

# Ag in the Classroom pivots to take advantage of high-tech 'silver linings'

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**  
For the Capital Press

COVID-19 hasn't been able to hinder Oregon Ag in the Classroom's mission to help students grow their knowledge of agriculture.

"There are several different ways we do that, and we have been able to convert them all to virtual, so it's been a really exciting year for us," said Jessica Jansen, executive director of the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation. "It actually opened up some opportunities we wouldn't have otherwise."

For instance, during a recent virtual "field trip" to TMK Creamery dozens of students would never have been able to crowd into the cheese-making area, but a video camera could go places the students couldn't.



Oregon AITC

**Students at Seven Peaks School in Bend, Ore., work on a socially distant development planning activity provided by Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom. Ag in the Classroom provides teachers with fun, hands-on lessons at no cost.**

"They see a little more than they probably would be able to see, so there are silver linings to this style," Jansen said.

The number of students who can go on virtual "field

trips" is almost unlimited.

"The Zoom call where we visited an Oregon Christmas tree farm and then a citrus orchard in Arizona had over 3,000 students connected," she said.

# HydroSide Systems make irrigation easier

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**  
For the Capital Press

"Why didn't somebody think of this sooner?" Dana and Sharon Mohr of HydroSide Systems hear it all the time.

The Post Falls, Idaho, start-up company received national affirmation that the time had come when they won the 2020 American Farm Bureau Entrepreneur of the Year award and received \$30,000 to help grow the business.

HydroSide's patent-pending system is powered by a self-charging hydroelectric platform. This is done by harnessing the power of the fast-moving water in the irrigation line. The water spins an inline turbine that powers the electric drive and moves wheel line, traveling gun and traveling boom irrigation setups.



HydroSide

**HydroSide founders Sharon and Dana Mohr.**

to fully automate a hose reel," Dana Mohr said.

Wheel line movers can be remotely operated, and hose reels can "drive" themselves.

The challenges that Sharon's brother faced moving irrigation rigs as a farmhand in Hamilton, Mont., inspired them to seek a solution.

"We were talking about how labor-intensive wheel line irrigation was and doing our best to solve the problem and, in the process, also developed a way

# Brim Tractor Company offers what farms of all sizes need

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**  
For the Capital Press

Bill Brim was just 22 when he became part owner of his first tractor dealership.

In 1966, he and his wife, Margaret, founded Brim Tractor Company in Lynden, Wash.

Bill Brim brought the first hydraulic-arm Bomford mower into the U.S. from England, transforming the maintenance of roadsides and freeways. The venture was successful; Brim still sells several of the tractor combinations to municipalities every year.

Brim's sons Bob, Alan and Dave pioneered a new market when they computerized the company in the late 1970s. They formed Dealer Information Systems Corp., now a leading busi-

ness management software provider to agricultural, construction, truck refrigeration and lift truck dealers throughout North America.

Another son, Dan, purchased the business in 1997 and started expanding it. Today there are six Brim dealerships in Oregon and Washington.

"Working with farmers is fantastic," said Mike Poston, manager of Brim's Salem store. "They are essential workers, so we have been able to stay open through the difficult times."

Also, with more time at home, hobby farmers and residential homeowners are buying equipment at an accelerated pace.

However, Brim's big focus remains large-scale ag, including the hay and forage, grass seed, hazelnut and wine grape industries.

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