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Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press
Tiffany Monroe and son Tommy Lee in a hazelnut orchard.

'NO NOBLER OCCUPATION'

How Tiffany Monroe became a voice for Oregon agriculture

By SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN
Capital Press

JUNCTION CITY, Ore. — Tiffany Monroe drove her UTV through an orchard of hazelnuts — old Jefferson variety trees on the right, rows of young PolyOs on the left.

Her 2-year-old, Tommy Lee, was perched on her lap, giggling as he put his small hands beside his mother's fingers on the steering wheel.

"Are those your filberts?" Monroe asked Tommy Lee, slipping one hand off the wheel to point to the young trees her son had helped plant and water.

The little boy grinned and nodded.

Monroe is a fifth-generation farmer, co-owner of Monroe Farms in Junction City and one of a handful of young Black farmers in the state.

She is also the president of Lane County Farm Bureau, president of Lane Families for Farms and Forests, grassroots coordinator for Oregonians for Food & Shelter, executive secretary of the McKenzie Business Association, co-chair of the Environmental Equity Committee on Gov. Kate

Brown's Racial Justice Council and a member of the Black Food Fund.

"What hasn't she been a part of?" joked Bryan Harper, her brother. "No matter what she dives into, she is really effective at creating some form of influence."

Mary Anne Cooper, vice president of government affairs at the Oregon Farm Bureau, echoed Harper's sentiment, calling Monroe "one of the most important voices in agriculture right now."

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Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press
Tiffany Monroe, with her son balanced on her hip, greets one of her family's cows.

Groups petition Oregon to regulate dairy air emissions

By GEORGE PLAVERN
Capital Press

SALEM — A coalition of 22 environmental, public health and animal welfare groups is petitioning Oregon regulators to adopt new rules targeting air pollution from large-scale dairies.

The petition, filed Aug. 17 with the state Environmental Quality Commission, seeks to create a dairy air emissions program that would apply to farms with 700 or more mature cows, which the federal Environmental Protection Agency defines as a "large" operation.

Under the program, proposed and existing dairies would be required to obtain an air quality permit and curb harmful emissions. They include ammonia, methane, hydrogen sulfide and particulate matter, among others.

Opponents argue the proposal is misleading, and would include family farms that can ill afford more costly regulations.

Emily Miller, staff attorney for Food and Water Watch, estimated the proposal would apply to 91 dairies in Oregon. That is 39% of all Grade A dairies and have 84% of all cows.

"For too long, the state has sat idly

while Oregon mega-dairies have been spewing toxic pollution into the air, wreaking havoc on our natural resources, climate and communities," said Miller, the petition's lead author. "This head-in-the-sand approach must change."

The commission has 90 days to respond. Confined animal feeding operations such as dairies are jointly regulated by the state's Department of Agriculture and Department of Environmental Quality.

However, the agencies are only responsible for ensuring the manure handled by CAFOs does not contaminate surface or ground water.

As early as 2008, a state-convened Dairy Air Quality Task Force recommended a dairy air emissions program in its report to ODA. Fourteen years later, Miller said, almost nothing has been done.

"Meanwhile, these operations keep getting bigger and bigger, and keep emitting more pollution into Oregon's atmosphere," she said. "This program is long overdue."

Food and Water Watch's analysis of state and federal data shows dairies with more than 2,500 cows in Oregon

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Emerald ash borer catches attention of nursery industry

By GEORGE PLAVERN
Capital Press

CANBY, Ore. — The recent discovery of emerald ash borer in Oregon came as a shock to the system for nursery manager Joe Dula.

"It was like, 'Holy crap, this is bad,'" said Dula, who runs the nearly 200-acre Moana Nursery in Canby, 45 miles southeast of where the highly destructive pest was found in Forest Grove. "You know you've got a problem coming."

Almost immediately, Dula was on the phone with Jeff Stone, executive director of the Oregon Association of Nurseries, which represents the state's \$1 billion industry. They both knew what this could mean for producers.

Native to Asia, the first U.S. sighting of emerald ash borer came in Michigan in 2002. Since then, the



Oregon Department of Agriculture
An adult emerald ash borer.

invasive insect has decimated tens of millions of North American ash trees in 30 states, according to the USDA.

The discovery in planted ash trees at a middle school parking lot in Forest Grove — a suburb of Portland — marks the first sighting

of emerald ash borer on the West Coast.

"This was always a pest we hoped would never get here," Stone said.

Moana Nursery specializes in growing trees, shrubs and perennial plants suited for the desert climate

of Reno, Nev., where the company is based and operates three garden centers.

While ash trees don't make up a large percentage of sales compared to oaks and maples, Dula said they are popular with commercial and residential landscapers because they are hardy, durable and eye-catching for their fall colors.

Dula said they will now likely quit selling ash trees as customers become wary of potentially introducing emerald ash borer.

"I'm not going to be gambling with the ash trees," he said. "I'm going to be gambling with the oaks, maples and other varieties."

How the pest got to Oregon remains a mystery. Stone said there is no evidence to suggest it arrived in nursery stock. "We're pretty careful

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