Oregon State University Extension Service

GROWING

Extending Knowledge and Changing Lives in Linn and Benton Counties

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Extension Internship: Building Skills, Serving Community

By Mitch Lies,
Lead Writer

This summer, Emily Braibish, a senior at Oregon State University, is gaining perspective on what it takes to be an Extension agent, knowledge she hopes to apply after she graduates.

Abby Thorsen, a junior at OSU, is helping people understand the importance of testing their well water for nitrate and other contaminants by conducting Groundwater Education Programs at farmers' markets and other events.

Nakayda Jacobs, a senior at OSU, also involved in the Groundwater Education Program, is sharing knowledge gained in the classroom with the community. "I've done a lot of research at OSU, but I really wanted to work with the community," she said.

These Oregon State University students are gaining experience and perspective this summer by participating in OSU Extension's Internship Program. Now in its seventh year, the program has become a vibrant learning experience for students.

"I think it is a good experience for students to be able to work with community outreach and to interact with the public," said Otillia Schreuder, Master Gardener Coordinator for Linn and Benton counties, who supervises Braibish.

The Extension Internship program started in 2020 with 11 participants. This summer, 21 students are participating from 16 counties.

"While the numbers of applicants and our ability to host interns in counties vary each year due to funding and availability of faculty to supervise them, we see the program grow in the aspect of the experience we offer the interns," said Wiley Thompson, regional director of OSU Extension's Coastal Region, who helped launch the program. "We create a more developmental experience for the intern. We seek to invest in them. We see them as a full-fledged Extension teammate, and maybe one day an employee who will join us or Extension in another state fulltime."

Under the program, interns are paid a competitive hourly wage and hold either a part-time or a full-time position with a maximum workload of 40 hours a week. Internships typically are summer positions but are available year-round, as well.

Many participants, like Braibish, hope to one day make a career out of Extension, a win for Extension and the interns.

PHOTO CREDIT: CHRISSY LUCAS

Well Water interns made it possible to conduct 54 well water workshops and reach hundreds of people over their time as summer interns.

"The internship program is allowing us to get individuals that really understand Extension before they actually apply for that permanent position." said Chrissy Lucas-Woodruff, Extension domestic groundwater and septic specialist, who noted that several of her former interns now hold permanent positions with Extension.

Braibish said her experiences have reinforced her commitment to Extension and helped inform her of areas to brush up on.

"I'm learning a lot about what goes into an Extension position," she said. "It is giving me a better understanding of what I need to focus on as I finish school, skills that I might want to brush up on. I think I might take a writing class, for example, just to brush up on that."

Others, like Callie Bradshaw, a junior at OSU, who is interning with the Master Food Preserver Program, aren't necessarily eyeing a career with Extension, but are finding the program helpful in professional development.

"I'm gaining a lot of communication skills and getting confident with talking to the public, answering questions and engaging with

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Who We Are

The Oregon State University Extension offices in Linn County and Benton County offer practical, lifelong learning experiences. We sponsor conferences, workshops, demonstrations, tours, and short courses. We recruit, train and manage volunteers who assist us with community outreach and education. Our Extension faculty and volunteers answer questions and give advice by phone, in person, through e-mail, and on our Websites. We provide brochures and flyers with specific information on a variety of subjects. We are funded by a cooperative partnership between Oregon State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and our local counties.

Office locations and hours

The Benton County office is located at 4077 SW Research Way in Corvallis. Office hours are 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Telephone: 541-713-5000. http://extension.oregonstate.edu/benton.

The Linn County office is located at 33630 McFarland Rd (on the corner of Old Highway 34 and McFarland Road), in Tangent. Office hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Phone 541-967-3871. http://extension.oregonstate.edu/linn.

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Oregon State University Extension Service

Extension Internship: Building Skills, Serving Community

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Emily Braibish at Benton County Demonstration Garden during fair

Food Preservation & Safety intern Callie Bradshaw talking to a person at Farmers Market

Miguel Merales Family Community Health intern collects data at Sweet Home free farmers market

the community," said Bradshaw, who is staffing workshops and farmers' markets in Linn and Benton counties this summer.

In addition to benefiting students, the program provides significant benefits to local communities, according to program supervisors, in part by enabling Extension to expand its reach. For the Groundwater Education Program, by summer's end, interns will have staffed 45 nitrate screenings over a six-county region and conducted more than 500 well water screenings, far more than Lucas-Woodruff would have been able to conduct were it not for the interns.

"I certainly would not be able to be out in the community and do as much outreach without the internship program," Lucas-Woodruff said. "The interns really maximize the program, both the opportunities to get the information out there, and also to bring awareness (to well-water issues)."

Every last Wednesday of the month, intern Miguel Merales supports a farm stand in Sweet Home that offers free food to the local community. The initiative hoping to improve rural food security and access to fresh foods is in partnership with Extension Family and Community Health and Linn County Health Department. Fresh produce supplied by Ejido Oso of Corvallis is purchased through multiple grant funds at wholesale prices and provided free to the community. Merales as part of his internship compiles data from farm-stand customers on their demographics and food insecurity and is working on an evaluation plan to show impact. "We want to know who we are reaching, language preference, how the farmstand impacts them and things like that so we can make adjustments as we go forward," Merales said. The pilot program, which is running through October, also provides free medical screening services.

Interns also bring fresh perspectives that help vitalize programs, according to supervisors. "The best programs have lots of humans who contribute to what makes good programing and what makes good ideas," Schreuder noted.

Faculty, meanwhile, benefit by being freed up to focus on areas they might not otherwise have time for. Schreuder noted, for example, that Braibish's commitment to the Master Gardener Program has allowed her to think more long-term. "It has allowed me as program manager to spend time thinking about more long-term programming so that I am better able to serve my community," Schreuder said.

"This has been a busy summer, with interns working across multiple Extension program areas, including some who provide translation and help serve Spanish-speaking community members," said Michele Webster, Linn County Office Manager and Local Liaison. "It's been rewarding to watch them collaborate and gain exposure to the breadth of Extension's work while developing valuable professional skills."

"While the interns learn from our faculty and staff, we also learn from them," Webster added. "Their fresh energy, creativity and enthusiasm enrich our office and the communities we serve. They play an invaluable role in helping disseminate research-based educational information and resources, allowing Extension faculty to expand our reach and better serve constituents throughout Linn and Benton counties."

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Why Cover Crops Are Essential for Drought Resilience

By Kevin Seifert,
Linn Soil and Water Conservation District

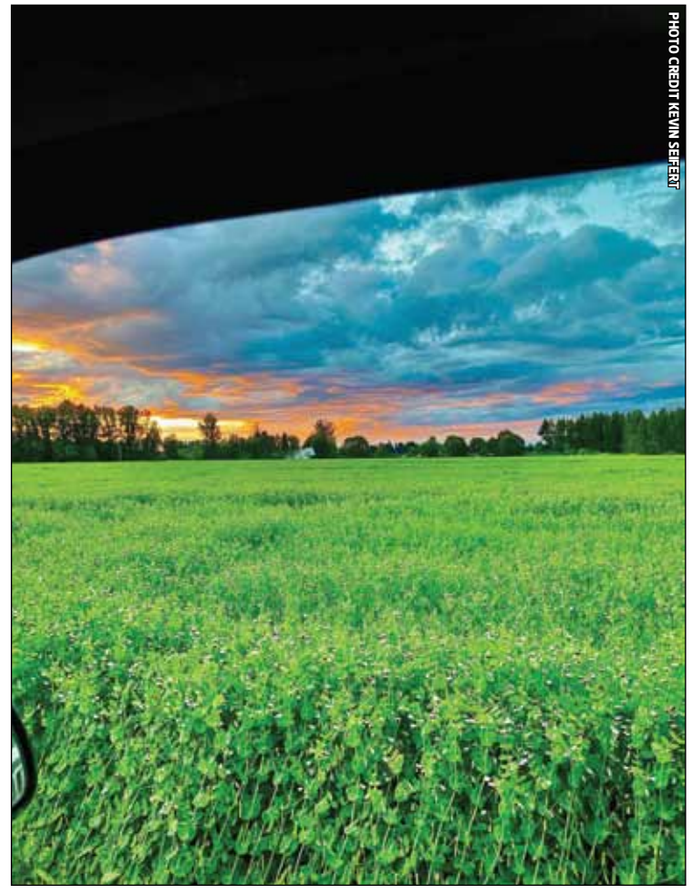
Drought has increasingly become a significant challenge for farmers and agricultural communities across the globe. As areas of drought intensify, periods of water scarcity are expected to become more frequent and severe, threatening crop yields, soil health, and overall farm productivity. One promising strategy to mitigate the impacts of drought and foster resilience is the adoption of cover crops. Cover crops are non-harvested plants grown primarily to improve soil quality, conserve water, and enhance ecosystem functions. Their importance in building drought resilience cannot be overstated, as they serve multiple roles in maintaining agricultural sustainability even when water is scarce.

The foundation of drought resilience in agriculture lies in healthy, robust soil. Cover crops contribute to improved soil structure by developing extensive root systems that penetrate and aerate compacted soils. These roots increase soil porosity, allowing water to infiltrate more effectively and reducing runoff. As cover crops decompose, they add organic matter to the soil, which acts like a sponge, enhancing the soil's ability to retain moisture. In periods of drought, this increased water-holding capacity becomes crucial, providing crops with a reservoir of moisture during dry spells and helping to buffer against acute water shortages.

Drought conditions often exacerbate soil erosion, as dry, bare soil is more vulnerable to wind and water displacement. Cover crops play a protective role by shielding the soil surface with their foliage and root networks. This living barrier prevents soil particles from being carried away, preserving valuable topsoil and maintaining the integrity of the field. By minimizing erosion, cover crops ensure that the soil remains fertile and productive, which is vital for sustaining crop growth in drought-prone areas.

Healthy soil is not just about structure—it's also about fertility and microbial life. Cover crops, such as legumes, fix atmospheric nitrogen and enrich the soil with essential nutrients. As they grow and eventually break down, cover crops feed soil microbes, fostering a vibrant underground ecosystem. These microbes further improve nutrient cycling and soil organic matter, making nutrients more available to main crops even when water is limited. Enhanced fertility means plants are better equipped to withstand drought stress, maintaining their growth and productivity with fewer resources.

Weeds compete with crops for water, nutrients, and sunlight. In the context of drought, this competition can be particularly damaging. Cover crops act as a natural weed suppressant, outcompeting invasive plants and shading the soil, reducing the need for chemical herbicides. Their dense canopy helps keep the soil cool and moist, slowing evaporation and preserving precious water for crop use. This dual function of weed suppression and moisture conservation is critical for farmers striving to maintain yields in dry conditions.



Field with cover crop.

The benefits of cover crops extend beyond immediate drought mitigation; they contribute to long-term resilience by gradually improving soil health and farm ecosystems. By integrating cover crops into rotation schedules, farmers can build a soil profile that is more resistant to extreme weather events, including prolonged droughts. This approach not only stabilizes yields but also reduces dependence on irrigation and other water-intensive practices, making agriculture more sustainable and less vulnerable to climate variability.

Cover crops support biodiversity both above and below ground. They provide habitat and food for beneficial insects, pollinators, and soil organisms, fostering a balanced farm ecosystem. Diverse cover crops can break pest cycles, improve pollination, and promote overall farm health. Increased biodiversity helps farms cope with environmental stressors, including drought, by creating more resilient systems that can adapt to changing conditions.

