



Capital Press File

Potatoes for processing are harvested near Pingree, Idaho. In Idaho and Malheur County, Ore., processors had used 54.1 million hundredweight of potatoes as of April 1, according to NASS.

Potato stocks on par with last year

By **BRAD CARLSON**
Capital Press

As farmers begin to plant the 2018 potato crop, about one-third of last year's crop remains in storage, the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service reports. That percentage is on par with last year.

Last season, farmers grew fewer acres of potatoes than the previous year, Idaho Potato Commission President and CEO Frank Muir said.

Idaho, which produces nearly one-third of the nation's potatoes, grew 131.3 million hundredweight last year, down from 2016 production of 139.3 million hundredweight. About 38 percent of the 2017 crop remains in storage.

Washington, the second-largest potato producer, had a crop of 99.0 million hundredweight and has 30 percent of its crop remaining.

Oregon grew 21.4 million hundredweight and has one-third of its crop remaining.

Overall, NASS said the 13 major potato-production states held 133.6 million hundredweight in storage April 1, up 2 percent from a year ago.

Potato disappearance, at 266 million hundredweight, was down 3 percent. Season-to-date shrink and loss, at 19 million hundredweight, was down 8 percent.

In the eight largest potato-processing states, processors had used 146 million hundredweight for the season as of April 1, up 1 percent from a year earlier, NASS reported.

In Idaho and in Malheur County, Ore., processors had used 54.1 million hundredweight for the season as of April 1, down 1 percent from a year earlier.

In other Oregon counties and the state of Washington

combined, processors used 61.8 million hundredweight for the season, also down slightly.

Dehydrated usage accounted for 25.8 million hundredweight of the total processed, down 3 percent.

In Wilder, Idaho, Doug Gross grows potatoes for the fresh market and for processing. He was to start planting April 19.

"We are right on schedule with a normal year," he said, referring to his potato plantings. He sees good planting conditions on his southwest Idaho farm, including soil temperatures on track with 10-year averages.

Gross said adequate water bodes well for production, but final 2018 results will depend largely on summer growing conditions and weather.

"We just have to see what the weather brings," he said.

Ramaswamy to oversee NW colleges, universities

Proudest of NIFA's focus on producers

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press



Sonny Ramaswamy

Sonny Ramaswamy will return to the Pacific Northwest after his role as director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture ends next month.

Ramaswamy's six-year term with NIFA ends May 5. President Barack Obama appointed him in 2012. He formerly was dean of Oregon State University's College of Agricultural Sciences.

In July, he will become president and CEO of the Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities, and reside in Seattle.

"It is in the world of education," Ramaswamy told the Capital Press.

The commission provides oversight and holds universities accountable, Ramaswamy said. He will oversee 162 colleges and universities, including public and land-grant universities, community colleges, private nonprofit and private for-profit schools.

"The intent is to make sure students that attend these institutions do get their education," Ramaswamy said.

"Once they're educated, that they have the skills and knowledge to become contributing

members of society. There's some very critical expectations that society has."

As an accrediting body, the commission evaluates the institutions, Ramaswamy said.

"Institutions could certainly be in trouble if they don't make sure they're offering the kind of educational opportunity, including research experiences and experiential education," he said.

The new job will allow Ramaswamy to continue to advocate for agriculture. He told the commission board he needed to remain a proponent, he said, serving on boards or testifying at congressional hearings about food, agriculture and forestry if the opportunity arises.

Ramaswamy declined to comment whether the Trump administration would have asked him to be continue with NIFA.

"It's not my call," he said. "At the end of the day, it is the Trump administration's call and Secretary (Sonny) Perdue's call."

He is proudest of the recognition for NIFA as a science agency that's deeply interested in protecting the in-

terests of farmers and ranchers, he said.

"I continually remind folks at and outside of NIFA, it's not just productivity of our farming system — you've got to worry about the profitability as well," he said. "Anything and everything we can do from a scientific and extension perspective to put a few more dollars in the pockets of our producers."

He expects that priority to continue at NIFA after he departs.

"Absolutely," he said. "These priorities are not any different from anybody else."

A registered independent, Ramaswamy said he approached problems as a scientist. Addressing climate change, and continuing water challenges are all part of that, he said.

"We may disagree on the cause of (climate change), but we know, farmers know that's happening, and it's an existential threat," he said. "Look at the droughts that are happening right now, snowpack in the Cascades and other places — these are really highly concerning. We have to do everything we can, and I guarantee you Secretary Sonny Perdue's focus is on it."

NIFA has also been heavily invested in addressing America's opioid crisis, Ramaswamy said.

Ag Fest to honor 3 groups for their ag efforts

Capital Press

SALEM — Oregon Ag Fest will honor three school groups Sunday, April 29, for their efforts to expand agricultural education in the state.

Receiving first place and a \$1,000 award is the Urban Farm Program at College Hill High School in Corvallis. The Urban Farm gives at-risk freshmen and sophomores a real-life farm and business experience to develop their leadership, teamwork and problem-solving skills. This takes place on a half-acre with 30 laying hens, a farmers' market stand and a student employment program that allows 3-4 students to work and run the urban farm stand from June to August.

Echo FFA will receive the \$600 second-place award for its agricultural advocacy projects, which include partnering with Ag In the Classroom at the elementary schools, ag science activities with the middle school and a petting zoo for the community during FFA week in March.

Receiving the third-place award of \$400 will be the North Powder Farm to School Program, which involves all grades of the school in garden and poultry production. It began nine years ago as a way to bring fresh, local products into the school cafeteria and to teach children the origin of their food. The local food bank also utilizes products from the farm in its weekly food distribution.



