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Oregon's First Electric Tractor Arrives at Rusted Gate Farm for Demonstration

*An innovative demonstration project to evaluate electric tractors
as an efficient and cost-effective technology.*

Central Point, Ore – Forth, Sustainable Northwest, Wy'East RC&D, and Bonneville Environmental Foundation have partnered to launch Oregon's first electric tractor demonstration to evaluate and demonstrate the potential of this new technology. The project will serve as an important test case to explore best use cases and areas to develop while increasing knowledge, access, and adoption of electric farm equipment to help farmers save money and reduce on-farm emissions.

The state's first electric tractor arrived at Rusted Gate Farm outside Central Point, Oregon on March 4. [Rusted Gate Farm](#) is the perfect first location to test this new technology. They are a non-profit farm that experiments with traditional, alternative, and innovative farm practices. Their mission is to identify a mix of income-producing activities that can increase average farm income and insure long term financial security for small farms in Jackson County. Rusted Gate will use the electric tractor in their truffle and apple orchards, food gardens, and for extensive grounds maintenance.

"We are thrilled to be the first farm in Oregon to test-drive an electric tractor. Our farm staff will conduct side-by-side comparisons to the gas and diesel fueled equipment already in use. We'll be able to track job time and fuel costs differences and also provide feedback on routine maintenance, ergonomics, and ease of use," said Jo Ann Shannon, Executive Director of Rusted Gate Farm.

The project team has secured funding for a total of three electric tractors to be shipped to Oregon for initial testing and configuration in 2021. Tractors, installed with remote sensors that will collect usage data and measure on-farm savings potential, will start making their way around Oregon. We're interested in learning where the tractor performs best and about opportunities for further agricultural equipment electrification.

While there have been great advancements in the electric passenger vehicle market, as battery technology and other innovations increase range and usage, electric vehicle adoption in the agricultural sector is relatively new, but fertile for growth. The team hopes to share emission reduction, health and safety, and savings information with the 2021 project.

"People traditionally associate electric vehicles with cars in urban areas, but I'm looking forward to learning about the benefits and best use cases for electric tractors and finding ways to further transportation electrification in rural areas," Erin Galiger with Forth says.

The team looks to evaluate and scale a variety of electric agricultural technologies as part of a broader electrification effort that supports Oregon's natural resource sectors and communities outside of urban

areas. This includes expanding electric charging infrastructure at businesses, farm stands, and publicly available charging stations across Oregon.

“Farmers and ranchers have to make a lot of decisions based on unknown variables, and profit margins can be thin,” says Robert Wallace with Wy’East RC&D. “This effort will demonstrate many anticipated benefits of electric agricultural equipment, from fuel savings, reduced maintenance and down time, reductions in diesel emissions, to increased health and safety. We hope to prove this technology is a win-win for Oregon’s farming community.”

Connecting people to the technology is a critical component of this project, and these tractors will be available for demonstration field tours, county fairs, and other public events starting Summer 2021. The team will work directly with individual agricultural producers, school districts, county fairgrounds, and demonstration farms.

“Conversations with farmers and ranchers in rural and tribal communities, from orchards and livestock operations to vegetable farms and indoor riding arenas, have resulted in growing interest and excitement about this new technology,” notes Bridget Callahan of Sustainable Northwest.

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Forth is a nonprofit organization advancing electric, shared and smart transportation through innovation, demonstration, advocacy, and engagement. Learn more at www.forthmobility.org. Media Contact: Kevin Friedman – kevinf@forthmobility.org, 503-381-4085

Sustainable Northwest brings entrepreneurial solutions to natural resources challenges to keep lands healthy and provide economic and community benefits. For more information visit SustainableNorthwest.org or contact Bridget Callahan, Sustainable Northwest, 503-756-0494, bcallahan@sustainablenorthwest.org

Rusted Gate Farm is a non-profit farm located in the Rogue River Valley of Southern Oregon dedicated to supporting small farms through demonstration, trials and innovation.

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