

ON A MISSION

Farmers advocate free trade

Ag groups line up grassroots support for foreign trade

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

Fleets of trucks, lines of railcars and bustling ports send U.S. agricultural products to far-flung foreign markets each day. Last year alone, those exports exceeded \$140 billion with a trade surplus of more than \$21 billion. They also supported more than 1 million jobs to deliver those products around the world and generated \$178.8 billion for the U.S. economy.

But a growing sentiment of protectionism in the U.S. is threatening the future of agricultural exports and the health of rural communities, according to a group that is mobilizing to combat those threats. Farmers for Free Trade is on a mission to rebuild grassroots support for trade.

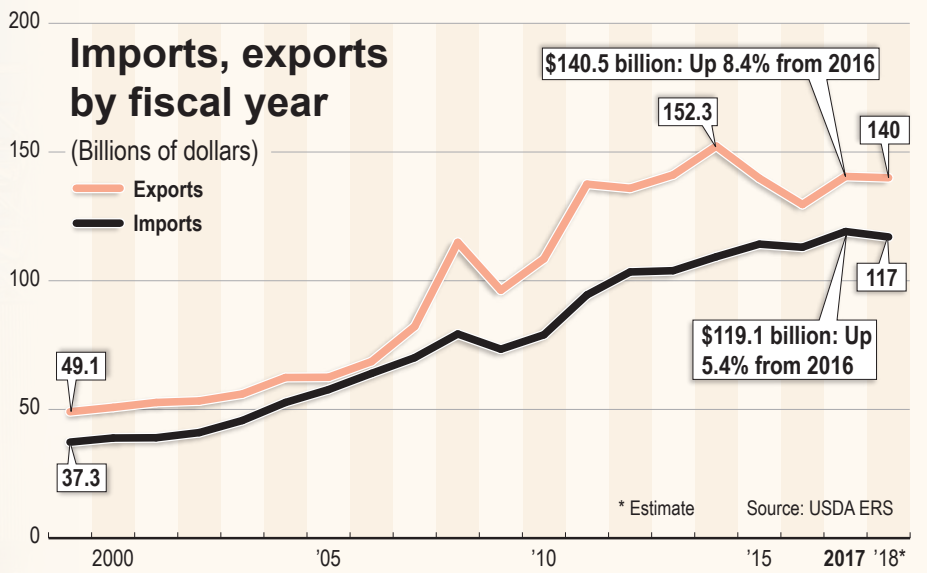
Launched last summer, Farmers for Free Trade is chaired by former U.S. Sens. Max Baucus, a Montana Democrat, and Richard Lugar, an Indiana Republican. Both are strong proponents of free trade who say they are concerned by the loss of the country's long-held pro-trade consensus.

"We need to rebuild consensus on agriculture trade. It must be one that incorporates the position of American

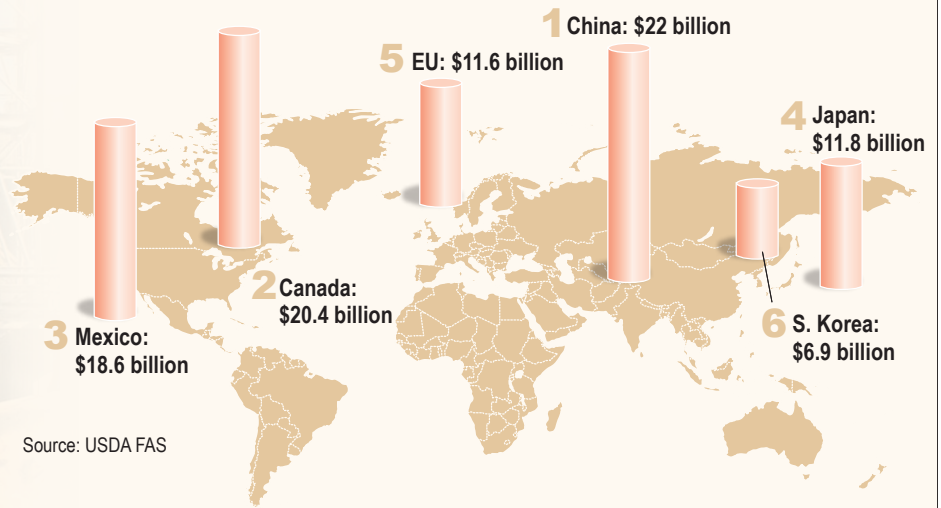
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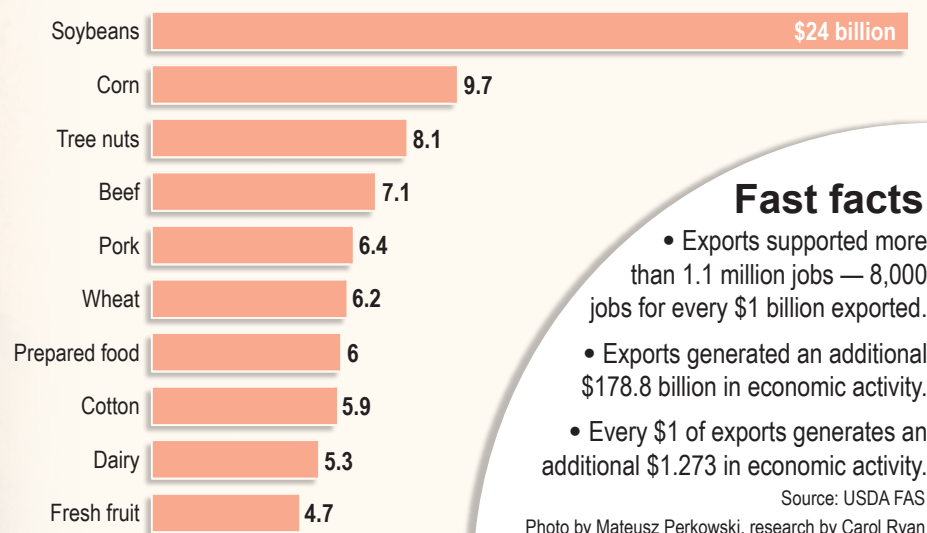
U.S. agricultural trade, FY2017



