A field of orange poppies and wheat stalks under a bright sky. The poppies are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The wheat stalks are in the foreground, slightly out of focus. The sky is a soft, bright yellowish-white.

# Cultivating

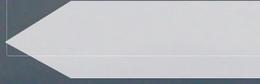
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POLK FARMERS STEP  
FORWARD FOR WATER  
QUALITY STUDY | **PG. 6.**

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# WHO WE ARE



## Oregon State University Extension Service Polk County

The Polk County Office of the Oregon State University Extension Service provides research-based educational information and programs in Agriculture, Forestry, 4-H/Youth and Family and Community Development for the citizens of Polk County.

OSU Extension's mission is to convey research-based knowledge in a way that is useful for people to improve their lives, their homes, and their communities.

### OFFICE LOCATION & HOURS

289 E Ellendale, Suite 301  
Dallas OR 97338 | 503.623.8395  
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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Learn more about OSU Extension events and register by going to [extension.oregonstate.edu/county/polk/events](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/county/polk/events)

## APRIL

**13** - Polk SWCD Board Meeting - 6pm

**13** - OSU Extension District Meeting, 10am, Polk County Courthouse

**20** - Conservation Spotlight on KМУZ Community Radio - 8am & 6pm

**20** - Polk SWCD, Climate Resiliency for Agriculture - 6:00 - 7:15pm

**21** - 4-H Outdoor Explorers - Birds in the Farm & Forest, 6pm, OSU Extension Office

**24** - 4-H Sunday Night Family Dinner - Outdoor Cookery, 5pm, OSU Extension Office

**25** - 4-H Fiber Arts - Cross-stitch class, 6pm, OSU Extension Office

**26** - The Birds of Cornerstone - Polk SWCD, Bird Talk

**28** - 4-H Science Investigation - Science of Propulsion, 6pm, OSU Extension Office

## MAY

**11** - Polk SWCD Board Meeting - 6pm

**11** - OSU Extension District Budget Hearing, 11am, Polk County Courthouse

**18** - Conservation Spotlight on KМУZ Community Radio - 8am & 6pm

**19** - Polk SWCD, Bird Walk at Cornerstone, 9am - 11am

**19** - 4-H Outdoor Explorers - Invertebrates, Butterflies & Bees, 6pm, OSU Extension Office

**23** - 4-H Fiber Arts - Needle Felting class, 6pm, OSU Extension Office

**26** - 4-H Science Investigation - Power of Precipitation, 6pm, OSU Extension Office

**30** - Memorial Day - Offices CLOSED

## JUNE

**08** - Polk SWCD Board Meeting - 6pm

**15** - Polk SWCD hosted - Tour of Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Native Plant Materials Center - 1pm - 3pm

**26** - 4-H Outdoor Explorers - Water Systems, 6pm, OSU Extension Office

**29** - OSU Extension District Budget Adoption, 10am, Polk County Courthouse

# WHO WE ARE



## POLK SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Nearly 3,000 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) across the United States are helping local people conserve land, water, forest, wildlife, and related natural resources. SWCDs are charged with directing programs to protect local renewable natural resources.

Polk SWCD was formed in April 1966, and promotes erosion control, reduction of invasive species, improvements to farms and forests, control of animal waste, as well as improving wildlife habitat and water quality/quantity issues in Polk County. The Polk SWCD is administered by 7 locally elected volunteer directors representing 5 zones and 2 at-large positions within the county. The Polk SWCD is a source of information and education on natural resources.

### OFFICE LOCATION & HOURS

580 Main Street, Suite A  
Dallas OR 97338 | 503.623.9680  
[www.polkswcd.com](http://www.polkswcd.com)  
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**Designed and Published by the  
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**Printed by  
Eagle Web Press | Salem, OR**

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***CULTIVATING*** is a quarterly publication of Oregon State University Polk County Extension Service and Polk Soil And Water Conservation District. Included in these pages, readers can find practical information on farm and forest management, on home and lifestyle choices, and on the many programs and services available through the Service and the District.



