

# Digger

OCTOBER 2019



## Retail for the holidays

PAGE 15

## O, Christmas trees

PAGE 21



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## 15 Retail for the holidays

Garden centers transform themselves into destinations for fall and Christmas.

## 13 My Farwest Show favorites

Mike Darcy took to the New Varieties Showcase and shares his top five favorites that he'll be looking for in garden centers come this spring.

## 21 O, Christmas trees

The industry's been on a rough ride, but some silver linings point to a bright future.

## 27 Ornamental hazelnut cultivars from Oregon State University

New cultivars bring combinations of interesting growth habit, leaf form and color, and resistance to the fungal disease eastern filbert blight.

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**On the cover:** Vendors can browse the seasonal gift items at Bauman Farm & Garden.

PHOTO BY BRIAN BAUMAN

**On this page:** Left: The Farmington Gardens team dresses in costume at their Annual Customer Appreciation Event in October. PHOTO COURTESY OF FARMINGTON GARDENS Right: Fresh-cut Christmas trees stand for customers in a lot. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD



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**SUBSCRIPTION AND CHANGE OF ADDRESS** Circulation is controlled. Domestic subscriptions are complimentary to qualified U.S. nursery industry members. Non-qualified U.S. subscriptions are \$42. Qualified foreign subscriptions are \$35 to Canada; \$45 to Mexico; and \$80 for all other countries. Single copy rate is \$6 while supplies last. Notify OAN Publications of change of address. Please allow 3-4 weeks for address change.

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## A word of thanks

**“Thank you.” These two words are so often underused, but I have chosen to start out this month’s column by using them for a specific reason.**

It has been such an honor to serve as president of the Oregon Association of Nurseries for the past year. Thank you to all of the staff members and volunteers who put in countless hours supporting our association. Most of all, thank you to all of our members.

Our industry has always faced challenges. However, our ability to work together is strong, and we benefit greatly from an issue-oriented approach to the issues that affect our industry, mainly in the political world. As a result, we have had success with many of these issues.

This year, the Oregon Legislature passed our top legislative priority, which was the driver’s license bill. This bill allows the option to get a license without proof of legal status, provided the applicant can prove that they live here, and that they can drive safely.

As our industry evolves, so does our leadership. At our annual OAN Convention November 1–2 in Hood River, Jim Simnitt of Simnitt Nursery will be installed as our president for 2019–20. I will join the list of past presidents that have done their time in supporting our industry.

I am really excited about the current and future leadership of the OAN, though I know we will continue to face challenges. The need to control boxwood blight is one that comes to mind; another is maintaining our customers’ confidence that they are receiving the highest quality plant material in the nation. We will also be very busy on the political front both in Oregon and nationally, working through solutions that will help and not hurt our industry.

Next year’s legislative session threatens to pose a slew of new taxes and regulations. Now more than ever, we need to support our Oregon Nursery Political Action Committee (ONPAC). I urge you to get involved. Please reach out to us if you are unsure how you can help.

As I reflect back on the last year, some of my personal highlights are lobbying for our industry back in Washington, D.C., and attending Oregon Gov. Kate Brown’s ceremonial signing of the driver’s license bill. It was so gratifying to see that bill go over the finish line. The governor thanked the OAN specifically, giving us credit for getting the bill through the Legislature and in front of her for her signature.

Another highlight was learning this month that Oregon’s nurseries and greenhouses have reached a major milestone with almost \$1 billion in annual sales. At the 2019 Farwest Show, there was a great buzz about how promising the future looks for the industry. I know the “R word” — recession — is out there looming, but the overall health of our members seems to be strong, and they have a ready and optimistic outlook for the future.

Again — thank you to everyone in our industry, and most of all, a huge “thank you” to my wife Kirstin and daughter Lola — I could not do it without you!

Good luck, everyone. I hope you know we are a strong industry, and we are even stronger when we all work together. We are the Oregon Association of Nurseries (plural) for a reason — let’s support the organization that supports the industry. Thanks. ©



Mike Hiller  
OAN PRESIDENT

**It has been such an honor to serve as president of the Oregon Association of Nurseries for the past year.**



# Calendar

Get the word out about your event! Email details to [calendar@oan.org](mailto:calendar@oan.org) by the 10th day of the month to be included in the next issue of *Digger*.

## OCTOBER - VARIOUS DATES

### FIRST AID AND CPR CLASSES

OAN-sponsored First Aid and Adult CPR training classes start this October. Sign up early to guarantee your seat in the course, as registrations will only be accepted up until two days before the class is scheduled to take place. Successful completion results in certification that is good for two years. Conducted in English, the first class will run 8 a.m.–noon, Thursday, October 3. The second Spanish-only class will take place 8 a.m.–noon, Friday, October 4. Both sessions take place at J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co., 9500 S.E. 327th Ave., Boring, Oregon. Two more English and Spanish sessions will take place at similar times on Monday, October 14 and Tuesday, October 15 at the OAN office, 29751 S.W. Town Center Loop West, Wilsonville, Oregon. Register online at [www.oan.org/cprclass](http://www.oan.org/cprclass)

## OCTOBER 3

### PORTLAND FALL HOME & GARDEN SHOW

Taking place at the Portland Expo Center, 2060 North Marine Dr., Portland, Oregon, this show will entertain and inform homeowners about the freshest garden designs and themes. There will be a plant and nursery marketplace, container garden competition, and an Oregon tree display. Visit [www.homeshowpdx.com](http://www.homeshowpdx.com) for details.

## OCTOBER 9

### OAN OPEN HOUSE

Get information and answers about OAN-endorsed health coverage, our bulk fuel program, discounted office supplies, the Farwest Show, the Nursery Guide and much more at our open house! All OAN members and their guests are invited to drop in between 3–5 p.m. in the OAN office, 29751 S.W. Town Center Loop West, Wilsonville, Oregon. You'll meet other members and OAN staff, make valuable connections, and most of all, learn how to max out your membership value. For more information or to RSVP, contact Zen Landis at 503-682-2011 or [zlandis@oan.org](mailto:zlandis@oan.org).

## OCTOBER 15-18

### LANDSCAPES 2019

The National Association of Landscape Professionals will hold its annual conference in Louisville, Kentucky. The conference is held in conjunction with the GIE+EXPO and Hardscape North America trade shows, which host nearly 850 indoor and outdoor exhibits, and provides more than 135 hours of educational sessions. For more information, log on to [www.greenindustryconference.org](http://www.greenindustryconference.org).

## OCTOBER 22-25

### GREENHOUSECONNECT

Meister Media's Connect events are private,



## NOVEMBER 1-2

### OAN ANNUAL CONVENTION

Scramble the jets! "Flying High" is the theme for the 2019 OAN Convention, which will take place over a long weekend at Hood River Inn in Hood River, Oregon. Greg Wooldridge, former commanding officer of the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels, will be the keynote speaker during Saturday's annual meeting. As always, this year's gathering will feature the Friday night Hospitality Suites — this time with a Woodstock theme! — as well as the annual meeting on Saturday with important updates on issues and the swearing in of the new board, with recognition of outgoing board members. Registration is now live and available at [www.oan.org/convention](http://www.oan.org/convention). Contact Allan Niemi at [aniemi@oan.org](mailto:aniemi@oan.org) or 503-682-5089 for details about sponsorship opportunities.

executive level meetings between owners and the top decision makers of large growing operations and industry suppliers. The greenhouse and nursery event will be held at The Village at Squaw Valley, 1960 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley, California. Visit [www.greenhouseconnect.com](http://www.greenhouseconnect.com) for more information

## OCTOBER 30-NOVEMBER 2

### NATIONAL FFA CONFERENCE & EXPO

Nearly 63,000 FFA members and guests from across the country will meet in the Indianapolis Convention Center, Indianapolis, Indiana to participate in general sessions, competitive events, educational tours, leadership workshops, an expo and shopping mall, volunteer activities and more. It is one of the largest annual student conventions in the world. Visit [convention.ffa.org](http://convention.ffa.org) to learn more.

