



## Summer Update

Greetings Multnomah County Farm Bureau (MCFB) members and friends. We hope you are managing through this difficult 2020 successfully. This has been a challenging year for all of us. We want you to know that MCFB and the Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) continue to work for you.

## Vision, Mission, Values

In the spring of 2020, MCFB adopted its first ever Vision, Mission, and Values. The Vision, Mission, and Values help our members, friends, and the public better understand why MCFB exists and what we are working to accomplish.

- **Vision:** Farmers, in reflection of their hard work, can expect incomes that support quality livelihoods for their families.
- **Mission:** We help local farmers be successful.
- **Values:** We believe a diverse representation of farmers and farming methods will best support and defend our collective farm community.

## COVID-19

The Coronavirus has impacted our local farming communities directly and indirectly. We have heard from farmers who have been infected, who have been impacted financially, and who are struggling to keep up with new regulations. OFB and the Oregon Department of Agriculture maintain websites with helpful information and resources which can be accessed at: <https://oregonfb.org/covid19/> and <https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/agriculture/Pages/COVID-19.aspx>. If you need information or help, let us know. If we cannot help directly, we will try to find someone who can.

## Find-A-Farm

MCFB wants to help the public support local farmers through direct purchases while at the same time understand how we can best serve local farmers and local farm communities. To this end, we have established the “Find-A-Farm” page on our website that identifies local farms, what they produce, and if the public can buy directly from them. We have over 100 farms on the list so we have a long ways to go before we get them all, but we will continue to add new farms as we identify them. If you know of a farm that should be on the list or have corrections to information already provided, please let us know. The Find-A-Farm page can be accessed at: <https://multnomahcfb.org/find-a-farm-home.html>.

## Asking Farmers

In the fall of 2019, we began receiving questions from the public about various farming issues. As this continued, we formally launched the “Ask a Farmer” program that provides the public access to real farmers to help them better understand farmers and farming. Thus far, we have responded to 10 inquiries, ranging from the affects of solar fields on farming to farm lease rates. Depending on the sensitivity of the questions, answers are either provided directly to the person who asked and/or posted on social media. If someone you know has a farming question, let us know.

## 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 local, state, and federal entities that assist farmers in a variety of ways, many farmers prefer to engage with a local farm group, such as MCFB, to help them solve problems. Given this, MCFB is undertaking projects, activities, and outreach to assist local farmers and communities. Recent efforts to assist our farmers and local communities have included: financial assistance; research; advice; and technical expertise.

## Connecting Farmers

In addition to being busy people, COVID-19 has impacted the ability of farmers to connect and support one another. MCFB normally helps farmers connect through social outings and celebrations which we will revive as soon as we can. Until then, we will continue to connect with farmers through our newsletters and social media. You can follow us and find more information about MCFB at:

- **Webpage:** [www.multnomahcfb.org](http://www.multnomahcfb.org)
- **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/multnomahcountyfarmbureau/](https://www.facebook.com/multnomahcountyfarmbureau/)
- **Instagram:** [multnomahcountyfarmbureau](https://www.instagram.com/multnomahcountyfarmbureau)

## **Representing Farmers**

We continue to do our best to stay current on the laws, regulations, policies, and programs that affect local farmers. We do this by engaging elected officials, monitoring new and changing requirements, assisting with voter education, providing opportunities to serve on advisory councils, and providing financial support to other organizations. The November 2020 elections are fast approaching, and voting has never been more important. In addition to voting, we encourage our members and friends to consider running for local office as there are many positions that affect farming and will be on the ballot this fall.

## **Sharing with Farmers**

While our in-person events have slowed down considerably since March, we were able to host two pesticide and worker safety workshops in January and February for about 30 farmers. After the COVID-19 restrictions lift, we plan to resume hosting free workshops to provide farmers needed certification credits and updates on new techniques and issues. In addition to workshops, we contributed to scholarships, learning events, and conference participation this past year to share knowledge with farmers.

## **Business Planning**

We are currently developing the first ever five-year MCFB business plan for the Board of Directors to review in September. The plan will identify the goals we hope to achieve over the next five years and the strategies we will use to achieve the goals. The plan will be used to allocate funds from year to year and to track progress toward our goals.

## **Board Meetings**

The Board of Directors currently has seven members. The Board met each month January through May 2020, is now taking the summer off to attend to farming, and will meet again in September and October. Our annual meeting this year is currently scheduled for November 13. Instead of a formal board meeting in December, we usually host an end of year celebration (stay tuned for the date). If you or someone you know is interested in attending any of these meetings or would like to consider board service, please contact us. Also, be on the lookout this fall for the invitations to the Annual Meeting and celebration.

## **Membership**

MCFB currently has over 7,500 members. The majority of these are associate members (\$25/year) and about 150 are voting and supporting members (\$125/year). We are always looking to encourage associate members to upgrade and new members to join at the voting and supporting member level. There are numerous benefits to joining MCFB. In addition to realizing significant savings on insurance from Country Financial Services, MCFB voting and supporting members receive all OFB member benefits (<https://oregonfb.org/member-discounts-2/>) and access to all MCFB and OFB programs.

*That is it for now. We hope you enjoy the rest of the summer.*

## **Contact Us**

For questions, input, or requests for assistance, please contact us.

- [multnomahcfb@gmail.com](mailto:multnomahcfb@gmail.com)
- 206-595-5078

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*MCFB prohibits workplace discrimination and harassment in all of its programs and activities. MCFB will not condone or tolerate prejudicial remarks, actions, slurs, or jokes expressed and directed at or to any person for any reason.*