

Western Farm, Ranch & Dairy Magazine

The vital resource of the Ag Industry

Northwest • fall-winter edition 2007

Idaho / Oregon / Washington



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Willamette Valley Ag Expo
Grows and Changes

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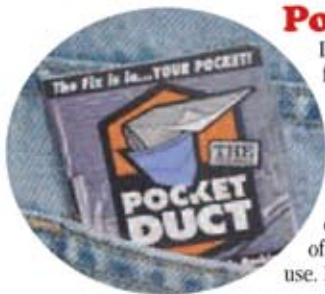
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WHAT TO *DEPEND* ON.

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ON THE COVER

Photo by: Scott Bauerw – Courtesy of USDA.
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Advantages

- 1 Our wand is meant to be back filled to keep the concussion in the tunnel/burrow and keep the noise level down.
- 2 If you hear a bang you are losing 50 to 70% of your concussion that should be in the tunnel/burrow.
- 3 Saves on your oxygen.
- 4 Hand held devices are DANGEROUS.
- 5 VARMITgetter gets the gas in the tunnel/burrow 3 to 4 times faster than the handheld devices.
- 6 Our device does not have to be cocked and valves to be turned each time you fire it like the handheld that are out there.
- 7 VARMITgetter can be fired repeatedly over and over again, simply by applying the gas and hit the button without being near the blast.
- 8 In VARMITgetter's owners manual it tells you how long to apply the gas depending on what varmint you are dealing with.
- 9 VARMITgetter is priced hundreds of dollars less than the handheld devices on the market and doesn't break down.
- 10 Wired remote control -- up to 25' away from the blast site.

11 Operator DOES NOT hold onto applicator, which produces the blast.

12 Operator is not fatigued by the constant concussion of the blast.

13 The other hand-held units cause some operators to flinch, causing not enough gas to be used for proper application.

14 You are able to see the blast from a safe distance at the control box and know how effective it is, versus just hearing it.

15 Able to cover firing cone with loose dirt to help keep gas from escaping and to snuff out possible fire.

16 More portable, easier to move from burrow to burrow, it is smaller and better balanced.

17 Well built to protect sensitive parts, yet readily accessible for easy repair.

18 Extra safety measures are built in, so in the event that the unit has been damaged or misused, you are protected by check valves, flashback arrestors and pressure relief plugs.

19 The firing cone is made smaller, therefore, easier to use on small rodents, such as the gopher and mole, etc.

20 Some repairs can be done while in the field, such as the check valve and wiring.

21 The single dispersion hose provides better gas mix, giving more effective and consistent blasts.

If you have any questions, would like more information or to purchase call our toll free number 1- 877-XVARMIT or go to www.varmitgetter.com 📞

Ag Expo Grows And Changes

If the 7th annual Willamette Valley Ag Expo is any indicator of the agriculture economy in Oregon things must be great. The Expo, scheduled for November 13th through the 15th in Albany reports an increase in vendor sales of over 20% over last year, with dozens of new companies joining the Show this year. "We had over 90% of last year's vendors return and have had a lot of interest from new companies both in the Willamette Valley and regional or national suppliers", said Scott Ingalls, producer of the event.

The Expo features over 130 Ag related suppliers, services and equipment dealers as well as offering CORE certification training, a large antiques farm equipment display and a very popular used equipment sale alley. The sale alley is open only to sellers that are vendors within the Expo and has been a popular addition.

Another new feature this year will be a 'ride & drive' on Wednesday evening. "This is an opportunity for the hobby farmer or stock owner that normally wouldn't come to an event like this to drive some of the smaller and medium size tractors and such", according to Ingalls. "In fact, along with the ride &

drive we are offering programming from the Extension Service geared to the smaller acreage owner on Wednesday evening too". There will also be a working demonstration of GPS controls in front of the facility, presented by Fisher Implement.

The Willamette Valley Ag Expo is produced by Ingalls & Associates for the Willamette Valley Ag Association, a non-profit group formed and managed by vendors within the Expo. The Association uses a percentage of realized profits from the Expo to provide \$1,000 scholarships to Oregon college students studying in the agriculture field. This year the Association awarded seven such scholarships. Those students are expected to be at the vendor breakfast during the Expo if their class schedules permit.

The Expo runs Tuesday, November 13th from 9 to 5, Wednesday, November 14th from 10 to 9 and Thursday, November 15th from 10 to 5. Admission is \$4 which includes a \$2 discount on the 'Ag Bar-B-Que Lunch'. Parking is free. More information including sle items, class schedules and vendor listings is available at wvaexpo.com.

Contact: Scott Ingalls, 800-208-2168, scott@ingallsagency.com 📞

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Egbers on Super Edge

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Laura Egbers, owners of Egbers Flighting & Supply L.L.C. The Super Edge is created in the rolling process. This is a cold rolling process so the steel is not heat treated. “This lets the steel retain its strength.” States Doug. Because of how the flighting is made, the outside edge is thicker than your common market flighting or plain flighting as they call it. Super Edge Auger Flighting has approximately 50 thicker outside edge. It gives longer wear and longer life of the auger.

And Egbers knows their augers. Their repair and fabrication division has years of experience in re-flighting and balancing auger sections. “It just makes good sense to replace the auger flighting instead of buying a new auger section.” Confirms Doug- “New auger sections can be pricey and the Super Edge Auger

Flighting is priced to sell,” Along with their repair’s Egbers offers a wide assortments of replacement parts and tubing. They have you basic inside tubing, pipe, rolled tube for grain cart unloading augers all the way up to 40 ft. lengths for transport augers, “We’ve always thought freight and shipping to our customers was a problem, we can ship pretty much all the replacement parts a customer needs from here.” States Laura “That way all your parts come from one location instead of several,”

New service for Egbers is their ability to balance combine rotors. “We’re always looking for new products and services for our customers. These rotors can be balanced at a fraction of what a new one costs,” Says Laura.

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- The all new 1028-s model is designed for the 3x3 bales and is nonadjustable.
- The model 1032 is adjustable and able to handle the 3x3 and 3x4 bales with ease.

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Starr Trak

As you know, center pivot and linear irrigation systems, under certain soil conditions, can be plagued by severe rutting problems. There are many things that irrigation managers have attempted in the past to curtail the problem such as plowing in ruts at the beginning of the year, or filling the trenches with wood chips, rock or hay bales, just to name a few. This often helps but invariably rutting problems persist and worsen leading to time and money lost to things such as:

- Digging out bogged down towers
- Erecting and repairing corner units

that have collapsed while trying to climb out of trenches

- General wear and tear to machinery from crossing trenches



Starr Trak, The Answer To Irrigation Rutting Problems

Rutting problems have been around for years and have spawned many pos-

sible solutions. Many of these ideas have accomplished some amount of improvement, but often end up creating more problems or simply poor results. That is until now.

STARR TRAK was designed and built as a logical answer to irrigation rutting problems. Now carried by your local Zimmatic dealer, this system is simple, affordable, and most importantly, effective. Not only will it solve your rutting issues, it will do so without creating other problems.

The patented STARR TRAK system has proven to tremendously

increase flotation allowing the machine to roll more freely resulting in

The McGregor Company

More than 120 years ago four McGregor brothers got their start as open range (“tramp”) sheepmen in the early 1880’s. They weren’t always welcomed as they trailed their sheep from scabland winter pastures to the surrounding mountains. “Cattle owners are running from a pestilence—sheep,” wrote a growly Yakima cattleman of those pioneer days. My great-uncle, John, recalled that the biggest challenge in those years of living in tents and traversing open range was “the farmer and his shotgun”.

The McGregor brothers took to the plow themselves and began growing wheat in 1901. They began raising cattle, in addition to sheep, on their range eight years later. They incorporated their ranch as McGregor Land and Livestock Company in 1905. At the McGregor ranch, headquartered at Hooper, today we raise cows and calves on scabland pastures and wheat on the adjacent hills near the confluence of the Palouse and Snake Rivers.

We were pioneers in the fertilizer business beginning fifty-five years ago as a sideline to our ranch general store. My cousin, Maurice, saw great promise in the soil fertility trials a Washington State College agronomist, Harley Jacquot, had done. When public funding for Harley’s research ran out, he came on board as our full-time ranch agronomist. My father, Sherman, then a clerk at our store, started supplying neighbors with fertilizers. Dad and Harley organized research tours on the ranch every summer, attended by hundreds of farmers from across the region.