## OCTOBER 31

### HORTICANN LIGHT + TECH CONFERENCE — USA

The HortiCann Light + Tech Conference (formerly the Horticultural Lighting Conference) will take place at the Sheraton Denver Downtown, Denver, Colorado. Horticultural lighting remains a key focus of the conference, with topics reflecting the increasing role of commercial cannabis

cultivation in addition to ornamentals, fruits, and vegetables. The conference focuses on connecting research and technology in the latest trends and techniques of the market. Register online at [horticannlt.com/hclt19/](http://horticannlt.com/hclt19/).

## NOVEMBER 14-15

### OREGON WATER LAW CONFERENCE

The 28th annual Water Law Conference will be held in the Two World Trade Center Building, 121 SW Salmon Street, Portland, Oregon. Meta Loftsgaarden, executive director of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board has been invited to present the keynote speaker. General and ethics credits may apply for those who attend. To register, log on to [www.theseminargroup.net](http://www.theseminargroup.net).

## DECEMBER 2-6

### IRRIGATION SHOW & EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The world's largest trade show dedicated to irrigation will take place in Las Vegas Convention Center, 3150 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, Nevada. Attendees can make plans to see technical session and seminars, view new products and technologies, and find solutions to any and all issues in agriculture, landscape, lighting, golf, turf irrigation and specialty solutions. For more information, visit [www.irrigation.org/2019Show](http://www.irrigation.org/2019Show)



# Northwest News

OAN members and chapters are encouraged to send in relevant news items, such as new hires, new products, acquisitions, honors received and past or upcoming events. Email [news@oan.org](mailto:news@oan.org).

## Colorado gives up fight against emerald ash borer

The state of Colorado is abandoning its six-year effort to contain the spread of the emerald ash borer (*Agriilus plagiipennis*), an invasive pest that kills ash trees, according to a report by the Colorado Sun reader-supported journalism site. The state plans to cancel its quarantine and allow the unrestricted movement of firewood, mulch, lumber and other wood products.

Although quarantines normally are intended to eradicate a pest, Colorado's emerald ash borer quarantine was intended to slow the pest down, buying time to replant urban forests with replacement trees. Officials said it accomplished its purpose. They recommend that users continue the transition to other trees in the landscape, as the emerald ash borer attacks only ash.

The pest's larvae destroy the vascular systems of ash trees, killing them. It arrived in North America from Asia, likely via wooden shipping crates, and was first identified in Michigan and Ontario in 2002. Colorado so far is the westernmost state where the pest has been confirmed. It's been found in every state and Canadian province east of Colorado, except for North Dakota, Mississippi and Florida.

It is possible to treat ash trees for the pest using systemic pesticides, but best to treat them while healthy so the chemicals can circulate throughout the tree. Four universities published a guide to treating for emerald ash borer this past spring, available for download at [tinyurl.com/gvbcnxw](http://tinyurl.com/gvbcnxw).

The search for ash tree replacements was featured in the August 2017 edition of *Digger*, and can be accessed at [www.diggermagazine.com/rising-from-the-ashes](http://www.diggermagazine.com/rising-from-the-ashes).



Nurseries and greenhouses have regained their ground as the number one commodity in Oregon agriculture. That is due in large part to the variety and quality of trees, shrubs and plants offered by nurseries such as Highland Meadow Nursery Inc. in Molalla, Oregon. PHOTO BY BILL GOLOSKI

## NURSERIES AND GREENHOUSES ARE TOPS IN OREGON AGRICULTURE

The Oregon Department of Agriculture announced in September that nurseries and greenhouses sold nearly \$1 billion worth of goods (estimated) during 2018, good enough for the highest ranking among all of Oregon's agricultural commodities.

The precise ODA estimate of \$996 million marks an all-time high water mark for Oregon's nurseries and greenhouses, and continues a steady climb in industry growth coming out of the Great Recession. It represents an increase from \$947 million in 2017, \$909 million in 2016, \$895 million in 2015, \$829 million in 2014, and \$745 million in 2013.

"We refer to Oregon as Nursery Country for a good reason — it's the perfect place to grow a wide variety of nursery and greenhouse products," OAN Executive Director Jeff Stone said. "Our state is blessed with an ideal climate, rich soil, ample water supply, adequate winter dormancy, and a long growing season. When you combine all of that with the ingenuity, passion and hard work of our growers, it results in a wide variety of high-quality nursery products — which is exactly what nursery buyers across the United States demand, and internationally as well."

Oregon's quality has long been recognized in the green industry.

"The numbers show Oregon's strength in producing high quality plants," Stone said. "It has been a long road back to this level of sales and all the credit goes to the growers and their craftsmanship."

Oregon's cattle industry posted an estimated \$652 million in sales, according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, good enough for second place. In third place, also according to NASS, was hay, with \$599 million in sales.

The OAN operates the Nursery Guide website and book to help buyers find the nursery products that they are looking for. Buyers can search the book index or website for trees, shrubs and plants using common or botanical names, and receive a list of nurseries that grow them, whether they are looking for bare root, containers, B&B, liners, seedlings, cut, bulbs or other (including grow bags or root pruning containers).

Searching the site is free; just go to [www.NurseryGuide.com](http://www.NurseryGuide.com). The book and site also list services and supplies that are aimed at helping green industry businesses become more profitable. Copies of the book can be ordered for \$14 each by calling 503-682-5089, or they can be picked up at select green industry trade shows (MANTS, Cultivate, Farwest and CanWest).

OAN members may list their plants, products and services on the site at low cost. Listings begin at \$6.50 per plant, product or service, and the first listing is free. Call 888-283-7219 8 a.m.–4 p.m. Monday–Friday for assistance or details.

## GARDEN MEDIA GROUP REPORT TIES TRENDS TO ECOLOGY

Garden Media Group has released its new Garden Trends Report for 2020, and logically enough, this year's theme is "Seeing 20/20." ➡

## Northwest News

*Stenoptilodes antirrhina* may be fond of snapdragon plants. PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA.

The report has been issued annually since 2001, and is often highly anticipated by lawn, gardening and nursery professionals looking to prepare their businesses and careers for what is coming next. This year's edition identifies eight different developing trends that the Pennsylvania-based public relations firm founded by Suzi McCoy expects will have an impact over the next year and beyond, based on its research. Ecology is the common thread running through most of them.

The report discusses increasing urbanization and with it the desire for plant-filled environments; the emergence of circular economies that use nature as a template; green-collar jobs that could provide the green industry's next workforce; the need to rehabilitate topsoil and the opportunities that creates; the continued popularity of houseplants; the

need to make environments hospitable for amphibians as well as mushrooms; and the key color for 2020.

The report can be downloaded free of charge (contact information required). It's available at [tinyurl.com/yykm7a9w](http://tinyurl.com/yykm7a9w).

### TRADE WAR WITH CHINA IMPACTS OREGON AGRICULTURE

ODA director Alexis Taylor and ag industry leaders told the Oregon House Land Use and Agriculture Committee on Monday that the trade war with China is costing Oregon growers sales, according to reports by the *Capital Press* agricultural newspaper (login required) and KGW-8 (free) TV.

The trade barriers imposed by China include tariffs of 50 percent on some products — such as hazelnuts, fresh apples and

cherries — but they aren't the only barrier. Exporters also face delayed inspections and drawn-out paperwork.

