Summer 2020



Oregon Small Farm News Dregon State University Small Farms Program



The Farmer-Breeder Who Shaped the Flavor of Japanese Tea: Hikosaburo Sugiyama	9
U-Pick farms Are Open For Business, Farmers Are Making Accommodations	12
Online Lincoln County Food Guide Now Available	14
New OSU Organic Fertilizer and Cover Crop Calculator Now Available	15
Online Courses offered by the OSU Small Farms Program	16
OSU Dry Farming Project - 2020 Virtual Field Tour Series Save the Dates	17

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

Javier Fernandez-Salvador Marion & Polk Counties, 503-588-5301

Melissa Fery Benton, Linn, & Lane Counties, 541-766-6750

Amy Garrett Benton, Linn, & Lane Counties, 541-766-6750

Pamela Monnette Lincoln County, 541-283-5119

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

Sara Runkel Josephine County, 541-476-6613

Heather Stoven Yamhill County, 503-678-1264

Clare Sullivan Central Oregon, 541-548-6088

Audrey Comerford Outreach Progam Coordinator, Agritourism

Chrissy Lucas Outreach Progam Coordinator, Statewide, 541-766-3556

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

Teagan Moran Program Assistant,Benton, Linn & Lane Counties, 541-766-3553

Cover Photo: John Hopkins University COVID-19 Tracking Map. https://coronavirus.jhu.edu

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.

After Another Tragedy, It's Time To Make Real Change A Priority* By: Ed Ray, President, Oregon State University

The primary role of police in America is to provide for the safety of all people by protecting them from criminals and to hold each of us accountable to the law. We expect police to apprehend criminals and work within the legal system to make certain that justice is blind and all are held accountable to the law.

We all have watched in horror videos being replayed over the past week showing the life of George Floyd brutally taken from him by a white police officer in Minneapolis, Minn., while three other officers sworn to uphold the law looked on in indifference. Sadly, this horrific event is just the latest in a seemingly endless stream of acts of violence against Black and other people of color by police who are sworn to protect and serve them.

We continually hear speeches and testimonials about how unacceptable and terrible these acts are and how our leaders feel the pain of the Black community. Yet, nothing changes much and we act as if these horrific events are singular or isolated events. But these are not one-offs. They are the product of a failed justice system that perpetuates racism in America and too often a culture of silence within police forces that protects incompetent and hateful people simply because they wear the badge. We are condemned to relive these tragedies unless we make real change a priority throughout this country.

America must be a land of personal and equal freedom, safety and opportunity for all people. That attitude should be universal in this country regardless of who we are, where we live or what we look like.

But how can we expect America and all people who live here — including communities of color — to thrive in the midst of such violence and injustice? How many times must we write the same messages expressing our outrage and hurt, sharing our thoughts and prayers for those harmed, and pleading for an end to injustice? How many acts of discrimination, injury and death must occur before our country confronts the realities of the lived experiences of people of color in our society? All of this must stop and that requires action not speeches.

Policing is a local function, but our system of policing requires systematic change across the country. Most police are good, dedicated, under-paid and hard working men and women, who risk their lives every day for the well-being of all people. They deserve our thanks and respect and they should not be subject to public scorn because we are incapable of holding some police accountable to the laws of our country and communities simply because they wear a badge.

The novel coronavirus pandemic has made all of us look at the inequities in our society. We call people essential workers and yet we systematically pay them less than living wages and deny them critical health care and quality education for themselves and their children, and we act surprised that they are disproportionately vulnerable to death from the COVID-19 pandemic because of pre-existing conditions and that they are disproportionately people of color. When do we get disgusted enough with what we have created and say enough?

In closing, I ask that each of us continue to participate in dialogue, leadership and understanding as we seek to alter the direction of society. I know this will not happen overnight, but by God it needs to happen soon.

*Edited to fit formatting. Full statement is here: https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/president/afteranother-tragedy-it%E2%80%99s-time-make-real-change-priority

Black and Brown Farmers of Color in Oregon

By: Edward Hill, Black Food Sovereignty Coalition, and Lauren Gwin, OSU Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems

"COVID-19 punched a hole in the food industrial complex barriers to BIPOC food innovation. That hole, that gap, gave us time to breathe, which let us catch our wind." -- Edward Hill, Director, Black Food Sovereignty Coalition

The COVID-19 pandemic is taking a terrible toll on Black, Indigenous, and Communities of Color locally, nationally, and internationally; higher rates of infection, lower rates of treatment, higher death rates, heavier job loss impacts, and an often greater risk of workplace exposure to the virus for those still working.

