

GEM
STATE **Producer** Idaho Farm Bureau.

April 2023 • Volume 27 Issue 3

Raising
Ostriches
in Idaho

**Economic
Impact of
Potatoes, 3**

**Insect
Program, 8**

**Ag Summit
Awards, 36**





More than \$1 million invested in innovative ag businesses

Innovation drives agriculture forward. From the first iron plow, developed nearly 200 years ago, to the driverless tractors of today, farm tools are ever changing to ensure farmers and ranchers can fulfill our mission to feed and fuel our nation and beyond.

But we wouldn't have those tools without innovative businesses cropping up in rural America. That's why 10 years ago, Farm

Bureau started the Ag Innovation Challenge to help these businesses grow and thrive.

Thanks to our partnership with Farm Credit and the support of our sponsors, we have invested more than \$1 million in ag businesses over the last decade.

That's \$1 million to the businesses who are investing all their energy into finding solutions to agriculture's greatest challenges.

See **DUVALL**, page 6

The President's Desk

By **Bryan Searle**

President, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



New Spud Nation report shows impact of potatoes

Potatoes play a big role in the American diet. That's probably no big surprise to anyone.

What may be surprising to many people is the role that spuds play in the American economy.

A new, first-of-its kind report by the National Potato Council found that potatoes contributed \$101 billion to the U.S. economy in 2021.

The "Spud Nation" report also found that the domestic potato industry is responsible for

an estimated 714,000 jobs in the United States and annual wages of about \$34 billion.

[See page 3 for a story on this report.]

That \$101 billion number is huge and probably came as a surprise to most people, even those of us involved in Idaho's potato industry.

But it's also a very reasonable number when you think about it. The report considered the direct and indirect impacts of the potato. From farm to fork, if you will.

For example, the direct impacts, valued at

See **SEARLE**, page 6

Inside Farm Bureau

By **Zak Miller**

CEO, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



Give and take

It is given that farmers and ranchers are price takers on both sides of the ledger. A farmer takes the price offered and accepts the cost given to produce.

Of course, this is a general explanation that production agriculture is a TAKE proposition.

After pricing, consider all the other TAKES a farmer must accept: nature, labor, logistics, inputs, regulation, politics, alternate land uses, and the list continues.

To be a farmer or rancher, one must accept that they will be a TAKER in most aspects.

Following that beautiful reality, a fair question is what real control does a farmer or rancher have? In my opinion, it is only one thing: their GIVE. In this context, GIVE does not mean flex, bend, or abuse endured, although those all play into it.

GIVE, in this sense, is how much effort, heart, mind, body, and soul someone is willing to contribute to be successful. In very simplistic terms, the amount a GIVE is all a farmer has to offer for their success.

See **MILLER**, page 7



Idaho Farm Bureau

Volume 27, Issue 3
IFBF Officers

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dan Garner Clifton
Austin Tubbs Malad
Jason Fellows Weston
Scott Steele Idaho Falls
Doug Barrie Idaho Falls
Travis McAfee Howe
Darren Taber Shoshone
Rick Pearson Hagerman
Rick Brune Hazelton
Cody Chandler Weiser
Galen Lee New Plymouth
Matt Dorsey Caldwell
Marjorie French..... Princeton
Tom Daniel Bonners Ferry
Tom Mosman Craigmont
Ray Searle Shelley

STAFF

Executive Assistant Cara Dyer
VP of Operations Justin Patten
Operations Assistant Elly MacDonald
Director of Finance & Systems Tyler Moore
YF&R-P&E Manager Ott Clark
VP of Member Relations & Commodities..... Brody Miller
Dist. I Regional Manager Vacant
Dist. II Regional Manager Camron Hammond
Dist. III Regional Manager Zack Lanier
Dist. IV Regional Manager Vacant
Dist. V Regional Manager Bob Smathers
Boise Office Manager Quinne Russell
VP of Governmental Affairs Russ Hendricks
Director of Government Affairs Braden Jensen
Governmental Affairs Manager Chyla Wilson
VP of Information Joel Benson
Project Manager Kristy Lindauer
Director of Publications Sean Ellis
Videographer Jacob Christensen
Broadcast Manager James Gallacci
Social Media Coordinator..... Saydee Longhurst
Director of Member Benefits..... Betty Inskip

Printed by: Adams Publishing Group, Pocatello, ID

GEM STATE PRODUCER

USPS #015-024, is published monthly except the four months the Quarterly runs by the IDAHO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION, 275 Tierra Vista Drive, Pocatello, ID 83201.

POSTMASTER send changes of address to: GEM STATE PRODUCER

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

MAGAZINE CONTACTS:

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



Photos by Sean Ellis

Potatoes are harvested in a Bingham County field in this Idaho Farm Bureau Federation file photo. According to a recent study, potatoes have a \$101 billion impact on the nation's economy.

Report: potatoes have massive impact on U.S. economy

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – A newly released report shows the potato industry has a massive impact on the U.S. economy.

The National Potato Council's "Spud Nation" report found the U.S. potato sector contributed an estimated \$101 billion to the nation's economy in 2021.

It also found that the nation's potato sector generates an estimated 714,000 jobs in the United States and annual wages of about \$34 billion.

"America's most consumed vegetable is potatoes" and spuds "are incredibly important to rural communities and the country as a whole," said NPC President RJ Andrus, a third-generation Idaho potato farmer and an owner of TBR Farms in Hamer.

Andrus said the report, released Feb. 28, is groundbreaking because it marks the first time any organization has measured and reported on the national economic impact of potatoes.

"We're incredibly excited about the information contained in this report," said National Potato Council CEO Kam Quarles.

The report, "Measuring the Economic Significance of the U.S. Potato Industry," looked at the direct as well as indirect contributions of the potato sector.

For example, it found that agriculture production and agribusiness services, which are direct impacts, contributed \$10.8 billion to the U.S. economy.

See POTATOES, page 11

COVER: See page 12 for a story about a ranch in southwestern Idaho that is raising ostriches. Photo by Sean Ellis



Photo by Sean Ellis

U.S. dairy exports reached a record level for value and volume in 2022.

U.S. dairy exports set a record for value, volume

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – U.S. dairy exports hit another record level in 2022, for both volume and value.

That's good news for Idaho's dairy industry, the state's top agricultural commodity in terms of total farm-gate revenue.

It's also good news for the state's overall economy since, according to the U.S. Dairy Export Council, Idaho's dairy industry has a \$9 billion economic impact on the state and supports more than \$400 million in total wages.

According to USDEC, total export value for U.S. milk products

reached a record \$9.6 billion in 2022, a 25 percent increase over 2021. This was the first time U.S. dairy exports crossed the \$9 billion threshold.

Total U.S. dairy product export volume, on a milk-solids equivalent, reached 2.4 million metric tons in 2022, which was also a record and 5 percent higher than the 2021 total.

Last year was the third straight record year for U.S. dairy export volume and the second straight record year for total export value.

“We are excited to be able to keep setting records in both volume and

value,” USDEC President and CEO Krysta Harden told Idaho Farm Bureau Federation during a video conference.

She said last year’s record export growth occurred despite some of the strongest dairy export headwinds the industry has ever seen, including slowing economic growth, historic global inflation, ongoing supply chain issues, and severely reduced demand from China.

According to USDEC, total export volume of U.S. dairy products last year was equivalent to 18 percent of all the milk produced in the United States, which was also an all-time high.

Growth in the export market continues to outpace domestic demand for U.S. dairy products.

U.S. dairy exports have grown more than domestic sales, percentage-wise, five out of the last six years.

“We continue to see the growth outside of the country,” Harden said.

A lot of that export growth is occurring in Asia, particularly southeast Asia.

While Americans already incorporate dairy into their diet in a lot of different ways, much of the population in the southeast Asian countries is still learning about dairy and while those nations have some milk production, it’s not enough to feed the growing demand, Harden said.

“They are also going to need other sources,” she said. “We want to be that source of choice. We want to be that reliable, high-quality, high-value source.”

While global demand for dairy products is growing, Harden said, the United States dairy industry’s two main competitors,

the European Union and New Zealand, are facing challenging supply outlooks as well as government policies limiting their capacity to grow.

“We’re kind of in this perfect situation coming where our biggest competitors have limitations that we really don’t have,” she said. “We still do have a robust support for agriculture in our country. Our farmers are getting more and more sustainable, and they are doing this the right way, which will put us I believe at the top of the heap in the short term.”

Dairymen’s Association.

“It’s definitely good news for a state like Idaho that makes so many milk ingredients that are exported,” he said.

While dairy export growth is good news for the U.S. and Idaho dairy industry, he added, current farm-level dairy prices are not doing so well right now.

Farm-level milk prices in Idaho and the U.S. reached record levels last year but prices on the futures market are currently below the cost of production.

At the same time, dairy production expenses remain at record levels.

“All of these inflationary costs are hitting the bottom line now,” Naerebout said. “We’ve never seen our costs this high. It’s astounding.”

Idaho dairy producers need to make about \$21 to \$22 per hundred pounds of production to break even right now.

“There are a lot of \$17s and \$18s on the futures board right now,” Naerebout said.

Depending on how the year plays out, that could amount to some significant losses for

Idaho dairymen, he said.

“It’s a little bit scary what might transpire if we see those significant losses play out throughout the year,” Naerebout said.

If those losses do play out, Idaho dairymen will lose a significant amount of money this year and the end result will be more consolidation in the industry, he said.

“We will still have a healthy dairy industry in Idaho, we’ll just have fewer dairymen be a part of it,” Naerebout said. ■

U.S. DAIRY EXPORTS, TOP MARKETS BY VALUE

2022, million \$

	2022	vs. prior year
Mexico	\$2,453	+37%
Southeast Asia	1,677	+22%
Canada	1,096	+19%
China	802	+14%
South Korea	569	+34%
South America	546	+24%
Japan	520	+39%
MENA	433	+2%
Central America	415	+46%
Caribbean	326	+32%
Australia-New Zealand	321	+16%

Source: U.S. Dairy Export Council, Trade Data Monitor

U.S. cheese exports rose 12 percent in volume in 2022, hitting a record 451,000 metric tons, which is good news for Idaho since most of the 13 billion pounds of milk produced in the state each year is used to make cheese.

Idaho ranked No. 3 in the U.S. last year in total milk production and the record export numbers certainly are welcome news since the vast majority of dairy products produced in Idaho are exported, said Rick Naerebout, executive director of the Idaho

Continued from page 2

While we all know that funding is key to any business, especially in its early stages, our recent winners say it's the competitive experience and relationship-building that has been critical to their success as well.

Hydroside, the 2020 Challenge winner, credits the competition with transforming their business from a "fledgling startup" to a "focused company with a mission."

That's the first thing co-founder and CEO Dana Mohr had to say about the impact of the Challenge.

Hydroside, like many other Challenge competitors, found great value in the application process, long before their journey to center stage at the American Farm Bureau Annual Convention.

That might surprise you, but what we heard from them and other competitors, is that the creativity, market analysis and vision that the competition demands provides a solid footing for future success.

I hope that encourages any entrepreneurs reading to apply!

The Ag Innovation Challenge is meant to be more than a competition; we want entrepreneurs to have access to the tools and network they need to grow.

You can't put a price tag on those relationships either.

According to Mohr, that networking gave Hydroside a real boost: "The relationships that we established while competing, both with the fellow competitors and industry players, set us up with the initial connections that companies usually dream of after years in business."

The 2023 Challenge winner, Will Walls of NORDEF, agrees: "The relationships, the networking, has been wonderful. And we've gotten to meet a lot of great people who have only validated our idea and our business model."

The Challenge also provides these startups with much needed

'The Ag Innovation Challenge is meant to be more than a competition; we want entrepreneurs to have access to the tools and network they need to grow.'

exposure—a benefit to them and the farmers and ranchers they're marketing to.

We purposely set up the final judging round of the competition on our trade show floor to give our members a chance to hear directly from these businesses and learn how their innovations can directly help their farm or ranch.

That exposure is the first thing that our recent winner noted, in fact. According to Walls, "Just the awareness of our product and that we exist. That's been wonderful."

At Farm Bureau, we want as many farmers and ranchers to know about these businesses as possible, whether that be innovative technology like NORDEF, producing diesel exhaust fluid at the point of use, or runners-up like EmGenisys Inc. offering a non-invasive solution to improve pregnancy outcomes of assisted reproductive techniques in livestock.

We know that their success can mean success for the farmers and ranchers they serve. I hope you'll check out fb.org/challenge to learn more about this competition.

If you have an innovative ag business, or know about one that should apply, applications for the 2024 Ag Innovation Challenge are now open and will close on May 12.

I cannot wait to see the next crop of businesses that are cultivated through this year's Challenge, or how the last decade of investments continue to reap benefits for America's farmers and ranchers for years to come. ■

Continued from page 2

\$10.8 billion, included the farm-level economic impacts of potato production – the actual growing of spuds and all of the inputs that go into that process.

The indirect impacts included things like the transportation and processing of spuds, which was valued at \$49.1 billion, as well as wholesale and retail activity associated with spud products, which was valued at \$41 billion.

