Dear Central Oregon OSU Extension Community,

Our commitment to serving our communities through our unique skills and interests is what brings us together as an Oregon State University (OSU) Extension family. We want to make those with sewing skills and capacity aware of the volunteer opportunity to contribute to the St. Charles Medical Center 10,000 mask challenge. By sewing and donating masks, you can help provide every Central Oregon caregiver with two masks they can launder and reuse.

Please use this link to find details from St. Charles, including an updated pattern with nose wire and filter pocket, and donation sites in Bend, Sisters, Prineville, Redmond and Madras (do not drop off at OSU Extension offices or St Charles facilities).
https://www.stcharleshealthcare.org/covid-19/hand-sewn-masks

Let us know how many masks you sew as part of our OSU Extension community by recording it in this form. This will allow us to coordinate with St. Charles regarding your donations.

Please note that by donating to St. Charles Health System, you understand, acknowledge, and accept that you are creating and donating in an individual capacity and not on behalf of OSU. OSU’s role in the donation is limited to relaying St. Charles’ requests and donation requirements to volunteers, and OSU does not influence, decide or determine how the donations are used or further donated.

Thank you in advance for your energy, creativity and dedication to our community during this challenging time.

With gratitude, Nicole A. Strong, Regional Director

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Central Oregon Agriculture is a bi-monthly newsletter produced by the Central Oregon Extension offices and the Central Oregon Agricultural and Extension Research Center (COAREC). The intent of this newsletter is to extend agricultural research-based information, to solve problems, develop leadership and manage resources wisely. Please direct comments and changes to the mailing list of your local County office.

- Mylen Bohle, Editor, (541) 447-6228
- Carol Evoniuk, Ag Newsletter Coordinator, (541) 447-6228

Central Oregon County Extension Offices
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- Deschutes County Extension Service - Phone 548-6088, 3800 SW Airport Way, Redmond, OR  97756
- Jefferson County Extension Service - Phone 475-7107, 850 Dogwood Lane., Madras, OR  97741
- Warm Springs Indian Reservation - Phone 553-3238, 1110 Wasco St., PO Box 430, Warm Springs, OR  97761

Central Oregon Agricultural Research and Extension Center (COAREC)
850 Dogwood Lane, Madras 97741
- Carol Tollefson, Director, 475-7107

Extension Service & Experiment Station Web Sites
- Crook County: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/crook
- Deschutes County: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/deschutes
- Jefferson County: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/jefferson
- Warm Springs: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/warmspings

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Websites
- OSU Ag Information https://extension.oregonstate.edu
- Oregon’s Ag Progress https://oap.oregonstate.edu
- OSU Extension Publications Catalog https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu

The above individuals are devoted to extending agricultural information to producers. Many of the individuals, in addition to agriculture, have assignments in research, 4-H Youth, administration and community resource education. Often it is appropriate to mention brand names of some commercial products; however, they are used only for the purpose of information. Extension does not guarantee or warrant the standard of the product, or does it imply approval of the product to the exclusion of others.
COVID-19 Information

The following links will help you be informed about COVID-19, the Coronavirus Virus.

OHA COVID-19 Information and Fact Sheets

CDC Fact Sheets

CDC COVID-19 Information

American Public Health Association Fact Sheets
http://aphagetready.org/coronavirus.htm

If you would like to keep up on the states in the USA and countries of the world confirmed COVID-19 cases, check out this website.  https://ncov2019.live/

Oregon Health Authority is a good web site to keep track of what is happening in Oregon at https://www.oregon.gov/oha/pages/index.aspx

Mylen Bohle

Crooked River Weed Management

Crooked River Weed Management Area will be able to answer any noxious weed questions by phone or email. If you are unsure of what you have, send us a picture or bring a sample in and drop it in the white box by the office door. Homeowners Weed Guide and other materials can be found on our webpage.  https://co.crook.or.us/crooked-river-weed-mgmt  Email Debbie Wood at debbie.wood@oregonstate.edu

Debbie Wood

Census 2020

The following link explains the importance of responding to the census questionnaire that we all received in the mail. Or if you have questions…

Mylen Bohle

Happy Apples Information

The OSU Deschutes County Extension Service has started a new program to assist local residents with control of the codling moth. The larval stage of this insect feeds on apples and pears (aka wormy apples). Informative weekly emails are sent out to interested residents with advice on when and how to treat fruit trees to reduce or prevent codling moth infestations.

