



WASHINGTON STATE  
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION  
**Kitsap County**



## KITSAP FARMING AND FOOD SYSTEMS 2023

### BY THE NUMBERS

- 10 farmers markets directly supported with their 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.
- Kitsap Harvest provided 79,778 pounds of fresh and donated foods to approximately 1,500 individuals at 44 total locations across the county, with 28 sites being served consistently.
- One-on-one technical assistance provided to 36 Kitsap farms.
- 8 virtual classes, 7 in-person farm walks and 10 additional topic based in-person classes provided to 113 Kitsap farmer participants.
- 7 farm mentors supported in providing a total of 10 group classes to their farm interns.
- Administration and ongoing support provided to 1 food systems network, 1 farmer coalition, 1 farmer led work group, and 1 agricultural nonprofit.

### 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, Kitsap 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 2023, Kitsap saw a continued need for partnership building and a more collaborative approach to food systems work across the county and the region.

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## RESPONSE

WSU Kitsap Extension continues to focus on a whole systems approach to our community food system work. In 2023, Extension continued partnerships and collaboration around health equity, food access, farmers markets, farmer education and support, and capacity building within our community networks. The focus was on the following projects and/or support of new and existing networks:

### FOOD ACCESS PROGRAMMING & FARMERS MARKETS

- **Washington State Farmers Market (WSFMA) Regional Lead** – continued partnership with the WSFMA to act as the West Sound Regional Lead, providing support for farmers markets in five (5) 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 (9) counties across Western Washington.
- **Kitsap Harvest** – continued providing staff time and resources in support of the Kitsap Harvest gleaning organization. As a young non-profit originally launched out of Extension programming, WSU continued to partner with their board of directors to assist the organization transitioning into their next phase of sustainability while expanding access to nutritious food in the community.

### 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 in 2023:

- **Regional Small Farms Program:** tri-county program focused on providing educational classes, technical assistance, farm walks and other resources and support to area farmers. *\*See the 2023 Regional Small Farms Impact Report for full information*
- **Kitsap Farm Mentor Program:** WSU Kitsap 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. *\*See the 2023 Kitsap Farm Mentor Program Impact Report for full information*



## RESPONSE

### CAPACITY BUILDING, COALITIONS & NETWORKS

- **Kitsap Agritourism Coalition (KAC)** – Administration and support for a farmer led group in Kitsap focused on agritourism businesses. The farmer group meets monthly to network, share resources, and collaborate on promoting agritourism in the county.
- **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 system focused organizations.
- **Kitsap Farmland Preservation Work Group** – Continued to provide administration and support for a farmer led group in Kitsap focused on farmland preservation.
- **Kitsap Community & Agricultural Alliance (KCAA)** – Provided advising and resources to the KCAA while they reformed the organization and seated a new board of directors.

## IMPACTS

### FOOD ACCESS PROGRAMMING & FARMERS MARKETS

- **Farmers Markets:** 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.
- **Kitsap Harvest:** Kitsap Harvest's mission is to divert food that would normally go to waste to those in need in the community. In 2023, the organization:
  - ◇ Collected 83,870 pounds of donated foods (12,486 lbs. gleaning, 1,489 lbs. Grow-a-Row, 69,895 lbs. of other fresh and donated food).
  - ◇ Distributed a total of 79,778 pounds of food to 44 total locations, with 28 sites being served consistently.
  - ◇ 4,092 pounds of food provided as animal feed that would have otherwise gone to the waste stream.





## IMPACTS

### FARMER SUPPORT

- **Regional Small Farms:** *(for the full list of impacts in the region please see 2023 Regional Small Farms Impact Report).* In 2023, **Kitsap specific** impacts include:
  - ◇ 36 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.
  - ◇ 25 educational classes and in person farm walk events provided to 113 Kitsap farmer participants.
  - ◇ 29 Kitsap Farms provided \$87,000 worth of PPE via a statewide Department of Health grant.
  - ◇ Five (5) Kitsap Farms participated in the first of a three (3) year Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant to conduct sweetpotato trials in the region.
- **Kitsap Farm Mentor program** *(for full list of impacts see the 2023 Kitsap Farm Mentor Program Impact Report):*
  - ◇ Support to 7 approved farm mentors across 6 farms in Kitsap.
  - ◇ Conducted 10 group classes delivered to 8 interns with instruction in: season extension; body mechanics; farm efficiency; farmer suicide prevention and mental health; small fruit production; crop planning; integrated pest management; no-till farming; business planning; and soil fertility.

### CAPACITY BUILDING, COALITIONS & NETWORKS

- **Kitsap Agritourism Coalition:** Administrative and facilitation support provided to the Kitsap Agritourism Coalition (KAC) group of farmers. The group now encompasses over 30 local farms meeting monthly to support each other and advance agritourism initiatives in Kitsap County. A grant was received in conjunction with the local DMO, Visit Kitsap, to support efforts in collaborative promotions for 2023, which included putting together the first Kitsap Farm Tour. WSU Kitsap Extension provided the group planning, coordination, resources, and support in presenting the first farm tour, which took place on August 13th, 2023, and included eight (8) Kitsap Farms.
- **Kitsap Food Systems Round Table:** Continued support of monthly meetings for ten local partner organizations to connect and share out resources. In addition to ongoing meeting support, WSU Kitsap applied and was awarded a USDA Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) grant for a collective planning project to take place in 2024. The project will assess the current state of local food distribution in the county, identify gaps, and provided recommendations to the group around opportunities moving towards a more economically efficient local food distribution system.