

CONSERVATION CONNECTION

News from the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District

Spring / Summer 2010

Local Director Receives Individual Contribution Award

By: Bruce Pokarnery, Director of Communications, Oregon Department of Agriculture and Judy Marsh, District Coordinator



Katy Coba, John & Ginger McDonald

John McDonald, Director of Zone 4 of the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District, received the **Individual Contribution Award** from Katy Coba, Director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture, at the eighteen annual Ag Progress Awards Dinner. The event was held at the Oregon Gardens in Silverton on March 16.

John's accomplishments in receiving this award are not limited to: being a strong advocate for conservation and implementation of programs that are good for agriculture; his leadership in developing a water quality management plan for the Tualatin paved the way for the adoption of Senate Bill 1010 and its statewide implementation of agricultural water quality management plans; he also attended a lot of meetings, testified at the legislature, and generally helped move Oregon agriculture into a stronger place in improving and maintaining water quality.

He has created a better template for Oregon's Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Developing a sound business structure allows the technical side of districts to be as good as possible. Working with ODA to provide training and guidelines, John has helped facilitate better on-the-ground technical assistance for landowners statewide. He has also argued passionately for the necessary funding to make these improvements possible.

John has received a host of awards and recognitions including those from the National Association of Conservation Districts, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Tualatin SWCD.

John have been a Director for the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District since 1995 and was the President of the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts, 2005-2009.

The Directors and Staff at the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District congratulate John on his honored and well-deserved recognition from the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

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Congratulations!

Spotted Wing Drosophila - Present state of recommendations

By Tom Peerbolt, Research Coordinator ORBC Newsletter

Subtitle: The best guesses we've got at this point.



Photo from the Oregonian

Brief Description: Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) is an exotic vinegar fly species that has rapidly emerged as a threat to Oregon berry crops. It causes damage by laying eggs within ripening fruit and feeding within the berries. It has been found in blueberries, caneberrries, strawberries, grapes, cherries, peaches, and other thin-skinned fruit.

Given our limited knowledge of the pest and its lifecycle in our region, the impact on the 2010 crop cannot be predicted. Therefore, the coordination of accurate and timely information is critical to growers and researchers.

This is a pest that has the potential to cause major losses. Our lack of actual facts on how it will behave in our crops and our climate necessitates that caneberry growers go into the season with a crisis management plan in place. We can and will manage this pest in the future, but the 2010 season presents the greatest threat to our crops due to this lack of experience and information.

Elements of a grower crisis management program

Plan for well-timed insecticide applications.

Insecticide timing will be determined by:

Trap counts. (Presence of pest) Know how to make and maintain the monitoring traps.

Fruit ripening stage. (vulnerable host) Researchers are still working on refining the timing of when this insect will begin laying its eggs in the berries, but the best indicator right now is when the fruit starts turning color. *Stay in touch, by going online to the websites mentioned at the end of this article, to collect the latest information on this point.*

When it's possible to get the application on. Have strategies worked out in advance for how to get insecticides on when you're getting close to or during harvest. This could be a new sprayer type, an on-farm

sprayer modification and/or aerial applications.

During harvest plan on continued monitoring and, if SWD populations begin to climb again, re-apply insecticides as needed, remembering to alternate chemistries since this insect is predicted to have up to five generations a year in our area making it prone to developing resistance. *Stay in touch to have the latest information on this point.*

Field sanitation could be critical. The experience of California caneberry growers demonstrated the need to minimize the presence of intact ripe and over-ripe fruit in the field. With our machine harvesting, this could be our greatest challenge. Closer picking intervals as well as innovative techniques to remove culls and/or break up the fruit integrity might be needed. If the berry drupelets are broken, the fly will not be able to reproduce on or within it.

Stay in touch! Get online! Know where to go to get regular, real-time updates.

[Oregon State University SWD Website](#)

OSU's SWD dedicated site has very comprehensive SWD information and the latest research findings as well as all the needed links to other sources.

[www.berriesNW.com](#) and [www.peerbolt.com/swd](#) Peerbolt Crop Management's (PCM) sites will have real-time regional scouting and monitoring information, the latest management recommendations, and links needed to other sources.

