

# GEM STATE **Producer** Idaho Farm Bureau

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## Ranchers on the front lines caring for public lands

I love visiting the great American West. Every time, I leave in awe of all I have seen. I am not a stranger to diverse landscapes coming from my home state of Georgia, with its mountains, forests and coastline. But the West is truly unique—not only in the landscape but in how ranchers serve as caretakers of our shared public lands.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management is

now proposing significant changes to how public lands are managed, and we are looking at this closely to ensure ranchers can continue their critical work, keeping the land healthy for agriculture and natural wildlife.

BLM recently released a proposal on “Conservation and Landscape Health” that

See **DUVALL**, page 6

# The President's Desk

By **Bryan Searle**  
President, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



## WOTUS ruling a big win for property owners

In a unanimous ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court has finally put a stop to the Environmental Protection Agency's long-running attempt to greatly broaden the Clean Water Act's definition of what “waters of the United States” are.

The EPA has, for far too long, wrongly asserted that the Clean Water Act's “waters of the United States” (WOTUS) language grants it control over a vast amount of land as “waters.”

In the Sackett vs. EPA case, the U.S. Supreme Court in a May 25 ruling rejected that claim.

That it rejected it by a 9-0 vote shows this was no partisan political ruling.

Farm Bureau has long argued against EPA on this case and with the Sacketts and the recent ruling is a testament to what is possible when farmers and ranchers stick together on an issue and commit to seeing it through.

In 2015, and again in 2023, the EPA adopted rules that would have greatly expanded the agency's regulation over vast areas of water.

See **SEARLE**, page 7

# Inside Farm Bureau

By **Zak Miller**  
CEO, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



## Thank you, farmers and ranchers

In my opinion, it's common to experience mixed emotions. Almost everyone goes through conflicting feelings frequently.

I encounter these emotions while playing golf. Sometimes I feel optimistic and happy that I am improving my game. More often, I get frustrated and end up throwing my club.

Farmers and ranchers experience a range of conflicting emotions about their career.

While some express their passion for their work with statements like, “I was born to farm or ranch,” “There is nothing on earth I would

rather do,” and, “My happy place is in the fields or with the cows,” others express their concerns with statements like, “I don't want my children to do this,” “I wish the weather and the markets would give me a break,” and the most heartbreaking of all, “This is not a good way to raise a family.”

I have heard some of you make positive and negative remarks about farming and ranching during the same conversation.

See **MILLER**, page 6





# Idaho Farm Bureau.

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University of Idaho photos

The new short-trellis hopyard at the University of Idaho Parma Research and Extension center, pictured above, will focus on research into hop diseases.

# U of I researchers open new hopyard in Parma for disease, pest research

By John O'Connell  
*University of Idaho*

A new experimental hopyard at the University of Idaho's Parma Research and Extension Center will facilitate trials evaluating pest and disease threats facing the state's hop farmers.

The new short-trellis hopyard, comprising 220 plots of Chinook and Cascade variety of hops throughout 1.7 acres, was planted in April and will be highlighted June 21 during a field day and tour of the Parma facility.

It will supplement the full-trellis hopyard, where researchers at Parma conduct studies evaluating chemical efficacy, chemical residue and yield effects.

The U.S. ranks No. 1 in global hops production, raising 40% of the world's hops, mostly in the Pacific Northwest. Idaho is the No. 2 hops-producing state, responsible for 16% of U.S. hops production.

James Woodhall, an Extension specialist and plant pathologist based in Parma, has spearheaded the project. Parma research technician Silas Shumate oversaw the design and construction, with input from area hop farmer Diane Gooding.

"Hop growers need information about new products and existing products and how well they work. This will enable us to get that information very cost effectively," Woodhall said. "It's more than doubled our capacity for hop field research."

See HOPYARD, page 16

**COVER: Franklin County Farm Bureau board member Dallin Greer, with his children, Gracie and Macklin, is shown at a Thank a Farmer event hosted May 19 in Preston by FCFB. See page 8 for a story on this event.**  
Photo by Joel Benson



Photo by Pamela Hutchinson

This photo shows damage to a potato plant caused by excess moisture carrying pre-emergence herbicide too deep into the soil profile.

# UI Extension experts say heavy moisture has been a mixed blessing for farmers

By **John O'Connell**  
*University of Idaho*

Many southern and eastern Idaho farmers who celebrated a heavy winter snowpack followed by a stormy spring as a reprieve from drought are now finding many of their fields have been hit with too much of a good thing.

University of Idaho agriculture experts offering crop updates during a recent Ag Talk Tuesday online discussion reported lingering snow cover amid a cool and moist spring created ideal conditions for snow mold to damage winter cereal crops.

Snow mold fungi grow at near-freezing conditions under prolonged snow cover, and damage has been extensive in winter wheat, especially in the Arbon and Malad

valleys of southeast Idaho.

Winter kill, due to very cold and dry conditions on exposed winter wheat and barley, has plagued those areas not under snow cover. Ponding of water in low areas also reduced stand in winter crops.

Intense spring hailstorms from Murtaugh through Rupert and in the Idaho Falls area have compounded challenges for winter cereal growers.

“The whole area has been shredded with hail damage. A number of winter wheat and winter barley fields were taken out of production for hail damage,” said Juliet Marshall, a University of Idaho professor of plant pathology and head of the Department of Plant Sciences. “We’re looking at yield reductions of 70% easily in some areas.”

Near Pocatello and Fort Hall in southeast Idaho, symptoms of bacterial infections in wheat are developing. Hail and wind-driven sleet damaged plants, allowing infection and development of bacterial leaf streak in barley and black chaff in wheat.

Flooding of fields has caused soil erosion and delayed planting in the high-elevation Soda Springs and Antelope areas of eastern Idaho, exacerbated by late snowmelt.

“The area where we were going to plant for a wireworm study has been flooded, and I’m not sure if we’re ever going to get in and plant,” Marshall said, adding that the university’s scheduled field day in the Rockland Valley of southeast Idaho may ultimately be canceled, as there’s little information to glean from the experimental



cereal stands due to extensive snow mold damage.

The Rupert winter wheat and winter barley variety trials were plowed under due to winter kill damage in the surrounding field of winter barley.

Triticale fields in southern Idaho were especially hard hit by the winter conditions, with many farmers reporting crop survival of just 10% to 20%.

In Northern Idaho, which has received about 3 inches below normal precipitation, Idaho Wheat Commission officials said cereal crops are faring relatively well.

Pamela Hutchinson, UI Extension potato cropping systems weed scientist, has heard several reports from potato farmers throughout southcentral and eastern Idaho regarding foliar damage to spud plants caused by excessive moisture carrying pre-emergence herbicides too deep into the soil profile.

With just 1 or 2 inches of excess rainfall within a two-week period, pre-emergence herbicides may move down to where they're absorbed by emerging potato shoots rather than the roots of weeds growing within the top 2 inches of the soil, as intended.

The herbicides Matrix and Metribuzin are especially water soluble, but Hutchinson has also received inquiries about potato damage this season from growers who used moderately soluble products such as Prowl H2O, Linex, Eptam, Dual Magnum, Outlook and Sonalan.

Hutchinson has conducted simulated excess rainfall trials at

the U of I Aberdeen Research and Extension Center to evaluate potential herbicide damage with regular moisture, 3 inches of excess moisture and 6 inches of excess moisture within two weeks of application.

Depending on the chemistry, symptoms of herbicide damage may include crinkled leaves, stunting, blotchy yellow spots, vein chlorosis, stubby roots, thickened stems and heart-shaped leaves.

In Hutchinson's trials, potato plants typically recover from the damage with time.

"We've seen potatoes recover and not have any yield loss because of early herbicide damage," Hutchinson said.

If moisture moves herbicides so deep in the soil that weeds are not controlled, growers may subsequently apply products labeled for post-emergence use, such as Metribuzin.

Hutchinson said many farmers who recently reported problems in their potatoes used 0.8 inches of water or more to incorporate their pre-emergence herbicide application into the soil through irrigation or chemigation.

She advises using no more than 0.4 inches to 0.6 inches of water for herbicide incorporation, thereby giving growers wiggle room in case of wet weather.

Hutchinson urges growers who have experienced herbicide damage this season to follow their usual irrigation programs based on their soil moisture, recognizing it's important to avoid further stressing the developing potato plants. ■

# Country Chuckles

By Jonny Hawkins



"She specializes in western omelettes."



"He's a water dog and a birder."

# DUVALL

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*Continued from page 2*

really alters how multiple uses are balanced on public lands.

Among other things, the proposal creates a new “conservation lease” that BLM claims will strengthen the stewardship of America’s public lands.

On the surface, that term “strengthening stewardship” has a good ring to it. Ranchers are stewards of the land after all. They are on the frontlines, often the only folks for miles with eyes on the land and wildlife.

But this BLM proposal raises a lot of questions providing not much time for ranchers to get answers.

Many are concerned that by making conservation a new “use” and issuing conservation leases, vast areas could be shut down from public use altogether.

The public comment period, which was only 75 days in total, closed on June 20. Usually, big changes like these take months to years of conversations with interested stakeholders and many public hearings to ensure a sustainable, workable solution for all.

Ranchers are delivering a return on the trust placed in them to care for public lands. They are clearing debris, spotting wildfire risks, and reporting other potential dangers to local law enforcement.

Livestock grazing also brings overall health benefits to the land, from reducing wildfire risk and slowing the spread

of invasive weeds to building robust root systems and spurring forage growth for native species.

The University of Wyoming Extension crunched the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture numbers and found that for each pound of beef raised on public lands, Americans get \$0.44 in ecosystem related returns.

So back to that BLM proposal. There are red flags both in policy and process from BLM. They are using vague language and coming up with their own new terms for public lands use.

Ranchers don’t know what the impact will be on their current grazing leases or what happens when they are up for renewal. What’s more, there are some areas out West where the lines of public and private land look a bit like a checkerboard.

