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# A winter respite

**Growing up on a farm and  
container nursery, I have always  
noticed a slight lull in the pace  
when fall and winter roll around.**



**Josh Zielinski**  
OAN PRESIDENT

While many of my childhood friends went out of town for Spring Break and often went on numerous summer camping and fishing trips, it didn't make sense for our family to leave work and play then: it was time to harvest and grow.

It was showtime, and we were simply too busy to get away.

So, instead of being "fishing-and-coast people" of summer, we were "skiing-and-mountain people" of winter. We went out of town for Thanksgiving, Christmas or both. We even attended church regularly in the fall and winter! (In all honesty, there was a period when I was very young that I thought church was actually closed for summer.)

Now, to be totally fair, these seasons between summer and spring aren't exactly slow for most Oregon growers. We are blessed, and to an extent cursed, by our relatively mild fall/winter weather which allows us to plant, dig, prune, and get really, really wet and muddy nearly any day of the year.

However, it does seem like there's a little more time for reflection once the days start shortening and the temperatures dip. We can come up for air, get off the farm or out of our offices, and get together. We gather with our communities; whether it's family for the holidays or a well-earned vacation, or our industry friends for functions like our Annual Convention held last month and various chapter functions planned in the upcoming weeks/months.

**While together,  
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While together, we celebrate the season's victories, give thanks, and reflect on lessons we learned. With our families we prepare holiday feasts (yum!) and maybe even dip our toes in the sands of far-off beaches or spray

each other with snow on the slopes. Within the industry we pause to give awards to recognize sacrifice and hard work from our comrades and take time to learn more about each other as both as people and as businesses with a common passion for growing amazing things.

So, I urge you to take advantage of a few of the rainiest — maybe even snowy — days and make a point to get out and get together with not only your families but your friends in the industry, in your association, and reflect on how far we've come and what we've learned over the season. By doing so we'll have a clearer idea of where we are going or some new ideas to consider as we enter the new year!

Getting together may be as simple as stopping in at the neighbor nursery for a cup of coffee or I'd recommend taking a look at the OAN's list of upcoming events ([www.oan.org/events/event\\_list.asp](http://www.oan.org/events/event_list.asp)) and attending one of the offerings listed there. ☺