

Hop production on the rise in US

The Associated Press

MOXEE, Wash. — Demand from craft beer brewers led to an 11 percent increase in U.S. hop production in 2015 compared to the previous year.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service says production totaled 78.8 million pounds.

Washington state produced 59.4 million pounds, followed by Oregon with 10.6 million pounds and Idaho with 8.7 million pounds.

Those three states produce about a third of the world supply. Oil from hop cones is used in beer for flavoring and stabilizing.

Production and acreage increased in all three states despite extreme heat early in the season and a low winter snowpack that influences irrigation.

"Considering those challenges and the amount of first-year plants in the ground which have smaller yield, we are pleased with the final count and looking forward to next year," Ann George, executive director of Hop Growers of America and the Washington Hop Commission, told the

Capital Press (<http://bit.ly/1P-gCCs>).

The National Agricultural Statistics Service said the preliminary value of the crop is \$345.4 million, up 33 percent from the 2014 crop.

The report said growers received record prices because production shifted to higher-value aroma varieties in response to increased demand from craft breweries.

Demand for those aroma varieties has driven demand "to a level that has challenged the industry to continue to expand production at an equivalent rate," George said.

Washington state had the highest number of acres harvested going back to 1915. Idaho had its highest production and acres harvested since 1944.

George said hop acreage in the Pacific Northwest has increased 48 percent in the last three years.

Meanwhile, George said, European producers had one of their toughest years in more than a decade due to drought, with production dropping 24 percent compared to last year.

She said production in Germany, which produces a third of the world crop, is down 26 percent.

Northwest, U.S. hop production statistics

State/year	Area harvested (acres)	Yield per acre (pounds)	Production (1,000 lbs.)	Price per pound (dollars)	Value of production (\$1,000)
Idaho					
2013	3,356	1,740	5,837.9	\$2.62	\$15,295
2014	3,743	1,847	6,913.8	2.72	18,806
2015	4,863	1,794	8,724.9	3.53	30,799
Oregon					
2013	4,835	1,764	8,530.5	3.76	32,075
2014	5,410	1,520	8,221	4.07	33,459
2015	6,612	1,613	10,667.8	3.24	34,564
Washington					
2013	27,097	2,025	54,877.7	3.37	184,938
2014	28,858	1,936	55,861.1	3.73	208,362
2015	32,158	1,849	59,453.3	4.71	280,025
U.S.					
2013	35,288	1,962	69,246.1	3.35	232,308
2014	38,011	1,868	70,995.9	3.67	260,627
2015	43,633	1,807	78,846	4.38	345,388

Source: USDA NASS

Capital Press graphic



New Year's Day offers regular raft of closures

In observance of New Year's Day on Friday, all federal, state, county and city offices and services, including Astoria, Warrenton, Gearhart, Seaside and Cannon Beach city halls, are closed. All U.S. post offices are closed, and there is no mail delivery.

Astoria, Jewell, Knappa, Warrenton/Hammond, Seaside (including Cannon Beach and Gearhart schools) and Ocean Beach (Wash.) School District schools and Clatsop Community College are closed for winter break.

The Astoria Library, Seaside Library, Warrenton Library and all Timberland libraries in Washington, including Ilwaco, Ocean Park and Naselle, are closed.

The Port of Astoria offices and services are closed.

Garbage collection through Recology Western Oregon (covering Astoria, Seaside, Gearhart and Cannon Beach) and the city of Warrenton is not affected by the holiday. Peninsula Sanitation

(covering Washington's Long Beach Peninsula) customers whose regular service day is Friday will have their garbage picked up Thursday. Recology Western Oregon and Peninsula Sanitation's transfer stations are closed for the holiday.

The Sunset Pool in Seaside is closed. The Astoria Aquatic Center is closed.

The Clatsop County Heritage Museum, Oregon Film Museum, Flavel House and Carriage House are closed. The Uppertown Firefighters' Museum is closed for the winter.

Capt. Gray's Port of Play and Lil' Sprouts are closed. Fort Clatsop is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Columbia River Maritime Museum is open from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Seaside Museum is closed.

Sunset Empire Transportation ("The Bus") is not running.

The Daily Astorian offices are closed, but the newspaper printed and delivered as usual.

