

Bi-Monthly Food Policy Forum Meeting Agenda

WASHINGTON STATE
FOOD POLICY FORUM

Thursday, October 1, 2026 • 1:00–4:00 PM

Zoom Link:

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1612414337?pwd=U3M6Uq7O6lWv2LNFmBPH5XBVII9jBF.1>

Meeting ID: 161 241 4337, **Passcode:** 739992

Objectives

- *Discuss Forum members' interest in engaging with legislators and agency representatives to elevate the visibility of the Forum's work and increase awareness of its ideas and recommendations.*
- *Create a shared understanding of what succession planning is and how it supports and sustains agricultural viability in Washington.*
- *Learn from generational producers firsthand how they navigated or are currently navigating farm transitions, state programs that are most valuable, and policy changes they would like to see to support succession planning in Washington.*
- *Understand what succession planning policies and programs have been successful in other states and whether they can be applied in Washington.*

Agenda

1:00 – 1:10 PM **Welcome, Roll Call, & Get Settled (Facilitator and Chair) (10 min)**

1:10 – 1:30 PM **Sharing and Elevating Forum Recommendations (20 min)**

- Gauge Forum members' interest in engaging with legislators and agency representatives to elevate the visibility of the Forum's work and increase awareness of its ideas and recommendations.

Succession Planning Learning Session

1:30 – 1:50 PM **Insight into Succession Planning and its Importance (20 min)**

- Representative Mary Dye will provide an overview of what succession planning is, why it's important, and barriers that are often experienced.

1:50 – 2:50 PM **Producer Panel (60 min)**

- Addie Candib, American Farmland Trust, will guide producer panelists through a series of questions developed by the Food Policy Forum to better understand the succession planning process in Washington from their perspectives and lived experiences. The panel will feature:

- Kevin Jensen: Riverbrook Ranch in Tenino
- Mark Charlton: Charlton Farms in Ellensburg
- Troy Lenssen: Lenssen Dairy in Lynden

2:50 – 3:20 PM

Succession Planning Services that Exist in Washington State (30 min.)

- Hilary Aten, Washington State Conservation Commission, and Addie Candib, American Farmland Trust, will provide a brief synopsis of available succession planning services in Washington along with local and regional examples of these services in action.
- Hilary and Addie will also highlight private sector businesses and individuals who support succession planning in Washington.

3:20 – 3:50 PM

Closing Succession Planning Gaps: Lessons from Other States (30 min.)

- Kellie Henwood, Regional Small Farms Program, Washington State University Extension, M.S Sustainable Food Systems & Policy, will highlight successful succession planning policies and programs from other states, identified in the report, *Exploring Policy Incentive Models to Support Farmland Transition and Access in Washington State*, that could help address gaps and inform future efforts in Washington.

3:50 – 4:00 PM

Closing Reflections & Adjourn (10 min)

- Caleb Gwerder, Washington Farm Bureau, will synthesize discussions from the learning session and provide additional opportunities to stay engaged in this topic.

Washington State Food Policy Forum

The Forum serves as a collaborative venue for advancing food system change across Washington. Established in statute in 2020, the Forum brings together diverse stakeholders from agriculture, conservation, nutrition, public health, and government to identify and address pressing food system challenges. Since 2019, the Forum has produced recommendation reports and letters to the Legislature, which it continues to expand upon. See *Forum reports and resources here: www.scc.wa.gov/food-policy*

Forum Priorities for 2025–27

Following a multi-phase planning process beginning in April 2025, the Forum established five teams to advance the following priorities for the 2025-27 biennium:

Team Name	2025-27 Topical Priorities
Impacts of Climate Change	• Water Supply for Agriculture and Food Production • Climate Resilience for Agriculture and Food Production
Agricultural Land Protection and Availability and Next Generation Farming	• Succession Planning and Incentives
Alleviating Barriers to Small and Mid-Scale Farm Viability and Market Access	• Advanced Technical Expertise and Knowledge Transfer
Regional Food Infrastructure and Institutional Procurement for Economic Development	• Public-Private Partnership Models for Infrastructure Finance • Strategic Infrastructure Planning and Coordination
Food Insecurity	• Food System Coordination for Food Security • Eligibility and Access for Food Assistance Programs