

# Business & Ag

## Haggen's Baker City store to close in November

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Haggen, on September 24, announced its plan to “exit from the Pacific Southwest market and realign its operations around 37 core stores and one stand-alone pharmacy in the Pacific Northwest as part of the Chapter 11 process.”

The news comes with the announcement that Baker City's own Haggen store, which replaced the local Albertsons just this May in order to break up a potential monopoly with Safeway, will now be one of the 100 stores slated for closure.

The change ironically leaves only one major grocery store in Baker City—and consumers with fears of instantly rising prices.

According to the company web site, “Haggen is asking the Bankruptcy Court for approval to conduct Store Closing Sales. All employees of the non-core stores and the Pacific Southwest support office will receive 60 day notice of the pending store and office closures. During this process, all stores will remain open. Employees will continue to receive their pay and benefits through the normal course of business as previously approved by the court.

“Haggen is supportive of



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

This was the scene as Haggen's Baker City store prepared to open back in May.

employees securing work elsewhere and is continuing to work with Albertsons in its request for the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to waive the restriction in the FTC Order which restricts the hiring of Haggen employees. Because this is a modification of an order entered by the FTC, the waiver will require Commission approval, which the FTC staff is seeking to obtain on an expedited basis. This has been a priority for Haggen management to ensure its employees can take advantage of every opportunity available to them.”

In a letter to employees, however, Haggen stated that its Baker City doors will close “shortly after” November 24, and that all employees will be laid off on or before December 8 of this year.

At present, those Baker City Haggen employees who are union-represented may receive “bumping rights,” although where has not been specifically stated.

Some local staff have already been informed that they have less than two weeks left on the job.

Despite business development rumors that a new store is being courted and

may directly transition to the Haggen store once it is vacated, a letter from Haggen's Corporate Headquarters states otherwise.

“The closing of the store is expected to be permanent, and the entire store will be closed regardless if a buyer is secured or not.”

Haggen has stated in its bankruptcy filings that since the buyout of Albertsons, it has hemorrhaged hundreds of thousands of dollars per month.

Critics cite failure to lower local prices to meet consumer demand as one key reason for the lack of popularity of the Baker City store.

## Fall prescribed burning to begin

BAKER CITY, OR – The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest will begin implementing prescribed burning program following rain and cooler weather. Prescribed fire managers are planning to implement hazardous fuel reduction burns beginning at many project sights.

Prescribed fire is a major component of the Cohesive Wildfire Strategy to meet the goals of restoring and maintaining resilient landscapes and creating fire adapted communities. Prescribed burning is done to reduce dead and down fuels, selectively thin understory trees in dense forested stands, stimulate fire tolerant plant species, enhance forage and browse, reduce the risk of large stand-replacement fires, create strategic fuels breaks in the urban interface, and restore fire under controlled conditions as a disturbance factor in these landscapes. Prescribed burns can range from tens acres to thousands of acres in size. Prescribed burns often are accomplished with combined resources of local rural fire departments, contractors, and State and other federal fire agencies.

Fire history studies have shown that fire was a dominant natural process in the Blue Mountains, maintaining a more open and park-like condition throughout the low- to mid-elevation forests.

Low-intensity surface fires burned throughout these drier forests and grasslands perpetuating open, park-like stands of fire tolerant tree species such as ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, and larch.

Hazardous fuel reduction is not without impacts. Smoke associated with prescribed burning is a major concern and the hardest to forecast in the implementation planning process. Prescribed fire managers work closely with the Oregon State Smoke Forecast Center in accordance with the Oregon Smoke Management Plan to determine when, where, and how much is burned on a daily basis. Smoke dispersion models looking at volume of smoke, direction of spread and mixing heights are determined prior to each burn, smoke which may prove a significant impact to a sensitive area or community is rescheduled until the time of a more favorable forecast.

Burning is part of the series of fuel reduction treatments intended to decrease the damage done by wildfires, including reducing the amount of smoke that typically impacts communities during the fire season. The intent is to keep smoke out of populated areas. Burning under controlled conditions reduces surface and ladder fuels setting the stage to limit future high intensity unplanned fires and smoke which they would produce. Many areas are burned on 10 to 15 year rotation to limit fuels accumulations and enhance forage and browse important to wildlife.

Wallowa-Whitman forest managers have been successfully conducting prescribed burning operations for fuel reduction for over 20 years, and plan to continue into the foreseeable future. The Forest completes between 5,000 and

10,000 acres of prescribed burning in a year.

Actual acres within a project area may vary dependent upon fuel conditions, smoke dispersion, wind patterns, and other variables. Acres may be higher or lower in some project areas than listed. Weather patterns, Fuel Conditions, and Smoke dispersion will determine exactly where and when units are ignited within the project areas. It is anticipated that not all areas will be within prescription and will not be implemented this fall, while other project areas may have more acres within prescription that may be implemented.

The Wallowa-Whitman plans to burn approximately 4,000 acres across the forest during early October. Forest Service and cooperator personnel will do the burning. For more information about the Whitman prescribed burning program, you may contact Steve Hawkins at 541-523-1262, or visit the forest web site at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/Fire-Aviation> to view the spring 2015, burn unit maps.

