

# People & Places

## Telling ag's story on social media

Michele Payn encourages farmers to communicate on a personal level

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

Michele Payn describes herself as a farm girl, author, mom, science enthusiast, motivator and innovator.

She combines all those talents to be a “food translator,” someone who encourages farmers and non-farmers to meet together at the center of the food plate and share their commonalities.



Michele Payn

As the keynote speaker during the annual Idaho Ag Summit on Feb. 21, Payn encouraged farmers and other industry leaders to engage people on social media about food and farming issues.

Environmental activist groups are reaching millions of people through Facebook, Twitter and other social media outlets — and they are not telling people things about agriculture that are friendly toward the industry, she said.

“Do you think PETA is putting any (positive) images out about farmers and ranchers?” she asked. “If I want the



Submitted Photo

Author, self-described farm girl and “food translator” Michele Payn with her cows on her central Indiana farm.

right story to be told about how I’m taking care of my animals the right way, I have to be participating in the conversation.”

### Here to stay

Social media conversations about food and farming are happening with or without farmers, Payn said.

“Maybe we all wish it would go away,” she said. “But it’s here to stay and it’s having a substantial influence over your future.”

As an example of how much misinformation there is about farming and food, Payn pointed to peppers with a non-GMO label on them.

“Have there ever been

GMO peppers? No,” she said. “Does Suzie Q. Consumer know that? No. How is she ever going to know that? There’s no question social media has a lot of nonsense on it. So where is the sense going to come from if it’s not from you?”

### Giving a voice

Payn, whose second book, “Food Truths from Farm to Table” comes out March 20, grew up on a dairy farm in Michigan and now resides on a small farm in central Indiana with her daughter.

She founded a company, Cause Matters Corp., as a way to “give a voice to the farmers who feed the world.”

Payn encourages farmers to connect with people on a personal level and not “bash them over the head” with facts and science.

“What I always try to encourage them to do is not data dump or puke science on people’s shoes but to connect on a human level,” she said. “Food is a deeply personal choice (and) cramming facts and science down people’s throats closes ears.”

### Personal level

Connecting on a personal level will enable farmers to reach more people, Payn said. “It’s time to change the conversation, folks,” she said.



## Western Innovator

### Michele Payn

Title: “Food translator,” farm girl, mother, author

Home: Central Indiana

Age: 47

Professional: Bachelor’s degrees in animal science and agricultural communications from Michigan State University

Website: [www.causematters.com](http://www.causematters.com)

“We have to look at this a little bit differently.”

Idaho State Department of Agriculture Director Celia Gould said Payn’s message “really resonated with me.”

“I think it’s critical to our industry to explain what we do and why we do it,” she said. “We have to be better advocates of our industry.”

Idaho Barley Commission Administrator Kelly Olson said what she took away from Payn’s presentation is that “not only do we need to have a fuller engagement on the social media platform but we probably need to retool our message. That was enlightening to me.”

## Small farm conference helps attendees thrive

By JAN JACKSON  
For the Capital Press

CORVALLIS, Ore. — New and experienced small farm enthusiasts made up the near-capacity crowd at the 17th Annual Oregon Small Farm Conference Feb. 18 on the Oregon State University campus.

The sessions were geared toward farmers, agricultural professionals, food policy advocates, students and farmers’ market managers.

Attendees could go to some of the 27 sessions offered throughout the day and had access to 45 industry vendors, an industry-rich resource bookstore, a breakfast and lunch of local foods and “Think and Drink” information-sharing sessions throughout the day.

First-time attendee Sue Delventhal came with her husband, Joerg, and their 13-year-old son, Tim.

“This not only is our first conference, but we are new to farming,” Delventhal said. “Two-and-one-half years ago, Joerg and I followed our dream and bought five acres on a 1,400-foot elevation ridge



Jan Jackson/For the Capital Press

As new farmers and first-time conference attendees, Sue and Joerg Delventhal with their son, Tim, focused on organic weed management and dryland farming techniques Feb. 18 at the 2017 Small Farm Conference in Corvallis, Ore.

on Chehalem Mountain near Newberg. The property is heavily wooded, which almost makes us more like homesteaders than farmers.”