So, if a rancher suddenly cannot graze or move their livestock across neighboring public lands, they will quickly be out of feed and out of business.

Ranchers are already becoming an endangered species, if you will, out West with the rising cost of land and other challenges from water access to restrictions like these on public lands.

One rancher out in Colorado, Chuck Haus, observed that in the region where he works with his in-laws, the number of ranch families is barely a third of what it was 30 or 40 years ago.

What makes this proposal even more of a tough pill to swallow is that ranchers

have traditionally worked closely with BLM. It’s truly been a partnership, but ranchers were blindsided by this proposal.

Western ranchers have been caring for the land for decades, if not centuries, for some families. Their work is critical not only to the nation, but also to their local, rural communities.

A rule of this magnitude should provide the broadest opportunity for feedback, especially given the impact on those local communities.

Farm Bureau is actively engaging on this issue. We are urging BLM to extend the comment period, and we will submit comments highlighting our concerns on behalf of our rancher members.

We are also working with members of Congress to pass legislation that would send BLM back to the drawing board.

Most importantly, now is the time for BLM and lawmakers to hear directly from ranchers. Ranchers, I urge you to share your story, share your concerns and talk with your lawmakers about the benefits your work brings to the land.

Stewardship is truly strengthened when farmers and ranchers have the flexibility we need to do right by the land.

Stewardship is strengthened when farmers and ranchers have access to tools and incentives that help bolster their sustainability practices. The BLM can and should do better. ■

# MILLER

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*Continued from page 2*

While I do not have any answers as to why agriculture is the way it is, I do know that it is hard, and it is ok to acknowledge that what you are doing is hard.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the suicide rate for farmers is 1.5 times higher than the national average. The depression rate for farmers is also higher than the national average, at 17.2% compared to 16.6%.

And in our great state of Idaho, it is even harder. In 2017, the suicide rate for Idaho farmers was 25.1 per 100,000, compared to the national average of 14.2 per 100,000 people.

The depression rate for Idaho farmers is also higher than the

national average, at 17.2% compared to 16.6%.

These stats don’t concern me. They scare me!

Farmers and ranchers are notorious for “rubbing dirt on it and toughing it out.” Mental health is different. When it is out of whack, it cripples and injures more than one body.

Mental health challenges can ripple like an explosion through families and communities when left unchecked.

We all need to remember it is ok not to be ok. Think of it this way – no self-respecting farmer would withhold water for their crops, or rancher withhold medicine to a sick calf, so why would we allow ourselves to suffer?

In June, Russ Hendricks, vice president of governmental affairs for Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, received the Idaho Icon Award

for his exceptional contributions to the farming and ranching community.

Being of farm stock himself, Russ was humbly grateful for the opportunity to work on behalf of those who tirelessly provide us with three meals a day.

While accepting the award, his heartfelt expression of gratitude towards farmers was met with thunderous applause and even brought tears to some, including myself. Witnessing this immense appreciation for farmers and ranchers was truly inspiring.

I cannot change the weather, I probably won't be able to help much with the markets, I'm sure input prices will likely stay volatile, and I doubt the long hours will change.

However, one thing I and many more like me can do is sincerely say, thank you! You are seen and respected. A recent Gallup poll confirms that you farmers and ranchers are among the most admired people in our nation.

When thank you is not enough, remember there are resources available to help. Idaho is an ag state; without you in a healthy mental state, our families, communities, and state are not as great.

Please be tough enough to be healthy.

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture has resources to help. Please use them:

- [agri.idaho.gov/farmcenter/farm-stress](https://agri.idaho.gov/farmcenter/farm-stress)
- 1-800-FARM-AID ■

## SEARLE

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*Continued from page 2*

Idaho residents Michael and Chantell Sackett were stopped by EPA from building a home near Priest Lake years ago.

The agency argued that because the land was near a wetland, it had authority to regulate it under the CWA's "waters of the U.S." definition.

The EPA's reasoning was basically this: because the land was near a ditch, which was near a creek, which was near wetlands, which were near Priest Lake, the agency could regulate it as WOTUS because there was a "significant nexus" between the Sackett's land and Priest Lake.

Not only did the agency stop the Sacketts from building on their own land, they threatened them with penalties of \$40,000 per day.

The Sacketts filed a lawsuit in 2007 challenging the EPA's decision and the highest court in the land has agreed with them.

It needs to be pointed out that after the Sacketts filed their lawsuit and it made its way to the Supreme Court, American Farm Bureau Federation helped coordinate with other national ag groups and 20 state Farm Bureaus, including Idaho, to file friend-of-the-court briefs on behalf of the Sacketts.

The court rejected EPA's significant nexus claim and made it clear the agency far overstepped its boundaries in attempting to restrict property owners from responsibly using their own land even though it's far away from legitimate waters of the United States.

At the heart of the court's ruling was

that the use of "waters" in the Clean Water Act includes only relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water.

When it comes to wetlands, the court made it clear the CWA extends only to wetlands that are indistinguishable from waters of the United States.

That is in line with what Farm Bureau has been saying all along.

The court's ruling completely tore apart EPA's claims. It described the agency's approach as a "freewheeling inquiry" with "weak textual arguments."

In fact, it strongly criticized EPA for ignoring the Clean Water Act and past Supreme Court decisions in its enforcement of water rules.

In its ruling, the Supreme Court's reasoning closely aligned with many of Farm Bureau's assertions on this issue, including that EPA should abandon its attempt to regulate private lands.

The May 25 ruling was a blow against burdensome and unnecessary regulation and federal government overreach and a real win for farmers, ranchers and other property owners.

Under the EPA's WOTUS rule, farmers, ranchers and other property owners would have needed to hire a team of lawyers to determine whether their land was regulated as "waters."

Many of them would have needed to obtain federal permits just to do basic farm work on their property.

The Supreme Court ruling establishes a clear definition of what "waters of the U.S." really are, based on the language of the

CWA. This will provide a clear boundary for federal agencies in setting any future regulations affecting waters.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruling affects the pre-2015 rule. That means the 2023 rule remains on the books, but based on the court's ruling, EPA cannot enforce it.

Farm Bureau will remain engaged in the effort to get the 2023 rule officially tossed.

Make no mistake, this is a major victory and it's also a great example of the power of farmers and ranchers when they continue to steadfastly advocate on an issue.

Farm Bureau led the charge on this issue with its "ditch the rule" campaign during the Trump administration and the rule got ditched for a time due to your involvement.

Then, when the rule came back in under the Biden administration, Farm Bureau members once again acted, requesting that the EPA not reinstate the rule, which the agency did anyway.

All along, the hope was that a positive ruling on the Sackett case could put in question the new WOTUS rule, and that's exactly what happened.

What a success that stems directly from Farm Bureau member involvement.

Thank you to everyone who was faithful in staying the course on this issue until it was decided.

Of course farmers and ranchers want to protect the nation's water resources and we appreciate the Supreme Court for its reasonable and common-sense ruling on this issue. ■





Photos by Sean Ellis

# INAUGURAL THANK A FARMER EVENT DRAWS HUNDREDS

By Sean Ellis  
*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

PRESTON – A first-of-its-kind “Thank a Farmer” event in Franklin County drew hundreds of community members who got a chance to thank farmers and ranchers and learn a little about Idaho agriculture.

The May 19 event was hosted by Franklin County Farm Bureau and was set up to allow people to show some appreciation to farmers and ranchers for providing the food they eat.

“It’s been a rough year between the weather, higher (costs) and other challenges and we just wanted to make sure the producers know that people know what they do is important and that we appreciate them,” said FCFB Secretary Amy Gittins.

“We wanted to allow people to show appreciation to all the farmers and ranchers,” said Brittany Smith, a Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. of Idaho agent in the Preston office.

Lance Zollinger, chairman of Franklin County Farm Bureau’s Promotion and Education Committee, said the organization wanted to host a unique event to demonstrate gratitude to agricultural producers in the area.

The event included facts about Franklin County and Idaho agriculture and doubled as an opportunity to educate people about

agriculture.

“It’s been a hard winter, it’s been a challenging spring and it’s been difficult at time for farmers and ranchers,” Zollinger said. “So, we thought it would be good to put an event together that could promote agriculture and help our community understand how important all of the producers are to us. Ag really is driving our community, so we really need people to understand that.”

“Franklin County is an agricultural community and there are a lot of people who do support agriculture here and we just wanted to let the farmers and ranchers know that,” said Dallin Greer, chairman of FCFB’s Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee.

People who attended the event had several opportunities to thank ag producers if they chose to. They could fill out a thank you card, scan a QR code and express their appreciation online or film a short video piece.

“Thank you to all the farmers; the dairy industry, the ranchers, everyone,” Franklin County resident Lacey Hansen said while recording a video thank you during the event. “We love agriculture and appreciate it very much. We love farmers.”

Kyle Reed, a truck driver who stopped by the event with his





Kids fill out farming-related activity books during a Thank a Farmer event in Preston.

*“It’s an industry that has a lot of risks and sometimes the reward doesn’t really match the risks and yet farmers still wake up and get the job done.”*

*- Kyle Reed, area truck driver*

family, also recorded a video thank you.

“I just want to thank a farmer,” he said, flanked by his wife and kids. “It’s an industry that has a lot of risks and sometimes the reward doesn’t really match the risks and yet farmers still wake up and get the job done.”

All of the various thank yous will be compiled and distributed to area farmers through a variety of ways, including this magazine, a website, social media, and a booklet with all the thank yous that will be sent by mail to every producer in Franklin County.

The Thank a Farmer event was held in the parking lot of Stokes Market and Zollinger said the grocery store welcomed it without hesitation and provided some of the food that was offered to attendees free of charge.

The event was held next to a grocery store on purpose, Greer said.

The unspoken message, he said, was, “Everything that they buy in that grocery store is because somebody is willing to work those hard days and long nights to be able to feed America.”

The four-hour event drew several hundred people, who were offered free French

fries, chocolate milk, and coloring and activity books.

