

WSU Extension Island County

Food Systems Newsletter

December 2018



Island County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

WSU Agriculture News

[New mulch ideas could help curb our addiction to plastic](#)

Sharing new ideas to help farmers grow crops more sustainably and curb our global dependence on wasteful, perpetual plastic, Jessica Goldberger, associate professor in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, gave the 2018 presidential address to members of the Agriculture, Food and Human Values Society.

[Soil scientist David Brown named new AgWeatherNet Director](#)

Helping growers and all Washingtonians understand and prepare for the challenges and changes that weather brings, Washington State University soil scientist David Brown is the new director of AgWeatherNet, Washington's Agricultural Weather Network.

[WSU Bread Lab's first culinary director connecting chefs, farmers through food](#)

As the first culinary director of the Bread Lab — Washington State University's Burlington-based research center for bread and grains — Niels Brisbane is pioneering foods and flavors that help Washington farmers, chefs and communities thrive.

More news from [WSU Insider](#)

Upcoming WSU Workshops, Classes and Events

Basics of Biochar: On-Farm Kiln and Soil Amendment Options

Thursday, December 8, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Finnrivier Farm and Cidery, 124 Center Road, Chimacum, WA

Charcoal, referred to as 'biochar' when applied in agricultural soils, has been shown to store carbon, retain nutrients and water, increase biological activity, and increase a plant's ability to absorb nutrients. New research on biochar's influence on soil carbon stabilization and increase in biological activity present an opportunity for charcoal to become a foundational element of regenerative agriculture, furthering other carbon-based farming practices. This FARMWALK will provide a summary of local and international research, as well as a series of on-farm and forestry production methods for converting woody debris into a resource that can increase crop resiliency in a changing climate.

\$15 for Students and Tilth Members, \$25 for Non-Tilth Members. [Register here](#) or find [more information here](#).

Seed Growers, Black Leg disease, and the Quarantine Area on Whidbey Island

Monday, December 10, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM, WSU Extension Island County, 406 N Main St. Coupeville

Seed production is an important business in Washington state, with approximately one-quarter of the world's cabbage seed produced in Western Washington. And a growing number of small farms are expanding into seed saving and small-scale, open-pollinated seed production.

Joining us in person are three respected individuals involved in issues of importance to local seed producers. **WSU Plant Pathologist Dr. Lindsay du Toit** will speak about Black Leg and Black Rot, two economically significant seedborne diseases that can affect Brassica vegetables, as well as related Brassica crops and weeds. **Don McMoran, Extension Director for Skagit County** will talk about non-brassica cover crop options for growers that can lessen the risk of disease spreading to seed crops. Also representing the WSDA Seed Inspection program will be Rich Gilbert to talk about the Crucifer Quarantine area that includes Whidbey Island north of Greenbank and how that impacts local vegetable growers, seed producers, and others who use crucifers and brassicas as cover or forage crops.

Free to attend. For more information, contact Loren Imes, loren.imes@wsu.edu, (360) 639-6059.

Plant Pathology Workshop

Thursday, December 20, 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM, Viva Farms, 15366 Ovenell Rd, Burlington, WA

Lindsay du Toit from WSU NW Research and Extension Center will share her knowledge on identifying and managing plant diseases on diversified farms. Contact Kate Smith at (360) 428-4270 ext. 223 for more information.

UPCOMING

Cultivating Success: Agricultural Entrepreneurship and Business Planning

Thursday Evenings 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM, January 10 - March 21

Take your farm business to the next level with this 12-week course. A unique combination of guest speakers, in class discussion and assignments, this course dives into the business side of running a farm, from sales and marketing to financial management. At the end of the course, you will have the core elements of a business plan to guide your farm forward. Course fee is \$260 per farm.

