



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Limagrain Cereal Seeds vice president for research Jim Peterson and chief operating officer Frank Curtis talk last Nov. 12 during a presentation in Spokane. Limagrain is working with Colorado State University and the Colorado Wheat Research Foundation to release a new non-GMO trait that will make wheat resistant to a herbicide.

Researchers developing herbicide-tolerant trait for wheat

New varieties available to farmers in 2017

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

Researchers are working on a new non-GMO herbicide-tolerant trait for wheat. The trait, which will be bred into several wheat varieties, is not a genetically modified organism, according to Limagrain Cereal Seeds, which made the announcement.

Limagrain is working with the Colorado Wheat Research Foundation and Albaugh LLC to develop tolerance to a herbicide not previously used on wheat. The herbicide has for several years been on the market for other crops, said chief operating officer Frank Curtis.

He declined to name the herbicide, citing patent applications that have been submitted. The herbicide has previously been used to control grass weeds in broadleaf crops.

Colorado State University researchers successfully created a mutation that makes wheat resistant to the herbicide.

The new trait will first appear in hard red winter wheat from the CSU breeding program and will be owned by the Colorado Wheat Research Foundation.

Limagrain is working to introduce the trait into other wheat classes.

"It's particularly good against jointed goatgrass, feral rye, cheatgrass, wild oats, numerous other grass weed species, all the most important ones," Curtis said. "There's no residual effect of the chemical, so there's nothing restricting the grower on future rotations."

Wheat farmers spend \$140

Brown signs Oregon wolf delisting bill

Environmentalists had hoped for a veto

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

A bill that averts an environmentalist lawsuit by ratifying the removal of wolves from Oregon's list of endangered species has been signed by Gov. Kate Brown.

Oregon wildlife regulators found that wolf populations have recovered enough to delist the species last year, which prompted three environmental groups — Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild and the Center for Biological Diversity — to petition the Oregon Court of Appeals to overturn the decision.

House Bill 4040, which holds that the delisting process complied with the law, was approved by Oregon lawmakers during the 2016 legislative session and effectively voided the environmentalists' argument that the decision was illegal.

Brown signed HB 4040 on March 15 over the objections of environmentalists, who urged her to veto the bill, arguing the Legislature shouldn't have interfered with a judicial review of the wolf delisting that they had sought.

Ag economists tell dairy producers to seize opportunities

By SEAN ELLIS
Capital Press

BOISE — The lifting of European Union milk quotas last April has resulted in rivers of milk flooding the global market and is a major reason for depressed milk prices, two ag economists told Idaho producers last week.

But the low prices won't last forever and the dairy industry will have a lot of good opportunities in the future, dairy economist Marin Bozic told United Dairymen of Idaho members.



Bozic

As the global population increases and incomes in developing nations rise, "there will be more people that can afford to buy dairy products," he said. "There will be huge opportunities for us."

Bozic, associated director of the Midwest Dairy Foods Research Center and a University of Minnesota dairy economist, said volatility in the dairy industry can benefit low-cost producers.

"There is a massive oppor-

tunity for low-cost producers around the world, Idaho among them," he said. "There will be increased demand for dairy foods not just for next year but for decades to come."

He said dairy producers have to be willing to re-invent themselves quickly to take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

"You have to be able to pivot and pivot radically," he said. "You have to look for new business models, new partnerships, new supply chain models, etc., that allow you to maintain your competitive edge."

Bozic said "rivers of milk are coming out of Germany" and other European Union nations since the EU lifted milk production quotas and several EU nations comparable in milk production terms to the leading U.S. states are growing at double digits.

"Really what's driving the milk situation in the world right now is the removal of quotas in the EU," he said.

In a separate presentation to Food Producers of Idaho members, Doug Robison, Northwest Farm Credit Service's vice president of agriculture



Carol Ryan Dumas/Capital Press

Cows feed in the sunshine at this dairy in Wendell, Idaho, earlier this fall. Dairy economists say that although prices are low now, there are plenty of opportunities for low-cost producers.

for Western Idaho, said that situation has been exacerbated by Russian's ban on dairy products from EU nations.

"All the export volume out of the EU had to find a new ... place in the world market," he said. "It's a major issue on the supply side ... and something that's certainly affecting Idaho dairymen."

Bozic said the current milk price slump may last longer than previous slumps but "I think in the end markets will come around and we will see higher milk prices by the first

quarter of 2017."

Nampa dairyman Mike Siegersma said Bozic's presentation "was pretty much, 'hang in there, watch your costs and wait for it to rise.' He said the long-term looks good; we're in the right industry. But short-term, we have this (challenge) to work through."

Gooding producer Steve Ballard said he agreed with Bozic that the current dairy slump won't be a repeat of 2009, when Idaho dairymen lost an estimated \$690 million in equity.



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