



Oregon Small Farm News

Oregon State University Small Farms Program

In This Issue:

2023 OSU Small Farms Conference is Saturday, February 18th	2
For the Love of Farming Podcast – First Series Complete	7
Oregon Community Food Systems Network Brings Together Statewide	8
Coalition to Distribute \$1.5M for Small and Underserved Farmer Disaster Relief	
Veteran Women for the Land Project – Enhancing Support and Growing	10
Programming	
Small Farms and Community Food Systems at the Oregon Legislature: Oregon	12
Community Food Systems Network Plans for the 2023 Session	
New Project Helps Beginning Farmers and Ranchers of All Backgrounds Access	14
Farmland	
DEQ Offers Free Well Water Testing in Southern Deschutes County	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

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

Evie Smith
Lincoln County, 541-574-6534

Heather Stoven
Yamhill County, 503-678-1264

Logan Bennett
Outreach Program Coordinator, Douglas
County, 541-236-3015

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

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

Cover Photo:

Organic butternut squash from
Gathering Together Farm.
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.

2023 OSU Small Farms Conference is Saturday, February 18th Registration is OPEN!

Register now for the Oregon State University Small Farms Conference at <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/smallfarmsconference>

Saturday February 18th, 2023 on the campus of Oregon State University in Corvallis.

Registration is open at <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/smallfarmsconference>

Early Bird Registration until Jan 20th: \$60

Registration from Jan 21st until filled or Feb 12th: \$85

We do not anticipate any at the door registration being available.

Conference Schedule (subject to change)

**7:30am – 9:00am: Sign-in & Packet Pick-up
(LaSells Stewart Center)**

8:50am – 9:30am: Welcome and Announcements

Session 1

Farm to School Produces Equipment @ Infrastructure Funding: Support for your Small Farm! – Amy Gilroy, Oregon Department of Agriculture; Melina Barker, Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Network; Domenika Radonich, ħast sqit, Good Rain Farm; Kiara Kashuba, Gorge Farmers Collective; Jeff Aichele, Aichele Farms

The Oregon Department of Agriculture's Farm to School Producer Equipment and Infrastructure Grant provides funding for producers to scale their production practices to meet the needs of the school marketplace. This funding can facilitate business growth with school markets and beyond. During this session, you'll hear from three different grantees and their operations – a vertically coordinated small farm, a micro farm with mobile handling and packing facilities, and a food hub that aggregates produce and distributes to schools. Come hear about the experiences of these panelists and how this funding might benefit your farm business. Speakers will also provide additional resources to producers interested in farm field trips and getting involved in agricultural education in school communities.

Tribal Farming and Food Production in Indian Country – Roberta Eaglehorse-Ortiz, Wombyn's Wellness Garden and Spring Alaska Schreiner, Sakari Farm

Sakari Farms will present a wide variety of topics including farming infrastructure, growing practices, regenerative practices, successful programs and production that spotlight growing food in Central Oregon. Indigenous food producer and herbal crafter, Roberta Eaglehorse-Ortiz will share how our collective participation, education model & tailored food distribution for our local urban Native community brings a variety of success that may not be held as important to outside folks. TEK & land stewardship is at the forefront for deep grassroots change. The importance of crop trials & alternative grow practices to strengthen quality seed stores & plant sales that increase community education & participation on returning to our Indigenous foods.

Climate Conversation: How Small Farmers in Oregon Are Adapting to Climate Change – Sara O'Neill, Euchre Creek Farms and Randy Walker, Walker Farms
Climate science warns us that farmers in Oregon will soon be facing more extreme temperatures, droughts and flooding, and wildfires. Farmers Sara O'Neill (Euchre Creek Farms) and Randy Walker (Walker Farms) will share best practices and lessons learned from management practices that they are using on their farms to adapt to these challenges. Practices discussed will include rainwater catchment, use of shade in pastures, and development of riparian habitat.

10 Things You Can Do to Optimize Your Online and Offline Marketing and Increase Direct to Consumer Sales – Michele Thorne, Friends of Family Farmers
You're a farmer and a business owner. You have a website and social media pages, and you probably spend A LOT of time creating content that will "hopefully" generate sales. Sadly, "hope marketing" isn't typically measurable, effective or efficient and it certainly can cost you...time and money! Luckily there are 10 ways you can optimize what you are already doing to promote and sell your products both online and offline!

When & How Much? The Science of Irrigation Management – Gordon Jones OSU Extension Service
In this class, we will learn about the checkbook approach to irrigation management. By the end, you will understand how to determine how much water your

soil can hold, how much water your crops use, and how much water should be replaced with irrigation. We will share practical resources and online tools so you can make informed irrigation decisions for a wide variety of crops

Oregon Olives 101– Logan Bennett & Heather Stoven, OSU Small Farms Program

Olives are a relatively new crop to Oregon, first planted in the early 2000's. Interest in olives as a local niche crop has increased recently as concerns over climate change and drought intensify. This class will discuss the current Oregon olive industry, required growing conditions, including climate and new pest challenges for growing olives in western Oregon.

Farmer and Worker Owned Cooperatives Lessons Learned – D Rooney, Rock Steady Farm; Rica Bryan, Rock Steady Farm

Farmers share their stories and advice on their cooperative farm business journey. How they found their cooperative community, how they structured their cooperatives, what works, and what doesn't.

