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fbhealthcare.com
Graduations are over and summer is underway. Washington’s food producers are in the middle of their growing season as the weather begins to warm.

You have probably read or heard in the news that Washington is in an epic drought. As we brace for warmer temperatures and drier conditions, fire is always a concern. When north central Washington was engulfed in flames last summer, more than 256,000 acres were affected and many people lost land, livestock and homes.

In the face of this devastation the agricultural community from across the state stepped up to help. Washington Farm Bureau members came to the rescue and raised more than $70,000 for victims of the Carlton Complex Fire.

With summer here, local farm stands are in full swing. Farmers are selling locally grown, farm fresh produce and flowers. They sell a wide variety of goods, while offering family friendly attractions such as corn mazes, petting zoos and pumpkin patches. Be sure to check your local farm stand and bring the whole family. Washington’s farmers are excited to see you!

With the kids out of school and as summer plans take shape, remember the farmers and ranchers who are dedicated to producing safe, wholesome food for your family. From all of us at Washington Farm Bureau, have a safe and fun summer!

Mike LaPlant
President, Washington Farm Bureau
Watch your energy savings grow.

Our wattsmart® Business program offers cash incentives for replacing worn irrigation components such as sprinklers, regulators, nozzles and gaskets. Incentives for upgrading to efficient farm and dairy equipment also are available for VFDs on irrigation and vacuum pumps, milk pre-coolers, ventilation fans and more. Typical incentives range from $200 to more than $5,000.

Please call before you start your project and we’ll walk you through the application process. The incentive check arrives a few weeks after a qualifying application is received.

The new equipment will make your farm or dairy run more efficiently. And your energy savings will continue to grow. To apply, visit bewattsmart.com or call 971-244-8178.
The new equipment will make your farm or dairy run more efficiently. And your energy savings will continue to grow. To apply, please call before you start your project and we’ll walk you through the application process. The incentive check arrives a few weeks after a qualifying application is received.

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The Washington Farm Bureau publishes NEIGHBORS™ to acknowledge farmers and ranchers and promote agricultural products. We hope to foster a better understanding of the importance of Washington’s $49 billion agriculture industry and to reinforce traditional family farm values with all people in the state. NEIGHBORS™ reflects the dedication of Washington’s farmers and ranchers who work to provide abundant, affordable and safe food products.

Cover photo: Taken by Michael Martin, who lost his home to the Carlton Complex Fire.
Road to Recovery

By Gail Greenwood Ayres
For Washington Farm Bureau

For most people, it is hard to imagine great walls of fire roaring mile after mile, day after day, incinerating nearly everything in its broad path. But for those who witnessed the Carlton Complex Fire last July, those images are seared in their memories.

Ignited by lightning strikes July 13 and 14, 2014, in North Central Washington, four separate fires converged to become one blazing inferno. At times the Carlton Complex Fire traveled up to 50 mph, scorching five acres a second and wreaking havoc and destruction through forests, farmland and towns, affecting every aspect of people’s lives and livelihoods in Okanogan County.

The flames raged through the towns of Brewster and especially Pateros, becoming the largest and most expensive wildfire in Washington state history.

By Aug. 2, the Carlton Complex Fire was under control, the oppressive smoke began to dissipate, and the grim work of assessing the staggering losses began.

In all, 239 single family homes, 54 cabins, 97 shops and garages, 163 barns and outbuildings – a total of 553 structures, many of them uninsured – were destroyed, for a total of $29.5 million of structural loss in Okanogan County. That doesn’t even take into account the infrastructure losses including highways, roads and water systems, as well as fiber, phone and electrical lines and thousands of miles of fences.

“It was just brutal,” said Jon Wyss of Brewster. “In all, more than 400 square miles, which is
more than 256,000 acres, were affected. That’s four times as much land as the entire city of Seattle.”

Thousands of wild animals and hundreds of head of livestock were killed in the blaze, but thankfully no humans were. However, two lives were claimed indirectly because of the fire.

While Wyss, the president of the Okanogan County Farm Bureau, struggled to find words to express the expanse of the devastation, he was also at a loss to describe his feelings when members of Washington Farm Bureau immediately began to help their neighbors and fellow farmers.

And help was needed. Following the fire, the emergencies continued. A heavy rain created massive mudslides that demolished more homes and cut off access to small businesses along the highway during the height of their busy season. But the most immediate widespread concern was that the fire had decimated the electrical power system.

Physically and emotionally exhausted, farmers became engaged in a race against time to get the water they needed without electricity to power their pumps.

“There we were in the heart of cherry season, apple growing season and cattle were out on the range and alfalfa growing and we didn’t have the electricity for the pumps to get water,” Wyss said. “And there was no power for homes or to operate many of the tools needed to begin recovery.”

So even those whose land, crops, orchards and animals had been spared by the fire still suffered from a lack of power and water.

“How do you run the water for your cattle, your orchard, your alfalfa, your home, without electricity?” Wyss said.

The answer was to ask for help.

“So when Don Jacobs, the regional director for Farm Bureau, asked what we needed, we said, ‘we need every size generator possible,’” Wyss said. “He put out an APB that we needed generators. Within three hours the first huge one arrived on the back of a flatbed truck,” Wyss recalled, still clearly touched by the memory.

And the generators kept coming. Small generators arrived that could help save food in someone’s freezer to huge ones capable of getting water to orchards and livestock. The generators came on pickup trucks, flat beds and trailers, from as far away as Redding, Calif. And Salem, Ore., but mostly from Moses Lake, the Tri-Cities, Yakima, Spokane, even North Bend and Seattle.

