

# Washington State Conservation Commission

## FARMLAND PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2016

[HTTP://OFP.SCC.WA.GOV/](http://ofp.scc.wa.gov/)



### *2016 Legislative Session in the final stretch*

March 10th marks the scheduled sine die of the state's 106th legislative session. Policy hearings have wrapped up and legislators look to move bills from their opposite house of origin. This is a time of concurrence and fine tuning as members work hard to get support from both chambers before being sent to the Governor.

To keep track of the legislative calendar dates, go to: <http://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/cutoff.aspx>. If you are interested in commenting on a bill or contacting your legislator, the following link provides information on the various ways you can provide your opinion. <http://leg.wa.gov/LIC/Pages/hotline.aspx>.



The Office of Farmland Preservation tracks legislation as it relates to agricultural viability, regulatory impacts, protection of farmland, land use, and other topics that may have a nexus with the viability of farmland in Washington.

**Bills of interest that are still moving through the process are found in the table below.**

ESHB 2478	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Supporting agricultural production, including that of apiarists, through the preservation of forage for pollinators.
SB 5937	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Addressing the farm internship pilot project.
SSB 6179	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Concerning water banking
SSB 6227	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Implementing the recommendations of the 2015 review of the Washington wildlife and recreation program
ESSB 6513	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Concerning reservations of water in water resource inventory areas 18 and 45
ESB 6589	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Concerning a feasibility study to examine whether water storage would provide non-interruptible water resources to users of permit exempt wells.

**Notable bills that do not appear to be passing this year:**

HB 2352	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Regarding riparian restoration and planting on farmland
HB 2840	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Establishing a water discharge permit for concentrated animal feeding operations that is issued under the sole authority of state law.
SHB 2945	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Establishing a legislative task force to review the growth management act.
ESSB 6426	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Allowing schools to be sited as essential public facilities outside the urban growth area.
SSB 6420	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Modifying certain land capacity review and evaluation requirements.
ESSB 6334	<a href="#">Bill Page</a>	Concerning rail dependent uses for purposes of the growth management act and related development regulations.

**Stay in contact and sign up for the OFP-Newsletter!**

Email frequency is once a month

Sign up on the web at: <http://ofp.scc.wa.gov>

## *WWRP Application Webinar: Farmland Preservation Funding*

Interested in funding to preserve farmland? The Recreation and Conservation Office through the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program is currently accepting grant applications for funding to be awarded in 2017 for all Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) programs.



An application webinar for all 2016 RCFB grants was recently held. This webinar provided a high level look at the grant programs and changes to RCO policies and procedures. The webinar included a series of presentations posted on RCO's web site that outline specific information about the grant programs available this year and may be viewed at the applicant's leisure.

To view the webinar, go to: <https://goo.gl/xUBAip>

For the webinar Q & A, go to: <http://goo.gl/N6laEn>

**Application deadline will be May 2.**

## *Avian Influenza – Starting Already in the US*

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) was identified in a turkey flock in Du-bois County, Indiana. This is a different strain of HPAI (H7N8) than those that caused the 2015 outbreak. Surveillance sampling in the 10 km zone found 9 infected flocks. All of the affected flocks so far have been turkey operations. All but one of those additional affected flocks were infected with low-path H7N8, never a problem before. This particular virus is a low -path virus in waterfowl, but can mutate quickly to a highly-pathogenic form in poultry, requiring a change in a single gene. All affected flocks are being depopulated, and a high-risk layer operation adjacent to the index farm was also being depopulated.

No cases of HPAI H7N8 virus infection have been reported in humans at this time, and no human infections associated with avian influenza A viruses of this particular subtype (i.e.H7N8) have ever been reported.

See the USDA APHIS website for more information: <https://goo.gl/X1SqKd>. (Original information provided by Dr. Joe Baker, Washington State Veterinarian.



## *Farm Financial Benchmarking - Mt. Vernon - March 10& 17*

2 Days!— Thursdays, March 10th & 17th 1:00pm-5:00pm - \$10 Registration Fee Includes Refreshments. Details and registration available by going to: <https://goo.gl/wESOS7>

Presented By Economic Development Association of Skagit County (EDASC) - this two-day workshop will cover several valuable small farm financial management tools. These will include:

**Profit & Loss Analysis** - Learn how to really look at your financial reports and make them work for you. This profit and loss analysis session provides tools to make sense of your farm income and expenses.

