

Oregon Small Farm News

Oregon State University Small Farms Program

In This Issue:

The 13th OSU Small Farms Conference	2
FSMA and Small Farms: Time to Weight In	6
Session Videos from the 2013 OSU Small Farms Conference Available Online	8
From Poulet to Gullet: Poultry Processing at Standing Stone Brewery	9
2013 OSU Small Farms Conference Sources Food from Local Farms	11
You Can, But Should You?	12
Finding Support through Farmer to Farmer Networking	13
Notes from the Northwest Farmer-to-Farmer Exchange	15
MSN.com Slideshow Highlights New Generation of Oregon Farmers	18
Calendar	20

OSU Extension Service Small Farms Program

Garry Stephenson
Small Farms Program
Coordinator
Corvallis, OR 97330

Nick Andrews
Clackamas & Washington
Counties, 15210 NE Mile Rd
Aurora, OR 97002
503-678-1264

Melissa Fery
Benton, Linn, & Lane
Counties, 4077 SW Research
Way, Corvallis, OR 97333
541-766-6750

Amy Garrett
Benton, Linn, & Polk
Counties, 4077 SW Research
Way, Corvallis, OR 97333
541-766-6750

Melissa Matthewson
Special Programs, Statewide,
Applegate, OR 97530

Elizabeth Murphy
Jackson, Josephine, &
Douglas Counties, 569 Hanley
Rd, Central Point, OR 97502
541-776-7371

Maud Powell
Jackson, Josephine, &
Douglas Counties, 569 Hanley
Rd, Central Point, OR 97502
541-776-7371

Chrissy Lucas
Small Farms Program
Assistant, 4077 SW Research
Way, Corvallis, OR 97333
541-766-3556

Oregon Small Farm News Layout by:
Chrissy Lucas

Cover Photo:

Crowd during the Green-
horns/Grayhorns Keynote
Session at the 2013 OSU
Small Farms Conference

Photo by Shawn Linehan,
<http://www.shawnlinehan.com/>

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.

The 13th Small Farms Conference

By: Caitlyn Menne, Goat Song Farm

To Sing with Goats blog - www.lifeatmennageriefarm.blogspot.com

I almost overslept on Saturday morning, when March 2nd rolled around. My cell phone's alarm jangled repetitively, an hour earlier than usual, and in my sleepy state I couldn't for the life of me figure out why I had set it to such an earlier time. I flicked the alarm off and sank back into a light doze; my subconscious rationalizing the whole time why it was perfectly okay to sleep in...

There weren't any goat kids at present that needed to be fed, there was no cow waiting to be milked, no animals out on pasture waiting to be moved. No one would care if I slept in just a *tiny* bit longer, right? I really hope I'm not the only farmer who pleads guilty to the fault of early morning reasonings like this. Say it ain't so, folks!

Drifting back into the oblivious depths of slumber, my mind suddenly remembered why that alarm was going off earlier than normal. "Holy Kohlrabi, today's the OSU Small Farms Conference!" All thoughts of sleeping in were thrown out the window as I scrambled around and got myself ready to face the day. "Great... I'm running late, it's a one hour drive down to Corvallis, and I was already cutting it close when I was planning to leave on time!" Breakfast consisted of half a bagel. Barn chores were done so fast that even the pigs remained quiet as they watched me rush through everything like a whirling dervish. I couldn't find my jacket.

In the end though, I did manage to get out the door and to the conference in time. I even had ten minutes to spare. Granted, I probably could have had more than ten minutes to wander around the building if a parking spot had been easier to locate. Last year there was a head count of something like eight hundred people at the Small Farms Conference. As I surveyed the staggering amount of cars parked outside (or perhaps I should say the staggering LACK of parking space??), I wondered if we were going to break that record this year. I really hoped so.





I've been looking forward to the Small Farms conference literally all year. It's the highlight of my late winter days. Quite a few people have asked me why I enjoy it so much; why I want to go so badly each year. My first response to their questions is always rather tongue-in-cheek as I tell them to "come with me and they'll find out." But beyond my saucy answers, there are a few normal reasons why I love it. The main reason is that it's an amazing, information packed day. I love it that I can be in one building and learn anything from pasture management, starting a farmer network, basic artisan cheese making, to seed saving! Add in the fact it's an awesome way to meet likeminded people, the lunch is excellent (an army is not the only thing that marches on its stomach; this farm girl likes her food too!), and that the whole thing is done in a very professional manner, and you have before you the explanation as to why I've come to love this event. You won't find anything else like it.

I've obviously stated the pros about this conference, but what about cons? Are there any downsides to such an event? Yes, actually. There's one. I would say the only con I've found about the Small Farms Conference is that they put *entirely* too many good class choices in each session. [Insert a most un-amused look at such a predicament] That probably counts as a good problem, but it sure didn't seem like a good problem at the start, when I had to decide which classes to skip, and which ones to attend!

Finding a seat for the morning session was almost as hard as finding a parking space outside, it turns out.

I have no idea what the headcount was this year, but it sure looked like more than eight hundred to me... On second thought though, you probably shouldn't go by the word of a nearsighted person when it comes to counting. Soon enough a seat was found, and I eagerly waited for the keynote session which would spotlight some "greenhorn" farmers, and one "grayhorn." The movement of young farmers is burgeoning all across America, and this excites me to no end.

A young farmer myself, I was looking forward to hearing from other folks who were also in this category, and gleaned some new knowledge. I was not disappointed. The four greenhorn panelists shared their experiences in starting a farm with little experience, capital, or knowledge; yet despite the setbacks each one faced, they succeeded in their dreams, and succeeded quite well if I may say so! With the addition of Frank Morton (owner of Wild Garden Seed, in Philomath) as the "grayhorn" of the session, the dialogue between the five farmers was kept going at a lively pace that kept everyone interested and eager for more.

