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THE AGRICULTURE QUARTERLY

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Lauren Henderson aims *to* build *on* ODA's legacy *as* Acting Director

Congratulations to Alexis Taylor, former director at the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). She was nominated by President Joe Biden to be the next United States Agriculture Department's (USDA) Undersecretary of Trade and Foreign Agriculture Affairs. Her nomination hearing before the Senate Agriculture Committee was held on Sept. 22, and she awaits confirmation. Her last day at ODA was Sept. 30. Alexis served as ODA director for nearly six years, and her departure is bittersweet. While it is hard to say goodbye, I am so proud. She earned this prestigious position and is very deserving of the opportunity. I am confident she will continue to have a positive impact on U.S. agricultural trade.

Lauren Henderson

Alexis Taylor

Upon Alexis' departure, I will serve as acting director at ODA. Oregon Governor Kate Brown has appointed me to the position. I will serve as interim until a new governor is elected and they make a permanent hire or direct appointment. In anticipation of Alexis' departure, leadership at ODA has been hard at work developing the department's 2023-2025 agency budget, preparing for the next legislative session, and hiring for jobs across the department. Like the rest of the country, ODA has difficulty filling positions, especially highly specialized and seasonal employment. I anticipate hiring will be an ongoing challenge through the next fiscal year.

If you don't know me, I have been at ODA for a long time. I joined the ODA team in 1999, serving as administrative services manager, Assistant Director, then Deputy Director. Over the years, I have worked for several remarkable leaders at ODA, including former Directors Phil Ward and Katy Coba, former Deputy Director Lisa Hanson, and Alexis Taylor. Like my predecessors, I am committed to ODA's mission, vision, and core values. Together with Assistant Director Jonathan Sandau, we will continue to build upon ODA's legacy of trust, transparency, and honesty with the ag industry, legislators, partners, customers, and the public.

I am honored to serve as director of ODA and would like to thank Gov. Brown for this incredible opportunity to serve. I wish Alexis the best as she begins a new chapter in her public service career. I know we will have a friend at the federal level. The future of agriculture in Oregon is bright, and I am happy to be a part of it.

Respectfully,

Meat-inspection program offers flexibility *to* state's producers

Oregon became the first state on the West Coast approved to operate a state meat-inspection program on July 28. This program is in addition to the USDA's federal program that already exists. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) finalized a cooperative agreement with Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) that launched the program. The goal of the program is to provide economic opportunity and flexibility for Oregon's livestock producers. The agreement grants ODA the

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ODA aids industry *in* trade visits

Now that the world is again traveling, the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is taking advantage of key trade opportunities.

ODA will participate in Gov. Kate Brown's trade mission Oct. 16-18 to Korea and Japan. The purpose of the mission is to re-establish in-person connections with long-standing Oregon agriculture customers and to follow up on market-access requests. Several Oregon agriculture partners will be represented during the visit, including Oregon berries, the wine board, the Food Innovation Center's Sensory Research Program, as well

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ODA *gets* funding boost *to* battle emerald ash borer *in* Oregon

In late September, ODA requested and received approval from the Emergency Board for $550,000 to fund additional emerald ash borer suppression efforts. The Board operates during the interim when the Legislature is not in session to consider and allocate agency requests for Emergency Funds. The money will pay for surveys, treatment, green waste collection, outreach, education, and management to prevent movement of the pest outside the known infested area within the city limits of Forest Grove in Washington County.

Emerald ash borer (EAB), an exotic beetle that infests ash trees, was discovered June 30 in Forest Grove, marking the first confirmation of the invasive pest on the West Coast.

In Oregon, establishing EAB could devastate habitats dominated by the native Oregon ash, such as wetlands and sensitive riparian zones, and reduce urban forest cover. The pest has proven deadly to all ash species in North America and Europe.

To date, EAB has only been detected in Forest Grove. Meanwhile, ODA, in partnership with the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Oregon State University, and regional, county, and city groups, is working to educate the public about how to detect and identify EAB and ash trees. The aim is to determine how fast the destructive insect is spreading in the state.

In addition, an EAB interagency task force of state, regional, county and city representatives are meeting regularly to coordinate research. Task force agendas are posted to **www.oregonEAB.info**. Work with the USDA APHIS continues to identify suitable sites for potential release of biological control agents or natural enemies such as four tiny stingless wasp species, the largest is about the size of a typical mosquito.

