



ANNUAL REPORT

2024/25



Growing Our Mission

The Washington Grain Commission is committed to enhancing the long-term profitability and competitiveness of Washington small grains and small grain producers by responsible allocation of assessment funds in research, marketing, and education.

Keep reading to learn how we invested grower dollars to drive measurable results toward our mission in fiscal year 2024/25.

From Our Leadership

Dear Growers,

As we reflect on the 2024/25 fiscal year, we first want to acknowledge that growers and farm families continued to face significant challenges. Grain prices remained low while input costs stayed high, straining farm operations across our state. The Washington Grain Commission (WGC) remains deeply aware of this difficult environment and is committed to supporting you through strategic market development, research, and education.

In that, one of our key priorities this fiscal year was developing a new strategic plan that, for the first time, incorporates measurable goals to guide our work for the next 3–5 years. After two working sessions in January and February, the board approved the plan's initial draft in May 2025, with final refinements, board approval, and implementation launching in fiscal year 2025/26.

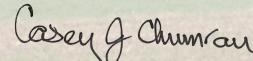
Grower engagement was also a top priority throughout Winter 2025. As part of our ongoing effort to listen directly to producers about key research and marketing issues, commissioners and staff worked to attend as many grower meetings as possible across Eastern Washington. At 18 meetings, we gathered more than 400 completed surveys—and invaluable grower feedback that will help direct our work in the years ahead, including that growers want their dollars focused on market development.

This year, commissioners and staff visited multiple countries in Southeast Asia, home to both our largest soft white markets and regions with significant growth potential. WGC representatives participated in both the North Asia Marketing Conference and the South and Southeast Asia Buyers Conference, a gathering of over 200 U.S. wheat customers, hosted by U.S. Wheat Associates (USW). We also partnered with USW to conduct a joint market development mission to South America with our fellow Pacific Northwest commissions in Oregon and Idaho. Closer to home, we increased direct grower interaction with seven visiting trade teams by inviting producers to participate in tour stops and joint meals.

Finally, the WGC continued its strong advocacy for research funding, with successful outcomes including additional support for the PNW Herbicide Resistance Initiative and the Barley Scab Initiative—critical investments in the long-term competitiveness of our industry.

Despite current economic headwinds and thanks to smart resource allocation over the past several years, the Washington Grain Commission is in a strong position and remains committed to strengthening demand, advancing research, and preparing for future opportunities. We encourage you to stay engaged with your commissioners and WGC staff and follow us on social media to get the latest news on how your assessment dollars are working for you.

Sincerely,



Casey Chumrau, CEO



Scan the QR code to
get our newsletter and
find us on social media



Commissioners

Districts:

- 1 **Mike Carstensen**
- 2 **Ben Barstow**
- 3 **Brit Ausman**
- 4 **Ben Adams**
- 5 **Nicole Berg**
- 6 **Art Schultheis**
- 7 **Kevin Klein, Chair**

Industry Rep

Ty Jessup, Vice Chair

WSDA

Scott Steinbacher

Staff

Casey Chumrau, CEO

Sarah Márquez,
Manager of
Communications

Jake Liening, Market
Development Specialist

Parker Dawson,
Systems and Records
Specialist

Shari McCarthy,
Office & Program
Support Specialist

Market Development

Our Objective

To strengthen and sustain our market position as a Tier-1 global grain supplier, focusing on domestic and international markets.

Our Key Activities

TRADE TEAMS

7

Trade Teams



8

Countries Represented



Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, the Philippines, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador & Brazil

VISITING CUSTOMERS

4

Marketing Trips



6

Countries Visited



4

Commissioners Traveled



These trips enable Washington growers to understand regional challenges and opportunities and build customer relationships. In 2024/25, we visited customers in the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam, Chile, and Peru.

END-USE QUALITY

1



RVA Donated to USW South America Lab

429

Soft White Harvest Samples Taken & Tested



4

Overseas Crop Quality Seminars Delivered



In-country quality testing reinforces overseas confidence in U.S. wheat, while annual crop quality analysis and seminars strengthen customer relationships and Washington's reputation as a high-quality supplier.

