

# **SUPPORT FOR FOOD AND FARM STATION**

Our newly formed Whatcom Food and Farming Station (WFFS) board is signing a lease agreement with the Port of Bellingham to operate the research farm on the Boxx Berry Farm location. The Port has been awarded \$750k in State support and has submitted a \$2.75 million application to the County's Economic Development Investment Fund to make this purchase. WFFS will become the management entity for developing the farm into a research station that is available to WSU, USDA/ARS, and private research projects.

WFFS was created for the purpose of managing this Station for **all** of local agriculture. The Raspberry industry's need for land for the WSU Plant Breeding program was the initial driver but WFFS's vision is much broader. We see opportunity to provide research land and offer a central space where all aspects of local agriculture can demonstrate ag's value to the entire community.

The entity created to manage this facility reflects local agriculture and the following support letters demonstrate an evolving interest in the potential this Station may provide.

## **WFFS Board of Directors**

Blake Te Velde – President – dahlia farm, formerly with Cascade Seed Potatoes

Brett Pehl – VP – ag business – formerly manager of CHS Agronomy, currently with Kahler Automation

Dakota Stranik – S,T - small farm operator, formerly Whatcom Conservation District, County Planning

Galen Smith – Dairy operator with Coldstream Farms

Jon Maberry – Berry Farm, Maberry Packing

September 13, 2017

Dear Washington Red Raspberry Commissioners:

We are delighted to deepen our commitment to growing Whatcom County's agricultural industries by investing in the future. This letter serves to underscore that commitment by providing formal approval for Washington State University to create a satellite agricultural research station in Whatcom County.

The proposed investment by Whatcom County stakeholders of \$5 million would create the infrastructure needed to provide farmers and collaborating scientists the tools to innovate and solve the current and future challenges of this important agricultural region. This would be accomplished through your investment in facilities, operations, and faculty excellence.

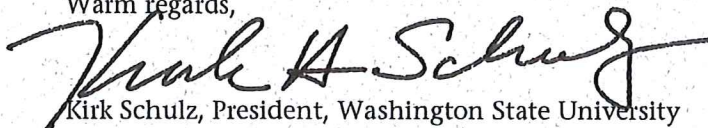
Once the agreed upon fundraising target for the facility (\$1-\$2.5 million) has been committed by stakeholders, Washington State University will commit to provide salary and benefits for a coordinator to staff the station, and \$50,000 annually to maintain and operate the facility, which will be known as the Whatcom County Agricultural Research Station. Additionally, once your goal of creating an endowed chair (\$1.5 million) is achieved, the University will fund half the salary and benefits and the College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences will fund the other half.

Your investments, coupled with WSU's investment in facilities, faculty, and staff, will be multiplied many times over. Our world-class faculty and educators have established track records for attracting and competing for new state, federal, and private funds through grants, gifts, and contracts. This new collaboration will serve as a catalyst to leverage new investments and resources that benefit agricultural producers, processors, and consumers in the years ahead.

We look forward to the next steps in our fruitful partnership to create a greater WSU presence in Whatcom County.

Thank you very much.

Warm regards,

  
Kirk Schulz, President, Washington State University



Ron Mittelhammer, Dean, College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences





WASHINGTON **Red Raspberries**

1890

DATE: Nov. 3, 2018

PAY TO THE ORDER OF: Washington State University \$ 1,500,000

ONE MILLION, FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS

FOR: Endowed Chair in Raspberry Industry Development

Washington Red Raspberry Commission

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT  
**ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5200**

68th Legislature  
2023 Regular Session

Passed by the Senate April 22, 2023  
Yeas 48 Nays 0

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**President of the Senate**

Passed by the House April 21, 2023  
Yeas 96 Nays 0

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**Speaker of the House of  
Representatives**

Approved

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**Governor of the State of Washington**

CERTIFICATE

I, Sarah Bannister, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5200** as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

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**Secretary**

FILED

**Secretary of State  
State of Washington**



project support to conduct capital feasibility studies that cover financing, architectural design, construction, business operations, and other relevant topics. Participants must also have access to professional consultation related to financing, architectural design, construction, and business operations.

Appropriation:

Ruth Lecocq Kagi Early Learning Facilities

Development Account—State. . . . .	\$65,000,000
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Prior Biennia (Expenditures). . . . .	\$0
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Future Biennia (Projected Costs). . . . .	\$260,000,000
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TOTAL. . . . .	\$325,000,000
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**NEW SECTION. Sec. 1025. FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**2024 Local and Community Projects (40000301)**

The appropriations in this section are subject to the following conditions and limitations:

(1) The department shall not expend the appropriation in this section unless and until the nonstate share of project costs have been either expended or firmly committed, or both, in an amount sufficient to complete the project or a distinct phase of the project that is useable to the public for the purpose intended by the legislature. This requirement does not apply to projects where a share of the appropriation is for design costs only.

