

People & Places

Producer finds symbiosis with nurseries

Jeff Gustin's 'Garden Time' show resonates with plant producers

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI

Media producer Jeff Gustin heard opportunity knocking when a television station canceled his gardening show a decade ago.

Gustin turned down a job offer with the company's news team and decided to launch a venture making corporate videos.

However, it didn't take long before he returned to filming various plants, soil amendments and backyard tools.

"Within a month, I got clients saying, 'You need a gardening show,'" Gustin said.

While local network affiliates have generally phased out home and garden programs in favor of news, nurseries and other companies still want a way to reach the public, he said.

Advertisers who previously worked with Gustin convinced him to create the weekly "Garden Time" program, which will begin airing its 10th season this spring.

Instead of working as an employee, Gustin now writes, films and edits the show and then pays local TV stations in Oregon to broadcast it.

The show has a symbiotic relationship with nurseries because its viewers tend to be dedicated gardeners, said Jack Bigej, owner of the Al's Garden Center chain of nurseries.

"Because they are hitting our exact audience, we use them all the time," Bigej said.

Nurseries face a difficult advertising landscape in television — primetime slots are dominated by large national companies that drive up prices,



Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press

Jeff Gustin, creator of the "Garden Time" television show, connects dedicated gardeners with nurseries and other companies in Oregon.

Western Innovator Jeff Gustin

Occupation: President of the Gustin Creative Group, which produces the "Garden Time" television show

Hometown: Lake Oswego, Ore.

Age: 54

Family: Wife, Therese, and two grown daughters

Education: Bachelor's degree in broadcast media from Oregon State University in 1983



es, he said.

It's also likely that viewers will simply skip past such ads with their digital recording devices, Bigej said.

"Garden Time" doesn't appear to have that problem, as viewers seem to pay attention to the ads and then ask for specific products or plant cultivars featured on the show, he said.

"We get pretty good results out of it," Bigej said.

Gustin said he has grown to prefer gardening over the subjects that typically interest local news programmers.

"It was much better than

working news, where you're covering accidents and house fires," he said. "You get burned out after a while."

The arrangement is also agreeable for TV stations, which have been dealing with tighter budgets in recent years, Gustin said.

"They don't have to put any manpower to it, they just sell a lump of time," he said.

Though "Garden Time" is technically paid programming, Gustin avoids the type of sales pitch that prompts viewers to change channels when they encounter "info-

mercials" about kitchen gadgets or exercise equipment.

Rather than push viewers to spend money, Gustin focuses on content that gardeners find educational.

Companies can promote whatever they want during their ads, but Gustin said he doesn't want the show to sound like a commercial.

"In the back of my head, I can hear the clicking of people shutting down their TVs," he said.

This content-driven strategy keeps viewers engaged and eager to take advantage of the show's advice, said Brian Bauman, general manager of Bauman Farms, a nursery and diversified farm operation near Gervais, Ore.

The farm routinely has people call or stop in asking about topics or products discussed on "Garden Time" as soon as the morning show ends.

"It's community-based," Bauman said. "It's all about things that are local and places that people can identify with."

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We want to publish corrections to set the record straight.

Timber payments shrink after expiration of subsidy

By JEFF BARNARD
Associated Press

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP) — The Obama administration is telling governors in 41 states how much money they are losing after Congress ended subsidies paid the past 20 years to counties that contain national forest land.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said Thursday that the U.S. Forest Service is sending more than \$50 million to 746 timber counties in February, with Oregon and other Western states the biggest recipients. That compares to about \$300 million paid out last fiscal year under the Secure Rural Schools subsidy program.

Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell sent letters to governors detailing how their payments would be cut.

Since 1908, the Forest Service has paid a quarter of its logging revenues to counties to be used for roads and schools. That law was enacted to win support for the newly



AP Photo/Jeff Barnard

This March 18, 2011, file photo shows dense forest on a steep slope on U.S. Bureau of Land Management land outside Ruch, Ore. The U.S. Forest Service has told governors that timber payments to rural counties will shrink dramatically this year.

created national forest system.

When logging was cut by 90 percent on federal forests in the Northwest to protect the spotted owl and salmon, Congress started approving the subsidies.

As logging cutbacks spread around the country to protect fish, wildlife and clean water, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., sponsored the Secure

Rural Schools bill, which expanded the subsidies.

They include payments to counties in western Oregon with U.S. Bureau of Land Management timberlands, which are at a higher rate, and used largely for sheriff's patrols and jails.

The president's budget included a five-year renewal of the program, but it died in the

last days of Congress.

Wyden could not get it attached to a must-pass appropriation in the Senate. The House attached a one-year extension to a bill ramping up logging on national forests, but that bill had no traction in the Senate and a veto threat from the White House.

The subsidy issue is expected to come up again this year.

Timber states in the West are seeing the biggest drop.

Forest Service payments to Oregon counties drop from \$67.9 million to \$5.9 million; California, from \$35.6 million to \$8.7 million; Idaho, from \$28.3 million to \$2 million; Washington, from \$21.5 million to \$2.1 million; and Montana, from \$21.3 million to \$2 million.

Expiration of Secure Rural Schools also dries up money for search and rescue operations and conservation projects on national forests. In Oregon, some cash-strapped counties got permission to use road funds for law enforcement.

