



State Department of Agriculture

**Dr. Candace Jacobs,
Assistant Director**

March 31, 2016

Food Safety & Consumer Services Division Annual Report January–December 2015

The Food Safety & Consumer Services Division serves the needs of the agricultural community, consumers and stakeholders through the state of Washington by delivering excellent customer service at every level of the division while providing each team member of our programs with the tools and training necessary to be successful.

THIS

PAGE

LEFT

BLANK

INTENTIONALLY

Table of Contents

Letter to the Director / Division Overview

By Dr. Candace Jacobs, Assistant Director for Food Safety & Consumer Services.....2

Organization

Organizational Chart (11/2015).....3
At-a-Glance.....4-5

Program Reports

Administrative Services.....6-13
Food Assistance.....14-19
Food Safety.....20-23
Microbiology Lab.....24-27
Organic Food.....28-38
Rapid Response.....39-44
Compliance and Outreach, Office of.....45-47

Financial Update

2015 Program Budgets.....48
2015 Division Total Budget.....48

Acronyms

Acronym Key.....49



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. Box 42560 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2560 • (360) 902-1800

March 31, 2016

Dear Director Sandison:

This report provides an overview of the accomplishments achieved and activities conducted by the Food Safety and Consumer Services Division in 2015. Defending the safety, integrity and availability of our food system is our main purpose among the Division's program areas of Food Safety, Organic Food, Animal Feed/Rapid Response Team, Food Assistance, and Microbiology Laboratory.

We attribute the success of our programs to our innovative program leaders and team members who exhibit outstanding customer outreach and service. We have excellent communication and collaboration within and outside of the agency with local, state, academic and industry customers and stakeholders. Involvement and feedback from our stakeholders is a key factor in the decisions we make each day whether it involves redesigning a license application or developing proposed legislation.

April 2015 saw a leadership change in the Division: Kirk Robinson became the WSDA Deputy Director and I took on his former role as the Assistant Director for the Division, a position I had left in 2000. The Division was further reorganized along program lines to strengthen and improve focus. A new Animal Feed/Rapid Response Team Program was formed, and a Policy/External Affairs position was created. The implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act continues to be a top priority for our Division as these new federal standards for food safety will impact the majority of Division programs. Our future work in providing customers and stakeholders with education on these food, feed, and produce safety standards will be fundamental to the successful implementation for our farmers and food processors.

The Division is key in supporting efforts to reduce childhood obesity and providing access to healthy foods in our schools and to low income families across Washington. The Food Assistance Program and its Farm to School group activities generate new markets for the state's farmers and provide the foundation for healthier Washingtonians.

We look forward to continuing our regulatory and technical assistance activities in the year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Candace A. Jacobs

Candace A. Jacobs
Assistant Director for Food Safety & Consumer Services
Washington State Department of Agriculture



**Food Safety & Consumer Services Division
 At-a-Glance: January 1 – December 31, 2015**

Number of Licenses, Certifications and Registrations

Food Safety – 4,288

Food Processors – 2,067	Warehouses – 770	Dairy Plants – 122	Dairy Farms – 480
Egg Handlers/Dealers – 990	Custom Meat – 140	Special Poultry – 39	Dairy Technicians – 670
Direct Sellers – 2			

Certified Organic Operations – 1,108

Producers (crop & livestock farms) – 737	Processors – 212
Handlers and Retailers – 159	

Material Registration

Materials Registered in Database – 826	Material Registration Companies – 302
--	---------------------------------------

Sanitary Certificates Issued – 5,456

Cottage Food Permits – 100

Other Activities

Feed Safety / Rapid Response

Commercial Feed Licenses – 660	Registered Pet Foods – 4,903
--------------------------------	------------------------------

Food Recalls – 36

Class 1 – 25	Class 2 – 10	Class 3 – 1
--------------	--------------	-------------

RRT Coordinated Responses / Activations – 23

Complaints – 71

Food Safety Consumer Complaints – 59	Consumer Complaints about a Certified Organic Operation – 11	Food Safety Industry Complaints about Inspections – 1
--------------------------------------	--	---

Inspections – 6,149

Organic Program – 1,062	Milk Tankers – 320
Eggs – 510	Marijuana Infused Edibles – 56
USDA Country of Origin Labeling Audits – 93	FDA Contract Audits – 30
Food Processors, Warehouses, Dairy Plants, Dairy Farms and Custom Meat – 4,078	



Food Safety & Consumer Services Division
At-a-Glance: January 1 – December 31, 2015 (continued)

- ✓ **Food Assistance Programs served:**
 - 500 Local Food Banks, Food Pantries, Meal Programs and Tribes
 - Represented 8,482,299 individual client visits
- ✓ **Microbiology Lab:**
 - Samples tested by the Microbiology Laboratory – 6,416
 - Tests run by the Microbiology Laboratory – 15,610

Dairy – 9,800	Feed – 200
Food – 5,300	FERN Project – 310

✓ **Food Safety Compliance Activities for January 15 – September 15, 2015**

Notice of Correction (NOC) – 601	Notice of Intent (NOI) – 15
----------------------------------	-----------------------------

- ✓ **Outreach Activities (meetings, workshops and tours) –**
 - Over 30 activities between January 15 – September 15, 2015



Core Functions and Services

- Barbara Baker has been the Business Analyst within the Food Safety & Consumer Services Division, Administration Unit since the position was established in July, 2013. In July 2015, her position was moved to the Director's Office as a Management Analyst. She continues to work on projects within the Division, mostly IT-related.

Key Accomplishments for 2015

X-LIMS Projects—

Electronic Submission of Sample Collection Forms—

- After many months of testing by both the Microbiology Laboratory and the Food Safety Officers (FSOs) from the field, the e-Dairy Products Collection Form went 'live' in April 2015. The e-form allows an FSO to complete a Dairy Products Collection Form in the field on their computer, and when the form is completed email it to the Microbiology Laboratory's Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), X-LIMS. X-LIMS takes the data in the e-form and starts the Chain of Custody (COC) in the LIMS, assigning laboratory sample numbers, and recording information about the sample in X-LIMS (e.g., sample type, collection temperature, pull date). In addition, the completed form is updated with the Laboratory's sample numbers and is attached in the LIMS to the COC. The FSO receives either an email confirmation the COC has been created, with the COC number, or if a problem is detected in the submitted form, the form is returned to the FSO, requesting they fix the error and resubmit it to X-LIMS.
- Implementation of the e-Dairy Products Collection Form was phased in starting with the Southwest Region (April), followed by the East Region (May) and finally the Northwest Region (June). In addition to Kim King, Sample Coordinator for the Food Safety Program, each Region had one or two FSOs that were part of the testing team and were resources for their co-workers who may have needed assistance. Early feed-back from the field and the laboratory resulted in several improvements to the form.
- An e-Environmental Sampling Form was also been developed, tested in the LIMS's test environment, and deployed in July. A sample collection form for food samples has been developed and will be implemented in 2016.

Automated Upload of Sampling Data from Industry Laboratories—

- Work began in August by Ethosoft, the Microbiology Laboratory's LIMS vendor, to allow for the upload of testing data from Darigold Corporate Laboratory. The Darigold laboratory provides monthly testing results for their milk producers, as well as several smaller dairy cooperatives. In the past, this data was entered by hand into another database. Since the data is sent to WSDA as an electronic file it was decided to explore how to upload the data to another system. This data is in the LIMS as a venue separate from the Microbiology Lab's test venues, and is not be visible to Laboratory staff and does not affect the Laboratory's testing numbers.
-



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- Producer data can be accessed via the “Dairy Ledger Report”, a report previously developed for FDA milk plant ratings. Producer data displayed on the Dairy Ledger Report has been processed by X-LIMS, and only sample(s) collected and tested during the Dairy’s first sampling date of the month is displayed and if more than one sample is collected at that sampling date, those samples are averaged. In the Report out-of-compliance samples are highlighted in yellow. Uploading a ‘usual’ file from Darigold takes about 5 minutes. One of the Food Safety Office staff projected it would take at least 2 hours to enter 500 samples into a database by hand.

Food Record Electronic Database (FRED):

Warehouse License Renewals—

- In 2015 the Food Safety Program used FRED to email renewal notices to nearly 800 licensed Warehouses. Licenses for warehouses expire on April 1st of each year. The original renewal email was sent in mid-February with a reminder emailed on March 18th to those who had not renewed. As of the end of April, 111 warehouses had still had not renewed their licenses. On May 1st those warehouse who still had not renewed their licenses were mailed a Notice of Correction (NOC) requesting they renew their licenses and pay a late fee or further administrative action may occur.

Food Processors, Custom Meat Operations, and Dairy Plant Renewals—

- In mid-April, a letter was mailed to all food processors, custom meat operations, and dairy plants informing them that license renewal notices will be sent this year by email. They were requested to update their contact information, including an email, with the Food Safety Office. This step was taken in an attempt to reduce the number of facilities without or with incorrect email addresses in FRED, since the number of license renewals for this group of facilities is over three times the number of warehouses. Renewal notices were sent in mid-May, approximately 45 days before their licenses expire on July 1st.

Continued Development—

- The FRED Workgroup continues to work with Ian Kremer, the developer from IT. Additionally, a Business Analyst, Dinesh Jeyaram, was hired in IT. He is working with the FRED Workgroup to assist the group in determining the requirements for future FRED enhancements and will then will work with Ian to get the enhancements programmed. The list of enhancements has been prioritized and the developer is working on the essential items first on the list.
- Shane Roberts, a developer with IT, has developed a number of reports in FRED. Many of the queries requested frequently from the Food Safety Program will now be reports easily produced by the users.
- A new version of FRED was tested by system users in the Test environment in early-April. A few issues were found, fixed and added to the new version prior to deployment. This major update included many things that both improve the functionality and the usefulness of FRED users.



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- Work continued on defining and developing the Compliance Tab, as well as determining how to accurately record information about compliance actions taken against a firm. In the current version of FRED, entering information about compliance issues is recorded on a Compliance Tab associated with Inspections on the Inspection Tab. This is the data that needs to be moved to the new Compliance Tab. A complicating issue is not all compliance actions entered in FRED are related to an inspection (e.g., failing dairy samples, out of business documentation), but because there was nowhere to enter this information in FRED it was entered on the Inspection Tab and the related Compliance Tab. Ian provided a list of nearly 500 inspections in FRED that contained any data on the Compliance Tab connected with the Inspection Tab. These inspections needed to be reviewed one by one to determine if the information needs to be moved to the new Compliance Tab or be deleted.
- After testing a new build of FRED in early-December, with reporting capabilities and the Compliance Tab, it was decided to fix bugs and to re-release into the Test environment late in December for another round of testing. After the remaining bugs were found and fixed the new build will hopefully be deployed in early-January 2016.

