



WSU Skagit County Extension Skagit County Agriculture Statistics

2018



Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



Greetings!

Washington State University Skagit County Extension has been keeping crop records since 1922. Information is compiled from processing companies, farm organizations, growers, field representatives, media sources, and University sources.

Agricultural statistics with related written details are important for several reasons:

- ♦ Figures show the past production history of farming in a community;
- ♦ Statistics show the ups and downs of agriculture in relationship to weather, economics, urban encroachment, disasters, or a shift in production to other areas;
- ♦ This information provides a basis on which to make important decisions for land-use planning, zoning, and economic development planning related to agriculture.

Your comments and suggestions are welcomed and encouraged. Feel free to give us a call and we can discuss the enclosed information.

Don McMoran

Don McMoran
Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Faculty
Skagit County Director
WSU Skagit County Extension
dmc Moran@wsu.edu



Washington State University Extension engages people, organizations and communities to advance economic well-being and quality of life by connecting them to the knowledge base of the university and by fostering inquiry, learning, and the application of research.



WSU SKAGIT COUNTY EXTENSION STAFF

Don McMoran

Agriculture and Natural Resources Faculty
WSU Skagit County Extension Director

Diane Smith

Extension Faculty (Skagit/Whatcom)
Family Consumer Sciences/Food Access Specialist

Kevin Zobrist

Extension Faculty (Puget Sound)
Forest Stewardship

Dorothy Elsner

4-H Youth Program Coordinator

Joan DeVries

Livestock Advisor Program Coordinator
(Skagit/Snohomish)

Alex DuPont

Master Gardener Program Coordinator
Shore Steward Coordinator
SNAP-Ed Educator

Jennie Goforth

Ideas for Healthy Living Program Coordinator

Kate Foster

Strengthening Families Program Coordinator

Shannon Bachtel

Farmers Market Flash Coordinator
Nourishing Our Early Learners Coordinator

Amber Phillips

Diabetes Prevention Program Lifestyle Coach

Mariah Brown-Pounds

SNAP-Ed Community Hispanic Educator

Talea Price

SNAP-Ed Coordinator

Charlie Coslor

Entomology Coordinator

Kate Selting

Small Farm/Latino Educator

Kate Seymour

WSU WISE/ Agriculture Suicide Prevention Coordinator

Sylvi Thortenson

Agriculture Technician

Valerie DeKok

Administrative Assistant 4

Sue Moulton

Receptionist / Technical Assistant

Report Summary



Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

About Skagit County	Geography, Population, Climate, Rainfall and Snowfall, Temperature	P 5
Weather	2018 Weather Picture, 2018 Weather Chart	P 6
Freeze	Frost Free Days and Freeze Probabilities	P 7
Agriculture Facts	Irrigation, Soils, Skagit Agriculture Facts	P 8
Labor	Agriculture Labor, Minimum Wage	P 9
Crops A-C	Apples, Blueberries, Blackberries, Bulb Crops, Cauliflower and Broccoli, Chicken and Eggs	P 10 - 11
Crops C-R	Cucumbers, Potatoes, Raspberries	P 12
Crops S	Seed Crops	P 13
Crops S-Z	Strawberries, Wine Grapes and Organic Farming	P 14
Dairy	2018 Milk Production Summary for Skagit County	P 15 - 16
Vegetable Seed	Vegetable Seed Production in Western Washington: Acres Harvested and Farmgate Value	P 17 - 18
Crop Acreage/Yield	2018 Crop Acreage Summary for Skagit County and Typical Yield (per acre)	P 19
Statistical Summary	Past Statistical Summaries: Dollar Value to Grower	P 20
U.S. Census	2017 U.S. Census of Agriculture Statistics	P 21
Crops Grown	Commercial Crops Grown in Skagit County	P 22
Involvement	Organizations, Businesses and Agencies Serving Skagit County Agriculture	P 23
Acknowledgements	Acknowledgement of WSU Skagit County Extension Stakeholders	P 24

About Skagit County

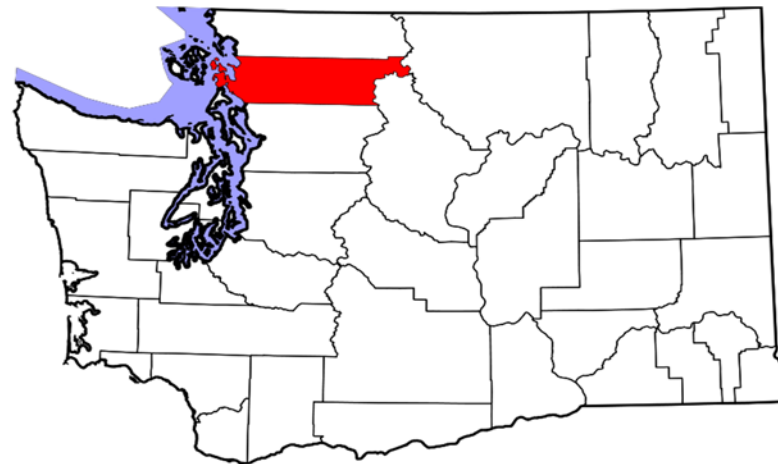


Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

GEOGRAPHY

Skagit County is 60 miles north of Seattle. It is 24 miles wide (north and south) and 95 miles long (east and west). Several islands in the Puget Sound area are included in the county. Snowcapped Mount Baker (in Whatcom County), elevation 10,000 feet, dominates the northeastern edge of the county and is the start of the North Cascades wilderness area and National Park. The Skagit River, which is famous for steelhead and salmon fishing and serves as important bald eagle feeding grounds, begins in the North Cascade mountain area. The upper Skagit has three hydro-electric dams which provide power for the northwest. Below the dams, the Skagit is fed by the Sauk, Cascade, Suiattle and Baker rivers. The Skagit River flows through the “upper valley” and continues through thousands of acres of fertile farmland before emptying into Puget Sound.



CLIMATE

Cool, marine temperatures and an abundance of moisture is evidenced by the lush growth of forest, pastures and agricultural crops in Skagit County.

Rainfall. The “rule of thumb” is to add one inch of moisture for each mile traveled east from Puget Sound. Anacortes averages 25 inches per year; Marblemount, 95 inches per year. The driest year since 1948 was in 1987, when precipitation total was 20.71 inches. The wettest year was 1990, with 47.20 inches.

