



Oregon Small Farm News

Oregon State University Small Farms Program



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OSU Extension Service Small Farms Program

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Cover Photo:
Romeney Sheep enjoying the Fall
sunshine.
Photo by Audrey Comerford

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The Oregon Farm Direct Marketing Law Has Been Updated!

By: Kelly Streit, OSU Extension Service

Good news for small farmers and aspiring food entrepreneurs who want to produce and sell a low-risk farm direct, value-added product directly to consumers without having to obtain a processing license. Due to the efforts of Friends of Family Farmers, the Oregon State Extension Service, farmers market managers, small farmers, and food hub managers, SB507 was passed and signed into law earlier this year. Below is a list of the amendments that are included in the new law:

- Product list expanded to include BigLeaf and walnut syrup, processed fruit and vegetable juices, herbal blends (herbal tea or dried herbs)
- Food preservation methods expanded to include steam canning and freeze drying
- Sales/delivery channels expanded to include intrastate online sales and third party sales
- Gross sale limit increased to \$50,000/year

ODA formed a Food Safety Advisory Committee in July to draft the Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) for publishing by the Secretary of State in their bulletin. A public hearing must occur at least 14 days after the posting. We are currently awaiting an update from ODA as to their timeline. It is important that the public and the farm direct community understand that the farm direct laws and associated rules are currently unchanged and will not change until after the 91st day sine die (9/25)

OSU will provide educational outreach to Oregon's agricultural community once the new law takes effect. Stay tuned for future updates. 



Field to Market
*A farm-direct
marketing workshop*

November 8 in Lane County
November 9 in Linn County
5-8 pm
\$15 per person

 **Oregon State University**
Extension Service

OSU Extension Answers The Call to Serve Veterans Interested in Farming

Jacob Mogler grew up in Iowa farm country and worked farms as a kid, but after high school he wrote off farming to join the U.S. Marine Corps.

Mogler served four years and then graduated from Oregon State University. He returned to agriculture when he moved to the Willamette Valley in 2016 and fell in love with sheep farming. In 2019, he started raising sheep on 14 acres near Corvallis that he and his wife, Carli, named Willamette Community Lamb.

Mogler soon learned about the Military Veterans Farmer Network, a program of Oregon State University Extension Service meant to connect military veterans engaged in or interested in farming. Vets receive information about funding opportunities via an online listserv where they also exchange ideas and ask questions of each other, go on farm tours and, most of all, build community.

“If you go on a farm tour or go to other events, there’s commonality that you know you share,” said Mogler. “It’s a bridge to kindred spirits. If you don’t have that shared commonality of serving, you start out at square one finding people to share experiences and knowledge with. The veterans farmer network is an easier starting point for connecting with others.”

Teagan Moran, OSU Extension Small Farms coordinator in the Willamette Valley, had that goal



Jacob Mogler
Photo courtesy of Teagan Moran

in mind when she started the program. At the 2019 OSU Extension Small Farms Conference, there was a meeting for military veterans who were interested in farming, and it became clear they needed support.

“We were always aware that there are veterans who

were engaging with our Small Farms program, but we didn’t know if we were meeting their needs,” Moran said. “It became obvious there was a desire to connect with one another.”

Moran’s first plan of action was to create a listserv she continues to use to send out information about resources vets in the program may not know about, like grants or agencies that work with veterans. She also uses the email tool to let participants know about events and networking opportunities and encourages those on the list to use the communication channel to connect directly with each other. Farm tours at veteran-owned farms are one of the most popular activities.

“Veterans for a long time have been touted as ideal candidates to enter farming,” Moran said. “They have compatible skills, and we recognize that working with their hands has therapeutic benefits. It’s win-win.”

Work that keeps hands busy

In southern Oregon, Maud Powell, Extension Small Farms faculty in Jackson County, expanded Extension’s 19-year-old beginning farmer training to include a

program specific to military veterans. Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Growing Veteran Agripreneurs has served vets in the Rogue Valley for four years. Now managed by Diane Choplin, Extension Small Farms education program assistant to Powell, the program is designed for veterans interested in pursuing careers in small-scale agriculture and combines farm tours with season-long farm training.

The veterans meet at the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center in Central Point once a week for four hours to work alongside mentors to develop practical farm skills and knowledge. Through the hands-on work, vets learn about and practice seeding, transplanting, irrigation, crop planning and rotation, integrated pest management, cover cropping and drought-mitigation techniques.

“I was amazed last summer when it was 104 degrees and we still had seven people show up,” Choplin said. “You don’t come to work outside when it’s 104 unless you enjoy what you’re doing. I see people hanging out. There’s a feeling of reunion when folks get back together. There’s joy and excitement when they get together.”

James Miller served four years in the Marines as an aircraft rescue fire fighter and emergency medical technician. When he moved to Oregon, Miller spent a year selling insurance and decided he didn’t want a desk job, so he went back to school to become a paramedic. He found the fast-paced work took him away from his children. In 2019, he and his wife, Kate, bought five acres in Elmira outside of Eugene, named it Sunwave Farms and decided to grow ingredients for salsa to sell at a small café they owned.

The learning curve was high. Miller’s first two seasons failed, but he didn’t give up.

