



WSU EXTENSION
Thurston County

The Extension Connection

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE. CHANGING LIVES.

August 2023

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

2nd Quarter 2023



The first WSU Master Gardener Question & Answer clinic was held at the Tacoma Mall 50 years ago this year. In honor of the 50th WSU Master Gardener Anniversary we recreated an outreach booth at the Capital Mall.

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*What's
COMING UP IN
EXTENSION?*

Conservation Grazing for Oregon Spotted Frog.
August 26th 9:00am-12:00pm
Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/2vvv5vcj>

2023 Master Recycler Composter Training Class
To learn more about the MRC Program and to apply to the
2023 MRC Volunteer Training, go to
www.extension.wsu.edu/thurston/gardening/mc/

Washington State Fair
September 1 - September 24, Washington State Fairgrounds
110 9th Ave SW, Puyallup WA 98371

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CAHNRS FOR



Thurston County WSU Extension builds the capacity of individuals, organizations, businesses and communities, empowering them to find solutions for local issues and to improve their quality of life. Extension collaborates with communities to create a culture of life-long learning and is recognized for its accessible, learner-centered, relevant, high-quality, unbiased educational programs.

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The new **Hedgerows Toolkit** includes resources such as a how-to handbook, *Hedgerows for Rural & Working Lands in Western Washington*, and ready-made hedgerows planting templates.

WSU WATER RESOURCES & NATIVE PLANT SALVAGE PROGRAM

Erica Guttman

WSU Water Resources/Native Plant Salvage program has launched a **Hedgerows Toolkit**, primarily geared towards rural and agricultural landowners, but also applicable for smaller homesites. Hedgerows are a beautiful, low-cost, and valuable tool to achieve multiple goals, including: screening for privacy, noise, odors, and dust; windbreaks, livestock shelter, and living fences; habitat for beneficial insects and pollinators to improve crop yields; and protecting local waterways by filtering runoff and protecting against flooding and erosion.

Primarily funded by Thurston County's Storm & Surface Water Utility, the Toolkit was a few years in the making and features:

- A 78-pp. how-to handbook, **Hedgerows for Rural & Working Lands in Western Washington**
- Six "ready-made" planting templates for multiple hedgerow goals, simplifying the planting-plan process
- Online sortable plant table featuring 78 hedgerow trees & shrubs
- Numerous resources on budgeting, funding, and all the details needed for successful hedgerow implementation
- How-to videos for some of the resources above, like template use & budgeting for plants

In the coming months, WSU Water Resources staff will be collaborating with local farmers, regional conservation districts, and other community partners to design and implement hedgerows on Thurston County farms. These efforts will include online and field-based workshops, plus volunteer opportunities, and the results will be used to expand the resources in the Hedgerows Toolkit.

To access the new Handbook and other Toolkit resources, find out about upcoming workshop, or volunteer, visit extension.wsu.edu/thurston/hedgerows/



WSU Water Resources staff member Cameron Dunn (center) meets with Pierce Conservation District farm specialist Ali Nichols (left) & Helsing Junction farmer Angie Camp (right) & to discuss plans for a new hedgerow project.





SNAP-ED

Amanda Leoni

The past few months for SNAP-Ed have been eventful! Springtime is when we plan for farmers market season and apply for the Farm to Food Pantry Grant. This will be our third year applying for the grant and we are excited to see how much we will be awarded this year. The funds will benefit all food banks associated with the Lewis County Food Bank Coalition and will be spent on local produce from small farms. We have finalized our plans for WIC week (the week of July 16th) where we will be promoting the use of WIC at farmers markets with cooking demos and nutrition education at four different farmers markets. In June, we offered a cooking demo at the Yelm Farmers Market where we made tons of fun, easy recipes using fresh garden produce.

This quarter we worked in the Garfield Elementary School Garden. In April, we unearthed pumpkins the first graders had planted in the Fall. Each pumpkin had been hollowed out and filled with various compostable and non-compostable items from their lunchroom. The students were excited to see all the items they put in the pumpkins and surprised by how many did not decompose. The fun part is the pumpkins had just enough seeds in them that we now have a thriving volunteer pumpkin patch in the garden where the pumpkins had been planted. SNAP-Ed also hosted a work party at the Garfield Garden and participated in their school wide annual field day. All students got to plant buckwheat, harvest peas & strawberries, make flower bracelets and plant earth worms.



SNAP-Ed Program Assistant, Melissa, sharing delicious recipes at the Yelm Farmer's Market Cooking Demo



AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

Stephen Bramwell

Wow, April through June of 2023 was a whirlwind for the agriculture program. We organized the inaugural Southwest Washington Grazing School from April 21st through the 23rd, drawing together 25 attendees across 8 counties who collectively manage over 4,000 acres of pastureland in the Pacific Northwest. Together we logged 32 hours of indoor and outdoor instruction, and were thrilled with the enthusiasm with the course, with 95% of attendees agreeing strongly that the school met their expectations, and they learned a lot. We're excited to offer this grazing school annually. Big thanks to Riverbend Ranch for hosting, and the many ranch and forage specialist instructors.