When you consider all aspects associated with the most consumed vegetable in the United States, that \$101 billion number

makes sense.

By the way, spuds and potatoes are the same thing.

A few years back as American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall, from Georgia, spent some time visiting different parts of Idaho, he noticed I used the word potatoes one time, then spuds another time.

He asked me, "Bryan what's the difference between spuds and potatoes?" and I said, Nothing, they're the same. Potatoes have earned many respected names, including spuds and taters.

The NPC report didn't break that data

down to the state level, but since Idaho produces about a third of the nation's annual potato crop, one could rightfully assume that roughly one-third of that economic impact could be traced to Idaho.

Idaho, a state with potatoes on its license plates, is known far and wide as the potato state and for good reason.

In fact, Idaho, which ranks No. 1 in the U.S. in total spud production, is known more for potatoes than any state is known for anything else.

That didn't happen by accident.

We have the right soil, water, climate, processing facilities, and best farmers to

‘Many people associate Idaho products with quality and that can be attributed in part to the reputation that Idaho potatoes enjoy around the globe.’

accomplish this. Growers pay an assessment on their total potato production – up to \$70 an acre – and that money is pooled together and used to promote the Idaho potato.

The state’s spud farmers have for many decades produced a large chunk of the

potatoes that Americans consume in the form of baked and fried potatoes, French fries, chips, hash browns and many more products.

One nice thing about a potato is it helps many other farm commodities as well. A baked potato is complimented by the dairy industry’s butter and sour cream, and it compliments many dishes.

Of course, you always need those French fries with a hamburger or steak.

All Idahoans, and particularly the state’s potato farmers, should be proud of the data contained in this 15-page report.

Those of us involved in the state’s potato industry have always known that potatoes have a large impact on the economy but even we were pleasantly surprised to see just how big that impact was.

The impact that potatoes have on Idaho goes far beyond just economic terms. When people all over the United States

and the world hear the word “Idaho,” they think not just “potatoes,” but “quality potatoes.”

That reputation for producing quality potatoes has been extended to other Idaho products as well, and not just agricultural products. Many people associate Idaho products with quality and that can be attributed in part to the reputation that Idaho potatoes enjoy around the globe.

This report will only help improve the state’s reputation for producing quality products.

So, a big thank you to Idaho spud farmers and also a big thank you to the humble potato.

Idaho is proud to be a major part of Spud Nation. ■

Bryan Searle is a potato farmer from Shelley.

MILLER

Continued from page 2

I will try to explain the dance of GIVE and TAKE that occurs in agriculture with an example.

Virtually every corner of our fair state has experienced drought recently. This past fall, everyone universally hoped for a significant winter to help relieve the effects of our recent drought.

While moisture is needed, we can only TAKE what we get and how we get it. Thankfully, we have experienced an above-normal winter with moisture levels, as of this writing, above average throughout the state.

We will all gladly TAKE that, and while it may not end our water concerns, it surely helps. As wonderful as a wetter-than-normal winter is, it has also forced our ranchers to TAKE on a hard calving and lambing season.

The only recourse they had was their GIVE to protect their livestock. Many ranchers deserve a nap and dinner in town for all their night work these past months.

If we didn’t TAKE on the winter (and the snowpack it brings), we would be forced to TAKE a miserable summer with very little water.

Again, our best farmers and ranchers have been wise to GIVE their time and wisdom to put in place management tools to ensure that deep winters can mean fruitful summers.

It takes a lot of GIVE to negotiate the water management agreements necessary to build and maintain reservoirs and delivery systems to save and use our precious water when we need it the most.

Contrast Idaho’s water management with California’s – drought

‘It takes a lot of GIVE to negotiate the water management agreements necessary to build and maintain reservoirs and delivery systems to save and use our precious water when we need it the most.’

coupled with lack of proper foresight when it comes to water management has caused that state’s situation to be much worse than ours.

Californians are TAKERS of weather just like us; however, along the way, their GIVE has not been as successful or powerful to address their water needs.

Sadly, because California has not built any new water storage capacity in more than six decades, so much-needed water that is available in that state’s mountain snowpack right now will simply go out to sea.

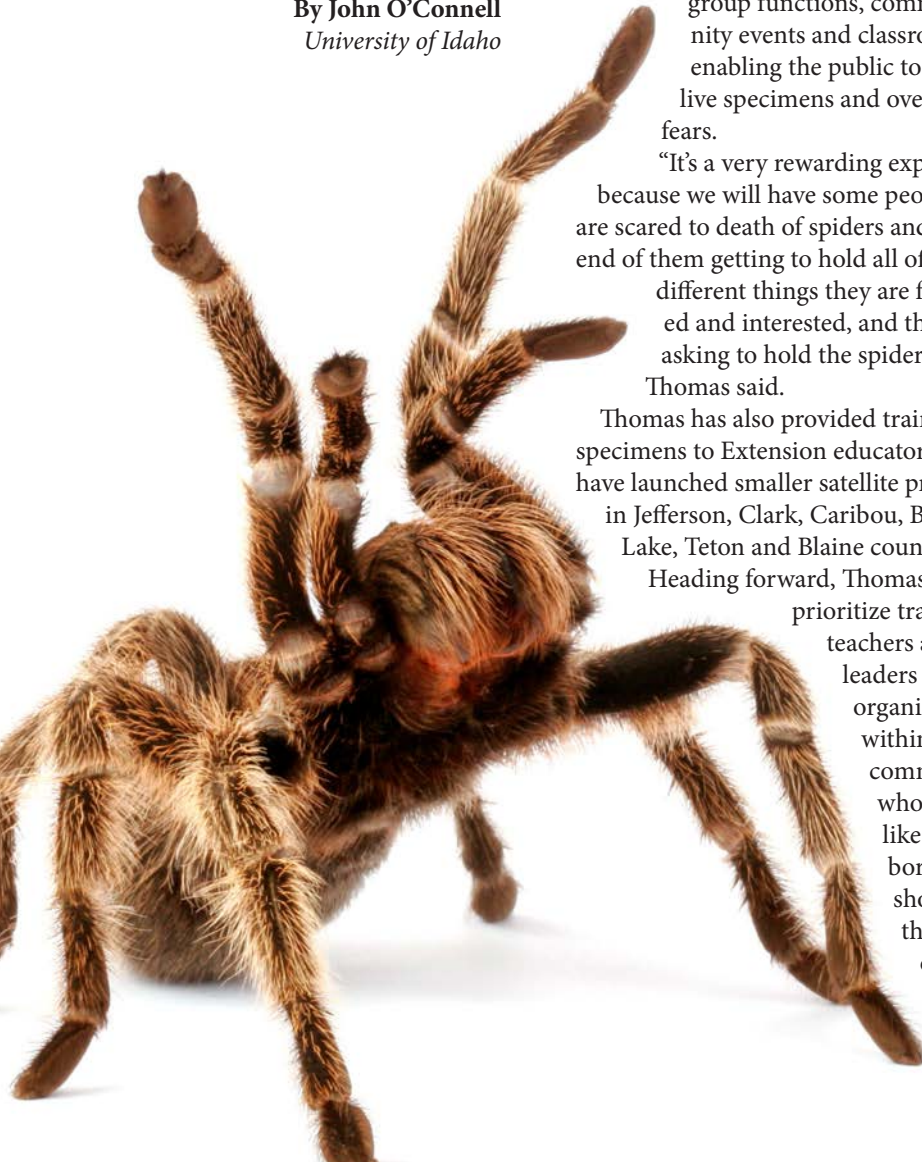
I genuinely feel for the farmers in California. There are so many TAKES forced upon them that one wonders if the state will ever find a solution to its water needs.

It takes so much GIVE to accept what Mother Nature offers. Those farmers and ranchers continually GIVING to find solutions to the TAKES placed upon them by both man and nature deserve our gratitude.

The fact that so many continue to GIVE to improve our state’s water situation should give us great pride in Idaho’s water management plan. ■

U of I program with live insects, spiders helps participants overcome fears

By John O'Connell
University of Idaho



With his live, exotic insect and arachnid collection, University of Idaho Extension educator Jason Thomas has taught thousands of Idaho children that there's nothing necessarily creepy about a cockroach, terrifying about a tarantula or repulsive about a roly-poly.

Fewer than 3% of insects and spiders are considered pests, though most people lump them all together in the creepy-crawly category.

Thomas, of Minidoka County, reasons that improving perceptions about these misunderstood arthropods is the best path toward preventing the needless spraying of creatures that appear menacing but are harmless, or even beneficial.

He's developed a hands-on program that's brought upwards of 80 different insect and spider species to 4-H group functions, community events and classrooms, enabling the public to handle live specimens and overcome fears.

"It's a very rewarding experience because we will have some people who are scared to death of spiders and by the end of them getting to hold all of these different things they are fascinated and interested, and they keep asking to hold the spiders again," Thomas said.

Thomas has also provided training and specimens to Extension educators who have launched smaller satellite programs in Jefferson, Clark, Caribou, Bear Lake, Teton and Blaine counties.

Heading forward, Thomas will prioritize training teachers and leaders of organizations within his community who would like to borrow and showcase these organisms to

learners.

"You want things that are big, exotic and different-looking," Thomas said.

Thomas has been providing opportunities for people – especially youth – to handle and interact with bugs since he first joined UI Extension in January 2018.

His early hands-on lessons featured hissing cockroaches and giant prickly stick insects, which he obtained through U of I's William F. Barr Entomological Museum.

"Initially, I was working with 4-H youth in the county. We'd always take bugs to the county fair and have a booth," Thomas said, adding that younger children are most receptive to handling insects and spiders. "And then I started getting calls from public schools in Minidoka County. Then I was getting calls from homeschool groups."

In September 2021, Thomas received an American Rescue Plan Act grant to support his 4-H efforts, which he combined with county funding to significantly grow the program.

With the funding, he significantly expanded his collection by reaching out to arthropod breeders who sell online and visiting exotic pet stores.

Giant prickly stick insects, giant African millipedes, blue feigning death beetles, pink-toe tarantulas, giant vinegaroons, wide-horn hissing roaches and dairy cow isopods have been among his greatest attractions.

The exoskeletons of the ironclad beetles in his collection are structural marvels, capable of withstanding being run over by a small car.

The grant enabled Thomas to hire high school students and others to assist in caring for the creatures and taking them out to classrooms. Cleaning cages and feeding and watering the insects and spiders required a time investment of up to eight hours per week at the height of the collection.

Thomas has also taken specimens from his collection to events and classrooms in surrounding counties, including a Bug



Photo by John O'Connell

Jason Thomas, a University of Idaho Extension entomologist from Minidoka County, holds a giant African millipede from his insect collection while a tarantula crawls along his arm.

Day event in Boise attended by more than 3,000 participants.

He hosted in-service trainings for Extension educators starting their own smaller collections.

Joseph Sagers, a UI Extension educator in Jefferson County, takes the insect and spider collection Thomas helped him start to area schools and 4-H day camps.

“A lot of times you can do presentations to some kids and it just goes over their head, but most kids remember that day a tarantula walked over their hand,” Sagers said.

Thomas breeds thousands of mealworms and cockroaches to feed his numerous predatory insects and spiders.

Under his supervision or the supervision of a trained helper, Thomas allows participants to handle the more docile creatures. He also has some insects and spiders that aren't safe to handle, such as black widows and burgundy Goliath birdeater tarantulas, which are kept inside of cages while participants view them.

“Another purpose is to get kids excited about science and STEM, and it's a great thing to study,” Thomas said.

From September 2021 to August 2022, his program reached 8,107 youth about insects and spiders. He also educated 1,977 adults about insects during that year.

During the recent Idaho Potato Conference in Pocatello, Thomas shared his insect collection with adult farmworkers attending sessions offered in Spanish.

He hopes the experience will lead them to make more informed decisions about when to apply pesticides.

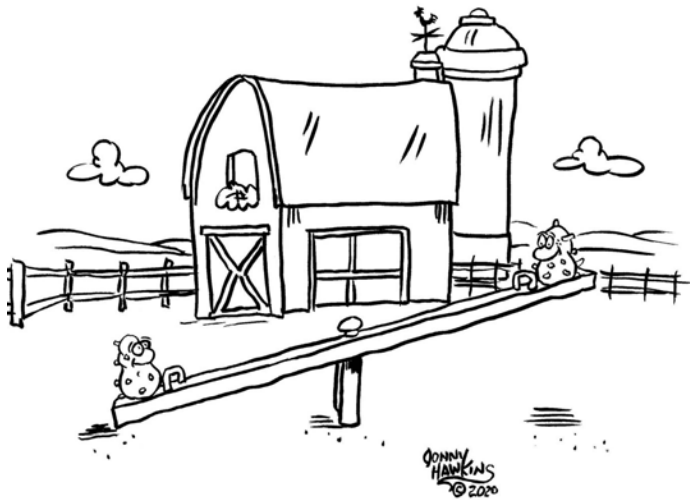
Now that the grant has ended, Thomas no longer has access to program staff. He's scaled back his collection to where it takes him no more than an hour per week to care for all of his insects and spiders.

