

Local News

FFA, band teachers win awards

By Spokesman staff

Two Redmond High School teachers were recognized for national and regional achievement at a back-to-school assembly at Redmond High School on Sept. 15.

Lance Hill, Redmond's agriscience, fabrication and design teacher, was awarded the Honorary American Future Farmers of America degree — the highest national FFA honor. Hill has been teaching in the Redmond School District for 13 years and has 25 years of teaching experience overall.

"Lance Hill is well-known in the agriculture and FFA world. His work with students in these areas is unmatched, and it's no wonder he is receiving this award," said Dr. Audrey Haugan, Redmond High School principal in a press release. "He makes a difference in the lives of our students every day, and the honors and awards our students bring to Redmond High School year after year are a testament to his hard work and dedication."

Hill will be receiving his plaque and medal at the 95th National FFA Convention in Indianapolis next month where the RHS FFA livestock evaluation team will also be competing for the national title.

Ben Lawson, RHS Band and Choir teacher, was awarded the 2023 Regional Teacher of the Year through the High Desert Education Service District. He received a plaque and a cash award at the assembly. Lawson is also in the running for Oregon's 2023 teacher of the year.

"Ben has been teaching for eighteen years and has touched thousands of young lives with his passion for music, his creativity, and his unwavering commitment to music education," said Principal Haugan.

Principal Haugan also spoke about how Lawson went above and beyond during the pandemic to keep his students involved and connected through music.

"If something did not work well, Ben created something new," said Haugan. "I don't



FILE- Redmond High School ag teacher Lance Hill instructs students on wiring basic circuits using national electricity code standards in 2016.

JAROD OPPERMAN/The Bulletin



Ben Lawson, Redmond High band and choir teacher, was awarded the 2023 Regional Teacher of the Year through the High Desert Education Service District.

Photo courtesy Redmond School District

think anyone spent more time or energy in creating new ideas to engage his students as Ben did."

"We're very grateful to have

such incredible educators on our team and in our community," said Dr. Charan Cline, Redmond School District superintendent.



FILE- Redmond High School ag teacher Lance Hill helps students, from left, Haily Brown, Callie Nance and McKenzie Miller tend to their geraniums in 2016.

JAROD OPPERMAN/The Bulletin

Redmond beef co-op to lead new climate program

\$10 million effort to make cattle ranching good for planet

BY GEORGE PAVLEN
CO Media Group

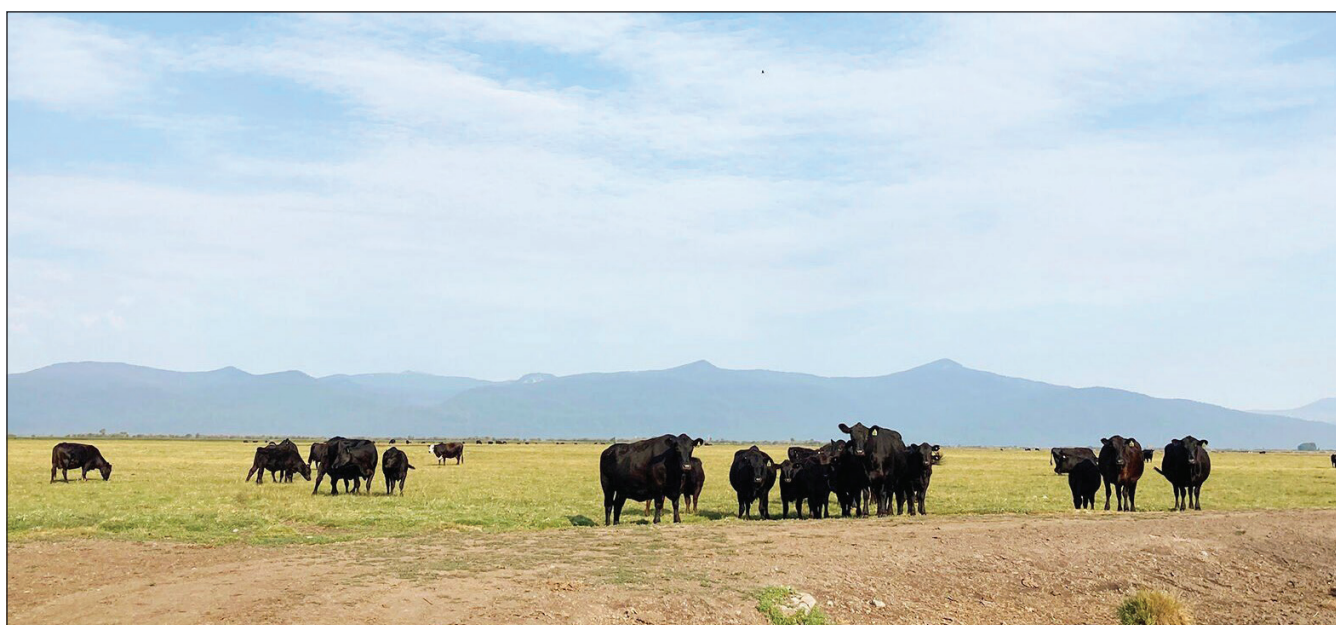
The USDA is providing \$10 million to help establish what advocates say will be the largest program to promote climate-smart ranching in the West.



Probert

Sustainable Northwest, a Portland-based nonprofit, is working with Country Natural Beef of Redmond to adopt "regenerative" agricultural practices at 120 different ranches across nine states, covering more than 7 million acres of public and private rangeland.

Regenerative agriculture refers to methods of farming and ranching that build soil health, improve water retention, increase biodiversity and sequester carbon from the at-



Sustainable Northwest

A ranch in the Klamath Basin. Sustainable Northwest has received a \$10 million grant from the USDA to implement the largest climate-smart regenerative beef production program in the West.

mosphere.

In the case of beef production, ranchers may consider rotational grazing of cattle, where the animals are rotated frequently between pastures. This allows forage and grasses to recover more quickly, replenishing organic matter in

soil while preventing erosion.

"This is the next generation of climate action," said Dallas Hall Defrees, regenerative ranching program director for Sustainable Northwest. "How can we ensure that the food we eat is storing and reducing greenhouse gases, enhancing

ecosystem processes and supporting family- and tribal-run ranches?"

Funding comes from the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation through the Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities Program, which allocated \$2.8

billions for 70 projects in all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and tribal nations.

The Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities also provided \$50 million to Oregon State University, which is collaborating with

Washington State University, the University of Idaho and Northwest farms and tribes to improve soil management.

Earlier this year, Sustainable Northwest also received a \$488,500 grant from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust to roll out its regenerative ranching program with Country Natural Beef.

Country Natural Beef is headquartered in Redmond and is the country's largest beef production co-op.

Program leaders predict they will reduce the carbon intensity of beef production by 50-100% compared to conventionally-raised beef; sequester enough carbon every year to offset 1 billion gallons of gasoline or 10 billion pounds of coal; and provide \$67 million in annual increased market returns for producers.

Country Natural Beef will market this meat under the name "Grazewell." The co-op sells to well-known regional and national restaurants and supermarkets including Whole Foods, New Seasons Market and Burgerville.





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