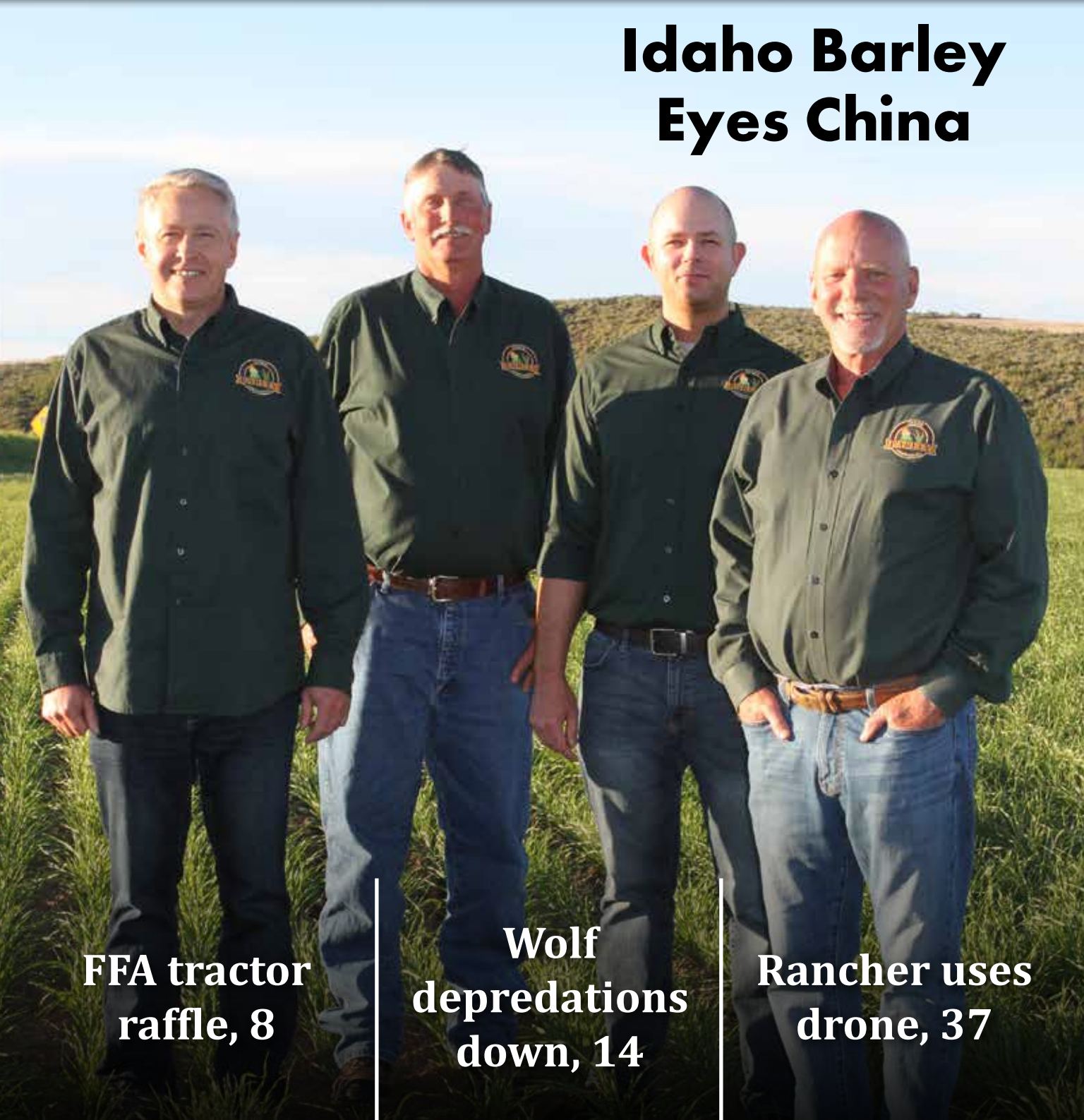
GEM STATE Producer
Idaho Farm Bureau
July 2020 • Volume 24 Issue 5

Idaho Barley Eyes China



FFA tractor raffle, 8

Wolf depredations down, 14

Rancher uses drone, 37

The Zipline

By Zippy Duvall
President American Farm Bureau Federation

Lessons from COVID-19

It was such an honor for me to be appointed by President Trump in April to represent agriculture on the industry group focused on economic revival following the COVID-19 pandemic. It was recognition of agriculture's importance not only to our nation's economy but to our quality of life.

Since then, the American Farm Bureau has provided input for consideration as the administration works on economic revitalization.

Several recommendations, such as pursuing trade agreements and removing unnecessary regulations, make sense in normal times; now they matter even more to our economy and food security.

It has taken our nation years to recover from big economic disruptions of the past, such as the Great Depression in 1929 and the Great Recession in 2008.

Policy decisions made today will have similarly long-lasting repercussions. It's important for us to learn from those past disruptions, as well as this one, and avoid policies that would stifle innovation and agricultural production.

See **DUVALL**, page 6

The President's Desk

By Bryan Searle
President Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Outbreak has brought ag groups closer together

The COVID-19 outbreak has presented significant challenges to the state's and nation's agricultural industries.

But it has also resulted in agricultural organizations throughout Idaho and the United States unifying in a major and unprecedented way as they join forces to tackle the many farming-related issues the coronavirus has created.

During normal times, the different organizations that represent a wide range of commodities are not always on the same page on important issues and that's putting it nicely.

Sometimes, their interests differ and so do their opinions on how to handle various issues but in the end, they are all working toward the same goal: to protect, improve and promote agriculture.

The unified response to the challenges posed by the coronavirus outbreak show that we really all are in this together and it has brought a great strength to the agriculture industry, at the state and national level.

For several weeks now, farmers and ranchers

See **SEARLE**, page 7

Inside Farm Bureau

By Zak Miller
CEO Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

The value of a good brace

On perfect days for me as a child, my grandfather would take me to the coffee shop with him. I didn't understand then why these old men would sit around and visit.

It sure makes sense now. Not only were they farmers, but they were also consultants, financial advisers, equipment dealers, etc.

Thinking of those days reminds me of an often-used saying: "Good fences make good neighbors." Virtually every time that phrase is used, it is used as a reference about the "neighbor," but what about the fence? What makes a good fence?

On the range where a fence's purpose is to keep livestock in their designated spaces, the fences are often quite spartan and almost always wire. As long as the wire is standing tight enough to hold livestock, the fence maintains its side of the "good fences" part of the bargain.

One hallmark of a good fence that any stockman can appreciate is the amount and quality of "braces" a fence contains.

There are many types of braces found in fences. A common type of brace is an "H" brace, which

See **MILLER**, page 6

Idaho Farm Bureau
Volume 24, Issue 5

IFBF Officers

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dan Garner.....Clifton
Austin Tubbs.....Malad
Fred Burmester.....Downey
Scott Steele.....Idaho Falls
Stephanie Mickelsen.....Idaho Falls
Travis McAffee.....Howe
Gerald Marchant.....Oakley
Rick Pearson.....Hagerman
Rick Brune.....Hazelton
Cody Chandler.....Weiser
Galen Lee.....New Plymouth
Matt Dorsey.....Caldwell
Marjorie French.....Princeton
Tom Daniel.....Bonners Ferry
Tom Mosman.....Craigmont
Judy Woody.....Filer
Jason Fellows.....Weston

STAFF

Director of Admin. Services.....Cara Dyer
Member Services Assistant.....Peggy Moore
Member Benefit Assistant.....Dixie Ashton
Dist. I Regional Manager.....Ott Clark
Dist. II Regional Manager.....Tyrel Bingham
Dist. III Regional Manager.....Zack Lanier
Dist. IV Regional Manager.....Brody Miller
Dist. V Regional Manager.....Bob Smathers
Dir. of Governmental Affairs.....Russ Hendricks
Boise Office Manager.....Kristy Lindauer
Energy/Natural Resources.....Braden Jensen
Governmental Affairs Representative.....Chyla Wilson
Director of Information.....Joel Benson
Publications Editor/Media Contact.....Sean Ellis
Broadcast Services Manager.....Jake Putnam
Business Systems Administrator.....Tyler Moore
Videographer.....Michaela Andrus

Printed by: Adams Publishing Group, Pocatello, ID

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

POSTMASTER send changes of address to:
GEM STATE PRODUCER
P.O. Box 4848, Pocatello, ID 83205-4848.
Periodicals postage paid at Pocatello, Idaho, and additional mailing offices.
Subscription rate: $6.00 per year included in Farm Bureau dues.

MAGAZINE CONTACTS:
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation
EDITOR (208) 239-4292 • ADS (208) 239-4279
E-MAIL: seanellis@idahofb.org
web: www.idahofb.org

Photo by Sean Ellis

ON THE COVER: The Idaho Barley Commission's four commissioners stand in a barley field near Soda Springs.

Photo by Sean Ellis

A member of an eight-person malt barley trade team from China inspects barley in a field near Soda Springs last October.

China opening its doors to U.S. barley

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO –U.S. barley growers suddenly have access to a tantalizing new market: China, the world's most populous country and also the largest producer and consumer of beer.

That is welcome news to many farmers in Idaho, which leads the nation in barley production. Idaho produced 55 million bushels of barley last

year, and about 75 percent of that barley was used to make malt for beer. The rest was used for food and animal feed.

As part of the "phase one" trade deal signed between China and the United States in January, China agreed to approve a phytosanitary protocol between the countries that would allow U.S. barley to be sold in that nation.

That means U.S. barley can now be exported to China.

As part of the phase one trade deal, China agreed to purchase massive amounts of U.S. agricultural products. Purchasing a significant amount of barley is one way to achieve that commitment, Idaho Barley Commissioner Wes Hubbard said during the IBC's regular meeting June 11.

"That would be one way for them to do that, to buy some malt barley from the U.S.," said Hubbard, a North Idaho barley farmer. "Hopefully, we're going to be able to capitalize on (this development)."

China has already made two recent purchases of U.S. barley and one of them involved some Idaho barley, said IBC Administrator Laura Wilder.

China's sudden interest in U.S. barley follows that nation's first-ever malt barley trade team visit to the United States last October. The eight-member trade team, which represented China's beer brewing industry, visited Idaho and other states from Oct. 9-12 to learn more about the U.S. malt barley industry.

Wilder said trade team representatives expressed great interest in purchasing U.S. barley and China's opening of its doors to barley from the United States can be attributed in large part to that visit.

"What opened the door for this to happen was that trade team being here," she said. "It's a direct result of that visit."

Wilder said members of the Chinese trade team were impressed with the quality of the malt barley produced in Idaho and the U.S.

"U.S. malt is typically higher quality than what they have available in China because we have better varieties, better storage and just better barley and malt for brewing," she said.

But she also said China's sudden appetite

Photo by Sean Ellis

Members of a malt barley trade team from China visit a barley farm in Grace last October.

Photo by Sean Ellis

Soda Springs farmer Scott Brown, second from right, shows members of a Chinese malt barley trade team an unharvested barley field last October. China recently opened its doors to U.S. barley.

for U.S. barley probably won't pay off in a big way this year because most of the barley produced in Idaho is grown under contract, which means there is not a large amount of open market barley available right now.

Next year could be where Idaho growers begin to see results of the recent development, she said, but Chinese purchasers are going to have to convince Idaho farmers that there is a profit in producing barley that is destined for export to that nation.

