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Katy Coba: Reflections of a memorable ODA career



Governor Kate Brown announced late summer that Oregon Department of Agriculture Director Katy Coba would become the state's new Chief Operating Officer and Director of the Department of Administrative Services starting October 1, pending Senate confirmation. Before embarking on a new chapter in her long career in public service, Katy Coba reminisced and reflected, in a final interview with the Agriculture Quarterly, on her nearly 14-year run as head of ODA:

Katy Coba started in July as special assistant to the director. Before joining the department, she was assistant director for customer services at the General Services Department. She enjoys horseback riding, embroidery, antiqueing and refinishing furniture. Katy walks to work every day, and if you get in her way, beware! She's been known to bash cars with her steel-toed purse. Katy, 27, her husband Marshall and their yellow Cadillac live in Salem.



Clipping from ODA staff newsletter, Winter 1990.

When you started at ODA in 1989, did it ever occur to you that someday you would be not only the director, but the longest-serving director in the agency's history?

Absolutely not! I was so young back then. Really, 1989 was very early in my career. I graduated from Whitman College in 1984, so I was not quite five years into my career. I had no idea what I wanted to be when I grew up. But obviously coming to the agency and coming from a farm family, I can distinctly remember thinking I knew something about agriculture. Then when I got here, I realized how little I knew about agriculture because of the diversity of the industry and me coming from just one sector. I was just taking advantage of opportunities that came my way. Then when I was offered the job as director, I didn't think it would go 13 and a half years. I feel very proud of ODA and very proud of the work I've done as director of this agency.

What has your time at ODA meant to you?

So many thoughts run through my mind very, very fast that it's hard to encapsulate what this has meant for me. But I haven't been shy in telling people that I think this is the best job in state government—certainly for someone who comes from an agriculture family. My brother and I are the fifth generation on our family ranch. This job has been really special. I've had a chance to represent and promote Oregon agriculture, and help it deal with some challenging issues. It's been an incredible opportunity and certainly the highlight of my career.

What are your thoughts about the people who work at ODA?

I am so proud of this agency and the staff that we have. When you think of the myriad and diverse programs that we have, the great expertise of our staff, the way they work with their customers to deliver program services, it's a very special agency. I couldn't be more proud of everything they've done and will continue to do. Our staff work on their own, they also work in teams across program lines and with partners throughout the industry. It's a special agency working with a special industry.



Katy Coba: Continued on page 2

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QUARTERLY

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When you first came to ODA, what was the agency like and how did it compare to today?

Many of the core programs that we have now we had back then. If my memory serves me correct, the general public was not quite as interested in ODA as they are now. I think there is a lot more overall interest in agriculture. Our agency did not work as much cross-program wise as it does now. That has been part of the evolution of the department and also part of my leadership style—to really encourage cross-program collaboration. Another change is that agriculture industry issues are more complex now than they were back in 1989. So as an agency, we have to think differently about how we come together and work on those issues.

How has technology and ODA's ability to deliver its services changed?

Without a doubt, we have adopted technology to the extent that we are able. I think that's probably a frustration our staff still has—that we are not able to incorporate as much technology as we'd like to into the work that we do. We've seen efficiencies with technology. We are limited with resources, so we maximize what we can. Moving forward, we will continue to take advantage of technology where we can. But the change from 1989 to today? Now our inspectors use iPads instead of paper for their reports. We are seeing a lot of our licensees renewing online, which is hopefully easier for the customer and certainly quicker and more efficient for us.

What are some of your proudest accomplishments?

There is no question—and it's been this way from the beginning—the area I love most is promoting Oregon agriculture. That includes talking to Oregonians about what Oregon agriculture is, what its economic impact is, what its environmental impact is, and the fact that it's such a part of our fabric, our culture, and our way of life—unlike most other industries in Oregon.



Agriculture is just different. Being able to talk about that and show it to Oregonians who don't know agriculture has been very rewarding. I'm also proud of the market development work—everything from local, regional, domestic, to international. Anytime we can see our producers and processors have success, that's what we are all about. Being able to wave that flag and be the proud director of the agency



representing Oregon agriculture encompasses my proudest moments.

Were there any challenges that came along that you felt ODA tackled well?

Yes. I think the first big one that hit me as a new director was the discovery of the BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) cow in our neighboring state of Washington. It was the first case of BSE ever discovered in the United States. That required an all-hands on deck emergency response. Thank goodness we had very

competent staff with technical expertise as well as incredible training in emergency response. USDA (US Department of Agriculture) was the lead responder, but it was nothing any of us had ever dealt with and, looking back in hindsight, we handled it very well. We have played roles in other places—I

think of the genetically engineered wheat outbreak a couple of years ago. Like the BSE incident, there was huge potential for market disruption. Again, USDA was the lead, but the states were a key part of the team. In hindsight, the market disruption was minimal. While we never figured out the source of the GE (genetically engineered) wheat, it ultimately turned out well.



with the industry in all the various settings where we've been together. The laughter we've shared, the camaraderie we've experienced agonizing over all our respective challenges, then being able to stand back and truly enjoy the relationship and, in so many cases, the friendships I've developed—that has to be the ultimate highlight. I can tell stories about crazy trips, traveling through horrific weather, missed flights, and the whole nine yards, but it's really the people that mean the most to me.

