

Support slips in Oregon for international trade pacts

By JIM REDDEN
Capital Bureau

Support for international trade slipped in Oregon while the major candidates for president criticized the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement that Congress could consider later this year.

According to two polls conducted by DHM Research, the percentage of Oregonians who believe foreign trade is an opportunity for economic growth dropped from 65 percent in March 2014 to 53 percent in April 2016.

During that time, the percentage of Oregonians who believe trade is more of a threat to the economy increased from 19 percent to 36 percent.

“Our polling data reveal that Oregonians are less certain that international trade is a good deal for our state and our country in 2016 than they were two years prior,” says DHM Research founding partner Adam Davis.

The drop in support followed repeated attacks on international trade treaties by Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump and Democratic presidential candidates Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton. All three can-



Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press

Cargo containers are shown being loaded on ships at the Port of Portland in this file photo. Container lines no longer call at the port. According to polls conducted by DHM Research, the percentage of Oregonians who believe trade is an opportunity for economic growth dropped from 65 percent in March 2014 to 53 percent in April 2016.

didates came out against the TPP, even though Clinton had previously called it the “gold standard” of such treaties.

“The seemingly 24-7 coverage of Trump and Sanders this past year has taken its toll on public understanding and appreciation of the benefits of trade,” Davis says. “It’s been a constant drumbeat of Americans losing jobs and big companies being the only beneficiaries of policies like the Trans-Pacific Partnership.”

Doug Badger, executive director of the Pacific Northwest International Trade Associa-

tion, deplors the criticisms. Although Trump, Sanders and, to a lesser extent, Clinton have all claimed such treaties have reduced the number of American jobs, Badger says the opposite is true, especially in Oregon.

“Trade is creating jobs in the country and the region, which is especially dependent on trade. And they are good-paying jobs,” says Badger, whose organization is aligned with the Portland Business Alliance and is pushing for approval of the TPP.

Badger notes that support

for international trade is still above 50 percent in Oregon, which he says is a good thing. But he worries the criticisms by the presidential candidates will make it harder to win approval of the TPP and future trade agreements.

“The politicians are saying one thing but the economy is saying another when it comes to trade,” he says.

Davis agrees there’s little public understanding of the benefits of trade.

“Like we see in our research about public understanding of the basics of governance and public finance, there’s a great deal of ignorance about international trade. And the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement? You got to be kidding; there’s next to no facts-based understanding of what it is and how it affects Oregon’s economy — positively or negatively,” Davis says.

TPP opponent Michael Shannon of the Oregon Fair Trade Campaign argues that just the opposite is true.

“The public isn’t responding to the politicians, the politicians are responding to the public,” Shannon says.

“People are tired of stagnant wages and increasing inequality, and previous trade deals have shipped good pay-

ing jobs with benefits overseas,” says Shannon, whose organization includes labor, environmental and social justice organizations.

Shannon and other opponents point to a recent study by the United States International Trade Commission that says some manufacturing jobs would be lost because of the TPP, although other sectors of the economy, like agriculture, would benefit.

Davis confirms his company’s polls are finding deep public dissatisfaction with the economy.

“Nearly half of Oregonians believe that America has gotten the short end of the stick, perhaps in a nod of agreement with Trump and Sanders about the exportation of manufacturing and other blue-collar jobs that once served as the backbone of our economy. Many of these same people are not considering, because they’re not aware, the benefits of international trade such as lower prices and the availability of a wider range of goods and services,” he says.

A 2013 study by the Value of Jobs Coalition found that \$20 billion worth of Oregon goods and services were exported in 2012. There were 490,000 jobs tied directly

or indirectly to international trade that year, up 20,000 from 2010. And the amount of Oregon’s trade-related employment grew 7.5 times faster than total employment between 2004 and 2011, said the study, which was supported by such business groups as the Portland Business Alliance and the Port of Portland.

The TPP is an agreement between the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. According to Badger, seven of Oregon’s top 11 export markets were on this list in 2015, and they accounted for nearly half of all of Oregon’s export value that year.

“The export of Oregon goods and services will only increase if we can reform the rules and reduce the tariffs with our major trading partners,” Badger says.

Shannon counters that the biggest companies, such as Nike, benefit most from such deals, not average workers.

Because of the political climate, some observers believe President Obama will ask the lame-duck session of Congress to approve the TPP after the November general election.

Signs help motorists ID crops

By KATHY HEDBERG
The Lewiston Tribune

GRANGEVILLE, Idaho (AP) — If you’ve ever driven by ripening grain fields and puzzled over what’s growing there, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farm Services Agency has a solution for you.