Today we’re proud to serve farmers and ranchers in many communities across eastern Washington. We’ve worked with cattle raisers since I was a toddler—providing nutrition supplements, battling invading weeds, and helping produce the best results on pastures, hay fields, and range. My Dad’s philosophy of hiring dedicated local people, investing in

the communities we serve, and building long term relationships with customers is deeply entrenched in our organization. The dedicated people who are The McGregor Company join me in saluting our cattle raising neighbors. We’re relative newcomers, with ninety-four years as cattlemen, compared to many of those we serve. We believe that farmers and ranchers are the cornerstone to our Pacific Northwest economy and are the unsung environmental leaders of our region—as good stewards of the prairie hills and canyons they manage. We tell of your achievements and of how proud we are to be of service to you every time we get a chance.

On behalf of my colleagues in each of the rural communities we serve, we the people of The McGregor Company are mighty proud of our neighbors who produce the foodstuffs that feed people around the country and the world.

Respectfully,
Alex McGregor 🐾

much shallower tracks. For instance, in one field test, high-float tires were creating ruts anywhere from 12" to 24". When the STARR TRAK system was used, the ruts were only two to four inches deep. One to two feet versus two to four inches, that's roughly a 600% improvement in track depth. With this improvement, difficult soil types that have previously prevented automated irrigation systems from being installed may now be manageable using STARR TRAK.

Not only does this system increase flotation, it also helps minimize rutting from soil erosion through its horizontal traction pattern which allows water to move to the outside of the track rather than centralizing water flow as do existing tire patterns. In addition, STARR TRAK is designed to keep the tires in their factory-designed angle (something that can't be done with solid metal or bolt on wheels) so as to not put any added stress on the axels and support tubes. Also, STARR TRAK may be used on the entire system or simply on problem towers.

Since the development of STARR TRAK, a need was recognized for the same track to be applied to corner units. The extreme weight, varied angles, and stress created by irregular terrain previously made widening the track difficult. The development of a retrofit bracing system for corner units has solved those challenges. These are now available for new or used pivots and allow our STARR TRAK assembly to be added to any corner unit. End tower rut crossover or simply the over watering in corner machine tracks need no longer be a problem for irrigators.

Imagine no shut down calls at midnight, no missed water timing, no digging or pulling machines out, no more filling in ruts. Then imagine, smooth field preparation and harvest operations under your pivot or linear system without damage to equipment. Imagine solving the cause of the problem rather than just fighting the symptoms. This is what STARR TRAK delivers.

The market is in need of a solution and we are ready to help solve your problems. 📞

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Saddle Butte Ag is sensitive to customers' specialized needs. Saddle Butte Ag's seed production, and access to quality forage grasses from Europe and New Zealand, enables them to create blends that meet any customer's specific seed needs. The company sells several varieties of forages, orchard grass, ryegrass, and fescue, as well as other agricultural products like turnips, chicory, plantain, oats and peas.

They also offer many types of clovers. Our exclusive variety of Ladino White Clover, Seminole, is a high yielding, cold tolerant forage compatible with other grasses and alfalfa.

Saddle Butte works closely with universities and researchers to keep abreast of new releases of improved seed that can be grown not only in the Pacific

Northwest, but across the United States and the rest of the world. They are developing varieties of forage grasses that are resistant to cold and rust, as well as forage grasses that maximize milk production for dairy cows.

Saddle Butte Ag is actively participating in the wildlife seed market servicing customers through out the United states. The wildlife mix is designed to attract deer, elk, and turkey. Saddle Butte Ag adjusts each customer blend for the soil type and climate of each region they sell to.

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Farm Pond Water Quality Maintenance

By: Jim A. Keeton, Fisheries Biologist

A major challenge on the farmstead is maintaining a pond for not only aesthetic appearance, but also a balanced fishery and good water quality. Many ponds are plagued with poor water quality that can result in major algae blooms, fish kills and poor water transparency. Poor water quality is the root of all evil concerning ornamental ponds, resulting in low oxygen; excessive algae and weed growth and not so nice looking water.

Many of us wonder what are the causes of such conditions and how we can correct them. Most biologists know that excessive nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus are the culprits of poor water quality. Even small

amounts of these nutrients in water can make a major difference between a clean pond and an unsightly pond.



Before Microbes

NUTRIENTS

Sources of nutrient entering a pond come from a variety of sources that we

call non-point source pollution because it is hard to identify all sources in particular pond water shed. In agricultural areas, run-off from fields, corrals, barns etc. can contribute large amounts of phosphorus and nitrogen if your pond is down stream. Even wells can be a major contributor to algae growth if they are loaded with nutrients. Many people assume if the water from a well is clear and cold, then it must be good when in fact, testing many times reveals high levels of phosphorus and even nitrogen.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The key to a successful farm pond management and a beautiful pond are maintaining water quality through a variety of options. The best manage-

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ment approach is solutions that are biological and mechanical, without the use of chemicals. In many cases we cannot control sources of nutrient entering a pond, so in-pond methods can be used to reduce nutrients and maintain good water quality and clarity.

These methods include:

Subsurface aeration, consisting of fine bubble diffusers to increase oxygen, freshening water, reducing nutrients and creating a better aquatic habitat for beneficial organisms to return to the pond. Subsurface aeration is the best as these aerators can circulate large volumes of water from the bottom up with low power consumption when compared to fountains. There are even solar powered aerators for lake and ponds that are as good as an electric unit, with no power costs "ever", but will cost more up front.



After Microbes

Beneficial microbial additions, a new technology that is very effective and a very promising aquatic management tool. Microbes can effectively reduce nutrients to low levels, digest bottom sludge and reduce all forms of nitrogen. Various beneficial microbes are now available for different functions, depending upon pond conditions.

Artificial substrates can be added for ponds that are very eutrophic (heavy nutrient levels), to grow beneficial organisms and absorb nutrients maintaining clear water.

To summarize call a professional biologist that can assess your ponds state of health and make recommendations based upon sound science. In the next article we will expand on aeration, biological management procedures and fishery management. 🐾

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Potato Industry Challenges

By: Jerry Wright
CEO, United Potato Growers of Idaho

The challenges facing the potato industry today are leaving many to wonder if a practical solution even exists – especially for growers. Serious over capitalization and over capacity in all aspects of the potato production has led to excess supply, cutthroat pricing, and a significant overhead tax in almost every facet of the industry.

Moreover, fundamental changes among traditional cus-

tomers and consumers are challenging the industry's long-established practices. Customers nationwide have consolidated and are gaining significant pricing leverage, ultimately reducing profitability for growers. Even worse, the real consumer, the average American, is eating fewer potatoes.

For the industry to be successful, the only variable that should remain constant is change itself. With the market, customers and consumers always changing, a new business model must be devised to identify and solve the problems within the supply "pipeline."

GROWERS

First and foremost, it all starts with the grower. Potato yields are up 65 percent over the last 25 years. Since 1987, growers are producing on 10 percent fewer acres; but on those 10 percent fewer acres, they are actually growing more potatoes. The net impact is the equivalent of adding 20,000 additional acres. Most years, 13 million hundred-weight of excess potatoes are grown. In other words, that is 1.3 billion pounds of surplus. What does that excess production do? It crushes the market.

PACKING SHED CAPACITY

Additionally, in the past 10 years, a major shift has occurred. Large growers have become "grower-shippers" illustrating that many in the industry still believe bigger is better. As a result, these "Mega Sheds" are contributing to the 40 percent excess shed capacity within Idaho. With their focus on absorbing overhead rather than meeting actual market demand, the real market – the actual consumer – continues to be overlooked and even ignored.

Likewise, this excess production capacity represents a massive tax on every bag that comes out of each shed by flooding the market and lowering the price for everyone. In order to sustain that over capacity, it is estimated that growers and sheds alike are losing a minimum of \$1.00 to \$1.25 per bag in profit. The picture does not change when shifting from fresh to frozen processors or dehydrators. It is the same over capitalized picture.

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CUSTOMERS

With over 200 sales people in Idaho alone, and probably more than 400 nationwide, all are competing for the same accounts. Because many of the industry's customers have undergone significant consolidation in the past 10 years, today there are probably no more than 40 major buyers in the fresh market. This means that there are more than 400 sales people chasing 40 buyers – all trying to sell the 1.3 billion pounds of excess potatoes produced each year.

