WSU Walla Walla County Extension

News

Vol. 2023: No. 3. May-June

PNW Crop Tour Schedule Announced

Adapted from WSU Wheat and Small Grains

The 2023 crop tours provide opportunities to view field trials and interact with Washington State University personnel. Please check with the contact listed prior to the tour to verify the time, location, and agenda or reach out to your local county wheat growers association or other co-sponsor.

WSU EXTENSION
Walla Walla County

For maps and other details:
smallgrains.wsu.edu/events/month

Date	Tour	Starting Location	Time	Contact
1-Jun	Horse Heaven	46.209856, -119.580939	10:00 AM	Clark Neely, 814-571-5628
1-Jun	Connell	46.620627, -118.720953	5:00 PM	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
2-Jun	Adams County Crop Tour	47.161512, -118.426341	3:00 PM	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
13-Jun	Moses Lake	3132 Rd O NE, Moses Lake, WA 98837	8:00 AM	Andy McGuire, 509-754-2011
14-Jun	Harrington	47.408640, -118.400026	10:30 AM	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
13-Jun	Pendleton (OSU/ARS)	48037 Tubbs Ranch Rd, Adams OR 97810	8:00 AM	Debbie Sutor, 541-278-4405
14-Jun	WSU Weed Tour (Pullman)	46.778166, -117.095522	1:00 PM	Drew Lyon, 509-335-2961
15-Jun	Lind Field Day	781 E. Experiment Station Road, Lind, WA	8:30 AM	Samantha Crow, 509-677-3671
16-Jun	Douglas County	47.612161, -119.990626	4:00 PM	Dale Whaley, 509-888-6352
16-Jun	Douglas Co. Canola Stop (PNWCA)	Tentative	TBD	Karen Sowers, 808-283-7013
20-Jun	Fairfield	130 W Emma St, Rockford, WA 99030	7:00 AM	Clark Neely, 509-659-3210
21-Jun	Reardan	47.700557, -117.927040	9:00 AM	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
21-Jun	Almira	39355 Sorensen Rd. N, Almira, WA 99103	3:00 PM	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
21-Jun	Lewiston (U of I)	TBD	TBD	Doug Finkelnburg, 208-799-3096
22-Jun	Mayview	46.597160, -117.404442	10:00 AM	Mark Heitstuman, 509-243-2009
22-Jun	Pomeroy Canola Stop (PNWCA)	Tentative	TBD	Karen Sowers, 808-283-7013
22-Jun	Dayton Canola Stop (PNWCA)	Tentative	TBD	Karen Sowers, 808-283-7013
22-Jun	WSU Potato Field Day	Othello Research Station, 1471 W. Cox Rd	9:00 AM	Mark Pavek, 509-335-6861
23-Jun	Eureka (WSU/OSU)	46.2971514, -118.6331472	9:00 AM	Clark Neely, 814-571-5628
23-Jun	Walla Walla Canola Stop (PNWCA)	TBD	9:00 AM	Karen Sowers, 808-283-7013
23-Jun	Walla Walla (WSU/OSU)	46.088483, -118.221440	1:00 PM	Clark Neely, 814-571-5628
26-Jun	Dayton	46.331880, -117.961550	10:00 AM	Clark Neely, 814-571-5628
27-Jun	St. John	47.070973, -117.532891	10:00 AM	Clark Neely, 509-397-6290
28-Jun	Farmington	47.036094, -117.045534	10:00 AM	Clark Neely, 509-397-6290
28-Jun	Pullman	46.695415, -117.128936	2:30 PM	Clark Neely, 814-571-5628
28-Jun	Pullman Canola Stop (PNWCA)	TBD	6:00 PM	Karen Sowers, 808-283-7013
29-Jun	Wilke Farm Field Day	47.656425, -118.131783	8:30 AM	Aaron Esser, 509-659-3210
29-Jun	Bickleton	46.024942, -120.283326	1:00 PM	Hannah Brause 509-773-5817

Coming Up

May 11—14: Milton Freewater Jr. Show & Auction. www.mfjrshow.com/

June 3: Washington Native Plant Society Walking Tour, Native Plant Gardens in Transition. Walla Walla. gardencbwnps@gmail.com for details.

June 3—4: Waitsburg Junior Livestock Show & Jackpot

June 6: Washington Association of Wheat Growers Wheat College. Colfax. Keep checking website for details. www.wawg.org

June 7: WSU Viticulture & Enology 2023 Virtual Smoke Summit. wine.wsu.edu/event/2023-virtual-smoke-summit/

June 13: WSU Tree Fruit Fire Blight Webinar: Pruning & Sanitation. https://bit.ly/41EZNFB

June 23, 26: WSU Variety Testing field days for Walla Walla & Columbia Counties. smallgrains.wsu.edu/events/month

July 13: WSU Viticulture & Enology 2023 Washington Rootstock Field Day. Register in late May. wine.wsu.edu/event/2023-washington-rootstock-field-day/

July 14—15: Northwest Junior Sheep Expo. Moses Lake. Market Lamb entries due May 10. General entries due in June. extension.wsu.edu/animalag/news/northwest-junior-sheep-exposition/

So You Want to Grow a Giant Pumpkin...

