

Griffin Greenhouse Supplies opens Oregon distribution center

By ALIYA HALL
For the Capital Press

SALEM, Ore. — Massachusetts-based Griffin Greenhouse Supplies Inc. is making the move to the West Coast, opening a location in Salem, Ore., this month.

The distribution center is expected to open Sept. 24, and is bringing hard goods and retail products to match their broker presence for West Coast growers.

“Our sales presence in Oregon for a long time was through brokerage. We have a solid customer base and representation,” Tracey Gorrell, marketing communications lead for Griffin, said. “It was a natural fit to bring the next branch to where we already have that customer base and presence.”

Gorrell said the company is primarily known as an ornamental crop broker by the Pacific Northwest customer base, but the distribution center will provide access to the retail side, with which customers may be unfamiliar.

“Now they have access to supplies, equipment and retail products they couldn’t previously get,” she said. “They have access to things like poly film and containers, produc-



Griffin Greenhouse Supplies

Griffin Greenhouse Supplies will open its first West Coast distribution center in Salem, Ore. The facility will bring hard goods and retail products to greenhouse and nursery growers in the region.

tion supplies that are needed to produce ornamental products.”

For nursery retailers, the center will also sell gift and holiday supplies, as well as bird baths.

“The things we’re bringing to the West Coast are more than just plant material,” Gorrell said.

The company is leasing the 24,000-square-foot facility at 3315 Aumsville Highway SE in Salem, which will become Griffin’s 16th branch location, according to the company.

The new Oregon warehouse’s product mix will support both greenhouse growers and nursery owners.

“We understand (nurseries) are a significant segment in the Pacific Northwest,” Gorrell said.

Griffin will also supply specific items and vendors to cater to the needs and preferences of Pacific Northwest growers, such as HC Companies, T.O. Plastics, Premier Tech Horticulture, JR Peters, Syngenta and Lumite.

Gorrell anticipates the Salem branch will house around 1,500 different products when fully stocked.

Griffin has been a family-owned business based in Tewksbury, Mass., for 71 years, specializing in green-

house and nursery production and independent garden centers. In 2012, Griffin acquired Syngenta Horticultural Services that focused on national ornamental brokerage, distributing live goods such as seed, cuttings and young plants. As a national broker and distributor, the company’s annual sales exceed \$200 million.

“The Oregon distribution center fulfills our longtime goal of achieving coast-to-coast coverage with all parts of our product offer,” said Craig Hyslip, chief operating officer at Griffin, in a press release.

The Salem location follows Griffin’s opening of an Aurora, Colo., facility in early 2017. The company also has locations in Connecticut, Illinois, Georgia, Maine, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Virginia.

“We’re looking forward to being a more full service resource to our existing customers, and hoping it will open new doors to customers we haven’t been able to adequately serve,” Gorrell said. “We’re interested in end-to-end solutions with this expansion, and we’re hoping to be a more valuable partner to the accounts in the Northwest.”

Spare wolves, say conservationists who helped write Washington policy

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

Three conservationists who helped form Washington’s wolf policy said Tuesday they oppose the state Department of Fish and Wildlife shooting wolves that are attacking cattle in the same territory where the agency killed seven wolves in 2016 and one last year.

Shooting wolves in the rugged forest formerly occupied by the Profanity Peak and Sherman packs shouldn’t be resorted to annually, and new ways should be found to protect cattle short of removing them from the range, they said.

“We’re OK with lethal removal when we think it’s going to prevent reoccurring issues,” said Conservation Northwest policy director Paula Swedeen, a member of Fish and Wildlife’s Wolf Advisory Group.

Another member of the advisory panel, Stevens County Commissioner Don Dashiell, challenged environmentalists to come up with something new to guard cattle.

“If wolves kill every year, we’re not going to take them out? What’s the logic in that?” he asked. “Lethal removal is the only thing that has stopped depredations. It hasn’t been human presence.”

