

# Chlorpyrifos action puts farmers in a pinch

In its decision to phase out the pesticide chlorpyrifos, the folks at the Oregon Department of Agriculture appear to have forgotten someone: the farmers.

Chlorpyrifos is an insecticide that's been around 55 years. It is used on dozens of crops in Oregon to keep insects, worms and mites at bay. It is also used on golf courses and in greenhouses, wood treatments and roach traps and to kill mosquitoes.

Chlorpyrifos is an important tool. It works well and is affordable. On farms and in commercial settings, additional training and protective equipment such as respirators, gloves and coveralls are required when the insecticide is applied, and the fields are off-limits to others until deemed safe. Household uses, where most of the concern was centered, have already been banned or phased out.

Instead of awaiting direction from legislators, whose job it is to write laws and make policy, the state agriculture department went ahead and convened a work group to come up with a plan to phase out the use of chlorpyrifos. That's fine.

But, importantly, the ODA neglected to offer Oregon farmers adequate help in finding alternatives or replacements for chlorpyrifos. Just because an insecticide is banned doesn't mean the insects will go away on their own.

An undocumented letter that was circulated in the legislature

last year by a lobbyist for the organic industry said that dozens of alternatives for chlorpyrifos are already available to farmers.

That was apparently wrong. Either that, or someone lost the list.

Now Oregon researchers are playing catch-up to find alternatives and replacements for chlorpyrifos that are effective and affordable.

And, unfortunately, they are trying to do it without adequate funding.

Since chlorpyrifos was banned in California, the state has provided more than \$5 million in grants for research into alternatives.

In Oregon, researchers have \$381,107 from two USDA specialty crop grants to do the same job. That will address a handful of crops out of the more than 50 on which chlorpyrifos is used.

Depending on what the researchers find, it could be years before the alternatives and replacements are fully labeled and available for use.

Under the ODA plan, chlorpyrifos will be phased out for most uses by the end of 2023.

For the state's farmers, the clock is running on whether adequate replacements and alternatives will be in place by that deadline.

Without adequate state funding for research, the odds of meeting that deadline are slim. We urge the ODA to work with legislators to adequately fund this research.



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## FARMER'S FATE

# One toaster, five love languages

**B**ut your language of love is time," my husband teased me. "You want to have undivided attention. Instead of words, acts, touch or gifts, you just prefer to spend meaningful time together."

I rolled my eyes. My language of love is time. But this is ridiculous.

I'm holding my finger on the lever of the toaster while browning myself two slices of bread. I'm not sure what happened, but the lever on the toaster quit working. It still toasts bread, but it won't latch down at the bottom. Meaning that someone has to really want toast to stand there the entire time they want their bread to continue roasting. I realize it's only a minute or so, but in that minute, I am accustomed to getting out a plate, the butter and a knife, and whatever toppings I want to add — and now I stand, spending every morning with the toaster. And while my love language has always been time, I am beginning to hate this kitchen appliance.

Yes, I could just replace it, but I also have a little too much of my grandparents in me, whose philosophy was, "It still works!" And it does. All except for the little latch that allows it to work by itself. We have tried everything from attempting to wedge in a wooden spoon, to holding the lever down with summer squash. Nothing has worked well, and we have often found ourselves skipping the toast entirely, or making it in the oven.

I've always taken pride in the fact



Brianna Walker

that I'm frugal. I can make do, or do without, and I'm good with that — usually. That was before my sunglasses broke too.

I was stepping from the boat to the dock, when the screw in my sunglasses decided to wiggle out. Seconds either way would have found both the screw and the arm of the sunglasses either in the boat or on the dock — but as fate would have it, it fell in the 6 inches of water between the boat and dock and the left arm had disappeared before I realized they were off my head.

My sunglasses are like my pocketknife — I never go anywhere without both — so I straightened what was left of my glasses, and kept on with life.

Of course with only one arm holding them on, I was constantly wrinkling my nose and trying to keep them straight. It was impossible to look down, which meant I picked melons squinting without glasses. Since the quarantine, I don't stray into town for anything that isn't 100% needed and farm related — anything else I can get online. But sunglasses are like shoes, one needs to be able to try them on, take them for a spin — see if they hide the fact that my left eyebrow is higher than my right — which makes buying online difficult. Besides, they still worked.

I've said before, it's all in how you

spin it. I wasn't wearing broken sunglasses. They were the original "tan-through" glasses. No more pesky tan lines on the side of my face or raccoon eyes — at least on the left side.

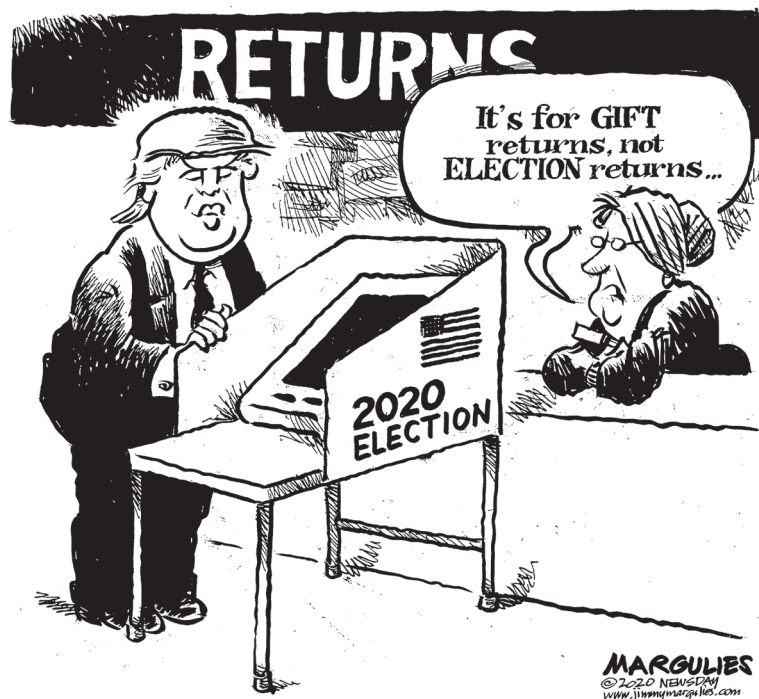
At the river a few weeks later, a guy stopped to ask me where I got one-sided sunglasses to match my one-strap swim-suit. I just smiled and said they were a one-of-a-kind designer pair.

