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# Gypsy moth wars



The gypsy moth eradication team that assembled this spring to do battle in north Portland included specialists from the Oregon departments of Agriculture and Forestry as well as USDA.

PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE PAID  
AT  
SALEM, OR

Oregon Department of Agriculture  
635 Capitol Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301-2532



*Just before sunrise, May 1st, the first helicopter lifted off from the spray program project headquarters southeast of Eugene near Pleasant Hill. With a full load of the biologic insecticide, Bt, the pilot turned the helicopter to the southeast to spray the first of 225,000 acres, which represented the largest gypsy moth eradication program ever undertaken west of the Mississippi River. The dimension of the project was enormous. Before the project was completed June 8th, more than half a million gallons of Bt had been applied by 14 spray helicopters. In all, nearly 2000 hours of flight time was logged by the gypsy moth "air force". If you flew that many hours in a straight line, you could circle the Earth four and half times!*

— Oregon Agri-Record, Summer 1985

Thirty-one years later, two helicopters went into battle against the gypsy moth in north Portland on a much smaller scale, but no less important. Failure to retaliate to an attack of gypsy moth was not an option. The continual threat

of the plant-eating insect pest is unchanged over the years, but the way the Oregon Department of Agriculture and its partners now respond to its presence has evolved. More communication, more outreach, more transparency, more notification. This is how a successful war against gypsy moth is fought in 2016.

"For this project, there was unprecedented outreach, education, and public access to information," says Clint Burfitt, manager of ODA's Insect Pest Prevention and Management Program, who headed operations for the eradication project that began April 16 and finished May 2. "I believe we were effective because the area of Portland that was treated had been networked well in advance. A lot of people and organizations in the community already cared about ecological assets like parks, watersheds, and nature. We talked with them, shared information with them. They, in turn, shared that information with residents in their community."

The three aerial applications conducted during the project were not without glitches. But there clearly is a correlation between all the work done well before the helicopters went airborne and the fact that the treatment of 8,800 acres was completed safely, effectively, and with general acceptance by the public.

The  
AGRICULTURE  
QUARTERLY

# Director's column

Four times a year, the State Board of Agriculture meets to learn about, discuss, and many times make recommendations on key issues. When the legislature is in session, the board meets in Salem. Otherwise, the venue for board meetings takes members and top ODA staff to various locations around the state. We need to be in Salem during session for obvious reasons — there is important work to be done and board members have opportunities to meet with legislators and provide important input. But as I have learned, along with the Board of Agriculture and ODA staff, getting to rural parts of Oregon is invaluable. We often think we know and understand what our farmers and ranchers are dealing with, but there is no substitute for seeing and hearing about it first hand.

The most recent board meeting took place in John Day in relatively remote Grant County. I grew up on a wheat ranch in Umatilla County. For me, spending time in Eastern Oregon is a chance to be re-grounded. When you are in Salem for a while, you get into the ebb and flow of Salem life. When you travel to the other side of the Cascades, it reminds you of what

people deal with day in and day out. Particularly, what we heard in John Day is that it's so difficult to live and work there. It's not easy to even get there. The commitment of people to their lifestyle, to the values they have in rural Oregon, you only truly appreciate it when you set foot in their community.

At the board meeting, we heard from a panel of local folks about the things that are going well, the challenges they are facing, but most importantly, the passion they have for their way of life. There is no doubt of their desire to want to pass something on to the next generation, about their commitment to the land, their commitment to conservation, and their commitment to wildlife habitat. There is no substitute for hearing that first hand and reminding all of us about the importance of our job, the work we do, and how we do it. How we do our job, as an agency, really matters to them. There is a way to do it well and there is a way to not do it well. We need to focus on doing our job well in a way that works for all the people we serve.

The board and ODA staff attending the meeting in John



Board of Agriculture members saw first hand the devastation from last year's Canyon Creek Complex wildfire.



Board of Agriculture and ODA staff tour the site of last year's Canyon Creek Complex wildfire in Grant County.

Day saw the horrific devastation from last year's Canyon Creek Complex wildfire, which destroyed homes, ranches, forested areas, and wildlife habitat. At the time, it was considered the highest priority fire in the nation as it required evacuation of so many people. I heard the story of when the Red Cross came in, set up shop, and was prepared to feed the community. No locals came to the Red Cross because the community was already taking care of its own. You don't hear that

in too many places. It's indicative of how strong these people are, how they can unify around a tragedy like this. Because it is such a remote area of the state, you have to be strong and you have to be a unified community to survive.

The meeting in John Day reminds me how important it is to make sure our

board meetings get around the state. There is work we have to do in Salem that is very important, but I don't think we are as effective in that work if we don't come out to these communities to see and hear first hand what is going well and where there are challenges. That's critical for us in doing our part to help the people in rural Oregon be more successful.

This was not just a token visit. The people of Grant County and other locations around Oregon far from the Willamette Valley don't want us to forget about them. They appreciate when we come to see them, but it's clear that they want us to carry their message and represent them when we are back in Salem. It's incumbent on the Board of Agriculture and ODA staff members to remember, when it comes to working with all regions of Oregon, relationships and trust are critical. Traveling to communities and meeting the people is a good way to keep us all connected. •

*Katy Coba*

## Board of Ag profile: Meeting with the EQC



Board of Ag Chair Laura Masterson, ODA Director Katy Coba, EQC Chair Jane O'Keefe.

