



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
**EXTENSION**

## The AG Sounder Newsletter

December 2025

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

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- Cultivating Success Agriculture Entrepreneurship & Business Planning Course: Jan 20th-March 1, 2026
- SW Washington Grasslands & Grazing Photography Competition
- Spotlight on Lon Fonseca - Veteran's Conservation Corp Intern

- Veterans Conservation Corps Internship Opportunity
- Early Blue Update - Mob Grazing Goats on Scotch Broom
- Withywindle Valley Farm Lamb Harvest & Butcher Course - Jan 17-18
- Reimagine Wool Digital Poster Contest - Entries due Jan 1, 2026

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

Make a Gift Today!



## AGRICULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS PLANNING

Tuesdays 01/20- 03/ 10 online via Zoom 6-8pm  
with in person intensives on Feb 28 or Mar 7

## EMPRENDIMIENTO Y PLANIFICACIÓN DEL NEGOCIO AGRÍCOLA

*Martes el 01/20 - 03/10 en línea con Zoom 6-8pm  
con intensivos en persona el 28 de feb o el 7 de mar*



WSU Extension will be offering our **Cultivating Success** course this winter, and we'd like to share this opportunity offered statewide, online and with Spanish interpretation. *(Español abajo)*

### **Agriculture Entrepreneurship and Business Planning Course**

This course will walk you through the steps to create a farm business plan through weekly online classes with guest speaker farmers and resource providers and connections in

regional groups.

Tuesdays, January 20- March 1, 2026, 6-8pm with in-person intensives on Feb 28 and March 7

**Location:** Virtual, statewide with Spanish interpretation

**Cost:** \$200 Scholarships available to anyone for whom the class fee is a barrier

Visit the **Cultivating Success website** to learn more and to register

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ANNOUNCING: SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON GRASSLANDS & GRAZING

## Photography Contest!



Agricultural photography can convey stories about farming, natural resources, and the day-to-day lives of farmers.

No matter your skills, consider participating in this photography contest to showcase your work and tell the story of local, grass-based agriculture.

Farmers have the inside story, so producers themselves are encouraged to join in!



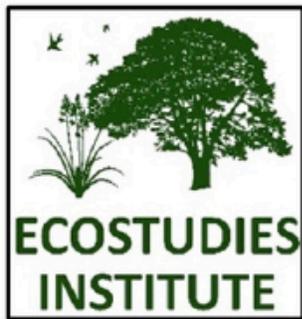
For more information:  
<https://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/swwa-grasslands-arts/>

Click **here** to learn more.

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**Spotlight on Lon Fonseca**

Lon Fonseca recently retired from the U.S. Army after 21 years of service. As a new member of the Veteran's Conservation Corp here in Washington and an Intern at the Washington State University Thurston County Extension, he hopes to build foundational knowledge of conservation work, grazing, and farming. Lon is currently studying for a BA in Computer Science at South Puget Sound Community College and plans to finish his degree at Saint Martin's University. With the knowledge gained from his experiences, Lon would like to help local farms and farmers in the Thurston county area and in the future identify ways that technology can be incorporated into farming to better serve farmers and agriculture in a positive way.



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<https://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/>



WASHINGTON STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**VETERANS  
AFFAIRS**

*"Serving Those Who Served"*

**Join the Veterans Conservation Corps (VCC) – Support  
Local Farms and Sustainable Agriculture!**

**INTERNSHIP  
OPPORTUNITY!**

Veterans Conservation  
Corps Crew Internship at the  
Southwest Washington Food  
Hub and Early Blue  
Conservation Site

**Location:** Tenino and Centralia, WA

**Compensation:** \$1,600/month for a  
part-time internship (20 hours/week)

**Work Hours:** Flexible Schedule

**Duration:** Up to 2 years

**Start Date:** October, 2025.

Position will remain open until filled

## **Veterans Conservation Corps Internship Opportunity!**

### Position Description:

We are seeking a Veterans Conservation Corps (VCC) member to work with the Southwest Washington Food Hub and the 35 farms and value-added businesses it represents. This is a great opportunity for someone interested in the field of agriculture.

You'll spend one day per week of work at Early Blue - a Thurston County Conservation Site

To Apply:

Email a copy of your DD214 or service discharge certificate, a copy of your driver's license, a resume, and a cover letter explaining your interest in this internship to Kim Pham, Veterans Conservation Corps Program Manager: [kim@dva.wa.gov](mailto:kim@dva.wa.gov)

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## **Early Blue Conservation Grazing Demonstration Site Update: Mob Grazing Goats on Scotch Broom**

WSU is working with Thurston County to manage a Conservation Grazing Demonstration Site in Tenino called Early Blue. This site has gophers, some remnant prairie plants and a whole lot of Scotch broom. WSU is trialing various methods of managing this shrub without using herbicides. The broom was mown in late summer in an attempt to weaken the root systems by removing most of the biomass while there were little reserves stored in the root system. In November, we trialed a flash grazing with more than 150 goats to knock back Scotch broom resprouts, ideally weakening the root systems further. The goats were provided by a local goatherd Olivia Raine and her Raine Grazing Services. Scotch broom is tenacious, and any successful management will be a long-term endeavor. Keep an eye on this site as it grows in diversity through practical, agricultural management.

Sierra Smith  
Agriculture Faculty  
WSU Extension Thurston County

# LAMB HARVEST AND BUTCHER COURSE

Learn the ancient craft of harvesting and butchering a lamb. Two different two-day courses are available.

Course 1:  
**November 8th - 9th**

Course 2:  
**January 17th - 18th**

*Leave with half a lamb you processed yourself!*

In this two day course, each participant will learn how to humanely dispatch, skin, gut, and butcher a grass-fed lamb raised on the pastures of Withywindle Valley Farm.

This course is great for hunters, farmers, and anyone wanting to experience processing their own meat.

Meals of lamb will be provided each day in the cozy barn.

Learn in a safe and supportive environment from farmer Carissa and butcher Brett.

Class fee per person: \$675  
Sign up with a friend and receive \$100 off.

More information at:  
[withywindlevalleyfarm.com](http://withywindlevalleyfarm.com)



*Withywindle  
Valley Farm*

# Lamb Harvest and Butcher Course

Learn the ancient craft of harvesting and butchering a lamb. Two different courses are available: November 8th-9th and January 17th-18th.

Click [here](#) to learn more and sign up.

## REIMAGINE WOOL DIGITAL POSTER CONTEST

Wool is the Miracle Fiber!  
Right now, there is untapped  
potential with millions of pounds  
of American wool being  
underutilized.

Submit your innovative idea for  
>25 micron wool that showcases  
a new use, twist on a current  
product, or a new method of  
processing and you could  
**WIN BIG!**



Win  
**\$1,000**  
+ Networking  
Opportunities



Entries due January 1, 2026

[www.sheepusa.org/reimagine-wool-digital-poster-contest](http://www.sheepusa.org/reimagine-wool-digital-poster-contest)



Reimagine Wool Digital Poster Contest

The new Reimagine Wool Digital Poster Contest is now live, inviting producers, designers, students, and agricultural advocates nationwide to reimagine the potential of underutilized U.S. wool. This initiative is part of our broader effort to elevate domestic wool as a valuable resource—one that deserves fresh attention, creative solutions, and practical applications.

Click [here](#) to learn more.



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