



Courtesy of University of Idaho College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean Michael Parrella is seen with UI mascot Joe Vandal.

Farm groups help ag college exceed fundraising goal

By SEAN ELLIS
Capital Press

MOSCOW, Idaho — The University of Idaho's first foray into social media fundraising was a success for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and its new dean.

The college raised \$30,425 from 143 donors during the 36-hour campaign, which started April 26. That far surpassed the campaign's \$15,000 goal.

The money will go into the CALS Dean's Excellence Fund, which will be used by Michael Parrella, the college's new dean, for special projects.

UI officials said that while they were happy with the amount, they were more happy with Food Producers of Idaho's support for the campaign. FPI includes 40 of the state's farm groups, and its members were asked by UI officials last month to kick off the campaign by pledging \$7,500.

FPI members quickly voted to donate \$1,000 from the organization, and its individual groups donated \$7,000 separately.

"I think it will speak volumes that this group is endorsing this new dean and really getting him set up on the right foot," Kim O'Neill, CALS assistant dean of development and communications, told FPI members. "That endorsement is what we're after."

Besides FPI's overall \$1,000 donation, the Idaho Cattle Association, Idaho Grain Producers Association, Idaho Co-op Council, Idaho Honey Industry Association, Idaho Dairymen's Association, Northwest Farm Credit Services, Idaho Sugarbeet Growers Association and Idaho Grange, all FPI members, donated toward the campaign individually.

O'Neill told Capital Press that university officials were pleased with FPI's response to the campaign because it serves as a vote of confidence for CALS and Parrella, who took over as dean in February.

"This is an endorsement of the dean," she said and FPI members said their support was intended for that purpose.

"We wanted to show our

support for the dean and we thought that was a good way to demonstrate it," said Bob Naerebout, executive director of IDA, which donated \$1,000.

"We are in full support of the college and the dean. They do a lot for agriculture and this is one way of repaying the favor," said Milk Producers of Idaho Executive Director Brent Olmstead.

The \$15,000 goal was set to honor the college's 115th year and Parrella's tenure as the college's 15th dean.

The excellence fund money will be used to help CALS students participate in scientific conferences and go on field trips. It can also be used for scholarships.

O'Neill said it will also be used to help achieve one of Parrella's main priorities of increasing graduate and undergraduate enrollment.

The money "will allow greater contact with prospective CALS students, increasing overall enrollment in the college and on the UI campus," Parrella said in an email.

Idaho hop growers to add hundreds of acres

By SEAN ELLIS
Capital Press

WILDER, Idaho — Idaho's hop acreage continues to expand at a robust rate, with growers planning to add hundreds of additional acres this year.

"It's still a pretty positive (environment) for hops right now," said Brock Obendorf, whose hop operation will add 350 acres in 2016. "I think this year there will be approximately 700 new hop acres in Idaho."

That would be a 14 percent increase over Idaho's 2015 total of 4,863 hop acres.

Hop grower Nate Jackson said that estimate sounds solid and based on the amount of hops sold recently, "There will probably be a larger increase next year."

Idaho hop acreage has been on a rapid rise since 2013, when it totaled 3,356. Acreage

increased to 3,743 in 2014 and 4,863 in 2015.

The increase is almost all related to soaring demand from the craft brewing industry, hop growers said.

Craft brewers use roughly four times as much hops to produce beer than the industry average, according to the Brewers Association, which represents small and independent craft brewers in the United States.

According to the Brewers Association, U.S. craft brewing volume totaled 24.5 million barrels in 2015 and the retail dollar value of that production totaled \$22 billion, a 13 percent increase in volume and 16 percent increase in value.

The number of craft breweries in the U.S. grew 15 percent to 4,269 in 2015, according to Bart Watson, the group's chief economist.

"It's all driven by craft,"

Obendorf said of this year's expansion of hop acres in Idaho. "It's all aroma hops" for the craft industry.

Jackson said the ability to get decent yields for baby or first-year hops in Idaho is another factor in that growth, and there is also less competition for ground in Idaho than in Washington and Oregon.

Washington and Oregon have also experienced sizable increases in hop acres in recent years but the percentage growth is greater in Idaho.

According to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, total hop production in Idaho has increased from 5.8 million pounds in 2013 to 6.9 million pounds in 2014 and 8.7 million pounds in 2015.

Yields averaged 1,740 pounds per acre in Idaho in 2013, 1,847 in 2014 and 1,794 in 2015.

Pacific Northwest hop acreage still climbing

By DAN WHEAT
Capital Press

MOXEE, Wash. — Hop acreage is increasing for the fourth straight year in the United States and for the third year globally.

U.S. hop acreage is projected to increase by 6,000 acres this year, a 13 percent rise. That follows a 19 percent last year, according to the Hop Growers of America.

The 13 percent is a conservative estimate and could be higher by the time final figures are available. Last year's initial estimate was 15 percent, but the actual increase was 19 percent, said Jaki Brophy, Hop Growers of America spokeswoman.

Of the increase, 5,400 acres are in Washington state, Oregon and Idaho and 600 acres are in other states.

With the new acreage, the U.S. total is 51,275 acres, widening the gap with Germany, the other leading producer at 45,468 acres. Germany's acreage is up 10 percent.

The worldwide increase is 8,347 acres, up 6.7 percent, which was predicted by the International Hop Growers Convention in Paris on April 18. The convention estimates 2016 production at 232 million pounds globally, up from 190.4 million in 2015. In the U.S., the estimated production is 97 million pounds, up from 80.2 million in 2015.

Of the U.S. estimate, 60.6 million pounds are aroma varieties and 36.4 million pounds are alpha. Aroma varieties are mainly used by craft breweries and alpha are mainly used by large brewers.