Get started now!

Adapted from Iowa State University Extension and Mike Estadt, Ohio State Extension

While attaining a half-ton jack-o-lantern may not be realistic for our area, growing giant pumpkins is certainly fun for many gardeners. With proper cultivar selection and diligent care, growing giant pumpkins can be rewarding. You might even want to get that "Big Pumpkin" form filled out for the fair!

The Right Plant

Selecting the right cultivar for planting is of the utmost importance. The cultivar name is often a dead giveaway to its ultimate size. Select cultivars such as 'Dill's Atlantic Giant', 'Prizewinner', 'Big Max', or 'Big Moon'.

The Right Spot

- Make sure you have plenty of space for the pumpkin and it's vine.
- Pumpkins need a full day of sun and good drainage (when you water- it shouldn't make puddles that stick around).
- Prepare the site with good compost

Seedling with first true leaf

The Right Care

- Get a jump start on the season by starting seeds indoors.
- Plant your transplants after Mother's Day to avoid frost.
- Seedlings are ready for transplant when the first true leaf is fully expanded.
- Before you transplant your seedling, harden it off. Do this by leaving it outside, in a warm, protected spot for 1-2 weeks, bringing it in at night.
- If you have more than one pumpkin on a vine, pick the best one and remove the rest when they're about the size of a volleyball.
- Water your pumpkin every morning.

- Scout your vines for squash bugs and squash bug eggs. If you find any, pull them off and dispose of them.
- Fertilize regularly with a LOW NITROGEN fertilizer (nitrogen promotes the production of leaves, and inhibits the production of fruit)
- Really big pumpkins put stress on their vines. You may need to train the vines away from the pumpkins to give them enough room. You may also need to clip the roots from vines surrounding your pumpkin so they can lift as it grows.

Honeybee Outlook May Be Worst in 20 Years

Adapted from Tim Lawrence, WSU Tree Fruit

Most beekeepers and bee researchers have attributed Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) to the introduction of the Varroa mite and the mite's resistance to many of the control measures used by beekeepers. However, there is a growing understanding of the role of various pathogens (viral and bacterial) in association with varroa mites, also contributing to the problem. We know that CCD is a complex of multiple interactions that includes several variables in addition to the stressors of Varroa and their vectored pathogens, including malnutrition (lack of diverse bee forage), chemical residues (bee miticides and agricultural), and weather extremes. Weakened by these factors, colonies dwindle to the point of non-recovery. It now appears that climatic conditions from hurricanes, drought, and flooding also contribute to making 2023, in the words of one large commercial beekeeper in Washington, "...the worst year since the disastrous year of 2005." This situation could be an issue for Washington growers who need honey bees for pollination services.

Nearly all commercial beekeepers bring colonies to California each winter to pollinate the almond crop. With some 1.6 million acres of almonds needing the recommended two hives per acre and less than three million total hives in the United States, shortages are expected during the almond bloom. However, this year beekeepers are experiencing much higher-than-normal winter losses and there is an acute shortage of bees for the 2023 almond bloom. Even some very good beekeepers report losses of more than double what they typically experience. There are reports of beekeepers experiencing losses in the 80-90 percent in some of their overwintered bee yards. Usually, this would not be too big of a problem as beekeepers often purchase bees from Florida to make up for these winter losses. However, hurricane Ian (a category four storm) that hit the west coast of Florida in September of 2022 ravaged one of Florida's most significant beekeeping areas. Fortunately, the Florida panhandle was spared, and some beekeepers have been able to refill their boxes with bees. However, many have not.

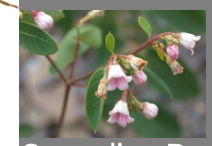
Whether this shortage continues and becomes an issue for Washington growers remains to be seen. At the time of this writing, the almonds are coming into full bloom, a bit later than expected, and somewhat colder weather than usual. The bees will build up quickly if the weather cooperates to stimulate bloom. Beekeepers are busy supplying supplemental pollen (protein) and sugar (carbohydrates), so the bees will build up their strength for the almond bloom. But there is nothing like natural pollen and nectar to stimulate bees to build up quickly. We can all hope for the best, but it may be prudent for growers to touch bases with their beekeepers to determine their situation and do so early rather than waiting or assuming all is well.

