

Foundation promotes ag advocates online

Bloggers connect with non-farm audiences

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

AIRWAY HEIGHTS, Wash. — Aspiring agricultural bloggers got a crash course in writing for an audience that doesn't know much about farming — but often thinks it does.

"I have a good friend who thinks everything about 'Big Ag' is terrible, farmers are doing it wrong, and he knows how to fix it — he can't even weed his yard," said Sara Duncan, a stay-at-home mom who writes the It's MomSense blog. "I think that's a really common feeling among consumers, but it's not their fault. Whose job is it to educate the consumer about where their food comes from? I think it's



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

The Pinke Post blogger Katie Pinke delivers the opening keynote address to the AgChat Foundation Pacific Northwest conference April 27 in Airway Heights, Wash.

our job."

Duncan spoke during a panel discussion at the Ag-Chat Foundation's Pacific

Northwest Agvocacy conference about using blogs and such social media sites as Twitter or Facebook.

Online

AgChat Foundation: <http://agchat.org>

It's MomSense: <http://www.itsmomsense.com>

The Pinke Post: <http://thepinkepost.com/>

Most consumers are seven generations removed from the farm, Duncan said.

"Assume they know nothing," she said. "I'm a very facts-based person, but facts don't convince people. Emotions convince people, values convince people. You have to connect with them. I use the fact that I'm a mom to connect with other parents: 'I also want my kids to grow up in a safe, healthy environment. We care about the same things, we're not that different, you and me. We just have different ideas on how to get there.'"

Keynote speaker and North Dakota farmer Katie

Pinke uses her Pinke Post blog to talk about life on her farm and in a small town and important political topics. As a result, Pinke and members of her family have found themselves trusted sources for information.

Efforts to make a change globally have to begin locally, and farmers can build trust by getting involved beyond their agriculture circle, Pinke said.

"We don't need to be defensive, we already have enough of that," she said. "You can't just be one voice in a silo, you have to have a community."

Duncan recommended having a thick skin.

"The biggest mistake I see is aggression and people being really angry, creating conflict and picking a fight — that's not productive," she said. "You're never going to talk anybody into something when you're mean."

The panelists and audience

members discussed sharing potentially hot-button, easily misunderstood images like cattle castration or branding with an audience that's never been exposed to the daily operations on a farm or portrays agriculture as cruel. Duncan said context is critical.

"Don't be afraid to tell (consumers) the truth — a lot of people want to know more, they don't want you to say, 'I don't want you in the chicken house,'" she said. "Let them in, but make sure they know what they're seeing. Consumers ask for things, but they don't know what they're asking for. If you're going to show that stuff, do it, but couch it right."

Audience member and Eastern Washington dairy farm blogger Krista Stauffer recommended putting the farmer's name, logo and detailed information on photos, so they can't be used by agriculture opponents in misleading ways.

GMO labels constitutional, federal judge says

Ruling rejects arguments by food manufacturers

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

Proponents of mandatory labeling for genetically modified organisms believe they've landed a heavy blow for the legality of such laws with a favorable court deci-

sion in Vermont.

A federal judge has rejected several legal arguments by food manufacturers who claimed the state's GMO labeling statute violated the U.S. Constitution.

While the ruling may be appealed, it marks the first time that a GMO labeling law has withstood constitutional scrutiny in federal court, said George Kimbrell, attorney for the Center for Food Safety, which supports the statute.

"This is a critical first step in securing the public's right to know, not just for Vermont but for all Americans," he said.

Several other states are expected to vote on GMO labeling in 2016, so the Vermont decision affirms they can legally require such disclosures, Kimbrell said.

"There is no legal reason why states can't require the labeling of genetically engineered food," he said.

When Vermont passed its GMO labeling law in 2014, the Grocery Manufacturers Association and other groups filed a complaint alleging the statute unconstitutionally violates their free speech rights and interferes with interstate commerce.

