



*Food for the body, mind and soul.....*

**Whatcom County Agriculture**

**Project for Whatcom Farm Friends  
Photography by Cheryl DeHaan**

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## **Whatcom County Agriculture**

Whatcom County's rich farmland has sustained families and communities for thousands of years. Today it is more productive than ever, providing thousands of people locally and around the world with valuable food products.

But farming in Whatcom County provides more than just healthy food. Well managed farms and farmlands means preservation of our rural vistas, our natural resources, and the sense of place we call Whatcom County. As such, all citizens of Whatcom have a stake in leaving a healthy legacy for our children and grandchildren.

A Project for Whatcom Farm Friends  
Editor and Photographer: Cheryl DeHaan  
Community Education Program Manager  
1796 Front Street  
Lynden, Washington 98274  
360.354.1337  
farmfriends@wcfarmfriends.com  
www.wcfarmfriends.com

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*Dedicated to the hard-working farmers in  
Whatcom County who provide us with food, economic  
vitality, beauty, environmental protection and a better way of life,  
for our generation, our children, and our grandchildren.  
Thank You*

*A picture is said to be worth a thousand words. As a person who has been using many words for many years to try to describe what is special about Whatcom County farms I am thrilled to enjoy Cheryl's photo collection. This book paints a beautiful picture of the productive soils and natural resources that feed us and celebrates the hardworking farmers that steward those resources.*

*I'm sure that by paging through this book you will enjoy a slice of what we are fortunate to enjoy every day. Take the opportunity to reconnect with the land that sustains us, the farm economy that enriches us, and the people and place that we call home.*

*Henry Bierlink, Policy Director—Whatcom Farm Friends  
October, 2008*



Agriculture is the world's oldest, largest, and most essential industry. Whatcom County has approximately 130,000 acres of land in farms and over a \$300 million in the market value of agricultural goods sold. Whatcom County production ranks 1st out of 17 Western Washington counties and 6th out of 39 counties in the state, and ranks in the top 3% of all farm counties in the United States.



Whatcom County's primary agriculture products are:

- Dairy
- Berries & Tree Fruit
- Cattle & Calves
- Nursery/Greenhouse
- Poultry & Eggs
- Seed Potatoes & other Vegetables
- Aquaculture

Dairy is Whatcom County's #1 Ag Industry. The Farm Gate or Market Value is greater than \$200 million annually. Farmers predominately milk Holsteins, but there are a significant number of Jerseys as well and a few Brown Swiss and Guernseys. Generally, cows are milked 2-3 times daily in modern fully-automated milking parlors.





Fresh picked berries don't get any better than those hand-picked from our local farmer's fields.



Whatcom County is a special place for **seed potatoes**. It is called an isolated area because of its location and disease protection qualities. About 2,000 acres of commercially grown potatoes are mostly grown for the “seed” which is really the eyes of the potatoes that are planted to grow potato plants and more potatoes! One acre produces an average of 40,000 pounds of whole potatoes. Farmers plant 3,000 pounds of “seed” potatoes per acre. So, the 2,000 acres of Whatcom County seed potatoes will yield 80 million pounds total production of potatoes! That would be enough to plant 26,667 new acres of potatoes. That means the 2,000 Whatcom County seed potato acres has the potential to yield over one billion total pounds of potatoes into the American potato food market to be used for bakers, fries, chips, etc. That is a LOT of potatoes!

Acres of beautiful potato blossoms emerge in mid summer.





Whatcom County farmers grow hundreds of varieties of vegetables every year. Vegetables are the county's 6th largest agricultural commodity. Everything from artichokes to beans to carrots to cucumbers to garlic to lettuce to onions to parsley to squash to sweet corn to turnips to zucchini...and everything in between!





There are many Roadside Stands, U-Pick Farms, Farmers Markets and Agricultural Events available in Whatcom County. Pick up a copy of the *Whatcom Farm Map & Guide* or download a copy from [www.wcfarmfriends.com](http://www.wcfarmfriends.com).

**Buy Local!**