WSU EXTENSION
Walla Walla County

May|June 2022
Volume 2022, Issue 3

NEWSLETTER

Don't Guess Soil Test

Adapted from Isaac Madsen, WSU Wheat & Small Grains

With record high fertilizer prices, it is more important than ever to efficiently use our fertilizer resources. The WSU Small Grains website has a number of useful tools and calculators for assisting in developing nitrogen rate recommendations. Soil organic matter changes very slowly over time and historical soil test results can be used to estimate the release of nitrogen from soil organic matter. However, the soil test nitrogen changes dramatically from year to year and it is important to soil test annually prior to developing fertilizer recommendations. Hence the saying popular among soil fertility specialists, "Don't guess soil test".

Links

WSU Small Grains Website: https://bit.ly/38Th5bX

WSU Dryland Wheat N Fertilizer Calculator: https://bit.ly/3vp2mx3

WSU Spring Canola N Rate Calculator: https://bit.ly/3xH8DXX

WSU Post Harvest N Efficiency Calculator: https://bit.ly/3EsrmaJ

In addition to the record high fertilizer prices for 2022, high commodity prices, and low yields and low precipitation in 2021 makes soil testing more important than ever for this crop year. Low crop yields generally result in less nutrient removal than high yielding crops leaving a greater amount of residual nitrogen in the soil. The amount of nitrogen used by a wheat crop can be estimated using the WSU Post Harvest Nitrogen Efficiency Calculator tool. While tools such as this can estimate the residual Nitrogen following harvest, they cannot predict the amount of Nitrogen available in the following year. Nitrogen remaining in the soil following harvest can be lost through leaching or denitrification. Soil testing is the only way to accurately assess the amount of nitrogen available to the plant in the soil. Once you have soil sampled, the WSU Nitrogen Fertilizer Recommendation Calculator can help you more accurately predict your spring and winter wheat nitrogen needs for the upcoming season. A little extra effort in soil sampling could save a lot on the fertilizer bill this year and improve yield and farm revenue.

Announcements

May 3—8, Milton-Freewater Jr. Show and Sale https://bit.ly/3650Sj4

May 10, 6—7:30 Dangerous Plants in Pastures and Paddocks. OSU Small Farms Program Online. https://bit.ly/3uSa3wE

May 16—18, WSU Tree Fruit, University of California, Airblast Spray Application & Modeling Conference, Online. https://ucanr.edu/sites/ASAM/

May 20, 8:30—4:00, WSU & WDNR Creating Healthy, Wildfire-Safe & Wildfire-Friendly Forests. Walla Walla. https://forestry.wsu.edu/ Or call (509) 667-6540

Walla Walla County Extension
328 W. Poplar St. Walla Walla, WA 99362

509-524-2685
http://extension.wsu.edu/wallawalla

Announcements (cont.)

May 24, 8am—5:30pm, WSU 2022 Viticulture Intern Boot Camp. Prosser. https://bit.ly/3JwBkZF

May 24, 6—7:30 pm, Don't Panic—What to do if Your Horse is Injured. OSU Small Farms Program. Online. https://bit.ly/3Er2Re3

May 25—26, Roots of Resilience Grazing Conference. Pendleton, OR. https://rootsofresilience.org/grazing-conference-2022

June 14—15. Cropping Systems Summer Expo: PNW Direct Seed Assoc. Colfax, Wa. www.directseed.org

June 23—26, Waitsburg Junior Livestock Show. Entry deadline https://bit.ly/3uvHzc0

WSU EXTENSION
Walla Walla County

POSTMASTER send address changes to:
WSU EXTENSION
328 WEST POPLAR
WALLA WALLA, WA 99362

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Stripe Rust Forecast and Update, March, 2022

By Xianming Chen

On April 15, we were checking winter wheat fields in the Horse Heaven Hill area in Benton County, Walla Walla County, Columbia County, and Garfield County of WA and Umatilla County of Oregon. Winter wheat ranged from Feekes 3 to 6. No rust was found on wheat plants, but stripe rust was found on wild grass in our winter wheat stripe rust monitoring.

Similarly, stripe rust was observed on wild grasses, but not on wheat plants in our winter wheat nursery and breeding nurseries at Central Ferry, Garfield County, WA on March 30, when we were planting spring cereal nurseries.

As stripe rust pressure is currently low in the eastern PNW, fungicide application is not recommended in the early growth season for winter wheat, unless stripe rust is observed in fields.