“We're continuing it, just not at the pace we were before,” Thomas said.

Those interested in learning more about using insects, spiders or other arthropods for education can reach out to Thomas at jasant@uidaho.edu to learn more. ■

Country Chuckles

By Jonny Hawkins

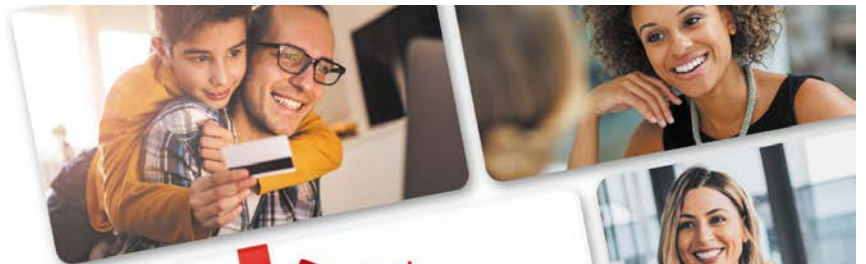


Tater Totter



“...And that’s 350 eyes and one big neigh.”

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



Get **\$25**
WHEN A FRIEND YOU REFER PURCHASES A POLICY FROM US



Get **\$500**
IF YOU WIN OUR QUARTERLY DRAWING*



*You’re automatically entered into our \$500 drawing when you refer a friend, even if they don’t purchase a policy. Visit: idahofarmbureauinsurance.com/refer-a-friend-get-a-gift for complete rules and restrictions. Above left: Darla Fletcher (third from left) of Cocolalla, the winner of our 4th quarter 2022 Refer A Friend, Get A Gift \$500 drawing.

POTATOES

Continued from page 3

It also found the industry was responsible for contributing \$49.1 billion in processing, wholesaling and retail activity and another \$41 billion through food service industries and household consumption.

The report said potatoes are the most consumed vegetable by U.S. consumers.

“We’re very proud that America is a spud nation,” Quarles said. “We’re providing a lot of value for the U.S. economy.”

The analysis was authored by Michigan State University economists. Highlights and a link to the 15-page report can be found at nationalpotatocouncil.org/spudnation.

NPC represents potato growers across the United States and the report’s release coincides with the NPC’s 2023 Washington Summit, a forum in Washington, D.C., where members discuss and advocate for the policy priorities of the nation’s spud industry.

Quarles said the information contained in the report will be incredibly important “for demonstrating the importance of this industry to our nation’s economy.”

He said that when meeting with elected officials and policy makers, two of the main questions they want to know are, “Who are you and why do you matter?”

The information in the recent report “clearly defines how important the U.S. potato industry is overall,” Quarles said.

“Not only are potatoes an essential and healthy component in our diet, but now we can say unequivocally that they are vital to the American economy,” Andrus said. “Today’s report cements the fact that potatoes are America’s favorite vegetable with value.”

The report’s analysis looked at the entire U.S. potato supply chain, from agricultural production to wholesaling, processing and distribution, to consumer purchases of final products through retail channels or food service providers.

U.S. potato growers typically produce between 41-45 billion pounds of spuds per year. Idaho is the nation’s top potato-producing state and produces about a third of



Potatoes are sorted in an Eastern Idaho field in this Idaho Farm Bureau Federation file photo. A new report by the National Potato Council shows that the nation’s potato industry is responsible for an estimated 714,000 jobs in the United States.

the total U.S. potato crop.

Idaho farmers typically plant about 300,000 acres of potatoes each year.

Washington ranks No. 2 in potato production in the United States. Other major spud-producing states include Wisconsin, Oregon, North Dakota, Colorado, Minnesota, Maine, Michigan, Nebraska and California.

The report did not break data down to the state level.

According to an NPC news release, the fact that potato farm production itself contributed \$10.8 billion to the U.S. economy

underscores “the significance of largely family-owned potato farms as rural job creators and wealth generators throughout the U.S. economy.”

The report also found that export markets are an important avenue for the U.S. potato sector. About 20 percent of the spuds grown in the United States are exported, either as fresh or processed potatoes.

The United States ranks fifth in the world in total potato production, behind China, India, Russia and Ukraine. ■

Idaho has a few thousand ostriches?

By Sean Ellis
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



Curious ostriches greet visitors to American Ostrich Farms Feb. 23. Photos by Sean Ellis

KUNA – It's hard to believe at first, but there are a few thousand ostriches in Idaho.

The very large, flightless birds are being raised at American Ostrich Farms in Kuna.

"When I first looked at the job, I thought, 'There's no way there's ostriches in Idaho,'" says Sarabeth Henderson, the animal husbandry manager at the 120-acre ostrich farm.

Alas, there are. And lots of them.

AOF Founder and CEO Alex McCoy got the idea to raise ostriches while training for an Ironman triathlon in South Africa.

He tried ostrich one day to satisfy his red meat craving. He instantly fell in love with the taste and energy jolt he got from the meat.

"I ate this huge ostrich steak," says McCoy. "It tasted just like beef; it was amazing and satisfied my red meat craving ... From that moment on, I was hooked."

It didn't take long for McCoy, an Idaho native from the Wood River Valley area, to think about the possibility of raising ostriches in the Gem State.

"Long story short, I left my previous career to bring ostrich to America," he says.

He left his career in investment banking and venture capital to do just that.

In 2014, he opened the AOF ranch, which now has upward of 2,000 ostriches depending on the time of year.

McCoy says ostrich meat tastes just like beef and has similar nutrition benefits.

"This product doesn't require consumers to do a whole switch; it's not something bizarre or a new flavor profile," he says. "This is red meat that tastes just like beef. If you like beef, if you like hamburgers and steaks, you're going to like ostrich."

American Ostrich Farms sells its meat via its website – AmericanOstrichFarms.com – and their product is delivered every week, anywhere in the nation.

The primary business focus of AOF is ostrich meat, which can be thought of as red meat with wings.

"Traditionally, ostriches were raised primarily for their hides," McCoy says. "Ostrich meat recently has become more attractive as an alternative red meat."

Ostrich eggs are enormous and one of them is equivalent to about 24 chicken eggs, which they taste similar to, McCoy says. However, AOF can make more money raising each egg to adulthood than it could by selling the eggs themselves.

"It's worth a lot more to us as a real-live ostrich than as 24 chicken eggs, as awesome as that sounds," he says.

The infertile eggs are blown out and sterilized and AOF sells those as crafts.

"It's a natural thing that's shockingly large and very different from something that you might find on your bookshelf," McCoy says.

While ostriches are more commonly associated with Africa, they fare well in southern Idaho's arid desert climate.

The birds don't like humidity and they thrive here as long as they're kept dry, Henderson says.

"They are not humid-tolerant; that's why the arid environment here is so useful to them," she says. "They do really well with dry. They can do cold, as long as it's dry."

Especially during the wintertime, "It's all about keeping them dry," McCoy says. "As long as we keep them inside and give them shelter when it's raining or snowing, they're fine. By the way, ostriches love Idaho because it's dry."

Ostriches may not be able to fly but since they can

run at speeds greater than 40 mph, they are easily the fastest birds on land.

Henderson says big male ostriches weigh from 250-280 pounds, while females oftentimes are 150-175 pounds and sometimes top 200 pounds.

Henderson and McCoy describe the animals as gentle and curious.

"Their disposition is curious," McCoy says. "They are super curious, and they're very social. If one bird goes and does something, the others follow."

The birds are mostly docile and gentle but there are a few males that are on the aggressive side, which is something the farm is trying to breed out of the birds, Henderson says.

"That's the type of stuff we want to get out of our genetics," McCoy says. "For the safety of our staff, a mean ostrich is an ostrich



Sarabeth Henderson, animal husbandry manager at American Ostrich Farms in Kuna, describes ostrich habits Feb. 23. She said they are mostly docile, curious and sometimes goofy birds.



Adult ostriches can grow up to 8 feet tall and weigh up to 300 pounds.

that's going to be in the freezer soon."

Sometimes, the birds are goofy, especially when it's windy, Henderson says.

"If it gets a little windy but it's a nice day otherwise, the adults do this little happy dance," she says. "They swing around in circles with their wings up in the air. They're extremely animated, fun critters."

AOF is not conducting farm tours at this time, although it's something the business would like to do in the future, McCoy says.

"We would love to do tours in the future but we're just not set up for it yet," he says.

AOF employees 26 people and part of the draw for them is the uniqueness of the job, McCoy says.

"That's how we attract employees here," he says. "You are the most interesting person at the cocktail party. You work at an ostrich farm."

During the COVID pandemic, AOF lost access to the processing plant it was using so the farm built its own.

"So now we're a completely vertically integrated operation, from genetics research and feeding and hatching and processing to direct distribution sales to consumers," McCoy says.

American Ostrich Farms having its own processing plant has

"I'm really proud of what we've built and we're really just getting started. It's a lot more work than I thought it would be, but it's rewarding because we're the first people actually doing this."

- Alex McCoy, AOF Founder and CEO

opened up opportunities for other Idaho producers, including Boise River Lamb, a Caldwell ranch that sends its animals there.

Having the operation "helps support all of Idaho agriculture because it provides additional processing capacity that allows other producers to explore direct-to-consumer opportunities," says Boise River Lamb owner Liz Wilder. "It really opens the door for all of us to take advantage of that marketing opportunity for direct-to-consumer sales."

A baby ostrich pops out at 2-3 pounds and about a foot tall. It grows almost a foot every month and is a good 6 feet tall at six months.

Adult ostriches eat about 5 pounds of feed per day, need little water and reach a height of 7-8 feet.

Those are some of the things AOF knows about the birds. But there is a lot that it doesn't know, McCoy says.

"There is a big learning curve," he says. "Raising ostriches is not easy. This is not like raising cows or sheep where we've been doing that for millennia and people know what they're doing. With ostrich, we're writing a lot of this book ourselves."

He says there is very little research on raising ostriches commercially. "Ostriches is such a small industry that we have so much yet to learn."

There have been a lot of studies conducted about the cattle, sheep and poultry industries, Henderson says.

"In ostriches, none of that has been done, so we don't have that basis of knowledge to build from and we're really literally building it from scratch," she says.

But AOF is definitely tracking the data as it goes, Henderson adds.

"Relevant information that should get tracked is getting tracked here," she says. "That way, we can look and see the patterns and actually build manual-type information so that eventually if Alex got it in his brain to do it, we could sit down and write an ostrich manual because we'll have the data to track it."

McCoy says he has no second-guesses about his decision to leave the investment banking and venture capital world and invest his life in ostrich farming.

"I'm really proud of what we've built and we're really just getting started," he says. "It's a lot more work than I thought it would be, but it's rewarding because we're the first people actually doing this."

Henderson says the farm is looking for "bird team members" and anyone interested in working there can contact AOF through its website. ■

Study finds correlation between cognition, infant beef consumption

By John O'Connell
University of Idaho

MOSCOW, Idaho – A recently published University of Idaho study finds consuming beef during the critical first year of life strongly correlates with improved cognitive function among 3- to 5-year-olds.

The paper, “Early Life Beef Consumption Patterns Are Related to Cognitive Outcomes at 1-5 Years of Age: An Exploratory Study,” was published Oct. 26, 2022, in the scientific journal *Nutrients*.

Annie Roe, a UI Extension specialist focusing on nutrition and cognition research and an assistant professor in the Margaret Ritchie School of Family and Consumer Sciences, was the study’s principal investigator.

The research team also included the school’s director, Professor Shelley McGuire, as co-principal investigator and Victoria Wilk, a Moscow resident who worked on the project to earn a master’s thesis in family and consumer sciences and is now enrolled in medical school.

The study was funded with a \$50,000 grant from the Idaho Beef Council.

“From birth to 5 years old, what is fed is critical for brain development. There is reason to believe that what is eaten early on carries on through life,” Roe said. “There are times in brain development if we do not provide these key nutrients in the right amounts then there are deficits that can’t be overcome later in life.”

The researchers evaluated 61 children, about half of whom were 3 to 5 years old and the rest of whom were under 3.

Parents completed surveys explaining their perceptions about nutrition and the types of foods they fed their children between 6 months old and 1 year old.

The team also administered tests assessing the cognitive ability of children. They used the National Institute of Health Toolbox to assess cognition of children in the



University of Idaho photo

Research at the University of Idaho has found a link between beef consumption and improved cognition in young children.

older age group, who played five different games on an iPad.

While results were inconclusive with children under 3, the researchers found a strong correlation between beef consumption during the second six months of life and the ability to pay attention and inhibitory control – the ability to demonstrate proper responses to stimuli -- in 3- to 5-year-olds.

Consumption of the key nutrients zinc and choline was also correlated with better cognition.

The team calculated nutrient values of diets using specialized software. Because infants eat small servings, it’s crucial to feed them nutrient-dense foods.

“We were really looking at food rich in those nutrients for brain development. Beef happens to be one of those foods,” Roe said.

