



Oregon Small Farm News

Oregon State University Small Farms Program

In This Issue:

Exploring Dry Farmed Winter Tomatoes in the PNW	2
Managing Tansy Ragwort: Know your options and the best timing for controlling this toxic weed.	7
Small Meat Processors & Regulatory Burden - NMPAN Evaluates The Impact of Federal Agency Oversight	9
Living On the Land: Small Acreage Stewardship Series Being Offered in the Southern Willamette Valley	11
HB 2785 Strengthens Oregon Small & Niche Meat Processing Sector	12
Save the Date: OSU Small Farms Conference	15

OSU Extension Service Small Farms Program

Garry Stephenson
Extension Small Farms Specialist, Corvallis, OR 97331

Lauren Gwin
Extension Community Food Systems Specialist
Corvallis, OR 97331

Nick Andrews
Organic Extension Program, 503-678-1264

Melissa Fery
Benton, Linn, & Lane Counties, 541-730-3538

Amy Garrett
Benton, Linn, & Lane Counties, 541-713-5000

Dr. Shayan Ghajar, Organic Pastures & Forages
541-737-2821

Danielle Knueppel, Josephine County, 541-476-6613

Maud Powell
Jackson & Josephine Counties, 541-776-7371

Nicole Sanchez
Klamath, Lake, & Harney Counties, 541-883-7131

Heather Stoven
Yamhill County, 503-678-1264

Audrey Comerford
Outreach Program Coordinator, Agritourism,
503-588-5301

Chrissy Lucas
Outreach Program Coordinator, Statewide,
541-713-5009

Teagan Moran
Outreach Program Coordinator, Benton, Linn &
Lane Counties, 541-713-5011

Heidi Noordijk
Outreach Program Coordinator, Clackamas &
Washington Counties, 503-678-1264

Andrea Stith
Outreach Program Coordinator, Wasco County

Julia Wentzel
Outreach Program Coordinator, Clatsop &
Tillamook Counties, 503-842-3433

Hayley White
Outreach Program Coordinator, Polk & Marion
Counties, 503-623-8395

Renee Johnson
Program Assistant, Lincoln County, 541-283-5119

Cover Photo:

Dry-farmed Open Oak dent corn at
2021 OSU Dry Farming Field Day.
Photo by Garry Stephenson

Oregon State University Extension Service offers educational programs, activities, and materials without discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, disability, and disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran status. Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Exploring Dry Farmed Winter Tomatoes in the PNW

By: Amy Garrett, Lane Selman, and Asher Whitney (Undergraduate Research Assistant), Oregon State University, Small Farms Program

In the Mediterranean there is a centuries old tradition of growing certain tomato varieties for storing either in boxes or hung in ristras (Photo 1) and put in the pantry or shed to consume throughout the winter months. While there are some farmers in the Pacific Northwest that grow a few of these varieties, we do not typically see locally grown tomatoes in the winter at local grocers, farmers' markets, and Fill Your Pantry events. In addition, many of these winter tomato varieties (Table 1) are traditionally dry farmed. These realizations inspired a collaboration between the OSU Dry Farming Project, Dry Farming Collaborative, and the Culinary Breeding Network in 2021 to dry farm multiple varieties of winter tomatoes and evaluate their productivity, quality, flavor, and storability.

How are winter tomatoes different from other types?

Winter tomatoes, like the prized 'Piennolo del Vesuvio' (Photo 1) from the Campania region of Italy, tend to have a thicker skin, lower water content, and firmer flesh than summer slicers or cherry tomatoes.



Piennolo del Vesuvio

Photo credit: Italy Magazine

'Piennolo del Vesuvio' and many of the other winter tomato varieties (Table 1) are typically hung in bunches or stored in boxes in a well ventilated, cool, dry space after harvest. These tomatoes are then used in the winter months for pizza or pasta sauces and bruschetta in Italy, and for tapas like pan con tomate or grilled tomato bread in Spain.