Homelessness doesn't stop for the holidays

Helping Hands raises awareness, funds through the winter months

By KATHERINE LACAZE
The Daily Astorian



Katherine Lacaze/EO Media Group
Lisa Chambers, of Astoria, is enjoying a holiday season with her 8-year-old son Zar. A year ago, the two were separated and Chambers was going through Helping Hands' re-entry program.

Helping Hands was one of the options.

Support and accountability

Chambers made her way down to Seaside on an evening bus from Astoria. Upon her arrival at the emergency shelter, staff member Alicia Camberg greeted her.

"Alicia took me and just hugged me and told me, 'You're going to get your kids back,'" Chambers said. "From that point on, I knew what I had to do. There was no question."

Chambers told herself nothing could stop her. By December, she had visitation rights to see her sons two hours once a week. Seeing

them for the first time made her stronger in her pursuit to provide a stable environment for them and herself.

Christmas last year was one of the saddest times for her, but it also was a time of hope. She had moved into the women's home and was going through the re-entry program. With support from Helping Hands staff and volunteers, she got clean and found a job.

"I was doing everything I possibly could to get my kids back," she said.

Her hard work paid off. On Valentine's Day, Zar was back in her care. She still was living at the women's home, and the environment provided extra accountability. Chambers was surrounded by nine women who she knew understood her story and cared about her but also could report her if she slipped up.

That didn't happen, though. Chambers stayed the course, and by June, had moved into her own apartment. She believes her success was due to Helping Hands, which she said "is a very, very loving and helpful place," and her motivation to be the best version of herself for her sons.

In October, she was offered custody of Kai, who has severe autism. However, he is



thriving and developing well with his foster family. Chambers feels it is best to keep him there for a while longer.

"It's not better that he's away from me, but it's better that he's growing," she said.

She wants to make sure she has a stable environment for Kai to return to. She hopes to get training to cope better with his autism and to provide the support and guidance he needs.

"My gut tells me it's not time," she said. "I'm not ready to make a wrong move and have him removed again."

She has full access to him and calls and visits frequently.

"Life is way better," she said. "I couldn't have done it without Helping Hands."

Countywide housing assistance need

Clatsop Community Action, which provides services and referrals to those in need in the county, is reporting a large increase in demand for all of its social services, in particular, housing and emer-

gency food requests. The organization reported housing assistance requests have increased about 600 percent from two years ago. Many families and individuals — including numerous children and senior citizens — remain unsheltered.

Food distribution also increased by about 50 percent over the past four years. More than 25 percent of residents qualify for emergency food assistance, the organization reported.

Clatsop Community Action runs multiple housing programs with different eligibility requirements. The organization assesses people who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless to see if they are eligible for any of the programs. Typically, the people have some type of income, although it may not be much, Executive Director Elaine Bruce said.

"We can't do everything, but we try to augment what's there," she said.

Clatsop Community Action assists Helping Hands

by diverting some of its grant money if it fits the criteria for a specific funding stream, Bruce said. The agency also works with the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority and other organizations and agencies.

As for seasonal need, the organization's energy assistance program runs from October to February and uses five different grant sources to help reduce energy costs for those that qualify.

"In the winter, that's when people really need that," Bruce said. "We have a lot of applications that come in."

She said factors contribute to the increasing need for housing assistance in the county, including a lack of manufacturing and other living-wage jobs; a lack of housing in general; and slow recovery from the economic recession in 2008.

"Those are heavy contributors to people asking for help," she said. "Sometimes people are hit by more than one factor at a time, she added. "It's just a complex myriad of problems."

'Feeling lost'

Lisa Chambers, 44, of Astoria, can relate.

This time last year she was going through Helping Hands' rehabilitation program after several tumultuous, emotional months of relapsing and using crystal methamphetamine after 14 years of being clean; having people she thought were friends turn against her; becoming homeless; and having her two sons, Kai, now 7, and Zar, 8, taken from her custody.

While at the hospital on suicide watch, a social worker asked if Chambers thought she could be a good mom while using crystal meth, she said. She knew the answer was "no." In October 2014, after a summer of "kind of destroying myself," she said, and after being evicted from her apartment, she remembers sitting at the Short Stop convenience store in Astoria "feeling lost." The Department of Human Services had referred her to options for getting back to a point where she could be with her children.

Seaside OUTLETS

WELCOMING IN THE NEW YEAR

OPEN NEWS YEAR'S EVE 10-5

NEW YEAR'S DAY 12-5

WINTER HOURS JAN-MAR

SUN-THURS 10-6, FRI-SAT 10-8

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