



## Hort Headlines

---

May 1, 2009

- **Authorities Warn Migrant Workers Concerning Swine Flu** – Local and federal officials are taking extra steps to warn migrant workers from Mexico about the spread of the swine flu. Social service organizations, health authorities, and Mexican officials are handing out Spanish-language fliers with information on swine-flu symptoms and prevention tips. One of the concerns is the traveling population of poor farmworkers, day laborers, and construction workers who pose a challenge for authorities. It can be difficult for people to wash their hands if they lack running water or go to the hospital if they fear deportation. Officials caution if you have muscle aches, trouble breathing or other flu-like symptoms: Stay home from work, and call your doctor. Everyone else: Wash your hands often and well. Read more at [www.kndo.com](http://www.kndo.com)
- **First Wide-Scale Survey Of Organic Industry By USDA** – This spring, USDA will conduct the first-ever, wide-scale survey of organic farming in the United States to find out how the growth of organic farming is changing the face of U.S. agriculture. The survey will look at many aspects of organic farming from the 2008 calendar year including production and marketing practices to income and expenses. The survey will be mailed in early May to all known organic producers in the U.S. asking them to respond by June 17 with the results available winter of 2009. Survey participants are guaranteed by law their information will be kept confidential. The survey and also be completed online at [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).
- **Effective May 1, Outdoor Heat Exposure Rule** – Employers need to remember to address their outdoor heat exposure safety program in their written Accident

Prevention Program during training with employees on the heat exposure rule and how to respond to symptoms. With the hot weather on the way, orchard supervisors should consider various work-flow strategies to prevent and guard against heat-related illnesses. A key element during hot weather is to encourage your workforce to drink plenty of water or other acceptable beverages (non-caffeinated). For more information about preventing heat stress, visit the L&I Heat Stress prevention web site [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov).

- **Heat-Related Illness Training Courses** – The state Dept. of Labor & Industries (L&I) has scheduled a workshop covering the requirements of the new Outdoor Heat Exposure rule as well as a sample employee/supervisor training program. The sample training program includes all of the training requirements of the rule and can be adapted by employers to provide the required training to their employees. The workshop is for company owners, managers, supervisors, foremen, and safety and health professionals of any business whose work involves employee exposure to outdoor heat between May 1st and September 30th of each year. The Outdoor Heat Exposure Rule does not apply to businesses whose employees are only exposed to outdoor heat on an incidental basis of 15 minutes or less in any sixty-minute period. Please register in advance to ensure your place at the session you choose. Space is limited. Call 1-800-574-2829 or register online at [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov) **Upcoming Training: Moses Lake** May 5, from 9-11:30 a.m. **Spokane** May 7, from 10 – 12 p.m. and **Kennewick** June 1, from 1 – 3:30 p.m.
- **Pest Management Workshops In Spanish** – On May 16, The Growers Clearing House is sponsoring a WSDA Pesticide Hands-On Training session for applicators, in Spanish. The training will be held at the Chelan High School from 8:00 am – 4:30 p.m. Training topics will include: Personal Protective Equipment use and care; Clean-up and decontamination; Respirators; Safe Pesticide Handling Practices; and Worker Protection Standard requirements. Participants will receive a WPS Pesticide Handler Card and 6 recertification credits. The cost for the course is \$25 for member/employees and \$50 for non-members. Lunch will be provided and space is limited. Pre-registration is required. Contact (509) 662-6181 for more information or email [vharnett@waclearinghouse.org](mailto:vharnett@waclearinghouse.org).
- **Reminder: Review Your Tractor Roll Over Protection Requirements** – Officials want to remind you to review your tractor safety programs. Recently one tree fruit grower was cited for lack of roll over protection while another person suffered injuries. During certain activities (not all), orchard tractors are on occasion exempt from low-profile tractor roll over protection requirements. Review LNI's Roll-Over Protection directive which provides more details as to when low profile orchard tractors are exempt. Visit [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov).
- **2009 WSU Fruit School** – Washington State University's annual tree fruit quality school will be held Tuesday, May 19, in Ellensburg. This one day education program helps to inform tree fruit industry personnel of important research associated with the preservation of tree fruit quality. The focus of the conference

will be to learn how to optimize fruit quality from harvest through storage and packing. For more details or registration visit <http://postharvest.tfrec.wsu.edu/>.

- **Tee Off For Student Scholarships** – The 16th Annual WSHA Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held on **Tuesday, August 4, 2009** at the Lake Chelan Municipal Golf Course. Link to the [WSHA web-site](#) and download a WSHA Golf Tournament Registration form today. This year's event is sure to be another big success with tree fruit industry golfers playing to benefit student scholarships in the name (and memory) of past tree fruit industry leaders. 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.
- **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.
- **Apple Blossom Festival Kicks Off** – The 90th Annual Washington State Apple Blossom Festival has officially opened and will run through Sunday, May 3. One of the highlights of the festival is Stemilt Growers Grand Parade which will take place Saturday, May 2 at 11 a.m. Connect to the festival's web-site at [www.appleblossom.org](http://www.appleblossom.org) for a complete listing of events.

**Hort Headlines will not be produced next Friday and will return May 15th.**

---

## Headline Links

**Big Bloom May Mean Big Crops This Year** – Red Delicious apples are expected to reach full bloom Friday or Saturday, according to a Washington State University blossom degree model that tracks annual bloom dates. Read more at [the Wenatchee World](#).

**No Relief For Pear Growers** – Recent political discussions between U.S. President Barack Obama and Mexico's President Felipe Calderon failed to bring Northwest pear growers the help they had hoped for. Read more at [the Wenatchee World](#).

**Unionization, Immigration Challenges Confront Industry** – If enacted, the Employee Free Choice Act could mean big changes in packers' and processors' relationship with their employees. Learn more on this story from [the Packer](#).

**Immigration Agents To Turn Focus To Employers** – In an effort to crack down on illegal labor, the Department of Homeland Security intends to step up

enforcement efforts against employers who knowingly hire such workers. Learn more on this story from [the NY Times](#).

**Ag Department Tightens Its Belt** – The Washington State Agriculture Department will receive \$4 million less than it requested from the state general fund under the 2009-11 operating budget that legislators sent to Gov. Chris Gregoire on Sunday, April 26. Read more at [the Capital Press](#).

**Researcher Finds New Fruit Fungi** – A researcher in Washington state has discovered three previously unknown fungal pathogens that cause apples and pears to rot in storage. Read the following article at [the Capital Press](#).

**How Will Agriculture Fit Into Climate Change Policy?** – A new administration and Congress have come to town, bringing a push to deal with climate change. The question is, what will that push mean for agriculture? Read the following article at [the Capital Press](#).

---

Washington State Horticultural Association  
PO Box 136 Wenatchee, WA 98807  
Phone (509) 665-9641 Fax (509) 665-8541  
Web-site [www.wahort.org](http://www.wahort.org)