CONSUMERS

In the last 20 years, in-home consumption of potatoes has declined 27 percent, a trend that was happening long before the introduction of low carb diets and Atkins. In 1984, some 84 percent of American households had potatoes and ate them 3.4 times per week. Today, only 74 percent of households have potatoes and only eat them 2.4 times per week. Both household penetration and frequency have declined.

THE SOLUTION

Growers are finally recognizing they must UNITE and control their future. Recently, growers nationwide decided to make their own luck and dictate their own future. UNITED together, growers decided to stop overproducing by controlling what they planted – a major paradigm shift in North America for potato growers.

In 2005, members of UNITED cut 35 thousand acres of

spuds, which was 54 percent of the USDA reported reduction in fall plantings. In September through November, growers saw the highest returns in 10 years; but it has not been flawless. The excess capacity that oversupplies the pipeline, in spite of the smaller crop, still plagues the industry.

The changes needed cannot stop at reduced plantings.

Additional steps must be initiated to reduce excess capacity in the sheds and in the sales and marketing organizations, which is literally costing Idaho growers more than a hundred million dollars each year. Measures must also be taken to fully consolidate the supply chain, encompassing both the packing capacity and sales organizations. Without it, no one will gain leverage with the consolidated customer base.

Finally, the real problem must not be forgotten. Declining consumption by consumers cannot be ignored. Significant dollars must be spent to reverse the trend. The industry, after a 20-year nap, has finally awakened to realize the consumer has moved on. Like the cheese, milk and almond industries, the potato industry must spend millions of advertising dollars to reverse this trend and remind consumers they can again enjoy potatoes.

Simply put, all players in the industry need to UNITE. Changes are inevitable, only a unified effort will make everyone profitable. ♣

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Yellowstone Park—so major that ash has been recorded in as far away regions as Florida—made the Ashton soil and its underlying bedrock of basalt quite accommodating for potatoes. Add that to a high altitude, mild summers and harsh winters to curtail the spreading of diseases, and you've

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Going on three generations, Baum Seed Potatoes has been producing quality certified seed potatoes for more than sixty years. It all started in 1947 with dark Baum, who

started with a field of Canadian thistle and wild oats and turned it into a crop. He passed the torch on to his son, Rex, about 30 years ago. Rex has integrated the latest in growing practices, along with more modern machinery, into the business. The tradition continues with his son Jared.

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Jared Baum holds his newly harvested Russet Burbank seed. He says up until a few years ago, russets were the only variety the Baums grew.

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Jim Letal has 35 years of experience working in the seed potato industry advising growers on the best growing practices. He worked in Alberta as the Provincial Seed Potato Specialist for 25 years and has spent an additional 10 years operating a seed potato tissue culturing laboratory.

Jim knows that in order to produce Superior Performing Seed Potatoes, you

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Spring Begins Today: 5 reasons to condition your soil now

Harvest doesn't end the season, it starts it;

5 reasons to condition your soils now.

(Louisville) – There's a saying out in the country that 'it's so quiet you can hear the corn grow.' This time of year all you will hear corn doing is settling in the bins. However, if you listen carefully some crisp, calm, autumn night you might just hear the sound of spring field work. No, it is not ringing with tractors and planters, spray rigs and seeders but buzzing with insects and bugs earthworms and bacteria. We refer to the earth as being 'dormant' this time of year, but far from dormant, the earth is alive and active; repairing, replacing, and rebuilding so that you can use it again next year to pull in another crop. Many farmers, if they condition their soils at all, either mechanically or chemically do not do so till the spring, but now, before you park the tractor in the barn for another season is the time to capitalize on the prep work that nature is already doing. A better understanding of the science of soil is showing that some of these products do offer some benefit. Joe Dedman, Certified Crop Advisor with Monty's Plant Food Company in Louisville, offered these thoughts on why using products like Monty's Liquid Carbon is so critical for the fall.

Before you can begin with any calculation of the value of conditioning you have to know where you are starting and establish a baseline. For that reason Dedman says, "Soil Testing is critical." He recommends fall as the best time for this as well because you will know what your needs are ahead of the spring and can plan for them financially. Further, the fall is when you may actually have time to soil test adequately and properly. Too many times we approach spring with the intention of testing but it is too rainy to get into the fields, then when the sunshine does break we are in such a hurry to get things planted on time that it slips off the calendar. Additionally, right now temperatures and moisture levels are moderating which will tend to give the most accurate readings for soil pH and nutrient levels. Finally, by knowing your input needs and plans now you have time to shop around for your inputs

so that you can maximize any cost saving that may be waiting. Even if you don't apply any fertility till the spring by buying it now you can reap huge dividends for your bottom line.

Time - Soil Conditioners especially conditioners which contain humic substances like Monty's Liquid Carbon provide numerous benefits like improving tilth, reducing compaction and hardpan, improving drainage, improving nutrient exchange and availability but all of these processes take some time to work. By applying it now you will gain at least 4-5 months over applications made 2 weeks prior to planting.

Time pt. 2 - One of the most valuable resources you have is your time. By conditioning now, following harvest, when you generally have more time you can free your production calendar of one more chore this spring. Additionally, Spring weather is unpredictable at best and you can find yourself late into April still hoping to get the fields dry enough to plant, much less to make an extra pass through the field with conditioner.

Water Management - One of the main benefits of humic technology is the ability to assist you in better utilization of water. By applying in the fall, you allow the soil to hold any moisture that falls during the course of the winter, while also opening up the soil profile to provide for better drainage. Imagine a spring where you are not held out of the field by poor draining soils or find yourself planting into dust hoping for a rain shower to get the crop up. Soils conditioned with a humic-based conditioner offer you the opportunity to improve drainage while holding moisture in the seed zone. This can allow for earlier entry into the field without fear of compaction problems or worries about seed rot prior to germination.

Residue Management - No-Till agriculture is no longer the exception; it is the rule. Leaving last year's crop residue does provide for some undeniable advantages, however, you can still maximize even those results by utilizing humics in your conditioning practices.

When you apply a product like Monty's Liquid Carbon you are not only working to build the soil, but you are activating the microbes, earthworms, arthropods, and small mammals that call the upper seven inches of top-soil 'home.' As these elements of the soil 'community' are energized, they begin feeding and breaking down the residue more efficiently making the resulting organic matter available sooner and releasing more nutrients into the soil profile ahead of spring planting.

Improved Soil Condition -Improved tilth maximizes aerobic activity, improves water percolation, and movement of nutrients. Improvement of pH levels for optimum seed development and early plant growth should have a positive impact on additional root establishment and photosynthesis. Humics have also shown the ability to reduce compaction, break up hard pan, and improve friability of soils all of which can make your tractor move through the field much more easily thereby reducing time and fuel operating costs.

The key to these changes is doing them before the microbes, earthworms, and microorganisms move deeper into warmer soil, die or become inactive in winter's cooler soils. By conditioning your soils now, which can be as easy as applying Monty's Liquid Carbon at 64oz. per acre diluted in 15 gallons of water directly to the soil, you are potentially buying yourself an extra week to two weeks this spring. As we all know, time, especially in modern agriculture, is money. And that is the bottom line; by conditioning your soils, by better preparing your seed beds, and by allowing them to better utilize your inputs and nature's resources you are maximizing your chances for an optimized bottom line.

"Shhh, if you quiet enough, out here in the country this time of year you can hear your bank account growing."

www.montysplantfood.com or call 1-800-978-6342 for more information of fall fertility or soil conditioning practices. 🐜

Washington seed potato farmers

The weather has been kind to seed potato farmers in Washington State this season. With seven growers tilling over 2,400 acres, Washington seed potato farmers believe they are supplying seed of the highest quality from this year's crop.

Nearly sixty varieties of seed potatoes are grown in Washington, including Red Lasoda, Chieftan, Russet Burbank, Ranger Russet, California White, Umatilla, Satina, and Yukon Gold. A majority of each crop is committed to buyers at harvest, and the inventory is entirely cleared out each year. Growers are committed to meeting their customer's needs and welcome cooperative efforts to explore and grow new varieties.

Whatcom County, located in the extreme northwest corner of the geographic US, is the state's most concentrated seed potato growing area. Whatcom County is in a narrow strip of fertile soils between Puget Sound and the Cascade Mountain Range. With this geographic location, Whatcom County growers are isolated from large commercial potato operations. There is also seed production just west of Spokane.