If you would like to be added to the contact list to get this information, go to https://extension.oregonstate.edu/newsletter/project-happy-apples or call (541) 548-6088.

Carrie Sether

The Oregon Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Do you have a stream or natural pond on your property in need of Riparian Restoration? The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program can provide funding for planting, fencing, seeding, livestock water development and other practices to enhance habitat and improve water quality. This program serves Crook, Deschutes & Jefferson County. For more information, contact Victoria Fischella, CREP Planner for Jefferson, Crook and Deschutes Counties at: Victoria.Fischella@usda.gov  Service Center: 625 SE Salmon Ave. Suite 6. Redmond, OR 97753

Victoria Fischella
Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training

Oregon Department of Agriculture has CANCELLED the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training classes through the end of April 2020 due to COVID-19 concerns. These classes will be rescheduled but ODA does not have dates established at this time. ODA has refunded all of the Eventbrite registration and processing fees for the course. If you have questions or concerns about the state of your refund, please contact Brittany Mills at 971-218-1409.

In addition to our classes, the Produce Safety Program is postponing technical assistance visits, or On-Farm Readiness Reviews through the end of April. A staff member is reaching out to all currently scheduled farms.

These Produce Safety Alliance courses have been POSTPONED.

- April 8, 2020 in Grants Pass
- April 24, 2020 in Klamath Falls
- April 30, 2020 in Aurora

Questions about COVID-19 and produce safety?

The Food and Drug Administration webpage Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development’s Novel Coronavirus Prevention & Control for Farms webpage has information specific to farms and resources in English and Spanish.

If you have further questions, please contact program manager Susanna Pearlstein directly at spearlstein@oda.state.or.us or at 971-283-4749.

Safe Pressure Canning in Times of COVID-19

How can home preservers pressure can vegetables, meat, fish, poultry and wild game safely when OSU Extension offices closed for face-to-face visits cannot offer free annual dial gauge testing to clients?

Presto, manufacturer of the most commonly used dial-gauge pressure canner in Central Oregon has added a statement on their web page that guides interested people to convert their dial-gauge pressure canner to a weighted-gauge canner. They do recommend purchasing a 3-piece weighted-gauge pressure regulator (rocker) that is useful for lower altitude canning using 10 pounds pressure, but in our area – no community is below 1000 feet! Weighted gauge canners adjusted for altitude over 1000 feet are pressurized using the 15-pound configuration (all three pieces). So using the 15-pound, solid, 1-piece rocker that comes with the dial gauge canner will work the same in Central Oregon.

The conversion to weighted gauge canner is as simple as turning your attention from watching the dial gauge (don’t remove it from the lid) to listening to the rocker with a few visual checks while making initial adjustments. Use the weighted gauge chart in your up-to-date, tested recipes to determine processing times and listen for gentle, steady rocking that normally releases steady (not overly strong) steam in the process. Adjust the temperature of your stove to sustain the gentle rocking of the pressure regulator. For longer processing times for some foods such as fish, you can add 1 to 2 more inches of water in your canner before you add your jars to avoid it boiling dry.

The manufacturer of All American canners recommends on their web page conversion of all of their older canners with a dial gauge and toggle vent port combination to their weighted gauge system. Customers can purchase a new stem port and pressure regulator, a round disk (like at Tinker Toy™ joint) online that jigs several times a minute, releasing some bursts of steam. Home canners should also inspect the gaskets and plugs on the pressure canner for wear and tear annually. Plugs that have gotten hard, may not blow out of the hole they block in the lid when pressure builds to dangerous levels. This safety system prevents the canner from exploding. Gaskets that are worn, stretched, cracked or hardened should be replaced. Depending on use, replacement might be needed every two to five years. If worn gaskets are used, the pressure canning process may fail or in some cases, the gasket could “glue” the lid to the canner! Replacement gauges and gaskets (plugs are included in the same package) for pressure canners are usually available at hardware stores or where canning equipment and supplies are sold. Replacement parts can be ordered from the manufacturer or on-line.

