Century farms honor generations-old farm families

Food businesses perfect the recipe for success

Bright, beautiful flower farms offer feasts for the eyes and family fun
ROOTED IN OREGON’S AGRICULTURE

For more than 90 years, generations of more than 200 family-owned farms have made up our cooperative. We’re committed to growing and harvesting fruits and vegetables of unsurpassed quality, using sustainable farming practices, right here in Oregon’s Willamette Valley. Our customers throughout the world have counted on our innovative products in the past, and we’ll be here to provide them Oregon-grown products in the future.
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Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm in Woodburn grows 80 varieties of tulips.
Photo by Ian McRae
Bob's Red Mill

Selling Oregon to the world, one product at a time

GOOD FOOD for all.™

Bob Moore, founder of Bob’s Red Mill, visiting Williams Hudson Bay Farm in Milton-Freewater, Oregon.

Shop 400+ products at bobsredmill.com
Welcome to Growing Oregon.

As a relatively new resident to the state, I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to see and learn about Oregon’s tremendous agriculture industry. Prior to arriving in Oregon, I had heard about its diversity of crops, farms, markets and production types. Being able to see it first hand has confirmed why I’m now so thrilled to be an Oregonian. Agriculture is a very exciting enterprise and way of life that fuels our economy and connects all of us in a way no other industry can.

In my travels around the state, I’ve met many of the men and women who provide food and fiber for consumers in local, regional, domestic, and international markets. Each producer has a story to tell. They are stories of innovation, hard work and determination. Oregon’s farmers, ranchers, fishers, food processors and ag-related entrepreneurs have collectively kept agriculture at the forefront, despite occasional challenges, by embracing opportunities to enhance the fruits of their labor.

We could write a book about Oregon agriculture, and it would be a good read. In the meantime, however, I am pleased to provide the fourth edition of Growing Oregon, which continues the tradition of telling the story of Oregon agriculture through interesting stories, informative graphics and beautiful photography. From Oregon’s family farms to the many food businesses that help give the state its reputation for high-quality products, it’s a dynamic and special place to be. It is our hope that this publication leads you to an Oregon agricultural experience and creates a desire to learn more about this progressive industry that touches everyone.

Whether you are a native Oregonian, a recent arrival like me, or simply a visitor to our beautiful state, I hope you find your personal connection to Oregon agriculture.

Sincerely,

Alexis M. Taylor
Director
Oregon Department of Agriculture
GETTING TO KNOW OREGON AGRICULTURE

WHAT KIND OF WHEAT IS GROWN IN OREGON AND WHAT IS IT USED FOR?
Oregon wheat producers primarily grow soft white wheat, which makes the best pastries, cakes, pretzels, cookies and Asian noodles such as ramen.

How is agriculture officially recognized by the state?
The Oregon Legislature has adopted several ag-related emblems. The state beverage is milk. The state crustacean is Dungeness crab. The state fruit is pear. The state nut is hazelnut. The state tree is Douglas fir. The state pie is Marionberry.

HOW MANY OREGON POTATOES DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE A REGULAR BAG OF POTATO CHIPS?
It takes about 2 pounds of raw potatoes to fill an 8-ounce bag of chips.

WHY DO OREGON FARMERS NEED EXPORT MARKETS?
Oregon agriculture produces more than the state can consume. Without domestic and international markets, each man, woman, and child in Oregon would have to consume 10 pounds of blackberries, 16 pounds of hazelnuts, 20 pounds of sweet cherries, 25 pounds of blueberries and 114 pounds of pears each year to make up the difference.

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HAZELNUT AND A FILBERT?
Actually, there is no difference. Many decades ago, both the nut and the tree were commonly called filbert. Hazelnut has more recently become the name used for the nut, while the trees are still most often called filberts.

WHAT TYPES OF CHRISTMAS TREES DOES OREGON GROW?
The majority used to be Douglas fir. Now it’s the Noble fir (54 percent) followed by Douglas fir (32 percent). Grand fir and Nordmann make up most of the remaining trees.

Why do Oregon farmers grow something in a field one year and then something different the next?
Crop rotation breaks up pest and disease cycles that may establish if only one type of crop is repeatedly planted. Also, in some (but not all cases) growing the same crop in the same place for several consecutive years tends to deplete the soil of important nutrients.

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40 million seedlings planted every year

$12.5 billion annual sales of timber and wood products

$2.8 billion payroll

1/2 of the dry weight of wood is carbon – removed from the atmosphere

#1 in production of lumber and plywood in U.S.

Oregon’s forests grow enough wood every 6.1 minutes to build the tallest wood building in the U.S. – Portland’s Carbon 12

Not just our legacy. Wood is Oregon’s future.

Oregon Forest Resources Institute
OregonForests.org
What’s Growing in Oregon

The state’s leading ag products based on production value

1. GREENHOUSE & NURSERY
   The state ranks first nationally for potted florist azaleas, and horticulture is one of Oregon’s top exports.
   $909.5M PRODUCTION VALUE

   Floriculture is flower farming. More than 30 percent of U.S. consumers buy fresh flowers each year.

2. CATTLE & CALVES
   Oregon is home to more than 1 million cattle and calves. Most beef cattle farms can be found in the southeastern, northeastern and central parts of the state, and the top counties for raising cattle are Malheur, Klamath, Harney, Baker and Lake.
   $701.1M PRODUCTION VALUE

3. HAY
   Oregon farmers harvest over 1 million acres of hay with a production value of $661.3 million. The state grew 420,000 acres of alfalfa hay, which has higher levels of protein, and 710,000 acres of all other types of hay.
   $661.3M PRODUCTION VALUE

WHAT IS PRODUCTION VALUE?
The USDA’s value of production equals cash receipts (crops or livestock sold in a calendar year) plus the value of inventory adjustment and home consumption.
4. MILK
The state’s 124,000 head of dairy cows produce over 2 billion pounds of milk each year. Oregon has approximately 230 dairy farms and consistently ranks among the top five states in the nation for milk quality.

$469.3M
PRODUCTION VALUE

5. GRASS SEED
With its 1,500 grass seed growers, Oregon produces more cool-season forage and turf grass than anywhere else in the world. Lawns, parks, sports fields and golf courses are among the many places that rely on Oregon grass seed.

$436M
PRODUCTION VALUE

6. POTATOES
In 2016, Oregon farms harvested 38,900 acres of potatoes in the five potato-producing districts: Blue Mountain, Central Oregon, Klamath, Malheur and Willamette Valley. Potatoes grown in northeastern Oregon are primarily used for French fries and other processed potato products.

$187M
PRODUCTION VALUE

7. WHEAT
Grown primarily in the Columbia plateau, the state’s 797,000 acres produce more than 50 million bushels of wheat, and the industry’s export value is estimated at $131 million.

$185.9M
PRODUCTION VALUE

8. PEARs
Oregon ranks second in the nation for pear production, growing 52,860 tons of Bartlett pears and 146,660 tons of other varieties in 2016 that included Anjou, Bosc and Comice.