Whatcom County is legislatively protected to be a prime certified seed potato growing area. General commercial potatoes may not be grown in plots larger than an acre. That protection has helped win Whatcom seed a good reputation over many decades. Major customers for WA seed potatoes are in Skagit County located immediately to the south, the Columbia Basin of eastern Washington, Idaho, and the Bakersfield area of California.

2006 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Washington State Seed Potato Commission (WSSPC). The WSSPC was established in 1956 to "establish orderly, fair, sound, efficient, and unhampered marketing and standardizing of seed potatoes, and to promote and increase the sale of seed potatoes". The WSSPC helps growers address mutual challenges and works with researchers and government agencies to make sure that Washington seed potato growers remain on the "cutting edge" of new technology, growing practices, and quality control.

Like most agricultural industries, much has changed in 50 years. What has not changed is the commitment of Washing-

ton seed growers to supply quality seed to their customers. Washington seed potato growers take pride in their field standards and grading and testing requirements that insure that their seed meets the demands of commercial potato growers throughout

the world.

Those interested in knowing more about the WSSPC and the Washington seed potato industry can access the website at <http://www.waseedpotato.com/> or call 360-354-4670 for a current crop directory. 🍆

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An Update on the Oregon Potato Commission

The Oregon Potato Commission has a variety of benefits to offer the potato industry. Much of what we have been involved with this past year revolves around establishing relationships with nearby states and potato industry leaders in those states. We have also been involved with promoting our frozen, dehydrated, and fresh potato products to individuals from different countries around the world, and furthering the pursuit of ongoing research. Promotion of our locally grown potatoes has also occurred in the form of educational events and participation in public affairs. We have much optimism for the coming year and we anticipate increased potato exports from our region; especially the export of chipping potatoes.

In order to foster the relationships we have established with researchers and growers as well as the Washington State Potato Commission (WSPC), and the Idaho Potato Commis-

sion (IPC), a non profit company known as the Potato Variety Management Institute (PVMI) was formed. PVMI is a non profit company with membership of the Oregon Potato Commission (OPC), Idaho Potato Commission (IPC) and the Washington State Potato Commission (WSPC). Each commission has an agreement with their state University to receive the first right to license new potato varieties. The commissions have an agreement with PVMI to sub-license those varieties to growers. In 1996 Plant Variety Protection (PVP) on potatoes became available, which allows exclusive release and fees to be charged for licenses and royalties. For many years each of the state potato commissions have allocated funds for potato variety development. Over 20 years ago, in these three states, potato variety development programs started working together in a program called Tri-State Potato Breeding.

Stukenholtz Laboratory Inc. Celebrating 37 Years of Agricultural Testing

In 1970, there were no commercial soil and plant testing laboratories in Idaho. Farmers applied fertilizers based upon educated guesswork. Dr. Dale Stukenholtz and his wife Joyce saw an opportunity to build a business and started a soil and plant testing laboratory and field consulting service based in Twin Falls, Idaho. Dr. Stukenholtz had an unusually diverse background as an educator at the University of Nebraska, an agronomist in the fertilizer industry, and a farmer, and he saw a need for more modern fertilizer recommendations to produce greater yields at less cost. His clients were the growers, so he could make unbiased recommendations that maximized economic return to the farmer. After extensive field research, he developed these improved fertilizer recommendations that quickly became popular with growers and form the basis for nearly all fertilizer applications in the intermountain west area. Stukenholtz Laboratory clients include growers from all neighboring states and several foreign countries including Australia, Canada, Egypt, Russia, Mexico and New Zealand.

Stukenholtz Laboratory provides 1 to 2 day service, including picking up and delivery time, across Southern Idaho from St. Anthony and Grace to Parma and Homedale. Results can be delivered, mailed, faxed, or pulled from the Laboratory's webpage: www.stukenholz.com. To improve their service, Joyce and Dale Stukenholtz expanded the laboratory 11 years ago,

installed the latest in computerized instrumentation and quality control, and made it the most modern and well equipped agricultural laboratory in their market area.

Critical to the success of Idaho's most efficient laboratory and largest field consulting firm has been its personnel. Dr. Stukenholtz has had a PhD in Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition since 1964 and his son and Laboratory Manager Paul has nearly completed his own. Consulting agronomists include J.P. Kruckeberg of American Falls, a 29 year veteran of field consulting and the most successful single agronomist in the state, and Bart Kunz. The Laboratory and office staff are equally good.

Stukenholtz Laboratory continues with research and improvement. In conjunction with the Idaho Crop Production Association and University of Idaho CFEP research project, Stukenholtz Laboratory has helped to ensure that fertilizer recommendations in Idaho are the most cost efficient possible and produce the maximum economic yield while protecting the environment. Stukenholtz Laboratory personnel have conducted field research on over 40 different products and continue to be the experts at "cutting edge" agricultural technology. As we end our first 37 years of business and begin our next, we would like to thank our current and former employees for their dedicated work and our customers and clients for their years of support. 🍷

Tri-State is one of the premiere potato breeding programs in the world. Each state and program brings unique situations and personnel to the table for the overall program. Tri-State participants are Oregon State University (OSU), University of Idaho (UI), Washington State University (WSU), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), IPC, WSPC and OPC.

Earlier this year, the Oregon Potato Commission (OPC) along with the Washington State Potato Commission (WSPC), and the Idaho Potato Commission (IPC) hosted a group of individuals from Central America. These individuals represented opportunities available in this portion of the world to export frozen potato products. Members of this group toured the Port of Seattle upon arrival and before departing the U.S., had meetings near Moses Lake and Pasco, and visited growing and packing facilities around the state.

Education and promotional events have occurred this year as well. One such event involved a series of grower appreciation days put on at McDonalds restaurants around the state. At these events, growers would greet the press and talk about how they sell their potatoes directly to this restaurant. Additionally, the OPC held a cooking contest at the Oregon State Fair where members of the public had the opportunity to enter dishes made from Oregon potatoes. One of our commissioners demonstrated cooking methods using fresh potatoes and dehydrated potato products at this event. Prizes were also distributed along with recipes to interested individuals. The event turned out to be a success and many people were introduced to new and innovative potato preparation methods.

The Oregon Potato Commission is working along with other potato growing states to promote a specialty crop industry priority document which will be submitted to the Oregon legislatures. This document has been produced by a coalition of specialty crop people that represent over 42% of all farm gate crop value in the U.S.

It is hoped that by producing this document, members of the legislature will support economic growth for potatoes in Oregon.

The economy around the Pacific Northwest is growing due to increased exports at our ports. We are proud to be part of this growth and continue to foster relationships with our neighboring states, the international community, our state universities, and the public. 🍌



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Harv's Farm Supply Inc. Helping You "Adapt" To Harvest

Are you looking to replace your combine or corn head but don't have to capitul to update both? Or do you need to have a specialty head custom built? Or rent a head for harvest? Or are you looking for a Bin Extension? Or wanting to find an easier way to harvest Down Corn? Or do you just want to adapt a newer head to an older combine or an older head to a newer combine. – Either way, we have you covered!

Harv's Farm Supply, manufacturer of BISH brand products – including Bish Head Changers, Bish Bin Extensions, Bish Down Corn Reels and Bish Custom Built Corn and Row Crop Heads – has been in business for 31 years at it's original location 4 miles west of Giltner, Nebraska. Harv's Farm Supply started business in 1976, with the introduction of the Bish Head Changers.

Bish Head Changers are packages which enable producers to place John Deere corn and row crop heads onto the combine that best fits their operations. Originally targeting the John Deere heads to be mounted onto combines of other manufactures, we now mix and match heads of nearly all brands onto combines of the most popular manufactures. This ability to serve the hard working men and women that take grain from the field to the table has lead this business to evolve into a leader of quality products and services that we provide each and everyday.

As the farming practices changed across the country the business grew. Sales of John Deere row crop heads followed shortly after the introduction of the Bish Head Changer, the two went

hand in hand. As farming practices changed and the flex head was brought into production, proving to be a very adequate tool for harvesting soybeans, particularly those planted in rows narrower than 30".

John Deere's decision to discontinue the row crop head, has caused demand to slightly increase, improving the used head market particularly in the hard to find row spacings. Soybeans, sorghum and sunflowers are the crops of choice for these heads.



Originally selling 8 row and smaller row crop and corn heads, we now focus on the needs of producers that require heads not offered by original equipment manufactures. With 100 corn and row crop heads in stock we offer a wide variety of row configurations to meet your needs.