# POLK FARMERS STEP FORWARD FOR WATER QUALITY STUDY

By Mitch Lies  
Cultivating Editor

**P**olk County is at the epicenter of a long-term Oregon State University study on water quality and water-use management in agriculture. And that is largely because of the mindset of a few farmers.

The long, ten-year-plus-term project, which started in the Oak Creek Watershed adjacent to OSU campus in Corvallis, expanded to Polk County in 2020 when area farmers approached the Polk Soil and Water Conservation District and OSU Extension about getting involved.

“This whole effort was producer-driven, meaning the producers came to us and said they wanted to improve their water management,” said Derek Godwin, watershed management faculty for OSU Extension, who is co-leading the project. “It is really about them wanting to be good stewards of their land and wanting to enlist the help of OSU Extension and the Polk SWCD in measuring and giving

them information that can help in the long-term management of their resources.”

To date, researchers have installed five soil-moisture-monitoring stations and two weather stations on Polk County farms. The weather stations are providing data on air temperature, precipitation, relative humidity, wind speed and evapotranspiration – information that in conjunction with the soil moisture stations can help in crop management decisions.

In addition, researchers are sampling water quality at 25 locations in the Salt Creek Watershed, an area that includes the Ash Creek Swale. The sampling is providing hourly data on stream and air temperature, as well as monthly measurements of nitrates, sediment, phosphorus and other common soil and plant nutrients that, in excess, could become pollutants.

The study has its origins in legislation passed in 2015 when lawmakers, at the urging of agriculture lobbyists, sought funding to engage in a long-term study

to learn more about agriculture’s effects on water quality in the Willamette Valley. The Oak Creek study started a year later. The Salt Creek Watershed study is now the study’s centerpiece.

Salt Creek is among hundreds of streams and rivers in Oregon that are on the Department of Environmental Quality’s 303d List, a list of water bodies deemed to have conditions that limit their ability to support beneficial uses, such as aquatic life and recreation. And growers in the watershed operate under guidelines put forth in agricultural water quality plans regulated by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. But the growers volunteering to participate in the study have expressed interest in refining plans further and improving their water management, Godwin said.

“This study isn’t about finding extreme pollution problems or bad actors. It is about learning as much as they can to keep their soil, plants and water healthy, and sustain their operations into the future,” Godwin said.



PHOTO BY DEREK GODWIN  
Jackson Morgan, farm specialist for Polk SWCD, collects stream temperature data from Salt Creek as part of a long-term water-quality study in the Polk County watershed.



PHOTO BY DEREK GODWIN  
Jackson Morgan downloads data from a weather station on a Polk County farm.

Another attractive feature of the watershed, Godwin said, is that it is home to an agricultural makeup that is consistent with much of the Willamette Valley’s commercial agriculture, which should provide a truer picture of agriculture’s influence on water use and quality than the Oak Creek Watershed.

“Salt Creek is going to become the new long-term research effort because that is where all the action is,” Godwin said. “That is where all the variety of cropping systems are, and it is more traditional, large-scale farming practices that we are studying.”

Polk County farmer Matt Crawford, one of the project’s cooperators, said he volunteered to participate both to learn what he can do to preserve water quality and to improve irrigation management.

“It would be nice to know what is coming off our property, so we can take the steps to mitigate as best we can,” he said. “Otherwise, without some data, it is hard to know exactly what we are doing right and what we are doing wrong.”

Data from a weather station and a soil moisture station that have been placed on his farm, meanwhile, will be used to

try and improve his irrigation management.

“Currently, we either say, ‘Yeah, it is wet out there,’ or ‘Yeah, it is dry out there,’ but it is more of an intuition on how much rain we’ve got or how little rain we’ve received,” he said. “It would be nice to have some data, so we can actually have some numbers to go off of.”

To date, the irrigation-management portion of the study is further along than the water-quality portion, Godwin said, noting that he plans to start sharing data with the grower-cooperators on irrigation management beginning this spring.

