



WSU EXTENSION  
**Thurston County**

## The AG Sounder Newsletter



### July 2023

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

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Thurston County Fair is this coming Wednesday July 26th through Sunday July 30th. Enjoy this quintessential family event combining youth educational projects with FFA and 4-H members, rides, community artwork, food entries, flower arrangements, indulgent fair food, and plenty of community and educational exhibits on farming, natural resource conservation, ecological restoration, farmland protection, raising livestock of all kinds and sizes, science, sewing, robotics, shooting sports, photography, and much more!

Click [here](#) for more information & to purchase tickets.

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## SW WA Food Hub Program Launches Two Consumer Direct Programs Successfully

Click a [here](#) for a candid retrospective on this *"toad's wild ride"-like* journey.





## Hands-on Soil Health Workshop

Friday, August 11th 2:00pm-5:00pm  
Randle, WA

A holistic approach to soil health management on farms, ranches, gardens or orchards takes into account the three main aspects of soils: biological, physical, and chemical (nutrients, pH, CEC). Join us for an immersive and hands-on workshop in which we'll learn about and actually do many accessible and useful soil health assessments. Being familiar with biological, physical and chemical aspects of soil health is important to a well-rounded, practical understanding of this vital resource underfoot.

### **In this workshop you will learn:**

- Biological, Physical, & Chemical soil health indicators
- How to take a soil sample
- How to evaluate biological activity using practical, easy methods
- How your farming practices affect organic matter
- How to evaluate a soil profile to assess soil structure
- Visual methods for soil health observations, such as aggregate stability
- How to determine soil texture
- Integrative soil health metrics like the Haney soil health index
- The Washington Soil Health Initiative, and how it can help you and other farmers and ranchers statewide

### **Guest Speakers Include:**

- Steve Fransen, WSU Pasture & Soil Health Specialist
- Molly McIlquham, WA Soil Health Initiative
- Local WSU Extension Soil Health Specialists



Click [here](#) for more information & to register.

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# Farms Forever Dinner

A farm-to-table dinner and ask to benefit farmland preservation in the South Sound.

Featuring local farm fresh food, live music, and guest speaker, Mitch Lewis of Summit Farms.

Saturday  
**August 19th**  
at Riverbend Ranch  
4 - 8pm

Purchase your tickets at:

<https://bit.ly/FFDinnerTickets>

## Farms Forever Dinner

Saturday, August 19th at 4:00pm - 8:00pm  
Tenino, WA

Join Community Farmland Trust for an in-person Farms Forever Farm-to-Table dinner on Saturday, August 19th from 4-8pm. This is part two of their Farms Forever fundraising event. The dinner will be featuring fresh food from local farms prepared especially for you by local chef, Mike Holbein.

You will enjoy an evening of community featuring local beer, wine, cider, and farm fresh food. Come prepared to be wined and dined all in the name of farmland preservation!

Click [here](#) for more information & to purchase tickets.

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## **Gordan Farm - Farm Walk**

**Wednesday, August 23rd, 5:00pm to 7:00pm + social time**  
**5154 US Highway Elma, WA 98541**

Join us for a farm walk at Gordon Farm in Elma Washington on August 20<sup>th</sup>. Gordon Farm is run Jay and Susan and is a 7<sup>th</sup> generation farm first established in 1872. The 600-acre farm boasts a rich diversity of grain, forages, vegetables, and wildlife along the Chehalis River. The farm is approximately divided into 450 acres of grass and alfalfa, 175 acres of corn, 20 acres of barley, and anywhere from a half to a couple acres in vegetables row crops including pumpkins and melons.

The farm supports a rich ecosystem, and is home to bald and golden eagles, buzzards, hawks, falcons, trumpeter swans, geese, ducks, bears, cougars, coyotes, and in most years, salmon. The Gordons have a 55-ac conservation easement on pastured wetland with the Trumpeter Swan Society to support this migratory species, 50 to 400 of which stop over at their property every winter.

Jay Gordon is also a founding member of the SW Washington Growers Co-op, and sells into both the grain and the vegetable sides of this farmer-owned cooperative established in 2019.

### **On this farm tour you'll learn about:**

- Grain production
- Fertigation systems for vegetable row-crop production
- Wholesale vegetable crop production for the SW Washington Food Hub
- Contract malting barley production through the SW Washington Growers cooperative for regional for Great Western Malting
- The vagaries of keeping a 7<sup>th</sup> generation farm going through 150 years of change

For questions please get in touch with Stephen Bramwell at







# Conservation Grazing for Oregon spotted frog



**AUGUST  
26TH  
9AM-12PM**

RSVP Required  
Parking is limited  
and attendees will be  
shuttled to site.  
RSVP with the QR  
code below



Join the SW Washington Grazing Association at Mima Creek Preserve in south Thurston County to learn about grazing as a restoration tool for the Oregon spotted frog, a federally threatened species. The Center for Natural Lands Management, Tracking Y Ranch, Ecostudies Institute, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have been working together for several years to experimentally evaluate how well different grazing regimes affect reed canarygrass, frog habitat, and water quality. Come see the impacts of these treatments and learn about additional opportunities for conservation grazing!

**This event is one of our SW WA Grazing  
Association events.  
All are welcome!**



Click [here](#) to register.





