



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
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WSU Walla Walla County

# EXTENSION NEWS



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## STRIPE RUST UPDATE

*Adapted from WSU Small Grains Website*

Dr. Xianming Chen's March stripe rust forecast for the 2025 wheat growing season in the inland Pacific Northwest indicates a low risk for stripe rust, with predicted yield losses ranging from 1-20% in commercially available varieties. This significantly reduced risk, attributed to a cold snap in February, is compared to earlier predictions of up to 41% loss. Field surveys across several Washington counties have found no evidence of stripe rust, even in locations where it was previously observed in November. This absence of disease is a stark contrast to last year, when stripe rust was prevalent by late February.

Given the low disease pressure and lack of observed stripe rust, early season fungicide application at herbicide timing is currently not recommended for winter wheat in the region. As always, continue scouting fields and following the stripe rust updates to determine whether symptoms appear and if fungicide application is needed later in the season. For spring wheat and barley, planting resistant (R, rating 1 or 2) or moderately resistant (MR, ratings 3 or 4) varieties is recommended. Stripe rust ratings can be found on the [Variety Selection Tool](#) on the WSU Small Grains website.

## PRODUCER SURVEY

A research survey of PNW agricultural producers experiences with the costs and challenges of weed management over time. Will take approximately 10-15 minutes. \$50 gift card for 5 eligible participants. Survey will close March 31, 2025.

[PNW Herbicide Resistance Initiative Survey](#)



## INLAND PNW PASTURE CALENDAR FORAGE WORKSHOP

Washington State University Extension, Oregon State University Extension and University of Idaho Extension will host the first comprehensive workshop to introduce the recently published PNW Bulletin 708, The Inland PNW Pasture Calendar. All presenters are co-authors on the Calendar. This is a Calendar tool to assist ranchers, farmers, and consultants to be more sustainable in forage and feeding of livestock on Inland pastures. The Calendar is focused on pasture agronomy, pasture species and comparing similarities and differences of irrigated and dryland tame pastures with rangelands, pasture grazing and pasture economics. Registration is required.

March 19, 8:00 am - 3:30. WSU IAREC, 24106 N Bunn Rd. Prosser, WA

Cost: \$20 (includes lunch, refreshments and printed copy of Calendar publication)

[REGISTER HERE](#)

If you need assistance with registering, please call 509-786-5609 or email [prosserext@co.benton.wa.us](mailto:prosserext@co.benton.wa.us)



### WSU HERBICIDE RESISTANCE RESOURCE PAGE

*Adapted from WSU Small Grains*

Herbicide-resistant weeds are becoming increasingly common in the Pacific Northwest, threatening the economics and sustainability of farming systems. Herbicide-resistant weed biotypes are selected for and will increase in the population through repeated use of the same or similar herbicides. Italian ryegrass, downy brome, wild oats, Russian thistle, mayweed chamomile, and prickly lettuce are just a few of the many weed species with biotypes resistant to commonly used herbicides. The resources on this page will help you understand how herbicide resistance occurs, how to manage weeds to slow the rate of herbicide resistance development, and what to do if you suspect you have a resistant biotype on your farm.

[Find resources to help with herbicide resistance here.](#)

### WA MEAT UP SUMMIT

*Adapted from WA Meat Up*

#### WA Meat Up In-Person Summit

- **April 5th from 10 - 4 pm at the Grant County fairgrounds in Moses Lake**
  - **Keynote address by Reed Anderson of Anderson Ranches and Kalapooia Processing – talking about how transparent practices improve customer relations**
  - **Opportunities for peer-to-peer networking, relationship building, and education**
  - **Hands-on workshop about low-stress livestock handling both at the facility and for on-farm slaughter**
  - **Insight into consumer education and customer expectations and service**

**REGISTER HERE!**



## COMING UP

### March

#### 19. Inland PNW Pasture Calendar Workshop

Hear about the new Inland North West calendar and how you can use it to manage your forage, from the authors.

[Learn More](#)

#### 22. Super Saturday

Annual event featuring a day full of fun, creative, and educational workshops designed for youth in grades 1-12. Featuring arts and crafts, animal science, cooking and baking, outdoor skills, and more. Registration is first come first serve. \$10 per participant. [Register Here!](#)

#### 22. WSU/UI Youth Livestock Field Days- Swine

Asotin County. Registration due March 15. Provides research-based information to 4-H and FFA members regarding the production, showing and marketing of youth livestock projects. \$10 per person. Lunch provided.

[Register Here!](#)

#### 25. Walla Walla County Conservation District Water and Wine Event.

A night of engaging conversations about vineyard farming approaches that restore soil health, enhance biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience.

Join Brian Rudin, Winemaker at Echolands Cellars, as he delves into the role of regenerative agriculture in vineyard management and winemaking.

