

Weekly Ag Report

Craig Hemphill

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Hello, this is Craig Hemphill with this week's Ag Report. Today I would like to talk about pocket gophers. Pocket gophers live in a burrow system that can cover an area of 200 to 2,000 sq feet. The burrows are 2½ inches to 3½ inches in diameter. Feeding burrows are usually 6 to 12 inches below ground, whereas the nest and food storage chamber may be as deep as 6 feet.

Pocket gophers do not hibernate and are active year around, although fresh mounding might not be seen. They also can be active at all hours during the day. Gophers usually live alone in their burrow system, except for females with young or when breeding.

Pocket gophers reach sexual maturity at about one year of age and can live up to 3 years. Females produce 1 to 3 litters per year with 5 to 6 gophers per litter depending on the environment they are in.

Pocket gophers feed on a wide variety of vegetation but generally prefer herbaceous plants, shrubs and trees. Gophers use their sense of smell to locate their food. Most commonly they feed on roots and fleshy portions of plants that they encounter while digging their burrows.

The sooner control practices are deployed after detection of pocket gopher activity the better your chances of successfully dealing with them either by trapping, baiting or gassing.

On the Ag Calendar:

- Please come support the Lassen County Farm Bureau's scholarship and youth activities fundraising Blues and Brews Festival held at Every Blooming Thing this Saturday. Presale tickets are on sale now at Every Blooming Thing.
- Carcass Contest results from the Fair will be awarded at 6 pm August 23rd at the Lassen County Fairground's livestock pavilion.

In closing, I would like to share a quote from John F. Kennedy: "The farmer is the only man in our economy that buys everything at retail, sells everything at wholesale, and pays the freight both ways!"