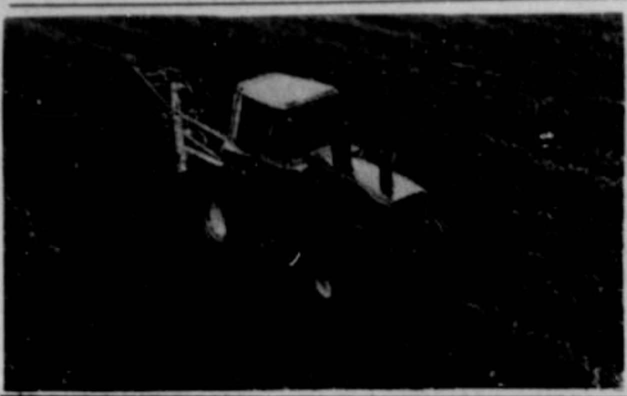

AGRI-BUSINESS NEWS

Wheat Growers Urge Inheritance Tax Phase-Out

The Oregon Wheat Growers League today urged Governor Straub to sign HB 2059 which would phase out state inheritance taxation over a ten year period.

The legislation has previously passed both the Oregon House and Senate and is waiting for Governor Straub's signature before becoming law.

The wheat growers, meeting in Pendleton, June 30, unanimously passed a resolution urging Gov. Straub to sign the bill. Fear has been expressed that Gov. Straub would veto the bill.

"Farmers have traditionally lived poor and because of rising property values over the years, died rich," said Tad Miller, of Heppner, president of the OWGL. "Farmers and ranchers have never been able to accumulate liquid assets with which to meet death taxes. It has been a disruptive and sometimes disasterous impact on the survival of the family farm."

Farmers state that approval of this bill will more properly place emphasis upon the income tax and would reflect ability to pay in the collection of state revenues.

"We need help of everyone on this bill," stated Ken Peck, Lexington, legislative chairman of the OWGL. "We would appreciate people who feel that they will have inheritance tax problems to telephone the Governor's office and let him know their views. People can do this by telephoning Salem at 378-3111."

The Oregon Wheat Growers League is a non-profit trade association composed of Oregon wheat farmers concerned with the development of agriculture in Oregon

Bureau President Calls for Contract Labor Program

Waldron Johnson, president of the Oregon Farm Bureau Federation, has called for a contract labor program between the United States and other countries, under which needed workers could be supplied to Oregon's fruit and vegetable growers.

In a statement released Monday through the Farm Bureau office, Johnson cited the desperate situation faced by Columbia Basin cherry growers, whose most recent call for 2000 pickers was answered by six applicants.

"We must have a means to assure food producers of an adequate harvesting force," Johnson stated. "Unless legal means can be developed to allow our traditional workers from Mexico into the United States, our growers will have millions of dollars worth of production rotting in their fields and orchards."

"The necessity of harvesting food must have a higher priority than unworkable regulations," he said. Johnson added that President Carter's recent action to allow Mexican pickers into Texas onion fields saved the crop. But such an arrangement would be impossible in Oregon, he said, since it stipulated that the workers return to Mexico each evening.

"Such stopgap measures, as valuable as they are in emergencies, cannot be applied to the Pacific Northwest. What is needed is a permanent agreement with Mexico to allow these skilled harvesters to follow the crops in the United States,just as they attempt to do now," the farm leader said.

"Increased activity by the Immigration and Naturalization Service to gather up the thousands of harvesters who now enter the United States illegally, has scared them away from this part of the country. Since North Americans apparently won't do the work, Oregon and Washington growers face ruin," Johnson concluded.

He pledged his close cooperation with the American Farm Bureau Federation, which is trying to gain Congressional approval of such international agreements.

