

Washington State Conservation Commission

FARMLAND PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

JULY 2017

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



EPA, U.S. Army Move to Rescind 2015 "Waters of the U.S."

The Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Army, and Army Corps of Engineers (the agencies) are proposing a rule to rescind the Clean Water Rule and re-codify the regulatory text that existed prior to 2015 defining "waters of the United States" or WOTUS. This action would, when finalized, provide certainty in the interim, pending a second rulemaking in which the agencies will engage in a substantive re-evaluation of the definition of "waters of the United States." The proposed rule would be implemented in accordance with Supreme Court decisions, agency guidance, and longstanding practice.



This proposed rule follows the February 28, 2017, Presidential Executive Order on "Restoring the Rule of Law, Federalism, and Economic Growth by Reviewing the 'Waters of the United States' Rule." The February Order states that it is in the national interest to ensure that the Nation's navigable waters are kept free from pollution, while at the same time promoting economic growth, minimizing regulatory uncertainty, and showing due regard for the roles of Congress and the States under the Constitution. Continue reading at: <https://www.epa.gov/wotus-rule>

The pre-publication version of the proposed rule is [available online](#).

Study: How health factors into consumer decisions

From Food Business News—June 2017

In its 2017 Food & Health Survey, the International Food Information Council (IFIC) seeks to outline the health beliefs and behaviors of U.S. consumers regarding food. In the 12th edition of the survey, entitled "A Healthy Perspective: Understanding American Food Values," IFIC dives deeply into hot-button food issues such as consumer confusion, navigating the information landscape, sustainability and food safety.



2017 FOOD & HEALTH SURVEY



IFIC's survey consisted of 1,002 Americans aged 18-20 and was conducted by Greenwald & Associates using ResearchNow's consumer panel. According to the study, 59% of those surveyed considered themselves to be in "very good" or "excellent" health. The majority of participants defined "healthy" as a lack of health problems rather than the presence of healthy habits such as eating healthy, being in good shape or being capable of exercise or physical activity.

Read more here: <https://goo.gl/R93D2F>

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>

WSDA picks projects for USDA specialty crop money

[Don Jenkins—Capital Press](#)

The Washington State Department of Agriculture has submitted 20 projects to the USDA receive a total of \$4.1 million in federal specialty crop grants.

The USDA is expected to announce grant recipients in the fall. The USDA last year funded all projects selected by WSDA.

The grants range from \$75,000 to \$250,000. Some of the money will be spent to promote sales of apples, asparagus, wine and other products. Some grants will fund research into such subjects as managing plant diseases and fertilizing with manure.

Several grants will fund research at Washington State University. A large grant will go to The Center for Produce Safety and the University of California-Davis to work on a reusable anti-bacterial liner for plastic containers.

Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture.

Click through to view the selected projects: [Link to Capital Press](#)



Food Policy—Complete Eats Fruit and Vegetable Coupons at Safeway Stores

The Washington State Department of Health is teaming up with Safeway to offer [Complete Eats](#), a new program in Washington that makes it easier for families on a limited budget to afford fruits and vegetables.

Complete Eats offers savings to shoppers who use their SNAP/Basic Food benefits (formerly called Food Stamps) when they buy Complete Eats marked fruits and vegetables. Shoppers who buy at least \$10 worth of qualifying fruits and vegetables using their SNAP/EBT card and their Safeway Club Card will get a coupon for \$5 off their next purchase.



When it comes to offering nutrition incentives to families who use SNAP, the participation of a major chain supermarket is important. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 81 percent of all SNAP benefits are redeemed at supermarkets and large grocery stores, so these large retailers are uniquely positioned to reach SNAP shoppers with incentives for buying nutritious foods.

Another notable feature about Complete Eats is that the program offers coupon savings on fruits and vegetables, which is rare. [Research](#) shows that very few store coupons are ever for fruits and vegetables, and most are for sugary drinks.

More information about the Complete Eats program can be found on the [Department of Health's website](#).

Audubon's Conservation Ranching Program Building Specialty Beef Market

Audubon's Conservation Ranching Program pairs livestock producers with local ecologists who guide them through sustainable grazing practices and other land-management systems that create vital habitats for birds.

The program includes a "Grazed on Bird-Friendly Land" label that participants can use. So far, 40 ranchers covering 600,000 acres in seven states are participating in the program.