*It may have been a rare and fortunate alignment of a time and location, but the State Board of Agriculture and Oregon's Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) found themselves holding their respective scheduled meetings in John Day in early June. That led to the two bodies meeting jointly as part of the Board of Ag's agenda and provided an opportunity for both to hear about programs in which the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) collaborate.*

"The board and the commission have issues in common that we work on and this has been a great opportunity to see how we each approach those issues," says EQC Chair Jane O'Keefe, part of a family cattle ranch operation in Lake County. "The staffs of the two agencies, ODA and DEQ, work closely and successfully in some of our respective programs. That's the kind of relationship and collaboration that is possible between the board and commission. We can learn a lot from each other."

Board of Agriculture member Stephanie Hallock, who once was DEQ's director, agrees.

"I think meeting jointly is a wonderful opportunity in two respects. Obviously, it's a chance to get to know each other better and share thoughts and ideas on

how we can manage programs collaboratively, and help each other achieve our missions. But it's also a learning opportunity through the program presentations that are given at our meeting. As board members, we learn from our ODA staff about what they are working on and the EQC learns from the DEQ staff."

At the John Day meeting, staff members from both agencies gave joint presentations on agricultural water quality and the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program. In both areas, it has been critical that the two agencies work together.

**"The cooperation and collaboration at the staff level has been super, especially in the water quality program," says Hallock. "It's got to be that way if we are going to achieve good results on the ground."**

That same level of understanding, appreciation, and support for each other is very achievable among members of the board and commission. In fact, it has already begun by establishing mutual liaisons between the Board of Ag and the EQC. Hallock is a liaison with the commission, EQC Commissioner Ed Armstrong is a liaison with the

Board of Agriculture. Both have attended respective meetings of the two bodies, and they expect that to continue.

The joint meeting in John Day was a good start at expanding the discussion beyond the liaisons.

"In the future, I would like the board and the commission to actually work on a topic together at one of these meetings," says Hallock. "We both learned a lot from the presentations this time. We both had some good questions. But I would like to have a 'dig down deep' dialogue about the program areas we share."

O'Keefe reminded everyone that the work done by one board or commission can easily affect the work of other boards and commissions — another good reason to meet from time to time.

One thing made clear to members of the Board of Agriculture is that of all state or federal agencies, ODA probably works with DEQ the most. The common issues are challenging and the two agencies may operate under different mandates, but it's vitally important for the staffs to work together. That's happening at the agency level and starting to happen at the board and commission level. •

## Threat and opportunity

Gypsy moth eradication projects became somewhat routine following the Lane County explosion in the mid-1980s. New introductions of the more common European gypsy moth often were annual affairs as people visiting or moving to Oregon from infested areas of the eastern US unwittingly brought with them gypsy moth eggs on their vehicles, outdoor furniture, or other household goods. Back east, entire forests have been defoliated by caterpillars of established gypsy moth populations.

In 1991, the first Asian gypsy moth was detected in the St. Johns area of north Portland, leading to a large-scale eradication project the following spring that gave rise to organized neighborhood opposition. In 2001, a second Asian gypsy moth was detected in Portland's Forest Park — a potential smorgasbord for the plant-eating pest. Another successful, albeit more quiet spray project ensued. A third Asian gypsy moth was detected in St. Helens in 2007, leading to a small and effective treatment. In each case, no additional Asian gypsy moths were detected following the spray projects.

Last year, ODA detected 14 moths statewide. Significant was the detection of Asian gypsy moths in Forest Park and St. Johns — two locations already familiar with the invader. Additionally, an Asian gypsy moth was trapped across the Columbia River near the Port of Vancouver in Washington.

"Unlike its European or North American cousin, the female Asian gypsy moth (AGM) is a very strong flyer and can disperse easily," wrote Burfitt in a letter sent to Portland city officials. "The AGM is also considered a more voracious defoliator. It is important to note that the AGM is not established in the US. Our goal is to prevent this invasive pest from establishing in Portland. The population may be small this year, but, considering that each flight-capable female can lay up to 300 eggs, it can quickly explode."

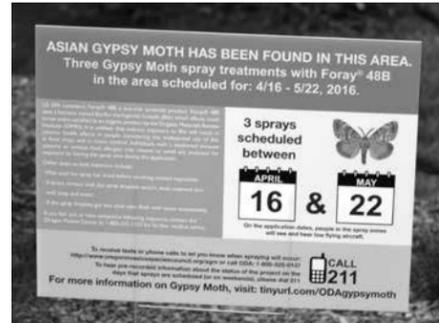
That letter was sent last September — seven months before the eradication project was approved. The groundwork for public support — or at least acceptance — was being laid. By then, ODA had collaborated with City Parks and Recreation, the Port of Portland, Metro, and the US Department of Agriculture. There was outreach to non-governmental groups and organizations, including those actively connected with Forest Park.

"I can't think of a single agency or non-profit organization that was blindsided by our efforts," says Burfitt. "Everyone was in the know for months. Also, we didn't just tell everybody what we were going to do, but articulated the threat of Asian gypsy moth and the opportunity to deal with it."

Treatment involves the use of Btk (*Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*), an organically approved product and natural-occurring bacterium that has been used safely and effectively in other gypsy moth eradication projects in Oregon since 1984.

When it came to delivering key

messages, ODA did not have to go it alone. Partner agencies and organizations shared the same information to their network of people. Since December, the collective group conducted more than 43 live briefings, workshops, and public meetings for agencies, community groups, and stakeholders. This is in addition to dozens of planning meetings, more than 10,000 direct mailings to postal patrons in and around the spray zone, articles, broadcasts, website information, social media announcements, and multilingual



postcards and park signs.

