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Kyle Fessler

# Weathering the storm

**August has always been a month I  
look forward to.**

As summer draws toward an end, it's a big time of transition for our family. Between football practices, trying to squeeze in one more trip to the lake, and scrambling to find last-minute school supplies, there is much to accomplish before Labor Day hits.

On the farm, much of the harvest work is nearing completion. The last of last season's nursery stock has gone down the road. This year's crop has flushed and is ready for sales. When mid-August rolls around in Nursery Country, it can only mean one thing: Farwest Show has arrived!

To me, there is no better kickoff to a new nursery season than the Farwest Show. It's a great opportunity for buyers from all over the country to tour Oregon nurseries, visit with our growers, and really take in all that the Pacific Northwest horticulture industry has to offer.

The cancellation of the 2020 Farwest Show was a big emotional hit for many of us. I can remember going to the show as a kid, tagging along with Dad as he walked the show, visiting with nursery friends, and roaming the halls of the Oregon Convention Center (and collecting more candy than a kid could ever dream of!). It was the last hoorah of the summer, and something we looked forward to each and every year.

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in the virtual world, but it can't  
compare to a welcome handshake, cold  
beer, or a meal amongst friends.**

The 2021 Farwest Show is not just the start of a new sales season. It marks the transition to a whole new world for our industry.

In just the past year here in the Northwest, we have gone through a pandemic, wildfires, ice storms, heat waves, labor and water shortages, and a whole host of other obstacles. Each of these potentially catastrophic events could have meant the end for many of our operations. Thankfully, we were able to lean on our OAN brethren to help us get through these obstacles.

Our Government Relations team worked overtime to keep our markets open last spring. Members shuttled trucks of water to their neighbors when the wildfires shut off power to irrigation sources. When the impact of the Farwest cancellation hit the association, our members showed unwavering support for the OAN, who continues to support us at every turn. Together, we've weathered the storm and come out stronger than ever.

When the committee met to evaluate Farwest 2021, the consensus was abundantly clear: We all wanted to be back in person to see our customers, colleagues, and friends face-to-face. There is much that can be accomplished in the virtual world, but it can't compare to a welcome handshake, cold beer, or a meal amongst friends.

I can't think of a better way to come together and celebrate all we've accomplished, and I can't wait to see you all the Farwest Show!