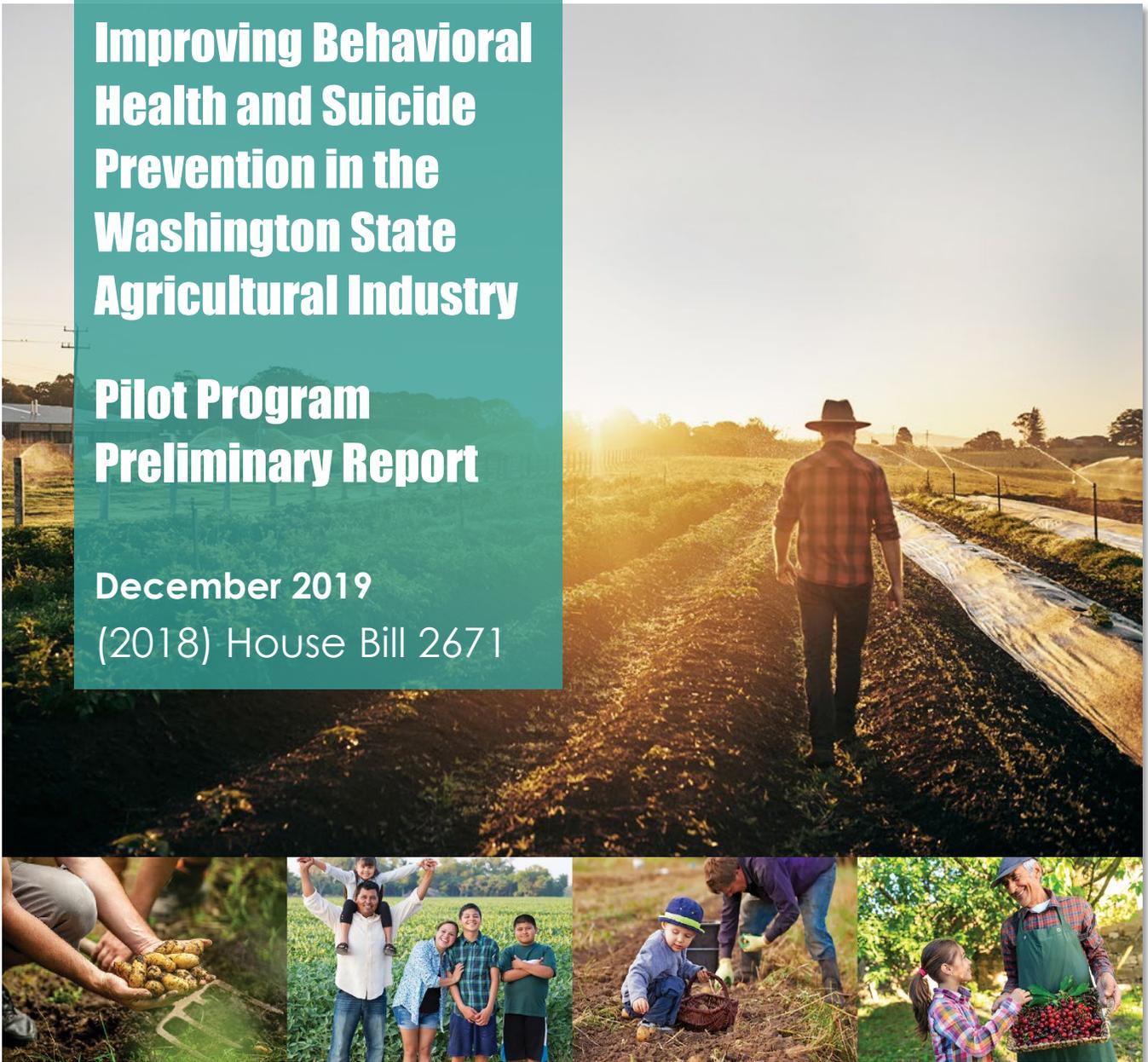


Report to the Legislature

# Improving Behavioral Health and Suicide Prevention in the Washington State Agricultural Industry

## Pilot Program Preliminary Report

December 2019  
(2018) House Bill 2671



Prepared by  
**Division of Prevention & Community Health**  
Office of Healthy & Safe Communities  
Injury & Violence Prevention Program



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For more information or additional copies of this report:

The Division of Prevention & Community Health  
Office of Healthy & Safe Communities  
111 Israel Road Southeast  
Tumwater, Washington 98501

