

Washington State Conservation Commission

FARMLAND PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2016

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



13th Focus on Farming—Nov 3—Monroe

The 13th annual Focus on Farming conference "Solutions for a Growing World," will be held November 3, 2016 at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds in Monroe, WA. The conference will also include Focus on Forestry workshops.

Participants will spend an outstanding day of learning, networking and enjoying farm fresh local products prepared by fantastic chefs from the Mill Creek Country Club. Local and national farmers, researchers and experts will share innovative ideas, and attendees will learn how new and upcoming farmers are shaping the future of the agricultural world and providing tomorrow's food. Some of the top experts in the country will present 24 great workshop classes in six industry tracks. The conference will once again include Focus on Forestry workshops.

View [more details](#) and register today!



2016 PNW Cash Rents Survey released

The Cash Rents Survey provides the basis for county estimates of the cash rent paid for irrigated cropland, non-irrigated cropland, and pasture. The 2008 Farm Bill mandated that [NASS](#) provide mean rental rates for all counties with 20,000 acres of cropland plus pasture.

The county level Cash Rents Survey is conducted bi-annually in all states.

Check out the WA report at: [09/12/2016: Cash Rent by County 2014 and 2016](#) (PDF)

In **Washington**, all cropland rental expense is \$195 per acre for 2016, down \$13.00 per acre from the previous year. Irrigated cropland is estimated at \$345 per acre, unchanged from 2015. Non-irrigated cropland rental expense is \$72.00 per acre, down \$3.00 per acre from last year. Producers paid \$9.00 per acre for pasture rent in 2016.



Report: 2015 Household Food Security in the U.S.

USDA recently released the Household Food Security in the United States in 2015 report. The report presents statistics from the survey covering households' food security, food expenditures, and use of Federal food and nutrition assistance programs in 2015.

Most U.S. households have consistent, dependable access to enough food for active, healthy living—they are food secure. But some American households experience food insecurity at times during the year, meaning their access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources.

An estimated 12.7 percent of American households were food insecure at least some time during the year in 2015, meaning they lacked access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. That is down from 14.0 percent in 2014. **Click here for report summary and the entire report:** <https://goo.gl/ZJRBVq>

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>

Financial Management Series—Wenatchee WA

The Center for Latino Farmers, a division of the Rural Community Development Resources (RCDR) will be hosting a 20-hr educational series on Farm Financial Management for farmers in the Wenatchee area. It will consist of understanding credit, financial statements, equity assessments, so that a farm business plan can be prepared. In addition, it will assist them in setting up a record keeping and develop a manual and/or computerized accounting system.



Registration is open and is limited to 15 people per session on a first come first serve basis. Priority is given to farmers/ranchers that want to qualify for an FSA loan for a real estate purchase, to buy equipment or for working capital. To register or receive more information, please call Maria Giedra 509-453-3157.

Date: November 7, 8, 9, 10, 2016

Time: 5:00 pm– 9:00 pm (each day)

Place: Wenatchee Valley College - Wenatchee

Cost: \$50/person or \$75.00/Couple



400 Member CSA Started With a 2-Acre Backyard Garden

For a few years Kacie Luckett was told there was no way she could compete against large farms at a Farmers Market when she only had 2-acres of growing space. And they were right.

“It wasn’t going too well and I wasn’t making a profit,” said Kacie, owner of Luckett Farms in East Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She tried to get into the Red Stick Farmers Market in Baton Rouge — the largest Farmers Market in the area. “But they wouldn’t let me in because I had no experience and didn’t have a big enough garden or variety of produce,” said Kacie.



So she turned her sights elsewhere.

After a brief conversation with her sister-in-law, she decided to take a different route and use the two acres of land in her backyard to start a Community Supported Agriculture, or CSA. CSAs allow individuals to purchase shares of the harvest produced by a farm.

But if she couldn’t sell at the Farmers Market, what made her think she could sell her produce at a CSA? That’s what the naysayers said. **Read more.** <https://goo.gl/JrQO1M>

Enhanced deduction for charitable contributions of food inventory

The Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act of 2015 modified and retroactively made permanent the Section 170 (e)(3)(C) enhanced deduction associated with ‘qualified contributions’ of food inventory. This deduction had expired at the end of calendar year 2014, but the PATH Act of 2015 reinstated it as of January 1, 2015, providing another opportunity for taxpayers that are not C corporations (e.g., partnerships, S corp.) to obtain a greater benefit for their charitable contributions.