$181.5M
PRODUCTION VALUE

9. GRAPES FOR WINE
Oregon is a leading wine-grape-producing state, ranking sixth in the nation. In 2016, the state produced 67,000 tons of wine grapes on 23,000 acres. Oregon’s wine production takes place all over the state with a concentration of wineries in the Willamette Valley.

$143.4M
PRODUCTION VALUE

10. ONIONS
Most of the nation’s onion production takes place in Oregon’s Malheur County, which is in the eastern part of the state along the Snake River. The state grew 18,500 acres of onions in 2016.

$125.3M
PRODUCTION VALUE

FIND MORE ONLINE
Find more facts and stats about Oregon food and farming at OR-Agriculture.com.

Pears are picked when they are fully mature but not ripe.
By filling gardens with bee-friendly flowering plants, home gardeners are becoming vital partners in propping up the world’s declining bee population. A third of all our food depends on pollination by bees and other pollinating insects.

“Especially because we have more people living in urban areas than ever before, I do believe home gardeners can have a significant impact on the bee population,” says Gail Langellotto, statewide coordinator for the Oregon State University Extension Service’s Master Gardener program.

Attention to supporting pollinator health with flowering plants has increased in recent years starting at the wholesale level, according to Leigh Geschwill of F&B Farms and Nursery in Woodburn.

“When we introduce new plants, we talk about whether it is pollinator-friendly or not, and we’re seeing retailers promote that attribute,” says Geschwill, who sells primarily to retail nurseries.

“All the specifics, you can do well by just planting a diversity of things that bloom at different times of the year.”

That said, Melathopoulos points out that not all plants are created equal when it comes to attracting pollinators.

“People often think the showy flower ought to be good for pollinators,” he says. “But a lot of roses or peonies that really look good have absolutely no value for pollinators.”

A rule of thumb when choosing plants for your

“Gardens, especially home gardens, could really be like an oasis in an otherwise inhospitable landscape for a variety of pollinators.”

Gail Langellotto, statewide coordinator, OSU Extension Service’s Master Gardener program

PLANTING

Flowering plants create buzz in pollinator health
garden, he says, is to tend toward native flowering plants, especially ones promoted as pollinator friendly.

“Another approach is just to keep your eye out around your property,” he says. “Pay attention to what pollinators are visiting.”

In addition to horticultural plants, Sarah Kincaid, an entomologist with the Oregon Department of Agriculture, says some crop plants are excellent for attracting bees. “A lot of pollinators are generalists,” she says, “so they like to forage on a lot of different types of plants. Farmer’s crops, such as strawberries, caneberries, blueberries, clover and orchard crops, can be wonderful pollinator plants.”

Kincaid adds that leaving nesting habitat in landscapes can benefit bee populations. “Oregon bees nest in a variety of places, such as small cavities in trees, beetle holes in old wood, the pithy stems of plants and in underground tunnels,” Kincaid says.

Another step homeowners can take to preserve bee populations is to avoid applying pesticides when plants are in bloom, Melathopoulos says.

“Applying insecticides not according to the label can be very harmful to pollinators and now we’re starting to learn that some fungicides also have effect on some pollinators. You can find windows of opportunity to deal with most pest problems before the plant is in bloom,” he adds.

By practicing integrated pest management and planting a variety of flowering plants, homeowners can provide a much-needed refuge for pollinators, Langellotto says.

“Gardens, especially home gardens, could really be like an oasis in an otherwise inhospitable landscape for a variety of pollinators,” she says.

– Mitch Lies

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**featured Recipe**

**HONEY-BACON GOAT CHEESE DIP**

**Ingredients**
8 ounces goat cheese, softened
3 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled
2 tablespoons honey
Fresh berries or thyme leaves, optional garnish
Garlic pita chips

**Instructions**
1. Place the goat cheese on a small serving platter.
2. Drizzle honey over goat cheese, and sprinkle with bacon crumbles over the top.
3. Garnish with fresh berries or thyme leaves, and serve with pita chips.
Flower Power

Planting these native blooms creates a vibrant, pollinator-friendly habitat. Home gardens play a key role in protecting the world’s pollinator population.

Blueblossom

Milkweed

Red-flowering Currant

Pacific or Coast Rhododendron

Asters

Goldenrod

Oregon Blueberries

Little Blue Dynamos

Oregon Blueberries are delicious, healthy, simple and convenient. Adding a handful of blueberries to your day will energize and help achieve daily nutritional requirements. They are low in fat and full of nutrients like Vitamin C.

oregonblueberry.com
The next time the fresh, aromatic mint flavor in toothpaste hits your tongue, think Oregon. Odds are the mint was grown in the state that is known for being green.

Oregon leads the nation in production of peppermint, and the state’s mint oil is favored by producers of gum, candy, mouthwash and toothpaste.

“Willamette Valley mint oil in particular is highly desirable,” says Bryan Ostlund, administrator of the Oregon Mint Commission. “Our temperate climate, which gives us an advantage on so many crops, whether it is berries or wine grapes, and our good, fertile soils and historically ample water provide all the ingredients to slowly bring the plants to the proper menthofuran levels that we look for in the oil profile.”

In addition to the Willamette Valley, mint is grown in central Oregon, the Klamath Falls area, in Union County and in the Columbia Basin.

Mint is used extensively in chewing gum, the confectionery industry, and as flavoring in products such as dental floss, and cough syrup.

Mint also is a popular scent in aromatherapy, where...
it has been found to benefit mental alertness. And high-end tea producers, such as Stash Tea of Tigard, also utilize Oregon-grown mint for their products.

“We believe mint from the Pacific Northwest is the best mint in the world,” says Amy Austin, marketing director for Stash Tea Company. “Our farmers do a great job of always supplying us consistent quality, and we’re really proud of our peppermint tea. We will put it up against anybody else’s on the market.”

By acreage, mint is not one of Oregon’s biggest crops, but with an annual production value of $41 million, it is a significant contributor to the state’s economy. And for those 75 or so growers who produce mint, it tends to be a vital part of their crop mix.

Tim Butler, who operates a family farm with his brothers near Stayton, ventured into mint production in 1995.

“It takes a lot of equipment to go into mint. It is not an investment for the faint of heart,” Butler says. “But mint goes really well with our current farm operation. It is not a windfall, so to speak. But it is a good, stable crop. If you manage
Southern Oregon food producers have all the advantages of Oregon agriculture, in a Mediterranean climate. Boasting the longest, warmest growing season in the state, Southern Oregon offers more sunshine and a greater variety of microclimates than any other region in Oregon. A broad diversity of agriculture and a ready workforce supports the highest quality food product manufacturing.

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to get the production up and the prices stay constant, you can do okay on it.”

Butler maintains his mint fields for four to five years before replacing them with a grass seed or vegetable crop.

When mint is ready for harvest, Butler cuts the crop with swathers and leaves it to dry in fields, where he will lower the moisture level to between 20 percent and 35 percent. With a forage harvester, he then chops leaves and blows them into steel tubs that are towed behind the choppers.

