



OREGON  
ASSOCIATION OF  
NURSERIES™



## Farwest Show to celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023

Portland, Oregon (February 8, 2023) — The biggest nursery industry trade show in the West, the Farwest Show, will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this coming August.

The trade show and conference is produced by the Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN) and will take place August 23–25, 2023 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon. It will include special festivities celebrating five decades of making nursery industry connections. Booths are available now, registration will open April 10, and organizers have planned a full slate of seminars and social events. Highlights of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration will include a band, food carts, expanded educational opportunities, and creative ways of recognizing the history of the show and the industry it represents.

“Not many nursery trade shows have lasted five decades, through all the changes in the industry and all the transformations in how sales happen,” said Allan Niemi, OAN director of events, who has served as director of the show since 2008. “Farwest has done it, so we’re going to have a party to celebrate! We are immensely proud of what the show has done for our growers and nursery professionals from all over the country. It has brought people to Oregon where they can see the difference that Nursery Country growers are able to offer.”

The first Farwest took place in 1973 in the exhibition halls at Portland’s Memorial Coliseum arena. “All shows lead to Portland, September 11–13 for the Farwest Nursery, Garden and Supply Show: the biggest, boldest nursery show ever staged in Farwest Country,” trumpeted the August/September 1973 issue of *Digger* magazine.

“It was just an exciting adventure,” said the late Arda Berryhill, a grower and member of the Oregon Nurseries’ Hall of Fame, in the August 2020 issue of *Digger*. “Nothing like it had ever been done. All of us were so excited to see customers from the Midwest and East that [most of us] had never had contact with. It brought us some customers that we’d never seen.”

Turnout at the first show was 120 exhibitors and 1,500 attendees from 27 states and three countries (the U.S., Canada, and the Netherlands). The show was hailed as a success, and the next year, it doubled in size. A few years later, in 1977, the only edition of Farwest to happen outside of Oregon took place at Seattle Center. It was successful, but growers decided they just wanted the show to take place in Oregon.

And why not? Farwest has continued to grow over the years, right along with Oregon's nursery industry. It made the big move to the gleaming new Oregon Convention Center in 1991. The center has since been expanded and Farwest expanded right along with it.

"It sounds corny, but the show came alive," said former Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN) executive director Clayton Hannon in the August 2020 issue of *Digger*.

During the 1990s, Oregon nursery sales doubled from \$299 million in 1990 to \$642 million in 2000, and growth has continued. The Great Recession from 2008–2012 saw sales subside, due to the housing crash, and the show contracted accordingly.

Nursery sales have normalized since then, resuming their prior growth. In 2020, the most recent year tallied, Oregon registered \$1.2 billion in sales, translating to about \$4 per person in the United States. More than three-fourths of Oregon's production is sold out of state, with the majority headed east of the Mississippi River.

"We pride Farwest on being the greenest show in the industry," Niemi said. "Most of our growers are located within a few hours' drive in the Willamette Valley, where the conditions for growing lush and beautiful trees and shrubs are as good as it gets. There's a long growing season, winter cold for dormancy, great soil, adequate water supplies, and growers who just know what they're doing. You can meet them at Farwest and see their plants. It's worth coming to see and experience."

For more information on booths or the show, contact Allan Niemi at [aniemi@oan.org](mailto:aniemi@oan.org) or 503-582-2005.

#### DOWNLOADABLE ASSETS:

- [Farwest Show logo — Oregon state outline](#)
- [Farwest Show logo — wordmark](#)
- [Farwest Show logo — 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary](#)

#### 2023 FARWEST SHOW RELEASES AND ASSETS

- [Farwest Show press room](#)

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The Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN), based in Wilsonville, represents nearly 700 wholesale growers, retailers, landscapers, and suppliers. Oregon's ornamental horticulture industry is one of the state's largest agricultural commodities, with annual sales of \$1.2 billion. Oregon's nursery industry is a traded sector; more than 75% of the nursery plants grown in Oregon are shipped out of state. For information, visit [www.oan.org](http://www.oan.org) or call 503-682-5089.

The Farwest Show, the biggest green industry trade show in the West, will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023! The show is produced by the OAN, a nonprofit organization that represents and serves the interests of Oregon's nursery, retail, and greenhouse industry. Any revenue realized by the OAN is reinvested into the industry through education, research, marketing support and government relations. For more information about the 2023 Farwest Show, visit [www.FarwestShow.com](http://www.FarwestShow.com) or call 503-682-5089.