

## Articulations and Partnerships

The Agriculture Center of Excellence (ACE) located at Walla Walla Community College has been busy facilitating agreements between various educational institutions in the last few months. Articulation agreements allow for students to transition between schools as they work towards further training and degrees. These agreements can also increase access to educational programs for students who are place-bound. Working in conjunction with Washington State University and the University of Idaho, the Agriculture Center of Excellence has facilitated initial articulation meetings involving community colleges throughout Washington State that are currently offering Agriculture Programs. By convening such meetings, Articulation Agreements can be forged between all involved institutions simultaneously, thus increasing efficiencies and helping to establish state-wide fully articulated agriculture programs. Stay tuned for more information in upcoming issues!

## Farmers and Ranchers Have Additional Choices with Whole-Farm Insurance Plans

SPOKANE, WASHINGTON, October 6, 2006 -- Two new approved pilot insurance programs will provide revenue protection for most farm-raised crops, animals and animal products. The two programs, Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) and Adjusted Gross Revenue-Lite (AGR Lite) will provide whole-farm revenue protection against low returns due to unavoidable natural disasters and market fluctuations that affect revenue from the sale of commodities produced during the insurance year. According to Dave Paul, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency Spokane Regional Office, "Our goal is to provide regional producers with the best possible risk management choices. With AGR and AGR Lite, producers now have the opportunity to purchase insurance covering all their farm production - even crops for which a federal crop insurance policy was not previously available."

To provide a level of guaranteed revenue for the insurance period, AGR (available in select counties including Walla Walla) and AGR Lite (available in all counties in the Spokane Region) are based on a producer's five-year historical tax information and an annual farm report. USDA will pay a portion (premium subsidy) of the premium for the AGR policy that equals 48 percent, 55 percent, and 59 percent of the total premiums for the coverage levels of 80 percent, 75 percent, and 65 percent, respectively.

Those interested can view an online video presentation, providing an overview of these programs, by accessing Washington State University's Western Center for Risk Management Education web page at: <http://westrme.wsu.edu>. Participants then select: *AGR Video Stream Conference* and select which download method they prefer (e.g., RealPlayer, WindowsMedia).

Closing dates are January 31, 2007 for AGR and March 15, 2007 for AGR Lite. Producers are encouraged to contact a local multi-peril crop insurance agent to learn additional details. Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance companies. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers throughout the United States or on the RMA Web site at <http://www3.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents/>.

## Agricultural Pilot Project Seeks to Benefit Agriculture & the Environment

### Agricultural Pilots Project Pre-Proposal Requirements Streamlined & Deadline Extended

The WSU-UW Policy Consensus Center previously announced a project designed to benefit agriculture and the environment in Washington State. The *deadline for pilot pre-proposals has been extended to **October 20th***, and the requirements have been streamlined to ease the submission of innovative and practical projects that demonstrate potential benefits for agriculture and the environment. Although economic activities and preservation of natural resources have often been perceived as competing aims, many are beginning to recognize common threads of interest. The project encourages agriculturalists, environmentalists, tribes and government agencies to work collaboratively to address these issues.

The effort is centered on dual goals to promote the profitability of agricultural producers throughout the state while restoring or enhancing natural resources and rural landscapes. To achieve these goals, the Agricultural Pilots Project is seeking funding proposals for individual activities which will test innovative ideas on a small scale, but show promise for benefits on a broader scale.

If a sufficient number of promising projects come forward, funding for the Agricultural Pilots Project may be sought by Governor Chris Gregoire. “We’ve been focusing on the differences for far too long.” Gregoire said in support of the project. “This is about finding solutions that strengthen our state’s agricultural economy and stewardship of natural resources.”

A newly established, independent committee, that includes agricultural, environmental, tribal and local government leaders, and scientists, will oversee the effort. This Oversight Committee will solicit, select, and evaluate the pilot projects. William D. Ruckelshaus, the chair of the WSU-UW Policy Consensus Center Advisory Board, appointed committee members following a nomination process and endorsement by the Governor’s office.

“Maintaining a vital agricultural economy while preserving the environment for future generations often presents complex challenges which are best solved by those with on-the ground knowledge working together to find solutions.” Ruckelshaus said. “In Washington, we can meet that challenge.”

This project relies upon local knowledge, creativity and partnerships to develop ways of working together to meet the challenges facing agriculture and the environment. Unlike many past efforts, this voluntary project has been developed through consultation with over 200 people involved in agriculture, environmental protection and local government.

