



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES TO THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY IN THE CHEHALIS BASIN

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CHEHALIS BASIN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

- DIP Goal #4: Develop approaches to keep forestry and agriculture on the land

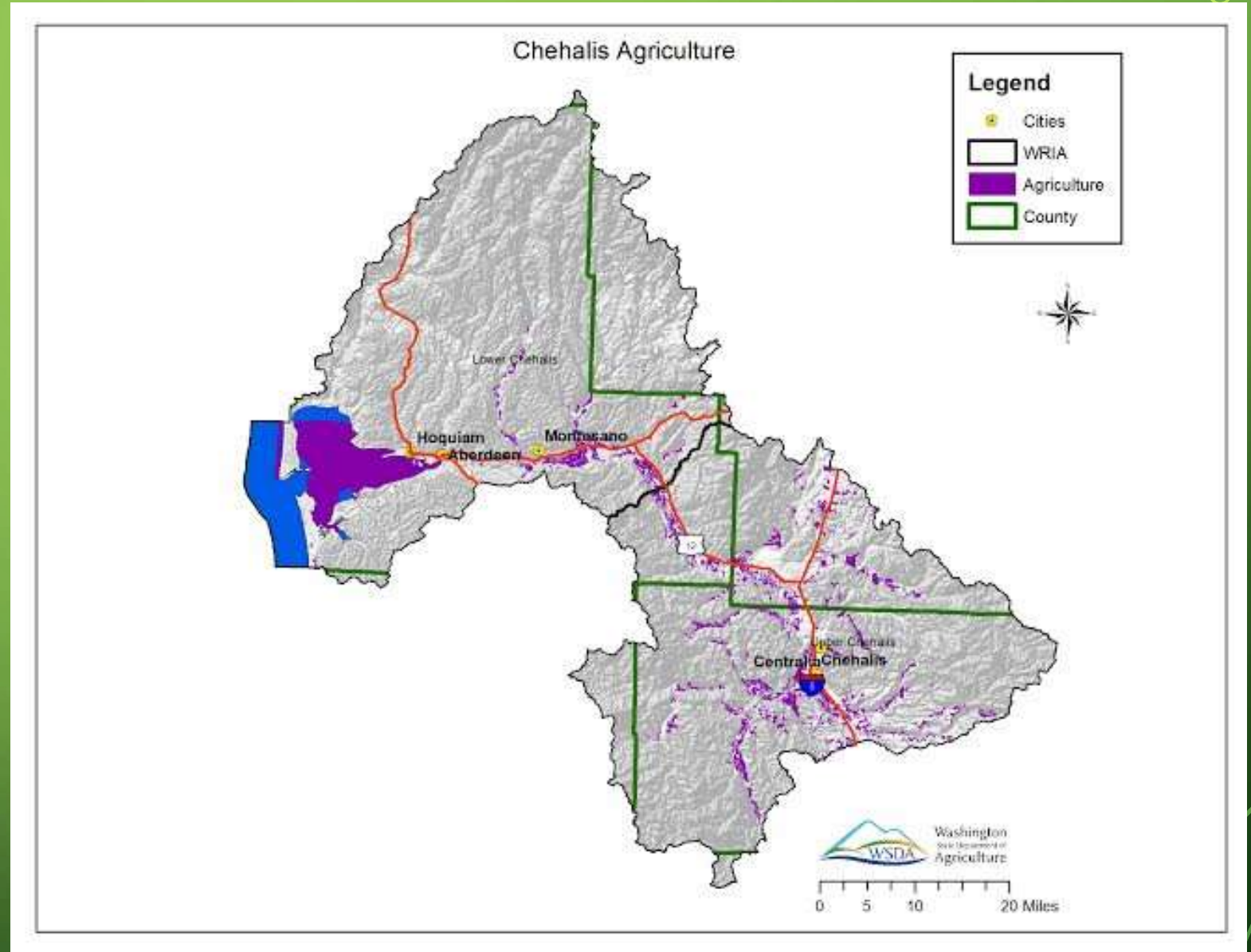


OUR FOOD

- Agriculture lands in the Chehalis Basin produce a wide range of crops and livestock including: corn, alfalfa, beef and dairy cattle, sheep, alpaca, and nursery plants.



EXTENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THE CHEHALIS



VALUE OF AGRICULTURE TO OUR ECONOMY



*Based on information from USDA
Agricultural statistics
(quickstats.nass.wsda.gov)
2012 census of agriculture (most recent
available)

Disclaimer: All producers who file an
agriculture income and expense form for
income tax purposes are required to
report production values. Not all
producers are accurate or complete on
their reporting. These numbers should be
considered conservative.

