

Focus on Farming Conference IV

Speaker Biographies

Welcoming Remarks



Aaron Reardon

Aaron Reardon, Snohomish County Executive

Executive Reardon has worked with local business and civic leaders to identify economic opportunities, create new jobs and get our local economy back on track. At the center of this effort is the Focus on Farming initiative and the Agriculture Action Plan. Guided by these efforts, Snohomish County has employed new strategies to generate financial opportunities for local farmers and preserve valuable farmlands. Other successes include implementing priority-based budgeting to close a \$13 million general fund budget deficit; enhancing government accountability and transparency through online performance measurement; and, spearheading an innovative bonding proposal to tackle our growing road, park and water quality needs – without raising taxes.

Aaron is a lifelong resident of Snohomish County and makes his home in Everett with his wife Kate, daughter Madeline and son Jack.

Rick Larsen, US House of Representatives, *Farm Bill in the Northwest – Update on Farm Legislation and its Impact in the Second District*

A native of Lake Stevens, Washington, Congressman Rick Larsen is currently serving his fourth term in the U.S. House of Representatives, representing Washington's 2nd congressional district. Congressman Larsen is the first U.S. Representative from Western Washington to serve on the House Agriculture Committee in over 50 years, and remains deeply involved in issues important to Northwest Washington growers even as his House committee assignments have changed.

Larsen is a leading advocate for specialty crop producers in the U.S. Congress. Specialty crops, which represent roughly 50% of all U.S. agriculture production, currently receive only 2 – 3 percent of federal agriculture investment. This year, Larsen was one of the lead sponsors of EAT (Equitable Agriculture Today) for a Healthy America Act, which aimed to strengthen investments in specialty crops by increasing market access, encouraging and facilitating consumption of nutritious agricultural products, expanding funding for research programs and increasing opportunities for family farmers in conservation programs. Many provisions from Larsen's bill were included in the House version of the 2007 farm bill, which awaits final passage in Congress.

Congressman Larsen has also served as an advocate for the hungry – raising awareness about hunger and supporting federal legislation to ensure that no child goes to bed hungry at night.

The Larsen family has been building a legacy in the Second Congressional District for more than a century. Congressman Larsen and his wife, Tiia, are the proud parents of two sons, Robert and Per (pronounced "Pear"), who represent the fifth generation of Larsen's in the district.

Steve Pottle (Emcee), Manager, Snohomish County Office of Economic Development

Steve joined Snohomish County in July, 2006, to increase family wage jobs, retain and expand opportunities for existing businesses and agriculture and position Snohomish County as the place for “new economy” businesses opportunities. Prior to joining the County, Steve served nine years as a Port Commissioner for the Port of Olympia where he was involved in marine transportation, airport management, commercial real estate development, marina development and lobbying. Other past positions include National Sales Manager for Moore Data Management Services and Northwest Business Development Manager for Microsoft. After leaving Microsoft, Steve authored a sales and marketing skills book titled “Capture Opportunity.” He then began his own consulting business, working with medium size businesses to increase sales, reduce costs and improve marketing and sales skills.

Keynote Speakers



Chad Kruger – Chad Kruger is the Biologically Intensive Agriculture and Organic Farming (BIOAg) Educator for the WSU Center for Sustaining Agriculture & Natural Resources (CSANR). He currently coordinates CSANR’s Climate Friendly Farming™ Project, which is researching agricultural practices and technologies that reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, sequester carbon in soils, and provide renewable, biomass-based substitutes for fossil fuel-based products. Chad holds a M.S. in Land Resources (2003) from the University of Wisconsin – Madison, where he was an Au Sable Graduate Fellow. His professional experience includes more than 10 years of teaching, extension and research on the adoption of sustainable agriculture systems and technologies and administration of a research policy network. He currently serves on the Washington State Climate Advisory Team, including both the Agriculture Technical Working Group and the Ag Preparation / Adaptation Working Group.
(picture courtesy of Merlin Quiggle)



Fred Kirchenmann, PhD – Dr. Fred Kirschenmann, a longtime leader in national and international sustainable agriculture, is Distinguished Fellow for the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University. From July 2000 to November 2005, he served as the Center's second director since its creation in 1987. Kirschenmann came to the Center from south central North Dakota where he operated his family's 3,500-acre certified organic farm. He continues to oversee management of the farm.