She heard about the conference after a visit to the OSU Yamhill Extension office in McMinnville.

“After attending, I saw that it wouldn’t matter who you were or what you were doing, you could find something there

of value,” she said. “My priority was the session on organic weed management and I was really impressed with what I was able to learn. I know now that I have basically two types of weeds, that I need to do more mulching and I need to do a lot more studying on the subject.”

Joerg was most interested in the dryland farming session. “We have a great loam soil

### Online

For more information, visit [smallfarmconference.org](http://smallfarmconference.org).

but living on top of a mountain gives us water issues,” she said. “Because I’m the one home in the daytime, I am able to do a lot of the farm work but Joerg and Tim get called in on all of the big muscle jobs.”

The conference started in Eugene in 2000 and moved to Corvallis two years later.

“There were 50 at the first one, then 180, 240, 800 and today there were 925,” Chrissy Lucas, one of the event coordinators, said. “Some people come every year, and some come if there are specific sessions they need. First-timers made up 40 percent of the attendees this year.”

Featured among the presenters this year were farmer-authors Ben Hartman of Clay Bottom Farm in Goshen Ind., and Josh Volk of Slow Hand Farm near Portland, Ore.

The books “The Lean Farm: How to Minimize

Waste, Increase Efficiency and Maximize Value and Profits with Less Work” by Hartman and “Compact Farms: 15 Proven Plans for Market Farms on 5 Acres or Less: Includes Detailed Farm Layouts for Productivity and Efficiency” by Volk are available at Amazon.com.

“Our goal is to bring people together to help solve problems of small-scale farming,” Garry Stephenson, OSU Extension small farms specialist and small farms program coordinator, said. “Both of our featured presenters drew 200 to 250 people each in their sessions.”

He said the target market for the conference is “both young people who are interested in and already doing it and an older group of people who are doing it as a second career.”

“We are trying to help them with profit, viability and, most of all, show them ways to stay nimble,” Stephenson said. “As soon as we get this conference evaluated, we’ll start on the next one set for Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018.”

## Calendar

Sponsored by:



**GASES / WELDING / SAFETY / FIRE**  
www.oxarc.com  
20 Northwest Locations  
1-800-765-9055

To submit an event go to the Community Events calendar on the home page of our website at [www.capitalpress.com](http://www.capitalpress.com) and click on “Submit an Event.” Calendar items can also be mailed to Capital Press, 1400 Broadway St. NE, Salem, OR 97301 or emailed to [newsroom@capitalpress.com](mailto:newsroom@capitalpress.com).

### Monday, March 6

Exploring the Small Farm Dream. 5:30-8:30 p.m. OSU Extension Auditorium, 569 Haley Road, Central Point, Ore. This is the first of a three-session course that provides an excellent framework to help new farmers assess their skills and interests, learn the realities of farm business ownership and become connected to local resources. The aim is to help those thinking about small-scale commercial farming learn what it will take to start and manage a farm business, and decide whether that is something they really want to pursue. Cost: \$75 per person; \$100 per couple. Website: <http://bit.ly/JacksonSmallFarmDream>

### Wednesday, March 8

Taxes and Succession Planning. Noon-1 p.m. Join us for a free online webinar and an introduction to how planning ahead for estate and gift taxes can help address family and business needs and meet retirement goals for the cur-

rent generation. Presented by: Carol Wachter and Heather Tomsick, Deloitte Tax LLP, and the Austin Family Business Program, Oregon State University. 800-859-7609, <http://bit.ly/2gW7Kjq>

