

# The State of Washington



## Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, every day, employees of the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) contribute to the economic vitality of Washington's towns and urban centers, helping to boost the state's food and agriculture industry from \$30 billion to \$46 billion these past eight years; and

**WHEREAS**, employees provide regulatory, marketing and policy support to facilitate the movement of agricultural products in domestic and international markets, including \$120 million in fiscal year 2012 in WSDA export-assistance sales to support the Governor's Washington Export Initiative; and

**WHEREAS**, WSDA leads food assistance programs to work with community food banks, meal programs and tribal programs to serve Washington families in need, totaling some 500,000 families in 2012; and

**WHEREAS**, the public and industry benefits from the efforts by WSDA to ensure the safe and legal distribution and use of pesticides and fertilizers, support alternative pest control methods to provide the tools farmers use to protect their crops and work safely with pesticides, and safely dispose of 1.2 million pounds of toxic and obsolete pesticides over the past eight years; and

**WHEREAS**, employees work to high quality standards, achieving ISO (International Organization for Standardization) accreditation for agency-operated laboratories that provide microbiology (2011), seed (2011), chemical residue (2008), and metrology services that enhance food safety and provide consumer protections; and

**WHEREAS**, Washington has a strong food processing industry employing more than 39,000 and the businesses—including dairy farms, food processors and beverage manufacturers, food warehouses and egg dealers—are licensed and inspected by WSDA; and

**WHEREAS**, WSDA now uses the LEAN process improvement approach to empower staff to provide improved customer service and value through teams that cut waste out of work processes, and employees are engaged in leadership development strategies to support future customers of state services; and

**WHEREAS**, employees have met the challenges of tough economic times and budget cuts and continue to provide excellent service by stressing low overhead, communication and involvement with our stakeholders while focusing on value for Washington's taxpayers and our fee-paying customers;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Christine O. Gregoire, Governor of the State of Washington, do hereby honor the employees of the Department of Agriculture for their commitment and dedication to supporting the state's vital agricultural industry for the people in Washington State.

Signed this 7<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2012

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Christine Gregoire', is written over the printed name of the Governor.

Governor Christine O. Gregoire