This year, shortly before Memorial Day, signs identifying the various crops that are grown in Idaho and Lewis counties began sprouting up along U.S. Highway 95, State Highway 162 between Grangeville and Nezperce and in some spots beside U.S. Highway 12.

It’s a project sponsored by the Idaho and Lewis counties’ farm agency offices, said Julie Fowler, executive officer for the Idaho County office.

“It was an outreach project,” Fowler said. “We have a lot of people who will come in and ask us what crops are planted. So this lets people know this is canola or dark northern spring wheat, or whatever.

“It just brings an awareness of it. A lot of people don’t know what kinds of crops are planted in Idaho, so this gives us an idea of what we do in Idaho County.”

Lewis County has planted the crop signs since 2014, reported The Lewiston Tribune. Kaci Ralstin of the county’s farm agency office said: “We’ve had tons of compliments on them and it’s a project we enjoy doing.”

The idea came from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food program, Ralstin said.

“The reason I started this project, I thought the signs would be a great way to show the public local crops that are growing throughout the area,” Ralstin said.

Each county has produced 30 signs at a cost of about \$100 per sign. Funding for the Idaho County signs comes from the agency, the Idaho Wheat Commission, Idaho County Soil and Water and the Idaho County Grain Producers.

In Lewis County the underwriters include the agency, the Idaho Wheat Commission, Hillco Technologies and the Nezperce FFA chapter.

Industrial technology and FFA students at Grangeville and Prairie high schools, as well as the Nezperce FFA chapter and agency employees, did the metal work and built and distributed the signs.

Fowler said the signs were erected in mid-May and probably will be removed before harvest begins.

“I’d like to leave them, but I think they might get in the farmers’ way when they harvest,” she said.

NW ag, forestry, fisheries pack economic punch

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

A new university study finds the natural resources sector in the Northwest fuels more than \$176 billion in direct and related sales and accounts for nearly 886,000 full- and part-time jobs.

The study, commissioned by Northwest Farm Credit Services and performed by extension economists at Oregon State University and the University of Idaho, found agriculture, forestry and fisheries account for 10.6 percent of all jobs in the five-state region and 12.2 percent of all sales in 2015.

“We knew intuitively how vital these industries are to the Northwest and wanted to quantify their contributions to the regional economy,” said Phil DiPofi, NWFCs president and CEO.

“This study affirms the significant impact producers have on the financial strength of our region,” he said.

Agriculture is the front runner in economic impact, claiming about 70 percent of total sales and jobs within the region’s natural resources sector with more than \$120.1 billion in direct and related sales and 621,518 jobs in 2015.

It also accounted for 8.3 percent of total sales in the region and 7.5 percent of all jobs, the economists found.

Forestry accounts for nearly 24 percent of sales in the natural resources sector and 21 percent of the jobs. Direct and related sales in the industry totaled nearly \$42 billion and provided 189,000 jobs in 2015.

In the entire regional economy, forestry provides 2.9 percent of all sales and 2.3 percent of all jobs.

The fishing and seafood



Dan Wheat/Capital Press

Dust flies from a bale of alfalfa as it’s picked up in Ben Schaaapman’s first-cutting south of Quincy, Wash., May 12. A new university study finds the natural resources sector in the Northwest fuels more than \$176 billion in direct and related sales and accounts for nearly 886,000 full- and part-time jobs.

Economic contribution of Northwest agriculture, forestry and fisheries

(Direct, indirect and induced effects)

Area	Full/part-time jobs	Sales (\$ billions)
Wash.	303,321	\$58.8
Ore.	256,423	48.5
Idaho	143,611	31.8
Mont.	85,037	11.1
Alaska	64,034	8.9
Northwest*	885,951	176.1

*Northwest totals are larger than the sum of the states because they include economic linkages among states.

Source: Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Fishing in the Northwest U.S. — An Economic Overview, 2016

Capital Press graphic

manufacturing industry is the smallest in the natural resources sector, representing about 8 percent of sales and jobs. With \$13.9 billion in sales and 75,416 jobs in 2015, it represented only 1 percent

of total sales in the region and less than 1 percent of jobs.

Washington and Oregon have the largest natural resources sector in the region and together contain about 65 percent of all economic activity in that sector. Washington had 200,770 direct jobs in the sector with \$42.4 billion in direct sales in 2015. Oregon had 147,591 direct jobs in the sector with \$32.4 billion in direct sales.