### Thursday, March 9

OFRF’s 20th Annual Organic Benefit Luncheon. 10:45 a.m.-2 p.m. City National Grove of Anaheim, 2200 East Katella Ave., Anaheim, Calif. The Organic Farming Research Foundation celebrates its 20th anniversary. Keynote speaker will be Kathleen Merrigan, executive director of sustainability at George Washington University and former deputy secretary of the USDA. She helped write the law establishing national standards for organic food. Cost: \$100. <http://bit.ly/2lsre2h>

Small Farms and Community Food Systems Workshop Series. 6-8:30 p.m. University of Idaho Extension, 2200 Michigan Ave., Orofino, Idaho. This is the first of three Thursday evening workshops. Topic is growing and marketing tree fruits, berries and table grapes featuring Mike and Joan Mount, Green Things Nursery. Please mail registrations with payment to UI Extension Workshop Fund, 2200 Michigan Ave., Orofino, ID 83544 prior to the workshop. Sign-in will begin at 5:30 each evening. Seating is limited to 25 people. Cost: \$5 per

workshop or \$10 for all three.

### Thursday-Sunday March 9-12

Natural Products Expo West, Anaheim Convention Center, Marriott and Hilton hotels, 800 W. Katella Ave., Anaheim, Calif. [www.expowest.com](http://www.expowest.com)

### Saturday, March 11

Northwest Bison Association annual meeting. 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Forest Grove Senior Center, 2037 Douglas St., Forest Grove, Ore. The NWBA annual meeting will focus on small-scale bison ranching and facility setup and lots of stories from ranchers that have seen everything from tires as a fence to our setups and everything in between. Dr. Richard Veeman with Veterinary Services of Oregon will speak on his experience with bison along with Pat Fitzgerald with Fitzgerald Corral. A ranch tour of the L Bar T Bison Ranch is included. Pre-registration is preferred but not required. [www.nwbisonassociation.com](http://www.nwbisonassociation.com)

### Monday, March 13

Exploring the Small Farm Dream. 5:30-8:30 p.m. OSU Extension Auditorium, 569 Haley Road, Central Point, Ore. This is the second of a three-session course that provides an excellent framework to help new farmers assess their skills and interests, learn the realities of

farm business ownership and become connected to local resources. The aim is to help those thinking about small-scale commercial farming learn what it will take to start and manage a farm business, and decide whether that is something they really want to pursue. Cost: \$75 per person; \$100 per couple. Website: <http://bit.ly/JacksonSmallFarmDream>

### Wednesday, March 15

Pudding River Meeting. 6:30-8 p.m. Seven Brides Brewing Co., 990 N. First St., Silverton, Ore. Meet the Pudding River Watershed Council Board and hear a presentation by Susan Barnes, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife region wildlife biologist. Sponsored by the watershed council, ODFW, and the Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District.

Agricultural Biodiversity on Farms: Conservation Practices Working for Western Farmers. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. McMenemy’s Edgefield, 2126 SW Halsey St. Troutdale, Ore. A first-of-its-kind conference on the benefits of agricultural biodiversity in Western farming systems and the practices that support it. Sponsored by the Oregon State University Integrated Plant Protection Center, the Xerces Society and Oregon Tiith. <http://bit.ly/2kpWRsK>

### Thursday, March 16

Small Farms and Community Food Systems Workshop Series. 6-8:30 p.m. University of Idaho Extension, 2200 Michigan Ave., Orofino, Idaho. This is the second of three Thursday evening workshops. Topic is beekeeping, honey production, pollination and bee biology featuring Pat Ball of Ball Honey Co. Please mail registrations with payment to UI Extension Workshop Fund, 2200 Michigan Ave., Orofino, ID 83544 prior to the workshop. Sign-in will begin at 5:30 each evening. Seating is limited to 25 people. Cost: \$5 per workshop or \$10 for all three.

