

The State of Agricultural Land in Oregon 2025

Oregon Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee
January 21, 2025



Yamhill County, Oregon

Key Points

- **Agriculture is very important to Oregon's economy**
- **Oregon agriculture is incredibly diverse**
- **Diversity in crops, production systems, farm sizes, and markets keeps the industry resilient**
- **Oregon is a leader in protecting agricultural land, but there are signs of weakness.**
- **Legislation is proposed to address some of the concerns.**



Diversity of Production

- Over 225 commodities produced in Oregon.
- Helps create greater stability throughout the industry over time.
- Varied size of farms and methods of production.
- Most of Oregon's ag products are not federal commodity crops.





OREGON AGRICULTURE TOP 2024

Based on 2022 data & estimates
of value of production
from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service,
Oregon Department of Agriculture,
Oregon State University, Oregon Wine Board, and
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife.
This is not a ranking compared to other U.S. states.
More stats online: <https://oda.direct/AgStats>
info@oda.oregon.gov • Created 6/2024



OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

Oregon's Top 10 Agricultural Producing Counties, 2022

• Marion	\$874,627,000	
• Morrow	\$866,052,000	
• Umatilla	\$525,616,000	
• Malheur	\$510,625,000	
• Clackamas	\$510,305,000	Oregon: \$6,671,166
• Yamhill	\$418,319,000	
• Linn	\$342,098,000	
• Washington	\$326,039,000	
• Polk	\$249,678,000	
• Lake	\$175,700,000	

Oregon Ag's ECONOMIC footprint

- **\$28.9 billion economic footprint**
- **\$22.9 billion in sales of goods and services**
- **15% of Oregon's economy**
- **12% of jobs or 1 in every 8 jobs**
- **Farm gate value over \$6.7 billion**



Agricultural exports

- **75-80% of production leaves the state**
- **35-40% of production leaves the country**
- **Largest export sector in terms of volume**
- **Second largest export sector in terms of value**
- **19% of total state exports**
- **60% of the Port of Portland's total tonnage of exports**



= Traded Sector

Agriculture Land Use Needs:

