CASE STUDY

How Oregon State University Programming Supports the Development of Agritourism Activities (Including Farm-Direct Sales) in Oregon

INTRODUCTION
Oregon State University (OSU) faculty members have supported the success of agriculture producers and their businesses for more than 100 years. Through research, education and community engagement, OSU faculty have helped agriculture producers and value-added operators respond to threats and opportunities in a manner that has brought vitality and sustainability to the state's multi-billion dollar agriculture industry.

A segment of OSU faculty members has been supporting the growth of an emerging sector of agriculture in Oregon—known as agritourism—for many years. Agritourism includes farm-direct sales and four other categories of agritourism activities.¹

This case study examines how OSU Extension programming in the area of farm-direct sales and other agritourism may support the successful development of the industry.

The study does not include OSU's extensive line up of non-credit technical training and credit classes that build general knowledge of agricultural growing practices.

METHODOLOGY
The search in the university's reporting system, Digital Measures, was for data created 2009 to 2019, and included Extension (any program) and College of Agriculture affiliated appointees. The farm-direct sales and other agritourism search structured accordingly:

- TRAININGS AND MEETINGS, including tours and efforts by agritourism, agriculture, forestry, and family and community health faculty.
- NEWSLETTERS are an important tool used by Extension faculty for sharing industry updates, trainings, pertinent articles, and other content.
- EXTENSION PUBLICATIONS AND TECHNICAL REPORTS help distribute topic-specific knowledge to the agriculture operations and other faculty members.
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT is used to develop external partnerships with agritourism operations and tourism entities.
- FACULTY RESOURCES AND GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION shows how the programming distributed across Oregon.

In additional reporting, authors added relevant items to supplement what did not sort out in the searches.

¹ Agritourism: Toward a Conceptual Framework for Industry Analysis
FINDINGS

TRAININGS AND MEETINGS
Approximately 20 presentations, trainings, or meetings held each year on all of the topics.

Trainings and meetings, including tours and efforts by agritourism, agriculture, forestry, and family and community health faculty generally fell under the topics of:

Farm-Direct Sales and Other Agritourism—Value, Conceptual Framework, Scope of Industry
- Agritourism, a Value Added to Farms
- Agritourism and Its Role in Community Development
- Agritourism – Its Value, How to Engage
- Small Town, Big Ideas: The Role of Eco Tourism, Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Economic Development in Coastal and Rural Communities
- Development of a Conceptual Framework for Agritourism in the U.S.
- Rural Tourism Collaboration and Training
- Assessment of Registered Oregon Coast Outfitters and Guides
- Coastal Oregon Visitor Industry (Tourism) Workforce Needs Assessment 2018

Farm-Direct Sales and Other Agritourism—How to Diversify and Add to Business Mix, Issues and Solutions, Regulations, Tips for Success, Recreation and Hospitality, Safety, Beginning Operators
- Agritourism 101
- Agritourism Summit for Clackamas, Marion and Polk Counties
- Agri-Eco tourism Conference
- OSU Small Farms Conference, agritourism-related sessions
- Getting your Farm Visitor Ready
- Terrebonne Agritourism Progressive Farm Tour
- OSU Extension Tree School (Clackamas County and other statewide locations)
- Forest tours as public education and recreation
- Private forest tours as technical demonstrations teaching best practices
- How to Create and Give Great Farm Tours
- Farm and Culinary Trails – how to develop and manage
- Successful Agritourism – Tips from Here and Elsewhere.
- Safety on your Agritourism Farm

Farm-Direct Sales and Other Agritourism—Food Systems
- Food systems – reports and presentations at the county and national level
- Food systems – needs assessments, food deserts, underserved regions
- Economic impacts of local food
- How to process food products on your farm for retail sales
- Safe food preservation practices – Master Food Preserver

Farm-Direct Sales and Other Agritourism—Themed Conferences Attended/Presented at
- Agritourism World Congress
- Farmers Markets and Location Choice for Value Added Processing -2013 Annual Meeting
- National Extension Tourism Conference
- Oregon Governor’s Conference on Tourism
- South Coast Rural Tourism Development Workshop
- North American Farm Direct Marketing Association
EXTENSION PUBLICATIONS AND TECHNICAL REPORTS

Publications and reports help distribute topic-specific knowledge to the agriculture operations and other faculty members. The data for publications were scrubbed of clearly academic submissions, and this analysis emphasizes outreach and engagement publications. Topics include community food assessments, agritourism as an on-farm enterprise and all the details and regulatory requirements that go with it. Farmers markets, their regulations, sustainable management, and role as a food resource for food-constrained shoppers are well represented. Foods systems have been the topic of many technical reports, white papers, etc. Also represented are meat processing for local sales by small holders – how to and regulatory. Faculty developed and published more than 75 extension publications, newsletter and newspaper items, blogs, social media posts, etc. Below are categories and names of representative outreach publications.

