



Hort Headlines

July 25, 2008

- **2008 Apple Crop Speculation Begins** – With apple harvest and a new marketing season just around the corner, industry leaders and analysts have come out with estimates on this year's crop size. The general consensus is that the crop will be slightly smaller than the 2007 crop, now projected at approximately 98.3 million boxes. Some concern still remains that the cool spring may delay fruit development and late harvest varieties like Fuji, Granny Smith and Cripps Pink which may still be on the trees when the cold weather sets in. Overall, market demand is expected to be favorable. A few years ago the industry record was approximately 105 million boxes.
- **King County Removes Misleading "Shopper Card"** – Recently the King County Hazardous Waste management posted a "Shoppers Card" on their Web site encouraging shoppers to purchase organic produce. The card identified several products grown in Washington State as "high risk for pesticide residues." The program encouraged shoppers not to purchase apples, pears, peaches and cherries, which are all leading crops in Washington. After receiving several letters from different industry organizations, about the misleading information on the shopper card, King County decided to remove the card from their Web site. Since the card has been removed they now state they support all Washington state agriculture. Read more at the [Seattle PI](#).
- **Apple Commission President Placed On Leave** – The Washington Apple Commission placed President Dave Carlson on administrative leave effective Sept. 1. Carlson worked for the Wenatchee-based Washington Apple Commission

for the past five years. Chairman Cragg Gilbert of Yakima said Carlson, who is also from the Yakima area, had contributed a great deal to the commission and the industry in his five years. Carlson said he was surprised by the decision and has no idea what happened except three of 14 board members wanted to change course. Carlson hasn't determined if he will attempt to retain his position.

- **Sen. Murray Adds \$2 Million To Bill For Agriculture Research** – Last week U.S. Sen. Patty Murray added nearly \$2 million to the 2009 Senate Agriculture Appropriations Bill to support agricultural research throughout Eastern Washington, including \$1.87 million to build a new ARS facility at the WSU Pullman campus. The Agricultural Appropriations bill passed through the Senate Appropriations Committee last week. The measure now is headed to the full Senate for consideration. The bill included \$300,000 for the Northwest Center for Small Fruit Research to enhance the profitability and sustainability in the Pacific Northwest of small fruits.
- **Update On Shipping Cherries To California** – Although safeguarding is commonly done by those shipping cherries to California, it can present some possible issues when trucks arrive at the California border inspection stations where officials inspect for western cherry fruit fly. With the 2008 cherry shipping season right around the corner, the Northwest Horticultural Council has created a summary three possible approaches to transiting California while meeting the requirements of both California and the Taiwanese government. Read the [NW Hort Council Update](#) and [specifications for the self-adhesive tape to secure loads](#).
- **Northwest Fruit Exporters' Apple Workshops (Workshop Clarification)** – The USDA will be presenting refresher workshops for the Mexico, China and Taiwan apple export programs. These workshops have proven helpful in the past for facility personnel responsible for the documentation of temperature records, fruit records and other phytosanitary requirements; and personnel responsible for cold treatments are encouraged to attend. For more information call 509-576-8004. The workshops will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 30, in Wenatchee at the Red Lion Hotel and the following day Thursday, July 31, at the Yakima Howard Johnson Plaza. *Documentation of farm workers will **not** be discussed, NFE does not work with labor issues.*
- **Oneonta Starr Ranch And Diamond Fruit Plan Merger** – The sales and marketing operations of Diamond Fruit Growers (Odell, Ore.) will be merging with Oneonta Starr Ranch Growers in Wenatchee. The merger will take place after Diamond Fruit completes the harvest of its cherry crop mid-August. Oneonta will have exclusivity for all products grown by Diamond Fruit and its members. All fruit will be packed under the Diamond Fruit label with a new Diamond Starr Growers label scheduled to be released this season.
- **Annual Pear Production And Marketing Meeting Set** – The annual Pear Production and Marketing meeting will be held Wednesday, August 6, at 7:00 p.m. at Cashmere High School. The Washington/Oregon Canning Pear

Association, Pear Bureau Northwest, and fieldmen panel will give informative presentations on pear harvest, crop prospects, and other pear issues. The Washington Growers Clearing House annual pear summary report will be released at the meeting. Call (509) 662-6181 for more information.

- **Have You Renewed Your WSHA Membership** – WSHA membership invoices have been mailed out to all members. If you have not yet received your invoice please contact WSHA membership coordinator Vicki Young at 509-665-9641 x817 or email vicki@wahort.org. Remember, it is important to renew your WSHA membership promptly. Membership is required in order to register and attend the WSHA 104th Annual Meeting and Trade Show that will take place this December 1, 2 & 3 in Yakima, Washington. Thank you in advance for your membership investment.



- **LAST CALL For Golfers** – We are still registering teams for the 15th Annual WSHA Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament that will take place on August 5, 2008 at the Lake Chelan Municipal Golf Course. All proceeds from the tournament are put towards student scholarships in the name (and memory) of past tree fruit industry leaders. Please note the deadline for registration is Tuesday, July 29. A special thank you to our headline tournament sponsors: **Key Bank, BASF and Wilbur Ellis**. For more information on the tournament contact Lynette at the WSHA office (509) 665-9641, download a [Golf Tournament Registration Form](#) or e-mail lynette@wahort.org.

Headline Links

Industry Invests Dollars To Allay Labor Fears – Thinning, pruning, precision spraying – all could be handled by robots. Learn more about this story at the [Fruit Growers News](#).

Whose Job Is It To Screen Workforce For Immigration Violations – Some states are balking at a federal effort to require them to screen potential farmhands for immigration violations before referring them to jobs, another conflict in the long-running dispute over the states' role in immigration enforcement. Visit the [News Tribune](#) to read more.

California Stone Fruit Supply Exceeding Demand – Some California growershippers say the industry could exceed the forecast of 56.5 million cartons of peaches, plums and nectarines. Read the following article at the [Packer](#).

Zirkle Fruit Reaches Labor Settlement – Approximately 600 foreign guest workers employed by Zirkle Fruit in 2007 will be entitled to \$170 each under the

terms of a settlement announced Monday. Visit the [Yakima Herald](#) to learn more.

New Life For A Thirsty Gorge – The Chelan Gorge rehab project is the product of years of debate that involved state and federal fish, wildlife and environmental agencies and a host of area community members. Read the following article at the [Wenatchee World](#).

Local Organic Farming Booming – Growing organic can be risky. "We don't get the largest amount of fruit now, we probably lose 10 to 20 percent of quality, things of that issue," Gilmore Farms owner and operator Dean Gilmore said. Learn more at www.keprtv.com.

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