

PART VII

FARM MARKETING AND EXPENDITURES

Location and Transportation

Most Snohomish County farms are favorably located to market products within the most densely populated area in the Pacific Northwest--the Puget Sound metropolitan area. The combined population of Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King and Pierce Counties, which includes the cities of Bellingham, Everett, greater Seattle and Tacoma, totaled 1,550,470 in 1960.

Transportation facilities are good in Snohomish County except in the eastern, mountainous section. A network of primary and secondary highways and county roads permits year around movement of farm goods in the agricultural areas of western Snohomish County. U. S. Highway 99, the primary route in the area, connects Snohomish County points with cities to the north and south. Another major route, U. S. Highway 2, extends eastward, providing access to eastern Washington via Stevens Pass. All of the several state highways in the county are found in the western part with the exception of one, State Highway 530, which runs eastward along the north fork of the Stillaguamish River to Darrington. County and other roads also join points in the eastern part of the county with those in the west.

Three transcontinental railroad companies, Northern Pacific, Great Northern and Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific, serve Snohomish County. A Northern Pacific line runs north-south through Snohomish and Arlington in the western agricultural area of the county. Other Northern Pacific lines in the county connect Everett with Snohomish and Arlington and connect Darrington with Arlington. The Great Northern has two mainlines which intersect at Everett. The north-south line runs from Seattle to Vancouver, British Columbia serving the areas along the Puget Sound. The main transcontinental line east to Chicago runs from Everett through Snohomish and Monroe providing service up the Snohomish and Skykomish Valleys. A branch line of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific traverses the southwestern part of the county connecting Everett with the mainline to the south. Extensive switchyard facilities are located in Everett which are important for speedier service in moving agricultural products to market.

The Port of Everett provides a year-around deep water harbor for ocean going vessels. In the past the major portion of the shipping was devoted to lumber and pulp and paper products. More recently, however, there has been increased use of the port as a terminal for shipment of agricultural products not only for Snohomish County but for eastern Washington counties as well.

Income: Value of Products Sold

Census of Agriculture data on the value of farm products sold show that the trend of gross farm income in Snohomish County has been upward in recent years. Snohomish County farms marketed agricultural products worth \$15,687,935 in 1959 compared with \$11,337,746 in 1954 and \$11,218,642 in 1949. Snohomish ranked fifteenth among Washington counties in value of farm products sold in 1959.

The total farm sales value of livestock and livestock products for 1959 in Snohomish County amounted to \$12,899,240 or about 44 percent greater than the \$8,945,993 reported in the 1954 Census. The 1959 total represented 82 percent of