China has been price-sensitive when it comes to purchasing barley from other nations, Wilder said, and the barley that Chinese purchasers have bought is lower quality than U.S. barley.

"It's early as far as trying to determine what the market potential is in China for U.S. barley but there is potential," she said. "So we just need to keep developing that market and building those relationships. It's happening but we're just at the tip of the iceberg."

"We are just going to have to see how the Chinese buyers are going to operate to give our farmers confidence they will have the market if they grow it," Wilder added. "We need assurances that if farmers grow it, the market's going to be there."

While a lot still has to happen before China starts buying significant amounts of U.S. barley, the potential for the world's most populous country to purchase large amounts of Idaho barley is exciting, said Scott Brown, a Soda Springs grower who hosted the Chinese malt barley trade team during its visit to Idaho last year.

"China is the largest beer producing nation in the world and to have that as a potential market for Idaho and U.S. barley growers is exciting," he said. ■

DUVALL

Continued from page 2

We've recommended that the administration's approach to restarting the economy be grounded in the principle that food security is domestic security, and domestic and global food supply chains are necessary for agricultural production.

That means farmers and ranchers need access to credit. It means USDA must have the authority and adequate funding to step in and stabilize the farm economy in the event of further or future disruption.

We already have learned important lessons from the past few months. We believe USDA should be the primary federal agency coordinating and overseeing all agricultural initiatives, and all other federal agencies (Labor Department, Federal Emergency Management Agency, State Department and Homeland Security, for example) should cooperate with USDA to leverage resources where appropriate to support agricultural production.

We've also recommended that agriculture be a top priority for testing and distribution of personal protective equipment or PPEs for workers on farms and in meat plants and other food manufacturing facilities, as well as farmers and ranchers themselves.

And speaking of meat plants, we must ensure the integrity and transparency of livestock markets to ensure that there is no price manipulation and that producers receive honest prices for their livestock.

Many produce growers who were already under stress from seasonal imports in early spring saw that situation get even worse. We've recommended that USDA, the U.S. Trade Representative and the Commerce Department resume delayed field hearings into the challenges facing seasonal produce growers in Florida, Georgia and other parts of the country.

One of the best things our government can do to help kickstart the farm economy is commit to long-range policies. We've had enough uncertainty. It will take time to re-establish supply chains and markets.

Farmers and food manufacturers shouldn't have to worry about the expiration of temporary regulatory suspensions. We need a clear, sustained focus on stimulating economic growth.

A positive outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic has been increased coordination between the federal and state governments, and we believe that's a great way to move forward. Continued dialog with states and their governors can ensure we build on what works for each state, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Through this health crisis, we've seen the importance of prioritizing the safety of agricultural workers and maximizing the flexibility of the H-2A visa program to ensure that food can be harvested and processed.

Going forward, Congress must renew immigration reform efforts to provide legal status to current agricultural workers, who are part of our critical infrastructure because of their role in providing food security. They truly are essential.

We've been through a crisis the likes of which none of us has experienced before. We're still going through it, actually.

We all want to see the economy reopen soon, but we also want to see things reopen in a way that's well thought out and keeps us on the path of lowering infections.

If we learn the lessons that COVID-19 has presented to us, then we just might come out of this stronger than before. ■

MILLER

Continued from page 2

consist of two posts close together planted deep and packed well into the ground. A third post is then placed horizontally between the two planted posts, creating an "H."

It is common to wrap wire in an X pattern between the corners of the planted posts and twist the wire until it forces the horizontal post to become wedged between the planted posts.

The purpose of a brace is to hold the wire tight and to bear the weight of the fence as a whole. Individual posts are essential to keep the wire secured and standing, but the brace post is the real key.

A good fence will have many braces, depending on the length and topography of the land. Some are far from each other. Some can be close. Each brace is vital to the fence to pull the wire tight and allow the posts to hold it up.

Given the economic, health, and social conditions we all find ourselves in, we all need some "braces" to keep us secure.

A brace in a fence does little to keep livestock in check. It is the result of its actions that allow many individual posts to hold their position and accomplish the general goals.

Who and what, as individuals, are our braces? A few examples are family and Farm Bureau.

It is not by accident that family is often the first word heard when a farmer or rancher describes what they do – "family farmer/rancher."

Farm Bureau exists to help our communities, doing things like providing potatoes and dairy products to food banks, donating ag books to libraries, or simply looking out for a neighbor.

Farm Bureau always provides a brace against the challenges we face.

Brace posts take time to build; however, the returns that they offer are very valuable and worth the effort. They hold the entire fence together! In our lives, let us recognize those individuals and groups that are our braces and, if possible, be a brace for someone else. ■

SEARLE

Continued from page 2

from around Idaho have joined in on a weekly conference call hosted by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, the governor's office and Idaho Farm Bureau Federation.

Representatives of the state's congressional delegation, Idaho's Farm Service Agency, leaders from all the ag organizations within the state, as well as officials from ISDA and IFBF, regularly join in on the weekly conference calls.

These calls have been very informative and have included presentations on a wide variety of subjects.

On a recent call, for example, Tom Dayley, executive director of Idaho's Farm Service Agency, provided an update on the federal coronavirus farm relief payments, and Joel Anderson, executive director of the Snake River Farmers Association, provided an update on the struggle to ensure agricultural producers have access to the H-2A foreign guest workers they will need this year.

Other topics have included employer liability created by the pandemic, a weekly market report from our own Clark Johnston and specific reports from a representative from each of the different ag organizations sharing how their industry has been impacted and some of the things being done to address those challenges.

Idaho Gov. Brad Little joined one of the meetings to address and answer questions.

It has been a real privilege to work with ISDA Director Celia Gould, along with her staff and ours, in facilitating these meetings

In addition to these calls, the various ag organizations that represent Idaho's 24,000 farmers and ranchers have worked closely together on several important COVID-related issues.

While this has occurred, many of the previously petty differences over small issues have seemed to magically disappear as these groups tackle serious issues that are threatening the livelihood of producers.

This effort shows that we really are all in this together. Cattle and dairy, grain and potatoes, pulse crops, sugar beets, hay, you name it, we truly are all facing this challenge together.

The same thing has happened on the national level.

At the American Farm Bureau Federation level, I have joined other state Farm Bureau presidents during weekly conference calls that have included presentations from USDA officials, elected congressional officials, FSA officials and the EPA administrator, that cover every subject from A to Z.

These calls are a time to share concerns and ask questions and as a result, we have received direction and support.

This coming together of ag groups, this unification of our different assets, has provided an incredible opportunity to work together on solutions to the challenges posed by the pandemic. I look forward to this continuing long into the future after the coronavirus threat fades into history.

This trying time has shown what we can accomplish when we unify to tackle the big challenges together and not nit-pick each other to death over the small details.

As is often said in farm country, we are competitors and will compete against each other for land and markets during normal times but when a neighbor faces a truly serious issue, we will set that competition aside and come to their aid.

Well, this coronavirus challenge has seriously threatened the livelihood of many producers and they and the groups that represent them have responded by working together to address it.

I would be remiss if I didn't use this opportunity to congratulate Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's new CEO, Zak Miller.

Zak brings a new perspective and vision that we look forward to as we continue to face the ever and quick changing world of agriculture.

Zak, a potato farmer, has proven his leadership ability during his time with the organization and I and members of IFBF's board of directors are confident he will do a great job. Farm Bureau will continue to grow, adapt and become an even stronger Voice of Agriculture.

I also want to thank members of the board, who are all volunteers, for the great effort they put forth to ensure IFBF hired someone who is capable of taking direction from our grassroots and leading this great organization into the future. ■

Photo by Sean Ellis

Gov. Brad Little, left, prepares to draw the winning ticket for the FFA's tractor raffle, June 3 in Caldwell. Despite challenges posed by the coronavirus outbreak, the raffle program generated more revenue from ticket sales this year.

FFA tractor raffle raises more money despite COVID

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

CALDWELL – The Idaho FFA tractor raffle program raised more money for scholarships this year despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 outbreak.

The shutdowns caused by the coronavirus outbreak occurred during a time when a lot of raffle tickets are traditionally sold, during various FFA springtime events.

Despite that, the tractor raffle, which just concluded its 10th season, raised $42,240 in ticket sales in 2019-2020, 16 percent more than the previous year.

Including the money that was raised through corporate sponsorships, the total revenue was enough to provide $22,000 worth of scholarships this year to high school seniors who are FFA members in Idaho.

Tickets used to cost $10 apiece but the price was raised to $20 for the 2019-2020 season and for the first time, half of the money from each ticket sold was given back to the chapter that sold it.

Total ticket sales were down this year partly due to the higher price, although the increased price also resulted in more total revenue being raised. But the coronavirus outbreak was a bigger factor in the decreased ticket sales, said Stephen Parrott, chairman of the Idaho FFA Foundation board of directors.

"I think the higher ticket price did contribute to the down ticket sales but I think COVID had a bigger impact because we lost out on a lot of our spring events" where a lot of tickets are sold, he said. "We are very excited with ticket sales this year given all the things that have been going on."

Before this season, 60 percent of ticket sales went to scholarships, 6 percent went to the chapters that sold the three winning tick-

ets and the remaining 34 percent was used to cover administrative costs of the program.

Sid Freeman, a Caldwell farmer and Idaho Farm Bureau Federation member, started the raffle program in 2010 along with his wife, Pam.

To help generate ticket sales, as well as raise awareness of the important role that agricultural education plays in Idaho, the tractor to be raffled is pulled 5,000 miles across Idaho each year on a trailer.

Since the first tractor was raffled off in 2011, the program has raised almost $550,000 in ticket sales, corporate sponsorships and in-kind donations.

It has provided $168,000 worth of scholarship money to 154 FFA students across Idaho.

On June 3, Gov. Brad Little, joined by FFA students and leaders, drew the winning ticket for this year's grand prize: a 2018 Yanmar 221 with blade and bucket. The winner was Hal Harris, who purchased the winning ticket from the Middleton FFA chapter.

Little, a Republican rancher from Emmett, praised the state's FFA program and he said that if there was no such thing as FFA and people wanted to start a program to help propel the state forward, "You'd say, let's invent FFA."

"This program just continues to provide incredible dividends to the entire state of Idaho," he said.

Parrott said the new program rule that gives 50 percent of ticket sales back to the chapter that sold it has been well-received among the state's 95 FFA chapters.

"I think that change has just been a great addition to the tractor raffle," he said.

Kevin Barker, an ag education teacher at Notus High School and member of the foundation board, said the tractor raffle has been a big blessing to Idaho's FFA program.

When Freeman first pitched the program to the board, it seemed like a wild idea, Barker said.

"But it has turned into a phenomenal program," he said. "It really helps get these kids into post-secondary education."

The first tractor, a 1940 International Farmall H donated by the Freemans, was raffled off in 2011.

Freeman said the tractor raffle had its genesis in his wife being "consistently persistent that I do something with that old tractor."

With the help of agricultural businesses, the tractor was refurbished and restored to "like-new" condition.

Freeman said he and his wife wanted to raise money to help fund a program they believe strongly in.

"Historically, the statistics will show that ag ed students with the FFA component are far more likely to graduate from high school, go on to a post-secondary education … and then come back and be leaders in our communities later," he said.

