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A New Face at Ioka Marketing



Cher Gillson

After five years at Ioka Marketing, Lindsay Fowler is stepping down as our Sales and Marketing Lead. She'll be leaving us in April 2020 to marry her long-time friend and relocate to Richland, WA. Ioka Marketing proudly welcomes Cher Gillson, who Lindsay is training as her replacement. Cher will serve as the primary point of contact for PGG Seeds materials as well as provide service for grass seed and small grains.

Cher Gillson comes to Ioka Farms with six years of business-to-consumer agriculture experience in both domestic and international markets. From cultivating 25 acres of crops as Rogue Farms' "Beer Farmer", to marketing the final products in over 50 countries, Cher understands the vertical integration of agriculture and business.

"Coming to Ioka Farms feels like being welcomed to a family," said Cher Gillson. "You can feel the labor of love that goes into each seed and the pride that comes from six generations of farmers."

While traveling extensively throughout the world and living abroad, Cher gained unique perspectives on international businesses, cultures, and relationships that will allow her to plant the seeds to contribute to Ioka's growth.

Lindsay has been an incredible asset to Ioka Marketing, Ioka Farms, and PGG Seeds North America and will always be considered a member of the family.

Production Report



Don Doerfler

Spring began with fertilizing and spraying of the fields. Our new Turbo Max tillage tool was used to prepare some fields prior to seeding oats and fine fescue. Planting went well and we had good establishment due to the blessing of timely rains.

Harvest started with what seemed to be a normal weather pattern. However, some cooler days and occasional showers contributed to an extended harvest period. Yields were generally average, with newer fields providing heavier seed and old ones favoring on the lighter side. Our harvest crew was made up of many new faces and a few old ones. Everyone did a great job stepping up to the tasks they were given and were an integral part of our successful harvest.

By early September it seemed fall had already started. Rains developed every few days leaving us scrambling to complete field work and plant fall crops, never knowing for sure how long the breaks in the weather would be. Although it didn't always go as planned, we got the job done.



Great Plains Turbo Max minimum tillage tool preparing a field for fine fescue planting.

Hazelnut harvest was wrapped up in the first week of November with yields not increasing as much as we had hoped. This was expected as we pruned heavily last winter. On the brighter side, nut fill was much better than in 2018 which can translate to lower clean outs at the processor.

This year we're adding 15 acres of a newer variety called Polly-O hazelnuts, which is another kernel variety and should become our earliest one to harvest.

The winter months ahead will keep us busy with annual maintenance and continuing education programs as we prepare for another successful year with our great team!

G3 Introductions

Part of the intention of this annual publication is to help you get to know the Ioka Family better. This segment will feature two members of generation three each year.



As the youngest son of Rob and Mindy Duerst, 20-year-old Connor began attending seed industry meetings at the age of two. As a youth, his time on the farm was often occupied driving combines during harvests and for one summer he worked part-time at the seed cleaning plant.

In high school Connor ran track, attended Young Life, and worked at Silverton Fitness. For the past ten years he's taken pride in giving back to his community by volunteering at the annual Silverton Dodge, Duck, Dip, Dive & Donate Dodgeball Tournament.

After graduating from Silverton High school, Connor attended Chemeketa Community College and Johnny Matthew's Barber School, graduating in August 2019. Continuing to follow his desire to serve the community he grew up in, and starting his own business, he is now working Tuesday through Saturday at Johnny's Barber Shop at 204 Oak Street in Silverton.

In his free time, you'll find Connor keeping himself active traveling, snowboarding, working out, and occasionally rock climbing. He enjoys spending time with his friends, family, and girlfriend Madi. Connor is also a video game enthusiast, making an annual pilgrimage to Seattle to attend the Pax West Gaming Conference.



Rylee, the oldest child of Don and Debbie Doerfler, spent her summer free-time in much the same way as many of Ioka Farm's third generation children, helping her family out on the farm.

When she wasn't attending volleyball camp or practice, you'd find her driving a combine and helping her aunt and grandmother in the office.