Chief U.S. District Judge Christina Reiss has dismissed the plaintiffs' interstate commerce claims and a portion of their First Amendment claims. She also indicated

they probably won't fare better with the remainder of their freedom of speech arguments.

The plaintiffs argued GMO labeling will burden interstate commerce because they will have to create Vermont-specific packaging and distribution channels.

Even if the statute does create such a problem for manufacturers, it doesn't rise to the level of being unconstitutional, she ruled.

The law doesn't impose

greater burdens on companies outside Vermont than those within the state, doesn't require GMO labeling nationwide and doesn't conflict with laws in other states, she said.

Reiss said the controversy over GMOs does not "convert a disclosure requirement about a food product into a political statement," and thus doesn't represent unconstitutionally compelled political speech.

Farm Market Report

Hay Market Reports

Compiled by USDA Market News Service • St. Joseph, Mo.-Portland

Hay prices are dollars per ton or dollars per bale when sold to retail outlets. Basis is current delivery FOB barn or stack, or delivered customer as indicated.

Grade guidelines used in this report have the following relationship to Relative Feed Value (RFV), Acid Detergent Fiber (ADF), TDN (Total Digestible Nutrients), or Crude Protein (CP) test numbers:

| Grade | RFV | ADF | TDN | CP |
|---------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Supreme | 185+ | <27 | 55.9+ | 22+ |
| Premium | 170-185 | 27-29 | 54.5-55.9 | 20-22 |
| Good | 150-170 | 29-32 | 52.5-54.5 | 18-20 |
| Fair | 130-150 | 32-35 | 50.5-52.5 | 16-18 |
| Utility | <130 | 36+ | <50.5 | <16 |

WASHINGTON-OREGON HAY (Columbia Basin) (USDA Market News) Moses Lake, Wash.

| This week FOB | Last week | Last year |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 930 | 1,200 | 1,330 |

Compared to April 17: All grades of Alfalfa steady in a light test. Trade very slow for domestic and export markets. Light new crop harvest was noted this week in the south basin region. Demand light to moderate. Retail/Feedstore steady. Demand remains good.

| | Tons | Price |
|----------------------|------|-------|
| Alfalfa Large Square | 200 | \$210 |
| Alfalfa Mid Square | 500 | \$160 |
| Alfalfa Small Square | 60 | \$260 |
| | 170 | \$250 |

OREGON AREA HAY (USDA Market News) Portland, Ore.

| This week FOB | Last week | Last year |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1,567 | 1,285 | 1,989 |

Compared to April 17: Prices trended generally steady compared to the same quality last week. Trade activity and demand picked up slightly this week. The continued good weather in several areas of Oregon has slowed down demand, as pasture grasses are growing causing end users to be able to turn animals out on pasture rather than purchase and feed additional hay. Export hay business seems to slowly be picking up, however, continued issues with few containers available and back-up of containers needing to be loaded at the shipping ports continues to slow down the ability to export hay overseas. Most producers have sold all that they plan to sell for this season.

| | Tons | Price |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| CROOK, DESCHUTES, JEFFERSON, WASCO COUNTIES | | |
| Alfalfa Large Square | Fair 700 | \$160-175 |
| Small Square | Supreme 2 | \$275 |

Orchard Grass Small Square

| | | |
|---------|----|-----------|
| Premium | 20 | \$250 |
| | 20 | \$250-260 |
| | 46 | \$260-270 |

Grass Mix-Five Way Small Square

| | | |
|---------|----|-----------|
| Premium | 40 | \$275-290 |
|---------|----|-----------|

LAKE COUNTY Alfalfa Large Square

| | | |
|------------|-----|-------|
| Supreme | 67 | \$250 |
| Prem./Sup. | 35 | \$240 |
| Good | 499 | \$170 |
| Prem./Sup. | 30 | \$240 |
| Premium 30 | | \$220 |
| Premium | 60 | \$150 |

Small Square

| | | |
|------------|----|-------|
| Prem./Sup. | 30 | \$240 |
| Premium 30 | | \$220 |
| Premium | 60 | \$150 |

Alfalfa/Oat Mix Large Square

| | | |
|------|----|-------|
| Good | 36 | \$150 |
|------|----|-------|

Forage Mix-Three Way Large Square

| | | |
|------|----|-------|
| Good | 36 | \$150 |
|------|----|-------|

EASTERN OREGON: No new sales confirmed.