Questions You Should be Asking When Searching for Farmland – Natalie Danielson, Oregon Farm Link Program Manager; Silvia Cuesta, Oregon Farm Link Navigator

Join the Oregon Farm Link Staff and a farmer who successfully secured land with the help of the OFL Navigate Program for a presentation and Q&A session on questions you should be asking when looking to purchase or lease farmland. Come get tips on how to optimize your land search, how to assess farmland for your needs and get ideas on what questions to ask a landholder when visiting a property or in setting up a lease. If you are in the market for farmland or might be in the future, please join us for an informational session to learn more about what to consider and who can help set you up for success.

Pacific Northwest Flower Growers Association Session – Speakers coming soon
Session description coming soon.

Break

Session 2

Beyond Direct to Consumer: Growing Sales and Reaching New Buyers with Food Hubs – Sydney DeLuna- Oregon Food Hub Network; Kiara Kashuba- Gorge Farmer Collective; Jocelyn Burns- West Balch Ranch; Erin Maher- Agricultural Connections Cooperative; Katie Swanson- Sweet Union Farm and Klamath Grown/Klamath Farmers Online Marketplace
How food hubs in Oregon provide “stepping stone” support and wholesale opportunities for farmers by developing and expanding markets for new, beginning and experienced farmers.

Truffle Farming in Oregon – Charles Lefevre, Ph.D., Owner/President New World Truffieres, Inc., Co-Founder/President Oregon Truffle Festival
Oregon holds unique status in the global truffle farming industry as one of the only places where both European and valuable native truffles can be grown on farms. Oregon State University also has a long tradition of truffle research and expertise that stands out globally. The famous European truffles are grown on irrigated farm land beneath hazelnut and oak trees throughout the state of Oregon. There are multiple truffle species options that are better suited to different local climate and soil conditions. The native Oregon truffles grow beneath Douglas fir trees planted on farm or pasture land throughout western Oregon. Oregon truffles do not require irrigation, but would benefit from it. This talk provides an overview of success with domestication of truffles around the world, and how to do it in Oregon

Beating the Heat on Pasture: Strategies for the Summer Slump – Dr. Shayan Ghajar, Oregon State University
Summer heat and drought can lead to immense reductions in pasture and animal productivity, and our summers are getting hotter and precipitation is less predictable. In this session, Dr. Shayan Ghajar will discuss some options for mitigating the summer slump, as well as the latest research specific to western Oregon. After his brief overview, a panel of farmers from western and southern Oregon will cover their strategies for dealing with summertime forage issues in a conversational and interactive discussion.

Lessons from Sweet Potatoes: Adaptable and Resilient Crops for a Changing Climate - Charlotte Epps, Oregon State University

Charlotte Epps is a multi-ethnic land nurturer and co-creator of The Reciprocity Garden, a social-justice based community garden project located at Oak Creek Center for Urban Horticulture in Corvallis, Oregon. In this session, Charlotte will share lessons learned from their research studying the growth habits of sweet potato leaves and roots in the Willamette Valley, a region not typically associated with this crop due to the temperate climate. This vegetable variety trial conducted at The Reciprocity Garden was supported by multiple USDA-NIFA grants under the mentorship of Dr. James Myers and Dr. Gail Langellotto, of the OSU Department of Horticulture.

Promises and Challenges of Dry Farming as a Tool for On-Farm Drought Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change– Andy Gallagher, Red Hill Soils; Jared Zystro, Organic Seed Alliance; Lucas Nebert and Matt Davis, OSU Horticulture.

Dry farming is a promising, yet challenging, tool for on-farm drought resilience that utilizes the inherent water-holding capacity of the soil, together with drought tolerant cultivars, to produce food through dry summer months without relying on irrigation. For growers interested in adopting dry farming practices, this panel provides the latest findings in site suitability, tomato variety trials, crop breeding, and seed production, all in the context of dry farming in the Maritime Pacific Northwest

Turning your Farm Goods into Value-Added Products – Mary Alionis, Whistling Duck Farm; Audrey Comerford and Melissa Fery, OSU Extension Service
This session is for those who would like to learn about the process of getting value-added products ready for market. We will explore various options, from processing your own using the Oregon Farm Direct, investing in a commercial kitchen or utilizing the services of a copacker. Other topics that will be covered include resources related to product insurance, developing recipes, and potential funding through the Value-Added Producer Grant. Hear from Whistling Duck Farm who has developed their own line of products that they sell at their on-farm store.

Starting a Non-Profit – Jim White, Executive Director, Nonprofit Association of Oregon

Wondering how to start a nonprofit, and really, if it's the right choice? Join Jim White, Executive Director of the Nonprofit Association of Oregon, for an overview of starting and running a nonprofit organization in Oregon. Participants will explore different nonprofit statuses to determine the best fit for their organization, and learn about the corporate filing process, how to select your founding board of directors, the required governing documents you'll need to get in order, and management tips for startups.

