



OATA Summer Conference Agenda
Eastern Oregon University
June 23-25, 2026

2026 OATA Summer Conference

Agenda At-A-Glance

Tuesday, June 23

9:00 am - 4:00 pm **Deep Dive Workshops ([info here](#))**

5:15 pm-5:45 pm **Conference Orientation and Social for First-Time Attendees and Early Career Teachers**
(at dinner location - White Barn Estate, 62788 Hunter Road, La Grande, OR 97850)

6:00 – 8:30 pm **Welcome to Conference Dinner and Business Session I**
White Barn Estate, 62788 Hunter Road, La Grande, OR 97850

Wednesday, June 24

7:30 – 7:50 am **Onsite Registration (*attire—teaching*) - David E. Gilbert Event Center**

8:00 - 9:30 am **OATA Business Session II - David E. Gilbert Event Center**

9:45- 10:45 am **Workshop Session I**

- *Animal Welfare and Ethical Decision-Making in Agriculture:* Hailey Zweigart and Cheryll Theal, PCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 109
- *Hands-On Greenhouse/Plant Science: Simple Projects & Guided Practice:* Mitch Coleman - Room: **Zabel Hall (ZH) 202**
- *Surveying in Agriculture and Why it Matters:* Blue Mountain Chapter of the Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 201
- *Finding the "Yes": Writing Compelling Grants for Ag Classrooms, Shops, and FFA Programs:* Jennifer Lookabaugh - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 224
- *Finding Balance in the Chaos:* Nicole Merchant - Room: **Zabel Hall (ZH) 106**
- *From Chaos to Confidence: Organizational Strategies for the Agricultural Education Classroom:* Katie Adams - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 110
- *Agricultural Science Lab Activities:* Joseph Meyer, TBCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 107
- *Q&A With FFA State Staff:* Lee Letsch and Oregon FFA State Staff - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 256

10:50 – 11:50 am **Workshop Session II**

- *Animal Welfare and Ethical Decision-Making in Agriculture:* Hailey Zweigart and Cheryll Theal, PCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 109
- *Woody Plant Identification - Course Structure, Assessment and a Walk Outside:* David Sandrock - PCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 106
- *The Accidental Shop Teacher: A Survival Guide to Teaching Ag Structures:* Amber Arceo-Bigoni - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 110
- *Managing the Journey: State and National Convention Logistics:* Abbey O'Toole and JD Cant - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 201
- *Breeding SAE Projects: Building Student Interest Through Hands-On Learning:* Mackenzie Wille - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 202



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10:50 – 11:50 am Workshop Session II (continued)

- *Using Drone Imagery in Agricultural Education*: Natalie Ramsland and Lorena Nascimento - PCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 104
- *Building Student Buy-In: Helping Students See Where They Fit*: Brooklyn Bush & Dr. Leila Graves - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 224
- *Natural Resources and Environmental Science Lab Activities*: Joseph Meyers, TBCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 107
- *Ag Marketing LDE*: Jared Collins - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 256

12:00 – 1:30 pm Lunch - Ideas Unlimited Presentations and Networking

1:30 - 2:15 pm Committee Meetings Session I

- Ag Ed Outreach and Marketing - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 104
- OATA Advocacy - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 106
- OATA Awards Selection - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 107
- OATA Finance and Budget - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 109
- Oregon FFA CDE Committee - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 110
- Teachers Years 1-2 Session - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 101

2:15 – 4:15 pm Tours (sign up during onsite registration)

- Grande Ronde Model Watershed - 40 people
- Barreto Manufacturing - 40 people
 - 66498 Highway 203 La Grande, OR 97850
- Boise Cascade Elgin Plywood- 20 people
 - 90 S 21st St Ave, Elgin, OR 97827
- Hines Meat Co - 25 people
 - 2315 Jefferson Ave, La Grande, OR 97850
- Northwood Manufacturing - 20 people - STARTS AT 2:15PM
 - 59948 Downs Rd, La Grande, OR 97850
- Eagle Carriage & Machine - 20 people - STARTS AT 2:15PM
 - 62500 Commerce Rd, La Grande, OR 97850

