The next several months will be a hectic time at the North Willamette Research and Extension Center (NWREC). Watch for a variety of educational programs, research updates, new faces coming and going, and our signature community events—like the annual Open House and our Harvest Dinner. And, did we mention about 25 others—high school and college students plus volunteers working with us this summer supporting our research, Extension outreach and farm operations?

Let’s get started with our people...

Extension Christmas Tree Specialist, Chal Landgren, departed on April 1st for a six month sabbatical in Denmark. Chal is at the University of Copenhagen working with Danish research colleague, Ulrick Nielsen, on several projects—including Nordmann and Turkish Fir genetic improvement, leader control experiments using plant growth regulators—a European concept, publishing research, and attending an international Christmas tree research and Extension conference in Norway. In addition, Chal, Ulrick and Gary Chastagner, a Washington State University Extension Pathologist—also in northern Europe for a portion of the summer—will be “skyping” back to the Pacific Northwest as they speak at a Christmas tree grower’s summer meeting held in Rochester in June. Have a great summer, Chal!

Bo Hu—also known as, Cooper, arrived at NWREC on May 1 from China. Cooper is a Visiting Scientist sponsored by his home institution to study aluminum toxicity in blueberries here in the Pacific Northwest. He will be working with NWREC’s Wei Yang—also a native of China—learning about blueberry production in this region and using his soil science experience to help address local nutrition issues. Wei and Cooper have met and worked together in the past and that relationship led to this most recent opportunity. Cooper will be with us at NWREC until November 1.

In addition, Cooper’s wife, Min, arrived in late May to join her husband. Min had not traveled overseas before, and is looking forward to this international experience. Min works in China doing marketing and promotion for value-added food products. During her time in Oregon, Min has offered to volunteer at NWREC assisting with photogtaphy, graphic design and publishing materials. We have plenty of projects she can work on while here. Welcome to the Pacific Northwest, Cooper and Min!

National Recognition for Joe!

We all know Joe is good...that is Joe DeFrancesco, Oregon’s State Liaison for the IR-4 program (Specialty Crop Pesticide

continues on page 2
Registration Research) and Field Center Director for IR-4 located at NWREC. At the recent IR-4 Western Regional Coordination meeting held in Portland this past April, Joe received well-deserved national recognition for his accomplishments over the years. The award was presented by IR-4’s national Executive Director, Jerry Baron, from Rutgers University.

“Joe has been a great leader in our program nationally,” Jerry said. “I believe he runs one of the best state programs in the entire country. He and his team’s work in Oregon is a model for every other state in the nation to emulate.”

Mike Bondi, NWREC’s Director, echoed these comments. “One of the things I’ve really come to appreciate over the past several years is the important work IR-4 does to provide new crop management tools for our farmers—from the vegetable growers to berry crops, the nursery and greenhouse industry, cranberries, cherries, grain and forage. Every one of these groups can’t speak any more highly about the critical value of this program and the university’s role in ensuring we have pesticide products that work to control the weeds, diseases and insects we need to deal with, plus to ensure these products meet food and worker safety requirements.”

The work of Joe and his NWREC team—Gina Koskela, Senior Research Associate, and Pete Sturman, Biotechnician—is entirely grant funded. Joe receives funding support from the USDA through the IR-4 program nationally to develop key data sets on specific Oregon crop pesticide registration needs. Also, funding is provided each year by the Oregon Department of Agriculture, commodity commissions and grower associations, and chemical companies. About $250-300,000 of funding is managed each year to address local needs.

“We believe the IR-4 program needs to grow to develop new directions in pesticide use,” says Bondi. “Pesticide management tools will continue to be essential for farm production in the state. We need to continue to be on the leading edge of change and advancement that is all about safe use and minimal environmental impact.”

**Latest Research on Organic Blueberry Production**

NWREC is home to cutting-edge research and development. OSU Ph.D. student in the Dept. Horticulture, Javier Fernandez-Salvador, is working with Extension Berry Crops Specialist, Bernadine Strik. He is conducting a two-year study to learn more about the impact of variety, mulch type, and fertilizer on nutrient update and carbon sequestration in organic blueberry production over the growing season.