With the introduction of the New Holland – CR Series and the Case IH 70 and 8010 combine -' feeder house widths have increased. Harvs Farm Supply has created a frame with adjustable filler plates to accommodate the New Holland – CR and Case 70 and 8010 as well as many other brands of machines.

We can currently fit our new frames on almost any New Holland, Case IH,

John Deere, Cat Challenger, Cat Lexion, Massey Ferguson and Gleaner combines. This universal feeder house opening on various machines can be obtained with minimal changes to the head due to the use of a Bish Head Changer and allows producers to "share" a head with combines of different manufacturers.

In addition to this newer feeder house opening, we are building a frame specifically designed to accommodate the row units from Case IH 900 and 1000

series heads to be used on the newer Case 70 and 8010 combines as well as the 21, 23 and 2500 series combines, as well as the John Deere combines. This is very beneficial for a producer that wants a row width up to 40" to have a corn head that will do the best job of cutting up the stalk while

being reasonably priced.

One of the main products of our company is our Bish Head Changer, we offer over 70 different possibilities. We welcome your challenges to adapt your favorite combinations of heads and combines. The Bish Head Changer can save you money, as many producers can not afford to update to a newer combine and corn head or cutter bar at the same time.

The Bish head changer allows you to use your existing head to your newer combine. Please call before you make your next leap to a newer piece of equipment as not all combinations are compatible. While we specialize in head changers, but we do not have the same expertise in the wiring for your

header height control. For your wiring needs for your header height control and sensors please call the friendly wiring experts at Headsight Inc. – www.headsight.com.

Harv's Farm Supply has in stock over 50 combinations of drive lines and parts, and we also offer Field Tracker and Contour Master Drive conversion kits, to place your level land head onto a lateral tilt feeder house. We stock custom made stub adapters- such as 1-1/8 hex female to 1-3/8 21 spline male as well as many others. We offer bolt on stub shaft adapters for your John Deere combines which enable you to attach a new head to an older combine via. Telescoping power shaft. These components can all be viewed in detail on our website – www.harvsfarmsupply.com. From the 30+ years of experience of building corn and row crop heads we have tried a lot of things, made many business contacts, created products that have had major impacts in the way people harvest and most of all have made a network of not just customers but FRIENDS!

Our website offers most of our inven-

tory at your fingertips, as well as the details of the other great products we offer. Please take a moment to explore our company at www.harvsfarmsupply.com and let us help you make your dream a reality.

Harv's Farm Supply is owned by

Brad and Christy Bish. Our address is 508 South "D" Road Giltner, Nebraska 68841. Please contact us at harvs@harvsfarmsupply.com or phone 402.849.2674, if you have any questions or comments, we welcome your thoughts. 🇺🇸

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AnBo's rakes designed to help farmers move waste

The hydraulic grapple rake, a versatile new tractor/loader attachment, is giving farmers and ranchers greater control and efficiency in cleaning up, moving, loading, and stacking tasks.

While the dirt bucket has been the standard tractor or loader attachment, it has drawbacks in a variety of tasks requiring control and efficiency such as raking, carrying, or stacking.

Because it's more efficient and adaptable than the bucket, the grapple rake, which hydraulically opens, closes, and moves its jaws of spaced metal tines, is becoming indispensable. It can remove trees and brush or surface rake limbs and debris without piling up unnecessary dirt. It can dig out roots, stumps, and rocks. It can pick up, move, and stack logs and hay bales. It can even lightly plow and efficiently tackle a variety of tasks requiring more control than the typical bucket provides.

Dorman Walser, who farms and ranches 4,000 acres in Crowell, Texas, used a standard bucket attachment on his Caterpillar loader, as well as other implements, to remove trees/brush, move firewood, and haul hay. He was less than satisfied with the results.

"The bucket could pile stuff up, but couldn't rake or stack," Walser says. "It dug into the ground and picked up a lot of

trash and dirt that we had to sort out. It wouldn't hold things in place."

To dig out roots, Walser resorted to plowing. "The plows would hang up on roots and tear up shanks," he says.


While hayforks could move hay bales, they lacked the control necessary to stack them. Says Walser, "When the bale rolled off the fork, I'd have to hope it rolled where I wanted it."


A firewood side business was also too manually labor intensive, requiring sorting through logs and debris.

Walser needed a tool strong enough to pick up stumps, logs, and hay bales, controllable enough to stack them, and versatile enough to efficiently rake up twigs and limbs without piling up dirt. It also had to be strong enough to withstand long wear without breaking teeth.

He turned to a hydraulic grapple rake by Colville, Washington-based AnBo Mfg., which specializes in high quality designed products for tractors, loaders, and skid steers.

AnBo built the grapple rake to fit Walser's Caterpillar loader so no brackets were needed. The grapple rake operates with the loader like a bucket. You can raise and lower it, roll it forwards or backwards. Opening and closing its jaws of spaced metal tines is controlled by a third hydraulic function.


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Walser chose an 8-foot grapple rake with 6-inch tine spacing to allow dirt but not brush to sift through the rake's tines. AnBo uses a special type of steel that has twice the yield strength (resistance to bending) and a much higher Brinell Hardness rating (resistance to wear) than T-1 steel.

When he uses the grapple rake to remove trees, stumps, and roots, he's confident it'll pick up the load without bending teeth or cluttering things up with debris.

"I can pick up whatever I want with it, from stumps as big as people to brush, without picking up dirt," he says. "It's great for grubbing out stumps and roots, and can do the work of five men moving and stacking logs in our firewood business."

He uses the grapple rake not only to rake up tree limbs, brush, and trash, but also to lightly plow the ground in preparation for planting improved grass seed for cattle pasture. "Because you can do everything with it from removing stumps, to raking, to light plowing, it makes for a fast, easy way to get a clean pasture," he says.

Walser uses the grapple rake to pick up, place, and stack square and round hay bales on a truck trailer, in addition to taking hay straight to the cattle from a haystack. "The grapple rake gives us more control than a hay fork," he says. "With it, you can pick up, turn, set down and stack bales wherever you want. It's a great tool for so many applications, and is quick to change over from a bucket."

Dennis Sherer, who grows corn and soy beans and runs a cow/calf operation on 2,000 acres southeast of Kansas City, Mis-

souri, had removed trees from a hedge row that was damaging a fence, and whose roots were jutting into a field. He was frustrated with pushing the trees on the ground with a dozer bucket for burning disposal. Trying to remove the roots with a chisel plow wasn't working, and he disliked how waste hay fell from the bucket when cleaning around the cow racks each winter.

He turned to a 7' AnBo grapple rake as an attachment for his tractor loader, and found the going much easier.

"Instead of pushing trees along the ground, I pick them up with the grapple rake and carry them to the pile," says Sherer. "It grabs everything like the fingers of your hand, and gives you more control. With it, you can pick up just about anything off the ground. It saves lots of time picking up waste cow feed to spread over the pasture."

Sherer has used his grapple rake to pick up, move, or load items that are difficult or inconvenient to do by hand. He's used it to pull trees back from fence lines. He's used it to load wood posts. He's used it to pick up scrap iron, old tires, and concrete foundation pieces. With it, he plans to tear down old wood buildings and load them onto a truck for removal.

"It's a great time saver," concludes Sherer. "I wish I'd heard of it earlier."

For more information, call 866-684-3330 toll free; fax 509-684-1997; email sales@anbomanufacturing.com; visit www.anbomanufacturing.com on the internet; or write to AnBo Manufacturing, Inc. at 685 S. Elm, Colville, WA 99114.

The Columbia Basin Farmer, September 2006

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The patent pending H & M gopher control system uses carbon monoxide from pressurized engine exhaust to kill burrowing rodents such as gophers, ground squirrels, moles and voles.

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Company owners, Allen Hurlburt and Virginia Massey, said that the PERC



got pivots?

Then you already know the challenge of keeping your irrigation on schedule for maximum profit. More than ever, high-energy costs make pivot management a critical task. In the early 90's Jerry Abts was selling a sophisticated and expensive remote monitoring and control system for center pivots; but most irrigators declined and simply asked, "what'a'ya got that will just tell me if my pivots are on?" The answer came in 1995 when Abts founded Pivotrak.com and patented a method of using simple text pagers to keep irrigators informed on the status of whole groups of pivots, one to a hundred or more.

Today Pivotrak combines text messaging and Internet connectivity with special radio telemetry that works everywhere to deliver on-the-go status of multiple pivots to anyone, anywhere. Pagers are still used, but most subscribers receive the text messages on their digital cell phones. In addition, the system provides remote start and stop options from any telephone or the Internet.