Burfitt feels the project's openness allowed the spray project to proceed relatively well — much better than the first time north Portland was treated for Asian gypsy moth 24 years ago.

**"We were forthright, transparent, and communicated information about this project well ahead of any scare tactics that people could have used to misinform the public."**

Of the thousands of impacted residents within the spray boundaries, only a handful responded negatively. For the most part, people either supported the project or at least accepted it with little or no reservations.

## The social network

Prior to the 2016 gypsy moth eradication effort, the most recent project was in Eugene in 2009. Social media was nowhere near as prevalent as it is today. Previous projects relied on ODA getting the word out through traditional media and hoping it would reach the affected communities. The new formula is to get timely information directly to citizens when they want it and the way they want it.

"We've updated the communications toolbox," says ODA's Bruce Pokarney, who served as the project's public information officer and is one of the few who also participated in the 1992 Asian gypsy moth eradication project. "Facebook, Twitter, text messaging, automated phone calls, email — these are the new tools by which up-to-date information can be provided directly to people. They don't necessarily need to tune in to the local TV or radio station, as they did 20 years ago. We were able to instantly provide notification of when spraying was taking place at their location, when it was completed, and if there were any changes to the schedule."

The Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC) — which represents numerous agencies working to protect the state from undesirable non-native plants, animals, and insects — played a major role

facilitating information and communication. First, it organized two open houses in St. Johns at which experts associated with the project could answer questions about gypsy moth, any health impacts of Btk, and the logistics of the aerial applications. OISC also arranged for people to subscribe to instant and direct notification of the spraying schedule via text messaging or automatic phone calls. OISC's website provided a wealth of factual information on all facets of the eradication project.

"As OISC chair in 2015, I was pleased when the 17-member Council voted unanimously to serve as the lead agency on public outreach," says Wyatt Williams, invasive species specialist with the Oregon Department of Forestry. "We all understood that Asian gypsy moth would affect Oregonians decades into the future if it were to establish in our state. It would be particularly harmful to the stakeholders I work with in forestry, but also in agriculture, tourism, and many other facets of our economy. It showed mutual understanding of the situation when members of the council, not from forestry or ag, also voiced their opinion that this pest had to be stopped now."

Never before had such extensive outreach and education been undertaken for a gypsy moth eradication project in Oregon. Everyone feels the effort was well worth it and is probably a prerequisite for future operations.

## By the dawn's early light

Early Saturday, April 16. A perfectly calm, clear dawn in Portland's St. Johns neighborhood. Off in the distance, the faint sound of two helicopters echoes from the northwest. As the thump-thump din grows near, the project team is in place, having been ready for nearly two hours. Assignments range from ground crews monitoring weather to those responsible for placing spray cards throughout the targeted area to ensure the Btk is properly applied. This is the first of two days of aerial application, most of which was done over unpopulated areas that included industrial property belonging to the ports of Portland and Vancouver. There would be two subsequent applications within the



ODA's Tom Valente checks a spray card to make sure the application was done correctly.



next two weeks.

Day one is completed within three hours without a hitch. Day two was poised to be another seamless day of gypsy moth eradication in Linnton and Forest Park. It didn't turn out that way. A mechanical malfunction of an emergency dump safety feature on one of the helicopters led to the inadvertent release of Btk at two sites. Fortunately, there was no impact to any residential area and no people were affected. Nonetheless, the incident was reported to the proper officials and to the media.

"Transparency was expected of us," says Helmuth Rogg, ODA's Director of Plant Programs and co-incident commander of the gypsy moth project. "The mechanical problems were unfortunate, but we were able to move forward without further incident for the duration of the treatments. Maintaining public goodwill was important."

The rest of the project proceeded without incident. On Monday, May 2, the final swath of Forest Park was treated, marking the official end of the third-largest gypsy moth eradication project in Oregon's history. It didn't match the colossal mid-80s effort in Lane County, but hopefully eliminates any breeding population of Asian or European gypsy moth in the area.

As co-incident commander of the project, the State Plant Health Director for USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Christopher Deegan, sent all team members a complimentary email for a job well done.

"On behalf of APHIS-PPQ, I'd like to express my gratitude to all of you who participated in the long-term planning and successful execution of this project. Your professionalism, dedication, diligence and enthusiasm (even at the 4 am briefings) were crucial to making sure everything proceeded smoothly."

Gypsy moth traps have been placed at a high density in and around the treated area of north Portland. They will provide a report card on this spring's efforts. Everyone hopes for zero catches this summer.

"Our efforts go to preserve places like Forest Park and the quality of life that many Oregonians sincerely appreciate and love," says Burfitt. "I believe we did a big service to the community by trying to take care of this gypsy moth issue early and proactively."

Hopefully, another battle is won in the war against the gypsy moth. •

# Chefs + commodity commissions: Building market demand

*From teams of international bakers learning to use Oregon soft white wheat blends to local chefs touting the tastiness of Oregon's agricultural bounty, commodity commissions are dedicating their funds to collaborate with professional chefs. In turn, the chefs connect Oregon's culinary commodities with consumers.*

Oregon's 23 agricultural and fisheries commodity commissions have their unique list of activities and accomplishments. But each has the same general mission — to fund projects for research, promotion, or education. In recent years, many commissions are seeing the value of a specific type of professional who can help them access the public in great numbers — the chef.

"Oregon chefs play a huge role in promoting Oregon food products simply by featuring locally grown ingredients on their menu," says Janie Hibler, public member of the Oregon Raspberry and Blackberry Commission (ORBC). "This is especially true in the last few years when the region has become widely known as a food destination for travelers."

