

OAN's Farwest Show keeps on growing

By **JANAE SARGENT**
Capital Press

The Oregon Association of Nurseries 2016 Farwest Trade Show will feature expanded programs that focus on navigating the challenges facing the industry today.

Growers, landscapers and wholesalers representing the horticulture industry will gather for the three-day show at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Ore. The show begins on Thursday, Aug. 25.

Last year, 386 exhibitors were at the show, attracting visitors from 47 states and 18 countries. Crystal Cady, the event and member services manager of the show, said the number of exhibitors signed up for the 2016 show has already

passed 400, and she expects the floor to sell out.

Charlie Hall, Ellison Chair in International Floriculture at Texas A&M University, will give this year's keynote address. Titled "Factors Affecting Short- and Long-Term Demand in the Future," it will explore the major aspects of the current horticulture industry.

Hall is a well-known speaker in regards to economics and the future of the industry. He spoke at the Farwest Show about the recession in 2013.

This year's New Varieties Showcase is themed "Plants with a Purpose: Pollinators." The showcase will feature 55 plants, a record-breaking

number for the Farwest Show.

The showcase and several of the breakout sessions such as "Marketing in the Digital Age: Reaching Today's Time-Starved Consumers" and "Marketing to Generation Me" educate attendees about how to sell plants to the younger consumer.

Allison Pennell, event and program coordinator, said the idea of the "lifestyle gardener" is a growing trend in the industry, especially in the younger generation.

"People want to use their gardens to show their values," Pennell said. "Restoration and pollinator support are ways people bring their values and lifestyles into their garden."

Pennell ran an outreach program at Oregon colleges with horticulture programs to attract young people to the show. An annual favorite networking event for young professionals in horticulture will be at 3:30 p.m. Aug. 25 along with the networking event aimed at women in horticulture at 3:30 p.m. Aug. 26.

Farwest will also feature its annual pub-crawl and tours of nurseries and retailers.

Unique online system helps 'consortium nursery' thrive

By **JANAE SARGENT**
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Paul Bizon came across the idea of a "consortium nursery," at which several growers share space and materials, while he was traveling in Germany in 2003.

When he returned to the United States, he partnered with the owners of Oregon Turf and Tree and started Garden World, a highly automated retail nursery that sells growers' plants through an online management system.

PlantX, the operating system, links the inventory directly to the website so when someone buys a plant, it is taken off the website and the grower of that specific plant is notified.

Bizon also owns Bizon Nursery, a wholesale nursery that is known for its conifers and Japanese maples.

As a grower, he said he saw the potential and need for a system that would link growers and sell their materials together.

Instead of buying grower material upfront, growers bring their products to Garden World and get paid every seven days online for whatever they sell.

"It's a place for growers to



Janae Sargent/Capital Press

Zach Peyton, Garden World manager, explains the unique automated system the nursery uses. Peyton is one of five people that staff the 10-acre farm in Woodburn, Ore.

bring material and it's kind of a balancing act of not letting growers build the nursery up, not selling too much and giving enough material to keep the inventory fresh," Bizon said.

Located along Interstate 5 just outside Woodburn, Ore., Garden World is the easiest nursery to see and the hardest nursery to find, Zach Peyton, the manager, said.

Because of its location — it's not on an exit for the interstate — Peyton said the nursery is reliant on its online system to sell product.

When plants come in from

individual growers, they are tagged with the grower's information, which is immediately uploaded to the website. All of the employees and growers have access to the website on their phones so they can see how inventory is moving.

"A lot of people are saying the website made it so easy and that's why they're here," said Peyton.

Bizon said the Willamette Valley is the perfect place for a nursery like Garden World because the growers are all so close they can easily monitor and control their sales.

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