A source of pride.

There are 260 dairy farm families in Oregon and they all share the same goals...to keep their herds healthy, to be good to the land, and to ensure that every load of milk that leaves their farm is filled with the highest quality milk they can produce.

And though Oregon isn’t nearly the biggest dairy state, it does have a source of pride for producing world-renown cheeses, nationally recognized dairy herds, and award-winning quality in its dairy processing plants.

See more about Oregon dairy at www.dairyfarmersor.com
One medium-size potato has just 110 calories and is absolutely fat free, sodium free and cholesterol free.

Potatoes provide your body Potassium, Vitamin C, Fiber, Vitamin B6 and Iron.

**What does Potassium do for your body?**

- Maintains the electrolyte balance in your body’s cells
- Manages your blood pressure and keeps your heart functioning properly
- Helps the muscles contract
- Releases energy from protein, fat and carbohydrates during the metabolic process
- Enhances muscle control, the growth and health of your cells
- Promotes efficient cognitive functioning by helping to deliver oxygen to the brain
GROWING OREGON

A guide to the state’s farms, food and markets
PORT OF PORTLAND: At the confluence of West and East

An endless stream of Oregon agricultural products flows through the Port of Portland to China, Japan and beyond. Shipments of blueberries and cherries, grasses and wheat, fish and much more; it all moves cost-effectively over the railways, flyways and waterways that converge at the Port of Portland. With our deep-water container facility and efficient rail and barge systems, the Port keeps Oregon at the center of global agriculture.  www.portofportland.com
I am pleased and excited to bring you this very first edition of Growing Oregon, a magazine that focuses on a leading Oregon industry – agriculture. We believe you will find it interesting, informative and compelling.

Oregon’s history is rooted in agriculture. Pioneers traveled the Oregon Trail in search of a better life that included abundant natural resources for farming. The legacy has continued for more than 150 years as agriculture remains a key sector of Oregon’s economy. A multibillion dollar industry responsible for one in 10 jobs statewide, the value of agricultural production in Oregon continues to set a new record high each year.

Inside this publication, you will read more about some of what Oregon is famous for, but we could write a book about all the food and agricultural products we have to offer. We boast one of the most diverse agriculture industries in the nation, producing more than 225 different types of crops, seafood and livestock. Agriculture is prominent in all regions of a state that has rich valleys, a coastline, mountains and deserts. Oregon leads the nation in production of several types of berries, grass seed, hazelnuts, peppermint and Christmas trees.

In our Celebrate Oregon Agriculture campaign, I emphasize the message: “We’re lucky to live in Oregon, where world-class soils and our mild climate grow the world’s greatest food.” We hope everyone who buys and consumes our agricultural products feels the same way, even if they don’t live in Oregon.

Thank you for your interest in Oregon agriculture!

Sincerely,

Katy Coba
Director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture
Quality and diversity. Two words that perhaps best describe Oregon agriculture. Many states can rightfully claim they produce quality agricultural products, but only a couple can say they produce more than 225 different crops, livestock and seafood products.

“Our farmers, ranchers, fishermen and food processors are as diverse as our products,” says Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Director Katy Coba. “They include small organic producers who focus on local markets and sell directly to the consumer, but also large family farms that grow and market products to other states and countries. Several characteristics they have in common – they are innovative, market-savvy, environmentally friendly, and connected to their community. Oregon is a relatively small state where people know the farmers and see them as a large part of our culture.”

Food is also part of Oregon’s culture. Oregon was one of the first in the U.S. to fully embrace local connections – farmers’ markets, farm-to-school efforts and farmer-chef collaborations. Oregonians treasure and demand locally grown foods. In addition, Oregon agriculture has never been afraid to branch out, look at new markets, and take advantage of market opportunities.

“We are sophisticated marketers,” says Coba. “Successfully marketing our products locally, domestically and internationally is not something new to Oregon. We’ve been doing it for decades.”

Anyone can look at a map and see how Oregon’s West Coast location is a competitive advantage for exporting, especially providing good access to the Pacific Rim. With about 3.7 million people, Oregon does not have the population to consume all that it produces, and relies on markets in other states and countries to sell most of its bounty. About 80 percent of Oregon’s agricultural production leaves the state, 40 percent goes internationally. While Asia is the primary customer for exports, Oregon is proud to ship products to more than 100 countries around the world.

Oregon benefits from a unique intermodal transportation system that includes road, rail, waterway and air. By truck on the interstate highways, by train on Oregon’s railroad network, by barge along the Columbia River, by
ship on the Pacific Ocean or by jet coming out of Portland International Airport, products from Oregon are efficiently delivered to the market in a timely manner and with the quality the market expects.

Those expectations are high but consistently met. Oregon successfully finds a way to produce something in a form that the market wants.

It starts with learning customer preference. Through product development and packaging, often followed by certification provided by ODA or other entities, buyers know they are getting something that meets their specifications.

“Because of our diversity of geography, climate and what we grow, Oregon is able to be very adaptable,” says Coba. “That allows us to look at what a market wants and produce for the market, not just produce a narrow range of commodities and say that’s all we can do. So many areas of the state produce so many wonderful products. We have the resources and the diversity that allows us incredible flexibility to produce for the market’s needs.”

Agriculture remains a key part of Oregon’s economy. As a result, there is great support in making sure it thrives. Land and water resources are made available so that numerous high-value products can be grown. Local and state business development programs help food processors maintain, expand or relocate into Oregon.

In nearly 12 years as Oregon’s agriculture director, Coba has traveled around the state, the country and the world, and is constantly reminded of how special Oregon agriculture is.