Table 1: Winter Tomato Varieties

Variety	Seed Sources	Descriptions
Piennolo del Vesuvio	Fruition Seeds, Salerno	Piennolo del Vesuvio Tomato is early to mature in short seasons, has low water content, thick skins and is traditionally hung and enjoyed in the winter months. From Napoli region of Italy.
Pendolino F1	Salerno	A very productive F1 hybrid variety. Very resistant to viruses and drought and has good leaf coverage that protects fruit from the sun. Intense red-coloured fruits with drop shaped protuberance .
Piennolo Giallo del Vesuvio	Salerno	“Piennolo Giallo” is said to be a yellow mutation of the classic Piennolo del Vesuvio. The fruits are a rounded pear shape with a sharp pointed tip. Size ranges from 1 to 2 ounces, From Napoli region of Italy.
Pomodoro Pumidori de Jerno sel “Annarita”	Smarites.Bio	Annarita is harvested in August and September and can be stored until April. To store, hang the tomatoes in a cool, sheltered place, they can also be laid in wooden boxes. From Puglia region of Italy.
Tomaquet de Penjar Bombeta	The Seedstead	In fall, lift the entire plant and hang upside down. The fruit will continue to ripen over a few months, giving you rich tasting, fresh tomatoes right into winter. From Spain.
Grappoli d’Inverno	Adaptive Seeds	Small bushes ripen early with 1-2 oz, plum-sized fruit that is tied in ristras, hung in a cool place and stored for months. Grappoli d’Inverno means ‘bunches of winter’ in Italian.
Principe Borghese	Adaptive seeds	Classic Italian sun drying tomato. One oz fruit are usually dried for winter use. When hung they can be kept for weeks or longer.
Tomate de colgar Can Bogunya	Les Refardes	Orange, reddish fruits, quite thick, elongated and pointed. They are kept hanging until early the following summer. From Pep Lleuger, Can Bogunyà, Castellar del Vallès (Spain)..
Tomate de colgar pequeño del Ramallet	Les Refardes	Small orange fruits of excellent preservation. They are kept hanging until early the following summer. From Can Bosc del Baró, Foixà, Baix Empordà (Spain).
Tomate de colgar Mala Cara	Les Refardes	Round fruit, medium size, the skin is a touch of wax, not shiny and a dull red. Potato leaf. They are kept hanging until early the following summer. From Josefina, Torah (Spain).
Tomate de colgar Mallorqui	Les Refardes	Produces a few bunches full of small, rounded tomatoes with pointed ends. Excellent conservation and very good. They are kept hanging until the summer. From Mercat de Solsona (Spain).
Tomate de colgar Son Gil	Les Refardes	Variety of round pink fruits. It is grown without pruning. They are kept hanging until early the following summer. From Xisco Nicolau, Sant Joan, Mallorca (Spain).
Tomate de colgar Montgri	Les Refardes	Variety of red, medium fruits, has typical castle at the top. Very good Conservation. From Can Bosc del Baró, Baix Empordà (Spain).
Tomate Pera Delta	Les Refardes	Very productive variety. Solid fruits of an intense red, with a lot of meat and little water. From Mas Pastoret, Torredembarra (Spain).
Fakel	Nichols	Determinate. The productive compact bush with a stand of flame red, 3.5” slightly oblong tomatoes. Fakel holds well after harvest and is a good choice for packing in newspaper and holding. From Moscow, Russia.

Where can you find seed for winter tomato varieties?

While winter tomatoes are common in Europe, they are harder to come by in the U.S, with only a handful of U.S. based seed companies carrying a variety or two. For the 2021 Dry Farmed Tomato Trial at Oregon State University, Amy Garrett was able to procure some Spanish varieties, with some help from Alex Stone (OSU Vegetable Crops Specialist) and connections via the Organic Seed Growers Conference, at Les Refardes (<https://www.lesrefardes.coop/>) in Mura, Spain during her trip there in February 2020. Lane Selman with the Culinary Breeding Network was key in sourcing some Italian winter tomato varieties with her connections via the Gusto Italiano Project.

Story of 'Annarita'

'Annarita' was one of the varieties Lane procured for the 2021 OSU Dry Farmed Winter Tomato Trial.

In addition to the seeds, there is a rich history and story (below) that is shared with them that is just as valuable as the tomatoes themselves.

