

Washington State Food Policy Forum

Progress Report | February 2019

The purpose of this report is to describe the progress and success of the Food Policy Forum January to December 2018. The report describes the Forum’s move from introductory (101-level) presentations on a variety of food system topics to seven prioritized 201-level discussions on potential policy recommendations. The report also describes how the Forum will approach joint decision-making and development of formal recommendations in 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: FOOD POLICY FORUM 2018 OUTCOMES

The Washington State Food Policy Forum (Forum) was created through a Legislative budget proviso in 2016 and charged with making meaningful recommendations for improving the food system in Washington State. To accomplish this, the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC), the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), and the Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) have been convening a cross-sector group of food system stakeholders to consider and develop recommendations that have broad support from the Forum’s diverse members.

This progress report provides detail on the key 2018 successes which lay the foundation for the Forum’s work in 2019.

1. The Forum defined its collective process for developing final recommendations
2. The Forum collectively prioritized a set of seven food system policy topics
3. The Forum is increasing understanding and trust among participants from diverse sectors of the food system
4. The Forum is hosting conversations about food system fiscal and legislative opportunities
5. The Forum transitioned from shared learning to joint decision-making and formalized membership roles
6. The Forum has identified more than 60 recommendations to consider

In 2018 the Forum progressed from a survey-level consideration of a wide range of food system topics to prioritization of seven issue areas of focus. From June 2018 through January 2019, the Forum heard expert presentations on the prioritized topics:

1. Coordination with and among local food policy entities;
2. Food insecurity;¹

¹ The prioritized topic was food deserts and inequitable access to food however presentations ended up covering food insecurity.

3. Agricultural land protection and availability;
4. Transportation and related infrastructure;
5. Alleviating barriers to small and medium scale farmers accessing markets, including institutional purchasing;
6. Rural economic development including next generation farming; and
7. Impacts of climate change.

The following table provides a cross-walk of the Forum goals established in 2017 to the recommendations food system experts proposed to the Forum in 2018. These recommendations will inform the Forum’s collective recommendations which will be presented to the Legislature by 2019.

Food Policy Forum Recommendations	Increase direct marketing sales ²	Expand and promote healthy, Washington-grown food programs ³	Examine ways to encourage retention ⁴	Reduce food insecurity and hunger ⁵	Identify ways to improve coordination ⁶
July 9 Forum Meeting - Coordination with and among local food policy entities					
1. Food Policy Forum is established as a permanent entity to coordinate local, state, tribal, and federal entities on issues and opportunities in the food system arena.	X	X	X	X	X
2. Foster new local food policy entities	X	X	X	X	X
3. Provide resources and money that goes beyond seed money for local food policy entities	X	X	X	X	X
4. Facilitate information sharing (e.g., policy blue prints, workshops, training sessions) that would be valuable to local entities	X	X	X	X	X
5. Assess what is working at regional levels in terms of wild and farmed food successes (e.g., Success Story Exchange)	X	X	X	X	X
6. Develop 2030 plus statewide priorities/budgets for strengthening regional-state food systems	X	X	X	X	X

² Increase direct marketing sales and consumption of Washington-grown foods

³ Expand and promote programs that bring healthy and nutritious Washington-grown foods to Washington residents

⁴ Examine ways to encourage retention of an adequate number of farmers for small scale farms, meet the educational needs for the next generation of farmers, and provide for the continued economic viability of local food production, processing, and distribution in the state

⁵ Reduce food insecurity and hunger in the state

⁶ Identify ways to improve coordination and communication among local food policy entities and communication between the local food policy entities and state agencies

Food Policy Forum Recommendations	Increase direct marketing sales ²	Expand and promote healthy, Washington-grown food programs ³	Examine ways to encourage retention ⁴	Reduce food insecurity and hunger ⁵	Identify ways to improve coordination ⁶
7. Build capacity of conservation districts to partner with local non-profits to support the development and management of regional food coalitions	X	X	X	X	X
8. Develop Food Policy Forum as a Leadership Network that provides opportunities for diverse people to participate and learn	X	X	X	X	X
9. Develop metrics around coordination	X	X	X	X	X
10. Implement a process to decide what statewide policies to support	X	X	X	X	X
11. Utilize video conferencing to increase engagement during Forum meetings	X	X	X	X	X
August 2 Forum Meeting - Food deserts and inequitable access to food					
12. Address barriers to accepting benefits (SNAP, FMNP, WIC) at farmers markets, farm stands, and other points of sale, specifically at non-traditional markets, including reducing administrative burdens and expenses.	X	X		X	
13. Increase availability of incentive programs at non-traditional markets (mobile and pop-up, farm stands, ethnic grocers).		X		X	
14. Provide more incentive programs at farmers markets, farm stands, and other points of sale that are not linked to SNAP participation, particularly for those who fall into the food security gap or do not qualify.	X	X		X	
15. Reduce the barriers for producers that sell to institutions or offer incentives to producers to meet those benchmarks.	X	X	X	X	
16. Increase funding to purchase local WA produce for food banks.	X	X		X	

Food Policy Forum Recommendations	Increase direct marketing sales ²	Expand and promote healthy, Washington-grown food programs ³	Examine ways to encourage retention ⁴	Reduce food insecurity and hunger ⁵	Identify ways to improve coordination ⁶
17. Statewide funding for a matching incentive program.	X	X		X	
18. Increased funding for Senior FMNP.	X	X		X	
19. Additional funding for DSHS to supply wireless POS terminals to all farmers markets.	X	X		X	
20. Develop a funding stream to help increase capacity at food pantries.		X		X	
21. Identify funding for local produce purchasing: Farm-to-Food Pantry spending; State investment in FINI; Farmers Market Nutrition Program for WIC & Senior vouchers; Child nutrition programs (school meals, summer meals, after school meals)	X	X		X	
22. Ensure continued funding for WSDA's Regional Markets program.	X	X	X		
23. Strengthen SNAP benefits: Raise the minimum benefit; Create standard medical deduction; Incentivize SNAP enrollment with seniors and people with disabilities				X	
24. Improve partnerships between grocery stores, brokers, and farmers so that when wholesalers distribute food to local stores, the local stores could provide a dock to move excess locally grown produce to warehouses.	X	X	X		
25. Utilize existing retail systems that classify individual products into departments to establish EBT requirements for healthy food purchasing.		X		X	
September 6 Forum Meeting – Agricultural land protection and availability					
26. Conduct more GIS mapping and assessments to understand progress and current state of land use.			X		

