

Subscribe to our weekly dairy or livestock email newsletter at CapitalPress.com/newsletters

Dairy

Large dairy's expansion plan approved in SW Idaho

By **BRAD CARLSON**
Capital Press

The Canyon County Planning and Zoning Commission on Oct. 17 approved a conditional-use permit allowing southwest Idaho's SunRidge Dairy to expand its waste handling system and in turn its cattle headcount, to 5,700 from the current 5,400.

The 510-acre facility is at 4910 Dry Lake Road, Nampa.

The commission authorized SunRidge to add two lagoons, two manure storage ponds and a composting area to its existing Confined Animal Feeding Operation, and to increase cow headcount by 300. Conditional-use permits and variances do not need Board of County Commissioners approval.

Matthew Thompson, waste-management engineer with Twin Falls-based AgTech, said in a letter to

Canyon County planners that SunRidge wants to add young stock, and be permitted for 3,000 milking cows as well as 2,700 head of dry cows and replacements. Proposed changes are not expected to increase employment.

The existing waste-handling system has adequate capacity for normal years, "but there are some limitations in the current design that have caused some excessive costs to the operation during bad-weather periods that the owners would like to change," he wrote. "The requested changes would allow the facility to better handle and distribute wastewater during especially bad-weather periods to minimize impacts to the environment and the neighborhood."

A report by county planners said the SunRidge Dairy expansion must comply with an Idaho State Department of Agriculture nutrient-man-



Brad Carlson/Capital Press

Part of SunRidge Dairy south of Nampa, Idaho.

agement plan approved in December 2018; mitigation steps and best-management practices identified in an August 2019 report by a CAFO siting team that included ISDA and state Department of Environmental Quality staff; state animal-handling, stock water and water-rights rules; and

county setback and other building requirements.

Dairy is a major contributor to the economy of the state, where about 70% of milk produced is made into cheese, ISDA said.

DairyWest, which promotes the industry and its products, estimates the industry employs more than

22,700 people in the state in producing, processing, transporting and distributing milk and milk products. Allied industries employ an additional 13,400 such as feed and equipment suppliers and the animal health segment.

Thompson, in his letter to Canyon County planners, said every dollar of cheese sales generates about \$2.47 in sales directly and indirectly in the state's economy. SunRidge generates enough milk to produce about 8.7 million pounds of cheese annually.

The University of Idaho reported the state in 2018 ranked third in the U.S. for milk production, with 15 billion pounds of output. Milk was the top source of cash receipts — \$2.4 billion — from agricultural production in the state. The state's milk-cow inventory was about 600,000 head at the start of 2018.

DAIRY MARKETS

Lee Mielke



Traders push cheese prices skyward

By **LEE MIELKE**
For the Capital Press

Traders appeared to ignore last week's bearish September Milk Production and Cold Storage reports and took the Cheddar blocks to a Friday close at \$2.1225 per pound, up 15.5 cents on the week and 60.75 cents above a year ago.

The barrels caught fire last week and closed at \$2.25, up 25 cents on the week, primarily on unfilled bids, the highest barrel price since Sept. 26, 2014, and \$1 per pound above a year ago. Twenty-one cars of block traded hands last week at the CME and only 9 of barrel, all on Friday morning.

The blocks added 2 cents Monday and a penny Tuesday, climbing to \$2.1525. The barrels inched a quarter-cent higher Monday and stayed there Tuesday at \$2.2525, an inverted 10 cents above the blocks.

Midwest cheesemakers continue to report a lack of spot milk, says Dairy Market News, but are keeping a close eye on how much to take on due to production capacity and potential resale concerns. Demand reports continue to be steady but slower than a few weeks ago, and inventories in the region are "mostly in balance."

Western cheese output is active and cheese demand is "steady, but not phenomenal." Holiday orders are starting to come but are not impressive. Some contacts suggest that government purchases could be helping support cheese prices. Fiscal 2019 purchases of cheese products are up about 14% from 2018 and processed cheese buys are up nearly 40%.

CME butter fell to \$2.0575 per pound last Thursday but closed Friday at \$2.06, down 5.5 cents on the week and 17.25 cents below a year ago on 13 sales.

Monday's butter jumped 2.25 cents and it inched a half-cent higher Tuesday, creeping to \$2.0875.

Cream is slightly less available in the Central region and some suggest it may soon be out of reach for churning. Demand is steady, meeting seasonal expectations, but market tones are, relative to their typical steadfastness, "slightly in flux."

