

Peterson Trucks acquires Brattain International

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
Capital Press

Western Oregon has a new authorized dealer for International Trucks and IC Bus after Peterson Trucks, based in San Leandro, Calif., acquired Brattain International earlier this month.

The deal includes five locations in Portland, Salem, Eugene, Bend and Albany which were re-branded as Peterson dealerships on Nov. 5.

Brattain International was the longtime dealer for International Trucks and IC Bus — a manufacturer of both commercial buses and school buses — throughout the region.

Peterson Trucks now assumes the mantle, expanding its territory from Northern California.

Tom Bagwell, executive vice president of Peterson Trucks, said the company is investing heavily in parts inventory at each new location. Terms of the deal with Brattain International were not disclosed.

“We know how important this is,” Bagwell said in a statement. “Anywhere we provide truck or bus service we will have an impressive parts inventory, dedicated to turning equipment around fast.”

Peterson Trucks is also

the authorized dealer for Idealease commercial trucks and TrailMax trailers.

The Peterson family of companies is no stranger to the Pacific Northwest. Peterson Cat, the authorized dealer for Caterpillar equipment, has been in Oregon since 2003, and its territory stretches from Longview, Wash., to San Martin, Calif.

Daniel Williams, the company’s marketing manager, said that when Peterson Trucks saw a chance to expand into Oregon and better match the footprint of Peterson Cat, they were eager to make the move.

“From the customer’s perspective, this should be good news,” Williams said. “We have a big territory and a lot of resources that we can bring to help them with their business.”

All former employees of Brattain International were given the chance to apply for jobs at Peterson Trucks, Williams said.

I think the goal was to keep things very seamless, which would include employees,” he said.

In addition to Cat parts and equipment, Williams said the company is an authorized dealer for Agco and Klaus farm equipment, and they are dedicated to continue serving agricultural customers.

Judge blocks Cosmic Crisp information release

By **DAN WHEAT**
Capital Press

COLFAX, Wash. — Proprietary Variety Management, a Yakima company helping Washington State University with commercialization of the Cosmic Crisp apple, has been granted a temporary restraining order blocking release of documents related to its work.

M. Sharon Baker, an Ephrata, Wash., freelance journalist, requested documents regarding marketing plans and finances about the new apple, which is scheduled to reach grocery stores in the fall of 2019.

PVM filed for an injunction in Whitman County Superior Court, in Colfax, to prevent WSU from releasing the documents the company says contains proprietary information that would harm it and WSU if made public.

PVM is seeking an injunction to prevent release of the information under Public Record Act exemptions and the Trade Secrets Act.

Judge Gary Libey granted a temporary restraining order Nov. 9 blocking release until an 11 a.m. Dec. 10 court hearing at which WSU and Baker are asked to show why a preliminary injunction should not be issued. Libey ordered PVM to provide the materials in question to the court by Nov. 16 for his private review.

The WSU Board of Regents is considering whether to fund Cosmic Crisp promotions for four years not to exceed \$10.1 million, including a 3.3 percent PVM administrative fee. The board



Dan Wheat/Capital Press

Washington’s new Cosmic Crisp apple will reach grocery stores next fall. A freelance journalist seeking financial and marketing information about it has been temporarily blocked by a judge at the request of a company promoting the apple.

approved an initial \$614,635 contract with PVM on Oct. 11 to get promotions started, also with a 3.3 percent PVM administrative fee.

The regents won’t be able to hear or discuss information in public that is subject to the restraining order, said Lynnell Brandt, PVM president.

That information includes the framework of a marketing plan that PVM has shared with an industry advisory committee. It includes projections of price-per-box value added by promotions, Brandt said.

Brandt’s declaration to the court states the information includes projected sales and pricing strategies, royalty projections, proposed budgets and marketing methods, techniques and processes known only to PVM. Release “would permanently and significantly damage the competitive interest of PVM, as well as WSU,” the declaration states.

Release would “compromise our ability to follow through with those plans,” Brandt told Capital Press.

“The problem we have is universities are looking to commercial entities to assist them in commercializing new products. The liberal Freedom of Information Act in this state makes it extremely difficult to do that because competitors are then cognizant of plans and timing,” Brandt said. “It takes away the commercial edge to bring a return to the university, the state and to growers. That’s got to change.”