FRED Needs in the Field—

- Dave Erho, one of the FSOs, has converted all of the inspection forms used by FSOs in the field to PDF-fillable forms. Barbara met with Dave to determine how those forms are used and to explore the possibility of utilizing these forms for direct entry into FRED, similar to how the e-forms are used with X-LIMS for laboratory samples. This meeting has led to the need for a larger discussion about how FRED can be utilized in the field. Barbara has scheduled a meeting with a couple FSOs, a Food Safety Regional Manager, a Food Safety Office staff, and Division's IT Representative to explore the information needs of FRED in the field.
- Kenji Iwamiya, the Division's IT Representative went on a joint inspection with Dan Mason an FSO to the Starbucks on Pike Street in Seattle to determine if any technology improvements can be made. Kenji made the following observations:
 - The ability to collect electronic signatures would greatly improve the inspection process. Inspectors currently carry paper forms and clipboards to inspections and equip their cars with mobile printers. This process improvement would save both time and money for the inspectors and the agency.
 - Food Safety field staff need the ability to lookup firm information without having to contact the Food Safety Program Office for assistance. Directly accessing FRED would allow them to become more self-sufficient and efficient in handling their workload.
 - Eliminate duplicate work for inspection data entry. The inspectors currently use a PDF-fillable form, print the form, and then send it to the office where data from the inspection form is entered into FRED. It was suggested Food Safety adopt a system that uses an offline mode sequence that would allow inspectors to enter the data straight into FRED with or without internet, thus eliminating duplicate efforts and time spent in the field and office



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- FRED Training was provided by Barbara and Ian to the Food Safety Regional Managers at the Food Safety Management Team meeting on December 16, 2015.

Information System for the Organic Program—

- The Organic Program, using a Sole Source contract, contracted with Intact for their Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) information system Ecert. Ecert fully meets the requirements of the Organic Program and has become the organic industry standard for certification of organic products.

Mapping—

- Barbara worked with Dr. Lyndon Badcoe with the Avian Health Program to gather a list of poultry operations in the state (e.g., egg handlers/dealers, layer flocks, broilers, etc.) so they can be displayed spatially on a map. As needed, addresses were geo-coded so they could be mapped. Rod Baker, with the Natural Resources Assessment Program (NRAS), produced the map. Having GIS data for these entities will become invaluable if Washington experiences any Avian Influenza (AI) introductions from wild water fowls during the fall 2015 and winter 2016 to identify premises within a quarantine zone, as it was in January 2015 when several premises were infected with AI.

Food Safety Program Annual Meeting—

- Barbara attended the Annual meeting and made the following presentations:
 - *E. coli* and pathogenic *E. coli*.
 - Demonstrated FRED and how to use X-LIMS to submit Dairy and Environmental Samples Collection Reports to the Microbiology Laboratory. Discussed the issue of how inspection data can get into FRED without duplicate data entry. The Food Safety Officers have become comfortable with using PDF-fillable forms for sending information directly into the LIMS and have suggested they would like to have a similar ability with sending their inspection forms directly into FRED rather than directly entering the information into FRED.



Administrative Services



March 2016

Core Functions and Services

- The Food Safety & Consumer Services (FSCS) Division administrative staff enables the program leadership and staff to execute their missions in an efficient and effective manner. The Division Coordinator (DC) supervises the administrative staff with the exception of the IT Specialist.
- The DC provides executive and programmatic support for the Assistant Director (AD) of the Food Safety & Consumer Services (FSCS) and the Division which encompasses an average of 120 FTEs. The DC is the single point for coordination between Agency Operations and the Division's programs. This position provides support to Division staff and has delegated authority over an FSCS annual budget of approximately \$37.0 million.
- The Information Technology Specialist(ITS), Management Analyst (MA), and Administrative Assistant(AA) provide for continuity and consistency across all the programs for functions such as: telecommunications, computer software and hardware procurement, deployment and maintenance, network and web page maintenance, facilities and space needs, public disclosure requests, travel reimbursement (TEMS), supplies and equipment, receivables and payables, Fleet management, mail, personnel actions, conference and travel arrangements for the AD, and the administration of the time, attendance and leave program (PISCES). As a group we focus on providing excellent service to our customers, which are our programs, and on improving Division processes as needed to maximize productivity and decrease expenses wherever possible.

Key Accomplishments for 2015

- Rolled out WSDA Clothing Policy – Collaborated with agency Administrative Regulations to create a clear Division procedure. Communicated this to Division and implemented order process. Trained Division Management Analyst to manage and maintain.
- Requested and implemented Pisces enhancements gathered from programs to assist with ease of entry and accuracy. Worked with system programmer to ensure specific Division needs were met.



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- Billing clean up – Took over payment of Division monthly bills. Ensured bills were paid out of correct PI and trained Administrative Assistant as back up in absence of DC.
- On boarding of new Assistant Director, Dr. Candace Jacobs, in April.
- Held monthly administrative meetings with each program represented. Frequently invited agency subject matter experts. Discussed needs and issues, training on administrative tasks and policies.
- In conjunction with Assistant Director, held monthly Leadership Team meetings. Frequently invited agency subject matter experts. Discussed current Division and program projects and needs.
- Held monthly Budget Meetings with AD Program Managers and Financial Services to ensure an average of 40 PI's are on track and discuss any necessary adjustments.
- Conducted Pisces clean up to ensure employee information matched HRMS. Worked with HR staff to clean up discrepancies.
- Hired a new Administrative Assistant in July. Duties include processing TEMS, employee reimbursements, managing Pisces timekeeping, assisting with HR advisements and employee letters, processing new hires, serving as records coordinator, and assisting DC with other duties.
- Began Scan & Toss project in the Food Safety Program. Created Division procedure, met with key players in the program to discuss details and ensure understanding. Progress so far has enabled the program to eliminate 4 file cabinets to create needed space for additional cubes. Turned management of project over to program Administrative Assistant. Project is anticipated to end in December of 2016.
- Held Division Public Disclosure Training with agency Records Officer in September. 28 staff members attended this required training. Will continue to administer this classroom training annually.
- Updated New Hire process. Created packets, checklist, seating chart and electronic *Welcome packet* which includes program overviews. Administrative Assistant manages this and sends email to new hires on first day.
- Audit of Fleet mileage – Administrative Assistant began this in October to ensure complete and accurate monthly entries in order to prevent unnecessary fees in regard to employee state vehicles.
- Established a standardized cube model Division wide to reduce spending on customizing equipment and cube layouts.
- Managed Division supply order process. MA and AA worked together to divide up tasks and cross train to ensure adequate coverage and also to streamline the process where applicable.
- Worked with A.D. on Division reorganization including dissolution Office of Compliance and Outreach program, creation of the Feed/RRT program, and the creation of an External Affairs/Policy Advisor position.



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- Worked with Facilities Manager to build and/or acquire a total of six new cubes to house growing program staff sizes. Reorganized existing floor plan for program staff continuity – moved a total of 11 employees.
- Updated Internet and Intranet pages.
- Completed budget allocations for 2015-2017 biennium.
- Worked with programs and Administrative Regulations team to process a total of 80 public disclosure requests.
- IT Specialist returned 37 VPN fobs to WaTech, resulting in a reduction of \$17/mo x 37 = \$629/mo or \$7,548/year.
- IT Specialist trained Division staff on new Service Desk Ticketing System initiated by agency leadership.
- Personnel activity in the Division during 2015:
 - 16 newly hired employees and 1 internal agency transfer
 - We are also proud to report that we awarded the following Length of Service certificates:
 - ✓ 6 – 5 year certificates
 - ✓ 2 – 10 year certificates
 - ✓ 1 - 15 year certificate
 - ✓ 4 – 20 year certificates
 - ✓ 3 – 25 year certificates
 - ✓ 1 – 35 year certificate

2016 Goals

- Utilization of the ECMS database to track contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements. Training was administered to Leadership Team in January of this year and users were set up in the system. This will allow more accurate documentation of contract activity and more accountability for contract managers. The Division will not be using SharePoint to house this documentation as was the previous practice.
- Programs need further understanding of the WSDA Clothing Policy. The Administrative Regulations Manager is scheduled to attend our March Leadership Team to provide clarity in order to ensure consistency across the Division and to ensure adherence to the agency policy.
- Our IT Specialist is in the process of cleaning up our R Drive. He has completed several programs and will continue to complete all Division files. This will allow more drive space and better organization.
- The Division is hosting a Division wide TEMS training class in March of this year. Fiscal staff will be facilitating a comprehensive walk through of the TEMS system process and related travel policies and procedures.
- DC will continue to work with agency subject matter experts to administer Division wide training classes to Division staff.



2016 Goals (continued)

- Division will continue to hold monthly Budget, Leadership Team, and Administrative Assistant meetings to ensure consistency and communication throughout all programs.
- We will hold our first annual Division wide staff meeting this November. Content will include current program/Division/agency activities, training, and employee recognition
- AD is requesting that all programs review their applicable WAC's this spring and to initiate rulemaking as needed. Program Managers will work with the External Affairs/Policy Advisor and DC to complete the process.
- AD will participate in a work group to relocate the Microbiology Lab currently located in Tumwater, WA.
- AD will initiate succession planning training with Program Managers and create a succession plan for Leadership Team.
- AD is asking programs to focus on ensuring evaluations, expectations, and position descriptions are brought up to date and are continually updated as needed.
- AD and DC will collaborate with Leadership Team to possibly implement a structured Employee Recognition program within the Division



Food Assistance Program



June 2015

Small Farm Direct Marketing / Farm to School Programs



February 2016



Core Functions and Services

- The Food Assistance Programs staff develops and issues program contracts and funding with non-profit food banks, community action agencies, tribes and tribal organizations; provides oversight of contracts; collaborates with state and national advisory committees and coalitions; provides food ordering, warehousing and shipping logistics services for USDA commodities; participates in emergency management responses; provides food recall information; offers technical assistance and nutrition education information; monitors for state and federal compliance; and develops key partnerships and data-driven strategies to alleviate hunger and increase access to healthier food options available in the emergency food system while supporting the agricultural community.
- In October of 2015, Food Assistance Programs (RCW 43.23.290) expanded to include support for the Small Farm Direct Marketing Program (RCW 15.64.050) and the Farm to School Program (RCW 15.64.060) which were previously part of the Office of Compliance and Outreach. These programs provide education, outreach, technical assistance, and other services to increase market opportunities for Washington's food and agriculture businesses. This work supports WSDA's goals to facilitate the movement of Washington agricultural products in domestic markets and to protect and reduce the risk to public health by assuring the safety of the state's food supply. The team serves as a central point of information, resources, and tools to assist Washington's agricultural stakeholders, to share best practices, and to highlight successful projects across the state to support the development and success of local supply chains.
- These WSDA programs help farmers and food businesses access markets that match their scale and type of production, and assist them to diversify their markets as they become ready. The team supports development of emerging markets by educating buyers and consumers, and by designing and sharing education and marketing materials to help consumers recognize the value of Washington-grown foods.
- They work closely with buyers to increase their understanding of seasonality, marketing, and purchasing considerations for buying and selling locally-grown foods. The team supports agencies and institutions to develop purchasing, food service, menu planning, and communication policies and procedures that support local purchases. Our education and outreach model is built on peer-led, on-site workshops; clear and detailed publications; and approachability and accessibility for offering knowledgeable and accurate technical assistance to individuals, businesses, and communities. WSDA's market development work ties to community goals for economic development through partnerships in urban and rural communities to increase markets and sales for locally-grown foods, and for increased public health through better access to healthy foods grown in Washington.
- Provided over \$20.5 million in USDA food along with state and federal funding to lead contractors which in turn helped over 500 food banks, food pantries, and meal programs distribute 139.2 million pounds of food to low-income Washington families. A portion of these funds went to thirty-one tribes to issue food vouchers to their community members and, in a few cases, to support their own food pantries.



