



NEWSLETTER

Agriculture



WSU Roadmap for Soil Health

A 124-page [“roadmap”](#) that outlines current challenges and pathways to help maintain healthy soils.

Key industries involved include growers of potatoes, wine and juice grapes, dryland agriculture and tree fruits, such as apples, pears, and cherries, among others.

The initiative includes a series of Long Term Agroecological Research and Extension (LTARE) projects, envisioned to run for at least 15 to 20 years, which is much longer than most grant-funded projects. Some sites will be considered large-scale in the

agricultural research world, with experiments on a dozen or more acres. A pilot site is already in operation.

“The Soil Health Initiative is a win-win for groups that haven’t always gotten along: farmers and environmental groups. We all want to maintain agricultural productivity across the state and protect our soils. From an environmental perspective, we hope to see carbon sequestration or water quality benefits from this partnership.”

- Chris Benedict, WSU Extension Regional

Value of Washington’s 2020 Agriculture

Apples and dairy remain top two commodities in the state followed by wheat, potatoes, and cattle—**USDA NASS**

The value of Washington’s 2020 agricultural production totaled \$10.2 billion, up 7 percent from the revised previous year value of \$9.49 billion.

Apples remain the leading agricultural commodity in the State with a 2020 value of \$2.10 billion.



Announcements

NOVEMBER

18-19, Washington State Grape Society Annual Meeting—*Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick*

DECEMBER

2-4, OSU Hermiston Virtual Farm Fair—*Virtual*

6-8 WSTFA Annual Meeting and NW Hort Expo—*Yakima Convention Center, Yakima*

10 Pesticide Private Applicator Continuing Education Credit Class—*WSU Walla Walla Extension Office*

13-15 FWAA Winter Conference—*Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick*

JANUARY

17—20, NCW Tree Fruit Days—*Chelan*

19—20 NW Hay Expo—*Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick*

WSU Walla Walla Extension office is open 9:00 am—4:00 pm, Monday—Thursday. The office is closed for lunch from 12—1 each day. Face masks are required inside the office. You can contact us at 509-524-2685 or email amy.rosenberg@wsu.edu

Private Applicator Credits

On December 10, WSU Walla-Walla Extension will host a continuing education opportunity for those needing credits to maintain their Pesticide Private Applicator license. The class will be held virtually and in person. Watch for an email from us as more details become available.

POSTMASTER send address changes to:

WSU EXTENSION
328 WEST POPLAR
WALLA WALLA, WA 99362

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This is up 7 percent from the previous year. Top 5 commodities for 2020 are Apples, which stayed steady from 2019 at 21% of the total agricultural value. Milk increased 7%. In third place is wheat, which increased 20% from 2019*.

Although the value of potatoes decreased 20% from 2019, they remain 4th in total value.

Rounding out the top five, cattle and calves was down 1% from 2019.



Record high values in 2020 included sweet cherries, up 43% and blueberries, up 40%. Egg value increased 33%, pears 23% and canola increased for the 5th straight year. Notable declines included onions and sweet corn.

Impact of Smoke on Grapes and Wine –

Adapted from TOM COLLINS, ASSISTANT PROF. WSU CAHNRS

Washington State University researchers are part of a team of west coast university collaborators that received a \$7.6 million grant to study the impact of smoke exposure on grapes, a project that will provide critical knowledge to grape growers and winery owners in Washington severely impacted by widespread wildfire smoke in recent years.

WSU researchers will work with scientists at Oregon State University and the University of California, Davis, on the four-year project, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture Specialty Crop Research Initiative.

"This project really ties together our ongoing state-based research programs into a strong, coordinated effort up and down the west coast," said Tom Collins, assistant professor at Washington State University, and on the project.

Washington is the second-largest wine producing state in the U.S., with over 1,000 wineries that produce over 17 million cases of wine each year, contributing to \$8.4 billion in annual in-state economic impact, according to the [Washington Wine Commission](#).

Grape exposure to wildfire smoke can compromise the quality and value of wine grapes, and adversely affect the final wine. Wildfire season has been especially devastating for the west coast, where California, Oregon, and Washington are three of the [nation's top four wine-producing states](#).

In the wake of the challenging 2020 vintage, the grape and wine industry on the west coast want to better understand how smoke density and composition impact grapes, grape vines, wine composition and sensory perception of the wine in a glass. The research team is calling this a “smoke to glass” understanding.



Collins said in the early years, there were only three or four researchers in the U.S. working on smoke exposure. “Now we have a really substantial team to work through these challenges. This grant really brings the resources that are going to make significant headway,” he said.

LIVESTOCK

WSU Livestock Carcass Calculator

WSU Livestock Carcass Grade & Cutability Calculator is a simple way to calculate carcass yield grade, dressing percentages, and cutability of beef, pork and lamb carcasses. The Calculator lets you determine:



- For cattle the Beef Carcass calculator will calculate estimated yield grade, dressing percentage, actual yield grade, percent retail cuts, and assist in determining USDA quality grade by reviewing USDA degrees of marbling standards for A maturity cattle carcasses (less than 30 months of age).
- For pigs the Pork Carcass Calculator will calculate estimated percent muscle, dressing percentage, and actual percent muscle for both ribbed and unribbed carcasses. The Pork Carcass Calculator allows one to correct for skin on or off and if the head has been removed from the carcass.
- For lambs the Lamb Carcass Calculator will calculate estimated yield grade, dressing percentage, actual yield grade, and percent of boneless closely trimmed retail cuts.

