



**100 Years
of Service
to Jackson
County**



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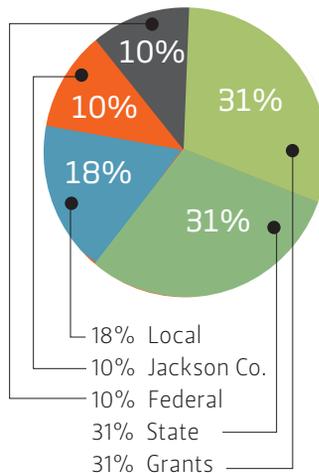
A Powerful Legacy, A Bright Future



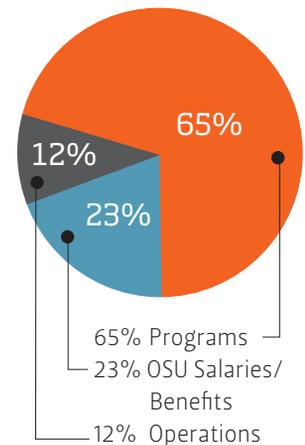
One hundred years ago farmers and ranchers of the Rogue River Valley welcomed the people and expertise of Oregon’s land grant college, Oregon State University. The practical knowledge and applied scientific research of OSU experts helped establish the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center (SOREC) and placed Jackson County prominently on America’s agricultural map.

TODAY THAT TRADITION has been extended to include Master Gardeners, 4-H, Food Preservers, Land Stewards and a host of other vital programs. New challenges to agriculture and rural lifestyles are coming via climate change, water shortages, the economics of production and much more. To meet them head on, OSU Extension provides solid, unbiased information and on-the-ground training. Thousands of pages could be devoted to the success stories of SOREC, but Extension has never been about looking backwards. The best way to predict the future is to create it.

Funding Sources



Allocation of Funds



“ Most citizens of Jackson County benefit in some way from the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center. And most of these benefits can’t be gotten from any other source.”

– RON MEYER, Meyer Orchards, Talent

Family and Community Health

This multi-faceted effort promotes healthy communities, families and individuals

Master Food Preservers is an 8-week, hands-on certification series for people interested in food preservation and food safety. Updated annually by OSU experts, classes range from basic water-bath canning and dehydration to more complex topics – pressure canning, fermentation and cheese-making.

Oregon Nutrition Education Program. Many Jackson County residents are eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Extension offers a 6-session education series, known as SNAP-Ed, taught by OSU staff in local elementary schools, the Boys & Girls Club, Head Start centers and local food pantries. The goal is to build skills for healthy eating and physical activity, smart shopping and cooking. Extension also works to educate eligible Oregonians age 60+ about SNAP benefits.

Strong Women Program. Previously sedentary post-menopausal women who lift weights twice a week for a year can increase muscle strength by 80 percent. Currently there are seven Extension-trained peer leaders with groups meeting up to three times a week throughout the Rogue Valley.



Walk with Ease. In this 18-session series, developed by Stanford University and sponsored by the National Arthritis Foundation, local walking groups partner with local fitness specialists, senior centers and trained volunteer leaders. It is open to anyone who can walk at least 10 minutes.



