

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



SKAGIT COUNTY EXTENSION



2006

Skagit County

Ag Stats

Greetings!

Washington State University Skagit County Extension has been keeping crop records since 1921. Information is compiled from processing companies, farm organizations, growers, field representatives, media sources, and University sources.

Agricultural statistics with related written details are important for several reasons:

- ♦ Figures show the past production history of farming in a community;
- ♦ Statistics show the ups and downs of agriculture in relationship to weather, economics, urban encroachment, disasters, or a shift in production to other areas;
- ♦ Figures give a basis on which to make important decisions for land-use planning, zoning, and economic development planning related to agriculture.

Your comments and suggestions are welcomed and encouraged. Feel free to give us a call if we can help you better understand the enclosed information.

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WSU Skagit County Extension  
helps people develop leadership skills  
and use research-based knowledge  
to improve their economic status and quality of life.

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*HELPING YOU PUT KNOWLEDGE TO WORK*

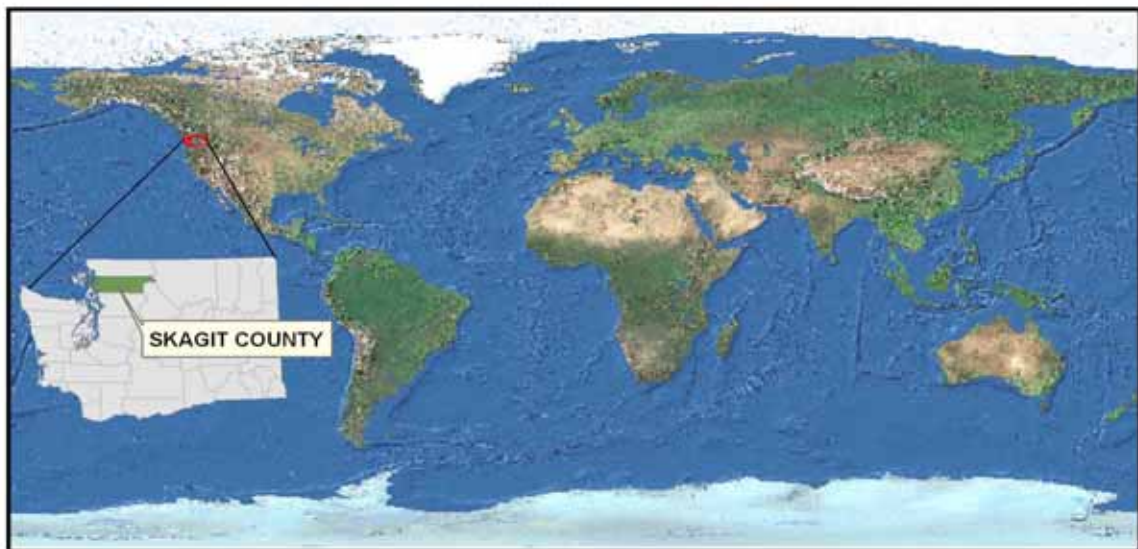
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## SKAGIT COUNTY

### GEOGRAPHY

Skagit County is 60 miles north of Seattle. It is 24 miles wide (north and south) and 95 miles long (east and west). Several islands in the Puget Sound area are included in the county. Snowcapped Mount Baker (in Whatcom County), elevation 10,000 feet, dominates the northeastern edge of the county and is the start of the North Cascades wilderness area and National park. The Skagit River, which is famous for steelhead and salmon fishing and serves as important bald eagle feeding grounds, begins in the North Cascade mountain area. The upper Skagit has three hydro-electric dams which provide power for the northwest. Below the dams, the Skagit is fed by the Sauk, Cascade, Suiattle and Baker rivers. The Skagit River flows through the "upper valley" and continues through 100,000 acres of fertile farm land before emptying into Puget Sound.



### POPULATION

1930	1950	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2006
35,142	43,273	52,381	64,138	79,555	102,300	110,900	113,100

Source: WA State Office of Financial Management

## CLIMATE

Cool, marine temperatures and an abundance of moisture is evidenced by the lush growth of forest, pastures and agricultural crops in Skagit County.

*Rainfall.* The “rule of thumb” is to add one inch of moisture for each mile traveled east from Puget Sound. Anacortes averages 25 inches per year; Marblemount, 95 inches per year. The driest year since 1948 was in 1987, when precipitation total was 20.71 inches. The wettest year was 1990, with 47.20 inches.

Approximately 20% of the rainfall in Mount Vernon occurs June through September. The sun shines 65% of the time in summer, and 25% of the time in winter.

SKAGIT COUNTY RAINFALL AND SNOWFALL (inches)  
as recorded at  
WSU Mount Vernon Research & Extension Center  
Mount Vernon, Washington

<i>Month</i>	<i>Rainfall</i>				<i>40 Year Norm*</i>	<i>25-Year Average</i>
	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>		
January	4.25	4.02	2.98	6.54	4.21	2.80
February	2.04	1.30	1.08	3.2	2.99	0.87
March	2.75	3.47	2.78	1.51	2.75	0.66
April	3.55	.28	4.08	3.16	2.52	0.02
May	.97	3.68	1.07	1.48	2.19	0.00
June	.07	1.8	1.90	1.12	1.81	0.00
July	.00	.51	.73	.82	1.25	0.00
August	.57	6.35	2.19	.23	1.46	0.00
September	1.28	2.70	1.95	1.78	2.01	0.00
October	5.38	n/a	3.99	1.98	2.96	0.00
November	5.98	6.79	4.19	14.61	4.28	0.20
December	3.07	4.33	2.57	3.04	4.22	2.00
Total	30.27	35.42	30.34	39.47	32.65	6.55

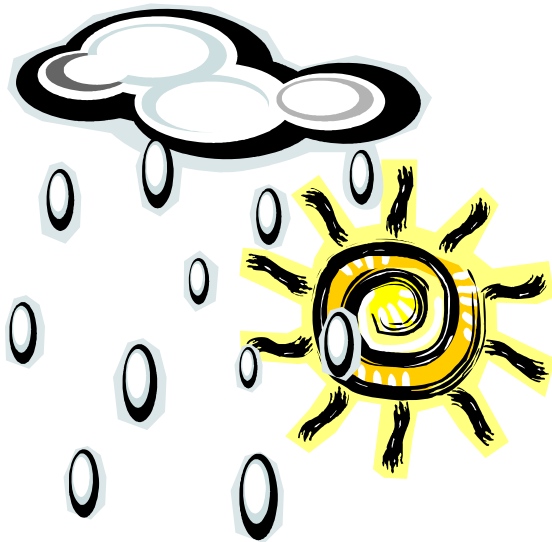
\* Source: National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

## Temperature:

The highest temperature ever on record at the WSU Northwest Research and Extension Center at Mount Vernon, was 98° F. on August 9, 1960. The average summer temperature is 73° F. The highest recorded winter temperature for December, January and February was 65° F. The lowest temperature on record was -4° F. on January 26, 1957. The Research Unit has been keeping records since 1948. (See chart on next page).

