



**LEFT:** Mathilde Aurélien Wilson, who owns the Haitian food business Mathilde's Kitchen, brews hibiscus tea in Community Co-Pack NW's kitchen at The Redd, Portland. **RIGHT:** Regino Flores of Regino Farms.  
Photos: Community Co-Pack NW; Puget Sound Food Hub Co-op

By BRAD CARLSON  
Capital Press

**B**OISE — Dave Krick talks with his employees at his three contiguous restaurants in downtown Boise on a late December afternoon during the post-lunch lull. "I don't want to do the same thing twice," said Krick of his restaurants, each of which serves different menus. "I like the challenge of building something different and the spirit of things being unique."

Another challenge he has overcome is getting more local food to his customers. Restaurateurs, farmers and others are finding that food hubs — which serve as clearinghouses for produce, meat and other foods — along with reimaged farmers markets can help.

#### A FARE deal

Krick is president of the board of the Idaho Independent Food, Agriculture, Restaurant and Beverage Alliance, which formed in spring 2020. The nonprofit, known as FARE Idaho, helps local farmers and independent food buyers connect in new ways, and identify challenges, such as livestock processing delays, a recent focus.

"We've created a trade association that connects the

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# Local FOOD

## Hubs, markets spell success for small farms



**Come Thru Market, a farmers market centering on Black and Indigenous vendors, has gathered at The Redd Plaza in Portland summers since 2020.**  
Noah Thomas

# Landowners fined for illegal marijuana growers' violations

By SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN  
Capital Press

EAGLE POINT, Ore. — Jackson County Code Enforcement is fining a Southern Oregon cattle and hay ranching couple \$150,000 for land use violations committed on their farm by an illegal marijuana grower who allegedly posed as

an industrial hemp grower when he leased their land.

The couple, Jerry Wetzel, 78, and Gloria Wetzel, 76, plan to appeal, saying they did not know the tenant lacked licenses and that the tenant claimed to be growing legal hemp.

Land use experts say cases like this are common statewide, especially in Southern

Oregon.

According to Jackson County Sheriff Nate Sickler, the county is "finding many land leasers have been less than honest with the property owners about what they are cultivating, as well as what permitting and licensing have been obtained."

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Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press

**Jerry Wetzel, 78, is a longtime cattle rancher and hay grower in Southern Oregon.**

# What defines U.S. 'waters'? EPA committee offers its input

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS  
Capital Press

The Environmental Protection Agency's Farm, Ranch and Rural Communities Advisory Committee on Friday submitted a list of recommendations to administrator Michael Regan on the intended revision of the definition of Waters of the

United States. "A clear and consistent definition of WOTUS is critically important to America's farmers, ranchers, and rural communities," the committee said.

The evolution of the definition of WOTUS has been a source of confusion and concern for American agriculture for several decades.

The "nexus" test in the 1986 rule made the definition elusive as farmers and ranchers attempted unsuccessfully to prove otherwise against federal agencies that had already determined jurisdiction, the committee said.

The agencies significantly expanded their interpretation of the jurisdictional authority provided

under the 2015 rule in a system that was neither beneficial for farmers or ranchers or the environment, the committee said.

"American agriculture appreciated the clarity the 2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule provided. Many features were retained within federal jurisdiction, but it was workable for farmers,

ranchers and rural communities," the committee said.

The committee submitted four recommendations to the agency.

- Adhere to Clean Water Act and relevant Supreme Court precedent in cases that reinforce Congress-placed limits on the scope of federal

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