See up-to-date, tested recipes for all methods of food preservation free, online from OSU Extension at https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mfp/publications. If you have questions or concerns contact Glenda Hyde at OSU Extension/Deschutes County at 541-548-6088.
Western Region Cover Crop Survey – we need your help!

Please take an important survey about cover crops to help improve outreach and inform cover crop incentive programs to better serve farmers.

Did you know the Western region now has a cover crops council? The Western Cover Crops Council aims to promote the successful use of cover crops in our diverse agricultural systems. In order to do that, we are asking farmers/ranchers like YOU to share your perspectives on cover crops. Whether you plant them now, planted them in the past, or have never planted them—your perspective is important!

The survey is being conducted by partners at the University of Idaho, Oregon State University, and Boise State University with funding from the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE). This brief survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. The survey is confidential, and your responses cannot be linked to you. Upon completion you will have the opportunity to enter a drawing for one of 10, $50 Amazon gift cards. Odds of winning are approximately 1 in 75.

Please take a few minutes and share your thoughts, experience, and expertise with us! It is only with help from farmers like you that we can understand how to best guide cover crop programs for the west. [Here is a link to the survey.]

Claire Sullivan

ATTRA Resources

This is the home page for ATTRA; you will probably find a lot of useful agricultural and horticultural information at their web site: [https://attra.ncat.org/?utm_source=WH&utm_medium=PM&utm_campaign=ATTRA](https://attra.ncat.org/?utm_source=WH&utm_medium=PM&utm_campaign=ATTRA). To help you understand the COVID-19 pandemic and how it affects your farming operation, ATTRA has gathered some resources that can help. Links to information on food safety, business assistance, farmers market operation, alternative markets, and food security are available at [https://attra.ncat.org/covid/?utm_source=WH&utm_medium=PM&utm_campaign=spotlight](https://attra.ncat.org/covid/?utm_source=WH&utm_medium=PM&utm_campaign=spotlight). (They have come up with a lot of links to resources.)

Mylen Bohle

Oregon NRCS Announces Application Cut-Off for Agricultural and Wetland Conservation Easements

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Oregon offers easement programs to help private landowners, state and local governments, Indian tribes, and non-profit groups protect Oregon’s working agricultural lands and wetlands for future generations. Applications for the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](https://www.sc.egov.usda.gov/) (ACEP) must be submitted by April 17 to be considered for this year’s funding.

Scott Duggan

Oregon Shearing School

Oregon Shearing School – May 14-17, 2020, in Roseburg, OR. Email John Fine at johnandpeggyfine@charter.net or visit [https://sheeporegon.com/](https://sheeporegon.com/). This school is full, but they are taking names to be wait-listed.

Scott Duggan
Time to Dethatch and Aerate

**What:** Dethatch – removes the layer of dead roots and shoots  
**Where:** Your lawn  
**When:** April through May is the ideal time but you can also do it in September if needed. Good to do every other year, especially in stands of grass that are 100% Kentucky bluegrass or Kentucky bluegrass blends. The grass will need some time to recover. Apply a fertilizer following dethatching.  
**Why:** A thick layer of thatch (1/2” or more) will prevent or significantly reduce water from getting to the root system of the plant. The grass roots are below the thatch layer.  
**How:** Rent a dethatching machine and do it yourself or hire a professional.  
**Benefit:** Water conservation and improved stand of grass.

**What:** Aerate and add compost – reduces compaction  
**Where:** Your lawn  
**When:** Anytime during the growing season. Should be done every year to every other year.  
**Why:** Relieves compaction and some thatch  
**How:** Rent an aerator or hire a professional. Rent a compost spreader and purchase an ultra fine compost. After removing the plugs, go over the lawn with the compost spreading adding back about 1/4” of compost. The compost will fall back into the holes and feed the soil adding back valuable nutrients and microorganisms.  

**Tip:** Clean the rental equipment with rubbing alcohol to avoid the spread of plant disease.

Amy Jo Detweiler

Central Oregon Berry Production Workshop via Zoom

10am-noon Wednesday, April 8th

Take a break in the middle of your stay-at-home week to learn something new! Join this 2hr Zoom meeting to learn about strawberry and raspberry production here in central Oregon. The class will provide an overview of site selection and preparation, recommended berry types, and establishment and maintenance. Focus will be on 1st year results from a berry research trial comparing raspberry and strawberry production in high tunnels vs. the open field. If you’ve thought about using high tunnels to grow berries, this is the session for you!