Approximately 20% of the rainfall in Mount Vernon occurs June through September. The sun shines 65% of the time in summer, and 25% of the time in winter.



Photo by WSU SCMG Sheri Hunter

TEMPERATURE:

The highest temperature ever on record at the WSU Northwestern Washington Research and Extension Center at Mount Vernon, was 98°F on August 9, 1960. The average summer temperature is 73° F. The highest recorded winter temperature for December, January and February was 65° F. The lowest temperature on record was -4° F. on January 26, 1957. WSU NWREC has been keeping records since 1948. (See chart on next page).

2018 WEATHER PICTURE

The winter of 2017/2018 was delayed with the first freeze not occurring until November 4th, and the coldest days of the year occurred on February 23rd at 22.3 degrees. The cold weather had an impact on the perennial cropping systems in Skagit County; there were several reported crop failures due to freezing weather on cabbage seed and several crop failures on raspberries and/or blackberries. The spring of 2018 was one for the record books. Farmers received rainfall events late in March and early April to keep them out of their fields. Mid-April was the start of a major drought in Skagit County. Farmers had very little precipitation from late April through the end of September. Farmers were able to have good weather to get crops in the ground with many reporting no rain delays in planting despite a few rain showers. Summer was hot and dry with some of driest weather we have ever seen in western Washington. The hot/dry weather created forest fires in the Pacific Northwest that impacted Skagit County with heavy smoke. The summer of 2018 created the dividing line between the have and the have nots. The farmers that were able to irrigate their crops reported high yields and quality, those that were not equipped with irrigation did not fare as well. November 1st closed the door on harvest with 1.16 inches of rain falling at WSU NWREC.

Month	High	Low	Average Air temp	Precipitation
January	48.9	39.5	44.1	4.79
February	44.6	34.6	39.3	5.78
March	51.9	35.6	43.6	2.79
April	56.3	42.3	49.3	4.73
May	67.6	47.8	57.1	0.35
June	68.1	50	58.9	1.52
July	77.3	52.1	64.5	0.04
August	75.1	51.9	62.6	0.17
September	67.2	48.3	57.5	1.36
October	59.5	40.7	49.8	2.32
November	52.5	39.8	46.1	4.2
December	47.5	35.6	41.4	3.79
				Year Total -31.84

Source: <http://www.weather.wsu.edu/>

I  FARMING

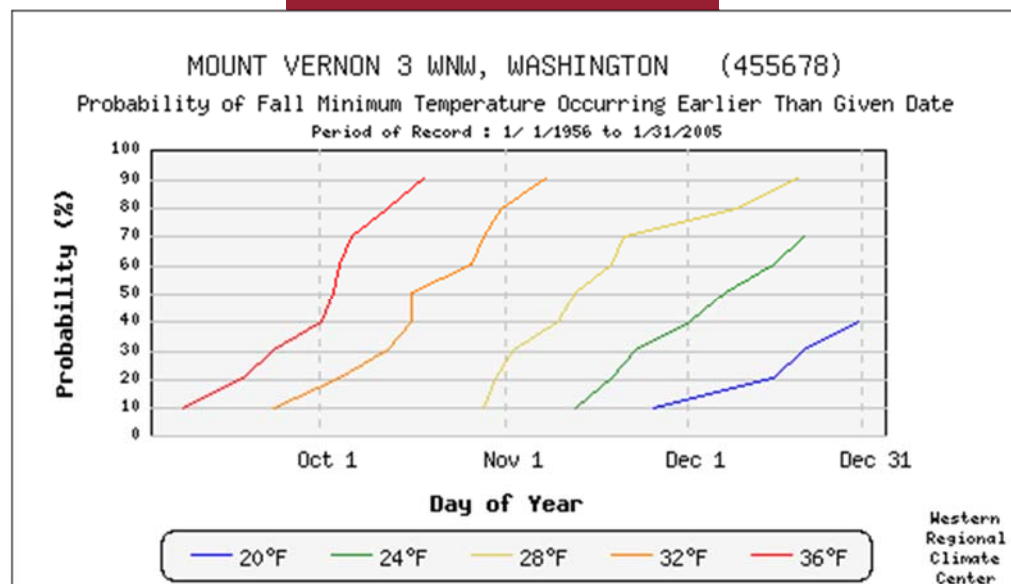
FROST FREE DAYS:

The lower Skagit Valley area has approximately 230 growing days and the upper valley has approximately 200 growing days. The last spring frost in the lower valley is estimated to occur about April 15, and the first fall frost occurs about October 15.

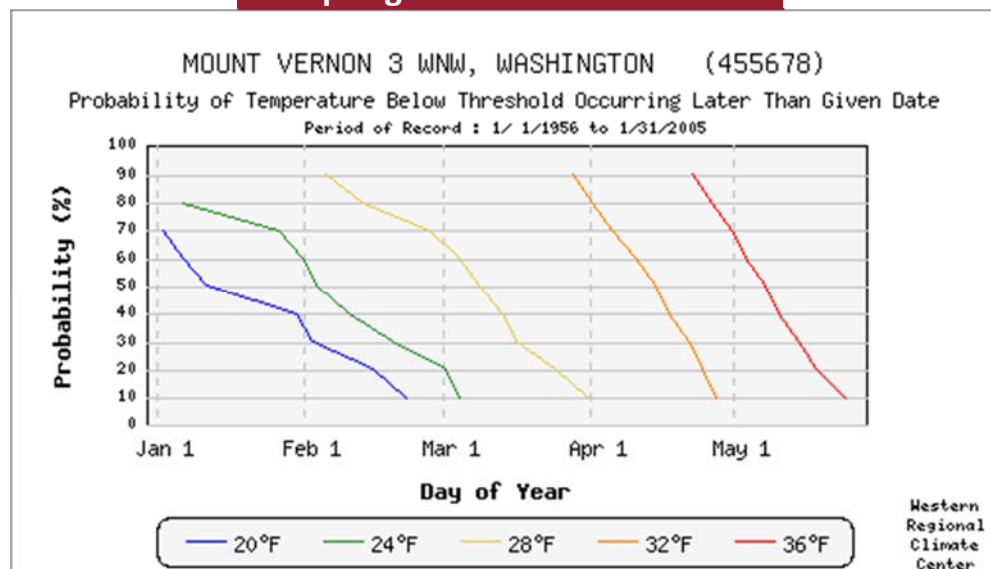


Photography by Don McMoran

Fall Freeze Probabilities



Spring Freeze Probabilities



IRRIGATION

In July and August, irrigation was used on approximately 30,000 acres of cropland in 2018. This was above average for Skagit County due to the summer drought. The main crops irrigated were corn, grass pasture, berries, potatoes, vegetable seed crops, and tree fruits.

