

Today is , the . This is Ken Morgan's Northcoast Ag Report, our lead story is about when we return

EPA Administrator Pruitt Resigns

The polarizing tenure of Scott Pruitt as head of the Environmental Protection Agency has come to an end. President Donald Trump tweeted on Thursday afternoon that he's "accepted the resignation of Scott Pruitt as the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency," noting that Pruitt has done a "good job within the Agency." The Senate has already confirmed Deputy Administrator Andrew Wheeler, who will take over as the acting Administrator next week. The departure of Pruitt follows months of scrutiny that gathered momentum following reports that Pruitt had rented a Capitol Hill condominium from an energy lobbyist on very favorable rental terms. There were already concerns about the high cost of Pruitt's travel and security detail, as well as the allegations of Pruitt fostering a working environment filled with workplace retaliation and wasteful spending. The steady flow of news stories prompted multiple government agencies to inquiries into Pruitt and the agency, which still faces over a dozen probes into spending, ethics, and policy decisions.

Battle Breaks Out Over GMO Labeling

The USDA comment period on its proposed GMO labeling rule brought in more than 11,000 comments from farm groups, consumers, and multinational companies like Hershey's. Politico says food manufacturers are at odds with farmers over which ingredients should actually be subject to disclosure. The companies are arguing that foods made with even some genetically modified corn, soybeans, and sugar beets need to have disclosures. On the other side of the debate, farmers say it's not accurate to apply the labeling standard to highly refined foods because they often contain no detectable amounts of these products. The Center for Science in the Public Interest told Reuters that it actually agrees with both sides. Farmers are correct in arguing that their finished ingredients are no different scientifically to their GMO counterparts, but products should still be labeled. The group says, "USDA should read the statute broadly and provide consumers with as much information as possible, but it should be scientifically accurate. They need a different disclosure for highly refined ingredients." Consumers, as well as some lawmakers, were more concerned about the new language. USDA has suggested

using the term or symbol “BE” or “bioengineered” instead of “GMO” or “GM” for genetically modified.

New Approach to Attacking Wildfires 2018-07-05 00:01:00.055

On his Back to the Roots tour this week Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue visited areas of Washington State and Oregon which are restoring forest lands devastated last year by a huge wildfire. (Gary Crawford, Sec'y Sonny Perdue, Rep. Greg Walden, Gov. Kate Brown)