Building Family Business Value from the Inside Out. 7:30 to 9 a.m. BridgePort BrewPub, 1313 NW Marshall St., Portland. Much can be done to build the value of the business from inside the enterprise, and the earlier the process begins, the more sustainable the results will be. In addition to building value, most businesses become more efficient and profitable along the way. Presented by Francis Brown, Key Private Bank and the Austin Family Business Program, Oregon State University. 800-859-7609, <http://bit.ly/2gr3KCO>

## Capital Press

Established 1928  
Board of directors  
Mike Forrester  
Steve Forrester  
Kathryn Brown  
Susan Rana  
Mike Omeg

### Capital Press Managers

John Perry .....Publisher  
Joe Beach .....Editor  
Elizabeth Yutzie Sell..... Advertising Director  
Carl Sampson.....Managing Editor  
Barbara Nipp ..... Production Manager  
Samantha McLaren..... Circulation Manager

Entire contents copyright © 2017  
EO Media Group  
dba Capital Press

An independent newspaper  
published every Friday.

Capital Press (ISSN 0740-3704) is published weekly by EO Media Group, 1400 Broadway St. NE, Salem OR 97301.

Periodicals postage paid at Portland, OR, and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: send address changes to Capital Press, P.O. Box 2048 Salem, OR 97308-2048.

### To Reach Us

Circulation..... 800-882-6789  
Email..... [Circulation@capitalpress.com](mailto:Circulation@capitalpress.com)  
Main line ..... 503-364-4431  
Fax ..... 503-370-4383  
Advertising Fax ..... 503-364-2692

### News Staff

**N. California**  
Tim Hearden ..... 530-605-3072

**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

**E Washington**  
Matthew Weaver ..... 509-688-9923

**Oregon**  
Eric Mortenson ..... 503-412-8846  
Mateusz Perkowski ..... 800-882-6789

**Graphic artist**  
Alan Kenaga..... 800-882-6789

### To Place Classified Ads

Ad fax ..... 503-364-2692  
or ..... 503-370-4383  
Telephone (toll free)..... 866-435-2965  
Online ..... [www.capitalpress.com/classifieds](http://www.capitalpress.com/classifieds)

### Subscriptions

Mail rates paid in advance  
Easy Pay U.S. \$3.75/month (direct withdrawal from bank or credit card account)  
1 year U.S. .... \$49.99  
2 years U.S. .... \$89.99  
1 year Canada ..... \$275  
1 year other countries..... call for quote  
1 year Internet only ..... \$49.99  
1 year 4-H, FFA students and teachers .... \$30  
9 months 4-H, FFA students & teachers ..... \$25  
Visa and Mastercard accepted

### To get information published

**Mailing address:**  
Capital Press  
P.O. Box 2048  
Salem, OR 97308-2048

**News:** Contact the main office or news staff member closest to you, send the information to [newsroom@capitalpress.com](mailto:newsroom@capitalpress.com) or mail it to “Newsroom,” c/o Capital Press. Include a contact telephone number.

**Letters to the Editor:** Send your comments on agriculture-related public issues to [opinions@capitalpress.com](mailto:opinions@capitalpress.com), or mail your letter to “Opinion,” c/o Capital Press. Letters should be limited to 300 words. Deadline: Noon Monday.

### Capital Press ag media

[www.capitalpress.com](http://www.capitalpress.com)  
[www.FarmSeller.com](http://www.FarmSeller.com)  
[marketplace.capitalpress.com](http://marketplace.capitalpress.com)  
[www.facebook.com/capitalpress](http://www.facebook.com/capitalpress)  
[www.facebook.com/farmseller](http://www.facebook.com/farmseller)  
[twitter.com/capitalpress](http://twitter.com/capitalpress)  
[www.youtube.com/capitalpressvideo](http://www.youtube.com/capitalpressvideo)

### Index

Dairy ..... 14  
Idaho ..... 9  
Markets ..... 13  
Opinion ..... 6  
Oregon ..... 7  
Washington ..... 10

### Correction policy

Accuracy is important to Capital Press staff and to our readers.

If you see a misstatement, omission or factual error in a headline, story or photo caption, please call the Capital Press news department at 503-364-4431, or send email to [newsroom@capitalpress.com](mailto:newsroom@capitalpress.com).

We want to publish corrections to set the record straight.