## **Buckwheat-Fest with Organic Seed Alliance & WSU**

**Monday, August 28th at 1:00pm - 5:30pm**  
**Chimacum, WA**

Join Organic Seed Alliance and Washington State University for an afternoon of learning about and celebrating buckwheat on August 28, 2023. Come on out and learn about this very special small grain's potential in the region and get involved in actualizing its huge potential. The festival will include discussions on crop agronomics and variety qualities, hearing from farmers about experiences in growing buckwheat for local markets, seed processing demonstrations, storytelling about buckwheat's histories and cultural pathways,

farm to school opportunities, tastings, celebrations, and more.

Click [here](#) for more information & to register.

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## **Western Washing Food Systems Partnership Announces Round 2 of Food Systems Accelerator**

The Western Washington Food Systems Partnership (WWFSP) just announced a second round of the Food Systems Projects Accelerator technical assistance program supporting Food Systems development projects in the Puget Sound. Pre-applications are available now for broad-reaching food systems infrastructure projects that advance equitable access and food security.

The Food Systems Projects Accelerator services are customized to the needs of the awardees and have the potential to exponentially increase organizational capacity through access to technical support for project planning, grant-writing and implementation as well as access to administrative support. At this time the Accelerator program does not offer direct monetary assistance. Previous Accelerator awardees include FareStart: Developing value-added products from food recovery, Pierce Conservation District: Farm Incubator Program, and the San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild: Lopez Food Center.

Click [here](#) for more information & to apply.

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# ANIMAL ALERT



## PROTECTING LIVESTOCK DURING A HEATWAVE

### Commercial producers and youth with animal projects should prepare now for the upcoming heat and dangerous conditions

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#### ENVIRONMENT

- Proper ventilation and air circulation in barns/sheds
- Provide shade outdoors
- Fresh, cool water available



#### WATER

- Essential in staying cool.
- Especially important in pregnant and lactating animals.
- Keep water clean and cool (look for blue-green toxic algae)
- Look for signs of dehydration (lethargy, dry eyes/nose, eyes appear sunken/dull)



#### FEED

- May need to reduce energy (grains) and increase fiber (forage/hay). Please do so slowly/responsibly to prevent issues like bloat
- Avoid endophyte infected forages (fescues or other crops), as they can worsen heat stress

Animal	Amount of water/day	Amount of feed/day
Lactating cows	20–25 gal/day	Free choice hay, protein supplement to meet requirements
Dry cows	5–15 gal/day	Free choice hay
Lactating sow	3–7 gal/day	8 lb of grain
Dry sow	3–6 gal/day	2 lb of grain
Lactating ewe/doe	2.5–3 gal/day	Free choice hay, protein supplement to meet requirements
Dry ewe/doe	1–2 gal/day	Free choice hay
Chickens	1 gal/20 birds	3 lb of grain/20 birds
Horses	10–15 gal/day	Free choice high quality hay
Rabbits	0.1–0.25 gal/day	Free choice high quality hay
Llama/alpaca	2–5 gal/day	Free choice hay

Adapted from Markwick (2002), Almond (1995), and FEMA (2013).

**\*Keep in mind each of the various species of domesticated animals with have specific needs\***



#### HANDLING

- Avoid handling if possible
- If not, avoid handling during heat of day



#### OTHER:

- Look for signs of heat stress
- Look for signs of respiratory and digestive disorders
- Have an emergency plan for wildfire
- Contact WSU Extension Specialists, County Extension Office, and/or Veterinarians for assistance in planning for heatwave



## Good Meat Project Job Opening

The Good Meat® Project is seeking a part-time Program Coordinator to help execute our Farmers and Ranchers Marketing Innovation Network program, which aims to support Good Meat farmers and ranchers in successfully bringing their meat to market.

Founded in 2014, the GMP is on a mission to catalyze marketplace innovation, connection, and education across the meat supply chain in order to increase the economic viability and ecological impact of livestock farmers who invest in healthy land, animals, and people. We envision a future where meat is produced ethically and responsibly, by an industry that invests in healthy animals and landscapes, values people all across the food supply chain, and nourishes diverse, well-informed consumers.

If you think of yourself as a creative problem solver, with a penchant for detail- and task-orientation, who has the drive and desire to help us deepen our impact across the entire meat value chain, this may be the perfect opportunity for you!

Click [here](#) for more information & application requirements.

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## Thurston County Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED) Job Openings

The team members of Community Planning and Economic Development make it a wonderful place to work and effect change. CPED is a department of highly motivated professionals working for the citizens of Thurston County and planning for its future. CPED is working to preserve history, ensure buildings are safe and energy efficient, plan for our future to ensure development is consistent with projected growth, and to preserve the County's rural character, natural areas, and open spaces.

Thurston County currently has openings for:

- **Associate Planner**
  - **Planning Technician**
  - **Permit Assistance Technician II**
-



## Seattle Public Schools Culinary Services Job Openings

Seattle Public Schools Culinary Services has 2 unique positions open that support farm to school, scratch cooking, and culturally relevant school meal initiatives.

- **Farm to School Specialist**
  - **District Chef**
- 



WSU EXTENSION

**Thurston County**

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