Welcome to the WSU Asotin County Extension Newsletter!
This is a quarterly newsletter highlighting events and topics of interest to residents of Asotin County and the surrounding areas.
This newsletter can also be viewed on our website: extension.wsu.edu/asotin/

Contact Us

Office location: 135 2nd St, B107 in Asotin (Basement of the Asotin County Courthouse)
*Masks are required in the courthouse

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 to 5:00 (closed 12:00 to 1:00)

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Washington State University helps people develop leadership skills and use research based knowledge to improve their economic status and quality of life.

Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through you local Extension Office.
WE WANT YOU
To Join Asotin County 4-H

Open enrollment for youth ages 5 to 18 is October 1 to November 15, 2021
https://extension.wsu.edu/asotin/4h-youth-development/join-4-h/kim.belanger@wsu.edu or janice.reed@wsu.edu
509-243-2009

4-H’ers Projects are...
Arts & Crafts
Beef, Goats, Sheep (Market & Breeding), Swine, Horse, Dogs, Cats, Poultry, Rabbit, Cavy & Pocket Pets
Clothing & Textiles
Foods & Nutrition
Gardening
Healthy Habits
Leadership
Performing Arts
Photography
Shooting Sports
And more...

4-H Genealogy Project
Family History Treasure Hunt
Grades 6th—12th.

The genealogy project book guides you through six years of activities; each year expands on the previous year. This project allows you to explore tools and build skills to research and record your family’s history. The treasured records you create will last a lifetime.

Contact kim.belanger@wsu if you know youth who may be interested. We are also looking for a club that would like to add this as a project! We have a genealogist who would become a project leader or participate as a resource volunteer.
Animal Talk Tuesdays is a collaboration between Pierce County 4-H and the WSU Animal Sciences Program. These talks are a new quarterly series for 4-H youth to learn about WSU Animal Sciences. Our first session will be October 19th from 6 to 7 PM with Amber Adams-Progar, WSU Associate Professor who will discuss her work on Animal Behavior. Register now to get your Zoom link and to get access to the recorded program if you can’t attend the live sessions.

Registration link - https://tinyurl.com/aszbur4ws

Animal Talk Tuesdays 6:00 – 7:00 PM
October 19th with Amber Adams-Progar, WSU Associate Professor who will discuss her work on Animal Behavior.
January 18th we have Michael Phelps, WSU Assistant Professor and his work with Aquaculture (the breeding, rearing, and harvesting of fish).
April – Date and speaker confirmation to be announced soon! (Asking a WSU Animal Nutritionist who has worked at Zoos. Has experience with animals from Elephants to Dogs.)
July 19th – WSU Animal Sciences – Graduate Student Roundtable Learn about how WSU students chose their area of study and what they love about their work.

This series will feature Staff, Professors and Grad Students from WSU Animal Sciences showing where they work and what they are researching. We will also have questions and answer time so 4-H youth can ask the experts about their animals or what it is like to study Animal Sciences at WSU. Hope you can join us! Stay tuned for future dates.
Master Gardeners and Gardening

Do you love gardening?
Enjoy sharing your knowledge with others?

Become a Master Gardener
Asotin, Garfield, Walla Walla, Whitman, and Nez Perce Counties

For information contact:
WSU Asotin County Extension
janice.reed@wsu.edu
509-243-2009

2022 Master Gardener Training Class
Begins January 18

- Tuesdays, 1 to 4 pm
- In person classes at Clarkston Campus of Walla Walla Community College
  1470 Bridge Street, Clarkston, WA
- Also offered via Zoom. In person Zoom locations to be determined.
- Cost for classes is $130
- Online training course required to become a Master Gardener. Additional fee.

For information and registration materials contact your local Extension Office
Should I mulch or bag my leaves this fall?
Jon Trappe, UMN Extension post-doctoral associate, CFANS horticultural science.

Many homeowners wonder if they should be collecting and removing tree leaves from their lawns prior to mowing, or if the tree leaves can be mulched (mown) into the lawn. Like many recommendations for lawn management decisions, this one can also be answered with the phrase, "it depends."

