

WDFW to shoot wolves in Smackout pack



ODFW File Photo

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife says it will cull the Smackout Wolfpack after it attacked cattle in Stevens County, Wash.

By **DON JENKINS**
Capital Press

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife announced July 20 it will shoot wolves to stop attacks on livestock in Stevens County.

A rancher's employee found an injured calf with wolf bites on federal grazing land July 18, according to WDFW.

Wildlife investigators determined the calf had been attacked by the Smackout pack. WDFW last September concluded the pack killed one calf and injured another, and prob-

ably killed a third calf.

Under WDFW policy, the department will consider culling a pack after four depredations in a 10-month period. The first depredation was confirmed Sept. 21.

WDFW said the rancher reported the previous month that his employee caught two wolves attacking livestock and killed one. The shooting was lawful, according to WDFW.

WDFW did not specify how many wolves it planned to shoot, though department policy calls for removing one or two wolves and pausing to

see whether the pack stops attacking livestock.

"The purpose of this action is to change the pack's behavior, while also meeting the state's wolf-conservation goals," WDFW wolf policy coordinator Donny Martorello said in a written statement. "That means incrementally removing wolves and assessing the results before taking any further action."

"This rancher has made concerted efforts to protect his livestock using non-lethal measures," Martorello said. "Our goal is to change the

pack's behavior before the situation gets worse."

The pack has killed a total of three calves and injured three others since 2015, according to WDFW.

The pack had eight members at the end of 2016 and since then has produced an unknown number of pups, WDFW said.

WDFW shot seven wolves in the Profanity Peak pack last year to stop depredations in Ferry County. WDFW also lethally removed wolves in 2012 and 2014, both times in Stevens County.

Sugar beet growers battle glyphosate-resistant kochia

By **SEAN ELLIS**
Capital Press

ONTARIO, Ore. — Kochia weeds that are resistant to Roundup herbicide can now be found in sugar beet fields throughout Malheur County in Eastern Oregon and parts of Canyon County in southwestern Idaho.

Weed scientists worry it's a matter of time before they're abundant in sugar beet fields throughout southcentral Idaho as well.

Virtually all of the 180,000 acres of sugar beets grown in the region are genetically engineered to resist applications of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup, the popular weed killer produced by Monsanto Corp.

Glyphosate-resistant kochia weeds were first detected in Eastern Oregon and Southern Idaho in 2014 and weed scientists had initially hoped their numbers would remain small.

"In Malheur County in the Treasure Valley, it's pretty much all over the place," said Joel Felix, an Oregon State University weed scientist in Ontario. "And we know it's in Canyon County across the river (in Idaho)."

While glyphosate-tolerant kochia weeds have been found in southcentral Idaho, they aren't widespread there yet, said Don Morishita, a University of Idaho weed scientist in Kimberly.

However, he added, "I'm waiting for it to start showing up in great numbers here, too. I'm expecting that."

Felix said kochia is a tumbleweed and he believes some of the glyphosate-tolerant weeds are detaching from fence lines or along field edges and dropping seed as they tumble through sugar beet fields.

"Taking care of fence lines and edges of fields should be a priority to keep kochia from tumbling into fields," he said.

Idaho and Oregon farmers have been growing GE sugar beets for 12 seasons now and Snake River Sugar Cooperative officials estimate they save Idaho and Eastern Oregon growers \$22 million a year.



Courtesy of Mark Hanson, CPS
Kochia, also known as fire weed or Mexican fire weed, is a highly adaptable plant that invades a wide variety of habitats in the dryer portions of the Northwest.

Rupert farmer Duane Grant, chairman of the coop's board of directors, said kochia weeds are a major challenge in sugar beet production because they are a fierce competitor for sunlight, nutrients and water.

"They must be controlled. If not, they would take the yield in the field below the point anybody would want to grow the crop," he said. "To the extent kochia is becoming resistant to Roundup, we will as a grower community have to find solutions."

One solution being developed is an effort by Monsanto and KWS Saat Research, a plant breeding company headquartered in Germany, to develop a genetically engineered sugar beet that is resistant to both glyphosate and dicamba, another popular herbicide.

Incorporating both traits into sugar beets should prevent the proliferation of herbicide-resistant weeds because it's unlikely a weed would be resistant to both modes of action, a KWS research scientist told sugar beet growers in Idaho in December 2015.

The technology is a couple of years away from being introduced to sugar beet growers, Grant said.

"That really should mitigate the effects of glyphosate resistance in kochia weeds," he said. "We can hopefully hold them to an economic threshold and persevere until the next set of tools arrive."

McMinnville creamery set to reopen as organic facility

By **ERIC MORTENSON**
Capital Press

The former Farmers Creamery Cooperative in McMinnville, Ore., will reopen in August as the newest facility operated by the nation's largest organic dairy cooperative.

The creamery was purchased last fall by Wisconsin-based Organic Valley, which produces organic milk, butter, eggs, cheese, soy and other products. The McMinnville plant will primarily make butter under the Organic Valley label, and is the company's first brick and mortar facility outside of Wisconsin.

The renovated creamery's grand opening is Saturday, Aug. 12, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the facility, 700 NE Highway 99W, McMinnville. Company spokeswoman Sasha Bernstein said the public is invited. Shuttles will be provided to take people on tours of dairies that will provide milk to the creamery.

Louise Hemstead, Organic Valley's chief operating officer in Wisconsin, said the Farmers Cooperative Creamery had long been on the company's "risk assessment" list. That is, it was an important supplier in the region and Organic Valley would need to buy it if some-



thing happened, she said.

Hemstead said Organic Valley spent more than \$12 million above the purchase price to renovate the creamery and "bring it around to be a modern facility."

Among other work, the company rebuilt the dryer that is used to produce skim milk powder, upgraded the electrical system, rebuilt the drains, improved the pasteurizing section and installed a better machine that forms and packages the familiar butter cubes.

The company also pulled out the industrial churn, shipped it back to Wisconsin to be rebuilt and will send it back to McMinnville next week to be reinstalled, Hemstead said.

In addition to butter and skim milk powder, the plant will produce buttermilk powder and a cultured butter that is more of a European type spread. The plant will make trial batches in the first week of August and should be operational in time for the grand opening, Hemstead said.

The renovation and re-

opening cap a year of changes for the McMinnville creamery. In July 2016, co-op members accepted an agreement that allowed dairy farmers to apply for membership in the much larger Northwest Dairy Association of Seattle, which includes Darigold. The McMinnville plant then was sold to Organic Valley for an undisclosed price, and it

is reopening as a strictly organic operation.

The facility will provide 37 jobs and will process milk delivered from 72 member dairies in Oregon and Washington.

Nationally, the Organic Valley cooperative represents more than 1,800 farmers in 36 states and describes saving family farms as its "founding mission."



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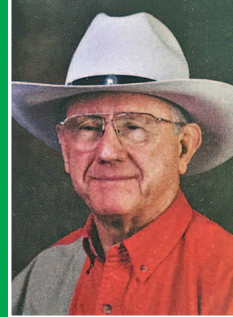
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