

People & Places

# Never a dulse moment in this kitchen

Jason Ball develops food from variety of exotic ingredients at innovation center

By ERIC MORTENSON  
Capital Press

PORTLAND — Jason Ball has an unusual job at an unusual place. He's the research chef at the Food Innovation Center in Portland, which itself is a joint venture of Oregon State University's College of Agricultural Sciences and the state Department of Agriculture.

The FIC was among the first in the U.S. Ball believes this position is still somewhat unusual, but may become more common over time.

Ball's job is to help develop food products. He said being a research chef combines the technical skills of culinary arts with the principles and methodologies of food science.

Which leads us to dulse, which is basically a red seaweed. Yum.

But it's nutritious. OSU's Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport figured out 15 years ago how to raise dulse in tanks rather than harvest it from the ocean. The Marine Science Center was raising it to feed abalone when an OSU business professor, Chuck Toombs, took notice and turned his marketing students loose on the project. OSU fisheries researcher Chris Langdon and colleagues patented a strain of dulse, and Ball was hired to figure out what to make with it.

His hiring had its own bit of dulse kismet. Ball was in Copenhagen, working on plant-based ice cream products for the Nordic Food Lab, when he saw the job notice from the Food Inno-



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press

Jason Ball is the research chef at Oregon State University's Food Innovation Center in Portland. Ingredients he has experimented with include dulse, a type of seaweed.

## Western Innovator

### Jason Ball

**Who:** Research chef at the Food Innovation Center in Portland, a joint venture of Oregon State University and the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

**Personal:** Age 31, originally from Chicago. Worked as a chef there, and in New York and outside London. Bounced about Europe. Began work at FIC in January 2015. Lives in Portland.

**Best known for so far:** Dulse development work. Developing food than can be made from seaweed, which in turn is grown in tanks, not harvested from the ocean.

**All hail vegetables and bread:** Finds cooking meat and fish "somewhat easy" and thinks vegetables are more interesting. Enjoys baking bread, especially natural yeast sourdough. "Honestly, warm bread (out of the oven — with butter and salt) is one of my favorite things to eat — so simple, yet so delicious," he says by email.

**His choice for an Oregon breakfast:** A frittata with kale sprouts, heritage farm cheese, green garlic, chili flakes and potatoes, probably garnished with herbs and flowers. On the side he'd have a salad of mixed chicories, hazelnuts, herbs and tahini dressing. Fresh bread and coffee, as well.

**When not cooking:** Can most often be found at Lovely's Fifty Fifty in North Portland, which he says has the best pizza and ice cream. Ever. "Hands down my favorite restaurant in Portland, maybe even the world," he says.



vation Center. He was snacking on a dulse ice cream sandwich as he emailed then-center Director Michael Morrisey and FIC Product Development

Manager Sarah Masoni to ask about the position.

He made sure to mention his snack choice; he got the job and started about 14 months ago.

The first commercial product to come from Ball's FIC work is a dulse seaweed salad dressing and marinade, sold at New Seasons stores in the Portland area.

Ball enjoys the challenge of developing products that are "less luxurious or appealing." It's easy to make lobster or steak taste good, he said, but seaweed?

"I like to say that I am an equal opportunity cook — I don't discriminate against ingredients," Ball said by email. "Why can't we approach all ingredients with that excitement and enthusiasm?"

# Oregon's Malheur County votes 90 percent against Owyhee Canyonlands monument

By AMANDA PEACHER  
Oregon Public Broadcasting

An overwhelming majority of voters in Malheur County rejected the idea of a national monument in a corner of southeast Oregon known as the Owyhee Canyonlands.

The vast and rugged area is known for its stunning red rock geology and canyons, extreme remoteness, and wildlife habitat. It's also an important area for cattle grazing and hunting.

The idea of an Owyhee National Monument is championed by Keen Footwear. The Portland-based company led a petition campaign to convince President Barack Obama to designate the mon-

ument, using his executive authority through the Antiquities Act.

Malheur County leaders decided to put the idea to citizens with an advisory vote, and County Clerk Deborah DeLong says voter turnout was high for a special election — higher even than some primary elections. Ninety percent of voters rejected the monument proposal. In some rural precincts, 100 percent of voters voted no.

"It's amazing to me that the difference in the vote was 90 percent no and 10 percent yes," said DeLong. "That's a huge statement."

Malheur County resident Tim Davis leads the grassroots group Friends of the Owyhee

in Malheur County. He voted yes on the monument proposal, because he said it's important "to have areas like this for people to explore and love."

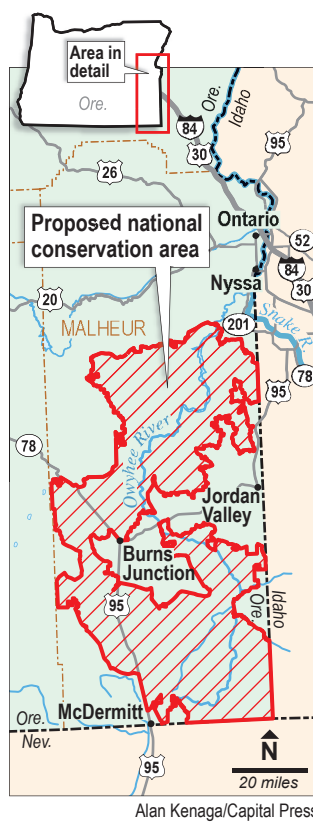
"Now that the people of Malheur County have spoken loudly and clearly against a 2.5 million acre federal monument, it's time for Gov. (Kate) Brown and our U.S. senators to speak out against it as well," said Steve Russell, Chairman of the Owyhee Basin Stewardship Coalition, in a statement. "Oregon already has millions of acres of protected lands, rivers and oceans."

