

People & Places

Urban farmers make it work in residential area

Scott and Dixie Edwards farm close to their customers

By **DON JENKINS**
Capital Press

LONGVIEW, Wash. — For more than 25 years, Scott and Dixie Edwards have farmed where you wouldn't expect it.

They have 7 acres two blocks outside Longview in a residential neighborhood at the foot of a big hill named Mount Solo. There's a church up the street, and Wal-Mart and McDonald's are close by.

In this case, the farm benefits by being near people. Scott Edwards, 64, and Dixie Edwards, 66, are tapping into the desire that some consumers want to buy locally and eyeball their farmer and the farm.

Beginning after the Fourth of July and continuing into mid-fall, the Edwardses deliver boxes of fruits and vegetables to customers each week. In the box is a letter written by Dixie Edwards with cooking tips. "If you have never roasted zucchini, it is worth a try," she advised in July.

Other customers come to the farm to pick up produce. They are young and old and in-between. A requirement appears to be the willingness to try different vegetables.

"We do a little bit of everything," Scott Edwards said. "You have to be into eating healthy."

Nursery first

They started the farm and a native-plant nursery in 1993. The nursery brings in more money. The couple



Don Jenkins/Capital Press

Dixie and Scott Edwards stand in a greenhouse planted to garlic at their farm in Longview, Wash. They've found a niche selling directly to customers.

reports, however, that after a quarter of a century, the food operation is catching on.

"Farming was always more of a lifestyle than a business, and now it's becoming more of a business," he said. "It's finally becoming profitable."

For years, they sold produce and plants at weekend farmers' markets in Longview and Astoria, Ore. Loading and unloading goods was physically hard, and working the markets left no time to rest from the week's labors. "It was a killer," Scott Edwards said.

Five years ago, they started selling food to members of an Episcopal church who signed up to receive weekly boxes of fruits and vegetables. After two years of that, they looked to expand into community supported agriculture.

The business didn't grow; it exploded. Organizations in the private and public sectors

got interested. More than 50 employees at the local community college signed up for shares.

"It was too much," Scott Edwards said. "Everything was good. It was just stressful as heck."

The interest from institutions in participating in community sustained agriculture waxes and wanes, making planning difficult, they said. The past two years have been smoother. More customers are coming to the farm to buy produce, and it's best when the shoppers come to them, they said.

'Rural Eden'

Scott Edwards grew up in Longview. He and his wife farm land that has been in the family since 1962. His parents bought it to farm, raise cattle and rent out the house on the property. Scott Edwards said it was his second home growing up and calls it a "rural Eden

on the outskirts of town."

Dixie Edwards also lived in Longview as a girl until her family bought a farm near Stella along the Lower Columbia River and not far from Longview. They went to the same high school, two grades apart, and were married in 1988. Scott was working for a conservation district in Kitsap County, while Dixie worked in water-quality programs for the county and later a public utility district.

In 1989, they rented land in Kitsap County for a native-plant nursery and a few years later moved to Longview and opened their business, Watershed Garden Works, which combined the nursery with an organic farm. "This was our way back to the farm," Dixie Edwards said.

Scott Edwards studied organic agriculture in the 1970s at The Evergreen State College in Olympia. "Doing something organic was almost



Western Innovator

Scott and Dixie Edwards

Occupations: Owners of Watershed Garden Works, a farm and native-plant nursery in Longview, Wash.

Education: Dixie Edwards earned bachelor's and master's degrees in education from Washington State University; Scott Edwards attended The Evergreen State College and Clark Community College.

Family: Two grown daughters

like crackpot back in the day," he said.

The Edwardses say they're following organic practices, but haven't paid the fees and filed the paperwork to obtain certification. They said if they were marketing to a broader population they would, but their customers can see what they're doing.

At the farm and nursery, they employ two full-time and two part-time workers year-round, along with a couple of seasonal workers. Good help is hard to find, they said.

Many of their customers are new to the area, they said.