SOILS

The Skagit Valley was formed by water-deposited (alluvial) soils. Most cropland and pasture land in the county is located in the floodplain-delta area. This area covers the valley floor and extends east along the Skagit River and its tributaries. There are five primary soil types in the floodplain-delta area. Three types are located in the floodplain: Skagit (26%), which consists of silt loam, silty clay loam, and a small amount of very fine sandy loam; Sumas (15%); and Field (14%). The other two types are found along the Skagit River: Lorus (17%) and Pilchuck (14%). Floodplain soils are highly productive under dry land farming. Elevation in this area ranges from sea level to 500 feet.

Soil wetness is the major limitation for crops in the floodplain area. The Skagit and Samish Rivers have had a long history of flooding. The Skagit River, from just west of Sedro-Woolley to the Puget Sound, is protected from flooding by dikes and levees. The floodplain areas along the lower reaches of the Samish River, below Thomas Creek, are flooded almost every year.

AGRICULTURE: SKAGIT FUN FACTS

- ♦ Skagit County is a major producer of cabbage, table beet, and spinach seed for the world. There are six vegetable seed companies in the county, most of which market products worldwide.
- ♦ There are two remaining processing companies in Skagit County: Sakuma Brothers and Gielow Pickles.
- ♦ There are two major ag-supply dealers in the Valley: Skagit Farmers Supply and Wilbur-Ellis provide supplies and services to farmers.
- ♦ More tulip and daffodil bulbs are produced in Skagit County than in any county in the United States.
- ♦ Skagit County ranks fifth in dairy production in Washington State.
- ♦ About 10,000 Trumpeter and Tundra swans, 100,000 Snow geese, and thousands more of mallard and other dabbling ducks utilize Skagit farmland for food and habitat. Skagit County is host to one of the highest concentrations of raptors, which also utilize farmland, in North America.
- ♦ Every year since 1999 approximately 20,000 visitors enjoy the Skagit Valley Festival of Family Farms.

I  FARMERS

AGRICULTURAL LABOR

Minimum wage in the state of Washington is the highest in the country, the result of a 1998 citizens' initiative passed by voters that links the minimum wage to the Federal Consumer Price Index.



SKAGIT COUNTY POPULATION GROWTH

1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2018
43,273	52,381	64,138	79,555	102,300	116,910	128,206

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Washington State Minimum Wage

Effective Date	Dollars per Hour
January 1, 1974	1.80
September 1, 1975	2.00
January 1, 1976	2.30
January 1, 1989	3.85
January 1, 1990	4.25
January 1, 1994	4.90
September 1, 1997 (Federal minimum wage changed)	5.15
January 1, 1999	5.70
January 1, 2000	6.50
January 1, 2001	6.72
January 1, 2002	6.90
January 1, 2003	7.01
January 1, 2006	7.63
January 1, 2007	7.93
January 1, 2008	8.07
January 1, 2009	8.55
January 1, 2011	8.67
January 1, 2014	9.32
January 1, 2015	9.47
January 1, 2017	11.00
January 1, 2019	12.00

CROPS

In the past the Skagit County processing industry revolved around green peas. 2010 marked the first year since the early 1900s that no commercial pea processing took place in Skagit County. As a result, growers have been experimenting with new crops in hopes of finding the next niche.

Potatoes have become a very important crop with acreage expanding significantly over the past fifteen years. Other crops, such as cole crops, vegetable seed crops, cucumbers, flower bulbs, and small fruits contribute less in gross dollars but are very important. The net return to the grower on these crops is relatively high, and they provide diversification and many jobs.



APPLES

Apple acreage in Skagit County is on the decline. The 2018 Skagit crop showed average yields and average quality with a moderate pricing structure.

Our coastal climate allows us to grow varieties that are different from those grown in the large apple-producing regions of central Washington. Varieties grown here such as Jonagold, Gravenstein, Spartan, Akane and Honey Crisp are excellent apples to consume, but with no apple processing facilities in Skagit County, shipping the apples back and forth across the mountain passes makes commercial production unprofitable.

In 1998 Washington State Department of Agriculture added Skagit to the list of counties quarantined against apple maggot. WSU Skagit County Extension initiated the formation of the Skagit County Horticultural Pest and Disease Board to develop programs to prevent the pest from infesting commercial orchards. To date, no apple maggots have been found in commercial orchards.



BLUEBERRIES

Harvested by hand and machine, about half the crop is sold for fresh market, and half is processed. Yields and quality in this area are exceptionally high compared to the Midwest. Our cooler summer temperatures allow the berries to ripen slowly, which results in more sugar. Prices have declined for blueberries due to overproduction.



BLACKBERRIES

2018 provided mixed reviews for the blackberry crop. Warmer winter temperatures increased fruit production but over-production kept prices lower. Prices are slowly recovering from the bottom of the market last year. Given the climate of Skagit County, blackberries have the potential to become a much larger player in Skagit County fruit production.



BULB CROPS

Approximately 1,000 acres of tulips and daffodils are grown in Skagit County. They are sold for both cut flowers and bulbs and shipped throughout the U.S. and Canada. About 20 million bulbs are harvested each summer in Skagit County. About 75 million cut flowers are grown in greenhouses and fields, accounting for over 50% of overall sales. About 500 acres of tulips are grown in the Valley, which represents 75% of U.S. commercial production. Skagit County is known worldwide for its Tulip Festival, which occurs the entire month of April. The Tulip Festival began in 1984 and now brings an estimated 300,000 visitors and \$65 million in revenue to the county.

The bulb industry averages about \$20 million in annual gross income, \$3 million of which is in bulb sales. Since 1968, flower prices have increased three times, while bulbs have only doubled, but prices have decreased steadily since 2000. There are now only three bulb-growing farms in the region. One of the three is expected to discontinue producing daffodils at the end of the 2018 season. Iris production was discontinued in 2016.



