

Washington State Conservation Commission

FARMLAND PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2020

[HTTP://SCC.WA.GOV/OFP/](http://scc.wa.gov/ofp/)



2020 Legislative Session set to begin

January 13th marks the start of the state's legislative session. The legislature in 2020 will have 60 days to conduct their business meaning shorter windows for public hearings, passage of legislation, and passage of supplemental budgets.

For calendars and agendas, go to: <http://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Calendar.aspx>

If you are interested in commenting on a bill or contact your legislator, the following link provides information on the various ways you can provide your opinion: <http://leg.wa.gov/lic/Pages/default.aspx>



The Office of Farmland Preservation tracks legislation as it relates to agricultural viability, regulatory impacts, protection of farmland, land use, and other topics related to viability of farmland in Washington.

January 13	First Day of Session
February 7	Policy Committee Cutoff—House of Origin
February 11	Fiscal Committee Cutoff—House of Origin
February 19	Last day to consider (pass) bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).
February 28	Policy Committee Cutoff—Opposite House
March 2	Fiscal Committee Cutoff—Opposite House
March 6	Opposite House Cutoff
March 12	Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

2019 Farmland Preservation Indicators Report

Every five years, the Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) updates the Farmland Preservation Indicators Report. In 2009, the Farmland Preservation Task Force adopted 20 indicators organized around five priority categories to track progress and provide information to stakeholders on key areas as they related to issues around farmland preservation. The indicators help identify trends, conditions, and opportunities over time.

The 3rd edition is now available to download here: <https://scc.wa.gov/ofp-reports/>

The data used for these indicators come from a wide variety of sources. These include USDA Census of Agriculture, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington State Employment Security Department, Washington State Department of Revenue, Washington State Department of Agriculture, Public Lands Inventory, the Natural Resource Inventory, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and more.

Stay in contact and sign up for the OFP-Newsletter!

Email frequency is once a month

Sign up on the web at: [HTTP://SCC.WA.GOV/OFP/](http://scc.wa.gov/ofp/)

Grants

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program Grant

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture is accepting applications for the BFRD. This program supports the delivery of education, mentoring, and technical assistance programs to help beginning farmers and ranchers with entering, establishing, building, and managing successful farm and ranch enterprises.

Applications for the FY 2020 funding cycle must be received by February 13, 2020.

[Learn more](#)

WA State Organic and Sustainable Farming Fund

In partnership with HumanLinks Foundation, Tilth Alliance is accepting applications by Washington State farmers seeking financial assistance for projects that will improve the economic viability, social impacts, or environmental sustainability of their farm businesses.

Grant requests should be between \$2,000 and \$20,000.

Applications are due January 17, 2020.

[Learn more](#)

USDA Accepting Proposals for Conservation Collaboration Grants

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service will invest \$35 million in grants to enhance our outreach to the nation's farmers and ranchers for the delivery and adoption of conservation measures. **Proposals are due February 7, 2020**, for projects that target agricultural producers in multiple states, including Tribal, socially disadvantaged, limited-resource or beginning farmers and ranchers as well as veteran farmers or ranchers.

[Learn more](#)

Research

U.S. Per Capita Availability of Red Meat, Poultry, and Seafood on the Rise

The supply of red meat, poultry, and fish/shellfish available for Americans to eat after adjusting for losses totaled 144 pounds per person in 2017.

Chicken and turkey posted the largest gains in per capita loss-adjusted availability over the last five decades.

Beef had the largest percentage increase—growing by 6 percent—over 2015-17.

That's a Wrap! ARS's 2019 Highlights

From Agricultural Research Service Blog

They say time flies when you're having fun ... or even when you're just working hard, and 2019 has certainly been a busy year for the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), our scientists, and their support staffs. ARS scientists conduct important research on subjects ranging from A to Z (alfalfa to zebra chip)—solving urgent problems affecting agriculture at home and abroad.

[Read the highlights here](#)

Stanford Study Finds Reduced Tillage Helps Soils and Yields

A Stanford University study showed that Midwest farmers who reduced tillage increased corn and soybean yields while improving soil health and lowering production costs.

It takes 11 years for corn farmers to see full benefits of reduced tillage, and twice that long for soybean growers. However, reduced tillage lowered production costs from the start.

[Read more](#)

USDA—Conservation Programs Changes

Under the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (also known as the 2018 Farm Act), agricultural conservation policy retains most of the programs under the previous Farm Act of 2014. Unlike the 2002, 2008, and 2014 Farm Acts—all of which involved some reconfiguration of programs—the 2018 Act continues all major conservation programs and makes only modest changes in program funding. The five largest agricultural conservation programs continue to account for a large majority of mandated conservation spending, while overall spending levels are projected to be slightly higher than they would have been under the 2014 Farm Act.

Embedded within the bill, however, are changes that could have far-reaching effects on the conservation incentives offered to farmers and ranchers. [Read more](#)

In Short

2017 Census of Agriculture Specialty Crops Data Now Available Online

The specialty crops data shows selected 2017 Census of Agriculture statistics about specialty crops defined as “fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture).” Eligible plants must be cultivated or managed and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops.