“Our goal is to share the data with the growers as they go about their typical summer irrigation practices, so they can reference how the data describes soil and plant water conditions compared to their historical approaches and understanding of conditions that influence their irrigation decisions,” Godwin said. “The goal is to apply the amount of water the plants need to produce high yields and quality, while minimizing water losses to the air and soil beneath the root zones. It sounds simple, but it is extremely complex. Plus, since the amount of water is

limited, they have to decide when, where and how much to apply and when to save it for later or other crops.”

As of this summer, researchers also will have two years of stream temperature data, as well as some water quality data from the current season for Salt Creek.

“It is pretty exciting right now,” Godwin said. “I mean, even though this big project has been going for five years in Oak Creek producing useful data, we’ve just started to look at water conditions and stream water quality in Salt Creek. I am really excited to work directly with growers rather than just OSU farm land.”

According to Crawford, there are no downsides to participating in the study, and the information that comes out of it could be significant, both in terms of irrigation management and water-quality preservation.

“If we don’t keep our state’s watersheds clean, then we are going to lose the right to use the land,” he said. “So, we have to make sure that we are being good stewards of the land.”

“I think we are,” Crawford added, “but we need to keep striving to be better.”

# OSU Extension helps rebuild wells and septic systems in Otis Community

By Kym Pokorny  
OSU Extension

The Echo Mountain Complex wildfire ignited in Lincoln County on Labor Day weekend in 2020, destroying about 400 homes in and around the Otis community. Hundreds of families were left with no place to live.

Most properties were in unincorporated neighborhoods without access to public water and sewer utilities. Even homes that weren't completely destroyed had damaged wells and septic systems. Without drinking water and functional septic systems residents weren't allowed to return to their homes.

In response, in August 2021, Lincoln County Commissioner Kaety Jacobson contacted Christy Lucas-Woodruff, Oregon State University Extension groundwater protection specialist and outreach coordinator. Jacobson knew Lucas-Woodruff had many years of experience doing educational outreach about domestic wells and septic systems in the Willamette Valley.

Jacobson wanted Lucas-Woodruff's help organizing distribution of \$500,000 from Lincoln County that was to be used for well and septic system repairs and reimbursements for Echo Mountain fire survivors. Lucas-Woodruff was asked to help create a program that would include an application process to distribute the funds as personal reimbursements and contractor payments.

Lucas-Woodruff quickly put together an application form that would help prioritize applicant needs. Some homeowners were uninsured and had made no progress on starting to repair these crucial systems; others were underinsured but had managed to make repairs and would benefit from reimbursement. Utilities such as wells and septic systems are frequently not covered by insurance in disasters like wildfires, but those utilities must be functional before the rebuilding process can begin.

Lucas-Woodruff contacted licensed contractors in the region to see if they were willing to work with the county on a case-by-case basis. Landowners would choose a contractor who agreed to set up quotes, complete the project



PHOTO BY SOILSCIENCE.INFO / CC-BY  
Replacing a septic system is a big task involving soil moving and heavy equipment.

and bill the county directly for the work rather than the homeowners. Lucas-Woodruff built a list of contractors who were willing to participate and shared the list with applicants still in the first stages of rebuilding.

As a result of Lucas-Woodruff's work, 110 applications to the program came in from August through December 2021. Sixty projects were completed with payments totaling \$300,000 for replacements, repairs and reimbursements for septic and well systems. Lincoln County has received an additional legislative promise for \$2.5 million additional funds to continue the program through 2024.



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# FIVE SCENTED PLANTS TO TRY THIS YEAR

*Chose plants with scented leaves to add a little something extra to your garden this summer. Grow them along a path or somewhere you will brush up against them to release the fragrance. Kids will also love trying to guess the different scents!*

## HAVE A FAVORITE SCENTED PLANT THAT DIDN'T MAKE THE LIST?

Let us know on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/OSUPolkCountyMG>

## HAVE GARDENING QUESTIONS?

Please reach out to the Polk County Master Gardener Help Desk [polkmg@oregonstate.edu](mailto:polkmg@oregonstate.edu), 503-623-8395, or look for us at community events this summer!

