



## Hort Headlines

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February 19, 2010

- **Proposed Hazardous Substance Tax Increase (MTCA)** – The Governor's tax package was released on Thursday and it includes a tax increase to the Proposed Hazardous Substance tax also known as MTCA. The proposed increase is from 0.7 percent to 2.0 percent. This increase would triple the tax that is paid on a list of products that includes petroleum, pesticides, and fertilizers. For more information about the tax and what's being done in opposition visit the following website <http://www.stopwahiddengastaxes.com>.
- **New WSU AgWeatherNet Products and Monitoring Locations** – The Washington State University AgWeatherNet development team has released two new weather products, and a third product developed by 4Quarters, Inc.. A new Web site, designed and formatted specifically for mobile computing devices is their first product. The second product AgWeatherNet has developed is a grape cold-damage decision-aid tool. The third product is AgAlertz (<http://www.agalertz.com>). AgWeatherNet's expansion in western Washington continues. In early February a new monitoring station was established near Olympia. AgWeatherNet is now comprised of 133 monitoring stations throughout the state of Washington. For more information about AgWeatherNet, please visit <http://weather.wsu.edu/>.
- **Farmland Preservation State Grants Available** – Applications are being accepted March 1 - May 3, 2010 for grants to protect farmland by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). Eligible farmland may include ranch land, irrigated or dry cropland. The grants are funded by the Legislature

through the sale of general obligation bonds. For more information visit [http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/grant\\_news.shtml#wwrp](http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/grant_news.shtml#wwrp).

- **Sahlin Faculty Excellence Award Winner Announced** – Timothy J. Smith, WSU Extension was recently awarded the Sahlin Faculty Excellence Award for Outreach and Engagement. For more than 35 years Tim has dedicated his career to helping Washington agricultural producers. Visit <http://www.wsutoday.wsu.edu/> for more information on this story.
- **Pest Management Workshops** – WSU Chelan County Extension will be providing Pest Management Workshops. The IPM workshops cover various topics that highlight critical issues, discuss industry trends, and point out possible horticultural and business solutions. The training workshops are presented by Tim Smith, WSU Extension. For more information email [smithtj@wsu.edu](mailto:smithtj@wsu.edu).
  - **February 25** | 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Wenatchee Valley College Lyceum (2 credits)  
*(Note Below: attend both sessions 1 and 2 for complete pesticide license pre-testing training)*
  - **March 4** | 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. (Part 1) Wenatchee Valley College Library Lyceum (2 credits)
  - **March 11** | 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. (Part 2) Wenatchee Valley College Library Lyceum (2 credits)
- **WSDA Hands On Pesticide Training** – There will be "Hands On" Pesticide Training on March 13 in Chelan, WA. To register contact the Growers Clearing House at 509-662-6181.
- **Washington Farm Bureau Labor Conference** – Register for the Washington Farm Bureau's Labor Conference titled "Measure Your Success" that will be held on Thursday, February 25 at the Wenatchee Convention Center. The conference is designed for owners, senior managers, and HR Directors. Register online at [www.wsfb.com](http://www.wsfb.com).

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## Headline Links

**Growers: Pruning Heavy, Ahead Of Schedule** – Central Washington growers are ahead of schedule pruning fruit trees to increase fruit size of their cherry and apple crops. Learn more on this story from [The Capital Press](#).

**Lawmakers Address Variety Of Ag Issues** – In the Washington State Legislature, Feb. 16 was the cutoff for policy bills that had not cleared their house of origin. Learn more on this story from [The Capital Press](#).

**Notice Of Intent To File A Lawsuit Initiated** – The Center for Biological Diversity today filed notice of intent to sue the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for failing to adequately evaluate and regulate nearly 400 pesticides herbicides harmful to potentially listed endangered species throughout the nation. Learn more on this story from [www.biologicaldiversity.com](http://www.biologicaldiversity.com).

**Labor Department Reverses Bush Regulation On H-2A Farmworker Program** – In a move that is sure to have the agricultural industry grimacing and labor-rights advocates cheering, the Labor Department is reversing a Bush administration rule that allowed farmers an easier path to hiring temporary or seasonal foreign workers. Learn more on this story from [The Wenatchee World](#).

**Senator Ranker Farm Internship Bill Passes Senate Unanimously** – Training and teaching the next generation of Washington's farmers could get easier thanks to legislation passed Tuesday by the Senate. Learn more on this story from [The Bellingham Herald](#).



**GRAS2P "Tip of the Week" - Visitor Sign-In** – Visitors to your orchard should sign in upon entering your orchard. Included on the sign-in sheet is a statement that they are visiting a working tree fruit orchard, your policy to have a safe, healthy working environment, and that they are to follow designated hygiene practices. You can have a "VIP" list to cover individuals who regularly visit your orchard site (e.g. field staff, regular suppliers, etc.) A template of the Visitor Log is in your GRAS2P Guidance Manual (Yellow Forms Tab; Page 12 of 61). This is part of USDA GAP (G-6) and Global G.A.P. (AF3.2.8).

**GRAS2P Web-Site** – [web-site](#).

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