

Xmas tree shipments at 7 million

With its annual harvest of approximately seven million, Oregon annually harvests more Christmas trees than any other state.

Some 6.3 million are shipped out-of-state each year, said Oregon Dept. of Agriculture (ODA), and considerably more than one million of those trees leave the country.

Oregon Christmas trees are already on their way to destinations including Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Mexico. During the next several weeks, Oregon will send its Yule trees to many other countries around the world as well as most U.S. states.

It's a hectic, frenzied time of year for growers and ODA inspectors who certify the trees as pest- and disease-free.

"November is the biggest shipping month for Christmas trees, so we are keeping very busy," said ODA inspector Debbie Driesner. "Our involvement is of utmost importance in getting the trees to their destination. Without the inspection and certification, those trees don't go."

Oregon's 750 growers are concentrated in the Willamette Valley, but there are licensed growers in many other counties, including some east of the Cascades. As Oregon's seventh-largest agricultural commodity with a production value of more than \$142 million, exports of Christmas trees are important to the state's economy. ODA inspection is essential to those exports.

ODA inspectors check out holiday trees bound for other states and countries to make sure those trees don't carry unwanted pests or diseases.

Inspectors don't look at every tree, but randomly walk through a representative part of fields looking for pest and disease problems. Some inspections occurred as early as this summer.

Last year, ODA inspectors wrote 1,456 phytosanitary certificates for Christmas trees. The largest export market is Mexico, with 1,340 certificates issued last year alone.

"Mexico continues to be a big market for our trees," said Driesner. "Most of the trees end up in the big chain stores, as well as independent retailers."

This year's quality appears exceptional thanks to ideal weather conditions.

"The trees this year are as good as I've seen," said Greg Rondeau of Holiday Tree Farms in Corvallis. "They have a great green color. The heavy rain we got this spring helped as has the recent rain."

"The trees are able to stay moist for the 10- to 14-day trip by truck to Mexico. There have been times when we've had to water them down before shipping."

Oregon Christmas trees last year headed in other directions as well, accompanied by the all-important ODA-provided paperwork.

Phytosanitary certificates were issued for shipments of trees destined for Hong Kong (19 certificates), Puerto Rico (18), Japan (16), Korea (11), Costa Rica (11), Guam (9), Panama (9), and Singapore (8), among the top export destinations.

There was even one shipment to a U.S. Air Force base in Iraq last year, something that may be more common in 2005.



GLENN MORRISON AMERICAN LEGION Post 70 and Auxiliary conducted a ceremony on Veterans Day, Friday, Nov. 11 at Cave Junction City Hall. Principal speakers were Ellie Buell and Jerry Buell (left). The flag squad was comprised of Tina Haemmerlein, district vice president (second from right, above), and (right) Michelle Colbert, Dept. of Oregon Poppy chairman. Among those attending the commemoration of veterans, including those still serving, were (from left in right photo) Kristin Colbert, Wanda Peterson, Nancy Goldtrap, and Rebecca Colbert. The speakers noted the many sacrifices made by military personnel in the course of their service for the United States of America. They also noted the thousands of personnel still missing in action or who are believed to be prisoners of war. The ceremony concluded with the playing of 'The Star-Spangled-Banner.' (Photos by 'I. V. News')

8th-grade girls scoring booze at home

Oregon eighth-grade girls' drinking rates increased by a third during the past four years, with most girls and boys alike saying they get illegal alcohol from friends or at home.

New data from the Oregon Dept. of Human Services (DHS) show that 58 percent of eighth-graders say alcohol is "very easy" or "sort of easy" to get, and 81 percent of 11th-graders do.

"The trend in underage drinking is heading in the wrong direction and, if we don't engage parents, students, teachers and our communities in an effort to stop underage drinking before it begins, the long-term implications will affect the entire state," said Gov. Kulongoski.

He added, "I have asked state officials and my council on alcohol and drug abuse programs, local government and others who care about this issue to come together to prioritize the most effective strategies so that we can reverse this trend and move Oregon's statistics in the right direction."

"This tells us we need to focus more on where teens get their alcohol -- and it usually isn't from a retail store," said Bon Nikkel, DHS mental health and addictions administrator.

"We're going to be vigorous about telling parents and teens alike that underage drinking is a prescription for traffic fatalities, school failure, sexually transmitted diseases, adolescent pregnancy, youth suicide and problems with the law," he said.

Nikkel said that a new Oregon campaign against underage drinking will launch in mid-December.

He said that eighth-

grade girls who reported drinking alcohol during the prior 30 days increased to 33 percent this year from less than 25 percent in 2001, an increase of a third, while eighth-grade boys' drinking rose to 27.1 percent from 24.4 percent four years ago.

He said that 11th-grade girls reported drinking more heavily than 11th-grade boys, 48 percent to 46.8 percent; while the 11th-grade girls' drinking rate had risen from 41.8 percent in 2001, or nearly 15 percent.

Among eighth-graders, Nikkel said, 12 percent reported obtaining alcohol from parents with their permission and another 12 percent claimed to obtain alcohol at home without permission.

He said that the only more frequently cited sources were friends under age 21 (15.1 percent) and parties (13.6 percent). He said that service stations, and grocery and convenience stores each registered less than 2 percent.

"It's bad enough that Oregon's \$7-million-a-year prevention budget for all alcohol and drugs is dwarfed by an estimated \$55 million in alcohol advertising and promotion in Oregon," Nikkel said. "It's worse when we see so many parents contributing to their own kids' risky behavior with possibly tragic consequences."

He said the highest incidence of underage drinking was among eighth- and 11th-grade girls in four Oregon north coast counties (Columbia, Clatsop, Lincoln, Tillamook) and among eighth-grade girls in 18 Eastern Oregon counties.

Among initiatives being pursued to try to reduce un-

derage drinking, aside from the ad campaign, are contracts with the Oregon State University and University of Oregon sports marketing departments.

Also, federal grants to support efforts in Lake and Willamette counties and in Newport; an initiative to build community coalitions against underage drinking on the Warm Springs Indian reservation in Jefferson County; a contract with a Berkeley research group to identify most-effective strategies against underage drinking; and recent awarding of \$560,000 spread across the state's 36 counties and nine tribes to develop plans to combat underage drinking.



MANSFIELD R. CLEARY



Attorney at Law

**General Practice in
Illinois Valley
since 1980**

Practice includes but not limited to:

- Bankruptcy - Eliminate financial problems**
- Living trusts - Avoid probate**
- Estate planning - Wills, power of attorney**
- Domestic relations**
- Auto accident - Personal Injury**
- Criminal - DUII**
- Real Estate contracts - Foreclosure**

592-2195 200 W. Lister

**FRIDAY,
NOV. 18
AT
WILD RIVER
BREWING &
PIZZA CO.**

**BEER & WINE
TASTING
COURTESY OF
FORIS
VINEYARDS
& WILD RIVER**

**GATHERING
BEGINS AT
5 P.M.
AUCTION AT
6 P.M.**

**AUCTIONEER:
JIM FRICK
CLERKING:
ANNA SWETT
& CREW**

**BARGAINS
& FUN**

**SPONSORED
BY
I.V. CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

ANNUAL AUCTION

Structure fire said deliberate

A fire that caused moderate damage to a home in Grants Pass was found to be not accidental, said the city department of public safety.

The blaze, which damaged a bathroom and a bedroom, occurred on N.E. Baker Street Wednesday, Nov. 9 around 11:45 p.m.

An elderly resident was taken into custody under a peace officer's mental hold. Investigation is continuing.