

KING COUNTY AGRICULTURE COMMISSION

MEETING NOTICE

THURSDAY JULY 13, 2023

6:00-8:00 P.M.

ZOOM VIDEO CALL

CALL IN:

One tap mobile: +12532158782,,84015262904#,,,,*905740#

Land line: +1 253 215 8782, Meeting ID: 840 1526 2904

OR

LOG IN FROM A COMPUTER OR SMARTPHONE:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84015262904?pwd=djg4d1A5UFhMQjhlRzJ5aXVpc3BxQT09>

MEETING AGENDA

The Commission's 2023 Focus is Farmland Preservation

6:00	Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none">For the public record, please sign in via the chat feature or announce yourself by name and whether you are a commissioner, staff or member of the publicApproval of AgendaApproval of Meeting Minutes: <i>March</i>	Kevin Scott, Chair
6:05	Public Comment related to a specific agenda item <i>3 minutes/person</i>	Kevin Scott
6:10	Updates (approx. 3 min each) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Commission Details, Policy, Ag Education & Events<ul style="list-style-type: none">LSLU BriefingJune's Berries and Elk Field TripPolicy letter re: large events on farmland in APDsKing County Ag ProgramKing Conservation DistrictLocal Food InitiativeWashington State University CSANRFood Business Resource Center/BINWKing-Pierce Farm BureauFarm Fish Flood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Patrice BarrentineRichard MartinMatt MegaMike LufkinJordan Jobe/Alyssa BowersHenry WongLeann KrainickRichard Martin
6:45	New Business King County 2024 Comprehensive Plan Review <ul style="list-style-type: none">OverviewPresentation of proposed changes in relation to AgricultureQ&A for Commissioners	Chris Jensen, KC PSB, Comp Plan Coordinator Mike Murphy, KC DNRP, DNRP Comp Plan Lead Richard Martin, KC AFI Patrice Barrentine
7:40	General Public Comment <i>3 minutes/person</i>	Kevin Scott
7:55	Concerns of Commissioners	Kevin Scott
8:00	Adjourn	Kevin Scott

Next Meeting: Special Meeting August 10, 2023



King County

Water and Land Resources Division

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
King Street Center
201 South Jackson Street, Suite 5600
Seattle, WA 98104-3855
206-477-4800 Fax 206-296-0192
TTY Relay: 711

**King County Agriculture Commission
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 9, 2023 – 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Zoom Video Conference Call**

Commissioners Present (Y/N)					
Kevin Scott-Vandenberg, Chair	Y	Andrew Ely	Y	Shelley Pasco	N
Darron Marzolf, Vice-Chair	Y	Janet Keller	Y	Henry Wong	Y
Jessi Bloom	Y	Nayab Khan	N		
Ex Officio Members Present (Y/N)					
Jordan Jobe, WSU	N	Matt Mega, KCD	Y		
County Staff/Representatives Present					
Patrice Barrentine, DNRP	Richard Martin, DNRP				
Mike Lufkin, DNRP	Megan Moore, DNRP				
Guests Present					
Leann Krainick	Stacey Smith				
Nathan Sherfey	Chenelle Tyack				

Meeting Summary

- **Actions: Approval of Agenda and February 2023 Meeting Minutes**
- **Old Business: Commission, Policy, County, & Organization Updates; Policy/Land Use Committee Update**
- **Presentations/Discussion: King County Agriculture Policies & Programs; Local Food Initiative**

Meeting called to order by Chair Kevin Scott-Vandenberg at 6:04 pm

Roll Call/Announcement of Staff & Public (Kevin Scott-Vandenberg)

Roll call of Commissioners and announcement of staff and public guests was completed via Zoom’s chat function.

ACTION: Approval of Meeting Agenda & February 2023 Meeting Minutes (Kevin Scott-Vandenberg)

Chair Scott-Vandenberg opted to combine approvals of tonight’s agenda and the February 2023 meeting minutes into one motion. Darron Marzolf motioned to approve the aforementioned items as-is. Janet Keller seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Public Comment – Specific Agenda Item (Kevin Scott-Vandenberg)

Janet Keller spoke on an ongoing issue of significant elk predation of farm crops in the Snoqualmie Valley, and being unable to receive aid from state WDFW for it. **Leann Krainick** noted elk are a problem for farmers in the Enumclaw area as well. Richard Martin explained this issue is addressed through state and not County law, and suggested the Commission invite WDFW to a meeting for a conversation. The Commission can also, through its advisory role, ask the Executive to put this issue on a priority list for conversations at the state level. Patrice Barrentine agreed to invite WDFW to the Commission’s April meeting, and then the Commission can draft a letter to the Executive asking this to be made a priority issue for next year’s legislative session. Martin advised encouraging any farmers with elk concerns to attend the April meeting if WDFW attends.

Old Business – Updates

- **Commission Details/Agriculture Policy & Events (Patrice Barrentine):**
 - The nomination process for new Commissioners is ongoing, currently still in DNRP.

- In response to an inquiry from Tom Quigley last meeting regarding SWM fees, it was noted that SWM fees did increase on February 14. Barrentine explained these fees are based on the amount of impervious surface on a property and are part of the funding for the County’s agriculture work and staff. King County’s [Stormwater Services](#) customer service can be contacted for any questions.
- Two ordinances reintroduced recently in committee at King County Council (KCC) have not moved.
- State House Bill 1720, addressing riparian habitat, moved to the Capital Budget Committee, but has remained there since February 22. Yesterday was the last day of this session to consider bills for passage. It is uncertain whether the bill is dead or on hold.
- FFF’s Agriculture Strategic Plan task force is being highlighted, the products of their work coming out for public review in late March or early April.
- **King County Agriculture Program (Richard Martin):** There was no update on this topic (see the presentation below).
- **King Conservation District (Matt Mega):**
 - Many applications are coming in for KCD’s landowner cost share program, particularly for fencing exclusion and manure bins.
 - Mary Embleton can be brought in for a larger update on the Regional Food Systems grant if needed.
 - It was suggested the Commission dive into regulatory and zoning land issues at some point.
- **Local Food Initiative (Mike Lufkin):** There was no update on this topic (see the presentation below).
- **WSU CSANR (Jordan Jobe):** There was no update on this topic.
- **Food Business Resource Center/BINW (Henry Wong):** An [incubator kitchen](#) at 21 Acres will launch soon, for producers with value-added products and who produce locally. The goal is to serve 40 businesses this coming year.
- **King-Pierce Farm Bureau (Leann Krainick):**
 - FB is busy with the current legislative session. House Bill 1720 is believed to be dead. Another bill addressing compostable packaging for products is causing concern for FB. Darron Marzolf suggested in the future the Commission try to add legislative language addressing the packaging issue to benefit agriculture, such as building in a benefit for farmers.
 - FB has a group to qualify in participating in the state’s [Retrospective Rating program](#), which farm employees can join. 13 inspectors from state Department of Labor and Industries are going to farms around the state now.
 - FB scholarship applications are due April 15.
 - King County’s Solid Waste program has a survey on its Facebook page addressing compostable food waste and single residences in unincorporated areas. Krainick stressed it is important for farmers to complete this survey to help King County determine their next path.
- **Farm Fish Flood 2.0 (Richard Martin):**
 - The Agriculture Strategic Plan task force is approaching the “finish line” of its work.
 - Yesterday, the FFF Implementation Oversight Committee (IOC) met to wrap up work on review and revision of three pieces of the King County Comprehensive (“Comp”) Plan. The agreed-upon language essentially states the existing language is solid in terms of multi-resource planning, but the IOC recommends a number of changes to enhance internal review of projects. Also included was language addressing further accountability to track acreage for farmland and habitat projects, and transparency in reporting. This was all approved by the IOC and the transmittal letter will be submitted to the Executive very soon.

New Business: King County Agriculture Policies & Programs (Richard Martin, DNRP)

Richard Martin presented an overview of King County’s agriculture program and its tools to preserve farmland. The presentation is available to view [here](#). In the presentation, Martin also noted:

- The King County Comp Plan as the chief document laying out County policy, key to understanding the priorities of County issues such as agriculture.
- The Farmland Leasing Program and Working Farmland Partnership as approaches to improve farmland access.
- Development of the FFF approach for the County to address competing needs for the same land base and assess their potential impacts.

Patrice Barrentine prompted the Commission to consider this presentation and determine what is most of interest to them and what they are concerned about. There were several follow-up questions from Commissioners and public:

- **Chenelle Tyack:** What about acquiring/purchasing land in industrial areas that has been deemed farmable?
RM: This is not off the table, but if there is a potentially farmable site in an industrial zone, [CFT \(Conservation Futures\)](#) would engage here instead of the [Farmland Preservation Program \(FPP\)](#).