4:15 - 5:30 pm Grande Ronde Goat Dairy/Rovey Family Farms

Whole group tour - all should attend
67733 Hutchison Ln, La Grande, OR 97850

5:30 – 7:00 pm Recreation & Networking

East vs West Softball
EOLS Grounds - 760 E Delta Ave, Union, OR 97883

7:00 - 8:30 pm Dinner & Networking

EOLS Grounds - 760 E Delta Ave, Union, OR 97883



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Thursday, June 25

7:30 - 8:00 am Refreshments - (*attire—teaching*)

8:00 - 9:00 am Business Session III

9:05 - 10:05 am Workshop Session III

- *Beef Quality and Yield Grading: Meat Production Implications for the Producer, Consumer, and Industry:* Kelley Duggan, TVCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 107
- *Disorderly Diagnosis - Identifying Plant Disorders:* Wes Crawford - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 106
- *Small Engines for Ag Educators:* Ellissa Chatfield and Beth Dickenson - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 256
- *Make it a Big Deal: Planning Extraordinary Banquets:* Luke Coomer - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 201
- *Growing Stronger: Fitness tips for Agricultural Educator:* Jared Collins - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 202
- *Basics and Benefits of Dry Farming:* Maria Farinacci, SOCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 109
- *National Chapter Is a Beast—Let's Tame It:* Tess Hall - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 224
- *Parli-Pro Basics:* Sandy McKay - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 110

10:10 - 11:00 am Committee Session II

- OATA Professional Development - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 107
- Mentoring - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 106
- Oregon FFA CDE Committee - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 110
- ~~OATA Finance and Budget (if needed) - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 109~~

11:05-11:55 am Workshop Session IV

- *Beef Quality and Yield Grading: Meat Production Implications for the Producer, Consumer, and Industry:* Kelley Duggan, TVCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 107
- *How do we integrate math into our CTE/Agriculture/Mechanics classes?:* Tim Eggleston - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 256
- *Big Fish in a Little Pond:* Braden Groth - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 106
- *ODE/Program of Study Q&A:* Dr. Reynold Gardner - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 224
- *Digital Agriculture in Your Classroom:* Elaine Swanson, EOU - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 201
- *Basics and Benefits of Dry Farming:* Maria Farinacci, SOCC - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 109
- *From SAE to Success: Building Strong FFA Proficiency Applications and Expanding Student Participation:* Kathy Mayfield & Karie Kelley - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 110
- *Building Student Skills Through Agricultural Communications:* Makenna Hanson-Johnson - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 202
- *Farming Futures: Teaching Mental Health in Your Classroom:* Abby Paul and Emily Kresca - Purdue University - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 104

12:00 - 1:00pm Lunch - Committee reports



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1:05 - 2:05 pm Workshop Session V

- *Anxiety-Easing Animal Science Activities*: Heather Brown - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 106
- *The Hanging Basket Playbook*: Nicole Merchant - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 107
- *The Chapter That Runs Itself... Almost*: Ellery Jones - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 256
- *ODE/Program of Study Q&A*: Dr. Reynold Gardner - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 224
- *Digital Agriculture in Your Classroom*: Elaine Swanson, EOU - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 201
- *Teaching Every Student: Practical Strategies for Diverse Learners*: Brooklyn Bush - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 202
- *Strengthening SAE Success Through the 3 Circle Model*: Kathy Mayfield & Karie Kelley - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 110
- *FFA Resources and The Advisor Google Drive*: Lee Letsch - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 109

2:10 - 3:00pm District Meetings

Blue Mtn - Rm. ZH 104	Mt Hood - Rm. ZH 202	SE OR -Rm. ZH 256
Capital - Rm. ZH 109	Northwest - Rm. ZH 110	SW Oregon - Rm. ZH 219
Central Or - Rm. ZH 201	Lower Willa. - Rm. ZH 104	Umpqua - Rm. Gilbert
Eastern OR - Rm. ZH 106	Snake River - Rm. ZH 224	Upper Willa. Rm. ZH 101