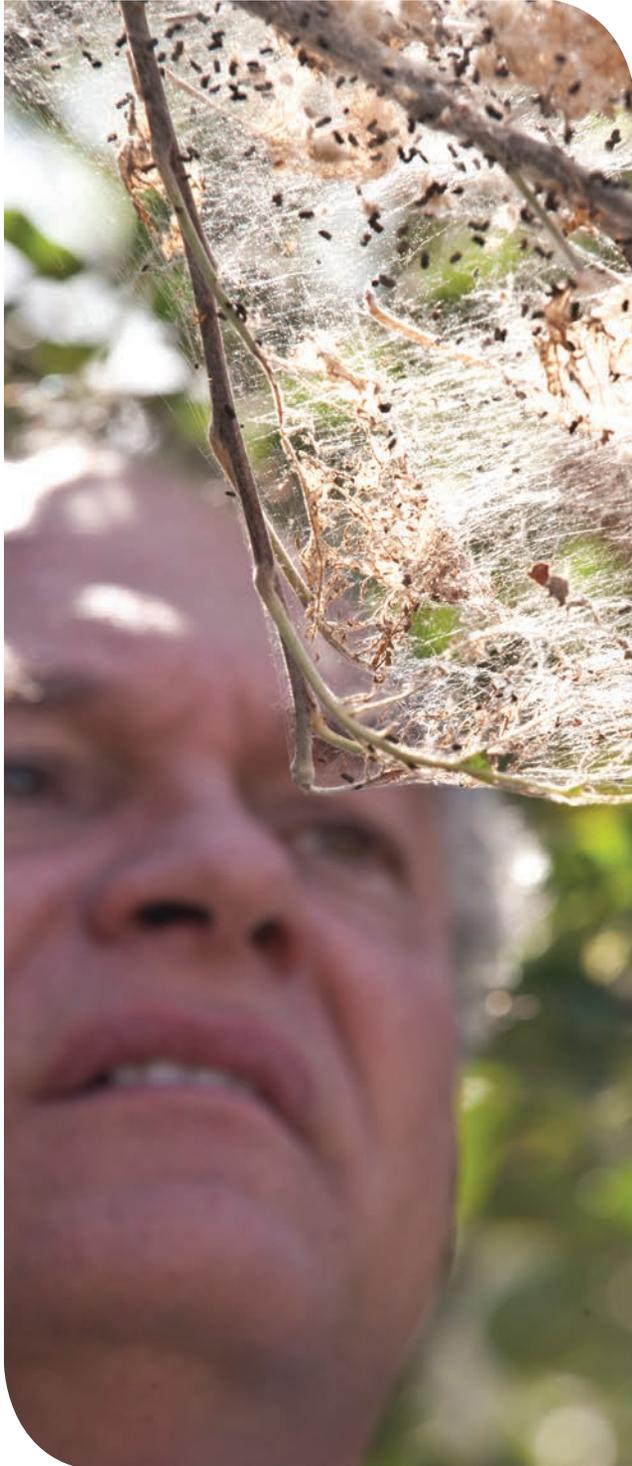
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“The Master Food Preservers training literally changed my life. It opened me up to a new food-preservation lifestyle which has changed what foods I serve my family, how I procure and store them.”
– T.R., Master Food preserver

“After retirement I needed motivation to stay fit. Health clubs didn’t fit the bill for me any longer. Working out with women with the same goals has been the answer for me.”
– S.P, age 76, Strong Women participant

Tree Fruits and Vineyards

Jackson County relies on a healthy agriculture industry that provides good jobs while maintaining open space and a desirable quality of life. High-value fruit has been grown here for more than a century and the Rogue Valley remains one of America's major pear-producing regions.



THE SOUTHERN OREGON RESEARCH and Extension Center creates local knowledge and innovation for effective management of pests, diseases and production problems. That means higher fruit quality and greater grower efficiency.

SOREC research has made significant improvements to the early ripening of pears and to maintaining fruit quality longer. This extends the market window, improving profitability for fruit packers.

Winegrape production is growing rapidly, adding to crop diversity and contributing to the tourist economy. OSU conducted much of the initial testing of winegrape varieties for suitability in this region. New vineyardists come to SOREC to learn advanced management techniques to improve grape and wine quality and for help diagnosing problems.

Direct Economic Impacts

With support from SOREC, nearly 10,000 acres of orchards and vineyards stay productive. Owners and operators sell their products throughout the world, generating \$50 million annually to circulate through the local community. Agriculture and food processing provide nearly 7,000 jobs, with an added value of \$180+ million.

Vital research is conducted both at OSU Extension and in growers' orchards, vineyards and fields. Project funding is obtained through competitive grants from federal, state, and commodity sources, and local ag enterprises.

“My family has farmed the same Rogue Valley property since 1902. When my husband and I decided to become the stewards of the family land, our first stop was SOREC. There we gained the information and support needed to begin our own successful farming operation.”

– NANCY VAUGHN,
Vaughn Farms, Jacksonville



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“ Our company farms 1,600 acres of pears in Jackson County. Recently we planted our first 15 acres of winegrapes and expect to plant more. SOREC’s work is vital, providing key research and information in integrated pest management, improved storage and ripening techniques, rootstocks, decay prevention and much more.”

– MIKE NAUMES
Naumes Inc., Medford

“ I’m a small pear grower and depend on SOREC’s services, regularly attending meetings that are absolutely critical to our success. I interact with the OSU faculty and staff weekly in order to produce top-quality fruit, while enhancing the environment. With their help, I’ve greatly increased the yield and quality of our crops, reduced the use of pesticides and transitioned to many organic methods.”

– JOHN NEILSEN
Pear grower, Medford



Livestock and Forage



Ranching - raising beef cattle, sheep and goats, hay and pasture, and more - is big business in this region, representing a combined value of nearly \$8 million in 2012.

THE OSU EXTENSION Livestock and Forage program assists ranchers and farmers who work on the land, raising food and fiber for others and themselves. The goal is to help producers use their economic and environmental resources as effectively as possible.