Nuts and Bolts of Creating Farm Cooperatives – Matt Stannard, JD, former Legal Education and Outreach Manager for Farm Commons; Luis Sierra, NW Cooperative Development Center; Narendra Varma, Director at Our Table Cooperative
Join experts in cooperative development to learn about the nuts and bolts of starting a farm cooperative and ask your burning questions to address your cooperative development challenges.

Succession Planning Basics: Starting the conversation, familial and non-familial transfer and logistically making it happen – Nellie McAdams and Andrea Krahmer, Oregon Agricultural Trust
Successfully passing on a farm or ranch can happen! Join us to discuss how either generation can start the conversation, considerations for family or non-familial succession, and making sure the right people at the table to work through obstacles. We'll take it a step further and walk through the things to think about before, during and after transition including knowledge transfer of key operational information, mentorship opportunities, a timeline for transition and professional resources to call on as you work through the process.
the effort.

Session 2 ends in a staggered fashion to reduce the length of the lunch line

Lunch

Session 3

OCFSN Legislative Updates – Nellie McAdams, Oregon Agricultural Trust; Alice Morrison, Friends of Family Farmers; Molly Notarianni, Farmers Market Fund; Amy Wong, Oregon Organic Coalition; Megan Kemple, Oregon Climate & Agriculture Network; Melina Barker, Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Network

The Oregon Legislature gets underway January 17, and this 6-month session will have many, many bills and budgets in play, including legislation that really matters to farmers and community food systems. In this session, you'll hear from a panel of farm and food system advocacy organizations about top priority bills and funding programs they are tracking. They are all part of the Oregon Community Food Systems Network "Community Food Systems at the Legislature" working group. .

Why Cultivate Mushrooms? – Bashira Muhammad, Zoom Out Mycology

This presentation is meant to inspire and inform the curious regarding a handful of reasons people cultivate fungi or grow mushrooms. The goal is to share light and practical information as to what can be done within the field of agricultural mycology. Each subtopic will be about 10-15 minutes each. The first will highlight nutritional/medicinal value of shiitake and lion's mane mushrooms, what kind of things we clean up with oyster mushroom mycelium, what we can craft with turkey tail and end with where to start with applying bio-controls in gardening and small-scale farming.

Managing Drought East of the Cascades through Low Till, No Till, and Soil Moisture Monitoring – Katie Swanson, Sweet Union Farm; Aaron Stubbs, Fibonacci Farm; Ashley Thompson: Sungrounded Farm
As Oregon continues to face drought and limited irrigation water in some regions, vegetable producers east of the Cascades have been experimenting with low and no till practices and tensiometers used to monitor soil moisture conditions under a SARE Farmer Rancher grant. The panelists will share lessons learned from this applied research project.

Scaling up: Drying and Processing Medicinal Herbs–

Elise Higley, Jeff Higley, and Matt Dybala

Come hear from Elise, Jeff and Matt as they share how their farms scaled up in medicinal herb drying, processing, and storage. They will share specifics about the equipment and infrastructure they use and for what products. The session will also touch on related food safety considerations. There will be ample time for questions and answers, opportunities to connect with others, as well as a chance to help inform future programming.

Selecting and Preparing for Livestock: A Beginner's Guide – Speakers coming soon

Are you thinking of adding livestock to your farm? This session will cover the basics of selecting the best livestock for your operation by answering the following questions; What should I look for when selecting livestock for a breeding program and/or for meat?; Where can I find livestock to buy and what should I keep in mind during the process?; What can I do to prepare myself and the farm before bringing on livestock?

Voles: their ecology, tales from the field, and can dogs help trap them? - Dana Sanchez, OSU Wildlife Extension Specialist, Nick Andrews, OSU Organic Vegetable Extension; Laura Masterson, 47th Avenue Farm and Jon Bansen, Double J Jerseys

Voles can be a huge challenge in lots of crops. Join us to learn about vole ecology and a new project investigating whether dogs can help locate voles in your field to make trapping more efficient. Two Willamette Valley farmers will also share their experiences with vole damage and management in vegetables and dairy pastures.

What New Farmers Market Vendors Need to Survive and Thrive – Speaker coming soon

Session description coming soon.

Culture, Skills & Structures for Successful Farm Cooperatives – Yana Ludwig, Executive Director of the North Coast Food Web and Author of *The Cooperative Culture Handbook* and *Together Resilient: Building Community in the Age of Climate Disruption*

Save your “chore” energy for farming! This interactive workshop will provide a framework for understanding cooperative culture, practical skills sharing for making it work, and some discussion of organizational structures common to co-ops. Building resilient organizational structures increases the chances of cooperative farm business success, and makes collective decision-making and operations more fun... and less of a chore.

Succession Planning with an Attorney: How to work with an attorney and innovative legal tools– Maria Schmidtkofer, attorney with Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt

Join attorney Maria Schmidtkofer as she discusses engaging in estate planning early, elements of a successful succession plan and general timeline for implementation. She'll talk through important information that you need to know about your operation to make the process run smoothly, legal tools such as working lands conservation easements that can help the succession process, and tips for mitigating Oregon estate tax. Bring your questions for Q&A!

3:30/4:00pm – 5:30pm: Think with a Drink Networking Session

After the third conference session wraps up this year, spend time debriefing with friends, talking with speakers, and checking out vendor tables while enjoying an array of samples from local Corvallis beverage makers!