“More and more I’m enjoying the lifestyle,” Miller said. “This is my life now and how I want to live. Other jobs drain you, pull your joy. Now I have coffee in the morning, go out to the greenhouse and work and go back to play with the kids. I make my own schedule and that’s what I want. How do I raise my kids and tell

them to follow their dreams, if I’m not doing it?”

Last year his organic farm produced gallons of tomatoes that the family turned into salsa. This year, he put in more tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and sunflowers to sell to local restaurants.

“The program reaches vets that normally like solitude,” Miller said. “For whatever reason they feel excluded, not part of society, but growing things is worthy of their time. The suicide rate is astronomically high for vets. Getting them involved in the dirt and the hope of another season – there’s something in that, I think.”

Mogler, who is currently raising 35 sheep, said he enjoys the work because it makes him sweat and keeps his hands busy. That’s a common theme from the vets in the program, Moran said. Other shared skills like discipline, hard work and a sense of service, make them good candidates for farming, she said. Having support from other vets serves to increase self-confidence and gives them an additional tool for learning. The network, Mogler said, creates a safe place where the vets see themselves, a community of learning and sharing.

“Overall, the veterans seem to benefit from being in a cohort comprised primarily of other vets,” Powell said. “I believe that the sense of overlapping or related past experiences strengthens the camaraderie and community-building aspects of the cohort model. As a result, we see greater levels of engagement and lower rates of attrition over the course of the season, which translates into better-trained beginning farmers who have the built-in support of a peer group.” ∞

THE BE WELL STUDY



Do you get your drinking water from a well?
Get a free water test!



Photo courtesy of OSU Extension Well Water website

For more information, please contact us at:

BeWellStudy@oregonstate.edu or (541)737-1078 or
Dr. Veronica Irvin at veronica.irvin@oregonstate.edu or
(541)737-1074.

The purpose of this study is to learn about:

- 1) chemical contaminants in well water
- 2) the health of those who drink well water
- 3) how wells are maintained

To participate in The Be Well Study you will complete a survey that requires 30-60 minutes, receive and return a well water test kit and receive your well water test results with a guided explanation.

To be eligible, you must: be at least 21 years old, be a homeowner in the state of Oregon who uses a private well as the primary source of drinking water, have lived in your home for at least 12 months and plan to live in the home for at least 12 months from now.

If you are interested in participating, write your name and contact information on the sign-up sheet **OR** Visit us at <https://wellwater.oregonstate.edu/bewellstudy> to begin the survey.



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Connecting With Small Farming Community

By: OSU Small Farms Program

Joining organizations and networks of other farmers is a great way to be in regular contact with folks who share your values and have experience and interest related to topics that are important to you. The Small Farms Extension team has put together a list of networks and organizations that may be of interest to small farmers in Oregon- happy connecting!

- **Agritourism Network-** Agricultural tourism (agritourism) is when you invite the public to visit your farm or ranch to sell agricultural products and promote the sales of products. The goal of this network is to create a space for information sharing about agritourism amongst producers, a safe place to ask questions, and a way to join together to discuss issues. If you are a farmer or rancher and would like to join, please go to <https://beav.es/59V>.
- **Dry Farming Collaborative-** The DFC is a group of farmers, extension educators, plant breeders, and agricultural professionals partnering to increase knowledge and awareness of dry farming management practices with a hands-on participatory approach. Join the [Dry Farming Collaborative Facebook Group](#)
- **Klamath Basin Food Producers Network-** Connect with other farmers through the Facebook Group or listserv. The [Facebook group](#) is intended for food producers and others looking to grow food to distribute or sell in the Klamath Basin and Eastern Oregon areas. This is a great way to connect with local producers to discuss opportunities, challenges, crops, and other informational conversations. The listserv enables participants to learn about tools, resources, and events of particular interest to the Klamath Basin and those with similar growing conditions. This is a great communication tool for questions, feedback, sharing of information and collaborating. To join listserv, email a request to: jody.durighello@oregonstate.edu
- **League of Women Farmers-** This is a group of female-identified farmers and ranchers in Jackson and Josephine county who meet quarterly for farm tours, workshops, and retreats. To sign up for the email list, contact Maud Powell at maud.powell@oregonstate.edu.
- **Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network** - NMPAN is a university Extension-based community of practice of people and organizations helping small meat processors thrive by growing our shared wealth of information and innovation. [Learn more and sign up for NMPAN.](#)
- **Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Network** - The OFSSGN provides resources, technical assistance and networking opportunities to support members of Oregon's Farm to School and school garden community in their work to incorporate healthy, local food into school meals and implement food-, farm-, and garden-based education. We also advocate for state and federal policies that support farm to school success. Find a regional hub coordinator to connect with <https://oregonfarmtoschool.org/regional-hubs/> or email Michelle Markesteyn, OSU Farm to School Specialist michelle.markesteyn@oregonstate.edu
- **The Oregon Pasture Network-** OPN is <https://oregonpasturenetwork.org/> is a network of independent farmers & ranchers who are committed to expanding pasture based agriculture across Oregon. Learn more about joining at <https://oregonpasturenetwork.org/join/>
- **Pacific Northwest Cut Flower Growers-** This is a group for commercial cut flower growers in the PNW. Connect with them through their facebook group, which is used as a platform for learning, collaboration and community: [Pacific Northwest Cut Flower Growers Facebook Group](#)

