

DREAM ACRES

THE IMPACTS OF
AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS
AND POLICIES ON THE
URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE IN
PIERCE AND KING COUNTY



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2019

Acknowledgements



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Grit City Farm

Bailey Farm

Jubilee Farm

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Brennon Staley

Allan Warren

Dehkordi Fereshteh

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Alleycat Acres

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Growing Things Farm

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One Leaf Farm

Forterra

American Farmland Trust

Pierce Conservation District





Contents

5 Intro

9 Context

- 10 The Puget Sound Region
- 16 The Urban-Rural Divide
- 19 Policies and Programs

21 Interviews

- 23 Farm Types

25 Findings

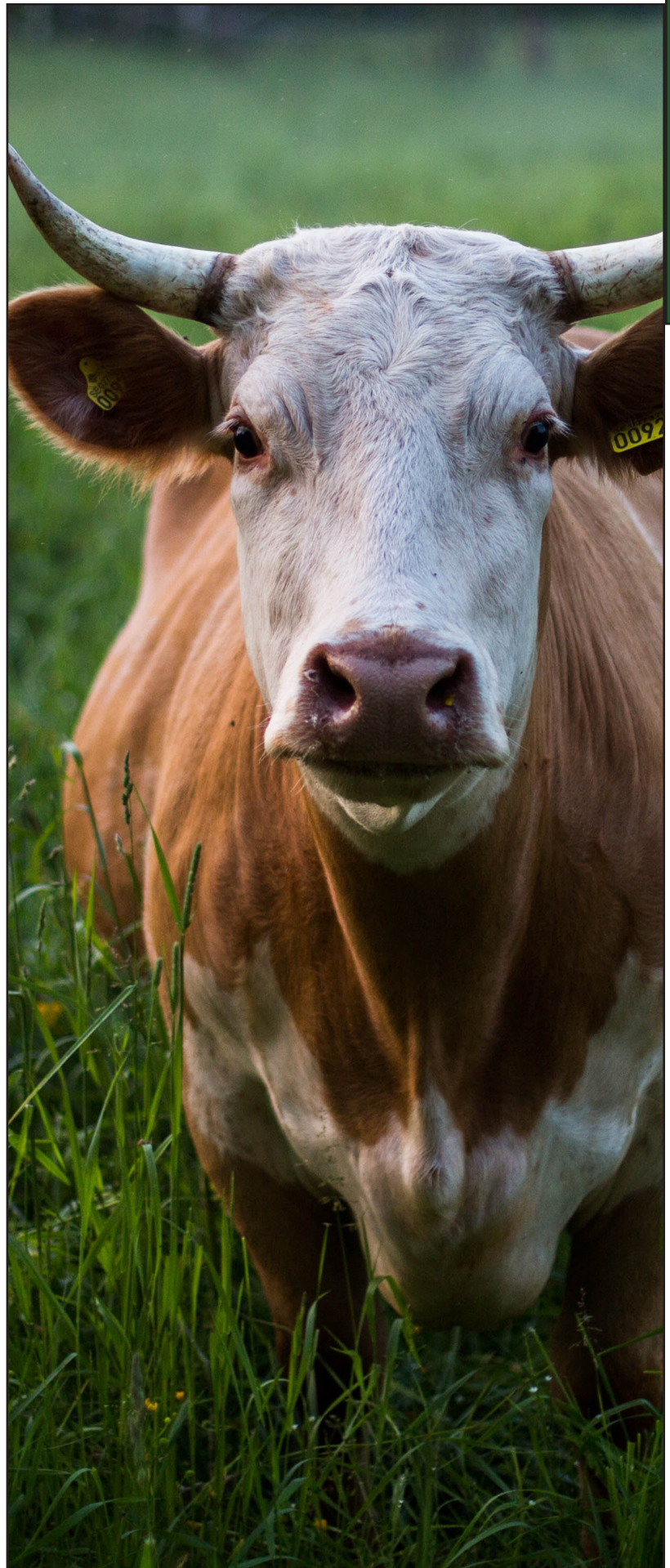
- 26 Trends in Profession
- 34 Trends in Geography

36 Implications

39 References

42 Appendices

- 42 Interview Questions
- 44 Interviewees
- 45 Further Zoning Terms



Abstract

Relevant to Western Washington State agricultural production, this project examines the impact of land use policy and related programs on the urban-rural divide in Pierce and King Counties. The urban-rural divide is a conceptual framework for understanding the social, economic, and political disparities between urban and rural life and how these disparities affect interactions within and across urban and rural communities. The policies and programs that are used to examine this conceptual framework are Agricultural Land Trusts, Agricultural Conservation Easements, Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements, Transfer of Development Rights, and Zoning. Farmers, planners, and policy-makers are interviewed to understand how the urban-rural divide impacts agriculture as a land use in the region. The results of this research can be applied to future policy-making and planning and used to promote planning practices that are more inclusive and representative of farmer needs.

Keywords: urban agriculture, peri-urban agriculture, urban-rural divide, Agricultural Land Trust, Conservation Easement, Transfer of Development Rights, zoning, ethnography



Research Question

How do policies and programs that support Peri-Urban and Urban Agriculture impact farmers in the closing of the urban-rural divide in Pierce and King County?

Background

Agriculture has been the backbone of society as we know it since around 9,500 B.C.. Through the advent and rise of agricultural technology, farming has been pushed to isolated, large, rural areas, with most other forms of work occurring in urban areas. This has morphed the face of agricultural production into an often-misunderstood profession and way of life. Reflective of this is the statistic that, today, only two percent of the U.S.A. works in agriculture (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2017) as opposed to over twelve percent of the population working in agriculture in 1950 (Growing a Nation, 2014). This statistic only exemplifies the idea that social perception and economic viability of agricultural production is dynamic, as is agriculture as a work type. We see this dynamism in the new persona that agricultural production is recently taking on via melding into spaces that were once foreign, namely metropolitan ones.

This interview-based ethnographic research project focuses on policies and programs that support peri-urban and urban agriculture as a form of land use in Pierce and King County, Washington. Further examined are the effects these policies and programs have on the conceptual framework of the urban-rural divide in the region, namely the effect of closing the divide.

One may ask, however, why is it im-

portant to close the urban-rural divide? This is a foundational question that has guided this ethnography, and the formation of interview questions for this report. As with any movement towards equity, the closing of the urban-rural divide is an effort to create a level playing field for all people. In this case, the negative preconceptions of individuals and groups dependent on their location of residence and work are aiming to be bridged in an effort to create a collaborative, cooperative society that values the work of all people in it via equal distribution of resources and respect of work type. The urban-rural divide permeates all facets of life, creating political division, personal animosities, and perpetuation of wealth inequality. To bridge it is to create an equitable society.

The above conversation contributes to this project's guiding questions. Firstly, how do policy and support programs impact the ability for agriculture to occur as a form of land use? Second, what happens when what was once seen as a rural activity seeps into the urban and peri-urban settings? Lastly, how does this impact the urban-rural divide in Washington State, particularly in Pierce and King County?

The use of ethnographic research, namely interviews, will work to answer these questions holistically, and representatively. Interviews were

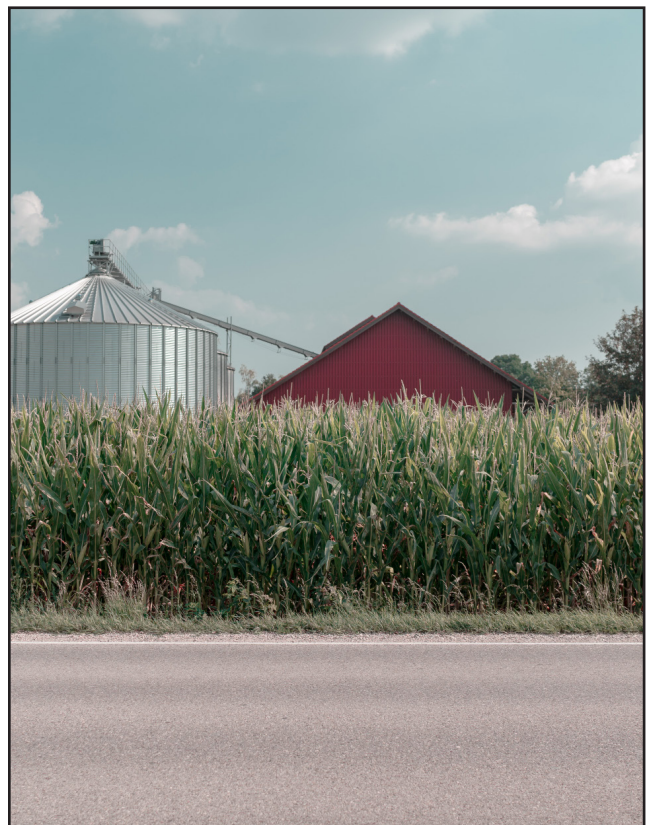
guided by understanding of various relevant land use policies and programs, which shaped conversation around the urban-rural divide. The urban-rural divide was examined in its multiple facets, with respect for personal testimony and opinion. The use of interview as a form of qualitative data collection brings light to individual impact on shaping of policy and program impact. Interview also gives first-hand accounts of policy-making, farming, planning, and other work, which contributes towards representation of relevant groups, providing on-the-ground account of the lived outcomes of government policy and programs.

