



Viticulture

SPECIAL SECTION

INSIDE



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THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE

Young farmers say hardest part is finding land

By **BRAD CARLSON**
Capital Press

Josh Norris, 31, is making his dream of farming a reality, gradually building his land base, controlling his expenses and doing custom farming on the side to bring in added income. “This year, I made it a priority to seek out more

custom work, and that seems to be a good way to try and cash-flow my operation,” the Caldwell, Idaho, farmer said. “That helps me grow — and pay for the equipment required to start up.”

Providing other farmers with services such as planting, disking, roller-harrowing and plowing works for Norris because the 235 leased acres he farms are spread across six smaller parcels he must drive to anyway — and it helps him scout for land he can add to his operation.

“The land that comes up for lease for a beginning farmer is not the most high-quality ground,” he said. “I have given up lower-quality fields to pick up better ground, and that is just a constant process each year.”

No. 1 issue

Land access is the No. 1 challenge facing farmers and ranchers younger than 40, according to a national survey. Participants in the National Young Farmers Coalition survey pegged it as the top issue regardless of location or whether they grew up on a farm or ranch. Land, and access to it, outranked all other concerns, including financial.

“And land access is the number-one reason farmers are quitting agriculture, and the number-one reason preventing farmers from getting started,” said Holly Rippon-Butler, the coalition’s land-access program director.

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Holly Rippon-Butler



Brad Carlson/Capital Press

Josh Norris with his tractor. He takes on custom work to bring in more income.

WSDA: Don’t put CBD from hemp in food

By **DON JENKINS**
Capital Press

Washington’s licensed food processors could lose points off inspection scores if caught adding cannabidiol to their products, state regulators say, adding that hemp’s hottest product has not been approved as an ingredient by the Food and Drug Administration.

The ban on making CBD-infused food and beverages likely

“WE UNDERSTAND THE CAT’S OUT OF THE BAG. HOWEVER, PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW WHAT’S LEGAL. WE NEED TO CLARIFY THAT FOR PEOPLE.”

Steve Fuller, Department of Agriculture’s assistant director for food safety

will affect only a handful of the couple thousand food processors inspected by the state Department of Agriculture’s food-safety division, officials said Monday.

CBD is ostensibly regulated by the FDA, even though demand for CBD candy, honey, beverages and other edibles is helping drive the hemp boom. The department does

not plan to raid stores.

“We understand the cat’s out of the bag,” said Steve Fuller, the department’s assistant director for food safety. “However, peo-

ple want to know what’s legal. We need to clarify that for people.”

The department’s policy also prohibits food warehouses licensed by the agriculture department from distributing CBD-infused food and drink to in-state retailers. The products can be sent out-of-state.

“We’re not regulating interstate commerce, but we are regulating

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Alleged marijuana damage to grapes ruled plausible

Racketeering lawsuit filed by vineyard to move forward

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

A federal judge has ruled that an Oregon vineyard has plausibly alleged harm from a neighboring marijuana operation and may proceed with a racketeering lawsuit against it.

U.S. Senior District Judge Anna Brown has denied the marijuana-growing neighbor’s motion to dismiss the complaint, finding that Momtazi Vineyard has legal standing under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act to pursue the case.

The vineyard has plausibly claimed under RICO that it’s suffered a “concrete financial loss” because a customer canceled an order over fears the grapes were contaminated with the smell of marijuana, the judge said.

“The customer’s concerns, whether valid or invalid, arose

directly from the proximity of defendants’ marijuana-grow operation,” Brown wrote in the 20-page opinion.

The defendants — Mary and Steven Wagner, along with their son Richard — had argued that Momtazi’s allegations of lost grape sales, reduced grape marketability and reduced property rental

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