Kirschenmann holds a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Chicago, and has written extensively about ethics and agriculture. He has held national and international appointments, including the USDA's National Organic Standards Board. In 2006, he was appointed to the 19-member National Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production operated by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and funded by Pew Charitable Trusts to conduct a two-year examination of key aspects in the farm animal industry.

He is also a board member for the Food Alliance, Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area, The Nature Institute, and the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture at the Rockefeller Center in New York. He chairs and is a charter member of the Whiterock Conservancy, a nonprofit organization that manages a 1,300-acre conservation area in west-central Iowa. Kirschenmann also helped convene and continues to be active in a multi-state task force, Agriculture of the Middle, that focuses on research and markets for midsize American farms.

In 1976, Kirschenmann returned to the family farm when his father became ill. By 1980, the farm was certified organic, one of the early operations to make the transition. The

farm is a natural prairie livestock grazing system that combines a nine-crop rotation of cereal grains, forages, and green manure.

Kirschenmann Family Farms has been part of a number of research studies. It also has been featured in national publications including *National Geographic*, the *Smithsonian*, *Audubon*, *Business Week*, the *LA Times* and *Gourmet* magazine. In 1995, Kirschenmann was profiled in an award-winning video, "My Father's Garden," by Miranda Productions, Inc.

In 1978, Kirschenmann helped organize North Dakota Natural Farmers that later became the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society. He helped found and for 10 years was president of Farm Verified Organic, Inc., an international private certification agency.

In 2001, Kirschenmann received the Seventh Generation Research Award from the Center for Rural Affairs for his work in sustainable food and farming systems. He also was named a 2002 Leader of the Year in Agriculture by *Progressive Farmer* publications. His essay, "Ecological Morality: A New Ethic for Agriculture," appears in *Agroecosystems Analysis*, a monograph published by the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and the Soil Science Society of America.

The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture was created by the Iowa Legislature to develop sustainable agricultural practices that are both profitable and conserve natural resources. Since his appointment to the Center, Kirschenmann has been a frequent speaker, engaging audiences to help shape a new vision for agriculture. New Center directions include research initiatives in marketing and food systems, ecology and policy.

Session Speakers



- **Annabelle Kirschner, PhD**, Washington State University Extension Specialist, *Worldwide Labor Demographics*

Dr. Annabel Kirschner is professor, and former chair of the Department of Community and Rural Sociology at Washington State University. She presented the findings of her research at numerous national and state professional meetings and published her findings in numerous professional refereed journals. Despite her academic standing she has a way of presenting the information so that it is both understandable and fascinating. Dr. Kirschner's areas of specialization include Applied Demography, State and Local population Trends, Migration, Social Organization of communities, and Rural Sociology. Rural communities are changing and understanding those changes is a crucial step in maintaining a thriving community.

- **Audrey Gravley**, Regional Vice President, Community Lending, Farm Credit Services, *Risk Management – Strategic Planning*

Audrey is passionate about rural communities and understands how a strong agricultural economy keeps them vibrant. She has been actively engaged in agriculture and other rural financing for over 30 years. A graduate of Washington State University and the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Program, Audrey currently works with staff in Burlington, Seattle, Chehalis and Wenatchee to provide competitive financing options for traditional and part-time farmers and commercial fishers, as well as rural residents. She lives near LaConner, Washington.