The best time to see EAB is in April, May and June, ODA epidemiologists say. By October, EAB adults are no longer flying and visible. ODF, county, and city partners are providing training to help people who work with and around trees correctly identify EAB and signs of infested ash trees. In the meantime, become familiar with EAB. There are many EAB look-alikes. ODA created an Emerald Ash Borer Look-Alikes document, **https://oda.direct/EABLookAlikes**, that helps people correctly identify EAB. Several Emerald Ash Borer resources are available at **https://oda.fyi/EABResources**.

Please report sightings of EAB to the Oregon Invasive Species Council hotline: **https://oregoninvasiveshotline.org/reports/create**.

From Page 1: Meat-inspection program *to* complement USDA's efforts

authority to inspect meat products produced for shipment within the state. Under the agreement, Oregon's program must develop, administer, and enforce requirements "at least equal to" those imposed under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA).

"Two years ago, in the middle of the pandemic, Oregonians and the ag industry came to us when they couldn't move their meat products due to a shortage of inspection services," said former ODA Director Alexis Taylor. ***"After much hard work, collaboration, and determination, we designed a program that creates additional opportunities for producers and processors to grow and satisfy local demand."***

Federal law requires meat sold for retail/wholesale markets be processed at a federal- or equivalent state-inspected facility. Unfortunately, during the pandemic, federally inspected facilities were booked out months or years, meaning Oregon meat producers couldn't get their products into the market. Oregon's cooperative agreement with USDA FSIS will give ODA the authority to inspect, with oversight by USDA FSIS. Like USDA, an ODA inspection will ensure compliance with construction, sanitation, food safety, and humane handling regulations.

The state's program is not meant to compete with USDA. Instead, it complements the federal program and increases the state's capacity by supporting smaller, local businesses to enable them to produce, process and ship statewide. Existing USDA-inspected facilities may choose to stay with the federal inspection program or enroll in Oregon's program.

ODA continues to work to serve the changing needs of Oregon's diverse agricultural and food sectors.

Oregon producers can apply to the State Meat Inspection Program by visiting ODA's State Meat Inspection Program web page or emailing **StateMeatInspection@oda.oregon.gov**.

According to the cooperative agreement, USDA will reimburse the state 50 percent of the program costs. Inspections during normal business hours will be conducted free of charge. Visit **https://oda.direct/MeatInspectionProgram** for more information on Oregon's state meat inspection program and answers to frequently asked questions.

With the addition of Oregon, 28 states now have state meat-inspection programs. For more information about state inspection programs nationwide, visit **https://oda.fyi/StateInspectionPrograms**.

Katy Coba served as ODA Director for 13 years.

Former ODA leader Katy Coba, friend *of* agriculture, retires

Former ODA Director Katy Coba retired from state government Oct. 1, after serving Oregon for more than 37 years.

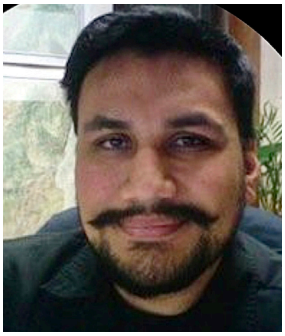
Coba left the agency in 2016, when Gov. Kate Brown appointed her Director of the Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and State Chief Operating Officer (COO). She led ODA for 13 years, first being appointed by Gov. Ted Kulongoski in 2003 and reappointed by Gov. John Kitzhaber in 2011. She also worked at ODA as a Special Assistant to the Director from 1989-95.

Coba grew up on her family's wheat farm in Umatilla, and in 1982, she was named Queen of the Pendleton Round-Up. She calls being named Queen an honor, part of who she is, her heritage. Her passion for agriculture fueled her desire to stay at ODA for more than a decade. Her sense of service motivated her to accept the COO position. During her time as COO, she led the state through challenging times, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

At one of Coba's first all-staff meetings, she discussed how important it was for everyone at the department to be an ambassador for Oregon agriculture. Her passion for agriculture was infectious. But, she made the point that everyone could market Oregon's bounty. It also was important to her to take care of staff, minimizing layoffs during budget downturns. Coba provided leadership through complicated pesticide issues, co-existence issues, and legislative discussions that sometimes left ODA at the crossroads between agriculture groups and competing interests. But, most of all, Coba encouraged staff to have those difficult conversations, regardless of how controversial or complicated the issue.