“When it was all said and done, 400 generators loaned from farmers were brought to help,” Wyss said, recalling the relief of everyone in the communities – many of whom hadn’t slept in days.

“There wasn’t quite enough for everyone, but on their own the people shared the borrowed generators with their neighbor. They would water their orchard and then take the generator so their neighbor could water his orchard or his livestock.

But it wasn’t just generators that saved the day. Farm Bureau members also organized a hay drive to bring free feed to farmers who lost pasture land and feed in the fire.

“Farmers from the Tri-Cities, Ellensburg, Yakima – all over, really – donated hay. They brought in truckload after truckload of hay from the Basin,” Wyss said.

In addition, the Washington Farm Bureau’s Disaster Relief Fund raised $70,000 for victims of the wildfires to help them to start to put their lives back together.

Other issues the farmers and ranchers faced include 863 miles of fencing that needed to be rebuilt – to keep cattle in at some places and deer out of others.
Scenes from during and after the devastating Carlton Complex Fire.

Photo by Q13 FOX

Photo by Melissa Luck

Photo by Jessica Robinson

Photo by Ken Stokes
Many ranchers had permits to graze on the State Department of Natural Resources land, which was charred and will have a two-year rest to recover before animals are allowed to graze on it again, making feeding livestock more difficult and very expensive.

On the other side of the downed fence, deer that survived the fire lost much of their food supply. And, between their hunger and the downed fences, they invaded orchards and farms, eating this year’s crops, Wyss said.

Cattle fencing costs $8,000 a mile to build and deer fencing $15,000, he said.

Wyss serves as the chair of the Carlton Complex Long Term Recovery Group. Organizers in Okanogan County, including Wyss, created the group, which includes three representatives from three different regions within the county, and provides a place to write and receive grants for help in rebuilding. The new organization successfully worked with the Washington Farm Bureau, U.S. Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, as well as Rep. Doc Hastings to secure federal funds for rebuilding fencing- $9.6 million from the Farm Service Agency, which has already helped farmers rebuild fences.

Even with money coming to help rebuild fences, the faster they can be built the better. The WFB Young Farmers and Ranchers from throughout the state brought their time, energy and expertise for a weekend to do just that, or whatever else area farmers needed.

This organization within Farm Bureau consists of 18 to 35-year-olds and is coordinated by Kristen Hinton.

“Within this group we have a diverse agricultural background and skill sets,” Hinton said. “We are there to help however we are needed.”

“We just thought: ‘Let’s help our neighbors by doing what we know,’ ” she added. “Our hearts really went out to all the people affected, especially because this group is involved in similar work.”

It’s help like that, which makes Wyss and others in Okanogan County grateful they are part of a larger group.

“This has been a huge ordeal, and it is a long road to recovery,” Wyss said.

“For the generators, the hay, the money and the time and help, we are just eternally grateful,” he said. “There is no way to describe what it means to have people come from outside of your community to help. You can’t put that kind of gratitude into words.”

In the meantime, the emotional and economic recovery for the people in Okanogan County echoes the natural recovery from the disaster. In some places the deeply scarred land looks like a moonscape, but in other places rebirth has begun, bountiful mushrooms have popped up in some places and beautiful meadows sprinkled with wildfires have appeared over some of the charred land – a visual demonstration that life and health can emerge from the ashes.
While the issue was still hot – with the fire literally still burning – Wyss and others began crafting language for legislation to help prevent this type of fire from happening in Washington again. The legislation, which was sponsored by Rep. Joel Kretz of the 7th Legislative District, was signed into law this spring by Gov. Jay Inslee.

It allows private property owners to create a fire line on state land if their private property is facing an imminent threat of fire coming from Department of Natural Resources land. Having that ability last July could have saved much destruction, advocates said.

Unfortunately, the new legislation may get an opportunity to be used soon. The North Central Washington region is already experiencing drought conditions.

Right now the Carlton Complex Long Term Recovery Group has a goal of raising $6.3 million to build 40 houses in the next two years for some of the area’s most vulnerable residents – the elderly, families with children, individuals with medical concerns and people who are unable to qualify for low-interest financing to rebuild on their own. Some $1.3 million has already been raised, and the group plans to use volunteer labor to rebuild 11 homes this spring and summer, 15 more in the fall and the final 14 in 2016.

Tax deductible donations for rebuilding the communities can be sent to:

Community Foundation of North Central Washington
9 S. Wenatchee Ave.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(Indicate in the memo line that the money is for the Carlton Complex Long Term Recovery Group.)

In addition, the Washington State Farm Bureau’s Disaster Fund is still accepting donations to benefit those affected by the Carlton Complex Fire.

To learn more about the Carlton Complex Fire, go to www.carltoncomplexrecovery.com. This website includes videos of the fire and up-to-date information on what is needed, how the recovery is progressing, and volunteer opportunities.
When the Carleton Complex Fire reached Pateros, “our house was totaled and my two daughters’ houses were both destroyed,” said Bill Daniels, who with his wife, Carma, now lives in a three-bedroom house outside of Brewster along with their two daughters, two sons-in-law and six grandchildren.

The tight conditions are not ideal, but Daniels said they are glad to be alive and they have plans to build new houses.

Three days after the fire, they received a borrowed generator while living in tents. They later moved to camp trailers and appreciated having the power the generator brought. Then a friend of the family rented a larger generator for the family and paid the monthly rental bill for them.

“Having power to the trailers, to the refrigerators to keep food, was so nice,” Daniels said. “My wife has cancer and to have a generator so she could watch TV, and run the oxygen machine and the air conditioner so she could stay cool and comfortable was so helpful.”

