



Winter 2010

Seeking Public Input for Strategic Plan

CPRCD is developing a new five-year strategic plan, and seeks public input on projects and programs that would benefit local rural areas.

Plans are underway for county commissioners to host public meetings in each of CPRCD's six counties -- Benton, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion and Polk. The meetings will be scheduled between February and April; dates will be listed on the CPRCD Web Calendar (www.cascadepacific.org) as they become available.



For more information, contact Karen Strohmeyer, RC&D Coordinator, Cascade Pacific RC&D, at Karen.Strohmeyer@or.usda.gov.

2010 Local Food Connection Features USDA Initiative, Workshops

Now in its fourth year, the Local Food Connection brings together local food producers and buyers to make business connections and share information about building and maintaining strong sustainable food networks.

The annual **Local Food Connection – Linking Farmers, Fishers and Food Buyers** will be held on Monday, February 1, 2010, 7:30 am – 3:30 pm at Lane Community College (LCC) in Eugene, Oregon. The event is presented by Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation & Development, and sponsored by EWEB, Oregon Tilth and LCC.

Keynote speaker Ann Wright will discuss the new USDA program, "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food." This initiative, backed by \$65 million in funding, will help develop local and regional food systems and spur economic opportunities. Wright is the USDA Deputy Undersecretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

Workshop topics include an introduction to Food Hub (food-hub.org), a new online marketing tool that connects food producers to buyers year-round; understanding food certifications; energy efficiency and renewable energy systems for food producers and businesses; growing and selling beans and grains; food safety; running an efficient business ("lean enterprise"); the latest on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs); social media marketing; success stories from buyer and seller pairs, and more. There will also be a hands-on butchering demonstration.



Networking opportunities are another popular feature of the Local Food Connection. After the 2009 conference, attendees estimated that the new business relationships they made resulted in increased revenues of more than \$385,000.

The \$20 registration fee includes lunch featuring locally grown products provided by local farmers and fishers and prepared by local chefs. Scholarships may be available to cover the registration fee. **Sign up now** at www.cascadepacific.org. For more information, contact Kelly Hoell at 541-341-4663 x217 or kelly.hoell@goodcompany.com.

2010 Calendar

5th Annual Oregon Truffle Festival
Eugene
January 29 - 31
www.oregontrufflefestival.com

Local Food Connection
Eugene
Feb. 1, 7:30 am - 3:30 pm
[See article below](#)

See Web for more:
www.cascadepacific.org

Fuels for Schools

Fuels for Schools is an innovative program that supports the use of wood as a heating fuel in public schools. It helps schools reduce their heating costs while creating local jobs, increasing forest health and utilizing wood waste.

The idea behind the program is simple. Through state and local funding, schools receive efficient, clean-burning wood chip boilers to heat water and buildings. To fuel the boilers, the US Forest Service provides wood from public forests in need of thinning.

Removing excess brush, deadwood and small trees from forests reduces the risk of destructive forest fires. And the trees that remain have less competition for water and sunlight.

The Fuels for Schools program offers many additional benefits to schools, communities, and the nation as a whole. Local jobs are created during all steps of the process: wood harvesting and transportation, and boiler installation and repair. Modern biomass boilers burn cleanly and efficiently, and require little maintenance. Finally, wood scraps are a renewable domestic source that increase our national energy dependence and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

If you're interested in a Fuels for Schools project in your community, contact Karen Strohmeier, RC&D Coordinator, Cascade Pacific RC&D, at Karen.Strohmeier@or.usda.gov.

Grants & Announcements

• USDA Energy Grants (REAP)

The next round of USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grants is expected to be announced in mid- to late January. REAP grants are available to qualified rural small businesses and agricultural producers for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. To find out if your project qualifies for a grant of up to \$20,000, contact Terry Johnson, Energy Program Manager, at 541.760.6444 or terry@casco.net.

• BPA Energy Award

CPRCD is negotiating a contract with the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) to design and manage an agricultural energy efficiency pilot program for a service area that includes all 18 counties of western Oregon. This program will be implemented and managed in conjunction with an NRCS Model Energy Program, which CPRCD began developing last summer.

• Food Hub

Ecotrust has launched **FoodHub**, a new online resource that makes it easy and efficient for regional food buyers and sellers to connect. For food sellers of all types—farmers, ranchers, fishermen, and food manufacturers—FoodHub offers an easy way to let buyers know about, and purchase, their products. For food buyers—including restaurants, public schools, grocery stores, caterers, universities, and hospitals—FoodHub provides a robust and easily searchable database of food products.

Intended for buyers and sellers in Oregon and Washington and all neighboring states, FoodHub is offering a \$20 rebate off the \$100 annual membership fee to those who join before January 31st, 2010. In addition, Food Services of America (FSA) is offering an additional \$20 rebate to select FSA restaurants and schools. Learn more at food-hub.org, or contact FoodHub's customer service representatives at 503.467.0816 or connect@food-hub.org.