Farm-Direct Sales and Other Agritourism—Value, Conceptual Framework, Scope and Characteristics of Industry

- Developing A Conceptual Framework for Agritourism in the US (professional journal article, workshops, poster sessions).
- 12% of Oregon’s Farmers Markets are in areas with Low Income and Low Access to Supermarkets
- 2018 Evaluation of Pricing and Online Presence of Oregon Coast Tour Operators
- Agritourism Turned into Agri-education: One farmer’s calling to teach kids about local food
- Inventory of Agritourism Farms and Value-Added Operations in Marion County
- How to Create an Inventory of Agritourism Operations in an Area, County or Multi-County Region.
- Needs Assessment of Agritourism Operations in Marion County
- Because They Joined the Grange: Architectural History of Benton County’s Grange Halls
- Documenting the Success of Oregon Farm-Direct Sales
- “Can Agritourism Save the Farm?” - Oregon Business interview about agritourism by Katy Sword
- Assessment of the success of Agritourism operators who have received the Value Added Producer Grant in Oregon and Washington between 2016 and 2018.
- “Agritourism Abounds: The Mid-Valley provides a bounty of local homesteads to visit.” Statesman Journal interview by Abby Luschei 10-7-18
- Farm and Culinary Trails (will publish quarter 4, 2019)
- On-farm Agritourism Activities in Marion County, Oregon 2017 to 2018

Farm-Direct Sales and Other Agritourism—How to Diversify and Add to Business Mix, Issues and Solutions, Regulations, Tips for Success, Recreation and Hospitality, Safety, Beginning Operators

- Agritourism (a 2-minute video illustrating agritourism)
- Ask an Expert – online question-and-answer service. Thousands of questions submitted and answered each year on a variety of topics, including farm-direct marketing and agritourism.
- Filling in the Gaps: Eight Things to Recognize about Farm-Direct Marketing
- Getting to Yes for Agritourism in Oregon
- Keeping it Legal: Regulations and Licenses for Growing and Selling Food in Oregon
• Questions Planners may anticipate regarding the Agritourism Industry’s Farm-Direct Sales and other Farm-Based Activities

• Agritourism Resources Available to Support Oregon Farmers and Ranchers

• Meat and Poultry Processing Regulations in Oregon: A Short Guide

• Recognizing the Strengths and Limitations of Farmers Market Ownership Structure Alternatives

• Grant research projects for USDA AgMRC “Best Practices in Agritourism” (ending Sept. 2019) and for USDA NIFA AFRI CARE “Critical Success Factors for Small and Medium-sized farms with Direct Sales and Agritourism” (ending September 2020).

• OSU Extension’s agritourism website [https://extension.oregonstate.edu/community-vitality/tourism](https://extension.oregonstate.edu/community-vitality/tourism)

Farm-Direct Sales and other Agritourism—Marketing and Promotion of Farm Products and Experiences, and Food Systems

• Community Food System Indicators: January 2018 Update

• eOrganic: Marketing and Food Systems segment

• Farm Direct, Value Added Products

• Farm Direct, Value Added. A Resource Guide to Making and Selling Food in Oregon

• Selling Farm Produce by Count, Volume or Weight

• Farm Direct at Five: An Early Assessment of Oregon’s Farm-Focused Cottage Food Law

• Agritourism in Oregon’s Coastal Counties: Land Use Policy and Permitting Required

• Farm-direct Marketing: An Overview and Introduction

• Farm-direct Marketing: Costs and Enterprise Selection

• Farm-direct Marketing: Merchandising and Pricing Strategies

• Oregon’s Home Baking Bill: Residential kitchen exemption for baked goods and confectionary items