- **Jessi Bloom:** People who want to get out of farmland preservation programs by paying back taxes – this doesn't sound like much?
RM: This option is only available for [CUT \(current use taxation\) program](#) landowners, as these are voluntary enrollments they can leave at any time. However, if someone were in FPP and sold an easement, there's no going back on that.
- **Kevin Scott-Vandenberg:** How does transferring land from open space to agriculture affect taxation?
RM: It's possible to go from farm/agriculture programs into [PBRS \(Public Benefit Rating System\)](#). We haven't seen much farmland do this, though the reverse does happen. There's some flexibility to move back and forth.
- **Janet Keller:** What do "open space" taxes refer to?
RM: This probably refers to CFT, as it's the only tax focused on preservation of open space.

Barrentine noted most of these questions focus on open space and PBRS, and suggested bringing in someone to talk on these topics, then asked the Commission to speak up on any other topics they want to hear more about.

Presentation: Local Food Initiative (Mike Lufkin, DNRP)

Mike Lufkin gave a presentation providing an overview and update on King County's [Local Food Initiative \(LFI\)](#). The presentation is available to view [here](#).

It was observed that the Executive appears to want to extend the LFI beyond ten years, and Lufkin was asked to confirm this and if any letters of support are needed. Lufkin responded that there is political support to move forward with the LFI's planned refresh.

Old Business: Policy & Land Use Committee Update (Kevin Scott-Vandenberg)

In response to King County Councilmember Sarah Perry's outstanding invite to hear from the Commission at KCC's Local Services and Land Use (LSLU) committee, the Commission's executive committee has decided Richard Martin will brief the LSLU committee. Chair Scott-Vandenberg and Vice Chair Darron Marzolf will represent the Commission at this briefing. Martin explained that Councilmember Perry is new to KCC and has an interest in getting more one-on-one time on County agriculture programs. The plan is to distill the presentation Martin gave to the Commission tonight and present the Commission's message. Martin will work with the executive committee to ensure this messaging is correct. The briefing will include an invite for a field tour and is tentatively scheduled for late April.

Patrice Barrentine gave an update on the Commission's Land Use and Policy Committee. At last month's Commission meeting, the Commission voted to convene this committee to draft a letter to King County DLS's Permitting Division. However, the committee was unable to find a workable meeting time, so Barrentine will try again to convene the committee in the next three weeks to draft a letter to bring back to the Commission.

Executive Committee Update (Kevin Scott-Vandenberg)

The Commission will continue to discuss recruitment for its leadership roles. Patrice Barrentine will reach out to Chair Scott-Vandenberg.

Public Comment – General (Kevin Scott-Vandenberg)

There was no public comment during this period.

Concerns of Commissioners (Kevin Scott-Vandenberg)

Janet Keller reported that a large concert previously scheduled to be held at Carnation Farms has found an alternative venue at Remlinger Farm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm

Next Meeting(s)

April 13, 2023, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm (Zoom Video Conference Call)



Legislation, Conferences, Events and Key Dates

REGARDING KING COUNTY
AGRICULTURE

JULY 2023

Commission Admin



Moving Nominations Forward



LSLU Briefing May 23, KC Ag Programs and Commission



Policy Letter: Large Events on farmland in APDs
revisiting summer/fall



Chenelle Tyack Letter to Commission re: Farmland Preservation in
Sammamish APD in mtg packet



Special Meeting in August to vote on Proposed Comp Plan language to
Executive



Field trip highlights



Events

On the Move: Commission Nomination Process

1

Ag Commission selects and forwards nomination to

2

Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) Director for review and approval; upon approval nomination is forwarded to

3

King County Executive for review and approval; *All nominees must complete financial disclosure forms within 2 weeks of this step*; upon approval nomination is forwarded to

4

King County Council- when Clerk receives the nomination, nominee can begin participating as a voting member and then

5

King County Council brings forward the confirming legislation for each nominee in their district first to committee and then full council to complete the process

We are here

May 2023



The Council has been working hard this month – here’s the work that matters most to District 3:

- In our [Local Services and Land Use Committee](#) meeting, we got a briefing on work of the [Agriculture Commission](#), which gives the King County agricultural sector the opportunity to take a more active role in the development and evaluation of policies, regulations, and programs that affect the commercial agriculture in our county!

See meeting packet for presentation slides

**King County Agriculture Program
King County Agriculture Commission**

**King County Council
Local Services and Land Use Committee**

May 23, 2023

Richard Martin

Env Programs Managing Supervisor

KC DNRP

Richard.martin@kingcounty.gov



Notes for Policy Letter

WHO: Land Use Committee -Jessi Bloom, Janet Keller, Andrew Ely and Leann Krainick and previous subcommittee member Shelley Pasco was included.

WHAT: Commissioners' and public comments in February meeting captured in Minutes and staff meeting notes construct the following key points:

- **Support:**
 - Current code enforcement audit
 - Council-ordered rewrite of Title 23
- **Need:**
 - Beef up enforcement, penalties, fines
 - Put a lien on property
 - Require soil mediation
 - Support abatement fund triggered by first or second lien on property
 - Pamphlet to educate public and landowners about such event requirements and impacts to APDs and farm activities such as
 - Noise impacts driving the elk herd onto neighboring farms causing crop and financial damage
 - Daily commerce and supply deliveries

King County Agriculture Commission

Berries and Elk Field Trip Itinerary

Featuring Harvold Berry Farm and WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife

Tuesday June 27, 11:30-3:30pm

Location: Harvold Berry Farm, 7701 Carnation Duvall RD NE

Here is a google maps link: <https://goo.gl/maps/NBpZ4Cfsnpo6qCkGA>



Welcome

- 11:30- Noon Arrival and Introductions

Part 1

Stacy Smith, Harvold Berry Farm, is our host for the field trip location. Stacy will tell us about the farm's history, production, marketing and plans for the future.

- Noon- 12:45 Introduction and Overview: Farm History, Crops, U-pick Operations

Part 2

WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife's

- Brendan Brokes - Region 4 Director,
- Chris Anderson - Regional Biologist,
- Mike Smith - Assistant District Biologist,
- Kevin O'Connor - Wildlife Conflict Specialist,
- Fenner Yarborough - Region 4 Wildlife Program Manager

will tell us about elk conflict in King County and on-farm, programs and strategies available (we will walk to the areas where Stacy has had elk damage)

- 1:00-2:00 Elk Pressure Damage and Strategies

Part 3

Stacy will tell us about the farm's strawberry varieties and plans for the future.

- 2:15-3:30 Refreshment Break: Strawberry Varieties and Taste Test & Digging into the Future: Location, Zoning, Proposed Annexation



Berries and Elk Field Trip featuring Harvold Berry Farm and WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife



Understanding the problem



Seeing the evidence: Elk prints and
their love of strawberries



Allowed Hazing Techniques

WDFW explained their programs – similarities with Skagit, best practices, and some limitations for farmers

