

Japan

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"Flour millers remained conservative and did not change their blending ratio of raw material despite some increased cost disadvantage of U.S. wheat during 2019," Nakano said.

Japan's Ministry of Finance year-over-year import

EarthCruiser

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The chassis has an independent 4-wheel drive developed by EarthCruiser engineers and special suspension systems, allowing one to navigate extremely rugged terrain. Each comes equipped with a winch for those hard-to-get-out-of spots, too.

Other campers or vehicles, such as Sprinter vans, are adapted from one use to another. At EarthCruiser, the vehicles are built from the ground up or "from scratch" as Gillies likes to say. "Our engineers — many of whom are outdoor enthusiasts design our trucks with users in mind," Gillies said. When the pandemic struck Central Oregon early last year, EarthCruiser shut down its operations for two months. "It was a bad time for us and

EarthCruiser event

When: Friday at noon Facebook Live: facebook.com/ earthcruiseroverlandvehicles Instagram: instagram.com/earthcruiser/

YouTube (afterward): youtube.com/ channel/UCF0UuGWo1XK68wM-F7oXdOvw

travel unbound" without sacrificing performance, comfort or livability," reads the marketing brochure. Like other Earth-Cruisers, it can easily fit in a shipping container to be sent anywhere in the world. "What we build has got to be in sync with what the manufacturer had in mind," Gillies said. "It's not about adding something with a host of new features. We pay a lot of attention to vehicle noise, how it moves through the air, how it corners, how it brakes." When one talks about a fully integrated cab, that means the remote controls on a key fob or dashboard open the doors to not only the truck, but the camper, control the heating and cooling, the water systems, raise the camper roof. There's even a crawl space between truck cab and camper so one doesn't need to go outside to access the living area. And the living area is designed with comfort in mind as well as being eco-friendly. Its canopy provides 360-degree views and the beds are designed so one doesn't have to duck when sitting up, or entering the living space. Much of it is powered by lithium batteries and a solar panel for recharging electrical circuits sits on top of the canopy "The EC Terranova is the culmination of years of expedition experience and field testing across the globe. We used this hard-earned knowledge to create an incredibly capable, well-designed over-cab expedition vehicle on a domestic oneton chassis, something already proven, familiar and accessible to consumers, and that can be serviced with ease" said Chad Knight, general manager of EarthCruiser.

From the conception of the idea to bring it to market took

Amazon

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Plus, he said, he's looking forward to visiting his parents in Russia for the first time since before the pandemic. "There's a lot of convenience, having it on site. If it wasn't on site, I probably wouldn't have done it," he said.

By the end of the clinic Saturday, the company aims to have given thousands of its Washington warehouse and delivery workers, contractors and their families the first shot of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. A second vaccination clinic will open Tuesday at a Spokane warehouse, followed by additional vaccination opportunities at other Amazon facilities in the state, company spokesperson Karen Riley Sawyer said. The clinics fulfill Amazon's goal, expressed in a letter last year to Gov. Jay Inslee, of vaccinating its front-line workers as soon as they become eligible. Amazon's vaccination efforts, which kicked off last month in the Midwest, also serve as a rebuke to Amazon's critics, who over the past year have lambasted what they described as the company's inadequate safety precautions.

The experience of Amazon workers during the pandemic emerged as a symbol of the divergent realities for the company's office and warehouse workers over the past year. Tens of thousands of Amazon's corporate emplovees have been allowed to work from home for more than a year, the value of their compensation packages rising as Amazon share prices soared. Meanwhile, the company's roughly 1 million warehouse workers globally were still expected to report to their facilities, where workloads surged even as the virus ravaged communities. As concerns about the spread of the coronavirus at Amazon intensified, warehouse workers stopped showing up to work en masse. The company rolled back COVID-19 benefits for warehouse employees, including pay bumps and unlimited unpaid sick leave.

tage for U.S. beef.

Whereas overall imports of chilled beef were down 5% from over 274,893 tons in 2019 to just over 261,510 tons last year, U.S. product imports decreased only 1.4%, from almost 126,908 tons to 125,157 tons. Conversely, while overall frozen beef imports decreased 0.5% from almost 340,516 to just under 338,898 tons, imports of U.S. meat jumped 14%, from almost 114,162 tons to almost 129,904 tons.

However, Yamashoji cautioned against making an assessment based on statistics only.

"The COVID-19 pandemic is a dramatic event and the impact is ongoing, so simply looking at yearover-year volumes is not a thorough way to evaluate the U.S.-Japan Trade Agreement," he said.

U.S. beef is heavily utilized by Japan's food service sector, which was hit hard by COVID-related restrictions and still is not operating under normal conditions, Yamashoji said. The growth in imports of frozen U.S. beef was partly due to consumer demand for staples such as beef short plate, of which the U.S. is the dominant supplier in Japan, he said.

"U.S. beef short plate is heavily utilized by the gyudon beef bowl restaurants and also sold thinsliced at retail, for convenient and affordable home cooking," Yamashoji said.

Unless the overall demand for imported beef increases, imports of U.S. beef will not increase significantly, said Shiroh Ohashi, executive director of the Japan Meat Traders Association, a grouping of 30 meat-importing and — exporting companies. our 35 employees," Gillies said. The pivot was to make a

smaller camper for the market. "We wanted to build some-

thing more approachable for the public from what we consider our bigger trucks. A domestic truck needs no introduction. But we didn't want to make a compromise (or retrofitted trailer). We wanted to make sure that what we know from years and years and years of traveling the planet is to bring an over-cab to the market that integrally fits with a Ford or a Chevy chassis."

Since announcing its plans for the Terranova, the low-key shop tucked away at 61510 American Lane has received at least 20-plus reservations for the new camper. Base price starts at \$289,000.

The Terranova is a 4x4, all-season cab-over that allows outdoor enthusiasts to "live and just under 18 months. It was not remarkable to Gillies who said that, "We knew exactly what we wanted it to look like when we were finished and pieced it together from there. We had to bring our collective experience, the network of suppliers, manufacturers, the Ford engineers and bring all that together. But that's the beauty of a small business."

It's a source of pride for Gillies, who has traveled the world, to say when someone spots an EarthCruiser at the Great Pyramids or in the bush of Africa, "Yeah, that was made in Bend, Oregon."

Editor: 541-633-2166, gobrien@bendbulletin.com

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