

Multnomah County Farm Bureau Five-Year Business Plan 2020 – 2025



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1.0 About MCFB

The Multnomah County Farm Bureau (MCFB) was established in 1958 as a non-profit organization. MCFB is one of 32 county farm bureaus serving as local chapters of the Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB), which serves as one of 51 state affiliates of the American Farm Bureau Federation. MCFB is governed by a member-elected Board of Directors and is managed daily by an Executive Director and a Treasurer (for more, see **Section 3.0 Administration**).

Located in northwestern Oregon, MCFB's area includes farms and farm communities in all of Multnomah County and in Northcentral Clackamas County (see **Figure 1** below).

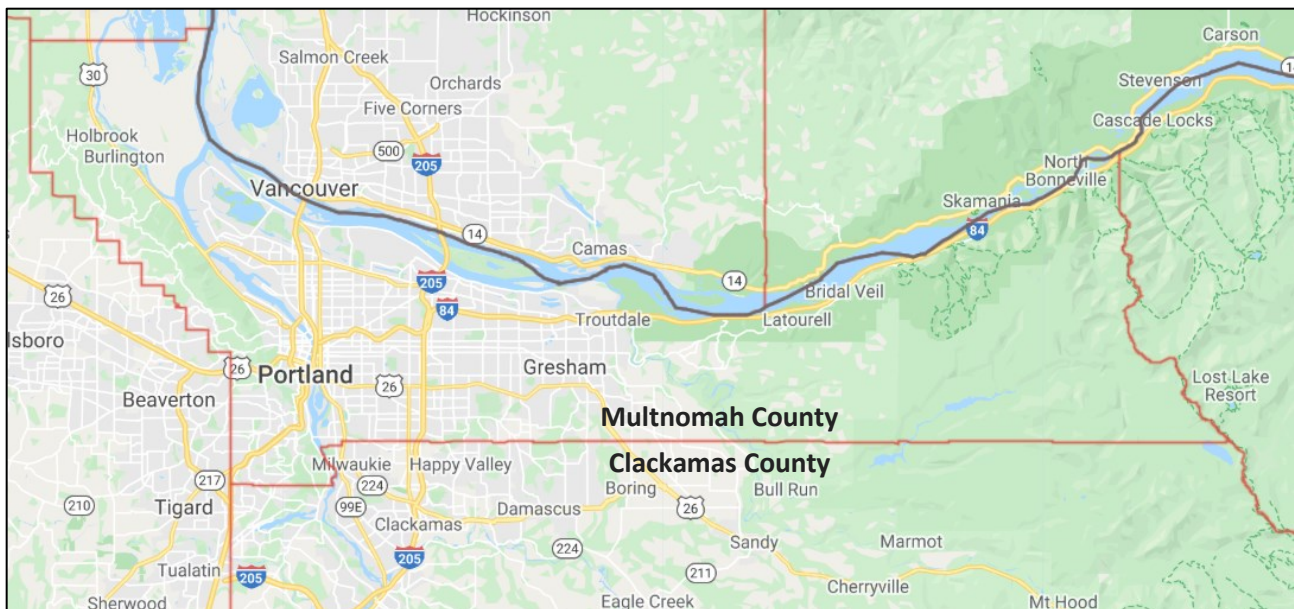


Figure 1: MCFB Area – Multnomah County and Northcentral Clackamas County

1.1 MCFB's Purpose

MCFB's purpose is to support and defend our vision, mission, and values as shown below.

MCFB's Vision

Farmers, in reflection of their hard work, can expect incomes that support quality livelihoods for their families.

MCFB's Mission

We help local farmers be successful.

MCFB's Values¹

We believe a diverse representation of farmers and farming methods will best support and defend our collective farm community.

¹ **Anti-discrimination/Anti-harassment Statement:** MCFB prohibits discrimination and harassment in all of its programs and activities.



