

AGRICULTURE ECONOMY

Thurston Region Progress Report prepared
for the Port of Olympia, May 2016

Summary

This report is intended to be a progress report on the work scope elements identified in the 2016 contract between the Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC) and the Port of Olympia. The majority of this scope of work addresses agriculture and rural development, including STEDI (South Thurston Economic Development Initiative) and rural business capacity building. It is our desire to keep Port of Olympia Commissioners and staff updated, share the approach EDC staff is taking with this material, provide current examples of work underway and suggest next steps and a direction moving forward.

This report and the attached appendices will provide a developing picture of the “lay of the Thurston region agricultural landscape” and an overview of how EDC staff, along with our community partners, are engaging in it. There is no finished work in this report. All work products submitted are in draft form (some more draft than others). It is the EDC’s intention that agriculture-related deliverables identified, to date, by Port staff will be delivered to the Port of Olympia in a 2nd report, projected to be completed in September of 2016. Due to the nature of many of the projects currently underway and the transitioning nature of our local agricultural industries, there will be a need for ongoing reporting and updating.

The length of this report is extensive. The intent is to provide as many details as possible at this time and tell many stories. It will be up to the Port to determine which points are most pertinent and which stories you would like to hear more about. Future reports will focus specifically on the deliverables asked for by the Port and will be concise in nature.

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Section One - Thurston Economic Development Council

Local Economic Development Efforts Applied to Agriculture

What We Do

At the Thurston EDC, we believe economic development is about identifying opportunities and applying efforts that result in creating a vibrant and sustainable economy. We are dedicated to improving and diversifying the local economy so that Thurston County is a vibrant place to live and work, now and in the future. Our mission is to create a dynamic economy that supports the values of the people who live and work in Thurston County.

At the EDC, much of our business and entrepreneurial technical assistance is provided through our *Center for Business and Innovation*-- with a robust offering of services that directly assist individual businesses. We also serve the overall Thurston economy through a systems approach of efforts designed to assist whole industries. In Sections 2 and 3 of this report, these two approaches will be described in detail.

Agriculture

In 2012, the EDC, working with the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council, commissioned an Industry Cluster Analysis which identified food production as one of the top 6 industries operating within the Thurston region.

The EDC is now approaching support of our local agricultural economy through a focus on **the agriculture industry supply chain, ultimately with the main objective of stimulating and increasing local and regional food production.** Some of the main strategies include:

- Business support and technical assistance to agriculture and food production-related businesses
- Identification of new and expansion of existing markets for agricultural goods and products
- Identification of infrastructure and distribution needs within agricultural industries

Port of Olympia

Every year since its founding in 1982, the Thurston EDC has held a contract of services with the Port of Olympia. For the current year of 2016, a new work scope element was added directing that “the EDC shall work within the food/agricultural sector of the county’s economy to promote and increase the agricultural elements in the County.”

Specifically, the EDC has been asked to explore and assess potential ways in which the Port of Olympia could invest in agricultural infrastructure. Further, the EDC has been tasked with developing a method the Port can use to assess, evaluate and prioritize potential agricultural infrastructure projects.

New Staff Position

The Port of Olympia's increased contract for 2016 with the EDC contributed to the creation of a new staff position at the Thurston EDC. With this new added staff resource, the scope of work was developed and expanded to focus a significant part of their duties on engagement in agriculture, food system and rural development.

One of the main roles of the new Community Development Coordinator position is to build connections and partnerships throughout Thurston County and the south sound region.

Partnerships

As you read the following report, you will begin to see a common theme—partnerships. A core value at the EDC, and evident in our approach to agricultural assessment and investment, our community partners are essential to the work that we do. Our success ultimately depends on our ability to build relationships and networks, and organize and convene teams and coalitions.

The quality and character of our community partnerships allow us to set agendas and achieve results far beyond what any one organization could do alone.

The State of Agriculture

While there is a good, robust debate on the size of the agriculture economy, the most current data provided by the Washington Department of Agriculture and the 2012 USDA Census of Agriculture reports that in Thurston County the market value of crops and livestock is \$122 million, and the number of farms is 1,336. The Thurston food processing industry gross sales are reported at \$363 million and are responsible for 582 jobs. Current projections indicate that this sector will be one of the major sectors to increase each year for the foreseeable future.

There is a lot of energy, excitement and momentum within the Thurston community when it comes to local food. Highly competent, professional and dedicated teams are assembling. Communication and information sharing is increasing between these teams, uniting the agricultural players. Knowledge is being gathered. A critical mass is building. Opportunities are being identified and efforts are being applied. A vibrant and sustainable local agricultural economy may lie on the horizon.

Section Two - Business Assistance

The Center for Business & Innovation

The Center for Business & Innovation (CB&I) is a partnership between the Thurston Economic Development Council and the South Puget Sound Community College (SPSCC). The center provides services and resources such as start-up help, established business advising, training classes and more. The comprehensive mix of programs and services supports businesses in Thurston County through their entire life-cycle – from planning, launching, and growing, to turn-around and exit planning. The CB&I also fulfills a critical component of the business success by promoting and supporting a robust workforce in Thurston County.

A great many businesses come through the doors of the CB&I, or participate through webinars and on-site trainings. Just to highlight one of the programs—the Washington Center for Women in Business (WCWB) alone served 413 training clients and 153 coaching clients in the last 6 months. On the agriculture economy front, among those served were 3 businesses starting food truck operations, a hydroponic farm start up, a local chocolate maker who is now exporting products to Canada, a gluten free baker, an artisan food market, and a local farmer who specializes in selling to local restaurants.

Often, a business served by one of the programs at the CB&I, ends up being connected to other programs of the center. The gluten free baker mentioned above is an excellent example. After her work with the Washington Center for Women in Business, she was introduced to our Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), who specializes in helping businesses to find, bid on and win government contracts. Now our gluten free baker has contracts with JBLM and with a cruise ship line.

Another example illustrating such interconnected programs would be a business receiving counseling at the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) being encouraged to enroll in the EDC's new Scale Up program. The SBDC provides individualized, no-cost, one-on-one counseling to business owners looking to optimize their operations, focusing on financial health, marketing issues, and more. Scale Up, a twelve week program, uses a facilitated group of business training courses to help businesses 'scale up' to their next level of development. Again, on the agriculture front, *Top Rung Brewery* and *Zoe Juice Bar* were two businesses who recently graduated from the Scale Up program. (This is a significant example given that both have a propensity to purchase local produce and products. The EDC has a focus of expanding the supply chain of end-of-line food producers by supporting the front-end produce growth and cultivation. This model is important to remember as the relationship between the Port and EDC deepens around the scope of work for increasing the local agriculture sector.)

