



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

The AG Sounder Newsletter

September 2024

Do you have an event or story you would like featured in
The Ag Sounder? Let us know!



In This Issue:

- Note from County Director & Agriculture Specialists on Program Impacts
- Revised Publication - Considerations & Resources for Vineyard Establishment in the

Inland Pacific Northwest

- Help Shape the Future of Farming in Puget Sound
- Join the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee
- Job Opportunity: Thurston County Fairgrounds Caretaker
- Taste of Washington - October 2
- Agroforestry, Forest Farming, & Native Forest Crops Webinar - October 2
- Organic Vegetable Systems & Cover Cropping Field Day - October 3
- Thurston Conservation District Harvest Festival - October 5
- Save the Date: Farmer Wellness Event - November 2

Help support the Cougs with a donation to WSU College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Resource Sciences

Make a Gift Today!

Commercial Agriculture

Program Coordinators: Stephen Bramwell, Annie Salafsky, Sierra Smith



The WSU Extension Ag program helps support **profitability and sustainability** of agriculture in Thurston County through:

1. Value-added production & marketing
2. Pasture, livestock, and habitat research and education
3. Agriculture workforce development

In 2023 we:

- Taught Whole Farm Planning class to **88** new, **16** vets, **24** low-income farmers
- Taught Ag Entrepreneurship class to **97** new, **23** vets, and **27** low-income farmers
- Helped the SW WA Food Hub establish **14** drop sites for Multi-Farm Box Program, and **5** Workplace Wellness Box Program partnerships, with **\$193,000** in sales
- Ran or co-ran **9** Grazing Association events and a **3-Day Grazing School**
- Helped distribute labor grants to farmers
- Managed specialty grain variety trials
- Coordinated a pre-conference farm tour for the WA School Nutrition Association ...and more!

Scholarship, Awards

- **Extension Pub:** Buckwheat Production West of the Cascades
- **Extension Pub:** Food Hub Adaptation; A Case Study of the Linc Foods

2023 in Numbers:

Funding

\$211,750 for 2023 in total:

- Dept of Defense: **\$82,333**
- Western Coastal Restoration: **\$26,666**
- Rural Business Development USDA: **\$15,000**
- Local Food Promotion Program USDA: **\$36,000**
- Specialty Grain Research: **\$15,000**
- Labor Recovery (**\$15,000**); Ag Labor Grants (**\$13,750**)

Training and Projects

- **42 workshops** such as pasture walks, farm walks
- **24 evening classes** for New Farmer programs (Cultivating Success)
- Classes attended by by **1,001 participants**

Impact Highlights

- Launched the SW Washington Grazing School!!! **26** inaugural students from **7** counties, **100%** felt the time commitment worthwhile
- Co-managed **\$500,000** in **\$20,000** cost-offset labor **grants** to County farms with Pac Mtn Workforce Development
- Secured funding to hire a **sales and marketing manager** for the SW WA Food Hub
- Co-organized **9 events** for the SW Washington Grazing Association reaching **240 participants**
- Visited **Piece by Piece Farm** and saw what tremendously talented and humble farmers Kelly and Laura are!



