

OREGON AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM (OAHP)

Support H.B. 3131 this session!

\$17.3 million in grants for working lands protection

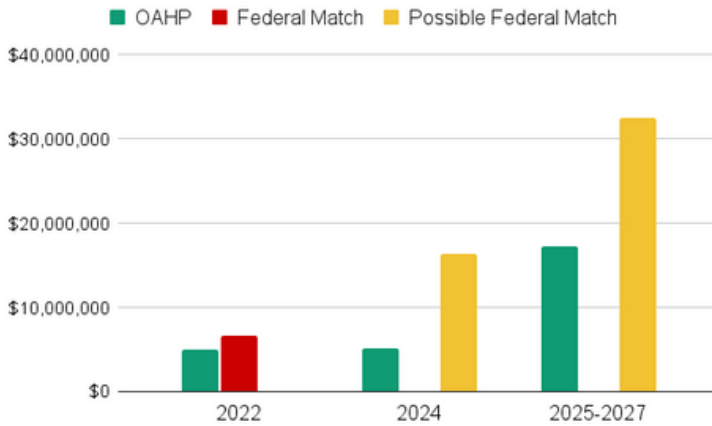


Background of OAHP

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) was created in 2017 by agricultural and conservation organizations and administered by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to:

- **Provide public benefits** of protecting agricultural land from development and keeping it in production, conserving natural resources, and helping next generations afford land.
- **Support climate goals** - farmland produces 58-70 times fewer greenhouse gas emissions than urban land, and provides opportunities for carbon sequestration.
- **Leverage federal dollars**, which are at historic levels. \$5M in 2022 leveraged a 1,100% increase in federal matching funds, and our 2025-2027 projects will leverage \$34M, if funded by the legislature.

OAHP, Federal Match and Possible Federal Match



OAHP's working land conservation easements leverage a 2:1 federal match.

Up to 25 easements across Oregon protecting 38,000 acres are ready for funding. \$14.5M invested in easements in 2025-2027 would **leverage \$32.5M in federal funds.**

OAHP is Protecting Farm and Ranch Land Across Oregon

Oregon farmland is threatened by fragmentation and development. From 2017-2022, **Oregon lost 660,000 acres**, or 4%, of its ag land from production (USDA Census of Agriculture). OAHP stems this tide across the state with approved projects from Columbia to Lake Co.

Year	Farms/Ranches	Acres
2022	7	12,480
2024*	9	10,291
2025-7*	25	38,081
TOTAL	41	60,852

*projected

What is OAHP?

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program is made of 4 grant programs:

1. **Working land conservation easements** - voluntary agreements where landowners sell development rights they don't need, retain ownership, keep the land in production, and make it more affordable
2. **Conservation management plans** and associated activities for 20-50 years
3. **Support for intergenerational farm transfer**, including to first generation producers
4. **Technical assistance** to organizational partners who coordinate this work

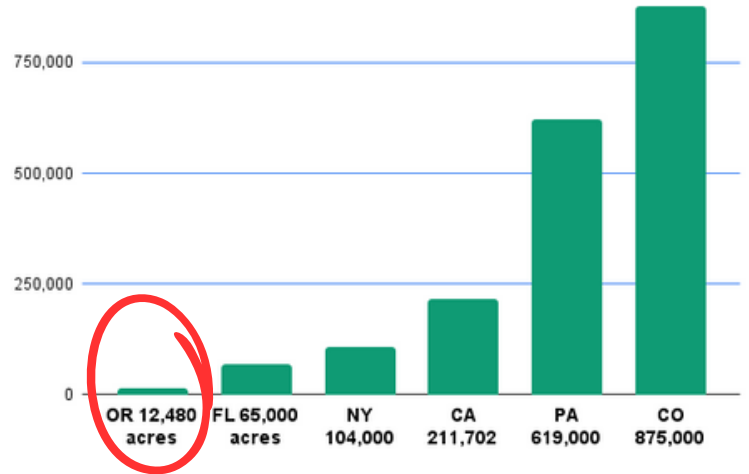
Contact Karsyn Kendrick, COLT's Conservation Program Manager at karsyn@oregonlandtrusts.org

Three Major Benefits of the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

1) Consistently Funded State Easement Programs Attract Federal Dollars

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), added \$1.4 billion in Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP-ALE) funding, which matches working land conservation easements at 50% - 75%. **Oregon has received \$0 in IRA funding for ACEP-ALE so far.** The 27 states with funded match programs are more competitive for these dollars. **And consistently funded state programs attract long-term federal investments.**

Acres protected by state-funded easement match programs



2) Working Land Easements Support Land Access for Disadvantaged Farmers

The average age of Oregon farmer and rancher is near retirement (58.6) and many do not have successors. Meanwhile, young producers find it nearly impossible to afford agricultural land. Working land conservation easements remove development rights, pricing land at agricultural value, and making it **more affordable for diverse and beginning farmers and ranchers.**

“We were finally able to buy land... and the land in Central Oregon is extremely expensive. We went ahead and bought it with the hopes of being able to offset the price with the conservation easement. OAHP is **the** state match [for working land easements]. Most states have something like this and Oregon needs more of it to protect more agricultural land. Our easement is supporting habitat and wildlife conservation and water because it’s keeping it in agriculture and agriculture helps protect those things.”

Sarahlee Lawrence & Ashanti Samuels
of Pitchfork T Ranch



3) Conservation Management Plan Grants Support Habitat, Water, and Climate

Oregon’s nearly 16 million acres of agricultural land also contain habitat, water, and sequester carbon. In 2023, OAHP received **\$750,000 for natural climate solutions** to be implemented through its Conservation Management Plan and Technical Assistance grant programs.

Support H.B. 3131 to fund OAHP at 17.3 million in 2025!