Working with the Southwestern Oregon Hay Growers Association, the Jackson County Stockman's Association, the Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District, the OSU Small Farms program and others, Livestock and Forage regularly delivers educational presentations to Jackson County ranchers. Topics include:

- Oregon beef quality assurance
- Animal nutrition and health
- Beef reproduction
- Pasture and grazing
- Soil fertility and irrigation management
- Weed ecology and management
- Pest control
- Marketing and sales

Livestock and Forage also provides informational resources to individuals. It assists local 4-H and FFA (Future Farmers of America) programs and builds beneficial networks among producers and suppliers.



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Forests and Woodlands

Jackson County's 3,000+ woodland owners have a significant influence on the County's environment, livability and economy. Well-managed small woodlands provide clean water, abundant wildlife habitat and open space - as well as vital timber products.

OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, the value of timber harvested from the County's small woodlands has averaged \$9 million annually.

But woodland owners face growing threats from wildfire, invasive weeds and insect pests. Many owners are new to the land (numerous parcels change hands every five years) and need current information and assistance to take care of their woodlands.

The go-to information source

Over the past five years, OSU Extension Forestry professionals have delivered more than 150 classes, workshops and field tours in Jackson and Josephine Counties - plus developed many useful publications and other resources.

Key impacts of this work:

- Demonstrated increase in proactive forest management through hazardous-fuels reduction, clean up of overgrown forests and planting of new trees. This creates healthier forests and stronger economic activity on private woodlands.
- Greater protection of soil, water, wildlife habitat and other resources
- Reduced threat of catastrophic wildfire and cost savings through avoided fires
- Education about protection of homes and properties from wildfire
- An increase in the long-term, sustainable timber supply

“Through the combined knowledge and direction from OSU Extension and the Small Woodlands Association, my abilities as a small woodlands owner have blossomed. I learned how to thin, promote diversity, and release the remaining trees for vigorous, carbon-storing growth.”

— JERRY BURKE, 20-year small woodlands owner

Land Steward Program

MANAGEMENT OF PRIVATE LANDS in urban and rural areas - as well as in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) - is an increasingly important issue in Southern Oregon. In Jackson County alone, WUI owners number in the thousands and they manage significant areas of forest, woodland, range, and other “unimproved” land.

Owners have a tremendous influence on wildfire risk, the spread of noxious weeds, water conservation and other natural-resource concerns.

Yet many WUI and rural landowners are new to the area and to rural living. The Land Steward program teaches them about land management in a multi-disciplinary way, guiding them through a planning and technical assistance process that aids in quicker adoption of on-the-ground management practices.

Launched in 2009, the program has trained 120+ residents and positively affected the management of more than 5,000 acres of private land. Participants have completed improvement projects on their own properties and contributed thousands of volunteer hours to community-wide efforts.

“The Extension Service gave us the confidence that we could take care of this parcel of land. Through their classes and guidance we learned what to do, and what not to do, and got in touch with other owners and professionals who helped us put our plan into action.”

— DENNIS MORGAN, landowner since 2003; President, Jackson-Josephine Small Woodlands Association

4-H



Developing responsibility, encouraging community values and building future leaders: 4-H does it. More than 3,000 youth participate in local programs each year – and they have better grades, higher levels of academic competence and an elevated level of school engagement

RAISING A 4-H ANIMAL or tending a garden teaches care and responsibility for other living things, preparing young people for adult life. Projects require other core skills taught by 4-H, including time management and financial accountability. 4-H also encourages participation of parents and siblings, imparting key family values of teamwork and togetherness.

Studies show that 4-H participants are 3.4 times more likely to actively contribute to their communities than other youth and nearly twice as likely to plan to go to college. Plus, 4-H youth are more inclined to pursue education in science, engineering or technology, with 4-H girls twice as likely as their peers to seek tech careers.

4-H generates \$1+ million from the private sector through grants, awards and auction purchases. Dollars flow back into the community to buy animals,

feed and show clothes. Those in sewing projects purchase fabric and notions. Young photographers have their pictures enlarged and printed at local businesses, and gardeners purchase plants.

“ I’m always seeking out ways to make a difference in my community because 4-H taught me to care. We were constantly striving to make a difference in our club, our community, our country and our world.”

— BROOKE, past 4-H member

“ The partnership with 4-H and the Extension Service has influenced our students in many ways. Achievement scores since 2009 have continued to increase, and students have been exposed to arts, sciences, athletics and other enrichment opportunities that wouldn’t have been accessible to them.”