[Northwest Berry & Grape Information Network](#)

This OSU site has an interactive Oregon map with voluntary scouting report data from fieldmen and growers as well as cooperating with PCM to disseminate the field scouting information collected through the state-sponsored regional scouting.

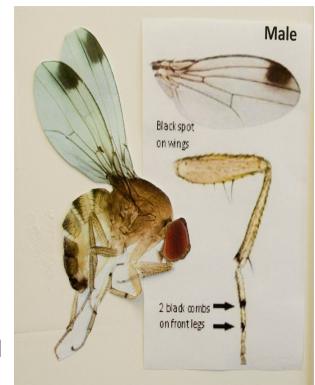


Photo from the Oregonian

Anne Berblinger, Organic Vegetable Grower

By: Dean Moberg, NRCS District Conservationist

Anne Berblinger owns and operates Gales Meadow Farm with her husband Rene. The Tualatin SWCD and NRCS have worked with Anne on an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) project. Recently, Anne agreed to be interviewed for this edition of the newsletter.



Q: What did you and Rene do before you started the farm?

Berblinger: Rene has been a teacher of classical guitar, as well as folk and jazz styles, and mandolin and banjo for more than 40 years. He intends to continue doing this as well as farming. Anne worked as Oregon field representative for the US Dept. of Commerce Economic Development Administration from 1983 until 2007, when she retired. We started farming in 1999, so like many farmers, we were part-time for quite a while.

Q: Why did you start farming and what was your biggest challenge in starting the farm?

Berblinger: I tell our farmers market customers, who are amazed by our 50+ varieties of tomato starts, that we had to be farmers since there is not enough room in a home garden for everything we want to grow. We love the work, we love growing beautiful delicious healthy food, and we love the community of farmers, our support people like NRCS and the Tualatin SWCD.

Q: Can you describe your farm, what kind of crops are you growing and how you market them?

Berblinger: Our farm, on the northeast side of Gales Creek Road, includes 9 flat acres of wonderful soil, a steep wooded hillside - the west side of Clapshaw Hill - and a riparian area with cottonwoods. We produce more than 300 varieties of great tasting and beautiful vegetables and herbs. Many of our varieties are heirlooms.

Early in the season, we sell starts of hardy vegetables including beets, onions, lettuce, and chard. In May, we have starts of tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, squash, and cucumbers. We have more than 50 varieties of tomatoes, more than 20 sweet and hot peppers, and about ten kinds of eggplant.

As the season progresses, we offer the best familiar spring, summer, and fall vegetables and many unusual varieties.

Our farming practices build the soil and provide habitat for wildlife including native plants, insects, birds, and microbes. In addition to the [Hollywood Farmers Market](#) (May - October), we can be found at the [Hillsdale Farmers Market](#) (March-May),

the Forest Grove Farmers Market (May), and the Cannon Beach Farmers Market (July through September).

Q: What are your goals for conservation on your farm?

Berblinger: We want our soil and the living community of plants and animals on our farm to become more vibrant and diverse every season. We want to limit our carbon footprint and our use of resources of every kind from outside our farm.

Q: Your farm is certified organic through Organic Tilth, correct? Do you have any suggestions for other farmers who are thinking about going organic?

Berblinger: We have been certified Organic by Oregon Tilth since 2001. Farmers who are interested in organic certification should talk to the helpful staff people at Oregon Tilth and to any of their neighbors who are certified organic farmers.

Anyone interested in organic certification should understand it is not just about what amendments and pest control methods are prohibited and what can we spray instead. It is about creating healthy soil, healthy plants, and a natural system which can thrive without the use of fossil-fuel based fertilizers and poisonous pesticides.

Q: How did the Environmental Quality Incentive Program help achieve your conservation goals?

Berblinger: We were able to switch from overhead sprinklers to mostly drip irrigation, saving both water and energy. Drip is also healthier for many of our crops. We planted a native hedgerow for wildlife habitat and to create a buffer along the highway. We learned to calibrate the use of our nitrogen and phosphorous sources to protect the groundwater. We built bird, bat, and butterfly houses. An owl scheduled to be released from the Wildlife Center of the North Coast may move into the owl house we built. And we even got a cash reward for not using harmful pesticides.



Q: Can you describe your workforce? How do you recruit and keep good help?