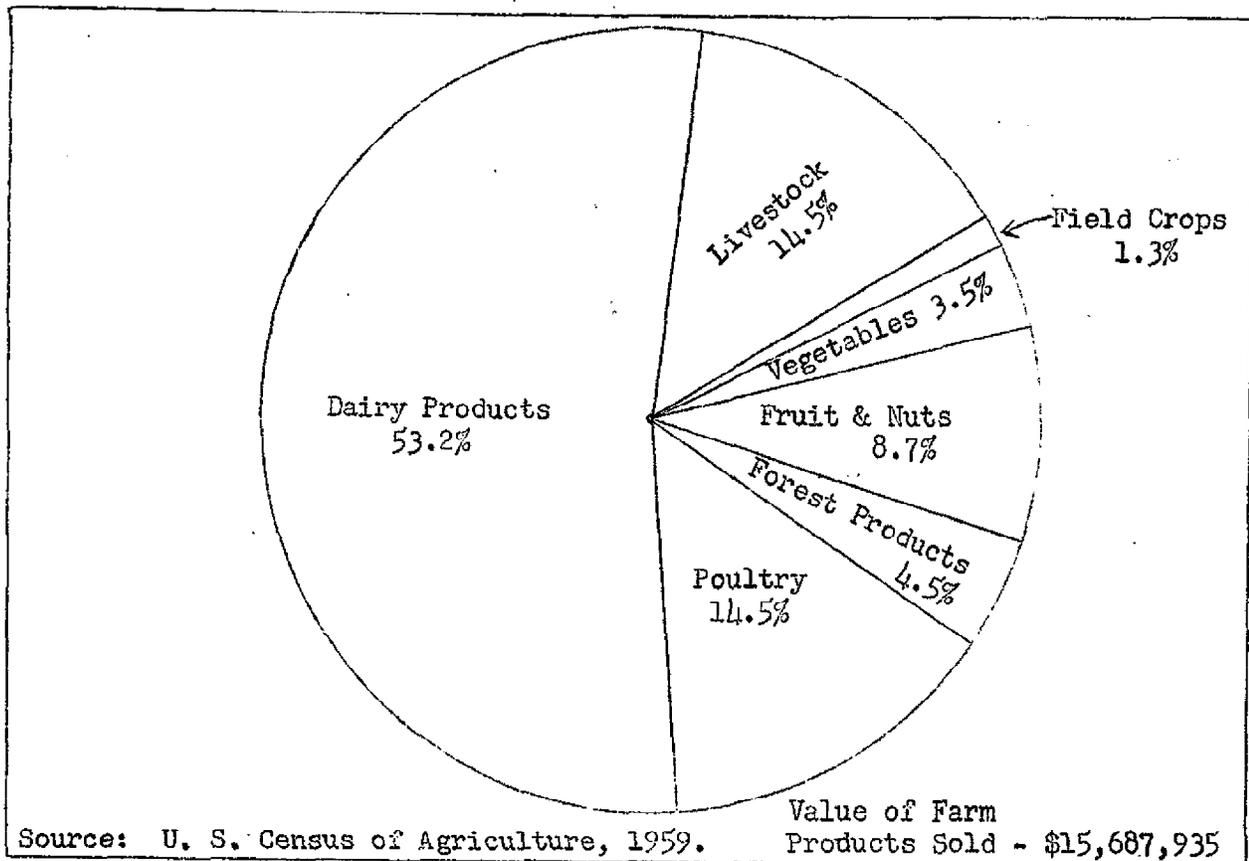


Figure 12. Sources of Cash Farm Income, Snohomish County, 1959

Table 33. Livestock and Livestock Products Marketed
Snohomish County, 1959

Class of Livestock and Products Sold	Amount Received By Farmers (dollars)	Percent of the Total Value
Livestock Sold Alive (cattle and calves, horses and mules, hogs, sheep)	\$ 2,268,473	17.5
Dairy Products (whole milk, butterfat)	8,345,001	64.6
Poultry and Poultry Products (chickens, eggs, turkeys, ducks, etc.)	2,280,383	17.6
Other Livestock Products	5,383	.3
Total amount received for Livestock and Livestock Products	\$12,899,240	100.0

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.

the value of all farm products sold in the county during that year and this was higher than the corresponding figure of 79 percent five years earlier in 1954.

All crops (i.e., field crops, vegetables, fruits, nuts, forest products and horticultural specialty products) sold off Snohomish County farms in 1959 were valued at \$2,788,695. This total was about 16 percent above the 1954 figure and represented nearly 18 percent of the total value of all agricultural products sold in 1959.

Table 34. Crops Marketed From Snohomish County Farms, 1959

Crops Marketed	Amount Received By Farmers (Dollars)	Percent All Crops Sold
Fruits (tree fruits, grapes berries and nuts)	1,362,796	48.9
Field Crops (small grains, hay, field corn and potatoes)	168,482	6.1
Vegetables (green peas, sweet corn, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, carrots, cabbage, snap beans)	553,492	19.8
Forest Products and Horticultural Specialties	703,925	25.2
Total amount received by farmers for cash crops	\$2,788,695	100.0

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

Sales of farm products and farm income vary considerably by type and size of farm. In 1959, nearly 41 percent of the farms in Snohomish County were considered commercial operations by the Census of Agriculture. The largest percentage (about 45 percent) of Snohomish County farms was Class VII, defined as part-time, non-commercial operations with annual agricultural sales per unit from \$50 to \$2,499. Class VIII noncommercial units operated by partly retired individuals with farm sales ranging between \$50 and \$2,499 ranked second in numbers, accounting for nearly 14 percent of the total count. Tied for third place in terms of numbers were commercial farm Classes IV and V, each of which represented 11 percent of the county total. Class IV farms are those with sales ranging between \$5,000 and \$9,999, while operations with sales from \$2,500 to \$4,999 are considered Class V farms. About 14 percent of the Snohomish County farms in 1959 marketed agricultural products worth over \$10,000 each. Finally, commercial farms with sales between \$50 and \$2,499 each represented around 4 percent of the county farm number.

