



Mid-Columbia Small Farms & Acreage Newsletter

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OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION SERVICE

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Dear Small Farmer and Landowner;

Welcome to the May/June Issue of the Small Farms and Acreage Newsletter. In this issue we have a important article by Steve Castagnoli, Hood River Horticulture Extension Agent about the West Nile Virus and what folks should know. In the resources section of this newsletter I have noted several excellent sites providing a wealth of information concerning Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) for those with poultry. It is important poultry producers stay current with the progression and identification of this disease to protect their flocks.

As all Oregonians are aware, we are undergoing significant adjustments in public services as our state grapples with reduced revenues. A second article that is featured in this issue relates to the OSU Extension Budget and the resultant loss in Extension positions throughout Oregon. Current budget projections as they stand are looking to a 40% reduction of Extension positions throughout the state in the coming months. We realize that the adjustments we are facing may affect how we serve and the level of service we are able to provide small farmers and landowners in the future. As we go through this period of adjustment, we would ask your patience and understanding and know that we are fully committed to continuing our strong support to you our clientele. Again, thank you for your patience and support during this time of change.

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.

As a reminder, if you view this newsletter on our website, whenever you change your internet carrier be sure to let us know so we stay current with your e-mail address.

Sincerely,

Brian V. Tuck
Mid-Columbia Extension Agent



Calendar of Events

2003

May



- 3** **Seattle Tilth Edible Plant Sale**, Good Shepherd Center 4649 Sunnyside Ave N Seattle, WA. The broadest selection of organic, edible plant starts available in one place in the Seattle area. Gardening experts, planting information, soil amendments and demonstration gardens all in one day. **CONTACT INFORMATION:** Theresa Steig 206.633.5045 or theresasteig@seattletilth.org, www.seattletilth.org
- 3** **Growing Fruit Organically**. A Luscher Farm Class in Lake Oswego, OR. Program will discuss disease resistant cultivars and holistic growing strategies. 1-4 pm., \$15. To pre-register, contact (503)-657-2549 or www.lakeoswegoparks.org.
- 3-4** **Clackamas County Master Gardeners 19th Annual Spring Garden Fair**, Clackamas Cty. Fairgrounds, Canby. Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. May 3; 9 a.m.-4 p.m. May 4. 140 vendors selling bedding plants, hanging baskets, shrubs, trees, garden ornaments, furniture, books and tools, educational displays, food and raffle. Master Gardeners on hand to answer questions about plants and gardening practices. \$1 fairground entrance fee, under 16 free. Free parking and free pH soil testing. Proceeds go to scholarships for students majoring in horticulture at Clackamas Community College and to support the Master Gardener program. Information: Kathi Cardinalli, (503) 659-8156 or Herb Davis, (503) 654-4737.
- 3-4** **Mid Valley ODS Dressage Horse Show**, Linn County Fair and Expo, Albany. Information: Brigitte Marker, (541) 791-3513.
- 8-10** **Second Annual Columbia River Wine Expo**, West Coast Hotel Pasco, in Pasco. Buyers from around the world meet with wineries from throughout Washington; taste tests and exhibitions; educational sessions. More information: Gary A. White, (509) 372-7614 or gawhite@tricity.wsu.edu.
- 8-10** **Second Annual Columbia River Wine Expo**, West Coast Hotel Pasco, in Pasco. Buyers from around the world meet with wineries from throughout Washington; taste tests and exhibitions; educational session. More information: Gary A. White, (509) 372-7614 or gawhite@tricity.wsu.edu.
- 9-11** **Alpaca Western Extravaganza**, Redmond, OR. For more information call 541-352-7405 or www.awe-alpacas.org.
- 12** **Wine Grape Production**, Mount Vernon research station. Registration begins at 9:30 am and the program will run from 10:00 am - 4:30 pm. The topics are aimed primarily at current or prospective commercial wine grape growers. Cost is \$20 per person. An agenda is available at: http://mtvernon.wsu.edu/frt_hort/grapesched.htm
- 13** **What We Learned From Last Year's Wildfires and What 2003 May Hold**
Sponsored by Columbia Gorge Chapter Society of American Foresters and Mid Columbia Woodland Owners: Bob Young, Oregon Dept. of Forestry, China Gorge in Hood River, Dinner at 6:00 pm, program following at around 6:30.
- 22** **Wasco County Crops & Conservation Tour**
See Upcoming Workshops & Seminars section.
- 27 - 28** **Private Forests Forum of Washington**
Olympia, WA; Summit 2000 resulted in numerous policy discussions and decisions affecting private forest lands. Summit 2003 is your opportunity to help understand and protect Washington's private forests and to participate in developing a plan to sustain future prosperity of our forests in economic, social, and biological contexts. Plenary and technical sessions will address issues such as:

