



Courtesy of Oregon State University

Paul Hughes, a chemist from Scotland, will teach classes and conduct research on whiskey and other distilled spirits at OSU's fermentation center.

## OSU adds distilled spirits teacher and researcher

By ERIC MORTENSON  
Capital Press

Paul Hughes jokes that he hasn't caused an accident on the road yet. So far, so good, when you're accustomed to driving on the left in Great Britain and have to adjust to American traffic patterns.

When it comes to making whiskey, vodka and other distilled spirits, however, Hughes will be happy to share his way of doing things.

Hughes, a chemist who spent the past 10 years teaching at a university in Scotland, has been hired as a researcher and instructor at Oregon State University's Fermentation Center. The program teaches students how to make wine, beer and cheese, and is branching out into the fast-growing distilled spirits industry.

According to OSU, distilled spirits made in Oregon now account for \$69 million in gross annual sales, nearly 13 percent of the state's liquor revenue. Oregon has close to 80 distilleries,

up from 12 eight years ago, said Christie Scott, spokeswoman for the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.

Hughes said one of his priorities is to meet with distillers and establish good relations with the industry.

Hughes also is setting up the first distilling course, which will be offered in January.

"There's a lot of commonality around the fermenting techniques used in brewing, wine-making and distilled spirits production," he said in an OSU news release. "But distilling requires additional steps. So there will be a need for additional courses about those techniques."

Hughes most recently taught and did research at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, Scotland,

At OSU, the fermentation sciences program is part of the Food Science and Technology department.

The Oregon Legislature provided money for the distilled spirits position on campus.

# Wash. DNR denies cherry plans

By DAN WHEAT  
Capital Press

WENATCHEE, Wash. — It appears efforts by one of the largest tree fruit producers in the state to acquire state Department of Natural Resources land high in Stemilt Basin for cherry orchard expansion are over.

Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark, head of DNR, came to a community meeting at Malaga Fire Hall, south of Wenatchee, Nov. 9, to announce DNR will sell the land to the state Department of Fish and Wildlife as soon as the land is appraised and final price negotiated.

It was a rejection of efforts by the Mathison family, owners of Stemilt Growers LLC, Wenatchee, to lease, buy or trade for the land in order to gain more high-elevation cherry ground for late-season, high-value cherries.

State Sen. Linda Evans Parlette, R-Wenatchee, said she was happy to have Goldmark to the meeting at her request to announce the progress on a memorandum of understanding for the sale signed last January in her office by Goldmark and then WDFW Director Phil Anderson.

DNR was part of the community Stemilt Partnership agreement in 2007 to preserve that part of the basin from development and for wildlife habitat, watershed protection and recreation, Parlette has often noted. Agriculture was not in that plan and for DNR to allow it would be breaking the public trust, she has said.

"It was a challenging process and my message all along has been for people to trust government, government has to keep its promises," she at the Nov. 9 meeting.

"I and Director Anderson signed this agreement at the request of Sen. Parlette and she can be very persuasive and was



Dan Wheat/Capital Press

Washington State Public Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark talks with State Sen. Linda Evans Parlette at Stemilt Partnership meeting south of Wenatchee, Wash., Nov. 9. Goldmark announced he will sell land to the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, not to the Mathison family for cherry orchard development.

in this. So we will go ahead and transfer the ownership to WDFW when we have an agreed upon value," Goldmark said.

Clayton Sprague, WDFW lands division manager, said the department is seeking to amend a federal grant to have the money to buy Sections 16 and 22.

West Mathison, president of Stemilt Growers, asked if WDFW will have enough money if the appraisal is higher than expected. Sprague said yes.

Asked if sale to WDFW precludes any sale or lease for agricultural use, Goldmark replied: "Decisions are decisions and agreements are agreements."

Chelan County Commissioner Ron Walters thanked Goldmark, saying the issue had been distracting from greater community management planning of the basin. The county bought 4,000 acres in the basin from Weyerhaeuser last year for preservation.

Asked, on his way out the door, if it's a firm decision, Goldmark said: "That's as firm a decision as you'll ever get."

After the meeting, Mathison

said despite the January agreement the sale was unresolved because WDFW didn't have the money.

