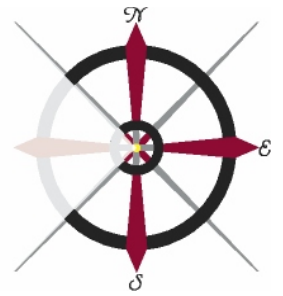




Western Center

FOR RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION



NEWSLETTER FOR WESTERN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS

SPRING 2008

Message from the Director

A new Farm Bill has been enacted. An early House version of the Farm Bill contained language that could have reduced or jeopardized the funding for the CSREES Extension Risk Management Education Program. The legislative title is the Partnerships for Risk Management Education, a section of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (FCIA). This legislation authorizes the funding used for the WSU Western Center's regional extension risk management education grants program. I am pleased to say that the final Farm Bill left the FCIA authorizing and appropriations language for our program intact, so pending other unforeseen actions in the appropriations process, we expect full funding. The final bill did contain language for addressing the educational needs of new and beginning farmers, asking that this audience be given additional emphasis in our grant program.

The Farm Bill passage does not detract from the reality that the risk environment for agricultural producers has not decreased because of the provisions of the Farm Bill. Skyrocketing input prices will work to keep the cost-price squeeze in place. The credit crunch may make operating loans more difficult to obtain. Highly volatile crop prices create increased price risks. It is difficult to anticipate how consumers will react to increasing food and fuel prices, but there will be a reaction which will most likely impact producers. Educators will have an even greater task ahead to help farm and ranch families implement risk management strategies that will protect and improve the business viability of their farming operations. This will be particularly important to small and mid-sized farmers as well as to new and beginning farmers.

A major revision of the online application and reporting system, being developed for the 2009 competitive grants program, will further strengthen program delivery that is targeted towards risk management training for producers. Applicants and project directors will be asked to improve and increase their focus on producer risk management outcomes. The Western Center's Advisory Council will seek to fund projects that can identify strong risk management results for farm and ranch families that go beyond a general understanding of the risk topics being presented.

Congratulations to Results Based RME Projects Funded for 2008 - 2009

◆ Increasing Employee Retention through Improved Compensation Structures	California Institute for Rural Studies	\$44,095
◆ Risks Associated with Intergenerational Transfer	Colorado State University	\$41,754
◆ Women and Agriculture: Cultivating our Reality	Washington State University	\$38,277
◆ Health Crisis Planning for Ranch and Farm Families	American National CattleWomen, Inc.	\$15,855

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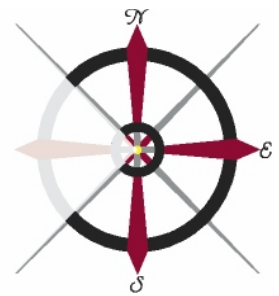
Helping Farm & Ranch Families Succeed Through Targeted Risk Management Strategies

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Congratulations to Results Based RME Projects Funded for 2008 - 2009

◆ Transitioning to Value-Added Products	NW Agriculture Business Center	\$49,733
◆ A Hands-On Approach to Risk Management	Rural Roots, Inc. (Idaho)	\$48,913
◆ Understanding How Environmental Laws and Land Use Regulations Affect How You Farm	Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association	\$44,991
◆ Reducing Vibrio Parahaemolyticus Illnesses through Appropriate Oyster Harvest Protocols	Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association	\$16,770
◆ Developing Young Producers through a Challenge Group	University of Wyoming	\$27,504
◆ Wyoming Master Cattlemen	University of Wyoming	\$14,490
◆ Farm Revenue Insurance Strategies to Manage Marketing Risks in Hawaii	University of Hawaii	\$42,400
◆ Succession and Estate Planning for Coastal California	California Farm Link	\$50,000
◆ Northwest Certified Forestry Workshop Expansion	Northwest Natural Resource Group	\$42,000
◆ Risk and Strategic Planning for Female Agricultural Producers in Utah & Western Colorado	Colorado State University	\$41,242
◆ Managing Food Safety Risks through Good Agricultural Practices (GAPS)	Washington State University	\$40,684
◆ Risk Management Education in Asian Medicinal Herb Production, Processing and Marketing	New Mexico State University Ag Experiment Station, Alcalde	\$49,759
◆ Managing Risk in an Organic Potato Cropping System	Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (Idaho)	\$14,410
◆ High Plains Ranch Practicum	University of Wyoming Cooperative Ext	\$27,588
◆ Barley Risk Management Education Project, Phase II	Idaho Barley Commission	\$20,000
◆ Farm Transition Planning - You Can Do It	Center for Farm Financial Management	
	University of Minnesota	\$25,000
◆ Variety Choices and Risk Management Considerations for Grain Producers	Colorado State University	\$20,000
◆ Managing Agricultural Labor on Small-Scale Farms	Oregon State University Extension	\$15,157
◆ Assessing and Managing Risk in Organic Transition	New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission	\$10,000
◆ Grower Adoption Rates of a Grower's TEAM as a Decision Making Tool	Oregon State University	\$49,238

