



2009 FARMS Report Appendix G

King County Agriculture Program

•**Livestock Program** – This program supports the raising and keeping of livestock in the county in an environmentally sound manner. Provides technical assistance on compliance with the county’s Livestock Management Ordinance: manure management, stream and wetland setbacks; livestock densities, and clean water diversion. The Livestock Program includes cost-share assistance for implementing best management practices with a farm management plan.

•**Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP)** – ADAP provides technical and financial assistance to farmers to help them maintain agricultural watercourses to improve drainage of fields while preserving water quality and avoiding harmful effects to fish.

•**Farmland Preservation Program (FPP)** –The FPP began in 1979 when voters approved a \$50 million bond initiative which has permanently protected over 13,000 acres of prime county farmlands. Property owners voluntarily sell development rights and agree to covenants that restrict their land use to agriculture or open space and that limit housing density. The county holds the development rights in trust on behalf of the citizens. The program monitors compliance with the covenants, reviews permits and other proposed activities, and continues to secure grant funding to add to the acreage protected.

•**Agriculture Commission** – The Agriculture Program provides assistance to the Agriculture Commission, which advises county staff, the Council and Executive on topics related to agriculture. The Agriculture Program staff members plan and organize meetings, identify and research issues, and assist the commission in communicating their decisions and implementing their annual work program.

•**Agriculture Permit Team** – The Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) sponsors an inter-departmental, interagency team that reviews county code and policy as it affects farmers. In addition to DDES, the team includes Public Health, the Agriculture Program, and the King Conservation District. The team addresses individual permit and code enforcement cases and makes recommendation for improvements in the permitting process and regulations so that they are more agriculture-friendly.

•**Puget Sound Fresh** – King County initiated Puget Sound Fresh in 1997 to encourage consumers and businesses to purchase products grown in the 12 counties that touch Puget Sound. The county has since transferred the program to Cascade Harvest Coalition. Agriculture Program staff continue to manage the website and participate in the program’s marketing activities. King County is the primary financial supporter of the program.

•**Farmers Market Support** – Staff consult with groups starting new farmers markets, work with market managers on best practices, management issues, business operations, and Health Department coordination, and identify opportunities to work together (such as cooperative marketing efforts).

•**Economic Development** – The Agriculture Program staff participate in a number of groups that support the economic viability of farming through the development of farming infrastructure, improving access to markets, providing education to farmers, and helping new farmers get started.

•**Farmbudsman Activities** – Staff provide direct assistance to farmers on land use, building, fire, road, and health code issues, on technical permit questions; on flood recovery, poor drainage, debris slides, impacts from neighboring businesses and residents, requests for conservation easements, etc. Staff work with other agencies to implement balanced solutions for farmers to meet codes and resolve enforcement cases.

• **Land Use Policy** – Staff participate in the County’s Comprehensive planning to ensure that Agricultural land use is protected. Activities include reviewing development proposals, easements, and condemnations related to the designated Agricultural Production Districts and the FPP and encouraging appropriate action. Staff negotiate resolution of the many controversies between agriculture and other mandates; such as fish, floods, transportation, wetland mitigation, value added infrastructure, direct marketing, and health regulations.



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