



## Hort Headlines

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**June 19, 2009**

- **WSHA FAX** – If you or your company has submitted a fax to WSHA at (509) 665-8541 in the past 10 days, please follow-up with our office by calling 509-665-9641 to make sure it was received. Our fax machine was having some issues, and they are now corrected.
- **GRAS<sup>2</sup>P Coach And Specialist Training** – Two all day training sessions will be provided for warehouse "coaches" and GRAS<sup>2</sup>P specialists. The Wenatchee session will take place on July 1, at the Washington Apple Commission building and the Yakima workshop will be held on July 2, at the Fruit Commission building. Coaches and specialists will receive a) training to assist growers in preparing for an audit as well as how to conduct a pre-audit, b) the GRAS<sup>2</sup>P workbook for sustainability and food safety, and c) on-going technical support from WSHA's GRAS<sup>2</sup>P Coordinator. Grower training workshops will take place throughout July and August. Pre-audits will be conducted in late August and early September and serve as a "dry run" for third party audits. To register for one of the training sessions and become a GRAS<sup>2</sup>P coach or specialist, please contact the Hort Office: 509.665.9641 or [gras2p@wahort.org](mailto:gras2p@wahort.org).
- **Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) Causes A Stir** – A recent report in the Mercury News mentioned reports of the LBAM has caused at least a 20 percent loss in an organic blackberry field near Watsonville, CA. The moth which is native to Australia was first discovered in California back in 2007. Since its discovery, the population has increased and to date this is the first reported commercial loss by the pesky LBAM. Currently, 2,800 square miles including all

of Santa Cruz County are under quarantine and any agricultural products must be cleared by inspectors prior to shipping out of the quarantined areas. A map of the quarantine zone is available at

[http://pi.cdffa.ca.gov/pqm/manual/pdf/maps/3434LBAMY\\_olo.pdf](http://pi.cdffa.ca.gov/pqm/manual/pdf/maps/3434LBAMY_olo.pdf). The quarantine applies to residential and public properties as well as nurseries, farms and other commercial enterprises. You may also call the pest hotline at (800) 491-1899 for more information.

- **Organic Standards Agreed Between U.S. and Canada** – According to a U.S. Agriculture Department official, the United States and Canada have agreed to accept each other's standards for organic food which will expand opportunities for organic food trade. The agreement between the two countries provides organic farmers and food processors certified by either the USDA's National Organic Program or the Canada Organic Product Regulation the ability to market their food with organic labels in both countries without going through a second certification process. This is a first-of-its kind agreement for the organic industry. The Canadian regulation will take effect on June 30, allowing certified-organic products to move freely across the U.S. – Canadian border provided they carry the Canada Organic Biologique or USDA Organic seal. The USDA said, Canadians purchase an estimated \$2.1 billion to \$2.6 billion worth of organic food, and approximately 80 percent is imported. Roughly 75 percent of those imports come from the United States. The USDA also mentioned the U.S. organic market was worth \$24.6 billion, up from \$3.6 billion in 1997. Read more at [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop).
- **San Joaquin Valley Threatened By Citrus Pest** – A bug threatening California's citrus crop has brought agricultural officials together from three countries in an effort to work together and stop the spread of the Asian citrus psyllid. First discovered in Mexico and San Diego County last year, the Asian citrus psyllid can transmit lethal citrus greening when it moves from tree to tree feeding on sap. Florida has already experienced billions of dollars in losses due to the disease spread by this pest. Agricultural officials met recently in San Diego to share information and work together in an effort to control the bug's migration and detect contaminated trees quickly.
- **Locally Grown Section Rolled Out By Safeway** – Safeway stores from coast to coast and in Canada will begin to have a new look throughout the summer in the produce department with a "locally grown" section. More than 1,700 Safeway stores will hype the "locally grown" motto with in-store signage and merchandising. Safeway will locate some new suppliers as well as work with grower-shippers that have done business with the chain for several years. The press release issued by Safeway stated they will require its local vendors to meet the company's strict safety and quality standards for planting, growing, harvesting, handling and transporting.
- **Two New Peach Varieties Offered** – Two new peach varieties created by Agricultural Research Service (ARS) horticulturalist Ralph Scorza at the ARS

Appalachian Fruit Research Station in Kearneysville, WV called SummerFest and FlavrBurst provide new taste. The two new sweet, juicy, yellow-flesh peaches should provide peach growers and consumers two new tasty varieties to add to their favorite list. Both varieties are patented and available for licensing. Plant patents are pending for SummerFest and FlavrBurst. These new cultivars were made available this spring to commercial growers and university test sites for further evaluation. Consumers can expect to see these new peaches in their local market by 2011.

