

Preserving Farmland and Farmers

Pierce County Agriculture Strategic Plan

SUMMARY REPORT



Prepared for:



**Pierce County, Washington
Economic Development Division**

By:



**Barney & Worth, Inc.
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Preserving Farmland and Farmers

Pierce County Agriculture Strategic Plan

Introduction

U.S. agricultural lands are slowly disappearing nationwide. This trend is particularly accelerated on the urban fringe of many regions. Pierce County is recognized as demonstrating this trend, suffering a loss of thousands of acres of agricultural land in recent decades.

In response to these changing conditions and the emerging needs of the agriculture sector, Pierce County has initiated a project designed to better understand and boost the industry's competitiveness. The Pierce County Agriculture Strategic Plan includes a systematic examination of the local agriculture sector, from an economic development perspective. In the final stages, strategies have been developed and are presented here to promote the agriculture industry and enhance its competitiveness.

To complete the Strategic Plan, Pierce County and its partners commissioned a consultant team led by Barney & Worth, Inc. The project sponsors drew upon the consultants to provide specialized expertise in economic development analysis, agricultural economics, and competitiveness strategies. The project was managed by an interdepartmental Steering Group led by Pierce County's Economic Development Division. The outcome for Pierce County is intended to be a deeper understanding of the competitive challenges and opportunities which can boost the county's competitiveness in local and domestic markets.

Project Goals

- ✓ Guide local policies to support agriculture: land use, economic, other.
- ✓ Cultivate programs to increase economic viability of agriculture in Pierce County.
- ✓ Facilitate agriculture industry profitability.
- ✓ Help farmers preserve/strengthen their enterprises.

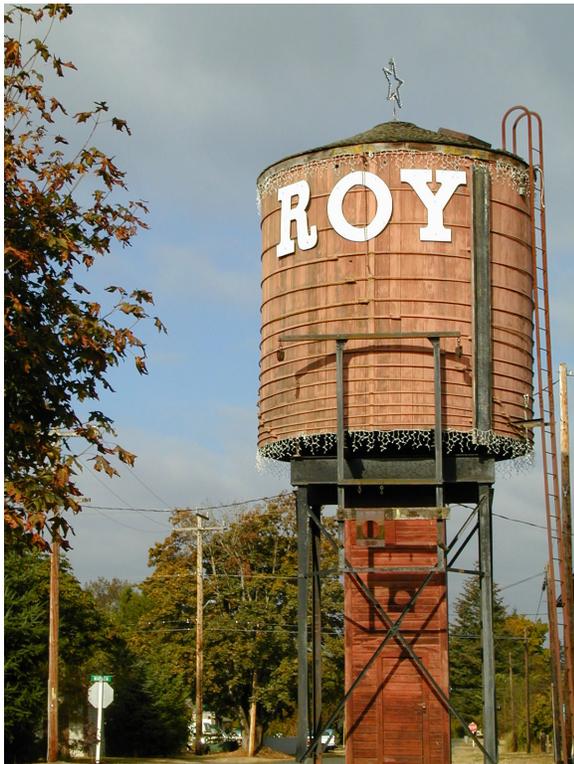


Agriculture-related businesses – and local and state government policymakers, too – want to know how they can best support the industry's competitive position. In addition, policymakers will benefit from knowledge gained about conditions facing the agriculture economic "cluster," and key elements of programs and policies that allow agri-businesses to take full advantage of their assets in the production planning, operations and marketing of their products. The project is focused on identifying specific strategies for action by county government and other major stakeholders to promote innovation, entrepreneurship and growth in local agriculture.



Pierce County Agriculture Today

Pierce County has enjoyed a long tradition of agriculture – some family farms are over 100 years old. The focus of agricultural activity has long centered on the Puyallup Valley, which benefits from fine silty and sandy, alluvial soils. Much of the production of vegetables, berry fruits, nursery plants and other crops remains concentrated here. Yet agriculture is present in other parts of Pierce County, too. There are significant numbers of growers of crops and livestock enterprises in the Key Peninsula area, as well as in upland areas near Buckley, Eatonville, Graham and Roy.