What do you see as the biggest opportunities for ODA following your departure?

Clearly the continued market opportunities. Our challenge is where to focus next because there are so many things—locally, domestically, internationally—that we could work on. It's really trying to figure out what is the work that can benefit the diversity of the industry we serve. A great opportunity is the love that Oregonians have for Oregon agriculture. They love their farmers and trying to figure out how to harness that love, even though they may not understand agriculture and what it takes to be a farmer. They want Oregon agriculture to succeed. That's really an opportunity for us and the industry and how we interact with Oregonians. Within the agency, we want to continue that cross-pollination amongst our programs.

I'm also very proud of how we've moved through challenging budget times. We've really looked hard at how we deliver our services and how we can do things differently to be more cost effective. At times, we've had to cut staff and certain programs, but we've really shored up core programs for our agency. The relationship we've had with different governors—now I'm on my third governor—as well as the relationship we have with the legislature is very positive, and I'm proud of that. It's hard work, it's a lot of constant communication, but it's led to mutual respect all the way around.

Favorite times?

My favorite times have been connected to interactions with people, whether it's within the agency, whether it's my colleagues around the US in other departments of agriculture, or the interaction



We have such a great staff and when they come together in new ways, great things happen. We need to continue to be innovative in how we deliver services and anticipate where the industry is going, what its needs are going to be, and being well positioned to meet those needs. That's something we do very well and something we can continue to do. Another opportunity is the continued adoption of technology, where it makes sense and where it



Katy Coba: Continued from page 2

helps. We've also talked a lot about the people in the agency and how, given the fact that we have many long-time staff that will be retiring in the next few years, we are going to have to bring in new staff. We can better train and support our staff to help them be the best they can be.

In your new position, do you see yourself still playing a role in Oregon agriculture?

Yes, I do. When I was visiting with the governor, I told the governor, that if I take the job, I'm still going to be a shameless advocate for agriculture, for Oregon's natural resource industries, and for rural Oregon. She said, 'I hope so.' So I think I can bring that voice to the governor's office and as I interact with other state agencies within state government about how the state collectively delivers its services. Is there a new and different way we can connect with Oregonians? I think I can take the lessons I've learned at



ODA and use those as examples. I will use everything I've learned here as I interact with the governor, her staff, and with legislators.

What advice do you have for your successor?

Love agriculture, it's pretty special. I say I have two passions in my

career—one is agriculture and one is public service. So have a passion about agriculture. It's really special and incredibly diverse. Embrace that diversity and embrace what agriculture means to Oregon. You've got a great agency with great staff. Help them be the best that they can be and they can help you. It's a great

job. You are lucky. Congratulations. Oh, and keep a sense of humor, because sometimes you need it.

Do you have parting words for the industry?

Yes. Keep doing the great things you do. Don't be afraid to share that with Oregonians. Farmers are a pretty private bunch. It's a minority that really likes to talk about what they do, how they do it, and why they do it. But I think in this day and age, we need more of that. Our farmers, ranchers, and fishermen in Oregon do great things. In whatever way is comfortable for you, tell the story, tell how much you love your job day in and day out, even though there are those few times when it can be challenging. It's a special person who is a farmer, rancher, or fisherman. Don't be afraid to share that specialness with the rest of Oregon. •

Board of Ag profile: Luisa Santamaria



A native of Quito, Ecuador, an accomplished instructor of Spanish-speaking nursery workers, and a biologist who has shown an insatiable desire to learn as well as teach, Luisa Santamaria is the newest member of the State Board of Agriculture.

"I really like Oregon, I enjoy it here," says Santamaria. "Sometimes it reminds me of my hometown, especially the (Willamette) Valley. Where I now work, when I go outside, I can see the mountains just like when I lived in Ecuador."

Luisa works at Oregon State University's North Willamette Research and Extension Center as a plant pathologist and bilingual educator. Her path to Oregon was filled with hard work and opportunities of which she took advantage. Growing up in Ecuador, Luisa fed her interest in biology and micro-organisms at a young age by helping her agronomist father in the greenhouse. Her early career involved something she has always enjoyed—teaching. She was a

popular college instructor.

