



# 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?"*

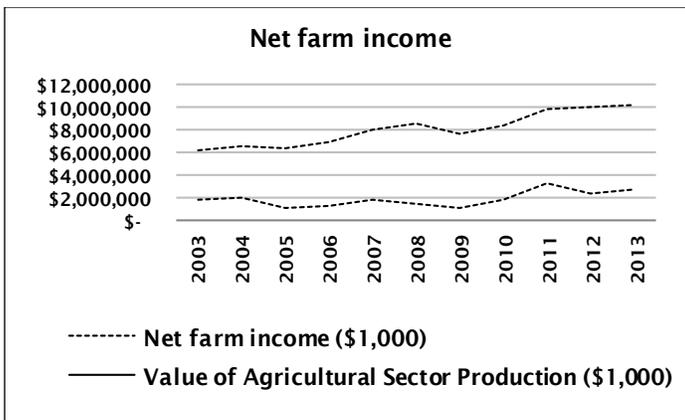
## INDICATOR GROUP:

### STRENGTHEN COMPETITIVENESS

While many variables impact the economic health of agriculture in Washington, an overall sense of costs and returns can indicate whether farming is strong, leading to farmers continuing to farm or new farmers coming on with a chance to be profitable. A diversified state agricultural economy improves opportunities for all farmers, regardless of size or scope. Local markets such as farmers markets, direct sales, and wholesale establishments all increase value and viability for Washington farmers.

#### Farm Income and Net Value

Insufficient return on investment can produce a range of negative effects that carry significant costs. In extreme cases, when farmers cannot make ends meet, agricultural land may be sold and converted to other uses, resulting in the loss of a valuable natural capital asset and a decline in food security for future generations.

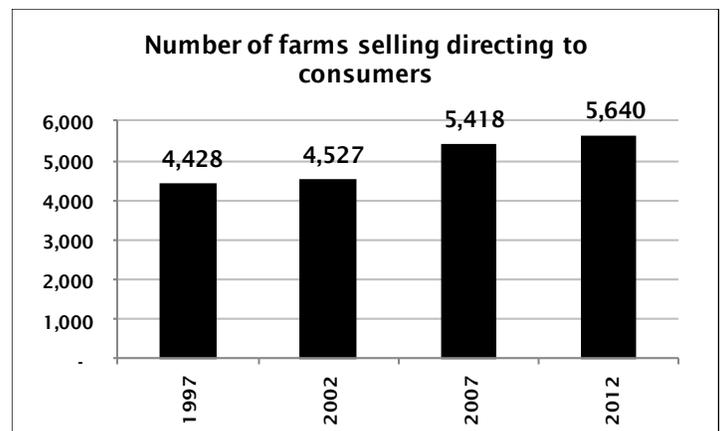


	Number of Farmers Markets
2003	76
2004	93
2006	95
2007	103
2008	108
2009	140
2013	150

#### Farmers Markets and Direct Marketing

During the last ten years, USDA estimates the number of farmers markets nationwide has doubled. Money spent in farmers markets goes directly to farmers and can be re-circulated to support other local jobs and businesses.

Direct marketing is one of many ways to improve a farm's financial success. It allows a farm to diversify by having more than one outlet for sales and assists in managing overall market risk. Typical direct marketing strategies include selling direct from the farm, farm stand, U-pick, Internet/mail-order, farmers market, Community Supported Agriculture, direct to restaurants, hospitals, grocery stores, and schools.



#### 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

For farmers interested in direct marketing, provide outreach and support to help them get their product to a localized marketplace.