Food Policy Forum Recommendations	Increase direct marketing sales ²	Expand and promote healthy, Washington-grown food programs ³	Examine ways to encourage retention ⁴	Reduce food insecurity and hunger ⁵	Identify ways to improve coordination ⁶
27. More stable funding for Purchase of Developmental Rights (PDR) programs.			X		
28. State funding for ag easements including ag value (OPAV) clauses; Include non-farming landowners with long-term ag tenants			X		
29. Tax credits and capital gains exclusions at state level			X		
30. Support policies that address instability of heir property (multiple owners)			X		
31. Access to state-owned farmland by beginning farmers			X		
32. Make current use tax better serve young farmers (e.g., income rather than acres, non-farming landlords with tenants, etc.)			X		
33. Support robust money in easement programs (state & local)			X		
34. Support flexible funding programs that allow BPS (2018 Senate Farm Bill)			X		
35. Support creative models for streamlined and low-cost financing in support of land protection and new and beginning farmers			X		
36. Recodify RCW 46.21c.011 .02: "... The legislature declared that it is the policy of the state to identify and take into account the adverse effects of these actions on the preservation and conservation of agricultural lands; to consider alternative actions, as appropriate, that could lessen such adverse effects; and to assure that such actions appropriately mitigate for unavoidable impacts to agricultural resources."			X		

Food Policy Forum Recommendations	Increase direct marketing sales ²	Expand and promote healthy, Washington-grown food programs ³	Examine ways to encourage retention ⁴	Reduce food insecurity and hunger ⁵	Identify ways to improve coordination ⁶
37. Pursue Gubernatorial Executive Order to require the protection of farmland; Re-introduce draft EO to Governor's Office and Agency Directors and pursue adoption circa 2019-2020			X		
October 4 Forum Meeting – Transportation and related infrastructure					
38. Provide grants increased market access and value-added model.	X	X			
39. Additional facilities for cold storage/freezing distributed throughout state for farms to access for value-added production.		X	X		
40. Change RCW 46.44.042 to allow for new generation wide based tires			X		
41. Complete I-90 East of Snoqualmie Summit			X		
42. Correct the I-90/Highway 18 interchange			X		
43. Complete Highway 167 gateway project into the Port of Tacoma			X		
44. Rural bridge replacement for water capacity building projects			X		
45. Expanding high school vocational education to include CDL coursework			X		
46. Improving seasonal road weight restrictions			X		
47. Advocate to increase Federal max weight to 97K pounds with 3 rd axle			X		
November 1 Forum Meeting – Alleviating barriers to small and medium scale farmers accessing markets, including institutional purchasing					
48. Create a system for identifying local/Washington products, including minimally processed foods.	X	X	X		

Food Policy Forum Recommendations	Increase direct marketing sales ²	Expand and promote healthy, Washington-grown food programs ³	Examine ways to encourage retention ⁴	Reduce food insecurity and hunger ⁵	Identify ways to improve coordination ⁶
49. Provide analysis that identifies Washington farms, including details on their food production and location so that schools can proactively reach out to local farms.	X	X			
50. Provide funding sources, grants, and legislative bills to increase capacity for school districts to work on farm to school.	X	X		X	
51. Offer consultants who could work with school districts one-on-one to provide guidance on how implement farm to school.	X	X			
52. Support initiatives that could enable local farms to provide services similar to a broadline distributors and align inventory in a way that makes purchasing easier.		X	X		
53. Support business models that invest in Washington agriculture and align regional markets with public partners and resources.		X	X		
December 6 Forum Meeting – Rural economic development including next generation farming					
54. Invest in research			X		
55. Engage in public-private partnerships			X		
56. Focus on supporting infrastructure. Specifically processing facilities			X		
January 10 Forum Meeting - Impacts of climate change					
57. Addressing agricultural water vulnerabilities across the state			X		
58. Importance of the long-term R&D / commercialization partnership to improve adaptability and resiliency. Particularly for variety development/testing, crop protection, and soil health			X		

Food Policy Forum Recommendations	Increase direct marketing sales ²	Expand and promote healthy, Washington-grown food programs ³	Examine ways to encourage retention ⁴	Reduce food insecurity and hunger ⁵	Identify ways to improve coordination ⁶
59. Improve our understanding of inter-state, inter-region, and inter-national competitiveness			X		

INTRODUCTION

The Washington State Legislature initially created the Food Policy Forum (Forum) through a budget proviso in 2016 and, in 2017, provided additional funding to support the Forum through June 2019. The Legislature asked the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) “to convene and facilitate a food policy forum.” The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and the Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) work in partnership with SCC to convene and manage the Forum. Ross Strategic is contracted by SCC to provide facilitation support.

The 2017 Forum process⁷ refined the charge of the group. The charge of the Food Policy Forum is to consider and make meaningful recommendations for improving the food system in Washington State that have broad support from the Forum's diverse membership and align with five goals (see text box).

The Forum is uniquely positioned in Washington to examine the food system as a whole and identify intersectional and win-win solutions for different scales of agriculture and food system actors. The Forum has positioned itself to understand and describe how opportunities in different sectors can be harnessed for meaningful change across sectors and scales.

The Forum is unique among state-level food policy councils in its intention to engage multiple scales of agriculture and diverse food system practitioners to take collective action and come to agreement on a set of policy recommendations.

Food Policy Forum Goals

1. Increase direct marketing sales and consumption of Washington-grown foods;
2. Expand and promote programs that bring healthy and nutritious Washington-grown foods to Washington residents;
3. Examine ways to encourage retention of an adequate number of farmers for small scale farms, meet the educational needs for the next generation of farmers, and provide for the continued economic viability of local food production, processing, and distribution in the state;
4. Reduce food insecurity and hunger in the state; and
5. Identify ways to improve coordination and communication among local food policy entities and communication between the local food policy entities and state agencies.