Annarita's father drove trains for a living and brought seed of this storage tomato (aka Pomodoro d'Inverno) from Puglia 50 years

ago when he moved north to Padova. Annarita shared the seed with Italian plant breeder Andrea Ghedina of Smarties.bio in April 2019.

Annarita is harvested in August and September and can be stored until April. To store, hang the tomatoes in a cool but sheltered place, like a garage. They store for 6 months or more. The ideal would be to keep them hanging in clusters so they are more ventilated. When it is not possible to hang them, they can be laid in wooden boxes.

It is most often consumed raw; on friselle (a special dry bread from Puglia) with a drizzle of oil and oregano – similar to bruschetta; or cooked to flavor dishes such as fish soup or sauces. It is not used to make tomato puree.

OSU Dry Farmed Winter Tomato Trial

The OSU Dry Farming Project initiated the Dry Farmed Winter Tomato Trial in 2021 and hired undergraduate research assistant, Asher Whitney, with support through E.R. Jackman Friends and Alumni internship program to lead the project. This trial sprouted from Alex Stone's dry farmed tomato project with Western SARE evaluating hundreds



Cluster of 'Annarita' tomatoes harvested mid-August in Corvallis.

Photo credit: Amy Garrett

Gusto Italiano Project

The 'Gusto Italiano Project' is a new collaboration between Culinary Breeding Network, Uprising Seeds and northern Italian vegetable breeders at Smarties.bio.

The project was born from a mutual love of radicchio and a desire to further establish it as an anchor of the fall and winter produce season here in North America, and specifically the Pacific Northwest. Lane Selman (OSU) is collaborating with breeder Andrea (Smarties.Bio) and WA-based Uprising Seeds through this project to exchange varieties of Italian vegetables that grow well in the PNW including radicchio, brassicas and now tomatoes! For additional information, questions, comments or suggestions, email info@oregontaste.com.



Piennolo del Vesuvio,

Photo Credit: Italy Magazine

<https://uprisingorganics.com/pages/gusto-italiano>

of dry farmed tomato varieties for quality, productivity and flavor in the Willamette Valley. Alex's project is focusing on larger slicer and sauce tomato varieties, rather than smaller cherry-sized tomatoes like many of these winter storage tomatoes, which presented an irresistible opportunity to try them out!

The 2021 Dry Farmed Winter Tomato Trial was held at the OSU Oak Creek Center for Urban Horticulture (OCCUH) in Corvallis, Oregon. Tomato seeds were started in the greenhouse on March 30th and transplanted in the field on May 18th. Multiple varieties of winter tomatoes (Table 1) are being evaluated for their productivity and quality in a dry farmed system, and then flavor and storability will be evaluated this fall and winter. In addition to the main trial at OCCUH, several of these varieties (Piennolo del Vesuvio, Mala Cara, and Pequeño del Ramallet) are being trialed by 15 growers in the Dry Farming Collaborative throughout Oregon, Washington, and California. These growers are dry farming these varieties in their respective locations and providing feedback via SeedLinked, which is an app we use to facilitate data collection from variety trials with multiple growers.

Projects like these are important to many of the participants because finding varieties that are successful dry farmed can be “difficult, frustrating and often costly.” Many growers in the Dry Farming Collaborative, dry farm out of necessity due to a lack of water rights, and limited water and labor availability. In a dry farm system there is not irrigation to manage, and therefore, less annual weeds to manage as well. Climate resilience and food security is another important motivational factor. Asher highlighted that, “having access to winter tomatoes such as these could allow for food insecure folks to have more locally grown, healthy, fresh produce through the winter.”



Asher Whitney featuring winter tomatoes at the Dry Farm Tomato Fest
Photo by Gemma Fanelli

Dry Farm Tomato Fest!

Outreach and education for the Dry Farmed Winter Tomato Trial and other dry farming research projects are shared via multiple events throughout the year, such as the recent and possibly the first ever Dry Farm Tomato Fest held on September 11, 2021 at the Wellspend Market parking lot in Portland! This event attracted more than 250 attendees and was organized by the Culinary Breeding

Network, Wellspend Market, OSU Dry Farming Project and the Dry Farming Institute.