BRUSSELS SPROUTS, CAULIFLOWER AND BROCCOLI

All Skagit County Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and broccoli are grown for fresh market. Head quality is exceptionally high in this region. Approximately 60% to 80% of the Brussels sprouts, broccoli and cauliflower grown in Skagit is consumed in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. Skagit farmers grew about 2,500 acres of Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and broccoli this year. Farmers in the Skagit Valley maintained acreages for these important rotational crops in 2018 largely for the disease suppression that brassica crops provide via biofumigation.



CHICKENS AND EGGS

Washington is ranked 19th in the nation for egg production (Source: http://www.stuffaboutstates.com/agriculture/livestock/chicken_eggs.htm). Two companies produce the majority of the eggs in Skagit County: National Foods and Wilcox Farms (entering the scene in 2016). These two farms account for hundreds of millions of eggs being produced in Skagit County and Washington State.

Retail egg prices are among the most volatile retail food prices, as they can be affected by seasonal demand. Egg prices decreased 5.8 percent from April to May but are 21.6 percent above May 2017 levels. In 2017, more egg-laying birds and an increased number of eggs per hen placed downward pressure on prices. Recent price surges at the farm and wholesale level may indicate that retail egg prices will continue to rise over the next several months. Egg prices are expected to increase 6.0 to 7.0 percent in 2018. (Source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-price-outlook/summary-findings.aspx>).

The sole Washington-owned chicken processor in the state, Draper Valley Farms, is located in Mount Vernon. The company employs approximately 500 people and has sales around 80 million dollars.



CUCUMBERS

The lone pickle cucumber processor in Washington State is Gielow Pickles located at the Port of Skagit County with headquarters located in Lexington, MI. According to their website, "Making pickles is in our blood. When our family began making pickles in the early 1900's, our goal was to make the highest quality pickle at a competitive price. Today, our goal remains the same. The use of automated packaging equipment, direct contact with growers across America, and the buying power of the market leaders enables Gielow Pickles to accomplish our goal."



Photo by Don McMoran

POTATOES

Potato acreage consists primarily of fresh market reds, whites, yellows, purple, fingerlings and some chipping potatoes. Skagit potatoes are in demand for their high quality. Late blight disease is a constant threat to the industry; however, due to a study of all the growers in Skagit and northern Snohomish counties, WSU Skagit County Extension was able to determine that Potato Virus Y (PVY) and Silver Scurf continues to be more of a problem for area growers. Researchers at WSU NWREC and WSU Skagit County Extension are now working on these issues. Because of the need for a three-year rotation, there is limited ground available for the 12,000 acres of potatoes currently grown in Skagit County. Overall production remained constant for 2018. The disadvantage in 2018 was that once the wet spring turned and things opened up for the growers, they scrambled to get enough water on the crop during the drought. There were over 500 acres of potatoes that were not harvested in 2018 based on heavy rains late in the harvest season.



RASPBERRIES

The majority of raspberry acreage in Skagit County is harvested by machine; high labor costs demand that hand harvest be designated for fresh consumption. The primary variety is Meeker. The majority of the crop is frozen so it can be processed at a later date into juice, preserves, yogurt, bakery ingredients, and frozen products. Skagit County produces about 3% of the state's crop. Washington produces about 75% of the total U.S. production of frozen red raspberries, and 95% of that is from Whatcom and Skagit Counties.

Unfortunately prices for the 2018 raspberry crop plummeted due to over production worldwide. In Skagit County, yields were lower in 2018 due to some of the fields getting set back by cold winter temperatures.



Spinach Seed Field— Photo by Don McMoran



Beet Seed Field— Photo by Don McMoran



Cabbage Seed Field— Photo by Don McMoran

SEED CROPS

A large variety of vegetable seed crops are grown in the Skagit Valley; the top 3 in both acreage and farmgate value are spinach, cabbage and beet seed. Skagit and Snohomish counties produce nearly 75% of the US supply of spinach and cabbage seed and nearly 95% of the U.S. table beet seed. Skagit County is known as a significant world contributor with approximately 8% of the world's spinach seed, 25% of the world's cabbage seed, and 25% of the world's beet seed. Other vegetable seeds produced in Skagit County include arugula, broccoli, Chinese cabbage, coriander, mustard, parsley, parsnip, rutabaga, swiss chard and turnip.

Vegetable seed production is highly technical and often involves long rotation intervals—sometimes stretching beyond a decade. Skagit County farmers have developed innovative tools and cultural practices along with a close relationship with Washington State University research scientists and Extension professionals to be proactive in managing specialty seed crops challenges.

Vegetable seeds from the Skagit County are marketed all over the world. The need for isolation distances to prevent contamination from cross-pollination keeps the vegetable seed acreage below 5,000 acres in Skagit County. Skagit-based seed companies contract some of their acreage with Snohomish, Island, Whatcom, and Clallam County growers. To protect these areas, seed companies joined together in the 1940s to designate where the crops would be grown. On the first Monday in March and again in June, the seed companies meet at WSU NWREC for the annual pinning days that determine which crop/variety will be planted and where. It is this spirit of cooperation that keeps the seed industry growing in Skagit County.

Beet and spinach seed yields were average in 2018 due to farmers supplying supplemental irrigation during the drought.

There was approximately 10 percent cabbage seed damage due to extreme winter weather conditions in the 2018 growing season.

There are nine vegetable seed companies in Skagit County: Sakata, D&D, McDonald, Rijk Zwaan, Schafer, Skagit Seed Services, Syngenta, Universal and Vikima Seeds USA.

Some turf and forage grasses for seed are also grown in Skagit County; production varies widely depending upon market volatility.



STRAWBERRIES

The main varieties are Albion, Shuksan, Totem, Puget Reliance, Hood, Puget Summer, Redcrest and Rainier. Most strawberries are sold to processors. Skagit County produces about 20% of the state's strawberries. Acreage is beginning to increase in Skagit County, based in part to a demand for local production. More growers are changing varieties to capture more of the fresh market by producing everbearing strawberries and using innovative technologies to increase the length of the season.



WINE GRAPES

The marine climate in the Skagit Valley is similar in many ways to the fine-wine-producing areas of France and Germany. Research conducted from 1976 to 1988 at WSU NWREC produced a number of white wine grape varieties, which have already proven successful in area vineyards. More recent research involves projects in evaluating new wine grape varieties, and rootstock trials evaluating potential for earlier maturity in 'Pinot Noir' grapes.

Currently, there are 7 wineries producing 25,000 cases of wine on approximately one hundred acres valued at over \$1 million.