There are many reasons for on-site vis-



its to fields with growing crops being irrigated by center pivots. The difference with Pivotrak is you and your hands know immediately when a pivot shuts down (and you know when it starts back up). Priorities change with new information. Now pivot status information delivered to everyone needing it can help adjust priorities to avoid costly downtime that can result in crop stress and yield loss. Why wait until the last of the day to find out a pivot is stuck? With

Pivotrak the problem is immediately known before all the help goes home and you get "stuck" with the problem.

The service is simple, reliable and at just \$225 per season, very affordable. Subscribers can view their pivots on a secure website from anywhere, and the website includes summary and detailed records of all pivot activity (www.pivotrak.com). For a dealer in your area, contact Jerry Abts by phone at 888-872-2360 or e-mail: jerry@pivotrak.com. 📧

system (Pressurized Exhaust Rodent Controller) involves a 1/4 inch diameter steel wand that is used to probe the burrow and injects pressurized exhaust via a hand piece valve that fills the burrow with lethal concentrations of carbon monoxide before the rodent has a chance to either escape or block the burrow.

An internal combustion engine, that also drives a compressor pump that pressurizes the exhaust gas to 125 psi in a storage tank, generates the carbon monoxide.

Two models are available. The PERC 412 is a trailer-mounted unit with a 13 hp motor and four reels each with a 50' hose and the hand probe. The 412 features turf tires and is designed to be pulled behind an ATV. It sells for \$6,595 plus S&H.

The PERC 206 is a skid-mounted unit with a 6.5 hp engine, two reels with 50' hoses and hand probes. It sells for \$3,695 plus S&H.

"No special use permits are required and crop stands are not damaged," Hurlburt says. "It is simple to use and safe for the operator as well as wildlife since there's no poison bait or explosions involved. No other control method is as effective, efficient and as inexpensive to operate as ours."

A PERC system can treat moderately infested alfalfa fields at about 3.5 acres an hour with a single operator, he adds. Each probed location requires only about 20 seconds injection time.

"We have shipped units from Southern California to central Canada and as far east as Kentucky. Though most of our market has been with alfalfa growers, orchard and specialty crop growers have also purchased units. A school district purchased a PERC 206 for their athletic fields and several government entities are very interested," Hurlburt says.

Contact: H & M Gopher Control
Allen Hurlburt and Virginia Massey
1979 Co. Rd. 106, Tulelake, CA 96134

Phone (530) 667-5181

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For more information,

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John Gismondi
Director of Operations

Agro Trend Mfg.

Agro Trend Mfg. has been serving customers in Ontario for the past 16 years. Like their product, their service is solid and built to last. Strong ties have been forged with customers based on integrity and a pledge to deliver a quality product on time and at a fair price.

The Schildroth family of Listowel has owned Agro Trend Mfg. since 1991.

“The company had a pretty good product line—the product was well-designed,” said managing director Rodger Schildroth.

Agro Trend Mfg. is best known for its blowers which rate amongst the top models in the market. The company’s 14 models from the 3’6” to the 9’ heavy duty have proven track records. The newest model is the heavy duty 102” single auger.

However, the company has expanded its equipment line considerably and improved existing products. In addition to snow blowers the company sells a range of cutters, dump trailers and sprayers.

At Agro Trend Mfg., product changes are precipitated by customer feedback or competition. “Our customers are the expert

son the equipment and we listen closely to what they say. As well, if we see a good idea in the market, we improve on it,” Schildroth said.

One of the products the company recently upgraded is a big dump wagon called the Big Mudder. It has been upgraded to an 18-ton capacity with a new undercarriage to handle the increased capacity.

Agro Trend tends to be loyal to their suppliers because that relationship is very important. “If we build a long-term relationship, when a problem arises, it gets solved quickly. Also, we get to know the supplier’s product—we know the limits to which it can be pushed and we don’t have to worry about it. If you look at a piece of shafting in a gear box, you can’t tell the quality of steel by looking at it. The only test is when it is under load,” he said.

Loyalty, however, doesn’t mean Agro Trend is blindfolded.



The company is looking carefully at offshore suppliers for opportunities.

Aside from the manufacturing end, the company is also experiencing changes in the sales process. “We run our business a little differently from some. We try to have dealers set up without any other dealers in the area,” Schildroth explained. However, as the big tractor companies consolidate their dealers, it becomes more difficult to give dealers an area to themselves.

“For instance, we may deal with one company that has five locations, but the other two dealers they bought are right beside our best dealer. This is out of our control,” he said.

Consolidation of dealers is one of Agro Trend’s concerns for the future. With fewer independent dealers, companies like Agro Trend have less choice of where their equipment can be sold because some of the big companies don’t like their dealers to sell short line products. There is some consolation that growing offshore tractors are gaining market share and are willing to include other products in their dealerships. Agro Trend currently has dealers in Ontario, Quebec, The Maritimes and the Northeastern United States.

As with many businesses, the continuing success through all the changes, negotiating and selling comes down to people. “The best part of the last 16 years is the people we deal with. We rely on our employees who produce and sell the best quality equipment. In turn we supply it to our dealers, who we expect are proud to sell our products,” he said. “That’s what makes this business enjoyable.”

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The Pocket Gopher population in the Northwest is high because of the old cliché “out of sight, out of mind.” The damage they do goes unnoticed until harvest time and machinery is damaged and dirt is then added in with the crop tare.

Early spring, before the crop is grown and after the harvest, when the crop has been removed, is the time of year when the gophers in the Northwest are working new upper burrows 6 to 12 inches deep. In extreme heat of cold, they will dig in their lower runs 24 to 30 inches deep.

The main reason that more mounds of dirt are not seen in your field is because they are amazing back fillers, pushing little piles of dirt up to 800 feet in an old run that they have abandoned.

The average gopher builds 150 feet of burrow run per day. In their short life span, their front teeth grow 15 inches in length and are kept short only by the fact that they eat and dig 22 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Gophers never hibernate or go dormant. In fact, gophers only sleep 30 to 45 minutes at a time. Anything that works 8,000 hours a year burns a lot of fuel. This fuel comes from eating crop roots and green foliage (everything but weeds).

The gopher is an antisocial animal who lives only in burrows of its own construction.

If two gophers should meet in a run they would fight to the death, unless it is mating time.

Mating season in the Northwest is once or twice a year. But as any animal in the wild, when their population slowly begins to drop, they will mate outside of their regular mating seasons; having the ability to mate up to five times a year.

This is why poisoning needs to be done on a large scale and within a short span of time with a tractor drawn gopher machine (Burrow Builder). Small acreage (50 acres or less) can usually be done by hand poisoning and trapping if the job is followed up on until offspring have been eliminated.

Gophers have to be thought of as a nuisance, the same as weeds, they cannot be ignored. When weeds appear in crops, they are sprayed or cultivated out, then kept in check until the crop is harvested.

In the Spring and Fall, crop and soil conditions allow for large scale extermination and in-between these times, the gopher can be controlled on a smaller scale, even by hand poisoning and trapping, when conditions don't allow machinery in the field.

Remember, just like weeds, the gopher is an endless supply. ♣

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beef – dairy

Rio Hondo Livestock & Farrier Supply

Rio Hondo is family owned and managed by Richard and Lynn Brook. Rio Hondo is Spanish for the “deep creek” running through the Brooks’ ranch situated in the Snake River Valley of southern Idaho, 4.5 miles west of Buhl, along Scenic Highway 30.

The Brooks have been in the ranching and farrier business for 35 years, having complete knowledge and expertise pertaining to the horse shoeing industry

including distinctive brand name tools and supplies. They also include their son and daughter, Rick and Surya in the daily operation of the business emphasizing friendly service and customer satisfaction.

The Brooks’ thorough knowledge and experience in cattle ranching has prompted them to offer consumers Hi-Hog, “The Outstanding Brand” in farm and ranch livestock handling equipment. Rio Hondo

will be the only provider of Hi-Hog equipment in Idaho. An “onsite” equipment display offers consumers a “no obligation” demonstration with the opportunity to check out the high quality and ease of handling this exclusive equipment offers.