Key Accomplishments for 2015

- One in six Washingtonians received food from food pantries that were supported with resources from WSDA. On average, each client visited a food pantry 6.7 times last year resulting in over 8.5 million visits. You may view the 2015 Emergency Food Assistance Program Closeout Report [here](#).
- Stakeholders successfully lobbied for an additional \$ 800,000 for our state funded Emergency Food Assistance Program in SFY 2015. WSDA passed 100% of these funds directly to local non-profit emergency food assistance providers and tribal organizations.
- Completed over 44 contractor and subcontractor compliance reviews.
- Received and issued over 495 truckloads of USDA food for distribution to lead contractors and logistic partners statewide. Over 121,043 families received this each month.
- Worked with the Food Assistance Programs Advisory Committee, housed within the Washington Food Coalition, to focus on further streamlining efforts and program improvements in conjunction with our contractors and partners.
- Supporting [Governor's Goal 4 - Metric 1.2.A](#), Healthy and Safe Communities – Fostering the health of Washingtonians from a healthy start to a safe and supported future focusing on increasing the percentage of healthier food options being offered to low-income children and families through food pantries, farmers markets, and meal programs by 5% from 2014 baseline by 2017. This information allows us to assess how our collective efforts are impacting improvements in the availability of healthier food options. This year's report again shows what an incredible job the emergency food providers are doing which statewide shows 84% of the food distributed is considered healthier. We are well on our way to exceeding the 5% goal!
- We completed Phase 2 of our national survey of TEFAP distribution systems which included in-depth interviews and will be used in the future to guide changes in the next bid for the state level shipping and warehousing.
- In partnership with the Washington Food Coalition (WFC), WSDA helps to support the annual FRESH RESULTS Awards. These awards honor the work that farmers and emergency food providers are doing to combat hunger and increase the nutritional value of food coming into the system. WSDA Deputy Director Kirk Robinson and Assistant Director Dr. Candace Jacobs honored the winners at the annual WFC conference. The 2015 winners were Inaba Produce Farms Inc. and Mobile Food Bank, FISH Food Banks of Pierce County.
- Our Farm to Food Pantry Pilot Program, in partnership with Rotary First Harvest, expanded this year to include 21 farms in six counties. Limited funding was provided to purchase food from local farmers which increased the amount of healthier fresh foods coming into the emergency food system. [You may view the 2015 Purchasing Pilot report here.](#)
- Participated in the Northwest Farmers Fighting Hunger June Event which resulted in over 199,380 pounds of food going to families in need in Oregon and Washington as well as bringing awareness to the general public that hunger exists in their local community.



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- We brought together federal, state, and local food safety experts from government and several hunger relief organizations to raise awareness regarding the rules and current practices related to donations/processing of certain product types. This should result in increasing the safety of donated food and the awareness of best practices for donors and recipients alike.
- Statewide Farm to School Summit - held on April 15–16, 2015 in Wenatchee, WA. The 1.5 day Summit convened 130 key farm to school stakeholders from all over the state to for workshops and to network for success and problem-solving for farm to school programs (28% school nutrition professionals, 33% farmers, processors, distributors, etc. and 40% community partners, educators, and agency representatives). Presentations and final agenda are available on WSDA Farm to School Summit [webpage](#) on the WSDA Farm to School Online Toolkit.
- WSDA Farm to School staff partnered with OSPI to support the successful start of the USDA Pilot for the Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables. WSDA recruitment and technical assistance helped 9 Washington farmers, processors, and food distributors become approved to sell to schools under this pilot opportunity. (Prior to the pilot, produce purchases using USDA Food funds were made only through the single Dept. of Defense produce vendor in each state.)
- Bridging the GAPs On-Farm Food Safety Workshops and Technical Assistance – Small Farm Direct Marketing and Farm to School staff conducted 3 on-farm workshops in 2015 (Spokane, San Juan Islands, and Mt. Vernon locations), including two that were followed by computer lab sessions to get farmers started with food safety plans. Staff presented on the new FDA Produce Safety Rule on the day it was released, at the annual Tilth Producers Conference. A new USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant started in October, which will provide for more on-farm and computer lab workshops, updated guidance to incorporate the new FDA Produce Safety Rules into Bridging the GAPs resources, and technical assistance and a mentor system to assist growers statewide. The Mount Vernon workshop, offered in English and Spanish, was profiled in Food Safety News: [Learning to ‘Bridge the GAPs for Small and Mid-Sized Farms](#).
- Spokane/Stevens County Local Buying Mission– WSDA presented the first of the Local Buying Missions funded by a 2014 Specialty Crop Block Grant, working closely with local partners (WSU Extension, LINC Foods, and Gonzaga University). WSDA staff developed an event model that aligns a WSDA Bridging the GAPs workshop, partner-funded Wholesale Success training, and technical assistance in a single region to lead up to an effective farm tour followed by business education, and one-on-one scheduled meetings between buyers and sellers. In Spokane, the morning farm tour sold out, with 28 buyers and farmers visiting 2 farms, a local food hub distribution site co-located with a food bank, and a university food service and on-site hydroponic greenhouse. Forty people attended the afternoon trade meeting. Half of survey respondents reported making new sales relationships, with another 20% replying that maybe they had made a new sales relationship. Capital Press covered the event: [WSDA tour seeks to connect farmers, buyers](#).



Future Changes in the Internal or External Environment that could Impact Customers and/or Program Services

- Shifts in federal and state resources, increasing depth of client need will continue to impact the emergency food systems' ability to provide the needed levels of support for low-income clients within the community. In particular, seniors are seeing a greater increase in need when compared to other demographics.
- As we move towards improving our current contracting structure for implement the TEFAP distribution system it is imperative to fully engage our contractors, subcontractors and partners. We will be developing a strong communications plan which will include a series of listening sessions in 2016.
- The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) will continue to be implemented by FDA and this will impact WSDA and stakeholders as new federal rules compliance dates approach.
- The Small Farm Direct Marketing and Farm to School programs receive \$125,000 per year of State General Funds. Projects and programs are offered through grant funding and contracts. Success and availability of grant funding is critical to our ability to continue these programs.

Partnerships and Linkages that Shape the Program

- In addition to our contractors which are made up of food banks, food pantries, community action programs, and tribes, we actively partner with the Washington Food Coalition which supports and compliments much of the work we do.
- We also collaborate with, Rotary First Harvest, Northwest Harvest, the Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition and several other coalitions that focus on access to healthier foods and nutrition. At the state level, we serve on the Governor's Advisory Committee on Homelessness, the Governor's Inter-Agency Council on Health Disparities, and the Food System Roundtable which is made up of state agencies, advocacy coalitions and food sector partners. At the federal level we are members of the American Commodity Distribution Association which brings together state agencies, industry, contractors and partners involved in USDA food programs. Over the last few years, there has been a concerted effort to coordinate and partner strategically at local, state and federal levels.
- The Small Farm Direct Marketing Program and Farm to School Program are both very customer-oriented programs. They serve agricultural businesses (farmers, processors, distributors, food hubs, etc.) and buyers (farmers markets, schools and other institutions, retailers, etc.), community and non-profit partners, and state and local government agencies. The team works in partnership within the FS&CS Division, the Commodity Division (especially the Fruit and Vegetable Program) and across WSDA. We work with USDA, Office for Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), WSU and extension staff, the Washington State Farmers Market Association, our State Health and Local Health agencies, as well as numerous industry stakeholder groups and community organizations.



LEAN Accomplishments and Goals

- Food Assistance Programs staff worked hard in 2015 to take a fresh look at all processes and identified new ways to improve while following agency procedure for all new forms and publications. Using the value stream mapping completed in 2014 as a building block we continued to request feedback from our contractors and advisory committee to help meet the needs of the emergency food system. With the change of the biennium, we strived to provide better service to our Contractors by streamlining the contracting process from application to executed contract. We created a new biennial application handbook to guide our contractors through the application process and a new policy and procedures manuals to help them stay compliant with all contract terms and conditions.
- We updated approximately 55 forms and publications. Our effort to keep our contractors up to date with all of the changes led to website modifications. We restructured as well as created new pages to ensure our contractors had access to the newest version of all of our forms and publications.
- We continued work on our program structure. The regional model allowed us to focus on one point of contact for each contractor. This approach was well received and improved our communication as well as continued to strengthen our relationships with the people we serve.

2016 Goals

- Identification of new ways to improve the quality of our services, contracting and pilot projects that encourage partnerships and collaborative projects across state agencies, federal, and local agencies.
- Increased collaborations with private and public sector partners will help in reducing hunger in families across the state and have a positive impact on the economic vitality of our state's agricultural community.
- Release of our National TEFAP Distribution System Survey which will inform future improvements to the current system.
- Increased educational outreach regarding the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) will be focused on medium and small producer/processor operations through the current Bridging the GAPs Specialty Crop Block Grant and with internal agency partners.
- WSDA will be looking for more opportunities to partner with FDA, state, local, extension and industry groups to help provide training and outreach.



Food Safety Program



October 2015

Core Functions and Services

- The Food Safety Program protects and reduces the risk to public health by assuring the safety of the state's food supply and facilitating the movement of Washington agricultural products in domestic and international markets. While conducting detailed inspections and investigations for compliance, the Food Safety Program also provides education, training and outreach as a way to reach compliance first. We are convinced that the most effective manner to facilitate compliant and viable businesses is to provide education before regulation. Program staff members provide training classes and stakeholder outreach meetings in all of our Program areas.
- The Food Safety Program is responsible for the licensing, inspection and compliance of food processing facilities, dairy plant and farm operations, food storage warehouses and egg handler/dealers. The program maintains the Interstate Milk Shipper's Program which allows for the ability of the dairy industry to ship milk and milk products out of state without interruption. The Division was reorganized October, 2016. The Food Safety Program took on the handling of all formal compliance/enforcement actions, auditing/quality management for the Manufactured Foods Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS) and the budgetary management for the FDA Food Contract and the MFRPS Cooperative Agreement.
- In the event of a food emergency response, Food Safety program staff work closely with other Division Programs, FDA and the Washington State Department of Health in conducting investigations of facilities and collecting samples for testing. All of the Food Safety Managers and many of the field staff who serve as "boots on the ground" have been trained in the Incident Command Structure (ICS) protocols. ICS is employed during all emergency responses with most of the Command and General Staff positions filled by Food Safety Program staff.



