

Governor to propose GMO bill

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber will propose a legislative fix in mid-January aimed at fostering coexistence among biotech, conventional and organic crops.

Details of the proposal haven't yet been disclosed and the legislative language will likely be amended before an actual bill is introduced, said Richard Whitman, the governor's natural resources policy director.

"The anticipation is there will be more conversation among stakeholders before we finalize the bill," Whitman said.

A task force on genetically modified organisms appears to have helped Kitzhaber decide on a course of action.

In 2013, the Oregon legislature pre-empted most local governments from restricting genetically modified crops at Kitzhaber's urging.

The governor then appointed a task force to frame the controversy over genetically modified organisms and inform lawmakers' decisions on possible statewide legislation.

The task force's recently completed report does not make any policy recommendations but lays out the points of contention between critics and proponents of genetically engineered crops.

However, its members did agree that more clarity is needed about the state's role in regulating GMOs and how it diverges from federal authority.

The main question now is what measures Kitzhaber or state lawmakers will put forward to prevent unwanted cross-pollination among these crops or if farmers can agree on a voluntary system to avoid such gene flow.

"All eyes are going to be on the legislature and what the governor is planning to do," said Ivan Maluski, executive director of Friends of Family Farms, which wants stronger biotech regulation. "This task force marks the beginning of the process, not the end."

One subject of debate will probably be the Oregon Department of Agriculture's



Gov. John Kitzhaber talks to the editorial staff at the East Oregonian in June in Pendleton. Kitzhaber

"control area" authority over biotech crops, said Maluski.

Currently, ODA can restrict where genetically engineered crops are planted as long as the USDA retains jurisdiction over them, but the state agency believes it loses that power once the crop is deregulated by federal officials.

State legislation could establish that ODA may still create or retain "control areas" even after USDA lifts its own restrictions on biotech crops, said Maluski.

For example, such state control areas could require biotech farmers to maintain "isolation distances" to mitigate the risk of cross-pollination with non-GMOs, he said.

"It's going to be on a case-by-case basis, as it should be," Maluski said.

Another concept involves compensating organic and conventional growers if their crops are contaminated by pollen from biotech plants, said Chris Schreiner, executive director of Oregon Tilth, an organic certification agency.

There should be a way to compensate non-GMO farmers for damages from cross-pollination that wouldn't require them to buy insurance policies, he said.

Proponents of biotechnology say farmers who grow biotech, conventional and organic crops can work out their differences without interference from the government.

"Farmers have learned to coexist for years," said Paulette Pyle, grass roots director

for Oregonians for Food and Shelter, an agribusiness industry group.

Decades ago, a conflict between cherry growers and wheat farmers over drift from 2,4-D herbicides threatened to spur legislation or erupt into litigation, but neighbors were ultimately able to resolve the issue through communication, Pyle said.

The potential for biotech varieties to pollinate organic crops isn't actually a problem under USDA organic rules, which regulate farm practices but don't set up standards for genetic purity, she said.

"The organic folks have put themselves in that market box," Pyle said. "They can advertise their product any way they want, but they've got to accept responsibility."

Bills that would increase government oversight of biotech crops would actually impede co-existence by limiting crop choices for farmers, said Greg Loberg, manager of the West Coast Beet Seed Co.

"It sounds threatening," he said. "There will be winners and losers in a situation where government intervention occurs through legislation."

Voluntary coexistence measures for biotech, conventional and organic crops would be preferable to those mandated by regulators, he said.

For example, seed growers in Oregon's Willamette Valley are already able to reduce the chances of cross-pollination among related crops through a voluntary mapping system, Loberg said.

Wandering wolf gets pack status

By JEFF BARNARD
Associated Press

GRANTS PASS — Oregon's famous wandering wolf, OR-7, is now officially the leader of his own pack.

State and federal wildlife agencies said Wednesday they have designated OR-7, his mate and their pups the Rogue Pack, for their location in the Rogue River drainage in the Cascades east of Medford.

It's the first pack in western Oregon and the ninth in the state since wolves from Idaho started swimming the Snake River in the 1990s.

As a youngster, OR-7 left his pack in northeastern Oregon in September 2011 in search of a mate. He traveled thousands of miles across Oregon and back and forth into Northern California before find-

ing a mate last winter in the southern Cascades on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

The GPS collar that tracked his travels is still working, but biologists hope to replace it this spring.

Efforts to trap OR-7, his mate or one of the pups to put a tracking collar on them were not successful last fall, said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist John Stephenson. They hope to have better luck this May, when the pack dens up for more pups.

Even if the GPS tracking collar fails, a separate unit on the collar that emits a radio signal that can be tracked by a directional antenna should continue working, Stephenson said.

Oregon could consider lifting state Endangered Species Act protections for

wolves this year if biologists confirm that four or more packs produced pups that survived through the end of the year. The earliest a proposal could go before the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission is April, said spokeswoman Michelle Dennehy. Delisting would not mean an end to protections for wolves, but would give ranchers more options for dealing with wolves that attack livestock.

OR-7 has continued to stay out of trouble as far as livestock are concerned.