### April

#### Tuesdays. Sustainable Living Center Composting Workshops

Topics include:

- Composting Basics
- Composting in Action (2 parts)
- Food Waste Reduction Composting a la Carte

[Learn more and register here!](#)

## ASK A MASTER GARDENER

Have a gardening question? Ask a Master Gardener at our in-person plant and insect diagnostic clinics.

Master Gardeners provide free access to unbiased research-based horticulture advice to help our community find answers to gardening questions.

**The Master Gardener Clinics start April 8.** Located in WSU Extension Office at 328 W Poplar, WSU Master Gardeners are on hand to answer questions:

### Tuesdays and Thursdays

**9:00 am - 11:00 am and 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm.**

Can't make it during clinic hours? No problem! Bring your questions and plant or insect samples into the office any time during office hours, Monday-Friday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm and Extension staff can help.

Come see WSU Master Gardeners at the Walla Walla Public Library on Saturdays from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm, March 15- April 26.

Also the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at the Walla Walla Downtown Farmers Market, beginning in May.





## GARDEN CHORES FOR MARCH AND APRIL

Adapted from Oregon State University Garden Calendar

**Plan your vegetable garden** carefully for spring, summer and fall vegetables that can be eaten fresh or preserved. If you lack in-ground gardening space, plan an outdoor container garden.

**Check soil temps.** Use a soil thermometer to help you know when to plant vegetables. Some cool season crops (onions, kale, lettuce and spinach) can be planted when the soil is consistently at or above 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Some warm season vegetable crops can be planted when soil temperatures are consistently above 60 degrees.

**Prepare garden soil** for spring planting. Incorporate generous amounts of organic materials and other amendments, using the results of a soil analysis as a guide.

**Prepare raised beds** in areas where cold soils and poor drainage are a continuing problem. Incorporate generous amounts (at least 2 inches) of organic materials.

**Spread compost** over garden and landscape areas.

**Allow foliage of spring-flowering bulbs** to brown and die down before removing.

**Divide hosta, daylilies and mums.**

**Protect new plant growth from slugs.** Least toxic management options include barriers and traps. Baits are also available for slug control; use with caution around pets. Read and follow all label directions prior to using baits or any other chemical control.

**Prune ornamentals** for air circulation and to help prevent fungus diseases.

**Practice preventive pest management** rather than reactive pest control. Identify and monitor problems before acting, and opt for the least toxic approach. Conserve biological control agents such as predators and the parasitoids that feed on insect pests.



## WINTER DAMAGE IN LANDSCAPE PLANTS

Adapted from the University of Maryland

### Winter Color of Evergreens

Symptoms of winter damage can include a change from the normal green color to gray, yellow, blue, purple, bluish-green, brown, and bronze leaves or needles.

Examples of plants that are often damaged by extreme winter weather include

- Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria*) turn bronze
- Yew (*Taxus buccata*) turn brown
- Arborvitae (*Thuja* spp.) turn brown
- Creeping juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*) turn purple
- White pines (*Pinus strobus*) turn yellow
- Boxwood (*Buxus* spp.) turn yellow-orange

Causes of 'winter color' can include low temperatures and drought stress. Often, the foliage colors will revert back to normal when springtime temperatures return to normal.

### Ice and Snow

Winter damage can occur on many plants. A rapid temperature drop following a mid-winter thaw can cause bark splitting. Dead twigs and branches in the spring may be the result of ice and snow damage from the winter.

Ice and snow damage

- Symptoms include bent or broken branches from the heavyweight of the ice or snow.
- Heavy snow can be gently knocked from branches, but branches that are iced over may actually be more brittle and suffer further damage if removal is attempted.
- Wind during ice storms will cause the most damage.

## WINTER DAMAGE ON LANDSCAPE PLANTS (CONT.)

Adapted from University of Maryland



Evergreen Magnolia leaves with winter scorch

### Leaf scorch

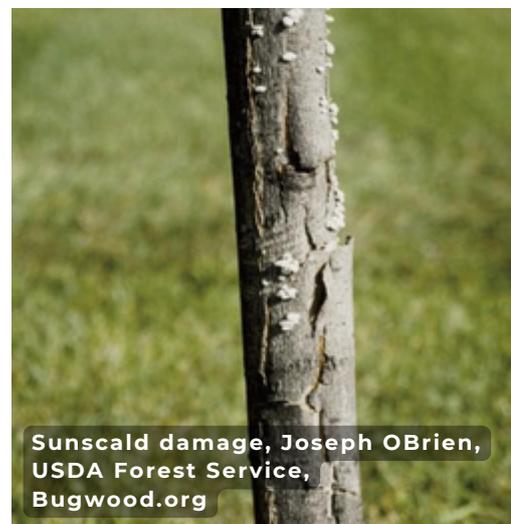
- Damage is most severe on shallow-rooted broadleaved evergreens such as azalea, rhododendron, holly, cherry laurel, boxwood, mountain laurel, or those at their northern limit for winter hardiness (*Magnolia grandiflora*, *Aucuba japonica*, *Camellia* spp. and others).
- The injury occurs on dry, windy, warm, or sunny winter days when the ground is frozen. Plants are unable to move water from frozen soil to replace water lost from the leaves.
- Leaves curl and droop, then brown from the tips and margins, giving the leaves a scorched appearance.
- Sometimes newly planted white pine and spruce can suffer needle scorch during their first season from limited root systems.
- Needled evergreens in exposed conditions such as along roadsides and parking lots can suffer needle scorch.
- Most damage is during the winter but in some cases, symptoms can occur during the spring as new growth appears.