Charitable contributions of food inventory are made by many different taxpayers, but they tend to be more common within the grocery and restaurant industries. For example, grocers regularly contribute large amounts of canned goods and perishable items nearing expiration to tax-exempt charitable organizations providing assistance to homeless and impoverished families. While taxpayers generally are entitled to a tax deduction for making these types of charitable contributions, the deduction usually is limited to the basis of the contributed property. However, a special rule for qualified contributions may apply, resulting in an enhanced charitable contribution deduction (i.e., a deduction that is greater than basis).

Resources:

<http://www.foodtodonate.com/Fdcmain/TaxBenefits.aspx>

[Enhanced deduction for charitable Contributions of food inventory](#)—PDF Fact Sheet

[Farmers Guide to Tax Deductions for Food Donations](#)—PDF Fact Sheet

In Short

High Tunnels and Other Season Extension Techniques Now Available

Spurred by enthusiasm and growing markets for local agricultural products, farmers are increasing the availability of their crops beyond the traditional outdoor growing season. Find out how with SARE's High Tunnels and Other Season Extension Techniques, a collection of practical resources for experienced growers and those who are new to season extension.

Download for free by going to:

<https://goo.gl/abr0fW>

This topic brief is a companion to SARE's [High Tunnels and Other Season Extension Techniques](#) Topic Room, an online collection of dozens of free books, bulletins, fact sheets, case studies, videos and more.

Cover Cropping Research

Planting a multi-species mixture of cover crops — rather than a cover crop monoculture — between cash crops, provides increased agroecosystem services, or multifunctionality, according to researchers in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

That was the conclusion drawn from a two-year study of 18 cover-crop treatments, ranging in diversity from one to eight plant species.

Story on the research: <http://news.psu.edu/story/424543/2016/09/07/research/first-kind-study-suggests-cover-crop-mixtures-increase>

Link to research results: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2664.12765/full>

Grant: Whole Kids Foundation: School Garden Grant Program

The Whole Kids Foundation is dedicated to supporting schools and inspiring families to improve children's nutrition and wellness. The Foundation's School Garden Grant Program provides support for edible gardens at K-12 schools in the U.S. and Canada. These grants of \$2,000 are awarded to schools as well as nonprofit organizations working in partnership with schools. Consideration is given to new or existing garden projects at any stage of development that help children engage with fresh fruits and vegetables.

The application process opened September 1, 2016. Applications must be submitted by **October 31, 2016**.

Details: <https://goo.gl/0R6szs>

New Ag Land Report out of Oregon

Our neighbors to the south have completed a report looking at land tenure and the future of Oregon ag lands. While not Washington state specific, lots of similarities exist.

Sixty-four percent of Oregon's agricultural land may pass to new owners during the next 20 years, as found in a new study released today by Oregon State University, Portland State University and Rogue Farm Corps entitled: "The Future of Oregon's Agricultural Land." The study explores and connects the impact of critical issues like aging farmer populations, increasing land prices, acquisition and development on the state's economy and rural way of life.

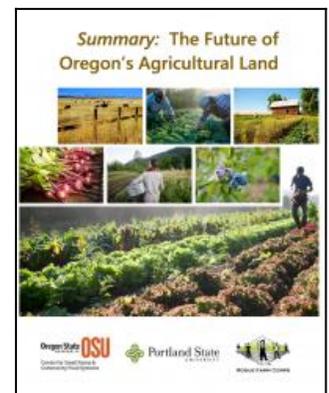
Interesting data points include:

- The average age of an Oregon farmer is 60, the highest in Oregon's history.
- More than two-thirds of Oregon farmlands are managed by those 55 and older.
- High sale prices are restrictive for new farmers (as high as \$30k an acre in Clackamas County).
- 25 to 40 percent of farmland in four counties was sold to businesses in the past five years, many of them investment entities and many with out-of-state addresses.
- 100,000 acres of Oregon farmland has been taken out of agricultural production since 1974.

The report identifies important avenues for further research and educational/policy tools like working lands easements, farming-savvy succession counselors, etc. These efforts assist Oregon farmers with succession planning, and help farmers in secure land to ensure it remains used for agricultural purposes.

"With 84 percent of Oregon farms and ranches being sole proprietorships, we're concerned that many farms do not have thorough succession plans. It begs the question of how this land will transition and the impact that will have on future generations," said Nellie McAdams, farm preservation program director of Rogue Farm Corps.

Read the report by going to: <http://centerforsmallfarms.oregonstate.edu/publications>



Washington State Food System Roundtable

The Washington State Food System Roundtable, a group initiated through a 2012 executive order, recently released a draft proposed roadmap to carry out a 25-year vision for a sustainable food system. The draft Prospectus provides an initial roadmap for Washington to progress towards the 25-year vision, and stewardship options to carry the movement forward. We are unveiling this roadmap - our Prospectus - in stages, starting with an executive summary and our key Action Areas and related strategies.