When the keynote session ended, I had to make that final decision on what class to go to next... There were three classes that I wanted to go to in the first session: The first being a continuation of the keynote session with the greenhorns and grayhorns. The second being a class on selling farm products via the internet. And the last was a pasture management 101 session. In the end, I chose to go to the pasture management class, and I'm glad I did!



I'm a small farmer who depends heavily on pasture to keep the farm running. For the last 5+ years I've been working on bringing the fertility of my pastures up, and I figured it would most likely be beneficial to learn more about taking care of the forage I grow out beyond my barn. And beneficial it most certainly

was! There were definitely a few "Oops" moments as I learned that one should never graze their pasture down more than 3" in height. I knew that I wasn't supposed to graze to the ground, but never knew that three inches is considered the lowest a person should let their pasture get. Or that the condition of your pastures in September/October is going to reflect what your pasture will be like next year?

Good heavens, why didn't someone tell me that sooner?! Okay, so I messed up a bit in 2012; but 2013 won't find me making those same mistakes.

I decided to keep "grass" as my theme for the day and my last two sessions to attend were 'Pasture Management 201' (basically a continuation of the first one; but more in depth), and 'Managing Breeding for Pasture Based Production.' I sorely wanted to go to the session about the basics of artisan cheese making... And *almost* did go to it, but veered off at the last minute and headed for the grass-based breeding session. First things first; get the grass in better shape before we add in another project to start.

The Pasture Management 201 session was every bit as good as the first, as we discussed topics such as rotational grazing, applying fertilizers, and watching for the daffodils. Wait a minute... Watching for daffodils? Um, wasn't this a class about *grass*? And now we're talking about flowers?



That one little tip about watching for daffodils made my whole day. Even if I walked away from the conference with nothing besides that little bit of information about the daffodils, I would have been happy. Allow me to explain now, before you start wondering if I'm off my rocker (i.e. daft, crazy, or "a French

fry short the order." Hehe). It seems that daffodils pop up and start blooming at the same time that grass starts growing again; so when you see daffodils, then you know that grazing season is a few weeks away (providing that your pastures weren't overgrazed in the Fall). Applying nitrogen to your pastures a couple weeks after you see the daffodils can also extend your grazing season!

So maybe I'm a simple person. Maybe I'm easy to please. Or maybe I'm just a farmer who gets excited about things like this. But that one little tip, to watch for the daffodils, was awesome. What a grand visual for us grass farmers! I was delighted when we were told this, as my own daffodils had just bloomed the week before. Rotational grazing, here I come!! If all goes according to plan, (I know, I know... When does *anything* go according to plan in the agriculture world?!) then my stock should be back out on grass by the time you read this sentence.

The last session, on managing a pasture based breeding program, was chock full of good information too, although slightly hard to mentally convert since I raise dairy animals and the panelists raised beef cattle and sheep. But I still kept busy jotting down notes, and came to realize that I'm really not culling hard enough in my own herds. Phooey. If you want to succeed with a pastured based herd, then you have to cull very aggressively and only keep the animals that fit the requirements of such a goal. You need an animal that

knows how to forage and knows how to convert that forage into meat/milk as efficiently as possible. You need an animal that can raise offspring each year, that isn't prone to sickness, and can withstand the elements without you coddling it. It seems I need to work on this... I have a tendency to keep animals that perhaps don't do so well on pasture because I like their pedigrees and genetics for milk production. But it seems it's time to tighten things up a bit and change course. I need those production genetics, but I more than that, I need genetics that won't fall apart when introduced to pasture. Wish me luck.



By the time the day was over, I was feeling rather cross-eyed from so much information, and if I had to choose between the two adjectives of feeling "hungry" and "ravenous," I sheepishly have to admit that I was leaning heavily towards the latter choice. If I didn't stand at 5' 7" then I might wonder if I was part hobbit after all.

The ride home was spent munching on a snack, looking over my notes, and spying daffodils on the highway's edge.

Daffodils are a good thing. So are Small Farms Conferences. This I know to be true.

See you next year? 🌿

SPRING 2013 CLASSES

SOUTHERN WILLAMETTE VALLEY SMALL FARMS PROGRAM

Spring is here! OSU Extension Service Small Farms Program is excited to be offering several classes this spring in Polk County for farmers and landowners interested in investigating marketing and processing options for farm products, visiting local farms and learning from local farmers, or considering starting a small farm.

Farm Tours in Polk County

Educational tours of an annual, perennial, and livestock based farm in Polk County. Farmers and ranchers will be sharing about their whole farm systems. Teal Creek Farm, Illahe Vineyard, and McK Ranch

Saturday, April 6th

9:00 - 4:00 pm

Meet at the Riverview Farmers' Market in Independence, OR

Passenger vans will depart promptly at 9 am

\$30/person

Exploring the Small Farm Dream

Are you living the small farm dream or hoping to one day? This class gives you an overview of some of the resources needed to start a successful farm and includes two local farmers sharing the story of how they got started and how their farm evolved into what it is today. Melissa Fery and Amy Garrett with OSU Extension, Jeannie Berg with Your Hometown Harvests, and Wendy Parker with Heritage Farms Northwest

Wednesday, April 17th

6:00 - 9:00 pm

Polk County Extension Office

289 E Ellendale, Suite 301, Dallas, OR 97338

\$15/person

For more information or to register, visit our website at

<http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/south-valley/events> or call

Amy Garrett or Melissa Fery at 541-766-3556.

Canola FAQ Page on Oregon Department of Agriculture Website

The Oregon Department of Agriculture has adopted an administrative rule that allows for some canola production in the Willamette Valley. The Department has started a Frequently Asked Questions web page at <http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/Pages/canola.aspx>

FSMA and Small Farms: Time to Weigh In

By: Lauren Gwin, Small Farms Program, Oregon State University

New federal food safety rules are coming for farmers, handlers, and processors. Before the rules are finalized, it's time for all small farmers – even if you think you are wholly or partly exempt – to tune in and weigh in. FDA needs to hear from you.