WSU EXTENSION
Thurston County

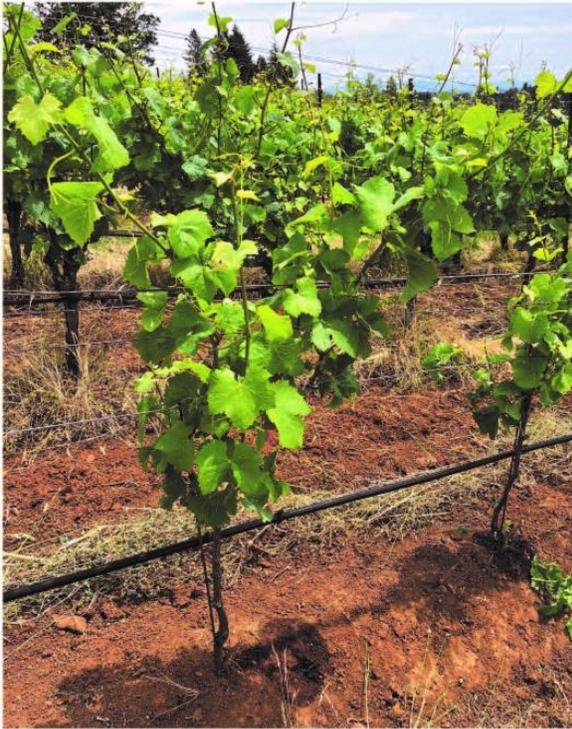
Page 8

Hard to believe, but it is coming up on 9 years since I started with Extension back in 2016. The great pleasure of this work is to be in community, hammering away on incredibly difficult issues with amazing partners: farmers, individuals, conservation districts, EDCs, NABC, county government, Ports, non-profits like Ecostudies, and the list is too long to not miss someone. In these eight years the energy and attention focused on agriculture has increased amazingly. While the pressure on local farmers is as high as it has ever been from development, difficult pricing, overseas competition, no safety net, and the herculean rigors of running a farm business, I am yet more optimistic now than at any time that I've worked in agriculture in the last 20 years. While the odds are steep, there seems to be a

building urgency and will to act in the community. Maybe it is a growing sense and awareness of what we have to lose. Even as supporters increase, the number of people we need to win over to championing local farms in the most direct ways, from a carrot purchase to a donation to a local land trust or other, numbers in the tens and hundreds of thousands, just in our region. And meanwhile, every day counts on the farm: there's precious little margin for breakdown, illness or injury. As I look back on some of our wins from 2023 and 2024, I'm proud of what we do at Extension in the ag program and all our programs, and I'm prouder still when I know our best wins are matched or bested by partners. That in south Puget Sound and southwest Washington there's an expanding network determined to hold on to and grow agriculture in the best of ways. Thank you to all of the WSU program leads, employees, volunteers, community partners, funders, and partners in cahoots. Here's to a solid finish through the rest of 2024 and another year building the movement for agriculture and incredible community Extension programs in 2025! - County Director, Stephen Bramwell

Click [here](#) to view the full 2023 Impact Report.

Considerations and Resources for Vineyard Establishment in the Pacific Northwest



**PACIFIC NORTHWEST
EXTENSION PUBLISHING**

WASHINGTON • IDAHO • OREGON

PNW634

Revised Publication - Considerations & Resources for Vineyard Establishment in the Inland Pacific Northwest

Vineyard establishment requires careful planning and implementation. This guide is designed to help you through the initial questions and considerations before establishing a new vineyard.

Click [here](#) to view the publication.



Help Shape the Future of Farming in Puget Sound

You support our communities by producing fresh food, supporting ecosystem services, and contributing to the local economy. However, the viability of agriculture is a deep challenge, as reflected in the most recent Census of Agriculture.

To address these challenges, American Farmland Trust (AFT) is conducting a survey of current, former, and aspiring farmers in the Puget Sound region. This survey will inform the development of a roadmap and action plan to address Puget Sound agricultural viability, along with a toolkit for county governments to better plan for and serve farmers in their communities.

Will you take a moment to fill out their survey? Not only will you help shape the future of agriculture, but you could also win a \$100 VISA gift card or “No Farms No Food” cap!

We know it is a busy time for farmers, and we appreciate you taking the time to share your challenges and needs. You can learn more about this project and sign up for updates on AFT’s [website](#).

Click [here](#) to take the survey.



Join the Flood Hazard Mitigation Committee

Thurston County Flood Hazard Mitigation Committee is looking for an agriculture or aquaculture representative who deals with flooding to join the Flood Hazard Mitigation Committee as they plan to update the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2025. This will consist of attending 5 meetings held between January - June 2025 (likely 1 hour long and hybrid). View the current Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan [here](#).