Zollinger said Farm Bureau organizers were thrilled with the turnout.

“We promoted the event well but we didn’t know for sure how many people would show up,” he said. “This is just icing on the cake. It turned out to be good icing on the cake.”

Large farm equipment loaned out to the

event for the day lined the area and two dairy calves loaned out by a local dairyman were a hit with children, who also had an opportunity to “milk” a life-sized fiberglass cow.

Hundreds of drawings by school children thanking farmers were displayed at the event.

“It’s been super fun. We had a great turnout,” said Gittins. ■



**RIGHT: A fiberglass “milking” cow was one of the highlights of a Thank a Farmer event held in Preston. The event was hosted by Franklin County Farm Bureau.**

# Thank you flow in for Franklin County farmers, ranchers

By Sean Ellis

*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*



Photo by Sean Ellis

PRESTON – Below are examples of some of the many thank yous received during a first-ever Thank a Farmer event held May 19 in Franklin County.

The event was hosted by Franklin County Farm Bureau as a way to allow area residents to thank farmers and ranchers for the food they produce.

Attendees could either write a thank you note, scan a QR code and thank an ag producer online, or record a short video thanking a producer.

Ages of the people who participated in thanking a farmer ranged from adult to very young.

## Thank yous

“Thank you for giving us milk which we use every day.”

“Farmers, you have a hard job! You never complain or gripe. You just keep going.”

“Thank you for the great harvest.”

“Dear agricultural specialist: Thank you so much for feeding, clothing and supplying the world with very little thanks. I know the long, hard, cold, hot hours you work and I appreciate you for it!”

“Thank you so much for feeding the

country.”

“Thank you so much for all you do.”

“Dear farmer, thank you for your part in agriculture! I really appreciate what you do. I know it’s not easy. Thank you for providing food and resources for our world. Best wishes in your farming endeavors. This community and even world couldn’t thrive without you. So once again, thank you.”

“Dear farmers, thank you for all your hard work and countless hours you put in. You’re amazing.”

“Thank you for all that you do for our community.”

“Thank you for all the milk and eggs and beef. I know that you guys work long, long hours. It is very much appreciated. Thank you.”

“Thank you for all you do to provide food and keep our country going. God bless.”

“To all the farmers and ranchers, you are greatly appreciated for all you do. You are the heartbeat of America.”

“Thank you for all your hard work and giving us milk. I hope you can have a good day. Thank you.”

“Thank you for your hard work. I love potatoes, carrots and milk.”

“Dear farmers and ranchers, thank you for making food for my family. You’re the best.”

“Thank you for making us crops that we eat like vegetables, corn, wheat and more. Thank you for that.”

“Just want to say how much you are appreciated for continuing on even through those hard times. Thanks a bunch.”

“Thank you for giving us food and milk.”

“Thank you for feeding us.”

“Thanks for your dedication. You make our lives better.”

“Dear farmers, thank you so much for what you do! I am so thankful for the food and things that you guys produce for us. You guys are the best.”

“Thank you for all your hard work! I realize the pressures and difficulties of farming but the benefits to humanity are so necessary and you have our support, love, encouragement and help. I am so grateful for all you do.”

“So grateful for the many farmers and ranchers in Idaho and across America who provide us with food on our tables. Thank



you for all you do!”

“Thank you to you, and your families, for the sacrifices you make every day to provide for all of us. Many people don’t understand how tirelessly you work so that we can eat every day.”

“I want to express my deep gratitude to the hard-working farmers in Idaho who tirelessly provide us with food every day. Your dedication and passion are truly admirable, and you are the backbone of our community. Thank you so much for all that you do, Idaho farmers!”

“A heartfelt thank you to all the hard-working farmers for providing the food and cultivating the land that sustains us all.”

“Farmers are some of the hardest workers I’ve ever met! From sunup, to sun-down, they are working to keep food on their own tables and everyone else’s! Thank you, thank you, thank you, farmers!”

“Dear all the farmers and ranchers everywhere, please don’t stop doing what you are doing! The world literally cannot survive without you. Thank you for feeding our children.”

“A huge thank you to all the farmers and ranchers of Franklin County! Your examples of selflessness, hard work, and commitment to community are a significant blessing to me and my family.”

“Thank you to all farmers and ranchers. You keep my family fed. I hope you know how much we all appreciate you.”

“Thank you! I can barely keep my house plants alive and you keep plants, animals, and me and my family alive. You are amazing.”

“I love our farmers and ranchers. I get to see them when I go to work. They are hard-working and deserve a pat on the back once in a while. They work hard for so little, and nothing tastes better than home-grown and we get that here with the potatoes and onions. Love where we live. Thank you, farmers.”

“Farmers are the backbone of our state of Idaho. They are the ones that keep this nation ticking along with the hard work ethic and a toughness that the majority of society is losing quickly. Not only do I say thank you to our farmers, I think we should all look to them as an example of what makes this nation great.” ■

Just want to say how much  
you are appreciated for  
continuing on even thru  
these hard times. Thanks  
a bunch!!

Thank you for giving us food  
and milk

THANK YOU! ❤️

-Malig

Age  
12

Dear Farmers,

Thank you for all  
your hard work and countless  
hours you put in, your  
AMAZING! ❤️

Brad's

Age: 17



Photos by Sean Ellis

Wheat is harvested in a field near Ririe last August. Idaho's wheat grower assessment will increase from 3.5 cents to 4.5 cents per bushel beginning July 1.

# Idaho wheat assessment goes from 3.5 to 4.5 cents per bushel

By Sean Ellis  
*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

POCATELLO – The Idaho Wheat Commission has raised the state's wheat grower assessment from 3.5 cents per bushel to 4.5 cents per bushel.

That means the state's 3,500 wheat farmers will pay 1 cent per bushel more for the wheat they produce starting July 1.

The increase from 3.5 cents to 4.5 cents will generate a little more than \$900,000 per year for the wheat commission, which is funded by the grower assessment.

The commission's budget for fiscal year 2024 is \$3.2 million, which is an increase of 1 percent over fiscal 2023.

The Idaho Wheat Commission, which

was formed by the state's wheat farmers in 1959, is tasked with helping to market Idaho's wheat crop, funding research important to the industry and communicating with and educating growers.

About a third of the commission's budget goes toward market development, a third goes to research and a third to grower communication.

The IWC's five commissioners, all of whom are wheat farmers, discussed raising the grower assessment during their regular meeting May 30. They voted to raise it during a special meeting June 7.

Rapidly rising costs were at the center of the discussion.

"Inflation is real. It's pretty obvious





The assessment that Idaho wheat farmers pay to fund the Idaho Wheat Commission will increase from 3.5 cents to 4.5 cents per bushel beginning July 1.

that costs are up,” said “Genesee” Joe Anderson, who represents wheat farmers in North Idaho. “I think the timing is right for us to increase the assessment.”

The vote to raise the assessment was 5-0.

Burley farmer Wayne Hurst, an IWC commissioner who represents southwestern Idaho wheat farmers, said he is a fiscal conservative who hates the thought of raising taxes.

“But I think it’s time to raise the wheat assessment,” he said. “As a grower, the return I receive from funding the commission is pretty significant. An assessment increase is certainly defensible. I hate raising taxes but I think it’s justified at this point.”

IWC Chairman and Ririe farmer Clark Hamilton, who represents wheat farmers in East Idaho, said the decision to raise the assessment wasn’t an easy one and “it doesn’t come lightly. To growers, it’s a big deal.”

“I don’t like the increase but it is what it is and it’s justified,” he added. “To keep all of the commission’s programs going – marketing, promotion, research, education – there had to be an increase.”

IWC commissioner and Rockland farmer Cory Kress, who represents East Idaho wheat farmers, said the increase is easily defensible.

“I firmly believe that the investments IWC makes with grower assessments result in positive net return for the farmers that pay them,” he said. “Unfortunately, those investments are costing more, but the benefits should also increase in tandem.”

The commission partners with other organizations, including Idaho Grain Producers Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and U.S. Grains Council, to market Idaho wheat and every one of them is asking for more money, commissioners said.

Idaho farmers typically harvest about 1.2 million acres and 100 million-plus bushels of wheat each year and half of that grain is exported to other countries.

The commission’s industry partners help develop and maintain international and domestic markets for that wheat.

“To maintain the mission of the wheat commission and continue the programs for growers and industry, we had to raise the assessment,” said IWC Executive Director Britany Hurst Marchant.

The Idaho wheat assessment was last raised in 2012, when it went from 2 cents to 3.5 cents per bushel. Before that, the assessment was last raised in 1992, when it went from 1 cent to 2 cents per bushel.

“Obviously, dollars today just don’t go as far as they did in 2012,” Marchant said.

Idaho’s wheat growers brought in an estimated \$706 million in revenue in 2022, which makes wheat the state’s No. 5 agricultural commodity in terms of total farm-gate revenue.

Wheat is grown in 42 of Idaho’s 44 counties and is an important rotation crop for most of the state’s farmers.

Idaho typically ranks No. 5 or 6 in the nation in total wheat production and is one of the very few states that produces five of the six classes of wheat.

Besides increasing funding to cover rising costs, commissioners also discussed the IWC’s plans for a new building.

The commission’s current 7,500-square-foot building in downtown Boise was constructed in 1945 but significant investments are needed just to maintain it at a functional level, according to IWC officials.

They say the building, which was purchased by the wheat commission in 2003, has provided a return on investment for wheat growers because several other ag groups pay the IWC rent to reside there, but the cost of maintaining the building is eating into that investment.

The commission has been studying plans for a new building for several years and the cost is something the commissioners considered when discussing the assessment increase. ■

# Raffle raises money for FFA scholarships

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE – The Idaho FFA Foundation’s annual raffle program raises money for scholarships for FFA members and the proceeds also help fund the state’s 100 FFA chapters.

Over the past year, the raffle program sold approximately 5,000 tickets. Half of the proceeds from each ticket go back to the FFA chapter that sold the ticket. This year, the raffle raised \$50,000 for Idaho FFA Foundation scholarships and another \$50,000 that will be returned to FFA chapters.

