



Photos by Dan Wheat/Capital Press
Hilda Rodriguez and Isabel Sanchez Moran double check fruit size on Chelan Fruit Cooperative's new, high-tech, red cherry line at its Beebe plant east of Chelan, Wash., June 18. New systems ensure consistent quality in markets.

NW cherry growers report lighter crop

By DAN WHEAT
Capital Press

YAKIMA, Wash. — The Pacific Northwest sweet cherry crop may have peaked early with 10 to 20 percent lighter volume than expected because of hot weather, drought, rain, hail and a shortage of labor.

What was originally forecast as a 19.7-million, 20-pound-box fresh crop maybe closer to 16 million boxes.

As of June 21, shipments totaled 8.2 million boxes which is probably about half the crop, said B.J. Thurlby, president of Northwest Cherry Growers, Yakima, the industry trade group. Of that, 2.3 million boxes have been exported and the daily peak so far is 543,618 boxes on June 18, he said. That may be the season peak, he said. Demand is strong going into Fourth of July sales, he said.

California finished a 5.9-million, 18-pound-box crop on June 8. Worries of a big overlap didn't materialize, instead Washington shippers were under pressure for cherries to cover ads the first week



A 9-row Rainier cherry, left, is considered decent size. Larger cherry to right may be a 7 to 6 row at Mike Prey's orchard, Orondo, Wash., June 18.

of June, Thurlby said.

As of June 22, 90 percent of Washington's Bing crop was harvested and 70 percent of Rainiers, he said. Harvest was beginning to move into later varieties at higher elevations.

Picking started the earliest ever on May 24 and will be all but done by the end of July. With later crops, August production has gone as high as 5 million boxes but it may be less than 500,000 this year, Thurlby said. He had thought a new 11-million-box record would be set in June, but now thinks it will be 9 million to 10 million boxes and July will be 6 million to 7 million.

Rain reduced early variety volumes, drought reduced later volumes in the Lower

Yakima Valley. Hot weather around June 9 took a toll. Growers were concerned about triple digits returning June 26 with peaks over 110 forecast for June 28.

There's a lot of 75- to 80-percent packouts compared with a lot over 90 percent last year, Thurlby said. Oregon has some gorgeous cherries but the heat reduced what was already a light crop from last November's freeze, he said.

Packers were running 20 to 30 percent short of estimates on pre-sales of red cherries leaving no spot market for tracking prices, said Jeff Main, reporter at USDA Market News, Yakima.

"If we had a spot market, prices probably would be good," he said.

Rainier cherries were \$50 to \$55 per 15-pound box wholesale on the spot market, June 19, compared with \$45 to \$50 at the same volume point a year ago, Main said.

"Rainiers took a big hit" from the June 9 heat, said Howard Nager, vice president of marketing, Domex Super-fresh Growers, Yakima.

Portland's Zenger Farm bridges urban, rural divide

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

PORTLAND — Zenger Farm, which operates at the edge of one of the city's poorest neighborhoods, opened the doors June 22 on a facility intended to train the next generation of farmers, consumers and food entrepreneurs

The Urban Grange, built with \$2.3 million in donations, has 6,600 square feet of classroom, office and meeting space. A commercial kitchen is available for start-up food businesses and community events.

The Grange — the name was used with permission from the national Grange — is part community center, part conduit to proper nutrition and a vibrant local food system.

Through camps for children, school visits, adult classes and presentations, families learn where food comes from, how to grow it and how to prepare it, Executive Director Mike Wenrick said.

Rural residents who grow up in agricultural settings already understand farming, Wenrick said. But he asked a group of children recently where eggs come from and one boy answered, "A carton."

"It might be a novelty to see the reaction children have to pulling a carrot out of the ground," Wenrick said.

"In an urban environment, a lot of the (food system) educa-



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press
A boy attending camp at Zenger Farm in Southeast Portland holds a chicken for the first time. The farm, owned by the city, offers classes, camps and tours, and trains new farmers.

tion rural children get is not happening," said Laleña Dolby, Zenger's communications director.

Zenger's programs help them value the farming lifestyle and farmers as well, Dolby said. That can pay off when they're adults and decide issues that affect agriculture.

"That urban piece is what makes us unique," she said.

About 10,000 people visit the farm annually, and Wenrick expects that to double now that the Grange is up and operating.

Zenger Farm has emerged over the years as a bridge between urban and rural. The 16-acre property is owned by the city of Portland and operated by the non-profit Friends of Zenger Farm.

The farm founded and supports the Lents International Farmers Market, which serves

low-income neighborhoods in outer Southeast Portland. Crops grown on the property go to the market, to a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, and to restaurants.

The farm trains a handful of interns each year, people who want to be farmers but don't know how to go about it. Children attending camps get to pet chickens, plant, care, harvest and prepare vegetables and enjoy fruit trees and berry bushes.

The farm has a relationship with the David Douglas School District, and fifth graders visit several times a year as part of their science curriculum. A wetlands on the property provides additional learning experiences.

