Rewards of Ranching

Cattle ranchers care for customers, animals and the environment

FOCUS ON FISHING
Sustainable practices help Oregon’s seafood sector thrive

Oregon Olives
Olive oil offers potential as an Oregon product

Ornamental Origins
Plant breeders introduce new varieties to market
Nutritious Potatoes from Healthy Oregon Soil

Potatoes provide your body potassium, vitamin C, fiber, vitamin B6 and iron. One 5.3 ounce potato provides 18 percent of the daily recommended value of potassium.

What does potassium do for your body?

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

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CONTENTS

20 Field to Consumer
A REWARDING CONNECTION
Local farmers and ranchers feel pride in feeding consumers

4 Ag Profile
OREGON AGRICULTURE
An overview of the state’s food, farming and agribusiness sectors

6 Top Ag Products
WHAT’S GROWING IN OREGON
A glimpse at the state’s leading ag products based on value of production

8 Economic Impact
DRIVING FORCE
Agriculture is an economic powerhouse in Oregon’s rural communities and urban centers

12 New Commodities
OREGON OLIVES
Olive oil offers potential as an Oregon product

16 Seafood
FOCUS ON FISHING
Oregon’s seafood industry thrives thanks to sustainable practices

24 Local Food
FARM-FRESH EATING
Programs teach people how to grow, cook and eat Oregon fruits and vegetables

28 Soil
BELOW THE SURFACE
Soil health is imperative for the success of Oregon agriculture

32 Technology
FARMING OF THE FUTURE
Technology, including robotics, is improving Oregon agriculture

34 Beef
REWARDS OF RANCHING
Cattle ranchers care for customers, animals and the environment

38 Conservation
PROTECTING THE WILDLIFE
Oregon farmers and ranchers support native habitat

40 Pears
THE PERFECT PEAR
Oregon pear producers share the fruit of their labor with consumers across the globe

44 Horticulture
ORNAMENTAL ORIGINS
Plant breeders introduce new varieties to market

47 Consumer Protection
PROTECT AND SERVE
ODA programs protect consumers and their pocketbooks

COVER STORY (page 34)
Erin, Grace and Dan Barnhart operate Barnhart Ranch in Philomath.

Cover photo by Michael D. Tedesco
Responsibly caught
Sustainably managed

WILD OREGON ROCKFISH
"From our local fishermen to your plate."

OREGON TRAWL COMMISSION
541.469.7830
www.ortrawl.org
Welcome to Growing Oregon.

Hello and welcome to the 2018 edition of Growing Oregon magazine! Since the first issue published four years ago, we have devoted time and energy to sharing interesting, colorful stories that connect our readers to the vast world of Oregon agriculture. Due to the state’s varying climates, geography and soils, there are more than 225 agricultural commodities produced statewide. Growing Oregon is meant to give our readers a small glimpse into the industry that contributes more than $6 billion annually to our state’s economy.

Holding true to Oregon’s trailblazing, untamed spirit, agricultural producers continue to experiment with new and exciting products. In this issue, we introduce you to some emerging crops including olives for oil, bitter apples for hard cider and tea plants for flavorful drinking teas. You will also learn how sustainable practices are protecting our ocean, soils and water while also benefiting growers. In addition, we will show you which agricultural products are No. 1 when it comes to value statewide.

The future of Oregon agriculture is full of promise as producers hold steadfast with traditional Oregon commodities, like greenhouse and nursery products, but still dare to experiment with something new. I truly believe we live in a special place when it comes to agriculture. We have so much to be proud of in Oregon. I hope you enjoy this edition of Growing Oregon and join us in promoting an industry that helps protect natural resources, feeds us, clothes us and makes our state one of a kind.

For regular updates on Oregon agriculture, make sure to follow us on Twitter @ORagriculture and Facebook @ORAgriculture!

Sincerely,

Alexis Taylor
Director
Oregon Department of Agriculture
Oregon Agriculture
An overview of the state’s food, farming and agribusiness sectors

Oregon’s beautiful landscape and diverse geography make for a vibrant and thriving agriculture industry. With a $50 billion annual economic impact, Oregon agriculture not only plays a huge role in the state’s economy, but also in the everyday lives of Oregonians providing food and fiber.

The state’s 34,200 farms, spread across 16.3 million acres, grow, raise and harvest top commodities, including nursery products, cattle and calves, hay, potatoes, wheat, pears, hazelnuts and more. The average farm size is 477 acres, and 96.7 percent of farms in the state are family-owned.

Oregon makes an impressive mark nationally as well, ranking first in production for a number of crops, including blackberries, boysenberries, hazelnuts, rhubarb, a variety of grass seeds, Christmas trees, potted florist azaleas and more. In fact, the state provides nearly 100 percent of the U.S. supply of blackberries, boysenberries and hazelnuts.

Almost 80 percent of production leaves the state and 40 percent of Oregon agricultural production leaves the U.S.

Oregon agriculture encompasses farms to food and beverage processing, innovative technology, research and agricultural education.

Oregonians of all ages can learn about the state’s farmers, fishers and ranchers and the importance of their work through several avenues. Visiting a farm, attending a fair, participating in programs such as FFA or 4-H, and going to farmers markets provide opportunities to learn more about the variety of Oregon agriculture.

Thanks to hardworking farmers, fishers, ranchers and many more, Oregon agriculture continues to grow and evolve.

---

34,200
Total Farms

130
Farmers Markets

$50B
Economic Impact

22,772
female farmers in Oregon

13.8% OF OREGON JOBS ARE RELATED TO AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES.

Crops vs. Livestock Production Value
Livestock: 37% $1.9B
Crops: 63% $3.3B

Oregon has more than 220 recognized commodities.

$144.5M
commercial fish landings

Sources: Oregon Farmers Market Association, Oregon Farm Bureau, NASS, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon State University
Award-Winning Beef

Whole Foods Market recognized Oregon-based Country Natural Beef at its sixth annual Supplier Awards, which highlights companies that exemplify the grocer’s values of quality, environmental stewardship, ethical sourcing and culinary innovation. Country Natural Beef is a family-owned co-op producing high-quality products under the Country Natural and Oregon Country brands. The company was recognized in the Service and Partnership category at the awards, and praised for continuing to evolve alongside Whole Foods Market.

Learn more about Country Natural Beef at countrynaturalbeef.com.

Food at Your Fingertips

The Oregon Farm Bureau is giving consumers an easy way to access fresh food – at their fingertips. The Oregon’s Bounty app and website is a searchable directory of nearly 300 farms and ranches that sell food directly to the public. Consumers can search by keyword, such as eggs, honey, berries, etc., or search farms within a specific region. Learn more about the app and search through the farms at oregonfb.org/oregonsbounty.

Learn more about agricultural organizations and events at OR-agriculture.com.

Food Fun

Treat yourself to tasty eats at one of Oregon’s many annual food festivals:

JANUARY
- Oregon Truffle Festival, Newberg

FEBRUARY
- Newport Seafood & Wine Festival, Newport
- Northwest Cherry Festival, The Dalles

MARCH
- Oregon Cheese Festival, Medford

APRIL
- Elephant Garlic Festival, North Plains
- Blackberry Arts Festival, Coos Bay

MAY
- The Little Woody Barrel-Aged Beer, Cider & Whiskey Festival, Medford

JUNE
- Lebanon Strawberry Festival, Lebanon

JULY
- Oregon Brewers Festival, Portland
- Watermelon Festival, Irrigon

AUGUST
- The Little Woody Barrel-Aged Beer, Cider & Whiskey Festival, Bend
- Elephant Garlic Festival, North Plains

SEPTEMBER
- Carlton Crush Harvest Festival, Carlton

OCTOBER
- FEAST, Portland
What’s Growing in Oregon
A glimpse at the state’s leading ag products based on value of production

1. GREENHOUSE AND NURSERY
Greenhouse and nursery products are big business in Oregon, ranking No. 1 in the nation for potted florist azaleas. Oregon is one of the top three nursery production states in the U.S.

$947.7M production value
Ornamental plants and shrubs, shade trees, perennials, and more are part of the nursery industry.

2. CATTLE AND CALVES
While cattle are raised in all 36 counties in Oregon, the most extensive herds are in the southeastern, northeastern and central regions of the state. Common cattle breeds found in Oregon include Angus, Hereford, Limousin, Charolais, Shorthorn and Brahman.

$695.3M production value

3. HAY
In 2017, Oregon farmers harvested more than 1.1 million acres of hay. Most of Oregon’s hay is produced in the southeastern and central regions of the state.

