

NASS to survey organic producers across U.S.

By **TIM HEARDEN**
Capital Press

SACRAMENTO — The U.S. Department of Agriculture is conducting a survey of organic farmers and ranchers nationwide to learn more about the production method whose popularity has exploded among consumers.

The mandatory survey is a follow-up to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, which found that total organic product sales by American farms and ranches increased by 83 percent since 2007.

The questionnaire will examine various aspects of organic farming, including production and marketing practices,

income and expenses, according to a news release.

“Organic farms are really a fast-growing segment of the agriculture industry,” said Vic Tolomeo, director of the National Agricultural Statistics Service’s Pacific Region office here. “This is just going to provide information on that industry, not only on how we can

address their needs but how it’s changing (agriculture) itself.”

The survey comes as NASS is also conducting an economic survey called Tenure, Ownership and Transition of Agricultural Land (TOTAL), which asks agricultural landowners about farm costs, improvements made to farmland and buildings, demographics and

other characteristics.

While the TOTAL surveys went to selected landowners, the organic survey was sent to every known organic producer in the U.S. as of the 2012 census, Tolomeo said. That’s more than 16,000 farms nationwide, about 3,000 of which are in California, according to census data.

Industry statistics show consumer demand for organically produced goods continues to show double-digit growth, with organic products now available in nearly 20,000 natural food stores and nearly 75 percent of conventional grocery stores, the USDA’s Economic Research Service stated in a recent report.

Sheep producer ponders wolf impacts

State looking for sighting info

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

LAMONT, Wash. — Sheep producer Art Swannack says the secret to dealing with wolves killing livestock is documentation.

“It’s kind of bureaucratic, but if you don’t document it, you don’t have anything to show that you had a problem,” he said.

Swannack, also a Whitman County commissioner, served on the working group that helped develop the wolf management plan for the state.

Now he’s using that knowledge.

Swannack keeps a flock of 1,200 sheep near Lamont, Wash. He estimates he’s lost four sheep to wolves, one confirmed by the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, one considered likely and two missing. He’s also missing a guard dog.

The sheep were grazing a 300-acre field of wheat stubble surrounded by a portable electric fence. The sheep escaped Dec. 5 when the fence shorted out. They moved into a neighbor’s stubble field, where wolves likely killed one ewe.

Swannack fixed the fence, but a portable post popped out 10 days later, and wolves killed to three more.

It was the first time Swannack was aware of wolves in the area.

“We’ve had coyotes forever, but coyotes are always around,” he said.

Neighbors and friends say they’ve spotted wolves near Lamont, Ritzville and Sprague, including a pair — a large gray wolf and a black wolf. Some calves have disappeared recently, increasing suspicions that wolves are in-



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Lamont, Wash., sheep producer Art Swannack talks about the impacts wolves have had to his operation Dec. 23 near the site where he found one of his sheep dead in a creek. Swannack, also a Whitman County commissioner, is concerned about the potential for increased depredations during lambing and calving season.



Photo courtesy of Art Swannack

Art Swannack’s first dead ewe was found near Lamont, Wash. Dec. 5. The state Department of Fish and Wildlife says this was likely a wolf kill, one of four sheep Swannack suspects were killed by wolves. He is also missing a guard dog. Swannack estimates the cost to his operation so far to be about \$6,000.

volved, Swannack said.

“We haven’t seen anything else, but it makes you suspicious when you have three animals killed and there’s nothing left within 24 hours,” he said. Coyotes typically leave half a carcass the first few days, he noted.

Joey McCanna, private lands and wildlife conflict su-

pervisor for the fish and wildlife department in St. John, Wash., hopes to verify the wolf pair sighting and set out more cameras.

“We’re still trying to find a good location where there’s a lot of activity from a wolf or possibly multiple wolves,” he said. “The more sightings we get from people and the quicker they get them to us, the better.”

The department installed Foxlights around the pasture and near the Swannacks’ home. Foxlights, which are battery-powered, give the impression that somebody is patrolling the area with a flashlight.