Some 400 generators were quickly and generously loaned through Washington Farm Bureau channels to those affected by the fire.

Another recipient was 68-year-old Rita McAlvey. She lived by herself on a 10-acre parcel more than 12 miles north of Brewster. The fire burned her home and all the outbuildings on the anniversary of her 24th year in her home. Her son and her brother were also burned out of their homes.

“I received a 7,500-watt generator which worked extremely well through the winter,” McAlvey said.

For Al and Judy Littlefield, 70 and 80, of the Chilliwist Valley, their losses included their home, more than 10 outbuildings, tractors, quads, a boat, motors, a gun collection, guest suite cabins and many tools. Insurance covered just 10 percent of their personal property loss.

“Having that generator meant that anytime I needed to operate power tools to build the cabin, I could,” McAlvey said. She also was able to pick up a new sewing machine and continue sewing and quilting in her cabin.

McAlvey said she is on the list of the first 11 houses to be built this summer.

“I still don’t have running water in the cabin, but I grew up with an outhouse,” she said. Despite her lack of complaints, she’s clearly eager to have the new house and hopes to turn her little cabin into a sewing room or a bunk house for guests.

Her daughter and son-in-law bought her a travel trailer and then began to build a 16-by-20 foot cabin.

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As the Smoke Cleared

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However Al is grateful to be alive.

“We had five minutes to get out. I was asleep and my wife woke me – thank God for her!”

Recently they received money to build a fence.

“We are right in the middle of range land. My wife is not too excited about range cattle grazing on our lawn!” he said.

Having other farmers give so generously and care so much means a great deal, Al said.

“My wife worked for more than 32 years with WSU Cooperative Extension and knows first-hand how caring and sharing farmers are.”
PROVEN EFFECTIVE
Developed by a veteran firefighter who discovered an unburnt disposable baby diaper, Barricade® protects homes and property against wildfires. Fire departments like the Los Angeles City Fire Department have been using Barricade®, and hundreds of homes across the United States and Canada have been saved. Now homeowners can use the same technology to protect their homes from wildfires and smoke damage, effectively and easily. Barricade’s super-absorbent polymers form a gel barrier that can withstand high temperatures to protect coated surfaces from fire.

EASY TO USE
The Barricade® Home Kit™ comes complete with everything you’ll need to apply Barricade® Gel to your home with a regular garden hose. Simply follow instructions and thoroughly coat eaves, walls, windows, roofs, surrounding ground, and even vehicles. Barricade® can be applied many hours before a fire approaches, allowing you and your family to retreat to a safe place until the threat passes. If necessary, the Barricade® protective coating can be maintained for several days by simply re-misting with water.

PROTECT ALL YOUR PROPERTY
FROM FIRE AND SMOKE DAMAGE
- Houses, cabins & vacation homes
- Patios & backyards
- Garages & sheds
- Gardens, shrubs & landscaping
- Vehicles
- Boats & RVs

ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE
Barricade® won’t harm surfaces or plants and animals when used properly. Just rinse it off with water and it biodegrades.

Your home is a lifetime of cherished memories...
...fire can take it away in minutes.

“Barricade® saved our home...Everyone, including experienced firefighters, who has seen our house is amazed ...There was no damage to the house at all – even the vinyl eaves were protected. It was as if the house had been sealed in a wet blanket, keeping it from burning and keeping the smoke and heat out.”

Save Your World.

Don’t wait until it’s too late, order your Barricade today.
Farm Bureau members receive a 10% discount. Visit wsfb.com/barricade-fire-gel for details.
Eating Fresh
Local farmers and restaurants forging new relationships
By Andy Cook, Washington Restaurant Association

As locally grown foods become increasingly popular, members of the Washington Restaurant Association (WRA) and WFB continue to look for ways to expand their farm-to-table relationships.

The goal for these restaurants is to prepare and share great food that they are proud of. A vital component of that comes down to the quality of ingredients. When these culinary crafters take farm-to-table practices and share them with their guests, they are adding value by telling a story of their core values and community ties.

As these stories and values resonate with their guests, restaurants gain loyal patrons, and their affiliate farmers earn the recognition for their hard work and dedication.

In a recent publication WRA profiled three of its members’ efforts to feature locally grown food. The following examples illustrate the relationships these operators have with their local farmers:

Garden to Gourmet, Yelm
gardentogourmet.net

Patrick LeBlanc and Daniel Juarez run Garden to Gourmet and have a network of local farms they coordinate with regularly. In many cases one of them will drive directly to their farmers to pick up their products.

“Meeting with our suppliers who are themselves small businesses ensures a personal relationship that helps us all,” LeBlanc said. “Staying this local has the added benefit of showcasing a sense of community to our patrons. It does more than portray our commitment to the fabric of our community; it tells a story, a local story, starring people and business my clientele knows.”

Manito Tap House, Spokane
manitotaphouse.com

Owner/operator Patrick McPherson locally sources a majority of his menu from local farmers, but the real focus at Manito is in its beer selection. It boasts 55 northwest beers on tap and maintains at least 20 cases of rare and local nano-breweries.

Manito does this for two big reasons: beer is yummy and they are made with high quality, locally grown barley. Washington-grown barley consistently ranks in the state’s top 25 commodities based on production value and ranks fourth in the nation in barley production.

Taylor Shellfish farms, Shelton
taylorshellfishfarms.com

Taylor Shellfish Farms have been practicing viable farming practices since 1890. For five generations they have farmed shellfish for tables, and now the Taylor family is setting up dining rooms of tables across western Washington.

The Taylor Shellfish restaurants sprang organically from their specialized market on Seattle’s Capitol Hill, which quickly became an oyster bar.

