

## Oregon

# OSU Extension offers hay class for those new to farming

By ERIC MORTENSON  
Capital Press

An influx of new or beginning farmers who need feed for goats, llamas, alpacas and sheep in addition to cattle prompted Oregon State University Extension to offer a class Thursday, Jan. 14 on Growing Quality Hay.

The class is scheduled from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Josephine County Extension Auditorium, 215 Ringuette St., Grants Pass. The cost is \$15. To register online, go to <https://secure.oregonstate.edu/osuext/register/968>, or contact Sharon Evans at OSU Extension, at 541-476-6613.

The class is offered through OSU's Small Farms Program. Paula Burkhalter, assistant to the area's Small Farms Agent, Maude Powell, said a good number of beginning farmers attended the class when it was offered two years ago in neighboring Jackson County, and 20 to 25 are expected this year. With many new farmers in Southwest



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press

Many of Oregon's new, small farmers raise livestock and need hay. OSU Extension is putting on a Jan. 14 hay class in Grants Pass. This 2014 file photo shows hay bales drying in Wallowa County.

Oregon, there appears to be an ongoing need for understanding what quality hay is and its role in producing healthy livestock, Burkhalter said.

The class will cover types of hay, nutritional content, the process of cutting and curing hay, required equipment, soil management and the importance of having a forage analysis done. The impact of poor quality hay on livestock health will be covered as well.

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The extension office also is offering a series of classes on farm management in January, February and March. The series follows a sequence intended to help farmers in their first five years, with sessions titled Dream it, Grow it, Do it, Sell it, Manage it and Keep it. More information is available at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/farms>.

# A solid year for S. Oregon pear production

By CRAIG REED  
For the Capital Press

MEDFORD, Ore. — Despite concerns that included extended heat periods, restrictions on water and possible labor shortages, the overall pear harvest in Southern Oregon was judged as a solid year for production and profit.

"Overall, it was a nice crop with good quality," said Ron Meyer, owner of Meyer Orchards, a Talent, Ore., pear growing business.

"We had beautiful, perfect harvesting weather," added the fruit grower.

There are 5,500 to 6,000 acres of pear orchards in the Medford area. Making up the biggest portion of the overall pear crop are the Bosc and Comice varieties, followed by Bartletts and Anjous.

Mike Naumes, president of Naumes Inc., said the Bosc and Comice pears were "quite good" and the Bartletts were fine. Naumes grows seven different pear varieties on 1,600 acres in Southern Oregon.

"We picked above average tonnage for our district on most of our varieties," Naumes

said. "We had a good set on most trees."

The fruit did mature earlier than normal due to the hot weather in July and August. Some growers began picking in July.

"That is very, very rare for us," said Rick Hilton, an entomology researcher with the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center in Central Point, Ore. "We had a shorter season because of the heat. We had the warmest year on record for the third year running."

John Neilsen, manager of the Medford Oregon Welfare Orchard, said picking Bartletts in that orchard began Aug. 1. He explained that late during the three-week harvest period, there were maturity issues as the pears were quickly ripening.

The pears were a bit smaller than normal, the growers said, because of a combination of the heat and less water. But, the growers added, the earlier harvest time meant that irrigation water wasn't needed for as long.

There was concern irrigation districts would run out of

water or have to further restrict it.

"We tried to keep our irrigation running on a regular basis, but be careful we weren't wasting it," Neilsen said. "We watered more often in the heat, but not as much. Our irrigation company did a good job keeping us with water."

Naumes said the Medford irrigation district had expected to run out of water by Sept. 1, but as it turned out there was still some water through that month and Naumes finished its harvest by Oct. 1.

"Limited water was a factor in sizing," Naumes said. "When the temperature is over 100 degrees, the trees struggle to survive. They're not putting any nutrients into the fruit."

"We had a record number of days over 100 in the Medford area in July and August," he added.

Despite the heat, Bartletts that generally end up at canneries, and Bosc and Comice finished with good appearance and coloring. Anjous, however, suffered from cork spot, resulting in a calcium deficiency and brown marks on the skin.

# Sutherlin FFA creates 'thank you' for food drive sponsor

By CRAIG REED  
For the Capital Press

SUTHERLIN, Ore. — The work of eight Sutherlin High School FFA students will soon grace the walls of every Les Schwab tire store in Oregon.

Those students, with guidance from teacher and FFA adviser Wes Crawford, designed, hand-crafted and assembled 115 plaques. The wood, metal and vinyl finished signs recognize Schwab's support of FFA. They are also a "thank you" from the Oregon FFA Foundation to the Oregon-based tire company for its sponsorship of FFA's statewide food drive in October.

Sutherlin High senior Geruon Erandio said that, at some time in the future, when he happens to walk into a Schwab store and he sees the plaque, he'll take pride in it.

"When I see it, I'm sure I'll reminisce on the memories of staining and assembling it," he said. "I'll feel proud. Our hands touched every single one of them. That'll be just awesome to see them sometime in the future."

The actual plaque is 16 inches wide and 24 inches tall. At the top is the FFA emblem and below that bold, black vinyl letters on gold stained, buffed metal proclaim Schwab as a supporter of FFA. A spot in the middle of the plaque is for a photo of either the members of the local FFA chapter for whichever area the Schwab store is in or for a photo of Oregon's state FFA officers.