Photos: (top) pineapple sage, lime scented geranium, creeping thyme, (bottom) chocolate mint, peanut butter tree



## *Pineapple sage*

(*Salvia elegans*)

is a perennial with leaves that smell like pineapple when crushed. It's also a great food source for hummingbirds! It produces tubular red flowers late in the season (August through the first frost) and fills in a gap when other plants have stopped flowering. Plan ahead though; this plant can grow 3-4' wide.



## *Scented geraniums*

(*Pelargonium* spp.)

come in many cultivars with different aromas and have use as both an ornamental and for flavoring dessert recipes. Lovely as container plants with beautiful foliage and flowers. Look for varieties scented as lemon, lime, rose, apple, orange, ginger, mint, apricot, pineapple and others! Geraniums are sensitive to cold so either grow as an annual or bring indoors for the winter.



## *Creeping Thyme*

(*Thymus* spp.)

is a low growing, spreading plant that looks great in rock gardens or when allowed to cascade over retaining walls. Some varieties are also tough enough to be planted between stepping stones or along pathways. When gently crushed it will release a thyme or lemon scent depending on the cultivar. Look for pots of creeping thyme for sale in early spring. They will grow as a mat to fill in an area within a growing season or two.



## *Try unique varieties of mint*

(*Mentha* sp.) like chocolate mint (smells like peppermint patty candies!), orange mint, or even the fuzzy leafed apple mint! All of these can be used in recipes like teas and baked goods. Remember to grow mints in pots to keep them from invading your garden beds.



## *Have space for a tree?*

Why not try *Clerodendrum trichotomum* also known as the Harlequin Glorybower aka the 'Peanut Butter Tree'. The flowers and fruit are stunning. But the reason it gets its name is because of the peanut butter scent given off when the leaves are bruised. The scent isn't for everyone so it might be worth to 'test smell' this one at a nursery before buying!

# Conservation Innovation Grants and the Plant Material Centers

By Marc Bell

Polk Soil & Water Conservation District

It is fitting to close out this series of the various funding and cost share programs that are available through SWCDs and the USDA in Oregon by looking at the NRCS's plant material centers and Conservation Innovation Grants (CIGs). This part of the NRCS's mission is to develop new information and provide on-farm trial opportunities to test new promising cultivating methods, seed mixes, technology advancements and collect data for the public's benefit. CIGs can be used to promote and speed the adoption of new farming, forestry and wildlife habitat management methods at local, state, regional or national levels. Fresh technologies and approaches developed by CIGs are then turned into NRCS policy, technical manuals, guides or references materials, and to provide avenues of access to those new approaches to the wider agricultural community; ultimately leading to enhanced water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat.

Oregon CIG grants have produced a number of tools and knowledge of techniques helping agricultural industries and wildlife habitat managers, including: The Oak Habitat Metrics and User guide – a series of monitoring and evaluation protocols for measuring the health and quality of habitat, which is useful for establishing baseline data or measuring improvements quantifiably for all Oak woodland and savanna land managers. A similar toolset



and documentation were developed to determine where to invest limited resources and how to calculate the ecological impact and improvement associated with the implementation of conservation actions for Sagebrush and Sage Grouse habitats. Both of these grants developed a new tool to evaluate habitat conditions objectively and allow sites to be compared over time and to each other for overall effects. Another CIG funded project developed the document “Best Management Practices for Climate Friendly Nurseries” – the first of its kind in the nation, the project's central goal was to demonstrate how participating nurseries reduce energy, resource inputs and greenhouse gas emissions while achieving greater economic efficiency and profitability. The grant looked at lighting, irrigation, insulation for greenhouses, nutrient use and other elements of nursery management and analyzed costs for each as well.