Donations for the Urban Grange construction came from some of the Portland area's best known organizations.

NW wheat growers eye early harvest

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

FAIRFIELD, Wash. — Lonnie Green could be harvesting his wheat two weeks early this year.

"We've had above-normal temperatures, drier conditions — we're below on precipitation," the Fairfield, Wash., farmer said while driving around his wheat and Kentucky bluegrass fields the morning of June 25. Normally, he swathes bluegrass around July 4 but that, too, is early this year.

Green usually harvests in August, but expects to be harvesting wheat in the last week of July.

Across the Pacific Northwest farmers are likely to begin harvesting early, say representatives of the region's state wheat agencies.

Harvest in drier areas of Oregon was to begin as soon as June 22, said Blake Rowe, CEO of

the Oregon Wheat Commission. Most areas are probably two to three weeks ahead of normal.

Harvest is running ahead of schedule in Idaho, said Blaine Jacobson, executive director of the Idaho Wheat Commission. Harvest usually begins at the latter part of July, but it could be in full swing by then this year.

The Washington crop is two to three weeks ahead of schedule, said Scott Yates, director of communications for the Washington Grain Commission. But many farmers in intermediate rainfall and drier areas interseeded spring wheat into fields affected by winterkill, so they'll have to wait until the spring wheat is mature before they can harvest. Harvest in Washington usually begins in drier areas after July 4, Yates said.

Oregon's crop is likely to be below average in yield, but above average in protein, which isn't preferred by soft white wheat

customers overseas, Rowe said.

Washington's crop is a mixed bag, even within regions, Yates said. Grower reports show the crop can be good in some areas and in worse shape 10 to 15 miles away.

"That's the advantage Eastern Washington has over other parts of the nation," Yates said. "With our multi-climatic zones, when one area is hit, another area compensates for it."

The picture's a little rosier in Southern and Eastern Idaho, where farmers received double the usual average rainfall, Jacobson said.

"This year we have dry-farm wheat so far in Eastern Idaho that is looking like it is grown under irrigation," he said. "We will need a little more to fill spring wheat out completely. It's looking terrific at this point. We need one more good shower at the right time, but it will be a terrific year if all those plans come together."

Rain would definitely help Green's spring and winter wheat in Fairfield.

"If we get the right weather, we could get 80 or 90 bushel per acre spring wheat," he said. "If we don't get the rain, you're looking at 40 or 50 bushel wheat."

Infected psyllid found in Twin Falls spud field

MOSCOW, Idaho — Another potato psyllid infected with the Liberibacter bacterium that causes zebra chip disease has been found in a commercial potato field.

The latest positive psyllid was collected from a Twin Falls County potato field, according to a University of Idaho pest alert issued June 19.

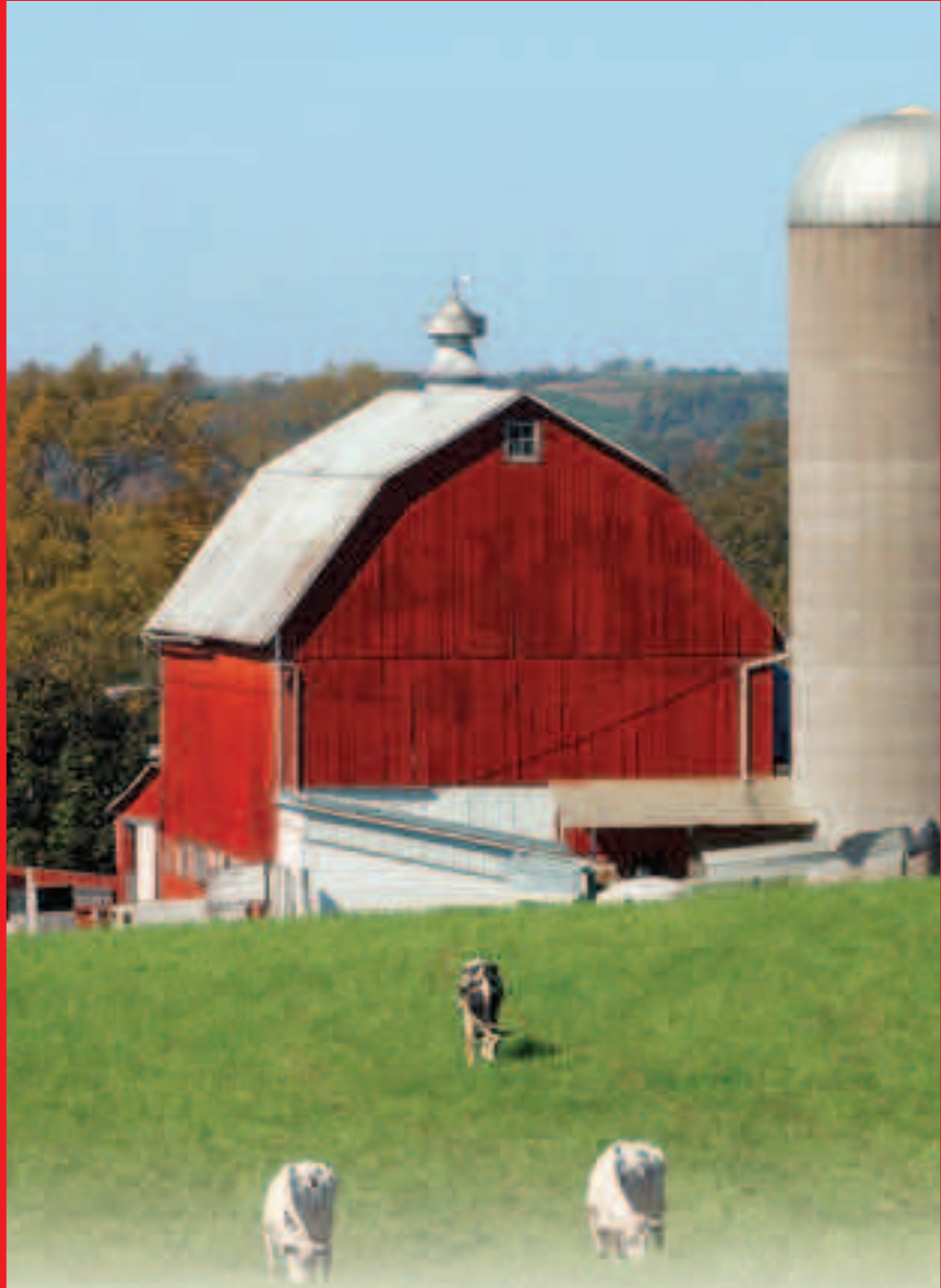
Potato psyllids were also found during the week in Payette, Canyon, Gooding and Jerome counties.