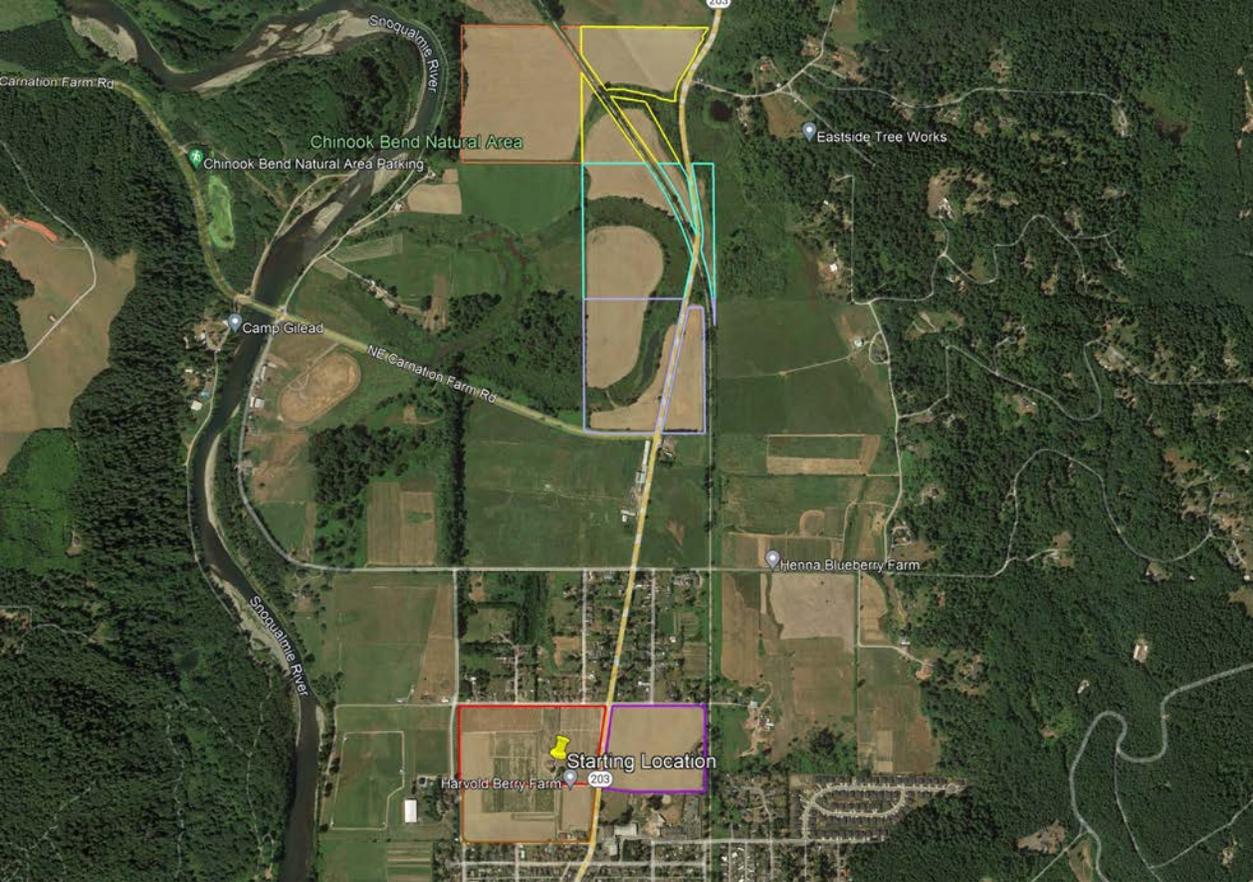




Don't forget peanut butter and molasses on the electric fence posts, Master Hunter program



Snoq Trail at Harvold Berry Farm &
How 'bout those corn dogs?!



Outcomes: WDFW collaring two of the bull elk to track movements, collaborate w/ KC on market value of ag products especially direct marketing, more collaboration and information sharing



Thursday July 13- Sunday July 16



Jr. Livestock Show

4-H/FFA



New WSU King County Director!

County Director

Alyssa Bowers, County Director
Assistant Professor, 4-H Youth
Development

alyssa.bowers1@wsu.edu

Phone [\(425\) 738-0110](tel:(425)738-0110)



King County Agriculture Program King County Agriculture Commission

King County Council Local Services and Land Use Committee

May 23, 2023

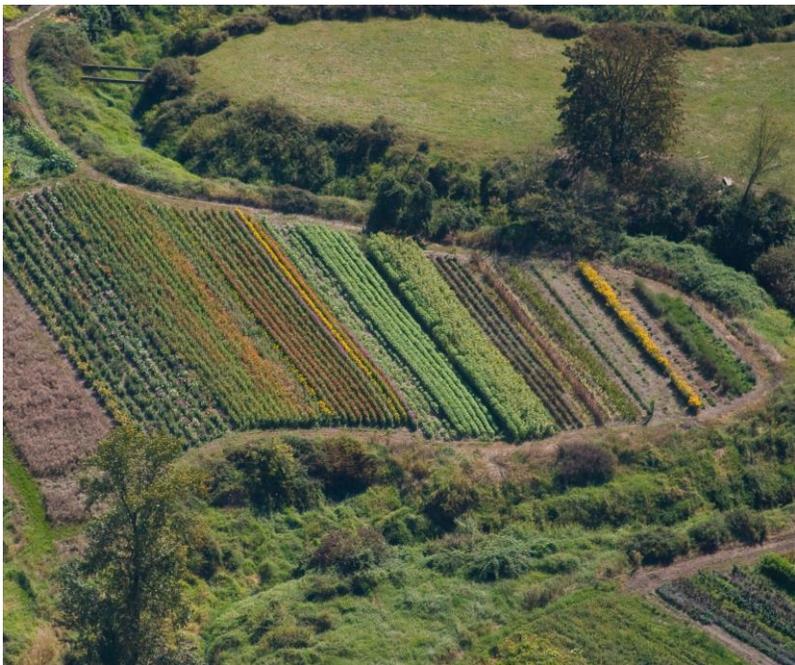
Richard Martin

Env Programs Managing Supervisor

KC DNRP

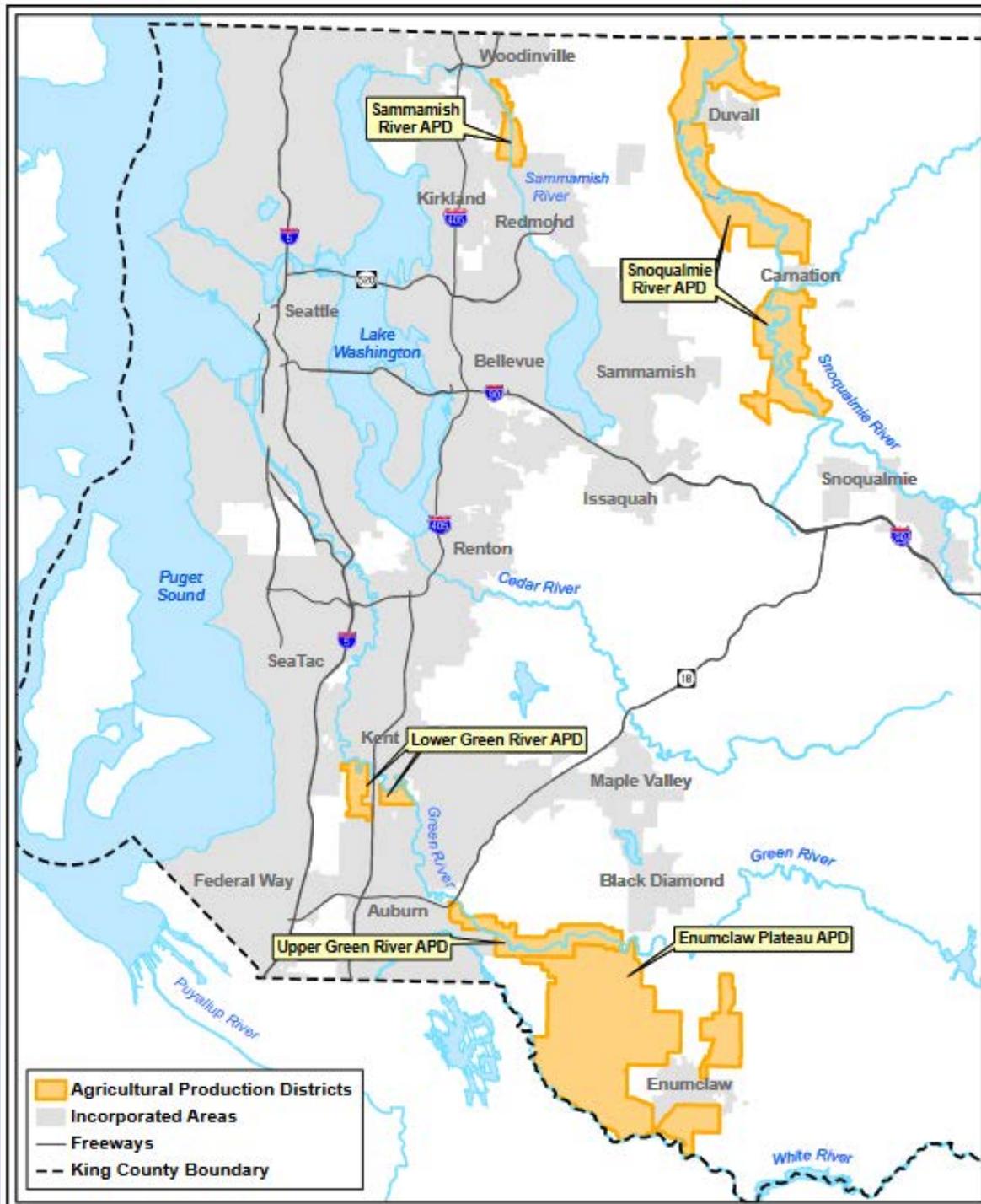
Richard.martin@kingcounty.gov







Agricultural Production Districts



Land Use (2017)	Acres
Fruit and Vegetables (excl. corn)	2,568
Corn (sweet and feed)	1,370
Livestock (excl. horses, llamas, etc.)	11,548
Pasture/Hay/Silage	9,850
Idle	1,391
Total “farmed for food”	26,727
Horses, llamas, etc.	12,111
Flowers	211
Turfgrass	336
Nurseries	301
Christmas Trees	551
Total “non-food farming”	13,510
Total actively farmed	40,237
“Farmable but unfarmed”	8,746



**Department of
Natural Resources
and Parks**

**Water and Land
Resources Division**

**Agriculture, Forestry
and Incentives Unit**

**Farm, Forest and Open
Space Preservation (3)**

**Agriculture Economic
Development and
Farmland Access (5)**

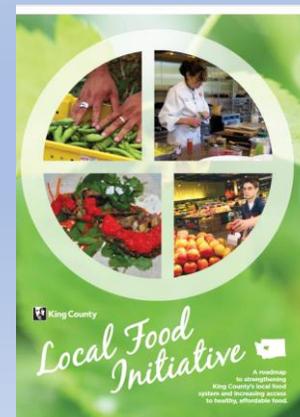
**Rural and Urban Forest
Stewardship (4)**





