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# Dairy/Livestock

## Appropriations rider aims to save sheep station

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

DUBOIS, Idaho — Sheep industry leaders say a recent vote in the U.S. House subcommittee bodes well for their continued efforts to save the local U.S. Sheep Experimental Station from planned closure.

The facility, operated by USDA's Agricultural Research Service in partnership with University of Idaho, was on a list of agency facilities targeted for closure in President Barack Obama's proposed budget in February. The closure would take effect on Oct. 1.

However, the House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee retained language pertaining to the closures, added by Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, when it approved the



USDA file photo

Sheep graze at the U.S. Sheep Experimental Station near Dubois, Idaho. A rider by U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, would prohibit USDA from shuttering any of the ARS facilities, including the sheep station, on the administration's closure list.

FY16 Agricultural Appropriations bill on July 9. Simpson's rider would

prohibit USDA from shuttering any of the ARS facilities on the closure list.

Simpson also blocked a USDA attempt to close the sheep station in July 2014

with language added to the agricultural appropriations bill.

"I was disappointed when USDA attempted to close (the U.S. Sheep Experimental Station) last year and failed to provide prior notice to Congress and the sheep industry," Simpson said in a press release. "Because of its location and expertise, staff at the Dubois station are working on unique issues, including research on the domestic-wildlife interface, that is vital to the sheep industry's future."

The station has 16 employees and operates on a nearly \$2 million budget. Bret Taylor, research leader at the facility, declined to comment.

Simpson's spokeswoman, Nikki Wallace, is optimistic his efforts to retain the facility will succeed once more.

She said House members have until Sept. 31 to pass appropriations bills and are working diligently to move them through the process in time for the Senate to act. Sen. Jim Risch, R-Idaho, has sponsored companion legislation.

American Sheep Industry Association Executive Director Peter Orwick said he is "absolutely optimistic" that the provision will pass. Even if appropriations bills are lumped into a single omnibus bill to continue funding, Orwick said it's unlikely that riders within the bills would be removed.

"It's the only ARS research facility dedicated to the sheep industry," Orwick said. "Certainly, there's room in that budget for one facility dedicated to furthering the sheep industry in this country."

## Young rancher sets her sights high

By CRAIG REED  
For the Capital Press

CHRISTMAS VALLEY, Ore. — Mariam Horton has not only learned in the classroom over the past several years, but also on her family's ranch.

She's earned her education and degree at North Lake High School, but has managed her time well enough to also educate herself on the animal science of sheep and cattle. The 2015 North Lake graduate has expanded her livestock numbers from three Suffolk ewes when she was a fourth-grader to about 380 ewes and ewe lambs, and from two bred black Angus heifers when she was an eighth-grader to 35 registered Angus mother cows.

The 17-year-old and her father, LeeRoy Horton, are partners in the livestock operation.

Although Mariam Horton has already established quite a flock of Suffolk, Targhee and Rambouillet sheep and a herd of cows at such a young age, she has bigger dreams.

"I have big goals, definitely," she said. "After college I hope to buy a ranch and have lots of animals, hopefully here in Oregon. I plan to get up to 500 to 1,000 Angus cows."

"And I want to be able to win one of the national shows," she added.

Horton is off to a good start on all of her goals. In January, she attended her second National Western Stock Show in Denver and showed five heifers in the junior competition (for producers age 21 and younger). One heifer took first in its Early Summer Heifer Division (animals born during the previous months of May, June or July). She then showed the heifer in the Open Division that included entries from producers of all ages and the pair finished second in the judging.



Craig Reed/For the Capital Press

Mariam Horton of Christmas Valley, Ore., has expanded the black Angus operation on her family's ranch from two bred heifers five years ago to 35 registered black Angus cows today. Horton has attended the past two National Western Stock Shows in Denver to show her animals.

Chad Waldron, the ag science teacher and FFA advisor at North Lake High School for the past 20 years, said he has not had a previous student own and manage as many sheep and cattle as Horton.

"What she is doing is very unique for a student," he said. "But she is very responsible, very motivated. She also gets a tremendous amount of support and encouragement from her parents. She does have a love for agriculture that motivates and drives her."

LeeRoy Horton is a hay grower, and now a livestock partner, on the family's Christmas Valley ranch.