How to decide
A number of factors will determine whether you should be mulching your tree leaves or collecting them, including:

• What amount of leaves are present before and after mowing?
• How long after being mulched will the leaves be on the grass?
• What are the air and soil temperatures in the next few weeks?

When it makes sense...free fertilizer!
In general, the preferred choice would be to mulch the tree leaves when you mow the grass. Most deciduous tree leaves are around 2 percent nitrogen, which is the most important nutrient for plants. So, by mulching your tree leaves into your lawn, you are essentially getting a free fertilizer application of nitrogen. There is even one report of maple leaves reducing dandelion numbers in lawns the following spring after leaf mulching. Truly, some leaf litter can be good for a lawn.

Successfully mulching leaves into a lawn canopy requires more frequent mowing in the fall and possibly several passes with the mower to mulch the leaves sufficiently. Specialized mulching mowers are available, and these mower types will also be beneficial year-round to mulch grass leaves into the canopy. Chopping leaves into small pieces is important.

When lots of leaves on the grass are NOT a good idea...
Don't leave excessive leaf litter left on a lawn when and if:

• It shades out the turf at one of the most critical times of the year that the grass plants are storing carbohydrates before the winter.
• It increases the incidence of snow mold diseases, resulting in dead patches of turf or a thinned canopy during spring green-up.
• It slows the spring green-up by reducing soil temperatures in the spring, by acting as a mulch layer on the soil surface.
• It provides a more suitable environment for burrowing pests like voles.
So how do you know if you have excessive tree leaves? The best way is to try mowing a pass or two and mulching the leaves. Make sure that no more than 20 percent of the turf is covered by tree leaves after being mulched.

What leaves make the best mulch?
Some tree leaf species are more easily mulched than others. Ash and maple tend to be more difficult to mulch than oak leaves, for example. Also, wet leaves will be more difficult to mulch than leaves that are dry, so if possible, avoid mulching leaves until they have dried.

Generally speaking, the finer the leaves are chopped up the better, as they will be broken down more quickly by weather and soil microbes. Depending on the amount of trees in your area, you may need to mow more frequently than what the turf needs if your objective is to mulch the leaves. It will be difficult to fully mulch this many leaves and not cause problems to the turf before going into winter. Collect them and compost off-site.

Interested in Beekeeping?
Beekeeping Classes with the Valley Beekeepers Association were not held in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID. Classes will resume in 2022 if there is enough interest. The classes will cover information on the housing, care, and feeding of bees. They will be followed throughout the season by hands-on field days to demonstrate such things as putting a bee package into an empty hive, and checking the health of a hive. The intent is to get new beekeepers through their first year.

Experienced beekeepers are also welcome.
If you are interested in taking a beekeeping class in 2022, please contact John Freeman at: 509-758-6338
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced a Request for Applications (RFA) for the new Pandemic Response and Safety (PRS) Grant program and encourages eligible entities to apply now for funds. **Applications must be submitted electronically through the grant portal at https://usda-prs.grantsolutions.gov/usda** by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, November 22, 2021.

Approximately $650 million in funding is available for the PRS grants, which are funded by the Pandemic Assistance provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

The PRS Grant program will assist small businesses in certain commodity areas, including specialty crop producers, shellfish farming, finfish farming, aquaculture, and apiculture; specialty crop, meat, and other processors; distributors; and farmers markets. Small businesses and nonprofits in these industries can apply for a grant to cover COVID-related expenses such as workplace safety measures (e.g., personal protective equipment (PPE), retrofitting facilities for worker and consumer safety, shifting to online sales platforms, transportation, worker housing, and medical costs. The minimum funding request is $1,500 and the maximum funding request is $20,000.

The RFA and the PRS Grant Portal provide more details about eligibility for the grant. Eligible entities are required to obtain a free DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) before applying for this program. USDA has created a custom PRS DUNS number portal at https://support.dnb.com/?CUST=PandemicResponse.

Application resources, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), tip sheets in English and Spanish on applying for a DUNS Number, videos on “How to Apply” and more, are available on the [PRS Grant Portal](https://usda-prs.grantsolutions.gov/usda).