What is FSMA?

Two years ago, Congress passed and President Obama signed the first overhaul of food safety laws since the 1930s: the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The law applies to farms and food facilities – manufacturing/processing, packing, and holding – and was designed to prevent food borne illness.

The important – and hard-fought – “Tester/Hagen” amendments to FSMA were written to assure that there would still be a place for small-scale, sustainable agriculture. Provisions include:

- Create scale- (and risk-) appropriate regulations for small farms serving local and regional markets;
- Allow on-farm conservation and beneficial wildlife practices;
- Complement, not contradict, organic standards;
- Minimize extra regulations for low-risk, value-added processing.

Draft Rules Seeking Comment

On January 4 of this year, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration released draft regulations to implement

FSMA. Sustainable agriculture advocates are busy deciphering the hundreds of pages of regulations, to see whether the intent of Tester/Hagen has survived intact.

The two rules to watch are the “produce rule” and the “preventive controls” rule.

The produce rule contains standards for growing, harvesting, packing, and holding produce for human consumption. It focuses on microbial contamination and creates standards for personnel qualifications and training; health and hygiene; agricultural water; biological soil amendments; domesticated and wild animals; growing, harvesting, packing, and holding; equipment, tools, buildings, and sanitation; and sprouts.

The proposed produce rule includes exemptions for smaller farms and farms that sell locally and regionally:

- Farms that earn less than \$25,000 in farm revenue (gross) per year are entirely exempt;
- Farms that earn less than \$500,000 of farm revenue (gross) per year AND sell the majority of their produce direct-to-consumer AND within a 275-mile radius or within the same state are “partially exempt” and are only required to follow labeling requirements for traceability.

The preventive controls rule applies to facilities that manufacture and process food for human consumption. The two major requirements are a hazard analysis and risk-based preventive controls and updated good manufacturing practices. In the draft rule, FDA lists a number of activities and facilities not covered by the rule, including specific low-risk activities by small and very small businesses; farm activities (as defined by FDA); and certain facilities that only store packaged foods or raw agricultural commodities for processing.

As with the produce rule, facilities are “partially exempt” if earning less than \$500,000 in annual gross revenue and selling more than half directly to



consumers or to retail food establishments that sell direct, all in the same state or within a 275-mile radius. Partially exempt facilities still have to document compliance with non-federal food safety laws and notify their customers or submit a HACCP plan.

Exemptions are not assured or permanent. FDA can revoke any exemption if a farm or facility is at all involved with a food safety problem. Conditions for exemptions may be more complicated when implemented than as described in the proposed rule. And, finally, retailers, distributors, and others who buy produce may decide not to recognize any exemptions, even if FDA does.

Tuning In, Weighing In


The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition is a good place to stay up to date on what the draft rules, as written, might mean for small farms and sustainable ag. NSAC will launch a grassroots campaign later this month to encourage farmers to comment on the draft rules.

It is worth remembering that the Tester/Hagen amendments to FSMA were very controversial, with many strong interests solidly against them. Those interests, including consumer protection groups, are working very hard now to weaken the whole and partial exemptions. Food safety is everyone's responsibility – no matter what size your farm is – but regulations can be scale- and risk-appropriate.

Comments on the draft rules are due to FDA by May 16. To submit comments on line, go to <http://www.regulations.gov/> and follow instructions. You will need these docket numbers:

- Produce Rule: Docket Number [FDA-2011-N-0920](#)
- Preventive Controls Rule: Docket Number [FDA-2011-N-0921](#)

Info for faxing or mailing comments is posted on the Small Farms Program FSMA webpage at <http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/fsma>

That page also has a lot of good FSMA links: to FDA summaries, rule analysis, and more. We'll continue to post new information as we have it. 

OSU/WSU FSMA Info Workshops

OSU, Washington State University, and agency and industry co-sponsors in both states are hosting all-day meetings this spring to explain the proposed rules. A representative from FDA will be present at each meeting. Remaining meetings are:

April 15: Everett, WA

April 17: Eugene, OR

April 19: Ontario, OR

All workshops run 8am-5pm. Registration is required and the deadline is 4 days before each workshop date. The cost is \$20 to attend. For more info and to register visit <http://foodsafety.wsu.edu/ag/index.html>

FREE FOOD SAFETY "TRAIN THE TRAINERS" WORKSHOPS FOR BERRY GROWERS

The Oregon berry industries are sponsoring a training program to educate farmers on how to prevent on-farm microbial contamination of Oregon produce. "Train the Trainers" Food Safety Workshops will be available for any Oregon produce farmer. They will prepare participants to train harvest workers on recommended food safety practices. The Workshops are free but require registration.

There are eight training locations:

- April 4. North Willamette Research Extension Center – 15210 NE Miley Rd., Aurora, OR
- April 9. Unger Farm Store – 34880 SW Johnson School Rd, Cornelius, OR
- April 18. Woodburn Fertilizer/ Wilbur-Ellis – 868 N Front Street, Woodburn, OR
- April 23. Scenic Fruit Co. – 7510 SE Altman Rd., Gresham, OR
- May 2. Riverbend Organic Farm – 35711 Helms Dr., Jefferson, OR
- May 7. Willamette Valley Fruit Co. – 2994 82nd Ave NE, Salem, OR
- May 16. HBF International – 310 NE Kirby St, McMinnville, OR
- May 21. Western Star Grange Hall #309 – 30423 Tangent Dr., Albany, OR

The 3-hour program is offered in English or Spanish. Attendees are expected to share training information with their farm managers, harvest crews, and labor contractors to train them on recommended food safety practices. For more information and to register, go to: <http://oregonfarmsfoodsafety.com/>

Session Videos from 2013 OSU Small Farms Conference Available Online

By: Garry Stephenson, Small Farms Program, Oregon State University

We were able to professionally video several of the sessions at the 2013 OSU Small Farms Conference. Included are the keynote session and three of the 21 concurrent sessions.