However, while not exactly a silver lining to a bad situation, COVID-19 has also created economic opportunity for some BIPOC (Black and Indigenous People of Color) farmers in Oregon and the call to grow more food, deliver more food, and address food insecurity is offering economic investments and game-changing donations.

In February, just before Oregon shut down due to the novel coronavirus, the Black Food Sovereignty Coalition and partners hosted the second annual Back to the Root gathering, in Portland. The two-day event, with a variety of workshops and field trips, drew more than 135 people from Oregon, California, and Washington.

At the same time, BFSC Directors and voting members were already getting farms up and running at two Portland sites: Howell Territorial Park on Sauvie Island, and Black Futures Farm at the Learning Garden Lab in Southeast Portland.

Howell Territorial Park

More than a dozen farm businesses, nonprofit community organizations, a restaurant, and variety trial research projects are now sharing two acres of farmland at the Park, with coordination and support from Black Food Sovereignty Coalition. The 120 acre park, owned by Metro, the regional government for the Portland Metropolitan area, has 20 acres in cultivation, most of which is leased by Sauvie Island Growers.

This spring, BFSC took over a lease for 3.2 acres held for the past 15 years by Janus Youth Programs. The property also includes a barn, hoophouses for season extension and winter cropping. **BFSC** is receiving technical assistance from Matthew Edwards at the regional Natural Resource



Edward Hill planting Photo Credit: Black Food Sovereignty Coalition.

Conservation Service office to put EQIP contracts in place for conservation practices. The farmland is certified organic, and Brian Wood at Sauvie Island Growers is providing a lot of guidance on organic production practices and techniques for scaling up production.

BFSC and partners, including Eca-Etabo Wasongolo of Village Gardens, have recruited and welcomed a multi-racial, multi-ethnic group of farmers to farm and steward the land together. These include immigrant farmers from Laos, Cambodia, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Kenya, and the Central African Republic. Indigenous farmers are also on the land: NAYA, the Native American Youth and Family Center, has started a First Foods project, and Tribal Canoe Journeys is growing food for this year's journey. The African Family Holistic Health Organization is planning a vegetable garden, and Po'Shines Café De La Soul, Portland's soul food restaurant, is growing vegetables for their menu.

The farm is also hosting two research teams doing variety trials: an OSU squash trial, and a hemp seed project led by CHEM, a new, BIPOC-led hemp genetics company.

BFSC is adding more production and marketing infrastructure and

systems to support the farm businesses Photo Credit: Bl and projects, based on their individual and collective needs and goals. This includes cold storage, distribution, and an online marketing platform for BIPOC farmers who want to use it. As more buyers want to support BIPOC farmers, BFSC wants to make those market connections easier.

BFSC is also working with farmers to make sure everyone has COVID-19 safety procedures in place and enough personal protective equipment to protect them, their families, and their customers.

Funding to invest in these farms and crucial systems is now coming from philanthropic and public sources that, pre-COVID, did not fully understand their importance. Food system disruptions and COVID-19's disproportionate impact on BIPOC communities have, together, shone a spotlight on the leadership and skills of BIPOC farmers and organizations.

Other BIPOC farmers who are members of BFSC have also started farming on Sauvie Island this season, leasing land, hosted by landowners who want to support BIPOC growers now and in the future. These include Yasuke Commons and the Raceme Farm Collective, a group of Black and Brown farmers from Chalchi Farm, Flying Dogheart Farm, and Scrapberry Farm. Many of these farmers are graduates of Mudbone Grown's Pathways to Farming training program for farmers of color.



Black Futures Farm beets Photo Credit: Black Food Sovereignty Coalition.

Black Futures Farm

In Southeast Portland, BFSC leaders Malcolm Hoover and Mirabai Collins, with community volunteers, created Black Futures Farm as a place of connection and healing for Black people to grow food and community together. The farm, located at the city of Portland's Learning Gardens Lab, has 1.5 acres under cultivation with 17 different fruit trees, vegetables, flowers, and medicinal and cooking herbs.