Lewis Co.

Livestock (all species)	103,253,000
Crops (all crops)	<u>29,075,000</u>
Total	132,328,000

Thurston Co.

Livestock	74,901,000
Crops	<u>48,843,000</u>
Total	123,744,000


Grays Harbor

Livestock (incl. aquaculture)	14,656,000
(7,756,000)	
Crops	<u>16,697,000</u>
Total	31,353,000

Three County total

287,425,000

VALUE OF AGRICULTURE TO OUR ECONOMY CONT..

- Value to three Counties = \$ 287,425,000
- Using economic influence multiplier X 4 = \$1.15 Billion
- Assume about 60% of ag production is in Chehalis basin rather than Nisqually, Deschutes, Cowlitz, etc
- \$1.15 Billion X 60% =  **\$ 690 million**

WHAT ABOUT ORGANIC?

- Organic production is a growth industry.
In 2012 Organic production was reported as follows:
- Lewis Co. \$4.2 million,
- Thurston Co. \$2.1 million,
- Grays Harbor \$2.1 million.

In the four years since these values were collected this part of the industry continues to thrive and grow.



Photo from Helsing Junction Farm.

A few organic producers in the Chehalis:

- Helsing Junction Farms, Rochester
- Newaukum Valley Farms, Chehalis
- Boistfort Valley Farm, Boistfort
- Rosecrest Farm, Chehalis

SMALL PRODUCERS IN THE CHEHALIS

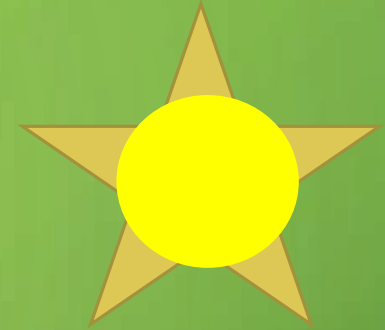
Small scale producers who do not file as an agricultural operation are not included in these statistics. However, there is a fairly high number of such operations in the Chehalis Watershed.

OPPORTUNITIES: WHAT MAKES THE CHEHALIS A GREAT PLACE FOR AGRICULTURE?

- Good soils
- Mild climate
- Location in relation to major population centers and shipping ports
(Seattle, Portland, Olympia, Tacoma, Grays Harbor, Kalama)



CHALLENGES



- **Cost of operations.** Farming is a relatively high cost/low return industry.
- **Climate:** while mild, is unpredictable. Tends to be too dry during the growing season and too wet the rest of the year.
- **Lack of infrastructure.** While close to potential markets, those markets are largely unavailable for many crops: grain for example. No elevators for shipment and storage.

CHALLENGES: WATER

- Closed basin, no new irrigation rights
- No significant storage for irrigation water
- Lack of predictability of the timing and quantity of rainfall
- Winter flooding, summer drought



CHALLENGES: REGULATIONS

- Federal: examples Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act
- State: examples Dairy Nutrient Management Law, Irrigation rules (use it or lose it), Growth Management Act (effect on funding, diversification, estate planning). Labor and Industries rules.
- Local: Mostly results of Federal and State requirements from previously mentioned Laws resulting in zoning, stream setback requirements, etc.

CHALLENGES: POLITICAL DECISIONS

- Examples:
 - Embargo of grain sales to Soviet Union and that country's invasion of Afghanistan.
 - Animal rights and welfare movement.
 - Controversy over organic vs conventional, genetic modification vs conventionally developed crop varieties.
- Tariff, trade agreements, crop supports, cheap food policies all affect agricultural businesses and must be taken into account in business decisions.
- Labor disputes example longshoreman strike/slowdown at major ports.



DISCUSSION

- How can these presented challenges be overcome?
- What can be done to support the CBP's goal of "keeping agriculture and forestry on the land"?
- What can consumers do to support local agriculture?
- What can local decision-makers do to support local agriculture?



KNOW YOUR FARMER

- Learn more about agriculture in the Chehalis Basin at the Fat Tire Willapa Bike Ride event June 25-26

Cyclists will tour exploring historic farms along the Willapa Hills Trail at the Fat Tire Ride & Festival event this June 25-26, 2016. Pet farm animals, smell the fresh county air, see the beauty of the Pacific Northwest, and taste the goodness of real farm produce crafting memories that will last a lifetime. These farms are located in very close proximity to the trail, making it easy to connect to the farms and get back on the trail once your tour is over! To find out more about each farm and what they have to offer, read on and click on the farm's name in all caps to head to their respective websites.

