

NHC NEWS

A Monthly Bulletin of the Northwest Horticultural Council

Food Safety

The United States Senate is poised to take action on landmark legislation aimed at strengthening the nation's food safety laws. The House of Representatives passed a similar bill last year and, once the Senate votes, a smooth conference between the two legislative bodies is anticipated. And, it is certain that President Obama will approve a final bill once it hits his desk in the Oval Office.

The tree fruit industry, even though it has an outstanding food safety record, finds itself under the umbrella of "fresh produce" for purposes of the anticipated law. This category includes melons, leafy greens, tomatoes, and other crops that have had limited but serious food safety issues in the recent past.

In the months ahead, we will need to be active in presenting the views of the growers and packers of crops such as apples, pears, and cherries to ensure fair and reasonable federal regulation and oversight of our industry. We must insist that any food safety rules be crop specific and based on actual risk. That economic costs of new rules are weighed. And, that common-sense flexibility is exercised in the enforcement of the new regulatory framework.

The public good will not be served if unnecessary procedures, red tape and higher costs are forced on a sector of agriculture that has a enviable history of providing safe and wholesome fruit to consumers in markets worldwide.



Still as an Apple

Renoir, My Father, published in 1962, was written by the painter's son, Jean Renoir. In this combination memoir and biography, the great Impressionist painter is warmly remembered and his surroundings and times gently evoked.

As one might expect from a painter especially fond of the open air and rural life in France, Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) noticed and respected the agricultural produce of the land. He often referred to fruit, especially apples and pears, when discussing his thoughts on life and art.

- "Renoir and his friends were in the process of realizing that the world, even in its most banal aspects, is a thing of wonder and delight. 'Give me an apple tree in some suburban garden. I haven't the slightest need of Niagara Falls.'"
- "Besides, an apple on the edge of the table is all you need. Look at the masterpieces Cezanne did with an apple ..."
- "... he would peel a pear by holding it in his left hand on the end of a fork and, with the knife in his right hand, remove the skin in slivers as thin as cigarette-paper. He was irritated by people who wasted part of the fruit when peeling it."
- "Vollard ...felt highly insecure on the rickety stand on which Cezanne had placed him... He had fallen once or twice and hurt his knee, even though Cezanne had assured him: 'You're in no danger as long as you keep still as an apple. Does an apple move?'"



May 20 – Annual meeting of the Northwest Horticultural Council, Yakima, Washington.

Travel

Mark Powers

May 3 – “ASEAN: The Crossroads of Global Investment” program and Trade Roundtable with USTR Ron Kirk, Seattle, Washington.

May 4-7 – Meeting of USDA’s Technical Advisory Committee for Fruits & Vegetables, Washington, D.C.

May 12-13 – Canadian Produce Marketing Association’s 85th annual convention and trade show, Vancouver, Canada.

Mike Willett

May 17-19 – Harvard School of Public Health’s program on Theory, Tools, and Practical Skills for Communicating about Risk, Boston, Massachusetts.

Deborah Carter

May 5 – FDA Listening Session on Fresh Produce Food Safety, Portland, Oregon.

May 12-13 - Meeting of Produce GAP Harmonization Technical Working Group, Rosemont, Illinois

May 18 – Produce Marketing Association’s Food Safety Symposium, Ellensburg, Washington.

You must write poems like apple blossom.

To Lord Alfred Douglas, April, 1894 *The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde*

The Northwest Horticultural Council represents the deciduous tree fruit industry of Idaho, Oregon and Washington on national and international policy matters of interest to growers and shippers. Its members are:

- *Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers*
- *Idaho Apple Commission*
- *Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission*
- *Pacific Northwest Canned Pear Service*
- *Washington Apple Commission*
- *Washington State Fruit Commission*
- *Washington Tree Fruit Research Comm.*
- *Wenatchee Valley Traffic Assn.*
- *Yakima Valley Growers-Shippers Assn.*

The NHC also advises the Fresh Pear Committee (Portland) on certain issues related to food safety, crisis control and international trade.



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