King County Agriculture Program Guiding County Initiatives

- Local Food Initiative
- Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan
- Clean Water Healthy Habitat Initiative
- Strategic Climate Action Plan
- Land Conservation Initiative



KC Agriculture Programs: Land Preservation

- **Farmland Preservation Program**
- **Current Use Taxation/Public Benefit Rating System**



KC Agriculture Programs: Economic Development

- Regulatory/Permitting Assistance
- Farm Management Plans Public Rule
- BMP Cost-Share
- Integrated Drainage Program
- Farmers Market Support
- Meat Processing
- Agriculture Commission
- Sharing Technical Information

www.FarmKingCounty.org

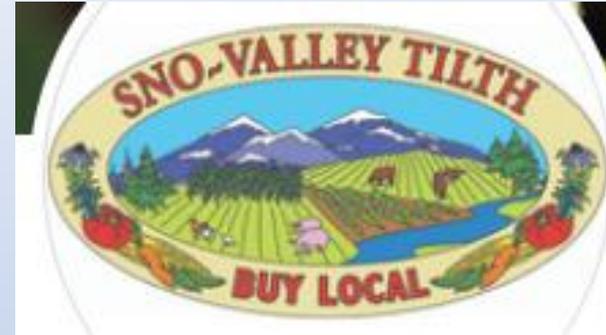


KC Agriculture Programs: Farmland Access

- Farmland Leasing Program
- Working Farmland Partnership



Farmland Access Partners



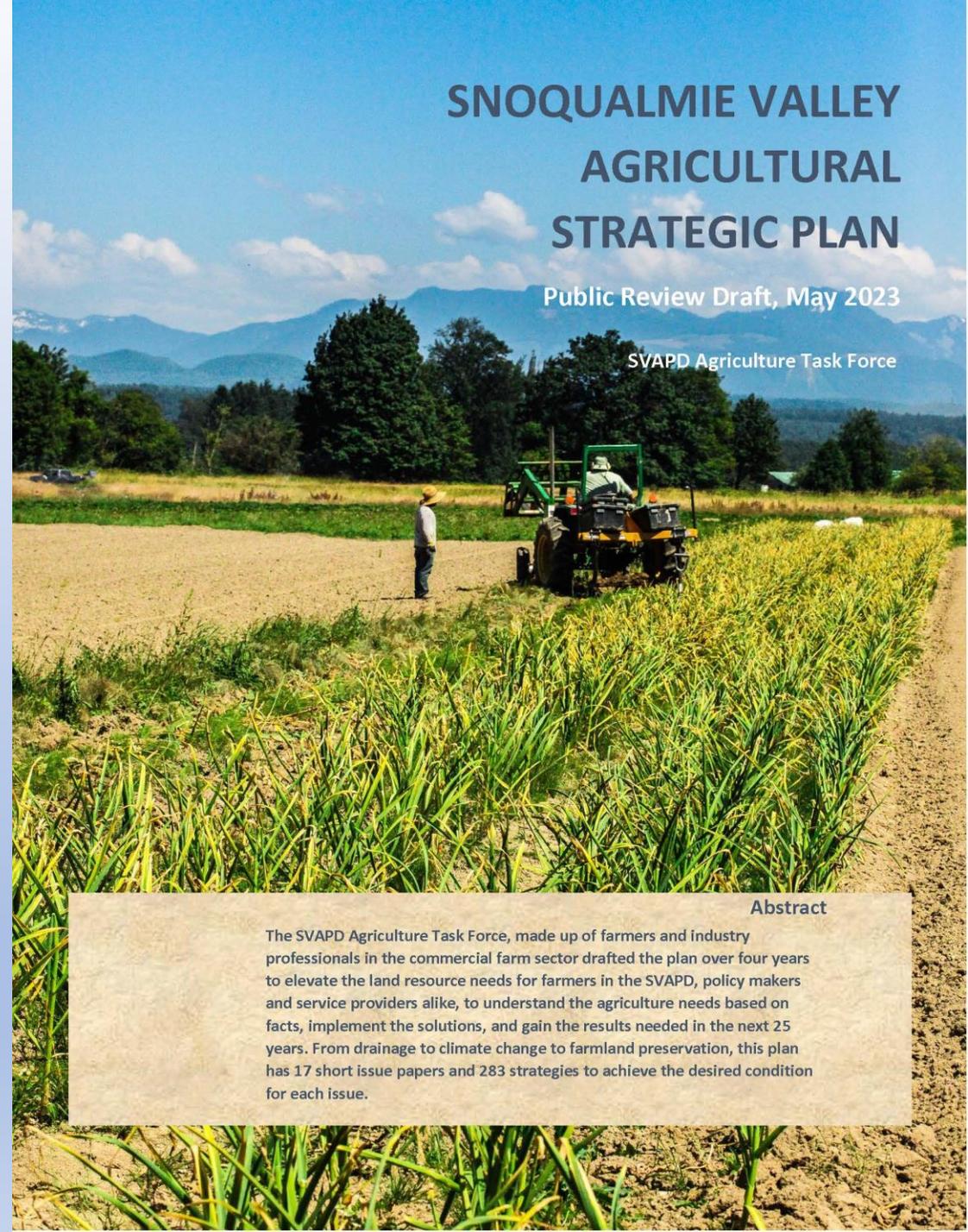
Balancing Agriculture and Salmon Recovery

- Fish Farm Flood
- Agriculture Procedures Committee
- Internal Acquisition Review

SNOQUALMIE VALLEY AGRICULTURAL STRATEGIC PLAN

Public Review Draft, May 2023

SVAPD Agriculture Task Force

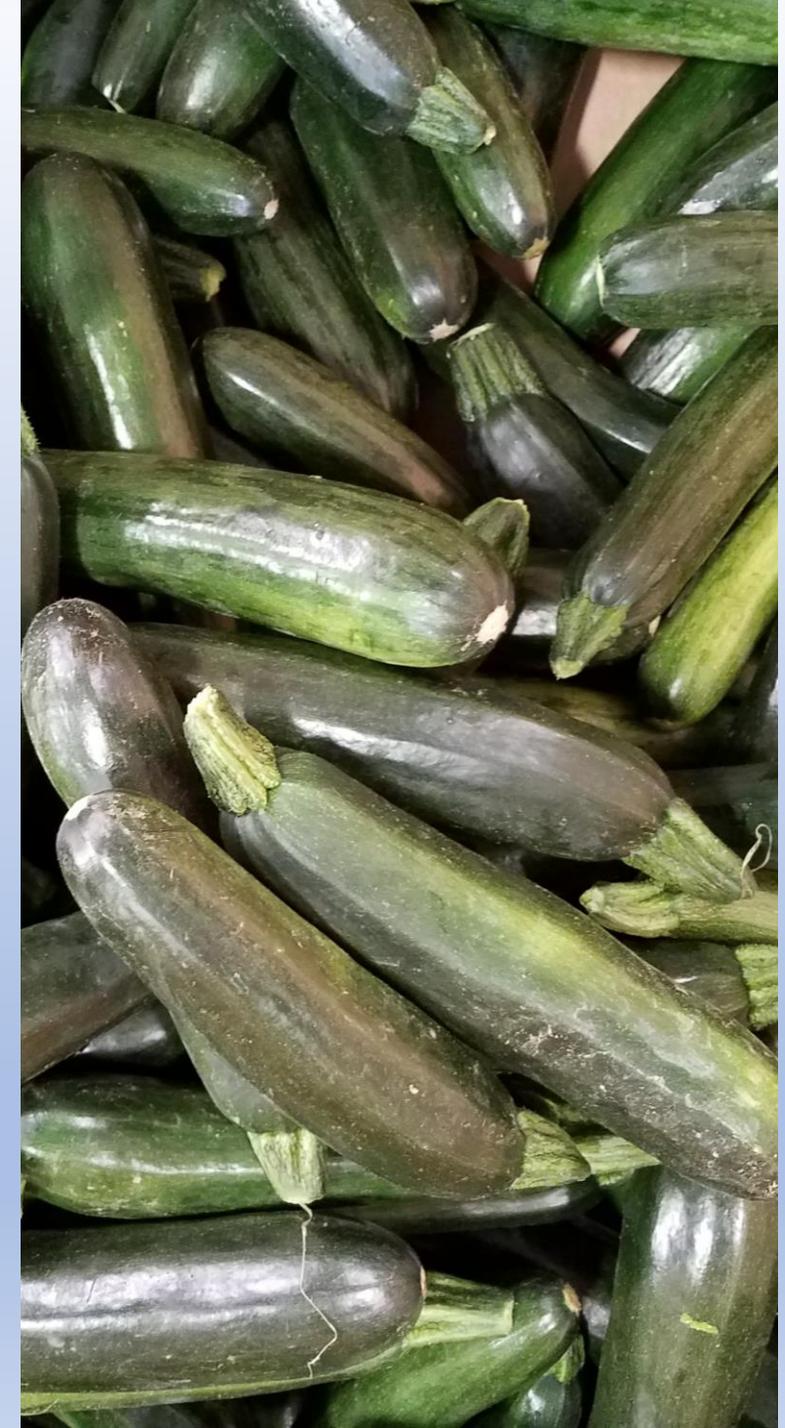
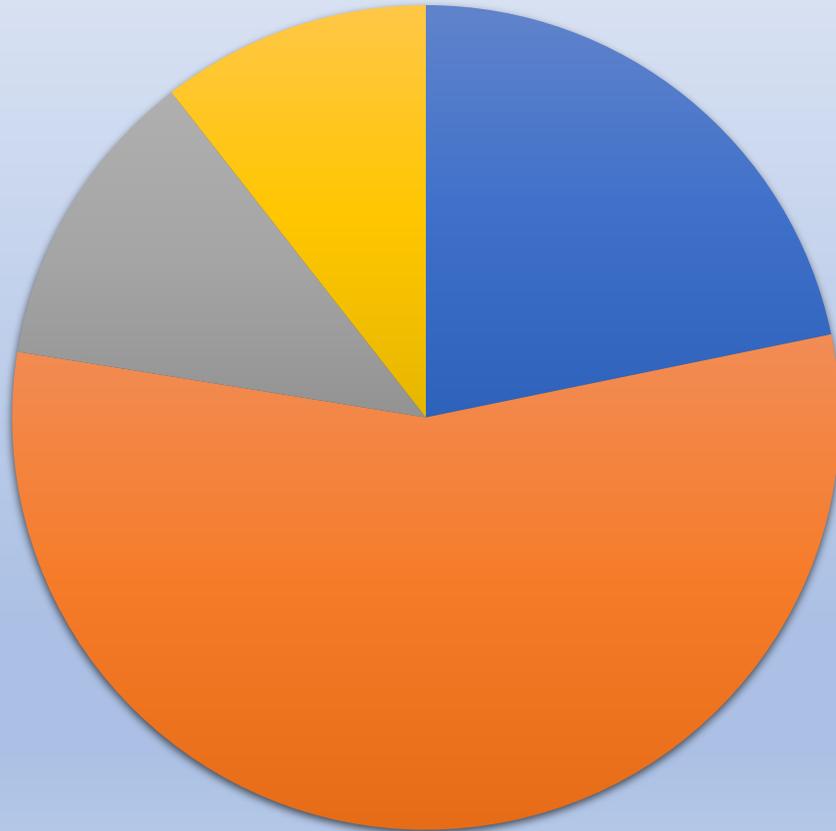


