Dear Small Farmer and Landowner;

Welcome to the September/October Issue of the Small Farms and Acreage Newsletter. In this issue are several excellent articles on topics of concern to anyone living in the urban rural fringe and those with livestock. The first article is one that I wrote in conjunction with Stu Nagel, Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue Fire Marshal concerning wildfire safety. As many of you are aware, this summer we have experienced a number of very serious fires in the area. As a volunteer firefighter and EMT, I have helped fight a number of these fires and truly appreciate the need to take extra measures to safeguard homes and outbuildings to make them as wildfire safe as possible. With this thought in mind, I strongly encourage folks to take time to carefully read this article and contact the appropriate local and state agencies and have them come out to do an evaluation of your wildfire risk. They can provide some very good suggestions about how to make your small farm and acreage safer and better able to withstand a wildfire. Please give them a call today!

Also note, for those who have experienced fire on or near their farms and acreages, there is the issue of runoff this fall and winter. On the next page, there is a note from the Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District about an excellent publication that will give landowners some good ideas on how to reduce damage from water erosion this fall and winter and about reseeding burned-over areas. Please give them a call at 296-6178 ext. 3. This publication is available at no charge.

Last but not least, there are a number of excellent programs coming up in the next two months. Of particular interest are the poultry tours and workshops being offered both in Centerville (Klickitat County, WA) on September 28, and Eugene, Oregon on September 7-8; Pasture Management in Hood River on October 28; as well as OSU Food Science Research Day on September 25th; and the Oregon Small Business Fair in Portland on September 14th. All these programs are listed in this newsletter under the “Area Workshops and Seminars” section with additional information about registration, costs and program agendas. I hope you will have an opportunity to attend some of these excellent workshops.

As you review this issue, if you should have any questions about any of the information found in the newsletter or questions about small farming please give us a call. You can contact your local county extension office at the numbers found on the top of this page. Again, please let us know how we can be of help to you.

Sincerely,

Brian V. Tuck
Mid-Columbia Extension Agent
### News from the Wasco County Soil & Water Conservation District

Wasco County Soil & Water Conservation District expects that there might be increased run off events this winter for those residing within wildfire burn areas. Our runoff models predict approximately 40% increase in runoff from any given rain event at the mouth of Chenowith Creek. Similarly, Mosier Creek can expect a 25% increase. The Dalles Service Center has the NRCS Publication “Wildfire Risk Reduction and Recovery Tips” on hand. It details the use of sandbags, straw mulch, straw bales and other tools to reduce erosion and land movement until vegetation can be re-established. It also covers methods of reseeding. The conservation district also recommends that culverts and ditches be cleaned out to handle increased seiment and water loads to avoid flood damage.

### Calendar of Events

#### 2002

**September**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Southern Oregon Wine and Grape Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Second annual workshop hosted by Rogue Community College along with OSU, SOU, RCOWA, and SOWA. For more information respond by e-mail <a href="mailto:bjiron@roguecc.edu">bjiron@roguecc.edu</a> or call Bill Jiron @ 541-245-7905.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13-14</td>
<td><strong>44th Annual Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association Tree Fair and Trade Show</strong></td>
<td>Holiday Inn, Portland Airport. Trade show to run Friday from noon to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Admittance $10 for PNWCTA members and $15 for nonmembers. Information: (503) 364-2942.</td>
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**16-18** | **Health and Safety in Western Agriculture - Cultivating Collaborations** | Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.; sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center and the UC Davis Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety. This conference will highlight common safety and health issues that are experienced along the West Coast and foster the development of collaborative projects between the individuals and organizations committed to agricultural injury and illness prevention. Registration is now open! Please visit the conference website, [http://depts.washington.edu/pnash/westreg/confhome.html](http://depts.washington.edu/pnash/westreg/confhome.html), for program and registration details. |

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<td>19</td>
<td><strong>Adopt-A-Stream Foundation Stream and Wetland Ecology Basic Training</strong></td>
<td>At the Northwest Stream Center, 600 128th St., S.E., Everett (in McCollum Park), 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. $75. Eight-hour course designed for real estate agents, developers, streamside property owners and others interested in understanding stream and wetland ecology. Information: Sue Minger, (425) 316-8592.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-22</td>
<td><strong>HOS Pioneer Orchard Fruit Display, Wintering-In</strong></td>
<td>Bybee-Howell Pioneer Park, Sauvies Island, OR.</td>
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Calendar …

28  **Small Scale Poultry Production Tour**
    Farm tour, Centerville, WA, 9am—noon
    See article for details.