FOOD POLICY FORUM 2018 SUCCESSES AND OUTCOMES

The Forum is celebrating the following 2018 successes which lay the foundation for its work in 2019.

1. The Forum defined its collective process for developing final recommendations

⁷ To learn more about the Forum's work in 2017, please see the [Food Policy Forum 2017 Report to the Legislature](#).

In 2017, the Forum identified a series of issues associated with Washington’s food system. These are issues the Forum members believed are most appropriate for discussion and possible recommendations. In 2018, in order to ensure all Forum members are familiar with the background of the issues identified, the Forum developed a process for defining the issues and refining recommendations. This process has three parts, and each issue went through the following:

- **101 level** – Background introduction of the issue and the relationship to the state’s food system. Panels of experts on the particular topic provided input. Initial recommendation ideas were identified.
- **201 level** – More in-depth discussion of the topic and refining of the recommendations.
- **301 level** – Finalization of the recommendations for each issue. This activity will take place in 2019.
- The process started with a landscape assessment in January through April 2018, transitioned in June 2018 to fiscal and policy analysis of a prioritized set of seven food system policy topics, and will end with workshop meetings in spring 2019 to refine and finalize the recommendations.

2. The Forum collectively prioritized a set of seven food system policy topics to focus on

The Forum prioritized seven food system policy topics that are likely to surface meaningful recommendations and garner support from its diverse membership:

1. Coordination with and among local food policy entities;
2. Food deserts and inequitable access to food;
3. Agricultural land protection and availability;
4. Transportation and related infrastructure;
5. Alleviating barriers to small and medium scale farmers accessing markets, including institutional purchasing;
6. Rural economic development including next generation farming; and
7. Impacts of climate change.

Since its establishment, the Forum has hosted discussion and presentations on a very broad range of issues that fall within the general scope of the food system. With that shared learning as a foundation, in 2018, the Forum worked through a defined process to collectively refine the broad scope of issues into a prioritized short list. More than 20 Forum participants provided their input, including three elected officials. These seven topic areas are receiving deeper consideration and inquiry and will be the focus of recommendations that are due to the Legislature in June 2019.

3. The Forum is increasing understanding and trust among participants from diverse sectors of the food system

- Washington’s food system is complex with interrelated social economic and environmental dimensions and changing it requires joint engagement and a sense of shared responsibility and benefit.
- Each month, over 100 food systems stakeholders are invited to participate in Forum meetings. The Forum is attended by on average 25 participants representing diverse sectors, including farmland preservation and access, medium- and large-scale agriculture, anti-hunger, emergency food, nutrition, distribution, economic development, conservation, and local food policy councils. Typically, at least two elected officials attend each Forum meeting.
- For each 201-level meeting, interested Forum participants are invited to a monthly agenda planning call for the forthcoming meeting. During the meeting each person shares insights on barriers and

opportunities related to the topic and identifies potential speakers and relevant resources. The agencies and facilitator use this agenda scoping call to design the forthcoming meeting agenda.

- Forum meetings make active use of web-based meeting tools to allow participation by individuals from around the state. Forum meeting notes, presentations, materials, and recordings are available for public access on the [SCC Food Policy Forum website](#).
- The Forum has grown to be a space for open dialogue and collaboration.

4. The Forum is hosting conversations about food system fiscal and legislative opportunities

- The Forum received presentations from state agencies to learn about 2019 legislative opportunities including agency decision packages.
- Forum participants are discussing issues before the state Legislature and Congress to determine whether and how the Forum members want to engage on these issues.

5. The Forum transitioned from shared learning to joint decision-making and formalized membership roles

In November, December, and early January the Forum came to agreement on several important aspects of its approach to joint decision-making so that it is poised to take collective action in 2019. The convening agencies clarified membership roles by confirming membership participation of previously appointed members and extending new invitations to State agencies that have been regular participants in Forum meetings and organizations and individuals who represent smaller scale, diversified, value-added producers and direct marketing farms.

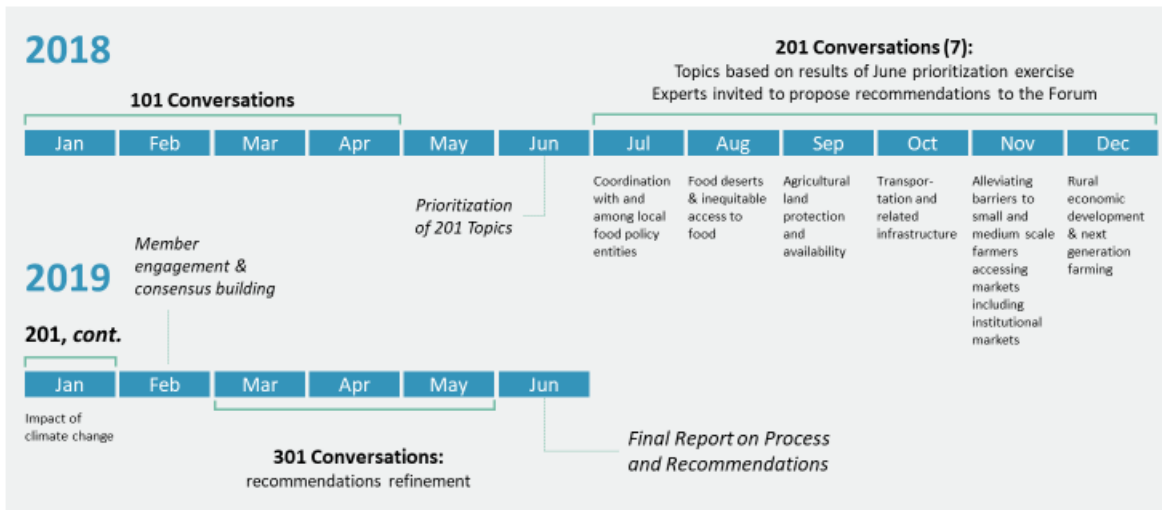
6. The Forum has identified more than 60 recommendations to consider

Through its 201-level conversations with food systems experts, the Forum was presented with a list of more than 60 recommendations to consider. These recommendations grew out of the seven policy priority areas the Forum selected in June. The recommendations generated during the 201-level conversations will form the basis for the Forum's own recommendations to the Legislature.

