

# THE AGRICULTURE QUARTERLY

**IN**  
THIS ISSUE

**1** A Tribute to Marty Myers, a visionary leader

**2** Appointments on the State Board of Agriculture  
Jonathan Sandau honored

**3** The Governor's Recommended Budget  
Oregon mink update

**4** Grant Kitamura to leave the Board of Agriculture  
Coming soon

## A TRIBUTE TO MARTY MYERS, A VISIONARY LEADER

Farmers and ranchers from Oregon, Washington, and around the country paid homage as they mourned Marty Myers, general manager of Threemile Canyon Farms near Boardman. Myers, an Oregon native, died on Dec. 1, 2020. He was an active member, mentor, and friend of Oregon agriculture for more than 20 years, having served on the Oregon Board of Agriculture as well as the Oregon Potato Commission, Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council, Oregon Business Association, the Freshwater Trust, Potato Growers Washington.

The director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture worked closely with Myers as a Board of Agriculture member. Myers was serving his second four-year term on the board. Oregon agriculture is going to feel this loss for a long time.

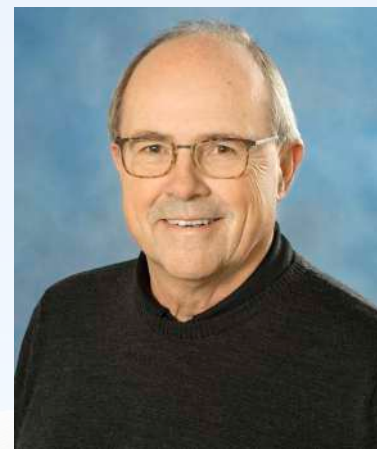
**“My deepest condolences to Marty’s family, friends, and colleagues,” Taylor said. “He was a talented leader who will be truly missed for his tremendous contributions to agriculture, the future of agriculture, and his community.”**

“He did so much more than run a successful farm; he donated his time, products, and efforts to nonprofits, including the Oregon Food Bank. He also sat on many boards, always making time for tough policy discussions and building strong connections between urban and rural Oregon. He understood that Oregon is interconnected and interdependent.”



*The State Board of Agriculture toured Threemile Canyon Farms in 2015.*

Three Mile Canyon Farms started in 1999, with Myers in charge. Farm managers say it was Myers’ idea to reduce the farm’s waste by using manure to fertilize organic crops and produce energy through a methane digester. He pursued and pioneered many sustainable practices on the farm and launched equally innovative community programs



*Marty Myers died on December 1.*

such as internships to encourage young people to pursue careers in agriculture and partnerships with local food banks to help feed the local community.

**“Marty Myers was a man ahead of his time,” Oregon Gov. Kate Brown said. “His vision of sustainable farming revolutionized the field, and his selfless contributions to his state will be cherished for generations.”**

Those who knew Myers and worked with him described the 68-year-old as a visionary, a friend who was quick to laugh, and a mentor who continuously challenged the agricultural community to do the right thing by taking care of people and animals and being good stewards of the land.

Earlier this year, Threemile Canyon Farms was recognized as a winner of the 2020 U.S. Dairy Sustainability Award by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy for the farm’s closed-loop system, pioneered by Myers, to minimize and recycle dairy waste.

To honor Marty, the Myers’ family encourages donations to one of two charities: the Blanchet House, a Portland nonprofit social services organization, or the Oregon Food Bank.

## APPOINTMENTS ON THE STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

Gov. Kate Brown has appointed Elin D. Miller of Roseburg and Josh Zielinski of Salem to serve on the Oregon State Board of Agriculture. Both appointments were effective on Oct. 29, 2020, and each will serve a four-year term. Miller and Zielinski attended their first Board of Agriculture meeting as members on Dec. 1 and 2.

### ELIN MILLER

Elin Miller and her husband, Bill Miller, own and operate Umpqua Vineyards and farm hazelnuts in Douglas County. She serves as the Oregon Wine Council co-chair and is a member of the Fall Creek Farm and Nursery Board. Elin is interested in water quality, agricultural trade, and how Oregon promotes its agricultural diversity to buyers worldwide. Miller's path to farming in Oregon is unique. Raised in Mesa, Arizona, Miller's lifelong career in agriculture began when she joined FFA in high school. Her school interest led to a prestigious career, holding several executive positions in government, corporate and not-for-profit organizations, as well as volunteer work on the west coast, and across the world in Africa, China, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan.