## 2006 WEATHER PICTURE

2006 was a year of records. It began with heavy amounts of rainfall for the Skagit Valley and tapered off in March with some wonderful weather. Area producers were in the fields earlier than ever with the first field of potatoes planted in the second week of March. Lack of moisture in early June stressed new plantings and more supplemental irrigation was applied than ever in history. This may be why overall yields were high for the Skagit Valley for the 2006 harvest season although Mother Nature did make up for herself with a record November rainfall which sent area producers out to fight flooding in the Skagit Valley. The town of Hamilton was once again flooded however areas protected by levies dodged a bullet. Precipitation was 6.82 inches above the 40-year norm for the year. This high concentration of rain in November made it difficult for area producers to harvest cool season crops and because of this some were left in the field to spoil.



**Skagit County Temperatures, 2006, as recorded at  
WSU/Mount Vernon Research and Extension Unit**

Month	High	Low	Monthly Average	40 Year Normal Mean* Temp.	Average Soil Temp. (degree F) at 2" depth	Solar Radiation (Langley)
January	56.6	31.1	43.5	39.4	41.2	58.5
February	56	17.8	39.1	42.4	35.5	170
March	66.7	28.4	44.0	44.9	47.1	205.4
April	66.1	31.8	46.8	48.4	47.5	367.4
May	75.3	34.6	52.3	53.7	53.7	333.2
June	80.2	43.4	61.1	58.4	68.7	359.3
July	85.5	44.5	64.7	61.5	68.5	351.4
August	79.1	42.9	59.2	62.2	66.1	311.1
September	81.5	38.1	56.0	57.6	60.9	252.5
October	66.3	25.5	47.2	50.7	52.4	169.4
November	61.2	7.5	42.8	44.3	46.8	88.9
December	58.1	22.6	42.1	39.9	40.6	60.7

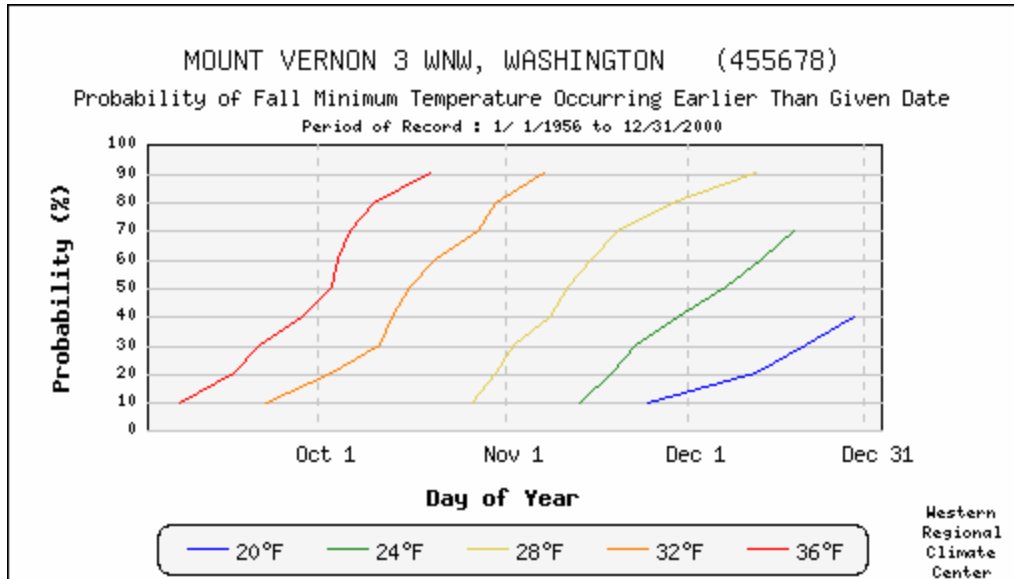
\*Source: <http://www.weather.wsu.edu/>



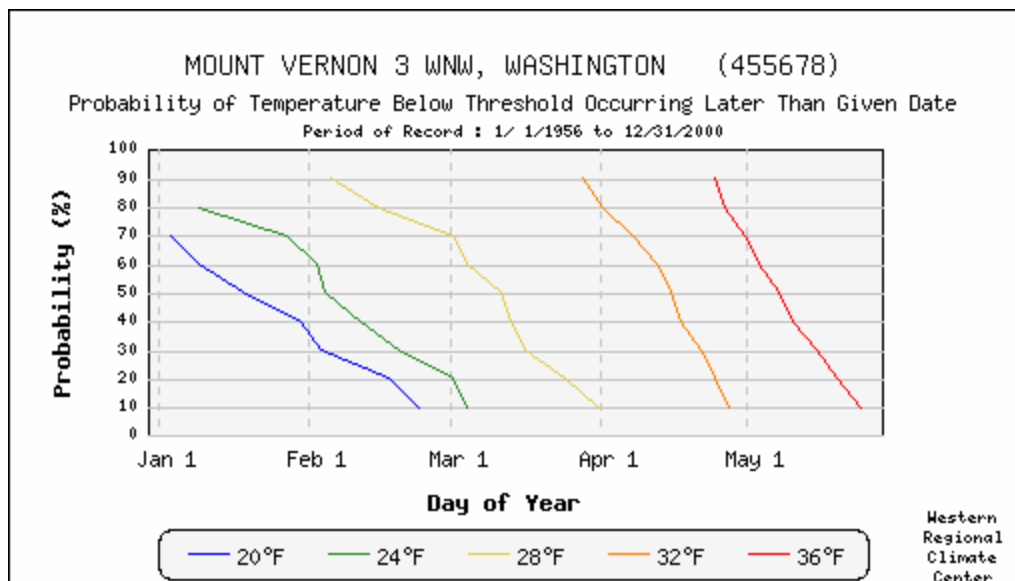
### Frost Free Days:

The lower Skagit Valley area has approximately 230 growing days and the upper valley has approximately 200 growing days. The last spring frost in the lower valley is estimated to occur about April 15, and the first fall frost occurs about October 15.

### Fall Freeze Probabilities



### Spring Freeze Probabilities



## IRRIGATION

In June, July, and August, irrigation is used on approximately 10,000 acres of cropland. The main crops irrigated are grass pasture, raspberries, blueberries, potatoes, cucumbers and tree fruits.