The Profanity Peak and Sherman packs broke up in 2017, but a new pack of three or four adults and two or three pups killed one calf and injured four others last week in the Kettle River Range, according to Fish and Wildlife. The department confirmed the pack attacked a sixth calf on Tuesday evening, according to sources. The calf survived.

The department’s protocol calls for it to consider killing one or two wolves after three depredations on livestock in 30 days. The confirmed attacks are possibly a fraction of total depredations.

The department on Wednesday afternoon announced plans to cull the pack.

The department is also dealing with depredations by the Togo wolfpack, also in northeast Washington. Fish and Wildlife shot one wolf in the pack Sept. 2. The pack has since injured one calf, according to sources.

The lethal-removal protocol was developed by the

department in meetings with the 18-member Wolf Advisory Group, which includes Swedeen and representatives of other environmental groups. They have been criticized by other environmental organizations for supporting Fish and Wildlife’s use of lethal removal in other cases.

Advisory group members Shawn Cantrell of Defenders of Wildlife and Tim Coleman of the Kettle Range Conservation Group agreed that the department shouldn’t kill wolves in this case. The Defenders of Wildlife and Conservation Northwest issued press releases to announce their positions.

“Our intent is to try to persuade the department,” Cantrell said. “If Fish and Wildlife removes wolves, we’ll have dead wolves and maybe a short-term reduction in depredations, but we’ll be back in the same situation in 2019 if we don’t take a different approach.”

The protocol also calls for the department to consider whether culling a pack will harm overall wolf recovery and whether depredations are likely to continue despite other efforts to protect the herd.

Cattle Producers of Washington President Scott Nielsen said he wasn’t surprised the environmental groups were opposing lethal removal. The cattlemen’s organization withdrew from the Wolf Advisory Group in 2015.

“What’s the point of sitting down again and meeting with them?” he asked. “It’s time for the department to put on big boy pants and do what needs to be done.”

Dashiell has stayed on the Wolf Advisory Group to represent commissioners in the counties with the most wolves. “If the department doesn’t go to lethal removal, collaboration is a lot more of a waste of time than I thought,” he said.

It’s Washington policy to hope wolves will spread out to the rest of the state. Progress has been slow, even as the population grows in the northeast corner. Coleman said shooting wolves in the Kettle River Range will hinder dispersal.

“I think the Kettle Range is proving to be a pinchpoint for migration from the northeast to the West,” he said. “It’s the same problem repeated over and over.”

UI Parma Fruit Field Day showcases research

By BRAD CARLSON
Capital Press

Art and Setsuko Church, who are seeking new varieties for the small-scale fruit operation they run in Weiser, Idaho, had plenty to look at Sept. 7 during the Fruit Field Day the University of Idaho hosted at its pomology orchard and vineyard north of the Parma Research and Extension Center.

Hundreds of people turn out each year at the event to learn about new pomology practices and to sample the many fruits.

Art Church said he’s interested in adding just about any stone fruit that grows well in southwestern Idaho and southeastern Oregon, but especially new cultivars. He’s also interested in pistachios.

He is encouraged by what he has seen of this year’s harvest, now in the late stages. He and Setsuko as of early September continued to harvest melons and had completed stone-fruit harvest.

“It has been a very good year,” Art Church said. Peaches, nectarines and melons look good. Compared to last year, they’re bigger and lack winter damage.



Brad Carlson/Capital Press

Art and Setsuko Church look at table grapes on display at the University of Idaho Parma Fruit Field Day on Sept. 7.

Jerry Henggeler of Henggeler Packing Co. in Fruitland, Idaho, said there was some excess heat this year, “but for the most part, we had very food volume and very good-quality crops.”

Freezes this year were mostly minor, said Henggeler, past president of the Idaho-Oregon Fruit & Vegetable Association.

“We were hit early in apricot and cherry crops,” he said. Those first-blooming crops ended up short in volume, but all others this season fared well — including peaches (many varieties),

plums, pears, apples and nectarines.