Parrott said the state's agricultural industry has provided a significant amount of support to the tractor raffle program.

"We've had a ton of industry support … and a lot of sponsorship dollars have gone into keeping the cost of the program down so we can provide more scholarships to students," he said. ■

Photo by Sean Ellis

Zak Miller has taken over as Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's new CEO and executive vice president. Miller is shown here inside IFBF's headquarters building in Pocatello June 26.

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation announces new CEO

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – Zak Miller, a fifth-generation farmer from East Idaho, has taken over as Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's new CEO and executive vice president.

IFBF is Idaho's largest general farm organization and represents more than 80,000 member families throughout Idaho, including 14,000 who are actively involved with the state's agricultural sector.

Miller began his new position on June 1 and replaces Rick Keller, who served as IFBF's CEO for 21 years and retired June 30.

"Rick has done a great job leading Idaho Farm Bureau Federation and … the board of directors has confidence in Zak's vision and leadership ability to continue to lead Farm Bureau into the future," said IFBF President Bryan Sear-

> “Farm Bureau is a beautiful vehicle but someone needs to drive it. My job is to make sure the vehicle is gassed up and tuned up and ready to run but the volunteers are the ones that make it go.”
>
> — Zak Miller, IFBF CEO

le, a farmer from Shelley.

Miller joined IFBF in 2014 and has served on the organization’s management team the past three years. He has also served as director of commodities and as manager of the Farm Bureau Marketing Association for the past three years.

He previously served as a regional field manager for East Idaho.

Zak Miller
CEO IFBF

“I am humbled and excited to be entrusted with the responsibility to help lead such a great organization with such dynamic members and leaders,” Miller said.

He said that Idaho has a lot of natural resources but “our most valuable natural resource is our farmers and ranchers.”

Miller said he has a high regard for the rugged individualism that is the hallmark of farmers and ranchers.

“They are individuals willing to take on the world and they work hard,” he said.

However, he added, sometimes regulatory hurdles and other obstacles beyond the control of farmers and ranchers make their job extremely difficult. Farm Bureau’s purpose, he said, is to ensure that those people have a collective voice that stands up for them and amplifies their talents.

“Farm Bureau brings a collective voice to these rugged individuals and makes sure society as a whole does not forget about them,” Miller said. “Our farmers and ranchers tend to be quite quiet and just keep their heads down and do their job and they can get run over if there’s not a collective voice for them, and that collective voice is Farm Bureau.”

Miller said he considers himself fortunate to be able to make a living representing people like himself who have a great love for agriculture.

“It’s hard to be in agriculture and not love it at the same time,” he said. “There is a passion for ag that I have and that I’ve seen in virtually everyone I’ve come across that makes their living off of the land.”

One of his main goals is to encourage other farmers and ranchers to get involved with Farm Bureau and share their opinions, experiences and wisdom with other producers.

“The more volunteers that speak up and share their voice and opinions, the better work we can do on behalf of agriculture,” Miller said. “If I could ask for anything, it’s for our farmers and ranchers to speak up. If you don’t speak up, we’ll never get to know the wisdom that you have.”

“Whether it’s developing policy, mentoring young farmers and ranchers or educating the general population about agriculture, we need you,” he added. “Don’t discount yourself. Every one of you has experiences and challenges and thoughts that could prove valuable to agriculture as a whole.”

Miller said he sees Farm Bureau’s role as being the vehicle that farmers and ranchers use to accomplish their collective goals.

“Farm Bureau is a beautiful vehicle but someone needs to drive it,” he said. “My job is to make sure the vehicle is gassed up and tuned up and ready to run but the volunteers are the ones that make it go.”

Prior to joining Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, Miller worked at Cargill Animal Nutrition as a consultant, working with farmers and ranchers throughout the Intermountain West for 9 years.

Miller, who is a native of East Idaho, is a partner on his family’s fifth-generation farm in St. Anthony, which includes a cow-calf operation and produces potatoes, wheat, malt barley and forage crops for cattle.

Miller earned a bachelor’s degree in ag business and animal science from BYU-Idaho.

He and his wife, Marcy, live in Rigby with their four daughters. ■

Photo by Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation officials are advising ranchers to think long and hard before signing voluntary agreements BLM is asking Idaho ranchers to sign.

Farm Bureau warns ranchers about signing 'voluntary agreements' with BLM

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – U.S. Bureau of Land Management officials are asking Idaho ranchers who water livestock on BLM land to sign voluntary agreements stating that they are limited agents of the federal government.

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation officials are advising ranchers to think long and hard before signing the agreement, cautioning them that doing so would allow the BLM to maintain water rights in their name and would prohibit the rancher from filing for in-stream stock watering rights on federal land in the future.

IFBF leaders say the issue rehashes some of the main points of a landmark 2007 water rights ruling known as the Joyce Livestock Decision.

In that decision, the Idaho Supreme Court ruled in favor of two Owyhee County ranchers in their battle with the BLM over who owns in-stream stock watering rights on federally administered land.

During the state's Snake River Basin Adjudication process, southern Idaho ranchers and the BLM filed thousands of overlapping claims to in-stream stock watering rights on federal land.

All but two of the ranchers, Paul Nettleton and Tim Lowry, backed off or negotiated with the BLM when they realized fighting the federal agency in court would cost a lot of money.

Agreeing with Nettleton and Lowry,

Idaho Farm Bureau photo

Owyhee County ranchers Paul Nettleton, right, and Tim Lowry, are shown at a meeting in this Idaho Farm Bureau Federation file photo.

the state's supreme court ruled that BLM didn't own the rights because it doesn't own cows and couldn't put the water to beneficial use.

During the SRBA process, the water adjudication court ended up conveying 17,000 stock watering rights to the BLM prior to the Joyce ruling. However, since BLM cannot put the water to beneficial use, they are now in jeopardy of forfeiting these rights through non-use.

The Idaho Legislature passed a bill a few years ago that codifies the Idaho Supreme Court's 2007 decision into state law, which paves the way for thousands of ranchers in Idaho to file competing claims for those in-stream stock watering rights on BLM land.

In an effort to keep those water rights, BLM is now encouraging permittees to sign agreements stating that they are agents of the federal government and that their livestock are putting the water to beneficial use for the agency.

In an email response to IFBF questions on this issue, BLM officials said the agency is "encouraging permittees to sign the voluntary (agreements) to help ensure that they can continue to utilize the state-based stockwater rights obtained by the BLM for the term of their permit and any subsequent renewals. A signed agreement helps protect the stockwater rights in the permittees' allotments from a possible future forfeiture proceeding."

BLM said the agreements "ensure regulatory certainty for permittees and ensure that all stockwater rights in an allotment remain available for the permittee."

During the court case, the BLM argued that they must hold the water rights to ensure the current and future grazers on federal lands had access to the water.

In its ruling, the Idaho Supreme Court rejected that assertion and it also said the BLM's argument reflected a serious misunderstanding of Idaho water law.

But now BLM is asking ranchers who graze cattle on federal allotments to sign voluntary agreements that say they are "acting as a limited agent of the United States for the purposes of establishing and maintaining water rights solely in the name of the United States on federal public lands…."

If a permittee signs this agreement, "He is saying, I am an agent of the federal government and as such, my cattle are putting this water to beneficial use for the BLM so they can hold stockwater rights in their name," said IFBF Director of Governmental Affairs Russ Hendricks. "There is no other way the BLM can have a stockwater right unless they have an agent who is putting the water to beneficial use for them."

Speaking at an IFBF water rights conference in 2015, Justice Dan Eismann, who wrote the court's decision, said, "People did not come West to be agents of the federal government, so that was easily rejected."

He also said that "water rights on federal land are appurtenant to the person who is watering the stock."

Hendricks said Congress has made it clear that stock owners are authorized to seek and receive stockwater rights on federally administered land.

By signing the BLM agreement, "The rancher would then have no opportunity to file for those stockwater rights in his name because the BLM would already have them," Hendricks said.

See **BLM**, page 15

Idaho Department of Fish and Game photo

Wolves are shown in a picture taken by one of Idaho Department of Fish and Game's remote cameras. Wolf depredations of Idaho livestock are down this fiscal year.

Wolf depredations of Idaho livestock down in fiscal 2020

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – After setting records during fiscal years 2018 and 2019, wolf depredations of livestock in Idaho are down significantly during the first 10 months of fiscal 2020, which ends June 30.

At the same time, the number of problem wolves that Idaho Wildlife Services has lethally removed this fiscal year is up compared with the same period in fiscal 2019.

Wildlife Services is a federal agency that helps solve conflicts between humans and animals. In Idaho, the agency conducts lethal wolf control actions as part of a cooperative agreement with the Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board, whose mission is to fund lethal control actions of wolves that cause chronic problems to livestock and wildlife.

During the wolf board's May 19 meeting, Todd Grimm, the Idaho state director of Wildlife Services, reported that the agency conducted 180 investigations of wolf depredations of livestock between July 1, 2019, and April 30.

Of those, 84 were determined to be confirmed wolf depredations, 28 were probable depredations, 48 possible depredations and 20 were determined to be the result of other causes.

During the same period in fiscal 2019, Idaho Wildlife Services confirmed 156 wolf depredations of livestock.

"In essence, we've gone from 156 wolf depredations to 84, which is a significant decrease," Grimm said during the meeting, which was held by teleconference.

During that same time period this fiscal year, IWS lethally removed 77 wolves and radio collared another

five. The agency killed 40 wolves and collared two during the same period the previous fiscal year.

"So far, those (wolf control) efforts seem to be paying off," Grimm said.

But he also cautioned it's too early to read too much into the decrease in wolf-livestock depredations so far this fiscal year because most depredations occur from June to August, "when the most amount of livestock are exposed to the most amount of wolves. And there is still two months left in this fiscal year."

However, Grimm told Idaho Farm Bureau Federation later that the Memorial Day weekend is usually the "kickoff" time when producers begin calling him about wolf attacks.

"My phone didn't ring once this weekend," he said May 26.

New radio collars that IWS is using are enhancing the agency's ability to identify and remove problem wolves, Grimm said.

The new collars put out satellite signals that allow IWS to trace the wolves' exact movements, he said.

"Many of the wolves we took this fiscal year, we were able to tie to specific depredation incidents just due to the satellite collars," Grimm said.

The confirmed wolf-livestock depredations this year included 24 cows killed, three calves killed, 42 sheep killed, two dogs killed and one domestic bison killed.

The list of probable depredations included 10 cows killed; 22 calves killed and one injured; and two sheep killed.

During the wolf board teleconference meeting, Stephen McGrath, a new board member who represents the public, asked Grimm if Idaho Wildlife Services could provide the average cost per wolf it killed.

Grimm said that number would change from year to year. Plus, he added, "it's not a way we've found to be an effective way of reporting our results. There are too many components involved that we can't control that can cause depredations and costs to go up, or down in some cases."

McGrath said he would appreciate the average cost per wolf killed over the last five years and said he wanted that information not to be judgmental but so he could better understand the board's wolf-control program from a budgetary standpoint.

"I understand that but when you put a price on the head of a wolf, that's when things get misreported," Grimm said.

Grimm told IFBF later that instead of trying to determine the average cost per wolf killed, the real question should be, "How much would it cost to have the same level of wolf depredations if we weren't killing wolves?"