- **Charles Kuperus**, New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture, *Selling Local: How Local is Replacing Organic*

Mr. Kuperus has made repositioning agriculture to ensure its future in New Jersey a focal point of his tenure. He has worked with all parties to develop the *Jersey Fresh* program, charting a comprehensive course to help establish a successful future for New Jersey's farms. Under his leadership, New Jersey has emphasized farmland preservation, worked to promote economic development to expand the marketplace for farmers and helped farmers develop their "green" strategies. Mr. Kuperus has expanded the *Jersey Fresh* program to build awareness of locally grown products, adding partner brands for nursery/horticultural items and seafood from local aquaculture. A native of New Jersey, Mr. Kuperus was raised on his family's dairy farm and still resides in the same area. In addition to all of his other agriculture-related activities, he served as President of the Northeast Association of State Departments of Agriculture in 2004.

- **Chris Mahelona**, Risk Management Specialist, USDA Risk Management Agency (OR, WA, ID, AK), *Programs and AGR-Lite Insurance*

Chris specializes in the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) whole farm insurance program which uses a 5-year tax history of allowable income from a Schedule F to determine a revenue guarantee. AGR/AGR-Lite provides insurance for many crops and animals which previously had no insurance available. Other program specialties include cabbage, forage, alfalfa seed, cranberries and the new pasture, range, forage program in Idaho and Oregon. Prior to joining USDA, Chris worked with the Agricultural Research Service in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

- **Claire Thomas**, The Root Connection, Woodinville, *Growing a CSA Program*

Claire Thomas has operated the 500-member Root Connection, Washington's oldest CSA program, since 1986. One admirer described her as "the godmother of all things CSA." Claire became interested in the CSA concept after reading an article about a CSA that had started on the East Coast. Prior to that, she had been running a small market garden as well as a commercial business. In 2006, Claire formed Roots of Our Times Cooperative, which took over ownership of The Root Connection. The cooperative was funded by investments from CSA members. Claire's son Jeff Schmidt has been foreman at The Root Connection for the past 17 years and her daughter, Jennifer Miller, owns and operates Take Root Farm, a 120-member CSA located in Buckley.

- **David Robb**, General Manager, Tuscarora Organic Growers Cooperative, Pennsylvania, *Cooperative Marketing – When Teamwork Pays*

David Robb is a teacher and an organic farming devotee. With degrees in economics and political science, Robb has been an artisan, small business owner, visiting professor, community organizer, consultant, Slow Food convivium founder and leader, and an organic dairy business development manager. As GM of *Tuscarora Organic Growers Cooperative*, Robb is attempting to manage (or more likely be managed by) the comings and goings of thousands of cases of organic vegetables and the wonderful staff and farmers that make TOG such an enduring success.

- **Darryl Vander Haak**, Vander Haak Digester Project, *Bio-Energy Technology*

Since 1968, Darryl and Judy Vander Haak have owned the Vander Haak Dairy in Lynden, Washington. In addition to operating a dairy, Darryl has been an entrepreneur in the recycling business for many years. The Vander Haaks were the first dairy in Washington State to install an anaerobic digester. The patented plug flow

digester is capable of handling manure from up to 1,500 dairy cows. A 400 kw generator converts the biogas into renewable electricity that is sold back to the grid. In addition, the Vander Haak's receive "carbon credits" for avoided methane emissions.

- Don McMoran, Washington State University Skagit County Extension, *Efficient Irrigation Systems for the Puget Sound Region*

- **Erick Haakenson**, Jubilee Farm, Carnation, *Water and Flood Issues in the Snoqualmie Valley – A Vision of the Future*

In 1989, with his wife Wendy, retired Alaskan salmon fisherman Erick started Jubilee Farm. The farm is now in its 12th season as a CSA and is in transition to biodynamic farming. Jubilee Farm runs along over a mile section of the Snoqualmie River, with numerous wetlands and an unnamed Snoqualmie tributary running through the property. They're currently in the process of re-vegetating six acres of riparian forest along the Snoqualmie River bank.

- **Eric Williamson**, Williamson Farms, Quincy, WA, *Beyond Corn: From Barley to Turnips, Growing Alternative Feeds on the Westside*



Eric Williamson is the fourth generation to farm, along with his dad and uncle, the Williamson spread in Eastern Washington. The enterprise grass finishes about 1,000 head of cattle per year for sale throughout the state, most notably at PCC Markets. Along with irrigated vegetable and alfalfa production, which helps feed the cattle, they also run 150 cow/calf pairs.

