The first phase of the U.S.-Japan Trade Agreement announced on September 25 will reduce tariffs on many agricultural products. Japan is the largest international market for Oregon’s food and ag products and this agreement will have a positive impact on Oregon’s largest exports to Japan. The trade agreement is a win for many Oregon products including, beef, wheat, frozen potatoes, blueberries, cranberries, cherries, pork, cheese, frozen blackberries, prunes, sweet corn, and wine.

In essence, this trade agreement levels the playing field for many U.S. food and agricultural products. Recently, U.S. products have been at a disadvantage in the Japanese market, where signees of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and European Union trade agreements have benefited from lower and lower tariff rates. For many products, this trade agreement brings the tariffs on U.S. food and agricultural products into alignment with the parties to the other trade agreements. The trade agreement also increases the quota for wheat, which is the single largest agricultural export from Oregon to Japan.

Oregon’s farmers, ranchers, winemakers, and food processors have felt the stress of having their markets tighten due to the changing tariff situation in key markets including China and Japan. Since January 2018, U.S. farmers and ranchers have been riding a roller coaster of uncertainty when it comes to trade with China—trade talks, failed trade talks, escalating tariffs, and retaliatory tariffs. While the U.S. has imposed tariffs on more than $250 billion in Chinese imports, China’s retaliation tariffs are targeting U.S. agricultural commodities. In Oregon, one of the most trade-dependent states in the nation, the ongoing tensions are impacting agricultural sectors like fresh cherries, potatoes, and beef.

In 2018, industry experts tell us northwest cherry growers lost $86 million in sales to China due to non-tariff barriers. While China did not add a specific tariff to cherries, trade tensions meant additional inspections were suddenly required. That translated into highly perishable commodities such as cherries, sitting on a shipping port for 7 to 10 days, downgrading the quality and price. While demand for cherries in China has grown 83 percent from 2017 to 2018, U.S. sales have fallen from 27,000 tons to 14,000 tons, with Chile and Canada making up the difference. Once we lose our place in the market, it is difficult and costly to earn it back.

The impact of trade friction and continued escalation has had a chilling effect on Oregon’s ability to sell goods to China. Northwest potato growers report a $20 million loss in 2018 due to tariffs. Growers in other-potato producing regions, such as Europe and Turkey, are taking advantage of the U.S. export slowdown and ramping up their production. Exporting Oregon beef into China is stalled. In May of 2018, I led a trade mission to China with an emphasis on beef. China had just opened their borders to U.S. beef after a 13-year lock out. We had high hopes for Oregon beef in China and the country remains an exciting market with a growing middle class expected to reach 160 million in the next decade. Trade tensions, however, have stopped any progress.

There is no doubt that the trade dispute is reshaping international markets in ways that will hurt U.S. and Oregon farmers for years to come if a resolution is not found quickly. China is Oregon’s fourth largest agricultural export market, shipping more than $270 million in product in 2018. At ODA, we are focused on the long term. That means despite uncertainty in federal trade policy, ODA will continue to explore new trade relationships, nurture existing relationships with trading partners, and host inbound and outbound trade missions with the goal of keeping and growing Oregon’s place in the agricultural global marketplace.
OREGON EXPANDS the LUNCH PLATE for FARM to SCHOOL
by AMY GILROY

The Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Grant Program provides funding to schools to purchase Oregon products for their school meal programs, connects farmers, ranchers, processors, and seafood harvesters to the school marketplace, and teaches schoolchildren how to grow fruits and vegetables in school gardens. More than 300 Oregon producers, processors, ranchers, seafood harvesters, and manufacturers participate in, and benefit from, the Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Grant Program.

Recently, the Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Grant Program received a substantial increase in funding for the 2019-2021 biennium. House Bill (HB) 2579 increased the program budget from $4.6 million to $15 million. With increased funding, HB 2579 will expand the Farm to School Program to early childcare and summer food service centers, such as Head Start. There are more than 900 summer meals sites around Oregon, providing more sources for Oregon produce and other products during harvest season.

Most of the funding will be awarded in grants to help school districts purchase more Oregon grown and processed foods. Oregon’s Farm to School Program also provides funding to educate children about nutritious food choices, Oregon agriculture, and school garden activities. Oregon’s more than 700 school gardens provide a place for kids to learn how to grow their own vegetables and learn about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables.