3:05 - 3:35 pm Snapshot Workshop Session VI

- *It Takes a Village: connecting local industry to your classroom*: Teague Teece, OSU - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 106
- *First Impressions, Lasting Impact: Professionalism for Agricultural Educators*: Luke Coomer and Jacob Johnson - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 201
- *From Classroom to Competition: Exploring Resources Developed for Oregon Ag Educators*: Dr. Leila Graves - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 107
- *Every Interaction Matters: From Bias to Belonging*: Allison Meadows - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 202
- *The Accidental Shop Teacher: A Survival Guide to Teaching Ag Structures*: Amber Arceo-Bigoni - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 110

3:05 - 4:30 pm Delta Conference Participant Meeting (Invite Only) - Room: Zabel Hall (ZH) 256

6:00 - 9:00 pm OATA 2026 Awards Banquet

Presbyterian Friendship Center - 1308 Washington Ave, La Grande, OR 97850



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WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Workshop Session I – Wednesday 9:45 - 10:45 a.m.

- *Animal Welfare and Ethical Decision-Making in Agriculture*: Hailey Zweigart and Cheryll Theal - PCC - Explore the “Five Freedoms” framework, humane handling practices, and animal welfare assessment tools. Participants will gain ready-to-use resources, including case studies and student debate activities, to engage learners in ethical decision-making and real-world welfare scenarios.
- *Hands-On Greenhouse/Plant Science: Simple Projects & Guided Practice*: Mitch Coleman - An abridged version of his previously presented Deep Dive. Whether you're new to the greenhouse or looking to refine your skills, this workshop provides a supportive and engaging environment to learn and grow.
- *Surveying in Agriculture and Why it Matters*: Blue Mountain Chapter of the Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon - A quick review of an amazing and relevant agricultural project in Eastern Oregon along with a discussion of suggested changes to the current State Ag Mechanics surveying contest form with the aim of improving scores and helping the contestants succeed in the CDE event.
- *Finding the "Yes": Writing Compelling Grants for Ag Classrooms, Shops, and FFA Programs*: Jennifer Lookabaugh - Learn how to think like a grant reviewer and write proposals that stand out. This session will focus on developing compelling narratives, using school and community data effectively, building strong budgets, and avoiding common mistakes. Participants are encouraged to bring current grant applications for hands-on work time and feedback. Whether you are new to grant writing or looking to improve your success rate, this session will provide practical tools you can immediately apply to support your agricultural education program.
- *Finding Balance in the Chaos*: Nicole Merchant - Teaching, coaching, answering emails, running errands, raising kids, and remembering where you left your coffee—ag teachers do it all. Join in for a fun and relatable conversation on surviving the juggling act of this crazy life we live. Walk away with time-saving tips, organizational hacks, and a few laughs at the chaos we call normal.
- *From Chaos to Confidence: Organizational Strategies for the Agricultural Education Classroom*: Katie Adams - Agricultural educators wear many hats—teacher, FFA advisor, SAE coordinator, event planner, fundraiser, mentor, and more. With so many responsibilities competing for attention, effective organizational systems can be the difference between feeling overwhelmed and feeling confident in your program. Whether you're a first-year teacher or a seasoned educator looking to streamline your systems, organization is key to a successful agricultural education program. This workshop will focus on developing manageable systems for lesson planning, digital file management, classroom organization, and daily preparation. Participants will learn practical strategies that save time, improve consistency, and support student success.
- *Agricultural Science Lab Activities*: Joseph Meyers - TBCC - his workshop will give participants the opportunity to learn about and practice a variety of science-based lab activities related to agricultural sciences. These labs will include instructions and lab sheets that can be incorporated directly into classes. Additionally, we will discuss useful resources to find additional science based free to use activities online
- *Q&A With FFA State Staff*: Lee Letsch and Oregon FFA State Staff - Have questions about Oregon FFA, agricultural education programs, events, policies, awards, applications, or upcoming initiatives? Join members of the Oregon FFA State Staff for an open forum designed to provide answers, clarification, and conversation around the topics that matter most to local agriculture teachers. Bring your questions, share feedback, and engage in discussion with the team that supports agricultural education across the state.