**Cash Flow Planning** - In your business Cash is King and running a farm is a difficult cash flow operation. Learn how to leverage credit and savings to keep your cash where it belongs, with you.

**IRS Form 1040 Schedule F** - Dive deep into the most intriguing of the IRS forms and how this one form can save you millions. OK, perhaps not but you will learn to make this for your ally at tax time.

**Enterprise Budget** - Enterprise budgets are intended as guidelines in the estimation of the production costs and returns for cash crops and assist producers in selecting enterprise combinations for the UPCOMING season. Learning this tool can help create a more profitable and productive season for your farm.

## *In Short*

### **U.S. House Agriculture Committee Reviews State of the Rural Economy**

On February 24, [the House Agriculture Committee held a hearing](#) with Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to review the state of the rural economy. According to the latest forecast from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), net farm income in the United States is expected to fall by 56 percent from 2013 to 2016, the largest three-year percentage decline in net farm income since the Great Depression.

While Members thanked the Secretary for his service, they also raised a number of concerns, including the impact that the continued outlook for depressed prices could have on America's farmers and ranchers.

Click [here](#) for more information, including the [archived webcast](#).

### **Kittitas Comprehensive Plan Update**

Kittitas County Community Development Services will be sharing what they heard in four public visioning meetings in early February at two meetings taking place on March 15 & 16. These meetings will also be another opportunity for participants to share their 20 year vision for Kittitas County.

#### **Meeting topics will include:**

Land use, transportation, housing, economic development, recreation and parks, rural and resource lands, and natural environment.

Both meetings will cover the same information. For more information, visit:

<https://goo.gl/uls3Av>

#### **Meeting Flyer (PDF):**

<http://goo.gl/WCyXtB>

### **Free Managed Grazing Tutorial**

A new online tutorial, "Managed Grazing Tutorial," by the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) goes in-depth into how changing the way grazing animals are managed can improve both the condition of your land and your bottom line.

The interactive tutorial is divided into a series of stand-alone lessons, so participants can progress at their own pace. The lessons include these subjects:

- Grazing Management: Inventory
- Managed Grazing Infrastructure: Fencing and Water
- Managing the Mature Stand
- Intensifying Managed Grazing
- Stockpiling Grass

It's free and available on the NCAT ATTRA website at:

<https://goo.gl/ci1aOl>

## *In Short*

### **Olympic and Kitsap Farm Workshop Series**

Grow your sales opportunities with this special WSDA workshop series for fruit and vegetable growers.

**March 23: [WSDA Workshop Series – Wholesale Success Workshop](#)** - John Wayne Marina, Sequim, WA, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, \$20 registration, Wholesale Success Manual included. [Register here](#).

**March 24: [WSDA Workshop Series – Good Agricultural Practices \(GAP\) Farm Walk](#)** - Dharma Ridge Farm, Quilcene, WA, 9 AM - 3 PM, FREE registration, Bridging the GAPs Farm Guide included. [Register here](#).

**Monday, April 4: [WSDA Workshop Series – Local Buying Tour & Meetup](#)**, Poulsbo, WA, 9 AM – 4 PM, \$20 registration, [lraymond@agr.wa.gov](mailto:lraymond@agr.wa.gov) or 206-256-6157 [Register here](#).

### **USDA NASS: 2014 NW Region's Horticulture Value of Sales at 1.38 Billion, increased 15% from 2009.**

The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) recently released the 2014 Census of Horticultural Specialties report, which shows that U.S. horticulture operations sold a total of \$13.8 billion in floriculture, nursery and specialty crops in 2014, up 18 percent since 2009.

Washington showed a 14 percent increase on the total number of operations reporting horticultural specialty crops sold between 2009 and 2014, while total sales increased 31 percent to \$366 million. Washington ranked second in the United States in cut flower sales, rhizomes, and tuber sales.

To access the full report, go to:

<http://goo.gl/jvnkE3>

### **WSU apple gets a fresh start marketed as Sunrise Magic**

The first apple variety released by Washington State University, WA 2, will be given the brand name Sunrise Magic.

WSU has launched a second release of WA 2 with a new commercial licensing and marketing program in partnership with Proprietary Variety Management (PVM).

Read more: <http://goo.gl/FwOPnL>



## *Permanent Cropland Supports Healthy Fourth Quarter Returns*

The National Council of Real Estate Investment Fiduciaries (NCREIF) has released the fourth quarter 2015 results of the NCREIF Farmland Index.