Coba had a way of breaking down complex issues into smaller conversational pieces that made you feel like you were sitting around the kitchen table. She was masterful in her way of giving speeches about agriculture, testifying on agriculture policy statewide and nationally, and excelling at traveling around the world promoting Oregon agriculture. She is on to her next big adventures, which include being appointed by Gov. Brown to serve on the Port of Portland Commission.

ODA *hires* Gilbert Uribe *as* Pesticides Program Manager



Gilbert Uribe

Gilbert Uribe is ODA's new Pesticide Program Manager. Uribe brings a wealth of experience and skills to his new position at the agency.

During his time at ODA, Uribe has proven to be a leader able to cultivate relationships with partners and gracefully manage staff. Most recently, he took on a new challenge joining ODA's Market Access and Certification Program as manager of the Certification Program.

In his new role, Uribe will manage pesticide product registration, applicator certification and licensing, Worker Protection Standard outreach, and administer the Pesticide Analytical and Response Center (PARC) Board, and the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program. Uribe replaces Rose Kachadoorian, who retired Sept. 30.

Uribe has been a leader in ODA's efforts to reach more Oregonians by translating into Spanish news releases, publications, social media, and web content.

Before joining ODA nearly six years ago as a Pesticide Registration Specialist, he spent almost five years at Oregon State University's North Willamette Research & Extension Center in Aurora. He served as an education program assistant with the Plant Health and Bilingual Education program, focusing on nursery plant disease prevention and outreach efforts to the nursery industry.

He earned a degree in biological sciences from California State University, Bakersfield and a Master of Science in plant pathology from the University of California, Riverside.

From Page 1: 3 trade missions *set*

as members of an agricultural delegation.

ODA will be part of a U.S. Department Agricultural (USDA) trade mission Oct. 21-Nov. 4 to East Africa, which includes stops in Nairobi, Kenya, Zanzibar and Tanzania. The mission will offer U.S. agribusinesses new opportunities in East and Central Africa. The purpose of ODA's participation is to explore options outside of Oregon's traditional markets. This visit will allow ODA to assess the Kenyan and Tanzanian markets after the pandemic, and where Oregon food and non-food agriculture opportunities exist. ODA will feature frozen seafood, fruit and vegetables, consumer-ready foods and beverages, and Oregon seeds.

ODA will join the Governor's team visiting Vietnam during the week of Nov. 14. ODA sees Vietnam as an important emerging market for several Oregon products. The state has few competing industries in this market, and demand is growing for the types of foods and beverages Oregon exports. ODA will build on earlier work with blueberries, potatoes, and the Western United States Agriculture Train Association (WUSATA) activities to develop an awareness of Oregon's variety of commodities and contacts for future inbound and outbound business-to-business meetings.

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DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM aids nearly 300 FARMERS, RANCHERS

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is proud to announce that nearly 300 Oregon farmers and ranchers qualified for the Oregon Disaster Assistance Program (ODAP) launched in May 2022. The one-time program was created to help those who suffered financial losses during one or more of the natural disasters that hit Oregon in 2021. The funding was provided by the Oregon Legislature and designed to bridge the gap with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) disaster assistance programs.

Working with private financial institutions familiar with agricultural lending ODA helped administer two rounds of ODAP applications. Round one began in May and round two in June. According to the latest data, ODAP funded nearly $16.4M in assistance the first round and another $3.2M in the second round for a total of nearly $20M in assistance, with a potential for many of the loans deemed forgivable. The average loan amount over the two rounds was nearly $70,000.

ODA is proud to have been part of this historic program to help Oregon's farmers and ranchers mitigate unprecedented impacts from natural disasters.

ODAP summary	Round 1	Round 2	Total
Total award amt.	$16.4M	$3.2M	$19.6M
Number of loans	244	54	298
Avg. loan amount	$66,747	$58,370	$65,733

COMING SOON

CAFO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
OCT. 13, 2022 • 1:30 - 3:30 P.M.
ODA Salem Office, Basement, Conference Room D
+ virtual via Microsoft Teams
https://oda.direct/Meetings

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE MEETING
NOV. 15-17, 2022 • 9 A.M. - NOON
Tigard + virtual via Microsoft Teams
https://oda.direct/boardagriculture

PESTICIDE ANALYTICAL AND RESPONSE CENTER (PARC) MEETING
NOV. 16, 2022 • 9 A.M. - NOON
Virtual via Microsoft Teams
https://oda.direct/PARC