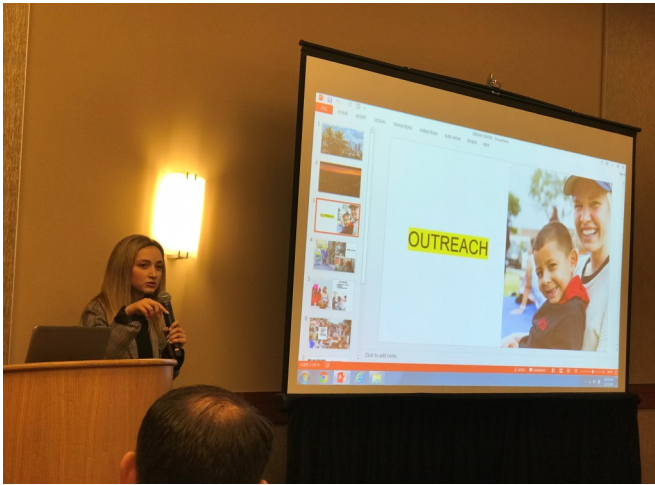
After graduating from high school in 2018, Rylee began attending Chemeketa Community College on scholarship, pursuing a degree in nursing. While attending college, she nannies for two children, three days a week and enjoys growing her passion for health, fitness, and overall body wellness.

Although Rylee keeps very busy with school, work, fitness, and enjoying the company of friends, she always makes time for her family. "My greatest joy in life is spending time with the ones I love, because you never know when it'll be your last," says Rylee.

Her loving heart and spirit of compassion will take her far in her nursing career.

Bringing Agriculture Education to our Youth

Chocolate Milk comes from brown cows, according to 16 million Americans. Ask California's 4th graders and 40% of them will tell you that hamburger doesn't come from a cow. With fewer than 2% of Americans living on farms, there is a growing disconnect between families in cities and families of generational farmers. Many individuals and local and national organizations are working to help bridge the gap of knowledge, understanding, and empathy between urban and rural communities, for the greater good of the country. The goal of this is not only education, but a way for the agricultural industry to communicate our legislative agenda to urban voters, and to increase the rural work-force.



Alexa Duerst presenting at the 2019 PSA Annual Meeting

Alexa, Rob and Mindy Duerst's middle daughter, is one of these advocates. Having grown up with both parents working at Ioka Farms, their family trips were scheduled between school and harvests, and revolved around annual seed association meetings.

As a young adult, Alexa relocated to Los Angeles to work with at-risk youth and adults experiencing homelessness, through the LA Dream Center. These contrasting environments has given Alexa a unique perspective of the world.

Last year Sam Cable, 2019 President of the Pacific Seed Association (PSA) and Director of Sales for Pure Seed, asked Alexa to speak on this subject at the PSA Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA in February. She shared pictures and stories of people she has met while living and working in LA, and recounted how she's been able to shine a light on domestic and international agriculture to inner city communities.

Through sharing her experiences, Alexa helped PSA members better understand the obstacles that are faced by individuals who seek help from the Dream Center. The Dream Center focuses on finding solutions to homelessness, hunger, lack of education, and human trafficking in "Skid Row".

The Pacific Seed Association donated to The Dream Center to help struggling youth go to camp and developed educational materials focused on the seed industry, scholarships, and employment opportunities. If you're interested in learning more about this program or to donate visit: www.dreamcenter.org.

FACTS

Two million, or twenty percent, of people in LA County are "food insecure", meaning they don't know where their next meal is coming from.

Relying 100% on donations, the Dream Center receives zero government funding.

*The **Dream Center** is the second largest foodbank in the county, distributing over 500,000 pounds of food monthly through multiple outreach programs.*

"Skid Row" is a 54-block area in downtown Los Angeles where people have moved to be closer to services. Most of the population here are trying to survive on a day-to-day basis.

*The "**Adopt-a-Block**" program has served over 23 different neighborhoods weekly since 2000 to provide food and hygiene items, pick up trash, play with local kids, and visit families at home to offer support.*



Bringing Agriculture Education to our Youth



Students on a tour of the Ioka seed cleaner checking out radish seed

Bridging the divide of rural and urban communities is a core part of the ethos of the Ioka family.

For nearly a decade, Ioka has volunteered with the Oregon Ag Fest, which challenges 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students to write a themed essay titled "What We're Made Of", focusing on the agriculture in their county. The 12 winning essay writers and their classmates get to spend the day at the Oregon Ag Fest to learn directly from farmers about where their food, fiber, and flora come from. At the Ioka station, students are educated about growing and processing wheat, and enjoy fresh pancakes.