"I taught genetics and any class related to biology that I was asked to teach because I enjoy science," says Santamaria. "The main class I taught was soil microbiology for agriculture, and it was a real popular class. I had students doing research with me as part of the class. In our country, in order to get a degree in biology/microbiology, you need to do two years of research."

It was Santamaria's interest in plant science microbiology that eventually led her to accept a US Department of Agriculture grant to study in the US, starting at the University of Delaware, where she obtained a masters in horticulture. Six years later she returned to pursue a doctorate degree in plant pathology followed by a post-doctorate degree at a Tennessee State University nursery crop research station. All of Santamaria's experiences and expertise brought her to Oregon State University in 2009. Her focus was on Oregon's important nursery industry. Her knowledge of soil borne pathogens has been invaluable to growers. But it's her roots in teaching—combined with her language skills—that have

filled an incredibly important niche in the industry. Quite simply, she can reach Hispanic workers who not only are unable to speak English, but also may be illiterate or possess little formal education.

"The beginning of my job was a little difficult because I was in a new position, and I was new to the area and not completely familiar with Oregon's nursery industry. Oregon has a great diversity of production systems as well as education priorities for the workforce. After all these years at OSU, I now have a better understanding of the industry and I have been able connect with nurseries. Now, I customize trainings according to their educational necessities at their site and I am able to outreach a greater number of workers. Nurseries are seeing that this education and these trainings are having a positive impact on workers and changing behavior at work activities."

Essentially, Luisa has brought science to nursery workers who speak Spanish. Through her workshops and training manuals, they have learned about conditions and plant diseases they should be looking for, proper use of pesticides, proper sanitation, and worker safety issues. She also has been instrumental in helping deliver on-farm food safety training for field workers. The berry industry, in particular, has a need and desire for outreach and education to improve food safety practices. As an extension educator with bilingual skills, Luisa has become involved.

"It looks like life is taking me in that direction," she laughs.

Luisa was not shy about speaking up early during her first Board of Agriculture meeting. She has found her fellow members to be most welcoming and she looks forward to learning more about the other sectors of Oregon agriculture.

"Everyone on the board is very sociable and very nice; they made me feel important!"

Luisa hopes to provide a strong insight of the agricultural work force, which is largely made up of Spanish speakers.

"I would like to provide information that I have gathered by working closely with growers and the work force. I can offer that perspective to the board. I have a passion for the things I do. I completely give myself to the things I do. That is also what I hope to bring to the board."

Santamaria, who has two grown children, resides in Canby with her husband, Carlos Castellanos. •



At its quarterly meeting in Pendleton, the Board of Agriculture got a first-hand look at some of farming's newest technology. Strong winds kept the demonstration short, but board members saw how a small unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)—better known as a drone—can help agriculture. Whether it's spot spraying of pesticides or monitoring soil conditions, drones appear to be the wave of the future. The demo took place at OSU's Columbia Basin Research Center.

ODA finds stink bug biocontrol agent already in Oregon

A natural predator of the invasive brown marmorated stink bug has found its way into Oregon on its own, a discovery made this summer by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Meanwhile, a four-year effort to rear the tiny wasp at a quarantine facility at Oregon State University for future controlled releases continues with the hopes that the natural spread of the biological control agent will speed up the process of gaining permission from the US Department of Agriculture to deploy the wasp.

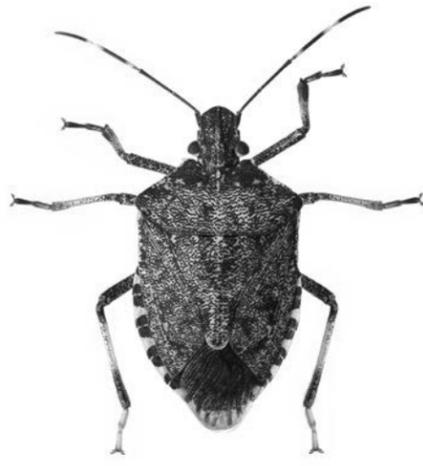
Any introduction of the good bug—*Trissolcus japonicus*—is welcome news to Oregon, whether intentionally released by ODA or naturally spread among the growing population of the exotic stink bug.



Trissolcus japonicus, a tiny wasp that is a natural predator to the stink bug.

"We've been rearing these wasps in quarantine since 2011 and no releases have been made anywhere in the US yet," says ODA entomologist Chris Hedstrom, who discovered the natural presence of *T. japonicus* this summer. "We still need permission from USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service. Right now, we are putting together a petition for release because we have enough data to make a first attempt at gaining permission. Growers are worried about the stink bug. Some have already been impacted and they are looking for a biocontrol solution."

It has been a race against time ever since brown marmorated stink bug was first detected in 2004 as a home pest in Portland. Additional



Adult brown marmorated stink bug.

sightings soon were reported in other urban areas. In recent years, populations of the exotic stink bug have exploded and spread to other parts of Oregon. Homeowners often report hundreds of the pests in or around their house. Additionally, brown marmorated stink bug has become a significant agricultural pest for the first time in Oregon.