With a master's degree in Ag Economics from WSU, Eric is responsible for the agronomic and financial management areas of the farm. Prior to coming back to the family farm, he worked in ag finance for a number of years as a loan officer at NW Farm Credit Services.

He credits the success of their farm operation on their primary focus integrating crop and cattle production to improve the soil. Over the years, they have experimented with a number of alternative forage crops including turnips. Eric is married with three sons to help him carry on the Williamson Farm legacy.

- **Georgana Webster**, WSDA Organic Program, *Panel: Organic Certification - Making it Work for the Small Farm*



A graduate of Cal Poly–San Luis Obispo's animal science program, Georgana Webster is a field inspector specializing in organic livestock for WSDA's organic program. Her experience includes dairy research at the UC Davis Veterinary Medical Teaching and Research Center as well as conventional production management for large swine and dairy operations.

Georgana is a 4-H leader as well as a member of the 4-H and FFA Livestock Sales Committee Board. In her spare time, along with her girls, she manages a small flock of 4-H and open sheep as well as running a few head of beef.

- **Greg Wilkes**, HealthyComm., Inc./Calgary Farmers Market, Edmonton, Alberta, *More Show, More Sales*

Alberta's Greg Wilkes has had extensive involvement in the "business" aspects of agri-food organizations in both the private and public sector. As a professional planner, he uses comprehensive technology to create strategic market focused projects. As an urban designer, he addresses emerging opportunities through

principles of creating healthy communities. A planner for more than 20 years, his planning practice has emphasized the agri-food field for the past eight. His strong interest in adding value to locally produced commodities led to his analysis of farmers' markets throughout North America, Britain, Italy and Portugal. Greg, through his firm HealthyComm., Inc., was the primary consultant in the planning, design and development of the very successful Calgary Farmer's Market.

- **Jack Habina**, Habina's Harvest / Calgary Farmers Market, Calgary, Alberta, *More Show, More Sales*
- **Julia Wiley**, Mariquita Farm, Watsonville, California, *Growing a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) Program*



Julia Wiley is the virtual farmwife at Mariquita Farm in Central California. Mariquita Farm has been marketing their harvest directly to the public through a growing CSA program for ten years. Currently, they also have a thriving restaurant route in San Francisco. Because of the success of their CSA program, this year Julia gave up their lucrative spot in San Francisco's Ferry Plaza Farmers Market after 16 years of getting up at 3 a.m. every Saturday morning. Among her many talents, Julia is also a self-taught Internet, website, and computer guru in all things farm. She also attempts to spend time with their children.

- **Karl Hereth**, Hereth Farm, Snohomish, *Beyond Corn: Making Hay & Haylage in Western Washington [Whether or not the Sun Shines]*



A member of one of Snohomish County's Centennial Farm Families (100 years of family ownership and continuous production), Karl Hereth was literally born to farm, helping with chores on the family dairy beginning when he was five years old. Part of the fifth generation to farm the rich Snohomish River bottom property homesteaded in 1904, Karl now turns out blue-ribbon winning hay and haylage.

Hereth Farm was first in the area to start using the round-bale system in 1984. The farm operation currently consists of a replacement heifer operation and managing over 350 acres for hay, pasture, and haylage production.

- **Kate Painter**, WSU Center for Sustaining Ag & Natural Resources, *Bioenergy Crops*
Kate Painter is the Sustainable Systems Analyst for the WSU Center for Sustaining Agriculture & Natural Resources. Kate's primary focus is economic analysis of various farm production practices related to biofuels and alternative cropping systems for the Climate Friendly Farming Project. Kate has led critical work over the past two years evaluating the economic potential of canola production across Washington State.



