

**Media Information, Contact:**

David Waters, OHS Public Relations

Ph: (503) 306-5221

Email: davidw@ohs.org

**Ranches Join the Century Farm Program, Now In Its 41<sup>st</sup> Year**

*Honor isn't reserved for just farms anymore, as the program announces new name and new application deadline date*

(Portland, Ore.) – Recognizing the importance of ranching in Oregon's agricultural history, the Oregon Historical Society (OHS) is officially changing the 41-year old program honoring Oregon's farms, broadening it to include Oregon's historic ranches. The Century Farm & Ranch Program is marking its 41<sup>st</sup> year, with a total of 920 properties recognized so far. A new application deadline date of July 1<sup>st</sup> has also been instituted. Standards for applying for the honor will remain the same. With 24 new honorees in 1998, OHS is now accepting applications for the current program year.

“Ranching has been a traditional cornerstone of Oregon's agricultural prosperity,” said Rick Read, OHS Field Services Coordinator. “With this new title, we are proud to begin recognizing qualifying ranches all around the state. The Oregonians that own properties which get recognized can be justifiably proud of the honor, which celebrates years of hard work and the heritage behind each of these family-owned farms and ranches.”

The Century Farm & Ranch program began in 1958 as a prelude to Oregon's statehood centennial the following year. Application materials are preserved in the OHS Library and provide useful information for researchers investigating the history of agriculture in Oregon, along with valuable data on farming techniques, livestock production, immigration and settlement patterns, and farm buildings.

To qualify as a Century Farm, property must meet a total of ten criteria, including the following:

- The farm must have been operated continuously in the same family for 100 years or more. If the farm has ever been rented or leased, it will not qualify.

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- The farm must have a gross income from farm use of not less than \$1,000 per year for three years out of the five years immediately preceding application.
- Family members must live on the property, or actively manage and direct the farming of the land.

Successful applicants will receive a Century Farm certificate signed by Governor Kitzhaber and officials from the Oregon Historical Society. Century Farm owners may also erect, at their own expense, a metal highway sign to mark their historic property. To receive an information packet with official application forms, please call **Rick Read** at (503)306-5215, or by email at: rickr@ohs.org. The application deadline is July 1, 1999.

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