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Workshop Session II – Wednesday 10:50-11:50 a.m.

- *Animal Welfare and Ethical Decision-Making in Agriculture*: Hailey Zweigart and Cheryl Theal - PCC - Explore the “Five Freedoms” framework, humane handling practices, and animal welfare assessment tools. Participants will gain ready-to-use resources, including case studies and student debate activities, to engage learners in ethical decision-making and real-world welfare scenarios.
- *Woody Plant Identification - Course Structure, Assessment and a Walk Outside*: David Sandrock - PCC - In this workshop, I'll present the structure of my woody plant identification classes in the Landscape Technology program at PCC and go over methods for assessing learning. We'll also go outside for a walking tour of some of EOU's trees and a demonstration of teaching plant identification in the field.
- *The Accidental Shop Teacher: A Survival Guide to Teaching Ag Structures*: Amber Arceo-Bigoni - You didn't go to school to be a shop teacher—but somehow you ended up teaching Ag Structures anyway. Whether you're brand new to woodworking, inheriting an existing program, or trying to balance traditional agriculture classes with a shop curriculum, this session will provide practical tools to help you get started. We'll discuss curriculum resources, scope and sequence development, project selection, industry-based content creators, safety considerations, and ways to build student engagement by connecting projects to their interests. Participants will receive ready-to-use resources, examples from a first-year program rebuild, and ideas they can implement immediately in their own classrooms.
- *Managing the Journey: State and National Convention Logistics*: Abbey O'Toole and JD Cant - Successful convention experiences begin long before students board the bus or plane. Join us to discuss strategies, organizational tips, and practical ideas to help make state and national convention trips more successful. Whether you're a new advisor or a seasoned veteran, you'll leave with resources and ideas that can be adapted to fit your program's needs.
- *Breeding SAE Projects: Building Student Interest Through Hands-On Learning*: Mackenzie Wille - Looking for ways to increase student engagement and expand SAE opportunities in your agriculture program? This session will focus on developing and implementing breeding-based SAE projects that spark student interest while teaching valuable animal science and recordkeeping skills. Participants will learn about a breeding SAE project to use in the classroom, including how it is introduced, managed, and connected to SAE development. In addition, attendees will receive practical resources to help launch or enhance their own students breeding SAE projects. Resources will include information on supplies, breeder contacts, project planning tools, management resources, and other materials that can be immediately applied in their programs
- *Building Student Buy-In: Helping Students See Where They Fit*: Brooklyn Bush & Dr. Leila Graves - Students are more likely to engage when they feel they belong. In this interactive workshop, we will explore practical strategies to help students discover their place within the ag program. Through discussion and activities, participants will learn how to connect student interests and strengths to meaningful opportunities, increasing engagement, ownership, and long-term involvement.
- *Natural Resources and Environmental Science Lab Activities*: Joseph Meyers TBCC - This workshop will give participants the opportunity to learn about and practice a variety of science-based lab activities in the area of natural resources and environmental sciences. These labs will include instructions and lab sheets that can be incorporated directly into classes. Additionally, we will discuss useful resources to find additional science-based free to use activities online.
- *Mad Men, Marketing: Reverse engineering marketing in the FFA Classroom and CDE*: Jared Collins - Step into the high-stakes world of 1960s Madison Avenue and discover how to pitch your way to developing your own FFA Marketing team and implementing marketing more in the classroom. This workshop equips agricultural educators with the strategy and creative edge needed to both coach a FFA Marketing team and integrate marketing principles into the daily classroom. Participants will channel their inner Don Draper to master the art of the perfect corporate pitch, market research, and branding strategies that captivate today's consumers. We will also explore how to shake up your curriculum by incorporating highly interactive, fun creative campaigns that will leave your students genuinely hooked. Loosen your tie, and learn how to close the deal in Ag Marketing.