- **PNW Mushroom Farmers Network-** This is a group of small scale mushroom farmers throughout the Pacific Northwest with a focus on Oregon producers with a mission to provide support, information and share resources to uplift one another. Reach out to Em Jones (jonesem7@oregonstate.edu) to be added to the network
- **Small Ruminants Group-** The Small Ruminants Group is a group of goat and sheep producers who are interested in sharing information, knowledge, and skills with each other. They correspond primarily through an email listserv hosted by OSU Extension Service Small Farms program and have a directory, in the form of a shared google spreadsheet; if you're interested in joining, reach out to Genie Harden (genieharden@gmail.com).
- **Southern Oregon Seed Growers Association-** SOSGA is a nonprofit association of Southern Oregon seed growers, and interested farmers and home gardeners providing education and pinning maps when necessary. Use the contact form at <https://sosga.wordpress.com/join-pin/> to join.
- **Statewide Military Veteran Farmers Network-** This is a network for military veterans who are farming in Oregon. Network members can participate in farm tours and other learning and networking activities. If you're interested in joining, reach out to Teagan Moran- teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu.
- **Willamette Women's Farmer Network** - This is a group of female-identified farmers and ranchers in Linn, Lane, and Benton counties who connect via an email ListServ as well as through farm tours, workshops, etc. To sign up, contact Teagan Moran at Teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu
- **Your Local Farm Bureau Chapter-** Oregon Farm Bureau is a grassroots, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization representing the interests of farming and ranching families in the public and policymaking arenas. [Learn about becoming a member of your local Farm Bureau Chapter.](#)
- **Your Local Small Farms Extension Listserv** - Many Small Farms Extension Agents run an email group for small farmers in their service areas. We share timely resources with farmers on these email list, and farmers can share resources and information with other farmers on the list. Reach out to your local Small Farms Extension Agent to learn how to get added to the small farms listserv for your area.
- **Western Cover Crops Council-** This group of farmers and other agricultural professionals working in the western U.S. promotes the successful adoption and integration of cover cropping into Western U.S. agricultural systems. Become a member [here](#), and join discussions with other cover croppers in the Pacific Northwest by contacting the PNW Chairperson (pnw@westerncovercrops.org). ∞

Flatheaded Borer Survey

If you are involved in the production of orchard crops and you are aware of flatheaded borers as pests of tree fruits and tree nuts, please participate in our survey. The link is below. Your input will help us direct research and outreach.

https://utk.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8ibXGdqshhbbqp7



Thinking of Adding Livestock to Your Farm? Here's Where to Start

By: Hayley White, OSU Small Farms Program

Livestock animals can be a rewarding and sometimes profitable addition to a farm or rural property. To ensure a smooth and beneficial experience for you and the livestock, I recommend clear goals, research, and preparing for basics before you look for livestock.

What are your goals?

Setting clear goals before bringing animals to your property will help you navigate decisions when planning for livestock. A combination of goals and motivation is likely, and a passion for animal husbandry is necessary.

- Do you want to have livestock as pets?
- Do you want to raise your own food while having a hobby for your family?
- Do you want to cover your costs or make a profit?

There are many possible scenarios and different reasons for having livestock. Example: You enjoy goats and have invasive blackberries and other weeds on your property that you would like the goats to manage for you.

What will the goats require in terms of resources and your time? Calculating those costs and comparing them to the cost of managing the weeds without the goats (labor, fuel, herbicide, etc.) will give you an idea ahead of time on budgeting. Raising livestock for enjoyment is rewarding, but clear goals and realistic expectations on what they need upfront will lead to less disappointment.

How can you prepare?

When animals do not have the adequate nutrition, environment, and medicine they need, there can be fatal consequences. Key places to start in your research process should include:



Romany sheep enjoying the Fall sun
Photo provided by Audrey Comerford

Location

Plan for a designated area for your livestock based on the space requirements for your species and size of group. Fencing must be secure for your particular animals, and many will require shelter from rain and wind. If you use pasture, familiarize yourself with proper pasture management and create an overwinter area to prevent overgrazing and damage to the soil. Don't forget the about manure! Animals produce manure, and by removing it and creating a covered compost area, you will reduce parasites, foul odors, and animal health problems.

Nutrition

Nutritional needs vary widely between species and sizes but also between sexes, life stages, and time of year. For example, a lactating sow may require more than three times more calories per day and different protein levels than a pregnant sow. Know the specific requirements for your animals and that it will change during the year to account for the animal's physiological stage, plant stage if using pasture, and

the environment. Energy (calories), protein, minerals, vitamins, and water requirements should be included in a nutrition program and plan for the cost to make sure it aligns with your budget.

Animal Health

We have all heard the phrase; “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” this is true with animal health. Investing up front by reducing exposure and providing preventative care will lead to less health problems. Research the vaccination recommendations for your animals and common health problems that may occur so you can recognize any symptoms. Organize an animal first aid kit to have supplies ready for emergencies. Problems like bloat, pink eye, scratch wounds, and more will happen and having supplies on hand and monitoring tools like a stethoscope and thermometer will be helpful. Lastly, having a client relationship with a livestock veterinarian before you have an emergency is essential. Livestock vets can be hard to find, and if you have a client relationship set up beforehand, you can get help when you need it.