HARNEY COUNTY: No new sales confirmed.

KLAMATH BASIN: No new sales confirmed.

IDAHO HAY (USDA Market News) Moses Lake, Wash.

| This week FOB | Last week | Last year |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 2,400 | 2,400 | 2,200 |

Compared to April 17: All grades of Alfalfa weak in a light test. Trade remains slow. Demand light to moderate. Most areas of the trade area are reporting drier than normal conditions and an oversupply of unsold feeder hay.

Some exporters are turning previously bought supplies back to producers. Heavy mice infestations this year are reportedly ruining range and hay fields. Retail/feedstore/horse not tested this week.

| | Tons | Price |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------|
| Alfalfa Large Square | Premium 400 | \$165 |
| | Utility/Fair 500 | \$120-130 |
| | 1500 | \$80-120 |

CALIFORNIA HAY (USDA Market News) Moses Lake, Wash.

| This week FOB | Last week | Last year |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 18,115 | 13,088 | 19,022 |

Compared to April 17: All classes traded active on good demand. Milk prices remained in the mid-teens, which affected the demand from dairies for test hay. According to U.S. Drought Monitor, in northeastern California, exceptional drought (D4) was expanded across the northern Sierras this week, while in northern Modoc County, a one-category improvement (from D4 to D3) was rendered to the depiction to more accurately reflect local conditions. Alfalfa export hay in region 6 is \$6 lower this week and premium Alfalfa is steady. Prices reported FOB at the stack or barn unless otherwise noted.

Washington (Toppensish Livestock Auction) (USDA Market News) Moses Lake, Wash.

| This week | Last week | Last year |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 2,020 | 1,850 | 1,500 |

Compared to April 17 at the same market: Stocker and feeder cattle \$6-10 higher. Trade active with very good demand especially from locals looking for small lots of stocker cattle to fill pastures. Slaughter cows \$4-5 higher. Slaughter bulls \$9-10 higher. Trade active with very good demand. Slaughter cows 60 percent, Slaughter bulls 5 percent, and feeders 35 percent of the supply. The feeder supply included

Premium 2

| | |
|----|-----------|
| 20 | \$250 |
| | \$250-260 |
| | \$260-270 |

Premium 40

| | |
|----|-----------|
| 40 | \$275-290 |
|----|-----------|

Supreme 67

| | | |
|------------|-------|-------|
| 67 | \$250 | |
| Prem./Sup. | 35 | \$240 |
| Good | 499 | \$170 |
| Prem./Sup. | 30 | \$240 |
| Premium 30 | | \$220 |
| Premium | 60 | \$150 |

Good 36

| | |
|----|-------|
| 36 | \$150 |
|----|-------|

Supreme 300

| | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|-------|
| 300 | \$255 | | |
| Premium | 180 | \$255 | |
| | 200 | \$260 | |
| | 300 | \$250 | |
| | 300 | \$235 | |
| | 150 | \$265 | |
| | 100 | \$180 | |
| | Good | 350 \$135 | |
| | Premium | 100 | \$280 |

Supreme 375

| | | |
|---------|-------|-------|
| 375 | \$263 | |
| Premium | 175 | \$250 |
| Good | 175 | \$215 |

Prem./Sup. 1150

| | | | |
|---------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| 1150 | \$222-230 | | |
| 800 | \$220 | | |
| Premium | 4300 | \$210-220 | |
| | 3750 | \$222-223 | |
| | 75 | \$235 | |
| | 3070 | \$200-232 | |
| | Good/Prem. | 100 | \$120 |
| | Premium 300 | \$150 | |
| | 75 | \$205 | |
| | 300 | \$147 | |

Good 140

| | |
|-----|-------|
| 140 | \$205 |
|-----|-------|

REGION 5: Southern California

Includes the counties of Kern, Northeast Los Angeles, and Western San Bernardino.

