



1284 Court Street NE ★ Salem, OR 97301
503-378-0595 ★ www.marioncofarm.com

Important Dates

MCFB Board Meeting
June 10, MCFB Office

"Tribute to Oregon Agriculture"
June 26-30, Volcanoes Stadium, Keizer

MCFB Board Meeting
July 8, MCFB Office

Marion County Fair
July 9-12, Oregon State Fairgrounds



FVC—Mobilizing Veterans to Feed America



The mission of the Farmer Veteran Coalition (FVC) is to mobilize veterans to feed America. The FVC serves military veterans of all eras and branches interested in the agriculture industry. It works with veterans, their families, and their employers to support those returning to or beginning careers in food and farming.

The FVC offers a wide variety of programs and resources, including the Farming Fellowship Program (grants and other support services for veteran famers), the Farm Building Program (assistance in assessing and reducing business risks), the Homegrown by Heroes Initiative (a marketing initiative to label agricultural products produced by veterans), and career services (assistance with job and internship/apprenticeship placement).

The FVC is supported by the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). According to AFBF President Bob Stallman, "The AFBF is a proud to partner with the Farmer Veteran Coalition to create opportunities on America's farms and ranches for brave men and women of our military."

Oregon is home to two farmer veteran farms featured on the farmvetco.org website: Heart2Heart Farms (www.heart2heartfarms.com) in Sherwood and Dot Ranch (www.dotranchchurros.com) in Scio. To learn more about the FVC and its programs, visit www.farmvetco.org.

Don't Miss Your Newsletter!

In an effort to be careful stewards of our resources, MCFB plans to switch to e-newsletters to save money on printing and postage. Members are encouraged to forward your email address to jessica@marioncofarm.com.

2nd Quarter
2015

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- Vice President Troy Hadley

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Laureal Williams

1284 Court St NE
Salem, Oregon 97301
503-378-0595
503-364-9919 fax
www.marioncofarm.com

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FARM GRAM

A publication of the Marion County Farm Bureau
Promoting, Protecting & Advancing Farm Interests in Marion County

Take 5

John Zielinski, President

I know that this is a busy time of year for most farmers, but I need you to take a five-minute break to rest and to think about all of the folks that are helping you do what you do best—grow the food and fiber needed by the modern world.

Some of the most important people are your employees; even with all of the equipment that is part of modern agriculture, we still need people to provide the dexterity of hand labor that machines simply can't. We are very dependent upon our employees and hopefully you value your employees as much as I value mine.

Depending upon how many employees you have, you probably have 3 to 4 minutes left in your "take 5". I ask that you think of all of those who are not on your farm but are very important to helping your farm be successful: the field men, accountants, bankers, attorneys, equipment dealers, and suppliers of all types who help to keep your farm profitable, legal and supplied.

I think that there should be 2 to 3 minutes left of your "take 5", and I would like you to take the remaining time and consider all of the challenging issues dealt with by the various grower associations and agricultural advocacy groups that you belong to: the OAN, the Pear Bureau, the OGSBA, the Agri-Business Council, Oregonians for Food and Shelter, the Oregon Cattleman, of course Marion County Farm Bureau, Oregon Farm Bureau, and the many other organizations that have been formed to build a strong, sustainable agricultural industry in Oregon. Many of these organizations are working to strengthen farmers through marketing, crop research, and political advocacy.

This year has been challenging for Oregon's Ag industry in the political arena. The Legislature has not been particularly friendly to farmers and rural Oregon. I would like to thank all of the Ag industry groups and their staff members who have spent long days in hearings and meetings with elected officials. Most farmers would rather be on a tractor, with dirty hands than at the legislature trying to convince the legislators from urban areas about the important contributions of Oregon's Agricultural community to the economy and the rural way of life.

The next time you see Paulette Pyle, Katie Fast, Jenny Dresler, Mary Anne Nash, Genoa Ingram, Jeff Stone, Kristina McNitt, Roger Beyer, or one of the many others who have spent time at our state house, please take a moment to thank them. They may not win every fight during this legislative session, but it is not for a lack of trying. The bills that have passed that we don't consider Ag friendly are much less severe than they could have been due to the political skills of all of the agricultural advocacy groups working together.

I hope to have given you some food for thought during your "take 5". Now get back to work—there are crops growing out there that need your attention.

Benton County Food System Ordinance Defeated

Excerpted from ballotpedia.org 5/26/2015

The Benton County Local Food System Ordinance (Measure 2-89) was on the ballot for voters in Benton County, Oregon, on May 19, 2015. It was decisively defeated.

This measure, which was backed by what supporters called the *Benton Food Freedom* campaign, would have prohibited the cultivation of genetically modified organisms in the county. The initiative also included a clause that would have asserted the county's right to self-governance, seeking a way around the state law passed in 2013 attempting to preclude initiatives such as this one.

Supporters of the GMO ban argued that GMOs can cause health problems and that, because of pollination from wind, insects and other natural agents, the rights of organic, GMO-free farmers were being violated by cross-pollination from neighboring GMO farms, which resulted in contaminated crops that could no longer be used or sold as organic or GMO-free. Responding to those who criticized Measure 2-89 based on alleged, harmful impacts to the agriculture industry, supporters claimed that making Benton County an all-organic, GMO-free farming zone would actually allow farmers to thrive because of the strong demand for GMO-free food products, both locally and world-wide.

Opponents argued that farmers should have the right to grow whatever crops they wish on their own property and that the commonly used genetically altered products had proven harmless to humans. They argued that eliminating the mainstream crop sources would make farming more expensive and hurt the agriculture industry in the county and that this issue is best controlled on a state level, rather than a local one.