Abstract

The SVAPD Agriculture Task Force, made up of farmers and industry professionals in the commercial farm sector drafted the plan over four years to elevate the land resource needs for farmers in the SVAPD, policy makers and service providers alike, to understand the agriculture needs based on facts, implement the solutions, and gain the results needed in the next 25 years. From drainage to climate change to farmland preservation, this plan has 17 short issue papers and 283 strategies to achieve the desired condition for each issue.

King County Agriculture Program Revenue Sources 2023-24 (\$2,930,000)

- GF
- SWM
- KCD
- Leases/
Other





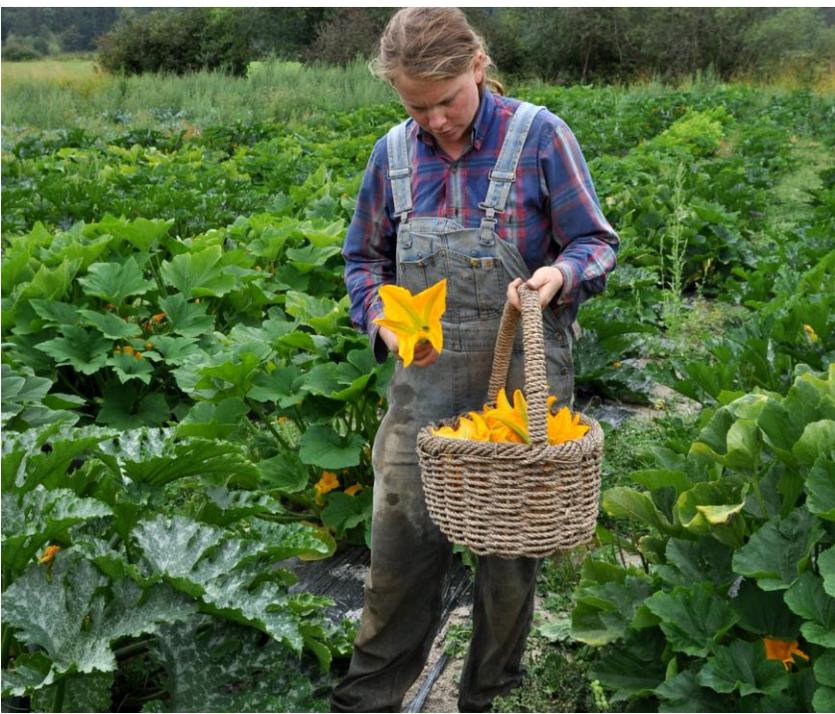
King County Agriculture Commission

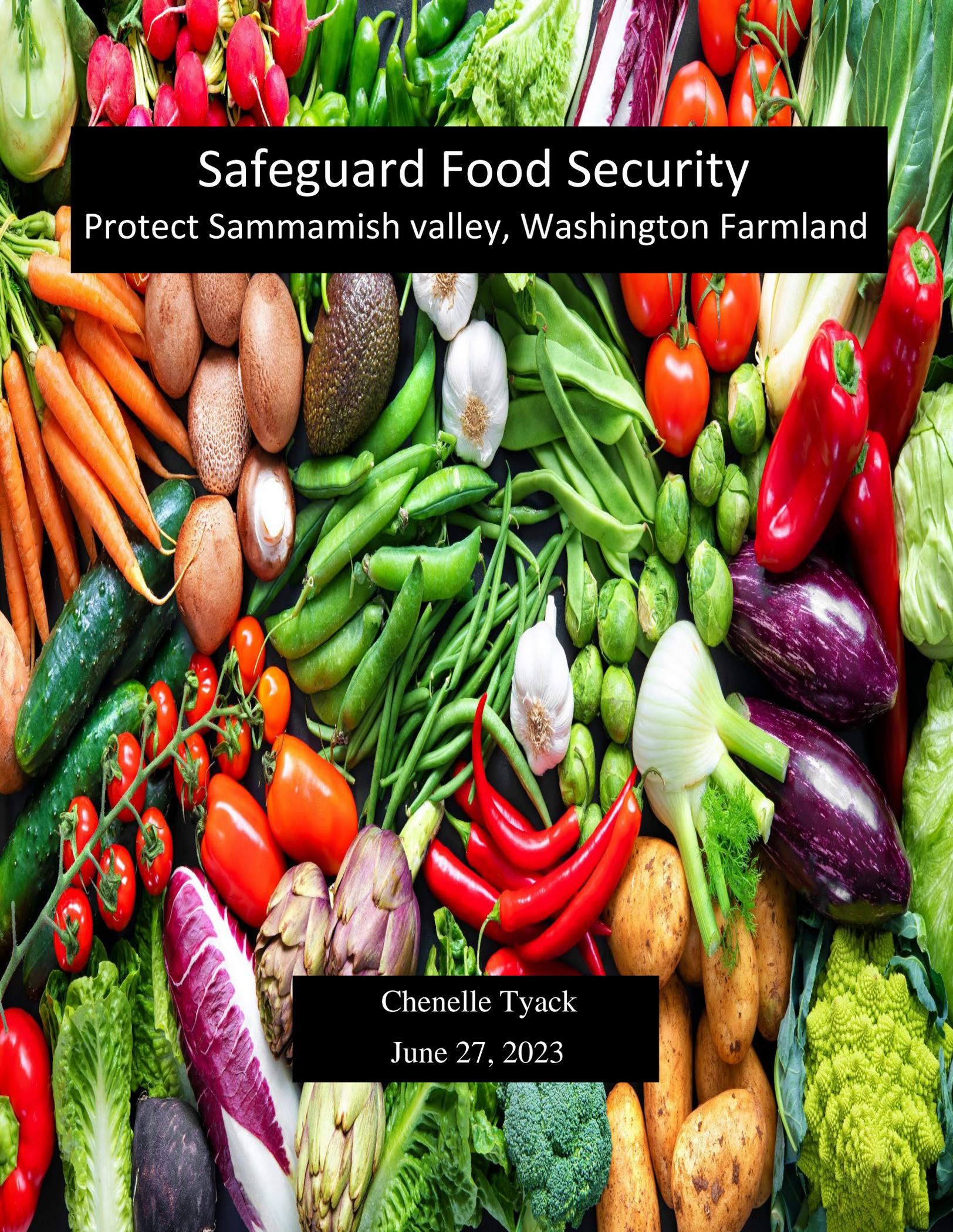
- **Established 1994 (Ordinance 11417)**
- **15 voting members; agency ex officio members**
- **Advise Council and Executive on agricultural policies and programs**
- **Supported by DNRP staff**