A timely tip for people raising livestock for meat is to reach out to processors before you get livestock. There is a nationwide shortage of small, custom meat processors, and scheduling might be over a year out. Plan ahead and find a processor who can take on a new client.

Do your research!

With all of the information on the internet, it is necessary to find research-based and non-biased sources. I recommend searching for publications connected to the Extension Service and universities. There are also hands-on opportunities and education available locally. The OSU Extension Service, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and livestock associations like the Oregon Sheep Growers Association often have resources and events to share. With the right resources and preparation, your livestock will be healthy and happy, and you can meet your goals. ∞

New Blog Alert!

Dan Bigelow, OSU has started this great Blog writing articles about farm and rangeland rent, land development, crop insurance, etc:

Read it here - <https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/appliedeconomics/>



We are investigating the effects of wildfire—particularly smoke—on cattle health and performance, in order to develop strategies to alleviate that stress.

We invite you to explore our website **livestockwildfirehub.org** to learn more about this hazard and our research and outreach projects.



This project was supported by Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Competitive Grants no. 2022-68016-38665 and 2023-68008-39173 from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.



**LIVESTOCK
AND
WILDFIRE
RESEARCH GROUP**

Our team:

Amy Skibiell, Pedram Rezamand, Denise Konetchy



Juliana Ranches, Jenifer Cruickshank, Katie Wollstein



CHECK
OUT OUR
WEBSITE:



For the Love of Farming Podcast – Season 2

By: Teagan Moran, OSU Small Farms Program

We are excited to have released the first three episodes in Season 2 of [For the Love of Farming Podcast](#).

You can find Season 2 and catch up on Season 1 here: <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/fortheloveoffarming>. This series is all about connecting listeners to small scale farmers and ranchers. We come together to talk about their why, how they came to be where they are, challenges, joys, and how they keep going. We are grateful to the individuals who were generous with their time, willing to get a little personal, share their wisdom and lessons learned, and yes - their love of farming with us all. This is a project of Oregon State University Extension, Small Farms Program. ∞



My time with the OSU Extension Small Farms Program

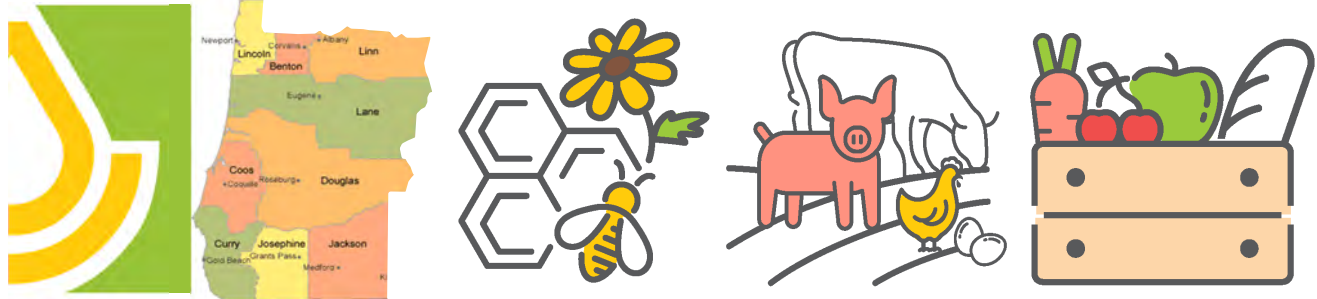
By Crystal Kelso

My journey with OSU Extension started as an Internship with Teagan Moran in the Small Farms Program for the summer, and then evolved into a Student Worker position for the remainder of my time at OSU while I finished my BS in Horticulture: Horticulture Therapy. During this time, I have had the opportunity to make life long connections to farmers, herbalists, and Veteran farmers through collaborations within the OSU Extension farming networks. Some of these collaborations include farm tours, Coffee & Chats, Medicinal Herbal Salve Making workshops, working with partnering organizations, and hosting a monthly Medicinal Herb group. The biggest take away from this experience is the abundance of growth in myself. Professionally, I've gained skills in public speaking, resource development, and leadership. Personally, I've learned to have confidence in my abilities, and have made so many new connections across a variety of fields that have opened my path to align with my long term goals once I graduate, and even given me an advantage in my immediate career opportunities. The Internship and Student Worker position has been such an important step for my future, and I highly recommend that anyone interested in developing those same skills and opportunities to put themselves out there, and go for it :)



Local Foods Initiative

Benton · Coos · Curry · Douglas · Jackson · Josephine · Lane · Lincoln · Linn



Financial assistance available with NRCS

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides innovative conservation solutions to restore, enhance and protect Oregon's urban and rural, agricultural lands.