The answer, he said, is that "it would be more than 100 times more expensive."

If you considered the personnel and equipment it would take to protect livestock without removing problem wolves, he said, "It would be a staggering number."

Federal funding for wolf control actions in Idaho declined by about $620,000 from 2009 to 2014. The wolf control board was created in 2014 to make up for that deficit.

The board typically receives $400,00 in state funds annually and the state's cattle and sheep producers provide another $110,000 annually, as do Idaho sportsmen. That has provided the board about $620,000 each year to fund lethal wolf control actions.

As is typical when the wolf depredation control board meets, a few people spoke in favor of the board's actions May 19 and a few questioned its mission of lethally removing problem wolves.

While one member of the public said he felt the money being spent by the board was a subsidy to the livestock industry in the state, Idaho Cattle Association Executive Vice President Cameron Mulrony said he appreciates the work the board is doing.

"We need every tool in the toolbox (in) trying to manage this species and protect our industry," he said. ■

BLM

Continued from page 13

If a permittee does not sign the agreement, Hendricks said, the BLM could potentially forfeit a water right that was decreed to them during the SRBA because they are not putting it to beneficial use. Meanwhile, the rancher would be free to file for that water right in their name with the Idaho Department of Water Resources.

"Under the Joyce Livestock decision by the Idaho Supreme Court, if the permittees own and manage the livestock, they should own the water rights," said Paul Arrington, executive director of the Idaho Water Users Association. "They are the ones putting the water to beneficial use."

He said that permittees' deferred claims are valid water rights recognized under Idaho water law and therefore, even if BLM's adjudicated water rights are forfeited, the permittees still have a valid, underlying water right that they are entitled to file upon.

"A water right is based on beneficial use – you have to actually use the water," Arrington said. "The water cannot be claimed by anyone who has not actually used that water."

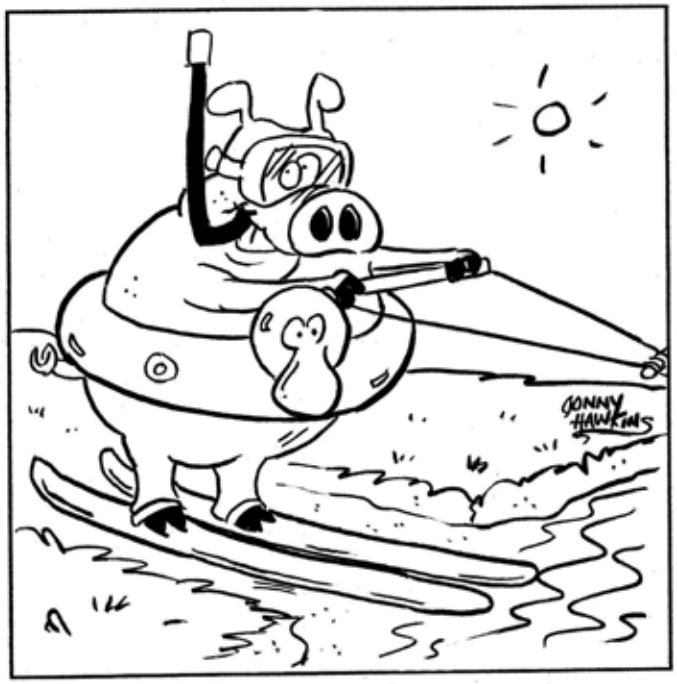
"Our advice at this point is to think long and hard about it before signing," Hendricks said. "The down side of signing the agreement is you are eliminating any possibility of obtaining that stock water right in your name in the future as long as the agreement is in force."

Lowry, one of the ranchers who prevailed in the Joyce Livestock Decision, said BLM's recent attempt to get ranchers to sign these voluntary agreements "looks like a back-door scam. It looks like they are trying to stampede people into signing up by essentially using scare tactics."

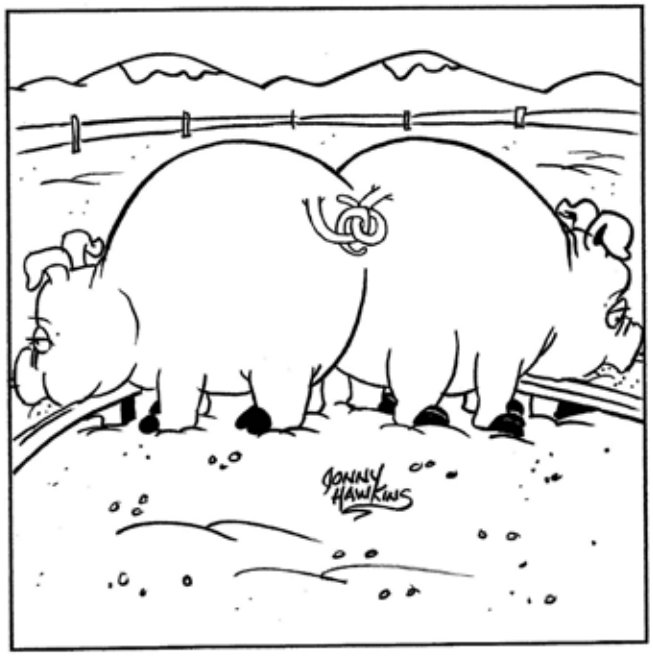
"I don't like it at all," he said. "It rubbed me the wrong bloody way." ■

Country Chuckles

By Jonny Hawkins



Where pulled pork comes from



Where Sausage Links Begin

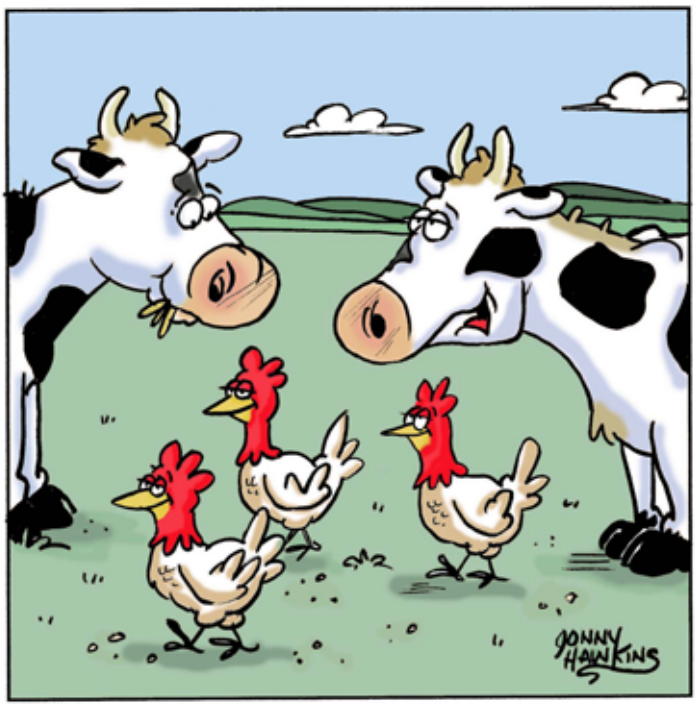
LOW INTEREST LOANS FOR IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

2.75% - 3.5%
Terms 7-15 Years
Up to $200,000

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

IDAHO CONSERVATION LOAN PROGRAM

swc.idaho.gov (208) 332-1790



"Have you met my peeps?"

On average, people estimate that life insurance costs *three times* more than it actually does.[2]

See how affordable it can be to protect those most important in your world with life insurance. Contact your Farm Bureau agent today.

FARM BUREAU FINANCIAL SERVICES

It's your future. Let's protect it.®

www.fbfs.com

[1]Individual eligibility for all product promotions is subject to underwriting and approval. Estimated premium payment is for 20-year Choice Term Guaranteed Premium Plan; Standard; 35-year-old male or female; non-smoker. Amount is for demonstrative purposes only. Contact your Farm Bureau agent for a quote on your actual monthly premium payment. [2]2019 Insurance Barometer Study, Life Happens and LIMRA. Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company*/West Des Moines, IA. *Company provider of Farm Bureau Financial Services. LI173-ID (6-20)

Submitted photo

The Stoddard children hold up signs to alert passing motorists of free red seed potatoes at their Caribou County farm.

COVID-19 has had major impact on seed potato growers

By John O'Connell
Intermountain Farm and Ranch

Caribou County farmer Jason Stoddard is one of many Eastern Idaho seed potato growers who have been stuck with lots of spuds that will never be planted due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Commercial potato farmers throughout the state have canceled seed orders, having had their contracts with processors scaled back due to lost food service demand amid the pandemic.

Industry officials estimate roughly 40 million pounds of Idaho seed potatoes have gone unsold or been returned to seed growers.

Based on the uncertainty about the future, many Idaho seed growers are also planting fewer acres this spring of seed that will be delivered next year.

Stoddard managed to sell some of his excess inventory to area potato dehydration plants.

"A fair amount of ours had been shipped out by the time the real crux of this hit," said Stoddard, who has been involved in several conference calls pertaining to the issue as a member of the National Potato Council's board of directors.

But his family's best option to move much of the surplus has been to give it away.

Over the course of a few recent days, Stoddard family children held up signs

inviting passing motorists to claim their fill of red seed potatoes, which many dehydration plants won't take.

The family also posted word of the giveaway on Facebook, offering instructions about protocols to maintain social distancing and asking people to bring their own bags and boxes.

"We will resupply totes through the day if demand warrants. We have plenty of potatoes to give away," the Facebook post stated.

Stoddard said interest in the free spuds was strong, and the public was extremely grateful. The family initially planned to do a one-day giveaway on May 14 but ultimately offered spuds for three consecutive days.

On May 20, his staff also prepped 80 15-pound bags of red potatoes to take to the Soda Springs food bank.

"We honestly didn't know whether people would be interested," Stoddard said, emphasizing that seed is especially costly to grow as it requires additional inputs and its own certification process. "It's kind of a tough thing all around, but there is some good that comes out of it."

His family will undoubtedly plant fewer acres of seed potatoes than originally planned this spring, he said.

His neighbor in Caribou County, Travis Gilbert, plans to reduce his planted seed potato acreage by about 5 percent, achieving the reduction mostly by leaving pivot corners fallow.

"A lot of these commercial (potato growers), they're looking at this harvest this fall. As a seed guy, we don't make deliveries until probably 10 months from now, in the spring of 2021," Gilbert said. "A lot of guys I've talked to have said, 'We hope things are back to normal,' but that's about the best they can do for me."

Gilbert was fortunate that the bulk of his seed was delivered to growers in Washington, most of whom had already planted when the processors announced their cuts.

United Seed Potato Growers of Idaho has had a contract for the past eight years to sell spuds to dehydrators. In the past, the contract has helped member growers find a home for off-sized seed potatoes.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, the market for spuds was tight. In light of the pandemic, however, that contract has been a big help for many members.

United conducts an annual acreage count, funded by the Idaho Potato Commission, with results released in mid-June. United CEO Rick Shawver expects this year's count will show a reduction in acreage.

"It's kind of tough for anybody to anticipate what the demand is going to be. We make the assumption that if somebody doesn't take the seed they were going to want this year, they probably will not take it next year as well."

— Clen Atchley, seed potato grower

"(Seed growers) are really concerned about the lack of demand created by the COVID-19 pandemic on potatoes in general. It's kind of like, what do I do? Plant the same acres as the year before, expecting the economy to rebound?" Shawver said. "It's difficult for seed growers to figure out."