- **Lisa Friend**, RE Sources for Sustainable Communities Special Projects Coordinator, Bellingham, *Environmentally Friendly Nursery Technology*

With RE Sources for 19 years, Lisa is responsible for electronics recycling outreach, business assistance, and farm plastics recycling and education programs in an eight-county area. The Bellingham-based non-profit group provides individuals with the tools they need to actively safeguard our marine waters, rivers, lakes, beaches and air, overseeing programs designed to reduce air pollution and encourage waste reduction and recycling throughout the region. She has conducted numerous recycling projects including recycling programs for pesticide containers in Bellingham, WA and plastic pots recycling events in Bellingham in several locations in Snohomish County.



- **Lloyd Glasscock**, Pacific Stone Co., Everett, *New Markets for Your Nursery: More Than Just Growing – Thinking Outside the Pot*

Lloyd Glasscock has been active in the nursery industry since 1978, the stone business since 1988. In 1998, he and Tim Gray opened Pacific Stone in Everett, WA. He is active in both the Washington Nursery and Landscape Association, and Washington Association of Landscape Contractors, has held several offices in each and champions the Certified Landscape Technician and Certified Professional Horticulturist. Like the stone pieces he sells, his is “rocks” when it comes to supporting the nursery and landscape industry. He and his partner have designed award winning landscapes at the Flower and Garden Show. Lloyd is a worker and a constant presence at industry meetings and events.

- **Lynne Carpenter-Boggs**, WSU BIOAg Program, *Mortality Composting*

Dr. Lynne Carpenter-Boggs is the Biologically-Intensive Agriculture and Organic Farming (BIOAg) Coordinator for research, extension and education at Washington State University. Focus areas of her research and extension projects include alternative and organic farm management, soil microbial community function, plant-microbe interactions, composting, and compost teas.

- **Michael Doehnel**, Saanichton, BC, *Beyond Corn: From Barley to Turnips, Growing Alternative Feeds on the Westside*



Mike has been growing and trialing spring and winter grains and pulses in the Pacific Northwest for over 10 years. Oddly enough, it was his passion as a homebrew master that led him to farming. After reading an ad stating the benefits of a superior winter malt barley from the UK, Mike knew he had to have some. Turned out the only way to get it was to grow it. He knew that winter barley would survive in our region and that started a serious trialing effort that continues to this day. Subsequent grain trials have included Emmer, Einkorn, hard and soft, spring and winter, red and white wheats, hullless and malting barleys, heritage and Durum wheats. Mike acknowledges that grain growers on the west side of the Cascades face an uphill, but defensible, battle against issues including heavy winter downpours, flooding, disease resistance, Canada geese and maturity dates. He also has considerable experience growing hops and developing an intensive hay production regimen.

- **Mike Broili**, *Environmentally Friendly Nursery Technology - Making an Effort to Reduce and Re-use in a "Going Green Culture"*



Michael Brioli, program director of the Phinney Neighborhood Association Well Home Program and owner of Living systems Design, Integrated Water Management. He is a member of the city of Shoreline Planning Commission, Bond Advisory Committee and Arts Jury. He is also a Washington Native Plant Steward, a King County Forest Adviser, a certified Sustainable Building Advisor and compost Facility Operator. He offers his experience and a broad network of contacts across the low-impact design community. Focusing on integrated water management, Mike is committed to advancing environmental stewardship by promoting economically viable solutions to environmental problems with individuals, businesses and government entities. He is passionate about developing sustainable living systems and teaches and writes about harvesting water for future needs.

- **Mike Hackett**, WSDA Organic Food Program Field Inspector, *Organic Certification: Making it Work for the Small Farm*



Prior to his work with WSDA, Mike served 26 years at Washington State University Extension as a Faculty member in a career that includes developing the WSU

Livestock Advisor volunteer program, teaching sustainable agriculture, innovative approaches to marketing agriculture products, and teaching/advising the 4-H agriculture program. Mike's down-to-earth, practical approach to addressing individual farm/ranch challenges in management, marketing, and sustainability is one of his trademarks. Mike and spouse Peggy enjoy (most of the time!) working on their small organic farm in north Skagit County.