$585.2M 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.
# Oregon Agriculture

## 4. MILK
The state lays claim to 228 licensed dairy farms, and thanks to farmers’ quality care for their cows, Oregon consistently places in the top five states in the nation for milk quality.

**$500.7M PRODUCTION VALUE**

## 5. GRASS SEED
Oregon is the world’s major producer of cool-season forage and turf grass seed. The state is a widely recognized center of seed production expertise.

**$455.2M PRODUCTION VALUE**

## 6. WHEAT
Oregon harvested 763,000 acres of wheat in 2017. More than 85 percent of the crop is exported, and it’s the top product exported through the Port of Portland.

**$238.7M PRODUCTION VALUE**

## 7. POTATOES
Seventy-five percent of Oregon potatoes are made into processed products such as frozen French fries, hash browns, chips, dehydrated flakes and soups. Up to 15 percent of these products are exported to foreign markets including Japan, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, Mexico and South America.

**$176.9M PRODUCTION VALUE**

## 8. PEARS
The pear is Oregon’s official state fruit, and the state ranks second in the nation in pear production. Farmers across Oregon produced more than 225,000 tons of pears in 2017.

**$176.5M PRODUCTION VALUE**

## 9. WINE GRAPES
Oregon is a world-class wine region with more than 700 wineries and more than 1,000 vineyards growing 72 grape varieties. On a national scale, Oregon is the third-largest wine grape-producing state.

**$171.1M PRODUCTION VALUE**

## 10. BLUEBERRIES
More than 20 varieties of blueberries are grown in Oregon, and the state is one of the top blueberry-producing states in the U.S., with its annual blueberry harvest averaging 20,000 pounds per acre.

**$147.7M PRODUCTION VALUE**

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**FIND MORE ONLINE**
Learn more about products grown and raised in Oregon at [OR-agriculture.com](http://OR-agriculture.com).

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**FARM FACT**
Oregon and Washington produce 84 percent of the nation’s fresh pear crop.
Agriculture is an economic powerhouse in Oregon’s rural communities and urban centers.
Oregon’s farmers and ranchers are at the hub of one of the state’s most important economic sectors. A 2015 report by Oregon State University economists linked food and fiber production to $50 billion in Oregon sales and 326,627 full- and part-time jobs.

The value of farming and ranching may be more apparent in rural communities, but the Portland metro area – better known for juggernauts such as Intel, Nike and Oregon Health & Sciences University – has an economic connection to agriculture that extends beyond trendy restaurants.

Seats at the Table
Portland is the primary handler and shipper of the bounty flowing from the state’s farms and ranches. The Port of Portland is among the nation’s leading grain shippers, moving about 4 million tons a year, most of it wheat bound for Asia.

The Port also ships hay, grass
seed and vegetable seed. Planes take perishable products that must be moved more quickly, such as cherries, berries, live seafood and fresh-cut greens. Rail and truck lines move fresh, canned, and frozen vegetables and fruit.

Josh Lehner, an economist with the state Office of Economic Analysis, says food processing jobs also are part of agriculture’s impact in the metro area. Food processing employs more than 28,000 workers statewide and was the only sector of Oregon manufacturing that added jobs during the 2009 recession, Lehner says.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture licenses more than 300 food and beverage processing facilities in Multnomah County alone, many of them small and specialized, creating beverages and packaged products you enjoy from your local grocery store.

Portland is known for its “foodies,” and in addition to being Oregon agriculture’s key consumer, it is the chief brander and marketer. Meeting Portland’s approval gives some farmers a unique market niche.

Many farmers, especially small operations, tap the revenue stream at farmers markets. The Oregon Farmers Markets Association counts about 130 farmers markets in the state, including 19 in the Portland area alone. Market sales total about $50 million annually, according to the Association.

**Agriculture’s Rural Roots**

In Madras, 120 miles away in sunny, dry central Oregon, the connection to agriculture is apparent. The tire store, machine shop, equipment dealers and other retailers know their well-being depends on customers who earn money farming and ranching. Janet Brown, Jefferson County’s economic development manager, says the carrot seed industry alone has an
Food processing employs more than 28,000 workers statewide. It was the only sector of Oregon manufacturing that added jobs during the 2009 recession.

$50B

Food and fiber production provides 326,627 full- and part-time jobs.

Food and fiber production sales in Oregon

The port of Portland moves about 4 million tons per year, with most of it being wheat going to Asia.

THE PORT OF PORTLAND MOVES ABOUT 4 MILLION TONS PER YEAR, WITH MOST OF IT BEING WHEAT GOING TO ASIA.

Food and fiber production provides $50B in economic impact in central Oregon of $30 to $35 million annually.

“If you’re a doctor, you have a farmer as a patient,” Brown says. “If you have a car dealership, a grocery store, any kind of business – you have a farmer as a client.”

Madras Mayor Royce Embanks Jr. puts it plainly. “Basically, we’re an ag town,” he says. “If ag went away, this town would dry up.”

The area’s farmers have filled economic niches since the 1940s, shifting in response to market changes and water availability. Over the years, the area has grown wheat, potatoes, alfalfa, grass seed, and onions and garlic for seed. Even peppermint for tea and the oil that flavors gum, candy and more.

In 1979, six farmers and a former Oregon State University Extension employee, Mike Weber, formed a partnership to grow carrot seed on contract. Today, 35 farmers associated with Central Oregon Seeds Inc. multiply carrot seed varieties for the world’s major vegetable seed companies. The area produces 65 percent of the nation’s carrot seed and 40 percent of the world’s production.

“Companies around the world have put a lot of eggs in the basket of this county,” Weber says.

– Eric Mortenson

FOOD NORTHWEST

1 Would you lick it?
2 Could it ooze out?
3 Where would I hide to survive?

Don’t miss
SANITARY DESIGN education at
Northwest FOOD & Beverage WORLD
January 14-16, 2019
Oregon Convention Center
Portland, Oregon

Food and fiber production sales in Oregon

$50B

Food and fiber production provides 326,627 full- and part-time jobs.

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Portland, Oregon
Oregon Farmers grow crops ranging from the commonplace to the unusual. Wheat and corn grown in Oregon, of course, is similar to what’s grown over much of the world. But the state also grows 99 percent of U.S. hazelnuts and produces two-thirds of America’s cool-weather grass seed and carrot seed. Dozens of other specialty or niche crops fall in between.

Olive Oil – Really

Oregon isn’t the Mediterranean, or even California. To which Paul Durant might justifiably answer, “No kidding.”

“There have been a ton of setbacks on the agronomy side, a huge number,” says Durant, the emergent honcho at his family’s Red Ridge Farms, home to the Oregon Olive Mill and Durant Vineyards.

Durant says he’s replanted olive trees every year for the last ten, experimenting with varieties that can best handle the Willamette Valley’s extended wet, cool periods. He’s pulled trees out of challenging areas, reducing the orchard from about 17 acres to 15. He’s accepted the reality that the orchard doesn’t yet yield enough to produce 100 percent estate olive oil, and he needs to buy olives from other growers. And yet...

“I’m really excited, the orchard has never looked so good,” Durant says. He believes he’s dialed in on applications of micronutrients such as boron, potassium, zinc and calcium. Putting heat-retention fabric around trees at ground level is paying off as well.

“Olive trees eat the heat, they love it,” he says.
Paul Durant operates Red Ridge Farms, home to the Oregon Olive Mill and Durant Vineyards. They produce local olive oil and wine.
Yields improve every year. Oregon Olive Mill was the first to provide olive crushing in Oregon, using an Italian press, and last year Durant crushed olives for eight other growers. The amounts they brought to the mill in Dayton ranged from 300 pounds to 11 tons. Meanwhile, the farm’s on-site and online retail sales of oil and wine diversify the operation, and an olive tree propagation nursery does the same.

Durant, 51, is a mechanical engineer who in 2010 returned, as he’d long planned, to the family farm. He credits his parents, Penny and Ken Durant, with the decision to grow olives and install an oil-pressing mill as part of the farm’s pursuit of a value-added business model. The family believes high-quality olive oil complements their well-regarded wine, but will it work?

Bogdan Caceu, executive director of the Olive Growers of Oregon and owner of La Creole Orchards south of Red Ridge, acknowledges the industry is “miniscule” for now, with less than 100 acres of olives statewide. But he said two groups plan to plant olive orchards of 200 acres or more, using high-density plantings of about 1,000 trees per acre. A second oil mill is in the works, he says.

