



Washington State Department of Agriculture
News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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WSDA grants promote local food economy, agricultural products

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) has approved 14 grants totaling more than \$200,000 to promote Washington’s diverse food and agriculture industry. Grants range from \$5,500 to \$20,000 to assist both small and larger agricultural organizations with marketing and trade projects over the next year.

Several years ago, the Washington state Legislature established the grants to expose buyers to the state’s agricultural products and to enhance market access—both domestic and international. To qualify for the funding, successful grant applicants presented a combination of matching funds and promotional agricultural products or services.

Gov. Chris Gregoire applauds the innovative work the organizations are proposing to benefit farmers, ranchers and consumers.

“Washington agricultural products are known around the world for their quality,” said Gov. Gregoire. “These grants will help bring that message to even more consumers.”

WSDA will sign contracts with the organizations in July.

“Competition for the grant funds was strong this year,” said Janet Leister, manager of WSDA’s International Marketing Program. “Our advisory committee did a great job of helping to select the best projects that will make a difference for our producers.”

This year’s grants were awarded to:

South Whidbey Tilth Association, Langley - \$5,500 to establish an additional day for operating a farmers market. On Wednesday afternoons, market vendors will sell locally grown farm products at Highway 525 and Thompson Rd. on Whidbey Island.

Sustainable Connections, Bellingham - \$18,000 to help create publications and other educational materials that lead to connecting producers to buyers. The organization is known for promoting local businesses with locally grown foods and has developed farm maps and directories highlighting which local businesses use local products.

Farming & the Environment, Seattle - \$18,552 to provide access to direct markets for Washington’s stewardship farms. The organization defines its program as certifying an environmentally friendly (sustainable) method of farming.

The Seattle Chapter of the Chefs Collaborative, Seattle - \$10,200 to hold a Farmer Chef Connection Conference to reinforce business relationships between farmers, fishermen, chefs and other food buyers. The event increases awareness of developing a local food economy.

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Cascade Harvest Coalition, Seattle - \$20,000 to connect local farmers with local food buyers and to help increase market share of locally grown food and farm income.

Washington State Nursery & Landscape Association, Federal Way - \$20,000 for creating a coupon “nursery passport” that promotes products from local nurseries for sale at Interstate 5 area garden centers.

Skagit Red Potato Growers' Association, Burlington - \$15,000 to promote Skagit's red potatoes at the Produce Marketing Association Trade Show slated in Houston this October.

U.S. Hop Industry Plant Protection Committee, Moxee - \$9,625 to help with efforts to establish import tolerances in the European Union for pesticides approved for use on hops grown in the U.S. The goal is to reduce potential trade disputes stemming from residue detections.

Hop Growers of America, Yakima - \$15,400 to participate in the Brau Trade Fair 2007 in Nuremberg, Germany.

Beefalo Northwest Association, Ellensburg - \$6,500 to increase awareness and educate the public on the benefits of Washington “beefalo.” The relatively new meat product is derived from a cross-breed of domestic cattle and bison. The marketing plan includes sales in the Seattle market.

Washington State Beef Commission, Seattle - \$20,000 for the Cougar Gridiron Classic Presented by Washington’s Beef Producers. Fans attending the Washington State University football game scheduled for Sept. 8 at Qwest Field in Seattle will receive promotional products including free beef and chili.

Washington State Potato Commission, Moses Lake - \$10,000 to conduct an analysis of fresh potato profitability and Canadian currency exchange for Washington fresh potatoes sold to the Canadian market.

Washington Red Raspberry Commission, Lynden - \$20,000 to promote the nutritional benefits of raspberries to industrial and consumer buyers at key trade shows.

Washington Wine Commission, Seattle - \$20,000 to produce a Washington wine promotional video and educational kit for U.S. wine buyers.

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Note to editors: Contact names and phone numbers for groups receiving the grants are available on the WSDA Web site (www.agr.wa.gov) under [Marketing and Business Services](#).