The tubs are brought to a distilling facility, where steam is pumped through lines connected to the bottom of the containers, pulling oil from the mint leaves and creating a condensate of oil and water that is easily separated, allowing distillers to capture the essence of the mint plant. The oil is then moved through the supply chain to the end user, where it will be used to flavor that gum, toothpaste, mouthwash or candy that bursts with flavor from Oregon. Once processed, mint oil is almost entirely stable, able to be stored for extended periods. “There was mint oil that was found in Egyptian tombs that was still good,” Ostlund says.

“Our farmers do a great job of always supplying us consistent quality, and we’re really proud of our peppermint tea.”

Amy Austin, marketing director for Stash Tea Company

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**OREGON MINT JULEP**

**Ingredients**

- 5 sprigs of Oregon-grown mint
- 2 sugar cubes or ½ ounce simple syrup
- 2 ½ ounces bourbon whiskey
- Mint sprig for garnish
- Crushed ice

**Instructions**

1.Combine sugar or simple syrup with mint in a glass and gently muddle to release the oils.
2. Add your favorite bourbon and crushed ice.
3. Stir until glass becomes frosty, then garnish with mint sprig and enjoy!

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“Taste

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“Learn

---

“Experience

---

“Celebrate Oregon Agriculture

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Oregon rides the wave of the beverage craze

Sipping fruit-flavored vinegar. Savoring lemon-infused kombucha. Tasting craft ciders on tap. Oregon's cup runneth over with the latest beverage trends.

**Vinegar: Tangy Thirst Quencher**

Refreshingly sweet and tart, drinking vinegars (or shrubs) are an infusion of fruit, vinegar and sweetener. One company making a splash is Grumpy Dog Shrub Co., which produces a bevvy of drinking vinegars. All but one of Grumpy Dog Shrub's vinegars are apple cider vinegar-based. Apple cider vinegar is touted for having numerous health benefits and has been adopted by many into everyday health and beauty routines.

“The vinegars are very flavorful – both tangy and tart,” says Christina Cary, owner and operator. “You definitely get the vinegar flavor, but you also taste the fruit or vegetables added to it.”

Bars and restaurants make great cocktails and sodas with our drinking vinegars.”

Located on the north Oregon coast, the Astoria company was launched in collaboration with Pilot House Distilling’s tasting room to show how vinegars can be used in many ways, including in cocktails and mocktails, while cooking, and to make salad dressings and desserts. Grumpy Dog Shrub's most popular product is its tomatillo-jalapeño drinking vinegar.

“We started this one for Bloody Marys and margaritas, but quickly realized how much cooking you can do with it – fish tacos, oysters, chili, guacamole, slaw, any kind of marinade – I could go on and on,” Cary says.

Other popular products are the grapefruit vinegar and tonic, which has a zesty flavor and pairs well with seltzer water, water, tea, or in cocktails.

“These are great mixers and also a healthier alternative to a sugary juice or soda,” Cary says. “I even have parents buy them for their children’s snow cones so they aren’t being filled with sugary syrup.”

**The Wonder of Kombucha**

Customers can discover the unique taste of kombucha – a sparkling fermented tea with a storied history – at Kombucha Wonder Drink bar in Portland.

“For most people who have tried kombucha, they love the
Paula Phillips is the president of Kombucha Wonder Drink in Portland. The company bottles the sparkling, fermented tea, known for its health benefits.
refreshing taste and how it can be an instant mood lifter,” says Paula Phillips, president of the company.

Believed to have been first brewed in the ancient Himalayas, kombucha is valued for possessing cleansing and detoxifying elements.

Kombucha Wonder Drink founder Stephen Lee was first introduced to kombucha while he was in Russia. He later returned home to the United States and founded the company. The company’s best-selling flavor is Asian pear and ginger made with fresh-brewed, organic oolong tea, followed by green tea lemon flavor made with organic sencha green tea.

As for the kombucha drink craze, Phillips says it “boils down to the fact that it is trendy, great tasting and has numerous health benefits.”

“People are constantly on the lookout for healthier options to nurture their bodies,” she says. “This is a trend that will stay.”

Bringing Cider Back
The Oregon beverage scene wouldn’t be complete without the crisp taste of cider. Based in Corvallis, 2 Towns Ciderhouse was co-founded by childhood friends Aaron Sarnoff-Wood, director of business development, and Lee Larson, CEO.

“Fermented cider is an amazingly versatile drink with a huge breadth of styles, from New World ciders that could almost be mistaken for Champagne to farmhouse-style ciders that boast notes of rich earth and fresh cut hay,” Sarnoff-Wood says. “There is something out there for everyone, and trying and exploring is much of the joy.”

“The Northwest region’s amazing agricultural community and farmland means amazing, quality ingredients,” he adds. “When people enjoy Northwest craft ciders they are supporting the farmers, economy and community that make craft cider possible.”

Some of 2 Towns Ciderhouse’s most popular drinks include BrightCider, which is made using Newtown Pippin apples, a heritage cultivate native to the United States, and The Made Marion, made using the Marionberry variety bred in Marion County by Oregon State University. Nutritionally, Sarnoff-Wood says ciders are naturally gluten-free and usually lower in calories than beer or wine, making them a perfect alternative for health-conscious consumers.

According to Sarnoff-Wood, cider has enjoyed explosive growth in the last decade, and “some even call this the U.S. cider renaissance.”

“Oregon has long been an epicenter for the craft beverage industry. An abundance of quality ingredients and an overall appreciation for quality of life in this region create an atmosphere very supportive of food and beverage innovation,” he says. “As an ever-evolving craft beer industry paved the way for consumer interest in new flavors and concepts, we found an eager and accepting audience when we reintroduced craft cider.”

— Brittany Stovall
Liquor Goes Local
Get a taste of Oregon’s thriving craft distilling industry across the state

Sip handcrafted spirits in Oregon, where many of the state’s distillers use locally grown ingredients to create high-quality products you can savor.

An easy way to visit the state’s best craft distilleries is to follow a route like the Oregon Distillery Trail, which includes tasting rooms, bars and restaurants throughout Oregon.

Located in Central Oregon, Crater Lake Spirits by Bendistillery serves up gin, vodka and rye whiskey made in small batches. Crater Lake Estate Gin and Crater Lake Estate Rye Whiskey are made solely with ingredients grown on the company’s 24-acre farm. CEO Alan Dietrich says Crater Lake Estate Vodka is coming soon.

“We take great care in how our spirits are made,” Dietrich says. “Because of the quality of the water we have and the filters we use for both water and spirits, we end up with unique flavor profiles that are never harsh. In addition, we strive to use locally grown ingredients whenever possible, and we are especially proud of our Estate line. There aren’t many distillers in the U.S. that grow their own raw materials.”

Also on the Oregon Distillery Trail, Indio Spirits in Portland offers a selection of products with locally sourced ingredients, such as their Oregon Marionberry Vodka that’s created using berries grown in Woodburn. Indio Spirits’ Hopka Hop Liqueur is made with Citra and Cascade hops from the St. Paul area, and the company’s three gin varieties are created using regionally sourced juniper berries.

Another must-visit is Distillery Row in Southeast Portland’s Industrial District, home to eight independent distilleries that produce more than 20 unique liquors. Stone Barn Brandyworks purchases fruit for its quince (tart, pear-like fruit) liqueur from Oregon Quinces’ orchard, located just 20 minutes away.

