

Youngest bull sale consigner already a veteran

By LEE JUILLERAT
For the Capital Press

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. — At age 15, Nicholas Sheridan of Yamhill, Ore., is the youngest consigner at the upcoming Klamath Bull & Select Ranch Horse Sale, but he's already a seasoned veteran.

This year's sale, Feb. 4-7 at the Klamath County Fairgrounds in Klamath Falls, will be Sheridan's third Klamath bull sale.

As a 13-year-old, the sale's youngest ever consigner in history, he entered an Angus bull that was the reserve champion and sold for \$5,600. He entered and sold two Angus bulls in 2015 and will offer two more this year. His long-range plans include four more in 2017.

"It was pretty exciting,"



Courtesy of Mark Sheridan

Nicholas Sheridan stands with two bulls that will go to the Klamath sale, NS Full Force 55N and NS Famous Prophet 52N. Two years ago, when he was 13, he was the bull sale's youngest consigner.

Sheridan said of his first year's success.

He began the process of raising registered black Angus bulls as an 11-year-old when he bought three females. One has produced three heifers annually. Now a sophomore at

Yamhill-Carlton High School, he remains involved in 4-H and FFA.

"My ultimate goal when I graduate from college is to become a veterinarian, preferably for large animals," said Sheridan, who lives on a 25-acre

farm and is the son of Mark and Kim Sheridan. Grass hay grown on the farm is used for cattle grazing.

"I get up in the morning and I go out and feed cows. I go to school and when I get home I go out and feed the cows," he said of his daily routine.

He said he learned about the Klamath Bull Sale from a breeder and has become a regular.

"I just like talking to people and the people at the sale are very pleasant and knowledgeable," Sheridan said.

"The best thing is he has gotten to know so many great people all up and down the West Coast. Many of these folks are well-established cattle ranchers," said his father, Mark.

"All of the cattle are his, not ones his mother and I have given him. He has purchased

them or raised them with his own money," Mark Sheridan said. "All of the cattle are registered and every one is halter broke, meaning he has earned their trust and can put a halter on them and lead them anywhere he wants them to go. In fact, one big cow won't go anywhere unless Nicholas puts a halter on her and then she just walks alongside him."

Mark Sheridan also noted his son gives his own shots, prepares the animals for artificial insemination, recently completed an AI class at Oregon State University, and recently artificially inseminated his cows, with the unborn calves destined for the 2018 sale.

"The knowledge Nicholas has about his cattle never ceases to amaze me," said his father. "The first time Nicho-

las showed up at the Klamath bull sale with one bull and did very well, they all thought he was a 'one hit wonder.' Last year, when he brought two really good Angus bulls, they knew he was serious.

"This is all Nicholas Sheridan. He deserves every bit of credit."

For young Sheridan, working with cattle is something in his blood. Although he sees his future as a veterinarian, he plans to keep his black Angus herd into adulthood. As he insists, "I won't forget my Angus cattle even when I'm a veterinarian. They'll always be a part of me. This isn't just a passing 4-H project."

Of selling his bulls, Sheridan explains, "It's sad — until the check comes. I always know I've got more bulls at home."

AgriNorthwest to buy Boardman Tree Farm

By GEORGE PLAVERN
EO Media Group

AgriNorthwest, a farm operator based in the Tri-Cities, has entered into an agreement to buy the Boardman Tree Farm from Greenwood Resources.

Part of the 25,000-acre tree farm already sold to a local dairy that will raise approximately 8,000 cows south of Homestead Lane. The rest will now go to AgriNorthwest, which farms mostly potatoes and other irrigated crops.

The deal is expected to close soon. Terms were not disclosed.

In the meantime, Greenwood Resources will continue to harvest the trees that are left under a leaseback agreement. The Collins Companies operates a sawmill at the tree farm, and Columbia Forest Products runs a veneer mill that makes decorative plywood.

Logs are also sold for pulp and biofuel. ZeaChem, a company at the nearby Port of Mor-



E.J. Harris/EO Media Group

Rep. Greg Walden, right, listens to swing shift team leader Richard Lewellen talk about the veneer production line at the Greenwood Resources tree farm Friday near Boardman.

row, used sawdust from the tree farm to make ethanol.

The tree farm has also hosted "A Very Poplar Run" since 2011, with 5K and 10K races to benefit the Agape House in Hermiston. Don Rice, director of North American operations for Greenwood Resources, said the decision to sell the property

has been met with mixed emotions.

"It has become a community feature," Rice said. "We have a lot of photographers who come out, especially in the fall, to take pictures."

The Boardman Tree Farm borders six miles of Interstate 84, and extends 13 miles south

of the highway. It includes roughly 6 million hybrid poplar trees that can grow to more than 100 feet tall. The trees are harvested in 12-year cycles.

It could take years to finish milling all the remaining trees, Rice said, depending on the market conditions. He is hopeful Greenwood Resources can continue to provide trees from its other locations to keep the local sawmill and veneer mill operating. Together, those businesses employ about 100 people.