The purpose of the event was to engage and educate consumers about dry farming. Attendees had the opportunity to taste various varieties of dry farmed tomatoes from Alex Stone's WSARE-funded project and purchase rstras of storage tomatoes to try this winter. 120 tasting kits were distributed and more than 30 participants walked away with rstras of winter tomatoes.

To learn more about future events and results from these and other dry farming research projects visit the OSU Dry Farming Project website <https://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/smallfarms/dry-farming> and connect with the Dry Farming Collaborative on Facebook, Instagram, or our new YouTube channel! 🍅

Growing Farms

Serious about farming?

Come learn how to navigate the biological, financial and human aspects of small-scale farming.



This hybrid course is designed for beginning specialty crop & livestock farmers in their first 5 years of business. Students will develop a whole farm plan. Course consists of six online modules, three classroom sessions, and a field trip.

When: Tuesdays, Jan 18, Feb 1, & Mar 1 2022 - 6:00-8:00pm
Feb 15 - All Day Farm Tour

Where: North Willamette Research and Extension Center
15210 NE Miley Rd, Aurora, OR

Cost: \$100 per person
Scholarships Available

REGISTRATION WILL OPEN ON NOVEMBER 29. DISCOUNT FOR OSU SMALL FARMS CONFERENCE (FEB 19) IS INCLUDED.

Contact Hayley White for questions - hayley.white@oregonstate.edu



**Oregon State University
Extension Service**



Oregon State University Extension Service offers educational programs, activities, and materials without discrimination based on age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran's status. Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Managing Tansy Ragwort: Know your options and the best timing for controlling this toxic weed.

By: Hayley White, Oregon State University, Small Farms Program

Yellow is a bright and cheery color, but for farmers and land managers in the valley it can bring a sense of doom. Tansy ragwort is a weed with green ruffled leaves and clusters of small, bright yellow flowers. It is toxic and difficult to eradicate once established. This is in part due to its deep root and prolific seed production with up to 200,000 seeds per plant. It is generally a biennial plant that grows in cool, wet, cloudy areas and can quickly invade disturbed sites like pastures, rangeland, riparian areas, logging areas, and construction sites.



Cinnabar moth caterpillars feeding on tansy ragwort.
Photo by Lynn Ketchum

Introduced to the Western U.S. in the 1920s, tansy became an issue with its peak in the 1970s. Because of its toxicity, it had a devastating effect on cattle and horses. Researchers at Oregon State University conducted extensive feeding trials, determining that the alkaloids in the plant are a “cumulative toxin” resulting in liver damage over time. The highest concentration of alkaloids are in the flowers, however all parts of the plant are considered toxic. It only takes around 4% - 8% of body weight in horses and cows to be fatal. For example, a 1200-pound cow would need to consume 48 pounds of the green plant for a lethal dose. This can occur with one single feeding or over a period of months or years.

In the early 1970’s the Oregon Department of Agriculture launched a biological control program to reduce tansy ragwort infestations. The biological control included three insects – the cinnabar moth, flea beetle, and seed head fly. These insects feed primarily on tansy ragwort and can do significant damage to the plant when populations are high. The insects follow a boom and bust cycle with the plant and may take a few years to build up their

population to do enough damage to an effected area. If management conditions are favorable for the insects, the tansy ragwort infestation can be reduced significantly. However, this approach might require isolating the infested area to allow the biological control to be undisturbed and

may not be applicable for every situation.

Due to the success of the biological controls, especially the tansy ragwort flea beetle, tansy maintained a low profile until 2005. A winter drought was followed by a warm wet spring, which created the conditions for resurgence of the noxious weed. Because tansy populations were low, so were the biocontrol agent populations that depend on the weed. The occurrence of long, wet and cool spring seasons also favors the tansy and hinders the biocontrols. This boom and bust cycle is a natural cycle, and it takes several years for the insects to build up and re-control the weed. Tansy ragwort has now made a big comeback in parts of the western Oregon, especially in the foothills where livestock grazing is prevalent. It remains to be seen if the biocontrols are able to make a comeback as well.