In the northeast Oregon town of Joseph, Stein Distillery handcrafts each of their spirits from start to finish using grain grown on their family farm. The distillery’s tasting room in Beaverton offers visitors on the west side of the state an opportunity to enjoy products like aged whiskey, rye-based vodka and the ultra-smooth bourbon, “SteinShine.”

– Jessica Walker Boehm

Dive Into Oregon Distilleries

Indio Spirits
1111 SW Alder St., Portland, OR
www.indiospirits.com

Crater Lake Spirits Distillery
19330 Pinehurst Rd., Bend, OR
www.craterlakespirits.com

Stein Distillery
604 N. Main St., Joseph, OR
www.steindistillery.com

Distillery Row
Portland, OR
www.distilleryrowpdx.com

Crater Lake Spirits Tasting Room
1024 NW Bond St. Suite 102, Bend, OR
www.craterlakespirits.com

Stein Distillery
Tasting Room
12325 SW Horizon Blvd. #215, Beaverton, OR
www.steindistillery.com
Feeding the FUTURE
Farm to School Program nourishes appetites and minds

Schoolchildren get half their daily calories from food they eat at school. Parents of students in Oregon can feel proud that their kids are seeing healthy and local foods on their cafeteria trays through the Oregon Farm to School Program.

At the heart of the program’s growth and success is a commitment to partnerships and innovation. Oregon’s Departments of Agriculture and Education collaborate to make it happen.

“We have one of the most popular and well-established programs for farm to school in the country,” says Amy Gilroy, the Farm to School Program manager at the Oregon Department of Agriculture. “Oregonians care about healthy kids and supporting their local farmers. Farm to School helps connect these two values by helping schools find and source Oregon products, developing creative recipes and unique menu items, and helping kids learn where their food comes from through school garden education.”

Many schools set up tasting tables in school cafeterias, highlight specific Oregon crops or unique Oregon products in their lunch menus, and work with local producers to teach kids about careers in agriculture and where their food comes from.

There are more than a half a million schoolchildren in the state. In the past 10 years, the program has grown from reaching 25 school

“It’s important for kids to know where their food comes from and to have a hand in growing it. This program provides those opportunities.”

Jeannette Thompson, co-owner of T 7 Ranch

OPPOSITE PAGE: Oregon students across the state get a hands-on lesson on how their food is grown through the Oregon Farm to School Program. The school garden in Salem is one example of many who are embracing this teaching effort.
districts to more than 130 across the state. That translates to more than 230,000 students served, 600 school gardens established, 170 Oregon companies involved and an average of 20 percent of school food budgets spent on Oregon-grown or -processed products. According to estimates, the program has generated more than 100 jobs and $20 million in statewide economic impact.

But the results extend way beyond the numbers. With more than 1 in 5 Oregon children at risk of being overweight and 1 in 3 at risk for diabetes, the opportunity for students to enjoy fresh, healthy food and to learn about nutrition has a far-reaching impact.

**Strong Roots**

One of the programs managed through the Oregon Department of Agriculture that has been instrumental in Farm to School is FoodCorps, a national service program that trains AmeriCorps leaders to connect kids in underserved communities to healthy food in schools. Last year in Oregon, FoodCorps service members maintained 26 school gardens and reached more than 16,000 students, introducing them to more than 100 new foods.

Other innovative initiatives include the creation of educational materials like the Oregon Harvest for School toolkit, which provides activities and promotional posters featuring 36 of the state’s specialty crops.

Promotional and educational efforts are designed to motivate kids to develop healthy eating habits and help them make good choices throughout their lifetimes.

Research suggests that kids need, on average, 12 exposures to a new food item before they will select it on their own. As examples, school gardens provide those hands-on opportunities,
and tasting tables give kids a chance to try a lot of different foods. These activities help school districts get a sense for what new Oregon foods kids will like before they make purchasing decisions – so it gives them a chance to save money and get products on the lunch line that children already like and enjoy eating.

Jeanette and Brent Thompson, who own T7 Ranch in Haines, believe in the goals of the Farm to School program and support them with time, talent and products. The Thompsons donate and sell beef to many local schools, offer equipment to help build and maintain school gardens, and host school groups at the ranch.

“It’s important for kids to know where their food comes from and to have a hand in growing it,” Jeannette Thompson says. “This program provides those opportunities.”

From Boat to School

Bornstein Seafoods is another active program partner. In 2012, the company helped establish the Boat to School program, which began in the Bend-La Pine school district in Central Oregon and now extends to the Portland, Pendleton, La Grande and Seaside districts.

Not only has Bornstein developed special cuts of fish to meet school lunch protein requirements, but they also work with kitchen teams on how best to prepare and serve wild, sustainably caught seafood so kids will try and enjoy it.

Christa Svensson, a former Bornstein's export sales account manager, champions the program.

“It’s a tremendous opportunity for districts to get local food on their menus and for children from all socioeconomic backgrounds to try something new. Some might like rockfish tacos; others shrimp fettuccine. Some might not like either, but they all have a chance to taste different preparations of fish and learn more about how Oregon supplies premier seafood here and around the world.”

Svensson explains that through the Farm to School program’s educational grants, students can learn even more. The Oregon Albacore Commission received a $15,000 grant to develop educational materials to tell the story of Oregon’s commercial fisheries. Students in Seaside got a real flavor of Oregon seafood from tastings, take-home dinners kits, field trips and activity books.

“People care deeply about Oregon producers and kids. This is what I love about the Farm to School program,” Gilroy says. “It looks different in every community across the state.”

– Cathy Lockman

FIND MORE ONLINE

Learn more about agricultural education in Oregon at OR-Agriculture.com.

Threemile Canyon Farms is living proof that progressive and sustainable agriculture can be good for business, and the environment.

• We grow conventional and organic crops in an earth-friendly way, with a focus on reusing and recycling.
• Our conventional and organic dairies put the animal’s health and well-being ahead of everything else.
• Products from our farm and dairy help make some of Oregon’s most trusted brands.
• Our “closed-loop system” means virtually nothing gets wasted; inputs and outputs from the farm and dairy are used to efficiently fuel one another.

We’d like to thank our dedicated team members and local Oregon community for their support; without you, our success would not be possible.

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OREGON BOWL

**Ingredients**

**For the grill:**
- 1 pound hanger steak
- Feel free to add your favorite seasonal vegetables to the grill

**For the salad:**
- ½ cup barley
- ½ cup wild rice
- 4 cups spinach
- ¼ cup mixed fresh herbs (thyme, oregano, sage, rosemary, parsley)

**Dressing:**
- 2 cloves garlic (grated or diced)
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons mustard
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar

**Note:**
* Recipe provided by Oregon State University Food Innovation Center

**Instructions**

**Prepare the dressing:**
1. Combine garlic, vinegar, lemon, and mustard in a bowl. Mix well.
2. Slowly drizzle the olive oil into the vinegar mixture, whisking constantly. Add more olive oil or vinegar to taste.