Go to: <http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/sfc> to access the videos.

OSU Extension Service Small Farms Conference: Keynote
Greenhorns & Grayhorns

1 views

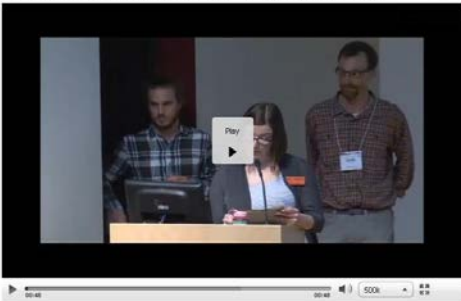


2013 OSU Small Farms Conference Keynote Session

The recently published book, *Greenhorns: 50 Dispatches from the New Farmer Movement*, includes nine “dispatches” from Oregon farmers and ranchers. These authors represent the growing youth movement in Oregon agriculture. The keynote session features four of the Oregon authors and greenhorn farmers representing different regions of the state: Sarahlee Lawrence, Rainshadow Organics, Terrebonne; Josh Volk, Slow Hand Farm, Portland; Cory Carman, Carman Ranch, Wallowa; Teresa Retzlaff, 46 North Farm, Olney. However, greenhorns would not be anywhere without grayhorns.” Moderating the panel is well-known organic seed grower and inveterate grayhorn, Frank Morton of Wild Garden Seed, Philomath.

OSU Extension Service Small Farms Conference: Session 1

0 views



2013 OSU Small Farms Conference Session One:

Useful Record Keeping for Vegetable Growers

Successfully operating a diverse farm is much easier with good planning and record keeping and it is essential for maintaining certifications. Josh Volk from Slow Hand Farm will share the basics of the systems he has developed over the last 15 years for keeping clear and concise records that feed into his planning system every year. AgSquared is an online software tool developed to help small farmers plan, manage, and keep farm records so that they can better understand the ins and outs of their production system and make better decisions. Drew Katz, AqSquared; Josh Volk, Slow Hand Farm.

OSU Extension Service Small Farms Conference: Session 2

0 views



2013 OSU Small Farms Conference Session Two:

Connecting to Land: Finding, Leasing and Purchasing Agricultural Land

Finding the right land is the most fundamental, and sometimes the most difficult, part of starting or expanding an agricultural enterprise. Prospective landlords and tenants will learn the basics of crafting a lease agreement, and how to maintain a long-term, working relationship. Get practical advice from a farmer, a legal perspective on land contracts, and a real estate agent’s perspective on researching a property. Nellie McAdams, Friends of Family Farmers; Conner Voss, Agricultural Real Estate Consultant; Shawn Clark, Student at OSU’s Horticulture Program and CCC’s Urban Agriculture Program.


OSU Extension Service Small Farms Conference: Session 3

0 views



2013 OSU Small Farms Conference Session Three:

Visual Soil Assessment in Pastures & Cultivated Crops

Learn how to evaluate soil health in pastures and cultivated crops. Graham Shepherd will describe his *Visual Soil Assessment* methods. Teresa Matteson will describe soil quality projects in Oregon. Graham Shepherd, Bioagronomics; Teresa Matteson, Benton Soil & Water Conservation District. 

From Poulet to Gullet: Poultry Processing at Standing Stone Brewery

By: Elizabeth Murphy, Small Farms Program, Oregon State University

The poultry served at Standing Stone Brewing Company in Ashland, Oregon begin and end their lives right on the restaurant premises. In the basement beneath the restaurant's popular outdoor seating area, heritage Delaware broilers are hatched and brooded from eggs collected and incubated by restaurant staff themselves. Beneath unsuspecting diners, hundreds of chicks wait for transport to One-Mile Farm, Standing Stone's 260-acre farm rented from the City of Ashland, where beef, lamb, eggs, and chicken are raised for the restaurant's menu. In a few months, these broilers will make the one-mile journey back to the restaurant in crates, where they are slaughtered and processed in the newly opened poultry processing room.

The on-site poultry slaughter and processing room is licensed by Oregon Department of Agriculture and operates under the producer-grower 20,000 bird per year exemption from federal inspection. It's only one of two existing in Jackson County and the first in the state built in an existing restaurant. The white- and black-tiled processing room and adjacent egg-handling room have windows connected to the bustling kitchen, where bread bakes in brick ovens and Chef Eric Bell and staff create menus to take advantage of farm-fresh food. "It's all about transparency here," says brewery owner Alex Amarotico, as his son, Taylor, sorts and washes eggs for use in the upcoming week. This transparency leads to cross-pollination across all facets of the restaurant. The baker is enrolled in a six-week pasture management course, and restaurant staff rotates on and off farm, alternatively moving fences one day and serving tables the next.



Standing Stone owner, Alex Amarotico, poses with chicks that are brooding in the restaurant basement. Photo by Elizabeth Murphy

A vision of sustainability inspired the Amarotico family from the restaurant's very beginnings. After restoring the historic Whittle Garage Building to open the brewery in 1997, the first significant expansion included installing a heat recovery system to recycle energy, solar panels to capture energy, and a poured concrete roof that can support 200 pounds per square foot, enough

strength to hold a thriving roof-top garden. In 2006, the need for locally grown and affordable hops made owners Alex and Danielle Amarotico begin thinking about farming. Looking at the City of Ashland's unused assets, the availability of open grazing land led Standing Stone to consider producing its own free-range meat. The restaurant signed the lease with the City of Ashland in 2011 and sent its first beef to slaughter in mid-2012.

A farm feasibility study, completed as part of local Ashlander, Eric Strong's, master's thesis, helped to make the integration of farm and restaurant possible.