Farm communities are an important part of Pierce County's heritage.

The loss of farmland is a national phenomenon; Washington and Pierce County are not exempt. American Farmland Trust has analyzed National Resources Inventory

data collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and reports that Washington lost 35,000 acres of prime farmland between 1987 and 1992, and an additional 46,000 acres from 1992 to 1997. (More recent data has not been compiled.)



One-fourth of Puyallup Valley's farmland is slated for future development.

In Pierce County, industry observers confirm that the amount of land devoted to agricultural production is declining. About 48,000 acres of agricultural land remain, with 29,000 of these acres still in production. Farmland, especially sites with highly productive soils in the Puyallup Valley, is being converted for developed uses. Upland pasture land is also being developed.

Throughout the county, the remaining agricultural production is frequently hemmed in – located side-by-side with residential and commercial land uses. The most intense mix of agriculture and development is taking place in the Puyallup Valley where there has been a steady conversion of open land to development uses. The accompanying table shows the location of Pierce County's remaining agricultural land. One-fourth of Puyallup Valley's farmland is already committed for future development.



Pierce County Agricultural Land		
Agricultural Area	Ag Land (acres)	% Inc./UGA ¹
Anderson Island/Nisqually	1,787	0%
Bonney Lake/Buckley	7,290	2.5%
Central County	7,318	5.7%
Peninsula	5,155	0%
Puyallup Valley	6,606	24.7%
Roy/Eatonville	19,723	0.8%
Total	47,880	5.0%

Source: Pierce County Assessor's Office (2005)

¹ Percentage of agricultural land that is located within an incorporated area or urban growth boundary.



Pierce County farms continue to produce a diversity of crops.

There is still remarkable diversity in Pierce County agriculture, however. The wide range of producers includes vegetable farmers, dairies, beef and other livestock producers, horse farms, specialty fruit growers with such crops as raspberries and rhubarb, open field ornamental plant nurseries, greenhouse operators, flower and bulb growers, Christmas tree growers, and more.

Over the past quarter century, the number and average size of Pierce County farms has

been decreasing, but many people continue to derive at least part of their livelihood from agriculture. Farmers, nursery operators and others report the fertile soils, together with the climate and availability of irrigation water, still allow for very productive agricultural enterprises. When these natural assets are combined with grower know-how, Pierce County continues the long tradition of producing very high quality food and plant crops on the available land base. Today, the agriculture sector continues to be robust; there are examples of profitable farm operations at every size category.¹

The focus for the Pierce County Agriculture Strategic Plan is *commercial* agriculture. What defines commercial farmers/growers is at the heart of evaluating the current condition of local agriculture. Part-time farmers have always been an important part of Pierce County agriculture, and neither the percentage of time spent farming nor the proportion of income earned from farming defines commercial operators. It is common that farmers/growers in Pierce County (and

¹ *Pierce County Agriculture - Quantitative/Qualitative Assessment*, Globalwise, Inc., October 2005.



across the U.S.) also work off the farm to supplement their incomes. For purposes of the Strategic Plan, commercial producers have been defined as those with gross annual farm incomes of at least \$20,000. (Note: Pierce County's *Right to Farm Protections* define a commercially viable farm as one that produces an annual gross income of \$1,000 or more, as does the County's "current use" tax assessment program.)



Horticulture is the fastest growing and most profitable segment of local agriculture.

The 2002 U.S. Census of Agriculture reported 1,474 farms located in Pierce County, 515 of which had "cropland used only for pasture or grazing". More than one-third of Pierce County's farms are very small – one to nine acres. The 2002 Ag Census also reports 208 farms with annual sales above \$20,000 – a number that is in line with local estimates of commercial farms. These include larger farm operations as well as some small tracts which are intensively managed.

The best estimate is that there are approximately 75 commercial food producers in the county today. There are also 30 to 40 nurseries. The number of livestock producers is unknown.

Research Methodology

The work to develop the Strategic Plan was organized as a series of interlocking tasks, providing comprehensive research and covering a range of related topics. Key steps are highlighted below.

Preparation: included a kickoff meeting with the Steering Group and compilation/review of documents and data.