These sorts of activities happen all the time at the CB&I, and while the EDC has been performing these services for years, the new location at the state-of-the-art facility on the SPSCC Lacey campus has fine-tuned and accelerated the process. While the EDC has always served ag-related businesses who seek out our services, with the addition of the new Community Development staff position, a new

coordinating element has been added. Now when an agriculture business is receiving services from any of the CB&I programs, an introduction is made to the Community Development Coordinator and often the Coordinator can help point the business in the direction of ag-related resources or connect them with appropriate Ag industry networks.

In the last 4 months, the PTAC and SCORE programs alone have introduced the Coordinator to multiple ag businesses-- including two separate Veteran-owned aquaculture startups in the same week (SCORE provides no-cost mentoring to business owners in the startup and early development stages of their businesses). Sometimes the Coordinator is asked to sit in on an ag business counseling session, to provide resource suggestions and a food system overview perspective to help with the business planning process.

The introductions move in the other direction as well. As a large part of the Community Development Coordinator's job is done out in the community, networking as a field agent, telling businesses of the resources available at the CB&I and helping to direct them to the appropriate program is a regular ongoing component of the job.

Deep Roots Foods, a local business interested in starting up a small batch food co-packing operation, truly exemplified the cooperative interconnection of the CB&I as they worked with the WCWB and SBDC on business planning, PTAC on finding and bidding on government contracts, and extensively with our Program Manager and Community Development Coordinator on site location, networking and overcoming obstacles. If they had had energy efficiency needs and required the services of our Thurston Energy program, they would have made the entire rounds.

Examples of direct services provided to ag-related businesses

The EDC's Community Development Coordinator has been working with **Ostrom's Mushroom Farm** to understand their expansion needs and help with finding a site location for a new composting facility. Ostrom's, a family owned business since 1928, employs over 300 workers in Thurston County and generates \$24,000,000 in revenue annually. The ideal location for a new facility for them would be somewhere with room to grow and without urban neighbors, as the smell of the operations can sometimes be a point of contention. They don't need prime agricultural land as most of their operations space will need to be paved. The composting process itself is a great example of sustainability as its main inputs, wheat straw, dried poultry waste and recycled gypsum, are waste outputs from other ag activities and their main waste is mushroom compost, which is an excellent soil amendment for growing food.

EDC staff have also been supporting efforts to keep the Thurston based USDA approved Mobile (meat) Slaughtering Unit in operation. Having a consistently operational and well managed slaughtering facility is extremely important to the success of both our regional meat producers and processors. When the unit is not operational in Thurston County, regional ranchers have to travel to Sandy, Oregon or Moses Lake in Eastern Washington to have their cattle and hogs slaughtered, seriously increasing

their expense. Tracy Smaciarz, owner of **Heritage Meats** in Rochester, shared recently that when the unit is not operational, it impacts how much work he has at his butchery business and he has had to send employees home.

Mr. Smaciarz has been leading the efforts to stabilize the unit. He and his partners recently formed a new company, **Puget Sound Processors**, and have taken over the lease on the unit, which is owned by the Pierce Conservation District. Currently located on the Nisqually Springs Farm on the boarder of Pierce County, the unit needs a few repairs and then will be operational again. Ultimately, the goal is to find a more permanent home for the unit at a location where separate animal species can be corralled and where extra cold storage facilities could be built.

On that note, the owner of the **Alpacas of America Ranch** in Tenino is interested in selling all or part of his property. A group of local Tenino area government and ag business leaders have been working with EDC staff exploring possibilities around the property becoming some sort of an ag center or even an ag industrial park. All discussions are very much in an exploration phase. This project will be covered in more detail in the next section.

A local group of industrious young entrepreneurs have designed a mobile processing trailer for fruits and vegetables and value added products. They are calling it a Modular and Mobile Food Processing Facility (MFPF) and are calling their startup **Slow Food Fast**. The plan is to process locally grown food into shelf stable products with preservation techniques including: pickling, fermenting, canning, freezing, drying, jamming, and saucing. The MFPF will be capable of processing hundreds of pounds an hour with only two workers and, as a mobile unit, will be able to travel and perform the processing at actual farm locations. You can't get fresher than that! The EDC's Community Development Coordinator has set up a business planning consultation with CB&I staff for the group and directed them to USDA Rural Development to seek grant funding to build the unit. Their grant submission actual goes in today (the day this report is being submitted). Our fingers are crossed!

Hummingbird Scientific is one of Thurston County's premier engineering and precision manufacturing companies, and it just so happens, their owner, Norman Salmon, is a supporter of local food. After starting a CSA program (Community Supported Agriculture), providing all his workers with weekly boxes of fresh local produce, Mr. Salmon contacted the EDC with an idea. He wanted to know what it would take to convince the insurance industry to lower health care premiums for CSA shareholders? Mr. Salmon pointed to the fact that you can have your premium lowered if you have a membership to a gym -- why not if you are making a commitment to eating fresh, healthy, locally produced food? He also sees how if such a program caught on, there would be a whole new market to drive local food production and assist expansion of local farming efforts.

EDC staff is reaching out to local insurance providers to get their input on the idea, and will also get feedback from local farmers during outreach efforts and listening sessions planned over the next couple of months. Staff has also contacted a Healthy Eating Coordinator colleague at the Washington State Department of Health's Office of Healthy Communities, enlisting their help in both exploring and

promoting the idea. Initial research has uncovered some hopeful movement in the state, including King County making use of its employee wellness program and offering the county's 13,000 employees the opportunity to reduce their out-of-pocket healthcare costs by purchasing locally grown fruits and vegetables.

Earlier this year, the WA State Department of Health collaborated with many partners on a Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program proposal for Medicaid Transformation projects. This proposal builds on the momentum of DOH's Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grant, which addresses population health and healthcare delivery, would help strengthen community-clinical linkages, and would address food security and healthy eating in the Medicaid population.

Section Three - Industry Assistance

Current Partners and Projects

The following projects are roughly listed in the order of staff time committed over the last 4 months.