**Prepare grill & salad ingredients:**
1. Preheat grill to high heat.
2. Wash and sort through the wild rice and barley separately. Place the wild rice and barley separately in two medium saucepans with 2 quarts of cold water each. Simmer the barley and wild rice until cooked (approximately 20 to 30 minutes). Strain and allow to cool.
3. Trim the hanger steak and season it liberally with salt and pepper. Set aside.
4. Using a clean cutting board, chop vegetables for the salad. Set aside.
5. Toss the hanger steak (and vegetables if using) with a small amount of olive oil. Grill over high heat (approximately 2 to 3 minutes each side). Remove from heat. Let steak rest for 15 to 20 minutes. **Note:** This will yield a rare steak. If you would like the steak to be cooked more, add 2 more minutes of cook time to each side.

**Assemble the bowls:**
1. Toss spinach, barley, wild rice, herbs, and dressing together. Mix well. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Distribute into two bowls.
2. Add vegetables to each bowl and garnish with hazelnuts and dried cranberries.
3. Slice the hanger steak thinly against the grain. Add the steak to the bowls or serve on the side.
4. Pour a glass of Oregon cider and enjoy!

*Note:* This recipe will also pair well with medium-bodied white wines, less hoppy beers, and kombucha.

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## WHAT’S FRESH?

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WHERE THERE’S WOOL,

From your coat to your socks, wool keeps you warm and dry. Textile mills have long been a part of Oregon’s history beginning in the mid-1800s, when woolen mills popped up across the state. This fiber-industry boom played a significant role in the state’s early economy and continues to have a big impact.

**Spinning a Yarn**

“The woolen industry was hugely important to Oregon’s economy. As early as the 1850s, the mills provided dual economic benefits, both a market for local farmers raising sheep and jobs for local workers,” says Kylie Pine, curator and collections manager, Willamette Heritage Center in Salem. “We estimate that the Thomas Kay Woolen Mill employed at one point in its operations one-fifth of the non-farming population of the city of Salem.”

The Thomas Kay Woolen Mill operated from 1889 to 1962, and was Salem’s second mill after the Willamette Woolen Mill burned in 1875. Pine says these mills became the centers of industry, with towns built around them. During the 19th century, Ashland Woolen Mills and Oregon Woolen Mills were the largest employers in Ashland and Oregon City, respectively. The Portland Woolen Mills opened in the St. Johns neighborhood in 1904. By 1950, the company had become the largest wool manufacturer west of the Mississippi.

**Fleece to Fabric**

While there are far fewer mills operating today, Oregon still enjoys a solid reputation within the textile industry. Pendleton Woolen Mills specializes in classic wool clothing, accessories, blankets and home decor, and has become an international powerhouse.

Linda Parker, head of corporate communications and public relations for Pendleton Woolen Mills, says among the secrets of the company’s 150-year success are “a commitment to quality and craftsmanship, authenticity, and family ownership – the company is in the sixth generation of ownership – and a vision for the long pull, not the short haul.”

Parker believes it goes back to understanding their target market and loyal customers. “We look for opportunities to extend the Pendleton lifestyle brand in surprising ways through collaborations and licensee products in apparel, home, and accessories,” she says.

Part of Pendleton’s success is due to a resurgence in the popularity of wool. Pendleton purchases about 40 percent of its fleece from Pacific Northwest growers, many of whom have worked with Pendleton for nearly 100 years.

“The desire and need for wool products has increased worldwide with the ‘rediscovery’ of wool as best-in-class for technical and athleisure apparel, outdoor sports and activities, home and work apparel, and home furnishings and blankets,” Parker says.

$1.9M Oregon wool earned more than $1.9 million in cash receipts in 2015.

Pendleton Woolen Mills is an American brand with over 150 years of success.
THERE’S A WAY

Oregon boasts colorful history, promising future in woolen textile production

Jeanne Carver of Imperial Stock Ranch near Shaniko raises sheep for wool.
Oregon Dungeness crab...
Coming soon to
a table near you!

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Agricultural Sciences. You’ll be
surprised what you find.
Counting Sheep

Imperial Stock Ranch near Shaniko has been raising sheep, cattle, hay and grains for more than 146 years. The historic ranch was able to survive dramatic shifts in commodity markets in the late 1990s by adapting to demand. They explored new ways to do business, connecting with U.S. textile manufacturers to convert the ranch’s raw wool harvests to premium wool yarns, fabrics and finished goods. The Responsible Wool Standard is a voluntary global standard that addresses the welfare of sheep and of the land they graze on.

“While more companies outsourced, we set out to prove you don’t have to cross an ocean to make clothing,” says Jeanne Carver, who owns and operates the ranch with her husband, Dan. “Similar to the farm-to-fork, ‘slow food’ movement that reconnects us to our food, we led a ranch-to-runway ‘slow wear’ movement that reconnects us to the source of the fibers we wear.”

The ranch partnered with designer label Ralph Lauren to provide yarn for the Team USA uniforms worn during the opening ceremony of the 2014 Winter Olympics, and in 2017, Imperial Stock Ranch was the first ranch in the world to be fully certified under the Responsible Wool Standard.

“We were able to maintain our ranching heritage and operations, and, at the same time, successfully transition from selling unprocessed wool to creating and selling retail products made from the raw wool,” Carver says. “From yarn and fabric to finished goods in both apparel and home products, we delivered traceable, sustainable options made exclusively in the United States into multiple markets and to a variety of brand partners.”

– Teree Caruthers

Oregon produced 900,000 pounds of wool in 2016.
Steeped in the ground of Fiala Farms is a tradition that, like the fruits and vegetables that are produced on this 111-year-old West Linn farm, grows each year. It’s a legacy that resonates within the family.

“Being able to put something in the ground, and a few months later retrieve it, sell it, eat it and know that you can do it again, and that people are happy about it, that is a good feeling,” Richard Fiala says. “And trying to pass that on to the next generation is a powerful thing.”

Across the state in rural Grant County, Sharon Livingston also holds tight to a family heritage that dates back more than a century.

“I live in a very pretty spot,” Livingston says. “I don’t have a huge ranch, but it is a very pretty place. I have timber. I have water. I have grass. I have wildlife. And I am very proud of what I have, because we have always worked to make it sustainable.”

Fiala Farms and Livingston Ranch are among 1,200 farms and ranches across Oregon certified as Century Farms. The state’s now nearly 60-year-old Century Farm and Ranch Program honors those held by the same family for more than 100 years.

Sponsored by the Oregon Farm Bureau Federation, the program spotlights the deep roots of Oregon’s farm and ranch families.

Fiala, the third generation of his family to work Fiala Farms, says that growing up, he didn’t see much significance in the farm’s rich heritage. That changed as he grew older.

“Seeing an opportunity to keep production going, keep something special happening instead of putting it into housing, and realizing a one-time reward of paving over and building rooftop to rooftop, actually holds a pretty pleasurable place in me,” he says.

The farm’s history dates back to 1906 when Richard’s grandparents, Jerry and Lucy Fiala, first purchased what was then a 58-acre stump forest along the Tualatin River.

“He grew a lot of cole crops, but also corn and other vegetables,” Fiala says of his grandfather, Jerry. “He would take them by wagon to the Portland Farmers Market. They got up very, very early to make the trip.”