(2) Prior to receiving funds, project recipients must demonstrate that the project site is under control for a minimum of 10 years, either through ownership or a long-term lease. This requirement does not apply to appropriations for preconstruction activities or appropriations in which the sole purpose is to purchase real property that does not include a construction or renovation component.

(3) Projects funded in this section may be required to comply with Washington's high performance building standards under chapter 39.35D RCW.

(4) Project funds are available on a reimbursement basis only and may not be advanced under any circumstances.

(5) In contracts for grants authorized under this section, the department shall include provisions that require that capital improvements be held by the grantee for a specified period of time appropriate to the amount of the grant and that facilities be used for the express purpose of the grant. If the grantee is found to be

1 out of compliance with provisions of the contract, the grantee shall  
2 repay to the state general fund the principal amount of the grant  
3 plus interest calculated at the rate of interest on state of  
4 Washington general obligation bonds issued most closely to the date  
5 of authorization of the grant.

6 (6) Projects funded in this section, including those that are  
7 owned and operated by nonprofit organizations, are generally required  
8 to pay state prevailing wages.

9 (7) The department must comply with the requirements set forth in  
10 executive order 21-02 and must consult with the department of  
11 archaeology and historic preservation and affected tribes on the  
12 potential effects of these projects on cultural resources and  
13 historic properties. Consultation with the department of archaeology  
14 and historic preservation and affected tribes must be initiated  
15 before project funds are made available.

16 (8) The state building construction account—state appropriation  
17 in this section is provided solely for the following list of  
18 projects:

19	57th Ave Sewer Project (University Place) . . . . .	\$200,000
20	ACT Historic Landmark Roof Restoration (Seattle) . . . . .	\$539,000
21	ADA For Northwest Center Janitorial (Spokane	
22	Valley) . . . . .	\$20,000
23	Admiral Theatre Facility Improvements (Bremerton) . . . . .	\$165,000
24	Affordable Housing Land Acquisition (Tacoma) . . . . .	\$1,500,000
25	Afterschool Program Expansion (Walla Walla) . . . . .	\$45,000
26	Agricultural Innovation Center (Pasco) . . . . .	\$200,000
27	Airlift Northwest Hangar (East Wenatchee) . . . . .	\$500,000
28	Airway Heights Public Safety (Airway Heights) . . . . .	\$1,340,000
29	Algona Wetland Preserve Interpretive Trail	
30	(Algona) . . . . .	\$600,000
31	American Indian Community Center (Spokane) . . . . .	\$1,000,000
32	American Legion Post 79 Roof Replacement	
33	(Snoqualmie) . . . . .	\$49,000
34	Anderson Island Multipurpose Building (Anderson	
35	Island) . . . . .	\$258,000
36	Angleside Reservoir Capacity Upgrades (Shelton) . . . . .	\$1,850,000
37	Arlington Commercial Kitchen (Arlington) . . . . .	\$581,000
38	ARTE NOIR Capital Construction Completion	
39	(Seattle) . . . . .	\$381,000

