



IN GOOD COMPANY

Agribusinesses help farmers deal with changing climate

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

Farmers have always been at the mercy of Mother Nature, but climate change has made her an unpredictable partner.

Less snowpack to provide irrigation water, scorching heat, longer droughts, drenching rainfall and catastrophic flooding are all occurring more frequently around the world as minor increases in global temperatures set off major shifts in the predictability of weather.

“There’s no such thing as an average year, but the swings are getting more extreme for most farmers,” said Andy Knepp, head of environmental strategy and industry activation for Bayer AG.

Broadly speaking, weather is much less predictable for farmers, he said.

“Adapting to changes is critically important to them in their operations. Ultimately, we’re really looking at how do



Andy Knepp



A Bayer employee looks at field data with a customer in this pre-COVID 19 photo. Bayer

we help them stay in business,” he said.

Around the world, agribusinesses are pouring resources into innovations and technology that will help farmers and ranchers survive — and thrive — as the

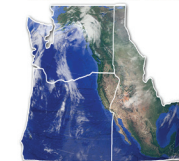
climate changes. New hybrids of crops, new chemistries aimed at the shifting populations of pests and technology that will allow farmers to fine-tune their strategies on the fly are all being added

to producers’ toolboxes.

Companies are even helping to develop a new market for carbon credits that farmers will be able to cash in.

At Bayer, Knepp said research-and-development has shifted into high gear to produce higher-yielding crops that perform under extreme conditions — whether it’s drought, disease, pest pressure, changes in the duration of the cropping season or the expansion of cropping areas. The company is also developing better crop protection products, he said.

Climate



Changed

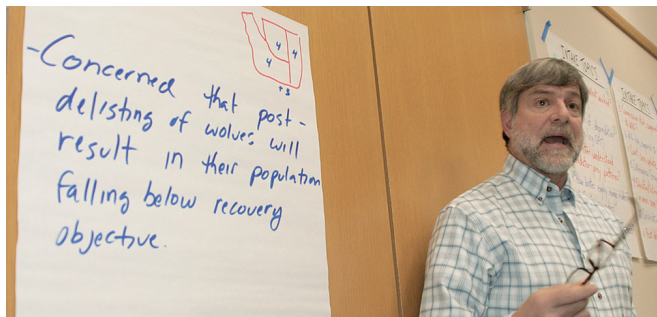
Another focus is putting more information at farmers’ fingertips through digital technology to help them make more informed decisions. That includes information on soils, weather and Bayer’s

See Climate, Page 9



A tractor rolls on Simplot’s Grandview Farm in Southern Idaho. Simplot and other companies are developing tools to help farmers cope with a changing climate. Simplot

Wolf czar appointment roils cattlemen



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Steve Pozzanghera will temporarily step aside as director of the Eastern Region of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to oversee wolf management in northeast Washington.

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

Wolf management in northeast Washington will be overseen this summer by Fish and Wildlife Eastern Region Director Steve Pozzanghera, a choice the president of a rancher’s group said ignores a troubled history between the department and cattlemen.

Pozzanghera will temporarily step aside as regional director, a position he’s had

for a decade. He said he will coordinate the work of wildlife conflict specialists and wolf biologists and be the liaison between the department and the community in four counties.

The department plans to make the position permanent later this year and hire someone else as Pozzanghera resumes being regional director.

“I’m test driving it,” Pozzanghera said Monday. “I’m just hoping to create some

efficiencies where we can.”

Pozzanghera, picked for the new post by Fish and Wildlife Director Kelly Susewind, comes with baggage, said Stevens County Cattleman’s Association President Scott Nielsen, who called the appointment a “slap to ranchers.”

He said Fish and Wildlife needs to communicate better with livestock producers, but missed an opportunity by appointing an architect of the department’s past actions.

“I think they would have been a lot better off with a fresh face,” Nielsen said. “I think Steve will be a complete and utter failure at improving relations with ranchers. But, hey, having said that, Steve can prove me wrong.”

The appointment was a surprise to the Washington Cattlemen’s Association, said Mark Streuli, acting executive vice president.

See Wolf, Page 9

‘Whistleblower’ allegedly helped unravel NORPAC deal

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

The Oregon Potato Co. claims information from a “whistleblower” at the NORPAC cooperative was the “last straw” that sank its deal to buy most of the bankrupt processor’s assets.

A top executive at NORPAC warned of dealings between the cooperative and Simplot, a rival processor, that threatened to diminish the agreement’s profitability for Oregon Potato Co., according to OPC’s vice president in court filings.

The allegation is the latest twist in ongoing bank-



Capital Press File

Workers at NORPAC Foods prepare onions for processing. A deal to sell most of the bankrupt cooperative’s assets was allegedly sunk by a “whistleblower,” the buyer says.

ruptcy proceedings that will determine how much money is repaid to NORPAC’s creditors — including farmers who are demanding payments for

last year’s crops.

At the time NORPAC Foods filed for bankruptcy last year, the Oregon Potato Co. had planned to buy most of its facilities,

equipment and inventory for \$155.5 million.

However, agribusiness entrepreneur Frank Tieg, the owner of Oregon Potato Co., pulled out of the deal shortly before competing bids for the assets were due.

A committee representing unsecured creditors — who don’t have collateral for loans — is seeking to file a lawsuit on NORPAC’s behalf, alleging Tieg’s withdrawal from the deal in “bad faith” to drive down the sale price.

These creditors claim they’ll be able to recover additional funds that NORPAC can use to repay the money they’re owed.

Oregon Potato Co. is now urging a bankruptcy judge to deny permission for the unsecured creditors to file such a complaint because their accusations are “baseless” and will only result in “expensive and futile” litigation.

Unsecured creditors shouldn’t now be allowed to pursue a lawsuit that would be paid for with NORPAC’s remaining cash since “there will be no upside recovery — only downside in the form of legal bills at New York City rates,” according to OPC in its filings.

To bolster its argument,

See NORPAC, Page 9