Key Accomplishments for 2015

- Program Management hosted the annual Program Meeting in Wenatchee, Washington, October 5-8, 2015. Twenty MFRPS Continuing Education credits were assigned to staff as a result of the training nature of the meeting. Thirty-six continuing education credits are required every three years.
- The Food Safety Program finished writing all Policies and Procedures that were required for the MFRPS system and the system was officially put in to place on December 28, 2015 in preparation for the FDA final verification audit. The MFRPS is a Quality Management System covering all aspects of the Program: Regulatory Authority, Training, Inspections/Sampling, Auditing, Investigations, Compliance/Enforcement, and Program Resources. The system will be verified by FDA in March, 2016 and we expect to be in conformance as required.
- All yearly Program staff evaluations and expectations were completed on time-March 1, 2015.
- Successful completion of the following 2014-2015 contracts/grants/cooperative agreements: FDA Food Inspections, FDA Building Inspection Capacity Grant (third year) and the MFRPS Cooperative Agreement with FDA (end of second year/beginning of third year).
- The Food Safety Program Manager was re-elected for an eighth term as the National Egg Regulatory Officials Treasurer and serves as the regulatory voting representative to the National Conference of Interstate Milk Shippers, MFRPS annual Conference and the National Association of Dairy Regulatory Officials.
- The WSDA Food Safety Program is contracted by the Liquor Control Board to perform sanitary inspections for the applicants who are producing MIE products. The inspection work was decentralized this past year and inspections are conducted in all Regions by selected inspectors. The Food Safety Program has conducted 56 of these inspections this past year.
- The Program Manager, Assistant Program Manager and Region Managers conducted educational outreach classes, seminars and professional conference presentations which provided technical and public health training to other regulatory communities, stake-holders and the agricultural/food processing community. These included presentations to the Western Association of Food and Drug Officials, National Association of Dairy Officials, National Egg Regulatory Officials, Washington Association for Food Protection, Mother Earth News Fair, WSU Extension Classes, community educational events and WSU Cheese Making and Pasteurization classes.
- A new Food licensing and inspection database system (FRED) was deployed. Work continues in collaboration with the Division Business Analyst and the WSDA IT department to build in add-ons and create work queries.



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- The Food Safety Program Manager/ Assistant Program Manager served as the ICS Incident Commander and program staff filled most of the ICS Command Staff and General Staff ICS positions for recalled food events and event investigations which included allergen recalls, pathogen food recalls, improper processing event recalls and food borne pathogen illness investigations.
- Food Safety Program staff attended the Western Association of Food and Drug Officials Annual Education Conference, the Northwest Food Processor's Expo, The Washington Association for Food Protection, The Northwest Food Safety and Sanitation Conference, the National Egg Regulatory Officials Annual Educational Conference, the quarterly Washington Food Protection Task Force Meetings, the National Conference for Interstate Milk Shippers, the National Association of Dairy Regulators and the National Egg Quality School.

Future Changes in the Internal or External Environment that could Impact Customers and/or Program Services

- With the passage of The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA,) the WSDA Food Safety Program must continue the work to meet and maintain the Manufactured Food Regulatory Standards. FSMA will continue to be implemented by FDA and this will impact the Food Safety program and the stakeholders we regulate. State and local programs are mentioned often in the act. FSMA requires FDA to provide outreach to the state and local governments to build their food safety and food defense capabilities, which will include additional resources for state food safety programs.
- In addition, FDA must work with states and local health programs to determine the best approach to addressing surveillance and tracing back food borne outbreaks. Although there are no specific state requirements, the law encourages the FDA to rely heavily on current state food safety and inspection programs, since a majority of the work currently is performed by state agencies. FSMA requires FDA to develop and implement strategies to leverage and enhance the food safety and defense capacities of State agencies regarding food borne illness outbreaks, state laboratory capacity, carrying out inspection and enforcing safety standards, to share information among agencies, and to improve the effectiveness of Federal, state and local partnerships on food safety and defense.
- FSMA provides for improving the training of state, local territorial and tribal food safety officials. The Food Safety program will continue to look for opportunities to be involved in educational outreach to stakeholder groups and will be looking for opportunities to partner with FDA, state, local, extension and industry groups to help provide training where possible.



Partnerships and Linkages that Shape the Program

- Over the last few years we have seen that due to the public's increased expectation of a safe food supply and businesses being forced to become more efficient to survive, we have strengthened our partnerships with other regulatory entities and the businesses that we regulate. FDA has increased the amount of funds available to state programs to build infrastructure, conduct inspections, increase training and respond to food born events. Our program is the recipient of many of these funds. We have naturally become even stronger partners with FDA due to this. We hold joint training events, conduct monthly compliance calls and team up for food born events.
- We have strong partnerships with the State Department of Health (DOH) and the local health jurisdictions (LHJ). We depend on the DOH labs to conduct the genetic testing on pathogens so we can definitively find the cause of a food born event. Our field staff works closely with the LHJ on many product related concerns. We coordinate and consult with USDA on meat and egg issues. We receive illness cluster information for food safety investigations.
- The Food Safety Program is linked to many other programs. The Food Safety Program has cross-walked with the Food Assistance Program on food donations, the Organic Program on mutual compliance concerns, the Microbiology Laboratory on routine and food event sampling and the Livestock Nutrient program concerning inspector safety issues. We continue to work with Liquor Control Board on conducting Food Safety Inspections at the firms that infuse marijuana into food products. The Program works closely with the Division Business Analyst on budget, database development, timekeeping and Washington GOV Stat processes.
- The program maintains strong stakeholder relationships with the many industries we inspect. There are many advisory groups that assist us during rule making, and they offer guidance and thoughts on our processes. A close working relationship is required with the dairy industry. The dairy industry must comply with the Interstate Shipper's Program requirements to be able to export Grade A products out of state. Both parties need to do their part to avoid a break in that business flow. The program issues Export Sanitary certificates based on our inspection work which assists industry to export to foreign nations.

LEAN Accomplishments and Goals

- The Program continues to embrace a culture built on value-added work and the elimination of cumbersome work processes resulting in improved customer response to all of our stakeholders.
- **Program Process Improvements** - The following processes were re-vamped resulting in time/money savings: NOC processing, LCB billing processing, pre-paid envelopes utilization and out-of-state leave request procedures. The "Scan & Toss" electronic storage project is about half way completed which will result in no paper reports in the office.
- **FDA Contract Inspections** – A new billing process was developed along with a new routing method of reports resulting in time and monetary efficiencies.
- **XLIMS & FRED Database Utilization** – Methods were developed to import outside data sources into the XLIMS system reducing hand-entries, Report queries were established which improved management efficiencies in the Program.



Microbiology Laboratory



December 2015

Core Functions and Services

- The WSDA Food Safety & Dairy (Microbiology) Laboratory Program is the Central Regulatory Food Safety Laboratory, the Central Regulatory Dairy Testing Laboratory, and the Central Regulatory Feed Testing Laboratory in the State of Washington. The laboratory conducts surveillance testing for pathogens in food products and animal feed samples. The laboratory also tests dairy products in accordance with the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance and the National Conference for Interstate Milk Shippers. The laboratory plays a crucial role in foodborne illness outbreaks, recalls and follow up testing. The laboratory enjoys accreditation by the international standard ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and certification by US-FDA for dairy testing. These certifications and accreditations provide evidence that the laboratory's test results are defensible and can be used by our own authorities and by other national and state regulatory programs. In addition to providing regulatory testing in support of protecting public health, the laboratory has been granted several Federal cooperative agreements in recognition of its leadership role among the nation's agriculture laboratories. The Laboratory's customers are the WSDA Food Safety Program and US-FDA /Food Emergency Response Network (FERN).
- Our laboratory provides lab testing to support the WSDA Food Safety Program and Animal Feed Program in accordance with the agency's mission to protect public health. The Laboratory provides testing and data on foodborne pathogens (*E.coli* O157, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli*, and *Staphylococcus enterotoxin*), dairy quality test, and prohibited materials analysis to regulatory agencies, our federal partners, and the agricultural community. Each year approximately 2,355 human food (including retail raw milk) and animal feed samples are tested (about 5,500 total tests) in the Food Microbiology section. This testing provides information for foodborne pathogen surveillance and recall activities. This testing is proactive in nature and prevents outbreaks of disease.



Core Functions and Services (continue)

- The WSDA Food Safety & Dairy (Microbiology) Laboratory tested close to 4,000 dairy-related products (about 10,000 total tests). All our laboratory analysts must be certified by US-FDA to perform this testing. This testing allows the interstate shipment of dairy products and is required by FDA. As the state's Central Milk Regulatory Laboratory certified by US-FDA, our laboratory conducts an annual on-site evaluation of all dairy industry Appendix N Laboratories in WA State. These industry laboratories conduct antibiotic testing of their milk. They are evaluated and trained by us to adhere to federal and state regulations. In addition, we evaluate more than 200 dairy industry analysts within the state of Washington for Appendix N proficiency testing. Without our approval/evaluation, these dairies would be unable to sell dairy products outside of Washington State. The laboratory conducts special microbiological projects that aid the Food Safety branch during food safety events. One such project in the past year involved an in-depth survey and testing to aid a Washington state dairy manufacturer with an ongoing food safety issue in its dairy products.
- To recognize our achievement, we have been awarded the U.S. FDA Food Emergency Response Network Cooperative Agreement since 2009. Under this cooperative agreement, our laboratory 1) conducts foodborne pathogen testing for special political assignments during major political events (Republican / Democratic National Convention; presidential Inauguration, etc.); 2) acts as a satellite mini FDA-like Microbiology lab during foodborne pathogen outbreaks and/or emergencies; and 3) participates in FDA's research and development projects.

Key Accomplishments for 2015

- Our laboratory earned biennial re-accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 in November 2015 and added another analytical method to our ISO scope. We passed all food pathogen proficiency testing with 100% accuracy and successfully uploaded all testing data to FDA's eLEXNET database throughout the year. (The eLEXNET database aids Epidemiologists and the Rapid Recall Team in understanding possible foodborne pathogen events)
- Our Laboratory Microbiologists passed the FDA-LPET/NCIMS Annual Dairy Proficiency Test. Our facility remains fully accredited as the Central State Milk Laboratory. Two LEOs in our lab conducted biennial evaluations of 10 Appendix N laboratories for adherence to FDA Milk requirements for antibiotic testing, and also evaluated more than 200 dairy analysts in the Washington State dairy industry.
- Our laboratory successfully obtained new FDA funding under the Animal Feed Regulatory Program Standards (AFRPS)-Laboratory Component to analyze animal feed for pathogens, toxins and vitamins. Since September 2015, we have been mentoring other states to achieve ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation. Additionally, our laboratory was also awarded new 5-yr FDA Food Emergency Response Network funding in September.



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- Our laboratory continued to assist WSDA and FDA throughout spring 2015 as follow up to the 2014 Snoqualmie ice cream *Listeria monocytogenes* outbreak. Environmental sampling was conducted three times and testing continued into April 2015.
- The FERN section participated in a FDA-led multi-lab validation research project of Salmonella detection via different real-time PCR platforms. Our FERN completed a new FDA assignment of avocado testing for *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* in May. Our data, along with other FERN labs' data, has made tremendous contribution to a new finding: avocado can be a potentially high risk product for *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination. Our laboratory assisted FDA to revisit and optimize the current testing method. A new Animal Feed technical section was established, and several pieces of technical equipment were upgraded: 10 new scientific refrigerators (benefiting all sections); 1 new high/low incubator (benefiting the FERN and food sections); a High Pressure Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) unit enabling the feed section to analyze feed for several new biochemical tests; new phosphatase analyzer (benefiting the dairy section); new automatic temperature monitoring system (benefiting all sections).
- Our laboratory detected Prohibited Material in several animal feed samples. These feeds were recalled.