When it comes to promotion and education, Hibler believes having chefs be ambassadors of Oregon foods leads to promoting the state's products from the inside out.

"Oregon food commodities are not commonly known by most Oregonians either in or out of the food industry. It's time they were no longer Oregon's best kept secret."



One of the many recipes developed by national research chefs attending a workshop sponsored by the Oregon Raspberry and Blackberry Commission this spring.

In April, ORBC brought 10 high level corporate research and development chefs to Portland, many representing well-known national and international chains that might potentially buy large quantities of blackberries and raspberries. They learned how to work with Oregon caneberries and broke into teams to develop new



Portland chef Gregory Gourdet became the first chef west of the Mississippi to win the Great American Seafood Cook-Off in New Orleans.

recipes. Initially, the chefs toured berry breeding plots at the North Willamette Experiment Station and learned about the industry, literally and figuratively, from the ground up. The day included a tasting and evaluation of current and future berry selections, a presentation on berry health research, and information on what makes a berry right for specific formulations. The R&D chefs then spent time with local chefs Jackie and Adam Sappington of Country Cat Restaurant to learn more about the many uses of berries. It's too early to tell whether any products will be developed from the workshop, but the event was extremely positive and, hopefully, the great vibe over Oregon berries will spread, via chef, to other parts of the country.

Other commissions have taken the chef connection one step further — their public member is actually a chef. Leif Benson, an award-winning chef and the public member of the Oregon Potato Commission for 12 years, sees his role benefitting farmers and Oregon agriculture on many levels.

"I have brought the end user, consumer, and chef perspective to growers regarding what we are looking for in our local food markets," says Benson, who has appeared on televised cooking demonstrations and has traveled overseas to promote Oregon potatoes to buyers in Asia.

While Benson specializes in potatoes, he has been a tremendous booster of all Oregon agricultural products. Whenever possible, he tries to bring other chefs into the fold.

"Education is key to good marketing," says Benson. "I am frequently surprised how often chefs do not know what is produced in Oregon. But chefs like to support

local farmers. When given the opportunity, they jump in with both feet."

Benson has successfully corralled Oregon chefs and various commodity commissions for cooking demonstrations using Oregon foods at the Bite of Portland in August. In past years, he has coordinated with chefs who use Oregon potatoes, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, beef, sweet cherries, albacore, salmon, Dungeness crab, pink shrimp, and dairy products.



Leif Benson, public member of the Oregon Potato Commission, enjoys promoting Oregon ag products to consumers and other chefs.

"The Bite of Portland is a monumental event drawing 50,000 visitors who love to experience fresh, local products prepared by some of our world class chefs," says Benson. "Partnering Oregon commodity commissions with chefs is the perfect symbiotic relationship. It's a lot of work to make it all happen, but the chefs have the passion to make great food and the desire to share the experience. That makes it all worthwhile."

Another award-winning chef is the public member of the Oregon Beef Council. Phillippe Boulot, formerly of Portland's Heathman Hotel and currently executive chef at the Multnomah Athletic Club, was a James Beard Award winner in 2001 — a prize often referred to as an Oscar of the food world. His reputation goes a long way in influencing other chefs to use local food ingredients.

"As a chef, I have access to the public more than anybody," says Boulot. "In the restaurants, putting together the menu, speaking to the

media — chefs like me can promote Oregon foods locally and in other states."

Boulot enjoys traveling around the state — he's a big hunter and fisherman — but he also takes time to visit Oregon's cattle ranchers. Boulot has hosted the annual dinner that honors the Oregon Beef Council's Chef of the Year, which, of course, showcases Oregon beef.

"We held the dinner at the Multnomah Athletic Club and I arranged for guests, members of the media, and ranchers to sit together at each table. The guests were interested in knowing where the beef was coming from and were able to connect with the rancher."

It's all part of Boulot's desire to promote Oregon beef, which he says is unbelievably good.

Oregon seafood commissions have a long tradition of taking a local chef to various cooking competitions around the country. Gregory Gourdet was the winner of the 2012 Great American Seafood Cook-Off, held each year in New Orleans, and was the first chef west of the Mississippi to take home the coveted top prize. The prestigious competition continues to give tremendous exposure to Oregon chefs and the magnificent seafood harvested off the state's shores.

As a nice touch and added promotion, Gourdet wore an Oregon Dungeness crab pin on his chef coat as he picked up his prize.

"We get calls from all over the country looking for Oregon's State Crustacean on a regular basis," says Hugh Link, administrator of the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission. "We have received calls from the Food Network looking for product for shows such as The Iron Chef and other programs that ask for Oregon Dungeness by name. There is definitely value in having leaders in the chef community understand the important of our iconic commodity."

Other commissions understand that having chefs select, use, and promote the great tasting farm and seafood products Oregon has to offer can add mileage to any marketing effort. There are many more examples of connecting the commodities with the public using the chef as the bridge.

As Chef Leif Benson says, "Bring a chef and the chef will bring success to your promotional opportunities." •

# Specialty crops: Focus on institutional food buyers

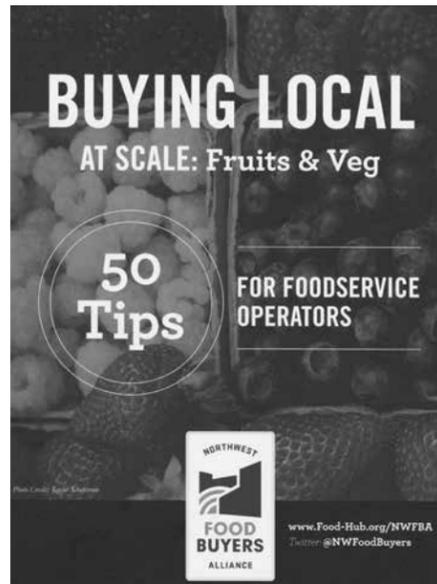


With more than 50 participating institutions, this group offers enormous purchasing power to regional farmers, ranchers, and fishermen. Some quick math revealed that the handful of attendees at a recent Alliance meeting served more

than 125,000 meals per day in the Portland metro area alone!

