

Oregon Hop Field Day highlights new facilities, technology

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
Capital Press

A cloud of dust kicked up from the gravel road as Chuck Weaver piloted a six-rotor drone over rows of leafy hop plants at BC Hop Ranch near Woodburn, Ore.

About 90 people watched from the ground as the drone dispensed its payload, airdropping tiny predatory mites known as *Neoseiulus californicus* that feed on a host of crop-munching pests, including the nefarious two-spotted spider mite.

The demonstration, part of the Oregon Hop Commission's annual field day event on July 15, was meant to show how some growers are embracing biological controls to manage harmful insects, while relying less on chemical pesticides.

"Biocontrol is not a new thing, but it's seeing a revitalization," said Tyler Leidig, regional sales representative for Biobest Sustainable Crop Management, which led the demonstration. "There's no more chemicals coming into the market. Growers are running out of options."



George Plaven/Capital Press

Chuck Weaver prepares a drone to fly over rows of hop plants at BC Hop Ranch in Woodburn, Ore., dropping predatory mites as a biological control to manage harmful pests.

Founded in 1987, Biobest originally provided bumblebees on farms to improve pollination before expanding into other types of beneficial bugs. The company now has 1,800 employees working in more than 70 countries, with U.S. head-

quarters in Michigan.

Using drones to release the predatory mites ensures even coverage throughout the field, Leidig said. He recommended three applications to control spider mites in hops — once in late June at the first sign of the insects' presence, followed by a second four weeks later, and third three weeks before harvest.

"Preventative is the way to go with biocontrol," he said. "It's another tool in the toolbox."

The visit to BC Hop Ranch was one stop during the daylong tour that featured several farms along the Mid-Willamette Valley.

Michelle Palacios, Oregon Hop Commission administrator, said the theme of this year's gathering was to spotlight how growers are improving their operations by investing in new facilities, equipment and technology.

"It's all about quality and consistency," Palacios said.

At Scenic Valley Farms north of Salem, farm manager Brian Zielinski showed off their mechanical hop picker and dryer that sat idle inside a converted hay shed, await-

ing next month's harvest when the behemoth system will spring to life.

Zielinski said the farm only began growing 100 acres of hops in 2016, adding to their diversity of crops. Scenic Valley Farms is perhaps most noted for its vineyards and winery.

"The learning curve has been steep, but it's been awesome," Zielinski said of producing hops. "I feel less nervous every year we go in (to harvest)."

Once hops are harvested from the field, they are fed into the automated picker, carried along a twisting maze of hooks, conveyors and trommels that separate cones from the bines. From there, the cones are sent to one of four kilns for drying.

While Zielinski said the farm will remain a relatively small producer of hops, he estimated the equipment could allow them to double their acreage.

Another significant upgrade was recently completed last summer at Crosby Hop Farm in Woodburn, where the fifth-generation family farm built a new 18,000-square-foot cooling and baling facility to

accommodate increased acreage.

Blake Crosby, farm president and CEO, said the facility can handle up to 1,000 acres. The farm currently grows 600 acres.

"Having too much space is never a bad thing," he said.

Overall, hop acreage strung for harvest this year is down 2% across the Northwest compared to 2021, according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. That includes decreases in Washington, from 43,783 acres to 42,428 acres, and in Idaho, from 9,694 acres to 9,440 acres.

Oregon, however, is experiencing a slight bump in acres, from 7,395 to 8,028. Palacios said Oregon actually had more than 8,000 acres in the ground in 2021, though it takes an extra year for the crop to become established due to a cooler climate.

A cooler, wetter spring than normal could delay the start of this year's harvest, Palacios said, though it appears the plants are looking healthy.

"We expect a quote-unquote normal harvest," she said.

Trade regulators decide against tariffs on UAN

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

Urea ammonium nitrate shipments from Russia and Trinidad haven't harmed U.S. fertilizer manufacturers enough to justify retaliatory tariffs on the imports, according to federal trade regulators.

The U.S. International Trade Commission has unanimously agreed that UAN imports from those countries have not "materially injured" the domestic fertilizer industry, precluding the federal government from imposing anti-dumping duties on the products.