On June 14, Kathy Adams of Middleton was named as the winner of this year’s grand prize, a 2022 Yamaha Wolverine side-by-side.

Her name was drawn from a barrel by Gov. Brad Little, a farmer and rancher from Emmett.

Little praised the FFA’s leadership development program and said Idaho employers are eager to hire students who went through the program.

“Companies that move into Idaho will say, ‘You can’t beat those farm kids and ... FFA kids,’ he said after drawing the winners of the 2023 raffle. “It’s been a really, really good program and as society changes, those core agricultural values the program teaches are always something that employers are looking for.”

Kevin Barker, an ag education teacher and FFA advisor from Notus who helps organize the raffle, agreed with that assessment.

When many employers are looking to hire, “They want to know, were you in FFA?” he said. “This program provides the employers of Idaho with fantastic kids who are ready to step right up and provide leadership.”

Caldwell farmer Sid Freeman and his wife, Pam, started the raffle in 2010 as a way to support a program they believe strongly in.

“These kids right out of high school are ready to roll and agribusiness owners



Photos by Sean Ellis

Gov. Brad Little, center, draws the winning ticket June 14 for the Idaho FFA Foundation’s annual raffle, which raises money for scholarships and the state’s various FFA chapters.

*“I’m so happy to see how the program has grown since we started it. This program is making a huge difference for our FFA students.”*

*- Sid Freeman, Caldwell farmer*

throughout the state and nation are looking specifically for FFA students because they know they’re going to succeed,” Sid Freeman said.

He said students who have been through FFA have a higher success rate than other students when it comes to post-secondary education.

“The FFA students have a far higher probability of succeeding in life after high school than any other group of high school students and I’ll stand by that,” Freeman said.

He said the raffle started as a simple idea: get rid of an old tractor and raise some money for FFA scholarships while doing so.





Gov. Brad Little tries out the grand prize of the Idaho FFA Foundation's 2022 raffle, a 2022 Yamaha Wolverine side-by-side. It was won by Kathy Adams of Middleton.

The first tractor was a 1940 International Farmall H, which was donated by the Freemans. Industry partners helped restore it.

Other farms and agribusinesses donated tractors in subsequent years. In 2020, the raffle program started offering off-road utility vehicles as the grand prize to attract a wider potential audience of ticket buyers.

"I'm so happy to see how the program has grown since we started it," Freeman said. "This program is making a huge difference for our FFA students."

Besides raising scholarship money and funds that help support individual FFA chapters, the raffle has also helped publicize and generate interest in agricultural education programs such as FFA, he said.

The grand prize is hauled around the state on a trailer for much of the year and it's typically accompanied by FFA students themselves when being showcased to the public.

The students serve as real-life advocate for agricultural education and the FFA program.

"It has raised awareness of the FFA program tremendously," Freeman said of the raffle. "We travel almost 6,000 miles a year and when people see this trailer, they want to know what it's all about."

"The goal for this raffle is to fundraise for scholarships and FFA programs and also increase awareness about the FFA program and agricultural education and why it's important to Idaho," said Carly Weaver, interim executive director of the Idaho FFA Foundation.

The second-place winner in this year's raffle drawing was Mark Ipsen of Dingle, Idaho, who won a Traeger Grill donated by Campbell Tractor.

Third place went to Chris Milich of Nampa, who won a \$500 D&B Supply gift card, and fourth place went to Linzie Green of McCall, who received a cooler and barbecue basket donated by Valley Wide Cooperative.

Next year's grand prize is a 2023 Cam-Am Maverick Trail side-by-side. The cost for a raffle ticket is \$20 and tickets go on sale later this summer. ■

*Continued from page 3*

Because the new hopyard is not intended for experiments evaluating yield, researchers were able to plant shorter trellises requiring fewer farming inputs to generate the same data on disease and pest pressure.

Shorter trellises are also easier to spray, enabling researchers to plant rows with tighter spacing.

“The main benefit is you can put in a yard for a third to a fourth of the cost per acre this way and you still get viable data,” Shumate said. “There’s not a lot of hops research going on within our Treasure Valley for the hops in the Treasure Valley. We can get a lot more data out to our hop growers in the coming years.”

The first research project is already underway at the facility, evaluating biological products applied when hops are planted.

The yard is laid out into two main blocks, surrounded by “spreader rows” of a hop variety that’s extremely susceptible to diseases and pests.

The intent is to provide consistent and even pest and disease pressure throughout the plots. Woodhall and his staff are developing special equipment for spraying the short-trellis hopyard

that should eliminate the potential for chemical drift to affect any nearby plots.

In addition to expertise, Gooding Farms, located in Parma, donated hop rhizomes, posts and other materials toward the project. Gooding Farms, established in 1895, is now run by Diane Gooding and her sisters, boasting 750 acres and 12 hop varieties.

Gooding serves as the vice president of the Hop Research Council, which is a national nonprofit organization that funds and directs hop research.

She believes obtaining site-specific research data is extremely important for Idaho’s hop farmers, noting the Treasure Valley has unique strains of powdery mildew affecting hops, for example.

“It’s a great opportunity to equal the playing field with what some of the folks in Washington have at their fingertips already,” Gooding said of the new hopyard. “Being the second largest producer of hops, it makes a lot of sense.”

Idaho’s hop-growing area is relatively small, encompassing Wilder, Parma, Notus, Greenleaf and Bonners Ferry. Local hops farmers and the Idaho Hop Growers Commission have been ardent supporters of the full-trellis hopyard in Parma. ■



Mackade Murdock, left, and Benjamin Wood, with the University of Idaho Parma Research and Extension Center, pound in posts for a new hopyard.



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# THANK A FARMER!



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University of Idaho researchers are studying ways to turn animal waste from dairies into revenue-generating products. Idaho Farm Bureau Federation photo



# U of I studying feasibility of products made from dairy waste

By John O'Connell  
University of Idaho

University of Idaho researchers are pioneering technologies that have potential to turn a liability for dairymen – animal waste – into revenue-generating products.

What would setting up commercial operations to transform dairy manure and lagoon water into usable products entail logistically? Would consumers accept products made from cow excrement? Would it be cost-effective to produce them? How should supply chains be established?

A team of U of I agricultural economists is seeking to answer those key questions by building on technological discoveries made by other U of I researchers as part of a five-year, \$10 million USDA Sustainable Agricultural Systems grant.

More than 20 U of I faculty members and several graduate students are participating in different aspects of the research.

“We’re trying to use resources already on a dairy in more ways to increase revenue and reduce costs for dairy farmers and improve the environment in the region,” said U of I agricultural economist Patrick Hatzenbuehler.

Work under the grant started in September 2019, initially focused on manure application and its effects on soils and nutrient uptake by crops.

Future research will expand into the economics of converting manure into renewable bioplastic, as well as separating it into valuable, concentrated crop nutrient components that can be substituted for commercial fertilizer.

A third project involves studying the feasibility of commercializing technology using iron and ultraviolet light to sterilize dairy lagoon water and capture the nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus and biochar it contains for application on crops.

Demand for manure is currently on the rise due to record high fertilizer prices, and manure also can improve soil organic matter and microbial activity. Thus, increasing revenue or reducing costs from more efficiently obtaining nutrients from manure is a topic of great interest for many dairy industry stakeholders.

One economics study will evaluate the willingness of consumers to pay for bioplastics derived from dairy waste.

“We could come up with dairy manure-based bioplastic at competitive market values with the upside in it being from renewable sources,” explained U of I agricultural economist Hernan Tejeda.

Pilot studies have been conducted elsewhere on the use of bioplastics as a substitute for mulch in agricultural production, which could be a primary use for the product.

Mark McGuire, associate dean of research with U of I’s College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and director of the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station, is the grant’s principal investigator.

“The grant is really designed to try to develop business and marketing plans for these technologies, like the bioplastics, to demonstrate the economic social viability, meaning it does help the environment or can play a role in the dairy industry being sustainable,” McGuire said.

McGuire anticipates that a U of I-led research dairy that’s now under construction in Rupert, the focal component of the Idaho Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (CAFE), which will begin milking operations in 2024, will facilitate research during the final three years of the grant:

“I’m hoping CAFE really demonstrates to producers that there’s a suite of new technologies that allow them to capture nutrients out of manure, and by doing so opening new markets and ways to generate revenue for their dairy,” McGuire said.

Rick Naerebout, executive director of the Idaho Dairymen’s Association, also sees a need to develop emerging technologies to convert manure for other uses. His organization has invested about \$250,000 dating back about eight years in U of I’s bioplastics research.

“We are bringing all of these nutrients into the state. We definitely need to spread them further away from dairy facilities,” Naerebout said. “That’s why we’re looking at novel ideas to generate revenue to make that more of a sustainable proposition for dairymen.” ■





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# Managing your seedlings for success

By Audra Cochran  
*University of Idaho*

Once the snow bares from the landscape, many north-west forest owners are anxious to get new seedlings planted on their land.

Seedlings are planted for a variety of reasons such as to reforest land parcels after a harvest, convert bare land into forest ground, provide habitat, or for aesthetic values.

Whatever the reason, planting seedlings is a substantial investment in time and resources. People are often mindful and meticulous in ensuring that their seedlings are planted properly.

However, once the seedlings are in the ground, it is easy to overlook continued care for those seedlings. To protect your investment and future stand of trees, here are a few tips that will help your seedling survival rate through the warmer, drier months ahead.

**Select the appropriate seedling for your site.** If you have ever been to an extension forestry workshop, you have likely heard the adage, “there is no such thing as a shade-loving tree.”

Same goes for moisture. While some species are better adapted to growing on drier sites, all trees need water and sunlight to survive.

To increase the odds of seedling survival on your site, it is important to select species that will grow well in the site conditions.

Confirming your USDA cold hardiness zone and web soil survey will help you determine what conditions are present at your site and which seedlings will be best suited for that site.