For the past seven years, Ioka has collaborated with Victor Point Farms in outreach with Ag Link's Adopt-A-Farmer program. Two to three times a year Victor Point Farms visits the classroom to teach students about the economics, machinery, and practices of growing grass seed. The students are then brought out to the Ioka seed cleaner to see the final process of seed cleaning.

Through our many partnerships with associations we're able to continue to support the education and growth of the seed industry for future generations of farmers and consumers.

Marketing Report



Rob Duerst

Our local and regional business remains steady from both new and returning customers. Peaking early in the year, we expect the Fine Fescue market to remain sluggish until spring. The overall turf market has been static, with an unwillingness to hold inventory.

Forage seeds are our main market domestically and continues to stay strong. The increased use of brassicas as forage and cover crop has complemented our business structure. Heavy rainfall across Midwestern states caused 19.59 million prevented plant acres, the most in recorded history. We sold daikon radish, purple top turnips, and Crimson Clover to farmers receiving aid in the affected area.

International markets opened up a whole new window of opportunity. Our product was shipped to eleven countries including new markets in Libya, Italy, Costa Rica, and Germany. My trip to Korea with Mindy resulted in a very good increase of product and new interest. We think the future is bright for exports in these same countries and potentially new ones.

In June, Oregon State University welcomed delegates from 13 countries for the International Herbage Seed Group convention. We hosted PGG colleagues from Uruguay, New Zealand, and Australia and toured them around the farm, cleaner, and crops.

We finished out the year with our annual trip to Kansas City for the Western Seed Association meeting where we visited with global customers to discuss trends and product availability.

As we finalize our strategic plan for 2020, we are excited about integrating new technology and expanding our marketing efforts to improve relationships with new and returning customers.



PGG group from New Zealand, Australia, Tasmania, and Uruguay.

Dave and Rita Doerfler

Recipients of the 2019 Oregon Aglink Agriculturists of the year award

Written by Allison Cloo of Oregon Aglink

What does it mean to build a legacy? Does it come from one generation, or are we constantly building on the work of those before us and hoping those after us will continue the work?

If your legacy is hard work and innovation, that means the process never stops. At least that's what seems to be the case at Ioka Farms in Silverton.

Dave and Rita Doerfler of Ioka Farms will be receiving our Agriculturist of the Year award as a pair on November 22nd in Salem at the annual Denim and Diamonds Award Dinner and Auction presented by Oregon Aglink and sponsored by Wilco. As the president and chief financial officer of Ioka Farms, respectively, the couple were nominated by a community member for their role in elevating their industry and Oregon agriculture as a whole.

"They have been ideal role models for the next and future generations of family farmers in the valley," says Phil Lavine of Chemeketa Community College. He and Dave Sunderland have known the Doerflers for years, through national and international tours of agriculture, and have seen the pair give back time and again. According to Sunderland, "They continue to work hard and work smart, foster the development of others in the family business and industry, and have unselfishly helped others succeed."

Former director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture Katy Coba is unequivocal with her praise of Dave and Rita: "Those are the kinds of people you want in your community, the ones who are giving of their time and knowledge."



The Beginnings

The farm itself goes back to 1877, when Dave's grandfather and great-grandfather began growing small grain crops on the land outside of Silverton. The next generation brought on turkeys, hogs, and Hereford cattle. As farm transitions go, some elements remained and others were adopted as newer generations found their place and responded to changing national and international markets.

A ten-year-old Dave encouraged his father to buy their first combine to begin farming bent-grass on a portion of the family land, starting their venture in the grass seed industry. They still raised turkeys for a good while, well into years when Dave and Rita had their own children after marrying in 1961. Dave's sister Shirley and her husband John Duerst joined the farm in 1968 and the name Ioka Farms, Inc. was formally adopted.

Although the animals are largely gone and the farm is known most widely for its grass seed varieties, the pieces of that early legacy endure: diversification works, change with the times, and above all, cooperation is key.

The Strength of Succession

Ioka Farms is in its sixth generation now, with Dave and Rita joined by siblings, children, and nephews. Keeping track of the Doerfler and Duerst clans from the outside can be a little tricky, but the main strategy is finding a place for everyone's contribution.

According to Dave, "It's important that each one have their own area so that not everyone does the same thing." Sometimes it's a matter of finding out whether a family member would rather be in the office or the warehouse. Other times someone will come in with their own ideas about diversifying services or crops. Where Dave originally started with bent-grass, the farm now has over 5,000 acres of contracted varieties of perennial ryegrass, hard, fine, and tall fescues, meadowfoam, small grains, brassica forage, hazelnuts, timber, and Christmas trees.

