

Unquenchable optimism and a tenacity verging on stubbornness



Inland Northwest Farm Families & the Road Ahead
Alex McGregor



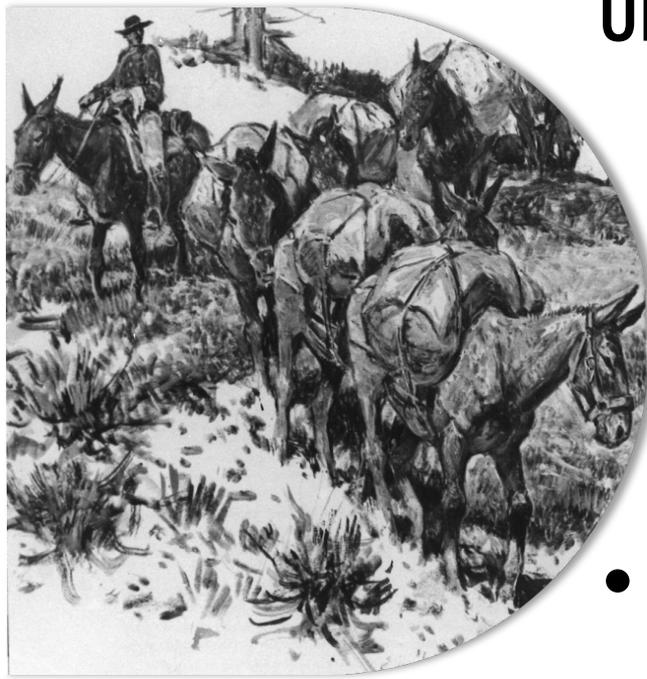
In the far Northwest lies an unusual land...





“The farmer has to be an optimist

or he wouldn't be a farmer.” Will Rogers



- Early travelers, often mule packers, saw signs promising “*plenty of guideboards, wood, water and whiskey stops*” on the Nez Perce trail...
- Wood and water can be seen with a glance at the river and the lumber mill on its north side.
- I'll provide some guideboards—about farm families and their remarkable heritage, trade, tugboats, legislative issues and the road ahead...
- It's a bit early in the day, alas, for this to be a whiskey stop...



John & Archie McGregor, 1886



Peter & Alex McGregor, 1898





#1: Deeply held values etched in our shared farm heritage and tempered by hard times...

“Pioneers came equipped with three traits that helped them succeed: unquenchable optimism, a wry self-deprecating sense of humor that helped in the tough times and a tenacity that verged on stubbornness. Traits that were useful then, are useful now, and will be useful in the future.”

~Bill McGregor

“It was pretty tough. Hot, dry and windy. We’d get very little—three bushels an acre. Our family of twelve shared bathwater—the one who was cleanest took the first bath. After all twelve of us took our turns, the water was spread on the garden.” ~Karl Weber



Wheat was 'king' and we soon led the nation...

A fellow wrote from our ranch boarding house a century ago, *"Late in June the vast Northwestern desert of wheat began to take on a tinge of gold, lending an austere beauty..."*

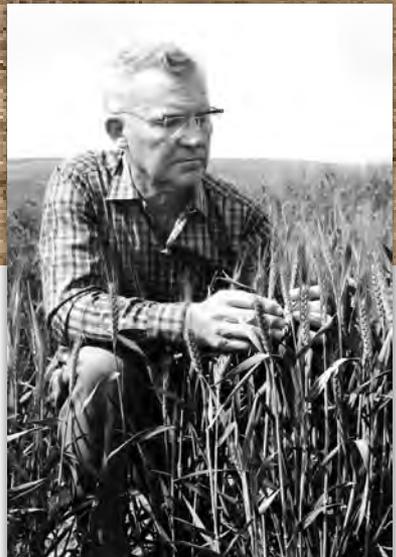


Farming was hardly simple and in harmony with nature....



#2 A remarkable relationship—farmers, scientists, and local businesses—set the stage for great progress...

"Help us bring science down out of the skies and hitch it to our plows."



Orville A. Vogel



WSU Wheat Scientists



Jim Cook



Farmers and local businesses have pitched in, too...

