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EXTENSION

WSU Walla Walla County

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WILDFIRE READY NEIGHBORS

From Washington Department of Natural Resources

Prepare Your Property, Protect Your Neighbors
Reducing wildfire risk starts with our community. **Wildfire Ready Neighbors** (WRN) is a collaboration between Washington State Department of Natural Resources and local wildfire experts to help everyone in our region prepare for wildfires.

WRN provides a free Wildfire Ready Plan to help you prioritize wildfire-ready actions on your property and connects you with local wildfire experts in your area.

For Walla Walla, Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Klickitat, and Skamania counties, call or email Charlie Landsman at charles.landsman@dnr.wa.gov, 360-972-4249

WATCH THE WHEAT GROW

Adapted from Drew Lyon, WSU Small Grains Extension & Research

Wheat growers are intimately familiar with how wheat grows and develops throughout the growing season, but not everybody has the privilege of waking up every morning and seeing a changing field of wheat outside their window. But now, anybody with an internet connection can watch wheat grow in eastern Washington. Two field cameras, one located at the **WSU Lind Dryland Research Station** near Lind, Washington, and another at the **WSU Spillman Farm** near Pullman, Washington are active.

The camera at Lind is set up in a winter wheat field and the camera in Pullman is set up next to the spring wheat variety trial at the Spillman Farm. Four times per day, the field cameras snap a picture of the field and the picture is viewable on the **WSU Wheat and Small Grains website**. The video feed also includes information about the current growth stage of the wheat crop.

WILDFIRE SEASON IS HERE

Adapted from WSDA

Wildfire season is here - Washington farmers and ranchers- get ready! Have a fire plan, know your evacuation routes, and prepare your animals, equipment, and team for a fast response. Evacuating without a plan can escalate an emergency- especially in Washington, where wildfires move fast.

Wildfire preparedness also means knowing where to turn before, during, and after a crisis. In high-stress situations, finding the right help can feel overwhelming.
To make wildfire readiness easier and more accessible, WSDA has gathered key resources in one place: agr.wa.gov/wildfires.

Reach out to WSDA Emergency Management at emergencymanagement@agr.wa.gov for support and questions.

HELP FOR WEED CONTROL

By Paul Castoldi, Walla Walla County Weed Noxious Board Coordinator

The Walla Walla County Noxious Weed Control Board has made available a rebate program to control selected noxious weeds in the county.
The Noxious Weed Board is accepting applications for fall chemical control of **Poison Hemlock**.

Landowners interested in applying for the program may pick up an application at the WSU Extension office at 328 W. Poplar Street. Or you may call Paul Castoldi at 509-524-2688 or 509-540-2299 with any questions you may have, to see about eligibility, or to have an application emailed to you.

You must be signed up and approved before any spraying can be done to be eligible for the rebate.

This program is only available to landowners in the county.

Poison Hemlock is a toxic, noxious weed.
Poison hemlock can be deadly toxic to both people and animals. It contains toxic alkaloids, including coniine and γ-conicein, which are found in all plant parts but is most concentrated in unripe seeds. These poisonous compounds affect the nervous system. Initial symptoms may include a burning sensation in the mouth, nausea, vomiting, confusion, respiratory depression, and muscle paralysis. Death, when it occurs, is usually rapid and is caused by respiratory paralysis.

Ingestion of poison hemlock should be taken seriously and persons doing so should be taken to the emergency room.

For further information about poison hemlock poisoning and symptoms, contact the Washington Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

COMING UP

July

25. Smart Orchard Field Day
Join growers, industry experts, researchers, and tech developers at the 2025 WSU Smart Orchard Field Day- a hands-on event showcasing cutting-edge technologies and applied research in precision irrigation and heat mitigation in WA. Mattawa, WA. 8:30 - 12. FREE. **Find out more.**

August

2-23 Walla Walla Fair and Frontier Days PRE-Fair Events.
Livestock judging, Fashion Revue, Cat show, Dog show, etc. See the Pre-fair schedule on the **Walla Walla Fair and Frontier Days Website** or in the **Exhibitors Handbook**.

15. Application deadline for WSU Master Gardeners
Join us! We are now accepting applications for WSU Walla Walla County Extension Master Gardener Volunteers. Read more about the program on page six, or **read about the program on our website.** Classes begin in October. Deadline for applications, 8/15.

