



2019 Washington State

# Farmland Preservation Indicators

*In 2009, the Farmland Preservation Task Force adopted a series of indicators to track trends, conditions, and opportunities around farmland. Updated in 2019, these indicators offer perspective on the viability and future of agriculture in Washington and help answer the question, "Are activities helping to improve the condition and availability of farmland in Washington?"*

## INDICATOR GROUP: REGULATORY BARRIERS

In some cases, regulations can impact the viability of certain agricultural businesses by increasing operational costs and labor to comply. The aggregate of the regulatory environment can be an incentive to sell the farm or move processing out of state.

### The Business of farming and food manufacturing

The regulatory environment can be a factor for the continued success of farms and manufacturing. The cost of coming into compliance and remaining in compliance with regulations can impact whether farmers and manufacturers are able to stay in business and grow their operations.

An example of farm compliance costs comes from a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) 2018 report for Food Safety Modernization Act. The average cost burden of implementing the regulations would be:

- Farms with annual produce sales over \$3,450,000 – 0.3 percent of the value of their produce sales.
- Farms with annual produce sales between \$500,000–\$700,000 are estimated 4.2 percent.
- Small farms (sales between \$250,000 and \$500,000) and very small farms (sales between \$25,000 and \$250,000) are estimated to incur annual costs of 6 and 6.8 percent, respectively.

### More Information:

The Farmland Preservation Indicators report is available online: <https://scc.wa.gov/ofp/>

### Contact:

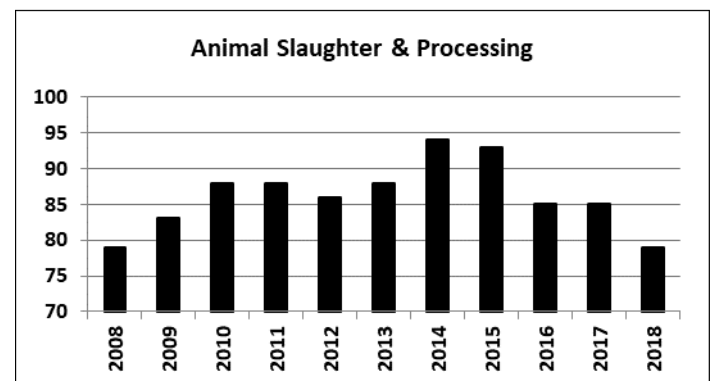
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau: County Business Patterns

### Food manufacturing and animal processing

Focusing on food system infrastructure, maintaining a healthy, robust food processing and manufacturing sector is important for farmers. When infrastructure leaves an area, if nothing fills the void, it becomes one less market available for Washington growers. While issues beyond regulations can factor in here, exploring goals from the regulatory and farm community will work to keep our agricultural economy healthy and growing.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau: County Business Patterns

### Opportunity Outlook

- Identify key areas and policy where the regulatory environment may be impacting farmland and food system infrastructure in Washington.
- Ensure the health of agriculture is reflected in regulatory rule-making.