Buying local at scale is what the group is all about, but that is a commitment much easier made than done. Troubleshooting issues of quantity, cost, complexity, and capacity together is one of the primary activities of Alliance members. To that end, the group recently published a guide called "Buying Local at Scale: Fruits & Veg, 50 Tips for Foodservice Operators," funded in part by the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. The guide offers helpful tips for overcoming challenges to local sourcing at scale and how to become a good buyer partner to local farmers, ranchers, and fishermen.

*The Northwest Food Buyers' Alliance (NWFBA) is a peer-to-peer network of foodservice directors at institutions — including K-12 public schools, hospitals, assisted living facilities, colleges and universities, corrections, corporate cafes, and event venues — who are committed to sourcing food grown and processed within Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.*



Getting out in the field is one of the best ways for foodservice directors and staff to maintain their commitment and enthusiasm for local sourcing. In recent years, members have taken field trips to Siri & Sons Farm, NORPAC, and Stahlbush Island Farms, and visited each others' kitchens at OMSI, Intel, and the Oregon Convention Center.

It's working. An analysis of six institutions participating in the Alliance over two years showed a 300 percent increase in purchasing of targeted specialty crops grown and processed in Oregon.

## Save the Date!

Interested in selling your products to institutional foodservice directors? Provided you're growing and/or processing food products from the Northwest, you can apply to show your products at the NWFBA's annual vendor fair, Local Link.

## NW Food Buyers' Alliance Local Link

*Connecting NW institutions with NW farmers, ranchers, and fishermen.*

9-11 am, October 13, 2016  
The Redd on Salmon Street, Portland. Vendor applications will be available at: [www.food-hub.org/nwfba](http://www.food-hub.org/nwfba) by September 1.

The Alliance is coordinated via a partnership of support organizations, including Ecotrust, Healthcare Without Harm, Oregon Tilth, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Foodservice directors and staff from throughout the Pacific Northwest are invited to join or participate at no cost. The Alliance's activities are supported by philanthropic funders and government grants.

To learn more, visit: [www.food-hub.org/nwfba](http://www.food-hub.org/nwfba) •

# A hopeful year two for Oregon industrial hemp

*What a difference a year makes. Changes to the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Industrial Hemp Program are expected to smooth out the rough edges of a relatively new agricultural industry in the state. Those changes are in response to what was learned in 2015 — the first year of hemp production in Oregon.*

"We believe these statutory changes have paved the way for an easier entry for those wanting to grow industrial hemp in Oregon," says Lindsay Eng, ODA's Director of Market Access and Certification. "We've seen more than double the interest by those who want to try out the crop."

At last count, 54 growers have registered with ODA compared with 11 licensees in year one. More applications to register are coming in, but it's getting late in the planting season for hemp and some applicants may just wait another year.

**"There is a lot of interest in industrial hemp and Oregon is a great place to grow a diversity of crops," says Eng. "So there is a good chance that the state can also be a fertile growing area for hemp. It still remains to be seen what ultimately is the best market for hemp. There are so many ways to grow it, whether it is for fiber, seed, oil, or medical purposes. All of those require a different type of production environment."**

Currently, the predominant type of production is for CBD, cannabidiol, which is a compound found in cannabis plants, including hemp. Most growers are looking to industrial hemp to harvest CBD for medical purposes. While some had expectations that industrial hemp in Oregon would be grown for fiber, the profit margin in the CBD market is much higher.

"We have a little more than 1,000 acres registered for hemp production so far, but that is spread across the 45 registrants," says Eng. "What we know from other production areas is that 1,000 acres for just one industrial hemp grower would be a reasonable economy of scale for true fiber production. The Oregon way for industrial hemp is probably going to look a little different than the industrialized markets we see in Canada or Europe."

Rules adopted this spring by ODA are in response to legislative changes made to Oregon's Industrial Hemp Law. Several modifications are now in place:

- There is no longer a minimum acreage requirement.
- Growing in greenhouses or other indoor areas is permitted.
- Planting in pots or other containers is permitted.
- Any method of propagation is allowed, including planting seeds, starts, or the use of clones or cuttings.
- A registration for growing industrial hemp may be used for multiple areas. While each noncontiguous growing area must be declared, there are no additional fees.

- Growing and handling industrial hemp is no longer covered under the same registration and each requires a separate fee.

In addition, registrations are now issued annually and are good for one year, instead of the three-year licenses and permits previously issued. Growers and handlers who already are licensed will receive a complimentary registration for the remainder of the term of their license. Both grower and handler registration fees are \$500 annually. Growing or handling agricultural hemp seed requires registration at the fee of \$25 annually.

The 2.5 acre requirement last year was problematic for growers and for ODA to regulate. The critical regulatory focus was intended to be on the THC level of the hemp crop to make sure it was below 0.3 percent, which keeps it from being considered marijuana. The acreage requirement had nothing to do with THC levels and so it has been discarded. Under the new statute, growers can have accredited private



Industrial hemp crop.

laboratories test the crop and then report the THC results to ODA. As long as those levels are below 0.3 percent, they will be in compliance with the registration.