1.2 Farming in Multnomah County

Multnomah County encompasses over 300,000 acres and includes both highly urbanized and less developed rural communities. According to the 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture, there were 653 farm operations made up of 25,435 acres within the county. While the vast majority of farm operations in the county were 50 acres or under, the farms are both big and small, urban and rural, organic and conventional, and food and non-food producing. Multnomah County farm commodity sales have recently totalled over \$74 million annually and are thus a critical part of the local economy. Summary data for the county are found in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Summary Farm Data for Multnomah County

Number farm operations	653	
Market value of products sold	\$74,578,000	
Average value of agricultural land, including buildings	\$20,879 per acre	
Average rent for irrigated land	\$256 per acre	
Average rent for non-irrigated land	\$122 per acre	
Total agricultural acres	25,435	
• Cropland acres	15,623	61%
○ Irrigated acres	5,747	23%
• Pastureland acres	2,544	10%
• Woodland acres	5,087	20%
• Other acres	2,289	9%
Average size of farm (acres)	39	
Crop Inventory	Acres	
• Hay	2,742	
• Vegetables	2,607	
• Corn, silage	737	
• Wheat	483	
• Orchards	226	
• Beans	3	
• Nursery (including Flowers & Herbs	4,900 *	
• Christmas Trees	tbd	
• Marijuana	tbd	
• Hemp	tbd	
Livestock Inventory	# Animals	
• Broilers and other meat-type chickens	3,697	
• Cattle and calves	1,284	
• Goats	360	
• Hogs and pigs	77	
• Horses and ponies	399	
• Layers	3,415	
• Pullets	230	
• Sheep and lambs	981	
• Turkeys	74	
• Aquaculture	tbd	
Source: Unless otherwise noted, USDA 2017		
* USDA 2010		



1.3 Our Members

As of June 2020, MCFB had over 7,000 members, consisting of local farmers and local farm supporters. Farmers and farm supporters from all sectors are welcome, encouraged to join and participate, and included in MCFB.

MCFB has three types of members:

1. Voting members;
2. Supporting members; and
3. Associate members.

Due to a special arrangement between OFB and Country Financial, most members join MCFB when they obtain insurance services through Country Financial. Membership totals, requirements, and rights are shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: MCFB Membership Totals, Requirements, and Rights

Criteria	Membership Type		
	Voting	Supporting	Associate
Number of Members (as of 06/2020): 7,643	125	29	7,489
Qualifications	Farmers/ranchers with \$2,500 or more per year in gross farming or ranching income	Farmers/ranchers with less than \$2,500 per year in gross farming or ranching income and non-farmers	Multnomah County residents; and Country Financial clients
Dues	\$125/year	\$125/year	\$25/year
Support MCFB & OFB financially via dues	X	X	X
May attend all MCFB Board meetings, annual meetings, events, and outings	X	X	With approval from Board President or Executive Director
May attend the annual OFB state and AFBF national conventions	X	X	
Receive all OFB benefits	X	X	
May vote at the annual MCFB meeting for Board Directors and officers	X		
May run for MCFB and OFB state boards and officer positions	X		
May represent the MCFB as a voting delegate at the OFB annual state convention	X		
May represent the OFB as a voting delegate at the AFBF annual national convention	X		

Five-year Membership Goal:

- MCFB will strive to increase its voting and supporting membership to 200, representing a 30% increase over present numbers (154) and approximately 31% of the farmers in Multnomah County.

2.0 Our Approach

MCFB accomplishes its mission and seeks to realize its vision through five key strategies:

- 1) Asking Farmers*
- 2) Assisting Farmers*
- 3) Connecting Farmers*
- 4) Representing Farmers*
- 5) Sharing Knowledge with Farmers*

2.1 Asking Farmers

People have questions about farming. Whether members of the general public, students, industry representatives, government employees, or elected officials, when farm-related questions come up, people tend to turn to the usual information sources. These information sources often consist of friends, colleagues, books, the Internet, or academic experts. Rarely, though, do people have ready access to real farmers. Real farmers have unique experiences, knowledge, and understanding of land and farming techniques and issues. Farmers, local communities, and our society in general will benefit if people who are seeking to understand farming better have the ability to ask farmers directly. Given this, MCFB will connect people with questions about farming with real farmers. To accomplish this, we will establish the “Ask a Farmer” program.