## SOILS

The Skagit Valley was formed by water-deposited (alluvial) soils. Most cropland and pasture land in the county is located in the floodplain-delta area. This area covers the valley floor and extends east along the Skagit River and its tributaries. There are five primary soil types in the floodplain-delta area. Three types are located in the floodplain: Skagit (26%), which consists of silt loam, silty clay loam, and a small amount of very fine sandy loam; Sumas (15%); and Field (14%). The other two types are found along the Skagit river: Lorus (17%) and Pilchuck (14%). Floodplain soils are highly productive under dry land farming. Elevation in this area ranges from sea level to 500 feet. The high amount of rainfall makes the soils acid; therefore, lime is required to grow most crops.



Soil wetness is the major limitation for crops in the floodplain area. The Skagit and Samish Rivers have had a long history of flooding. The Skagit River, from just west of Sedro Woolley to the Puget Sound, is protected from flooding by dikes and levees. The floodplain areas along the lower reaches of the Samish River, below Thomas Creek, are flooded almost every year.

Erosion is usually not a major problem in the valley, although considerable stream cutting has occurred in some sections along the Skagit River. Flooding has contributed to loss of topsoil in some areas.

## AGRICULTURE: SKAGIT FACTS

Skagit County is a major producer of cabbage, table beet, and spinach seed for the world. There are seven vegetable seed companies in the county, most of which market products worldwide. About half the world's beet and Brussels sprout seed are grown in the Valley. 50% of the U.S. supply of Chinese cabbage, Chinese kale, Chinese mustard, and Brussels sprout seed are grown in Skagit County.

There are two processing companies in the area which secure raw products from Skagit County growers. The major crops grown for freezing are peas (Twin City Foods), raspberries, strawberries, and blueberries (Sakuma Brothers). These crops are noted for their superior quality.

There are two major ag-supply dealers in the Valley: Skagit Farmers Supply and Wilbur-Ellis, provide supplies and services to farmers.

More tulip, daffodil, and iris bulbs are produced in Skagit County than in any county in the United States.

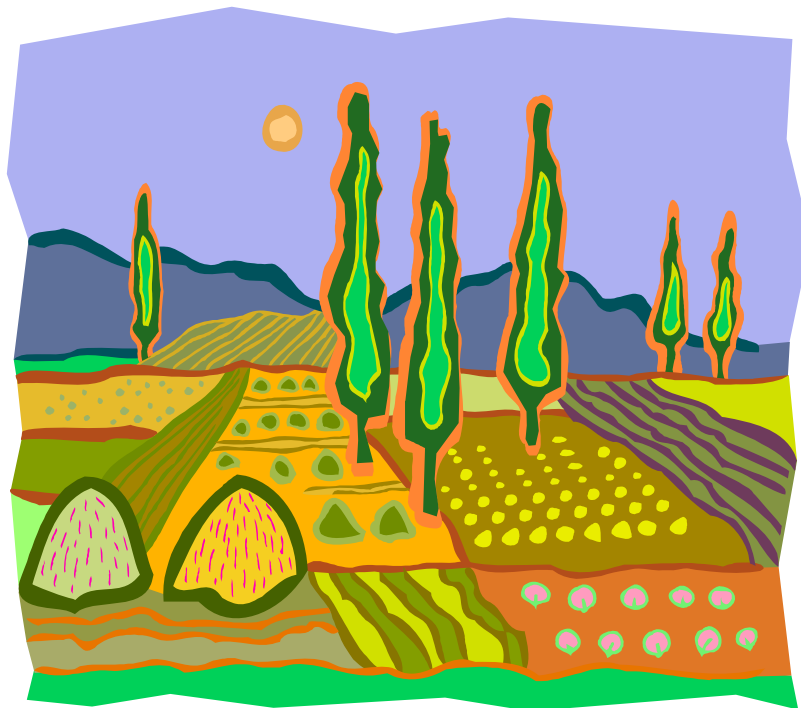
Skagit County ranks fourth in dairy production in Washington State.

Skagit grape growers have planted 100 acres over the past 5 years. This industry is expected to increase exponentially in the future.

About 4,000 Trumpeter and Tundra swans, 70,000 Snow geese, and thousands more of mallard and other dabbling ducks utilize Skagit farmland for food and habitat. Skagit County is host to one of the highest concentrations of raptors, which also utilize farmland, in North America.

In 1999, the first *Festival of Family Farms* was organized by WSU Skagit County Cooperative Extension, with cooperation from Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland and the Skagit Valley Herald. Farm visitors numbered 2,500 in 1999; 3,700 in 2000; 4,000 in 2001, 5,000 in 2002, 5,800 in 2003 and 15,000 in 2006. Beginning in 2007 the festival will be referred to as the **Skagit Valley Farm Tour: A Festival of Family Farms**, more correctly identify what the event is.

Organic acreage in Skagit County is on the increase as consumers demand organic products Skagit Valley producers have ramped up to meet that need. In 2006 there were 3162.5 acres in certified organic production under 33 certified organic farms in Skagit County. There is also 281.5 acres in transition into the certified organic program for 2006 in Skagit County. Over all the market value of organic production is over 5 million dollars which is the fifth highest in Washington State and the highest in Western Washington.



## AGRICULTURAL LABOR

Minimum wage in the state of Washington is the highest in the country, the result of a 1998 citizens' initiative passed by voters that links the minimum wage to the Federal Consumer Price Index.

### Washington State Minimum Wage

Effective Date	Dollars per Hour
June 30, 1961	1.15
January 1, 1962	1.25
January 1, 1968	1.60
January 1, 1974	1.80
September 1, 1975	2.00
January 1, 1976	2.30
January 1, 1989	3.85
January 1, 1990	4.25
January 1, 1994	4.90
September 1, 1997 (Federal minimum wage changed)	5.15
January 1, 1999	5.70
January 1, 2000	6.50
January 1, 2001	6.72
January 1, 2002	6.90
January 1, 2003	7.01
January 1, 2006	7.63

## CROPS

The processing industry revolves around green peas. The crop is fully mechanized from planting through processing. Green pea acreage, which has averaged around 12,000 acres in past years, is now down to about 4585 acres as a result of the closure of National Frozen Foods in 2000. As a result, growers have been experimenting with new crops such as buckwheat, artichokes, cherries, and wine grapes. Others were attempting to put the land to good use by planting barley, corn, pasture grass, and hay. A large number of acres was planted to cover crops, typically cereal rye, for overwintering.

Potatoes have become a very important crop with acreage expanding significantly over the past fifteen years. Other crops, such as cole crops, vegetable seed crops, cucumbers, flower bulbs, and small fruits contribute less in gross dollars but are very important. The net return to the grower on these crops is relatively high, and they provide diversification and many jobs.