"Last year, we started to get a first response from growers who were seeing what they thought was stink bug damage," says Hedstrom. "Specifically, a lot more stink bugs were showing up in hazelnut orchards, and we're finding the same situation this year. We haven't seen huge amounts of agricultural damage like there is in the mid-Atlantic states, but we are bracing for the worst."

Brown marmorated stink bug, left unchecked, already has blazed a trail of destruction in states like Pennsylvania, where major losses have been reported for apples, peaches, grapes, tomatoes, and many other fruits and vegetables that also grow in Oregon. The list of crops and plants the stink bug won't feed on is probably shorter than the list of crops and plants it likes. The pest even feeds on maple and cedar trees.

The biological solution everyone is hoping for has been pursued in the laboratory nationally with ODA as one of three lead regional agencies conducting research involving *T. japonicus*, the imported wasp that acts as a parasitoid of the brown marmorated stink bug. The tiny wasps were collected from Asia—also home to the exotic stink bug—and provided by USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS).

The research program established a colony of the good bugs as well as a colony of brown marmorated stink bugs. It was confirmed that the adult female tiny wasp lays its eggs inside the stink bug eggs. As a result of the parasitization, the stink bug eggs do not survive.

While the biocontrol agent holds great promise in the control of brown marmorated stink bug, there has been concern that the tiny wasps might have a similarly negative impact on native stink bug species. Not all stink bugs in Oregon are bad, and researchers want to make sure non-target species are not affected. With the pending petition to USDA, ODA will be making the case that only the right stink bug species will be impacted.

In 2014, *T. japonicus* was found in the mid-Atlantic states for the first time outside of a quarantine facility. There was suspicion that a breach had occurred, but it proved to be a different population of the beneficial insect that had been

introduced unintentionally. Last year, Washington State University researchers recovered the wasp in Vancouver. Again, there was worry of a quarantine breach, but DNA analysis showed it was a different population of the wasp from the one being reared by researchers and even different from the one discovered on the East Coast. A second unintentional introduction of the tiny wasp had apparently taken place.

"We got excited but had not found it in Oregon until early this summer when it was recovered from traps near downtown Portland," says Hedstrom.

In looking for the wasp this year, ODA placed sentinel egg clusters throughout the state. Hedstrom found one parasitized stink bug egg cluster that was completely obliterated.

"We don't usually see that in the field because there are not a lot of native natural enemies that could

have killed the stink bug. We put more traps out in the area. Within a couple of days, wasps were attacking those egg clusters. We brought the wasps back to the lab and had them identified as *T. japonicus*."

It appears the natural spread of the wasps has not gone far, but the insect's presence is encouraging. If researchers can find out more about the population of *T. japonicus*, it could accelerate the timetable for getting permission for small-scale releases of the reared biocontrol agents.

"We've been working on this biocontrol agent for so long and trying to get it released, it's really exciting to now find it already here and attacking exotic stink bugs in the field," says Hedstrom.



An emerging wasp from an egg of the brown marmorated stink bug.

Even with the wasp naturally coming into Oregon, ODA would like to complement its spread through targeted releases of the insects being reared in quarantine right now. That combination would certainly speed up the ability to control the pest.

"In 10 years, assuming biocontrol releases are allowed, we should see a population decrease of brown marmorated stink bug," says Hedstrom. "There could be smaller pesticide applications or less impact on crop yields to the point where growers could absorb any damage. Homeowners might no longer see them in the thousands, but only perhaps a handful in the house and something that can be easily managed."

That may be a best-case scenario, but it's one that researchers are starting to believe. •

Oregon battles its largest ever outbreak of Japanese beetle

A record number of invasive Japanese beetles have been detected in Washington County within the city of Portland this summer. To date, the Oregon Department of Agriculture has found nearly 350 Japanese beetles in traps placed in the area as well as live beetles causing feeding damage on roses and other plants. The evidence suggests a breeding population of the non-native insect has been established.

"What we know right now is that this infestation is localized yet producing enough adult beetles that we have

found them feeding on roses and other plants in this area," says Clint Burfitt, manager of ODA's Insect Pest Prevention and Management Program. "Without community action, this pest will spread and cause an increased use of pesticides by homeowners and producers of agricultural crops such as cannabis, hops, nursery plants, and wine grapes."

Additional traps have been placed in the Cedar Mill area of Washington County. It appears the infestation has been present for more than a year, but not detected until this summer.