The tariff for wheat is expected to go to 100 percent in December, but according to Blake Rowe of the Oregon Wheat Commission, the Chinese have already stopped buying it from the U.S., costing growers \$340 million in sales nationwide.

Potatoes and beef are also affected by the tariffs. Tariffs are paid by the importing party and either passed on to the consumer, or absorbed by the purchaser out of their margin. More often, the purchaser opts to get the commodity from another country.

Oregon hazelnut growers said demand for their product remains strong despite what is effectively an 81.5 percent duty on their crop. Oregon represents about 90 percent of U.S. hazelnut production.

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Susan L. Ford, an intellectual property attorney and business litigator, has joined the **Jordan Ramis PC** law firm as a new shareholder.



Ford is admitted to practice law in Oregon and Washington, where she represents businesses of all sizes on matters relating to trademarks, patents, copyrights, and trade secrets. In the agriculture industry, she helps clients create well-honed intellectual property strategies that can result in brand development, innovation and growth for just about any nursery stock producer, retailer, landscaper and related companies serving the nursery and greenhouse industry.

Ford has significant experience prac-

ticing law before the state and federal courts of Oregon and Washington, as well as before the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Trademark Trial and Appeal Board.

Ford is based in the firm's office in Lake Oswego, Oregon, and can be reached at 503-598-7070 or [susan.ford@jordanramis.com](mailto:susan.ford@jordanramis.com).

Founded in 1963, Jordan Ramis PC is a law firm dedicated to the businesses, organizations, and entrepreneurs building and defining the future of the Pacific Northwest. The firm's attorneys concentrate on representation and advocacy in the areas of Government Law, Dirt Law®, Business Law and Litigation. The firm has more than 30 attorneys, with offices in Oregon (Lake Oswego and Bend) and Washington (Vancouver), and serves as the law firm of record for the OAN.

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OHP has also released two products for controlling pests in nursery and greenhouse operations.

Sarisa™ is a diamide insecticide that will control nursery and greenhouse pests such as thrips, beetles, armyworms, gypsy moths, loopers, plant bugs, lace bugs, >>

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## Northwest News

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## ENERGY TRUST OPENS INCENTIVE INCREASE

For a limited time, Energy Trust of Oregon is increasing the cash incentive for industrial customers who sign incentive agreements by December 31, 2019 for custom capital gas efficiency projects in 2019, according to a notice from Ulrike Mengelberg.

Energy Trust cash incentives help Oregon businesses save by reducing upfront costs and creating long-term energy savings.

Incentives for custom capital equipment upgrades are increasing to \$2.50 per therm saved up to 70 percent of eligible project cost, which is up from \$2 (50 percent of cost). Upgrades such as greenhouse envelope upgrades, condensing boilers, process hot water boilers, cannabis indoor grow insulation, and other projects may be eligible.

To qualify for the increased incentives, businesses must be an eligible industrial or agricultural customer of NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas or Avista. Electric-only energy efficiency projects and gas operations and maintenance projects are not eligible for increased incentives. Incentives are subject to availability and may change. Customers must sign an incentive agreement and will have one year from signing to complete the project and submit closeout paperwork.

Go to [www.energytrust.org](http://www.energytrust.org) to access the online versions of the rebate forms. ©

**FARWEST**  
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newvarieties  
**SHOWCASE**

## My Farwest Show favorites

**T**HERE ARE MANY REASONS that I regularly attend the Farwest Show. One is for the social connection to others in the horticulture industry. There is camaraderie among garden people that I rarely see in other organizations, and it is hard to explain until you are part of it. I believe that social interactions are extremely important in this age of the internet and there are few opportunities to see so many industry people all in one facility.

Another reason that I attend is to see what is new, both in hard goods and green goods. While seeing what is new in hard goods is interesting, my chief interest is to see what new plants are being offered. These are the plants that we will be seeing at garden centers in the spring.

The area within the Farwest Show that I always gravitate to is the New Varieties Showcase. This is a section where plants have been selected to be featured because they offer something new. It might be the foliage, or the flowers, or the growing habit, or a combination of these. Or it could be a new plant introduction.

At the conclusion of the Farwest Show, awards are given within the New Varieties Showcase. There is an award for Best in Show and a People's Choice Best in Show. Plus there are

Awards of Merit. After spending time looking at all the choices, I selected five plants to talk about. Two of those were singled out for an award, but to me they are all winners.

Crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia*) has long been a favorite plant of mine. There are many attributes to this genus, including that many bloom in late summer to early fall when it is not common to see trees blooming.

There is a wide selection to choose from. As to height, some would be considered shrubs and other trees. These are deciduous plants and crape myrtle bark is very attractive, making it ideal for a spotlight to shine on it in the winter. Depending on the particular cultivar, some will provide brilliant fall color.

The New Varieties Showcase featured 'Cherry Mocha', (*L.* 'Cherry Mocha' PP28281) which had cherry red flowers in clusters and foliage that was deep burgundy. 'Cherry Mocha' is said to be a dense, compact plant and has mildew resistance. This would make an excellent container plant on a deck or patio with plenty of sun exposure. The deep burgundy foliage is an added bonus.

Of my five selected plants, **Golden Falls™ Redbud**, (*Cercis* 'NC2015-12' PPAF), was selected for an Award of Merit. This is considered a breakthrough foliage color for a weeping *Cercis*. The



Left to right: BARISTA® 'Cherry Mocha' crape myrtle, Golden Falls™ redbud, and Salvia Rockin® fuchsia.

new growth is tinged orange followed by bright gold leaves that do well in the sun without burning. This tree is narrow and weeping and lends itself to small spaces. It has pink flowers in the spring. This plant was introduced by the J.C. Raulston Arboretum at North Carolina State University.

For the past several years, I have had an obsession with the genus *Salvia*. It all



Mike Darcy

Head "plant nerd," longtime speaker, host of gardening shows on radio and TV, and author of the *In the Garden* email newsletter. You can reach Mike, or subscribe to his newsletter, at [itgmikedarcy@comcast.net](mailto:itgmikedarcy@comcast.net).

started when I purchased *Salvia guaranitica* 'Black and Blue' and realized what a long blooming, hummingbird magnet and superb container plant this was. After a summer with 'Black and Blue' blooming continuously in a container on our deck, I knew that I needed more *Salvia* in my garden. Today, I have more than a dozen *Salvia* cultivars in containers, with multiple plants in each container.

Each year I add new cultivars that I have not grown before and this past spring, one was **Salvia Rockin'® Fuchsia** (*Salvia* × cBBSAL0031' PPAF). I planted four plants in a large pot and they started to bloom in early June and have not stopped. As I write this column, it is mid-September, my plants are prolific with flowers and there is no sign they are

about to stop, and there are many new flower buds continuing to appear. With a black calyx, the flower stems are attractive even when the petals fall. Since the plants are sterile, they will not set seed and so that means more bloom. Honeybees and hummingbirds have been regular visitors and my plants have stayed much more compact than 'Black and Blue'.

Hardy hibiscus is a group of



## WHAT I'M HEARING

plants that are becoming increasingly popular with gardeners. Perhaps it is because they provide spectacular blooms late in the summer when many other plants are beginning to wane. The flowers, which come in many different colors including white and shades of red and pink, offer quite a show of color with their dinner plate-sized blooms. The foliage can also vary from green to almost black.

### Summerific® 'Evening Rose'

(*Hibiscus* 'Evening Rose') is an excellent combination of hot pink flowers and near-black foliage. Compared to another popular cultivar, 'Berry Awesome', the foliage on 'Evening Rose' is much darker and the flower color is more magenta than lavender. 'Evening Rose' received an Award of Merit.