Another important change to the program is a new grant program at the Oregon Department of Agriculture. HB 2579 establishes an equipment and infrastructure grant to help farmers, ranchers, processors, seafood harvesters and others overcome barriers to access school markets. Overall the program continues to support the local economy and provides an opportunity for Oregon farmers to feed Oregon’s children.

REGIONAL VIDEO PROJECT TOURS THE STATE

Throughout the summer of 2019, ODA traveled to the eight agricultural growing regions in the state to shoot videos and take photos of Oregon’s specialty crops and the farmers who grow them. “Specialty crops” include fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture. Oregon’s food and agriculture industry plays an important role in Oregon’s economy. According to the 2019 Food and Agriculture Industries Economic Impact Study, Oregon’s food and agriculture sector accounts for 686,518 jobs, $12.12 billion in tax revenue, $29.71 billion in wages, and $2.85 billion in exports.

The goal of the project is to produce videos and promotional materials that educate Oregonians and trade partners about the diversity of Oregon specialty crops and our state’s unique growing regions. These videos will be shared on ODA’s YouTube channel and social media platforms. Additionally, a 30-minute regional feature, Oregon’s Harvest, was created in partnership with KOIN 6. The special features ODA Director Taylor as well as Governor Brown promoting food and agriculture in Oregon. Catch the show on Saturday, October 12 at 10 a.m. or watch it on YouTube at oda.ifyi/OregonHarvest.

ODA partnered with the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation (AITC) to maximize production costs and make better connections with producers. The program promotes using agriculture to teach science, math, history and nutrition across existing curriculum. They provide free curriculum, resources and training to K-12 teachers. AITC’s grant is to promote careers in agriculture, from farmers to scientists and everything in between. This partnership allowed for opportunities for both projects to share video resources and to keep costs down.

For this project, ODA secured USDA Specialty Block Grant funds to work with two Eugene-based agencies, Revolution Design Group and Attic Media Inc., who traveled with ODA trade development manager, Erick Garman, to tour a variety of farms between June and August. The focus of the trips was to capture high-quality videos and photos, interview specialty crop farmers, and record videos showing how to cook with Oregon crops. At the end of the day, we hope the combination of informative regional marketing and hands-on culinary videos will educate and inspire consumers to purchase and prepare these products, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of Oregon specialty crops.

THANK YOU TO ALL THE FARMS AND NURSERIES, WINERIES, MARKETS, AND PROCESSORS WHO PARTICIPATED!

- Kiyokawa Family Orchards – Parkdale, OR
- River Point Farms – Hermiston, OR
- Threemile Canyon Farms – Boardman, OR
- Walchli Farms – Hermiston, OR
- Baker Murakami Produce – Ontario, OR
- Norris Blueberry Farms – Roseburg, OR
- Gold Dust & Walker Farms – Malin, OR
- Del Rio Vineyard – Gold Dust, OR
- Oregon Dulse – Bandon, OR
- Seaview Cranberries – Cape Blanco, OR
- Valley Flora Farm – Langlois, OR
- Native Grounds Nursery – Brownsville, OR
- Fox Hollow Ranch – Madras, OR
- Oregon’s Wild Harvest – Culver, OR
- Unger Farms – Cornelius, OR
- AI’s Garden Center – Sherwood, OR
- NW Hazelnut Company – St. Paul, OR
- Lane County Farmers Market – Eugene, OR
For more than a decade, the Oregon Department of Agriculture’s (ODA) Noxious Weed Program and Insect Pest Prevention Programs were the only ODA displays at the Oregon State Fair in Salem. Located in the natural resources area near the Oregon Department of Forestry and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, ODA staff interacted with hundreds of visitors a day. Visitors were drawn in by live plant and insect displays, games, and welcoming staff. ODA’s Produce Safety and Hemp Programs joined the fun at the fair this year. The Produce Safety team provided free water testing and information about the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s Produce Safety Rule.

“We are working to involve more ODA programs in the coming years giving the public an idea of all the great services we provide and how we touch their lives every day.”

Noxious Weed Grant Coordinator and Special Projects Facilitator, Tristen Berg organizes ODA’s Plant Protection and Conservation team each year for fair. She knows it takes a lot of time, energy and educational prizes to be a part of the event but she says it is a great opportunity to inform the public about what ODA does and ways they can avoid spreading invasive species.

