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# Idaho

## Bill would allow Idaho officers to check for illegal dyed fuel use

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

BOISE — A bill introduced Feb. 11 in the Idaho Legislature would allow law enforcement officers to inspect motor vehicles for the illegal use of dyed fuel.

Law enforcement officers in Idaho don't currently have the authority to inspect vehicles to see if they are illegally using dyed fuel, which is also called dyed diesel and exempt from state and federal fuel taxes because it's only for use in off-road, non-licensed vehicles.

Senate Bill 1310 would make any diesel-powered motor vehicle subject to inspection for dyed diesel "when the operator is requested to submit to such inspection by any peace officer at a fixed or portable check station established by the Idaho Transportation Department...."

According to the bill, vehicles would also be subject to inspection for dyed fuel "when requested by any peace officer as a secondary action when the operator of the motor vehicle has been detained for a suspected violation of another law."

Idaho farm groups have told lawmakers they would not oppose any efforts to increase enforcement of the state's dyed diesel law as long as they aren't burdensome and don't unfairly target agriculture.

### 'We'll watch it'

Milk Producers of Idaho Executive Director Brent Olmstead said he hasn't had a chance to digest all of the implications of SB 1310 yet, but added, "We'll watch it closely."

Members of the Senate Transportation Committee voted Feb. 11 to print the bill, which is authored by the com-

mittee's chairman, Sen. Bert Brackett, a Republican rancher from Rogerson.

The bill comes on the heels of a 61-page report that offers nine options for increasing dyed diesel enforcement in Idaho.

The report by the Idaho State Tax Commission and Idaho State Police was a result of language in a bill passed last year that directed the agencies to develop recommendations for greater dyed fuel enforcement.

The report estimates Idaho could be losing about \$11 million a year from the misuse

of dyed diesel, which is used heavily in the agricultural, mining, timber and construction industries.

### 'A small step'

Brackett told the Capital Press the bill doesn't change anything about the state's dyed fuel law, except to give law enforcement officers authority to inspect vehicles if they have probable cause.

"It does not create a dyed diesel enforcement program," he said. "It's just a small step forward."

Olmstead said there are some basic philosophies Idaho

farm groups would want to see included in any legislation that amends the state's dyed diesel law.

That includes inspections being based on probable cause and any enforcement action being taken only against the vehicle that used the fuel illegally and not being traced back to the bulk storage tank where it originated.

Idaho agriculture would also want the state to have sole jurisdiction in any enforcement program and not share that jurisdiction with the Internal Revenue Service, he said.



Submitted photo

Green peas are harvested in a field near Kendrick, Idaho, in this 2014 file photo. A resolution introduced in the Idaho Legislature recognizes pulse crops such as peas for their health benefits and contribution to Idaho's economy.

## Resolution cites pulse crops' health, economic benefits

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

BOISE — A concurrent resolution making its way through the Idaho House of Representatives recognizes the role that "mighty pulse" crops play in a healthy diet and the state's economy.

House Concurrent Resolution 32 gives an official state shout-out to pulses — peas, lentils, dry beans and chickpeas — and the commissions that promote them.

More than 200,000 acres of pulse crops are grown in the state and while North Idaho residents are well aware of their importance — Moscow, Idaho, is known as the Pea and Lentil Capital of the World — people in Southern Idaho could use a refresher, said Rep. Caroline Troy, R-Genesee, who introduced the resolution. "It brings some awareness about the benefit of pulse crops to Boise," she said. We're "well educated on pulse crops up north but I think we need to make sure that the rest of the state knows about them."

North Idaho pulse farmer Robert Blair applauded the resolution and added that it's not an accident that the USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council is in Moscow.

"My hat's off to Rep. Troy for bringing this resolution and the benefits of pulse crops to the forefront of Idaho," he said. "Even though pulses are

a minor crop as far as USDA is concerned, they're a major crop in Idaho and a big part of the state's economy."

The resolution states that pulse crops "are a vital source of plant-based proteins and amino acids" and should "be eaten as part of a healthy diet to address obesity, as well as to prevent and help manage chronic diseases such as diabetes, coronary conditions and cancer."

It points out that pulses are nutrient-dense, rich in fiber and protein, and contribute nitrogen to the soil "and have a positive impact on the environment."

The memorial also recognizes "the tireless work" the Idaho Pea and Lentil Commission, Idaho Bean Commission and the national council do "in promoting these important crops to the world."

IBC Commissioner Don Tolmie said pulse crops are becoming a bigger part of the national mindset when it comes to their nutritional benefits.

"There is some real momentum gaining for pulse crops and any recognition for these crops is good for the growers, good for Idaho's economy and good for the nation as a whole," he said.