- Land Base**
- Ability to Operate**
- Infrastructure**
- Water**

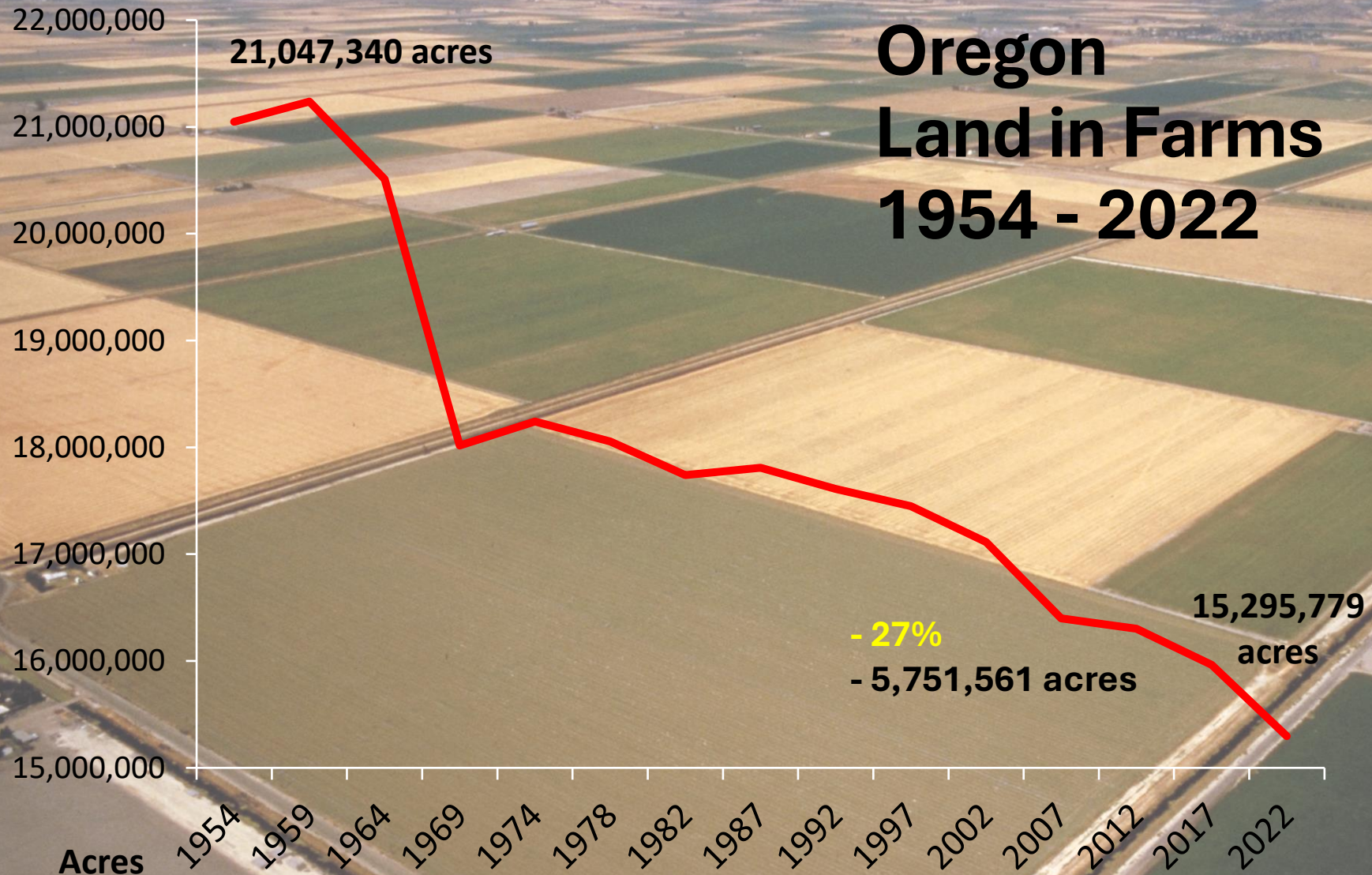
Elements of Conversion:

- **Footprint**
- **Ability to operate: Shadow**
- **Critical Mass**
- **Individual and Cumulative impacts**

Gauges

- **USDA 2022 Census of Agriculture**
- ***Oregon Farm and Forest Land Use Report*, LCDC**
- ***Forests, Farms & People: Land Use Change on Non-Federal Lands in Oregon*, ODFW and USDA Forest Service**
- ***Farms Under Threat 2040, Choosing an Abundant Future*, American Farmland Trust**