NRCS offers technical and financial assistance to private landowners and operators interested in preserving natural resources on the land. Assistance may be available to help you implement the following conservation practices on your urban or rural farm:

- ✓ Fencing, Forage Improvement & Livestock Watering
- ✓ Tillage, Nutrient, Water & Grazing Management
- ✓ Improved crop health and vigor
- ✓ Localized source of produce
- ✓ Pollinator Habitat Planting
- ✓ Cover Crop Rotation
- ✓ Weed Control

Next Application Deadline:

Nov. 17, 2023

**What are you waiting for?
Contact your local NRCS
Conservationist to find out
more and apply today.**

CONTACT:

County	Phone	Email
	541	
Benton·Linn	967-5925	wallace.jennings@usda.gov
Coos · Curry	824-8091	katlyn.woodruff@usda.gov
Lane	650-3051	thomas.snyder@usda.gov
Lincoln	563-5627	anna.marion@usda.gov
Douglas	378-3536	david.ferguson@usda.gov
Jackson· Josephine	423-6174	peter.winnick@usda.gov



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www.or.nrcs.usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Oregon Legislature Funds Food Systems Drought & Heat Resilience Grant Programs: \$6.65 million awarded for disaster resilience grant programs for Oregon's farmers markets, food hubs and small farmers and ranchers

By: Oregon Community Food Systems Network: Shin Lee & Andrew Collins-Anderson; Oregon Farmers Market Association: Ashely Hess & Friends of Family Farmers: Alice Morrison, Co-Director

There were wins and losses for Oregon food systems at the wrap up of the rollercoaster 2023 Oregon Legislative Session. In the final weeks of the session, the Oregon Legislature did invest in more resilient local food production and distribution through several funding allocations for disaster resilience granting programs. These grants include \$2.65 million for farmer and rancher disaster resilience grants and \$1.5 million for food hub infrastructure grants administered by the Oregon Community Food Systems Network (OCFSN). The Oregon Farmers Market Association (OFMA) was also awarded \$2.5 million for grants for farmers market disaster resilience, accessibility improvements and SNAP technical assistance and equipment.

“Oregon’s small and underserved farmers and ranchers face the worst of climate impacts as they work daily to provide quality and affordable food for our communities. These farmer resilience grants will help producers face impacts to their operations caused by heat, drought, smoke, and wildfire by helping them proactively prepare for these compounding challenges.” Andrew Collins-Anderson, OCFSN Farming for the Future Working Group coordinator.

“This project will build local economies and disaster resilience by investing in Oregon Food Hubs and regional food system infrastructure. Hard assets funded by this project will expand and improve on regional cold storage, dry food storage, and transportation capacities by leveraging the expertise and services of existing networks and partners throughout the state. Increased system

capacity improves regional disaster resilience while simultaneously building and developing regional markets.” Sydney DeLuna, OCFSN Food Hub Network Coordinator.

“Oregon’s farmers markets are economic powerhouses, drawing millions of visitors annually, supporting more than 5,500 small, Oregon-based businesses. They generate nearly \$60 million in revenue and infuse their communities with economic stability. The state’s investment will bolster farmers markets’ impacts and strengthen their vital role of sustaining small business and communities alike. When our small businesses thrive and our communities get this kind of support, we all benefit. By proactively and collectively preparing for climate challenges, OFMA and our partners are optimistic that our farmers markets will endure to provide fresh, wholesome and affordable food to their communities.” Ashley Hess, Executive Director of OFMA.

“This funding represents a collaborative effort to help our state’s small and midsize, highly diversified and local market farmers adapt to the ongoing effects of the climate crisis. We are so proud to be a part of this coalition of forward thinking food system advocates, farmers, and policy makers who made this happen. Oregon is so lucky to still have a thriving small scale farming community and we think it is high time that the state invested in its future. Our farmers are on the front lines of climate change and this funding helps those who need it most.” Alice Morrison, Co-Executive Director of Friends of Family Farmers (FoFF).

This nationally unique funding ensures Oregon's regional food systems and local producers will be more resilient to climate impacts such as heat, smoke and drought. This funding is one element of the Legislature's multifaceted efforts to meet the challenges of the climate crisis.

This funding was initially included in the expansive Bipartisan Drought Relief and Water Security Package (BiDRAWS) and was advocated for by a broad cross-section of OCFSN members. Late in the session, the funding was moved to the Christmas Tree Bill ([Senate Bill 5506](#)) and passed at the end of session.

The farmer and rancher resilience grants program builds off the successful [OCFSN 2022 Farmer and Rancher Disaster Relief Program](#). Program managers are in the initial stages of this year's program

development and are working with a farmer and expert advisory committee to ensure these funds meet the community's needs. Details on eligibility and how to apply will be released fall/winter 2023.

The partners would like to thank the people who testified and worked tirelessly to ensure this funding was a priority this legislative session. Friends of Family Farmers were outstanding advocates for this funding throughout the session, and worked with Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network and OCFSN to formulate the Disaster Resilience Grant Program. The Food Hub Infrastructure funding was developed from the work of the OCFSN Food Hub Network. A significant thank you is also due to Representative Helm and his team for championing this funding and for working closely with partners to steward this through the rocky 2023 Legislative Session. ∞

**OREGON'S FARM AND RANCH EQUITY
AND ANTI-RACISM PROGRAM
INFORMATION SESSION**

NOVEMBER 14TH 12:00-1:00PM

RSVP: [HTTPS://BEAV.ES/TRJ](https://beav.es/trj)

FRIENDS OF FAMILY FARMERS | Oregon State University Extension Service | ROGUE FARM CORPS

Join The Farmer-to-Farmer Willamette Valley Agritourism Network

By: Audrey Comerford, OSU Small Farms Program

The OSU Extension Service Agricultural Tourism team has coordinated efforts to form a Willamette Valley Agritourism Network specifically for farmers and ranchers who are currently operating or interested in adding on-farm direct marketing and agritourism to their agricultural business. The hope is to create a space for information sharing amongst producers, a safe place to ask questions, and a way to join together to discuss issues. To start, communication will be through an email list-serve. If there is interest, the OSU team will help coordinate a few meetups each year to visit in person. There is no membership fee to be part of this network.