The Oregon FFA Foundation put the project out for bid last summer. The Sutherlin FFA chapter turned in a bid and a prototype of its plaque idea. The chapter was selected to produce the plaques in August.

Sutherlin 2015 graduates Kimi Gerstner, Sandra Cox and Jessie Campbell, seniors Bryson Price, Lukas Roman, Colby Hobgood and Erandio, and junior Emma Matteo have been working on the project since. The plaques were delivered to the Oregon FFA Foundation office in Corvallis in and then distributed to the Schwab stores around the state by FFA members.

Crawford said the Sutherlin FFA chapter made \$3,500 from the project.

He explained getting wood from Roseburg Forest Products and metal from Great Northern Trailers in Sutherlin at discounted prices helped greatly in reducing the cost for the chapter.

"There were two reasons we bid for the project," Crawford said. "One was to use it as a fundraiser for those kids competing at nationals in Louisville, Kentucky, and the other was the opportunity to show the abilities and capabilities of our high school students."

The eight students made use of four different computer numerical controlled processes (wood router, plasma table, vinyl and laser) to construct every part used in assembling the plaques.

"It has been a win-win situation, as the FFA Foundation chose to support a chapter to make these instead of just ordering them from other parts of the world, and it worked as a good fundraiser for us as well," Crawford said.

"Some of the students had experience, but they still had a lot to learn to complete all the processes in order to build the plaque," he added. "Other students were really pushed outside of their comfort zones."

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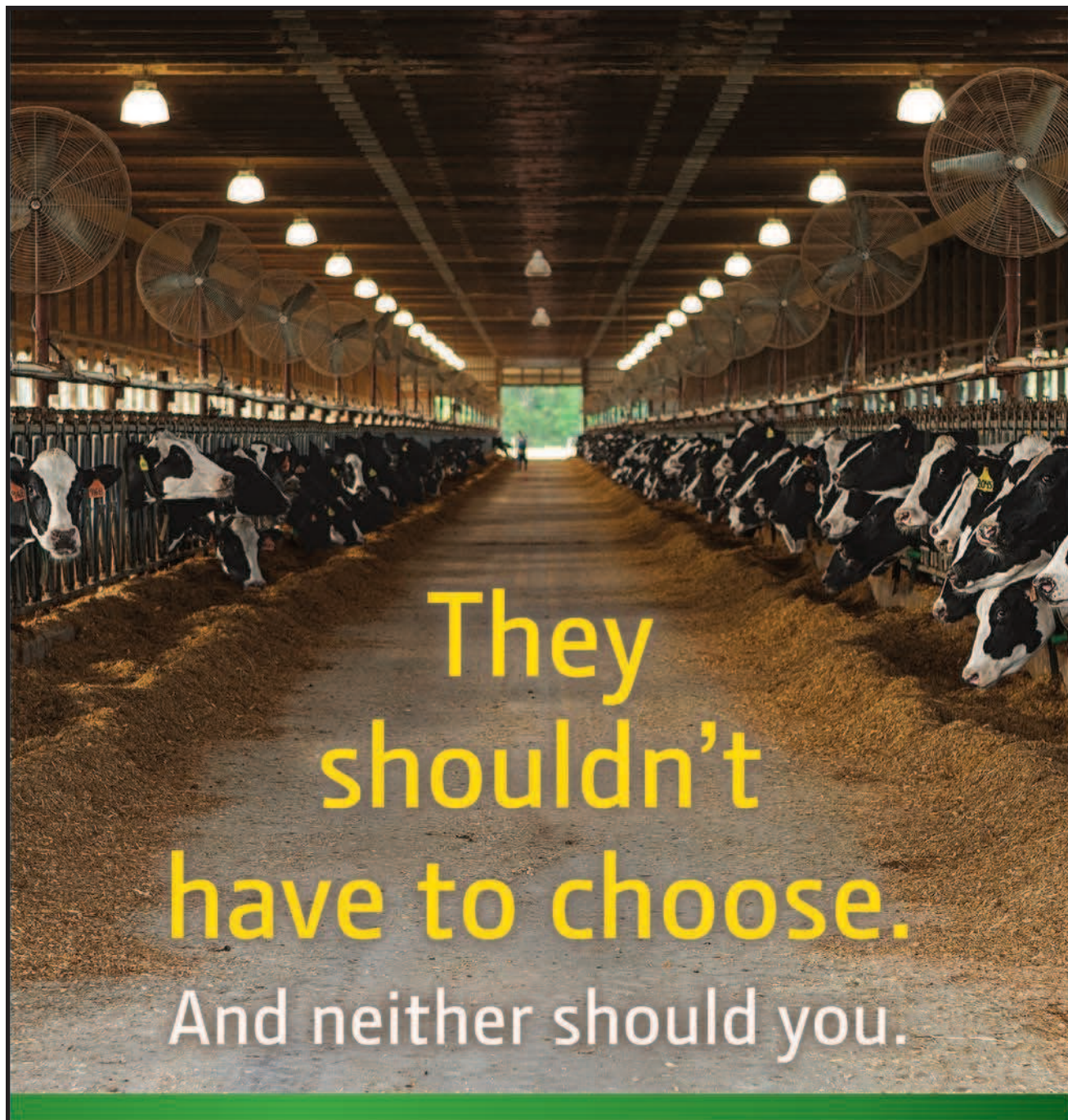
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