October

4   “**Farm To Cafeteria: Healthy Farms, Healthy Students**” Conference, Seattle.
    Conference launches the Community Food Security Coalition’s new farm-to-school and
    farm-to-college initiatives. Participants will be introduced to strategies that can help link school
    food services with local agriculture, improve the quality of school lunches, educate students about
    the sources of their food, and support local farmers. Information: On the Internet: www.foodsecurity.org; e-mail James Hong at james@foodsecurity.org; or call (310) 822-5410.

5-7  “**Eating Locally, Thinking Globally,**”
    Community Food Security Coalition’s Sixth Annual Community Food Security
    Conference, Seattle Center, Seattle. Highlights will include training sessions on diverse aspects
    of community food security and tours of local farms, fisheries, food processing facilities, food
    banks, community gardens and farmers’ markets. Information www.foodsecurity.org; e-mail James Hong at james@foodsecurity.org; or call (310) 822-5410.

12-13  **Equimasters 2002 Horse Expo**, Western
    Washington Fairgrounds, Puyallup. Featured speakers include John Lyons, trainer; Gawani
    Pony Boy, authority on Native American horsemanship; Clinton Anderson, trainer and
    clinician; Peter Lert, dressage expert and judge; and Capt. Mark Phillips, Olympic Gold Medalist.
    Information on the Internet: www.showmasters.com, e-mail showmstr@ccrctc.com or call
    (800) 457-2804.

12-13  **Home Orchard Society, All About Fruit Show**, 10-4, Tigard National Guard Building,
    6700 S.W. Oak, Tigard, OR (Turn North off of 99W at signal light at 69th and 99W at
    Bannings Restaurant & Pie House, then turn right on SW Oak).

23-24  **Fire in the Forest: Risks and Opportunities for Oregon**, Bend. Sponsored by OFRI, Oregon
    State University College of Forestry, Oregon Department of Forestry, Society of American
    Foresters. Information: (541) 737-2329.

November

8   **Northwest Symposium on Organic and Biologically Intensive Farming**, Yakima
    Convention Center, Yakima, Wash., 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
    For more information or to receive the full symposium announcement, contact David
    Granatstein at 509-663-8181, ext. 222, e-mail granats@wsu.edu.

8-10  “**The Family Farm on the Cutting Edge,**”
    Annual Conference of Tilth Producers of Washington, Yakima Convention Center and
    Gateway Hotel. Information: (206) 442-7620. or nancy@tilthproducers.org or

16  **Small Farm School**, Clackamas Community College, 8am—4pm. A workshop about
    horticultural enterprise opportunities, direct marketing options, community supported
    agriculture, and growing on small acreage. Registration flier/form, call Stephanie Taylor at
    503-657-6958 ext. 2378.
Area Workshops and Seminars

Small Scale Poultry Production Tour

On September 28, Washington State University and Oregon State University Cooperative Extension will co-sponsor a farm tour for people interested in learning more about small-scale poultry production. This program will be held in Centerville, WA, from 9 AM to noon.

Tour participants will learn about obtaining chicks, feeding and caring for birds, health and diseases, housing, free-range poultry management, and various other topics. Numerous educational resources will be provided at no charge. Refreshments and a sanitary station will be provided. Participants should wear clean, disinfected rubber footwear that can be re-disinfected at the host farm. Older youths may attend with parents, but this program is not appropriate for young children.

This educational opportunity is sponsored in part by a grant from the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program. Call 509-773-5817 or e-mail Klickitat County Cooperative Extension at ce6620@coopext.cahe.wsu.edu for directions and more information about this program.