Not sure if this network is for you? Agricultural tourism (agritourism) is when you invite the public to visit your farm or ranch to sell agricultural products and promote the sales of products. This may include:

- Direct Sales (farm stands/stores, U-pick/U-cut, livestock and fiber sales)
- Education (farm tours, classes/demonstrations/workshops, tastings)
- Entertainment (festivals, open farm days)
- Outdoor Recreation (hiking/walking trails, birding, horseback riding, hunting/fishing)
- Hospitality (on-farm lodging, farm to table dinners, private events)

The network was launched in January and the team is happy that there is interest. In time, we would also like to offer opportunities to meet in person at various farms around the valley. We are committed to only adding active farmers/ranchers who are currently offering agricultural tourism or moving in that direction to the network. This group exists so that farmers have a way to share and learn together. It is a place to post questions, ideas, best practices, opportunities, or concerns. If you are a farmer or rancher and would like to join, please go to <https://beav.es/59V>.

If you have any questions about the network or anything agritourism related, please feel free to contact Melissa Fery at melissa.fery@oregonstate.edu or Audrey Comerford at audrey.comerford@oregonstate.edu ∞

OSU EXTENSION ONLINE COURSE

DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL AGRITOURISM BUSINESS IN OREGON

 Oregon State University



Register at: beav.es/wYh

This material is based upon work supported by USDA/NIFA under Award Number 2018-70027-28587.

 USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

 OSU EXTENSION SMALL FARM MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

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Organic Grains and Pulses Field Day

By: Sophia Nowers, Intern, OSU Small Farms Program

On August 3rd, Organic Grains & Pulses Field Day took place at the OSU Lewis-Brown Horticultural Farm at the organic grains and pulses trial plots. There were several speakers, including Dr. Brigid Meints, an assistant professor (senior research) at OSU in the Department of Crop and Soil Science; Nick Andrews, an OSU Organic Vegetable Extension specialist; and Dr. Jim Myers, an endowed professor in the Department of Horticulture. Chefs and cooks from the Willamette Valley also attended to share their grains and pulses dishes and demonstrate varietal differences for wheat, barley, and beans.

About 50 people attended the field day, mostly organic grains and pulses farmers from Western Oregon. They heard from Dr. Meints about her research on oats, wheat, barley, and beans and her collaborations with local chefs and growers. Some of her research includes breeding barley for organic systems and for disease resistance, and breeding beans for organic dry bean production. Attendees also heard from Dr. Myers about his work breeding bean varieties for consumers that are resistant to mosaic virus and curly top virus, and from Andrews about the OSU Organic Extension program and its cover crop research.

At the end of the field day, everyone sampled recipes from six chefs & local food businesses that showcased grain and pulse varieties researched at the OSU test plots. There was sourdough bread, shortbread, yakisoba noodles, pasta salad with beans, and more. Thank you to everyone who came to the field day, the speakers, cooks, and especially to Dr. Brigid Meints for organizing it! We look forward to seeing you next year. ☞



Sights found at the Organic Grains and Pulses Field Day
Photos courtesy of Sophia Nowers



Save the Date

February 17th, 2024

OSU Oregon Small Farms Conference

<https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/smallfarmsconference/>

We can't wait to see you there



Headwaters Farm Business Incubator Program Applications for 2024 Cohort Now Open

Application Period is October 1st to November 30th, 2023

Headwaters Farm is a 60-acre property on the outskirts of East Multnomah County near Gresham. The Headwaters Farm Incubator Program operates on this property. The business incubator is a robust, 5-year program that provides farmers with affordable access to land, and a variety of valuable farm resources to grow your farm start-up businesses.

The Headwaters Farm Business Incubator Program provides tools and training to empower farmers to create successful farm livelihoods.

The Headwaters program works to help farmers hone skills in managing farm systems and provides farmers with resources to help overcome common barriers for farm businesses. The program includes:

- Access to land
- Infrastructure
- Farm & business knowledge
- Markets
- Capital

Details about these resources are available on the Headwater's website: <https://emswcd.org/farm-incubator/>



 East Multnomah
Soil & Water Conservation District

Apply now for the next incubator cohort! Application information is available here: <https://emswcd.org/farm-incubator/application/>

To qualify for the program, farmers should have three years of farming experience including one year in a farm managerial position. The incubator program can be a great next step for farmers who complete a beginning farmer program. ∞

Headwaters Farm is owned and managed by the East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District. Our mission is to support a farming economy that provides jobs and strengthens the local and regional food system.