STEDI—South Thurston Economic Development Initiative

STEDI is a consortium focused on long-range economic and community development in the rural areas of the Thurston Region with the intent to engage the collective strengths and resources of the communities of **Yelm, Rainier, Tenino, Bucoda & Rochester/Grand Mound**— along with the organizing strategic community partners of the **Thurston Regional Planning Council, Thurston Economic Development Council, WSU Thurston County Extension Office, and the Visitor & Convention Bureau** – to identify and implement strategic efforts that will meet south county’s economic and community development goals.

With the combined minds and passion of this group, a very effective work program for retaining and creating appropriate investment activities in our local communities is being created and implemented.

The STEDI efforts began in 2009. Since that time, monthly meetings have been held, with the location rotating between the rural communities. These meetings are, first and foremost, listening sessions, to hear the needs, priorities and visions of rural participants. STEDI’s focus is not specific to agriculture. There is also a strong focus on developing the Main Streets of the rural communities and we often hear concerns addressing topics such as city beautification projects and shopping local initiatives. As an example, along these lines, a work plan objective achieved in recent years included business inventories and profile surveys conducted by the STEDI partners and rural participants for their communities.

Since the beginning of 2016, there has been a good deal of energy and momentum within the community participants, with meetings generating high turnouts, and with representatives from every participating community attending each monthly meeting. The Chehalis Tribe has also been sending a representative, and at the last meeting both a County and Port Commissioner attended. While not everyone on the STEDI email list (Appendix) attends every meeting, over 20 participants have attended each of the last several meetings.

With the addition of the new staff position at the EDC, more frequent, extensive and personal outreach efforts have been taking place in south county, with the vast majority of these having an agricultural focus.

Specific to agriculture, EDC staff has worked with the STEDI strategic and rural partners on the following projects over the last 4 months.

NABC—NORTHWEST AGRICULTURE BUSINESS CENTER

The Northwest Agriculture Business Center (NABC) was established in 2006 to improve the economic vitality of the agriculture industry within the northwest Washington counties of Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom.

The NABC staff are well respected within the agricultural community and are experts at helping ag businesses to innovate, develop new value-added products, create new markets, find grant funding & access to capital, develop infrastructure, form cooperatives and more.

The NABC has been instrumental in establishing the **Puget Sound Food Hub**, where purchasers from hospitals, schools systems, restaurants, etc. can buy direct from multiple local farms, aggregating many farm products into one order, one payment and one delivery. The Food Hub just added a 4th distribution point, Terra Organics, extending their operations down as far south as Pierce County and adding 5 new refrigerated trucks.

The STEDI partners see the possibility of bringing NABC staff further south to service the Thurston Region as a very feasible and exciting way to support our agricultural business community, and have been working hard exploring ways to make this happen. For several years such noted local stakeholders as Rancher, Fred Colvin and Legislator, J.T. Wilcox have advocated for the need of NABC services in Thurston County.

EDC staff have been in regular contact with NABC Director, David Bauermeister and hosted Mr. Bauermeister for a work session where over 10 local agriculture resource organizations participated. Those involved are encouraged by the fact that last year funding was raised in King County to add NABC staff to service their territory.

Bringing the services of the NABC to Thurston—and potentially the surrounding counties—would greatly support and bolster the food and farm businesses of the region to help them scale up to a new level of capability. Certainly there is something very attractive about not re-creating the wheel with a food hub. The Puget Sound Food Hub already has the online platform for ordering, has an ever growing network of local farms and processors participating and is starting to show a positive revenue generation.

The STEDI partners are exploring several possible funding options to bring NABC staff to the Thurston Region, including a Legislative Appropriation. One possible source for funding could be a USDA Rural Development RCDI grant.

RCDI—RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

In 2013, the STEDI partners submitted an RCDI grant proposal to USDA Rural Development and missed qualification by 3 points. The focus of the grant was to house a business technical support staff within the rural communities. Currently, the STEDI partners are exploring re-submitting the grant this

calendar year with the focus changing slightly to include making that staff person a NABC ag business specialist.

The STEDI partners and EDC staff have met multiple times this year with USDA Rural Development staff to explore every possible grant option available that could assist the South Thurston communities. We've looked at ways to support the region as a whole, ways to support individual communities and ways to assist individual stakeholders, such as the Yelm Chamber of Commerce. At this time, the RCDI grant seems to be the best option for moving forward and would support the region's agricultural efforts as a whole.

One of the challenges with the RCDI grant is in securing the match. In 2013, the Port of Olympia was in a position to offer a very generous cash match of \$50,000 a year for a 3 year period. With the likelihood that the Port is no longer in such a position to offer a cash match, the STEDI partners have been exploring other options for a match.

A MORE ROBUST AGRICULTURAL CENTER

To make the proposal of the establishment of a Thurston Region NW Ag Biz Center even more robust, the STEDI Partners have been exploring the possibility of adding further components, direct service partnerships and potentially an agricultural business park model.

The **Thurston Conservation District** is exploring moving its offices from their current location within the Tumwater Mottman Industrial Park to a location in southern Thurston County where they would be closer to the farm operators and landowners they serve. The District provides technical assistance to landowners, conservation planning, equipment rental, soil testing, grant assistance, and more. The District is considering purchasing a permanent home, with space for their rental equipment and land for research trial plots. The District would consider providing space and partnering with the NABC to create a Center with their combined services under one roof.

The **Thurston WSU Extension** could also add its expertise and services, providing agricultural technical assistance and classes within the Center on a regular basis. The Extension could also potentially make use of trial plots for research purposes.

With extra classroom and/or meeting space within a proposed south county Center, the **Thurston EDC** could also offer business support, counseling and planning services on a regular basis to south county businesses and the **Thurston Regional Planning Council** could provide planning services to meet south county needs from the Center as well.

The **Visitor & Convention Bureau** could also potentially provide resources to promote agri-tourism in the region and help drive tourists to and through the rural communities, supporting businesses on both the main streets of the rural towns and those located along the *Thurston County Bountiful Byway*.