What is Stripe Rust? Why is it a problem? What are the symptoms and how is it managed? Learn more about Stripe Rust from WSU Wheat & Small Grains:

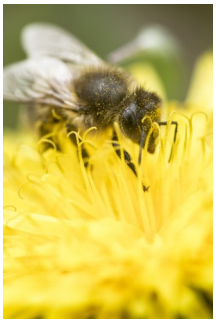
https://bit.ly/3Kpq81V

New from WSU Publications:

Learning Agroecology on the Land: Holding a Farm Walk (FS371E) https://bit.ly/3KnsbTV
Experts draw on evaluations and organizers' experiences to develop guidelines and share insights with others who may want to offer these programs. Authors include Anne Schwartz, Katherine Smith, Doug Collins, and Marcia Ostrom.

Manage Water by Adjusting Lawn Sprinkler Run Time: Instructions for the Columbia Basin of Washington State (FS372E) https://bit.ly/3y36TbH
Seasonal adjustments with an automatic controller will save money on water bills, maintain your lawn, and conserve water; easy-to-follow steps are included. Authored by WSU Extension Agronomist Andy McGuire.

Home & Garden



Why Those Dandelions in Your Yard Aren't So Bad

Adapted from Adam Varenhorst, South Dakota State University Extension Field Crop Entomologist

Every year, people work hard using herbicides to keep weeds out of their yards. Some of these weeds, including flowering plants like dandelions, can serve as early season food sources for pollinators. While research has shown that pollinators, specifically honey bees, can't survive on dandelion pollen alone, this doesn't mean that the dandelions aren't still important for pollinators.

During the spring, there are sometimes a limited number of flowering plants. However, dandelions tend to bloom on a consistent basis and can provide at least some sustenance to pollinators until other plants begin to bloom. On sunny days, close inspection of dandelions in a yard will reveal several different pollinators foraging for pollen.

Pollinators often rely on a diverse assemblage of flowers and pollen to meet their dietary needs, so consider holding off on removing dandelions until other flowers, trees, and shrubs are blooming.

If you do choose to use herbicides to remove dandelions, make sure to read and follow all label directions. Pay close attention to required personal protective equipment, and re-entry intervals (especially if children and/or pets use the lawn).

An Inland Northwest Vegetable Garden Schedule

Adapted from Tonie Fitzgerald, Gardening in the Inland Northwest

The following Schedule is for an "average" last frost date of May 15. Find your average frost date here: https://bit.ly/3MdPdhd, and adjust accordingly.

OUTDOORS

On or about May 1 to May 15 (2 weeks before last frost):

Plant:	Beets Carrots Turnips Potatoes	Transplant:	Cabbage Cauliflower Broccoli Brussels

On or about May 15 to June 1 (on last frost date):

Plant: (be prepared to replant if frost occurs)	Beans Corn	Transplant:	Cucumber (have covers handy) Melons

On or about June 1 to 15 (2 to 4 weeks after last frost):

Plant:	Okra seeds Carrots	Transplant:	Tomatoes Peppers Eggplant

Weed to Watch: Palmer Amaranth

Adapted from Joel Felix, OSU

Palmer amaranth (*Amaranthus palmeri*) is a member of the pigweed family. Palmer amaranth has been nicknamed 'the king of weeds' largely because of the damage it is capable of causing. A single Palmer amaranth plant growing per foot of corn row reduces corn yield by 40%–80%.

Palmer amaranth has a long history of herbicide resistance to 9 herbicide groups (Groups 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 27).

Palmer amaranth has the potential to greatly disrupt weed management programs in various crops. In fact, it appears that Palmer amaranth is already in the PNW region, albeit in isolated areas.

For information, identification. and control see:

the USDA Palmer Amaranth Fact Sheet: https://bit.ly/3v348VD

Or, PNW 758 *Pigweeds: Current and Emerging Weed Threats in the PNW:* https://bit.ly/3xNUFDs

Female inflorescence. Credit: Pratap Devkota, University of Florida

Found a bug eating your begonia? Trying to identify a weed in your window box? Not quite sure what to do with your flagging phlox?
Master Gardeners are here to answer your gardening questions!
WSU Master Gardener Plant Clinics are

Tuesdays & Thursdays
- 9:00—11:00 am &
- 2:00—4:00 pm

at the WSU Walla Walla County Extension office, 328 W. Poplar, Walla Walla.

Call 509-524-2685 or email wallawallamastergardeners@gmail.com for more information.

You can also come see us at the Walla Walla Farmer's Market starting Saturday, May 7.

Understanding Soil PH

Adapted from Allison Kosto, Montana State University, Broadwater County Extension

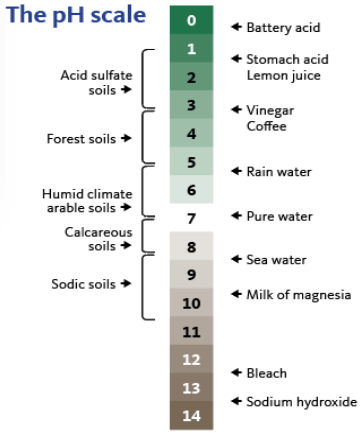


Chart Credit: Oregon State University

Soil is comprised of minerals, water, gases, organic matter and microorganisms. All of these components give soil it's unique characteristics.