Your local extension educator or nursery manager can help you with this process.

**Plant your seedlings in the mineral layer.** Once you’ve selected the appropriate seedlings for your site, you will want to make sure they are planted in locations that allow for proper growth.

**LEFT: Planting seedlings in an area free of slash, brush, or forest floor debris will help with root establishment.**

Photos by Lauren King





This means selecting locations that are free of slash, brush, and other forest floor debris. You will also want to make sure seedlings are planted in mineral soil, not in duff or compacted soil (i.e. skid trails, roads, etc.).

You will want to ensure that there are no air pockets around the roots and the soil plug is completely buried. The roots need to be in direct contact with the soil to receive appropriate water and nutrients. This will yield the highest chance of survival.

**Some water is always better than no water.** Whether you're planting three or 3,000 seedlings, any amount of water you can provide when the weather turns hot and dry will be beneficial.

There are a variety of portable watering system examples available online. Watering at least once per week during the hottest part of the summer will help with seedling survival.

If your seedlings are in remote or extreme terrain and watering is not feasible, it is best to be prepared to plant those seedlings as early as possible in the spring to take advantage of high soil moisture levels.

This will allow the seedling roots to become established before the onset of the dry season.

**Protect seedlings from sunlight.** Direct sunlight can scorch naïve seedlings and cause the soil moisture to deplete more rapidly. If possible, plant seedlings on the north or east sides of logs or stumps.

This will help cast more shade over them throughout the day. If you planted in smaller volumes, there are forms of seedling sunshades available online that can also help with this.

**Use fertilizer sparingly.** Fertilizer is not recommended for at least the first year after planting. Fertilizers are considered salts and can alter the soil, making it hard for plants to extract the moisture they need for growth.

Your seedlings will be fine assuming the soil nutrients are available. Again, this is why it is so critical to select the appropriate seedlings for your planting sites.

**Wildlife will eat your seedlings.** Not only do you need to worry about protecting your seedlings from too much sunlight and too little water, but you also need to help protect them from wildlife.

Ungulates (deer, elk, moose), rabbits, and rodents will chew on your seedlings. The ungulates will eat the foliage, especially as new leader growth establishes in the spring.

They will also rub on the seedlings as they get larger.

Rabbits, gophers, voles, and other rodents will undermine your seedlings by chewing on the roots.

There are tree tubes and netting available for purchase online



**Vegetative competition can be a significant cause of seedling mortality.**

through forestry suppliers. Tubes are available in a variety of styles and sizes, so you will need to match the tubes to the size of seedling plugs you plant.

While tubing seedlings does help inhibit some wildlife damage, they will not completely stop them.

For rabbits and rodents, there are some deterrents available in the form of sprays, powders, or pellets that you can use on or around your seedlings. There are also more lethal measures available in the form of poisons.

However, before using any of these methods you will need to talk to a licensed chemical applicator or rodent control company for lawful applications and best management practices.

There are a lot of factors that can affect the survival success of your seedlings. Being mindful of just a few of these tips can decrease the chances of seedling mortality.

If a seedling survives for the first three years, then they are generally established for the long haul. ■

*(Audra Cochran is a University of Idaho Extension educator in Lewis County. She can be reached at [audrac@uidaho.edu](mailto:audrac@uidaho.edu).)*

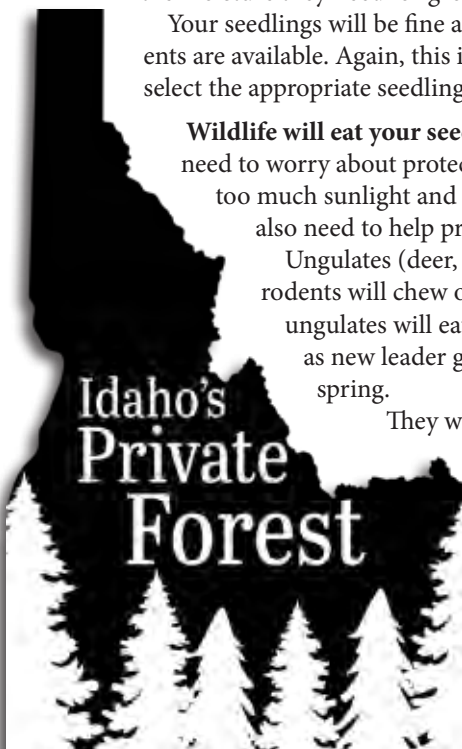






Photo by Jill Cryder

Idaho FFA members pose for a picture with the traveling UTV trailer which advertises the annual utility vehicle scholarship raffle begun by Sid and Pam Freeman, of Middleton, during this year's Nampa Chamber of Commerce Ag Forum.

# FFA, 'the greatest story in our high schools today'

By Kathy Corgatelli Neville  
For Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

A vast network of teachers, alumni, organizations, governmental officials and businesses all work together in support of FFA.

Sid Freeman, a sixth generation farmer in Middleton, is representative of the thousands of FFA advocates in Idaho.

"FFA is the greatest story in our high schools today," Freeman said. "I'm passionate about FFA and what I do for a living. FFA and farmers are the best advocates for our industry."

When students with an FFA background apply for scholarships or jobs, and when they include FFA membership or an American FFA Degree on their resume, it often gives them an advantage, Freeman said.

He said the American FFA Degree shows an extraordinary amount of student effort toward their Supervised Agricultural Experience.

Students with that degree also demonstrate leadership and involvement in their communities.

It's the highest degree achievable in the national FFA organization, with recipients demonstrating that they've gone above and beyond in achieving excellence, according to the FFA website.

Freeman said many students who are active in FFA tend to return to their hometowns after a post-secondary education and become



valuable contributing members of their communities.

“FFA alumni make a huge impact whether they go into agriculture or not. These students are well prepared for life with real life experiences,” Freeman said.

There are 8,995 FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S Virgin Islands, and about 850,823 members.

In Idaho there are 100 FFA chapters and about 5,700 members. Per capita, Idaho has more FFA members than California.

“The phenomenal success of FFA students is one of the reasons why we have so many FFA supporters,” Freeman said. “Idaho has literally thousands of very good people who care about FFA. We are a tight-knit group and work together well. We’re focused and we never take our eye off the ball.”

Like many other advocates, Freeman’s family has a long association with FFA here in Idaho, starting with his dad Loren Freeman, who was 1957-58 president of the Marsing FFA Chapter.

Sid was active in his FFA chapter in Middleton, and both of his sons, Justin and Wesley, were presidents of their FFA chapter at Middleton High School.

Upon graduating from University of Idaho in 1958, Sid’s father-in-law, Quinton Markwell, started his ag-education teacher and FFA advisor career at Murtaugh High School.

Sid’s wife, Pam, is a fourth generation Canyon County farm wife. Along with seed crops, the couple raises beets, onions, wheat, corn and hay on their farm.

In 2010, Sid and Pam rallied local agribusinesses and started the

Idaho FFA Foundation Tractor Raffle Program by restoring an antique tractor from their farm to raffle off in order to raise money for scholarships for FFA students.

Today they raffle off utility vehicles. Last year, the raffle 6,500, \$20 tickets, which raised about \$130,000, of which \$65,000 goes directly back to the chapters that sell tickets and \$65,000 goes to the scholarship program.

“We travel 6,000 miles across the state displaying the UTV at various events so chapters can raise money for themselves and the scholarship program.” Freeman said.

Above all, it’s the bottom line that counts, Freeman said.

What the volunteers advocate through their various and important contributions, he said, is food security for a growing population and to achieve that, it’s critical for the next generation to be educated about, and to seek careers in, the world of agriculture.

In 1917, Congress recognized this and passed the Smith-Hughes Act, which funded ag-ed classes in high schools because they realized that the nation was losing farmers at an alarming rate, Freeman said.

“We cannot lose control of our food supply,” he said. “Since the beginning of time, our independence, freedom and security have depended on being able to grow and produce food, fiber and fuel for ourselves. Being strong in those areas is a testament to any country’s overall well-being and security.”

To support FFA members, raffle tickets are available online at [growidahoffa.org](http://growidahoffa.org). ■

# Country Chuckles

By Jonny Hawkins



FREE RANGE CHICKEN NUGGETS



# Researchers using genes from plant to develop nematode-resistant potatoes

By John O'Connell  
*University of Idaho*

MOSCOW, Idaho – University of Idaho researchers are introducing genes from a plant in the nightshade family into potatoes, seeking to develop spuds that resist harmful nematodes.

The plant, called litchi tomato, has natural resistance to several species of cyst and root-knot nematodes.

“That’s an unusual trait to have such broad resistance,” said Allan Caplan, associate professor in U of I’s Department of Plant Sciences who is involved in the project.

Nematode cysts, which can severely reduce potato yields, can remain viable in fields for more than a decade, and they can be found down to 3 feet deep in soil.

U of I researchers, led by nematologist and plant pathologist Louise-Marie Dandurand, have worked for several years studying a range of possibilities for using litchi tomato as a tool to avert nematode-related yield losses in potatoes.

Litchi tomato has been planted as a “trap crop” in the program to eradicate pale cyst nematode (PCN), which is quarantined in a small area of eastern Idaho. When planted in fields infested with PCN, litchi tomato stimulates cysts to hatch in the absence of a viable host, causing them to starve.

Dandurand also has a post-doctoral researcher seeking to identify chemicals in litchi tomato that harm or kill nematodes. The chemicals that prove effective could be refined and applied directly to fields as a pesticide.

Caplan and Fangming Xiao, a professor in the Department of Plant Sciences, have been working to identify the genes in litchi tomato that are specifically expressed when nematodes attack the plant.

“We found at least 277 genes that got turned on,” Caplan said. “We think not all of them are necessary. We have to make educated guesses of which to try first, and it’s really a matter of trial and error. We’re pretty certain some of these are going to have a big ef-



University of Idaho photo

## Litchi tomato plants.

fect but we can’t say with certainty which ones they’re going to be.”