**"In general, industrial hemp is treated a lot more this year like any other agricultural crop," says Eng. "We learned a lot in year one and we believe this year will end up being a lot easier on the growers as well as the agency."**

Year number two should be a lot more productive crop-wise and a lot less troublesome for everyone. With some of the major growing pains now in the past, a new ag industry is encouraged about its future. •

# Good neighbors make good decisions about pesticides

*For the past few months, many Oregon crops, roadsides, and residential properties have been treated with pesticides. For the second year in a row, a coordinated effort to prevent pesticide drift through outreach and education is in full swing with agricultural groups embracing messages about being a good neighbor.*

"For the most part, everyone involved in last year's effort to raise awareness about pesticide drift thought it was very successful, but they feel like it needs to keep going," says Ann Ketter of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Pesticides Program. "We can't just stop, we aren't done."

Some of the measures taken last year are being repeated for 2016. But there are some new initiatives largely designed to bring in two targets that have not necessarily been part of the mix.

**"This year, we are trying to direct a message to the homeowner and the person who may have only a couple of acres. Their pesticide applications, just like commercial agriculture and forestry, need to stay on their property," says Ketter. "They need to be a good neighbor."**

Being a good neighbor and practicing co-existence is important in a diverse state like Oregon. Growing more than 220 crops is a strength, but also a challenge because of differences between crops. Pest problems and timing of pesticide applications are unique. Many times, these crops are grown in close proximity to each other. That can lead to conflicts that involve herbicide drift.

Initiated by a request from the Oregon Winegrowers Association (OWA) to ODA, a meeting was convened with a variety of agricultural groups to discuss pesticide drift. The talk was about how to conduct pesticide applications in a way that respects the boundaries of property, crops, and people. The goal led to a

strategy that relies on improving communication along with outreach and education.

As part of reinforcing past efforts, ODA sent another pre-recorded telephone message this spring from ODA Director Katy Coba to about 7,000 licensed pesticide applicators around the state.

"We still want to make sure we got that message out to them this year to be careful with pesticide applications, particularly on small farms or hobby farms," says Ketter. "We are also repeating some of the social media messages about drift awareness and co-existing with your neighbor."

Steps outlined by the director in the recorded message are clear and instructive for all pesticide users — read and follow the label on the pesticide product, be aware of weather conditions over the next 48 hours, communicate with neighbors about any plans to spray, and other common sense advice.

Once again, many agricultural groups are putting drift messages in quarterly newsletters, writing guest articles, and making presentations for other groups and organizations about the impact of drift and how applicators can avoid problems. ODA has helped coordinate the overall effort, but the industry has put the drift awareness campaign into practice. Among the groups active both last year and this year are OWA, the Oregon Seed Council, Oregon Wheat Commission, Oregon Association of Nurseries, Oregon Farm Bureau, Oregonians for Food and Shelter, and Wilco Farm Stores.

The present and future goal is to fold in the general public and homeowners. After all, drift is not confined to farms and orchards.

"This is a difficult group to reach," says Ketter. "Agriculture has organizations, associations, commodity commissions. We can reach them with messaging at the farm supply stores. We can send out the robocall to our licensed applicators. But it's hard to talk to individual homeowners or small farmers because they aren't part of these groups. We need to get the messages out to them."

Expanding the circle of



Prevent pesticide drift information cards on shelves in a store.

participants in the drift awareness campaign is one tactic. Master gardeners are a likely target, but so are some of the large retailers that widely sell pesticide products to ordinary consumers. Training store employees to pass along important information to consumers already has proved effective for Wilco, a farmers' cooperative with stores throughout the Willamette Valley.

Encouraged by all the progress made last year, ODA and other participants of the drift awareness campaign are eager to do more. At least anecdotally, neighboring growers have reached out to each other when they had not made the effort before. That has reduced conflicts, including those surrounding pesticide applications.

"One of the problems with success is that people don't always report it and only let us know when there is a problem," says Ketter. "This year, we will make an effort to find those success stories of things being done correctly and people communicating effectively."

Talking to each other, respecting each other, working together to co-exist. A lot of Oregon agricultural interests continue to turn that recipe into an effective, long-term approach

to pesticide drift. Incorporating homeowners and small property owners into that effort is the next item on the agenda. •

## Prevent herbicide drift

- Read and follow all label directions.
- Be aware of weather condition at the time of application and for the next 48 hours.
- Determine if there are crops highly sensitive to herbicide exposure near the treatment site, and relay this information to the person making the application.
- Talk to neighbors about their crops and current stage of development.
- Communicate with neighbors about your plans to spray.
- Select herbicides that are less likely to drift or to volatilize.
- If you need more information about a herbicide, call ODA (503) 986-4635 or NPIC (800) 858-7378. Or visit the OSU spray drift prevention webpage at: <http://bit.do/SprayDriftPrevention>

# Funds available to help offset organic certification costs

*The Oregon Department of Agriculture announces the availability of cost share rebate funds for certified organic farmers and producers. The funds, made available through the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), will reimburse up to 75 percent of certification costs, or up to \$750 per year per certification category.*

*The rebates are available to cover certification expenses incurred between October 1, 2015 and September 30, 2016.*

An estimated 770 certified organic growers, processors, and handlers in Oregon are potentially eligible for partial reimbursement. The cost-share program makes it easier for organic businesses throughout the supply chain achieve USDA organic certification, helping them meet growing consumer demand in the domestic and international marketplace.