In this capstone pro forma, "poultry production really took the spotlight," says Alex. In 2010, Standing Stone paid \$3 per pound for



Taylor Amarotico pauses during his work sorting and washing in the licensed egg handling room. A window connects the room to the walk-in cooler for easy egg transport. Photo by Elizabeth Murphy



The ODA licensed poultry processing room at Standing Stone Brewing Company is connected to the egg handling room and has windows overlooking the restaurant kitchen.
Photo by Elizabeth Murphy

a Joel Salatin-inspired grazing strategy, integrating, beef, lamb, and poultry in a year-round rotation.

Two years later, with farm and restaurant improvements and infrastructure in place, the new challenge lies in ramping up production to meet restaurant demand. Since the processing room opened in January, two kill days have supplied about 10% of consumer needs. The multitude of new chicks in the basement portends things to come. “We need to increase our flocks in order to meet demand,” says Alex, who believes in the importance of breeding his own chickens, so that he is growing “a bird that can move on its own.” This means hatching enough Delaware chicks to meet average restaurant demand of 110 birds per week.



Farm-raised chicken is ready for special treatment in Standing Stone's kitchen.
Photo by Elizabeth Murphy

organic chicken, while they could produce their own ultra-local product for a mere \$2. As of 2013, even non-organic chicken now breaks \$2 per pound. With these rising prices, the profit margin of pasture-raised poultry for the restaurant increases even more. Poultry also play a key role in whole farm management of the leased acreage, which has adopted

Meeting demand also means changing the menu to fit farm supply, a flexible management tool that Standing Stone employs through its ever-changing board of specials. A newly customized menu has also removed some favorite dishes that don't take advantage of what the farm produces. In the short term, that means less chicken until production increases. In the long term, Standing Stone's popular Chicken Wings will likely stay off the menu since “there are only two of them per bird.” The exciting part for Chef Eric Bell is in “using recipes that your great-grandmother would have been familiar with.” Since Standing Stone is currently slaughtering birds of all ages, Chef Bell can take advantage of traditions that use yogurt or wine to soften older meat, resulting in classic creations like Coq au Vin. “I remember my great-grandmother yelling at my grandmother because the turkey didn't have flavor,” recalls Chef Bell, “but these Delawares have tons of flavor.”

What's next for this innovator in sustainability? The poultry processing room is just another milestone in connecting consumers directly to local food. “We'd like to see a local USDA slaughtershouse,” says Alex, whose cattle now travel 150 miles north for slaughter. A longer term farm-lease would also open up long-term agricultural endeavors, such as growing the brewery's hops supply - the dream that originally started this restaurant down the farming path.

You can read more about Standing Stone Brewery and the One-Mile Farm at <http://www.standingstonebrewing.com/index.html>



Standing Stone's daily specials board features new dishes with this week's farm fresh meat.
Photo by Elizabeth Murphy

2013 OSU Small Farms Conference Sources Food from Local Farms

By: Garry Stephenson, Small Farms Program, Oregon State University

For most of the 13 years the OSU Small Farms Conference has operated, it has sourced food for lunch and breaks from local farms. This effort was challenging initially and largely focused on what was available fresh or from storage during February. Lunch at the conference reflects the progress that has been made in availability and “new” crops over the years and includes salad greens and potatoes as in the past, but now includes bread made from local grains, a variety of beans, and corn meal (polenta). As always, the food is purchased from farmers or their suppliers. This year’s conference menu was built on food from these farms:

Dancing Roots Farm, Troutdale.

- Winter salad greens (Chicory & Arugula)

Denison Farms, Corvallis.

- Winter salad greens (Spinach & Red Kale)

Lonesome Whistle Farm, Junction City

- Vermont Cranberry Beans Polenta White flour

Stalford Seed Farm, Tangent.

- Wheat, Oats and Flax (in Dave’s Oregon Grains Bread & Halos)

Oven and Earth, Philomath.

- Potatoes

Hunton’s Farm, Junction City.

- Garbanzo beans

Full Circle Creamery, Scio.

- Cheeses 



OSU Small Farms Conference participants serve up a great lunch from local farms. Photo by Shawn Linehan (<http://www.shawnlinehan.com/>)

*The 2014 OSU Small Farms Conference
is scheduled for*

Saturday, February 22nd, 2014

Mark your calendars!

You Can, But Should You?

By: Dr. Susan Kerr, DVM, Washington State University - Klickitat County Extension

Perhaps you've just acquired some acreage and your dream has always been to raise livestock as part of your home food production plan; maybe you plan to sell products to your neighbors or even beyond. That's great! We have a many helpful Extension resources to support your efforts; Extension educators are strong advocates of local food systems and those who want to produce high quality, safe and wholesome food products.

HOWEVER (you knew a HOWEVER was coming...), just because you have the space, time and even desire to raise livestock doesn't mean you should. Really. I mean it.

Animals are living, breathing, feeling beings that need care on a daily basis. Much of this care costs money--sometimes lots of it. The purchase price of an animal often is the least expensive aspect of raising it. Livestock require fences, shelter, handling facilities, feed, clean water, waste removal, preventive care, predator control, veterinary care, routine management practices, emergency care and much more. If this list sounds overwhelming, please do not purchase even one animal.

One of the most rewarding moments in my Extension career occurred a few years ago at the University of Alaska's annual Sustainable Agriculture conference. After giving presentations about goat health and disease, nutrition, predator control, reproduction, selection and other fundamental aspects of raising goats, a very happy prospective goat owner shook my hand and said "Thank you so much for this workshop! It was the best \$500 I ever spent! You made me realize I don't want to have goats if I have to work this hard!" I regarded that as a win-win for this woman and her future goats: they weren't harmed by her lack of willingness to provide adequate care and she incurred no financial losses or frustration.

It takes a lot of knowledge to raise livestock successfully (meaning they live). It takes a lot more to raise them profitably. Unfortunately, due to rising land, fuel, feed and other costs, it is very difficult to raise livestock profitably, especially for beginners. If


you really need to make money with an agricultural enterprise, it is hard to recommend livestock production to a new producer as a sure-fire way to be profitable.