The WSU Livestock Carcass Grade & Cutability is an excellent way for producers, niche marketers, butchers, livestock judges, meat evaluators, and youth to quickly determine the yield grade and cutability of beef, pork or lamb carcasses.

This tool is not meant to replace or verify USDA grades determined by USDA graders or grid pricing used to determine carcass value by specific cattle/carcass buyers.



For your Android phone, find it here: [Google Play](#), for iPhone and Apple products download from the [iTune Store](#)



4-H News

Washington State Fair Foundation Scholarship Applications Open November 1st!

The Washington State Fair Foundation is pleased to present scholarship opportunities to local students for continuing education. 4-H member students may be eligible for some of these opportunities.

2022 BLUE RIBBON SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS OPEN NOVEMBER 1, 2021—JANUARY 21, 2022.

Go to <https://www.thefair.com/foundation/scholarships/> and click any of the scholarships listed to see specific qualifications, or apply directly at: <https://thefairfoundation.awardspring.com>.

For any Scholarship questions, please email kima@thefair.com.



WSU offers two types of Pesticide Pre-License Review Webinars for Private Applicators

- Webinar dates:
 - Nov. 29—30
 - Jan. 25—26
 - Feb. 22—23
 - Mar. 29—30
 - Apr. 26—27
- Webinar topic options: 1. Laws & Safety or Dealer Manager exams 2. Weed Management exams 3. Insect & Plant Disease exams.
- License types: Private Applicator, Public Operator, Commercial Applicator, Commercial Operator, Private-Commercial Applicator, Dealer Manager Exams.
- For more information and to register, visit our webinar website: <https://pep.wsu.edu/otherpltwebinar/>
- Make sure you review the study materials before the webinar.
- Testing available in Puyallup, Spokane, and Yakima on dates immediately following the webinar. See the website for a complete schedule
- There is a fee of \$30 for each webinar. Testing/ license fees are separate.

Home & Garden

Winter Care for Backyard Chickens

Adapted from Douglas B. Gucker, Illinois Extension

Winter begins challenges to the small flock chicken owner. There are issues that need to be solved: keeping the water from freezing, preventing the birds from getting frostbite, and maintaining egg production. Winterize the Coop

- Chickens need a dry, draft-free, and well-ventilated building to stay healthy and productive.
- Winterize your coop by:
 - Placing 6-12 inches of dry bedding on the floor
 - Checking for drafts
 - Adding insulation to the roof and walls
 - Making sure windows and doors are tight fitting and secure
 - Making sure you have proper ventilation. A roof vent and a partially open window will do the trick



Water. Chickens need access to water at least every 10 hours, day and night. Prevent water from freezing by installing a heater in the waterer or by using a heated water bowl. When using heaters or heated bowls, make sure the electrical cords and connections are off the floor and not accessible to the chickens. Check daily for water spills and leaks, since these can cause increased moisture in the coop and health issues.

Feed. Your chickens will need more food in the winter to stay warm. Feed a good, balanced diet. You might consider allowing your birds to eat free-choice.

Chickens will adjust their eating according to the temperature. Another option to free-choice feeding is to scatter high energy feed like grains or oilseeds in the evening in the coop. This will encourage the birds to be active and forage through the litter for their feed. Also, this foraging activity will help to turn over the litter and keep the birds from pecking each other.

Frostbite. Chickens with large combs or wattles are more susceptible to frostbite. For small flocks, applying petroleum jelly to large wattles and combs will reduce the chance for frostbite. Remove snow from chicken runs or scatter straw to protect their feet.

Light & egg laying. Chickens need 14-16 hours of light to encourage egg-laying. Hanging a 60-watt incandescent light or an 800-lumen equivalent lamp with a downward-facing reflector at seven feet above the floor will provide sufficient light for 200 square feet of coop floor area.

Preparing Your Garden for Winter

Adapted from Viki Eierdam, WSU Master Gardener (<https://extension.wsu.edu/clark/2017/11/preparing-your-garden-for-winter/>)

Tucking in for a long winter's nap

For gardeners, preparing the vegetable plot for winter is as essential as planting, watering and harvesting the bounty.

Tips to make the transition from active summer gardening to winter seed catalog perusing as efficient as possible.