Calendar ... continued

economic impacts; silvicultural needs; urban challenges; regulations and riparian zone biology. <http://www.cfr.washington.edu/Outreach/summit2003/>

- 29-31 The 2003 Sustainability Forum**, Portland, OR
Three-day conference for business and community leaders committed to addressing economic, environmental and social challenges in the Pacific Northwest. The Sustainability Forum's 130+ panels and workshops are designed to define and facilitate progress towards sustainability in the Northwest - promoting sustainable products and services, creating employment in sustainable industries, revitalizing communities, and restoring natural ecosystems. <http://www.sustainablenorthwest.org/soc/sfindex.htm>
- 31 Fertilization for Organic Gardeners.** A Luscher Farm Class in Lake Oswego, OR. Program will focus on soil health and a diversity of organic fertilization strategies. 1-4 pm., \$15. To pre-register, contact 503-675-2549 or www.lakeoswegoparks.org.
- 31 Managing Your Forested Streamside Area.** Topics of this workshop include: the value and function of riparian areas, how riparian areas are defined, how to manage forests in riparian areas, cost-share programs that provide financial assistance when managing timber in riparian areas. Contact: Peter Griessman, pgriessm@wsu.edu, 509-684-2588
- 31-June 1 Willamette Valley Home & Garden Show**, Linn County Fair and Expo, Albany.
Information: Lori Hickey, (541) 928-5159.
- June**
- 1-3 Biotechnology: Science & Society at a Crossroad**, Seattle WA. More information can be found at: <http://arc.cahe.wsu.edu/nabc/>
- 9 Spring Pesticide Container Management Program** Deliver your rinsed and prepared PLASTIC PESTICIDE containers for disposal and recycling to Round Butte Seed Growers (505 C Street) in Culver, 9 am to 3 pm. 541-546-5222.
- 10 Columbia Basin Agricultural Research Center, Pendleton Field Day**, Pendleton, Oregon. Call Steve Petrie 541-278-4186 or the Wasco or Sherman County Extension Offices for additional information.
- 10 Spring Pesticide Container Management Program** Deliver your rinsed and prepared PLASTIC PESTICIDE containers for disposal and recycling to Wilbur-Ellis Co. (3390 SW Hwy. 97) in Madras, 9 am to 3 pm. 541-475-9474.
- 11 Columbia Basin Agricultural Research Center, Moro Field Day**, Moro, Oregon. Call Steve Petrie 541-278-4186 or the Wasco or Sherman County Extension Offices for additional information.
- 11 Spring Pesticide Container Management Program** Deliver your rinsed and prepared PLASTIC PESTICIDE containers for disposal and recycling to Cenex Harvest States (116 NW Depot Rd.) in Madras, 9 am to 3 pm. 541-475-2222.
- 11-15 Hood River Classic Hunter/Jumper Horse Show**, Jensen Mills Meadow south of Hood River, 8 a.m. to evening each day. Event or ticket information: (541) 354-2009 or visit www.hoodriverclassic.com.
- 12 Spring Pesticide Container Management Program** Deliver your rinsed and prepared PLASTIC PESTICIDE containers for disposal and recycling to Wilbur-Ellis Co. (Weber Industrial Park) in Odell, 9 am to 3 pm. 541-354-3255.
- 14 Woodland Tour of Rich Strachan's Tree Farm** 9:00 a.m. to about noon. Carpool to Rick's at 9:00 a.m. from large parking area across from Hood River China Gorge Restaurant . Rich is doing some interesting woodland management including wildfire mitigation.

