

Newsletter

Updates

STRIPE RUST UPDATE, APRIL 16, 2021

Adapted from Xianming Chen

On April 15, we were checking winter wheat fields in the Horse Heaven Hill area in Benton County, Walla Walla County, and Columbia County in the eastside of Washington State. Winter wheat ranged from Feekes 3 to 6. No rust was found in any commercial fields. Stripe rust was found on a susceptible check variety at several spots, but mainly at the low leaves in our stripe rust monitoring and screening nurseries near Walla Walla (**Fig. 1**). At this location, stripe rust was observed at a similar level on February 26 of the last year, and similar levels of stripe rust are normally seen in the first or second week of March. We did not find any rust in our previous check of this nursery site on March 9 of this year. So, stripe rust in Walla Walla started more than one month later than normal and about seven weeks later than the last year.

As stripe rust was forecasted low and the pressure is currently low in the PNW, fungicide application is not recommended in the early growth season for winter wheat in the eastside PNW, unless stripe rust is observed in fields.

Farm Walks Podcast

For 17 years, [Tilth Alliance](https://www.farmwalks.org/) and [WSU Food Systems Program](https://www.farmwalks.org/) have organized over 130 Farm Walks around Washington State. Each Farm Walk includes a tour of the host farm, a deep dive into 1-2 themes, and a discussion of current research and resources related to those themes. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they adapted the Farm Walks Program into a podcast. You can listen to the full season at <https://www.farmwalks.org/>.

USDA Announces 'Pandemic Assistance for Producers' to Distribute Resources More Equitably

USDA is establishing new programs and efforts to bring financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, and producers who felt the impact of COVID-19 market disruptions. USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers will reach a broader set of producers than previous COVID-19 aid programs. USDA is dedicating at least \$6 billion toward the new programs.



Fig. 1. Stripe rust in winter wheat nurseries at Walla Walla, WA on April 15, 2021.



Photo by Brian Colombo

Announcements

MAY

25-26 Two-Day Pre-License Review Webinar. Three modules on Laws and Safety (+Dealer), Insect & Plant Disease, and Weeds. \$30 per 3 hour session. Registration information: <https://pep.wsu.edu/otherpltwebinar/>.

Day 1

Laws & Safety 9 am– 12 pm

Insect & Plant Disease 1-4 pm

Day 2

Weed Mgmt. 9 am-12 pm

JUNE

29-30 Two-Day Pre-License Review Webinar. Three modules on Laws and Safety (+Dealer), Insect & Plant Disease, and Weeds. \$30 per 3 hour session. Registration information: <https://pep.wsu.edu/otherpltwebinar/>.

Day 1

Laws & Safety 9 am– 12 pm

Insect & Plant Disease 1-4 pm

Day 2

Weed Mgmt. 9 am-12 pm

The WSU Walla Walla County Extension Office is currently closed due to the COVID-19 virus.

Appointments will need to be made prior to visiting our office. We appreciate your patience while we work through the current restrictions. You can contact us at 509-524-2685 or email becki.green@wsu.edu.



MG PLANT CLINICS

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.

POSTMASTER send address changes to:
WSU EXTENSION
328 WEST POPLAR
WALLA WALLA, WA 99362

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PUBLIC'S HELP NEEDED TO DETECT INVASIVE BEETLE

Washington State Department of Agriculture

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is asking the public to report any sightings of Japanese beetle, an invasive and highly destructive pest, and will be hosting an educational webinar about the beetles in April.



Japanese beetles are not native to Washington and threaten more than 300 plants, including roses, grapes, apples, hops, and turf grass. WSDA sets traps for the beetles each year, typically finding them at ports and other entryways into Washington.

Last year, WSDA trapped three Japanese beetles – one in Sunnyside and two in Grandview – and issued a [pest alert](#) as it is unusual and concerning to find the pest so far inland. If Japanese beetles were to become established in Washington, it would have serious trade and economic impacts in addition to direct damage to numerous Washington-grown crops.

