

# We've Got 'Em Covered: Soil Health Workshops Serve Washington County Farmers

As the number of farmers using soil health management systems to improve the health and function of their soil increases, local and national agencies are focused this spring on raising awareness, providing education, and offering technical assistance for a variety of practices. The Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District along with local USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service staff recently hosted two workshops on agricultural soil health for 33 local farmers and nurserymen growing both annual and perennial crops with the support of the USDA Risk Management Agency, Recology Inc., Soiltest Farm Consultants Inc., and Coastal Farm Supply.

The workshops focused on the importance of building soil health on the farm to control costs and improve productivity, beginning with a presentation by Dean Moberg, acting resource conservationist for the Natural Resource Conservation Service in the Willamette Valley, on the value of soil health and its basic elements. Dean covered the biological, chemical and structural components of soil health, emphasizing the importance of protecting and enhancing the tiny fraction of the Earth's surface available for providing all of the food and fiber on which the world depends. Live demonstrations of common sense techniques for assessing soil health were given by Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District manager Lacey Townsend as well. On Tuesday, April

15, just in time for tax day, Oregon State University Small Farms Extension Agent Nick Andrews continued the theme of saving valuable time, resources and money through conservation practices for small operations, organic farms and annual crops, such as cover cropping and the addition of organic matter through compost or manure. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Dean Moberg returned to address a group of berry growers, winery managers and many others on similar techniques aimed at improving the productivity of perennial crop operations.

Workshop attendees received a copy of Building Soil for Better Crops courtesy of support provided by Recology Inc., and enjoyed a boxed lunch provided by Soiltest Farm Consultants Inc.; both sponsors were present to help answer questions from the crowd and provide additional resources. Coastal Farm supply provided additional funding to help cover workshop expenses.

The Districts also held a workshop on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, at the Clean Water Services building in Hillsboro, Oregon, on the topic of streambank erosion. Nationally and internationally recognized experts Janine Castro of the U.S.G.S. and Colin Thorne

of University of Knottingham helped landowners understand why the banks of streams erode and weighed the benefit and risk of various possible solutions.

For more information about upcoming events visit the website at [www.swcd.net](http://www.swcd.net).

## Columbia Humane Society

Happy Tails to one and to all!

Throw on your favorite jeans and your best jewelry and join us for our largest event of the year--the Happy Tails Denim & Diamonds dinner, music and auction event.

**DENIM**  
&  
Diamonds

Denim & Diamonds will be held Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> beginning at 4:30pm, concluding at 8pm at The Pavilion on the Columbia County Fairgrounds.

There will be an exciting auction, delicious dinner buffet with music and dancing for all to enjoy.

Tickets are \$40 per person and can be purchased online at [www.ColumbiaHumane.com](http://www.ColumbiaHumane.com) or in the shelter lobby at 2084 Oregon Street from 10am - 7pm Wednesday thru Friday and 10am - 5pm Saturday and Sundays. There is also an exciting opportunity for purchasing and/or sponsoring an entire table--make it an event for your whole family or co-workers! Additionally there are seat packages with fantastic advertising opportunities included for any interested companies or corporations.

We would be honored if you joined us for this exciting event celebrating the beloved animals in all our lives! All proceeds directly benefit the Columbia Humane Society. If you have any questions please call the shelter at 503-397-4353 or visit our website at [www.columbiahumane.com](http://www.columbiahumane.com)! Thank you!

### Mobile Mammography

Thursday, May 8

at Vernonia Health Center  
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to schedule an appointment

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The IRS does not endorse any particular individual tax return preparer. For more information on tax return preparers, go to [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov).

## Potluck & Movie Night at the Grange

Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup>

Potluck 6 pm (bring a dish to share)

Movie 7 pm

The Blues  
Brothers

starring Jim Belushi and Dan Ackroyd  
All ages welcome but... rated R for profanity

Vernonia Grange Hall - 375 North Street

Next Showing will be on June 21st~ "A Mid Summer's Night Dream"

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