“We grew the concept and opened two more oyster bars that expanded the food and beverage offering to include location-specific farms for sourcing ingredients beyond what the local bays and inlets we nurture could provide,” said Marcelle Taylor, a fifth-generation family farmer who is tasked with marketing and restaurant development.

To learn how you can connect with restaurants in your area, contact the Washington Restaurant Association at warestaurant.org or call 360.956.7270 or 800.225.7166
WASHINGTON FAIR DATES

JULY

Cowlitz County Fair
July 22 - 25, 2015
Longview, WA
360-577-3121
www.cowlitzcountyfair.com

Thurston County Fair
July 29 - August 2, 2015
Olympia, WA
360-786-5453
www.co.thurston.wa.us /fair

AUGUST

Grays Harbor County Fair
August 5 - 9, 2015
Elma, WA
360-482-2651
www.ghcfairgrounds.com

Clark County Fair
August 7 - 16, 2015
Ridgefield, WA
360-397-6180
www.clarkcofair.com

Whidbey Island Area Fair
August 6 - 9, 2015
Langley, WA
360-221-4677
www.whidbeyislandfair.com

Pierce County Fair
August 6 - 9, 2015
Graham, WA
253-847-4754
www.piercecountyfair.com

San Juan County Fair
August 12 - 15, 2015
Friday Harbor, WA
360-378-4310
www.sjcfair.org

Skagit County Fair
August 12 - 15, 2015
Mt. Vernon, WA
360-336-9414
www.skagitcounty.net/fair

Skamania County Fair and Timber Carnival
August 12 - 16, 2015
Stevenson, WA
509-427-3980
www.skamaniacountyfair.com

Jefferson County Fair
August 14 - 16, 2015
Port Townsend, WA
360-385-1013
www.jeffcofairgrounds.com

Northwest Washington Fair
August 17 - 22, 2015
Lynden, WA
360-354-4111
www.nwwafair.com

Grant County Fair
August 18 - 22, 2015
Moses Lake, WA
509-765-3581
www.gcfairgrounds.com

Southwest Washington Fair
August 18 - 23, 2015
Chehalis, WA
360-740-1495
www.southwestwashingtonfair.net

Clallam County Fair
August 20 - 23, 2015
Port Angeles, WA
360-417-2551
www.clallamcountyfair.com

Klickitat County Fair
August 20 - 23, 2015
Goldendale, WA
509-773-3559
www.klickitatcountyfair.com

NE Washington Fair
August 20 - 23, 2015
Cusick, WA
509-445-1367
www.povn.com/pocofair

Wahkiakum County Fair
August 20 - 22, 2015
Skamokawa, WA
360-795 3480
www.co.wahkiakum.wa.us/depts/fair/index.htm

Benton Franklin Fair
August 25 - 29, 2015
Kennewick, WA
509-222-3749 ext. 6203
www.bentonfranklinfair.com

Kitsap County Fair - Stampede
August 26 - 30, 2015
Bremerton, WA
360-337-5350
www.kitsapgov.com/parks

North Central Washington District Fair
August 27 - 30, 2015
Waterville, WA
509-745-8480
www.douglascountywa.net/ncwfair
Evergreen State Fair  
August 27 - September 7, 2015  
Monroe, WA  
360-805-6700  
www.evergreenfair.org

Ferry County Fair  
September 4 - 6, 2015  
Republic, WA  
509-775-3146  
www.ferrycountyfair.com

Adams County Fair  
September 16 - 19, 2015  
Othello, WA  
509-750-6367  
www.adamscountyfair.org

Lacamas Community Fair  
August 29 - 30, 2015  
Roy, WA  
253-843-1566  
www.lacamasfair.com

Columbia County Fair  
September 10 - 12, 2015  
Dayton, WA  
509-629-1354  
www.columbiacountycfair- 
grounds.com

Garfield County Fair  
September 18 - 20, 2015  
Pomeroy, WA  
509-843-3701  
murphyp@wsu.edu

Lincoln County Fair  
August 14 -16, 2015  
Davenport, WA  
509-725-5161  
www.co.lincoln.wa.us

Okanogan County Fair  
September 10 - 13, 2015  
Okanogan, WA  
509-422-1621  
www.okfair.org

Columbia County Fair  
September 10 - 12, 2015  
Dayton, WA  
509-629-1354  
www.columbiacountycfair- 
grounds.com

SE Spokane County Fair  
September 25 - 27, 2015  
Rockford, WA  
509-291-4716  
www.sespokanecountyfair.org

Pacific County Fair  
August 26 - 29, 2015  
Menlo, WA  
360-942-3713  
dgraves2co.pacific.wa.us

Washington State Fair  
September 11 - 27, 2015  
Puyallup, WA  
253-845-1771  
www.thefair.com

SEPTEMBER

Walla Walla Fair & Frontier Days  
September 02 - 6, 2015  
August 31- September 4, 2016  
Walla Walla, WA  
509-527-3247  
www.wallawallafairgrounds. 
com

Chelan County Fair  
September 10 - 13, 2015  
Cashmere, WA  
509-782-3232  
www.chelancountyfair.com

For a full list of fair dates and locations, visit:  
www.wsfb.com/calendar

Kittitas County Fair  
September 03 - 7, 2015  
Ellensburg, WA  
509-962-7639  
www.kittitascountyfair.com

Palouse Empire Fair  
September 10 - 13, 2015  
Colfax, WA  
509-397-6263  
www.palouseempirefair.org

Spokane County Interstate Fair  
September 11 - 20, 2015  
Spokane Valley, WA  
509-477-2772  
www.interstatefair.org

Central Washington State Fair  
September 25 - October 4, 2015  
Yakima, WA  
509-248-7160  
www.fairfun.com

For a full list of fair dates and locations, visit:  
www.wsfb.com/calendar
Telehealth is a means of delivering health care by phone or other telecommunication technologies. Simply put, telehealth is a new way to deliver existing health care services. This new approach in health care can save families and businesses hundreds to thousands of dollars each year in health care costs.

