

# OREGON AGRITOURISM WORKING GROUP

## PROGRESS REPORT

July 2019

The Oregon Agritourism Working Group, a group of key agencies and partners aiming to advance agritourism in Oregon, met in July 2018 to discuss and provide input on priorities for the coming year. The group agreed to form a new agritourism steering committee that would oversee the direction and work for one year. This committee finalized a purpose statement comprised of four primary action areas to tackle. As of July 2019, the following progress has been made by the steering committee and its partners.

### 1. Improve inter-agency and organizational coordination to support the sustainable development of agritourism.

**Action step:** Develop an outline of the roles and activities of agencies and organizations working on agritourism.

Progress update:

- The steering committee held a mapping exercise to better understand the current landscape of agritourism in Oregon. As a result, we:
  - Developed an “agency list” aimed at operators to help them understand the organizations and agencies that agritourism businesses may need to interface with
  - Developed a targeted set of agencies and organizations to build new or deeper relationships with as part of the ongoing efforts to advance agritourism

**Action step:** Develop a process to improve collaboration both among state agencies and association organizations; build support for increased resources for both agencies and organizations to lead on agritourism.

Progress update:

- An Oregon agritourism coordination meeting was convened by Travel Oregon and the steering committee in advance of the Small Farms Conference; a dedicated conversation around building engagement for agritourism was held among the 68 people in attendance
- Members of the steering committee including the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Department of Land Conservation and Development, Regional Solutions and Travel Oregon have been meeting to build support for and clarify working relationships to advance agritourism in Oregon
- Travel Oregon and partners have met with organizations such as 1000 Friends of Oregon, Association of Oregon Counties, Oregon Agritourism Partnership, Oregon Aglink and representatives of the Oregon Farm Bureau to share the goals of the workgroup and identify opportunities for partnership
- Steering committee members have participated in, supported and encouraged agritourism to be a central part of other meetings and conferences including the ODA Board of Directors, OSU Small Farms Conference and county and regional level agritourism meetings; proposals are being submitted to the Association of Oregon Counties and Oregon Economic Development Association Annual Conferences

## 2. Build a better understanding and increase support for agritourism in Oregon.

**Action step:** Develop a communications strategy aimed at educating county and regional agencies and policy makers about benefits of agritourism, the associated activities that are currently permissible, challenges to running successful operations, and solutions to these challenges.

Progress update:

- Partners have provided insight into the benefits of updating county codes to include the available agritourism statute to county planners and commissioners as well as regional economic development agencies; this work supported the adoption of SB 960 in Clatsop, Grant and Wallowa Counties

**Action step:** Gather economic impact data and trends to bolster this work.

Progress Update:

- Travel Oregon is exploring opportunities to collect economic impact data related to agritourism
- Oregon Wine Board is working with University of Oregon to collect in-depth wine data for the Willamette valley and other areas

## 3. Support agritourism businesses to improve current, establish new and expand existing operations.

**Action step:** Provide operators with opportunities to network, learn and gain assistance with business planning from other operators and resource providers.

Progress update:

- OSU Small Farms Conference hosted an agritourism track led by the Oregon Agritourism Working Group; the following three sessions reached nearly 300 participants:
  - Marketing 101 for Agritourism Businesses
  - Risk Management
  - Connecting Farmers Markets to Tourism
- Travel Oregon, in partnership with local proponents, offered three business engagement workshops for businesses participating in the Oregon Food Trails program around the state

**Action step:** Offer technical assistance to establish and run successful agritourism businesses so that they can effectively navigate and comply with laws, codes and permitting requirements.

Progress update:

- Technical assistance, via a Travel Oregon contract with Erika Polmar of Plate and Pitchfork, supported more than 120 landowners, potential owners and affiliated agencies and organizations to develop an agritourism business or add agritourism activities in their business plan; there is an intake form on [industry.traveloregon.com](http://industry.traveloregon.com) that connects those seeking assistance to resources
- U.S. Farm Stay Association also offers a farm stay toolkit for people interested in opening a farm stay and has plans to put together webinars on related topics
- One-on-one technical assistance was provided to operators at the OSU Small Farms Conference at a number of steering committee members' booths, including Travel Oregon and the U.S. Farm Stay Association

**4. Explore, and improve as needed, statewide and county-level policy issues and structural barriers and solutions to growing a robust agritourism economy in Oregon.**

**Action step:** Advocate for codes and rules that support agritourism while maintaining integrity for agricultural lands and respecting key farming activities.