We'll provide conference attendees who plan to attend this event (who are over 21) with three drink tickets. That's right, you can try three samples of cider, beer, or wine compliments of the Small Farms Conference!

5:30pm: Conference Conclusion

Register now at
<https://beav.es/UVK>

For the Love of Farming Podcast – First Series Complete

By: Teagan Moran, OSU Small Farms Program

I have just released the final episode in the first season of our Small Farms Program [For the Love of Farming Podcast](https://beav.es/5MK).

There are 12 episodes total for the 2022 series. You can listen to them for free on Anchor or on Spotify: <https://beav.es/5MK>.

This series shares a wide range of voices and stories from the small-scale farming community. It has been an honor to learn from these farmers and it has highlighted how deeply personal and varied small farming can be. The farmers interviewed offer a wide range of perspectives - from years of experience, homesteading to selling through diverse market channels, land owners and those navigating unpredictable land leases.

Each farmer shares their strategies for how they keep going, for taking care of themselves (physically and mentally), as well as addressing specific challenges on the farm. The importance of a farmer's wellbeing cannot be underestimated when we talk about the sustainability and resilience of our food system.

Each farmer stressed the importance of having a supportive farming community (of other farmers), and shared how they were able to cultivate that. I am so grateful to all of the farmers who were so open, speaking with vulnerability and sharing words of wisdom with us all. I am excited for the upcoming 2023 interviews. If you want to recommend someone feel free to reach out: Teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu. A relationship like no other – for the love of farming! ☺



Oregon Community Food Systems Network Brings Together Statewide Coalition to Distribute \$1.5M for Small and Underserved Farmer Disaster Relief

By: Oregon Community Food Systems Network: Shin Lee, Network Coordinator, & Friends of Family Farmers: Alice Morrison, Co-Director

The Oregon Community Food System Network (OCFSN) successfully distributed \$1.5 Million in state funds to provide relief for small and underserved producers to recover from the natural disasters of 2021. During the 2021 season, farmers faced historic heat domes, drought, wildfires, and an early ice storm which impacted agricultural producers across the state. OCFSN brought together its members and administered these funds from the State for farmers who did not fit into the Oregon Disaster Assistance Program (ODAP) run by the Oregon Department of Agriculture, with a focus on Black, Indigenous, People of Color, small, and beginning farmers.

The Program

The parameters of the program were designed by a group of stakeholder organizations. Thank you to Our Family Farms (OFF), the OSU Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems, A Greater Applegate, High Desert Food & Farm Alliance (HDDFA), Friends of Family Farmers (FoFF), and the Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network (OrCAN) for their participation and input in building the program to quickly and equitably distribute these funds to farmers and ranchers in need. This committee helped set this program's guidelines to prioritize small, beginning, and BIPOC farmers. Eligibility requirements included: annual gross sales of less than \$350K, ineligible for or unable to access assistance from the ODAP program, and for losses due to natural disasters occurring in 2021 only.

The funds were disbursed through three rounds of applications. Grant funds were

held by OCFSN and the application was administered by FoFF. FoFF's staff provided translation services, coordinated outreach efforts with partners, oversaw the application process including a preliminary review of applications for completeness, provided one-on-one application assistance and troubleshooting. Grant award decisions were made by the OCFSN Disaster Relief Grant Review Committee.

Feedback 2022 Farmer & Rancher Disaster Relief Grant recipients shared with us:

"One thing that really stood out to me about this grant program was how beautifully streamlined and straightforward it was. Having applied to other grants in the past, there are many challenges navigating the complexities and immense amount of paperwork involved while trying to run a farm during the busy season. [Another grant application], for example, was pushing 50 pages and took several full weeks to complete. I can only imagine the kind of barriers that others would experience if English wasn't their first language or did not have the financial flexibility to dedicate so much time to the application."

"We were very pleased to hear that we were able to qualify for the Disaster Relief funds. As you know farmers are an independent bunch and reluctant to take a handout, but we are very appreciative of a helping hand from our neighbors when times are tough. The grant will help us to continue on during these times of high inflation and painful fuel prices."

"Thank you so much!! Although we had troubles in 2021...applying for this grant wasn't anything I thought I would be acknowledged in the running but with supportive pep talk from (a fellow BIPOC farmer), I gave it a go."

"A vote of confidence like this Disaster Relief has infused us with confidence and gratitude for this season after all the hardships of the last one. We received the news we got a grant after a very busy week that included planting a huge hedgerow on one of our property boundaries to support pollinators, biodiversity, and soil health. It means the world to us to do what we do, and the support of this grant will enable us to continue to grow and serve our community with reduced financial stress, and more clarity. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts."

The Results

108 farmers received grants from these funds. Of these recipients, 38% were BIPOC-owned farms. Awards were capped at \$30,000 in order to provide as much assistance to as many farmers as possible and the average grant was \$13,186. All farmers received their checks within 30 days of the application deadlines. Read more in our Farmer and Rancher Disaster Relief Grant 2022 Impact Report.

