

May 2020

Announcements

EVENT DATES ARE TENTATIVE DUE TO COVID-19 STATUS

MAY

9-10 Milton-Freewater Jr. Show Online Market Show & Sale. Support local 4-H & FFA members as they compete at a virtual level. An online auction will begin at high noon on the 9th where community members can support the efforts of 4-H and FFA members by buying their animals online.



JUNE

6 Master Gardeners Return to Downtown Farmers' Market, 4th and Main. Market is open through October on Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Look for the Master Gardeners' booth on Saturdays to get weekly gardening tips and advice on plant problems.

23 Dayton Variety Tour (cereals & legumes), 8 a.m., Walla Walla Variety Tour (cereals), 1 p.m. Please check with Clark Neely at 814-571-5628 prior to the tour to verify the time, location, agenda, and ensure a place at the table if food is served. Location maps for the WSU Cereal Variety Trials are available online at [Variety Selection & Testing page](#). Washington Grain Commission funds support the trials and the tours.

JULY

9 Cougar Classic Camp, Grant County Fairgrounds Moses Lake (con-current with NWJSE info below).

10, 11 Northwest Junior Sheep Exposition, Moses Lake WA, Grant County Fairgrounds. Participants learn how to select fast gaining lambs that are heavily muscled and will finish properly. **Entry deadline is May 1 for market lambs and June 16 for breeding and prospect lambs.**



Premium books and entry forms available at: <http://extension.wsu.edu/animalag/news/northwest-junior-sheep-exposition/>. For more information, contact Sarah Smith at 509-754-2011 or smithsm@wsu.edu.

Updates

STRIPE RUST IN EASTERN PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Adapted from Xianming Chen

On April 21st, I was checking wheat fields in Whitman, Adams, Lincoln, Grant, and Douglas counties in Washington. Winter wheat ranged from Feekes 4 to 7. Minor frost damage on leaf tips was common in Whitman County, caused by freezing night temperatures of the last week. Stripe rust was found only in one commercial field in Lincoln County. The rust incidence was below 1%, and rust was still in low leaves.

Three weeks ago, I was checking wheat fields in Whitman, Garfield, Columbia, Walla Walla, Benton, Franklin, and Adams counties in Washington State and Umatilla County of Oregon State on April 1. No stripe rust was found in any checked commercial fields, but rust developed to upper leaves (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Stripe rust developed to upper leaves in a disease monitoring nursery near Walla Walla, WA on April 1, 2020.

The use of fungicides at the time of herbicide application in the early planted winter wheat areas and the dry conditions has kept the rust pressure at a relatively low level so far. However, the rust season still has about three months to go. Any good moisture may increase stripe rust pressure. The use of

fungicides at the time of herbicide application for fields grown with moderate susceptible or susceptible varieties (ratings 5-9 in the Seed Buying Guide) is still recommended for both winter wheat (if not applied) and spring wheat. For fields that have already been sprayed with fungicides, check fields for any new infections about 30 days after the fungicide application, and apply fungicides when rust incidence reaches about 5%.

WSDA PESTICIDE DRIFT ALERT

In early spring each year WSDA investigates a high number of pesticide drift incidents in tree fruit and other growing areas, affecting workers and neighbors. To avoid this problem, WSDA is urging all applicators to follow all pesticide label instructions carefully and use pesticides in a manner that will



prevent off-target drift to workers, neighbors, adjacent properties, and sensitive sites. To ensure pesticides do not drift beyond the intended treatment area, pesticide applicators must:

- Read the label on the pesticides being applied and abide by all precautions and restrictions on safe handling, necessary protective equipment, buffers, the effect on crops and more. Be especially diligent near sensitive areas such as highways, homes, schools and other occupied dwellings.
- Properly calibrate equipment according to tree size, shape and growing stage. Use proper nozzle configuration, proper air and water volumes and pressure to keep the spray on-target. This is critical in the spring when trees have minimal foliage to intercept the spray mist.
- Turn off outward pointing nozzles at row ends and outer rows during airblast applications
- Do not direct the spray above trees or vines during airblast applications.
- Evaluate conditions such as wind speed, wind direction, and temperature. Do not apply during a temperature inversion.

Halt the application if conditions change and create a risk of drift to off target areas, or if anyone approaches the area without proper protection. The Worker Protection Standard now requires an airblast applicator to suspend the application if anyone (other than a properly trained and equipped handler) enters a 100 foot circle around the sprayer. This is called the Application Exclusion Zone (AEZ).

