

### **Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership, Farmer Profile**

As a young child, Yua Lo and her family made the long journey out of Laos to Thailand on foot. There they spent 3 years in a refugee camp before finally coming to the U.S in 1978. In Denver Colorado, Yua began her education as a 7th grader not knowing how to read or write. While living in Denver, Yua was faced with adjusting to a new culture and educational system, learning English, and also helping to care for 3 younger brothers and sisters. In 1981 Yua's family moved to Stockton California where they could again pursue farming, as they had done in Laos. Yua was involved in the family farming, and later farmed with her husband Chow for seven years until they moved to Oregon with their two sons in 1998. They had planned to give up farming in favor of regular paychecks and schedules. But, despite the fact that her husband and sons thought she "was nuts," Yua felt compelled to start farming again. In 2001, despite working full time, Yua taught herself to grow flowers. Over time, her family became more and more involved, and grew to love farming together again.

This season, Yua quit her full time job to pursue full time farming. This not only involves working the land, but marketing and selling the flowers her family grows on about 7 acres of leased land in Corbett. Yua is both a savvy grower, and a smart businessperson. She is steadily growing her family farming business through relationships with two local churches, where she provides flowers for farm stands, through regular customers at three Portland neighborhood farmers' markets (Hollywood, Interstate & Hillsdale), and by providing wedding flowers for customers who've fallen in love with her amazing seasonal bouquets. She has also provided important connections to the Hmong community. Yua hopes to continue to expand her Willamette Valley farming business in the coming years by growing organic vegetables.



**Yua Lo, farmer**