Some of the losses farmer requested relief for include: collapse of greenhouses due to snow and ice, loss of plants (both field crops and seedlings for future planting) from extreme heat, hay loss due to wildfires, smoke damage to crops and animals from fires, need for replacement feed for animals due to low hay yield from drought conditions, underselling livestock because of lack of food/water in drought conditions, and more. FoFF's Co-Director, Alice Morrison, says "We are proud to say this program was met by entirely positive feedback and has set us up for future efforts to distribute emergency funds."

Next Steps

This process has taught the coalition involved a lot about how to effectively reach, engage, and support our community of farmers. We will maintain these systems and relationships to respond to the next challenge that comes along. Because of the effects of a changing climate, we know that extreme conditions and worsening storms will continue to be a challenge for Oregon's small, independent, and underserved farmers.

Farmer & Rancher Disaster Relief Grant 2022 Impact Report

With leadership from Our Family Farms, Oregon Climate & Agriculture Network, Friends of Family Farmers, High Desert Food & Farm Alliance and many others, the Oregon Community Food Systems Network (OCFSN) distributed nearly \$1.5 million of state funding in 2022 through the Farmer & Rancher Disaster Relief Grant Program to 108 farmers and ranchers impacted by natural disasters in 2021.

\$1.5M

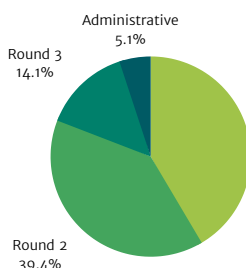
Total Fund

108

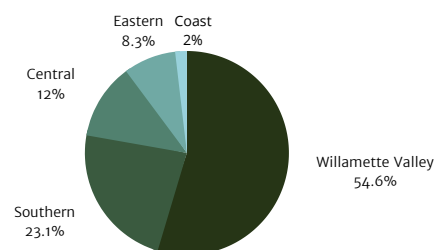
Grant Recipients

38%

Identified as BIPOC+

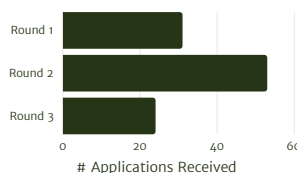


Distribution of Fund



Recipient Location

Grant funds were distributed across three rounds



This allowed us to balance getting money to producers quickly and giving folks sufficient time to apply.

Reasons for Requesting a Grant

Losses were caused by a variety of challenges, including:

- crop damage from heat waves
- loss of sales due to farmers market closures because of extreme heat or wildfire smoke
- early irrigation shut offs due to drought
- ice storm damage
- greenhouse damage from snow
- evacuating livestock to protect them from fires.

Oregon producers are on the frontlines of climate change.

Testimonials from producers who received funding highlighted how crucial this type of direct, accessible support was for them to continue farming in an unpredictable, rapidly changing climate. This is even more challenging for producers who don't have the resources to weather these events and are unable to access other state and federal disaster relief funds.

OCFSN is also encouraging lawmakers and state agencies to promote resilience on Oregon's farms and ranches so farmers are better prepared for extreme weather events when they occur, rather than focusing only on disaster relief after farmers incur losses. OCFSN, FoFF, and OrCAN support the inclusion of drought resilience mini-grants for farmers and ranchers in any drought relief package that comes from the State in the 2023 Legislative Session. ∞

Veteran Women for the Land Project – Enhancing Support and Growing Programming

By: Teagan Moran, OSU Small Farms Program

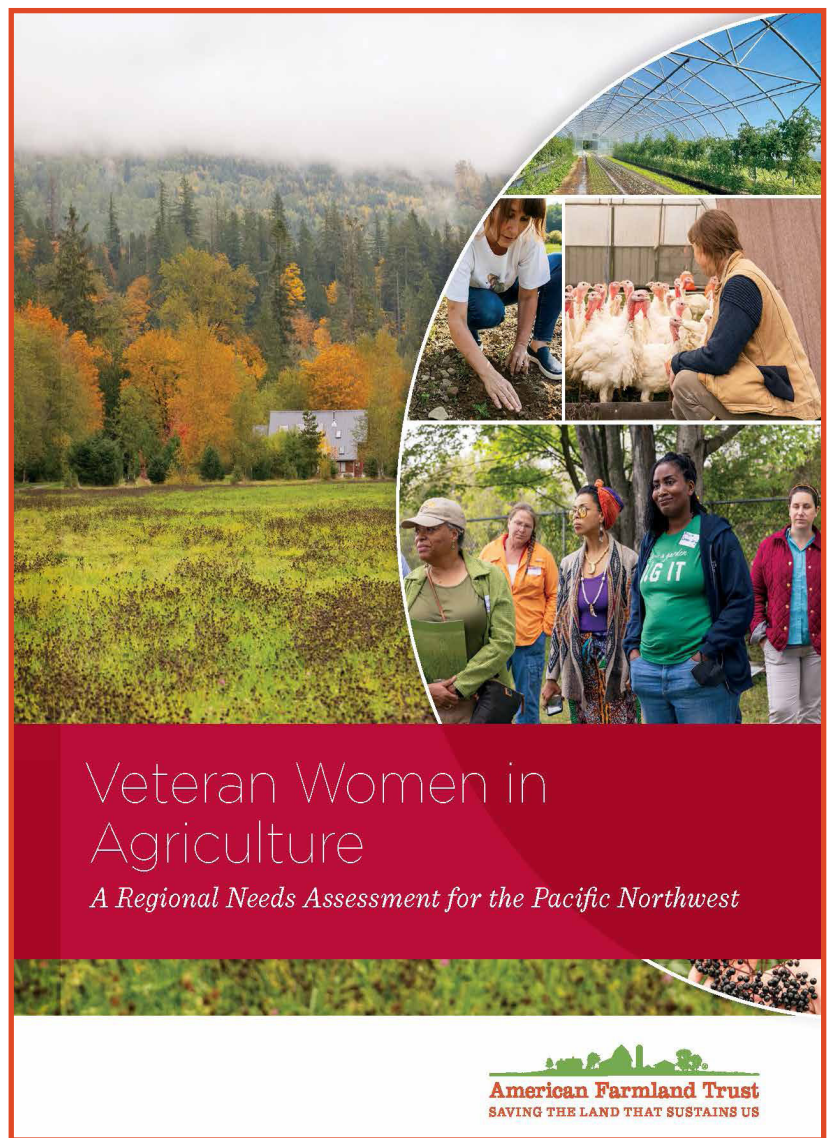
Our Small Farms Program is collaborating on a [Veteran Women for the Land Project](#). This effort is a partnership between American Farmland Trust (AFT), Farmer Veteran Coalition, Farmer Veteran Coalition-Washington Chapter, Annie's Project, Rogue Farm Corps, Washington State Department Veterans Affairs, Washington Farmland Trust, Insight for Action, and Oregon State University Extension Services Small Farms Program.