THE TENINO BRAIN-TRUST AND THE ALPACAS OF AMERICA RANCH

Tenino is motivated. Just come to a Tenino Chamber of Commerce meeting and you'll see! (standing-room only). Under the Leadership of their new Mayor, Wayne Fournier, EDC staff has found a new, mutually beneficial, rural partnership. Mr. Fournier has taken EDC staff around to personally introduce and meet local ag producers—setting up meetings and tours with ranchers, a creamery and more. A Tenino team has been building, with participation from the City Council, city planning & school district, members of the local ranching community, Conservation District staff, and others. Heads are being put together to figure out how Tenino can capitalize on its heritage of being an agricultural center (including the original home of the Thurston County Fair). Tenino is located in the center of rural South Thurston County, directly in the center of the Bountiful Byway route, in the heart of traditional farming and ranching land, just miles off of I-5.

One location being considered for the Ag Business Center project is the current site of the Alpacas of America Ranch, in Tenino. With easy access and visibility off of the main Hwy 99, the ranch offers a beautiful rural landscape with multiple buildings and infrastructure already in place. Several tours and brain-trust meetings have already taken place on the property, with the owner, Dr. William Barnett getting increasingly more excited with the possibilities. Much of the brainstorming discussions have gone beyond just the idea of an ag business resource and assistance center to visions of an Agriculture Industrial Park model-- exploring the possibilities of housing ag-related processors, light industrial, and/or cottage industries. Potentially even some of the ag infrastructure objectives the Thurston community has been discussing for the last several years could find a home here. These possibilities could include commercial kitchen space, dry and cold storage, or even an aggregation/food hub/distribution center. There has also been specific discussion around the possibility of the ranch becoming a more permanent home for the USDA Mobile Slaughter meat-processing unit.

Everything discussed to this point is clearly only in the brainstorming phase, with no commitments being made on the part of any of the partners involved. Still, there is energy, participation and a growing momentum. Participants from Tenino and the surrounding communities see how this could be a standard raising project, uniting the factions, and building a sense of local pride and identity. With all the possibilities being kicked around, there has been talk that the name of the project should more fully capture the concept—one suggestion has been to call it the *South Thurston Agriculture Innovation Park*.

THE THURSTON BOUNTIFUL BYWAY—AGRITOURISM

Another agricultural and rural development project with a great deal of momentum, energy and participation, is the Thurston County Bountiful Byway.

On March 18th, 2014 the Thurston County Board of Commissioners officially designated the Thurston Bountiful Byway—a scenic route in the heart of Thurston County's most picturesque rural and agricultural lands.

The byway is a scenic route that promotes agricultural tourism, or agritourism, in the rural parts of Thurston County. The route starts in the Nisqually Valley, stretches south to the city of Yelm and west through Rainier, Tenino, Grand Mound and Rochester, to the Capital Forest before ending at the intersection of Mud Bay Road and Delphi Road SW. Along the way you can explore dozens of special stops and activities including farm stands, creameries, nurseries, wineries, distilleries, and historic sites.

**Source; Thurston County- <http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/permitting/agriculture/agriculture-tourism.html>*

In 2015, the Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the County, agreeing to market the Byway. The County then created a new 7 member Agritourism Committee to, among other things, review business applications for membership in the Byway. EDC staff sits on this committee.

The VCB has fully embraced the project, created a Marketing Plan for the Byway, and has begun to aggressively promote the Byway through all the marketing channels at their disposal. Some of their strategies include preparing Byway stories for local, national and international media markets, with a special focus on lifestyle and travel writers; increased social media presence, search engine optimization, blog posts, e-newsletters, public relations and paid advertising in the WA State Scenic Byway Guide and Map. They are also creating a new version of the Bountiful Byway brochure/map and website—coordinating these efforts with their overall organizational rebranding campaign.

Some of the markets the VCB is targeting for Byway promotion include the drive market, reaching from Portland, OR to Vancouver, B.C., and the international market, focused on consumers from the United Kingdom, China and Germany, where there is an increased interest in outdoors, fresh air and authentic experiences and flavors from a local region. Age targets include both Millennials seeking authentic cultural and culinary experiences, and Baby Boomers interested in soft adventure and experiencing nature, with mild physical activity. Niche markets include Culinary tourism-- pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences, and Adventure/Outdoor recreation-- with an emphasis on biking. **Source; VCB – Thurston Bountiful Byway Marketing Plan, 2016*

The VCB has also been working with the Agritourism Committee and EDC staff to reach out to local ag-related businesses to “beef up” membership in and on the Byway. As part of the STEDI team, the VCB has been working with EDC staff to promote Byway membership through the STEDI efforts. Among other initiatives, the VCB and EDC are partnering to present Byway business readiness trainings throughout the beginning of June—focusing not only on preparing participating businesses to engage in the tourist market, but also to bond the businesses together, encouraging them to cross-promote each other and to collectively promote the Byway and rural Thurston agritourism as a whole.

Key Thurston Agriculture Partners

Beyond the work being done under the STEDI initiative, there is a smaller core team forming, whose work is specifically focused on agriculture and food system development and assistance. This new team is composed of the **Thurston Conservation District, Thurston WSU Ext. and Thurston EDC.**

When Aslan Meade started at the beginning of 2016 in the newly created Community Development position at the EDC, tasked--to a significant degree--with assessing and assisting the agriculture community, one of his first priorities was to surround himself with the best agriculture advisors available in Thurston County.

As mentioned in the section above under *A More Robust Agricultural Center*, the **Thurston Conservation District** (TCD) is deeply involved with serving local farm operators and land owners, offering a wide variety of services ranging from direct on the ground technical support to land owners to providing farm equipment rentals. Already close allies through their work together on the *Thurston Food System Council*, Mr. Meade furthered his commitment to the District by running for, and being elected to, their *Board of District Supervisors* in March of this year. Furthermore, the TCD has joined the STEDI partnership and District staff is now included in any ag-related project initiated or convened by the EDC.

The Washington State University Cooperative Extension Program is recognized as agricultural leaders and experts within the State of Washington. The previous Director of the Thurston WSU Ext., Lucas Patzek, was not only specifically an Ag Faculty Professor, but really was the Agricultural initiative leader of Thurston County during his brief tenure in the position. Over a period of about 3 years, Mr. Patzek drove a food economy agenda that pushed our community to expand its thinking and roll up its sleeves and get to work. To this day--over a year and a half since his departure--those of us working in local food systems and agriculture, follow the trail that he blazed.

