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Oregon Organic Coalition Honors Seven Organic Trade Innovators with Awards for Excellence



Organic Scientist, Author & Professor Dr. Garry Stephenson, Gives Keynote at Luncheon Celebrating Oregon's Organic Food Trade

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The recipients of the 2017 Oregon Organic Coalition (OOC) Awards for Excellence were announced yesterday at a celebratory luncheon at the Ecotrust Building in Portland, Oregon. More than 50 representatives from Oregon's farming, retail, academic, political and food production communities gathered together to honor these organic innovators.

Previous award winner Dr. Garry Owen Stephenson was the keynote at this year's luncheon, speaking to attendees on the importance of funding organic research. Garry's extensive writing and teaching work with OSU also includes leading their extension and agricultural education service programs, such as the Extension Organic Program, the Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems and the Small Farms program. He emphasized the need for more representation, cooperation and funding at the state level.

OOC Awards for Excellence were given to the following individuals and organizations that demonstrated innovation in organic practices, service to the industry, expansion of organic business opportunities and overall achievement in the state's organic industry:

Retailer: Hopworks Urban Brewery, Brandie Ettinger, Portland, OR

Founded in 2007, Hopworks became more than just a basement brewing facility. Brewmaster, Christian Ettinger opened Hopworks after his career at the Eugene City Brewery, where many of Oregon's finest brewers start out. Hopworks uses locally-sourced, organic and Salmon Safe hops and distributes throughout the Northwest. They are a family-owned and operated business, employing over 130 in the area, and continuously giving back to the community through donations, profit-sharing, and volunteering with local, non-profit organizations. They don't cut corners to ensure their business is sustainable, from the hops to the facility where they compost and use salvaged materials whenever possible. Hopworks is the first Certified B Corporation brewery in the Pacific Northwest and their campus is the first Salmon Safe Certified brewery in the world!

Organic Certifier: Stellar Certification Services, Philomath, OR

Founded in 2002, Stellar Certification Services provides individualized attention and deep agricultural expertise to their members nationwide. They are based in Oregon but certify 188 operations as organic across the nation.

Stellar was originally formed to provide organic certification for Biodynamic farmers and processors. While the NOP standard forms the base to the Demeter Biodynamic standard, in order for a Biodynamic member to receive organic certification they must be certified organic through the NOP program. Combining Demeter/Stellar members save time, money, and hassle as only one application fee, one inspection, and one licensing fee is required. However, they do certify operations that choose not to be certified to Demeter Biodynamic requirements.

Scientist: Dr. Ramon Seidler, PhD. Oregon State University, Corvallis OR

Dr. Ramon (Ray) Seidler is a former Professor of Microbiology at Oregon State University and retired Senior Research Scientist and GMO Biosafety Team Leader, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Research and Development. Ray has authored/co-authored over 155 scientific peer reviewed publications and co-authored 3 books. He was one of 3 founding editors of Molecular Ecology, a science journal dedicated to cutting edge research in this field. He prepared the first Biosafety research plan for the U.S. EPA on the evaluation of genetically engineered microbes and plants intended for environmental release which described the research needed for the evaluation of genetically engineered microbes and crop plants. Dr. Seidler has also been a leader and a dedicated volunteer in Southern Oregon helping to expand the organic movement.

Processor: Oregon's Wild Harvest, Randy Buresh, Redmond, OR

Oregon's Wild Harvest has been growing their business and their noble practices since the early 1990's. They've been using innovative composting methods and practice regenerative farming that sequesters carbon. They save their own seeds from the products they grow and are Non-GMO Project certified, certified organic, and certified biodynamic. They preserve 10% of their land for natural pollinator habitat. In 2014, they relocated to Redmond, Oregon and since 1994, have increased their farm acreage from five acres to 435 acres (at various locations throughout the state), increased the size of their production facility, and brought new jobs to the area. Oregon's Wild Harvest has presented workshops throughout the state, region and the trade. They offer numerous resources on their web site to educate their customers, like indications for uses for their products as well as the scientific proof behind products. They work closely with the Department of Natural Resources, ensuring plants that are endangered due to over harvest they grow themselves, ensuring a reliable source. Oregon's Wild Harvest produces encapsulated herbs as well as tonics, extracts, bulk herbs, and children's formulas. They are all certified organic and many are certified biodynamic.

Farm (Livestock): Lebanon Auction Yard, Lebanon, OR

Starting in the late 1940s and purchased by the Cowart family in 1987, The Lebanon Auction Yard is now one of the most modern livestock market facilities in Oregon. They can market a single animal to a large herd, this last year they marketed over 15,000 head of cattle, as well as sheep, goats and pigs. Lebanon Auction Yard became certified as an organic livestock handler in 2015 with Oregon Tilth, Inc. They are one of the first auction yards to obtain this certification after the USDA amended their requirements for the handling of organic livestock.

Wholesaler: Bridges Produce, Portland, OR

Founded in 2002 by Ben Johnson, Bridges Organic Produce aims at helping mid-sized organic growers maximize their potential in the marketplace. Utilizing the total of their experiences, the Bridges team promotes the family farm and helps ensure their success. It's Bridges belief that knowledge is power! Bridging the communication between the grower and the consumer, they

are able to build a strong and equitable business model that allows all stakeholders to make informed decisions and wise investments to further the organic trade. Interdependence and mutual success are central to Bridges' approach, as is the recognition that the family farm is where it all begins.

Farm (Crops): Groundwork Organics

Groundwork Organics has been selling quality certified organic fruits, vegetables, and flowers since 2000. Located in Junction City, Groundwork Organics sells to 7 Farmers' Markets, has an active Farm stand, 450 CSA members and sells to restaurants, natural food stores plus wholesalers through OGC. Each week they produce weekly newsletters, recipes and a variety of creative tactics to bring people to organic produce. Founder and farmer, Gabe Cox's innovative usage of tillage and cropping equipment has helped increase production and quality. Groundwork is an active partner with Food for Lane County and in 2016 alone they donated 60,000 lbs. of fresh produce to the organization. Groundwork has expanded from its original 40 acres to its current 150 cultivated acres. This highly successful organic farm is deeply appreciated for its top quality produce by its many customers throughout the state and for supplying labor to a group of faithful, full time Oaxacan employees and many part-time workers as well.

Organically Grown in Oregon Week is presented by the [Oregon Organic Coalition](#), with generous support from [Organically Grown Company](#), [Oregon Tilth](#), [Ecotrust](#), and [Coconut Bliss](#). To see a full list of member organizations and OGOW sponsors, please visit oregonorganiccoalition.org.