



Hort Headlines

August 1, 2008

- **Pesticides Effects On Salmon And Steelhead To Be Studied** – The public interest law firm Earthjustice says the National Marine Fisheries Services will evaluate the effects of 37 pesticides on salmon and steelhead. The federal fisheries agency will complete the reviews over a four-year period. In October the agency will finalize three biological "opinions" or studies on organophosphate pesticides. The group says this is the first time the fisheries service has evaluated the large-scale impacts of pesticides on salmon. Most of the 37 pesticides have been found in California and Pacific Northwest rivers used by salmon and steelhead. As a temporary measure a court order requires farmers to leave buffer strips between fields sprayed with these pesticides and many salmon streams.
- **Food Prices Rise 16 Percent In 2008** – According to a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture report, food prices are 16 percent higher now than they were a year ago. Rising costs for fuel, feed and fertilizer drove grain prices to record highs in June, raising the overall price of crops and livestock. The annual report measures the price that farmers receive for their goods, not the ultimate price that consumers pay for food. The USDA report shows corn and soybean prices have climbed rapidly since 2007 with the price for corn increasing approximately 69 percent and soybean prices almost doubling. While exports continue to increase so does domestic use of the crops for bio-fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel.
- **China Suspends Two Washington Shippers** – The People's Republic of China has suspended two Washington shippers due to detection of Phacidiopycnis washingtonensis fungus on apples. Taiwan's Bureau of Animal and Plant Health

Inspection and Quarantine (BAPHIQ) will be intensifying import inspections on apple shipments from Washington state. USDA/APHIS is advising state inspection agencies to carefully look for signs of post-harvest decay when inspecting apples for shipment to Taiwan. Lots with decay will not be certified unless the underlying agent of the decay is identified and determined not to be *P. washingtonensis*.

- **COOL Interim Final Rule Issued** – The USDA has issued an interim final rule for the mandatory country-of-origin labeling program (COOL). The rule, which is effective Sept. 30, will be formally published in the Federal Register on Aug. 1. Several provisions that amended the COOL regulations are included in the 2008 Farm Bill. The USDA plans to conduct education and outreach activities during the six months following the rule's effective date to help the industry comply with the new law. Copies of the interim final rule and additional information can be found at: www.ams.usda.gov/COOL. Read an article at the [*Fruit Grower's News*](#) to learn more.
- **Anhydrous Ammonia Violations Bring Hefty Fines** – The EPA has fined Cascade View Fruit and Cold Storage about \$81,000 for violating restrictions on the use of anhydrous ammonia violations at the company's warehouse located in Selah. Anhydrous ammonia is a potentially deadly refrigerant commonly used in the fruit storage industry. After a records check last year, the EPA discovered the warehouse exceeded the ammonia threshold in November 2004 and did not have a risk management plan, which is required by federal law. The EPA said the problem has since been corrected and the company is working closely with local officials to develop a risk management plan.
- **Federal Minimum Wage Increased** – On July 24, 2007 the Federal Minimum wage increased from \$5.85 to \$6.55 per hour. This increase is the second of three provided by the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007. The next and final increase to \$7.25 an hour will become effective July 24, 2009. The current Washington State minimum wage is \$8.07 and state employers are required to pay the highest of either the Federal or Washington State minimum wages. This summer also marks the 70th anniversary of the FLSA, the federal law providing minimum wage, overtime and youth employment standards. To download the minimum wage poster visit www.dol.gov.
- **Washington Apple Commission Chooses Search Committee** – The commission's board appointed two members to begin the search for an interim president. Last week the commission placed President Dave Carlson on administrative, effective Sept. 1. Mark Zirkle of Yakima and Dalton Thomas of Wenatchee will lead the search for an interim president of the Apple Commission. There was no indication when they would report back to the full commission.
- **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.



- **FINAL 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. **This is our largest tournament to date and we only have a few spots left!** All proceeds from the tournament are put towards student scholarships in the name (and memory) of past tree fruit industry leaders. 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

Forbes: Washington Jumps To Third Best State To Do Business – In a national study released today Forbes ranked Washington as the third "best state for business." Learn more about this story at www.forbes.com.

Moth Foes Target Abandoned Trees – OSU is testing several moth-control materials, including one for organic orchards that combines nematodes, which attack over-wintering larvae in the soil and a viral spray for fruiting trees, plus traps that lure moths then offer them a lethal meal. Visit the [Capital Press](#) to read more. Read another article at the [Yakima Herald](#) about these pests.

Strange Year In Cherry Sales – It's been a bizarre year for selling cherries, according to more than one industry source. Read the following article at the [Wenatchee World](#).

Koreans Taste Washington Cherries, Want More – They don't even wince at the price — more than 13,000 Korean won — pronounced "wan" — which is

nearly \$13 in U.S. currency, for less than a pound of fruit. Visit the [Wenatchee World](#) to learn more.

California Pear Volume Decreases Following Freeze – California pear growers anticipate slightly less volume this season because of an April freeze in the mountain district. Read the following article at the [Packer](#).

Oil Retreats On Weak US Economic Data – Oil prices sank nearly \$3 a barrel Thursday, July 31, retreating from the previous day's surge, as disappointing data on the U.S. economy signaled further cutbacks in energy demand for the world's thirstiest oil consumer. Learn more at the [Capital Press](#).

Hands Off That Rain – It's State Property – The question wouldn't have occurred to most of us: Who owns the rain? You'd think some phenomena of nature would be exempt from mundane property laws. But rain isn't one of them. Learn more at the [News Tribune](#).

International Paper Buys Weyerhaeuser Unit – The paper and packaging industry in North America and Europe has been consolidating and reducing production capacity in an effort to tackle soaring raw material costs and dwindling demand for paper. Read more at the [New York Times](#).

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