While the primary goal of cover crops in drought resilience is to secure soil health and water conservation, their economic and environmental benefits are noteworthy. Farmers who invest in cover crops often see reduced input costs, as healthier soils require less fertilizer and irrigation. These cumulative benefits make cover crops a wise investment for both individual farmers and the broader agricultural community.

In an era where drought poses a formidable threat to food security and farm livelihoods, cover crops stand out as a practical and effective solution for building resilience. By improving soil structure, conserving water, suppressing weeds, and enhancing biodiversity, cover crops enable farmers to endure and recover from periods of water scarcity. Their adoption is a key step toward sustainable agriculture that can withstand the challenges of our ever changing environment. Investing in cover crops not only protects current yields but also ensures the long-term health and productivity of our farmland for generations to come.

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Choosing the Right Canner: A Key Step in Safe Home Food Preservation

By Callie Bradshaw, Summer Intern

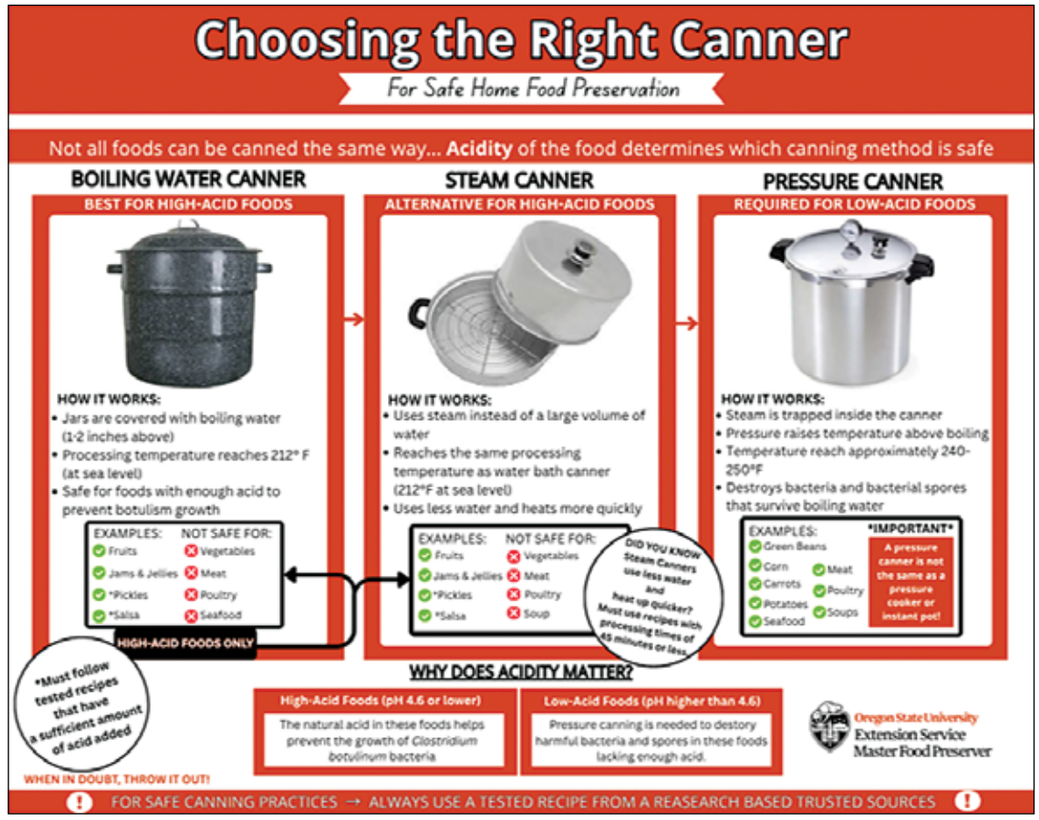
Late summer is one of the best times of the year to preserve fresh produce. Farmers' markets and home gardens are overflowing with tomatoes, peaches, cucumbers, green beans, and many other seasonal favorites, making it the perfect time to preserve the harvest for the months ahead. Whether you're making applesauce, pickles, salsa, or canning green beans, choosing the right canner is one of the most important steps in ensuring your food is safe to eat.

There are three main types of canners used for home food preservation:

- boiling water canners
- atmospheric steam canners, and
- pressure canners

The type of canner you use depends on the food you're preserving. Choosing the right canner can seem confusing. The image in this article provides a quick guide to help you choose the right canner for the foods you're preserving.

Boiling water canners and steam canners are used for high-acid foods with a pH of 4.6 or lower. These foods are naturally acidic enough to prevent the growth of *Clostridium botulinum*, the bacterium that causes botulism. Steam canners are a great alternative to boiling water canners for many high-acid foods, but only if you are using a research-tested recipe with a processing time of 45 minutes or less. Foods that can be safely processed using these canners include:



- Fruits
- Jams and jellies
- Fruit preserves
- Pickles
- Applesauce
- Properly acidified tomatoes and tomato products prepared using a research-tested recipe

Pressure canners are required for low-acid foods because they can reach temperatures of 240–250˚F, which are necessary to destroy harmful bacteria and bacterial spores that can survive at boiling-water temperatures. Foods that require pressure canning include:

- Green beans
- Corn
- Carrots
- Meat and poultry
- Seafood
- Soups
- Stocks and broths
- Dried beans and other low-acid mixtures

If you have questions about home food preservation, your local OSU Extension Master Food Preservers are here to help. Visit your local Extension office to have your dial pressure canner gauge tested while you wait anytime during business hours – It's free! Visit the Master Food Preservers at local farmers markets this fall. Call the Extension office to see when they'll be at the markets. Food safety and preservation questions can be answered by calling our statewide helpline (staffed by Master Food Preservers throughout the state) at 1-800-354-7319, or submit your question to Ask Extension at https://extension.oregonstate.edu/ask-extension.

Tomatoes are one of the most commonly misunderstood foods in home canning. Although they can often be safely processed in a boiling water or steam canner, they must always be prepared using a research-tested recipe that includes the recommended amount of bottled lemon juice or citric acid. Since the natural acidity of tomatoes can vary, adding acid helps ensure they are safe for boiling water or steam canning.

It's also important to remember that a pressure canner is not the same as a pressure cooker or electric multi-cooker. As highlighted in the infographic, most pressure cookers, which include many electric countertop appliances, have not been tested for safely canning low-acid foods. If you're preserving vegetables, meats, seafood, or soups, always use a pressure canner designed specifically for home canning.

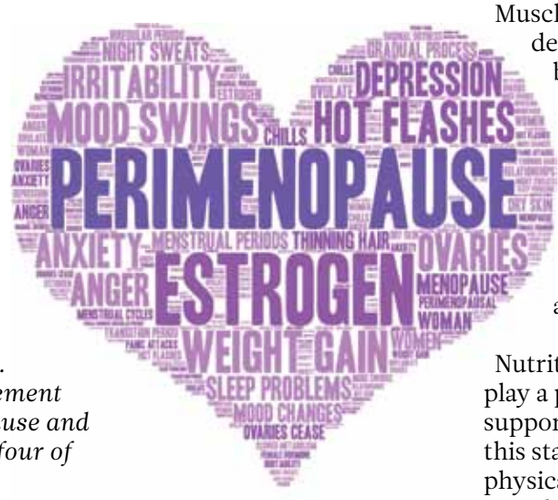
No matter what you're preserving, always use a current, research-tested recipe from a trusted source such as Oregon State University Extension, the USDA, the National Center for Home Food Preservation, or the *Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving*. These recipes have been carefully tested to ensure foods are processed safely while maintaining quality.

As you enjoy this year's harvest, take the time to preserve it safely so you can enjoy the flavors of summer throughout the year.

Nutrition and Movement During Perimenopause and Menopause

By Kendall Wilmoth, OSU dietetic intern

Linn-Benton Family and Community Health has shared an informational series on women's health looking at nutrition needs through a woman's lifespan. This four-part series explores how hormones affect nutrition at different life stages. Nutrition and movement during perimenopause and menopause is part four of four.



As women enter their 40s and 50s, they go through perimenopause and eventually menopause. This time is marked by changing levels of the hormones estrogen and progesterone. These shifts can affect everything from body temperature and sleep to mood and metabolism. While it's a completely natural part of life, many women notice changes in their energy, body shape, and overall health.

Lower estrogen levels can change how the body stores fat, often leading to more weight around the belly. Muscle mass may slowly decline, bones can become weaker, and metabolism tends to slow down. These changes, along with less daily activity, can increase the risk for heart disease, insulin resistance, and osteoporosis.

The good news? Nutrition and movement play a powerful role in supporting health during this stage of life. Regular physical activity helps keep muscle mass, bone strength, and heart health while also improving energy, mood, and sleep quality. Even moderate activity, like brisk walking, strength training, or yoga, can make a big difference.

From a nutrition standpoint, focusing on balanced, nutrient-rich meals becomes more important than ever.

- **Protein:** Include a source of protein at each meal—eggs, fish, chicken, beans, or tofu—to help keep muscle and metabolism strong.
- **Calcium and Vitamin D:** These nutrients work together to keep bones strong. Dairy products, fortified milk, leafy greens, and sunlight are great sources.
- **Healthy fats:** Omega-3s from salmon, chia seeds, and walnuts support heart and brain health.
- **Whole grains & Fiber:** High-fiber foods like oats, quinoa, fruits, and vegetables help with digestion and support stable blood sugar levels.
- **Phytoestrogens:** Foods that mimic estrogens like soy, flaxseeds, and lentils may offer gentle, natural support for hormone balance.

Hydration and sleep are also important. Drinking enough water helps reduce bloating and hot flashes, while getting good quality sleep supports hormone balance and energy levels.

Finally, staying active with movement you enjoy is one of the most powerful ways to handle the physical changes of menopause. Strength training, walking, swimming, or group fitness all help keep muscle, strengthen bones, and protect long-term heart health.

What does ultra-processed foods actually mean?

By Shannon Guerin Van Deusen, OSU Dietetic Intern

All Food Is Processed

When you hear the words "ultra-processed foods," you might think of fast food, hot dogs, or packaged snacks, however many foods are processed in some way. Processing includes simple things like cooking, washing, cutting, freezing, or canning. What matters to our health is how much the food has been changed. Whole foods that are processed to have added sugar, salt, or fat can raise your risk of health problems such as obesity, Type 2 diabetes, and heart disease if you eat them too often.

Think of processed foods on a continuum of minimally to highly processed:

- Minimally processed foods are close to whole foods with nothing added, such as bagged salad, frozen vegetables, and roasted nuts.
- Moderately processed foods have some ingredients added for flavor or shelf life, but they are still nutritious (meaning they still provide good amounts of vitamins, minerals, fiber, or protein that your body needs to stay healthy), such as canned vegetables, jarred pasta sauce, cheese, and whole-grain bread.
- Highly "ultra"-processed foods are altered from their naturally found form, with a long list of ingredients that you would not find in a home kitchen.

Example of common foods and their level of processing:

Less Processed	Moderately Processed	Ultra Processed
Apple	Applesauce with added sugar	Apple-flavored snack bar
Plain oats	Instant oatmeal	Sweetened flavored instant oatmeal or sugary cereal
Baked chicken	Frozen breaded chicken strips	Chicken nuggets or hot dogs
Plain yogurt	Sweetened yogurt	Yogurt-covered pretzels or dried fruit
Corn tortilla chips	Packaged tortilla snack chips	Cheese-flavored

Some foods may fit in different columns depending on the brand and ingredient list. Check the label for added sugars, sodium, oils, colors, and ingredients you would not usually use at home.