Common Raven

(Photo & Written by Bradford D. Price, Wildlife Technician)

Do you know the difference between a crow and a raven? Both birds are from the family corvidae. They are medium-large sized, black colored birds, being gregarious, living in flocks, omnivorous, eating vegetables and animals, and have a heavy bill. Crows and ravens have long, rounded wings that nearly extend to the tip of their tail. Both birds generally have 4-7 eggs that are often colored and speckled.

The crow (**Corvus brachyrhynchos**) is a smaller bird, about 17" long with a wing spread of less than 3 feet. They nest mostly in stands of cottonwood and aspen groves, usually within 25 feet of the ground. good percentage of their diet is agricultural crops such as corn, wheat and oats, however, they are beneficial birds, by eating grasshoppers, beetles, caterpillars and spiders.

The raven (**Corvus corax**) is a larger bird, being 24 inches long and having a wing spread generally over 4 feet. They nest in tall trees or in high rock cliffs. Ravens are scavengers and eat anything they can digest. A part of their diet is carion, cleaning up and eating the flesh of dead animals. They are also beneficial in that they feed on small rodents, field mice and rats, and injurious insects.

But how do you distinguish them in the field? Crows have a square-ended tail whereas ravens have a rounder, wedge shaped tail. a crow's call is a smooth caw, whereas a raven has a low, hoarse croak. An easy flight characteristic is that crows almost continously flap their wings, but ravens, which are much swifter, mostly soar, sailing on high wind currents.

Cattle Industry Suffers

"Disastrous drought, below cost of production prices, imports unreasonable, government regulations, unfair labor practices, environmental harrassment, and now 'fake steak' (newly developed imitation steak made entirely of vegetable protein). How much more can the Oregon and United States beef industry take?" is the question posed to the Baker County Chamber of Commerce by Donald Ostensoe, manager, Oregon Beef Council, during a chamber luncheon Friday noon, July 1 at the Kopper Kitchen restaurant in Baker. Ostensoe added, "In 1974-75, the net worth of the U. S. beef cattle industry was at a record $37 billion. Today, 1977, the net worth of our industry is $21 billion. This is a $16 billion net worth loss in the past three years. There is not one single major corporation in the world that could suffer this type of financial disaster and survive. However, the beef industry has survived, but not very well."

The beef cattle executive continued, "Oregon and our neighboring western states are experiencing the worst drought in our history. The Oregon cattle inventory (cows and calves) is 1,500,000 head, with total ranch gate value of approximately $300 million. Because of the drought in Oregon, nearly 300,000 head, or almost 20 percent of our total cattle inventory, have been 'sold off' due to the drought. These animals which have been sold would normally be grazing on pasture through the summer and fall months. But, due to lack of water and grass, ranchers have had no alternative, but to sell. Presently, the retail marketplace has a larger beef supply than demand--causing depressed prices to producers. Ironically, and very unfortunately, consumption of imported beef in the U.S. remains at about 8 percent. In Oregon, it's about 10 percent. Through our state Cattlemen's Association, through Governor Straub, through our Congressional delegation, we have asked the Administration for some help for the reduction of beef imports. We seem to have fallen on deaf ears. It is inconceivable to anyone in business that beef imports should continue at a time of a natural disaster such as drought--causing oversupply and financial ruin to a basic industry.

Because of this situation, we are unfortunately estimating that between 12 and 15 percent of those people now engaged in beef cattle production will be out of business by January 1, 1978. We are not asking for your sympathy, but it is most important that you do understand the situation because there is not one single business in Baker, and perhaps in all of Oregon which will not be affected adversely because of these conditions. It is also important that the consumers understand they will benefit in the short run at the retail counter where low prices for beef will prevail for some time. However, they should understand that when our industry must deplete a good share of its basic cattle herd, (cows and calves) in the long run, and I am talking about 10 to 12 months from now, there could very well be a short supply of beef, and this will ultimately reflect increased beef prices at the retail counter. In my opinion, there has to be a better balance and understanding between government, consumers, environmentalists and livestock industries of our country."