- **Washington's Unemployment Rate Creeps Up In May** – According to the latest reports, Washington's unemployment rate for May jumped to 10 percent, which is the first time the regional threshold has been broken in roughly 25 years. The unemployment rates in eight states hit record-highs last month and only two did not report increases (Nebraska and Vermont). Employment Security Department's chief economist Mary Ayala warned that unless the nation's banking system stabilizes in the next several months and lending resumes to a more normal level, we could potentially hit a 12.5 percent unemployment rate by the end of this year or next year.
- **Oregon Metal Theft Bill En-Route To Governor** – On June 11, the Oregon House unanimously passed a bill intended to crack down on metal theft and toughen laws. Senate Bill 570 previously passed the Senate 29-0. Among other provisions, the bill also includes a provision disallowing cash payments in scrap metal purchases, requires recyclers to purchase scrap metal with a check and mail the check to a seller's street address. A "do-not-buy" list was also created by the bill that includes sprinkler heads and irrigation pipe. Recyclers are asked to double-check the status on items that are listed on the "do-not-buy" list. SB570 will provide law enforcement probable cause to pull-over those suspected of transporting stolen scrap metal. The crime remains a misdemeanor and the bill stops short of adding jail time for metal theft. A legislative work group is currently reviewing elements of the many metal theft bills introduced
- **Burger King Apple "Fries" Move Into Retail Market** – In 2007, Burger King's Apple Fries joined the menu of the fast food chain and are now moving into the retail market with the apple fries hitting 10,000 supermarkets by this fall. According to the Wall Street Journal, you can expect to see the fries sold in Burger King Frypods in the produce section of the stores. Accompanying the fresh apple fries will be low-fat caramel dipping sauce that is packaged in pouches like a condiment.
- **Tee Off For Student Scholarships** – Teams are filling up fast this year for our 16th Annual WSHA Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament that will be held on **Tuesday, August 4, 2009** at the Lake Chelan Municipal Golf Course. **Sign up today to guarantee your spot!** 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.

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## Headline Links

**Obama Says Immigration Overhaul Is Essential** – President Barack Obama says he is committed to a comprehensive immigration overhaul that includes a way that illegal immigrants can become U.S. citizens. Learn more about this story at [\*the Capital Press\*](#). Read another story at [www.csmonitor.com](http://www.csmonitor.com).

**They Send Dogs To Sniff Cherries** – As if cherry growers didn't have enough to worry about — rain, cold, heat, labor, fruit flies, markets, foreign governments, quarantines, competition, trade disputes, etc. Now, add terrorists. Learn more on this story from [\*the Wenatchee World\*](#).

**Website Will Polish Apple Efforts** – A new website will soon be added to the toolbox the Washington Apple Commission uses to aid sales and increase international promotion of Washington apples. Learn more on this story from [\*the Capital Press\*](#).

**Apple Commission Targets Money On Expanding Markets** – The Washington Apple Commission board of directors last week decided to reallocate some of its marketing budget to target growing and emerging markets. Read more at [\*the Capital Press\*](#).

**24 Million Bushels Of Apples Still In Storage** – U.S. holdings of fresh-market apples were at 24.4 million bushels on June 1, down from 35.5 million reported on May 1, according to the U.S. Apple Association (USApple) report released in mid-June. Read the following article at [\*the Fruit Grower News\*](#).

**USA Pears Rocks As Sponsor Of Touring Teen Band** – Milwaukie, Ore.-based Pear Bureau Northwest is sponsoring Honor Society, an up-and-coming band opening for teen sensation the Jonas Brothers on its summer tour. Read the following article at [\*the Packer\*](#).

**Ag Faces Uncertain Year As Food Spending Drops** – The past year has been a riches-to-rags story for many North Central Washington growers. Read the following article at [\*the Wenatchee World\*](#).

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