While the study provides Roe and her colleagues with evidence that the benefits

of feeding beef to infants warrants further research, it wasn’t designed to indicate causation.

It didn’t include a control group and socioeconomic status wasn’t factored. Other external factors, such as whether families dined together and engaged in conversations during meals, could also have influenced cognitive function.

“I’m really cautious in the conclusions of our study,” Roe said. “We’re not saying beef is the miracle developmental food everyone has to include. We’re saying beef, probably because it is rich in these nutrients that are important for early childhood development, is related to improved cognition later in life.

“I think this is the beginning of a series of studies that can help us have a bigger picture of how we should feed young children.” ■



Adobe Stock photo

Voles are causing a lot of damage to fields in the Mud Lake area of Jefferson County.

UI Extension educators seek solutions for Idaho farmers vexed by voles

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

MOSCOW, Idaho — Feb. 9, 2023 — When Idaho's vole populations spike, environmental factors and a corresponding surge in predators usually bring their numbers back into equilibrium by the following year.

In the Mud Lake area of Jefferson County, however, the mouse-like, burrowing rodents have been plaguing farmers for three consecutive seasons, with no relief in sight.

Last fall, the problem grew so acute in the rural eastern Idaho community that area farmers called an emergency meeting attended by congressional leaders, state lawmakers, regulators and University of Idaho Extension staff. Shortly after the meeting, Gov. Brad Little flew

over the area in a helicopter to survey the damage.

UI Extension experts who have been contemplating how to address the problem in Mud Lake and other pockets of the state where voles are running rampant acknowledge there's no "silver bullet" solution, but they've identified several simple practices to help growers better weather the storm.

UI Extension Educator Joseph Sagers, Jefferson County, believes it might be worthwhile for growers to consider pre-baiting. Zinc phosphide, the most used toxicant for vole control, is commonly applied to wheat, oat or millet seed and broadcast onto fields for voles to consume. Broadcasting untreated grain

seed onto fields, known as pre-baiting, aims to increase voles' appetite for the bait, thereby leading them to eat more of it when growers spread treated kernels.

Sagers also plans to host a demonstration project for area growers, setting up barn owl boxes to support predators. UI Extension Educator Jason Thomas, Minidoka County, has promoted the use of predators to control voles and has posted [free plans](#) online for farmers who would like to make their own boxes.

Sagers distributed a survey to farmers at last fall's vole meeting to assess the scope of the problem. Yield losses in the hardest-hit crop, alfalfa, averaged 27% among the survey's 30 respondents. Many farmers said they were forced to take fields out of alfalfa after only two years, rather than the five to eight years of alfalfa they expected to get.

"They had 27% yield losses. That's really bad for operations working on single-digit profit margins," Sagers said. "They've reached this critical mass in the alfalfa fields that voles are spreading out into other fields."

In potatoes, even a small amount of vole damage may cause tubers to turn green and decrease crop value. Voles have also been decimating small grains, rangeland and sugar beets.

Sagers plans to conduct another survey of area farmers to gather additional information, and he'll be working with UI Extension agricultural economist Patrick Hatzenbuehler to evaluate the economic impact of voles in the county. Sagers may also set up trail cameras in certain fields to help quantify vole numbers.

Terreton farmer Steve Shively advocates for a local disaster declaration to fund the widespread distribution of zinc phosphide bait.

"I think it's going to take a disease to get them to thin out," Shively acknowledged. "We've had to tear up some of our alfalfa just because it was chewed up too bad and too rough. We had some fields we were tilling two or three times trying to thin them out and planting winter wheat, and the voles were still in there."

Some of the same shifts in practices that have made Idaho farmers better stewards of the environment have also given voles an advantage. Throughout the past few decades, vole outbreaks have gotten worse as growers have dramatically reduced tillage to improve soil health, while also installing highly efficient sprinkler systems in fields that were formerly flood irrigated. The combination of deep, moldboard plowing and flood irrigating formerly disturbed a lot more vole habitat and subterranean dens.

"We're having alfalfa that survives longer and we're doing better with no-till, which is amazing for soil health, but as we build these efficient crop systems it's making things better for the voles," Sagers said.

In southeast Idaho and the Magic Valley, the vole population explosion started last fall, thanks to perfect habitat conditions and an abundance of grass and forage. Danielle Gunn, a UI Extension educator based at the Fort Hall Reservation, believes producers should begin gathering hard data on vole losses in support of the establishment of a vertebrate task force to help tackle the problem.

"If we can begin working more cohesively with growers and vertebrate pest specialists, we can compile vole-loss statistics, track populations by year and develop additional solutions to this



University of Idaho photo

Vole damage in a field in the Mud Lake area.

significant problem," Gunn said.

Gunn's primary advice to growers for the time being is to carefully follow product labels when deploying vole-control toxicants, making sure to use bait at the proper timing. For example, voles prefer to eat surrounding vegetation and ignore bait when stubble height in fields is greater than 2 inches.

In addition to modern tillage and irrigation practices, Gunn believes the proliferation of cover crops, development pressure, land conservation programs and the shift toward mild, open winters and wet springs and falls due to climate change have contributed to worse vole outbreaks. Typically, vole populations experience a minor peak every four to six years, with epidemic population increases occurring every 10 to 12 years.

Gunn advises farmers who have the flexibility to rotate out of alfalfa in favor of crops with fibrous root systems, such as wheat, when voles become a problem. Gunn recommends cultivating a 15- to 30-foot perimeter of bare ground surrounding fields, as voles are wary of crossing areas where there's no cover due to predator concerns. Furthermore, growers may wish to use anticoagulant bait adjacent to those perimeters, taking care not to use it directly in crops.

Removing weeds surrounding fields and burning vegetation along ditch banks can also help farmers eliminate vole habitat and food sources. In some foreign countries where voles have caused major crop losses, producers have buried 5-gallon buckets in fields, each filled with a little water to trap the rodents that fall in them. Gunn believes the approach is worth a look in Idaho.

The bad news for farmers is that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been reviewing some of the crucial toxicants used in vole control, and new restrictions may be forthcoming.

"It's really important that we start being more proactive with the problem," Gunn said. ■

Ham-Potato Salad

INGREDIENTS

4 cups cubed, cooked potatoes

1/4 cup olive oil

2 tablespoons vinegar

3 hard-cooked eggs, cut up

1 cup diced celery

1 to 2 tablespoons chopped onion

2 cups diced, baked ham

1 teaspoon curry powder

3/4 cup mayonnaise

Salt and pepper to taste


Lettuce

Paprika



DIRECTIONS

Marinate potatoes in olive oil and vinegar for about one hour. Add other ingredients except lettuce and paprika. Serve on lettuce and sprinkle with paprika. Makes 3-10 servings.

RECIPES FROM
1966 IDAHO
FARM
BUREAU 



I don't want to leave
my family to cover:

- Mortgage debt
- Monthly expenses
- Funeral costs
- Kids' college tuition

I know you say I need **life insurance**, but **do I really?**

Yes! While the reasons for having life insurance vary from person to person, coverage is a smart move no matter what stage of life you're in. **Talk to your agent about the many ways life insurance can help protect you and your loved ones.**



Idaho Farm Bureau Member Benefits

ENTERTAINMENT



PROPANE



**START
SAVING
TODAY!**

HOTELS



RENTAL CARS



INSURANCE



HEALTH & BEAUTY



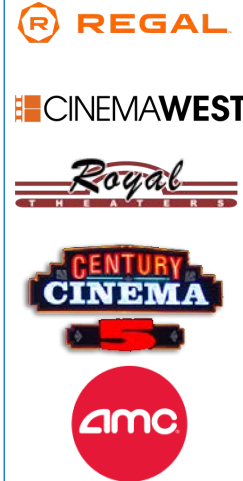
AUTO



TRANSPORT



MOVIE TICKETS



RETAIL



AGRICULTURE



HOME & OFFICE





Experience your ONCE IN A LIFETIME



More perks. More savings. More of what makes you happy.

**GO TO THE IDAHOFBSTORE.COM TO LEARN
MORE AND START SAVING TODAY!**

Electronics • Appliances • Apparel • Cars • Flowers • Fitness Memberships
Gift Cards • Groceries • Hotels • Movie Tickets • Rental Cars • Special Events
Theme Parks • And More!



THE FUN IS IN THE DRIVE

Farm Bureau® members, save **up to 35% off** base rates with Pay Now.* Plus, get a free upgrade, dollars off your rental, and so much more.

To book, visit budget.com/fb and use BCD # Y775700.



*Terms and Conditions: Terms apply. Visit www.budget.com/fb for full terms and conditions.
©2023 Budget Rent A Car System, Inc.

**Continue to the
next page for**

LOCAL

**MEMBER BENEFIT
PARTNERS!**



idahofbstore.com

CENTRAL IDAHO

Bowling Pins

JUNKYARD BISTRO

NAPA AUTO PARTS

THE PORK PEDDLER

SYRINGA LODGE
Salmon, Idaho

MINI 93 MART
317 S. Challis St. Salmon, ID 83407

Total Image Salon

point S
ORR'S POINT'S TIRE & AUTO

REAL DEALS

Rise & Shine Espresso

SALMON RIVER CHIROPRACTIC
CHIROPRACTIC CARE FOR A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY

QWIK LUBE
(208) 756-2707
FULL SERVICE SHOP

Serpent Skin Camo

River City

RED-E-MIX
756-4475

The Recorder Herald
Free Press - Open Government - Fine People
519 Van Drell - P.O. Box 310 - Salmon, Idaho 83407
Office: (208) 756-2221 - Fax: (208) 756-2222

EAST IDAHO

Blackfoot Movie Mill

FIREHOSE CAR WASH

JIM DANDY BREWING

SLED SHED
BIKES BOARDS BOULDERING

GERONIMO'S!
TRAMPOLINE PARK

SUMMIT EYECARE
Your vision is our focus!

PRESTON CARQUEST AUTO PARTS

Paramount THEATER
2085 Niagara - Across from the mall (208) 523-1142

ESTABLISHED 1916
L7
MACKAY IDAHO

Bru House GALLEI

Ron Keller Tire, Inc.
-SINCE 1958-

ROOT CAUSE INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

Centre INN
461 Park Ave - Downtown Idaho Falls (208) 525-3340

Smitty's PANCAKE & STEAK HOUSE

DERMACHIC LASER & SKINCARE CENTER

VE VALLEY EQUIPMENT & IRRIGATION

THE VICTOR TETON VALLEY FINE LODGING
www.thevictor.com

Cub River Guest Ranch
Located @ Deer Cliffs @ Cub River @ Canyon @ Preston Idaho

"Spring is when you feel like whistling, even with a shoe full of slush."

~Doug Larson

FINDING A CAREER IN AGRICULTURE OR A WESTERN INDUSTRY SHOULD NOT BE HARD.

OF THE WEST.CO

OF THE WEST

THE JOB PLATFORM FOR THE AGRICULTURE AND WESTERN INDUSTRIES.

NORTH IDAHO



SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO



[BEARDED AXE]



SOUTHWEST IDAHO



IDAHO RIVER REALTY



Farm Bureau Members Receive a
\$500 Exclusive Cash Reward*
 on an Eligible New Maverick®, Ranger®, F-150® or Super Duty®



FORD MAVERICK

FORD RANGER

FORD F-150

FORD SUPER DUTY

Computer-generated images with available features shown.

We value our long-standing partnership with Farm Bureau and are proud to offer you exclusive savings.

*Visit FordRecognizesU.com/FarmBureau today for complete offer details!



* Farm Bureau Recognition Program is exclusively for active Farm Bureau members who are residents of the United States. \$500 Exclusive Cash Reward on the purchase or lease of an eligible new 2022/2023/2024 Ford Maverick, Ranger, F-150 or Super Duty. This incentive is not available on F-150 Lightning®, F-150 Raptor®, F-650 and F-750 Super Duty. 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 or lease and take new retail delivery from an authorized Ford Dealer's stock by January 2, 2024. Visit FordRecognizesU.com/FarmBureau or see your authorized Ford Dealer for qualifications and complete details. Note to dealer: Claim in VINCENT using #38656.



idahofbstore.com



University of Idaho photos

The photo on the left shows annual grass control when droplets are distributed properly. The photo on the right did not have herbicide applied and the annual grasses are dense.

Site preparation before and after tree planting

By **Timothy Prather**
University of Idaho

Once trees are harvested and the area is getting prepared for planting, it is important to estimate how much competition from other plants the new tree seedlings might encounter.

Woody debris can, in some instances, reduce germination of some species that may compete with the tree seedlings.

Another possibility is use of preemergent herbicides prior to planting, followed by preemergent herbicides applied after planting.

While there are several herbicides used during site preparation, I will focus on indaziflam and one other herbicide. Both can control quite a few species and they both control grasses.

One of the more recently available herbicides is indaziflam, marketed as Esplanade F, that can

be used for conifers. Interest in indaziflam is high because control can

last at least three years.

The other herbicide is imazapic and one tradename for it is Plateau. Both can be applied to the soil and they both can be applied by airplane or helicopter.