Oregon Land in Farms 1954 - 2022



Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, Oregon

Land in Farms *(million acres)*

As a Percent Change 2017 to 2022, by State

Oregon: Land in Farms

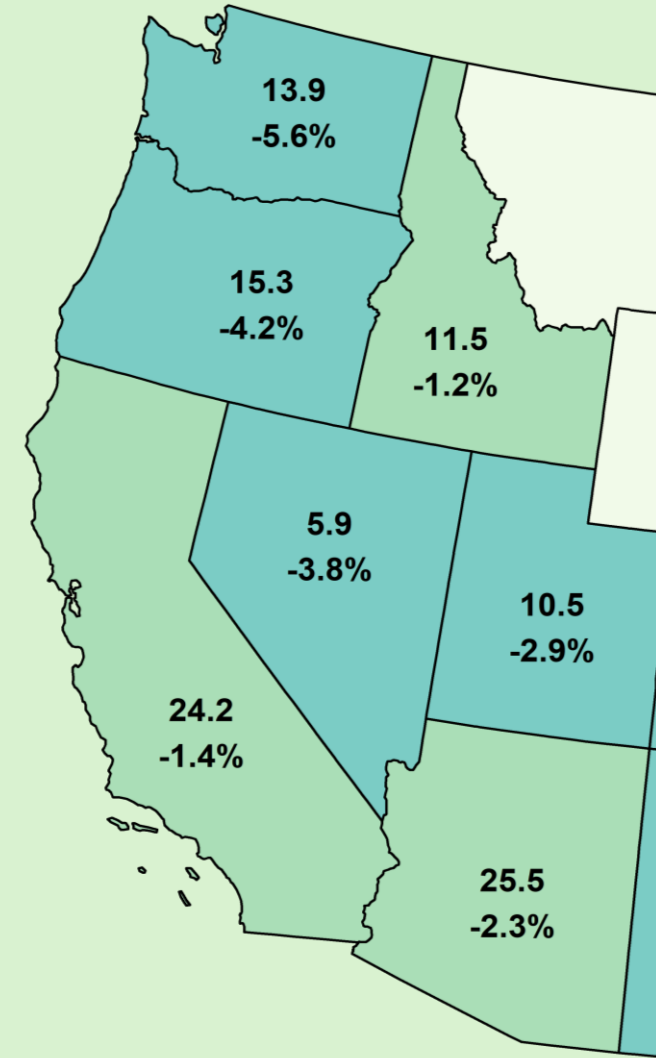
2022: 15,295,779 acres

2017: 15,962,322 acres

-666,543 acres

2007-2022: -1,103,868 acres -6.7%

2012-2022: -1,005,799 acres -6.2%



Conversion by County

• Wasco	-410,411 acres
• Jefferson	-250,576 acres
• Sherman	-122,341 acres
• Harney	-77,419 acres
• Morrow	-73,296 acres
• Douglas	-70,620 acres
• Union	-42,239 acres

