

MINUTES  
**HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 18, 2025

**TIME:** 1:30 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room EW42

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Andrus, Vice Chairman Raymond, Representatives Cannon, McCann, Ehlers, Garner, Nelsen, Pickett, Sauter, Miller, Beiswenger, Dygert, Leavitt, Mendive, Shirts, Mathias, Achilles

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** Pickett

**GUESTS:** The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office; following the end of session the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

**Chairman Andrus** called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Achilles** made motion to approve the minutes of February 12, 2025. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Chairman Andrus** introduced **Ryia Thomsen** as the page for the second half of the session.

**DOCKET NO. 02-0801-2401:** **Lauren Mink**, Executive Director, Idaho Sheep and Goat Health Board, State Animal Damage Control Board, stated there are no changes to the **Docket No. 02-0801-2401**, and it is being adopted as originally proposed.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Shirts** made a motion to approve **Docket No. 02-0801-2401**. **Motion carried by voice vote**

**Candi Fitch**, Executive Director of the Idaho Apple, Cherry, and Hops Commissions, provided an industry update. The Idaho Hop Growers Commission reported a decline in hop acreage from 9,561 in 2022 to 5,797 in 2024, with further drops expected due to oversupply. Warm temperatures in August 2024 impacted early apple varieties like Galas, and late spring frosts caused additional losses. Northwest tree fruit growers face financial strain from rising costs, stagnant prices, and limited marketing. The Idaho Cherry Commission reported a yield of about 1,400 tons, with low prices due to high market competition.

**Jamey Higham**, President/CEO of the Idaho Potato Commission (IPC), reported the IPC promotes and protects the Grown in Idaho seal, ensuring consumers receive high-quality Idaho potatoes. Idaho's ideal growing conditions and generational farmers set its potatoes apart. Challenges include trade uncertainties with Canada, Mexico, and Asia, rising competition from India and China, high input costs, and declining market prices affecting grower margins. The IPC also works on developing disease-resistant, heat-tolerant, and water-efficient potato varieties, while addressing labor, succession planning, dietary guidelines, and urbanization.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

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Representative Andrus  
Chair

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Jayne Feik  
Secretary