Calendar



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June

14 Pest Management for Organic Gardeners.
A Luscher Farm Class in Lake Oswego, OR. Program will explore the gamut of organic techniques for pest prevention and reduction. 1-4 pm., \$15. To pre-register, contact 503-675-2549 or www.lakeoswegoparks.org.

22-25 Agroforestry and Riparian Buffers for Land Productivity and Environmental Stability,
Corvallis, Oregon. Call 541-737-2329 or e-mail at outreach@for.orst.edu

July

11-12 Washington State Sheep Producers' 2003 Ram and Ewe Sale, Moses Lake, WA. Call 208-777-3082 or e-mail at wssp@televar.com

August

2 Home Orchard Society Budding & Summer Pruning Workshop, 9 am - noon, Aboretum, Clackamas Comm. College, Oregon City, OR. For more information contact: Jim Cox at 503-234-3559

20-23 Farwest Show. With more than 850 exhibitors -- nearly 500 of which are wholesale nurseries -- and 1,365 booth spaces this years show promises to be the best. The show runs from noon to 6 p.m. daily. To register for the show or seminars, visit www.farwestshow.com.

Area Workshops and Seminars

Grazing Management for Riparian Areas

OBJECTIVE: To build an understanding of the tools, concepts, and thought processes relative to livestock grazing in riparian areas so that attendees will be able to work with other individuals, groups, and agencies to develop and implement successful grazing management strategies. Given an actual livestock operation situation, participants will be able to provide grazing management alternatives to achieve riparian objectives.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Permittees, agency personnel, and others who are involved with planning, managing, or evaluating riparian grazing systems.

LOCATION, DATES & TIMES: Cloverleaf Hall, Hwy 3 in Enterprise, Oregon, May 20 and 21, 2003. The first day will be held at Cloverleaf Hall beginning at 9:00 am and ending at 5:00 pm. The second day will be held in the field. The group will depart from the Cloverleaf Hall parking lot at 8:00 am.

INSTRUCTORS: The National Riparian Service Team (NRST), based in Prineville, OR, will be presenting this workshop for ranchers, agency personnel, and others interested in livestock grazing in riparian areas. This workshop is one of many activities

conducted throughout the west as part of an ongoing effort to

accelerate cooperative riparian restoration and management. Instructors for this session are Steve Leonard, Ecologist and Grazing Management Specialist (NRST retired), Sandy Wyman, Range Management Specialist (NRST), Jimmy Eisner, Fisheries Biologist, Prineville District BLM, and Mike Borman, State Rangeland Extension Specialist for OSU Cooperative Extension, Corvallis, OR.

COURSE MATERIALS: This course is designed to compliment Technical Reference 1737-14 entitled *Grazing Management for Riparian-Wetland Areas*. This and other materials will be provided to attendees.

TUITION: There is no tuition for this workshop.

RSVP: Please RSVP to the Willowa County Extension Office 541-426-3143 or email John.Wiliams.1@oregonstate.edu



Area Workshops and Seminars...continued

Wasco County Crops & Conservation Tour, May 22

The Wasco County Crops and Conservation Tour is set for Thursday May 22, 2003 sponsored by the Wasco County SWCD, NRCS and OSU Extension Service. The tour will begin with coffee and donuts at The Dalles Auction Yard at 7:40 am with tour departure scheduled for 8:00 am and return to the Auction Yard by 12:30 pm. Plan to provide your own transportation.