Applicant eligibility rules do not deviate from other NRCS programs, so individuals, organizations and other non-federal entities can all apply to participate in a CIG grant. National CIG and State run CIG programs are administrated separately but follow similar processes – identifying a natural resource concern, defining a scope, a project timeline not to exceed three years in length, and also transferability and integration with strategy priorities. There are notices for National, On-Farm Trials, and State CIGs as well,

so please come speak with an NRCS staff for more information. Funding for 2022 potential CIGs are due in early May, see more information about CIG grants here: [https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/programs/financial/cig/?cid=nracs142p2\\_044081](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/programs/financial/cig/?cid=nracs142p2_044081)

NRCS also has a number of Plant Material Centers (PMCs) across the country; the closest is not far from the Benton County line, north of Corvallis. The PMCs are uniquely positioned to address local, regional, and national natural resource concerns. For ideas about what kind of resources come out of the Corvallis PMC, a 2021 wrap up report highlights brand new pollinator species seed mixes, effective pollinator enhancements on no-till farms, and has studies underway currently focusing on cover crop species and exploring new forage pasture species meant to increase resilience in the face of climate change. Often CIG grants will leverage work being done at or produced out of the PMCs, but they provide knowledge-based resources and workshops for rural land managers of all types regardless of participation in other USDA programming.

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More information about NRCS's Plant Material Centers can be found here: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/plantmaterials/pmc/>



# Polk County youth help with **NATIVE PLANT HABITAT RESTORATION**

**Morgan Neil**  
Polk Soil & Water Conservation District

Polk County youth help with native plant habitat restoration. The Polk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Dallas Community School (DCS) and Luckiamute Valley Charter School (LVCS) recently partnered to enhance the natural environment in the County. Students from both schools were invited to help put native plants in the ground at Cornerstone, Polk SWCD’s 87-acre conservation easement, located in northcentral Polk County.

Cornerstone is a natural wonderland that provides much needed, permanently protected, high quality habitat. One of the unique qualities of this conservation easement is the variety of habitats there, with the dominant habitat being oak savannah and oak woodland. Pre-

serving the legacy oaks and their associated habitats at Cornerstone is a priority and incorporating recommended native plants will attract and support native and endangered wildlife, such as Fender’s Blue Butterfly.

The students from both schools arrived at Cornerstone in rubber boots with tools in hand – well-prepared to help with the planting! It was evident that many of them had experience with planting because they were able to identify some of the plant species. In all, 161 plants and 15 species of native plants went into the ground, including Oregon Sunshine, Oregon Iris and Large Camas.

Engaging our youth and promoting environmental stewardship is so important for the future of our land. To further support wild habitat restoration, Polk SWCD donated native plants to both schools. The students of DCS will be relocating to a new building and are

currently learning about native plants, soil and pollinators. It was the perfect opportunity to create a native plant demonstration garden in front of the building for the community to see. LVCS students took home plants that will attract pollinators for their garden and support wet prairie restoration.

---

**The fate of the Oregon White Oak is in the hands of the community; 98% of the remaining habitat exists on private land. If you are interested in oak restoration and want to take an active role in their preservation, check out Polk SWCD’s Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The RCPP is open to Polk County residents. Go to [polkswcd.com](http://polkswcd.com) to learn more about the grant opportunity, oak management, native plants and more!**

# Small Farm PROGRAMMING



PHOTO BY HAYLEY WHITE  
Bob Klinger talks with participants about pasture management (above). Participants practicing FAMACHA with sheep (bottom).

Hayley White  
OSU Extension Service

**W**e have been busy bees creating programming for farmers in Polk County!

In December of 2021, we offered a two-part Regenerative Pasture Management series. We featured Dr. Shayan Ghajar, OSU Small Farms Organic Pasture and Forage Specialist, and Jackson Morgan, the Farm Specialist with Polk SWCD. The series was designed for land managers who wanted to learn how to support soil and plant health to improve their pastures.