Table 35. Farms by Economic Class
Snohomish County, 1959

Economic Class	Value of Farm Products Sold	Number of Farms ^{1/}	Percent of Total Estimated Farms in the County
Class I	\$40,000 and over	60	2.0
Class II	\$20,000 to \$39,999	111	3.7
Class III	\$10,000 to \$19,999	255	8.5
Class IV	\$ 5,000 to \$ 9,999	330	11.0
Class V	\$ 2,500 to \$ 4,999	330	11.0
Class VI ^{2/}	\$ 50 to \$ 2,499	135	4.5
Total Commercial Farms		1,221	40.7
Class VII (Part-time)	\$ 50 to \$ 2,499	1,370	45.6
Class VIII (Part-Retirement)	\$ 50 to \$ 2,499	411	13.7
Total non-commercial farms		1,781	59.3

^{1/} The totals for farms by economic class are estimates for all farms made on the basis of data reported only for the sample farms.

^{2/} Farms with a value of sales of \$50 to \$2,499 were classified as commercial if the farm operator was under 65 years of age and (1) he did not work off the farm 100 or more days during the year and (2) the income received by the operator and members of his family from nonfarm sources was less than the value of all farm products sold.

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.

Marketing Dairy Products

The sale of dairy products is the major farm marketing activity in Snohomish County. Sales of dairy products off Snohomish County farms amounted to \$8,345,001 in 1959 which was 48 percent above the 1954 figure of \$5,616,725. The 1959 figure represented 53 percent of the total value of all farm products sold in the county during the year. Also in 1959, Snohomish County ranked second among Washington counties in the value of dairy products sold.

Dairy products sold in 1959 included 194,235,908 pounds of whole milk from 1,009 farms and 14,650 pounds of butterfat off 70 farms. Whole milk is hauled by tank trucks to dairy plants located in Everett and Stanwood. Licensed milk venders are located in Edmonds, Snohomish, Everett, Darrington, Monroe, Arlington and Alderwood Manor. Snohomish County is one of the counties included in the Puget Sound Federal Market Order area.

Marketing Poultry and Eggs

The poultry industry in Snohomish County provides, for many farmers, all or a substantial part of their income each year. Snohomish County farmers marketed poultry products worth \$2,280,383 in 1959, or about 3 percent below the corresponding Census figure for 1954. Sales of poultry products in 1959 represented 18

percent of the total value for all livestock and their products sold and almost 14 percent of the value of all farm products sold in the county. The number of farms active in poultry and poultry products has been declining but average production per farm has continued to increase in terms of the sale of birds and eggs. Nearly 500 poultry producers in the county sold chickens, eggs and turkeys during 1959.

The marketing of fresh eggs is the major activity within the poultry industry of Snohomish County. In 1959, about 4,590,051 dozen eggs were sold, or nearly 43 percent above the 3,211,573 dozen reported for 1954. Marketing channels are through arrangements with producers and egg dealers. These dealers have established arrangements with retail outlets for disposing of fresh eggs. Chicken eggs were sold by 419 Snohomish County farms in 1959.

The marketing of live chickens and broilers represented the second most important poultry activity in 1959. Chickens sold in 1959 totaled 1,099,888--30 percent more than the 845,383 reported for 1954. Broilers comprised 68 percent of the number of all chickens sold in 1959 compared with 81 percent in 1954. Private and cooperative processing plants equipped to handle large numbers of birds constitute the major sales outlet for broiler growers. In 1959, 22 farms reported selling broilers while other chickens were sold by 275 farms in the county.

Total income derived from the sale of turkeys, ducks, geese, other miscellaneous poultry and their products has dropped in recent years. Annual sales of these items by Snohomish County farmers decreased from \$339,891 in 1954 to \$54,651 in 1959.

Marketing Livestock

Snohomish County's third major agricultural marketing activity, after dairy and poultry products, has been the sale of livestock and livestock products involving auction yards, meat packers, feed yards, breeders and shippers. In 1959, the value of livestock sold alive in Snohomish County amounted to \$2,268,473 which represented 14 percent of the total value of all farm products sold during the year.

Cattle and calves are the major animals sold within the livestock marketing activities of Snohomish County. In 1959, a total of 2,150 farms reported selling 24,395 head of cattle and calves worth \$2,147,923 or about 95 percent of the county's total livestock sales during the year. Calves made up about 61 percent of the number sold. Cattle are sold directly to local packers or those located in Seattle. They are also sold to feeders or at auction yards. Some feeder calves are hauled to eastern Washington, particularly the Columbia Basin area.

