

People & Places

Farmers strike out on their own

Bowman-Brown, partners put values to work on Idaho organic operation

By SEAN ELLIS
Capital Press

BOISE — Until he started working on a farm, Alex Bowman-Brown often questioned the value of his previous jobs, which included a variety of occupations.

"I always kind of questioned every job I'd done. Was there really a point to me doing it?" he said.

But then he volunteered at an organic farm about seven years ago and the questions stopped.

"Farming wasn't something I could question the meaning of," said Bowman-Brown, 35. "It's essential. Food is something that everyone needs. It's also a way for me to be a land steward and do something that benefits the community, and I can't question the value of it."

After working on several organic farms during summers in Montana and Washington, Bowman-Brown moved to the Boise area in 2015 and began working at Peaceful Belly Farm, an organic operation in the Dry Creek Valley just north of Boise.



Sean Ellis/Capital Press

Alex Bowman-Brown sells vegetables to customers at the Boise Farmers' Market on Nov. 4. After questioning the value of several previous jobs, he has found his niche as an organic farmer.

After a year, he and two other farmworkers employed there decided to start their own operation, Fiddler's Green Farm, a small certified organic farm that grows garlic, flowers and vegetables on 6 acres just down the road from Peaceful Belly.

The farm grew 180 types of vegetables last year.

"It's a huge, diverse array of mixed vegetables" that requires a spreadsheet to keep track of, Bowman-Brown said.

Their products are sold at

the Boise Farmers' Market, directly to Boise restaurants and at the Boise Co-op. They also have a Community Supported Agriculture program.

Bowman-Brown co-owns the farm with Justin Moore, a Vermont native who has worked on several organic farms around the country, and Davis McDonald, a native Boise resident who has a background in wholesale flower sales.

Nampa farmer Janie Burns, president of the Boise Farmers' Market board of

directors, said the three are a great example of young farmers who put in their time on the farm and then struck out on their own when they saw a niche opportunity open up.

"I think it's wonderful that a group of young farmers saw a market and are using their professional skills to bring some really beautiful vegetables to the valley," she said. "It's a great example of young people kind of doing their time learning the craft and then striking out with fingers crossed."



Western Innovator

Alex Bowman-Brown

Occupation: Co-owner, Fiddler's Green Farm, Dry Creek Valley

Age: 35

Born: Helena, Mont.

Bowman-Brown said the trio felt confident there was a local market to support their dream but admitted that starting their own farm involved a good dose of chance.

"We knew that the market in Boise was pretty open and we knew we could probably sell stuff but we didn't know how well it would work," he said. "It was definitely a big risk."

He said their goal is not necessarily to become bigger but to get better at what they're doing now.

"Instead of getting big, we want to get really dialed in and make it a well-oiled machine," he said.

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We want to publish corrections to set the record straight.

Oregon Make It With Wool contest winners named

By JAN JACKSON
For the Capital Press

THE DALLES, Ore. — An enthusiastic audience cheered on the 50-plus contestants who competed in the 70th Annual Oregon Make It With Wool contest held Oct. 28.

Traditionally held during the Oregon Sheep Growers Association annual convention, the event took place during the Columbia Gorge Fiber Festival on the Columbia Gorge Community College campus in The Dalles. Children and adults of both sexes competed in the event. Sponsors included the Oregon Sheep Growers Association, Oregon Sheep Commission and Pendleton Woolen Mills.

The first-place Senior winner was 19-year-old Sara Treichel of The Dalles. The first-place Junior winner was 16-year-old Becca Ziegler of Cloverdale, and the first-place adult winner was Quinn Hanna of LaGrande.

They will represent Oregon in the national competition in San Antonio, Texas, during the American Sheep Industry Association Convention on Jan. 31-Feb. 3.

The first place Pre-Teen winner, which does not advance to the national competition, was 10-year-old Tora Jo Timinsky from The Dalles.

Treichel and Ziegler will model in



Jan Jackson/For the Capital Press

Quinn Hanna, of LaGrande, won the Adult Oregon Make It With Wool contest. She will compete in the national contest in San Antonio, Texas.

the national competition while Hanna will compete by submitting her garment, photos and a video.