Overgrazing and poor pasture management are contributing factors to tansy ragwort poisoning. If you do not have a healthy grass stand and you place hungry cows or horses on a pasture without proper nutrition, they can resort to eating tansy ragwort. One of the worst things livestock owners

can do is to pull or mow tansy and leave it to wilt and dry in the pasture. Once dried the plant loses its qualities that warn the animal of its toxicity, it becomes more palatable and increases the likelihood of consumption. If you are going to pull, mow, or spray the plant, bag it up and take it to a landfill. Any methods you choose to target tansy ragwort should be paired with a strategic plan to improve your pasture and soil health. By seeding, fertilizing, and minimizing disturbance, tansy ragwort will have less room and resources to compete.

In the months of July and August, tansy is in full bloom and has grown to maturity. This is when the plant is the most obvious and unavoidable to farmers, but it is the hardest time to manage it. If you spray or mow the plant while in full bloom, you are more likely to disperse the seeds and can encourage more growth. The best time to control tansy ragwort is in the fall or spring when there is new growth and seedlings are in the rosette stage.

If you prefer to use chemical agents against the weed, experts recommend applying an herbicide in the fall or during spring before the plant bolts. You can mow and bag the dead plant material, and after rains bring new seedlings or the green up of the rosettes, apply herbicide. An economical option would be an herbicide with 2, 4-D + dicamba that is labeled for use on tansy ragwort. Always follow the directions and restrictions on the label as herbicides can have different recommended timing and application rates. This herbicide information is only a brief and general summary, it is best to consult a local professional for a personalized recommendation.

For those who wish to manage the plant without chemicals, your options include pulling the plant by hand, using biological control insects, and improving your pasture. Another option for those who have access to sheep can include targeted grazing. Sheep are generally immune to the toxins in tansy ragwort if they graze in the spring and early summer. Placing the sheep in the affected area while the plants are smaller and in the rosette stage can aid in your control efforts, however this is not recommended when the plant is mature.



Tansy ragwort flea beetles feeding on the leaves of the plant.
Photo by Devi O'Carroll

No matter which options you prefer, be prepared to be in it for the long haul. Especially for severe infestations, it can take several years to get tansy under control. It is always best to combine multiple control methods with best management practices for your pasture and affected areas. The Polk Soil and Water Conservation District and OSU Polk County Extension Service are here to help you in your efforts to manage tansy ragwort and improve your pasture. 🐑

For more information visit:

- OSU Extension Weed Resources - <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/pests-weeds-diseases>
- Oregon Department of Agriculture, Noxious Weed Control - <http://oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/>
- Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook - <https://pnwhandbooks.org/weed>
- Recorded Webinar on biocontrol for tansy ragwort and targeted grazing for weed management - https://media.oregonstate.edu/media/t/1_97vl96kc
- Tansy Ragwort Fact Sheet - <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/pests-weeds-diseases/weeds/tansy-ragwort>

Small Meat Processors & Regulatory Burden - NMPAN Evaluates The Impact of Federal Agency Oversight

By: Rebecca Thistlethwaite Director, Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network, Oregon State University

The Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network, a project of the Center for Small Farms, was contracted to write an external evaluation of how USDA Food Safety and Inspection Services (FSIS) provides support and oversight for the small and very small meat processing establishments that they inspect. NMPAN submitted the final report to FSIS in December 2020 and FSIS published it to their website (<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/news-events/publications/2020-report-guidance-and-outreach-small-and-very-small-meat-processors>) in June of 2021.

are large-scale with over 500 employees, 39% are small-scale with 10-499 employees, and 55% are very small in scale with less than 10 employees. Thus, the vast majority of establishments that FSIS inspects are considered small or very small (SVS) processors.

FSIS has released some new demographic datasets that help illustrate the vast differences in slaughter and processing volumes at plants of various sizes (Tables 1-2). Most SVS plants fall into the lowest three volume brackets for slaughter and processing. For slaughter, 66% of the 1,091 of plants that

This report (https://www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media_file/2021-06/2020_Report_on_Small-Very_Small_Processor_Outreach.pdf), was authorized by Congress in the 2018 Farm Bill. Its purpose was to assess the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) interactions with small and very small meat processors in three main areas: outreach, information tools, and responsiveness. Small and very small meat processors are very different from large processors in fundamental ways, not just their scale of operation. These differences have implications for the effectiveness of FSIS communication with SVS plants.

