

AgKnowledge

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CROPS—Idaho ag receipts top \$5.6 billion; gain to farmers/ranchers up 78 percent

GET A COPY of "The Financial Condition of Idaho Agriculture: 2007 Projections" at <http://www.ag.uidaho.edu/aers/resources.htm>

IDAHO AGRICULTURE HIT THE JACKPOT in 2007 with cash receipts estimated at \$5.6 billion by College of Agricultural and Life Sciences agricultural economists. Nearly every crop and livestock market came up a winner, led by Idaho's booming dairy industry that, like cream, rose to the top.

Most important for Idaho farmers and ranchers is that net farm income—what's left after expenses—skyrocketed 78 percent to \$1.5 billion during 2007. In the fifth annual report on the agricultural industry's financial condition, UI CALS economists Ben Eborn, Paul Patterson, and Garth Taylor projected cash receipts will rise \$1.1 billion, a 25 percent jump from 2006.

Livestock's 7-year dominance of Idaho agriculture became more pronounced, with beef and dairy providing 57 percent of receipts overall. Strong milk production and prices led the way to a projected 59 percent increase in receipts in 2007—\$2.04 billion. Sales of beef cattle and calves rose 5 percent to \$1.07 billion, boosting the livestock sector's receipts to \$3.2 billion.

Crops, led by potatoes and wheat, posted strong gains, registering a 15 percent increase to \$2.4 billion, 43 percent of Idaho agriculture's cash receipts. Potato sales surged 11 percent to \$721 million followed by wheat at \$511 million, launched 49 percent higher by extraordinary market prices. Every crop except sugarbeets posted strong gains, an unusual situation for Idaho growers. A combination of factors boosted agriculture's financial performance:

Strong milk prices joined with the state's growing dairy herd to create the spectacular showing. Idaho is on track to surpass New York as the nation's third ranking dairy state this year.

World wheat prices surged as production dropped due to drought in Australia and problems elsewhere. Strong demand for wheat cut supplies on hand to the lowest levels on record.

Potato prices jumped 2 percent. While production per acre dropped slightly, growers planted more acres to potatoes.

Hay sales driven by the state's growing dairy industry jumped 12 percent to \$426 million.

The strong markets helped agriculture more than offset a 10 percent increase in expenses with a 21 percent increase in revenue. Increasing costs of energy, fertilizer, and other expenses in 2007 are expected to continue in 2008, making the year anything but a sure bet for Idaho ag.

New grains released by Idaho researchers address quality, pest-resistance issues

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JIANLI CHEN, the University of Idaho's new Aberdeen-based wheat breeder, has a long, challenging list of goals: developing and releasing topnotch wheats for breads, Asian noodles, and biofuel and doing it faster than ever. Experienced in accelerated variety development, Chen will deploy novel integrated technologies to improve breeding efficiency and speed variety release.

In 2007, colleague Juliet Windes participat-

ed with the USDA Agricultural Research Service in the release of Tetonia, a high-yielding irrigated barley, and Clearwater, a low phytic acid hullless barley particularly good for fish food. In northern Idaho, Robert Zemetra led release of Cataldo, a soft white spring wheat similar to Alturas but resistant to Hessian fly, and Bitterroot, a soft white winter wheat with superior end-use quality and high tolerance to *Cephalosporium stripe*.

1 in 20 Idahoans work in potato-related jobs

FIND "Contributions of Potato Industry to Idaho's Economy" at <http://info.ag.uidaho.edu/pdf/CIS/CIS1143.pdf>

IDAHO'S POTATO INDUSTRY, from seed potatoes to French fries, provided 39,500 jobs in 2002, nearly one in 20 in the state, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences economists report.

Idaho potatoes, famous throughout the nation and the world, support a wide-ranging industry that markets them fresh, frozen, and dehydrated, and employs thousands in doing so.

University of Idaho Agricultural economists Garth Taylor, Paul Patterson, Joe Guenther, and Lindy Widner analyzed data from 2002 to produce the industry profile.

The potato industry provided 15,500 jobs and \$3.4 billion in sales of potatoes and potato products that generated \$720 million in added value and \$490 million in income.

The impact was much greater because potatoes exported from Idaho multiplied the economic benefits. The "potato export dollars" rippled through businesses that support the industry and created a total impact of 39,500 jobs, \$6.7 billion in sales, \$1.9 billion in added value, and \$1.3 billion in income, according to the authors.

DID YOU KNOW?

\$721 MILLION

IS ESTIMATED 2007 REVENUE FROM POTATOES, IDAHO'S LARGEST SOURCE OF CROP REVENUE. THAT IS 11% HIGHER THAN IN 2006.

Source: The Financial Condition of Idaho Agriculture: 2007 Projections