Examples of previous questions asked of MCFB farmers relate to:

- Farmland lease rates;
- Farm business plans;
- Solar field impacts;
- Water needs for livestock; and
- Lease premiums for former CRP lands.



Figure 2: Local farmer Don Sturm inspecting his crop

Five-year Ask-A-Farmer Goal:

- MCFB will create and implement an easily accessible and readily used program to connect people with questions about farming with local farmers.

2.2 Assisting Farmers

Farmers are resourceful and creative people, but sometimes they would like assistance solving problems or addressing issues on their land. While there are many entities at local, state, and federal levels that assist farmers in a variety of ways, many farmers would prefer to engage with a local farm group, such as MCFB, to help them solve problems. Given this, MCFB will continually seek to identify local on-farm and community needs and ways in which MCFB can uniquely help meet those needs. As possible and appropriate, MCFB will then establish and implement relevant programs, projects, and activities.

Examples of previous and existing MCFB assistance, some of which we expect to continue during the next five years, include:

- Financial contributions for legal aid;
- Research for Portland BES water submeter program;
- Equipment advice for export to developing country;
- Wetland mitigation banking information;
- Agricultural conservation easement information; and
- *Find A Farm* web page that connects the public with local farms.

Five-year Assisting Farmer Goal:

- **MCFB will assist local farmers and farm communities with at least two problem-solving efforts each year.**

