

Local News

Redmond supplement company a stop on state business roadshow

Oregon's Wild Harvest employs 60

BY LEO BAUDHUIN
Redmond Spokesman

Members of Oregon Business & Industry gathered in the lobby of Oregon's Wild Harvest in Redmond for a tour of the organic herbal supplement company's facilities.

The event on Wednesday, August 16, came near the end of an 11-day manufacturing and innovation roadshow, during which OBI traveled across Oregon — from Portland to Medford to Klamath Falls to Redmond — to meet with manufacturers and unique businesses across the state. OBI collaborated with the Oregon Business Council to plan and execute the tour.

Scott Bruun, the OBI director of tax and fiscal policy, said the roadshow was a way "to hear the stories of the diverse base of Oregon manufacturing and then to tell those stories in a way that really gets at the base of the innovation and creation of Oregon."

With those stories, OBI can identify themes around what is and isn't working for Oregon businesses and use those insights to push for policy changes that support local manufacturing, Bruun said.

The roadshow mostly featured OBI member businesses, with the goal of showcasing a variety of products and locations. Oregon's Wild Harvest isn't part of that membership, but cofounder Pam Martin jumped on the opportunity when she heard about it. Martin



Oregon Business Council analyst Andrew Desmond (left) and Oregon's Wild Harvest cofounder Pam Martin (right) stand in front of a conveyor belt.

said the roadshow seemed like an opportunity to show the state what Oregon's Wild Harvest does and to grow the business.

Martin helped the group suit up in hair and beard nets, shoe covers and lab coats and took them on a tour through Oregon's Wild Harvest's facilities. Attendees look in at the herb room, where the company tries to bring in materials in the most natural form possible. It's easier for workers to know what they're getting if they're evaluating a full root rather than something that has already been

ground into powder, for instance.

The business grows about 30 percent of its natural products, according to Oregon's Wild Harvest marketing manager Wendy Brinkley. And that number is on the rise. Oregon's Wild Harvest uses biodynamic farming to grow herbs, a more holistic step above certified organic practices.

"We're enriching the soil," Martin said. "And trying to make the world a better place than what we started with."

To verify the quality and au-

thenticity of its products, Oregon's Wild Harvest tests the micro and macro composition of the plants it works with, as well as looking for insects and traces of heavy metals like lead and arsenic. It encases its capsules with tapioca, which Martin said is better for people than the more commonly used semisynthetic HPMC. The company sells its products in glass bottles and is planning on switching over to metal lids to reduce plastic use.

"I can't say enough on how hard we work as a company to give the best herbs we can,"



Photo by Leo Baudhuin/Spokesman
Milk thistle bottles collect on a conveyor belt at Oregon's Wild Harvest, waiting for their labels.

she said.

Oregon's Wild Harvest also contributes to research. It's currently partnering with Oregon Health & Science University to test products on mice and fruit flies. It released a study on the use of botanical products as dietary supplements in January.

Bruun said he wants to highlight that research component in conversations with legislators and the videos OBI plans on putting together based on the roadshow.

"Most of the companies we're seeing have a significant research and development component," he said. "And yet the state doesn't really acknowledge that from a tax perspective."

Another trend Bruun noticed is staffing shortages, largely related to COVID-19 and the strains the pandemic has put on

various parts of people's lives.

Oregon's Wild Harvest, which currently employs about 60 people in Redmond, hasn't been hit as hard as most, Bruun said OBI had to cancel its Bend stop at 10 Barrel Brewing Co. due to the business limiting its hours as a result of fewer employees.

Still, Bruun said that the roadshow and the opportunity to see how local manufacturers interact with and give back to the communities they're a part of has been overwhelmingly positive.

"When we look at Oregon's diverse manufacturing sector and everything it's doing for the communities, for the state, for the country, it's awe-inspiring," he said. "It really is. Makes me proud to be an Oregonian."

Reporter: lbaudhuin@redmondspokesman.com

Redmond voters will make choices on psilocybin

BY TIM TRAINOR
Redmond Spokesman

In November, Redmond voters will answer two questions on psilocybin in city limits: Whether therapeutic service centers can operate and whether local businesses can manufacture the newly-legal psychedelic.

On Tuesday August 16, Redmond city council moved forward a plan to ask voters to decide whether or not to temporarily ban treatment centers at least until 2024 and put into effect a permanent ban on manufacture of psilocybin.

Psilocybin is a natural, hallucinogenic compound found in some mushrooms.