King County Agriculture Commission: recent actions

- **Guidance on revisions to County's farmland leasing program**
- **Receive regular updates on County agriculture programs and provide guidance on future actions**
- **Supported Fish Farm Flood Planning Efforts**
- **Input during development of SCAP, Comp Plan, Sub-area Plans, Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan, Lower Green River PEIS, etc.**
- **Guided revisions to KC Code that affect agriculture**





Safeguard Food Security

Protect Sammamish valley, Washington Farmland

Chenelle Tyack
June 27, 2023

King County Council
516 Third Avenue, Room 1200
Seattle, Washington 98104

June 27, 2023

Dear: King County Councilmembers: Dave Upthegrove, Claudia Balducci, Rod Dembowski, Reagan Dunn, Jeanne Kohl-Welles, Joe McDermott, Sarah Perry, Peter von Reichbauer, Girmay Zahilay

Subject: *Safeguard food security; protect Sammamish valley, Washington farmland (abbreviated)*

At the present time of global wars, climate change, emerging diseases, and worldwide food crisis, we must exercise everything in our power to preserve our irreplaceable farmland (WFP, 2023). Humanity's feasting on resources has tripled, we are consuming 175% of what the Earth can regenerate (Pelley, 2023). With King County's population spiking 2.252 million, it is immensely important to protect our local food security system (Data Commons, 2021).

The Puget Sound region has lost over 57% of its farmland since the 1950's (Washington Association of Land Trusts, 2023). Conflicts, climate change, and soaring food and fuel costs have left more than 345 million people facing food insecurity in 2023 (WFP, 2023). Protecting farmland is vital to our survival (Maryville University, 2023). No farms no food (Stuart, 2022).

The Sammamish valley, recognized as one of the most fertile valleys in the United States, is critical to our local food security system. At full potential, the Sammamish Valley Agricultural Production District (APO) can feed 80,000 people annually (FOSV, 2018). We jeopardize our food security and food sovereignty when we relinquish our local food security system (Darier, 2020).

It is within your authority to repeal or remedy the damaging environmental impacts of Beverage Ordinance O1903 on the Sammamish Valley APO and King County agricultural lands (King County Council, 2023). King County must comply with the State Environmental Policy Act and state statutes codified in the Washington State Growth Management Act (WSL, 2022 & 2023).

Our earth cries out in wildfires, flooding, and drought (Hobert & Negra, et al. 2020). Humankind will reap what we sow. Let us cultivate and grow a healthy community. We save Sammamish valley farmland by safeguarding agricultural land zones. We all eat food and thereby we must protect the farmers that feed us and the food producing lands that sustain us.

Sincerely,



Chenelle Tyack
renetyack@gmail.com

King County Council
516 Third Avenue, Room 1200
Seattle, Washington 98104

June 27, 2023

Dear King County Councilmembers: Dave Upthegrove, Claudia Balducci, Rod Dembowski, Reagan Dunn, Jeanne Kohl-Welles, Joe McDermott, Sarah Perry, Peter von Reichbauer, Girmay Zahilay

Subject: *Safeguard food security; protect Sammamish valley, Washington farmland (extended)*

Thank you for your commitment to the people of King County, Washington. Preserving natural resource lands and achieving environmental sustainability is core to King County's Comprehensive Plan, updated December 6, 2022 (King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, 2017 & 2022). In accordance with King County's environmental priorities, this report addresses the critical importance of protecting the Sammamish Valley Agricultural Production District (APD). King County Code (K.C.C.) must clearly regulate what is permissible and prohibited on agricultural zoned land.

As enacted in Title 26 Agricultural and Open Space Lands, K.C.C., section 26.04.010(B)(D),

B. Land suitable for farming is an irreplaceable natural resource with soil and topographic characteristics which have been enhanced by generations of agricultural use. When such land is converted to urban and suburban uses which do not require those special fertility and landscape characteristics, an important community resource is permanently lost to the citizens of King County.

D. It is the policy of the state of Washington and King County to protect, preserve and enhance agricultural and open space lands... (King County Council, 2022).

With King County's population spiking 2.252 million, the most populous county in Washington state, it is increasingly important to safeguard our local food security system (Data Commons, 2021). The Puget Sound region has lost over 57% of its farmland since the 1950s, (Washington Association of Land Trusts, 2023). Humanity's feasting on resources has tripled, we are consuming 175% of what the Earth can regenerate (Pelley, 2023).

Beverage Ordinance-19030-Regulations for Wineries, Breweries, and Distilleries imposes substantial harm to Sammamish valley agricultural lands, jeopardizing our local food security system (FOSV, 2018). Buffer zones surrounding the Sammamish Valley APD are quality control measures to protect vegetation from contamination. Development of protective buffer zones and adjacent farmland will adversely affect public health, cause environmental contamination, and impede our farmers' ability to produce nutrient rich foods that fuel our lives (FOSV, 2018).

Earth is only 29% land (Williams, 2014). We have already lost over 50% of our best quality farmland in Washington state (Candib, 2021). Soil sustains life (Galloway, n.d.). Abundant with minerals, medicinal properties, and nutrients for agriculture, soil is a beneficial natural resource (Rolf, et. al, 2018; Maryville University, 2019). Sammamish valley, rich in vitality, supreme in quality, is one of the most fertile soils in the United States. Home to more than 50 farms and agricultural businesses, the Sammamish Valley APD can feed 80,000 people annually. Sammamish valley farmers could supply local organic vegetables on a yearly basis, at a value of \$54 million (FOSV, 2018). Protecting farmland is vital to our survival (Maryville University, 2023). No farms, no food (Stuart, 2022).

Washington is a haven for cultivation and livestock. The various climates, vegetation, geology, and age of the soils make Washington home to 12 different soil types. This diverse soil helps Washington farmers grow more than 300 different crops (Rowe, 2018). Tokul soils, unique to Western Washington are among the most productive soils in the world (USDA, n.d.). Rich with volcanic ash and glacial till, tokul soil supports our evergreen forests and purifies water that major metropolitan areas such as Seattle depend upon (Cerise, n.d.). Soil combats climate change by capturing and storing carbon. Soil reduces flooding and regulates the atmosphere (Zurich Magazine, 2023).

A leader in agricultural innovation, the Sammamish Valley APD championed one of the first Community Supported Agriculture operations in Washington state. Sammamish valley farmers supply fresh fruits and vegetables to local restaurants and foodbanks. Pike Place Market offers vibrant Sammamish valley grown flowers (FOSV, 2018). Instrumental in the agritourism movement, Sammamish valley farmers introduced wedding venues, educational tours, on-farm dinners, as well as farm-to-table and organic farmers markets (Sawyer, 2019). Farmers of Sammamish valley practice regenerative organic agriculture, helping alleviate climate change (FOSV, 2018). An entire network of community and local agricultural system is at stake if commercial development is permitted within the Sammamish Valley APD buffer zones and adjacent farmland. Speculation drives up farmland prices, consequently displacing our community farmers (Jensen, 2017).

King County must uphold state statutes codified in the Growth Management Act, Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 43.21C.240(a) to validate that environmental impacts have been avoided or otherwise mitigated. King County must comply with RCW 36.70A.020(1) to encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner (WSL, 2022 & 2023). Infill building within existing urban areas reduces urban sprawl. Vacant buildings in urbanized areas may be repurposed for commercial use (Diverge, 2021; Madrone, 2023). Compliance with the State Environmental Policy Act, 43.21C RCW is a legal mandate, (WSL, 2023). Agricultural lands are impacted by intrusion of pipelines and resulting corrosion contaminating soil layers (Dean & Geusic, 2022). Concrete pavement damages topsoil, the most fertile layer of the earth. Concrete contributes to surface runoff, soil erosion, water pollution, and flooding (Atlantis Fiber, 2018). Parcels along waterways zoned industrial, commercial, and residential, pollute irrigation sources (EPA, 2023).

Soil pollution is a risk to our health and food security (Bensada, 2020). Food security, the reliable access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food, is inextricably linked to a predictable climate and healthy ecosystems (Hobert & Negra, et al. 2020). Pollution reduces soil's ability to yield food. It results in food crop contamination and disease (Münzel, 2023). Automobiles release heavy metals, sulfur, and nitrogen oxides into the atmosphere (Hidaya, 2021). Soil acidification can render land unsuitable for growing crops altogether (Kantor, 2015). Washington state contains 46 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency superfund sites, 10 in King County (EPA, 2023). Southeast, Washington, harbors Hanford Nuclear Site, the most polluted place in the United States, (Lohan, 2022). We cannot continue this dangerous cycle of contaminate now and mitigate later! We were given one Earth that sustains all life. We must coexist with our Earth in a manner that is respectful and responsible. We are called to heal our wounded world.