The New Varieties Showcase award for Best in Show went to 'Crested Surf',



Left to right: Summerific® 'Evening Rose' rose mallow and Japanese painted fern 'Crested Surf'.

a Japanese Painted Fern (*Athyrium niponicum* 'Crested Surf'). I was pleased to see a fern win this title because many of us have moist shady areas in the garden and it is not always easy to find plants that will provide color, especially those without flowers. As my own garden matures, what once were small shrubs and trees have become bigger which creates more shady areas. This fern is similar to the traditional Japanese painted fern but the tips of the fronds are double-crested. This would make a nice container plant for a shady space and would provide

interesting texture all summer.

It is never easy making a list of favorites and I would not dismiss any of the plants selected for the New Varieties Showcase. The above mentioned five are those that appealed to me and I could visualize them being popular plants in the spring for gardeners. I am certain that garden centers will want to capitalize on the excitement surrounding all of the plants that were selected for the New Varieties Showcase, because just being selected is in and of itself an award!

Garden centers will want to feature these plants and should create signage to indicate the awards that these plants have won. The public will not only appreciate the new plants, but also the extra information. After all, educating the public is what garden centers are all about. ☺

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## Retail for the holidays

Garden centers transform themselves into destinations for fall and Christmas

BY TRACY ILENE MILLER

**T**HE MONTHS LEADING UP to December can lead to a slowdown in business at many garden centers, as gardening activity decreases. But some retailers have made these months quite profitable, and without going too far off mission, if at all.

After all, nurseries and garden centers aren't just in the nursery and garden center business. Some see their true mission as providing beauty to the customer. Among them is Laura Hammond, director of marketing at **Al's Garden & Home**, which has four locations in Oregon.

"We bring beauty into people's lives, and that comes in different forms," Hammond said. "What you are selling is that finished product and the ability for clients to enjoy their life in a very certain way."

Garden centers today can be more than just a place to buy plants. Some have become holiday destinations. Many put on events to provide customers with creativity, inspiration, learning, fun and, importantly, gifts and décor.

### Buyer personae

In the United States, more than 50 percent of gardeners in the baby boomer generation are female, and among millennials, it is more than 70 percent, according to the National Gardening Survey.

At Al's, they drew on that knowledge to create a persona for

their buyers in each of those groups — Sally and Kristin.

Sally is of the boomer and slightly younger generation. An educated homeowner, she knows some botanical nomenclature and about varieties, and may even come in with specific ones to request. She doesn't mind getting her hands dirty.

Kristin is 20–30 years younger than Sally, with one or two kids she may need to keep busy. She knows no nomenclature. She wants the look of a garden but doesn't necessarily want to get her hands dirty. Convenience is important. "If the party is tomorrow, and she wants her table a certain way, she might sacrifice a little bit of quality to do it on time," Hammond said.

Importantly, both Sally and Kristin have said their home, garden and how they entertain is an extension of their personal style.

At garden centers such as Al's, **Bauman's Farm & Garden** (Gervais, Oregon) and **Farmington Gardens** (Hillsboro and Beaverton, Oregon), targeting Kristin and Sally in the holiday months means, in part, meeting their respective needs for personal self-expression in the home, garden and free time; family time; and fun.

### Setting the scene

Brian Bauman, general manager at Bauman's, said that by September 1, the idea of a "wonderland" is not just for winter anymore. Fall décor — including harvest, pumpkin-themed



## Retail for the holidays

**Previous page:** left: Al's Garden & Home showcases a Christmas tree with Santa Claus decorations. Right: Signs for pumpkins motivates customers for discounted sales at an Al's Garden & Home event. PHOTO COURTESY OF ALS GARDEN & HOME



and Halloween decorations and gifts — is the fastest growing category for the business. Therefore, Bauman's takes more than three greenhouses and fills them with displays from September through January.

Heading to gift shows and locations such as AmericasMart, a wholesale marketplace with more than 300 showrooms in Atlanta, Georgia for home décor products, Bauman's staff pick out hundreds of items, from mittens — “Our hottest selling item,” said Bauman — to glass pumpkins, planters, chimineas, scarecrows, decorative wheat bundles and more.

The deadline for having everything in place is the annual Chicks Night Out. The free, just-for-women event starts on the first Thursday of September. It not only jump-starts fall sales of new items, but cleans out end-of-season items as well.

It offers music; classes related to merchandise in the store (e.g., flower arranging); massages; and some free cider and food samples, but mostly food, wine and cider for purchase. Regular store items are discounted — like this year's offer of 50-70 percent off all pottery — and guests get an extra incentive to shop end-of-season items.

In this way, the center becomes a destination for some well-planned fun while providing an opportunity for the women to get first dibs on new décor items.

### Show a little appreciation

In a challenging time for sales during the year, what better way than to show a little appreciation and create a holiday just for customers? This is exactly what Farmington Gardens does at the end of September: it holds a customer appreciation event as a

segue into the holiday season.

Each year, the event has a theme where staff dresses up, items are deeply discounted, and there are carnival games, scavenger hunts, 4-H displays, beehive viewing, a cake walk and more activities to bring in customers.

Michelle Shepard, marketing manager, states that the nursery is saving money by selling plants that would otherwise have to be overwintered.

“We will have potted plants because everything is on sale, and we try to have some color, and we have a lot of classes for sprucing up your fall containers, which helps

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**Opposite page: left:** Al's Garden & Home branded holiday decor is sold when the growing season is closed. PHOTO COURTESY OF ALS GARDEN & HOME **Center:** Colorful bouquets on display at Bauman's Farm & Garden PHOTO BY BRIAN BAUMAN **Right:** Staff dressed up for Customer Appreciation Day at Farmington Gardens. PHOTO COURTESY OF FARMINGTON GARDENS

us get coupons out for later events," Shepard said. "It takes us into the next phase."

That, of course, is Christmas — their big season. But the event also provides an opportunity to remind customers of the big upcoming delivery of pumpkins.

### Pumpkins, pumpkins, pumpkins

More than 1.5 billion pounds of usable pumpkins were produced in the United States in 2018, according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, and only 15 percent were for processing; the rest were sold whole. The National Retail

Federation estimates that 49 percent of adult Americans decorate for Halloween, with specialty pumpkins like Cinderella, white (ghost), multicolored and green pumpkins gaining in demand the last five years.

Pumpkins offer workshop opportunities for pumpkin-centric masterpieces that incorporate plants to promote sales of existing inventory. Farmington has its pumpkins delivered, along with gourds, to provide their customers front porch decorating and workshops.

Al's grow and sells its classic pumpkins, no matter the size, at \$1.99 (until the end of October, when they slash the price to .99 cents); specialty pumpkins at a higher price; and (last year) minis at 3 for \$4. They bring people in and prompt one of Al's most successful Wine & Workshop Wednesday

classes (a regular year-round event priced at \$40) in October, when customers make a succulents and pumpkin centerpiece.

Al's then gives customers other reasons to stay and buy things they need for beautifying their homes. These include a full line of Pacific Northwest-perfect fashionable clothing; gourds; pumpkins of all colors and sizes, smooth and warty; decorative corn; mums and other fall plants galore to brighten the home. There is also the fall inspiration package, a starter kit for porch decorating that includes a corn stalk, straw bale and pumpkin.

The combination provides the fall aesthetic a Kristin would appreciate with its nod toward convenience — someone else has done the design work. Groupings like the inspiration package (similar to pre-picked mixes of tulip bulbs) can



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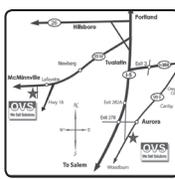
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## Retail for the holidays

**Opposite page: left:** Staff pose for photos at a wreath workshop at Farmington Gardens. PHOTO COURTESY OF FARMINGTON GARDENS **Center:** Scarecrows are featured in one display at Bauman's Farm & Garden. PHOTO BY BRIAN BAUMAN **Right:** A seasonal photoshoot opportunity with the "real" Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, and elf Julie is a requirement at Farmington Gardens. PHOTO COURTESY OF FARMINGTON GARDENS

prompt the customer to walk away with more than the pumpkin she came shopping for, including other plants and goods.