Learn more at the Audubon website: <https://goo.gl/G72Lv9>



Need for Automation to Back Deployment of Agriculture Robots

The growing need for automating agricultural processes is likely to boost the deployment of agriculture robots in the near future, states TMR Research in a research report. The report is titled, “[Agriculture Robots Market – Global Industry Analysis, Share, Growth, Trends and Forecast 2017 – 2025.](#)”

Robots are likely to substitute agricultural hands in the coming years. They can milk cows, sow and reap crops, and also pluck. They carry out the assigned tasks comparatively quicker and with great accuracy. Along with this, the directives on an enhanced minimum pay being imposed in many nations is expected to spell good news for the global agriculture robots market.

Read more at: <https://goo.gl/AnW575>



A robot being used in vineyards in Chalon-sur-Saône, France. Photograph: Philippe Desmazes/AFP/Getty Images

Revenue offers webinar about business taxes July 13

Business owners in Washington have many responsibilities, including knowing which taxes they must report. To help reach more businesses statewide, the Washington State Department of Revenue (Revenue) will host a free live webinar for new and small business owners on **Thursday, July 13**. In offering these live webinars, Revenue aims to make it easier for small businesses to participate.

The deadline to register is Wednesday, July 12. [Sign up here](#)

Participants will learn about Washington excise taxes, reporting classifications, deductions, sales tax collection, and record-keeping requirements. During the webinar, the facilitator will answer specific questions related to your business. Continuing education credit is also available.

The Revenue website at www.dor.wa.gov/Workshops offers a complete schedule of in-person business workshops held around the state and short video versions of the workshops.

Bee Certification for Farmers and Ranchers

Certification for Farmers and Ranchers Who Help Bees on America's Working Lands!

The NRCS works with conservation partners like the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation to help farmers plan and implement conservation practices that benefit bees and other pollinators. Through a new certification program - Bee Better Certified - agricultural producers can inform consumers that they are farming in ways that benefit bees.

Funded by a grant from the USDA, the Xerces Society partnered with Oregon Tilth to develop and launch the Bee Better Certified program. The project received a \$350,000 Conservation Innovation Grant in 2016 from the NRCS which Xerces matched to develop and test the first-of-its-kind program.

After piloting the program with 13 farmers over the past few months, Xerces and Oregon Tilth are now opening it to farmers nationwide.

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



Farmers: Apply to sell to schools in WA through the USDA Pilot Project

The [WSDA Regional Markets](#) team is working with farms and other suppliers to sell directly to schools in the [USDA Pilot Project for Unprocessed Fruits & Vegetables](#). There's still time to apply with USDA to become an approved vendor before next school year!

Nineteen school districts across the state are looking for more farms and other produce vendors to buy from for the 2017-18 School Year. [See the list of participating districts](#) (PDF).

Washington schools have allocated over **\$850,000 to this program to buy from local farms**, processors, and fresh produce distributors this coming school year.

For questions about the program or support with your application, [contact WSDA!](#)

Eligible vendors must meet USDA requirements including applicable USDA or GFSI recognized GAP/GHP/GMP certification, a Food Defense audit for some vendor types, and product liability insurance.

Application materials and eligibility details can be found on the [USDA-AMS Pilot Project webpage](#).



Emerging Tech: Animal waste treatment system for dairy farms

Two awards for the Janicki Bioenergy waste water treatment system received funding from the State Department of Commerce through their Clean Energy Fund and the federal NRCS through a Conservation Innovation Grant.

[Janicki Bioenergy of Sedro-Woolley](#)

Awarded \$283,158 from Commerce to demonstrate their innovative vapor recompression distillation system that produces clean, potable water from dairy manure wastewater using thermal evaporation, steam compression, vapor recovery and water treatment. This grant will demonstrate the commercial viability of Janicki's technology, which has the potential to provide global sanitation in places with no public water or sewer systems.

[Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians](#)

Awarded \$1,000,000 from NRCS to demonstrate successful implementation of an emerging animal waste treatment system for dairy farms. The technology, originally developed to address human waste in developing countries, is now being adapted to treat dairy waste. The advanced distillation and nutrient separation processor converts dairy wastewater into clean, distilled reclaim water, with liquid ammonia and nutrient-rich solid material by-products that can be used for agricultural purposes.

WSU Mount Vernon NWREC Annual Field Day

WSU NW Research & Extension Center Annual Field Day JULY 13, 2017 | 3:00 TO 6:00 PM

The WSU Mount Vernon NWREC Annual Field Day, which began in the 1940s, is free and open to the public. Beginning at 3:00 pm faculty and graduate students will host a walking tour of some of the nearly 150 acres of active research plots at the Center.

Hear about current research projects and learn how work at the Center impacts growers, consumers, agricultural businesses and local economies throughout the region. A tractor-driven wagon ride will be available for non-walkers. Field tours will conclude at 6:00 pm.