“Oregon has developed a culture of love for food and agriculture. Oregonians embrace it and are proud of it,” Coba says. “That makes it an exciting time to be a farmer in Oregon who wants to directly market products locally. At the same time, we are a global player because our growers have been involved in larger domestic and international markets. We are passionate about agriculture in Oregon and we’ve been successfully sharing what we produce with the rest of the world. When you see other cultures wanting high-quality food and other agricultural products, Oregon is a place that’s at the top of their list.”
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Export Experience
# Oregon Top 10 Ag Commodities

A glimpse into Oregon’s top agricultural products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. GREENHOUSE AND NURSERY</th>
<th>6. WHEAT</th>
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<tr>
<td>In 2013, Oregon’s greenhouse and nursery production, including Christmas trees, earned $848 million in cash receipts.</td>
<td>Known especially for Oregon soft white winter wheat, Oregon production earned $368 million in 2013, largely from a robust export market.</td>
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<tr>
<th>2. CATTLE AND CALVES</th>
<th>7. POTATOES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Approximately 14,350 farms and ranches raised cattle and calves in Oregon in 2013, earning an estimated $669 million for the state’s economy.</td>
<td>Potatoes were harvested from 41,667 acres in Oregon in 2013 – or 55,000 American football fields – and generated $170.5 million.</td>
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<tr>
<th>3. HAY</th>
<th>8. ONIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon farmers produced 3 million tons of hay in 2012 to provide feed for cattle, sheep and horses when grazing is not feasible.</td>
<td>Oregon is well-known for producing onions, and the crop earned $143.3 million in cash receipts in 2013. Onions grown in Oregon are used by internationally known brands.</td>
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<tr>
<th>4. DAIRY PRODUCTS</th>
<th>9. HAZELNUTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon dairy farmers milked 123,000 cows in 2013, earning an estimated $553 million in cash receipts. Milk from these dairies is used in the state’s award-winning cheeses.</td>
<td>Oregon is the country’s largest producer of hazelnuts, and ships overseas to China and elsewhere. In 2013, the crop was valued at $120 million.</td>
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<th>5. GRASS SEED</th>
<th>10. PEARs</th>
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<td>Oregon is a leader in grass seed production, with a 2013 value of $411 million. The seed is used on lawns, golf courses, athletic fields and pastures around the world.</td>
<td>The official state fruit of Oregon earned $111 million in cash receipts in 2013. The Pacific Northwest is responsible for 84 percent of U.S. pear production.</td>
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Oregon’s ranchers satisfy local, national and global demand for quality beef
OREGON RANCHERS KNOW THE DIFFERENCE between a good steak and a great steak: flavor. Oregon ranchers also know what consumers want on their plates: delicious beef. In recent years, consumers are looking for natural or specialty beef. Oregon ranchers understand that and deliver it.

Cattle ranching dates back more than 150 years to Oregon’s origins. Although beef cattle are raised in nearly every county in the state, the rugged high desert regions of Oregon create a sweet spot for cattle. Many families have been ranching in this area for generations.

The state has a diverse cattle industry to meet consumer preferences globally, nationally and locally. Much of Oregon beef is grass fed on the ranch and then grain-fed in the Midwest. This combination produces the marbling and flavor that most people prefer, particularly the international markets. There’s a growing American market for 100 percent grass-fed beef, and Oregon ranchers are producing some of the best in that category.

Specialty co-ops like Country Natural Beef and Painted Hills Natural Beef offer natural beef to the national market. Country Natural Beef, formed in 1976, led the charge in branding natural beef from the ranch to the customer.

“No antibiotics, no hormones and raised on family ranches with economic stability. The goal is to have our ranches and our families for many generations into the future supplying high-quality food to consumers,” says Stacy Davies of Country Natural Beef. Today, the company works with 100 family ranches.

“We try to fit in with nature,” Davies says. “In Eastern Oregon, much of the land is high desert country and too harsh for crops, so it’s a natural environment for cattle grazing and that’s why we are able to survive using natural practices.”

PERFECT PLACE TO RAISE CATTLE

“Our environment is conducive to healthy, vigorous growth in cattle, and that’s a hard combination to beat,” says Susan Doverspike, a fourth-generation cattle rancher.

Doverspike and her husband, Mark, run a cow-calf and yearling operation with Angus-Hereford cattle. Cattle feed on the native meadow hay during the winter. As the
seasons progress, the Doverspikes ride horses to move the cows with calves higher into the mountains and pine forests to graze on the native grasses. With the beginning of winter, they guide the cattle back to the meadows.

“It’s a family goal that we leave the land in better shape from one generation to the next,” she says. “When your ancestors were excellent stewards of the land, and were true cattlemen and good producers, it creates a high standard for the next generation.”

THE OREGON DIFFERENCE

Painted Hills Natural Beef, formed by seven ranching families, is known for its natural beef. Raised on a diet of nutritious grasses, the cattle are fed a healthy diet of barley, corn and alfalfa hay.

“Grain finishing is where you get the sweetness, the marbling, flavor and the consistency,” says Jennifer Homer, a second-generation rancher with Painted Hills. In response to consumer demand Painted Hills also added a 100 percent grass-fed program three years ago.

“This is beef country,” Doverspike says. “Ranchers here have been raising cattle for generations and learning from those experiences.”

Whatever consumers prefer, the real difference in Oregon beef is the ranchers’ experience and knowledge working with their cattle in concert with the environment.
Great Catch
Oregon’s seafood industry is sustainable and successful

The clean, cool waters of Oregon provide seafood defined by its freshness and variety. “From albacore tuna to pink shrimp and everything in between – Chinook salmon, Dover sole, Dungeness crab and Pacific whiting – Oregon’s seafood bounty is second to none,” says Hugh Link of the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission. “Our waters are healthy, our fisheries are well-managed, our stocks are harvested sustainably and our fishing fleet is committed to delivering the finest seafood available – from our boats to the customer’s plate.”

The independent family fishermen that make up the majority of Oregon’s fishing fleet care passionately about maintaining sustainable fisheries, the health of the ocean and the wholesomeness and variety of the fish. Many of Oregon’s fisheries have been certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), a designation that assesses and recognizes sustainable practices. Oregon boasts the first cold water shrimp and Dungeness crab fisheries in the world to earn MSC certification. In addition to good management practices, Oregon’s seafood industry is renowned for producing delicious fish and shellfish.

“The state’s seafood industry is no different than Oregon agriculture in its abundance and variety. Last year, Oregon’s fleet caught more than 60 species of fish and shellfish,” says Brad Pettinger of the Oregon Trawl Commission.

