

# Inslee, Bryant talk about rural economy during debate

By MATTHEW WEAVER  
Capital Press

SPOKANE — Rural Washington’s economy was a major topic of the Aug. 17 debate between the two major party candidates for the state’s highest elective office.

Incumbent Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat, squared off against Republican challenger Bill Bryant, chairman and founder of Bryant Christie Inc., an export consulting firm. Bryant is also a former Port of Seattle commissioner.

Unemployment is highest in rural counties, with the bulk of economic growth coming in Snohomish, King and Pierce counties. Debate moderator Sean Owsley asked the candidates whether the glass is half-full or half-empty.

“There are a lot of people being left behind, and that’s unnecessary,” Bryant said, citing trade, forestry and agriculture among the assets available in Washington. “What we need to do is have a governor that will take the regulatory part of the state and the budget and use it in a way that will help the private sector generate jobs in each of those sectors.”

Bryant said the state has “a culture of no” when it comes to expanding business.

“That’s why on Day One, I announce I’m going to have a moratorium on all new regulations until the departments can justify the ones we’ve already



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

From left, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee and debate moderator Sean Owsley listen as Republican gubernatorial candidate Bill Bryant speaks Aug. 17 during a debate in Spokane.

got,” he said.

Inslee said the state’s economy is stronger, with unemployment down in every county. The WorkStart program helps companies locate in the state, he said.

“I focused on Eastern Washington and rural Washington as much as urban Washington,” he said.

Bryant called for cooperation between legislators and various interests to develop a plan to fully fund education, focus on outcomes, create jobs and restore salmon runs, among other goals.

“My agenda is not partisan, it’s not ideological — it’s just about coming together and getting stuff done, so people can get good jobs here, buy houses, raise their families and retire here in this natural beauty we all love and want to protect,” he said.

Inslee said he is “positive and optimistic” about the state’s

future, including a transportation package that would help freight mobility to export from the state’s ports.

“We should think of our state as building an entirely new economy and educational system based on the next century, rather than the last,” he said. “We should focus much more on our talents of innovation, technical creativity and entrepreneurial zeal rather than just fixing it with duct tape. We need to have higher aspirations, and those are my aspirations.”

Bryant said after the debate he has a long history of supporting agriculture.

“It’s a great, solid relationship,” Bryant said of his connection with farmers and ranchers. “My company, over the last 24 years, has worked to increase agricultural exports from Washington state all around the world. I’ve worked with the hop, tree fruit, potato and wine industry.”



Tim Hearden/Capital Press

Declan McGill sells olive oil for Guinda, Calif.-based Pasture 42 at a recent farmers’ market in Davis, Calif. The American Olive Oil Producers Association in Clovis, Calif., has received a \$50,000 USDA specialty crop grant to coordinate olive oil research.

## Group receives \$50K grant to coordinate olive oil research

By TIM HEARDEN  
Capital Press

As the production of extra-virgin olive oil in the U.S. is rising rapidly, a group is coordinating crop research to better inform industry members as well as consumers.

The Clovis, Calif.-based American Olive Oil Producers Association has received a \$50,000 specialty crop research grant to collect and share data on olive oil with scientists and growers.

The effort follows a conference the organization held last fall at which scientists from various states shared results from their research, said Kimberly Houlding, the association’s president and

chief executive officer.

The grant will enable the AOOPA to develop a national strategic plan for research so that scientists don’t inadvertently duplicate their efforts, Houlding said.

“We were excited ... to be the only one from California and the only non-government agency on that list” of grant recipients, she said, adding that the organization may seek larger grants later.

“They were awarding \$2 million to \$4 million and more” to some projects, she said. “Those are kind of future grants we’ll be going after once we identify what our industry’s priorities are.”

The olive oil grant was among \$36.5 million in re-

search funding that U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack handed out on Aug. 2. Among the other recipients was Oregon State University, which received \$3.1 million for genetic research to expand commercial U.S. hazelnut production.

Domestic olive oil production has nearly tripled in the past decade, according to the California Farm Bureau Federation. The grant will help the olive oil group coordinate research into such things as quality, appearance, nutrient management, pest and disease pressures and processing efficiency, Houlding said.