- Harvest the remaining crops.
- **Recordkeeping.** While the plants are still in the ground, take some time to write down where each crop was planted this year. Next year, when crops are rotated as recommended, this will make it easier to plot out a new configuration.
- **Personal inventory.** This is also a good time to note what vegetables you liked and didn't, what you'd like to plant more of/less of next year, what grew well and what yielded poorly.
- **Clean it up.** Remove all plant debris, particularly if any plants showed signs of disease. Clean leaves and vines from all structures (e.g. stakes, baskets, trellises). Structures can then be stored in the garden beds. Pulling spent plants doesn't have to be done all at once. If you think a few more tomatoes will ripen or that pumpkin patch is still giving, leave them in.
- **Plant cover crops.** November is a little cold, but for next year, consider planting cereal rye, winter wheat, winter oats, fava beans or phacelia between Sept. 15 and Oct. 15. Cover crops inhibit weeds, stave off erosion and can be worked into the soil as organic matter in the spring.
- **Use those leaves.** After raking up leaves from the yard, cover garden beds with a nice thick layer of them. This is another way to hold down weeds and becomes organic matter in the spring.



- **Winter crops.** Chard, kale and leeks can often give through the winter. Palmer harvests her kale a few leaves at a time and pulls them out when she plants new kale the following spring. Now is also a good time to plant garlic and shallots for a July/August harvest. Lettuce and spinach will grow until the area receives a hard freeze

Growing Groceries: Healthy Soil = Healthy Plants

Home gardeners can learn proper soil and fertility management and how to grow healthy soil for healthy crops, in this [Growing Groceries seminar](#), All winter long, via Zoom.

41st Annual Food Safety Workshop

Co-hosted by WSU Extension, the [Northwest Food Safety & Sanitation Workshop](#)

addresses basic sanitation as well as cutting edge issues related to food sanitation and safety. Held Nov. 9-10 via Zoom.

Agricultural Entrepreneurship Course

Hosted by Snohomish Extension, the 12-week [Agricultural Entrepreneurship course](#) helps new and current farmers gain skills in business planning and direct marketing; \$200, begins Jan. 11

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
WALLA WALLA COUNTY EXTENSION

Celebrating 100 Years of Extending
Knowledge and Changing Lives.

Debbie M. Williams

Debbie M. Williams
County Extension Director



LET'S TALK TURKEY

Unsafe handling and under-cooking your holiday bird can cause foodborne illnesses. Here are a few tips from the USDA to keep your Thanksgiving safe and delicious!

Types of turkeys regulated by the USDA:



*For more information about each type of turkey, visit fsis.usda.gov.

3 WAYS TO THAW

While frozen, a turkey is safe indefinitely. As soon as it begins to thaw, bacteria that may have been present before freezing will begin to grow again. Here are three ways to safely thaw your bird:

Refrigerator:

Safe to store the turkey for another 1 – 2 days in the refrigerator.

This is the USDA recommended thawing method.

How to thaw:

Allow approximately 24 hrs. for every 4-5lbs of bird.

Cold water:

Cook immediately after thawing.

How to thaw:

Submerge the bird in cold water & change every 30 mins.



Microwave:

Cook immediately after thawing.



How to thaw:

Use defrost function based on weight

For more information on safe thawing methods, visit fsis.usda.gov

DID YOU KNOW?

It's safe to cook a frozen turkey though cooking time will be 50% longer!



Clean



Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water.



Utensils
Plates
Countertops
Cutting boards

SHOULD ALSO BE WASHED



Bacteria, which can be present inside and outside a turkey, can't be washed off the bird! Cooking is the only way to destroy this potentially dangerous bacteria.

SO DON'T WASH YOUR TURKEY!!

SEPARATE



Separate raw turkey from fresh food, and use separate cutting boards, plates, and utensils.



Keep dishes that touch raw food separate, too!

Wash items that touch raw meat with soap and warm water.



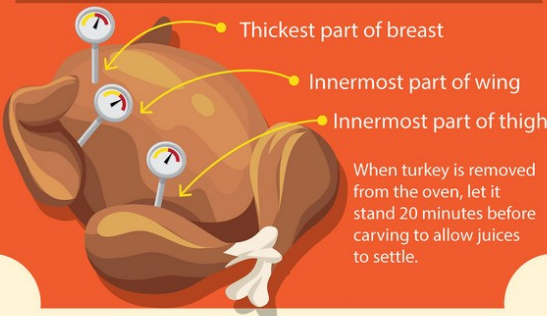
COOK



Your bird is not safe until it reaches 165 °F — you cannot tell by the color.

Remember to ensure any stuffing cooked with the bird reaches 165 °F, too!

Use three places to check the temperature.



Thickest part of breast

Innermost part of wing

Innermost part of thigh

When turkey is removed from the oven, let it stand 20 minutes before carving to allow juices to settle.

CHILL

Take your time around the dinner table, but refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours!



Safe in fridge 3-4 days

Safe frozen, but use within 2-6 months for best quality.



Last day Thanksgiving leftovers are safe from the fridge.



Leftover turkey should be cut into smaller pieces, and store items separately in smaller containers.



Be sure to pack leftovers in a cooler if traveling.



Reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165 °F.

Remember, bacteria that cause foodborne illnesses can't be smelled or tasted!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit foodsafety.gov

If you have a specific question, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHOTLINE or visit AskKaren.gov. Visit PregunteleaKaren.gov for questions in Spanish.



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