According to the Meat and Poultry Inspection Directory, of all inspected meat slaughter and processing establishments, 6.5%

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF MEAT AND POULTRY SLAUGHTER ESTABLISHMENT IN EACH VOLUME BRACKET

ANIMAL SLAUGHTER VOLUME BRACKET (HEAD PER YEAR)	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS IN VOLUME BRACKET	PERCENT OF ESTABLISHMENTS IN VOLUME BRACKET
Less than 1,000	254	23%
1,000-9,999	306	28%
10,000-99,999	161	15%
100,000-9,999,999	201	18%
10,000,000 or more	169	16%

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF MEAT AND POULTRY PROCESSING ESTABLISHMENTS IN EACH VOLUME BRACKET

MEAT PROCESSING VOLUME BRACKET (POUNDS PER MONTH)	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS IN VOLUME BRACKET	PERCENT OF ESTABLISHMENTS IN VOLUME BRACKET
Less than 10,000	1,107	20%
10,000-99,999	1,868	34%
100,000-999,999	1,026	19%
1,000,000-9,999,999	997	18%
10,000,000 or more	467	9%

Source: USDA FSIS, FSIS - Establishment Demographic Data - Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Directory Supplement. (2020), <https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/fsis-establishment-demographic-data-meat-and-poultry-inspection-mpi-directory-supplement>.

slaughter livestock or poultry are in the lowest three volume brackets of animal slaughter establishments. For processing, 73% of 5,465 plants are in the lowest three volume brackets of meat processing establishments. Once again, the majority of meat processing plants that FSIS inspects are small volume establishments. As their main constituency, it is important that they are responsive to their needs. That is the main impetus for the NMPAN report.

Assessments of outreach, information tools, and responsiveness were conducted by compiling feedback from SVS processors about their experiences with the FSIS and comparing those experiences to FSIS policy and its recent efforts in the relevant topic areas. Processor feedback was collected via round table discussions, surveys, interviews, and key informant reviews of early versions of this report.


One interesting part of the report was the special case study regarding humane handling violations in small facilities. It is an area that small plants struggle with, particularly around the issue of mis-stuns (not rendering the animal senseless on the first knock or shot). Through research, NMPAN found out that 98.2% of all humane handling violations were received by SVS plants, even though they make up 93.5% of inspected establishments. Small plants were also more likely to be shut down for more days than large plants, with a median number of 3 days as compared to 1 day for large plants. This is disparity is a frequent area of concern for SVS plants and one that this report highlighted extensively.

Key recommendations from the report include:

- Continuing to find ways for small and very small processors to interact and share experiences directly with high-level FSIS leadership.
- Standardizing the information provided by FSIS across platforms, documents, and personnel to eliminate conflicting or confusing information.
- Studying inspection decisions and enforcement actions across circuits, districts, and inspectors to identify potential inconsistencies or biases.

- Frequently updating information sources to eliminate out-of-date information.
- Upgrading information access tools.
- Providing explicit benchmarks and procedural guidance for meeting regulatory requirements with the time and financial constraints of SVS plants in mind.
- Closely examining humane handling regulatory procedures for small and very small plants.

According to the FSIS website, they have made an effort in recent years to collect small and very small processor feedback through roundtable listening sessions, something that NMPAN has been a lead organizer of (along with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition). Also, in the last 8 months of 2021, FSIS has made new guidance documents and webinar resources targeted to issues those small plants face. These efforts are appreciated, and we at NMPAN (along with our members) hope that they represent a renewed effort by FSIS to connect with their small and very small plant stakeholders that will continue well into the future.