Oregon Agricultural Land Base

Land in Farms

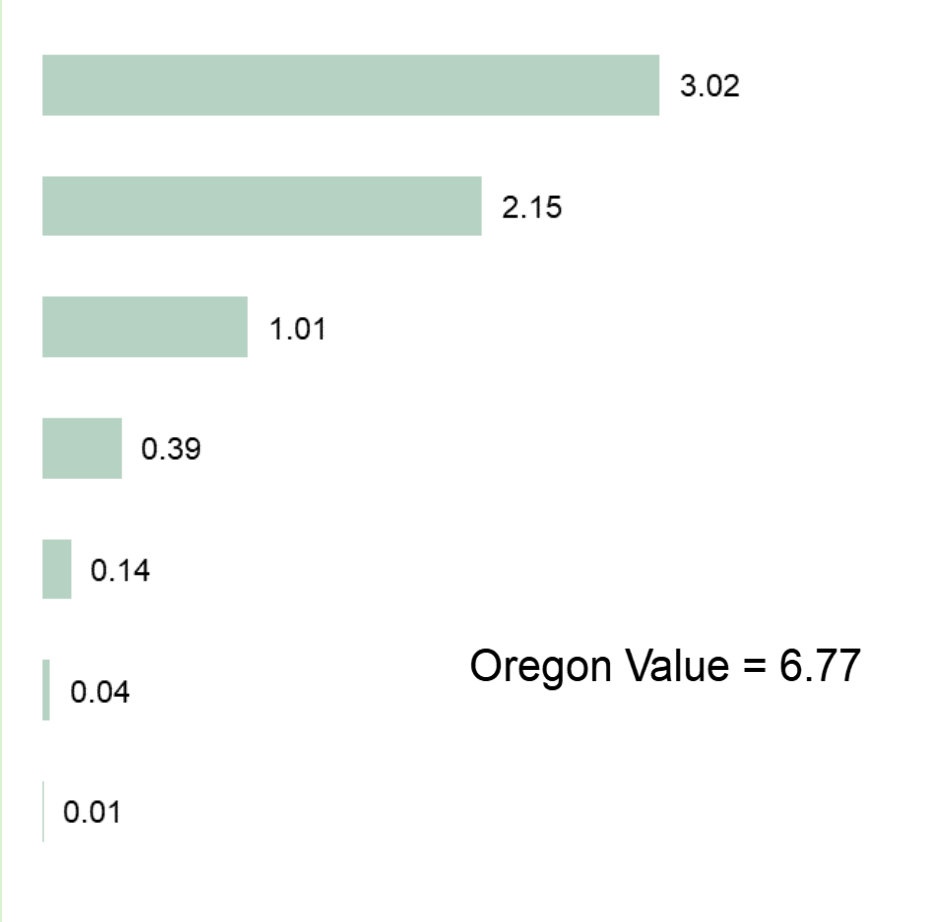
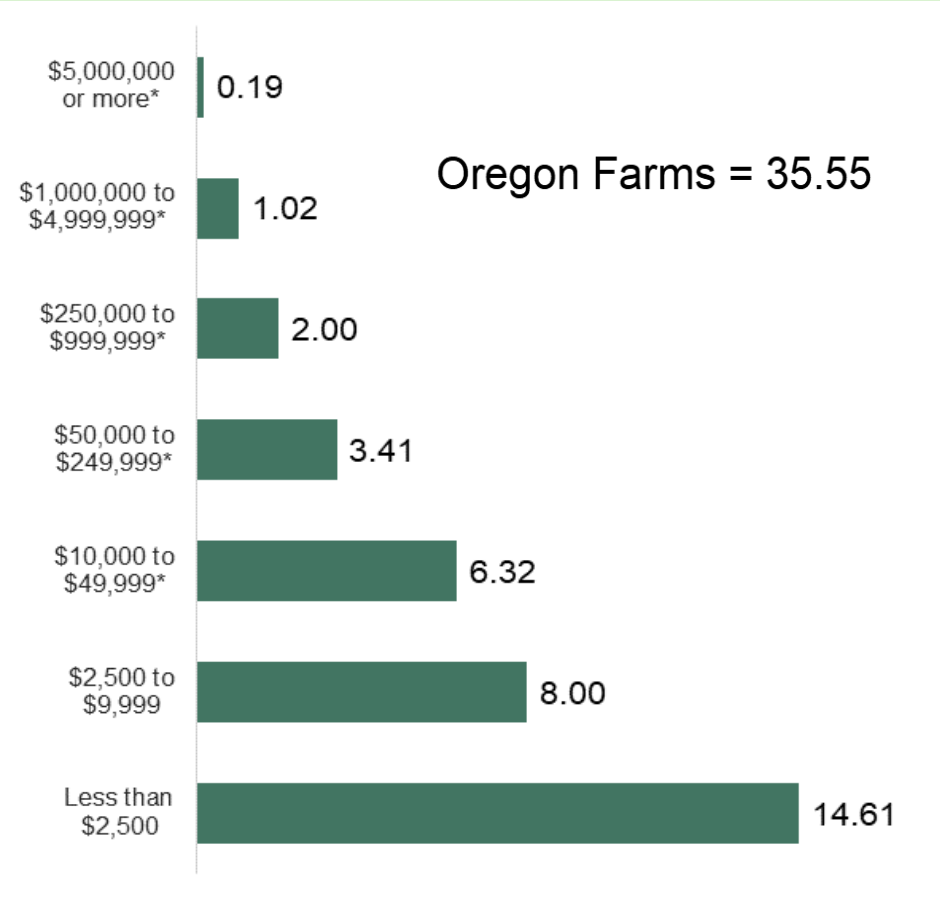
- **35,547 total farms, 2022**
37,616 2017
35,439 2012
- **67% are 49 acres or less in size**
- **These farms account for 2.3% of the area of land in farms and 8.5% of the production value**
- **71.4% of the area of land in farms involves farms that generate \$100,000 or more**