In this first year, they are selling their produce through a 35-family CSA, serving families in SE and Far-East Multnomah County. In mid-June, they launched a test-run CSA with their first harvest and distribution with the support of OFMA.

On BFSC's website, Black Futures Farm describes itself as "building a more resilient, thriving, and entrepreneurial food and maker community in which equitable food oriented development where cooperation and shared economy are standard. "BFF is in the business of growing food, growing community health, growing business, and growing community culture around delivery of the quadruple bottom line to historically absent or barriered communities. BFF practices and teaches what it promotes, and as part of a motivated and dedicated collaborative, we are working to establish a more just and equitable sustainable food system in the Portland Metro area."

The Black Food Sovereignty Coalition (BFSC) serves as a collaboration hub for Black and Brown communities to confront the systemic barriers that make food, place and economic opportunities inaccessible to us. BFSC is focused on meeting these barriers with creative, innovative, and sustainable solutions. Built on a decade of work of founding members of the Black Food Sovereignty Council and other Black-identified leaders and stakeholders in the Pacific Northwest, the BFSC mission is to ignite Black and brown communities to participate as owners and movement leaders within food systems, placemaking, and economic development. Learn more and donate to BFSC at: https://blackfoodnw.org/









OSU Dry Farming Project Presents 2020 Virtual Field Tours

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR WEDNESDAYS AT 10AM IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER!

Nine tours featuring different elements of the five core research projects: *Tomato, Corn Breeding, Soil Management, Solar Co-location with Dry-Farmed Vegetables, and Variety Trials*

For more information and to view a final schedule once posted visit https://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/dry-farming

OSU EXTENSION SERVICE PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION IN ALL ITS PROGRAMS, SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND MATERIALS. ACCOMMODATIONS ARE AVAILABLE, CONTACT TEAGAN 541-713-5011 TEAGAN.MORAN@OREGONSTATE.EDU

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Flowchart: An interactive flowchart to explore resources on incorporating CSA into your operation

By: Heidi Noordijk, Small Farms Program, Oregon State University

S mall-scale farmers throughout the state have been adapting to meet market changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stay at home orders and restaurant closures led to an increased demand for foods from local farms and businesses with safe delivery and pick up options. Temporary closures of restaurants and food service providers left some farmers without their early spring marketing channels. Farmers moved quickly to find new markets for their products that were ready to harvested and sold. Many of these farmers looked to the community supported agriculture (CSA) model or an adaptation of CSA during this time

To support CSA farmers Holly Hutchason, executive director of The Portland Area CSA Coalition (PACSAC) and OSU 's Small Farms Team collaborated on a new CSA flowchart and website. Resources and information for farmers of all experience levels are included on site - from farmers that have never heard of CSA to those that have been doing CSA for decades. Topics on the website include, the history of CSA, recent CSA trends, guidance on safely running a CSA drop site during the pandemic, and many resources on incorporating CSA into your farm operation. Link to website and interactive flow chart: <u>http://blogs.</u> <u>oregonstate.edu/csainfo/</u>

CSAs throughout the country have reported a decline in sales and customer retention as market forces have been pushing to expand the definition of CSA beyond the traditional model. COVID-19 turned this trend on its head and farms throughout Oregon were selling out of CSA shares much earlier than usual this year. Farm collaborations and aggregations, innovative delivery



Vol. XV No. 3 Page 6

options, online sales, and weekly boxes were all adaptations seen in 2020.

Collaborations between farms occurred to boost CSA offerings, find new markets for restaurant farmers, and reduce delivery contacts. Weekly box shares were offered while restaurant accounts were on hold, customers did not have to commit to a full season and farms had a willing market for their crops that were ready to harvest. Farmers added online sales options, and offered home delivery to support stay at home orders from the state.

For those looking to get into CSA or change their models the flowchart and website can serve as a guide. The website will be updated annually.

Special thanks to Katie Gourley for creating the flowchart graphics and interactive webpage.



The Portland Area CSA Coalition promotes CSA in Oregon and Washington by

- Directly connecting local CSA farmers with people
- Providing farmers opportunities to learn and grow and meet their business and sustainability goals.
- Educating the public about the CSA experience and the benefits of healthy eating.

