

# Herbicide studies could lead to restrictions

## Legal settlement covers four common chemicals

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
Capital Press

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will study the nationwide impacts that four common herbicides have on endangered species, which could lead to new restrictions.

The studies are part of a legal settlement with envi-

ronmentalists under which the agency must conduct "effects determinations" by 2020 for glyphosate, atrazine, propazine and simazine.

In exchange, the agency will not have to complete regional analyses for 16 chemicals it had agreed to scrutinize under an earlier version of the agreement reached in 2010.

Those pesticides were cyhalothrin, cypermethrin, dimethoate, esfenvalerate, ethoprop, fenpropathrin, fipronil, fluralinate, im-

idacloprid, oxyfluorfen, phenothrin, propargite, resmethrin, sodium cynde, tetramethrin and zeta-cypermethrin.

Under the 2010 settlement, EPA would only have to reach conclusions about the endangered species effects of those chemicals in the San Francisco Bay area.

In a statement, the agency said it's "more efficient" to limit the studies to the four herbicides, noting that it had already finished determinations for 59 of the

75 chemicals covered under the previous deal.

The Center for Biological Diversity, which filed suit against EPA over the pesticides eight years ago, said the swap is worthwhile because the studies will now be larger in scope even though the number of chemicals will be pared down.

"That was a good trade, in that sense," said Brett Hartl, endangered species policy coordinator for the environmental group.

Atrazine and glyphosate are the most heavily applied herbicides in the U.S., while propazine and simazine are chemically similar to the former chemical and thus are logical for inclusion in the study, Hartl said.

While glyphosate is "not the most acutely toxic" of pesticides, its usage has risen tremendously with the popularity of biotech crops that are resistant to the chemical, he said.

"It's definitely having consequences," he said.

As for atrazine and related chemicals, they've been linked to health problems in wildlife and in humans, Hartl said.

The Center for Biological Diversity is expecting the study to result in "tailored conservation measures" to mitigate the negative effects of glyphosate in sensitive habitats, he said.

As for atrazine and related pesticides, the group expects they'll be found to be dangerous enough to be prohibited, said Hartl.

## S. Idaho wins food-processing recognition

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS  
Capital Press

Southern Idaho has received the prestigious U.S. Department of Commerce designation as a top "Manufacturing Community."

The designation means the region's All Things Food Manufacturing initiative will receive coordinated support for its economic-development strategies from federal agencies and share \$1 billion in federal assistance with 11 other selected communities.

The designation also brings federal recognition to the food-manufacturing sector of south-central Idaho's Magic Valley as having national significance, said Carleen Herring, chief operating officer and senior vice president of the Region IV Development Association, based in Twin Falls.

The region is one of the most diverse food baskets in the nation and a powerhouse of food production, processing and research, said Herring, who authored the grant application.

The designation will help companies attract food-related talent in research and education and bring workforce training opportunities. It includes preferential consideration for federal funding and provides liaisons in federal agencies to help economic development organizers navigate programs, policies and regulations, she said.

"We are thrilled. This changes the game for south-central Idaho food manufacturing. It's shining a national spotlight on what we've already accomplished and allows us to accomplish more," she said.

Numerous partners have been working to implement strategies to boost the region's growing food-processing industry, including attracting and retaining businesses, creating workforce programs, building public infrastructure and establishing market strategies, she said.

"This just gives us access to a whole new set of resources we didn't have yesterday," she said.

In announcing the top 12 communities selected for the program, U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker said the designation is an "important signal to potential investors that these communities are a good place to spend their money, and this is smart government at work."

The communities were selected based on the strength of their economic development plans, the potential for impact in their communities and the depths of their partnerships across the public and private sectors to carry out their plans.

"The bottom line is we know how to play well together and capitalize on individual strengths. It's that working together that makes us so successful," Herring said.

That partnership has spurred growth in the region's food manufacturing sector in recent years, including new investments from Chobani, Monsanto, Clif Bar and Frulact Group and expansions by Glanbia Foods, McCain Foods and WOW Logistics.

"This is a defining moment for our small region and validates our All Things Food Manufacturing brand," said Jan Rogers, executive director of the Southern Idaho Economic Development Organization.

# Cranberry growers renew marketing order

## Oregon farmer pins hopes on increased sales instead of volume controls

By DON JENKINS  
Capital Press

U.S. cranberry growers, faced with a huge surplus that's pushing down prices, have renewed their crop's federal marketing program, though Canadian competitors and a U.S. Supreme Court ruling involving raisins makes volume controls appear unlikely.

Some 76 percent of 470 growers in 10 states, including Washington and Oregon, recently voted to renew the Cranberry Marketing Committee for another four years. The vote total was similar to the 2011 referendum.

The committee, established in 1962, is rooted in the same 1937 New Deal law that was successfully challenged by California raisin farmer Marvin Horne, who argued that being forced to surrender part of his crop to boost raisin prices was an unconstitutional taking of private property. The high court ruled 8-1 in June in his favor.

The cranberry committee sought a 15 percent reduction in the 2014 harvest after prices tumbled the year before. The U.S. Department of Agriculture denied the petition, citing possible collusion with



Photos by Don Jenkins/Capital Press

Cranberries are harvested in 2014 on the Long Beach Peninsula in southwest Washington. Growers have renewed the industry's federal marketing order, but volume controls to stabilize prices are not in the offing.

Canadian growers to reduce supplies against the public's interest.

The committee decided last spring to not renew the request for 2015, even though the industry expects to begin the fall harvest with 86 percent of the 2014 cranberry crop still unused.

The cranberry industry boasts some gains in increasing demand, but the new sales have been more than erased by higher production.

Cranberry supplies have been swelled by rising U.S. yields, especially in Wisconsin, plus Canada's emergence as a large cranberry producer.

