

# Spud growers join Boise schools' Potato Celebration Week

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

BOISE — The Boise School District's new Potato Celebration Week enabled Rod Lake of Heyburn-based Southwind Farms to get his company's fingerling potatoes into a public schools market he's been trying to reach for most of a year.

For the farmers and staff of Potatoes USA and the Idaho Potato Commission, the district's event provided an opportunity to educate the next generation of consumers about the versatility and nutrition of their crop.

And district officials say principals were elated for the chance to have students with limited knowledge on food production interacting with farmers.

Peggy Bodnar, the district's food and nutrition services supervisor, explained the schools' celebration of the state's most famous commodity stemmed from a phone call she received from T.K. Kuwahara of Potatoes USA. Kuwahara inquired about opportunities to team with the district on nutrition education, and Bodnar had recently learned of Every Kid Healthy Week, a healthy-living campaign spon-

sored by Action for Healthy Kids.

Bodnar decided to observe the event district-wide throughout the final week of April, and to tie it with potatoes. She hopes the celebration will become an annual event.

"Regardless of how strange it may sound, a lot of kids never have the opportunity to know and understand where their fruits and vegetables and produce come from," she said.

Bodnar said 13 low-income elementary schools in the district qualify for a USDA grant, funding snacks to introduce students to new fruits and vegetables. The district is required

to prepare educational material about the featured produce item.

Though the district had exhausted its program funds for the year, Southwind Farms donated 1,000 pounds of fingerlings and Potatoes USA prepared educational handouts on spuds to provide a bonus snack on April 26 in conjunction with the celebration.

At Kuwahara's suggestion fingerlings were cooked, chilled and served with ranch dressing. She said Potatoes USA plans to work with additional schools to include spuds in the USDA snack program, and will provide educational

materials as an incentive.

Lake, who spoke to students at Horizon Elementary School, said fingerlings, typically served unpeeled, cook quickly and require little preparation time.

"We understand this is a longterm process," Lake said of getting produce into schools. "We're taking baby steps here and hope to get it expanded."

The April 28 lunch menu for all 32 district elementary schools included fresh potato wedges, and Idaho potato growers were scheduled to help the lunch staff serve them at several schools. IPC and

Potatoes USA donated Spuddy Buddy dolls and potato cookbooks for kids as prizes for a contest involving matching names of potato varieties with the correct pictures.

"We hope to reinforce that Idaho potatoes should be an essential part of their healthy diet forever," said IPC President and CEO Frank Muir, one of the scheduled servers.

Kuwahara also arranged for a display of several potato varieties to be featured at each school.

Bodnar said the district would serve those specialty varieties in the lunch lines at its secondary schools.

# Washington demands coal exporter cut carbon footprint in half

## DOE suggests carpooling

By DON JENKINS  
Capital Press

The Washington Department of Ecology on Friday demanded a company proposing to export coal submit a plan to sharply shrink the project's expected carbon footprint, raising questions about the plan's chances of winning approval from Gov. Jay Inslee's administration.

Ecology released a long-awaited study on the environmental impacts of building a coal-export terminal in Longview along the Lower Columbia River.

Millennium Bulk Terminals, a partnership of two coal companies, proposes to export up to 44 million metric tons a year to Asia.

The Washington Farm Bureau has been among the project's strongest advocates, arguing that expanding the state's port and rail facilities will benefit agricultural exports.

DOE's study found BNSF Railway and Union Pacific will have to make investments to accommodate 1.3-mile long trains hauling coal through Washington from Montana, Wyoming, Utah and Colorado.

DOE found little reason to be concerned about coal dust or vessel traffic, but was alarmed about greenhouse gases.



Don Jenkins/Capital Press

Millennium Bulk Terminals proposes to build a coal export facility at a former aluminum smelter site in Longview, Wash., along the lower Columbia River. The Washington Department of Ecology says the company must submit a plan to cut in half the estimated carbon output from the project.

U.S. coal exports would drive down the price of coal in Asia, encouraging more consumption and increasing global carbon output, according to the report.

If operating at full capacity, the terminal would increase the world's greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of 672,100 passenger cars, according to the study.

DOE demanded Millennium submit a plan to cut the net increase by 50 percent.

DOE called its 50 percent mandate "reasonable and appropriate" based on state laws regarding emission standards for new power plants and overall carbon-reduction goals.

Failing to present a satisfactory carbon-reduction plan won't necessarily kill the project, but it will be significant, DOE spokeswoman Lisa Copeland said.