Rio Hondo would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our customers for their support and patronage. We appreciate your business, and look forward to supplying your needs in the future. ☛

Upcoming Events

Northwest Lowline Classic

Central WA State Fair, Yakima, WA

October 3-7, 2007 (Show day is October 5 at 10am)

Lowlines in Place – October 3-7

NW Lowline Classic Show – October 5 10am

Breeders Reception – October 5 5pm

Clinics – October 6, 10am TBA

11:30am – lunch break

1pm – “Marketing Your Steers”

More information available at www.nwlowline.com

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J & B LOWLINES

Why Lowlines?

If I had a dollar for every time I've been asked this question, I could take myself out to lunch every day for a decade. The question usually comes from commercial ranchers or longtime cattle raisers. These are people who know that their money is made at the scale. Small cattle weigh less; therefore, they have to be worth less. I'm here to say that it ain't necessarily so.

Americans tend to like things big; we super size our drinks and fries at the burger drive-through. We like our big cars, we love big houses, we love to shop at warehouse stores and bring things home in quantities that require pallets. It naturally follows that we've taken our cattle industry in the same direction. Bigger cows make bigger cuts of beef; bigger cows translate to more money based on weight. Again, why Lowlines? How can these small cows possibly be preferable to the 'big guys'? A little history might help answer the question.

Cattle weren't always as big as they are today. Lowlines are actually a better representation of how Angus (and most other breeds) started out. A typical Lowline is about 1/3 smaller than a standard Angus. Lowlines are not dwarfs; they are the result of a lengthily Australian breeding experiment. They were specifically selected for size and temperament. The end result of that Australian experiment is what we see today in Lowline herds in this country. Along the way during the experiment, it was found that the smaller cows were equally efficient at protein conversion and produced a carcass with less waste and more high quality meat.

So, we have small, easy to handle, easy keeping cattle. They still weigh less, right? They're still worth less at slaughter time, right? Yes to the first question, not necessarily to the second. The American consumer is changing. Not everyone wants (or needs) a 40 oz. t-bone steak. Many people want to know where their food comes from, and what that food has been fed or treated with. Many, many people are willing to pay a bit more to have these conditions satisfied. This is where Lowlines start to shine.

Lowlines are perfect for grass-fed operations. For those who prefer grass-

fed beef, they will finish nicely on an exclusive grass diet. For those who like a slightly different flavor, the addition of an extremely small quantity of unprocessed (not pelleted) grain will fit the bill. Because Lowlines are smaller, and because they are efficient feeders, we have found it possible to graze 3 Lowlines on the same area that will only support 1 standard size cow.

Perhaps this all sounds as though Lowlines are only appropriate for the small-

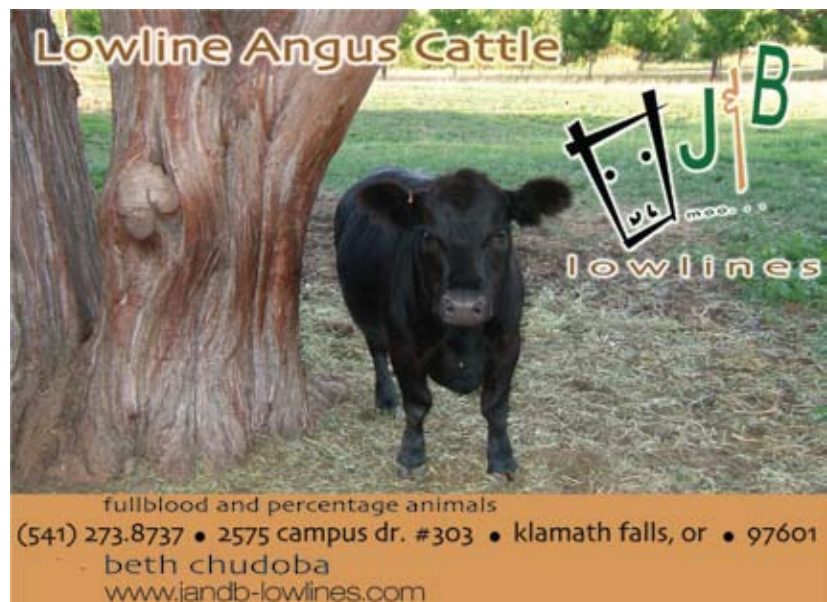


time hobby farmer or someone looking for a pet. Make no mistake; Lowlines are perfect for small acreage, as well as for hobby farmers and those who just want a walking lawnmower they can eventually eat, and you can't beat them for personality. But I also believe they have a place in larger operations. Using Lowline bulls on commercial heifers can help reduce

losses. Yes, the calves are smaller, but the losses are smaller as well. Is increased calf weight worth the cost of replacement heifers? I think, perhaps, it is not. Would you like a breed that does extremely well on marginal forage and was developed in a country prone to drought? Perhaps you would. Can a short (42 inch) Lowline bull manage to breed the 'big girls'? He certainly can. This year we have living proof on the ground; gorgeous little black baldies from our Lowline bull and the full sized Hereford and Angus/Simmental cows.

I don't believe for a minute that Lowlines and other small breeds are going to replace the large commercial cattle that we have today. But I do believe that Lowlines have a place in today's market. There will always be a segment of the consumer population that wants 'more' for their money; more peace of mind concerning where their food comes from, more quality for their consumer dollar, a more health-conscious sized cut of beef. This is a steadily growing segment, and Lowlines are ready to satisfy these consumer needs.

For more detail on the Lowline breed, please visit the American Lowline Registry website at www.usa-lowline.org. You will also find a complete list of registered Lowline breeders in the member's directory on this site. 🐾



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MAS-D-TEC measures electrical conductivity in a small sample of milk. Research has shown that conductivity increases markedly with the onset of mastitis infection. MAS-D-TEC uses sophisticated technology to detect increases in conductivity long before other clinical symptoms and signs are evident.

With an average dairy of 120-150 cows losing up to \$37,500 to mastitis every year, it is no wonder there has been so much talk among dairymen about mastitis. It is estimated that at least 40% of all cows are infected with mastitis. Most dairy farmers deal with the obvious clinical cases and usually overlook the less obvious, but far more costly, subclinical mastitis. Those dairymen who are best informed as to herd health will be those who, through the application of good management factors, will ultimately have the "cleanest" herd. In the past, detecting subclinical mastitis was difficult. MAS-D-TEC makes it easy to detect and provides critical feedback.

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will drink more water which in turns encourages more dry matter intake, which usually encourages higher milk production. 2) It cleans up the water lines, spray nozzles and stock tanks.

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For years the dairy industry has been searching for the solution to lameness issue with cattle. There have been attempts made to eliminate or reduce lameness through altering floor designs such as grooving, the use of rubber, scabbling etc. All of these efforts may appear to be the fix in the short term but over time they have not proven themselves.

AGRI-TRAC, a patented process and anti-slip surface, milled into existing concrete floors is proving to be the fix for slippery floors which leads to hoof and leg injuries which lead to lameness.

Tom Woodall, the founder of AGRI-TRAC, worked with the slat manufacturers to come up with a process which would

allow the prefabricated material to be resurfaced when they became slippery. At the time, Woodall was using a concrete planer attachment on a BOBCAT to resurface dairy barn floors in southern Ontario. This process was far too aggressive to be used on slat floors completely destroying them when tested.

Two years of design and testing lead to the development of the AGRI-TRAC process which was endorsed by the slat manufacturers and lead to the current patent. The end result was a surface which has a corduroy texture and is more suitable for hoof health then the planer's surface.

That was ten years ago. Today AGRI-TRAC is making a name for itself with dairy herds in 9 states and 9 provinces benefiting from the finish. Until just recently Woodall has been a one man and one machine show which has provided the finish to over 550 different barns covering over 1.2 million square feet or 27.6 acres of solid floor coverage.

With the word of mouth advertising AGRI-TRAC is getting from the farmers, hoof trimmers, veterinarians and nutritionists, the demand has grown to a point where he can no longer support the demands of Canada let alone the added demands from states like Wisconsin, New York and Minnesota. The added hurdles imposed on North America as a result of 9-11 have also created problems with AGRI-TRACs abilities to provide service into the United States.

Why the demands?

Results and information provided by the dairy farmers who have had the AGRI-TRAC finish machined into their floors to date show:

- Milk productivity increases of up to 18%
- Heat detections increased by up to 50%
- Hoof and leg injuries reduced by up to 55%
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Hoof trimmers have indicated that they have seen a reduc-



tion of income from farms having been AGRI-TRACed by up to 35%, stating that they are generally providing a manicure service rather than having to block and repair hoof damage suffered from previous flooring conditions. They are finding that the hoof is wearing evenly and at a rate slightly slower than the rate of growth.