Visitors are invited to stay for a barbecue in the Center's Auditorium. Enjoy a locally prepared meal and connect with others in the agricultural community. [See the flyer for details](#)

In Short

Grant Opportunity: USDA Social-ly-Disadvantaged Groups Grants

USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service recently announced the availability of \$3 million in competitive grant funds to provide technical assistance to socially-disadvantaged groups in rural areas.

Eligible applicants include Cooperatives, Groups of Cooperatives, Cooperative Development Centers, and Native American tribal governments.

Electronic applications are due July 25, 2017. Paper applications must be postmarked by August 1, 2017.

Complete details at:

<https://goo.gl/qWDhSM>

Food Policy: Maine Enacts Food Sovereignty Law

Maine's governor recently signed An Act to Recognize Local Control Regarding Food Systems, reports Bangor Daily News.

The legislation legitimizes the authority of communities to enact ordinances regulating local food distribution independent of state regulatory control.

Supporters say the legislation opens new opportunities for small producers to sell food within their own communities.

Learn more at: <https://goo.gl/BxgMxP>

Washington state non-profit receives inaugural United Fresh community grant award.

The United Fresh Start Foundation recently announced 10 grant award recipients with one here in Washington going to non-profit [Food From Farms](#). More than 700 organizations applied for the community grants.

The Foundation established the Community Grants Program to advance the organization's mission to increase children's access to fresh fruit and vegetables. The program extends the Foundation's work beyond the school day, with the goal to provide children in communities across the country with access to fresh fruit and vegetables after-school, on weekends, during summer breaks and in other creative venues. [Learn more](#)

In Short

Guide on Managing Risks of Interns and Volunteers Available

Farm Commons has released a free, online guide titled [Managing Risks of Interns and Volunteers](#).

Employment laws that apply to interns, apprentices, and volunteers may include obligations to provide minimum wage, pay workers' compensation, and contribute payroll taxes--depending on whether State or Federal agricultural labor exemptions apply.

For information on Washington's farm internship project managed by the Department of Labor & Industries go to: <https://goo.gl/9BBg93>

Rice Farmers Sell First Carbon Credits

Seven rice farmers who implemented conservation measures that reduced methane emissions generated carbon credits that were sold to Microsoft.

The process is featured in an [NRCS interactive online story, "Nature's Stewards."](#)

The voluntary conservation practices implemented by the California, Arkansas, and Mississippi farmers not only generated carbon credits but also reduced energy consumption and water use.

Job Opening: Nash's Organic Produce—Livestock Husbandry

Nash's Organic Produce is currently hiring a Livestock Husbandry Assistant to work with the Livestock Manager to care for pastured hogs and laying hens raised on Nash's organic feed.

They are in need of more hands as they expand the livestock operation.

Nash's Organic Produce is located in Sequim, WA on the Olympic Peninsula.

Learn more at: <http://nashsorganicproduce.com/employment.html>

In Short

100 years of water law - Story map

The [Dept. of Ecology has been commemorating](#) our state's first water law, which turns 100 this year. Over time, the law has been changed to ensure that competing needs are addressed, including water to support the environment and fisheries, growing communities and individual homes, farms, and industry.

Ecology developed a story map to provides an interactive experience for everyone who is interested in learning how Washington's water laws have shaped our lives. It also takes a look at the next 100 years and what issues the state will need to address.

[Check it out here](#)

Quarterly Newsletter from WSU's Veterinary Medicine Extension

The summer 2017 edition of WSU's Veterinary Medicine includes several interesting and informational articles on livestock health.

Also included are research results and information on testing for bovine tuberculosis.

The newsletter also has a note on new fees for WSDA large animal certificates of veterinary inspection.

These and other animal related news can be found at:

[Summer 2017 Newsletter \(PDF\)](#)

Learn about the King County Local Food Initiative accomplishments in 2016

King County recently released an annual report on their Local Food Initiative.

Follow the progress as they work to implement efforts to create a stronger, more resilient local food system, and increase access to nutritious, affordable food in underserved communities.

This annual report includes a report card on their initial progress

[View the 2016 Local Food Initiative Report.](#)

[More information on the Local Food Initiative](#)

In Short

Farmers and ranchers have one week left to sign up to receive the 2017 Census of Agriculture

NASS [debuts new census video](#) and online questionnaire demo

New farmers and ranchers, and those not previously contacted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), have until the end of June to ensure they are represented in this year's Census of Agriculture.