More and Better Forage for Your Livestock

Saturday, October 12, 2002
8:30 AM until noon
Hood River Valley High School,
Bowe Theater
1220 Indian Creek Rd., Hood River

Brian Tuck, OSU Extension Agent from Wasco County, will lead a slide show and discussion of proper pasture management and grazing techniques. Other topics Brian will cover include weed management, chemical safety, fertility management and irrigation management. Following the presentation, participants will travel to a nearby livestock operation to view and discuss pasture rotation and fencing techniques to maximize forage production and livestock health.

This free workshop is sponsored by OSU Extension and the Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District. They can be reached at hrswcd@gorge.net or 541-386-4588.

Forest Stewardship “Coached Planning” Program

Underwood Community Center
981 Schoolhouse Rd
Underwood, Washington
October 1–November 6, 2002

The Forest Stewardship “Coached Planning” Program is an educational opportunity for owners of private forest land in the Columbia River Gorge and persons interested in forestry. Woodland owner participants are expected to author their own forest stewardship plan with guidance and “coaching” from natural resource professionals.

Students Will Learn:

- How to read your forest. Is it healthy? What to watch for.
- How to evaluate wildlife use on your property and improve wildlife habitat potential.
- How to identify silvicultural alternatives and when they should be applied.
- How to measure land, trees and logs
- How to protect one of the most valuable resources: water.
- Your rights and responsibilities as a forest property owner.

Registration Fee: $100 per person, family, or land parcel. Fee includes a Forest Stewardship Handbook and all handouts. Each session is limited to the first 30 registrants, so Register Early!

For More Information, contact:

Ole Helgerson
WSU Area Extension Forester
509-427-9427
helgerso@wsu.edu
2002 Oregon Small Business Fair
"Information You Can Use" ™

The Oregon Small Business Fair is a Free Trade Show for you, whether you are currently a small-business owner or just thinking about becoming a small-business owner and is scheduled for September 14th from 8:30 am to 3 pm at the Portland Community College Southeast Center, 2850 S.E. 82nd Ave., Portland.

Informational booths staffed by agency representatives and numerous seminars will be available throughout the day.

This is a special opportunity to get a full day of free counseling in many areas that small businesses need most.

Portland Community College has donated space to make this fair possible. Agency and organization representatives have contributed many hours to make this fair a success. This is one day you can't afford to miss ... so join us at the Oregon Small Business Fair.

Adding Value to Oregon Agriculture
OSU Food Science Research Day

The OSU Food Science Research Day is scheduled for September 25, 2002 from 9:00 am to 2:30 pm to be held in room 115 (Auditorium) in Wiegand Hall on Campus in Corvallis, Oregon

Program topics to include research work on Food Safety, Fruits, Vegetables and Grains, Dairy, Enology, Brewing, Sensory, Flavor Chemistry, Sustainable Biomass and By-Product Utilization, High Pressure and Packaging.

For additional information and to register for the Research Day, please contact OSU at 1-800-823-2357 or e-mail at Deborah.yacas@orst.edu. There is no charge to attend this program and lunch is provided.

Pastured Poultry Production School Offered

A two day intensive training on raising pastured poultry for commercial or homestead use is scheduled for September 7 and 8, 2002 in Eugene, Oregon.

The school will provide ample information, practical experience for interested growers to be able to set up a pastured poultry enterprise. It will include both classroom lectures and discussion plus on-farm practical experience. The school is limited to a small number of participants to enhance the learning experience.

Instruction will be provided by a grower currently using the system and university and government specialists.

Topics will include:

- An overview of the variety of pasture and range production systems
- Nutrition and feeds
- Poultry health
- Meat processing regulations for Oregon
- In depth coverage of the pasture-based system
- On-farm training

Registration fee is $175. Continental breakfasts and lunches and reference materials are included. For a registration form contact the OSU Benton County Extension office at: 800-365-0201 or 541-766-6750.

