Oregon Agricultural Trust

OAT was created over the course of three years by agricultural and land trust stakeholders. Beginning with a meeting of diverse partners who explored the need for a new organization, and continuing with a feasibility study, business plan, and now a 3-year strategic plan, OAT has been shaped by the expertise of dozens of individuals and organizations that care passionately about protecting Oregon’s agricultural land and keeping it in production. In creating this strategic plan, our Board thanks our partners locally and nationally who informed our vision. We give our word to agricultural landowners that we will work every day to earn and deserve their trust. And we commit to our colleagues to work in collaboration towards a shared vision of a secured agricultural landscape; a flourishing agricultural economy; and vibrant communities that inform, partake in, and benefit from this work. With this plan as our guide, we look forward to another successful three years.

Sincerely,
Kimberlee Chambers, President
Nellie McAdams, Executive Director

The Challenge Ahead

From the fields of the Willamette Valley to the ranches of eastern Oregon, over 37,600 farms and ranches are vital to Oregon’s economy, way of life, and the landscapes we love.

As a generation of producers nears retirement, almost two-thirds (10.5 million acres) of Oregon’s agricultural land will change hands in just 20 years. Meanwhile, beginning farmers and ranchers find it increasingly difficult to afford and access agricultural land.

| 25% of Oregon land is farm or ranch land |
| 64% of that land will change hands in the next 20 years |
| 60 average age of Oregon’s farmers & ranchers |
| 81% of Oregon’s farmers & ranchers have no succession plan |

How this land changes hands and whether it remains available for economically viable agricultural production are questions that will determine the future of Oregon’s rural communities, open spaces, natural resources, and food systems.

This plan sets forth a strategic course of action for Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT) to address these challenges to working farms and ranches—on behalf of the next generation of farmers and ranchers, and for all Oregonians.
We envision a future in which Oregon’s agricultural lands are **PROTECTED AND PRODUCTIVE**, and where farmers and ranchers are thriving. In our ideal future...

- **Agriculture is a viable economic enterprise**, with land and knowledge passed from generation to generation—be it to family members or others.
- **Public policies** are in place with appropriate funding and technical know-how to support the protection and transfer of agricultural land as critical elements of a successful Oregon.
- Agricultural landownership, and the economic opportunities that come with it, are more **equitably available** to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.
- **Commercial and conservation** values of agricultural land are constantly being improved.
- **Non-farmers** appreciate the diverse agricultural products, landscapes, conservation uplift, food security, and community impacts that agriculture provides, and they take action to address the challenges that farmers and ranchers face.
- **Oregon is a model** of resilient agricultural landscapes, communities, and businesses.

**OUR MISSION**

We partner with **FARMERS AND RANCHERS** to protect agricultural lands for the benefit of Oregon’s **ECONOMY, COMMUNITIES, AND LANDSCAPES**.

**OUR VISION**

**FARMER-FOCUSED**

Our programs, policies, and ideas are driven by those who work the land.

**INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE**

We honor Oregon’s past, present, and future agricultural leaders as we create opportunities for new generations and communities to steward the land.

**ETHICAL AND ACCOUNTABLE**

We are committed to wise stewardship of Oregon’s agricultural resources, and OAT’s human and financial resources.

**CONNECTED TO COMMUNITY**

We celebrate the critical benefits that agriculture provides to every Oregonian, not just to those who make a living as producers.

**COLLABORATIVE**

Because agriculture and conservation depend on relationships, we bring people together to work towards our shared goals.

**OPEN MINDED AND THOUGHTFUL**

We listen closely, make careful decisions, and learn from our experiences and partners.
To me OAT’s tagline of ‘For Ag. Forever’ honors the work of all those generations and generations of people who have come before that have contributed to the food on our plates. It is about creating opportunities for those who are farming now and holding space for those who will be our farmers and ranchers in the future. It is also about people like me and many in urban environments who may not be farming but have so greatly benefited beyond the food on our plates from being connected to agricultural landscapes and associated communities.”

— Kimberlee Chambers
OAT President
Director of Business Development & Sustainability at RainSweet, Inc.

PROGRAMMATIC GOALS

GOAL 1: LAND PROTECTION
We help ensure that a permanent agricultural land base supports the future of farming and ranching in Oregon using three strategies:

WE PROTECT COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE LAND
We conserve commercial agricultural land directly through working lands easements and, under certain conditions, through fee ownership.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND PROTECTION
We increase land protection by supporting other organizations that hold or wish to hold agricultural easements, and real estate professionals who are integral to agricultural land protection and transfers.

SUCCESSION ASSISTANCE
We serve as a strategic partner to organizations that assist with farm and ranch transfers, including to non-family members and those who have historically faced challenges in accessing agricultural land.

Our 3-Year Land Protection Goals:
— Create a Strategic Conservation Plan
— Protect 8 Properties in 4 Focal Areas:

1 North Coast
Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Lincoln

2 Gorge
Hood River, Wasco, Sherman

3 Mid/South Willamette
Clackamas, Marion, Polk, Linn, Benton, Lane

4 Southeast Oregon
Malheur, Harney, Lake

8 PROPERTIES
4 FOCAL AREAS
GOAL 2: PUBLIC SUPPORT AND POLICY

We encourage Oregonians to value farmland protection and invest in it as a part of Oregon’s future.

ADVOCACY

We coordinate closely with partners to advance public policies focused on agricultural land protection.

