



2015 Washington State

# Farmland Preservation Indicators

*In 2009, the Farmland Preservation Task Force adopted a series of indicators to track trends, conditions, and opportunities around farmland. Updated in 2015, these indicators offer perspective on the viability and future of agriculture in Washington and help answer the question, "Are activities helping to improve the condition and availability of farmland in Washington?"*

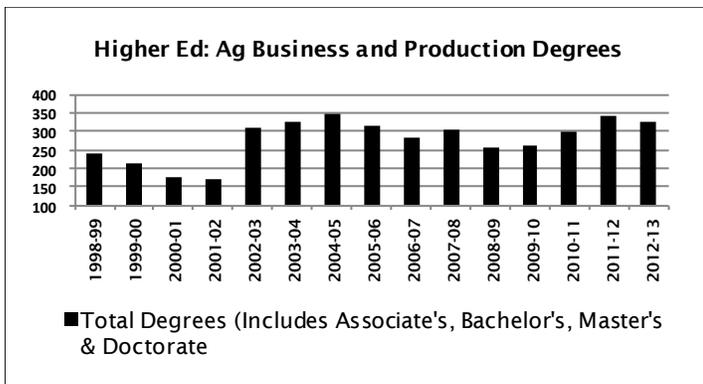
## INDICATOR GROUP:

### EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

The prosperity of farming depends in part on a trained workforce and access to land. These indicators track protected landscapes through working land easements, primary schools that have agricultural curriculums, and secondary degrees in agriculture. Farms by organization track family farms and non-family farms and can be an indicator of the next generation of farmer and types of farm operations.

#### Agriculture Training

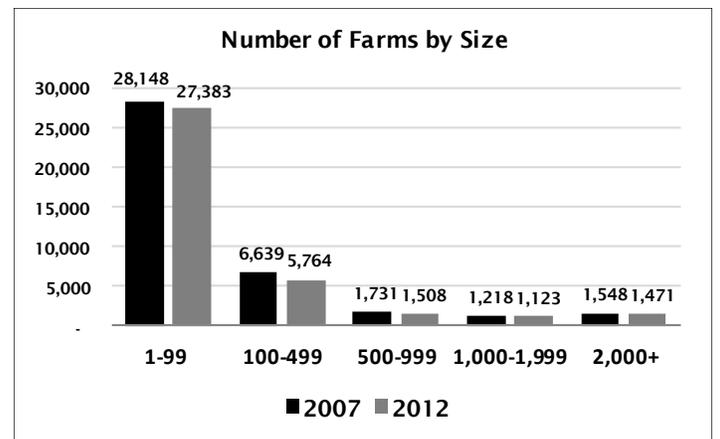
A college-trained workforce may indicate the interest and potential for new farmers. An important indicator is the number of degrees Washington students earn each year. An increase in the number of degrees indicates a desire to learn more about farming and begin their own farm or take a larger share of the management on the family farm. In addition, farm internship programs are gaining popularity as Washington initiates a pilot program to provide labor certainty for interns and farmers.



	1997	2002	2007	2012
Individuals/family, sole proprietorship, Family-held corporations	36,516	33,085	35,516	33,324
Partnerships, Non-family corporations, Others - cooperative, estate or trust, institutional, etc	3,597	2,845	3,768	3,925

#### Washington Farms

Washington farms are diverse, ranging from very small retirement and residential farms to enterprises with annual sales in the millions of dollars. Farms are operated by individuals on a full- and part-time basis, by multiple generations of a family. Farms owned by individuals or families accounted for 89.5 percent of total farms in Washington in 2012 – a half percent decrease from 2007. Farms owned by individuals or families accounted for 34 percent of total farm acreage, a 7 percent decrease from 2007. The majority of farms are under 100 acres. This may indicate farms facing pressure to convert as a trend to increase size and consolidate.



#### More Information:

The full Washington State Farmland Preservation Indicators report is available at: [ofp.scc.wa.gov](http://ofp.scc.wa.gov)

#### Contact:

Office of Farmland Preservation – [ofp@scc.wa.gov](mailto:ofp@scc.wa.gov)

#### Opportunity Outlook

Efforts should focus on continued education for new and beginning farmers and improve preservation of farmland through land use protections tools.