360-236-2803  
[suicidepreventionplan@doh.wa.gov](mailto:suicidepreventionplan@doh.wa.gov)

### **Department of Health Report Authors**

Reese McMullin Holford  
Neetha Mony  
Therese Hansen  
Ashley Noble

### **Contributing Authors**

Kate Seymour, Washington State University, Skagit County Extension



John Wiesman, DrPH  
Secretary of Health

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## Executive Summary

The legislature directed the Department of Health (department) to form a task force and establish a pilot program to support behavioral health improvement and suicide prevention in the agricultural industry. According to the bill passed in 2018 calling for the task force, [Second Substitute House Bill 2671](#),<sup>1</sup> the pilot program was to be established by March 1, 2019, in a county west of the Cascade Mountains that is reliant on agriculture as a primary economic activity. The task force convened on October 18, 2018, and reported its [findings and recommendations](#)<sup>2</sup> to the legislature in December 2018.

At the recommendation of the task force, the department contracted with the Washington State University Skagit County Extension (WSU) to develop the pilot program. In a short six-month timeframe, WSU developed and disseminated behavioral health and suicide prevention materials tailored to the agricultural workforce and rural communities, trained industry leaders on suicide recognition and referral, built networks of stakeholder organizations, and identified gaps in current services related to suicide prevention and behavioral health.

This preliminary report informs the legislature of the pilot program implementation as of September 2019. A final report, due December 1, 2020, will inform the legislature of the results of the pilot program and make recommendations for future expansion.

### Key Pilot Program Accomplishments

- Created and launched a publicly available, agriculture-industry specific, [web-based resource](#)<sup>3</sup>
- Conducted evidence-based trainings in suicide risk recognition and referral skills for agricultural industry leaders and prevention specialists.
- Created and disseminated model marketing materials in English and Spanish (see **Appendix B**).
- Partnered with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to launch a video campaign as part of a long-term communications and marketing strategy ([Agriculture Suicide Prevention Program Video](#)<sup>4</sup>).
- Created an inventory of and began aligning community-based supports and existing resources.
  - Community-based supports: Skagit County Public Health, United General District 304 and Volunteers of America Western Washington

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<sup>1</sup> Link: <http://lawfilesexxt.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/2671-S2.SL.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Link: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/8390/971-028-BehaviorHealthSuicidePreventionAgriculturalIndustryReport.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Link: <https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/suicide-prevention/>

<sup>4</sup> Link: <https://vimeo.com/335963662>

- Existing resources: task force recommendations, publications by Dr. Michael Rosmann, Suicide Prevention Resource Center, etc.
- Garnered substantial media attention to help spread message.
  - Print: Capital Press (regional agriculture-specific newspaper covering Western United States) and the Skagit Vallet Herald (Daily Newspaper)
  - Television: King 5 News evening news story
  - Radio: Washington Ag Network interview

## Emerging Needs

- Sustainable long-term funding to expand the pilot program to agricultural communities across Washington.
- Improved outreach and partnerships with people from the migrant farmworker community to ensure materials are effective and culturally appropriate.
- Tailored suicide prevention trainings that consider the agriculture industry's unique structure, barriers, and diversity in work locations and tasks.
- Increased education on safe firearms and medication storage to reduce access to lethal means during a crisis.
- Suicide prevention training for veterinary professionals, and specifically large animal veterinarians who play an important and visible role in the agricultural industry.
- Expanded education and outreach to loan officers and other farm financial service providers.
- Increased access to financial counseling for farm operators.
- Partnerships with WSU's 4-H programs to provide early resiliency and stress management tool-building for youth interested in agriculture.
- Address reentry and postvention protocols for families and communities after a suicide attempt or loss.

# Background

Agriculture makes up 12 percent of the state economy, generating nearly \$11 billion in revenue from 39,500 farms and ranches, and adding almost 165,000 jobs through production, processing, transportation and sales.<sup>5</sup> Agricultural workers include farm and ranch owners, laborers, and those who work in the forestry and fishing industries.

In 2017, 1,292 Washingtonians died by suicide, an increase from 1,123 deaths by suicide in 2016. Of those deaths, 197 occurred in rural areas, and 165 were by firearm. The 2017 suicide rate in small town rural and isolated rural areas was 21.2 deaths per 100,000, about 24 percent higher than the overall state rate (see **Table 1**). In 2017, the rate in Washington was 17.1 per 100,000, while the national rate was 14 per 100,000. Washington’s suicide rate has eclipsed the national rate every year for the past 20 years.

