BRIEFS

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before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins. For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the Union County FSA office at 541-963-4178

Youth business education program reaches more Eastern Oregonians

PORTLAND — Young Entrepreneurs Business Week announced it will launch programs at Oregon State University-Cascades for the first time in the summer of 2019. Partnership with OSU-Cascades, based in Bend, will allow YEBW to better serve youth and business professionals across the state, particularly in Central and Eastern Oregon.

YEBW's expansion to OSU-Cascades marks its entry into a fourth campus partnership. Programs first launched at University of Portland in 2006. Oregon State University was the second campus host in 2008. University of Oregon joined the lineup in 2014. This critical partnership with OSU-Cascades was made possible by The Ford Family Foundation and The Tykeson Family Charitable Trust, which provide substantial scholarship support for local youth in rural Oregon.

In 2019, YEBW will run Business Week programs at: OSU-Cascades, June 23 to June 29; University of Portland, July 7 to July 13; Oregon State University, July 28 to Aug. 3; and University of Oregon, Aug. 11 to Aug. 17. High school students are eligible to register starting Oct. 19. To learn more, visit www.yebw.org.

Young Entrepreneurs Business Week (YEBW), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, educates and inspires the next generation of business leaders. Established in 2006, YEBW empowers young people to explore business industries and careers, while developing leadership and professional skills. Led by local entrepreneurs and executives, YEBW hosts week-long experiential education programs for high school students — Business Week, Finance Week, Investing Week, Marketing Week and Entrepreneur Week — on college campuses across Oregon.

Oregon and California crabbers sue fossil fuel companies

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Commercial crabbers in Oregon and California are suing 30 fossil fuel companies, claiming they are to blame for climate change, which has hurt their industry.

West Coast crabbers experienced significant losses starting in the 2015-16 season when massive algal blooms caused by warm ocean temperatures resulted in a domoic acid outbreak that reduced the length of the crabbing season.

The season was cut short again in 2016-2017 for the same reason.

OTEC

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period of time.

"It's a very successful project. Our lumber grade is better, and we have better drying times," said Mike Smith, Boise Cascade Electrical System engineer. "The lumber is worth more money and we are saving extra doing it."

Now that the project is fully complete, Boise Cascade is expecting an annual energy savings of more than 981,000 kilowatt hours per year, totaling an annual energy cost savings of more than $39,000 for the company.

According to Andrew Cutler, OTEC's manager of communications and public relations, the "rebate incentive program has allowed OTEC several opportunities to provide rebates and simultaneously reduce electrical demand for capacity."

Susie Snyder, OTEC supervisor of energy programs, said the Boise Cascade project represented a benchmark for the cooperative.

"This is the largest (rebate) project we've done at OTEC," she said. "We are very pleased to be able to work with Boise Cascade, BPA and ESI to be able to give money back to our members."

RANCH

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Dennis Sheehy runs one herd on private rangeland in the summer and another herd on public land on the hills southeast of Joseph. In the late summer and early fall, Sheehy said, the focus is growing pasture.

"We put the cows and calves in the hay meadows for another month of growth," Sheehy said. "Having enough fall pasture is a critical element if you are going to stay in Wallowa County."

Birkmaier brings his cattle off summer public range in northern Wallowa County at the end of October, and until spring they are spread out across the Zumwalt Prairie and Wallowa Valley. He said his first concern when preparing for winter is making sure he has enough hay.

"The earliest thing you will start procuring is winter feed, get it in a shed or tarped. You want to have a little extra, because you never know how long the winter will be," he said. "Once you start feeding hay you don't build fence or cut firewood. Feeding controls your day, and it's hard to run an entire operation including a family once you start."

Sheehy agreed that having enough hay is a top priority whenever a rancher starts feeding. In the winter of 2016-17, he recalled, Northeastern Oregonians endured temperatures well below freezing and record-breaking snow accumulation for close to six weeks.

"Two years ago I don't think you could have bought a bale of hay in two counties, and if you could you would have had to spend three or four times more than normal," Sheehy said.

Because his North Powder ranch has about 160 acres of irrigated cropland, Martin said he uses a lot of "off-quality" hay to feed his cattle supplemented by grains. A vertical mixer is used to process a variety of the ingredients Martin wants in his feed — complete with a scale that measures out the right amount of each grain before slowly turning and grinding it up.

"We could feed around 1,500 head of calves. We even bring in calves from other producers," Martin said. "We take a 575-pound weaned calf and push it to gain 2.5 pounds a day to sell as a yearling in February to a finishing lot or to a sale yard, whichever way the market dictates."

