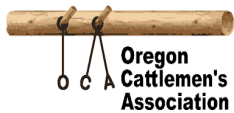


Fund the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

Support Oregon's Economy, Rural Communities & Natural Resources



Extension Service



NWRT

NORTHWEST RANGELAND TRUST

Established by the Oregon Legislature in 2017, the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) helps Oregon farmers and ranchers plan for succession and maintain agricultural land for future generations.

OAHP Elements

- Oregon Agricultural Heritage **Fund** – to fund program components
- Oregon Agricultural Heritage **Commission** - to develop rules and oversee investments
- Matching grants to landowners for three types of voluntary conservation projects:
 - Permanent working lands conservation **easements**
 - Temporary working lands conservation **covenants**
 - **Conservation management plans**
- **Technical assistance** for organizations that hold conservation management plans or covenants/easements
- **Succession planning** resources, workshops, and farmer support

OAHP Status

This program was passed by the Legislature in 2017 and established the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission. These 11 leaders representing Oregon's farming, ranching, conservation and tribal communities developed program rules, which OWEB's board approved in January 2019. No funding for program implementation was included.

Our Request: Support HB 2729

We urge the Legislature to fund OAHP at \$10 million for the 2019-2021 biennium. Oregon must act now to protect the public benefits that these lands provide.



"I don't want this valley to look like a suburb. This is a way to capitalize on its economic value while preserving what people like here."

Woody Wolfe, Wallowa County rancher with two working land conservation easements

Contact

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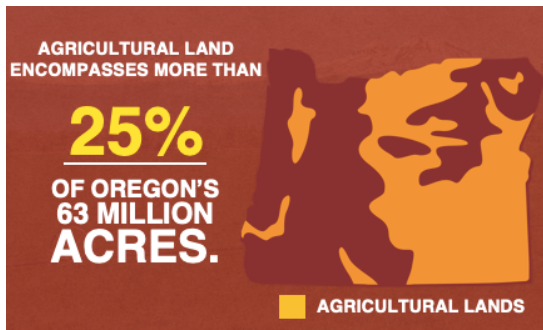
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Fund the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program – HB 2729



Why OAHP is Needed

Agricultural lands make up 25% (16.3 million acres) of Oregon's land. Yet two-thirds (10.45 million acres) of Oregon's agricultural lands will change hands in the next 20 years.



And up to 80% of Oregon's farmers may not have a succession plan, according to OSU research.

Poor Farm Succession Planning → Loss of Farmland

Farmers and ranchers are land rich, cash poor. In order to raise cash for non-farming heirs, attorney fees, or Oregon estate taxes, they often sell parcels of farmland or lose the whole farm. The land is then:

- Fragmented - Smaller parcels are less viable for agriculture and vulnerable to being brought into a UGB.
- Developed - Since Oregon's land use program was implemented in 1974, half a million acres of agricultural land has been taken out of production and 65,600 acres have been taken out of Exclusive Farm Use.
- Purchased by non-farmers - From 2010 - 2015, 25-40% of Willamette Valley agricultural land sales were to investment or development entities, which will maximize profits by developing or selling for non-farm use.

Economic Benefits of Oregon's Agricultural Land

- **Dollars:** Agriculture is Oregon's 2nd largest economic driver, with an economic impact of \$8.2 billion.
- **Jobs:** Agriculture directly provides 4% of Oregon jobs and indirectly provides 14% of jobs, mostly rural.
- **Rural Entrepreneurs:** 97% of Oregon farms are family-owned (compared to 89% nationally).

Conservation Benefits of Oregon's Agricultural Land

- **Water:** Unpaved agricultural land provides water filtration, water storage and storm water control.
- **Habitat:** Many farms and ranches have streams, which provide critical fish and wildlife habitat.
- **Corridors:** Agricultural lands provide migratory corridors for birds and wildlife.

Funding is Needed this Biennium

The federal program that permanently protects U.S. agricultural land (ACEP) just received \$450 million in the 2018 Farm Bill. Yet each year, **Oregon leaves millions of these federal dollars on the table** because we do not have a state match program for this funding. Oregon has only received 0.19% of ACEP funds.

The federal program has strong bipartisan support in Congress. But **without funding for our state match program, we will miss the opportunity to access Farm Bill dollars** dedicated to farmland preservation.

We cannot slow the changing hands of Oregon agricultural land or undo the decisions along the way.

Once it's fragmented, it's rarely re-consolidated.

Once it's sold to investors, it rarely comes back to family ownership.

Once it's developed, it will never return to agricultural land and open space.