

Focus on Farming Conference III

Workshops and Sessions

Track I: Value-Added Products

Selling to the Retailer: Teamwork Means Success

Speakers: Scott Smith, Marketing Vice President, Haggen Foods; Dorie Belisle, BelleWood Acres; Mike Chittick, Founder & President, Bear Creek Fine Foods, Woodinville

Discover how to access the wholesale market, develop a marketing plan with a retailer and find out about transportation options that already exist to maximize market share in this innovative workshop. Make your product stand out by working together with a wholesaler, and learn how to get your product into retail outlets. Learn how to overcome supply challenges, regulatory issues, and price negotiations. And finally, hear what it takes to build a solid reputation and working relationship with your biggest customers.

Get it to Market: Meat & Poultry Processing

Speakers: Joel and Cynthia Huesby, Thundering Hooves Farm

You've raised your herd or flock: now what? Learn the steps involved in moving your investment from pen and pasture to market. Joel & Cynthia Huesby of Thundering Hooves will discuss processing, State versus Federal requirements, volume, transportation, logistics for the new farmer, and will provide information on selling meat and poultry to today's consumer. Hear about innovative direct marketing options on your own, or through cooperative marketing groups, and discover how to stay in line with the latest regulations. Joel and Cynthia Huesby and their family are co-owners of Thundering Hooves, a fourth generation farm now specializing in direct sales of pastured livestock and poultry production in Walla Walla, Washington. Winners of the 2005 Vim Wright Stewardship Award for their natural resource protection practices, Thundering Hooves promotes holistic farm management and organic agriculture.

Local Climate Bears Fruit: Ciders & Grape Growing in the Pacific Northwest

Speaker: Tom Bronkema, Lahar and Challenger Ridge Wineries

Consumer interest is on the rise for local wines and ciders. Learn the finer points of wine and cider production in this emerging market. Expert Tom Bronkema will guide you through crop development, processing, regulations, and marketing strategies for these popular value-added products. Learn, too, the methods involved in growing grapes, a lesser-known but robust alternative crop for Northwest Washington farmers.

From Seeds to Shelf: Retail Farm Products

Speaker: Dale C. Nelson, Food Concepts Inc.

Have you ever thought your Grandmother's canned peaches were the best? Did you ever consider creating a retail product to increase your revenues? Dale Nelson will walk you through the creation of value-added food items harvested right from your family farm. Dale will show you the steps in creating a retail product that can be sold at the farmers markets, at your local farm stands, in local stores and on the web.

Track II: Marketing

A Future in Exporting: Small & Medium Sized Farms

Speakers: Janet Bauermeister, US Department of Commerce, Commercial Service

Have you ever thought about exporting your farm products? Or wondered what was in demand in other countries? How much you would need to produce to even consider exporting? What about selling as a cooperative with other growers? The Pacific Northwest has one of the largest ports in the country – presenting a great opportunity for our local farmers.

The Direct Marketing Challenge: Innovate with Passion

Speaker: Vance Corum, AdVance Marketing

Recognizing that bigger is not better, farmers are innovating at the local level and filling niches across the country. Tens of thousands are creating new rural-urban partnerships as they passionately link with restaurants, farmers' markets, community supported agriculture (CSA), schools, hospitals, natural food stores and more.

Farm Marketing From Scratch

Speaker: Jane Eckert, Eckert AgriMarketing

Most farmers focus on raising crops or livestock and give little thought to marketing their products. But in today's competitive environment, basic marketing skills are essential! The *Eckert Farm Marketing Plan* helped increase revenues at Eckert's family farm more than 300%. Eckert created the *Farm Marketing Pie*, dividing strategies into slices that require more creativity than dollars. Get an overview of this farm-fresh approach to stretching your marketing budget and increasing sales.

The Best Publicity is Free, and How You Can Get It

Speakers: Jen Lamson and Kristen Hyde, Good Food Strategies

Find out how farmers are getting their stories in the news, and learn how you can, too. With decades of experience between them, Jen and Kristin are experts at developing savvy communications campaigns, from message development and media outreach to grassroots advocacy. They'll share some inside tips and tricks-of-the-trade.

Track III: Alternative Crops

Alternative Tree Fruits & Grapes

Speaker: Gary Moulton, WSU, Northwestern Washington Research & Extension Center, Mt. Vernon

Researcher Gary Moulton reveals fruit and wine grape varieties that have recently shown promise for commercial production in the maritime Northwest. While many are niche market crops, some are seeing success with both large scale production and value-added, higher profit products.

Greenhouses, Hoop Houses, High Tunnels

Speakers: Steve Kuhn, Wilson Orchard & Vineyard Supply; Richard Sakuma, Sakuma Brothers Farms; Gretchen Hoyt, Alm Hill Gardens

A lively presentation by a major supplier, with commentary by users of hoop houses, high tunnels and greenhouses to enhance the growing season and improve your harvest quality of veggies, fruits and berries.

Organic Seed Production

Speakers: Producer Nash Huber, Nash's Organic Produce and Seed Researcher and Educator, Micaela Colley, Organic Seed Alliance

Micaela Colley will provide information on the benefits of growing an organic seed crop and the means to do it, while Nash Huber, a very successful and respected organic farmer, will provide first hand examples of how on farm organic seed production has been beneficial to his operation.