Again, the school is limited to a small number of participants so registration will be on a first come first served basis. This program is sponsored by the Small Farm Program of the OSU Extension Service.
“Create a Business Plan”
Workshop Series Planned for Area Farmers and Ranchers

Agricultural production is an increasingly risky undertaking. Those who don’t have a clear idea of their personal and business goals will have difficulty in monitoring whether they are getting closer to or farther away from those objectives. Typically the assets and net worth of agricultural businesses represent a major share of the economic wealth and security of its owners. This wealth forms the foundation for family income, education of children, retirement and a buffer against financial adversity. For many, a major objective is to pass a viable farm or ranch operation on to offspring or successors. The decisions that will determine the success or failure of these objectives can’t be left to chance—a planning context is needed as a guide for decision making.

During the upcoming fall and winter, Oregon State University Extension Service will be collaborating with Columbia Gorge, Central Oregon and Blue Mountain Community Colleges to present a program designed to help farmers and ranchers create a comprehensive, written business plan. This plan will be designed to help producers answer three age-old questions about their business: Where are we now? Where do we want to be in the future? How do we get there?

The “Create a Business Plan” workshop series will consist of three components:

- Five to six monthly seminars on the contents and principles of writing a business plan. Attendees will be given “homework” assignments to prepare them for:

- Individual business consultations with a farm management advisor. Three to five consultations will be arranged (outside of seminar times) during which the advisor will assist growers with computer analysis and compiling the plan. The written business plan will be submitted for:

- Review and critique by a panel consisting of Extension staff, an agricultural lender and an accountant. Written comments will be given to producers during individual “debriefing” sessions.

While the idea of seminars has been tried before, the second two components are new ones. They give producers a degree of personalized feedback and attention that has never been available before. Well, almost. A series was conducted last season, with good results, for tree fruit producers in Hood River and The Dalles. While orchardists are certainly welcome again, this year the examples and teaching materials will be oriented towards dryland and irrigated cropping as well as livestock production.

Individualized instruction would normally be very expensive. But Bart Eleveult, OSU Extension Economist and coordinator for this project, was successful in getting two Federal grants through the Western Regional Risk Management Center at Washington State University. Participants will only be asked to pay $150 per farm/ranch rather than the approximate $1,000 total cost. Depending on participant’s location, they will be assisted by one of three highly experienced professionals who have agreed to serve as on-farm advisors: John Caster (formerly of Chemeketa C.C.), Jon Farquharson (Blue Mountain C.C.) or Amos Bechtel (private ag consultant in Eastern Oregon). Local Extension agents will also be directly involved in workshop planning and instruction. The three Community Colleges previously mentioned will provide classroom space and registration.

The first seminar session has been scheduled for 1-4 pm at these three locations:

- Mid-Columbia / The Dalles, Nov. 12
- Northeast Oregon / Pendleton, Nov. 13
- Central Oregon / Redmond, Nov. 14

Registration is being requested by November 1 at the latest. Enrollment is limited to 12 families or farms per location. Contact Wasco County Extension Service at 541-296-5494 or Columbia Gorge Community College (541-296-6182, Ext. 3112 for more information. A brochure is available.
Resources

Newsletters
(Note, this information was provided from the OSU Northwest Berry and Grape Information Network)

- The IPM Corner: http://berrygrape.orst.edu/news/pestnews.htm

Northwest Resources

- Agrichemical and Environmental News: http://www.aenews.wsu.edu/

U.S. Resources

- Fruit Crop Advisory Team Alert newsletter: http://www.msue.msu.edu/ipm/fruitCAT.htm
- Strawberry IPM Update: http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/Pages/plantpath/strawber.html
- Vineyard and Vintage View Newsletter: http://mtngrv.smsu.edu/grapenews.htm

Global Resources


The Tender Fruit Grapevine
http://www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/crops/hort/news/Tender

The Food Alliance Newsletter. This is an excellent newsletter for folks interested in ways to improve marketing of agricultural products. The newsletter can be found at: http://www.thefoodalliance.org

Funding Resources

Forest landowner can receive $$$ for forest road improvements through the ENVIRONMENT QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

Eligible projects include:
- Road Maintenance
- Road Abandonment
- Culvert Repairs
- Water bars
- Ditch Clearing
- Seeding Road Beds
- And other road projects...