Javier’s project began this past May by digging up selected, whole, mature plants from Strik’s long-term, one-acre organic blueberry research trial at NWREC. The plants were separated into all of their parts (leaves, shoots, fruit, old wood and roots) and, then, the nutrient content will be measured. The ultimate goal is to learn more about how these plants grow and use nutrients and to help inform organic growers of the best fertilization strategies. The study will continue throughout the summer with continued sampling at five different times and stages of plant development. In all, about 100 plants will be dug, separated, and measured.

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**Calendar of Events**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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| June 24    | Advanced Tractor Safety and Operations. 8:00-4:30pm. REGISTRATION CLOSED; CLASS FULL. |
| June 26    | Last Friday NWREC Public Farm Tour (2:00-4:00pm). Free tour of research center. Call office (503-678-1264) to let us know you are coming. Farm bus holds 24. |
| July 1     | Caneberry Field Day (1:00-5:00pm). No registration needed. Donation suggested to cover cost of ice cream served with berries. |
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| August 26  | International Trials Conference Tour. By invitation. |

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Latest Research on Organic Blueberry Production

Javier hauling away blueberry bush being analyzed for nutrient content in various portions of plants.

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High School and college students are lined up for summer work experience at NWREC, again, this year. Twenty one young adults will be working—and, some have already started—around the farm on general operations and/or working with researchers and Extension faculty on specific projects.

As our summer staff has grown over the past few years, the need to better organize to recruit, train and support these important workers has become a growing necessity. Shelley Hughes, NWREC’s Office Manager, teaming up with Amanda Vance (Berry Program Research Assistant), Derek Wells (Assistant Farm Manager), and Geoff Lewis ( Facilities Manager), developed a summer worker orientation manual and training session.

“Our goal was to streamline the orientation process for our summer workers,” Hughes said. “We wanted everyone to get the same information, all hear it together, and standardize the processes and communication. Over the past few years, we have struggled with so many students and not preparing them as well as we would like. We want the students to have a good experience. They do important work at the Center. But, we have expectations that need to be met, too.”

NWREC’s first training, held on Saturday, May 16, reached about 2/3s of the summer crew and was a good start to the new process. Other workers will be trained as they report for duty.

Extension Vegetable Specialist, Ed Peachey, is launching an herbicide screening trial on vegetable and flower crops this summer at NWREC. Peachey does one of these large field trials every four or five years. The purpose of the trial is to assess damage and phyto-toxicity of various herbicide treatments to commonly grown crops. About 40 vegetable and flower seed crops are being evaluated this summer on the 2 1/2 acre test plot. Herbicides being tested include pre- and post-emergent products and organic-approved herbicides for stale seedbed application.

“The idea behind this project is to identify better methods to control weeds in vegetable crops. We are continually looking for herbicides with lower use rates and less environmental impact. Field trials like this one compare new products with those currently used by growers, and how well they fit into an overall IPM (integrated pest management) program. These trials are often the first step in identifying new weed control strategies that will eventually be evaluated by the IR-4 minor crops program of the USDA.”

Peachey began work as the Vegetable Specialist in the Willamette Valley a year ago following the retirement of Bob McReynolds at NWREC and Dan McGrath in Linn County. Ed is based on campus in Corvallis and works with vegetable and specialty seed growers throughout the valley.

Ed plans to have a field day for farmers later in the summer. Watch the NWREC website for more information.
Orchard Crops Faculty Candidates Visit

A new faculty Extension specialist position focusing on orchard crop management is in the final stages of hiring. A national search was initiated this past winter with a pool of candidates identified in last April. Potential candidates were selected for phone interviews and, eventually, for visits to NWREC and OSU's campus in Corvallis. The personal visits were hosted the second week of June. A decision on hiring is expected before the end of the month.

“This is an important position to be filled,” said Mike Bondi, NWREC Director. “The position has been a long time in coming. But, we believe we have good candidates for consideration and hope to be successful in the hiring.”

Robin Rosetta, NWREC’s Nursery Integrated Pest Management faculty member will be co-chairing the next search—scheduled to begin with advertising by the end of June. She offers these perspectives.