Some additional tasks have proven to be very helpful in preventing exposure incidents:

- Before making an application, communicate your spray plans to neighboring farms and neighboring residents, and scout the areas bordering the target site for unprotected workers or other persons.
- Have someone outside the treatment area monitor the application and communicate with the applicator, especially in those areas where applicator visibility is impaired.

and reduce wildfire risk. It was created by the USDA Forest Service under the direction of Congress and is designed to help community leaders, such as elected officials, community planners, and fire managers.

This is the first time wildfire risk to communities has been mapped nationwide. Visit: <https://wildfirerisk.org/>.

Agriculture

AGRICULTURE, MORE “ESSENTIAL” THAN EVER

WSDA Communications



In March, Gov. Jay Inslee intensified our state’s coronavirus response with a statewide, [Stay Home](#), [Stay Healthy](#) order to suspend all non-essential activity. Inslee called on people to stay home and for businesses to close, except for essential activities and services.

Though the spirit of the mandate is clear, some workers and business owners are still unsure if the directive applies to them and if their activities are viewed as essential.

For the agriculture industry, here’s what it means to you.

Agriculture and supporting businesses remain open

If you work or do business in food and agriculture – farming, ranching, food processing and production, food distribution; or you work in a business that supports agriculture, like pesticide application, fertilizer distribution, or veterinary care – then you can continue to operate.

Our basic needs, including the need for food, drink and other agricultural products have not changed. Washington is committed to keeping the food supply chain open and operational -- especially during the current crisis.

This is why “Food and Agriculture” is identified in the [Governor’s Essential Business list](#).

New guidelines to help stop COVID-19

During these extraordinary times, essential businesses that remain in operation must do their part to protect workers and fight the spread of the COVID-19 virus by implementing social distancing and sanitation practices.



Wildfire Risk to Communities is a free, easy-to-use website with interactive maps, charts, and resources to help communities understand, explore,

To help, WSDA has been sharing guidelines for the agriculture industry to help protect workers so they can safely fulfill their essential function. Those resources, for food processors, storage warehouses and packing houses, are available on the WSDA website [coronavirus webpage](#), many of them in English and Spanish.



Keeping the food moving helps in the fight against coronavirus.

Keeping food on the shelves

Deliveries to grocery stores are continuing at a steady pace and farmers, ranchers and food processors are producing plenty to meet our needs. By maintaining the

food supply chain and safe conditions for workers, we can ensure that store shelves will not go empty and the public can ride out this storm.

WSDA remains committed to ensuring that Washington's agriculture industry continues to thrive for the benefit of those in the agriculture community, and those of us who depend upon them.

TOP DRESS MICRONUTRIENTS FOR OPTIMUM WHEAT PRODUCTION

Paul Carter, WSU Agronomist

It is time to think about top dressing wheat, but not only with nitrogen. There are other nutrients, which can be very beneficial to crop production. Most soils of Eastern Washington are deficient in some of the



Zinc deficiency in wheat. Smallgrains.wsu.edu.

micronutrients such as zinc, chloride, boron, sulfur, and copper to name some of the most frequently observed. Acid leaching can remove [micronutrients](#) from the soil, as can intensive cropping. Also, excessive use of phosphate fertilizers can diminish the availability of some micronutrients, particularly iron and zinc.

Extremes in soil pH can result in reduced micronutrient availability.

Most plants have a pH range "sweet spot" in which the micronutrients in the soil are soluble enough to satisfy plant needs without becoming so soluble as to become toxic.

Chloride, sulfur, and boron are very mobile in the soil so it might make good sense to apply a foliar application. Plants absorb nutrients through their leaves and stems, using stomata—little openings

similar to the pores of our skin.

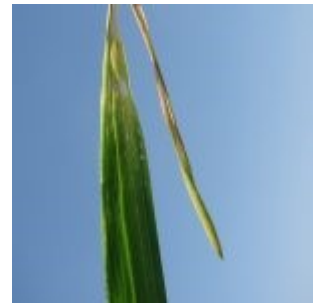
Foliar sprays are well suited for micronutrient applications. Deficiencies identified during the growing season can be quickly corrected. It makes sense to have a comprehensive micronutrient plan in place to ensure that you are getting the best crop yields for your money and the extra effort invested. Remember — if you allow micronutrient deficiencies to become a limiting factor in crop development, further application of water, [macronutrient](#) fertilizers and other resources/time may give a limited return or be wasted.

"Prior to 10 years ago, we weren't doing anything about micronutrients. Then we started doing more complete soil tests and testing plant tissue samples during the growing season. Now I wouldn't consider planting a crop without checking micronutrients and addressing them. If you don't have good micronutrient levels, you absolutely will restrict your yield potential." says Brian Hefty from Ag PhD.

