



Photos by John O'Connell/Capital Press

R. Kim Wolfley, a Blackfoot, Idaho, dairyman who converted four years ago to Glanbia's pasture-based milk program and heads the Snake River Dairyman's Association, walks among cattle grazing in his pasture on June 14. Wolfley said 36 of the 39 member dairies in the association have converted to pasture-based production.

ROOM TO ROAM

Eastern Idaho dairymen help carve a niche by supplying 'pasture-based' milk for cheesemaker

By JOHN O'CONNELL
Capital Press



Russ De Kruyf, left, director of milk procurement at Glanbia Nutritionals, and David Bunnell, manager of the Blackfoot, Idaho, Glanbia cheese plant, show off some of their cheese products at the plant.

BLACKFOOT, Idaho — Dairyman R. Kim Wolfley believes his cows have gotten stronger and healthier since 2000, when he converted his marginal farmland to pasture and let them spend more time grazing.

Wolfley, who heads the Snake River Dairyman's Association, didn't have to change much about his operation when he accepted an invitation from Glanbia Nutritionals for his members to participate in a unique niche market, supplying "pasture-based" milk.

The pasture-based niche is Glanbia's animal-welfare standard developed to meet the needs of its customer, Chipotle Mexican Grill.

The niche is one of many that have proliferated in recent years. Agricultural producers can supplement their incomes by filling a wide variety of niches, ranging from GMO-free, which does not have genetically modified ingredients, to organic, which is certified under USDA standards.

Since Glanbia pitched the idea to Wolfley's association in 2013, all but three of the 39 member dairies have converted to pasture-based production and become certified.

The pasture-based premium can be as much as 10 percent above

The program mandates that farmers allow cows unfettered access to pasture for grazing.

"This is not an organic program. Dairies can still treat cows with conventional methods."

— Russ De Kruyf, Glanbia's director of milk procurement

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By any name, these insects are a pest

Parts of northcentral Oregon overrun by cannibalistic creatures

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

An infestation of voracious Mormon crickets in the Arlington area of northcentral Oregon has residents scrambling

to protect farm fields and home gardens.

Ione resident Alison Ogden said people in Arlington have spent thousands of dollars battling the bugs on their own over the past couple of weeks. "Some people don't have air conditioning and can't even open their windows for fear the bugs will enter homes," she said in an email to the Capital Press.

Ogden said she farms a few miles east of town and anxiously checks the crickets' presence every day. She said the pests could do significant damage to their crops. "And because we have millions of leaf cutter bees working in the alfalfa seed fields, spraying insecticide is not an option," she wrote.

Townpeople met with state agriculture and Oregon



E.J. Harris/EO Media Group

The City of Arlington, Ore., has been inundated by a Mormon cricket outbreak leaving residents with few options as to how to deal with the insects.

State University Extension representatives June 16, and OSU Extension Agent Jordan Maley set up a Facebook page on which people can share information and tips for countering the insects: <https://www.facebook.com/gilliamext.ag.9>

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Biologists watch for first W. Washington wolfpack

Male wolf fitted with GPS collar

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

State and federal biologists may learn in the next few weeks whether Western Washington has its first pack since wolves began recolonizing the state a decade ago, a state Department of Fish and Wildlife official said Monday.

WDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service trapped a male wolf June 8 in Eastern Skagit County. The wolf, the first captured west of the Cascades in decades, was fitted with a GPS collar and released.

If he stays in the area,

it will suggest he's found a mate, WDFW wolf policy coordinator Donny Martorello said.

"These next two weeks will tell us what we're dealing with," he said.

A Western Washington wolfpack would be a significant advancement in the state's goal to have wolves settle throughout Washington. Currently, all 20 packs are east of the Cascades, with 15 concentrated in four northeast Washington counties.

Ranchers and public officials in those counties say they already are overrun by wolves, but the animals will remain a state-protected species until wolves have

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Courtesy U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
A wolf stands in a field in this photo taken by a northwest Washington resident. Wolf biologists captured and fitted the animal with a GPS collar June 8. Biologists hope to learn whether the wolf has a traveling companion and has formed the first wolfpack west of the Cascades.



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