Oregon Nurseries & Greenhouses

AT A GLANCE

Nursery & Greenhouse Benefits
Economic, Social, Environmental

Archibald McGill and Malcolm McDonald established Oregon Nursery Co. in the early 1900s in Washington County, where soils, water supply, and climate were ideal for commercial nursery production. Heirs have expanded the business, concentrating knowledge and know-how within the region. Subsequent developments in collaborative marketing, technology, and research have given Oregon a national reputation for leadership in the industry.

Oregon follows California and Florida in sales of nursery and greenhouse products. In state, the industry tops all other agricultural sectors in sales and has a history of strong growth, with annual sales increases for more than 30 years. Greenhouse production has slow, steady growth consistent with regional population growth. For the past decade, greenhouse sales value has averaged about 25% of that for nurseries.

Oregon's industry employs about 22,000 workers (at least half full time), not including middle or upper managers, owners, sales, or office staff. As some segments mechanize and all producers seek efficiencies in this hand-labor-intensive industry, the rate of employment increase has not kept pace with total sales.

Deciduous shade trees are Oregon's most valuable nursery crop. They grow rapidly in our mild winters, so producers can sell larger trees after fewer years of in-nursery care than in some other locations. More than 75% of Oregon nursery product is sold out of state, much of it to be "grown on" after shipment east of the Rockies. The industry is a vital contributor to "green" activities, in state and beyond, via its ornamentals for landscaping, plants for vineyards, orchards, and small-fruit farms, riparian and native plants, shade trees for energy conservation, and plants for conservation/restoration projects.

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Cooperative research and educational outreach have benefited the nursery and greenhouse industry in the following ways:

- Continually improving production efficiency and ability to deliver high-quality plants to market while reducing environmental impacts. $ ❦
- Combatted weed problems in container production by evaluating nonchemical controls and "softer" pesticides with less environmental impact. $ ❦
- Continuously stimulates the Portland Metro economy via wages paid to nursery and greenhouse workers. The industry is most intensely clustered around the Metro area. $ ✋
- Raised awareness of herbicide-drift problems in container nurseries. More than half of south Willamette Valley grass seed farmers now control herbicide drift, resulting in healthier nursery stock and fewer losses. $ ❦ ✋
- Developed strategies to control *Phytophthora*, a serious fungal disease that could have damaged the entire Oregon industry. Identified sources of nursery contamination and advised on preventive strategies. $ ❦ ✋
- Identified significant tree and shrub disorders, and researched appropriate management strategies. $ ❦
- Evaluated integrated pest management for insects in nursery stock, enabling growers to reduce insecticide applications significantly. $ ❦
- Advised growers to plant perennial grass cover crops between rows in shade tree nurseries to improve weed control and reduce herbicide applications, thus benefiting water and soil quality. $ ❦
- Continually delivers disease-control information via the highly regarded *Pacific Northwest Plant Disease Management Handbook*, a primary source of information about major plant diseases in the Pacific Northwest. $ ❦
- Documented the physical and chemical properties of Douglas-fir bark, enabling container-nursery managers to make better use of this material. $
- Led innovations in irrigation technology and use of regionally adapted plants. Developed standards for "green" roofs, bioswales, and strategic landscape planning to reduce wildfire damage. For the general public, designed and disseminated programs about sustainable community gardens and food systems and integrated pest management. $ ❦ ✋
- Continually working to improve woody plants' adaptability and performance once the plants are sold from the nursery and put in landscapes where they'll receive less irrigation and fertilizer. $ ❦

Benefits key

$ Economic benefit

❦ Environmental benefit

✋ Social benefit

Produced by the Department of Horticulture and Extension Service, Oregon State University.

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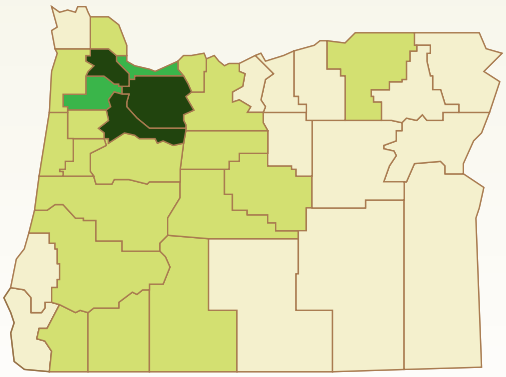
Oregon farms	880
Value of sales	$823.8 million
Oregon's national ranking	#3

Notes

Economic data in this section are from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Oregon Field Office, 2006 Nursery Crops Summary.



Farm Receipts

- $160–$185 million
- $50–$122 million
- <$15 million