



## Hort Headlines

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**January 5, 2007**

- **Legislative Sessions Starts on Monday** - Legislative leaders will officially open the 2007 legislative session in Olympia on Monday, January 8, 2007. Highlighting the 2007 session will be the passage of the state's two-year operating budget, which could total around \$33 billion once budget writers complete it. The governor's budget proposal calls for a 12.2 percent spending increase, while revenue forecasters are predicting that revenues will grow at a much slower rate than the spending increase only 7.7 percent. The 2007 session will also be noteworthy given the huge voting advantage that both House and Senate Democrats secured from voters last November.
- **Stay Informed About Legislative Issues** - Throughout the year, WSHA's Government Affairs Program will keep you up to date on legislative events and issues through our Capitol View e-mail reports. Capitol View will run every other week throughout the legislative session. This represents the most current tool available on cutting-edge political issues available to the tree fruit industry. One more service made available to the industry thanks to WSHA dues-paying members.
- **Tree Fruit Day Set For January 30** - WSHA's 5th Annual Tree Fruit Day is scheduled for Tuesday, January 30 in Olympia. The one-day event will include visits with key legislators and agency officials. Tree fruit industry gift boxes will also be distributed again this year to all legislators and their legislative assistants. Visit the [WSHA web-site](#) to download a registration form.

- **New \$7.93 Minimum Wage Rate Now In Effect** - Washington's minimum wage increased 30 cents to \$7.93 an hour beginning January 1, 2007. The Department of Labor and Industries recalculates the state's minimum wage each year in September as required by Initiative 688, which Washington state voters approved in 1998. This year's adjustment gave a 4.1% increase to minimum wage workers. Free minimum wage posters are available from any L&I office or by calling 1-866-219-7321 or downloading from the [L&I web-site](#).
- **Auvil Estate Gift To Tree Fruit Industry** - An estate gift of more than \$2.9 million from Wenatchee tree fruit leaders Grady and Lillie Auvil will fund scholarships and research at Washington State University and Wenatchee Valley College. An endowment has been created for the nearly \$1.8 million gift to WVC, with the proceeds to be used in the further development and support of its agriculture programs. At WSU, the Auvil family gift of \$1.18 million will support development and operations of a new research orchard and graduate education at the Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center in Wenatchee, and support undergraduate research and scholarships at WSU. Auvil, of East Wenatchee, founded the Auvil Fruit Co. and also served as president of the Washington State Horticultural Association and was the first chairman of the Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission.
- **Meeting Provides Information About Black Rock Reservoir** - The Yakima Basin Storage Alliance is inviting the community to a two-hour presentation to better understand the benefits of the Black Rock Project. The meeting will be held at the Yakima Convention Center, Monday, January 8 at 2:00 p.m. Learn more about the Black Rock Reservoir project at [Yakima Herald](#).
- **Gene That Controls Apple Color** - Australian researchers have located the gene that controls the fruit's color that could potentially allow plant breeders to invent new and exciting colors of apples. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) scientists used the latest molecular technology to measure how much particular genes were expressed as the skin of the fruit ripened and colored, allowing them to isolate the gene that produces anthocyanins, natural plant compounds responsible for blue and red colors in many flowers and fruits.
- **Northwest Farm Credit Services 2007 Scholarship Program** - Northwest Farm Credit Services announces the twelfth annual Northwest FCS Scholarship program to promote the further education of youth in the rural Northwest. The deadline for application submissions is March 15, 2007. Winners will be announced in early May 2007. Visit [www.farm-credit.com](http://www.farm-credit.com).
- **InfoAg Northwest Conference** - InfoAg Northwest is scheduled for February 20-21, 2007, at the Three Rivers Convention Center in Kennewick, Washington. This is a first-time conference in the Northwest agricultural region. InfoAg Northwest will highlight precision equipment, practices, and the people who have

successfully incorporated them into their grain crop, fruit, vegetable, and potato production systems. Read the press release or visit [www.infoag.org](http://www.infoag.org) to register.

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## Headline Links

**Raising Federal Minimum Wage Bad Idea** - A federal minimum wage is an idea whose time came in 1938, when public confidence in markets was at a nadir and the federal government's confidence in itself was at an apogee. Read more at the [Seattle PI](#)

**EPA Facing Lawsuits Over Pesticide Rules** - The Environmental Protection Agency is facing an onslaught of lawsuits from both the pesticide industry and environmental activists, over a new rule on pesticide use in or near water. Learn more at the [Seattle Times](#)

**Senate Set To Move On Immigration As House Waits** - Industry supporters of comprehensive immigration reform hope for Senate action in the early days of the 110th Congress. Visit the [Packer](#) to learn more.

**Survey Takes Snapshot Of Tree Fruit** - Industry representatives say there are few surprises in a recently released survey of Washington state's tree fruit industry. Read more at the [Capital Press](#).

**Ag Outlines Agenda For Wash. Legislature** - With the goal of giving agriculture a strong, unified voice during Washington state's 2007 legislative session, 25 industry groups have joined together to craft a "2007 Ag Package." Visit the [Capital Press](#) to learn more.

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