PACSAC website: http://www.portlandcsa.org

9th Annual



Small Farm School will be held online this fall. Starting September 8th, we will be offering a couple of sessions each week over the course of 8 weeks.

More info to come on classes, dates, and registration. For now rest assured that Small Farm School 2020 is a go, and we are working on figuring out the best way to bring it to all of you.

Join our Small Farms School Mailing List to stay up to date at https://bit.ly/SFS_Updates Or visit our webpage at http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/smallfarmschool

OSU Small Farms offers Free Webinar on Staying Strong during Challenging Times

N ow more than ever, farmers and ranchers face myriad factors out of our control— market, weather, food safety regulations, government programs, and market fluctuations. These factors can lead any of us to experience distress anger, feelings of isolation, and feeling out of control. With the current COVID-19 situation, many people are experiencing what farmers and ranchers cope with on a regular basis- additional stresses associated with living in isolated circumstances and working/living closely with family members.

In May, OSU Extension Small Farms faculty Maud Powell and consultant Angie Boudro put together a webinar on mental health in agriculture called Staying Strong in Trying Times.

The webinar opens with Kit Pharo, a well-known cattle rancher and owner of Pharo Cattle Company telling his personal story. Kit, a popular public speaker who advises cattle ranchers on how to improve the profitability and sustainability of their stock, lost his son to suicide. In the webinar, he speaks candidly about the warning signs of depression, how to help a family member get help, and the impacts of suicide on his family.

Dr. Robert Fetsch spends the rest of the webinar explaining how farmers and ranchers can learn to identify untreated depression and anxiety amongst family and community members, how to have difficult conversations, and how to access resources in times of crisis. Dr. Fetsch served on the faculty of the University of Kentucky Extension and Colorado State University Extension for thirty-two years. He's spent the past forty-one years learning and teaching about the latest research on family life in order to assist farmers and ranchers bounce back from challenging times.

Access the Webinar: https://media.oregonstate.edu/ media/t/1_h7iyy1gg

DID YOU KNOW?

Farming and ranching are ranked in the top 12 most stressful occupations.

Stress, anxiety, depression, and fatigue probably contribute to high levels of farming and ranching accidents.

Understandably, many farmers and ranchers experience depression, with the risk of depression increasing if, in the past year, the farmer or rancher:

- Lost something of sentimental value, including a spouse
- Experienced substantial income decline
- Acquired large amounts of debt
- Had legal problems
- Experienced an increase in health problems
- Lost meaning, such as stepping back from management or retiring

Signs of depression include:

- Sadness
- inability to experience genuine pleasure
- significant weight loss or gain (not due to dieting)
- loss of energy
- excessive sleep and/or middle of the night insomnia
- lethargy
- agitation
- inappropriate guilt
- feeling worthless
- inability to concentrate
- preoccupied with negatives and/or recurrent thoughts of suicide.

There is help! A combination of taking good care of yourself, exercise, counseling and medication will help!

Resources

- www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/farmer-mentalhealth
- http://extension.colostate.edu: fact sheets on managing stress during tough times, coping with droughts, dealing with anger, strategies for dealing with transition and change, and more
- Extensiondisaster.net (Extension Disaster Education Network)
- Mentalhealthfirstaid.org 🔗

The Farmer-Breeder Who Shaped the Flavor of Japanese Tea: Hikosaburo Sugiyama

By: Dr. Toshihiko Nishio Translated and edited by: Shinji Kawai and Abigail Huster, Department of Horticulture, Oregon State University

mprovements in agricultural technology and breeding helped struggling Japanese farming communities in the early 20th century. Since the 1990s, Dr. Toshihiko Nishio, a Japanese rice farming system researcher, published over 150 stories about these innovations. By showing how these discoveries derived from careful observation, patience, and in some cases, serendipity, we hope that farmers will realize how ordinary people can contribute to the advancement of their local agricultural communities and beyond.

One Cultivar to Rule Them All

In the suburbs of Shizuoka City, Japan, there is a hilly area filled with modern buildings. The center of this area, where the Prefectural Library now stands, was the birth place of the tea cultivar 'Yabukita'. It would not be an overstatement to say that all Japanese people have benefited from this cultivar.

