

# Resources for youth development create positive, engaged citizens

*...who are tomorrow's leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators*



**T**he academic and economic systems in which youth grow up have a far-ranging and deep impact on their development. When youth are involved in resilient systems, they learn to adapt in the face of threats and stressors, become more flexible in the midst of challenge and change, and become more able to transform risk into positive development.

## Increased funding to the Western Land-Grant Universities is needed to provide opportunities for youth.

Engaging youth with positive and resilient academic and economic programs:

- Benefits their social and emotional development
- Helps build their leadership, problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Gives them a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose while decreasing high-risk behaviors



## With adequate funding, the Western Land-Grant Universities are uniquely positioned to:

- Develop new approaches to school readiness (pre-K), especially among low-income and underrepresented populations
- Provide alternative academic pathways and promote leadership development and citizenship opportunities to keep youth engaged
- Complement the K-12 school system and help develop skill sets to prepare youth for higher education and future career opportunities

**The Western Perspective**  
*of the Land-Grant Universities*

**WAAESD**  
Western Association of Agricultural  
Experiment Station Directors  
<http://www.waesd.org>

**WEDA**  
Western Extension  
Directors Association  
<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/weda>

# The Western Perspective & The Western Agenda

## What is the Western Perspective & Agenda?

The Western U.S. is facing unprecedented challenges maintaining sustainable urban communities and agricultural and natural resource economies. The Western Perspective & Western Agenda serves to inform policy responses and actions and demonstrates how Land-grant Universities, Agricultural Experiment Stations, and Cooperative Extension support all Western Region communities sustained by agricultural and natural resources economies.

## What are the unique challenges and characteristics of the West?

Every state in the Western Region has densely populated urban areas juxtaposed with large expanses of sparsely populated rural areas. This creates pressure on natural resource and agriculture industries while increasing population brings new demands on local and regional economies—largely dependent on watersheds, ecosystems, infrastructure and federal lands.

The public owns 47% of the land in the West. The majority of Western Region agriculture depends on public lands for livestock and forestry production, and on strong partnerships with federal organizations to sustain the health of ecosystems, agriculture and communities.

Fire, water, climate change, population growth, and invasive pests and diseases are the primary threats to agriculture and communities in the Western Region.

## Synergy Between Units

Land-grant Universities, the Cooperative Extension Service, and Agricultural Experiment Stations have a federal and state obligation to conduct research and outreach, and lead educational programs that address the greatest agricultural and natural challenges of their home state and region.

The collaborative nature between these entities in the Western Region ensure the programs, people and places of the Western Region are able to sustain and thrive with respect to their individual state needs and united regional challenges.

This collaboration is unique and powerful! No other institutions have the scope, resources or capacity to anticipate and respond to the current and future challenges facing the Western Region. The interaction between each entity produces timely information and research from experts at each institution. The depth and breadth of these programs reaches everyone, from the most vulnerable to the most prosperous.

## Agenda Priorities

- Sustainable Production Systems: Food Production, Food Safety, Food Security, Forestry and Horticulture
- Natural Resources: Water, Wildlife, Wildfire, Invasive Species, Ecosystem Services and Economic Opportunities
- Energy
- Community and Economic Development
- Youth Development: Agriculture, Nutrition and Natural Resources Science Literacy
- Nutrition and Health: Innovation in Foods for Health

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