Nutrition is equally important for pregnant and unborn cattle, especially during the third trimester of the fetus' development. When a cow receives good nutrition, it improves a newborn calf's vigor and its ability to suckle soon after its birth.

Locke said about six weeks before his cows calve in February, he starts feeding them almost half alfalfa and half hay, and he trades in the salt blocks for loose mineral supplements to increase protein consumption.

"It's expensive, but it's worth it," he said.

GM

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tween the U.S., China and Europe that likely will lead to higher prices for imported vehicles and those exported from the U.S. Barra said the company faces challenges from tariffs but she did not directly link the layoffs to them.

The planned reduction includes about 8,000 white-collar employees, or 15 percent of GM's North American white-collar workforce. Some will take buyouts while others will be laid off.

At the factories, around 3,300 blue-collar workers could lose jobs in the U.S. and another 2,600 in Canada, but some U.S. workers could transfer to truck or SUV factories that are increasing production. The cuts mark GM's first major downsizing since shedding thousands of jobs in the Great Recession.

The company also said it will stop operating two additional factories outside North America by the end of next year, in addition to a previously announced plant closure in Gunsan, South Korea.

General Motors Co.'s preemptive strike to get leaner before the next downturn likely will be followed by Ford Motor Co., which has said it is restructuring and will lay off an unspecified number of white-collar workers. Toyota Motor Corp. also has discussed cutting costs, even though it's building a new assembly plant in Alabama.

GM isn't the first to abandon much of the car market. Fiat Chrysler Automobiles got out of small and midsize cars two years ago, while Ford announced plans to shed all cars but the Mustang sports car in the U.S. in the coming years.

Barra told reporters that GM doesn't foresee an economic downturn and is making the cuts "to get in front of it while the company is strong and while the economy is strong."

Factories that could be closed include assembly plants in Detroit and Oshawa, Ontario, and Lordstown, Ohio, as well as transmission plants in Warren, Michigan, and near Baltimore.

The announcement worried GM workers who could lose their jobs.

"I don't know how I'm going to feed my family," Matt Smith, a worker at the Ontario factory, said Monday outside the plant's south gate, where workers blocked trucks from entering or leaving. "It's hard. It's horrible." Smith's wife also works at the plant. The couple has an 11-month-old at home.

Workers at the Ontario plant walked off the job Monday but were expected to return Tuesday.

Most of the factories to be affected by GM's restructuring build cars that will not be sold in the U.S. after next year. They could close or they could get different vehicles to build. Their futures will be part of contract talks with the United Auto Workers union next year.

The Detroit-based union has already condemned GM's actions and threatened to fight them "through every legal, contractual and collective bargaining avenue open to our membership."

Bobbi Marsh, who has worked assembling the Chevrolet Cruze compact at the Ohio plant since 2008, said she can't understand why the factory might close given the strong economy.

"I can't believe our president would allow this to happen," she said Monday.

She now faces an uncertain future, not knowing whether the plant will close for good or if there's a chance it could find another use.

"Everything is up in the air," she said. "I don't want to give up hope for this facility and these people. I spend more time around them than my own family. It would be like breaking up a family."

Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown said the move will be disastrous for the region around Youngstown, Ohio, east of Cleveland, where GM is one of the area's few remaining industrial anchors.

"GM received record tax breaks as a result of the GOP's tax bill last year, and has eliminated jobs instead of using that tax windfall to invest in American workers," he said in a statement.

Many of those who will lose jobs are now working on conventional cars with internal combustion engines. Barra said the industry is changing rapidly and moving toward electric propulsion, autonomous vehicles and ride-sharing, and GM must adjust.

She said GM is still hiring people with expertise in software and electric and autonomous vehicles.

GM will stop producing cars and transmissions at the plants through 2019. In all, six car models were scrapped, leaving the company with nine remaining car models.

The automaker said it was ending Chevrolet Volt production because the vehicle was meant to be a bridge to fully electric cars when it was introduced about a decade ago. The Volt has a small battery that can take it about 50 miles, then it switches to a small gasoline engine.

Since it was introduced, battery technology has improved dramatically. Now the full-electric Chevrolet Bolt can go up to 238 miles on a single charge.

GM builds full-size Chevrolet and GMC pickups in Mexico, and it recently announced that a new Chevrolet Blazer SUV will be built there. Also, GM imports the Buick Envision midsize SUV from China.