If you are a landowner who needs financial help implementing road maintenance, abandonment, and culvert replacement practices to protect water quality and/or improve fish passage, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program may be able to help.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has begun accepting applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP provides financial assistance to farm and forest landowners for practices that control erosion and improve water quality.

Historically the funds have gone to agricultural practices, however, EQIP has received a much higher level of funding through the recent Farm Bill and forestry practices are now specifically identified as eligible.

If interested, apply NOW at the USDA-NRCS office which serves the county in which your land is located. To find the nearest NRCS office, please go to: http://oip.usda.gov/scripts/ndisapi.dll/oip_agency/index?state=wa&agency=nrcs or call: 509-323-2900.

Applications will be reviewed by an EQIP Local Work Group (composed of Conservation District and Public Agency members) who will establish local "conservation priorities" for the EQIP program in their area and recommend ranking of applications for funding.
It will be difficult for the EQIP Local Work Group to identify forest roads as a "conservation priority" unless they get a significant number of potential applicants in this category.

Interested landowners should act promptly by contacting the USDA-NRCS office in their area.

Web Pages

Log Lines. LOG LINES Log Price Reporting Service was established in 1989 to provide an independent, reliable source of delivered log price data from private timber sales in the Pacific Northwest. With the cooperation of a broad range of log buyers and sellers across Washington, Oregon and Idaho, Log Lines provides up-to-date prices each month by region, log species and grade, for domestic and export markets. Each issue also includes the University of Montana's quarterly mill survey, giving comparable log price data for western Montana. Additional timber market information is provided with results of monthly Washington Department of Natural Resources and Oregon Department of Forestry stumpage sales, and quarterly harvest statistics from the Washington Department of Revenue. http://www.logprices.com/


DNR outdoor burning website provides fire danger updates Rural homeowners, forest landowners and woods workers who conduct outdoor burning of forest debris are invited to visit a new web site by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that provides daily county-by-county updates of local fire danger. To learn more, access: www.wa.gov/dnr and click on "Fire Information." Web features include:


Windthrow and Forest Practices. Windthrow is a natural disturbance agent in forests but can impact integrated management prescriptions which depend on maintenance of residual trees within or adjacent to harvested areas. Post-harvest windthrow can reduce the effectiveness of prescriptions for riparian and biological reserves, visual quality and partial cutting. Salvaging windthrow disrupts harvest planning. http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HFP/FORDEV/windthrow/lesson1/1-print.htm

Small Business Administration. Everything you need to know to start your own small business enterprise. http://www.sba.gov/starting/

OSU Dryland Crops Weed Research. This site provides some very good information about common dryland crop weeds and their biology, management and control with excellent photos that show the various growth phases. http://www.oregonstate.edu/dept/weeds/

Organic & Integrated Fruit Production Home Page Orchardists worldwide are increasing their use of organic and integrated production systems in response to consumer preferences and environmental imperatives. You can access resources related to integrated and organic fruit production at this web site, including materials developed at Washington State University as well as from other locations around the world. http://organic.tfrec.wsu.edu/OrganicIFP/Home/Index.html

New Crop Resource Online Program by Purdue University Center for New Crops and Plant Products. www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/default.html

Publications

The new report, "Methods to Develop Markets to Improve Profitability of Small Family Farms in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey," commissioned by The Rodale Institute, costs $19.95 plus shipping and handling and can be purchased by contacting The Rodale bookstore at: 610.683.6009. Their web page is found at: http://www.rodaleinstitute.org/home.html

Some other titles you may be interested in from their
Resources..... continued

bookstore:
- Farming Systems Trial
  (a comparison of conventional vs organic production)
- Backyard Market Gardening
- Small Scale Aquaculture
- Chicken Tractor:
  The Guide to Happy Hens and Healthy Soil
- Methodologies for Screening Soil-Improving Legumes
- Steel in the Field: A Farmers Guide to Weed Control
- Farmer's Fertilizer Handbook
- Controlling Weeds with Fewer Chemicals
- Food Waste Composting Demonstration Project