The Growing Farms Course, which ran from January to March, was for farmers in their first 1 to 5 years of business. Farmers learned the essentials of starting and maintaining a farm business. It was an opportunity for participants to consider all aspects of farming, from setting goals to marketing and everything in between. We offered it as a hybrid course with online modules, in-person classes, and a day of local farm tours.

An exciting event for sheep and goat producers was the Farm Tour & FAMACHA training in Grand Ronde on March 12th. Dr.

Charles Estill, OSU Extension Veterinarian, introduced FAMACHA, a tool for monitoring for signs of internal parasites, and spoke on the importance of reducing parasite resistance. Afterward, we toured the farm of Bob and Piper Klinger. They have been raising sheep for over 50 years and are true farm innovators. We walked through the pasture, toured the lambing barn, and talked about the ins and outs of raising sheep.

Later this spring, we will be offering a webinar series for horse owners. It will be available virtually and is a collaboration with the OSU Small Farms Program in Linn, Benton, and Lane Counties. It will include a variety of horse and land management-related topics.

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Whether you are a current farmer or thinking of starting a farm, we've got programming for you! To stay updated on all that we offer small farms in Polk County, sign up for our newsletters: <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/newsletter/mid-willamette-valley-small-farms-newsletter> <https://www.polkswcd.com/>

## Conservation Spotlight is growing through PARTNERSHIP AT KMUZ



Morgan Neil

Polk Soil & Water Conservation District

**I**f you haven't tuned in yet, be sure to check out Conservation Spotlight - a regular segment of Willamette Wake Up on KMUZ community radio 88.5 & 100.7 FM and streaming at kmuz.org. This is where Marion & Polk SWCD's and OSU's Small Farm program shine a light on partnerships and programs that conserve our beautiful natural resources in the Willamette Valley. Conservation Spotlight illuminates our collective mission of conserving soil, water, and natural resources for urban and agricultural audiences in the Willamette Valley.

KMUZ just celebrated their 10th anniversary of being on air. The hyper-local, community radio station, is all volunteer-run and listener-supported. Melanie Zermer, Executive Producer of Willamette Wake Up stresses the importance of this form of media as an important source for information. She also encourages people to be involved with the radio

station by paying attention to Board elections and considering running themselves.

Conservation Spotlight became a regular segment on KMUZ January of 2021 with Jenny Ammon of Marion SWCD. Melanie says that "she hopes people tune in to understand the issues and the land." She admitted that she didn't know what a Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is, but has enjoyed showcasing their work, so the community understands what services are available to landowners.

Recent episodes featured Sue Reams, Soil Conservationist with NRCS. Sue recently retired. You can listen to Sue talk about conservation planning, soil science and her experience in the field. You can also listen to Rose High Bear of Elderberry Wisdom Farm - a Native American nonprofit corporation created to assist Native Americans as they integrate academics, experiential service-learning activities and cultural and ecological knowledge while creating their own agricultural and horticultural career pathways.

The most recent episode features Andony Melathopoulos, Assistant Professor of Pollinator Health Extension in the Department of Horticulture at Oregon State University. He has over 15 years of experience working together with commercial beekeepers and land managers to develop solutions for keeping bees healthy. Since 2016, he has been leading OSU's efforts to design, implement and evaluate a state-wide pollinator health program. He is on the Coordinating Team of the statewide bee protection initiative, the Oregon Bee Project, and coordinates the Oregon Bee Atlas.

Melanie hopes that Conservation Spotlight and KMUZ empower listeners with more information to take action and be more involved in community and protecting our environment. If you want to listen to Conservation Spotlight live, tune in to 88.5 and 100.7FM the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 8:00am and you can also catch the rebroadcast at 6:00pm. You can also stream live through kmuz.org or listen to the podcast anytime.

By Mitch Lies  
Cultivating Editor

**L**ong-time Polk County Extension supporter and Advisory Committee member Jim Clawson, who died Jan. 7, found great pleasure in contributing to Extension, according to his son Jeff Clawson.

“He just wanted to give back and stay connected in retirement, and that was his way of doing so,” Clawson said. “Pretty much all of his free time was spent serving in one form or another.”

