

WSU PUYALLUP HIGHLIGHT

June 16, 2006

Strawberry Field Day Shows Growers New Plants!



Every year, for the last nineteen years, Patrick Moore has held a Strawberry Field Day to give growers an opportunity to see new plant material and get feedback on tastes and attributes. There is also an opportunity to see field

research underway on berry firmness, weight and plant yield. This year, as we walked along the slippery rows of numerous strawberry

cultivars, an audience of growers, Department of Agriculture representatives, and Strawberry Commission

members stooped down to feel and pick a selection of ripe berries. Some tastes were sweet and lush while others were tarter. Local growers took copious notes looking for new products for upcoming years. A visiting berry plant breeder found similarities between Puget Sound growing conditions and his marine climate in Nova Scotia.

The WSU Small Fruit breeding program grows from 4,000 - 10,000 strawberry seedlings each year. Moore walks the fields at least once a week looking for plants that will make good candidates to become a "mother" plant for future propagations. Last year, 24 % or 4.8 million of the total commercial strawberry plants sold in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia were WSU-Puyallup varieties: *Puget Reliance*, *Rainier*, *Shuksan*, *Puget Summer*, and *Quinault*.

(Photo collage: (top) Patrick Moore talks to field day participants at Farm Five; (bottom left) WSU selection #2649; (bottom center) a variety of WSU selections; (bottom right) WSU sophomore Aubrey Whitfield (left), Wendy Hoashi-Erhardt (at center) and a summer worker check for strawberry firmness.)

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.