Oregon's management plan calls for protections to continue for the Rogue Pack until there are four packs in western Oregon producing pups for three years running. Federal Endangered Species Act protection also remains in force in western Oregon and California.

Suit highlights risk of 'auto-hold' video poker strategy

PORTLAND (AP) — A lawsuit claims the Oregon Lottery misleads video poker players to think they'll do better if they let the machines play the cards.

Plaintiff Justin Curzi told Oregon Public Broadcasting he noticed the issue when using the "auto-hold" feature. It chooses what cards to keep or discard in the game that mimics five-card draw poker.

Curzi said the machines didn't always make the smartest plays. For example, he said, the machine would hold cards most likely to give him a straight when other available cards would have given him a flush, a better hand with a higher payout.

Lottery officials declined comment, which is common for state agencies facing litigation. The lottery's website warns players they may not do as well relying on the machine: "Auto-hold strategies vary by game, based on the particular features of a game and do not necessarily result in theoretical payouts."

Curzi's attorney, Jay Zollinger, says the notice is too obscure, and documents he obtained through a public records request show the lottery knows through research that players believe the machine will use the best strategy.

The suit filed in Multnomah County claims lottery officials were warned more than five years ago

that the auto-hold function produced worse odds but did nothing to change the games or warn players.

"The lottery knows how the players perceive the auto-hold, and the lottery hasn't done anything affirmative to address that perception," he told *The Oregonian* newspaper.

Using lottery documents, Zollinger said he calculated that the lower odds cost players \$134 million in lower credits over the last five years.

That doesn't mean players lost that much extra money. The amount includes credits racked up but not necessarily paid out to players, who usually continue playing through a number of ups and downs.

Corrections

The Jan. 7 article "Business licenses to remain the same" misstated Mike Short's employer. He works for the Bank of Eastern Oregon.

The Jan. 7 article "Farmers concerned power line will zap profit" incorrectly stated the economic impact caused by the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line on irrigated circles owned by Hale Companies. Vice President Craig Reeder said one alternative of the route would take half of seven circles out of production. At 62.5 acres per half-circle and \$15,000 per acre, that's roughly \$6.5 million in total value.

The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed major holidays

www.eastoregonian.com

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East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday, Monday and Dec. 25, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801.
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Single copy price:
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To submit sports or outdoors information or tips: 541-966-0838 • sports@eastoregonian.com

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Production Director Jake Duquette
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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
38° 27°	37° 28°	39° 31°	40° 30°	41° 29°
42° 29°	40° 27°	40° 30°	39° 30°	42° 29°

ALMANAC

PENDLETON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	40°	28°
Normals	40°	26°
Records	68° (1902)	-7° (1937)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.18"
Normal month to date 0.40"
Year to date 0.18"
Last year to date 0.17"
Normal year to date 0.40"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

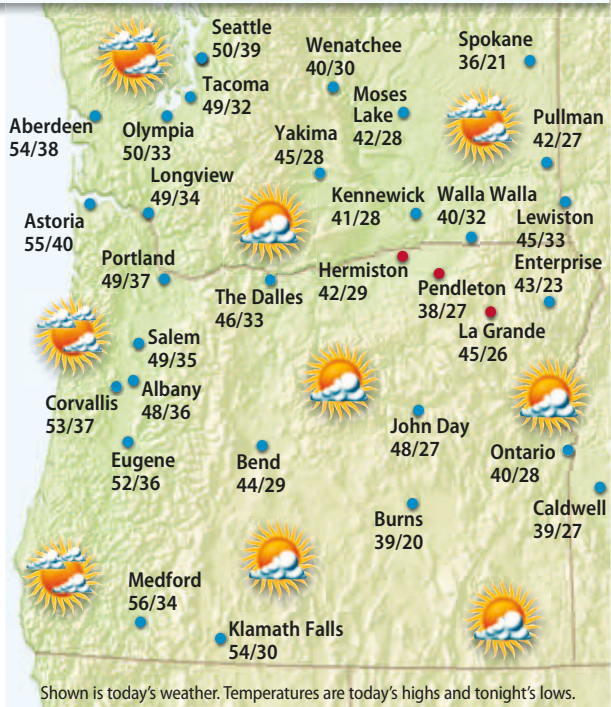
TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	42°	25°
Normals	40°	28°
Records	67° (2002)	-13° (1937)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.10"
Normal month to date 0.28"
Year to date 0.10"
Last year to date 0.15"
Normal year to date 0.28"

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:35 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:29 p.m.
Moonrise today	8:25 p.m.
Moonset today	9:13 a.m.

Last	New	First	Full
Jan 13	Jan 20	Jan 26	Feb 3



REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Clouds and sun today. Turning cloudy tonight; however, partly cloudy in the south.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Partly sunny today; areas of morning fog in the upper Treasure Valley.

Western Washington: Intervals of clouds and sun today; dense fog in the morning. Dense fog tonight.

Eastern Washington: Areas of freezing fog in the morning; some sun today. Partly cloudy tonight.

Cascades: Partly sunny today. Partly cloudy tonight. Mostly cloudy tomorrow.