“We’re really excited about this initiative,” she said.



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### LET THE GOOD TIMES GROW AT THE CUSTER COUNTY FAIR!



Custer Horse Crazy 4-H Club member Charlie Bullock waits his turn to show his horse in the Halter class at the Custer County Fair. (Brenda Bullock photo)



Who says 4-H isn't fun? Micah Winters holds on tight during the wheel barrow race at the annual Kids Night held at the Custer County Fair in Mackay. (Mati Winters photo)



First year 4-H member Jalie Oerke smiles at the buyers as she parades her hog around at the Custer County 4-H & FFA Market Animal Sale in Mackay. (Holly Cox photo)

In the middle of Central Idaho lies Custer County. While large in size (third largest in land mass), Custer County is 38th in terms of population in the state. One of the unique features of Custer County is our county fair. While the county seat and University of Idaho Extension office reside in Challis, the fairgrounds are located in Mackay, 60 miles away. While this creates some challenges, it also creates some great opportunities.

I remember when I was growing up, being from the “north” end of the county, I was always thrilled that the fair was in Mackay. That meant a week-long vacation away from home, sleeping in the back of our horse trailer, while attending the county fair and showing my sheep and beef projects.

Now that I am the University of Idaho Extension educator, in charge of overseeing the 4-H program in Custer County, I’m maybe not as excited as I was as a kid, but I’m still excited. I pack up our office in Challis and for seven days I will eat, sleep, and breathe the county fair in Mackay.

We just wrapped up our county fair last week and even though I think I could sleep for a week and still not get caught up, I am very proud of the 4-H members from Custer County. As most of you probably know, the philosophy behind 4-H is to strengthen the mental, physical, moral, and social development of youth, and to help them develop into competent, committed, and self-assured adults. 4-H utilizes the “learning by doing” model.

Youth, with guidance from adult volunteers, are involved in hands-on experiences where they gain useful skills and learn how to live with people and serve their community and country by practicing these skills in real life situations.

Our county fair showcases all that the youth members have learned throughout the year as their exhibit their projects during the week. Our 4-H project exhibits showcase some of the best hands-on learning that 4-H has to offer. Know Your Government project record books recap a weekend spent in Boise learning about our state government. Shooting sports and sewing projects showcase the hands-on learning model that 4-H is so well known for.

My favorite is the cooking exhibits. Most of the 4-H members will “practice” their projects that they plan on exhibiting, and they will drop them off for the Extension Office staff to sample. I ate some of the best monkey bread I’ve ever tasted and it was made by an 8-year-old 4-H member the week before the fair.

The animals arrive in the middle of the week. Rabbits, horses, sheep, hogs and steers line the barns. Nervous 4-H members and parents are bustling around trying to get their animals settled into their new home for a week.

Unpacking the trailer, moving show boxes, hauling hay and straw, putting up posters and making sure all the animals are content and fed – it’s quite a busy night when the animals arrive on the Fairgrounds.

4-H Demonstration and Interview contests are always fun to watch. You cannot learn better life skills than speaking in public, demonstrating something you have learned, and interviewing with a judge about your 4-H project.

Before the livestock shows, all of the market animals are ultra-sounded to help the kids better understand the meat quality of their projects. We can never overestimate the importance of teaching our youth livestock producers the significance of end product quality and the important role that they play in producing food for our nation.

The days of the livestock shows are fun to watch. The early morning washing of hogs and lambs to get them prepared for the show, older members helping out the younger members, and the great big beaming grins of the kids that won the championship ribbons are definitely a highlight of any county fair.

The week is capped off with the market animal sale. To see the community come out and support our youth at our sale is rewarding as a county agent. Each year, I’m always astounded at the amount of money our community pours back into the kids and their projects by buying their animals and adding money onto their projects.

It normally takes at least a week to recover from the county fair – that goes for the kids, the parents, the volunteers, and the Extension Office staff!! Through all the laughter, smiles, tears, and high-fives will emerge youth who have learned valuable life skills, increased their leadership abilities, and gained a better sense of community pride after they have participated in the 4-H program at the Custer County Fair.

Submitted by Sarah D. Baker, associate professor and livestock extension educator, University of Idaho Extension in Custer County.



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