Not All Packaged Foods Are Bad

A common mistake many people make is thinking that any food in a bag or can is unhealthy. Many packaged foods are healthy, affordable, and easy to use. Examples include:

- Canned beans and vegetables give you fiber and vitamins with no prep needed.
- Frozen fruits and vegetables keep their

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Plant Figs in the Fall for a Sweet Summer Treat

By Emily Braibish,
OSU Extension Intern for the Linn-Benton Master Gardener Program

An increased interest in growing figs in Oregon recently may have something to do with how easy figs are to grow in the Oregon climate. The hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters of Oregon are very similar to the fig's native range. The common fig (*Ficus carica*) along with the sycamore fig (*Ficus sycamorus*) are the only two species that are cultivated for their fruit, however, there are around 700 to 900 species in the Ficus genus worldwide.

When selecting a fig tree, determining what kind of fig you are purchasing is an important step to ensure its pollination needs are met. Within the genus Ficus, there are four primary botanical types. Figs are categorized as:

- Common figs are persistent, which means that they keep their fruit on the branch and ripen without needing pollination or fig wasps.
- Non-persistent or caducous figs, such as Smyrna types, will drop their fruit unless pollination occurs.
- Caprifigs are male trees that produce pollen but not edible fruit and are used to pollinate other types.
- San Pedro figs are an intermediate fig that will produce an early fruit crop without pollination but require pollination for the main crop.

Cultivars derived from the common fig express a diverse range of characteristics. Cultivars can range in size from small, container grown trees to trees reaching 30 or more feet. They can be large, multi-stemmed shrubs or single-stemmed trees with a bushy canopy containing low-branching limbs and shallow roots. Figs commonly sprout basal suckers. The size and shape of a fig tree is highly dependent on how the tree is maintained through pruning and trimming.

There are several fig varieties that do especially well in the Willamette Valley's climate.

- 'Desert King' is one of the most popular and well-suited varieties for the Willamette Valley. It produces large, green fruits with sweet, pale to pink flesh.
- 'Brown Turkey' are highly adaptable, medium to large figs with fruit that turns from green to reddish-brown once they ripen.
- 'Lattarula', also known as the Italian honey fig, produces a medium to large fruit with greenish-yellow skin and pale, golden flesh inside. The fruit has a sweet, honey flavor.
- 'White Kadota' produces fruit with yellow-green skin with a sweet, amber colored flesh.

A ripe 'Negronne' fig ready to harvest from the home garden of Deanna Lloyd.

Fig harvest from the home garden of Deanna Llyod.

Harvested 'Negronne' figs from the garden of Deanna Lloyd.

Cultivars often have several names they may be referred to by, depending on the region.

Growing fig trees is fairly simple. When selecting a location for a new fig tree, take the following factors into account. Fig trees will need a location that has:

- a minimum of eight hours of direct sun
- loose, fast-draining soil
- neutral soil pH between 6.5 – 7.0.

Figs trees have more successful yields if planted in an area that is protected from wind. A south facing retaining wall, fence, or hedge can reflect heat from the sun back to the plant providing windbreaks and consistent heat in the summer, which is needed to ripen fruit successfully. Windbreaks that don't stagnate the air help trap warmer air around the tree allowing for better fruit maturation. Additionally, this barrier provide protection in the winter. Temperatures below zero degrees Fahrenheit can kill or damage fig trees.

Plant fig trees in early to mid-fall to reduce summer heat stress on young trees and allow figs to focus on root growth before winter dormancy. Figs planted in the fall will have a more vigorous growth spurt in the spring.

To plant a fig tree:

- Dig a hole as deep as the pot it is in and twice as wide as the root ball.
- Remove fig tree from pot and arrange so that soil around the base of the tree is level with the ground around the hole.
- Fill the hole with a compost-soil mix. Do not add additional soil around the base of the tree.
- Water deeply.

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REPUBLIC SERVICES

September-October Gardening Calendar for Western Oregon

SEPTEMBER

Timely advice on garden chores, fertilizing, pest control, and more from OSU Extension. These tips are not necessarily applicable to all areas of Oregon. For more information, contact your local Extension office.

The Oregon State University Extension Service encourages **sustainable gardening practices**.

Practice preventive pest management rather than reactive pest control. Identify and monitor problems before acting, and opt for the least toxic approach. Conserve biological control agents such as predators and the parasitoids that feed on insect pests.

Maintenance and cleanup

- Harvest winter squash when the "ground spot" changes from white to a cream or gold color.
- Pick and store winter squash; mulch carrots, parsnips and beets for winter harvesting.
- Protect tomatoes; pick green tomatoes and ripen indoors if frost threatens.
- Reduce water on trees, shrubs and vines east of Cascades to harden them for winter.
- Stake tall flowers to keep them from blowing over in fall winds.
- Dig, clean and store tuberous begonias if frost threatens.
- Harvest potatoes when the tops die down. Store them in a dark location.
- Optimal time for establishing a new lawn is August through mid-September.
- Aerate lawns.
- **Early-September:** Apply 1 pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet to lawns. Reduce risks of run-off into local waterways by not fertilizing just prior to rain, and not over-irrigating so that water runs off of lawn and onto sidewalk or street.
- **Willamette Valley:** Stop irrigating your lawn after Labor Day to suppress European crane fly populations.
- Recycle *disease-free* plant material and kitchen vegetable and fruit scraps into compost.

Planting and Propagation

- Divide peonies and iris.
- Plant or transplant woody ornamentals and mature herbaceous perennials. Fall planting of trees, shrubs and perennials can encourage healthy root growth over the winter.
- Plant daffodils, tulips and crocus for spring bloom. Work calcium and phosphorus into the soil below the bulbs at planting time. Remember when purchasing bulbs, the size of the bulb is directly correlated to the size of the flower yet to come in spring.
- **Western Oregon:** Plant seeds of overwintering cover crops by September or early October so they get established before the weather turns cold and wet.

Pest monitoring and management

Use chemical controls only when necessary, after a specific pest has been identified, and only after thoroughly reading and following the pesticide label (the label is the law). First consider cultural, then physical and biological controls. Choose the leasttoxic options that will manage the target pest, such as insecticidal soaps or horticultural oils, and use them judiciously to minimize impacts on beneficial organisms and the environment.

- Apply parasitic nematodes to moist soil beneath rhododendrons and azaleas that show root weevil damage (notched leaves).
- Control slugs as necessary. Least toxic management options include barriers and traps. Baits are also available for slug control; use caution around pets. Read and follow all label directions prior to using baits, or any other chemical control.
- Monitor trailing berries for leaf and cane spot. Treat if necessary.
- As necessary, apply copper spray for peach and cherry trees at the recommended timing.
- Spray for juniper twig blight, as necessary, after pruning away dead and infected twigs.
- Continue monitoring late-season soft fruits and berries for Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD). If SWD are present, use an integrated and least toxic approach to manage the pests.
- **Coastal and Western valleys:** Spray susceptible varieties of potatoes and tomatoes for early and late blight.

Indoor gardening

- Clean houseplants, check for insects, and repot and fertilize if necessary; then bring them indoors.

OCTOBER

Planning

- If needed, improve soil drainage of lawns before rain begins.
- To become an OSU Master Gardener volunteer, register with your local Extension office. For additional information, visit OSU Master Gardener.

Maintenance and clean up

- Recycle disease-free plant material and kitchen vegetable and fruit scraps into compost.
- Drain or blow out your irrigation system and insulate valve mechanisms in preparation of winter.
- Use newspaper or cardboard covered by mulch to discourage winter and spring annual weeds or remove a lawn area for conversion to garden beds. For conversion, work in the paper and mulch as organic matter once the lawn grass has died.
- Clean and paint greenhouses and cold frames for plant storage and winter growth.
- Harvest sunflower heads; use seed for bird feed or roast for personal use.
- Dig and store potatoes; keep in darkness, moderate humidity, temperature about 40˚F. Discard unused potatoes if they sprout. Don't use as seed potatoes for next year.
- Harvest and immediately dry filberts and walnuts; dry at 95˚–100˚F.
- Ripen green tomatoes indoors. Check often and discard rotting fruit.
- Harvest and store apples; keep at about 40˚F, moderate humidity.
- Place mulch over roots of roses, azaleas, rhododendrons and berries for winter protection.
- Trim or stake bushy herbaceous perennials to prevent wind damage.
- To suppress future pest problems, clean up annual flower beds by removing diseased plant materials, overwintering areas for insect pests; mulch with manure or garden compost to feed the soil and suppress weeds.
- Cover asparagus and rhubarb beds with a mulch of manure or compost.
- Clean, sharpen and oil tools and equipment before storing for winter.
- Store garden supplies and fertilizers in a safe, dry place out of reach of children.
- Prune out dead fruiting canes in raspberries.
- Western Oregon: Harvest squash and pumpkins; keep in dry area at 55˚–60˚F.
- Western Oregon: Spade organic material and lime into garden soil, as indicated by soil test results (if necessary and the weather permits).
- Central/eastern Oregon: Prune evergreens.

Planting and Propagation

- Dig and divide rhubarb. (Should be done about every 4 years.)
- Plant garlic for harvesting next summer.
- Propagate chrysanthemums, fuchsias and geraniums by stem cuttings.
- Save seeds from the vegetable and flower garden. Dry, date, label, and store in a cool and dry location.
- Plant ground covers, trees and shrubs.
- Dig and store geraniums, tuberous begonias, dahlias and gladiolas.
- Pot and store tulips and daffodils to force into early bloom, indoors, in December and January.

Pest monitoring and management

- Remove and dispose of windfall apples that might be harboring apple maggot or codling moth larvae.
- Rake and destroy diseased leaves (apple, cherry, rose, etc.), or hot compost diseased leaves.
- Spray apple and stone fruit trees at leaf fall to prevent various fungal and bacterial diseases.
- If moles and gophers are a problem, consider traps.
- Western Oregon: Control fall-germinating lawn weeds while they are small. Hand weeding and weeding tools are particularly effective at this stage.
- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.

Houseplants and indoor gardening

- Early October: Reduce water, place in cool area (50–55˚F) and increase time in shade or darkness (12–14 hours) to force Christmas cactus to bloom in late December.
- Place hanging pots of fuchsias where they won't freeze. Don't cut back until spring.
- Western Oregon: Check/treat houseplants for disease and insects before bringing indoors.

Trade-name products and services are mentioned as illustrations only. This does not mean that the Oregon State University Extension Service either endorses these products and services or intends to discriminate against products and services not mentioned.

Master Gardeners are in the community to help you

By Otillia Schreuder

Below is a calendar of events for the Linn and Benton County Master Gardeners. For more information on these events visit https://www.facebook.com/LinnBentonOSUMG or

https://extension.oregonstate.edu/program/mg/linnbenton/events

Master Gardeners offer not just plant advice but also can help you to identify common garden and household pests.

To find out where the Master Gardeners will be in your community, please refer to the calendar below.