Compared with the marketing of cattle, the farm sales of sheep, lambs, hogs and horses is relatively minor in Snohomish County's agricultural economy. In 1959, 80 farms marketed 670 sheep and lambs valued at \$8,710. In addition, 116 farms reported 13,127 pounds of wool shorn from 1,709 sheep. In the same year, hogs numbering 2,405 head were sold off 160 Snohomish County farms with the value of sales at \$79,365. Sheep and lambs are sold directly to local packers or at auction yards. Feeder pigs are usually marketed at auction yards while fat hogs are shipped to Seattle slaughter houses. Horses and/or mules sold alive numbered 115 off 60 farms in 1959 for a total receipt of \$32,475. Most of the horses are used for pleasure riding.

Marketing Berries, Fruits, Nuts and Grapes

Local market outlets for Snohomish County's important berry crop are located in Everett, Marysville, Stanwood, Snohomish and Arlington. Most of the strawberries go to processors for freezing. Some of the berries are later sold by processors for the commercial manufacture of preserves, jams and toppings. The bulk are sold as frozen berries in either small packages for the consumer trade or in larger containers for restaurants, bakeries and ice cream plants.

Nearly all of the red raspberries, blueberries and blackberries produced also are sold to local processors for freezing. Although an excellent berry for eating fresh, red raspberries cannot be shipped long distances because of the tendency for the berry to mash. Fresh market sales, therefore, are concentrated in the urban areas near the producing fields.

Most of Snohomish County's tree fruit and grape production is from small plantings and production is largely for home consumption. The county's filbert and walnut production is also on a minor scale.

In 1959, fruits, nuts, grapes and berries sold by Snohomish County farmers were valued at \$1,362,796. This amounted to 49 percent of the total value of crops sold and about 9 percent of all farm products marketed in the county for that year.

Marketing Forest Products and Horticultural Specialties

Numerous farms in the foothills and upper valleys of Snohomish County have woodlots of young Douglas fir, hemlock, cedar, maple and alder. These are generally second-growth stands which have reached commercial size since the area was first logged around the turn of the century. Location close to pulp and paper and other mills utilizing wood in small dimensions has created a good cash market for farm forest products. Woodlot owners haul pulpwood, small logs, bolts and poles to mills at Everett and other cities and towns of Snohomish County. Farmers owning large acreages of woodlands generally sell timber stumpage to small logging operators. Others log their own timber.

The Census of Agriculture enumerated sales of forest products from 223 Snohomish County farms which amounted to \$206,601 in 1959. Standing timber valued at \$77,242 was sold off 113 farms while 167 farm units marketed firewood, pulpwood, fence posts, sawlogs, Christmas trees and other miscellaneous products totaling \$129,359 during the year.

Total value of sales for all horticultural specialties in Snohomish County for 1959 was \$497,324 as reported by 80 farms. Vegetables grown under glass, flower seeds, vegetable seeds, vegetable plants, bulbs and mushrooms sold from 12 farms amounted to \$11,778 while 37 farms reported sales of nursery products (trees, shrubs, vines, ornamentals, etc.) which grossed \$116,310. By far the most important horticultural specialty crops marketed during 1959 were cut flowers, potted plants, florist greens and bedding plants. These crops sold off 46 farms had a sales value of about \$369,236. In 1959, 30 Snohomish County farms reported the sale of over \$2,000 worth of horticultural specialty crops each.

In 1959, forest products and horticultural specialty products sold by Snohomish County farmers were valued at \$703,925. This amounted to about 25 percent of the total value of crops sold and 4 percent of all farm products marketed in the county for that year.

Marketing Vegetables

Many Snohomish County farmers derive part or all of their income from sales of vegetables. Vegetable growers in general receive relatively high returns per acre for their crops. The county's annual production of vegetables is primarily for processing with only small quantities for fresh market consumption. Most of the vegetables grown are contracted by processors for freezing either on an acreage or tonnage basis. In 1959, the value of vegetables sold off Snohomish County farms amounted to \$553,492, making up about 4 percent of the value of all farm products sold and accounting for almost 20 percent of all crops marketed. The 1959 figure was 29 percent above the value of vegetables sold from the county's farms in 1954.