Pre-proposals should be less than 5 pages and need not be overly detailed, but should clearly show the potential value and impact, and show that the project could soon be ready for implementation. Promising proposals will be invited for expansion and further detail.

Additional information about the project including Oversight Committee members and project selection criteria can be found at <http://pcc.wsu.edu/projects/agriculturalpilotsproject.html>. If you have questions, please contact [agpilots@u.washington.edu](mailto:agpilots@u.washington.edu) or call (206) 616-6962.

The WSU-UW Policy Consensus Center represents a joint effort by the two universities to act as a neutral resource for collaborative problem solving in the region. The Center has offices at Washington State University Extension, and the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. PCC staff will provide support for the Oversight Committee.

## ACE Advisory Committee Meeting Scheduled

The next Advisory Committee meeting for the Agriculture Center of Excellence has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 15 at 1:30 PM in the Technology Building on the Walla Walla Community College Campus. During the past few months the staff of the ACE has been working diligently to reach out to our educational partners and industry members in new and hopefully productive ways. The committee will review past ACE activities and work on future plans and goals. Guests are welcome at this meeting. If you would like to join the advisory committee or have a recommendation for membership, please contact: Liz Stroe at 509-527-4635.

## **USDA Awards nearly \$900,000 throughout the Pacific Northwest and Alaska in Partnership Agreements to Develop Risk Management Tools, Education and Outreach**

SPOKANE, WASHINGTON, October 3, 2006 --- USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) Spokane Regional Office announces the awarding of nearly \$900,000 in partnership agreements to help provide new ways for producers to manage agricultural risks, for expanded outreach and educational opportunities to women, limited-resource and other traditionally underserved farmers and ranchers.

RMA is committed to providing farmers and ranchers in the region with quality risk management products, tools, and information. Dave Paul, Director of RMA's Spokane Regional Office stated, "We are very excited about the diversity of the new partnership agreements in the Northwest and we look forward to working with the recipients to ensure the success of each project."

Proposals were accepted from public and private entities including colleges and universities, Federal, State, and local agencies, non-profit and for-profit organizations, and others. All partnership agreements were competitive and awarded based on merit. The following sections represent partnership agreements in the RMA Spokane Regional Office area only (representing Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington).

### **Outreach Partnership Agreements -- \$215,000**

***"Emerging Farmer Training & Outreach Program"*** Friends of Zenger Farms – \$75,000 awarded to provide outreach, training and assistance to immigrant and refugee farmers to provide agricultural production, direct marketing training and networking opportunities for optimal risk management. In addition, the project will research the availability of suitable City of Portland-owned land to support agricultural production. Serving: Oregon

***"Cultivating Success: Community Based Education for Sustainable Small Farms"*** Washington State University, Puyallup Small Farms Unit – \$140,000 awarded to foster the long-term success and stability of small-scale farmers in Washington. This RMA partnership agreement will support a total of 29 semester-long course offerings at county locations in the two states over one year to assist farmers with developing proactive farm and business plans and management strategies. Serving: Washington

### **Rural Initiative for New American Farmers Agreements-- \$50,000**

***"New American Farmers in Alaska"*** Catholic Social Services – \$50,000 awarded to provide risk management education and mentoring to producers from the former Soviet Union and others with an emphasis on marketing their produce at farmers markets. Serving: Alaska

### **Education Partnership Agreements -- \$343,719**

***"Cultivating Future Farmers of America-Mexican Immigrants"*** Rural Community Development Resources – \$46,098 awarded to empower small Latino farmers through risk management education and awareness to ensure sustainable farms. Serving: Central Washington (Yakima, Benton, Chelan, Okanogan, Adams Counties).

***"On-Farm Variety Trials: Guidelines and Field Trainings for Organic Vegetable, Herb and Flower Producers"*** Organic Seed Alliance – \$115,059.35 awarded to provide organic, specialty, and alternative growers with on-farm variety trialing skills through published guidelines and in-field trainings which will assist in reducing producer's risks of crop loss, increase crop agronomic success and marketability and facilitate compliance with the USDA NOP regulations. Serving: Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

***"Risk Management Education for Potato Growers – Potato Tuberworm and Potato Cyst Nematode"*** Potato Growers of Idaho, Inc. – \$83,687.21 awarded to effectively inform growers of the financial, market, production, trade and regulatory risks associated with the devastating pests, the Potato Tuberworm and Potato Cyst Nematode, which have the potential to destroy potato yields at a catastrophic rate. Serving: Idaho.