Compared to California, Oregon orchards produce less fruit per acre and less oil per ton of olives. On the other hand, Oregon’s orchards have trees more than 17 years old now and have shown they can hang tough in the state’s cooler climate. “The trees themselves have made it,” Caceu says.

Better still, “The proof is in the olive oil,” he says. “The quality of oil has been fantastic.”

The demand for high-quality extra-virgin olive oil is strong, Caceu says. Oil makers are dealing with consumers who favor local products and who are “well-informed in the culinary arts and will appreciate the sensory aspect” of olive oil.

Caceu applauds Oregon State University’s decision to research olive tree cultivars. He and other backers believe olive oil could repeat the story of Oregon wine, in which a small group of collaborative hard-chargers turned the state’s wine into a global brand, especially Pinot noir. In that example, Oregon’s pioneer vintners knew they couldn’t compete with California’s quantity, so decided to focus on quality.

The search is on, Caceu says, for a cultivar that is cold hardy, precocious in the amount of fruit and oil it produces, and has exceptional sensory quality.

Caceu believes, “If we check all those boxes, that’s the Pinot noir of olives.”

– Eric Mortenson

---

**CHERRY AND THYME SALAD**

**Ingredients**

- Assortment of dark greens
- 1 cup fresh cherries
- 2 ounces goat Brie
- 2 prosciutto slices
- Sprinkle of almond slivers
- 1 tablespoon thyme, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons Oregon Olive Mill Tuscan EVOO
- 1-2 tablespoons Aperò passion fruit vinegar
- Salt and pepper

**Instructions**

1. Slice pits out of cherries and cut them in half. Crumble pieces of goat Brie. Slice prosciutto pieces.
2. Drizzle most of the olive oil and vinegar onto greens. Sprinkle salt and pepper to taste, and mix greens.
3. Add cherries, goat cheese, prosciutto, almonds and thyme. Drizzle remaining olive oil and vinegar.

*Recipe courtesy of Red Ridge Farms*
A Sip and a Swig

Hard cider and tea join the ranks of Oregon-produced beverages

Fine wines, micro-brewed beer and regional distilleries have popped up in every corner of the state, and hard cider and perry—made from fermented apple and pear juices—are the newest members of the club.

Consumer demand is strong, especially in the Pacific Northwest. Cider drink sales grew 7 percent nationally in the first quarter of 2018, but increased 30 percent in Oregon during that time, says Emily Ritchie, head of the Northwest Cider Association.

Purists believe Northwest cider will improve as more growers plant traditional cider apple trees, including old French and British varieties that produce gnarly, astringent fruit. For now, many cider makers use dessert apples, but more cider apple trees are being planted throughout the state. In Jefferson, south of Salem, former financier Richard Hostetter bought a 60-acre farm and is in the process of transforming it into a high-density cider apple orchard, planted with 1,200 trees per acre. He’ll harvest his first commercial crop from 12 acres in the fall of 2018.

Hostetter believes the Willamette Valley will become a premier cider apple-growing area and welcomes the increased commercial research attention the crop is receiving.

Oregon State University established a research orchard of more than 90 cider apple varieties and is evaluating how they fare in western Oregon conditions.

Tea Time

Oregon growers have a knack for finding and filling economic niches. People involved in the state’s fledgling tea industry hope they can repeat the success of hazelnuts, which grew by about 3,000 acres of new orchard plantings per year over the past decade.

Minto Island Tea Co., part of a diversified vegetable and berry farm near Salem, was the first to grow tea plants—Camellia sinensis. The family-run business started with a half-acre research plot of tea plants in 1988 and, by commercial standards, is minuscule. Owner Elizabeth Miller says she typically produces several hundred pounds of tea per year.

Tea plants are difficult to propagate and slow to produce, Miller says. The farm now has about 8 acres approaching production, but the half-acre plot established by her father and a research partner remains the base of the operation.

The future, however, is intriguing. Tea is a high-value specialty crop that can be profitable on a small scale, Miller says. Minto Island quickly sells its annual harvest. The 2017 production was very small and sold out within hours.

There is “unbelievable interest and passion” for tea, which she says is the most widely consumed beverage in the world. Miller eventually wants to open a traditional teahouse on the property. Meanwhile, Japanese tea farmers have come walking up the farm’s driveway unannounced, eager to see the small Oregon operation they’ve heard about.

“There’s a huge demand,” Miller says. “We’re nowhere close to even meeting it.”

– Eric Mortenson
For decades, Oregon fishermen have been capturing the delicious and diverse bounty of the vast Pacific Ocean. In 2017 alone, commercial onshore harvests were valued at $144.5 million, and port landings totaled 302.5 million pounds of fish. Today’s fishermen are dedicated to taking care of the ocean that has fed and provided for their families for generations.

A Swimming Industry

Mike Retherford is a second-generation fisherman out of Newport, focusing primarily on shrimp, crab and groundfish (e.g., rockfish, Petrale sole, Dover sole). Retherford began fishing with his dad in 1999, and as he learned more about the industry, he and his brother branched out and bought their own boats. “It’s been an amazing journey,” he says.

Retherford says a lot has changed in terms of sustainability of Oregon seafood and the ocean since the days of fishing with his father. One example is the change to management of fisheries. Rockfish Conservation Areas, or RCAs, came into effect, leading to a shutdown of specific ocean real estate to allow fish stocks to rebuild. “That is a sustainable management tool,” Retherford says.
“As we’ve lived and learned in this era of sustainability and proper management for our fisheries, the fishing practices have gotten better and better.”

Retherford says bycatch reduction is an effort to prevent the capture of nontarget fish. As one of the biggest threats to the ocean, it can cause dramatic decline in fish populations. The learning process has continued to make the seafood and fishing industry better for future generations.

“In the last 20 years, everyone has worked really well together to make our fisheries not only sustainable, but better so we have a future — so we have fish for the next 200 years,” he says.

Brad Pettinger, former director of the Oregon Trawl Commission, adds that Oregon has been a driving force in seafood sustainability. In the past decade, Oregon trawl fisheries became certified to the standards set by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), an international, nonprofit organization that aims to keep oceans teeming with life for the future. The MSC looks at three core principles: stock health, effects of the fishery on the ecosystem and fisheries management.

“The certification changed the way people looked at us,” Pettinger says. “We’ve been held as an example for the rest of the country and have gotten a lot of support.”

He adds that communicating those sustainability efforts to the public plays a major role in consumer trust.

“It assures folks that the ocean is a good resource. People need to be aware of that and trust what you’re doing. It’s just good policy,” Pettinger says.

Pettinger also won the Champion of Change award in 2016 from the White House for his sustainability efforts that were instrumental to the recovery of many rockfish species.

“It was an acknowledgement
that we did the right thing, and the award was a nice kudos,” Pettinger says. “There were a lot of people involved and it was pretty cool.”

**Good for the Ocean, Good for You**

Tyson Yeck has been involved in Oregon’s industry as a Trawl commissioner and has a strong focus on sustainability.

“Sustainability has been an integral part of our industry culture since the beginning,” Yeck says. “We recognized early on that we need to protect and preserve our resources to ensure their availability for future generations. We focus on sustainable harvest and catch methods in addition to making the best decision to expand beyond wild-caught species to include sustainable farming in aquaculture.”

Yeck adds that the relatively new nonprofit trade association, Positively Groundfish, is helping tremendously to advocate for consumer appreciation and long-term economic success of Oregon seafood.

“In 2017, there were 963 different vessels making a total of 27,365 landings to Oregon ports.

“IT helps producers by generating demand for groundfish, and in turn, jobs in Oregon,” Yeck says. “For consumers, it brings an abundant, healthy, tasty and affordable protein to their plates.”

**The Water Is Fine**

Retherford, Pettinger and Yeck all agree that the Oregon seafood industry is only poised for more growth, especially with the continuous adoption of sustainable practices.

“I believe we’re in a good place,” Retherford says. “I believe our oceans are really healthy and the future of our fisheries looks very bright.”