Vegetable processing plants in the county are located in Stanwood, Arlington and Snohomish. Minor amounts of vegetables are marketed for fresh market consumption through produce buyers.

Marketing Field Crops

In 1959, Snohomish County farms sold field crops amounting to \$168,482 which was 6 percent of the value of all crops sold off the farms. Field crop sales accounted for almost 2 percent of the total value of all farm products sold in the county.

More acreage is devoted to hay than any other field crop grown in Snohomish County. The county's production of clover-timothy and alfalfa hay is consumed locally on dairy and livestock farms as late fall, winter and early spring feed. Silage cut from clover, alfalfa and grass mixtures grown in the county is used almost exclusively for feeding dairy cattle, especially during the winter months. The county's small production of field corn is also used for silage.

Most small grains harvested in the county are used by the local dairy, livestock and poultry industry as feed. These include oats, wheat, barley and rye. Oats, the county's main small grain crop, are grown mainly as a high value feed for livestock, being fed directly or mixed with other forms of feed.

According to the Census of Agriculture, other field crops produced in the county included potatoes, mint, peas and red clover seed in 1959. Farm marketing activity for these crops is minor as local production is relatively small.

Specified Farm Expenditures

Specified farm expenditures estimated on a basis of reports obtained from sample farms in Snohomish County by the Census of Agriculture amounted to \$9,638,034 in 1959 which represented over 61 percent of the value of all farm products sold during the year. The largest expenditure for the year was for feed for livestock and poultry which added up to \$5,173,956, exemplifying the importance of livestock farming in the county. Feed expense also includes the cost of grinding and mixing of the feed. Purchases of livestock feed were reported by 2,686 farms in the 1959 Census.

Expense for hired labor was the second major item amounting to \$1,861,007. Some 1,147 farms used hired help during 1959. Purchase of livestock and poultry ranked third as a major cost to Snohomish County farmers in 1959. Livestock and poultry worth \$1,349,246 were purchased by 1,416 farms during 1959.

Outlay for gasoline, petroleum fuel and oil related only to use in the farm business totaled \$670,744 on 2,902 Snohomish County farms. Seeds, bulbs, plants and trees cost 855 county farmers an estimated \$363,656 in the 1959 period. The sixth major cost which amounted to \$219,425 represents the total amount spent during the year for machine hire on 976 farms. Machine hire expenditures relate to custom machine work, such as tractor hire, threshing, grain or seed combining, silo filling, baling, corn picking, plowing, vegetable harvesting, spraying and dusting. The amount spent for the labor included in machine hire was considered part of total expenditure.

Table 36. Specified Farm Expenditures in 1959
Snohomish County

Type of Expenditure	Number of Farms Reporting	Expenditure of All Farms	Average Per Farm
Feed for Livestock and Poultry	2,686	\$5,173,956	\$1,926
Purchase of Livestock and Poultry	1,416	1,349,246	953
Machine hire	976	219,425	225
Hired labor	1,147	1,861,007	1,622
Gasoline, petroleum fuel and oil	2,902	670,744	231
Seeds, bulbs, plants and trees	855	363,656	425
Total expended		\$9,638,034	

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

Fertilizer and Lime

About 32 percent of the farms in Snohomish County used commercial fertilizer in 1959. About 4,073 tons of dry fertilizer were used by 900 farms while 85 farms applied 404 tons of the liquid type during the year. In addition, about 880 tons of lime or liming materials were used by 71 farms in the same year.

More fertilizer was used on hay and cropland pasture than any other crop in the county during the 1959 season. Hay and cropland pasture accounted for about 59 percent of all fertilizer used and for 62 percent of the acreage fertilized in the county. In the same year, other pastures accounted for nearly 5 percent of the total fertilizer used and represented 6 percent of the fertilized acres.

Table 37. Use of Commercial Fertilizer
On Crops and Pasture, for Snohomish County, 1959

Crops and Pasture Fertilized	Farms Reporting Use of Fertilizer	Acres Fertilized		Tons Used	
		Total	Percent of Acreage Fertilized	Total	Percent of Total Amount Used
Total Commercial Fertilizer Used	920	24,853	100.0	4,477	100.0
Hay and Cropland Pasture	587	15,466	62.2	2,636	58.9
Other Pasture	135	1,515	6.1	210	4.7
Barley	5	145	.6	15	.3
All Other Crops	329	7,727	31.1	1,616	36.1

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.