

Potato, sugar leaders laud GMO labeling bill

By JOHN O'CONNELL
Capital Press

PARK CITY, Utah — Leaders of the potato and sugar beet industries say they consider a bill that passed Congress requiring labels on food containing genetically modified organisms to be a good compromise.

The House of Representatives approved the bill July 14 by a 306-117 vote and sent it to the White House. President Barack Obama has indicated he intends to sign the legislation, which agricultural interests laud for creating a single national standard to prevent a patchwork of state regulations.

The GMO labeling bill recently implemented in Vermont will

be suspended. New rules for the federal standard will go into effect within two years.

The bill allows companies to label GMO content using an icon that will be developed by USDA, on-package language or a bar code linking to online messaging when scanned by a smartphone — a major point of contention among critics, who argue the requirement is too weak.

"It gives the food companies options," said John Keeling, executive vice president and CEO of the National Potato Council. "They have to convey information, but it gives them options in how they do that."

NPC had initially made it a top priority to lobby for a voluntary

GMO labeling standard, introduced by Rep. Mike Pompeo, R-Kan., but that bill failed to gain traction in Congress.

NPC President Jim Tiede, of American Falls, Idaho, lobbied for the current bill with leaders from the major U.S. commodities, including corn and soybeans, in a July 7 meeting with House Agriculture Committee Chairman Michael Conway, R-Texas.

Tiede said Conway "apologized profusely" that the voluntary labeling bill failed, but agricultural interests agree the new bill is still "a good compromise."

Ashton, Idaho, potato farmer Britt Raybould, who chairs NPC's Legislative and Government Affairs Committee, said suppliers

had already started pulling products from Vermont shelves. Raybould supports the bill's definition of a GMO crop, noting it regulates the introduction of traits from one organism into another but omits promising new "gene editing" techniques that don't introduce foreign DNA.

Furthermore, the bill doesn't require labeling of ingredients derived from GMO crops in which all traces of GMO traits are removed in processing, such as beet sugar.

"Food companies now can breathe a bit easier," said Luther Markwart, executive vice president of American Sugarbeet Growers Association. "They're not going to have to do different sourcing of

ingredients and drive up consumer food prices over a ridiculous Vermont bill."

National Organic Coalition officials said in a press release the bill avoids "fully transparent, on-package labels" and includes no enforcement provisions or penalties.

The vast majority of U.S. sugar beets are genetically engineered to withstand glyphosate herbicide. Idaho-based J.R. Simplot Co. is in the early stages of marketing the only commercially available GMO spud, called Innate.

"This bill blocks Vermont's law and gives USDA two additional years to set labeling rules under this weak and meaningless framework," the coalition's press release reads.

Time runs out for timber ballot initiatives

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Bureau

Three ballot initiatives that would have restricted clear-cutting and aerial spraying in Oregon have failed to qualify for the November general election.

One of the petitions, which would have imposed new limits on aerial pesticide applications, was able to obtain the Oregon Supreme Court's approval for its ballot title language.

However, that didn't leave enough time for supporters to collect about 88,000 valid signatures by the July 8 deadline.

The state's highest court has yet to rule on the ballot title for another petition that would restrict aerial spraying and logging in landslide-prone areas.

A third petition to prohibit clear-cut timber harvests was withdrawn by supporters due to legal complications involving forestland property value laws.

Steve Pedery, a chief petitioner for all three proposals, said the application process was started late and further hindered by legal challenges from the timber industry.

"Once we ended up in the court process, the clock was probably going to run out on us," said Pedery, who is also conservation director for the Oregon Wild



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

The state Department of Forestry keeps a 100-foot buffer along the Nehalem River below the Homesteader timber sale in the Buster Creek basin.

environmental nonprofit.

However, Pedery said he's pleased the Oregon Supreme Court has approved the ballot title for one of the initiative petitions, since such language is now likely to stand in future elections.

Oregon Wild is taking a long-term interest in enacting timber reforms, possibly with initiatives on the 2018 or 2020 ballots, said Pedery.

Oregonians for Food & Shelter, an agribusiness group, is glad the "extreme and damaging measures" won't be on the November ballot, but it's likely the issues will be revived, said Scott Dahlman, its policy director.

Similar ideas will also probably surface in the Oregon legislature again next year, Dahlman said.

Lawmakers rejected such proposals during the 2015 legislative session in favor of a "more reasoned approach" once they learned about their negative consequences, he said.

