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CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM

USDA looks at adapting farm-style safety net for fishermen

Federal agriculture officials talked to Maine lobstermen about expanding crop insurance to cover fishing revenue losses.

By PENELOPE OVERTON
Staff Writer
Top federal agriculture officials visited Maine this week to evaluate whether crop insurance can be expanded to protect the state's multimillion dollar lobster industry.

The visit by U.S. Department of Agriculture Undersecretary Richard Fordyce and Risk Management Agency Administrator Pat Swanson comes as the agency increasingly looks to integrate seafood producers into traditional agricultural safety nets. Federal crop insurance allows farmers to buy government-subsidized policies that pay out in weeks to months after natural disasters or market drops cause severe revenue losses. In contrast, lobstermen rely on federal fishery disaster declarations that can take three to five years to distribute aid, which industry analysts call far too slow for small operators.

"We are a small-boat, owner-operated fishery made up of thousands of independent businesses, so programs designed for agriculture or other food-producing sectors will not necessarily translate neatly to lobster," said Patrice McCarron, director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association. However, McCarron called the visit "an important first step" toward determining whether existing USDA programs can be adapted or new approaches developed to better support Maine lobstermen in their role as food producers for the world. During a dockside roundtable in Stonington on Tuesday, in-

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Martha Karolina Rojas Alvarez, right, the partner of Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero, and his sister, Daniela Durán Guerrero, spoke about him Thursday at the Gideon Asen law firm in Portland. "He didn't like to be alone," Alvarez said. "He always liked to be with us, to go out, to eat ... or simply staying at home and watching movies" (DARYN SLOVER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

‘IT SHOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED’

Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero’s widow and sister want transparency and accountability after his death at the hands of an ICE agent in Biddeford this summer.

By EMILY ALLEN
Staff Writer

It's been almost three months since Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero's death, and his family is still not used to the quiet. Martha Karolina Rojas Alvarez, his widow, said he used to come home from a day of work — mornings at PetSmart, afternoons and evenings driving for DoorDash — and talk about his day, then ask about hers. He doted on their young daughter, reserving Monday afternoons for time with her.



“He didn’t like to be alone,” she said. “He always liked to be with us, to go out, to eat, visiting the lake ... or simply staying at home and watching movies.”



At left, a memorial for Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero, above, at the intersection of Hill and Pool streets in Biddeford on July 14. (DARYN SLOVER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

On July 13, a Monday morning, Durán Guerrero was shot and killed by a federal immigration agent in Biddeford. His death, and others by agents for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, have spurred protests and

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NEWLY RELEASED REPORTS:

Portland code enforcement officer assaulted woman on the job

By MORGAN WOMACK
Staff Writer
Editor's note: This story contains language about sexual assault that may be upsetting to some readers.

A former Portland code enforcement officer and fire inspector is serving jail time for assaulting a woman while responding to a fire scene more than two years ago, according

to newly released police reports. Matthew Sarapas, 51, resigned in April 2025. He is in custody at the Cumberland County Jail after pleading guilty to Class D assault in August. Since he was charged in March 2025, city officials have declined to share any information about what led to his arrest. But police

Matthew Sarapas is serving a 90-day sentence and resigned his city position in April 2025.

reports, which the Portland Press Herald obtained this week through a public records request, show that the charge stemmed from Sarapas' presence at the scene of a building fire on Brighton Avenue in April 2024. A woman living in the

building, who was 20 at the time, told police that Sarapas came into her apartment because she was worried about a gas smell, according to police reports provided by the Cumberland County District Attorney's Office. When she let him in to check the smoke

detectors, she said, he began rubbing her shoulders and fondling her breasts. She said he also licked her breast and made her touch his penis without her consent, records show. She reported the assault shortly after Sarapas left. When police interviewed Sarapas later that day, he denied allegations of any sexual contact, detectives

wrote in their reports. Sarapas agreed to a DNA swab for a sexual assault evidence collection kit. Once the DNA analysis was completed nearly a year later, in February 2025, reports show investigators determined that Sarapas' saliva had been found on the woman's breast.

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G7 nations agree to release 100 million barrels of oil and diesel fuel



The products will be released over 4 months, starting with 'substantial' amounts of diesel 'immediately.'

By COLLIN BINKLEY and JOHN LEICESTER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Group of Seven wealthy democracies said Friday that they plan to release 100 million barrels of oil and fuel products in the coming weeks, starting with "substantial" amounts of diesel after the fuel recently hit record high prices in the

United States. President Donald Trump said the diesel release would happen "immediately," echoing a G7 promise to start "immediately" with a "frontloaded substantial release" of diesel within the next 20 days and the rest over four months. Trump and his Republican Party face pressure to address surging prices ahead of the Nov. 3 midterm elections, and Trump announced the action Friday on social media. The president's approval ratings on the economy hit a new low, according to an AP-NORC poll, as the Iran war and his trade battles have increased U.S. prices for oil



EMMANUEL MACRON
French president presided over G7 oil discussion

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