1	(Carbonado) . . . . .	\$500,000
2	Wastewater Treatment System Upgrades (Long Beach) . . . .	\$340,000
3	Waterfront Organic Soil Removal (Washougal) . . . . .	\$2,000,000
4	Weld Seattle Reentry Resource Center (Seattle) . . . . .	\$5,000,000
5	Wenatchee Valley Museum Expansion and Redesign	
6	(Wenatchee) . . . . .	\$1,000,000
7	Wenatchee Valley YMCA (Wenatchee) . . . . .	\$1,030,000
8	West Biddle Lake Dam Restoration (Vancouver) . . . . .	\$412,000
9	Whatcom Ag Research Station (Lynden) . . . . .	\$764,000
10	What-Comm Dispatch Center (Bellingham) . . . . .	\$1,000,000
11	White Bluffs Rail/Rail Replacement (Richland) . . . . .	\$1,250,000
12	White Center Community Hub (Seattle) . . . . .	\$1,000,000
13	White Center Food Bank Renovation (Seattle) . . . . .	\$275,000
14	Wilkeson Infrastructure (Wilkeson) . . . . .	\$824,000
15	Windermere Park Playground (Longview) . . . . .	\$155,000
16	WRF Upgrades Solid Side (Yelm) . . . . .	\$442,000
17	Yakama Nation "Creator Law Sculpture" (Roslyn) . . . . .	\$99,000
18	Yakima Co Fire Emergency Responder Radio System	
19	(Yakima) . . . . .	\$139,000
20	Yakima County Fire District 12 Wildfire Response	
21	(Yakima) . . . . .	\$38,000
22	Yakima County Meals on Wheels (Union Gap) . . . . .	\$1,000,000
23	Yakima Trolley Museum (Yakima) . . . . .	\$25,000
24	Youth Assist Program Skills Training Center	
25	(Tacoma) . . . . .	\$500,000
26	Youth Emergency Shelter (Longview) . . . . .	\$250,000
27	Zillah Park Renovation (Zillah) . . . . .	\$300,000
28	(9) The model toxics control capital account—state appropriation	
29	in this section is provided solely for the Port of Vancouver Dock	
30	Demo and Removal of Creosote project in Vancouver.	
31	Appropriation:	
32	Model Toxics Control Capital Account—State. . . . .	\$3,500,000
33	State Building Construction Account—State. . . . .	\$228,343,000
34	Subtotal Appropriation. . . . .	\$231,843,000
35	Prior Biennia (Expenditures) . . . . .	\$0
36	Future Biennia (Projected Costs) . . . . .	\$912,000,000
37	TOTAL. . . . .	\$1,143,843,000

38 NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1026.    FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**



Tuesday, December 27, 2016

Brad Rader, Steering Committee Chair  
8629 Benson Road  
Lynden, WA 98264

Re: Proposed Washington Agriculture Research Station

Dear Mr. Rader,

On behalf of the Dairy Farmers of Washington Board of Directors, I am writing to show our support behind your efforts to open an agricultural research center in Whatcom County. We are certain that the proposed project will greatly benefit the community in northwest Washington.

A tangible presence in the community will, no doubt, demonstrate the significant scientific work that is underway. Opening this facility will also strengthen connections between Whatcom County farmers, Washington State University, United States Department of Agriculture, and British Columbia research programs. This will not only succeed at raising awareness among a larger audience, but the research center will illustrate the innovation behind today's farming practices. The facility is key in showing our industry's commitment and responsiveness to address the evolving challenges facing family farms in the northwest.

We are eager to participate in this project and fully support your direction.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Kinney", is written over the "Thank You," text.

Scott Kinney, General Manager | CEO  
Dairy Farmers of Washington  
4201 198<sup>th</sup> ST SW  
Lynnwood, WA 98036  
scott@havemilk.com

cc:

Michelle Schilter, DFW Board Chair  
Julie Loveall, DFW Board Vice President  
Jeremy Visser, DFW Board Member  
Karen Steensma, Research Associate, WSU





To: Whatcom County Council, Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu  
From: Whatcom County Food System Committee  
Date: March 26, 2024  
Subject: Letter of Support for the Ag Innovation Center from the Food System Committee

On behalf of the Whatcom County Food System Committee, I am writing to express our strong support for the Whatcom Agricultural Research Station project in Whatcom County. This initiative aligns closely with several key objectives and actions outlined in the Whatcom County Food System Plan, thereby contributing significantly to the advancement of our local food system.

The research station's commitment to advancing sustainable agricultural practices and soil health directly supports the plan's objectives under Goal 2: "Protect Agricultural land in Whatcom County and increase the acreage used for local and regenerative food production" and Objective 2.2: "Improve the health of our county's soils." This project aligns with action items such as 2.2.1, which calls for increased funding support for Washington State University (WSU) Extension and the Whatcom Conservation District to boost technical assistance and educational opportunities for growers.

Additionally, the station's focus on water conservation and efficiency aligns with Objective 2.3: "Conserve water and support water efficiency projects and policies."

The research station also aligns with Goal 3: "Increase the supply of local, sustainable food produced in Whatcom County," by supporting action 3.1.8, which encourages innovative methods to increase local food supply.

Furthermore, the educational and outreach components of the project support Objective 3.3: "Workforce development and readiness," particularly action 3.3.1, which involves funding and developing a county network of skilled workers to host the creation of skilled technical training and apprenticeship opportunities.

The Whatcom County Food System Committee recognizes the Whatcom Agricultural Research Station as a critical asset enabling us to meet the goals outlined in the Food System Plan. We are confident that this project will have a lasting positive impact on our local food system, enhancing sustainability, efficiency, and innovation.

We are grateful for your commitment to this important initiative and look forward to the contributions it will make to our community.

