

U.S. farms hiring more workers, survey shows

By DAN WHEAT
Capital Press

U.S. farms are hiring more workers and paying them more, according to a USDA report.

In April, farms employed 2 percent more workers than a year earlier, the report showed. In January, the number of workers was 6 percent more than a year earlier.

The farm labor report for the first half of 2016 was released May 19 by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. It showed 703,000 people were employed directly on farms and

ranches the week of April 10-16 and 582,000 were employed Jan. 10-16.

Those numbers include field and livestock workers, supervisors, managers and office staff but do not include people working for farm labor contractors, said Teresa Varner, NASS labor statistician in Washington, D.C.

Farm employment has ups and downs and the report was normal in the number of employees and their wages, she said.

The largest percentage increase in the number of workers during April was in

Illinois, Indiana and Ohio at 31 percent. Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Oregon and Washington also had increases.

The largest decrease during the same period was in Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia, down 23 percent. Lesser decreases were seen in North Carolina, Virginia, Iowa and Missouri.

Farm operators paid workers an average of \$12.75 per hour in the April 2016 reference week, up 4 percent from 2015. Field workers received an average of \$12 per hour, up 6 percent. Livestock workers

earned \$12.01, up 4 percent.

Laborers worked an average of 40.4 hours in the April 2016 reference week compared with 39.9 hours a year earlier.

Farm workers received an average of \$12.83 per hour in the January 2016 week, up 2 percent from 2015. Field workers were paid \$11.84, up 4 percent and livestock workers, at \$12.02, were up 3 percent.

The survey is conducted twice a year. The sample is about 13,000 farms and ranches of 1,000 or more in sales in all states except Alaska.



AP Photo/Gosia Wozniacka, File

In this 2013 file photo taken near Fresno, Calif., farmworkers pick up paper trays of dried raisins off the ground and heaping them onto a trailer in the final step of raisin harvest. U.S. farmers are hiring more workers and paying them more, a survey shows.

Grower: Grain farmers should join forces, negotiate higher prices

By TIM HEARDEN
Capital Press

CORNING, Calif. — Commodity prices that lag below a farmer's operating costs threaten the nation's long-term food security, a grain grower says.

Frank Endres, who grows about 2,500 acres of barley and other grains in the northern Sacramento Valley, says the consolidation of buyers into multinational companies has given them more leverage against growers to keep prices low.

He argues growers need to band together in their marketing and negotiations.

"You've got to get with your neighbors so you'll have the bargaining power to bring up the markets a little bit," Endres told about two dozen grain growers during a field day May 26 on his ranch west of Corning, Calif. "We have to have people that are aware that our food security in this country is being threatened now."

Endres, who also raises cattle, is part of a group of growers in nine California counties that market their grains together. He said the group is different from a cooperative, in which resources and income are pooled.

His remarks capped a field day in which he showed guests several barley trials he is working on with University of California researchers. The varieties are being bred for disease resistance, said Endres' son, Jack.

Endres is a long-time member of the National Farmers Organization, which negotiates with major buyers on behalf of groups of growers across the country. Formed in the mid-1950s, the NFO is best known to many for organizing dairy farmers in 1967 to engage in a holding action to get higher prices for their milk.

The group is separate from the National Farmers Union, which was formed in 1902 and is an advocacy group for growers.



Tim Hearden/Capital Press

Frank Endres discusses barley varieties and grain marketing during a field day near Corning, Calif., on May 26.

Endres has traveled around the country to make his pitch for more participation in grower marketing groups. He says most major commodity growers only take in 30 to 40 percent of "parity" — the amount they'd need to remain profitable amid rising input costs. He contends farm prices need to be higher to entice younger people into agriculture.

The term "parity" in agriculture has its roots in the early 20th century, when prices were relatively high and farms were profitable during a "Golden Age" of farming before World War I. The doctrine of parity led to New Deal-era legislation and other attempts at government-imposed price controls, but Endres and others are now advocating a free-market solution in which growers are voluntarily represented as a group.

Such an approach could work, but it would depend on having a large share of the relevant supply, said Daniel Sumner, a University of California-Davis agricultural economist. If a substitute supply of the commodity is available, then collective action couldn't raise prices enough to improve revenue, he said.