Add to this other costs associated with traditional doctor’s office visits, trips to the emergency room, time off from work and travel expenses, and the potential savings add up.

Telehealth is now part of mainstream healthcare in the United States with millions of people and thousands of public agencies and companies adopting MyHealthPass services as a cost-saving solution of the problem of rising overall health care costs.

To get a better understanding of the benefits of telehealth, let’s start with a few easy questions:

• Have you ever woken up in middle of the night with a sick child and had to scramble for locating a doctor at midnight?
• Do you live in a rural area where getting to a doctor’s office or an urgent care clinic is an hour plus commute?
• Do you have regular health insurance but have a high deductible or co-payment?

MyHealthPass telehealth service provides a solution to these problems as well as significant health care savings.

MyHealthPass is an innovative method of delivering health care, including specialist care, to patients in rural areas and for those individuals who may not be getting the quality health care they need due to costly insurance deductibles or co-payment rates.

With MyHealthPass, you now have access to thousands of doctors nationwide, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, by phone or video. It is as simple as picking up the phone and talking to a board-certified U.S. doctor in internal medicine, pediatrics, or family medicine whenever you need it from virtually anywhere. You can even have medication prescribed, when necessary, without an office visit right over the phone.

The network of doctors that participate in this program currently provides service to almost 12 million Americans nationwide with an average response time of less than 23 minutes. MyHealthPass can be used for almost any non-emergency medical situation including cold and flu symptoms, bronchitis, allergies, rashes, pink eye, urinary tract infections, respiratory infection, sinus problems, ear infections and more.

According to the American Medical Association, 70 percent of doctor office visits, 50 percent of emergency room visits and 28 percent of pediatric emergency room visits can be handled by telehealth services like MyHealthPass.

MyHealthPass helps reduce the cost of health care for individuals and families. It covers an entire family household up to 8 people for less than $1 a day, and, unlike traditional health insurance plans, it does not have any deductibles, consultation fees or co-payments.

MyHealthPass also offers its members access to additional services including in-home lab testing, personal health assessments, health coaches, behavioral health specialists, nutrition specialists, patient advocacy and a prescription savings program at no additional cost. For example, MyHealthPass’ proprietary “Lab in a Box” service can save members $400 or more per test for the full lab report generated by this in-home test kit.

To learn more about MyHealthPass, visit www.getmyhealthpass.com/wsfb.
Do you and your family:

- Live in rural areas
- Have high co-pay and/or high deductible health insurance policies
- Not want to spend time going to a doctor’s office for common illnesses and sit in a germ-filled waiting room
- Not want to pack up the family in the middle of the night and wait in an emergency room
- Want to have a US doctor available 24/7 for non-emergency common illnesses, PLUS get prescriptions (when necessary) without leaving your house, right over the phone

Cover Your Entire Family for less than $1 a Day!

Your membership includes all of these services (billed monthly $21):

- Unlimited Access to Physicians 24/7/365
- MyHealthCoaches
- MyHealth Personal Health Assessment
- MyHealth Labs
- MyHealth Advocates
- MyHealth Pricing Tool
- MyHealth Rx
- MyHealth Back

Simply call us on the Farm Bureau dedicated Benefits Hotline at 866-721-0247 Monday through Friday (8am - 6pm CST) and speak with a dedicated Benefits Specialist who can answer any questions you may have, and even get you enrolled in as little as five minutes.

Or, visit us online at www.getmyhealthpass.com/wsfb

### LET’S TALK SAVINGS
Average annual savings for a family of 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Savings</th>
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<tr>
<td>Physician Visits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prescription Drugs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Lab Tests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Back Pain Physical Therapy</td>
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<td>Total Costs per year</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MyHealthPass</td>
<td>$252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL SAVINGS: $3898.00**
Farm Fresh

Farm Bureau members provide locally grown food

By Andy Barth

Farm stands have been around for centuries. They have been thought of as the heart of American agriculture. Before grain elevators and farmer’s cooperatives, producers would sell their goods at farmer’s markets and roadside stands. With consumer demand of knowing where their food comes from, farm stands are seeing a rebirth.

Bi-Zi Farms, Vancouver, WA

In the southwest corner of the state, there is another farm stand with roots that span generations.

The Zimmerman family arrived in the United States sometime around 1775. While the family does not know the exact year or location of their arrival, they do know that their ancestor, Michael Zimmerman, was born in North Carolina in 1799. The Zimmermans moved westward and settled in Ohio and Iowa. According to family historical accounts, in 1871 Michael’s son, Gabriel, sold the farm, and he and his family boarded a train for San Francisco, California. They spent that winter waiting for conditions to improve before sailing north to settle near the Columbia River and Fort Vancouver, which was then part of the Washington Territory.

More than a century later, the Zimmerman family continues to farm. Bill Zimmerman is the
patriarch of the farm they call Bi-Zi Farms. As the youngest of six children born to Arbra and Margareta Zimmerman, Bill excelled in school, graduating from Battle Ground High School in 1971 as vice-president of the Future Farmers of America (FFA). Bill credits his FFA experience for giving him the knowledge he needed to develop what is now Bi-Zi Farms. He began by raising hogs and cattle and doing custom haying on the side.