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- *Using Drone Imagery in Agricultural Education: Natalie Ramsland and Lorena Nascimento - PCC* - Learn how drone technology and spatial data can be integrated into high school agriculture classrooms to track crop health, plan irrigation, and map site dimensions. Highlighting a real-world case study at McDaniel High School in Portland, OR, it demonstrates how drone flights can generate high-resolution, dimensionally accurate aerial images (orthomosaics) to plan projects like community orchards. The presentation introduces a structured framework—Capture, Measure, Compare, and Communicate—to guide educators through collecting drone data, building 3D digital elevation models, monitoring environmental changes over time, and sharing their findings via interactive platforms like Agisoft Metashape and ArcGIS Storymaps. Ultimately, PCC provides project templates, resources, and educational software recommendations to help teachers implement these interactive, data-driven geospatial lessons in their own schools.

Workshop Session III – Thursday 9:05 - 10:05 a.m.

- *Beef Quality and Yield Grading: Meat Production Implications for the Producer, Consumer, and Industry: Kelley Duggan - TVCC* - In a hands-on setting, learn how quality and yield grade for beef is calculated, what those grades mean for both the consumer and producer, and how payment on the grid has affected beef production in the United States. Grading labs will occur in a classroom setting that is replicable for those that do not have access to a cooler and hanging carcasses.
- *Disorderly Diagnosis - Identifying Plant Disorders: Wes Crawford* - Does your person have glasses? No! Does your person have long hair? Yes! How does the game "Guess Who" relate to plant disorders? Join us as we explore strategies for engaging students in scientific classification, guiding them through the process of building their own dichotomous keys, and challenging their critical thinking all while keeping learning active and exciting.
- *Small Engines for Ag Educators: Ellissa Chatfield and Beth Dickenson* - Created by ag teachers for ag teachers, this one-hour workshop covers small engine components, basic maintenance, troubleshooting techniques, and effective instructional strategies. Participants will gain practical knowledge and classroom-ready ideas to enhance agricultural mechanics instruction and build confidence teaching small engine concepts.
- *Make it a Big Deal: Planning Extraordinary Banquets: Luke Coomer* - Join us for a collaborative workshop focused on transforming chapter banquets and special events into memorable experiences that celebrate members, engage families, and strengthen stakeholder support. Participants will share and explore programming ideas, event logistics, scripts, and A/V strategies that can elevate any banquet from routine to remarkable.
- *Growing Stronger: Fitness tips for Agricultural Educator: Jared Collins* - As agricultural educators, you spend your days cultivating students into future leaders, but it is equally vital to cultivate your own physical well-being. This workshop highlights the importance of staying fit to meet the demanding physical rigors of Ag education. Participants will learn how to start their fitness journeys and maintain it with our busy teaching schedule. We will map out actionable steps for long-term success. We will be looking at different types of workouts and nutrition, along with looking at other Ag teachers fitness journeys. Join us to discover how prioritizing your health allows you to show up stronger for your students, your program, and yourself.
- *Basics and Benefits of Dry Farming: Maria Farinacci - SOCC* - This workshop introduces high school teachers to the principles and practices of dry farming in Oregon. Participants will learn how crops can be grown successfully with little or no irrigation by using soil moisture conservation techniques and selecting appropriate crop varieties. The workshop will also explore the environmental, economic, and educational benefits of dry farming, including water conservation, resilient agriculture practices in a time where drought is more and more widespread. Teachers will leave with foundational knowledge, classroom ideas, and resources to help students better understand dry farming and its role in Oregon agriculture.
- *National Chapter Is a Beast—Let's Tame It: Tess Hall* - National Chapter is a BEAST, and training students to help is a chore. In this workshop, you will gain knowledge and tools necessary to successfully guide your students through the National FFA Chapter Award application process. You can gain an understanding of the award's structure and tips specific for each of the three main divisions: Growing Leaders, Building Communities, and



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Strengthening Agriculture. We'll break down the application step-by-step, focusing on strategies for documenting and showcasing chapter activities. The workshop will cover how to use existing chapter records, write narratives, and compile a strong application that truly reflects the hard work and accomplishments of the students.

