Mission Statement:
To promote the vitality of farming, farmers, and ranchers by ensuring that we will continue to have productive agricultural lands in Washington State.

We will achieve this through policy recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature, the Conservation Commission and others and by enlisting public support.

Programs will be voluntary, recognize local priorities, and provide for economic incentives.

Stay in contact — sign up for the OFP Newsletter!
Send an email to ofp@scc.wa.gov or visit our webpage: www.ofp.scc.wa.gov. Email frequency is once a month.

Office of Farmland Preservation
A program of the Washington State Conservation Commission

Linking you to conservation and preservation of local agricultural lands

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Who we are

The Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) was established by the Governor and legislature in 2007 to address the rapid loss of working farm and forest lands in Washington. A program within the State Conservation Commission, the purpose of the OFP is to identify and address the causes of farmland loss.

The OFP was assigned a number of tasks, including evaluating conservation easements as a tool for preserving farmland, developing model programs for innovative economic incentives for landowners, provide technical assistance to local governments to encourage retention of agricultural lands, and develop a farm transition program to ensure viable agricultural lands are available for future generations.

What we do

- Support and sponsor agricultural conservation easements, including partnering with conservation districts on agricultural conservation easements.
- Provide technical assistance to localities as they develop and implement programs, mechanisms, and tools to encourage the retention of agricultural lands.
- Support and develop farm transition programs available in Washington to assist in the transition of farmland and related business from one generation to the next.
- Provide data and analysis on trends impacting the loss of farms and farmland in Washington.

Key Focus Areas

Farm Transition and Planning: Educate landowners on transition options, educate professionals who work with farmers about the tools available to keep the land as a farm, and match willing buyers with willing sellers.

Agricultural Conservation Easements: Coordinate, support, and make recommendations for funding of agricultural conservation easements. Partner with conservation districts on easement projects seeking funding from the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.

Grants: Partner with agricultural groups on grant funding.

Clearinghouse: Develop the OFP website to be user-friendly and organized to include information on incentive programs.

Food Policy: Explore potential for state and local actions related to farmland preservation, including emphasizing local foods and how a food system approach can work to examine the loss of farmland and other environmental issues (e.g., water quality and wildlife habitat).

Education and Outreach: Outreach to stakeholders and landowners with information on farm transition options, i.e. estate planning and other tools.

Policy: Work with stakeholders and the State Conservation Commission on policy recommendations as they relate to promoting and preserving agriculture.

Farmland Indicators: Continue tracking and publishing the Farmland Preservation Task Force identified indicators that chart the overall condition of agriculture as it relates to farmland preservation.

WA Farms

Between 2007 and 2012, the total number of farms in Washington decreased by 5% to 37,249. Farms 1-9 acres increased 14% to 10,559 farms. The number of farms selling less than $50,000 declined 6% while the number of farms selling over $1m increased 26% from 2007 (1,620 farms).

Direct Markets

Between 2007 and 2012, there was a 4% increase in farms reporting direct marketing (5,640 farms in 2012). 15% of all farms now do some direct marketing (up 2% from 2007). The market value of direct sales improved 4% over 2007 to $45.1m.

Direct Sales

2012 top 5 counties with revenues from direct sales:

- Yakima County $4,138,000 (365 farms)
- Thurston County $3,484,000 (238 farms)
- King County $2,635,000 (382 farms)
- Whatcom County $2,576,000 (302 farms)
- Skagit County $2,564,000 (244 farms)