On March 1, 2021, a Grandview resident reported that Japanese beetles devoured her roses the previous summer, providing photos showing flowers covered with the pests. She further reported that she had picked off as many as 75 beetles from her roses in a single day.

To help determine the extent of the existing spread, the public is asked to report all suspected sightings, even those from last year, online at agr.wa.gov/beetles, by emailing PestProgram@agr.wa.gov, or calling 1-800-443-6684.

People can also check their lawns for Japanese beetle grubs (larvae) that may be spending the winter there. Those who find Japanese beetles in their lawns may want to consider treating their lawns to help control this pest.

“Last year’s Asian giant hornet project proved that the public can play a game-changing role in detecting and eradicating invasive species,” Sven Spichiger, WSDA managing entomologist said. “Japanese beetle poses every bit as much of a threat to farms and gardens as the Asian giant hornet. This is another case where the public can have a profound impact on the success of this detection and eradication project by reporting what they see in their communities.”

AGRICULTURE CAN BE STRESSFUL- YOU'RE NOT ALONE Coping with Excessive Stress

WSU EXTENSION SKAGIT COUNTY

Agriculture is known to be a dangerous occupation full of potential stressors like weather, changing economic markets and machinery breakdowns. When these start to compound many farmers experience excessive stress, making it hard to move forward to positive solutions.

Due in part to the stresses faced in farming, agricultural workers have high rates of suicide. This loss of parents, siblings, children and spouses can be avoided – if you or someone you know is experiencing excessive stress or thoughts of suicide, please reach out to a confidential crisis support line.

A Message from the National Action Alliance on Suicide Prevention

Consider ways to encourage the public to be there for someone who might be struggling or in crisis. Some examples of how someone can [#BeThere](#) include:

- Check in with a friend by phone or text message to see how they are doing.
- Invite a friend to meet for coffee or to share a meal together.
- Send a handwritten card to let someone know you are thinking of them.
- Learn the [risk factors and warning signs](#).
- Help connect someone who is struggling to professional care.
- Share the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Number (800-273-8255), which provides 24/7, free, and confidential support. For specialized care, military veterans may press '1.' In addition, anyone can contact the Crisis Text Line by texting HOME to 741741.



WSU | AGRICULTURAL
SUICIDE PREVENTION
PILOT PROGRAM

There are several signs or symptoms to look for when stress has begun to take an effect on you or someone you know:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| •Thoughts of hurting oneself | •Lack of energy/motivation to do usual tasks |
| •Care of Livestock Declines | •Loss of interest in favorite activities |
| •Increase in Agriculture-Related Accidents | •Alcohol and/or substance abuse/addiction |
| •Appearance of Farmstead Declines | •Withdrawal from others |
| •Children Show Signs of Stress | •Relational tension |

Home & Garden

LANDSCAPE PESTS– ARMYWORM

Adapted from PNW Handbook and WSU Extension Whatcom County

Pest description and damage The variegated cutworm is commonly found in gardens in the PNW. The larvae are black with brown and white markings and measure 0.5 to 0.75 inch long. Damage includes leaf and shoot feeding and may include cutting plants off at the soil line. Cutworm larvae are nocturnal, and their damage easily confused with slugs, but cutworms make clean cuts, while slugs rasp from the side of the plant leaving a ragged edge. Cutworms leave pellet-shaped droppings, while slugs deposit S-shaped sludge wrapped in slime.



If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline network is available 24/7 across the United States. Call 1-800-273-8255.

If you are hard of hearing, you can chat with a Lifeline counselor 24/7. Use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 1-800-273-8255.

CRISIS TEXT LINE |

Text HEAL to 741741 from anywhere in the USA to text with a trained Crisis Counselor.

Every texter is connected with a Crisis Counselor, a real-life human being trained to bring texters from a hot moment to a cool calm through active listening and collaborative problem solving. All of Crisis Text Line's Crisis Counselors are volunteers.



Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION





Armyworm pupa



Each proleg has a black band at the base.



A dark netting pattern occurs on each side of the head.



Adult armyworm moth. (Photo courtesy Tracy Hueppelsheuser, B.C. Ministry of Agriculture).

