

# Business & Ag

## Ag and culinary tourism project launches

BY SUNNY WERNER  
Sunny@TheBakerCountyPress.com

“Agritourism” is fast becoming the newest fashion in many large cities. In Portland for example, where fascination with naturally raised meats and organically produced fruits and vegetables is legendary, many consumers are beginning to take an interest in the other end of the supply chain: the farms and ranches who are actually producing their food.

The relationship between agriculture and tourism isn’t new—farms and ranches typically served travelers on a regular basis, long before hotels were available. From Pony Express stops to dude ranches, popular in the middle of the last century, people have been fascinated by farm life.

As the population has gradually moved away from ranching and farming areas, toward big cities, the disconnect between providers and consumers has grown.

With the resurgence of interest in living and eating in healthier ways, more consumers are paying attention to who produces the foods they feed their families. The barrage of news reports that the big industrial producers have been using unhealthy practices, avoiding compliance inspections, and shipping their products overseas to be processed at facilities that do not meet U.S. health standards has increased consumer awareness.

This information, in turn, has brought awareness to the general public that they do have the choice to either buy mass-produced, unregulated products or take time to learn about their local growers and producers. By purchasing locally, consumers can build relationships with

the people who grow and produce their food.

The Oregon Tourism Commission, doing business as Travel Oregon, is a semi-independent agency created by the Oregon Legislature in 2003 to enhance Oregonians’ quality of life by strengthening economic impacts of the state’s \$10.3 billion tourism industry.

Travel Oregon, along with the USDA (via grant funds), the Northeast Oregon Development District, Eastern Oregon Visitors Association and a conglomeration of farmers, ranchers and growers in each area, have joined together to establish a base upon which to build an eco-tourism industry. For the purposes of this project the State has divided Oregon into seven regions, each of which has distinct characteristics. The Eastern region was then further divided into four more regions, as the enormous variety of agricultural diversity across such a large area called for more specific planning.

Janet Dodson, of Sunnyslope Marketing, is the Project Consultant for the Eastern region of Oregon in this new enterprise. Dodson is tasked with maintaining the network between participating stakeholders in the Eastern regions, collecting data, holding workshops and engaging new participants. Expanding the base of ranchers and farmers who are engaged in the project is another of her interests.

According to Dodson, examples of Agritourism include:

- Farm and Ranch stays - lodging, camping, RVs
- Tours- single farm/ranch; multiple ag tours; guided or self-guided tours
- Farm stands; one day or seasonal
- Farm to table dinners Wineries, orchards and gardens that invite visitors



Submitted Photo.

Janet Dodson of Sunnyslope Marketing.

- On-farm product and gift shops
- Fee hunting and hunting preserves
- Horseback riding and petting zoos
- Working ranches with tourism facilities
- Restaurants and stores offering locally produced foods and beverages
- Single or multi-day events: rodeos, fairs, harvest festivals
- Farmer’s Markets
- Farms and ranches which invite visitors in only once or twice a year or on a very limited seasonal basis as an educational outreach
- Event facilities for weddings, reunions and other gatherings
- Trails, tracks and obstacle courses on farms and ranches
- Horse boarding facilities and arenas

Dodson said, “As a destination, the Eastern U.S. is well established internationally. What Travel Oregon has done to expose travelers to Eastern Oregon includes bicycle tours, Farm to Fork dinners, rafting trips, and so on.”

She went on to explain that Eastern Oregon University has a Tourism Program, and is encouraging

farm-tourism connections. “When we can get an intern placed with a working ranch, for example” she said. “That intern can help the rancher with some of the specific tasks that have to be addressed, such as signage, visitors expectations, etc.”

Dodson acknowledges the divide between many agricultural families on the Eastern side, where conservatism reigns, and the ecotourists who usually come from densely populated, often very liberal cities.

“We hope those agricultural families who decide they want to host tourists will meet with us in workshops to establish their own ground rules and learn what to be prepared for,” she said. “The goal is to educate, inform and entertain these tourists who are paying for their opportunity to stay on a real working ranch, and although we know there will be some conflicting opinions, we encourage all participants to share their views respectfully.”

The next meeting of the Northeast Oregon Agritourism Project Committee is in La Grande, Wednesday, January 20. Call 541.786.8006 for info.

### — WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, December 18, 2015 — Eastern Oregon  
\*Report unchanged from last week due to holiday.