"I think Longview and (neighboring city) Kelso are going through a big change, like a lot of communities are," Scott Edwards said. "There are a lot of possibilities for farmers."

environmental and economic future. Speakers include Karen Ross of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, Frank Mitloehner of the University of California-Davis and other industry leaders. Website: <https://bit.ly/2OdfJF06>

Wednesday-Friday Nov. 28-30

Washington Small Fruit Conference & Lynden Ag Show. NW Washington Fairgrounds, 1775 Front St., Lynden, Wash. The Washington Small Fruit Conference is a three-day conference with the latest relevant research information delivered by the scientists performing the research. Lunches each day are provided. This conference is presented in association with the Lynden Ag Show, a trade show featuring vendors serving the small fruit community. Website: www.wasmallfruit.com

Tuesday-Thursday Dec. 4-6

86th Oregon Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Salem Convention Center, 200 Commercial St. SE, Salem, Ore. All voting and supporting members of Farm Bureau are welcome and encouraged to attend. Besides the grassroots OFB policymaking process, the convention offers a chance to learn about Farm Bureau's programs and priority issues, network, and socialize with farmers and ranchers from across the state. Website: <https://oregonfb.org/convention/>

Idaho Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Boise, Idaho. Idaho Farm Bureau members gather to learn about and discuss items pertaining to agriculture. A session is convened with delegates making policy coming from resolutions that generated from the grassroots of the membership. The delegates also vote for officers of the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation Board.

Tuesday-Friday Dec. 4-7

California Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Hilton San Diego Bayfront, San Diego, Calif. The California Farm Bureau's 100th annual meeting. Website: http://cfnb.com/storage/app/media/am_assets/2018_AM_RegForm.pdf

Wednesday, Dec. 12

Mid-Columbia CORE Pesticide Training. 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Columbia Gorge Community College Lecture Hall, Building 2, The Dalles, Ore. Morning topics include glyphosate, triclopyr and risk assessments. Afternoon topics include an update on laws and regulations and case studies and lessons learned. 4 pesticide credits are available. The class will satisfy CORE requirements or can be taken for 4 additional credits. Lunch will not be provided. Pre-registration is required. Cost: \$15 Website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/wasco>

Calendar

To submit an event go to the Community Events calendar on the home page of our website at 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. Include "Calendar" in the subject line.

Friday-Saturday Nov. 2-3

Farm & Food Expo. Spokane Community College, Spokane, Wash. More than 40 classes will be offered for small-scale farmers. The Washington State Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation is a title sponsor for the event. Website: <https://bit.ly/2eVxY63>

Monday, Nov. 5

Meridian FFA Scholarship Auction. 5:30-9 p.m. Meridian High School Career Technical Center, 1900 W Pine Ave., Meridian, Idaho. Join the Meridian FFA Alumni in raising money for Meridian FFA Chapter members in the West Ada School District to attend FFA trips and seniors to afford college. Enjoy a dinner, raffles, silent auction and live auction for a great cause. All auction proceeds directly benefit students of Meridian, Mountain View, Eagle, Centennial, and Rocky Mountain High Schools. To donate an item to the auction, please deliver it to the event location by 3 p.m. Friday, Nov. 2.

Monday-Wednesday Nov. 5-7

2018 Advances in Walnut Production Short Course. Activities and Recreation Center Ballroom, University of California-Davis. This course is designed for new and experienced growers as well as other industry members interested in commercial walnut production. Website: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/walnutshortcourse/>

Tuesday, Nov. 6

Water Rights Boot Camp. 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Keizer Community Center, 930 Chemawa Road NE, Keizer, Ore. This seminar will address water rights, title issues, transfers and other related issues. Sponsored by the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District. Cost: \$25 Website: <https://www.marion-swcd.net/>

Wednesday-Thursday Nov. 7-8

Pacific Northwest AGIE Expo and Tradeshow. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. TRAC Center, 6600 Burden Blvd., Pasco, Wash. Among the scheduled events are pesticide classes in English and Spanish, presentations and drone demonstrations. Website: www.washingtonagnetwork.com/pnw-agie/

