

Port of Lewiston works to diversify

By BRAD CARLSON
Capital Press

Lewis-Clark Terminal is building a small rail-loading facility at the Port of Lewiston.

It's slated for completion by early February.

"It has been a good year," said Scott Zuger, general manager at Lewis-Clark Terminal.

Some facility and market expansion continues at the Port of Lewiston, which has tried to broaden its revenue base since losing oceangoing container business about three years ago. That occurred after container vessels stopped calling on the Port of Portland amid a labor dispute.

"There was definitely a drop in revenue from the loss of container volumes," Port of Lewiston General Manager David Doeringsfeld said. Tonnage exported from the port fell by around 15 percent — most of it



Courtesy Keith Carlson

The Port of Lewiston, Idaho, lost oceangoing containers due to events downstream but still has its grain-barge business, which has seen some expansion.

pulse crops — when the container business stopped.

"The dollar loss was probably, ballpark for just that part of it, about \$450,000 in throughput fees," he said. Taking out associated expenses, the net loss was under \$200,000.

The port extended a dock to receive sawdust and chip barges headed upstream.

Doeringsfeld said that segment now generates nearly \$100,000 in revenue, and little expense.

"And we are continuing to work on break-bulk volumes, he said, "bringing equipment manufactured overseas that is brought to a Columbia River port, put on a barge, offloaded here, put on a truck and taken into the

interior of the U.S."

For the fiscal year that started July 1, the port's budget is around \$1.6 million, down from about \$2 million recently, mainly due to a lack of major port-owned construction projects, he said. Oceangoing containers once occupied chunks of a large storage yard. For now, the yard is not vacant all the time. Large, upstream-bound equipment is stored there as needed.

"At this point, we are not converting that area to any other use," Doeringsfeld said. "We are optimistic containers will come back in the future."

Hong Kong-based Swire Shipping early this year began calling on the Port of Portland for container service. Doeringsfeld said this has been a welcome development but does not impact the Port of Lewiston, the West's most inland seaport, because Swire's capacity is minimal compared to total

demand — and thus filled close to Portland.

"It has to get there somehow," said Todd Scholz, vice president of research and member services for the Moscow, Idaho-based USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council.

Peas, lentils and chickpeas from Idaho, Washington and Montana now get to Seattle or Tacoma ports by truck or train.

"It's more expensive and less efficient," Scholz said. "We need the container ships back." The pulse crops are shipped in bags rather than in bulk.

Pacific Northwest (PNW) Farmers Cooperative, Uniontown Cooperative and CHS Primeland own Lewis-Clark Terminal. PNW also leases a Lewis-Clark Terminal facility where it cleans pulse crops; much of that volume is loaded onto boxcars. PNW has a unit train facility, for hauling single types of commodities directly, near Rosalia, Wash.

Exiting WSU

provost: Ag will remain priority

Bernardo: Years as CAHNRS dean 'highlight of my professional life'

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

Agriculture will remain a top priority at Washington State University after its provost, a former leader of the agricultural college, departs next spring, he says.

Washington State University provost Dan Bernardo announced last week his decision to leave once a replacement is found, slated for the end of the spring semester.



Dan Bernardo

Bernardo served as dean of WSU's College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences from 2005 to 2013, before moving into the provost position.

"Over the past couple of years, I've had a couple signals from my body that I might need to slow down a little bit," Bernardo, 60, told the Capital Press. "This is a job that requires a tremendous amount of effort and energy and I just feel that energy waning a little bit."

Part of the process in selecting a new provost will be finding someone who respects WSU's mission as a land-grant university with strong agricultural programs, Bernardo said.

Bernardo praised current CAHNRS Dean Andre-Denis Wright and WSU President Kirk Schulz.

"I think it's safe to say the food and agriculture industry will remain a high priority for Washington State University," he said.

After his replacement comes on board, Bernardo will work part-time, about 60 percent of his current workload, averaging three days a week. He will serve as a special assistant to Schulz on various projects that would require "constant administrative attention."

"Some of those are projects that I have within my scope now, but unfortunately, I have about 15 of those balls I'm trying to juggle," Bernardo said. "This would allow me to take three or four of them and some others the president might have and just dedicate my attention to those."

The projects for Schulz would likely not have an agricultural connection, he said.

"If there's opportunities or needs, I'm always there to help," he said.

Bernardo recalls his time as dean fondly. He said Wright has the best job at WSU.

"I can probably say that better than anybody, because I've had just about every job at (WSU)," he said with a laugh. "Whatever I can do to support (Wright), the college and the industry, I'll certainly be there for them."

Bernardo also filled in as interim president for a year upon the death of Elson Floyd in 2015 until Schulz was hired. The years as dean of the agricultural college were the highlight of Bernardo's professional life, he said, crediting industry support and relationships with farmers that he says make Washington the envy of just about every other state.

"When you think about a lot of the fractured relationships that we inherited, where we've come over the last two decades is truly amazing," he said. "I just appreciate so much the producers particularly, because that was instrumental. That was the defining achievement, certainly, in my tenure in CAHNRS."

Amalgamated Sugar enters betaine-production venture with Austrian company

By BRAD CARLSON
Capital Press

Amalgamated Sugar Co. recently signed a joint-venture agreement with Vienna-based fruit, starch and sugar enterprise The Agrana Group to build a betaine crystallization plant at Agrana's facility in Tulln, Austria.

Work on the nearly \$40 million project is slated to start in early 2019 and take about a year.

Betaine is a by-product of sugar beets. It is extracted in the sugar production process. The vitamin-rich substance is used as a feed constituent to help animals naturally retain proper water and salt concentrations. It's also used in food supplements, sports drinks and cosmetic products.

Amalgamated Sugar has



Amalgamated Sugar

Amalgamated Sugar has struck a deal with Austrian company Agrana Group to build a betaine plant.

been extracting liquid betaine from sugar beet molasses since 1994. The Boise-based company started producing crystalline betaine in 2005. The Beta Pura joint venture's Austria plant will be the third production

site in the world where natural, high-quality crystalline is produced, Amalgamated said in a news release.

Amalgamated Sugar is a world leader in crystalline betaine technology, company President and

CEO John McCreedy said. "Our growers and company staff are looking forward to working with Agrana in this market. Leveraging the technology developed by our subsidiary company, Amalgamated Research LLC, is an important strategic initiative for our future."

Amalgamated Sugar Communications Specialist Jessica McAnally said the research subsidiary developed the technology to separate betaine from sugar beet molasses, and is one of two companies in the world that can separate and crystallize betaine. Amalgamated Sugar produces liquid betaine at its plants in Twin Falls and Nampa, Idaho. The company produces crystalline betaine in Nampa.

"This allows us to expand into different mar-

kets," she said. "We are hoping to expand in the feed market and also possibly the cosmetics market." She expects the new joint venture to "positively affect the payments we are able to provide our grower-owners."

Amalgamated Sugar parent cooperative Snake River Sugar Co.'s more than 750 members grow sugar beets on more than 180,000 acres in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Amalgamated said it is the second-largest producer of sugar from beets in the U.S. Sugar prices remain at 1980s levels, the American Sugar Alliance reported.

Agrana converts agricultural raw materials into food and other products. The company employs about 8,700 people at 59 sites around the world.

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