While family is important, Dave is quick to remind people that it's not just Doerflers or Duersts helping Ioka run smoothly. "You know," he says, "we have some wonderful employees who are very dedicated too."

Family members may have been raised with some of the same goals and surnames, but as with succession planning, the strength comes from reaching out and building connections, whether that's with employees, extension agents, fellow members of agricultural organizations, or farms across the world.

Life-Long Learners

One reason Ioka Farms looks the way it does today is that the Doerflers have been willing to take on new ideas from a variety of places. While all farms respond to external challenges, like concerns over field-burning or water quality issues, the attitude at Ioka is to be



proactive rather than reactive. That involves taking some risks, certainly, but their strong connections with other organizations have helped them find what works for their land and their business.

At Marion Ag Service, Gale Gingerich remembers Ioka Farms from the early seventies, when he was an extension agent with Marion County. “There were lots of research trials on Ioka Farms,” says Gingerich. What does he remember about Dave and Rita? “They were always very cooperative,” he says. Their involvement with the industry in terms of development was matched by their active presence in organizations, such as the Highland Bentgrass Commission, Fine Fescue Growers Commission, Cascade Foothills Seed Growers Association, and Rita’s involvement with Oregon Women for Agriculture as a founding member of the organization in 1969.

As Gingerich puts it, the Doerflers have “a commitment to seeing that it continues, that it stays successful.” He clarifies, adding, “the industry, not just their own operation.”

At Chemeketa Community College in the Agribusiness Management Program, Phil Lavine and David Sunderland paint a similar picture of the Doerflers, who have been joining them on national and international tours of agriculture for over thirty years. “The world is our classroom,” says Lavine of the program. And what about the Doerflers? “They’re life-long learners.”

Lavine and Sunderland seem to have endless pictures of Dave and Rita all around the world: Thailand, Italy, Spain, Australia, New Zealand. The trips offer more than sight-seeing, though, since they’re a chance to see how other countries have dealt with issues familiar to agriculture all over the world: labor shortages, language barriers, crop treatments, regulations and more.

Positive Perspective

The Doerflers conduct similar tours at Ioka Farms, sharing their own experience and knowledge. While they haven’t hung on to every new variety or practice tested on their operation, they’ve had success with several and are willing to share what works for them.

They lean toward perennial crops and rotating annuals as needed, all with an interest in maintaining soil health and root structure where possible. Practices like minimum-till or no-till take extra equipment and planning, but mesh well with other conservation efforts that make good sense for their farm, such as drip irrigation and cover cropping for erosion control.

Just like Oregon’s practices don’t always match up with what goes on in the rest of the world, the Doerflers seem to understand that not everyone is going to adopt something that doesn’t fit a particular operation. When asked if he considers Ioka forward-thinking, Dave Doerfler suggests that “Forward-thinking or trying new things depends upon how much research you’ve done. Something that may be new to some people, you’ve thought about for a while.”



Dave & Rita on an Ag tour in Budapest

Keeping up with the industry and the larger community, including consumers and voters who may not necessarily live on a farm, means that Ioka Farms has been tuned in to new developments as well as coming changes. The field-burning and water quality issues were chances to show Oregon how agriculture could respond to challenges.

Phil Ward, formerly at Oregon Department of Agriculture and Farm Services Agency, recalls the role Ioka Farms played during both periods. When a fatality on I-5 brought field burning under scrutiny, “Dave and Rita helped lead the industry through that process.” When questions of water quality were on the horizon, they stepped up again.

“[Dave] was part of the group of ag leaders that said it’s better for us to get out in front of this issue as an industry, and we want to guide this whole process into the department of agriculture instead of leaving it with DEQ and EPA. I think that the decisions those folks made in those days set Oregon agriculture up for success in this water quality arena that other states don’t really enjoy.”

Knowing that agriculture will always have new challenges to face, Dave keeps his advice simple: “You need to stay involved with your commodity people and the industry people. You know, you need to stay positive that things will work out. Sometimes it makes it more difficult than you thought it should be, but if you enjoy what you’re doing you stick with that and survive.”

Bonded Together

When people share photos of the Doerflers at events or on trips, there are hardly ever pictures of Dave or Rita on their own. They are together, Dave with his arm around her shoulders, and Rita leaning in close. For all the connections they have forged with others at their farm, their local Silverton community, the grass seed industry, and Oregon agricultural organizations, there doesn’t seem to be any more enduring or memorable than their bond with each other.