### A harvest marketing juggernaut

Bauman's Farm & Garden also grows its own pumpkins and sells out of them every year at its Harvest Festival ([bauamanshf.com](http://bauamanshf.com)), which runs from the third week of September until the end of October. It began 31 years ago with Brian's second-grade class coming in for a tour of the garden, and has turned into 100,000 visitors — existing and potential customers — in six weeks.

Notably, the ideas for festival activities originated from things the younger Baumans did growing up on the farm, like making hay forts and swings and picking pumpkins, which the farm had been growing since the late 1800s. "Everything we do is based on

that idea of sharing the farm and all the fun stuff we shared as kids," Bauman said.

The Harvest Festival offers guests 12 activities for an \$8 weekend admission, including an animal barn and hayride. A \$20 wristband unlocks unlimited turns on 20 more activities, including a maze, sock hop and apple slingshot.

Activities are changed each year based on what provides the best customer experience. The activities always focus on children and lots and lots of food. There is also something for the adults, such as a two-day Cider Festival (where Bauman does an exit survey to capture contact information) at the end of September; one to two musical acts on weekend; a pumpkin weigh off (with 10,000 visitors alone the day of the event — last year a 2,157.5-pound winner!); and coupons.

Visitors get a 16-page, four-color

harvest guide to apprise them of festival activities as well as advertise future events and other businesses, and provide a sheet of coupons for discounts on plants and other goods at the event and in the garden center post-event, between November and March.

"It's a lot to pull this off, but the reason I'm still doing it, it is part of a who we are," Bauman said. "There is a demand among consumers; they are looking for traditions to do as a family. People who came here as kids are coming here with their families."

Bauman is always looking for ways to enhance visitors' connection to the farm beyond just the pumpkin patch, which sticks in their memories. Some visitors think the fall festival is all Bauman's does.

To partially remedy that, the first weekend of the festival, Bauman's offers a \$5 discount on the unlimited ride wristband



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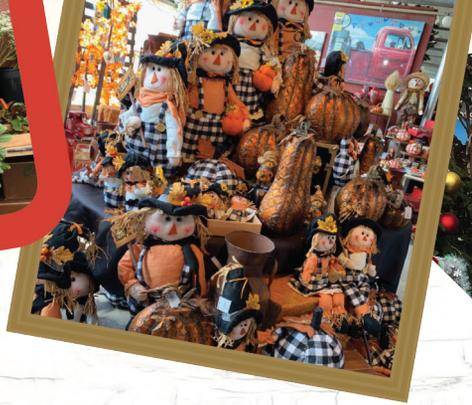
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for those who sign up for the rewards program. Bauman's then reaches back out to let them know about such products as U-cut Christmas trees, hanging basket reveals in spring, produce in summer, and more.

"A lot of new people can go through the whole farm and not realize the retail store is there, so we do a scavenger hunt to see all parts of the farm," Bauman said.

### Creating partnerships

Farmington Gardens' Holiday Market in December follows on the heels of its popular wreath-making workshops that begin the day after Thanksgiving.

Coupons and reminders go out as the mass of pumpkins are being delivered in October, and each workshop provides an opportunity to continue promotion plus hand out more coupons — every participant gets one to shop in the store.

Farmington has a consistent partnership with Shannon Feltus, a private chef at Urban Farm Foods, whose success translates into her followers attending her regular workshops at Farmington (on such topics as canning, vinegar and pickle making, and decorating) and visiting her at Farmington's Holiday Market, where she maintains a booth for the two Saturdays in December that it runs.

"It is so great when you can team up with someone trying to boost themselves," Shepard said. "Shannon has a big following, and we have a big following, and it is nice to put those two together."

In its fourth year, the Holiday Market keeps growing, Shepard said, as customers now expect it and more vendors find it and apply for a spot.

"We have 20 to 30 vendors each year, and all of them have people who follow them, so they themselves bring in people," Shepard said.

Vendors are focused on gifts, and include everything from woodworking, carved trees and wood toys to yard art, canned preserves, and photography.

Farmington, for its part, has wreath workshops, sells wreaths and Christmas trees (cut and live), hosts the real Santa

Claus (Shepard insists!) and of course provides plenty of impulse buys of plants in Christmas colors, such as pots with coral bells (*Heucheras*), wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), hellebore, dwarf Alberta spruce (*Picea glauca* 'Conica') and lemon cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Goldcrest').

"It's supposed to be a slow time to get things done, and it's not," Shepard said. "I do believe that we do get new customers every year because of the holiday activities. We hear it all the time, 'We never knew you were here! That you were this big!'"

### Lights, camera, action

Like at Farmington Gardens, staff at Al's are already gearing up for its big Christmas merchandizing events by

September. They decorate four stores in preparation for the Evening of Lights open house events in early November, which attract more than 4,800 people at the four stores combined

At the event, there are more than 40 varieties of locally grown poinsettias and lavishly designed displays with gifts for everyone, right down to dog lovers, and up to 20 "designer" trees. ➤

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## Retail for the holidays

"It gives customers ideas well ahead of Thanksgiving," Hammond said. "Seventy-five percent will put up their tree Thanksgiving weekend, and we've got to be primed to take advantage of that small window, because the first to second week of December, we're done."

As well, the Rose City Garden Railway Society sets a Christmas-themed toy train route, carolers come calling, and there is other live music plus local vendor-provided holiday treats, including wine, beer, cupcakes, cakes and cookies.

The sheer numbers who come out for the events may be a testament to its success, and yet Al's conducts plenty of activities leading-up to the event to help build interest in the store.

For example, Al's offers a special Kids' Club hands-on planting activity — normally \$7 — for free in October, and they make it Halloween themed. The December activity includes storytime and cookies with Mrs. Claus.

Al's also offers autumn-themed and Christmas-themed child photo sessions in the fall to bring the kids and their parents into the store. Sessions cost \$35. They are limited and typically sell out, keeping demand high.

For these and all events, Al's has a consistent Facebook marketing strategy that becomes laser-focused in fall on the holiday months and the retail purchases possible at the store during that time.

Garden retail centers that have made their businesses a destination for holiday season fun, gifts and décor have found a way to maximize the utility of their location, get rid of season-end products, provide opportunities and benefits to existing customers and cultivate new loyal customers who become attached through the many experiences, a reason to return.

By targeting a holiday for a larger marketing and event effort, they begin to perfect the execution and their success. ©

*Tracy Ilene Miller is a freelance writer and editor who covers several topics, including gardening. She can be reached at [tracyilenemiller@gmail.com](mailto:tracyilenemiller@gmail.com).*



# O, Christmas trees

The industry's been on a rough ride, but some silver linings point to a bright future

BY JON BELL

**T**he years leading up to the Great Recession were merry ones for Christmas tree farmers in the United States. Consumer demand and spending were strong, prices were steady, and the supply was bountiful. The future looked bright as a Christmas star, and so farmers planted and planted — and planned. They kept on planting until there were just too many trees.

“As a state in general, Oregon used to sell about 8 million trees a year,” said Mark Arkills, general manager of Holiday Tree Farms Inc., a Corvallis-headquartered farm that, at close to a million trees per year, is one of the largest growers in the state. “And for a while there, we were planting, as a group, over 10 million a year. So, an oversupply hit.”