Analysts tell DMN they expect a slightly bearish 2020 butter market as higher imports and stocks put a bearish slant on the overall tone. Still, butter is expected to remain in its range-bound status.

Retail butter orders in the West have been strong the past days, says DMN, but stockrooms are full and, so far, incoming orders for the holiday seem lower than usual. Butter output is steady to up a bit due to readily accessible and reasonably priced cream.

FC Stone points out that 2019 will likely mark the 7th year that National Dairy Product Sales butter prices have averaged above \$2.00.

Grade nonfat dry milk closed Friday at \$1.1525 per pound, down 1.75 cents on the week but 28.5 cents above a year ago.

Monday's powder was unchanged but it gained a half-cent Tuesday, climbing to \$1.1575.

Cream of the crop: Oregon cheese named best in the world

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
Capital Press

CENTRAL POINT, Ore. — A Southern Oregon creamery was the cream of the crop at the 2019 World Cheese Awards in Italy.

Rogue River Blue, an artisan blue cheese made by Rogue Creamery in Central Point, Ore., was crowned the world's best cheese by a panel of 260 judges from 25 countries at the annual competition Oct. 18.

David Gremmels, president of Rogue Creamery, created the recipe for the cheese in 2002, capturing regional flavors of the Rogue Valley. The milk comes from pasture-fed Holstein and Brown Swiss cows raised at the creamery's own organic dairy, and the cheese is hand-wrapped in organic Syrah



Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press File

David Gremmels, owner of the Rogue Creamery in Central Point, Ore., took over the company in 2002 with partner Cary Bryant. The company has since won international acclaim.

grape leaves from Cowhorn Vineyard & Garden in nearby Jacksonville, Ore.

The grape leaves are also soaked in a pear liqueur made by Organic Alcohol Co. in Ashland, prior

to wrapping each wheel of Rogue River Blue.

"The flavor of this cheese really captures the terroir of our valley," Gremmels said. "It's an expression of the milk, of our pastures, of the

vines as well as the orchards."

Gremmels said he was humbled and filled with gratitude for the global recognition. More than 3,800 cheeses from 41 countries were entered into this year's World Cheese Awards, held in Bergamo, Italy, during the city's FORME cheese festival.

Both Rogue River Blue and a 24-month aged Parmigiano Reggiano from Italy received perfect scores of 100 points from the judges. Nigel Barden, a food broadcaster and chairman of the judging panel, cast the deciding vote for Rogue River Blue. It is the first time a U.S. cheese has won the top award.

"This is a cheese made with passion by the entire team here at Rogue Creamery," Gremmels said. "It's

worth every bit of work we put into the cheese."

Rogue River Blue also received the award for best blue cheese at the 2003 World Cheese Awards in London. U.S. cheeses received 131 honors at this year's competition, including 17 gold, 40 silver, 67 bronze and seven "super gold" medals.

Angelique Hollister, executive director of the USA Cheese Guild, said markets worldwide are discovering the quality of U.S. cheese.

"We put a concerted effort into raising the profile of U.S. cheese by telling our story," Hollister said in a statement. "And the global community has embraced what sets us apart — our legacy of excellence, forged from experience, but unbound by tradition."



JOHN DEERE

JohnDeere.com/6M
JohnDeere.ca/6M

We didn't just design the
6M Series Tractors with you in mind.
We designed them with you by our side.

Before we even hit the drawing board, we talked with farmers, fleet owners and more to learn what they need in a mid-size utility tractor.

Visit your **John Deere dealer** to experience the tractor you designed—with more visibility, better maneuverability and more options to fit your needs.

The 6M.
Reimagined by you. For you.

John Deere Dealers

See one of these dealers for a demonstration

Belcorp Ag, LLC
Modesto, CA

Campbell Tractor & Implement
Fruitland, ID
Homedale, ID
Nampa, ID
Wendell, ID

Papé Machinery
Four Lakes, WA
Madras, OR
Merrill, OR
Moscow, ID
Ponderay, ID
Tangent, OR
Tekoa, WA
Walla Walla, WA

RDO Equipment Co.
Pasco, WA

Stotz Equipment
American Falls, ID

Tri-County Equipment
Enterprise, OR

Washington Tractor, Incorporated
Chehalis, WA
Ellensburg, WA
Lynden, WA
Quincy, WA

 **JOHN DEERE**

5150007-1