Conservation proposals for wilderness or monument designations in the Owyhee have also drawn fierce local

opposition during recent public meetings. The Oregon Natural Desert Association has been talking about wilderness in the Owyhee for years, but that can only be designated through Congress.

Obama has not given any indication that he plans to designate the Owyhee a national monument, as some conservationists propose. Obama has already created or expanded 19 national monuments. Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell said last week that she is not aware of any coordination between her office and the White House on a monument proposal.

The Malheur County vote is advisory only and holds no legal weight.



Alan Kenaga/Capital Press

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20 Northwest Locations

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### Friday, March 18

2016 Oregon FFA State Convention, Oregon State University, Corvallis. <http://www.oregonffa.com>

Northwest Horse Fair & Expo 2016, Linn County Fair and Expo Center, Albany, Ore. The largest equine expo in the Northwest will feature dancing horses, clinics by world-class horse trainers and riders, breed and stallion review demos, equine entertainment and a trade show. <http://equinepromotions.net/>

### Saturday, March 19

Women in Agriculture Conference, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Pacific time, 31 locations across the region. The 2016 Women in Agriculture Conference will offer women in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Alaska a unique opportunity to gather in 31 locations for a one-day event featuring knowledgeable speakers, inspiring stories, networking with other

producers and practical advice for learning new skills. <http://womenninag.wsu.edu/>

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### Sunday, March 20

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### Monday, March 21

2016 Oregon FFA State Convention, Oregon State University,

Corvallis. <http://www.oregonffa.com>

California Fresh Fruit Association Annual Meeting, Resort at Pelican Hill, Newport Coast. <http://www.cafreshfruit.org>

### Tuesday, March 22

California Fresh Fruit Association Annual Meeting, Resort at Pelican Hill, Newport Coast. <http://www.cafreshfruit.org>

### Saturday, April 2

Spring Farming Days, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Eastern Washington Agricultural Museum, Pomeroy. [www.co.garfield.wa.us/museum](http://www.co.garfield.wa.us/museum)

### Sunday, April 3

Spring Farming Days, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Eastern Washington Agricultural Museum, Pomeroy. [www.co.garfield.wa.us/museum](http://www.co.garfield.wa.us/museum)

### Wednesday, April 6

Idaho FFA State Leadership Conference, College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls. [idahoffa.org/](http://idahoffa.org/)

### Thursday, April 7

Growing Agripreneurs — A Season of Farming Training, 6-9 p.m., Growing Agripreneurs is a seven-month program, beginning April 7, designed for beginning farmers interested in gaining theoretical and practical knowledge

through classes, field work, marketing, food preservation, farm tours and one-on-one mentoring. Pre-registration by March 25 required. Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, Ore. Cost: \$350 (couples discount, \$600) Partial scholarships available. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/farms>

Idaho FFA State Leadership Conference, College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls. [idahoffa.org/](http://idahoffa.org/)

### Friday, April 8

Idaho FFA State Leadership Conference, College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls. [idahoffa.org/](http://idahoffa.org/)

### Saturday, April 9

96th Annual California Ram Sale, Viewing starts are 8 a.m. Over 400 range rams from California, Oregon, Idaho and Utah. Crossbred, Hampshire, Suffolk and White-Faced (Columbia, Rambouillet) rams will be auctioned off in the sale. In addition three purebred ewes will also be sold. Also, ultrasound carcass measurements and a range ram index will be provided on all sale rams, Porterville Fairgrounds, 2700 W. Teapot Dome Ave., Porterville, Calif. <http://cawoolgrowers.org/sale/ramsale.html>

Idaho FFA State Leadership Conference, College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls. [idahoffa.org/](http://idahoffa.org/)

### Tuesday, April 12

Oregon Cranberry Growers Twilight Meeting, 4 p.m., Robinson Farm, Bandon, Ore. [www.oregoncranberrygrowers.com](http://www.oregoncranberrygrowers.com)

### Wednesday, April 13

International Fair of Agricultural Technologies Conference and Exhibition, FEXPO Agricola Central, Talca, Chile

### Thursday, April 14

International Fair of Agricultural Technologies Conference and Exhibition, FEXPO Agricola Central, Talca, Chile

### Friday, April 15

International Fair of Agricultural Technologies Conference and Exhibition, FEXPO Agricola Central, Talca, Chile

### Saturday, April 16

Oregon Women for Agriculture Auction & Dinner, 5-9 p.m. The organization's 29th annual fundraiser, themed "Oregon Agriculture A to Z," will take place at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road E in Albany, Ore. Cost: \$40 per person. <http://owaonline.org/owa-auction-2016/>

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### Correction

A photo and caption in the March 11 Seed & Row Crop section confused two types of clover. The photo was of crimson clover, which is an annual, but the accompanying story was about red clover, a perennial that has light purple flowers. The Capital Press regrets the error.