Two locations linked by video-conference to choose from:

- WSU Skagit County Extension, 11768 Westar Lane, Suite A, Burlington
- WSU Island County Extension, 406 North Main Street, Coupeville

For more information, email loren.imes@wsu.edu or call 360-639-6059. [Register Here.](#)

Cascadia Grains Conference

Friday - Saturday, January 18-19, South Puget Sound Community College, Olympia, WA

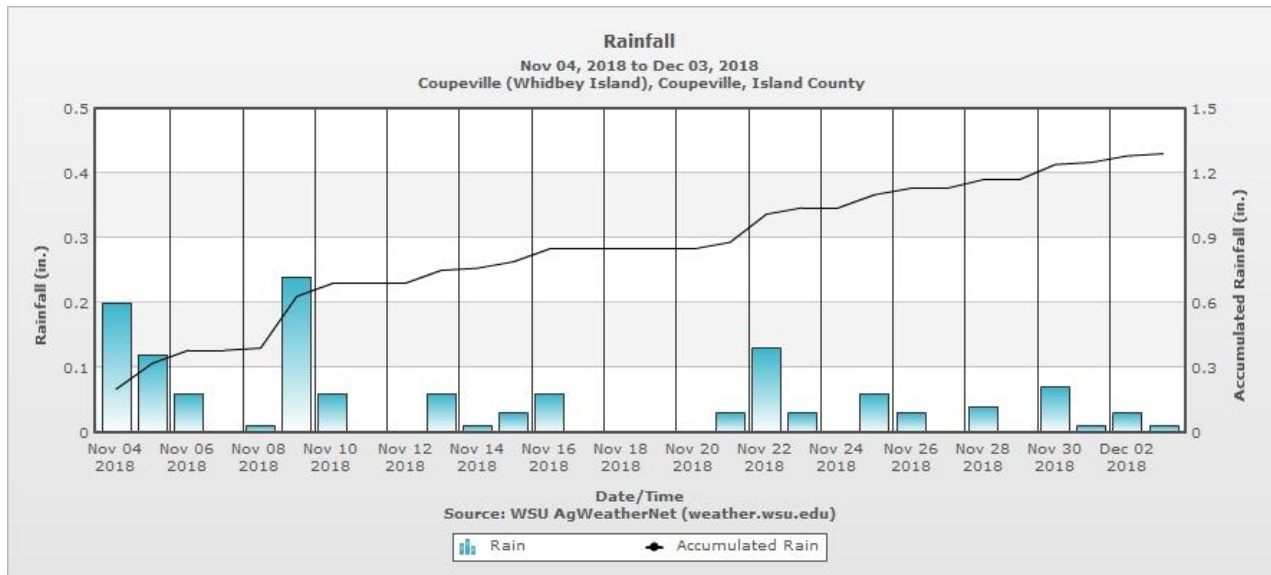
A two-day conference that envisions the revitalization of a local grain economy in the Cascadia Region. The theme for 2019 is "The Terror of Grains." The Cascadia Grains Conference brings together farmers, bakers, brewers, distillers, brokers, investors, policy-makers and others to strengthen the role of grains in our local food economy by sharing the latest science, techniques, and developments, as well as creating a space in which new business, policy and research relationships can form and existing ones can be strengthened.

Optional field trips are on Friday, and Saturday includes a full day of programming: hands-on classes, tastings, panels, discussions, networking and locally-sourced meals.

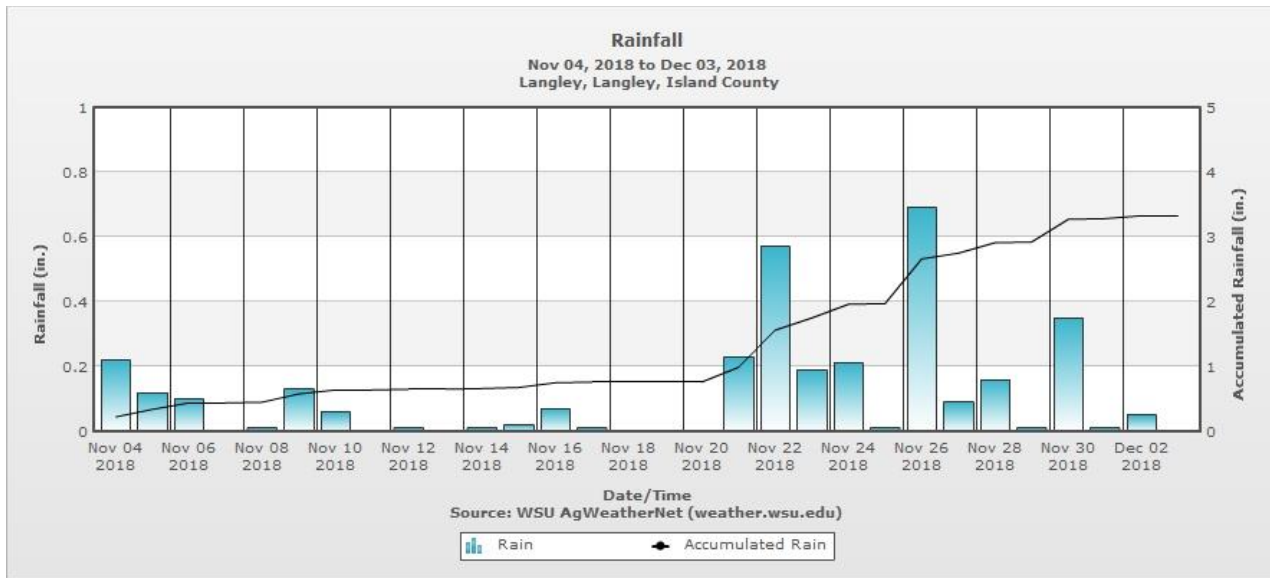
[Register here](#), or for more information, contact Aba Kiser (360) 379-5610 ext. 211 or cascadia.grains@wsu.edu