Ostensoe concluded, "The cattle industry and all of agriculture will have to understand that the consumer movement is here to stay and it is up to us to find ways to educate, communicate and improve the public's understanding of the basic economics of agriculture. The importance of this can be appreciated by the fact that recently, a newly appointed Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently stated, "Food is for people, not for profit." Our job is cut out for us in many different areas. We are attempting to meet these challenges with organizations like the Oregon Beef Council, Cattleman's Assn., CowBelles--working in concert with our counterparts on a national level, and with better understanding by the business community, we just might have a chance to survive."

June Acreage Survey

The Oregon Crop and Livestock Reporting Service's June acreage survey released today shows Oregon farmers plan to harvest:

More acreage: Barley, 13 percent; Oats, 13 percent; Alfalfa Hay, one percent; Rye, 11 percent.

Less Acreage: Winter Wheat, 11 percent; Spring Wheat, 42 percent; Other hay, 4 percent, Sugar Beets, 40 percent; Corn, no change.

Winter wheat for harvest as grain in Oregon is placed at 1,080,000 acres, 11 percent less than last year. Planted acreage is now estimated at 1,160,000, 7 percent below a year ago.

Spring wheat acreage, at 65,000 acres, is 42 percent less than last year's harvested acreage of 113,000. Planted acreage at 70,000 acres is also 42 percent below last year.

Farmers say they are going to harvest 180,000 acres of **barley** for grain in Oregon this year, 13 percent more than last year. Planted acreage at 200,000, is 11 percent above a year ago.

Oat acreage for grain is pegged at 90,000 acres, 13 percent more than was harvested in 1976. Acreage planted for all purposes is estimated at 150,000, 15 percent above last year.

Corn for grain is forecast at 11,000 acres to be harvested for grain, 25 percent of the total planted acreage. The balance of the acreage usually goes for silage. Corn planted acreage for 1977 is 8 percent below last year.

Rye to be harvested for grain is placed at 10,000 acres, 11 percent above last year. Acreage planted for all purposes is estimated at 52,000, 5 percent less than a year ago.

Sugar beet acreage, at 8,700 acres, is sharply below last year's 14,500 acres harvested.

Alfalfa hay is placed at 425,000 acres, one percent above last year while **All other hay**, at 615,000 acres, is 4 percent less than last year.

A RAW ONION AND A RAW POTATO taste about the same, experts say; it's only the sight and smell that make them seem so different.

Drought Funds Available

The Department of Labor has notified Senator Bob Packwood that $5 million has been set aside for immediate use by states to relieve unemployment problems caused by the drought.

Announcement of the funds followed a request by Senator Packwood and other Northwest Senators to Labor Secretary Ray Marshall last month for additional monies for their states under the recently-enacted Economic Stimulus Appropriations Act.

State applications for the Northwest will be handled through the regional office of the Department of Labor in Seattle.

This money will be an addition to the pool of drought money already available to the Northwest under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and the Economic Stimulus funds. The Pacific Northwest has been allocated $163 million under CETA and $240 million in economic stimulus funds. Money under these programs can be used by CETA sponsor agencies to employ workers on temporary layoffs to help in areas such as building fire breaks, soil erosion, well-digging operations, energy conservation and other projects related to the lack of water.

July 5-15 Beef Referendum

Russel Fulleton, Chairman Malheur County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, reminded all registered beef producers of their right to vote on the beef research and information order July 5-15.

If over half the registered producers vote and two-thirds of those voting approve a beef research and information order, the Secretary of Agriculture would appoint a beef board, composed of not more than 68 beef producers, from names submitted by producer organizaitons. The board would collect assessments on the sale of cattle and use the funds to promote beef research and information. The law sets the maximum assesment at one-half of one percent of live animal value.

"Producers can vote in person at the county office or by mail," said Fulleton.

For the beef research and information order to become effective, at least half of the registered beef producers must vote and two-thirds of those voting must approve the order.