Please contact amelia.schwartz@co.thurston.wa.us if interested.



Thurston County Fair and Event Center is seeking a caretaker! This contract opportunity provides a unique chance to live on the fairgrounds and serve the public.

Responsible for the daily opening and closing of the fairgrounds, ensuring its security during non-business hours, and communicating with private event hosts, the Caretaker is a crucial member of the Fairgrounds team.

Key duties include:

- Opening and closing grounds daily, including buildings and gates
- Act as point of contact for event rentals during non-business hours
- Assist with restocking restrooms for weekend rentals
- Cleaning buildings and grounds for weekend rentals
- Conducting nightly rounds to ensure lights are off and buildings are secure
- Attend quarterly meetings with Fair Team

All gates, including the Main Gate, must be closed by 7:00pm when the fairgrounds are not in use, and opened at 8:00am when fairgrounds are in use. The Caretaker must be available weeknights and weekends.

A qualified candidate must possess:

- Physical strength: The ability to move heavy items, such as tables and chairs.
- People skills: The ability to communicate clearly with renters about rules and expectations.
- Highly reliable and responsive.
- Ability to work independently.
- Good decision-making skills.

The successful candidate must pass a background check.

The Caretaker resides on the Thurston County fairgrounds. Basic utilities provided. Lease is \$451.83/month; contractor receives \$650/month for services.

Application materials online: www.thurstoncountyfair.org. Application and letter of interest required.

Email application to: Thomasina.Cooper@co.thurston.wa.us

Mail application to:
Thurston County Fairgrounds Caretaker Search
3054 Carpenter Rd SE
Lacey, WA 98503

Applications will begin being reviewed on October 1, 2024; candidates will be contacted for interviews.

Click [here](#) for more information.



WSDA Taste Washington Day

Wednesday, October 2nd

Taste Washington Day is a day for school districts around the state to celebrate Farm to School and local agriculture. On Wednesday, October 2nd, or another day in October, nutrition services staff, school gardeners, teachers, administrators, and volunteers all over Washington serve school meals with local ingredients and do activities to help children learn about the farms that feed us.

This celebration was cooked up by the Washington School Nutrition Association (WSNA) and Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) with support from Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Child Nutrition Services to promote locally grown food served in school meals. Taste Washington Day serves as Washington State's kick-off for the month-long celebration of National Farm to School Month in October.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

Agroforestry, Forest Farming, and Native Forest Crops: An Introduction

Forest farming refers to a type of agroforestry practice, consisting of the stocking and stewardship of existing forestlands with edible and medicinal plants and fungi. In the United States, there are many forest “crops” that can be grown or stewarded for personal use, sale, and/or conservation. In this session, Dr. Eric Burkhart, from Penn State University, will provide an overview of different approaches to forest farming by examining native forest “crops” such as ginseng, ramps, mushrooms, and maple syrup.

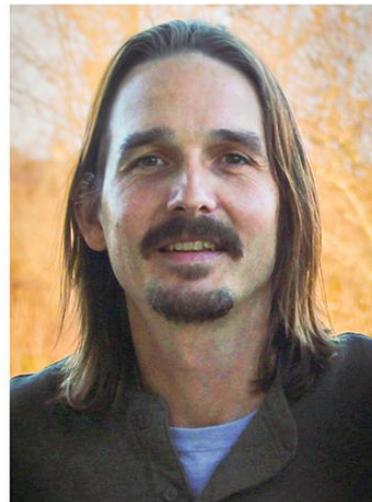
Dr. Eric Burkhart is a botanist, ethnobotanist, and agroforester at Penn State University, where he is Teaching Professor in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management. He holds degrees in Ethnobotany (BA, Idaho State University), Horticulture (MS, Penn State University), and Forest Resources (PhD, Penn State University). For the past two decades, he has worked on topics pertaining to forest-based (in situ) stewardship and agroforestry crop development of Appalachian non-timber forest products (NTFPs). In recent years, he has also been working in Central America (Belize, Costa Rica) and the Caribbean (US Virgin Islands) on agroforestry and ethnobotany projects.