Other states have similar laws that are limited, and commercialization of a product has to be one of those limitations, he said.

WSU said, in a court brief, that it was prepared to release the documents to Baker on Nov. 14 and that it “lacks sufficient knowledge of PVM’s business plans and operations to adequately evaluate whether the marketing plans at issue are proprietary documents or trade secrets.”

Baker declined comment to Capital Press but provided her court response to PVM’s motion for an injunction.

“The information is not proprietary, unique or a trade secret and is not specifically exempted from public discourse under the Public Record Act,” she wrote. “PVM competitors have access to all the same data and will not gain any unnecessary advantage by seeing PVM’s projections.”

“The public has a right to know how PVM is going to spend \$10 million to market the Cosmic Crisp apple and it needs to have the confidence that PVM has the sophisticated marketing expertise to make the Cosmic Crisp a success,” she wrote.

PVM and WSU have never disclosed their contract or how much WSU is paying PVM in fees from royalties. Baker believes those items are not proprietary.

WSU gets a royalty of 4.75 percent of every box of Cosmic Crisp sold at over \$20 per box and a \$1 royalty on every tree sold for planting. Costs of commercialization, including patenting and PVM’s management fee is around 20 percent, James Moyer said in 2017, when he was associate dean of research at WSU’s College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences. He is now retired.

Cosmic Crisp is scheduled for a fast ramp-up. Industry marketers have called it their \$500 million gamble. Retail volume will quickly accelerate from just under 200,000, 40-pound boxes of apples in 2019 to 2.2 million in 2020.



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4-H OFFERS URBAN-RURAL EXCHANGE



Bea Herzberg, Julia Glanz and Lannie Novick learn about rural issues sitting around the dinner table with Ramona and Charley Phillips in Wallowa County.

The 4-H Urban-Rural Exchange program gives 7th and 8th grade students the opportunity to walk a mile in each other’s boots across the rural-urban divide.

During five- to six-day exchanges, the middle schoolers get an understanding of natural resource management issues from both an urban and rural perspective, according to Maureen Hosty, faculty member of Oregon State University Extension Service 4-H youth development. They develop a camaraderie between families and gain a deeper understanding of the environmental, social and economic issues from both perspectives.

Jay Weil, a Portland 8th grader, says the six days he spent in rural Oregon changed his life. He eloquently recounts the impression the trip made on him: “The people were so kind, present and down to earth. It was my home away from home where I could express my feelings and people actually listened instead of nodding while looking at their cell phones.”

The program started in 2006 after an Oregon Fish and Wildlife hearing where urban youth spoke in favor of wolf re-introduction. The Eastern Oregon ranchers didn’t appreciate their take on the problem without knowing about the issues first hand.

“It was a really big deal,” Hosty says. “We decided we needed to do



Mia Bolte gets a lesson in horseback riding during her stay in Klamath County as part of the Urban-Rural Exchange Program.

Photos by Lynn Ketchum and Maureen Hosty

4-H members from the Portland area learn about rural life through hands-on experiences on farms and ranches in Eastern Oregon.



an exchange. We organized the first one with 20 kids going to Grant County. We tap into what’s going on with important issues, both rural and urban.”

The program has been going ever since, with exchanges with Grant, Klamath, Wallowa, Harney, Morrow, Gilliam, Baker and Wheeler counties. During the trips, kids get a taste of what real life is like. In rural situations, they may help with branding, calving, moving irrigation pipe, cleaning out barns, and fixing fences. They go to school and church with their host families.

In Portland, the 4-H youth go on train, trolley and tram rides and hike in Forest Park. They learn about homelessness, recycling and even how to pick up after a dog on a walk. Organizers try to coordinate the visit with the annual Shamrock Run so that the kids get a feeling for a large community event.

Weil says it’s very important for kids to get cultural education. Most people in urban areas don’t realize there is an equal amount of similarities between them and rural communities. “Having this kind of experience in the back of your pocket can help you deconstruct stereotypes that you have about people,” he says.

“I value all the knowledge, philosophical and hands-on, that these wonderful people gave me,” he continued. “When cities and rural communities start bridging the rural divide, great things can happen.”

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