

# USDA buys up more surplus cranberries

Large inventory remains, depressing prices

By DON JENKINS  
Capital Press

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will spend \$27.5 million on cranberry concentrate, buying a fraction of the surplus berries that are depressing prices.

The purchase of the value-added product will soak up 30 million pounds, or 300,000 barrels, of cranberries, according to the industry's Cranberry Marketing Committee, which announced the purchase in a press release June 29.



Don Jenkins/Capital Press

Workers drag cranberries in from a bog during a harvest Sept. 23, 2015, on the Long Beach Peninsula in Washington. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will spend \$27.5 million to soak up surplus cranberries and support prices.

"We're pleased to hear that. Certainly when you have an inventory of 7 million barrels, it's nice to have some help getting rid of that," Washing-

ton cranberry grower Malcolm McPhail said July 1.

Total U.S. production in 2015 was about 8.4 million barrels, according to the USDA

National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The cranberry surplus has hovered around 90 percent in recent years, swelled partly by a bumper crop of nearly 9 million barrels in 2013. Farmers have seen prices fall every year since 2009.

The average price growers received in 2014 was \$30.90 per 100-pound barrel. The USDA was due to issue a report later this week on the 2015 crop.

"Any sale of cranberries helps our growers," Ocean Spray cooperative spokeswoman Kellyanne Dignan said. "From our perspective, we appreciate the USDA's attention to the cranberry industry."

The USDA purchases sur-

plus food to stabilize prices under a program created during the Depression. The government distributes the food to schools and charities.

The USDA has been a regular customer for cranberry farmers. The purchases included buying 680,000 barrels for \$55 million around Thanksgiving 2014. A bipartisan group of federal lawmakers from the five cranberry-producing states lobbied for the purchase.

"We are grateful for the continued support of the USDA and appreciate the positive impact that this bonus buy has on our industry," the marketing committee's executive director, Michelle Hogan, said in a written statement.

A Massachusetts task force

in mid-June made several recommendations to help that state's cranberry growers.

The recommendations included providing grants, tax credits and low-interest loans to farmers to renovate bogs and increase yields.

Other recommendations called for programs to pay farmers to convert bogs to wetlands to reduce production.

Cranberries are the top farm crop in Massachusetts, the country's second-leading cranberry producer.

Washington, the fifth-leading cranberry state after No. 3 New Jersey and No. 4 Oregon, has 1,700 acres planted to cranberries. "I think everybody is hanging in there," McPhail said.

# Ukraine and Romania hungry for U.S. agricultural investment

Oregon ag director Katy Coba returns from trade mission

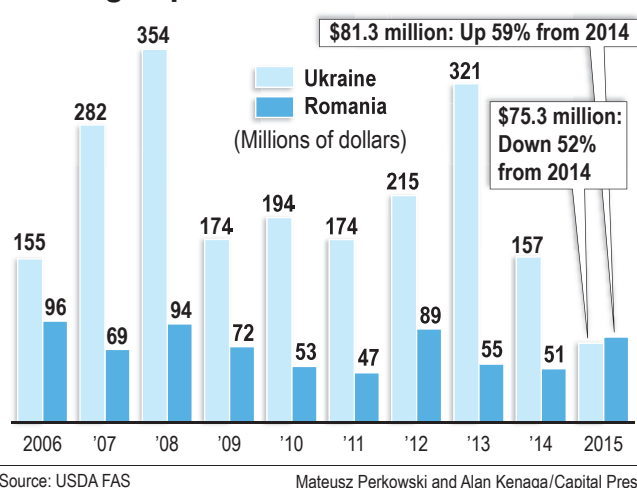
By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
Capital Bureau

Ukraine and Romania are hungry for U.S. investment in grain storage, irrigation and other agricultural infrastructure, said Oregon Department of Agriculture Director Katy Coba.

Major U.S. companies are best poised to immediately take advantage of opportunities in Ukraine and Romania due to their expertise working in foreign nations, said Coba, who recently returned from a trade mission to the two countries.

In the future, though, there may be greater openings for

U.S. ag exports to Ukraine and Romania



Oregon farm exports to the Eastern European countries, particularly as they need more high-quality seed, she said.

"If democracy continues to grow, those are markets for us to keep our eye on," Coba said.

The USDA led a trade mission of state agriculture officials and agribusiness representatives to Ukraine and Romania on June 13-17, after which Coba visited Croatia with her two daughters.

A major challenge for U.S.



farm exports to the two countries is transportation — air freight is expensive, while ships must take a meandering route through the Mediterranean and Black seas, she said.

"It's quite a truck for our stuff," Coba said.

The U.S. shipped \$321 million worth of farm goods to Ukraine in 2013, but that amount had plummeted more than 75 percent by last year,

according to USDA trade data. "The Ukrainian economy collapsed after the overthrow of their president in 2014," Coba said.

That year, Ukraine's parliament ousted the nation's Russian-backed president, Viktor Yanukovych, leading to Russia's invasion of its Crimea region and conflicts along its eastern border.

During the trade mission in Ukraine, U.S. officials toured a grain facility owned by Archer Daniels Midland and participated in the opening ceremony for an oilseed crushing facility built for nearly \$300 million by Bunge.

Ukraine has insufficient infrastructure for irrigation, storage and processing of crops, so the nation is looking for American help to expand its production capacity, Coba said.

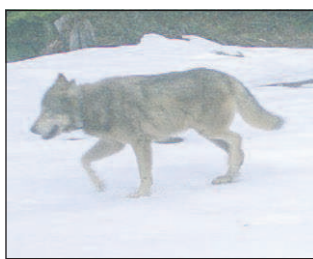
# Wolf delisting lawsuit against Oregon reinstated

By KRISTENA HANSEN  
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — The Oregon Court of Appeals has decided to reconsider a lawsuit against the state that was dismissed a couple months ago over its decision last year to remove the gray wolf from the endangered species list.

It means environmentalists will have another chance to argue for an independent, judicial review of the delisting decision — as well as challenge the validity of House Bill 4040, one of the Legislature's most controversial new laws this year that ultimately led to the case's dismissal in late April.

"The issues presented by this judicial review and by HB 4040 are complex matters of public importance," Judge Erika Hadlock wrote in the court's decision Tuesday. "Without deciding what, if any, effect HB 4040 has on this judicial review, the court determines that the issues of possible mootness and the validity of HB 4040 are more



Courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
A photo taken by trail camera in February shows wandering wolf in February shows wandering wolf for the first time since his tracking collar quit working in 2015.

appropriately decided by a department of the court following full briefing."

The controversy stems from the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission's November decision to delist the gray wolf as endangered, a move aimed at managing the species' replenishing population that environmentalists say was premature and based on questionable science.

As environmentalists were asking the court for a review of the delisting decision, some Republican lawmakers crafted HB 4040 as a means to block the

case. The idea was that, with the Legislature's stamp of approval that the decision was air-tight according to law, reviewing that decision was a moot point and the case itself, therefore, would be too.

The bill was blasted by many residents, conservationists and Democratic leaders, including Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio, as an overreach by the Legislature into judicial branch matters and therefore potentially unconstitutional — an argument environmentalists reiterated in court this week. Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum filed a "notice of probable mootness" soon after HB 4040 was signed into law, prompting the case's dismissal on those grounds on April 22.

Nick Cady, attorney for Eugene-based Cascadia Wildlands, which brought the case along with Oregon Wild and the Center for Biological Diversity, said the case was reconsidered after they challenged the constitutionality of HB 4040 and the court's process for dismissing the suit.

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