Ethnography allows for a “systemic approach to understanding the complexities of social life. It informs mindful framing of “problems” by policymakers and planners as it allows for surfacing and interpreting of complex and diverse experiences, as well as vital comparison across experiences . Ethnography is adaptive, as should be policy and community engagement. In short, representation is the core of ethnographic research, with falls in line with the goal of this report: to inform representative policy and planning in agriculture (Mauldin, 2016).



Significance

This project is written with policy makers and planners in mind. By providing information about the impact of land use policies and programs on farmland and farmers, a bridge is created between those that write policy/facilitate programs and those that live the consequences. The use of interviews as a methodology works to deconstruct the knowledge gap that is present between city representatives and farmers, giving a face to people who reap the benefits of and face the hurdles caused by policies and planning. While largely representative of the Puget Sound area, this project can be used as a case study for other regions, as issues in representation for farmers and preservation of farmland extends nationally and internationally.



CONTEXT



The Puget Sound

The Puget Sound region is the subject of this body of research. Pierce and King County are examined as well as, to a lesser degree, Snohomish County. Focused on specifically is the Puyallup and Snoqualmie River Valleys (as well as, to small degree, other Snohomish River tributaries). These valleys boast peri-urban agricultural land use. Seattle and Tacoma, Washington are also examined. These cities exemplify urban agriculture in the Puget Sound. Both counties hold a vast agricultural history, varying zoning regulations, a different prevalence of land use programs/policies, and urban farming practices, and are ideal study areas for this project.

Pierce county has a population of 876,764 (Bureau 2017). The City of Tacoma as well as the Puyallup River Valley are present here. The county's most fertile soils are present in the Puyallup River Valley, where there is a presence of diversified vegetables, berries, as well as livestock in agricultural production here. Agriculture-specific zoning in Pierce County includes the Rural Farm (RF) zone classification, which is intended to protect agricultural lands that may or may not have prime agricultural soils but have been historically (or currently) used for agricultural lands. The Agricultural Resources Land (ARL) classification, on the other hand, is a resource-based zone. The purpose of this designation is to promote long-term, commercially significant agricultural resource use. ARL sites are designated as such if they contain prime agricultural soils with a yield of 3.5 tons per acre. Parcels must be greater than 5 acres (contiguous parcels that make up 5 acres or greater are also allowed) (Pierce County n.d.). Regarding development pressure, there is a slight decrease in agriculture as a land use in Pierce County. This follows the trend of Washington State, which has lost nearly 2 million acres of farmland between 1982 and 2010 (WSRCO, 2016).

King County holds the city of Seattle and the Snoqualmie River Valley, with a population of 2.189 million (Bureau 2017). The Sno-



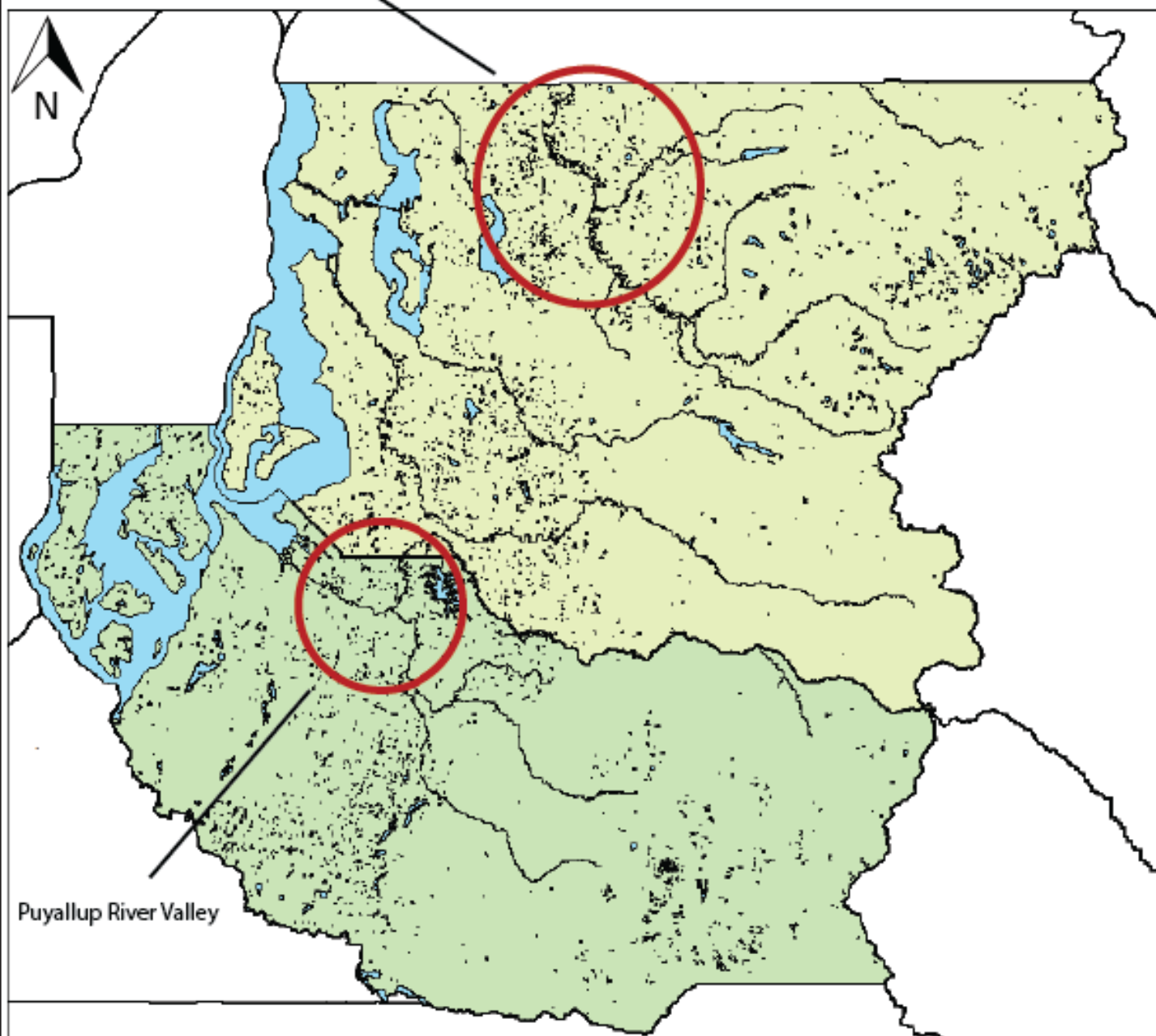
qualmie River Valley is part of an Agricultural Production District, holding 14,500 acres of land (Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, 2019). Agricultural zoning in King County is jurisdiction-specific with base agricultural zoning including A-10, A-35, RA-5, to name a few. Largely, however, zoning in King County is based off of a general definition of “farm and agricultural land” as “land which is in a single ownership of twenty or more contiguous acres, at least eighty percent of which is open or fallow and which has produced a gross income from agricultural uses of one hundred dollars or more per acre per year for three of the ten calendar years preceding the date of the owner’s application.” Another widely used definition is simply “food producing farmland.” Land that falls into this category is used for the commercial, soil-dependent cultivation of vegetables, berries, other fruits, cereal grains and silage corn. Due to the fact that the Snoqualmie River Valley is close to as large of a metropolis as Seattle, speculative purchase of land is heightened here. Development pressure is high here, causing a lack of sustained agriculture.