**Table 1. Comparison of Suicide Rates by Urban/Rural Classifications in Washington (2017 WA residents)\***

Geography	Age-adjusted rate per 100,000	+/- % Compared to the state	Number of suicides	Population
<b>Urban Core</b>	15.4	-10%	906	5,490,766
<b>Suburban</b>	15.6	-8.8%	102	540,201
<b>Large Rural Town</b>	17.5	+2.3%	78	414,241
<b>Small Town /Isolated Rural</b>	21.2	+24%	197	865,085
<b>STATE</b>	<b>17.1</b>	—	<b>1,292</b>	<b>7,310,300</b>

\*This table uses the Rural Urban Commuting Areas (RUCA) classification system, which is based on population density at a census tract level.

Geographic barriers to behavioral health care in rural settings, stigma surrounding behavioral health, climate change, weather events that impact production, tariffs, financial stressors, and the changing landscape of the industry (including the subsequent impact on multigenerational family farms) are among the many factors that put members of agricultural communities at increased risk of death by suicide. Protecting the health and safety of the people of these communities is an important mission of the state of Washington, and essential to the state’s economy and culture.

<sup>5</sup> Washington Farm Bureau, “Agriculture’s Contribution to Washington’s Economy,” available online at: <https://wsfb.com/agricultures-contribution-to-washingtons-economy/>.

## The Pilot Program

The Washington State Legislature enacted [Second Substitute House Bill 2671](#)<sup>6</sup> in 2018. This legislation directed the Department of Health (department) to establish a pilot program by March 1, 2019, to support behavioral health improvement and suicide prevention efforts for the agricultural workforce. The legislation specified that the pilot program be located in a county west of the Cascade Mountains that is primarily reliant on agriculture for economic activity. The department contracted with the Washington State University Skagit County Extension (WSU) to establish the pilot program.

The legislature required the pilot program to create a free resource that must:

- Be made publicly available through a web-based portal or telephone line.
- Provide a resource to train agricultural industry management, workers, and their family members in suicide risk recognition and referral skills.
- Provide a resource to build capacity within the agricultural industry to train individuals to deliver training in person.
- Contain model crisis protocols that address behavioral health crisis and suicide risk identification, intervention, reentry, and postvention.
- Contain model marketing materials and message that promote behavioral health in agricultural industry.
- Be made available in English and Spanish.

The WSU Agricultural Suicide Prevention Pilot Program launched in March 2019 and has since made considerable progress toward addressing behavioral health and suicide prevention in Skagit County's agricultural community. Pilot program activity is guided by the requirements of SSHB 2671 and the task force findings and recommendations detailed in the [2018 Report to the Legislature](#).<sup>7</sup>

## Web-Based Portal

WSU Skagit County Extension (WSU) created and launched a publicly available [website](#)<sup>8</sup> specifically for the agriculture industry in May 2019. The website is available in English and Spanish, and contains links to internal and external resources, upcoming events, and training opportunities. It also includes public service announcements (PSAs), links to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the Crisis Text Line, and resources specifically for providers and

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<sup>6</sup> Link: <http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bills/House%20Passed%20Legislature/2671-S2.PL.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Link: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/8390/971-028-BehaviorHealthSuicidePreventionAgriculturalIndustryReport.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Link: <https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/suicide-prevention/>

professionals. WSU is continuously expanding the website and tracking traffic to it. (See **Appendix A.**)

As the website continues to develop, it will be linked with the Department of Health and Department of Agriculture websites and widely available for use by stakeholders across the state.

## Training and Capacity Building

Shortly after the pilot program started, WSU staff participated in two training courses to increase their understanding of agricultural industry-related stressors and to examine culturally and geographically relevant strategies for suicide prevention. These courses included:

- [Working Minds: Suicide Prevention in the Workplace](#)<sup>9</sup>  
This course, offered through the University of Colorado, trains participants to act as trainers in their own workplaces (“train the trainer”). The eight-hour course equips participants to present suicide prevention approaches to workplace audiences, including curricula and associated handouts. This training was also attended by representatives from several state and local agencies throughout Washington.
- [Michigan State University: Farm Stress Management Series](#)<sup>10</sup>  
This series offers a number of resources to address stress among members of the agricultural community. Over the course of two days, participants received “train the trainer” instruction. Curricula included segments called “Communicating with Farmers under Stress” and “Weathering the Storm in Agriculture: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset.”

