

Washington

WSU presidential search team stresses ag

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

PULLMAN, Wash. — Members of a committee searching for the next Washington State University president emphasized the importance of agriculture to the state’s land-grant institution during a forum Oct. 21.

“(Agriculture is) absolutely huge,” said committee member Duane Brelsford, president and CEO of Corporate Pointe Developers in Pullman. “It’s one of the biggest departments here. It’s well-respected, well-

thought-of and will be represented.”

Daryll DeWald, dean of WSU’s College of Arts and Sciences, said he interacts with College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences interim dean Kim Kidwell almost daily.

“There’s recognition among the committee how important agriculture is as part of our land-grant mission,” DeWald said. “It is the largest and most extensive network in our state and in many ways is the face of WSU to many people

across the state. It’s the largest research footprint we have. We take it very seriously, we’re aware and we welcome the input.”

“The future president should have a sense of what this landscape is, and how food production and the agricultural community interact with the university,” said Debbie Lee, a WSU English professor. “The agriculture surrounding Pullman is very important. It shapes our imaginations, it shapes who we are.”

The leaders of several ag-

ricultural organizations previously expressed concern over a lack of representation for agriculture on the 25-member committee, citing only one CAHNRS member.

WSU regent Michael Worthy, chairman of the advisory committee, met with representatives of the Washington Grain Commission earlier in the day, and said similar outreach is planned with other agricultural groups across the state.

Washington Grain Commission member Randy Suess, one of the critics, said his con-

cerns were “very much eased” by the meeting.

“They are going to make sure this person either comes from another land-grant university or has that at the forefront of their mind,” Suess said. “I was pretty impressed.”

No one from agriculture attended the Pullman forum, but Worthy said several had attended other forums across the state.

“I am personally committed to continuing to reach out to any group that would want to add input,” Worthy said.



Dan Wheat/Capital Press

Aaron Krause, owner of Krause Enterprises, walks next to a tractor tilling a mulched orchard for replanting.

Mulching, tilling replace excavation of fruit trees

By DAN WHEAT
Capital Press

EAST WENATCHEE, Wash. — The skid-steer loader with its 84-inch-wide wood mulcher doesn’t look all that intimidating sitting idle. But it can reduce a 15-foot-tall apple, pear or cherry tree to wood chips in minutes, shaking the ground and sending chips flying 100 feet.

This is the second season Aaron Krause, 35, owner of Krause Enterprises in Wenatchee, has been mulching and tilling fruit trees into the ground instead of yanking them out by their roots with an excavator and burning them.

Krause specializes in orchard tree removal, planting and prep work for planting — all but fumigation. Right after fall harvest through spring is his busy season, hiring out his services to orchards throughout Central Washington.

Some people chip trees and then have big piles of chips to deal with. Krause

believes he’s the only one who mulches trees as they are standing and tills them into the ground fine enough that the ground is ready for planting.

The mulcher gets everything above ground and chips tree trunks up to 30 inches in diameter. The tiller grinds up stumps and roots in the plant zone to 1 foot underground. The grower’s investment in the old trees becomes nutrients for the new planting.

Krause said he turned to mulching because state Department of Ecology restrictions are making it harder to burn.

“There are too many days you can’t burn,” he said.

Depending on the site, size of trees and other variables, he charges an average of \$1,500 per acre to mulch and till. That includes subsoiling, ripping the ground to a depth of 3 feet to prepare it for fumigation.

“There’s no waiting, no delays, no restrictions on when we can work and virtually no farm labor,” he said.

With pulling and burning, growers often use workers to pick up limbs and roots and help with burning.

“So far, we’ve had excellent feedback. Auvil Fruit had me do 20 acres up at Orondo last year. They loved it,” he said.

“We had a little bit of difficulty with some rocky ground but he’s getting a new tiller to take care of that,” said John Baile, assistant orchard manager at Auvil Fruit Co.

“It’s a great set up and way cost-effective. You don’t have to deal with DOE on burn days. It’s the way of the future,” Baile said.

Everything is ready for fumigation at \$1,500 to \$1,600 per acre versus pulling and burning at \$1,300 an acre and then spending more for tilling the ground, he said.

