

# BEEETS, TOPPS & LIVESTOCK



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## POWELL TRIBUNE

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# POWELL TRIBUNE Beets, Tops & Livestock

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The early harvest started with sunny skies, but was temporarily suspended last week due to heavy rain. Above, sugar beets are loaded into a truck in a field off Lane 11 west of Powell. Marc Rodriguez of Rodriguez Farms operates a Tiger XL by Ropa (at left) on Sept. 11. Tribune photos by Carla Whitney.



The Western Sugar Cooperative factory in Lovell continued processing sugar beets this week, as farmers had piled up enough beets before the rainstorm hit to keep the factory going. The factory's processing campaign will continue into February. At right, stormy skies loom in the distance on Sept. 13.

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There's been a recent outbreak of Influenza & Kennel Cough in the Powell & Corvallis areas.

## Beet harvest

EARLY DIG SLOWED BY WEATHER, BUT ON TRACK

BY TESSA BAKER  
Tribune Features Editor

Area farmers had only a few days of sunny skies to begin the sugar beet harvest before the dig was temporarily suspended due to rain.

They made the most of the nice weather prior to the storm, piling as many beets as possible. "We were far enough ahead on Thursday (Sept. 14) to quit, and it started raining Thursday night. We couldn't have harvested Friday through the weekend anyway," said Mark Bjornestad, senior agronomist for Western Sugar Cooperative.

The harvest resumed Monday. The Western Sugar factory in Lovell didn't skip a beat during the temporary suspension, since enough beets were piled to

keep a constant supply going to the plant. "We have about five days of beets [piled] on the ground right now," Bjornestad said Tuesday morning.

Farmers hoped to again pile up more beets before more rain arrived again today (Thursday). "Every load we get ... it just extends that calendar out for the said, adding, "we'll put as much and it started raining Thursday night. We couldn't have harvested Friday through the weekend anyway," said Mark Bjornestad, senior agronomist for Western Sugar Cooperative.

The harvest resumed Monday. The Western Sugar factory in Lovell didn't skip a beat during the temporary suspension, since enough beets were piled to

reach about 18 percent. "It all depends on the weather, but I think that's something we can achieve," Bjornestad said. "It's a possibility out there. We seem to be on track with mid-September sugar in the upper 15s and low 16s; we should see an increase as time goes on."

"Grower yields are expected to average about 27 to 28 tons to the acre. "We haven't seen anything to indicate it would be any better or any worse, but it's very limited data right now," Bjornestad said.

More completed fields will provide a better picture. "Everything's going pretty good for us at the moment, but we're hostages to the weather, just like the farmers are," Bjornestad said Tuesday.



Rodriguez Farms' Ropa harvests multiple rows of beets on Sept. 11. The German-made Ropa eliminates the need for a defoliator, as it tops, digs and hauls beets in a single piece of equipment.

Farmers of the P...