

# Proposed limits on animal prizes worry cattlemen's group

Bill would restrict 'rabbit scrambles' and similar events

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
Capital Press

Proposed restrictions on "rabbit scrambles" and similar contests that award live animals as prizes have alarmed the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, which fears impacts on rodeo events.

House Bill 2641 is intended to prevent injuries to animals during "scramble" competitions, in which young children try to catch rabbits or other small animals to keep as pets. Such contests also cause problems after the event, when the prize animals are given to shelters after people decide they don't want to care for them, said Rep. David Gomberg, D-Otis, who introduced the legislation. The bill was inspired by the controversy over a rabbit

scramble in Lane County but Gomberg said he did not want to limit the provisions to that species or region. Under HB 2641, animals could not be "chased, kicked or otherwise subjected to offensive physical contact" during the contest. The event's organizer would also have to allow contestants to return the animals up to six months after the competition. Violating the statute by "unlawfully awarding an animal as a prize" would be a Class B misdemeanor, punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$2,500 fine. The Oregon Cattlemen's Association is in "protective mode" regarding the bill because the group does not want it to infringe on rodeo events, said Jim Welsh, its political advocate, during a Feb. 19 hearing of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. While the OCA does not support the legislation as cur-

rently written, it would favor a "work group" to improve the language, he said. Glenn Kolb, executive director of the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association, said his group was also uneasy about provisions in the bill. Specifically, the bill requires that "minimum care" be provided to animals before the contest, but veterinarians can only attest to the condition of an animal during the time of examination, so this

provision is impractical for event organizers, he said. Also, the OVMA dislikes the provision allowing the prize winners to return animals for six months, as this would let them shirk responsibility, Kolb said. Gomber told the committee that he'd be willing to amend the legislation, such as exempting fish from the bill or creating a minimum weight for animal prizes so that "greased pig" contests are not banned.

# Sports medicine test holds promise for cattle industry

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

POCATELLO, Idaho — Idaho State University and Montana State University researchers believe a common blood test for evaluating the performance of elite athletes could help the cattle industry better assess the dispositions of livestock.

The project, conducted in 2012 at Nebraska's Chappell feedlot, utilized readily available, low-cost sport performance meters that instantly estimate lactate levels from a single drop of blood. Their findings have been published online by Meat Science and will appear in the journal's May 2015 print publication.

Blood lactate accumulates when exercise, or stress, triggers anaerobic metabolism — when oxygen delivery to tissue is insufficient to meet normal metabolic demands. In humans, a lower lactate reading following strenuous exercise indicates an athlete is in excellent shape and well equipped to handle the stress of competition.

Michael Meyers, an associate professor of sports science at ISU, reasoned the same, simple test could measure stress in steers, enabling the industry to breed animals with the most



John O'Connell/Capital Press

Michael Meyers, an associate professor of sports science at Idaho State University, visits the ISU Human Performance Laboratory to demonstrate a quick blood test used to evaluate athletic performance that he's now utilizing to evaluate the disposition of cattle, working in partnership with the Montana State University Department of Range Sciences.

docile dispositions, evaluate individual animals and monitor how handling and facility designs affect cattle stress.

Meyers, who also has a background in animal sciences, explained other studies have shown stress reduces weight gain in livestock and may even decrease tenderness.

The industry standard for evaluating animal stress entails recording an animal's speed at moving through a chute and

also assigning a score based on its behavior. In theory, slower-moving, less-irritable livestock have a calmer disposition, which should correlate with low stress and tender meat.

"Some (cattle) just freeze in the chute and don't move at all. We wanted to move away from subjective scoring with human error in it to some bio-market," said Meyers, who is also a visiting research faculty member with MSU's Department of An-

imal and Range Sciences.

Meyers is optimistic his lactate test will eventually become widely adopted as the industry seeks to stay on the cutting edge of animal welfare technology.

Jane Ann Boles, an associate professor of meat sciences at MSU and the lead researcher on the lactate project, found a correlation between lactate levels and chute score and velocity. Cattle in the experiment were also evaluated postmortem for tenderness. Cattle with fast chute scores tended to yield tougher meat.

Boles said cattle with low lactate levels generally yielded tender meat, and animals with medium lactate were tougher. She was surprised, however, to find animals with the highest lactate levels were also tender — she hypothesizes they're accustomed to high lactate levels and predisposed to quickly rid their systems of it postmortem. She advises high lactate animals should, nonetheless, be screened out due to other problems associated with stress.

# NE Washington to Olympia: Action on wolves can't wait

By DON JENKINS  
Capital Press

OLYMPIA — A Stevens County commissioner Feb. 18 told legislators that northeast Washington counties may intervene to stop predation by wolves if state wildlife managers fail to protect livestock.