"We think the people of Oregon would do the same if they were educated on the issue," Dahlman said.

Sara Duncan, public affairs director for the Oregon Forest & Industries Council, said the timber industry has made great technological improvements to prevent off-site spray drift.

Aside from a few high-profile incidents, pesticide spraying in forestry has proven to be safe, she said.

"We already have stringent rules and regulations," Duncan said.

BRIEFLY

Young occupier pleads guilty in standoff case

PORTLAND (AP) — The youngest occupier from this winter's takeover of an Oregon bird sanctuary has pleaded guilty.

At the federal courthouse in Portland, 21-year-old Travis Cox admitted Wednesday that he conspired with others to impede federal workers from doing their jobs at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

Prosecutors will recommend that Cox serve eight months of home detention with credit for time served.

The defendant from Redmond, Oregon, was arrested in Utah in April. He's the ninth man to plead guilty to conspiracy among the 26 people indicted in the case.

Most of the other defendants — including occupation leader Ammon Bundy — are scheduled to go to trial in September.

DEQ says ground water contaminated after train derailment near Mosier

PORTLAND (AP) — A monitoring well installed after last month's train derailment near Mosier, Oregon, has detected oil contamination in the ground water.

The state Department of Environmental Quality tells Portland station KATU that drinking water is not affected in the Columbia River Gorge town because those wells are uphill

from where the oil train derailed June 3.

The agency said Wednesday that four monitoring wells were installed after the wreck, and one revealed significant oil contamination.

DEQ plans to install a treatment system that injects air into the underground water. The oxygen will stimulate the existing microbes that live in the water to break down the oil.

Spokane may fine railroads shipping oil or coal through town

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — The Spokane City Council is thinking of fining railroad companies that ship crude oil or coal through downtown Spokane.

The companies would be fined hundreds of dollars for each train car under a law the City Council will consider placing on the November ballot.

The Spokesman-Review says the proposed law would make such shipments a civil infraction punishable by a fine of up to \$261 for each train car.

The Spokane City Council earlier this summer condemned Union Pacific Railroad for resuming the transport of crude oil through Mosier, Oregon, following the derailment of a train that had passed through Spokane hours earlier.

The City Council will vote Monday on whether to add a law that would authorize fines for oil and coal train operators to the November ballot.

Corrections

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 —

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333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed major holidays

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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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\$1 Tuesday through Friday, \$1.50 Saturday

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Very warm with sunshine	Sunny, breezy and not as warm	Mostly sunny and pleasant	Nice with brilliant sunshine	Plenty of sunshine
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
93° 62°	82° 55°	84° 53°	90° 59°	94° 59°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
97° 67°	87° 57°	88° 55°	94° 60°	98° 61°

ALMANAC

PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE

HIGH LOW

Yesterday 86° 58°

Normals 90° 60°

Records 110° (1931) 42° (1932)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace

Month to date 0.80"

Normal month to date 0.20"

Year to date 7.32"

Last year to date 5.00"

Normal year to date 7.82"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE

HIGH LOW

Yesterday 88° 53°

Normals 90° 59°

Records 108° (1931) 46° (1933)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"

Month to date 0.30"

Normal month to date 0.14"

Year to date 4.94"

Last year to date 3.25"

Normal year to date 5.87"

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 5:27 a.m.

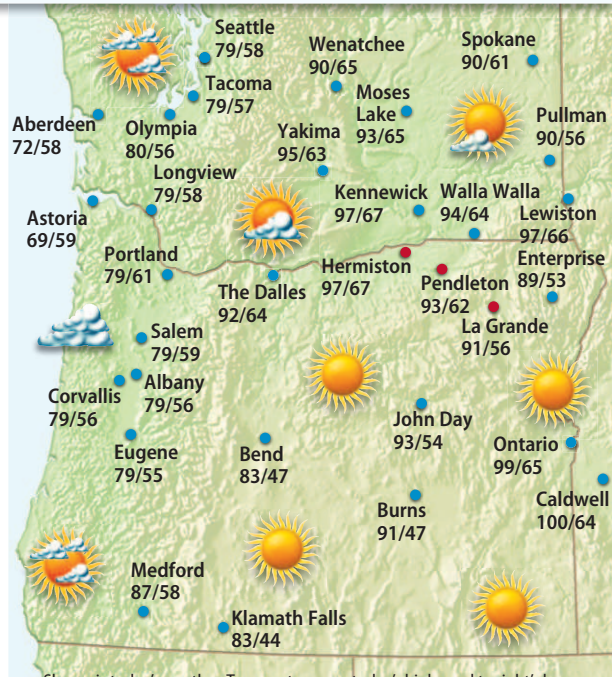
Sunset tonight 8:36 p.m.

