

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 08, 2017
TIME: 1:30 P.M.
PLACE: Room EW42
MEMBERS: Chairman Boyle, Vice Chairman Dayley, Representatives Bell, Miller, VanOrden, Burtenshaw, Kerby, Troy, Stevenson, Amador, Armstrong, Hanks, Zito, Erpelding, Toone
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Rep. VanOrden, Hanks, Burtenshaw
GUESTS: Brandy Kay, Idaho Wool Growers; Mitch Coates, Food Producers

Chairman Boyle called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

Carrie Maulin, Chief Clerk, explained the new procedure changes in place needed to comply with Joint Rule 18.

Moya Dolsby, Executive Director of Idaho Wine Commission, said they now have a 12% market share of all wine consumed in the State of Idaho. There are 52 wineries with 1,300 acres of vines throughout the state as compared with Washington State which has 60,000 acres of vines showing the great potential for growth in Idaho. Ms. Dolsby said the economic impact to the state grew from 73 million in 2008 to 169.3 million in 2013. She explained the partnerships used to promote Idaho wines, resulting in over 100 successful events having taken place this past year.

In response to a committee question, **Ms. Dolsby** said they were still waiting to determine the effect of the harsh winter. She stated because the cold weather came slowly and the ground was covered with snow during the lowest temperatures, they were optimistic the damage to the vines would be minimal.

Candi Fitch, Executive Director of Apple/Cherry Commission, reported the fruit market started out positive with good prices for plums, peaches and Gala apples, however about mid-October, the apple market showed pressure of over supply and prices decreased for certain varieties. This may cause certain varieties to be replaced with new varieties that consumers prefer. Apple production in the state continues to slowly decrease which is caused in part from a labor shortage. Ms. Fitch reported on several promotional activities they participated in this year which helped to create an awareness of Idaho apples.

Ms. Fitch said the cherry crop this year was about two weeks early and it was a condensed season only lasting about four weeks instead of the usually six weeks. The market was good with both prices and volume being about average. She explained looking ahead there may be frost damage from the cold temperatures we experienced this winter therefore the volume may be down.

Ms. Fitch said there maybe as many as 37 onion storage structures destroyed or damaged from the heavy snow this winter. She said it is too early to tell what the long term effect of this devastation will be on the onion industry.

In response to a committee question, **Ms. Fitch** stated she was not aware of any of the growers or shippers using labor from the correctional institutions to fill the labor shortage at this time.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Representative Boyle
Chair

Joan Majors
Secretary