Future Changes in the Internal or External Environment that could Impact Customers and/or Program Services

- The laboratory hired and trained two new Microbiologists who filled the personnel gap experienced in early 2015 (retirement and illness). They are fully trained and competent to perform all duties in their section. The laboratory hired and trained three additional interns in 2015. This program benefits the laboratory and the local scientific community by creating an opportunity for burgeoning scientists to learn and apply new techniques, and develop critical thinking skills.
- In 2013 and 2014, the laboratory program suffered financial strain because there were cutbacks and sunsets of two federal grants: MDP and RRT. In addition, the program has experienced a consistent uptick in retail raw milk testing with no associated increase in funding. To mitigate this funding shortage, the laboratory offered a Decision Package requesting an additional \$250,000 to cover the increase testing cost experienced from the retail raw milk market segment. The laboratory was granted an additional \$126,000 for one year.
- The laboratory requested and succeeded in preparing a pre-design and budget package for basic building requirements as well as future expansion of the laboratory. The laboratory facilities are sorely lacking in several areas: inadequate air handling; leaking roof; inadequate laboratory equipment storage; inadequate laboratory access (no elevator in two-story building). Last year's 2014 annual report addressed the ongoing building challenges that the laboratory experiences.



Future Changes in the Internal or External Environment that could Impact Customers and/or Program Services (continued)

- Technology is moving to WGS (whole genome sequencing) from PFGE (pulse-field gel electrophoresis) and it would be highly beneficial for our laboratory to obtain WGS capability in order to supply more complete information to the Food Safety Program. WGS technology has revolutionized food safety by allowing vectors of food outbreaks to be identified in record time.

LEAN Accomplishments and Goals

- We now order lab supplies twice a month (emergency is still allowed) instead of on demand to help reduce shipping costs, transportation costs, and helps us better predict what supplies we will need so less will go to waste.
- We are transitioning all Quality System documents to our lab's shared network drive lab so that paper can be eliminated and everyone can see quality documents that could come under examination during an internal or external audit without asking for the documents from the QAO. These documents can be viewed, but not modified.
- A key goal is to have our LIMS Program updated to make it more user-friendly and streamlined. This would allow us to generate worksheets, review records, and extract data more efficiently.
- Our laboratory assisted the Safety Office to get the Safety Data Sheet (SDS, formerly MSDS) forms uploaded and available electronically. The laboratory purchased a new Automatic Temperature Monitoring System that reads and records temperatures in the laboratory equipment twice a day. This allows remote management of alerts and emergencies, freeing up manpower time spent manually monitoring equipment and facilitating the trending of equipment temperatures to predict replacement needs.



*Our Mission: To protect consumers and support the organic food industry
 by ensuring the integrity of organic food products.*

History and Authority

The Washington Organic Food Products Act, Chapter 15.86 RCW, was enacted in 1985 to implement one of the first state organic certification programs in the nation. By 1988 WSDA certified 68 organic farms and approximately 2,000 acres in accordance with 15.86 RCW and WAC 16-157. Processor certification services were added in 1990, handler certification added in 1992. In 1991 WSDA Organic Program began evaluating and registering brand name material inputs approved for use in organic production. In 1998 the Organic Program received ISO Guide 65 Accreditation, authorizing certification to international organic standards.¹



In April 2002 the program received United States Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) accreditation. Chapter 15.86 RCW was amended to require certification in accordance with the new National Organic Program (NOP) and USDA organic regulations, 7CFR Part 205. Two years later, WSDA Organic Program became one of the first government bodies to receive accreditation with the criteria of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM).²



WSDA Organic Program is accredited as an organic certification agency by USDA.³ Overseen by the NOP, WSDA Organic Food Program's role is to inspect and certify organic operations, verifying they meet the requirements of USDA organic regulations. Organic regulations define organic production as a system that is managed to respond to site-specific conditions by integrating cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Organic land must be free from prohibited materials for 36 months and only approved input materials may be used. Specific product composition and labeling requirements are in place.

¹ ISO Guide 65 accreditation was surrendered in 2015 after USDA implemented equivalency with several key trade partners to Washington State and issued formal approval of WSDA's Organic Material Registration.

² IFOAM Accreditation was surrendered in 2010; certification of products to IFOAM standards was no longer necessary for Washington organic products to be exported.

³ 84 Certification agencies are accredited by USDA. Agencies include government, private, and nonprofit entities.



Funding

WSDA Organic Program is funded by fees charged to certified operations or material registrants applying for certification or registration; no general funds are received. Fee Schedules are outlines in WAC 16-157 and 16-160.

Organic Program Fund Balance, Revenue and Expenses, Fiscal Year 12 - Fiscal Year 2015

	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Beginning Fund Balance	\$962,118	826,652	900,219	1,027,082
Total Revenue	2,118,798	2,243,727	2,473,455	2,662,849
Total Expenditures	2,254,264	2,170,161	2,346,591	2,360,514
Excess of Revenues over (under) Expenditures	(135,466)	73,566	126,864	302,335
Ending Fund Balance	826,652	900,219	1,027,082	\$1,329,417

Services and Scope

The program’s work is divided into two services: Organic certification in accordance with USDA organic regulations, and registration of input materials for use in organic production as defined by 15.86 RCW and WAC 16-160. Transitional certification in accordance with 15.86 RCW, and inspection services in accordance with Japan Agricultural Standards (JAS), are available as added services.

*Washington State is fourth in the country in terms of number of certified farms and second in the country in terms of farm gate value of organic crops.**

Organic farms are found in all but three counties in the state and represent a diversity of crops, sizes and marketing options. Approximately 90% of the organic businesses in Washington are certified by WSDA Organic Program.⁴ Less than 4% of WSDA’s clients reside outside of the state, where services are provided to ancillary facilities or under cooperative agreements with state partners. At the end of 2015, the Organic Program was working with 1,108 operations that produce or handle certified organic products.⁵ In 2015, 80 operations surrendered or had their certification suspended, and 129 new applications were received.

* Snapshot of Washington Organic Agriculture and Beyond, Granatstein and Kirby, WSU CSNAR, November 2015.

⁴ USDA Organic Integrity Database, February 15, 2016.

⁵ WSDA Organic Program data, December 31, 2015. Active 2015 clients or applicants for certification.



Program Organization

The program is organized into six main scopes with teams of staff focused in each scope area. Teams work together to support each other in providing high quality services through professional evaluations of applications, rigorous onsite inspections, and objective reviews.



Crop Producer Certification – Review and Inspection Teams

652 farms with certified organic crops.

Forage, tree fruit, vegetables, grains & beans, small fruit & nuts.



Livestock Producer Certification – Review and Inspection Teams

85 farms with certified organic livestock and organic crops.

Dairy and poultry predominate organic livestock in the state.



Handling and Processing Certification – Review and Inspection Teams

159 certified facilities handling organic raw or packaged products. Handlers are packers, warehouses, distributors, brokers, retailers.

212 certified facilities processing organic products. Includes on-farm processing. Processed products include frozen fruits & vegetables, juice, feed, coffee, bread.



Material Review Team

302 companies manufacturing or handling organically approved inputs.⁶

826 materials registered: 596 Fertilizer & Soil Amendment, 130 Disease & Pest Control, 41 Crop Production Aids, 20 Livestock Production Aids, 39 Handling Aids



Administrative Team

Direct administrative and customer service support to 1,410 clients, 30 program staff, and 5 contract inspectors.



Quality Team

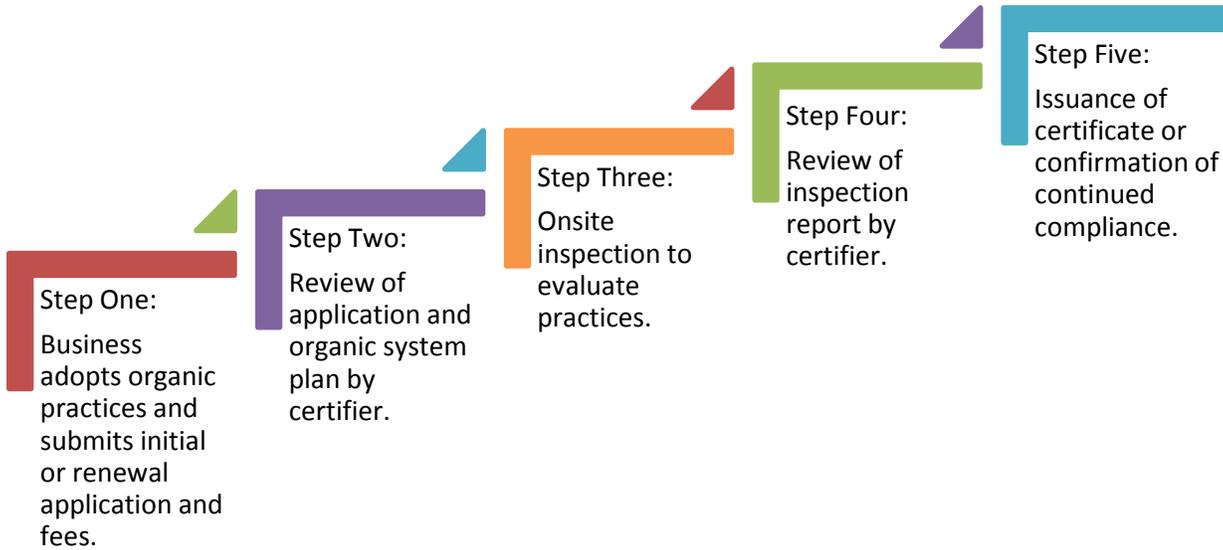
Supporting the program, certified operations, and the public through: Quality Assurance, Compliance and Complaints, Data Management, Accreditation and Policy, Outreach and Education.

⁶ WSDA Organic Program data, February 12, 2016. Registered clients and products, does not include pending.



Assisting Clients with the Steps to Certification

Organic certification is an annual process. WSDA Organic Program staff assist new applicants and renewing operations with the steps required to achieve or maintain organic certification. Team accomplishments for 2015 are outlined below.⁷



Step One - Administrative Team

1,131 pre-reviews of incoming initial or renewal applications in preparation for technical review
 2,316 incoming documents routed to technical specialists

Step Two – Review Teams

1,150 new and renewal application reviews
 745 reviews of input material lists submitted by certified farms

Step Three – Inspection Teams

1,062 annual inspections completed

Step Four – Review Teams

1,134 annual inspection reports reviewed

Step Five – Quality Team

1,781 organic and transitional certificates issued

In 2015, WSDA Organic Program distributed \$493,240 in cost share reimbursements to 840 certified operations.

A cooperative agreement with USDA enables the program to continue this assistance for Washington State certified operations through 2018.

* Funded through the US Farm Bill, the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program helps farmers, handlers and processors afford the expense of organic certification by reimbursing them for up to 75% of their certification costs, with a maximum of \$750 per scope of operation.

⁷ WSDA Organic Program Data, 2015 calendar year, including archived operations.



Our Mission: Ensuring Organic Integrity

Organic integrity is ensured by certification staff through the annual certification process, in addition to work in key activities aligned with the program’s mission.