Quantitative/Qualitative Assessment of Pierce County Agriculture: this in-depth assessment evaluated the size and productivity of the local agriculture sector.



Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) Analysis: a look at the current realities and future prospects for the agriculture sector that isolated the most important elements of the situation facing agriculture in Pierce County.

Agriculture Industry Trends: a review of the research and thinking of leading experts who are in the forefront of understanding U.S. agricultural competitiveness in the 21st Century.

Policies and Regulations Impacting Competitiveness: a summary of regulations significantly impacting local agriculture, including land use planning and zoning.

Entry Barriers for Farmers: a careful examination of the challenges faced by local entrepreneurs starting new farms or expanding their existing operations.

Case Studies of Peer Communities: highlights of strategies adopted by communities across the U.S. where agriculture confronts similar challenges.

Benchmarks to Measure the Agriculture Sector's Viability: recommended yardsticks to monitor and evaluate the local agriculture sector's performance over time.



Consultant team and County staff tour local farm operations.

Stakeholder/Public Outreach: an extensive outreach program that involved a diversity of key stakeholders and more than 100 farmers and other agricultural producers. Outreach included meetings with the Pierce County Farm Advisory Commission and Alderton-McMillin Planning Board, stakeholder interviews, conducted with a cross-section of 50 area agriculture leaders, a tour of local agricultural producers, a survey of 60 farmers conducted through the Extension Service.

Competitiveness Strategy: as a final step, preparation of a strategy to reinforce the agriculture sector's competitiveness in Pierce County.

The accompanying table highlights some important conclusions taken from these various stages of the project.



Overview – Research Findings

Quantitative/Qualitative Assessment

- The numbers and size of commercial farms and food processors in Pierce County are declining, but local agriculture is still quite diverse.
- Pierce County's agriculture sector (including horticulture) employs 1,900 workers and produces \$115 million annually (based on 2001 figures – includes covered/non-covered workers).
- Nurseries are a major segment – and the most profitable.
- Land prices in the Puyallup Valley range from \$50,000 to \$1 million per acre – substantially above the economic value for farm production.

SWOT Analysis

- Key strengths for Pierce County agriculture include excellent growing conditions and proximity to the large, affluent Puget Sound market.
- The rising consumer demand for locally grown products offers a special opportunity.
- Important weaknesses/threats include the high cost of land and declining number of commercial farm operations.

Agriculture Industry Trends

- Global competition continues to challenge many sectors of U.S. agriculture. U.S. fruit and vegetable production is expanding – but losing market share.
- Another significant trend is concentration in food retailing.
- Traditional competitive advantages for Washington agriculture – cheap land, water and power – are declining or gone.

Policies & Regulations Impacting Competitiveness

- Land use policies have a profound effect on the ongoing viability of agriculture.
- Significant portions of Pierce County's farmland are being converted for development – especially in the Puyallup Valley.
- Myriad regulations pose ongoing challenges for small operators. Local regulatory hurdles make Pierce County less attractive than other locations for farming.

Entry Barriers

- The greatest barrier for new farmers is the high price of land.
- Another significant barrier is access to capital.
- Suitable land has diminished, but availability is not yet a major problem for beginning farmers.

Peer Communities

- Communities nationwide are confronting the challenges of preserving farmland and nurturing viable agriculture.
- Peers report success with a wide range of approaches and activities.

Benchmarks

- Recommended benchmarks to monitor the vitality of Pierce County agriculture:
 - Agricultural employment
 - Net farm income
 - Number of establishments
- Pierce County data/trends can be compared with King, Skagit, Snohomish and Thurston Counties

Stakeholder / Public Outreach

- Farm-friendly policies and assistance to farmers are essential to retain family farms.
- There is consensus support for a "buy local" program.



The Strategic Plan was undertaken simultaneously with two other projects underway in Pierce County:

- The Alderton-McMillin Community Plan being developed for the Puyallup Valley area.
- Research undertaken by Cascade Land Conservancy to explore the potential for Preservation of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Programs for Pierce County.



