



## **USDA-CSREES 2007 National Water Quality Conference**

### [EPA Region 10: Ag 101 Certification](#)

Offered an opportunity to meet food producers, in their fields and barns, 37 EPA employees from the Region 10 office in Seattle embarked on a four-tier Certification course. Beginning in April, the EPA regulators and community outreach staff and some of their Unit Managers logged onto an on-line agriculture awareness course to begin the summer-long course. In May, the course participants spent one and one-half days in classes learning about the issues that face today's producer as they relate to water quality; regulations covering NPS, Pesticides, Dairy and Beef nutrient management, and short courses on Idaho's OnePlan and Oregon's 1010 as these regulations relate to Agriculture. The third tier of the course included two field trips to farms in Washington. A one-day trip to Western Washington's King, Snohomish, and Skagit Counties introduced the course participants to a potato grower, a dairy family, a small acreage sustainable farm that grows and sells to a specialized market of up-scale restaurants, ending at a Winery that uses Central Washington grown grapes. The second tour, in Central Washington, introduced the agricultural diversity of that area. An under-construction wind farm, dry land wheat, irrigated row crops, dry land potato production, range management, ESA issues, organic and traditional orchards, and the issues around worker safety standards filled the two days on the road. The last tier, the Course Capstone, asks that everyone in the Certification Track involve himself or herself in an agricultural endeavor such as working with the Farm Bureau, a Conservation District, or a Community Sustainable Ag project in the fall of 2006. Objectives of the Certification Course were introduction to: 1) Appreciation for the critical partnerships needed to gain environmental protection through use of Best Management Practices 2) Funding sources tapped to achieve progress, such as CRP, EQIP, SARE, and EPA 3) Living production systems and the producers: How do they deal with an array of resource issue and when do regulations overlap or counteract?

Author: Jan Seago

University Affiliation: University of Idaho

Co-Author(s): Karl Arne