Jim Clawson, who died at Dallas Retirement Center after a short bout with pancreatic cancer, was one of the longest serving members on the Extension Advisory Committee, said Alisha Atha, Polk County Extension Office manager, and was “without a doubt, the committee’s most engaged and active member.”

“He was on our Advisory Committee since the beginning of the Service District,” Atha said, “and before that, he was heavily involved in the Service District formation.” The Service District formed in 2010 after Polk County voters approved a permanent tax rate to fund Extension.

“I would say he was one of the three most instrumental people in getting the Service District launched and passed to maintain stable funding for the Polk County Office,” said Gene Pirelli, emeritus professor of animal science for Polk County Extension, and a long-time friend to Clawson.

Clawson, who retired from UC Davis in 1992 as an Extension specialist in agronomy and range management, also “made a lot of contributions to the education of livestock producers in the area,” Pirelli said. And he was instrumental in helping forge the direction of Extension after the Service District was formed.

“We did a lot of outreach after the district was passed to develop some focus groups to determine what direction people wanted to see the district go, in terms of activities and educational programs,” Pirelli said.

Clawson also served on the statewide Extension Advisory Committee for at least one term, and was one of 26 individuals honored in 2006 with a Diamond Pioneer award for contributions to his community and the state.

Jeff Clawson, pilot research brewery manager for the Department of Food Science

# Long-Time Extension Supporter ‘WANTED TO GIVE BACK’



Long-time OSU Extension supporter Jim Clawson.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

and Technology at OSU, said his father made friends wherever he went.

“We could be in the middle of Utah somewhere and stopping for gas and he could start up a conversation and have a friend in common,” he said. “I saw that happen so many times. He had so many good, close friends.”

Pirelli said he continued to stay in touch with Clawson after Pirelli retired, and, in fact, spoke with Clawson in his final hours.

“It was very difficult,” Pirelli said of the conversation. “I’d never had a conversation like that before. Jim said it is time to say goodbye and we said our goodbyes and we hung up and that was it. He passed away later that day. It was very emotional.”

“He called it,” Jeff Clawson said. “He called me that morning and said, ‘I just wanted to say goodbye. I’ve decided to stop fighting this.’ And by the time I got over there, he had already passed.”

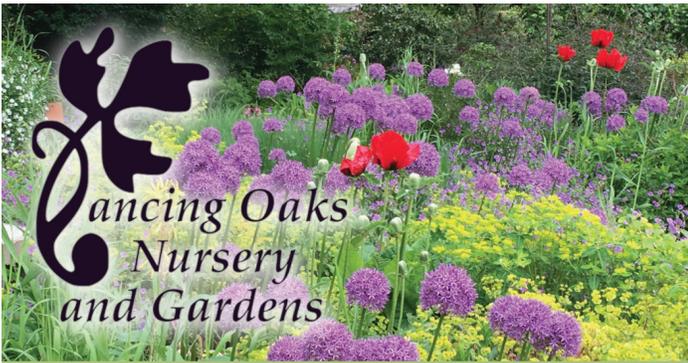
“He was just a month shy of turning 90,” Clawson said, “and he had a really good, full life. And when he decided it was time to go, he went fast.”

Atha said she too spoke to Clawson the morning of his death.

“Gene (Pirelli) and I had been talking about going to visit him, and Gene told me that he didn’t think he was going to last through the day and he encouraged me to give him a call,” Atha said.

“I didn’t think he would answer, but he did, so I got to say thank you, and he talked about how he appreciated my friendship and Extension and the time that we got to work together. It was a short conversation, just a few minutes, but I got a chance to say goodbye, which meant a lot to me,” Atha said.

“I can still hear his voice,” Atha said. “He would come into the office and he always had a huge smile on his face. He will definitely be missed.”