Alfalfa

| | | |
|---------|-----|-------|
| Supreme | 375 | \$263 |
| Premium | 175 | \$250 |
| Good | 175 | \$215 |

REGION 6: Southeast California

Alfalfa

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| Prem./Sup. | 1150 | \$222-230 | |
| 800 | | \$220 | |
| Premium | 4300 | \$210-220 | |
| | 3750 | \$222-223 | |
| | 75 | \$235 | |
| | 3070 | \$200-232 | |
| | Good/Prem. | 100 | \$120 |
| | Premium 300 | \$150 | |
| | 75 | \$205 | |
| | 300 | \$147 | |

Bermuda Grass

| | | |
|---------|-----|-------|
| Premium | 300 | \$147 |
|---------|-----|-------|

Klein Grass

| | | |
|---------|-----|-------|
| Premium | 300 | \$147 |
|---------|-----|-------|

REGION 1: North Intermountain

Includes the counties of Siskiyou, Modoc, Shasta, Lassen, and Plumas.

No new sales confirmed.

REGION 2: Sacramento Valley

Includes the counties of Tehama, Glenn, Butte, Colusa, Sutter, Yuba, Sierra, Nevada, Placer, Yolo, El Dorado, Solano, Sacramento.

Alfalfa

| | | |
|------------|-----|-----------|
| Premium | 500 | \$220 |
| Good/Prem. | 100 | \$220-250 |
| Good | 150 | \$100 |

Rice Straw

REGION 3: Northern San Joaquin Valley

Includes the counties of San Joaquin, Calaveras, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Mono, Merced and Mariposa.

Alfalfa

| | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Supreme | 300 | \$255 | |
| Premium | 180 | \$255 | |
| | 200 | \$260 | |
| | 300 | \$250 | |
| | 300 | \$235 | |
| | 150 | \$265 | |
| | 100 | \$180 | |
| | Good | 350 \$135 | |
| | Premium | 100 | \$280 |

Alfalfa

| | | |
|---------|-----|-------|
| Supreme | 375 | \$263 |
| Premium | 175 | \$250 |
| Good | 175 | \$215 |

REGION 4: Central San Joaquin Valley

Includes the counties of Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Inyo.

Alfalfa

| | | | |
|---------|---------|-------|-----------|
| Supreme | 400 | \$250 | |
| | 225 | \$180 | |
| | 65 | \$250 | |
| | Premium | 360 | \$225-240 |
| | Good | 140 | \$205 |

REGION 5: Southern California

Includes the counties of Kern, Northeast Los Angeles, and Western San Bernardino.

Alfalfa

| | | |
|---------|-----|-------|
| Supreme | 375 | \$263 |
| Premium | 175 | \$250 |
| Good | 175 | \$215 |

REGION 6: Southeast California

Alfalfa

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| Prem./Sup. | 1150 | \$222-230 | |
| 800 | | \$220 | |
| Premium | 4300 | \$210-220 | |
| | 3750 | \$222-223 | |
| | 75 | \$235 | |
| | 3070 | \$200-232 | |
| | Good/Prem. | 100 | \$120 |
| | Premium 300 | \$150 | |
| | 75 | \$205 | |
| | 300 | \$147 | |

Bermuda Grass

| | | |
|---------|-----|-------|
| Premium | 300 | \$147 |
|---------|-----|-------|

Klein Grass

| | | |
|---------|-----|-------|
| Premium | 300 | \$147 |
|---------|-----|-------|