Conclusion

Over the past century, Pierce County has been transformed from an agricultural center to a highly urbanized population center. The transformation has progressed steadily through each decade. Figures comparing “improved parcels” within the county for 1950 through 2005 illustrate the marked change.²

Growth and development continues today unabated, and the transformation from rural to urban shows no sign of slowing. Pierce County’s population is projected to increase by 60,000 over just the next five years. Meanwhile, a number of factors beyond this constant development pressure are making it more difficult for local farmers to stay in business and prosper. The rising costs for labor, production, processing and shipping

² See *Policies and Regulations Impacting Competitiveness*, Barney & Worth, Inc., January 2006.

have driven up operating expenses and reduced profits for many farmers. The urbanization of agricultural areas has placed tough limitations on many farmers. New residents resist odors, dust/smoke, nighttime noise, farm vehicle traffic, and other activities of any farm operation. The local agriculture infrastructure (equipment dealers, farm lenders, etc.) is in decline and there are fewer local processors for agricultural crops. The concentration in grocery retailing has left fewer large buyers for Pierce County’s products. The bottom line is that changing market conditions and increased competition have forced many farmers out of business.



New homes – the final crop on some prime farmland.

The best data sources confirm the negative effects on Pierce County agriculture. The figures show the number and size of Pierce County farms are declining, along with farm incomes. By several standards, Pierce County is faring less well than its peers in the 5-county Puget Sound Region (King, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston). “Covered employment” in local agriculture fell from 1,500 jobs in 1990 to 1,000 jobs in 2004, and Pierce County’s share of the regional total slid from 22% to 15% of the regional total. Likewise, the number of farm enterprises providing covered employment declined from 152 to 91, leaving Pierce County with 16% of the regional total in 2004 versus 20% in 1990. Pierce County net farm income dropped



even more precipitously – to less than half of its 1990 level.³



Local farmers express concern about rules for ditch cleaning and other standard farm practices.

At the same time, the cost of farmland in Pierce County has escalated to a range that now extends from a low of \$50,000 (in some rural areas) to as high as \$1 million per acre (in more urban settings) – well beyond the economic value of land for agricultural use. The high price of land presents an attractive alternative to farming for many rural landowners. Land costs also pose the single greatest entry barrier to beginning farmers. Even the smallest farms can expect to encounter first year startup costs of about \$350,000.