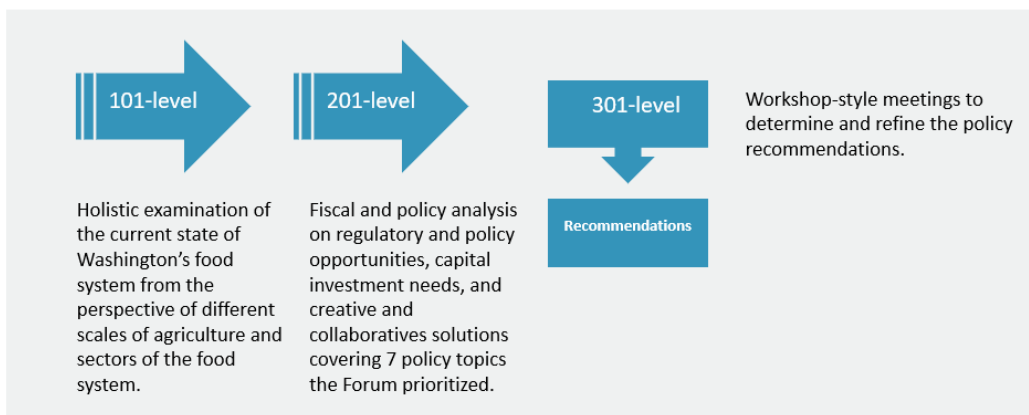
2018-2019 FOOD POLICY FORUM PROCESS

The Forum has been honing its understanding of opportunities to improve the food system by moving from a landscape assessment of the whole system to a set of presentations and conversations on seven policy topics. The landscape assessment (101-conversations) began in 2017 and wrapped up in 2018. The 101-level to 201-level process is intended to set the stage for workshop-style conversations in 2019 during which specific recommendations will be defined. The process is summarized in the following infographics.

Food Policy Forum 2018-19 Process



The 101 to 201 to 301 Approach



101-Level Meetings

From January to April of 2018, the Forum conducted a series of food system 101-level conversations to ensure a holistic understanding of the big picture in Washington state. This phase grew from the landscape assessment that began in 2017. The 101-level topics and speakers are listed below. Meeting summaries can be found online on the [SCC Food Policy Forum website](#).

Washington is unique among agricultural states in our broad diversity of crops and robust food products sector, scales of agriculture, and in our creative and applauded approaches to addressing hunger and food insecurity. We have significant strengths to build upon, but issues are complex and need to be addressed holistically.

- Getting a next generation farmer onto a piece of land is only one part of the equation. Promoting agricultural land protection and access in concert with rural economic development is the optimal approach.
- Right-scaled aggregation, distribution, processing, and storage logistics are key to improving market access (e.g., institutional markets), particularly for small- and mid-sized farms.

- Engage diverse stakeholders to create multi-sectoral impacts by identifying win-win solutions. For example, addressing food access issues while promoting Washington-grown food.
- Work is needed to increase the value consumers place on Washington-grown food and reduce inefficiencies in the food system so that the price is lower while supporting farm business economic viability.

101-level Meeting Presentations

January 5	<p>International Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rianne Perry, WSDA <p>Commodity Commissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hannah Street, WSDA
February 2	<p>Farmland Preservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Josh Giuntoli, OFP • Chris Elder, Whatcom County Planning and Development Services • Mike Tobin, North Yakima Conservation District <p>Next Generation and Small-Scale Farmers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melissa Campbell, PCC Farmland Trust
March 12	<p>Agricultural Business Viability and Local Food Production in WA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aslan Meade, Thurston Economic Development Council <p>USDA Meat Processing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patrice Barrentine, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks <p>Local Inland Northwest Cooperative (LINC) Foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian Estes, LINC Foods <p>WA Grown Food – Incentives for Low Income Populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claire Lane, Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition <p>Policy as a Vehicle to Promote WA-Grown Foods: Executive Order 13-06</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Benson, Washington State Department of Health <p>Incentivizing Food and Agriculture Improvements in WA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Iberle, WSDA
April 4	<p>Funding and Financing Food – Philanthropy’s Role in Food System Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosalie Sheehy Cates, Philanthropy Northwest • Brad Hunter, Craft3 <p>Distribution of WA-Grown Foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diane Dempster, Charlie’s Produce

Decision Packages and Farm Bill Analysis

During the May 2nd and October 10th meeting, the Forum considered how it could establish a collective voice through opportunities for engagement presented by Washington agencies preparing Decision Packages and the federal Farm Bill reauthorization. Highlights of these discussions include the following:

Decision Package for Biennial Budget Priorities and Opportunities

- **Amy Ellings and Alyssa Auvinen, Department of Health** – Provided an overview of the funds DOH was planning to request for the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program, which supports nutrition

incentive programs that make it easier for participants in SNAP to afford more fruits and vegetables. DOH also planned to seek funding to increase the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition program, which would allow for an increase in vouchers per client per season.

- **Babette Roberts, Department of Social and Health Services**
- **Laura Lewis, Washington State University** - Described the work of the Food Systems Program at WSU, which provides innovative opportunities for research, academic, and extension programs across diverse parts of Washington's food system. The Food System Program's content areas include organic and sustainable production systems, food security, energy and waste reduction, processing and distribution, policy and regulation, economic benefits, and farmland and resource conservation. WSU Food System's current programs include Cultivating Success™, FARMWALKS, and Food System Innovation Events such as the Cascadia Grains Conference. The Food Systems Program receives support from WSU and is working to build program capacity by seeking additional funds through grants, contracts, and public-private partnerships.
- **Ron Shultz, SCC** – Provided an overview of 2019-21 state budget packages requested by the SCC, and included: conservation technical assistance, farmland preservation, match for the regional conservation partnership program, forest/range healthy/fire assistance, the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP), irrigation efficiencies, and various other programs. More information at: <https://scc.wa.gov/19-21/>
- **Derek Sandison, WSDA** – Presented on a WSDA budget decision package that was aimed at mitigating impacts of trade disruptions with market access assistance for Washington agricultural producers of all sizes. As presented to the Forum, the package included matching grants to help producers affected by the tariffs enter new markets and address non-tariff trade barriers; a labeling and marketing program to increase the visibility of and expand access to Washington agricultural products in local, regional, and international markets; enhanced funding for two existing WSDA programs, the Regional Markets Program that serves small and direct marketing farms and food producers to be economically viable and supports farm to school initiatives, and the Food Assistance program.

