



Letter from the President

Office of the President, president@uidaho.edu

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Dear Vandals,

After growing up on a farm in Kuna, and spending her entire career at land grant universities, Leslie Edgar can't imagine a better role than leading the University of Idaho's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS).

The new J.R. Simplot Endowed Dean joined the Vandals in June. Between visits to UI Extension county offices and meetings with stakeholders and organizations around the state this summer, Edgar is quickly getting to know the CALS landscape.

"I've only been on campus for about three weeks out of eight so far. The other five weeks I've been touring the state," Edgar said. "I've spent time talking to commodity commissions and associations, the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, the Idaho Department of Agriculture and many others. In all those conversations, I'm trying to learn the power of our collaboration, and identify possibilities and determine what our partners want to see from the University of Idaho that they may not be currently experiencing — those are where our opportunities lie."

The college is building on a strong foundation, with major infrastructure coming online over the next year. The Deep Soil Ecotron laboratory continues to take shape in Moscow, and studies in soil health, carbon capture and more will begin soon. Scientists can study soil at depths up to 10 feet — the deepest of any facility in the world.

The Meat Science and Innovation Center Honoring Ron Richard is nearing completion and will offer a bright new space for research and workforce training, as well as provide a new home for Vandal Brand Meats. Idaho's dairy production was worth close to \$4 billion in 2024. The Idaho Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (Idaho CAFE) will be fully operational next year and will soon be the nation's largest research dairy once fully operational at 2,000 cows. The new facility in Rupert will provide major research insights to critical challenges facing our dairy producers.

In addition to building partnerships and completing major projects, Edgar plans to build on CALS' legacy of producing solutions to meet the state's needs. She sees opportunities collaborating with sister institutions in Idaho, with Washington State University and across colleges within U of I.

Edgar also sees great potential in embracing technology to find solutions, which was a hallmark of her position's namesake, J.R. Simplot.

"The fact that this is the first endowed deanship at the University of Idaho, I feel quite privileged," Edgar said. "Growing up in Idaho, J.R. Simplot was a household name and we all aspired to emulate his success. We knew his story and his legacy of constantly looking for innovative ways to grow his business enterprises. I truly believe that's what we need to do in CALS — lean into innovation and entrepreneurship to find new ways to educate students, conduct research and deliver our

Extension programs.”

We’re grateful to have Dean Edgar leading CALS and building on the U of I’s rich legacy of service and solutions that power Idaho.

Go Vandals!

C. Scott Green
President



Snapshots

‘Fightin’ Taters’ take on St. Thomas in home opener

The Vandal football team will wear “Fightin’ Taters” helmets in their Saturday game against St. Thomas at the P1FCU Kibbie Dome. The Idaho Potato Commission is Saturday’s game sponsor and will bring the Big Potato Truck and the Spuddy Buddy mascot for the game.

[Learn more.](#)

U of I, Micron team up on semiconductor training

The U of I and Boise-based Micron are working together to help meet the looming workforce shortage in the semiconductor industry. The university’s Next Generation Microelectronics

Research Center gives students a chance to work in clean rooms and tackle projects like designing solar cells used in solar panels.

[Learn more.](#)

New tool saves growers money, reduces chemical use

Idaho farmers can protect crops and reduce costs thanks to the Growing Degree Day Calculator developed by UI Extension educator Jemila Chellappa. The calculator gives growers science-based guidance on the best times to apply pesticides, irrigate or fertilize.

[Learn more.](#)



The University of Idaho Library is featuring the Smithsonian traveling exhibition, "Voices and Votes: Democracy in America" through Oct. 3.

The exhibit is one of several taking place in Idaho throughout 2025-26 to commemorate the 250th anniversary of America's founding.



University of Idaho

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