Raising Resilient Bees: Heritage Techniques to Mitigate Mites, Preserve Locally Adapted Genetics, and Grow Your Apiary

Increasing pest and disease pressure present an unprecedented challenge for the modern honey bee. All beekeepers continue to experience troubling rates of mortality for their colonies, with deleterious consequences for the stability of our wider ecosystems and overall food security. It is time for a global focus on restoring the health of the shared apiary through naturally reared, genetically diverse, and resilient lines of bees.

Raising Resilient Bees translates these crucial goals into real-world practice. Authors Eric and Joy McEwen take over two decades' worth of beekeeping experience, experiments, and professional production to deliver groundbreaking methods in queen-rearing, varroa mite management, and Natural Nest hive design. The book includes:

- Revived and adapted heritage Integrated Pest Management techniques
- Methods to naturally rear queens and select for resilient, mite-resistant genetic lines without relying on swarming or grafting
- Key tenets of apicentric beekeeping
- Advice for establishing a flourishing and sustainable beekeeping business

The book is published by Chelsea Green Publishing.

Southern Oregon Farmers and Ag Professionals Launch New Climate Adapted Seed Project

By: Maud Powell, OSU Small Farms Program

Southern Oregon is known as a world class seed growing region, and like many parts of Oregon is dealing with hotter and drier growing conditions. Many farmers have little to no irrigation water, farmers are moving, and farms are going out of business. In order to strengthen the viability, economic resilience, and climate adaptability for farmers during this difficult time, it is imperative that we learn from our peers about seed production during times of drought.

A new Western SARE-funded project, *Expanding Commercial Drought-Tolerant Seed Production* is supporting regional farmers in learning from previous research about non-irrigated farming, local adaptation of heritage grains, and strategies for bed preparation for seed production. Case studies resulting from the grant will provide farmers with valuable information about seed production in drought.

Some farmers have expressed a desire to add heritage grains to their operations, and they want to learn from other farmers. This new project brings together

diverse farmers to learn, observe, and share their experiences producing grains and specialty seed crops during drought. Through two seasons of on-farm grain trials and eight tours of seed operations, farmers will learn from their peers about non-irrigated farming, local adaptation of heritage grains, and strategies for bed preparation for maximum yield and biomass production. The research will consist of developing case studies on four differently scaled farms. Additionally, different practices of growing four grains will be compared in order to determine largest yield and greatest amount of biomass produced.

Results from this project will be shared across Oregon through community partner networks and will be included in field day and outreach events. Producers will learn from each other about how to implement non-irrigated grains and seed production into their current cropping plans.

Results of this season's grain trials will be available next spring. Stay tuned! 🌿



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5 Legal Options For Legal Commercial Irrigation Water

By: Melissa Fery, OSU Small Farms Program

Legal access to irrigation water is a big deal for small commercial farms and many new and beginning farmers are unaware of the situation.

There are 5 options to obtain a legal source of water for commercial irrigation:

1. Capture rainwater from an artificial impervious surface (roof), store in tanks and use when needed. Exempt under ORS 537.141
2. Haul water in from a legal municipal source, store in tanks and use when needed. No water right required.
3. Apply for a new Groundwater Permit (this would be for an irrigation well).
4. Apply for a right to store water in a pond and then a secondary water right to use the stored water for irrigation.
5. File a Transfer application to move an existing water right to a new property.

The person that works to regulate water rights and assist landowners with answering specific water access questions is a Water Master. They work for the Oregon Water Resources Department. (provide your local watermaster's info)

People often ask me why they can't use their home or domestic well. The rules are complex but essentially domestic wells have exemptions to allow a home owner to use groundwater for purposes related to home use, not a commercial farm business.

The exemptions are:

Domestic use- 15,000 gallons/day

½ acre of land (non-commercial-typically lawn and garden)

Livestock watering

Fire control


The handout linked below was written by the OWRD for cannabis producers because so many of them got



Photo provided by Adobe

started using domestic wells, either not knowing or not caring, or maybe some of both. The information is true for any irrigated crop and I wish they'd write one that says as much. But when cannabis production exploded and the OWRD had to respond due to the high number complaints there were getting they shared out this information. https://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Documents/Water_Use_and_Marijuana_Handout_FINAL.pdf

Here's some additional information that you might find helpful.

- For a brief overview of water rights and water law in Oregon, refer to the Aqua Book.
- For a brief introduction to wells in Oregon, refer to the Water Well Owner's Handbook.
- For a brief overview of dam safety requirements, refer to the Dam Safety in Oregon brochure.
- You can research information about wells using the Well Log Query.
- Identify Water Rights and other information in your area using the Water Right Mapping Tool.
- Find a tax lot map using the OR Map webpage 

Oregon State to Co-Lead \$30 Million USDA Regional Food Business Center

By: Sean Nealon, Oregon State University

Oregon State University has been selected to co-lead a \$30 million U.S. Department of Agriculture regional food business center that will support farmers, ranchers and other food-related businesses to access new markets and navigate federal, state and local resources.

The Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Food Business Center, which Oregon State will lead with Colorado State University, will serve Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming.