“The job market for faculty members has been really heating up over the past year. Our search pools have been smaller and candidates are often looking at more than one position or offer. Also, our pipeline of potential candidates that will have the educational background and experience we need here in Oregon for our position is a bit limited.”

The Nursery Research/Extension position at NWREC will serve nursery and greenhouse growers throughout the Willamette Valley. The faculty member will work on production science aspects of growing the variety of crops raised by growers in the region.

“Our goal is to have the new faculty member hired and at NWREC by the end of the year,” said Rosetta.

Nursery Position Back to Drawing Board

Our last newsletter reported progress on the hiring of a Nursery Research and Extension faculty member at NWREC. At that time, we were negotiating with our preferred candidate. Unfortunately, that hiring didn’t work out well for us. Our top candidate decided to remain at their home institution. And, our second choice candidate had already taken another position by the time we were able to get back to them.

As a result, the hiring process search was closed and we have been “on hold” since the end of 2014. Over the past months we have re-evaluated the position, job description and how to approach our next attempt.

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Neonicotinoid insecticides (known as “neonics”) have been in the news a lot over the past two years. A significant bumble bee kill at a shopping center in Wilsonville in 2013 was the first major event. A bee kill the next year in the Eugene area, and other such incidents in Oregon, raised further questions about this class of insecticides. Even though, in most cases, these bee kills were due to misapplication of the pesticide, they raised questions about just how safe the neonic insecticides are to bees.

Neonic Project Comes to NWREC, too

The research is being conducted as a contracted study with Craig Collins, Collins Agricultural Consultants, Inc., based in Oregon City. “This is important work,” said OSU’s Joe DeFrancesco, Director of the IR-4/ Specialty Crops Research and Registration Program in Oregon. “Bees, in general, are major contributors to biodiversity and ecosystem function by providing pollination to many flowering plants. Honey bees, in particular, are especially important in the production of food crops, helping to enhance yields. It’s critical that we have data from controlled field studies to assess impacts and determine how neonicotinoids can be used successfully without harm to both managed and native bee populations.” Once the current study on ornamental plants is completed, a similar study may be conducted on a variety of agricultural crops, adding to the growing body of knowledge about the neonicotinoid class of insecticides.
NWREC Harvest Dinner—Save the Date

The date has been set for the NWREC Harvest Dinner—an event growing in popularity each year. The 2014 Harvest Dinner was the largest, yet, with more than 120 attendees.

This year’s Harvest Dinner will be Friday, October 2 beginning at 5:30pm with social time, visiting and appetizers. Dinner will be at 6:30 and the program following at 7:30.

According to Mike Bondi, NWREC’s Director, “The Harvest Dinner is a special time when we reflect on the past year at the Research Center, thank the many people involved in our programs, and recognize significant accomplishments. It’s also a good time to see and hear from some of our key administrators from OSU and build support for the importance of our work at NWREC.”

Planning is just getting started. But, a tradition of the NWREC dinner is a unique meal prepared, in part, with a variety of produce grown at the Center and coming from our research and demonstration projects—plus the bounty of local farmers who grow food in the area and work with the faculty and staff at NWREC.

“We have several vegetable variety trials this year, so we hope to have lots of veggies to work with!”

Rufus Lalone, the well-known weather guy at WxCafe®, enjoying the festivities of the 2014 NWREC Harvest Dinner. Rufus is already signed up to be a Table Sponsor at this year’s event.

Bondi is recruiting table sponsors for the Harvest Dinner, again, this year. Table Sponsors help defray the cost of the event and receive dinner tickets for themselves and/or guests and are recognized for this support in program advertising and during the dinner event. Sponsorship categories are $250, $500, $1,000 and $2,500. For information about being a Table Sponsor, contact Bondi at michael.bondi@oregonstate.edu.

“Friends” members and other supporters receive complimentary invitations to the Harvest Dinner. See below.

Membership—Friends of North Willamette Research and Extension Center

YES, I WANT TO BECOME A FRIEND OF THE NORTH WILLAMETTE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER!

Name:________________________________________
Address: ____________________________________________ City, State, Zip: ____________________________
Phone(s): ____________________________ Email(s): ____________________________

☐ I prefer to remain anonymous. Please do not publish my name in future publications.