- **Mike Shelby**, Executive Director, Western Washington Agricultural Association, Mt. Vernon, *Water Rights, A New Approach for Agriculture*

As a part of Mike's diverse responsibilities representing agricultural interests, he works with many county, state and federal agencies and tribes on issues of land use and environment, dike and drainage infrastructure, and agricultural water and irrigation use, including Critical Areas Ordinances for agricultural lands, pesticide management issues, irrigation needs and water rights, habitat protection and restoration, and salmon recovery. In this work, Mike strives to achieve a critical balance between protection of fish and wildlife needs and the needs of a viable and productive agricultural landscape. Mike participated as a member of the Puget Sound Partnership to develop the 2020 Action Agenda for a healthy Puget Sound. He serves on the Skagit Watershed Council Board and the Shared Strategy for Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council. Mike comes from a farming family and is a graduate of Oregon State University. He has over 25 years in the Pacific Northwest vegetable and fruit processing business and joined the Association five years ago.

- **Pamela Coleman**, WSDA Organic Food Program Field Inspector, Columbia Basin, *Panel: Organic Certification*

Pamela has been active in organic agriculture for many years throughout the U.S., including Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey as well as in Oregon and Washington. While Pamela's organic experience includes tree and small fruit, grape, and herb production, she currently specializes in large-scale organic vegetable and mushroom production.

- **Rick Wright**, Owner, Sunbreak Nursery, *New Markets for your Nursery –*



Rick began his career in horticulture with the purchase of a small greenhouse operation north of Bellingham in 1979. The business produced ground covers for the landscape trade. In the early 1980's, a national recession in construction occurred and the focus of the business changed to the garden center market. New greenhouses were built and the business was renamed *Sunbreak Nursery*. Over the next twenty years, Rick continued to specialize in growing ground covers and introduced many new varieties now common in Northwest horticulture. Early in his career, Rick realized the benefits of associating with others who grew, sold, or installed plants for a living. He became active in the Washington State Nursery and Landscape Association and served as President in 1989 and again in 2001. In 2003, Rick became active in the Bellingham Farmers Market Association, assisting them to raise funds to build a permanent facility, and is now an active member of the Board of Directors. Rick holds a B.S. Degree from Cornell University and an M.S. from San Diego State.

- **Stephanie Aeschman**, USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service, *On-farm Energy: Farm Energy Use Calculators*

Stefanie Aschmann has worked for the Natural Resources Conservation Service since 1992 and was a civilian conservationist with the Navy Department before that.

She is currently serving as the National Energy Technology Development team leader for NRCS in Portland, Oregon.



- **Steven C. Fransen**, Forage Research and Extension Agronomist, WSU, Prosser, *Beyond Corn: Making Hay & Haylage in Western Washington [Whether or not the Sun Shines]*

With nearly 25 years as an Agronomist, Steve has authored and co-authored numerous publications on grassland and pasture management and is known throughout the entire region as the 'go-to' person on all aspects of hay and hayland management techniques. He literally wrote the book—along with Mike Hackett—on Western Washington haymaking, publishing "Haymaking on the Westside" in 2001. Each summer and fall, Steve makes the rounds to most of the county fairs throughout Washington and Oregon to judge the hay contests, taking a great deal of time to thoroughly inspect each entry and share with his audience exactly what goes into a blue ribbon bale of hay. Most recently, Steve's research has looked at switchgrass as a feedstock for biofuel, hay, and pasture under irrigation. He's worked with big and little bluestem, Indiangrass, Eastern Gamagrass and other warm-season perennial grass production for biofuel and forage. As an agronomist at WSU Puyallup, Steve's research included perennial grass evaluation, management and quality, reducing forage nitrates in grass silage by fermentation and wilting, grass silage effluent reduction, silage corn hybrid evaluation, silage corn effluent reduction, and recycling organic byproducts and biosolids with grass. For almost a quarter century, Steve has provided leadership in pasture, hay, and silage management for clientele throughout the Pacific Northwest.