Japanese beetle is a major plant pest in other parts of the US. As a grub, it can be very destructive to turf. As an adult, the bright metallic green beetle with copper-colored wing covers will feast on a wide

variety of plant material including trees, shrubs, flowers, fruits, and vegetables. It is a pest that can be destructive in urban and agricultural environments, and is also subject to agricultural quarantine regulations. ODA has been using an early detection, rapid response approach for years to find and eradicate populations of the pest. In the past, Japanese beetle has made its way into Oregon through air cargo carriers, with multiple detections over the years near Portland International Airport. In recent years, ODA has conducted eradication projects in residential areas of Portland and Cave Junction.

No eradication plans have been made yet in response to the most recent outbreak. ODA has continued to trap for Japanese beetles in hopes of pinpointing the location of the



breeding population and potential treatment next year.

"We encourage residents to cooperate with field technicians who are maintaining traps and to be aware that this infestation can be spread by the movement of plants, roots, and soil that originate from this area," says Burfitt. •

REAL Oregon program to produce real ag leaders

Oregon is just one of 14 states without a leadership development program for those tied to the natural resource industries. Until now. REAL Oregon—which stands for Resource Education and Agricultural Leadership—is a program ready to get started with its first class of future leaders slated for 2017. With support from the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries in the months to come, an annual crop of natural resource leaders will emerge, ready to give back to their communities by using the skills learned through the program.

The shape and form of the annual leadership development program to this point has been largely the work of a steering committee whose members saw no need to reinvent the wheel. The neighboring states of Idaho, Washington, and California have established leadership programs. Idaho, in particular, seems to use a format that can serve as a model for Oregon.

"The diversity of Oregon agriculture creates many challenges, and communication with the right people at the right time is critical," says Doug Hoffman, President and CEO of the Pacific Northwest agricultural cooperative Wilco and a graduate of the Leadership Idaho Agriculture program. "Relationships of trust can be created through the development of leaders in the REAL Oregon program and, as a result, it makes those tough discussions down the road much easier."

The next phase is to establish future development and administration of REAL Oregon

under a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, which will establish a board of directors that represents the wide diversity of Oregon's natural resources.

REAL Oregon aims to bring together future leaders from agriculture, fishing, and forestry to learn leadership skills and gain a greater understanding of Oregon through a series of training sessions held in five diverse regions of the state. While the focus is on the natural resource industry sectors, the steering committee wants leaders who will serve all of Oregon, not just the interests of their industry.

"We want folks in these sessions who are producers—farmers, ranchers, forest managers, fishermen—but we also want potential leaders from government agencies and higher education," says Bill Buhrig, an Oregon State University extension agent in Malheur County who also attended the Leadership Idaho Agriculture program. "This is a professional development program for professionals. It's for people who typically know where they are in their career as they enter the program."

Buhrig, one of the REAL Oregon steering committee members, says prospective participants already may be leaders in their respective jobs—whether it is being good stewards of the land and water or effective marketers of their products. But do they have the skill set to lead a group in a meeting, go testify at the state Capitol, or be active on the local school board? Successful graduates of the program will be better equipped to provide leadership and a natural resource perspective no matter how they choose to move forward. Maybe they become a commodity commission board



More information on REAL Oregon can be found at www.realoregon.net

member or county commissioner, serve on their school board, get involved in the legislature, or are willing to answer a reporter's question about an agricultural issue.

Part of the skill set to be developed is urban-rural relationship building. REAL Oregon is designed to produce leaders willing and able to build bridges with others who have different perspectives on natural resource issues. Training will center on communication skills, conflict resolution, public speaking, media relations, board governance, public policy, and natural resource industries co-existence. Accepted candidates will already possess leadership qualities, but REAL Oregon hopes those qualities are transformed into skills.

It's the public policy arena that holds a great deal of opportunity for someone who has developed effective leadership skills and can see all sides of an issue. Good leaders most often make good public policy. And these leaders can come from all sectors of agriculture, whether it's producers, businesses that provide support services to agriculture, or even various government agencies. There is a place in line for all who help make up the wide diversity of Oregon's natural resources.

Under the program's format, 30 participants will be dedicating

five weeks of their time. Each year, the training begins in November and concludes in March the following year with the leadership class meeting once a month for two-and-a-half days at each of five locations. The steering committee chose Burns, Astoria, Medford, Salem-Portland, and Boardman as the five sites that can provide the diversity of natural resources required by the program's curriculum. Applications for the first class are expected to be available in spring 2017.

Before the program can successfully launch, it needs industry support. It will cost an estimated \$150,000 annually to run the program, which pays for speakers, class materials, lodging and meals, and administrative oversight. Class members will pay a portion of that cost, but REAL Oregon is asking for sponsorships from those associated with the natural resource industries. Steering committee members plan to make presentations at upcoming meetings of organizations, making the case for support and participation. Organizations can also help identify potential class members.