Fiala Farms today is run by Richard Fiala, his three siblings and their children. The farm grows an impressive array of fruits and vegetables, including peaches, cherries, pears and apples, pole beans, sweet corn, and cole crops, like broccoli and cauliflower, all of which they sell from their farmstand, which is open from July until Halloween each year.

Sharon Livingston’s grandparents, C.W. Conger and William Carter, first purchased the property in the Long Creek area in 1888 and 1891, respectively. The marriage of their children J.L. and Rose Conger Carter brought the families together.

Livingston and her husband, Fred Livingston, who has since passed away, took over management of Livingston Ranch in 1966.

Now approaching 80, Livingston rents out her
pasture to a local rancher, who raises Hereford and Angus beef cattle, but retains ownership of the ranch and helps in management decisions.

“I am very much involved in helping him, because it is my place,” she says. “I take a great deal of pride in ownership. It is important to me because my family came here and they worked hard to put together what I experience today. And I am very grateful for everything they did, because the people that came here lived through some pretty tough times.

“I want to leave this in as good of shape when I pass on as when I got it,” she says, “so the next generation can enjoy it as much as I do.”

— Mitch Lies
OREGON
IN BLOOM

Bright and beautiful flower farms offer feasts for the eyes and family fun.

Nothing brightens your day quite like a bouquet of vibrant, fresh flowers. Luckily for Oregonians, the state is home to several flower farms, offering bright blooms and bulbs to enjoy immediately or for years to come in home gardens.

Schreiner’s Gardens

Located in the heart of the Willamette Valley, Schreiner’s Gardens grows approximately 120 acres of bearded irises. Steve Schreiner helps run the business along with his sister, brother and nephew. Steve’s grandfather, F.X., began the family business in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1925 and moved to Oregon in 1946.

“F.X. just loved irises,” Steve Schreiner says. “He said he would give his life in eternity if he could have 50 more years working with irises.”

Schreiner’s grows many different varieties of irises, mostly bearded, and introduces 17 new varieties each year. During the bloom season in May, consumers can purchase cut flowers to put in vases and preorder rhizomes.

“We have a 72-page catalog that has a lot of recognition as being an excellent catalog,” Schreiner says. “We take great pride in that.”

Visitors can savor the view of those stunning irises in the farm’s two 10-acre display gardens throughout May.

“Our display gardens get rave reviews from all over the world,” Schreiner says. “We’ve had people who have seen lots of gardens across the globe and they say ours are the most beautiful they’ve ever seen.”

The gardens are free and open to the public in daylight hours. “Even for those of us who work here every year, you can’t get jaded,” he says.
“The color just sends us all into a cartwheel.”

**Swan Island Dahlias**

The nation’s leading dahlia grower, Swan Island Dahlias in Canby, grows almost 40 acres of dahlias.

“We offer about 370 different varieties of dahlias and ship about 300,000 dahlia tubers worldwide per year,” says Heather Schloe, one of the family members at the family-owned and -operated Swan Island Dahlias. The business was started by Heather’s grandparents, Nick and Margaret Gitts, in 1963.

“Oregon is a wonderful place because of our mild climate – no extreme summer heat or extreme cold winters,” she says. “Our soil allows us to have a large operation, with beautiful, sandy soil that lets us harvest even in winter.”

Heather says these soils help create gorgeous gardens and Swan Island Dahlias brings lots of tourism dollars to the state.

“We support Oregon’s economy not only by offering many jobs, but also being one of ‘Oregon’s Best Destinations’ for tourism,” she says.

Visitors can walk through the fields for free seven days a week each August and September when the flowers are in bloom. They can also choose their favorite tubers to order and plant in their own gardens in the spring.

**Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm**

In Woodburn, Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm understands the impact of agritourism from their annual...
festival each spring, where visitors can wander through 40 acres of gorgeous blooming tulips and enjoy other fun activities.

“We attract about 100,000 people during the month of April for the Tulip Fest, and after their farm visit they’re looking for other things to do, so we send them to the surrounding community,” says Barb Iverson, co-owner at Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm. “People come out here for the memories. It’s on their bucket lists. We have a map where people pin where they’re from and we’ve had every U.S. state and about 140 countries.”

Barb’s parents purchased the farm in 1950 and began growing tulips in 1974. She’s one of six children, and currently runs the farm with two of her brothers and her nephew, with another brother planning to retire and return to the farm.

“During the tulip festival, everyone pitches in,” she says.

The farm grows about 80 varieties of tulips, along with daffodils and perennials. Iverson says most of the flowers are sold on-site, and they work with several nonprofits to sell them for fundraisers around Easter. Consumers can also order bulbs through the catalog or buy cut flowers.

Easter Lilies

Oregon is also home to the Easter Lily Capital of the World. The isolated coastal region that straddles the California and Oregon border, including southwest Curry County, produces nearly all Easter lily bulbs for the blooming, potted Easter lily market. Grown on about a thousand acres, bulbs are planted in the fall, but the bloom is not allowed to grow in the field, ensuring the growth takes place in the bulb. Each year for three years, the bulbs are dug up and replanted into a new field. Then they are harvested and ready for shipping. If the timing is right, the lilies bloom and are available just before Easter.

— Rachel Bertone
Oregon growers and food producers find inspiration and collaboration from Japan

Japan and Oregon’s reciprocal relationship dates back nearly two centuries—some say even before Commodore Matthew Perry led an expedition to Japan in 1853. Today, Japan remains Oregon’s top agricultural customer. Half of the wheat consumed in Japan comes from the Pacific Northwest.

“Japan has a very long, strong history with Oregon. Japan is our top export market for food and agricultural products, including fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables. More recently, we’ve been selling a lot of craft beverages—craft beers and even some craft ciders that are just starting to get into the market,” says Theresa Yoshioka, a trade manager for the Oregon Department of Agriculture. “Japanese consumers appreciate premium-quality products, and that’s something Oregon creates.”

According to Yoshioka, most Asian buyers won’t typically email a purchase order over to a company they’ve never met. Instead, they prefer to meet the people behind the company and develop a relationship before doing business with them.

Rooted Rapport

These special relationships are celebrated on both shores and have resulted in several creative—and delicious—culinary collaborations. Stacey Givens owns The Side Yard Farm & Kitchen, an urban farm and catering company in Portland, and began working with Japanese farmers and restaurateurs about five years ago after a Japanese photographer visited her farm. Since then, Givens has hosted Japanese tourists and farmers,
What’s GROWING in Oregon?

Visit FarmFlavor.com to learn your state’s top agriculture products.
and has traveled to Japan several times to tour local farms and host seed-to-table dinners and events.

“On my first trip, I got a chance to tour four different farms, meet the farmers and use their product. I met bakers, ranchers and people who make cheese. I even helped them with the harvest,” Givens says. “Seeing how seriously they take their craft is really beautiful.”

Now, Givens makes the journey to Japan annually and takes other farmers and culinary artisans with her.

“We call it the Seed-to-Plate Tour, sponsored by Travel Portland, and we do it every fall, as soon as the farm season ends. I pick another farmer or chef to go with me – maybe somebody in the beverage industry, like a winemaker or brewer,” Givens says. “We’ll do farm-to-table events in small towns right in the middle of Japan; it doesn’t matter where. And the whole point is to meet farmers, use their product, share techniques and share seeds – to get connected.”

