



Label debate continues after COOL

Some dairy and cattle producers believe voluntary country of origin labels could still be major selling point

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press



Mike Eby was a seventh-generation dairy farmer in Lancaster County, Pa., but in 2016 he decided to call it quits.

His family operation went back more than 200 years, and ending the legacy was a difficult decision.

"It's quite the heritage. There are days sometimes I feel it was a failure," he said.

He blames the demise of his farm on the region's dairy cooperatives growth based on the use of imported milk and their unwillingness to promote U.S. milk. The result has been unsustainably low U.S. milk prices, he argues.

Toward the end, he worked four other jobs — a bed and breakfast, hay wrapping, bottling other producers' milk and selling radio advertising — to keep his dairy of 60 milking cows and 60 tillable acre in business.

"It's just not supposed to be that way," he said.

As chairman of the National Dairy Producers Organization, he advocates change in the way co-ops are managed and the promotion of "100 percent USA" labels on dairy and beef products.

While he believes the larger issue weighing down farmer profitability is co-op managers building empires and pouring profits into joint ventures, the label would go a long way toward increasing demand for domestic products and boosting farmers' milk prices, he said.

For Eby — and many other producers — it's a matter of promoting U.S. products over foreign products. Co-ops should label their products made with 100 percent U.S. milk because consumers find value in USA-branded products, he said.

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Carol Ryan Dumas/Capital Press

Bob Krucker, owner of Long View Dairy in Jerome, Idaho, stands beside his maternity pen on Oct. 19. He says U.S. dairy farmers can compete successfully with imports by labeling verified 100 percent U.S. dairy products with a USA label.

"We need to give the consumers the tools to choose because consumers will make the right choice, they will make the U.S.-made choice."

Bob Krucker, owner of Long View Dairy

Increased DEQ pesticide authority worries farm groups

Draft policy would regulate spraying over 'wet or dry' surface waters

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

Agriculture and forestry groups in Oregon worry the state's Department of Environmental Quality is planning to significantly expand its

authority over pesticides.

Under the policy being considered by DEQ, the agency would regulate pesticide spraying over state surface waters "whether wet or dry at the time," according to an early draft.

It's unclear how broadly dry wa-

terways would be defined, but the concern is that areas where water pools in winter — such as wet fields in the Willamette Valley — would be subject to regulation during summer, critics argue.

"DEQ would be setting itself up

to be the most aggressive regulator of farm and forestry practices in the U.S.," said Mary Anne Cooper, public policy counsel for the Oregon Farm Bureau.

Regulation of pesticides over waterways by DEQ initially became an issue in 2009, when the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a federal policy exempting

pesticides from regulation under the Clean Water Act.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency delegates its Clean Water Act authority to certain states, including Oregon, which developed a "general permit" for pesticide discharges in 2011.

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Dispute erupts over replacing farmland dwellings

Confusing land use law provision at center of battle

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

A legal dispute has erupted over replacing dwellings on farmland in Oregon due to an ambiguously written provision of the state's land use laws.

The specifics of the controversy are convoluted, but it centers on whether

Oregon law allows landowners in "exclusive farm use" zones to rebuild dwellings that were torn down or destroyed by a natural disaster many years or even decades ago.

Landwatch Lane County, a farmland preservation group, believes that rebuilding after such a long interval is prohibited and goes against the intent



of the Oregon Legislature.

If such delayed replacements were permitted, it would result in "non-conforming uses plastered all over EFU land," said Lauri Segel-Vaccher, the group's legal analyst.

"Are you really going to have a commercial farming and forest economy, or are you converting farm and forest

land into residential uses?" she said.

Kay King, a landowner near Florence, Ore., wants to rebuild three dwellings on 100 acres of farmland that were removed more than 20 years ago.

Rebuilding the old homes will allow for the next generation of farmers to live on the land, but it's unlikely to have widespread impacts, said Mike Gelardi, King's attorney.

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