***“Enabling Lower Risk Pest Management Practices through Using Localized Weather and Climate Information”*** Oregon State University – \$64,000 awarded to provide programs that enable farmers to effectively manage site-specific insect, disease, and weed risks in their crops, and reduce environmental risks, particularly those that affect surface water quality. Serving: Oregon, Washington

***“Risk Management Education for Oregon and Washington Christmas Tree Growers”*** Custom Ag Solutions – \$9,999 awarded to deliver the Christmas Tree Risk Analysis Tool (CTRATR) and related risk management education content to Oregon and Washington growers attending the PNWCTA’s 2007 production short course. Serving: Oregon, Washington.

***“Risk Management Education for Producers of Specialty Crops in Southwest Oregon”*** Oregon State University – \$10,000 awarded to provide risk management education to new and beginning farmers of specialty crops in Jackson and Josephine counties. Producers will learn how to create farm business and marketing plans, use diversification strategies for choosing enterprises, use and employ crop insurance and understand the various direct marketing techniques available to small producers. Serving: Oregon (Jackson and Josephine counties).

***“Risk Management Education for Livestock Producers”*** Colville Reservation District – \$5,000 awarded to provide information on production management, marketing, safety, and financial effects to many underserved producers on the reservation. Washington (Colville Reservation)

***“Using Cooperative to Decrease Farm Financial Risk in Southern Idaho”*** Rural Roots, Inc. – \$9,875 awarded to provide education and information to producers who are interested in learning about how developing cooperatives can decrease their farm financial risk. Serving: Idaho, Southwestern and South Central.

#### **Research Partnership Agreements – \$275,097**

***“Analysis of Risk Management Strategies for Irrigation During Periods of Water Shortages”*** Oregon State University – \$275,097 awarded to develop a web-based decision-support tool to assist producers with irrigated farms dealing with reduced water supplies by modeling the relationship between irrigation intensity and crop yield reductions. Serving: Oregon

## **Shaping Your Research University for Washington’s Future**

### **The 2007- 2009 Operating Budget Request:**

Unprecedented communication with industries, businesses, colleges and other universities has produced a compelling state operating budget request package from Washington State University. This proposed operating budget will enable the university to nurture more engineers and scientists, launch an agriculture research program based on industry needs, promote bio-fuels made from Washington commodities, and create more doctors, nurses and dentists for the Inland Northwest. WSU is also seeking compensation to be set at competitive rates to recruit and retain high-quality faculty, staff and students to ensure that we are *“Keeping The Best In Washington.”*

These are the highlights of the package that has now been submitted to Gov. Christine Gregoire and legislative leaders for consideration. The governor is expected to make her recommendation to the Legislature later this year. Notably, WSU identified Agriculture as one of the pressing state needs that is addressed in the budget request. The \$10.8 million request coupled with internal reallocations, federal contracts, and private funding is aimed at developing technological solutions to assure that this \$29 billion industry remains viable, globally competitive and environmentally sustainable. It is the result of dozens of collaborative meetings over nine months with key stakeholders in the state’s leading industry. These meetings have already led to internal reallocations within WSU’s existing agricultural research budget. This request creates new positions across the state to fill key gaps that remain in research areas to support our very diverse agricultural industry.

For the complete report see: [http://www.olympia.wsu.edu/News/2007\\_News\\_One.stm](http://www.olympia.wsu.edu/News/2007_News_One.stm) More information is available by contacting Larry Ganders, Assistant to the WSU President, 360-280-6320, [ganders@wsu.edu](mailto:ganders@wsu.edu)

## Farmworker Education & Outreach

Washington State Department of Agriculture hosted a Farmworker Education and Outreach meeting in Yakima. Speakers included Margaret Tucker, Ofelio Borges, Flor Servin of WSDA, Kirk Mayer from Washington Growers Clearing House, Ramon Benavides and Mel James from L&I Safety, Matt West from USDA Compliance, Liz Stroe from the Ag Center of Excellence, Francisco Sarmiento and Malaqías Flores both from WSU, Jeff Lutz from Washington State Farm Bureau, Eric Alegria from the Center for Latino Farmers, and Lilia Gomez from Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers.