Oct 2



**6-7:30
PM (PDT)**

Join us online via Zoom on Wednesday, October 2. Register at <https://beav.es/UcY> or call OSU Extension at 541-776-7371. A recording will be available for one week following the class. Cost is \$15 or sliding scale. Fees help support the Land Steward Program. For more info, email nicole.smith@oregonstate.edu.



OSU Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities, and materials. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made 7 days prior to Rachel Werling 541-776-7371, or rachel.werling@oregonstate.edu.



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GRANGE CO-OP
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Click [here](#) to learn more and register.

Organic Vegetable Systems and Cover Cropping Field Day

Featuring

- Soil Health Initiative Long-term Agroecosystem Research and Extension site
 - Organic reduced tillage vegetables
 - Pasture and animal grazing in vegetable cropping systems
 - Compost amendment
- Cover crops for biofuels
- Seaweed to Soil



When

Thursday, October 3, 2024
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Advance
registration
preferred



To register, use the QR code or visit:
<https://tinyurl.com/PuyallupFieldDay2024>



Where

2609 W Pioneer, Puyallup, WA 98371
WSU Puyallup Research and Extension Center
[Directions](#) | [Map](#)

For more information contact Doug Collins,
dpcollins@wsu.edu or 253.445.4658.

See project videos here:
<https://tinyurl.com/CSANRvideos>

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. Reasonable accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities and special needs who contact Doug Collins at 2606 W Pioneer, Puyallup, WA, 98371; 253.445.4658; dpcollins@wsu.edu at least two weeks prior to the event.

Click [here](#) to register.



HARVEST FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, OCT. 5TH

10 AM - 3 PM

SOUTH UNION GRANGE HALL

Come join Thurston Conservation District and friends as we celebrate the harvest. This family-friendly event will feature:

- PIE BAKING CONTEST! Enter by 11am, Judging at 12pm
- CIDER PRESSING - Bring your apples and bottles to make juice!
- SOIL TEST DROP-OFF & INFORMATION BOOTH
- KIDS ARTS & CRAFT ACTIVITIES
- FACE PAINTING!
- FOOD VENDORS!
- LIVE MUSIC!



TUMWATER SCHOOL DISTRICT IS NOT A SPONSOR OF THIS EVENT AND ASSUMES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT.

COME CELEBRATE WITH US!

WWW.THURSTONCD.COM

Click [here](http://www.thurstoncd.com) to learn more.



Farmer Wellness Event
November 2, 2024 - 9 am to 4 pm
Napavine High school
405 4th Ave N E Napavine WA 98532

Join us for a day of learning and reflecting on how to reduce and manage stressors on your farm with a focus on physical, emotional, mental, and financial health.

Farming can be extremely stressful. Agriculture is known to be a dangerous occupation full of potential stressors like weather, changing economic markets, and machinery breakdowns. When those start to compound many farmers experience excessive stress, making it hard to move forward to positive solutions. Due in part to the stressors faced in farming, agricultural workers have rates of suicide much higher than the average rate. Farmers need support now more than ever.

During this free, one day workshop, we will explore how farmers can care for themselves to sustain their tenure in agriculture. You will walk away with practical knowledge and resources to help manage the stressors of agriculture. While we understand that some of these topics may be challenging to address in our agricultural community, it is necessary in order to be proactive in community health and wellbeing.

Lunch will be provided.

This workshop is presented by **Washington State University Extension Farm Stress and Suicide Prevention Program** and **Lewis County Farm Bureau**. We could not offer this free workshop without the generosity of our sponsors. Our sincere thanks to them all. If you have the opportunity, please, let our sponsors know of your appreciation.

To register: <https://bit.ly/4e6tS7N>



Click [here](https://bit.ly/4e6tS7N) to register.



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