

Farm Bureau president looks forward to Perdue confirmation

Senate vote set for Monday

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall said he looks forward to Monday's vote to confirm Sonny Perdue as agriculture secretary, a move that Duvall said is overdue.

"We were discouraged it didn't get done before the Easter break," Duvall said Tuesday in an interview with the Capital Press.

The U.S. Senate has scheduled the confirmation vote on the Trump administration's 95th day. The Senate also has yet to confirm U.S. trade representative nominee Robert Lighthizer and labor secretary nominee Alexander Acosta to fill out the 21-seat cabinet.

Some farm groups have said they are concerned that Perdue's confirmation has lagged weeks behind other cabinet members, leaving open other USDA leadership positions, including deputy secretary.

At the state level, USDA Farm Service Agency and Rural Development offices are being led by acting directors. The agriculture secretary also appoints state-level commit-



AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais

The agriculture secretary-designate, former Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue arrives on Capitol Hill in Washington on March 23 to testify at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee. The Senate will vote in him Monday.

tees of farmers to advise the Farm Service Agency.

Perdue received a friendly hearing in March from the Senate Agriculture Committee, and diverse farm groups have endorsed him.

In an interview about President Donald Trump's early months in office, Duvall said

Perdue's background in agriculture and as a veterinarian "is very, very comforting."

"He's coming in with the attitude that he wants to take barriers down and let farmers be as productive as they can be," Duvall said.

The National Farmers Union has also urged the Senate to confirm Perdue. The group's president, Roger Johnson, said the new administration already has fallen short, particularly with Congress beginning to work on the next farm bill and the White House proposing budget cuts to the USDA.

Perdue will have some catching up to do, Johnson said. "He will get to a desk piled high with paper, and he'll have to dig out."

Perdue and Duvall are both Georgia residents. Perdue was the state's governor from 2003 to 2011. Duvall said he was president of the Georgia Farm Bureau when he met Perdue.

Perdue told him he would always welcome farmers to his office, Duvall said. "He made good on that promise."

After his second term as governor, Perdue and business partners founded an Atlanta-based export company. At the time, Perdue said the company's goal was to help businesses gain access to new markets.

Trump's early trade actions have concerned some farm groups. He followed through on a campaign pledge to withdraw the U.S. from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a Pacific Rim trade agreement, and has indicated his administration will renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Duvall said he believed Perdue will defend agriculture's interest in expanding exports. "As a governor, he was really good on trade," Duvall said.

Perdue will be another advocate in an administration that already has cheered farm groups by installing Scott Pruitt as Environmental Protection Agency administrator and Ryan Zinke as Interior secretary, said Colin Woodall, vice president of government affairs for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

"When we look back at that next year ... I don't think anybody is going to go, 'If we only had those 95 days, how much more could we have done,'" Woodall said. "I don't think it's going to be a black cloud over his term as secretary of agriculture."



Courtesy of Washington Department of Natural Resources

Wheat grows on state land in the Horse Heaven Hills region of Benton County, Wash. The Department of Natural Resources' abrupt notification to wheat farmers that it was converting the land to irrigated cropland spawned legislation that lawmakers have sent to Gov. Jay Inslee.

Inslee gets bill to give Wash. farmers heads-up

State agency admits mess up, backs new fix

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

OLYMPIA — A bill pushed by wheat growers after a state agency admittedly messed up and short-circuited farmers' plans in Benton County has been delivered to Gov. Jay Inslee.

Senate Bill 5051 would require the Department of Natural Resources to give farmers a 180-day notice before terminating a lease, tripling what had been the department's standard practice.

The bill also mandates that DNR document that the state has a plan to sell, exchange or increase the land's profitability.

The legislation stems from DNR's early termination a year ago of leases to five dryland wheat farmers in the Horse Heaven Hills region.

DNR notified the farmers it planned to convert some 3,000 acres into irrigated cropland.

The Washington Association of Wheat Growers said it supports DNR's mission to manage lands to maximize returns for public schools. The association, however, objected to the department's abrupt

notification of its plans six years into 10-year leases.

Farmers reported that the department wanted them to start preparing to put the land into organic production.

The farmers also reported receiving payments from DNR that didn't cover their investments, but that they didn't want to risk losing a costly lawsuit against the state.

"I think it was akin to having a gun to your head," said Sen. Sharon Brown, R-Kennewick, who introduced the bill. "It was a crying shame that we had to go through what we had to go through to even get them something."

In a rare mea culpa by a state agency, DNR Leasing Division Manager Darin Cramer told lawmakers that the department made a mistake.

"I have no excuses. We screwed up, bottom line. We communicated poorly and late," he testified to the Senate agriculture committee.

He said the department had already adopted a 180-day notification policy under new Public Lands Commissioner Hilary Franz, who took office in January.

The bill won't affect DNR's plans for Heaven Hills. The department recently took bids to lease the 3,000 acres. The bids are being evaluated, a DNR spokeswoman said Monday.

The land will be irrigated by a Columbia River water right. The agency will select the lessee based a criteria that includes environmental considerations, such as whether the applicant intends to grow organic crops or preserve shrub-steppe as wildlife habitat.

SB 5051 passed the House and Senate unanimously.

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Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 5/5/2017. The sale will be held at 10:00am by RANDY'S TOWING 925 WILCO RD., STAYTON, OR 2007 FORD FUSION VIN = 3FAHP07Z57R105863 Amount due on lien \$3,078.00 Reputed owner(s) KAMERON BOWEN THE EQUITABLE FINANCIAL CAPITAL AUTO SALES LC Legal-16-2-2/#4

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Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 4/21/2017. The sale will be held at 10:00am by WITHNELL MOTOR CO 2650 COMMERCIAL ST SE, SALEM, OR 2015 DODGE DART 4DR VIN = 1C3CDFB85FD112267 Amount due on lien \$3,405.00 Reputed owner(s) AUBREY J R CROOK MCCOY CREDIT ACCEPTANCE CORP AUBREY CROOK MCCOY 16-2/#4

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
TO: ALL OREGON RYEGRASS GROWERS

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held pursuant to ORS 576.416 (5), on Tuesday, May 16, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., at the Cascade Grill Restaurant, 110 Opal St. NE, Albany, Oregon, upon a proposed budget for operation of the Ryegrass Growers Seed Commission during the fiscal year July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. At this hearing any producer of Oregon-grown Ryegrass seed has a right to be heard with respect to the proposed budget, a copy of which is available for public inspection, under reasonable circumstances, in the office of each County Extension Agent in Oregon. For further information, contact the Oregon Ryegrass Growers Seed Commission business office, PO Box 3366, Salem, Oregon 97302, telephone 503-364-2944. The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. Please make any request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities at least 48 hours before the meeting by contacting the Commission office at 503-364-2944. 16-1/#4

LEGAL
NOTICE OF PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
TO: ALL OREGON FINE FESCUE GROWERS

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held pursuant to ORS 576.416 (5), on Monday, May 8, 2017, at 7:00 a.m., at Elmer's Restaurant, 3950 Market Street NE, Salem, Oregon, upon a proposed budget for operation of the Fine Fescue Commission during the fiscal year July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. At this hearing any producer of Oregon-grown Fine Fescue seed has a right to be heard with respect to the proposed budget, a copy of which is available for public inspection, under reasonable circumstances, in the office of each County Extension Agent in Oregon. For further information, contact the Fine Fescue Commission business office, P.O. Box 3366, Salem, Oregon 97302, telephone 503-364-2944. The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. Please make any requests for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities at least 48 hours before the meeting by contacting the Commission office at 503-364-2944. 16-2/#4

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