Though WSDA did not receive approval to pursue the entire package, Office of Fiscal Management authorized the WSDA to work with interested legislators on funding for WSDA programs that would have received assistance under the proposed package by increasing base funding for WSDA's Regional Markets program by \$315,000 per year; and by increasing base funding for the Food Assistance program by \$120,000 per year. Proposed funding would support the viability of farm and value-added food businesses by providing the necessary market readiness services, regulatory guidance, and food safety education needed to make their products available at farmers markets, school cafeterias, and other local/regional markets across the state.

The Regional Markets Program consists of two statutorily-authorized programs: the Small Farm Direct Marketing Program (RCW.15.64.050) and Farm-to-School (RCW.15.64.060). The Small Farm Direct Marketing Program provides information and resources to small farmers to allow them to navigate a complex regulatory environment and competitively respond to the demand for local products. The Farm to School Program promotes and facilitates the purchase of Washington-grown foods by schools and other institutional buyers. Current permanent funds are insufficient for WSDA to respond to requests received from small farmers, schools and institutions, farmers markets, non-profits, local and state agencies, as well as other organizations in-need of program services across the state.

The Food Assistance Program is responsible for managing and coordinating the shipping, storage, and distribution of agricultural products received from the United States Department of Agriculture through to local organizations and tribal governments who provide this emergency food to low income and vulnerable individuals throughout the state. One additional funds would support additional work created in part by the federal government’s new food purchase and distribution program related to global trade disruption.

Farm Bill and Potential Effects in WA State

- **Ron Shultz, SCC** – In May 2018, Ron presented the Commission’s analysis of the House Farm Bill. Ron shared that the President’s 2019 budget proposal includes \$47 billion in reductions; the proposed reductions come in part from eliminating the conservation stewardship program and the regional conservation partnership program. Ron also noted that the CBO estimates that under the House Farm Bills’ proposed work requirements, the SNAP caseload would be lowered by about 1.2 million people in an average month in 2028. The bill would also preempt state laws by imposing additional standards on agricultural products shipped from other states.
- Forum members expressed the following concerns about the House Farm Bill:
 - Reduction of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
 - Reduction in conservation programs and financial assistance programs
 - The need to bolster the Conservation Technical Assistance program and develop the Regional Conservation Partnership Program
 - Lack of sufficient funding for SNAP
 - Fixing Conservation Reserve Program in a way that will not hurt environmental programs
 - Lack of funding for research

Prioritization Exercise

In June 2018 the Forum engaged in a prioritization exercise to identify a short list of food system topics that warrant deeper consideration. A draft list of potential 201- level topics was developed based on the 101-level landscape assessment meetings held from February 2017 to April 2018. The 201-level topic list was shared with the Forum before the June meeting for additions and revisions. These suggested edits were incorporated into a final list of all topics the Forum covered in its 101-level landscape assessment phase. At the beginning of the June meeting, participants offered additional amendments to the list, such as language clarification or organizational revisions.

More than 20 Forum participants provided their input, including three elected officials. Members of the Forum who had participated in at least one Forum meeting in 2018 and who could not attend the June meeting were contacted after the June meeting and given an opportunity to provide their 201-level topic priorities. The 201-level topic options and votes are available in **Appendix B**.

Prioritization Exercise

The facilitator called on a participant at random and asked that person to share one of their three policy priorities. Other participants who also marked that policy priority were asked to raise their hands and a tally was taken.

The facilitator then turned to the first person and asked that person to share their rationale for choosing that topic. Those who also chose that priority were then invited to add to the rationale.

The facilitator turned to a second person at random and repeated the exercise until everyone had a chance to share and all top three policy priorities were tallied.

Based on the results of the prioritization exercise, the 201-level meeting topic for the 2018-19 process were:

- **Coordination with and among local food policy entities:** July 9
- **Food deserts and inequitable access to food:** August 2
- **Agricultural land protection and availability:** September 6
- **Transportation and related infrastructure:** October 4
- **Alleviating barriers to small and medium scale farmers accessing markets, including institutional purchasing:** November 1
- **Rural economic development including next generation farming:** December 6
- **Impacts of climate change:** January 10

201-Level Meetings

The 201-level meetings are focused on policy opportunities and in many cases examine the intersection of various food system challenges and opportunities.

The Food Policy Forum is engaged in a series of 201-level sessions on the priority topics that are taking place during July to January 2019. The 201-level meeting topics were selected during the collective prioritization exercise completed at the June Forum meeting. Interested Forum participants are engaged to identify themes and speakers for each meeting through a one-hour conference call. Speakers at the 201-level meetings are food system experts, and typically elevate local or regional perspectives. Each 201-level speaker is asked to prepare remarks on the challenges he or she encounters in their areas of the food system; creative, innovative, and/or collaborative approaches being used to address these challenges; and 2-3 recommendations for the Forum to consider in terms of regulatory/policy recommendations, capital investment, or supporting collaborative/innovative projects. The recommendations offered during these meetings will directly inform the Forum's own recommendations due to the Legislature in June 2019.

The following provides a high-level view of the 201 topics July to November 2018. Meeting summaries can be found online on the [SCC Food Policy Forum website](#). See Page 1 for a cross-walk of the 201-level recommendations against the Forum's five goals.