“They’re committed to each other,” says Katy Coba of the pair. “They support each other, they’re together—they’re just Dave and Rita.” Even if Dave and Rita Doerfler are getting the Agriculturist of the Year Award, you know they’ll be the first to tell you that they wouldn’t be there without the rest of the community.

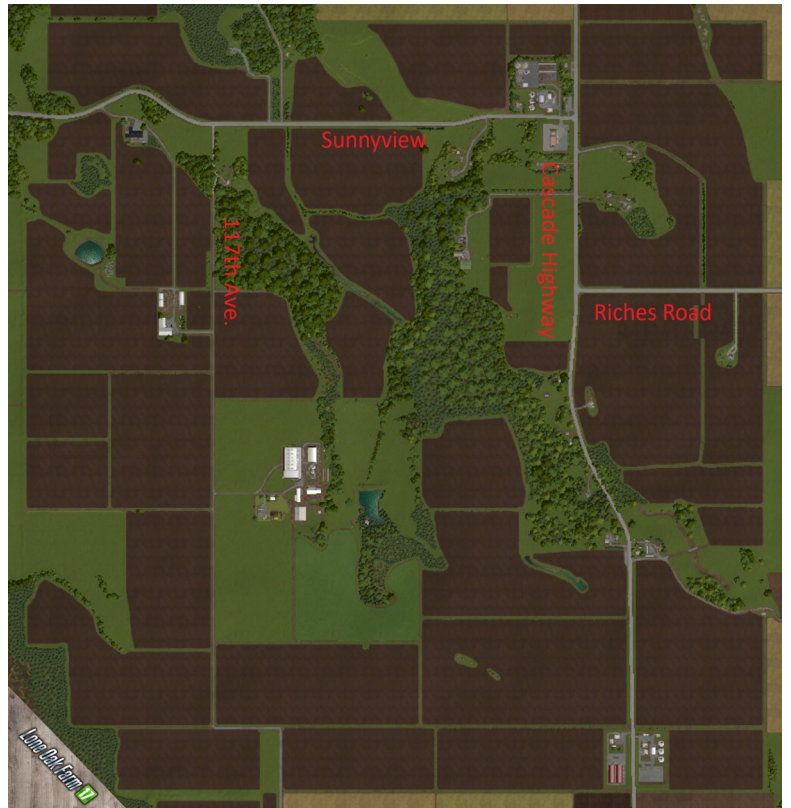
Like Dave says, Ioka Farms owes its success to more people than just him and Rita alone. There are family members, and employees, and supporting organizations, commissions, and agencies. Even the grass seed industry doesn’t stand on its own, or Oregon for that matter.

And it’s true, no one stands alone. We can, however, honor the people who help represent our best.

Virtual Farming

The term “gamer” is often used to describe a person who spends much of their time in front of the TV or computer screen shooting bad guys, racing vehicles, or playing sports. There is a game for just about anything you can think of, and yes, that includes farming. I stumbled upon Farming Simulator 2019 while Christmas shopping last December. It looked interesting and realistic so I grabbed two copies, one for my dad and one for myself. Upon loading the game to my computer I discovered that one can waste a lot of time “farming” from the comfort of their chair. This game can be played online so your friends can run the combine while you operate the grain cart. FS19 has virtually everything covered when it comes to farming field crops, raising livestock, forestry operations, and even excavation. Virtual worlds have been created, some being based off of real life locations. These worlds or maps are available to download along with custom equipment, buildings, trees, and many other things to customize your farming experience. One of these maps available to download is called Lone Oak Farm. Lone Oak Farm contains many of the fields that we own and lease at Ioka. It encompasses 2,000 acres running along Cascade highway, with the south boundary being State Street and the north boundary being a little further than Sunnyview. Some may not be impressed, but I was amazed with the attention to detail of this map. Buildings are in the correct locations, hills and elevation changes are accurate, even rock outcroppings and road signs are spot on. If you are curious to have a look to see what it’s like, search for Lone Oak Farm on YouTube to check out a video or two.

Alex Duerst



Some of the locals may recognize this map view. Pictured above is the Lone Oak Farm map with main roads in red.

Pictured below: Harvesting wheat, south of Riches Road with Rob and Mindy’s house and Riches seed cleaner in the background.



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