Community Forestry Research Center Publications
An interesting collection of newsletters, legal documents, surveys, studies and other literature relating to small forest landowner cooperatives.
http://www.forestrycenter.org/cfrc/

Income Opportunities in Special Forest Products--
Self-Help Suggestions for Rural Entrepreneurs. This publication describes special forest products that represent opportunities for rural entrepreneurs to supplement their incomes. The types of products discussed in this publication include aromatics, berries and wild fruits, cones and seeds, forest botanicals, honey, mushrooms, nuts, syrup, and weaving and dyeing materials. http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/documnts/usda/agib666/agib666.htm

New OSU Publications, which can be obtained through any OSU Extension Office our their Web Site at eesc.orst.edu

- EC 1219 -Growing Hazelnuts in the Pacific Northwest, $4.00
- EC 1554 -Feed Wild Birds, $1.50
- EC 1555 -Create Roots for Bats in the Yard, $1.50
- EC 1556 -Build Nest Boxes for Wild Birds, $1.50
- EC -Reduce Deer Damage in Your Yard, $1.50
- PNW 225 -Building and Electric Anti-Predator Fence, $2.50
- EM 8791 -Garbanzo Beans (No Charge)
- EM 8792 -Safflower (No Charge)
- EM 8793 -Sudan Grass (No Charge)
- EM 8794 -Grain Sorghum (No Charge)
- EM 8795 -Dryland Alfalfa (No Charge)
- EM 8796 -Edible Mustard (No Charge)

On-line Small Farms Library. This is a good source of small farms publications that are on-line at no-charge. This private group has put out the text of a number of hard-to-find farm management related books on its web site. They also have a number of other resources and links. http://journeytoforever.org/farm_library.html#howard

A Guide to Placing Large Wood in Streams
http://www.odf.state.or.us/FP/Reflibrary/LargeWoodPlacemntGuide5-95.doc

The Portable Sawmill Option -
A Small Scale Harvesting Tool
http://64.77.121.89/Sawmill.html

On-line Business Courses
The USA Small Business Administration has a wonderful selection of FREE on-line courses for individuals entering or already involved in small businesses. Topics include writing Business Plans, eCommerce, Entrepreneurship, Procurement Opportunities etc. The web site can be accessed at http://www.sba.gov/classroom/courses.html. Purdue University Center for New Crops and Plant Products.
www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/default.html
Reducing Wildfire Risk for the Small Farmer and Landowner

By Brian Tuck Wasco County Extension Agent
(Note: Information for this article was provided by Stu Nagel, Mid-Columbia Fire & Rescue Fire Marshal and from Fire Free: Reduce Your Risk of Wildfire, SAFECO Corporation, 1998.)

As many are sadly aware, we are in our 4th year of drought in the Mid-Columbia. This year, like the last has been exceptional in the number and size of the fires that we have experienced this fire season, and it is still not over with yet.

In the Mid-Columbia as in many rural areas or Oregon and Washington, we are seeing a large increase in the numbers of people who are moving out into the countryside to enjoy the benefits of rural living. This increase in population in the more rural areas increases the potential for serious wildfire loss particularly in dry years. To reduce the potential risk for serious loss due to wildfire for the small farmer and landowner there are several key points to consider which include:

1. Define your Defensible Space.
   Defensible space is a buffer zone, a minimum 30-foot non-combustible area around your home and outbuildings that reduces the intensity and risk of a wildfire from starting or spreading to structures. Although a 30-foot distance is standard, additional clearance of as great as 100 feet or more may be needed depending on slope and height, type and size of plant material near the structures, and other conditions such as weather.

   Defensible space not only helps protect your home in the critical minutes it takes a fire to pass, it also gives firefighters an area to work in and could well make the difference between whether a house can or cannot be saved.