In conjunction with the United Nations declaring 2016 as the International Year of Pulses, "this is a great opportunity to tell the story of the pulse crops," Troy said.

## Seed testing finds rise in PVY, ring rot

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho — Potato virus Y infections in Idaho seed lots have increased slightly from last season, according to results of Idaho's 2016 winter grow-out in Hawaii.

However, testing has confirmed a more significant rise in the percentage of infections by PVY strains that cause tuber damage.

Furthermore, new testing protocols enacted in February 2014 by Idaho's seed potato industry have identified bacterial ring rot in some tuber samples.

Alan Westra, southeast Idaho area manager with Idaho Crop Improvement Association, said 28 percent of seed lots that were tested in the winter grow-out had some level of PVY infection but were still eligible to be replanted to produce more seed, which was down 1 percent from last season's grow-out.

Another 27 percent of lots were ineligible for replanting as seed for having at least 2 percent PVY infection, up 6 percent. Forty-five percent of seed lots tested clean, down by 5 percent.

"I don't really consider the changes to be significant," Westra said. "The amount of quality seed out there isn't going to change because of our winter readings."

In 2013, Westra said 55 percent of Idaho seed lots tested clean and just 18 percent were ineligible to replant for seed. He believes Idaho imported some of its PVY in seed from Montana, where disease pressure was high a couple of years ago.

Westra said plant growth in this winter's grow-out stand was exceptional. His program also conducted its first trapping of aphids, which spread PVY, concluding the pressure was so light there was virtually no risk of PVY spreading throughout the Hawaii plots and skewing test results.

University of Idaho Extension virologist Alexander Karasev, who conducted additional testing to determine the strains of PVY from grow-out samples, said the percentage of infections



Courtesy of Idaho Crop Improvement

A good stand of Idaho seed potatoes grows in Idaho's 2016 winter grow-out in Hawaii. The results showed relatively flat rates of potato virus Y in seed potato lots.

caused PVY NTN, a recombinant strain known to cause tuber damage, rose to 20 percent, after dropping to just 10 percent during the prior season.

"We would like to keep this NTN strain down as much as possible," Karasev said.

He said last year's most common type, a recombinant strain that doesn't typically cause tuber damage called PVY N Wilga, continued a growth trend, reaching 66 percent of all positives. Karasev said no potato varieties with resistance to N Wilga have been developed yet, and that should be a priority for

the industry.

He said the strain that caused the majority of infections just five years ago, PVY O, which also causes no tuber defects, is now virtually extinct, representing just 3 percent of infections in the recent testing.

Westra said in 2014, the first year of mandatory ring rot testing for seed certification, no samples of the 576,000 tubers tested were positive for the devastating crop disease. This year, field inspections confirmed three seed lots contained ring rot. Under the new program, additional traceback testing of

lots originating from a common seed source, or in which equipment or facilities were shared in common with infected lots, confirmed more ring rot. In all, Westra said about 2,400 tuber samples were positive for ring rot, and 500 to 600 acres of seed production were rejected.

"The silver lining of this cloud, if there is one, is our testing program now appears to be working, and we're keeping ring rot as best as we can from getting into the commercial industry," Westra said, adding infections weren't the fault of the growers.



## Oregon Aglink

Take a new look at an old friend.



**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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## Idaho Wheat Commission to host no-till workshop

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho — The Idaho Wheat Commission has scheduled a workshop to focus on direct seeding for 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Feb. 24 at the Shiloh Inn Conference Center, 780 Lindsay Blvd.

Advocates for direct seeding, also known as no-till farming, say the lack of tillage prevents erosion, improves moisture penetration, builds organic matter and maintains the natural processes that occur within healthy soil.

Swan Valley farmer Gordon Gallup, who organized the workshop, said in a press release no-till cropping systems are catching on in Eastern Idaho as growers seek to limit their input costs and reduce the number of trips their equipment must make through fields.

According to the commission, the workshop will offer the latest information on varieties, fertility management and equipment, as well as the experiences of growers who have utilized direct seeding.

Presentations will include a grower panel, cropping systems strategy by Aaron Esser of Washington State University Extension, resistant weeds

in no-till farming by University of Idaho Extension weed specialist Don Morishita, disease control in no-till farming by UI Extension cereals pathologist Juliet Marshall, water in no-till farming by UI Extension irrigation specialist Howard Neibling and crop rotation in no-till systems by Marlon

Winger, with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

A \$10 fee will be charged to cover the cost of lunch. RSVP at [ts@idahowheat.org](mailto:ts@idahowheat.org) or by calling 208-334-2353.


The commission expects to draw growers from as far away as Montana and Northern Utah.

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