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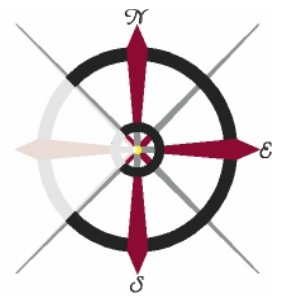
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NEWSLETTER FOR WESTERN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS

SPRING 2008



Developing Farm Plans for Environmental Certification

"We feel our Farm Plan promotes good stewardship and sustainable positive consumer regard"

This project helped shellfish growers, who adopted best management practices, to participate in an environmental certification program, which was part of a larger strategic marketing plan. It was anticipated that the farm plans would be used as a mechanism by which growers could gain coverage under a regional general permit process; however the Army Corp of Engineers issued a new nationwide permit last spring which required growers to register their farms with the Corp, in order to be covered. As a result over 100% more growers (130) attended workshops than was originally estimated.

Farm plans were completed by 26 growers with an additional 10 growers taking steps towards the completion of a farm plan. In workshops that were held in Washington State and other regions along the West Coast, growers gained improved understanding of both the marketing and regulatory benefits of developing individual farm plans. Tools were developed to implement niche market options that accommodated new permitting requirements.

Project Director, Robin Downey who is also the Executive Director of the Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association, reports that as a result of this project, Food Alliance, a third party certifying organization, agreed to work with the PCSGA and the Pacific Shellfish Institute to develop a robust third-party certification program. This will be the first such program of its kind in the United States. Food Alliance interest is directly attributable to grower involvement in developing Environmental Codes of Practice, along with their commitment to develop farm plans, which are being used in part as a foundation for this program.

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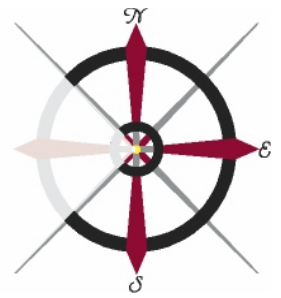


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FOR RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION



NEWSLETTER FOR WESTERN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS

SPRING 2008

Farm Succession Planning for Washington & Oregon

A recent survey indicated that 95% of farmers in two eastern Washington counties rated succession planning as a high to moderate priority



Project Director, Diana Roberts (Washington State University Extension) and Co - Project Director Brian Tuck (Oregon State University Extension), have been working with a committed group of team members and collaborators to help over 300 eastern Washington and Oregon farmers, spouses and heirs address farm succession planning. Participatory workshops, website materials, fact sheets and one-on-one mentoring with consultants and legal experts are helping participants develop written succession plans.

Participant goals included minimizing land transfer risk through improved intergenerational communication and identifying appropriate steps for writing a succession plan, with a commitment to finalizing a plan by the end of the project.

After the initial set of workshops were conducted last winter, participants requested follow-up workshops that could further their progress towards achieving succession planning goals. Topics include tips for maximizing appointment time with attorneys; discussion on how to transfer non titled property and important personal possessions; and, what to do if there is a sudden death in the family.

“What does it take to get started on a farm succession plan?” and “What works well in a succession planning process?” are questions that farm families are discussing together in the workshop settings. With the passing of important family members during the course of the workshops, some participants have felt an even greater sense of urgency to complete their plans. This workshop series has been overwhelmingly successful. Twice as many families as anticipated signed commitments to write succession plans.

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