— Rachel Bertone

Second-generation fisherman Mike Retherford works on his groundfish boat.
SPICY OREGON ROCKFISH TACOS WITH FRESH CILANTRO LIME SALSA

Ingredients

- 1 cup sour cream
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Tabasco to taste
- 2 8-ounce rockfish fillets with any bones removed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup flour
- ⅔ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 flour tortillas
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 cup cabbage, shredded
- Cilantro Lime Salsa (Recipe follows)

Instructions

1. Season the sour cream with 1 teaspoon each of the cayenne, cumin and garlic powder. Add Tabasco to taste and set aside in the refrigerator.
2. Season rockfish fillets with the remaining 1 teaspoon each of the cayenne, cumin and garlic powder. Dredge the fillets in flour, shaking off any excess.
3. Panfry the floured rockfish over medium-high heat in the olive oil for 3 to 4 minutes on each side, or until golden brown. Remove from pan and let drain on paper towels.
4. When cool, flake apart and set aside.
5. Lay the tortillas out on a sheet pan and sprinkle some cheese over them. Place in a 350-degree oven until the cheese has melted.
6. Flake the fish fillets evenly between each of the tortillas and add the seasoned sour cream, shredded cabbage and some Cilantro Lime Salsa. Fold over and serve hot.

Recipe courtesy of Oregon Trawl Commission

CILANTRO LIME SALSA

Ingredients

- 1 cup black beans
- 1 roma tomato, chopped
- ½ onion, chopped
- ½ green bell pepper, chopped
- ½ red bell pepper, chopped
- ½ cup cilantro, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh garlic, chopped
- 1 jalapeño pepper, chopped
- 1 avocado, chopped
- ⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup lime juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

Mix all the ingredients together and refrigerate until use.

Recipe courtesy of Oregon Trawl Commission
Rod Liepold of Liepold Farms in Boring grows fresh berries for Burgerville restaurants. The chain uses them in tasty treats such as its raspberry lemonade sundae.
Most Oregon farmers have only a general sense of who consumes the food they grow. There’s nothing wrong with that, of course. Wheat farmers know the tons of grain they ship to Japan, Taiwan or the Philippines are made into noodles, crackers, cakes and more, and there’s satisfaction in that. “Feed the world,” a wheat combine operator in eastern Oregon says as a mound of wheat swelled in the hopper behind the driver’s seat.

Growers who sell to distribution and processing co-ops may not know exactly who buys the frozen vegetables or canned fruit made from their labor, but they see the brand labels on store shelves or in a shopper’s grocery cart.

Personal Ties

Other farmers have a more personal connection. For Marcia and Rod Liepold, owners of Liepold Farms in Boring, Oregon, it comes when passing a Burgerville restaurant. The Pacific Northwest chain, based in Vancouver, Washington, made a corporate decision to brand and market itself as a fast food outlet that features local ingredients. In season, the company trumpets its locally sourced onion rings, fries, grass-fed beef hamburgers, blue cheese in salads, and hazelnut shakes.

In a partnership that began 15 years ago, Burgerville buys strawberries, raspberries and blackberries from Liepold Farms. The berries flavor the restaurant’s milkshakes and other treats.

Beginning with strawberries in late May or early June, Liepold Farms workers pick berries and...
load them on trucks for rapid delivery to Burgerville outlets. “They need it fresh,” Marcia Liepold says.

The Liepolds also sell at farmers markets and to processors, but the Burgerville connection is a critical piece of their business.

Both sides benefit. Burgerville is assured of high-quality local products – a selling point with many customers – while producers including Liepold Farms are assured of a stable market and price. The restaurant readerboards announce the arrival of berry season, and the restaurants even featured a poster of Marcia Liepold. It got to the point that strangers would approach, ask if they’d met before, then recognize her as “the berry lady.”

Knowing that people inside are eating her family’s berries is an honor, and a responsibility, that hits her when she passes a Burgerville restaurant.

Field to Fork

Connecting with consumers who want to know where their food comes from is a key development of the “foodie” movement. As a result, many Oregon restaurants, grocery stores and even some cafeterias identify and share the stories of their growers.

New Seasons Market, a high-end Portland grocery chain, tells customers that it buys Hood strawberries – a heritage variety in Oregon – from Unger Farms west of Portland and pork from Rieben Farms, one of the few surviving hog farms in the Portland area.

From northeast Oregon, rancher Cory Carman and collaborators provide grass-fed beef to a collection of markets and restaurants that in turn note the connection on websites, advertising and menus. Carman also sells beef to the food services department at Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, a teaching hospital, which serves it to patients, students and staff.

Carman gains satisfaction from providing beef that tastes good and is raised in a sustainable way.

“I think when we put so much work, energy and passion into the product we are producing, to hear back from people who are experiencing that product is rewarding,” Carman says.

– Eric Mortenson

PHOTOS: MICHAEL D. TEDESCO/FFM STAFF; BURGERVILLE

The Liepold family has five generations working together to produce local fruit for the Burgerville restaurant chain as well as farmers markets and other processors.
Ingredients
1 cup all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
1 stick unsalted butter
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, divided
3 eggs, divided
2 teaspoons vanilla, divided
8 ounces cream cheese, softened
1 cup thawed frozen raspberries

Instructions
1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-inch square baking pan and line with parchment.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour and salt. In a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, melt chocolate with butter, stirring frequently. Remove from the heat and whisk in ¾ cup sugar. Whisk in 2 eggs, one at a time, and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Fold flour into chocolate mixture until combined and pour into baking pan. Set aside.
3. In a medium bowl, beat cream cheese, ¼ cup sugar, 1 egg, and 1 teaspoon vanilla until smooth. Spread over brownie batter in the pan.
4. In a food processor, pulse raspberries and 2 tablespoons sugar until smooth. Strain to remove seeds. Spoon the raspberry sauce onto the cheesecake layer in uneven dollops and use a skewer to swirl the berry puree into the cheesecake layer.
5. Bake for 45 minutes or until set. Cool completely before slicing.
Living in a land of plenty, Oregonians have access to some of the freshest and most delicious foods in the nation. To help consumers take advantage of those foods, several organizations within the state are providing not only access, but education as well, showing people how to cook and enjoy fresh Oregon products.

**Zenger Farm**

Zenger Farm is a 24-acre nonprofit farm and wetland in Portland helping consumers create a direct connection with their food. The farm grows more than 150 varieties of vegetables, with new ones each year. “Since 1999, Zenger Farm has been teaching people where good, healthy food comes from, how it’s grown and the importance of eating it every day,” says Maya Edelstein, development and communications manager for Zenger Farm. “Our goal is to be a place where communities come together to find access to nourishing food, connect with resources, participate in food and farming education, and teach, learn, and share.”

One of the most successful ways the farm puts that mission into action is through its CSA program, or Community Supported Agriculture. Founded in 2011, the CSA program provides access to fresh, organic vegetables, which can be paid for with SNAP benefits. Each subscriber to the farm’s CSA receives a share of seasonal vegetables that were grown on the farm and harvested that day.

Bryan Allan, a farmer at Zenger, says in 2015, the farm partnered with Multnomah County Health Department’s Mid County Health Center, about 2 miles away, to create CSA Partnerships for Health. The program offers a solution to prevent and manage chronic diseases with fresh, healthy foods. In 2018, Zenger Farm will provide 22 weeks of vegetables to over 150 families.

The farm also knows that providing the food is just the beginning – consumers need to know what to do with it, too.

“We really concentrate on cooking skills, so members can cook what they have on hand,” Allan says. “We created a CSA Skills Sheet on how to store vegetables, how to stir fry, make quick pickles, grill vegetables and so on.”

He adds that the farm offers a range of programs along with its CSA about where food grows and how to cook it.

**Food Hero**

Oregon State University’s Lauren Tobey wants all Oregonians to have easy access to fresh food and resources on food preparation. As the statewide coordinator for Food Hero, a social marketing campaign funded by Oregon SNAP-Ed, Tobey works with her team to increase fruit and vegetable consumption – with an ultimate goal of helping to decrease obesity. An important component of the campaign is the Food Hero website, which provides tasty, quick and low-cost recipes featuring healthy...
Rootopia

Michelle Ratcliffe, Ph.D., of Rootopia is also on a mission to make healthy eating easy for kids. Dr. Ratcliffe has worked on farms, big and small, for more than 20 years, and researched ways to make it easier for food to get from field to table and advocated for policies to do just that. In creating Rootopia, a website filled with recipes, activities, blogs and more centered on healthy eating, Dr. Ratcliffe combines education and entertainment to change the story of how we eat, grow and cook together.

“Through Rootopia, we promote all Oregon producers and processors,” Dr. Ratcliffe says. “It’s less about ‘fresh’ and ‘distance’ and more about an authentic relationship with knowing the people and place that brings you your food and fiber.”

