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Organically Grown in Oregon Week Showcases the State's Farmers and Food Activities in the Willamette and Rogue River Valleys Range from Farm Tours to Contests

SALEM, Ore. – August 31, 2009 - September 14 to 20, 2009, marks *Organically Grown in Oregon Week*, a tradition that began in 1988 to celebrate Oregon's organic industry and recognize the leaders of the movement. To introduce Oregonians to the state's riches, a selection of organic farms, retailers, certifiers and farmers markets have lined up a slate of educational, family-friendly activities that will provide firsthand experiences with exposure to the cornucopia of delicious, healthful foods produced by the local organic community.

Portland area activities highlight the region's organic abundance

The Willamette Valley has long been recognized as one of the nation's richest organic agricultural centers. Lucky for Portlanders, *Organically Grown in Oregon Week* offers a variety of ways for the public to explore the region's lush offerings:

Fall Soil Building Workshop - Thursday, September 17, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Experts from Oregon Tilth will lead a class on building good soil tilth using inexpensive or free local materials. Explore various mulching methods for different applications including rejuvenating depleted soils, winter weed control and starting a garden from scratch. Learn how to use winter cover crops to build healthy soil, conserve nutrients, and suppress winter weeds. For more information on cost and location, or to register, visit www.tilth.org.

Portland Food Co-Ops Host Tour of Hood River Farms - Sunday, September 20, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

People's Food Co-op and Food Front Co-op are partnering to offer a daylong tour of organic and biodynamic farms in the Hood River area. First, participants will arrive at the 30-acre Columbia Blossom Farm and Orchard, growers of stone and vine fruits, including the farm's famous organic peaches. Next, at Mt. Hood Organics, guests will learn about biodynamic apple and pear farming and enjoy a seasonal organic lunch. The final stop is Hood River Organics, the region's premier producer of crimini and portabello mushrooms. For more information and to buy farm tour tickets, visit People's Food Co-op or either Food Front Co-Op location.

New Seasons Market Invites Shoppers to Taste, Explore and Win - September 14-20

Locally owned New Seasons Market will honor Oregon's family of organic growers and food companies all week long with daily in-store samplings of organic produce and products in all nine store locations. Kids can join an in-store scavenger hunt to find Oregon-grown organic foods in the aisles. Pick-up a list of organic treasures to hunt for at the Solutions Desk, located in each

store. Adult shoppers can enter to win a free shopping basket loaded exclusively with locally produced, organic fruits, cheeses, artisan foods and pantry staples.

Activities to Celebrate the Organic Riches of the Rogue River Valley

Explore Southern Oregon's organic offerings by participating in the plethora of activities scheduled in Medford, Ashland and Grants Pass. Below are a few of those taking place in and around the Rogue River Valley. These events are designed to increase awareness of organic food sources and to challenge eaters to become active in the local food movement. For more information about any of these activities, visit www.ashlandfood.coop or call 541-482-6431

Eat Local and Organic Festival - Saturday, September 12, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Ashland Food Co-op will kick off its Eat Local Challenge with fun and educational events to celebrate local, organic foods. Festival-goers can taste Port Orford fish tacos made with local and organic wheat tortillas and topped with local, organic heirloom tomato salsa, listen to live music and sign-up for other food focused events offered throughout the week.

Local Meal Solutions and Tastings – Week of September 14 - 20, Tuesday and Thursday, 4 p.m. to 6 pm, Saturday 3 p.m. to 5 pm

Visit the Ashland Food Co-op to taste dishes made with ingredients grown or produced within 200 miles of the Rogue Valley. Collect free recipes that feature local bounty and incorporate local foods into meals from season to season.

The Farm and Vineyard Tour - Saturday, September 19, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Tour organic farms and vineyards in the beautiful Applegate Valley, including Whistling Duck, Barking Moon and Troon Vineyard, where participants will enjoy a food and wine extravaganza featuring five flights of wine paired with a sumptuous meal. The afternoon ends with a wine tasting at Wooldridge Winery. Motor coach transportation will be provided and space is limited to 30 people. Register for the tour online at www.ashlandfood.coop or in person at the Ashland Co-op's Information Desk.

Documentary Film: *Ingredients: Who's Your Farmer?*

Wednesday, September 16, 7 p.m., Club Northwest, 2160 NW Vine St., Grants Pass

Friday, September 18, 7 p.m., Medford Library, 205 South Central Ave., Medford

This powerful film demonstrates how America's local food movement is providing solutions to the myriad problems inherent inside our present industrial food system. The film pays tribute to some of Oregon's many innovators.

About Oregon Organic Coalition

The [Oregon Organic Coalition](http://www.oregonorganiccoalition.org) (OOC) was formed in 2005 to advance the development and growth of the state's organic agricultural community and trade. OOC brings together representatives of the organic trade as the stakeholders of the organic food system. Together, they support research on organic systems at Oregon State University, advocacy, alliances with like-minded groups, marketing programs and conferences, and provide direction and endorsements for activities that promote Oregon's organic industry.

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