Prices trended generally steady compared to week ago prices. The upcoming holidays have slowed sales. Many producers have decided to hold on to their hay for now, in hopes for higher prices. Snow has hit some of the hay producing areas.

Tons	Price Range	Wtd Avg
Alfalfa —Large Square Premium	320 190.00-190.00	190.00
Alfalfa —Large Square Good	245 125.00-125.00	125.00

Two weeks ago:

Timothy Grass — Large Square, Good  
65 200.00-200.00 200.00

Timothy Grass— Small Square, Good  
5 200.00-200.00 200.00

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

### — CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, December 16, 2015  
Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 1,528

\*Report unchanged from last week due to holiday.

#### Steer Calves

300-400#	Bulk 171.00 - 196.00	Top 228.00
400-500#	Bulk 162.00 - 203.00	Top 216.00
500-600#	Bulk 151.00 - 180.00	Top 180.75

#### Heifer Calves

300-400#	Bulk 151.00 - 176.00	Top 178.00
400-500#	Bulk 137.00 - 172.00	Top 175.00
500-600#	Bulk 136.00 - 160.00	Top 160.50

#### Yearling Steers

600-700#	Bulk 134.00 - 162.00	Top 163.50
700-800#	Bulk 128.00 - 139.00	Top 152.75
800-900#	Bulk 123.00 - 136.00	Top 137.00
900-1,000#	Bulk 120.00 - 129.00	Top 135.00

#### Yearling Heifers

600-700#	Bulk 122.00 - 144.00	Top 146.50
700-800#	Bulk 118.00 - 131.00	Top 132.00
800-900#	Bulk 112.00 - 123.00	Top 124.50
900-1,000#	Bulk N/A	Top N/A

Thin Shelly Cows	37.00 - 47.00
Butcher Cows	48.00 - 55.00
Butcher Bulls	52.00 - 62.00
Stock Cows Yng.	1175.00 - 1475.00
Younger Hfrts.	74.00 - 111.00
Stock Cows Older.	935.00 - 1125.00

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/mbf
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: 1,060.00

Silver: \$13.85

Platinum: \$871.63

Palladium: \$550.50

Bloomberg.com

### — AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$359.00/bu/USD

Wheat: \$471.20/bu/USD

Soybeans: \$870.00/bu/USD

Oats: \$218.00 bu/USD

Rough Rice: \$11.76/cwt/USD

Canola: \$491.30 CAD/mwt

Live Cattle: \$136.70/lb./USD

Feeder Cattle: \$161.63/lb./USD

Lean Hogs: \$59.80/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com

## The laundromat is no more

BY GINA K. SWARTZ  
Gina@TheBakerCountyPress.com

815 Campbell Street was Baker City Laundromat since its opening in the early 90s. It closed in October 2013 for good and has remained empty ever since.

For a long time, paper covered the windows so no one could see in.

Then slowly over time the paper began to peel down revealing the dark lonely space.

Rumors even circulated that Subway was going to expand into the space, but nothing ever came of that.

Then “For Rent” signs appeared in the window but still the space sat empty, until eventually those signs disappeared as well.

Recent activity in the space has not gone unnoticed by patrons of the adjoining, Subway.

Major renovations began happening—old washers and dryers were replaced by coolers.

What was happening in the space? Many wondered.

In mid-November Baker



Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

This location next to Subway will be the new location for Moe Joe Smoke & Gift, Inc.

City Police Chief Wyn Lohner received an application from business partners Farukh Abdullah and Masoud Aria both of Redmond, OR.

They intend to open a convenience type store in the space featuring beer and tobacco sales. The name of the business is Moe Joe Smoke & Gift Inc. Lohner brought the application before the City Council at the December 8, 2015 meeting where the Council voted to unanimously approve the application.

As is the case with any liquor license application the partners were required to submit to a background check as well as a criminal history check.

The investigation conducted by Chief Lohner revealed that the partners also own a store in Pendleton, OR called Bare Bones. That store has operated successfully for several years.

Lohner’s report to the City Council states, “In communication with Mr. Abdullah he states that the business will sell groceries,

cold beverages, including beer, foods, gifts and tobacco products. He further says the business will operate seven days a week and be open each day from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.”

According to Lohner, Abudullah and Aria will oversee the management of the business but will use local employees.

The exact number of people the business will employ is not known at this time nor is the intended date of opening.