Dairy West Annual Meeting. Boise Centre, Ninth and Front streets, Boise, Idaho. Guest speak-

ers Nov. 7 include former U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, now president and CEO of the U.S. Dairy Export Council and a Feeding America board member; Sara Dorland, managing partner at Ceres Dairy Risk Management; and Alison Van Eenennaam, University of California-Davis animal biotechnology and genomics researcher. A public showing of the film "Food Evolution" is slated at 7 p.m. Website: <https://dairywest.com/>

Wednesday-Friday Nov. 7-9

Weed Conference. Wenatchee Convention Center, 121 N. Wenatchee Ave., Wenatchee, Wash. The 68th conference provides information on all aspects of weed control and management. It covers crops of all kinds, turf and ornamental, vegetation management and aquatic. Website: www.weedconference.org

Thursday, Nov. 8

Food Safety Workshop. Hilton Garden Inn, 1741 Harrison St. N, Twin Falls, Idaho. Course: Preventive Controls for Human Food Course, PCQI certification. Cost: \$150 Website: www.fsnwllc.com

The Science of Overgrazing and How to Avoid It. 5:30-7 p.m. OSU Southern Oregon Research & Extension Center, Auditorium, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, Ore. Pastures can take a beating but only to a point. In this course you will learn the ecological theory of pasture plant communities and the detrimental nature of overgrazing. Harnessing this knowledge, we will then discuss practical strategies to maximize the productivity and profitability of your pasture and reduce problems with weeds and mud. This is an intermediate-level class, so some experience with pastures will be helpful but not required. This course will be taught by Gordon Jones, Ph.D., SOREC Extension Faculty. Cost: \$15. Website: <https://bit.ly/2SexA5H>

Friday-Sunday Nov. 9-11

Oregon Young Farmers & Ranchers Leadership Conference. Eagle Crest Resort, 1522 Cline Falls Road, Redmond, Ore. Open to Farm Bureau members ages 16-35, the conference is geared toward young people interested in improving their leadership and communication skills, learning about the most important issues impacting Oregon agriculture, gaining business tips from experts, networking with peers, and having fun. Website: <https://oregonfb.org/yfconference/>

Tilth Conference. Davenport Grand Hotel, 333 Spokane Falls Blvd., Spokane, Wash. Tilth Conference brings together hundreds of farmers, producers, researchers and food system professionals for a weekend of learning, building

relationships and sharing best practices for growing a healthy food system. The speakers will include Mai Nguyen, who grows heirloom, ethnic grains in Sonoma, Calif., and is the California Organizer for the National Young Farmers Coalition, and Audra Mulken, the founder of "The Female Farmer Project," a documentary project chronicling the rise of women working in agriculture. Website: www.tilthalliance.org

Monday-Wednesday Nov. 12-14

Idaho Cattle Association's Convention and Trade Show. Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, Idaho. On the agenda is a presentation by Celia Gould, ISDA director, and the Idaho Beef Council will update cattle producers on checkoff programs during lunch. <https://bit.ly/2YkGRya>

Tuesday-Wednesday Nov. 13-14

Washington Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Yakima Convention Center, 10 N Eighth St., Yakima, Wash. Among the speakers will be André-Denis Wright, dean of the College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences at Washington State University; Brian Hodges, senior attorney at the Pacific Legal Foundation; and Caroline Lobdell, executive director and clinical law professor at the Western Resources Legal Center. Website: <https://bit.ly/2OBTgge>

Tuesday-Thursday Nov. 13-15

Willamette Valley Ag Expo. Linn County Fair and Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road E, Albany, Ore. The Expo features 250,000 square feet of exhibits, seminars, antique farm equipment and the unique Dine Around Oregon progressive dinner. 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: <http://wvaexpo.com/>

Wednesday, Nov. 14

Big Idaho Potato Harvest Meeting. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Shoshone-Bannock Hotel and Event Center, 777 Bannock Trail, Fort Hall, Idaho. The meeting brings industry leaders together for a single post-harvest event to discuss the growing season, field trends and forecasts, and research. Website: <https://bit.ly/2IPiUY>

Wednesday-Thursday Nov. 14-15

Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association Annual Conference. Three Rivers Convention Center, 7016 W Grandridge Blvd., Kennewick, Wash. A pre-conference workshop on grower producer safety and a meeting on integrated on-ion pest and disease management will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 13. The main conference will take place on Wednesday and Thursday. Website: www.pnva.org