Photo by Don McMoran

ORGANIC FARMING

In 2018 there were 66 certified organic producers, two secondary companies/producers and one producer transitioning to organic production in Skagit County on 8,481 acres and 87 acres in transition. Organic production in Skagit County is valued at more than \$27,000,000, making it the highest organic agricultural producing county in Western Washington.

WSU Skagit County Extension has been teaching the Cultivating Success Beginning Farmer and Rancher course and the Agricultural Entrepreneur bilingual 12-week course in partnership with Skagit Valley College since 2006. To date more than 500 students have been educated on organic/sustainable agricultural production.

Sources: http://tfrec.cahnrs.wsu.edu/organicag/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2019/05/WA_OrgStats_ann_rev_2018.pdf and personal communications with WSU Sustainable Agricultural Specialist, David Granatstein.

2018 MILK PRODUCTION DATA FOR SKAGIT COUNTY

Year	Number of Dairies		Total Pounds	Uniform Average	Annual Total Milk Value	
	Start of Year	End of Year	Milk Produced	Milk Price/cwt*	Total County	Ave Value/Farm
2018	30	29	279,152,302	\$14.83	\$41,388,470	\$1,413,506
2017	30	30	279,118,178	\$16.16	\$45,105,498	\$1,503,517
2016	30	30	277,208,444	\$14.67	\$40,666,479	\$1,355,549
2015	29	30	287,906,784	\$15.59	\$44,884,668	\$1,521,514
2014	29	29	299,584,645	\$22.66	\$67,885,881	\$2,340,892
2013	30	29	280,182,987	\$18.84	\$52,786,475	\$1,759,549
2012	31	30	270,573,960	\$17.20	\$46,538,721	\$1,551,291
2011	30	31	336,923,400	\$19.20	\$64,689,293	\$2,086,751
2010	29	30	264,944,400	\$15.42	\$40,854,426	\$1,408,773
2009	27	28	237,502,107	\$11.76	\$27,930,248	\$1,034,454

* Weighted Average Uniform Price = Class III milk price + producer price differential.

2018 DATA

Month	Milk Pounds	Price/cwt	Total Value	Dairies	Milk Income/Dairy
January	24,032,301	\$14.32	\$3,441,426	30	\$114,714
February	22,139,535	\$13.66	\$3,024,260	30	\$100,809
March	24,467,879	\$13.88	\$3,396,142	30	\$113,205
April	23,995,329	\$14.32	\$3,436,131	30	\$114,538
May	25,025,352	\$15.18	\$3,798,848	30	\$126,628
June	23,887,259	\$15.47	\$3,695,359	30	\$123,179
July	24,000,520	\$14.73	\$3,535,277	30	\$147,843
August	23,480,501	\$15.07	\$3,538,512	30	\$117,950
September	21,816,517	\$15.44	\$3,368,470	30	\$112,282
October	21,984,405	\$15.77	\$3,466,941	30	\$115,565
November	21,703,328	\$15.22	\$3,303,247	30	\$110,108
December	22,619,376	\$14.96	\$3,383,859	29	\$116,685
TOTALS	279,152,302	\$14.83	\$41,388,470	29.92	\$1,413,506



Photo by Don McMoran

U.S. dairy product consumption statistics reveal interesting trends. The USDA's Economic Research Service reports the following changes between 1975 and 2013:

- Milk and cream: 28% decrease in consumption
- **Yogurt: 645% increase in consumption**
- **Cheese: 89% increase in consumption**
- Evaporated and condensed milk: 16% decrease in consumption
- Frozen products: 23% decrease in consumption

Sources:

2017 Washington Annual Agriculture Bulletin, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Northwest Regional Field Office.

2017 Pacific Northwest Federal Milk Marketing Order, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Dairy Programs.



Photo by Jason VanderKooy

2018 DAIRY

In the face of global oversupply, weak commodity markets, retaliatory tariffs, and other challenging headwinds, exports rose to an equivalent to 15.8 percent of U.S. milk solids production in 2018, the most ever. U.S. dairy exports reached a record-high volume, increasing 9 percent over the prior year. The value of U.S. exports was \$5.59 billion, 2 percent more than the prior year. The decrease in volume exported to China was offset by increased exports to Mexico and Southeast Asia and broadly across trading partners. Despite strong exports, Washington milk prices in 2018 maintained a downward trend. The yearly average uniform milk price received was \$14.84, which was the third lowest price since 2009. Dairy producers face ongoing profitability challenges from world trade conditions that continue to keep milk prices low despite high volume of milk exported. The low milk price creates challenging financial conditions. Available dairy financial review information for 2018 shows dairies operating at financial loss. Dairy policy has risen to a pinnacle farm policy issue to address international trade disputes and the ongoing financial stress effecting the dairy sector. In response to increasing dairy financial stress, efforts have been made to improve the effectiveness of existing dairy risk management programs. The USDA Farm Service Agency operates the revised Dairy Margin Coverage Program and the USDA Risk Management Agency offers the Livestock Gross Margin, and the Dairy Revenue Protection programs was first made available in October 2018. This is a new USDA Risk Management Agency insurance program structured similarly to Livestock Risk Protection where producers insure future prices and production based on futures market prices. Indemnity payments are triggered if USDA reported milk prices fall below milk futures prices in the insured coverage period. There has been initial support for the program including participation by Washington producers.

--Dr. Shannon Neibergs, WSU Livestock Economist

Vegetable Seed



Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

VEGETABLE SEED PRODUCTION IN WESTERN WASHINGTON (ACRES)

Harvest Year	Skagit County					Total Clark	Total Clallam	Total Cowlitz	Total Island	Total Jefferson	Total Lewis	Total Snohomish	Total Whatcom	Total Western WA
	Beet	Cabbage	Spinach	Misc.	Total Skagit									
*2018	598	271	2036	67	2972	35	35	493	57	10	176	766	94	4638
*2017	486	260	1956	17	2719	NA	NA	NA	67	10	300	742	54	3892
*2016	581	236	1260	45	2122	NA	NA	NA	73	10	300	507	45	3057
*2015	609	250	1227	25	2111	NA	NA	NA	56	10	250	503	43	2973
*2014	734	202	1622	20	2578	NA	NA	NA	50	10	200	252	30	3120
*2013	1005	322	2139	25	3491	NA	NA	NA	59	1	NA	479	50	4080
*2012	733	388	1847	50	3018	NA	NA	NA	44	1	NA	531	57	3651
*2011	668	339	1454	68	2529	NA	NA	NA	76	1	NA	235	NA	2841
*2010	512	495	1619	44	2670	NA	NA	NA	46	1	NA	384	NA	3101
*2009	305	433	1631	75	2444	NA	NA	NA	70	NA	NA	315	NA	2829
*2008	457	381	1456	20	2314	NA	NA	NA	60	NA	NA	367	NA	2741
*2007	530	400	1493	80	2503	NA	NA	NA	73	NA	NA	272	26	2874
*2006	519	352	1680	69	2620	NA	NA	NA	60	NA	NA	458	NA	3138
2003	316	93	790	20	1219	NA	45	-	34	10	-	272	93	1673
2002	313	95	770	26	1204	NA	71	-	105		110	234	102	1826
2001	710	349	1112	190	2361	NA	78	-	126		194	417	79	3255
2000	763	410	2412	215	3800	NA	100	-	256		146	661	112	5075