### APPLES



Apple acreage increased rapidly between 1995 and 1998 and is now on the decline, with low prices causing a slump in the industry. The Washington State apple crop was one of the smallest in recent years, in part due to unusually high summer temperatures in eastern Washington. Skagit farmers enjoyed the best prices they've seen since 1997. The Skagit crop showed good yields and excellent quality.

Our coastal climate allows us to grow varieties of high quality that are different from those grown in the large apple-producing regions of central Washington. Varieties grown here such as Jonagold, Gravenstein, Spartan, and Akane are in high demand.

In 1998 Washington State Department of Agriculture added Skagit to the list of counties quarantined against apple maggot. WSU Cooperative Extension initiated the formation of the Skagit County Horticultural Pest and Disease Board to develop programs to prevent the pest from infesting commercial orchards. To date, no apple maggots have been found in commercial orchards, though surveys show populations are expanding throughout the county.

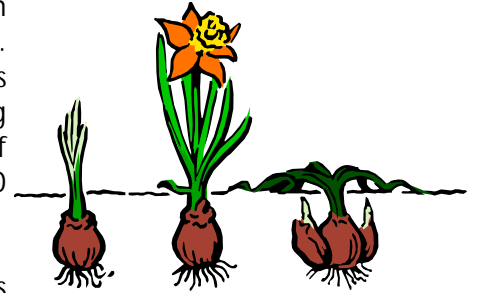
### BLUEBERRIES

Harvested by hand and machine, about half the crop is sold for fresh market, and half is processed. Yields and quality in this area are exceptionally high compared to the Midwest. Our cooler summer temperatures allow the berries to ripen more slowly, which results in more sugar. Skagit county grows about 30% of the state's total production. About 65% of the acreage planted in the county has not yet come into full bearing. Blueberry acreage and consumer demand have been growing and continue to grow. In January, 2002, USDA reported a 50% growth in blueberry production over the previous year in the U.S. and an 18% growth over the previous five-years average production. The Pacific Northwest is currently the fastest growing segment of the industry in the U.S. In 2006, good prices, strong demand, low inventories, and sweet berries added up to a good year for growers. Hot days and warm nights ripened berries to perfection.



## BULB CROPS

Approximately 1,300 acres of tulips, daffodils, and iris are grown here. They are sold for both cut flowers and bulbs and shipped throughout the U.S. and Canada. About 40 million bulbs are produced in the county. About 50 million cut flowers are grown in greenhouses and fields, accounting for about 50% of overall sales. About 450 acres of tulips are grown in the Valley, which represents 75% of U.S. commercial production. Skagit County is becoming known for its Tulip Festival, which occurs the first three weeks of April. The Tulip Festival began in 1984 and now brings 350,000 visitors and \$65 million in revenue to the county.



The bulb industry averages about \$12 million in annual gross income, \$3 million of which is in tulip bulb and flower sales. Since 1968, flower prices have increased five-fold, while bulbs have only doubled. About 400 workers are used to pick the crop. There are now three bulb-growing farms in the region.



## CAULIFLOWER AND BROCCOLI

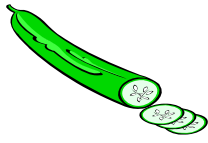
All cauliflower and broccoli are grown for fresh market. Head quality is exceptionally high in this region. Approximately 60% to 80% of the broccoli and cauliflower grown in Skagit is consumed in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. Skagit farmers grew about 1,000 acres of cauliflower and broccoli this year. Farmers in the Skagit Valley reduced acreages for Cauliflower and Broccoli for the 2006 season due to low commodity prices in the 2005 growing season.

## Chickens and Eggs

Washington is ranked 16th in the nation for egg production. Three companies produce the majority of the eggs in Skagit county: Dynes, Day Creek Organic Farms, and Dai-Zen. These three farms account for about 10 million eggs being produced in Skagit County every year.

The sole Washington-owned chicken processor in the state, Draper Valley Farms, is located in Mount Vernon.





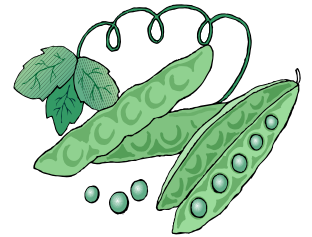
## CUCUMBERS

Most of the pickling cucumbers grown in the state are produced in Skagit County. Cool summer temperatures are a plus for growing cucumbers here, because slower crop development allows pickers to harvest more of the highly desirable smaller sizes. About 40% are hand picked, but as labor costs continue to increase, growers are increasingly shifting to machine harvest. The cucumbers are transported south for sorting and packing. The majority of Skagit cucumbers are processed under the Nalley's and Steinfeld's labels, both companies now being owned by Dean Foods. Locally-owned Cascade Ag Services pickling plant has capacity for 440 vats last year, enough to hold 18 millions pounds of cucumbers.

Some fresh cucumbers are also produced. About half the growers in the Valley irrigate the crop in dry years. Production was about 25,000 tons in 2006.

## PEAS

All peas in the county go to one processor for freezing. Skagit County green peas are among the finest in the world for quality and yields. The effects of reducing pea acreage by more than half due to the departure of National Frozen Foods is that the less desirable ground now is not being planted in peas. 2006 yields were above average at about 2.5 tons per acre. Several producers had yields over 4 tons to the acre a feat we have not seen for many years.



## POTATOES



Potato acreage consists primarily of fresh market reds, whites, yellows, some russets and some chipping potatoes. Skagit spuds are in demand for their high quality. Late blight disease is a constant threat to the industry, and growers use integrated pest management practices to minimize their losses from this fungal pathogen. Because of the need for a three-year rotation, there is limited ground available for the 13,000 acres of spuds currently grown here. Overall yield were higher than normal for 2006 due to increased irrigation capacity, quality was reportedly high in irrigated fields.

## RASPBERRIES

About 40% of the acreage in Skagit County is harvested by hand, and the rest is machine harvested. The primary varieties are Willamette and Meeker. A majority of the crop is processed into juice, preserves, yogurt, bakery ingredients, and frozen products. Skagit County produces about 10% of the state's crop. Washington produces about 75% of the total US production of frozen red raspberries, and 83% of that is from Whatcom and Skagit counties. 95% of Washington state's raspberries go into processing for juices, preserves, yogurt, frozen berries and bakery ingredients.



Due to excess production of raspberries around the world the price for Skagit Valley raspberries decreased in 2006. Because of the low commodity price very few new plantings are being planted in Skagit County.

