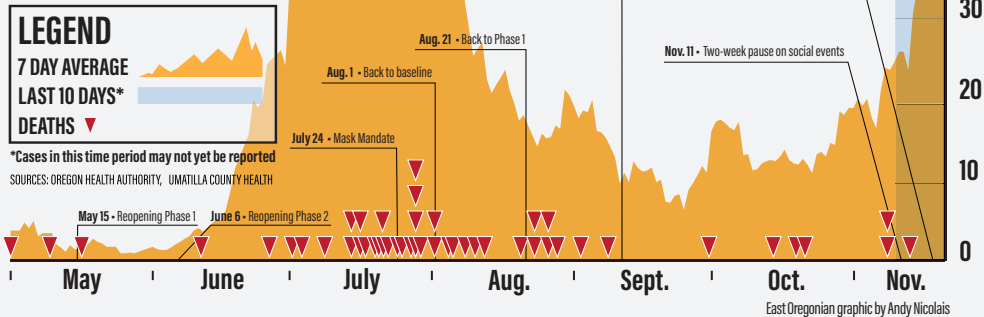


## UMATILLA COUNTY - COVID-19 TREND

### TOTALS AS OF FRIDAY, NOV. 20:

Umatilla County cases: **4,013** (225 new cases this week)  
 Umatilla County deaths: **48** (3 new deaths reported this week)  
 Oregon cases: **62,175** (7,238 new cases this week)  
 Oregon deaths: **812** (59 new deaths reported this week)



## SCHOOL OPENING METRICS

### For Umatilla County elementary students to return for in-person instruction:

- the county must have < 100 cases per 100,000 population during a 14-day span, AND
- the county must have a test positivity rate < 8% during same 14-day span.

### For all schools in the county to reopen for in-person instruction:

- the county must have < 50 cases per 100,000 population during a 14-day span AND
- the county must have a test positivity rate < 5% during same 14-day span.

### TEST POSITIVITY RATE - Goal is ≤ 5%

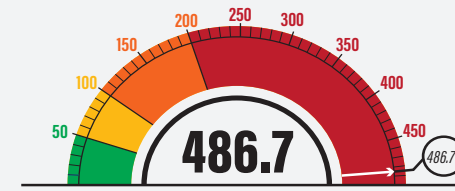
(Number of positive tests divided by number of people tested)

Time Period	Umatilla County	Oregon
Nov. 1-14	24.4%	Not reported
Oct. 25-Nov. 7	20.9%	10.0%
Oct. 18-31	17.6%	7.5%

Source: Oregon Health Authority. Percentages may change week to week as data is updated.

### 14 DAY CASE RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION

WEEKS OF NOV. 1 - NOV. 14



# A 'churkey' by any other name

How the pandemic supply chain made a Thanksgiving meal out of chickens

By SHEILA HAGAR  
 Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

WESTON — If you want to cook a churkey for your Thanksgiving meal, you have to act fast.

But first — “churkey?” Exactly, Cheryl Cosner said with a laugh on Thursday, Nov. 19.

She and her husband Robert Cosner are the founders and owners of Upper Dry Creek Ranch, about 5 miles south of Milton-Freewater, and 3 miles uphill from State Route 11.

The ranch is in the business of selling animals, on the hoof or frozen in packages. The Cosners have built a robust clientele that appreciates their sustainability practices and certified standards, Cheryl Cosner said.

About 90% of their meat sales have traditionally been to institutional cafeterias, such as those at Whitman College and Hewlett Packard, along with grocers and restaurants around the Pacific Northwest.

The pandemic changed that this year. With college campuses closed and companies sending employees home to work, a hard pivot was made to sell directly to people



Upper Dry Creek Ranch/Contributed Photo

**Upper Dry Creek Ranch chickens had more time to grow big this summer with processing delays. Now some of them are as big as a small Thanksgiving turkey.**

doing their own cooking.

By beefing up Upper Dry Creek’s online store and marketing to the home consumers, plus continuing some livestock sales, the Cosners’ business is still upright, she said.

A delivery routine brought the processed product right to customers in Walla Walla and Tri-Cities, Washington, and Pendleton.

Now, then, the chickens — or churkeys, if you will.

Along with their trademark lamb and beef, the Cosners have long sold roasting chickens they raise, in frozen form for meals.

The taste is “amazing,” and there’s a fan following among chefs for the poultry, which have typically weighed just over 4 pounds apiece in their packages, Cosner said.

This year, the plan was

to order chicks as usual. Little did she know demand for them would intensify, particularly with a new market of housebound folks intent on raising their own food.

Chick orders were backlogged six to eight weeks, Cosner recalled. When they finally got some — later and fewer than expected — the arrival was followed by a chicken food shortage in July when feed manufacturers were caught short by the demand.

A bag of chicken food was as scarce as hen’s teeth, Cosner wrote in her newsletter to customers, conceding the pun.

Then the next egg got laid. In August, when Upper Dry Creek’s chickens were ready to be made into entrees, the chicken processing business was full up with other orders.

### ONLINE

For more information about Upper Dry Creek Ranch, go to [upperdry-creek-ranch.com](http://upperdry-creek-ranch.com).

So the chickens stayed around, eating and growing.

And more eating and more growing.

Soon, the “nice little 6-pound chickens” weighed more than 10 pounds, Cosner said.

“By mid-August, we were finally able to get our birds processed but not before they were big,” she wrote. “I mean, really big.”

Now? Those are the churkeys, weighing in at about 7 pounds per package — a size many cooks seek out in a Thanksgiving turkey, Cosner said.

Upper Dry Creek Ranch is taking online orders for the birds until 7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 22, but there’s only about 30 to be had. Drop-off day will be Tuesday, Nov. 24, and if a customer asks, the Cosners will jump-start the thawing process.

Cheryl Cosner is thankful her business could flex around the challenges presented by COVID-19, she said.

“We’re going to make it,” she said.

## LOCAL BRIEFING

### Pilot Rock passes \$8M school bond

PILOT ROCK — Even as most students learn from home during the pandemic, the Pilot Rock School District was able to convince residents to make a long-term investment in school facilities.

The district announced Thursday, Nov. 19, that the Pilot Rock School Board had formally accepted the results of the election, affirming the 59-41 vote. Pilot Rock is the latest Eastern Oregon school district to take advantage of Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching Program, meaning the \$8 million raised from Pilot Rock property taxes will be matched by \$4 million from the state.

“Thank you to our voters,” Pilot Rock Superintendent Troy Jerome said. “Passing a bond is difficult, but with the challenge of the pandemic added in, we knew we had to work even harder, and that paid off.”

The \$12 million in proceeds from the bond and grant will go toward capital improvements at the district’s schools, including security upgrades, improved disability access, new roofing and an updated heating, ventilation and air

conditioning system.

### Hermiston City Council to meet Monday, Nov. 23

HERMISTON — The Hermiston City Council will meet Monday, Nov. 23, at 7 p.m. at the Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395.

On the agenda is an update of the city’s sewer ordinance, as part of an ongoing effort to review and update all city ordinances. According to the agenda packet, the updates to the sewer ordinance will bring the language into compliance with changes to state and federal law that the city has already been following.

The council will consider a motion to create the debt service payment fund needed to use payments in lieu of taxes from enterprise zone projects to pay down debt service the city has on bonds.

The council will also hear presentation of the city’s financial audit for the 2019-20 fiscal year, the October financial report, committee reports and staff reports.

The meeting will be livestreamed on the city of Hermiston YouTube channel.

— EO Media Group

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President, CEO, & Army veteran



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