The application for the cost share rebate, as well as other information

about the program is available on ODA's website at: <http://go.usa.gov/cuePJ>

Reimbursements will be on a first-come, first-served basis, based on receipt of the completed application packet, until available funding is exhausted. All applications must be received no later than October 31, 2016.

USDA AMS provides approximately \$11.6 million in funding through state departments of agriculture to make organic certification more affordable for organic producers and handlers across the country. More information about this nationwide program is available at: [www.ams.usda.gov/NOPCostSharing](http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOPCostSharing)



Questions regarding cost share funds for organic certification may be directed to ODA's Marketing Program at (503) 872-6600 or email: [agmarket@oda.state.or.us](mailto:agmarket@oda.state.or.us) •

# Hot spring temperatures change summer's water outlook

By Andy Zimmerman

*In April, there was optimism this summer would be better than last for agricultural water users.*

What a difference a month makes.

What once appeared to be a better water year quickly turned into a familiar theme: getting by with less.

The numbers tell the story. At the beginning of April, the US Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) snow water equivalent measurements across Oregon ranged from 88 percent of normal in the Malheur Basin to 116 percent of normal in the Lake County, Goose Lake Basin. By the May 1 report — 30 days later — every basin was reporting below normal results, with the greatest drops in the John Day and Malheur basins. John Day went from 106 percent of normal to 1 percent of normal; Malheur went from 88 percent to 2 percent.

**"While it was optimistic in the beginning, the reality is now that it's looking a lot like last year," says Margaret Matter, the water resource specialist with Oregon Department of Agriculture.**

A gradual transition from winter to summer — and with it, normal stream flows to aid water users — did not materialize. Instead, after stretches of record-setting temperatures in April, the snowpack melted quickly, producing greater streamflows earlier in the spring.

"Once you start seeing flows in the rivers, then you get a better sense of whether predictions have been overly optimistic or not," Matter says. "And at this point, not only were the temperatures warm in April but we've had some other warm spells, and cool spells, too, which have been welcome. But the observations have been the flows just aren't as high as expected."

Stream flows through September are projected overall to be below normal to well below normal, according to the June 1 Oregon Basin Outlook Report. In southeast Oregon, the Owyhee and Malheur basins, and the Harney Basin in are expected to have the lowest flows.

"Even at the beginning of May, streamflows were already down; that warm April really made things drop off," Matter says. "You'd see effects of rainstorms in the early part of May, but (there) was nothing to sustain it; there was limited or no snow left to support streamflow."

Most of the peak amounts of snow

accumulated between one to four weeks earlier than normal. Snow at most of the state's monitoring sites melted between one and three weeks earlier than normal, with some sites seeing snow dissipate five weeks early, according to the report.

"If temperatures continue to be high this year and flows are low — if the snowpack is gone — that means our late season flows are going to be low and demands are going to be high with warmer temperatures," Matter says. "If there isn't much rain this summer, there could be greater pressure on existing supplies."

In addition to the snowpack melting earlier, other factors also play a role in lower streamflows. Low soil moisture, lower groundwater tables, and vegetation all take a bite out of the streamflow pie.

One bright spot is the state's largest reservoir levels are near average, according to the NRCS report. Last year, snowmelt runoff was insufficient and left reservoirs low.

Agricultural water users, though, have become more resourceful through years of drought and uncertainty with streamflows.

"For farmers, their experience, and their aggressive implementation of more efficient irrigation methods and water reuse better positions

them," Matter says. "And their experience now becomes habit."

Matter praised the efforts of farmers in southeast Oregon, which remains in a moderate drought, according to the US Drought Monitor.

"An interesting way to look at things was in the Owyhee and Malheur basins. They looked at not only the damages due to drought but what their conservation efforts have done in reducing the losses. It could have been worse," she says.

"And what they demonstrated in 2015 was the losses could have been much higher had they not aggressively put money into piping conveyance, and bringing pressurized water to farms. And for those farmers who were able, they could install drip irrigation or sprinkler irrigation, depending on what they're growing."

Although most of the state is starting summer in a better position with water than last year, conditions aren't much different.

**"It's better than having two years like last year in a row," Matter says, "but nonetheless, streamflow may be turning out to be similar to last year, even with a different starting point." •**

## A+ report card for ODA's metrology laboratory

*It's the equivalent of getting a report card with straight "A"s. The Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA's) metrology laboratory has received a glowing assessment from a third-party auditing team that has completed an extensive review of the lab in Salem. To the average Oregon consumer, the great report card supports the claim that the marketplace is governed by accurate standards of measurement, increasing the likelihood that the consumer is getting what they pay for.*

"The audit report confirms what we have known to be true — our metrology lab is one of the best in the country," says ODA Director Katy Coba. "I am proud of the outstanding work, expertise, and professionalism of our metrology staff. It's nice to have an independent review validate our laboratory."

Simply put — consumers and businesses — including those outside of the state who rely on ODA's metrology laboratory as a foundation for their measurement system — can be assured that they are getting the highest quality measurement services from the lab.

The two-day review looked at key elements of the laboratory's quality control system and verified compliance with international requirements for testing and calibration laboratories.

Only 16 of the 50 active state metrology laboratories are

accredited. Since 2004, ODA's lab has maintained accreditation through the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) administered by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), which is ultimately responsible for maintaining the system of measurement used by the US.

"We got a great report card with no non-conformances, which is really hard to do," says Aaron Aydelotte, one of two ODA metrologists. "No non-conformances means that the audit team did not find any problems with our laboratory's quality management system. Finding four or five non-conformances is pretty routine. Coming away with an assessment like this is much more unusual."