The agency began investigating UAN imports last year after receiving a complaint from CF Industries, a major U.S. nitrogen producer that argued excessive UAN imports had unfairly driven down prices for the popular fertilizer.

However, the company's petition was opposed by certain fertilizer distributors, which claimed CF Industries is an "unreliable supplier" that's largely responsible for its own problems in the domestic market.

Several agricultural organizations also spoke out against retaliatory tariffs on UAN, fearing such measures would further drive up fertilizer prices that are already surging and eating into farm profits.

"If these duties are finally imposed, production costs to farmers across the country for corn, soybeans, cotton, wheat, and other crops will increase for the next planting season and beyond," the American Farm Bureau Federation said in a letter to regulators.

Despite such concerns, the petition for tariffs initially made headway with federal trade regulators, with the U.S. International Trade Commission initially finding there's a "reasonable indication" domestic nitrogen manufacturers are hurt by UAN from Russian and Trinidad.

The U.S. Department

of Commerce, which also evaluates trade complaints, determined that tariffs of up to 123% were warranted because Russia and Trinidad subsidized UAN production and dumped the fertilizer onto the U.S. market below fair market values.

For countervailing and antidumping duties to become final, however, the U.S. International Trade Commission would have to determine that imports have materially injured domestic manufacturers. The reasons for the commission's negative determination will be released in a report next month.

International Raw Materials, a large fertilizer distributor, argued that CF Industries only experienced a short-term reduction in profits in 2020 — which wasn't caused by imported UAN — and the company has since "rebounded spectacularly."

A global shortage of UAN has the company "printing money" while imports are necessary to serve relatively remote coastal markets, since CF Industries is focused on more profitable Midwestern markets that are closer to its manufacturing base, according to IRM.

Under federal law, trade regulators cannot cite the current profitability or improved fortunes of CF Industries to determine that it hasn't been materially injured in recent years, the company claimed.

Imports from Russia and Trinidad, rather than weather disruptions and depressed commodity prices, caused an "overhang" of UAN supplies that harmed CF Industries, the company said.

Without massive UAN imports from Russia and Trinidad, "the domestic industry's production, U.S. shipments, prices, profits and profitability would have been materially greater during full-year 2021, as well as in 2019 and 2020," the company said.

Meat, poultry markets see tight supplies, strong demand

By **CAROL RYAN DUMAS**
Capital Press

Limited supply growth of beef, pork and poultry and steady demand have bolstered U.S. meat prices by double-digit percentages.

Both spot market supplies and freezer inventories are below pre-pandemic levels, and retail meat and poultry prices were 18% higher in May compared to a year earlier.

The combination of tight supplies and solid demand kept meat prices 20% higher than the five-year average for the March-May period, CoBank said in its latest quarterly report.

But inflation is now the key risk to meat and poultry consumption and strong sales at the retail meat counter.

"When producers have stronger balance sheets, they usually expand capacity. Recession fears and higher input costs and interest rates are limiting that," Brian Earnest, CoBank lead economist for animal protein, said in the report.

In the beef sector, cow culling remains elevated as cattle ranchers and feeders grapple with drought, poor pasture conditions and high corn and hay prices, he said.

"Poor grazing and forage conditions and high hay prices have been especially taxing on cow-calf operators, as have higher input costs across the board," he said.

Despite historically strong cattle prices, beef cow slaughter was 16% higher year over year in May and up 18% from the five-year average, he said.

"Beef prices continue to benefit from strong demand both from domestic and foreign markets, even though prices followed the typical seasonal trend lower in recent weeks," he said.

Total beef slaughter was up 2% year over year for the first five months of 2022, and exports to key destina-



USDA

Retail meat prices continue to increase as supply can't keep up with demand.



Associated Press File

The retail prices of beef and other meats continue to increase.

tions such as Korea, Japan and China have contributed to market optimism. A surge of lean trim beef imports has assisted in keeping ground beef prices in check, he said.

After making a strong run to end 2021, fed cattle prices have largely flattened in recent months. However, cost of gain for feedlot operators has risen considerably, further complicating operational efficiencies, he said.

"We expect this will continue through the fall period. Although packer margins have compressed consider-

ably over the last 12 months, they remain elevated from a historical perspective," he said.

