

Transitioning to Value-Added Products in Northwest Washington

Impact: Producers from Northwestern Washington's agricultural industry sectors were led through a low risk learning process to identify and evaluate value-added products



Capturing a new perspective is what Northwestern Washington producers endeavored to do as they engaged in a comprehensive program launching new and innovative value-added products. A team led by Jake Fowler, of the Northwest Agriculture Business Center in Mount Vernon, mentored willing farmers evaluating these opportunities. Success potential was maximized through a series of workshops that included technical production and market development assistance. A diverse project team supported participants both in and out of the classroom and also provided a final structured networking session to help facilitate solutions for optimal product development.

Thirty six producers utilized business development tools relevant to the four participating industry sectors that included food crops, small scale poultry, livestock and nursery plant production. Each producer conducted an enterprise analysis for products of their choice with 18 investing in production of a value-added product and six going on to complete a business and/or marketing plan.

Anecdotal evidence validated the risk management improvements experienced by participants. For some it was a launching point that gave them the necessary tools and confidence to explore new product potential – for others an opportunity to assess the potential risks and benefits associated with product diversification and development, and for a few, a chance to create and implement a complete branding and marketing strategy for a new product or enterprise. Producers stretching to meet an increased demand for local value-added products have found the low risk learning environment, created through this project, has contributed to their ability to manage financial risk during a time when business support programs are integral to the success of farming operations.

Congratulations to Results Based RME Projects Funded for 2009 - 2010

◆ Safe and Sustainable Practices for Tree Fruit	Washington State Horticultural Association	\$42,500
◆ Annie's Project - 2010	Montana Grain Growers	\$31,764
◆ Colorado Building Farmers Program	Colorado State University	\$47,249
◆ Outreach Agriculture & Small Business Development	New Mexico State University	\$46,589
◆ Cull Cow Marketing & Management for Washington Livestock Producers	Washington State University	\$34,109
◆ Variety Choice Decision Tool	Colorado State University	\$46,384
◆ Northwest Certified Forestry Workshops	Northwest Natural Resource Group	\$47,500
◆ Scaling Up and Managing Risk in Selling to Institutions	Farm to Table	\$31,616
◆ Enhancing the Economic Viability of Grassfed Livestock Production in the Southwest	Southwest Grassfed Livestock Alliance	\$47,180
◆ Mid-Columbia Ag Enterprise Investigation Series	Washington State University & Oregon State University	\$33,995
◆ Improving New Mexico Small Farm Sustainability through Farmers Markets	New Mexico State University	\$33,641
◆ Risk Management for Transitioning & Certified Organic Growers in Idaho	Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides	\$42,436
◆ Wyoming Master Cattleman	University of Wyoming	\$15,750
◆ Managing for Higher Production Costs to Cattle Producers	Colorado State University	\$24,981
◆ Managing Risk for Montana Producers in Mobile Processing of Poultry	Lake County Community Development Corporation	\$34,546
◆ Improving Quality Assurance in Nevada's Dairy & Beef Industry	University of Nevada, Reno	\$44,999
◆ Food Safety: A Tool for Managing Risk & Expanding Direct Marketing Opportunities	University of Nevada, Reno	\$44,228
◆ Farm Basics for New Refugee Farmers	International Rescue Committee	\$25,427
◆ Annie's Project - Navajo and Blackfeet	Intertribal Ag Council	\$28,000



Helping Farm & Ranch Families Succeed Through Targeted Risk Management Strategies