- Parli-Pro Basics: Sandy McKay - his workshop will cover Conduct of Chapter Meetings and Parliamentary Procedure contest basics, including: What kids should be learning from the competition; How to better understand and judge the contest, including proper Scoring & Deductions; Keys to a good team presentation; Training resources. Bring your questions and I will answer them the best that I can!

Workshop Session IV – Thursday 11:05 - 11:55 a.m.

- Beef Quality and Yield Grading: Meat Production Implications for the Producer, Consumer, and Industry: Kelley Duggan - TVCC - In a hands-on setting, learn how quality and yield grade for beef is calculated, what those grades mean for both the consumer and producer, and how payment on the grid has affected beef production in the United States. Grading lab will occur in a classroom setting that is replicable for those that do not have access to a cooler and hanging carcasses.
- How do we integrate math into our CTE/Agriculture/Mechanics classes?: Tim Eggleston - In this hands-on workshop we'll explore some easy ways to incorporate math into a variety of classes, and will leave with several easy to implement activities, as well as resources and ideas for more activities & lessons. I'll also share the curriculum resources, files, & lessons that I gathered and created this past year while teaching a stand-alone Applied CTE Math class.
- Big Fish in a Little Pond: Braden Groth - Teaching agriculture and serving as an FFA Advisor in a small school brings unique opportunities and challenges. This workshop will share practical strategies for building successful classroom instruction, creating meaningful FFA experiences, and strengthening connections with students, parents, and the community. Discover how small school programs can make a big impact
- ODE/Program of Study Q&A: Dr. Reynold Gardner - Get some time with Dr. Reynold Gardner to get all your questions answered regarding ODE, Perkins Funding, Pathways Funding, your Program of Study, and so much more. Your questions drive the workshop!
- Digital Agriculture in Your Classroom: Elaine Swanson - EOU - Agriculture is rapidly becoming one of the most data-driven industries in the world, yet many classrooms are still focused on traditional practices without connecting them to emerging technologies. This session will explore why it is essential to introduce and teach students about artificial intelligence (AI) + data science (digital agriculture) and how these concepts are already shaping modern farming in Oregon. Participants will gain a clear understanding of how AI is used in areas such as irrigation management, crop monitoring, and equipment automation, along with practical, classroom-ready ideas for integrating these topics into existing programs. This session is designed for educators of all experience levels and will emphasize approachable entry points, student engagement strategies, and real-world relevance for rural communities. Attendees will leave with a stronger understanding of how to prepare students for future careers in agriculture by bridging traditional knowledge with emerging technology.
- Basics and Benefits of Dry Farming: Maria Farinacci - SOCC - This workshop introduces high school teachers to the principles and practices of dry farming in Oregon. Participants will learn how crops can be grown successfully with little or no irrigation by using soil moisture conservation techniques and selecting appropriate crop varieties. The workshop will also explore the environmental, economic, and educational benefits of dry farming, including water conservation, resilient agriculture practices in a time where drought is more and more widespread. Teachers will leave with foundational knowledge, classroom ideas, and resources to help students better understand dry farming and its role in Oregon agriculture.