They turned over some of the genes they suspect may be directly involved in killing nematodes to Joseph Kuhl, associate professor in the Department of Plant Sciences, who used biotechnology to introduce them into a red-skinned potato variety, Desiree, last summer.

Desiree was chosen because it’s relatively easy to transform through genetic modification.

“If we see resistance in Desiree then we’ll make the effort to put it in russets,” Caplan said.

Xiao created some biotech potatoes using litchi tomato genes last fall, and Caplan is set to introduce additional litchi tomato genes into potatoes this summer. All their growing, infecting and analysis is taking place in closed growth chambers.

By first using genetic engineering to find the pathway through which litchi tomato protects itself, Caplan believes researchers may later be able to change gene expression to protect potatoes from nematodes through laboratory methods that aren’t considered to be genetic modifications.

Their work has been funded by several sources, including the Idaho Potato Commission, the Northwest Potato Consortium and the federal Plant Protection Act. ■





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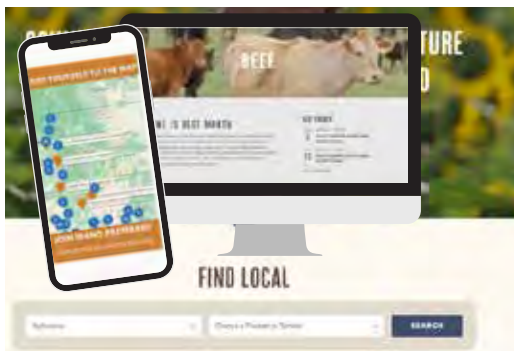
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## Van Lith Ranch

*Idaho Cattle Rancher Origin Story*



Watch the video to meet this Fruitland, ID ranch family.

Van Lith Ranch is a 3rd generation ranch family with a pasture-to-table cattle operation based on the banks of the Payette River in Idaho.

## GET ON THE MAP:

The Idaho Preferred website has become the go-to resource for discovering local Idaho agriculture products for consumers and businesses alike (retailers, restaurants, chefs, farmers markets, schools, etc.) with over 2.1 million unique views in 2022. The new Digital Directory allows consumers to discover new sourcing opportunities and get to know the farmers, ranchers, and ag-artisan crafters who produce throughout the state, direct from the source.

Learn more about the program's producer perks, digital learning lab, social media, and digital marketing efforts to support Gem State producers.

**Visit: [www.idahopreferred.com/membership](http://www.idahopreferred.com/membership)**

## Submit Your Ag-tivities



*July*

MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
14	15	16	17	18	19
21	22	23	24	25	26
28	29	30	31		

**Idaho Preferred  
Community Calendar**

## JULY IS IDAHO BEEF MONTH

In a state where cattle populations outnumber humans, the Idaho Beef Industry holds immense importance for local communities and the state's economy. With a staggering 2.55 million cattle, Idaho takes pride in its thriving beef industry. It's a testament to the dedication and hard work of Idaho ranchers who contribute to the rich traditions of Idaho's agricultural heritage.

**Idaho Beef Directory: [www.idahopreferred.com/beef](http://www.idahopreferred.com/beef)**

Idaho State Department of Agriculture

# Idaho's barley assessment fee going up half a cent

By Sean Ellis

*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*

POCATELLO – The assessment fee that Idaho barley farmers pay per hundred pounds of production will increase from 3 cents to 3.5 cents.

The increase will be effective July 1 and impact the state's 1,500 barley growers, who pay the assessment to fund marketing, research and grower education programs conducted by the Idaho Barley Commission.

Idaho's barley farmers formed the commission in 1988 to help promote their industry and the commission started with an assessment fee of 2 cents per hundred pounds of production.

This will be only the second time the assessment has increased. The other time was in 2013, when it was raised from 2 cents to 3 cents.

The new 3.5-cent rate is equivalent to 1.68 cents per bushel.

Idaho's four IBC members – three barley farmers and one industry representative – voted unanimously to raise the assessment during a special meeting June 9.

The need to raise it to cover rising costs was a main topic of discussion.

"I think it's time to move up (from 3 cents)," said Blackfoot farmer and IBC Commissioner Allen Young. "I really see that staying at 3 cents would make it hard to maintain what we are doing as a commission."

During the June 9 meeting, commissioners voted to adopt a budget of \$915,447 for fiscal year 2024, which begins July 1. That represents a 4 percent increase over the fiscal 2023 budget of \$877,604.

While examining the budget, IBC Executive Director Laura Wilder pointed out the cost of virtually every program and service the commission provides barley growers has increased.

"The cost of all those programs has gone up incrementally," she told commissioners. "Everybody is asking for more money. It



Idaho's barley assessment fee, paid by barley farmers, will increase from 3 to 3.5 cents per hundred pounds of production beginning July 1.  
Photo by Sean Ellis

really erodes what we can do as a commission."

If the barley commission is to continue its various market development, research and grower outreach programs, raising the assessment is necessary in order to keep up with rising costs, Young said.

"Inflation is real. Another half cent does not seem outrageous to ask for to keep the commission's services going," he said. "We definitely need an increase."

Rupert farmer and IBC commissioner Mike Wilkins said growers understand well the reality of rising costs.

"Our farm production prices the last two years have gone up significantly," he said.

Idaho leads the nation in barley production and Gem State farmers typically produce more than 50 million bushels of barley off of 550,000 acres annually.

Most of that barley is used as malt during the beer production process and the rest is grown for human food or animal feed.

The half-cent increase in the barley assessment will bring in about \$125,000 per year in additional revenue for the barley commission.

While the vote to increase the assessment was 4-0, the decision did not happen without significant debate. A motion to raise it to 4 cents died for lack of a second motion and discussion occurred over two days.

North Idaho farmer and IBC commissioner Josh Jones said he was reluctant to raise the assessment without being assured it would result in an additional return to growers.

"I would like to see more dollars put into market development if we want to increase the rate," he said. "I just want to make sure we have some agreement among ourselves on how to better utilize these funds and ... get more return to the producers. That's our job." ■



# Idaho Delegation Promotes U.S. Potato Market Access Overseas

Promoting market access for U.S. fresh potatoes, a clear aim for the recent Idaho delegation visiting Japan. Representatives from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and the Idaho Potato Commission (IPC) joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) trade mission to discuss the status of market access for U.S. agricultural products.

Led by USDA Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Alexis M. Taylor, the U.S. delegation included 11 state departments of agriculture, numerous farm organizations and 40 agribusinesses.

Idaho representatives included ISDA Director Chanel Tewalt, IPC Chairman Bryan Wada, IPC Vice President of Legal and Government Affairs Sam Eaton and ISDA trade specialist Chelsea Conlon. The trip allowed for each state to focus on specific activities that most benefited their producers back at home.

“I am very encouraged by the discussions we had in Japan, and especially pleased to have been able to leverage the scale and depth of this mission to advocate for Idaho’s producers,” said Tewalt. “Japan has long been one of Idaho’s strongest trading partners. Throughout our trip, we heard a common message: Japan is a mature market, but it is full of opportunity.”

Japan is one of Idaho’s top and most reliable trading partners and is the fourth-largest market for U.S. food and agricultural exports. While Japan remains a top export market for U.S. frozen potatoes, a ban on fresh potatoes prevents U.S. growers from exporting to Japan. According to the National Potato Council, market access for U.S. fresh potatoes could result in an additional \$150 million per year in exports.

Under Secretary Taylor, Director Tewalt and state rep-



representatives met with Japan’s Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to discuss the status of market access negotiations for U.S. commodities.

“It is important that we continue to apply pressure on the Japanese government,” said Eaton. “Thankfully, Director Tewalt was able to advocate for fresh potato access in her meeting with Japanese government officials. We also have broad support from our partners at the National Potato Council and Potatoes USA as well as the entire Idaho Congressional Delegation.”

While in Japan, the Idaho delegation met with USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service officials to further discuss the status of market access negotiations. The group received in-depth market briefings from the USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service, met with large import coordinators and participated in retail site visits. The Idaho delegation also facilitated discussion with top potato processors in Japan including Simplot, McCain Foods and Lamb Weston.

“We had a very productive trip, and I believe our collective efforts are moving the needle closer to market access for U.S. table-stock potatoes into Japan,” said Wada. “With our high-quality product and international brand recognition, I believe Idaho® potatoes are positioned to do particularly well in the Japanese market.”

Idaho recognizes this is a long-term discussion and will continue to facilitate the process that has been requested by the Japanese government. Ultimately the decisions are in the hands of Japanese officials who are now working on a risk assessment for U.S. potatoes to determine any potential pathogens or insects that could unintentionally be introduced into Japan.



Director Chanel Tewalt (ISDA), Chelsea Conlon (ISDA), Bryan Wada (IPC), Sam Eaton (IPC)



Photo by Jacob Christensen

Lemhi County, shown in this picture, is cattle country.

# Lemhi County is cattle country

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

SALMON – There are nearly five times more cattle than people in Lemhi County. Not surprisingly, beef cattle is by far the main agricultural commodity here.

Hay is the county's No. 2 agricultural commodity in terms of total farm-gate revenue.

“Cattle and hay are the biggest part of agriculture in Lemhi County,” says Wes Mackay, who ranches near Lemhi city and is vice president of Lemhi County Farm Bureau. “Most of the hay grown here stays locally. Most people raise it for their own animals.”

“Lemhi County is basically all cattle,” says Salmon rancher Paul Fisher, president of LCFB. “We’ve got cattle on the landscape

from the tree line to the river bottoms and everybody produces their own hay to sustain their own cattle.”

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, cattle represented \$25 million of the total \$33 million in farm-gate revenue that agricultural producers in Lemhi County brought in during the 2017 census year. Hay accounted for most of the rest.

According to the ag census, there were 35,000 cattle and calves in the county in 2017 and 40,017 acres of hay.