Research done at Oregon State University (OSU) involving genetic engineering also became a much-debated topic surrounding Measure 2-89. Opponents argued that, since the measure included no exemption for research, it would have shut down whole departments at the university and destroyed millions of dollars worth of research. Supporters said this concern was just a gimmick designed by opponents to trick voters into rejecting the measure. They argued that Measure 2-89 would have been restricted to GMOs that affect the "Local Food System," making isolated OSU research exempt from the ban.

At its April meeting, the Marion County Board of Directors approved a \$5,000 contribution to the measure's opponents, *Benton County Citizens Opposed to Measure 2-89*. Unofficial election results posted for the ballot measure reported 16,556 'No' votes and 6,270 'Yes' votes.

Salem-Keizer Volcanoes Host Tribute to Oregon Ag

The Salem-Keizer Volcanoes baseball team (an affiliate of the San Francisco Giants) plans to host a Tribute to Oregon Agriculture, June 26-30, during a series of home games versus the Spokane Indians. The tribute has been identified as "a time to recognize and thank the tremendous agriculture workers in Oregon".



Each night of the event is dedicated to a different aspect of the agriculture community:

- June 26—Nursery Industry
- June 27—Food Processing Industry
- June 28—Traditional Family Farmers (with special recognition of the Scott Miller family)
- June 29—Grass Seed Industry
- June 30—Farmers Ending Hunger in Oregon & Oregon Cattle Night.

Tickets can be purchased through the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes office at 503-390-2225 or via the team's website at www.volcanoestickets.com.

Governor Declares Drought in 15 Oregon Counties

Excerpted from the Drought Report published by the Oregon Water Resources Department

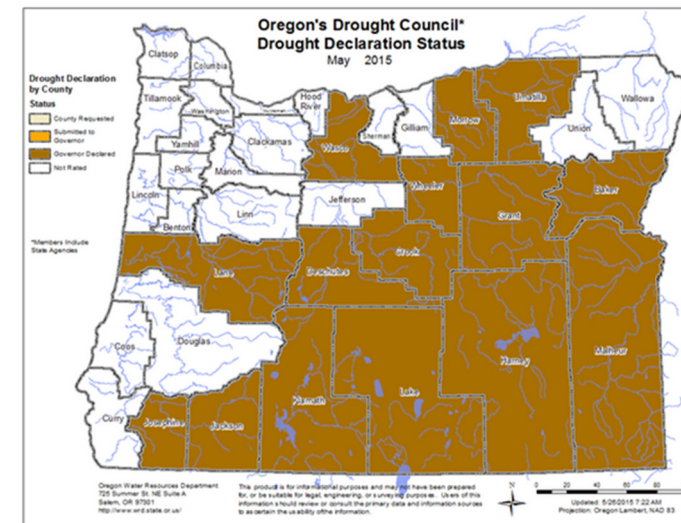
As of May 26, 2015, the Governor's Office has made official drought declarations for 15 counties: Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Lane, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Wasco, and Wheeler.

County-wide drought declarations to through a three-part process before securing a drought declaration from the Governor's Office. First, County Commissions meet to determine whether they want to seek a declaration.

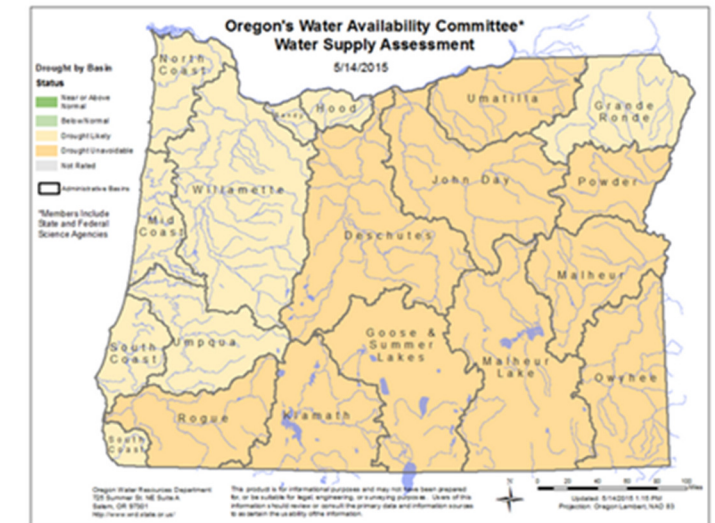
Second, these recommendations go to the Water Availability Committee and the Oregon Drought Council for technical review. (The next meeting of these two groups is scheduled for June 11, 2015).

If approved for drought declaration, the Governor's Office issues an Executive Order declaring drought in specific counties. A Governor's Drought Declaration allows the Water Resources Department to issue emergency drought permits to applicants using an expedited process.

Current water conditions in Oregon include snow pack throughout the state averaging less than 6 percent of normal, signaling early and prolonged drought conditions throughout southern and eastern parts of Oregon. Statewide average precipitation is less than 89 percent of normal.



Drought Declaration Map
Tinted areas show counties under official Drought Declaration status.



Water Supply Assessment Map
Dark tinted areas illustrate where drought is 'unavoidable'; light tinted areas illustrate where drought is 'likely'.

Got Tuition? MCFB Scholarships Available

The application deadline for the Mary Petzel Scholarship and Scott Miller Memorial Scholarship is July 15, 2015. Application for both scholarships is available to any immediate member of a Marion County Farm Bureau family preparing to study at any university, four-year college, or junior college.

Applications are available online at www.marioncofarm.com, by contacting the MCFB Office at 503-378-0595, or by emailing MCFB staff at jessica@marioncofarm.com.