This spring, Ashton seed potato grower Clen Atchley has cut about 25% from his acreage of the popular processing variety Ranger Russet, due to the pandemic.

"It's kind of tough for anybody to anticipate what the demand is going to be," Atchley said. "We make the assumption that if somebody doesn't take the seed they were going to want this year, they probably will not take it next year as well."

Atchley has heard stories of seed growers who have had as much as a third of their crop returned.

He was fortunate to sell his surplus seed — about 20 percent of his crop — for dehydration. Nonetheless, he estimates he's taken a $400,000 to $500,000 financial hit on those spuds, compared with the price of seed.

On the commercial side, Travis Blacker, industry relations director with the Idaho Potato Commission, explained his organization has taken several steps already to address the oversupply on the market.

During April and May, the IPC hosted a jumbo bin promotion, moving large-sized spuds that would normally go to the food service sector through retail channels.

When restaurants began closing their dining areas, Blacker explained, there was a full supply chain of Idaho potato cartons in trucks on the road and at distributors, but retailers were running out of inventories to sell to households quarantining at home.

IPC helped move those food service cartons directly onto retail floors, simply taking off the tops of the boxes and selling them loose.

Since 1970, Blacker said, Idaho's potato crop has dipped below 300,000 planted acres just three times. Last year, growers planted a relatively small crop, at 308,000 acres.

Blacker considers it a given that the Idaho potato crop will be well below 300,000 acres this season, and he expects both fresh and processed potato growers will cut back on their acres.

"These seed potato growers, they're kind of the forgotten bunch," Blacker said. "They're going to be hurt pretty good." ■

Idaho Farm Bureau

For detailed information go to: www.idahofbstore.com

THEME PARKS

Lagoon
Roaring Springs Waterpark
Wahooz
Silverwood Theme Park
Boulder Beach
Knott's Berry Farm
San Diego Zoo
SeaWorld Adventure Parks
Great Wolf Lodge

RENTAL CARS

enterprise
AVIS
Budget
Hertz

OIL CHANGE

jiffy lube

TIRES

Commercial Tire

HOTELS

Choice Hotels
Comfort Inn
Comfort Suites
Sleep Inn
Quality
Clarion
Rodeway Inn
Cambria
MainStay Suites
Wyndham Hotel Group
Days Inn
Howard Johnson
Ramada
Baymont
Wyndham
Travelodge
Wingate
Hawthorn
Super 8
Knights Inn
IHG
Holiday Inn
Motel 6

WINTER SKIING

Brundage
Pebble Creek
Deer Valley Resort
Silver Mountain Resort

INSURANCE

Farm Bureau Insurance

SUPPLIES

Office Depot
OfficeMax
xerox
GRAINGER

PROPANE

AmeriGas
America's Propane Company
Suburban Propane
Valley Wide

MOVIE TICKETS

Regal Cinemas
amc Theatres
Magic Valley Cinema
Blackfoot Movie Mill

HEALTH / MEDICAL

MDLIVE
The Canadian Pharmacy
Rx Card
ClearValue
dbp Dental Benefit Program

VEHICLES

Ford
The Lincoln Motor Company

AGRICULTURE

John Deere
Case IH

MACHINERY

Caterpillar

NOTARY

LIFE FLIGHT

Life Flight Network

IDENTIFY THEFT

LifeLock
Relentlessly Protecting Your Identity

SMART HOME TECHNOLOGY

Water Hero
Eco Net Controls

HOUSEHOLD

Sherwin Williams
Kelly-Moore Paints
Carpet One

APPAREL

Dungarees
Membership Program
Ariat
Carhartt
Yeti
Wolverine

SPORTS

Utah Jazz

TRANSPORT

Salt Lake Express

FINANCIAL

Farm Bureau Bank
$1,000 Reward
Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. of Idaho
Scholarships

FOOD STORAGE

Walton Feed

SEED

Member Benefits

(208) 239-4279

NORTH IDAHO

SILVER Mountain Resort

PINNACLE PHYSICAL THERAPY

SCENIC 6 RV PARK POTLATCH, ID 83855

PEAK HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER

MATTLEITHOLT CRAFTSMAN OF LIGHT

CENTRAL IDAHO

BARKING SPOT GROOMING 208-991-1748

Total Image Salon

LEGACY GAME BIRDS

EASTERN IDAHO

Helping Hands Home Health "Because there's no place like home" 232-2009

SUMMIT EYECARE Your vision is our focus!

Cub River Guest Ranch

THE VICTOR TETON VALLEY FINE LODGING www.thatvictor.com

GERONIMO'S! TRAMPOLINE PARK

SLED SHED BIKES BOARDS BOULDERING

ROOT CAUSE INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

GRAVITY FACTORY

Blackfoot Movie Mill

Larry Jensen Sod

THE 208 GROUP Keller Williams Realty East Idaho

A B 2

SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

DESERT CANYON MOUNTAIN HOME, IDAHO

Village Coffee & Bistro

IDAHO RIVER REALTY

SOUTHCENTRAL IDAHO

OAKLEY VALLEY ARTS COUNCIL

Morey's STEAKHOUSE

MAGIC VALLEY CINEMA

Best Western PLUS

Perkins

Teton & Teton

NO FLY ZONE Automatic Fly Control SALES AND SERVICE

Shade-loving trees?

Trees differ in their ability to tolerate shade

By Chris Schnepf
University of Idaho

Many times, people will describe a tree species as "shade-loving" versus "sun-loving."

It is natural for us to try to wrap our heads around topics as complex as forest ecology by using anthropomorphic terms (ascribing human characteristics to non-human things).

But it not very helpful to describe trees this way when practicing forestry. First, there is the issue of whether trees experience emotions such as love – that question is perhaps best left to poets. But the term "shade-loving," in particular, is problematic from a scientific perspective.

Idaho is blessed with one of the widest varieties of conifer species in the United States. Each tree species has evolved unique strategies to compete with other trees and vegetation, according to many different environmental factors.

One of those factors is shade from overstory trees. Each tree species differs in its ability to tolerate shade. The graphic below illustrates the relative shade tolerance of common Idaho tree conifers.

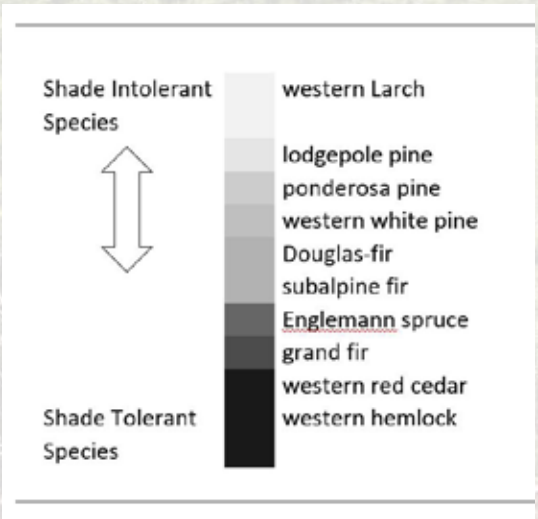


Photo by Chris Schnepf
Shade-tolerant trees such as Douglas-fir can survive in the shade from trees in the overstory.

Shade-intolerant tree species

As the name implies, shade-intolerant species grow especially poorly in shade. They tend to be "pioneer" species, whose strategy is to sprint ahead of the competition, by growing rapidly in full sunlight, to fully occupy a site after some kind of disturbance (historically, a fire).

Examples of shade-intolerant species include larch, lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine, white pine and nearly all of our broadleaf trees (e.g. birch) and shrubs.

Shade-tolerant tree species

Shade-tolerant species survive under shade better than other species. Their strategy is to "outlast" the competition. Shade-tolerant species tend to grow slower than shade-intolerant species, but they are in it for the long haul, and often "release" (grow faster) after shade-intolerant trees have died, eventually taking their place, in a process called succession.

Note that I wrote shade-tolerant, not "shade-loving." There is no such thing as a shade-loving tree, at least not in Idaho, but there are shade-tolerant trees. All trees struggle to capture as much sunlight as they can.

When you walk through a forest with pine or larch in the overstory and grand fir, western redcedar, or western hemlock in an understory, it is not because the latter species need shade to grow. It is because they are the only species that can tolerate that shade – they out-compete other tree species in a shady environment.

If you put a cedar seedling in full sun and another in shade, both with the same sufficient moisture and nutrients, the one in full sun will usually grow faster. Next time you are in the woods in a large opening on a moist site, check out the sapling cedar or grand fir – once these species get through animal browsing (deer, elk, and moose love to eat cedar) they should be growing great.

What about shocked cedar or grand fir? Sometimes you will see heavily shaded understory cedars get "shocked" after an overstory is removed. When that happens, it is more due to the abrupt change in conditions than to any affinity cedar has for shade.

Shade-tolerant trees put out leaves with different physiological properties when they are shaded than when they are in full sun. A sudden change in environment may shock these species — particularly on drier, sunnier sites – because they are not able to change their leaves over that quickly. Deciduous trees are more adaptable to these changes since they put out new leaves every year.

'Note that I wrote shade-tolerant, not "shade-loving." There is no such thing as a shade-loving tree, at least not in Idaho, but there are shade-tolerant trees. All trees struggle to capture as much sunlight as they can.'

Why is shade tolerance important?

Understanding the relative shade tolerance of tree species has important implications, particularly when choosing between silvicultural systems and their accompanying regeneration techniques.

If you rely on harvest/regeneration methods that leave more trees, such as shelterwood, selection, or dispersed retention systems, you tend to create shadier environments, that favor more shade-tolerant species. Is this what you want? It may be, if you are on a relatively wet site that can support grand fir, cedar, and other shade-tolerant species over the long term.

However, if you are on a drier site, or for other reasons want to favor shade-intolerant species, such as larch or white pine, you need to use silvicultural systems that allow plenty of sunlight to reach the understory (typically clear-cut or seed-tree systems).

It is sometimes possible to use group selection or aggregated retention systems with sufficiently sized openings for these species if follow-up thinnings are used to take out a higher percentage of shade-tolerant trees, to counterbalance the favorable environment created for them from the shade on the borders of the opening.

You may hear the shade tolerance of different species described differently in different regions. For example, a forester in coastal Washington state will often describe Douglas-fir as shade-intolerant, while one in central Idaho might describe the same species as shade-tolerant.

That is because the term is often used relative to species a tree is growing with. On many central Idaho forests, Douglas-fir is the most shade-tolerant species to be found, whereas in coastal areas, Douglas-fir grows with many species that are more shade-tolerant.

Many factors go into making effective reforestation decisions – having an accurate understanding of shade tolerance is a critical part of making those decisions.

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

Northwest
FARM CREDIT SERVICES

Where to begin.

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

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

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

208.552.2300 | northwestfcs.com

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

Here to Help You Grow®

RANGER XP® 1000:
YOUR NEW 80HP WORKHORSE

THE HARDEST WORKING, SMOOTHEST RIDING AUTHORITY ON GETTING EVERY JOB DONE.

The all-new Polaris RANGER XP® 1000, the world's most powerful and most comfortable utility side-by-side featuring a class dominating 80HP ProStar® engin, an all-new industry-exlusive 3-mode throttle control for ideal power and control for every situation, and best-in-class payload and towing capacity. See your dealer for more information or visit polaris.com to see the full RANGER® lineup.