The main goals of this project are to:

1. Identify and fill gaps in our knowledge of how to better serve women veterans in agriculture. This work is particularly focused on meeting the needs of women veterans in the Pacific Northwest and those interested in pursuing agriculture.
2. Foster a community of practice among veteran women farmers in the Pacific Northwest through a series of listening sessions, Learning Circles, and convening's. The project will offer both in-person and virtual learning opportunities tailored to participants' interests, providing veteran women with the necessary skills, training, and experience they need to be successful in agriculture.

The first phase of the project was to conduct a regional needs assessment for the Pacific Northwest. Women veteran farmers, veterans exploring farming, and some organizations that support them were interviewed. The full assessment report can be found here: [“Veteran Women in Agriculture: A regional needs assessment for the Pacific Northwest”](#).

You can also [view a recent livestream panel](#) where three organizations, including our Small Farms Program, shared reflections on this work. During this conversation Gabrielle Roesch-McNally, the AFT



Women for the Land Director, summarized the core findings as:

1. *Veteran women farmers are a diverse group. Just as we know that women farmers are not a monolithic group, we know that veteran women involved in agriculture have different motivations for growing food and face different challenges. Many are motivated to engage in agriculture because the profession offers a chance to connect to the land, provide healing for the self and others, and to create more resilience in the face of uncertain times.*

2. *Intersectional and layered barriers exist for veteran women in agriculture- many are beginning farmers, looking to navigate challenges with land access. Others are facing gendered discrimination, and many are wary of public institutions who they may feel have betrayed them or let them down in their return to civilian lives.*
3. *Outreach to veterans and carefully curated spaces for education and networking are important. Indeed, finding and appealing to women veterans in agriculture is a challenge but many see a value in connecting with other women and are eager for connections and resources that are curated for them."*

We are now integrating feedback from the assessment and are in planning stages for the Learning Circles and convening's. Our involvement with this effort is also strengthening partnerships to expand our programs for military veterans more broadly. While the project has a three year timeline, the collaborations and support will be ongoing. We look forward to connecting women veteran farmers to one another

and connecting them to programming that meets their needs. If you want to talk about the Small Farms Program participation in this project you can contact: Teagan Moran at Teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu.

If you want to stay connected with the project overall and receive updates with associated event details, [you can do so HERE \(scroll down for the Veteran Women for the Land - Interest Form\)](#).

In addition, Our OSU Extension Small Farms Program has a Statewide Military Veteran Farmer Network for veterans in Oregon who are currently farming or exploring the farming path. This two way communication option provides us a space to share statewide events and resources relevant to veterans. You can also email the listserv yourself to ask a question, sell farm equipment, post a job opportunity, or organize over a particular topic. To join email Teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu. Listserv is monitored to assure safety and relevance. ∞

Growing & Saving Seed As A Farm Business Online Class Available Now

This Growing and Saving Seed as a Farm Business course guides you through the basic knowledge and skills needed to develop a successful seed production or seed saving enterprise on your farm. The course focuses on both the biological and farming aspects of producing, harvesting and storing seed. It will also help you evaluate some of the marketing and business decisions involved in seed production.