Beginning in 2006 production numbers are based on "Pinned" acres by seed company representation at WSU NWREC on March 1st and June 1st.



VEGETABLE SEED PRODUCTION IN WESTERN WASHINGTON (DOLLARS)

Harvest Year	Skagit County					Clark	Clallam	Cowlitz	Island	Jefferson	Lewis	Snohomish	Whatcom	Total Western WA
	Beet	Cabbage	Spinach	Misc.	Total Skagit									
2018	1,794,000	2,710,000	6,108,000	201,000	10,813,000	227,500	175,000	1,479,000	570,000	100,000	528,000	4,100,000	470,000	18,462,500
2017	1,458,000	2,598,000	5,868,000	51,000	9,975,000	NA	NA	NA	670,000	100,000	1,500,000	3,707,500	530,000	16,482,500
2016	2,324,000	2,362,000	3,780,000	135,000	8,601,000	NA	NA	NA	728,000	100,000	1,500,000	2,532,500	450,000	13,911,500
2015	1,827,000	1,250,000	3,681,000	75,000	6,833,000	NA	NA	NA	278,000	100,000	500,000	1,509,000	213,000	9,433,000
2014	2,202,000	2,016,000	4,866,000	60,000	9,144,000	NA	NA	NA	150,000	400,000	800,000	1,004,000	150,000	11,648,000
2013	1,512,500	1,932,000	5,347,500	62,500	8,854,500	NA	NA	NA	292,500	2,500	NA	2,395,000	250,000	11,794,500
2012	1,899,000	1,940,000	5,541,000	75,000	9,455,000	NA	NA	NA	217,500	1,500	NA	1,703,000	388,500	11,765,500
2011	2,004,000	1,693,500	4,847,000	102,000	8,646,500	NA	NA	NA	381,500	1,500	NA	705,000	NA	9,734,500
2010	1,536,000	2,473,500	4,857,000	132,000	8,998,500	NA	NA	NA	230,250	NA	NA	1,152,000	NA	10,380,750
2009	915,000	2,166,250	4,894,500	225,000	8,200,750	NA	NA	NA	347,500	NA	NA	1,017,000	NA	9,565,250
2008	1,143,300	1,905,500	4,366,599	100,000	7,515,399	NA	NA	NA	300,000	NA	NA	1,100,100	NA	8,915,499
2007	953,640	1,198,500	2,238,750	120,000	4,510,890	NA	NA	NA	219,000	NA	NA	527,700	78,000	5,335,590
2006	519,000	352,800	1,680,000	39,000	2,590,800	NA	NA	NA	180,450	NA	NA	458,000	120,300	3,349,550
2003	560,507	346,429	828,369	62,550	1,797,855	NA	269,907	-	183,771	8,025	-	437,676	133,782	2,831,016
2002	630,897	492,849	1,152,622	17,906	2,294,274	NA	250,682	-	290,534	-	129,969	588,275	204,560	3,758,294
2001	1,481,266	1,501,946	2,099,945	178,890	5,262,047	NA	374,673	-	545,636	-	121,853	973,485	52,427	7,330,121
2000	1,192,711	2,036,666	3,345,547	606,589	7,181,513	NA	319,102	-	847,693	-	193,710	1,773,375	265,203	10,580,596

Crop Acreage/Yield



Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

SKAGIT COUNTY CROP ACREAGE SUMMARY *

CROP	2018	2010	2000	1990	1978
Apples ⁽¹⁾	75	100	373	103	n/a
Blackberries	450	60	n/a	n/a	n/a
Blueberries	4,600	1,200	625	xxx	xxx
Brussels Sprouts	1,600	10	n/a	n/a	n/a
Carrots (processing)	0	200	800	468	890
Cucumbers (processing)	500	1000	2,396	1,900	1,094
Dry Beans	1,100	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Field Crops ⁽²⁾	34,000	35,000	22,650	33,050	25,000
Grass Seed	1600	650	1,081	xxx	xxx
Misc. Crops ⁽³⁾	4,000	4,000	3,623	665	975
Peas (processing)	0	0	7,233	14,880	15,898
Potatoes	12,000	10,500	9,500	7,250	1,520
Rasp/Blueberries	See separate listings	See separate listings	See separate listings	420	524
Raspberries	350	1,300	1,441	xxx	xxx
Strawberries	550	475	390	615	550
Sweet Corn, processing	0	0	0	616	1,098
Vegetable Seed ⁽⁴⁾	2,972	2,669.7	3,800	3,375	4,891



TYPICAL YIELDS (per/acre)

Apples	40 bins
Blueberries	6-10 tons
Flower bulbs	50,000 bulbs
Cucumbers	7 ton-10 tons
Green peas	2 tons
Potatoes	20-25 tons
Raspberries	3.5-4.5 tons
Ryegrass seed	1500 lbs

1) Includes no nonbearing trees.

2) Field Crops include alfalfa, barley, corn & grass silage, grass, oats, small grain, & wheat.

3) Refer to Crops Grown in Skagit County on page 22.

4) Vegetable Seed includes beet, cabbage, swiss chard and spinach.