“We just had two orchards chipped and then you have chip piles. We have to haul them off and put it back on as mulch, so we’re moving chips around. His (Krause’s) program gets it all done for a lot less,” Baile said.

WSDA gets federal funds for pesticide use training

Agency hopes to educate more workers

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

The Washington State Department of Agriculture has received a \$240,000 federal grant to train workers to safely spray pesticides.



Courtesy of Washington State Department of Agriculture

Washington State Department of Agriculture training manager Ofelio Borges drives a tractor hauling an air-blast sprayer through a pear orchard in Wenatchee. Borges tied ribbons to the sprayer to show how pesticides can be wasted by being blown into the sky or ground.

The training will benefit all agricultural producers by reducing drift incidents that add to political and regulatory pressure to further restrict the use of pesticides, according to WSDA.

Some 1,200 workers last year attended WSDA daylong workshops on applying pesticides. WSDA estimates that the grant will allow the department to purchase specialized equipment and reach 240 more workers over the next two years.

“Every year the demand for training continues to grow,” said Ofelio Borges, WSDA pesticide training manager.

“We’ve been stretching ourselves way too thin.”

The money was awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and was one of 24 specialty crop grants passed through WSDA. Many of the grants, which total \$4.1 million, will go to Washington State University research projects. Other grants will support marketing campaigns, private-sector research, and nurturing small and new farms.

A legislative committee this

year held a hearing on pesticide drift incidents, and a House budget proposal called for a study on how farmers could alert the public before spraying. Farm lobbyists said notification would be cumbersome and advocated for more training.

To reach more workers, WSDA plans to hire another trainer and buy equipment, including an air-blast sprayer and a vertical patternator, which measures the distribution of pesticides over an orchard.

Dairy to fence manure lagoons after worker accidentally drowns

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

A Central Washington dairy will put barriers around five manure lagoons and in exchange the state Department of Labor & Industries will reduce a fine levied after a worker accidentally drowned last winter.

Randy Vasquez, 27, was found after dark Feb. 25 inside a front-end loader submerged in a manure lagoon at Riverview Ranch in Mabton. The tractor apparently slipped off a shoulder and into the lagoon, officials reported.

Riverview was originally fined \$6,800 by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries for allegedly failing to provide a safe workplace and was ordered to fence off the lagoon. L&I alleged the lagoon should have had warning signs and a fence around it, and rescue equipment should have been stored nearby.

The dairy appealed and in a revised settlement finalized Oct. 1 agreed to pay \$2,200 and erect barriers around ev-

ery lagoon at the dairy by Dec. 1.

L&I spokesman Tim Church said the agreement made the workplace safer.

Riverview Ranch owner John Banks referred questions to the Washington

Farm Bureau.

The Farm Bureau safety director, Jeff Lutz, who represented Banks at the appeals hearing, said it’s unclear whether the incident will set a precedent for other producers with manure lagoons.

Celebrating 75 Years Conserving the Idaho Way

LOW INTEREST LOANS FOR IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

Sprinkler Irrigation, No-Till Drills, Fences
Livestock Feeding Operations
Solar Stock Water Pump Systems

2.5%-3.5%
Terms 7-15 Years
Up to \$200,000



IDAHO
CONSERVATION
LOAN
PROGRAM



swc.idaho.gov | 208-332-1790

ROP-3252#17



WHEN EVERY DROP OF WATER COUNTS

DEPEND ON PAPÉ MACHINERY FOR SOIL MOISTURE MONITORING TECHNOLOGY

This fall Papé Machinery can help reduce your water costs and better protect your fields. Intuitive and user-friendly, the John Deere Field Connect system monitors moisture levels at various depths of your field and sends you information on your computer or smart phone. Let's work together to pinpoint where crops thrive, resources are protected and your profits can soar.



JOHN DEERE



PAPÉ MACHINERY

LEARN MORE AT ANY OF OUR 21 FAMILY OWNED LOCATIONS IN OREGON, WASHINGTON, IDAHO AND NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.

papemachinery.com