Whatcom County Food System Committee





1/10/2025

Henry Bierlink  
Washington Red Raspberry Commission  
Lynden, WA

Dear Henry,

Thanks for the opportunity to write this letter expressing my support for establishing a non-profit Research Station at the existing Boxx farm. I visited the farm this week, and came away impressed with the buildings, infrastructure and land base there. I think it would make a very good raspberry research station, as well as for blueberries and other important Whatcom county crops.

As a contract researcher, I would like to use this research station in several ways:

- Oftentimes, when I trial products that are not yet labeled for raspberry, there is a crop destruct requirement. I anticipate it would be easier to accommodate this requirement on a research station.
- Sometimes, using new products, there is a danger of phytotoxicity (damage to the plants). In these cases, I could use the research station and avoid damaging a grower's crop.
- I would also be interested in renting space, especially during the field season, for equipment storage and the occasional overnight stay.
- I would be interested in using space at the station to establish trial areas with high insect or disease pressure for trials. Examples would include a blueberry mummy berry site, or a raspberry site with misters for Botrytis work.
- I would be interested in using the space for field days and grower meetings.

I also look forward to meeting other researchers and learning from them at the research station, which I imagine will become a hub for our industry.

Best Wishes,

Tom Walters  
Walters Ag Research



204 Hawley Street  
Lynden, WA 98264  
tel 360-354-8767  
fax 360-354-0948  
[www.red-raspberry.org](http://www.red-raspberry.org)  
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February 28, 2025

Port of Bellingham  
EDI Oversight Board

The WA Red Raspberry Commission (WRRC) is appreciative of the partnership with the Port of Bellingham to establish an ag research station investing into the future of local agriculture. This fills a long term need and sends a clear message to the community that agriculture plans to be a vital part of our local economy for decades to come.

We are assisting the Port in preparing and advancing the Economic Development Investment (EDI) application for \$2.65 million to complete the purchase of Boxx Berry Farm. The Raspberry Commission is leading the effort to get this off the ground as we have a need for research land to support our raspberry plant breeding program. That will require 7-10 acres/year for 5 years resulting in a need for 30+ acres. The Boxx farm is 56 acres plus some residential, retail, and processing buildings. There will be some need for other berry research that is currently being conducted on individual farms which is less than ideal, particularly for access to all farmers. The Raspberry Commission wants this to be a station providing for the research needs of ALL Whatcom farmers and we will cede leadership of the station to an emerging Management Entity that has representation of all elements of local agriculture as it develops.

The near future is the development of a lease between the Port and the WRRC addressing the need to comply with the loan requirements of the EDI investment and management of the facility for the next decade. WRRC, in turn, will be subleasing the land not immediately needed for research to a local farm which will allow the station to grow into the ag research needs of the entire community.

The Whatcom Ag community has never had County investment that we have seen in other Western WA counties. This provides a clear opportunity to do so. The State has provided \$750k towards realizing this purchase. EDI and the assistance of the Port as the local Economic Development entity provides us the opportunity to complete the purchase and put the Ag Research Station on the path to address research needs of local farms and a place there the community can proudly engage with the cutting edge research and technology that support the future of local farms.

Thank you for your partnership,

Henry Bierlink  
WRRC Executive Director





WASHINGTON STATE POTATO COMMISSION  
108 INTERLAKE ROAD, MOSES LAKE, WA 98837  
PH: 509 765-8845 FAX: 509 765-4853 WWW.POTATOES.COM

April 17, 2025

Whatcom Food and Farming Station Board  
C/O Washington Red Raspberry Commission  
204 Hawley Street  
Lynden, WA 98264

Re: Support for a research station in Whatcom County

To Whatcom Food and Farming Station Board,

On behalf of the Washington State Potato Commission (WSPC), I am writing to express our support for the development of a research station in Whatcom County. We recognize the need for a facility in that unique agricultural area to support the research needs of crops there that include raspberry, blueberry, and seed potato. Clearly, a raspberry breeding program would benefit from work at that site, relative to its current location in Puyallup. The site would also benefit blueberry and seed potato research, both of which have exceptional challenges.

I am encouraged by the careful planning conducted by the Whatcom Food and Farming Station board. The board has identified a site for the station, has garnered state funding, and has a plan to complete funding needs. The board has also planned to accommodate management, staffing, and funding support going forward.

The WSPC understands the importance of agriculture in Washington and supports the generation of research facilities that enhance it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Matthew J. Blua".

Matthew J. Blua, PhD  
Director of Industry Outreach  
mblua@potatoes.com