Visitors to the site, rootopia.com, can find tips on how to engage kids in choosing healthy foods (“Reach for a Rainbow”), helping in the garden and cooking together.

– Rachel Bertone
Along with producing high-quality food products and gaining recognition as a leader in sustainable agricultural practices over the past decade, Threemile Canyon Farms is making a mark on the Boardman community that will serve residents for years to come.

**Threemile Canyon Farms Gives Back**

Threemile Canyon Farms, home to one of the largest dairy operations in the U.S., has been a fixture in Boardman since 1999, and has grown to employ 300 year-round workers as well as 400 seasonal and part-time employees. As a result, it’s easy to see that the company is firmly rooted in the community – and is committed to finding ways to enhance and improve the lives of those in it.

For instance, Threemile Canyon Farms was instrumental in funding the creation of a new medical clinic in Boardman, which has enabled the community to receive care close to home, and the company helped make the SAGE (Sustainable Agriculture and Energy) Center a reality. The SAGE Center, an interactive and educational visitor center, features hands-on exhibits that showcase the sophisticated technologies used by growers and the related industries at the Port of Morrow, and it’s become a must-visit spot – as well as an economic driver and a source of agricultural promotion – that draws thousands of visitors to Boardman each year.

Threemile Canyon Farms also supports local schools and youth organizations, including area FFA and 4-H groups, and it donates more than 8,000 pounds of ground
beef to the Oregon Food Bank each month. Additionally, Threemile Canyon Farms has worked with other companies to finance a long-awaited housing project that will ultimately result in 240 new apartment units in Boardman.

Leaders Encourage Employees to Volunteer, Get Involved

Not only does Threemile Canyon Farms serve the Boardman community as a company, but it also supports employees in their individual philanthropic efforts.

One way the farm bolsters its employees’ volunteer work is through its Community Builder program, which gives employees the opportunity to submit applications for organizations they believe in, and the recipients receive grants to fund projects that will benefit the community.

A recent award winner was the Boardman Rural Fire Protection District, nominated by Threemile Canyon Farms employee and volunteer firefighter Tammy Sheppard. The fire district received a sizeable grant from Threemile Canyon Farms to purchase a lightweight quick response unit, allowing them to more effectively serve the thousands of citizens who depend on them.

Threemile Canyon Farms is also heavily involved with the American Red Cross, and hosts on-site blood drives quarterly that make it convenient for employees to donate blood on a regular basis.

“Our leadership team strongly believes in giving back and doing the right thing, so it’s a philosophy that starts at the very top and permeates the entire company in a big way.”

Anne Struthers, director of communications for Threemile Canyon Farms

“If you have a healthy community, your employees benefit from it, and it’s important to take care of them,” says Anne Struthers, director of communications for Threemile Canyon Farms. “Plus, our leadership team strongly believes in giving back and doing the right thing, so it’s a philosophy that starts at the very top and permeates the entire company in a big way.”

– Jessica Walker Boehm
Soil health is imperative for the success of Oregon agriculture
A Fresh Look at Old Practices

At Square Peg Farm near Forest Grove, Chris Roehm and his wife, Amy Benson, raise certified organic lettuce, peas, spinach, tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, onions and squash. They also raise a few hogs, but are transitioning to beef cattle.

Roehm worked as an engineer before deciding in 2003 to make a go of the 40-acre family farm. He and his wife follow three primary practices to ensure soil health: cover cropping, rotational grazing by the hogs and cattle, and rotational vegetable plantings.

“The main reason I’m concerned about soil health is because it makes it a lot easier to grow good vegetables,” Roehm says. “With healthy soil, you have less compaction, less insect pressure, less weed pressure and better tasting vegetables.”

The couple typically grows annual vegetables on a 5-acre section of the property for three years, then plants it with cover crops. The former veggie area becomes grazing land for the hogs or cattle for four or five years, while another 5-acre parcel hosts the vegetable production.

Roehm says the method works well and he is “definitely sold on it.” “It’s definitely not something we invented,” he says. “To a large extent it’s an old-school approach.”

Many Oregon farms have been using these fundamental techniques for generations. Oregon produces many of the cover crop seeds that are used across the country.

“I do think once you start doing practices like this with an eye to improving soil health, it leads you down the road of pursuing that goal more completely,” Roehm says.

Managing for Healthy Soils

“We don’t call it dirt, that’s a soil scientist joke,” says Cory Owens, a USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employee in Portland.

The NRCS was born in the aftermath of the drought and erosion of the Dust Bowl in the 1930s. Since then, NRCS has worked with farmers, ranchers and other landowners on conservation projects. In 2012 and 2013, the NRCS launched a national soil health effort, Owens says.

With it came growing recognition of soil’s role in life itself. Soil cleans water and cycles nutrients. As an “engineering medium,” it holds up houses and provides a place for plants to grow, Owens notes.

In Oregon, soil classifications are also a primary factor in land-use decisions and preventing urban sprawl. In general, state law steers commercial and residential development away from prime farm and forest land.

Oregon’s soil is particularly diverse, with ten of the world’s 12 soil “orders” found here. “We run the gamut of coastal to glacier soils within three hours (travel time) of each other,” Owens says.

The official Oregon state soil, Jory, is the red dirt in the Willamette Valley foothills that supports the state’s vineyards, Christmas tree farms and more.

Owens says current perspectives and management practices align with two primary goals: feed and protect the soil.

To feed the soil, remember “diversity above for diversity below,” she says, and “keep a living root year round.” Soil is a living organism, she says, and needs “robust and diverse” vegetation present to stay healthy.

To protect the soil, keep it covered and minimize disturbance, she adds. Cover crops are good for the first, while such things as the amount of livestock grazing and “mindful tillage” take care of the second.

“Soil is an ecosystem in its own right,” Owens says. “Treat it as an ecosystem. As a land manager, you are in control of that structure.”

– Eric Mortenson
Oregon State Grange

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In Oregon for 145 years and active in 168 communities.

orgrange.org
# HEALTH IS WEALTH

**DISCOVER THE MANY NUTRIENTS AVAILABLE IN FRUITS, VEGETABLES AND MORE GROWN IN OREGON**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLES</th>
<th>ASPARAGUS</th>
<th>BLACKBERRIES</th>
<th>BLUEBERRIES</th>
<th>BROCCOLI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples contain vitamin C, potassium and other nutrients. They’re best eaten with their peel since that’s how to get the maximum amount of nutrients.</td>
<td>Asparagus is a good source of vitamin K, which is important for healthy blood and strong bones, and vitamin A, promoting good eyesight.</td>
<td>Blackberries are high in vitamin C and other antioxidants that may protect cells in your body.</td>
<td>A serving of blueberries is an excellent source of vitamin C, which promotes a healthy immune system. Blueberries are also full of vitamin K, promoting healthy blood.</td>
<td>Broccoli is a good source of folate, which may reduce a woman’s risk of having a child with a brain or spinal cord defect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARROTS</th>
<th>CAULIFLOWER</th>
<th>CHERRIES</th>
<th>CORN</th>
<th>CRANBERRIES</th>
<th>MUSHROOMS</th>
<th>ONIONS</th>
<th>PEARS</th>
<th>PEPPERS</th>
<th>POTATOES</th>
<th>SPINACH</th>
<th>STRAWBERRIES</th>
<th>STRING BEANS</th>
<th>WATERMELON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrots are a good source of vitamin C and potassium, and are rich in beta carotene, which is important for maintaining healthy skin and eyesight.</td>
<td>One serving of cauliflower provides a good source of vitamin K, which is important for maintaining healthy blood. It’s also rich in vitamin C and folate.</td>
<td>Cherries contain vitamin C, fiber and anthocyanins, which may offer anti-inflammatory, antiviral and anticancer benefits.</td>
<td>Corn is a good source of thiamin (vitamin B1), which helps keep the body’s nerves healthy. One ear of corn also provides a good source of dietary fiber.</td>
<td>Cranberries provide an excellent source of vitamin C, aiding in a healthy immune system. Cranberries also contain dietary fiber and antioxidants.</td>
<td>Mushrooms are an excellent source of riboflavin, a B vitamin that helps release energy from our food, and they provide a significant amount of potassium.</td>
<td>Onions contain quercetin, an antioxidant that may help prevent heart disease and cancer, and they are an excellent source of immune-supportive vitamin C.</td>
<td>Pears are a source of vitamin C, which promotes a healthy immune system, heals cuts and wounds, and helps our bodies fight infection.</td>
<td>Green bell peppers are an excellent source of vitamin C, containing twice as much as an orange, while red bell peppers are a great source of vitamins A and B6.</td>
<td>Potatoes are a good source of vitamin B6, which helps the body turn food into energy, and they’re a great source of both potassium and vitamin C.</td>
<td>A half-cup of cooked spinach is a good source of vitamin B6, riboflavin, calcium, iron and potassium. In addition, spinach is an excellent source of folate.</td>
<td>Strawberries are packed with antioxidants, most notably anthocyanin, and they are an excellent source of vitamin C.</td>
<td>One cup of string beans delivers 30 percent of one’s daily requirement of vitamin C. String beans are also a good source of potassium, which helps organ function.</td>
<td>Watermelon is an excellent source of vitamins A, C and B6, all good for your immune system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legions of teenagers may never forgive them, but the student robotics team at Crescent Valley High School in Corvallis, Oregon, is on track to make us eat our vegetables.