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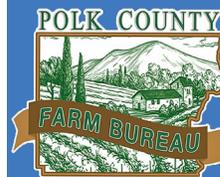
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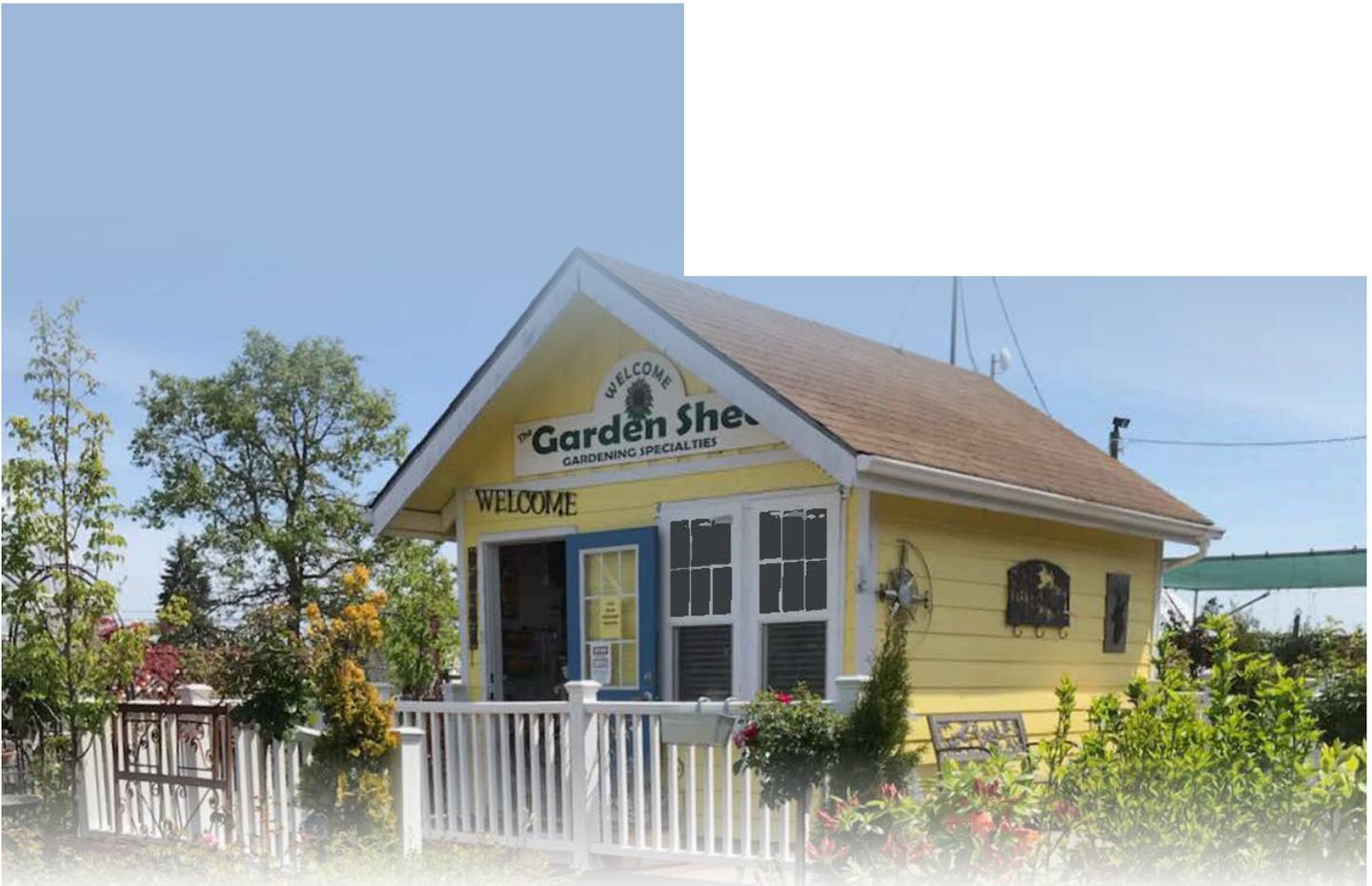
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