



WASHINGTON STATE  
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION  
**Kitsap County**



## KITSAP FOOD SYSTEMS 2022

### BY THE NUMBERS

- 10 farmers markets directly supported with food access programming in Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason and Grays Harbor counties.
- 19 farmers markets and farm stands supported with SNAP Market Match technical assistance across Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Grays Harbor, Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat and Skamania Counties.
- One-on-one technical assistance provided to 25 farms
- 6 virtual classes and 4 in person farm walks offered to Kitsap area farmers
- 8 farmer mentors supported in providing a total of 9 group classes to their farm interns
- Administration and facilitation support for 1 food systems network, 1 local coalition and 1 farmer network.

### ISSUE

WSU Kitsap Extension works to build the capacity of individuals, organizations, businesses, and communities, empowering them to find solutions for local issues and to improve their quality of life. Since 2015, Extension has actively taken part in building a community food system by supporting emerging coalitions, networks and other projects based around the needs of the community and its partners. A community food system is one in which food production, processing, distribution, and consumption are geographically integrated and benefit the environment, economy, and social and nutritional health of a particular community. In 2022, we saw a stronger need for partnership building and a more collaborative approach to food systems work across the county and the region.

### RESPONSE

In 2022, WSU Kitsap Extension continued to focus on a whole systems approach to our community food system work. Extension continued partnerships and collaboration around health equity, farmers markets, food access, farmer support services, and capacity building within our networks. The focus was on the following projects and/or support of existing and new networks.

#### FARMERS MARKETS & FOOD ACCESS

**WSFMA Regional Lead** – continued partnership with the Washington State Farmers Market Association (WSFMA) to act as the West Sound Regional Lead, providing support for farmers markets in five counties wishing to build or expand food access programming.

**SNAP Market Match Technical Support Provider** – continued partnership with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) acting as the Technical Assistance Provider for the statewide SNAP Market Match incentive program at farmers markets and farm stands in nine counties across Western Washington.



## RESPONSE

### FARMER SUPPORT

Farmers form the backbone of community food systems. Working with farmers and other community partners is essential in building a more localized food system in our region. WSU Kitsap Extension has continued to support farmers through the following projects and programs:

- **Regional Small Farms Program:** tri-county program focused on providing educational classes, technical assistance, farm walks and other resources to area farmers.
- **Kitsap Farm Mentor Program:** WSU provides administration and curriculum support to approved Farm Mentors in the county. Farm Mentors then collectively provide instruction and hands-on learning in small farm agricultural practices via group intern classes each season.
- Farmer networking opportunities

### CAPACITY BUILDING, COALITIONS & NETWORKS

- **Kitsap Food Systems Round Table**— Continued to provide administration and support of the county wide Food Systems Round Table, a monthly meeting consisting of representatives from ten local food systems focused organizations.
- **Kitsap HEAL Coalition** – Continued co-administration of the county wide Kitsap Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Coalition.
- **Kitsap Agritourism Group** – Administration and support for a farmer led group in Kitsap focused on agritourism businesses. The group meets monthly to network, share resources and collaborate on promoting agritourism in the county.

## IMPACTS

- Direct support of 10 area farmers market with food access programming in the West Sound. Increased dollars spent at Western Washington farmers markets via the SNAP Market Match incentive program. This provides greater access to nutritious food for SNAP customers as well as increased sales for local farmers and vendors.
- Regional Small Farms program impacts (Kitsap County alone):
  - ⇒ 25 Kitsap farmers provided one-on-one technical assistance, including on farm visits. Farmers additionally had access to regional staff specializing in livestock and integrated pest management.
  - ⇒ Farmers had access to six virtual education offerings (including Cultivating Success class series), and four in person farm walk educational opportunities.
- Support to 8 approved farm mentors in Kitsap. Conducted 9 group classes with instruction in: season extension, body mechanics & farm efficiency, apiculture, small fruit production, growing flowers, winter crops, racial justice in farming, crop planning and soil fertility.
- A new agritourism focused farmer group formed, and support was given to the group in the form of administration, grant writing and resources. The group encompasses over 25 local farms with meetings offered monthly. A grant was received in conjunction with our local DMO, Visit Kitsap, to support efforts in collaborative promotions for 2023.
- Quarterly meetings held for the Kitsap HEAL Coalition open to stakeholders, community partners and the public. In addition, work groups formed around pressing community needs and projects. Work groups included Kitsap Early Childhood work group, Kitsap Moves active living campaign, and Farm to Early Learning workgroup which helped secure funding for a local partner under the WSDA Farm to School grant.
- Kitsap Food Systems Round Table continued monthly meetings for ten local partner organizations to connect and share out resources. A sub-group was formed and started working together in 2022 around Farmland Preservation in Kitsap