The robotics team is assembling its sixth iteration of an automated broccoli harvester. The battery-powered “Broccolibot” straddles the row as it travels, and an onboard camera detects and measures the height of broccoli heads. It sends that information to a spinning blade mounted on a gantry, which moves the blade up or down as needed to make a precise cut every half-second.

The work is important because broccoli is a valuable rotation crop for Oregon farmers, but it is labor intensive.

The high school team’s work brings smart technology to automated equipment. The robotics team first added its vision technology system to a mechanical harvester developed by farmer Ron Pearmine. The farmer’s machine works by simply mowing down the broccoli row at a set height, which produces excess stems and leaves that must be separated. Also, the blade may miss heads growing lower on the plant. The vision technology holds promise of making the harvester more precise and reducing the amount of human labor.

The Broccolibot represents what some believe is an evolving merger of agriculture and technology. Agriculture welcomes technological solutions, says Jeff Lorton, an advertising agency owner who organized a 2017 FutureFarm Expo in Pendleton, Oregon.

At the FutureFarm Expo last year, panelists described a future in which drones monitor fields, look for problems and dispatch other equipment.

Young Kim, a former U.S. Air Force captain and CEO of Digital Harvest, is using the Pendleton Airport’s Unmanned Aerial Systems Range and a local vineyard to develop the Remote Operated Vineyard Robot, or ROVR. The concept is a robotic vehicle with mounted tools and cameras that moves through a vineyard. Remote workers could pick, prune and move vine wires while wearing a virtual reality helmet and gloves.

Lorton says the blending of ag and technology has “reached the point of no return.”

An Educational Disconnect

Lorton and others celebrate education’s increased emphasis on STEM classes, or instruction in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. But Lorton says schools, industry and government could do more to point students to the fields that feed us.

“We don’t have anyone teaching high school students about the opportunity to work in ag, in technology,” he says.

The adults guiding the Broccolibot team make the same point.

“Building robots is amazing, but there are problems in our own backyard they can solve,” says Peter Mes, a plant breeder. With two sons on the team, Peter is a committed mentor for Crescent Valley High’s robotics team.

The high school team was assembling its latest version of the broccoli-harvesting robot this summer. The goal is to create a commercially viable prototype that a private company could take over, adapt and build. Sponsors of the project include the Oregon Department of Agriculture, the Oregon Processed Vegetable Commission, Oregon State University, GK Machine, NORPAC, RJH Enterprises and HyTEK Plastics.

— Eric Mortenson
A path to success for younger people means prosperity for the whole community. In the fall of 2011, a group of business professionals gathered to discuss the past and future of Malheur County, and they realized that the community was lacking in both business opportunities and Career Technical Education training.

As a result, the local economy was suffering, and in an effort to facilitate economic recovery, that core group of professionals launched a grassroots movement called Malheur County: From Poverty to Prosperity. Out of that initiative came the creation of the P2P Career Technical Education project, which provides training designed to foster 21st-century career skills and expand access to jobs for at-risk, underserved and underrepresented students.

“We need trained people for all of our industries, including the agriculture sector,” says Dirk DeBoer, who operates DeBoer Farms in Nyssa and co-founded the group.

“Vocational training is important, and it can show young people the many workforce opportunities available to them in the future whether or not they choose to attend college,” he says. “Plus, our schools need to do their part to make sure students are hirable. Graduates need the skills that are in demand locally.”

The P2P Career Technical Education project is designed to prepare Malheur County youth to find local jobs while attracting new industry and employment opportunities to the community. It began in the fall of 2013 with a pilot welding/fabrication program at Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC) that included 20 juniors and seniors from local high schools.

In 2014, the project introduced an allied health professionals track, and more recently, an associate of applied science in automation and control systems/renewable energy technologies program opportunity was added, which prepares students to work in automated electro-mechanical, product assembly, process control, product distribution or solar thermal and photovoltaic industries.

According to DeBoer, students must earn good grades and maintain strong attendance in order to keep their spots in the program.

In the future, DeBoer hopes Malheur County will have a standalone career and technical education building, which would enable more students to be part of the project, and he says he would like to see more training opportunities for those interested in careers in production agriculture.

“Most European countries have vocational schools, and in the U.S., many people have forgotten how important vocational training is,” DeBoer says.

– Jessica Walker Boehm

Students have access to training that may help them land ag jobs and find local employment.
Oregon’s natural beef industry is truly a grassroots operation. The official parameters for “natural beef” includes beef raised without antibiotics, hormones or animal byproducts. But to Oregon natural beef producers, the term means much more.

Painted Hills Natural Beef

For Painted Hills Natural Beef founder Mehrten Homer and his son Will, producing natural beef is all about family. Painted Hills began in Wheeler County with seven ranching family owners who wanted to use gentle husbandry practices to produce antibiotic- and hormone-free beef.

“Without the hormones and antibiotics, the animal grows slower,” says Will Homer, who serves as COO. “The product that comes from that process tastes better, and it’s just a better experience. When a customer finds a product that gives them a good experience, they recognize it and want to duplicate that.”

Consumers have been fiercely loyal to the Painted Hills Natural Beef brand. The company began in 1996 and has experienced sustained growth since. Last year, the company processed more than 26,000 head of cattle.

“Demand for natural beef has been solid and continues to grow,” Will says. “Our company is 20 years old and we’ve been in most of our stores nearly that long. It’s all about consistency and knowing what you’re buying. That’s been an amazing place to be.”

That demand has created a need for more cattle, and today, Painted Hills partners with over 100 different cow-calf ranchers.

“In the natural beef circle, we do a lot of extra steps on our ranches. When we learn our customers really do care about these things, it gives us motivation to keep making that extra effort.”

Dan Barnhart, rancher

BEEF

PHOTO: MICHAEL D. TEDESCO/FFM STAFF

Rewards of RANCHING

Cattle ranchers care for customers, animals and the environment
Dan Barnhart, a rancher in Philomath, joined the Country Natural Beef Co-op in 2001 to have a better relationship with consumers.
The independent cattle feeders are disappearing, shrinking the market opportunities for the calf producer. Giving those smaller producers a market for their cattle is a huge benefit we create.”

**Country Natural Beef**

Country Natural Beef, also sold under the label Oregon Country Beef, began in 1986 as a small co-op of ranchers who wanted to market hormone- and antibiotic-free beef directly to local customers. Now, the co-op includes more than 80 family-owned ranches in 10 states. Dan Barnhart, a rancher in Philomath, joined the Country Natural Beef co-op in 2001. “I joined because I liked the concept of being able to interact with, and actually have a relationship with, the end consumer,” Barnhart says. Getting ranchers connected face-to-face with consumers is a key part of Country Natural’s marketing strategy. Each rancher spends two days a year at one of Country Natural’s partner stores. “Shoppers at these natural grocery stores want to know more about where their food comes from,” Barnhart says. “Spending time in the stores allows shoppers to get to know us.”