In 1997, 75% of all tea plantings in Japan were of the cultivar 'Yabukita' (39,000 ha of 52,000 ha in total). The second largest cultivar, 'Yutaka Midori', comprised only 3.6%. No other crop is dominated by a single cultivar to this extent. If you exclude the unnamed heirloom cultivars which comprise 12% of Japanese tea plantings, the total percentage dedicated to 'Yabukita' increases to an impressive 85%. This trend has been true for over half a century. Historical data pre-1997 show the same reliance on the cultivar 'Yabukita' as today.

Considering its dominance of the market share in Japan, how many of the readers would have guessed that Yabukita was bred by a small farmer, Hikosaburo Sugiyama? The distinctive aroma of the tea that



Current prefectural libray area where 'Yabukita' was found. Illustration by Eiko Goto.

Japanese people consume each morning and evening is the result of his hard work and astute selections, despite the fact that national and public institutions have conducted the majority of tea breeding work in Japan.

The "Weasel" in the tea garden

Sugiyama launched his tea flavor selection project around the year 1890, when he was about 30 years old. The Sugiyama family businesses were a local traditional clinic, a tea farm, and a brewery. He had a health condition that prevented him from working in the clinic so he devoted himself to running the tea garden instead.

When Sugiyama started to practice agriculture, there was little interest in tea cultivars. Many tea plantations were maintained by planting seedlings, leaving the genetics up to chance. At that time



Right: Tea Flowers. Left: Tea Cuttings. Below: Sugiyama Hikosaburo Illustrations by Eiko Goto.



tea experts claimed that Japanese tea plantings consisted of various cultivars, and the blend of diverse flavors ended up creating the renown Japanese green tea. Many doubted that breeding efforts would have any effect on the quality of tea plants.

However, Sugiyama challenged himself to create a uniform tea planting through plant breeding. Tea cultivars are categorized by three harvest seasons: early, mid and late.

He realized that if the harvest season was coordinated by planting one uniformly maturing cultivar instead of collections of chance seedlings, tea production could become much more efficient.

He began his breeding efforts by visiting the farm on a daily basis and identifying plants with high quality leaves. His breeding method of individual selection was a rather simple approach by current standards. He would select superior plants from various tea plantings. Then he would observe these plants over time and propagate the best selections.

The standard clonal propagation methods of the time were difficult and ineffective in the case of tea plants. He struggled mightly, but ended up finding a method that worked well for his needs: an adapted version of air-layering. To perform air-layering, you bend a shoot at 90 degrees to encourage rooting. At the time the accepted method of air-layering was to bend older branches, but they were often unamenable to rooting. He altered this technique to use young small shoots, which were much more responsive to this type of clonal propagation. This new method enabled him to reproduce his selected plants easily. He developed this new technique in collaboration with professional gardeners.

His selection methods were simple but depended on his many years of experience. He would chew fresh leaves, selecting the ones

with sweetness and eliminating anything bitter or astringent. Selected bushes were further observed for two to three years, and particularly outstanding plants were increased and made in to cultivars. He ended up receiving the nickname "Weasel" as he endlessly roamed the fields, chewing so many leaves that his teeth cracked.

Sugiyama made trips all over mainland Japan looking for promising tea cultivars, as well as to Okinawa and the Korean peninsula. There was little transportation and shipping infrastructure at the time, so he always carried moss with him to keep his collections alive until he reached home. If the moss ran out, he would even stick shoots into Daikon radish to get them home safely.

Setbacks and Success

Like all good stories, Sugiyama's has several unexpected twists and turns. At the end of the 1890s, his breeding efforts came to an abrupt halt. Another



Tea Field.

Illustration by Eiko Goto.

enterprise of his was in development in the South Pacific territory. He went away on an unsuccessful venture and while he was abroad, all of his tea bushes were removed due to an accident.

He was able to resume his tea planting efforts nearly ten years later when he met the head of Tea Business Association, Kaheibei Otani, in 1909. Moved by Sugiyama's enthusiasm, Otani purchased a 2.7 ha tea orchard with his own money and offered it to Sugiyama. Adding on to Sugiyama's own small farm it became 3 ha. And those 3 ha are the site where the Prefectural Library now stands.