The total return for the quarter was 4.30%, comprised of 1.67% appreciation and 2.64% income return. Following seasonal income patterns, the fourth quarter experienced the strongest total return of the year, although quarterly performance trailed the 6.56% total return from the fourth quarter 2014.



Total annual returns for farmland, while relatively healthy at 10.35%, were the lowest since the 8.81% total return for 2010. In contrast to that income-driven year, 2015 returns were more balance with a 5.69% income return and 4.48% appreciation.

View the full report including how the Pacific Northwest performed, go to: <http://goo.gl/iJPtnq>

## *Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group - New Reports*

The Recreation and Conservation Office recently completed two reports on behalf of the [Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group](#): the Lands Group's 2015 Progress Report and 2016 Biennial State Land Acquisition Performance Monitoring Report (Monitoring Report). The Monitoring Report has been updated with a new format to allow easier assimilation of information and better tracking of state land acquisition performance.

You may link to the reports from the RCO Web site:

[2015 Progress Report](#) (PDF)

[2016 Biennial State Land Acquisition Performance Monitoring Report](#) (PDF)

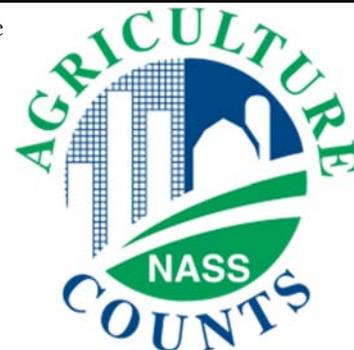
Learn more about the Lands Group and view other reports, go to: <http://www.rco.wa.gov/boards/hrlcg.shtml>

## *2015 Washington State Farms and Land in Farms Highlights*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service recently released the annual Farms and Land in Farms report. This annual data presents on the number of farms in operation, land in farms, and average size (acreage) of farms for individual states and the U.S.; includes economic sales class estimates for number of farms, land in farms, and average of farms for U.S. and selected states. The full U.S. report is available at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/>.

The Washington State report is available by going to: <http://goo.gl/xEB9FP>

The number of farms in Washington for 2015 is estimated at 36 thousand, down 7 hundred farms from 2014. Total land in farms, at 14.7 million acres, is unchanged from 2014. The average farm size for 2015 is 408 acres, up 7 acres from the previous year.



## *Value-Added Producer Grant Webinar - March 10*

In case you can't make any of the Value-Added Producer Grants workshops in WA, there is a webinar planned by the University of Arkansas on March 10, 12:30 – 1:45 **Central Time**

Rural Development staff will provide an overview of the Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program, including purpose, basic program requirements, and resources, to prepare participants for introductory outreach to potential applicants and stakeholder groups.

Preregistration is not required. Simply join the session through the link below. Type in your name, then enter as guest.

<https://goo.gl/H0DU59>



## *Rep. Suzan DelBene - CIDER Act legislation passed*

### [Update from Congresswoman Suzan DelBene](#)

Hard cider is a growing industry, and entrepreneurs in Washington state have helped blaze the trail. Recently, I was in Woodinville visiting Locust Cider, one of the many great cideries, breweries and wineries located in the First District.

The alcohol content of hard cider can fluctuate depending on how much sugar is naturally in the apples, making it difficult for a local business like Locust Cider to predict their tax liability and expand production.

Thankfully, the CIDER Act, a bill I cosponsored, passed as part of the year-end tax relief package. The bill updated the definition of hard pear and apple ciders in the tax code, allowing more of these small businesses to invest in expanding and hiring more employees.

This important tax relief will help provide certainty for our cideries and will encourage economic growth not only in this industry, but with local farmers and manufacturers as well



*DelBene tours Locust Cider in Woodinville with Co-founders Jason Spears and Patrick Spears, Chelsea Luper, and Mayor Bernie Talmas.*

## *Hands-On QuickBooks for Farmers - Free Workshop*

**Hosted by Thurston Conservation District - March 14th, 6pm - 8pm - 2918 Ferguson St SW, Tumwater**

QuickBooks is a powerful tool for business management! Good bookkeeping and accounting habits give your business that boost to maintain success and profitability over time. QuickBooks Desktop and the newer QuickBooks Online version are fantastic programs for any business application. This workshop will focus on managing expenses in both the Desktop and Online versions. TCD will be demonstrating transactions in both versions, so bring your laptop or tablet to put new tools to use in your own company file!