16. National Lentil Fest
Music, 5K race, free lentil chili, cooking demonstrations, etc. **lentilfest.com**. Reaney Park, Pullman. 7:30 AM - 10 PM

18. Explore Your Farm Dreams
Interested in starting a small farm? This 3-Hour virtual intensive class from Cultivating Success can help you determine what options are available to you. $15. **Register Here**.

19-20. Intertribal Agriculture Council NW Regional Summit
Tailored for Tribes and individual Tribal farmers, ranchers, fishers, food gatherers, and entrepreneurs to explore emerging market opportunities, exchange knowledge and cultivate partnerships. FREE. Northern Quest Casino. **More information here.**

23. 4-H Public Fashion Revue
7 PM, Community Building, Walla Walla County Fairgrounds. 4-H, Grange, and Open Class youth model their sewing projects.

27-31. Walla Walla Fair and Frontier Days.
Stop by the WSU Extension booth in the Flower Building and talk to a WSU Extension Master Gardener!

September

22-Nov 3. Whole Farm Planning.
Learn how to use a whole system lens to create a living plan for your small farm future. Cultivating Success and WSU Extension. Virtual. $200 per farm. Learn more at **Cultivating Success.**

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST FOR FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Adapted from WSDA

- [ ] **Emergency planning**
  - Create a wildfire evacuation plan for family, workers, and animals.
  - Share the plan and contact info with neighbors and employees.
  - Post maps showing gates, water sources, and escape routes.

- [ ] **Defensible Space and Fire Breaks**
  - Clear dry brush, weeds, and dead vegetation around all buildings.
  - Maintain at least 100 feet of defensible space around key structures.
  - Install or maintain fire breaks around fields, fences, and barns

- [ ] **Livestock and Animal Readiness**
  - Identify and prep safe zones for animals to go during a fire.
  - Prepare trailers and halters for fast animal transport.
  - Mark or tag animals with ID in case of evacuation or escape.

- [ ] **Equipment and Water Sources**
  - Check that water tanks, pumps, and hoses are ready and working.
  - Keep irrigation systems accessible and functional.
  - Store fuel, tools, and equipment away from flammable areas.

- [ ] **Communication and Alerts**
  - Sign up for fire alerts.
  - Keep a battery-powered radio on hand.
  - Charge phones and keep emergency contact list updated.

- [ ] **Documents and Emergency Supplies**
  - Store insurance papers, ID tags, and animal records in a fireproof box.
  - Prepare emergency kits for family, workers, and animals.
  - Keep extra fuel, batteries, flashlights, and first aid supplies on hand.

Sign up for the Walla Walla County Emergency Alert System.
This system enables Walla Walla County Emergency Management to provide you with critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods.
You will receive time-sensitive messages wherever you specify, such as your home, mobile or business phones, email address, text messages and more.

NEW COMPOST REIMBURSEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Adapted from USDA

The US Composting Council and Zero Foodprint are partnering to offer funding for on-farm compost use. This project directly supports efforts to study and advance the use of compost in agriculture. If you are a grower in California, Colorado, or Washington State, you can apply now to receive up to $10,500 to help cover the purchase, delivery, and application of compost for use in your fields, orchards, or rangelands.
For priority consideration, fill out the Interest Form below by July 14th! USCC Compost Interest Form 2025: https://web.miniextensions.com/XILf6jAeXngJ2feEgR1Z
Please reach out to sdixon@compostingcouncil.org with any questions. This opportunity is supported and funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

CREATE A DEFENSIBLE SPACE AROUND YOUR HOME

Adapted from Ready for Wildfire, Cal Fire

Zone 0 extends 5 feet from buildings, structures, decks, etc.

While not legally required yet, Zone 0 is key for wildfire defense and preventing fires from spreading to your home. Here are the current guidelines:

- Use gravel, pavers, or concrete instead of combustible mulch
- Clear dead weeds, grass, and debris; check roofs, gutters, and outdoor areas
- Keep branches trimmed 10 feet away from chimneys and stovepipes
- Minimize combustible items like furniture and planters on decks
- Move firewood and lumber to Zone 2 for safety
- Replace combustible fencing and gates with fire-resistant materials
- Shift garbage and recycling containers to a safer area outside this zone
- Relocate boats, RVs, and vehicles away from this zone to reduce fire risks

Zone 1 extends 30 feet from buildings, structures, decks, etc. or to your property line, whichever is closer.