Due to the low return on investment, lack of knowledge, lack of animal selection and many other reasons, it is easy for people to overstock their property with too many animals. Overstocking is an animal welfare issue. Sanitation and individual animal care are affected and preventable diseases soon become the norm. It is tragic when animals die due to preventable conditions including starvation.

Many people who want to raise livestock but are new to this industry don't know what they don't know and fall prey to misinformation, particularly from the Internet. Sadly, animals have died from their owners' lack of research-based information.

Misinformation that I've read recently includes:

- Organic livestock can't be given vaccinations
- Livestock can balance their own diets by selecting what they need to eat
- Livestock know which plants are poisonous and avoid them
- Blanket statements regarding numbers of animals that can be supported by a given amount of acreage
- Purebred animals that have given birth to crossbred offspring can never have purebred offspring in the future
- Garlic, yeast and/or diatomaceous earth are effective dewormers for internal parasites
- It is natural for sheep to retain their wool throughout their entire life and cruel to shear them.

Livestock owners are obligated to care for the animals that enrich their lives and/or wallets. Educated and responsible owners realize they owe their animals good lives and humane deaths, regardless of species. If you don't have the time, space, knowledge, skills, resources or motivation to give livestock the care they deserve, please do not purchase even one animal. Really, I mean it. 

Finding Support through Farmer to Farmer Networking

By: Melissa Fery and Maud Powell, Small Farms Program, Oregon State University
Melissa Matthewson, Barking Moon Farm

When farmers come together, new opportunities arise for increased economic viability, quality of life and community interaction. Farmers who have similar interests or shared concerns or needs, for example, specific commodities, organic farmers, women farmers or those who farm and ranch in regional areas, may find benefits from regularly meeting together and exchanging information.




Creating a Farmer Network Training in Moscow, Idaho. March 2013.
Photo by Melissa Fery

A farmer network builds community by creating new business partnerships, creating new friendships and be deepening existing ones; provides education and mentoring opportunities; and gives farmers a venue for peer-to-peer discussion which often results in innovative production and marketing strategies.

Portland Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition, Gorge Grown Food Network, Ten Rivers Foodweb and Oregon Rural Action are examples of organizations that have helped connect farmers together through networking.

Three OSU Extension Small Farms extension agents developed a new resource available for farmers, university educators, nonprofit leaders, community organizers, and agricultural professionals interested in starting farmer to farmer networking opportunities. *Creating Farmer Networks: A Toolkit for Promoting Vibrant Farm Communities*, PNW 638 is an instructional guide for creating farmer-to-farmer networks. This toolkit is based upon the creation

and management of two women farmer networks in Oregon. It is available at: <http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/womens-farmer-networks/pnw-638-creating-farmer-networks-toolkit-promoting-vibrant-farm-communities>

Through a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, Professional Development Program grant, the authors of the toolkit traveled to Idaho and Montana in March, and Northern Oregon in early April to train professionals about network startup, program planning, surveying farmer needs, communicating with and maintaining farmer networks. 



Agricultural Composting Resources & Education Series

Thursday, April 18 and Thursday, April 25

8:30am - 5:00pm

North Willamette Research and Extension Center, Aurora

Registration Fee: \$90

The workshop will be at OSU's North Willamette Research and Extension Center. The course will include hands-on and classroom activities. Participants will learn about different composting methods, facility design and location, environmental and regulatory concerns, equipment for agricultural composting, developing compost recipes, using compost, and more. During the first class you will build a compost pile, and in the second class you will tear it apart to evaluate performance.

**For further information and to register visit the ACRES website
<http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/ag-compost-workshop>**



Clackamas County Soil and Water

**CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

Good dirt. Clean water.



Contact heidi.noordijk@oregonstate.edu for more information

Notes from the Northwest Farmer-to-Farmer Exchange

By: Maud Powell, Nick Andrews, and Heidi Noordijk, Small Farms Program, Oregon State University and Andrew Rodman, Oregon Tilth

In February, over 75 organic farmers gathered at Brienbush hot springs for the 11th annual Farmer to Farmer Exchange. The gathering provides a relaxing and inspiring venue for farmers to share tips and travails from another year of organic production and direct marketing.

Oregon Tilth and Organically Grown Company supported the two-day Exchange, keeping the price down for attendees. Following are some of the insights and practical tips shared.

Seeds

During the session on seed saving, some of the more experienced seed growers and breeders argued that open-pollinated varieties have the potential to compete with hybrids but that most research and development funding is spent on hybrids.

Growers discussed some challenges of saving seed in commercial rotations. Seed crops must stay in the ground longer and can interrupt rotation planning

Overhead irrigation can cause problems as many seed crops won't dry down well, or develop diseases if they continue to receive overhead irrigation.

Farmers must also consider cross-pollination. Pinning maps can help seed growers maintain varietal integrity by ensuring that different varieties of the same species will not outcross.

To avoid in-breeding depression, growers recommended saving seed from at least 100 good plants for out-breeding crops like broccoli, spinach and onions and at least 20 good plants for in-breeding crops like peas, beans, tomatoes and peppers.

One grower showed a simple seed cleaning setup for small dry. Seeds were cleaned by rubbing them on a variety of rough surfaces, then winnowed using a box fan and staggered containers to catch seed and chaff. Fan speed was adjusted according to seed size. A variety of seed screens were used for final cleaning.



Growers discussed the Northern Organic Vegetable Improvement Collaborative (NOVIC - <http://eorganic.info/novic/>), which is working with growers to collaboratively breed broccoli, snap peas, winter squash, carrots, sweet corn and peppers in organic systems. Organic Seed Alliance (www.seedalliance.org/), is working to re-invigorate locally adapted seed systems.

Aha's!