Biology and life cycle Cutworms are found throughout the year, but are most damaging early in the spring when overwintering larvae feed on emerging plant tissues. In the Pacific Northwest, small cutworms feed at night in mid-December and January. Larvae, or the shiny red-brown, bullet-shaped pupa case, also may be unearthed while weeding in spring and early summer. Eggs are laid in patches on plants or nearby grasses.

Pest monitoring Watch plants for fecal pellets near defoliated leaves by day or search plants for larvae at night in mid-winter in milder climates.

Management-biological control Several predators including ground beetles feed on cutworms and multiple wasps and flies parasitize them. Encourage natural enemies of cutworms like birds, ground beetles, and spiders. Ground scratching birds may also play a role in keeping numbers low.

Management-cultural control Control weeds, grasses, and debris on the soil surface in the vegetable garden that provide cover for marauding larvae. Using a flashlight at night, remove cutworm larvae by hand picking. Sort through the loose soil at the base of plants to find larvae in the daytime.

Livestock

DUAL-PURPOSE CANOLA: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTENDING FORAGE IN A DRY YEAR

Isaac Madsen, WSU CAHNRS

Unfortunately, 2021 is shaping up to be an unusually dry year with large portions of the Western U.S. experiencing drought. With approximately 37% of the area of cattle inventory experiencing drought as of April 13th, 2021 forage will likely be scarce as we progress into summer. One possible approach to increasing late season forages is through the little used practice of dual-purpose [canola](#). Dual-purpose canola, sometimes referred to as canolage, is the practice of seeding canola for forage and grain production. Dual-purpose canola is by no means a new concept, having been practiced and studied in Australia, however, it has not been widely practiced in the inland Pacific Northwest. With the impending forage shortage and good canola prices, 2021 may be an ideal year for attempting dual-purpose canola.

Several researchers at WSU and U of I have assessed the practicality of dual-purpose canola in the inland Pacific Northwest. The research has revealed that dual-purpose winter canola can be practically applied in the inland Pacific Northwest. At two different locations and years, Dusty (2017) and Creston (2019), canola seeded in July successfully survived the winter and was harvested the following year. In Dusty during 2017, the severity of grazing was found to decrease canola seed yield (see table). In Dusty in 2018, the canola was seeded in May in the hopes of allowing for two grazing events. The early seeding ended with a killing drought in the fall of 2018 in the ungrazed canola and drought that reduced seed yields to 700 lbs/acre in the grazed canola. The fact that the grazed canola did not completely succumb to drought, while the ungrazed canola did, indicates that grazing had the effect of reducing water usage. [Soil moisture](#) probes

supported this conclusion as the canola that was grazed had reduced fall moisture usage when compared with the ungrazed canola. The best approach to dual-purpose winter canola in the inland Pacific Northwest appears to be an early July planting and an August or September grazing.

When managing dual-purpose canola, it is important to consider the forage quality and methods for improving the forage quality. Canola tends to be high in protein and may have high nitrate and sulfates. Any canola forage should be tested prior to consumption by cattle. Additionally, no nitrogen should be applied at planting unless soil reserves are near or at zero. Canola tends to be low in fiber, which means additional high fiber forage should be made available. High fiber forage can be made available by feeding hay, companion planting a high fiber grass, or making high fiber pasture available near water. In the fall of 2020, WSU researchers compared monoculture canola forage to canola forage companion planted with oats. The canola-oat forage had significantly higher ADF% and NDF% than the monoculture canola.

Dual-purpose winter canola may be a suitable means of extending forage into the late summer and fall. If you are planning on implementing dual-purpose winter canola, please consider the following:

1. Fall grazing of early seeded winter canola frequently results in a yield decline depending on the intensity of the grazing.
2. Test canola-based forage for nitrates prior to grazing.
3. Winter canola is a high protein, low fiber forage. To ensure digestibility, the canola can be companion planted with higher fiber grasses. Additionally, it is good to have high fiber forages, straw, or hay available near water sources.
4. If the canola is seeded too early it may use too much water in the fall, resulting in late fall drought stress. Grazing may reduce fall water usage and assist in mitigating this effect.
5. Densely and early seeded canola may result in increased height, thereby reducing winter survival.