To reference just a sampling of his work:

- He conducted and published the *South Puget Sound Farms to Market Assessment*— This study identifies and quantifies the barriers to, and opportunities for, increasing the availability of locally-produced fresh fruits and vegetables in the South Puget Sound region of western Washington State, particularly in the under-tapped retail and institutional food service markets.
- He became the point person on the work to engage the Port of Olympia in agriculture— Presiding over the April 2014 Ag Special Session, organizing the May 2014 Farmers Breakfast listening session, and accompanying Port staff and a Commissioner on the June 2014 fact-finding trip to the Port of Skagit and Snohomish County.
- He worked to organize and market local beef ranchers and to initiate ranching practices that incorporated land conservation practices.

- He developed and launched the Cascadia Grains Conference—with a focus of supporting the entire grain supply chain in the Pacific Northwest-- west of the Cascade Mountain Range.

Mr. Patzek left Thurston County to pursue work in the private sector in the fall of 2014. After a year and a half period with no one in the position, it was with great anticipation that the local food system and agriculture community awaited the arrival of the new WSU Ext. Director and Ag Faculty, Stephen Bramwell.

Mr. Bramwell has most recently been employed as a Professor of Agriculture at the Evergreen State College and South Puget Sound Community College and started in his new position on April 11th of this year. For the months prior to his arrival into the new position, EDC staff fed him local food economy information, sharing the dates for STEDI, Thurston Food System Council, and Ag Advisory Committee meetings, and helping to share the institutional knowledge of the local food system community-- in order to help Mr. Bramwell get up to speed as soon as possible upon his official arrival. In fact, 4 out of the 5 days of his first week on the job were spent with time in meetings with the STEDI strategic partners and EDC staff. His assistance was immediately enlisted on projects like the USDA RCDI grant and NW Agriculture Business Center.

Mr. Bramwell hit the ground running and has already become a significant partner and deeply appreciated asset to local agricultural efforts. Bringing his skills as a researcher and teacher to the table, a large focus in his first year will be to gather data, which will be used to design and implement trainings.

Returning briefly to Lucas Patzek-- one of the objectives identified by his research, was the need for a "Regional Agricultural Economic Development Consortium." The current working group composed of TCD, WSU and EDC staff has become the acting kernel of such a consortium, with Port staff in the position to easily become the fourth supporting leg.

Lead by Stephen Bramwell's research and teaching orientation, Conservation District staff, Sarah Moorehead's deep working and institutional knowledge of the Thurston farming community, and Aslan Meade's networking and convening leadership, this core working group has already set in motion plans that include:

- Farmers Breakfast Listening Sessions have been scheduled for the end of June in three locations to solicit input on the gaps and needs in the farming community. An early session has also been arranged with direct-sales innovator, Helsing Junction Farm, in May.
- Equipment Purchase and Rental Program—this is a competitive grant process inspired by Port of Olympia staff. It will be covered more under the immediately flowing topic heading.

There is also work underway exploring how to retrieve more targeted data from institutional food purchasers and potentially doing some sort of market analysis. A clear direction forward has not yet been identified. This work would follow on the work-session results and survey completed during the Thurston Food System Council's *Anchoring Local Food* event, held at the Center for Business & Innovation in October of 2015.

There is also the rudimentary beginnings of an Agriculture Resource Library being formed, gathering the essential documents relating to local agriculture and also examples of best practices from other locations (such as food hub reports). Such a Library would house documents like the following:

- Thurston County Working Lands Strategic Plan
- South Puget Sound Farms to Market Assessment
- Olympia Port Commissioner Sue Gunn July 2014 Agricultural Activities presentation
- WSDA's Green Book-- Small Farm and Direct Marketing Handbook
- Farmland Zero Net Loss Background Materials
- Thurston EDC Economic Vitality Index
- Thurston County Bountiful Byway Materials
 - Business Application Packet
 - Visitor & Convention Bureau MOU
 - Visitor & Convention Bureau Marketing Plan
 - Press Release
- Northwest Agriculture Business Center Report
- King County Local Food Initiative

And so much more!

The Port of Olympia

From meetings conducted between Port of Olympia and Thurston Economic Development Council staff, a need for several agricultural deliverables have been identified. Work has been started and each of the following projects are in varying stages of development.

AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT DECISION CALCULATOR

Objective: To create a tool--establishing a means or method--for the Port of Olympia that would assist with determining what agriculture infrastructure projects it would be best for the Port to invest in.

Postulating that the Port may be presented with multiple agricultural infrastructure investment opportunities, the calculator tool will be designed to assess, evaluate and prioritize potential projects in order to answer the questions:

- How do we *pick* the right one?
- How do we *know* it is the right one?

A long list of questions and criteria has been generated to help with the assessment process (Appendix). These questions try to cover every possible criterion from job creation to stakeholder consensus to environmental concerns. The list is now being disseminated throughout the agricultural community to gather feedback on which criteria are deemed the most important and essential.

The criteria will then be arranged into a format which will turn them into a decision making tool or matrix. As one example of a possible format, included in the Appendix is an Infrastructure Investment Rubric recently created in Mason County.

The EDC will also create an agricultural infrastructure application form, to help gather information from potential applicants in a systematic way.

THURSTON REGION AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Objective: To create a Directory of the Resources available in the Thurston region that provide services to the agriculture community.

Included in the Appendix is an outlined list of agricultural resource organizations. EDC staff, working with partners, will continue to add to and refine this list.

Many local agencies and organizations have already taken the time to write up a little description of how they are a resource, and some also included lists of their membership or vendors (included in the Appendix). The EDC is compiling these descriptions and this **first draft version of the Directory will be submitted to the Port as a separate document within a month's time.** Again, this will still be a very incomplete list at this stage of development and the descriptions will come in all shapes and sizes, with some of the resources only getting a brief mention.

This first version of the Directory is geared toward helping to provide the Port of Olympia Commissioners and staff with a “ley of the land” of local agricultural resources.

The possibility exists though—especially if the Port deems it valuable to do so—to create a standardized listing format for the resource organizations to fill out, and then create an ever more comprehensive Resource Directory that could be shared with the ag community itself and be made available to the general public through an online, and possibly, printed version.

THURSTON REGION AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Objective: To create a Directory of the businesses engaged in agricultural activities within the Thurston region.

