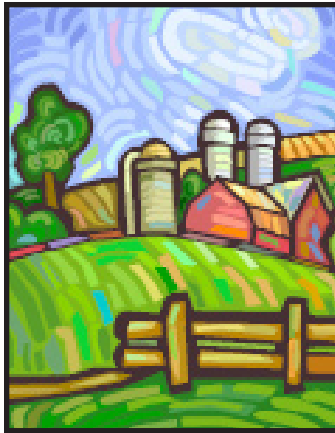


CULTIVATING SUCCESS in 2006

Starting an agricultural business can be difficult for new and aspiring farmers in the Puget Sound area. Good farmland is hard to come by and finding effective ways to market agricultural products can be challenging. Experienced farmers often deal with similar pressures. WSU King County Extension is addressing these concerns and providing help to both aspiring and existing farmers through Cultivating Success, a three-part course series developed by WSU, University of



Idaho and the nonprofit, Rural Roots. Cultivating Success courses emphasize the practical skills that farmers need to succeed. Combining the vast expertise of county extension, land grant faculty, and local farmer experts, these classes cover the development of practical farming knowledge in the areas of whole farm planning, resource stewardship, livestock and crop production strategies, finance, marketing, and business entrepreneurship.

2006 Accomplishments

- Fifteen students successfully completed the fourteen week course, Sustainable Small Farming and Ranching, resulting in twelve farm plans ready to be implemented. Post surveys of students found that the course was extremely useful and increased likelihood of starting successful farming businesses.

- Future farmers are diverse. Over half the class was female and visiting nationalities included Japanese and Peruvian. Foreign students were excited to learn about small farming strategies and have created long-term relationships with King County farmers.

- The Cultivating Success program has created promising partnership with the not-for-profit organization, 21-Acres. Our plan is to offer on-farm experiential learning and mentorship opportunities for Cultivating Success students. The third class will take place during the growing season of 2007 where students have the opportunity to farm from planting seeds to direct marketing at 21-Acres in Woodinville.

- Fourteen Washington State counties offered Sustainable Small Acreage Farming & Ranching Overview Course with class sizes up to thirty farmers totaling 127 farmers to complete the course in 2006.



New Farmers learn from the experiences of Fall City Farms.

Photo: Todd Murray

Partnerships

The continual success of the Cultivating Success program is due to the many partnerships and sponsors that have supported its initiation and implementation. Curriculum for the three-part course series was developed by Washington State University Extension, University of Idaho Extension, and Rural Roots, a non-profit food and farming organization. Funding for the program comes from the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program, USDA Risk Management Agency, and USDA Western Center for Risk Management Education. WSU faculty and staff around the northwest continue supporting this program in order to assist small farmers.

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*For more information on the
Cultivating Success course series visit
www.cultivatingsuccess.org
or call 206-205-3206*