Total land area of Oregon = 63.018 million acres

Farms and Value of Production, by Sales Class, 2022

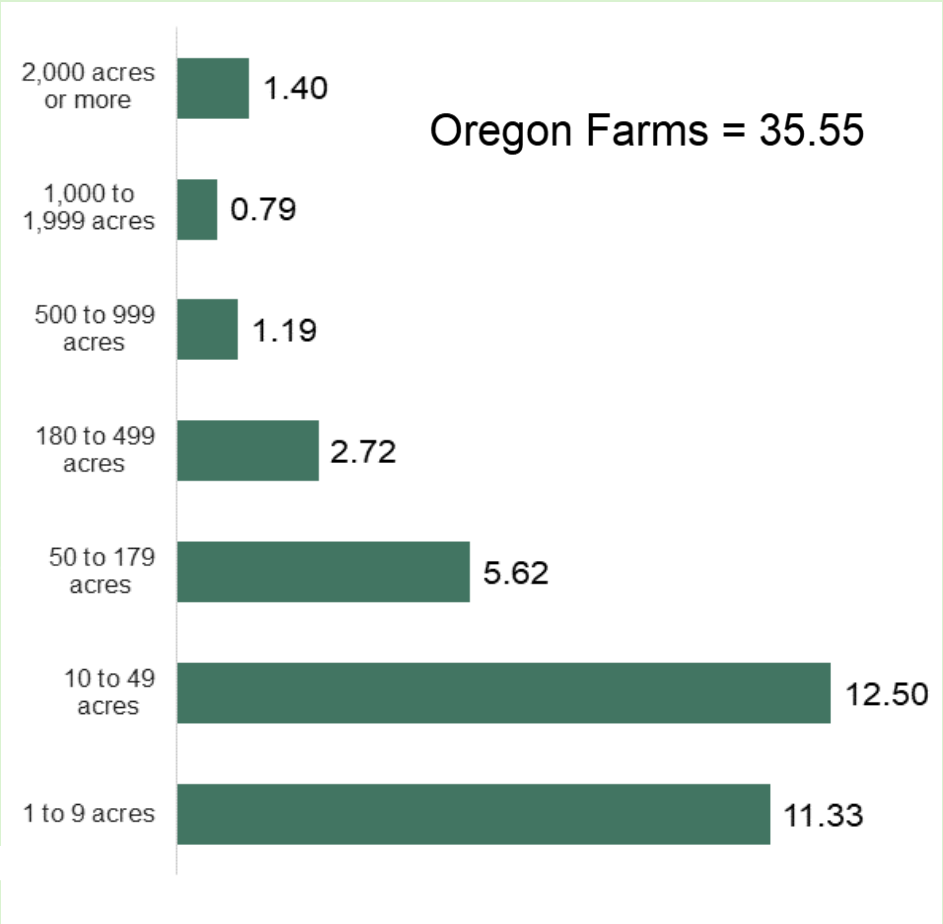
Number of Farms (thousands)

Value of Production (\$ billions)