Once again, Sugiyama collected numerous tea plants, developing a selection process and propagating elite materials. However, this time around brought its own challenges. After Otani retired, the land he had given to Sugiyama was handed over to the Prefecture, and Sugiyama could not continue his work there. By then, though, nothing could stop his enthusiasm. He spent his own money to acquire sufficient land to continue his tea breeding, and ended up developing over 100 cultivars there. 'Yabukita' is like the summit of Mt. Fuji, sitting above all the cultivars he developed.

The name 'Yabukita' comes from the name of his tea plantation that was founded after clearing A Moso bamboo forest. There was one to the north named 'Yabu (bush)-kita (north)', and one in the south called Yabu-minami (south). Once Sugiyama identified, 'Yabukita' he increased it by air-layering, and it established by 1927.

By 1931 the public began to recognize the exceptional quality of 'Yabukita'. The cultivar was highly praised during evaluations by Shizuoka Prefecture Agricultural Experiment Station in 1934. It was registered as a cultivar at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry by 1953. As it uniformly matured in mid-May it could avoid frost damage, and thus became a recommended cultivar by Shizuoka Prefecture in 1955. 'Yabukita' is a vigorous bush with large dark green leaves. Above all, the flavor is outstanding.

Since it took 20 years from its development until 'Yabukita' was registered at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest as a cultivar, Sugiyama passed away in 1941 at the age of 84 without seeing this success. However, he was more active than ever in tea breeding late in his life. He would talk passionately about his projects to his guests, never running out of things to say.

The original 'Yabukita' bush is recognized as a natural treasure of the Prefecture. It was transplanted to a public place near the local railway station. The bush's canopy of dark green leaves stands well overhead. There is a monument for Sugiyama nearby as well **%**



Statue of Sugiyama. Illustration by Eiko Goto.

U-Pick farms Are Open For Business, Farmers Are Making Accommodations

By: Audrey Comerford, OSU Extension Service, Agricultural Tourism and Melissa Fery, Oregon State University Small Farms Program

Customers are ready for sweet Oregon grown fruit and the opportunity to pick-our-own at local farms. Perhaps this year, even more than most, they are looking forward to getting outdoors, being active and breathing in farm fresh air.

Farmers are gearing up to welcome visitors for u-picking. However, customers should expect some changes this season, so communicating new practices and procedures is important.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, farms will need to have extra sanitation and guidelines in place to keep their employees and visitors healthy. To comply with the 6-feet or longer social distancing rule, on-farm picking may only be allowed in certain rows. Some farmers are also considering ways to schedule harvest times in advance.

"We'll be working with customers to make sure that groups are appropriately distanced from one another," said Andrea Davis of Kings Valley Gardens, a blueberry U-pick farm in Benton County. "We'll also be open on Sundays, in addition to Friday and Saturdays, for the first five weeks of the season to try and make sure we don't have too many people at once."

Christina Fordyce of Fordyce Farm in Marion County said, "We will assign our U-pick customers two rows apart instead of the usual neighboring rows to enforce social distancing guidelines, adding that that the farm will have a handwashing station by the field for both staff and customers.

Some farmers are also considering ways to minimize handling of the fruit. Kiger Island Blues, a blueberry farm near Corvallis, is planning to sell by the bucket instead of weighing fruit after it's picked this year.

"I've sourced food grade buckets that my customers can fill up for a flat rate of \$10 and then take the



Photo provided by Andrea Davis, Kings Valley Gardens.

bucket home with them," said Kiger Island Blues owner Mindi Miller.

To have a safe and successful U-pick season, there are a few things farmers need to communicate with their customers. Keeping the farm website, social media accounts like Facebook and recorded phone messages current will be especially helpful in keeping visitors informed. Customers should know that:

- To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, don't go if you are sick or have symptoms.
- Wearing facemasks might be encouraged by the farm.
- You may need to bring own container for picking or to take home your fruit. If you do, make sure they are washed, disinfected and rinsed. Not all farms provide containers.
- Pick what you touch to minimize the spread of germs.
- Don't eat the fruit while picking and avoid touching your face.
- Payment options vary by farm. Some will be

discouraging the use of cash while others don't have the option to take debit or credit cards. Be prepared for both payment options.

- Areas that may have been used as gathering places in the past might not be available this year, such as barns, shade trees, canopies, etc.
 Come prepared with the appropriate sun protection and clothing.
- Be mindful of your distance between others in locations like the parking area, picking in the fields and waiting in line to pay for produce.
- There might be more wait time in lines due to additional sanitation procedures such as disinfecting scales and checkout areas.