### JOSH ZIELINSKI

Josh Zielinski is a manager and owner of a mid-sized nursery and farming operation in the Willamette Valley. Zielinski provides a voice for many crops, including grass seed, specialty seed, vegetable row crops, hops, and hazelnuts. A native of Oregon, Zielinski grew up working on his family's farm. After attending college in southern California and studying abroad in Argentina, he returned home to join the family business. When Josh is not running the family farm, he serves on the Oregon Association of Nurseries Board and Chemeketa Community College Horticultural Advisory Committee. He enjoys camping, hiking, and gardening with his wife, Kattie Zielinski, who works in the wine industry.



**“Elin and Josh will provide a global view of Oregon agriculture and leadership to the Board of Agriculture,” ODA Director Alexis Taylor said. “Their unique experience and interests will play a critical role in addressing the state’s most pressing agricultural issues and challenges. We are also fortunate to have Bryan (Harper) and Luisa (Santamaria) back for another four-year term. They have been an invaluable part of the board.”**

### BRYAN HARPER AND LUISA SANTAMARIA

The governor also reappointed board members Bryan Harper and Luisa Santamaria each to a second four-year term. Both had first terms expire in 2020 and both applied to the board to serve a second term. Harper is a hazelnut farmer from Junction City, and he says he looks forward to serving another term in order to continue to give back to the agricultural community. Santamaria fills the public member position on the board, and she says she feels prepared to contribute and advocate for the farming community's well-being in her second term.



The Oregon State Board of Agriculture advises the director and ODA regarding the implementation and administration of programs and the development of policies designed to improve the agricultural industry. The 10-member board comprises nine governor appointees and the chair of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission. The ODA director and dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Oregon State University serve as non-voting ex-officio members of the board.

## ODA's Jonathan Sandau honored as a Friend of Nurseries for 2020



The Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN) recognized six public officials as Friends of Nurseries for 2020. OAN Government Relations Committee Chairman Mark Bigej of AI's Garden & Home announced the winners during the association's annual convention held online in early December. OAN recognized each person for their unique actions in defending and advancing the Oregon nursery industry.

Jonathan Sandau, special assistant to the director at the Oregon Department of Agriculture, was honored for his help in getting masks and other personal protective materials out to the growers in the wake of COVID-19 and having a clear message about funding. Sandau served as the main point of contact for the agricultural community during the pandemic and provided timely updates to its executive directors.

“When the pandemic was at its peak and uncertainty was an everyday issue, Jonathan was the go-to person, and he made a difference,” said Jeff Stone, executive director. “We appreciate Jonathan's dedication to the agricultural community and the nursery industry appreciates all his hard work.”

Outgoing U.S. Rep. Greg Walden (R-Oregon); Osama El-Lissy, deputy director of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; State Sen. Lynn Findley (R-Ontario); outgoing State Rep. Cheri Helt (R-Bend); and State Rep. Ron Noble (R-McMinnville); were also honored for long-standing support of key nursery industry issues and supporting OAN's policy priorities during the 2020 legislative session.

# THE GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET AND ODA

On Dec. 1, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown released her recommended budget and policy agenda for the 2021-23 biennium. The Governor's Recommended Budget focused on the key challenges facing Oregonians: the public health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, recovery from the devastating 2020 wildfire season, and taking steps to end systemic racism and address racial disparities in Oregon.

A condensed budget summary is available in addition to the Governor's full strategic budget. The Governor's Budget will be presented to the Oregon Legislature during the upcoming 2021 session scheduled to begin on Jan. 19, 2020, and run through June 28, 2020. Legislative committees will review the proposed budget, hold public hearings, and ultimately pass a Legislatively Adopted Budget that ODA will carry out during the 2021-23 biennium. The following are some of the items included in the Governor's recommendations for ODA:

- New positions for emergency management, an agency equity officer, and an internal auditor.
- New funding for gathering data on soil health, developing domestic markets, and a new Diversity in Ag Market Access Grant Program.
- Continuation of funding for avian influenza education, Japanese Beetle eradication, Worker Protection Standards (WPS), Klamath water quality improvement, Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) support, and start-up costs for a state Meat Inspection Program.
- Additional positions and spending authority in the Hemp Program.
- Approval for fee changes in Food Safety, Brands, Feeds, Pesticides, and Certifications.

## **DUE TO STATEWIDE BUDGET CONSTRAINTS, THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET ALSO RECOMMENDS SEVERAL ADJUSTMENTS TO ODA'S BUDGET:**

- Eliminate of funding for Farm Mediation.
- Eliminate vacant positions in Procurement, Food Safety, CAFO, Ag Water Quality, SWCD, and Ag Development.
- Hold a vacant Natural Resource Program position open.
- Reduce services and supplies in Ag Water Quality and SWCD programs.
- Shift a position in Natural Resources to Pesticides, shift some staff in the Noxious Weed Program to the Hemp Program, shift a portion of the Plant Programs director and Plant Programs office manager positions from Lottery Funds to Nursery Program funds, and shift some of the IPPM Program and staff from Lottery Funds to Federal Funds.
- Eliminate rent at the Food Innovation Center (FIC) for the Marketing Program.