Wednesday-Saturday Nov. 14-17

Tri-State Grain Growers Convention. Sheraton Airport Hotel, 8235 NE Airport Way, Portland, Ore. USDA Special Trade Counsel Jason Hafemeister, USTR Chief Agricultural Negotiator Gregg Doud and a grain export market panel are among the many events featured on this year's agenda. Website: www.wawg.org

Thursday-Friday Nov. 15-16

Washington State Grape Society Annual Meeting and Trade Show. Church of the Nazarene, 500 N. Elm, Grandview, Wash. Thursday lunch is included in registration. Cost: \$80 Website: <https://www.grapesociety.org/annual-meeting.html>

Friday, Nov. 16

Denim and Diamonds Dinner Auction, 5-10 p.m. Salem Convention Center, 200 Commercial St. SE, Salem, Ore. Oregon Aglink hosts Denim & Diamonds, an awards dinner and auction, which raises funds for the Cultivating Common Ground initiative, ultimately supporting all of Aglink's programs like Adopt a Farmer and telling ag's story. This event serves to recognize those who have gone above and beyond in advocating the importance of agriculture to the economic, environmental and social well-being of the state of Oregon. Website: <http://www.aglink.org/event/denim-diamonds/>

Third Annual Post-Harvest Almond and Walnut UC IPM Workshop. 8-11 a.m. Chico Veterans Memorial Hall, 554 Rio Lindo Ave., Chico, Calif. A panel of Sacramento Valley IPM and farm advisors will talk about the latest research, 2018 field observations and discuss key pest management issues. Website: sacvalleyorchards.com

Friday-Saturday Nov. 16-17

Fall Forage Festival. Benton County Fairgrounds and OSU Oldfield Animal Teaching Facility, Corvallis, Ore. Presenters will include Glenn Shewmaker, a University of Idaho Extension forage specialist; Steve Norberg, a Washington State University Extension forage specialist; Mylen Bohle, an Oregon State University forage specialist; and Jon Driver of Farm Credit Services. The annual Hay King Contest will be Saturday. Website: <https://www.oregonforage.org> or oregonhaygrowers.com

Tuesday-Wednesday Nov. 27-28

California Dairy Sustainability Summit. Sacramento Convention Center, 1400 J St., Sacramento, Calif. Learn how California's dairy families are leading the world in sustainable farming, and gain insight into the policies and technologies that will continue to drive innovation and help the industry improve its

Capital Press

Established 1928

Board of Directors

Mike Forrester
Steve Forrester
Kathryn Brown
Susan Rana
Harrison Forrester
Mike Omeg
Cory Bollinger
Jeff Rogers

Corporate Officers

Heidi Wright
Chief Operating Officer

Rick Hansen
Chief Financial Officer

Capital Press Managers

Joe BeachEditor & Publisher
Elizabeth Yutzie Sell....Advertising Director
Carl Sampson.....Managing Editor
Jessica BooneProduction Manager
Samantha McLaren....Circulation Manager

Entire contents copyright © 2018
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
Main line503-364-4431
Fax503-370-4383
Advertising Fax503-364-2692

News Staff

Idaho
Carol Ryan Dumas208-860-3898

Boise

Brad Carlson208-914-8264

Cent. Washington

Dan Wheat.....509-699-9099

W. Washington

Don Jenkins.....360-722-6975

E. Washington

Matthew Weaver509-688-9923

Oregon

George Perken406-560-1655
Mateusz Plowski800-882-6789

Graphic artist

Alan Kenaga.....800-882-6789

To Place Classified Ads

Ad fax503-364-2692
or503-370-4383
Telephone (toll free).....800-882-6789
Onlinewww.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 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, 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
www.FarmSeller.com
marketplace.capitalpress.com
www.facebook.com/capitalpress
www.facebook.com/farmseller
twitter.com/capitalpress
www.youtube.com/capitalpressvideo

Index

Dairy11
Livestock10
Markets13
Opinion6

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.

We want to publish corrections to set the record straight.