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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Record-Sized Crop Forecasted for Oregon Hazelnuts**

*Oregon Hazelnut Growers Ramping Up Marketing Efforts to Meet Growing Consumer Demand*

**August 30, 2018 – Aurora, Ore.** – Consumers want more hazelnuts and Oregon hazelnut growers have answered that request with the industry’s largest crop yet. The Oregon hazelnut crop is forecast to be 52,000 tons, according to the objective yield survey conducted by the Oregon Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is 63 percent higher than last year (32,000 tons) and the previous record-sized crop was in 2001 coming in at 49,500 tons.

“Our growers have doubled their acreage over the past five years and continue to increase it by at least 8,000 acres each year to meet consumer demand,” said Meredith Nagely, manager of the Oregon Hazelnut Marketing Board (OHMB). “There is a strong consumer preference for U.S.-grown hazelnuts and considerable interest in trying them in a variety of products, so we’ve invested in a communications campaign aimed at increasing domestic awareness and demand.”

In the past, Oregon’s hazelnut haul was predominantly for export to Asia. However, with the larger crop comes more opportunities and OHMB is working to broaden awareness and understanding of Oregon hazelnuts’ benefits and versatility while maintaining a premium price for its growers. This includes cultivating new demand in the foodservice, manufacturing, retail and consumer markets.

This fall, top Portland chefs including Cathy Whims of Nostrana and John Gorham of Tasty n Alder will feature Oregon hazelnuts on their menus, among many others. OHMB has also partnered with Guittard Chocolate Company as part of its industry supply channel program to educate chocolatiers and confectioners on how to work with hazelnuts and why Oregon’s hazelnut varieties are superior in flavor.

A 2017 consumer survey funded by OHMB found that 47 percent of people thought hazelnuts were “very healthy,” which was nearly twice the number from the previous year. The survey also found people don’t view hazelnuts as being as expensive as some other nuts. Food manufacturers have taken note and hazelnuts are gradually starting to appear in more SKUs, according to the survey, growing from 63 products in 2013 to 93 in 2015, when data was last available.

Oregon boasts an ideal climate for producing the world’s highest quality hazelnuts and it is where 99 percent of the U.S. crop is grown. It’s in this special corner of the world where

temperate ocean, mountain and river climates meet with rich volcanic soils to create prime hazelnut-growing country.

### **About Oregon Hazelnut Marketing Board**

The Oregon Hazelnut Marketing Board was established in 1949 by the growers and handlers of hazelnuts. The purpose of the board is to set quality standards for the industry, ensure all imported product meet U.S. standards and provide funding for promotion of hazelnuts through research, education and promotion programs. For more information, visit [oregonhazelnuts.org](http://oregonhazelnuts.org).

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