REAL Oregon is attempting to fill a need that is both great and critical with Oregonians who have the leadership skills to face the changing times. •

Rodger Huffman saddling up for retirement

In November 1985, a young Rodger Huffman was eating a hamburger in a café at the cattle sale yard in La Grande when a brand inspection supervisor for the Oregon Department of Agriculture tapped him on the shoulder and asked if he wanted to help out. Huffman wasn't really looking for a job, but since he grew up around cattle in Eastern Oregon, he was willing to do some part-time work.

Some 31 years later, Huffman is retiring from ODA as manager of the Animal Identification Program and a distinguished career serving the agency and the livestock industry with equal distinction.

"Overall, this job fit me perfectly," says Huffman. "I have to believe that what I'm doing is a productive and valuable service. I was fortunate to be able to help an industry that I grew up in because all this

was unplanned. With all that has happened over my career, I'm the luckiest guy in the world."

Coming to work on the west side of the state as a brand inspection supervisor led to a natural progression at ODA. Huffman took over as administrator of the Animal Health and Identification Division in the late 1990s, a position he relinquished about 10 years ago in order to go back to La Grande yet still work for the agency.

Biggest challenge during his ODA career? The flood of 1996 filled the basement of the ODA building with 10 feet of water from nearby Mill Creek. The Animal Health and Identification Division was housed in the basement and lost virtually everything.

"The flood completely ruined our office and staff morale, but we recovered and moved on," he says.

Other memorable challenges included the famed "cow that stole Christmas"—a reference to the animal that contracted BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) in Washington state, which required ODA to test 25,000 head of cattle in

Oregon that may have been exposed.

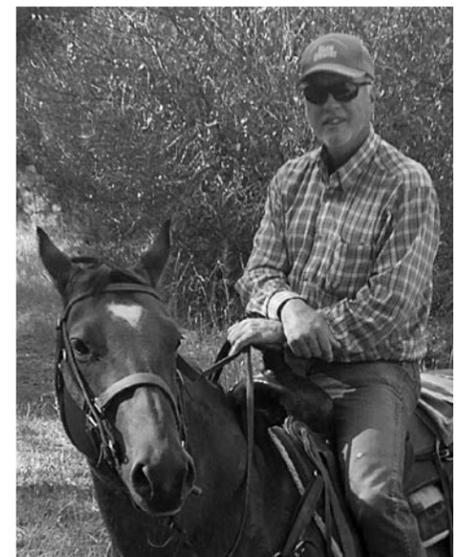
Sometimes, the greatest challenges for Huffman turned out to be his proudest accomplishments.

"I'm not a big social person, so I found it a major challenge to keep our office staff in Salem working closely on a day-to-day basis—8 or 9 people with totally different personalities that we were able to keep together as a team instead of tearing each other apart. Since there was no coup or attempt to take me out, I think it was a success."

Huffman is well regarded in the cattle industry, having received an award from the Oregon Cattlemen's Association for his longtime service. He believes Oregon's livestock industries have a bright future, especially as they continue to adapt to consumer demands. The biggest change he's seen in the industry is the improvement in the animals themselves thanks to genetics.

"Even though the number of cattle is down over the past 50 to 60 years, we are still producing more beef, and the quality of the meat has improved, too."

The biggest change at ODA? Well, it's not genetics. In fact, Huffman is



more apt to talk about what hasn't changed.

"ODA is still very well supported and respected by the industry, by the legislature, and by the governor."

Huffman is one of the reasons the Oregon Department of Agriculture maintains those good relations.

What's next for Rodger Huffman? "I can't tell you what I'll be doing five years from now, but it will have something to do with agriculture. No doubt there will be horses and some cattle, somewhere."

Happy trails to one of ODA's most likable cowboys. •

Special summer gatherings highlight specialty crops

From Astoria to Hermiston, from Portland to Medford. Oregonians this summer got a delicious taste of local specialty crops and a chance to meet many of the growers as part of a series of events coordinated by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Oregon State University.

The "Crop Up Dinner Series and Market Showcase," successfully brought together local growers, food buyers, chefs, and the general public at OSU facilities in five regions of the state. All events were sold out—a good sign of the interest Oregonians have in local fruits and vegetables, prepared in creative and tasty dishes by OSU and local chefs. Another series of crop up dinners will take place next summer in new locations around the state.

The dinner-showcase events were made possible through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, a federal program administered in



Oregon by ODA. In August, Oregon hosted the inaugural meeting of state coordinators of the program from across the country. The conference was a huge success, with representatives from 44 states and three US territories coming to

Portland. It only made sense that the participants should attend the crop up event held at the Food Innovation Center in Portland.

Oregon ranks seventh in the nation in production of specialty crops. •



A new school year means another crop of FoodCorps service members in Oregon delivering hands-on nutrition education, building and tending school gardens, and helping to source healthy, local food for school cafeterias.