"If you don't come up with a solution, we will come up with our own solution," the commissioner, Wes McCart, told the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

McCart said later in an interview that county commissioners have talked with county prosecutors about what they can do to manage wolves.

"It's not an idle threat," he said. "I have folks who cry almost everyday because of their losses, and that's not going to continue."

McCart didn't outline a plan of action, but he said he's been asked before about specifics.

"My answer is, we will take the appropriate action at the appropriate time, and it will be legal," he said. "We know that if we don't — if we go off by ourselves — it puts us in a defensive position and vulnerable to a lawsuit."

"We will declare a defensible action," he said. "We don't just shoot from the hip."

With time running out on this session for wolf-related legislation, northeast Washington legislators are making a last push for relief from wolves killing sheep and cattle.

"I can't go back home and tell people we're not going to do anything for a year or two," Okanogan County Rep. Joel Kretz said. "Social acceptance (of wolves) in my district started low and has plummeted."

Kretz's proposals to take wolves in northeast Washing-



Don Jenkins/Capital Press

Stevens County Commissioner Wes McCart stands outside a hearing room Feb. 18 on the Capitol Campus in Olympia after telling a House committee that northeast Washington counties are preparing to take action if state game managers fail to curb livestock predation by wolves.

ton off the state's endangered species list or transfer wolves closer to Western Washington to hasten recovery don't have enough support in Olympia.

More recently, he introduced House Bill 2107, which would require the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to reopen the state's wolf recovery plan and measure the plan's success by counting packs instead of breeding pairs.

Kretz said the plan needs to be reconsidered because wolves have packed his corner of the state, but not the entire state. Until, wolves are more widely distributed, they will remain a protected species, according to the recovery plan.

WDFW supports the bill, but it's opposed by environmental groups. Defenders of Wildlife Northwest representative Elizabeth Ruther told lawmakers they should let the current plan play out. A citizens' advisory group already gives the department guidance on wolf recovery, she said. "We respectfully think this is the wrong time for the this bill."

# Researchers look at cider apples, mulches

MOUNT VERNON, Wash. — Qualities of cider apples, consumer preferences of cider and the effects of biodegradable mulches on fruit quality will be evaluated by Washington State University researchers at Mount Vernon.

The separate cider and mulch studies, each \$40,000 grants, were among eight grants recently awarded by the WSU College of Agri-

cultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences to study agricultural issues.

"The cider industry will gain a better understanding of the impact of growing environment, location and harvest method on fruit quality and whether or not these differences are valued by the cider maker or detectable by consumers," said Carol Miles, horticulture professor, lead on the cider study and involved in the mulch study.

Miles has been investigating cider apple production at Mount Vernon since 2007.

Researchers will evaluate quality of cider apple varieties to look for differences due to environment. They will consider tannin levels, a bitter-tasting organic substance higher in cider apples and will see if consumers can detect differences in cider due to location or harvest method.

In a separate project, researchers will examine the ef-



Courtesy of Washington State University

Cider qualities are evaluated at the Washington State University Mount Vernon processing lab. A new study will look at qualities of cider apples and consumer preferences in cider.

ffects of biodegradable mulches on fruit quality. Mulches are used in orchards to control weeds and preserve moisture. The study will consider migration of chemical constituents from deteriorating mulches to developing fruit.

## LEGAL Request for Proposals Fiscal Year July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

The Oregon Beef Council is soliciting proposals for projects in the following areas:

- 1) Positive Producer Image
- 2) Studying Legislation
- 3) Education related to beef
- 4) Generic promotion of beef

Any individual or organization may propose projects in any of the categories listed above.

Projects must meet the Beef Council's mission of enhancing the beef industry's image of profitability of Oregon's beef industry. Approved projects must comply with the Beef Promotion and Research Act and O.R.S. 577

To present a proposal you must complete and submit an Authorization Request Form by March 20, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

Download an Authorization Request Form from [orbeef.org](http://orbeef.org) or by contacting the Oregon Beef Council office (503) 274-2333 or via e-mail at [julie@orbeef.org](mailto:julie@orbeef.org). legal-8-2-2/#4

## LEGAL PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 87

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 3/11/2015. The sale will be held at 10:00 am by SAVEON TRANSPORT 4410 SWEET LANE, SALEM, OR 2009 Acura TL VIN = 19UUA86529A018489 Amount due on lien \$3,200.00 Reputed owner(s) Shukri Diriye Shukri Diriye Capitol One Auto Finance Legal-9-2-4/#4

## LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announces a meeting of the Washington State Technical Advisory Committee on March 24, 2015 from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm, 316 W. Boone Ave., Suite 450, Spokane, WA. Remote access is available.

For more information contact Sherre Copeland, (360) 704-7758.

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