

2007-09 BIENNIAL BUDGET

AS SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR

May 15, 2007



Department of Agriculture

The 2007-09 Biennial Budget passed by the Legislature provides a total **Operating Budget** of \$121 million for WSDA and includes \$3.7 million in additional funding for five ongoing activities.

- **Administrative and Operational Capacity:** \$950,000 and 7 FTEs to address the department's administrative and operational needs. A recent independent assessment of WSDA's administrative and operational capacity concluded that the Department lacks adequate capacity to carry out administrative functions to fully implement its mission. This item represents the first phase in addressing serious gaps. (*General Fund-State*)
- **Animal Health Enforcement and Response:** \$1,121,000 and 4.2 FTEs for enhanced surveillance and investigation activity to improve compliance with the state's animal health law and for continued development of a Reserve Veterinary Corps to enhance the department's ability to respond in the event of an animal health incident. (*General Fund-State*)
- **Biofuels Quality Assurance:** \$1,007,000 in the Transportation budget plus \$500,000 in one-time Operating budget funding to monitor biofuels quality throughout the distribution system. Provides for laboratory testing and field inspection and testing, adding 2.3 FTEs, for an expanded Motor Fuel Quality program. (*Motor Vehicle and Energy Freedom accounts*)
- **Noxious Weed Control:** \$500,000 for distribution to counties with weed boards to control invasive weeds, including \$300,000 for expanded Japanese knotweed control efforts. (*General Fund-State*)
- **Puget Sound Partnership:** \$150,000 and 0.5 FTE to work with the Puget Sound Partnership on developing and implementing the Partnership's Action Agenda to clean up and restore the environmental health of Puget Sound by the year 2020 (E2SSB 5372). (*General Fund-State*)

The budget also includes \$1.8 million GF-S for several one-time or short-term activities:

- **Future of Farming Evaluation:** \$450,000 to develop a long-term strategy to keep Washington farms profitable and productive, and the state's food and agriculture industry competitive.
- **Pesticide Notification Project:** \$150,000 to investigate whether a voluntary notification program would be significant in reducing the risks of pesticide exposure in certain situations.
- **Pesticide Technical Assistance:** \$550,000 for the Tree Fruit Research Commission to develop and implement a pest management transition program to reduce the use by the tree fruit industry of certain organophosphate insecticides.
- **Agricultural Worker Training:** \$500,000 for Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC), a nonprofit organization based in Yakima, to provide necessary skills training to agricultural workers.
- **Sugar Beet as Biofuel:** \$125,000 to evaluate the use of sugar beets for producing biofuels.
- **NASDA Conference:** \$25,000 for costs associated with hosting the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Conference in Seattle on September 21-26, 2007.

The **Capital Budget** passed by the Legislature adjusts funding of the Energy Freedom Loan program and includes funding for specific projects that WSDA will administer.

- **Energy Freedom:** Overall funding for the loan program is reduced from \$17 million to \$14.5 million and the amount of funding from some targeted projects is adjusted. The budget transfers funding to the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development if HB 1303 is enacted.
- **Asparagus Mechanization:** \$840,000 to expand the asparagus mechanization program.
- **Hops Initiative:** \$1 million to continue the hops mechanization and research initiative.
- **Fairground Improvement Grants:** \$1.4 million, including \$1 million for renovations and repairs to the historic pavilion at the Walla Walla fairgrounds.

For more information, contact Mary Beth Lang, Assistant to the Director, (360) 902-1812.