Berblinger: We will have 5 full-time employees and several drop-in employees for the 2010 season. Most of our employees are aspiring farmers, or at least they have a deep commitment to healthy food, a healthy environment, and community building.

Continued on Page 7.

ARE WE LOOKING FOR YOU!!

Do you live in the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District and would like to be a part of an up-and-coming board of directors? The District is looking for qualified applicants to run for a position in Zone 3 and in Zone 5.

Each director serves as a volunteer and the length of each term is for four years. New terms begin after January 1, 2011 once the director is officially sworn in during the January board meeting. All applicants for director must be a resident of the District, own at least 10 acres, a registered voter, and reside in the zone for which they are running.

Zone boundary information:

Zone 3 — Start in the NE corner of this zone located in the NE corner of T3N, R4W.

Go south approximately 13.75 miles to where State Highway 47 intersects the section line between section 12, T1N, R4W and section 7, T1N, R3W.

Follow State Highway 47 south to where it intersects the line between T1N and T1S.

Follow the township line west approximately 0.5 miles to the intersection with State Highway 8.

Follow State Highway 8 to where it intersects State Highway 6 in section 36, T2N, R5W.

Follow State Highway 6 in a westerly direction to the district boundary.

Follow the district boundary west a short distance to the SW corner of section 25, T2N, R6W.

Go north 1 mile, west 2 miles, north 1 mile, west 1 mile, north 1 mile, west 1 mile, north 2 miles, east 6 miles, and then north 5 miles to the north district boundary at the NW corner of T3N, R5W.

Follow the north district boundary east to the starting point of this description.

Zone 5 — Start at the NW corner of this zone located at the NW corner of T3N, R3W.

Go south approximately 13.75 miles to where State Highway 47 intersects the section line between section 12, T1N, R4W and section 7, T1N, R3W.

Follow State Highway 47 south to where it intersects the line between T1N and T1S.

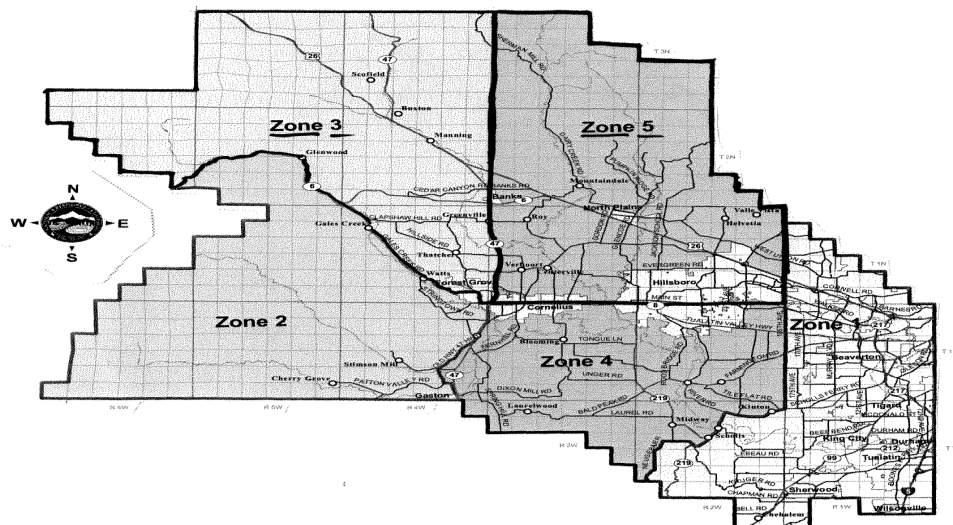
Follow the township line west 11.75 miles to the SE corner of T1N, R2W.

Go north 6 miles to the NE corner of T1N, R2W.

Follow the district boundary west 1 mile, north 1 mile, west 1 mile, north 1 mile, west 1 mile, north 7 miles, west 3 miles, north 1 mile, west 2 miles, north 2 miles, and then west 4 miles to the starting point of this description.

The filing period for the November 2, 2010 General Election is July 15 through August 24, 2010. All candidate application packets must be filed at the Natural Resources Division in Salem no later than 5 p.m. on August 24, 2010. For more information and application packets please contact Judy at 503-648-3174 ex 117 or visit the Tualatin SWCD at 1080 SW Baseline, Suite B-2, Hillsboro, OR 97123.