As a result of elevated packer margins and depressed cattle prices, interest in expanding capacity is swelling at a time when upstream cattle economics are under severe pressure.

"Over the next 12-18 months, declining cattle supplies are expected to converge with excess capacity, which should contribute to more favorable conditions for producers," he said.

In the pork sector, producers remain challenged by porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS), higher input costs, domestic regulations and shifting export markets.

"However, pork prices remain well supported, and the wholesale cutout enjoyed a 30% premium to the five-year January-June average," he said.

Between PRRS, a declining breeding inventory and high feed costs, market hog supplies should be tight well into 2023, he said.

In the poultry arena, the broiler layer flock is showing moderate contraction and was down 2% year over year in the most recent USDA chicken and eggs report.

"Hot weather, tight supplies and a potential consumer shift away from higher-priced beef cuts all suggest chicken prices will remain strong throughout 2022," he said.

Turkey and egg markets have been roiled by highly pathological avian influenza, with the loss of roughly 40 million commercial birds. Egg prices skyrocketed ahead of Easter and fresh tom breast meat eclipsed the \$6 a pound threshold, previously considered unattainable, he said.

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Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 07/25/2022. The sale will be held at 10:00am by
COPART OF WASHINGTON INC
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR
2013 NISSAN FRT 4D
VIN = 1N6AD0CW8DN763074
Amount due on lien \$1535.00
Reputed owner(s)
SHERRYL LEIGH MOORE

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PREMIER TOWING & RECOVERY
305 JEFFERSON ST SILVERTON, OR
2019 TOYT CAM 4D
VIN = 4T1B11HK1KU698403
Amount due on lien \$952.00
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2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR
2017 LND RRV LL
VIN = SALWR2FKXH669153
Amount due on lien \$1515.00
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TRAVIS JAMES STAFFORD
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2020 CHEV CLD PU
VIN = 1GCG5BENZL1143538
Amount due on lien \$1515.00
Reputed owner(s) CMTS LLC
CAPITAL LEASE GRP LTD/LSR
BERSHIRE BANK

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2019 BMW X5 UT
VIN = 5UXCR6C59KLL04621
Amount due on lien \$1535.00
Reputed owner(s)
JOSHUA THOMAS CHRISTENSEN
FINANCIAL SERVICES VEHICLE TRUST

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2016 HONDA CIVIC 4D
VIN = 2HGFC2F57GH539674
Amount due on lien \$1535.00
Reputed owner(s)
MARLANA HANEY
FIFTH THIRD BANK NATIONAL ASSOC

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VIN = 1GCGWGAFF8H1249661
Amount due on lien \$1535.00
Reputed owner(s)
> SIDWELL AIR FREIGHT INC
FIRST BANK DIV OF GLACIER BANK

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2020 SUBARU IMP 4D
VIN = 453GKAB68L3606388
Amount due on lien \$1535.00
Reputed owner(s)
SUBARU OF AMERICA

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2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR
2016 NISS V25 VA
VIN = 1N6AF0LY3GN802508
Amount due on lien \$1415.00
Reputed owner(s)
VERTICAL WINE/BEER CO LLC
NISSAN MOTOR ACCEPTANCE CORP

LEGAL
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COPART OF WASHINGTON INC
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR
2008 JYCO FLIGHT C T
VIN = 1UJB02N987880482
Amount due on lien \$1435.00
Reputed owner(s)
NICHOLAS HENRY ROBERT REYES

LEGAL
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON FOR THE COUNTY OF MARION PROBATE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF PAUL MELVIN STUDER, deceased. Case No.: 22PB05623

NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS

NOTICE IS HERBY GIVEN that the undersigned has been appointed Personal Representative of the above estate. All persons having claims against the estate are required to present them to the undersigned attorney at: 319 Sixth Street SW, Albany, OR 97321 within four months after the date of the first publication of this notice, as stated below, or such claims may be barred.

All persons whose rights may be effected by the proceedings in this estate may obtain additional information from the records of the Court, the Personal Representative, or the attorney for the Personal Representative.

DATED and first published July 8, 2022.

Personal Representative
CHRISTOPHER S. STUDER
796 S. Grice Loop
Jefferson, OR 97352
Attorney
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Albany, OR 97321