Again, the first audience for such a Directory is the Port of Olympia Commissioners and staff, with the same goal of helping to provide a “ley of the land” of what is already on the ground and operating in the agriculture business world of the Thurston region.

Beyond just the purpose of informing the Port, such a Directory has great potential to assist in the work of food system economic development. Even in the current, extreme draft version, EDC staff has been able to use this data to help with farmer outreach for such projects as Bountiful Byway membership business recruitment and Farmer Breakfast Listening Session invitations. Having an ever more comprehensive listing of local ag producers will also be essential for efforts focused on large institutional purchasing of local food and the creation of such possible aggregation efforts as a food hub. Knowing who is out there is also a first step towards eventually gathering more specific industry data.

The current version, attached in the Appendix, is rudimentary. It is so far nothing more than an ongoing spreadsheet compilation of existing ag business lists. These lists have been provided by community partners like the South of the Sound Community Farmland Trust, the Thurston Conservation District, the Olympia Food Co-op, and the Thurston Agritourism Committee. There is also a list of Food Manufacturers created by EDC staff running a NAICs (North American Industry Classification System) code report of the region. Neither list has not been culled for out of date information or fully checked for duplications.

A more developed version of the Directory will break these businesses into categories, listing together--for example--all of the dairies, ranches, poultry and egg layers, etc.

The EDC is also creating an Ag Business Directory Form (a draft of which is in the Appendix) which could live on a website and could potentially be used to also gather industry data from businesses who fill it out.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASE AND RENTAL PROGRAM

Objective: To engage the agriculture business and farming communities in suggesting the sorts of equipment needs existing currently in the region, through a grant proposal submission process.

This project proposes the development of a ‘competitive proposal/grants’ program to purchase and rent agricultural equipment. The program would be funded by the Port of Olympia in an amount agreed upon by Port Commissioners, but with a general intention that individual proposals would be funded in a range from under \$1,000 to \$20,000.

Purchases would be owned by the Port of Olympia, and rented out at reasonable rates by the Thurston Conservation District. The Thurston Conservation District currently rents agricultural equipment and has a functioning rental management system in place. Equipment would be housed at the Thurston Conservation District.

Every stage included in the process of this proposal attempts to maximize the involvement of the actual agriculture producers, including a requirement that the *proposal review committee* be made up of a certain percent representation by agricultural businesses, and a minimum percent, specifically farming businesses.

Thurston WSU Ext. Director, Stephen Bramwell has taken the lead on writing up this proposal idea. His draft proposal is included in the Appendix.

TENINO AGRICULTURE INNOVATION PARK EXPLORATION

This exploration was already described, in part, under the sections; *A more robust Agricultural Center* and; *The Tenino Brain-Trust and the Alpacas of America Ranch*.

Port staff has shown interest in the exploration, and so EDC staff will keep them updated, providing further written reports, if and when, any major development should occur which moves the project forward.

Thurston Food System Council

The Thurston Food System Council is a grassroots citizen organization composed of a diverse group of community stakeholders fostering collaboration and active engagement in the local food system. Their mission is to bring together the community resources, people and programs needed to develop and strengthen the local food system.

The need for the Thurston Food System Council was articulated at, and formed out of, the 2011 South Sound Food Summit. The Summit raised the food localization standard under which hundreds of local food businesses, organizations, and concerned citizens gathered—all with the general building knowledge that something was happening in the region and across the nation around local food, and we had better organize locally! The Food Council then came into being during the same time frame as the *Sustainable Thurston* conversation which was being facilitated by the *Thurston Regional Planning Council* and the Food Council became the body charged with organizing and carrying forward the food piece of that conversation.

In 2015 the Food Council concentrated its efforts on two major project/events.

FARMLAND ZERO NET LOSS

This event takes its name from the Sustainable Thurston Plan which identified a priority goal of “*preserving environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands and develop(ing) compact urban areas.*” With a supporting target of “*No Net Loss of farmlands, forest lands, prairie habitats (in addition to environmentally critical areas that are currently protected) while providing for a range of densities within rural Thurston County.*”

The Zero Net Loss event took place in November of 2015 and convened an impressive number of local and statewide experts to explore and recommend steps forward on the best ways to preserve, restore and expand the working farmlands of the Thurston region. A great deal of the focus of both the event and the prior research was to identify funding mechanisms available to support such efforts.

Since the event, the working group has merged with the Sentinel Landscape Partners to carry on the efforts, adding the now seriously hot topic of endangered species habitat conservation. This new combined group is currently submitting a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant to USDA NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service).

Partners on the project include the U.S. Department of Defense, which funds off-base conservation through the Army Compatible Use Buffer Program (ACUB), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NRCS, The Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM), Thurston County (Voluntary Stewardship & Habitat Conservation Program staff), Capitol Land Trust, South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust, and the Nisqually Land Trust.

ANCHORING LOCAL FOOD

Held at the Business & Innovation Center on the brand new SPSCC Lacey Campus, over twenty local institutions, including Providence St. Peter, Mason General Hospital, the Olympia, Tumwater, North Thurston & Yelm School Districts, WA State Corrections, Senior Services of South Sound, Haggen Foods, Lucky Eagle Casino, Aramark at the Evergreen State College and many more attended this Thurston Food System Council roundtable discussion on exploring ways to make a commitment at the institutional level to purchase more food from local producers.

Some of the main topics covered (and overall long-term objectives) of the event were; 1) to learn how much local food is currently being purchased; 2) to seek ways to standardize measurement of local food purchasing across institutional sectors; 3) to have the institutions learn from each other and share best practices, and; 4) to increase the level of commitment to purchasing local from individual institutions.

Some of the major needs identified were; 1) low cost; 2) simple logistics; 3) low time commitment for purchasers; 4) consistent level of food preparation, and; 5) year-round availability of products. Most all of these needs could be addressed with some sort of a food-hub/aggregation and distribution center.

Seen as one of the most compelling ways to drive an increase in local agricultural production, Institutional Procurement is an ongoing economic development target for not only the Food Council and the EDC, but many of our region's community partners. Further efforts on this front will be described in this report's section on *Procurement*.

COMBINING THE FOOD GROUPS!

The 3rd major undertaking of the Thurston Food System Council in 2015 took place mostly behind the scenes and was the tireless effort of the Council's co-chair, Katie Rains, Executive Director of GRuB (Garden Raised Bounty). Katie's efforts came to fruition in the first week of the new year as the *Thurston Food System Council* officially merged with both the *Thurston Thrives Food Action Team* and the *Asset Building Coalition's Food Hub*.