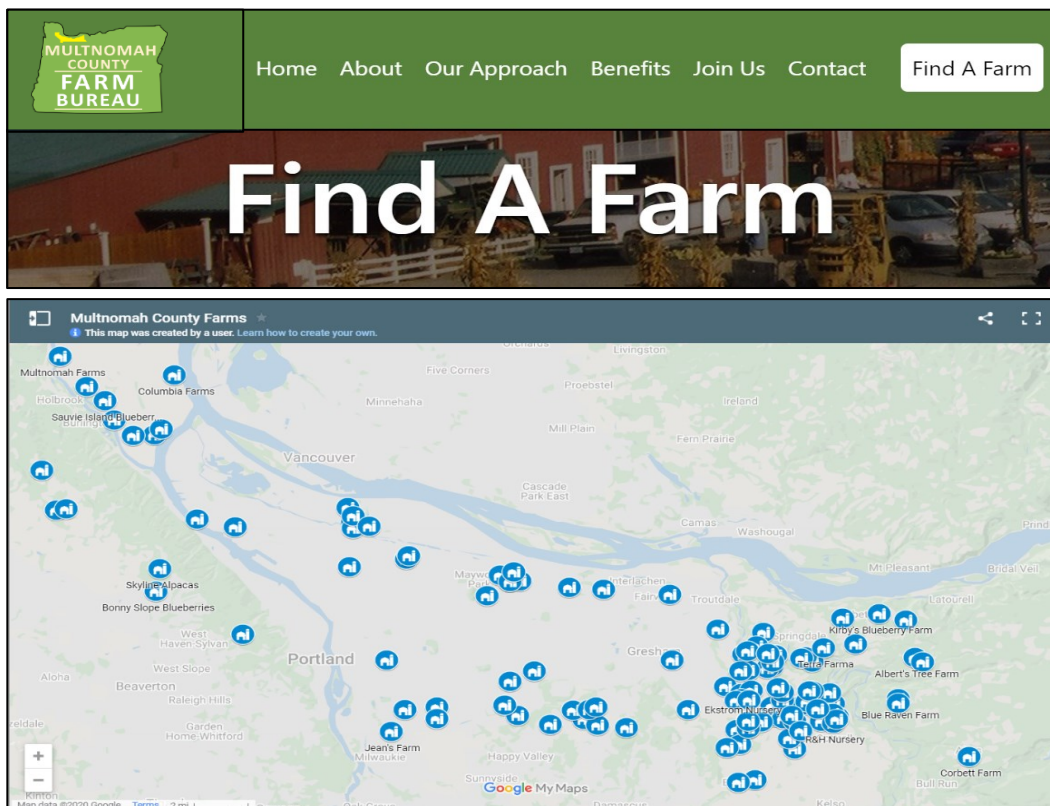


Figure 3: Find-A-Farm Web Page

2.3 Connecting Farmers

Farmers enjoy talking to other farmers. They share stories and ideas, and sometimes even co-miserate about problems. In today's busy world, however, it's difficult for farmers to connect with one another. There's not enough time in the day to get the work done, not to mention sit down for coffee with a fellow farmer. At the same time, there are an over-whelming number of ways to communicate with today's technology. Given this, through our social events, newsletters, emails, and online presence, MCFB will strive to serve as a farmer-to-farmer uniter and communication pathway.

Current MCFB networking efforts that we expect to continue during the next five years include:

- Social outings;
- Celebrations;
- Newsletters and mailers; and
- Social media

Five-year Connecting Farmers Goal:

- **MCFB will establish a network of local farmers and farm supporters through which formal and informal communications and exchanges occur to help farmers address issues they are facing.**



Figure 4: 2019 End of Year MCFB Celebration

2.4 Representing Farmers

The legal requirements that affect farming can make a difficult business even more difficult. Laws, regulations, policies, and government programs are constantly changing and it's nearly impossible for individual farmers to track, respond to, learn, comply with, and voice concern about the changes and requirements. To address this, MCFB will continue to be an active voice for local farmers at the local, state, and national levels. When government laws, regulations, policies, and programs are proposed anew or to be changed, MCFB will strive to identify, understand, disseminate, and engage related officials in a manner that benefits local farmers and their communities.



Figure 5: Oregon Capital Building, Salem, Oregon

Current MCFB representation and lobbying-related areas that we expect to continue engagement in during the next five years include:

- Elected officials;
- Laws and regulations;
- Voter education;
- Advisory councils and committees; and
- Organizaional support.

Five-year Representing Farmers Goals:

- **MCFB will establish and implement a mechanism through which local farmers receive and respond to accurate information about laws, regulations, policies, and programs that may affect their farming businesses; when local farmer response is not possible or practical, MCFB will serve as a proxy.**

2.5 Sharing Knowledge with Farmers

There's a lot to know when you're a farmer. Not only do you have to stay current on legal requirements, but there are near constant advancements in technology and practices that would help you be successful if you were aware of them and understood them. Given this, MCFB will develop an annual curriculum that delivers training to local farmers that meets their needs.

Current MCFB training and education-related efforts that we expect to continue during the next five years include:

- Scholarships;
- Conferences;
- Learning events;
- Workshops; and
- Financial support.

Five-year Sharing Knowledge Goal:

- **MCFB will establish and implement an annual training curriculum that meets unmet needs of local farmers.**



Figure 6: Local farmers at sponsored workshop



3.0 Administration

3.1 Board of Directors

MCFB is governed by a member-elected Board of Directors. MCFB's Board of Directors must include a President and Secretary as Board Officers, and no less than one additional Board Director. The Board of Directors may choose to elect a Vice-President and Treasurer as additional Board Officers, and up to eight additional Board Directors. In addition, if there is a county Women's Committee and/or a Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee, the Chair of each committee shall be a voting member of the Board of Directors.

Board Officers are elected by Voting Members each year at the Annual MCFB Meeting. Other Board Directors, also elected at the Annual MCFB Meeting, serve staggered terms of two years. Only full MCFB Voting Members can serve on the Board of Directors. In addition to the Annual MCFB Meeting, the Board of Directors normally meets seven times throughout each year.