**No registration required, but they would appreciate a headcount for pizza! 360.754.3588 x136**

## *Palouse farmers honored for commitment to clean water*

The Palouse-Rock Lake Conservation District is being recognized for leadership in making on-the-ground improvements that benefit healthy farms and protect clean water.

The Washington Department of Ecology recently presented district staff and the board of supervisors with an Environmental Excellence award, the agency's highest honor.

The district has worked with private landowners to reduce erosion and improve shade along 40 miles of streams and rivers in the Palouse region by planting more than 100,000 native trees.

Through direct-seeding or low-tillage farming thousands of tons of soil have been prevented from eroding and washing down stream. More than 45,000 acres have benefited from direct-seed tillage under the district's cost-sharing program since 2010.

The district's leadership and work on the ground will benefit Palouse River water quality improvement projects designed to address warm temperatures, low oxygen and high bacteria.



## *Chick-associated Salmonella Prevention Outreach from DOH*

Spring chicks and ducklings can be a source of Salmonella illness in people

Increasing popularity of raising backyard flocks also gives rise to Salmonella infection outbreaks experienced across the nation. Some of these outbreaks were linked to poultry bought at mail-order hatcheries and feed stores. Many people don't realize that chicks, ducklings, and other young poultry are commonly infected with harmful germs that can make people sick.

Live poultry often carry Salmonella germs in their droppings and on their feathers, feet, and beaks, even when they look healthy and clean. The germs also get on cages, coops and the environment where the birds live and roam. Salmonella illness can be dangerous to the very young, the very old, and those with compromised immune systems. Frequent handwashing is the best way to avoid illness.

Tips for staying healthy are on the Washington State Department of Health website (<http://goo.gl/kJDxfS>).

Facts on keeping birds healthy are on the Washington State Department of Agriculture website (<http://goo.gl/fsxcx7>).



## *Four Cultivating Success Free Farm Talks - start March 3*

The local food movement is growing by leaps and bounds. Everywhere you look it seems there is a new farm or farmers market starting up, giving rise to the notion that small farms are the latest dot.com-type success story. While true for some, there are plenty of small farms trying to find their niche in the 21st century's latest iteration of the world's oldest occupation – agriculture. To help these modern-day agriculturalists, the Cultivating Success™ program has put together four Farm Talks to address the challenges today's small farms face.

1 Join us starting **Thursday, March 3, 2016** for Farming Is a Risky Business, an informal Q&A-type panel discussion on the legal, financial, employment management, and food safety issues farmers often find themselves up against. Our panelists include George Benson of Schweet Linde & Coulson who specializes in estate planning and commercial real estate, as well as the banking and legal issues farmers might face; David Poor from Northwest Farm Credit Services whose focus is on credit and debt restructuring; the Washington Sustainable Food & Farming Network; and Brian Bookey from National Food Corporation. In addition, we'll have local farmers bringing their unique "Been there, done that!" perspective to the conversation.

2 We'll continue on **Thursday, March 10** with Managing Your Water Resources with Bob Simmons, WSU Olympic Region water resources specialist; Scott Patee, Skagit NRCS forecasting expert; and John Rose, hydrologist and GIS analyst with Washington Department of Ecology's Water Resource Program. The evening will focus on water quality, quantity, and rights including: H2O facts and myths: Will we have enough? Do you know your water rights? and Water quality: What you need to know as a farmer.

3 **Thursday, March 17** will be devoted to Selling What You Grow with Whitney Keyes from Whitney Keyes Productions and Greg Prang, an expert on consumer insight. During the evening, you'll learn how to gather and put to use information about you and your customers to make marketing and promotional efforts more strategic and effective. Learn how to find and reach the right customers, gain more value from your efforts, and be more profitable.

4 We'll wrap up the series on **Thursday, March 24** with an evening devoted to No Fear Farm Financial Management with Dr. Michael Brady, WSU Extension economist, and Wendy Knopp from Northwest Farm Credit Services. Topics covered include financial statements, benchmark ratios, investment analysis, budgeting, and tips to help put your bottom line in the black.

With locations on both sides of the state connected synchronously, each evening session runs from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Western Washington location is at Everett Community College's Gray Wolf Building, 2000 Tower St. Everett, WA. For those in Eastern Washington, location is WSU Spokane County Extension at 222 N Havana, Spokane, WA.