Crop & Season Diversity: An Overview

Speakers: Carol Miles, WSU Vancouver REU and Wade Bennett, Rockridge Orchards & Cidery

Carol Miles will present practical solutions to crop diversity and season extending options for Market Growers seeking a new niche. Successful farmer and entrepreneur, Wade Bennett will address the realities of diversified crops and how creative planning can add to the bottom line. Topics include Ice Box Watermelons, Winter Lettuce, Pea Shoots, Edamame, Heirloom Dry Beans and/or Shell Beans.

Track IV: Dairy Innovations

Tomorrow's Dairy Producers

Speaker: Dr. David Dickson, Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin Dairy Science Department

Moderator: Joe Hillers, Professor Emeritus, Washington State University

Renowned dairy scientist Dr. David Dickson shares insight as to why a collaborative approach is essential to economic and food security and to restoring vitality to the local dairy industry. Northwest dairy producers will appreciate his Northwest roots – Dr. Dickson was born in Everson, Washington and graduated from Washington State University. He continues his stellar tenure of leadership of the World Dairy Expo, now completing its 40th year as the premier world-wide dairy event.

Network Farming

Daryl Williams, Tulalip Tribes; Andy Werkhoven, Dairyman; Craig MacConnell, Director, WSU Whatcom County Extension

Moderator: Jay Gordon, Dairyman, Executive Director, Washington State Dairy Federation

Sharing resources can lead to dairy success. Hear how dairy operators are building community partnerships that share lands and other resources for developing alternative revenue streams and provide solutions to environmental concerns.

Income Diversification

Speakers: Vic Jensen, Dairyman, Golden Glen Creamery; Don Bailey, Bailey Compost Farms; Ben & Carol Krause, former dairy producers, The Farm

Moderator: Ned Zaugg, Director, WSU Skagit County Extension, Area Dairy Faculty

Learn how dairy professionals are adapting to the changing industry with value-added products such as organics, raw and flavored milks, alternative crops, Agritourism and by-product marketing.

Niche and Global Marketing

Speakers: Mike Brown, Marketing Director, Darigold, Inc.; Kurt Dammeier, Owner, Beecher's Cheese Company

Moderator: Jim Werkhoven, Dairyman and Board Member, Darigold, Inc.

Improve producer returns by developing local niche and global markets for sustainable dairies into the distant future. Cutting-edge marketing of branded products and producer-supported ventures are paving the way to the future.

Track V: Nursery Trends and Opportunities

Who is the Customer: Trends and Opportunities

Speaker: Ian Baldwin, Nursery Consultant, Columnist, Author

Moderator: Sharon Collman, WSU Snohomish County

Nursery marketing consultant Ian Baldwin shares a research-based glimpse into the consumer of tomorrow. Market research shows that there is a decline in sales by baby boomers and an emerging new and different market opportunity with Gen X gardeners. His energetic and humorous presentation will help business owners modify their business model to meet the needs of both groups.

Innovative Plants That Drive Sales - Panel

Speakers: Color Spots – Jim Nash, Henry’s Plant Farm, Everett; Perennials – Teri Walsh, Skagit Gardens, Mt. Vernon; Shrubs – Carolyn Pinkard, Briggs Nursery, Elma

Moderator: Peggy Campbell, Horticulturist & Education Outreach, WSU

National surveys show a decline in the number of gardeners. The home gardener/hobbyist has been replaced by the hired landscaper. Carolyn will examine how the nursery community must respond to this trend and involve the 18-35 year old to ensure future success. Jim Nash will present new plants and ideas for color spots, and Teri Walsh will showcase recently introduced plants and talk about the worldwide breeders who create them.

No More Dirt: Soiless Media 101

Speaker: Rita Hummel, WSU Puyallup

Moderator – John Anthony, Puget Sound Nursery Services

Confused about container mixes, porosity, drainage and all the amendments on the market? Dr. Rita Hummel’s style and presentation will calm the angst and put the spotlight on amendments for container media. Dr. Hummel will provide an overview of what to look for in a growing media and then cover her research findings on some of the amendments on the market.

Point of Purchase Techniques for Increasing Sales

Speakers: Andrej Suske, T&L Nursery, and Frances Hopkins, Under a Foot Plant Company

Moderator – Curt Moulton, WSU Snohomish County

How do you sell more deciduous plants in winter? What does it take to change underappreciated, often-in-the-background, groundcovers into an in-demand garden center item? Andrej Suske, T&L Nursery, is using large color tags to sell even dormant plants to retailers. T&L also prepares special large Sedum planter displays that help sell four-inch Sedums by inspiring and showing consumers how to use these plants. Award-winning Frances Hopkins, originator of the colorful STEPABLES® plants and recipient of the 2006 Medal of Excellence for Marketing by Greenhouse Grower’s Magazine, will describe how the brightly colored marketing of “STEPABLES®” has turned groundcovers into an exciting new landscape product.

Track VI: Finance

Home Mortgage Options for Producers and Rural Homeowners

Speaker: Audrey Gravley, Regional Vice President, Community Lending

This session provides a mortgage financing overview and outlines programs that are widely available. It also discusses the challenges that are often faced by owners of rural properties and how to identify and ultimately overcome these.

Land Value Trends

Speaker: Ed Snyder

This session provides information on agricultural land value trends in Northwest Washington.

Loans for Young and Beginning Producers

Speaker: Wendy Knopp, Assistant Vice President, AgVision

This session provides information on how to prepare for your lender and a lending program developed specifically for young and beginning producers.

Strategic Business Planning

Speaker: Wendy Knopp, Assistant Vice President, AgVision

This session provides an introduction to strategic planning, including a framework for evaluating internal and external environments and developing meaningful action plans.