

# MEET THE LEADER

The voices of Oregon's nursery industry



PHOTO BY VIC PANICHKUL

## WHAT'S YOUR BACKGROUND?

University of Oregon, IBM, graduate school in fine arts, lots and lots of nursery work.

## YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE?

My parents spent their whole life savings to buy the first 20 acres in Troutdale. They didn't have equipment, so the first crop was planted by hand. There weren't any other nurseries on that street back then, and the local farmers thought Dad was a little crazy. But he saw something there with real potential, and no one but him to do it, so he found a way. If you put your whole heart and mind into something and are willing to do the work, you can accomplish anything.

## BEST BUSINESS DECISION?

Having a cohesive team is critical to our success. I have spent years looking for the best people to fill key roles, and have elected many times to pull double duty and do the work myself rather than bring someone on board who isn't a good fit. I prefer to collaborate on our major initiatives, so talent is important. The team we have in place now is already taking Countryside to the next level. >>

## Adam Farley

**President**

*Countryside Nursery*

**OAN Member**

*Since 1986*

**2017-Present**

Container grower representative

OAN Board of Directors

**2017-2018**

Past president of the Clackamas Chapter

**More than 40 years**

Farwest Show exhibitor

## Meet the leader

### HARDEST BUSINESS DECISION?

We acquired Countryside in 1993, and for the next 20 plus years Fairdale and Countryside operated more or less as separate entities with some overlap in the front office. As the Great Recession hit and the businesses became more integrated, it was clear that our survival depended on realigning our resources to match the climate we were in and the way we were doing business. We are a more streamlined operation now, but getting there was painful — and necessary.

### MOST SIGNIFICANT MENTOR?

My dad, Jim Farley. I think about him every day and feel like I can hear him talking me through most of the situations we encounter. If I handle anything right,

it's because of the things he taught me growing up.

### BEST BUSINESS ADVICE?

When two people do business, both should be better off afterward.

### WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT THE NURSERY INDUSTRY?

The people, no question. I left a lucrative career in high-tech because I wanted to reconnect with a community where the people are honest and direct, and the standards haven't changed.

### YOUR GREATEST CHALLENGE?

Right now, it's not having enough plants to sell. But in general, I would say it's that we need to expand our operation. That is not something I have encountered

yet in my career so I will have lots of new things to learn in that process.

### WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GO TO WORK EVERY DAY?

It's easy to go to work and see all the progress my team is making on a daily, weekly, monthly basis. I am very excited about the future of Countryside and it's my good fortune to move forward with some of the best people in this industry.

### WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

If I have managed to meet the expectations of the generation that came before us, life-long friends and mentors to our family and people whose example was a guiding light my whole life, well then I would feel like I have accomplished something. ☺

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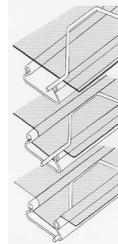
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