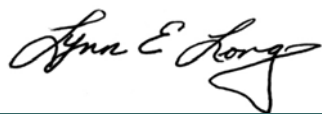


HORT UPDATE

Volume 17 Issue 4

December 2004



Coming Attractions

- December 16
Wasco County Cherry Pruning Tour, The Dalles
- December 17
Hood River County Cherry Pruning Tour, Hood River
- January 7, Cherry Institute
8:20 am, Yakima Convention Center
- January 20, Smoke Mgt. Seminar, The Dalles
- February 1 WCFPL Mid-Columbia Cherry Day
- February 1 WCFPL Business Meeting
- February 10-12
International Dwarf Fruit Tree Association Cherry Tour, Wenatchee to The Dalles. More information later.

See newsletter articles for more details on the above programs.

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Wasco County Cherry Pruning Tour Set for December 16

This year's pruning tour will be held Thursday, December 16th. Rick Derrey of Inland Fruit, Wapato, Washington will be sharing with us his expertise on training and pruning cherry trees. The tour will highlight Steep Leader, Central Leader and Spanish Bush (KGB) training systems.

The tour will start at 8:15 AM with coffee and donuts at Lee and Rob Agidius' orchard at 2552 Three Mile Road. Take Exit 85 off of I-84. Cross the overpass, then turn right at the stop sign. Go 50 yards and make a sharp left turn, driving uphill on Brewery Grade. After cresting the hill, you'll be on 9th Street for a very short way – turn right on Dry Hollow Road. Continue on Dry Hollow Road until Three Mile Road branches off to the left by the Polehn Packing Shed. Stay on Three Mile Road to 2552 Three Mile Road, (across the road from the Cemetery Block).

The morning tour will be conducted in **English**. The tour will be repeated in **Spanish** in the afternoon, beginning at 1:15. This will be an opportunity for your Mexican workers to participate in their own language. Everyone is invited to either or both tours.

8:15 AM **Coffee and Donuts Provided by UAP West**

8:30 AM & 1:15 PM (Spanish)	Agidius Orchard	Central Leader/Gisela, KGB/Gisela Steep Leader/Mazzard
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Stop #2	Dave Maier Orchard	Young Steep Leader/Mazzard
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Stop #3	John Carter Point Block	Mature Steep Leader/ Mazzard
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Hood River County Cherry Pruning Tour Planned for December 17

The 2004 Hood River Pruning Tour is set for Friday, December 17. Training and pruning cherries will be the focus of this tour. Three stops will provide opportunities to discuss and demonstrate establishing and pruning trees with different training systems as well as the importance of matching the training system to specific scion and rootstock combinations.

Rick Derrey with Inland Fruit in Wapato, WA, Roberto Nunez-Elisea, MCAREC Cherry Researcher and myself will be resource people for the tour. The tour will be held rain, snow, or shine, as long as the roads are clear. We will start the morning at **8:00 am** with coffee and donuts at the Experiment Station in Hood River. The program will begin at 8:30 am. Each stop will be approximately one hour long with 10 to 15 minutes travel time allowed between stops. The tour should finish at about noon.

Tour Route (see tour map, enclosed)

Stop #1) Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center - 3005 Experiment Station Drive, Hood River
Fourth leaf Regina/Gisela 6 – Central Leader

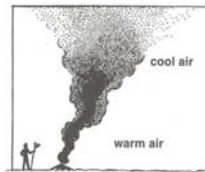
Stop #2) Annala Orchards - Country Club Rd, Oak Grove
Third leaf Sweetheart/
Mazzard – Steep Leader

Stop #3) Burrone Orchards
1212 Tucker Rd, Hood River
Tenth leaf Bing/Mazzard – Steep Leader

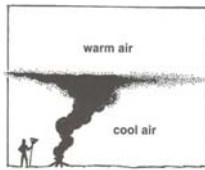


Smoke Gets in Your Eyes

When is the right day to burn your slash pile? When are conditions wrong? Where does smoke go and why? What causes it to hang in the air and how can you be sure it will disperse? Make plans to attend a seminar on smoke management on January 20, at The Dalles Discovery Center, from 12:00 to 4:00 pm.



Normal conditions: Smoke rises and disperses.



Inversion condition: Smoke concentrates.