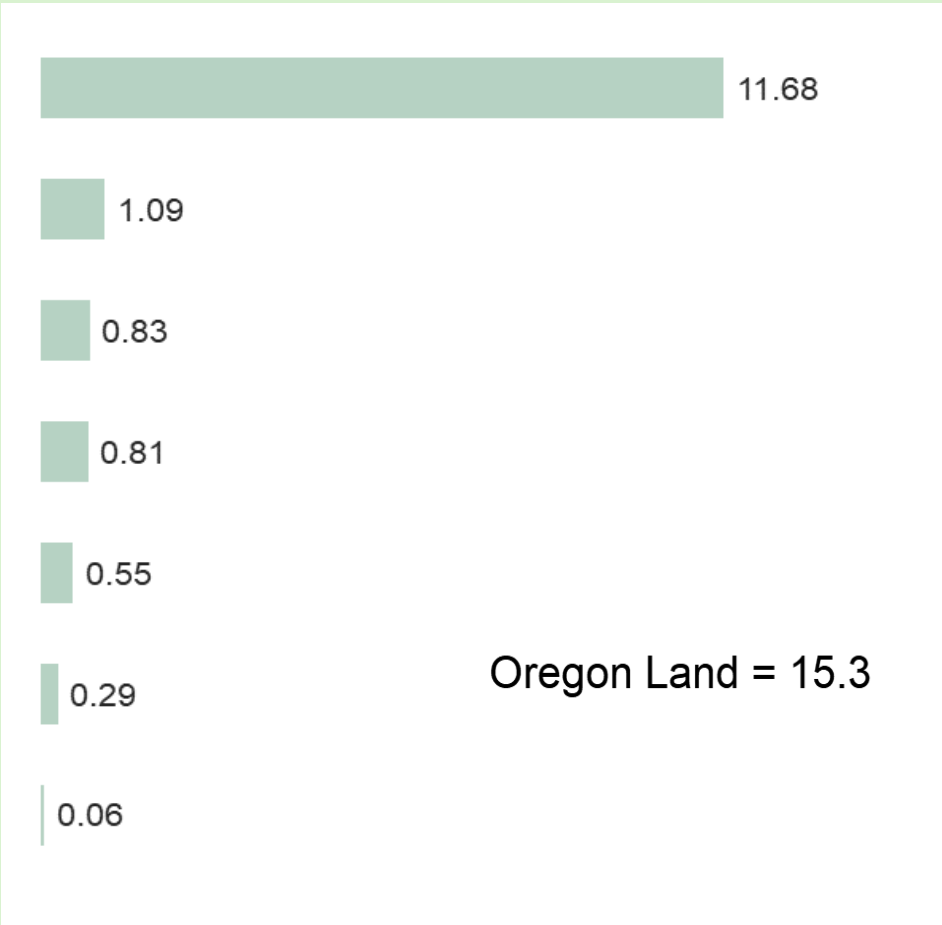


Farms and Land in Farms, by Size Class, 2022

Number of Farms (thousands)



Land in Farms (million acres)



**Estimated
Market
Value of
Land and
Buildings:
Selected
Counties**

Avg. \$/Farm				Avg. \$/Acre		
	2017	2022		2017	2022	
Oregon	1,032,545	1,589,147	+53.9%	2,433	3,693	+51.8%
Baker	1,337,390	2,630,243	+96.7%	1,250	1,942	+55.4%
Benton	821,618	1,268,333	+54.4%	6,438	12,931	+100.8%
Deschutes	786,080	1,253,846	+59.5%	8,867	12,883	+45.3%
Harney	1,996,031	3,934,938	+97.1%	682	1,268	+85.9%
Hood River	685,502	1,025,330	+49.6%	13,926	19,141	+37.4%
Jackson	677,191	1,051,685	+53.3%	8,494	12,421	+46.2%
Jefferson	1,707,699	2,829,728	+65.7%	855	1,816	+112%
Linn	1,292,898	1,894,386	+45.5%	12,367	17,033	+37.8%
Morrow	1,269,551	2,318,652	+82.6%	1,127	2,202	+95.4%
Polk	852,419	1,371,288	+60.9%	7,116	10,255	+44.1%
Sherman	2,349,030	3,279,620	+39.6%	850	1,410	+65.9%
Umatilla	1,430,953	2,249,721	+57.2%	1,824	2,437	+33.6%
Washington	1,020,247	1,577,317	+54.6%	17,099	22,445	+31.3%
Wasco	2,127,529	3,864,528	+81.6%	911	1,809	+98.6%



50 years into the Program

- **EFU land uses: 6 to over 60!**
- **30 - 40 year-old UGBs**
- **Super-siting**
- **Concerns about cumulative impacts**
- **No periodic review**

Replacement Dwellings

“[S]ince 1994, only twenty-two percent of dwelling approvals on land zoned EFU have been approved in conjunction with farm use. More nonfarm dwellings have been approved than dwellings in conjunction with farm use. This is true for the preceding decade as well.”