This is the sixth year Oregon has hosted FoodCorps service members. This year's team includes:

- Amy Staats, Food Roots in Tillamook
- Katherine Globerson, Growing Gardens in Portland
- Morgan Joyner, Native American Youth and Family Center in Portland
- Joel Whitmore, Salem-Keizer Education Foundation
- Karen Tassinari, Rogue Valley Farm to School in Ashland/Talent
- Phoebe Lett, Corvallis Environmental Center
- Desiree McGinn, North Power Charter School
- Amelia Clements, Curry Soil and Water Conservation District in Gold Beach/Port Orford
- Shaili Parekh, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council in Redmond/Sisters
- Rachelle Hanson, Lake Health District in Lakeview

ODA manages the state's FoodCorps program and hosts a fellowship position to lead the team. •

Third edition of Growing Oregon now available

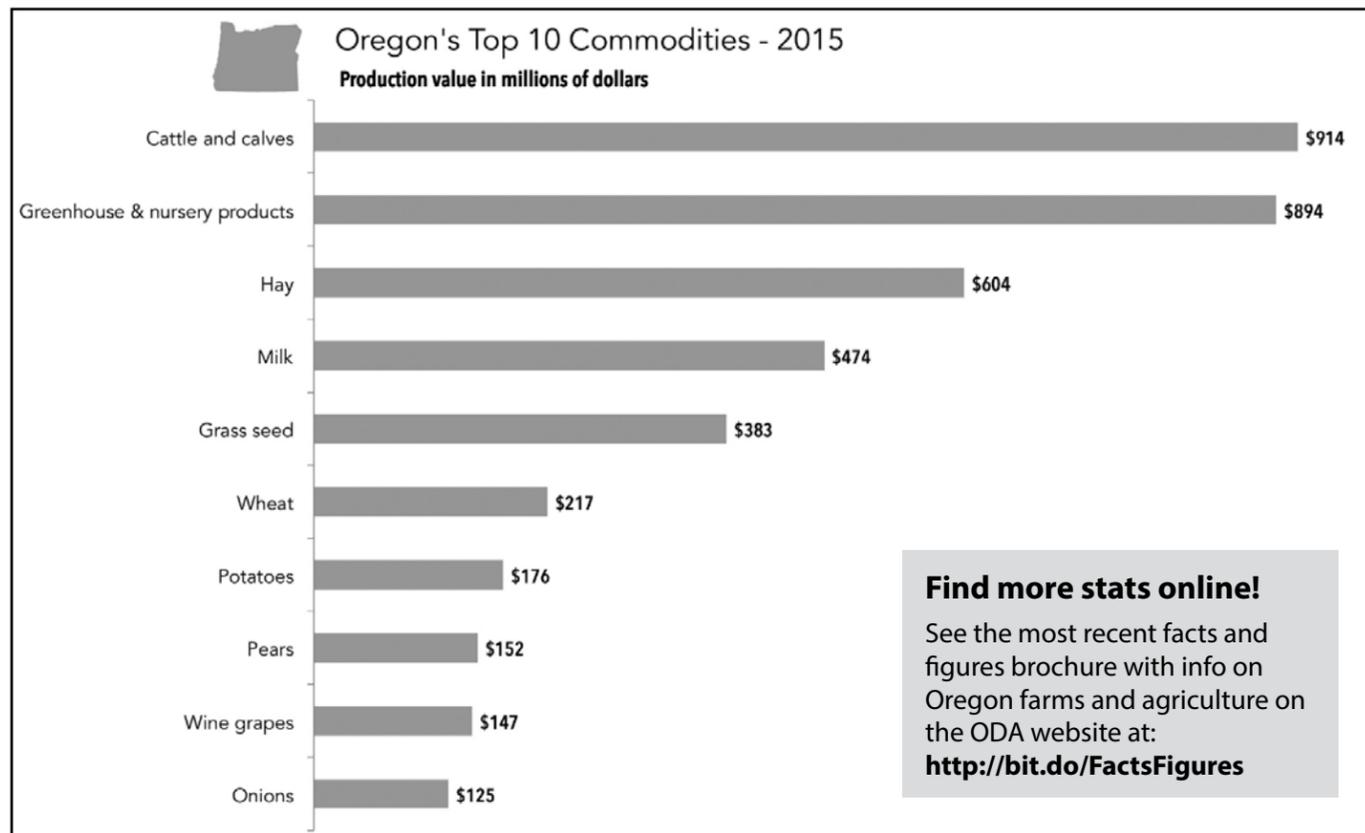
The Oregon Department of Agriculture announces the 2016 edition of *Growing Oregon: A guide to the state's farms, food and markets* is now available. The magazine targets Oregon consumers with a diversity of stories that profile the state's agricultural bounty, its producers, and the many

opportunities for consumers to experience Oregon agriculture for themselves.