“We were happy to share our space with the Produce Safety and Hemp Programs this year,” said Tristen. “We worked well together getting people the information they needed. The Insect Pest Prevention and Management Program and Noxious Weed’s tent and trailer exhibits and games were a big success in teaching the public about the importance of invasive pests and noxious weeds. We had 35 staff working shifts at the fair. Many fair goers mentioned, they look forward to our booths year after year, learning about noxious weeds, biocontrol, and insect pests. We all had something different to offer our visitors. I appreciated all the hard work and long hours everyone spent to make the fair the most visited outreach event for our programs. It was exciting to see ODA programs fill the entire grass area on the south side of the poultry building.”

Produce Safety Outreach Specialists, Brittany Mills and Tyler Manitsas, appreciated “representing the agency as a whole with information and brochures from multiple departments within the agency. Visitors asked questions about agriculture in general, what ODA does, and shared their own farming experience.” Tyler enjoyed “a great experience getting to work with the public and meet our fellow ODA employees”.

House Bill 2437: AG Channel Maintenance

On June 29, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2437, known as the ditch cleaning bill. The bill will allow landowners to remove up to 3,000 cubic yards of dirt per mile of ditch over five years without a state fill-removal permit from the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL).

Current Oregon law only allows up to 50 cubic yards per year. The bill also transfers the regulatory program from DSL to the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). ODA is developing a new notice-based process in coordination with DSL, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. All three state agencies are working together on the implementation of what is now being called Agricultural Channel Maintenance.

Until DSL adopts new administrative rules and ODA establishes a notification process, landowners should not conduct any removal or fill within a channel, ditch, or wetland without contacting DSL. Work to complete rules and the notification process is underway. The goal is to establish new administrative rules by spring 2020 and implement the notice-based process by fall 2020.

Please know that there will be opportunities for public comment during the process of rulemaking and implementation. To receive the latest developments about agricultural channel maintenance, please sign up for email updates at oda.fyi/Subscribe. By subscribing you will receive news about rulemaking meetings and decisions, opportunities to comment, and the process of implementation.

For more information please visit the ODA Agricultural Channel Maintenance webpage at: oda.direct/AgChannelMaintenance

Produce Safety Program Manager, Susanna Pearlstein said it was really important to have staff represented at the fair this year and she plans on participating next year with a more interactive display. “The Market Access team has been talking about a hands-on activity that would illustrate the work ODA does...something memorable and fun.”

Organizers of the Oregon State Fair are eager to work with the department on an increased presence at the fair. Please remember to look for ODA next year at the fair with more of the best the department has to offer.
PUBLICATION UPDATES

Our goal as a communications team is to communicate effectively with our audiences including consumers, the ag industry, agency partners, lawmakers, and our employees. Over the last year, we evaluated several significant agency publications and have explored ways to update the form and content to better meet the needs of our target audiences and to align with ODA’s strategic plan. Using internal survey data, an evaluation of our audiences’ needs, an assessment of our time and resources, and examples of other agency publications, we are planning for improvements!

By the end of the year, watch for:

• A newly designed agency Biennial Report with information about our work, agency impacts over the last fiscal year, and plenty of photos and graphics to share stories.

• A Resource Guide that includes the most current USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) statistical bulletin and an updated resource directory. This will replace the Agripedia publication and will become an annual guide.

  » Watch for a survey that will be open for feedback regarding the changes to this publication.

Interested in receiving updates about publications?

Sign up for email notifications, check the topic ODA publication releases & announcements at: oda.fyi/subscribe

COMING SOON

OREGON’S BOUNTY EVENT - FREE!
OCTOBER 5, 2019 • 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, Salem
oda.fyi/OregonBounty

CONFINED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS (CAFO) ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 10, 2019 • 1:30 - 3:30 PM
ODA Room 331, 635 Capitol St NE, Salem
oda.direct/Meetings • 503-986-4792

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
NOVEMBER 5, 2019
Eagle Crest Lodge
1522 Cline Falls Road, Redmond
oda.direct/Meetings • 503-986-4704

PESTICIDE ANALYTICAL & RESPONSE CENTER (PARC) BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 2019 • 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Oregon Health Authority
Portland State Office Building, Room 1B
800 NE Oregon St, Portland
oda.direct/PARC • 503-986-4562

STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE MEETING
DECEMBER 3-5, 2019
Astoria, OR
oda.direct/BoardAgriculture