Pierce + King County

Snoqualmie River and
Snohomish River Tributaries

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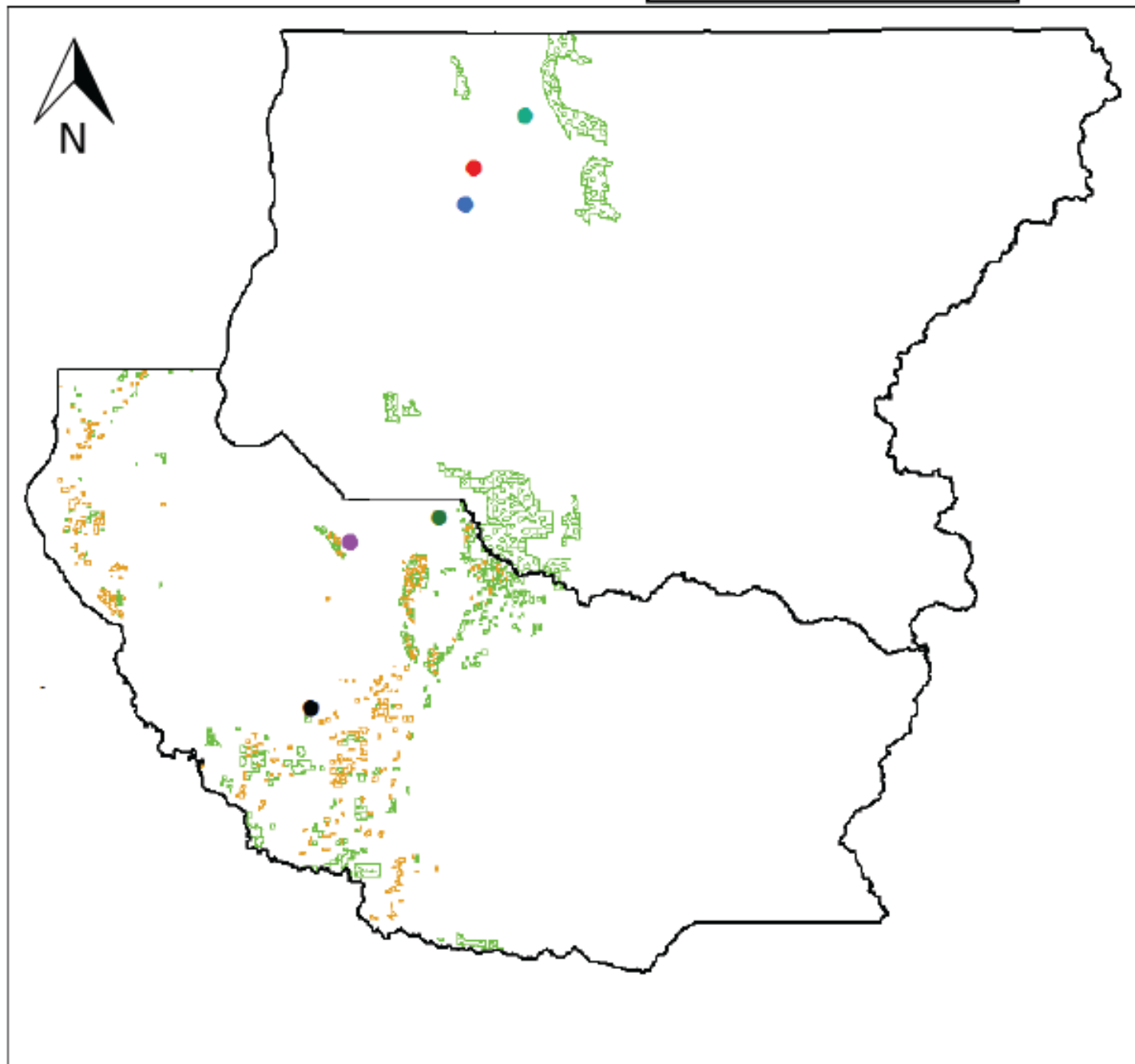
- Waterbodies
- King County
- Pierce County
- Surrounding Counties



Interviewee Information and Zoning

Legend

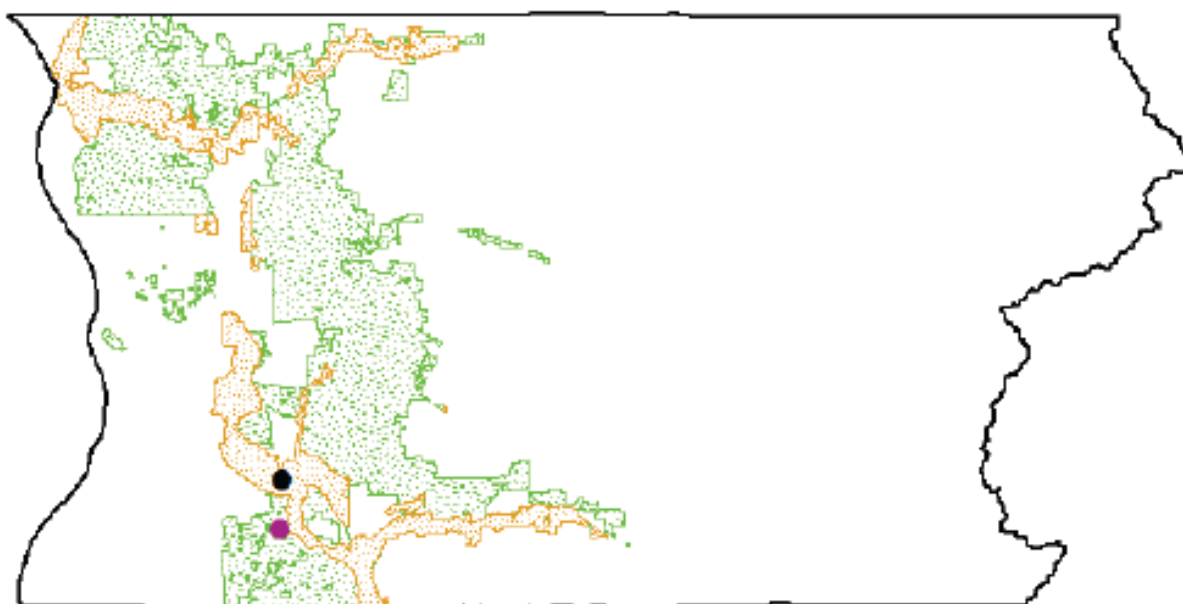
- Jubilee Farms
- Alleycat Acres
- Growing Things Farm
- Wild Hare Farm
- Grit City Farm
- Rural Farm Zone
- ARL Zone
- APD Zone



Snohomish County Zoning and Interviewees

Legend

- Growing Things Farm
- Bailey Farm
- Ag-10 Zoning
- Rural-5 Zoning
- Rural Use Zoning



Hurdles in Agriculture

In the Region

The areas studied in this report hold various similarities in land-use and agricultural history, which enables meaningful research and comparison between the two. The Puyallup River Valley and Snoqualmie River Valley are prominent agricultural areas that are near their county's largest metropolitan hubs, Tacoma and Seattle. Tacoma and Seattle boast a prominent amount of community gardens, and some urban farms. In addition to this is the presence of P-Patch programs and the Seattle Tilth Alliance in Seattle. Food forests are promoted through Tacoma Metro Parks, and small urban farms are cropping up from Hilltop Tacoma, to West Seattle. Land trusts, and other relevant land use organizations have a presence in the Puget Sound region at large, and there are local incentives in policies to protect farmland. Because of this, conversation about agriculture is prominent in the fields of urban planning and policy-making within the region.

Beyond this, agricultural producers in the Puyallup and Snoqualmie River Valley face similar issues. These issues are not unique to just a few farmers, but rather permeate national agricultural sentiment. To start, development pressure is prevalent for agricultural land (excluding certain, undevelopable floodplains), presenting the possibility of immediate financial return on the selling of farmland for use other than agriculture. Different regulatory policies and land protection programs are utilized by farmers to prevent this, but a sense of disconnect between governmental entities and other support-focused organizations can lead to feelings of under representation for farmers. This can make the acquisition of support to push back at development pressures a confusing journey for farmers. The nature of time-intensive processes in government can often lead to negative outcomes for season-based workers, and further perpetuate a feeling of disregard.

Another topic that is talked about at length amongst farmers is the continuation of farming culturally significant plots of lands. This is often a conversation in family farms. Children of farmers, especially on non-monoculture/small/family farms,

see the challenges and grit needed to farm (as well as the lack of money associated with it). Rightfully so, many children of farmers will move away, acquire a university degree, or enter another field of work instead of continuing farming their family's land. This jeopardizes the longevity of local farmland. Additionally, the confusing nature of understanding permits, regulations, land-use, utilization of resources, and more only exacerbates a lack of desire to continue farming.

This confusing and multifaceted nature is, itself, exacerbated by an ever-present disconnect between urban and rural life. This is often synonymous with a disconnect between those who farm that land and those who regulate the land. There is a need to begin conversation and collaboration about the way that the land is dealt with, as well as promote mutual understandings of the hardships faced in both farming and regulating the land. Access to land use resources will deem agriculture as something that does not feel so confusing. Instead it will feel inviting, whether this is to children of farmers or urbanites searching for a new life.

It is also important to acknowledge that farming is not only legacy-based, and the challenges faced by rural farmers are also faced by urban farmers. Lack of zoning specificity surrounding the use of urban land for agriculture can cause hiccups in production for urban farmers. Permit acquisition can be confusing, which is problematic as it is often absolutely vital to urban agricultural production. Socially, urban farmers also face issues in being accepted by rural farmers as valid. This touches upon social and cultural ideas of work type based on geography, with the rural areas being labeled as "for farming" and cities being "for business, creativity, etc." To speak more to this, when a farmer begins their engagement in agriculture as a profession in an urban setting, they may not be seen as a "real" farmer by rural, legacy farmers. These above issues are only a few similarities between farmers in Pierce and King County, discussion with only be continued in the "Interview Analysis" section.

The above issues can easily be extrapolated into the conceptual framework of the urban-rural divide, highlighting agricultural production as a core player in the urban rural divide.