Spotlight: Resolving Indonesian Trade Barrier

In June 2025, a united effort by USW, the USDA, and the Washington Grain Commission (WGC) successfully resolved a technical trade barrier in Indonesia, a key market for U.S. soft white wheat.

The issue arose in October 2023 when the Indonesian Quarantine Agency (IQA) mandated a significantly higher dosage of phosphine fumigation for all wheat imports, potentially closing the market due to safety and efficacy concerns.

The U.S. industry mobilized, leveraging scientific evidence to demonstrate the rule was unnecessary. **A crucial turning point was a December 2024 technical visit hosted by the WGC, where IQA officials toured the U.S. wheat supply chain, gaining firsthand knowledge of our farming, cleaning, storage, and traceability practices.**



During a site visit with the Indonesian delegation, dryland farmer Mike Miller (right) demonstrated how our seed treatments persist through winter, prevent disease, and reduce excessive fumigation at shipping.

This diplomacy and science-based engagement led the IQA to officially drop the high-rate fumigation requirement on June 15, 2025. This resolution—a direct return on farmer-funded market development—not only preserved market access but contributed to a subsequent surge in U.S. wheat sales to Indonesia. The collaboration underscores how ongoing trade servicing can address complex non-tariff barriers.



USW Japan Country Director Rick Nakano (center left) translates for members of the Japanese Biscuit Association during their tour of the USDA-ARS Western Wheat Quality Lab.



Commissioner Ben Barstow (center) at the Filipino-Chinese Bakery Association's Bakery Fair in Manila.

Research

Our Objective

To drive practical, forward-looking public and private grain research that improves crop performance, boosts production efficiency, and explores new uses for wheat and barley.

Our Key Activities

27 

Research Projects Funded

5 

Research Funding Advocacy Trips

6 

Perpetual Endowments

In 2024/2025, we invested in variety development (71%), cropping systems (13%), barley breeding and evaluation (8%), plant protection (5%), and other projects (3%). The six endowments established by WGC since 1990 require no additional funding from WGC and currently fund seven research faculty positions at Washington State University.

Spotlight: Research Investments Pay It Forward

ROYALTY REVENUE



In May 2012, the WGC supported a WSU-sponsored initiative that led to license its future wheat variety releases, charging 2 cents per pound of certified seed sold.

Starting in July 2024, Washington State University (WSU) royalty revenue from their spring wheat varieties began offsetting \$250,000 in annual research funding requests to the commission for spring wheat breeding projects.

This means that the commission can now allocate more funds to other research projects that benefit Washington growers, while still supporting the breeding program. This is a testament to the strategic foresight and success of the WSU breeding programs and breeders, including Drs. Mike Pumphrey, Arron Carter, and Kimberly Garland-Campbell.

Education

Our Objective

To serve as a reliable source of information for farmers and the public and educate key audiences on the importance of small grains production to food systems, communities, and the economy.

Spotlight: Grower & Community Education

GROWER MEETINGS

18

Grower Meetings



950

Grower Attendees



422

Completed Surveys



From Jan–Feb 2025, WGC staff traveled across 12 counties to provide an update on HB4, discuss GMO wheat acceptance, and survey growers on how they want WGC to invest grower dollars. Their top answer? Marketing.

WHEAT WEEK

24



WA Counties

286

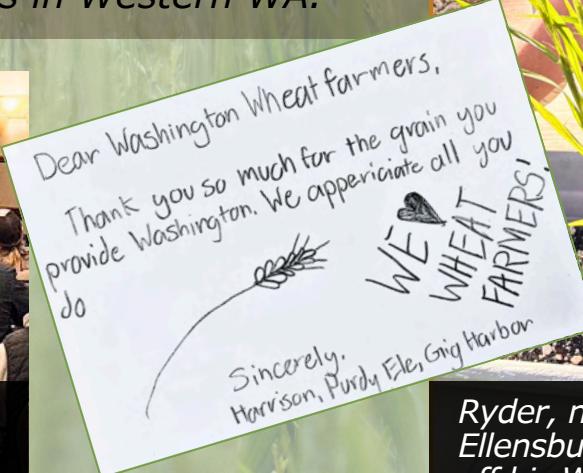
In-Person Programs



Wheat Week, funded by WGC and delivered by Franklin Conservation District, reached 21,631 students with both in-person and online programming, including 68% (14,823) students in Western WA.