Information is tailored to small-scale commercial operations, but all are welcome. Please email Clare by April 7th if interested to receive registration information. There is a call-in number for audio-only if you do not have internet access. For any questions please contact at 541-548-6088 or email Clare.Sullivan@oregonstate.edu

Claire Sullivan

Central Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (COYCC)

Central Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (COYCC) hires local young people for 8 weeks of natural resources conservation work with the US Forest Service. 16-18 year old corps members learn job skills, earn wages, and work on projects that improve public lands and keep local communities safer from wildfire.

During the summer season, crews and their crew leaders complete projects ranging from fencing to fire fuels reduction to wildlife habitat restoration. Thirteen crews across Central Oregon work on the Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests and the Crooked River National Grassland. This program provides entry level work for young people that benefits their community and prepares them with technical skills and general employability skills. We are currently hiring crew members and crew leaders for the summer season (starting mid-June)!

Interested in becoming a COYCC crew leader or crew member click here to apply. For more information contact Tyler McRae, Office: 541-633-7834, Mobile: 406-261-0209 or tylermcrae@heartoforegon.org

Tyler McRae, Summer Program Manager, Heart of Oregon Corps
Beware of Hazards Prior to Turn Out on Spring Pasture

There are 654 million acres of pastureland in the United States providing valuable forage for livestock. Unfortunately, there are poisonous plants growing alongside beneficial forages in pastures. Poison Hemlock and Water Hemlock are two very toxic plants that grow in central Oregon. Water Hemlock is a wetland plant that grows at the waterline in canals, streams and rivers. Poison hemlock grows in moist soils along waterways and is capable of spreading out into drier soils in irrigated pastures. Livestock will typically avoid eating these poisonous plants. However, in the spring when the grass is still short, animals may accidentally ingest these plants as they graze along the banks of waterways. All parts of the plants are poisonous and ingesting even a small amount can kill all species of livestock and humans. Removing hemlock manually or by using herbicides needs to be a priority for landowners.

The spring season typically brings cloudy skies, cool soils and fast growing, cool season grasses. These lush forages growing in pastures with soils low in magnesium and high in available potassium can result in grasses deficient in magnesium. Livestock grazing forages low in magnesium can develop grass tetany, which is often fatal without swift veterinarian intervention. Grass tetany is a metabolic disorder caused by low magnesium levels in the blood. Cows and ewes in heavy lactation and late gestation are most susceptible to the disease. Horses may contract this malady, but it is rare. To prevent this in your herd, it is recommended to provide supplemental magnesium to livestock grazing pastures in the spring.

Livestock grazing lush pastures in the spring may be at risk for bloat. Pasture bloat often occurs when livestock accustomed to eating dry hay all winter are turned out onto lush pastures. Pastures containing over 30% legumes such as clover and alfalfa, may cause bloat in livestock and colic and/or founder in horses. Livestock hungry for green grass will rapidly consume large amounts of pasture forage. Microbes in the rumen critical for digestion need time to adapt to this rapid intake of green forage. This relatively fast dietary change overwhelms the microbial population in the rumen allowing excess gas to be produced from fermenting forages. The gas cannot be belched up normally and death results from the pressure causing heart and lung failure. A few tips on avoiding bloat include:

- Limit the time livestock spend on lush pasture for the first few weeks.
- Feed dry, low protein hay prior to turnout on green pasture and have the hay available free choice while grazing pastures.
- Provide daily supplement with anti-bloat products.
- Check animals for bloat every two hours when beginning grazing.
- If an animal frequently shows signs of bloat, remove from herd as they often become chronic bloaters.

Finally, don’t graze forages below 3-4” or forage production for the balance of the grazing season will be reduced. Preserve the bottom half for the plant and give the top half to the cow.  