It is [one of 12 new USDA centers](#) nationally that are part of a \$400 million initiative that focuses on small and mid-sized farm and food businesses within local and regional food systems. The centers will focus on historically underinvested and underserved communities in their region.


“This is important recognition of the work we have been doing to build a strong local food economy in Oregon, in collaboration with farmers, food businesses, grassroots organizations, and many other partners around our state,” said [Lauren Gwin](#), interim director of [OSU’s Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems](#) in the College of Agricultural Sciences and OSU Extension community food systems specialist. “We are excited to take this work to another level, here at home and across the West.”

The Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Food Business Center will focus on four areas that are priorities for the six-state region:

- Strengthening local supply chains for animal proteins. This work will support small- and mid-scale meat and poultry businesses by expanding the Western Meat School, led by the [Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network](#), a national program within OSU’s Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems. Participants learn

about producing, financing, processing, marketing and pricing niche meat products. [Rebecca Thistlethwaite](#), NMPAN Director, will co-lead this area.

- Connecting and scaling food entrepreneurs. Guidance and resources from government agencies and institutions are key for business development, but often don’t align with the needs of small- and mid-sized enterprises. The work will facilitate connections among entrepreneurs and disseminate information about resources and programs that could aid those looking to scale their businesses. [Sarah Masoni](#) of Oregon State’s Food Innovation Center will co-lead this area.
- Supporting climate-resilient agriculture. Scientific research is focused on developing climate resilient grants and other crops, but information about how to process and market those products is lacking. This work will expand processing infrastructure, develop new products, help create supply chain contracts and implement marketing strategies using those climate-resilient crops.
- “Right-sizing” investment and infrastructure. This work includes improving two-way understanding and communication between food producers, processors, and distributors and investors, banks, and other sources of capital that potentially can provide funding. The investment and infrastructure work is particularly crucial to supply chain infrastructure and systems, which must be the appropriate scale for producers, products and markets to thrive

The Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Food Business Center will be supported by a regional steering committee with staff from OSU and Colorado State, teams from each of the six states and four priority areas, and community leaders from underserved and underinvested communities engaged at all levels in the center. 

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RFC APPRENTICES:

- Are hired as waged employees by the Host Farm, paid at least minimum wage, and protected by state and federal labor laws
- May live on or off the farm (offering on-farm housing is not a requirement)
- Attend an online and in-person educational series of classes, farm tours, and weekend intensives to complement their on-farm experience
- Benefit from a structured program with discussion circles, networking opportunities, ongoing access to RFC resource materials, support, and technical assistance

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO SEE IF HOSTING AN APPRENTICE IS A GOOD FIT FOR YOUR FARM.

[ROGUEFARMCORPS.ORG/HOST](https://roguefarmcorps.org/host)

APPLICATIONS OPEN THROUGH NOVEMBER 15



Warm Season Forage Field Day

By: Sophia Nowers, Intern, OSU Small Farms Program

On August 10th, the Warm Season Forage Field Day was held at the USDA Plant Materials Center near Corvallis, Oregon. The 15 attendees toured the trial plots of safflower, lablab, sweet blue lupin, Bermuda grass and other species while Dr. Shayan Ghajar spoke about his research. He is growing annual and perennial warm season forage species in both irrigated and dry farmed plots to test their suitability for Oregon's summers. Dr. Ghajar said that currently the number of warm season forage species used in Oregon are limited due to a lack of research. Through his work, he hopes to expand the options for producers with forage-based operations,

helping them adapt to the weather extremes and uncertainties caused by climate change. So far this season, he has experienced the most success in the trial plot where he planted all nine warm season forage species he is researching together, suggesting that species diversity increases forage yields.

Please reach out to Dr. Shayan Ghajar at shayan.ghajar@oregonstate.edu if you are a forage grower who would like to trial the forage species being researched. Thank you to Dr. Ghajar for putting on this event, and we look forward to having it again next year! ∞

Photo courtesy of Sophia Nowers



Groundwater Survey

Auburn University is exploring private well owner's knowledge about groundwater. We invite you to take a brief survey which would require about 10 to 15 minutes of your time.

The goal of this study is to understand groundwater knowledge across the United States by measuring private well owner's groundwater knowledge, perceptions of groundwater, well management and stewardship, and demographics through an online survey. As a resident of Oregon, we value your input and perspective as there is a local and individualized nature to private well water.

Results from this survey will help researchers understand groundwater knowledge and what factors affect differing levels of knowledge. Information gleaned from this study can also help researchers and program coordinators assess programs, resources, and education for private well owners.

Would you like to help? To see if you are eligible, please read the requirements below.

Who can participate?

- Private well owners and users
- People who are 18 years or older
- People that engage or interact with a program about their private wells (an example would be through Cooperative Extension or Department of Health)

Why Should You Participate?

- You will be helping to advance scientific research
- You will be helping to understand and collect information about outreach programs and resources available for well owners and users

If you fit these requirements and are interested in helping, you can find more information and the survey here: https://aub.ie/groundwater_usa

If you have any questions, please contact me, Bethany Foust at bgf0004@auburn.edu or Dr. Stephanie Rogers at s.rogers@auburn.edu.

Thank you for helping to improve our understanding of groundwater knowledge!



Online Courses offered by the OSU Small Farms Program

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