

Newspapers In Education and the Washington State Fair present

WE ARE WASHINGTON

An Introduction to the People of the Washington State Fair

Join Newspapers In Education and the Washington State Fair as we take a close look at the animals, people and exhibits of the Washington State Fair in Puyallup. Together, We Are Washington!

Fair Farm Animal Caregiver

The animal caregiver role at the Washington State Fair involves creating a fun and safe Fair Farm for everyone to interact with and learn about a variety of farm animals. Each of the 10 species in the Fair Farm has different biological needs to keep it healthy. Susan Becker, Co-Superintendent of the Petting Farm and Traveling Farm staff, explains how biology is used in the Fair Farm: "I need to understand how digestive systems work. Horses, pigs and rabbits have a simple, single stomach like ours. Chickens and turkeys store their food temporarily in a pouch, called a crop, before moving it to their stomach. Sheep and goats are ruminants with an enormous four-part stomach that breaks down the plants they eat so they can be digested. If I understand how their bodies work, we can read the signs when they're not working correctly, or know what to do to help them." Visit the Fair Farm where you can see at least 12 different types of animals.



Photo courtesy of Patty Herman



Photo courtesy of Eric Bastin

Photo Salon Superintendent

The Photo Salon incorporates the winning images from two competitions: the Northwest International Exhibition of Photography (NWIEP) and the Washington State Photographers Exhibition. The NWIEP competition is recognized by the Photographic Society of America and brings in images by photographers from all over the world. These images depict life in different cultures. Eric Bastin, Superintendent of the Photo Salon, discusses how math and science are used in the Photo Salon: "During the judging process, we have to figure percentages to find out how many images will be accepted into the final display." In other words, these photos are given a score by multiple judges and that total will be used to decide if the photo is accepted into the competition. Eric reflects on how photography has changed over the years:



"There is a definite science to photography, although it has greatly changed since the advent of digital. In the film days, there was a lot of chemistry involved to take the silver on exposed film and make it into a negative image. Currently for the photographer, the science of getting the right amount of light into the camera for proper exposure is still very important. There is also the aspect of getting the images onto paper, getting proper color balance and archiving photographs."

How do you take and archive photographs?

Giant Pumpkin Grower

The giant pumpkins are a favorite at the Fair! Giant pumpkins compete for the top prize and bragging rights for being the heaviest pumpkin that year. Last year's winner topped 1,314 pounds. Giant pumpkin growers spend lots of time using science to prepare their gardens for the pumpkin plants. The Pacific Northwest Giant Pumpkin Growers President Ron Barker knows how important science is to growing pumpkins, since most growers use soil kits to measure the pH and nutrient levels in the soil. "There are ratios to create a balance of the perfect soil and climate to give the giant pumpkin and plant what it needs and when it needs it. The ratios of nutrients and micronutrients need to be in the optimum range in order to get the best (growth) results." A balance between the soil and climate is also an important component in growing giant pumpkins.



Photo courtesy of Dick Milligan



APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Draw a simple diagram of a human stomach compared to a chicken and sheep stomach. What are the major differences?

Which animals do you think would be most interesting to photograph? Why?

What does a pumpkin seed need to grow into a giant pumpkin?