SEPTEMBER

1 Sweet Home Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., 1141 12th Ave. Sweet Home, OR
3 Oak Creek Walk and Talk, noon-1:30 p.m. Oak Creek Center for Urban Horticulture, 844 SW 35th St, Corvallis, OR
3 Brownsville Farmers Market, 3-6 pm, 185 Main St, Brownsville, OR
5 Albany Farmers Market, 9 a.m - 1 p.m., Water Ave & Ferry St, Albany, OR
10 Lebanon Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., 971 Park Street, Lebanon, OR
10 Brownsville Farmers Market, 3-6 pm, 185 Main St, Brownsville, OR
13 Philomath Farmers Market, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., 1050 Applegate St, Philomath, OR
15 Sweet Home Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., 1141 12th Ave. Sweet Home, OR
17 Brownsville Farmers Market, 3-6 pm, 185 Main St, Brownsville, OR
19 Albany Farmers Market, 9 a.m - 1 p.m., Water Ave & Ferry St, Albany, OR
24 Lebanon Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., 971 Park Street, Lebanon, OR
24 Brownsville Farmers Market, 3-6 pm, 185 Main St, Brownsville, OR
26 Corvallis Farmers Market, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 1st & Jackson, Corvallis, OR
26 Tomato Fest, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Lebanon Senior Center, 80 Tangent St, Lebanon, OR
29 Sweet Home Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., 1141 12th Ave. Sweet Home, OR

OCTOBER

1 Brownsville Farmers Market, 3-6 pm, 185 Main St, Brownsville, OR
3 Albany Farmers Market, 9 a.m - 1 p.m., Water Ave & Ferry St, Albany, OR
8 Lebanon Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., 971 Park Street, Lebanon, OR
17 Albany Farmers Market, 9 a.m - 1 p.m., Water Ave & Ferry St, Albany, OR
22 Lebanon Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., 971 Park Street, Lebanon, OR
24 Corvallis Farmers Market, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 1st & Jackson, Corvallis, OR

Linn and Benton County Fair Wrap-ups

By Emily Braibish, OSU Extension Master Gardener Intern

Fair was in full swing from mid-July to early August this summer. Thanks to our invaluable partnership with the Linn County Fair and Expo Center and Benton County Event Center and Fairgrounds, the Master Gardener Programs of Linn and Benton Counties were uniquely positioned to provide valuable garden outreach to the public during the fairs. Efforts were coordinated by OSU Extension Master Gardener intern, Emily Braibish.

Linn County Fair

Volunteers and staff from the OSU Extension Linn County Master Gardener Program were kept busy by the many visitors that stopped by during Linn County fair on July 16 through July 18. Lucky visitors were able to sample Black Diamond blackberries as they became ripe on the vines trellised over the entrance gate. The Demonstration Garden featured a special activity each day of the fair.

Master Gardener volunteers and OSU Extension staff went above and beyond with featured displays including:

- Children's pollinator table with pollinator themed coloring books and stories
- Fresh herbal tea tasting made with herbs from the garden
- Display about adaptive gardening that highlighted ways to approach gardening with physical limitations
- Uses of sachets with dried aromatic herbs to calm the mind and body in therapeutic horticulture
- An interactive, live display of the invasive Asian jumping worm

Visitors who missed the fair or just want to visit again, may visit the demonstration garden in Linn County on Tuesdays or Sundays from 9 a.m. to noon. The garden is located at 3700 Knox Butte Rd, Albany, OR 97322. Visitors may join the LCMGA Demonstration Garden volunteers on Tuesday and Sunday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon.

To check out upcoming workshops and events held by the OSU Extension Linn County Master Gardener Program, visit Master Gardener Programs of Linn and Benton Counties or https://www.linnmastergardeners.com/ for details.

Benton County Fair

The Benton County Fair followed shortly after on July 29 through August 1. The Demonstration Garden at the Benton County Fairgrounds displayed a wide variety of gardening styles and techniques for visitors to see. The garden is diligently cared for by a group of dedicated Master Gardener volunteers from the OSU Extension Benton County Master Gardener Program.

Within the demonstration garden, volunteers were able to highlight new and old features including:

- An updated drip irrigation system
- Patio space showcasing container gardening
- A new dry farming plot
- Temperature-activated greenhouse vent openers installed on a greenhouse hutch
- Apple trees arranged using the espalier method

The Benton County Demonstration Garden is located on the south side of the Benton County Event Center and Fairgrounds at 110 SW 53rd Street in Corvallis, Oregon 97333. The Demonstration Garden is open for visitors on Wednesday mornings from 9-11 a.m.

To check out upcoming workshops and events held by the OSU Extension Benton County Master Gardener Program, visit Master Gardener Programs of Linn and Benton Counties or https://www.bentonmg.org/ for details.

Promoting Powerful Pollinators - The Amazing Mason Bee

If you love the crunch of a crisp apple, the taste of a juicy peach and the fragrance of a ripe pear, we invite you to learn how to host, care for and celebrate the amazing Mason Bee. Mason bees are a native, solitary bee, and are super pollinators. They bellyflop from flower to flower as they zigzag their way across fruit trees, native plants and other spring blooming flowers. Along the way they collect and spread the pollen that clings to their hairy bellies. Their pollinator impact is massive, and we can play a very helpful role in their lifecycle and wellbeing.

The Blue Orchard Mason Bee (Osmia lignaria) is one of many native bees that play a critical part in the pollination of early blooming plants and fruit trees. They are cavity nesters that seek out existing holes in which to lay their eggs. They get the name "mason" bee because they build mud walls (masonry) between the individual cells they make for each egg they lay. The pollen and nectar collected on their busy, belly flopping journeys become the food

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What is a Wellhead and Why Should You Care?

By Abby Thorsen, OSU Extension Service Intern

If you own a private well, you've probably noticed the pipe sticking up out of the ground somewhere on your property. While it may not look like much, this is your wellhead, and it plays a critical role in protecting your drinking water.

A wellhead is the visible portion of your well that extends above the ground. It provides access to the well for maintenance and testing while creating a barrier that helps keep contaminants out of your water supply. Think of it as your well's first line of defense against pollution, insects, rodents, and surface water.

A properly maintained wellhead is essential for protecting the quality of your drinking water. If the wellhead is damaged, buried, or improperly sealed, contaminants such as bacteria, fertilizers, pesticides, or runoff from heavy rain can enter your well. Unlike public water systems, private well owners are responsible for maintaining and protecting their own water supply, making regular wellhead inspections an important part of home maintenance.

This wellhead shows signs of neglect and is in need of some maintenance that can be identified with routine inspection.

So, what should a healthy wellhead look like?

Your well casing should extend at least 12 inches above the ground and have a secure, tightly fitting cap that is in good condition. The area around the well should be clear of debris, vegetation, and stored chemicals or equipment. The ground should also slope away from the wellhead, so rainwater drains away rather than pooling around it.

There are also a few things to avoid. Never bury your wellhead or cover it with landscaping materials, decorative rocks, or soil. While hiding the wellhead may improve the appearance of your yard, it makes inspections more difficult and increases the risk of contamination. Avoid storing gasoline, fertilizers, pesticides, or other hazardous materials near the wellhead, and always keep livestock away from the area.

Routine inspections only take a few minutes and can help identify problems before they become expensive. At least once a year, walk around your well and check for signs of damage such as cracks in the well casing, a loose or broken cap, evidence of flooding, or pooling water around the well.

In addition to inspecting your wellhead, it's important to test your well water regularly. Water quality can change over time, even if your wellhead appears to be in good condition. We recommend testing water every 1-3 years for bacteria and nitrate, as well as for any contaminants that may be common in your local area.

Protecting your wellhead is one of the simplest and most effective ways to ensure safe drinking water for your household. By keeping the area clean, inspecting it regularly, and testing your water, you can reduce the risk of contamination and catch potential problems early. A few minutes of maintenance today can help safeguard your family's water for years to come.

Sources:

- CDC- https://www.cdc.gov/drinking-water/about/index.html
- EPA- https://www.epa.gov/privatewells
- OSU- https://wellwater.oregonstate.edu/well-water

Upcoming Webinars

Free registration for all webinars can be found at https://beav.es/wellseptic

Protect the health of your family, neighbors and animals, your property investment, and the safety of groundwater resources.

Living with Your Domestic Well

Did you know there are possible contaminants in your well water that you cannot see, taste, or smell? Municipal water is regulated by the EPA so consumers can be quite confident that the quality of the water coming from their tap is sufficient. However, well water does not face such stringent regulations and contamination testing often only occurs when the well is first installed or in some locations when property ownership changes. It is so important that well water users understand when and how to monitor their water quality and the associated benefits of doing so.

- 9/1/2026 from 5:30-7:45 p.m. - Living With Your Domestic Well & Septic System
- 9/10/2026 from Noon to 1:15 p.m. - Living With Your Domestic Well
- 9/23/2026 from 5:45-8 p.m. - Living With Your Domestic Well & Septic System
- 10/06/2026 from Noon to 1:15 p.m. - Living With Your Domestic Well

Living With Your Septic System

Proper maintenance and monitoring of your septic systems ensures proper treatment of the effluent and a longer life of the system. Did you know that stress and overloading systems during the holiday season can cause failure? Let's talk about signs and how to avoid dreaded surfacing effluent.

- 9/1/2026 from 5:30-7:45 p.m. - Living With Your Domestic Well & Septic System
- 9/9/2026 from Noon to 1 p.m. - Living With Your Septic System

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Benton County NO-COST WELL WATER TESTING

For Nitrate, Arsenic, and Coliform Bacteria

Fill out this interest form and we will reach out: https://beav.es/GZh

Testing includes an OSU intern coming out to your home to gather the sample, do a well head inspection and mandatory participation in an educational seminar!

Oregon State University Extension Service

Benton County OREGON

Why Test?

It is important to test your water regularly, since these contaminants have the potential to cause short- and long-term health issues. Testing is the only way to know if these contaminants are present.

Priority testing will be given to high risk locations, and need based.
Questions? Contact well.water@oregonstate.edu or (541) 730-3531

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Pigs Can Fly: How One Oregon Farmer Built a Livestock System That Works With Her Body, Her Land, and Her Life

By Teagan Moran, OSU Extension Service in collaboration with **Nancy Hildebrandt,** Pigs Can Fly Ranch

When you walk onto Nancy Hildebrandt's ten-acre hillside farm near Lebanon Oregon, you immediately understand two things:

- this land is steep, rocky, and unconventional farmland, and
- Nancy has built every part of her system with intention, humor, and a deep respect for what her body can and cannot do.

PHOTO CREDIT CRYSTAL KELSO

Feeding station and feed barn designed to reduce danger in the feeding process.

Nancy Hildebrandt at Pigs Can Fly Farm near Lebanon Oregon

"I grew up in a blue-collar oil refinery and steel mill town on the east side of Chicago," she told the group during a recent tour. "I was an urban girl."

Her path into agriculture didn't begin until her 50s, when she developed what she calls an obsession with retiring to a ranch. That dream eventually brought her to Oregon, where she now raises Idaho Pasture Pigs on terrain most people would never consider livestock-friendly. But Nancy took the time to explore options first. By reaching out for help from others, she has built a system that works for the pigs, for the land, and most critically, for her body.

Nancy's property is a patchwork of steep slopes and deep rock pockets. Traditional cropping isn't an option. Even mowing most of the pasture is out of the question, so she manages vegetation with a string trimmer and her pigs.

