



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
**EXTENSION**

# The AG Sounder Newsletter

March 2024



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

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

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## Prioritizing Conservation Goals on Farm & Forest Lands Survey

Farms and forests are amazing resources that help our communities prosper and provide benefits to our natural environment. To protect these lands and the benefits they provide, Thurston County develops programs to make it easier for land owners to make a living and conserve natural resources.

Thurston County received a grant to improve these conservation programs. Help us find out what conservation goals are the most important to you by answering the questions below. We will use this information to shape these changes.

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

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# **SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON FOOD HUB**

## **Southwest Washington Food Hub Sales Manager Job Opportunity**

The Southwest Washington Food Hub is hiring a Sales Manager! This is a dream job for someone interested in helping build a resilient local agriculture scene!

The Food Hub, a farmer-owned Co-op, runs two produce box programs and sells to local school districts and other wholesale customers. They are trying to find someone to spearhead their sales department, who has experience with CSA programs, sales, and local agriculture.

This job is 20 hours a week and pays \$2,400-\$2,900 per month.

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

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## AgWest Farm Credit Grant Opportunity

This grant opportunity from AgWest Farm Credit celebrates the ingenuity and passion of new producers and can help their dreams come to fruition. This program was developed for those who have a vision for their operation but lack the funds to put their plans into action. Successful applicants will receive a one-time \$15,000 grant to support their operation's growth.

Eligibility requirements:

- Be a full or part-time agriculturalist who has two years or less of operational experience or has plans to start their operation within two years of the grant application date.
- Have an operation located within AgWest Farm Credit's territory.
- Not be a current AgWest lending customer.
- Must be 18 years of age.
- Be a U.S. citizen or a foreign national lawfully admitted for permanent residency or pursuant to certain visas.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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## Southwest Washington Food Hub Summer Multi-Farm Produce Boxes

Sign up for the Food Hub's Summer Multi-Farm Box to enjoy a customizable weekly share of local produce.

The Multi-Farm boxes will feature summer's \*greatest hits\* from our 20+ local farm members! Multi-Farm Boxes will contain 8-10 items per week of a curated mix of produce that you can choose for yourself.

The season lasts 15 weeks, with pick-ups on Thursdays from July 11th to October 17th, at convenient locations in Olympia, Rochester, Centralia, Chehalis, and Doty.

Summer is right around the corner, sign up now to reserve your spot!

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







## Forest Cultivated Shiitake Workshop

Friday, April 12th

Join WSU Extension for an introductory workshop covering the basics of producing shiitake mushrooms on logs as an enterprise to add to your farm's crop lineup or supplemental income for forest owners. The course will be hands-on and interactive. Attendees will inoculate a log during the workshop and take it home.

This workshop is intended to support farm or forest owners considering commercial production of shiitake. If you are only interested in hobby scale production and want more resources, contact Patrick Shults at [patrick.shults@wsu.edu](mailto:patrick.shults@wsu.edu)

Click [here](#) to register.

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## Thurston County Cattlewomen Scholarship Opportunity

The Thurston County Cattlewomen are pleased to offer a \$500 Scholarship for 2024.

We ask that applicants meet the following criteria:

- Be an active member of a Thurston County 4-H or FFA organization in the Beef project area, or in a Jr. Breed association.
- Be a current senior in a Thurston County high school enrolling in, or currently attending a 2 or 4 year college or technical school OR have involvement in an Agriculture related field

As the 2024 Thurston County Beef Scholarship recipient, you will receive:

- A \$500 scholarship towards your college education paid directly to the college you are attending upon receiving a copy of the student's registration receipt.
- If the scholarship is not redeemed by winter quarter/semester of award year, it will be relinquished to the second placing applicant.

Applications must be postmarked by May 15, 2024 for the 2023-2024 school year.  
Recipients will be announced at the May Cattlewomen's meeting

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

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## Thurston EDC Staff Enjoys Locally Sourced Food Hub Breakfast

Thurston Economic Development Council team were treated to a special breakfast at their Monday morning meeting, thanks to Southwest Washington Food Hub. The breakfast consisted of locally sourced ingredients from Thurston County farms. Thurston EDC Executive Director, Michael Cade, took those ingredients and prepared a breakfast feast for his team which included:

- Mouthwatering Bacon from Steger Family Farm
- Juicy Oranges from Newaukum Valley Farm
- Flavorful Potatoes, Shallots, Onion, and Parsley from Wobbly Cart Farm
- Fresh Eggs from Forest Flora Farm

A huge thanks to Thurston EDC for supporting local farmers and producers and to Southwest Washington Food Hub for their dedication to promoting local agriculture.

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## Agrotourism Working Group Meeting

Tuesday, April 30th  
Zoom

Please join the National Extension Tourism (NET) Agritourism Working Group for an interactive Zoom meeting on Tuesday, April 30th from 9:00am - 10:00am PST.

This meeting is a chance to learn about agritourism resources and programming happening around the US – and to share your work with colleagues. All are welcome, whether you have decades of experience to share or are just getting started with agritourism programming.

Click [here](#) to register.

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## WSDA Local Food System Infrastructure Grant Opportunity

Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is offering Local Food System Infrastructure Grants to support local food supply chains and market access for farms, ranches, and food businesses. The intention is to fund projects that expand and strengthen collaboration across linkages in the regional food supply chain.

This includes planning, equipment, and facilities that support on-farm post-harvest handling, aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, distribution, and sale of Washington grown, caught, and raised foods.

Click [here](#) for more information.



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WSU Extension Thurston County | 3054 Carpenter Rd SE, Lacey, WA 98503 (360) 867-2189

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