"We are committed to providing quality fruit to our customers – something we believe no one should miss out on during this time," Fordyce said. "Eating seasonally and spending time outdoors have many health benefits. We wish to provide this opportunity to our customers while also doing whatever is necessary to keep our customers safe. We also ask that our customers be mindful of the health of those around them and please save your U-picking for another day if you are ill."

Safely picking and enjoying tasty, Oregon berries benefits the farmers and consumers.

"I enjoy U-pick season, it's a fun way for me to work with the public," Miller said.

The <u>Oregon Department of</u> <u>Agriculture</u> has provided guidance for U-pick farms. **%**



Photo provided by Andrea Davis, Kings Valley Gardens



Online Lincoln County Food Guide Now Available

LINCOLN COUNTY, Ore. - It's hard to miss Forks Farm on Yachats River Road.

"If you turn one way you're at the North Fork Yachats River Covered Bridge," said owner Catherine Lucido. "If you turn the other way, you're in my front yard."

Lucido sells vegetables and blueberries that she grows on her 26-acre farm. Fresh-cut flowers are also a cornerstone of her operation. She cultivates roses in her greenhouse that become centerpieces in floral arrangements.

Lucido was recently contacted by Pami Monnette with the Oregon State University Extension Service, who wanted to include Forks Farm in a new online Lincoln County Local Food guide. Lucido didn't hesitate.

"I was happy to do it," she said. "It's a great idea."

Since the website went live, Lucido has received a couple of calls from people who've seen it and are interested in buying from her. She hopes other farms in Lincoln County get noticed, as well.

"We're really tiny farms out here, but we're still doing it," she said.

Monnette had a local food guide on her planning list for a year. Then came March and the COVID-19 pandemic. Disruptions to the normal food supply chain made it imperative that Lincoln County residents had a resource to find locally grown food, she said.

"Restaurants were very limited, farmers markets were under threat of closing, and these local farmers were losing their usual markets," said Monnette, Lincoln County Extension agriculture faculty.

"We needed something that was hyperlocal so that neighbors could connect with neighbors," she said. "It's a simple idea that can be replicated in other counties."

The food guide features a growing list of Lincoln County producers who are doing direct sales, including farm stands, local food deliveries, U-pick, community supported agriculture (CSA), whole/half pastured animals, and on-dock sales. Geographically, the guide encompasses every corner of the county, from Newport to Lincoln City, from Waldport to Siletz.

"If they're not at farmers markets or selling to restaurants, they just needed a little help to market their products directly to customers," Monnette said. "This leads to a greater conversation, that these businesses should be a priority for economic recovery plans. The more we can tie these local businesses together, the stronger they can be. We can keep the food that's grown in a region consumed in that region. It benefits the integrity of the food system."

New OSU Organic Fertilizer and Cover Crop Calculator Now Available

By: Nick Andrews, Oregon State University Small Farms Program and Dan Sullivan, Oregon State University

The OSU Organic Fertilizer and Cover Crop Calculator has been online since 2010, and is widely used by farmers, students and agricultural professionals. It is a free online tool that predicts nitrogen release from cover crops, organic fertilizers and compost using nitrogen mineralization models. You can also enter your input and labor costs to compare the cost and nutrient value of different management plans.

We have recently moved the Calculator to a new <u>website</u>, and updated to version 5 of the Calculator. Changes to version 5 include revised cover crop nitrogen mineralization models that provide 4-week and 10-week nitrogen release estimates. The revised models also predict nitrogen immobilization from low nitrogen cover crops. Version 4 only allowed entry of up to three cover crop fields, version 5 allows entry of up to eight cover crop fields at a time. The nitrogen mineralization models for organic fertilizers and compost are the same as in version 4. Like version 4, the new version 5 is also available in two formats: one for per acre calculations, another for per 1000 ft² calculations.

that went in to developing the nitrogen mineralization models. If you sample your cover crop biomass and submit a sub-sample to a laboratory for total N and dry matter analysis, you can use the Calculator to predict the fertilizer value of your cover crop stand. You can enter these results into the Calculator to predict the fertilizer value of your cover crop. Table 3 and figure 2 from the publication show the Calculator's predicted amount of nitrogen that is immobilized or mineralized by cover crops with different nitrogen concentrations.