All Farm Talks are free! However, space is limited and you must pre-register to ensure your spot. To register, visit [FarmTalks.Brownpapertickets.com](http://FarmTalks.Brownpapertickets.com). For more information on the FarmTalks, visit [snohomish.wsu.edu/FarmTalks/](http://snohomish.wsu.edu/FarmTalks/) or contact Holly Small, [hollynthompson@wsu.edu](mailto:hollynthompson@wsu.edu) or Kate Halstead, [khalstead@wsu.edu](mailto:khalstead@wsu.edu), (425) 357-6024.

Course sponsors include Snohomish Conservation District, Moss Adams LLC, Western Extension Risk Management Education, USDA RMA, and Northwest Farm Credit Services.

## *In Short*

### **Report: How States Strengthen Local Food Systems**

The National Conference of State Legislatures has released a new report examining state legislation in all 50 states enacted between 2012 and 2014 that aimed to strengthen various components of local food systems.

“[Harvesting Healthier Options: State Legislative Trends in Local Foods 2012-2014](#)” focuses on six policy areas, including farm to school.

Each section contains an introduction to the policy area and relevant research, case study or studies highlighting notable state actions and an analysis of trends in 2012 to 2014 legislation, followed by summaries of all enacted legislation in the policy areas.

[View the report here.](#)

### **WA Department of Revenue Tax Workshops**

Attend a Business Outreach workshop to learn the basics of Washington State taxes. This free workshop will help you understand your tax reporting responsibilities. Tax reporting classifications, deductions, sales tax collection, and recordkeeping requirements will be discussed. You'll also have the opportunity to ask questions regarding taxes that apply specifically to your business.

To find out when the next workshop will be held in your area, please select a month below. For special accommodation needs, please call (360) 705-6624. If you have tax questions, please contact us.

Check out the workshop calendar by going to: <https://goo.gl/quKOgV>

### **2016 Columbia River Policy Advisory Group - recent presentations and water supply outlook**

The following presentations from the recent **Columbia River Policy Advisory Group** meeting are now available for viewing or download:

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cwp/pag\\_2016.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cwp/pag_2016.html)

- Washington State Department of Agriculture Interim Report on the 2015 Drought

- Office of Columbia River Financial Challenges & Budget Updates

- 2016 Water Supply Outlook

The next meeting is scheduled for May 12 at the Hal Holmes Center in Ellensburg

## *In Short*

### **Documentary - Watershed Agreement: The Truce Ending Washington's Water War**

The \$4+ billion dollar plan to help Central Washington farms and fish better survive droughts. After decades of contentious battles and lawsuits over water rights, a diverse group of farmers, irrigators, Native Americans, conservationists, and government officials set aside their self-interests to cooperate and develop one of the biggest water projects. The documentary looks at the history of the water wars in Washington, what convinced the sides to finally come together, the projects each group will get in return, and why some believe the plan spends too much taxpayer money for too little payoff in the face of a changing climate.

**Watch the documentary by going to:**  
<http://goo.gl/RXeV0P>

### **Study Explores Economic Impact of Local Food Operations**

University of Minnesota Extension has published Financial Benchmarks and Economic Impact of Local Food Operations.

This investigation of 11 mixed-vegetable enterprises in Central Minnesota found that small farms return \$232,550 more to the local economy per million dollars of output than conventional agriculture. An estimated 65 small-scale vegetable farms in the 13-county study area bring in an estimated \$1.1 million in wage and proprietor income.

The complete 25-page project report is available online in PDF.

<http://goo.gl/sQ4pLj>

### **Purdue Offers Livestock Budgeting Tools for Small-Scale Producers**

Purdue Extension has developed a pair of Web-based, interactive resources to help small-scale livestock producers make critical budgeting decisions.

The Purdue Comparative Decision Support matrix (PCDS) includes a spreadsheet tool that allows users to create an operating budget based on their own fixed and variable costs, cash flow, and expected revenue.

The PCDS2 profit/loss analysis function uses cost and price information to calculate potential earnings.

