

THE SOCIAL FABRIC OF OREGON AGRICULTURE

CENTURY FARMS

More than 1,000 farm and ranch operations in Oregon have been managed by the same families for over 100 years. These farms have achieved a feat that few other businesses can. Succession to new generations of producers is a challenge—the economics of agriculture have dictated that more families find off-farm jobs to support their living expenses, health insurance, etc. However, the commitment, tenacity, adaptation, and foresight necessary to hand the farm from one generation to the next is exhibited in these century farm operations.

More information on the Century Farm Program, honoring those who achieve this milestone, can be found online.

- <http://oregon.gov/ODA/crf.shtml>

COUNTY FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Many of Oregon's distinct local festivals and county fairs originated and remain connected to agriculture. The Tulip Festival outside Woodburn and the Iris Festival outside Salem are just two examples of established operations that are recognized as important community events, enabling the public to get a closer look at agriculture. There's the Turkey-Rama in McMinnville (Yamhill County was once home to significant turkey production and processing), the St. Paul Rodeo, the Pendleton Roundup, the Mt. Angel Oktoberfest, and many more.

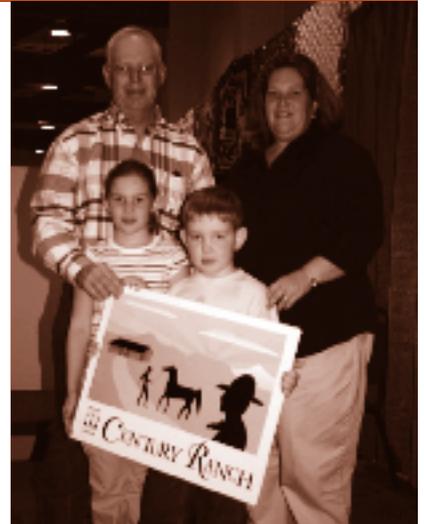
These events provide a sense of community, history, unique identity, and location.

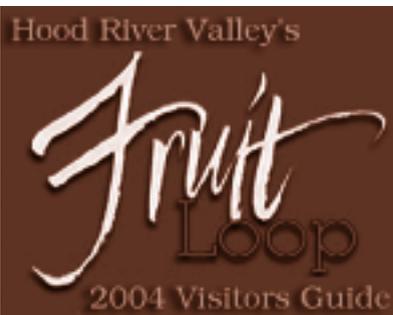
- <http://www.oregonfairs.org>

FARM STANDS, FARMERS' MARKETS, AND ROADSIDE STANDS

The public's increasing desire to connect with the source of their food and to interact with farmers is driving a growing interest in farmers' markets, farm stands, u-pick operations, and other direct marketing ventures. These serve as important community connections.

- <http://www.oregonfarmersmarkets.org>





AGRI-TOURISM AND OTHER RECREATIONAL FARM CONNECTIONS

The famous Fruit Loop Tour in Hood River showcases local orchards, farm goods, and unique processed foods. Similar tours in southern Oregon's Rogue Valley feature wines, pear orchards, and artisan cheese—all adding to the regional flavor of the famous Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Other farms provide educational experiences for nearby schools. Still others are diversifying operations to include a fee hunting or fishing aspect. Others are emphasizing the natural amenities, wildlife, and environmental attributes for photographers, bird watchers, hikers, and related interests. There are pumpkin patches, corn mazes, harvest festivals, oyster and seafood festivals, wine tasting, and many more events that are uniquely Oregon.

The Agri-Business Council of Oregon maintains a list of many agri-tourism locations in Oregon. This is another way some producers are endeavoring to keep the farm viable and connect with the urban population.

- <http://www.aglink.org>
- <http://www.traveloregon.com>