Pick blended micronutrient products for the crop and use what is needed each year keeping your micronutrients in balance in the soil. It will most likely keep your crop from being yield-limited from a lack of these minor nutrients.

Brian Hefty said, "Micronutrients can be applied pre-plant, at planting-time, as a foliar application, or we even streambar sometimes. There are lots of different ways to do it, just don't forget about micronutrients."

If you are thinking about foliar applications of micronutrients, contact your local providers or local Extension Office specialist for ideas and to develop a plan.



Copper deficiency in wheat. smallgrains@wsu.edu.

Gardening

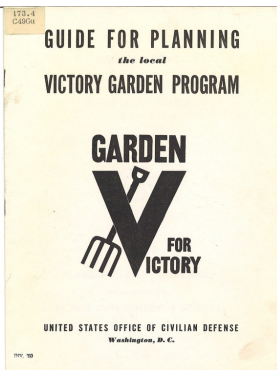
VICTORY GARDENS

Adapted from UC California Sonoma County Master Gardeners

For the average American in World War II, the Victory Garden was a practical way to contribute to the war effort. Some 20 million Victory Gardens were planted (US population in 1940 was 132 million), and by 1943, these little plots produced 40 percent of all vegetables consumed in the US. It's estimated that 9-10 million tons of vegetables were grown.

The Victory Garden Program

In December 1941, shortly after the United States entered World War II, Agriculture Secretary Claude Wickard began promoting Victory Gardens. The Department of Agriculture produced pamphlets to guide urban and suburban gardeners, magazines and newspapers published helpful articles, and patriotic posters urged participation.



Neighborhood and community committees were formed with veteran gardeners guiding newcomers. These committees also helped with distribution of surplus food and sharing of equipment. Many garden tools were made of steel, which was in short supply, so sharing between families was encouraged.

1. Increase the production and consumption of fresh vegetables and fruits by more and better home, school, and community gardens, to the end that we become a stronger and healthier Nation.
2. Encourage the proper storage and preservation of the surplus from such gardens for distribution and use by families producing it, local school lunches, welfare agencies, and for local emergency food needs.
3. Enable families and institutions to save on the cost of vegetables and apply this saving to other necessary foods which must be purchased.
4. Provide through the medium of community gardens, an opportunity for gardening by urban dwellers and others who lack suitable home garden facilities.
5. Maintain and improve the morale and spiritual well-being of the individual, family, and Nation. The beautification of the home and community by gardening provides healthful physical exercise, recreation, definite release from war stress and strain.



Food Safety

SMART PHONES AND GERMS Fightbac.org



You touch a log of things when a you are in the kitchen. You might handle your smartphone or tablet as you are cooking.

A 2016 study by the FDA found:

- 49% of people use device such as smartphones or tablets while preparing food.
- Of those, only 37% wash their hands with soap after touching the device.

What's the big problem? Well, the germs that cause foodborne illness can be on your smartphone or tablet. It is know that Norovirus can live on hard surfaces and on clothes.

It is best to minimize contact with your phone or other devices while cooking, and wash your hands regularly during the cooking process.

Studies have shown that handwashing can prevent 1 in 3 diarrhea-related sicknesses and 1 in 5 respiratory infections.

Try Soapy Solutions, a 20-minutes experiment for kids on effective handwashing.

It is best to minimize contact with the phone or other device while cooking, and wash hands regularly during the cooking process.



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And the researchers recommend that, in general, consumers always follow the core four steps for practicing food safety in the kitchen.

- Clean – Wash hands and surfaces often;
- Separate – Don't cross contaminate;
- Cook – Cook to the safe internal temperature;
- Chill – Refrigerate promptly.

Consumers can find more information on [FDA's Safe Food Handling web page](https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety). Another resource is <https://www.foodsafety.gov/>.

EATING HEALTHY ON A BUDGET DURING COVID-19 ISOLATION

Sara Zaske, WSU News



COVID-19 has changed many things about our daily lives, but one thing it hasn't changed is healthy food advice. It has just modified it.

WSU nutrition expert Jen Moss said if people take only one healthy step in lockdown it would be to eat more fruits and vegetables, but she advises getting them from a can or the freezer as well as using fresh produce.

"Both canned and frozen fruits and vegetables tend to be picked at their peak of freshness, so you can count on them as being pretty nutritionally well preserved any time that you have them," said Moss. "It can be a great option when we are all trying not to go to the grocery store too often."

