Ore. farmers, ranchers strive to offer healthy foods to those most in need

Oregon's farmers and ranchers are looking at ways to enhance their ability to provide good, wholesome food to those in need.

From the processing of cattle that otherwise would not be used to the harvest of undersized potatoes, the agriculture industry is exploring strategies that ultimately may direct more food into the Oregon Food

"Oregon's agriculture and food processing sectors are currently among the most significant contributors to the food bank and are anxious to augment the amount of food that makes its way to Oregon's hungry," said Katy Coba, director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Working with representatives of the Oregon Food Bank, Oregon's agricultural commodity commissions and the governor's office, ODA has developed some specific initiatives that could be online by the end of the

Two specific initiatives have emerged as intriguing possibilities that could greatly held stock food bank shelves.

The first creates a mobile slaughter capacity for Oregon livestock. The cattle industry in the state is interested in donating to the food bank, but processing cattle into meat has been a challenge. Instead of bringing the cattle to a slaughter facility, perhaps

it would work better to bring the slaughter facility to the cattle.

"Under this concept, livestock producers in Oregon would be able to process their livestock into meat products in remote locations and do so under U.S. Dept. of Agriculture inspection and regulations," said Dalton Hobbs, administrator of ODA's Agricultural Development and Marketing Division.

USDA has licensed its first mobile slaughter facility as a pilot project of sorts in Washington state, which took advantage of a federal grant to land the mobile unit. For Oregon, where permanent slaughter facilities are few and far between, the concept of developing a slaughter plant on wheels is very enticing.

"We would be looking at a multiple use facility,' says Hobbs. "Part of the time, a mobile slaughter facility could be used to process livestock for the commercial side of the equation. At other times it could be utilized for donated livestock products."

Processing in remote locations — where much of Oregon's livestock is located anyway-has an appeal to potential donors.

Downer cattle or other non-ambulatory livestock are examples of a potential food product that might otherwise go to waste. A mobile slaughter facility can change that.

"Some of the animals that could conceivably be processed by this mobile facilty are often going to a rendering plant or, even worse, a landfill," says Hobbs. "These are animals that otherwise could provide safe and wholesome food that is USDAinspected."

It might take well into 2004 to turn the initiative into reality, but ODA is working with the Oregon beef industry and the governor's office to identify the estimated \$250,000 needed to bring a mobile slaughter facility online.

The second initiative being pursued involves the harvest of undersized pota-

Implementing different harvest and sorting techniques — perhaps as simple as putting the digging machines on a different setting—could make some of these potatoes available for packing into food boxes. ODA is continuing its work with the Oregon Potato Commission to implement a pilot program as early as this fall to harvest the smaller spuds.

ODA and the commodity commissions are taking advantage of their good working relationships with both producers and processors in Oregon to help link the Oregon Food Bank staff with those who can provide new and additional donations.

In 2003, an estimated 720,000 Oregonians ate meals from emergency food boxes at least once, much of which originated from Oregon agriculture.

No HUD funds to go to JOCO for 2003

U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) announced that Oregon will receive \$10.8 million in grants from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The grants are being awarded through

HUD's Fiscal Year 2003 Capital Fund Program, which awards grants to public housing agencies for housing modernization and improvements.

\$232,321 was allocated to the Housing Authority of Jackson County.

\$125,703 was allocated to Klamath Housing Authority. The Coos-Curry Housing Authority will receive \$107,083 and Douglas will receive County \$271,208.

No funds will be allocated to Josephine County.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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Trivia Time by Walter Branch

1. How many consecutive years was Ed Sullivan on television?

2. What Elvis Presley hit did Willie Nelson record with Leon Russell in 1979?

3. Who did fragile Dr. Don Blake become by pounding his walking stick on the ground?

4. What Welsh poet authored "Deaths and Entrances"?

5. What completed the ad line: "Promise her anything..."?

6. What composer's record did Winchester smash in the last episode of "M*A*S*H"?

7. What president raised the minimum wage

25-cents to \$1.25? Trivia Time Answers: 1. 23; 2. "Heartbreak Hotel"; 3. Thor; 4. Dylan Thomas; 5. "...but give her Arpege"; 6. Mozart's; 7.

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