

Extension Program Work Area

Agriculture: Small Farms

PWA1: Environmental Quality

Rationale

Over 60% of all farms in Oregon are less than 50 acres in size and constitute an important economic contribution to the economy. Many farms of this scale are pioneering new crops, exploring niche markets and using direct marketing methods. Direct market channels are currently expanding and offering profitable venues for small farmers. In addition, there are many thousands of non-commercial small acreage landowners who are not inventoried in the census of agriculture who need assistance in managing the natural resources on their property, especially soil and water quality. Challenges to small farmers include pest management, nutrient management, preserving soil and water quality, sustaining and expanding marketing opportunities, limited processing facilities, public policy and regulation, sustaining rural communities and integrating with urban communities.

Stake Holder Input

Small farms faculty are in continuous contact with clientele through one-on-one exchanges as well as through formal grower, marketing, and commodity advisory groups, watershed councils, soil conservation districts, non-government organizations, and county and city decision-makers. Guidance for the development of this plan of work was derived from these sources plus past longitudinal surveys of small farmers, and formal needs assessments of farmers, small acreage landowners, and farmers' market managers.

How Stake Holder Input was used to create this PWA

Long Term Outcome

Improved environmental quality from increased use of IPM and other biologically based agriculture production systems by small farmers, conservation of biodiversity, and reduced nutrient and soil runoff from small acreage livestock operations.

Indicators of Successful Achievement of this Outcome

- Number of farmers using information, educational materials, and participating in delivery systems to manage nutrient and soil runoff, access direct markets, utilize IPM and biological production practices, and select new crops.
- Number of farms reducing nutrient and soil runoff from small acreage livestock operations through adoption of environmentally sound management practices.

PWA2: Production and Processing Systems

Rationale

Over 60% of all farms in Oregon are less than 50 acres in size and constitute an important economic contribution to the economy. Many farms of this scale are pioneering new crops, exploring niche markets and using direct marketing methods. Direct market channels are currently expanding and offering profitable venues for small

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How Stake Holder Input was used to create this PWA

Extension Agriculture faculty use stakeholder input to plan and implement programming based on the needs expressed by local stakeholders. At the same time, Extension Agriculture faculty inform stakeholders about pressing needs within agriculture that may not be a priority for the local community. This interaction between stakeholders and Agriculture professionals ensures that programming is relevant to the local community while reflecting the needs and concerns of producers throughout the state.

Long Term Outcome

Profitable and diverse scale appropriate small farm production and processing systems for fruits, vegetables, livestock, poultry, and other farm products.

Indicators of Successful Achievement of this Outcome

- Number of scale appropriate processing facilities.
- Changes in local and state public policy that facilitate expansion of small farm marketing opportunities.

PWA3: Local Food Economies

Rationale

Over 60% of all farms in Oregon are less than 50 acres in size and constitute an important economic contribution to the economy. Many farms of this scale are pioneering new crops, exploring niche markets and using direct marketing methods. Direct market channels are currently expanding and offering profitable venues for small farmers. In addition, there are many thousands of non-commercial small acreage landowners that are not inventoried in the census of agriculture that need assistance with managing the natural resources on their property, especially soil and water quality. Challenges to small farmers include pest management, nutrient management, preserving soil and water quality, sustaining and expanding marketing opportunities, limited processing facilities, public policy and regulation, sustaining rural communities and integrating with urban communities.

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Long Term Outcome

Expanding local food economies based on direct marketing methods including farmers' markets, farm to business and farm to institution sales.

Indicators of Successful Achievement of this Outcome

- Number of new farms operating successfully and established farms that continue to operate successfully.
- Number of farmers' markets operating successfully or failing, and the level of management turnover.
- Number of scale appropriate processing facilities.
- Changes in local and state public policy that facilitate expansion of small farm marketing opportunities.

PWA4: Community Life and Social Change

Rationale

Over 60% of all farms in Oregon are less than 50 acres in size and constitute an important economic contribution to the economy. Many farms of this scale are pioneering new crops, exploring niche markets and using direct marketing methods. Direct market channels are currently expanding and offering profitable venues for small farmers. In addition, there are many thousands of non-commercial small acreage landowners that are not inventoried in the census of agriculture that need assistance with managing the natural resources on their property, especially soil and water quality. Challenges to small farmers include pest management, nutrient management, preserving soil and water quality, sustaining and expanding marketing opportunities, limited processing facilities, public policy and regulation, sustaining rural communities and integrating with urban communities.

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Long Term Outcome

Enhanced community life based on social networking associated with local food systems; and social change from mitigating aspects of the urban/rural divide through linkages of rural small farmers and urban consumers and food-related businesses.

Indicators of Successful Achievement of this Outcome

- Number of new farms operating successfully and established farms that continue to operate successfully.
- Number of farmers' markets operating successfully or failing, and the level of management turnover.

PWA5: Information Systems

Rationale

Over 60% of all farms in Oregon are less than 50 acres in size and constitute an important economic contribution to the economy. Many farms of this scale are pioneering new crops, exploring niche markets and using direct marketing methods. Direct market channels are currently expanding and offering profitable venues for small farmers. In addition, there are many thousands of non-commercial small acreage landowners that are not inventoried in the census of agriculture that need assistance with managing the natural resources on their property, especially soil and water quality. Challenges to small farmers include pest management, nutrient management, preserving soil and water quality, sustaining and expanding marketing opportunities, limited processing facilities, public policy and regulation, sustaining rural communities and integrating with urban communities.

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Long Term Outcome

Increased use of electronic information systems that provide immediate technical assistance, decision making support, and provide general information on issues and policy.

Indicators of Successful Achievement of this Outcome

- Number of farmers using information, educational materials, and participating in delivery systems to manage nutrient and soil runoff, access direct markets, utilize IPM and biological production practices, and select new crops.

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