Climate change and associated severe weather, droughts, fires, pests, and diseases are already threatening the production of food around the world (Hobert & Negra, et al. 2020). California, the nation's number one producer of lettuce, broccoli, strawberries, and cauliflower is experiencing reduced crop yields due to torrential rain (Andrews, 2019). Saturated soil delayed California's tomato planting season (Toms, 2023). Drought decimated yields of corn, wheat, and soybeans in "America's Breadbasket, the Midwest in 2022 (Cosier, 2022). Bodies of water all over North America are drying up due to climate change. Nearly 82% of the continental U.S. shows conditions between abnormally dry and exceptional drought (Jacobo, 2022). As global temperatures and sea levels rise, the result is more heat waves, droughts, floods, cyclones, and wildfires (U.S. Mission Italy, 2022). Unless urgent action is taken, climate change will increase food prices, decrease food availability, and exacerbate instability and conflict because of competition over water and fertile land (Hobert & Negra, et al. 2020).

The world is experiencing the largest global food crisis in modern history (WFPUSA, 2023). Conflicts, climate change, and soaring food and fuel costs, have left more than 345 million people facing food insecurity in 2023 (WFP, 2023). In Washington, 688,170 people are facing hunger (Feeding America, 2023). Global catastrophes can escalate into local emergencies. Washington was linked as the epicenter of Covid 19 in our country (Sencer, 2023). Unprecedented supply chain interruptions occurred at Ports of Seattle and Tacoma (Wills, 2020). Food shortages on eggs, milk, and meat were prevalent in 2022 (Sager, 2022). Labor shortages are plaguing the transportation industry nationwide, disrupting one of the economy's most critical support systems (Sandoval, 2023). From local to global, how will we sustainably feed our world population of 8 billion, when we continue to destroy the farmland from which our food is produced? (Worldometer, n.d.).

Wars have been fought over land since time immemorial. War in Ukraine has far reaching impacts on oil, gas, and food prices (Hauk, 2022). Washington welcomed 16,000 Ukrainian refugees in 2022 (Wilkinson, 2023). Washington received 30,213 refugees from 2010 to 2020 (DSHS, n.d.). In preparation for humanitarian crisis, the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway preserves 850,000 biodiverse seeds. Global warming caused permafrost melt, flooding the vault. The ability of the rock vault to provide failsafe protection against all disasters is now threatened by climate change (Carrington, 2017). We must ensure emergency preparedness and agriculture safeguards are established in King County! The Sammamish Valley APD is one of our critical food safety nets. We all eat food; thus, we wage war against ourselves when we destroy our food producing lands.

Food is medicine. Food has the power to prevent and reverse disease. Researchers are studying “farmacy,” where fresh food is prescribed to patients with type 2 diabetes and low-income mothers to improve their health (Karsit, 2022). Fruits and vegetables lose their optimal nutritional value as soon as they are picked. Vitamin C content of broccoli was cut in half when shipped from outside the country, compared to locally sourced (Mesenberg, 2013). To transport food long distances, much of it is picked while still unripe and gassed to “ripen” it after transport, or highly processed in factories using preservatives, irradiation, and other means to keep it stable for transport and sale (Foodwise, 2022). Local produce travels less miles, thereby reducing carbon emissions, cost, and energy (Ranzi, 2016). Maintaining our local food system is essential to our public health. Humankind will reap what we sow. Let us cultivate and grow a healthy community.

In November 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that for the first time in U.S. history, America will be importing more agricultural products than exporting (Coggins, 2022). Food safety threats cause a burden on economies from disruptions or restrictions in global and regional agri-food trade, loss of food and associated income, and wasted natural resources (News Desk, 2019). Food safety regulations differ across regions, and their enforcement may be less strict abroad, as compared to locally. There is little chance of food contamination in locally sourced produce, unlike imported produce (Ranzi, 2016). We must support food justice with communities exercising their right to grow, sell, and eat healthy food (Darier, 2020).

International investors own or lease nearly 37.6 million acres of U.S. agricultural land (Landthink, 2022). We need to regain our food sovereignty by placing authority into the hands of local food providers. A resilient food system is an ecological food system, designed to help people and the environment rather than make profits for multinational corporations (Darier, 2020) Farmers look down and see soil, but the developer sees only dirt (Mall, 2017). The unopened eye sees a valley of emptiness, unprofitable in its natural state. The enlightened eye knows the value is intrinsic to the land itself and what it can produce not what can be built upon it. We have the opportunity today to protect the Sammamish Valley APD; to utilize this most fertile soil for its true agricultural purpose.

King County’s agricultural policies and principles have not been reflected in its land use planning and permitting. Upon completion of the 1962 Howard Hanson dam, came development of our prime farmland (Stein, 2001). Corporate owned Outlet Collection, Kent Station, Westfield Southcenter, and Renton Landing, all built on our highest quality farmland (Wilson, 2019; Tarragon, 2023; Beckley 2014). It is an unconscionable loss. Title 26, K.C.C., 26.04.010(E) acknowledges that, “policies and regulations, by themselves, have not been effective to provide long-term protection of farmlands and open space lands under the pressure of increasing urban development”. Leadership must exercise corresponding action that upholds King County’s agricultural policies. Professional engineers sit on land use planning boards, we need representation from farmers and environmentalists (Strozewski, 2023). Monetary motives must not drive development decisions. Is any amount of money worth more than the value of our lives? Our public health is of principal importance. Of all material things money buys, it cannot buy you a new body. You are given one body in this life, to carry you through all your days. Healthy individuals create a strong societal body.

Washington's roots were seeded in agriculture (Rowe, 2018). Early inhabitants recognized the gift of our grounds. By the 1920s, Japanese farmers supplied 75 percent of King County's vegetables and half the milk (Takami, 1998). Reigning as the gold standard, Kent, Washington was crowned "Lettuce Capitol of the World," (Stein, 2001). Kent was a leading exporter of lettuce to the eastern United States (City of Kent, n.d.). Today, only a fraction of farmland remains in the Kent valley (Sullivan, 2015). Where there once grew an abundance of vegetation, now sits littered with warehouses. Buildings grow in the heartbeat of our farmland. Veins that pumped lifeblood into our community, dried up in concrete. It is a shame to have lost our superior world title. Nevertheless, pavement cannot erase the memory of generations of devout farmers, nor the history of our homeland.

Farmers feed the world. Yet, our farmers face the challenge of protecting our food producing lands (Krentz, 2021). Farmers have been displaced from the Puget Sound region for decades. In 1942, amid World War II, Japanese farmers were uprooted from their farms in Kent, Washington and imprisoned in internment camps (Fiset, 2008). Farmers are positioned at an unfair disadvantage against developers and corporations with insurmountable profits, shareholders, lobbyists, and lawyers to represent them (Held, 2022; Francovich, 2022). Landlords lease land to farmers and sell when most profitable (Walhof, 2021). Under eminent domain, farmers surrender their land to the government (MRSC, 2023). We must protect the farmers that feed us and the food producing lands that sustain us! This requires prohibiting rezoning of agricultural land. With lawful application of preserving farmland for agricultural purposes, we can purchase development rights, restore recoverable lands, and invest in parcels of farmland for incorporation into land trusts and conservation easements (Washington Association of Land Trusts, 2023).

Please do not permit present day desire to develop Sammamish valley, at the expense of our future wellbeing. Food scarcity is a reality when our farmlands are in decline. So, the next meal that you eat, please think of your farmer, their sacrifice, and their dedication to your nutrition. Remember the land, the soil that nurtures the sprouts and springs forth food for your livelihood. We have entrusted you as our leaders to make the right decision. Save our soil. Repeal beverage ordinance 19030 or amend its negative environmental impacts through adoption of proposed ordinances (King County Council, 2023). Protect the Sammamish Valley APD and our local food producing lands through policy and action that safeguards agriculture. As U.S. Secretary of State, Antony Blinken expressed, "The health, stability, and wellbeing of our people depends on the food security that we build together," (U.S. Department of State, 2022).

Sincerely,



Chenelle Tyack
renetyack@gmail.com

(2) attachments

cc:

City: Woodinville City Council, City of Woodinville Planning Commission,
Kent City Council, City of Kent Land Use and Planning Board,
Renton City Council, Tukwila City Council, Auburn City Council.