PNW Canola Association

4-H News



Public Presentations

The first round of Public Presentations started in April and the second round of presentations will be held in May. 4-Her's will present in a live format through a Zoom meeting to a judging panel. They will be given positive feedback and helpful tips to assist them with future presentations.

4-H and FFA Animal Weigh-Ins

As in past years, there will be no weigh-in for swine. Online registrations are due by May 24th. Tags will be available for pickup at the WSU Extension Office by June 3rd.

Sheep and Goat weigh-in is tentatively scheduled for June 5th at the Walla Walla Fair Grounds.

	Treatments	Yield (lbs/a)	Grazing Pressure
Dusty * 2017-2018	Pasture 1	2460	Heavy
	Pasture 2	2140	Severe
	Pasture 3	3320	Light
	Ungrazed	3380	None
Dusty** 2019-2020	Grazed	700	Severe
	Ungrazed	0	None
Creston*** 2019-2020	Grazed	1820	Heavy
	Ungrazed	2840	None

* No replication

** May planting resulted in drought

*** Replicated strips w/ commercial combine

Family Living



Free Pressure Gauge Testing

To ensure safe canning processes during the COVID-19 pandemic, a form has been created to streamline the pressure gauge testing process: <https://docs.google.com/wsuwallawallapressuregauge/testing>.

Please fill the form out, then you will be contacted to arrange a time to have your pressure gauge tested. You can email becki.green@wsu.edu with any questions.

It is recommended to have your pressure gauge tested every year also when you purchase a new gauge to ensure that it is calibrated properly.



Celebrating 100 Years of Extending Knowledge and Changing Lives.

Debbie M. Williams
County Extension Director

PLAN AHEAD FOR HOME CANNING THIS SUMMER

Elizabeth L. Andress, Ph.D., Extension Food Safety Specialist

If you are just now thinking about joining the trend in our communities to can food this summer, start by checking your equipment and supplies. Proper equipment in good condition is required for safe, high quality home canned food.

A pressure canner is essential for canning low-acid vegetables, meats, fish, and poultry. Two basic types are available. One has a dial gauge to indicate the pressure inside the canner; the other has a metal weighted gauge. Dial gauges must be tested for accuracy before each canning season. For information on testing a dial gauge, call your county Extension agent. Check the rubber gasket if your canner has one; it should be flexible and soft, not brittle, sticky or cracked. Also make sure any small pipes or ventports with openings are clean and open all the way through.

A boiling water canner is needed for canning other foods such as fruits, pickles, jellies and jams. The canner should be deep enough to allow at least one to two inches of water to boil over the tops of the jars.

Inspect jars nicks, cracks or chips, especially around the top sealing edge. Nicks can prevent lids from sealing. Very old jars can weaken with age and repeated use; they break under pressure and heat. New jars are a better investment over time than buying used jars at yard sales or flea markets.

Mason-type jars specifically designed for home canning are best. Jars that use two-piece self-sealing metal lids are the recommended container in USDA guidelines. A "must" every canning season are new flat lids. Used lids should be thrown away. The screw bands are re-usable if they are not bent, dented or rusted.

A final must is reliable, up-to-date canning instructions. Publications and information are available at your county Extension office, or on this website for the National Center for Home Food Preservation. The current edition of the USDA *Complete Guide to Home Canning* is on www.homefoodpreservation.net. So Easy to Preserve, a comprehensive book with information on all types of home food preservation can be ordered from the [UGA Extension Publications Store](http://www.ugaextension.org/publications).

Be sure to look at the instructions for what you want to can well before you are ready to prepare the food. You may need time to purchase some ingredients and small equipment that are necessary to prepare food exactly as the directions indicate. There are a few products in the USDA *Complete Guide to Home Canning*, for example, that use a starch only available through mail order for most locations.

Planning ahead can save you time, money, and frustration with home canning. Make it a happy, successful canning season by getting prepared before your harvest is ready.



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