The 48-page magazine features original photography, reader-friendly charts and graphs, and profiles of individual producers and companies. Among its 11 feature stories, the magazine also highlights efforts by Oregon growers to make efficient use of water, protect pollinators, and address the issue of hunger. With

its focus on the consumer, *Growing Oregon* offers links to additional information on how to engage and experience Oregon agriculture.

A print copy of *Growing Oregon: A guide to the state's farms, food and markets* is available upon request by contacting the Oregon Department of Agriculture at (503) 986-4550 or by email at info@oda.state.or.us. A digital version of the magazine is available at www.OR-agriculture.com.



International culinary ambassadors get a taste of Oregon

Oregon's global reputation as a leader in today's food scene came into focus in September, when the state hosted world renown chefs and food and beverage writers as part of the International Culinary Ambassador Program. In its second year, the program welcomed 12 influencers from the culinary world including six chefs from three well-known restaurants in Tokyo; four food, wine and travel writers

from Japan; and two leading wine and cider writers coming from the United Kingdom.

The three Tokyo restaurants represented by the chefs include Ivan Ramen and Kirakutei as well as the Canna Restaurant at the Tokyo Disneyland Hotel.

The 2016 International Culinary Ambassadors participated in Feast Portland, one of the leading food and beverage festivals in the US. This annual gathering for leading chefs and foodies is a celebration of the food scene in Portland and a showcase of Oregon's bounty of agricultural products and quality

ingredients. The ambassadors also received a close-up look at Oregon's craft cider and wine, including a visit to a cider apple orchard in Corvallis and a meeting with cider makers from two craft cider companies to learn about this rapidly growing beverage industry. Their special tour ended with a special tasting at Firesteed Winery near Rickreall.

The International Culinary Ambassador program is a Specialty Crop Block Grant funded project of the Oregon Department of



Agriculture. ODA has worked in partnership with Feast Portland, Travel Oregon, and Travel Portland to bring these key chefs and culinary influencers to the state. The Oregon Wine Board, NW Cider Association, Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission, and Hazelnut Marketing Board have supported the program and provided high-quality products for the Feast events as well as the wine and cider tour. •

ODA honors three of its best!



(From left): Distinguished Employee award winners—Sherry Kudna, Donna Fry, and Barb Stoner with director Katy Coba.

Three long-time employees of the Oregon Department of Agriculture have been honored with this year's "Distinguished Employee" award, as announced by director Katy Coba at a recent all-staff meeting in Salem. Sherry Kudna, executive assistant to the director; Donna Fry, brand recorder in the Animal Health and Identification Program; and Barb Stoner, cashier, were all noted for their exemplary service. Donna and Barb have announced their retirement. Despite their youthfulness, all three award winners have combined for more than 100 years of service at ODA!

Announcements

Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) meeting

Date October 20, 2016
Time 8:30 am–11:30 am
Location Monarch Hotel, 12566 SE 93rd Ave., Clackamas, OR
Contact Manette Simpson, 503-986-4715
Website www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/NaturalResources/SWCD/Pages/SWCC.aspx

Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) Advisory Committee meeting

Date October 20, 2016
Time 1:30 pm–3:30 pm
Location Oregon Department of Agriculture
3rd floor conference room (Room 331)
635 Capitol St. NE, Salem, OR
Contact Wym Matthews, 503-986-4792
Website www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/NaturalResources/Pages/CAFO.aspx

Pesticide Analytical and Response Center (PARC) Board meeting

Date November 9, 2016
Time 9:00 am–12:00 pm
Location Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE, Salem, OR
Contact Theodore Bunch Jr., 503-986-6470 or toll-free 844-688-7272
Website www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/Pages/PARC.aspx

Oregon State Board of Agriculture

Date November 29–December 1, 2016
Location Willamette Valley (TBD)
Contact Kathryn Walker, 503-986-4558
Website www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/BoardAgriculture.aspx

Oregon Interagency Noxious Weed Symposium

Date December 6-8, 2016
Location LaSells Stewart Center, Corvallis, OR
Contact Jo Davis, 503-986-4757
Website www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Weeds/Pages/2016INWS.aspx

State Board of Agriculture

- Barbara Boyer, vice chair
- Pete Brentano, chair
- Stephanie Hallock
- Tracey Liskey
- Sharon Livingston
- Laura Masterson
- Marty Myers
- Tyson Raymond
- Luisa Santamaria
- Dan Arp (ex-officio)
Dean of Agriculture
Oregon State University
- Katy Coba (ex-officio)
Director
Oregon Department of Agriculture

Board members may be contacted through the Oregon Department of Agriculture Director's Office.

Find Board of Ag info online

www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/BoardAgriculture.aspx

Check out all the ODA public meetings online

www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/Calendar.aspx

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