

TOP 20 ISSUES FACING THE INDUSTRY

Developed in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Agriculture

In no order of importance or rank...

- Labor availability and cost (immigration reform, minimum wage indexing and its impacts, and resolution of farm worker bargaining law).
- Federal farm bill legislation and how Oregon growers participate or benefit.
- Plant protection research, material availability, and cost in a state that produces mostly “specialty” crops.
- Availability, storage, and distribution of water, with impending pressure from climate change.
- Land use. Preserving farmland. Balancing development pressures, private property rights, and regional opportunities and needs.
- Transportation infrastructure, fuel cost, and movement of products to market.
- Need for more locally-based, value-added processing infrastructure (due to loss of a significant portion of the local processing industry, over the past decade).
- Biotechnology in agricultural crops, assessing benefits and risks for Oregon producers.
- Development of new technology and its adaptation to agriculture; critical need to develop links with higher education and the high tech industry with focus on nanotechnology, laser and infrared technology, precision agriculture, mechanization, and energy and water conservation.
- Renewable energy development, in which local producers can participate and benefit.
- Access to foreign markets and development of stateside markets. Resources to address non-tariff barriers, market development, and product introduction.
- Resources to combat invasive species and their impacts on local agriculture and ecosystems.
- Regulatory challenges and the continually tightening environmental standards (costs) in Oregon and the US versus other nations.
- Aging of farmers and pending land turnover with few younger people choosing to farm; need for tax structures, financing programs and succession planning assistance to ensure a local, dynamic and viable farm infrastructure and farm population.
- Global animal disease prevention and response to maintain a viable and healthy livestock industry. Reduce disease potential for humans and animals.
- Direct marketing, certification, and access to local food markets for smaller growers.
- Public sector research funding for Oregon State University and other institutions that develop and improve agriculture production, new crops, management systems, and value-added processing.
- Public education and policy that support economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable agricultural production.
- Wildlife damage and mitigation assistance for agricultural and timber production.
- Grower access to financing and business models in order to adopt new technologies, crops, and production methods.