Jan Jackson/For the Capital Press

From left, Sara Treichel, of The Dalles, was the first place Oregon Make It With Wool Senior winner and Becca Ziegler, of Cloverdale, was the first-place Junior winner. They will represent Oregon at the National Make It With Wool Contest during the American Sheep Industry Association Convention in February.

Chandra Worman, director of Oregon MIWW contest since 2012 and National MIWW fashion show direc-

tor since 2013, was thrilled to see this year's competition was such a success.

"I set a goal of 50 contestants and 60 entered," she said. "It took a lot of volunteers and sponsors to put it on but it was definitely one of our best."

Contestants were judged on quality of construction, fit, poise and marketability of the outfit.

"Years ago, it was common to see business suits in the Junior and Senior categories, but now it has shifted to age-appropriate garments that reflect the contestant's lifestyle," Worman said. "Sara won with houndstooth wool skirt and skirt length vest ensemble, Becca won with a wool skirt and a hooded wool coat made from a Pendleton Woolen Mills Melton and Tora Jo's outfit was a wool summer dress."

Hanna, a first-year seamstress whose daughter challenged her to enter the contest, won with a pencil wool skirt and open front vest.

In addition to other prizes, each contestant received 1½ yards of Pendleton wool fabric, which many will use in the garment they enter next year, Worman said.

The 2018 Oregon MIWW contest will be at The Dalles Middle School on Oct. 27; deadline for entry is Sept. 20. For more information, visit oregonmiww.com or contact Chandra Worman at cwloves2sew@yahoo.com.

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Saturday-Sunday Nov. 11-12

OFB Young Farmers & Ranchers Leadership Conference. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. Oregon Farm Bureau office, 1320 Capitol St. NE, Salem. Keynote speakers will be Kim Bremmer of Ag Inspirations, a nationally recognized motivational speaker who will discuss communication and advocacy in agriculture, and Derek Pangelinan of Derek Rey Consulting, the developer of "The 6 Perspectives of Leadership," a model for teaching leadership skills. Speakers include Mary Anne Cooper, OFB Public Policy Counsel; Jenny Dresler, OFB Director of State Public Policy; Doug Hoffman, Wilco president and CEO; Joanne Humphrey of Aldrich CPAs and Advisors; Sarah Brown of Oregon Tilt; Andrea Kraemer of Northwest Farm Credit Services; John Williams of Oregon State University Extension, Walla Walla County; Jana Peterson of the Oregon Department of Forestry; and Stacy Davies, Country Natural Beef and Roaring Springs Ranch. Cost: \$40 for Farm Bureau members age 16-35. Website: http://oregonfb.org/yfconference

Tuesday, Nov. 14

Big Idaho Potato Harvest Meeting, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Shoshone-Bannock Hotel and Events Center, 777 Bannock Trail, Fort Hall, Idaho. Or-

ganized by the Idaho Potato Commission, the meeting includes other potato organizations and presentations on topics of interest to the industry. Website: https://idahopotato.com/industry/harvest-meeting

Tuesday-Wednesday Nov. 14-15

Washington Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Yakima Convention Center, 10 N. Eighth St., Yakima, Wash. Website: www.wsfb.com

Tuesday-Thursday Nov. 14-16

Willamette Valley Ag Expo, Linn County Fair & Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road E, Albany, Ore. The expo is over 250,000 square feet of exhibitors, equipment, seminars, classes, food and fun. The Ag expo is put on each year by the Willamette Valley Ag Association. The WVAA is a nonprofit and proceeds from the Ag Expo go toward the association's college scholarships. Hours are 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Wednesday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday. Website: www.wvaexpo.com

Wednesday-Thursday Nov. 15-16

Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association Annual Conference. Three Rivers Convention Center, 7016 W. Grandridge Blvd., Kennewick, Wash. Join other growers, vendors, and support sponsors for talks about the industry, breakout speakers, and social events. Website: http://pnva.org/