Why pigs? Nancy found that they're agile, adaptable, and far less likely to escape than goats. After early experiments with Guinea Hogs and Kunekunes, including one winter when she suddenly found herself managing 18 pigs and bare pastures, she transitioned to Berkshires for their temperament and meat quality, and then finally to Idaho Pasture Pigs. As she has continued to adjust feed, pasture access, and management over the years, her most reliable indicators that she's on the right track come from her customers and processors.

"Whatever you're doing, keep doing it," her mobile slaughter crew told her. "It's the perfect balance of fat to meat."

Farming at 75: "I want to do this for at least 10 more years"

Nancy is 76, going on 77. She's candid about the realities of aging:

"I never thought of myself as disabled, but you know... shoulder impingements, back pain, knee replacements coming."

Like many older farmers, she knows that one injury can take you out for a season or permanently. She wanted to keep farming, but she needed to change how she worked. So she was excited to hear about a workshop on farm ergonomics through the OSU Extension Service Small Farms Program, regional farmer listserv. The workshop was hosted by Labor Movement and focused on safe lifting, body mechanics, and injury prevention.

"At the end of the talk the instructor said there's this national website called AgrAbility," Nancy recalled. "Assistive aids for older farmers and disabled farmers."

She went home and searched the National AgrAbility Resource Toolkit: https://www.agrability.org/toolbox/ , looking at everything related to pigs or livestock. She found a design that stood out; a simple pasture cutout that allowed feeding pigs without entering the pasture.

"I saw this little pencil sketch on the AgrAbility site," she said, "and I thought, that's perfect for keeping me safe and making it easy to deliver the feed."

What Assistive Technology and Ergonomics Mean for Farmers

Farmers don't always use the words assistive technology or ergonomics, but they use the concepts every day. At its core, assistive technology (AT) is anything (simple or advanced) that helps you overcome a physical limitation so you can do your work more safely, with less pain, less strain, less risk of injury, and in many cases, continue doing tasks you might not be able to do otherwise. Ergonomics is the practice of designing tasks, tools, and systems so they fit the person doing the work, not the other way around.

For farmers, this can look less like high-tech gadgets and more like practical, body-saving

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Resources for Farmers Experiencing Pain, Physical Challenges, or Disability

OSU Extension's Small Farms Program is partnering with Access Technologies, Inc., Oregon's statewide assistive technology nonprofit, to increase support for farmers who are working through pain, injury, chronic conditions, or age-related physical changes. Together, we are building capacity to help farmers identify practical tools, safer workflows, and affordable assistive technology options that make daily tasks more manageable.

If you are a farmer or someone hoping to farm who is navigating physical difficulties, chronic pain, or a disability, you can fill out our Oregon AgrAbility Interest Form. This helps us connect you to available services now and advocate for expanded programming in the future.

Interest Form: https://beav.es/YZV

Your information is confidential and helps us understand what support is needed across the state. Whether you're looking for ergonomic strategies, assistive tools, or help problem-solving a specific task, this form is the best way to get connected.

Takeaways for Farmers

1. Your body is your most important piece of equipment. Design systems that protect it - and there is help to do so.
2. Assistive technology doesn't have to be fancy. Sometimes it's a bucket roller, a load handler, or a better workflow.
3. You don't have to figure it out alone. Extension, AgrAbility, AT specialists, and other farmers can help - fill out interest form: https://beav.es/YZV
4. Small changes add up. Nancy's system wasn't built overnight, it evolved through curiosity, community, and problem-solving.

Pigs Can Fly: How One Oregon Farmer Built a Livestock System That Works With Her Body, Her Land, and Her Life

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solutions that make daily tasks safer and more sustainable.

On farms, assistive technology can include:

- Tools that reduce lifting (feed rollers, powered dump wagons, bucket dollies)
- Equipment that redistributes weight (harness-style weed whackers, ergonomic backpack sprayers)
- Modifications to workflow (no-entry feeding stations, raised work surfaces, low-stress livestock handling)
- Simple adaptations (better grips, two-handed tools, long-handled weeders)
- Mobility supports (ATVs with racks, step-in gates, ramps, handrails)

Ergonomics shows up in the questions we ask farmers every day:

- Where does your body hurt during this task?
- What movements are hardest on you?
- Can we change the height, angle, or distance?
- Can we reduce the number of times you lift, twist, or carry?
- Is there a tool that could take part of the load?

For Nancy, ergonomics meant redesigning her feeding system so she no longer had to carry buckets into the pasture or lift 50-lb feed bags. Assistive technology meant using a load handler, a bucket roller, a powered dump wagon, and a harness-style weed whacker, all simple tools that dramatically reduced strain on her shoulders, back, and knees.

These changes didn't just make her work easier. They made it possible for her to keep farming at 76 years old.

Reaching Out for Support: Extension + AgrAbility + Community

After the workshop, Nancy contacted the OSU Extension Small Farms Program. They sent out one of their staff, who walked the terrain with her and served as a thought partner.

Nancy was then able to reach out through the OSU Extension regional Small Farms farmer network email list, asking for contractor recommendations that could make the design come to life. Several farmers responded, and one contractor came highly recommended for his ability to design with farmers, not just for them. He turned out to be exactly who she needed.

Designing a Pig-Feeding System That Protects the Farmer

Before redesigning her system, Nancy's feeding routine required:

- climbing into a shed
- lifting and dumping 50-lb feed bags
- carrying buckets into the pasture
- managing pigs crowding behind her

It was physically demanding and increasingly unsafe.

Using the AgrAbility design as inspiration, Nancy and her contractor built a centralized, no-entry feeding station paired with a feed barn designed so she can back her vehicle up, roll feed bags out using a load handler, and slide them directly into storage bins:

- allows feed delivery directly into storage from the truck
- stores feed in rodent-proof bins
- lets her feed pigs without entering the pasture
- doubles as a low-stress loading area
  - reduces lifting, twisting, and carrying
- keeps her safe from being knocked over

Her contractor took the idea and built something even more robust - "a cabana," she jokes, but one that has transformed her daily work. She lights up when she talks about how helpful this new design is.

Nancy says it best

"What I want to do is keep doing farm work for at least 10 more years, but I want to do whatever I can to avoid injury."

Her commitment underscores the importance of assistive technology and thoughtful design, all shaping how she moves through the land, how she works, and what support she receives. These tools and strategies are what will help her continue farming safely and sustainably.

Small Farm School

Join us on Wednesday, September 16 for a full day of classes, hands-on workshops, and networking opportunities designed specifically for small-scale farmers and land stewards.

This year, we will offer broad programming with twenty-five sessions to choose from. Many sessions have hands-on, outdoor, and demonstrative components. Whether you're in your first ten years of farming or looking to expand and refine your farm enterprises, there's something for everyone. Don't miss the chance to secure your spot in your preferred classes. Class sizes are limited!

For class offerings and descriptions, please visit the Small Farm School website https://extension.oregonstate.edu/smallfarms/metro/small-farm-school

Wednesday, September 16

Clackamas Community College, 19600 Molalla Ave, Oregon City

Cost: Early registration, August 5th – September 3rd, sliding scale $30-$100. Late registration, September 4th – September 9th, sliding scale $40-$110.

Scholarships: If cost is a barrier, please reach out. We want everyone who wants to attend to have the opportunity to experience this day of learning.

Register Here:
https://extension.oregonstate.edu/smallfarms/metro/small-farm-school

Commercial Agriculture
Tree and Small Fruit

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Hazelnut, Apple, and Pear Harvest

September and October are busy months for orchard growers in the Willamette Valley, with hazelnuts, apples, and pears all reaching the harvest stage. Along with harvest, growers should monitor irrigation, pests and overall tree health as we head into fall.

Hazelnuts

- Late September marks the beginning of hazelnut harvest season. Prepare the field for harvest by mowing grasses and weeds to about ¼ inch from the soil to make it easier to sweep up nuts, and make one last pass with a flail mower just before harvest to break up any leaves, sticks, blanks, and nuts filled with filbertworm larvae.
- Shut off your irrigation prior to nut drop to give the soil some time to dry out before harvest.
- Harvest nuts by sweeping them into 2- to 4-foot-wide windrows in the alleyways between the trees, and use a machine harvester to pick up the nuts and separate them from the leaves, twigs and other debris.
- To reduce mold, harvest hazelnuts before the fall rain arrives, and keep totes dry by covering or shielding them from rain.
- Bacterial blight (*Xanthomonas arboricola* pv. corylina) and Eastern Filbert Blight (*Anisogramma anomala*) should also be managed in the fall. Young hazelnut trees are particularly susceptible to bacterial blight, which, when severe, can girdle and kill young trees. Newly planted and drought-stressed young trees are particularly susceptible. In the fall, apply copper following harvest and before the onset of fall rains. Copper does not have a curative effect, but it can help prevent the spread of the disease.
- Late summer is a good time scout your orchard for Eastern Filbert Blight. Look for dead leaves and branches in the green canopy and flag any branches that need to be removed. Infected wood should be pruned out at least one to three feet below the cankers. Severely infected trees should be removed. Destroy pruned and infected wood by burning or chipping before budbreak in the spring.

Apples and Pears

- As fruit reaches the proper size, color, firmness and maturity, carefully monitor each block to determine the right time to pick. Timing of harvest varies by variety and location, so regular checks are essential. Harvest fruit with care to minimize bruising and protect post-harvest fruit quality.
- Apples and pears should be placed into cold storage immediately following harvest to maintain quality and extend the storage life. Do not store fruit with insect or disease damage, and handle both apples and pears carefully to prevent bruising, which can lead to decay during storage. Most apples and pears store best at 30 to 32˚ Fahrenheit, though some varieties like 'Honeycrisp' prefer 38˚F to avoid chilling injury. Length of storage varies by variety; most can be kept in cold storage for two to six months. For more information on optimal cold storage temperature and storage life, refer to the OSU Extension publication *Picking and Storing Apples and Pears* (see: https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/fs-147-picking-storing-apples-pears).
- Reduce irrigation. As the temperatures drop and the days grow shorter, trees will utilize less and less water. Irrigation can be turned off once the fall rains begin.
- Fall is also an important time to manage two important diseases of apple and pear trees: anthracnose and scab. Scab (Venturia inaequalis) overwinters in fallen leaves and fruit, so good orchard sanitation is important for managing the disease. Shred fallen leaves with a flail mower to speed up decomposition and help reduce disease pressure the following season.
- Anthracnose (*Cryptosporiopsis curvispora*; sexual: Neofabraea malicorticis) is another common fungal disease of apples and pears. Infection occurs in the fall when rain spreads fungal spores to young limbs and twigs, although cankers may not become visible until the following spring. To help prevent the spread of the disease, apply a fixed-copper spray before the onset of fall rains. Prune out and destroy infected branches, as well as rotted or mummified fruit remaining on the trees.

PHOTOS BY E CHERNOH/OSU EXTENSION

Hazelnuts just prior to nut drop

Braeburn apple The fruit will turn yellow with red blush and stripes at maturity

Plant Figs in the Fall for a Sweet Summer Treat

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New, unestablished, in-ground fig trees should be watered regularly. A deep watering one to two times a week during the first several growing seasons will promote stronger root growth. Additional watering may be necessary during periods of extreme heat while the plant is young. For established, in-ground fig trees a deep watering every seven to ten days during dry summer months is sufficient. Once established, fig trees are quite drought-tolerant but regular, deep watering will reduce heat stress, maintain vigor, and increases fruit size.