"I'm an animal person myself," LeeRoy Horton said. "Mariam is just kind of following right in behind me. We work real close together on ev-

erything."

The daughter called her father her inspiration. "He knows a lot and I try to listen to everything he has to say," she said. "I look up to him a lot."

LeeRoy managed and owned sheep flocks in the Willamette Valley and in Idaho in his younger years before moving to Christmas Valley in 1992 and concentrating on hay production.

Mariam Horton most enjoys the lambing and calving. And she doesn't mind helping during the birthing process when needed. She first helped pull a lamb from a ewe at age 10 and has become the go-to person when an animal is having trouble giving birth.

The fun of showing her

ewes and lambs at county and state fairs and jackpot events led Horton to want to have more opportunities to show animals. So she purchased the two Angus heifers. They had their calves, one a heifer and one a bull. She kept the heifer calf and eventually had her bred. The bull calf was sold at auction. It looked impressive, helping her establish a market and she's had no trouble selling her bull calves since.

Horton also attended a weekend class at Oregon State University in Corvallis and learned how to artificially inseminate cows. She's been involved in that process with her Angus cows for a few years.

At North Lake, Horton's experiences in the FFA program helped her gain confidence in

addition to knowledge in marketing and selling her animals. She's been a two-year chapter president for North Lake FFA and a two-year district FFA secretary for Central Oregon. She considered running for a state office, but then decided not to because it would have meant time away from her animals.

She will attend Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, this fall. She plans to major in animal science and is eager to study sustainable agriculture so she can apply it in managing her own animals.

LeeRoy Horton will manage the cattle and sheep while his daughter is at school. And when she finishes her college career, she intends to return to Oregon to make ranching a full-time profession.

## Milk Advisory Board hires former Blue Diamond director

Capital Press

California Milk Advisory Board, one of the largest agricultural marketing boards in the U.S., has hired Bob Carroll as vice president of business development, according to a CMAB press release.

Carroll most recently served as international business director for Blue Diamond Growers, where he formed and led the division responsible for expanding all Blue Diamond branded products outside North America.

He also served as vice chairman of the global market development committee of the Almond Board of California. Prior to Blue Diamond, he worked in brand management for Kraft Foods on such brands as Taco Bell Home Originals and in the Kraft enhancers, meals and cheese divisions.

"Bob's strong leadership skills and expertise in brand marketing, corporate strategic planning and international market development will greatly benefit the CMAB and the California dairy industry as we look to further establishing national markets and capture the growing overseas demand for quality dairy products," John Talbot, CEO of the CMAB, said in the press release.

Carroll holds a bachelor of science degree in economics from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a master of science degree in business administration from Bucknell University in Pennsylvania.

## Cash dairy prices wavering

By LEE MIELKE  
For the Capital Press

The cash dairy market had a hard time making up its mind last week but seems more determined this week to head down.

Cheese prices had showed some previous weakness as product, particularly barrel cheese, flowed to the CME. But prices strengthened last week and the block Cheddar closed the week at \$1.7250 per pound, up 10 1/2-cents, but still 24 1/2-cents below a year ago. They dropped 3 cents on Monday and 1 3/4-cents Tuesday, to \$1.6775 per pound, as traders anticipated Wednesday's Global Dairy Trade auction.

The Cheddar barrels closed Friday at \$1.66, up 7 3/4-cents on the week but 32 3/4-cents below a year ago, and a higher-than-normal 6 1/2-cents below the blocks. The barrels also lost 3 cents Monday but were unchanged Tuesday, holding at \$1.63 per pound. The spread slipped to a more typical 4 3/4-cents. Seven cars of block traded hands last week and 12 of barrel. Trading

has been light so far this week.

Favorable weather is continuing to aid cow comfort and crops through most of the Midwest, according to Dairy Market News. Dairy manufacturers are experiencing some seasonal declines in milk intakes and in milk components. However, milk is still readily available for cheese production. Consumer demand remains steady for most varieties of cheese.

Western manufacturers suggest that although export cheese sales have dropped a little this year, strong domestic demand has helped make up the difference. Cheese production has remained strong in the region, with milk readily available.

Butter lost some ground last week, closing Friday at \$1.92 per pound, down 2 cents on the week and 45 1/4-cents below a year ago. The spot butter lost a penny Monday and Tuesday, slipping to \$1.90.

Dairy Markets  
Lee Mielke



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