- **Steve Gilbert**, Water Quality Project Manager, King County Department of Natural Resources & Parks, *Reclaimed Water: A New Resource for Agriculture*

Steve has worked in the Wastewater Treatment Division for 15 years in the areas of reclaimed water, biosolids recycling and the Endangered Species Act. Prior to joining King County, he was City Administrator for a small city in western Washington.

- **Stephen J. Hirshey**, Regional Water Policy Analyst, King County, *Reclaimed Water – Regional Water Policy Analyst, Ag Water Issues in Western WA*

Steve earned his B.S. in Natural Sciences from St. John's University and his M.S. in Environmental Studies from the Evergreen State College in Olympia. He has significant experience working as a biologist on instream flow issues, water rights administration, state water rules and regulations, and water law after over twenty year with the State of Washington, Department of Ecology, Water Resources Program. Steve recently joined King County's Department of Natural Resources, Director's Office, as a regional water policy analyst working on utility water service, instream flows, and water management.

- **Susan McCoy**, Garden Media Group, *Coordinating Growers, Retailers and Customer Trends: What's Hot, What's Not – Consumer Trends in Gardening*



Susan McCoy is well known in gardening circles. She is the founder and president of the Garden Media Group, a public relations and marketing firm specializing in the lawn & garden industry and one of the top 10 PR agencies in Philadelphia. For more than 18 years, GMG has promoted plants and products to the outdoor living and green industries, generating consumer awareness and driving consumer demand for new plants and green products. She regularly appears on prime time radio talk shows, including Gardening with Ciscoe, Let'sTalk Gardening with Mike Nowak in Chicago, and on the syndicated AARP Prime time Radio show. GMG's clients include

the giants in the industry, including Ball Horticultural, Hines Horticulture, as well as non-profits, museums and other businesses. An active member in Garden Writers Association of America, McCoy is a member of ANLA, National Gardening Association, American Horticultural Society, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and a speaker in the field. Prior to founding her company, she worked in both agency and corporate marketing and public relations. Involved in both business and non-profit communities, she graduated from the University of South Carolina with a Masters of Journalism, specializing in public relations and advertising.

- **Ted Durfey**, Natural Selection Farms, *Bio-Energy Technology*

Ted Durfey grew up on a family farm and graduated from WSU. He has been actively involved in recycling and the holistic approach to sustainability for agriculture. He has received two National EPA awards for advocacy of environmental stewardship through biosolids recycling and the King County Department of Natural Resources Green Globe Award. His interest in canola began in 2003 with research results of 120 test plots that have led him to constructing a crushing and oil extracting operation in Sunnyside, Washington. This facility is the first to become operational within the state. Durfey owns Natural Selection Farms, Inc. in Sunnyside, a leader in environmentally responsible agriculture, which includes a composting operation using dairy waste to produce organic compost.

- **Vance Corum**, AdVance Marketing, *You've Got to Sell What You Grow*

Vance has nearly 30 years experience in all realms of agricultural direct marketing. He has worked creatively with state government, non-profits and the private sector, as well as with the media. He has written magazine articles, produced events to connect specialty food producers with top chefs, developed conferences, and conducted market research in various states and countries. Having studied markets throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas, his primary joy is helping organize farmers' markets in 70+ communities and restore markets in countless others from Washington to Maine. He is co-author of The New Farmers' Market, lauded as the foremost guide for the farmers' market industry.

- **Wendy Knopp**, Assistant Vice President, AgVision, *Family Succession and Farm Financing*

Wendy graduated from Gonzaga University with a degree in Education. Later she returned to Gonzaga, obtaining her master's degree in Administration and Organizational Leadership. She began her career with Northwest Farm Credit Services shortly after graduation. Today she manages the AgVision program, where she promotes products and programs targeting young, beginning, small and minority producer's needs.