- On our farm, seventy years ago, we took what long-time NRCS soil conservationist Dennis Roe calls *"a bold leap...to adapt cropping systems research."*
- That tradition continues today with our researchers trying out new practices and products, in close collaboration with university scientists, with dozens of on-farm trials across this prairie and at our two research stations...



A growing awareness of the importance of agricultural technology...

Exponential gains to come in **data management**

In more **efficient water use** and **nutrient management**

In **control of disease** and **pests**

In harnessing **plant breeding** and **biotechnology**

To **produce the highest return**, harvest after harvest





Staying positive and tenacious: Getting bipartisan action to help our dedicated stewards of the land—farm families!



"If we allow misconceptions, not science and good judgment to dictate the future of agriculture..."

~Norman Borlaug

"What an amazing, positive story. It is time to be positive about the industry, to be proud of it. It is agriculture that has enabled this country to grow and become the strongest, most powerful nation in the world. And we should not let a person in this country forget it. Ever."

~Tom Vilsack



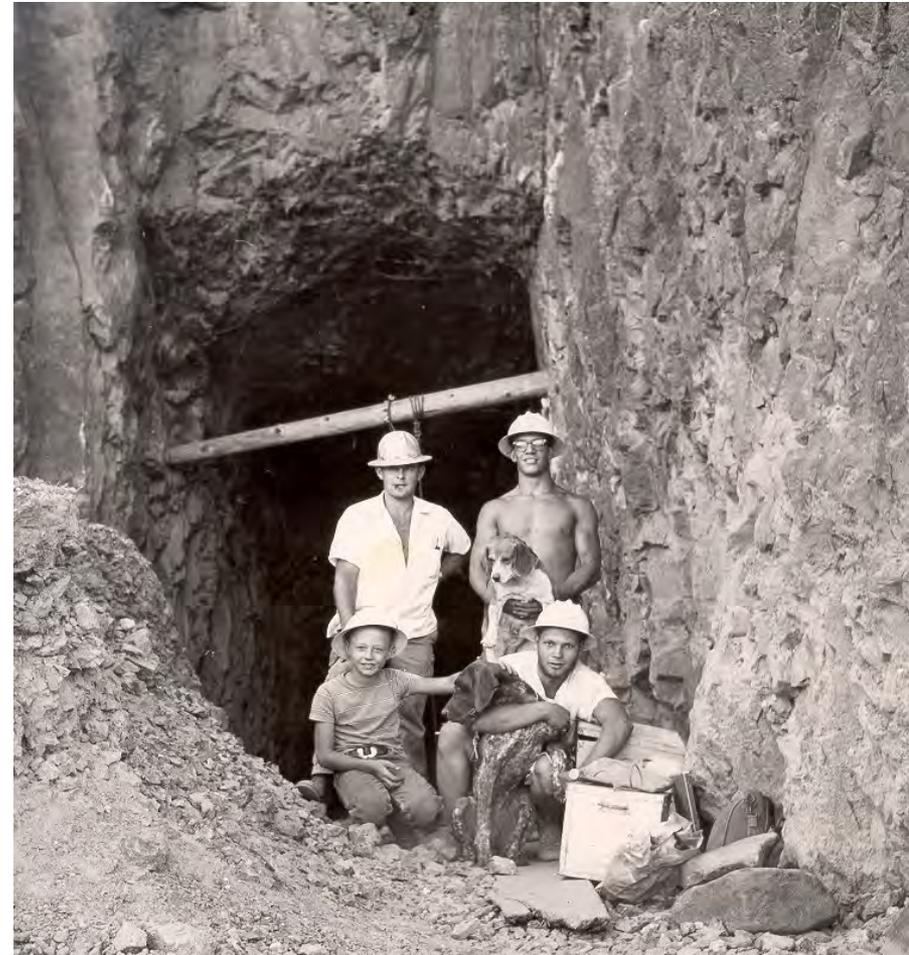


#3 The 'three T's' are all vital in getting our crops to market...

- In pioneer days, *"a farmer was exhausted and his vocabulary of cussing pumped dry."*
- Renewable power, an efficient way to reach distant markets and feed hungry people around the globe outweighed the nostalgia...