July 9 Forum Meeting – Coordination with and among local food policy entities

Planning Committee: none

The following subject matter experts provided presentations and shared their perspectives for the first 201-level meeting on coordination among and with local food policy entities:

- Ron Shultz, Washington State Conservation Commission
- Richard Conlin, Regional Food Policy Council, Puget Sound Regional Council
- Nancy Warner, Initiative for Rural Innovation and Stewardship
- Nathan Calene, Spokane Food Policy Council

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

1. Food Policy Forum is established as a permanent entity to coordinate local, state, tribal, and federal entities on issues and opportunities in the food system arena.
2. Foster new local food policy entities

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

3. Provide resources and money that goes beyond seed money for local food policy entities
4. Facilitate information sharing (e.g., policy blue prints, workshops, training sessions) that would be valuable to local entities
5. Assess what is working at regional levels in terms of wild and farmed food successes (e.g., Story Exchange)
6. Develop 2030 plus statewide priorities/budgets for strengthening regional-state food systems
7. Build capacity of conservation districts to partner with local non-profits to support the development and management of regional food coalitions
8. Develop Food Policy Forum as a Leadership Network that provides opportunities for diverse people to participate and learn
9. Develop metrics around coordination
10. Implement a process to decide what statewide policies to support
11. Utilize video conferencing to increase engagement during Forum meetings

August 2 Forum Meeting – Food deserts and inequitable access to food

Planning Committee: Aaron Czyzewski, Food Lifeline; Amy Ellings, DOH; Babs Roberts, DSHS; Christina Wong, Northwest Harvest; Laura Raymond, WSDA; Ron Shultz, SCC; Tom Davis, WA Farm Bureau; Yvonne Pitrof, Washington Food Coalition; and Nancy Warner, IRIS

The following subject matter experts provided presentations and shared their perspectives for the following presentations were provided for the second 201-level meeting on food deserts and inequitable access to food:

- Jen Hey, WSU Extension, SNAP-Ed
- Laura Titzer, Washington State Farmers Market
- Jenn Tennet, Northwest Harvest
- Jeff Lau, Owner, Plaza Super Jet (Wenatchee)

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

1. Address barriers to accepting benefits (SNAP, FMNP, WIC) at farmers markets, farm stands, and other points of sale, specifically at non-traditional markets, including reducing administrative burdens and expenses.
2. Increase availability of incentive programs at non-traditional markets (mobile and pop-up, farm stands, ethnic grocers).
3. Provide more incentive programs at farmers markets, farm stands, and other points of sale that are not linked to SNAP participation, particularly for those who fall into the food security gap or do not qualify.
4. Reduce the barriers for producers that sell to institutions or offer incentives to producers to meet those benchmarks.
5. Increase funding to purchase local WA produce for food banks.
6. Statewide funding for a matching incentive program.
7. Increased funding for Senior FMNP.
8. Additional funding for DSHS to supply wireless POS terminals to all farmers markets.
9. Develop a funding stream to help increase capacity at food pantries.
10. Identify funding for local produce purchasing:
 - a. Farm-to-Food Pantry spending
 - b. State investment in FINI

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

- c. Farmers Market Nutrition Program for WIC & Senior vouchers
- d. Child nutrition programs (school meals, summer meals, after school meals)
11. Ensure continued funding for WSDA's Regional Markets program.
12. Strengthen SNAP benefits:
13. Raise the minimum benefit
14. Create standard medical deduction
15. Incentivize SNAP enrollment with seniors and people with disabilities
16. Improve partnerships between grocery stores, brokers, and farmers so that when wholesalers distribute food to local stores, the local stores could provide a dock to move excess locally grown produce to warehouses.
17. Utilize existing retail systems that classify individual products into departments to establish EBT requirements for healthy food purchasing.

September 6 Forum Meeting – Agricultural land protection and availability

Planning Committee: Josh Giuntoli, SCC; Ron Shultz, SCC; Tom Davis, WA Farm Bureau; Laura Raymond, WSDA; Chris Elder, Whatcom County; and Linda Neunzig, Snohomish County.

The following subject matter experts provided presentations and shared their perspectives for the third 201-level meeting on agricultural land preservation and protection:

- John Piotti, American Farmland Trust
- Hannah Clark, American Farmland Trust
- Chris Elder, Whatcom County
- Lucia Wyss, Washington Young Farmers Coalition
- Dan Schilling, Washington State Housing and Finance Commission
- Hillary Aten, PCC Farmland Trust
- Allen Rozema, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

1. Conduct more GIS mapping and assessments to understand progress and current state of land use.
2. More stable funding for Purchase of Developmental Rights (PDR) programs.
 - a. State funding for ag easements including ag value (OPAV) clauses
3. Include non-farming landowners with long-term ag tenants
4. Tax credits and capital gains exclusions at state level
5. Support policies that address instability of heir property (multiple owners)
6. Access to state-owned farmland by beginning farmers
7. Make current use tax better serve young farmers (e.g., income rather than acres, non-farming landlords with tenants, etc.)
8. Support robust money in easement programs (state & local)
9. Support flexible funding programs that allow BPS (2018 Senate Farm Bill)
10. Support creative models for streamlined and low-cost financing in support of land protection and new and beginning farmers
11. Recodify RCW 46.21c.011 .02
 - a. “. . .The legislature declared that it is the policy of the state to identify and take into account the adverse effects of these actions on the preservation and conservation of agricultural lands; to consider alternative

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

actions, as appropriate, that could lessen such adverse effects; and to assure that such actions appropriately mitigate for unavoidable impacts to agricultural resources.”

12. Pursue Gubernatorial Executive Order to require the protection of farmland
 - a. Re-introduce draft EO to Governor’s Office and Agency Directors and pursue adoption circa 2019-2020

October 4 Forum Meeting – Transportation and related infrastructure

Planning Committee: Laura Raymond, WSDA; Mary Embleton, King County Conservation; Aaron Czyzewski, Food Lifeline; Chris Voigt, Potato Commission; David Bauermeister, Northwest Agriculture Business Center; David Bobanick, Rotary First Harvest; and Diane Dempster, Charlie’s Produce.

The following subject matter experts provided presentations and shared their perspectives for the fourth 201-level meeting on transportation and related infrastructure:

- Diane Dempster, Charlie’s Produce
- David Broering, President, N.A. Non-Asset, NFI Industries
- Chris Voigt, Potato Commission
- Harley Soltes, Bow Hill Blueberries / Puget Sound Food Hub

Proposed RECOMMENDATIONS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

1. Provide grants for increased market access and value-added model.
2. Additional facilities for cold storage/freezing distributed throughout state for farms to access for value-added production.
3. Change RCW 46.44.042 to allow for new generation wide based tires
4. Complete I-90 East of Snoqualmie Summit
5. Correct the I-90/Highway 18 interchange
6. Complete Highway 167 gateway project into the Port of Tacoma
7. Rural bridge replacement for water capacity building projects
8. Expanding high school vocational education to include CDL coursework
9. Improving seasonal road weight restrictions
10. Advocate to increase Federal max weight to 97K pounds with 3rd axle

November 1 Forum Meeting – Alleviating barriers to small and medium scale farmers accessing markets, including institutional purchasing

Planning Committee: Ron Shultz, SCC; Laura Raymond, WSDA; Josh Giuntoli, SCC; Chris Iberle, WSDA; Lucia Wyss, WA Young Farmers Coalition; Loretta Seppanen, South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust; Amy Ellings, DOH; and Chris Benson, DOH.