Thanks to the following Polaris Dealers for supporting the Young Farmer & Rancher Program:

Action Cycles N Sleds
Twin Falls (208) 736-8118

Action Motorsports
Idaho Falls (208) 522-3050

Buds Powersports
Cottonwood (208) 962-3211

Carl's Cycle Sales
Boise (208) 853-5550

Dennis Dillon
Boise (208) 343-2830

Grizzly Sports
Caldwell (208) 454-8508

Guys Outdoor
Lewiston (208) 746-0381

Krehbiel's Sales & Service
Aberdeen (208) 397-4704

Mile High Power Sports
McCall (208) 634-7007

Northstar
Preston (208) 852-1888

Performance Motorsports
Ashton (208) 652-7738

Post Falls Powersports
Post Falls (866) 628-3821

Rexburg Motorsports
Rexburg (208) 356-4000

Sandpoint Marine
Sandpoint (208) 263-1535

Switchback Motor Sports
Pocatello (208) 238-1575

Young Powersports
Burley (208) 678-5111

POLARIS

Warning: The Polaris RANGER is not intended for on-highway use. Driver must be at least 16 years old with a valid driver's license to operate. Passengers must be at least 12 years old and tall enough to sit with feet firmly on the floor. All SxS drivers should take a safety training course. Contact ROHVA at www.rohva.org or (949) 255-2560 for additional information regarding safety training. Polaris recommends that drivers and passengers wear helmets, eye protection, and protective clothing, especially for trail riding and other recreational use. Always wear seat belts. Be particularly careful on difficult terrain. Never engage in stunt driving, and avoid excessive speeds and sharp turns. Riding and alcohol/drugs don't mix. Check local laws before riding on trails.

Breaking the MOLD

Winner of AFBF ag innovation challenge from Coeur d'Alene

By Paige Nelson
For Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Have you ever heard of the Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge? If "yes," you know your Farm Bureau. If "no," well, you're in good company because neither had this year's winner, that is to say, they'd never heard of it before they did a quick google search.

During the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual convention in Austin, Texas, in January, Idaho company HydroSide Systems, LLC was named winner of the sixth annual Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge, also making them the 2020 Farm Bureau Entrepreneur of the Year.

HydroSide is working to revolutionize the traveling irrigation industry, starting with wheel lines and traveling guns.

Dana and Sharon Mohr are husband and wife owners of HydroSide, based in Coeur d'Alene, and are currently in the process of designing the first-ever completely autonomous wheel line and traveling gun system.

Thanks to the credibility and recognition that comes with Farm Bureau's award, they are in a good position to release their first products by late summer.

A hands-off way to water

Growing up in a blue-collar world with plenty of hard labor under his belt, Mohr related with his brother-in-law, a farm hand, when he complained about the difficulties involved with wheel lines.

"We saw these old-fashioned machines that were tried and true and worked well," Mohr said. "They were reliable, but they were very labor intensive and not as efficient as they could be. In the West, water can be as valuable as gold."

With this problem in mind and after consulting with western Montana farmers, he initially started looking into how he could modernize wheel lines. This led to a breakthrough that automates wheel lines and traveling guns with a combination of GPS and hydroelectric technologies using a whole new drive system.

"When we started digging into it, we saw there were some great advances in some of the precision irrigation technologies, including GPS and computer drive systems," Mohr said. "We saw a way that we could combine some of these existing technologies to make these systems better."

The product of more than three years of research and development birthed HydroSide and its flagship invention: an autonomous irrigation system.

According to Mohr, the autonomous wheel line system operates like this: A traditional water pump services one or more wheel lines or traveling guns,

This is an artist's rendering of HydroSide, an autonomous irrigation system.

sending pressurized water down the line. The gas-powered motors that drive these systems are replaced with all electric movers.

The HydroSide system bolts into the existing set but employs an in-line turbine to charge onboard batteries. The system's batteries power the onboard computers and electric drive motors. As long as the pump is running, the HydroSide system is harvesting power.

The wheel lines irrigate like normal for their preset time. Once complete, they are remotely shut down and 20 minutes elapse for the water to drain. Then, using GPS technology, the electric motors power up and move the system to its next set spot in the field, carrying the hose right along with them.

The hose spools out as the system drives away from the water source and then picks the hose back up as it returns to the water source — similar to a fishing reel. When the set location is reached, the pump is turned on and irrigation happens once more.

"Say you have your 40-acre square and you have your quarter-mile long wheel line traveling across," explains Mohr. "Now that wheel line will just drive itself down and back, irrigating, draining and moving over and over across the field. That's how we've been able to automate the 40 acres."

The system is completely autonomous. Wheel lines are notorious for getting out of alignment, but HydroSide has built steerability into their product.

The HydroSide-enhanced wheel line has two electric movers. A big main unit at the end does all the heavy lifting of the hose and driving of the line. About two-thirds of the way out there is a smaller mover that looks a lot like a traditional gas-powered wheel line mover but instead is powered with the HydroSide hydroelectric drive system. The smaller mover drives in sequence with the main mover, preventing any bends or kinks in the pipe.

"Those systems talk wirelessly with a short-range radio," Mohr said. "They are able to communicate back and forth and very precisely travel together. We've got GPS accuracy down to within 2 inches using our own GPS correction data."

For the traveling gun (or boom) system, the primary HydroSide mover serves as a 1-to-1 replacement for a hose reel and can work in conjunction with an existing hose reel to cover even more acreage. This also means that you can use the system to perform two functions. For example, you can use the wheel line system on one crop for one part of the season and then use it as a traveling gun for another – all with the switch of a few fittings.

Irrigating from the rocking chair

HydroSide has designed its system to be operated from a smart phone or a computer. Via notifications, it proactively communicates with the farmer.

"Our system is set up with a few fail safes," Mohr said. "We have a pressure sensor, so if there's an increase in pressure we know that there's a blockage … If there's a drop in pressure, say there's a failure at the pump or a leak, then a notification will go out.

"Otherwise the farmer is notified when the set moves are complete and then gets an indication of how much water was put down and the general performance of the system."

Breakdowns happen

Because breakdowns in the field happen, Mohr said the system's built-in redundancies help the unit continue to operate even if one or more parts are lacking function.

Software on the system is cellular enabled. Mohr said HydroSide can remotely access the units to address any software issues or make upgrades or updates. There's no need for onsite visits when it comes to software.

Ag Innovation Challenge

With their unit showing great promise in the field, Mohr and his team were asking themselves, "How do we get credibility in the industry?"

"We knew it was going to be a little tricky to get our name out there," he said. "We started looking at grant opportunities, and then we started looking at competitions. Farm Bureau was the first hit."

Mohr said the team had no idea how they would fare in the competition. Previous winners had been focused on app technology and drones. He wasn't sure if HydroSide's idea was "sexy enough." Nevertheless, "We threw our name in the hat figuring we had a very practical yet innovative solution for growers."

HydroSide Systems being named the winner of the 2020 Challenge was a landmark win for Idaho and a sort of statement for the rest of the West.

"We were the only company selected [for the top 10] that was west of Missouri and there's a lot of amazing ag tech and innovative ideas in the West," Mohr said.

He said the credibility earned from the prestigious Farm Bureau award has opened important doors for the blooming enterprise and is even more valuable than the $30,000 prize winnings.

"The recognition and relationships that we've been able to build and establish as a result of this competition have far outweighed any winnings," he said. "Even if we won $100,000, the relationships are worth so much more."

HydroSide's future

The HydroSide team already has plans in place to take their invention and apply it to pivot irrigation — lateral and center pivots. The application is the same, it would just be scaled up for pivots.

"We realized we could automate [pivots] with this same power plant," Mohr said. "We crafted our patents to be able to do exactly that."

In the more near-term, HydroSide is planning a "collaborative demo days" tour of the Northwest.

HydroSide had planned a "collaborative demo days" tour of the Northwest in late spring; however, that road show has been delayed until the summer months or when the coronavirus restrictions are lifted.

For more information about HydroSide, visit www.hydroside.com or send an email to dana@hydroside.com. ■

Photo by Bill Schaefer

Jeff Stark, right, speaks with Randy Thomas of Blackfoot during the 2020 Idaho Potato Conference in Pocatello in January. Stark, who retired in January, oversaw the release of more than 20 new potato varieties during his time as director of the University of Idaho's Potato Variety Development Program.

Potato researcher ends career with one more new variety

By Bill Schaefer
For Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Jeff Stark's retirement plans would just have to wait. With only two and a half weeks until his retirement, Stark was busy completing all the necessary paperwork for the release of the Galena Russet, a new potato variety.

Stark had been the director of the University of Idaho's Potato Variety Development Program since 2006 and he estimated that the Galena Russet was the 22nd or 23rd variety released during that time.

With his retirement on Jan. 24, this would be the capstone to his career.

Stark came to Idaho in 1981 after completing his Ph.D. in soil science at the University of California at Riverside.

He was hired to be a UI research and

extension potato specialist, but he was only a few months into that job when a position opened up for a research agronomist dealing with potatoes and small grains.

"I decided that I would throw my hat in the ring and they said, OK, we'll put you into that position as long as you help us find a replacement," Stark said. "So, I did and I guess that started my 23-year career working on management systems for potatoes and small grains."

He said his work during that time included fertility and irrigation research and "everything in between." The majority of his work was at the Aberdeen Research and Extension Center, with additional research at the Kimberly, Parma and Tetonia R&E centers.

Looking back over his 39-year career, Stark has witnessed the evolution of eastern Idaho's agricultural landscape.

"Certainly in potato agriculture, in this state and most other states I'm familiar with, the farms have gotten a lot bigger (with) a lot fewer farmers," Stark said. "And so the economics of scale have driven growers into larger scale production systems so they can utilize that equipment and spread it across a larger operation."

Stark said that as the farms grew larger, the interaction between researchers and potato growers changed.

"Back in the early '80s I think there was a lot more direct contact between the growers (and) university researchers and extension specialists," he said. "Now we tend to deal more with the farm managers, the foremen, that manage certain parts of the farm. That's one of the things that's changed a lot."

In 2005, Stark accepted the opportunity to become director of the PVDP.

The last 15 years he has worked closely with members of the USDA program at Aberdeen as well as members of the tri-state potato breeding program, which includes researchers in Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

He spoke with a sense of accomplishment when discussing the varieties developed during the past 15 years through this team of researchers; however, he acknowledged that it can be difficult to persuade growers and processors to switch to newer varieties.

Photo by Bill Schaefer

R.J. Andrus, right, talks with Jeff Stark during the 2020 Idaho Potato Conference in Pocatello in January. Stark, who retired in January, oversaw the release of more than 20 new potato varieties during his time as director of the University of Idaho's Potato Variety Development Program.

"I have a little bit of a bias now working on the PVDP with these new varieties," he said. "There's a lot of these new varieties that have a lot of attributes that are so much better than the old, standard varieties but we've built the industry on these standard varieties. I don't know that there are very many crop industries, certainly in the United States, that are more tradition based than the potato industry in Idaho because the industry was built on the Russet Burbank potato."

Stark cited a number of varieties that have come through the Idaho program that have shown great potential return for growers and processors.