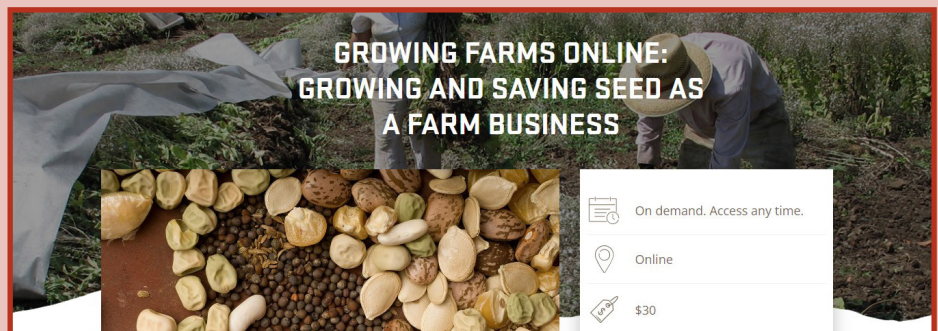
Who is this Course Designed For?

The course is designed primarily for small- to medium-scale farmers who are interested in producing seed for their own use and/or for commercial purposes.

Cost: \$30

More Information or the register:

<https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/growing-and-saving-seed-as-farm-business>



Small Farms and Community Food Systems at the Oregon Legislature: Oregon Community Food Systems Network Plans for the 2023 Session

By: Erik Chi, OCFSN Public Policy Intern

The 2023 Oregon Legislature is just around the corner - starts Jan. 17 - and state legislators will take up many bills related to farming and food systems. The Oregon Community Food Systems Network (OCFSN) has been getting organized. Our "Community Food Systems at the Legislature" working group will once again create a "Bills to Watch" report in January/February, which will be posted on our OCFSN Public Policy page. <https://ocfsn.org/policy-committee>

The OCFSN Community Food Systems at the Legislature working group is focused on legislative advocacy specific issues within the Oregon legislature. In this working group we focus on helping our members engage in their policy goals more effectively.

On November 30, OCFSN held a mini-convening focused on preparing our members for the 2023 legislative session. This convening covered the results of Oregon's general elections and its implications for legislative priorities within the food systems.

The elections on November 8th featured three competitive gubernatorial candidates and a high number of legislator turnover.

- On the national level, many election observers predicted a "red wave", however, this did not materialize.
- In Oregon, Republicans gained one seat in the House leaving the composition of the chamber with 35 Democrats and 25 Republicans. The House also had a high level of turnover with 21 representatives entering office for the first time.
- In the Senate, Republicans also gained one additional seat. This leaves the Senate with 17 Democrats, 11 Republicans, and 2 Independents. The ideological divide is roughly 17/13. We will

also have a new Senate President and new Senate Majority Leader.

- Unfortunately, it is still too early to know concretely the committee appointments, the priorities of new members, and the bills getting introduced.

The passage of Measure 113 will sanction legislators from having ten or more unexcused absences during a legislative session. This constitutional amendment will prevent the walk-outs of previous years.

Oregon's gubernatorial race saw Democrat Tina Kotek defeating Republican Christine Drazan and Independent Betsy Johnson. Kotek has a long legislative history and advocacy background in food systems and housing. The governor's office will produce a budget by February 1st, so this is an important time to express support or grievances with the budget to the various agencies and the new governor's office.

Breakouts: our attendees discussed their own thoughts about the new governor and legislature as they relate to their own work in public policy and legislative advocacy. Overall outlook on Governor Kotek is positive due to her previous work on food systems issues like Farm to School. However, there is also an undercurrent of apprehension stemming from concerns over the consolidation of programming and reduction of agency over funds at the local level as well as turnover and Kotek's potential appointments in Oregon Health Authority.

Representative Ken Helm (D-Beaverton), the Chair of the Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, and Water, gave us some insight on his legislative outlook and policy priorities. He noted that the decreased majorities for the Democrats in both chambers will

likely require greater bi-partisanship than in prior years. He is optimistic that bi-partisan collaboration will produce an efficient legislature on the issues of agriculture, land use, and water.

Example SB 1111: Title of the Bill		
Summary	Importance	Contact Person/Organization and How to Get Involved
What is this bill about?	Why does this bill matter to community food systems?	Where can you learn more about this bill? How can you get involved?

Three OCFSN member organizations then spoke briefly about issues their organizations were involved in with respect to how the new governor and legislature might affect their work.

- Alice Morrison, Friends of Family Farmers, spoke about their campaign on Farm Direct, which already has bi-partisan support.
- Megan Kemple, Oregon Climate & Agriculture Network, spoke about the creation of a new soil health initiative. OrCAN will continue to engage across the aisle and recognizes the need to focus on the new legislators who may not have experienced a regular in-person session before.
- Mason Durfee and Sammi Teo, Oregon Food Bank, spoke about Double up Food Bucks. They are optimistic due to the past success of the program and Kotek’s supportive stance on food security/assistance.

OCFSN will continue using the Bill Matrix and Bills to Watch to share information.

- As before, the Bill Matrix will be the primary repository for bills and any cursory information about them from our members.
- Bills to Watch (coming soon) will be maintained as an easy-to-read version of the Bill Matrix.

Please join us for our panel at the Oregon Small Farms Conference, on February 18th, about bills we are watching!

About the 2023 Oregon Legislature:

- The 2023 Oregon Legislature begins on January 17, half online and half in person (we’re waiting for the Legislature to provide more detail).
- Their target end date is June 15 but the session will end no later than June 25.
- [Oregon Legislative Information System](https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/) (OLIS) [https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/] ∞

New Project Helps Beginning Farmers and Ranchers of All Backgrounds Access Farmland

A 3-year USDA NIFA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) grant will help land seekers and landholders transition agricultural land to the next generation of Oregon farmers and ranchers.