For more information, you can also reach out to the PRS help desk, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. ET at (301) 238-5550 or [usda.ams.prs@grantsolutions.gov](mailto:usda.ams.prs@grantsolutions.gov).

Check your eligibility, obtain a DUNS number, and learn more about the application process at the [PRS Grant Portal](https://usda-prs.grantsolutions.gov/usda).
Harmful Algal Blooms
https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/harmful-algal-blooms

Harmful algal blooms are a major environmental problem in all 50 states. Red tides, blue-green algae, and cyanobacteria are examples of harmful algal blooms that can have severe impacts on human health, aquatic ecosystems, and the economy. Algal blooms can be toxic. Keep people and pets away from water that is green, scummy or smells bad.

What are harmful algal blooms? Harmful algal blooms are overgrowths of algae in water. Some produce dangerous toxins in fresh or marine water but even nontoxic blooms hurt the environment and local economies.

What are the effects of harmful algal blooms? Harmful algal blooms can:
- Produce extremely dangerous toxins that can sicken or kill people and animals
- Create dead zones in the water
- Raise treatment costs for drinking water
- Hurt industries that depend on clean water
Learn more about these and other effects: https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/effects

What causes harmful algal blooms? Harmful algal blooms need:
- Sunlight
- Slow-moving water
- Nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus)
Nutrient pollution from human activities makes the problem worse, leading to more severe blooms that occur more often. https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/sources-and-solutions

Did you know? Climate change might lead to stronger and more frequent algal blooms. Find out how: https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/climate-change-and-harmful-algal-blooms.

What You Can Do We can all take action to reduce nutrient pollution through the choices we make around the house, with our pets, in lawn maintenance, and in transportation. Families, individuals, students and teachers can access resources online to find out more about the health of their local waterways and participate in community efforts to make their environments healthier and safer. Learn how you can help prevent nutrient pollution: https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/what-you-can-do

About Toxic Algae (https://www.nwtoxicalgae.org/About.aspx) Most cyanobacterial blooms occur during warm summer and early fall months but in Washington, toxic blooms also occur during colder winter months. For example, American Lake in Pierce County has a history of toxic episodes during the winter at low water temperatures (7-8°C). It is possible that a bloom can be found somewhere in Washington nearly every month. For more information please see: https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Contaminants/BlueGreenAlgae

Local news on algal blooms
DROUGHT RESOURCES
FOR LIVESTOCK
PRODUCERS

These videos are provided to help livestock producers address challenges in times of drought. The video collection can be found and accessed by following the link provided.

♦ Possibilities of Grazing CRP in Times of Drought
Joel Packham—Extension Educator, Cassia County

♦ Drought Resources for Livestock Producers
Ashlee Westerhold—Extension Area Economist, AERS Dept

♦ Early Weaning: A Drought Management Strategy
Dr. John Hall—Extension Beef Specialist, AVFS Department

♦ Feeding Straw During Drought
Shannon William—Extension Educator, Lemhi County

♦ Ammoniating Straw for Beef Cows
Jim Church—Extension Educator, Idaho County

♦ Strategic Supplementation for Drought and Dormant Season Grazing
Dr. Jim Sprinkle—Extension Beef Specialist, AFVS Dept

♦ Utilization of Drought Damaged Feeds
Carmen Willmore—Extension Educator, Lincoln County

♦ Culling and Marketing strategies for Drought
Dr Hernen Tejeda—Extension Beef Specialist, AFVS Dept
Dr. Jim Sprinkle—Extension Beef Specialist, AFVS Dept
Do the chilly, gloomy days of winter make you want to curl up under the covers and stay there until the sun shines again? You’re not alone. During our dark and rainy Pacific Northwest winters, we get less of the mood-boosting help of sunlight, which may set the stage for the winter blues. What can you do to beat the blues when the short, dark days are getting you down?

Overcoming the winter blues

Here are 8 ideas to get past the winter blues recommended by Kaiser Permanente physician Amado Daylo, MD (Assistant Medical Director of Behavioral Health Services).

1. **Exercise:** Bundle up for a walk, swim indoors, or head to the gym. Exercise can work as well as antidepressants (drugs to control a person’s mood) in fighting mild-to-moderate depression.