There are some sheep and a handful of acres used for growing potatoes, pumpkins and even berries in Lemhi County, “but other than that, it’s all cattle and hay,” says Chase Whittaker, who ranches outside



*“There’s a lot of good cattle in this county. The county’s cattle guys keep a pretty high standard here.”*

*- Chase Whittaker, Lemhi County rancher*

Leadore and serves on the Lemhi County Farm Bureau board of directors.

“A lot of people’s income and taxes paid in the county come from the cattle industry,” he adds.

Whittaker says the county’s ranchers pride themselves on raising top-notch cattle.

“There’s a lot of good cattle in this county,” he says. “The county’s cattle guys keep a pretty high standard here.”

According to the ag census, there are 351 farms in Lemhi County and 173,956 total acres of land in farming.

Lemhi County is the fourth-largest county in Idaho by size but more than 90 percent of the county is public land owned by the state or federal government. That means the ranchers here depend on being able to graze their cattle on public land.

“There are a lot of BLM and Forest Service grazing permits that we all rely on heavily,” Whittaker says.

Most ranchers here have a little bit of private land for grazing but almost all of them also depend on BLM or Forest service ground for summer grazing, Mackay says.

A major focus of the county’s Farm Bureau organization is representing cattle producers whenever issues with public lands arises, Mackay says.

“We try to be an advocate for the ranchers,” he says.

Lemhi County Farm Bureau has conducted tours on grazing allotments where permittees have had issues with the permitting agencies, Whittaker says. These tours bring together ranchers and representatives of BLM, Forest Service, Idaho Fish and Game Department and other relevant agencies.

“We all go out there and talk about it together,” he says. “I feel like we’ve been able to do some good.”

The county Farm Bureau organization also focuses on helping youth, with scholarships and by helping with high school rodeos as well as hosting activities aimed at ensuring kids in the county have a basic understanding of agriculture, Fisher says.

“We want to make sure these kids really know where their food comes from,” he says. “It’s better to teach them ourselves rather than let their education about agriculture come from people that don’t have a foot in the game.”

Whittaker says the Farm Bureau organization also gets a number of requests from community organizations seeking help with funding for various events and causes and assists as much as it can.

“We sponsor a lot of worthwhile activities,” he says. “Most of the time, we’re able to provide something ... if we determine it’s a worthwhile cause.” ■



Photo by Joel Benson

A hay field is shown in Lemhi County, where cattle and hay are the county’s top two agricultural commodities.

# Classifieds

## FARMING/EQUIPMENT

Ford 4,000 Tractor. 500 hours on engine. New back tires and runs well. \$6,000. Call 812-620-3475 Cobalt, Idaho.

Bale wagons: New Holland self-propelled or pul-type models, parts, tires, manuals. Also interested in buying bale wagons. Will consider any model. Call Luke 208-880-2889.

Unique Antique! Farmhall M tractor with farm hand loader attached. Bought in 1955 used and has been in the same family since. Last ran in 2018. Will need to be hauled. Call 208-785-8001 or 208-681-4920 Blackfoot, Idaho.

## PROPERTY

In Teton Valley Idaho 65.22 acres. Just miles from the Mouth of the Teton Mountains. Great ground for development or your personal house. Call 208-201-5303.

## LIVESTOCK

30 white face ewes. Grace, Idaho call 208-223-3898.

## AUTO

1984 Corvette classic. 90 90 restored, overhauled engine and transmission. Beautiful gold color and clean interior. California car and fun to drive. Garaged in

Salmon. \$8,500 obo. Insured for \$10,000 will consider trade for ATV. Call 858-518-4622.

2015 Polaris 4-wheeler with very low miles. Rexburg 208-201-5303.

## ANIMALS

Half Bengal/half Jungle male kitten for sale, available end of July. He looks like a Bengal. Call 208-357-1845 Firth, ID, for information.

## FOR SALE

Denver Colorado Saddle. 15 1/2 inch pades seat, tooled leather, double rigging. Excellent condition. 208-785-2021. Lava Hot Springs, Idaho.

Kimball Spinet piano for sale. Excellent condition. 208-785-2021. Lava Hot Springs, Idaho.

## MISCELLANEOUS

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.

## WANTED

Paying cash for unwanted fireworks, the older the better. I collect firecrackers, Roman candles, mortars and anything else aerial.

I also collect old m-80s like fish and game used to hand out. Great way to repurpose old fireworks as they are disassembled and used to create new ones. 208-866-2112.

Looking for old sawmill two or three saw board edger mounted or by itself. Older three- or four-sided lumber planner. Call 208-743-9204. Lewiston, ID.

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.

Wanted old Idaho Patches! Farm Bureau, Farming, Hunting, Idaho Cattlemen Assoc, Idaho Fish and Game. Top Dollar Paid! Call, email, or text pics. Rusty Kramer idahotrappguy@hotmail.com 208-870-3217.

## SERVICES

4S Welding- Mobile welding for Bingham County and surrounding areas. Fencing, pipe, equipment repair, etc. Carbon and stainless, 20 years of experience. Call Mike 208-680-7372.

Ranch made items- Personalized Stainless Steel Shovels with your name stamped on it. Dependable Chain Oilers- for harvesters, planters, every chain on earth. Custom Portable Stainless Steele Tilting Bathtubs- With sliding seat for home care. Rocking Cowboy Piano-Chassis 21" wagon wheels. Weiser, ID call 208-550-4619.

## 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 July 19 for the August Quarterly.

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

**Free Classified ads for  
Idaho Farm Bureau Members  
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# 2023-2024 SCHOLARSHIP RAFFLE

## Grand Prize Reveal

### 2023 Can Am Maverick Trail

Thank you to everyone who made last year's raffle a success. In 2023, the Foundation awarded \$34,000 in scholarships from funds raised in this raffle. Tickets will be available later this summer for \$20 each.



Are you proud to support Idaho FFA? Showcase your partnership by putting your company logo or farm's name on the grand prize trailer and let it do the talking as it travels around Idaho this year. For more information, contact us at 208-856-0288 or [carly@growidahoffa.org](mailto:carly@growidahoffa.org)



# Idaho dairies struggling with low farm-level milk prices

By Sean Ellis  
*Idaho Farm Bureau Federation*



Idaho's dairy operations were seeing record farm-level milk prices last year, but 2023 has been a far different story.

The prices that dairy operations are receiving so far this year are not enough to cover the cost of production.

As a result, many of the state's dairies are burning through equity just to stay afloat.

"It's going to be tough going here for (at least) the next few months. Dairy farmers are going to be grumpy about milk prices," dairy expert Mike McCully said recently during an AgWest "Dairy Market Outlook" webinar.

McCully, owner of The McCully Group, said this year's global milk supply is coming along pretty close to what was expected.

"The demand piece is the one that has really been worse than what I think most people expected," he said. "You have a little too much supply around the world compared to where demand is."

Idaho typically ranks No. 3 or No. 4 in the nation in total milk production and dairy is the state's top agricultural commodity in terms of total farm-gate revenue, which is what the dairy operator gets for his milk.

University of Idaho agricultural economists estimate Idaho's dairy operations brought in a record \$4.2 billion in farm-gate revenue last year.

That total is likely to go way down this year as a result of much lower milk prices.

Most of Idaho's milk is turned into cheese and that is known as class III milk. Class III prices on the futures market have hit the \$14 per hundredweight (cwt) level in June and are near \$15 for July and August.

This time last year, class III prices were in the mid \$25 per cwt range and they touched the \$27-28 range earlier in 2022.

Meanwhile, the cost of production for Idaho dairies has not changed substantially since hitting record levels last year.

The average Idaho dairy needs to receive close to \$21 per cwt for its milk just to break even, according to Idaho Dairymen's Association Executive Director Rick Naerebout.

"We're well below cost and dairymen are using a lot of equity to weather this downturn," he said. "In Idaho, our dairymen are losing \$4 to \$5 per cwt right now and they're burning through equity at a rapid rate."

Some positive news, if there is any right now, for milk producers is that farm-level milk prices may be near the bottom, McCully said.

"We're probably close to the darkest hour right now in terms of pricing," he said. "I think we're going to see the market come back into more balance in the second half of the year with modest increases in prices."





Photo by Sean Ellis

**Idaho's dairy industry, the state's top agricultural commodity in terms of total revenue, is facing extremely low farm-level milk prices this year.**

However, he added, "For people that are expecting a big jump up in prices, I don't see that happening."

The outlook for dairy prices "is not terribly positive from a dairy farmer's standpoint," McCully said. "The hope is we get in the second half and things will be a bit better."

Naerebout said he agrees with McCully's take on the current milk market and he hopes milk prices really have bottomed out.

"I certainly hope so because \$14 milk is absolutely brutal and I can't imagine it being worse," he said.

If prices do go lower, Naerebout said, dairy producers could be looking at a repeat of 2009, when milk prices fell way below the cost of production and the industry sustained huge losses.

"If we get too much lower, we're going to be comparable to '09 in terms of the extreme amount of loss," he said.

Idaho's dairy industry plays a major role in the state's overall agricultural economy because so much of Idaho's crop production is centered around feeding dairy cows.

That means that any major losses felt by the state's dairies could have a ripple effect on other parts of Idaho agriculture.

The state's dairy operators are facing enormous stress right now and many are faced with some tough decisions, Naerebout said.

The current milk price situation will likely lead to more consolidation in the state's dairy industry, he added.

There were 360 dairies in Idaho as of February, a 10 percent reduction compared with the previous year.

"We lost 10 percent of our dairies last year and I fully expect we'll lose at least 10 percent of our dairies this year again," Naerebout said.

But even as dairies close, Idaho's total cow numbers and milk production don't decrease, as those cows from the shuttered dairies are picked up by other operations.

Idaho's total milk production typically increases 1.5 to 2 percent per year, partly as a result of more cows being added and partly as a result of more milk per cow.

The current milk price situation "is definitely adding stress to our dairy families and there are a number of them that are being forced into a tough consideration of, do they continue to battle through this downturn or is it time for them and their family to hang it up on their family business," Naerebout said. "Those are some really tough conversations around the kitchen table." ■



Photo by Alex Karasev

This picture shows alfalfa plants with symptoms of Snake River Virus.