To download the full report, please go here: https://www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media_file/2021-06/2020%20Report%20on%20Small-Very%20Small%20Processor%20Outreach.pdf 

Living On the Land: Small Acreage Stewardship Series Being Offered in the Southern Willamette Valley

Living on the Land is a class series designed for landowners new to managing small-acreage farms and properties. The four classes in the series will be offered virtually via Zoom on Tuesday evenings from 6-8 PM. We anticipate scheduling an in-person clinic to offer free nitrate screenings for well water, hands-on activities, and networking.

Registration is required as space is limited. Cost is \$20 for the series. Scholarships are available - please contact Teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu
Register online: <https://beav.es/3K2> or contact Teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu 541-713-5011

Schedule:

October 5 – Weed Management

- Learn about management strategies for common weeds on your land.

October 12 – Managing Natural Resources & Soil Health

- Learn the basics of planning for natural resource management, including soil health.

October 19 – Understanding Your Water: Surface Water, Domestic Wells & Septic Systems

- Learn about water rights, ways to protect drinking water sources and how to manage septic systems.

October 26 – Pasture & Grazing Management

- Make the most of your pasture by learning how grass plants grow, rotational grazing, nutrient and winter-time management.

This program is sponsored by the Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area in partnership with the OSU Extension Service Small Farms and Well Water programs. 🌿



2021 Western Alfalfa & Forage Symposium

The 2021 Western Alfalfa & Forage Symposium will be held in-person November 16-18, 2021, at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nevada. This year, an agricultural educational tour of Nevada is being offered, visiting a dairy, a specialized goat dairy, distillery, the Derby Dam and Newlands water project, and a hay export operation. **Early bird registration has been extended through September 30th!** Registration is open and can be found at <https://calhaysymposium.com/conference-registration/>.

A poster session will be hosted with posters related to alfalfa and forages displayed during the entirety of the Symposium. For those who wish to share their information at the Symposium, we ask you submit your poster by October 8th. More information can be found in the attached or at <https://calhaysymposium.com/posters/>.

Continuing Education Units will also be available.

Please contact Nicole Helms, Symposium Coordinator, nicole@agamsi.com ms
Western Alfalfa & Forage Symposium | 916-505-1821 | calhaysymposium.com



HB 2785 Strengthens Oregon Small & Niche Meat Processing Sector

By: Rebecca Thistlethwaite Director, Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network, Oregon State University

The Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network (NMPAN), a project of OSU's Small Farm Center, has been advising non-profits, legislators, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture over the last couple years on what they can do to strengthen the small and niche meat processing sector in Oregon. To those ends, we wrote a letter of support for HB 2785, which authorized a new grant program for Oregon's small meat processors, and provides some financial support for OSU's own Clark Meat Science Lab. NMPAN Director Rebecca Thistlethwaite checked in with Amy Wong of [Friends of Family Farmers](#) (FOFF), an Oregon non-profit dedicated to small farm viability, about their support of this bill and other legislative efforts to bolster the sector.

FOFF's big win was getting their priority bill, HB2785, the grant fund to expand small scale meat processing, passed on the last day of the 2021 session. The grant fund was allotted \$2 million, plus an additional \$300K for [OSU's Clark Meat Science Center](#). While the initial ask was \$10 million, this long-overdue investment should be considered a major milestone for small farmers and ranchers who have pushed for expanded processing for decades. ODA also mentioned that there is the possibility of adding additional resources to the grant fund, pending success. FoFF hopes to participate in ODA's administration e around this grant fund and helped identify small processors that would like to participate in Oregon's nascent State Meat Inspection Program.

Below is a Q & A that FoFF's Policy Director did with the State Innovation Exchange (SiX), that they agreed to share, which sheds light on the legislative process surrounding HB2785.

1. Why was this bill needed and how will this bill help Oregon small farmers?

The consolidation of meat processing in the U.S. has

led to a dearth of regional processing capacity, as well as issues with corporate control of the food supply. Oregon's already acute lack of meat processing capacity was severely strained during COVID-19, as industrial meat processing facilities were closed by virus outbreaks and [out-of-state producers sent meat to the Pacific Northwest](#) for processing, taking away precious processing slots for Oregon farmers and ranchers. Increased demand for local meat also further taxed an already burdened system, with even seasoned producers lamenting the loss of processing slots. The Legislature recognized the importance of this issue when it passed [HB 4206](#) in 2019, authorizing ODA to begin the process of establishing a State Meat Inspection Program. However, to be truly successful, the State Meat Inspection Program needed a concurrent grant fund to help expand processing capacity, especially in rural Oregon.