Stops on this year's tour include:

***John Fulton Ranch.** At this stop, we will look at spring plantings of corn and peas for forage with Cory Parsons, OSU Crook County Livestock Agent discussing the use of legumes and other specialty crops for livestock feed. We will also look at a spring mustard field with Dr. Don Wysocki, Soils Specialist discussing spring mustard production and market options for Mid-Columbia producers.

In addition Jim Bishop, Dusty Eddy, and Ron Graves from the Wasco County FSA, NRCS and SWCD Offices will provide updates on the current farm and conservation programs.

***Bill Johnson Ranch.** At this stop, we will look at a field of Clearfield Winter Wheat with Mid-Columbia Grain Growers discussing how growers can participate in the Clearfield Wheat program for this coming year. Dr. Dan Ball, OSU Weed Specialist will discuss reducing weed resistance development in the production of Clearfield Winter Wheat as well as Rattail Fescue Management and other weed control issues in small grains production.

In addition, Stan Decker of Mid-Columbia Insurance will discuss 2004 Crop Insurance program changes.

***Rich Remington Ranch.** At this stop, Dr Dick Smiley, OSU Plant Pathologist will review disease problems found in this year's wheat and barley crops and management practices. He will also discuss results of his research in the Mid-Columbia on nematode damage to small grains.

***New Technology Update.** In addition, we will

have demonstrations by Pioneer Implement and Morrow County Grains Growers showing some of the latest farm management technology including the New John Deere Ag. Management Solutions Kit GPS System. We will also have a Hydro-Seeding demonstration for soil stabilization and erosion control by Brian Stradley.

Oregon Pesticide Credit Hours and CCA Credits have been applied for. For further information concerning the tour, please contact the Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District at 296-6178 ext. 3 or the Wasco County Extension Office at 296-5494.



Annual Union County Crops and Conservation Tour, June 17

The tour starts at Western Farm Service at 7:30 a.m. with coffee/donuts and a brief program. The bus tour will depart WFS at approximately 8:00 a.m. to travel through the southern region of the county to observe and learn about several interesting topics which include Wolf Creek Irrigation District projects, commercial/organic potato production and marketing, 2002 Union County Conservation Farm of the Year (Rien and Cresta de Lint), direct seed projects, beef production (Colton's, Thomas Angus), and others. At noon, the tour will conclude with a short program and a hosted steak barbecue at the de Lint Farm.

For more information, contact the Union County Extension Office at 541-963-1010.

Area Workshops and Seminars...continued

OSU OFFERS A HOME-STUDY COURSE IN BEEF BASICS

The Oregon State University Extension Service is offering a home study course on beef production and management. "Beef Basics" was developed by researchers at the University of Nebraska for cattle ranchers to review their production practices or for anyone who wants to learn more about raising beef animals. It includes four 12-week sections:

- Nutrition, Economics, & Forage Utilization;
- Reproduction, Genetics, Selection;
- Nutrition, Health, Management of Growing Calves;
- Beef as a Business.

Participants can sign up for any or all sections. Materials will be provided for home study and testing. OSU Extension Service faculty will hold discussions with participants periodically throughout the sessions.

Sign-up begins May 1.

The program is offered by OSU Extension livestock and forages faculty in Coos/Curry counties, Douglas County, and the Willamette Valley (through the Polk County office).

Contact these OSU Extension county offices or Shelby Filley at 541-672-4461 for information on pre-registration, dates and fees.



Resources

Agency Notes



Farm Service Agency (FSA)

Note: This information applies to all small and large farmers in both Oregon and Washington, which had emergency drought declarations.

Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) II
Sign-up started: April 1, 2003

Livestock producers with headquarters in counties with Disaster Declarations for either 2001 or 2002 can apply for assistance if they did not receive assistance under the provisions of LCP I. No deadline has yet been announced .

If you owned eligible livestock (beef, dairy, sheep, or goats) on June 1, 2002 you may be eligible for assistance. Contact the FSA office for more information.

