

SECTOR STRATEGIES

Vibrant sector strategies, committed partnerships and inspired community leadership are helping to drive the growth of targeted industries and our regional economy. The Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to be a part of the Lane County Sector Strategies team. Each quarter, we'll learn from the partners moving this work forward.



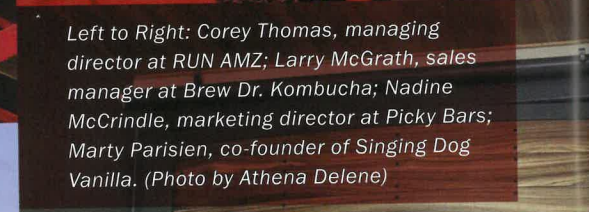
Kim Johnson gives RAIN Eugene mentor Sean Johnson a tour of Bohemia Food Hub.



Senior Regional Associate at Agriculture Capital Tyson Davies, right, connects with UO students at Food Business Unpacked.



Young organic hazelnut trees planted at My Brothers Farm in Creswell.



Left to Right: Corey Thomas, managing director at RUN AMZ; Larry McGrath, sales manager at Brew Dr. Kombucha; Nadine McCrindle, marketing director at Picky Bars; Marty Parisien, co-founder of Singing Dog Vanilla. (Photo by Athena Delene)

FOOD AND BEVERAGE: ENVISIONING BIG THINGS IN EUGENE

Article by BY MICAH ELCONIN, SEASON TO TASTE CONSULTING

Increased connectivity between industry members has spurred the launch of new projects that will further solidify Eugene as a food and beverage manufacturing hub. Kim Gibson Clark, CEO of Coconut Bliss summarizes this well: “The strength, unity and collaboration that we foster on a local level sets us up for success on a national and global level.”

The University of Oregon’s Institute for Policy Research and Engagement (IPRE) recently concluded that Eugene’s core has several critical ingredients to create an Innovation District based on Brookings Institute definitions. The food and beverage industry is one of the principal anchors to this activity.

Industry is gathering around efforts to establish a Southern Willamette Valley Food Business Development Center in downtown Eugene. The center is envisioned as a hub that will accelerate launch and scaling of local food companies.

Open spaces are another important part of this discussion. Collaborations are building around edible landscaping projects in downtown Eugene. This winter, students at the University of Oregon will work with Eugene Parks and Open Spaces to explore private/public partnership opportunities.

The sector is buzzing with activity in rural areas of Lane County, as well. Bohemia Food Hub in Cottage Grove continues to grow. Renovations are supporting core tenants, including Real Live Foods, Sohr Performance, and Hot Winter Hot Sauce, while other emerging brands begin utilizing the space.

“Ever since joining the movement at Bohemia Food Hub, my business has continued to pick up momentum and gain visibility,” says Joey Jaraczewski, CEO of Sohr Foods.

Local organic hazelnut farmers formed an organization to support deeper collaborations, including a cooperative organic processing facility. The project is catching the community’s attention. Taylor Larson, of My Brothers Farm in Creswell says, “The Organic Hazelnut Growers Association gets contacted constantly by folks who are excited about going organic. They want to know that they’ll have reliable processing options and market outlets before making the leap – that’s what we’re working so hard to secure.”



The Lane County Sector Strategy Team (LCSST) is a team of professionals representing workforce development, economic development, business and education. The LCSST works collectively, in an effort to better support critical industries in Lane County. We believe we can achieve more and have a greater impact in our community by working together.

For more, visit: bit.ly/2PhYKpU