2. Reduce Flammable Vegetation, Trees and Brush Around Structures.
   When needed, replace flammable landscaping with fire-resistant plants. Choose plants with loose branching habits, low growing, non-resinous woody material, high moisture content in leaves, and little seasonal accumulation of dead vegetation. An excellent web site that lists fire-resistant plants for Oregon home landscapes can be found at: http://extension.orst.edu/deschutes/FireResPlants.pdf You can also visit your local home or garden center to find fire-resistant plant materials.

3. Remove or Prune Trees.
   If you live in a wooded area, reduce the density of surrounding forest by removing or thinning overcrowded or weakened trees. Check with local agencies for guidelines on tree removal before clearing or thinning your property.

   Be sure to prune low-hanging branches to keep a ground fire from climbing into the upper branches. Limbing up these “ladder fuels” will cut the chances of ground fires climbing into tree canopies.

Grass and Weeds Regularly.
Fire spreads rapidly in dry grass and many of our local weeds, particularly cheatgrass, ryegrass, knapweed and other annual and perennial grasses and broadleaf weeds. Mow grasses and other low vegetation and keep them well watered especially during periods of high fire danger.

5. Relocate Wood Piles, Leftover Building Materials and Other Burnable Items.
   Stack all wood, building debris and other burnable materials at least 30 feet away from your home and other buildings. Clear away flammable vegetation within 10 feet of wood/debris piles or other burnable materials as an additional safeguard.

   Especially your roof. Clear pine needles, leaves and debris from your roof, gutters and yard to eliminate ignition sources. Remove dead limbs and branches within 10 feet of your chimney and deck. Keeping areas around structures free of burnable materials will reduce fire hazards.

7. Signs, Addresses and Access.
Easy-to-read road signs and address numbers that are visible from the road are critical in aiding firefighters to find your home quickly during a fire or other emergency. Make sure there is safe, easy access to your property that can accommodate emergency vehicles and space for them to turn around. Bridges should be able to support the weight of emergency vehicles. Driveways should be trimmed of peripheral vegetation to allow emergency vehicles to see driveways and access structures.

8. Rate Your Roof.
Your roof is the most vulnerable part of a structure. If you have a wood shake roof, consider treatment or replacement to make it more fire-resistive.

9. Additional Resources
There are a number of very good free resources available for small farmers and landowners including several publications from SAFECO Corp including “Fire Tips” which can be found on their web site at http://www.safeco.com/safeco/about/giving/firetips.asp and “Wildfire” at http://www.safeco.com/safeco/catastrophe/wildfire/. Stu Nagel, Mid-Columbia Fire & Rescue Fire Marshal has available “Living with Fire: A Guide for the Homeowner” which is a very good overview on fire safety, particularly for folks living in rural areas. His phone number is 541-298-8830.

Your local fire department is also very willing to come out to your home or small farm at no-charge and evaluate your wildfire risk. They can provide you with good ideas and suggestions about how to make your land more defensible and reduce your risk of wildfire damage.

10. For those who have experienced wildfires this year, there is a real need to consider the potential for increased stream runoff and erosion this fall and winter. The Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District Service Center has available at no-charge the Natural

Ariel view of the Biscuit Fire, August 2002.
Mid-Columbia Small Farms and Acreage’s Newsletter Subscription Form

To receive a paper copy of the newsletter please fill out this form and enclose a check for $6.00 for six issues (one-year subscription). Make checks payable to Sherman County Extension and mail your check along with this form to:

OSU Sherman County Extension  
P.O. Box 385  
Moro, OR 97039

Name ________________________________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________________

City _______________________________ State _______________ Zip _________________

If you wish to receive the newsletter electronically, which is available free of charge, you only need to send an e-mail message to join-mcsf@list.orst.edu. You do not need to put anything in subject line or in the body of the message. The listserv will take your e-mail address and put it on the list to receive notification of when the most current newsletter is available on the Wasco County Extension Web Page with a hotlink directly to the web page. For additional information concerning subscribing to the newsletter please contact your local Oregon or Washington State University Cooperative Extension Office.