The tree farm has 20 employees, along with 50-60 contractors. Rice said they were not actively marketing the property, but AgriNorthwest approached them about acquiring the land.

"We believe they made a fair offer," he said.

Prior to becoming a tree farm, the area was used for agriculture. The trees came in 1990, and Greenwood Resources bought the property in 2007. But Rice said they won't be planting again in spring.

"Things change over time," he said. "This will continue to be a valuable asset to the community and economy."

Todd Jones, president of AgriNorthwest, said the company has been farming in the Columbia Basin for more than 50 years and is looking forward to adding the Boardman property to its operations.

In December, Greenwood announced it sold roughly one-third of the tree farm — 7,288 acres — to Willow Creek Dairy, which was established in 2002 on land leased by Threemile Canyon Farms located on the other side of the Boardman Bombing Range.

That sale closed for \$65 million.

The dairy will now be located along the southern boundary of the tree farm, near the Finley Buttes Landfill. AgriNorthwest's fields will be located more closely to the highway, which marks the property's northern boundary.



Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press

Oregon State University hazelnut breeder Shawn Mehlenbacher estimates that hazelnut cultivars with new sources of Eastern Filbert Blight resistance will be released in a decade.

New blight-resistant genes identified for hazelnuts

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

New sources of resistance to Eastern Filbert Blight, a devastating fungal pathogen, are being incorporated into hazelnut trees, though getting them into orchards will take a while.

Blight-resistant varieties released by Oregon State University are all dependent on the Gasaway gene, which was discovered in 1975 in trees impervious to the disease.

About 100 different trees from countries including Spain, Chile, Turkey, Russia, Serbia and Georgia have found to be resistant to EFB, even though the disease isn't native to those regions.

"We've been testing material from all over the world," OSU hazelnut breeder Shawn Mehlenbacher said at the recent Nut Grower's Society meeting in Corvallis, Ore.

While it's uncertain why these trees developed resistance, their genetic sequences are being analyzed by Mehlenbacher to find the location of resistant traits.

"We start with that and whittle away," he said.

EFB-resistant genes have so far been found on three distinct chromosomes.

Several resistant genes are found on only one of those chromosomes — the same one as the Gasaway gene — but Mehlenbacher said he's optimistic they will also confer new sources of resistance to hazelnut trees.

Since the genes were discovered in far-flung

geographic locations, it's unlikely they are identical, he said. Genes that confer disease resistance are often found in clusters on a chromosome.

Mehlenbacher said he's already using some of the new resistant genes in his hazelnut breeding program, but it will probably take a decade before OSU releases a new variety with a resistance source other than Gasaway.

Developing a variety with two or more sources of resistance will require closer to two decades, since it's more complex to incorporate multiple genes into trees that also generate sufficient yields and quality, he said.

It's unlikely OSU will soon release any new hazelnut varieties with the Gasaway gene unless the cultivar is significantly better than existing ones or has a novel trait, said Mehlenbacher.

"The standard is pretty darn high," he said.

The most recent commercial variety released by OSU was McDonald in 2014 and the most recent ornamental variety was Burgundy Lace in 2015. Trees that fill a niche — such as having mature nuts ready for harvest earlier than other cultivars — would also justify a new variety release, he said.

Mehlenbacher said he's reluctant to release new varieties because the industry still needs time to absorb recent cultivars, since nurseries are still trying to produce enough trees to meet demand.

Newton named Nut Grower of the Year

Farmer recognized for innovative practices, new undertakings



Newton

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

Hazelnut farmer Jeff Newton of Amity, Ore., has been honored as the Nut Grower's Society Grower of the Year for 2015 in

recognition of his innovative production practices and contributions to the industry.

Newton has equipped his newest hazelnut orchard with drip irrigation lines that can supply fertilizer to the trees, allowing him to experiment with nutrient-to-water ratios, according to the NGS.

As he seeks to replace

orchards infected with Eastern Filbert Blight, a fungal pathogen, with disease-resistant varieties, Newton is also undertaking nursery production and has likely generated enough trees to plant 500 acres this year.

He has also been involved in educating farmers who are new to the hazelnut industry and has worked to improve food safety measures at receiving stations and elsewhere in the supply chain.



Oregon Aglink

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Lori Pavlicek, Oregon Aglink President

Lori is a 4th generation farm girl and co-owns 4 B Farms, Inc. with her parents, Jim and Donna Butsch, and brother Jeff. The farm grows garlic, hops, hazelnuts, grass seed, and a variety of row crops on 2600 acres

around the Mt. Angel, Gervais, and Hubbard areas.

Lori is a member of NORPAC and the Nut Growers Society of Oregon, in addition to being a past Marion County FSA Board member. After an 18 year run on the Mt. Angel Oktoberfest board she continues her community work by being the President of the Mt. Angel Community Foundation Board and Secretary of the Providence Benedictine Nursing Center.

Lori and her farm became members of Oregon Aglink because "We believe the 'Link' between rural and urban consumers is the education and use of our natural resources. Oregon Aglink is the voice of the Natural Resource community, and we need to spread the word."

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