Farmers, ranchers face high costs, low supply for materials

By RONALD BOND, BENNETT HALL, JOHN TILLMAN AND JAYSON JACOBY
EO Media Group

Trying to acquire items as simple as metal corral panels can be hard enough in 2022, rancher Dean Defrees laments.

But actually finding them can be even worse.

Well, sort of.

The combination of a supply chain that's missing more than a few links, and the highest inflation rates in more than four decades, has created quite a conundrum for ranchers and farmers, said Defrees, whose family has been raising cattle in the Sumpter Valley southwest of Baker City for more than a century.

Although Defrees is fortunate in one sense — he doesn't raise hay and doesn't use fertilizer, a product that has been in short supply — he said he still wonders what would happen if a tractor or other piece of equipment broke down.

See Supply, Page 5

Wheat lines the edge of a field on June 23, 2021, as a combine harvester harvests at Starvation Farms outside of Lexington. The farm produced a harvest of 60-70% of average in the wake of the 2021 heat wave and drought.
East Oregonian, File