



'STILL AMBITIOUS'

Inside Anderson Ranches' sheep farm and its rise to success

By SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN
Capital Press

BROWNSVILLE, Ore. — With Easter two weeks away, the Anderson family is preparing for one of its busiest times of the year.

The Andersons run a grass-fed sheep farm in Oregon, and Easter weekend marks peak season for lamb consumption in the U.S.

"The two weeks before Easter are our biggest push," said Reed Anderson, 62, a fourth-generation farmer and owner of Anderson Ranches. "We're rockin' and rollin'."

For decades, many Americans have eaten lamb only around Easter, Christmas and in white-tablecloth restaurants, but that is changing. The pandemic fueled in-home gourmet cooking, boosting lamb's popularity. Per capita consumption is the highest it's been in decades, and lamb prices have broken



Amanda Jae Photography

The Anderson family. Back row, left to right: Jake, Jessica, Reed, Robyn, Knox, Jessica, Travis. Front row, left to right: Abigail, Scarlett, Dean.

records. The overlooked protein is having a renaissance.

"It's a really positive time," said Robyn Anderson, 59, Reed's wife, who runs the

bookkeeping side of the business.

Anderson Ranches is one of the largest and best-known sheep operations in the Northwest, with sprawling acreage

across the southern Willamette Valley near Brownsville.

"It would be really hard to find a fine dining establishment in Seattle or Portland where they're not on the menu," said Megan Wortman, executive director of the American Lamb Board. "They have just been so successful."

The business is also a rare example of a sheep operation that's vertically integrated, with both a farm and meat processing plant.

Getting to this point has taken many years and many hands.

Shearer and shepherdess

Robyn and Reed Anderson both came from sheep backgrounds.

They met in high school. Reed, 18, was shearing sheep for someone Robyn's dad worked for. Robyn, 15, was helping with lambing. They soon started dating and married three years later.

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Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press

Anderson Ranches sheep.

Farm groups take fight for chlorpyrifos to Midwest court

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

A chemical company and 19 farm groups, including the American Farm Bureau, are suing in a Midwest federal appeals court to overturn the Environmental Protection Agency's ban on the pesticide chlorpyrifos on all food crops.

Gharda Chemicals International, the largest supplier of chlorpyrifos products in the U.S., and the farm groups claim the ban is too broad and that the EPA ignored its own science.

They seek to at least keep the pesticide legal on 11 crops in select states, including strawberries in Oregon and apples, alfalfa,

sugar beets in Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

The EPA identified the crops and geographic areas in 2020, proposing to reduce exposure to chlorpyrifos by limiting the pesticide to "high-benefit" crops. The EPA estimated alternatives to chlorpyrifos would cost apple growers \$51 an acre.

Instead of narrowing uses, the EPA banned chlorpyrifos on all food, effective Feb. 28, capping a legal and scientific battle that began in 2007 when two advocacy groups petitioned the agency to ban the pesticide.

Chlorpyrifos has been used in U.S. agriculture since 1965 and is registered for more than 50 uses.



The suit argues EPA should have evaluated the uses separately.

"If all tolerances must rise or fall together, EPA would have to revoke all tolerances for any pesticide every time it concluded an individual tolerance was unsafe. That makes no sense," according to the lawsuit.

Douglas County, Wash., tree fruit orchardist April Clayton said March 23 that her farm used chlorpyrifos to attack leafy hop-

per and mealybug, the insects that cause little cherry virus and Western X.

Chlorpyrifos was used before bees were in the orchards or fruit was on the trees, she said. "This product isn't actually going to be sprayed on the food," she said.

Chlorpyrifos rotated with other pesticides to keep the bugs from building up resistance, she said. "Losing this tool will be a burden," she said.

In response to the new lawsuit, the EPA said it didn't have time to finalize its tentative proposal to confine chlorpyrifos to 11 crops. The agency was under a deadline set by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to ban chlorpyrifos or

declare it safe.

The EPA notes in court documents that the agricultural industry did not rush to embrace the 11-crop limit.

Some groups, such as cranberry and banana farmers, wanted to be included, and no chemical company volunteered to cancel other uses, according to the EPA.

"In order to retain those 11 uses, all other uses would need to be cancelled," stated Timothy Kiely, deputy director for the EPA's Pesticide Re-evaluation Division, in a court declaration.

Beginning in the Obama administration, the EPA resisted pressure

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Judge refuses to block grazing in six Eastern Oregon pastures



Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press File
The Mark O. Hatfield U.S. Courthouse in Portland, Ore.

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

PORTLAND — A federal judge has denied a temporary restraining order sought by environmental groups that would block grazing in six Eastern Oregon pastures.

U.S. District Judge Michael Simon said the environmental plaintiffs haven't shown that turning cattle out on the pastures will cause irreparable harm to sage grouse or to rangeland research.

Continued grazing isn't likely to irreparably harm the ability of environmental plaintiffs to enjoy undis-

turbed sagebrush grassland, since the pastures have long been grazed and are commonly rested on a rotating basis, he said.

Any hardship suffered by the environmental nonprofits is also "minimal" compared to the harm that a temporary restraining order would cause Cahill Ranches near Adel, Ore., which relies on an affected pasture to turn out cattle, the judge said.

"Several families' livelihoods depend on Cahill, which in turn depends on the ability to use public lands for its livestock operations," said Simon, noting that the public interest also doesn't weigh in favor of

a temporary restraining order.

Six other ranches are also seeking to intervene in the case, which was filed against the U.S. Bureau of Land Management by the nonprofits Oregon Natural Desert Association, Audubon Society of Portland and Defenders of Wildlife.

Aside from seeking a temporary restraining order to stop cattle from being turned out on six pastures in April, the environmental plaintiffs have requested a broader preliminary injunction against grazing on a total of 13 Oregon pastures.

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