



A message from the Washington Agricultural Community

December 13, 2012

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee,

We look forward to working with you and other policy makers on major public policy issues impacting agriculture.

Agriculture is the economic backbone of Washington State, and supportive public policies have enabled our industry to be an ongoing, stable part of the Washington economy – especially during these recent years of economic distress.

As a major economic driver for communities across our state, small and large, east and west of the Cascades, **our \$46 billion agriculture and food processing industry** makes up 13 percent of the state's economy and **employs 160,000 people**. More than **\$15 billion in food and agricultural products were exported** through Washington ports in 2011. These benefits extend not just to producers, but to processors, shippers, employees, communities, and all Washington consumers.

Agriculture faces unique risks such as ever-changing pest and disease threats, and our farmers and ranchers are subject to increased input costs and regulatory burdens. Maintaining a strong, vibrant agricultural industry requires a state regulatory and tax structure that allows the industry to remain competitive both nationally and internationally.

For the benefit of the entire state, it is essential that we allow agriculture to flourish.

The agricultural community has developed the following list of key goals for the 2013 legislative session.

Key Goals for 2013

- **Guarantee the long-term viability of agriculture by maintaining existing tax policy.**
- **Review and revise current regulations to allow agriculture to thrive, create jobs, and lead in the economic recovery.**

- **Ensure that environmental and regulatory policy is necessary, reasonable, and based on sound science.**
- **Support agricultural research, extension, and commodity-specific programs funded through the state universities and Department of Agriculture.**
- **Ensure that our transportation system provides an efficient farm-to-market product distribution network through adequate and equitable project prioritization and funding.**

Thank you for your interest in agriculture. We look forward to working with you on these issues.

Sincerely,

Ag. Water & Power Users of Eastern Washington
 Association of Washington Aerial Applicators
 Assn. of Washington-North Idaho Seed Association
 Cattle Producers of Washington
 Columbia Basin Development League
 Columbia-Snake River Irrigators Association
 Farwest Agribusiness Association
 Hop Growers of Washington
 Northwest Food Processors Association
 Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers
 Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association
 Washington Asparagus Commission
 Washington Asparagus Council
 Washington Association of Conservation Districts
 Washington Association of Landscape Professionals
 Washington Association of Wheat Growers
 Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers
 Washington Blueberry Commission
 Washington Cattle Feeders Association
 Washington Cattlemen's Association
 Washington Christmas Tree Growers

Washington Farm Bureau
 Washington Fish Growers Association
 Washington Friends of Farms and Forests
 Washington Growers Clearing House Association
 Washington Growers League
 Washington Potato and Onion Association
 Washington State Conservation Commission
 Washington State Council of Farmer Cooperatives
 Washington State Dairy Federation
 Washington State Grange
 Washington State Hay Growers Association
 Washington State Horticultural Association
 Washington State Nursery and Landscape Association
 Washington State Potato Commission
 Washington State Sheep Producers Association
 Washington State Turfgrass Seed Commission
 Washington State Water Resources Association
 Wenatchee Valley Traffic Association
 Western Washington Agricultural Association
 Willapa-Grays Harbor Oyster Grower Association
 Yakima Valley Growers-Shippers Association

cc: WSDA Director Dan Newhouse
 Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark
 Members of the Washington State Senate
 Members of the Washington State House of Representatives