

The numbers confirm what we already know

Oregon has always known how to grow things. From the misty valleys of the Willamette to the volcanic soils east of the Cascades, our state has built a reputation for cultivation.

But new data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture makes something unmistakably clear: Oregon isn't just good at growing nursery crops — we are the best in the nation.

According to newly released figures compiled by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Oregon is the top producer of nursery stock in the United States and the third-largest grower of horticultural specialty crops overall.

In 2024 alone, Oregon growers sold \$1.3 billion in horticultural specialty crops. Of that, an astonishing \$889 million came from nursery stock — the woody backbone of landscapes across America. Those numbers place Oregon firmly ahead of traditional agricultural heavyweights like California (\$708 million in nursery stock sales), Florida (\$679 million), Texas (\$259 million), and New Jersey (\$244.7 million).

Growing elite plant material is not a quick, turn-and-burn enterprise. Years of care, investment and technical skills are required. It takes careful water management, pest control, pruning, grafting and long-term planning. And at these, Oregon growers excel across the board.

The numbers tell a remarkable story of excellence. Oregon ranks No. 1 nationally in sales of conifers at \$233.3 million, commanding 27% of the U.S. market. For deciduous shade trees, we lead again with \$197.9 million — 24% market share. In deciduous shrubs, Oregon growers account for \$149.6 million in sales, or 18% of the national total. Flowering trees? Once again, No. 1, with \$86.8 million and 20% market share.

That level of across-the-board leader-

ship isn't accidental. It reflects decades of infrastructure development, generational knowledge, research partnerships, and market relationships that extend from local garden centers to national retailers and landscape contractors.

And of course, no discussion of Oregon's nursery leadership would be complete without mentioning Christmas trees. Oregon is the top grower of Christmas trees in the United States, with \$119.2 million in sales — 25% of the national market.

While we dominate many categories, Oregon also holds strong positions in others. We rank second in broadleaf evergreens with \$105.2 million in sales, just behind Florida. We are third in fruit and nut plants at \$71.7 million, trailing California and Washington. In ornamental grasses, Oregon ranks fourth with \$8.4 million in sales, behind Florida, California and Texas.

Taken together, these figures confirm what industry insiders have long known: Oregon is not a niche producer. We are a diversified horticultural powerhouse.

When looking at horticultural specialty crops overall, there is a broader category that includes nursery stock, Christmas trees, bedding plants, potted plants, cut flowers, food crops grown under protection and other specialty products — Oregon stands third nationally. Only California (\$3 billion) and Florida (\$2.2 billion) exceed Oregon's \$1.3 billion total. Our friends in Pennsylvania (\$1.20 billion) and Texas (\$1.12 billion) round out the top five.

This leadership has tangible economic impact. The nursery industry supports tens of thousands of family-wage jobs in rural and suburban communities across the state. It drives exports, supports trucking and logistics sectors, and sustains allied businesses from irrigation suppliers to equipment manufacturers. It keeps farmland in production and strengthens local tax bases. But beyond the numbers lies something even more significant: reputation.

Oregon-grown plants are known for quality, vigor and performance. Buyers trust them. Landscapers specify them. Retailers promote them. That trust is built



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on consistency and innovation. Our growers invest in improved cultivars, sustainable practices, water conservation technologies and integrated pest management systems. They adapt to changing climate conditions and shifting consumer demand.

There are still storm clouds ahead. Oregon growers face rising input costs, labor challenges, regulatory pressures and market fluctuations. Yet year after year, they innovate and compete. In an era when many agricultural sectors struggle with volatility, Oregon's nursery industry demonstrates stability and strategic growth. It blends science and stewardship, tradition and technology. It proves that agriculture can be both environmentally responsible and economically powerful.

The latest USDA figures do more than validate past success; they point toward future opportunity. Demand for trees and shrubs is rising as communities invest in urban forestry, climate resilience and green infrastructure. Consumers increasingly value landscapes that provide shade, habitat and beauty. Oregon growers are well positioned to meet that demand.

Leadership brings responsibility. Maintaining our No. 1 ranking will require continued investment in research, workforce development, water infrastructure and trade access. It will require policymakers to recognize horticulture as a cornerstone of Oregon agriculture, not an afterthought. But if history is any guide, Oregon's nursery industry is up to the challenge.

Oregon's growers shape the American landscape — literally.

Oregon doesn't just grow plants. We grow the nation's landscapes. ©