### Frost cracks and sunscald

- Even hardy trees may develop sunscald or frost cracks.
- Occurs when temperature fluctuations are extreme. Water in the cells of the tree trunk freezes and moves out of the cells, causing the wood to shrink.
- Tree bark warmed by the sun in winter can reach a temperature as much as 18 degrees warmer than the air temperature.
- When clouds shade the bark or temperatures drop quickly at nightfall, the bark and cambium layer beneath is damaged. This type of freeze damage is called sunscald.
- Tension between the frozen and unfrozen layers of wood is so great that the wood separates, causing a crack.
- Cracks can form suddenly and are often combined with a loud cracking sound.
- Frost cracks can reopen and enlarge in subsequent winters and may extend to the center of the tree.
- Damage to tree trunks is often on south and west sides of the tree where sun is strongest.
- Frost cracks may begin in previously wounded or pruned areas.
- Proper pruning and avoidance of injury may help to prevent some frost cracks.
- Tree species prone to frost cracking (those with thin or smooth bark) may benefit from applying white latex paint to the tree trunk. The light color reflects light and helps to reduce temperature fluctuations. Trunks can also be wrapped with commercial tree wrap.
- The following species are more likely to develop frost cracks: apple, beech, crabapple, elm, goldenrain tree, horse chestnut, linden, London plane, maple, oak, walnut, and willow.



Frost and winter injury, James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org



Sunscald damage, Joseph O'Brien, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org



## 4-H HAPPENINGS

Super Saturday, March 22. Open to all youth in grades 1-12. Learn some new skills and have a great time learning about 4-H. See page 2 for details or visit our [website](#).



The enrollment deadline for participating as a 4-H member in Fair is March 15. So if you haven't enrolled your child in 4-H, now is the time to do it!



4-H members are learning all about livestock judging! Judging helps kids develop skills like analytical thinking, effective communication, livestock knowledge, teamwork, decision-making, and builds self-confidence. Walla Walla County 4-H has been hosting livestock judging series for 4-H members and will participate in a Livestock Day on April 19. [See website for details.](#)



4-H youth will participate in a Public Presentation Contest in April and May. This annual event lets youth show off their knowledge in their 4-H project area while building public presentation skills.



Walla Walla County 4-H helps youth build valuable life skills and create lifelong friendships. If you have a skill you are interested in sharing with a 4-H club, we are looking for project leaders. 4-H volunteers are background checked and go through leader training. Community members interested in volunteering with Walla Walla County 4-H can call 509-524-2685 or fill out the [volunteer interest form](#) on our website.

## AVIAN INFLUENZA: SOME THINGS TO KNOW AND WHO TO CALL

Adapted from [WSDA Avian Influenza Resource Page](#)

### Are poultry products safe to eat?

Chicken, eggs and other poultry and poultry products are safe to eat when properly handled and cooked. Be sure to follow these steps for safer food:

- Wash hands. Clean and sanitize work surfaces and equipment.
- Do not wash poultry.
- Separate raw and cooked meat to avoid cross-contamination.
- Cook poultry thoroughly to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Keep poultry stored at 40 F or below or in the freezer at 0 F or below.

### What are some symptoms of Avian Influenza in Birds?

Decreased egg production, mild respiratory disease, discharge from the eyes or nasal openings, ruffled feathers, decrease in appetite or drinking, swollen comb or wattle, bluish comb, wattle or legs, blood-tinged nasal or eye discharge, tilting head, lack of coordination, sudden death, in some cases there will be no symptoms at all.

### Who to call

Unexplained illness or death of domestic flock: WSDA Avian Health Program, 1-800-606-3056 or [report sick domestic birds online](#).

For food safety questions: WSDA food safety program, 1-360-902-1876

Concerns about sick family member: Washington State Department 1-800-525-0127

To report sick, injured, or dead wild birds: [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife](#)

Thank you, Cattlemen! For sponsoring this newsletter.

Walla Walla County



Cattlemen's Association



WSU EXTENSION  
Walla Walla County

Debbie M. Williams, County Extension Director

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