* Figures shown are unofficial estimates based on input from processing companies, growers, agricultural organizations and agencies, field representatives, news articles, and Extension Agent experience. Crops grown by fewer than three producers are combined to protect confidentiality. Official agricultural figures are collected every five years by USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. The last Census of Agriculture was collected for the year 2012 and can be viewed at the following web site: <https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/>

Statistical Summary



Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

STATISTICAL SUMMARIES: *

Dollar Value to Producer

Crop	2018	2010	2000	1990	1978
Apples ⁽¹⁾	100,000	200,000	865,200	592,250	xxx
Blackberries	1,400,000	30,000	n/a	n/a	n/a
Blueberries	21,000,000	6,000,000	3,011,646	xxx	xxx
Brussels Sprouts	8,000,000	50,000	n/a	n/a	n/a
Carrots processing)	0	600,000	985,600	493,794	1,181,157
Cucumbers (processing)	500,000	1,500,000	5,220,773	4,944,034	1,920,930
Dairy (milk sold)	41,388,470	40,854,426	43,895,519	53,122,168	23,885,268
Dry Beans	1,700,000	1,500	n/a	n/a	n/a
Eggs and Fryers ⁽²⁾	25,000,000	25,000,000	12,309,000	14,016,877	5,177,500
Field Crops ⁽³⁾	34,000,000	30,000,000	9,423,600	12,844,718	2,575,000
Grass Seed	1,600,000	487,500	545,000	xxx	xxx
Livestock	12,000,000	7,500,000	8,123,000	4,400,000	5,493,283
Misc.Crops ⁽⁴⁾	35,000,000	20,000,000	16,944,598	2,046,600	176,000
Nursery & Greenhouse, Floriculture & Sod	55,000,000	50,000,000	56,207,469	24,000,000	4,900,000
Peas (processing)	0	0	3,044,092	5,640,903	7,117,743
Potatoes	60,000,000	52,500,000	52,725,000	33,746,600	2,032,800
Raspberries/ Blueberries	See separate listings	See separate listings	See separate listings	1,179,450	1,789,058
Raspberries	900,000	8,400,000	4,143,347	xxx	xxx
Strawberries	1,900,000	2,500,000	2,725,643	2,496,280	1,233,314
Sweet Corn (processing)	0	0	0	187,828	1,187,462
Vegetable Seed ⁽⁵⁾	18,462,000	10,380,750	7,566,503	3,144,352	1,828,968
TOTALS	317,950,470	256,004,176	227,735,900	162,855,854	60,498,483



Photo by Jason VanderKoooy

1. Includes no acres nonbearing trees.
2. State public disclosure restrictions prevent the publishing of "farm-gate" values. The figure for Eggs & Fryers reflects the "overall value" of the industry to the county.
3. Field Crops include alfalfa, barley, corn & grass silage, grass, oats, small grain, & wheat.
4. Refers to Crops Grown in Skagit County on page 22.
5. Vegetable Seed includes, beet, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, rutabaga, spinach.

*Figures shown are unofficial estimates based on input from processing companies, growers, agricultural organizations and agencies, field representatives, news articles, and Extension Agent experience. Crops grown by fewer than three producers are combined to protect confidentiality. Official agricultural figures are collected every five years by USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. The last Census of Agriculture was collected for the year 2012 and can be viewed at the following web site: <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/>. For state information, contact Washington Agricultural Statistics (360/902-1940).



2017 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE County Profile



Skagit County Washington



Total and Per Farm Overview, 2017 and change since 2012

	2017	% change since 2012
Number of farms	1,041	-3
Land in farms (acres)	97,664	-8
Average size of farm (acres)	94	-5
Total	(\$)	
Market value of products sold	287,096,000	+5
Government payments	407,000	-72
Farm-related income	7,400,000	+10
Total farm production expenses	250,953,000	-1
Net cash farm income	43,951,000	+57
Per farm average	(\$)	
Market value of products sold	275,789	+9
Government payments		
(average per farm receiving)	5,029	-59
Farm-related income	18,363	+10
Total farm production expenses	241,069	+3
Net cash farm income	42,220	+62

Farms by Value of Sales

	Number	Percent of Total ^a
Less than \$2,500	563	54
\$2,500 to \$4,999	113	11
\$5,000 to \$9,999	75	7
\$10,000 to \$24,999	87	8
\$25,000 to \$49,999	37	4
\$50,000 to \$99,999	37	4
\$100,000 or more	129	12

Farms by Size

	Number	Percent of Total ^a
1 to 9 acres	387	37
10 to 49 acres	401	39
50 to 179 acres	158	15
180 to 499 acres	46	4
500 to 999 acres	32	3
1,000 + acres	17	2

3 Percent of state agriculture sales

Share of Sales by Type (%)

Crops	67
Livestock, poultry, and products	33

Land in Farms by Use (%) ^a

Cropland	67
Pastureland	12
Woodland	12
Other	9

Acres irrigated: 23,544

24% of land in farms

Land Use Practices (%) of farms)

No till	4
Reduced till	3
Intensive till	12
Cover crop	10

Skagit County
Washington, 2017
Page 2

2017 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE County Profile

Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold

	Sales (\$1,000)	Rank in State ^b	Counties Producing Item	Rank in U.S. ^b	Counties Producing Item
Total	287,096	9	39	277	3,077
Crops	191,167	10	39	149	3,073
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas	5,733	15	33	1,591	2,916
Tobacco	-	-	-	-	323
Cotton and cottonseed	-	-	-	-	647
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes	86,674	4	38	40	2,821
Fruits, tree nuts, berries	21,905	13	39	107	2,748
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, sod	73,606	1	37	38	2,601
Cultivated Christmas trees, short rotation woody crops	58	17	30	356	1,384
Other crops and hay	3,192	17	39	801	3,040
Livestock, poultry, and products	95,929	9	39	536	3,073
Poultry and eggs	(D)	9	39	(D)	3,007
Cattle and calves	9,778	16	39	1,266	3,055
Milk from cows	59,506	5	29	145	1,892
Hogs and pigs	74	14	39	988	2,856
Sheep, goats, wool, mohair, milk	174	21	39	888	2,984
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, donkeys	239	17	39	853	2,970
Aquaculture	(D)	4	33	21	1,251
Other animals and animal products	(D)	(D)	39	(D)	2,878

Total Producers ^c

1,838

Sex

Male	1,044
Female	794

Age

<35	131
35 - 64	1,039
65 and older	668

Race

American Indian/Alaska Native	9
Asian	20
Black or African American	3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-
White	1,790
More than one race	16

Other characteristics

Hispanic, Latino, Spanish origin	39
With military service	225
New and beginning farmers	441

Percent of farms that:

Have internet access **83**

Farm organically **5**

Sell directly to consumers **18**

Hire farm labor **25**

Are family farms **96**

Top Crops in Acres ^d

Forage (hay/haylage), all	16,052
Vegetables harvested, all	13,792
Potatoes	9,896
Corn for silage or greenchop	8,046
Barley for grain	4,993

Livestock Inventory (Dec 31, 2017)

Broilers and other meat-type chickens	(D)
Cattle and calves	29,525
Goats	613
Hogs and pigs	211
Horses and ponies	1,528
Layers	13,686
Pullets	2,872
Sheep and lambs	1,243
Turkeys	458

See 2017 Census of Agriculture, U.S. Summary and State Data, for complete footnotes, explanations, definitions, commodity descriptions, and methodology.