## SEED CROPS

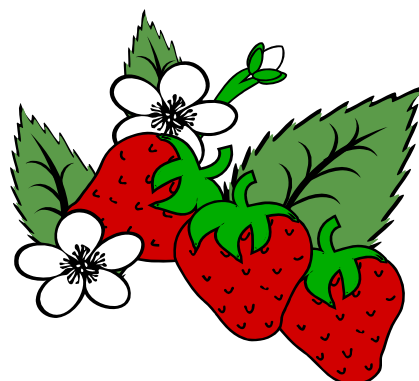


Vegetable seeds from the Skagit Valley are marketed all over the world. The need for isolation distances to prevent contamination from cross-pollination keeps the vegetable seed acreage below 5,000 acres in the Valley. Skagit-based seed companies contract some of their acreage with Snohomish, Island, Whatcom, and Clallam county growers.

There are eight vegetable seed companies in Skagit county: Ag alternatives, Alf Christianson, D&D, Schafer, Seminis, Skagit Seed Services, Sorensen, and Syngenta. Local grass seed contractors are D&D Farms and Sorensen Seed Company. In July of 2006 the International Spinach Conference was held in La Conner Washington for the first time. Industry representatives from around the world came to the Skagit Valley to learn where their seed is grown and were pleased with what they saw. Exchange rates are playing a major role in acreage increase of seed crops in Skagit County. In 2006 spring-planted seed crops like spinach performed better if the crop was supplemental irrigated.

## STRAWBERRIES

The main varieties are Shuksan, Totem, Puget Reliance, Hood, Puget Summer, Redcrest and Rainier. Most strawberries are sold to processors. Skagit county produces about 20% of the state's strawberries. Acreage is on the decline due, in part, to national and global competition. At least one grower is moving to capture more of the fresh market by producing ever-bearing strawberries and using innovative technologies to increase the length of the season.



## WINE GRAPES

The marine climate in the Skagit Valley similar in many ways to the fine wine producing areas of France and Germany. Research conducted from 1976 to 1988 at WSU NWREC produced a number of white wine grape varieties, which have already proven successful in area vineyards. Current research involves projects in evaluating new wine grape varieties, and rootstock trials evaluating potential for earlier maturity in 'Pinot Noir' grapes.



Currently there are 7 wineries producing 25,000 cases of wine on approximately one hundred acres valued at over \$1 million. Due to the success of the existing wineries in Skagit County this industry is expected to increase 10-20% a year for the next 5 years.



## DAIRY

Milk prices for 2006 were 22 cents lower than 1980 prices. Only 37 dairies remained at the end of 2006. Milk production for 2006 (318,664,007 #) decreased over 24 million pounds from 2005 levels (343,039,397 #), and the value of the total milk yielded \$10.2 million less for Skagit County dairy families and their communities than in 2005. \*Dairy Nutrient Management regulations, urban encroachment, and rising expenses continue to exert a variety of negative impacts on agricultural lands, producer families and their way of life. Dairy families have reduced labor and as many non-essential costs as possible, and are now looking for alternative sources of income. Land values continue to escalate putting pressure to subdivide farms and sell to the highest bidder, whether farming or not.

### Dairy Production and Value\*

Year	Herds	Total Milk	\$/cwt	Value (Millions\$)
2006	37	318,664,007	12.07	38.5
2005	44	343,039,397	14.20	48.7
2004	46	353,067,570	14.82	52.3
2003	50	369,868,449	11.32	41.9
2002	52	366,204,903	11.57	42.3
2001	53	364,835,870	14.26	52.0
2000	58	375,175,380	11.70	43.9
1999	61	399,050,887	13.41	53.1
1998	66	395,610,377	14.76	57.7
1997	76	395,953,583	12.66	50.1

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\*Source: Pacific Northwest Federal Milk Marketing Order

## DAIRY PRODUCER DATA, 2006\*

Number of Producers Shipping Milk  
in Skagit County: 37

Milks (lbs.) produced:  
318,664,007

### Value of Milk Sold

2006	\$38,500,000	1992	\$45,880,625
2005	\$48,700,000	1991	\$45,549,617
2004	\$52,300,000	1990	\$53,122,168
2003	\$41,900,000	1989	\$49,315,723
2002	\$42,369,907	1988	\$46,321,996
2001	\$52,025,595	1987	\$41,190,576
2000	\$43,895,519	1986	\$41,053,148
1999	\$53,073,768	1985	\$44,313,447
1998	\$57,719,554	1984	\$43,544,734
1997	\$50,127,724	1983	\$41,951,744
1996	\$55,702,533	1982	\$38,658,469
1995	\$49,575,744	1981	\$36,767,513
1994	\$49,333,440	1980	\$33,250,893
1993	\$47,118,147	1979	\$28,425,590



### Dairy Cattle & Calves Inventory\*\*

Year	Number of Farms (10 cows or more)	Number of Cows
2002	74	17,021
1997	93	20,612
1992	123	21,345
1987	131	19,211
1982	166	19,366
1978	153	16,129

\* Source: Pacific Northwest Federal Milk Marketing Order  
 \*\* Source: Census of Agriculture, U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

## SKAGIT COUNTY CROP ACREAGE SUMMARY \*

<i>CROP</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1978</i>	<i>1968</i>
Apples <sup>(1)</sup>	225	300	103	n/a	n/a
Blueberries	1000	800	xxx	xxx	xxx
Carrots (processing)	0	0	468	890	220
Cucumbers (processing)	3,000	3,000	1,900	1,094	1,070
Field Crops <sup>(2)</sup>	30,000	28,355	33,050	25,000	2,800
Grass Seed	600	375	xxx	xxx	xxx
Misc. Crops <sup>(3)</sup>	3,027	3,847	665	975	562
Peas (processing)	4,585	4,196	14,880	15,898	32,289
Potatoes	13,000	12,500	7,250	1,520	537
Rasp/Blueberries	See separate listings	See separate listings	420	524	150
Raspberries	1,400	1,400	xxx	xxx	xxx
Strawberries	580	550	615	550	1,443
Sweet Corn, processing	0	0	616	1,098	5,521
Vegetable Seed <sup>(4)</sup>	2620.8	1,204	3,375	4,891	1,800

1) Includes no nonbearing trees.

2) Field Crops include alfalfa, barley, corn & grass silage, grass, oats, pea hay, small grain, & wheat.

3) Refer to Crops Grown in Skagit County on page 23.

4) Vegetable Seed includes beet, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, rutabaga, spinach.