In 1993, Bill’s teenage son, Doug, asked to use some acreage to raise sweet corn. His first year brought him enough profit to buy a computer. After several years, each better than the last, Bill and Doug joined forces, deciding to expand Bi-Zi Farms with strawberries and a few other vegetables besides sweet corn. The family business was growing by leaps and bounds, so the Bi-Zi farm stand was created.

“It’s all family,” Bill said. “Doug still works with us. Our daughter-in-law, Sadie runs the store.”

Bi-Zi farms offers a wide variety of produce and hanging baskets. From strawberries and blackberries to squash, zucchini, tomatoes and peppers, the Zimmermans are able to sell farm fresh produce for less.

“We cut out the middle man,” Bill said. “Our produce goes from the field, directly to our customers. It boosts our sales tremendously.”

When fall rolls around, Bi-Zi farms holds a pumpkin patch and animal display for children to tour. Visitors can help feed the animals in the evening and ride ponies at the pumpkin patch. They have a hay-bale pyramid with tunnels to go through and hide in. An after-dark corn maze offers a fun and challenging obstacle course for those who feel brave enough to take it on.

“We can’t educate everyone about all things agriculture,” Bill said. “But we can show them a glimpse of what happens on a farm and where their food really comes from.”

The family strongly believes that continuous education is the key for their farm. Every year, they attend numerous classes during the winter months to keep up-to-date on any new varieties they think would be a good addition to the crops they offer.
Tucked into a quiet corner of Bellingham, surrounded by apartments and suburban neighborhoods, sits a local treasure. Joe’s Garden is a family-run farm and farm stand that partners with various farmers and orchardists in the area to ensure its customers have a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables to choose from. Yet a large amount of what brothers Nathan and Jason Weston sell is grown on their own six-acre farm.

Joe’s Gardens opens in March each year and sells more than 225 varieties of vegetables through June. They sell more than 100 varieties of flowers and, beginning in May, they will sell more than 250,000 potted plants.

Co-owners Nathan and Jason grew up on the farm, long before the Westons owned it. Joe’s Gardens has a long history of providing produce for the community. The boys’ father, Carl, began working for the former owners in 1959 and took over operations of the farm in 1983.

“The farm got its start from Joe and Ann Bertero back in the 1920s,” Nathan said. “They moved to our current location in 1933.”

Back then there were several farms in the area that trucked their produce from the garden to local markets and grocery stores.

Nathan and Jason took over the majority of the operations from their father in 2007.

The brothers have one important goal. “We want everyone to be able to walk out of our farm with a big bag of healthy fruits and vegetables for under 20 bucks,” Nathan said.

“We are using the best of modern technology,” Nathan said. “We are also stepping back 50 years in how we are doing stuff.”

The brothers conduct comprehensive soil analyses for each crop they produce. They utilize a variety of business apps to help run the operation. Their equipment, however, is from the 1950s and 1960s.

“We are a small farm, and we have to maximize every inch of our fields,” Nathan said. “We have
to plant our rows closer. Most farm rows are 24 to 36 inches apart. Our rows can be as close as eight inches.

In order to plant their rows closer together, the Westons use a Planet Jr. walk-behind tractor. Their weeds are pulled by hand.

Jason said he actually prefers the older equipment.

“I’m online literally every single day looking for that rare piece of equipment that is sitting out there,” Jason said.

As the family-run farm enters its fourth decade in business with the second generation now running the farm, Nathan and Jason both attribute their success to family support.

While Carl, the brothers’ father, turned the farm over to them, he and his wife Karol still play a role in daily operations.

“He is always in the background working,” Nathan said. “My mom is the same way. She takes charge of bookkeeping.”

Nathan and Jason’s wives also play a large role in the farm’s success. When Jason was sick during part of this year’s planting season, his wife, Maureen, hopped on the tractor and planted.

“We couldn’t do it without our wives,” Jason said.

Nathan’s son has a big interest in the farm and said he hopes he will take it over someday. Both brothers agree their chief aim is producing the best food for their customers, while educating the public about the importance of agriculture.

Contact information:
Website: joesgardens.com
Phone: 360-671-7639
Address: 3110 Taylor Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225
Shaffner Farms, Montesano, WA

About 45 minutes west of the capitol city of Olympia sits Shaffner Farms. It is another family owned and operated farm stand that offers everything from a variety of berries to a wide selection of vegetables.

Additionally, customers can purchase vegetables starts to grow in their own gardens. The Shaffners also offer hanging flower baskets for special occasions or to liven up porches.

“We sell about three tons of cucumbers a year,” said owner Owen Shaffner. “We also sell a ton and a half of beans every year.” They bring in produce like apples, cherries and pears from the eastern side of the state.

More than 20 years ago the Shaffners started the farm, which spans 40 acres outside Montesano.

The farm opens the first of May and stays open through the end of October.

“Locally grown produce is a big deal for us.” Shaffner said.

While the farm is the primary focus of the operation, the Shaffners believe in educating its customers and the public.

The farm offers pumpkin patches, hayrides, and corn and hay mazes. They have local schools come out to participate in the activities. Students can learn where their food comes from and can see what goes into growing produce.

Students are not the only ones learning about the food they eat.

“We had one woman who had never seen a carrot pulled from the ground before,” Shaffner said.

