

Oregon

Ranchers on lookout for ticks this summer

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

Nobody's out there counting them, but anecdotally this summer is shaping up as a bad one for ticks.

That could mean additional expense for cattle producers, who fight the blood suckers with insecticide-loaded ear tags, sprays, powders and dips. It should make recreationists and dog owners wary as well, because they could return from walks carrying unwelcome hitchhikers. Emilio DeBess, public health

veterinarian with the Oregon Health Authority, said ticks engage in what entomologists call "questing behavior" when it's time to feed. They climb to the top of a blade of grass or hang from a branch, extend their front legs and wait for a human or animal to pass by. They grab on, climb up, stick their needle-like mouth organ into your skin and start sucking blood.

The biting and sucking doesn't do much damage, but ticks can carry diseases. In humans, lyme disease is a leading tick-borne illness, and

the number of reported cases in Oregon has steadily increased over the past decade.

Rancher Jon Elliott, of Eagle Point, Ore., in Jackson County, said he lives in "tick heaven." He treats his dogs with Frontline insecticide every month; if he didn't, they'd quickly have a dozen or more ticks on them.

For his cattle, he uses insecticide-loaded ear tags that repel or kill insects. "The conventional wisdom is you change the chemical every few years so they don't get resistance," he said.

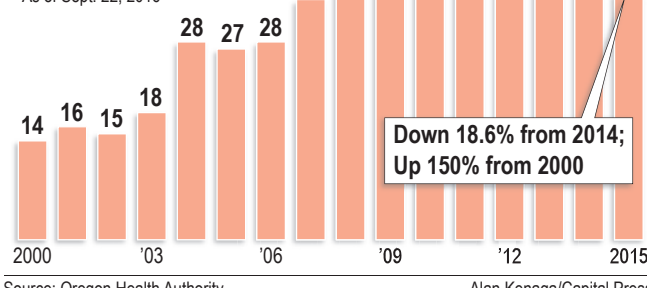
He also uses fabric tubes coated with insecticide and a carrying agent. He places them in a way that cattle have to brush against them to get to feed. He's tried dust bags in the past as well.

In addition to carrying diseases that make people sick, ticks can weaken cattle and in some areas of the country pass along diseases that kill livestock.

Elliott, who has been ranching 50 years, is chair of the beef improvement committee for the Oregon Cattlemen's Association.

Lyme disease cases in Oregon*

*As of Sept. 22, 2016



Dairyman objects to delay on permit

He says it would cripple operation

By GEORGE PAVLEN
EO Media Group

BOARDMAN, Ore. — The owner of a controversial new mega-dairy in Morrow County says his farming practices go above and beyond what's required to protect the environment, and efforts to halt his operation would cause "tragic" injuries to the cows already on site.

Greg te Velde, a California dairyman with more than 40 years of experience, recently opened Lost Valley Farm on a portion of the former Boardman Tree Farm following an extensive permitting process.

Lost Valley Farm was approved in March by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Department of Environmental Quality, which jointly administer the state's confined animal feeding operation, or CAFO, program. Officials described the permit as the most restrictive of any CAFO to date, ensuring the dairy would properly handle waste from up to 30,000 cows.

Opponents, however, are urging regulators to change their minds. A coalition of groups has filed a petition for reconsideration, arguing the dairy does not go far enough to protect water quality. The petition also asks for a stay of Lost Valley's CAFO permit.

Members of the coalition include the Animal Legal Defense Fund, Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Food Safety, Columbia Riverkeeper, Food & Water Watch, Friends of Family Farmers, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, Humane Oregon and Oregon Rural Action.

In response, te Velde said the permit "reflects the toughest and most stringent environmental safety standards applicable to a dairy in Oregon." Lost Valley is required to install 11 groundwater monitoring wells, which is seven more than usual, and will be subject to a minimum of three annual inspections, versus one every 10 months.

Beyond state and federal regulations, te Velde said the dairy feeds its cows "a unique blend of food that includes high-quality starch and additives" to lower emissions, and has built a state-of-the-art lagoon system that rotates water and reduces emissions.

"I believe that a well-run dairy not only provides for contented cows and produces quality milk, but also proactively implements environmental emissions," te Velde wrote in a declaration filed June 4 with ODA and DEQ.

For the past 15 years, te Velde has operated his dairy in Oregon on land leased from Threemile Canyon Farms. He decided to relocate in order to expand and increase the amount of milk he sells to Tillamook Cheese, which runs a cheesemaking plant at the Port of Morrow.