Theoretical Framework:

The Urban Rural Divide

The urban-rural divide provides a conceptual framework about the disparities between urban and rural life in a variety of facets and how they affect interaction within and across urban and rural communities (McFarland 2018). This framework provides the context by which research about impacts of land use policies and programs is done in this report in the Puget Sound region. The aim of this project is to view the urban-rural divide holistically, considering the value of different opinions on the concept as well as its reach into many different facets of life, from social, to economic, to political and beyond (Scherr 2016). The definition of the urban-rural divide expands with each question asked related to it, and the below discussion is reflective of the divide's multifaceted nature.

Chen gives a general definition of the urban-rural divide. Presented are the various facets of this conceptual framework, especially highlighting how location-specific work type influences the divide (Chen 2018). This has only been

solidified by the use of two different planning systems for urban and rural settings, leading to a tangible example of the urban and rural beings as separate entities, removing the possibility for connectivity (Alister Scott 2007). A crucial consideration in this planning history is the exclusion of rural space from planning controls. Further, the industrialization of agriculture in the 20th century (Barney & Worth, Inc. 2006) transformed the countryside landscape, and further pushed rural life away from urban life. In essence, this was due to the creation of intensive agriculture and its occurrence on large, isolated plots of land. While farms today are still widely family owned and operated, there has been a massive increase in average farm acreage, from 162.1 acres per farm in 1938 to 464.2 acres per farm in 1992 (Julian M. Alston 2009) which is representative of the physical isolation of agriculture. It is evident that history is a vital part of the understanding of outlook of urban and rural areas and how they relate to perceptions of agricultural work.

The urban-rural divide is not only prevalent in the context of work type, as general economic divide is also present. MacFarland's piece, *Bridging the Urban-Rural Economic Divide*, defines the divide in the economic sense. This definition is vitally important in understanding the divide's relation to agriculture, due to the fact that agriculture is the livelihood of many Americans, and land economics are an integral part of both access to farmland and the presence of the divide. Several factors that contribute to the divide across are explored such as education, business growth, and prosperity. Further, ways to bridge the divide are suggested, looking at social changes that can occur to bridge the divide (McFarland 2018). This project will explore implications and suggestions for bridging the divide in the implications suggestions, which build off of MacFarland's piece.

Sara Scherr's article about how "landscape management" serves to bridge the urban-rural di-



vide is paramount to understanding the divide in the context of this report, examining socio-cultural implications. Scherr states that “today’s urban culture devalues traditional agrarian society and increasingly values the non-productive role of rural places.” This statement supports the idea that rural people, who produce foodstuffs, often have a limited voice, and are seen as bearers of misunderstood land (Scherr 2016). While agriculture and forestry are core to rural economies, policy change has reduced the number of family farms, increased agricultural mechanization, and reduced local power. This has led to one-size-fits-all regulations as well as environmental and economic degradation (Scherr 2016). A lack of desire to revalue rural economy and society is a massive cause for the divide, and the closing of it through a rural renaissance rooted in agricultural policy and planning is necessary. There is a need for restoration of mutual respect and a vision of collaboration at the landscape level, while understanding the interdependence of urban and rural living, (Truelsen 2017).

Scherr’s examination of the urban-rural divide accentuates the impact of land use policies on the urban-rural divide, which leads to a conversation of policies and programs relevant to research in this project.





Policies + Programs

There are various land use policies and programs examined in this project, which have been selected in an effort to be representative of programs and policies and foster represent responses about effect on the urban-rural divide. The policies that are examined in this report are as follows.

Agricultural Land Trusts

(ALTs) conserve agricultural land, emphasizing non-market benefits of the land, preserving the land indefinitely (Farmland Information Center 2017). These non-profit organizations (Julia Freegood n.d.) are unique in that they focus entirely on ensuring that agricultural activity remains the focus of preservation, and that restriction of development occurs indefinitely (Brinkley 2012). Some examples of ALTs are the American Land Trust, and, locally, the PCC Farmland Trust, who base a great amount of their work off of the knowledge that two million acres of rural land are lost in the United States each year (Thompson 2001). ALTs are arguably the most nearsighted program, with a fairly stringent and indefinite view on land preservation. This is different from other policies and programs, such as agricultural zoning, which is less permanent, and can be deviated from with variances and petitions (to name a few) (Kartez 1980). It is important to also note that ALTs exist within, and because of, other programs and policies such as Agricultural Conservation Easements, Transfer of Development Rights, and Agricultural Zoning (Farmland Information Center 2017).

Zoning in general is a planning tool that regulates the built environment by specifying the land use of specific sites, particularly by defining the location, size, and use of buildings in certain areas as well as what type of buildings will be present in certain areas (i.e.

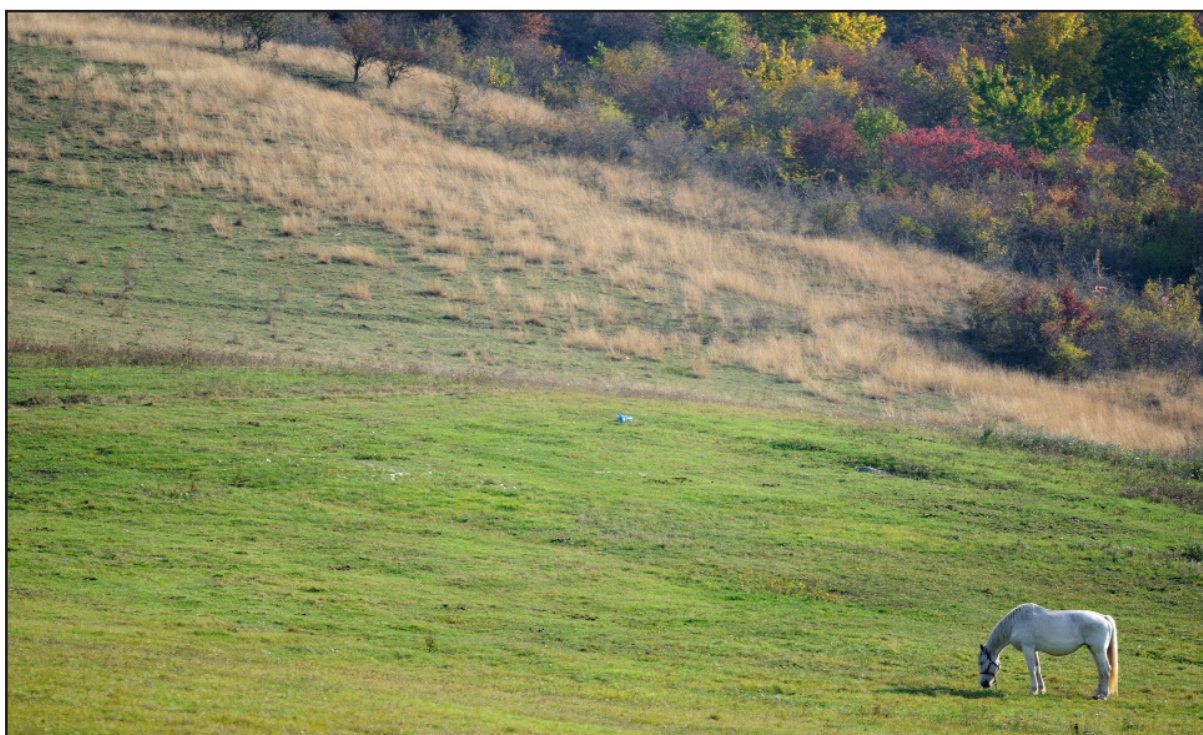
low-, medium-, high-density residential, commercial, manufacturing) (The World Bank n.d.). In the frame of agriculture, zoning can regulate and protect agricultural activity, (Julia Freegood n.d.) and is the most commonly used tool to prevent conversion of agricultural land into developed land (Coughlin 1991). There are two varieties of agricultural zoning: exclusive (prohibits non-agricultural dwelling) and nonexclusive (permits some non-farm development). Minimum lot size differs, but it is always necessary that the land is proven to be a valuable natural resource, which can support agriculture. This can guard against court challenges Coughlin 1991).

Zoning can help to satisfy certain goals such as ensuring the occurrence of contiguous zones (which follow the argument that blocks of continuous agriculture (specifically in the peri-urban setting) preserves agricultural land productivity and character) (Dennis Canty n.d.) or the preservation of adjacent land value through conditional zoning (Heather Wooten 2011). However, it is important to note that, because farming does not fit into a “one-size-fits-all” mold, issues can be encountered regarding zoning. A classic example plays out as a farmer encounters issues when an agricultural area they are working is zoned for, say, two dwellings, but they need more dwellings to accommodate crew, a wash station, and a farm stand (Kartez 1980). Other components of agricultural zoning such as allowable use, and as-of-right zoning can work to combat these issues (Heather Wooten 2011).

