

Diggin' in the Dirt: Hello, Mushrooms!

By Chip Bubl
Oregon State University
Extension Service - Columbia County
All About Fruit Show in Canby

This is the premier show about fruit growing and tasting. The show will be Saturday, October 20 and Sunday the 21 from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm both days at the Clackamas County Fairgrounds in Canby. Admission charge is \$5. It is put on by the Home Orchard Society, a collective effort by people who love to grow fruit. There are lots of classes and demonstrations. Go to their website for more information <http://www.homeorchardsociety.org/>.

Mycology (Mushrooms) 101 in Columbia County

This free class will be held at the Extension office in St. Helens on Wednesday, October 24 at 6:30 pm. The class will cover local mushroom ecology, the basics of mushroom taxonomy (identification), mushroom uses, and low-tech cultivation of some local mushrooms. The class will be taught by Jordan Weiss. Space is limited so please call to pre-register (503) 397-3462.

Oregon Mycological Society Fall Mushroom Show in Portland

At the annual fall mushroom show on Sunday, October 28, from noon - 5:00 pm you can view beautifully displayed specimens from around the region and talk to mushroom experts. There will be vendors, books for sale, mushroom cooking samples, speakers, and much more. At the World Forestry Center across the parking lot from the Oregon Zoo. Admission \$5 adults, \$3 seniors/students.

Storing winter squash

As this is written, the forecast is for a succession of storms for the next two weeks. Many gardeners have winter squash like *Acorn*, *Butternut*, *Buttercup*, *Hubbard* and *Kabocha* in various stages of ripeness. Excess moisture does create decay, so it would be wise to bring in all squash that seem to be of normal harvest size and color. The best way to cure them is to wash off any dirt and let them dry in a warm place in the house. Curing can take several weeks and if all goes well, the squash should have a nice hard rind. Once the squash is well-cured, it can be stored in a dry garage on a shelf. Generally, squash will last in good condition for at least three months. Squash roasted with other winter vegetables is

great! Any squash showing signs of decay should be cut free of decay and the remainder eaten or cooked and frozen as soon as possible.

Normally, I would leave the remaining somewhat unripe squash in the garden to ripen further. However, with rain, not much ripening will take place. My best guess would be to leave them for at least two more weeks and then assess where the fall weather is going and hope that decay is delayed.

Hello, mushrooms!

Fall rains bring out one of the richest mushroom floras in the world to this temperate rain forest we call home. An estimate of numbers of species exceeds 800 with many genera as yet poorly described. A woods wander will reward you with a fascinating array of mushrooms of all sizes, shapes and colors.

A good book is essential to learning about mushrooms. There are a number of titles available. Try to find one that has a west coast focus. In addition, the Oregon Mycological Society has an annual fall educational event where you can see numerous species identified (see events listed above).

There are a number of species that are great eating and some that are deadly poisonous. The most abundant and popular edible species is the chanterelle. This is a great mushroom to start with since it is relatively easy to identify. They are starting to show up in the markets from commercial pickers. However, **never eat a mushroom until you are absolutely sure of its identity and safety**. As the saying goes, "there are old mushroomers and there are bold mushroomers." In addition, some people experience allergic reactions to certain otherwise safe mushrooms, so try any well-identified species new to you in small quantities at first.

Finally, if you are in the woods looking for mushrooms, be sure to wear lots of orange. Deer hunters need to clearly see your bent-over figure. And you deer hunters who read this, please watch out for the mushroomers who also share and treasure this time in the forest. They may well be your friends and

neighbors. In addition, it is quite possible to become disoriented when you are always looking down (in fact, that once happened to me). Keep track of where you are and understand that there isn't GPS coverage everywhere in Columbia County. In addition, you need to purchase permits on any Weyerhaeuser land.

Chanterelles



Blackberry control

There is still time to control blackberries. Mowing is an option, but the clumps will return with a vengeance. That said, persistent mowing (3-4 times a year), can wear blackberries out. The most common herbicides used are the glyphosate-based products like *Roundup*™ and triclopyr-mixes like *Crossbow*™ or *Brush-B-Gone*. Good leaf coverage is essential. You need at least six hours of dry weather after spraying to ensure absorption. This time of year, the leaves might not show any sign of damage but when spring returns, the plant will not leaf out. You will have a lot of dried up stickery canes to cut but that should be a pleasure. Inevitably, there will be some re-growth. Treat that with an herbicide or mow several times and you will eliminate it from the area. Follow all label instructions and restrictions. Don't spray in the wind.

Food Safety or Food Preservation Questions? OSU Extension Service Has Answers.

Are you planning to preserve food from your garden or purchased from a farm? If so, call or visit the OSU Extension Service office **before** you start canning, freezing, or drying. Costly and potentially harmful mistakes can be made by using outdated canning recipes

and instructions. We can also test the accuracy of your pressure gauge. You can drop off your canner lid with gauge and pick it up later in the day. Sometimes, it might be possible to have it tested on the spot. An inaccurate gauge can lead to canning at a lower than recommended pressure which could lead to serious food poisoning concerns.

You can find free publications at the Columbia County Extension office located at 505 N. Columbia River Highway in St. Helens (across from the Legacy Clinic). If you have questions, phone the office at (503) 397-3462. **There is a statewide Extension food preservation hotline that you can reach Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm at 1-800-354-7319.** You can download for free all our food preservation publications at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/fch/food-preservation>. An additional

great resource is the National Center for home Food Preservation at <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/>.

Free newsletter (what a deal!)

The Oregon State University Extension office in Columbia County publishes a monthly newsletter on gardening and farming topics (called *Country Living*) written/edited by yours truly. All you need to do is ask for it and it will be mailed or emailed to you. Call (503) 397-3462 to be put on the list. Alternatively, you can find it on the web at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/> and click on newsletters.

Take excess produce to the food bank, senior centers, or community meals programs. Cash donations to buy food are also greatly appreciated.

The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

Contact information for the Extension office

Oregon State University
Extension Service – Columbia County
505 N. Columbia River Highway
(across from the Legacy clinic)
St. Helens, OR 97051
(503) 397-3462
Email: chip.bubl@oregonstate.edu



VERNONIA
CHIROPRACTIC CLINIC, INC.
VernoniaChiro.com

Joseph Dombek, DC
(971) 248-4055

Now Accepting New Patients
610 Bridge Street • Vernonia, OR 97064



To all of us

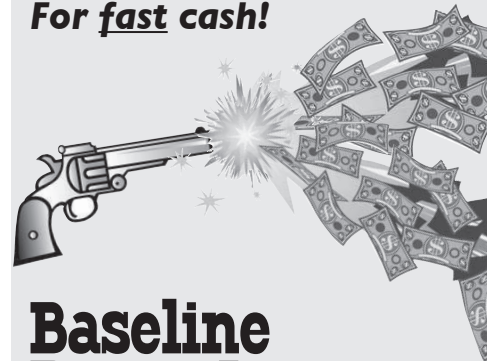
We're dedicated to helping you and your neighbors be healthier.

Creating health together.

colpachealth.org
@columbiapacificcco

Columbia Pacific CCO™
A CareOregon Company

Don't Sell it!
Pawn it!
For fast cash!



Baseline Pawn, Inc.

2245 Baseline St., Cornelius
(Across from Fred Meyer)
503-530-8119
State Licensed PB-0388

Open
everyday
at 10 a.m.