The bounty from Oregon’s waters has spawned a number of seafood processors. Micro-canneries put up many of the line-caught albacore tuna while larger companies like Hallmark Fisheries, the family-run Bornstein Seafoods, Trident Seafoods and industry leader Pacific Seafood provide fresh, processed and frozen Oregon seafood worldwide. Founded in Portland in 1941, Pacific Seafood has grown to the 10th largest seafood company in the world.

“One of the reasons that we have been able to be successful is the abundance of really wonderful seafood right off our coast here in Oregon and the greater Pacific Northwest,” says Pacific Seafood’s Larz Malony.

“Oregon pink shrimp are recognized domestically and internationally as some of the best cooked and peeled cold water shrimp in the world,” Malony says. “And while albacore tuna is caught around the world, the Oregon albacore is special. This is a young run of albacore, between two and four years old. As it happens, that’s when tuna have the highest Omega-3 oils and are the healthiest to eat.”

“This is a beautiful fish and is in high demand in other parts of the world that have their own albacore fisheries, like Japan and Europe, two parts of the world that are serious foodies when it comes to seafood,” Malony says. “The same is true of Oregon Dungeness crab and so many other fish and shellfish thriving just off the Oregon coast.”

– Teree Caruthers
Wheat of the World

Oregon specialty wheat meets quality standards

Story by Matthew D. Ernst
Oregon’s seed farmers produce the finest grass seed in the world. The family farms who produce Oregon’s grass seed use the best possible farming practices to ensure that grass seed farming is good for the environment as well as the economy.
All flour is not created equal, which is why the special characteristics of Oregon wheat make it ideally suited for a wide variety of foods ranging from Asian noodles to Egyptian flatbread. The state’s wheat growers are experienced and reliable suppliers, and the wheat they grow produces flour with the desired protein, gluten, color and texture sought by bakers and producers around the world.

“Different wheat buyers require different protein levels for different products,” says Dave Shelton, executive director of the Wheat Marketing Center (WMC) in Portland. The center, the only of its kind in the country, focuses on improving the competitive edge of U.S. wheat through education and research. One way to achieve that goal is to fully understand the national and international characteristics and uses of wheat, and then demonstrate to potential buyers how Oregon wheat is ideal for uses ranging from baking pastries to rolling noodles. The WMC’s test kitchens have helped develop a wheat product that is specific to the needs and desires of the export market.

INTERNATIONAL DESTINATIONS

Ninety percent of the Oregon wheat crop is exported. Oregon’s port system exports more wheat to Asia than any other U.S. state.

Tyson Raymond (pictured on page 14) grows soft white wheat on his 5,000-acre farm in Helix.

OREGON WHEAT EXPORTS (BUSHELS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>241.5M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>324.4M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>186.5M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>134.2M</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>247.8M</td>
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2012 ACRES HARVESTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring Wheat</td>
<td>93,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Wheat</td>
<td>785,000</td>
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The four top export destinations for soft white winter wheat for 2013 were Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Yemen. Oregon growers provide customers’ preferred protein profiles, wheat coloration and other quality standards for sponge cake in Japan, confectionaries in the Philippines or flatbread in Yemen, Indonesia and Egypt.

“We have seen some recent expansion in global demand for soft white wheat used in flatbreads, as well as for snack foods,” says Shelton. Other markets are growing. Shipments to Guatemala increased from 755,000 bushels in 2010 to 6.3 million bushels in 2013. “We’ll host a group of bakers from Guatemala in 2014,” says Shelton.

“Exports are everything for our industry,” says Darren Padget, a fourth-generation farmer harvesting more than 2,500 acres of soft white wheat annually. Padget is among the Oregon farmers who have met with wheat buyers in Asia. “We’ve worked hard to build that market. Our customers know that our wheat will meet their quality standards.”

It’s fitting that wheat is an important export crop for the state. Oregon growers were among the first to enter the export market by delivering shipments of soft white wheat to Japan as early as the 1950s.

**FROM THE FARM**

Wheat is grown in 24 of the 36 counties in Oregon. The state’s farmers grow mostly soft white wheat, between 50 million and
75 million bushels per year, valued at approximately $368 million in 2013. Soft white is about 90 percent of the Oregon wheat crop.

“The reason soft white wheat works so well here is that we grow it very well,” says Padget.

Climate is key. Padget’s dry land averages a foot or less of rainfall per year, requiring him to let half of his land lay fallow, without a crop. But the lack of moisture and humidity creates an environment resistant to moisture-loving wheat diseases.

Tyson Raymond, a 33-year-old farmer from Helix, says he benefits from new, higher-yielding soft white wheat varieties developed specifically for the Pacific Northwest climate. “Oregon farmers are experienced in growing high-quality wheat and developing the advanced techniques that help us adapt our product to the appetites and needs of our global customers,” he says. The future of wheat looks bright in Oregon. Raymond and other growers use the most advanced technology and carefully selected varieties to grow top-quality wheat. Research at Oregon State University continues to focus on developing new varieties of wheat through breeding techniques in order to gain higher quality and higher yields, and through the WMC, enhancing baking and milling qualities will continue to be on the agenda.
It all starts with the milk. The key is freshness, quality and the care Oregon cows receive. Because of that, the state’s dairy processors earn honors for milk, rich ice creams, flavor-packed cheeses, cottage cheeses and yogurts.

“All of our farmer-owners and contract suppliers know that healthy cows produce the highest quality milk, which allows us to produce the high-quality Tillamook dairy products that our fans have come to love,” says Mark Wustenberg, Tillamook County Creamery Association’s (TCCA) vice president of quality and operations, who is also a veterinarian. “Our farmers’ commitment to quality means they take animal care very seriously, which includes working closely with veterinarians and nutritionists to keep their cows healthy and comfortable, and ensuring the cows get the nutrition in their diets that they need.”

In Tillamook County, there are more cows than people. TCCA is made up of nearly 100 dairy families that have been farming in the region for generations.

“The fact that Tillamook is a farmer-owned cooperative gives additional value to the work we do here,” says Patrick Critenser, TCCA president and CEO. “This is truly a farmer-owned and farmer-driven business, and the values of these dairy farmers really do translate into the way we make cheese every day and the way we run our company.”