You can download and learn more by going to: <http://wafoodsystem.weebly.com/draft-food-system-prospectus.html>

You can also engage in this effort as the Roundtable will be holding engagement meetings around the state over the next month. Please follow this link to learn where these meetings will be taking place and on which dates. <http://wafoodsystem.weebly.com/share-your-thoughts.html>

Meetings will be in Wenatchee, Spokane, Okanogan, Bellingham, Yakima, Chelan, and Vancouver.



USDA Announces \$26m Investment to Spur Ag Innovation

USDA recently announced the investment of \$26.6 million by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) into 45 projects that will spur innovative conservation initiatives on both rural and urban farms across the country. One of those awards went to Washington State University (\$455,915) for their work to increase irrigation efficiencies throughout Washington.

This project will work to increase efficiencies by encouraging adoption of proven irrigation monitoring technology, irrigation efficient equipment and conservation practices through the following objectives: (1) Educate and enroll farmers in the Irrigation Scheduler Mobile (ISM) system; a tailored, wateruse efficiency monitoring application associated with a water savings value of 20%. (2) Increase water-use efficiency by providing voluntary irrigation assessments and delivering a tailored compilation of recommendations for irrigation system improvements. Quantify changes in wateruse efficiency rates of participants. (3) Facilitate the adoption of irrigation equipment upgrades by providing consultations and technical assistance for EQIP grant proposals. **Full list of awards here:** <https://goo.gl/B5Njlg>

Certified Organic Survey Results Show Sales Up 13% Nationally

[USDA-NASS](#) recently released the results of the 2015 Certified Organic Survey. Results show that 12,818 certified organic farms in the United States sold a total of \$6.2 billion in organic products in 2015, up 13 percent from \$5.5 billion in 2014.

The organic reports provide acreage, production, and sales data for a variety of organic crop and livestock commodities as well as organic marketing and agricultural practices.

While Washington does not have the most certified organic farms (California and Wisconsin had the most at 2,637 and 1,205 respectively), the state's 598 farms had a sales value of \$626,445 million, second only to California's \$2.4 billion. In 2015, Washington had 71,781 acres of certified organic farmland.

Check out the full results by going to: <https://goo.gl/Y19NbY>

Orchard Netting: A Catch All for Climate Change Adaptation

One technique that is helping tree fruit growers in the Northwest adapt to climate change is orchard netting, writes WSU horticulture graduate student Brendon Anthony. Orchardists are finding that shade cloth can protect fruit from wind, untimely precipitation, pests, and pathogens. Photosensitive colored netting may help with fruit set, fruit size, coloration, and other attributes, as well.



An example of red and blue “photosensitive” nets hanging over a Honeycrisp Orchard in WA State. Research shows that nets like these can help improve the light quality and insulate against a changing climate. Photo: B. Anthony

Check out the research at: <http://csanr.wsu.edu/orchard-netting-cc/>

In Short

WA Dept of Commerce awards clean energy technology funding

Commerce recently announced the next nine projects awarded matching grants from the state's Clean Energy Fund to advance research and development of a wide range of clean technologies. One of the projects was awarded to a dairy in Lynden (**Edaleen Cow Power, LLC**)

The Lynden based Edaleen Dairy will install an advanced solids/nutrient recovery system at its digester. This project will demonstrate and evaluate an emerging technology that extracts up to 35 percent nitrogen and 90 percent phosphorus from cattle waste. The opportunity to develop value-added products, such as fertilizers from waste, represents a major benefit to the dairy industry across the state and the nation.

Details here: <https://goo.gl/QOLr4t>

Attention CSA farmers: CSA Member Agreement Workbook

Most CSA producers share the same goal: A strong CSA program that is stable and profitable with a member base that feels connected to farm

[Farm Commons](#) is currently offering a CSA member agreement [workbook](#).

The workbook explains the legal best practices for drafting a CSA member agreement, then gives examples for how individual farms might make those principles a reality on paper.

In the end, farmers will be able to draft a terrific agreement for their own members.

Check it out by going to:

<https://goo.gl/YGVu17>

Research—Orchard Management Can Produce More Desirable Hard-Cider Apples

Cornell University research is revealing ways in which apples grown with specific orchard management practices can produce more desirable hard cider.

For hard cider, a heavier crop load, with smaller, bitter fruits may be better because the smaller apples have a higher concentration of polyphenols.

Hard apple cider was widespread throughout the American colonies from the time Europeans began immigrating to North America until Prohibition, in the 1920s. Hard cider has remained popular in Europe, but it has only recently enjoyed a revival in the states. Within the past five years, U.S. cider consumption has increased by 850 percent.