Funding/Technical Resources

Oregon Department of Environment Wood Chipper Tax Credit

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is offering a tax credit for wood chippers. The credit for purchases after 1/1/02 is 35%. Those interested in information about how to apply for the tax credit can go to their web site at: <http://www.deq.state.or.us> or contact them at 541-298-7255.

Farmland Protection Program

Federal program through the USDA that pays for conservation easements on farms and forest land that is an incidental part of an agricultural operation. <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmland/2002/pubntcs/fpp.rfp.html> Deadline for this program is May 19,2003.

Resources..... continued

Funding For Road and Culvert Improvement Projects

Small Forest Landowners interested in receiving financial assistance with road and culvert improvement projects are encouraged to enroll now for funding in 2004 through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP is administered by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and will provide up to 75% of the cost of making forest road improvements that will benefit water quality and salmon habitat. NRCS is taking applications now for funding through EQIP that will be made available in 2004. To receive an application, contact the NRCS office in your region.

Radio Stations

NOAA Weather Radio Stations in the Mid-Columbia.

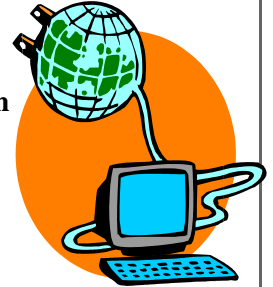
The Mid-Columbia is fortunate to have three sites in the Mid-Columbia that transmit up-to-date weather information. The stations offer current information on:

- Severe weather watches, warnings and special weather statements when needed.
- Hydrologic statement such as flash flood warnings and watches when needed.
- Forecasts for the Columbia Gorge, the Northern Oregon Cascades, North Central Oregon and the Eastern Slopes of the Southern Washington Cascades.
- Extended forecast up to 7 days.
- Outlook up to 14 days.
- Hourly regional weather reports.
- Climate and statistical data.
- Non-weather emergency information when needed.

Radio frequencies for the three stations are 162.400 MHz for The Dalles site, 162.525 MHz for the Sherman and Gilliam County site and 162.55 MHz for the Wheeler County site. Any radio that has a weather frequency can receive the broadcast. Reception quality will depend upon terrain and distance from the transmitter. A list of weather radio manufactures can be found at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr>. For more information concerning NOAA Weather Radio, please contact the National Weather Service at 541-276-7839 Ext. 223 or see their web site at <http://www.wr.noaa.gov/pendleton>

Web Pages

Oregon Association of Nurserymen is an excellent web site to learn about what is happening with the nursery industry. Their website is located at: <http://www.oan.org/>



American Farmland Trust recently released our latest Farming on the Edge study, which provides tangible evidence that we are losing our nation's best farmland at a faster rate than ever before. Between 1992 and 1997, the U.S. paved over more than 6 million acres of farmland, an area approximately equal to the size of Maryland. Wasteful use of land, rather than economic growth, has led to America losing twice as much farmland in the 1990s as it did in the 1980s. This study includes national and state maps of farmland in the path of development, as well as ranking the top 20 states by acreage of prime farmland lost to development. You can find out more at www.farmland.org/farmingontheedge/downloads.htm.

OSU Dryland Cropping Systems Weed Web Site can be found at <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/weeds/> This has a lot of good information about dryland small grains cropping systems weed management.

Hardwood Silviculture Cooperative

The Hardwood Silviculture Cooperative conducts high priority silvicultural research on hardwood species and mixed hardwood/softwood stands in the Pacific Northwest, with the goal of providing information that will improve the management of these stands. <http://www.cof.orst.edu/coops/hsc/>

Stand Management Cooperative

To provide a continuing source of high-quality information on the long-term effects of silvicultural treatments and treatment regimes on stand and tree growth and development and on wood and product quality. <http://www.cfr.washington.edu/research.smc/>

A Synthesis of Published Articles on Young Stand Management

http://www.efn.org/%7eonrcdoug/THINNING_SCIENCE.htm

Feature Articles

Nile Virus Update

*Steve Castagnoli,
Hood River County Extension Faculty*



Spring has definitely arrived in the Mid-Columbia region. And, although the winter was quite mild, it did provide a brief, but

welcome respite from the advance of the West Nile Virus throughout Oregon and Washington. The virus was detected in a dead raven collected near Newport, Washington early last fall. Government officials are warning that the virus and the disease it causes will, almost without uncertainty, appear in Oregon and other parts of Washington during the coming spring or summer.