While zoning is oft-times regulated at the county level, or even the municipal level, **Agricultural Conservation Easements** (ACEs) and **Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements** (PACEs) are federal programs, which protect agricultural land and wetlands with a focus on future use and viability of land (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service n.d.). An easement, in general, is a “legal right to use another’s land for a specific limited purpose” while the title remains in the possession of the owner of the land. ACEs both protect the land and infuse capital into farms (Thompson 2001). While the process of getting an easement is timely and requires that a farm fits into certain qualifications (i.e. Adjusted Gross Income below \$900,000), when accepted, farms are legally bound to agreement documents and, thus, protected indefinitely (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service n.d.). PACEs buy ACEs, in order to compensate farmers for keeping their land out of development and in farming. This can reduce the value of land, and thus tax liability for farmers and their future devisees. Proceeds from purchases can aid in expansion of business, enhancing economic viability of farming (Farmland Information Center 2016).

Both **Transfer of Development Rights** (TDR), and **Current Use Taxation** (CUT) work towards enhancing viability of farming, especially considering monetary blocks to farming. TDR are market-driven programs that reward developers in urban areas for purchasing and transferring rights of farmland and other rural parcels to densifying urban areas. Largely incentive-based, these programs allow a landowner to sell the right of development to another party, while still using their land, which protects resources, as an easement is placed on the land (American Farmland Trust n.d.). Current Use Taxation values land at the current use, not potential development (Julia Freegood n.d.), which stabilizes agriculture and its viability rather than protecting it (Thompson 2001). Both of these programs work with other policies and programs as aids towards preservation, protection, and expansion of farmland and its productivity.

It is clear that the success of many programs and policies rely on the existence of one another, which is an important reason to examine a wide breadth of policies and programs, such as the ones listed above. The use of these policies specifically informed the interview selection process for this project, as is described in the section below.



Interview Foundations

The interview process for this report was careful to include farmers, policy-makers and planners. There was an aim to interview similar numbers of industry professionals and farmers as to not skew responses, however classifications for farmers were more stringent in an effort to retrieve information relevant to specific farm practices.

The interview process lasted from January 10, 2019 through March 10, 2019 and 17 interviews were conducted. Nine planners/policymakers were interviewed, and seven farmers were interviewed. Within this pool, seven interviewees were from Pierce County, Washington, nine interviewees were from King County, Washington, and two outliers were from Snoqualmie County, Washington

Peri Urban Farm Criteria

Location	Puyallup River Valley, Snoqualmie River Valley and Surrounding Watersheds
Acreage	20-300 acres
Program Relationships	Wholesale, CSA, Family
Production Type	Vegetables, Fruit, Eggs
Soil Type	Alluvial River Deposit

Urban Farm Criteria

Location	Seattle or Tacoma City Limits
Acreage	5-50 acres
Program Relationships	City Farm
Production Type	Vegetables, Fruit, Eggs
Soil Type	Variable (Raised Beds Permitted)

Table: farm criteria used to select interview participants for this ethnography

INTERVIEWS



Farm Types + Specifications

With information about the region and relevant policies and programs kept in mind, it was important to create interviewee classifications as to promote directed research within the ethnographic model. It is vital to categorize, compare, and contrast farm types as they pertain to different categories in the industry. This is done to gauge interview responses regarding relationships to programs, policies, the urban-rural divide, and related topics. It follows that circumstances surrounding farm type influence perception.

There are many types of farming that occur all around the Puget Sound area, though some mainstream farming types are examined in this report. Defined below are Peri-Urban and Urban Agriculture as overarching farm types. Beyond this, are types of farming that fit into these larger categories, such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and family farms. Definitions of peri-urban and urban agriculture are foundational to an understanding of how this project's methods. In its essence, peri-urban agriculture simply occurs on the fringe/transitional area (Nickerson 2012) of metropolitan hubs, rather than in strictly rural classifications (Ina Opitz 2015). This type of agriculture includes both urban and rural aspects regarding development pressures, culture, lifestyle, and more. 58% of food production in the U.S.A. occurs here (Ina Opitz 2015).

Included in the peri-urban classification of farming are various methods of farming. These methods informed the formation of farm criteria for this project, guiding interviews and analysis. Their selection is due to their presence in the region. This includes CSAs, which are spaces of agricultural production that are supported by community members who often buy shares in the farm in exchange for boxes of goods weekly/monthly (Julia Freegood n.d.). Family farms, which rely on family members for labor and management, and can vary greatly in size, contribute to 86% of production (Campos 2014). Wholesale farms, which participate in the selling of crops, meat, eggs, or oth-



er products to other retailers to be sold among other farm types (Farmland Information Center 2017). Peri-urban agriculture is often the livelihood of she who owns the land, putting peri-urban agriculture into contrast with urban agriculture.

Urban agriculture (with a focus on city farms vs. community gardens) occurs in densely situated areas of cities, providing social, environmental, and economic services (Heather Wooten 2011). This sort of agriculture is often done by in-experienced workers at a small scale (5 acres or less). There are often more community-directed focuses in this form of production such as public health, environmental health, or even personal entrepreneurship (Ina Opitz 2015). This exposure and surrounding attitudes serve to have an impact on the urban-rural divide, which, in this project, is examined in interviews instead of further academic research.



FINDINGS



Trends in Profession

Perception of Policy + Programs

Among planners and policymakers, the following similarities were found through the interview process. Descriptions of policies and programs were communicated in relation to experience in operating with them through work with the city, county, or in relation to internal organizational work. It was clear that most planning and policy professionals did not work with policies and programs in a vacuum, and were aware of the interrelatedness of the policies and programs that are relevant to this research.

Also expressed was an understanding of the sometimes negative perception of planners and policymakers within farming communities, as well as a desire to move towards more representative planning, while grappling with the presence of hurdles in doing so. Planners and policymakers were expressed to be, by farmers, large sources of restriction, inhibition, misunderstanding, and misrepresentation in the process of utilizing resources that enable farming (especially financially), though there was a present disconnect in that farmers largely expressed gratitude towards those resource-focused programs and policies that enabled them to farm without crushing financial burdens.

This brings out the main point of this section: Policies and programs in agriculture are the backbone of the ability to farm. The process that one takes to be able to utilize them must be more representative and accessible, which will only be a possibility once the misunderstanding of agrarian lifestyle, work, and knowledge is bridged.

Key Findings

- Planners and policymakers view their work as vital to farming, but realize their personal disconnect from farmer lifestyle.
- Farmers are well-versed in policy and program benefits. However, they also acknowledge that there are unnecessary roadblocks to production caused by policies and programs
- Planners and policymakers tend to look at the divide in terms of systemic implications (highly political).
- Farmers are more inclined to look at cultural, resource-specific impacts of the divide (highly personal).
- Note: urban farming is seen as a tool to increase connectivity between urban and rural life.

Discussion

Conversation around agricultural policies and programs hinged on several topics. To start, peri-urban farmers that were interviewed knew a lot about the policies and programs that they benefited from and expressed their relationship with them positively. Urban farmers were less aware of the policies that they potentially could have benefited from, or simply did not benefit from most relevant policies and programs due to the less established history and nature of urban farming.

Policies and programs at large were seen as ways to sustain farming via promotion of farmland conservation and enhancement of rural business while improving farming practices. The farming practices that were mentioned included farming methods to improve water quality, increase environmentally friendly land use practices (such as cover cropping), and reduce pollution (from waste streams and chemical usage). These policies were also seen as a barrier to development in a permanent way. Policies and programs like conservation easements that feed into land trusts promote a feeling of security for farmers (as identified by planners and policymakers), while being palatable in their lowering of taxes, giving of money to farmers, increasing of ability to promote legacy via promotion of land ownership instead of leasing, and ability to satisfy multiple needs. Needs that were met by these policies and programs include the assurance that codes are carried out while ensuring historical and cultural preservation, allowing agricultural activity outside of just rural areas, and creating economic opportunity.

At large, policies and programs were seen as beneficial, and necessary. Planners and policymakers have seen this represented in farmer comments on how much policies and programs have been able to change the face of their agricultural experience. However,

when asked to look into the intricacies of policies and programs, certain critiques were present. These critiques were expressed by farmers and planners/policymakers alike, and largely pertained to before the policies and programs were enacted on specific land. This refers to the reach of policies and programs to small farms or underrepresented groups as well as the ability to navigate through acquiring the benefits of policies and programs because of confusing permitting rules or loopholes and time constraints.

Discussion of TDR illustrated the issue of acquiring access to extremely beneficial programs. One policy maker suggested that “policy can fall under the general public’s radar” when talking about TDR in an effort to suggest that the initial access to understanding policy can truly inhibit the ability for it to positively influence people’s lives. TDR provides public benefits such as affordable housing, land conservation, and management of policy, which are often simply misunderstood. This highlights comments made by policymakers and planner’s that conversation around policy needs to show farmers the value that they hold for local government, allowing for crossover and collaboration between the urbanite and rural person. While both planners/policymakers and farmers acknowledge a need for collaboration, many expressed that this is not often acted on. This is why programs such as land trusts, like the PCC Agricultural Land Trust, or American Farmland Trust are crucial in ensuring utilization of resources and providing necessary education. However, while value is present in these policies and programs, they are not perfect. The need to improve is present in all policy work, and only can be strengthened by constructive criticism from those that live the results of policy and program impact.