Unfortunately for Christmas tree farmers, that oversupply hit just before the Great Recession, the latter adding the second part of a one-two combo that knocked the industry back. Strapped for cash, consumers cut spending. Farmers had more trees than they could sell, and the ones they could sell weren't commanding top dollar. As a result, many farmers trimmed their plantings; others switched crops or got out of the business altogether — all moves that led to an

undersupply of the Noble and Douglas firs that people wanted to deck their halls with by the time the economy recovered a few years ago.

Though the Christmas tree industry in Oregon — the nation's top state for production — and elsewhere is still navigating the fallout from those harvest seasons past, the market has steadied a bit. The lagging supply has pushed prices up, and farmers have tried to balance their planting to at least soften the blow when the next drop-off comes. New-to-the-U.S. evergreen varieties and advances in genetics are helping to fill out the supply, and targeted marketing campaigns aim to beat back the advance of artificial trees.

But the industry is not out of the woods yet. A seed shortage has some growers nervous about the future, artificial trees pose a serious threat and a younger generation may not have the same affinity for the Tannenbaum experience that their elders did. All in all, though, the tidings look glad for the future of Christmas trees.

“I think the outlook is really positive,” said Chal Landgren, a Christmas tree specialist with Oregon State University's North Willamette Research and Extension Center. “We've gone through a pretty tough time,

but now growers are feeling pretty happy about the prospects for the future.”

## A tough run

By the numbers, the downturn for Christmas tree growers was pretty heavy. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) five-year census, in 2007 there were nearly 17,400 Christmas tree farms in the nation that cut 17.4 million trees. By 2012, the number of farms had dropped by close to 2,000, and 100,000 fewer trees had been cut. In 2017, the number of farms had slipped further to 15,000 and just above 15 million trees were cut.

In Oregon, farmers harvested close to 6.9 million trees in 2007; by 2016, it was down to 5.2 million, and in 2017 it hit 4.7 million. According to Landgren, there were 375 Oregon licensed growers in the Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association in 2008; now, it's down to 166.

“That's been a function of the oversupply bulge the industry went through,” he said. “You can only sell so many Christmas trees.”

It wasn't just the tree growers who felt the pain. The farmers who grow the seedlings that become Christmas trees got



## O, Christmas trees

**Previous page:** Christmas trees are an essential part of the holiday season. PHOTO COURTESY OF OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY  
**Below.** The Christmas Tree Promotion Board offers free publicity materials like this one for growers to use during the holiday season. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD



socked, too. Kathy LeCompte, co-owner of Brooks Tree Farm, a seedling grower headquartered in Salem, said that when farmers stopped planting trees, demand for seeds dried up. And while some seed, like Douglas fir, can last for years, others, like Noble, don't age well and don't last.

"We dumped a million trees one year during the recession," LeCompte said.

On top of that, Brooks Tree Farm and other seedling growers had to ration their seeds for a few years while they waited for a bumper crop of new seeds, which usually occurs every seven to 10 years. A few years ago, when that bumper crop finally came around, a heatwave struck and destroyed massive amounts of seeds in the Willamette Valley, Idaho and on Vancouver Island, all within a few days. That same heatwave also damaged some of the new plantings that were already in the ground, which has contributed to the ongoing shortage.

"I often say to people, this is a hard game to win," LeCompte said.

### Faking it

Making it even more difficult for the Christmas tree industry: fake trees. According to a 2016 study from the American Christmas Tree Association conducted by Nielsen, close to 100 million households across the U.S. display Christmas trees. More than 80 percent of those are artificial. The National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA) reported that in both 2016 and 2017, Americans bought 27.4 million real trees; in 2016, they bought 18.6 million artificial trees, and in 2017 that number rose to 21.1 million.

"There's been a significant shift to artificial trees, particularly among aging Baby

Boomers," said Tim O'Connor, executive director of the NCTA. "Many of them grew up knowing that they wanted a real tree experience for their kids, but once their kids were older or moved out, they immediately switched to an artificial tree, and they're not coming back to a real one."

Another impact of growers not planting as many trees during the recession is a present lack of taller trees, those that hit 10 to 12 feet. That's a void that fake trees have been able to fill, especially as more new construction homes are featuring taller ceilings.

"One of our biggest requests was for 12-foot trees, specifically in (wealthy Portland suburbs) Sherwood and Wilsonville, with all the big new houses and apartments that have higher ceilings," said Candace Moffatt, home décor buyer with Al's Garden & Home. "We could charge more than \$2,000 for a pre-lit one. They didn't care."

### Silver lining

Though the fallout from Christmas tree seasons past continues to influence the present and future, there is still plenty of silver lining that suggests the industry is returning to a healthy state.

"The optimistic part is, the guys who have stuck through the tough years are in a great position, and that's great for them," said Marsha Gray, executive director of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board (CTPB).

Perhaps the biggest positive from the shortage of trees is an accompanying rise in prices as demand has outpaced supply. According to the USDA's Northwest Regional Field Office, in Oregon, the average price per tree sold in 2010 was \$14.21;

by 2015, the average was up to \$17.90. The NCTA found that U.S. retail consumers paid an average of \$75 for a real tree in 2017. Similarly, though down slightly from \$91.1 million, the estimated sales value of Oregon's 2016 Christmas tree harvest was still a healthy \$90 million.

"There have been some significant price increases in the last few years," said Holiday Tree Farms' Arkills. "We went up about 3 percent this year. But we think prices are leveling off — and that they need to. If prices get too high, then we make the artificial tree more attractive."

The rough stretch for the industry has also led to some innovation. Some relatively new species have been introduced from overseas, including Turkish and Nordmann firs, to help beef up supply. The trees seem to grow well here and require less spraying, if any at all, according to Arkills.

Holiday Tree Farms has also been working with Oregon State University on some genetics projects, and it's invested in its own seed orchard as well as one with the Bureau of Land Management in Colton, Oregon. In addition, Arkills said Holiday Tree Farms has been continually looking for ways to improve its land, whether that be fallowing fields for a year in between production, planting cover crops to restore nutrients or using track-based tractors to lessen compaction.

O'Connor said there's also no discounting the rise in "agritainment" as many farmers have added new draws to get families to come to their farms and generate new revenue; think corn mazes, hayrides, live music and appearances by Santa Claus.

The industry as a whole has also come together to support marketing and promo-



tional efforts spearheaded by the CTPB. Farmers and importers pay 15 cents per tree to fund what's called a checkoff program, which aims to spread the good word about real Christmas trees. The primary campaign, called "It's Christmas. Keep it real," takes largely to social media to target young families with the benefits of real trees, from the memories made when choosing and cutting a tree to the environmental and business realities.

"There is such a misunderstanding out there about real trees when the person off

the street thinks that we are taking trees off the planet," Gray said. "These are farm-grown. We put more in when we take them out. When you're not buying a real tree, you're not saving a real tree, you're putting a farmer out of business."

At the end of the day, O'Connor said Christmas tree growers have been through a rough cycle, but, as in agriculture in general, it is just that: a cycle. He's seen it in other ag sectors; Arkills said this is the second oversupply cycle that he's experienced in his 33-year career.

The market should continue to level out and the industry will iron out its wrinkles while also trying to sow the seeds for increased future demand. After all, people have been celebrating the Yuletide with fir trees in their homes for nearly 500 years and aren't likely to stop anytime soon. ©

*Jon Bell is a freelance journalist who writes about everything from craft beer and real estate to the great outdoors. His website is [www.jbellink.com](http://www.jbellink.com). He can be reached at [jontbell@comcast.net](mailto:jontbell@comcast.net).*



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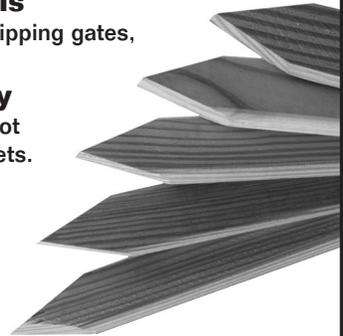


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### PLANT HEALTH MANAGER / ASSISTANT GROWER

Position oversees all chemical applications in propagation, container grown and field grown nursery stock at Kraemer's Nursery in Mt. Angel, Oregon. Position manages a group of applicators, diagnosing symptoms and creating a chemical program to treat diseases and pests.