Membership Category (circle one):
$25 Member $100 Second Crop $500 Director’s Club $2,500 President’s Club
$50 First Crop $250 Bumper Crop $1,000 Dean’s Club $5,000 Sustainable Agriculture Club

Make checks payable to: OSU Foundation—NWREC
Mail to: North Willamette Research and Extension Center, 15210 NE Miley Road, Aurora, OR 97002

Membership forms for the Friends of North Willamette Research and Extension Center are also available by contacting the NWREC office at 503-678-1264 or downloading from the website at http://oregonstate.edu/dept/NWREC.

Contact Director, Mike Bondi, for more information or to discuss life or deferred gifts options.
Phone: 503-678-1264 • Fax: 503-678-5986 • E-mail: michael.bondi@oregonstate.edu • Cell. 503-705-2434

Congratulationsto
Marion County Extension

In May voters in Marion County overwhelmingly passed a ballot measure to create a service district for OSU Extension. More than 72% of voters approved the measure. The district will have the opportunity to levy up to a maximum of 5 cents per $1,000 of assessed property value within the county. The average home owner could be assessed up to about $12 per year with the funds dedicated to support Extension programs and services available to county residents. A full rate levy in Marion County will raise about $900,000 per year of funding for Extension.

The agricultural community in Marion County was a strong supporter of the district effort and the programs that will be funded including 4-H, agriculture, Master Gardeners and families, and forestry.

The North Willamette Research and Extension Center provides important support for many of the region’s agri-
The North Willamette Research and Extension Center is becoming a primary place for farm equipment and tractor safety training in the state of Oregon—not to mention, the entire Pacific Northwest. What started out three summers ago as a first-time training to certify youth 14 to 17 years old to work for farmers in the community—and meet national safety and insurance standards—is growing to meet more and more needs.

NWREC now offers two three-day youth farm tractor safety and certification trainings each year. One is held during Spring Break; the other the first week school is out for the summer—this year, June 15-17. The three day training includes nearly 24 hours of classroom and field instruction. Only 20 registrants are taken for each class to maintain a high-quality training with lots of time on the equipment. The program is managed by the Clackamas County Extension office and 4-H program in Oregon City who tracks the certification, too. NWREC farm management staff do all the instruction.

In addition, NWREC has been teaching adult farm equipment trainings, too. Typically, these are one-day sessions and focus on practical, hands-on, introductory skills. Derek Wells, NWREC Farm Management Assistant and lead instructor for the tractor training sessions, said, “Our goal is the make sure youth and adults know basic tractor safety information, how the equipment operates, safe driving procedures, and how to hook up and unhook farm equipment implements. There aren’t many places where you can go to get this kind of instruction for youth or adults—plus get the practice needed with the equipment to build the skills.

A beginning adult class was taught at NWREC on June 9. Fifteen students came to NWREC from throughout the valley—from Portland to Eugene and Bend. One couple participating in the workshop together offered this comment, “Thanks again for the excellent Adult Tractor Safety class and to all those that participated with you in teaching this class. We had a good time and learned some important skills today. Well worth the cost and time.”

Further growth in the program over the past two years has now led to a Women’s ONLY farm equipment safety training class and advanced classes for both youth and adults.

NWREC Farm Manager, Marc Anderson, said, “We have had great support from the business community to provide these trainings. It is an important community service. We see the need to provide a place for more tractor time, plowing and discing fields, cultivating row crops, and learning about technology options on farm equipment. These topics will make up our more advanced trainings.”

As the training programs have grown, more and more staff time, supplies and equipment has been needed. Farm equipment dealers like Pape and Ag West have provided tractors—at no cost—for the trainings. Other businesses have provided lunches, advertising and teaching support.

To support the future development of the farm equipment safety training programs, NWREC has launched a new Farm Equipment Training Consortium of funding partners to support this effort. According to Mike Bondi, NWREC Director, “We want to raise funding support so we can back fill for our farm staff to free them up to teach the classes. What makes our program unique is that we have people teaching the classes and providing practical experience that work with the equipment day in and day out. You just can’t get this learning opportunity anywhere else.”