As autumn arrives, so does the last of the fig crop. Yield varies based on age and variety of the tree. Young fig trees two to three years old and potted fig trees may yield about a dozen figs, with vigorous varieties yielding 20 to 40 fruits by their second year. Mature fig trees five years and older, grown in-ground, can produce 40 to 100 pounds of fruit each year.

Fig fruit is a delicious addition to the growing season's harvest. Figs are delicious right off the branch but can also be made into a myriad of sweet or savory dishes and pair excellently with sharp cheeses, nuts, honey, and spices. For information about preparation and preservation, please visit https://extension.oregonstate.edu/food/preservation/preserving-figs.

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Commerical Agriculture Field Crops

Fall Slug Control

When the weather cools and the first fall rains moisten the soil, slugs emerge in many grass and clover seed fields and begin to feed on the plants. Established crops can withstand some slug damage, but slugs can devour rows of seedlings leaving bare spots that will remain for the life of that crop. Signs of slug damage include shredded leaves and slime trails.

Slugs spend the summer in deep soil cracks, avoiding the dry soil near the surface.

Once some rain has fallen, these slugs wake up and move to the surface in search of food. Slugs need moisture to thrive, so they will hide when it is sunny, too warm, too cold, or too windy.

Still days with moderate temperatures and overcast skies will bring out the slugs. While they like moisture and may be active during a light sprinkle, heavy rain will send slugs into hiding. Slug activity is usually highest at night rather than during the day. Slug activity stops when the weather is cold, and it can take 4-5 days of warmer weather after a freeze for them to become active again.

Efforts to control slugs are most effective when slugs are active and feeding. The best time to apply bait is when the weather is going to be mild and overcast for the next several days. Some slug control products are formulated to perform best under drier conditions, while other baits are more resistant to wetter conditions. There are three active ingredients that can be used to control slugs in seed crops – metaldehyde, iron phosphate, and sodium ferric EDTA. Avoid applying the same active ingredient multiple times in a row. Slugs that get less than a lethal dose can learn to avoid products that made them sick.

Fall 2026 OSU Extension
SEED AND CEREAL CROP PRODUCTION MEETING

Bridging Seed Science, Technologies, and Extension to Improve Seed Production Systems
Juliana Espíndola – OSU Extension Seed Specialist

Optimizing Slug Management and Research Updates
Rory Mc Donnell – OSU Slug Scientist

Insect Pests in Oregon Seed Crops: True Armyworm Outbreaks and Lesser Clover Leaf Weevil Pest Status
Navneet Kaur – OSU Extension Entomologist

From Practice to Performance: Linking Soil Health Management to Yield
Daniel Manter – USDA-ARS Research Soil Scientist

Weed Management Trials in Clover and Grass Seed Crops: 2025–26 Results
Victor Ribeiro - OSU Extension Weed Specialist

Two ODA pesticide recertification credits (1 core, 1 other)

Roth's Hospitality Center
1130 Wallace Rd, West Salem
Wednesday, September 9th
8:30 a.m. – Noon

Linn County Fair and Expo
3700 Knox Butte Rd, Albany
Wednesday, September 9th
1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Forest Grove Elks Lodge
2810 Pacific Ave, Forest Grove
Thursday, September 10th
8:30 a.m. – Noon

Please register at https://beav.es/YTY
Registration help: Call Laurie Gibson at 541-248-1088
General Questions: Christy Tanner at 541-570-5642

Oregon State University Extension Service

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South Valley Field Crop Notes
September-October

General Management

- Test soil buffer pH and lime as needed. Watch for pH and nutrient stratification in fields that have not been tilled. Current lime recommendations can be found at https://beav.es/xqH
- Monitor soil test P and K levels, especially if removing straw.
- On fall planted wheat and grass seed crops, limit N and K placed with the seed to 25 lbs/ac each or less.
- Aim for timely burndown of weeds prior to planting. Efficacy of herbicides increases when plants are actively growing after some moisture (0.5-1" rain).
- Begin scouting fields for slugs, European crane fly, armyworms, cutworms, and winter grain mites once 2-3" of rain have fallen (or in irrigated fields). Armyworm chewing may appear before fall rains.
- Plan to deploy slug bait when soil is moist (>2" of rain) but before steady rains begin.

Grass

- Above-ground applications of zinc phosphide baits for vole control may be made until September 30th, or until migratory Canada and cackling geese have returned to the fields intended for treatment, whichever occurs first. Baiting down holes may continue throughout the year.
- Best window for carbon seeding grass fields is late Sept – early Oct
- In established grass seed fields without irrigation, complete pre-emergence herbicide applications by early Oct for maximum effectiveness and crop safety, coinciding with the onset of fall rains. Optimum control of sprout and grass weeds occurs when 0.5 inches of moisture is received within 10 days of the herbicide application.
- Scout for adult billbugs and leaf feeding in orchard grass and control (Oct 15-30).

Wheat

- Consider the traits you are interested in for wheat varieties.
- Soil pH below 5.4 can limit wheat growth. Check for pH stratification if planning to no-till plant.
- Winter wheat planting should be delayed until mid-Oct to fall planting.
- Although armyworms and cutworms may appear before fall rains, scouting and management decisions should be made for these and others once 2-3 inches of rain has fallen. This provides enough moisture to penetrate the soil and "wake up" slugs to signal food is ready at the soil surface.

Forestry and Natural Resources

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How to stay safe during smoke season

By Kayla Bordelon,
Regional Fire Specialist

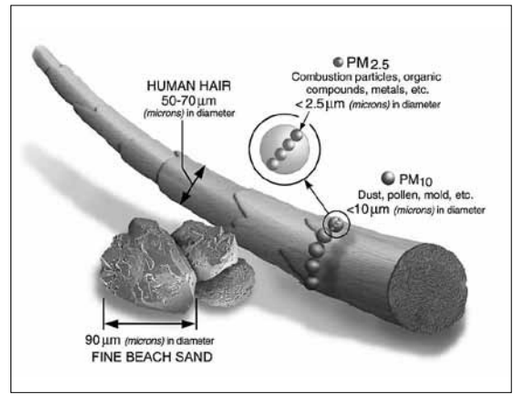
"Smoke season" is upon us, with wildfires burning across the state and region. While less dramatic than flames, wildfire smoke can cause both immediate and long-term health effects and should be taken seriously.

What is wildfire smoke, anyway? It's a mixture of gases and tiny particles from burned fuels so small that they can be inhaled into the lungs and even enter the bloodstream. Breathing smoke can cause burning or itchy eyes, headaches, fatigue, coughing, shortness of breath, and can worsen heart or lung conditions.

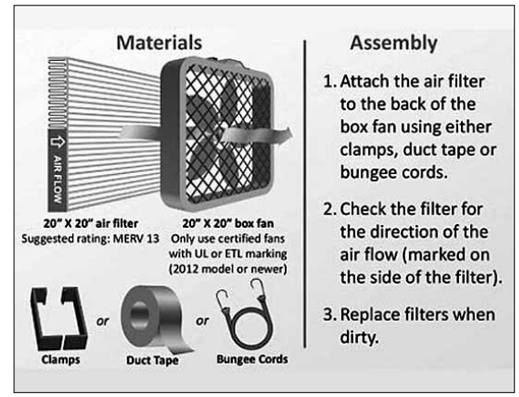
To protect yourself and loved ones, stay indoors as much as possible when air quality is unhealthy. Check current conditions anytime using AirNow.gov or the app.

To clean indoor air, run an air conditioner (with a clean filter) on recirculate or use an air purifier (see DIY instructions). Keep all windows and doors closed against smoky outside air. If you must go outdoors, wear a well-fitted N95 mask, which filters these fine smoke particles.

Want to learn more? Check out: *Protect Yourself from Wildfire Smoke* (EM9404-d)



Wildfire smoke contains tiny particles (PM2.5) that are much finer than a human hair or even a speck of dust. Their small size makes them easy to breathe deep into the lungs. Image Credit to EPA: https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/particulate-matter-pm-basics



This DIY air cleaner can effectively "scrub" indoor air for the price of a box fan and standard filter (total=$30). Visit AirNow.gov for more information. Image from AirNow.gov

Weed Profile - Himalayan Blackberry aka. Armenian Blackberry

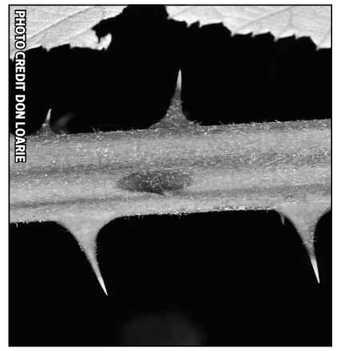
(*Rubus bifrons, formerly R. armeniacus*)

The Himalayan Blackberry is a perennial that is classified as a List B Noxious Weed. It is found on roadsides, fencerows, fields, ditch banks, riparian areas and recently disturbed sites.

Description

- Foliage: Alternate, palm-shaped, evergreen leaves with 3-5 leaflets. Short white hairs on the underside. Large, straight or curved spines with thick bases along stem. Canes can grow up to 15 feet tall.
- Flowers: Five petaled, white to light pink. Blooms May-September.
- Seed/Fruit: Oblong and glossy, black when mature. Favored by robins and other songbirds, which can spread the seeds widely.

Himalayan Blackberry fruit



Himalayan Blackberry cane

Himalayan Blackberry flowers

Himalayan Blackberry foliage

Impacts

- Aggressively competes with native plant species, disrupts riparian habitats and restoration efforts.
- Significant financial impact on right-of-way maintenance, agriculture, park, and forest maintenance.
- Creates physical barriers of dense thickets, inhibiting access for people and wildlife.
- Ripe and spent fruit is known to be a host for Spotted-wing drosophila fruit fly that is negatively impacting fruit farmers throughout the PNW.

How to control

Prevention and correct identification of the plant is key! Monitor for new plants and seedlings in disturbed areas, prevent going to fruit, maintain regrowth, remove and replant with desirable plants. Expect several years of monitoring and effort to eradicate.

Manual

- Cut stems (canes) near the ground and dig out root systems when the soil is moist to weaken the plant. Be aware, new plants can emerge from root fragments.
- Mowing or grazing goats can remove Himalayan Blackberry canes, but the root system will sprout new canes. Follow up with other management strategies.
- Mow, graze, or cut back plants in the spring or early summer to allow for regrowth to create an optimal amount of foliage for chemical applications in the

Biological

Continued on Page 15

Weed Profile - Himalayan Blackberry aka. Armenian Blackberry

Continued from Page 14

Currently no approved biological agent is available for release in Oregon.

Chemical

- Direct foliar (leaves), bare cane (basal bark), and cut stump applications.
- Spraying regrowth after mowing or grazing is most effective when it is at least 12-18" to ensure enough foliage surface area of regrowth.
- Fall applications allow for translocation of herbicide to the roots as it is sending energy reserves to the roots for dormancy, while spring spraying may translocate more to the upper foliage as the plant is coming out of dormancy.

