.S., said Idaho Potato Commission President and CEO Jamey Higham.

Opening all of Mexico to U.S. fresh potatoes “would be a very big thing for Idaho’s potato industry and for the U.S. potato industry as a whole,” he said “It

would provide access to a market we’ve never had access to before and a market that we think will have strong demand for our product.”

The efforts by the U.S. potato industry to gain access to all of Mexico have been a long and drawn-out battle that has raged on different fronts for a quarter of a century.

The U.S. and Mexican governments in 2002 announced both sides would resolve two long-standing market access issues – the U.S. agreed to expand market access for Mexican avocados and Mexico agreed to open the entire country to U.S. fresh potatoes.

The U.S. now imports about \$2 billion worth of Mexican avocados each year while Mexico remains mostly closed to fresh potatoes from the United States.

The Mexican government in 2011 agreed to allow U.S. potatoes full access to that country beginning in 2014. However,

Mexico's potato industry – the National Confederation of Potato Growers of Mexico (CONPAPA) – sued its government to prevent that from happening and that case ended up before Mexico's Supreme Court.

In a 5-0 ruling last April, Mexico's Supreme Court overturned a 2017 lower court decision on that case that prevented the Mexican federal government from implementing regulations to allow for the importation of fresh U.S. potatoes throughout the entire country.

The unanimous decision by the Mexican Supreme Court was greeted by U.S. potato growers with tempered excitement because of the long history by CONPAPA of throwing up roadblocks to prevent U.S. fresh potatoes from being allowed into the entire nation.

Sure enough, CONPAPA succeeded in putting up new hurdles and on March 14, 34 members of Congress signed a joint letter calling on USDA to press its counter-agency in Mexico to honor its trade agreements and finally open the entire nation to fresh U.S. potato imports.

The U.S. had previously negotiated market access and was shipping potatoes to Mexico for a brief three-week period in 2014 until the Mexican potato industry filed its lawsuit.

"We write today out of deep concern for the ongoing dispute regarding U.S. fresh potato access to Mexico," stated the congressional letter, which was signed by all four members of Idaho's congressional delegation. "It appears that Mexico is continuing to delay restoring this access that was blocked due to legal proceedings initiated by the Mexican potato industry"

"We request that the U.S. Department of Agriculture continue to work with their counterparts in Mexico to ensure that the trade

deal is honored by expeditiously reinstating access for U.S. fresh potatoes and to express that any Mexican request for enhanced agricultural access to the U.S. should not be granted until this access is restored," the letter stated.

On April 5, a joint U.S.-Mexico announcement on the potential reopening of the Mexican market to fresh U.S. potatoes was released.

That joint announcement states that according to an agreed upon work plan, the entire Mexican market will be open no later than May 15 for fresh U.S. potatoes.

In response to that joint announcement, NPC released a statement thanking USDA and the U.S. Trade Representative's office for their efforts on this issue.

"Given the history of this 25-year trade dispute, we are waiting to declare victory until we see durable exports of both fresh processing and table stock potatoes throughout all of Mexico ...," the NPC statement said.

NPC also said it hopes that "no last-minute roadblocks will be erected prior to Mexico finally – and permanently – reopening its border to U.S.-grown potatoes."

National Potato Council CEO Kam Quarles told Idaho Farm Bureau Federation that Mexico's potato industry has been creative about finding ways to kick the can down the road to avoid opening the entire nation to U.S. fresh potato imports.

"They have an exclusive monopoly on the market and they don't want to give it up," he said. "They are fighting so they can avoid competition with U.S. growers."

The U.S. has lived up to its part of trade agreements that call for allowing fresh U.S. potatoes into Mexico, he said, and it's time for Mexico to do that as well.