One friend suggested baler twine, another gorilla tape. Still another told me she was glad I wasn't inhibited by social norms. I admit they look a little unusual — but hasn't anyone seen the models on the Hollywood runway? Those outfits are much less practical than my glasses! I sported my "designer" glasses for over a month, waiting for the style to catch on.

Then one day, a package arrived in the mail with a brand new pair of glasses and a case. A gift from a girlfriend on the west side. I felt a bit disloyal as I traded my one-of-a-kind glasses for the new, sleek, tan-line, raccoon eyes model. Disloyal — but happy to be able to have full range of motion of my head again!

Of the five languages of love, words, acts, touch, time or gifts, my language is still time — but I'm starting to find the occasional gift isn't so bad. And with the amount of time we're all spending with that toaster, I think it may be a great time to become bilingual.

Brianna Walker occasionally write about the Farmer's Fate for the Blue Mountain Eagle.



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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Reporting COVID-19 aid fraud

**U**nfortunately, scammers are taking advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic in a variety of ways including submitting applications and receiving funding using another person's identity. Victims may very well be unaware until they receive a letter from the Small Business Administration informing them of payments due.

It is critical that those suspecting their identity has been stolen act quickly to limit financial loss and damage.

SBA officials recommend identity theft victims do all the following:

- Contact the Processing and Disbursement Center to report suspected fraud by calling 800-366-6303. Their team will make a note to the file and place a hold on funds if they have not already been disbursed.

- Notify the SBA Office of the Inspector General to report any suspected fraud on the OIG's Hotline at 800-767-0385 or email OIGHotline@sba.gov.

- Place a fraud alert on credit reports. Contact one of the three major credit reporting agencies. Whichever company is contacted is



Greg Smith

required to tell the other two: Experian.com/fraudalert, or 1-888-397-3742; TransUnion.com/fraud, or 1-800-680-7289; or Equifax.com/Credit-ReportAssistance, or 1-888-836-6351. Consider adding an extended fraud alert (valid for seven years) or a credit freeze to credit bureau reports.

- Reach out to the Federal Trade Commission at IdentityTheft.gov to file a report about the situation. Once a person has entered their information, the site will create an Identity Theft Report. Print it or save it to a computer; it will need to be referred to later.

- Contact the Oregon Attorney General's Office at 877-877-9392 or by emailing help@oregonconsumer.gov. It is possible to file an online complaint on their website by clicking the Consumer Protection tab.

- Victims should contact the Social Security Administration as soon as possible, even if they are not sure their number has been compromised at 1-800-269-0271 or submit a report online at https://oig.ssa.gov.

## Another Round of PPP is Coming

While it is a good thing Congress has passed another round of Paycheck Protection Program funding (much of which is a forgivable loan), it does give scammers a new opportunity to steal someone's identity.

It is critical that all people (not just business owners) take every precaution they can to protect their personal information. Our offices have received reports from non-business owners who received a letter from SBA stating an EIDL loan of several thousand dollars was taken out in their name and that a payment was due soon.

With that said, the PPP is an excellent program, and it is very much worth applying for. Business owners, and especially those who have not previously applied, should get their financial information in order now and, equally important, research the allowable expenses so the loan may be forgiven.

Greg Smith is the director of the Eastern Oregon University Small Business Development Center, 1607 Gekeler Lane, Room 148, in La Grande. For free, confidential business advising, call 541-962-1532 or email eousbdc@gmail.com.

## WHERE TO WRITE

### GRANT COUNTY

• **Grant County Courthouse** — 201 S. Humbolt St., Suite 280, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0059. Fax: 541-575-2248.

• **Canyon City** — P.O. Box 276, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0509. Fax: 541-575-0515. Email: tocc1862@centurylink.net.

• **Dayville** — P.O. Box 321, Dayville 97825. Phone: 541-987-2188. Fax: 541-987-2187. Email: dville@ortelco.net

• **John Day** — 450 E. Main St, John Day, 97845. Phone: 541-575-0028. Fax: 541-575-1721. Email: cityjd@centurytel.net.

• **Long Creek** — P.O. Box 489, Long Creek 97856. Phone: 541-421-3601. Fax: 541-421-3075. Email: info@cityoflongcreek.com.

### MONUMENT

• **Monument** — P.O. Box 426, Monument 97864. Phone and fax: 541-934-2025. Email: cityofmonument@centurytel.net.

• **Mt. Vernon** — P.O. Box 647, Mt. Vernon 97865. Phone: 541-932-4688. Fax: 541-932-4222. Email: cmtv@ortelco.net.

• **Prairie City** — P.O. Box 370, Prairie City 97869. Phone: 541-820-3605. Fax: 820-3566. Email: pchall@ortelco.net.

• **Seneca** — P.O. Box 208, Seneca 97873. Phone and fax: 541-542-2161. Email: senecaoregon@gmail.com.

### SALEM

• **Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: (503) 986-1180. Website: leg.state.or.us (includes Oregon Constitution and Oregon Revised Statutes).



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