Progress update:

Below is a summary of agritourism or rural development related bills that passed in the 2019 legislative session. The agritourism steering committee did not establish 2019 policy priorities or introduce policy concepts or language during session. The bills below are not reflective of priorities of the agritourism steering committee but provide a general update.

**Farm Brewery Bill ([SB 287](#))**

Creates standards for establishment of farm breweries on lands zoned for exclusive farm use or mixed farm and forest use for breweries that annually produce under 150,000 barrels of malt beverages total with under 15,000 barrels produced on site.

**Wine Labeling Bill ([SB 829](#))**

Focused on conjunctive labeling and requires that if appellation of origin on wine label is an American viticultural area in Oregon that is in a larger American viticultural area, label must also identify larger American viticultural area. For example, it would require a wine label to include the name "Willamette Valley" if it contains the name of one of its 'nested' viticultural areas. Other related winery labeling bills (SB830 and SB831) died.

**Guest Ranches ([HB 2435](#))**

Makes a 2018 law that was scheduled to sunset April 15, 2020 permanent, allowing guest ranches to be established on lands zoned for exclusive farm use in Eastern Oregon.

**Forestlands Second Dwellings ([HB 2469](#))**

Allows counties to approve second dwelling on forestlands within rural fire protection district near existing dwelling for owner or relative who supports owner's forestry practices. Requires a written forest management plan for the property.

**High-Value Farmland Designation for Cranberry Farms ([HB 2573](#))**

Requires counties to approve establishment of dwellings in conjunction with farm use on high-value farmland for cranberry farm operator meeting \$40,000 annual income standard.

**Outdoor Mass Gatherings ([HB 2790](#))**

Amends definitions of "outdoor mass gathering" for purposes of land use and public health laws. Amends ORS 197.015(10)(d) so that only gatherings fewer than 3,000 people, regardless of duration, are exempted from land use review. Makes gatherings of over 3,000 people on resource lands as a conditional use. Revises Chapter 433 definition to cover gatherings 500 to 3,000. Amendments were included to ensure this does not impact agritourism.

**Small On-Farm Processors ([HB 2844](#))**

Exempts on-farm processors smaller than 2,500 sq. ft. from county siting standards.

**Action step:** Establish a set of best practices to support counties in bringing their codes to current standards.

Progress update:

- Travel Oregon and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) provided counties with information about utilizing DLCD model code as well as connecting them to planners in counties that utilize state code to implement agritourism

**Action step:** Encourage counties to set up an easy-to-understand, transparent and streamlined process for businesses and operators to legally operate their agritourism business.

Progress update:

- Used Marion, Tillamook and Deschutes Counties case studies to demonstrate how the regulatory process could be streamlined for operators

### **Steering Committee Members**

Bree Boskov, Oregon Wine Board  
Brandi Ebner, Oregon Horse Council  
Carla McLane, Morrow County  
Erick Garman, Oregon Department of Agriculture  
Erika Polmar, Plate & Pitchfork  
Hilary Sager, Travel Oregon  
Janet Dodson, Eastern Oregon Visitors Association  
Jeanne Carver, Imperial Stock Ranch  
Jody Christensen, Regional Solutions, Office of Governor Kate Brown  
Karie Walchli, Umatilla County Tourism  
Kelly Crane, Oregon Farmers Market Association  
Sam Angima, OSU Extension  
Samara Phelps, Clackamas County Tourism  
Scott Bricker, Travel Oregon  
Scottie Jones, Leaping Lamb Farm/U.S. Farm Stay Association  
Shari Sirkin, Friends of Family Farmers  
Sean Scorvo, Goat Yoga  
Sara Morrisey, Travel Oregon  
Sadie Carney, Department of Land Conservation and Development  
Tim Murphy, Department of Land Conservation and Development  
Walt Bernard, Workhorse Workshops