• Oregon’s Farm Direct Marketing Law: Producer-Processed Value-Added Products

• Public health implications of farm to fork meat safety in Canada

• Savor the Gorge

• Sell It: Markets and Marketing

• Tracing the Decline of a Farmers’ Market

• Meat and Poultry Buying at Farmers’ Markets: A Survey of Shoppers at Four Markets in Oregon
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement develops external partnerships with agritourism operations, agriculture and food systems nonprofits, tourism entities, economic development entities and the public

- Development of Digital and Printed Maps of the Agritourism Community in Marion County (Marion Farm Loop).
- Development of Digital and Printed Maps of the Agritourism Community in Clackamas County (Canby Farm Loop, Farmlandia Farm Loop, Molalla Country Farm Loop).
- Agritourism Education Day for (Legislators and other) Community Leaders
- Agritourism Operator Networking Tour with Oregon Farm Loop – Mid and Upper Willamette Valley
- Farm and Culinary Trails: support for the engagement of agritourism communities and collaborations—Canby Farm Loop, Marion Farm Loop, Molalla Country Farm Loop. Farmlandia Farm Loop.
- Creating Sustainable Agriculture Farmer-to-Farmer Networks through Professional Trainings and an Agricultural Educator Toolkit in the state of Oregon.
- Economic Impact of Local Food Producers in Central Oregon
- Support for Farmers Markets, including but not limited to: Mt Hood Farmers Market, Molalla Farmers’ Market, Oregon City Farmers Market, Milwaukie Farmers Market, Portland Farmers Market, Damascus Farmers Market and Salem Farmers Markets including help forming new Farmers Markets.
- Farm Stand Education and Consulting
- GORP Guide Program (the training and support of 4-H youth outdoor recreation guides)
- Growing Farms: Successful Whole Farm Management online curriculum.
- Oregon Agritourism Working Group. Develop initial goal and strategy recommendations for agritourism
- Oregon Agritourism Partnership – Support collaboration of private producers who operate agritourism enterprises.
- Agritourism Limited Liability Signs – provide a way for agritourism operators to access official limited liability signs.
- OSU Agritourism efforts bolster farms and ranches - OSU: Oregon’s Land Grant University-Bridges to Prosperity.
- Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Committee for the South Coast Regional Tourism Development Project
- Small Farm School
- South Coast Regional Tourism Development Steering Committee
- Supporting Development of Oregon’s Agritourism Industry (2012-present)
- Umpqua Culinary & Agritourism Studio
- Understanding Needs of Farm Direct Marketing and Other Agritourism producers and processors guides program development – Research
- Wild Rivers Coast Rural Tourism Studio
NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters and blogs are an important Extension tool for sharing industry updates, trainings, pertinent articles, and other content. Farm-Direct Marketing and other Agritourism articles appear in these newsletters. Below are the named newsletters included in the database. Note that all county Extension programs have a newsletter, but not all counties came up in the original data sort.

- Benton County Express
- Clackamas Woodland Notes
- Confluence (Polk County)
- Coos-Curry County Extension Newsletters
- Dairy bearing blog
- Down on the Farm (North Willamette Research and Extension Center - Clackamas County)
- Extension Master Gardener Newsletter (most counties)
- Forest-Tree Leader
- Growing (Benton and Linn County)
- Livestock and Rangeland: A Malheur County Extension Newsletter
- Mid-Willamette Valley Small Farms Program Newsletter
- Oregon Small Farm News
- Oregon Wine Research Institute (OWRI) Vine to Wine Newsletter
- Oregon Wine Research Institute Viticulture & Enology Technical Newsletter
- OSU Extension Cereal Newsletter
- OSU Extension Marion E-News
- OSU Extension Service and Agriculture Research News
- OSU to YOU
- OSU Vineyard Notes
- OSU Wine and Grape Research and Extension Newsletter
- Extension Newsletter
- Pivotal Moments
- Quarterly Bark
- Regional Livestock and Forages Newsletters
- South Coast Field and Forest
- South Coast Horticulture News
- Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems
- Sustaining the Pacific Northwest
- The Woodlander
- Woodland Compass
- Woodland Notes
- Woodland Roots

FACULTY RESOURCES AND GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

Figure 1 shows how the programming is distributed across Oregon. It includes faculty who conduct research, education and community engagement programming on this topic.