The Plant Health Manager will hold a current pesticide applicators license and ODL. Successful candidate will be proficient in Excel and other general office software and will develop and manage a yearly chemical budget. Bilingual (English/Spanish) is strongly preferred. Competitive salary and benefits package including health insurance and 401(k) plan available.

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Pac Green Landscape and Dutchman Nursery in Woodburn, Oregon has a full-time position open! This position will assist estimating team with bidding new projects and locating plant material for projects along with other office duties.

Must have excellent computer skills and Excel spreadsheet experience. Spanish language would be helpful but not required.

Email resume or contact:  
Annie Mock, Owner  
[annie@pac-green.com](mailto:annie@pac-green.com)  
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17049 Mountain View Lane NE  
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## EMPLOYMENT

### SHIPPING – STORAGE SUPERVISOR

We are looking for an experienced, highly motivated, self-directed person to become part of our management team located at our bare root farm in Boring, Oregon.

Duties will include, but not limited to, being responsible for directing and coordinating the shipping and storage of trees, managing budding in the summer and some inventory oversight. Applicant will ensure efficient utilization of personnel, equipment, and facilities to achieve timely and accurate shipments.

This position requires decision making, interpersonal skills, teamwork, problem-solving skills and the ability to achieve desired results through the efforts of others. Must be able to implement and prepare shipping documents and have accuracy in numerical calculations.

Bilingual in Spanish is a plus. Must have a valid, insurable driver's license. We offer a comprehensive employee benefit package, salary DOE.

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Large wholesale nursery is seeking a skilled and self-motivated Journeyman Mechanic to join our team in our repair shop located in Boring, OR.

Applicant must have a valid driver's license and insurable driving record. Candidate must have the ability to work independently and assist other mechanics in the repair and maintenance of vehicles, tractors, forklifts, farm equipment and implements for a large variety of repairs, diagnosis and general service and upkeep.

Required experience:

General Service, Gasoline/Diesel/LPG Engine Repair and Diag., Clutch/Transmission and associated component replacement (Tractor and Vehicles), Brake systems (Hydraulic and Air), Heavy Equipment Repair and Service including drive systems, Electrical Systems and wiring, Hydraulic systems and cylinders, some level of experience with farm equipment.

Any additional experience in welding and/or fabrication is a plus as well as familiarity with diverse farm/nursery implements or tire repair and replacement on vehicles/tractors.

Candidate will have good communication and organizational skills, be highly motivated and goal oriented as well as being aware of and practicing safety in the workplace. Candidate must also possess knowledge of electronic diagnostic equipment and be open to further training and use of electronic data and labor management software platforms. The ability to maintain accurate records by recording service and repairs completed with parts and product usage is vital to the position. Must be able to handle and carry objects up to 80 lbs.

We maintain a drug-free workplace. This is a full-time position with excellent company benefits. Work hours are 40+ hours per week and are conducted inside of a shop but may require outdoor work in potentially inclement conditions out in the fields of the nursery at times. Opportunities for advancement; wage DOE.

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## EMPLOYMENT

### JOURNEYMAN MECHANIC – CANBY, OR

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### B&B DEPT. MANAGER

We are currently looking for an experienced manager to coordinate day-to-day operations of our B&B Dept. in Boring, Oregon. Qualified candidates should have hands-on experience with production of B&B ornamentals and conifers.

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## EMPLOYMENT

### NURSERY MANAGER

Teufel Nursery is looking for a career-minded professional Nursery Manager to work out of our Cornelius, Oregon facility.

Job Requirements:

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# GROWING KNOWLEDGE

Series content is coordinated by Dr. Jay Pscheidt, professor of botany and plant pathology at Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon.



Oregon State University



An ongoing series provided by Oregon State University in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture and in partnership with the Oregon Association of Nurseries

## Ornamental hazelnut cultivars from Oregon State University

BY DAVID C. SMITH

**T**HE HAZELNUT BREEDING and genetics program at Oregon State University (OSU) has named and released two disease-resistant, red-leaved ornamental cultivars of European hazelnut, *Corylus avellana* L. The cultivars bring to the nursery industry new combinations of interesting growth habit, leaf form and color, and resistance to the fungal disease eastern filbert blight (EFB).

'Red Dragon', released in 2008, exhibits contorted growth in the shoots and leaves, and has beautiful dark purple and red color in the young foliage (Fig. 1). The red pigmentation is also seen in the young stems, bud scales, the nut husks, immature nut shells and the catkins, the male inflorescences.

'Red Dragon' is named for the image of a mythical Chinese dragon that the twisting shoots evoke. It is slightly more vigorous and its branches are less pendulous than those of 'Contorta' (also known as 'Harry Lauder's Walking Stick'), the well-known green-leaved contorted hazelnut of the nursery trade. Its leaves are moderately contorted and rolled, which partially exposes the contorted shoots to view during the growing season. The red coloration in the leaves fades as the leaves age, becoming an attractive mixture of red new growth and green older leaves.

Like most European hazelnuts, the natural growth habit of 'Red Dragon' is a multi-stemmed shrub and if a single-stemmed tree form is desired, the sucker shoots arising at the base of the plant must be cut off several times during the spring and summer. With sucker removal, 'Red Dragon' grows into

a round-headed, upright-spreading tree form, reaching 10 feet in height in 15 years (Fig. 2, next page). In either growth form, pruning to open up the canopy and highlight the snaking, twisted shoots will maximize the enjoyment of this ornamental trait (Fig. 3, next page).

'Red Dragon' will produce small nuts in red husks, but only if there is another compatible hazelnut nearby to provide pollen, as hazelnuts will not set seeds through self-pollination. In the Willamette Valley, this could occur commonly, but nuts and husks may not be seen when it is planted elsewhere. Fall leaf color is an unassuming but pleasant yellow.

The catkins on 'Red Dragon' add attractiveness in the winter, especially when they elongate during bloom in late winter or early spring. The female flowers are inconspicuous tiny red filaments, much smaller than those of witch hazel or winter hazel. 'Red Dragon' can be a stand-alone focus plant in a landscape that provides year-round interest.

The second ornamental hazelnut from our breeding program is 'Burgundy Lace', a cutleaf type with purple-red leaf color. A controlled cross was made in 1998 between two selections carrying the recessive allele

Fig. 1



for dissected leaf margins, derived from their common parent, *C. avellana* f. *laciniata*. One of these parents had red leaves, a dominant trait in hazelnut.

'Burgundy Lace' was chosen as the superior selection from among 38 seedlings in 2005, and after testing in a replicated trial for seven years, was named and released in 2015.

The leaf margins of 'Burgundy Lace' are deeply incised or dissected (Fig. 4, next page), giving the tree canopy a lighter, >>>

## Ornamental hazelnut cultivars from Oregon State University

Fig. 2



Previous page: **Figure 1:** 'Red Dragon', showing the contorted leaves and stems and the mélange of leaf coloration.

**This page: Figure 2:** 'Red Dragon' at 8 years old, as a grafted tree in the field trial. **Figure 3:** 'Red Dragon' in winter, showing the contorted growth habit in branches. **Figure 4:** Deeply dissected leaves of 'Burgundy Lace'.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

Fig. 3



airier appearance than standard European hazelnut. New leaf growth is a striking purple red, with the top surface of the leaves being darker than the undersides. As with all other red leaf forms of hazelnut, the red color is overtaken by green as the leaves age, and the canopy is a mixture of dark green older leaves and the purple-red young leaves.