Moonrise today 9:38 p.m.

Moonset today 7:27 a.m.

Last New First Full

July 26 Aug 2 Aug 10 Aug 18



Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Mostly cloudy today; a shower in spots across the north.

Eastern Washington: Partial sunshine today.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Sunny today. A shower or thunderstorm in spots near the Cascades; hot elsewhere.

Cascades: Partly sunny, a thunderstorm in spots this afternoon.

Western Washington: Clouds and sun today; however, cloudy at the coast; a shower in spots across the south.

Northern California: Low clouds followed by sunshine at the coast today; plenty of sunshine elsewhere.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	69	59	c	69	56	pc
Baker City	92	50	s	78	39	s
Bend	83	47	s	77	42	s
Brookings	64	53	pc	68	53	pc
Burns	91	47	s	82	40	s
Enterprise	89	53	s	76	46	s
Eugene	79	55	pc	79	51	s
Heppner	91	57	s	80	49	s
Hermiston	97	67	pc	87	57	s
John Day	93	54	s	82	47	s
Klamath Falls	83	44	s	81	43	s
La Grande	91	56	s	79	45	s
Meacham	88	51	s	75	42	s
Medford	87	58	pc	87	56	s
Newport	64	54	c	65	51	s
North Bend	66	56	c	68	53	s
Ontario	99	65	s	91	58	s
Pasco	96	66	pc	86	56	s
Pendleton	93	62	s	82	55	s
Portland	79	61	pc	75	58	pc
Redmond	88	48	s	80	41	s
Salem	79	59	pc	78	55	s
Spokane	90	61	pc	77	54	sh
Ukiah	87	49	s	75	43	s
Vancouver	79	60	pc	73	56	pc
Walla Walla	94	64	s	82	58	s
Yakima	95	63	pc	86	54	s

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	84	74	r	88	79	pc
Hong Kong	91	82	sh	91	82	s
Jerusalem	85	69	s	86	65	s
London	78	63	pc	76	62	t
Mexico City	72	55	t	71	55	t
Moscow	70	55	r	74	61	t
Paris	82	63	t	82	61	pc
Rome	85	62	s	85	68	s
Seoul	88	75	pc	89	75	t
Sydney	70	58	sh	77	55	pc
Tokyo	79	71	r	77	69	sh

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	WNW 4-8	WSW 8-16
Pendleton	WNW 6-12	WSW 10-20

UV INDEX TODAY

2 5 7 7 4 2

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.

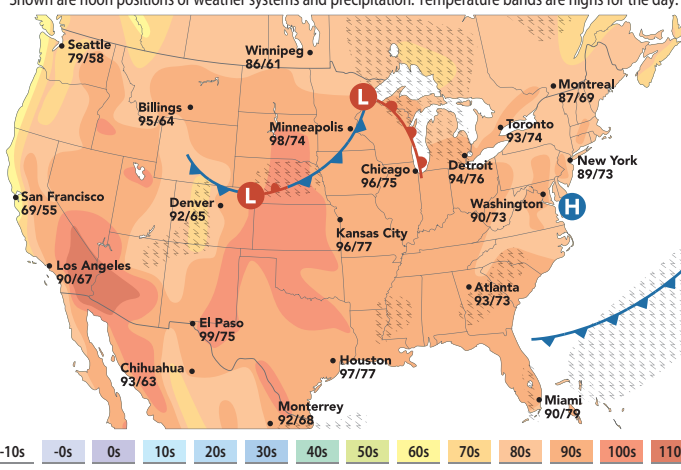
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2016

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



National Summary: Gusty storms will rumble across the Upper Midwest, while spotty storms drench the Southeast and dot the Rockies today. Heat and humidity will reach dangerous levels over much of the Central states.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 112° in Needles, Calif. Low 24° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	94	70	pc	95	71	t
Atlanta	93	73	t	94	74	t
Atlanta City	84	73	s	88	77	pc
Baltimore	88	69	s	94	75	pc
Billings	95	64	s	98	63	t
Birmingham	96	75	pc	93	75	t
Boise	99	62	s	89	57	s
Boston	87	70	s	93	73	t
Charleston, SC	91	74	pc	91	74	s