

JeffCoSeed.com Website and Crop Sign Project, 2013

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Abstract

The JeffCoSeed.com website and crop sign project was launched in June, 2013. The JeffCoSeed website and crop sign project is a cooperative venture between the Central Oregon Agricultural Research Center (COARC) and the Jefferson County Seed Growers Association to educate the public about local agriculture. The project includes placement of 24 crop signs on various fields throughout Jefferson County. The signs list the crop name, the JeffCoSeed.com website, economic value of agriculture in central Oregon and a QR code to scan with a smartphone linking to the website. The website includes pages offering information about the significance of various specialty and other crops in central Oregon, the importance of burning and smoke management and testimonials by local farmers and their families. In addition, there is a Farm Fair page allowing for online vendor sign-ups. The website allows the Seed Council to communicate with the local community and to provide vital information and updates to the local community and those traveling through the area. The goal of this project is to educate the community and tourists traveling through central Oregon about local, high value agricultural crops and their economic value to central Oregon.

Introduction

The JeffCoSeed.com website and crop sign project was launched in June 2013. The project is a cooperative venture between COARC and the Jefferson County Seed Growers Association to educate the public about local agriculture. The project includes placement of 24 crop signs on various fields throughout Jefferson County. The signs list the crop name, the JeffCoSeed.com website, economic value of agriculture in central Oregon and a QR code to scan with a smartphone linking to the website. The website also includes a page with a map showing the location of the crop signs and what is planted in the marked fields. This ongoing project provides the Jefferson County Seed Council a platform to educate the community and tourists about local, high value agricultural crops and their economic value to central Oregon.

Google Analytics

Analysis of Google Analytics Reports from June - December 31, 2013 show the website had 408 unique visitors and 525 overall visitors. In September, 2013 the site showed the heaviest traffic with 80 unique and 98 overall visitors. Traffic on the website has remained consistent through the winter season with 62 unique and 81 overall visitors to the site during December, 2013.

Traffic to the website includes visitors from 20 different countries in addition to the United States. The highest number of visits comes from within the state of Oregon, with the majority of traffic from outside of central Oregon. Data indicates increases in website traffic during September and December, which may correspond with increased traffic in central Oregon around holidays.

Future Plans

COARC will continue to maintain the JeffCoSeed crop signs, moving them from harvested fields and resetting them to newly planted fields. This will allow a continual educational opportunity to the local community and tourists to central Oregon. The website is maintained by COARC and will continue to be used to communicate the value of local agriculture as well as special events and opportunities such as the Central Oregon Farm Fair and Trade Show that is held each February in Madras, Oregon. During 2014, COARC will print bookmarks displaying the JeffCoSeed.com website and QR code for distribution at local visitor centers and seed companies.

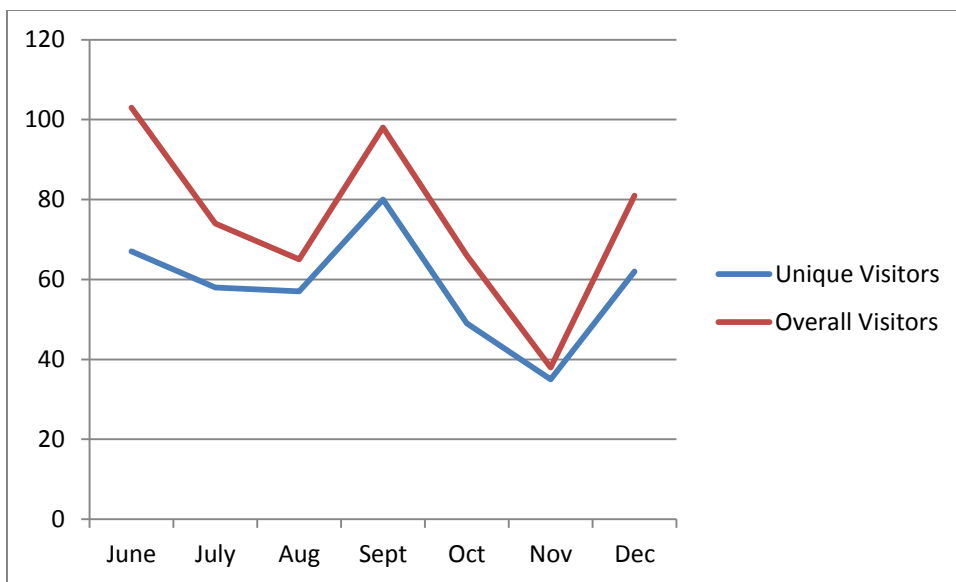


Figure 1. Unique and Overall Visitors June-Dec, 2013