Contact Information:
Email: info@shaffnerfarms.com
Website: shaffnerfarms.com
Phone: (360) 249-6722
Address: 158 Geissler Road
Montesano, WA 98562

Going back to the small, family farm is becoming more appealing to Americans. Family-owned stands, like our featured farms, offer consumers locally grown products while boosting the rural economy. Be sure to check out farm stands in your area for fresh, locally grown produce to feed your family.
Small farms play an important role in Washington, and many offer direct sales to the public. A recent poll found that more than 66 percent of Washington residents felt it was important to make food purchases that would keep local farms in business.

Research conducted by the Washington State University (WSU) Small Farms Team found that both farmers and consumers have a strong interest in increasing marketing of locally grown foods. Roadside stands were the most popular form of direct marketing used by Washington farmers, followed by farmers markets, U-Pick programs, restaurant sales, and Community Supported Agriculture farms.

In Washington nearly 9 out of every 10 farms meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) definition of a “small farm.” USDA defines a small farm as having sales of less than $250,000 per year.

Recognizing the value small farms provide to state residents, 15 years ago the state Legislature created the Small Farms Program at WSU to develop education and research programs targeted specifically to the needs of small-scale farmers. The program works with farmers in communities across the state to successfully operate small farms that provide healthy locally grown foods.

Small farms face many challenges, such as intense development pressure, tightening environmental regulations, escalating farming and land costs, and competitive global markets. Another challenge is the critical number of farmers who will reach retirement age in the coming decade. More than half of all Washington farmers are over age 60.

Younger farmers are needed to follow in the footsteps of those who will be retiring. Most beginning farmers start out with small farms. That’s why the statewide WSU Small Farms Team is so important. Comprised of more than 45 county and campus-based extension, research and teaching faculty and key external partners, the team develops educational programs and conducts research based on the highest priorities identified by small farmers.

The Small Farms Team offers courses, field days, farm tours, workshops, conference sessions and educational exhibits on sustainable farming topics throughout the state. An intensive web-based training program for new and transitioning farmers known as “Cultivating Success” is offered in partnership with county extension offices and the University of Idaho. The program that can be accessed at [www.cultivatingsuccess.org](http://www.cultivatingsuccess.org) consists of a series of weekly, evening courses and short courses that can be taken individually or as a series. To date, nearly 4,000 producers have participated in the program.

Beginning farmers who have taken the Cultivating Success program and developed a business plan are eligible to apply for small plots of land at the Viva Farms incubator program in Skagit County where they receive access to technical assistance, equipment, and a roadside farm stand for marketing their products. More information about this program can be found at [www.vivafarms.org](http://www.vivafarms.org).

The website [www.smallfarms.wsu.edu](http://www.smallfarms.wsu.edu) highlights educational resources and includes a directory of team members, links to ongoing programs and relevant publications, and new online short courses.

For more information about local farm stands in your area, see pages 24-25 of this edition of Neighbors.
Find Your Local Farm Stand

1. Nash's Farm Store (organic produce)
   4681 Sequim-Dungeness Way Sequim, WA 98382
   (360) 683-4642

2. Finnriver Farm (winery)
   62 Barn Swallow Rd Chimacum, WA 98336
   (360) 732-6822

3. Wynooche Valley Meats
   106 Old Wynooche Rd Montesano, WA 98563
   (360) 249-6066

4. Shaffner Farms (fruits & vegetables)
   158 Geissler Rd Montesano, WA 98563
   (360) 249-1042

5. Country Cider Mill & Farm
   9402 Rich Road SE Olympia, WA, 98501
   (360) 491-7328

6. Schilter Family Farm (fruits & Vegetables)
   141 Nisqually Cutoff Road SE Olympia, WA 98513
   (360) 459 4023

7. Aldrich Berry Farm Nursery, Inc
   190 Aldrich Road Mossyrock, WA 98564
   (360) 983-3138

For a complete list of Washington state's small farm stands visit:
smallfarms.wsu.edu/farms/locate_search.asp
Get 20% off at participating Choice Hotels
wsfb.com/choice-hotels-international
Washington’s Top Four Agricultural Commodities

- Apples: $2.18 Billion
- Dairy: $1.2 Billion
- Wheat: $1.01 Billion
- Potatoes: $792 Million

Annual value of crops sold

Washington’s 37,249 farms power a diverse agricultural economy, led by the state’s apple industry with 70 percent of U.S. production. Rich soils, diverse climates, and large-scale irrigation make Washington one of the most productive growing regions in the world, and enables farmers to produce some 300 crops each year.

- The state’s $49 billion food and agriculture industry employs approximately 160,000 people and contributes 13 percent to the state’s economy.

- More than $15.1 billion in food and agricultural products were exported through Washington ports in 2013, the third largest total in the U.S.

Source: WSDA
Can You Hear Me Now?

One out of every three adults has some level of hearing loss.

Hearing loss has been classified as an epidemic in the U.S., yet most health insurance companies do not cover hearing aids. However, as a Washington Farm Bureau member you can receive significant discounts on hearing aids and other hearing protection products through MEDPlus Discounts. (See page 29 for more information).

Although there are many ways to develop a hearing loss, the two major causes are age and noise exposure. With the increased use of headphones by both young people and baby boomers, the problem is only going to get worse.

One out of every three people aged 64 to 74 has some level of hearing loss. After age 75, that ratio goes up to one out of every two people.

Many people are aware that their hearing has deteriorated, but are reluctant to seek help. Perhaps they don’t want to acknowledge the problem, are embarrassed by what they see as a weakness, or believe that they can "get by" without using a hearing aid. Unfortunately, too many wait years, even decades, to address the effects of hearing loss before getting treatment.