[HB 2785](#) established a \$2 million grant program to fund expansion, upgrades, and technical and other necessities, such as equipment, as laid out in the [programs in other states](#). The bill includes an additional \$300K allocation for OSU's Clark Meat Science Center. The legislature has also expressed a willingness to add funds to the grant fund with money from the American Rescue Plan, as long as the grant fund is proving viable.

2. What role did FoFF play in supporting legislators to connect with farmers on this bill?

FoFF strategically enlisted the help of a supportive farmer in the district of a key legislator to ensure that there was active constituent participation, which was critical to getting the bill across the finish line. FoFF also leaned heavily on the farmers and ranchers in the organization's Oregon Pasture Network Program to submit testimony and speak with legislators. FoFF also offered legislators access to farmers, ranchers, and processors in the event

that they needed additional input. They also worked with Legislative Counsel to draft the amendments for the bill, which strengthened it considerably.

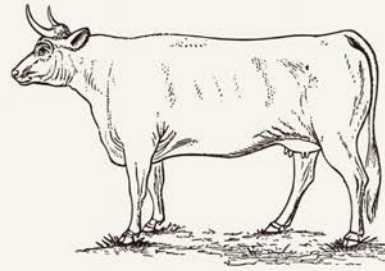
3. If you had advice to legislators in other states working on a similar bill, what would it be?

Seize the opportunity to work on a truly bipartisan issue that largely will bring about rural economic development, regional food security, and better health outcomes. There are so many partisan fights in state legislatures. Local meat processing is a topic that should be easy to get buy-in on both sides of the aisle, as long as environmentally-minded legislators understand the benefits.

4. Was there any opposition to this bill? If so, how did FoFF help legislators to navigate tensions in order to get the bill passed?

Some “environmental” and/or vegetarian/vegan legislators were opposed to the bill because they see meat consumption as a driver of climate change.

However, small-scale regional meat production can actually help fight climate change through beneficial pasture management and carbon sequestration in soil. It was necessary to do repeated outreach to these legislators to get them to understand that factory farms are the true problem and building an alternative food system, including small scale meat processing, is a way to create regional food security that is both resilient and environmentally-sound.



Now
100%
online

THE WESTERN MEAT SCHOOL

Online Short Course

Master all the essentials for direct marketing niche meat from experts in production, marketing, processing & pricing.

Comprehensive, self-paced short course to take your meat business to the next level. Farmers, ranchers, butchers, & others are encouraged to sign up.

-14 modules, 30 hours of education-

Go to www.westernmeatschool.com to enroll.

You can get involved in FOFF's efforts by visiting their website <https://friendsoffamilyfarmers.org/>

To learn more about NMPAN, please see their website <http://www.nichemeatprocessing.org/> 

Online Courses offered by the OSU Small Farms Program

Available anytime online and self-paced. Register at: <https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/catalog-page#all-courses>



**GROWING FARMS ONLINE:
SUCCESSFUL WHOLE FARM
MANAGEMENT**

FREE
Whole Farm Management
Book Included with
Registration

On Demand. Access Anytime

3-6 hours per online module

Online

To Growing Farms: Successful Whole Farm Management
<https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/growing-farms-online-successful-whole-farm-management>



FREE

**GROWING FARMS:
INTRODUCTION TO PASTURE
AND GRAZING MANAGEMENT**

On Demand. Access Anytime.

Online

Free

To Pasture Management:
<https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/pasture-and-grazing-management>



**GROWING FARMS SHORT
COURSE: ECOLOGICAL
STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING
INSECTS ON A FARM**

now \$10

On Demand. Access Anytime.

2-4 hours

Online

To Ecological Strategies
<https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/growing-farms-short-course-ecological-strategies-for-managing-insects-on-a-farm>

Save the Date

February 19th, 2022

OSU Oregon Small Farms Conference

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

We can't wait to see you there