**Both tools are available online.**

<https://goo.gl/HUyFjT>

# WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

## Mark Your Calendars

<p><b>Reduced Tillage Organic Ag &amp; Cover Crop Research Field Day - April 25</b></p> <p>No-till and strip-till vegetables Cover crop selection Precision cover cropping Cover crop management Soil quality Organic fertility</p> <p><b>Where:</b> WSU Puyallup Extension</p> <p>Full details here: <a href="http://goo.gl/bUwIer">http://goo.gl/bUwIer</a></p>	<p><b>Women in Agriculture Conference March 19, 2016</b></p> <p>This years <a href="#">Women in Agriculture Conference</a> takes place at several locations across WA, OR and ID.</p> <p><b>More Info:</b> <a href="http://goo.gl/8vNbem">http://goo.gl/8vNbem</a></p> <p>Please email <a href="mailto:donna.rolen@wsu.edu">donna.rolen@wsu.edu</a> (or call 509.745.8531) for updates on our 2016 conference on March 19.</p>	<p><b>Seminar Group: Floodplain Development: Regulation under FEMA and ESA</b></p> <p>Seattle, WA - May 19, 2016</p> <p>Seminar Available via Live Webcast.</p> <p>To view full agenda, which includes registration information and pricing, go to the link below. To register over the phone, or if you have any questions please call us at 800-574-4852.</p> <p><a href="http://goo.gl/qCz9EO">http://goo.gl/qCz9EO</a></p>
<p><b>Grape Pest and Disease Management for Western WA - Mar. 19</b></p> <p>Join WSU Extension for this workshop with Dr. Michelle Moyer, Assistant Professor and Extension Viticulturist and Gwen Hoheisel, Regional Extension Specialist from the WSU Viticulture and Enology Program in Prosser, WA. Location is the Stillaguamish Grange, 6521 Pioneer Hwy, Stanwood, WA.</p> <p><b>Registration and details:</b> <a href="http://goo.gl/MHK5dQ">http://goo.gl/MHK5dQ</a></p>	<p><b>Farm Financial Benchmarking - Thursday's, March 10th &amp; 17th Mt. Vernon, WA</b></p> <p>Presented By Economic Development Association of Skagit County - the workshop will cover several valuable small farm financial management tools.</p> <p>2 Days!— Thursdays, March 10th &amp; 17th 1:00pm-5:00pm - \$10 Registration Fee Includes Refreshments. All workshops are bi-lingual</p> <p><a href="https://goo.gl/wES0S7">https://goo.gl/wES0S7</a></p>	<p><b>Wholesale Success Workshop March 23 - Sequim, WA</b></p> <p>NOT JUST FOR WHOLESALE FARMERS! This training builds capacity of farmers at all scales to meet the burgeoning demand for locally grown fruits and vegetables. Learn how to meet your buyers' expectations with best practices for post-harvest handling, packing, grading, food safety, and business management. Learn strategies to become more efficient and profitable.</p> <p>See the flyer at: <a href="http://goo.gl/9DiG0">http://goo.gl/9DiG0</a></p>
<p><b>Wholesale Success: Post-Harvest Handling &amp; Food Safety, Mt. Vernon, WA - March 26</b></p> <p>WSU Northwest Research and Extension Center, \$20 registration, scholarships available, Bi-lingual Spanish/English.</p> <p><a href="#">Register here</a></p> <p><b>More details here:</b></p> <p>Wholesale Success: Post-Harvest Handling &amp; Food Safety</p> <p><a href="https://goo.gl/OfrdK">https://goo.gl/OfrdK</a></p>	<p><b>Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Farm Walk March 24 - Dharma Ridge Farm, Quilcene, WA</b></p> <p>Buyers increasingly require on-farm food safety assurances. Expand your market access by learning best practices for food safety on your farm. Prepare for a voluntary GAPs audit with this farm walk and working session led by WSDA educators and GAPs auditors.</p> <p>See the flyer at: <a href="http://goo.gl/9DiG0">http://goo.gl/9DiG0</a></p>	<p><b>Local Buying Tour Event, April 4 - Poulsbo, WA</b></p> <p>Connect with other fruit and vegetable farmers and buyers on this "mobile workshop" tour that will demystify direct, local buying. Site visits and presentations from local farms and food businesses will explore the ins and outs of successful direct sales relationships, with plenty of time for farmers and buyers to talk directly about their products and sourcing needs.</p> <p>See the flyer at: <a href="http://goo.gl/9DiG0">http://goo.gl/9DiG0</a></p>

"OUR MISSION IS TO PROMOTE THE VITALITY OF FARMING, FARMERS, AND RANCHERS BY ENSURING THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN WASHINGTON STATE. WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS THROUGH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATURE, THE OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OTHERS AND BY ENLISTING PUBLIC SUPPORT. PROGRAMS WILL BE VOLUNTARY, RECOGNIZE LOCAL PRIORITIES, AND PROVIDE FOR ECONOMIC INCENTIVES."