



someone is growing very short plants. Growers who want to lower their electric bills and save the planet while they relieve the pain of chronically and terminally ill patients can use compact fluorescent bulbs for maximum efficiency.

Scott says that his vegetation room uses entirely compact fluorescent lighting, and he sees a difference of several hundred dollars between the energy bill for his compact fluorescent room and the more expensive high-pressure sodium lights.

Different types of cannabis growth require different light, which is measured as the color temperature (the hue of a light type) in Kelvin. "Flowering for compact fluorescents is 2,700 K, for vegetative growth it's 6,500 K," Scott says. "It can be a pain in the butt to get your hands on." He says he's seen the right type at Lowe's, but not at Jerry's or Home Depot.

EWEB has a rebate plan for compact fluorescent and light emitting diode fixtures, but they only apply to hard-wired fixtures on the list of Energy Star qualifying products, which may disqualify a lot of marijuana growers. If anyone could figure out a way around the EWEB qualifications, it would be the activists who managed to lessen the legal impacts of medical pot in the face of a draconian federal drug policy.

— Shannon Finnell

SMALL SCALE FARMING

Farmers gathered in the Coquille Room of the EMU on the first day of the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference to discuss subsistence rights, the faults of monoculture and agricultural agriculture, and how to reinvigorate small-scale farming in this country.

"Food is the center of our society, our culture," said Jorge Navarro of Huerto de la Familia, a group that provides organic farming opportunities for Latino families in need throughout Lane County. "Everything begins and ends" with food, he said.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the number of farms in the country has declined from four million to 2.2 million since 1959. This is the result of monoculture farming, the

practice of farms growing one specific crop, and the rise of the "industrial farming complex." The lack of diversity in major commercial farms is bad for farming because it opens up the entire farm to danger from swarms of pests and creates an economy dependent on just a few specific crops, the panelists said.

"When you simplify an ecosystem, you weaken it," said Larry Brewer, program director for the Oregon Biodynamic Group.

The panel offered some positive examples of sustainable and non-consumerist farming working on a small-scale. Paul Atkinson, who owns Laughing Stock Farm off of Territorial Highway, shared his experiences exchanging turkeys with other small-scale farmers for meals instead of money. Michael Moss discussed the benefits of herd sharing, in which consumers pay farmers a fee for a farmer to board a cow, obtaining milk — or in this case, cheese — in exchange.

"I don't like to talk about ownership; I like to talk about taking care of the land and animals," Atkinson said.

While these practices have worked on a small scale, agriculture as a whole in this country remains driven by monoculture and consumerism. When the Earl Butz-led USDA provided large subsidies to massive corn farming operations, small-scale farms couldn't compete with the low prices and were bought up or failed.

"Nothing is sustainable if practices are being committed that could bring the whole ecosystem down," Moss added. "I don't believe in insular activism."

— John Locanthi

COOS BAY: A DUMPING GROUND?

Coos Bay has long been an important site for the timber industry with its strategic positioning along the Coos River, the Pacific Ocean and lush forests. However, as discussed at the "Rural Oregon: Not a Dumping Ground for Dirty Development Projects" panel at the Public Interest in Environmental Law Conference, logging is no longer the only environmental issue

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