To receive a census questionnaire this December, these producers are asked to visit the Census of Agriculture website at:

www.agcensus.usda.gov and click on the 'Make Sure You Are Counted' button today.

Soil Health Profile:

Douglas Poole, Mansfield WA

He's an evangelist who saved his own soil. Now he wants to help others save theirs.

When Douglas Poole speaks, you hear the passion in his voice for how healthy soil has helped his farm. But Poole wasn't always a soil health proponent; in fact he used to be an accountant. [Read his story here](#)



USDA research: The Relationship Between Energy Prices and Food-Related Energy Use in the United States

Food-related energy use includes all energy used in the production and preparation of foods and beverages purchased by and for U.S. consumers. Natural gas is used to produce the fertilizers applied on farms, and farmers use diesel fuel to run their tractors. Gasoline is used in transporting fresh produce from farms to grocery stores and restaurants, and from grocery stores to homes.

Researchers at ERS looked at energy use over time—see the results of their work by going to:

<https://goo.gl/dd3m7>

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Mark Your Calendars

<p style="text-align: center;">Cider & Perry Production A Foundation, October 9-13, Mt. Vernon, WA</p> <p>This five-day course located in Washington's Skagit Valley provides students with expert knowledge of cider and perry principles and practices. The curriculum includes information regarding cider culture, production, and business. Students of this course will participate in hands-on sensory demonstrations, laboratory exercises, and blending trials.</p> <p>Details at: https://goo.gl/bjGajl</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Barley field day - Wynoochee Valley—July 18th</p> <p>Ground to Glass: Evaluation of Barley Varieties for Craft Brewing, Distilling and Malting</p> <p>July 18th 4:30 – 7pm (reg./food at 4pm)</p> <p>Hidden River Farms - 627 Wynoochee Valley Rd - Montesano, WA</p> <p>Click through to see the flyer and RSVP http://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/event/4667/</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Hands-On Poultry Processing workshop—Freeland– Whidbey Island—July 12th</p> <p>This rigorous class is relevant for both the commercial producer and the home flock farmer.</p> <p>The workshop fee is \$95; pre registration is required in order to reserve sufficient birds.</p> <p>For more information, please see the webpage LINK or contact the NABC office: 360-336-3727 or <a href="mailto:se-
ra@agbizcenter.org">se- ra@agbizcenter.org</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Season Extension in Specialty Crops—July 10; noon - 4 p.m. Growing Washington, Everson</p> <p>Upcoming Tilth Farm Walk. Growing Washington is a 70 acre diversified, certified organic farm spread across eight sites in Whatcom and Skagit Counties.</p> <p>WSU specialists will be on hand to provide additional information about season extension and specialty crops.</p> <p>Details at: https://goo.gl/zM1EEw</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Growing a Revolution—Bringing our soil back to life—July 27-28</p> <p>David R. Montgomery will speak on Lopez Island July 27th and San Juan Island July 28th.</p> <p>Montgomery is a MacArthur Fellow and professor of Geomorphology at the University of Washington. He is an internationally recognized geologist who studies how erosion shapes topography and the effects of geological processes on ecological systems and human societies. Details</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6-week Small Ruminant Health class (September – 1st half October 2017—Wednesday evenings)</p> <p>Classes held at local farms and WSU Extension Thurston County.</p> <p>Course includes Nutrition, handling, reproduction, vaccinology, and more.</p> <p>Check out the flyer to register and learn more.</p> <p>http://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/agriculture/farming-news-resources/events/</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Save the Date! South Sound Food Summit—South Puget Sound Community College October 20 & 21</p> <p>Join the South Sound Food System Network (SSFSN) in October for a two day summit. SSFSN is comprised of local businesses, non-profits, educational institutions and local government agencies with a mission to grow a vibrant local food economy, ensure broad access to healthy foods, and steward the environment in the South Sound.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Save the Date! Whatcom Food Fest & Whatcom Farm Tour - September 8-10th.</p> <p>The Sustainable Connections Food & Farming program asks you to save the date! The Whatcom Food Fest will feature an expanded farm tour that will now be two days long including a number of other County wide food events.</p> <p>Check this newsletter or Sustainable Connections this summer for more details. https://goo.gl/IGtekQ</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SARE: Our Farms, Our Future Conference—April 2018</p> <p>USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE) and NCAT/ATTRA will host the Our Farms, Our Future conference April 3-5, 2018, in St. Louis, Missouri.</p> <p>Every decade, SARE hosts a conference to look at the progress of sustainability in agriculture and to understand the trajectory for the future.</p> <p>Details at: https://goo.gl/PSfQi5</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.”