

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Farm Bureau celebrates National Ag Day

Salem — American agriculture is responsible for providing the necessities of everyday life...food, fiber, and clothing. That's the message of National Ag Day, which is celebrated today, March 20, 2006. Farm Bureaus, other ag organizations, producers, corporations, universities, government agencies, and countless others across America will gather to celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture on this first day of spring.

In recognition of National Ag Day, Oregon Farm Bureau Women's Advisory Council Chair Anne Rigor visited the state Capitol to give a basket of ag products and information to Governor Ted Kulongoski, Speaker of the House Karen Minnis, and Senate President Peter Courtney. (Digital photos of the Capitol visit are available on request.)

The Agriculture Council of America, organizers of National Ag Day, and Oregon Farm Bureau believe that every American should understand how our food and fiber are produced, as well as should value the essential role agriculture plays in maintaining a strong economy and in providing almost everything we eat, use, and wear on a daily basis. The National Ag Day program is committed to increasing public awareness about American agriculture.

### Some facts about agriculture:

- In fact, one farmer now supplies food for about 129 people in the United States and abroad compared with just 25.8 people in 1960. *Source: The Agriculture Council of America*
- More than 15 percent of the U.S. population is employed in farm or farm-related jobs, including production agriculture, farm inputs, processing, marketing, and wholesale and retail sales. *Source: The Agriculture Council of America*
- Americans only spend 10% of their disposable income on food, making it the most affordable in the world. In France, people spend 18%; United Kingdom, 22%; Japan, 26%; and India, 51%. *Source: American Farm Bureau Federation & USDA*
- Farmers and ranchers receive only 19 cents out of every dollar spend on food eaten in and out of the home. The rest of the money goes to processing, distributing, wholesaling, and retailing. *Source: American Farm Bureau Federation & USDA*
- Plant and animal byproducts raised by U.S. farmers and ranchers are use to make everyday items like shampoo, soap, cosmetics, lotions, fingernail polish, and toothpaste. *Source: American Farm Bureau Federation & USDA*

- About 93% of farms in Oregon are individually or family-owned. The vast majority of farms in America are not large factory farms. *Source: Oregon Department of Agriculture*
- An estimated 1,800 family farm operations in Oregon have been in business for more than a century. *Source: Oregon Department of Agriculture*
- About 80% of Oregon's agricultural production leaves the state, with about 40% (\$754 million in 2004) leaving the country. *Source: Oregon Department of Agriculture*
- There are 40,033 farms in Oregon with an average size of 427 acres. *Source: 2002 US Ag Census*
- There were 236,269 farms operated by women in the United States in 2002, a 12.6% increase from 1997. *Source: 2002 US Ag Census*
- In 2002, the average age of a farmer was 55. *Source: 2002 US Ag Census*

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For more information or digital photos of OFB's visit to the Capitol to celebrate National Ag Day, contact Anne Marie Moss, 503-399-1701, [annemarie@oregonfb.org](mailto:annemarie@oregonfb.org).

For more general information about National Ag Day, contact the Agriculture Council of America at (913) 491-1895 or visit <http://www.agday.org>.

*Oregon Farm Bureau is Oregon's largest agricultural advocacy organization. Founded as a statewide, voluntary membership organization in 1932 and with county roots dating to 1919, Oregon Farm Bureau today represents over 8,500 Oregon farm and ranch families.*