In today's world of commerce, accuracy in measurement is essential for monetary reasons and more. It's estimated that approximately \$106 billion in annual sales of goods in Oregon are weighed and measured many times in commerce. When weighing and measuring devices are even slightly off, the inaccuracy can have an impact of millions of dollars, either for or against consumers.

It goes beyond money. Accuracy in measurement is critical in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals that contain a specific number of milligrams. If a company's scales are not correct, the consumer won't be getting the right dosage.

The equipment used by Oregon's 18 Weights and Measures inspectors to check more than 58,000 licensed measuring devices used in Oregon is calibrated by ODA's metrology lab. In short, the lab calibrates all of the industry standards for measurement

so that the tools used to check weighing and measuring devices for accuracy are themselves accurate. High precision mass and volume calibration conducted by the lab ensures that the scales and meters used in commerce are accurate and meet national standards.

"We make an evaluation of a scale's ability to accurately weigh a commodity, from something as large as trainloads of grain to small quantities of herbs and spices sold at the grocery store," says Stephen Harrington, manager of ODA's Weights and Measures Program. "Our metrology laboratory gives us very high assurance that the standards of measurement we are using to carry out our job in the field are unquestionably correct."

ODA's lab resides in a secured facility using high precision measuring equipment. The mass measurements done in the laboratory, for example, are so precise that equipment must be protected from such things as air drafts, body temperature, and other environmental impacts that could alter the calibration.



**"If you gave us an ant, we could tell if it had a piece of pollen on it," says Aydelotte. "That's how sensitive these instruments can be. Our finest balances and scales go seven decimal points to a gram."**

The lab is not planning to simply rest on its laurels. Like a 4.0 student, it's hard to improve upon a report card with straight "A"s. Maintaining its capability and reputation is important. But the metrology staff at ODA has a quality system goal of continuous improvement. That means keeping their eyes open and looking towards the future. Industry and technology will be changing, and the metrology lab will be ready for it. •

# Summer pop-up events feature Oregon specialty crops



Dinner at the Food Innovation Center in Portland. Photo by Kathryn Elsesser.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture and Oregon State University are teaming up this summer to offer the “Crop-Up Dinner Series and Market Showcase,” bringing together local growers, food buyers, chefs, and the public. Attendees will be getting a taste, literally, of Oregon specialty crops.

Patterned after the trendy and popular concept of pop-up restaurants, the crop-up dinners are designed to be more than a venue for eating food. They are an event that includes a mini-farmers’ market along with the multi-course family-style dinner.

The dinner and showcase series is funded through federal Specialty Crop Block Grant funds. In Oregon, nearly \$2 million is funding projects that help boost the competitiveness of the state’s fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, and other specialty crops.

**The crop up dinners will reach different regions of Oregon but all will be held at OSU facilities:**

- Aurora, July 21 at the North Willamette Research and Extension Center
- Astoria, August 4 at the OSU Seafood Lab
- Hermiston, August 18 at the Hermiston Agricultural Research Center
- Portland, August 24 at the Food Innovation Center
- Medford, September 13 at the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center

Admission is \$20 per person. There are 100 tickets available per event. Each ticket provides access to the farmers’ market showcase as well as the full dinner and entertainment for the evening.

For more information and to purchase tickets, go to:

<http://bit.do/CropUpDinners> or call the Food Innovation Center at (503) 872-6680.

## Announcements

### Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) Advisory Committee meeting

Date July 14, 2016  
Time 1:30 pm–3:30 pm  
Location Oregon Department of Agriculture, conference room D  
635 Capitol St NE, Salem, OR 97301  
Contact Wym Matthews, 503-986-4792  
Website [www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/NaturalResources/Pages/CAFO.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/NaturalResources/Pages/CAFO.aspx)

### Pesticide Analytical and Response Center (PARC) Board meeting

Date July 20, 2016  
Time 9:00 am–12:00 pm  
Location Portland State Office Building, Room 1-B  
800 NE Oregon St, Portland OR 97232  
Contact Theodore Bunch Jr., 503-986-6470  
Website [www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/Pages/PARC.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/Pages/PARC.aspx)

### Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) meeting

Date August 16, 2016  
Time 8:30 am–12:30 pm  
Location Hilton Garden Inn, 3528 Gateway St.  
Springfield, OR 97477  
Contact Manette Simpson, 503-986-4715  
Website [www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/NaturalResources/SWCD/Pages/SWCC.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/NaturalResources/SWCD/Pages/SWCC.aspx)

### Oregon State Board of Agriculture

Date September 11-13, 2016  
Location Wildhorse Resort and Casino, Pendleton, OR  
Contact Kathryn Walker, 503-986-4558  
Website [www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/BoardAgriculture.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/BoardAgriculture.aspx)

### Oregon fairs around the state this summer!

Website <http://bit.do/OregonFairs>

### Check out all the ODA public meetings online

[www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/Calendar.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/Calendar.aspx)

### State Board of Agriculture

- Barbara Boyer, vice chair
- Pete Brentano, chair
- Stephanie Hallock
- Tracey Liskey
- Sharon Livingston
- Laura Masterson
- Marty Myers
- Tyson Raymond
- Dan Arp (ex-officio)  
Dean of Agriculture  
Oregon State University
- Katy Coba (ex-officio)  
Director  
Oregon Department of Agriculture

Board members may be contacted through the Oregon Department of Agriculture Director’s Office.

### Find Board of Ag info online

[www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/BoardAgriculture.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/AboutUs/Pages/BoardAgriculture.aspx)

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