The following subject matter experts provided presentations and shared their perspectives for the fifth 201-level meeting on alleviating barriers to small and medium scale farmers accessing markets, including institutional purchasing:

- Chris Iberle, WSDA

- Vickie Ayers, Bethel School District
- Gina Sadowski, Seattle Children’s Hospital
- Brian Estes, LINC Foods

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

1. Create a system for identifying local/Washington products, including minimally processed foods.
2. Provide analysis that identifies Washington farms, including details on their food production and location so that schools can proactively reach out to local farms.
3. Provide funding sources, grants, and legislative bills to increase capacity for school districts to work on farm to school.
4. Offer consultants who could work with school districts one-on-one to provide guidance on how implement farm to school.
5. Support initiatives that could enable local farms to provide services similar to a broadline distributors and align inventory in a way that makes purchasing easier.
6. Support business models that invest in Washington agriculture and align regional markets with public partners and resources.

December 6 Forum Meeting – Rural economic development including next generation farming

Planning Committee: Laura Raymond, WSDA; Chris Voigt, Potato Commission; Christina Wong, Northwest Harvest; Evan Sheffels, WSDA; Yvonne Pitrof, Washington Food Coalition; Ron Shultz, SCC; Chris Elder, Whatcom County; and Steve Bramwell, WSU Thurston County Extension.

The following subject matter experts provided presentations and shared their perspectives for the sixth 201-level meeting on rural economic development including next generation farming:

- Scott Peterson, Port of Skagit
- Carlotta Donisi, USDA Rural Development

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

1. Invest in research
2. Engage in public-private partnerships
3. Focus on supporting infrastructure. Specifically processing facilities.

January 10 Forum Meeting – Impacts of Climate Change

Planning Committee: Aaron Czyzewski, Food Lifeline; Chad Kruger, WSU; Chris Elder, Whatcom County; Chris Voigt, Potato Commission; Evan Sheffels, WSDA; Laura Lewis, WSU; Laura Raymond, WSDA

The following subject matter experts provided presentations and shared their perspectives for the seventh 201-level meeting on impacts of climate change.

- Nick Bond, University of Washington
- Chad Kruger, Washington State University

Proposed Recommendations Under Development

1. Addressing agricultural water vulnerabilities across the state
2. Importance of the long-term R&D / commercialization partnership to improve adaptability and resiliency. Particularly for variety development/testing, crop protection, and soil health
3. Improve our understanding of inter-state, inter-region, and inter-national competitiveness

301-level Conversations in 2019

In January 2019, the Food Policy Forum will determine the suite of 201-level topics that warrant deeper analysis. These topics will then be organized into a series of 301-level workshops to determine and refine the policy recommendations. Conference calls and small workgroups may be scheduled in between Food Policy Forum meetings in the first quarter of 2019. It is anticipated that the recommendations will be characterized by their potential to enact or shift policy; establish or augment funding; or encourage engagement in innovative and collaborative strategies, in both public and private sectors. A set of recommendations will be provided to the Legislature in June 2019.

Approach to Decision-Making: Food Policy Forum Agreements

1. Membership is to be the affiliation with the invited individual as representative of that affiliation. If that individual is not able to participate in an ongoing manner or in a particular meeting, then the expectation is they or their affiliation will designate an alternate. Consistent membership is critical for the Forum to be able to have productive conversations. Members are expected to brief alternates adequately so that alternates can represent them at meetings.
2. Consensus is desirable but not required. The deliverable due to the Legislature in June 2019 will lay out the recommendations for which there is full consensus and include recommendations for which there is less than full consensus with details about how member opinion differs. Working definition of consensus is “I can live with it”. A recommendation has value even if there is not full consensus. The report will be unique in its ability to describe the nuance of how perspectives differ on important food systems policy topics.
3. Members may choose to ‘stand aside’ if they feel they do not understand the opportunity sufficiently to weigh in. Members are asked not to over use this option because it could minimize the value of the Forum to bridge spheres of expertise and make collective recommendations.
4. There is an assumption that within a sector there may be natural agreement on certain recommendations, but it is not necessary for there to be consensus within a ‘caucus’. Formal caucuses are not part of the Forum’s process.
5. The Forum will focus on “common ground and set more contentious issues aside for the future. Topics that are found to be contentious will be described in the final report and can be taken up in the future.
6. The Forum should have a shared perspective on what the problem is even if proposed solutions are different. A shared understanding of the problem is the foundation for discussion of solutions.
7. Members must be present (in person or online via webinar) in order to vote on recommendations or be in communication with the Forum leads ([Ron Shultz](#) and [Laura Raymond](#)) as soon as possible to plan for their absence, including inviting alternates.
8. The Forum will still welcome open participation from any stakeholder during meetings and agenda planning; however, voting will be limited to Forum members.

FORUM MEETING PARTICIPATION

The budget proviso provided the following guidance on the composition of the Forum:

- (a) *In making appointments, the director of the commission must attempt to ensure a diversity of knowledge, experience, and perspectives by building on the representation established by the food system roundtable initiated by Executive Order 10-02.*
- (b) *In addition to members appointed by the director of the state conservation commission, four legislators may serve on the food policy forum in an ex officio capacity. Legislative participants must be appointed as follows:*
 - (i) *The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives; and*
 - (ii) *The president of the senate shall appoint one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.*

The convening agencies who are tasked with appointing members, reviewed and updated the membership roster for the 2018-19 Forum. The membership list maintains and reaffirms membership of those individuals and organizations previously invited to participate as members; extends new membership invitations to those State agencies who have been regular participants in Forum meetings; and extends new membership invitations to improve representation from a diversity of agricultural perspectives, including smaller scale, diversified, value-added producers and direct marketing farms. Membership includes 11 newly appointed members. See **Appendix A** for the 2018-19 Food Policy Forum Membership List.

