



Extension Service
Washington County

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SERVING WASHINGTON
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OSU to You

January/February 2010

OSU Extension Service engages the people of Oregon with research-based knowledge and education that focus on strengthening communities and economies, sustaining natural resources, and promoting healthy families and individuals.

Farming Grass Seed in Tough Times



Washington County, and much of the Willamette Valley, is home to the world's finest grass seed farms. The cool climate, rich soils and winter rainfall provide ideal conditions for producing high-quality grass seed on just over 35% of the county's agricultural land. The Willamette Valley produces two thirds of the global supply of cool season grasses used for

lawns, golf courses and other residential uses, or forage in animal pastures. Unfortunately, local grass seed production is facing tough times. It is expected that when farmers start their combines this July and head to the field to harvest their seed, they will be harvesting seed with little value. Grass seed contracts and prices have dropped drastically over the past two growing seasons due to poor economic conditions and a decrease in demand. In fact, the cost of producing grass seed now exceeds the price seed can be sold for. The Oregon Seed Council is projecting that the Willamette Valley will have a 2010 carryover of nearly 270 million pounds of seed from the previous two crops. OSU extension agents and researchers have been working hard alongside the Oregon Department of Agriculture, USDA – FSA/NRCS, and others to support the farming community through this difficult climate. One important accomplishment has been to investigate and consider what other types of crops can be grown to replace some of the grass seed acreage in the area. Much of the acreage has been planted with wheat and other cereals. However, some newer oilseed crops such as camelina and canola have been planted on several hundred acres in the county. The OSU extension team is working closely with local farmers to not only produce high quality and high yielding crops but to produce maximum economic return and maintain the healthy farming community that they have been a part of for many years.



2010 CPO CCI Elections

Washington County Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) members elected leadership for the coming year. Bruce Bartlett, Henry Oberhelman, Richard Smith, Pat Van Dyke, and Wynne Wakkila will continue to share their thoughtful guidance of the CCI through 2010. Their January meeting will include discussions with the Connecting Neighborhoods sub-committee and the Tree Code group. These groups seek to build county-wide interest in providing access for pedestrian and bicycle travel and understanding of the value of tree canopy in all communities. The CCI is made up of members of each active CPO and includes a representative from Beaverton CCI. They meet the third Tuesday of each month at 7 pm in the OSU Extension Office, 18640 NW Walker Road, #1400 the public is always welcome.

Welcome our new Nutrition Program Staff

Please welcome our new Nutrition Education Program Assistants (EPA's) to Washington County who are concentrating their efforts on youth audiences. During the school year, you will find them busy teaching in elementary school classrooms and in the summer, at USDA summer food sites and other community centers.



Shelley Smith:
"As an OSU alumna with a Nutrition and Food Management degree, I couldn't think of a better way to be using my

education! It brings me great joy to see the children I work with making positive behavioral and attitudinal changes related to healthy eating and physical activity because of the hands-on nutrition education experiences I am able to provide."

Rena Titus:
"I am very excited and happy to be with OSU Extension Service. I worked for 16 years in Special Education -



inclusion and special services, Library science, and cafeteria nutrition. It feels so good to be back in the schools and teaching the students all the exciting things the OSU Nutrition Program has to offer. It feels awesome to have the children excited and happy when they see you coming for the day's lesson."

Washington County OSU TO YOU is a bi-monthly publication of the OSU Extension Service in Washington County highlighting the activities and accomplishments of local programs. More information on all program areas and events can be seen on our website at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/washington> or our location at 18640 NW Walker Road, Suite 1400, Beaverton, OR 97006 (CAPITAL Center Entrance D1).

Caregiving in Tough Times

President Barack Obama proclaimed November 2009 as National Family Caregivers Month. OSU Extension Service, Washington County Disability Aging and Veteran Services and Tuality Healthcare responded by offering a day-long conference for family caregivers. The free event offered caregivers a chance to select from sessions including Protecting seniors from fraud, Managing medications, How to help without getting hurt, and Home Safety for Alzheimer's caregivers. Rev. Larry Hansen, Chaplain and Volunteer Coordinator, Legacy Hopewell House Hospice, offered a keynote address with a hopeful look at the emotional and spiritual journey caregivers embark on. Oregon reported 359,470 family caregivers in 2004 (most recent numbers available) who gave 385 million hours of care at an estimated value of 3820 million dollars. Family caregivers comprise 13% of the workforce and 60% of caregivers are women. 130+ local caregivers and resource providers attended.

4-H Sustainable Schools

Partners for a Sustainable Washington County Community has established sustainability education and training as a goal for the county. To help meet this need and provide positive youth development opportunities, 4-H is implementing a Sustainable Schools Program.

4-H partners, volunteers, and staff developed a three day Sustainable Schools workshop at the Tualatin River Wildlife Refuge in late fall. The workshop attracted over 40 attendees from five counties. Participants were introduced to the concept of sustainability, why sustainability is important for schools, the principles of sustainable urban agriculture, and correlations between children's participation in farm/garden programs and positive youth development.

Tualatin Elementary School had five staff and volunteers attend the workshop; they are our newest Sustainable School. OSU Extension 4-H staff worked with teachers and volunteers to involve all the students in the planning process to design an outdoor habitat and garden area. All 260 students, 26 staff, and their PTA are engaged in the program. 4-H and the Tualatin Elementary PTA have submitted grants to better connect the students in this outdoor learning laboratory. The 4-H Sustainable School workshop will be offered again this spring with Tualatin Elementary setting the bar for involvement and enthusiasm. **Photo: Volunteers assist students creating habitat plans for use around their school.**



Forest Management Plans Prepared

About half of Washington County is forest land, and much of that land is in the hands of thousands of small woodland owners. These families manage their land for timber, Christmas trees, and other products while also caring for the ecological health of their land, water, and the wildlife that inhabit it.

Accomplishing these diverse goals efficiently requires forethought, and a written forest management plan is the most widely accepted tool for ensuring that economic, ecological and social concerns are addressed in forest management. OSU Extension held a shortcourse last fall in which woodland owners learned how to evaluate their property and write their own forest management plans. Twenty-two families, collectively owning over 900 acres, took part in the course and were mentored by ten of OSU's Master Woodland Managers. These volunteers are active, knowledgeable Washington County woodland owners that provided peer-to-peer assistance as the class participants wrote their plans. A forest management plan is a requirement for a woodland owner to obtain third-party "green" certification for their land as well as to apply for financial assistance to carry out stewardship projects. As a result of the class, woodland owners have a better understanding of the resources on their property and a plan for managing them sustainably.