

# CHINA

## BOOSTS APPLE EXPORTS TO

# U.S.



Associated Press File

Chinese farmers harvest apples at an orchard in Eastern China's Shandong province. The U.S. and China have opened their doors to each other's apples. China grows half of the apples in the world.

By **DAN WHEAT**  
Capital Press

**T**wo years ago, after decades of sparring through negotiations, the U.S. and China fully opened their doors to each other's apples.

What has happened since then was expected in terms of Washington's apple shipments to China, but the rapid growth of China's shipments to the U.S. has surprised some in the industry even though it still represents only a sliver of the market.

For Washington apple companies, the trade deal has had the desired effect. They have shipped about 1.3 million, 40-pound boxes of apples to China in each of the past two years.

That's worth about \$26 million a year, and though the Chinese economy has slowed, Washington apple shippers

**"They have a lot of apples. They doubled exports to Southeast Asia in one year."**

Desmond O'Rourke, apple market analyst

still hope the most populous nation in the world will one day grow into a 10 million-box, \$200 million market. China has a large and growing middle class that likes high-quality Washington apples.

At the same time, however, Chinese apple exports to the U.S. increased by more than 30 fold, from 6,149, 40-pound boxes in the 2014-2015 sales season to 192,258 boxes in 2015-2016, according to the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service.

That's still less than 2 percent of U.S. apple imports and

about one-quarter of 1 percent of overall Chinese apple exports in 2016, says Desmond O'Rourke, an apple market analyst and retired Washington State University agricultural economist who studies China.

### Worries about China

But is it reason for alarm? Could China flood the U.S. with its cheap Fuji apples, as U.S. apple producers feared years ago?

The answer appears to be no, but O'Rourke says it's well worth watching because of China's ability to rapidly ramp up its exports. China could "easily double" its apple exports to the U.S. this year because it is such a tiny portion of its total exports, he said.

"Being able to sell in high-quality markets such as Europe, Canada and the U.S. is a matter of pride for them," O'Rourke said.

Turn to CHINA, Page 12

## WDFW floats new way to count wolf attacks

Policy would reduce influence of scavengers, officials say

By **DON JENKINS**  
Capital Press

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife suggested March 15 creating a new category of wolf attacks on livestock, blurring what's now a bright line between confirmed and probable depredations.

The new category, called "qualifying depredations," could change the way WDFW

counts attacks that lead to culling wolfpacks.

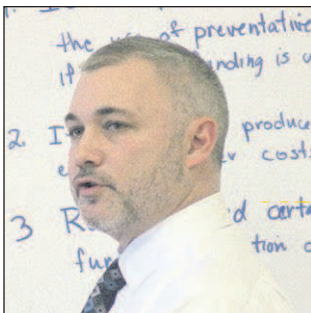
The department's staff included the idea in an 11-page document presented to WDFW's Wolf Advisory Group in a conference call.

WDFW wolf policy coordinator Donny Martorello said the paper reflected the staff's thinking on preventing and responding to depredations during the upcoming grazing season.

He said the department was not making any proposals, but wanted to circulate the thoughts before the advisory group meets March 29 and 30 in Olympia. "Everything's on the table," Martorello said.

Currently, WDFW's policy is to consider shooting wolves after four confirmed depredations.

Depredations classified as "probable" don't count toward the threshold, even in cases in which wolves are



Don Jenkins/Capital Press Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife wolf policy coordinator Donny Martorello speaks at a Wolf Advisory Group meeting Feb. 1 in Olympia.

strongly suspected, but scavengers have picked the carcass and removed evidence such as bite marks.

WDFW staff suggested tallying qualifying depredations in considering whether to lethally remove wolves.

Qualifying depredations

Turn to WOLF, Page 12

## Reversal of Oregon's GMO pre-emption debated

Opponents argue local restrictions create uncertainty

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**  
Capital Press

SALEM — Nearly four years after barring local governments from regulating genetically engineered crops, Oregon lawmakers are thinking of reversing that policy.

The Oregon Legislature pre-empted all local ordinances over seed in 2013 but is now considering House Bill 2469, which would create an exception allowing local restrictions for genetically engineered crops.

Critics of the bill worry it will pave the way for outright bans on genetically modified crops, or GMOs, such as the prohibition passed in 2014 by Jackson County voters.

Jackson County's GMO ban was allowed to go forward because the initiative



Capital Press file photo

The Oregon Legislature pre-empted all local ordinances over seed in 2013 but is now considering House Bill 2469, which would create an exception allowing local restrictions for genetically engineered crops.

was already on the ballot when the state pre-emption policy was enacted.

Barry Bushue, president of the Oregon Farm Bureau, said it's unfortunate that some people would rather forbid farmers from growing certain crops rather than letting them resolve conflicts with neighbors amicably.

"I urge you to reject

the notion that one grower should be prioritized by the government over another," said Bushue said at a March 16 hearing before the House Agriculture Committee.

Fewer than 1 percent of organic farmers have reported losing crop value due to GMOs and none of them were in Oregon, Bushue said, citing a nationwide USDA survey.

Also, no growers have taken advantage of a mediation program aimed at resolving conflicts among conventional, organic and biotech crops, passed by Oregon lawmakers in 2015, he said.

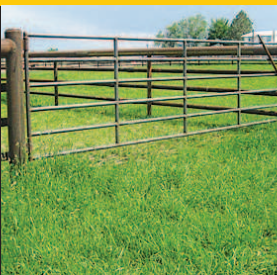
Steve Strauss, an Oregon State University professor who studies biotechnology, said lawmakers should ask themselves whether they want Oregon agriculture to be known for innovation or for exclusion.

Scientists are developing new crops with gene editing,

Turn to GMO, Page 12



800.764.7473  
BISONPIPE.COM



### BISON TOUGH GATES

- Commercial Grade
- Heavy Duty
- 4' to 20'
- Custom Sizes Available



### LARGE DIAMETER PIPE

For Irrigation, Road Bore, Hydro-Electric Piling, Road Crossing  
½" to 120" Pipe Available



LARGEST STOCKING DEALER IN THE NORTHWEST OF SURPLUS STEEL PIPE!!!



7 29467 70125 0