

in the garden

Q&A

with
Janet Weidman

Q: What are you doing to prepare for this year's growing season?

A: Actually I haven't done anything yet for this year's growing season. We do have a chicken/rabbit/goat manure pile in one section of the garden and a tarp over another section. I also save seeds for the next season. Just this week, when I roasted a delicata squash, I kept the seeds. I let the seeds dry out for a day, then put them in a small envelope and labeled them so I can plant some of them in the spring.

Are you making changes from last year?

A: I don't think so. We liked the way our garden turned out last year, so we'll probably grow the same edibles again this year. This is mostly my husband Peter's garden. I put in the strawberry patch, and I help with the weeding, but he has done the larger part with rototilling the soil, planting the seeds and daily watering. (I do talk to the plants in the greenhouse, though.)

Do you grow flowers and edibles?

A: We don't grow flowers because we want all of our enclosed garden space for food crops. Our goats eat everything in sight if it's not in the garden. I'll see the daffodils in the open fields starting to bloom and the next thing I know, they are all gone. So we keep the goats out of our garden!

Is your garden organic? If so, why.

A: Yes, our garden is organic. We put rabbit, goat and chicken manures on the garden during the winter. We use natural products to deter bugs (orange and water spray on leaves with potato bugs, etc.). We do not want to harm the earth, nor do we want to eat foods grown with pesticide residuals. Pesticide runoff gets into the soil and water, not just on the plants,



Photos by JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

ABOVE: Janet Weidman stands in her garden next to an organically-grown kale plant. **BELOW:** One of the collards in Weidman's garden has a very floral look.



so it is environmentally damaging to use pesticides. Our food is our first defense against disease, so I want the healthiest food possible, too.

What do you do with extra produce?

A: We have made extra cucumbers into pickles, extra collards and kale into pesto or kale chips, and zucchini has been frozen whole to add to soups all winter. I am hoping that our extra bounty can be added to other local farmers' extra bounty for a "Bounty Table" at the River Peoples Farmers Market in the summertime. I heard from one vendor that the market in Cannon Beach has a beautiful and abundant "Bounty Table" from local small family gardens. I don't think this would take away from the other growers who have booths at the market. It would be a collective table, which would mean that the gardeners who brought bounty to sell would need to tend to and sell their own foods at the table (or perhaps we could have rotating shifts and a price sheet for all of the produce/veggies on the table).

Janet Weidman is co-owner of and broker at Astoria Real Estate, an avid gardener and strong supporter of the North Coast Food Web and River Peoples Farmers Market.

Repeal of raw milk advertising ban unopposed

Legislation is part of a legal settlement

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — A bill that would overturn Oregon's prohibition against advertising raw milk encountered no opposition during a hearing Tuesday before state lawmakers.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture, which is charged with enforcing the advertising ban, is asking the Legislature to change the statute because of a legal settlement with a raw milk producer.

Christine Anderson of McMinnville, was told by an ODA investigator in 2012 that posting prices for raw milk violated the law, which prompted her to file a lawsuit challenging the statute as unconstitutionally limiting free speech.

After reviewing the complaint, state officials decided the advertising ban was unlikely to prevail in court and agreed not to enforce the statute.

As part of the settlement with Anderson, ODA is now requesting that lawmakers repeal the prohibition by passing House Bill 2446, which was considered during a hearing Tuesday of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The legislation removes a provision that disallows raw milk producers from advertising but does not require any warning language for the product, said Lisa Hanson, ODA's deputy director.

Anderson told lawmakers that however they may feel about raw milk — which has been controversial due to food safety concerns — producers should be allowed to advertise a product that's legal in Oregon.

Aside from posting prices, Anderson said she wants to provide consumers with results from microbial tests and other information.

HB 2446 leaves in place all other restrictions on raw milk sales, including limits on the number of animals



MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI — Capital Bureau

Christine Anderson handles a cow at her small farm near McMinnville, in this file photo. A lawsuit filed by Anderson led to Oregon's prohibition of advertising raw milk to be declared unconstitutional.

per site and where the milk is sold, said Michael Bindas, an attorney for the Institute for Justice, a nonprofit law firm that represented Anderson.

"This is not an attempt to open a policy debate on raw milk," he said.

Brad Witt, D-Clatskanie, said the committee doesn't tolerate the infringement of constitutional rights and vowed to act on the bill as quickly as possible.

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From left: Peter Wong, Hillary Borrud, Mateusz Perkowski