"Varieties like Ranger Russet and Alturas and Umatilla Russet have come on board and now Clearwater Russet have come on board and added quite a bit to the potential return for growers and processors," he said. "But I think that there's a lot of potential there in the potato breeding arena for improvement. I think as we move into new breeding technologies that make the whole program more efficient and more directed to address particular deficiencies, particular genotypes, I think those will be areas that could be major advances."

Stark was non-committal about any future work with the potato industry but he didn't rule out the likelihood that one might run into him at future field days or research trials.

Should he decide to take on any consulting work, it will probably be on part-time, short-term assignments, he said.

Phil Nolte, a seed potato specialist, worked with Stark from 1991 until Nolte's retirement in 2015.

"He's an excellent leader. He's the kind of person who has that authoritative air to him and you just sort of naturally listen when he starts talking. He is a consummate professional," Nolte said.

"He cares deeply about the program, he gave everything he had for it," said Jeanne Debons, executive director of the Potato Variety Management Institute, which serves as the promotion and marketing arm for the tri-state potato variety program and collects licensing fees and

See **STARK**, page 33

By Clark Johnston
Owner JC Management Co.

This is the year to put on your marketing hat

The wheat and barley crop in Idaho is in good condition.

The dry farm wheat in southern Idaho received much needed rain the first part of June that relieved some of the drought conditions on the crop. It doesn't look as though the dryland wheat will produce a bumper crop but it will be considerably better that it looked earlier.

The futures markets continued their trend lower into the last part of June, giving producers little to smile about. The news out of China is that although the wheat crop won't be as large as 2019 it will be a very good crop.

The Chinese government has announced that it will be buying wheat from its producers to increase the amount in the government reserves. This doesn't bode well for those that have been thinking we just need to sell wheat to China to correct this market.

In the WASDE report for June, USDA reported the lowest total wheat stocks for the US in the past six years but also reported higher total world stocks. This, along with estimates of total corn stocks at 16 billion bushels, could keep pressure on the corn market, thus pressuring wheat as well.

There are a couple of bright spots in the market that could give us a boost. The first is that ethanol production has the potential to increase back to normal levels as people once again get out and drive, pushing demand higher. The other is that WASDE lowered total corn stocks in the world.

Domestic flour mills currently have good run times and are producing flour. The challenge is that they had a backlog of wheat that still needs to be delivered, pushing old crop contracts into the new crop months.

This should correct itself as we move into September and the fourth quarter of the year. We have seen the basis for hard white strengthen over the past few weeks, giving producers an opportunity to enter into basis-only contracts for fourth-quarter delivery.

In the Portland market, the bids for protein wheat continue to converge between old and new crop deliveries. The basis for soft white continues to move closer to 100 over once again.

The market was there this spring before backing off. In this market, a basis of 100 over is usually a good level to contract wheat. This can be done with either a cash-bid contract or a basis-only contract where you then lock in the futures side of the cash price at a later date.

In the feeder cattle market, we see the October contract has strengthened considerably off of the low this spring. However, it still isn't trading at a level that excites much interest in contracting calves for this fall.

As we look at the futures market for feeders, it is fairly flat through the first quarter of next year. This doesn't give producers much of an incentive to keep calves over into 2021.

Producers will need to keep a very close eye on this market for opportunities to contract into the feedlots as they look to increase their inventories this fall. With the corn market at the current levels, we could see feeders increase their inventories back to pre-virus levels.

This year is shaping up to be a good and challenging year all at the same time. Most of you are producers at heart. This is OK, you are doing what you love to do.

However, this is shaping up to be the year when you need to put on your marketing hat and work at studying and learning the markets on a daily basis. I don't mean all day every day but at least some time every day.

This year, especially in the wheat markets, we could very well see the market move quickly to levels that are good, then the demand is filled and the market moves just as quickly back down or even the buyers exit the market as we have seen with the flour mills over the past couple of years.

As we have all seen, if you take the time to think about it, the demand has been filled by someone else and that particular market is gone.

The decision as to how and when to market your wheat needs to be made ahead of time and then stick with your decision. By doing so you won't find yourself on the outside looking in as the marketing year progresses.

Clark Johnston is a grain marketing specialist and owner of JC Management Co. of Ogden, Utah. He can be reached at clark@jcmanagement.net. ■

Photo by Sean Ellis

Retiring Idaho Wheat Commission Executive Director Blaine Jacobson is shown here in the IWC building in Boise.

Jacobson retires as executive director of Idaho Wheat Commission

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE — Idaho's wheat industry is losing one of its biggest assets as Blaine Jacobson retires after 18 years as executive director of the Idaho Wheat Commission.

"Working in the wheat industry for 18 years has been a great ride," said Jacobson, who grew up on a wheat farm in Bonneville County. "Our wheat growers are wonderful people to work with and the wheat industry is a dynamic part of Idaho's economy. It's been a great honor to work with the growers."

Industry leaders say they are confident his replacement, Casey Chumrau, will do an excellent job but they say there is no doubt that Jacobson's vast institutional knowledge about the Idaho and U.S. wheat industry will be sorely missed.

Clark Hamilton, an IWC commissioner and wheat farmer from East Idaho, said it's hard to put into words what Jacobson has meant to the state's wheat industry over the years.

"Blaine has been a solid, solid anchor for the wheat commission," he said. "Blaine is so well educated when it

comes to the wheat industry, from start to finish. He had a passion for the job."

Hamilton said Jacobson understood a lot about agronomics as well as marketing, export markets and research.

"He was well educated in all of those areas and he gave it his all," he said. "He had a passion for the position and the industry benefited because of that."

Wheat is grown in 42 of Idaho's 44 counties and ranks as the state's No. 2 crop in terms of farm-gate receipts. Idaho typically leads the nation in average yields per acre and ranks between fifth and seventh in total wheat production.

Soft white wheat produced in Idaho is preferred by many domestic mills and export customers because of its consistent quality and Idaho now ranks among the top three states in organic wheat production.

Besides being an effective administrator, Jacobson "has an incredible understanding of both the uses of all the classes of Idaho wheat and their markets," said "Genesee" Joe Anderson, an IWC commission and North Idaho wheat farmer.

"Half of Idaho's wheat is sold domestically and half is exported," Anderson said. "Blaine's had a great ability to mix and manage his time promoting both the export markets and the domestic markets and carry out the commission's mission of research, education and marketing. He's been very focused on the mission."

The IWC is funded by an assessment fee paid by Idaho wheat farmers and promotes and markets Idaho wheat, invests in research projects and educates growers.

During his tenure at the helm of the wheat commission, Jacobson helped renegotiate an agreement with University of Idaho on royalties from the sale of wheat seeds developed by UI researchers with the assistance of wheat grower money. That resulted in more of the royalty money going back into actual wheat research at the university.

He also oversaw a three-way partnership between the commission, Limagrain and UI, and has hosted four to six trade missions each year from other countries.

Shortly after taking over as executive director, Jacobson championed the purchase of an office building near the capitol building in Boise that houses several ag groups that represent a variety of Idaho ag commodities, including wheat, barley, milk, dry beans and wine.

That building's central location has enabled different commodity groups to work closer together on many issues important to the state's overall farming and ranching industry.

The building has "been a tremendous resource for not only wheat growers but for other ag organizations such as Food Producers of Idaho to meet there and use it as a staging place to go over to the capitol," said North Idaho farmer Bill Flory, an IWC commissioner. "It's provided great utility for growers coming to town as well as the agricultural industry to meet there."

Despite these accomplishments, Jacobson said the thing he will miss the most is the people involved with the industry.

"I'll miss working with the wonderful people in the industry – the growers, the customers, the millers, the researchers, the trade teams that come to Idaho," he said.

He said he will look for opportunities to stay involved in the industry and help out where he can.

Flory said Jacobson's willingness to help out even after retirement speaks volumes about his commitment to the industry.

"His level of commitment to the industry was, and remains, at a high level," Flory said. "It was never about the time clock for Blaine. He has a high regard for growers and the contributions they make in the form of checkoff dollars." ■

STARK

Continued from page 30

royalty payments for its potato varieties.

"I think he'll be remembered as an excellent contributor to potato variety research," Debons said. "I will miss him. He has a wicked sense of humor that not everyone saw."

Stark was reluctant to project what the future might hold for potato research and development, recalling someone working for a local processor in Shelley in 1981 predicted that they wouldn't be growing potatoes in eastern Idaho in five to ten years because of the distance to market.

"I learned early on that trying to make predictions on the potato industry is probably a fool's errand," he said.

Stark said it was the teamwork and collaboration among researchers and industry specialists throughout his career that he will never forget.

"I enjoy working with people who enjoy working in team efforts," he said. "Because what I've observed in my career is that really anything worthwhile that lasts a long time and has a major impact is not the result of one person's efforts, it's the result of a lot of people working on a particular goal. I think when we've been successful in reaching a team goal those have been the times that I've enjoyed the most."

Stark said the success that he and the tri-state breeding program have enjoyed could not have been accomplished without the collaboration of everyone in the potato industry, from seed growers to commercial growers to packers.

"I'll also add that the industry collaborators that we've had have been key to any success that we've had," Stark said. "You have to have industry collaborators to make these things work or you're going to have a train wreck and so I've appreciated those growers and members of the processing and fresh pack industry that have been proactive enough to work with us and to try these things." ■

Chumrau takes over as director of Idaho Wheat Commission

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Photo by Sean Ellis
Casey Chumrau, the new executive director of the Idaho Wheat Commission, is shown here in the IWC building in Boise.

BOISE – The Idaho Wheat Commission's new executive director, Casey Chumrau, knows she has big shoes to fill but leaders of the state's wheat industry are confident she has the skills and experience to do that.

In January, Chumrau began working alongside Blaine Jacobson, who led the wheat commission for 18 years and retires at the end of June.

The wheat commission, which is financed by a grower assessment fee, markets and promotes Idaho wheat, funds research and educates wheat farmers.

The six-months transition period has allowed Jacobson to transfer much of his institutional knowledge about Idaho's wheat industry to Chumrau.

"It is definitely a daunting thought to have to fill Blaine's shoes," Chumrau told Idaho Farm Bureau Federation. "But we've had six months together and he's just been wonderful in trying to dump as much knowledge onto me as he can. We've been working really well together and I really appreciate all the time he's dedicated to me and my future success in this role."

Chumrau, who is originally from Montana, previously worked 8.5 years for U.S. Wheat Associates, the export market development organization for the U.S. wheat industry.

She spent four years in USWA headquarters in Arlington, Va., where she monitored global wheat market trends, produced weekly price reports and provided contract, quality specification and price assistance to wheat exporters and importers.

She then spent 4.5 years in Chile as USWA's marketing manager for South America, where she helped develop and expand export markets for all classes of U.S. wheat. During her time in that position, she also brought trade teams to Idaho.

"Casey's going to be wonderful because she has a very good background in the wheat industry," said Jacobson. "In the five months that she's been here, she has just been a quick study. She's picked up things very quickly and I think she'll move things along really well to the next level."

IWC Commissioner Bill Flory, a North Idaho wheat farmer, said Chumrau brings a wealth of experience to the commission.

"She has quite a breadth and depth of experience that she brings to the office that will benefit the entire industry," he said. "Blaine has done a phenomenal job of mentoring here and transitioning her into the position and the commissioners are dedicated to making sure she's a success."