CEO Casey Chumrau (standing) presenting an HB4 update at one of 18 grower meetings WGC attended in early 2025.



Ryder, now a 5th grader in Ellensburg, proudly shows off his Wheat Week plant.

Organizational Success

Our Objective

To build a collaborative team of commissioners and staff who are well-equipped to carry out the Washington Grain Commission's mission and guide the industry toward long-term success.

Spotlight: National Leadership & New Faces

At their January 15, 2025 meeting in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Wheat Associates board of directors elected WGC District 1 Commissioner Mike Carstensen to serve as secretary-treasurer for the 2025/26 term.

Carstensen's election is a milestone not only for him and his family, but also for the entire Washington wheat industry. It highlights the leadership, vision, and values that our growers contribute to the national conversation. We are proud to support Mike in his new role and thank him for the many years he has contributed to guiding the strategy, stewardship, and success of the Washington Grain Commission's mission.



Mike Carstensen (3rd from left) hosting a personal harvest tour near Almira, Wash. for the Nissin Flour Milling Crop Survey team in August 2025.

CARSTENSEN JOINS U.S. WHEAT

NEW WGC TEAM MEMBERS



Ben Adams
Commissioner
(District 4)



Nicole Berg
Commissioner
(District 5)



Jake Liening
Market Development
Specialist

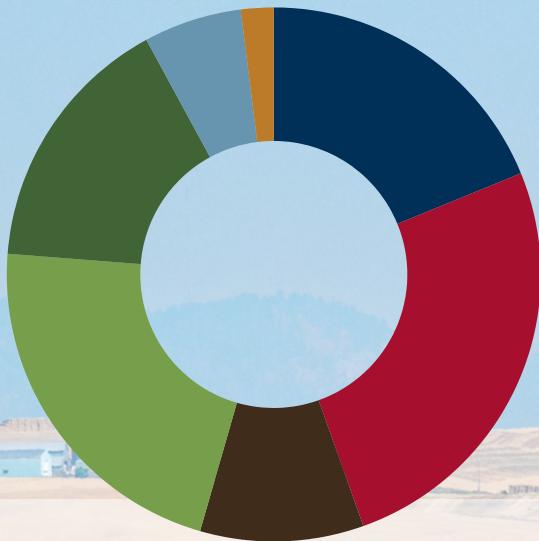


Sarah Márquez
Manager of
Communications

Financials

2024/25 Budget

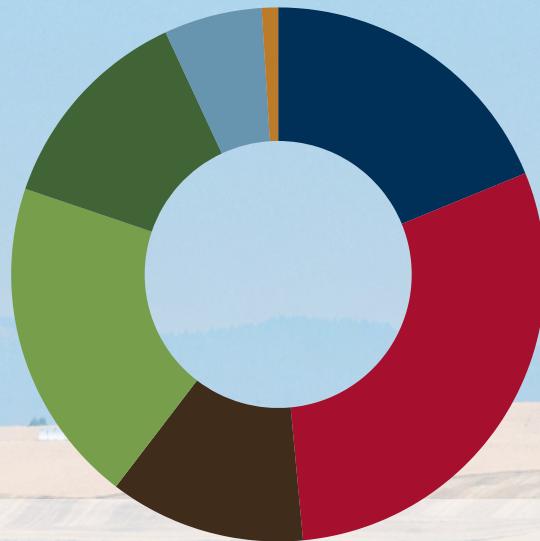
\$7,287,379



19% Market Development
26% Research
10% Education
22% Grower Services
16% Professional Services
6% Office Operations
2% Policy Development

2025/26 Budget

\$8,360,278



19% Market Development
30% Research
12% Education
20% Grower Services
13% Professional Services
6% Office Operations
1% Policy Development

2024/25 Summary

Actual Expenditures

\$7,021,162



Total Revenue

\$6,737,510

Wheat: \$5,582,820
Barley: \$102,357
Other: \$1,052,333

Total Ending Assets

\$18.2M

25/26 Budget: \$8.3M
General Reserves: \$6.4M
Marketing Reserve: \$1.5M
Unallocated Funds: \$2.0M