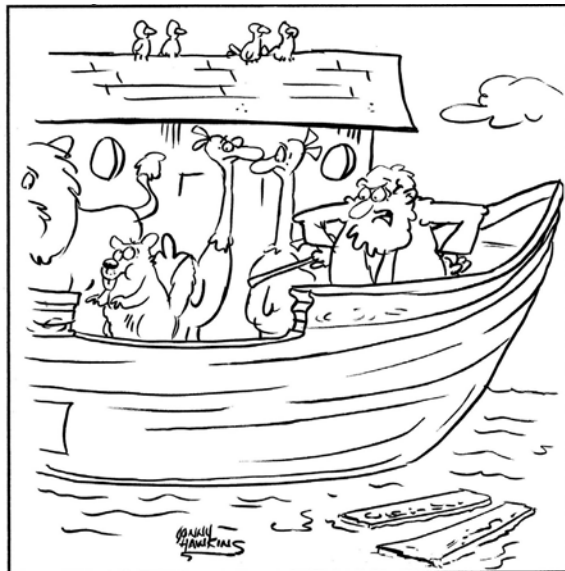
"It's really frustrating," Quarles said. "That is a situation that cannot continue." ■

Country Chuckles

By Johnny Hawkins



"If I don't have my morning nectar ...
it's all a brain fog."



"Ok, ok ... who chucked wood?"



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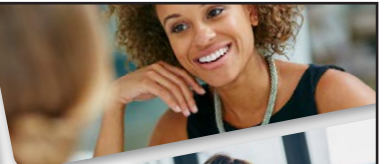
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Lopping and scattering slash reduces associated fire hazard.

Photo by Chris Schnepf

Thinning small trees – doing the work

By Chris Schnepf
University of Idaho

In my previous column, we outlined the essentials of pre-commercial thinning – thinning out sapling trees early in the life of a forest to favor the most sustainable species for a site and improve forest growth.

In this column, we discuss some practical steps and tools to get that work done.

Typically, a pre-commercial thinning (PCT) will leave 12-15 feet between trees. You may be tempted to space trees a little tighter than that.

After all, isn't it good to leave a few trees to spare, in case some die? Resist that temptation.

If you do not reduce stocking enough, five years later you may be back at the same place, with too many trees per acre,

and larger trees to deal with than you would have had if they were cut earlier.

If you are felling larger pines, you may now also have to think about pine engraver, a bark beetle that can breed in downed green stems larger than 3" in diameter.

Lodgepole pine is an exception to this general spacing guideline. If you thin lodgepole pine right out to 15 feet, the trees can become very bushy, so a possible strategy is to do two pre-commercial thinnings – one to 6 feet and then another to 15 feet, to develop better form on the trees.

Some foresters play with these densities and timing in the hope of making the second thinning a commercial thinning, where some trees can be sold to a mill to reduce the cost of the treatment.

For optimal growing conditions for each tree, aspire to thin to a consistent spacing

throughout the stand. But if you are doing the work yourself, it does not hurt to start by focusing on the trees you most want to favor and start daylighting around them.

The goal here is to give desired trees an edge against competing trees.

If you are lucky enough to have western white pine (WWP) saplings in your forest, think about what thinning could mean for managing the Idaho state tree's chief nemesis – white pine blister rust.

Opening up young white pine stands can increase blister rust infections. Thinning allows the lowest branches of WWP to live longer; these branches are more likely to be infected by blister rust.

Letting more sunlight to the understory can also help *Ribes* (gooseberries and currants), the plants that supply the spores that infect white pine trees.

Generally, when thinning a young stand

with white pine, it is best to also prune the white pine to reduce rust infection opportunities. The disease can only come in through the needles, mostly within the lowest 8 feet of the tree where humidity is highest.

In some cases, leaving some areas a little thick will suppress *Ribes* and aid WWP self-pruning. Some small thickets may also benefit some species of wildlife (e.g., snowshoe hares, which are a prey species for many of our carnivorous species such as lynx).

For more information see “Pruning Western White Pine: A Vital Tool for Species Restoration” (PNW 584) downloadable at www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/PNW/PNW0584.pdf.

If you are falling the trees, wear appropriate safety equipment – chaps if you are using a chainsaw, a hardhat (it does not take a very large stem to hurt your cranium), eye protection, ear protection, long pants, and a long sleeve shirt.

Also bring a shovel and a small fire extinguisher, in case your saw hits a rock, creating sparks.

