

Nursery serves dual purpose for this Oregon farm

By **DESIREE BERGSTROM**
Capital Press

CANBY, Ore. — Morning Shade Farm began nearly 25 years ago, when Jim Geiselman and his wife, Kasi, decided they wanted to move to the country to raise their kids.

The farm lives up to its name, as cars make a turn off of Barnards Road in Canby, Ore., and onto a long gravel driveway that meanders through large trees, keeping the road almost fully in the shade.

As cars approach a large red barn, they are guided by small signs to dirt parking near the rows of blueberries.

The farm operates commercial and U-pick blueberry operations each year as well as a nursery operation that produces between 30,000 and 50,000 berry plants each year, Geiselman said.

The nursery is a small operation, Geiselman said.



Desiree Bergstrom/Capital Press

Jim Geiselman, owner of Morning Shade Farm, said that the nursery grows about 20 varieties of blueberries as well as other types or berries.

“We are mostly targeting ... that niche of people that big people don't want to really deal with. The backyard growers (and) the small farmers,” he said.

The nursery portion of the farm

sells wholesale and retail, Geiselman said. They don't ship anywhere, so all sales are directly from the nursery.

It's not only about blueberries, though.

“We have several other types of

berries besides the blueberry. Blueberry is our main sale. We have several varieties of raspberries and currants and gooseberries,” he said. While the nursery grows mainly berries it also has a few other items such as kiwi and grapes.

The nursery serves a dual purpose for the farm, Geiselman said. Partially the nursery is a diversified piece of the business to make money, but it also supports what they do on the farm.

As an example, Geiselman said that at the nursery they are grafting orchard trees to plant on the farm so they can have a cider orchard.

“That is kind of how we got started in blueberries. ... We were propagating our own” and then ended up selling some of the plants, he said.

When they first started, they were growing perennial ground covers, but after doing some research they decided that blueberries would be a good fit for them, Geiselman said, mentioning

also how they generally liked blueberries.

Now, “We mainly grow (the blueberry plants) from liner stock that we buy from other nurseries. We do also propagate hardwood cuttings off of some of our varieties,” he said.

Liner stock is a term for young plants that are going to be grown for one or more seasons at the nursery before they are sold.

With blueberries, Geiselman said, his nursery is different than, for example, a traditional ornamental nursery selling flowers, because the blueberry plants take a lot longer to grow.

They sell the plants at about two years old, but the nursery also has plants that are older. Geiselman mentioned that allowing plants to bear fruit before they are ready isn't great and they pick the flowers off to prevent the fruit from growing. “You usually don't want to let them bear fruit until they are 3 or 4 years old,” he said.



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