*\* Figures shown are unofficial estimates based on input from processing companies, growers, agricultural organizations and agencies, field representatives, news articles, and Extension Agent experience. Crops grown by fewer than three producers are combined to protect confidentiality. Official agricultural figures are collected every five years by USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. The last Census of Agriculture was collected for the year 2002 and can be viewed at the following web site: <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/>. For state information, contact Washington Agricultural Statistics (360/902-1940).*

### Typical Yields (per/acre)

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Apples	40 bins
Blueberries	6-10 tons
Flower bulbs	50,000 bulbs
Cucumbers	7 ton-10 tons
Green peas	2 tons
Potatoes	15-20 tons
Raspberries	3.5-4.5 tons
Ryegrass seed	1500 lbs

**STATISTICAL SUMMARIES: \***  
**Dollar Value to Producer**

<i>Crop</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1978</i>	<i>1968</i>
Apples <sup>(1)</sup>	1,024,875	1,260,000	592,250	xxx	xxx
Blueberries	10,256,600	3,104,573	xxx	xxx	xxx
Carrots (processing)	0	0	493,794	1,181,157	78,672
Cucumbers (processing)	5,000,000	5,555,765	4,944,034	1,920,930	553,725
Dairy (milk sold)	38,500,000	42,369,907	53,122,168	23,885,268	8,400,250
Eggs and Fryers <sup>(2)</sup>	13,500,000	13,278,300	14,016,877	5,177,500	1,887,000
Field Crops <sup>(3)</sup>	14,000,000	15,132,876	12,844,718	2,575,000	3,000,000
Grass Seed (1997 included in Misc. Crops)	450,000	111,400	xxx	xxx	xxx
Livestock	8,500,000	8,290,500	4,400,000	5,493,283	2,200,000
Misc.Crops <sup>(4)</sup>	20,000,000	22,308,095	2,046,600	176,000	319,500
Nursery & Greenhouse, Floriculture & Sod	65,000,000	60,075,000	24,000,000	4,900,000	1,500,000
Peas (processing)	2,292,300	1,491,944	5,640,903	7,117,743	6,139,843
Potatoes	60,000,000	72,037,500	33,746,600	2,032,800	399,166
Raspberries/ Blueberries	See separate listings	See separate listings	1,179,450	1,789,058	225,600
Raspberries	5,932,800	4,640,520	xxx	xxx	xxx
Strawberries	4,251,500	2,959,063	2,496,280	1,233,314	2,371,746
Sweet Corn (processing)	0	0	187,828	1,187,462	1,047,585
Vegetable Seed <sup>(5)</sup>	2,620,800	2,294,274	3,144,352	1,828,968	500,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>254,728,875</b>	<b>254,909,717</b>	<b>165,141,854</b>	<b>63,181,133</b>	<b>29,017,717</b>

1. Includes no acres nonbearing trees.
2. State public disclosure restrictions prevent the publishing of "farm-gate" values. The figure for Eggs & Fryers reflects the "overall value" of the industry to the county
3. Field Crops include alfalfa, barley, corn & grass silage, grass, oats, pea hay, small grain, & wheat.
4. Refers to Crops Grown in Skagit County on page 23.
5. Vegetable Seed includes , beet, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, rutabaga, spinach.

*\*Figures shown are unofficial estimates based on input from processing companies, growers, agricultural organizations and agencies, field representatives, news articles, and Extension Agent experience. Crops grown by fewer than three producers are combined to protect confidentiality. Official agricultural figures are collected every five years by USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. The last Census of Agriculture was collected for the year 2002 and can be viewed at the following web site: <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/>. For state information, contact Washington Agricultural Statistics (360/902-1940).*

## Vegetable Seed Production in Western Washington Acres Harvested

Harvest Year	Skagit County					Total Clallam	Total Cowlitz	Total Island	Total Jeffer	Total Lewis	Total Snohomish	Total Whatcom	Total Western Washington
	Beet	Cabbage	Spinach	Misc.	Total Skagit								
1993	441	324	3,149	427	4,341	56	-	315		-	1,071	-	5,783
1994	764	276	2,180	467	3,687	59	-	180		-	844	-	4,770
1995	592	388	2,433	590	4,005	-	-	209		-	646	-	4,860
1996	962	296	2,049	727	4,034	-	-	204		-	511	-	4,749
1997	1,048	640	2,476	458	4,622	448	55	159		90	395	-	5,769
1998	537	859	1,824	355	3,575	68	-	125		71	527	48	4,414
1999	771	526	2,630	217	4,145	94	-	128		120	778	52	5,317
2000	763	410	2,412	215	3,800	100	-	256		146	661	112	5,075
2001	710	349	1,112	190	2,361	78	-	126		194	417	79	3,255
2002	313	95	770	26	1,204	71	-	105		110	234	102	1,826
2003	316	93	790	20	1,219	45	-	34	10	-	272	93	1,663
2006	519	352.8	1680	69	2620.8			60.15			458		3138.95

## Vegetable Seed Production in Western Washington Farmgate Value (dollars)

Harvest Year	Skagit County					Clallam	Cowlitz	Island	Jefferson	Lewis	Snohomish	Whatcom	Total Western Washington
	Beet	Cabbage	Spinach	Misc.	Total Skagit								
1993	792,147	676,415	2,322,818	408,374	4,199,754	141,500	-	487,000	-	-	1,134,000	-	5,962,254
1994	1,528,558	899,259	2,208,128	398,986	5,034,931	226,100	-	380,800	-	-	1,169,235	-	6,811,067
1995	1,031,821	966,306	2,449,053	564,411	5,011,591	-	-	379,938	-	-	793,989	-	6,185,518
1996	1,414,137	666,209	2,568,972	723,933	5,373,251	-	-	468,054	-	-	739,762	-	6,581,067
1997	1,769,864	3,533,368	2,464,127	512,274	8,279,633	268,463	45,525	205,572	-	73,120	490,712	-	9,363,025
1998	881,875	1,441,628	1,665,009	560,290	4,548,802	278,554	-	205,377	-	78,193	639,661	55,268	5,805,855
1999	1,100,635	1,577,963	4,524,822	363,083	7,566,053	348,384	-	235,031	-	178,451	2,416,114	89,789	10,834,272
2000	1,192,711	2,036,666	3,345,547	606,589	7,181,513	319,102	-	847,693	-	193,710	1,773,375	265,203	10,580,596
2001	1,481,266	1,501,946	2,099,945	178,890	5,262,047	374,673	-	545,636	-	121,853	973,485	52,427	7,330,121
2002	630,897	492,849	1,152,622	17,906	2,294,274	250,682	-	290,534	-	129,969	588,275	204,560	3,758,294
2003	560,507	346,429	828,369	62,550	1,797,855	269,907	-	183,771	8,025	-	437,676	133,782	2,831,016
2006	519,000	352,800	1,680,000	39,000	2,620,800	-	-	180,450	-	-	458,000	120,300	3,379,550