With indaziflam being relatively new, we studied how it affected larch seedlings. We applied indaziflam to larch seedlings before other plants emerged from the soil.

The indaziflam was sprayed by ground application rather than aerial application. Without herbicide, there were many weed emerging in early June, and they would compete with the trees through the summer.

The herbicides kept most of the weeds from competing with the tree seedlings with indaziflam-treated trees gaining 9 inches of height when the control gained less than 4 inches of height.

Diameter of the tree seedlings was slighter greater when herbicides were applied, approximately 1/4 an inch larger in diameter. We found that Esplanade F was safe for larch seedlings.

The Esplanade F performed well when applied by ground, typically with about 15 gallons per acre of water with the herbicide.

When we consider aerial application, the volume is reduced significantly and 5 gallons per acre would be considered a

high amount of water per acre.

The two herbicides, imazapic and indaziflam behave differently when applied to the soil.

The imazapic is mobile in soil so even if the droplets that contain the herbicide are not evenly distributed on the soil surface, the herbicide does move and is able to contact germinating seeds.

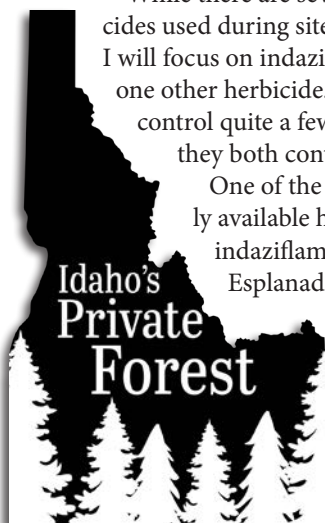
Indaziflam is not as mobile as imazapic in the soil so if the droplets containing indaziflam are not evenly distributed, control may not be optimal in the first year after treatment.

We have studied the distribution problem by trying different amounts of water that is applied with the herbicide. The idea is that more water sprayed with the herbicide should improve the distribution of the herbicide.

We looked at 2 to 10 gallons of spray volume per acre. Unfortunately, increasing the amount of water applied increases costs because the airplane or helicopter must refill tanks more frequently.

Our study area was in rangeland, but the principle is the same for a forestry site, after tree planting.

Before the herbicides were applied, we were able to put out water-sensitive paper to capture droplets as the droplets reached the ground. We found the distribution of



droplets did vary and they ranged from 2% of the cards capturing droplets up to 20% droplet capture.

So, what happened? We found more variable control of annual grasses with indaziflam when less than 7% of the card was covered with droplets.

The control ranged from nearly no control of annual grasses up to 100% at the low droplet coverage. Above 7%, the control of grasses was nearly uniform.

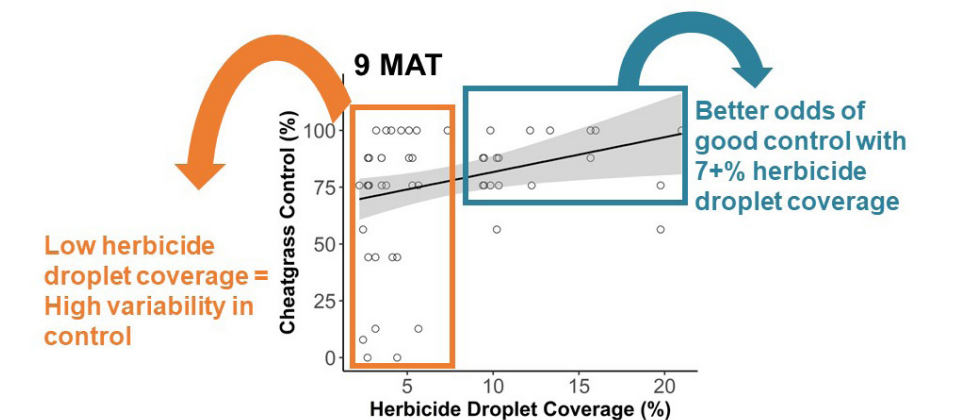
The control of annual grasses above 7% droplet coverage ranged from 60% to 100%.

So with better droplet coverage, we have better control. Does that mean more water should be used?

Perhaps, but if there are other ways to improve the droplet distribution with additives or changes to spray nozzles, then higher spray volume could be avoided.

Fortunately, we have seen control increase in the second year as indaziflam slowly moves through soil.

Another possibility is combining the two herbicides (indaziflam + imazapic) so that uniform control is possible during the first year after application and then extended



University of Idaho graphic
With low droplet coverage below 7%, we see variable control. Above 7%, the control is more consistent. The 9 MAT refers to the control being measured 9 months after the herbicides were applied.

control with the indaziflam after the first year.

The combination could then be applied at lower volumes with similar control.

However, that approach is viable if the target is only annual grasses. There are other plant species that are controlled with indaziflam that are not controlled by imazapic so those plant species would have poorer control during that first year if

spray volume was low.

Studies like the ones described in this article help us understand how to improve our ability to control plants that compete with tree seedlings during that critical establishment phase.

Increasing seedling survival by reduced competition should get the seedlings off to a good start. ■



The photo on the left shows the treatment of Esplanade F and a low rate of clopyralid was effective. The photo on the right shows trees in a weedy area without Esplanade F and a lower rate of clopyralid.



Jesse Barger places fish in the new tanks. Photo by Trent Van Leuven

Achieving big dreams in a small lab

Mackay ag students' pioneering aquaculture projects and new lab benefit research and recreation

By Dianna Troyer

For Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Resourceful agri-science students in a remote school in central Idaho never let their barebones budget or the small size of their fish lab – an old greenhouse they retrofitted nearly three decades ago – limit their imagination.

Mackay Junior/Senior High School students dreamed big. What could they do that had never been done before? Collaborating with innovative teachers and dedicated biologists for advice, they completed record-setting aquaculture projects.

“The best projects always come from students,” said Trent Van Leuven, the school’s agri-science instructor and FFA advisor. “Some have been incredibly self-motivated and never let setbacks discourage them.”

Little did students realize at the time, their aquaculture accomplishments would ripple outward, far beyond their small lab, to have significant lasting benefits for recreation and research.

For the first time in Idaho, they stocked California Golden Trout in a creek, establishing a destination fishery for anglers in Lower Cedar Creek east of town.

Another project focused on a unique local species, the Big Lost River Mountain Whitefish. The fish had never been incubated and raised in a lab until a student developed a feeding protocol of brine shrimp and ground-up bloodworms for the tiny fry.

The popular sturgeon swimming in the native fish display at the East Idaho Aquarium were raised in the Mackay aquaculture lab.

“It was a lot of fun for our elementary students to visit our Mackay FFA sturgeon during a field trip to the aquarium,” Van Leuven said.

Considering students’ remarkable track record, more than a dozen diverse groups statewide, including agricultural, environmental, and tribal organizations, were eager to help finance the construction of a new state-of-the-art aquaculture lab to support continued projects.

In 2019, the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation provided an \$8,288 grant for the aquaculture program to restore the old fish lab back into a conservatory.

“This phase would have taken an additional two years,” Van Leuven said. “After working on that fish lab, it was really nice to have one more project out of the way. It wouldn’t have happened without the Farm Bureau.”

After breaking ground for the new lab in 2018, it was completed last fall. Grants and donations paid for construction materials, while local residents and students volunteered their labor. The new \$84,000 Mick Hoover Aquaculture Facility was named for a local biologist who offered his expertise for decades.

“Our lab looks amazing,” Van Leuven said. “It’s a premier inland fish lab, the only high school lab of its kind statewide and perhaps nationwide. When visitors tour it, they say it’s what they’d expect to see on a college campus, not a rural high school with only 86 students from 8th to 12th grades. We have 70 in our ag program.”



Photo by Dianna Troyer

Trent Van Leuven, left, agri-science instructor at Mackay Junior/Senior High School, explains an award-winning aeration system to fish experts Melissa Wagner of the College of Southern Idaho and Jacob Bledsoe with the University of Idaho.

With its gleaming white walls, bright lights, and humming pump, the immaculate lab came to life in late October when students placed 3,000 golden trout, grayling, and rainbow trout in tanks filled with clear spring water.

Operating the new lab's 23 tanks at full capacity, they will be able to raise 20,000 fish annually and coordinate with state and federal agencies to release them throughout the region.

The lab not only helps agencies boost native fish populations and create angling opportunities, it also teaches job skills in aquaculture, a key component of Idaho's agricultural economy.

Several Mackay alums have been hired in aquaculture jobs, based on their experience working in the lab.

Statewide, aquaculture provides 800 jobs and generates \$150 million annually, according to a University of Idaho study.

Fish farms based in southern Idaho produce 70 percent of the nation's domestic trout, amounting to 40 million pounds annually. More than 2 million pounds of tilapia, catfish, and sturgeon meat and caviar are also raised yearly.

Industry leaders from southern Idaho

were impressed with the lab during a recent tour.

"This is fantastic," said Jacob Bledsoe, University of Idaho assistant professor, aquaculture research and extension specialist at Hagerman, "It's one of the cleanest labs I've seen and definitely the caliber to conduct research. The fact that students are at the forefront is amazing."

Melissa Wagner, an aquaculture and fisheries management instructor at the College of Southern Idaho, was equally amazed.

"It's incredible to see this type of facility at a high school," she said. "This accomplishment by a handful of students and their instructor is remarkable. The community coming together is phenomenal,

too. It's obvious everyone put their heart and soul into building it."

Award-winning aeration system

The lab's unique, award-winning passive aeration system is a point of interest for industry leaders, Van Leuven said. "It was invented by the program, is quiet, reduces splashing from fish, and cuts down on fish jumping from the tanks. It oxygenates water without using additional electricity."

Instead of using a noisy electric air generator to provide dissolved oxygen for the fish, students installed a venturi aerator at each tank. They placed an hour-glass-shaped fitting inside a ¾-inch hard plastic pipe to change the water pressure and draw air into the system, mixing it with pumped water.

To build a prototype, students used a 3D printer to make the fitting. They made a video, explaining their idea, and entered it in the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Challenge. Selected as a state finalist, they were awarded a \$7,500 credit to buy supplies and assemble the system.

"The final aerators were fine-tuned and made from reducers sawed in half with a fender washer glued in between to create the venturi," Van Leuven said

While feeding fish, students recalled the lab's four-year progression. The seniors were eighth-graders during the ground-breaking ceremony. As they helped build it in their spare time, they learned construction trade skills.

"To see what it has become is truly amazing," said McKenzie Donahue, a senior. "Our new lab creates so many opportunities for students. We're so lucky to have this incredible facility."

FFA chapter president Rylee Teichert said, "We're really thankful to everyone who volunteered and donated. We couldn't



RIGHT: At full capacity, students can raise 20,000 fish annually in their new 1,400-square-foot lab. Photo by Dianna Troyer



TOP: When the fish are large enough, they will be released in creeks and lakes to improve angling opportunities. Photo by Dianna Troyer
ABOVE: Kali Gamett releases California Golden Trout into Lower Cedar Creek. Photo by Bart Gamett

be more excited about its future.”

Fish feats

On the new lab’s walls, posters show grinning students working on their pioneering projects in the old lab.

Kali Gamett cradles a radiant California Golden Trout she reared and stocked in Lower Cedar Creek. Before her project, in Idaho golden trout were only found in high mountain lakes, not creeks.

In the fall of 2014, Gamett started her experiment, raising the trout with approval of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the Salmon-Challis National Forest. By spring, 146 trout were large enough to release.

Several years later, wondering if they survived, she caught and released one. The population did so well that students have raised and released more than 300 into the creek since then. Some have grown to more than 14 inches.

“I love to tell people that the first one she caught was the first

catch-and-release record for California Golden Trout in Idaho,” Van Leuven said. “The local joke is they’ve been caught and released so often, they pose for photos.”

Another poster shows Selena Gregory, who incubated and hatched Big Lost River Mountain Whitefish for the first time in a lab from 2009 to 2013. She eventually stocked them in Antelope Creek as part of a larger effort to re-establish the native fish population.

Biologists’ support

When he was hired in 2014, Van Leuven was astounded at the aquaculture program’s milestones and began envisioning its expansion.

He eventually formed an Agriculture Technical Advisory Committee whose members included local biologists Mick Hoover and Bart Gamett, and teacher VerNon Roche, who founded the aquaculture program in the mid-1990s.

Students raised rainbow trout, brook trout, golden trout, tilapia, grayling, sturgeon, catfish, and kokanee.

“The beauty of building the new lab was that we had a group that asked what could be possible with our resources and what resources were needed,” Van Leuven said. “So much can be done if a group has imagination and a vision.”

Hoover, the lab’s namesake, helped students in his spare time while working as assistant manager at the nearby Idaho Fish and Game Fish Hatchery. He recalled students’ frustrations in the old uninsulated lab when they confronted temperature extremes, ranging from sweltering to frigid.

Checking on warm-water tilapia one morning, “there was an odd aroma,” he said. “They were boiled due to an out-of-control thermostat on their tank. Sometimes in winter, if there was a leaky fixture or a pipe burst due to the cold, the floor turned into an ice-skating rink.”