Nearly 70 percent of Oregon dairy farmers belong to a co-op. With TCCA, Farmers Cooperative Creamery and Northwest Dairy Association are Oregon’s major co-ops.

Managing a dairy and a processing plant often runs in the family. In Oregon, Alpenrose, Eberhard’s Dairy, Lochmead Dairy, Springfield Creamery and Umpqua Dairy are all operated by multi-generational families.
CARING FOR COWS

Oregon dairies of all sizes and types pamper Oregon’s dairy cows with excellent nutrition, which is key for cows to stay healthy and give high-quality, wholesome milk. Cows eat 75 to 100 pounds of food and drink about 25 to 50 gallons of water each day. Many of Oregon’s dairy farmers feed cows from their own lands.

Cows at Sar-Ben Dairy graze on ryegrass, white clover, orchardgrass and some chicory, and in the summer on the leaves of young radish and turnip plants. “It’s becoming what we describe as a salad bar for the cows,” says Sar-Ben Dairy’s Steve Pierson.

Sar-Ben uses an intensive rotational grazing system, which means the cows graze on specific portions of pasture for short periods of time, moving every 12 hours. Cows complete the rotation through the pastures every 18 days. “This method keeps the grass at an optimum level,” Pierson says. “It’s always vegetative, always growing new leaves and offers the cows the highest energy and protein.”

In addition to nutrition, Oregon dairy farmers know herd health is also tied to comfort and care. Veterinarians regularly visit dairy farms for preventative medicine, check-ups and prompt treatment of illness. Farmers also work in concert with the environment, with most living on the land where they have their dairies. Protecting land and water quality, and implementing sustainable practices are ways of life for Oregon dairy farmers.

GOOD STEWARDSHIP

Coupled with high-quality products in the dairy case, Oregon’s dairy processors get kudos for award-winning community and global solutions like methane digesters making electricity, zero-waste processing plants and Prevention Magazine’s Cleanest Packaged Food Award.

In turn, the cows reward Oregon’s farmers with milk unmatched in quality. The average Oregon cow produces 56 pounds of milk a day on an average farm size of 300 acres. Dairy farms in the state produce roughly 2.5 billion pounds of milk annually. That milk is processed into cheese, yogurt, ice cream, butter, and other specialty products including lactose and whey protein, which are used in protein sports drinks and energy bars.

Award-winning and innovating describe Oregon dairy farmers and processors.
The Big Cheese
Oregon’s artisan cheese industry demonstrates expert skill, high quality

Cheddar. Pepper jack. Blue Cheese. Chevre. Queso Fresco. Pick a cheese, and it is made in Oregon.

From large to artisan, Oregon cheese producers of all sizes are top notch in their craft.

“Oregon cheesemakers are continually educating themselves and are very conscientious about making good, safe, wholesome cheese,” says Lisbeth Goddik, food science professor at Oregon State University. “They are motivated because they truly want to make good products.”

If you look at Oregon’s track record, it’s easy to see their success. Highly respected dairy giant Tillamook has earned a reputation for their award-winning sharp cheddar, colby jack and Monterey jack cheeses, and Oregon’s artisan producers are proudly representing the state as well. Since the Oregon Cheese Guild was formed in 2006, the number of artisan cheesemakers has grown from three to 19.

Oregon’s artisan cheesemakers are recognized as some of the best in the nation. Briar Rose Creamery won several awards at the American Dairy Goat Association’s National Cheese Competition and first place honors for their classic chevre and Freya’s Wheel cheese. Face Rock Creamery won first place at the American Cheese Society’s Judging and Competition for their garlic cheddar Vampire Curds, and Rogue Creamery has garnered numerous awards throughout the U.S. and internationally.

Rogue Creamery was an early innovator in artisan cheesemaking. Its founder, Tom Vella, traveled to Roquefort, France in the early 1950s to learn from the masters and then returned to construct cheese caves at his Oregon creamery similar to what he had toured in Europe. In those caves, Vella created his own Oregon Blue in early 1954. Rogue Creamery continues to be a leader in the artisan cheese movement, which is a natural fit in Oregon. Their cheese can be purchased in the U.S. and also around the world from Paris to Tokyo.

“The number of creameries that have received recognition and awards is great – it really raises awareness as a whole to Oregon,” says Sarah Marcus, who runs Briar Rose Creamery with her husband, Jim Hoffman. Focusing on goat’s milk cheeses, Marcus says she loves the creative process of cheesemaking. “We nurture each small batch to achieve the best flavor and texture, highlighting the seasonal qualities of our cheeses.” Briar Rose Creamery’s “small batches” range from basic chèvre to a spicy chipotle chèvre.

That same diversity and attention to detail can be seen in every Oregon creamery, large and small. Inside the Tillamook plant, cheesemakers have created smoked black pepper and garlic chili pepper varieties to expand their popular line of cheddars. Artisans at Ochoa Queseria make Mexican-style cheese produced in the state, while La Mariposa creates Argentinian cheeses with Welsh roots. Their Chubut, named for the region near Patagonia where the cheesemaker’s father is still making this same historic cheese, is mild and nutty.

Oregon’s cheesemakers are producing cheeses in styles found around the globe – cheeses that often outshine international products in both texture and flavor.

– Rachel Bertone
Welcome to Lane County: Where Innovation Production Meet

Everyone knows it’s a great place to live, work and play – now let’s talk business.
and Food
Deeply Rooted Tradition

Oregon potatoes and onions are some of the most valued crops.

Story by Blair Thomas

Staff Photo by Jeffrey S. Otto
THE HISTORY OF POTATOES IN Oregon is as deeply rooted as the rich soil the spuds grow in.

The crop dates back to the early 1800s, when the first explorers ventured into the Pacific Northwest. The fertile land provided the perfect growing environment, and potatoes have been an important part of the state’s agriculture industry and economy ever since.

In 2013, Oregon farmers harvested more than 41,667 acres of potatoes, yielding more than 53,000 pounds per acre. More than 2.3 billion pounds were harvested across the state in 2013, contributing $170.5 million to Oregon’s economy and making the crop the seventh highest value commodity in the state’s agriculture sector.