Millennium needs 20 permits from eight different local, state and federal agencies, including six from

DOE, which falls under Inslee's authority. Inslee has made climate change his signature issue.

As a start to slashing carbon output, DOE suggested the company enforce a "no-idling" policy for trains and ships, and school locomotive engineers and heavy equipment operators in "fuel efficiency."

The company also could buy electric vehicles for its fleet, install charging stations for employees with electric vehicles, and en-

courage workers to carpool, according to DOE.

Millennium did not respond to a request for comment on whether the company could come up with a plan to halve greenhouse gases.

The company issued a brief statement from CEO Bill Chapman. "This major milestone moves us one step closer to creating family-wage jobs in Longview, while meeting Washington's strict environmental standards," he said.

Todd Myers, environmental policy analyst for the conservative-leaning Washington Policy Center, questioned DOE's basis for requiring Millennium to cut projected emissions by half.

"A regulator is supposed to be clear and objective. In this case, the regulation is far from clear and far from being an objective standard and has become an arbitrary tool," he said.

Myers said DOE wrongly assumes Asia won't buy coal from other countries if U.S. coal isn't available. He said buying carbon credits would be a lot more cost-effective than purchasing electric vehicles.

"Ecology's suggestions are probably the most expensive things that you can do and do almost nothing for the environment," he said.

The Washington Farm Bureau will continue to

voice support for Millennium, the organization's CEO, John Stuhlmiller, said in a written statement.

"Farmers and growers understand the more opportunity Washington has to export, the greater the willingness there will be to invest in the infrastructure to support these exports," he said.

Utah-based Lighthouse Resources Inc. and Missouri-based Arch Coal own Millennium. The company's website said Friday that it began mining for permits four years, two months and 17 days ago.

DOE will take comments until June 13 on the study that came out Friday. The department is expected to issue a final environmental impact statement next year. DOE says it already has received 217,500 comments, many of them from people concerned about climate change.

Business and labor groups have rallied behind Millennium, saying they're frustrated by the lengthy review.

DOE's unprecedented demand for Millennium to mitigate carbon emissions that occur elsewhere in the world should terrify any manufacturer or shipper looking to expand, said Kathryn Stenger, spokeswoman for the private trade organization Alliance for Northwest Jobs and Exports.

# Wash. wolf managers present ideas for lethal-control policy

By DON JENKINS  
Capital Press

Washington wildlife managers Wednesday suggested ways to motivate ranchers to use state-approved tactics to prevent wolf depredations.

Cooperative ranchers could be rewarded with higher compensation for livestock losses. Also, the state could move sooner to shoot wolves in places where preventive actions failed.

WDFW staff members floated these and other ideas during a conference call with the department's Wolf Advisory Group.

The group, whose members represent conservation, producer and other interest groups, will meet May 10-11 in Ellensburg. The challenge there will be to agree on a

new lethal-control policy for the upcoming grazing season.

"It's got to be done. The producers need to know what the rules of the road are," said Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association executive vice president. "I hope people can call the department on the 12th and get answers to their questions."

WDFW has twice resorted to shooting wolves, in 2012 and 2014, in the eastern one-third of Washington, where wolves are not federally protected.

Ranchers criticized WDFW's decision-making process as too subjective, too prolonged and too uncertain.

Wolf advocates accused the department of being trigger-happy.

WDFW staff members, including those who investi-

gate depredations, are trying to come up with a clear policy to cover dozens of scenarios.

"I think this will produce a protocol that is intuitive, easy to understand and will have broad support," said Donny Martorello, WDFW policy coordinator.

Currently, WDFW's policy is to use lethal control when at least four depredations have occurred, preventive measures have been exhausted and attacks are likely to continue.

The Cattle Producers of Washington, whose members include northeastern Washington ranchers, withdrew from the Wolf Advisory Group last fall, charging WDFW with using the group as a shield against taking meaningful action.

The Cattle Producers' vice

president, Stevens County rancher Scott Nielsen, said Wednesday that ranchers already are protecting their livestock, without signing agreements with the state.

"They call them range-riders. We call them cowboys," he said. "Whether it's four depredations or whatever, no responsible livestock owner is going to leave their cows out there to be eaten by predators."

Nielsen said WDFW-confirmed depredations don't provide an accurate count of lost livestock.

"If you get to four depredations, you have a lot more than four dead cows," he said. "If you get one confirmed depredation, you've probably lost 10."

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