Despite the setbacks, Hoover said the tenacious students persevered.

“From humble but determined beginnings with setbacks aside, this new lab is the envy of other schools,” he said.

Gamett, who works for the U.S. Forest Service, said teens’ accomplishments were unprecedented.

“Great things were done in that old lab,” he says. “What it lacked in beauty, it made up for in innovation, especially with the Big Lost River Mountain Whitefish. They occur nowhere else in the world due to geologic isolation. Their eggs were collected in the wild, hatched, and successfully reared in a lab. That had never been done before – not even by professionals. The new lab is a tremendous facility that will benefit students, the community, and ultimately fish.”

Eventually, Van Leuven intends for the lab to be certified as a disease-free facility by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game – yet another milestone for a high school lab.

“We’re really excited for the program’s future,” he said. “We’d like to see how large we can grow some goldens for spawning and have been asked to supply graylings and goldens to the East Idaho Aquarium to join the sturgeon we raised. In May, we’ll be releasing more fish in nearby creeks, too.” ■

Students describe their lab’s award-winning aeration system at <https://youtu.be/wvp2LjCa7OM>.



IDAHO NATIONAL AG FACTS

#1 producer of barley

#2 producer of hops

Field-To-Bottle State

WHAT CRAFT BEER MONTH REALLY MEANS:

Idaho is a true "field-to-bottle" state, a term used to describe beer production that focuses on using locally sourced ingredients grown and harvested within the same state where the beer is brewed. Hops and barley can be taken directly from the field, processed, and bottled right here in Idaho.

Idaho farmers typically grow enough malt barley each year to produce 12 million barrels of beer or 4.1 billion 12-ounce bottles of beer explains Sean Ellis in Idaho Farm Bureau's recent article on 2022 Barley Production.

With shorter distances to travel for processing, ingredients are fresher and offer more depth and complex flavor profiles reflecting Idaho's local climate and soil conditions. What's more, less travel time is saving money for the farmer and brewer.

To celebrate Idaho Craft Beer Month in April is to really celebrate the farmers, processors, and brewers who make it possible.

"Field-to-bottle" beer is a growing trend in the craft beer industry that highlights the importance of supporting local agriculture and promoting regional food culture.

MILL 95 ORIGIN STORY

Gooding Farms & Payette Brewing Co.

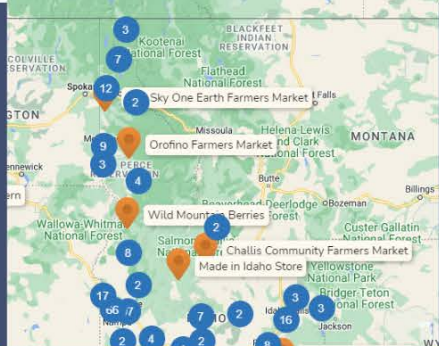
Scan to Watch

MILL 95
Parma, Idaho
idahopreferred.com/members/mill-95/

Watch the video to hear Idaho's farm to bottle journey

Mill 95 is the only hops processing plant of its kind in the Gem State. Located in the heart of SW Idaho's hops country, Mill 95 has been innovating the way beer is made in the Gem State since 2016. The hops processing facility offers cold storage, drying, pelletizing, and vacuum sealing onsite, and works closely with farmers like Michelle Gooding of Gooding Farms and Brewers like Mike Francis of Payette Brewing Co. to ensure that their hops are processed to the highest standards, resulting in a consistent and high-quality product.

ADD YOURSELF TO THE MAP



JOIN IDAHO PREFERRED
idahopreferred.com/membership

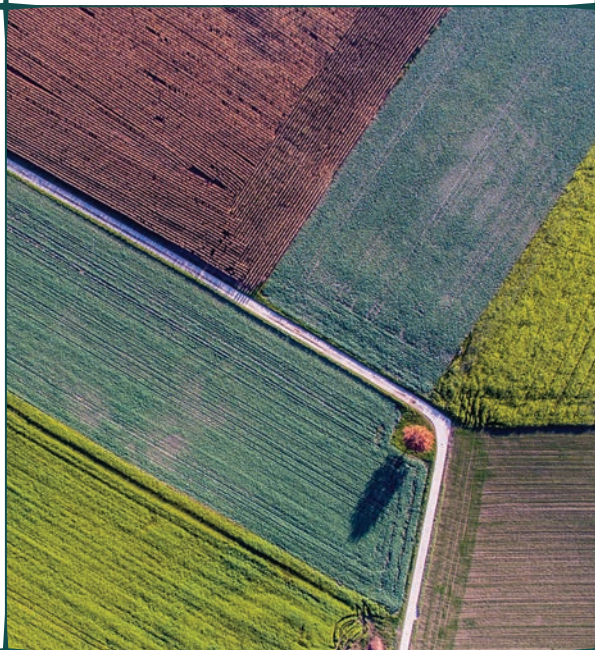
Statewide Find Local Directory

The Idaho Preferred website has become the go-to resource for discovering local Idaho agriculture products for consumers and businesses alike (retailers, restaurants, chefs, farmers markets, schools, etc.) with over 2.1 million unique views in 2022.

The new digital Idaho Find Local Directory allows the consumer to discover new sourcing opportunities, and get to know the farmers, ranchers, and ag-artisan crafters who produce throughout the state, direct from the source.

Visit: idahopreferred.com/find-local

Idaho State Department of Agriculture



New name. Same commitment to your success.

Northwest Farm Credit Services is now
AgWest Farm Credit.

Providing agricultural financial services, backed by a
century of experience—to help you grow your legacy.

Contact your local branch
or visit AgWestFC.com
to learn more.



ISN'T IT TIME TO INVEST YOUR HARD-EARNED MONEY WITH A RESPECTED IDAHO BASED FARM BUREAU COMPANY WITH OVER 60 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE?

Subordinated Debenture Note Benefits:

- Minimum investment of \$50.00.
- You choose the term, one month to 60 months.
- Automatic re-investment at maturity, at current offered rate.
- Penalty-free withdrawal after original maturity.
- Current rates among the highest offered in Idaho!

Current Debenture Note Special:

12 months at 5.25% apr.

\$500 minimum new investment

A subordinated debenture note is security offered by Idaho Farm Bureau
Financial Services that may only be purchased by residents of the State of
Idaho. Prospectus available upon request.



Brett Fuhriman, Director (208)239-4249
275 Tierra Vista Drive, Pocatello, Idaho 83201

Visit our website at www.idfbfs.com to see all current rates.

LOW INTEREST LOANS FOR IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION



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



SWC.idaho.gov (208) 332-1790

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture’s Division of Agricultural Resources manages a variety of programs that are crucial to functionality and safety of our industry and communities across Idaho. ISDA has licensed and certified over 8,000 pesticide applicators and registered over 12,000 pesticide products. As always, safety and compliance concerning the use of pesticides is of the greatest concerns of the ISDA. Agricultural Resources staff are available to answer any questions or concerns about ISDA programs regarding pesticides, applicators, trainings, study materials or certifications.

Licensing and Testing Updates

Spanish applicator exams are now being offered for the following categories: private applicator, chemigation, applicator core competency and ornamental herbicide.

Pre-license training and exam events are being hosted by ISDA across the state. These events allow applicators to learn the material and be certified, all in one day. At each event, in the morning there will be category specific training by ISDA staff, followed by an opportunity to take the exam in the afternoon. ISDA personnel will be available to answer questions and assist with questions during the training and prior to the exam. Some training and exams are offered in both English and Spanish.

The Metro Institute Testing Center is now offering pesticide applicator exams at several testing locations across the state. Metro Institute also offers remote testing where the exam will be supervised by a virtual proctor using any video-enabled computer with an internet connection. Exams are available any day of the work week, providing the opportunity for applicators to test at their convenience.

Recertification credits are now viewable to each applicator’s personal profile. ISDA has created the new recertification credit system, with the goal to eliminate the challenges and frustrations of the old system. Applicators can log into their license profile to track how many credits they have and how many credits they need, along with license expiration dates and more.

2023 Negotiated Rulemaking

Negotiated rulemaking 2023 will include the Rules Governing Pesticide and Chemigation Use and Application (IDAPA 02.03.03). To meet the requirements of the Red Tape Reduction Act and the US Environmental Protection Agency, the ISDA’s pesticide certification and training plan must be amended. Because the standards are in rule, the rule must be reopened.

Negotiated rulemaking meetings will be held in late spring and early summer. Meetings open to the public will be posted on the ISDA website. The ISDA encourages the public to provide input via rulemaking meetings or the open comment period. To get involved with ISDA rulemaking, email _rulesinfo@isda.idaho.gov.

Pesticide Disposal Program

The ISDA pesticide disposal program provides a safe and free opportunity to dispose of unusable or unwanted pesticides. Below are spring pesticide disposal dates, late summer and fall disposal dates are available on the ISDA website.

April 25 9:00 a.m. to 1:00p.m.

Nampa, Canyon County Landfill

April 26 9:00 a.m. to 1:00p.m.

Weiser, Idaho Transportation Department

April 27 9:00 a.m. to 1:00p.m.

Lewiston, Nez Perce County Fairgrounds



For more information on testing, trainings, event dates, applicator credits and more please visit:
agri.idaho.gov/main/pesticides/



Photos by Paul Nettleton

When it comes to total farm-gate receipts, cattle is the main agricultural commodity in Owyhee County.

Cattle is king in Owyhee County

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

When it comes to agriculture in Owyhee County, cattle is king. At 7,700 square miles, Owyhee is Idaho's second largest county by size and there is a whole lot of wide open space and range for cattle to graze, says Owyhee County rancher Ted Blackstock.

"Most of the land in the county is grazing land, essentially," says

Blackstock, who also raises and sells some hay. "We have a lot of wide open space for beef cattle."

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, the county's cattle and calves sector brought in \$116 million in farm-gate receipts during the 2017 census year, making cattle the county's top ag commodity in terms of total revenue.

There were 157,193 cattle and calves in Owyhee County in 2017, according to the ag census.

“The goal is educating our kids about agriculture so they know our roots and where we came from.”

- Hayzen Corder, Owyhee County Farm Bureau President

“The money crop here is cattle,” says Owyhee County rancher Paul Nettleton, who also raises hay, corn and grain. “There is a lot of range in the county and it’s good range, too.”

Besides all the land, the climate in the county – fairly low elevation and winters that are usually not too harsh – is also favorable for raising cattle, he adds.

“It’s just a nice area to raise cattle,” says Nettleton, a member of the Owyhee County Farm Bureau board of directors. “Owyhee County is mainly cattle area and we definitely think that’s the future here, too.”

The county also includes a pretty fast growing dairy industry. According to the 2017 ag census, farm-gate receipts for the dairy sector totaled \$94 million in 2017.

“Beef cattle and dairy cattle are the biggest income generators for agriculture in Owyhee County,” says Blackstock, who also serves on the OCFB board.

While cattle is the big thing in Owyhee County agriculture, there is plenty of farming going on there also.

“There is a fair amount of row crop farming in the county,” says Owyhee County Farm Bureau President Hayzen Corder, who does custom haying and works in ag retail.

According to the ag census, there were 71,000 acres of hay grown in the county in 2017, 28,000 acres of corn, 9,000 acres of wheat and 2,500 acres of sugar beets.

Mint, potatoes and sunflowers are some of the other crops grown there, Corder says.

According to the 2017 ag census, there were 565 farms in Owyhee County in 2017 and 727,338 total acres of land in farms. The average size of a farm in the county – 1,287 acres – is much larger than the statewide average of 468 acres.

Ninety-seven percent of the farms in the county are family owned and operated.

A total of \$273 million in farm-gate receipts were recorded in the county in 2017, ranking Owyhee No. 10 in Idaho in that category.

While the county isn’t experiencing near the growth that nearby Ada and Canyon counties are seeing, growth, development and loss of farmland is becoming a concern in Owyhee County, Blackstock says.

“We’re worried about all the growth and houses coming in and the farms getting sub-divided,” he says. “It’s coming this way.”



Owyhee County is Idaho’s second largest county by size and there is a lot of range for cattle to graze on.

Blackstock says there’s no simple solution when it comes to preserving farmland and private property rights – a landowner’s right to sell their property if they choose to – will always be respected in Idaho.

At the same time, he adds, “If we want to continue to produce food in this valley, we need to figure out something. I’d rather have a big farm than houses any day.”

A good deal of the county Farm Bureau organization’s focus is on supporting youth and educating them about agriculture, Corder says.

“The goal is educating our kids about agriculture so they know our roots and where we came from,” he says.

Another major focus, Corder says, “is being there to support and protect the producers in any way we can and educating the newcomers about agriculture and why it’s important to the county and state.” ■

Classifieds

FARMING/EQUIPMENT

Grow your own food! Single row potato equipment. 1 row diggers 3 point on or pull type. 2 row planters 3 point or full type. 2 row rolling cultivators. All have been reconditioned and are field ready. Call or text 208-757-0400 Blackfoot.