2. **Check your vitamin D levels:** Sunlight is a source of vitamin D, a nutrient linked to sharper thinking and better emotional health. Check with your doctor about whether a vitamin D supplement is right for you.

3. **Get some light therapy:** Give yourself every opportunity for daylight, such as placing exercise equipment or your work area near a window. Lamps that simulate natural light can also help.

4. **Eat a healthy diet:** Complex carbohydrates such as whole grains can boost your energy and are vital year round. Fruits and veggies of deep green or orange, like broccoli, kale, and carrots, have nutrients that promote better mood and total health.

5. **Stimulate your senses:** Some people find that painting their walls a bright color — or even their nails — can improve their outlook. Scents can add to your feeling of well-being; try peppermint essential oil or some other energizing scent.

6. **Nurture your spirit:** Slow down and curl up in a cozy chair with a good book or write in your journal.

7. **Head to a sunnier climate:** If time and budget allow, plan a midwinter visit to a warmer, sunnier climate.

8. **See a therapist:** A therapist can help you train your brain to think more positively, which can also make you feel better physically.

**Feeling extra depressed during winter?**

If you feel more than just a little down each winter, with symptoms such as missing work or struggling with even simple day-to-day tasks, you may have seasonal affective disorder (SAD) or winter depression. For some people, the lack of sunlight upsets the body’s ability to keep its complex chemistry and biological rhythms in sync; the body doesn’t know when to be active and when to rest anymore. If you’re trying to help yourself feel better but it isn’t working, you might want to see your doctor who could recommend other treatments.
Indulge your sweet tooth with Slow Cooker Stuffed Apples, stuffed with apple crisp filling and cooked into tender, delicious perfection!

Diet: Dairy-Free, Gluten-Free, Vegan, Vegetarian  
Prep Time: 15 minutes  
Cook Time: 2 hours  
Servings: 6 apples  
Calories: 286kcal

**Ingredients**
- 6 apples any variety, I used Fuji
- ¼ cup rolled oats 24 g
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour 30 g
- ¼ cup brown sugar 50 g
- ¼ cup pecans roughly chopped, 28 g
- ¼ cup cold unsalted butter cut into small cubes, can sub dairy-free, 57 g
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp salt

Choosing Your Apple Variety: When it comes to choosing your apple variety, I recommend Fuji, Granny Smith, Honeycrisp, or Pink Lady (although additional varieties probably work well too). These are four types of apples that hold their shape and texture well when cooking.

**Instructions**
- **Prep Apples**: Cut just the top off of each apple. Using a small spoon, scoop out the seeds and some of the inside, leaving ¼ to ½ inch of apple flesh around the outside to act as a bowl.
- **Filling**: In a medium bowl, combine all remaining ingredients. Use a pastry cutter or your fingers to work the butter into the dry ingredients. It should resemble coarse crumb when mixed.
- **Stuff**: Spoon the oat mixture into each apple, packing it in to prevent the mixture from falling out.
- **Cook**: Add ¼ inch of water to your slow cooker. Place apples into the slow cooker in a single layer. Cover with a lid and cook for 2 hours on high or 4 hours on low. Apples should be fork tender when finished.
- **Serve**: Serve warm, topped with ice cream and/or caramel.

**Nutrition**
- Serving: 1 apple  
- Calories: 286kcal  
- Carbohydrates: 46.1g  
- Protein: 2.6g  
- Fat: 12.1g  
- Saturated Fat: 5.3g  
- Cholesterol: 20mg  
- Sodium: 156mg  
- Potassium: 300mg  
- Fiber: 6.8g  
- Sugar: 29.3g  
- Calcium: 18mg  
- Iron: 2mg
Be Prepared to Stay Safe and Healthy in Winter
https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/winterweather/index.html

Winter storms and cold temperatures can be dangerous. Stay safe and healthy by planning ahead. Prepare your home and vehicles. Prepare for power outages and outdoor activity. Check on older adults.

Although winter comes as no surprise, many of us may not be ready for its arrival. If you are prepared for the hazards of winter, you are more likely to stay safe and healthy when temperatures start to fall.