Drought in Europe re-

duced the worldwide production in 2015. U.S. yields are expected to be better due to more acreage coming into production and no drought in the Yakima Valley, where about 70 percent of the U.S. crop is grown, Brophy said.

The acreage increase continues to be driven by the growing number of craft breweries, said Ann George, administrator of Hop Growers of America and the Washington Hop Commission.

The number of breweries in the U.S. reached 4,144 at the end of November, topping the historic high of 4,131 in 1873, according to the Brewers Association in Boulder, Colo.

Brewery openings exceeded two a day in 2015 with 15 states each now home to more than 100 breweries, the association said. California, Oregon and Washington are among the top 15.

The U.S. inventory of hops was 131 million pounds on March 1, up 10 percent from a year earlier. For perspective, that compares with 190.4 million pounds harvested worldwide in 2015.

"We are finally beginning to see some signs of breathing room in the supply chain, especially in popular craft varieties hard-hit last summer, although we have not reached comfortable levels quite yet," said Pete Mahony, vice president of supply chain management and purchasing at John I. Haas in Yakima.

Early maturing aroma varieties in the Yakima Valley experienced lower yields last year due to drought but there's adequate water this year from a larger mountain snowpack.

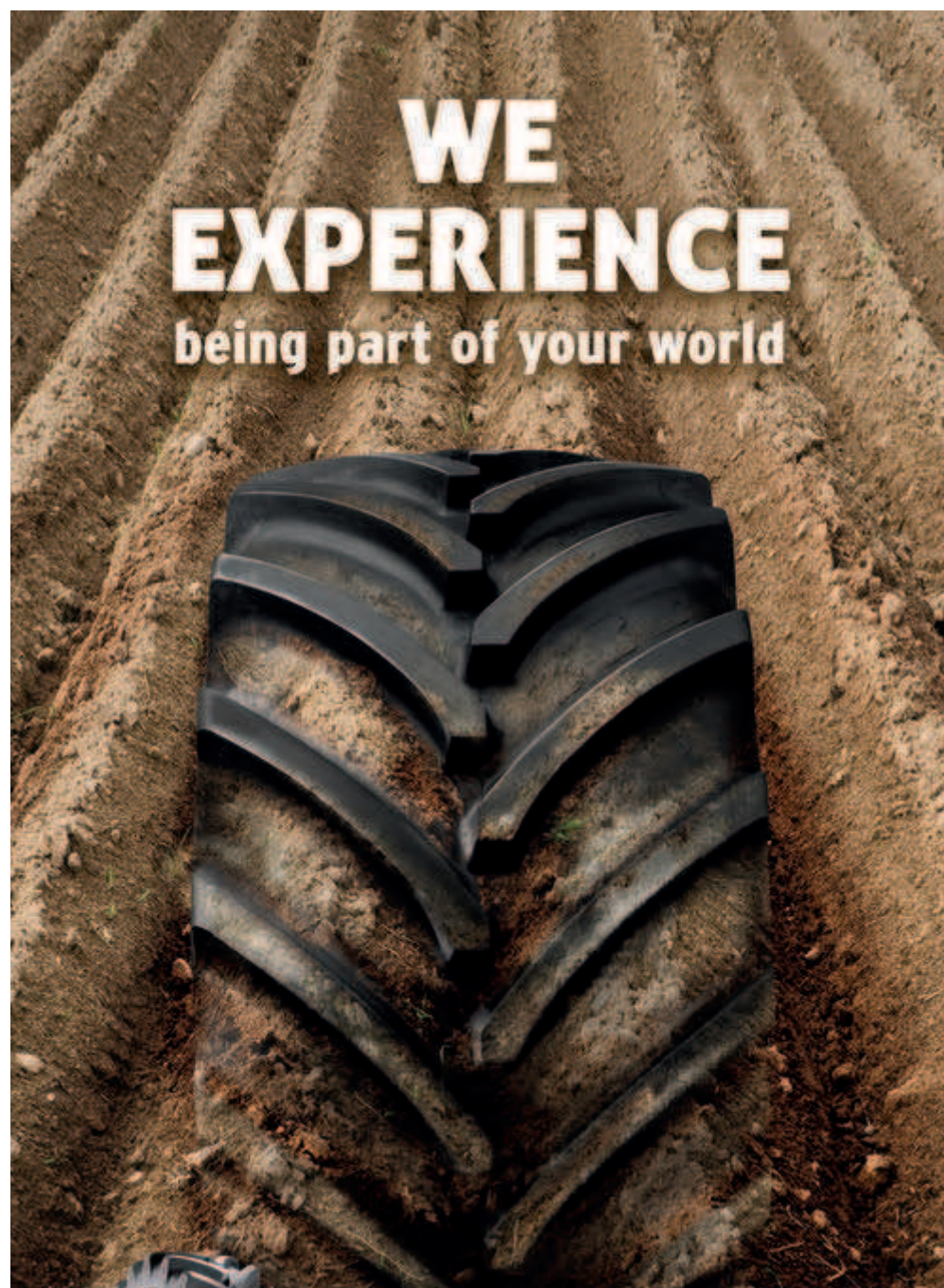
It looks like a good season and more breweries are buying hops by contract versus the spot market, resulting in more breweries reliably having their needs met at a known price, George said.

"We hope to see this continue, reducing reliance on the spot market, which acts as a good buffer for unanticipated need and yield variances," she said.

Too much spot market supply causes market price volatility and more grower risk, she said.

Forward contracting also allows growers to secure necessary capital from lenders, as they can prove their crop is sold, George said.

That's crucial for expansion estimated at a minimum of \$40,000 per acre, including the cost of land, growing supplies, rootstock, labor, equipment, harvesting, cold storage and packaging, she said.



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