*"It was not the six-gun that won the West.
It was impounded water."* ~Oregon Senator
Mark Hatfield



...a canyon of sagebrush, coyotes, rattlesnakes and rugged paths through the rocks, a land few knew since the Palouse Indians called it 'home.'



Tugboats have become crucial to our future...



- The Columbia-Snake River system has become the #1 route for ocean going wheat and wood, #2 for corn and soy, from here at home and as far away as the Dakotas...
- Some critics claim agriculture depends upon the river less than it once did...
- The river system laid the foundation for a strong Washington economy...



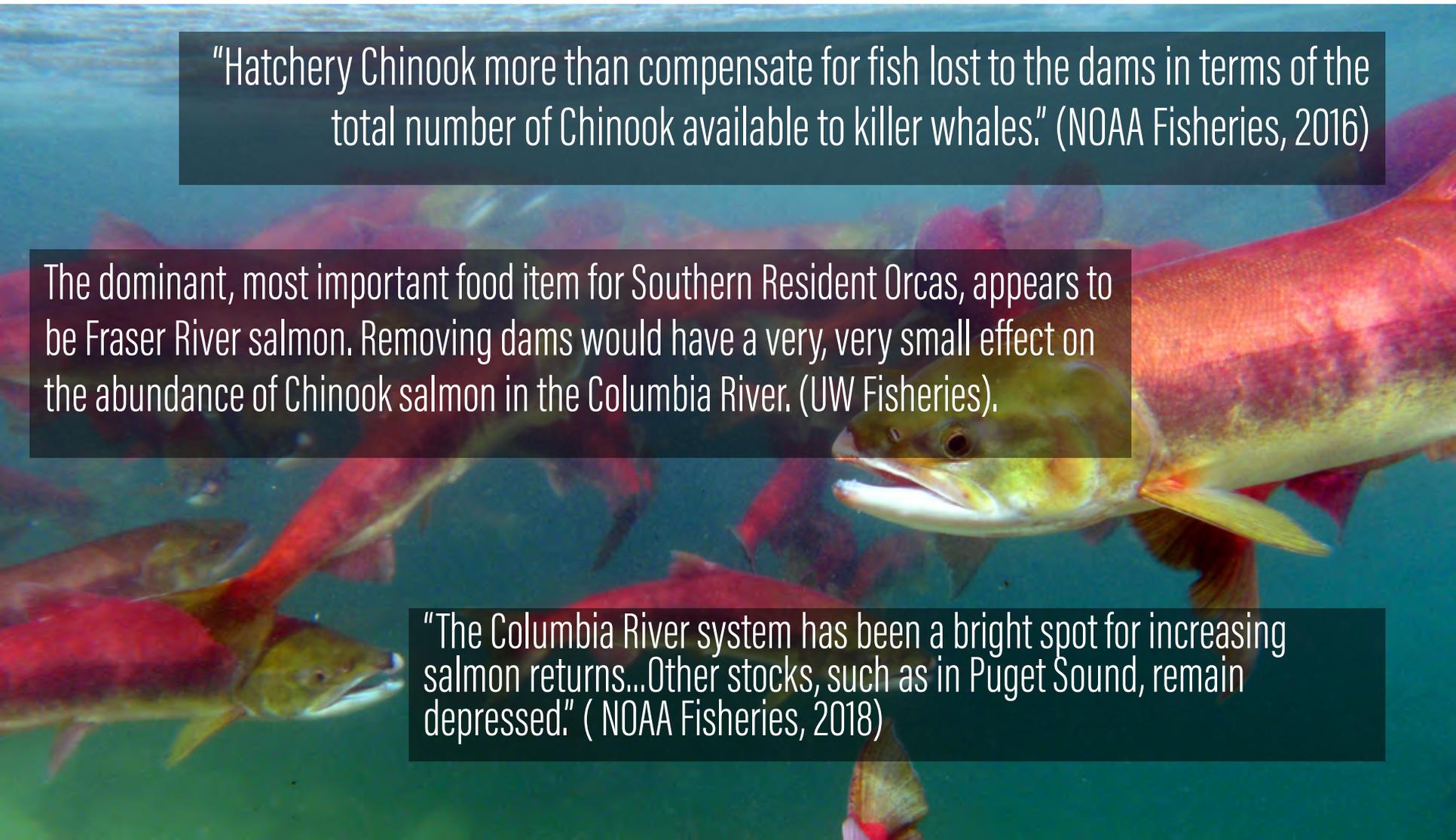


#4 There are so many positive signs of progress made!