Givens has planted native Japanese seeds and incorporated them into her menu.

“We grow Hinona turnips and they’re beautiful. They’re long, slender turnips almost like the size of a carrot, and they’re half purple and half white. The greens taste delicious,” she says. “We also grow Shungiku, which is a type of chrysanthemum. They kind of taste a little bit like carrot tops, but they put out these beautiful flowers, and you can actually eat the flowers, too.”

Brewers without Borders

Tomas Sluiter, owner of Culmination Brewing in Portland, says his cross-cultural collaboration began with a love of sake.

“I’ve been a fan of Japanese food, culture and sake for over a decade,” Sluiter says. “I was a professional beer brewer when I took John Gauntner’s professional sake classes. After that, I got a deeper understanding of sake, and my eventual goal was to open a brewery where I brewed beer and sake.”

While he hasn’t opened a sake brewery yet, Sluiter has successfully experimented with Japanese flavors, such as red rice and yuzu fruit. He caught the attention of Japanese brewers and distributors and soon, was working directly with Japanese brewers to make and sell Portland beer in Japan.

“We did a beer with Ise Kadoya Microbrewery. They shipped us a very specific yeast that is proprietary to them,” Sluiter says. “It was isolated from a tree in the Shinto shrine garden in Ise. We popped it up in a local yeast lab here and brewed a type of Witbier. And we called it Amaterasu after the goddess worshipped in the Shinto religion. That beer turned out fantastic, and we had it released here [and in Japan].

“These stories that I can relay to friends and family. These products that I can bring back. They help people understand that cultures aren’t just single entities. What you come to realize, if you travel and you meet people, is that we’re all humans, and we all love food, and we love friendship, and we love to toast each other with drinks,” he adds. “I think if more people understood that, we would live in a better world.”

— Teree Caruthers
Jason Pastega grew up in the midst of his parents’ Blue Heron French Cheese Company in Tillamook. When he decided to start a business of his own, it didn’t take long for Pastega to discover how much he needed to learn about what it takes to own a food company.

Thankfully, he found a program designed to address his questions right in his own backyard.

Pastega is one of hundreds of entrepreneurs to make their way through a food business incubation program offered through the Portland-based Food Innovation Center (FIC), which is jointly run by Oregon State University and the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

“I was super excited to learn that this resource was available,” Pastega says.

One of 13 OSU branch experiment stations, the center focuses primarily on food safety and food science, but also connects food entrepreneurs with retailers and other buyers, says Sarah Masoni, product and process development manager for the FIC.

Masoni says she frequently hosts food scientists and educators from outside the region, who travel to Portland to tour the center.

“What we are doing has put Oregon at the forefront of food innovation,” Masoni says, “and people are coming here from all over the United States and the world to learn how we are changing our food economy.”

Pastega was like many FIC clients before he first approached the center. He had an idea for a food product, but didn’t know how to get it onto store shelves.

“What we are doing has put Oregon at the forefront of food innovation, and people are coming here from all over the United States and the world to learn what we are doing to change our food economy.”

Sarah Masoni, product and process development manager for the FIC
family try the food,” Pastega says. “I perfected the recipes as much as I could, but I didn’t really know how the recipe stacked up as far as shelf life, and how the flavor would change over time. So that is when I reached out to Sarah.”

That was nine years ago. Today, Pastega’s Skout Backcountry organic snack bars can be found on Amazon and in local health food and outdoor stores. The company, which sources most of its ingredients from local farmers, has eight full-time employees, and could add more if efforts to gain national distribution succeed.

And Pastega continues to turn to the FIC for advice, particularly when working on new products.

The FIC draws between 250 and 500 clients annually. “We are service oriented, and that was the main goal of the FIC to begin with: to create a place where people could come to create value in a food product,” Mason says. “We are helping people commercialize food, and we have had some really good success stories.”

Some food entrepreneurs work with the center just long enough to turn their idea into a product that is safe, flavorful, artfully packaged and ready for distribution. Others stay with the program for several years.

“Some companies started out very small, and now they are in a 10,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, and I still work with them,” Mason says.

Included in the many food companies that have worked with the FIC are some of Oregon’s most successful. Umpqua Dairy, which has operated in Oregon since 1931, recently partnered with the center on developing a new product that remains proprietary until it goes public.

“They were very helpful,” said Marty Weaver, director of sales and marketing for the dairy. “They took the product from idea through inception and did a nice job with it. I was very pleased.”

– Mitch Lies

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Nathan Jackson oversees operations at K-Bar Ranches, a division of the Umpqua Indian Development Corporation.
Like their ancestors before them, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians in southern Oregon is living off the land these days, having invested profits from their Seven Feathers Casino into ranch ownership.

“We have a very strong belief that agriculture is an important part of the economy and an important part of society,” says Nathan Jackson, general manager for sales and administration for K-Bar Ranches, a division of the Umpqua Indian Development Corporation. “And, if done right, it is a sound business investment.”

The tribe’s venture into agriculture started 17 years ago, when it purchased the Myrtle Creek ranch from the Bare family,
and kept Tim Bare on to help run it. “Nobody had a lot of experience running a ranch,” Jackson says. “That is why we retained Tim as general manager.”

Since then, the Cow Creek Band has supplied steaks and hamburger for the Seven Feathers Casino Resort in Canyonville, just down the road from K-Bar, moving its investment full circle. “There are opportunities to do other things on some of this ground, but agriculture is something that we hold near and dear,” Jackson says. Co-managed today by Jackson, Rob Estabrook and Jeff Jones, K-Bar Ranches produces 10,000 tons of hay, much of which it sells locally, and raises 4,000 head of cattle on 7,000 acres. The ranch also grows barley, straw and corn, which they use to feed their cattle. The ranch prides itself on...
treat ing animals humanely, Jackson says, and takes an active interest in environmental stewardship, partnering with conservation groups to protect waterways and enhance stream health and wildlife habitat, as well as practicing sound pasture management by moving herds to avoid overgrazing.

“We work very hard to take good care of this ground, because frankly, if you don’t take good care of the ground, you are not profitable,” Jackson says. “But beyond just profitability, it is the right thing to do.”

The Cow Creek’s Board of Directors decided to diversify the ranch’s operations last year after cattle prices dropped, adding field crops to its production mix, and even looking into olive production.

“We’ve done a bunch of research on that,” Jackson says, “and it looks like olives are something that would work well here in the Umpqua Valley.”

The ranch also is considering producing vegetables, including sweet corn, squash and maybe pumpkins. “We have some people within the organization that have had some experience with that,” he says.

The ranch is also close to finalizing an arrangement to produce a branded beef product that will be sold through a local grocery store chain. And this year, the ranch started raising wheat that will be milled at Camas Country Mills in Junction City.

“We can use that milled flour at the casino, bake our own bread products with grain that we grew and that was locally milled,” Jackson says. “Our food and beverage director for the casino is very excited about having another locally produced product that we can showcase at the Seven Feathers Casino.”