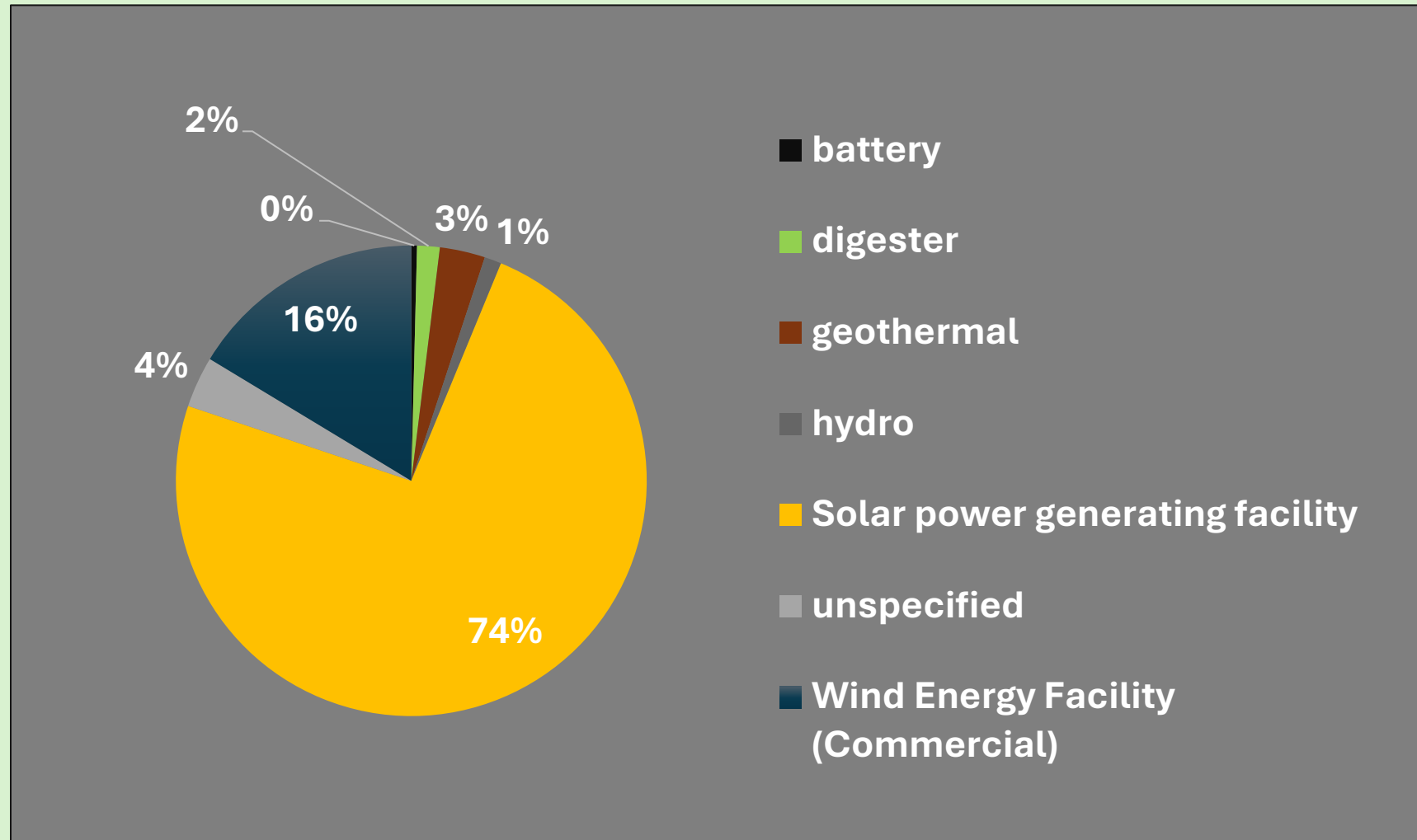
LCDC 2022-2023 Farm Forest Report, Nov. 21 2024, at 46.