Tualatin Soil and Water District Map



Green Roof for Animal Comfort



Green Roof is the new craze in pet comfort. What is a Green Roof? A green roof is a vertical extension of the roof of a structure.

The system consists of:

- vegetation
- growing medium
- filter membrane
- drainage layer
- waterproofing

Vegetated roofs of one form or another have been used on human shelters for thousands of year, dating back, at least, to the hanging gardens of Babylon. The modern Green Roof system was developed in Germany in the 1960s.

What are the benefits of a Green Roof system?

- provides insulation against temperature and sound
- filters runoff water which can then be used as drinking water
- soothes via the smell of natural building materials and plants
- filters dust and particulate matter, providing clean air
- provides aesthetic beauty

A few web sites where you can get directions on how to build one Green Roof Dog House are:

www.ehow.com/how-4478250-build-green-doghouse.html

<http://sustainablepet.com/about.html>



Picture shows a newly planted roof. As plants mature the open spaces will fill in.

www.indyweek.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A2887

www.greenfoors.xom/blog/2009/02/30/sustainability-is-for-the-masses-by-design-example/

Not only could you build a green roof dog house, but how about a green roof Chicken Coop, a cat house or even a bird house? There are endless possibilities.



Disclaimer

All information presented should be considered general guidance. Each property has unique features that will influence the success of any Green Roof project. Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District, their staff and contractors are not responsible for flooding, property damage or loss, or any other damages resulting from the installation of a green roof. Be sure to check with your local jurisdiction to see if permits are required for activities associated with the construction of a green roof building.

The Tualatin SWCD Directors and Staff would like to thank all our partners and landowners who attended our Planning Session on March 3. With your help JSWCD has created conservation goals that we will strive to implement in the next 5 years.



Weed Wise - Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

By Lacey Townsend

Look out for... **Purple Loosestrife!!**



Bonnie Rasmussen, Oregon Department of Ag

Description

Upright bushy plant, growing up to 7 feet tall. Showy, pink to purple flowers bloom mid-to late-summer and occur in spikes at end of stalks. Stems are square; leaves are lance-shaped.

Where it grows

Wet areas, such as ponds or wetlands. Along stream banks.

Why it's a problem

Replaces native grasses, sedges, and other flowering plants that provide food and shelter for wildlife. Clogs waterways, reducing water quality and stream flow. Plants resprout from stem and root fragments; seeds spread by wind and water. Each plant produces up to 100,000 seeds per year.

Control

Mechanical methods not effective for large populations. Individual plants and clusters of up to 100 younger plants (1-2 years old) can be hand-pulled. Apply herbicides. Four biological control agents approved in Oregon. **Key:** eliminate small populations in July and August before they expand, and be careful not to scatter seed when pulling plants after flowering.

Beautiful alternatives to Purple Loosestrife that would make excellent habitat for wildlife:

Natives: Douglas spirea (*Spirea douglasii*), Meadow checkermallow (*Sidalcea campestris*), Common camas (*Camassia quamash*), Small-flowered bulrush (*Scirpus microcarpus*), River lupine (*Lupinus rivularis*)
Ornamentals: Spike speedwell (*Veronica spicata*), Gayfeather (*Liatrix spicata*), Bee balm (*Monarda didyma*), Siberian iris (*Iris sibirica*), Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

Information about the above alternatives, as well as alternatives to other invasive plants, can be found in "GardenSmart Oregon: A Guide to Non-Invasive Plants." Pick up a copy from the SWCD office or download a PDF at http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/oregon/files/gardensmart_oregon_reduced.pdf

For more information on Purple Loosestrife:

Oregon Department of Agriculture
http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/profile_purpleloosestrife.shtml

Oregon State University, Extension & Experiment Station Communications
http://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/story.php?S_No=166

For more information on invasive species, check out the following websites:

Oregon State University Agricultural Experiment Station – Research Magazine
<http://oregonprogress.oregonstate.edu/summer-2005/beautiful-invaders>

Oregon Department of Agriculture
<http://oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/>

Clean Water Services
<http://www.cleanwaterservices.org/EducationAndOutreach/CleanWaterTips/StreamEnhancement/InvasivePlants/>

Four County Cooperative Weed Management Area
<http://www.4countycwma.org/>

Oregon Invasive Species Council
<http://oregon.gov/OISC/>

The Nature Conservancy
<http://www.nature.org/initiatives/invasivespecies/>



Eric Coombs, Oregon Department of Ag

Conservation Calendar

When	What
Saturday—September 11, 8:30am—5pm	Rain Garden Volunteer Training Workshops. Please check East Multnomah SWCD's web site at www.emswcd.org for additional information.
Saturday—September 25, 10am—2pm	Tualatin SWCD Fifth Annual BBQ and Conservation Tours.