“Hatchery Chinook more than compensate for fish lost to the dams in terms of the total number of Chinook available to killer whales.” (NOAA Fisheries, 2016)

The dominant, most important food item for Southern Resident Orcas, appears to be Fraser River salmon. Removing dams would have a very, very small effect on the abundance of Chinook salmon in the Columbia River. (UW Fisheries),

“The Columbia River system has been a bright spot for increasing salmon returns...Other stocks, such as in Puget Sound, remain depressed.” (NOAA Fisheries, 2018)

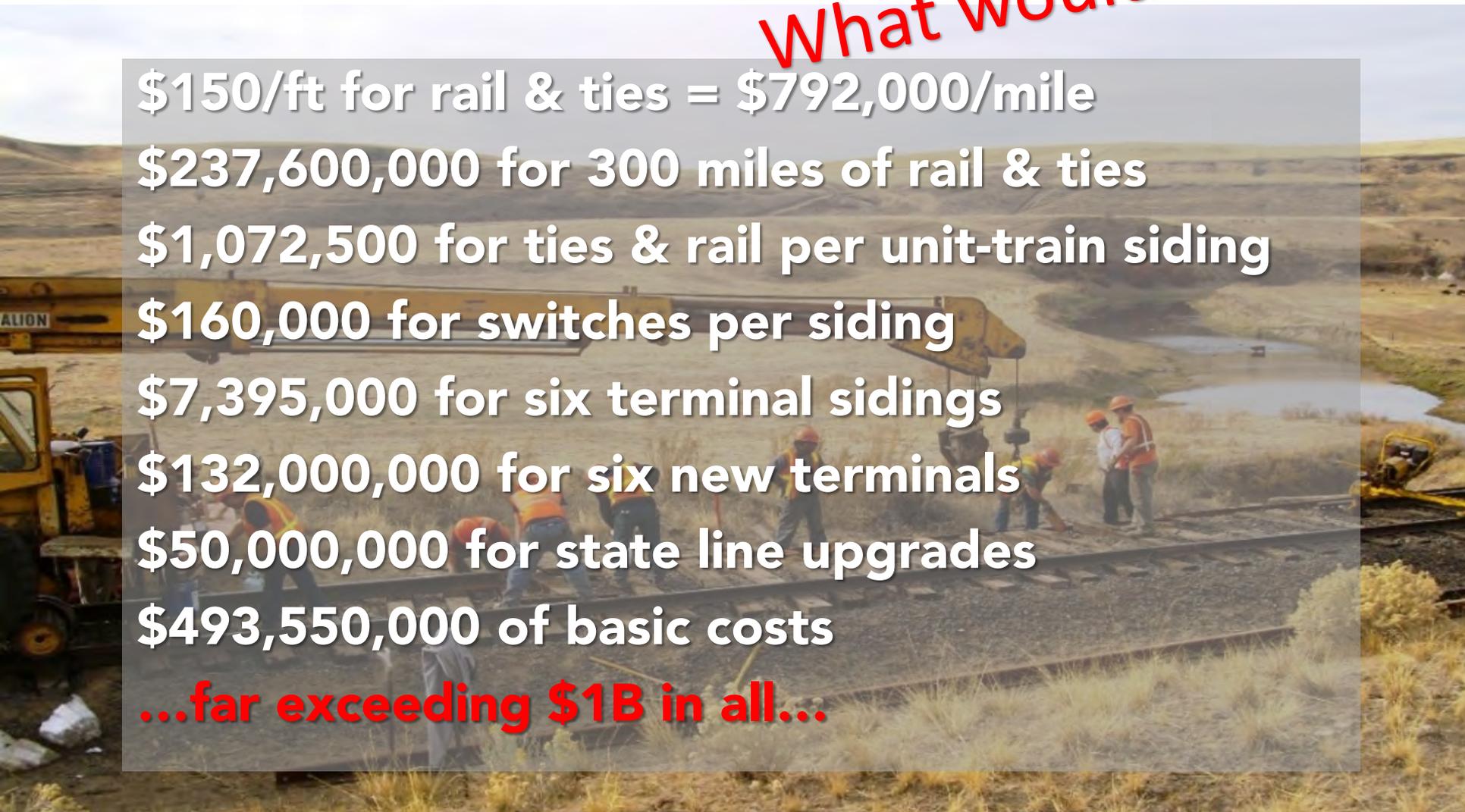




If the dams were breached, could rail take up the load instead of overcrowded highways?

What would it cost?

\$150/ft for rail & ties = \$792,000/mile
\$237,600,000 for 300 miles of rail & ties
\$1,072,500 for ties & rail per unit-train siding
\$160,000 for switches per siding
\$7,395,000 for six terminal sidings
\$132,000,000 for six new terminals
\$50,000,000 for state line upgrades
\$493,550,000 of basic costs
...far exceeding \$1B in all...





Maintaining what we have is a big enough endeavor...