Inspections and Audits

Production and financial audits are conducted at each annual inspection. An organic operation must be able to readily trace organic crops products one step forward and one step back in the supply chain, as well as demonstrate there are enough land and inputs to account for the products represented as organic. In addition to the annual scheduled inspection, WSDA Organic Program has the authority to conduct additional announced or unannounced inspections to verify compliance. In 2015, 95 additional inspections were conducted.

Follow-up Reviews

New information and changes are requested and/or submitted throughout the year by certified operations. In 2015, the Review Team successfully completed additional reviews:

- 2,316 certification document reviews
- 265 registration document reviews
- 109 new handler product reviews
- 286 new site reviews
- 133 new input material reviews

Compliance Notices and Adverse Action

Certification Summaries are compiled by the Review Team. The letters to clients outline issues, requirements and action needed for each application, renewal, and inspection report review. Reminders are provided and items are requested if not enough information is available to determine compliance. Items are elevated if action is not taken.

When correctable violations are identified a Notice of Noncompliance is issued. Correctable violations do not negatively impact the organic integrity of a product, but could lead to a more serious violation if not quickly improved. In 2015, the Review Team issued:

- 207 Notices of Noncompliance plus 55 additional Notices of Noncompliance specifically for failure to renew certification in 2015.
- 64 Notices of Resolution.

Adverse action is taken when violations are found that are *not* correctable, such as the application of a prohibited material to organic land, or failure to correct previously identified Notices of Noncompliance. In 2015, the Review Team issued:

- 1 Notice of Denial
- 5 Notices of Proposed Suspension
- 17 Notices of Proposed Suspension and 5 Notices of Suspension for failure to renew
- 5 Notices of Resolution of Proposed Suspension
- 1 Settlement Agreement
- 1 Notice of Suspension





Complaint Follow Up

WSDA Organic Program receives complaints from the public as well as referrals from other programs and agencies regarding mislabeled products or potential violations to the organic standards. All complaints are investigated to determine whether or not a violation has occurred. Eleven complaints were received in 2015; all complaints have been closed.

Pesticide Residue Sampling

In 2015 the program set a goal of increasing the number of organic samples taken and tested for pesticide residues. Inspectors took 175% more samples in 2015 compared to 2014. The number of positive samples found in 2015 was equal to 2014 results.

*WSDA Organic Program has collected and analyzed organic samples for pesticide residues since 1988.**

109 samples taken from more than 40 different crops/products. 12 contained detectable pesticide residues. 2 of the 12 contained residues at levels over 5% of the EPA tolerance for a prohibited compound; the crop was prohibited from being sold as organic.⁸

Our Mission: Supporting the Organic Industry

The program supports the development of organic industry through education, outreach and technical assistance. The program strives to communicate effectively and ensure organic requirements are easily understood. Key activities in 2015 include:

Online Resources

The WSDA Organic Program [website](#) was redesigned at the end of 2015, marking the completion of a multi-year effort to streamline information for existing and prospective organic operations. The new website removes redundant information and reorganizes resources to make finding new and renewing application forms simple and straightforward. The redesign also offers a new collection of recordkeeping templates, fact sheets, and guides that answer commonly asked questions.

In October 2015 the Organic Program completed a yearlong contract with USDA National Organic Program to develop outreach material for farms and businesses interested in transitioning to organic. The new resources are featured online on a new Organic Program webpage titled, [Interested in Organic Certification?](#) Packed with resources tailored to new organic producers and handlers, the new page highlights two of the projects produced in support of USDA's Sound and Sensible Initiative. The projects share a common goal of making organic certification more accessible, attainable and affordable while upholding the integrity of the organic label.

* In 2014 USDA organic regulations began requiring certifying agents to take residue samples from 5% of clients certified.



WSDA Organic Certification Calculator

The WSDA Organic Certification Calculator helps businesses estimate certification costs, determine the forms needed for certification, and evaluate other requirements and licenses needed to operate an organic business in Washington.

Sound and Sensible Organic Certification Videos



Filmed in Washington State and applicable to viewers across the country in English and Spanish, three videos provide viewers with a step-by-step approach to prepare for organic certification. *Steps to Certification* provides an overview of the organic certification process; *Preventive Practices* describes activities and techniques that help farmers avoid crop pest, weed, and disease problems; and *recordkeeping* gives instruction for developing and maintaining good recordkeeping practices.

Approved Material List

The 2016 List of WSDA Organically Approved Materials was published in November 2015, 30 days earlier than in previous years. The online list of materials is referenced by organic farms and agriculture professionals nationally and continues to be the most accessed webpage with the Food Safety and Consumer Services Division.

Technical Assistance

5 new organic certification fact sheets were published in 2015 to increase public awareness of organic standards and provide information about organic certification requirements and process.

- *Recordkeeping Requirements*
- *Business Licensing Requirements*
- *Manure and Compost Application Timing*
- *Preventative Practices – Crop Pest, Weed & Disease*
- *Water Quality in Organic Production*

Spanish speaking specialists provided technical assistance for callers and clients during annual inspections.

An e-newsletter was regularly distributed to clients to provide updates on issues, upcoming deadlines and events related to organic certification.



Participation at Industry Events

Technical specialists attended and provided outreach about organic certification through tabling, presentations, and as technical experts at numerous industry events in 2015, including, but not limited to:

- Cascadia Grains Conference
- WA State Farmers Market Association Conference
- Northwest Wholesaler Meeting
- Organic Trade Association Policy Conference
- WSU-Tilth Producer Farm Walks
- Washington Organic Dairy Producers Association Conference
- NW Food Safety and Sanitation Workshop
- Tilth Producers of Washington Annual Conference
- Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association Conference
- Focus on Farming
- Washington State Tree Fruit Association Meeting
- The ABCs of Certification – WSU Skagit County
- Wilbur Ellis Organic Grower Meeting
- NW Wholesaler Grower Meeting
- Evergreen State College Practice of Sustainable Agriculture Class
- WSU 100 and 400 Level Organic Agriculture Classes

WSDA Organic Program distributed over 1,000 bumper stickers to certified clients during Washington Organic Week, in honor of the Governor's proclamation celebrating the state's leadership in organic agriculture.



A Look Ahead: Guided by Customer Satisfaction

WSDA Organic Program has historically relied on client surveys to help guide our work and goals. In 2015 a new client evaluation survey was developed to gain direct feedback from clients after their annual inspection. Evaluations solicit feedback on our clients' experience with our customer service, forms and procedures and interaction with field and review staff. Responses are used to inform improvements in our service and operations.

As of February 15, 2016, 164 (15%) of certified operations completed the 2015 client survey. 113 of the respondents were farms and 48 were handlers or processors of organic products. Clients were asked about key benchmarks in the certification and inspection process. Responses were overwhelmingly positive, with very few outliers. Most common suggestions for improvement were related to further streamlining the certification process and providing technical assistance on specific topics. A similar survey will be distributed to Organic Material Registrants in 2016.



What are WSDA Certified Organic Clients saying?

I have always had a positive experience working with the WSDA. Responses are thorough and clear. Our inspector is very courteous, positive, and professional. Thanks for all that you do!

I have always found the staff at the WSDA Organic Department to be very helpful and timely in their support. I credit much of my knowledge of Organic handling/guidelines to the great support & knowledgeable staff. I reached out to them for support & they were absolutely wonderful. Can't say enough good things about the team.

I appreciate the commitment to assisting growers/packers in a timely manner and providing answers to questions that keep our product moving without any hold ups. Thanks!

I have been very impressed with the organic program on a whole. The team in Olympia helped ensure my application was processed promptly and the inspector was very professional and provided the necessary programmatic information needed to help us transition into organic production. Thank you.

Very professional people. No nonsense, but polite and approachable. Very detailed. Asked good questions and went over everything in regards to organic crops. Tough inspection but fair.

This year was a stellar year for the program when it comes to inspections and the renewal process. The inspectors were well informed, prepared, and ready, willing, and able to do whatever we needed to do to make this happen in such a manner that worked for all of us. WSDA organic team.....well done in 2015!!

We had an excellent experience with the Organic staff. We had several questions as this is our first attempt at Organic certification. All were answered quickly and explanations were very clear and easy to understand. The entire staff made this a very easy process.

Very satisfied with the service and certification process!

Our inspector was very thorough and I felt did an excellent job of assuring that our operation complied with the organic requirements. This is very assuring to know that the organic brand is being protected. Keep up the good work.

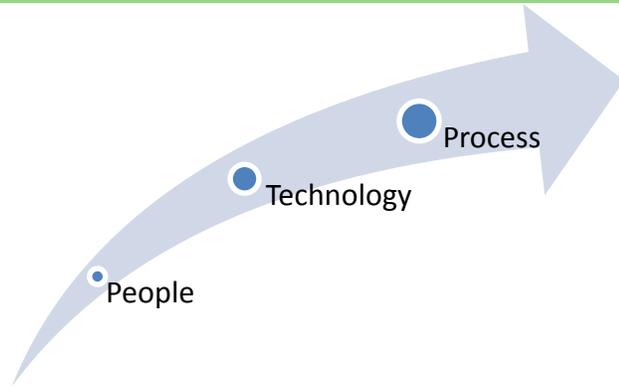


A Look Ahead: Guided by LEAN Principles

WSDA Organic Program continues to embrace a culture of LEAN Principles that takes into consideration the people, processes, and technology needed to complete our work. Systems are built on visual management, a focus on value added steps, and an emphasis on eliminating waste in the form of hidden workloads and unnecessary delays. Highlights of the year ahead include:

People

The greatest asset of the Organic Program is the dedicated team of individuals that work each day to support the program's mission. In order to meet the demands of the growing organic industry's need for certification services, a comprehensive staffing plan and reorganization is underway. The reorganization includes the establishment of new positions as well as new challenges and opportunities for existing staff. The changes will further align staff within the program's six program areas, strengthening teams and better defining roles. The ability to respond to customer requests and timelines, as well as a need to balance the growing workload of existing staff, influenced the development of an organizational structure that will allow growth yet sustain itself for years to come.



Technology

In September 2015, the program signed a contract with Intact US, Inc. for the development of a new database called ECert. The new system will replace two Access Databases, one created in 1998, used to track client accounts and program workload. ECert has been designed specifically for organic certification agencies and is the most used database by USDA Accredited Certification Agencies worldwide. Migration to the new database system will take place in April 2016. After completion of this first phase, additional work on upgrades and options will begin, including the eventual ability for client online interface with their Organic System Plan.

Process

The new database system was created to align with the program's current certification flow. However, the implementation of the new system will inevitably result in changes in internal processes and staff instructions. New procedures will be developed with LEAN principles and team trainings will be scheduled throughout 2016. Program staff will work to prevent this internal change from negatively impacting external clients and their ability to market organic crops and products.



Food Safety & Consumer Services Division
Organic Food Program
Brenda Book, Program Manager

WSDA Organic Program Team



March 2015

We've got two words for you..