The cranberry committee's outgoing director, Scott Soares, wrote in a farewell message in May that the global cranberry industry's growth made U.S. volume controls less effective. The USDA last authorized cranberry volume controls in 2001.

Long Beach, Wash., cranberry grower Malcolm McPhail said losing volume control as a tool to reduce surpluses would be unfortunate.

"You get rid of the surplus and then you can get living again," he said. "I don't know if it's ever going to happen again."

The surplus caused the

price farmers received to drop from an average of \$47.90 per 100-pound barrel in 2012 to \$31.10 in 2014, according to the USDA's preliminary report on last year's crop. The USDA is scheduled to issue a final report Friday.

Prices varied widely among farmers.

In Washington, where most farmers belong to the Ocean Spray cooperative or sell to the fresh fruit market, the average price was \$43.50 a barrel.

In Oregon, which has more independent growers selling to processors, the average price was \$27.50.



Cranberries sit in a bin during the 2014 harvest on the Long Beach Peninsula in southwest Washington.

Bandon, Oregon, farmer Bob Donaldson, who grows for Ocean Spray and independent markets, said some berries are being sold for less than the cost of production. He said a small percentage of acres are not being cultivated this year. Returning the bogs to production would require expensive restoration of vines, he said.

"You hate to see your friends and neighbors give up," Donaldson said. "I love growing cranberries, so I have to be an optimist and tell myself I'm going to stick with it, but it's hard to see it coming back anytime soon."

Donaldson and McPhail said they were happy the cranberry committee was reauthorized. The Massachusetts-based committee, funded by grower assessments, supports cranberry research and promotions.

# McMorris Rodgers: Immigration reform movement 'soon'

## Washington rep also talks about wildfire funding, trade

By MATTHEW WEAVER  
Capital Press

SPOKANE — Immigration reform is the biggest legislative need for agriculture today, a Republican U.S. House leader says.

"There is a real need for a workforce," Washington Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers told the Capital Press following her welcoming remarks at the National Association of Conservation Districts summer board meeting. "In Washington state, we need between 80,000 and 100,000 people to help us pick in a given year. The current guest-worker program will provide maybe 5,000 to 8,000."

McMorris Rodgers said



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Washington Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers welcomes members of the National Association of Conservation Districts to the summer board meeting July 12 in Spokane.

she is talking with colleagues to determine how to move forward on immigration bills.

"The judiciary committee has passed out the border security, the interior enforcement and hopefully we can

start working on the workable ag guestworker program and the visa bill and really start taking some action," she said. "I'm hoping we'll see something soon."

How soon is soon?

"If not by August, certainly in the fall," said McMorris Rodgers, who is the Republican Conference chair.

In other issues, she said the House recently approved HR 2647, the Resilient Federal Forests Act, to address wildfire funding.

"Every year, the Forest Service when they are fighting fires, robs other accounts, including their management account, to pay for fires," McMorris Rodgers said.

The bill allows other agencies to put forward money beforehand, she said.

"It will create more certainty," she said.

The bill also includes provisions that will help improve forest conditions and encourages local collaborations.

McMorris Rodgers cited bipartisan support in the House when talking about the bill's chances of surviving in the Senate.

"With us facing larger, catastrophic fires every year, there's a recognition that we need to be taking action," she said. "We're seeing those fires start even earlier this year because of dry conditions."

The House has been focused on trade bills, McMorris Rodgers said. She called the recent approval of fast-track trade promotion authority a "big win" for agriculture across the board.

# Forest groups pick SW Washington tree growers for annual honor

## Greg and Sue Pattillo lauded for productive stewardship

Capital Press

A Raymond couple has been named the Washington State Tree Farmers of the Year.

Greg and Sue Pattillo received the honor May 1 at the annual meeting of the Washington Farm Forestry Association in Grand Mound.

The WFFA and the Washington Forest Protection Association sponsor the annual award.

The other nominees were Coy and Judy Eshom of Pierce County, John and



Courtesy of Washington Farm Forestry Association

Sue and Greg Pattillo of Raymond have been named Washington Tree Farmers of the Year by the Washington Farm Forestry Association and the Washington Forest Protection Association.

Nancy Lawder of Spokane County, and Boyd Wilson of Lewis County.

The Pattillos were nominated by tree farm inspector Jim Hillery of Raymond.

The Pattillos grow Douglas fir, red alder, western

red cedar, Sitka spruce and western hemlock on 700 acres near the coast in southwest Washington. Some of the trees are more than 80 years old, but most are 5 to 35 years old, according to a news release from the WFFA.

They have lived on their tree farm for 27 years and started accumulating land 30 to 40 years ago. They both work full-time on the farm.

"Between the two of us, we get a lot done. We're busy all the time, and there's always something to do," they said in a joint statement. "We enjoy the lifestyle and have made a good living."

They say they hoped the land will stay intact as a tree farm.

"The intergenerational aspect is a bit of a quandary since we have no children. We had trees instead," they said. "We're looking at options. Overall, we think it doesn't get any better than being self-employed doing what you love."

Greg Pattillo earned a bachelor's degree in for-

estry from Humboldt State University in 1970. He was a forester for Silvaseed Co. in Roy, Wash., for 17 years. Sue Pattillo is the daughter of a logger and grew up in the woods, according to the WFFA. She worked as a librarian.

He is the president of the Pacific County Farm Forestry Association. She is the secretary-treasurer.

The Pattillos intensively manage their farm and usually harvest annually. Ron Smith, a forestry contractor, has done the precommercial thinning and tree planting as a one-man crew for a dozen years, according to the WFFA. Greg Pattillo does much of the logging with his own equipment and also has used several logging contractors.