“Between the electric fence and the Foxlights, we haven’t had any wolves come into the sheep to kill, but the fence isn’t

Online

http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/gray_wolf/

3 feet tall,” he said.

The Swannacks added guard dogs, are replacing some fencing and adding night penning, and will continue monitoring.

Swannack estimated his cost to be roughly \$6,000 — \$600 each to replace his pregnant ewes and several thousand for the guard dog, plus time and labor.

Swannack is concerned about county residents whose cattle will be calving during January and February. Most deer have moved south for the winter, leaving little wildlife and plenty of livestock for the wolves, he said. The department may add fladry — a string of flags — during lambing, he said, but fladry can be good for two to 60 days, depending on how the wolves react to it.

Swannack said the state needs to begin making decisions about management as wolf problems increase. He wants the wolves delisted as an endangered species to allow ranchers more management options.

“Ideally, I’d like to not have any more problems. I don’t think that’s realistic, I expect once in a while I’ll have a problem,” he said. “But continuing, ongoing problems with wolves aren’t acceptable.”

Beekeeper group’s president buzzing about neonic ban

By **DON JENKINS**
Capital Press

OLYMPIA — To beekeeper Mark Emrich, Thurston County’s ban on neonicotinoids on county property was a win in the battle against pesticides he blames, in part, for harming his honeybees.

County commissioners in December barred “neonics” from county managed land, saying they wanted to set an example by being the first Washington county to embrace the anti-neonic movement.

Seattle, Spokane, Olympia and Eugene, Ore., also have adopted policies against neonics.

Emrich, a Thurston County resident and president of the Washington State Beekeepers Association, said local jurisdictions may be more open to regulating neonics than state or federal agencies.

“I think the groundswell is going to be enough,” he said.

Neonicotinoids were developed in the mid-1990s in part because they showed reduced toxicity in honeybees compared with other pesticides, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Neonicotinoids, however, have come under scrutiny for, at the least, contributing to colony collapse disorder. The European Commission has banned three neonics: clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiametoxan.

A Washington State University study in 2013 concluded that neonics have a negative effect on honeybees, bumblebees, mason bees, and others. However, it was unclear whether those pesticides have a significant effect on bees at “realistic field levels.”

The study said more research was needed and that in the meantime home gardeners should be educated about the importance of following labels.

Also last year, the Washington Department of Agriculture declined to regulate neonics. The agency noted there were “at least 61 factors” associated with colony collapse disorder and concluded there was no “documented evidence” neonics were harming bees in Washington. The agency’s position hasn’t changed, WSDA spokesman Hector Castro said.

The USDA has essentially



Don Jenkins/Capital Press

Washington State Beekeepers Association President Mark Emrich checks a hive Dec. 29 in Rochester. Emrich hopes more counties and cities will restrict neonicotinoids.

the same position, while the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency plans to study neonics over the next several years.

Emrich, who has 21 hives in Rochester, just south of Olympia, said about one-third of his 40,000-bee hives collapse each year, unable to function as a cohesive unit.

He said other factors, including parasitic varroa mites, are likely harming bees. “It’s not all pesticides,” he said. “There’s a whole bunch of moving parts effecting bees.”

Nevertheless, Emrich said enough research suggests that neonics are one of those factors. For now, he said he would like to see a moratorium on the unregulated use of neonics by home gardeners.

“I’d like to see it benched until we have more research,” he said.

The executive director of Washington Friends of Farms & Forests, which represents farm groups whose members use pesticides, said Thurston County “made a completely emotional decision.”

“I do not expect either the Legislature or the state Department of Agriculture to follow that example,” Heather Hansen said. “They base their decisions on science.”

Hansen said neonics control pests on many state crops, including wine grapes, apples, pears, cherries, potatoes, raspberries, blueberries, vegetables, wheat, lentils and Christmas trees.

She warned against rushing to blame neonics for colony collapse disorder and needlessly weakening the state’s ability to ward off invasive pests.