A WSU Extension specialist, Moss is a SNAP-Ed manager for Region 3 of the state, which includes five counties from Snohomish to the Canadian border. As part of WSU's land-grant mission, the university is an implementing agency for SNAP-ED, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education, the federal program that provides nutrition education to people who are eligible to receive SNAP benefits (formally known as food stamps). Moss regularly works to help increase access to healthy foods for people experiencing hunger and improve the health and nutrition environment in food banks and school lunch programs. She is also a registered dietitian.

Moss recently showed WSU President Kirk Schulz [how to make a Shamrock Smoothie](#): an easy, affordable recipe to make during lockdown, using what else: fruits and veggies.

Here are a few more tips for eating healthy on a budget:

Plan ahead: Know what you have in your pantry first. Then, plan your meals so that you can make healthier food and utilize some of the same ingredients more than once a week. You can make tomato sauce, use it in a casserole one day and on pizza the next. This helps maximize ingredients as well as refrigerator and cupboard space.

Read the label: Look to avoid any large amounts of added sugar, salt or fat in foods. Also keep an eye out for the portion size as the nutritional information is usually calculated by serving.

Think simple: Complex recipes often require multiple ingredients or those you might only use

once. Simple recipes take advantage of items you may already have on the shelf and that can be used for more than one meal.

Buy in bulk: Shopping for larger amounts can save money and help with your meal planning. Make sure to calculate the unit price of the item rather than just looking at the total.

Eat whole foods: Pre-prepared and processed food often have added sugar and salt. If you find yourself with more time in lockdown, try making your own soup or sauces from scratch.

Mindful eating: It is easy to rush through meals at your desk when you work at home or mindlessly snack as you watch TV. Moss advises intentional eating, such as keeping regular meals, sitting down to eat together with your family or roommates and simply slowing down while you eat.

Move: As you sit in front of screens more, plan short breaks. Do five minutes of exercise or just stretch.

"When we move our heads across the plane of our body, it tends to wake us up and helps us feel more energized and alert," Moss said.

She also advised getting outside as much as possible while observing social distancing guidelines.

WHAT KIND OF SOAP IS BEST FOR HAND WASHING?

WSU Food Safety Expert Susie Craig

Contributors Zena Edwards, Lizann Powers, Margaret Viebrock

Have you noticed there are fewer antibacterial soaps and body washes in the stores? They've been around for years, but in 2019 the Food and Drug Administration determined antibacterial soap sold to consumers wasn't any better than plain soap and water in preventing infections. In their final ruling, antibacterial soaps, gels, foams and liquid washes would no longer be able to be marketed.

The FDA reviewed scientific literature. Additionally, manufacturers of consumer antibacterial soaps and washes had not shown antibacterial ingredients were any more effective than plain soap and water. The FDA final rule does not affect hand sanitizers, hand wipes or anti-bacterial soaps used in health care settings.





Simple works! Soap, water, scrubbing, rinsing and drying with a paper towel.



We know that many of you are having to adjust to the new restrictions and a lot of information tied to COVID-19.

In an effort to provide the most accurate, efficient, and effective support, we would like to hear what COVID-19 questions you have related to farm or food processing facility operations. Your input will help our Extension team connect you and comply with current recommendations or considerations.

All answers will be published on the Food & Produce Safety Site in English and Spanish <http://foodsafety.wsu.edu/covid-19-ga-for-the-washington-agriculture-industry/>.

Send questions to:



Faith Critzer

Produce Safety Extension Specialist

faith.critzer@wsu.edu

Or one of the Extension Specialist below.

Please include "COVID-19" in the subject line.

We will strictly maintain your anonymity when addressing your question and sharing the Q and A. If you have workable solutions to share—send them our way so we can share broadly.

We are all on the job during the "Stay Home Stay Healthy" proclamation and are available to assist in the navigation of this new territory.

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Master Gardeners



Master Gardeners are available for plant issues and identification through our virtual clinic. Visit our website at: <https://extension.wsu.edu/wallawalla/gardening/> to find the clinic forms. Email the form along with photos to: becki.green@wsu.edu or wwwmastergardeners@gmail.com.

4-H

While many activities are on hold until June 19th, the Public Presentation Contest will go virtual! 4-Hers will give their presentations live to a panel of judges over the Zoom platform. It will be a state qualifying event with feedback from the judges.



HELP NEEDED! Budget constraints are pushing us to cut postage costs. We can accomplish this if you furnish us with your e-mail address! If you are currently receiving our newsletter by postal mail, please email your current email address to: becki.green@wsu.edu or call the Extension Office at 509-524-2685.



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Celebrating 100 Years of Extending Knowledge

Debbie M. Williams

Debbie M. Williams
County Extension Director

Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.