Country Natural is intentional about listening to its customers. In addition to avoiding beef raised using hormones or antibiotics, Country Natural’s customers are passionate about animal handling practices and environmental stewardship. As it learned what its customers wanted, Country Natural became Global Animal Partnership (GAP) certified. GAP encourages a focus on health and productivity, natural living and emotional well-being for animals. “Interacting with customers really resonated with me,” Barnhart says. “Most of our ranchers have a similar feeling. In the natural beef circle, we do a lot of extra steps on our ranches. When we learn our customers really do care about these things, it gives us motivation to keep making that extra effort.” — Jill Clair Gentry
BLT BURGER WITH SWEET ONION MAYONNAISE

Ingredients
1 pound ground beef
6 slices bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled
1 teaspoon sea salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
⅓ cup sweet onion, finely chopped
⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
4 whole-wheat or sourdough burger buns, toasted
4 tomato slices
4 crunchy iceberg lettuce leaves

Instructions
1. Combine the ground beef, bacon, salt and pepper. Form into 4 large patties. Grill to desired doneness.
2. Meanwhile, prepare sweet onion mayonnaise by mixing together mayo, onion and cayenne pepper.
3. Place burgers on the buns, and garnish with tomato, lettuce and a dollop of mayonnaise.
Oregon farmers are a diverse bunch, growing 220 crops using different methods, and Alana Kenagy describes her family’s operation as an “unconventional conventional farm.” Kenagy Family Farm near Albany in the Willamette Valley includes 450 acres, but crop production takes place on about 325 acres. The family chooses not to farm more than 100 acres, leaving it instead as riparian habitat along the Willamette River or set aside for native plants. They leave seasonal waterways and wetlands to their own devices.

On much of their farm, the Kenagys grow sweet corn and beans on contract to a vegetable processing co-op, but they also raise a variety of seed, legumes, buckwheat, oats, asparagus and native plant seed for the restoration market.

They encourage and restore native plants and wildlife habitat, providing food and shelter for birds and beneficial insects such as pollinators. Alana Kenagy and her brother, Darrell, have joined their parents, Peter and Tina Kenagy, in operating a farm that supports them and is also sustainable.

Alana Kenagy explains their goal, “To steward a sizable chunk of land so that it is both an ecologically regenerative habitat and a financially sustainable farm.”

Sustainability a Pillar for Oregon Producers

The Kenagys aren’t alone. A tremendous number of Oregon farmers and ranchers consider themselves the first line of defense against environmental degradation. They take pride in providing for diverse landscapes and work to make their agricultural operations compatible with wildlife, habitat and streams.

Southeastern Oregon comprises 13 percent of the Priority Area of Conservation for Greater Sage Grouse – an anchor for the 11 western states that provide sage grouse habitat. In fact, ranchers across eight Southeast Oregon counties have committed to science-based conservation agreements to protect 1.4 million acres of private land to care for the habitat of the Greater Sage Grouse and other wildlife species.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service considered putting the Greater Sage Grouse on the endangered species list. A potential listing was worrisome to many in the 11 western states where the bird lives. Rural residents in particular anticipated complicated new regulations or restrictions. While sage grouse range includes vast acreage of public Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service land, they also nest on private land used for livestock grazing, hunting, recreation and more.
Oregon cattle ranchers found a unique collaborative solution with the federal Fish and Wildlife Service. In 2010, the agency began working with county Soil and Water Conservation Districts to develop habitat conservation agreements on private land.

Harney County Soil and Water Conservation District, in the southeast corner of the state, became the model for the West. Oregon landowners voluntarily agreed to conservation measures to reduce the loss and fragmentation of sagebrush.

In 2015, citing the unparalleled conservation efforts and agreements as a major factor, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced the bird would not be listed as threatened or endangered.

**Looking for Solutions**

Wildlife doesn’t recognize the lines between private, state and federal lands. Collaboration is a key tool in conservation efforts.

The USDA’s Natural Resource and Conservation Service works with Oregon landowners to protect habitat essential to migrating pintail ducks, mule deer, Fender’s blue butterflies and Columbia white-tailed deer.

In some cases, farmers create conservation easements by working with government agencies or nonprofit land trusts. Easements allow farmers to continue owning and farming their land but may limit development. The end result is permanent protection of land that has key habitat for wildlife.

**Making the Commitment**

The Kenagys use conventional methods in some aspects of farming, such as controlling weeds with mechanized cultivation in addition to pulling weeds by hand. Decisions to keep some land out of agricultural production are made on a “site-specific and site-appropriate” basis, Alana Kenagy says.

For example, the family might decide not to plant a tight corner of a field where it is difficult to turn a tractor. The use of efficient center-pivot irrigation systems essentially turns some fields into circles, with the remainder available for use as native habitat.

“Those areas become productive in a different way,” Kenagy says. “Ecologically productive rather than economically.”

The commitment to habitat conservation and collaboration crosses many sectors of agriculture. As Harney County cattle rancher Tom Sharp memorably put it, “What’s good for the bird is good for the herd.”

– Eric Mortenson
Next time you bite into a sweet, juicy pear, keep in mind there’s an excellent chance it was grown right here in Oregon. The state of Oregon ranks second in the nation for pear production after Washington, producing about 35 percent of all fresh pears sold in the United States.

Thanks to its role as Oregon’s largest fruit crop (and the eighth-largest crop overall in the state), the pear was named Oregon’s state fruit in 2005. Around 200 Oregon family orchards grow pears, together producing about 474 million pounds of pears annually.

“Pears thrive in our mountains and valleys, where there are long hot days and cool nights. The ash soil from our volcanoes is also excellent for drainage and pear trees,” says Kathy Stephenson, Pear Bureau Northwest marketing director. “Oregon communities work together to create long-term success. Medford and Hood River have been a mecca for pear trees since the mid- to late-1800s. Agriculture has deep roots and a rich history in these communities. Growers, workers, packers, shippers and families share a bond that is essential because it supports the entire pear production process.”

**Pine Grove Orchards**

Ten varieties of pears are grown in Oregon, the largest volume being Green Anjou, followed by Bartlett, Bosc and Red Anjou. At Pine Grove Orchards in Hood River, the Green Anjou – also known by its French name “d’Anjou” – is king.

“Between 50 and 60 percent of pears grown in Hood River are Green d’Anjou,” says Ken Newman, co-owner of Pine Grove Orchards LLC. “The Green d’Anjou is world-famous for being grown in Hood River.”

Newman and his wife, Kelli, dreamed of living the country life and traded their Portland city life for Hood River in 2003. They wanted a few acres with chickens and a garden.
PEAR PIZZA

Ingredients
1 prepared pizza dough crust (such as Boboli)
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 ounces grated fresh Parmesan cheese
3 ounces prosciutto, chopped
1 Red Anjou USA Pear, cored and thinly sliced

Instructions
1. Heat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Place pizza crust on baking sheet. Spread olive oil and garlic over the pizza crust. Top with cheese, prosciutto and pear slices. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until cheese is melted and bubbly. Slice and serve.

Recipe courtesy of USAPEARS.org
taken to ensure excellent quality.

“After sorting, they make their way to a pear sizer that drops pears by weight into different tubs to be packaged,” Laura says. “Pear packers then either wrap pears in paper or put pears in trays or bags. The final package makes its way down a conveyor to be marked with variety, orchard harvested from, date packed and more. The packages of pears are put on pallets and stored in refrigeration until they are ordered by a store. A truck delivers them to a supermarket.”

Oregon’s pear crop is primarily sold fresh in grocery stores, providing the highest return for growers.

“However, about 20 percent of the crop is moved to the canning and juicing industry in the Northwest, where a healthy market helps improve grower profits,” Stephenson says.

— Jessica Mozo

DID YOU KNOW?
Pears are one of few fruits that do not ripen well on the tree. The pear is harvested when it is mature, but not yet ripe. To ripen pears, store them at room temperature in a fruit bowl or brown paper bag to speed ripening. Test if they are ready to eat by pressing your thumb into the neck, near the stem. If the flesh is soft enough that you can make a small impression on it, it is ripe. If you wait until the pear is soft around the middle, it may be overripe inside. Remember to “check the neck” for ripeness.

WHAT’S COOKING IN YOUR STATE?
Find recipes using ingredients grown and raised in your state at FarmFlavor.com.
Western Oregon’s climate, long growing season, rich soil and plentiful rainfall make it an ideal place to develop new plants. For decades, Oregon nurseries and universities have pioneered to introduce new plants that now thrive all over the country.

“Oregon is the No. 1 producer of shade and flowering trees,” says Ryan Contreras, associate professor of ornamental plant breeding at Oregon State University. “Really, anywhere you are in the country, there’s a good chance your trees got their start in Oregon.”

Progressive Growers

In addition to favorable growing conditions, Oregon horticulture is successful in large part because of its community of growers – in industry and academia. “At OSU, we definitely have a very proactive and collaborative approach and always seek to work with the industry to figure out how we can achieve our goals together,” Contreras says. “Oregon growers are really progressive in every aspect.”

One of these progressive nurseries, TERRA NOVA Nurseries, has grown from a tiny company into a world leader in perennial and annual development.