This effort was driven primarily by the need to eliminate some of the confusion for both the general public and local government agencies and officials who were seeking information on food in the Thurston Region. There were too many different groups and it was unclear what each of them did and represented. There was also a good deal of duplication of time and efforts (and too many meetings!) as many participants were members of multiple groups.

The new combined food group is still in the housekeeping phase, identifying a united mission statement, developing meeting standards, and reworking websites. The new name of the group is likely to be the **South Sound Food System Network**, and may be made official at the June 2016 meeting. The word change from *Council* to *Network* is intended to move away from an official membership structure and to encourage efforts of more inclusiveness. The change in focus from *Thurston* to *South Sound* acknowledges that food-sheds do not adhere to county lines. Furthermore, the "Network" is more and more attracting participation from surrounding counties—notably Mason, with regular attendance from Taylor Shellfish and the Mason WSU Ext. being joined at the May meeting by representatives from the Squaxin Island Tribe and the Mason Health Department.

The composition of the new combined group truly creates a fuller representation of the food system, including representatives from the economic, environmental and social spheres (please take a look at the attached spreadsheet in the Appendix listing the diversity of participants). One of the greatest benefits the "Network" provides is an opportunity, in one sitting, to hear from many different food perspectives. The "Network" is a hub for gathering the latest information on everything from food-related projects, initiatives and events, to research and national food trends.

While the "Network" balances a focus on Food Sovereignty with Food Security, and hence agriculture and economic development are not its only objectives, the recent May meeting did focus on the Food Economy. While momentum and participation has been steadily increasing at meetings for over a year now, the May meeting set a serious new record in attendance. To provide a sample of activities, the following is a list of businesses and organizations that reported (there were so many reports that we did not get through them all and some will present at the June meeting):

- Bountiful Byway ~ Visitor & Convention Bureau ~ Shauna Stewart
- Squaxin Island Tribe ~ Leslie Johnson & Aleta Poste

- The Olympia Farmers' Market ~ Mary DiMatteo
- Heritage Meats ~ Tracy Smaciarz
- Enterprise for Equity ~ Lisa Smith
- Helsing Junction Farm ~ Jen Witherspoon
- Deep Roots Food ~ Tanikka Watford
- Taylor & the Shellfish Industry ~ Marco Pinchot
- Aramark at The Evergreen State College ~ Bill Kinter
- Sustainable South Sound ~ Rachel Friedman
- Thurston EDC/Port of Olympia ~ Aslan Meade
- New Thurston WSU Extension Director & Ag Faculty ~ Stephen Bramwell
- Mason WSU Ext. ~ Justin Smith
- Anchoring Local Food follow up ~ Mary K Johnson & Aslan Meade

One of the immediate responses that came out of this meeting—after hearing a somewhat concerning economic farm report from Helsing Junction—was the arrangement for a more in depth farm food economy listening session to take place at their farm.

Communication and Networks

At the same time in 2015 when the *Thurston Food System Council* was working to merge several of the county's key food groups into one organization, the Council also saw the need for better communication, across the board, between as many food-related organizations as possible. Partly this realization was driven home by the fact the a couple local organizations separately applied for the same grant, without knowledge of each other's efforts (this obviously does not look well from the perspective of the grantor). And so an effort was begun to identify as many local food-related organizations as possible and actively increase communication between the groups. This effort has been moving forward quite successfully. As an example, members of the County's *Agriculture Advisory Committee* now sit on the Food System Council and several Food System Council members have made presentations to the Ag Advisory Committee.

These communication and network building efforts were given a major leg up when Aslan Meade was hired by the Thurston EDC in the Community Development Coordinator position. As the EDC's designated staff on issues related to agriculture and food system development, Mr. Meade now has the capacity to communicate and network on a full time basis. Aslan is also currently serving as one of the two Co-Chairs of the Thurston Food System Council and has been in that position since December of 2014. Add to this his position as liaison with the Port of Olympia on agriculture-related issues, his appointment to the Thurston County Agritourism Committee and his election to the position of Thurston Conservation District Board of Supervisors, Mr. Meade is now in a unique position to both have the capacity to keep many organizations connected and is also in a position to receive the most current information being shared from many different sources in the food system community.

The current active communication network includes almost every organization--in one way or another--represented in the *Thurston Region Agricultural Resource Directory* (outline included in the Appendix). And between actual EDC staff time spent at meetings, and close partnerships formed in the major local ag-related groups, Aslan is regularly in connection with organizations ranging from the *Thurston County Farm Bureau* to the County's *Voluntary Stewardship Program* and even the *Veterans in Agriculture* group.

During these past four months, it has become evident that a proactive agriculture agenda must put aside personal agendas and recognize that strong, honest and vibrant partnerships are critical to moving forward economic agriculture activity. The EDC is committed to that type of partnership – proactive, honest, community based, and creative.

The Colleges and the IPZ

The Thurston EDC has a long track record of collaboration with our Thurston-based institutes of Higher Learning. In recent months, and specific to agriculture, I will just quickly hit on a few highlights.

St. Martin's University

Our main ally at St. Martin's—on many projects—and specifically when it comes to agriculture, is Dr. Riley Moore. Dr. Moore has degrees in both Economics and Agriculture and has experience with agriculture economy-based research. Dr. Moore has joined working group discussions on the agriculture economy in recent months and has been instrumental in providing a reasoned argument articulating the objectives, as well as possible methodology, for moving forward. In the past, Dr. Moore has organized the St. Martin's student body to conduct research projects for the EDC. If deemed necessary, this could be done again, with a focus on gathering agriculture economy data.

Referring briefly back to our earlier section on direct services to business, a recent business working with our SCORE Counselors is a Veteran-owned agriculture training business who is offering a class at St. Martins, and who has become the St. Martin's school garden manager.

The Evergreen State College

Evergreen students regularly participate on the Thurston Food System Council and assist with ag and food related projects. In the current quarter two students have “unofficially” interned at the EDC, volunteering hours to help with such tedious work as compiling contact lists for the Ag Business Directory project. Hosting both an Organic Farm and an Agriculture Field of Study, Evergreen is a foundational resource for agriculture in our Thurston region. EDC staff will be exploring ways to more directly partner with the college as projects and plans develop.