About 25 percent of Oregon potatoes are sold fresh. The remaining are processed into food products, including frozen French fries for quick-serve restaurants, hash browns, chips, dehydrated flakes and Tater Tots. According to the Oregon Potato Commission, up to 15 percent of these products are exported to foreign markets, including Japan, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, Mexico and South America.

Oregon potato processors played key roles in innovating production of two potato staples – French fries and Tater Tots. In the Oregon border town of Ontario, Ore-Ida founders Nephi and Golden Grigg got the patent for the Tater Tot in 1953.

In 1960, Gilbert Lamb boosted the speed of cutting potatoes for French fries with his Lamb Water Gun Knife – think of it as using extreme water pressure to shoot potatoes at steel blades at 117 feet per second.

Reid Saito’s KLG Farms is located in Nyssa. He is also a founder of Muir-Roberts onion packing facility.
“Oregon potatoes account for more value-added production than any other crop grown in the state,” says Dan Chin, owner of Chin Family Farms and Wong Potatoes Inc. This results in marketing over $250 million of fresh and processed potatoes each year.

Chin Family Farms grows 5,000 acres of potatoes, onions, wheat, barley and alfalfa hay. He is a third-generation potato farmer in the Klamath Basin, which is ideal for growing high-quality potatoes because of its elevation and short growing season.

Chin raises 16 different varieties of red, yellow, russet, purple, white and fingerling potatoes for local sales and exporting. In addition to the farming operation, Wong Potatoes Inc., packs and ships 70 million pounds of potatoes each year.

Potatoes are rich in nutrients. The largest and most affordable source of potassium in the produce department, they provide 45 percent of daily vitamin C and 10 percent of B6. A medium potato is 110 calories.

ANOTHER CONSUMER FAVORITE

Potatoes aren’t the only product playing an important role in the state’s agriculture industry. Oregon growers produce some of the nation’s best onions, including the trademarked Crown Classic marketed by Northwest Onion Co. Total Oregon onion production ranks eighth in the state’s top agricultural commodities and contributes $143 million.

Reid Saito grew up weeding crops on his family farm, just as his children would years later. Today, Saito and his wife, Kaylene, farm 1,000 acres of row crops in Nyssa including onions, potatoes and sugar beets. He and other growers established Muir-Roberts onion packing facility in 1999.

“The advantages we have here in the Treasure Valley are our climate and soil,” Saito says. “We have warm days and cooler nights, and that helps tremendously with growing onions.”
Saito also says in most years the region offers a dependable supply of water, thanks to an irrigation system of canals and storage.

“The most important thing is that we have a good knowledge base and history of growing onions in the valley,” says the third-generation farmer.

Oregon is known for quality onions ranging from the sharp, full-flavored yellow Danver to the mild, sweet Spanish varieties. Rich soils formed from ancient river bottoms and lakes create the fertile fields that yield these unparalleled storage onions.

On his KLG Farms, Saito grows big, yellow, sweet Spanish onions, along with a smaller crop of red onions. White onions are also grown in the region.

“Our onions are versatile,” he says. “They taste great raw on a sandwich or hamburger and they are the best onion available for cooking because they keep their flavor and desired crispness.”

HOME TO LARGEST PRODUCER

The Eastern Oregon-Idaho onion industry is one of the largest producers of summer storage onions in the country, with approximately 24 percent market share in the national value of production. In 2013, 1.4 billion pounds of onions were harvested from 19,800 acres in this region.

Located nearly 200 miles northwest of the Treasure Valley region, River Point Farms in Hermiston is the largest onion producer in the United States, growing 450 million pounds of onions each year. CEO Bob Hale says River Point utilizes sustainable growing, including conservative irrigation systems and solar technology, and distributes its fresh-cut, quality onions to national brands, including FritoLay, Subway and Whataburger.

And the industry is continuing to grow each year. “With new technologies making farming more efficient with lower inputs and higher yields, this industry is only going to continue to flourish,” Hale says.
Growing knowledge for Oregon’s agriculture

Oregon State University’s College of Agricultural Sciences provides innovative research and development that drives Oregon’s reputation as a global leader.

In 2014, OSU’s programs in agriculture and forestry were ranked #7 in the world. From developing food safety practices to creating precision technologies, the College of Agricultural Sciences leads innovations that serve Oregon agriculture, natural resources, and communities, across the state and around the world.

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Facilities such as these for malting barley are part of OSU’s fermentation sciences program and one small example of a much larger $55 million research enterprise that focuses on food, agriculture, health, and natural resources.

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In Oregon, vegetables move quickly from field to freezer – locking in freshness and ripeness. Farms are located close to Willamette Valley-based vegetable processors so that fully ripened vegetables can be harvested and frozen, canned or freeze-dried on a tight timeline.

“Freshness is what consumers are looking for, so we devised a system to maintain the highest nutritional value and quality appearance,” says George Smith, president and chief executive officer of NORPAC Foods. Today, the 240-member farmer cooperative grows and processes up to 30 types of vegetables and fruits on 45,000 acres.

Thanks to the processors’ commitment to quality and carefully cultivated vegetables, Oregon ranks fifth in the nation for production of processed vegetables, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service. The top processed vegetables include sweet corn, peas and green beans.

The state’s vegetable processors lead the nation in sustainability practices. In 2013, Food Engineering magazine named Stahlbush Island Farms Sustainable Food Plant of the Year for its integrated approach to growing and processing vegetables. The farms’ biogas system takes the by-products from vegetable processing and produces the electricity, steam and natural fertilizer used on the farm and in the plant.

Across Oregon, food processors freeze, can and dry products for both retailers and institutions, from grocery stores to hospitals. NORPAC cans some produce, but primarily freezes via individually quick frozen, or IQF. This means each piece of vegetable or fruit is frozen separately.

Oregon processors were pioneers in the IQF method. Before IQF, fruits and vegetables were first packaged, then quick frozen. The first shipment of quick frozen vegetables and berries sold in the United States were quick frozen in Oregon in 1929.

Nationwide, consumers buy Oregon’s processed vegetables in the frozen, canned and camping food sections. Some of the state’s vegetables are freeze-dried for New Season Foods’ corn powder and for Mountain House freeze-dried meals that are enjoyed by camping and outdoor enthusiasts worldwide. The state’s processed vegetables reach retail and food service customers in Canada, Mexico and Central America, the Caribbean, Middle East and Pacific Rim.