Read more: <https://goo.gl/rcpK2L>

In Short

Grant: Extension Risk Management Education Competitive Grants Program

The Western Extension Risk Management Education Center recently announced the 2017 Request For Applications (RFA).

<http://westrme.wsu.edu/grants-program/>

2017 RFA Timeline:

November 17, 2016 – Application Deadline

February 17, 2017 – Award Notification

April 1, 2017 – Start Date for Funded Projects

[2016 Western Center Request For Applications \(RFA\)](#)

Basics of Meat Processing Fact Sheets Available from Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network

Want to learn more about meat processing but aren't sure where to start? Processing is an essential link in local meat supply chains, but it's a complicated business. If you're a livestock producer — or work with producers — and have questions or concerns about processing, you'll benefit from NMPAN's "**Beginner's Guide to Local Meat Processing**" on the basics. And if you're a processor already, you can use the short fact sheets below to educate others about your business.

The fact sheets cover: What is Local Meat Processing? What are the Rules? Small Plant Economics, and New Plant Checklist. Download at: <https://goo.gl/YRWkTm>

Flour company expands classes to new WSU Bread Lab

King Arthur Flour, America's oldest flour company, will expand its baking school this fall from New England to Washington State University's Bread Lab in the Skagit Valley.

Registration is open at <http://www.kingarthurfLOUR.com/baking-school>

The baking school classroom is part of the new 12,000 square-foot facility for the Bread Lab wheat think tank. It will include wheat milling and bread baking labs, a professional kitchen and meeting areas for collaboration and experimentation.

Find a schedule of Bread Lab classes and read more at <http://www.kingarthurfLOUR.com/press/bread-lab-baking-school-opening.html>.

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Mark Your Calendars

Bridging the GAPs - On-Farm Food Safety Workshop - October 10 Sunnyside, WA —Bilingual

WSDA is offering an on-farm food safety workshop on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and new FDA Produce Safety Rules mandated under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). Learn practical, cost-effective methods for handling food safety to ensure product quality, stay current with regulations and open market opportunities.

Details: <https://goo.gl/wGuRv0>

H2O – Managing Your Resources: Quality, Quantity, and Water Rights—Oct 18—Everett

Tuesday, October 18, 2016, 5:30pm-8:30pm. Cost is \$15 per person or \$25 per farm or family up to three.

To register, visit H2OResources.EventBrite.com.

For more information, visit snohomish.wsu.edu/event/H2OResources

Farm Financial Management November 2016—Wenatchee, WA

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Time: 5:00 pm– 9:00 pm (each day)
Place: Wenatchee Valley College
Cost: \$50/person or \$75.00/Couple

Law CLE: Agriculture Law February 16 & 17—Wenatchee

There are unique regulations and legal issues faced by companies in the agriculture industry. Anyone involved in the agribusiness, be it growers, ranchers, distributors, service providers, or legal representatives, need to be up to speed on the latest issues to achieve their goals.

Agenda and details at:

<https://goo.gl/aF7omb>

Washington Small Fruit Conference & Lynden Ag Show, Lynden WA Nov 30—Dec 2

Washington Small Fruit Conference is a 3-day conference with latest relevant research information delivered by the scientists performing the research. Lunches each day are provided.

Remote viewing available in Prosser.

Registration and full details at:

<https://goo.gl/mFWUDu>

Tilth Annual Conference Wenatchee Conference Center November 11-13:

Every year, the Tilth Conference brings together hundreds of farmers, producers, researchers and food system professionals to network and learn. This is a great way to meet others in your field, enjoy locally sourced meals and participate in fun evening events around Wenatchee.

Details available by going to:

<http://goo.gl/DzNJPT>

Free: Agriculture Business Training November 4, Tumwater

This free training event hosted by the state Labor & Industries will offer 24 courses to choose from over the course of the day.

These range from ag employment standards to business planning.

Register and see the full list of courses being covered by downloading the PDF at: <https://goo.gl/O9YcqT>

9th Annual Water Rights Transfers CLE—November 9/10—Seminar Available via Live Webcast

This seminar is designed to provide information of vital interest to water right holders, developers and advocates.

To view full agenda, which includes registration information and pricing, go:

<http://goo.gl/TEvzjG>

5th Annual Easements and CCRs in Washington—Seattle, WA - Nov 4, 2016 Seminar—Available via Live Webcast.

Easements are often skimmed over, not discussed and buried someplace in a title report. However, what you don't know can hurt you.

To view full agenda, which includes registration information and pricing, go to: <http://goo.gl/j4Z0bV>

“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.”