Bondi is searching for community partners—individuals, businesses, agencies and organizations—who want to have their names attached to the farm equipment safety training program. His goal is to raise about $25,000 per year to hire additional seasonal and summer help for NWREC farm management, purchase needed supplies for the program, develop promotion and marketing materials, fund program evaluation and documentation needs, and provide scholarships for those unable to afford the training.

The Clackamas Chapter of the Farm Bureau is the first organization to come forward to support the Consortium. In May, the Clackamas Chapter contributed $2,500 for the 2015 program.

“We are just beginning our community outreach now,” said Bondi. “Our goal is to attract funding from a number of groups or individuals. If we get enough contributors, we can fund the program with many small gifts, so no one has to write a big check. We want this to be a sustainable program, supported by many around the region.”

For more information or to get involved, contact Bondi at 503-705-2434 or michael.bondi@oregonstate.edu.
Art About Agriculture Coming to NWREC!

What do art and agriculture have in common? Well, quite a bit! What’s more beautiful than a sunrise or sunset over a well-manicured farm field? Who doesn’t appreciate the artistic design of an historic barn?

Oregon State University’s College of Agricultural Sciences began a project to connect art and agriculture through a special art show they hosted in 1983. The art show encouraged artists to investigate agriculture and natural resources themes for creating their works of art—to develop an understanding and appreciation among Oregon’s diverse audiences.

Now, more than 30 years later, the Art About Agriculture show is an annual event that includes about a dozen juried artists contributing about 25 to 40 examples of their work around a specific theme. The annual shows often travel to two or three galleries in the state—as well as, on campus in Corvallis.

For many years a unique themed poster has been prepared as an advertisement and promotion for the Art About Agriculture show. The posters, alone, tell an interesting story and share impressions about agriculture in the state and in our varied regions of the state.

NWREC has received, on loan, copies of most of the show posters and will be displaying them in the Center’s Main office for public viewing.

Sample posters from the Art About Agriculture program in the College of Agricultural Sciences at OSU.

More County Extension News—an other district moving forward

In 2008 voters in Clackamas County formed a service district for OSU Extension. The maximum levy is 5 cents per $1,000 of assessed property value. Prudent spending and a vision for a new Extension Education Center is starting to take shape as a benefit of adequate funding for Extension.

Extension Regional Administrator, Mike Bondi, has administrative responsibility for the Clackamas County Extension office in Oregon City. Bondi, and his faculty and staff in that office, are now working with a Portland-based architectural design firm, Opsis Architecture, LLC., to develop concepts for new offices, conference facilities, demonstration kitchens, and landscape gardens. Clackamas Extension is planning a 10,000-15,000 square foot complex and are hoping the Clackamas County Commissioners will allow construction on their Red Soils county government office campus. This would be the first time Extension would be housed in a building designed for their specific needs in their 98 year history in the county.

The Clackamas County Commissioners own the North Willamette Research and Extension Center farm property. Oregon State University has a long-term no-cost lease with Clackamas County for agricultural research and teaching at the Center. OSU owns, manages, and maintains all of the buildings and structures on the property.
It's that time of year for the annual summer Community Open House at the North Willamette Research and Extension Center on Miley Road. This is the time when we open up to the public and community to share our work, show you around the farm, and provide an opportunity to taste berries and take home fresh veggies.

This year's Open House will be Wednesday, July 29 from 4:00 to 7:00pm. Hay wagon farm tours will depart the Main office area every 45 minutes beginning at 4:00pm. Educational stations and displays will be set up with the research and Extension Service faculty and staff to explain their work and answer your questions. Tractor driving—always a very popular activity for some—will be available, again this year. OSU Master Gardeners will be present to answer your home landscape and gardening questions. OSU Family Food Educators will share tips and ideas for proper food preservation and canning methods.

The Open House is a fun and educational event for all ages. Special youth activities are organized by the Master Gardeners. The Canby High School Future Farmers of America students will be grilling for anyone interested in enjoying dinner during your time at NWREC.

At special feature for this year's Community Open House will be OSU's Art About Agriculture display highlighting this unique program over the past 30 years. Come to enjoy a mix of culture with your farming and gardening!

For more information see NWREC's website at http://oregonstate.edu/dept/NWREC.