# COMMERCIAL CROPS GROWN IN SKAGIT COUNTY

## Small Fruit

Blackberry  
Blueberry  
Boysenberry\*  
Currant\*  
Lingonberry\*  
Loganberry\*  
Marionberry\*  
Raspberry  
Strawberry  
Tayberry\*  
Wine Grape

## Tree Fruit

Apple  
Asian pear\*  
Cherry\*  
Filbert  
Peach\*  
Pear\*  
Plum\*

## Vegetables

Artichoke  
Asparagus and asparagus root\*  
Basil\*  
Bean\*  
Beet\*  
Bok Choy\*  
Broccoli  
Brussels sprout\*  
Burdock\*  
Cabbage\*  
Cantaloupe\*  
Carrot  
Cauliflower  
Chives\*  
Cucumber  
Garlic\*  
Green pea  
Hothouse tomato\*  
Kale\*  
Kohlrabi\*  
Leek  
Lettuce\*  
Mizuna\*  
Onion\*

Parsley\*  
Parsnip\*  
Pepper\*  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Radish\*  
Rhubarb\*  
Salad Mix\*  
Spinach\*  
Summer squash\*  
Sweet corn  
Swiss chard\*  
Tomatillo\*  
Turnip\*  
Winter squash\*

## Seed Crops - Vegetable

Arugula  
Broccoli-raab  
Brussels sprout  
Cabbage  
Cauliflower  
Chinese cabbage  
Chinese kale  
Chinese mustard  
Coriander  
India mustard  
Kale  
Kohlrabi  
Parsley  
Parsnip  
Radish  
Rutabaga  
Spinach  
Swiss chard  
Table Beet  
Turnip

## Seed Crops - Other

Fava bean  
Ryegrass  
Tall fescue

## Small Grains

Barley  
Buckwheat  
Cereal rye

Oats  
Triticale  
Wheat

## Forage Crops

Alfalfa  
Field corn  
Silage grass

## Flowers and Bulbs

Daffodil  
Dahlia  
Iris  
Lily  
Tulip

## Miscellaneous Crops

Bamboo  
Christmas trees  
Dill\*  
Fennel\*  
Gourds\*  
Hybrid poplar  
Tea\*

\*Less than ten acres

## Nursery & Greenhouse Crops, Mushrooms, and Sod Grown for Sale - Skagit County\*

ITEM	2007	1997	1992
Nursery & greenhouse crops			
No. of farms	129	116	111
Sales (dollars)	60,075,000	42,390,000	29,980,000
Nursery, floriculture, vegetable & flower seed crops, sod, etc. grown in the open, irrigated:			
No. of farms	89	74	75
Sales	NA	NA	NA
Floriculture crops— Bedding, foliage, potted flowering plants, & cut flowers, total			
No. of farms	63	39	38
Sales	NA	25,810,000	18,785,000
Bedding/Garden plants			
No. of farms	38	21	26
Sales	NA	23,863,000	11,302,000
Cut flower & cut florist greens			
No. of farms	21	15	13
Sales	NA	1,827,000	7,446,000
Bulbs, corms, rhizomes, or tubers (dry)			
No. of farms	19	12	13
Sales	NA	NA	4,297,000
Nursery crops			
No. of farms	58	24	33
Sales	NA	3,359,000	3,663,000

\*Source: Census of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Commerce  
NA=not available

### Annual Index of Prices Received and Paid by Farmers, U.S.\*\*

(Ratio of index of prices received by farmers to index of prices paid for commodities, services, interest, taxes, and wage rates).

1995	94
1996	98
1997	90
1998	89
1999	83
2000	81
2001	82
2002	79
2003	83
2004	85

\*\*Source: WA Agricultural Statistics 2004.



# SKAGIT COUNTY AGRICULTURE STATISTICS

according to

Census of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Commerce\*

ITEM	2002	1997	1992
Market value of ag products sold (dollars)	217,384,000	171,690,000	138,471,000
Average per farm	249,294	240,463	183,648
Crops (including greenhouse & nursery)	152,452,000	90,392,000	63,849,000
Livestock, poultry, and their products	64,932,000	81,299,000	74,621,000
Estimated Market Value of Land & Buildings In Dollars for Skagit County Farms			
Per Farm	613,134	609,685	435,274
Per Acre	5,113	4,645	3,618
Total farm production expenses (dollars)	168,073,000	129,701,000	121,418,000
Average per farm	191,864	181,654	160,818
Net cash return from ag sales for the farm unit (dollars)	N/A	40,882,000	18,134,000
Average per farm		57,257	24,019
Net cash farms income of operations**	59,651,000 68,095		
No. of farms with net gains	488	308	359
No. of farms with net losses	388	436	396
No. of farms by size (acres)			
1-9	164	132	139
10-49	357	252	271
50-179	222	204	218
180-499	86	89	86
500-999	21	22	24
1,000+	22	17	16
Number of Farms by Value of Sales, Skagit County			
Less than \$2,500	345	218	226
\$2,500 - \$4,999	69	87	110
\$5,000 - \$24,999	177	163	170
\$25,000 - \$99,999	97	76	81
Over \$100,000	184	170	176
Total cropland			
No. of farms	689	613	617
Acres	76,178	73,028	72,576
Harvested cropland			
No. of farms	543	511	513
Acres	62,074	61,257	57,946
Irrigated Land			
No. of farms	226	165	149
Acres	17,658	9,821	8,415
Hired farm labor			
Workers	9,048	6,140	7,633
Payroll (\$)	53,921,000	27,309,000	30,071,000
Cropland idle or used for cover crops on soil im- provement, but not harvested and not pastured or grazed (acres)	4,244	N/A	N/A

\* 2002 Census of Ag data are not comparable to Census of Ag data from prior years. For the first time in 2002 the data was adjusted to account for farmers missed or misclassified during the census in prior years. This caused an apparent increase in the number of farms, farmers and land in farms in the 2002 Census. For definitions and explanations of data gathering, go to [www.nass.usda.gov/census](http://www.nass.usda.gov/census).

\*\* New category for 2002.