When Jackson turns his attention to the future, he sees more diversification ahead for K-Bar Ranches and a continued embrace of agriculture.

“I think that we have the opportunity to further diversify and improve our profitability and resiliency through sustainable production practices,” he says.

“The tribal population is very supportive of our agricultural operations. As Indians, we are really connected to the land, and it is important for us to be doing this. “We’re pretty proud of what we are doing,” he says.

– Mitch Lies
Although it might sound like the plot of a sci-fi thriller, the fight against invasive species, from insects to noxious weeds, is a harsh reality. Invasive weeds reduce biodiversity and displace native plant and wildlife species. They invade agricultural land, forests and other natural areas causing severe production losses, increased control costs, and negative impacts to watersheds, ecosystems and sometimes human health. An economic impact study commissioned by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) shows that 25 of Oregon’s most significant invasive weeds cause an estimated annual loss of about $83.5 million to the state’s economy. That figure could be well over a billion dollars without control efforts by state, county and federal weed programs.

ODA has enacted a multi-pronged approach to invasive species: prevention, early detection and rapid response, control and management, education and outreach, and coordination and leadership.

With the support from groups including the Oregon Invasive Species Council and Oregon Public Broadcasting’s “The Silent Invasion” program, there is a growing awareness among Oregonians, asking the all-important question: What invasive species are threatening Oregon and how do we stop them?

**Prevent, Detect, Control**

ODA sets out thousands of traps statewide each year for about 120 target insect pests. Most of those traps focus on the notorious plant-eating gypsy moth. If a breeding population is detected, an eradication program using the biological insecticide *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (Btk) is conducted.

“Finding gypsy moths as soon as possible and quickly eliminating breeding populations allows ODA to successfully prevent economic and environmental losses,” says Helmuth Rogg, ODA’s director of Plant Protection and Conservation Programs. “We must be vigilant in order to protect Oregon’s natural resources and our quality of life.”

Without ODA’s program, private efforts to eradicate or control gypsy moths could involve increased use of chemical pesticides. “Without our traps, an infestation could grow large and harder to eradicate. We do not want to have to learn to live with the gypsy moth,” Rogg says.

Indeed, 30 years ago, 19,000 gypsy moths were detected in Lane County alone, which led to the largest gypsy moth eradication project in the western U.S. Since then, the traps have gone up and ODA has quickly dealt with breeding populations.

Recently, another unwanted, non-native insect pest has emerged. “We are currently fighting the largest Japanese beetle infestation in Oregon’s history in the Cedar Mill and Bethany neighborhoods of northwest Portland,” Rogg says.

ODA has organized intensive outreach campaigns to inform and involve local, state and federal counterparts, environmental groups, and the community. By utilizing social media, media campaigns, local events and house-to-house communications, Rogg reports that basically 100 percent
of the area’s residents have participated in the current Japanese beetle eradication project.

Making Progress

Fortunately, Beth Myers-Shenai, integrated weed management coordinator for ODA, who regularly conducts site visits, has found that individual infestations are getting easier to manage and track through better technology and equipment.

“If an invasive plant is found for the first time in an area, we coordinate or participate in a survey to determine how far it’s spread,” which nowadays can be performed by foot, truck, ATV, boat or even helicopter, she says. The staff has also been employing mobile mapping technology and continues important collaborative work with Oregon State University on online weed mapping.

Additional successful measures have included ODA’s development of a weed-free hay certification program, working with gardeners to identify invasive species, and promoting a national “Play. Clean. Go.” education campaign to remind recreationists about the importance of cleaning gear before and after an outing. “Don’t Move Firewood” and “Don’t Let it Loose” outreach campaigns also help publicize techniques to manage invasive weed species.

Lastly, without the coordination and leadership to bring ODA’s strategy full circle, this outreach wouldn’t be as effective, says Clint Burfitt, manager of ODA’s Insect Pest Prevention and Management Program.

“This issue isn’t about agriculture versus urban culture, so our tactic is to build relationships and trust with a diverse group of people. Whether it’s the media, communities or stakeholders – by developing a sense of ownership at a grassroots level, they are pushing for the project as much as we are,” Burfitt says.

ODA and a wide network of partners are on the battlefield daily, working to prevent, eradicate or control invasive species. Success benefits agriculture, forestry, the state’s valuable natural habitat and even urban livability.

– Keri Ann Beazell

What can YOU do to help fight invasive species in Oregon?

• Clean your recreational gear before and after you enjoy the great outdoors. Plant seeds can move easily on boots, tires, propellers, etc.
• Research plants or seeds before including them in your garden to ensure they are not invasive. Check them against your local county and state noxious weed lists.
• Know the source of any material you add to your yard or landscape. They can be sources of new invasive plant infestations. Ask about where it came from.
• Report suspicious plants. Call 1-866-INVADER or fill out a report online at oregoninvasiveshotline.org.
Want to stay in touch with Oregon food and farmers? Here are a few ways to get started:

**Shop at a Farmers Market**
With more than 150 farmers markets across the state, it’s easy to buy fresh, local produce, meats and other foods in Oregon. Find a farmers market near you at oregonfarmersmarkets.org.

**Keep Learning**
Ag in the Classroom provides agricultural education to students across the state. For more information, visit oregonaitc.org.

**Buy Local Products**
Want to support producers in your state? Discover products made in Oregon at oregonfresh.net.

**Taste, Learn and Experience**
Picking berries, exploring a corn maze, selecting the perfect Christmas tree – these are just some of the fun things to do on farms. To learn more about Oregon agritourism, visit celebrateoregonagriculture.com.

**Share Infographics**
Download shareable graphics featuring the state’s top 10 ag products, seasonal produce calendars and more at OR-agriculture.com.

**Stay in Touch**
Keep up with the wide-ranging efforts of the Oregon Department of Agriculture at oregon.gov/oda.

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Learn more about the organizations that support Oregon’s agriculture.

- Blue Mountain Community College bluecc.edu
- Bob’s Red Mill bobsredmill.com
- Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs mthoodterritory.com
- George Packing Company georgepack.com
- NORPAC Foods Inc. norpac.com
- Northwest Farm Credit Services northwestfcs.com
- Oregon Blueberry Commission oregonblueberry.com
- Oregon Department of Agriculture – Celebrate Oregon Agriculture celebrateoregonagriculture.com
- Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission oregondugenness.org
- Oregon Forest Resources Institute oregonforests.org
- Oregon State Grange orgrange.org
- Oregon State University – College of Agricultural Sciences agsci.oregonstate.edu
- Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission osweetcherry.org
- Oregonians for Food & Shelter ofsonline.org
- Pacific Coast Fruit Company pcfruit.com
- Pear Bureau Northwest – USA Pears usapears.org
- SAGE Center visitsage.com
- Southern Oregon Regional Economic Partnership Inc. soredi.org
- Threemile Canyon Farms LLC threemilecanyonfarms.com
From our Farms to Your Table

At the SAGE Center, you discover where your food begins. From a farm to your table we explore each step. Our mission is hands-on learning and education through our one-of-a-kind exhibits. See Morrow County like you have never seen it before from our simulated hot air balloon ride! Visit us today!

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