



# ON THE FARM



## GOV. KATE BROWN

**Occupation:** Governor of Oregon

**Age:** 61

**Born:** Torrejón de Ardoz, Spain, on a U.S. Air Force base where her father served.

**Hometown:** Arden Hills, Minn.

**Education:** Degree in environmental conservation and certificate in women's studies, University of Colorado at Boulder; law degree and certificate of environmental law, Northwestern School of Law at Lewis & Clark College in Portland.

**Public service:** Oregon House of Representatives, 1991-1997; Oregon Senate 1997-2009; Oregon Secretary of State 2009-2015. Became Oregon governor in 2015 and was elected to a second term that ends in 2023.

**Family:** Husband Dan Little (married Brown in 1997), retired in 2015 after a decades-long career in the U.S. Forest Service. Brown has two stepchildren (Dan's adult children), Dylan and Jessie.

Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press

Stephen Hagen, owner of Antiquum Farm, explains to Oregon Gov. Kate Brown how he grazes his sheep in the rows between winegrape vines. He uses electric wires similar to electric fencing to keep the sheep from damaging the vines.

## Oregon Gov. Kate Brown talks about rural and farming issues

By SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN  
Capital Press



Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press  
Brown with a livestock guardian dog at Antiquum Farm in Junction City, Ore.

JUNCTION CITY, Ore. — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown last week visited Antiquum Farm, a Willamette Valley vineyard and livestock operation owned by Stephen Hagen and his wife, Niki.

The governor was there at Hagen's invitation to learn more about Antiquum's vertically integrated business, sustainability goals and the benefits of grazing.

The farm, nestled in Junction City's rolling hills by Turnbow Creek, has grazing-based viticulture — rotational intensive grazing of Katahdin and Dorper sheep, Kunekune pigs, poultry and waterfowl among rows of Pinot noir and Pinot gris grapes to control weeds and boost soil health.

In addition to wine, the Hagens sell pasture-raised meats, eggs and honey, and their latest venture involves expanding their targeted grazing operation, using goats to graze private

forestland to reduce wildfire risk. As Brown toured the farm, she asked questions, trekked through pastures and forestland and petted a menagerie of farm animals.

During her time in office since 2015 as Oregon's 38th governor, Brown's policies — especially relating to climate change and business regulation — have been controversial, and her approaches have often generated criticism from many in the state's farming and rural communities.

After the tour, Brown sat down with Capital Press reporter Sierra Dawn McClain for an exclusive interview on issues of importance to farmers

and ranchers.

The text of the conversation has been edited for brevity and clarity.

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## Brown signs farmworker overtime pay bill

By SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN  
Capital Press

SALEM — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has signed into law House Bill 4002, which phases out the state's agricultural overtime pay exemption.

The new law establishes overtime pay requirements for agricultural workers in Oregon after 40 hours per week, with the requirements phased in over five years starting in 2023.

"I view this bill as an important step in the right direction, to correct a historic wrong," Brown wrote in a letter Friday to legislative leaders. "This policy will make a significant difference in



Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press File

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has signed a bill that will phase out the overtime exemption for farmworkers.

the lives of farmworkers and their families."

Under the law, farmworkers will be owed time-and-a-half wages after 55 weekly hours of work next year, after 48 hours of work in 2025-2026 and after 40 hours per week beginning in 2027.

Advocates welcomed the governor's signature, saying it enhances farmworkers' basic rights.

Critics, however, said they are "deeply disappointed" in the decision, which they predict will hurt farmers who receive prices set by global markets and can't afford a

steep increase in labor expenses.

Jeff Stone, executive director of the Oregon Association of Nurseries, said he expects the biggest losers will be small farms, dairy farms and highly seasonal operations — including nurseries and orchards — where workers put in long days during peak season.

Mary Anne Cooper, vice president of government affairs at Oregon Farm Bureau, said she believes farm employees will also lose out when employers can't afford to hire more workers or must offer workers fewer hours.

"We think this legislation will have devastating consequences for our family farms and their employees, will likely result in signifi-

cantly reduced farm employment in Oregon and is really going to change the landscape of Oregon agriculture," said Cooper.

In contrast, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, or PCUN, a Latino union, welcomed the governor's signature and is gearing up for implementation.

"PCUN will be working on educating farm laborers about the phased implementation and about how their employers can access the fully refundable tax credit," said Reyna Lopez, executive director of PCUN.

The tax credit Lopez referred to is included in the new law.

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## OSU selects first woman to serve as dean for College of Agricultural Sciences

By GEORGE PLAVEN  
Capital Press



Karl Maasdam/OSU

Staci Simonich is the first woman to serve as dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Oregon State University.

CORVALLIS, Ore. — Staci Simonich began her career at Oregon State University in 2001 as an assistant professor in the College of Agricultural Sciences, and has never looked back.

Over the years, she rose to a full professor in the college's chemistry and toxicology departments, where her lab research focused on human and environmental exposure to pesticides and other semi-volatile organic compounds.

In 2020, Simonich made history when she became the first woman to serve the college as executive associate dean, overseeing all academic

departments and branch experiment stations across the state.

Her journey culminated in March when she was promoted to dean, making history a second time as the first woman to hold the college's top job. She replaced Alan Sams, who left OSU to rejoin Texas A&M University.

"It means a great deal," Simonich said of breaking barriers within the college. "It's the recognition — and you see this across our state — how women are becoming the business owners, the leaders on farms and ranches, the leaders on all different parts of the agricultural community and commodities."

As of fall 2021, the College of Agricultural Sciences has 3,214

enrolled students. That includes 1,415 students enrolled in online courses.

Simonich said 60% of students in the college are women. According to the latest USDA Census of Agriculture, the number of female-operated farms nationwide increased 23% from 2012 to 2017, and the number of female producers increased 27%.

In Oregon, 44% of agricultural producers were women in 2017 — tied for the fourth-highest percentage with Maine and Massachusetts.

"You definitely see it happening now in agriculture," Simonich said. "Women are starting to be more evident."

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