One producer formed a multi producer CSA model, adding bread and eggs to her veggie boxes. CSA recipients loved the additions.

Another producer reported successfully spraying cucumber beetles with a kale clay used for codling moth. He used one pound per gallon with a backpack sprayer.

A farmer's market veteran reported that more tastings increased sales, while another producer explained that their best source of farm labor came from an influx of on-call educators, DIY'ers and volunteers through Friends of Family Famers. Another grower cautioned that non-family members must have certification to drive many kinds of on-farm equipment.

Farming with your partner

Many farmers manage their business with their partners. Most successful partnerships identify clear roles for each.

Small farms are uniquely all-encompassing businesses. Growers agreed that as farm work is never finished, the relationship must be prioritized in order to maintain it.

Equipment

Farmers compared notes on a wide range of tools. One grower passed around a short hand hoe made from scrap wood, scrap inner tube and scrap metal flashing from pallets. Japanese Ko gama hand hoes are also inexpensive and popular. Some farmers joked that their favorite tools for very fine weeding are still old spoons from the thrift store.

Steel in the Field, A Farmer's Guide to Weed Management Tools, edited by Greg Bowman was

recommended as a timeless read. This is free from www.SARE.org.

Speedglas™ on a welding mask helped one farmer improve his welding skills. The same grower increased efficiency hooking up equipment by installing a hydraulic top link on the tractor 3-point and is considering a top and tilt system that also has a hydraulic leveler.

A garlic grower and breeder demonstrated a hand-held garlic dibbler, which makes holes for five rows in a 36" bed and is made out of scrap walnut.

A couple farmers praised the strawberry harvesting carts from Glacier Valley. For harvesting greens someone attached two pieces of 11" PVC for wheels to a seat, so they can scuttle along cutting greens without crouching.

Electric Allis Chalmers G tractors remain popular. One farmer envisioned developing something like the old GE Elek-Trak tractors from the early 1970's with an extra bank of batteries for operating power accessories. He thought that with a 36 or 48 volt motor it might be possible to belly mount a 38" BCS tiller on an electric AC-G.

One grower recently bought an inexpensive potato "middle buster" for hilling and undercutting potatoes. Another more experienced grower recently upgraded to a Checchi and Magli potato digger.

In the packing shed, one young farmer pointed out that the more farmers can group individual items (i.e. wash and wrap 6 bunches of carrots at a time, rather than one) the quicker their work will be.

One grower was frustrated carrying tools, supplies or crops when driving the tractor. He welded some all thread onto the tractor and bolted on a vegetable crate for storage, and also bolted an old ammo box onto the fender to carry wrenches and hand tools.

Another farmer praised the specialized tools available at Buckeye Tractor Co. in Ohio and Market Farm Implements in Pennsylvania. Another made a bed

shaper, which operates like a metal sled attached to their 3-point hitch. It creates a 48" bed top after tilling with their 58" tiller. One equipment enthusiasts recommended using cone wheels to guide aggressive cultivation equipment during the season.

Pack-out

Growers discussed efficiency, infrastructure, water and food safety, consistency and quality control during a session on pack-out.

The concept that "the more you pick it up, the more expensive it becomes" came up a number of times. Packing straight from field to market is highly efficient, but may not meet food safety recommendations. Growers debated the pros and cons of whether to bunch root vegetables and greens in the field or in the packing house.

Growers also talked about how to keep things cool on the farm. A new pack house and long narrow cooler with doors on each end have helped with efficiency on one farm. One farm stand has an enclosed, insulated room that is cooled with an air conditioner. Another farm uses a cool 3,000 gallon water tank in an insulated building that maintains an air temperature of 55 °F year round for storing crops. Many growers expressed interest in root cellars for storage. One farm uses a cargo container with a dehumidifier for storage. Another uses bulk crates in a basement with fans and a dehumidifier. The proper temperature and humidity for storing squash can be found in an article by WSU's Carol Miles (csanr.wsu.edu/publications/SPNW/SPNW-v5-n3.pdf).

Moveable table and packing equipment provide more room and flexibility for one farm. As labor is so expensive, purchasing a machine for the packing line can sometimes pay for itself within a year.

A big topic of discussion was what to do about wash water for food safety and GAP certification. Tsunami® 100 parasitic acid and Sanidate 5 are two products growers are using in their dip tanks. Big concerns are worker protection when handling these products and correct dilutions.

Farmers spent a lot of time discussing bunch sizes

and how to keep them consistent during pack-out. Farmers use either weight, count or twist ties to ensure consistency.


Growers talked about CSA pack line efficiency and quality control. Many farms bunch greens to avoid plastic bags and weighing time. To minimize the amount of lifting and twisting during pack out some lines have stock bins on the back of tables that are tilted towards the worker, others have stock bins on top of pallets. To avoid mistakes and missing items one farm standardizes the position of every item in the box and the last person makes sure everything is there. One farmer weighs as few items as possible to increase efficiency and uses an assembly line with skate tables.

Labor


Most growers agree that putting a lot of energy into the hiring process pays off. Some farms invest in comprehensive trainings that convey specific expectations of the job, while another farm conducts a "show and tell session" at the interview where they assess a potential employee's knowledge of equipment and tools. One farmer uses a three-day training period. Another suggested asking employees about their entire skill set to see how else they can help on the farm.

Farmers grappled with the question of how to find and retain middle managers. A few long-term farm managers at the session explained that they have stayed because they feel respected, enjoy a degree of independence, and continue to learn and grow. Better pay, medical and educational benefits are other ways to retain managers.

A couple of farms participate in the Agricultural Justice Project (AJP), a non-profit initiative to create fairness and equity in our food system through the development of social justice standards for organic and sustainable agriculture. These farmers developed a wage system and chart to give employees information on opportunities for advancement.

Incentives that farms offer beyond pay include produce, no interest loans, books, knives, wine and chocolate and rain gear. Farm lunches foster camaraderie and help with retention and morale. 

