

Oregon farm facts

Did you know?

- Almost all Oregon farms are family owned. About 97 percent of Oregon farms and ranches are family owned and operated.
- About 12 percent of all jobs in Oregon are directly or indirectly connected to farming and ranching, or 1 in 8 jobs.

Source: Oregon Farm Bureau

By the numbers: Oregon farms in 2013

35,000Number of farms
16.5 millionLand in farms (acres)
471Average farm size (acres)
2,400Value per crop land acre (dollars)

Value of Oregon agriculture exports, 2012

Commodity	Value (\$ millions)
Seeds	\$378.8 million
Wheat and products	241.5
Fruits and preparations	235.8
Vegetables and preparations	152.4
Dairy products	68.3

Source: USDA NASS

Value of Oregon agriculture in 2013

Source: 2012 OSU estimate

Crop	Acres	Production (Millions)	Value (\$ Millions)
Field crops			
Hay, alfalfa (tons)	400,000	1.8	369.8
Wheat (bu)	868,000	53.9	368.2
Potatoes (cwt)	39,600	21.6	170.5
Corn, grain (bu)	50,000	6.8	38.3
Hops (lbs.)	4,789	8.55	31.5
Fruits and nuts			
Hazelnuts (tons)	30,000	0.45	120.6
Wine grapes (tons)	18,500	0.49	107.3
Blueberries (lbs.)	9,600	89.5	94.3
Vegetables			
Onions, storage (cwt)	20,900	13.9	143.3
Corn, sweet (cwt)	24,520	4.7	34.8

Livestock inventory (As of Jan. 1, 2014)

Source: USDA NASS

Commodity	Head	Commodity	Head
Cattle and calves	1.3 million	Market lambs	67,000
Beef cows	516,000	Horses and mules*	118,000
Milk cows	124,000	Mink, females bred	67,900
Cattle on feed	75,000	Hogs†	85,000
Sheep and lambs	195,000	Goats	37,500
Ewes	97,000		

*2012 OSU estimate †Dec. 1, 2013

Many groups support state agriculture

Get involved or support an agricultural organization such as:

- **Oregon Farm Bureau Federation**
Voluntary grassroots nonprofit organization representing the interests of farmers and ranchers in the public and policy making arenas.
503-399-1701, www.oregonfb.org

- **FFA Organization**
Organization dedicated to developing student potential for leadership, personal growth and career success in agricultural education.
503-507-6499, www.oregonffa.com

- **Northwest Horticultural Council**
NHC focuses on national and international policy issues affecting growers in Oregon, Idaho and Washington.
509-453-3193, www.nwhort.org

- **Oregon 4-H Youth Development Education**

4-H helps youth learn subject matter and life skills through a process that helps them meet key developmental needs.
541-737-4444, oregon.4h.oregonstat.edu

- **Oregon Cattlemen's Association**
OCA is a membership organization promoting the Oregon cattle industry.
503-361-8941, orcattle.com

- **Oregon Dairy Council**
ODC is the nutrition education arm of the Oregon Dairy Products Commission.
503-229-5033, www.oregondairy-council.org

- **Oregon Farmers Markets Association**

OFMA provides resources and promotion on behalf of farmers' markets, market vendors and farm-direct agriculture, and support to the communities that host them.
971-400-0581, www.oregonfarmersmarkets.org

- **Oregon Hop Growers Association**

The association supports growers and producers involved in Oregon hop production.
503-982-7600, www.oregonhops.org

- **Oregon Sheep Growers Association**

OSGA is a nonprofit organization that promotes the growth of and profitability of the sheep industry in Oregon and nationally.
503-364-5462, www.sheeporegon.com

- **Oregon Women for Agriculture**

This organization educates the membership and the public about the importance of agriculture.
503-243-3276, www.owaonline.org

- **Wallowa County Hay Growers Association**

The WFHGA promotes the quality and availability of forage products made by area farmers.
541-432-3735, www.certifiedwallowacountyhay.com

ONIONS: Average harvest produces 36 tons per acre

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But Gehrke said it's still far too early to ensure a successful harvest. Mother Nature can be fickle, and if the summer heat becomes too intense it could shut down the onions' growth and turn what promised to be above-average yields into just average yields — as it did a year ago.

Onions are a warm weather vegetable, able to tolerate temperatures as high as 90-95 degrees. However, Gehrke remembers last year when the region sweltered under two weeks of 100-plus degrees, which helped to curb a promising 2014 crop.

"There's no guarantees in farming," he said. "There's always hope. That's what we do."

An average harvest usually produces 36 tons of onions per acre, Gehrke said. Workers should finish planting all 44 fields at River Point Farms by early April, and the bulk of harvest for storage onions will take place in September.

Statewide, Oregon's onion crop was worth \$143 million in 2013, ranking as the eighth most valuable agricultural commodity. In comparison to Umatilla and Morrow counties' other top crops, potatoes generated more than \$170 million (seventh), and wheat raked in \$368 million (sixth).

Gehrke said 2015 has so far been an irregular year on the farm. Such a warm February is not unheard of, but they are few and



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Warmer winter conditions this year has allowed the cover crop, wheat, to grow earlier than normal. The cover crop offers protection to the young onion plants from the wind.

far between. The weather actually had farm conditions about four weeks ahead of normal, though they could not plant until irrigation water became available on March 1.

Once they get caught up on planting, Gehrke said it's up to workers to keep up on spray-

ing and irrigation.

"That's a full-time job in itself," he said. "Things can change in the field very fast."

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4547.

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From left to right: Joe Young, Andrea Munkers, Cindy Dougherty, Shelby Moody, Shane Leasy and Erin McLaughlin. Not pictured: Jeanne King.

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