With sucker removal, 'Burgundy Lace' grows as an upright-spreading, moderately vigorous tree that can reach 15 to 20 feet in height at 15 years (Fig. 5, opposite page). Bud scales, immature husks and nuts, young shoots and catkins are also pigmented red.

Both 'Burgundy Lace' and 'Red Dragon' have the single dominant gene from the cultivar 'Gasaway' that confers resistance to the strain of EFB that occurs in the Pacific Northwest.

EFB is a tree-killing fungal disease that is endemic to the central and eastern United States. Wherever the disease exists, it has severely limited the long-term survivability of European hazelnut. EFB is now widespread throughout western Oregon, Washington and coastal British Columbia. Both of the new ornamental cultivars have remained free of EFB after many years of field exposure under high disease pressure at our research

farm and in controlled inoculations.

Disease resistance in other areas of the U.S. may be similar or less than in Oregon, based on our experience with commercial nut varieties, but will be significantly better than a selection that does not have the 'Gasaway' gene. They have also survived unscathed through a -10 F freeze in December 2014 and mid-winter cold hardiness of buds and wood is expected to be similar to that of 'Contorta'. 'Red Dragon' is intended as a replacement for 'Contorta',

which is extremely susceptible to EFB.

Based in Corvallis, Oregon, the breeding program has been focused on genetic improvement of hazelnut for Oregon's commercial hazelnut industry since 1969. The program has been led by Dr. Shawn Mehlenbacher for the past 33 years. In that time, we have selected and released more than 20 new main crop cultivars and pollinizers, plus these two ornamental types. The ornamental cultivars came about through investigation of the inheritance of naturally occurring growth habit, leaf color and leaf form mutants. We are always striving to learn more about the inheritance and interaction of the numerous growth and color variants in hazelnut.

We have identified several mutants in addition to contorted growth and red leaf color, including two chlorophyll deficiency (yellow leaf) mutants, pendulous growth, yellow female style color, and cream-colored pollen. Most of these mutants are recessive traits, meaning that they are expressed in an individual only if it inherits a recessive allele from both parents. If it were simply a matter of crossing two siblings that each have a recessive allele, the breeding effort would be easy. But because of the self-incompatibility

Fig. 4



**Figure 5:** The airy, open canopy of a 5 year old 'Burgundy Lace' tree.  
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**Fig. 5**

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issue, many individuals cannot be crossed in such a direct fashion.

In the case of 'Red Dragon', it required finding two seedlings, both descended from 'Contorta', that could be intercrossed and both carrying the recessive allele for contorted growth. Hopefully, we will one day produce more interesting combinations, such as a cutleaf contorted or a cutleaf pendulous, or combinations of the yellow, green and red leaf colors. The search goes on, to add to our knowledge about the genetics of hazelnut and to also bring beautiful, unusual ornamentals to the nursery trade.

'Red Dragon' and 'Burgundy Lace' are protected by U.S. plant patents and propagation for sale is restricted to nurseries that have licensed the rights to do so. If you are interested in becoming a licensee, contact Denis Sather in the OSU Office for Commercialization and Corporate Development at Oregon State University at [denis.d.sather@oregonstate.edu](mailto:denis.d.sather@oregonstate.edu). ©

*David Smith has worked as an assistant to the hazelnut breeder in the Horticulture Department at Oregon State University since 1982. He can be reached at [dave.smith@oregonstate.edu](mailto:dave.smith@oregonstate.edu).*

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# Your success is OAN's mission

**I have served as your executive director for more than nine years now and have been a steadfast advocate for the best people I have ever met.**

If you include my time as your government relations director prior to that, I have seen 14 years of ups and downs in our industry.

When Kristin VanHoose and her board conducted a nationwide search and offered me the role to lead the association, the industry was in the steep fall of the Great Recession. I committed then, as I do now, that the association will act as a mirror to the membership. What you need, the trade association will deliver.

## We have your back

OAN protects every nursery and greenhouse operator in Oregon — even those that are not OAN members. Let me give a few examples.

When artificial trade barriers were erected to slow down plant shipments to Oregon's markets, we were first to take action. We led the West in obtaining fair and equal treatment from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

When nurseries and agriculture overall continued to struggle with a labor crisis, OAN led the charge as strong voice for immigration reform, respected not just on the state but the national level.

When pest and disease issues threatened our state's reputation, we built a partnership between OAN, the industry's companies, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, the USDA and researchers from Oregon State University and Washington State University to create what became the *Safe Procurement and Production Manual*. This resource guide shows nurseries how to produce clean plants more efficiently by adopting a systems approach to pest and disease prevention.

## Return on investment

For those nurseries that have not yet joined us, we want your participation. Our programs and services are designed to meet your needs and generate strong return on your dues investment. Helping you lower

your business costs is one of our primary drivers. While we're active on the policy side, keeping markets open and fair, we're also trying to help your bottom line with our programs and services.

*Digger* magazine is the industry gold standard for an association publication, reaching nearly 8,000 industry members and leaders. Through member input, the magazine addresses real issues and provides tools to help you adapt in a changing business environment.

The Farwest Show, our showcase event, brings 5,000 people to a pure business-to-business environment. About 20 percent of attendees were new this year.

Every OAN member earns free admission into the show. Exhibitors save 22 percent on their booth compared to non-members. The show guide that is inserted into the August edition of *Digger* provides an added boost with a free profile.

The OAN *Nursery Guide* (in print and online) is a portal for all buyers to find and source plants for every member. It is affordable and customized to fit your needs. The NurseryGuide.com website has almost 670,000 annual pageviews. All members get a free profile and one free listing.

We also help members exhibit at other shows besides Farwest. We created the Trucks to Trade Shows program to ship your booth materials and save money.

## Membership has its benefits

When the Obama Administration enacted the Affordable Care Act, prices for insurance went through the roof. Through a strategic partnership with Leonard Adams Insurance, OAN members were able to manage the costs through group buying.

Enrollment is easy. Many plan choices are available, including some with richer benefits that are typically available only to larger employers. And despite added premium taxes and healthcare and prescription increases averaging 8–10 percent a year, members save thousands on their premiums. The increases they pay are about half those that others must pay. This has created a greater favorable competitive option for members.

We also save members money with free legal advice, discounted bulk fuel, competi-



Jeff Stone  
OAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

tive rate credit card processing, and even discounted rooms at the Oregon Garden Resort.

## Networking still matters

In addition to our advocacy and our savings, people often join OAN for the connections. Every member is encouraged to pick a local chapter community to join. By taking part in chapters, one can build a strong nursery family and be part of something bigger than a single company.

## Upcoming issues

Every year, the U.S. Congress and the Oregon Legislature pass legislation that impacts the industry, and they consider a lot more. When issues come down fast and furious, it can be overwhelming. We break it all down for you, so you're always up to speed. One of the places we do that is at the annual OAN Convention.

When we can beat bad bills, we do. Sometimes we can only make them less bad. The more complicated the regulation, the more determined we are to bring you common-sense explanations, provide options to manage your business, and help you adapt to an ever-changing business and regulatory environment.

By getting involved in our efforts to protect the industry, you can lend your singular voice to a choir of influence. I promise you, our efforts truly impact the direction and success of every nursery, greenhouse operator, retailer and supplier. This does not happen by accident. It begins when you make that conscious decision to get involved and give your input, opinion, advice and most importantly, your support.

Take a step and join the OAN community at our annual convention in Hood River on November 1-2, 2019.

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