Whidbey Island Weather Data

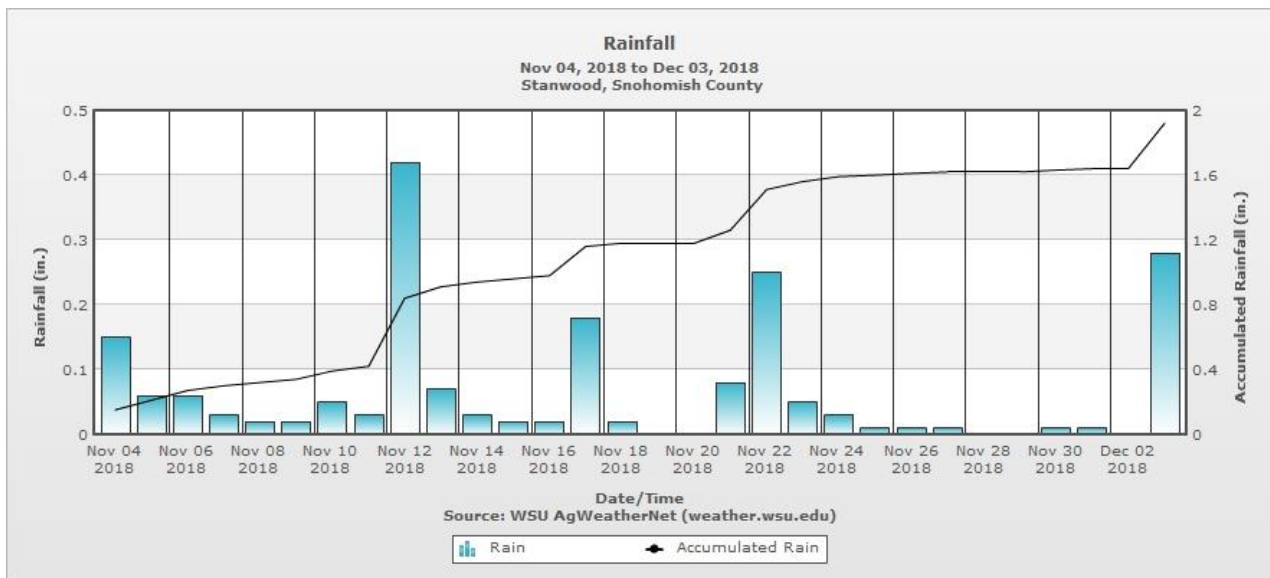
November Rainfall at Coupeville



November Rainfall at Langley



November Rainfall at Stanwood



Visit WSU's [AgWeatherNet](http://weather.wsu.edu) website for more weather data from our two island and neighboring locations.

Follow WSU Extension Island County Food Systems on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

If you do not wish to receive these communications, please contact loren.imes@wsu.edu to be removed from the list.

Loren Imes
WSU Extension Island County
Food Systems Programs Coordinator
<http://island.wsu.edu>
360-639-6059 | loren.imes@wsu.edu

Extension programs and policies are consistent with federal and state laws and regulations on nondiscrimination regarding race, sex, religion, age, color, creed, national or ethnic origin; physical, mental, or sensory disability; marital status, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era or disabled veteran. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.