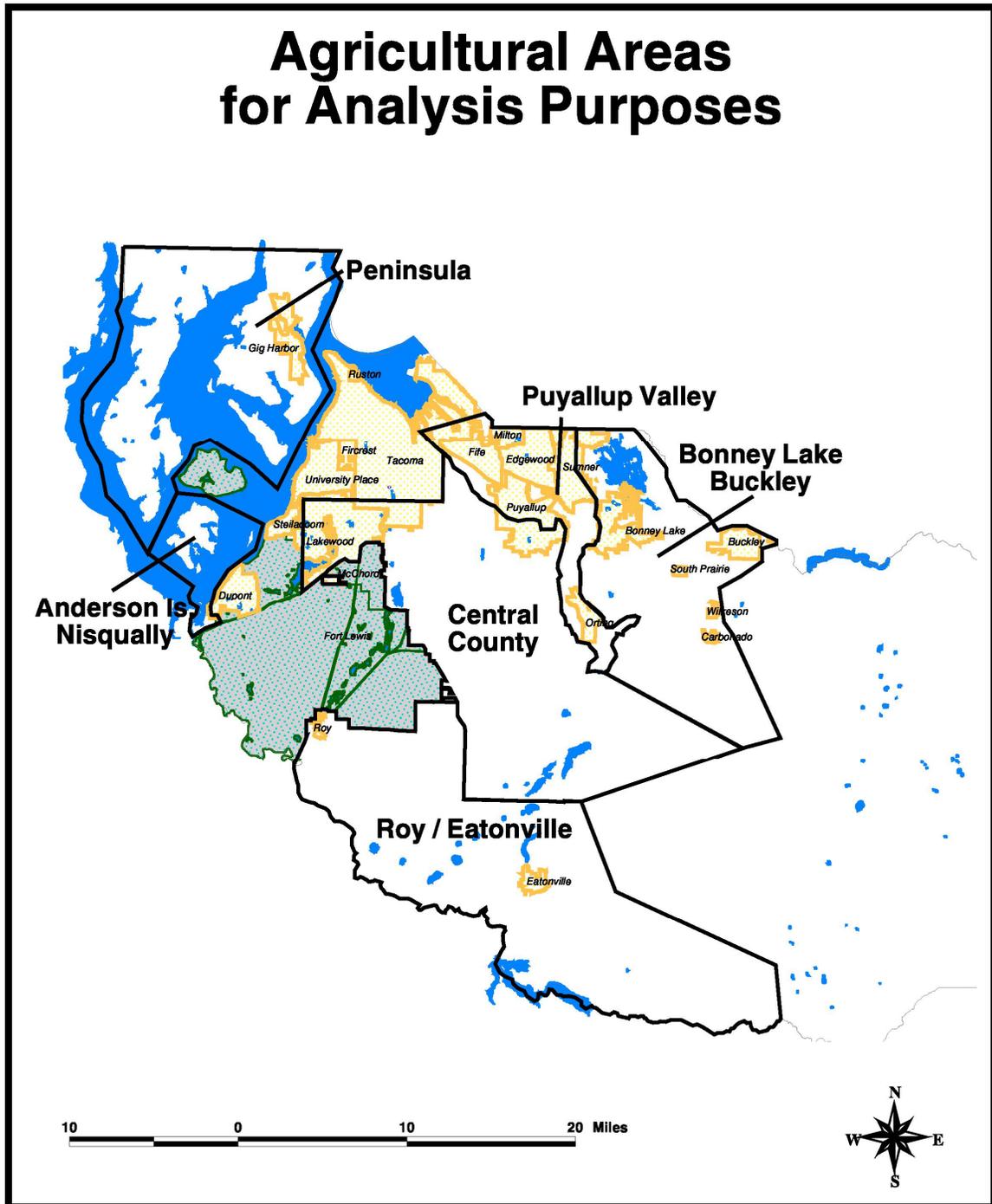
Entry Barriers for New Farmers	
Barrier	Priority
Land prices	Very significant
Access to capital	Very significant
Farm labor	Significant
Local regulations	Significant
Technical support/training	Significant
Tax law	Moderate to significant
Land availability	Moderate

Source: *Entry Barriers for Farmers*, Globalwise, Inc., December 2005.

³ *Benchmarks to Measure the Agriculture Sector's Viability*, Globalwise, Inc., December 2005.



Pierce County Agricultural Areas



These problems and challenges are not unique to Pierce County or the Pacific Northwest. Many other peer communities facing similar difficulties are taking steps to preserve farmland and enhance the economic viability of local agriculture – with some signs of success.



Montgomery County, Maryland has protected one-fourth of the County's total land area from non-farm development.

- *Montgomery County, Maryland* has legally protected more than one-fourth of the County's total land area from non-farm development (93,000 of 317,000 total acres). More than 40,000 of these acres have been permanently preserved through a *transfer of development rights (TDR)* program.
- *Multnomah County, Oregon* formed a Food Policy Council that worked to incorporate “*buy local*” preferences in food service vendor contracts for public schools and corrections facilities. Thousands of dollars have been directed to local farms.
- The *State of Massachusetts Farm Viability Enhancement Program* has provided technical assistance and funding over the past decade to nearly 300 operating farms. All but two participants have remained in

farming, and 23,000 acres have been permanently protected through a *purchase of development rights (PDR)* program.

The foundation for farmland protection programs in other communities is often provided by land use controls. Counties typically adopt regulations that restrict the amount of farmland that can be converted for development. This step alone does not ensure that individual farm operations can remain profitable. However, it does “buy time”, and can lessen some of the pressure on farmers operating in urban fringe areas to convert their land for other uses.



Beyond land use regulations, communities across the U.S. are taking additional steps to protect farmland and help sustain the viability of local agriculture. Measures include farmland purchases, protective easements, expanding direct marketing opportunities, technical and financial assistance to farmers, “buy local” initiatives, tax incentives, regulatory relief and other activities.⁴

Many observers are optimistic that it's not too late to ensure that agriculture can remain part of Pierce County's future. While only one in five respondents to a survey of the farm community believe Pierce County

⁴ From *Case Studies of Peer Communities*, Barney & Worth, Inc., January 2006.



agriculture is viable at present, about half think it can be viable in the future.