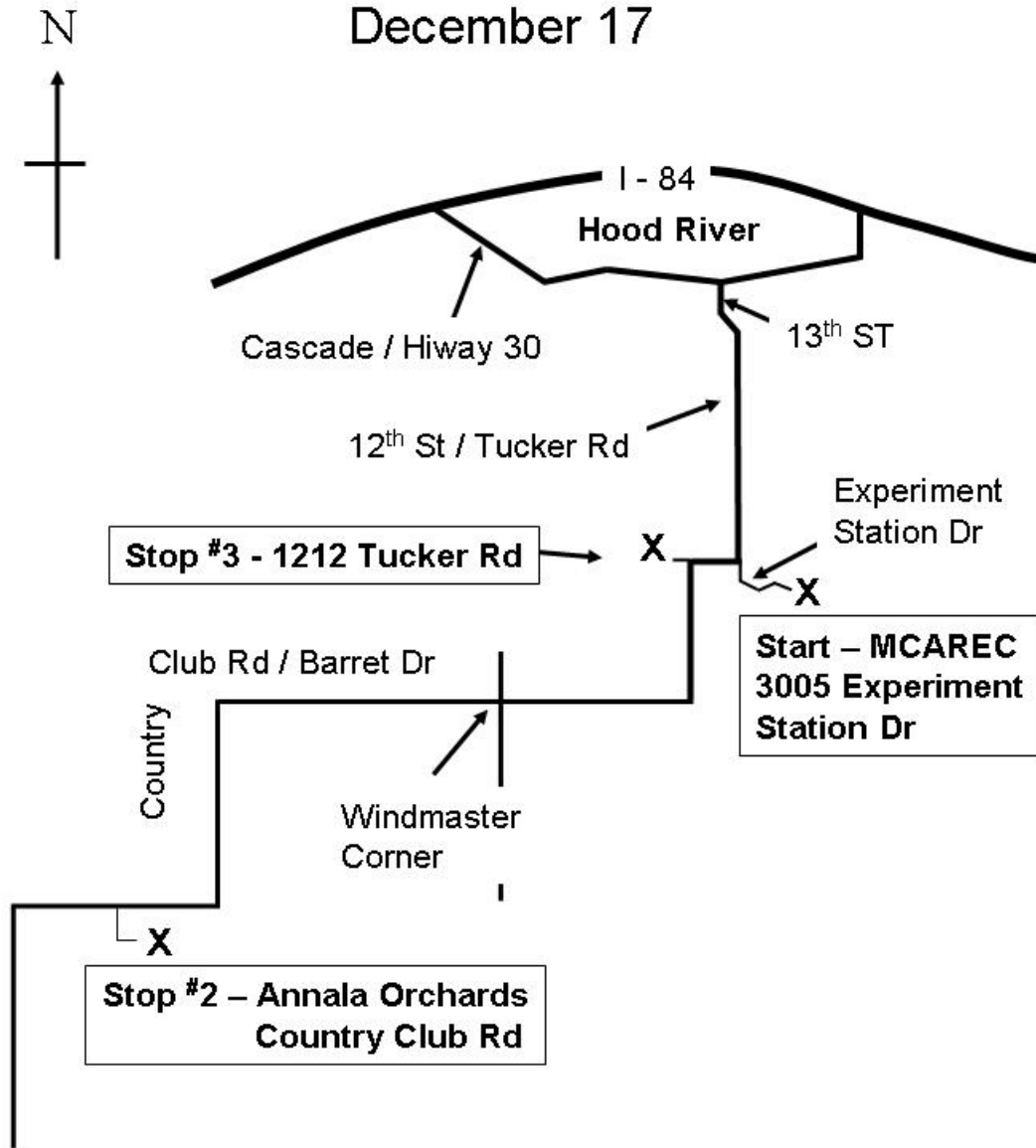
This smoke management seminar will address the specific air quality features of the Mid-Columbia region and train you to better understand how we can keep burning in your toolbox without new regulations. It's possible if you keep the smoke out of the public's eyes. Attend and learn how!