The most common criticism of policies and programs was conflict with farmer interest in production. This included farmer comments about zoning that would not allow

for the rebuilding of a farm after a fire or enough on-site housing for laborers, permitting barriers, livestock regulation, and issues in drainage. This disconnect is highly influential in day-to-day farming operations, and can lead to detrimental inconvenience, as well as a lack of infrastructure. Planners and policymakers communicated a strong understanding of this, with many of these professionals suggesting a need for creation of new positions in relation to representation. These representatives would focus primarily on in-the-field and meeting-based work to be able to devote time and energy to understanding the intricacies of policy and program effect on farmers and farmland. Currently, there are present programs such as the King County Agriculture Commission (King County, 2017) and the Pierce County Farm Forum (Pierce County, n.d.), which work to serve this purpose to a degree. However, these programs are often farmer-run, and while they can lead to extremely meaningful change, they can only do as much as any non-paid, part-time position can. The need for government-appointed, paid positions in liaison work is declared necessary through conversation with farmers and planners/policymakers alike.

There is certainly room for growth in relation to policy and planning in Pierce and King County, Washington, as has been relayed through the extensive interview process. However, this growth is not always easy. This notion was supported by points brought up by farmers and planners/policymakers alike about the process of planning and making policies: plans and policies are enacted slowly and are not always financially viable. For instance, permitting processes were often expressed as slower than the need of a season-sensitive work type. Beyond this, the execution of meaningful change in land-use planning for agriculture often is complex, as it requires non-profit, governmental, organizational, farmer, and other support in order to thrive. For example, land trusts support farmers in acquiring conservation easements. Other nonprofits help to provide education about governmental programs, often requiring close communication between the two. Getting farmers involved in the planning process, in order to make representative planning choices requires time and resources within government, such as the creation of agricultural liaison positions or facilitating consistent meetings with farmers.

A sense of self-awareness was evident in planner and policymaker discussion here. One planner even suggested that many agricultural policies and programs are essentially lip service, and do not contribute to meaningful change. This was expressed as caused by lack of communication across disciplines and understanding of agricultural lifestyle. When there is not consistent communication with farmers, working with them can often be forgotten about. That is why there is a need for change in agricultural land use planning. Beginning conversations is the first step towards moving away from that mindset.



Perception of the Urban-Rural Divide

The dialogue around, and perception of, the urban-rural divide largely differed between planners/policymakers and farmers highlighted the reality of the impact of lived experience and perception of power/powerlessness in the definition of the urban-rural divide, and policy/program impacts on land use and agriculture. The main point of this section is that planners and policymakers tend to look at the urban-rural divide in the context of systemic implications (political), whereas farmers were more inclined to look at cultural, and resource-specific focuses of the divide. Because of the nature of this response, the following discussion is divided into two sections: The Planner + Policymaker, and The Farmer.



The Planner + Policymaker

To start, planners and policymakers defined the urban-rural divide most distinctly by looking at its political nature and technical definitions, which is reflective of a conception of the divide outside of the individual-level impacts it has. For instance, there was a focus on the east/west political divide in Washington State, as well as the liberal-urban and conservative-rural stereotype in the United States. A focus on density, infrastructure and tangible lines of divide, such as those exemplified in Urban Growth Areas (under Growth Management) were also present as definers of urban and rural existence, perpetuating the urban-rural divide. Farmer response to this systemic perception of the divide suggests that to be able to be detached from the personal realities of the divide is indicative of power inequality, as planners and policymakers may not be subject to the negative repercussions of the divide due to public perception of them paired with their access to resources.

There were also some variations in planner/policy maker definitions of the urban-rural divide. A few comments were spent on view of the urban-rural divide as intimate, personal, and nuanced. One comment included the idea that in rural areas there is a focus on tradition whereas in urban areas there is a focus on creativity and empathy. Another planner talked about relation of the divide as being more present in the face of limited access to social and economic benefits for people living in rural areas, which leads to rural alienation and resentment. To tie together all of the ideas, there was an overarching understanding of the divide as elastic, which informs the understanding that policy has a large impact on the ability of the divide to close.

It is important to this project to connect the policies and programs that are being examined to the urban-rural divide, as it informs the creation of a set of implications that can move policymaking forward in closing the divide to create equity in agriculture as a land use. The following discussion examines how planners and policymakers were able to connect the impact



of policies and programs to the possibility of the closing of the urban-rural divide. To start, it was suggested that policies and programs make farming and farmland look like an opportunity instead of a challenge. This means that without these policies and programs, dealing with rural activities were seen by planners and policymakers as hindrance to development, while now they are seen as opportunities for better community, food, environmental health, and economy. This also promotes the continued legacy of farming, by positively re-framing the discussion around agriculture as a land use.

Beyond this, policies and programs also increase conversation around farming and with farmers which can help improve issues such as climate change and acquaint farmers with new scientific developments that impact their livelihood. This promotes conversation between the urbanite and the country-dweller in a common issue. Planners and policymakers suggested that access to education about topics such as environmental impacts can lead to farmer empowerment in the use of their land. The push towards methods such as cover-cropping or wetland preservation through education leads to farmer empowerment in the usage of their land as well as a lack of misunderstanding of why certain regulations are present.

Planners and policymakers were not quick to disregard farmer comments, but rather felt a need to grapple with the presence of missing input and realities of working within bureaucracy; a poignant reality in facing a need for more representative planning. Planners and policymakers suggested that farmer comments on the shortcomings of policies and programs can help address issues faced by farmers. For instance, planners can work to relax building permits for farmers or expedite certain regulatory processes. In response to certain ideas that disparate understanding increases the divide, planners and policymakers expressed that an increase in the presence of peri-urban and urban farms (because of policy measures meant to promote their existence) can connect urbanites to agricultural production, and improve farm economies. Peri-urban and urban farms also allow for farmer stories to be told, making their lives relevant to urbanites who hold the consumer power due to their proximity to urban spaces. This contributes to the closing of the divide and promotion.

Again, there are not only positive outcomes of these policies and programs on the urban-rural divide, as it takes a lot of time to change the status quo when it comes to agricultural land use, and one thing is evident: Holistic change is not realistic in the near future. On a personal level, especially for people in planning, looking at these policies and programs is challenging because it acknowledges shortcomings in land use planning over the years, which can lead to resistance to change. However, the change must happen. The change must be gradual, interdisciplinary, and constant.



The Farmer

Farmers made the following comments about the urban-rural divide in definition, largely focusing on personal, and social impacts based on lived-experience. It was expressed that technical definitions of the urban-rural divide made farmers feel isolated from their understanding of the land and their role in policy. This is reflective of planner and policymaker disconnect from farmer experience in rural, peri-urban, and urban settings. Political ideas of the urban-rural divide were often last to be mentioned by farmers. Within this, a few different definitions were present across urban and rural farmers as well, which shows influence of location on farmer conception of the urban-rural divide.

To start, there was an idea that interactions between urban and rural farmers largely revolve around conversations of legitimacy, which is reflective of cultural norms and valuing of tradition (and familial line) in rural areas. This can be seen to inhibit a wider sense of community across farming regions, as the rural or peri-urban farmer is quick to say that they know the “right” way to farm, and view hobby farming as perpetuating alienation and underrepresentation of farming. Policies and programs were also seen as promoting small scale gardens, which was not viewed as a “true form” of agriculture. This conception of the divide for urban farmers is largely personal, and not related to systemic oppression. These interactions were said to perpetuate the divide within the farming community instead of strictly outside of it. Here, the notion that the urban-rural divide fits easily into work type is being clouded by the reality that agriculture is no longer a strictly rural activity. Thus, farmer internalization of the divide has also perpetuated the divide.

When discussing the definition of the divide with non-urban farmers, it became clear that peri-urban and fringe-rural farmers are comfortable in defining the urban-rural divide with confidence, as it is something many express to have thought about in an impactful way. The most common response was a feeling of being under-appreciated and having a lack of visibility due to resource proximity and the feeling of a lack of representation/consultation in policy making.



Farmers feel unheard, especially when decisions are made that impact the way that they use their own land without their input. This reality dictates the majority of farmer conversation around the urban-rural divide.