The area still enjoys distinct competitive advantages, including: fertile soils and favorable climate; proximity to a large (and largely untapped) urban market; experienced farmers; a diverse range of products; and an emergence of community supported agriculture enterprises. Local farmers also find Pierce County residents to be at least moderately supportive of agriculture.⁵



Community Supported Agriculture appeals to a growing number of consumers.

Preserving farmland and nurturing a prosperous agriculture sector will require a sustained policy commitment and well conceived, concerted action. Due to its important role in land use policymaking, Pierce County government may be in a unique position to lead this effort. But first, the County may need to build credibility among local farmers. The farm community does not see government as an ally – some 70% of farm survey respondents say local government is not supportive of agriculture. Communication is strained between farmers and local government – or is not taking place at all.⁶

⁵ Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) Analysis, Barney & Worth, Inc., November 2005.

⁶ See *Farm Community Survey – Summary Report*, Barney & Worth, Inc. and WSU Cooperative Extension Service, November 2005.

Why should Pierce County take action? The agriculture sector employs 1,900 workers and produces \$115 million annually (based on 2001 figures). This is no “small potatoes” – but it certainly doesn’t make agriculture one of the county’s leading economic sectors. Looking into the future, experts do not foresee a big increase in demand for agricultural products. Also, few of the jobs in agriculture yield wages that meet or exceed the local median income.

There must be other, non-economic factors to warrant County government’s attention and intervention. Reasons often cited include: preserving open space; maintaining and enhancing Pierce County’s treasured quality of life and lifestyles; promoting public health; and continuing the County’s rural heritage and traditions.

If Pierce County policymakers do choose to take action, a few of the possible measures they might consider include:

- **Strengthen land use protections.** Review/update existing comprehensive plan and policies for agricultural land, under the auspices of the Farm Advisory Commission. Changes might include allowing farmers currently operating outside designated agricultural areas to secure an agricultural zoning designation (similar to the “Rural Farm” zone being proposed in the Graham Community Plan).
- **Update and enhance tax incentives.** Land currently zoned for agriculture, whether or not it is currently in active agricultural use, could be assessed for agricultural use rather than “highest and best” use under present zoning.
- **Create a PDR/TDR program, and purchase protective easements.** This could be achieved over the years



through a combination of grants, bond measures or other methods introduced effectively in peer communities. In addition to preserving farm land, this effort could help retiring farmers leave the business with fair compensation.



Few food processors still operate in Pierce County.

- **Develop the local agriculture infrastructure**, creating one or more cooperative distribution centers, recruiting and assisting food processors, equipment dealers and financial services.
- **Adopt a Food Policy for Pierce County**, committing the County to enact measures in support of a “buy local” initiative for home-grown agricultural products.
- **Encourage institutions to purchase food supplies locally:** Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base, public schools, colleges, hospitals, corrections facilities – Federal, state, local, and other major employers.
- **Offer technical and financial assistance** to existing and new farmers: business planning, marketing, and information on value-

added production opportunities. Financial assistance tools could include direct grants for eligible farms, incentives, and revolving loan programs. Encourage WSU Extension and other entities to take an active role, carrying out similar activities to those conducted elsewhere in the Puget Sound region.

- **Develop more farmers markets**, expanding the direct sales channels for farmers, and increasing operating hours and days. Encourage development of a *Community Supported Agriculture Co-operative* where farmers jointly provide agricultural products to subscription customers.



Farmers markets open new direct sales channels for local farmers.



- **Stimulate expansion of the horticulture sector**, building upon the nascent ornamental plant and greenhouse industries, which have shown strong growth and distinct



competitive advantages relative to other segments of local agriculture.