A psyllid on a sticky trap collected from an Ada County commercial potato field during the last week of May previously tested positive for Liberibacter, marking the earliest confirmation of an infected psyllid in an Idaho field since zebra chip disease was first detected in the Pacific Northwest in 2011.

Zebra chip causes bands in tuber flesh that darken when fried and reduces spud yields.

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PUBLIC NOTICE BY WASHINGTON STATE PORK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION AND THE NATIONAL PORK BOARD

The election of pork producer delegate candidates for the 2016 National Pork Producers (Pork Act) Delegate Body will take place at 1:00 pm, Wednesday, July 8, 2015 in conjunction with a Board of Directors meeting of Washington State Pork Producers Association, in Room 1 of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers building, at 109 East 1st. Street, Ritzville, Washington, 99169. All Washington State pork producers are invited to attend.

Any producer, age 18 or older, who is a resident of the state and has paid all assessments due may be considered as a delegate candidate and/or participate in the election. All eligible producers are encouraged to bring with them a sales receipt proving that hogs were sold in their name and the checkoff deducted. For more information, contact Washington State Pork Producers Association, 2001 VanTine Road, Garfield, Washington. Telephone 509/397-2694.

26-2/#4

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PORT OF GRANDVIEW REQUEST for PROPOSALS

The Port of Grandview invites proposals from persons or businesses interested in starting a business in the Ports Business Incubator Building located at 683 Wallace Way, Grandview, WA. The purpose of this RFP is to determine interest in locating and starting new businesses in the building. The type of business proposals selected will determine the interior construction required, rental rates and occupancy dates.

All proposals shall include:

- The type of business (manufacturing, wholesale or retail)
- The area required (sq. footage)
- Volumes of water and sewer necessary.
- Natural gas and power requirements
- Product(s) to be manufactured or created
- Specific building requirements
- Anticipated number of employees
- Names and contact information of principals
- Personal or business references.

Persons interested in viewing the building or having questions should contact: Jessica Hansen, Executive Director, Port of Grandview, 509-882-9975 or jessica@portofgrandview.org. Proposals in sealed envelopes marked "Incubator Proposal" should be postmarked not later than Tuesday, July 28, 2015 and addressed to: Port of Grandview, PO Box 392, Grandview, WA 98930 Legal-25-4-2/#4

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OREGON SHEEP COMMISSION Notice of Public Budget Hearing

The annual Budget Hearing and Regular Meeting of the Oregon Sheep Commission will be held Monday, July 13, 2015, beginning at 1:30 PM in Conference Room C of the Oregon Department of Agriculture, 635 Capitol Street NE, Salem, Oregon.

At this hearing any interested sheep producer has a right to be heard with respect to the proposed budget, a copy of which is available for public inspection, under reasonable circumstances, in each of the Oregon State University Extension Services offices. Copies of the proposed budget and tentative agenda are also available for public inspection in the Commission office located at 1270 Chemeketa Street NE, Salem, OR and may be requested by calling (503) 364-5462 or sending a message to: info@sheeporegon.com.

The Oregon Sheep Commission complies with the American with Disabilities Act. If you need special accommodations to participate in this meeting, please contact the Commission office 48 hours in advance.