Prepare Your Home
Staying inside is no guarantee of safety. Take these steps to keep your home safe and warm during the winter months.

- Winterize your home.
  - Install weather stripping, insulation, and storm windows.
  - Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls.
  - Clean out gutters and repair roof leaks.

- Check your heating systems.
  - Have your heating system serviced professionally to make sure that it is clean, working properly, and ventilated to the outside.
  - Inspect and clean fireplaces and chimneys.
  - Have a safe alternate heating source and alternate fuels available.

- If you do not have a working smoke detector, install one. Test batteries monthly and replace them twice a year.

- Prevent carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning emergencies.
  - Install a CO detector to alert you of the presence of the deadly, odorless, colorless gas. Check or change the battery when you change your clocks in the fall and spring.
  - Learn the symptoms of CO poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion.

Prepare Your Vehicle
Get your vehicle ready for cold weather use before winter arrives.

- Service the radiator and maintain antifreeze level.
- Check your tires' tread or, if necessary, replace tires with all-weather or snow tires.
- Keep the gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Use a wintertime formula in your windshield washer.
- Prepare a winter emergency kit to keep in your car in case you become stranded.

  The kit should include:
  - Cell phone, portable charger, and extra batteries;
  - Items to stay warm, such as extra hats, coats, mittens, blankets, or sleeping bags;
  - Food and water;
  - Booster cables, flares, tire pump, and a bag of sand or cat litter (for traction);
  - Compass and maps;
  - Flashlight, battery-powered radio, and extra batteries;
  - First-aid kit; and
  - Plastic bags (for sanitation)
Prepare for Emergencies
Be prepared for weather-related emergencies, including power outages.
• Stock food that needs no cooking or refrigeration and water stored in clean containers.
• Ensure that your cell phone is fully charged.
• When planning travel, be aware of current and forecast weather conditions.
• Keep an up-to-date emergency kit, including:
  * Battery-operated devices, such as a flashlight, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio, and lamps;
  * Extra batteries;
  * First-aid kit and extra medicine;
  * Baby items
  * Cat litter or sand for icy walkways.
• Protect your family from carbon monoxide (CO).
  * Keep grills, camp stoves, and generators out of the house, basement and garage.
  * Locate generators at least 20 feet from the house.
  * Leave your home immediately if the CO detector sounds, and call 911.

Take Precautions Outdoors
Outdoor activities can expose you to several safety hazards, but you can take these steps to prepare for them:
• Wear appropriate outdoor clothing: wear a tightly woven, preferably wind-resistant coat or jacket; inner layers of light, warm clothing; mittens; hats; scarves; and waterproof boots.
• Sprinkle cat litter or sand on icy patches.
• Learn safety precautions to follow when outdoors.
  * Work slowly when doing outside chores.
  * Take a buddy and an emergency kit when you are participating in outdoor recreation.
  * Carry a cell phone.

Do This When You Plan to Travel
When planning travel, be aware of current and forecast weather conditions. Avoid traveling when the National Weather Service has issued advisories. If you must travel, inform a friend or relative of your proposed route and expected time of arrival.
• Follow these safety rules if you become stranded in your vehicle.
  * Make your vehicle visible to rescuers. Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna, raise the hood (if it is not snowing), and turn on the inside overhead lights (when your engine is running).
  * Move anything you need from the trunk into the passenger area. Stay with your vehicle unless safety is no more than 100 yards away.
  * Keep your body warm. Wrap your entire body, including your head, in extra clothing, blankets, or newspapers. Huddle with other people if you can.
  * Stay awake and stay moving. You will be less vulnerable to cold-related health problems. As you sit, keep moving your arms and legs to improve circulation and stay warmer.
  * Run the motor (and heater) for about 10 minutes per hour, opening one window slightly to let in air. Make sure that snow is not blocking the exhaust pipe—this will reduce the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

* Be ready to check on family and neighbors who are especially at risk from cold weather hazards: young children, older adults, and the chronically ill.
* If you have pets, bring them inside. If you cannot bring them inside, provide adequate, warm shelter and unfrozen water to drink.
* No one can stop the onset of winter. However, if you follow these suggestions, you will be ready for it when it comes.