Moreover, to raise prices the members would need to restrict the quantity available, and that's difficult if growers outside the group can benefit from the higher price without restricting how much they produce, Sumner said.

Bat disease continues to surprise in Washington

One white-nose syndrome case found so far

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

A Washington state wildlife veterinarian calls the so-far fruitless search for more signs of the bat disease white-nose syndrome baffling but promising.

A sick little brown bat found by hikers March 11 in a state park 30 miles east of Seattle was the first confirmed case of white-nose syndrome in the West.

Previously, the disease had been documented only as far west as eastern Nebraska.

The discovery raised concern that the fungus, deadly to insect-eating and farmer-friendly bats, had somehow leaped across the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains.

Since then, the U.S. Geological Survey has tested dozens of live and dead bats, along with soil samples and bat guano collected in caves. The tests have not detected the virus.

"The fact we haven't found anything else is puzzling," Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife veterinarian Katie Haman said Wednesday. "It leaves a huge question mark. This is not the way white-nose syndrome works back east."

White-nose syndrome was first documented in New York in 2007. By the beginning of this year, the fungus had been confirmed in 28 Eastern, Southern and Midwestern states.

In some states, discovery of the fungus in bat-dwelling

At a glance

White-Nose Syndrome

What it is: A disease affecting hibernating bats, a fungus, *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, appears as a white patch on the muzzle and other body parts.

First documented: 2006-07 in New York state.

Symptoms/mortality: Erratic behavior during cold winter months, including flying outside during daylight hours and clustering at cave entrances. WNS has killed more than 5.5 million bats in the Northeast and Canada.

Where it is now: 28 U.S. states and five Canadian provinces.

Bats affected: Eleven species, including four that are endangered.

Impact to agriculture: Bats are primary consumers of insects. In temperate regions it's estimated they provide insect suppression valued at more than \$4 billion per year.

For more information, go to: www.WhiteNoseSyndrome.org

Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Alan Kenaga/Capital Press



Courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey



Courtesy of PAWS Wildlife Center

A photo taken at the PAWS Wildlife Center in Lynnwood, Wash., shows the wing damage inflicted by white-nose syndrome on a little brown bat. The bat was found unable to fly March 11 by hikers 30 miles east of Seattle. The bat was the first and so far only confirmed case of white-nose syndrome west of Nebraska.

A U.S. Department of Agriculture spokeswoman said she could not find any assessments of actual losses to agriculture caused by white-nose syndrome.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last year listed the northern long-eared bat as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act because of white-nose syndrome.

The bat ranges along the Atlantic Coast and as far west as Montana.

Defenders of Wildlife has sued USFWS in federal court in Washington, D.C., claiming the bat should be given the broader protections of an endangered species. The lawsuit argues the infected bats need more forested areas to forage and roost because they emerge from hibernation in a weakened state.

The Center for Biological Diversity has cited the threat white-nose syndrome poses to bats as grounds for opposing cave exploring, mining, oil and gas drilling, and pipeline construction, according to its website.

New cider institute aims to guide fast-growing industry

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

A new organization plans to help Oregon State University and Cornell University train people to make hard apple cider, an industry that is growing rapidly in the Pacific Northwest and is attracting the same

sort of connoisseurs who favor the region's craft beer and fine wine.

Formation of the Cider Institute of North America — known by the acronym CINA — was announced in late May. Nick Gunn, co-owner of Wandering Aengus Ciderworks in Salem, Ore., is chair of the new group's board of directors.

Gunn said the new organization sprang to life because English cider guru Peter Mitchell is retiring. Mitchell's Cider & Perry Academy — "Perry" is hard cider made from pears — is based in the United Kingdom and Mitchell has been teaching cider makers in the U.S. since 2003. Gunn said he took one of the first classes Mitchell taught in the U.S.

"Education at this point in our industry is maybe the most critical thing to maintain cider quality in America," Gunn said. "Maintaining a high level of quality is the only way to keep moving forward."

Gunn said CINA will work with instructors at Oregon State's Fermentation Center, which focuses on such things



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press

Nick Gunn of Wandering Aengus Ciderworks in Salem, Ore., is board chair of the new Cider Institute of North America.

as beer, wine, cheese and yogurt production. He said foundational laboratory work and "Introduction to Cider Making" classes are necessary.