Core Functions and Services

Regulation of Animal Food:

- The Animal Feed/Rapid Response Program regulates the distribution of commercial feed within the State of Washington and manages the continued development of the food and feed Washington Rapid Response Team (RRT). Currently, the program is composed of thirteen staff members.
- WSDA Feed/RRT Program routinely conducts inspections at feed manufacturing, warehousing, transportation, and distribution facilities to determine compliance with state and federal feed safety and labeling regulations. Feed/RRT Program inspectors work closely with industry partners and often provide technical assistance related to safe feed manufacturing and storage. Inspectors also evaluate industry compliance with state and federal feed regulations related to current good manufacturing practices (cGMPs) for medicated feed and prevention of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Feed/RRT Program inspectors also collect commercial feed and pet food/treat samples throughout the year to be analyzed for several areas of concern including prohibited material (related to control of BSE), guaranteed analysis, pathogens, and mycotoxins.
- In addition, the Feed/RRT Program manages registration of pet food and specialty pet food products, reviews pet food labels for regulatory compliance, manages tonnage reporting, conducts Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) audits, and reviews applications and product labels for new and existing permits for the cottage food industry.
- During the 2015 Regular Session of the Washington State Legislature, the House proposed a bill relating to hemp as a component of commercial animal feed. The WSDA Feed/RRT Program was tasked with reviewing current academic literature related to hemp in animal feed. The draft report was completed in December 2015 and will be shared with subject matter experts both within and outside of WSDA to promote next steps in the analysis process.

Food and Feed Emergency Response:

- The Washington RRT is an “all hazards” response team consisting of both food/feed safety and public health partners within Washington State. The team’s primary response partners are WSDA and the U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Seattle District Office (SEA-DO). These two agencies, in conjunction with additional public health partners such as Washington State Department of Health, collaborate to improve the efficiency of food/feed-related incident response and reduce the time to a meaningful public health intervention. The term "food/feed incident" can include incidents related to human and animal food contamination (unintentional and intentional), food-borne illness outbreaks, product recalls, natural disasters, and other incidents that may impact the safety of Washington State's human and animal food supply.
- During a response, WSDA and FDA SEA-DO can staff joint-agency field teams and manage activities through the use of the Incident Command System (ICS). The RRT also commonly coordinates communication amongst public health partners during response activities that involve several jurisdictions on the local, state, tribal, and federal levels of government. Since its creation in 2009, the Washington RRT has assisted in creating a culture of communication within public health agencies tasked with responding to food and feed-related incidents in Washington State and the Feed/RRT Program plans to continue building this capacity with other possible response partners in the future.



Core Functions and Services (continued)

Food and Feed Emergency Response:

- The Feed/RRT Program also houses the Food Safety and Consumer Service Division's Recall Coordinator, who assists the division and FDA SEA-DO in a wide array of recall activities related to food and feed. The Recall Coordinator also assists the division in coordinating and delivering outreach events throughout the year.
- The Feed/RRT Program Manager currently chairs the Washington State Food Protection Task Force (FPTF). The FPTF is a cooperative association of food and feed regulatory entities in Washington State that includes stakeholders from the local, state, and federal level. The FPTF exists to identify and address human and animal food safety issues within Washington State, provide an interactive forum to enhance communication and partnerships amongst its participants, and increase awareness of food safety and defense educational opportunities to all stakeholders.

Implementation of Food and Feed Program Standards:

- As of October 2015, the WSDA Feed/RRT Program has been an active participant in the implementation of the Animal Feed Regulatory Program Standards (AFRPS). These "feed standards" establish a standardized foundation for the design, management, and continual improvement of state programs responsible for the regulation of animal feed. Through implementation of all eleven standards, which range from staff training to laboratory capacity, Feed/RRT Program will be better positioned to ensure the safety and integrity of the feed supply in Washington State as well as to coordinate and communicate with other feed regulatory jurisdictions in a standardized manner.
- The Feed/Rapid Response Program also assists the WSDA Food Safety Program in its continual improvement efforts through the implementation of the human food equivalent Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS). The Feed/Rapid Response Program has taken lead on several of the deliverables related to Standard 5 that addresses program elements related to food and feed-related emergency response as well as components of Standard 3 relating to food/feed recalls.

Key Accomplishments for 2015

Continual Program Improvement:

- Completed the formation of the Feed/RRT Program that was initiated on July 1, 2015.
- Assessed current business needs of the Feed/RRT Program and aligning the program structure to meet those needs.
- Hired an RRT Coordinator to assist the Feed/RRT Program Manager with coordinating food and feed-related emergency responses.
- Hired an AFRPS Coordinator to assist the program in making meaningful and sustainable progress in the implementation of the feed standards.
- Initiated the process of developing an electronic Commercial Feed information System (CFIS) to assist with registration, licensing, and tonnage work throughout.



Program Accomplishments for 2015

Food/Feed Rapid Response:

- The Feed/RRT Program participated in response activities related to the following incidents:
 - *Listeria monocytogenes* in high protein milkshake mix
 - Undeclared allergens in refrigerated pies
 - Undeclared allergens in burritos
 - Undeclared allergens in various baked good products
 - *Campylobacter* in retail raw milk
 - Mammalian bone in game bird feed
 - *Listeria monocytogenes* in retail raw cream
 - *Listeria monocytogenes* in guacamole
 - *Salmonella enteritidis* in hollandaise sauce
 - *Salmonella* in pork products
 - Transport truck accident carrying frozen fish
 - Power outages related to regional windstorms
 - Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC) in retail raw milk

- Assisted in the sharing of emergency response lessons learned through mentoring other RRTs in other states.

- Conducted a multi-agency exercise related to continuity of food and feed regulatory operations following a large natural disaster such as an earthquake. Participating partners included:
 - FDA Seattle District Office
 - Washington State Dept. of Health (DOH) Food Safety Program
 - FDA Pacific Regional Lab-NW
 - WSDA Food Safety Program
 - WSDA Office of Compliance and Outreach
 - WSDA Emergency Response
 - Washington Department of Health (DOH) Environmental Public Health Food Safety Program
 - USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)
 - USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)



2015 Annual Washington RRT Exercises



- Coordinated with WSDA Food Safety, Washington DOH, FDA SEA-DO, and several local health jurisdictions in Washington State to hold a meeting of the Washington Food Protection Task Force.
- Coordinated and hosted the delivery of an epidemiology training course attended by several local, state, and federal public health partners.
- Collaborating with the WSDA Microbiology Laboratory to build emergency response capacity during RRT responses as well as develop a routine feed sampling plan.
- Worked with the WSDA Animal Services Veterinary Reserve Corps and Administrative Services Emergency Management group to host an ICS training course for the Director of Agriculture and his leadership team.
- Purchased equipment and supplies to establish two additional caches of equipment to support a food/feed emergency response.
- Partnering with WSDA Animal Services Veterinary Reserve Corps and WSDA Administrative Services Emergency Management group to cross-walk emergency response resources within WSDA.



Partnerships that Protect Public Health

- Whether working with industry partners or emergency response agencies during a food/feed-related incident, successful working partnerships are integral to protecting human and animal health. The Feed/RRT Program is committed to fostering these partnerships through effective communication, participation on joint committees and workgroups, and conducting outreach. From an emergency response perspective, the Washington RRT has allocated considerable time and resources to establish, grow, and maintain relationships with partners *before* an emergency calls upon everyone to work together. This proactive approach to creating a strong network of public health responders has been a particularly beneficial outcome of a supported rapid response team.
- Specifically, the Feed/RRT Program actively participates in the following committees, boards, and/or workgroups:
 - The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) Feed Labeling Committee
 - AAFCO Pet Food Committee
 - AFRPS Review Leadership Team
 - AAFCO FSMA Implementation Task Force
 - Washington Food Protection Task Force
 - AAFCO Ingredient Definition Committee
 - AAFCO Strategic Affairs Committee
 - AAFCO Education Outreach Committee
 - AAFCO Current Issues and Outreach Committee
 - AAFCO Board of Directors
 - Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) Board of Directors
 - Western Association of Food and Drug Officials (WAFDO) Board of Directors
 - International Food Protection Training Institute (IFPTI) Feed Core Curriculum Workgroup
 - IFPTI Advanced Level Food Protection Professional Guidebook development workgroups
 - National Rapid Response Team Best Practices Manual Revision Workgroup

Future Changes in the Internal or External Environment that could Impact Customers and/or Program Services

- Implementation of the feed standards over the next five years will most likely illustrate both program strengths and areas that can be improved to positively impact customers and program services. The emphasis on standardization will assist feed regulatory programs housed in different states to better align themselves with each other and their federal partners, which may assist in creating a more uniform feed regulatory and information sharing structure in the U.S.
- Despite considerable investment and support from the division and agency, the sustainment of the RRT continues to be predicated on continued federal funding. In response, the Rapid Response Program Sustainability Plan was created in order to prioritize RRT-specific capacities that should be maintained with decreased funding. The plan will be updated on an annual basis to reflect changes in the state and federal funding environments.



Future Changes in the Internal or External Environment that could Impact Customers and/or Program Services (continued)

- When considering its portfolio of possible development projects, the Rapid Response Program will continue to emphasize the importance of projects that would continue to develop RRT response capacity. Continued and consistent funding support for the RRT is integral to the continued development of an integrated food and feed safety network both within Washington State and nationally.

LEAN Accomplishments and Goals

The Feed/RRT Program has utilized LEAN principles to address current workflow through the program and to address current and future business needs. In 2015, these tasks included:

- Assessing how RRT supplies and equipment can be more efficiently monitored to ensure expiration dates are tracked and supplies remain in a constant state of readiness.
- Assessing the current pet food/specialty pet food registration and label review process in order to identify possible streamlining of work flow.

2016 Goals

The Feed/RRT Program will be working to address the following during the next year:

- Make meaningful and measurable progress in the implementation of the feed standards.
- Continue to align program resources to address current work needs.
- Continued refinement of the Washington Rapid Response Team Operations Manual.
- Explore options for sustaining the Washington RRT through a dynamic funding environment.
- Host training opportunities and exercises for related to food/feed incident response for food/feed professionals within WSDA and partner entities.
- Continued assistance in augmenting WSDA laboratory capacity related to RRT food/feed responses.
- Continue working toward increased communication and collaboration among food/feed safety partners in Washington State through continued participation in the Washington Food Protection Task Force.
- Continue to collaborate with partner programs within the division on MFRPS development.
- Continue to work on a national level to emphasize a robust and standardized state feed regulatory program along with an established food/feed rapid response team are important components to an integrated food and feed safety system.



Core Functions and Services

- The Office of Compliance and Outreach (OCO) provides education, outreach and fair compliance response to support production of quality agricultural products and to maximize the safety and security of Washington's food system. To facilitate productive and efficient interactions between WSDA and the agriculture industry, OCO works collaboratively within the Food Safety & Consumer Services Division and across WSDA to promote and enhance the cohesive operations of the Agency and improve service delivery. The Office of Compliance and Outreach believes that the most effective way to facilitate good business practices is to provide education before regulation. We prioritize partnership with stakeholders and across agencies to cultivate and communicate best practices for safe food production and marketplace success.
- The Office of Compliance and Outreach (OCO) unit provides many services within the Food Safety & Consumers Services Division. The core functions of the unit are: auditing and quality management; budgetary and regulatory review; commercial feed licensing and pet food product registration; cottage food reviews, country of origin labeling reviews, compliance actions and education and outreach activities including farm to school, farm to institutions, direct marketing, good agricultural practices (GAPs) regarding food/feed safety regulatory and business requirements.