LINKS:
More about honey bees:
treefruit.wsu.edu/orchard-management/pollination/honey-bees/
Bee precaution pesticide ratings:
ipm.ucanr.edu/bee-precaution-pesticide-ratings/

Dozen Best Native Plants for Overall Beneficial Insect Diversity

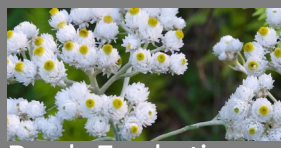
Adapted from a presentation by Dr. David James

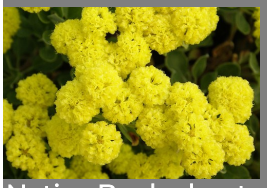
WSU Associate Professor, Dr. David James presented his research into the best native plants for attracting beneficial insects.

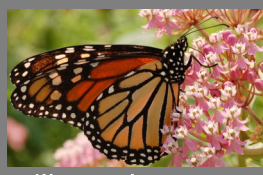

Spreading Dogbane


Yarrow

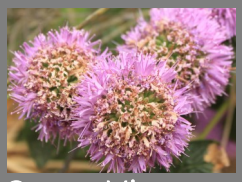

Goldenrod


Pearly Everlasting


Native Buckwheats


Milkweed

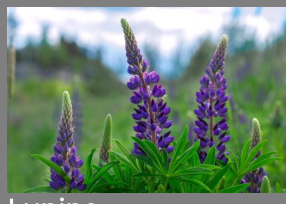

Rabbit Brush


Coyote Mint


Western Hyssop


Nettles


Wild Rose


Lupine

Further reading

James, D. 2014. *Beneficial Insects, Spiders, and Mites in Your Garden: Who they are and how to get the to stay :* Washington: WSU Publications. bit.ly/3oDrUqr

Sign Up to Help WSDA Watch for High-Priority Invasive Pests

Adapted from Karla Salp, Ag Briefs

Early detection is critical for protecting the state's forests, parks, farms, and gardens from invasive pests and diseases.

That's why WSDA's Pest Program has a new project to be on the lookout for some of the nation's highest-priority pests and plant diseases that are not yet known to be in the state.

To look for these and other* pests, the WSDA Pest Program needs your help. They are asking farms, community gardens, parks, and even private property owners to sign up to participate in the project this summer. There are two ways to participate:

- Summer trapping – WSDA trappers will place traps early in the summer and check them several times throughout the season. The traps will be removed in the fall.
- Single site visit – WSDA staff will visit the site once to perform a visual inspection for pests.

Specifically, the team is looking for properties that will have one or more of the following on-site this summer:

- Fruit or nut trees
- Vegetables
- Fruiting shrubs/vines
- Ornamental trees/shrubs

If you are willing to participate by offering your property for trapping or a site visit, please sign up to have your location considered. https://bit.ly/3oiBtLm

The Pest Program will review your information and contact you by May 15, 2023, to let you know if your property has been selected as a pest survey site for the upcoming season.

For more information see WSDA Ag Briefs: wastatedeptag.blogspot.com/

Identifying the Northern Giant Hornet

Adapted from WSDA

There are a few things you can look for to identify a northern giant hornet.

* Usually 1.5 - 2 inches in length
* Large orange head with prominent eyes
* Black and orange/yellow striped abdomen

Spring is here, which means many insects are appearing, including bumble bees, yellow jackets, bald-faced hornets, paper wasps, and more. The buzzing insects may seem larger than what you would see in the summer. That is typical, since many queens are waking up from overwintering and they are usually larger than males or workers. Our flying buzzing bugs are beneficial. They help pollinate many trees, flowers, and other important plants. We need our flying buzzing insects to help our gardens, neighborhood landscapes, and agriculture thrive.

Vespa mandarinia
Asian giant hornet

Sphecius sp.
cicada killer

Cimbex americana
elm sawfly

Vespula pensylvanica
western yellowjacket

Bombus flavifrons
yellow head bumble bee

Polistes dominula
European paper wasp

Dolichovespula maculata
bald-faced hornet

Profitability Tool for Growers Considering Alternative Rotations in Dryland Systems

Adapted from Karie Boone, CSANR and Clark Seavert, OSU

For the inland Pacific Northwest, wetter springs and drier, hotter summers will lead to production system uncertainties and risks for dryland, small grain farmers. Annual precipitation is projected to increase by about 5-15% by 2050 except during the summer months where precipitation is projected to decrease, resulting in decreased soil moisture during the late summer months. We have seen conditions similar to these projections in recent years, such as the droughts in 2015 and 2021 and a wet spring in 2019 that prevented planting almost 53,000 acres across Washington, Idaho, and Montana.

Wind erosion on fallow land, Ritzville, WA. Photo: Georgine Yorgey

These changes are expected to increase reliance on fallow for small grain dryland systems. Fallowing strategies can lead to further declines in organic matter inputs, soil health, and reduced production capacity in the future. Potential alternatives attractive to producers include incorporating winter pea into rotations and planting cover crops coupled with livestock grazing. But will they be profitable?