The OSU Calculator website links to the new Calculators, and includes a quick guide and records sheet to help you sample cover crops and use the Calculators. It also links to OSU Publication EM 9235 and PNW Extension Publication 636 "Estimating plant-available nitrogen release from cover crops" that describes cover crop sampling methods in detail and additional research background.

We are using the Calculator to evaluate crop performance in on-farm cover crop trials. If you have any questions about the Calculator, please contact <u>nick.andrews@oregonstate.edu</u>.

A new Extension Publication "OSU Organic Fertilizer & Cover Crop Calculator: Predicting Plantavailable Nitrogen" (EM 9235) describes the research



Oregon Small Farm News

Vol. XV No. 3 Page 15

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



To Growing Farms: Successful Whole Farm Management https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/growing-farms-online-successful-whole-farm-management?hsLang=en



To Pasture Management: https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/pasture-and-grazing-management?hsLang=e



To Ecological Strategies

https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/growing-farms-short-course-ecological-strategies-for-managing-insects-on-afarm?hsLang=en

OSU Dry Farming Project - 2020 Virtual Field Tour Series Save the Dates

By: Amy Garrett, Oregon State University Small Farms Program

Mark your calendars! The 2020 Dry Farm Project field tours will be held on Wednesday mornings at 10:00AM in August and September. There will be nine field tours featuring different elements of the five core projects listed below. For more information and to view a final schedule once posted visit: <u>https://</u> <u>smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/dry-farming</u>

The Dry Farming Project began in 2013 with case studies of farms in Western Oregon and Northern California (coordinated by Community Alliance with Family Farmers) that dry farm a variety of fruit and vegetable crops. These case studies revealed a suite of management practices that support crop production without supplemental irrigation including: careful timing of tillage, early planting, cultivation or surface protection to prevent crusting and cracking of soil surface, diligent weed management, improving soil quality and water retention with organic matter addition (cover crops, compost, rotational grazing), increased plant spacing, and use of drought-resistant varieties. There have been dry demonstrations in Western Oregon every year since 2015.

2020 Dry Farming Projects: Tomato Project (funded by Western SARE) 2020 -2022. Led by: Alex Stone

Goal: Evaluate hundreds of tomato varieties under dry farmed conditions; grafting tomatoes onto different drought-resistant rootstocks; utility of soil management strategies (mulching, fertilization) and cultural management (staking, pruning, shading); the profitability of dry farmed tomatoes; and help farmers promote and market dry farmed tomatoes.

Corn Breeding Project (funded by Agricultural Research Foundation) 2020. Led by: Lucas Nebert Goal: Refine and improve the diverse, openpollinated dent corn variety called Open Oak Party Mix, stewarded by Adaptive Seeds in Brownsville, OR; evaluate performance of the offspring of 200 unique hand pollinations made in 2019 in dryfarmed conditions; showcase a corn variety trial in collaboration with NOVIC to determine best varieties for hominy and masa production that grow well in our region.

Soil Management Study (funded by University Corporation for Atmospheric Research) 2020

Led by: Amy Garrett, Alex Stone, and Matt Davis Goal: Evaluate how different tillage, mulch, and fertilizer treatments affect the quality and productivity of dry farmed tomatoes.

Solar Co-location with Dry-Farmed Vegetables (funded by National Renewable Energy Lab) 2019 – 2021. Led by: Amy Garrett

Goal: Evaluate quality and productivity of dry farmed vegetables interplanted in a solar array. Potatoes responded to the partial-shading by the panels with a 9.5% increase in yield in the 2019 trial and will be included in the 2020 and 2021 trials.

Variety Trials (supported by The Dry Farming Institute) 2015 - present. Led by: Amy Garrett and Lucas Nebert

Goal: Evaluate performance of select varieties (winter squash (delicata and maxima), tepary beans, corn, potatoes, and tomatoes) in a dry-farmed system; pilot an app called <u>SeedLinked</u> year to streamline our data collection and make it easier for more growers to participate!

Thank you to our sponsors!



For questions contact Teagan Moran at Teagan.moran@ oregonstate.edu or (541) 713-5011