^a May not add to 100% due to rounding. ^b Among counties whose rank can be displayed. ^c Data collected for a maximum of four producers per farm. ^d Crop commodity names may be shortened; see full names at www.nass.usda.gov/go/cropnames.pdf. * Position below the line does not indicate rank. (D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations. (NA) Not available. (Z) Less than half of the unit shown. (-) Represents zero.



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

COMMERCIAL CROPS GROWN IN SKAGIT COUNTY

Fruit

Aronia*
Blackberry
Blueberry
Boysenberry*
Cantaloupe*
Currant*
Lingonberry*
Loganberry*
Marionberry*
Raspberry
Strawberry
Tayberry*
Watermelon*
Wine Grape

Tree Fruit

Apple
Asian pear*
Cherry*
Hasselnut/Filbert
Peach*
Pear*
Plum*
Quince*

Vegetables

Artichoke
Asparagus and asparagus root*
Basil*
Bean
Beet*

Bok Choy*
Broccoli
Brussels sprout
Burdock*
Cabbage
Carrot
Cauliflower
Chives*
Cucumber
Garlic*
Green pea*
Hothouse Tomato*
Kale*
Kohlrabi*
Leek
Lettuce
Mizuna*
Onion*
Parsley*
Parsnip*
Pepper
Potato
Pumpkin
Radish*
Rhubarb*
Salad Mix
Spinach*
Summer squash
Sweet corn
Swiss chard*
Tomatillo*
Tomato*

Turnip*
Winter squash

Seed Crops - Vegetable

Arugula
Broccoli-raab
Brussels sprouts
Cabbage
Cauliflower
Chinese cabbage
Chinese kale
Chinese mustard
Coriander
India mustard
Kale
Kohlrabi
Parsley
Parsnip
Radish
Rutabaga
Spinach
Swiss chard
Table Beet
Turnip

Seed/Pulse Crops - Other

Fava bean
Pinto bean
Red bean
Ryegrass
Tall fescue

Small Grains

Barley
Buckwheat
Cereal rye
Oats
Triticale
Wheat

Forage Crops

Alfalfa
Field corn
Silage grass

Flowers and Bulbs

Daffodil
Dahlia
Iris
Lily
Tulip

Miscellaneous Crops

Bamboo
Christmas trees
Dill*
Fennel*
Gourds*
Hybrid poplar
Marijuana
Sod
Tea*

*Less than ten acres



ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES AND AGENCIES SERVING SKAGIT COUNTY AGRICULTURE

Agrilink Foods	Skagit Farmers Supply
Bank of the Pacific	Skagit Seed Services
Bio Huma Netics, Inc.	Skagit Valley Red Potato Growers Assn.
Brim Tractor	Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland
Cascadian Farms	Small Fruit Advisory Committee
Conway Feed	Sorensen Seed Co.
Cucumber Industry Advisory Committee	Sustainable Connections
D & D Farms	Syngenta Seeds, Inc.
Farm Service Administration	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Farmers Equipment Company	USDA Farm Service Agency
Gielow Pickles	Tree Fruit Industry Advisory Committee
Harmony Dairy	Twin City Foods
Natural Resources Conservation Service	Valley Pride Sales
Northwest Ag Business Center	Viva Farms
Northwest Agricultural Research Foundation	WA Blueberry Commission
Northwest Bulb Growers	WA Lettuce & Vegetable Co.
Northwest Farm Credit Services	WA Red Raspberry Commission
Northwest Food Processors Association	WA Seed Potato Commission
Peoples Bank	WA State Dairy Federation
Puget Sound Seed Growers Association	WA State Potato Commission
Rabo Bank	WA Strawberry Commission
Rijk Zwaan Seed	Washington Tractor
Sakata Seed Company	Western WA Agricultural Assn.
Sakuma Bros.	Western WA Fruit Research Foundation
Schafer Agriculture Services	Western WA Small Seed Advisory Committee
Skagit Bank	Wilbur Ellis Company
Skagit Conservation District	WSU Mount Vernon Northwestern
Skagit County Cattlemen's Association	Washington Research & Extension Center
Skagit County Dairy Federation	WSU Clallam County Extension
Skagit County Farm Bureau	WSU Jefferson County Extension
Skagit County Farmland Legacy Program	WSU Skagit County Extension
Skagit County Horticultural Pest Board	WSU Whatcom County Extension
Skagit Dairy Women	

Acknowledgements



Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

We wish to express our appreciation to the following for their assistance in the gathering of data for this report:

Ag Tech Services
Capital Press
Day Creek Poultry Farms
Draper Valley Farms, Inc.
Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County
Farm Service Agency
Gielow Pickles Inc.
Harmony Dairy
Hedlin Farms
Hughes Farms
Knutzen Farms
McMoran Farms
Merritt's Apples
National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration
Norm Nelson, Inc.
Northwest Agriculture Business Center
North Fork Nursery
Ralph's Greenhouse
Sakuma Bros. Farm
Sakata Seed Company
Schafer Ag Services, LLC
Seminis Vegetable Seed Co.
Skagit Farmers Supply
Skagit Seed Services
Skagit Select
Skagit Valley Herald
Sky Harvest Produce
Sterling Hills Potato Farm

Syngenta Seeds, Inc.
Universal Seed, Inc.
US Department of Commerce
US Department of Labor
Valley Pride Sales
Vikima Seed, USA
Viva Farms
Washington Agricultural Statistics Service
Washington Bulb Co., Inc.
Washington Fryer Commission
Washington State Potato Commission
Washington Red Raspberry Commission
Washington State Employment Security Department
Washington Strawberry Commission
Western Washington Agriculture Association
Wilbur Ellis Company
WSU Mount Vernon Northwestern Washington
Research and Extension Center



Photo by Don McMoran