36% of the new homes approved in Oregon’s exclusive farm use zone since 1994 were “replacement” dwellings, “which may or may not be associated with a farm.”

LCDC 2022-2023 Farm Forest Report, Nov. 21, 2024 Staff Report, at 4



Local Commercial Power Generating approvals on farm and forest land by type, 2008-2021



**2008 - 2021,
the majority of
power
generation
facilities
approved on
farmland have
been solar
projects.**

EFSC + Local
65,556 acres
102.43 sq. miles



North Unit Irrigation District, Jefferson County

The most commonly approved nonresidential nonfarm use in exclusive farm use zones are “home occupations” for short-term lodging.

DLCD 2020-2021 Farm Forest Report, 17.

Some counties allow luxury hotels that are not the property owner’s home.

“It has been suggested *that clarifying and limiting the definition of Home Occupation in EFU zones would alleviate confusion and uncertainty related to the scope of uses allowed.”**

LCDC 2022-2023 Farm Forest Report, 17.

Unlike provisions for agritourism, current law does not requires that proposed home occupations show any connection to farm use.

Home Occupations



Rezoning of Agricultural Land

The 2009 legislature authorized a process for counties to designate agricultural lands for non-resource use, *but* “counties and landowners have not used this coordinated process.”

See ORS 215.788- 215.794

DLCD 2020-2021 Farm Forest Report, 39.



Proposed Legislation

SB 78: Replacement Dwelling Reform

What it does:

Stops the conversion of agricultural and forest land to luxury residential development through “replacement” dwellings.

Why it matters:

Oregon is losing nearly 300 tracts of farm and forest land every year for high-end residential development in the form of replacement dwellings. (DLCD 2022-2023 Farm & Forest Report)

In addition to taking thousands of acres of resource land out of production each year, the mere opportunity for this type of development drives up ag and forest land prices, making it increasingly difficult for both new and established farmers to locate land they can afford to lease or purchase.

SB 77: Home Occupation Reform

What it does:

Closes the loophole that allows large-scale hospitality and entertainment facilities disguised as “home occupations” on land designated for agricultural and timber production.

Restores the intent of Oregon’s home occupation statute to allow small inconspicuous businesses such as bookkeeping services or small-scale childcare facilities as accessory uses in homes located in farm and forest zones.

SB 77: Home Occupation Reform

Why it matters:

The opportunity to site hotels, restaurants, bars and event venues under the guise of home businesses is driving up land prices beyond the reach of farmers, ranchers and forest land managers. New and aspiring operators are priced out of the market.

SB 73: Spot Zoning Reform

What it does:

Requires local governments to use an existing statutory planning process to rezone agricultural and forest land for residential and industrial development, instead of case-by-case rezonings.

Why it matters:

This case-by-case rezoning is converting thousands of acres of valuable resource land into a crazy quilt of harmful development in the middle of large blocks of resource lands.

The opportunity for speculative development outside the planning process drives up agricultural and forest land prices, introduces expensive and disruptive conflicts for farmers, ranchers and forest land managers, and breaks up the large blocks of resource land Oregon's agricultural and forest economics need to operate.

SB 79: Nonresource Dwelling Reform

Why it matters:

- Oregon counties are approving an average of 697 new houses per year in Oregon's exclusive farm and forest use zones that have no relationship to agricultural or forest management.
- The American Farmland Trust estimates that roughly half of the farmland conversion in Oregon between 2001 and 2016 was due to low-density residential development within exclusive farm use zones. (*Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future*, American Farmland Trust)
- Rural residential sprawl threatens not only our agricultural and forest land base, it also negatively impacts groundwater supplies and critical wildlife habitat and priority connectivity areas.



Hood River County, Oregon

QUESTIONS?

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