## **THE GOVERNOR ALSO HAS RECOMMENDED STATEWIDE REDUCTIONS, INCLUDING:**

- Elimination of inflation for services and supplies.
- A five percent reduction in the budget for salaries and wages to achieve vacancy savings.
- Adjustments to charges for the Attorney General and Department of Administrative Services (including consolidation of the Microsoft Office 365 Project).

The Governor's Recommended Budget is an integral part of the budget building process and will be the starting point for working with the legislative assembly during the upcoming session.

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## **TESTS SHOW OREGON MINK RECOVERING FROM SARS-COV-2**

Two weeks after testing positive for SARS-CoV-2, Oregon mink are showing signs of recovery. Follow-up testing by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) show little to no detection of the virus in the farmed mink. In addition, no mortalities were reported linked to the virus. The farm will remain under quarantine until no virus is detected. ODA will continue to test the mink to ensure the virus has cleared the herd.

On Nov. 27, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Veterinary Service Laboratory (NVSL) confirmed all 10 mink samples submitted by ODA tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, the animal virus linked to COVID-19 in humans. ODA State Veterinarian, Dr. Ryan Scholz, immediately placed the farm under quarantine, meaning no animal nor animal products could leave the farm until further notice.

The mink contracted the virus from humans associated with the Oregon farm. The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) quickly responded to the needs of the employees, including testing, contact tracing, and ensuring the necessary personal protective equipment and supplies were available to protect employees and their families. Farm staff were also directed to self-isolate to further prevent COVID-19 exposure and illness.

ODA will not disclose the location of the farm; this information is being excluded pursuant to the personal privacy exemption to prevent disclosure of medically identifiable information.



*State Veterinarian, Dr. Ryan Scholz.*

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**OREGON  
DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE**

**Oregon Department of Agriculture**  
Communications  
635 Capitol Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301-2532  
[www.oregon.gov/ODA](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA)  
503-986-4550  
[communications@oda.state.or.us](mailto:communications@oda.state.or.us)



## GRANT KITAMURA TO LEAVE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

Grant Kitamura of Ontario notified the Oregon Board of Agriculture that he is moving to Idaho on Jan. 1, 2021 and therefore, must leave the board by the end of the year. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown appointed Kitamura to the board in fall 2018 and his term was set to expire on Oct. 31, 2022. He announced his departure during the board meeting on December 2.



"I appreciate all the fellowship and friendship over the years," Kitamura said. "I'm sure our paths will cross down the road. I enjoyed working with you all. It has been a lot of fun and I want to thank you. While I'm moving to Idaho, my businesses are staying in Oregon. We have enjoyed an excellent partnership with ODA."

Kitamura was born and raised in Ontario, and is a partner in onion shipper Baker and Murakami Produce Co., based in the same city.

Gov. Brown will appoint new board members to fill the remainder of the terms for both Marty Myers and Kitamura. The expectation is to have these appointments in place before the board meeting in May 2021.

## COMING SOON

### PRODUCE SAFETY ALLIANCE GROWER TRAINING CLASSES (FREE)

JANUARY 12-13, JANUARY 26-27, FEBRUARY 23-24 AND MARCH 9-10 • 8:00 AM - 1:30 PM  
Virtual meeting by video/conference call  
971-218-1409 | <https://oda.fyi/ProduceSafetyTrainings>

### OREGON STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE MEETING

JANUARY 19-20, 2020  
Virtual meeting by video/conference call  
503-986-4554 | <https://oda.direct/BoardAgriculture>

### PESTICIDE ANALYTICAL & RESPONSE CENTER (PARC) BOARD MEETING

JANUARY 20, 2021 • 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Virtual meeting by video/conference call  
503-986-4562 | <https://oda.direct/PARC>

### SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION (SWCC) QUARTERLY MEETING

FEBRUARY 17, 2020 • 8:45 AM - 12:00 PM  
Virtual meeting by video/conference call  
503-986-4704 | <https://oda.direct/Meetings>

### PESTICIDE ANALYTICAL & RESPONSE CENTER (PARC) BOARD MEETING

MARCH 17, 2021 • 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Virtual meeting by video/conference call  
503-986-4562 | <https://oda.direct/PARC>