Farmer Scott Zielinski says Oregon provides consumers with the industry’s best vegetables. He grows green beans and sweet corn in the Willamette Valley for local food companies, a relationship his family started in the 1950s. In 2014, the family also began trials with edible soybeans. Zielinski and his family strive for top quality, an endeavor that earns a premium with food companies. The family’s generations of experience, paired with access to local food processors, allows them to harvest vegetables at their peak freshness and deliver the best-tasting food to consumers.

– Joanie Stiers
Doug Krahmer of Berries Northwest says a better blueberry than grown in Oregon can’t be found.

Staff Photos by Jeffrey S. Otto
Oregon's Willamette Valley is considered a berry paradise by fruit buyers, with more than 50 varieties of premium, healthy and delicious berries cultivated for U.S. and global markets. Fertile, well-drained soil, favorably timed spring rains, and summers that are warm by day and cool at night give Oregon berries superior taste profiles.

Grown primarily on small family farms, Oregon's tasty berries are sought after as high-quality ingredients in many products from sauces to desserts. Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries – and even cranberries – can be found fresh and frozen.

Living around this kind of abundance, it's no wonder that award-winning cookbook author Janie Hibler created *The Berry Bible* to offer recipes both savory and sweet.

Oregon is the nation's top producer of blackberries, black raspberries, boysenberries and loganberries – and is second in the production of red raspberries. Farmers even grow a premium blackberry variety known as the Marionberry, named for the county where it was developed. These berries contain antioxidants, fiber, vitamin C and other natural properties known for their extensive health benefits such as their ability to fight cancer and age-related diseases.

Oregon berries are more than a summertime treat. Studies show that frozen berries are just as nutritious as fresh. The majority of Oregon berries are frozen within hours of being harvested, locking in flavor and nutrients and making them available all year.

While farmers sell some berries directly to consumers, the majority are delivered fresh to a packer, then on to retailers or processed for use in baked goods, ice cream, yogurts, jam, juices, canned and as flavoring.

For 66 years, the Malensky family of Oregon Berry Packing (OBP) has grown and supplied many varieties of quality berries. The family focuses on...
freshness and the ability to trace a berry from the field to the customer’s mouth. OBP buys berries grown by 14 other farmers to help meet the demand in U.S. and Asian markets. Fresh market berries can ship to arrive the day after they are harvested.

Oregon’s berry packers, nearly as numerous as the state’s berry varieties, offer berries in many forms – fresh, frozen, IQF, poly bags, straight pack, purees, concentrates, syrups, all natural freeze-dried powders and value-added products.

**BLUEBERRIES**
Growing blueberries since 1980, Doug Krahmer firmly believes that no one can find a better blueberry than those grown in Oregon. “Obviously I’m a little bit biased, but I think they have the best taste,” he says.

Krahmer says Oregon has the ideal growing conditions for a superior blueberry. He now farms at three locations that make up Berries Northwest LLC and two of his children, Zach and Anne, work full-time for the farm. Oregon farms are expected to harvest more than 100 million pounds of blueberries in 2014.

**CRANBERRIES**
Another sweet treat, cranberries – which were brought to the state in the 1880s – grow in bogs located on Oregon’s southern coast.

“It’s important to take care of your farm in such a way it will be there for years and generations to come,” says Scott McKenzie, who owns Seaview Cranberries. All five of his children help plant bee-friendly vegetation, develop new bogs and harvest.

The cool summers and a long growing season mean Oregon cranberries are bright red and ripe when they are harvested in late October and November.

International and domestic markets prize Oregon cranberries for their high brix (natural sugars) content, their rich and deep color, and their large size. Chefs and bakers in Asia often ask for Oregon cranberries because of their taste and beauty. And, Oregon cranberries stand out with high antioxidant and proanthocyanidin levels – food properties that continue to interest health researchers.

With superior taste, variety and packing options, most states can’t match Oregon berries.
FRUITS & NUTS

Orchards flourish in Oregon

Story by Matthew D. Ernst

Fruitful TREES

Randy Kiyokawa grows Oregon’s famed pears in his orchards at the foot of Mount Hood.

Orchards flourish in Oregon

Staff Photo by Jeffrey S. Otto
Prized across the country and around the world, cherries and pears are two of Oregon’s top tree fruits. Nationwide, Oregon ranks third in sweet cherry and fresh pear production with 13,150 acres of cherry orchards and 16,200 acres dedicated to pears.

Worldwide, the largest producer and processor of sweet cherries is Oregon Cherry Growers, a co-op of around 70 farmers with plants in The Dalles and Oregon’s capital, Salem, where the buses are dubbed “Cherriots.” Oregon is noted as a leader in cherry innovations. Born during Prohibition out of the need to preserve cherries without using alcohol, today’s maraschino cherries come in natural varieties using beets and berries for coloring.

Oregon Cherry Growers supplies fresh, maraschino, dried, and frozen sweet cherries and other fruits to customers worldwide. “We pack and process an average of 25,000 to 30,000 tons of cherries annually,” says Tim Ramsey, CEO and president.

Picked With Care

Pears, Oregon’s official state fruit, are available almost year-round. Harvest begins in August and continues through October, with each pear carefully picked by hand to maintain the fruit’s pristine quality. Pears are harvested when the fruit is fully mature, but not yet ripe. Firm when transported in refrigerated conditions, pears ripen to sweet and juicy perfection after they are brought to room temperature.

Oregon cherries reach mouth-watering sweetness from June to late August, depending upon variety, weather and elevation. The well-known Bing cherry was developed by Henderson Lewelling in Oregon in 1875 and named after his Chinese assistant. The Chelan and Tieton varieties start cherry season in early June, a bit ahead of the Bing, while Sweetheart and Lapin varieties extend the dark red cherry season into mid-August. The Rainier spans late June through early August. Fresh cherries may be frozen for use year-round.

