

## Diggin' in the Dirt: Spring Hope

By Chip Bubl  
Oregon State University  
Extension Service – Columbia County

The OSU Extension Office is fully reopened. The best way to reach me directly is with the email below but calls are always welcome.

### Events:

**The Chronicle Home and Garden Show:** The Home and Garden show returns after several years. It will be at the Columbia County Fairgrounds on April 23 (10 am-5 pm) and 24 (11 am - 3 pm). There will be guest speakers (a number of garden speakers) and many displays.

**The Columbia County Master Gardeners™ Spring Fair** will also return after two years. It will be Saturday, April 30 from 9 am - 3 pm. There will 3,000 tomato plants, peppers, and garden related items by other vendors. It will be at the Columbia County Fairgrounds this year.

**Local Bee Group Meeting:** Thursday, May 5 at 6:00 pm there will be an in-person (at the OSU Extension office in St. Helens) and zoom Beekeepers meeting. To get the Zoom link, email columbiacountyoregonbeekeepers@gmail.com

**Growing a Drought Tolerant Home Landscape:** This program will be at the Vernonia Library on Wednesday, May 11, at 6:30 pm. Free and open to all. Chip Bubl, OSU Extension Service, is the speaker.

### Vegetable notes

Snow is in the forecast as this is being written. Our weather is getting more turbulent. But it is time to talk vegetables, since spring hope is part of a gardener's DNA.

Much of our cool-season crops (spinach, cabbage family, lettuce, etc.) can be either direct seeded or transplanted. For direct seeding, the soil temperature needs to get warmer. Raised beds naturally warm faster than non-raised bed spaces. This happens because the raised beds drain moisture so you don't have to heat as much water as you do on flat ground. You can also warm soil by placing clear plastic over the area you intend to plant. Given a couple of clear warmish days, the soil temperatures will bump up 10 or more degrees. This reduces germination time and lowers the chance of seed loss due to disease.

Once seedlings are up or transplanted, installation of some kind of covering structure over plants will hasten growth as well. Clear plastic will work to make a "mini" greenhouse but you have to be very aware if it might get too hot on clear days. That can "cook" plants. Those structures need to have the plastic removed or opened up for good air circulation on sunny days and then put back down for the evening. That is not true if you are using row covers.

European gardeners and chefs love radishes. But somehow, they have become less popular here. That is too bad as they are quite good for you. Radish seed needs to be planted about a half an inch deep. There are quite a few radish types and all do well here. The soils should be worked deeply and fertilized with your regular vegetable fertilizer of choice. A four foot row of radishes planted every 10-15 days throughout the summer will keep a family of four in radishes for the entire growing season. In the middle of the summer, they can get "woody" and "hot" so timely early harvest improves quality. They need to be



kept well-watered. The cabbage maggot fly larva (little maggots) love radishes. They can be stopped by growing the crop completely under row cover. An alternate, though less successful approach is to put coarse sand adjacent to the radish stems. The flies don't like to lay their eggs there. Cabbage maggot flies are not in everyone's garden so perhaps you wouldn't need to do anything for a couple of years.

Radishes can be eaten fresh or pickled for later use. Pickled radishes are a common addition to Vietnamese food like Bahn mi sandwiches and many other delicious dishes.

Speaking of larger root crops, they only do well if thinned. I know it is hard! But thin so that there are "three fingers" between each carrot, beet, turnip, and onion. For rutabagas (a very underappreciated root vegetable) increase the spacing to "four fingers". Large daikon radishes can be thinned like carrots.

This is the time to start tomato plants from seed. Wait another couple of weeks for peppers. Or buy both at the Master Gardener sale on April 30, from 9-3pm at the Columbia County Fairgrounds.