MSN.com Slideshow Highlights New Generation of Oregon Farmers

MSN.com has compiled a set of photographs titled “New Generation of Farmers” on their Money page: <http://photos.msn.com/slideshow/money/new-generation-of-farmers/23wszyt0#1/>. The collection includes 56 photos of young farmers from across the country. Photos 1 to 20 are from Oregon. Featured are Tyler and Alicia Jones of Afton Field Farm, Kasey White and Jeff Broadie of Lonesome Whistle Farm, Sara Cogan of Zenger Farm, and Angelina Overstreet and her urban chickens. The photographs are by Portland photographer Leah Nash and are associated with the 2011 New York Times article about Oregon’s young farmers (http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/06/us/06farmers.html?_r=0). 

NEW GENERATION OF FARMERS



 Play Slideshow

< 17 of 56 >

A Young Farmers' Social takes place at Mary's River Grange in Philomath, Oregon to mark the end of the 11th Annual Oregon State University Extension Small Farms Conference.

OSU Extension, OSU Small Farms Program and Oregon Rural Action Team Up to Offer “Exploring the Small Farm Business Dream” Workshops in Eastern OR.

If you’ve ever dreamed of operating your very own small farm business or currently own one, this new workshop will provide participants an overview of the key factors you need to consider before starting a small farm business. The program is designed to help you develop an inventory and assessment of the natural & physical resources of your farm (soil, water, climate) which determine your crop selection options, as well as, the skill set of the people who will be working and managing the farm business. In addition, it will give you the opportunity to think about the values you bring into the business and create a foundation to move forward by setting goals.

“Exploring the Small Farm Business Dream” Workshop #1 - NE Oregon, LaGrande

Date: April 17, 2013
Time: 6 pm to 9 pm
Location: OSU Extension Service Union Co. Conference Room,
10507 North McAlister Road, LaGrande, OR 97850
RSVP required: call 541-963-1010 to reserve a seat.

“Exploring the Small Farm Business Dream” Workshop #2 – Malheur Co., Ontario

Date: April 18, 2013
Time: 6 pm to 9 pm
Location: Four Rivers Cultural Center, 676 SW 5th Avenue, Ontario, OR 97914
RSVP required: call 541-881-1417 to reserve a seat.

The upcoming “**Exploring the Small Farm Business Dream**” workshop is a component of the “Growing Markets & Next Generation Farmers in Eastern Oregon” program, a local collaborative effort between Oregon Rural Action, Northeast Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD), OSU Extension, OSU Small Farms Program and the Austin Family Business Center. The goal of this effort is to provide training opportunities identified by local producers and to engage local FFA and 4-H programs by providing advanced business training and mentor/internship opportunities to aspiring young specialty crop producers. Funding provided by the 2012 Oregon Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant program.

Future Educational Opportunities: The “**Exploring the Small Farm Business Dream**” workshop is actually a precursor to the well-known OSU Small Farms workshop series “Growing Small Farms: Successful Whole Farm Management”. The 5-week series is an in-depth program geared towards farmers who are in the early stages of operating their business and would benefit from learning how to manage risks associated with farming. Topics include: strategic planning, farming operations, marketing, production systems, farm finances and managing liability. Interest in the “Exploring the Small Farm Business” workshop on April 17 and 18 will determine whether or not to offer the 5-week series. If you are interested in either program, contact Nella Parks at Oregon Rural Action at 541-975-2411 or email nella@oregonrural.org.

Calendar



April

6 - Farm Tours in Polk County

Educational tours of an annual, perennial, and livestock based farm in Polk County. Farmers and ranchers will be sharing about their whole farm systems. Teal Creek Farm, Illahe Vineyard, and McK Ranch. 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. Meet at the Riverview Farmers' Market in Independence, OR 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM. Contact: 541-766-3556. **\$30**

17 - Exploring the Small Farm Dream

Are you living the small farm dream or hoping to one day? This class gives you an overview of some of the resources needed to start a successful farm and includes two local farmers sharing the story of how they got started and how their farm evolved into what it is today. Polk County Extension Office, 289 E Ellendale, Suite 301, Dallas, OR. 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM. For more information or to register call 541-766-3556. **\$15**

17 - Exploring the Small Farm Business Dream

Are you living the small farm dream or hoping to one day? This class gives you an overview of some of the resources needed to start a successful farm. OSU Extension Service Union Co. Conference Room, 10507 North McAlister Road, LaGrande, OR. 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM. RSVP required: call 541-963-1010 to reserve a seat.

18 - Exploring the Small Farm Business Dream

Are you living the small farm dream or hoping to one day? This class gives you an overview of some of the resources needed to start a successful farm. Four Rivers Cultural Center, 676 SW 5th Avenue, Ontario, OR. 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM. RSVP required: call 541-881-1417 to reserve a seat.

18 & 25 - ACRES: Agricultural Composting Resources and Education Series

The workshop will be at OSU's North Willamette Research and Extension Center. The course will include hands-on and classroom activities. Participants will learn about different composting methods, facility design and location, environmental and regulatory concerns, equipment for agricultural composting, developing compost recipes, using compost, and more. North Willamette Research and Extension Center, Aurora, OR. 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM. **\$90**

May

15 - Rural Living Basics: Living with Your Well and Septic System

Free well water nitrate screenings offered, bring a water sample in a clean container. Coburg Community Grange, 32663 E. Mill Road, Coburg, OR. 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM. For more information, 541-766-3556. **FREE**

<http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/advanced/list/extension-smallfarms/>
for more upcoming events!

Want to add your event to our calendar then please submit your information at <http://calendar.oregonstate.edu/advanced/list/extension-smallfarms/> "Click the Submit an event button." Events have to be approved and will not immediately post. If you have questions please contact Chrissy Lucas at Chrissy.Lucas@oregonstate.edu or 541-766-3556