

News Release: September 28, 2017

WSU Ferry County Extension

350 E. Delaware Ave. #9

Republic, WA 99166

509-775-5225, X1114 [serena.davis@wsu.edu](mailto:serena.davis@wsu.edu)

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exciting news for Ferry County farmers! There is now an operational WSU AgWeatherNet station located near Curlew. An AgWeatherNet station is a weather station from Washington State University (WSU) that provides access to raw, as well as current and historical weather data, advisories, customized weather alerts and decision support systems specific and available to each farmer that has signed up. These stations can help improve production and product quality, optimize resource use, and reduce environmental impact. WSU Ferry County Extension Director, Trevor Lane, speaks of the enormous benefit this technology brings to our county: “With a very limited growing season in Ferry County, the AgWeatherNet station will give our producers and operators important data to make decisions for their farms and follow the weather. The system can even send updates to subscribers.”

AgWeatherNet includes 177 automated weather stations located mostly in the irrigated regions of eastern Washington State. Since the installation of the first station in 1988, the network has undergone significant expansion in western Washington as well as in the dry land regions of the state. Standard AgWeatherNet weather variables include air temperature, relative humidity, dew point temperature, soil temperature, soil temperature at 8 inches, rainfall, wind speed, wind direction, solar radiation, and leaf wetness. Some stations also measure atmospheric pressure. These variables are recorded every 5 seconds and summarized every 15 minutes by a data logger.

The monitoring stations are comprised of Campbell Scientific CR-1000 data loggers and a complement of sensors from different manufacturers. The data loggers are powered by a battery that is recharged through a solar panel during the daytime. Communications are handled through cell phone data telemetry and the internet. Following data processing the weather data is disseminated via the website: [weather.wsu.edu](http://weather.wsu.edu). The weather data and associated tools that are provided on the website are updated continuously.

The weather network is administered and managed by the AgWeatherNet team located at the WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center in Prosser, WA. However, AgWeatherNet is programmatically linked to the research, extension, and instruction efforts conducted by all departments and research and extension centers of the College of Agriculture, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences of WSU.

The WSU developed Irrigation Scheduler Mobile is an electronic irrigation assistance program through the AgWeatherNet that facilitates optimum irrigation practices. Farmers enter the crop and soil type and key into the nearest 2 of the nearly 177 weather stations. Based on percent and historical weather data, the program algorithm alerts farmers to the irrigation needs of that particular crop in the particular site, reducing overwatering. AgWeatherNet and Irrigation Scheduler Mobile data may be accessed and retrieved free of charge.

The AgWeatherNet is a key part of the WSU Water Irrigation System Efficiency (WISE) program. The WSU WISE program in Ferry County seeks to educate Washington State farmers about cost-effective equipment and practices that increase irrigation efficiency. It is a USDA-funded program that focuses on increasing irrigation efficiencies and reducing water waste. WSU WISE offers free on-farm irrigation audits throughout Washington State, producing tailored suggestions for equipment upgrades, change in practice, or irrigation tech assistance programs. WSU WISE assists farmers by:

1. Conducting tutorials in the enrollment and use of the Irrigation Scheduler Mobile.
2. Delivering interactive on-farm workshops showcasing the benefits of Irrigation Scheduler Mobile on irrigation efficiency and crop health.
3. Helping in selecting efficient irrigation solutions.
4. Conducting on-farm irrigation efficiency audits and provide a report of current irrigation water loss with tailored recommendations for increasing irrigation efficiencies.
5. Providing technical support for farmers seeking to offset the cost of irrigation efficiency upgrades through EQIP grants.

“When the project team for WSU WISE was being assembled it was very apparent that areas of Northeast Washington were being underserved,” explains Don McMoran, WSU Skagit County Extension Director and grant principal investigator of the WSU WISE program. “Through WSU WISE we are literally able to add Ferry County to the map. Having an AgWeatherNet station will allow your producers to document weather events and receive alerts directly to their home computer, laptop or even their phone. Real data, right at your fingertips.”

WSU WISE is primarily here to benefit farmers and help them with updated resources to improve their irrigation systems and the productivity and profitability of their crops.

To sign up for a free irrigation system evaluation go to this link: <http://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/wsui-wise/>

Or to enroll your farm in the AgWeatherNet Irrigation Scheduler Mobile go to this link: <http://weather.wsu.edu/index.php?page=register>

For more information about the AgWeatherNet go to: <http://weather.wsu.edu/?p=88650> or call the WSU Ferry County Extension Office at 775-5225 ext. 1116.

Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.



WSU Ferry County Extension Director, Trevor Lane, and Coordinator Serena Davis, finishing a site evaluation for a local Ferry County farmer who is a part of the WSU WISE Program.