## GROSS FARM INCOME IN SKAGIT COUNTY

SOURCE: WSU/SKAGIT COUNTY EXTENSION  
(before any expense is paid)

2006	\$254,728,875	1988	\$120,560,757
2003	\$244,974,185	1987	\$110,511,377
2002	\$254,909,717	1886	\$104,804,777
2001	\$261,312,281	1985	\$104,920,240
2000	\$227,351,000	1984	\$ 97,272,703
1999	\$242,992,859	1983	\$ 95,396,166
1998	\$235,308,595	1982	\$ 91,862,479
1997	\$216,329,869	1981	\$ 76,834,618
1996	\$181,469,151	1980	\$ 81,839,881
1995	\$172,067,932	1979	\$ 79,467,182
1994	\$171,024,023	1978	\$ 63,181,133
1993	\$181,276,517	1977	\$ 56,936,539
1992	\$158,125,507	1974	\$ 51,644,810
1991	\$157,006,833	1968	\$ 29,017,717
1990	\$165,141,854	1956	\$ 12,023,393
1989	\$149,714,999	1654	\$ 11,839,253

## AGRICULTURAL LAND USE TRENDS, SKAGIT COUNTY \*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number Farms</i>	<i>Land in Farms (Acres)</i>	<i>Avg. Size (Acres)</i>	<i>Total ** Cropland (Acres)</i>	<i>Harvested Cropland (Acres)</i>	<i>% of County in Farms</i>
2002	872***	113,821***	131	76,178***	62,074***	10.3
1997	714	93,495	131	73,028	61,257	8.4
1992	754	92,074	122	72,576	57,946	8.3
1987	806	95,357	118	73,548	57,226	8.6
1982	897	109,934	112	86,623	70,687	9.9
1978	779	105,721	136	81,872	67,251	9.5
1974	850	108,972	128	n/a	67,029	9.8
1960	1,700	141,770	81	n/a	n/a	12.2
1940	3,242	152,758	47	n/a	n/a	13.8
1920	2,401	136,350	57	n/a	n/a	12.3
1900	889	87,151	98	n/a	n/a	7.8

\*Source: Census of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Commerce

The data shown represents totals for places or establishments which qualify as farms for U.S. Department of Commerce census purposes, which defines a farm as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products are sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.

\*\* Total land area in Skagit County is approximately 1,110,100 acres.

\*\*\* 2002 Census of Ag data are not comparable to Census of Ag data from prior years. For the first time in 2002 the data was adjusted to account for farmers missed or misclassified during the census in prior years. This caused an apparent increase in the number of farms, farmers and land in farms in the 2002 Census. For definitions and explanations of data gathering, go to [www.nass.usda.gov/census](http://www.nass.usda.gov/census).

Type of Organization*, Skagit County								
Individual or Family Proprietorship			Partnership		Corporation			
					Family Held		Other than Family Held	
	No. of Farms	No. of Acres	No. of Farms	No. of Acres	No. of Farms	No. of Acres	No. of Farms	No. of Acres
2002	706	48,345	64	26,544	79	33,488	11	3,236
1997	570	46,701	66	14,720	63	28,703	9	(D)**
1992	622	54,117	69	10,817	57	26,841	1	(D)**
1987	806	95,357	70	9,994	43	22,590	3	542
1982	897	109,834	78	N/A	40	21,847	5	521
1978	664	70,899	81	19,733	28	12,937	5	(D)**

\*Source: Census of Agriculture, U.S. Dept. of Commerce

\*\*Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms



**FARM OPERATORS BY PRINCIPLE OCCUPATION \***  
(FOR SKAGIT COUNTY)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Farming</i>	<i>Other</i>
2002	531**	341**
1997	376	338
1992	393	361
1987	391	415
1982	437	460
1978	398	381
1974	458	368



	Average Age of Operator in Years *	Operator by Sex (Number of Farms)*	
		Male	Female
2002	56.3	714	158
1997	54.6	615	99
1992	52.6	658	96
1987	50.6	739	67
1982	49.7	832	65
1978	48.8	756	23
1974	51.8	n/a	n/a

\* Source: *Census of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Commerce*

## *Organizations, Businesses and Agencies Serving Skagit County Agriculture*

Ag Alternative  
Agrilink Foods  
Alf Christianson Seed Company  
Barnett Implement Company  
Bio Huma Netics, Inc.  
Cascadian Farms & Muir Glen  
Cucumber Industry Advisory Committee  
D & D Farms  
Farm Service Administration  
Farmers Equipment Co.  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
North Washington Implement  
NW Agricultural Research Foundation  
NW Ag Business Center  
NW Bulb Growers Assn.  
NW Food Processors Assn.  
Pea Industry Advisory Committee  
Puget Sound Seed Growers Assn.  
SBF Processing  
Schafer Agriculture Services  
Seminis Vegetable Seeds  
Skagit Conservation District  
Skagit County Cattlemen's Assn.  
Skagit County Dairy Federation  
Skagit County Farm Bureau  
Skagit County Farmland Legacy Program  
Skagit County Horticultural Pest and Disease

Skagit Dairy Women  
Skagit Farmers Supply  
Skagit Seed Services  
Skagit Valley Red Potato Growers Assn.  
Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland  
Small fruit Advisory Committee  
Sorensen Seed Co.  
Steinfeld's Products Co.  
Syngenta Seeds, Inc.  
Tree Fruit Industry Advisory Committee  
Twin City Foods  
Valley Pride Sales  
WA Blueberry Commission  
WA Lettuce & Vegetable Co.  
WA Red Raspberry Commission  
WA Seed Potato Commission  
WA State Dairy Federation  
WA State Potato Commission  
WA Strawberry Commission  
Western WA Agricultural Assn.  
Western WA Fruit Research Foundation  
Western WA Seed Advisory Committee  
Wilbur Ellis Company  
WSU Mount Vernon Northwestern Wash-  
ington Research & Extension Center  
WSU Skagit County Extension



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*We wish to express our appreciation to the following for their assistance  
in the gathering of data for this report:*

Agrilink Foods  
Alf Christianson Seed Company  
Anderson Blueberry Farm  
Bio HumaNetics, Inc.  
Capital Press  
Cedardale Orchard  
Dai-Zen Egg Farm  
Dean Foods  
Draper Valley Farms, Inc.  
Dynes Farms  
Economic Development Association of Skagit County  
Farm Service Agency  
Hedlin Farms  
Hughes Farms  
Day Creek Poultry Farms  
Merritt's Apples  
Mike and Jean's Berry Farm  
Mother Flight Farm  
National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration  
Norm Nelson, Inc.  
North Fork Farms  
Ralph's Greenhouse  
Sakuma Bros. Farm  
Schafer Ag Services, LLC  
Seminis Vegetable Seed Co.  
Skagit Farmers Supply  
Skagit Seed Services  
Skagit Valley Herald  
Sorensen Seed Co.  
Syngenta Seeds, Inc.  
Twin City Foods  
US Department of Commerce  
US Department of Labor  
Valley Pride Sales  
Washington Agricultural Statistics Service  
Washington Bulb Co., Inc.  
Washington Fryer Commission  
Washington Red Raspberry Commission  
Washington State Employment Security Department  
Washington Strawberry Commission  
Western Washington Farm Crops Association  
Wilbur Ellis Company  
WSU Northwestern Research and Extension Center at Mount Vernon  
Ned Zaugg, WSU Skagit County Extension

6/21/06