ISSUE-BASED COMMUNICATION

We help the public understand the value that OAT’s work brings to their lives, and facilitate actions by the public in support of agricultural land protection.

Our 3-Year Public Support & Policy Goals:

— Highlight the challenges and opportunities for farmers, ranchers, and their landscapes through written, pictorial, and video projects.

— Expand ag land protection funding from at least one public source, such as ACEP-ALE.

The main funding source that pays farmers and ranchers for easements is the AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM - AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENTS (ACEP-ALE).

This federal program is administered by USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, and is funded through the Farm Bill. National advocacy groups successfully doubled funding for ACEP-ALE in the 2018 Farm Bill, and are now advocating to triple funding in the 2023 Farm Bill to $1.3 billion, which would allow the program to meet demand. OAT supports this advocacy by appealing to our congressional delegation directly and through our supporters, and by garnering support from state and national organizations.

“"I think that easements may be one of the most underutilized financial mechanisms for generational pass down. I think that if you have a next generation that really wants to come back to the operation, a lot of the time due to agriculture being an industry with such a thin margin, cash flow doesn’t always cooperate. Perhaps you don’t have a relationship with a lender who is thinking very long term. So what easements allow is for that next generation to come in and be able to buy out the previous generation, without having to whack up the property and sell chunks off.”

— Zach Wilson

OAT Board
General Manager & Vice President of Wilson Cattle Company

Image Courtesy of Shawn Linehan Photography
**ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS**

**GOAL 3: REVENUE**
*We enjoy sufficient and diverse operational and project funding.*

**CORE FUNDING**
We have an early, stable base of revenue capable of supporting core operations, community engagement, and big thinking.

**CULTIVATION**
We develop relationships with potential supporters from four key giving sectors—individuals, foundations, corporations, and public agencies.

**OPERATING FUNDS**
We develop long-term revenue streams to support annual operational, regular/periodic capital, and perpetual stewardship costs.

**PROJECT REVENUE**
We generate significant working capital and program revenue to support investment in the long-term viability of Oregon’s agricultural community.

**Our 3-Year Revenue Goals:**
- Launch a **BARNRAISER CAMPAIGN** for donors of $1,000 or more annually
- Earn support from **15 CORPORATIONS**
- Build a **MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM**
- Secure income from foundations, government sources, fee-for-service, and administering partnership grants.

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**2024 PLANNED REVENUE**

- Membership
- Corporate Donations
- Fee-for-Service
- Interest on Stewardship Endowment
- Bequests
- Major Donors
- Stewardship Contributions
- Government Grants
- Sale of Donated Real Estate
- Foundation Grants

Total: **$1,963,500**
GOAL 4: TEAM

OAT attracts, retains, and develops talent.

BOARD
We recruit and support a diverse and engaged board of directors with credibility, connections, and commitment to provide good governance and build key relationships.

COMMITTEES
We develop a high-functioning committee structure to support and clarify the board-staff partnership.

VOLUNTEERS
We recruit and engage community members in volunteer roles.

STAFF
We recruit and retain a staff skilled in program development, planning, and execution.

Michelle Wood
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Marc Hudson
RANGELAND PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Cynthia Lopez
GRANTS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR

Nellie McAdams
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Alice Williamson
FARMLAND PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Michelle Wood
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
When I first came to learn of Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT), I was inspired by how its leadership believes in and maintains relationships, and adopts an open-minded vision. As an Oregonian, it moves me because I know that, as a collective, we form a tight knit community that stands with each other.

— Javier Lara
OAT Board
Executive Director of Anahuac

GOAL 5: COMMUNICATIONS
Oregonians look to Oregon Agricultural Trust as their trusted go-to resource on agricultural land protection issues.

ORGANIZATIONAL OUTREACH
We are building Oregon Agricultural Trust’s name recognition and brand, beginning with key partners, policymakers, and funders, then expanding to all agricultural landowners and eventually to key segments of the general population.

BRAND IDENTITY
We recently completed development of a logo, website, brand identity, materials, and communications plan.

COMMUNICATIONS
We will continue to connect with key audiences about OAT’s services and programs via our newsletter, events, video projects, earned and social media, and meetings of partner organizations.

GOAL 6: SYSTEMS
We have the necessary technology, contracted services, policies and other infrastructure to deliver our programs.

Our 3-Year Systems Goal:
— Prepare for land trust accreditation under the Land Trust Alliance standards and practices.
LONG TERM JOURNEY.

“I’m just really excited about the Oregon Agricultural Trust. We’re really early along in this journey. Oregon is just an unbelievably beautiful and diverse state. What are the options for that century ranch? Easements are a relatively new tool in the toolbox in Oregon. ‘In perpetuity’ is a long time. Conservation easements are not for the faint of heart. It’s not a sprint. It isn’t even a marathon. It’s an ultra-marathon.”

— Jay Gibbs
OAT Board
Basin Team Leader for John Day/Umatilla & Snake Basin of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

THANK YOU!

STRATEGIC PLAN FUNDERS
Harbourton Foundation
Hollis Foundation
Nora and Martin Kelley Family Foundation
Tillamook County Creamery Association

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BOARD MEMBER
Zach Wilson
BOARD MEMBER

OAT STAFF
Marc Hudson
RANGELAND PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Cynthia Lopez
GRANTS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR
Nellie McAdams
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Alice Williamson
FARMLAND PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Michelle Wood
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Your Support Makes a Difference

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