Time and again, research demonstrates the considerable effects of hearing loss on development as well as negative social, psychological, cognitive and health effects of untreated hearing loss. Each can have far-reaching implications that go well beyond hearing alone. In fact, those who have difficulty hearing can experience such distorted and incomplete communication that it seriously impacts their professional and personal lives, at times leading to isolation and withdrawal.

It’s a proven fact that when your hearing ability decreases, so does the quality of your life. Annual hearing screenings are highly recommended and are a key component to healthy living. So, if you have not had your hearing tested within the last few years, make the effort to see a hearing professional. Knowing is half the battle.

Here is what you need to know before you purchase your first or next hearing aid:

- Hearing loss is incurable. Hearing aids can drastically help you hear better by amplifying sound customized to your specific needs, but they will not cure your hearing loss.
- Hearing aids are expensive and should be treated as an investment that will increase the quality of your or your loved one’s life.
- Today’s technology has made vast improvements in hearing products over the last decade to accommodate for a younger generation of users’ needs as well as the needs of an older population.
- Hearing aids are an ongoing serviceable item, similar to your car. You should expect tune-ups from time to time as well as repairs.
- There are no regulations on hearing aid prices. This means that you can pay $1,000 for Brand A, Model B hearing aid, and then pay $1,500 for the same exact product across the street or across the country.
- Shop around, but don’t forget about ongoing servicing. Buying from the least expensive provider does not always mean that it was money well saved. It is important that you feel comfortable with the specialist and take the time needed to get your hearing aids programmed correctly.
- Today’s leading hearing aid manufacturers all make very comparable products. If you decide to switch providers to save money, do your research to ensure the new brand the specialist is recommending is a comparable product.
- Only pay for what you need. No sense in paying for a fully loaded model, if all you need is the basic functions based on your hearing loss and lifestyle. This is a great way to save money and still get the help you need.
- Most health insurance companies do NOT cover hearing aids. Some may pay for audiologic testing, a hearing evaluation or only part of a hearing aid purchase.
Are you one of the 40 Million Americans with Hearing loss?

Washington Farm Bureau Members Now Have A Solution, MEDPlus Discounts!

MEDPlus Discounts is pleased to extend their Discounted Hearing Savings Plan to you as an added Value of being a Washington Farm Bureau Member.

Did you know?

- Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) affects 50 Million people in the United States alone.
- Over 15 million people in the US with hearing loss avoid seeking help.
- Hearing aids can offer dramatic improvements for most people with hearing loss.
- Annual hearing consultations is an important part of staying healthy.

Members receive Significant Discounts on today’s latest technology! Includes hearing aids, tinnitus treatment and hearing protection products.

- ✔ FREE Annual Consultations!
- ✔ Warranties Up To 5 Years!
- ✔ Up To 5 Years of Batteries!
- ✔ 60 Day Trial Period!
- ✔ Financing Available!
- ✔ Complete WA Coverage!

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To Start Saving **Today**!
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For a complete list, visit our website, www.wsfb.com/member-benefits

PRIVATE INCENTIVE
$500 TOWARD THE PURCHASE OR LEASE¹ OF QUALIFYING 2014-2015 VEHICLES.²
Plus, you can stack this offer with in-market incentives to maximize your savings.

BECOME A NW MEDSTAR MEMBER TODAY

$55 PER FAMILY PER YEAR
($135 FOR 3 YEARS)

Alberto’s family knows that when you are fighting for your life, time matters and so does the flight team caring for you.
You have a choice and deserve the best.
Ask for Northwest MedStar.

“MedStar definitely saved my life and membership saved me thousands of dollars.”
Alberto Reyes, NW MedStar patient and member, with Kayla Morgan, NW MedStar Registered Respiratory Therapist/EMT

Enroll or renew at www.nwmedstar.org
Use promo/discount code: wsfb
An unlikely star emerged as the national media darling in January when the contents of the “Everyone Wins at the Oscars” nominee gift bags were revealed to the public. In a gift bag valued at nearly $170,000 given to this year’s non-winning Oscar® nominees, Ambrosia apples grabbed a huge share of the media spotlight as the only fresh produce item included.

“We were stunned and delighted to see Academy Award-related press coverage focusing on our Ambrosia,” said Steve Lutz, vice president of marketing for Columbia Marketing International. “In a gift package worth many thousands of dollars, it was really gratifying to see a wonderful apple like Ambrosia recognized by the media.”

USA Today, New York Daily News, Good Morning America and CNBC were among the many outlets that featured the custom gift box of Ambrosia apples hand-delivered to the Hollywood celebrities. Seattle TV news picked up on the local Ambrosia connection, with one station highlighting three evening news anchors sampling Ambrosia while raving about its flavor and another station sending a news crew to McDougall & Son’s new 445,000 square foot Wenatchee packing facility. Early consumer reach estimates for the Ambrosia promotion indicate that more than 20 million people saw or heard about the apple gift carton for the stars.

“A big part of the success is Ambrosia is a wonderfully distinct and colorful apple that we packed in very traditional packaging,” said Lutz. “For TV, it was a can’t-miss visual. Each Ambrosia gift was delivered to the top Oscar® nominees in handmade antique apple boxes with traditional box label art reproductions.”

Lutz added, “USA Today called Ambrosia a ‘simple pleasure’, so maybe that’s why the story got such a big play. We’re just delighted that stars like Bradley Cooper, Steve Carell and Reese Witherspoon can enjoy Ambrosia apples to ease the pain of missing out on Oscar® gold.”
Customize your farm coverage

With AgriPlus® from COUNTRY, you can customize your insurance coverage to fit your individual needs, whether you raise cattle or grow nursery stock, row crops, grain, hay or fruit. Talk to your local financial representative, and grow your own way with COUNTRY Financial.