The purpose of the Ag Fest Agricultural Education Award is to reward student organizations, nonprofit organizations or classrooms that promote and educate Oregonians about agriculture and extend the Oregon Ag Fest mission beyond its annual, two-day, interactive event.

"As Oregon Ag Fest celebrates 31 years of growing awareness for the importance of agriculture in our communities, we are proud to continue to support the agricultural education outreach efforts of nonprofit and student organizations this year," Jake Wilson, Oregon Ag Fest chairman, said in a press release. "Oregon Ag Fest is dedicated to educating the public about the importance of agriculture, and we see this award as a way to encourage and support student groups that have programs and activities aimed to accomplish the same thing."

The awards ceremony will take place at 1 p.m. Sunday, April 29, on the main stage in the Jackman Long Building at

the Oregon State Fairgrounds during the 31st Annual Oregon Ag Fest. Oregon Department of Agriculture Director Alexis Taylor will present the awards.

The awards ceremony will top off a weekend of agricultural adventures at Ag Fest, which is in its 31st year.

Ag Fest will be at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem at 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, April 28, and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, April 29. Children 12 and under are admitted free and parking is free. Admission is \$9 for ages 13 and over.

All activities center around locally grown products, which allows families to learn about and celebrate the diverse world of Oregon agriculture.

"Our goal is to help kids gain a better understanding of the importance of agriculture to Oregon's rural landscape, and to emphasize that most food starts on a farm somewhere and in Oregon we're lucky enough to grow over 200 varieties of crops," said Wilson, the Ag Fest chairman.

Members of the public can kick off their visit to Ag Fest from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 28, with an old-fashioned ranch-style breakfast. Included are hotcakes, ham, Oregon-grown fruit toppings, scrambled eggs, juice, coffee and milk prepared by Linn County 4-H groups. Cost is \$6 for adults; children under 3 are free. Proceeds from the breakfast provide scholarships for 4-H camp and leader training.

High court grills Washington lawyers on tribal treaty rights

By **DON JENKINS**
Capital Press

Washington's solicitor general faced tough questioning Wednesday from Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch, who said he was "struggling" to accept that other interests can outweigh the treaty rights of 21 Western Washington tribes.

Gorsuch said Washington's appeal of a court order to replace more than 800 fish-impeding culverts "boils down" to whether the state can affect tribal fishing in the pursuit of public benefits. He said he didn't see anything in the treaties that says tribal fishing rights "may be completely eliminated, if necessary, to meet other domestic needs."

"Which is," Gorsuch told

the state's attorney, Noah Purcell, "the position you're taking, I think, before this court."

The questioning came during oral arguments in the latest phase of litigation the Justice Department started in 1970 against the state on behalf of the tribes that signed the Stevens treaties in 1854 and 1855.

A previous phase allocated up to half the fish to tribes. Although the case before the Supreme Court stems from a 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals order to replace culverts, the larger question is to what extent the treaties obligate Washington to protect salmon habitat.

Washington argues that the order to remove culverts makes every "significant human activity" a potential treaty violation, a concern echoed

by farm groups and some other states, including Idaho, that have treaty tribes.

Eight justices are deciding the case. Justice Anthony Kennedy, often a swing vote, recused himself because he participated in a 1985 circuit court ruling regarding the treaties. Gorsuch may play a pivotal role in whether the court reaches a decision or deadlocks. Native American groups endorsed his appointment by President Donald Trump based on his record on the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

At the outset, Purcell acknowledged the state made a mistake when it told the circuit court that it had the right to completely block every salmon-bearing stream. He said the state could not cause a "large decline."

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Standard cab, 24 spd trans, Bareback, 4 remotes, 24.5-32 duals, 8,734-hrs, #0H004622
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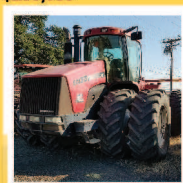
JD 9200
1997
Standard cab, 24 spd trans, 1000 PTO, 4 remotes, 18.4-42 Triples, 11,103-hrs, #0S730647
-Located in Walla Walla

\$55,000



Challenger MT955B
2015
Premium Cab, PS trans, 6 remotes, bareback, 800-42 duals, 2,001-hrs, #NTSG1040
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Case IH STX375
2005
Deluxe cab, PS transmission, 4 remotes, 3pt hitch, no PTO, 620-42 duals, 5,177-hrs, #E0107240
-Located in Salem

\$95,000



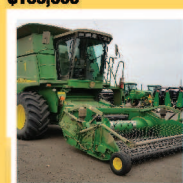
Case IH 435HD
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Deluxe Cab, PS transmission, 5 remotes, bareback, 710-38 duals, 8,734-hrs, #7F108048
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JD 9870
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Sm Grain, Hillico 28% leveler, 635F flex platform and cart, 2,421-hrs, #0S730647
-Located in Moscow

\$275,000



JD 9660
2004
Sm Grain, Bullet Rotor, JD 615P belt pickup platform, 3,479-hrs, #0S706470
-Located in Tangent

\$115,000



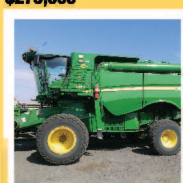
JD S660
2013
Premium Cab, Small wire concave, vari stream rotor, JD 615P BPU platform, 1,263-hrs, #D0755808
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JD 9670
2008
Premium Cab, Small wire concave, JD 615P BPU platform, 3,006-hrs, #0S726053
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\$150,500



JD S680
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JD S680
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-Located in Tekoa

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JD 9870
2009
Rahco 35% leveler, duals, 4WD, straw chopper, 635F platform and cart, 2,335-hrs, #0S730229
-Located in Colfax

\$262,000



JD S680
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