Clark Hamilton, one of the IWC's five commissioners, said Chumrau's experience and professional skills make her more than capable of leading the commission into the future.

"I feel we're in good hands going forward and we're excited to have her," said Hamilton, an East Idaho farmer.

Chumrau said Jacobson has the commission in a good place but one of the IWC's objectives going forward is to reassess how the commission's research dollars are spent. About a third of the IWC's total $3 million annual budget goes toward research.

"We want to make sure those dollars are getting a good return on investment for the grower and that they are research projects that are going to help increase the bottom line of our growers here in Idaho," she said.

Chumrau said one of her initial goals was to go out and meet wheat farmers and other industry members in person but the COVID-19 outbreak has slowed that plan. But she said she has been welcomed warmly by the industry.

"I have been so warmly welcomed," she said. "The people have been so nice and open and absolutely wonderful and that makes me very sure that I made a good decision." ■

2021 Idaho FFA Foundation

Tractor Raffle

VISIT
www.idffafoundation.org/tractor-raffle.html
TO PREORDER YOUR TICKETS FOR THIS

2020 POLARIS RANGER 1000

with Custom Sprayer, Roof, Windshield and Light Bar!

Thank you to our Grand Prize sponsors!

DENNIS DILLON
RV • MARINE • POWERSPORTS
DDRV.COM
SINCE 1975

OPEN TRAIL
ATV & UTV ACCESSORIES

G&R Ag Products, Inc.

Classifieds

FARM EQUIPMENT

Snow 6" grain auger 50' length, electric motor 5 hp, good condition; 2 - 650 IH hoe drills 10' space; 5 saddles all sizes and age. Malad, Id. 208-479-6785 leave message.

JD 4440 tractor, PS transmission 5474 hrs. The tractor is in good condition and has good tires. Rupert, ID $20,000. Rupert, ID. Call Jim. 208-431-4123.

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

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Veterinarian mobile medical box. Fiberglass. Fits standard pick-up bed. $3,000. Boise, ID. 208-850-7466.

A U.S. Army veteran looking for a year around property caretaker position with housing/utilities and some wages in Idaho or possible Montana. Resume upon request with prior experience. 44aussiedog@outlook.com 208-358-0623.

High Volume Jack Rabbit & Ground squirrel eradication, 5000 minimum. Idaho, North Nevada, North Utah, East Oregon. Call 6-9 pm PST 208-882-8963.

Responsible retired veteran looking for varmint hunting. Wolves, coyotes, chucks, squirrels. I live near Emmett but have gun will travel. leave message 208.365.1639.

Cabin Kits for the DIY, rough-in cabin packages, pole barns, equipment sheds, carports and garages, Rough Cut lumber or beams. We have milled logs and lumber that can help you achieve your custom-built dream. Please call John 208-781-0691.

The Brady Bunch on DVD Seasons 1, 3, & 4. $10; New garden supplies: 6 1/2" zoned soil thermometer and rapitest moisture meter $10; New regular weight floating row cover 50' x 5' $10 + shipping for all items. Grangeville, Id. Kurt 208-983-0599.

REAL ESTATE/ACREAGE

13 Acres near Tetonia, Id. Perfect view of Grand Tetons. Comes with water rights. 208-390-3809.

WANTED

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

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

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

Non-commercial classified ads are free to Idaho Farm Bureau members. Must include membership number for free ad. Forty (40) words maximum. Non-member cost 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 10 for the August Quarterly.

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

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ **Membership No.** _____

Ad Copy _____

Free Classified ads for Idaho Farm Bureau Members

Send to dashton@idahofb.org

Drone puts a little fun into chores for rancher

By Dianna Troyer
For Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

To care for his cattle, rancher Brian Kincade relies on an uncomplaining personal assistant that is attentive and follows orders immediately.

With its acute airborne electronic eyes, his DJI Mavic Pro drone transmits indispensable data to his cell phone.

The bird's eye view helps him prioritize chores and deal with calving, maintaining fences, and keeping water troughs full at Kincade Ranch near Elba in southeastern Idaho.

"It's another tool to use and puts a little fun into a day's work," Kincade said.

He bought the drone in the fall of 2017 at Costco.

"It was compact and durable and had an affordable price of about $1,000," he said. "It's not the most expensive model that has infrared vision to see at night."

Since he started flying a drone, friends and neighbors watched to see whether his investment would pay off. Convinced, they bought one, too.

"I've helped some others out, so the drone has made life easier for all of us," Kincade said.

During calving season from January to May, the drone makes it easy for Kincade to monitor cows giving birth in hard-to-access areas of pastures.

"Some like to calve in the clumps of willows along the creek," he said. "I can zoom in and see a cow's ear tag and know her history and whether she's had trouble calving before."

Kincade said learning to fly the Mavic was fairly easy. He became registered to pilot it by correctly answering a short series of safety questions.

"You had to pass the test before the software would allow you to fly it," he said.

Submitted photo

Brian Kincade flies his drone to check on cows during calving season.

The drone must remain in the pilot's line of sight and cannot fly above 400 feet or in restricted airspace.

He taught himself to fly it by reading a brief instruction manual and watching classes on the internet.

"I call it You Tube University," he said, grinning. "You can learn just about anything there. The software is pretty sophisticated, so it almost flies by itself."

To begin a flight, he clicks its propellers into place and slides his cell phone into the control module. It whirs to life on the ground. Toggling joysticks, he makes it hover and go straight up.

Set to a regular mode, it automatically avoids objects. It is also programmed to return to its launch site if its battery is running low. If it does go down, its location can be traced.

Once clear of obstacles and buildings, he sets it on a sport mode speed of about 40 miles an hour. Looking at his phone screen, arrows show the direction the drone is moving, so he knows where to guide it.

"I want to get it out there and back before a battery gets low," he said. "Each battery lasts about 21 minutes, so I always carry two extras when I'm out."

The drone proved its worth shortly after Kincade bought it. It not only showed him what water troughs needed to be filled, it helped him herd his cattle.

"It sounds like a hive of bees, which can get them moving," he said, laughing. "I flew it low enough to bring them off a ledge and down into the canyon where I was riding my horse, so I could move them to where they needed to be."

Since then, most of his cows have become accustomed to the Mavic's sound and just look at it.

"I haven't had any trouble with it," he said. "Considering how much I use it, it's lasted a long time." ■

Photo courtesy of UBC

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game counts Yellowstone cutthroat trout at its weir upstream of the Upper Blackfoot Reservoir. The count confirmed 1,300 mature cutthroat this spring.

Stream projects done in partnership with ranchers help trout rebound

By John O'Connell
Intermountain Farm and Ranch

SODA SPRINGS — Regional fishery experts believe stream restoration projects done in partnership with cattle ranchers have helped make this spring one of the best on record for the Upper Blackfoot River's migrating cutthroat trout.

For several years, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game has counted cutthroat trout making their spring migration to spawn in tributaries at the headwaters of the Blackfoot River.

During a four-week period this spring, IDFG counted more than 1,300 mature trout trapped at a weir upstream of Blackfoot Reservoir, marking the second highest total since 2001. The count dipped to just 16 fish in 2005, followed by 19 fish in 2006. Both were dry years.

"Because each mature female trout carries roughly 1,500 eggs, the annual migration is a major driver of fish abundance in this historic cutthroat stronghold," said Arnie Brimmer, IDFG regional fishery biologist.

Fishery experts acknowledge recent good water years have played a significant role in the trout rebound. But they also give credit to a collaboration of mining companies and conservation groups that has worked closely with Caribou County ranchers, called the Upper Blackfoot Confluence.

"This year's spawning run is great news for anglers," said Warren Colyer, with Trout

Photo courtesy of UBC

A Yellowstone cutthroat trout is taken from the Upper Blackfoot River and counted. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is encouraged that more than 1,300 mature trout were counted at the weir above Blackfoot Reservoir this spring.

Unlimited. "It is also a big boost for landowners, companies, agencies and citizen groups who have worked for years to improve fish habitat in the Upper Blackfoot."

UBC was founded in 2011 and includes representation from Bayer U.S., J.R. Simplot Co., Nutrien, Trout Unlimited and Idaho Conservation League.

The mining companies have contributed more than $1.9 million toward Upper Blackfoot habitat projects, with state, federal and private sources contributing another $1.7 million in grants.

The collaboration has implemented about 15 projects to date and plans to invest more than $220,000 on four additional projects this year.

"I think (the recent trout count) is a first indication that the projects are helping," said Jason Beck, IDFG regional wildlife habitat biologist. "We've had other good water years that weren't this high in the counts. It's still early to see a lot of responses, but we've been doing collaborations in there for almost a decade and they're really coming to a head right now."

Will Whelan, who is UBC's facilitator, said a 2018 project to restore the lower reach of a major tributary, Sheep Creek, resulted in a doubling of cutthroat nests, known as redds, during the following year.

Whelan said participating ranchers, including families involved in Bear Lake Grazing Co., have also reaped benefits, such as upgraded water diversions.

Another major project, implemented last spring, entailed UBC paying for the installation of cattle fencing within IDFG's 2,500-acre Blackfoot River Wildlife Management Area.

From June through early July, the Bear Lake Grazing Co. moves between 1,000 and 2,000 head of cattle from range near the tributaries to the wildlife management area. Beck explained the timeframe is cutthroat spawning season, when sediment from grazing cattle tends to bury or displace trout eggs.

"We haven't looked directly at the eggs, but we've seen a dramatic decrease in sediment in those streams," Beck said.

Beck said the partners work to provide the ranchers access to a greater amount of forage at the wildlife management area than they would otherwise receive to incentivize participation.

Beck believes the arrangement has also resulted in ecological benefits for the wildlife management area, half of which is grazed. The other half is left untouched to retain cover for nesting birds.

Beck said cattle in the grazed portion clear away old vegetation, causing grass to come back greener later in the year. The availability of verdant vegetation in the late summer is good for both elk and birds, Beck said.

"(The ranchers) have been really impressed with the response of the wildlife management area to their grazing," Beck said.

Whelan said the 2020 UBC projects include a second year of moving cattle from the tributaries to the wildlife management area, restoring a channel of Chippy Creek, relocating a portion of Diamond Creek Road that frequently washes out and working with Bear Lake Grazing Co. on adding new fencing along Sheep Creek to further aid in restoration.

"This is a great place to invest, but it's going to take time," Whelan said. "It's been a patient, long-term focus by this collaborative group. After putting in this work, it's been great news to see the (trout) numbers rebound." ■

Ford

Go Further

For details, go to
www.idahofbstore.com

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

*Farm Bureau Bonus Cash is exclusively for active Farm Bureau members who are residents of the United States. This incentive is not available on Mustang Shelby GT350®, Mustang Shelby® GT350R, Mustang Shelby® GT500®, Ford GT, F-150 Raptor, Bronco and Mustang Mach-E. This offer may not be used in conjunction with most other Ford Motor Company private incentives or AXZD-Plans. Some customer and purchase eligibility restrictions apply. Must be a Farm Bureau member for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase and take new retail delivery from an authorized Ford Dealer's stock by 1/4/21. Visit FordFarmBureauAdvantage.com or see your authorized Ford Dealer for qualifications and complete details. Note to dealer: Claim in VINCENT using #37408.