Key Accomplishments for 2015

- The OCO Administrator worked closely with the FS&CS Divisional Coordinator, Assistant Director's Special Assistant, and the FS&CS Program Managers along with WSDA fiscal staff on reviewing all budgets and funding sources within the division.
- The OCO Administrator participated on the Food Safety Preventive Control Alliance (FSPCA) developing training related to the new FDA Preventive Controls rule for small and medium food processors. She is also a member of the National Partnership for Food Protection (NFP) Governance Council helping to streamline and integrate our federal, state and local food safety systems, and she is a member of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Technical Working Group.
- The FDA Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS) cooperative agreement work is cross divisional work by staff from OCO, the Food Safety Program, the Rapid Response Team and the Microbiology Laboratory. FDA conducted a revisit of the 36 month performance audit of the MFRPS work from 2014. WSDA staff attended the March MFRPS Alliance meeting and participation in regional and national standards revision work is on-going. An internal mock audit was conducted in preparation for the FDA MFRPS standards staff visit with WSDA in September to review our work and help prepare us for the required 60 month audit taking place in 2016.
- Thirty seven FDA Contract audits were completed by our two FDA State Auditors during the FDA State contract period and they participated in three FDA Environmental Sampling events as part of the FDA contract work. FDA approved OCO auditing staff to conduct advanced specialty acidified Food Contract Audits during this period.
- Our Compliance Officer (CO) participated in industry compliance meeting with FDA and she held WSDA compliance settlement meetings after issuance of NOI actions. The CO met with WSDA's assigned Assistant Attorney General (AAG) on cases and the WSDA Administrative Regulations office on the Administrative Procedures Act (APA), laws and regulations and divisional procedures. A new compliance process for firms failing to renew their warehouse, food, milk and custom meat license was implemented during the March and June renewal periods.



Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- Compliance actions issued January through September 2015 include: 601 Notice of Correction letters; 6 Dairy Farm NOI's and 9 Food Plant NOI actions. Final actions on firms vary depending on the compliance case but include one or more of the following: license suspension; degrade; civil penalty; or compliance agreement settlements whereby the firm demonstrated correction and verified by WSDA. An Administrative Procedures Hearing was conducted in August for a food firm issued a NOI in 2014 and the case moved to a Settlement Agreement.
- OCO worked with WSDA IT staff, the WSDA Contract Manager and a FSCS Project Manager to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) for contracting with an IT project Manager to assist with overhauling our feed database systems used to license and register Commercial feed companies. The FRED database system continued to be developed for use by the Food Safety Program and OCO. FRED meetings were attended by our Compliance Officer, Program Technician and Administrator. Share point is being utilized to connect compliance cases with the agency administrative office case tracking.
- Under the 2014-2015 FDA State Feed Contract, WSDA reviewed and conducted an assessment of the FDA Animal Feed Regulatory Program (AFRPS) utilizing lessons learned from our MFRPS work. This assessment was then used to strategize where WSDA may be able to make improvements and applied for the new FDA AFRPS & Microbiology Lab ISO Cooperative Agreement Grant that was awarded August 2015.
- The 2015 legislature session approved changed to the Cottage Food Operation statue and stakeholder work regarding rule revisions began in July. Three cottage food workshop presentations and outreach material at the Washington State Farmer's Market conference were provided during this period assisting new operations in becoming permitted as a Cottage Food Operation.
- USDA Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) audit reviews were conducted for both routine label reviews and compliance follow up correction reviews during this period.
- During this period our Farm to School Manager participated in visits to Spokane and Seattle schools by the USDA Farm to School Under Secretary. A statewide Farm to School Summit was held April 2015 in Wenatchee where over 150 attendees participated in workshops covering topics such as food and vendor procurements, farmer and school district connections sharing success stories and identifying potential solutions to gaps. This Summit was funded through the USDA Farm to School Conference grant that was completed in May 2015. The OCO staff member handling this grant departed WSDA in June. Work also included updating the on-line Tool kit located at www.wafarmtoschool.org, coordinating statewide [Taste Washington Day](#) events, the National Farm to Cafeteria conference and Washington conferences discussing WA farm to school work.
- A new USDA SCGB cooperative agreement project manager was hired for the Local Buying Mission project and staff transitioned to the USDA SCBG Public Sector and Institutional Markets project after the project manager moved into the WSDA International Marketing program. The USDA Pilot Project for Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables was initiated during this period.
- OCO assisted with applying for and receiving one new FDA cooperative agreement being implemented by the RRT/Feed Program and three continuing FDA cooperative agreements related to food and feed safety work.

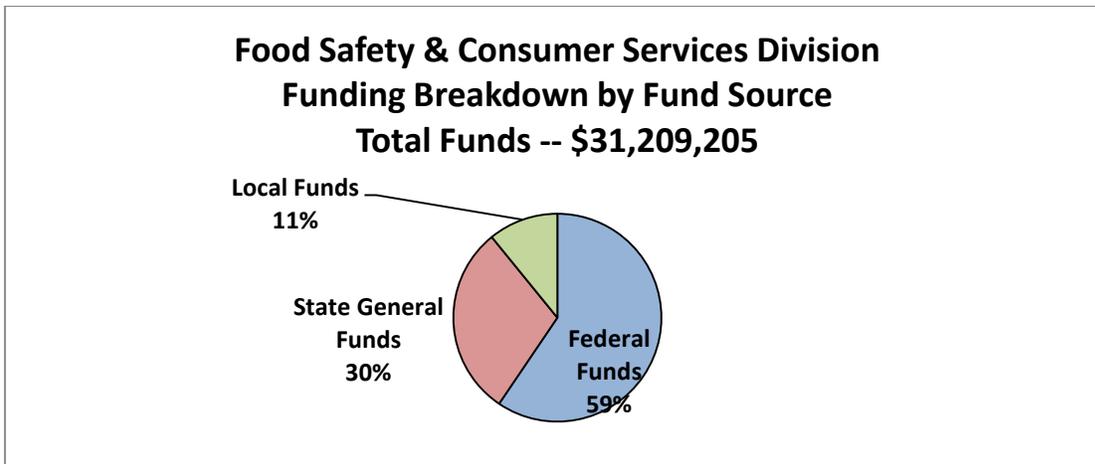
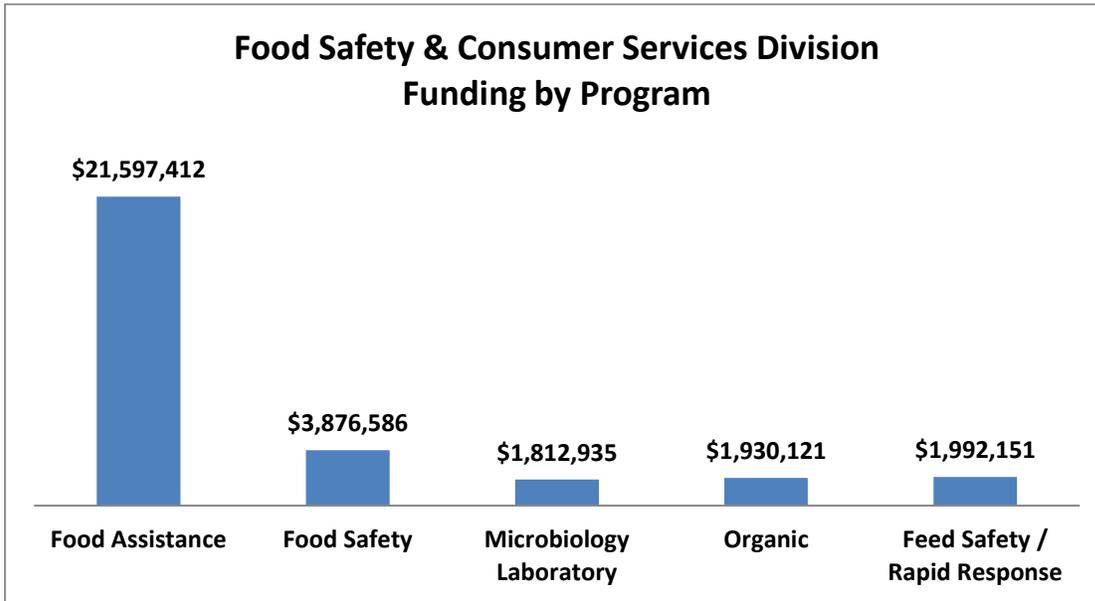


Key Accomplishments for 2015 (continued)

- OCO staff spoke at: the Washington State Farmer Market Association Conference, the Northwest Food Processor's Conference, the WSDA Allergen Workshop, the Farm to School Summit and numerous Cultivating Success workshops across the state.
- OCO staff attended the Association of Food and Drug Officials Annual Education Conference, the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference, the Association of American Feed Control Officials mid-year meeting and Administrator's Seminar, the Northwest Food Processor's EXPO, the International Food Protection Association (IAFP) Conference.
- OCO staff continues to participate on the Rapid Response Team and assist the FS&CS Division and agency on food and feed hazard emergencies and incidents. OCO staff participated in the RRT Training Exercise on Natural Disaster Preparation and the Quarterly Food Protection Taskforce meeting in Bothell, WA.
- On July 1, 2015 the FSCS Division reorganized and the Animal Feed Licensing and Pet Food Registration and tonnage work, the Cottage Food and the USDA COOL work moved out of the OCO unit.
- On October 1, 2015 the OCO unit was reorganized and disbanded.



Fiscal Information for Division Annual Report



Program	% Local Funds	% State – GF	% Federal Funds
Feed Safety / RRT	57%	0%	43%
Food Assistance	0%	29%	71%
Food Safety Program	20%	50%	30%
Microbiology Laboratory	7%	56%	37%
Organic Program	69%	0%	31%



Acronyms

APHA	American Public Health Association
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CDFA	California Department of Food and Agriculture
COOL	USDA Country of Origin Labeling
COTS	Commercial Off-the-Shelf
CSFP	Commodity Supplemental Food Program
DNR	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
DOH	Washington State Department of Health
EFAP	Emergency Food Assistance Program
FAP	Food Assistance Program (WSDA)
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FERN	Food Emergency Response Network
FERP	Food Emergency Response Plan
FPTF	Washington State Food Protection Task Force
FMSA	Washington State Farmer Market Association
FSO	Field Safety Officer
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
Grants SEA-DO	FDA Seattle District Office
ICS	Incident Command Structure
ISO	International Standardization Organization
LHJ	Local health jurisdictions
LIMS	Laboratory Information Management System
MIE	Marijuana Infused Edibles
MDP	USDA's Microbiological Data Program
MFRPS	FDA's Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standard
NOI	Notice of Infraction
NOP	National Organic Program
OCO	Office of Compliance and Outreach
OMRI	Organic Material Review Institute (WSDA)
OSPI	Office for Superintendent of Public Instruction
PI	Program Index, which is an account identifier for budgeting purposes
PISCES	Internal computer program/timekeeping system
RMA	USDA Risk Management Agency grant
RRT	Rapid Response Team (WSDA)
SCBG	USDA Specialty Crop Block
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TEFAP	The Emergency Food Assistance Program
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WSDA	Washington State Department of Agriculture
WSU	Washington State University

THIS

PAGE

LEFT

BLANK

INTENTIONALLY