Lost Valley currently has 17,500 animals, including 8,500 milking cows.

Judge: Federal laws don't shield Oregon

Timber lawsuit can proceed, he says

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

Federal environmental laws do not preclude a class action lawsuit against Oregon by local governments seeking \$1.4 billion for insufficient logging.

The lawsuit, on behalf of 14 counties and numerous taxing districts within them, argues that Oregon's forest management policies have deprived local governments of logging revenues from forests they donated to the state.

Attorneys for Oregon claimed that federal environmental statutes, including the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act, effectively prohibited state forest

managers from maximizing timber harvests on that land.

Linn County Circuit Judge Daniel Murphy has now ruled those defenses are not valid, since the plaintiffs allege Oregon's forest protections surpassed the requirements of federal law.

The state government also argued it properly formulated the 1998 "greatest permanent value" regulations, which the plaintiffs claim impermissibly reduced logging levels.

Murphy ruled this defense is invalid because the regulations could have resulted in a breach of Oregon's contract with local governments, even though the rules were lawfully enacted "through legitimate process."

The judge disagreed with Oregon's argument that local government can't sue over the contract while continuing

to benefit from timber revenues, since a lawsuit "for partial damages is allowed."

He struck several other defenses offered by Oregon's attorneys, such as arguments the lawsuit was time-barred or was outside the court's jurisdiction.

Capital Press was unable to reach Oregon's attorneys and the Oregon Department of Forestry to comment on the ruling.

The judge's decision removes significant obstacles in bringing the lawsuit to trial, said John DiLorenzo, attorney for the plaintiffs.

"I have no doubt this case is going to be tried to a jury," he said.

DiLorenzo said he expects the parties will now focus on gathering evidence in preparation for a trial that would likely take place during the summer of 2018.



Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press

Fourteen counties and roughly 130 tax districts are involved in a \$1.4 billion lawsuit that accuses Oregon's government of insufficiently logging state forests. A judge has ruled federal environmental statutes don't shield the state from potential damages.



George Pavlen/EO Media Group

From left, Erin Jenner, Grant Woods and Terry and Debby Anderson gathered June 9 when Terry Anderson presented Woods with a check for \$5,000.

Rancher pays \$5,000 for tip on cattle killers

Two men convicted after 2016 incident

By GEORGE PAVLEN
EO Media Group

HERMISTON, Ore. — In all his years ranching, Terry Anderson has never received a phone call like the one he got Jan. 15, 2016.

Anderson, who runs Anderson Land & Livestock with his wife, Debby, was tipped off by one of their employees that something was seriously wrong at the winter pasture along Feedville Road near Stanfield. Not only had one of the cows been killed, but body parts were strewn all over the scene.

"The kid was just in complete shock," Anderson remembers. "It's more than emotional. Those cattle are family to us."

What happened was two men — Anthony Haigh of Stanfield and T.J. Kestler of Hermiston — sneaked onto the property the previous night, shot the heifer and attempted to butcher the animal right there in the field. Though the cow was skinned out, Anderson said most of the meat was left to waste. He suspects the rest of the herd may have spooked Haigh and Kestler before they could finish.

There were 160 cow-calf pairs in the pasture, which were part of a synchronized breeding program, Anderson said. His ranch, which is based outside Pilot Rock, is a "seedstock" operation,

meaning they breed and sell bulls for other producers to build their herds.

Based on the evidence, Anderson said it was clear to him that Haigh and Kestler knew exactly what they were doing.

"I don't think I'll ever get over it," Anderson said. "I just can't imagine someone doing something like that."

Haigh and Kestler, then 21 and 20 years old, were arrested just four days later. They each pleaded guilty to first-degree theft earlier this year. Haigh was sentenced to six months in prison, while Kestler received 24 months probation and 100 hours of community service. Both men were also ordered to pay \$3,000 in restitution.

The convictions might not have come without the help of a Hermiston man who alerted authorities.

Grant Woods, 21, was in the room when Haigh and Kestler arrived to visit a mutual friend the night they killed the cow. The two spoke freely about the crime as they cleaned their gun, according to Woods. The motive was apparently to sell the meat for beer money.

After talking on the phone with his fiancé, Woods decided to call the police.

"It was just completely wrong," Woods said. "This was about doing the right thing."

Though Woods did not know at the time, both Anderson and the Oregon Cattlemen's Association were offering reward money for information leading to a conviction in the case.



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