

ENTERPRISE IDEAS

Sustainable Small Farming & Ranching



Skagit
County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



Island
County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

CULTIVATING  SUCCESS™
sustainable small farms education

Choosing your Crop Enterprises

- What grows in your climate?
- What you can market?
- What can you grow and harvest with existing or affordable equipment ?
- Which crops match your time and labor resources?
- Are there complimentary enterprises that can be used on the farm (feed, cover crops)?

Considerations for choosing an enterprise:

- Low initial start-up cost relative to the ability to generate income
- High gross profit margin
- Relatively low maintenance requirements
- High Cash flow, quick turnaround
- History of high success rate

Crop Enterprise Options



Mixed Annual Vegetables

Fruit and Nut Trees

Gourds and Pumpkins

Cider Orchards

Annual and Perennial Fruits

Flowers: fresh and dried

Herbs: Culinary and Medicinal

Grains

Timber

Pasture/Forage

Agricultural Production

Skagit County Agriculture Statistics 2016

THE FRESH TASTE OF WASHINGTON

The state's \$32 billion food and agriculture industry contributes 12 percent of the state economy and employs 160,000 people.

There are 39,000 farms in Washington state totaling 15.7 million acres. Washington's rich, arable lands are nurtured by a mild climate and a unique growing season, warm days followed by cool nights. The Cascade mountain range creates microclimates that support record crop diversity. Over 200 foods, feeds, and feed crops are grown each year, more than any other state except California. Washington ranked first in the nation in the production of 12 commodities: apples, pears, sweet cherries, red raspberries, hops, spearmint and lemongrass, ground and Nigara grapes, cranberries, and sweet corn. A fall third of the state is in pastureland or rangeland, supporting a large livestock industry. The waters bordering the state to the west support a thriving seafood industry. This natural wealth, combined with the state's proximity to world markets, has made Washington one of the leading exporters of food and agricultural products.

Washington food products are known worldwide for their quality, variety, and year-round availability.

Combined with state-of-the-art food processing, world-class transportation and port facilities, and a cutting-edge research and technology sector, Washington state is an agricultural powerhouse.



WASHINGTON FARM BUREAU
1.800.331.3276 www.wafb.com



If you are interested in joining a Farm Bureau in your county or want more information on member benefits such as healthcare, safety programs and business services, please call 800-331-3276 or go to www.wafb.com.

These icons represent the top commodities per county based on crop value.

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Animal Enterprises

- Consider animals that :
 - Fit your temperament
 - Are marketable
 - You can raise with existing or affordable land and facilities
 - Match your time and labor resources
 - Are complimentary to main enterprise

Aquaculture

Some examples of aquaculture enterprises:

<http://www.taylorshellfishfarms.com>

<http://www.northwestfisheries.org>

<http://www.idahotrout.com>

Goats for milk, cheese or meat

Potential Markets

Scale

Processing Requirements

Additional Considerations

Example of goat enterprises:

<http://gothbergfarms.com/about/>

Sheep for meat or wool

Potential Markets

Scale

Processing Requirements

Additional Considerations

Examples of enterprises that use sheep:

<https://harmonyfields.com/>

<http://glendaleshepherd.com/>

<http://www.sheep101.info/farm.html>

<http://users.lewiston.com/sheepster>

Rabbits: meat or manure



Potential Markets

Scale

Processing
Requirements

Manure for Compost

Cattle Enterprises

- <http://www.skagitriverranch.com/>
- <http://www.prairiespringsranch.com/>
- <http://www.eatbisonmeat.com/>



Potential Markets

Scale

Processing Requirements

Additional Considerations

Complimentary Enterprises

- Diversification - reduces market risk exposure
- Criteria
 - Use of existing infrastructure
 - Filling low work times with cash generating jobs
 - Evenly distributed cash flow
 - Increased customer flow

Top Complimentary Enterprises

- Pastured turkeys
- Lamb
- Pork
- Rabbit
- Firewood
- Agritourism/recreation
- Greenhouse/Flowers
- Honey and bee products
- Cottage industry

Summary

- Existing resources influence viability of enterprise option
- Select an enterprise that fits your resources and interests
- The duration of the course will involve an evaluation of the feasibility of this enterprise

Upcoming Events

- Mount Vernon Farmer Restaurant Mixer + Marketing Workshop- October 28 6pm-8pm at the Front Gallery, Mount Vernon
- Tilth Conference – November 8-10, Yakima, Wa

Reading for discussion next week:

- *The New Organic Grower*, Elliot Coleman - Chapter 7
- *Market Farming Success*, Lynn Bycznski – Chapter 5

Assignment: Whole Farm Plan Section- Evaluation of Current Resources