WSU's involvement with the Southwest Washington Food Hub was high in Q2 as well. Extension employee Annie Salafsky is serving as interim sales manager with the hub, and helped launch the Workplace Wellness Program and the Multi-box Farm program. The hub, which is a farmer-owned cooperative, garnered 190 members across the two box subscription programs, and partnered with ten local businesses such as Dancing Goats Coffee, Headless Mumby Brewery, Three Magnets, True Self Yoga, and more (more info here: <https://swwafoodhub.com/>). Notably drop sites for workplace wellness include Thurston County (govt), the WA state legislature, and cities of Olympia, Tumwater, and Lacey. It is really important that these programs for the food hub grow to ~600 members in order for the hub to become self-sustaining. Volunteers are always needed to help pack boxes so please reach out!

Other activities Apr-Jun activities included a Kincaid's lupine farm walk at the Mallonee Organic Valley Dairy, co-hosted by the SW Washington Grazing Association. The Mallonee's have been amazingly successful at expanding the range of the federally threatened Kincaid's lupine, all while running a successful dairy and transitioning the farm to the next generation while being featured on PBS (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Brw0xDXu9Sw>).



Attendees of the first ever SW Washington Grazing School gather in the Skookumchuck Grange just outside of Tenino, WA. Participants in the 3-day intensive, hands-on class learned about rotational grazing, using stocking density to match forage supply and demand, grazing for habitat conservation, plant identification, and infrastructure for adaptive multi-paddock grazing systems.



Participants at the SW Washington Grazing School use pasture sticks to estimate available forage biomass to calculate paddock sizes.



WSU MASTER GARDENER & MASTER RECYCLER COMPOSTER PROGRAM

Cori Carlton

This year continues to be a busy one for the WSU Master Gardener and Master Recycler Composter Programs.

WSU Master Gardener Program 50th Anniversary Celebration activities kicked off this spring. For those who don't know the WSU Master Gardener program started in King & Pierce counties 50 years ago and has since spread internationally.

Our program volunteers participated in regional celebration events and at the International Master Gardener Conference in Overland Park, Kansas. In addition, the first gardening question/answer clinic was held at the Tacoma Mall 50 years ago. In honor we hosted our own question/answer clinic at Capital Mall. WSU Master Gardener and Master Recycler Composter volunteers hosted informational and activity booths over two weekends this spring. Visitors got their gardening, composting, recycling, and waste reduction questions answered. It was a fun event. We also hosted guided walks of our demonstration gardens. More walks and workshops are scheduled so check our website for further details.

In May Master Recycler Composter volunteers celebrated International Composting Awareness week by hosting our first in-person composting workshop of the year. We will continue to host monthly composting workshops through October. Check our website for further details.

Passionate about waste reduction? 2023 Master Recycler Composter new volunteer training information is posted on our webpage. Training starts September 21 and runs through November 9.

Do you have a gardening, composting, or recycling question? Email our certified volunteers via our Question/Answer clinic at master@co.thurston.wa.us

Check our website for further details on our outreach activities and demonstration gardens.



Master Recycler Composter volunteer, Matthew, teaching about worms at a community outreach workshop.





Thurston County 4-H Senior Livestock Judging Team, third place award in the swine portion of the contest.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Emily Killeen

Spring is a busy time for Thurston County 4-H youth members as they gear-up for the Thurston County Fair (held the end of July).

Spring break started off with a Junior Master Gardener 4-H Day Camp for youth interested in gardening and healthy living. Several county-wide 4-H project meetings were held to help youth practice and prepare for exhibiting their work. Sewing, gardening, robotics, and small animal handling were just a few of the learning opportunities offered.

June was a jam-packed month with the Thurston County 4-H Pack Goat Challenge and an archery demonstration held in partnership with the Lacey Rotary Duck Dash event. Thurston County 4-H teens attended the State 4-H Teen Conference on the Washington State University Pullman Campus from June 20-23. State 4-H Teen Conference offered campus tours, career exploration, educational workshops, teambuilding games, trying cafeteria food, and experiencing college life in the WSU dorms. On June 24, Thurston County 4-H sent a livestock judging team to the state-level contest. 4-H livestock judging teams from all over Washington State gathered at the Grant County Fairgrounds in Moses Lake for the day long contest. The Thurston County 4-H Senior (high school age) Livestock Judging Team placed 5th overall high team; an impressive result for their first time attending this state-level event.

June concluded with two different day camps to kick-off the summer break, including Junior Master Gardener 4-H Day Camp at the fairgrounds and Tumwater HOPES 4-H project day camp in Tumwater at the Brighton Park Grange.



4-H Pack Goat Challenge, Thurston County Fairgrounds, partnership with Lacey Rotary Duck Dash



4-H Shooting Sports, Shotgun (trap) practice at Evergreen Sportsmen's Club