



**OREGON**  
ASSOCIATION OF  
NURSERIES™

# State Affairs

2023

**Overarching approach:** We support efforts and agendas that promote the sustainability and success of the nursery and greenhouse industry in Oregon. We strive for bipartisan collaboration where possible, and we will work to educate decision-makers about how statutory and fiscal policies affect the industry. The OAN is committed to doing the hard work to achieve the best policy outcomes for our state and for our industry.

## Labor and Workforce

- **Workforce availability.** Support state-level efforts to address agricultural worker shortages.
- **Worker benefits.** Support implementation of worker benefit laws, such as Paid Family Leave and Mandatory Retirement, in a manner that is least administratively burdensome for employers.
- **Worker protections.** Support flexibility for growers that will promote worker safety while being compatible with agricultural practices.
- **Agricultural overtime.** Support SB 457 and HB 2469. These bills amend the 2022 legislation, establish a 15-week peak labor period at 55 hours, and establish a \$50 million worker relief program, providing much needed transition time to protect the family farm in Oregon. **This is OAN's top legislative priority in 2023.**

## Water and Environment

- **Water supply.** Develop and pass a comprehensive statewide water vision addressing quality, supply, sharing, place-based planning and seasonal use.
- **Water transfers.** Resolve location and Point of Diversion authority by the Water Resources Department without additional environmental conditions.
- **Climate change.** Advocate for climate policies that promote best practices, acknowledge growers' positive contribution to fighting climate change, and hold ag producers harmless for cost increases in energy and fuel. Recognize the industry's green products as a mitigating force to sequester carbon and help the state achieve its climate goals.
- **Recycling Modernization Act.** Support policies that facilitate the recycling of nursery containers without excessive burden on growers and retailers.

## Government Accountability

- **Oversight by the Oregon Legislature** to ensure that legislation passed maintains its intent, rulemaking is consistent to the outcomes desired, and accountability ensured by the legislative branch on the executive branch.

## Taxes and Budget

- **Oregon Department of Agriculture Nursery Emergency Fund.** Protect funding against potential legislative fund sweeps.
- **Property taxes.** Resolve county assessment issue for agricultural equipment exemptions.
- **Natural resource agencies.** Support funding for programs and services that impact agriculture.
- **Taxes.** Oppose revenue-raising measures that unfairly harm or target agricultural producers and produce a competitive disadvantage for traded sector industries. Recognize the cumulative impact of taxes and regulations.



## Transportation, Land Use and Infrastructure

- **Land use.** Protect productive agricultural lands and right-to-farm.
- **Transportation taxes and fees.** Support policies that moderate the cost of moving goods to market.
- **Transportation infrastructure.** Support policies that improve infrastructure — including the I-5 Bridge project — and facilitate the movement of goods to market.
- **Carbon emissions.** Support efforts to recognize working lands as a solution to carbon emissions and work to rebalance the Climate Protection Plan.



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**OREGON**  
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# Federal Affairs

2023

**Overarching approach:** The OAN is recognized as moderate problem solvers at the federal level. The association's engagement with Congress, federal agencies and the administration supports Oregon's top agricultural sector, the specialty crop industry, and a trade-dependent state like Oregon. The OAN collaborates with AmericanHort and our fellow nursery and greenhouse states on a balanced federal agenda. With enormous turnover at the federal level in 2023, the OAN will make an increased effort to build relationships with the administration and new elected officials.

## Industry Needs

- **Funding for USDA-APHIS** to support research, protect market access, and prevent pest and disease threats.
- **Increase research funds** for green industry sectors, including nursery, greenhouse and Christmas tree growers. Include greater collaboration between industry, state and federal funding sources.
- **Funding for NASS.** Obtain funding to restore detailed annual National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) statistics for Oregon's nursery and greenhouse industry.
- **Amend transportation driver hours restrictions.** Product to market has been hampered by the USDOT limitations on hours of service by logistics entities such as trucking companies.

## Labor Needs

- **Comprehensive Immigration Reform,** which includes a pathway for current workforce to remain in the United States, development of a new visa system class outside of the H-2A and H-2B visas to broaden the availability of workers in the West, reasonable touchback provisions (to the nearest international airport) and employer accountability measures be put in place after the visa systems are up and running.
- **Limit the reach of the National Labor Relations Board** to prevent the deployment of card check and union organization on the farm.

## Farm Bill

- **Collaborate** with AmericanHort, nursery and greenhouse associations, and Oregon agriculture for a sensible approach to the five-year funding plan through the Farm Bill.
- **Areas of focus:**
  - **Horticulture Title:** Continued support for the specialty crop industry, including USDA Block Grants to the State of Oregon, and pest and disease prevention.
  - **Conservation Title:** Reimagine the conservation title to bring infrastructure funding for water storage and efficiency, and climate sequestration acknowledgment to the nursery and greenhouse industry.
  - **Research Title:** Greater emphasis on joint efforts between industry and land grant universities.
  - **Disaster eligibility:** The current farm bill does not work well with specialty crop growers and the disaster relief funds are substandard in reach and funding. Whole farm insurance has worked for monocrops but not the diverse multi-year crops such as the nursery and greenhouse industry. Fixing this problem is critical.

## Federal Policy Initiatives

- **Strengthen international trade relationships and lower tariffs on green goods.**
- **Continue robust funding and implementation of infrastructure for water, roads and broadband.**
- **Amend the Estate Tax provisions** to acknowledge continued farm ownership, exemption of farm equipment payments and mirror the approach passed by the OAN at the Oregon Legislature in 2007.
- **Carbon sequestration.** It is critical that the federal government put as much effort into recognizing the benefits of working lands within climate policy development. Creating a marketplace for growers to be recognized and compensated for continual sequestration of carbon through the production of green goods needs action over the next two years.

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