



MEMORANDUM

TO: Whatcom County Council

FROM: Kayla Schott-Bresler, Deputy Executive

RE: Port of Bellingham – WA Ag Research Station

DATE: June 09, 2025

Attached for your review and approval is the Agreement between Whatcom County and the Port of Bellingham for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

The concept of acquiring property for the purposes of establishing an Agricultural Education Center began in 2018 and evolved into the opportunity to acquire an existing farm to support agricultural research. In 2023, the Boxx Berry Farm located at 6211 Northwest Drive became available for the proposed project. The property includes approximately 58.81 acres and a 3,000 square foot steel ag building that is fully powered has two walk-in coolers and potential office space. Another 3,000 square foot building is located on site and a 100,000-gallon water storage tank, fire-suppression system and municipal grade fire hydrant. This investment will create infrastructure that will provide farmers and collaborating scientists the tools to innovate and adapt to changing pressures in this unique and economically important agricultural region.

On May 8, 2025 the Economic Development Investment Board adopted a recommendation to fund the Port of Bellingham's proposal to acquire the Port of Bellingham's acquisition of the referenced property for the purposes of establishing the WA Agriculture Research Station. The EDI Board's recommendation for funding this project was presented to Council on May 13, and was unanimously approved by the Council.

Funding Amount and Source

This project will be funded through the EDI Fund in the amount of a \$1,966,542 grant and a \$933,271,000 loan for a total of \$2,899,813.

If you have any questions, please contact Kayla Schott-Bresler (kschottb@co.whatcom.wa.us).