



Poultry moving through the Mobile Poultry Processing Unit



active part in making the food they will eat. Also part of the crew are a contingent from the Junction City Gleaners — gleaners gather food from fields and orchards that otherwise would go to waste.

“We’ve just been realizing in the last few years how important your diet is,” says gleaner Cindy Clark of Cheshire, who adds that she was horrified by factory farming conditions and practices she learned about from documentaries that show how thousands of haggard, debeaked chickens are crammed into rows of small cages in massive warehouses, never exposed to sunlight and open air. “You certainly wouldn’t want to go back to commercial chickens after this. The comparison is dramatic.”

Mobile chicken slaughter

A gleaming white fifth-wheel trailer sits in a 40-acre field off of Highway 36 near Junction City that Our Family Farm shared with another part time farmer during its first two years of chicken raising. Brandow is jazzed about this trailer, visibly excited. The 8-by-33-foot trailer represents an Oregon agricultural milestone and the fruition of years’ worth of planning and hard work. The trailer, which will be Oregon’s first licensed mobile poultry processing unit (MPPU) after passing final inspection later this month, is designed to make the process of turning live poultry into kitchen-ready meat with as little stress and trauma for the birds and work crews

alike. Instead of being crated up and trucked more than 30 miles to the closest brick-and-mortar processing plant, the fowl can rest calmly in their pens until almost the last minute before workers stage them next to the butchering floor.

Inside, two rows of gleaming, stainless steel tables face each other under banks of florescent lights, so that Brandow’s volunteer crews will be able to socialize while working, sharing recipes, family gossip and rocking out to music blaring from a portable stereo system. The atmosphere will be the polar opposite of the notoriously hazardous conditions of industrial packing plants, where processing speeds are kept so high that repetitive stress injuries and accidents are commonplace.

As *YES! Magazine* notes, the consolidation of the meat industry has led to the closing of many small meat processing plants, “leaving mom-and-pop livestock farmers with few if any options for turning their animals into legal-to-sell meat.” Mobile processing units like Brandow’s may be the solution. According to ODA Food Program Manager Jim Postlewait, once the facility is licensed each farm that uses it can process up to 20,000 birds a year under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) exemptions and state regulations.

Lauren Gwin, co-coordinator of the Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network, says that the new mobile unit is one of only a handful of such facilities nationwide. “Overall, I’d be surprised if there were 20,” she says. “There are probably a dozen.”

Farmers raising 1,000 birds or fewer can process their fowl in open-air abattoirs but can only sell their fryers on the farm. Under USDA and state regulations, those growing up to 20,000 fowl a year can build a state-licensed brick-and-mortar facility or transport their birds to such a facility. But a facility that meets Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) standards is a big investment. With no commercial poultry processing facilities in the southern Willamette Valley, local farmers who want to grow more than 1,000 birds or sell off-premises have to budget the time and money to travel to one of the 15 facilities elsewhere in Oregon.

‘I don’t think I will buy another store-bought bird if I can help it.’

— Lee Jennings, Eugene Country Club Executive Chef

In 2010 Brandow began discussing the benefits of a mobile processing unit with Rachel Prickett of Provenance Farm in Philomath. After broaching the idea with the ODA, Brandow recruited Brian Schack of the Schack Farm in Junction City, who had the skills to construct a mobile processing unit and a trailer bed on which to build the unit. Working closely

The Willamettans Family Nudist Club, where all you need to wear is a smile.

We are now finished with our open house events for this summer having 23 people show up on our last one. With the weather being so good it isn’t to late to get rid of those tan lines. The next big event is **Labor day weekend** (our **Sunshine Festival**) with activities planned for all 3 days. A fashion show, an Elvis night, games for the kids, a live band on Saturday Night with “Haywire”, and someone is even going to win a suite on a Bare Necessities Cruise. Be sure to contact our office to see how you can get involved in all of this.

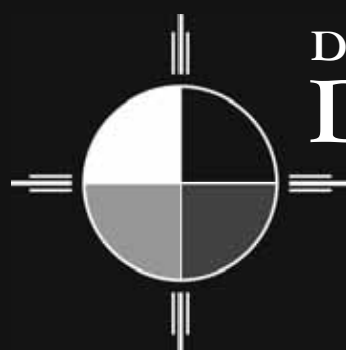


The Willamettans
A Family Nudist Club

Swimming Pool • Tennis Courts • Horseshoes • Camping or Rentals

541-933-2809 willamettans.com

aanr.com • 1-800-TRY-NUDE



DONALD DEXTER JR DMD LLC
DENTISTRY

“The first wealth is health.”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Invest in your health, the returns are abundant.

2233 WILLAMETTE ST, BLDG B • 541-485-6644
www.drDexter.com