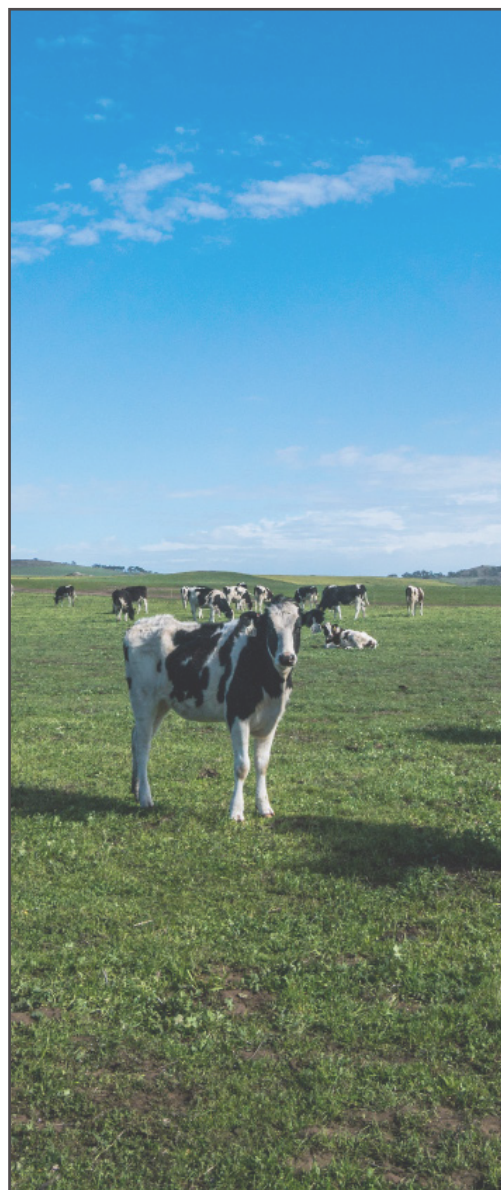
To examine the urban-rural divide in a more systematic way, one farmer said that it is related to capitalist ideas of productivity, which perpetuate the idea that rural activities are less impactful/important than urban ones. It was explained by this farmer that capitalistic conceptions of success deem agriculture (non-mono-culture) as something on the “lower rungs” of society. To be a traditional farmer is not to “win” in capitalism. Because of this perception, people see agricultural production areas to be associated with a part of society that is lesser than urban settings who have chosen to work in business, technology, and more. This belief is generational and circumstantial, as it does not affect every farmer the same way. However, trends do run deep, with many farmers expressing that they feel unseen in a society that relies on their production. This sort of discussion potentially highlights why the divide exists.

Beyond just defining the urban-rural divide, farmers were asked to express how they **believe** policies and programs work to close the urban-rural divide. To start, farmers expressed a

desire to fill the gap between urban and rural life by taking away the line of division via participation in land use matters and the encouragement of policymakers, planners, and laypeople to get a true glimpse into the lives of farmers, with the lack thereof perpetuating the divide. This speaks to the notion that, in general, people are far too removed from food production, despite its integral importance in sustenance of every life.

This desire to fill knowledge gaps leads well into farmer comments about the effect of policies/programs on the urban-rural divide, providing a few initial ideas for action. Policies and programs were mentioned as having an overwhelmingly positive effect on removing the urban-rural divide via the following impacts: improving pathways for consumption of local food, encouraging competitive pricing for produce, mitigating cost of land to promote agricultural land use and reduce bureaucracy, increasing marketing and bringing urbanites to the farm by making rural activities an “outing”, removing urbanites from the stress of the city, increasing education and opportunity through support communities, and normalizing agriculture in fringe settings by allowing for their long-term presence. These are all very positive comments, which were discussed with pride and relief.

Policy/program shortcomings were also discussed by farmers in the topic of closing the urban-rural divide. To start, farmers suggest that outreach work that has been done only scrapes the surface of representation, overlooking highly marginalized farmers. An example given was the oversight of Southeast Asian farmers in the Snoqualmie River Valley, especially due to language gaps. This overlooks the needs of those who may be minority laborers or have leased land for long periods of time without being given relevant resources that could ensure a movement towards owning of land, and consequent job security. In this, planners and policymakers have not realized the nuance of many farming situations, leading to further alienation of farmers. This only enforces the idea that policymakers and planners have written and implemented policies and programs from the mindset of the urban. Overarching misconceptions of farming and rural or peri-urban lifestyle cloud professional’s judgment and enforce the presence of the urban-rural divide.



Trends in Geography

Pierce County

Pierce County interviewees made the following comments about agricultural policies and programs. These trends below are reflective of commonalities across profession as pertains to Pierce County interviews exclusively.

To start, there was an acknowledgment that some policies and programs may interfere with traditional farming practices, often due to focus on environmental resilience and protection. This was mitigated by the comment that policies and programs also connect farmers to other important resources, promote business, and take away financial stress around legacy. These policies and programs reflect training of policy makers and planners in wearing multiple hats. This was exemplified in policy-makers and planners wide ability to work within the reality of the county's large suburban area, with was reflected in extensive information being communicated about the impacts of Growth Management on Pierce County's unique character. Policy-makers and planners talked about location-dependent resources as influenced by Growth Management. Comments included the knowledge that areas outside of Growth Management boundaries are less likely to get services such as snow-sweeping or street-cleaning.

An understanding of impact of policies and programs on Pierce County character went beyond just talk about Growth Management. Several interviewees mentioned that programs and policies promote traditional character of the county by improving urban understanding of farming and promoting agricultural existence via improved knowledge and accessibility. Examples included conversation about a larger presence of farmers markets, agrotourism and other connectivity-based activities occurring, partially as a

Discussion of trends across geography highlight a unique perspective of similarities within counties, despite profession, as well as regional similarities and differences. The discussion follows below. (Note: TDR was only studied in King County.)

“Sharing stories makes agriculture relevant. It stops people from thinking of farmers as something distant, or as the other.”

result of policy and program impacts.

When considering the urban-rural divide and its relation to policies and programs in Pierce County, it was agreed that the urban environment in the county is very different than the rural and that is reflected in certain practices such as simple maintenance like snow plowing (as mentioned above), to more impactful differences such as paving roads. This is a simple reflection of the divide in the county as being seen largely as a cause of underrepresentation. It was commented that policymakers and planners need to truly educate themselves about rural life and the people in rural areas in order to move towards closing the urban-rural divide. This can be difficult for planners and policymakers because it acknowledges oversight in land use planning but can be combated with a paradigm shift in planner and policymaker mindset about rural and peri-urban lifestyle and agricultural work. This can be accelerated by excellent communication and storytelling about agricultural lifestyle, the realization of human impact of policies and programs, and a willingness to expedite certain agricultural permitting.

King County

King County interviewees made the following comments regarding policies and programs. These trends below are reflective of commonalities across profession as pertains to King County interviews exclusively.

To start, it was suggested that policies and programs can be burdensome, but that is the price that one has to pay to get the benefits. This burden often occurs as a result of the need of public and private input to promote program/policy success. This is reflected in the fact that in King County demand for easements is outstripping available funding and tools. Incentivization of things like TDR, which the city benefits from, connects urbanites to rural realities. Despite the presence of these policies and programs, there is a huge disparity in urban understanding of farmland, with urban understanding being very distant. The way that policies and programs are created are widely understood across profession as problematic and outdated, as they can remove traditional agrarian practices. While there is an effort to remove generational stress of land transfer, these policies and programs do not fully remove the reality that in order to become a new farmer you must have some sort of background in it or money.

In regard to the urban-rural divide and the impacts policies and programs have on it, people in King County expressed the following ideas. The divide revolves around feeling of farmer deprivation, even in cases where agriculture occurs in close proximity to the city. For instance, the Snoqualmie River Valley, in parts, is only a 15 minute drive to Seattle but still is experiences underrepresentation. This feeling was commented to be reflective of policy up to a federal level. Divide in representation was suggested as needing to be looked at in federal, state, county, and local level. For farmers in King County, considering the definition of the divide was expressed as something that should not be looked at only in the context of density (which is valid to a degree), but rather in social, historical and cultural relevance.

Many people here made the effort to



comment that the divide is ever-changing, hurts farm economy, and can be bridged in a few ways. The current policies and programs help to close the divide to a degree, but need improvement. Further, many comments were made suggesting that the divide cannot be cured by urban-rural interface activities such as agritourism or “foodies” alone, as this does not promote holistic understanding of the food system. That is not to say that urbanites should not expose themselves to rural settings, as that is a valuable activity in closing the divide. Further, closing the divide does not always require policy change, which largely represents people with the biggest voice for the voiceless. Policies and programs need to be paired with additional work such as that with schools and other smaller programs like connectivity with the P-Patch program in an effort to provide a better understanding of agriculture.

IMPLICATIONS

Findings

This interview-based ethnography serves as a reminder that representative planning and policymaking is possible, and highly effective, if done thoughtfully. The above synthesis of interview responses can inform a set of implications for planners and policymakers when conducting land use planning as pertains to agriculture in the Puget Sound region.

A desire for growth and improvement, as informed by suggestions for change is the only way that land use planning can serve to be representative of farmers. This initial step allows for planning and policymaking professionals to be willing to remove themselves from old and poorly representative methods of shaping the land that farmers work on. This acknowledgment must be paired with the realization that policies will prove more effective when farmer perspectives are included during the development, as they are the party that has historically been underrepresented (this prevents push back).