Harvest weather has been good so far, without inclement days to slow work, Henggeler said.

A shortage of labor is becoming a serious problem, he said. Mechanization is growing in orchards and packing plants.

Essie Fallahi, UI pomology program director, said horticulture is increasingly important as the world’s population grows.

Scientists, through their own work and in collaboration with peers in different

areas, aim to help growers produce high-quality food in greater volumes at a lower labor cost, he said.

High-density orchards are producing larger fruit of better quality, and using less land and water, due in part to UI-pioneered irrigation advances that apply precise amounts of water a tree needs, Fallahi said. Onions, hops and other crops also are thriving with help from this system, which is efficient and cuts chemical leaching into groundwater.

The field day showcased current research and production advancements; work on the best rootstocks for apples, peaches and nectarines most suitable for the region; tree and fruit irrigation, nutrition and pest management; orchard and canopy research; and alternative crops such as quince, almond, walnut, jujube and haskap.

Fifth-grade students at Parma Middle School also attended.

“It’s a good introduction for the kids to the resources we have,” math teacher Brian Hutton said.

The Idaho town of more than 2,000 is home to many farms and agricultural businesses.

North Cascade grizzly plan apparently on hold

By DAN WHEAT
Capital Press

Federal efforts to reintroduce grizzly bears to Washington’s North Cascade Mountains apparently are on hold and it’s unclear if agencies are evaluating further public comment as they were directed.

“It is our understanding that this proposal will not move forward by the end of September,” Will Boyington, a spokesman for U.S. Rep. Dan Newhouse, R-Wash., told Capital Press on Sept. 10.

In June, Eric Rickerson, Washington state supervisor of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said USFWS and the National Park Service would announce a decision on reintroducing grizzly bears into the North Cascades at the end of September and the decision would be finalized by the end of the year.

On March 23, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke spoke in favor of grizzly recovery at the North Cascades at the NPS office in Sedro Woolley.

On April 12, Newhouse sent Zinke a letter warning of grave impacts to ranchers and residents if grizzlies were brought into the North Cascades and imploring Zinke to

“stop ignoring the local community.”

On July 19, the House passed an Interior appropriations bill including a Newhouse amendment denying funding for Interior to transport grizzlies into the North Cascades.

The Senate passed it with changes and it is now in a House-Senate conference committee.

On Aug. 3, Newhouse said he was pleased with a new statement from the Interior Department that USFWS and NPS are “continuing analysis” of grizzly restoration and, in response to requests from stakeholders and Newhouse, would take “appropriate additional time to consider and evaluate further stakeholder input to inform the planning and decision process.”

The department statement continued: “Public input, reliance on the best available science and coordination with affected communities, agencies and organizations will be critical before any decision is made.”

At that time and still now, Heather Swift, Interior Department press secretary, Rickerson and the NPS North Cascades office have no information about what’s hap-

pening regarding “continuing analysis,” and evaluation of “further stakeholder input.”

Jim DeTro, Okanogan County commissioner, said no one from the agencies has reached out to him or Okanogan County ranchers, that he knows of, for more input.

Sarah Ryan, executive vice president of Washington Cattlemen’s Association, said the association and ranchers remain “adamantly opposed” to the reintroduction of grizzlies and that it would be “great” if the Interior Department totally dropped the effort.

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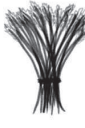
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Weekly fieldwork report

	Ore.	Wash.	Idaho	Calif.
Item/description (Source: USDA, NASS; NOAA)				
• Days suitable for fieldwork (As of Sept. 11)	6.9	6.9	6.9	7
• Topsoil moisture, surplus	0	0	0	0
• Topsoil moisture, percent short	95%	69%	75%	75%
• Subsoil moisture, surplus	0	0	0	0
• Subsoil moisture, percent short	94%	64%	71%	80%
• Precipitation probability (6-10 day outlook as of Sept. 11)	40% Below	40% Below	40% Below	33% Below/Normal

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