The environment along with soil composition attribute to its pH. The pH scale ranges from 0 to 14 with 7 as neutral. Numbers less than 7 are acidic and numbers greater than 7 are alkaline or basic. Lemon juice is acidic and bleach is alkaline.

Plants thrive best in different pH ranges. For example, blueberries prefer acidic soils.

Generally, most plants grow well when the soil pH is 6 to 7 (slightly acid to neutral).

Due to our area's arid climate, we tend to have soils with a high pH. The best way to find your soil pH is to use a reputable lab. Home testing kits are available for pH and other nutrients. However, their accuracy is questionable. A list of labs is available from the WSU Walla Walla County Extension Office.

Soil pH affects how the soil attracts and releases nutrients. In high pH soils, iron, manganese and boron are not very accessible to plants.

If you have a high pH soil, one of the first questions you'll likely ask is "how do I change it?" Unfortunately, it's not easy. The two most common amendments to lower pH are sulfur and aluminum sulfate. Aluminum sulfate works more quickly, whereas sulfur can take several months. Routinely adding organic matter can also improve the pH. Always be cautious when adding fertilizer and soil amendments. Too much of a good thing, isn't always a good thing. Use your soil test to determine how much fertilizer or organic matter should be used.

Acidic soils and the need to raise pH is rare in our area. Limestone is the common amendment used to raise pH.

Even with amendments, it is extremely difficult to cause a major change in your pH. However, by knowing and understanding your pH, you can make better management decisions. For example, if you have a pH of 8.0 then you may have to come to terms with the fact that blueberries simply won't produce well.

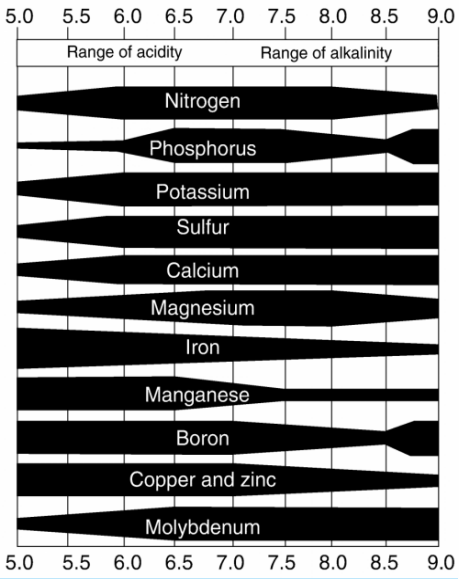


Chart Credit: Ohio State University Extension

Livestock & Animal Science

Links:
Biosecurity webinar series (recorded): https://farmppe.netlify.app/training
Center for Food Security & Public Health: https://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/biosecurity/
Craig McConnel email: cmcconnel@wsu.edu

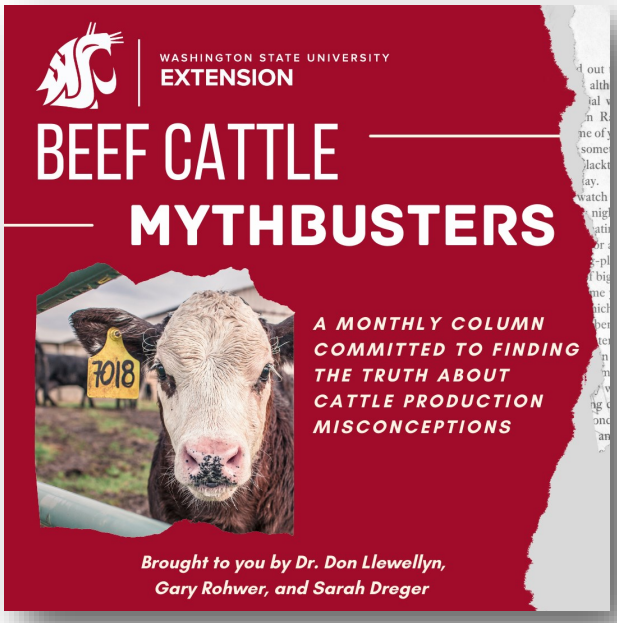
Time to Think About Bio-Security

Adapted from Craig McConnel, WSU Veterinary Extension

If you haven't done so already consider preparing for upcoming seasonal considerations such as heat stress, pinkeye, parasite management, and potential biosecurity issues associated with fairs and shows. If you haven't thought about your biosecurity strategies lately, you might consider checking out a biosecurity webinar series that was created as a collaboration between UC Davis, Colorado State University and Washington State University. It was developed with small farms in mind but provides food for thought for anyone interested in basic biosecurity principles or more advanced biosecurity preparation. For those of you with an interest in biosecurity, the go-to for resources can be found at The Center for Food Security & Public Health.