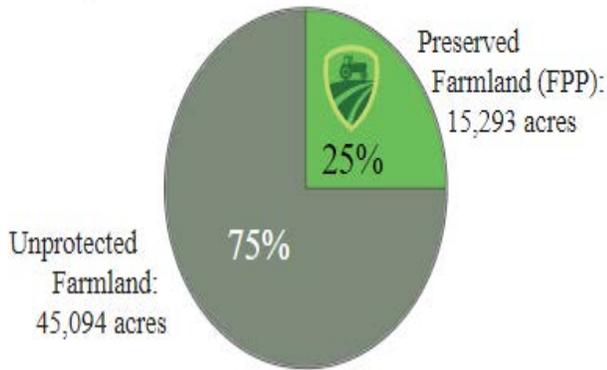
County: King County Executive, King County Representative, King Conservation District,
King County Local Services and Land Use Committee,
King County Agriculture Commission, King County Farmland Preservation Program,
King County Land Conservation Initiative.

State: Washington Policy Center, Washington State Food Policy Forum,
Washington State Growth Management Board, Washington Association of Land Trusts,
Washington State Department of Agriculture, Washington State Department of Ecology,
Washington State Conservation Commission, Washington State Association of Counties,
Washington State Legislative District 33, Washington State Legislative District 45.

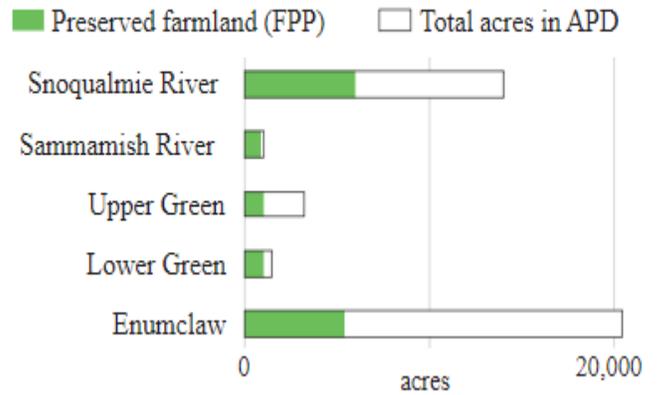
Organizations: Washington Farmland Trust, Washington Farm Bureau, King Pierce Farm Bureau,
American Farmland Trust, Friends of Sammamish Valley, Futurewise,
Municipal Research and Services Center.

Farmland in King County

Total: 60,387 acres



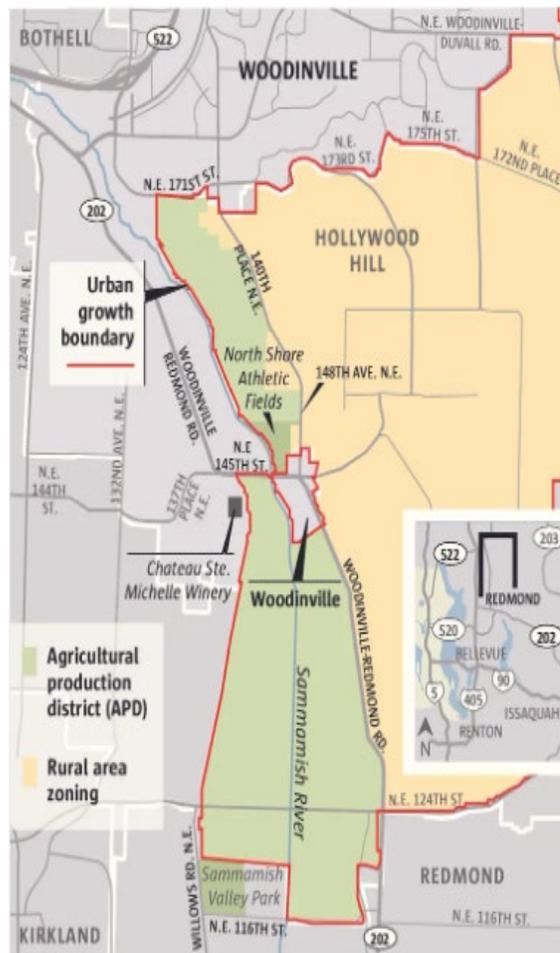
Farmland preserved by Agricultural Production District (APD)



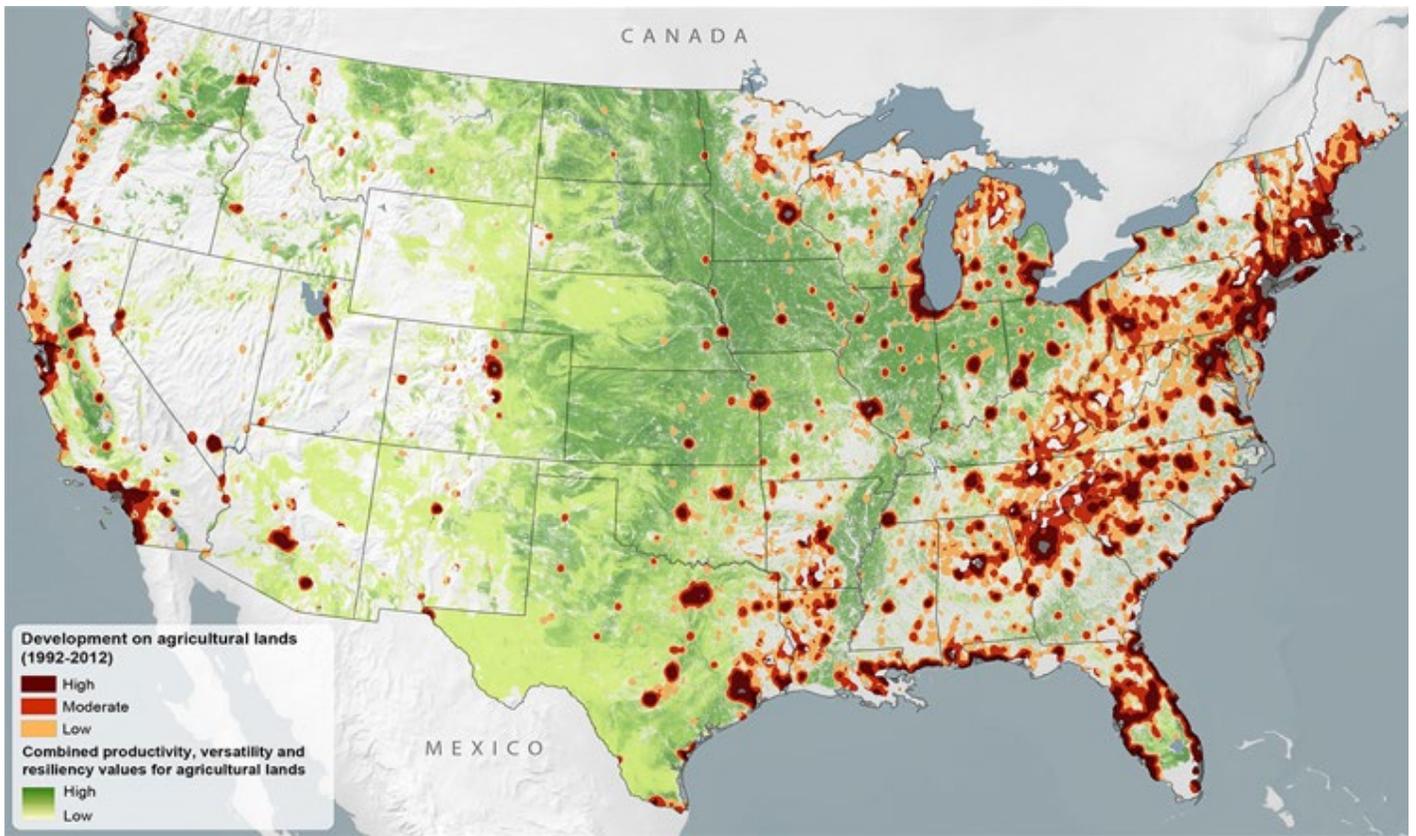
*FPP=Farmland Preservation Program

*Most recent chart and graph identified as of date of this report

Note: Active farmland data from field surveys conducted in 2013 and 2017. “Food” represents those acres farmed directly or indirectly (e.g., hay) for food production. “Non-food” represents farmed land devoted to horses, sod production, and plant nurseries.



Sammamish Valley, Washington zoning map, 2016
The Seattle Times



*American Farmland Trust-Map of continental United States. Most recent map identified as of date of this report.



Slow erosion of Sammamish valley, Washington farmland, 2023



Sammamish valley, Washington agricultural land, 2023





Kent valley, Washington warehouses, 2023





Pike Place Market; August 18, 1995 Duffield Farm stand, David Duff, Judy Duff, Deanna Duff, name undisclosed Kent valley, WA organic farmers-circa 1980s-2000s



Lettuce Festival Princesses-Kent valley, WA, 1934; Kent Historical Society



Golden Arrow Dairy- Tukwila, WA, circa 1930s; Tukwila Historical Society



Japanese Berry Farmers- Seattle, WA perimeter, 1915
Ouchi Family Collection



Potato Farm-Auburn, WA, 1910

White River Valley Museum Auburn, WA



Pacific Coast Condensed Milk Company building and staff-Kent, WA, circa 1899
White River Valley Museum, Auburn, WA

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