# **People & Places**

# Helping the next generation

Nellie McAdams asks: Who are the next farmers and where is their land?

By ERIC MORTENSON Capital Press

GASTON, Ore. — It was the most telling sentiment Nellie McAdams heard as she toured the state, putting on workshops to help farmers and ranchers with the gutwrenching question of what will happen to their land when they retire.

It was beautiful and tragic in the same breath. "We're so blessed to have this land," someone would say. "It's such a burden."

It summed up an aspect of Oregon agriculture, maybe the emotional ledger, that may not be seen in other businesses. After all, McAdams said, not many other business owners live where they work.

"It's more than just land," she said. "It's heirloom, legacy, your family heritage. Being a farmer isn't just an occupation, it's an identity.

'You can't retire from being yourself," McAdams said. "You're passing over what makes you, you.'

But eventually, farmland must be passed on to someone, somehow. A son or daughter may be interested in taking over, but sometimes they are not. Sometimes parents aren't willing to let go. And sometimes, dealing with the situation is like pulling the bandage off family wounds.

Sale to a stranger has its own pitfalls. Oregon has many earnest agricultural neophytes, but how many can afford land and equipment? If another farm is the buyer, will it operate with the same care as generations of family members?

To McAdams, Farm Preservation Program director for Rogue Farm Corps, the succession question has emerged as one of the most critical issues facing Oregon agriculture. Among other work, Rogue Farm Corps trains beginning farmers, placing them in internsnips with commercial farms.

farm succession, and has put on workshops statewide to get farm families thinking about

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mit an Event." Calendar items can

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PDX Hempfest Expo. 8 a.m.-8

p.m. Portland Expo Center, 2060 N.

Marine Drive, Portland, Ore. More

than 100 exhibitors and 40 speakers

on subjects such as best practices.

Cost: \$20. Website: http://pdxhemp-

Six-week Forestry Short Course. a.m.-noon. Federal Building

meeting room, Seventh Street and

College Avenue, St. Maries, Idaho.

This course will be six successive

Wednesdays. The \$38 fee includes

resource material. Register by phone

2017 Interpera Congress.

Wenatchee Confluence Technolo-

gy Center, 285 Technology Center

Way, Wenatchee, Wash. The con-

ference features presentations

from world experts on emerg-

ing pear varieties, high-density

planting, root stock, harvest and

packing house mechanization,

integrated pest management suc-

cesses, export trade flows and

successful practices for building

consumer demand. http://ncwctc.

Friday-Sunday

June 16-18

at 208-245-2422 before June 7.

Thursday-Friday

June 15-16

Wednesday, June 14

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Saturday, June 10



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press

Nellie McAdams at her family's hazelnut farm near Gaston, Ore., which she is taking over from her parents. She helps farmers develop succession plans that will keep farmland in production.



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press

Nellie McAdams walks down a row in her family's hazelnut orchard. The family has about 400 acres, including about 100 acres in hazelnut trees, 150 in second-growth timber and about 150 acres leased for clover seed, grass seed and winter wheat.

how they want to handle the transition.

It's an issue McAdams is familiar with; she's taking over the family farm from her parents. The family has about 400 acres, including about 100 acres in hazelnut trees, 150 in second-growth timber and about 150 acres leased for clover seed, grass seed and winter

wheat. In her workshops, McAdams urges farmers to consult McAdams specializes in with an estate attorney, and maybe even a family coun-

selor. McAdams would like to see a program, perhaps through OSU Extension, that makes more farm succession experts available to help families work through the financial and personal issues.

She urges people to start planning. "A lot of farmers don't know what the next step is," she said.

Again, she's working from experience. Her father, David McAdams, is an estate attorwho worked the farm on weekends, and the family had its own work to do when it came time for succession planning.

# Western Innovator

### **Nellie McAdams**

Occupation: Farm Preservation Program director, Rogue Farm Corps.

Personal: 37. grew up in Southwest Portland but spent weekends at the family's hazelnut farm in Gaston,

Ore. Her father, David, is a retired attorney; her mother, Nita, is a retired teacher.