The two states also have more related economic activity than the other states due to larger spillover benefits, as there are more businesses buying and selling and more people earning wages and income from the production, the economists found.

Idaho had 76,374 direct jobs in the natural resources sector with more than \$22.7 billion in sales in 2015. Montana had 63,360 direct

jobs with more than \$8 billion in sales in 2015.

With similar employment levels, “total sales in Idaho are 2.8 times as large as sales in Montana, which indicates that the natural resources sector is less labor intensive and includes more high value production in Idaho than Montana,” the economists reported.

Alaska has the fewest sales and jobs in the sector, with about \$5.9 billion direct in sales and 45,036 direct jobs in 2015.

The study also found that 60 percent of all natural resource sales in the region are exported to other states or other countries, accounting for 15 percent of all exports from the region. Total sales exported ranged from a high of 89 percent of the seafood manufacturing sector to a low of 55 percent of agricultural farm gate production.

Animal agriculture showcases advances

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

In an effort to inform the public about modern animal agriculture and dispel negative myths about how it operates, the Animal Agriculture Alliance has released its 2016 Advances in Animal Agriculture Report.

The report highlights the industry’s commitment to continuing improvements in areas consumers care about. Those highlights demonstrate the industry is using less feed, water, land and energy to produce safe, high-quality food while reducing environmental impacts and the use of antibiotics, said Hannah Thompson, the Alliance’s communications director.

It provides a comprehensive overview of the positive steps animal agriculture is taking in animal care, food safety, public health and environmental sustainability, she said.

The Alliance uses the report to communicate that message to consumers, the media, retailers, restaurants, partners in the supply chain and other influencers, she said.

“There’s no doubt that raising food looks much different than it did 50, 25 even five years ago. To feed a growing population efficiently and to prioritize the highest standards of animal care, the entire animal agriculture industry has worked tirelessly to identify areas for improvement and to evolve,” the report states.

Fresh fruit organization’s Bedwell moves to leadership foundation

By TIM HEARDEN
Capital Press

The executive who presided over historic advances at the California Fresh Fruit Association is taking over the California Agricultural Leadership Foundation.

Barry Bedwell, president of what would become the Fresh Fruit Association since 2003, will take the reins of the Salinas, Calif., based foundation on Aug. 1.

The ag leadership program, which works with four California universities to offer a 17-month course for people working in or around agriculture to become industry leaders, will start its 47th class in the fall.

“I was a graduate of Class 13, and the fact is I had understood the value of the pro-



Barry Bedwell

gram as it was structured then,” Bedwell said. “Over the years, I’ve become even more impressed with how the program has evolved into a true leadership program. They do coaching and training for leadership.

“When you look at that coupled with the challenges we face, primarily in Sacramento, this program will be imperative for the future of California agriculture,” he said.

Bedwell will replace outgoing foundation president and chief executive officer Bob Gray, who is retiring after seven years at the helm. Gray will stay on as a consultant for a few months after Bedwell takes the position.



Bob Gray

As president, Bedwell will be responsible for directing the foundation’s activities, which raises funds for the program, and guiding the leadership program. The program works with California Polytechnic University-San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly-Pomona, California State University-Fresno and the University of California-Davis.

Applicants who are chosen for classes receive all-expenses-paid instruction at the universities as well as national and international trips to learn about ag, Bedwell said.

The program is considered to be one of the world’s best at preparing industry leaders, he said.



George Radanovich

“They have over 1,300 alumni now,” Bedwell said. “That’s one of the things I want to capitalize on — that network of prior graduates ... who come from everywhere in California.”

Among Bedwell’s accomplishments at the Fresh Fruit Association was to preside over its 2014 name change from the California Grape and Tree Fruit League, under which the organization had operated for 66 years. The name change was necessary as the group had expanded to represent about 15 different fresh fruit commodities.

While the more than 300-member group has for

many years held a Fruit Delivery at the state Capitol, the CFFA has been more outspoken in recent years, supporting workers’ right to vote on union decertification at Fresno-based Gerawan Farming and opposing the minimum-wage increase that lawmakers passed earlier this year.

Bedwell will be replaced at the CFFA by former U.S. Rep. George Radanovich, a wine-grape grower who served in Congress from 1995 to 2011. He is also a California Agricultural Leadership Program graduate.

“With George being an eight-term congressman, he gives a lot of practical experience and access to the association,” Bedwell said. “It became a win-win. ... I feel good about what I’m going to do and I feel good about George coming in here.”