- Adding 167,000 semi-trucks to overcrowded highways would snarl traffic and fill the skies with more CO₂...
- We've already faced our share of maintenance challenges in '19 on the Three T's so essential to get crops to market and essential supplies upstream...



Spring 2019, Rail line near LaCrosse, WSDOT



Sept 8, 2019 Bonneville Dam Sill Crack, US Army Corp of Engineers

#4

Export or Die



Exports rule the West

by Andrew Eddie



Our Common Goal: Washington Relies on International Trade to Support our World-renowned Growers and Manufacturers



Wheat leaders talk about next steps on trade

Matthew Weaver Mar 12, 2018



CEO ADVISER

BY SPENCER COHEN

THE TARIFF THREAT IS REAL

A TRADE WAR WOULD DEVASTATE WASHINGTON'S ECONOMY





A trade war could hardly have come at a worse time for agriculture...

Farmers are 'casualties' of Trump's trade war, agriculture secretary admits
"You can't pay the bills with patriotism," Sonny Perdue said.



INDIA IMPOSES ADDITIONAL TARIFFS ON U.S. PULSES

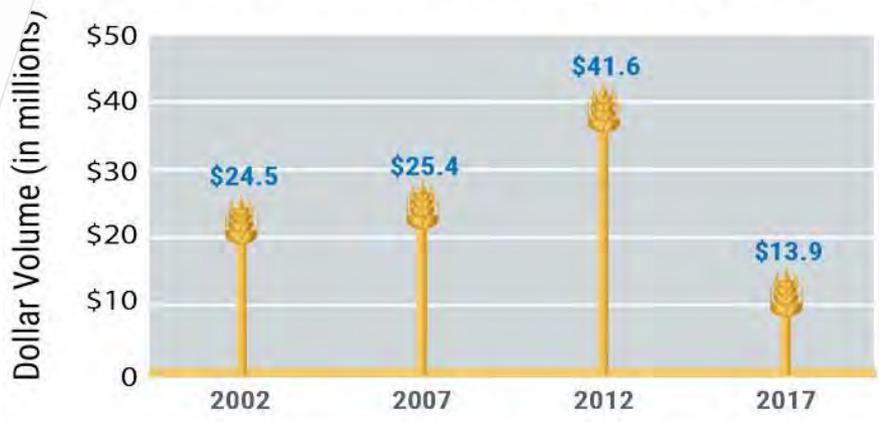
TARIFFS ON U.S. ORIGIN CHICKPEAS AND LENTILS AT 77% AND 55% RESPECTIVELY.