WCFPL Considers Assessment Increase

The Wasco County Fruit and Produce League Board has proposed increasing assessments from the current \$1.25 per ton to \$3.00 per ton. The purpose of this proposed increase will be to help fund cherry related research projects affecting local producers. Specifically, the Board would like to have available sufficient funds to supplement the funding of projects of local interest as they might arise at the Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center (MCAREC).

This proposal is scheduled to be on the ballot at the League's annual meeting which will be a lunch meeting immediately following the annual Cherry Day Meeting, February 1 at the Discovery Center. Please plan to attend this annual business meeting and offer your thoughts and votes on this very important proposal.

Hood River Pruning Tour December 17



Map is NOT to scale

Conservation Security Program Grants Available

The Conservation Security Program (CSP) was authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill to reward farmers and ranchers who are implementing conservation on America's working lands. CSP is a voluntary program based on conservation accomplishments that recognizes the contributions of the best land stewards and encourages them to do more.

The program is implemented on a watershed basis with a focus on high priority watersheds. The Mid-Columbia-Hood River Watershed has been chosen as a 2005 priority watershed. The Mid-Columbia-Hood River Watershed takes in the southern parts of Skamania and Klickitat Counties in Washington, and the northern half of Hood River and Wasco Counties and part of Sherman County.

Applicants will be selected at the national level for 2005 sign-up. There is a fact sheet available at the USDA NRCS office in The Dalles entitled: "CSP Eligibility, Qualification and Application Steps". In addition, further information about the CSP Program in Oregon may be obtained by going to: www.or.nrcs.USDA.gov.

From my understanding of this program, it looks like many of the IFP practices that you have implemented on your farm will help to qualify you for these grant monies. I believe that this program is well worth pursuing by Mid-Columbia growers.

Farmworker Housing Opportunities

By Jeff Heater, Underwood Fruit

A new project for developing low cost farmworker housing is now available due to a program by the Oregon Housing and Community Services that includes grants, tax credits and low cost loans. This program is further backed by Bank of America. This is a unique approach to building new housing on your land that requires little upfront monies from you, the grower. Hood River has several growers signed up for this new project that will see many dormitory as well as family housing units to be built in 2005. An example of this type of work was built last year at the Rick Marsh orchard in Odell.

Bank of America working with the state of Oregon and two independent contractors, Ortiz and Assoc. and Rivera Development Group, had taken the incentives to build this type of housing and made it very easy for the landowner and farmer to have this new construction

completed on their land. In most cases, the landowner fronts the cost of utilities hook-up and a foundation and then leases to this group the land for the building. Depending on the size of the building and level of occupancy a small fee will be charged to the tenants. The management of this facility is up to the contractor as well as the maintenance. The grower has the option to buy back the building at the end of the lease much like a lease on a vehicle.

We are planning for an informational meeting later this winter to give this group a chance to present this proposal more fully and give you an opportunity to ask questions. At a meeting in Hood River last month, their plan was very impressive and created a lot of interest from many growers throughout the valley. If you have any questions in the meantime, you can call Jean at the HRGSA office at 387-4769.

SWCD Grower Grants Available

Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District continues to have funds available for grants of up to \$10,000 for conservation projects that save soil and water or improve wildlife habitat. Cost-share rates vary from 50% to 75%, depending on the amount requested.

Grants are competitive and are considered by a local panel every month and require minimal paper work for the applicator. Interested parties should contact Jennifer Clark at Wasco County SWCD, (541) 296-6178 x 119.

2005 Tree Sale

The annual Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District Tree and Shrub sale is in full swing and orders are being taken now until January 28. You can obtain a list of the plants available and order blanks by either calling the Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District at (541) 298-8559 x 3, or by requesting an electronic copy from Ron Graves at ron.graves@oacd.org.

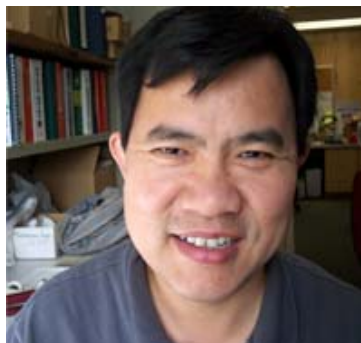
New Soil Scientist Hired at MCAREC

My name is Xinhua Yin, also known as 'Frank'. I am currently an assistant professor at the Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center (MCAREC) in the soil fertility/biology and plant nutrition program. This is a new research program at MCAREC, and I am very excited to begin working with other scientists and growers in the Mid-Columbia region.

