

Regional Food Coalition Meeting Minutes, 6/16/11

Present:

Amy Hendershot, USDA-NRCS

Nadine Lehrer, WSU Pest Management Transition Project

Kristi Roberts: IRIS Americorps Volunteer

Amanda Ellis, Cascadia Americorps Volunteer

Laura Clark, Okanogan County Conservation District and Precision Slaughter

Jeri Timm, Washington Water Project of Trout Unlimited

Amanda Levesque, Cascadia Education Coordinator

Cheryl Dawes, IRIS

Michel Wiman WSU CSANR and Small Farms (minutes)

Welcome & Introductions, Amy Hendershot, USDA-NRCS

Updates from the group:

- July 11 -Farm Walk in Royal City at Cloudview Ecofarms, WSU/Tilth
- NRCS Pollinator Workshop in Wenatchee, July 7
- Precision Slaughter custom exempt meats processing is developing a mobile processing unit for local livestock in the coming year.

Recap of March 24 Meeting, Michel Wiman, WSU Small Farms Program

Salmon-Safe Certification and Discussion - Jeri Timm, Washington Water Project of Trout Unlimited

Salmon-Safe is a PNW certification program – consulting in Eastern WA since Oct 2010 (new to the area).

Certification adds value to products, and certifies the entire farm.

60,000 acres certified in PNW; protects salmon. 300+ supermarkets carry products.

Many vineyards are salmon-safe certified; a third party certifier for vineyards - Live, through IOBC.

Other entities certified in PNW: UW campus, WSU Vancouver campus, Nike headquarters, REI, Puget Consumers' Coop, Okanogan Producers Marketing Association. With these businesses, cert. involves stormwater management.

Program is a great communication opportunity in addition to marketing value.

Partner with Oregon Tilth Organic Certification program – smaller fee if have this certification.

Jeri is a consultant, and she can give farmers an estimate of certification cost based on their operation.

Federal Funds Available for Agricultural Producers and Forest Landowners and Discussion - Amy Hendershot, USDA-NRCS

The Soil Conservation Service was changed under President Clinton to the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

They are the only Federal agency working with private farmers on private lands.

They are non-regulatory except with their contractors. All consultation is voluntary and confidential.

They primarily talk to growers, and see how they can save resources and money.

EQIP – major program that helps farmers implement conservation practices.

As an example, a pear grower in Peshastin saved \$30,000 in fertilizer after a consultation; he was using too much for his pear crop.

They teach IPM practices

To be eligible, must earn < \$1 million

Beginning Farmer and Rancher grant - < 10 years funding. Hoophouses that are up to 1/20 of an acre can be funded through this program.

EQIP also helps forest landowners: thinning to reduce fire hazard, old road fixed to reduce erosion.

Volunteer/Date Setting for Next Meeting:

Agreed that Regional Food Coalition meetings will assign a minutes volunteer at the start.

Cheryl will post the minutes on the IRIS website.

**Next meeting is at the Riverbank in Twisp; Jeri Timm will host, Laura Clark co-host:
Thursday, Sept. 22, 2011 10am-12pm.**

11:00 Adjourn