**Education:** Bachelor's degree in philosophy from Dartmouth College, law degree from Lewis & Clark College.

Career path: Consultant with Ecotrust, staff attorney for Friends of Family Farmers, now with Rogue Farm Corps, http://www.roguefarmcorps.org/, which provides training for beginning farmers. Also on the board of directors for East Multnoman Soil and Water Conservation District in the Portland area.

Her specialty: Farm succession research and planning.

Notable: From December to May did 38 presentations, traveling 7,260 miles and speaking to 1,396 people.

Common thread: Even as they reach or surpass retirement age, farmers and ranchers have intense physical and emotional ties to the land, and it is difficult for them to let go.

Groundbreaking work: Co-wrote "The Future of Oregon Agricultural Land" with cohorts from Oregon State University and Portland State University. Report showed average age of Oregon farmers is near 60, and that 64 percent of state ag land could change hands over the next two decades as they retire or die. "How that land changes hands, who acquires it, and what they do with the land will impact Oregon for generations," the report said.

Seeking solutions: She's among the backers of House Bill 3249 in the Oregon Legislature. The bill includes funding for working land easements, covenants and conservation management plans, as well as succession training and a tax study.

They agreed to set it up in but wasn't interested in farma way that Nellie McAdams will be able to take over the farm and buy out her younger brother, who loves the farm

But every Christmas, just to be sure, the family takes out the will and talks it over.

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Circulation	800-882-6789
Email Circulation	n@capitalpress.com
Main line	503-364-4431
Fax	503-370-4383
Advertising Fax	503-364-2692

# **News Staff**

### N California

Tilli i lealueit	330-003-3072
E Idaho John O'Connell	208-421-4347
Idaho Carol Ryan Dumas	208-860-3898
Boise Sean Ellis	208-914-8264
Central Washington Dan Wheat	509-699-9099

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Saturday, June 17
Forest Thinning and Pruning
Field Day. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. University tion, 541-601-5495.

Trees and Taxes workshop. 5-7:30 p.m. Coos County Extension Office, 631 Alder St., Myrtle Point, Ore. This class is for anyone with forest management expenses, recent forest income or planning for future income from their forestland. Tammy Cushing, Extension specialist in forest economics, management and policy, will explain topics many landowners are unaware of and the special provisions in the Internal Revenue Code that pertain to forestland and income generated from the land. This session will help improve the records you keep on your forestland as well as minimize the taxes that you pay for income generated by your forest. Pre-registration is required by June 16. For questions, call Shawna at 541-572-5263. Website: http://extension.ore-

# Tuesday-Wednesday

Center for Produce Safety Research Symposium. Hyatt Regency Denver Tech Center, 7800 E. Tufts Ave., Denver, Colo. Agricultural water will kick off the program agenda. This session will focus on four CPS-funded research programs that will help stakeholders better understand the factors involved in sourc-

# Thursday, June 22

Rodeo Grounds, Trout Lake Highway, Glenwood, Wash. The Bull Bash starts at 7 p.m. June 16, followed by the rodeo, which starts at 12:30 p.m. June 17-18. Website: http://business.gorge.net/ glenwoodrodeo.

Glenwood Ketchum Kalf Ro-

deo and Bull Bash. Glenwood

of Idaho Extension office, 1808 N. Third St., Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Whether you have problems with insects, disease or concerns about fire, the response from foresters is nearly universal: Thin your forest. Presentations about thinning and financial assistance will be followed by a field trip to a thinned stand. A \$20 fee includes a field notebook or publications. Register by June 9.

# Tuesday, June 20

gonstate.edu/coos/.

# June 20-21

ing, sampling, testing and treating specific types of agricultural water.

Oregon Angus Field Day. 4-10 p.m. Quail Valley Ranch, Prineville,

Ore. Cattle on display, contests with prizes, a meal and a time to visit. For more information, contact Becky Tekansik, Quail Valley Ranch, 541-699-8562, or Dick Hubman, president of the Oregon Angus Associa-

# Saturday, June 24

Washington State Dairy Ambassador Coronation. 5-9 p.m. Byrnes Performing Arts Center, 18821 Crown Ridge Blvd., Arlington, Wash. Doors open at 5 p.m. with the program beginning at 5:30. This year dinner will not be provided; instead there will be light hors d'oeuvres and refreshments served during a short intermission. Tickets purchased by June 16 will be adults \$20, students \$10, and under 6 years free. Tickets purchased after June 16 or at the door will be adults \$25, students \$15, under 6 still free. For ticket information, please contact Gloria Edwards by email at gloria.wsdw@ hotmail.com or 360-273-7313. Website: http://wastatedairywomen.org/ ambassador-contest.html