Participants were informed about programs assisting our farmworkers around the state. Through collaboration with Washington State University Cooperative Extension and members of the agricultural community, WSDA implemented hands-on handler training in the late 1990's. These daylong training sessions provide pesticide safety training using interactive, hands-on techniques. Such programs include Train-the-Trainer, Private Applicator Prelicense Education, Hands-On Training for Pesticide Handlers, and Respirator Fit Test Training.

To encourage others to conduct hands-on handler training, WSDA developed a [How-to Guide](#). This, together with the training curriculum, training props and willing trainers are all that is needed to start conducting similar training on-site. Alternately, you can contact Flor Servin in Wenatchee at (509) 662-0590 or by e-mail at [fservin@agr.wa.gov](mailto:fservin@agr.wa.gov) to gain training support.

## UPCOMING EVENTS – SAVE THE DATES

### October 16-20, 2006

11<sup>th</sup> Biennial Watershed Management Council Conference  
*Community Action and Innovation for Watershed Sustainability*

- Marcus Whitman Hotel and Conference Center, Walla Walla, WA
- More information at: <http://www.agcenterofexcellence.com/content.cfm?id=18>

### November 1-3, 2006

56<sup>th</sup> Annual Weed Conference

- Yakima Convention Center, Yakima, WA
- Covers information on all phases of weed control and weed management in the Pacific Northwest
- More information at: [www.weedconference.org](http://www.weedconference.org)

### November 2-3, 2006

Biofuels Summit *Examining the Feasibility of Biofuels in the Basin*

- Columbia Basin College / Pasco, Washington / Byron Gjerde Center

#### Conference Highlights/Key Topic Areas

- “The Demand for Feedstocks-Where the Oils will Come From”
- “Biofuel Research-The Backbone of a Strong Oilseed Industry”
- “Dryland and Irrigated Oilseed Production”
- “Connell GG & WA Biodiesel Business Model-Assuring Success for Oilseed Farmers”
- “PNNL/WSU Tri-Cities Research and Education Opportunities”
- “Joint Research to Maximize Feedstock Production for Columbia Basin Farmers”
- “Economics-The Bottom Line for Farmers”
- “The Farm as Producer and Processor”
- “Port of Wilma Project Ethanol Facility at the Port of Vancouver”
- “Great Western Malting”
- “Government Grants and Loans for Farmers”
- More information at: [www.columbiabasin.edu/biofuelssummit](http://www.columbiabasin.edu/biofuelssummit)
- To register or for more information contact: [kathryn.crocker@columbiabasin.edu](mailto:kathryn.crocker@columbiabasin.edu)

**November 13-16, 2006**

Washington Farm Bureau Annual Meeting

- Yakima Convention Center, Yakima, WA

**December 6-8, 2006**

2006 Pacific Northwest Grains Conference

- Doubletree – Lloyd Center – Portland, OR

**Conference Highlights:**

- Speakers:
  - Ross Korves, Economist for the American Farm Bureau Federation
  - Katy Coba, Director, Oregon Dept. of Agriculture
  - Scott Burrows, Inspirational Speaker
- Educational Breakout Sessions
- Tours & Receptions
- Trade Show
- More information at [www.wawg.org](http://www.wawg.org)
- Call the WAWG office at 800-598-6890 to register or register online at [www.idahograin.org](http://www.idahograin.org)

**January 7-10, 2007**

American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting

- Salt Lake City, Utah

**February 6-8, 2007**

Spokane Ag Expo & Pacific Northwest Farm Forum

- Over 250 Exhibits
- Over 70 Educational Seminars
- *New* - Alternative Energy & Conservation Pavilion
- Women's Workshops & Seminars
- More information at <http://www.agshow.org>

**February 22, 2007**

Third Annual Agriculture Safety Day

- Yakima Convention Center, Yakima, WA

**Topics:**

- Building a Safety and Health Culture
- Machinery, Tractors, Equipment
- Zero Mechanical State
- Success Stories: Overcoming Cholinesterase Depressions to Build Safe Working Environments
- Accident Prevention Program: Making a Plan that's Workable and Working the Plan
- Overview of Worker Protection Standard Requirements

**March 7, 2007**

Center of Excellence Summit

*Protecting Our Resources: Agriculture, Health, and Homeland Security*

- Marcus Whitman Hotel, Walla Walla, WA
- Sponsored by the Agriculture Center of Excellence, the Homeland Security Center of Excellence, and the Allied Health Center of Excellence

If you would like to submit articles or dates for the next Issue, please email them to Liz Stroe at [elizabeth.stroe@wwcc.edu](mailto:elizabeth.stroe@wwcc.edu).