- Alisha Atha, Office Manager, Polk Co.*
- Amy Garrett, Assistant Professor (Practice) Small Farms Program, Benton Co.
- Audrey Comerford, Agritourism Education Assistant II, Marion Co.*
- Dana Martin, Regional Director (retired), Deschutes Co.
- Frank Burris, Associate Professor, Extension Watershed Health, Coos Co.
- Garry Stephenson, Extension Small Farms Specialist and Coordinator - statewide
- Jeanne Brandt, Family and Community Health Programs, Benton Co.
- Kelly Streit, Family and Community Health Programs, Clackamas Co.
- Lauren Gwin, Extension Community Food Systems Specialist, Associate Director Small Farms & Community Food Systems - statewide
- Lauren Kraemer, Family and Community Health, Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman, Wasco, and Wheeler Counties.
- Larry Lev, Small Farms Program - statewide
- Mallory Rahe, Extension Community Economist and Instructor - statewide
- Mary Corp, Director, Columbia Basin Agriculture Research Center (retired)
The original data sort of the reporting system data showed that 19 of the state’s 36 counties had some outreach engagement on the main topics from 2009-2019. Figure 1 shows the distribution of outreach by Extension region, and suggests outreach was weighted toward the more heavily populated regions of west and south central.

Figure 1. Distribution of Agritourism Outreach by Extension Region. Linda Brewer 2019. Oregon State University.
CONCLUSION

This study, spanning 10 years of programming, has provided important insight into how OSU Extension supports the development of farm-direct sales and other agritourism operations in Oregon.

The original sort of data showed faculty in 19 of the 36 Oregon counties provided agritouristic outreach through programming in research, education, and community engagement. Potentially, the Ask an Expert™ online question-and-answer service may have reached agritourism operators in each county. Subsequent to the data sort, four names and two counties were added.

Oregon farm-direct sales and other agritourism operators receive direct education through one-on-one conversations with faculty; Ask an Expert™ online question-and-answer service; publications made available in print, digital and video; e-newsletters and blogs; tours and field days; and workshops and conferences.

The search results for this study showed that, in addition to one-on-one consultations with faculty, farm-direct sales and other agritourism operators had the opportunity to engage in:

Farm-Direct Sales and Other Agritourism Trainings and Meetings, including tours and efforts by agritourism, agriculture, forestry, and family, and community health faculty.

- Eight trainings and meetings with the topic: value, conceptual framework, scope of industry.
- 13 trainings and meetings with the topic: how to diversify and add to business mix, issues and solutions, regulations, tips for success, recreation and hospitality, safety, beginning operators.
- Six trainings and meetings with the topic: marketing, promotion, evaluation.
- Five or more trainings and meetings with topic: food systems.
- In addition, faculty attended or gave presentations on the above topics at six statewide, national or international conferences.
- Operators and community partners can access Extension’s agritourism information by connecting to their local OSU Extension office and Agricultural Research and Extension Center and signing up for the countywide as well as specific subject matter e-newsletters and blogs. Check the websites for events. Get acquainted with the agriculture or family and community health faculty who can provide information and resources in agritourism. In addition, the Ask an Expert program provides online answers to questions.
- There is statewide support for agritourism at OSU Extension, and web content for the field is emerging in the new website format.
- Melissa Fery and Audrey Comerford are serving as the statewide contacts for agritourism, and Miles Phillips serves as the statewide contact for sustainable tourism.
- OSU Extension Service assesses the needs of the industry segment and designs a training program and
community engagement to meet those needs. Operators may make requests for resources that would help them be more successful.

**Extension Publications and Technical Reports**, which help distribute topic-specific knowledge to the agriculture operators. Faculty developed and published more than 75 Extension publications, newsletter and newspaper items, blogs, social media posts, etc. Most of these publications are still viable and in use.

**Community Engagement Programs**, which develop external partnerships with agritourism provider organizations; agriculture, economic development and tourism entities. Faculty provided leadership, facilitation, connections and resources to 22 community engagement relationships.

**Newsletters** are an important tool for Extension for sharing industry updates, trainings, pertinent articles, and other content. Faculty produced a minimum of 30 topical newsletters distributed monthly or quarterly.

Building awareness of OSU Extension Service as a resource for prospective and existing farm-direct sales and other agritourism operators would deepen the impact that Oregon State University has on farm profitability and rural community vitality. Continue to build better ways to connect between agritourism operators (producers and value-added operators) and Extension resources.