According to information from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the West Nile Virus was first isolated in 1937 in eastern Africa. It has spread from there causing epidemics in other parts of Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. The virus and the disease it causes were first documented in the United States in 1999 during an outbreak in New York City. Since then, it has spread rapidly across most of the country. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as of mid-March, 2003, there have been 4161 human cases resulting in 277 fatalities nationwide. In states bordering Oregon and Washington, confirmed human West Nile Virus cases have occurred only in California. Non-human cases have occurred in Idaho and Washington.

There are many facets to this disease. Perhaps of greatest concern is the impact it may have on human health. Symptoms of infection by the West Nile Virus range from none to moderate to very severe, the latter including death in a small percentage of cases. According to a national alert published by the USDA, most humans infected with the virus do not experience any symptoms. For those who do develop symptoms, they are usually only mild. These include fever, headaches, body aches, swollen lymph glands, and a body rash. Severe symptoms, including encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), high fever, headaches, neck stiffness, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, paralysis, and coma, are estimated to occur in less than one percent of those infected with the virus. If you suspect that you have been infected with the virus, contact your physician.

Despite the ability to cause human fatality, we are considered to be incidental hosts for West Nile Virus. An incidental host is one that generally does not transmit the virus to other animals. Horses are another incidental host. Wild birds, such as crows, are considered to be the primary hosts of the virus. They play a key role in the spread of the disease. Mosquitoes, the only known vector for the disease, are an essential element of the infection cycle. They transmit the virus from infected birds to other birds, humans, horses, and other mammals.



As noted above, the virus has only been detected in the northeast corner of Washington, but not yet in Oregon. The geographic spread of the virus is probably limited to relatively short distances as mosquitoes transmit it from bird to bird. It may, however, be spread considerably longer distances as birds undertake their seasonal migration. Additionally, warmer weather increases the rate of mosquito population growth with increased potential for spread among birds, humans, and horses.

With the imminent spread of this virus throughout Washington and Oregon, it seems prudent to plan ahead for the prevention of infection. There are three main strategies for prevention of the disease: mosquito control, mosquito avoidance, and in the case of horses, vaccination.

Adult female mosquitoes lay their eggs in slow moving or standing water where they develop through the larval and pupal stages and then onto the adult stage. Reducing or eliminating aquatic habitats can significantly reduce mosquito populations. Eliminating all mosquito habitats in an area like the Mid-Columbia would not be practical. Great strides may be made in eliminating non-natural habitats that may serve as breeding sites. These include any site or object that collect and provide standing water for even a few days at a time. Examples are used tires, metal or plastic containers, clogged roof gutters, bird baths, wheelbarrows, wading pools, etc.

Mosquitoes may also be controlled with insecticides. Insecticide treatments are aimed at either the adults or larvae. Treating adult mosquitoes entails the use of an insecticide such as malathion applied as an ultra-low

Feature Articles...continued

volume or aerosol spray. The resulting aerosol droplets suspended in air kill adult mosquitoes on contact. Treatment against larvae requires treating their aquatic habitats. There are several types of materials available for treating these. Achieving mosquito control without harming other aquatic organisms can be accomplished with microbial larvicides, which are selective for mosquito larvae and considered non-toxic to other aquatic organisms and humans. The most common of these are products that contain a bacterium known as *Bacillus thuringiensis israeliensis* (Bti).

