

FoodHub in the News



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Ecotrust Launches FoodHub

A social venture business of the nonprofit [Ecotrust](#), [FoodHub](#) is designed to increase food trade in the Pacific Northwest. It is the only network of its kind that accommodates food producers and food buyers of every scale and production type across such a significant geographic range.

FoodHub will provide benefits to both food sellers and buyers. For food sellers—like Northwest farmers, ranchers, fisherman, and smaller food manufacturers—FoodHub will offer an easy way to let buyers know what products are available and how to make contact to complete a sale. For food buyers—including local restaurants, public schools, grocery stores, caterers, universities and hospitals—FoodHub will provide a robust database of food products that are available.

“FoodHub is designed to be a one-stop-shop for the chef who needs six dozen artichokes for a menu special, the baker looking for a local source for flour, or the large institutional food buyer whose purchasing power could significantly stabilize a family farm,” said Deborah Kane, vice president of Ecotrust’s Food & Farms program.

With FoodHub, food buyers can log on daily to see what product is available — and where. Farmers on any given day can post what they are selling. “We want to create more transparency in the food system,” Kane said. “We want to make it easy for people to see who’s buying and selling in the food market.”

The system is geared for use by large and small buyers and large and small farms, she said.

“It’s not a tool just for chefs, but it’s for institutional buyers, grocers and other large purchasers,” Kane said.

At food-hub.org, buyers can search for a particular product and narrow searches for products within a certain distance from their site.

Kane said Ecotrust hopes to sign up 500 members by year's end and double that by February. The goal is to double that again by the end of the summer.

Cost to become a FoodHub member is \$100 a year.

The system initially will be available to users in Oregon, Washington, Northern California and Alaska, Kane said. Eventually, Ecotrust hopes to make FoodHub available to users across the West.

Much of the early work creating FoodHub was funded through federal grants administered by the Oregon and Washington state departments of agriculture. FoodHub recently learned it has received an additional award of \$100,000 in a USDA specialty crop grant administered by ODA. The grant is part of \$1.5 million in USDA grants being distributed to Oregon companies by ODA.

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