Longer fruit harvests leverage Oregon’s natural advantages: location, clear water, and warm days and cool nights. Brenda Thomas, president of Orchard View Farms near the Columbia River Gorge, says “It’s a drier climate with low humidity, ideal for cherries. And the ground is sloping, which helps us plant trees in locations to avoid frost.” Cherry trees thrive in the state’s best-draining soils.

Other trees, like the Comice pear, may flourish in soils with more clay. About 22 miles west on the north flank of Mt. Hood, Randy Kiyokawa says, “Our soil is ideal for growing tree fruit. In the Hood River Valley, our soils are rich and deep.” His grandfather planted the orchards in 1911. Today the family farms 187 acres.

Kiyokawa also grows Anjou and more than 25 other pear varieties, both European and Asian. He ships most of his pears to the local co-op, Diamond Fruit Growers, for sorting, packing, cold storage and distribution across the U.S. and around the world.

Oregon’s world-renowned pear orchards also thrive 300 miles south in the Rogue River Valley near Medford, where gourmet fruit gift retailer Harry & David originated.

Delicious Health Food

Both pears and cherries offer many health benefits. Cherries have anti-inflammatory properties that may help decrease arthritis and gout. They are a good source of potassium, melatonin, antioxidants and have a low glycemic index, with their sugars releasing more slowly and keeping you feeling full longer. Pears are an excellent source of fiber and a good source of vitamin C.

Whether in Oregon’s farmers markets, at hundreds of retailers in the U.S. or in more than 60 countries worldwide, everyone can enjoy the delicious taste and health benefits of Oregon pears, cherries and other tree fruits.
Oregon produces virtually all U.S.-grown hazelnuts, 5 percent of the global supply. “Hazelnuts are grown successfully around the world near the 45th parallel, right where we sit,” says Michael Klein, Hazelnut Marketing Board associate director. “And right here, in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, we have the quality of soils, adequate natural rainfall and year-round temperatures ideal for hazelnuts.” But what really distinguishes Oregon hazelnuts is what happens after harvest. “Post-harvest handling is what really determines hazelnut quality,” says Klein. “And Oregon hazelnuts are handled at a level exceeded nowhere else in the world.” Harvested hazelnuts are dried using an indoor dryer – the best method to maintain quality, then go to a processor for additional cleaning, sorting and bagging, or shelling, depending on the buyer’s preference. Then it’s on to the domestic and global market. “People in the United States are turning to tree nuts because of health benefits,” Klein says. “So food manufacturers are including hazelnuts in everything from baked goods, cereals, and flavorings to oatmeal and energy bars.” Hazelnut flour is a good alternative for those with gluten sensitivities. Northern China is a main export destination, where in-shell hazelnuts are roasted, seasoned and more. “Just like here in the United States, we see the Chinese market looking for more convenience and wanting different types of foods,” says Polly Owen, executive director of the Hazelnut Marketing Board. “Hazelnuts have a distinctive and elegant flavor that really stands out,” says Owen. “Oregon hazelnuts are bigger and tastier than what’s found anywhere else on the market.”

– Matthew D. Ernst

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WINE & CRAFT BEER

VINTAGE
Oregon is a national leader in wine and craft beer industries.
OREGON WINEMAKERS KNOW THE KEY TO producing some of the country’s most flavorful wine is to let Mother Nature do most of the work. Oregon is home to nearly 500 wineries, and what makes each distinct is the origin of the grapes used to make its product.

“A key Oregon principle is to match the grape variety to the place where it will grow best, not just where it is able to grow,” says Michelle Kaufmann of the Oregon Wine Board. “That’s why Willamette Valley pinot noir is so wonderful; a cooler climate is best for that grape. And why tempranillo from the Umpqua Valley is so full of character; that variety prefers warmer temperatures.”

Maria Ponzi, president and director of sales and marketing for Ponzi Vineyards of the Willamette Valley, adds that variation in soil types also contributes to the flavors of Oregon wine.

“The Red Hills soil in Dundee tends to produce more red-fruited characteristics like cherry and strawberry, while the Laurelwood soil we find here in the Chehalem Mountains tends to produce more blue and black-fruited characteristics like that of blueberries, plum and blackberry. These are vines that are now deeply rooted in the basalt base of our soils,” Ponzi says.

“More than 400 Oregon wines were reviewed at 90 points or higher by the Wine Advocate in 2013. This makes up 22 different varieties of wine from 13 different regions across Oregon. And, we’re just getting started,” Kaufmann says.

The impact of the wine industry on the state’s economy doubled between 2005 and 2010 to more than $2.7 billion and accounted for more than 13,000 wine-related jobs and $382 million in wages, Kaufmann says.
Ponzi says part of the industry’s growth has been the result of expanding markets overseas.

“There is a real interest in Oregon wines everywhere, but I found this particularly true in Scandinavia,” Ponzi says. “I think this is due to the higher acid and lower alcohol wines that lend themselves so well to the indigenous dishes of that area. London and Japan have been supporters of Oregon wine for many years now.”

A CRAFT BREWERY LEADER

Oregon is a national leader in the craft brewery movement, which has grown from about two dozen breweries nationally in the 1980s to more than 3,000 today. In Oregon, the industry is comprised of 214 breweries, accounts for close to a $2.83 billion economic impact and employs more than 29,000 workers. Portland has more breweries than any city in the world.

A large part of this growth can be attributed to the state’s pub culture and openness to new ventures, says Irene Firmat, founder and CEO of Full Sail Brewing Company in Hood River. But the success of the movement in Oregon is also the result of the relationship between brewers and hop growers. Nearly 15 percent of U.S. hops are grown in Oregon – a significant advantage for companies when crafting their signature brews.

“We have the kind of climate that the hops like – the kind of aromatic and flavorful hops that the craft brewers use,” says Nancy Sites, administrator of the Oregon Hop Commission. “Over the last few years, hop growers have raised more varieties. In the past, brewers used only two or three certain varieties. Now farmers offer more than 30. That gives each brewer a lot of flavor choices so that they can produce different taste profiles.”