Moving forward, OSU Extension should analyze and publish the results of the USDA NASS reports that show value of sales in agritourism. In addition, produce a report of the impact of OSU Extension’s agritourism training and other resources on changes in business practices.

In fall 2019 and early winter 2020, agritourism operators should be encouraged to participate in the national survey: “Critical Success Factors for Small and Medium-Sized Farms with Direct Sales and Agritourism.” The results of this survey will help us understand the scope and impact of the agritourism industry, including number of visits annually to farms.

OSU is encouraged to continue support for farm-direct sales and other agritourism programming. Perhaps most exciting is what lies ahead.

OSU Extension is well positioned with personnel, programming, and experience in the agriculture industry and community resource development, an educational toolkit and community relationships and engagement.

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References

APPENDIX A  Links displayed when this document is printed

Agritourism—value, conceptual framework, scope and characteristics of industry

- 12% of Oregon’s Farmers Markets are in areas with Low Income and Low Access to Supermarkets
  https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9215
- Agritourism Turned into Agri-education: One farmer’s calling to teach kids about local food
- Inventory of Agritourism Farms and Value-Added Operations in Marion County
- How to Create an Inventory of Agritourism Operations in an Area, County or Multi-County Region. https://extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/documents/9271/agtourfactsheetinventoryagritourismoperationsv2.pdf
- Needs Assessment of Agritourism Operations in Marion County
- Because They Joined the Grange: Architectural History of Benton County’s Grange Halls https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269709786_Because_They_Joined_the_Grange_Architectural_History_of_Benton_County_Oregon_Grange_Halls
- Documenting the Success of Oregon Farm-Direct Sales
  “Can Agritourism Save the Farm?” - Oregon Business interview about agritourism by Katy Sword https://www.oregonbusiness.com/article/farms-forests/item/17853-can-agritourism-save-the-farm
  Assessment of the success of Agritourism operators who have received the Value Added Producer Grant.

Agritourism—how to diversify and add to business mix, issues and solutions, regulations, tips for success, recreation and hospitality, safety, beginning operators.

- Getting to Yes for Agritourism in Oregon https://media.oregonstate.edu/media/i0_cgaqmm8
- Questions Planners may anticipate regarding the Agritourism Industry’s Farm-Direct Sales and other Farm-Based Activities
- Agritourism Resources Available to Support Oregon Farmers and Ranchers https://extension.oregonstate.edu/community-vitality/agritourism/agritourism-resources-available-support-oregon-farmers-ranchers
- Meat and Poultry Processing Regulations in Oregon: A Short Guide
- Recognizing the Strengths and Limitations of Farmers Market Ownership Structure Alternatives
Agritourism—Marketing and Promotion of Farm Products and Experiences, and Food Systems.

- Agritourism (a 2-minute video illustrating agritourism)
  
  https://youtu.be/5Q0fl1NuPNQ

- Community Food System Indicators: January 2018 Update https://extension.oregonstate.edu/community-vitality/food-systems/oregons-community-food-system-indicators


- Farm Direct, Value Added Products

- Farm Direct, Value Added. A Resource Guide to Making and Selling Food in Oregon

- Selling Farm Produce by Count, Volume or Weight


- Farm Direct at Five: An Early Assessment of Oregon’s Farm-Focused Cottage Food Law https://www.foodsystemsjournal.org/index.php/fsj/article/view/621

- Agritourism in Oregon’s Coastal Counties: Land Use Policy and Permitting Required https://seagrant.oregonstate.edu/sgpubs/agritourism-oregons-coastal-counties-land-use-policy-and-permitting-requirements

- Farm-direct Marketing: An Overview and Introduction https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw201

- Farm-direct Marketing: Costs and Enterprise Selection https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw202

- Farm-direct Marketing: Merchandising and Pricing Strategies https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw203

- Oregon’s Home Baking Bill: Residential kitchen exemption for baked goods and confectionary items

  https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9192

- Oregon's Farm Direct Marketing Law: Producer-Processed Value-Added Products https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9205


- Savor the Gorge

- Sell It: Markets and Marketing

- Tracing the Decline of a Farmers’ Market


Partial funding for this study provided by the Agriculture Marketing Resource Center (AgMRC), located at Iowa State University, www.agmrc.org. AgMRC is a national website dedicated to providing information to producers and service providers on value-added agriculture businesses.