Fish provide a form of biological control by consuming mosquito larvae and adults. Precautions must be taken to prevent the escape of exotic fish into natural waterways including creeks, streams, sloughs, ponds, and ditches if connected to natural waterways. For information on permitted stocking of exotic fish such as mosquito fish in Oregon, contact the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife at 503-872-5268 or visit their website: <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/>. In Washington, contact the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife at 360-902-2936.

Avoiding mosquitoes entails exclusion of mosquitoes from homes and other structures with tight fitting window and door screens, wearing clothing that mosquitoes cannot bite through, and using mosquito repellents. When applying insect repellents, be sure to follow label instructions, paying particular attention to those when applying these products to children.

A vaccine is available for immunizing horses against the virus. Effective vaccination requires a series of three shots, each administered at three-month intervals and an annual booster thereafter. Ideally, horses would receive the full course of vaccination before the build up of mosquito populations. Contact your local veterinarian for more information about the vaccine.

Monitoring the spread of West Nile Virus in Oregon and Washington will be a coordinated effort of state and county agencies. Both states have telephone information lines and websites with extensive links to provide information on many aspects of the virus: Oregon Department of Human Services 866-703-4636, <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/publichealth/acd/wnile/index.cfm>; Washington State Department of Health: 1.866.788-4787, <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WNV/WNV.html>.

You may be aware that testing dead birds for the virus is a way of monitoring its geographic spread. Specific information on dead bird testing is available from the telephone information lines or websites listed above.

OSU EXTENSION SERVICE May Face Sizeable Reduction

News Release from Oregon State University, Corvallis

The Oregon State University Extension Service, which delivers educational information across Oregon that underpins the economy, environmental protection and community health efforts, is wrestling with the



possibility of a sizeable reduction in its workforce. The reduction would leave the outreach arm of OSU about 40 percent smaller by 2005 than it was at the start of the current 2001-03 state funding biennium.

"Extension is in an extremely challenging financial situation," said Lyla Houglum, dean and director of the organization. "The main reasons are an anticipated reduction in state funding because state revenues are down sharply, and increased mandated operating costs.

"Our state budget for the 2003-05 biennium may not be finalized until late summer, but we need to be proactive and plan for anticipated cuts," said Houglum. "All indications are that Extension may be smaller and therefore many educational services that Oregonians value won't be available. The goal of the planning process we've initiated is to assure maximum quality program delivery with the resources that are available."

The Extension Service's outside-the-classroom educational efforts focus on areas such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, families, community development and 4-H youth development. Extension is supported primarily by state, federal and county funds and has offices in every county in the state.

An Extension Service staffing plan under development is aimed at outlining how the organization would do its work if its funding dropped to the governor's proposed budget minus 10 percent. Some forecast that this will be roughly Extension's state funding level for the 2003-05 biennium, which starts July 1.

The first draft of the proposed staffing plan was developed with input from individual Oregonians and representatives of industries and organizations around the state.

There may be more regional programming, Houglum said, but Extension plans to maintain an office in every county that provides adequate fiscal support for a county Extension office.

"We're going to gather input on the proposed plan from our citizen advisers, and from our faculty and staff, during the last couple of weeks in April," Houglum said. "Then we'll refine the plan. We won't know if additional changes will need to be made until we know what our state budget is going to be."

"Extension may not look the same in the future," Houglum added, "but we're going to keep making important contributions to the state within the resources that are available."

Examples of those contributions cited by Houglum include:

- The Extension Service supports natural resource-based industries, which have an estimated annual value of more than \$24 billion;
- The 4-H and family programs help individuals realize greater potential and success;
- About 30,000 citizen volunteers annually magnify the impact of work the Extension Service does around Oregon;
- In the 2001-03 biennium, the Extension Service used about \$35 million in state funds to "leverage" about \$48 million in partnership and grant funds that addressed Oregon issues;

Each year Extension Service personnel, and the educational materials they produce, help more than a million Oregonians solve problems, contribute to the economy and learn new skills.

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@lists.orst.edu** You do not need to put anything in the subject line or in the body of the message. The listserve 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.