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NOTICE OF SALE OF ABANDONED PERSONAL PROPERTY FORMERLY BELONGING TO ERNIE FRIES AND DIANE M. HERTE PURSUANT TO ORS 90.675(10)

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, on January 27, 2015, John Sanders, as managing member of Dukes Farm, LLC, will sell by private sale a 1997 Home Builders Northwest, Inc. manufactured home with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, square footage of 1,512 square feet, manufacturer ID number 1411A and 1411B. The personal property does not include the land on which the manufactured home is situated, which is at Oak Pointe Estates, 2000 Robbins Lane SE, Space 27, Salem, OR 97306. The personal property is abandoned and was formerly owned by Ernie Fries and Diane Marie Herte. The personal property has a Manufacturer Structure Ownership number of 285903.

The manufactured home must remain in the Duke’s Farm manufactured home community. A successful bidder must apply for and be accepted as a tenant for the sale to finalize. A reserve for all minimum bids is \$8,000.00. If the highest bid does not exceed the sum of \$8,000.00, the property will not be sold. Duke’s Farm, LLC may submit a sealed bid.

The Sale is by private bidding in the form of sealed bids delivered to Mark B. Comstock, Attorney at Law, Garrett Hemann Robertson P.C., 1011 Commercial St NE, Salem, OR 97301, and will be accepted until 3:00 p.m. January 27, 2015. The sealed bid must state on the outside of the envelope: “SEALED BID.” The personal property will be sold to the highest bidder which shall have five (5) days in which to provide funds by cashier’s check payable to Duke’s Farm, LLC. In the event of no satisfactory bids or buyers, the property will be disposed of pursuant to ORS 90.675.

The name and telephone number of the person to contact to view the property is John Sanders, Duke’s Farm, LLC, 2000 Robbins Lane SE, #48, Salem, OR 97306; telephone: (503) 585-7111.

John Sanders
For: Duke’s Farm, LLC

legal-52-2-5/#4

Farm regulators increase scrutiny of water quality

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

A project aimed at restoring riparian habitat along several creeks in Oregon’s Multnomah County has hit a roadblock.

Despite numerous entreaties from the local soil and water conservation district, most landowners have refused free streamside tree planting that would reduce temperatures in the creek.

“Some people are just not interested in having someone else working on their property,” said Julie DiLeone, rural lands program supervisor for the East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District.

Even though the trees are planted at no charge, people are reluctant to have crews come onto their land and to relinquish control over the management of streambanks, she said.

Only about 25-30 percent

of stream miles targeted by the district are enrolled in the restoration program, DiLeone said.

“We don’t know if that’s going to be enough or not” to bring down temperatures, she said.

Increased scrutiny of water quality by Oregon’s agriculture regulators may help the state’s soil and water conservation districts overcome such resistance among landowners.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture plans to expand its oversight of streams and rivers that flow through agricultural lands next year, which may spur interest in voluntary riparian improvement projects, experts say.

“If more people come in the door, at least in our district, that’s great because we have the capacity to help more people,” said Laura Masterson, an organic farmer and board member of the East Multnomah S&WCD.

For decades, the agency’s

strategy for compliance with the federal Clean Water Act on farmland was largely complaint-driven, said John Byers, manager of ODA’s agricultural water quality program.

This method is only reliable to a point, however, since some water quality problems — like manure piles near waterways or streams denuded of vegetation — may never be reported, he said.

“Neighbors don’t always want to turn in neighbors,” said Byers.

About two years ago, ODA decided to “self-initiate” compliance with water quality rules, relying on publicly available information like aerial photographs and topographical maps, to identify potential problem areas and notify the landowners.

Since the agency doesn’t have the resources to conduct in-depth monitoring of the whole state, the new approach was first tested in Wasco and Clackamas counties.

LEGAL

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NOTICE is hereby given that The Odessa Public Development Authority (OPDA) will receive Proposals as established in the complete Request for Proposals for the project generally described as: **Biodiesel Production Facility, Odessa, WA.**

Please obtain the full requirements for proposals at www.odessapda.com or by calling 509-982-7850 or by email at info@odessapda.com. Odessa Public Development Authority. **Clark Kagele, President**

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