'A World of Hurt in Farm Country'

'There's bleeding going on' in U.S. farm economy, ag lender says

Farm Families Face Another Brutal Year

Net cash farm income in Spokane County



"Losses have already been documented and are extreme." WSDA

Our View: Financial Woes on the Farm Bode Ill for the Nation



Please join us in supporting USMCA—the new NAFTA—with Mexico and Canada

“Congress must rise above the current red/blue political environment which pits D’s and R’s as opposing forces. Trade is the fertilizer that helps the country grow. The failure to pass the USMCA treaty will have the same effect on the economy as failure to provide their wheat plants their necessary inputs—a paltry harvest.” ~Michelle Hennings, WAWG

Please join us in reaching out— to urge House Democrats not to reopen the treaty. It could hold us back years. To urge Republicans to help keep the waters calm. It is a must-pass piece of legislation for our state and the nation.



CANADA  UNITED STATES
FRIENDS | PARTNERS | ALLIES

WASHINGTON




Washington sells **\$9.6 BILLION** in goods and services to Canada

223,300 JOBS in Washington depend on trade & investment with Canada





With USMCA resolved, moving forward with Japan becomes job #1

Editorial: Mr. President, Japan wants our wheat
Aug 22, 2019

"We've invested countless hours and millions of hard-earned farmer dollars and federal export market development funds building this market. The largest, most reliable and valuable market for US wheat." ~Vince Peterson, US Wheat



NAWG
@wheatworld

.@realDonaldTrump Mr. President, Japan is the #1 market for US wheat exports on average, where we hold just over 50% of the market. They don't buy our wheat because "they want us to feel okay." They buy it because it's the highest quality wheat in the world. That's not fake news.

8:27 AM · Aug 14, 2019 · TweetDeck

Politics

U.S. rebukes Japan over tariffs on farm products



#5 Please help us make room for making decisions in the field about how to steward our precious land...

- Family farms and ranches dominate our land—97% of our agricultural lands in our state are in their custody and care...
- We work for a fickle boss that calls the shots...
- This spring, while 'restrictive scheduling' was being discussed in Olympia, it was all hands on deck...
- We've made huge strides protecting our waters and soils with help from conservation districts, land grant scientists, and voluntary incentives for doing work we'd like to do but cannot afford on our own



"We have to avoid putting rules on top of rules on top of rules that make it almost impossible for farm families to compete."
 Alex McGregor, President
 The McGregor Company
 Colfax, WA





We support, and appreciate, your work on other key issues, including...

- Bipartisan action to support a pesticide application safety panel and increase funding for WSDA's pesticide safety training program
- Your support for the soils health initiative
- Your support for short-line rail infrastructure
- And, for completing the investment in the WSU Global Animal Health Facility



SOIL HEALTH INITIATIVE





#6 I look forward to working together to strengthen our rural communities..

- *“People in rural America need to know we have their backs. Their futures should be determined by the size of their dreams, not by the distance to a decent internet connection.” ~Debbie Stabenow, Senate Ag Committee*
- Join me in supporting the effort, lead by the Port of Whitman, to bring affordable, reliable coverage to rural areas using ‘dark’ fiber leased to licensed retail providers...
- Let’s pull together to work further with agencies and colleges to bring workers to our rural areas. We’ve got high quality, full time jobs available, great schools and job openings





#7 "The greatest generation" of farmers and a fast pace ahead ~Tom Vilsack

"We're now poised to see the greatest period of scientific advance in the history of agriculture. There's never been a more exciting time to be in agriculture." ~Tom Fraley, World Food Prize



- The wheat genome has been mapped and the pace of research accelerates.
- During the careers of farmers, average age 59, we've seen remarkable progress:

Yields 250% ■ Soil erosion 85% ■ Dust six-fold ■ Burning of crop residue 22-fold

The biggest gains in productivity and stewardship of any generation since crops were first sown so very long ago!



A Nobel Prize winner put it well:

*"It took some 10,000 years to expand food production to the current level. **By 2050, we will need to nearly double it. Through science and technology, and farmer ingenuity**, American agriculture has achieved levels of productivity second to none. Let us never forget that world peace will not be built on empty stomachs or human misery." ~Norman Borlaug*



*"We live in a society exquisitely dependent **on science and technology**, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology." ~Carl Sagan*

A photograph of a vast field of golden wheat stretching to the horizon under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The text "Many thanks, friends!" is centered in the upper half of the image.

Many thanks, friends!