Because a lack of understanding of agricultural lifestyle, legacy, culture, and desire leads to ill-informed planning that perpetuates dissatisfaction of farmers, it is necessary that planners and policymakers make an effort to acknowledge that the plans and policies they make have real-life impacts on farmers. Planners and policymakers must first familiarize themselves with the communities and land they are planning for. Representative planning practices can lead to planning and policymaking that understands socioeconomic needs of farmers, resource conditions, and day-to-day impacts of plans and policies on farmers.

Representative planning can take various shapes. Traditionally, forums, charrettes, asset mapping (and many other forms of community engagement) allow for dynamic, honest conversations, and should be utilized in all stages of land use planning, not just the beginning. Forums, charrettes, asset mapping and more could be promoted via the creation of governmental agricultural liaison positions that allow for farmers to not be the sole facilitators of representation-promoting conversations. This prevents farmer exhaustion and feelings of lack of importance while including governmental input in conversations that

Key Findings

- Promote understanding of day-to-day impacts of programs and policy on farmers through traditional representative planning methods such as charretts, forums, and asset mapping.
- The creation of an agricultural liaison position at the county level could ensure continued, dynamic relationships between government and farmers.
- Foster mutual education through farmer panels, marketing programs, and community garden connectivity efforts.
- Represent marginalized groups such as non-english speaking farmers by providing educational material and outreach in native languages.

can inform meaningful change. Within these conversations, mutual education can be promoted. For instance, governmental entities can educate farmers about environmental policies and codes, which can inform farmers about the importance of certain changes, or movements away from certain traditional practices, while helping them navigate confusing permitting processes and codes. This will also promote a dynamic of respect, as planners and policymakers will be able to come to farmers to start conversation, instead of the other way around.

On the other hand, via promoted conversation, farmers can inform planners and policymakers about where permits and regulations can be relaxed, what languages need to be included in resource information, and what connectivity-based activities (such as farmer's markets info booths, ag-

ritourism marketing, or P-Patch connectivity with rural areas) are needed and how they can be promoted. Beyond this, these conversations can inform where benefit access needs to be increased in peri-urban areas specifically. It is important that planners and policymakers come to farmers, instead of the other way around, as it is absolutely necessary for planners and policymakers to have face-to-face interaction with farmers and their land, which informs planning for real people, instead of allowing for disengagement from underrepresented communities. Facilitation at the municipality-level helps to re-define specific areas within the divide, and develop mutual revaluation and respect.

Within community engagement, an acknowledgment of the impacts of the urban-rural divide on perception of “the other” is necessary by both farmers and policymakers is very important. As soon as relationships are formed, and roles are respected by disparate fields, this can lead to relationships of trust, mutual respect, and forward movement. It is essential to maintain these relationships, and realize the nuance of farmer opinion, especially across physical locations, farm time, environmental conditions and more.

It is important to note that representative planning does not put highlight voices of non-marginalized groups in majority. Non-English speaking farmers, first generation farmers, urban farmers, and other further marginalized groups must be included in outreach and engagement, as to provide an equitable representation of farmers and who policy is being made for.

While not comprehensive, this ethnographic method of research engages farming communities, shaping the highly nuanced and complex reality of farming. Further engagement allows the slow but sure closing of the gap between farmers and planners/policymakers, and thus the closing of the urban-rural divide.



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Interview Questions

Divide Context for Interviewees:

What is the urban rural divide? The urban rural divide is a multifaceted conceptual framework about the disparities between urban and rural life. This covers many facets of life, and is, in fact, all-encompassing. It looks at economic, social, political, cultural disparities, and more. Because of the multi-faceted nature of the divide, it is important to define how I will be looking at the divide in the context of this project. In this project, I will mainly be looking at the cultural aspect of the urban rural divide as it pertains to agricultural workers and activity. It is not necessary for you to be a farmer to answer questions regarding the urban rural divide, as the perspectives of policy makers and planner matter in this context, too.

So, when I ask, how do you think these policies and programs affect the closing of the urban rural divide, consider these questions:

- How is the perceived typical lifestyle of farmers changing because of farming enabled by these policies?
- How is the notion of urban vs rural activity changing because of these policies?
- Are these policies involving people who may not have been involved in ag activities before?
- Is land more available to people who don't have ag backgrounds.
- Are these policies providing connectivity between urban and rural farmers (as well as peri-urban farmers)?
- Is respect developing between farmers of different backgrounds and consumers?

Farmers:

General Information:

- What is the size of your farm?
- What do you grow?
- How big is your crew?
- Are you: wholesale, CSA, family farm, urban farm?
- Do you benefit from any of the following programs: ALT, ACE/PACE, CUT, Ag. Zoning?
- How is your parcel zoned?
- Do you feel that the zoning is to your advantage?
- How do you feel that the program you're a part of influences your ability to farm?

Divide:

- How would you define the urban-rural divide?
- How do you think the divide impacts food production for people in peri-urban settings?
- How do you think the policy that you are benefiting from helps to close the urban-rural divide?
- How do you think farmers that do not benefit from these policies interact with consumers and the land?

Policymakers/Planners:

General Information:

- What are your roles at the city/org you work for?
- Do you work with urban, rural, and peri-urban agriculture in your work?
- Can you speak to agricultural history in your respective location?

- Can you define the urban rural divide as you understand it?
- How do you work in relation to ALT, ACE/PACE, CUT, Zoning in the realm of agriculture? Can you define these in a short answer?
- How do you believe these programs and policies affect farmers and city dynamics?
- How do you believe these programs affect the urban rural divide?
- Ask for zoning documents for certain parcels.

Divide:

- How would you define the urban-rural divide?
- How do you think the divide impacts food production for people in peri-urban settings?
- How do you think the policy that you are benefiting from helps to close the urban-rural divide?
- How do you think farmers that do not benefit from these policies interact with consumers and the land?

Interviewees

Entity	Type	County	Contact Info
Wild Hare Organic Farm	Farmer	Pierce	info@wildhareorganicfarm.com
Grit City Farm	Farmer	Pierce	gritcityfarm@outlook.com
Bailey Farm	Farmer	King	360-568-8826
Jubilee Farms	Farm	King	253-304-7626
Jordan Rash, Forterra	Organization	Pierce/King	253-254-8798
Hanna Clark at Farmland Trust	Organization	King	hclark@farmland.org
Brennon Staley-TDR	Government/Planner	King	brennon.staley@seattle.gov
Allan Warren, Pierce Conservation District	Organization	Pierce	allanw@pierced.org
Dehkordi Fereshteh,	Government/Planner	King	fereshteh.dehkordi@kingcounty.gov
Dennis Hanberg,	Government/Planner	Pierce	dennis.hanberg@piercecounywa.gov
Michael Murphy	Planner	King	michael.murphy@kingcounty.gov
Alleycat Acres	Farmer	King	allison@alleycat-acres.org
Eric Beach	King county	King	
Growing Things Farm	Farmer	King	michaeeleblakely@gmail.com
Brain Boudet, City of Tacoma	Government/Planner	Pierce	boudet@ci.tacoma.wa.us
One Leaf Farm	Farmer	Snohomish	oneleaffarm@gmail.com

Further Zoning Terms

What is Agricultural Zoning?

Agricultural zoning is the most commonly used tool used to prevent conversion of agricultural land into non agricultural use. There are two varieties: exclusive (prohibits non-agricultural dwelling) and nonexclusive (permits some non-farm development). Of the nonexclusive variety, there are large minimum-lot-size zoning (minimum 40-acre size) and area-based allocation (one dwelling allowed for 40 acres or on a sliding scale of size). In order for agricultural zoning to occur, it must be provable that the land is a valuable natural resource, that there is adequate support for continuation of agriculture, and that development is permitted enough to guard against court challenges (as to not be restrictive). It is evident that zoning is supported by other programs and incentives that offset added costs and conflict associated with urbanization (Coughlin 1991).

Some important terms to know in the realm of zoning for this paper include the following:

- Protective Agricultural Zoning: This ensures that farmland is afforded large parcel size and ag-oriented uses.
- Parcel Size: In the Puget Sound, this would mean that agriculturally zoned areas would have a parcel requirement of 40 acres, though some non-conforming (specifically urban) parcels would be accepted and “grandfathered” in.
- Allowable Use: A particularly sticky conversation and issue in zoning of agricultural land, it is vital that farmers can operate business-associated aspects such as farm stands, hoop houses and processing facilities.
- Contiguous Zones: There is currently an argument that good agricultural zoning requires a certain level of continuity, i.e. blocks of continuous agriculture (specifically in the peri-urban setting) preserves agricultural land productivity (Dennis Canty n.d.).
- As-of-Right Zoning: This is the use of a property allowed as a right in the zoning code. This can be used in the context of community gardens if they are permitted used in certain zoning districts. This ensures that community gardeners as individuals do not have to obtain permits, etc. in order to garden.
- Conditional Use Zoning: Conditional zoning allows a change in zoning activities subject to certain conditions that are designed to protect adjacent land from the loss of use value which might occur. This means that a use may be suitable in a zoning district, though not all locations within that district. This requires landowners to seek approval before using land in a particular way (i.e. for agricultural production) (Heather Wooten 2011).