Northern California: Partly sunny today. Partly cloudy tonight.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	55	40	pc	53	42	c
Baker City	39	24	pc	35	24	c
Bend	44	29	pc	45	28	c
Brookings	59	44	pc	56	44	c
Burns	39	20	pc	37	19	pc
Enterprise	43	23	pc	38	23	c
Eugene	52	36	pc	53	38	c
Heppner	39	28	pc	40	27	c
Hermiston	42	29	pc	40	27	c
John Day	48	27	pc	43	26	c
Klamath Falls	54	30	pc	53	27	c
La Grande	45	26	pc	41	26	c
Meacham	40	23	pc	37	25	c
Medford	56	34	pc	56	33	c
Newport	58	44	pc	56	45	c
North Bend	59	44	pc	56	44	c
Ontario	40	28	pc	38	28	c
Pasco	44	29	pc	40	26	c
Pendleton	38	27	pc	37	28	c
Portland	49	37	pc	51	37	c
Redmond	44	26	pc	44	26	c
Salem	49	35	pc	52	38	c
Spokane	36	21	pc	31	25	c
Ukiah	45	27	pc	42	28	c
Vancouver	49	36	pc	51	34	c
Walla Walla	40	32	pc	38	31	c
Yakima	45	28	pc	42	25	c

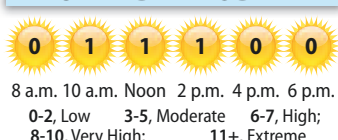
WORLD CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	45	22	s	46	24	s
Hong Kong	67	56	s	66	57	s
Jerusalem	42	34	sh	37	27	sn
London	51	43	pc	58	52	sh
Mexico City	63	40	pc	66	44	pc
Moscow	15	13	sn	22	19	sn
Paris	50	42	r	56	53	r
Rome	56	41	pc	58	42	pc
Seoul	30	18	s	37	21	s
Sydney	85	71	s	88	73	s
Tokyo	50	37	pc	48	37	pc

WINDS

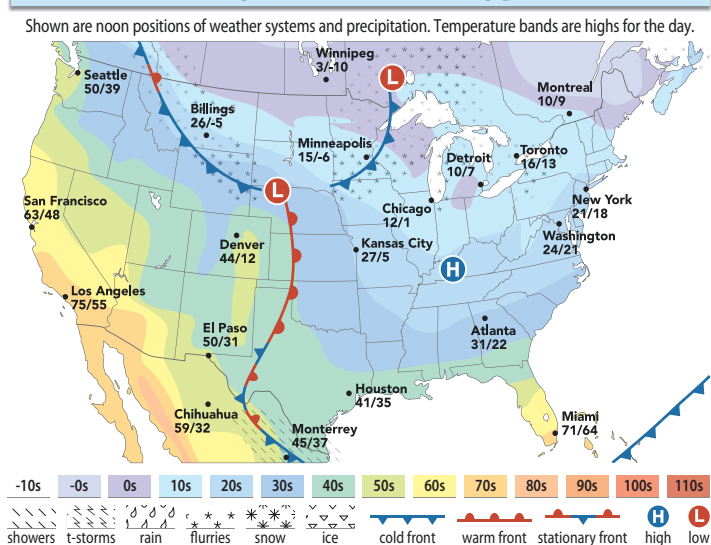
(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	NNE 3-6	VAR 3-6
Pendleton	NNW 3-6	NNE 3-6

UV INDEX TODAY



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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



National Summary: Lake-effect snow will shift northward today as a swath of snow moves eastward over the Upper Midwest. Snow will fall over the northern Rockies. The East will remain cold, while the West stays warm.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 84° in Los Angeles, Calif. **Low -30°** in Poplar, Mont.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	46	28	pc	39	26	c
Atlanta	31	22	s	40	21	pc
Birmingham	30	20	s	38	18	pc
Boston	38	29	pc	38	29	pc
Bozeman	19	17	s	34	17	sf
Charleston, SC	36	23	s	49	29	pc
Charleston, WV	22	20	pc	28	8	pc
Chicago	12	11	sn	3	-8	pc
Cleveland	13	11	pc	17	-1	sf
Dallas	37	27	s	35	23	c
Denver	44	12	c	29	17	sn
Detroit	10	7	sn	16	0	sf
El Paso	50	31	i	43	28	c
Fairbanks	7	2	s	14	2	pc
Fargo	12	-7	sn	5	-9	pc
Honolulu	78	65	s	79	65	s
Houston	41	35	pc	40	33	r
Indianapolis	14	8	pc	8	-7	pc
Jacksonville	44	31	sh	53	32	s
Kansas City	27	5	s	14	4	s
Las Vegas	66	41	pc	64	41	pc
Little Rock	30	24	s	33	19	pc
Los Angeles	75	55	pc	71	54	pc
Louisville	21	16	pc	21	5	s
Memphis	28	23	s	32	17	pc
Miami	71	64	sh	78	61	pc
Milwaukee	12	0	sn	3	-7	pc
Minneapolis	15	-6	sn	2	-10	pc
Nashville	24	21	s	27	10	pc
New Orleans	40	32	s	47	33	c
New York City	21					