

Monday, July 11 - Cloudview EcoFarms

Diverse Vegetable Operation Meets Community & Biodiversity

12-12:30pm Registration; Farm Walk 12:30-4pm

Optional dinner buffet

Cloudview EcoFarms is a certified organic, 15-acre diversified vegetable farm co-created five years ago by Jim Baird and family. Young farmers and interns assist with production, nearby organic orchards and circle irrigated crops. They sell produce through a CSA, farmers markets and to institutions, restaurants, and schools, demonstrating that small-scale organic production can be viable in the Columbia Basin. Participants will learn about soil-building, seed production, growing forage, cut flower gardening and integrating chickens, pigs, meat and milking goats. Visitors will hear about plans to develop an insectary program and see an organic Gala block, organic alfalfa circle, and plantings of hard fescue and clover. An optional dinner buffet and tour of a second location will follow the Farm Walk.

Monday, July 18 - Middleton Organic Orchard, Eltopia

Organic Apples, Cherries, Blueberries & Value-Added Products

12-12:30pm Registration; Farm Walk 12:30-4pm

Middleton Organic Orchard located near Eltopia grows apples, cherries, and blueberries. Gary, Lori and family have been farming for 36 years, the last twelve as certified organic. Gary will discuss the benefits and challenges of raising fruit in an arid environment, and the family's value-added "Savoring the Harvest" product line, featuring a collection of organic apple butters, including apple citrus, apple blueberry and the unique apple cherry. These products are processed in a rented commercial kitchen. The Middletons also dehydrate organic apple tidbits and dried cherries, which they package in recycled glass jars. See how an orchard can diversify its end products.

Cost: \$10 for Tilth Producers members, students and interns. \$15 for non-members. Paid pre-registration is recommended for all farm walks, and is required for Inaba Farms Farm Walk on May 16 and Red Dog Farm Walk on May 23.

Beverages are provided.

For directions, visit www.tilthproducers.org or <http://smallfarms.wsu.edu>

To pre-register, mail a check with your farm walk choices to:

Tilth Producers

4649 Sunnyside Avenue N #305

Seattle, WA 98103

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TILTH PRODUCERS POLICY UPDATE

NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARDS BOARD

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) will be in Seattle the week of April 25-29. This is the first time the NOSB has come to Washington, and the opportunity gives NW farmers and businesses a unique opportunity to see how our National Organic Program is crafted and provide critical input to the process. We have been sending out alerts on a regular basis to urge our members to consider traveling to Seattle to provide testimony on issues of concern to you. It is important to sign up now (see Tilth website for a link) to reserve your time slot as people will be traveling from around the US to attend this meeting. We also suggest you visit the website at www.usda.ams.nop.gov to familiarize yourself with the process and issues. Some issues important to Washington organic growers are the use of plant protection for fireblight in tree fruit, or the impact to small diversified market farmers of record keeping requirements—specifically for the purchase of certified organic seed and new seed inventory requirements. Are there other materials important in your operation? Are there other concerns you have with the program? Now is the time to enter the conversation. Tilth Producers of Washington is interested in tracking who will provide testimony and what the issues of concern are. Please send an email to let us know: organic@tilthproducers.org.

There are two days of public testimony, April 26 and April 28, as well as other events and opportunities to meet with NOSB staff and board members. The National Organic Coalition (NOC) is holding a day-long meeting in the same hotel,



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Monday April 25. PCC Natural Markets (PCC) is hosting this event and Tilth Producers of Washington is helping source food for the meeting. If anyone is interested in attending, please contact the Tilth office and visit the NOC website. The NOC will be an active player in the upcoming Farm Bill and this will be an opportunity to learn about proposed programs to benefit organic farmers and agriculture and how we can support critical changes to our food and farming policies.

Tilth Producers is also planning a reception for the NOSB that will highlight Washington organic food. This reception will follow the meeting on Wednesday, April 27 at 5:30pm. All Tilth Producers members are invited!! We are seeking donations of food and financial sponsorships to help us with this event. Please join us there and help us showcase Washington Organic! Contact Diane Dempster at dianed@charliesproduce.com for details.

2012 FARM BILL

The upcoming 2012 Farm Bill is massive and is not taking us down a sustainable path for future food production. Tilth Producers is actively seeking a volunteer-preferably a farmer-who can partner with our new policy intern to serve as a liaison for Tilth Producers with the Northwest Farm Bill Action Group (NWF BAG) and the (NOC). The NOC along with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) will guide the strategy for specific farm bill programs as well as recommendations for appropriations. They will also provide timely information and recommendations to regional organizations to support local efforts for energizing people to contact our elected Senators and Congress. The regional groups will be critical in getting the word

out to people who care about food and farms, educating them and empowering them to make simple, timely phone calls. We can make a difference, but YOU need to get comfortable picking up the phone or sending an email, both are easy to do and only take a few minutes. Tilth Producers wants to provide leadership and support so our needs are represented.

We are eager to participate in the Farm Bill process with the Northwest Farm Bill Action Group (NWF BAG). Started last summer after a workshop called Food Fight was organized by the Community Alliance for Global Justice, NWF BAG is a collection of individuals and organizations working together to educate themselves and help shape a better farm bill. On March 1, NWF BAG brought Dan Imhoff, author of Food Fight: A Citizens Guide to the Farm Bill, to Seattle for a series of events. Dan was interviewed by KUOW, along with Eastern WA farmer Ben Barstow. He participated in a strategy session with NSF BAG during the day before his evening lecture at the University of WA.

NWF BAG is also developing a Train-the-Trainer Curriculum designed to offer skills training and a tool kit to individuals from a wide variety of organizations and communities so they can gather people's concerns about the farm bill, inform them of the importance of the farm bill, and train even more people. Additional strategy sessions will be held. Resources permitting, NWF BAG would like to collect concerns from farmers and others about the food system, how it needs to be changed and how the farm bill affects them. Check out their next meeting March 24 at the office of the Community Alliance for Global Justice, 606 Maynard Ave. S. #252 Seattle, WA 98104. Please get involved! www.nwfoodfight.org.

POLICY INTERN

Tilth Producers is currently seeking a part-time Policy Intern from the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. This individual will promote Tilth Producers' policy platform, coordinate organizational advocacy efforts, research and write white papers on selected policy issues, draft editorial responses, create content for the Tilth Producers website and list serve, and attend meetings, events and hearings. More on this exciting opportunity soon!

As we go to press, the state Legislators will be in Session for another month. Our main focus now is to get people to identify what the impact of reductions in support for WIC/FMNP (Women Infant & Children/Farmers Market Nutrition Program) funding. We need to get farmers who participate in the program and sell at farmers markets to call Senators and House members to request this budgetary transfer and explain how the WIC program affects their business. Ellen Gray, Director of the WA Sustainable Food and Farming Network (WSFFN or The Network) has been tracking bills and budget items as they work their way thru the legislative process. This graph provided by Ellen highlights the status of each item. ✕

For more information contact Ellen Gray, Executive Director 360-336-9694 or egrays@wsffn.org, wsffn.org. To learn who your state elected representatives are, go to <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/default.aspx>, call the Olympia Hotline and tell them your zip code at 1-800-562-2000, or look in your local paper for a complete listing of State Legislators and Congressional Members.

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