

## VFW assembles vets' care packages

Cottage Grove VFW Post 3473 said local donations allowed the post to put together 36 soldiers' boxes. Eighteen of them will be shipped to Afghanistan and 18 to Japan, according to volunteers.



photo by Carolin Pettit

## Local keepsake collecting is 'charming'

Downtown Cottage Grove businesses are the source for charms as part of the Bridges and Beyond Charm Trail organized by the Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce. Participants pick up a charm bracelet at any of the "trail heads," or participating local businesses. Then, charms unique to each business can be purchased for \$1.50 each.

In addition, businesses such as the Sentinel, Scarpelli's Short Stop, Territorial Seed Co., the Village Green, Bonanza Drive-Up, Books on Main, Bustlers Cafe, CG General Store, KNND Radio, Pinocchio's Pizza, Roger's Fine Collectibles, Shampoo Dolls, the Bookmine, Flower Basket and the Pink House are currently selling a limited edition Christmas charm. Supplies of these charms are limited, with only 25 per business.

# The large economic footprint of Oregon agriculture

Updated OSU study confirms the sizable contribution ag makes to Oregon's economy

Oregon agriculture's large impact on the state's economy is reaffirmed by an updated analysis and report released by Oregon State University. The OSU study, commissioned by the Oregon Department of Agriculture, quantifies the contributions of producers, processors and others in a variety of economic snapshots ranging from sales to employment.

"We've talked consistently about the importance of agriculture to Oregon's economy and the numbers found in OSU's report validate what has been said," says ODA Director Katy Coba. "What we think is happening in agriculture is indeed taking place."

The report, Oregon Agriculture, Food and Fiber: An Economic Analysis, builds on previous OSU studies done in 2008 and 2011 to assess agriculture's economic footprint and ripple effect on the state. It details the entire cycle of agriculture – from the farm to the consumer – and connects the flow of dollars throughout the system, capturing production, processing, distribution, wholesale, retail and food service.

Using a variety of currently available data, the report generally shows that the industry continues its steady growth.



Sentinel file photo

A new study shows that agriculture is linked to about \$50 billion in the sales of goods and services in Oregon.

Specifically, it finds agriculture is directly and indirectly linked to about \$50 billion in sales of goods and services, which is more than 13 percent of the statewide total of sales involving all industry sectors. The report also finds that Oregon agriculture directly or indirectly supports more than 326,000 full or part-time jobs, making up almost 14 percent of total jobs in the state. Overall, Oregon agriculture is responsible for \$22.9 billion or 10.6 percent of the net state product.

"Whichever measurement you want to use, those are all big numbers that show

agriculture's huge contribution to Oregon's economy," says Coba.

Spread throughout the report are compelling stories captured by statistics.

While the number of Oregon farms, ranches and total farm acreage has decreased in recent years, the output of Oregon farms has increased 39 percent to \$5.7 billion dollars between 2010 and 2014.

"Our producers aren't really getting paid that much more for their crops, so they've become much more productive, and those numbers reflect that," says

Coba. Measuring efficiency is another by-product of the OSU study, according to its primary author.

"One of the most important points in this report is the tremendous work farmers and ranchers have done by improving the use or efficiency of their inputs like water, land, and chemicals," says OSU Extension Economist Bruce Sorte. "Oregon was ranked 46th out of the 50 states in terms of agricultural total factor productivity in 1960 and it advanced to 15th with the highest level of improvement among all the states. Farmers and ranchers are still improving each year working with researchers in universities, government, and businesses. This is very good news for consumers, producers and ecosystems."

A section of the report focuses on processing – adding value to what is agriculturally produced. In 2013, more than \$12 billion was added to the farmgate sales of Oregon-grown food and fiber by processors and food services. Frozen food manufacturing tops the list of processing sectors in terms of sales followed by breweries, fluid milk manufacturing, canned fruits and vegetables, wineries and cheese manufacturing.

Sorte underscores the importance of value-added agriculture while saying more can be done.

"Adding value – increasing the value of wheat at 10 cents a pound to flour

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