



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
Kitsap County



Kitsap Farming & Food Systems 2025

THE ISSUE

Kitsap County farms face pressures from development, economic challenges, market barriers, labor shortages, and environmental concerns, threatening long-term agricultural viability and local food security. Since 2015, WSU Kitsap Extension has supported coalitions and community-led efforts to strengthen a geographically rooted food system. In 2025, the county continued to see growing need for coordinated partnerships and collaborative food systems work.

THE RESPONSE

In 2025, WSU Kitsap Extension strengthened its whole-systems approach through the Farming & Food System Program, expanding partnerships focused on food access, farmer education, capacity building, and food preservation. Additionally, new work with Kitsap County Solid Waste launched planning for a backyard composting workshop series.

Key efforts:

- Supporting farmers markets with food access programs
- Delivering farmer education and technical assistance
- Providing food preservation education
- Facilitating farmer coalitions and networks
- Partnering with Kitsap Conservation District on *Kitsap Farmers Fighting Hunger* to support local farms and hunger-relief organizations

These efforts strengthened local partnerships and advanced a more resilient, community-based food system.

THE IMPACTS

FOOD ACCESS PROGRAMMING & FARMERS MARKETS

- Supported 24 farmers markets and 2 farm stands with food access programs across Western Washington.
- Increased use of SNAP Market Match, helping families access fresh, nutritious food while boosting sales for local farmers.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **24** farmers markets and **2** farm stands supported with food access programs
- **26** Kitsap farms received one-on-one technical assistance
- **32** farmer classes and farm walks delivered to **193 Kitsap** participants
- **7** farm mentors supported across **5** farms, providing **9** group classes, training **10** interns
- **11** pressure canner gauges tested
- **15** community members received individualized food safety/preservation guidance
- **150** participants reached through statewide online Food Preservation Series
- **28** farms supported through agritourism coalition network





THE IMPACTS *continued*

FARMER SUPPORT

See the 2025 Regional Small Farms Program impact report for full farmer impacts across the region.

Regional Small Farms Program (*Kitsap Numbers*)

- Provided one-on-one technical assistance to 26 Kitsap farms, including site visits and guidance in pest management, food safety, agritourism, marketing, and business planning.
- Delivered 32 classes and farm walks with 193 Kitsap farmers taking part, strengthening skills in sustainable production and farm efficiency.

Kitsap Farm Mentor Program

- Supported 7 farm mentors across 5 farms, offering 9 in-person group classes to 10 interns in production skills, efficiency, and farm business management.
- Added two online mini-lessons on business planning and crop planning to improve early-season preparation.

FOOD PRESERVATION & SAFETY

- Completed 11 pressure canner gauge tests and maintained an online hub for food preservation and safety resources.
- Provided individual guidance to 15 community members on food safety and preservation topics.
- Taught “Use Food Well” classes to 18 participants on safe storage and meal planning.
- Delivered food safety education to 15 youth in after-school programs and 9 individuals at Kitsap Detention Center.
- Co-hosted three statewide online Food Preservation Series reaching ~150 participants.

CAPACITY BUILDING, COALITIONS & NETWORKS

- **Kitsap Agritourism Coalition:** Supported 28 farms through coordination and facilitation; assisted planning and promotion of the third annual Kitsap Farm Tour featuring 11 host farms.
- **Kitsap Food Systems Round Table:** Facilitated monthly meetings for 10 partner organizations and completed the USDA LFPP local food distribution assessment with recommendations for improved efficiency.
- **Kitsap Farmland Preservation Coalition:** Provided administrative and facilitation support as the farmer-led group expanded to include agriculture service providers and farm representatives countywide.

The Farming & Food System program offers opportunities for farmer education, technical assistance, food safety & preservation, resources, and fosters important local food systems partnerships across Kitsap County.

