



AP PHOTO

**Dr. Esmail Fallahi holds Red Globe table grapes, one of the many varieties produced at his Idaho research lab.**

## IN BRIEF

### Idaho lab produces 'alternative fruits'

PARMA, Idaho — If Esmail Fallahi has his way, the home of the world-famous Russet potato may soon also welcome persimmons, pistachios, pawpaws, quinces and mulberries.

Fallahi, a University of Idaho professor, has been the state's fruit guru for almost 20 years, working on everything from improving apple irrigation to finding the best way to thin a plum tree.

Now, Fallahi wants to give the agriculture industry a little more flash in a state best known for its pedestrian potatoes, onions and sugar beets.

Fallahi's lab is researching "alternative fruits" — those that traditionally haven't been grown in a region — that might have potential in Idaho.

They could be as simple as a Fuji apple, where the traditional crop might be red delicious, or as exotic as a jujubi, a medicinal plant that grows in India, Pakistan and Fallahi's native Iran.

"There is a huge urge for new things, for trying new tastes — a curiosity and urge for something different," said Fallahi, who is hoping these fruits can grow into big bucks for Idaho farmers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## 'COUNTRY LANES AND GRAVEL PATHS'



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**Locust Hill, located in Madison County, is one of the homes that will be featured on "Country Lanes and Gravel Paths," the annual garden tour sponsored by Dolley Madison Garden Club of Orange. The tour will feature three 18th-century homes and one contemporary Italian style house in Culpeper and Madison counties. It will be held on April 21 from 10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Advance tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at many shops in Culpeper, Orange and Madison counties or online at [vagardenweek.org](http://vagardenweek.org). Day of tour tickets are \$25.**

## Marylanders may soon drink 'raw milk'

**A bill before lawmakers would legalize sale of unpasteurized dairy products**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WESTMINSTER, Md. — It may look just like milk at the grocery store, but dairy farmer Donald Dell says his product is superior.

It hasn't been pasteurized.

As a growing number of people seek so-called "raw milk," Maryland legislators are considering a law allow-

ing the state's embattled dairy farmers to sell milk straight from the cow to niche customers.

"The milk you buy at the store is hardly milk," said Dell's grandson, Gary Dell, who oversees operations at the family's 470-acre Cranberry Meadows dairy farm just outside Westminster. "It's been beat up, burned up, torn up and

mixed back up again."

Gary Dell told The (Baltimore) Sun he'd be happy to sell raw milk, even though pasteurization can prevent some bacteria from reaching consumers.

The change is needed, Gary Dell said, for a dairy industry in sharp decline.

The industry "can't get any worse than it already is today," he told the newspaper.

Not everyone thinks that allowing raw milk sales is a great idea. Earlier this month two people in

Pennsylvania were sickened from drinking raw milk, leading to a warning from that state's health department.

Twenty-eight states allow raw milk sales, The Sun reported. Some others, including Virginia, allow multiple owners to buy a cow and share its milk.

Despite an apparent market for old-time milk, the Maryland Farm Bureau and the state Health Department opposes the legalization of raw milk sales.

## Rural counties could see more help

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Payments to rural counties hurt by cutbacks in federal logging would continue for five more years under a deal announced Tuesday by Senate Democrats.

The deal, announced by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and others, would authorize about \$2.8 billion to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act through 2011.

Another \$1.9 billion would be directed to rural states through a plan to fully fund the Payments in Lieu of Taxes program, which reimburses state and local governments for federally owned property.

"This Democratic package represents a renewed federal commitment to the people of Oregon, the rural West and the nation," Reid said.

"With Senator Reid's leadership we have crafted a lifeboat to keep rural communities afloat," added Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore. "This proposal will mean more than \$1 billion (over five years) for Oregon schools, public safety, roads and other essential county services. It couldn't come at a more critical time."

Details were still being worked out, but lawmakers said the plan would allocate \$526 million in emergency spending to extend the law for one year.

The so-called county payments program helps pay for schools, roads and public safety in 700 rural counties in 39 states, with most of the money going to the West.

## 'Max' the horse gets a case of colic, but is once again on all fours



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO, KIMBERLEY BEER

**David Snogles and his wife Anita are traveling around the country on horseback to raise money for charity. David's horse 'Max' fell ill recently, but is now on the mend.**

It's funny how things can change in as little as 24 hours, isn't it? There I was getting ready for this week's column to tell you all about our trip down from Ohio, through eastern Tennessee en route to Allendale, South Carolina.

We were meeting up with the Team from 'Best of America by Horseback' to go on our first "official" trail ride of our grand American tour.

We did it okay, along with about 150 other riders down there in the deep south, and our horses did us proud, considering we were pretty much new to each other.

So I was hoping to tell you all about the great time we had, the great people we met and the wonderful camaraderie that you find whenever horse people get together.

People have travelled hundreds of miles with their horses to come and ride with the Best of America team, and to be able to say that they were part of the whole adventure.

Indeed, many of the folks we met said they wouldn't miss it for the world, and would no doubt meet us again on some of the other



DAVID AND ANITA HASBURY-SNOGLES

rides around the country.

Everybody has a great time on these "shin-digs", no matter what the weather — and we had it all: torrential rain, freezing nights and mornings, and glorious hot, sunny days in which we rode, trained our horses, and just plain-old chilled out chewin' the cud with other like-minded folks.

But what was a great time, so very nearly turned out to be a tragedy for me and when I talk about people rallying around to help one another, I know how true that statement is.

I was getting ready for bed Saturday around midnight when a knock came on the door of the trailer and a couple of ladies asked if I owned a young grey horse that wasn't looking too good.

I rushed out of the trailer to the corral and saw what every horse owner dreads — there was my horse 'Max' laying completely flat on the ground, barely moving and clearly in some pain. It looked like a case of colic — a condition of the digestive system that horses are prone to get at any time (often without really knowing why), and which can prove fatal.

Anita and I had to get Max up onto his feet and get him walking around, keeping him moving in the hope that it would somehow help to relieve the pain and some of the condition itself.

It is a very distressing activity to undertake at 2:00 in the morning when your horse keeps stumbling around and looks as if any second he would collapse into a lifeless heap on the ground.

Many of the people from our group and nearby trailers came to see if they could help.

Someone ran off to see if they could find a vet and, as luck would have it, there was Tim, a skilled practitioner in our neighbouring trailer.

Having been walking Max around for the best part of a couple of hours, Tim gave him an injection to relieve any pain and, after a few minutes, we saw Max take his first tentative nibble of some grass ... he was going to be OK, although we would need to keep a careful eye on him over the next few days!

It's turned out to be a great trip after all!

Until next week, then, when we will be in North Carolina ... Ride the Dream.

*David and Anita Hasbury-Snogles are British residents riding across the United States on horseback to raise money for charity. Visit [HorseQuestUSA.org](http://HorseQuestUSA.org) for more information. David can be reached at [david\\_hasbury@yahoo.com](mailto:david_hasbury@yahoo.com)*

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