

December 3, 2010

**A message from 37 associations  
on behalf of the Washington  
agricultural community**

The Honorable Christine Gregoire  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Gregoire,

The future of Washington's economic recovery depends on the strength and vitality of Washington agriculture and food processing. Although the farm-gate value of Washington agriculture declined 8% in 2009, the industry has continued to remain steady in employment and exports. Washington's agriculture and food industry is the 3rd largest exporter in the United States. It contributes 12% of the state's economy and employs approximately 160,000 people. With global and local economies continuing to struggle in a deep recession, now is the time to keep the agricultural industry in position to help lead Washington into a thriving future.

To guarantee Washington's recovery it is vital that producers, growers, academic researchers, retailers and consumers benefit from policies that will promote long-term success of Washington agriculture at home and abroad. The agricultural community has worked together to identify the following key issues for the 2011 legislative session. We are asking you to partner with us and lead Washington into a successful future.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss items that will act to preserve and enhance the economy through the support of working family farms across our state.

**Key issues for agriculture in the 2011 legislative session.**

- **Support agricultural research, extension, and commodity-specific programs funded through the state universities and Department of Agriculture.**
- **Promote agriculture's role in the economic recovery by not increasing taxes, fees, or regulations that hinder producer profitability. Instead, allow for voluntary programs to keep Washington's farmers and ranchers viable.**
- **Ensure that our transportation system provides an efficient farm-to-market product distribution network.**

Thank you for your leadership and your interest in assisting agriculture.

Sincerely,

*Cattle Producers of Washington  
Columbia-Snake River Irrigators Association  
Hop Growers of Washington  
Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers  
Washington Asparagus Council  
Washington Association of Conservation Districts  
Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers  
Washington Blueberry Commission  
Washington Cattlemen's Association  
Washington Farm Bureau  
Washington Friends of Farms and Forests*

*Columbia Basin Development League  
Far West Agribusiness Association  
Northwest Food Processors Association  
Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association  
Washington Asparagus Commission  
Washington Association of Landscape Professionals  
Washington Association of Wheat Growers  
Washington Cattle Feeders Association  
Washington Christmas Tree Growers  
Washington Fish Growers Association  
Washington Fryer Commission*

*Washington Growers Clearing House Association*  
*Washington Potato and Onion Association*  
*Washington State Dairy Federation*  
*Washington State Horticultural Association*  
*Washington State Potato Commission*  
*Washington State Turfgrass Seed Commission*  
*Wenatchee Valley Traffic Association*  
*Yakima Valley Growers-Shippers Association*

*Washington-North Idaho Seed Association*  
*Washington State Council of Farmer Cooperatives*  
*Washington State Grange*  
*Washington State Nursery and Landscape Assoc.*  
*Washington State Sheep Producers*  
*Washington State Water Resources Association*  
*Western Washington Agricultural Association*

cc: Governor Christine Gregoire  
WSDA Director Dan Newhouse  
Senate Members  
House of Representatives Members