— PRINCIPAL CHRISTINE BECK
Sam’s Valley Elementary

4-H Youth Natural Resources Program

From forests to rivers, Southern Oregon is endowed with rich and diverse natural resources. They enhance our way of life and affect the economy positively. But these resources face unique challenges now and into the future.

OSU EXTENSION's 4-H Youth Natural Resources Program (YNRP) provides hands-on science education and experiences that benefit students, teachers, families and the community at large.

Bringing science to life

YNRP uses current topics such as clean water and healthy forests to create science enrichment programs for schools and communities. Reaching out to rural, urban, minority and economically disadvantaged schools, the program involves 1,500 students each year (18,000 since 2004).

The program stimulates critical thinking and problem solving to help citizens, scientists and natural resource specialists find sustainable solutions. OSU Extension cultivates these skills, enhancing science career possibilities for young people and shaping future stewards of a healthy Oregon.



Some 3,600 students have participated in projects for restoration planting, weed removal, monitoring and storm drain marking.

YNRP secured \$100,000+ in grants to Jackson County from 2010-13, providing 150 classes to 4,500 students and serving more than 100 teachers with professional development workshops in outdoor science education.



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“ OSU StreamWise helped my students learn more about backyard biology and chemistry in our watershed. It enhanced our curriculum and motivated students. Thank you for this golden opportunity.”

— KATHY McNICHOL
Talent Middle School

Master Gardeners



Most Jackson County residents manage a home landscape that may include a lawn, ornamental flowers, shrubs and trees, a vegetable garden, fruits and berries. Frequently, home gardeners have questions about pests and diseases, what to plant, how to maximize production and minimize negative environmental impacts.

OSU EXTENSION RESPONDS through the Master Gardener (MG) program. MGs are professionally trained volunteers who offer reliable, relevant information and educational opportunities.

The MG training program graduates up to 75 skilled adult learners each year who then contribute 20,000+ volunteer hours. They staff a Plant Clinic where people get questions answered, present over two dozen evening and weekend public classes, organize a full-day Winter Dreams/Summer Gardens symposium, and speak to numerous community groups.

Every May for the past 33 years, MGs have hosted the Spring Garden Fair, kicking off the Rogue Valley growing season. Attracting 7,000 visitors, it features 150 garden and home landscape vendors, and is the largest event of its kind between San Francisco and Portland.

Master Gardener publications include *Garden Guide for the Rogue Valley: Vegetables, Berries, Melons* (2007) and *Garden Guide for the Rogue Valley: Ornamental Trees and Shrubs* (2011).

“ The Master Gardener program changed my backyard – and my life. I have a deeper understanding of soils, bugs, composting and so many other things in my vegetable garden.”

– CINDY WILLIAMS

“ Master Gardeners have had a huge influence by being involved in starting, building and maintaining many of the community gardens in Ashland, Talent, Phoenix and other areas.”

– PATRICK MARCUS

Small Farms



OVER THE PAST FIVE years the OSU Extension Small Farms program has hosted 200 classes and workshops with more than 3,000 participants. It helps three distinct groups in Jackson County:

- Hundreds of **commercial producers** who drive the local economy through production of raw and value-added crops and livestock – most of which are direct-marketed to consumers in the area.
- **Beginning farmers** whose numbers continue to increase as sustainable, small-scale agriculture has become popular and viewed as a viable career.
- Thousands of **small-acreage landowners** who need guidance on weed control, soil fertility management, irrigation and pasture management. Small Farms instructs them in best management practices, improving health of the environment and saving landowners money and time.

Small Farms offers a year-long, comprehensive curriculum for beginning farmers including a one-evening class, *What To Do with My Small Farm*; a month-long course, *Exploring the Small Farm Dream*;

a two-month business class, *Growing Farms*, and a seven-month hands-on *Growing Agripreneurs* program.

For commercial producers and small acreage landowners, Small Farms presents classes on topics ranging from integrated pest management to hay assessment, raising pastured poultry for profit to advanced marketing with social media.

Small Farms also convenes two farmer networks, the League of Women Farmers and the Farmer to Farmer network, that focus on farm tours and skill-building sessions.

ANNA VITINSKY came to the Rogue Valley from California, where she and her husband had farmed for five years. They immediately contacted OSU Extension. Anna attended **Growing Farms** (and joined the **League of Women Farmers**). Through the course, she learned the nuances of farming in Oregon – including state agricultural regulations and land use laws. **Anna's farm, Wandering Roots**, is at two local growers markets and is considered one of the Valley's up-and-comers.

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