



# STATE OF IDAHO



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## **Illegal Agricultural Product Purchases Causing Losses**

Boise – The Idaho State Department of Agriculture recently received numerous complaints of illegal and unethical conduct in sales of farm products and agricultural commodities.

Unlicensed and unregistered dealers are purchasing these items from producers, and are competing with dealers who are complying with the law and are licensed and bonded.

Anyone who purchases farm produce, grains, beans, peas, feed, seed, hay or other products and commodities from Idaho producers must be licensed or registered with Idaho's Warehouse Control Program. Unlicensed in-state and out-of-state dealers are targeting southern and eastern Idaho hay and grain producers especially, due to higher prices and demand. Several incidents of theft or non-payment for hay contracts have been reported, as well as disagreements over settlement price have arisen.

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Producers are encouraged to sell only to reputable, licensed and bonded dealers or get paid up front in cash. Licensees can be verified by calling 208-332-8660. Suspected unlicensed dealers can be reported to the same number. Sales agreements usually involve large sums of money.

Contracts should be in writing, dated, signed by buyer and seller, and include all terms of sale. Producers need to take all reasonable steps to protect their crops from theft. Depending on the type of business, acting as a dealer in Idaho without a license is a felony and the penalty for doing so is a \$10,000 fine, or 10 years in jail, or both.

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