Continued from page 3: **Anne Berblinger**

We don't do much recruiting – people find us and clamor for an opportunity to work on the farm. Our crew members have the opportunity to participate in and learn all phases of the farm operation from soil preparation to marketing and business management. They can try out some of their own ideas, as long as they are consistent with our values and core operations. Our full-time employees live at the farm. We do help with the cost of individual health insurance plans for full-time employees.

Two of our former employees have their own growing businesses and two current employees are making plans for their own farm next year.

Q: What about energy conservation?

Berblinger:

We heat our farm house with a wood stove, all of our light bulbs are CFLs, and we go around turning off the lights. We use B-20 fuel for our tractor. We deliver on a schedule to minimize the number of vehicle trips into Portland. Our farm house has solar-panels which provide a significant portion of our electricity and


feed into the grid when they are producing more than we use. We use heat mats for propagation, rather than trying to warm up all the air in the hoop-houses. We are always looking for ways to do better.

Q: How has the recession affected your markets? Do you have any advice for farms getting through these difficult economic times?

Berblinger: Our sales dipped very little at the farmers markets in 2009, although overall sales were up. Two restaurant customers went out of business (because of the economy), but other chef customers bought more and we added some new ones. The best advice for getting through hard times is to provide what the customers want at a price that will allow you, the farmer, to make a living and pay a living wage to your workers.

For us, having a balance between farmers markets and direct sales to restaurants has been a good strategy. It is less costly to pick and deliver to restaurants, but the farmers markets are steadier and more predictable.

Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District's Fifth Annual Barbeque, September 25, 2010. Conservation Tours this year will be starting at 10:00 AM with lunch to follow. There will be silent auction with great items to bid on. Mark your calendars! This one you do not want to miss!



- Monthly Board Meetings**
- Tualatin SWCD - second Tuesday of the month, 7:30 p.m., USDA Conference Room. For more information, contact Judy at 503-648-3174 x117.
 - Washington County Farm Bureau - third Tuesday of the month, 7:30 p.m., Country Insurance and Financial Services Building, 885 SW Baseline Street, Hillsboro.
 - Tualatin River Watershed Council - first Wednesday of the month, 7:00 p.m., Clean Water Services Administration Building, Tualatin Room. For more information, contact April Olbrich at 503-846-4810.
 - Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve - second Wednesday of the month, 4:00 p.m., Jackson Bottom Wetlands Education Center.

- To volunteer for restoration activities, contact the following organizations:**
- Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District, Melissa Marcum at 503-629-6305 ext. 2953
 - SOLV at <http://www.solv.org>
 - Tualatin River Watershed Council at <http://www.trwc.org> or April Olbrich at 503-846-4810

TUALATIN SWCD

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Phone: 503-648-3174 ext. 5
Fax: 503-681-9772
Email: judy.marsh@or.nacdnet.net

We're on the web!

www.swcd.net

Our Mission

In order to conserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources in the Tualatin Basin, the mission of the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District is to:

- Assess watershed conditions, identify resource concerns, and select strategies to help natural resources meet standards and all beneficial uses;
- Provide technical assistance to help private landowners install conservation practices to meet natural resource goals and their own objectives;
- Increase the public's knowledge of and involvement in natural resource issues and solutions; and
- Deliver conservation programs and services to individuals, groups, and other governments.

Board of Directors

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George Marsh
John McDoanld
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Gary Clark
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Lyell Gardner
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Sally Krahmer
Anthony Mills

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Lacey Townsend, Resource Technician
Autumn Bryant, Program Manager
Judy Marsh, District Coordinator

The Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer, providing services to the public without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.