MCFB Board meetings and annual meeting are normally held as per the schedule in **Table 3** below. Notices, locations, and changes to the schedule are provided through mailers and on the MCFB Facebook page. Voting and Supporting members are always welcome to attend any of these meetings. Associate members, members of the public, and partner representatives should contact the MCFB Board President or Executive Director should they like to attend a meeting.

Table 3: MCFB Board Meeting Schedule

Month	Board Meeting Day/Time: 3rd Thursday @ 7:00PM Location: 1101 NE Burnside, Gresham	Annual Meeting Day/Time: TBD Location: TBD	Holiday Gathering Day/Time: TBD Location: TBD
January	X		
February	X		
March	X		
April	X		
May	X		
June			
July			
August			
September	X		
October	X		
November		X	
December			X

All Board agendas, meeting packets, and minutes are available on the MCFB website after being finalized.

Five-year Board-related Goal:

- The MCFB Board of Directors will work with the Executive Director to increase the capacity and diversity of the MCFB Board—by adding, on average, one new Board member per year— as a means to provide more direct benefit to local farmers and farming communities.



3.2 Contractors

On a weekly basis, MCFB activities are undertaken by a part-time contracted Executive Director and a part-time contracted Treasurer. We expect this situation to continue into the foreseeable future. Potential increases in capacity and changes to the nature of engagement of these individuals depend on increases in available funding and, as a result, increases in organizational activities.

Five-year Contractor-related Goal:

- **MCFB will maintain existing capacity and relationships with the Executive Director and Treasurer; and monitor and adapt as needed.**

3.3 Volunteers

MCFB occasionally benefits from the time and expertise of volunteers. Volunteers lead or help with activities such as website development and maintenance, social media management, and event hosting. As strategies evolve, there may be the need and desire to recruit additional volunteers, either for one-time activities or for on-going commitments.

Five-year Volunteer-related Goals:

- **MCFB will maintain existing capacity and relationship with Web Designer; and**
- **MCFB will recruit additional volunteers and will monitor and adapt as needed.**

3.4 Foundational Documents, Plans and Policies

MCFB's foundational, plan-related, and policy-related documents include the following:

- MCFB Articles of Incorporation;
- MCFB By-Laws;
- MCFB Business Plan;
- OFB Conflict of Interest Policy; and
- OFB Whistle Blower Policy.

These documents are available on the MCFB website. New Board Directors and contractors will be encouraged to read the documents and sign the policies.

Five-year Document Administration Goal:

- **MCFB will review foundational documents, plans, and policies on at least a five-year basis and will revise as necessary.**

3.5 Finance and Budgeting

The majority of MCFB funding is derived from member dues via Country Financial. This stable source of funding provides approximately \$80,000 per year. In addition, MCFB currently has approximately \$258,000 in savings. The MCFB fiscal year runs October through September. Each year the budget is developed in August and presented to the Board of Directors in September for review and approval. Once approved, the budget is available on the MCFB website. Each year in spring, MCFB is required to file taxes for the previous fiscal year, ending in September the year before.

Five-year Finance and Budgeting Goals:

- **MCFB will diversify and increase organizational funding; and**
- **MCFB will strive to increase its annual funding level to \$150,000 by 2025.**

3.6 Reporting

MCFB is required to submit an annual report to the Oregon Secretary of State (SOS) in April of each year. These short reports are mostly non-substantive and serve to keep the state informed regarding organization name, jurisdiction, nonprofit type, and names and mailing addresses of the registered agent and officers. The Oregon SOS reports are available on the Oregon SOS website and the MCFB website.

Beginning in 2020, MCFB intends to prepare annual progress reports to document progress toward the five-year goals established in this business plan. The annual progress reports will be prepared in September of each year and presented to the Board of Directors in October for their review and approval. Once approved, the annual progress reports will be available on the MCFB website.

Five-year Reporting Goals:

- **MCFB will continue annual reporting to the Oregon Secretary of State as required; and**
- **MCFB will begin and continue annual progress reporting to track progress toward business plan goals.**



Figure 7: Farmers at Rossi Farms, Portland, Oregon