South Puget Sound Community College

SPSCC is obviously our closest higher education partner at this time. Sharing a building and an economic development mission with the college, we interact on a daily basis with college staff and are exploring many ways to join forces and complement each other's resources. To provide one example--CB&I offerings for business trainings, workshops and advising are being presented together with SPSCC's business-focused offerings in the colleges' corporate and continuing education catalog, beginning summer quarter 2016.

Specific to agriculture, the EDC's Community Development Coordinator has been working with a SPSCC Sociology Professor, who has designed a community service component for her *Food and Society* course. The Professor has partnered with the Thurston Food System Council to seek volunteer opportunity submissions for the students. Unfortunately, the course was cancelled for Spring Quarter, but plans are in motion to pick the project back up in the next school year.

Craft Brewing & Distilling Innovative Partnership Zone (IPZ)

The Innovation Partnership Zones program was created in 2007 by Governor Gregoire and the Washington State Legislature. Its goal is to stimulate the growth of industry clusters and build regional economies. IPZs provide regions a mechanism to form partnerships between research entities, private sector partners, and workforce training to collaborate and develop commercially viable technologies.

The craft brewing and craft distilling IPZ designation was awarded in the fall of 2015 to the Thurston Economic Development Council (as administrator), in partnership with the City of Tumwater, South Puget Sound Community College, Washington State University School of Food Science, the Port of Olympia and the cities of Olympia and Lacey.

One of the ways in which SPSCC is seizing the IPZ day is by offering continuing education courses. This quarter they have two "Distiller for a Day" classes scheduled and they have plans to start teaching this curriculum. It is the intention of the IPZ that this economic sector be addressed from farm and produce to final product and international distribution. The middle elements of the program are squarely centered on building the agriculture production and supply chain that would serve the needs of the distillers and brewers.

The City of Tumwater is an essential partner in the IPZ efforts and is working to create a **Craft Brewing and Distilling Center** which has the stated mission to "ensure a world-class source for craft brewed beers and ciders and craft distilled spirits which are made from locally grown ingredients by independent expert producers and distributed nationally and internationally to great acclaim."

A list of area Brewers, Distillers and Cider Makers is provided in the appendix.

Section Four – Deliverables and Key Next Steps

The next major agriculture-related report generated by the Thurston EDC for the Port of Olympia is projected to be produced in September of 2016.

It is the EDC's intention that this report will focus on providing the Port with deliverables identified by Port staff. The following is a list of deliverables, identified by Port staff to date:

- **Agricultural Infrastructure Investment Decision Calculator**
- **Thurston Region Agricultural Resource Directory**
- **Thurston Region Agricultural Business Directory**
- **Equipment Purchase and Rental Program**

Details about each of these deliverables was presented in Section 3 of this report, under the heading *The Port of Olympia*. The current drafts or outlines of these documents are presented in the Appendix.

Of note: It shall be a standard operating procedure for EDC staff to be on the lookout for agricultural investment opportunities. If any specific opportunity should present itself in a significant way—especially if it is of a time-sensitive nature or clearly suggests involvement on the part of the Port—EDC staff shall, of course, quickly provide this information.

TENINO AGRICULTURE INNOVATION PARK PROJECT REPORT

Port staff has also shown specific interest in this exploratory project. The EDC will keep Port staff updated and will provide further written reports as needed, if and when, any major development should occur which moves the project forward.

Beyond these currently identified deliverables, Port staff and Commissioners may also request further work products. A great deal of material has been covered in this current report. If any specific content, story, project, etc. should interest the Port, please just communicate your interest to EDC staff and updates and more information will be provided.

Next Steps

Most of the projects presented in this report will be continued forward, including work on the Northwest Agricultural Business Center, RCDI grant, and Bountiful Byway projects.

One area important to specifically call attention to is upcoming actions targeting agricultural producer outreach and input. The following are some of the key next steps EDC staff will be devoting time and effort toward on this topic over the next 4 months:

- Continued efforts through the STEDI initiative

- Bountiful Byway Business Readiness Trainings
 - June 3 – Gate City Schoolhouse, Rochester
 - June 8 – Prairie Hotel, Yelm
- Farmer Listening sessions
 - Helsing Junction Farm- May 18
 - Farmer Breakfasts—June 23, 27 & 28

Summary

This report covered a lot of ground, yet is still but a sampling of the work underway in the Thurston region within the agricultural sphere. Some of the topics still to cover include local investing efforts, data collection, the *Cascadia Grains Conference*, and more information on food procurement at the institutional level. Some of the areas that deserve more attention include updates on our local Indian Tribes and their efforts in agriculture and connections still needing to be made with more traditional farm organizations like the *Future Farmers of America* and the *Grange Association*. There is much still to learn and much still to do.

Luckily we are not alone in these efforts, but have many very competent and committed partners. This network of partnerships will only increase as the work expands in scope. Ultimately, this is the real work—initiating and developing relationships, forming and strengthening partnerships, increasing communication, expanding the network, building community. It's about the people. The more interconnected our community is, the more successful our economy will be.

The intent of this report was to begin to bring into focus a lay of the agricultural landscape from the lens of local economic development efforts. Again, at the EDC, we believe that economic development is about identifying opportunities and applying efforts that result in creating a vibrant and sustainable economy. We hope this report has begun to identify some of the opportunities that currently exist within our regional agricultural economy, and we look to our longstanding partnership with the Port of Olympia to help direct the efforts that will be applied.

Appendix

Deliverables

Please see the following attachments for additional information

-Agricultural Infrastructure Investment Decision Calculator--Draft

- Mason County Infrastructure Investment Rubric - as an example

-Thurston Region Agricultural Resource Directory—Outline

-Thurston Region Agriculture Business Directory

- Farms Draft Spreadsheet
- Food Manufacturers Draft Spreadsheet
- Agricultural Business Directory Form—Draft

-Project: Equipment purchase and rental program

Contact Lists

Please see the following attachments for additional information

-Thurston Food System Council

-STEDI

-Team Bountiful!

-Innovation Partnership Zone – Craft Brewing & Distilling

-Anchoring Local Food – Institutional Food Procurement

-Regional Farmer's Markets

- Olympia Downtown
- West Olympia
- Tumwater
- Tenino
- Yelm