I have a family of four. My wife Becky is studying accounting at Iowa State University. My son Matthew is an eighth grader and my daughter Vicky is four years old. They will move to Hood River this month after my wife finishes her studies.

I grew up in Shaodong County, Hunan Province, China. I completed my B.S. degree in Soil Science at Hunan Agricultural University, Changsha, China in 1985.

I received my M.S. degree in Crop Nutrition and Fertilization at Nanjing Agricultural University, Nanjing, China in 1988. From 1988 to 1997, I worked at the Soil and Fertilizer Research Institute, Hunan Academy of Agricultural Sciences. My duties included conducting research and extension activities in soil fertility, crop nutrition, and nutrient management for row and horticultural crops. I received my Ph.D. degree from Purdue University in 2002. My Ph.D. thesis research dealt with soybean responses to potassium



placement alternatives on no-till fields, potassium fertility effects on isoflavone composition and concentrations in soybean, and previous corn row impacts on potassium nutrition and yield of subsequent no-till narrow row soybean.

From 2002 to 2004, I was employed as a postdoctoral researcher by the Department of Agronomy, Iowa State University. My research included assessing the effects of nutrient management, tillage, and cropping systems on soil carbon sequestration and nitrogen dynamics, and evaluating nitrogen management and irrigation effects on corn yield and nitrogen and water use efficiencies.

I started to work at MCAREC on July 26, 2004. I am conducting research on soil fertility/biology and plant nutrition for pear and sweet cherry. So far, my research focuses on the effects of different drip irrigation systems, fertigation, and nutrient management strategies on fruit quality, storability, and yield of pear and sweet cherry, grower profitability, and water and nitrogen use efficiencies.

I am an active member of Soil Science Society of America, American Society of Agronomy, and Crop Science Society of America. I have received more than 20 awards and scholarships from various institutions, such as the American Society of Agronomy and the Potash and Phosphate Institute.

We're on the web!

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/wasco/>

Cherries Evaluated in Taste Test

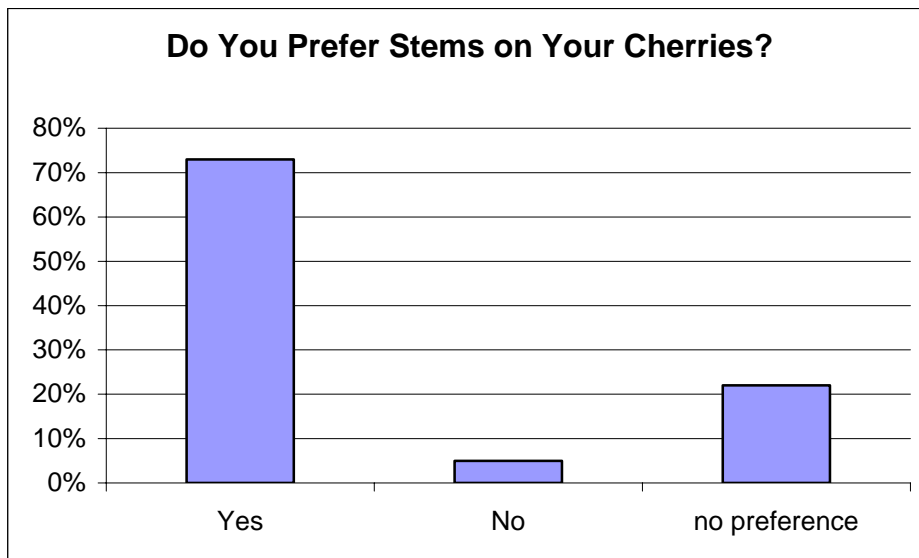
A cherry taste test was conducted this past summer at the Portland Saturday Market by Janet Turner and Clark Seavert of the MCAREC in Hood River, Ann Colonna of the Food Innovation Center in Portland and myself. Rated cherries included ‘Bing’, ‘Lapins’, ‘Skeena’, ‘Regina’ and ‘Sweetheart’. By taking advantage of elevation differences, we were able to harvest all cherries within a three-day time differential, e.g. ‘Bings’ were harvested from a higher elevation orchard in Dufur while ‘Sweethearts’ were collected from a lower elevation block in The Dalles.