Always read and adhere to pesticide label instructions. The label is the law. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Himalayan Blackberry Resources:

- OSU Extension – Himalayan BlackBerry: https://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/tackling-invasive-himalayan-blackberry-takes-persistence-planning
- PNW Weed Handbook: https://pnwhandbooks.org/weed/problem-weeds/blackberry-vines-wild-rubus-spp
- ODA: https://www.oregon.gov/oda/Documents/Publications/Weeds/ArmeniaBlackberryProfile.pdf
- SOLVE: https://solvepestproblems.oregonstate.edu/weeds/himalayan-blackberry
- Marion SWCD Himalayan Blackberry: https://www.marionswcd.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Managing-Himalayan-Blackberry-in-Western-Oregon-Riparian-Areas-OSU.pdf
- PNW Pest Handbook – SWD Fly: https://pnwhandbooks.org/insect/emerging-insect-pests/ongoing-eradication-programs/spotted-wing-drosophila-emerging-berry

What does ultra-processed foods actually mean?

Continued from Page 5

Nutrient	What to Look For	Why It Matters
Serving Size	Check before evaluating anything else	All other numbers are based on this amount.
Saturated Fat	5% or less of the Daily Value per serving.	Lower saturated fat supports heart health.
Fiber	3g or more per serving	Supports digestive health and helps you feel full longer.
Added Sugars	Less than 5% Daily Value per serving	Excess added sugar is linked to heart disease and weight gain.
Sodium	Less than 10% Daily Value per serving	High sodium can raise blood pressure over time.
Protein	5g or more per serving	Protein helps you feel full and is good for muscle health.
Vitamins & Minerals	Look for Vitamin D, Calcium, Iron, Potassium	Nutrients that many Americans don't get enough of.

nutrients and help busy people eat well.
- Milk with added vitamin D and whole-grain bread are packaged foods that support good health.

The key is to read the label and ingredient list, not to avoid all packages.

How to Read a Food Label

When you look at a food label, start by checking the serving size at the top and how many servings are in the package. This helps you understand what the numbers on the label mean. For example, if the serving size is 1 cup, all the nutrition facts are for 1 cup of that food.

You should also look for the %DV, which stands for percent Daily Value. This tells you how much of a nutrient is in one serving compared to what you need in a whole day. For instance, if you see "added sugars" listed at 10 percent, eating one serving gives you 10 percent of your daily limit for added sugar.

Ingredient List

The nutrition label gives a quick overview of the nutritional value of the product through numbers; the ingredient list tells you what is in the food. Ingredients are listed in order of quantity, so the first ingredient makes up the largest amount of the foods. When reading the ingredient list, keep these tips in mind:

- It is a good sign when whole grains, vegetables, or proteins appear first.
- The product is likely high in added sugar, if sugar (under any of its many names: cane syrup, maltose, dextrose, fruit juice concentrate, etc.) appears in the first two or three ingredients.
- A shorter ingredient list with recognizable items generally indicates less processing.

The Bottom Line

No single food makes your diet healthy or unhealthy. What matters is a balanced approach to eating. Focus on foods that are close to their whole, natural form when you can, and use minimally processed packaged foods, like canned vegetables, whole-grain bread, and fortified dairy, without guilt.

For more information about how to read food labels, visit foodhero.org

References upon request.

Veteran Farmer Coffee + Chat in the Garden:
Ornamental Gourds & Poppies

Friday, October 9th
10 a.m. - Noon

Linn County Demo Garden at Linn County Fair and Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Rd E, Albany, OR 97322

RSVP Here: https://beav.es/YJB

Are you a Veteran who is farming or interested in farming? Please join us as we harvest the ornamental gourds from the Veteran raised bed, then clear it out and replant with Poppies for Memorial Day!

Coffee + snacks provided

Questions or accommodations? Contact crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu or call (541) 730-3539.

Linn County 4-H Youth Development

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2026 Linn County Fair Recap

The 2026 Linn County 4-H and FFA Fair had another successful year. More than 500 4-H and FFA members participated with over 2,000 entries. The Linn County Youth Livestock Auction brought in another record breaking $1.6 million. We want to express how grateful we are for all the volunteers, staff, and businesses that made this year great! Photos were provided by OSU Linn County 4-H.

Linn County Make-a-Wish Partnership: **Making Wishes Come True**

The Linn County 4-H Program and the Linn County Youth Livestock Auction Committee partnered with the Linn County Make-A-Wish Foundation to help raise funds for children waiting for their wishes to come true.

With the help of the Foley Family, who raised the market rabbit pen, and Bountiful Blessings Farm, who generously donated the rabbits, we were able to raise enough money to grant one full wish!

A huge thank you goes to everyone who helped make this possible, especially our generous buyers: Les Schwab Tires Albany, Pacific Excavation, and K & E Excavating. Your support truly makes a difference and helps bring hope and joy to a child waiting for their wish.

Wild Rivers 4-H Camp Creates Prehistoric Memories

The 2026 Wild Rivers 4-H Camp season was one to remember! With two separate weeks of camp, one in June and another in August, more than 200 campers came together to enjoy the outdoors, make new friends, learn new skills and create lasting memories with fellow campers and camp staff.

This year's camp took campers back in time with a prehistoric and dinosaur-themed adventures. With beautiful weather throughout both weeks, campers were able to take full advantage of all that Wild Rivers 4-H Camp had to offer.

There was never a shortage of experiences at camp. Campers cast their lines and caught fish, paddled canoes around the pond, and took to the air on the adventure swing. They also enjoyed swimming in the pool, getting creative with arts and crafts, and participating in a variety of fun and engaging classes.

Some of the best parts of camp, however, were the memories made along the way — laughing with friends, trying something new, spending time outdoors and building connections with other kids and the dedicated staff who make camp possible.

While Wild Rivers 4-H Camp is a 4-H program, you do not have to be a 4-H member to attend! Camp is open to youth ages 9-13, making it a great opportunity for kids from all backgrounds to experience the fun of 4-H camp and everything it has to offer.

Older youth also have opportunities to be part of the camp experience. Youth who are 14 years old or in 8th grade are eligible to participate as Leaders in Training (LITs), while Cabin Leader positions are available to high school students. These leadership opportunities allow older youth to grow their leadership skills, mentor younger campers and help create the welcoming camp environment that makes Wild Rivers so special.

Wild Rivers Camp Archery

Art Classes

Wild Rivers Camp Gold Panning

David Imel - 4-H Shotgun Project Leader

By Jody Hill, OSU Linn County Extension 4-H

Did you know that Trap Shooting is an Olympic Sport? Well maybe the members of ARPC Youth Shotgun 4-H aren't qualifying for the Olympics tomorrow, but Dave Imel is honing their skills now.

So what is Trap Shooting? Dave describes it like this: "In most shooting sports you shoot at a static or stationary target, but with trap (shotgun), you are shooting at a clay 'bird' approximately 4 ½ inches in diameter that travels at speeds of 40+ mph."

Hitting this small, fast-moving target takes lots of practice and dedication to the sport. Dave's club practices every Saturday at the Albany Rifle and Pistol Club and one Sunday a month at the Albany Gun Club. Dave says he likes to have kids practice at a different range because the background and light change how you see the clay disc.

You might be asking how shooting a shotgun teaches 4-H values to 4-H youth. David says the kids learn teamwork and respect for the range and their fellow shooters while learning gun safety and care of their shotgun. He gives an example of how his teaching impacts his students, stating, "A youth that was competing as a Junior (age 9-11) at the State Tournament. The boy and a competitor were scoring neck to neck. When the score keeper called one of the competitor's shots a miss, this youth spoke up and said, 'No, he hit the bird.' The score keeper changed the score as a hit, which gave the competitor the Championship with the Linn County youth coming in as Reserve Champion." Talk about ethics!

Like so many 4-H volunteers, Dave kind of fell into the role. He was running the Jr. Trap program at the Albany Rifle and Pistol Club and was asked if he would be willing to change the program to 4-H. He thought it would bring in more kids, and it did.

Dave likes to tell new parents and kids, thinking about joining, this story. "A 9-yr old who wanted to start in the program came in with his dad's hunting gun that was as tall as he was. When I saw he could hold it up, we were all surprised at how well he did shooting. That year he was Grand Champion at the State match." This type of encouragement, belief in the children he teaches, and dedication to the sport, is what makes Dave such a great leader.

When asked what keeps him going, he says, "the kids. When you see the look on their face when they break their first bird or when they break their first 25 (perfect round), seeing the kids that have aged out and have continued to shoot at a higher level – it's all about the kids." He gives this advice to prospective volunteers, "If you enjoy being around kids and want to help guide them in a positive direction, then please volunteer."

Benton County 4-H Youth Development

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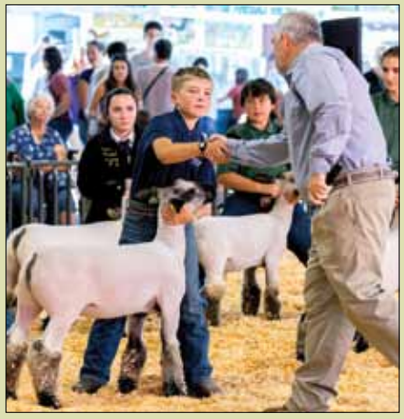
2026 Benton County 4-H Shows

The "Stars, Stripes and Summer Nights" Benton County Fair was four days jam packed full of fun! 4-H members showcased the projects that they worked so hard on throughout the year. Members were able to show their beef, sheep, swine, goat, rabbit, poultry, pigeon, cavy, dog, and family consumer science, art, and science projects to judges. Thanks to all the members, leaders, and 4-H families for making 2026 a terrific Fair. Photo credits to OSU Benton County Extension 4-H.



Benton County 4-H Fair Awards Highlights

Thanks to all of our Benton County 4-H Superintendents, Betty Collins, Heidi Gratsinger, Sherrie Deaton, Rita Adams, Anna Colvin, Tatiana Nelson, Mark Baumgartner, Kerri Dowless, Tracy May, Matt Kennedy, Ryan Cheeke, Sandi Herring, Mike Schmidt, Nicki Hurley, Tina Chambers, Delayna Canon, Alexis Schiedler, and Linda Eng.

