

WSU PUYALLUP HIGHLIGHT

March 24, 2006

WSU Small Farms Team Sponsors Farmers Market Management Conference



(Photo: 75 attendees hear keynote speaker Ben Gisan, at right, talk about the importance of building community food markets to ensure food security)

Farmers markets are part of an emerging infrastructure that promotes locally grown food. These venues have enjoyed incredible growth in Washington over the past decade, providing multiple benefits to farmers, consumers and communities at large. In 2004, 89 Washington markets recorded sales totaling \$24 million, with the strongest urban markets reporting average daily sales of \$1,300 per farm vendor.

"With new challenges on the horizon, such as the rising price of oil, climate change, and healthcare costs that could be addressed through better nutrition, farmers markets are positioned for even more growth," said Rich Hines, outreach specialist for Washington State University's Small Farms Team, a conference sponsor. The February conference included workshops on planning for market growth, developing creative partnerships to increase a market's impact, and low-cost promotion ideas. Over seventy participants traveled from all over the state for the conference and 100 guests attended the Bounty of the Northwest Dinner featuring farm products and seafood from vendors at Washington's farmers markets. The dinner speaker was Victor Vasquez, Assistant Director for Economic Development, Washington State Office of Community, Trade and Economic Development. Special guests at the dinner included Puyallup-area legislators Joyce McDonald and Dawn Morrell, as well as Pierce County Council Member Tim Farrell.

WSU Puyallup: Solutions for the Region- Programs for Its People.

Weekly Highlights is provided by the people and programs of WSU Puyallup. To include a highlight in an upcoming announcement, please contact either Tanyalee Erwin, terwin@wsu.edu, 253-445-4504, or Jon Newkirk, jnewkirk@wsu.edu, 253-445-4568. If your email is set to text messages only and you wish to see the graphical version of this Highlight, please email Tanyalee and she will send this Highlight as an attachment.