Growers who are considering alternatives to fallow, such as legumes or forage crops, can use a new profitability tool to understand the impact on their bottom line, including impacts to the profitability of their main wheat crop. The Economic Model to Compare Crop Rotations is an excel spreadsheet that assists dryland growers of the inland Pacific Northwest in comparing the whole-farm net returns of an alternative crop rotation, compared to their Business as Usual (BAU) rotation. The developers have also created a series of short, instructional videos that walk you through how to use it.

Links

Profitability Decision Tool for growers considering alternatives to fallow:
pnwlit.org/profitability-decision-tool

Stripe Rust Forecast

Adapted from Dr. Xianming Chen

Stripe Rust is forecasted to be in the moderate epidemic level in the eastern Pacific Northwest

Wheat stripe rust is forecasted to be in the moderate epidemic level range (20-40% yield loss) in the 2023 growing season, based on the predication models using the weather data from November 2022 to February 2023. The models predicted highly susceptible varieties to have 37% yield loss with a standard deviation of 16%. This value is higher than the 21% forecasted in January based only on the November- December weather conditions. According to the current prediction, susceptible and moderately susceptible commercially grown varieties will likely have 7 to 27% yield losses, or 6% yield loss on average for commercially grown varieties.

Stripe rust has not been found in eastern Washington

So far, stripe rust has not been found in fields in eastern Washington. We checked wheat fields in Whitman, Adams, Lincoln, Grant, and Douglas counties on November 16, 2022; and Garfield, Columbia, Walla Walla, Benton, Franklin, and Adams on March 9, 2023, but did not find any rust. Stripe rust will likely to have a relatively late start in the eastern Pacific Northwest.

Recommendations for the eastern Pacific Northwest

As stripe rust has not been found and the disease is likely to have a late start, fungicide application is not recommended in the early growth season at the time of herbicide application for winter wheat, unless stripe rust is observed in the fields. Fungicide application may be needed later in the flag leaf stage for fields planted with moderately susceptible and susceptible varieties (stripe rust ratings 6 – 9). Winter wheat varieties with stripe rust ratings 1 – 5 may not need fungicide application. For spring wheat, resistant or moderately resistant varieties (stripe rust ratings 1 – 5) should be selected for planting.

Master Gardeners at Walla Walla Downtown Farmers Market

Walla Walla Downtown Farmers Market starts Saturday, May 6th 2023 and WSU Walla Walla County Master Gardeners will be there! Master Gardeners hold a booth at the market where they visit with market-goers about the Master Gardener program, dispense garden advice, and spread enthusiasm for gardening in the Walla Walla Valley.

Master Gardeners are there every Saturday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, through the end of September.

If you are interested in becoming a Walla Walla County Master Gardener, fill out our interest form: extension.wsu.edu/wallawalla/gardening/mg/

Master Gardener Interest Form

Celebrate the start of the WWDFM deliciously while using up all that great produce with this recipe from USDA SNAP-ED:

Farmers Market Gazpacho

Garlic, cumin, and lemon juice give a zesty flavor to this cold, blended vegetable soup. Cilantro added at the end leaves a refreshing pop of flavor.

Makes 4 servings.

Find this recipe and more at snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/snap-ed-recipes/summer-recipes

Ingredients

2 cucumbers (diced into 1/4 inch pieces)
3 red bell peppers (seeded and diced into 1/4 inch pieces)
3 green peppers (seeded and diced into 1/4 inch pieces)
4 celery stalks (diced into 1/4 inch pieces)
2 tomatoes (diced into 1/4 inch pieces)
1 onion (medium, diced into 1/4 inch pieces)
2 lemons
2 cups tomato juice, low-sodium
3 garlic cloves (fresh minced)
1 tablespoon cumin (ground)
1 cup cilantro (fresh chopped)
salt and pepper (to taste, optional)

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients except salt, pepper, and lemons in a bowl.
2. Remove 2 cups of the mixture and reserve.
3. Using a blender or food processor, puree the remaining mixture in the bowl.
4. Add 2 cups of reserved mixture to the pureed mixture.
5. Season with salt, pepper (optional) and the juice from the lemons.
6. Cover mixture and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.
7. Serve cold, garnished with chopped cilantro.

4-H Happenings:

The annual 4-H Super Saturday was held on March 18th at Blue Mountain Community Church. Many local volunteers presented workshops on a variety of topics.

April's Public Presentation contest was a great success. More than 30 youth participated in the April 4-H contest.

4-H members will have the opportunity to return for a contest in May to improve their presentations.

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

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Celebrating 100 Years of Extending Knowledge and Changing Lives.

Debbie M. Williams
County Extension Director