# Tuesday, June 27

Range Field Day. 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Northern Great Basin Experimental Range, 100 Placidea Butte Road, Riley, Ore. Presentations will include managing wildfires, livestock grazing for fuels management, safe sites and restoration of sagebrush rangeland. For more information, contact Chad Boyd, office: 541-573-8939, cell: 541-589-4990, email: chad.boyd@oregonstate.edu. To RSVP for lunch, call Petrina White at 541-573-4085.

### Wednesday-Saturday June 28-July 1 128th Annual Washington State

Grange Convention. Ocean Shores Convention Center, 120 W. Chance a La Mer NW, Ocean Shores, Wash.

### Thursday-Friday June 29-30

3rd International Conference on Livestock & Nutrition. 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Avani Atrium, 880 Phetch-

### aburi Road, Bangkok, Thailand. The Bangkok Livestock Nutrition Conference welcomes attendees, presenters and exhibitors from all over the world. The theme is "Leading Innovation in Livestock for Sustainable Farming." Cost: \$699. Website: http://livestocknutrition.conferenceseries.com/

# Friday, June 30 Farm Practices to Support

Beneficial Insects. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Day 2 of this two-day class will offer a tour of Wandering Fields farm in the Applegate area. Participants will practice identifying beneficials and observe how a blend of hedgerows, cover crops, flowering seed crops and native plants creates a system of biological pest management. Participation on Day 1 on June 9 is a requirement to attend the tour. Instructor: Dana Kristal and local experts. Cost: \$15 one/\$25 two from the same farm. Website: http://bit.ly/JacksonSmallFarm-

Bark Beetle Field Day. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. University of Idaho Extension Kootenai County office, 1808 N. Third St., Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Participants will get first-hand exposure to major bark beetles' biology and research into controlling bark beetles. Pre-register by June 23. Cost: \$20 (\$22 with a credit card at www.uidaho.edu/ BarkBeetle) Website: www.uidaho.edu/extension/forestry

### Wednesday-Saturday June 28-July 1 128th Annual Washington

State Grange Convention. Ocean Shores Convention Center, 120 W. Chance a La Mer NW, Ocean Shores, Wash.

### Friday-Tuesday June 30-July 4 St. Paul Rodeo. Rodeo Arena,

20045 Fourth St. NE, St. Paul, Ore. The St. Paul Rodeo will continue to bring a slice of the

### rodeos and some of the most exciting and colorful entertainment offered anywhere. Information: (503) 633-2011, tickets@stpaulrodeo.com, Website: http://www. stpaulrodeo.com/

old West to the north Willamette

Valley each 4th of July and to give

those who attend a look at one of

the nation's finest professional

### Saturday-Tuesday July 1-4

Molalla Buckeroo Rodeo, 815 Shirley St., Molalla, Ore. The Mo-Ialla Buckeroo Rodeo has been an Oregon tradition since September 1913. 503-829-8388. Website: http://www.molallabuckeroo.com/

### Thursday-Sunday July 6-9 Marion County Fair. Oregon

State Fairgrounds, 2330 17th St. NE, Salem, Ore. Website: http:// www.co.marion.or.us/CS/Fair

### Friday-Saturday **July 7-8** Idaho State Ram Sale. Twin

Falls County Fair Grounds, 215 Fair Ave., Filer, Idaho. The "Suffolk Show of the West" begins at 6 p.m. Friday and continues at 10:30 a.m. Saturday. For more information, call 208-344-2271 or email idahowool@ gmail.com Website: idahowool.

### Friday, July 14-Sunday, July 30 California State Fair. 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Cal Expo Center, 1600

Exposition Blvd., Sacramento, Calif. Website: www.castatefair.

### Saturday, July 15 Washington State Sheep Pro-

ducers Ram and Ewe Sale. 1:30-6 p.m. Grant County Fairgrounds, 3953 Airway Drive NE, Moses Lake, Wash. For questions, call 509-200-2112. Email: wssp@

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