- **Assist farmers in complying with environmental and other regulations.** Establish a single point of contact for all agriculture-related permit applications and zoning questions. Appoint a “farmbudsman” who can listen to farmers’ concerns, and help them deal with local hoops and hurdles. Similar to Snohomish County’s *Agriculture Coordinator* and stationed in the Executive’s Office, this person could also be a catalyst and “cheerleader” for agriculture, representing the agriculture sector and providing high-profile visibility in County policymaking circles.
- **Foster the entry of new farmers,** perhaps in conjunction with an expanded TDR/PDR program, working with entities that maintain contact with individuals searching for agricultural land in the region.



Experienced farmers can provide a resource for newcomers.

- **Conduct a formal regulatory review** to reduce outdated or unnecessary restrictions, fees and paperwork faced by farmers for their standard (and benign) farm-related development and farming practices. Develop and adopt a standardized

set of pre-approved base plans for common farm facilities (e.g., farmstands, cold storage units, etc.)

- **Promote public outreach and education** about local agriculture, through the involvement of schools, Pierce County Health Department, WSU Extension, public schools and other organizations. Post road signs identifying crops being grown, and promote ag tourism.
- **Monitor the health of Pierce County’s agriculture sector,** establishing benchmarks and tracking progress. Develop GIS-based tools to monitor the distribution of agricultural production, and conversion and fragmentation of farmland across the county.

Competitiveness Strategy

Honing Pierce County’s agriculture policy and shaping a strategy to enhance viability of its agriculture sector will require careful consideration of the County’s motive. Is the primary purpose to:

- Preserve farmland (or open space)?
- Reinforce and expand agriculture as a key sector of Pierce County’s economy?
- Increase local purchases of Pierce County products?
- Enhance the long-term financial sustainability of local farm operations?
- Retain agriculture as an element of Pierce County’s image and identity?
- Or achieve several of these objectives?

Pierce County Council has already signaled its intention to “support and encourage continued agriculture in the County”, as



outlined in the *Right to Farm Protections* (Chapter 181.35 of the County Code): “Commercially viable agricultural land exists within the County, and it is in the public interest to enhance and encourage agricultural operations.”

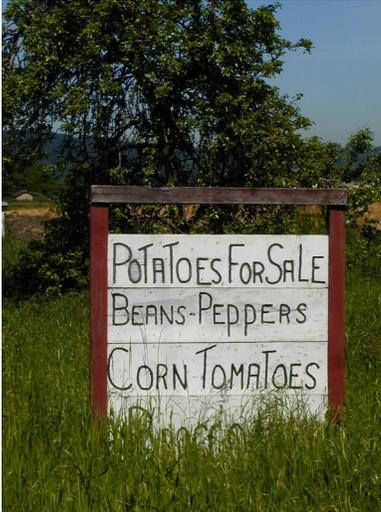
Clarifying the County’s driving purpose will ease the job of developing a strategy and identifying supportive programs and activities. The accompanying table illustrates how various programs correspond to each policy objective.



Productive farmland remains distributed across all parts of the county.

Pierce County Agriculture Competitiveness Strategy	
Policy Goal	Strategies
<i>Farmland Preservation</i>	Land use controls Tax incentives Purchase of development rights (PDR) Transfer of development rights (TDR) Protective easements
<i>Expand Agriculture Sector</i>	Develop agriculture infrastructure Education and training
<i>Increase Local Purchases</i>	Food Policy “Buy Local” program Farmers markets Public outreach and education
<i>Farm Viability</i>	Farmbudsman Technical assistance: business plans, marketing, ag specialists Financial assistance Permit assistance Farm Link assistance for beginning farmers
<i>Image & Identity</i>	County agriculture policy Regulatory streamlining





Farm stands offer an added revenue source for some local farmers – and draw customers from the city.

Preserving and nurturing agriculture in Pierce County will require a sustained policy commitment. There are many forces – for example, global market conditions and the general competitiveness of U.S. agriculture – over which Pierce County’s intervention can have little effect. It’s important to recognize those limitations.⁷

Experience elsewhere in the U.S., however, seems heartening. The evidence suggests county governments can make a difference. Pierce County, if it chooses to take action, can develop a portfolio of programs and expect to succeed in its quest to “*enhance and encourage agriculture operations within the County.*”

Steps to secure a place for agriculture in Pierce County’s future will require additional resources. The accompanying table identifies implementation requirements – dollars and staff resources – needed for Pierce County to undertake various new programs and activities.