If I have to remember to bring multiple tools to get a given job done, there is a risk I will forget one of them. Using equipment that is more integrated can reduce that (e.g., a hardhat with a face shield and ear protection built into the same unit).

Remember, plastic hardhats have a limited life, so replace them as needed per the manufacturer’s recommendations.

If you are cutting trees smaller than 4” and the ground is not too steep, a clearing saw can speed up pre-commercial thinning dramatically.

These devices also tend to be safer to use and easier on your body than bending over all day with a chainsaw. They also leave flatter, shorter stumps than angling a chainsaw to cut trees.

A clearing saw is like a string trimmer, except with a circular saw blade on the end. Typically, these blades have teeth similar to a chainsaw, that can be sharpened using a rat-tail file.

On chainsaw manufacturers’ websites, you will see an assortment of these kinds of devices ranging from a string trimmer you plug into an electronic outlet to larger devices with a circular sawblade on the

end.

“Clearing saw” generally refers to the largest two or three models along this spectrum. You can put a circular saw blade on some of the mid-size devices, but they likely will not withstand cutting trees by the acre.

Most saw shops do not stock clearing saws, but they can order them for you. Working with your local saw shop also puts you in place for help with maintaining the saw.

All cutting devices work better if they are sharp. If you are planning to use a clearing saw a whole day, bringing spare sharpened saw blades with you to the field allows you to change blades out as needed.

This can be especially helpful working on rocky sites, where blades are dulled more easily.

You may discover pre-commercial thinning is a lot more work than you imagined. If it is too much, consider working with a consulting forester to get a thinning contractor to do the work.

As with any contracted forestry work, get a signed, written contract that clearly specifies job expectations and insurance coverage.

You may also be eligible for cost-sharing assistance for pre-commercial thinning. Even if you are doing the work yourself, cost-share money will help you pay for better tools (e.g., a clearing saw).

The most common cost-share program currently used for pre-commercial thinning is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Stop into your local NRCS or Idaho Department of Lands office and they can fill you in on the details and deadlines. They may also have information on other cost-sharing monies to support pre-commercial thinning.

The trees you cut down in a pre-commercial thinning can be a fire hazard. On most Idaho sites, fire risk is reduced by lopping trees into smaller pieces and keeping slash less than 2 feet high.

Normally after a winter or two, the needles have fallen off the felled saplings, and snow compacts the slash, further reducing fire hazard.

Because pre-commercially thinned

stems are smaller diameter, they tend to decompose sooner than larger fallen trees. It is always a good idea to talk to your local IDL fire personnel to assess your site and the likely fire hazard from pre-commercial thinning.

In some cases, pre-commercial thinning slash may need to be piled and burned to keep fire hazard within acceptable levels of risk. However, when appropriate, leaving thinning slash to decompose in place retains nutrients for the site.

A compromise would be to leave the slash in place over one winter before piling and burning it. If the needles have fallen, you would still have captured a portion of the nutrients.

There are no insect hazards associated with thinning slash if cut stems are less than 3” in diameter. If you leave felled pine stems larger than 3” in diameter, you may need to treat them or do this thinning in the late summer or early fall to avoid problems with pine engraver beetle, a bark beetle also commonly referred to by its genus name “*Ips*”.

Other bark beetles capable of breeding in downed green trees are not a problem since stems from pre-commercial thinning are usually too small for them to successfully reproduce in.

For more information, see “Managing Organic Debris for Forest Health: Reconciling Fire Hazard, Bark Beetles, Wildlife, and Forest Nutrition Needs.” PNW 609. <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/PNW/PNW0609.pdf>.

Pre-commercial thinning is a powerful tool to put your young forest on the most sustainable trajectory possible. If you would like to learn more, we are holding a “Thinning and Pruning Field Day” on June 18 in Blanchard, where you can learn more about fundamental concepts of thinning and pruning, stand stocking measurements, forest genetics, and demonstrations of thinning and pruning tools.

Registration forms can be downloaded at <https://www.uidaho.edu/extension/forestry/programs>.

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

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