150 Years of Learning, Discovery, and Engagement

As the founding college of Oregon’s land–grant university, the College of Agricultural Sciences at Oregon State University has a long-standing commitment to understand social, economic, and environmental issues important to Oregon; to research effective ways to address those issues; and to engage the public with practical solutions, locally and globally. ¹

This commitment is even more important as we face the global challenge to provide food, safe environments, and livelihoods for 9 billion people and the local challenge to sustain quality of life in Oregon through the 21st century.

The College of Agricultural Sciences has faculty stationed in Corvallis and across the state, where we are fully engaged in our communities. We bring the power of science to address local problems and emerging issues important to Oregon and the world, through teaching, research, and Extension. The state is our campus.

Where We are Now

Our Mission
The College of Agricultural Sciences is a world-class leader in agricultural, environmental, and life sciences. We foster leadership and discipline-based expertise in our students and we create knowledge to solve problems, manage natural resources, create jobs, and support the economy.

Academics within the College of Agricultural Sciences prepare the next generation of scientists, managers, and leaders in the fields of food, agriculture, natural resources, and life sciences. With 14 academic programs, learning is integrated with research and Extension to provide students with inquiry-based, hands-on experiences in laboratories and field locations across Oregon and the world.

The Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) is Oregon’s principal research engine related to agriculture and natural resources. Centered in the College of Agricultural Sciences, AES engages more than 400 scientists in five OSU colleges, on campus and at branch stations across the state. The strengths of all these disciplines are put to work to solve complex problems of productivity, profitability, environmental quality, and human health.

The Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Extension Program connects Oregonians to research-based knowledge in a wide variety of topics. Well-known Extension programs, such as Master Gardeners and the Small Farms programs, enrich communities across Oregon. Extension programs also support production of Oregon’s major crops, management of working landscapes, and integrated pest management strategies.

Equity, inclusion, and civil discourse are highly valued within the college. It’s worth remembering that the legislation that established the nation’s land–grant university system was intended to educate all the people, not only the privileged class. That original intention has grown within the college where, today, diversity and excellence go hand-in-hand.

¹ The idea of research and education in the service of society began with the Morrill Act of 1862 that created the nation’s land–grant university system during the height of the American Civil War. In 1887, the need for site-specific research led to the Hatch Act that created a national network of Agricultural Experiment Stations. In 1914, the need for educational outreach to communities led to the Smith–Lever Act that established an Extension Service in every state.
Where We are Heading

We intend to pursue innovative initiatives within our areas of excellence and make intentional, targeted investments to achieve leveraged impacts.

Our Areas of Excellence

We serve Oregon, a state with remarkable diversity in agriculture, natural resources, ecosystems, and communities. In a 2014 international survey, OSU’s programs in agriculture and forestry were ranked seventh in the world. Clearly, the college is well positioned to address local and global challenges through the following areas of excellence:

Sustainable food and agricultural systems: Global population growth and economic development increase the urgency for sustainable approaches to grow food. While Oregon is a global leader in food production, the college leads research in sustainable and profitable agricultural systems leading to improved, value-added agricultural and seafood products to keep Oregon competitive.

Water quality, quantity, and marine resources: As the global population continues to grow, competition increases for fresh water and marine resources. The college leads research in freshwater, coastal, and marine resource management, as well as research to increase efficiency in the use of water across Oregon’s diverse ecosystems.

Environmental and human well-being: Oregon’s high quality of life requires confidence that the food supply is safe and that air and water are clean. The college leads development of innovative technologies that protect human and environmental health, and science that informs public policy toward creating a healthier world.

Integrated systems biology: Understanding the basic building blocks of life is essential to sustaining agriculture, natural resources, and human health. The college leads revolutionary new approaches to understanding the function of those building blocks, from fundamental genomics to integrated cells, organisms, and ultimately ecosystems.

Natural resource stewardship: Oregon has exceptional natural resources that support both our economy and our quality of life. The college leads the nation in programs in fisheries, wildlife, and range management, and is internationally known for work in the sustainability of managed landscapes, natural resources, and the world’s oceans.

Our Intentions

We will provide research and development necessary for Oregon industries to develop new precision technologies, new products that add value to resources, and new industries that keep jobs in the state.

We will address critical environmental issues such as climate change, land use, and invasive species, to ensure sustainable use of land, water, and resources for future generations.

We will integrate food systems research across the full spectrum of food issues, from breeding new crops and developing food safety practices, to creating new products, in order to build Oregon’s reputation as a global food leader and to address the needs of a growing, hungry world.

We will help build a world-class marine studies program on the foundation of our recognized excellence in marine resource management, ecology and genetics, and seafood-related research and outreach.

We will inspire a new generation of leaders to solve complex problems through mastery of STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and evidence-based, experiential learning throughout Oregon and the world.

We will continue our commitment to the people of Oregon, to address their site-specific needs through our statewide network of facilities, faculty, and long-term collaborative relationships.