



Dan Wheat/Capital Press

Too much early summer heat led to cork on pears, dimples that turn to rot. These pears in the Wenatchee Valley showed it at harvest in September. Such fruit was discarded in the orchards and packing sheds.

Pear crop shrinks but sells well

By DAN WHEAT
Capital Press

WENATCHEE, Wash. — The 2015 Pacific Northwest pear crop is selling at a decent pace and prices are good but the crop is shrinking because of too much cork, a decay brought on by calcium deficiency caused by too much heat early in the growing season.

Cork is most prevalent in d'Anjou pears grown in the Wenatchee Valley, the top pear region in the nation. It is culled out, shrinking the crop as fruit is pulled from storage and packed for shipment.

Because of it the crop is now estimated at 18.6 million, 44-pound boxes, down from estimates of 19.9 million on Aug. 18 and 20.4 million on May 28, says Kevin Moffitt, president of The Pear Bureau Northwest of Portland. The crop undoubtedly will shrink more, he said, keeping prices strong, which coupled with the strong dollar, is hindering exports.

"The domestic is keeping up the slack, so all is good," he said.

The average wholesale asking price of nearly sold out U.S. No. 1 grade Bartlett, size 80, in the Yakima and Wenatchee districts was \$36 to \$38.90 per box on Jan. 20, according to USDA Market News. It was \$26 to \$30.90 for No. 1 d'Anjou of the same size. A year ago, d'Anjou were \$22 to \$26 and Bartlett was sold out.

Moffitt and two associates talked to growers about pear promotions at the annual Northcentral Washington Pear Day at Wenatchee Convention Center, Jan. 20. The event is sponsored by the Pear Bureau and Washington State University Extension.

Afterward, Moffitt told Capital Press movement is good at 61 percent of the crop sold as of Jan. 15 compared to 60 percent a year ago.

Exports are down 20 percent because of the strong dollar and smaller crop, he said. Exports to China are down 36 percent at 103,000 boxes versus 161,000 a year ago at this time. China likely will finish the season at around 146,000 to 160,000 boxes, he said, down from 227,900 for 2014 and 185,000 in 2013. It opened as a market in February 2013.

The top export markets, Mexico and Canada, are down 15.7 percent and 14 percent, respectively, Moffitt said. They won't fall as much as other export markets because of proximity to the U.S. and because they are stable, historic markets, he said.

Imports are a concern this season but not as much as they could be, Moffitt said. Imports will arrive mid-February through June, attracted by good U.S. retail pricing but hindered by small fruit size, he said. Because size is small, imports probably will be kept down to 3.2 million boxes total for the season compared to 3 million last year, he said. Sixty percent of imported pears come from Argentina, 30 percent from Chile and 10 percent from New Zealand and South Africa.

Pear Day talks included pear psylla and integrated pest management, irrigation and pruning.

500 FFA blue jackets converge on Idaho Capitol

By SEAN ELLIS
Capital Press

BOISE — More than 500 FFA students from across Idaho converged on Boise Jan. 25 for a two-day event that allows them to visit with legislators and sharpen their leadership skills.

Idaho lawmakers were surrounded by a sea of blue jackets during the Cenarrusa Day on the Hill luncheon, the official kickoff of the annual event.

The FFA students spent the morning visiting with lawmakers and industry leaders and experiencing firsthand how Idaho government works.

Agriculture is "a great place to be and a great place to raise a family. It's an honor for me to be here and see all the blue coats today," said Jack Ingram, president of the Idaho Cooperative Council, which represents agricultural cooperatives and co-sponsors the event.

Idaho State FFA Executive



Sean Ellis/Capital Press

Sen. Jim Guthrie, a Republican rancher from McCammon, talks with a member of the American Falls FFA chapter Jan. 25 during the Cenarrusa Day on the Hill event. More than 500 FFA members from across Idaho attended the annual event, which kicked off a two-day leadership conference.

Director Clara-Leigh Evans said the two-day event, which includes a leadership conference, is a great way to help shape the state's future leaders.

"In the blue jackets, you're looking at the people that eventually will be wearing (suits) in our Capitol in the

future and be the movers and shakers of Idaho," she said. "This is a really, really special event and it's an exciting opportunity for them."

FFA member Robi Salisbury, president of the New Plymouth chapter, said that FFA students truly are the fu-

ture leaders of Idaho "and I feel it's really important to get us out there and hear about the important issues that (legislators) are dealing with."

Lt. Gov. Brad Little, a rancher, proclaimed Jan. 20-27 as FFA week in Idaho and noted that 65 percent of the state's general fund revenue is dedicated to education.

"There's no better way to get a sense of the (benefit of that investment) than to come to Cenarrusa Day on the Hill," he said.

During the luncheon, Ingram presented Sen. Jim Rice, R-Caldwell, and Rep. Caroline Troy, R-Genesee, with ICC friends of the industry awards.

Rice, chairman of the Senate Agricultural Affairs Committee, noted that "modern agriculture feeds ... more people per farmer than at any time in history."

"I think the world is in good hands when I look out here and see all the blue jackets," said Troy, who Ingram described as "a farm girl through and through."

**BUYING 6" and UP
Alder and Maple
Saw Logs, Standing Timber**

CHEHALIS, WA

<p>Darrell Alvord 360-431-0421 • WA & OR</p>	<p>Ken Jones 360-520-6491 • WA & OR</p>
--	---

www.cascadehardwood.com

RANCONA® V RTU. THREE POWERFUL FUNGICIDES. ONE AMAZING SEED TREATMENT.

RANCONA® V RTU (ready-to-use) seed treatment for wheat takes disease protection and plant health to new levels. By combining three powerful fungicides that provide both contact and systemic activity, with the superior coverage and adhesion of RANCONA advanced flowable technology, you have a seed treatment that delivers more consistent protection under a wider range of conditions. Because when more seed treatment stays on the seed, you get more out of your seed treatment. To learn more, talk to your Arysta LifeScience representative or visit rancona.com.

Always read and follow label directions. RANCONA is a registered trademark of M&D Agri Solutions, Inc. Arysta LifeScience and the Arysta LifeScience logo are registered trademarks of the Arysta LifeScience Corporation. © Arysta LifeScience North America, LLC. RAN0-003

5-1/#4N