Rep. Greg Walden, R-Ore., has said he has a commitment from House speaker John Boehner to try to renew Secure Rural Schools for one year sometime in the first quarter of this year. But Republicans also are expected to try again to boost logging on national forests.

Calendar

To submit items to the calendar, send an email with information to calendar@capitalpress.com

JANUARY NATIONAL

Jan. 28-31 — American Sheep Industry Association annual meeting, Nugget Resort and Casino, Sparks, Nev., www.sheepusa.org/About_Events_Convention

REGIONAL

Jan. 26-29 — Washington-Oregon Potato Conference, Three Rivers Convention Center and Toyota Center, Kennewick, Wash., www.potatoconference.com

OREGON

Jan. 26 — Agricultural Safety and Pesticide Accreditation Workshop, sponsored by the Central Oregon Safety and Health Association, Deschutes Farm Bureau and Helena Chemical Co., 1-5 p.m. Bend, \$45 (\$20 for Farm Bureau members), www.cosha.org
Jan. 26-27 — Mid-Oregon Construction Safety Summit, The Riverhouse, Bend, www.cosha.org
Jan. 27 — Oregon Blueberry Conference, 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m., Jantzen Beach Red Lion Hotel, Portland, oregonblueberry.com/conference

Jan. 27-29 — Northwest Agricultural Show, Portland Expo Center, <http://www.nwagshow.com/>

Jan. 29 — Cattlemen's Workshop, 9 a.m.-4:15 p.m., Blue Mountain Conference Center, 404 12th St., La Grande, 541-562-5129

WASHINGTON

Jan. 26-29 — Washington-Oregon Potato Conference, Three Rivers Convention Center and Toyota Center, Kennewick, Wash., www.potatoconference.com

IDAHO

Jan. 21-23 — Idaho Horticulture Expo, Boise Centre on the Grove, inlagrow.org

Jan. 30 — Organic conference on the use of cover crops to enhance soil fertility, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Herrett Center, College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls, sponsored by Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides, University of Idaho and Oregon State University, preregistration required by Jan. 26, www.pesticide.org or 503-312-1415

FEBRUARY NATIONAL

Feb. 1-3 — American Sugarbeet Growers Association annual conven-

tion, Long Beach, Calif., www.americansugarbeet.org

Feb. 19-20 — Family Farm Alliance annual meeting, Monte Carlo Resort and Casino, Las Vegas, 707-998-9487 or frameeting@aol.com

OREGON

Feb. 3 — Focus on Weed Management pesticide applicator's short course, 7:45 a.m.-5:30 p.m., \$80, Building 19, Lane Community College, Eugene, 541-463-6103

Feb. 7 — Oregon Pork Producers Annual Meeting and Educational Workshops, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Oregon State University, Corvallis, 541-737-1906, matthew.kennedy@oregon-state.edu

Feb. 19-21 — Oregon Logging Conference, Lane County Fairgrounds and Convention Center, Eugene, 541-686-9191, www.oregonloggingconference.com

Feb. 24-25 — Oregon Dairy Farmers Annual Convention, Salem Conference Center, www.dairyfarmers.com/101-convention-general

CALIFORNIA

Feb. 5-7 — Sierra Cascade Logging Conference, Shasta District Fairgrounds, Anderson, sierracascadeexpo.com/

Feb. 6 — Tehama Walnut Day, 8 a.m.-noon, Elks Lodge, Red Bluff, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu/>

Feb. 6 — Glenn-Butte Walnut Day, 1-5 p.m., Silver Dollar Fairgrounds, Chico, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu/>

Feb. 10-12 — World Ag Expo, International Agri-Center, Tulare, <http://www.worldagexpo.com/>

Feb. 25 — Sutter-Yuba-Colusa-Yolo-Solano-Sacramento Walnut Day, Veterans Hall, Yuba City, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu>

WASHINGTON

Feb. 3-5 — Spokane Ag Expo and Pacific Northwest Farm Forum, Spokane Convention Center, <http://www.agshow.org/ag-expo-home.html>

MARCH

MARCH OREGON
March 16-17 — Oregon State University Blueberry School, LaSells Stewart Center and CH2M Hill Alumni Center, OSU campus, Corvallis, <http://osubluerryschool.org/>

March 20-22 — Northwest Horse Fair & Expo, Linn County Fair and Expo Center, Albany, www.equinepromotions.net

CALIFORNIA

March 3 — Walnut (7-year-olds) No Pruning-Pruning Comparison Field Meeting, morning, Nickels Soil Lab, Arbuckle, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu>

March 3 — Walnut (2-year-olds) No Pruning-Pruning Comparison Field Meeting, afternoon, Nickels Soil Lab, Arbuckle, 530-822-7515, <http://cesutter.ucanr.edu>

March 17-18 — Fruit Ripening & Retail Handling Workshop, University of California-Davis, <http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/Education/fruitripening/>

March 22-24 — California Fresh Fruit Association Annual Meeting, The Grand Del Mar, San Diego, www.CAFreshFruit.com

MAY

MAY CALIFORNIA
May 1-2 — Forest Landowners of California annual meeting, Holiday Inn, Auburn, www.forestlandowners.org/

JUNE

JUNE CALIFORNIA
June 15-26 — Postharvest Technology Short Course, University of California-Davis, <http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/Education/PTShortCourse/>