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Bacteria discovery prompts Oregon quarantine

Shipments of plants restricted in nine counties

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

The discovery of a bacterial disease, *Xylella fastidiosa*, has convinced Oregon's farm regulators to order a quarantine restricting shipments of susceptible plants from nine counties.

The pathogen causes symptoms similar to drought stress and often kills affected plants, as no treatments are available, said Helmut Rogg, director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's plant program area.

A pear nursery in Hood River County first reported disease symptoms earlier this year, which researchers from Washington State University found were caused by *Xylella fastidiosa*, he said.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture was initially unable to replicate these results but eventually confirmed the bacteria's presence after refining its test procedures, Rogg said.

The agency then found that pear trees from the National Clonal Germplasm Depository in Corvallis, Ore., were infected with the bacteria and that pear scion wood from that facility had been sent to 22 sites in the state, he said.

ODA is now trying to trace the disease's source and where else infected plant material may have been shipped.

It's also issued an emergency quarantine for the nine counties where the pear tree scions were shipped: Benton, Hood River, Jackson, Lane, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Washington and Yamhill. Violating the quarantine is punishable by fines of up to \$10,000.

While the bacteria has so far been associated with pear trees, the quarantine prohibits shipments of any host plant material, including oak, maple, blackberry, caneberry, blueberry and stone fruit, said Rogg.

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WHAT'S COOKING AT THE OFFICE



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press

AirBNB employees enjoy a free lunch of locally sourced food at the company's private restaurant in downtown Portland. The company, which employs 400 people at a nearby call center, provides free breakfast, lunch and all-day snacks to its workers, and buys from local farmers and processors when possible.

Corporate cafes offer market for producers

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press



James Evans Harvey, having a lunch with laptop moment in a yurt at AirBNB's call center in downtown Portland, says the fresh, locally sourced food fed free to her and other workers has a ripple effect of making employees feel better about their job.

PORTLAND — For the record, it is possible to find a job where you do your work while sitting in a yurt with a laptop and a sandwich. The yurt, it should be said, is on the third floor of a 100-year-old building in Portland's Old Town, where street people provide rambling commentary and futilely shake parking pay stations for loose change.

Inside the old building, up to 400 employees of AirBNB, the international online vacation rental hub whose other offices are in San Francisco and Dublin, Ireland, take calls and emails from all around the world while perched in cubby holes, arranged in themed mini-offices or, yes, occupying the yurt.

But let's talk about the sandwich.

The greens are from Portland's Sauvie Island Organics. The ham is from Olympia Provisions, also of Portland, and the chutney was made in-house by AirBNB's food team. The bread is from Pirate Bread, a North Portland startup.

All of which is intentional. AirBNB provides free breakfast, lunch and all-day snacks to its call center workers five days a week. As much as possible — bananas, orange juice, coffee and chocolate are among the few exceptions — the food is locally

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"I'm a new mom and for me it's profoundly important to know the food going into my body and my baby's body was grown, produced and made with a whole lot of love."

James Evans Harvey
AirBNB employee



Capital Press file

Glyphosate resistant Roundup Ready alfalfa is seen in Jackson County, Ore.

Settlement will allow county GMO ban to stand

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

The prohibition against genetically engineered crops in Jackson County, Ore., will be allowed to stand if a proposed settlement is finalized, barring a new legal challenge to the ordinance.

Voters in the county approved the ban last year, which prompted alfalfa growers Schulz Family Farms and James and Marilyn Frink to file a lawsuit claiming the ordinance violated Oregon's "right to farm" law.

In May, U.S. Magistrate Judge Mark Clarke rejected their argument, finding that the "right to farm" statute is intended to protect growers from lawsuits and ordinances against common farming practices, but it exempts farmers who want to avoid damage to their crops.

"While farming practices may not be limited by a suburbanite's sensitivities, they may be limited if they cause damage to another farm's crops," Clarke said in the ruling.

While the plaintiffs lost this argument, they still sought more than \$4 million for the lost value of the biotech alfalfa crops they'd have to destroy when the ordinance went into effect.

Also, the growers would eventually be able to challenge Clarke's "right to farm" ruling before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals once the original lawsuit was closed.

They've now agreed to give up that right and drop their other claims against Jackson County under a proposed settlement that would in turn allow their alfalfa to stay in the ground, but for no longer than eight years.

While other farmers are not bound by the agreement, which must still be approved by the judge, any future lawsuits would have to "grapple"

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Appeals court clears salvage logging project

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Apple marketers
look for more shelf space

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Website seeks to correct chicken production misconceptions

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