

Repeal of COOL saves apple exports to two largest markets

By DAN WHEAT
Capital Press

WENATCHEE, Wash. — The potential loss of tens of millions of dollars in apple exports to Canada and Mexico was avoided with resolution of the country of origin labeling trade dispute with the two countries.

The World Trade Organization had approved Canada and Mexico imposing \$1 billion in tariffs on U.S. products. That was averted when Congress repealed COOL in the omnibus federal spending bill Dec. 18.

"This is extremely good news for the U.S. apple industry and we thank Congress for fixing this critical trade problem," said Mike Wade, U.S. Apple Association

board chairman and general manager of Columbia Fruit Packers in Wenatchee.

The association said the omnibus bill also ensures continuity of federal Market Access Program dollars for the Washington Apple Commission and Specialty Crop Research programs and grants and crop insurance for the industry.

Under COOL it cost Canadian beef producers over \$100 more per head to have cattle slaughtered in the U.S. because feedlots and slaughter houses had the added expenses of tracking cattle to label beef by country of origin.

Apples and cherries were on a preliminary list of Canadian tariffs and while Mexi-

co had not released a list, apples, pears and cherries may have been on it, said Kate Woods, vice president of the Northwest Horticultural Council in Yakima.

"We don't know what the tariff rate would have been and how long it would have lasted, but it would have cost the industry tens of millions of dollars," said Mark Powers, the council's executive vice president.

Mexico and Canada are the Washington apple industry's top export markets.

Washington had average annual exports to Mexico of \$230 million in apples over the past three years, \$70 million in pears and \$5 million in cherries, Woods said.

Average annual exports to Canada were \$155 mil-

lion in apples and \$90 million in cherries, she said. Pears were not on the list in Canada.

From a record 2014 apple crop, Washington shipped 16 million boxes of apples to Mexico and 7.1 million to Canada, according to the Washington State Tree Fruit Association.

With a smaller crop this year, the volumes will be a more normal 9 million to 10 million boxes to Mexico and 4 million to 5 million boxes to Canada, said Todd Fryhover, president of the Washington Apple Commission in Wenatchee.

Meanwhile, Mexican allegations of U.S. apple dumping in Mexico are still pending and could result in tariffs, Powers said.



John O'Connell/Capital Press

Turkeys congregate along Green Canyon Road in Inkom, Idaho. The birds are part of a turkey population that has grown too large and begun causing problems for Bannock County farmers and dairies, according to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. The department, which is also concerned about turkeys in Franklin County, plans to revise its southeast Idaho turkey hunting regulations to control the turkeys and provide growers relief.

Turkey hunt changes aimed at helping Idaho producers

By JOHN O'CONNELL
Capital Press

POCATELLO, Idaho — The Idaho Department of Fish and Game has proposed to expand its southeast Idaho turkey hunt to provide area farmers and dairymen relief from excessive populations of the non-native game bird.

The region has thus far offered a fall controlled hunt for turkeys in the region, requiring hunters to win a lottery for tags. Jason Beck, an IDFG wildlife biologist, said the odds of winning that lottery have ranged from 20 to 60 percent, with significantly higher odds for youths.

The proposed change would establish a regional general hunt, open to every interested hunter, spanning from Sept. 1 through Oct. 31. The department hosted a public open house on the plan on Dec. 21 and will accept public comment at fishandgame.idaho.gov through Dec. 28.

The hunting change is welcome news to Preston farmer Gerald Cole, though he fears it may not go far enough to help local producers.

Cole didn't bother to plant a 40-acre field he'd scheduled for winter wheat this fall when he saw about 150 turkeys milling on the property at seeding time.

"They'd dig it up as fast as I could plant it," Cole said. "My neighbor planted, and they dug all of his up, so he wasted all of his seed."

Cole once fed the birds, and charged hunters a small fee to access his property to help cover the feed costs. But he believes the lack of adequate population controls has resulted in turkeys overrunning the area — to the point that they've been causing traffic accidents this winter.

"We've got a terrible problem up here when I can't plant grain," Cole said. "That's my livelihood."

Dean Westover, who runs a small dairy in Clifton, con-

sidered turkeys to be a novelty when the flock in his area numbered about 20 birds.

"Now we've got about 200 of them, and the novelty is gone," Westover said.

During the past couple of months, he said, turkeys have been "really working" his winter grain. They also get into mangers and dump out feed while they scratch for seeds, and they've torn apart straw bales.

"Going to a general hunt, I think more people will get a hunting tag," Westover said.

Beck said wild turkey populations vary widely, depending on chick survival, and past counts for the Bannock County population have ranged from 500 to 2,000 birds. However, Beck said the department has set the number of tags for turkey controlled hunts before receiving any information about chick survival. He's confident the change will lead to more hunting pressure when turkey flock sizes balloon, as they did during 2015.

"That general season just allows that greater flexibility for hunters to respond to what the turkey populations are doing," Beck said. "In those lean years, I don't think people will put a lot of effort into chasing turkeys, so we're not concerned about wiping out the population."

Beck acknowledges regulations for the hunt may change from year to year, given the dramatic fluctuations in turkey populations.

Beck said Idaho was on the fringe of the historic turkey range, and the birds have taken hold throughout the state since the 1980s, as they've been introduced both by the department and sportsmen.

Beck said there's also a spring turkey hunt, which includes some general hunts. He said the department offers no funding to producers to compensate for turkey depredation, given that problems for producers are relatively new.



Courtesy of Oregon State University

Oregon State University fisheries researcher Selina Heppell talks about fish surveys with science and math teachers at the Yaquina Bay Yacht Club in Newport, Ore. She is the new head of OSU's Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Biologist appointed head of Oregon State's fisheries and wildlife department

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

Selina Heppell, a conservation biologist, is the new

head of the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Oregon State University.

Heppell is the first woman to head the department in

its 80-year history. The department is the largest within the College of Agricultural Sciences, with nearly 800 students, and among the largest natural sciences department on campus.

Heppell replaces Dan Edge, who earlier in 2015 was appointed the college's associate dean. Heppell had been serving as interim department head since Edge's appointment.

In a prepared statement, ag college Dean Dan Arp described Heppell as a distinguished researcher and teacher who had provided "terrific leadership" as interim head of the depart-

ment.

Heppell has been on the OSU faculty since 2001. She has specialized in studying slow-growing species such as sturgeon, sea turtles, sharks and West Coast rockfish. Among other work, she has used computer models and simulations to study how fish respond to human impacts and climate change — and how they may respond to future climate change.

Heppell and her husband, Scott Heppell, teach a conservation biology course in Eastern Europe and have done fish research in the Caribbean.



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<p>Wednesday January 27th, 2016</p> <p>7:30am Continental Breakfast & Registration @ TRCC</p> <p>8am - 11am General Sessions</p> <p>9am - 5pm Trade Show</p> <p>11am Keynote: What Food Trends Say About Our Society - David Sax</p> <p>12pm - 1:30pm Hosted Potato Bar @ TRCC</p> <p>1pm - 4:40pm General Sessions</p> <p>6pm - 9pm Leadership Recognition Banquet @ Location TBD</p>	<p>Thursday January 28th, 2016</p> <p>7:30am Continental Breakfast & Registration @ TRCC</p> <p>8am - 12pm General Sessions</p> <p>9am - 1pm Trade Show</p> <p>12pm - 1pm Hosted Lunch @ TRCC</p> <p>1pm - 4:10pm General Sessions</p>



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