Asked if he's disappointed, he said, "I'm glad to see DNR and WDFW on the same page. For us to do anything we have to work through the Stemilt Partnership and I'd rather do that than work through those agencies."

Mathison said he doesn't know if failure to get part of Section 16 will impede the family's efforts to expand cherry orchards on Section 17 and other land they own. He said he doesn't know if 16 is needed to pump water to 17.

Gordon Goodwin, a Stemilt Hill cherry grower and member of the Wenatchee Sportsmen's Association, said Goldmark had been dragging his feet on the appraisal and that he's glad to see it going forward. He said if Mission Ridge Ski Area expands into Section 19 and the Mathisons plant orchard in Section 17 that Section 16 could be the last open corridor for migrating elk and mule deer.

But the issue may not be dead, Goodwin said. At a recent

Stemilt Partnership meeting, Mathison asked about trading for or leasing the land from WDFW, Goodwin said.

Originally, the Mathisons proposed converting 450 acres of Section 16 and 22 into cherry orchard. They scaled that back to 134.5 acres on Section 16 and proposed a swap with land they own in Section 21.

The Sportsmen's Association sent letters to DNR in 2013 and 2014 complaining of apparent lease violations on Section 10 by Kyle Mathison Orchards.

West Mathison, Kyle's son, and John Lehmkuhl, the Mathisons' wildlife biologist, explained those issues have been addressed by changes in fencing and planting pine and willow trees in wildlife corridors to give elk and deer cover.

Goodwin said that's an improvement that wouldn't have happened without WSA forcing the issue.

Dave Gimlin, president of WSA, said he's pleased with Goldmark's commitment but said: "I'll believe it when it's done and over and when the title is in WDFW's hands."

## Glyphosate no cancer threat, scientist argues

By DAN WHEAT  
Capital Press

WENATCHEE, Wash. — The notion that glyphosate, the active ingredient in the weed killer Roundup, is a human health threat is nonsense, a Washington State University scientist told attendees at the Washington State Weed Association's annual meeting.

"I'm here to tell you some bad news. We have a planetary threat and you guys should be scared because we use glyphosate too much and apparently it ranks right up there with climate change," Allan Felsot, professor of entomology and environmental toxicology, sarcastically remarked in opening his talk at the Wenatchee Convention Center, Nov. 6.

"The World Health Organization says it's probably carcinogenic and it's a planetary threat according to blogs. This is all bull---- and I will show you the data," Felsot said.

Part of the problem, he said, is semantics, confusion over the definitions of toxicity, hazard and risk.

Toxicity is innate potential of a substance to cause injury, he said. Hazard is potential to cause injury under specific circumstances and risk is probability of harm and a function of the magnitude of exposure integrated with hazard.

Glyphosate has been used commercially since 1974 and has been approved in the U.S. and Europe as low risk. It's not an organophosphate insecticide with neurotoxic properties but a phosphonated amino acid based on glycine, which occurs naturally, he said.

In March, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer — known by the initials IARC — declared glyphosate a probable human carcinogen, meaning it's associated with cancer. But that's declaring it a type of hazard, not a risk, Felsot said.

"It's now under review,

"The World Health Organization says it's probably carcinogenic and it's a planetary threat according to blogs. This is all bull---- and I will show you the data."

Allan Felsot, professor of entomology and environmental toxicology at Washington State University

but the data is already there. It doesn't have any acute toxicity. You have a greater chance of toxicity from eating potatoes," he said.

"This is just not a toxic compound. It's a frickin' amino acid," he said.

Some studies IARC relied on involved injecting rats with high concentrations of glyphosate at 1,000 to 10,000 times levels farmers are exposed to, Felsot said.

"So these studies are contrived because they manipulate things," he said. "They are manipulating the parameters of the experiment to see if anything happens."

IARC concluded a probable association between glyphosate and Non-Hodgkin lymphoma and that there's evidence of genotoxicity, toxicity at the level of causing mutations.

The problem, Felsot said, is that those conclusions are only reached at doses far beyond real world exposures.

"The IARC declaration that glyphosate is a probable human carcinogen is in direct contrast to the conclusion of many agencies around the world and to recent comprehensive reviews that have concluded glyphosate is not likely a carcinogen," Felsot said. "To make headlines otherwise is doing a disservice to the citizens of our countries."

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