He envisions students obtaining a certificate that would help them get jobs in the industry.

The organization is applying for nonprofit tax status, which Gunn said will provide flexibility in obtaining grants and conveying money to the university programs. CINA hopes to help universities pay for tenured faculty and for re-

search and development costs.

Making and drinking hard cider is particularly popular in the Pacific Northwest. Membership in the Northwest Cider Association grew from 17 to 70 in a three-year span, and cider accounts for 4 percent of alcoholic beverage sales in Portland and Seattle, compared to 1.7 percent nationally.

A former Cornell University cider expert estimated that people in Oregon, Washington and California drink about 80 percent of the cider consumed in the U.S.

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Potato Variety Management Institute (PVMI)

(<http://www.pvmi.org>)

Request for Proposals:

To produce a document that evaluates PVMI's business practices including financial management, policies/procedures, and board/business operations, and recommends improvements. The work will include a 10-year business plan and a succession plan.

Background:

In August of 2005, the potato commissions of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho filed Articles of Incorporation to create the Potato Variety Management Institute (a.k.a. PVMI). Incorporated in Idaho as a tax-exempt, non-profit organization (501(c)(3)), and with the potato commissions as its sole members, PVMI's stated purpose is "to enhance the agricultural capacity and resources of Idaho, Washington and Oregon for the benefit of their citizens by coordination of potato varietal research programs; management and protection of potato varieties created by state funding; and education of growers, processors and retailers." The top priorities of PVMI are to ensure intellectual property protection (via the Plant Variety Protection Act), and to collect license and royalty income from users of potato varieties developed by the Northwest Potato Variety Development Program, a cooperative venture of USDA-ARS, the potato commissions, and Land Grant universities in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. PVMI currently manages thirty protected potato varieties, collects license fees and royalties from seed potato producers, and after covering its business costs, returns funds to USDA-ARS and the universities to support potato research at those institutions.

Much has changed in the potato industry and research programs since PVMI was incorporated in 2005, and PVMI has accomplished more than the founders anticipated. In light of this change and success, the potato commission members and the PVMI board of directors have decided to embark on a formal planning process to launch PVMI into an even more successful second decade of operation.

To respond to this RFP, please provide:

- A proposal of no more than 5 pages describing how you would provide the document described above including a suggested timeline and cost estimate(s).
- A description of at least two successful projects you have completed, similar to the one contemplated here.
- At least two references from previous clients

Deadline for receipt of proposals: June 15, 2016.

Send all materials as a single PDF to Jeanne Debons, PVMI Executive Director, at: <mailto:jeannedebons@msn.com>

Proposal review process and timeline:

Proposal review will begin immediately after the June 15 deadline, with the aim of the PVMI board of directors selecting the successful consultant during its mid-July board meeting. We anticipate that most of the work of this project will be completed in the fall and winter months when the PVMI board members have more time available to dedicate to PVMI, with a completion deadline of March 15, 2017.

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PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 98

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 6/7/2016. The sale will be held at 10:00am by

DISCOUNT TOWING & RECOVERY
3750 MAINLINE DR. NE, SALEM, OR
2013 INFINITY EX 37 4DR
VIN - JN1BJ0HR2DM480570
Amount due on lien \$3,241.00
Reputed owner(s)
UTL OR WA CA

legal-22-2-7/#4

LEGAL

PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 98

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 6/7/2016. The sale will be held at 10:00 am by

RETRIEVER TOWING
1768 13TH ST. SE, SALEM, OR
2009 Chevrolet Suburban
VIN - 1GNFK26319J116081
Amount due on lien \$1,511.00
Reputed owner(s)
Sugar Bowl Ski Team Found
Car Auto Wholesale

Legal-22-2-4/#4

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REVISED LOCATION FOR OREGON WHEAT COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

The Oregon Wheat Commission public budget hearing on June 15, 2016 has been moved to Padgett Ranches Shop at 60945 Lonerock Road, Grass Valley, OR 97029. The hearing will start at 1:30 p.m.

For further information, contact the Oregon Wheat Commission office, 1200 NW Naito Parkway, Suite 370, Portland, OR 97209-2800 or by phone at (503) 467-2161.

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