



Regional Small Farms

2025

THE ISSUE

The increasing number of smaller-scale farms on the Olympic & Kitsap Peninsulas has created a need for more small farm education, technical assistance, experiential opportunities, and resources for area farmers. The region's agriculture faces challenges due to policy-related issues, economic viability, and environmental concerns, such as water management and soil health. Additionally, unpredictable weather patterns and market fluctuations further complicate sustainable farming practices. In 2025, the WSU Regional Small Farms program saw an increase in farmer educational requests and technical assistance to include identification and management of on-farm pests, animal agriculture, crop production, soil health, farmland preservation, agritourism, and farm business assistance.

THE RESPONSE

The WSU Regional Small Farms Program serves Clallam, Jefferson, and Kitsap Counties with the mission of fostering a resilient and thriving local food and farming sector. In 2025, the program continued to prioritize the needs of new and beginning farmers while developing strategies to sustain high-quality programming and services across the region. Throughout the year, the program delivered a diverse range of educational opportunities—including in-person and virtual workshops, classes, and farm walks targeted primarily at small farm operations managing 10 acres or less. Beyond education, the program provided technical assistance on a wide array of farm-related topics to support producers in all three counties. To ensure localized support, the program maintains Extension Coordinators in each county, enabling tailored assistance that addresses unique regional challenges and opportunities.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **499 farmers engaged** through 32 classes and farm walks (16 online, 16 in-person).
- **58.5 hours** of educational programming delivered.
- **77%** of participants would recommend classes to others.
- **70%** rated classes as highly valuable for improving knowledge and skills.
- **12,600 views** of recorded classes online, totaling **804.5 hours** of watch time.
- **69 technical assistance requests** served, benefiting **48 unique farms**.

*Washington State University
Regional Small Farms
Program provides research-based information and educational programs for farmers, consumers, decision-makers, and others involved in local food systems.*





THE IMPACTS

In 2025, the WSU Regional Small Farms Program advanced small farm viability and strengthened local food systems across the region through education, technical assistance, and strategic partnerships. The program equipped farmers with practical knowledge, supported improvements in production and business practices, and contributed to greater overall agricultural resilience.

Alongside the substantial number of farmers served and the outcomes detailed in the following section, qualitative feedback highlights the depth and significance of the program's impact. Farmers reported markedly reduced uncertainty and increased confidence—especially in navigating markets, securing grants, exploring collaborative farming models, and strengthening business planning. Participants also emphasized meaningful time savings, noting that curated, place-based information replaced hours of independent research and enabled faster, more informed decision-making. Taken together, these quantitative and qualitative outcomes demonstrate how the program not only strengthened individual farm capacity but also contributed to a more resilient and adaptive regional food system.

Farmer Engagement and Education

- Delivered 32 classes and farm walks (16 online, 16 in-person), totaling 58.5 hours of instruction.
- Creation of a new Living on the Land Workshops series focused on topics relevant to small acreage farmers and homesteaders.
- Engaged 499 farmers, with 82% farming on 10 acres or less, underscoring the need for small farm education.
- Class evaluation results:
 - 77% would recommend classes to others.
 - 70% rated classes as highly valuable for improving knowledge and skills.
- Online resources extended reach with 12,600 views of recorded classes, totaling 804.5 hours of watch time.

QUOTES

“ *Very helpful - very impressed with the farmers and the model for sharing land & resources ~ Dirt Talk Farm Walk: Collaborative Farming Attendee*

“ *This was so valuable. It saved me so much time doing research to find these opportunities on my own! ~ Kitsap Market Channels Class Attendee*

“ *I'm new to all this and found this information was very helpful and digestible for someone in my position. ~ Farm Grants From Start to Finish Class Attendee*



Regional Small Farms Program Pillars





THE IMPACTS *continued*

Technical Assistance:

- Responded to 69 technical assistance requests, serving 48 unique farms across the region. Top topics included: Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Crop Production, Soil Management, Farm Business Planning, Marketing, and Financial Planning.
- Farmers frequently applied technical guidance immediately on their farms, contributing to reduced pest pressure, stronger soil management, improved production outcomes, and more strategic financial and business decisions.

Regional and County Based Projects:

- Kitsap Farm Mentor Program: Supported 7 mentors, delivered 9 classes to 10 farm interns.
- Supported food access programs (SNAP and SNAP Market Match) at regional farmers markets and farm stands.
- Delivered 6 workshops focused on financial planning, farm human resources, and grant management through a USDA Rural Business Development Grant.
- Hosted a Land Succession Planning event with over 40 participants in partnership with American Farmland Trust, Washington Farmland Trust, and Jefferson Land Trust.
- Assisted in the coordination of county agritourism events:
 - Kitsap Farm Tour (3rd Annual)
 - Jefferson County Farm Tour (23rd Annual)
- Assisted in the delivery of three Cultivating Success series for the region: Explore Your Farm Dreams, Whole Farm Planning, Agricultural Entrepreneurship.
- Completed a Western SARE grant for three years of sweetpotato trials in Clallam, Jefferson, and Kitsap counties.
- The Farm to Community program in Clallam and Jefferson Counties provided \$79,210 in contracting support to 23 local farms and producers, delivering fresh produce and protein to 21 partner sites—improving community food access and strengthening local food systems.

Community Partnerships:

Acted in an administration, facilitation and/or advisory capacity for multiple community partnerships/groups, including Clallam AgWorks, Clallam County Conservation Futures Board, Climate Action Committee Food Resiliency Work Group, Kitsap Agritourism Coalition, Kitsap, Food Systems Roundtable, Kitsap Farmland Preservation Coalition, Kitsap Agriculture Working Group & Steering Committee (Year of the Rural), Petersen Farm Workgroup, Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative.

