

# Oregon

## Youngsters prepare their animals for Jr. Livestock Auction

By JANAE SARGENT  
Capital Press

SALEM, Ore. — Young livestock owners will get a chance to show and auction their animals at premium prices at the annual Marion County Junior Livestock Auction.

The Marion County Junior Livestock Auction will start at 5 p.m. July 9 in the Forester Pavilion at the Marion County Fair. The county fair takes place at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem.

The auction gives kids in grades 4 through 12 the opportunity to show rabbits, chickens, turkeys, goats, pigs and steers for awards and auction them to business owners and community members at higher than market prices.

More than 180 pigs were weighed in for the show, making them the most popular animal at the auction.

Bill Luthi, director on the auction planning committee, said the auction



Janae Sergeant/Capital Press

Nathan Kuenzi stands with his pig, Tank, which he will show and auction at the Marion County Jr. Livestock Auction on July 9.

committee became a non-profit organization to let the kids keep most of the proceeds from their animals. Kids are able to keep up to 94 percent of the money earned from their animals, with the rest going to fund the program.

“We’ve got the committee really turned around where we’re helping the kids more than we had been,” Luthi said.

One of those kids is 14-year-old Nathan Kuenzi, who will be showing his fifth pig at the auction. Kuenzi and his three brothers and sister will all show pigs.

All of the Kuenzi children who showed in 2015 won their classes and his sister, Ashley, showed a pig that was the Grand Champion Market Hog in 2015.

Kuenzi described his



Janae Sergeant/Capital Press

Nathan Kuenzi and his brothers and sister will all show their pigs at the Marion County Jr. Livestock Auction July 9. Four of the five siblings showed in 2015 and all won their classes.

days, saying that while he was still in school he and his siblings would get up at 5:45 every morning to take care of their more than 50 pigs.

Luthi said the kids are encouraged to go into the community and advertise their animals to business people, friends and relatives. The auction invites community members every year — giving interested at-

tendees the option of donating money to the animals’ selling price that would go directly to the kids.

The auction also hosts a hospitality dinner for buyers to encourage people to support the kids.

Luthi said around 275 buyers attended the auction in 2015.

“Over the years people have seen that this is a good wholesome and clean activ-

ity for kids to be involved in,” Luthi said. “A lot of people are proud of the kids that are willing to put in the time and effort and like to support them.”

In addition to the auction, the committee awards scholarships of up to \$1,000 to kids who apply and prove to be responsible.

Michelle Kuenzi, Nathan’s mother, lauded her kids’ dedication in raising pigs and the passion Nathan has for it.

Kuenzi said her kids pay for feeding their pigs with the money they earn showing them.

“(My kids) aren’t inside playing video games all day,” Kuenzi said. “They really care about this and work hard at it.”

Nathan Kuenzi said he expects good things from his current pig, which he thinks he is going to name Tank. It is heavier than the pig that won Grand Champion last year but Kuenzi predicted that there will be good competition this year.

### LEGAL

**SECRETARY OF STATE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING HEARING**  
Oregon Department of Agriculture, Market Access & Certification Program, Administrative Rules Chapter #603, Sue Gooch, Rules Coordinator, (503) 986-4583. Amend: OAR 603-052-0862, 603-052-0870. **RULE SUMMARY:** The proposed amendments would add a definition for “Land Manager” and clarify the definitions for “Field,” “Department” and “Director” in OAR 603-052-0862. For OAR 603-052-0870, the proposed amendments expand the regulatory requirements for blackleg testing to include seed and transplants for home/personal use, and remove the requirements for seed treatment prior to planting and for mandatory crop rotation. Finally, the regulatory response to fields and volunteer Brassicaceae officially confirmed as infected with blackleg have been changed to the Public Nuisance process as described in ORS 570.170 to 570.180. Hearing date: July 18, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. Location: Oregon Department of Agriculture, Hawthorne Facility, 151 Hawthorne Ave NE, Salem, OR 97301. Last day for public comment is July 22, 2016. 27-7/#4

## Feast your eyes on ‘naked’ barley

Yield, resistance, quality keys to research

By GEORGE PLAVEN  
EO Media Group

Golden wheat swayed in the breeze as researchers with Oregon State University updated farmers on the latest statewide variety trials in Morrow

County.

