

Organic farms, land and value of sales

(Certified and exempt organic*)

Area	Farms		Acres		Sales (\$ millions)		Transition acres	
	2014	2008	2014	2008	2014	2008	2014	2008
Calif.	2,805	2,714	687,168	470,903	2,231.2	1,148.7	17,046	NA
Idaho	161	254	125,141	148,425	65.7	10.1	4,568	12,967
Ore.	525	657	204,166	70,946	237.1	105.6	4,452	4,569
Wash.	716	887	73,841	65,937	514.9	82.2	2,687	6,071
U.S.	14,093	14,540	3,670,560	4,077,337	5,455	3,165	122,175	194,384

NA — withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.
* Exempt — farms that follow the National Organic Standards and have less than \$5,000 in annual sales can be exempt from certification. These exempt farms may use the term "organic" but may not use the "USDA Organic" seal.

Source: USDA NASS

Capital Press graphic

In 2014, farm-level organic sales approach \$5.5 billion

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

Sales of organic products from U.S. farms have increased substantially, jumping 72 percent to \$5.45 billion from \$3.16 billion since the federal government last conducted a comparable survey in 2008.

Although the value of sales have increased, the National Agricultural Statistics Service reported last week that both the number of organic farms and the amount of organic acreage has dropped.

NASS reported 14,093 organic farms, 447 fewer than in 2008, and 3.67 million acres, almost 407,000 less. The service attributed the decline, at least in part, to differences in the survey methodology.

Ten states represented 78 percent of organic sales, according to the survey.

Farms in California claimed \$2.2 billion in sales, 41 percent of total national sales. It led the nation in number of organic operations, at 2,805, and in acreage, more than 687,000 acres.

Washington state posted the second-highest sales at \$515 million, up from \$282 million in 2008. Oregon came in fourth at \$237 million, up from \$156 million.

Nationwide, crops accounted for \$3.3 billion in sales, led by lettuce at \$264 million, apples at \$250 million, grapes at \$195 million, and corn for grain at \$155 million.

Livestock and poultry products accounted for \$1.5 billion in sales, with milk in the top spot at almost \$1.1 billion in sales. Livestock and poultry sales, at \$660 million, were led by broilers at \$372 million.

Nationwide, 78 percent of product was sold to wholesale markets, 14 percent directly to retail and 8 percent directly to consumers.

While the majority of product was sold wholesale, 40 to 60 percent of farms in Washington, Oregon and Idaho sold some product directly to consumers, as did 20 to 40 percent in California and 45 percent nationwide.

Total production expenses

increased from \$2.5 billion in 2008 to almost \$4 billion in 2014, with feed and hired labor combined comprising 46 percent of expenses. Nationwide average per-farm expenses increased from \$171,978 in 2008 to \$208,722 in 2014. Expenses were significantly higher in California at \$616,379 and Washington at \$485,708.

The survey shows 1,365 farms are transitioning an additional 122,175 acres to organic production. Nearly 5,300 organic farms, 39 percent, intend to increase organic production over the next five years, 43 percent intend to maintain production and 5 percent intend to decrease or discontinue organic production.

The 2014 organic survey offers nearly 600 pages of details on farm-level organic sales, farms and land in organic operation, crops and products being produced, how they are marketed, and producers' age, years in organic, expenses, and practices.

Small businesses can apply for grants

The Daily Astorian

Business Oregon, the state's economic development agency, is offering \$450,000 worth of Small Business Administration grants to help small businesses market their products and services to an international market.

The State Trade and Export Promotion program grants encourage small businesses with at least 75 percent of their workforces in Oregon to pursue international markets for their products, helping offset the cost of overseas marketing, including booth fees at international trade shows.

"Marketing Oregon's products to the world starts with access," Gov. Kate Brown said. "These grants open the door for Oregon's small businesses to markets around the globe."

About 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside the United States, but less than 1 percent of U.S. small busi-

nesses export. Lektro, the electric airplane tug manufacturer based in Warrenton and makes a quarter of its sales internationally, has used the grant.

"International Trade Shows are extremely expensive to go to," said Henry Balensifer, a spokesman for the company. "From airfare to lodging for your staff, shipping or building your booth on site, and the freight to send your product to a foreign country is very expensive. Helping defray those costs with a STEP grant assists companies with their attendance at international shows."

This is the fourth straight time Business Oregon has been awarded grants through the Small Business Administra-

tion's competitive application process. During the previous three years, Oregon received a combined \$1.2 million.

Business Oregon has provided grants to 153 Oregon small businesses, producing a reported \$36 million in immediate export sales, a \$31 return in export sales for every \$1 in federal grants provided.

The State Trade and Export Promotion program was authorized by the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010.

To apply for grant funding, Oregon small businesses can apply online at <http://tinyurl.com/psn3bjs>. To qualify, at least 75 percent of the company's total employees must be employed in Oregon.

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We look forward to seeing everyone for our fourth annual Race to the Bar, September 10th, 2016!

www.racetothelbar.com



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

There is no timetable for Lindstrom's Danish Malt Bakery to reopen. The bakery closed earlier this month because of a family medical emergency.

Bakery: 'We appreciate the support of the community'

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"He's doing good," Jan Lindstrom said, adding he recently came home and is in physical rehabilitation. "It's going to take him a while to get back."

John Lindstrom began

working at the Danish Malt Bakery in 1974. He and Jan bought the shop in 1986, and have run it with their three children.

A customer posted a lime green sheet of paper just beneath their announcement of closure.

"We hope to see you open again soon," the sheet said, entreating others to write down their well wishes, which many took the opportunity to do.

"We appreciate the support of the community," Jan Lindstrom said. "Thanks for all the prayers and love and concern."

Farmers: Hop production has grown more than 50 percent since 2012

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average of nearly 1.4 pounds — roughly sixfold more, said Ann George, administrator of the Hop Growers of America trade group.

Historically, about two-thirds of U.S. hop production consisted of "alpha" hops, which are used to impart bitterness and are favored by large brewers, said George.

Now, roughly two-thirds of the hops grown are "aroma" varieties that are popular among craft brewers, she said.

These specialty cultivars are responsible for the upswing in hop production, which has grown more than 50 percent since 2012 to 45,500 acres, George said.

"That buildup in acreage has been attributable to the

demand from the craft sector," she said. "It makes a huge impact on our hop industry."

Craft brewers also have an outsize footprint in the market for malt, which is produced from barley, said Watson. About 1.4 billion pounds of malt are used in craft brewing, which is 35 percent of the total amount.

Large brewers aren't as reliant on barley malt because they also use brewer's rice and corn syrup, he said.

"These beers are not the ones that are going to be heavy demanders of hops and premium ingredients," Carstensen said of the most popular brands produced by AB InBev and SABMiller.

Nonetheless, the combination of the two companies is problematic from the per-

spective of consumer choice, he said.

A telling sign is that the stock price for all major breweries rose after the merger proposal was announced, Carstensen said.

This increase may indicate that these companies are expected to collude more effectively after the merger, he said. "The market is expecting to see less competition in the beer industry."

Given these concerns, it's likely U.S. antitrust regulators will block the merger unless the combined company divests its stake in MillerCoors, a joint venture between SABMiller and Coors Molson, said Watson.

"Everyone's assumption is they'd be forced to sell their stake here," he said.



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