- Clear all dead plants, grass, and weeds
- Remove dead leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof, and gutters
- Trim overhanging branches and keep them 10 feet from your chimney
- Regularly trim trees to maintain a 10-foot gap from others
- Move wood piles to Zone 2
- Prune flammable plants and shrubs near windows
- Clear flammable vegetation and items from under decks, balconies, and stairs
- Maintain space between trees, shrubs, and flammable items like patio furniture and wood piles
- Ensure outbuildings and LPG tanks have 10 feet of clear space to bare soil and no flammable vegetation within an additional 10 feet around them

Zone 2 extends from 30 feet to 100 feet out from buildings, structures, decks, etc. or to your property line, whichever is closer.

- Trim annual grass to a maximum height of 4 inches
- Space out shrubs and trees horizontally (See diagram)
- Ensure vertical spacing between grass, shrubs, and trees (See diagram)
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, and small branches, but can leave up to 3 inches
- Keep exposed wood piles at least 10 feet clear from surroundings, down to the soil
- Ensure outbuildings and LPG tanks have 10 feet of clear space to bare soil and no flammable vegetation within an additional 10 feet around them

For more firewise landscaping recommendations, including an extensive list of plant recommendations, see Fire Resistant Plants of Eastern Washington.

4-H HAPPENINGS

Another Beginning Quilt Camp in the books! Each summer, youth entering 5th grade and above attend WSU Walla Walla County's 4-H Quilt Camp. They learn new sewing skills and complete a quilt and pillowcase within the week-long camp.

In June, three 4-H teens participated in Teen Conference at WSU. Teens had the opportunity to stay in dorms, learn about topics from fashion to genetics, tour WSU, and explore career opportunities during the 3-day conference.

WSU MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER TRAINING APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE NOW!

WSU Walla Walla County Extension

WSU Walla Walla County Master Gardeners are university-trained volunteers providing research-based information about gardening, environmental stewardship, and horticulture topics to their community. Master Gardener Interns complete training by giving 40 hours of community service. Veteran Master Gardeners maintain certification by providing at least 25 hours of community service and 12 hours of approved continuing education each year. Master Gardeners volunteer at office clinics on Tuesdays and Thursdays and at Farmer's Market on Saturdays as well as at Walla Walla Fair and various other community events. Master Gardeners also maintain a demonstration garden at the Extension Office.

The selection process starts by submitting an application and passing a background screening. If selected to move forward, we will reach out to schedule an interview.

The WSU Master Gardener training includes Green School, a required online course to be completed at home, as well as in-person sessions with other students and Master Gardener Veterans, held at the WSU Extension office in Walla Walla. Green School begins October 5th and is scheduled to run through the end of February. The in-person training requires attendance at 2-4 3-hour sessions per month from October - March. The total cost of the online training program is $275 and will be collected at the time of enrollment in Green School. Walla Walla County Extension will require an additional $30 materials fee, due on the first day of class.

After classes are complete, trainees must complete 40 hours of volunteer service as an intern before receiving the Master Gardener Certification.

You do not have to have experience in gardening – just an interest. You are not required to memorize a lot of material but will be given reference materials and research techniques to help you answer gardening questions.

If you are interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer, please fill out the application linked below and return it via email or drop it at the WSU Walla Walla County Office at 328 W Poplar by **August 15**. Paper applications are available at the Extension Office.

If you need assistance or have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to 509-524-2685 or email amy.rosenberg@wsu.edu.

Position Description (PDF)
Master Gardener Application (Fillable PDF)

Walla Walla County Cattlemen's Association

Thank you, Cattlemen! For sponsoring this newsletter.

WSU EXTENSION Walla Walla County

Debbie M. Williams, County Extension Director

Washington State University Extension engages people, organizations and communities to advance knowledge, economic well-being and quality of life by fostering inquiry, learning, and the application of research.

Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.