Moderators

- **Anne Schwartz**, *Local/Organic*, President, Tilth Producers of Washington

Anne Schwartz and her husband Michael Brondi live in Rockport, in eastern Skagit County. Blue Heron Farm is home to 13 acres of mixed vegetables, berries and nursery plants. They sell their produce to farmers markets, the Skagit Food Coop, Pioneer Organics and the North Cascade Institutes Environmental Learning Center. They grow over 100 species of hardy bamboo and some native trees and shrubs for the nursery trade and restoration projects. In addition to farming, Anne has been actively advocating for organic and sustainable agriculture in many capacities for nearly 30 years. She is currently serving as President for Tilth Producers of Washington and on Advisory Boards for the WSU Center for Sustaining Agriculture

and Natural Resources, the WSU Kitchen Cabinet for the Dean of the College of Agriculture (CAHNRS) and for the Northwest Agriculture Research Foundation. Anne is committed to working for change in our food systems and advocating for healthy rural communities.

- **Audrey Gravley**, *Risk Management Tools for Farmers*, NW Farm Credit Services

Audrey is passionate about rural communities and understands how a strong agricultural economy keeps them vibrant. She has been actively engaged in agriculture and other rural financing for over 30 years. A graduate of Washington State University and the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Program, Audrey currently works with staff in Burlington, Seattle, Chehalis and Wenatchee to provide competitive financing options for traditional and part-time farmers and commercial fishers, as well as rural residents. She lives near LaConner, Washington.

- **Chad Kruger**, *Environment & Farming*, Washington State University, Bio-Ag Educator (see keynote speakers for more information)

Chad currently serves as the Director of Outreach for the Climate Friendly Farming™ Project, which is researching agricultural practices and technologies that reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions and provide renewable, biomass substitutes for fossil fuel-based products.

- **Ryan Carpenter**, *Nursery Trends and Opportunities*, Sunbreak Nursery

Ryan Carpenter is the manager at Sunbreak Nursery in Bellingham and son-in-law to owner Rick Wright. He and his wife moved to Bellingham in 2004 where they started a family on the nursery property and have just had their second child. Ryan attended Eastern Washington University and Sierra College in Sacramento, Ca focusing his studies on business. Ryan continues to reach out in the nursery industry attending WSNLA and PSFG meetings.

- **Sharon Collman**, *Nursery*, WSU Snohomish County Extension

Sharon has worked for WSU Extension for 25 years, first building the WSU Master Gardener program then moving on to build an award-winning horticulture and integrated pest management educational program for nursery and landscape professionals. Currently she is co-chair of the Nursery and Greenhouse Team which will focus WSU resources and make them more accessible to the nursery and greenhouse growers. The goal is that the nursery and greenhouse growers, educators, and WSU researchers, teachers and extension will form a fully equal team to identify and support the needs of this industry in Washington.

- **Steve Evans**, *Water*, King County Farm Specialist

Steve is involved in developing better economic opportunities for farmers in the Puget Sound Region. Steve helped develop the Puget Sound Fresh program, as well as Farmlink – a program that links people who want to farm with landowners who have available farm land.

- **Tristan Klesick**, *Marketing*, Klesick Family Farm Stanwood.

The Klesick family operates The Organic Produce Shoppe and Klesick Family Farm, which delivers organic fruits and vegetable directly to homes and offices. They also produce grass fed beef, honey and hay. Tristan has served on the Agricultural Advisory Board, the Northwest Agricultural Incubator Task Force, and as co-chair of the ad-hoc Snohomish County Economic Development Action Team.

- **Wendy Dore** *Marketing*, The Marketing Partners

Wendy Dore, one of the originators of the Puget Sound Fresh program, has over 25 years experience developing and implementing effective, affordable marketing and public relations programs. As a partner in The Marketing Partners, she helped to successfully launch Puget Sound Fresh and dramatically increase enrollment in Washington State's Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) program. She supports



many local organizations to build their business, and coordinates community activities. Prior to forming The Marketing Partners, she was a Vice President of Marketing with Bank of America and Director of Marketing for AAA Washington. She and her firm offer regional businesses cost-effective solutions to marketing challenges, always focusing on "Marketing with a Human Touch."