TOP ART
- Junior – Brenna Hiemstra
- Intermediate – Emma Zoellner
- Senior – Alivia Kowalski

TOP PHOTOGRAPHY
- Junior – Mae Bennett
- Intermediate – Kennedi Pierce
- Senior – Eliana Krieger

TOP FOODS
- Junior – Scarlett Gibson
- Intermediate – Emma Zoellner
- Senior – Alyssa Weeber

TOP TABLESETTING
- Junior – Margaret Colvin
- Intermediate – AddieMay Sullivan
- Senior – Alyssa Weeber

TOP FOOD PRESERVATION
- Junior – Anneliese Pindell
- Intermediate – Indigo Roe
- Senior – Elias Schweitzer

TOP CLOTHING
- Level 1-2 – Olive Goracke
- Level 3 – AddieMay Sullivan
- Level 4 – Alyssa Weeber

TOP QUILTING
- Junior – Mae Bennett
- Intermediate – AddieMay Sullivan
- Senior – Ellie Dye

TOP HORTICULTURE
- Junior – Olive Goracke
- Intermediate – Jax Pensillin
- Senior – Elias Schweitzer

TOP STEM
- Junior – Arnaud Boudet

TOP EDUCATIONAL DISPLAY
- Junior – Evelyn Hlebechuk
- Senior – Ellie Dye

TOP FEMALE ANIMALS
- Outstanding Heifer – Emma Stoneberg
- Outstanding Ewe – Emmie Dapp
- Outstanding Female Hog – Briahna Ledbetter
- Champion Pygmy Goat Doe – Hailey McKinley
- Champion Meat Goat Doe – Ethan Stoneberg
- Champion Dairy Goat Doe – GracieAnn Sullivan
- Champion Rabbit Doe – Ellie Dye
- Outstanding Female Bird – Selah Voltz

RABBIT HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- 1st Year Exhibitor Award – Junior – Thomas Moore
- Junior – Thomas Moore
- Intermediate – Indigo Roe
- Senior – Ellie Dye

CAVY HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Intermediate – Ayla Adkins
- Senior – Ellie Dye

POULTRY HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior –Claire Washburn
- Intermediate – Ayla Adkins
- Senior – Galena Kayes

PIGEON HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior - Lumen Roe
- Intermediate – Indigo Roe
- Senior – Pyper Baisted

DOG HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior – Zinnia Surette
- Intermediate – Callie Bennett
- Senior – Evelyn Higgins

PYGMY GOAT HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior – Aria Vance
- Intermediate – Alley Remington
- 2nd place Intermediate – Wyatt McKinley
- Senior – Hailey McKinley
- 2nd place Senior – Bryce Hruska

MEAT GOAT HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior – McKenna Richardson
- 2nd place Junior – Aria Vance
- 3rd place Junior – Emil Sullivan
- Intermediate – Ethan Stoneberg
- 2nd place Intermediate – Addie Dapp
- 3rd place Intermediate – Emmie Dapp
- Senior – Cameron Kvidt

DAIRY GOAT HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior – Aria Vance
- 2nd place Junior – Emil Sullivan
- 3rd place Junior – Rosalie Mason
- Intermediate – AddieMay Sullivan
- 2nd place Intermediate – Kaylee Wilson
- 3rd place Intermediate – Autumn Wilson
- Senior – GracieAnne Sullivan
- 2nd place Senior – Kenna Bradley

BEEF HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior – Lydia Rogers
- 2nd place Junior – Darcy Morrison
- 3rd place Junior – Liam Dowless
- Intermediate – Emma Stoneberg
- 2nd place Intermediate – Ethan Stoneberg
- 3rd place Intermediate – Elizabeth Rogers
- Senior – Andrew Stoneberg
- 2nd place Senior – Kenna Bradley
- 3rd place Senior – Matthew Noble

SHEEP HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior – Jace Raschein
- 2nd place Junior – Charlotte Sinkbeil
- 3rd place Junior – Olive Goracke
- Intermediate – Emmie Dapp
- 2nd place Intermediate – Sienna Smith
- 3rd place Intermediate – Jarod Raschein
- Senior – Hailey McKinley
- 2nd place Senior – Miley Richardson
- 3rd place Senior – GracieAnne Sullivan

SWINE HIGH SCORING EXHIBITORS
- Junior – Maycee Richter
- 2nd place Junior – Colton Wright
- 3rd place Junior – Charlie Nelson
- Intermediate – Sienna Smith
- 2nd place Intermediate – Jordyn Smallwood
- 3rd place Intermediate – Paisley Rowley
- Senior – Briahna Ledbetter

Continued on Page 20

2026 Lee Allen Memorial Youth Market Auction

The Lee Allen Memorial Youth Market Auction was held on Saturday August 1.

Auction buyers spent over $1.2 million to support 246 participating 4-H members! These buyers purchased prize winning livestock raised by Benton County 4-H members. The buyers are supporting youth who are learning to produce high quality food for their tables. Being responsible, engaging in financial obligations, and learning how to manage their own business operations only scratch the surface of the educational benefits Benton County 4-H members receive from participating in the program. In addition to regular auction animals, the donation animal, a lamb raised this year by the Blue Ribbonaires 4-H Club, earned $32,000 that goes directly towards the Moos Scholarship fund for graduating 4-H seniors.

Volunteer Today. Inspire for a Lifetime.

4-H volunteers are the key to a successful 4-H program and create positive life-changing experiences for youth. 4-H offers endless opportunities to volunteer. Most volunteers commit to on-going service as leaders, while others may assist with a single event or activity. Oregon has more than 3,300 adult and teen volunteers who offer their time and talents to our program. Benton County 4-H is home to 190 of those volunteers.

We are actively searching for adults who want to share their time and talents with our members! New volunteers receive a comprehensive orientation and training specific to their role, no knowledge or experience is required. Discover how you can become involved and make a difference for the youth in your community.

There will be several upcoming volunteer trainings this fall. The exact dates will be announced soon. If you are interested in learning more about how to get involved, please visit our website or contact our Benton Extension office.

4-H Open House - Discover yourself in 4-H

The Benton County 4-H Open House will take place on Thursday, October 8, 2026, at the Benton County Fairgrounds. 4-H is America's largest youth development organization serving over 6.5 million youth annually. Benton County 4-H serves over 3,000 youth annually through community clubs, school programs and camps. 4-H empowers youth with hands-on learning experiences to help them grow and thrive. By creating a safe and welcoming environment, youth develop the skills needed to make a positive impact on the world around them.

Members are guided by caring adult volunteer mentors to lead hands-on projects in areas such as science, health, agriculture and citizenship. The 4-H year begins October 1st! Youth who are 9-19 years of age as of September 1, 2026 are eligible to join 4-H. We also offer a 4-H Cloverbud program for children 5-8 years old as of September 1, 2026. Cloverbud members explore a variety of topics, while developing social skills in a non-competitive environment.

Join us Thursday, October 8, 6:30 p.m., at the Benton County Fairgrounds Solar Building for our annual 4-H Open House to learn about the Benton County 4-H Program, meet our members & volunteers, and explore the majority of projects available. If you cannot attend, but would like more information, please visit our website or contact our Benton Extension office.

Horse Fair

PHOTO CREDIT TO OSU BENTON COUNTY 4-H

The Benton County 4-H Horse Fair took place on July 16-19. 4-H horse project members demonstrated their skills and knowledge of riding and showing their horses (and mule).

Papa's Pizza 4-H Fundraiser

An easy way to help raise funds for your Benton County 4-H Program is to go and dine in or takeout food from Papa's Pizza in Corvallis on Wednesday, October 14, 2026 All you have to do is provide the cashier with the Benton County 4-H Papa's Pizza fundraiser flyer, and Papa's will donate 50 percent of the proceeds! Please visit our website or contact our Benton Extension office to receive a flyer. Thanks in advance for your support!

PAPA'S PIZZA PARLOR
A Slice of Family Fun!

Upcoming Webinars

Continued from Page 9

- 9/23/2026 from 5:45-8 p.m. - Living With Your Domestic Well & Septic System
- 10/07/2026 from Noon to 1 p.m. - Living With Your Septic System

Home Water Treatment Options for Domestic Wells

Do you have water treatment or thinking about adding some - check out what types of treatment might match your wells quality issues or meets your water quality goals. No two wells are the same!

- 9/11/2026 from Noon to 1 p.m. - Home Water Treatment Options for Domestic Wells
- 10/14/2026 from Noon to 1 p.m. - Home Water Treatment Options for Domestic Wells

Registration for the webinar is required to receive the zoom link. Webinar registration closes 24 hours before the class.

For additional questions you can email Well.Water@oregonstate.edu or leave a message at 541-730-3531

Benton County 4-H Fair Awards Highlights

Continued from Page 19

- 2nd place Senior – Ande Fitts
- 3rd place Senior – Kaitlyn Hughes

MARKETING CONTEST

- Junior Champion – Olive Goracke
- Junior Reserve Champion – Lumen Roe
- Intermediate Champion – AddieMay Sullivan
- Intermediate Reserve Champion – Olivia Onderko
- Senior Champion – GracieAnne Sullivan
- Senior Reserve Champion – Matthew Noble

LIVESTOCK JUDGING

- Junior Champion – Jace Raschein
- Junior Reserve Champion – Maycee Ritcher
- Junior 3rd Place- Riley Banks
- Junior 3rd place – Brystol Bailey
- Intermediate Champion – Sienna Smith
- Intermediate Reserve Champion – Emma Stoneberg
- Intermediate 3rd place – Olivia Onderko
- Senior Champion – Andrew Stoneberg
- Senior Reserve Champion – Matthew Noble
- Senior 3rd place – Briahna Ledbetter

CHUG-A-LUG

- 1st place – The Lactose Legends
- 2nd place – The No Names Team
- 3rd place – Queen Posse

AUCTION COVER CONTEST

- 1st place – Alivia Kowalski
- 2nd place – Helen Dearman
- 3rd place – Hannah Hammonds
- Special Merit Roen Oehler, Emmylou Cook, Aria Vance

SMALL ANIMAL MASTER SHOWMANSHIP

- Junior Champion – Zinnia Surette
- Junior Reserve Champion – August Knight
- Intermediate Champion – Indigo Roe
- Intermediate Reserve Champion – Ayla Adkins
- Senior Champion – Ellie Dye
- Senior Reserve Champion – Pyper Baisted

LARGE ANIMAL MASTER SHOWMANSHIP

- Junior Champion – Lydia Rogers
- Junior Reserve Champion – McKenna Richardson
- Intermediate Champion – Ethan Stoneberg
- Intermediate Reserve Champion – Emma Stoneberg
- Senior Champion – Briahna Ledbetter
- Senior Reserve Champion – Andrew Stoneberg

HERDSMANSHIP

- High Score Beef – Ram Ewe Downs
- High Score Swine – Hoskins Livestock
- High Score Sheep – Blodgett Tailtwisters
- High Score Goat – Hoskins Livestock
- High Score Rabbit/Cavy – Critters Of The Valley
- High Score Poultry/Pigeon – Happy Hoppers
- Overall Large Animal – Hoskins Livestock
- Overall Small Animal – Critters Of The Valley

Promoting Powerful Pollinators - The Amazing Mason Bee

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source for their eggs to feed on as they pupate and eventually become the next generation of power pollinators. So how can you play a part in this important process?

A number of years ago, the Linn County Master Gardeners made a commitment to learning about and educating others about pollinators and what we can do to help them thrive. We also learned that the lifecycle of Mason bees can be supported by careful human action. The female Mason bee has a 6-8-week active lifespan from March/April to early June. They are gentle; they rarely sting. Their short, active lifespan is exactly when fruit trees are in bloom and in need of pollinating even before some other bees are active. We can easily provide them with clean, pest and disease-free nesting tubes and trays that are the perfect diameter and length. We can protect their nesting materials during the summer while the eggs are maturing and are most susceptible to predators. During the warm summer months, the eggs pupate, and a cocoon is spun which encases the developing and hibernating mason bee. We can "harvest" the cocoons in the fall and can clean and store them in a refrigerator until they are ready to emerge in the spring and begin the lifegiving process again. We are happy to teach you everything you need to know to be successful.

Please visit our website, www.LinnMasterGardeners.com, for more information about how to host, care for and support mason bees and other pollinators.

You can also attend a Mason Bee Cocoon Harvesting class in October or November for a hands-on experience and to learn more about how you can help this special pollinator survive and thrive.

What you will learn:

- the lifecycle of the amazing Mason Bee and your role in this cycle
- when and how to store cocoons from June to October
- how to harvest and clean cocoons to rid them of disease and pests
- ways to store cocoons after cleaning until it's time for spring release
- when and how to set cocoons out in the spring so the bees can emerge and get busy pollinating!

Check our website for class dates: www.LinnMasterGardeners.com