### Grapes for Vernonia

I think that Vernonia can grow grapes if the following conditions are met. First, the site needs to get full sun and good air circulation. We love our trees but the grapes don't. Second, the ground needs to be well-drained. A sunny south-facing hillside is ideal but other locations that meet these "tests" could do fine. Some table grape varieties that I think would do well include *Canadice*, *Swenson Red*, *New York Muscat*, *Interlaken*, *Himrod*, *Reliance*, and the series of *Mars*, *Jupiter*, *Venus* and *Saturn*. For wine grapes try *Reisling*, *Pinot gris*, *Marechal Foch*, and *Pinot Noir*.

### Free newsletter (what a deal!)

The Oregon State University Extension office in Columbia County publishes a monthly newsletter on gardening and farming topics (called *Country Living*) written/edited by yours truly. All you need to do is ask for it and it will be mailed or emailed to you. Call 503-397-3462 to be put on the list. Alternatively, you can find it on the web at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/> and click on newsletters.

**Take excess produce to the food bank, senior centers, or community meals programs. Cash donations to buy food are also greatly appreciated.**

**The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.**

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## Oregon's Private Forest Accord *continued from front page*

an approved Incidental Take Permit.

The HCP ensures that any anticipated take of a listed species will be minimized or mitigated by conserving the habitat upon which the species depends, thereby contributing to the recovery of the species as a whole, while also protecting private loggers from law suits under the ESA.

The HCP and an Incidental Take Permit is seen as a way to potentially improve outcomes for timber harvest, conservation, county revenues, and other public values.

The Accord excludes forestland owned by the nine federally recognized, Oregon-based Tribes but allows them to opt into the Habitat Conservation Plan. It also establishes an approach to identify forest road problems and make improvements, and establishes a process to adjust forest practices in the future if science indicates a need for change.

In addition to approving the Accord, the Legislature also approved SB 1546 which creates the Elliott State Research Forest by a vote of 50-8 in the House and 22-4 in the Senate. The 90,000 acre Elliott Forest is located in the Oregon Coast Range northeast of Coos Bay. Passage of the bill provides \$120 million to de-couple the forest from the Common School Fund, which releases the forest from its obligation to provide revenue for school funding. Protection of the Elliott State Forest has long been a goal of the conservation movement in Oregon.

Work on the Accord was initiated in 2019 when conservation organizations filed several ballot initiatives designed to protect forests and watersheds, followed by several counter measures filed by forest industry advocates. That led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two sides to drop the ballot measures and instead come to the table to negotiate, resulting in the finalizing of the Accord on October 30, 2021, which was heralded as 'the end of the Timber Wars' in Oregon.

"This agreement is an investment in the long-term viability and sustainability of our industry in Oregon," said Roseburg Forest Products President and CEO Grady Mulbery in a press release. "Through the Private Forest Accord, we minimize the risk of unscientific ballot measures and never-ending bills before the Legislature in favor of long-term certainty that allows us to maintain our commitment to our timberland resources in this state."

The goals of the Accord process were four-fold:

- Provide greater business certainty for forest landowners and industries dependent on Oregon's private forests without compromising manufacturing infrastructure
- Provide greater environmental certainty for the survival and recovery of threatened and endangered species and protection for aquatic resources
- Provide greater regulatory certainty through the applica-

tion of an HCP

- Provide a science-driven management process to ensure the durability of Oregon's forest practice laws on private forest land.

"Oregon is now responding with needed urgency to protect salmon and steelhead and the clean, cold water they require," said Wild Salmon Center President and CEO Guido Rahr. "The science is unequivocal: Salmon cannot survive the climate change impacts we're now seeing in Oregon without the streamside protections secured by the Private Forest Accord. That's why we've been fighting for these changes so hard and for so long."

Among the specific highlights included in the Accord are:

- Increased stream buffer widths by 10-100% based on stream type and geography, including new protections for headwater streams, which help to cool temperatures throughout stream networks
- New standards for forest road design, inventory, maintenance, management, and culvert design, and provides funding for culvert replacement for qualifying small forestland owners
- New requirements for unstable slopes to retain trees in key areas to reduce landslide risk and help protect streams and aquatic habitat from sediment

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## Cedar Side Inn



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