Fordson Major Diesel, 42 HP engine, overhauled 2020, 6 speed transmission, Hi-Lo Range, very good tires, fluid + weights at rear, 3 pt hitch, PTO, lights. Includes: shop manual, drawbar, top link, rear chains, and 3 pt. rear blade. \$5,500. Moscow, call or text 208-892-1887.

Colorado Pellet Mills like new. American made Model Mill 10 \$6,500 obo. Produces 80 to 800lbs of pellets per hour. Matt 208-250-0924.

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

AUTO

1984 Corvette classic. 90 90 restored, overhauled engine and transmission. Beautiful gold color and clean interior. California car and fun to drive. Garaged in Salmon. \$8,500 obo. Insured for \$10,000 will consider trade for ATV. Call 858-518-4622.

LIVESTOCK

Quality Beefmaster Bulls for sale. 4-year-old bull \$2,600. Yearling bulls \$1,600 each. Request pictures by calling or texting Jody 208-573-3209. Nampa.

Weaned piglets looking for new pastures! Heritage grazing pigs are docile, easy keepers that provide gourmet pork. Idaho Pasture Pigs x American Guinea Hog and Kune Kune x American Guinea Hog. \$100 each. Careywood, ID 208-610-2960.

TRAILER

2014 Forest River Wildwood 21RSB RV Trailer. Table slide outs with all new parts. 4 new tires, 2 deep cell 6 volt batteries, new roof. Two 7-gallon propane tanks. Electrical jack on hitch. Call 208-941-7435. Nampa.

MISCELLANEOUS

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

4S Welding. Mobile welding for Bingham County and surrounding areas. Twenty years experience. Carbon & Stainless. Great rates. Call Mike 208-680-7372.

PROPERTY

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

WANTED

Paying cash for unwanted fireworks, the older the better. I collect firecrackers, Roman candles, mortars and anything else aerial. I also collect old m-80s like fish and game used to hand out. Great way to repurpose old fireworks as they are disassembled and used to create new ones. 208-866-2112.

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

Paying cash for old cork top

embossed bottles and some telephone insulators as well as other vintage and antique items. Call Randy. Payette, ID. 208-740-0178.

Paying cash for German & Japanese war relics/souvenirs! Pistols, rifles, swords, daggers, flags, scopes, optical equipment, uniforms, helmets, machine guns (ATF rules apply) medals, flags, etc. 208-405-9338.

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

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

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 April 20 for the May Quarterly

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

**Free Classified ads for
Idaho Farm Bureau Members
Send to knlindauer@idahofb.org**

**TEE UP
FORE
FFA**



2023 TEE UP FORE FFA GOLF SCRAMBLES

24 MAY 2023 || CANYON SPRINGS GOLF COURSE - TWIN FALLS

7 JUNE 2023 || UNIV. OF IDAHO GOLF COURSE - MOSCOW

16 JUNE 2023 || SHADOW VALLEY GOLF COURSE - BOISE

28 JUNE 2023 || PINECREST GOLF COURSE - IDAHO FALLS



GRAB YOUR CLUBS & REGISTER TODAY!

Governor's awards for excellence in ag awarded to six Idahoans

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE – Six Idahoans received governor's awards for excellence Feb. 21 during the 28th Annual Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit.

The summit attracts a couple hundred farmers, ranchers and others involved in all aspects of the state's agricultural industry.

The Governor's Awards for Excellence in Agriculture recognize people for their contributions to Idaho's agricultural industry. Videos highlighting those contributions were shown before the awards were presented.

"As you can tell from the videos, these are quality Idahoans," said Lt. Gov. Scott Bedke, a rancher and farmer from Oakley who presented the awards.

Gov. Brad Little, a rancher from Emmett, has called the award recipients the "heart and soul of Idaho."

Lifetime Achievement

Scott Brown, a fourth-generation wheat, barley and mustard farmer from Caribou County, received a Lifetime Achievement award, which, according to the award criteria, is given to an individual who has dedicated their life to advancing agriculture and "who embodies the high standards of Idaho agriculture and sets an example for others to follow."

Brown, who farms more than 11,000 acres with his nephew and son-in-law outside of Soda Springs, "is passionate about agriculture and has served in various state and national leadership capacities," according to his award bio.

He has also represented U.S. wheat and barley growers on several trade missions.

"Scott is a hard-working, outstanding farmer who has stepped up and led organizations with knowledge, skill and passion," his award bio states.



Photos by Sean Ellis

Lt. Gov. Scott Bedke, right, presents a governor's award for lifetime achievement to Soda Springs farmer Scott Brown Feb. 21 during the 28th Annual Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit.

Brown has also mentored countless other growers and has been instrumental in developing young growers for leadership positions, according to the bio.

"Scott can bring people together during difficult times and be an articulate spokesman for the industry with fellow farmers, the media, as well as congressional offices," his award bio states. "He has a gifted way of providing relevant, relatable information that has substantial positive impact."

Technical Innovation

Darin Moon, CEO of Redox Chemicals, received a Technical Innovation award, which is given to an individual or business that develops or implements new methods to advance agricultural production or

processing.

Established in 1994 by Moon, the company has become a leading international, Idaho-based agribusiness.

According to Moon's award bio, "The core values of Redox are to be passionately authentic, creatively driven and scientifically knowledgeable."

The bio says Redox products "are designed for farmers and advanced by science...."

Redox maintains a 5-acre test farm at the company's headquarters in Burley, where the company maintains tree fruit, has annual crop plots and an area for work on turf. The test farm also has a greenhouse for year-round work.

Moon received a degree in soil science



TOP: Lt. Gov. Scott Bedke, left, presents a governor's award for technical innovation to Redox Chemicals CEO Darin Moon Feb. 21 during the 28th Annual Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit.

ABOVE: Lt. Gov. Scott Bedke, right, presents a governor's award for marketing innovation to Kuna farmers Jim and Hillary Lowe Feb. 21 during the 28th Annual Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit.

and agronomy from Utah State University.

"Darin is very scientific and creative and uses this combination of skills and practical knowledge to develop patented products that have improved global ag production," his award bio states.

Marketing Innovation

Jim and Hillary Lowe, owners of Lowe Family Farmstead in Kuna, received an award for marketing innovation.

This award is given to a grower, processor or commodity group "that demonstrates excellence and effectiveness of individual programs conducted in an effort to develop or increase sales of Idaho food or agriculture products, internationally or domestically."

The Lowes use their agritourism business to educate people



Lt. Gov. Scott Bedke, left, presents a governor's award for environmental stewardship to Hamer farmer Justin Place Feb. 21 during the 28th Annual Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit.

about agriculture and "continually strive to narrow the gap between rural agriculture and urban life," their award bio states.

At the Farmstead, according to the bio, "every visitor comes face-to-face with education and facts about agriculture, animals and crops at every turn. Signs, themes, information and hands-on experiences entice guests to spend multiple hours each visit at the farm."

According to their award bio, "Jim and Hillary work hard to bridge the gap between the nostalgic farm life of one's childhood and the modern industry of agriculture ... The Lowes have used their own ingenuity to market agriculture and to encourage the general public to use all five senses to experience agriculture up-close and personal."

Environmental Stewardship

Justin Place, who farms with his father in the Mud Lake/Hamer area of East Idaho, received an Environmental Stewardship award, which is given to someone who demonstrates a commitment to maintain and improve the quality of air, water or soil as a result of innovative practices or technologies.

The Place farm, which produces grain, alfalfa and mustard, utilizes minimal tillage.

"This has been an excellent soil conservation method as the area experiences extremely high winds and low water levels," Place's award bio states.

He networks with farmer friends in Texas and other areas with water shortages that are more prevalent than they are in East Idaho.

"He adapts their successful practices to help tame his own sandstorms to improve his crop production and soil health," Place's award bio states ... "Justin is a strong advocate for responsible production agriculture and education. He is what the American farmer of the future needs to be to continue farming."

Education/Advocacy

Susi Larrocea was presented with an Education/Advocacy

award, which is given to someone who is committed to educating Idahoans about how important the state's agricultural industry is to their life and the economy.

"Susi Larrocea is a true advocate for agriculture as demonstrated by her lifelong commitment to educating youth and their families throughout Ada County through 4-H and FFA leadership and volunteerism," her award bio states.

Susi and her husband, Flip, are actively involved in the Phillips Brothers Cattle Co., a family operation in Star that includes cow-calf production and a feedlot, along with diversified crop farming.

Larrocea led the Crafty Critters 4-H Club for more than 20 years and "mentoring students is one of Susi's strongest attributes," her award bio states ... "She encouraged all young 4-H members to expand their agriculture education by enrolling in local FFA programs when they reached high school age."

She helped develop the Meridian FFA Alumni Chapter and start a community FFA auction that generates several thousand dollars each year for scholarships.

"Susi Larrocea possesses talents and skills that help define Idaho agriculture," her award bio states. "She has become a reliable source of value information to her profession and the industry of agriculture."

Pat Takasugi Leadership Award

During the Ag Summit, Mike Gooding, who grows hops in the Parma area, was presented with the Pat Takasugi Leadership Award, which is named after the late director of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture and given to someone who has shown strong leadership for Idaho agriculture.

Gooding, a fifth-generation hop farmer, has served as a member and past president of the National Hop Growers Association as well as the national Hop Research Council.

He is also a charter member of the Hop Industry Plant Protection Committee and served for 37 years as a member of the Idaho Hop Commission, including 15 years as chairman.

"Mike has been a significant force in the establishment and growth of the Idaho hop industry over the last 40 years," said retired bean industry representative Don Tolmie,



TOP: Lt. Gov. Scott Bedke, right, presents a governor's award for Education/Advocacy to Susi Larrocea Feb. 21 during the 28th Annual Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit.

ABOVE: Don Tolmie, left, presents the Pat Takasugi Leadership Award to Parma hops farmer Mike Gooding Feb. 21 during the 28th Annual Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit.

who presented Gooding with the award.

He has also grown onions, beans, sweet corn seed and cereal grains in Idaho and is a past member of the Idaho-Eastern Oregon Onion Committee.

"It's a real pleasure to see someone who has devoted their entire life to agriculture

be recognized," Tolmie said.

Gooding credited his family and employees for allowing him to be heavily involved with the ag industry.

"Without them, I would never have been able to take the time to be involved in the industry as I have been," he said. ■

Idaho ag export value set another record in 2022

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – The total value of agricultural exports from Idaho increased by 11 percent in 2022, reaching a record \$1.13 billion.

That eclipsed the 2021 total of \$1.02 billion, which tied a record set in 2014.

“That’s two years in a row of record ag export growth for Idaho; that’s good news,” said Laura Johnson, who manages the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, which reported that data.

The totals are based on U.S. Census Bureau data that was crunched by ISDA. The Census Bureau data, which is available on a monthly basis, differs from a separate set of data released annually by USDA.

The USDA data does a better job of capturing all of Idaho’s agricultural exports but the Census Bureau data is more timely because it’s released each month.

However, both sets of data track closely when it comes to percentage increases or decreases.

According to the USDA data, Idaho set records for total value of ag product exports in 2020 and 2021. The USDA data for 2022 will be released this fall.

The Census Bureau data shows Idaho set records for that category in 2021 and 2022.

According to that data, Canada continues to be the top destination for Idaho ag exports, as Idaho businesses sold \$362 million worth of ag products to that nation in 2022, a 12 percent increase over 2021.

Mexico was the state’s No. 2 ag export destination at \$168 million, a 20 percent decrease compared with 2021, and China was the state’s No. 3 market at \$122 million, a 59 percent increase over 2021.

South Korea came in at No. 4 (\$81 million, 78 percent increase) and Japan was No. 5 (\$61 million, 27 percent increase).

Dairy was Idaho’s top ag export commodity in 2022, as Idaho exported \$308 million worth of dairy products last year, a 58 percent increase over 2021.

Live animal exports continued to be a bright spot, as Idaho exported \$82 million worth of live animals in 2022, a 4 percent increase from 2021 and a 41 percent increase compared with 2020.

According to the Census Bureau data, Canada purchased \$78 million worth of live animals – all cows – from Idaho last year, a 20 percent increase over 2021.

That made live animals Idaho’s top ag export to Canada in 2022. “A lot of cows from Idaho are going to Canada,” Johnson said.

The increase in Idaho ag export value to both China and South Korea was led by dairy, as \$60 million worth of dairy products from the Gem State were sold to China last year, a 50 percent increase over 2021, and \$60 million worth of dairy products from Idaho were also sold to South Korea, a 75 percent increase.



Photo by Sean Ellis

This Idaho Farm Bureau Federation photo shows a hay field in southcentral Idaho last year. Idaho exported \$1.13 billion worth of agricultural products in 2022, which was a state record for that category and 11 percent more than the 2021 total.

Doug Robison, the Idaho president for AgWest Farm Credit, said Idaho’s 11 percent increase in ag export value in 2022 matched the total increase nationwide.

However, he added, “While an 11 percent increase in agricultural exports is significant, there are some economic indicators that suggest export volumes actually decreased in 2022.”