The data are available online in PDF format:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/Specialty_Crops/SCROPS.pdf

Pest Alert: Asian giant hornet

This month, WSDA entomologists identified a large hornet found near the Canadian border as an Asian giant hornet (*Vespa mandarinia*), an invasive species not previously found in Washington State.

Although it is not typically aggressive toward humans, this unwelcome pest can inflict a powerful sting and also represents a threat to honeybees, for which they have a voracious appetite.

On Dec. 8, a resident in Blaine near the Canadian border reported an unusually large hornet they found on their property.

Read more at [WSDA Ag Briefs](#)

WA DOH is considering draft animal waste rule

The State Board of Health (Board) is considering revisions to WAC 246-203-130, Keeping of Animals, originally developed in the 1920s.

The draft update retains the rule’s purpose for proper animal waste handling to maintain sanitary conditions and to prevent nuisance. The draft revisions focus on key control points for domestic animal waste that complement and reference related laws and rules. The draft rule is written as a tool that local and state agencies may implement and enforce as needed and as resources allow.

Comments accepted until Jan. 31.

[Learn more and comment here](#)

San Juan County Agricultural Summit: February 7-8

Gather with 150+ local farmers, food producers and more for a weekend of education, inspiration, and community at Orcas Island. Choose from 8 extended and hands-on workshops around Orcas on Friday morning and afternoon. Join the Orcas community for a Summit Hoedown with music and delicious food at Oddfellow’s Hall.

Saturday starts with a Trade Show, youth presentations, and a Buyer-Producer Meetup. Local and regional experts will offer 12 breakout sessions on policy, marketing, soil, livestock, and more. Featuring keynote Dr. Jennifer Moore-Kucera, Climate Initiative Director at American Farmland Trust. Scholarships and Work-trade available.

Learn more at the event page: <https://extension.wsu.edu/sanjuan/ag-summit/>



USDA Research—Food insecurity among children

Food Insecurity Among Children Has Declined Overall But Remains High for Some Groups

Food security—access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life—provides an important foundation for nutrition and health. Food security is especially important for children. The nutritional content of their diets affects not only their current health, but also their physical, mental, and social development—and thus, their future health and well-being. Prior research has shown that children in food-insecure homes, where parents and caregivers struggle to put enough food on the table, are more likely to have adverse outcomes, such as more chronic health conditions, slower progress in math and reading, and more difficulties with social development than do otherwise similar children in food-secure homes. [Read More](#)

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Mark Your Calendars

San Juan County Agricultural Summit: February 7-8—Orcas

[Gather with 150+ local farmers](#), food producers and more for a weekend of education, inspiration, and community. hands-on workshops around Orcas on Friday morning and afternoon. Saturday Trade Show, youth presentations, and a Buyer-Producer Meetup. 12 breakout sessions on policy, marketing, soil, livestock, and more. Featuring keynote Dr. Jennifer Moore-Kucera, Climate Initiative Director at American Farmland Trust. [Flyer here](#)

Cascadia Grains Conference January 17-18—Olympia, WA

The Cascadia Grains Conference and supporting events bring together farmers, bakers, brewers, distillers, brokers, investors, policy-makers and others to strengthen the role of grains in our local food economy by sharing the latest science, techniques, and developments, as well as creating a space in which new business, policy and research relationships can form and existing ones can be strengthened.

[Register online](#)

On-Farm Compost Short Course Pierce CD, Puyallup—Feb 27

This two-day short course will focus on increasing your knowledge and skills around on-farm composting. The course will include hands-on exercises in compost recipe formulation, feed-stock assessment, and construction of aerobic and properly wetted compost piles. End use of compost products to improve production and soil health on-farm and best practices to protect water quality will also be included.

[Further details](#)

Basic Financial Workshop Feb. 13 Spokane, WA, 9 am—4 pm

NW Farm Credit Servies will be offering a financial workshop focused on financial management for agriculture with hands-on workshops that teach fundamental skills in a fun and interactive environment. All family members and employees involved in record keeping or financial planning should attend.

To Register: <http://cloud.go.northwestfcs.com/BasicFinancial>

February 4-6: Spokane Ag Expo

The largest farm machinery show in the Inland Northwest. More than 250 ag suppliers and service companies all under one roof. Held at the Spokane Convention Center. The Spokane Ag Expo and Pacific Northwest Farm Forum is a 3 day event that takes place every February in Spokane, WA, and brings together agriculture professionals from across the Northwest.

Learn more!

<https://www.agshow.org/attendees>

Family Business Succession Retreat—Feb 18-20

Attend this three-day retreat to begin building your succession and estate plan with the support of family business, tax and legal experts – all in one place!

Attendance: Northwest FCS customers are given priority on a first come, first serve basis. Others may register at the link and be added to a wait list.

[Learn more](#)



“OUR MISSION IS 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 OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OTHERS AND BY ENLISTING PUBLIC SUPPORT. PROGRAMS WILL BE VOLUNTARY, RECOGNIZE LOCAL PRIORITIES, AND PROVIDE FOR ECONOMIC INCENTIVES.”