AGRI-TRAC also aids in preventing and fighting off strawberry foot and other viruses. When comparing the manure storage of a grooved floor and that of an AGRI-TRAC floor, the AGRI-TRAC floor holds 1/4 the amount of manure reducing the amount of bacteria left on the floor after having been scraped.

All of this equals PROFIT to the farmer.

Woodall has recently hired on two crews to provide the Canadian dairy farmers a more timely service. He has custom-



ers that have waited for up to 10 months to have their barns completed after having had a trial area finished in their barns and then requesting the remainder of the barn be completed after experiencing the benefits of the service. New customers

have been patiently waiting knowing that when AGRI-TRAC arrives a lot of their hoof health, lameness and heat detection issues will be addressed and taken care of.

For the dairy farmers in the United States, Woodall is looking to develop a dealer network to provide services to them. The affects of 9-11 have virtually shutdown the border and his ability to get into the country. He has many customers in the Wisconsin area and New York state who have been demanding his services.

AGRI-TRAC has recently started to work with 2 recognized and respected non-partisan groups who are in the dairy industry to substantiate the data that has been provided by the farmers. The goal is to change the theory of power trowel and grooving new barn floors to provide a defense against slipping. Woodall believes that a good quality surface finish can be put into freshly poured concrete using a rollerbug tool will provide a good stable no slip surface for up to 4 to 6 years at no cost to the farmer. When that surface wears and becomes slippery then call AGRI-TRAC.

For information pertaining to AGRI-TRAC call 1-877-966-3546, visit the web site www.agriltraction.com or visit us at the World Dairy Expo in Madison Wisconsin. 🇺🇸

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alpaca – llama

Alpaca Farms Celebrate First Ever “National Alpaca Farm Day”

On September 29 and 30, alpaca breeders from across the United States and Canada will invite the public to come to their farm or ranch to meet their alpacas and learn more about these inquisitive, unique animals for the first National Alpaca Farm Day.

Alpacas, cousins to the llama, are native to the Andean Mountain range of South America, particularly Peru, Bolivia, and Chile.

Alpacas were first imported into the United States in 1984. Since then, the alpaca industry has grown steadily, according to the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association (AOBA), the backbone of the alpaca industry. Current estimates total over 100,000 registered alpacas with the Alpaca Registry, Inc. (ARI) in the United States and more than 4,000 AOBA members in North America.

There are two types of alpacas in the United States today. Although almost physically identical, what distinguishes the two types of alpacas is their fiber. The Huacaya (wa-Ki'-ah) is the more common of the two and has a fluffy, extremely fine coat. The Suri is the rarer of the two and has fiber that is silky and resembles pencil-locks.

Adult alpacas stand at approximately 36 inches at the withers and generally weigh between 150 and 200 pounds. They do not have horns, hooves, claws or incisors. Alpacas are alert, intelligent, curious, and predictable. Social animals that seek companionship, they communicate most commonly by softly humming.

Alpacas are shorn, without harm, every twelve to eighteen months. They produced five to ten pounds of luxurious fiber. Long ago, alpaca fiber was reserved for royalty. Today it is purchased in its raw fleece form by hand-spinners and fiber artists. Knitters buy it as yarn.

Because of its soft texture, alpaca fiber is sometimes compared to cashmere. Making the fiber even more coveted, it has the luster of silk. Alpaca is just as warm as, yet 1/3 the weight of wool. It comes in 22 natural colors, yet can be dyed any desired shade.

Containing no lanolin, alpaca fiber is also naturally hypoallergenic. Most people who are sensitive to wool find that they can wear alpaca without the itching or irritation they feel from wool because alpaca fiber is smooth.

Additional performance characteristics include: stretch, water repellency, and odor reduction. For travelers, clothing made from alpaca is desirable because it is wrinkle-resistant.

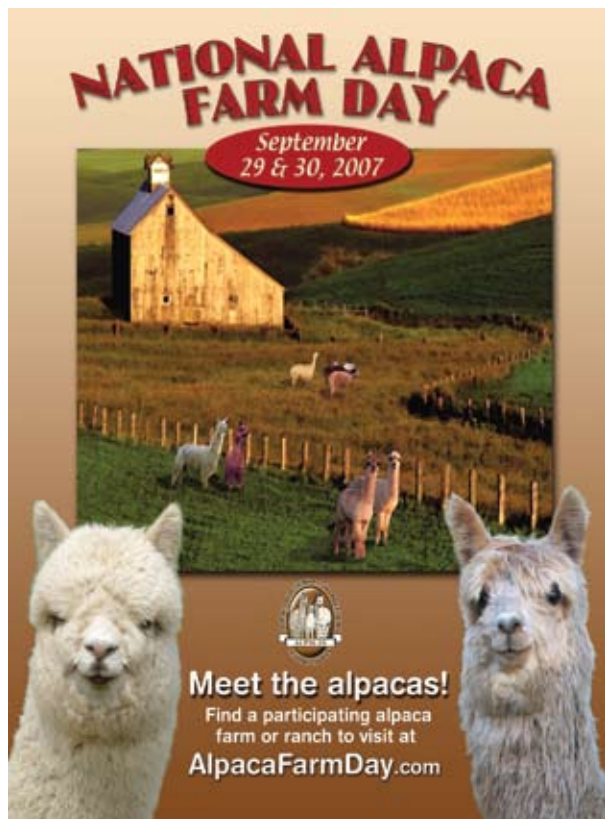
The alpaca industry has seen a continued growth over the past 23 years. The secret to a lucrative alpaca career is constant education. There are a number of resources for those interested in starting their own alpaca business, such as attending alpaca local, regional and national AOBA certified shows and events. To find a complete list of these events, go to www.alpacainfo.com and click on “Calendar of Events.”

Another great way to learn is to join AOBA as an associate member, which will give you a subscription to Alpacas Magazine and the OneVoice newsletter, plus access to the AOBA lending library. The AOBA lending library is one of the largest alpaca-related libraries in the world. AOBA’s marketing Committee has produced several resources to purchase or to borrow. Topics include everything from care, feed and nutrition to how to raise you alpaca in general.

The best way to learn about the alpaca business, however, is to visit alpaca farms in your area. The breeders will gladly answer all your questions and share helpful information about their experiences of starting up.

While most alpaca farms open their doors to visitors any time, National Alpaca Farm Day is sure to include special activities and educational opportunities at a farm or ranch near you!

To find out more about National Alpaca Farm Day visit www.NationalAlpacaFarmDay.com. To locate a farm or ranch near you to visit any time, visit the Farm and Ranch Locator at www.AlpacaInfo.com or call the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association at (800) 213-9522. 🐾



Summer Breeze Ranch

Committed to the Future of the Alpaca Fiber Industry

Located in the beautiful northern panhandle of Idaho, Summer Breeze Ranch is owned and operated by Frank and Beverly Koerperich. Both Frank and Beverly were raised on farms in the Midwest so, while caring for alpacas is new to them, caring for livestock is not.

The couple purchased their first alpacas in the spring of 2005 and the farm's first cria arrived just weeks later. Since then the Summer Breeze herd has grown to 25 Huacayas. The Koerperiches are willing to share what they know, and are careful to take the time to know where to find the answers for anything they need to learn.



The focus of Summer Breeze Ranch is improvement in the quality of their herd in every way, with the ultimate goal of quality fiber production. Frank and Beverly believe the future of the alpaca industry is fiber production and commercial development, and that only an alpaca of increasingly excellent health and conformation will produce fiber of the highest and most marketable quality.

In order to preserve the safety and security of their own herd, the Koerperiches recently acquired a beautiful Great Pyrenees guardian dog. Kodiak was such a valuable addition to the farm that the decision was made to add a Great Pyrenees breeding program to Summer Breeze Ranch, with the first litter anticipated in 2008. Summer Breeze Ranch features Great Pyrenees' from the Karolaska and Quibbletown bloodlines. These dogs are gentle, vigilant guardians for your alpaca, goat or sheep herd, residing in the field for full-time protection.

Summer Breeze Ranch is a developing farm, yet with generations of experience in both their families coupled with enthusiasm for their herd, Frank and Beverly have already shown

vision and drive that promises to make them valuable partners in the future of the alpaca community. Their love of the alpaca



shows in every aspect of the Summer Breeze Ranch, from the farm guarantee and discounts for multiple services and sales, right down to their friendly and welcoming manner. 🐾



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