Bob Zemetra, a wheat breeder with OSU’s Department of Crop and Soil Science, said the keys to successful breeding are yield, resistance and quality. A solid wheat variety should be able to make the most of Eastern Oregon’s limited rainfall, while withstanding potentially cold winters and avoiding damage from diseases such as stripe rust.

“It’s hard to make a variety have everything,” Zemetra said.

To test new varieties against the local elements, OSU Extension Service conducts field

trials along Highway 207 between Hermiston and Lexington.

Some wheat types might mature early or be more susceptible to certain diseases, which are things that farmers need to know ahead of time before they plant or spray fertilizer.

At the end of the day, Zemetra said growers should hang their hat on quality, which gives the Northwest a distinct edge in the marketplace.

“We produce some of the best wheat in the world,” Zemetra said. “You have to push for quality.”

Wheat wasn’t the only grain that caught the farmers’ attention on Thursday. Pat Hayes, a barley breeder with OSU, is also pushing for that crop to gain more of a foothold across the state as craft breweries continue to increase in popularity. He highlighted the results of his research in Morrow County following a second year of trials.

With names like Alba, Verdant, Glacier and Strider, Hayes said barley holds plenty of promise if the price is right. Prices are higher for malting and food barleys than feed varieties, he said. He especially pointed to “naked” barleys — where the grain can be removed from its hull — as an attractive option for their versatility in all different markets.

“It all comes back to the hull, which is inedible to humans and has little to no benefit in feed,” Hayes said. “After 30 years of pushing the barley envelope in every direction, I believe it’s time to go naked.”

Larry Lutchter, with OSU Extension in Heppner, said field days are an important resource for farmers looking to improve or diversify their operations and potentially improve their bottom line.

“Variety selection is a huge part of that,” Lutchter said. “I hope they’ll go home and think about one or two, possibly three different lines, and see how they do on their own farms.”

## Nematodes a nemesis of potato farmers

Team seeks molecular markers to breed in resistance to spud parasites

By GEORGE PLAVEN  
EO Media Group

Potato breeders at Oregon State University are hot on the trail of a microscopic parasite lurking in farms across the Columbia Basin.

Columbia root-knot nematodes might be too small to see with the naked eye, but they can cause noticeable damage to spuds if left unchecked.

The faculty at OSU’s Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center is now working to identify the gene that makes certain potatoes resistant to nematodes, which could then be used to create new varieties. Sapinder Bali, a postdoctoral scholar with the HAREC plant breeding program, is part of a team developing molecular markers for the nematode-resistance gene in potatoes. She discussed their progress during the station’s annual potato field day June 22.

Nematodes infect both the roots and tubers of potato plants, which can stunt their growth or kill them.

By developing a set of molecular markers, Bali said researchers will be able to scan potatoes at the DNA level to find which varieties are resistant and which are susceptible to nematodes.

“These markers can help breeders to confirm the resistant varieties before crossing for choosing right parents and evaluating the segregating populations with higher confidence,” according to the project

summary.

That gives breeders like Sagar Sathuvalli a leg up on creating new varieties designed to save farmers money.

Sathuvalli works with the Tri-State Potato Breeding Program with Oregon, Washington and Idaho. It takes a minimum of 12 years and thousands of samples before new varieties are ready for commercial release, he said.

The program did release three new varieties earlier this year, including Jester, Cheshire and Vermilion. Three others are also in the works. Sathuvalli said breeding is done primarily for resistance to pests like nematodes and diseases like Verticillium wilt and potato virus Y.

“Our goal is to identify those genes responsible for resistance,” he said.

Other field day presentations included updates on tiny Lygus bugs as a potential vector for disease, as well as efforts to monitor aphids in fields.

The goal of HAREC field days is to provide the latest information on growing tools and techniques to make local farmers as efficient and profitable as they can.

Station Director Phil Hamm said HAREC now has 15 center-pivot irrigation systems for their fields, mostly due to the generosity of supporters.

A new Blue Mountain Community College Precision Irrigation Agriculture building is also under construction.

“It just keeps getting bigger and bigger,” Hamm said. “I don’t think you can go anywhere where they have more faculty doing more with potatoes than we have here.”

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