One hundred ninety-two consumers were queried on size, color and shape preferences, their preference for stem-on or stemless cherries and their flavor ranking of the five tested varieties. By far, consumers preferred 9 row over 10.5 or 12 row cherries, cherries that were darker in color and cherries with a distinctive shape, preferring ‘Skeena’ shape over the elongated shape of ‘Attika’. However, the heart-like shape of ‘Attika’ was preferred over the shape of ‘Sweetheart’ (data not shown).

An overwhelming number of people said that they preferred cherries with stems, but most said that they would pay the same price for stem-on and stemless cherries (Fig. 1 and 2). In the actual taste test, ‘Regina’ was preferred over all other tested varieties (Fig. 3). Sixty-five percent of respondents said they liked their favorite cherry primarily for its sweetness (data not shown). A total of 58% said that the reason they disliked their least favorite cherry was due to its lack of taste or its tartness (data not shown).

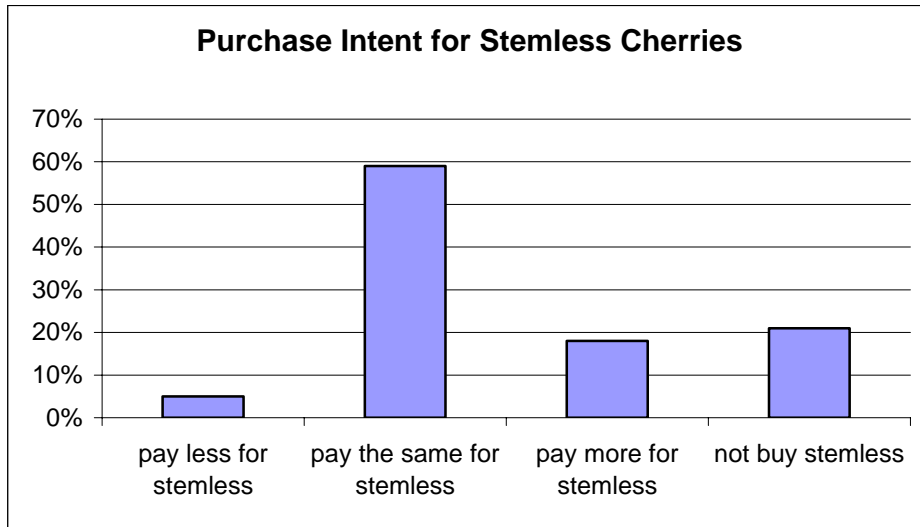


Figure 1



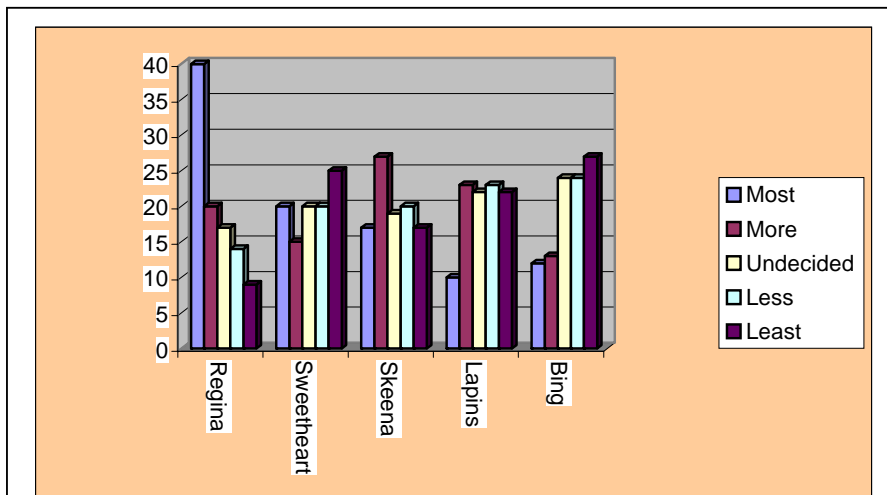
Cherries Evaluated in Taste Test...continued

Figure 2



Ranking of Cherries from Most Preferred to Least Preferred Based on Taste

Figure 3



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