# U of I scientists discover new virus in Magic Valley alfalfa

By **John O'Connell**  
*University of Idaho*

A University of Idaho researcher discovered a previously unknown virus in alfalfa samples taken from a Magic Valley field and is conducting tests to determine if the disease poses a threat to farmers.

U of I plant virologist Alexander Karasev took the samples in 2020 while collecting symptomatic foliage in a field near Rupert.

Karasev named the newly discovered disease Snake River Virus, after the Snake River Valley in which the field is located.

Karasev and Erik Wenninger, an entomologist with U of I's Kimberly Research and Extension Center, recently received a three-year, \$300,000 USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant to study if the virus is economically important for growers, how it's transmitted, foliar symptoms of infection and the range of host crops it can infect.

Karasev chose the Rupert field for his sampling due to the prev-



absence of foliage with common symptoms of viral diseases, including mosaic leaf discoloration and vein clearing.

He was seeking to test a new diagnostic genetic sequencing methodology, known as deep sequencing, and associated laboratory equipment.

Researchers with the National Center for Biotechnology Information in Maryland compared Karasev's results against their database and determined it was a new virus.

The discovery is detailed in the paper "A Novel Flavi-like Virus in Alfalfa Crops Along the Snake River Valley," published in the June 2022 issue of the journal "Viruses."

In addition to Karasev, authors of the paper include Wenninger, U of I entomologist Jennifer Dahan, Gardenia Orellana, a UI Extension research specialist in plant pathology, and National Center for Biotechnology Information researchers Yuri Wolf and Eugene V. Koonin.

"Alfalfa is one of the largest crops grown in the state but is one of the least studied of all of the major crops in the state," Karasev said. "The production of alfalfa has special characteristics that make it of interest to me. You have a crop that stays in the same place for four years. It acts like a sponge – any type of pathogens and diseases tend to make a stop in this crop."

Flaviviruses comprise the genus that includes yellow fever and had never previously been found to infect plants.

Based on subsequent testing of Magic Valley fields, Snake River Virus is widespread within the region. It's possible it's an ancient virus that's flown under the radar and was only recently discovered thanks to new diagnostic technology.

"Very likely, based on the analysis of our collaborators, this virus may be the founder of a new taxon of flavi-like viruses," Karasev said. "It's always interesting and always fun to see something people didn't see before."

Testing of samples from the Rupert field also confirmed infections by six other viral diseases known to infect alfalfa.

Four of the diseases are transmitted only by seed and are considered benign, causing no known symptoms. Two of the diseas-



Photo by John O'Connell

**Alex Karasev presents about Snake River Virus at the University of Idaho's 55th Annual Idaho Potato Conference on the Idaho State University campus in January.**

es – alfalfa mosaic virus and bean leafroll virus – can be transmitted by aphids and may be contributing to diminished yield and quality in older alfalfa plantings.

Karasev hypothesizes that the increase in virus pressure may be a key reason why alfalfa production diminishes by the fourth year in production, leading most farmers to rotate to a different crop.

"The assumption was viruses in general caused very little harm to alfalfa," Karasev said. "We're trying to get some data to confirm or refute it. Until you start studying it you may not realize it's a problem."

Karasev suspects Snake River Virus is spread by thrips. At Karasev's request, Wenninger collected samples from the university's research fields in Kimberly.

Alfalfa foliage and some thrips Wenninger collected from Kimberly were confirmed to be positive for Snake River Virus.

Because positive samples were found at

locations 50 miles apart and on opposite sides of the Snake River, Karasev suspects the virus is widespread in the region.

Wenninger plans to have a master's student research if the virus is indeed transmitted by thrips.

The master's student will also apply insecticides in plots for comparison against untreated checks to assess how Snake River Virus and other viruses affect alfalfa yield and quality, as well as the efficacy of treatments at controlling thrips, aphids and other insect vectors.

"That's the purpose of this (USDA NIFA) grant – to see the effects of various alfalfa viruses on the quality of hay," Karasev said. "If we can suppress and manage these viruses, maybe we can increase the quality and economic efficiency of hay production." ■



# New Producer Grant

## Creating opportunities for new producers.

At AgWest Farm Credit, we recognize that a lack of start-up funds can be challenging for many new producers. This grant opportunity celebrates the ingenuity and passion of new producers and helps them bring dreams to fruition. This program was developed for those who have a vision for their operation but lack the funds to put their plans into action.

### Available funds

Successful applicants will receive a one-time \$15,000 grant to support their operation's growth.

### Eligibility

Eligible applicants need to meet the following requirements:

- Be a full or part-time agriculturalist who has two years or less of operational experience or has plans to start their operation within two years of the grant application date.
- Have an operation located within AgWest Farm Credit's territory.
- *Not be a current AgWest customer.*

### Application process

To apply, the applicant must complete the following:

- Review the Strategic Business Planning guide on AgWestFC.com.
- View three recorded webinars on AgWestFC.com covering financial statement basics.
- Submit a business plan and cash flow budget (educational video and template available).
- Submit a one-page essay sharing the applicant's relevant agricultural experience, addressing how funds received through this grant will be used to achieve the applicant's goals, and explaining how their operation will benefit their local community or help them achieve their operational aspirations.

### Award process

Applicants will be evaluated on a five-point scale covering four components: application, business plan, cash flow budget and essay. Grant recipients will be notified of their award in late September.

### Deadline to apply:

August 31. Recipients will be notified by September 29 and invited to an awards ceremony to celebrate their achievements in late fall.

Questions?  
Email: AgVision@AgWestFC.com.

Ready to apply?  
Get started by scanning  
the QR code below.





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



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WHEN A FRIEND YOU REFER PURCHASES A POLICY FROM US

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\*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: Darla Fletcher (third from left) of Cocolalla, the winner of our 4th quarter 2022 Refer A Friend, Get A Gift \$500 drawing.

# IDAHO VALUES FARMER AND RANCHER WELLNESS

Caring for the health and wellness of our Idaho agricultural community has never been more important. If you or someone you know is struggling, reach out and find help.



[farm.idaho.gov](http://farm.idaho.gov)



# Transparency: a look into how your tax dollars are being spent

By **Brandon Woolf**  
*Idaho State Controller*

The first rule for any responsible government is that it must do the work of the people, for the people. That is the reason for any government's existence.

But before that work can start, the governing body must first prioritize getting, and more importantly, keeping the trust of its citizens.

I am proud to say the state of Idaho is leading the way in the creation of concrete processes to do just that, to better ensure our citizens can trust their state and local government entities.

As your Idaho state controller, it is my job to account for all of our state's expenditures so Idahoans can know exactly how their government is working for them.

However, the inner workings of government can be complicated and cumbersome.

That is why it has been a goal of mine since I was elected to office to make those obscure details easy to understand – and thanks to the hard work of your state controller's office, Idaho is now bringing clarity to the complex.

With that, I am honored to announce the successful expansion of Transparent Idaho (<https://localtransparency.idaho.gov/>).

Transparent Idaho is a free-to-use online portal where you can find Idaho's state and local government financial data.

This in-depth information is laid out in a comparable format with uniform, comprehensive reports that are both concise and digestible.

For example, you can see how your property tax contributes to your county's budget, and then, how your county is spending that money.

Transparent Idaho also has interactive



*'Every Idahoan deserves to have a full understanding of where, when, and how their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent, as well as be able to see exactly what is being accomplished with that spending.'*

charts, where you can pick and choose what data you'd like to view based on a category.

Maybe you're curious how Payette County's spending compares to Banrock County. Or, how Kootenai County

allocates its funds compared to Canyon County.

Transparent Idaho can give you an apples-to-apples comparison of each. You can even see how much your county or city is spending by category, from public safety and sanitation to education and economic development.

Since I first took office in 2012, my goal has been to conduct Idaho's business in an open and transparent manner.

Every Idahoan deserves to have a full understanding of where, when, and how their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent, as well as be able to see exactly what is being accomplished with that spending.

Knowing that, I wanted to create a one-stop shop for our citizens to get all the answers they need with the simple click of a button – and Transparent Idaho was born.

I truly hope this website can become a trusted source for Idaho's financial data and a resource for all Idahoans to hold their elected officials accountable.

We're not done yet. My team is continuing to work with local entities to dive deeper into Idaho's financials.

We are focusing now on the Gem State's nearly 200 cities, and following our ongoing uniformity efforts, we will provide greater insight into revenue, expenditure, and fund balance data.

A transparent Idaho only makes Idaho better.

I hope Transparent Idaho opens the door to further collaboration between our elected leaders and our citizens. ■



# DELICIOUS APPLE PIE

# EASY

# AS

# PIE

## Ingredients

4 or 5 delicious  
apples

3/4 cup sugar

1/3 cup cream (or half  
and half)

1/4 teas. cinnamon

## Directions

Dice apples into a 9-inch unbaked pie shell. Spread sugar, spice, and cream over the apples. With a fork, stir until the apples are covered. Cover with top crust. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes.



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# LOOKING FOR A NEW PODCAST? DIRT ROAD DISCUSSIONS

## **Episode 31: The Traveling 4-Ton Potato**

WHEN YOU HAUL A 4-TON POTATO AROUND THE UNITED STATES, PEOPLE NATURALLY FOLLOW YOU OFF THE HIGHWAY TO GET PICTURES OF THEMSELVES WITH THIS SPECTACLE. EVERYONE HAS THE SAME QUESTION, "IS IT REAL?" LAURA MARTIN AND SUE KENNEDY, TOUR DIRECTORS, TAKE US ON A JOURNEY OF THIS FAMOUS IDAHO POTATO TRUCK FROM PROM PARADES TO BARGE RIDES AROUND THE STATUE OF LIBERTY. HEAR HOW IT ALL GOT STARTED AND WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN THE FUTURE.

