

Olympic athletes to sport Oregon wool

Pyeongchang, S. Korea, Winter Games underway

By **GEORGE PLAGEN**
Capital Press

When members of Team USA arrived Feb. 9 for the opening ceremony of the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, they were again wearing Oregon wool clothing.

Polo Ralph Lauren, an official outfitter of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic teams, has partnered with Imperial Stock Ranch in Shaniko, Ore., to make this year's Team USA uniform sweaters, hats and mittens using U.S. wool.

It took approximately 25,000 pounds of raw grease wool to make the clothing for U.S. Olympic athletes for the opening ceremony on Feb. 9 and the closing ceremony on Feb. 25.

All of the items were knitted with Imperial Stock Ranch American Merino yarn, a program launched in 2015 with the National Spinning Co. in North Carolina. Imperial Stock Ranch also provided the wool for Olympic sweaters at the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi, Russia.

Jeanne Carver, who runs the ranch with her husband, Dan, said they are proud and humble to be part of the Olympic tradition.

"For us, we do work that most people don't know about," Carver wrote in an email. "We're tending the land and animals that give us fiber, that has clothed humankind for thousands of years. To have some of that fiber worn by the best athletes in America on a global stage like the Olympics is still unbelievable for us. It will never stop being a miracle."

Imperial Stock Ranch traces its roots to 1851, when homesteader Richard Hinton arrived in central Oregon from the Willamette Valley.

Hinton raised sheep, cattle, grain and hay, and by the early 1900s he was the state's largest individual land and



Aja Evans, a U.S. Olympic bobsledder, wears the uniform that will be featured during the closing ceremony of the 2018 Winter Olympics. The sweater, hat and gloves were made using wool from Imperial Stock Ranch in Shaniko, Ore.

Polo Ralph Lauren

livestock owner.

Though sheep numbers have declined over the decades, the ranch has managed to stay in the commercial wool business. In 1999, Imperial Stock Ranch shifted from selling raw wool to wool products, such as yarn, which Carver said has opened several new markets.

It was the summer of 2012 — during the Summer Olympics in London — when Carver said they first got the call from Ralph Lauren looking for wool for its "Made in America" Olympic uniforms.

That deal changed the future of the ranch, she said, with hundreds of designers and companies suddenly interested in doing business.

"We added market channels and

continue to grow in each," Carver said. "The visibility that resulted from Ralph Lauren telling our story strengthened opportunities with our supply chain partners and broadened our impact."

Carver said she does not know how long the relationship with Ralph Lauren will continue into the future. Meanwhile, she said the ranch continues to focus on its agricultural operations, supporting local markets and U.S. manufacturing.

Last year, the ranch was also the first in the world to be certified under the voluntary Responsible Wool Standard, focused on sustainable land practices and animal welfare.

Coverage of the 2018 Winter Olympics on NBC will continue through the closing ceremonies.

Proposed Oregon rural reserve change dies quickly

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

SALEM — A proposal to reclassify 1,700 acres in Oregon's Washington County from a rural reserve to an urban reserve was killed shortly out of the gate.

Under House Bill 4075, the land could have been included in the Portland metropolitan area's "urban growth boundary" instead of being shielded from development for 50 years.

After the bill's first public hearing on Feb. 8 before the House Agriculture Committee, proponents and critics of HB 4075 learned it would go no farther.

The committee's chairman, Rep. Brian Clem, D-Salem, said the bill was too "problematic" for a thorough vetting during 2018's short legislative session.

"This bill will not be moving forward this session in this committee," Clem said.

Many of the arguments for and against HB 4075 were familiar in Oregon's ongoing land use debate.

Supporters claimed more development in burgeoning Washington County would fuel Oregon's economic "engine" of high tech development, which shouldn't be sacrificed for the "sacred cow" of preserving farmland.

Detractors argued that urbanization should become more concentrated before spreading out, saving not only farmland but the agricultural infrastructure — such as machinery and input suppliers — needed to sustain the industry.

However, the discussion over urban and rural reserves also has another dimension due to the a "grand bargain" struck by lawmakers four years ago.

The concept of reserves became part of Oregon's land use law in 2007, when the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1011 aiming to improve the metropolitan region's long-term growth planning.

In 2012, the state's Land Conservation and Development Commission approved the rural and urban reserve designation developed by Portland's Metro regional government and the counties of Washington, Clackamas and Multnomah.

Two years later, though, the Oregon Court of Appeals ruled that LCDC had made several errors in its approval, which threatened to greatly prolong the reserve designation process.

That court decision prompted Oregon lawmakers in 2014 to pass a compromise bill establishing urban and rural reserves, effectively bypassing the bureaucratic process for such designations.

Opponents of the HB 4075 claim that "a deal is a deal," but if lawmakers go down the road of altering the 1,700 acres in Washington County, it will be difficult to reject future adjustment requests.

"This break of a settlement jeopardizes the reserves," said Mary Kyle McCurdy, deputy director of the 1,000 Friends of Oregon conservation group.

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California FFA gears up for state convention

By Luke O'Leary
and Hunter Andrade

From left to right are California FFA State Secretary Genevieve Regli, State Sentinel Bobby Marchy, State Vice President Jasmine Flores, State President Luke O'Leary, State Treasurer Armando Nevarez and State Reporter Hunter Andrade. They will be leading the state organization's annual convention, which will be held April 22-25 in Anaheim this year.

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This year California FFA has challenged FFA members across the state to remain anchored in service, values and agriculture.

In April California FFA members will make their way to Anaheim for the 90th Annual State Leadership Conference that will be held for the first time at the Anaheim Convention Center.

FFA Members will hear the words of our keynote speakers Jesse LeBeau and Brett Culp, who will inspire members to ACTIVATE their inner leader and inspire them to bring change to their communities.

California FFA also has the honor to welcome two National FFA officers, California's own Breanna Holbert, the 2017-2018 National FFA President and Gracie Furnish, the Easter Region Vice President.

The National Officers as well as Visiting State Officers and Collegiate Presenters will host workshops for FFA Members to attend while at the convention. These workshops will motivate FFA members while educating them as to what California FFA as well as the National FFA Organization have to offer students in terms of their development of premier leadership

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and personal growth with the ultimate goal of career success.

Another added feature to the California State Convention is the expansion of the career show and expo. Universities and companies from across the nation will be present in Anaheim to share with FFA members the opportunities that await them after their time in the blue and gold has come to a close.

The career show and expo will be a highlight for members that are eager to explore what the agriculture industry has to offer in the future. However, there is plenty that the industry will offer while at the convention. Urban Agriculture will have a strong presence as students from across California will have access to tours in the area that will highlight areas of agriculture that many have yet to experience in southern California.

Another highly anticipated feature is the included Disney's California Adventure exclusive event that is included with registration. On the final night of the convention, FFA Members from all over California will flood Disney's California Adventure and celebrate the year of remaining anchored in service, values and agriculture, all while looking towards the future as members activate their potential and make waves in their communities.

Luke O'Leary is the California state FFA president, and Hunter Andrade is the state FFA reporter.

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