Washington Agriculture: Current Landscape

Washington State Academy of Sciences
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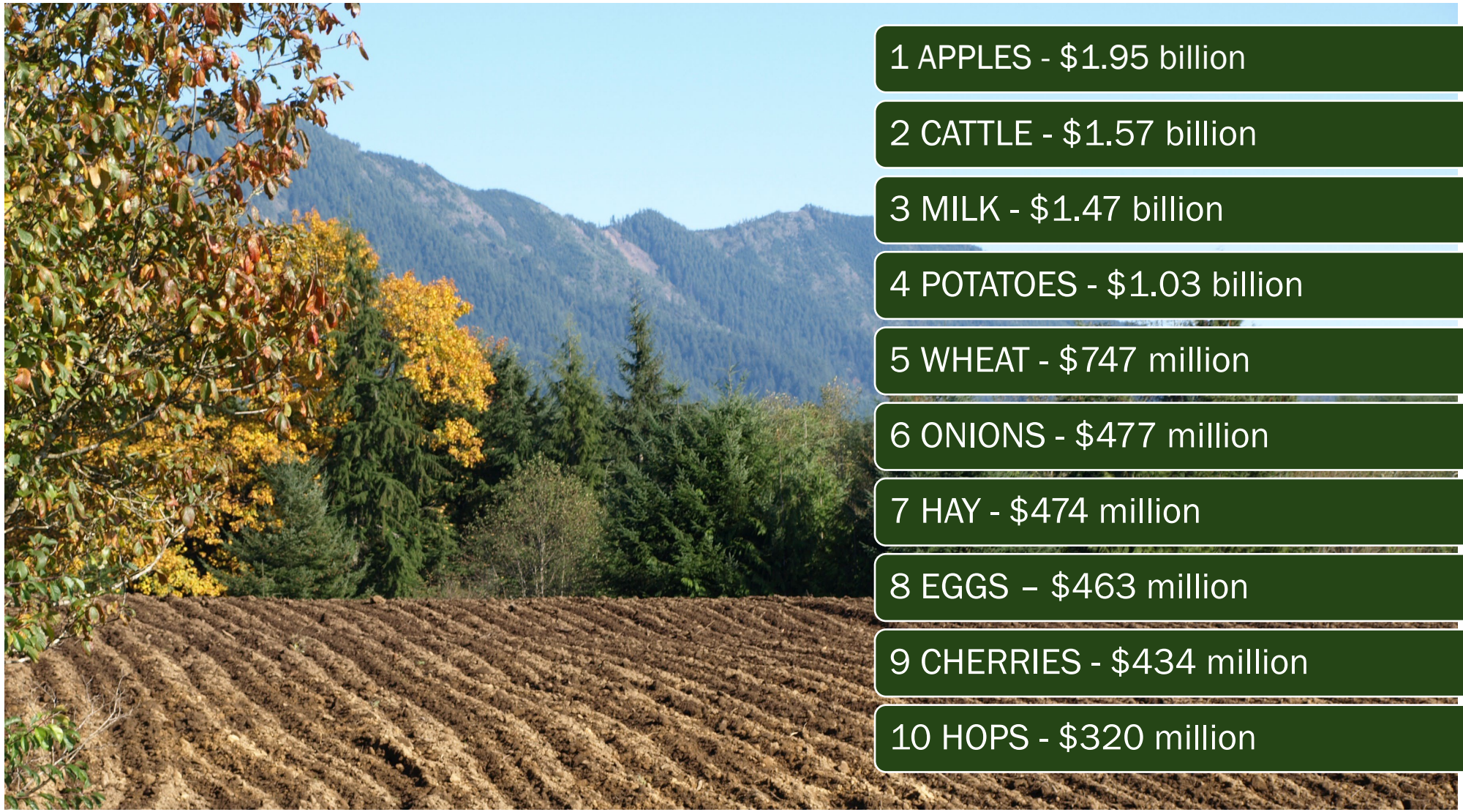
About Washington Farms

- **32,076** – total number of farms (2022). Most farms are family owned.
- **300+** - variety of crops grown in Washington.
- **$12.9 billion** – market value of crops and livestock only (2024)*

**USDA NASS.*

- **$1.95 billion** – value of apples, state's top crop
- **89%** - percent of Washington farms considered small farms
  - 82% - less than 180 acres
  - 67% - less than 50 acres

Top 10 Commodities in Washington (2024)*



1 APPLES - $1.95 billion

2 CATTLE - $1.57 billion

3 MILK - $1.47 billion

4 POTATOES - $1.03 billion

5 WHEAT - $747 million

6 ONIONS - $477 million

7 HAY - $474 million

8 EGGS – $463 million

9 CHERRIES - $434 million

10 HOPS - $320 million

**Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)*

Washington's Top Export Destinations & Export Products (2024)




Top Export Destinations

Canada	$1.3 billion
Japan	$1.1 billion
Mexico	$908.2 million
China	$692.6 million
South Korea	$508.2 million

Top Export Products

Frozen French Fries	$1.1 billion
Fish and Seafood	$939.9 billion
Apples	$845.2 million
Wheat	$651.9 million
Dairy	$563 million

Factors Affecting Viability of Washington Agriculture

Major pressures on the agricultural industry

- Increasing input costs, especially labor
- Low commodity/crop prices
- Reduced funding for technical support and research
- Regulatory burdens
- Weather/climate impacts
- Water scarcity
- Pest pressures (Japanese beetle, little cherry disease, blight)
- Impact of trade barriers/lack of emphasis on market growth

Photo credit: Dr. Andrea Bixby Brosi, WSU

Urban–Rural Divide: A Growing Challenge

Overview:

- Policies shaped by urban population and legislators
- Disconnect between urban priorities and rural/ag realities
- Labor, water, and environmental policies often hit rural areas hardest

Implications for Ag:

- Risk of losing support for critical infrastructure, transportation, and research funding.
- Need for bridging initiatives like legislative ag tours, urban-rural listening sessions, or ag education in schools to close the understanding gap

Agricultural Viability Study

- Intends to shed light on challenges producers in Washington are facing and works with partners at every level – local commissions, state agencies and Legislators – to develop sustainable solutions.
- Conducted by WSU IMPACT Center in partnership with WSDA.
- Preliminary report available 1/26.
- Final report available 6/26.

Washington Agricultural Opportunities

- Trade and International Markets
- Improvements in agricultural technology
- Farm and food systems development
- Supporting farmer and farmworker mental health
- Opportunities and strategies to mitigate climate risks
- Workforce development and agricultural education
- Clean energy

Washington's Agricultural Technology Opportunities

Burgeoning opportunities to:

advance agricultural yields and efficiency.

improve conditions for farmworkers.

reduce environmental impacts.

Technology for improved crop and livestock management and worker safety

AgWeatherNet

WSU Decision Aid System (tree fruit specific)

Drones (inputs and crop monitoring)

Automated irrigation systems with app management

GPS-driven tractors

Automated harvesters

Picking platforms

The Impact of Technology to Washington Agriculture

- On-farm agricultural technology investments have the potential to *increase skilled jobs/higher wage opportunities for farm workers.*

- Technology improvements *can be implemented across agriculture* including within the supply chain (e.g., packing house, storage, transportation) and at the point of consumption (e.g., smart packaging, spoilage indicators, etc.) to improve quality and reduce waste.

Questions

Contact Us

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