

Willamette Valley Ag Expo marks its 16th year

By GEOFF PARKS
For the Capital Press

It's been 16 years since the first Willamette Valley Ag Expo, and it keeps growing

with every passing year.

The Willamette Valley Ag Expo begins its 16th year on Tuesday, Nov. 15, and finishes its three-day run on Thursday, Nov. 17, at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road, in Albany, Ore.

Expo hours are:

- Tuesday, Nov. 15, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, Nov. 16, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- Thursday, Nov. 17, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The sponsoring Willamette Valley Agriculture Association is a nonprofit educational and trade organization whose members are either exhibitors or sponsors of the Expo, or both.

Proceeds from the Expo go toward the WVAA's college scholarships, said association manager Jill Ingalls. She and her husband, Scott, the Expo producer, have been the force behind the successful event for the past decade-and-a-half.

"The Willamette Valley Ag Expo is 16 years strong and growing," said Jill Ingalls.



Courtesy of WVAAE

A view of the Calapooia Arena floor at the Willamette Valley Ag Expo..

"The event just keeps getting bigger.

"For 16 years, I've been blessed to work with this industry and the amazing people that live and breathe agriculture," she said. "I learn something new all the time. It's so rewarding to see this event continue to thrive and change along with agriculture in Oregon."

Scott Ingalls is equally enthusiastic.

"From a production standpoint, this is a fun show to put together," he said. "Because the vendors own the show, everyone is very cooperative and share in each other's success. I see that throughout the show, from load-in to load-out, it goes smoothly and the vendors are always helpful and supportive."

He said he looks forward to the Ag Expo every year.

"We've been blessed to

have basically the same staffing for the last 14 or 15 years, so every one of our people know what they're doing and know all the vendors," he said. "That makes it pretty easy for me."

The Linn County Fair & Expo Center allows the Expo to spread out over 250,000 square feet for exhibitors, equipment, seminars, classes and food.

Dine Around Oregon is the show-stopper of the Expo, and will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 16. The cost of the meal would be more than \$30 anywhere else, Jill Ingalls said, but at the Expo sponsors and partners bring the cost down to just \$12.

A chock-full agenda of training classes and educational opportunities are also provided each year as part of the Expo.

The Willamette Valley Ag Expo is open to visitors of all ages. Current FFA and 4-H participants are encouraged to attend.

Admission is \$4 per person and parking is free.

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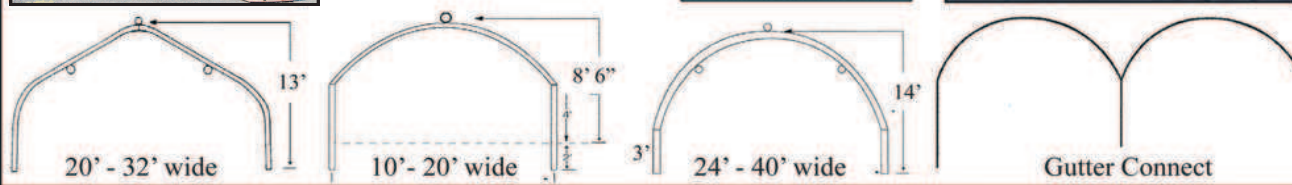
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