



2011 Goals & Accomplishments

Goal 1
Foster fair and fact-based public policies for the agricultural industry with respect to land, water, and labor.
Objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that all farmland has adequate access to legal water. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administering Bertrand and North Lynden Watershed Improvement Districts</i> • <i>Represent agriculture in Nooksack Basin water supply negotiations</i> • <i>Led Whatcom County efforts to establish a Natural Resources Market – pilot projects underway</i> • <i>Preparing water right applications – contract service</i> • <i>Represent ag in Water Supply Planning for Economic Certainty</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ensure that all farmland has proper drainage, erosion control, and flood protection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Negotiated agreement for ditch cleaning in Double Ditch</i> • <i>Support efforts of Dairy Federation in flood management</i> • <i>Led Whatcom County efforts to establish a Natural Resources Market</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Educate policymakers to ensure well reasoned agricultural policies that minimize the negative impact of regulations on farmers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regular discussions with federal, state, and county representatives</i> • <i>Provided candidate information to farmers and farm concerns to candidates</i> • <i>Outlined federal, state, and county policy agenda</i> • <i>Lobby as necessary for legislation impacting agriculture</i> • <i>Membership in Washington Growers League for labor issues</i> • <i>Connect land, water, labor, and economic development policy issues (integration)</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Preserve the necessary land base (100K acres) of productive farmland, while protecting the economic value to the farmer and ensuring a sustainable agriculture industry in Whatcom County. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Led Whatcom County efforts to establish a Natural Resources Market</i> • <i>Direct support for the County Ag Advisory Committee</i> • <i>Support for the Purchase of Development Rights program</i> • <i>Advocating for numerous ag land protection “tools” as recommended by AAC</i> • <i>Implementing County’s Ag Strategic Plan – adopted July, 2011</i>
Goal 2
Improve the economics of farm operations to assure sustainability and prosperity
Objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate the creation of new profit opportunities for local farmers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Facilitating Agri-Energy working group – study of centralized digester underway</i> • <i>Organized the Northwest Ag Business Center</i> • <i>Explore economic development projects with the Port of Bellingham</i> • <i>Exploring ag diversification with Sustainable Whatcom</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Provide a structure for direct service programs to farmers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Operate the Starling and Beaver Control programs for Whatcom County</i> • <i>Operate the Whatcom County Pest and Disease Board</i> • <i>Preparing water right applications – contract service</i> • <i>Coordinated Lynden Ag Show and WA Berry Conference</i>

3. Facilitate the development of succession plans with farmers, and programs that assure the continuance of farming and farmland.
 - *Provided succession planning sessions with Larson, Gross, CPAs*
 - *Link farmers and farm businesses with community support resources*

Goal 3

Build county-wide communities of support for agriculture.

Objectives

1. Develop positive, productive relationships and partnerships with other agencies and groups such as other ag partners, environmental groups, economic development groups, and higher education.
 - *Use Farm Flash newsletter and other communication venues to foster farm/community communication*
 - www.wcfarmfriends.com website, Facebook page
 - *Regular communication and occasional partnering projects with - Whatcom County, City of Bellingham, City of Ferndale, City of Lynden, City of Sumas, Port of Bellingham, PUD #1 of Whatcom County, WA Dept. of Ecology, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Wa Dept. of Agriculture, USDA Wildlife Services, Whatcom Conservation District, Nooksack Tribe, Lummi Nation, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, Building Industry Association, Futurewise, Western WA University, Washington State University, Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Dairy Federation, Whatcom Farm Bureau, WA Red Raspberry Commission, WA Blueberry Commission, WA Seed Potato Commission.*
2. Educate the general community about:
 - a. Where our food comes from.
 - b. Common misconceptions about farming.
 - c. Farmers' role as environmental stewards.
 - d. The value of Ag in our local economy.
 - e. How Agriculture contributes to our quality of life.
 - *Use Farm Flash newsletter and other communication venues to foster farm/community communication*
 - www.wcfarmfriends.com website
 - *Assisted Farming For Life exhibit at the NW WA Fair*
 - *Assisted Dairy Women in organizing Milkmakers Fest*
 - *Led occasional Farm Tours – Technology Tour (July), Water Tour (September)*
3. Advocate for the role of all Whatcom farms, large and small, in effectively and efficiently feeding the community and the world.
 - *Consistent voice in media and community settings to advocate for conventional farms as well as "local, fresh market" farms*
 - *Respond to media requests and arrange connections with farmers*
4. Build relationships between farmers and the general community.
 - *Explore partnering projects with Sustainable Connections, Sustainable Whatcom*
 - *Food and Farm Finder*
 - *Harvest Dinner*
 - *Farmer's Growing Trees for Salmon*
5. Educate the farm community about what the broader community expects of farmers.
 - *Use Farm Flash newsletter and other communication venues to foster farm/community communication*
 - www.wcfarmfriends.com website