With the passage of Measure 109 by Oregon voters in 2020, the Oregon Health Authority was ordered to license and regulate the manufacture, transport, delivery, sale and purchase of psilocybin products and services. That law goes into effect Jan. 1.

Measure 110, passed in the same election, reduced criminal penalties for a wide range of drugs, including psilocybin, and has already become the law of the land.

"110 still exists, nothing can be done about that," Redmond city attorney Keith Leitz told councilors before they started their debate. "Recreational use of drugs, including psilocybin, will still exist regardless of what we do."

Measure 109, however, did allow for a few opt out provisions



kirill vasiliev
Psilocybin mushrooms are touted for their therapeutic use.

for local municipalities. The measure allowed voters in cities and counties to ban service centers, where trained operators can guide users through a therapeutic experience, as well as manufacturing facilities. Both bans can only be enacted with the consent of voters.

Redmond city councilors were united on the fact that they wished to ban therapy centers and manufacturers for at least the next two years, but split on whether to make those bans permanent or temporary.

Councilors Krisanna Clark-Endicott, Jay Patrick and Shannon Wedding voted in favor of the permanent ban on both therapy centers and manufacturing. The three deadlocked with councilors Clifford Evelyn, Ed Fitch and Cat Zwicker, who supported the permanent ban on manufacturing, but only wanted a temporary moratorium on the therapy centers. Mayor George

Endicott was absent and Patrick ran the meeting.

Those advocating the temporary ban said they had little information on the treatment centers at this time, and they hoped that in 2024 they — and local voters — would have better information at their hands. In a clinical setting, psilocybin has shown promise on a wide range of issues, including PTSD, anxiety, and numerous mental health, mood and substance abuse disorders.

"I don't want to force people in Redmond to go somewhere else to seek medical treatment," said councilor Fitch.

"I think we should send it to the voters for a permanent ban and see what they have to say about that," argued councilor Clark-Endicott. "They've already said they wanted (a ban) once, so we'll see if they want it again."

In 2020, when Measures 109 passed in a statewide vote, all four Redmond precincts voted against legalization of psilocybin. Margins of defeat ranged from 51 percent to 60 percent.

After one tie vote, Clark-Endicott, Patrick and Wedding relented. A majority of council then decided to send two questions to voters: Should the city temporarily ban the therapeutic centers through 2024, and should it permanently ban manufacture of psilocybin?

Both those questions will be on the November ballot.

REPUBLIC SERVICES TALKS TRASH

Joe Dear, general manager for Republic Services in Central Oregon, spoke about issues at the city's solid waste garbage hauler.

City officials said they have seen higher volume of complaints of delayed or missed garbage and recycling pickups, which residents pay for whether their trash gets picked up or not. Numerous city councilors passed on complaints they received from constituents, which has increased since June, they said.

"We've seen some service issues here, we'll admit that," Dear responded.

He noted that a lack of staff and high employee turnover has required the company to push some routes "to the next service day." Sometimes, those

"next service days" do not happen until two weeks later, especially on recycling routes.

Dear said that Republic crews are now currently servicing 95 percent of their customers on time each day.

He also noted that they are working hard to fill open positions, and they have new programs to train and certify CDL drivers. He also noted that many employees are working weekends and the highest number of hours allowed by the Department of Transportation. The company has also increased hiring, retention and referral bonuses. He said they have lost numerous employees who moved to areas with a lower cost of living and they are not seeing a lot of new people moving into the area who can afford housing.

"We're continually looking

for other opportunities to try bring more drivers into the business," said Dear.

AIRPORT PROJECTS GET OK

Council approved bids on a number of projects at city-owned Redmond Airport.

Council first approved a \$92,150 bid to Central Oregon Roofing to replace the roof on the airport's rescue and fire-fighting station.

Central Oregon Roofing also got the green light on a \$74,800 bid for roof repair on an airport-owned hanger.

A third airport project went forward as well, after Apollo Mechanical Contractors got the go ahead to repair and replace part of the airport's HVAC system to improve cooling.

Reporter: ttrainor@redmondspokesman.com



Carpet Vinyl Hardwood Laminate

(541) 526-5543
1950 SW Badger Ave #102,
Redmond, OR 97756



**Best Meats
Best Prices**

541-416-0711 **3093 SW Parrish Ln, Powell Butte, OR 97753**

Central Oregon Disability Support Network

Our mission:
Connecting families with resources and each other to recognize, promote and value diversity in a welcoming community..

(541) 548-8559
www.codsn.org
2525 NE Twin Knolls Dr # 7,
Bend, OR 97701