A collaborative project of [Friends of Family Farmers](#) (FoFF), [Oregon Agricultural Trust](#) (OAT), and [Rogue Farm Corps](#) (RFC) will develop a network of place-based, regional hubs to support an equitable, intergenerational transfer of farmland to the next generation of farmers and ranchers in Oregon.

This project, **Transitioning Oregon's Farmland: Access, Planning, and Assistance for This Generation and the Next**, will support or expand each organization's existing statewide programming and establish Oregon's first regional land access hub with a Farmland Navigator in Oregon's fertile Willamette Valley.

The Farmland Navigator helps land seekers and landholders access educational programs, resources, and service providers to find land or hand their land off to the next generation. Through this project, beginning farmers and ranchers will also be supported by a statewide network of business planning and land access services facilitated by FoFF and RFC. The project's goal is to help beginning farmers and ranchers establish successful and sustainable farm businesses, prioritizing farmers who are Black, Indigenous, & People of Color (BIPOC), women, LGBTQIA+, and/or low-income, through a documented, replicable, regional, and community-led model.

RFC and FoFF help beginning farmers develop a broad range of skills including financial readiness, business planning, and land access. OAT educates landowners and retirement-age farmers and ranchers about succession planning and working land easements. The organizations also connect land seekers with landowners through a proven, statewide landlinking database and through intergenerational networking

events. And they provide one-on-one guidance and technical assistance to both land seekers and landowners.

"The average age of farmers in Oregon is 60, and nearly two-thirds of our state's farmland is expected to change hands in the next 20 years," said Project Director and Rogue Farm Corps Executive Director, Abigail Singer. "When this land gets put on the open market, it's at risk for development, real estate investment, and being taken out of agriculture. But in this moment of transition we also have an opening to connect retiring farmers with a new, more diverse generation of farmers who are ready to take the reins. This USDA grant will provide much-needed resources to facilitate this intergenerational transition work, at a time when beginning farmers face huge barriers to entry."

Approach

This collaborative project will employ several strategies to support equitable land access and farmland transition. These include:

- **Farm Launch (RFC):** beginning farmers will receive education, peer-to-peer support, and one-on-one technical assistance in marketing, finance, land access, and business planning
- **Changing Hands Workshops (RFC):** New & retiring farmers will come together for succession and land access training and facilitated intergenerational networking
- **2 Farmland Navigators (FoFF):** Navigators will work 1-on-1 with beginning farmers and ranchers on land access and preparing to run their own operations. One navigator will serve BIPOC farmers and one will establish the regional farmer support hub in the Willamette Valley
- **Farmland Navigator Guidebook (FoFF):** A guide to establishing a regional navigator

program will be created for other regions interested in replicating this model.

- **Landholder Education (OAT):** Education and support on succession planning & easements will be offered for landowners and the service providers (accountants, attorneys, etc) that support these complex transactions.

Outcomes

Over three years, the project will serve at least 188 beginning farmers and ranchers to begin or prepare to begin their own operations, with at least 25% people of color, at least 50% women, transgender, or non-binary, and at least 50% low-income. In addition they will educate 400 ag landowners and train 250 service providers to build readiness, knowledge, and connections for succession.

How to get involved

You can access details on each organization's programs on their websites and join their newsletters to get updates on project rollout. ∞

<https://www.roguefarmcorps.org>
<https://friendsoffamilyfarmers.org>
<https://www.oregonagtrust.org>

DEQ offers free well water testing in southern Deschutes County

Bend, Ore.—The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is offering free well water testing in southern Deschutes County as part of a groundwater quality study. Interested well users can contact DEQ at groundwater.monitoring@deq.oregon.gov or 503-693-5736 to be considered for the study.

DEQ will test 60-100 wells in spring and fall 2023 for nitrate, bacteria, arsenic, pesticides and other contaminants and send property owners their individual results.

The Oregon Health Authority recommends people test well water regularly to protect their health.

The southern Deschutes County area has porous, volcanic soil and many shallow groundwater aquifers, both of which allow the potential for contamination. Possible sources of groundwater contamination include failing septic systems, current or prior application of fertilizers and pesticides, and leaking underground fuel tanks.

Property owners are responsible for maintaining and monitoring private wells in Oregon—the state does not have water quality regulations for private wells. Well water testing is only required if the property is being sold.

DEQ will provide study participants with information on proper well maintenance, the health effects of common contaminants and options for water treatment.

Sample results will be publicly available, but landowner information will not be included in the public database.

Southern Deschutes County is the seventh geographic area DEQ has studied as part of its Statewide Groundwater Quality Monitoring Program, which evaluates the current condition of Oregon's groundwater. DEQ selected the area because existing groundwater data shows elevated nitrate levels in some water samples, shallow and vulnerable aquifers, and a lack of robust data in the basin over time. DEQ last sampled this area in 2014.

Find more information about participating in the study at <https://ordeq.org/groundwater>.

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>

Register Now

February 18th, 2023

OSU Oregon Small Farms Conference

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

We can't wait to see you there

