

2022 FARWEST SHOW

‘Best plants and the best growers’

By **MOLLY CRUSE**
Capital Press

PORTLAND — This year marks the 49th anniversary of the Farwest Show, the largest nursery and horticulture show west of Texas.

The show typically attracts more than 5,000 visitors and 400 exhibitors each year.

Last year, however, the COVID pandemic and accompanying public health mandates decreased attendance by 26%.

“We’re still coming out of the pandemic,” said Allan Niemi, director of events for the Oregon Association of Nurseries, which produces the show. “Our goal this year is to just provide a solid experience for our attendees, for our exhibitors, and to get our footing back on track coming out of the pandemic. We want to give people a safe environment and get reconnected with the industry and with their fellow horticultural folks.”

The show will take place Aug. 24-26 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland.

Elizabeth Peters, vice president of The Peters Company, has been attending the Farwest Show since her introduction to the nursery industry 14 years ago. Peters will be one of the many panelists at the show this year. Her panel will include sharing strategies that business owners and industry professionals can apply to their organizations.

“I’m excited to come back,” Peters said. “The show is just magical. You have the best plants and the best growers. They prepare for months ahead of time to get this plant material that’s perfect to take to the trade show floor. But I think what is most striking about the show is the people.

It’s not about just showing up for the plants.”

Which is fitting as this year the Farwest Show team has been working hard to create an environment that invites reconnection, and opportunities for learning and networking.

On Wednesday, Aug. 24, the “Emergent Networking” event will take place, which encourages the next generation of industry professionals to meet, connect and share advice about succeeding in horticulture over appetizers and complimentary beverages. This is followed by a “Happy Hour” during which the exhibitor booth awards will be announced.

The following day, the show is hosting the “Women in Horticulture” networking event for the 10th consecutive year. This is followed by a “Pub Crawl” around Portland.

In addition to spotlighting nursery growers and pro-



Oregon Association of Nurseries

The Farwest Show attracts buyers from around the nation.

ducers, the show also features speakers such as Lloyd Nackley, an associate professor of nursery production and greenhouse management at Oregon State University. He will present his research on how nursery producers can adapt their growing strategies to extreme weather.

“You can come learn about product, but you can

also come and learn about the science-based production, too,” said Nackley. “The production systems in Oregon are innovative, and people like coming out and

seeing that and learning from the growers and hopefully learning from us, too. There are a lot of academics that are involved, not just myself, but breeders, pathologists, entomologists, who come in and share the science side, which is a neat aspect of the show.”

Nackley will also lead one of the innovation tours at the North Willamette Research & Extension Center.

The keynote speaker this year is Greg Bell. He is a nationally known motivational speaker and will speak Wednesday, Aug. 24, at 11 a.m.

“No matter what specific sector you come from, he will hit the mark,” said Heather Cyrus, the events and education manager at OAN. “Whether you’re a garden

center owner, or you’re out there planting plants, he’ll have a message that will resonate, that you can take back to your team.”

According to Niemi, although the nursery industry “thrived” during the pandemic due to the many people taking up gardening and landscaping, he believes Bell will be a welcome presence at the Farwest Show.

“Everyone has felt a lot of new pressures,” said Niemi. “So that’s one of the reasons why we chose Greg Bell. He has very strong, motivational aspects to him, but he’s also very grounded in applying that toward business. We hope that will help people navigate the new waters that we are coming out of and into the foreseeable future.”



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