In addition to official Forum members, a variety of interested organizations regularly participate in the monthly Forum meeting, including representatives from farmland preservation and access, medium- and large-scale agriculture, anti-hunger and nutrition, distribution, economic development, conservation, and local food policy councils. Below is a table that shows regularly attending participants January to December 2018.

Regular Food Policy Forum Participants, Jan-Dec 2018

Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Farmland Trust • Conservation District representatives • Farm Bureau • Potato Commission • Tree Fruit Association • Washington State Farmers Market Association
Anti-hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antihunger and Nutrition Coalition • Food Lifeline • Northwest Harvest • Washington Food Coalition
Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlie’s Produce
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascadia Foodshed Financing project • Initiative for Rural Innovation and Stewardship

Local Food Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Puget Sound Regional Council• Spokane Food Council
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Agriculture• Department of Health• Department of Social and Health Services• Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction• Snohomish County• State Conservation Commission• Washington Senate and House representatives• Washington State University• Whatcom County

APPENDIX A: Food Policy Forum 2018-2019 Membership

Washington Food Policy Forum Updated Membership Roster February 2019

The following updated roster of Policy Forum includes all previously appointed members and those who were newly appointed.

This updated roster reflects the intent of the convening agency Directors:

- Maintain and reaffirm membership of those individuals and organizations previously appointed
- Extend new membership invitations to those State agencies who have been regular participants in the Forum
- Extend new membership invitations to expand representation from a diversity of agricultural producers, including smaller scale, diversified, value-added producers and direct marketing farms.

All new members and continuing were sent a letter inviting and/or re-affirming their membership participation.

Member	Affiliation	Sector
Aaron Czyzewski	Food Lifeline	Anti-hunger
Amy Ellings	Department of Health	Government / Anti-Hunger
Amy Moreno Sills	Four Elements Farm	Agriculture
Aslan Meade	Thurston Economic Development Council	Economic Development
Babette Roberts	Department of Social and Health Services	Government
Brian Estes	LINC Foods	Agriculture / Distribution
Chad Kruger	Washington State University	Agriculture
Chris Elder	Whatcom County Planning	Government
Chris Voigt	Potato Commission	Agriculture
Christina Wong	Northwest Harvest	Food Interest/Anti-hunger
Claire Lane	Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition	Food Interest/Anti-hunger
Colleen Donovan	WA Farmers Market Association	Agriculture / Economic Development /Food Interest
Dan Wood	WA State Dairy Federation	Agriculture/Food Interest
Derek Sandison*	WA Department of Agriculture	Government
Diana Carlen	WA Association of Wheat Growers	Agriculture/Food Interest
Diane Dempster	Charlie's Produce	Distribution
Hannah Clark	American Farmland Trust	Agriculture
Heather Hansen	WA Friends of Farms and Forests	Agriculture
Jon DeVaney	WA Tree Fruit Association	Agriculture/Food Interest

Member	Affiliation	Sector
Josh Giuntoli*	Office of Farmland Preservation	Government
Keith Kisler	Finn River Farm	Agriculture
Kirsten Ringen	NW Food Processors Association	Food Interest
Laura Raymond*	WA Department of Agriculture	Government
Leanne Eko	OSPI	Government / School Food
Linda Neunzig	Snohomish County	Economic Development / Agriculture
Lisa Smith	Enterprise for Equity	Food Interest
Lucia Wyss or delegate	WA Young Farmers Coalition	Agriculture
Mary Embleton	King Conservation District	Economic Development / Agriculture
Melissa Spear	Tilth Alliance	Food Interest / Agriculture
Mia Gregerson	Representative	Government
Nancy Warner	Initiative for Rural Innovation and Stewardship	Economic Development
Patricia Hickey	WA Association of Conservation Districts	Economic Development
Richard Conlin	Puget Sound Regional Council	Economic Development / Food Interest / Government
Ron Shultz*	State Conservation Commission	Government
Shawn Morrill or delegate	Clark County Food System	Food Interest
Tim Crosby	Cascadia Foodshed Financing Project	Food Interest
Tom Davis	WA State Farm Bureau	Agriculture
Yvonne Pitrof	WA Food Coalition	Food Interest/Anti-hunger

*Food Policy Forum leadership

APPENDIX B: Prioritization Exercise

201-Level Topics	Votes
Coordination with local food policy forums and groups and incentives/funding assistance to local governments to adopt and implement food policies that will complement and enhance this work at the state level	11
Agricultural land protection and availability	9
Transportation and related infrastructure (trucks, barges, various freight, etc.)	9
Alleviate barriers to small and medium scale farmers accessing markets, including institutional purchasing of WA grown food (e.g., schools, hospitals, child care, food banks, Department of Corrections, etc.)	9
Food deserts and inequitable access to food	8
Rural Economic Development	7
Impacts of climate change (water availability, etc.)	7
Agricultural research (soil benefits/erosion, pest disease, increase in nutrition content)	6
Examine regulations that make farming less profitable	5
Next gen farming & rural economic development	5
Strengthen safety net programs to ensure they are reaching food insecure Washingtonians	4
Reengage youth in food and farm careers	3
Land access opportunities for next generation	3
Food bank network capacity	2
Nutrition education	1
Relieving impediments to small and medium scale farmers getting product to market	1
Food safety training, education, and technical assistance	
Developing/expanding farm incubators	
Expanded technical assistance for small and med scale producers	
Deliver incentive programs for landowners to implement practices and develop strategies to assist conservation districts to be more climate resilient	
Branding and marketing of WA grown foods to WA consumers	
Farm & food bank partnerships	
Senior hunger	
Hunger among unsheltered individuals	
Hunger on college campuses	
Food waste recovery	

201-Level Topics	Votes
Meat processing (customer slaughter and USDA)	
Value-added processing	
Funding and financing food system change	
Food disaster response	
Using agritourism to promote consumption and production of WA grown food	
Evaluate access to & scope of existing food system data	
Impacts of wage policy on food prices	