Funding requirements for all options total \$1 million to \$2 million per year (or even higher

for a more aggressive program) – not including costs for additional staffing. Personnel requirements add up to 5.5 FTE (includes 1 FTE non-recurring), increasing the total cost substantially. It may not be possible to fund all of these programs at one time. Adequate funds may not be available for the coming fiscal year, and reassignment of existing staff and resources to take on agricultural issues could mean that other priorities would go undone. As an alternative, County policymakers can choose – from the menu of options provided here – their highest priority initiatives.

County government can’t do it alone. Implementation will also necessarily involve many partner organizations contributing different specialized expertise. Key partners include: Farm Advisory Commission, WSU Cooperative Extension, Pierce County Conservation District, Economic Development Board of Tacoma/Pierce County, Farm Link and others. A partnership approach will help assure that Pierce County Agriculture can effectively *Preserve Farmland and Farmers.*

Will there be agriculture in Pierce County’s future? Together with its partners, the County’s aim must be to create a farm-friendly climate that allows hundreds of agricultural operators to continue investing in their businesses with the reasonable expectation of sustained viability.

Partnership Opportunities

- Farm Advisory Commission
- WSU Cooperative Extension
- Pierce County Conservation District
- Economic Development Board of Tacoma / Pierce County
- Farm Link
- Public schools
- State of Washington

⁷ *Agriculture Industry Trends*, Globalwise, Inc., November 2005.



Pierce County Agriculture Competitiveness Strategy Implementation Requirements				
Implementation Option	Resource Needs ¹			
	Direct Costs (Omits Wages)	Personnel (FTEs)	Notes	Agent
Strengthen land use protections.	\$10,000	0.50		County Council; Planning & Land Services
Update and enhance tax incentives.			Costs and staffing level to be determined.	County Council; Assessors Office
Create a PDR/TDR program, and purchase protective easements.	\$500,000 ²		Annual recurring cost based on estimates from Cascade Land Conservancy study. Staffing level to be determined.	County Council; County Executive
Develop the local agriculture infrastructure.	\$6,000	0.25	Includes focusing some Business Retention & Expansion efforts on agriculture support firms.	Economic Development Division ³
Adopt a <i>Food Policy</i> for Pierce County. Encourage institutions to purchase food supplies locally.	\$15,000	0.25	Costs include in-state travel and administrative support.	Farm Advisory Commission
Offer technical and financial assistance to farms. Foster the entry of new farmers.	\$100,000 to \$500,000	1.00	Annual costs for financial assistance.	WSU Cooperative Extension
Stimulate expansion of horticulture			Could be included in Technical Assistance role.	WSU Cooperative Extension
Develop more farmers markets.	\$100,000	0.25	Annual costs for grants/assistance for start-up costs.	Farm Advisory Commission
Assist farmers to comply with regulations. Appoint a "farmbudsman".	\$150,000	2.00	1 FTE "Farmbudsman" position; would also require 1 FTE in PALS to work with agriculture-related permits and Current Planning issues; 2006 budget for Snohomish County Ag Coordinator program is \$582,000.	County Council or County Executive; Planning & Land Services
Conduct a formal regulatory review.	\$23,000	1.00	One-year non-recurring action	Farm Advisory Commission; Planning & Land Services
Promote public outreach and education.	\$30,000 to \$60,000	0.25	Costs for outreach materials/media purchases may range from \$25,000 to \$50,000; includes administrative overhead	Farm Advisory Commission
Monitor the health of Pierce County's agriculture sector.			Minimal ongoing cost to monitor existing data. Cost to develop GIS-based tool to monitor fragmentation is dependent on model complexity and data availability. Costs and staffing needs to be determined.	Planning & Land Services; Economic Development Division

1) Where County departments are identified as lead participants, adding these duties to the current workload may (or may not) require additional resources.

2) Includes local resources only with opportunity to leverage outside resources

3) In partnership with Economic Development Board of Tacoma/Pierce County





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