That means a lot of the increase was due to higher commodity prices and not necessarily increases in ag export volumes

“Decreasing export volumes are not surprising, given the strength of the U.S. dollar in 2022,” Robison said.

He said the average value of the U.S. dollar in 2022 increased by 6.7 percent on a trade-weighted basis and by 8.5 percent when accounting for differences in purchasing power.

Johnson said Idaho’s ag export value gains were not all related to higher prices. “We are seeing some volume growth as well,” she said.

Johnson also said that the state’s 11 percent increase in ag export value occurred despite the ongoing supply chain challenges.

“Yes, that situation has improved but it’s still a challenge; it’s still a constraint,” she said. ■

Idaho State Animal Damage Control Board



By **Emily Merrigan**
Idaho Sheep and Goat Health Board

The Idaho State Animal Damage Control (ADC) Board was established in 1951 to prevent and control damage caused by predatory animals and other vertebrate pests to agriculture production in Idaho.

Monies received by the ADC Board pay for the control of coyotes, jackrabbits, skunks, weasels, starlings, raccoons, lions, bears, and pelicans.

The board is made up of nine individuals: Chairperson of the Idaho Sheep and Goat Health Board – Steve Wilder, appointee by the Idaho Cattlemen Association president; The director of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture – Chanel Tewalt; the director of the Idaho De-



partment of Fish and Game – Jim Fredericks; and the chairperson from each of the five ADC districts: Oley Peterson, District 1; Phil Davis, District 2; John Noh, District 3; Jennifer Ellis, District 4; and Jeff Siddoway, District 5.

The Idaho Sheep and Goat Health Board provides administrative services to the state and district ADC boards through its executive secretary, Emily Merrigan.

Representation

Each county is represented on a district ADC board by one agricultural producer. That producer is appointed by their local county commissioners after being formally nominated by a livestock or agriculturally oriented group, and serves a two-year term.

The 44 counties are divided into the five ADC districts as follows:

District 1: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Clearwater, Idaho, Kootenai, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, and Shoshone.

District 2: Ada, Adams, Boise, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley, and Washington.

District 3: Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls.

District 4: Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, and Power.

District 5: Bonneville, Butte, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, and Teton.

District ADC agreements

Each district board holds annual meetings where they sign an agreement paying for the control of coyotes, jackrabbits, skunks, weasels, starlings, and raccoons.

Those agreements cover agricultural producers who contribute to the ADC districts through brand, wool, or grazing assessments. Currently, all five ADC districts maintain that annual agreement with USDA Wildlife Services.

USDA Wildlife Services has numerous wildlife specialists, commonly known as “Government Trappers,” spread across the state.

To find your local wildlife specialist, contact the USDA Wildlife Services office at (208) 373-1630. Mention this article and ask for your wildlife specialist’s name and contact information.

It is important as a producer to establish and maintain a relationship with your local wildlife specialist so you can work together efficiently to protect your farm or ranch.

State ADC agreements

The State ADC Board holds two agreements with USDA Wildlife Services, one for the control of lions and bears, the second for the control of pelicans in specific

areas identified by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

These agreements enable producers to request assistance from USDA Wildlife Services to prevent and control damage caused by lions and bears and are solely funded through the IDFG.

To request services with these animals, contact your local wildlife specialist.

Funding

The State and District ADC funds are all managed by the executive secretary of the Idaho Sheep and Goat Health Board and reported to each board regularly.

To fund the financial agreements, the state and district ADC boards collect money from several avenues.

Each year, dollars are allocated across all parts of Idaho government. The allocation designated for the ADC boards is sent to the Idaho Sheep Commission, then forwarded to the ADC office as a check.

That check includes the general allocation, brand money, and wool money. Those three income sources are split fairly among the five districts, as decided by the State ADC Board.

Also included in that single check is money from the IDFG. Of the IDFG dollars, half are split equally between the five ADC

districts, and the other half is split equally between the lion/bear and pelican funds.

The five district ADC boards also request annual contributions from the counties within their district. Of the 44 counties solicited, 38 regularly contribute funds.

The amounts given by each county vary based on the amount of service needed and available dollars. It is the responsibility of the county representative on each district ADC board to converse annually with the local commissioners to ensure the county is contributing to the district.

Grazing districts across the state also contribute to their local ADC district annually. Those funds are split to correspond with the district each grazing allotment is a part of.

USDA Wildlife Services

The mission of USDA Wildlife Services is to provide federal leadership and expertise to resolve wildlife conflicts to allow people and wildlife to coexist.

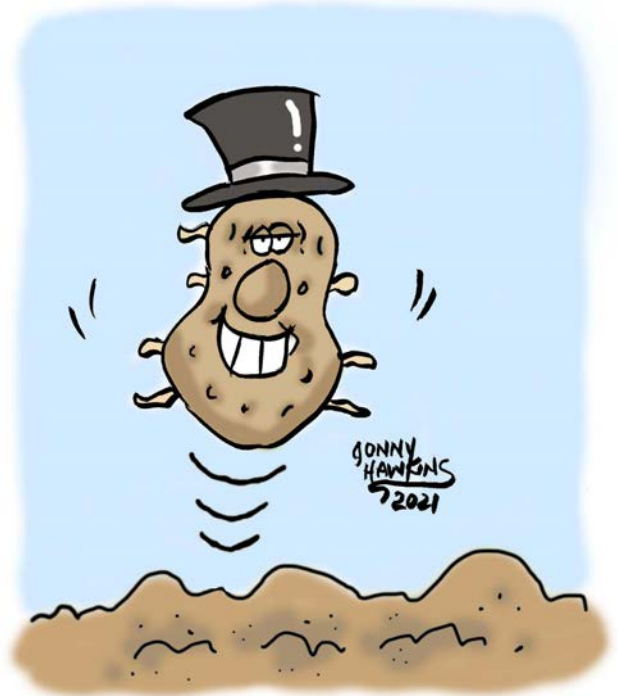
To accomplish this, they maintain agreements with many different groups, covering a wide variety of wildlife. If you experience conflicts with any wildlife species, contact your USDA wildlife specialist and they will likely be able to assist. ■

Country Chuckles

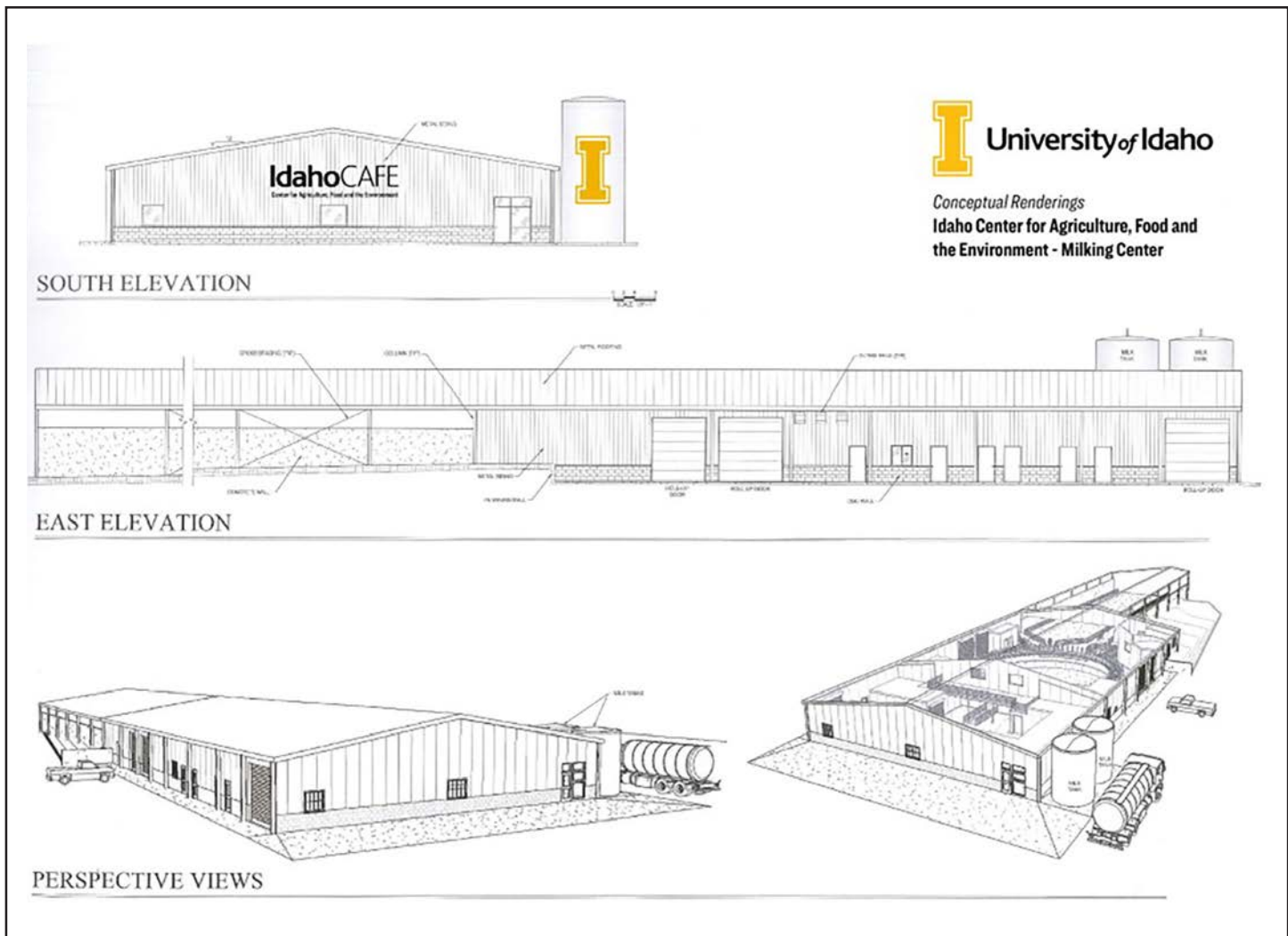
By Jonny Hawkins



Alfred's attempt at a Mr. Potato Salad was met with less than overwhelming enthusiasm.



Levy Tater



Conceptual Renderings
 Idaho Center for Agriculture, Food and
 the Environment - Milking Center

Cargill donates \$500,000 to U of I's CAFE project

Cargill news release

TWIN FALLS – Dairy sustainability scientists and innovators will soon have the nation's largest research hub to test their ideas and develop technologies in the Pacific Northwest.

The Idaho Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (CAFE) will be the backdrop to short-term and longer-term research projects to benefit dairy farmers in Idaho and beyond.

To help support this University of Idaho project, Cargill is donating \$500,000 to the university.

Located in the nation's third-largest dairy-producing state and home to a thriving agriculture sector, CAFE is designed with the size and scale of a commercial dairy, with additional capabilities to grow and study crops used for animal nutrition.

CAFE researchers will examine the sustainability of the dairy farming value chain from feed to milk and beyond to help bring solutions to dairy farmers in the Western region for years to

come. In addition, researchers will study additional revenue streams for farmers beyond milk from emerging bio-based products and carbon credit markets.

"Supporting the next generation of agriculture sustainability experts and the dairy farmers who will benefit from their advancements is important to our company," says Julie Abrahamzon, commercial director for Cargill's animal nutrition business in North America. "We are making investments in projects like U of Idaho's CAFE because we believe in the future of the dairy industry."

"Idaho CAFE presents a viable farm-scale solution for conducting the research needed to address the sustainability of the dairy industry nationwide," said UI College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Dean Michael Parrella. "Cargill's investment in this effort underscores the critical need for the research-based solutions that will benefit dairy producers for generations to come."

The multi-phase project will begin milking its first cows by the end of 2024 and will house 2,000 cows when fully operational. ■

A NEW, PRIVATE
CROP INSURANCE

SERVICED BY A LOCAL,
KNOWLEDGEABLE AGENT

WITH GREEN SNAP
PLUS COVERAGE

SPECIALY-TRAINED
ADJUSTERS

CUSTOMIZABLE
COVERAGE

FROM AN IDAHO-BASED,
AWARD-WINNING COMPANY

WITH 75 YEARS' EXPERIENCE
INSURING IDAHO'S FARMS

BETTER CROP INSURANCE FROM THE GROUND UP

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL AGENT TO LEARN MORE



**NEW EPISODES
EVERY OTHER
TUESDAY!**

**IB Idaho
Farm Bureau**

P.O. Box 4848
Pocatello, ID 83205-4848

LOOKING FOR A NEW PODCAST? DIRT ROAD DISCUSSIONS

EPISODE 27: FIVE MARYS FARMS

THE HEFFERNAN FARM FAMILY (YES, THERE REALLY ARE 5 MARYS) DREAMED OF TAKING WHAT THEY LEARNED FROM THE RESTAURANT BUSINESS AND MOVED IT INTO RAISING AND PRODUCING BEEF AMONG MANY OTHER VENTURES. THIS IS THEIR STORY OF STARTING OVER 20 BUSINESSES WHILE ACHIEVING THEIR GOAL OF RAISING FOUR DAUGHTERS WITH AGRICULTURAL ROOTS.