Top markets for U.S. agricultural exports



Top exports (Billions of dollars)



Fast facts

- Exports supported more than 1.1 million jobs — 8,000 jobs for every \$1 billion exported.
 - Exports generated an additional \$178.8 billion in economic activity.
 - Every \$1 of exports generates an additional \$1.273 in economic activity.
- Source: USDA FAS

Photo by Mateusz Perkowski, research by Carol Ryan Dumas, illustration by Alan Kenaga/Capital Press

Two more calves killed by wolves in SW Oregon

Rogue pack responsible for three attacks in two weeks

By GEORGE PLAVERN
Capital Press

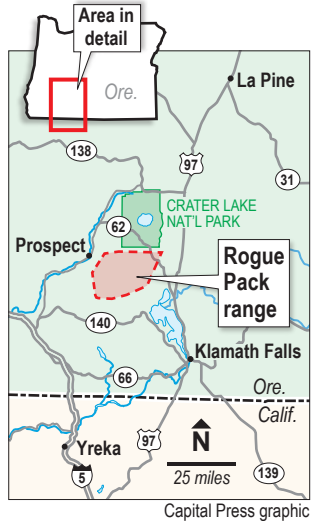
Federal wildlife officials are working to protect cattle at a southwest Oregon ranch after wolves from the nearby Rogue pack killed three calves in eight days in the same fenced pasture.

The attacks are also renewing calls from the Oregon Cattlemen's Association to change how wolves are managed on the west side of the state, where the animals remain listed as endangered.

All three kills occurred at the Mill-Mar Ranch south of Prospect in Jackson County, which lies in the middle of Rogue wolfpack territory. John Stephenson, wildlife biologist and Oregon wolf coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said the pack had visited the ranch for years without preying on livestock.

That changed Thursday, Jan. 4, when investigators confirmed the pack was responsible for killing a 500-pound calf. Two more incidents were confirmed Wednesday, Jan. 10, and Thursday, Jan. 11.

"It's something we're very concerned about," Stephenson said. "We can't just trust anymore that (wolves) are going to come visit and not cause problems. Things have



changed in that regard."

In each case, GPS-collar data from OR-54 — a member of the Rogue pack — showed the wolf was nearby when the calves were killed. Biologists

collared OR-54 in October 2017 to help track and learn more about the pack.

The Rogue pack was established in 2014, when the famous wandering wolf OR-7 and his mate had their first litter of pups. OR-54, an 80-pound female, is believed to be directly related to OR-7. Stephenson said he believes the pack now has between seven and 12 individual wolves, with a territory that covers parts of Jackson County and neighboring Klamath County to the east.

Rancher Ted Birdseye said he was aware wolves were present in the area when he purchased the Mill-Mar Ranch two years ago. In a recent interview with the Capital Press, Birdseye said he was growing concerned about

chronic predation.

"I hope (wolves) don't come in once a week over the next few months," he said. "There's nothing I can really do about it."

Gray wolves are listed as a federally endangered species west of highways 395, 78 and 95. East of the highways, wolves were removed from the state endangered species list in 2015, enabling ranchers and wildlife officials to shoot wolves in certain situations to prevent or deter repeated attacks on livestock.

Last year, the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife authorized kill orders for members of the Harl Butte pack in Wallowa County, as well as the Meacham pack in Umatilla County. Stephenson, with the USFWS, said lethal

control will not be considered for the Rogue pack.

"We're still looking to try an effective deterrent that keeps them out of the pasture," Stephenson said. "We're not looking at anything beyond that at this point."

Stephenson said deterrents may include some combination of fladry, electric fencing and increased human presence to haze wolves from the area. In fact, Stephenson had just arrived at the ranch Jan. 10 to help replace fladry when he discovered the second dead calf.

After the third calf was killed, Stephenson remained at the ranch in his truck, with a spotlight and shotgun to haze wolves should they return.

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Well bill waits vote by Washington Senate

House works on separate proposal

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

OLYMPIA — A bill to reopen rural Washington to new wells was moved this week to the Senate floor, an unprecedented but tenuous bipartisan

response to the Hirst court decision.

Senate Bill 6091 was advanced by the three Democrats and two Republicans on the Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources Committee.

"This is a necessary bill for the fishermen and all the people who want to live and work in rural areas," said Mo-



ses Lake Sen. Judy Warnick, the committee's lead Republicans.

The bill responds to the state Supreme Court's 2016 Hirst ruling. The court's majority assumed new wells harm fish. The ruling halted or threatens to stop building in rural areas. Senate Republicans have focused attention on the issue by withholding

votes for the \$4 billion capital budget. House Democrats are working on a separate Hirst bill.

"The most newsworthy item right now is that the Hirst negotiators are working long, long hours into the morning looking for a solution," said Senate Minority Leader Mark Schoessler, R-Ritzville.

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