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- *Building Student Skills Through Agricultural Communications: Makenna Hanson-Johnson* - This interactive workshop will provide agriculture teachers with practical strategies, classroom activities, and ready-to-use resources that develop students' writing, design, social media, broadcasting, teamwork, and critical-thinking skills while preparing them for the Agricultural Communications Career Development Event (CDE). Participants will experience portions of an Agricultural Communications CDE challenge, explore ways to integrate communications projects into existing agriculture courses, and leave with lesson ideas, assessment tools, and a framework for building a successful Ag Communications team. Whether you are new to the event or looking to strengthen an existing program, this session will provide actionable tools that can be implemented immediately.
- *From SAE to Success: Building Strong FFA Proficiency Applications and Expanding Student Participation: Kathy Mayfield & Karie Kelley* - FFA proficiency applications are one of the best tools available for validating the skills, knowledge, and experiences students gain through their SAE programs. Yet many qualified students never apply because teachers are unsure how to identify opportunities, organize records, or guide students through the process. This hands-on workshop will help agricultural educators increase both the quality and quantity of student proficiency applications. Participants will learn how to identify the most appropriate proficiency award area for a student's SAE, structure experiences and records in AET to effectively showcase student growth, and coach students to write strong responses that maximize scoring potential. We'll also discuss strategies for creating a culture where proficiency applications become a natural extension of SAE programs and a way to recognize and validate student achievement. Teachers are encouraged to bring a current or prospective student SAE project to use as a working example. By the end of the session, you'll have a plan for setting up that project for future proficiency success while identifying additional students who could benefit from participating in the proficiency award process.

Bring: A student SAE project (current or future) that you would like to develop into a competitive proficiency application. Leave with practical tools, resources, and an action plan to help more students showcase their accomplishments through the FFA proficiency award system.

- *Farming Futures: Teaching Mental Health in Your Classroom: Abby Paul and Emily Kresca - Purdue University* - This session will debut a new online training preparing you to teach mental health for rural youth in your classroom. Not all mental health programs are created equal, and this grab-and-go lesson focuses on the specific stressors in agriculture that touch farm families and rural youth. Prepare yourself and your students for the challenges they face everyday.



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Workshop Session V – Thursday 1:05 - 2:05 p.m.

- *Anxiety-Easing Animal Science Activities: Heather Brown* - How can you make Animal Science fun and engaging if you don't have access to live animals?! Join us for engaging activities you can add to your Breeds Identification, Reproduction, Digestion, Poultry, and Animal Health units. Whether you have the resources to have animals on campus or not, these activities will add value to your already existing units in the Animal Science classroom and have your students hooked to learn more!
- *The Hanging Basket Playbook: Nicole Merchant* - Are you ready for a hands-on workshop packed with proven tips and tricks for creating stunning hanging baskets that customers can't resist. Learn how Baker FFA designs and grows baskets that sell, explore successful basket recipes, and discover practical techniques for maximizing basket quality and visual appeal. Leave with practical resources, fresh ideas, and answers to your greenhouse questions.
- *The Chapter That Runs Itself... Almost: Ellery Jones* - Tired of feeling like you're the event planner, recruiter, fundraiser, communications director, and chapter president all at once? Discover how student-run committees can transform your chapter by increasing member involvement, developing leadership beyond the officer team, and taking tasks off your plate. Walk away with practical committee structures, meeting strategies, and ready-to-use ideas that will help your students take ownership while you focus on guiding, not doing, everything. Because the best chapters aren't advisor run; they're student led.
- *ODE/Program of Study Q&A: Dr. Reynold Gardner* - Get some time with Dr. Reynold Gardner to get all your questions answered regarding ODE, Perkins Funding, Pathways Funding, your Program of Study, and so much more. Your questions drive the workshop!
- *Digital Agriculture in Your Classroom: Elaine Swanson - EOU* - Agriculture is rapidly becoming one of the most data-driven industries in the world, yet many classrooms are still focused on traditional practices without connecting them to emerging technologies. This session will explore why it is essential to introduce and teach students about artificial intelligence (AI) + data science (digital agriculture) and how these concepts are already shaping modern farming in Oregon. Participants will gain a clear understanding of how AI is used in areas such as irrigation management, crop monitoring, and equipment automation, along with practical, classroom-ready ideas for integrating these topics into existing programs. This session is designed for educators of all experience levels and will emphasize approachable entry points, student engagement strategies, and real-world relevance for rural communities. Attendees will leave with a stronger understanding of how to prepare students for future careers in agriculture by bridging traditional knowledge with emerging technology.
- *Teaching Every Student: Practical Strategies for Diverse Learners: Brooklyn Bush* - Students learn in different ways, and effective teachers use a variety of instructional techniques to help every student succeed. In this interactive workshop, participants will explore common learning styles and discover practical strategies that support visual, auditory, reading/writing, kinesthetic, social, and independent learners. Teachers will leave with simple, ready-to-use techniques that increase engagement, improve understanding, and make lessons more accessible without requiring additional lesson planning.
- *Strengthening SAE Success Through the 3 Circle Model: Kathy Mayfield & Karie Kelley* - Whether you're supporting beginner exhibitors or refining advanced projects, this workshop will equip you with the tools and knowledge needed to elevate student success across all stages of their SAE livestock projects.
- *FFA Resources and The Drive: Lee Letsch* - Explore the resources available to Oregon agriculture teachers through the Oregon Ag Teacher Advisor Google Drive and The Agricultural Experience Tracker (AET). This session will provide an overview of key tools, templates, curriculum resources, reports, and management features designed to support classroom instruction, FFA operations, and agricultural education program success. Participants will gain a better understanding of available resources and how to effectively access and utilize them throughout the year.



