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The short and long game

February is here! The shortest month of the year still packs a big punch.

Scrambling to finish our winter grafting, harvesting spring orders, and trying to keep up on our current short Oregon legislative session makes for an exciting February here at Columbia Nursery, as well as for many of my fellow members, I am sure.

Propagation is front and center for us right now. It is always exciting to see all the new “babies” in the greenhouse, as my kids call them. And for some reason, cutting and cleaning scion wood seem to be one of their favorite jobs at the nursery all year.

I am not complaining. I will take all the free help I can get before they get bored!

The slow process of filling our greenhouse with all of the grafts is something almost promising and hopeful for the future. Without a doubt, one of our biggest discussions every year is what varieties we will be propagating and the numbers we want to see. Do we expand varieties and increase numbers? Or should we be a little more conservative this year? Who knows what the future will bring?

It's not as simple as just repeating what we did before. Successful businesses always take the risk and hit that “jack-pot.” But who knows what a customer (or homeowner) may want in three, five, or even 10 years. That is what we are creating now, and I don't know of anyone who has a crystal ball to see what will be popular in the future.

Aside from knowing what customers may want is trying to figure out what our economy is going to do. With an election year right around the corner, many things are possible. I keep going back and looking at all of those new “babies” and choose to remain hopeful. It's a gamble in a very long game, but one I am still willing to play.

February is also the beginning of our short legislative session here this year.



Amanda Staehely

With the anticipated end date of March 10, February is the most important month in our capital this year. Many of us are also hoping to see some legislative amendments to some (frankly) poor and detrimental legislation passed in prior sessions. Or maybe just no more new ones? I would be happy enough with that.

On the forefront is a possible change to Measure 110, the bill that decriminalized hard drugs. I am hopeful that we will also at least begin the conversation on agricultural overtime.

I truly believe that one of the greatest assets of our association and our largest benefit to our members is our advocacy and lobbying. I believe that most legislation that is harmful to our businesses is passed solely because of lack of knowledge and understanding from people making those decisions. Therefore, my goal is to just be available to legislators and to answer truthfully what is affecting my ability to do business here in Oregon whenever it is possible. I would ask the same of all of you.

Our businesses and needs are undoubtedly different, but I feel most (if not all) of us share the same desire to see legislative changes made to some of those measures put in place recently. It's important to stay alert in case there is a need to write in or call your representative this month.

Again, that crystal ball would be nice, but I still choose to remain hopeful for this legislative session. I am ready to see what this short session and short month bring to all of us. ☺

Amanda Staehely