Firmat says ties to Oregon’s agricultural community will help strengthen the state’s brand and inspire even more growth. She says, “The connection Oregon breweries have to the farmers who grow the hops sets us apart from the rest.”
Grown in Oregon, Adored Worldwide
Diversity, beauty define state’s nursery and Christmas tree industries

Story by Keri Ann Beazell

OregOn iS tHe nAtion’S largest producer of shade and flowering trees as well as conifers. Innovation propels growth in the industry. Growing healthier, diverse trees, shrubs, annuals and perennials is no easy task, but with the help of Mother Nature, natural resources and sustainable practices, Oregon’s greenhouse and nursery industry is the state’s most valuable agricultural sector.

Greenhouse and Nursery Products

Oregon produces more than 5,000 varieties of ornamental nursery stock and numerous varieties of fruit tree rootstock. Many of its plants, trees in particular, are shipped internationally. China purchased Oregon nursery products for beautification prior to the 2008 Olympics and 2010 Shanghai World’s Fair.

The state has more than 2,100 nursery and greenhouse businesses. It is the second largest nursery state in the nation with more acreage under nursery production than any other state, most of it within a 90-mile radius of Portland. With such an industry concentration, competition is a given, but it’s also elevating, says Eric Hammond, production manager of Heritage Seedlings Inc., the largest under stock nursery in the country.

“Having so much knowledge and experience in one region of the country helps to lift everyone. We share and learn techniques and practices. There’s a competitive pressure that helps sharpen the tone to do a better job every year.”

The size and success of the nursery industry in Oregon speak to the state’s strengths.

“Our climate is just ideal,” Hammond says. “It’s warm enough, sunny enough and cool enough without being too cold. We have fantastic soil quality and an abundance of water. We have all the components necessary to grow plants. Having those natural resources in place gives us a chance to focus on the art and science of horticulture.”

Heritage Seedlings is a leading wholesale propagator of unusual and
sought-after deciduous ornamental trees and shrubs, offering more than 500 varieties of seedlings. Their hard-to-find selections are grown by grafting, cuttings and tissue culture. “Availability of water, innovative production methods, research, and aggressive prevention of pests and diseases are all critical components to producing healthy and clean plant material,” says Jeff Stone of the Oregon Association of Nurseries.

Oregon’s 2013 Christmas tree harvest was estimated at 6.4M trees. Counties with the greatest production of Christmas trees are Benton, Clackamas, Marion, Polk and Yamhill.

It takes an average of 7 years to produce a Douglas fir Christmas tree.

Oregon grows much of its Douglas and noble firs, says Jim Heater, owner of Silver Mountain. “We later learned that the noble fir also holds up under a range of temperatures and humidity levels, making it an ideal product for exporting.” Over the years, Silver Mountain has shipped to every state in the country, as well as Hong Kong, Singapore, Guam, Japan and Mexico.

Exports of Oregon Christmas trees are on the rise to markets including India, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Caribbean and the Middle East.

Oregon growers utilize technology and sustainable practices, such as using helicopters during harvest to limit compaction on the ground. This also eliminates the need for tractors, trailers and roads, ultimately allowing more use of the land to meet growing demands.

Oregon’s 2013 Christmas tree harvest, collected from more than 63,000 acres, was estimated at 6.4 million trees, resulting in a wholesale value of $110 million. Oregon ranks number one nationally in Christmas trees with 38 percent of total U.S. gross sales.

“We have to give a lot of credit to Mother Nature,” says Heater. “Rainfall, temperature, soil and slope make Oregon one of the best tree-growing regions in the U.S. and the world.”

CHRISTMAS TREES
Located in Marion County, a leading producer of Christmas trees in the state, Silver Mountain Christmas Trees started out with just 13 acres of Douglas and noble firs in 1968. As of 2013, the operation spans 3,500 acres and ships more than 300,000 trees annually. “We’d long been looking for crops to grow on these non-irrigated foothills. Luckily, we just happen to live in an area that has the exact climate needed to produce high-quality Douglas and noble firs,” says Jim Heater, owner of Silver Mountain.

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World Class Grass

Oregon grass seed industry has a global impact

In Oregon, the grass is always greener on every side of the fence, thanks to the $411 million grass seed industry.

“Oregon is considered the Grass Seed Capital of the World,” says Don Doerfler of Ioka Farms, which has been processing and packaging grass seed since 1977. “Grass seed is important to Oregon in many ways.”

Nestled mostly in the Willamette Valley, 500,000 acres of grass flourish in the mild maritime climate.

“We’re in a unique pocket here,” says Bryan Ostlund, with the Oregon Grass Seed Commissions. “It doesn’t get particularly cold in the winter or hot in the summer.”

Many species of grass are cultivated in Oregon for forage and turf purposes. Ryegrasses (both annual and perennial), tall fescue, fine fescue and Kentucky bluegrass blanket the countryside.

“The durability and texture of Oregon grass makes it the top choice for sports fields, parks, lawns and the most popular seed in the world for golf courses.

“It’s safe to say, anywhere you see natural turf, it is likely coming from Oregon,” Ostlund says.

In addition to luscious lawns, Oregon’s grasses have another important application. When planted as a cover crop, grasses prevent erosion and water pollution while promoting soil health.

“Any time you’ve got something planted on ground, you have less erosion,” says Nick Bowers, of KB Seed Solutions. “A root system growing will hold soil in place so it won’t just wash away.”

Oregon ryegrass is used extensively in Midwestern states in tandem with no-till practices to improve crop production.

“Ryegrass can actually hold on to nitrogen in the soil,” Ostlund says. “Then when you burn it down or green chop it, that nitrogen is still available to something planted after it, like corn or soybeans.”

This is not only beneficial to the farmer, but to the quality of surrounding bodies of water. Half a world away, other countries are using Oregon grasses for turf, forage and cover crops. Asian countries make up a large percentage of Oregon grass seed exports with China, Japan and Korea being the biggest consumers. In preparation for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, China turned to Oregon ryegrass for athletic fields and to prevent erosion along the banks of the famous Yangtze River.

– Hannah Patterson
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GROWING OREGON
2014-15 EDITION, VOLUME 1

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Growing Oregon is published annually by Journal Communications Inc. and is distributed by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. For advertising information or to direct questions or comments about the magazine, contact Journal Communications Inc. at (615) 771-0080 or by email at info@jnlcom.com.

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:
Director KATY GOBA
Special thanks to all Department staff for their support.

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