Forage for a Short Water Situation

It sounds like most irrigation districts are going to be OK, not great, but OK, for water quantity delivery. One district and those farms along streams are probably not OK for full summer irrigation. If you are thinking you might need additional forage for your livestock, you might think about planting some spring cereals, with or without peas, if more forage is needed. Planting time is sooner the better. Spring barley / cereal rye, and then Triticale come to mind in that order as the best species to plant if you think you are going to be short on forage either for grazing or for hay. It does not sound like there is a lot of moisture in the soil this spring; one can only hope we get a fair amount of additional precip. But perhaps with one to two to three irrigations and what mother nature gives us, you might be able to grow some quick forage for spring grazing or a fair hay crop. You can irrigate some of your acres and then divert what water is left to other acres, perennial crops or higher value crops, depending upon your crops being grown. You will have to pencil the economics. Spring forage cereal species and varieties were trialed from 1990 to 1993 and results are located below in the link. While some/many of the varieties may not be available any more, you can get an idea of how species responded to full irrigation. Harvest was at late boot and soft dough, and there is information on late boot and soft dough yields, harvest date, plant height (important for hand and wheel line irrigation), seeding rates, and quality. You will want to test for nitrates prior to grazing or after baling the hay. [link to website]

Mylen Bohle
CARES Act and Resources for Oregon Agricultural Businesses

As of April 3, 2020, Oregon’s agricultural producers can apply for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) loan called the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The federal program is part of the recently passed CARES Act. It offers loans to help businesses keep their workforce employed during the COVID-19 crisis. ODA does not administer any part of the CARES Act. For more information please contact the SBA’s Oregon District Office.

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)
The new PPP loan is set up to help small businesses, including agriculture operations:

- pay employees,
- cover mortgage and rent payments, and
- cover utility costs.

This loan can be 100% forgivable. Forgiveness is based on the employer maintaining or quickly rehiring employees and maintaining salary levels for eight weeks. We encourage you to apply early, due to the potential for high demand.

How to Apply
You can apply through any existing SBA 7(a) lender or any participating federally insured depository institution, federally insured credit union, or Farm Credit System institution. Contact your local lender to see if they are participating or the SBA’s Portland office for guidance.

If you want to start your application, you can download a copy of the PPP borrower application form. This will provide you with the information that lenders need

Loan Terms and Qualifications
Loans will be fully forgiven if the funds are used for:

- payroll costs (at least 75% of the amount must have been used for payroll),
- interest on mortgages, rent,
- and utilities.

Loan payments are also deferred for six months. You do not need collateral or personal guarantees. Neither the government nor lenders will charge small businesses any fees. This loan has a maturity of 2 years and an interest rate of 1%.

This program is for any small business with less than 500 employees affected by coronavirus/COVID-19. This includes agricultural operations. Loan amounts are based on the payroll costs for all employees whose “principal place of residence” is in the U.S. This definition excludes H-2A workers and will likely reduce the loan amount available to some agricultural producers.

What other resources are available to workers and employees?
For more information regarding COVID-19: Related Business Layoffs, Closures, and Unemployment Insurance Benefits, please visit the Oregon Employment Department (OED) website. The OED has Scenarios and Benefits documents in both English and Spanish. You can file claims with OED in English and Spanish.

ODA continues to commit to helping and doing our part as the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 public health crisis is setting in. ODA’s COVID-19 website is frequently updated with current information and resources.

Mylen Bohle

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Calendar

*Please contact event holder to verify if event is cancelled/rescheduled*

April
6-10 CANCELLED - Washington State Shearing School. Moses Lake, WA.
8 Central Oregon Berry Production Workshop via Zoom (see article)
11 CANCELLED - Washington State Advanced Shearing School. Moses Lake, WA
17 Applications due for Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (see article)
25-26 CANCELLED - Oregon Ag Fest: 8:30 a. m. –Saturday, 10 a.m. Sunday, Oregon State Fair & Exposition Center, Salem, OR. http://oragfest.com/

May
14-17 Oregon Shearing School. Roseburg, OR. Contact: John Fine at johnandpeggyfine@charter.net https://sheeporegon.com/
CANCELLED - Jefferson County Irrigation Field Day
CANCELLED - Crook County Irrigation Field Day
CANCELLED - Deschutes County Irrigation Field Day
CANCELLED - Lake County Irrigation Field Day