



## Hort Headlines

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March 20, 2009

- **Mexico Imposes Steep Tariffs On US Goods** – In retaliation for a U.S. decision to cancel a cross-border trucking program, Mexico is now imposing tariffs of 10 percent to 45 percent on dozens of U.S. exports. According to the Mexican government, the new tariffs are the result of canceling the cross-border trucking program and will affect approximately \$2.4 billion in annual trade and 80 U.S. products. Washington state apples escaped the tariff imposed by Mexico, but other Northwest crops haven't been as lucky. The lengthy list of products subject to the tariffs includes: pears, cherries, and apricots. The crop affected at the moment is fresh pears which could see an increase of up to \$4 per box. The current average per-box price is \$18. Cherries and apricots which are currently out of season won't be affected unless the tariff stretches into early summer. According to the Commerce Department, the U.S. and Mexico in 2008 had \$368 billion in total trade, making Mexico the third-largest U.S. trading partner after Canada and China.
- **WSDA Hosts Free Pesticide Disposal Events** – The WSDA is hosting a free pesticide disposal event in Yakima on May 4 and 5. Agricultural and commercial-grade pesticides accepted for disposal include insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides and most chemicals that kill, repel or prevent unwanted pests. **Customer sign up is required by March 23.** To sign up, call toll free (360) 902-2056 or e-mail [wastepesticide@agr.wa.gov](mailto:wastepesticide@agr.wa.gov). Visit the WSDA website at [agr.wa.gov](http://agr.wa.gov) to learn more.

- **Hands On Pesticide Training In Spanish** – The WSDA will be offering a training session in Spanish on April 11th at Chelan High School. This all day event will help employees comply with state and federal worker protections and standards. Participants will receive a WPS card. **Pre-Registration is required.** Call (509) 662-6181 for more information.
- **Brody Named Apple Man of The Year** – Bob Brody has been selected as the Washington State Apple Blossom Festival's 2009 Apple Man of the Year. Brody has been a Washington apple grower-shipper for more than four decades and a pioneer in the growing of organic apples. In 1969 he purchased his first apple orchard and was among one of the first certified organic apple and pear growers in the state. The Apple Citizen of the Year award was started in 1981 to honor the roots of the festival and to recognize leaders in Wenatchee Valley's agriculture industry. A formal award presentation will be held on April 30. He has served on the board of directors for the Washington State Horticultural Association, the Association of Apple Growers, the Washington State Farm Bureau, and the Association of Washington Business.
- **Find Out How Cold It Will Be In Your Area** – Fruit growers can get detailed information on frost conditions online at [www.clearwest.com](http://www.clearwest.com) and beginning in mid-March available from a telephone recording for the Yakima, Wenatchee, Okanogan, and Basin Districts. Forecasts will run through May 31.
- **Get Geared Up For Golf** – Time to start planning for the 16th Annual WSHA Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament that will take place Tuesday, August 11 at the Lake Chelan Municipal Golf Course. This year's event is sure to be another big success with tree fruit industry golfers playing to benefit student scholarships. Put your company name in the spotlight by becoming a tournament sponsor by contacting Lynette at [lynette@wahort.org](mailto:lynette@wahort.org) to learn more.
- **WSHA New Web-Site** – WSHA is proud to announce the launch of our newly re-designed web-site. Check out the new [WSHA Website](#) and remember to add it to your favorites! **You will also find information on the 2009 Annual Meeting, Trade Show and Golf Tournament.** Current and new members will need to register to access the member's only section.

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## Headline Links

**DOL Proposes Suspending New H-2A Rules** – On March 13, the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration announced the proposed suspension, for nine months, of a 2008 final rule implementing changes in the H-2A program, which allows U.S. agricultural businesses to employ foreign workers in temporary or seasonal agricultural jobs. Learn more at [the Fruit Growers News](#).

**Companies Advised To Become Transparent** – Organic food companies should stop trying to show how "green" they are and instead focus on becoming "transparent," according to proponents of sustainability metrics. Learn more on this story from [\*the Capital Press\*](#).

**Wash. Revenue Drops; Deficit Nears \$9 Billion** – The state's budget shortfall, which in December was pegged at about \$6 billion, now stands at nearly \$9 billion. Read more at [\*the Spokesman\*](#).

**90 Water Permits Granted By State In Grant County** – The agency hasn't issued this many water permits since the 1960s, Partridge explained. Read the following article at [\*the Columbia Basin Herald\*](#).

**Agriculture's Forgotten Enemy: Influential Advertising** – During the last few years, more and more consumers are taking an interest in breaking free of the conventional food system. Read the following article at [\*yankton.net\*](#).

**Fruit Choices Increasing In Value-Added Category** – When it comes to the number of commodities available to shoppers, fruits have lagged behind their vegetable relatives in the value-added category. But the fruits are trying harder, getting help from technological breakthroughs and guidance from consumers. Read the following article at [\*the Packer\*](#).

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