

# Road trip to the City of Roses

## The pandemic has been a not-so-welcome roller coaster ride for the past two years.

Just over a year ago, in the teeth of uncertainty and a virus outbreak that dominated public life, the OAN Board of Directors made the decision to push the 2020 Farwest Show into 2021.

This was the right call. We had no event venue available, local restaurants were closed and airfares were sky high. All factored into the decision.

Farwest is not only the anchor event of the association, but the signature nursery trade show of the Western United States. Oregon's elite nursery operators were shipping like gangbusters across the nation and the globe. Plants were flying off the truck, but we just could not invite you into Oregon's nursery living room. Got to say, that hurt.

### Dirty boots, engaged minds

The Farwest Show is a green show put on by the grower community. It is intentionally scheduled in August as a signal of the new year of production. The sprint of spring eventually gives way to the summer. That's when people need to meet face-to-face, peruse plants, and share stories of challenges and successes. Handshakes and the love of the industry — that is what August in Oregon is about.

We embrace the best new plants at the New Varieties Showcase every year. The NVS class of 2021 will shine a spotlight on multi-tasking plants (such as edible ornamentals) and compact/dwarf varieties. This is something that has been trending for a while. Newer homes tend to have smaller gardens, so people want plants that will thrive in containers.

Our sponsor HipLabels has a brand-new Augmented Reality feature called HipEngager. Attendees can scan the plant image on the tag using the Arilyn smartphone app and be taken to a website where they can learn more about that variety.

This year's Growing Trends Showcase will feature three garden concepts to inspire imaginations. We connect the gardens to health and welfare (Immunity Garden), a

restful place (Quiet/Secret Garden) and your ultimate garden surroundings (Garden of Joy). The blending of our exceptional plant innovations with forward looking concepts that are ahead of the market is what makes Growing Trends special.

Lastly, we will feed your minds. Keynote speaker Katie Dubow, president of the Garden Media Group will kick off the show on Wednesday from 11 a.m.–noon with “Garden Trends 2022: Growing Forward.” The seminars offered at Farwest are top-notch and cover the continuum of relevant content. The educational experience ranges from environmental and biocontrol enhancements to e-commerce that works, to what is on the horizon for automation. Bring your laptop or your notepad and get ready to hear from the experts.

At Farwest you can visit leaders in the industry in one location. We want you to experience a walkable and well laid out floor. We know from long experience that attendees come from all over the United States and the world to tour our elite nurseries. No iPhone or Zoom meeting can replace getting your boots dirty and crouching down to touch quality material. So, get dirty.

### The Pacific Wonderland is open

When my father wanted to get my absolute full attention, he would call it his “come to Jesus” chat. Well, the OAN had that chat with Travel Oregon and Travel Portland, who are charged with attracting visitors and tourism.

Straight up — our beautiful Farwest host city, the City of Roses, has had an image problem lately. Last year's riots and a more visible homelessness besmirched the livable and walkable reputation of a downtown core known for safety and fun.

I am not known for subtlety in times of clarity, so I put it to them. I said the city needed to get right and clean up. Since I go to church with the Mayor of Portland, I suggested that we not let things slide. This little bit of church pew motivation worked. Travel Portland is now working with us — side by side — to repair Portland's image and restore public trust. But it's not just about image. The fact is, we are ready to host you in the City of Roses!



Jeff Stone  
OAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When we have friends visiting from out of town, it is hard to get everything in. From athletic and sportswear campus giants of Nike, Adidas, and Columbia Sportswear to our foodie heaven with renowned restaurants and our much-celebrated food cart scene.

If you want ground zero for innovation for beer, everything is here. Sorry Ohio — you are not even close. Huber's Café is the oldest bar in Portland and happens to serve the best Spanish coffees in the country (I have taste tested the competition around the country — you know, for science).

Oregon's wine country is the hidden gem and tasting rooms and wineries are within a 30-minute drive. Get a designated driver, because it is really good. The city is home to cultural standouts: Voodoo Doughnuts and my personal favorite, the world famous Powell's City of Books. Nearby are the 12 picturesque bridges that connect each side of Willamette River.

Oregon also offers awe-inspiring natural beauty. Multnomah Falls, the Columbia River Gorge, trails galore and the natural, wooded beauty of Forest Park. If you're a hiker or runner, the trails of Forest Park are hard to top. Within a stone's throw of the Oregon Convention Center are Washington Park, Portland Japanese Garden, Pittock Mansion, and the International Rose Test Garden. Portland is the ultimate “pick your own adventure” experience.

### Pack your bags!

The 48<sup>th</sup> Farwest Show awaits. Enjoy the greenest show in the country, go see the best growers of nursery stock and leaders of industry innovation, and come to Portland. You will be glad you did. See you at Farwest! ☺