If you have a farm of any size and would like some help reviewing your biosecurity plans, please feel free to Craig McConnell, Director of Veterinary Extension, to discuss options for an onsite visit. We have two DVM candidates participating in an Extension internship this summer with the goal of helping develop basic and advanced biosecurity plans for producers.

Visit our website for information on current research projects and outreach materials for veterinarians and producers! http://vetextension.wsu.edu/



A new column for Beef producers from the WSU Dept. of Animal Sciences *https://ansci.wsu.edu/beef-cattle-mythbusters/*

Avian Influenza Resources

Adapted from WSDA

Watch the WSDA webinar on highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) https://youtu.be/WnOPEw4LaE0

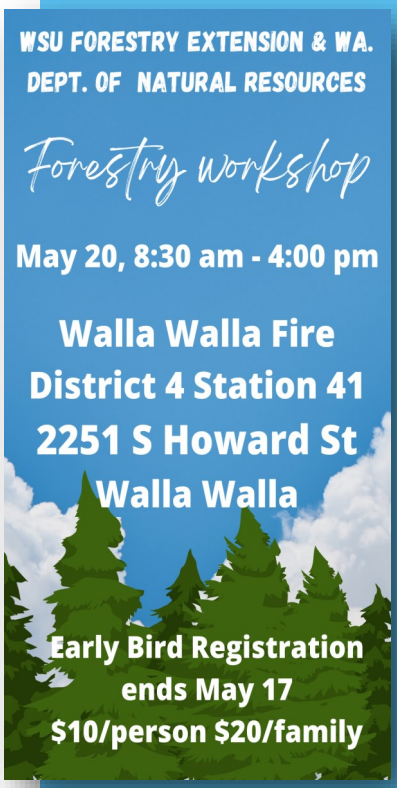
WSDA Avian Health Program: avhealth@agr.wa.gov, 360-902-1878

Who to call:

- If you experience unexplained illness or death in your flock: WSDA Avian Health Program—1-800-606-3056
- For food safety questions: WSDA Food Safety Program— 1-360-902-1876
- If you are concerned because you or your family member becomes sick: Washington State Department of Health: 1-800-525-0127
- Report sick, injured, or dead wild birds: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife: https://bit.ly/3EuddtQ

WSDA Avian Influenza Resource Page: https://bit.ly/3Mggpfb

Opportunities



Creating Healthy, Wildfire-Safe and Wildfire-Friendly Forests

Washington Department of Natural Resources and WSU Extension Forester Andy Perleberg are hosting a forestry workshop for landowners in Walla Walla. The event will help landowners enhance, protect and manage their forest property for optimum health now and for future generations.

This event offers the opportunity to:

- Learn to identify and manage common conditions that make your trees weak and vulnerable to tree-killing bark beetles, root rots, defoliators, and other pests.
- Learn how to examine tree density, recognize if your forest is "overstocked" and how to thin and prune trees so they are healthy, productive, and safe from fire.
- Get ideas for improving and protecting wildlife habitat in your woods.
- Acquire hands-on experience measuring trees. You keep the instruments for monitoring growth and changes.
- Learn about programs that will help you improve forest health, reduce wildfire risk, and save you time and money.
- Meet foresters, contractors, and family forest owners!

For more information: http://forestry.wsu.edu, or (509) 667-6540

WSU Walla Walla County Extension Searching for a New Agronomist

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

We are looking for a dryland crop agronomist to join the Walla Walla County Extension team. The new Extension Specialist will join us as a permanent, tenure-track Assistant Professor. This agricultural expert will be responsible for leading outreach for agricultural extension programs in dryland agronomy and cropping systems across Walla Walla County and Southeastern Washington. The program emphasis will focus on agronomic crop production, cropping systems, and soil health along with farm enterprise management and decision support systems. Our new Agronomist will conduct outreach and Extension programming based on sound agronomic practices, and on-farm research. They will address issues and opportunities of highest priority to area farmers in Walla Walla and other Southeastern Washington counties.

See the full job description here: https://bit.ly/36JRWQm

For questions, contact WSU Walla Walla County Extension Director, Debbie Williams.
dmoberg@wsu.edu
509-524-2685

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
WALLA WALLA COUNTY EXTENSION

Celebrating 100 Years of Extending Knowledge and Changing Lives.

Debbie M. Williams
County Extension Director