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Snapshot Session I – Thursday 3:05 - 3:35 p.m.

- *It Takes a Village: connecting local industry to your classroom:* Teague Teece, OSU - In this snapshot, we will explore industry connections in your local area that can offer expertise aligned with your classroom content. At the conclusion you will have an email drafted and ready to send to start coordinating a guest speaker or an industry tour.
- *First Impressions, Lasting Impact: Professionalism for Agricultural Educators:* Luke Coomer and Scott Jacobson - Whether you're fresh out of college or entering the classroom from industry, establishing professional credibility is essential to long-term success. This session will explore practical strategies for presenting yourself as a professional agricultural educator through appropriate dress, communication, conduct, and relationship-building. Participants will leave with actionable ideas for earning respect, building trust with students and stakeholders, and creating a positive professional reputation from day one.
- *From Classroom to Competition: Exploring Resources Developed for Oregon Ag Educators:* Dr. Leila Graves - Whether you're a new teacher looking for ready-to-use materials or a veteran advisor searching for fresh ideas, this snapshot workshop will showcase practical tools designed specifically for Oregon agriculture educators. Advisors will also have an opportunity to preview, explore, and share feedback on the new Intro to Agriculture & FFA Curriculum currently under development. Come explore the growing collection of Oregon-developed agriculture education resources designed to support your classroom and prepare your students for success in CDEs.
- *Every Interaction Matters: From Bias to Belonging:* Allison Meadows - Every interaction in the classroom communicates a message about belonging. From a greeting at the door to responding to a challenging comment, educators have countless opportunities to foster engagement, build trust, and create inclusive learning environments. We will reflect on how personal perspectives influence daily interactions, practice responding to bias with confidence, and leave with simple, actionable strategies that help every student feel seen, heard, and valued.
- *The Accidental Shop Teacher: A Survival Guide to Teaching Ag Structures:* Amber Arceo-Bigoni - A shortened version of the full length workshop. You didn't go to school to be a shop teacher—but somehow you ended up teaching Ag Structures anyway. Whether you're brand new to woodworking, inheriting an existing program, or trying to balance traditional agriculture classes with a shop curriculum, this session will provide practical tools to help you get started. We'll discuss curriculum resources, scope and sequence development, project selection, industry-based content creators, safety considerations, and ways to build student engagement by connecting projects to their interests. Participants will receive ready-to-use resources, examples from a first-year program rebuild, and ideas they can implement immediately in their own classrooms.

Committee Meetings

If you are not already assigned to one of these committees, prepare to choose one, or talk to your district advisor about committee assignments. All committees report out at lunch on Thursday.

- Ag/Ed Outreach and Marketing
- Mentoring
- OATA Advocacy Team
- OATA Awards Selection
- Oregon FFA CDE Committee
- OATA Finance & Budget
- OATA Professional Development
- POS/Ag Portfolio