“We have made vast improvements on a large number of genera,” says Dan Heims, president of TERRA NOVA. “We’ve introduced over 1,000 new plants since we began 25 years ago – that’s a world record. We now have 115 employees in the nursery and laboratory, and we sell plants internationally through our partners.”

J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. (JFS), a third-generation, family-owned nursery founded in 1946, has introduced or co-introduced more than 100 unique tree cultivars. “The Schmidt family understands the need

#1

Oregon is the No. 1 producer of shade and flowering trees.

Developing new trees can take between 15 and 20 years.

Source: Oregon Association of Nurseries
for new and improved trees,” says Nancy Buley, communications director. “They and over 350 JFS employees are devoted to developing and growing new trees from our own breeding and selection efforts, and by trialing, evaluating and co-introducing trees discovered by others.”

What It Takes

Developing new trees is a multigenerational project that requires a long-term investment of time and resources, Buley says – typically 15 to 20 or more years.

“From hundreds, or even thousands, of seedlings or hybrid crosses, just a few outstanding performers are selected for further observation and trial,” Buley says. “If a standout tree appears to be distinctively better than others of its species, we’ll name, patent and introduce it.”

Keith Warren, a 40-year JFS veteran who recently retired as director of New Plant Development, says this deliberate selection process is essential for creating successful cultivars such as Redpointe® Maple (Acer rubrum “Frank Jr.” PP 16769). Seventeen years in the making, from seed to its introduction in 2006, the improved cultivar has become the nursery’s top seller.

“The quality of new plant introductions will only be as good as your selectivity,” Warren says. “You get really good introductions by throwing out hundreds, or even thousands, of rejects to make sure you have the best plant.”

Contreras’ work developing new tree varieties at OSU can be even more complex. Contreras addresses breeding issues that require specialized equipment and techniques, like developing sterile maples to prevent non-native species from escaping cultivation.

“My program is designed to complement what the industry does,” Contreras says. “We’re not trying to compete. I have an amazing relationship with the growers here – they are always really willing to collaborate.”

Taking It Farwest

Both TERRA NOVA and J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. participate in the Farwest Show, produced every August by the Oregon Association of Nurseries. Farwest boasts more than 400 exhibitors from all over the world and attracts over 6,000 attendees each year.

“I think Farwest is the best summer trade show in the country,” Buley says. “It’s a wonderful opportunity for growers, garden center managers, plant buyers, specifiers and green industry pros from around the country to come to Oregon and see what’s new, meet the growers and tour nurseries.”

Heims says TERRA NOVA proudly participates in the Farwest Show each year.

“As Portland is in our backyard, we join the cadre of many nurseries in Oregon in presenting at Farwest,” he says. “The show attracts many buyers from the east, Midwest and Canada, and we are happy to spotlight our latest innovations in plant breeding in the expansive show area.”

– Jill Clair Gentry
Learn more about the organizations that support Oregon’s agriculture.

Blue Mountain Community College
bmc.edu

Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs
omht.us/farmadventures

Country Home Products Inc.
chp.com

Food Northwest
foodnorthwest.org

George Packing Company
georgepack.com

Northwest Farm Credit Services
northwestfcs.com

Oregon Blueberry Commission
oregonblueberry.com

Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission
oregondungeness.org

Oregon Potato Commission
oregonspuds.com

Oregon State Orange
ororange.org

Oregon State University - College of Agricultural Sciences
agsci.oregonstate.edu

Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission
osweetcherry.org

Oregon Trawl Commission
otrawl.org

Oregonians for Food & Shelter
ofsonline.org

Pacific Coast Fruit Company
pcfruit.com

Pear Bureau Northwest/USA Pears
usapears.org

SAGE Center
visitsage.com

Threemile Canyon Farms LLC
threemilecanyonfarms.com
Not a day goes by without the work of state programs protecting Oregonians, often unbeknownst to them. A part of Oregon Department of Agriculture’s (ODA) role is to prevent the spread of foodborne illness and ensure that scales weigh products accurately. Plus, the department verifies the gallons and contents of fuel sold at all levels throughout the state.

The ODA’s Internal Services and Consumer Protection Program and its counterpart in consumer protection, the Food Safety Program, protect Oregonian pocketbooks and health.

ODA Protects Consumer Health

“We ensure food safety in the state, provide consumer protection and work to prevent foodborne illnesses,” says John Burr, a manager in the ODA Food Safety Program. The program issues more than 12,000 food licenses to more than 9,000 Oregon companies, including canneries, bakeries, grocery stores and cannabis facilities.

The program’s routine, unannounced inspections work to attain a common goal: prevent foodborne illness.

Burr says, “As a consumer, I’m thankful to know that there are inspectors going to establishments on a routine basis to ensure what we consume is safe.”

The Food Safety Program protects and promotes food safety for consumers in all places outside of restaurants, where county agencies preside. They educate new food processors of safe food-handling practices. They inspect equipment and investigate consumer complaints of potential food contamination.

“At the end of the day, I feel like the state of Oregon is a little better because of our actions,” says Burr.

ODA Protects Pocketbooks

Meanwhile, the ODA Internal Services and Consumer Protection Program certifies every scale used for commerce in the state. In fact, staff certify all types of scales, from the luggage scale at the airport to scales weighing containers on the railroad. They test scales at more than 130 farmers markets.

“Most people do not realize our program exists,” says Jason Barber, director of the ODA Internal Services and Consumer Protection Program.

“Most people do not realize our program exists,” says Jason Barber, director of the ODA Internal Services and Consumer Protection Program.

The Food Safety Program and Consumer Protection Program also ensures fairness in fish markets up and down the coast. It tests scales for heavy trucks and livestock. The program even checks meters at gas stations to ensure a gallon is a gallon. A key to certifying the scales and meters is the state’s metrology lab, which houses highly accurate weights and measures that match global standards.

“It’s not only consumer protection,” Barber says. “The business owner is happy to see us to make sure they are not giving away too much product.”

That’s because small inaccuracies can equate to big dollars. For example, Oregon’s 30,000 fuel meters sell $5.9 billion in fuel annually. Inspectors also sample fuel to ensure it meets national quality standards.

The program’s efforts intend to prevent consumer fraud and support consistent standards in the marketplace.

“We’re pretty diversified as far as this program is concerned,” Barber says. “For our first time, we’ve reached over 60,000 licensed devices in the state.”

– Joanie Stiers
Thanks to residents’ ingenuity, many food trends currently sweeping the nation are emerging from Oregon – and they’re showing no signs of slowing down.

The state is home to UpStar Ice Cream, a Portland-based company that’s capitalizing on the ever-growing health and wellness trend by producing “healthy” ice cream that’s high in protein and low in calories and sugar.

Founded by Chris Spencer and Gabrielle Sanders, UpStar Ice Cream uses all-natural ingredients sourced from the Pacific Northwest to create their products – available in seven flavors including Vanilla Dream, Strawberry Sunrise and Cinnamon Doodle – and the company has collaborated with researchers at Oregon State University’s Food Innovation Center to ensure their frozen desserts have the texture and taste consumers are looking for.

“We’ve gotten great feedback so far,” Spencer says. “People tell us how natural UpStar Ice Cream tastes. It has the perfect amount of sweetness, so you know you’re getting a dessert, but it doesn’t feel too indulgent. As more and more people see the importance of following a healthy and balanced diet, I think products like ours will only find more success in the marketplace.”

In nearby Hood River, Tofurky is offering consumers more food choices, creating nonmeat products described as “tasty, good for us, good for animals and the environment, and easy to get on the table on a busy Tuesday night.”

Established in 1980 as Turtle Island Foods, Tofurky’s products are made with all-natural organic ingredients, many of which are sourced from the Pacific Northwest. Its current lineup includes options such as veggie burgers, hot dogs and tempeh – all 100 percent vegan.

“We’re focused on environmental sustainability, humane treatment of animals and improving personal health,” says Jaime Athos, Tofurky’s president and CEO, and stepson of founder Seth Tibbott. “We’re aligning with the many people who are interested in eating plant-based diets and looking for quality products. More and more, consumers are finding that they don’t have to sacrifice taste to eat vegan or vegetarian diets. That’s helping this movement gain even more ground.”

– Jessica Walker Boehm

UPSTART ICE CREAM
UpStar Ice Cream, based in Portland, offers consumers tasty treats without the guilt, using all-natural ingredients for a high-protein, low-calorie product.
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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