Thursday, Nov. 16

Four-Part Farm and Ranch Succession Workshop 6-8:30 p.m. Online

or Clackamas Community College Harmony Campus, 7738 SE Harmon Road, Milwaukie, Ore. Learn from an attorney, an accountant, an appraiser, a banker, the director of Oregon State University's Austin Family Business Program and farmers who've been through the process. Receive free one-on-one succession counseling sessions between each event. Part two of four parts. Cost: Free. Website: http://bit.ly/2elYcPx

Friday, Nov. 17

Denim and Diamonds Dinner Auction. 5-9 p.m. Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Portland. This is the premier fundraiser for Oregon Aglink. Website: aglink.org

Saturday, Nov. 18

Women in Agriculture Conference. The 2017 conference is a one-day event held simultaneously in 39 locations. Washington: Bremerton, Chehalis, Colville, Coupeville, Des Moines, Elma, Everett, Goldendale, Mount Vernon, Nespalem, Olympia, Pasco, Port Angeles, Pullman, Raymond, Republic, Ritzville, Spokane, Vancouver, Walla Walla, Wenatchee and Yakima. Idaho: Bonners Ferry, Caldwell, McCall, Salmon, Sandpoint and Twin Falls. Oregon: La Grande, Redmond, Roseburg, Salem and The Dalles. Montana: Broadus, Great Falls and Missoula. Alaska: Delta Junction, Fairbanks and Palmer. Website: www.WomenInAg.wsu.edu

Saturday-Sunday Nov. 18-19

Thanksgiving "Before & After" Weekend Festivals. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Redhawk Vineyard & Winery, 2995 Michigan City Lane NW, Salem, Ore. Join us for wine and barrel tasting, delicious food and our incredible view. We will be serving our popular tri-tip sandwiches, Betty's famous butternut squash soup, homemade sausage, smoked salmon pate and cheeses. Meet the winemaker, sample our current selection of wines and barrel taste a future release. All included with \$10 tasting fee. Website: redhawkwine.com

Friday-Sunday Nov. 24-26

Thanksgiving "Before & After" Weekend Festivals. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Redhawk Vineyard & Winery, 2995 Michigan City Lane NW, Salem, Ore. Join us for wine and barrel tasting, delicious food and our incredible view. We will be serving our popular tri-tip sandwiches, Betty's famous butternut squash soup, homemade sausage, smoked salmon pate and cheeses. Meet the winemaker, sample our current selection of wines and barrel taste a future release. All included with \$10 tasting fee. Website: redhawkwine.com

Tuesday-Thursday Nov. 28-30

Montana Grain Growers Association Convention and Trade Show. Best Western Heritage Inn, 1700 Fox Farm Road, Great Falls, Mont. With nearly 900 in attendance, a dynamic and educational agenda, and a full trade show with over 70 exhibitors, the MGGA Convention is one of Montana's largest agricultural gatherings.

Website: mgga@mgga.org

Tuesday-Friday Nov. 28-Dec. 1

Oregon Water Resources Congress Annual Conference. Best Western Hood River Inn, 1108 E Marina Drive, Hood River, Ore. Website: https://owrc.org/

Wednesday-Friday Nov. 29-Dec. 1

Farm Fair Ag and Tradeshow. Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center, 1705 E. Airport Road, Hermiston, Ore. The event is a partnership with the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce and the Oregon State University Hermiston Agriculture Research and Extension Center. Local and regional agriculture-related businesses will display their services and products both inside and outside the center. Topics and sessions include the Oregon Bee Project, Pollinator Workshop, Pesticides, Water, Potato Production, Organic Session, Cereal Session and more. Website: hermistinchamber.com

Thursday, Nov. 30

Four-Part Farm and Ranch Succession Workshop 6-8:30 p.m. Online or Clackamas Community College Harmony Campus, 7738 SE Harmon Road, Milwaukie, Ore. Learn from an attorney, an accountant, an appraiser, a banker, the director of Oregon State University's Austin Family Business Program and farmers who've been through the process. Receive free one-on-one succession counseling sessions between each event. Part three of four parts. Cost: Free. Website: http://bit.ly/2elYcPx