The Wallowa Fire Zone (WFZ) - 541-426-4978 (Wallowa Valley Ranger District, Hells Canyon NRA and Eagle Cap Ranger District). The WFZ plans to conduct prescribed burning of up to 3,000 acres this fall, which may include:

- Spooner (220 acres) - Harl Butte area east of Joseph, OR.
- Green McCoy (195 acres) – Southwest of Wallowa, OR
- Minam (1800 acres) - Southwest of Wallowa, OR

•B-Vine (2300 acres) - North east of Enterprise near Billy Meadows

•The Grande Ronde Fire Zone (GRFZ) – 541-963-7186 (La Grande Ranger District). The GRFZ plans to conduct prescribed burning on up to 2000 acres this fall, which may include:

- Bald Angel (1986) – 5 Miles northeast of Medical Springs, OR
- Blue Fly (400 acres) – Tony Vey Meadows 10 miles south of Starkey, OR
- Mc Meadow(780 acres) - 6 miles west of Starkey, OR
- Bald Angel (98 acres)- 8 miles south east of Medical Springs
- Little Bear (58 acres)- 10-12 miles southeast of Union, OR
- Trail (109 acres)- 8 miles northwest of La Grande, OR

Whitman Ranger District (WRD) – 541-523-4476 (Baker, Halfway, and Unity). The WRD plans to conduct prescribed burning on 1,500 acres this fall, which may include:

- Mile 9 (320 acres) – 5 miles west of Unity, OR
- Foothills (250 acres) - in the Baker City Watershed 3 mile west of Baker City, OR
- Deer and Union Miners (800 acres) - in the Sumpter Valley
- Dry Creek and Barnard (800 acres) - in the Pine Valley near Halfway, OR
- Mile 9(700 acres) – 5 miles west of Unity, OR
- Goose (1200 acres) - 6 miles northwest of Sparta, OR
- Pine Valley (500 acres) 7 miles northwest of Halfway, OR.

### — WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, September 25, 2015 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady compared to week ago prices. Export sales continue to be slow. Retail/Stable demand for all types of hay from Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, Wasco counties continues to be good. Many producers have decided to hold on to their hay for now, in hopes for higher prices. Some producers are having their water rights cut off due to the drought.

Tons Price Range Wtd Avg

Alfalfa / Orchard Mix — Small Square, Good	10	190.00-190.00	190.00
Barley Straw — Small Square, Utility	15	75.00-75.00	75.00
Oats — Large Square, Premium	15	130.00-130.00	130.00

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

### — CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, September 23, 2015

Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 2,003

#### Steer Calves

300-400#	Bulk	237.00 - 276.00	Top	291.00
400-500#	Bulk	198.00 - 248.00	Top	251.50
500-600#	Bulk	186.00 - 219.00	Top	221.00

#### Heifer Calves

300-400#	Bulk	195.00 - 244.00	Top	255.00
400-500#	Bulk	187.00 - 231.00	Top	238.00
500-600#	Bulk	172.00 - 202.00	Top	204.50

#### Yearling Steers

600-700#	Bulk	181.00 - 206.00	Top	207.00
700-800#	Bulk	169.00 - 186.00	Top	189.50
800-900#	Bulk	143.00 - 166.00	Top	168.00
900-1,000#	Bulk	131.00 - 149.00	Top	151.00

#### Yearling Heifers

600-700#	Bulk	168.00 - 184.00	Top	185.00
700-800#	Bulk	146.00 - 167.00	Top	171.00
800-900#	Bulk	141.00 - 153.00	Top	155.00
900-1,000#	Bulk	136.00 - 148.00	Top	152.00

Thin Shelly Cows	69.00 - 85.00
Butcher Cows	87.00 - 99.00
Butcher Bulls	97.00 - 114.00
Stock Cows Yng.	N/A
Younger Hfrts.	112.00 - 137.00
Stock Cows -	1500.00 - 1800.00

ProducersLivestock.com  
541-473-3136

### — LOG PRICE REPORT —

Price per 1,000 board feet: Northeast Oregon

Doug Fir	is \$415.00/mbf
White fir	is \$365.00/mb
Ponderosa Pine	is brought sold on diameter splits
6 to 11 inch dib	\$300 to \$310/MBF
12 to 17 inch dib	\$350 to \$375/MBF
18 to 23 inch dib	\$400 to \$430/MBF
24 inch plus dib	\$450 to \$500/MBF

DIB is diameter inside bark at small end of log.

MBF is thousand board feet lumber, net scale.

People interested in selling logs should call and get specific quotes from saw mills.

Courtesy of Arvid Andersen,  
Andersen Forestry Consulting

### — PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD

Gold: \$1115.60

Silver: \$14.51

Platinum: \$908.05

Palladium: \$652.25

Bloomberg.com

### — AG COMMODITIES —

Corn:	\$387.75/bu/USD
Wheat:	\$512.75/bu/USD
Soybeans:	\$892.00/bu/USD
Oats:	\$226.75 bu/USD
Rough Rice:	\$13.20/cwt/USD
Canola:	\$476.00 CAD/mwt
Live Cattle:	\$130.60/lb./USD
Feeder Cattle:	\$177.88/lb./USD
Lean Hogs:	\$66.55/lb./USD

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