In June 2019, WSU hosted an evidence-based Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) training tailored to supporting farmers and agricultural workers. WSU heavily advertised the training in the agricultural community. Participants included WSU Skagit County Extension educators, 4-H leaders, and Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Organic Program inspectors, among others. WSU plans to update the existing farm-focused QPR content prior to conducting future trainings with recent statistics and additional concerns facing workers in the agricultural industry.

As the pilot program grows, WSU will offer and publish information about future suicide prevention trainings on its website and through their Extension listserves, interpersonal contacts, current WSU Skagit County Extension programming, and Skagit community health services. To date, WSU has invited a wide swath of industry professionals to training and information sessions about the pilot program, including loan officers, machinery, seed and

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<sup>9</sup> Link: <https://www.coloradodepressioncenter.org/workingminds/>

<sup>10</sup> Link: [https://www.canr.msu.edu/managing\\_farm\\_stress/](https://www.canr.msu.edu/managing_farm_stress/)

fertilizer sales representatives, members of the WSU Extension Network, and commodity group leaders.

To further strengthen capacity to address behavioral health and suicide prevention in Skagit's agricultural community, WSU has identified aligned stakeholder community groups and promising partnerships for program delivery coordination. The process of identifying stakeholder groups is ongoing. (See **Appendix C.**) WSU is also seeking collaboration with existing crisis lines, current counseling and intervention resources, and new volunteers.

WSU recently partnered with Volunteers of America Western Washington (VOA) and Oregon State University (OSU) in a successful grant application for funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network ([FRSAN](#)<sup>11</sup>) to support a Western Regional Farm Stress Assistance program. This grant will enable the partnership to:

- Establish a diverse, regionally-representative network of member organizations.
- Develop a clearinghouse of farmer assistance programs in the region.
- Educate individuals and teams in the region about FRSAN activities and how to access and use existing resources and programs in their work with agricultural workers and communities under stress.

WSU is exploring coordination with Sea Mar Community Health Center Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Promotores, and Skagit County Public Health, to provide local clinical expertise and connect farmworkers under excessive stress with appropriate resources. WSU has hired a translator with ties to the Latinx farmworker community in northwest Washington who will also collaborate with other promotores programs around the state to develop communications, training curricula, and printed materials for migrant and seasonal workers. Materials will be made available in English, selected Mixtec languages, and Spanish.

## Model Crisis Protocols

WSU is collaborating with suicide prevention specialists and agricultural suicide prevention programs in other states (North Dakota, Idaho) to develop regionally relevant and culturally appropriate model crisis protocols to address behavioral health crisis and suicide risk identification, intervention, reentry and postvention.

## Model Marketing Materials and Messaging

WSU is developing a set of marketing materials tailored to agriculture workers and their families (see **Appendix B** for examples). As the materials are developed, they are reviewed by the Department of Health for content, WSU Skagit County Extension Educators for usability,

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<sup>11</sup> Link: <https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/farm-and-ranch-stress-assistance-network>

and the farming community for messaging and resonance. WSU has identified Extension educators, Community Health Workers, local farms, and other stakeholders within the agricultural community to disseminate these materials initially. Resource materials are posted to the [WSU pilot program website](#)<sup>12</sup> for use and distribution by the Extension and relevant stakeholders. They are also distributed at education and community events such as the Skagit County Fair, which was held in August 2019. Materials are available in English and Spanish and include brochures, Model Crisis Protocols (in progress), referral resources specific to Skagit County, wallet cards, and worksite posters. All resources developed under the pilot program are available in English and Spanish and available online.

WSU collaborated with North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension, which developed a program related to suicide prevention in rural communities. WSU has access and permission to reformat NDSU materials and to tailor them to the specific needs of Washington state's farming and rural communities. WSU has committed to translating NDSU materials to Spanish and sharing back to NDSU, to not only increase the program reach within our state, but to ensure accessibility to Spanish speaking farm populations in other regions within the country.

## Outreach and Public Education

WSU conducted extensive outreach efforts throughout the region to promote the pilot program, reduce stigma, and to help boost awareness and conversation around suicide prevention and behavioral health needs. The program tracks visits to its website via Google Analytics (see **Appendix A**).

WSU has reached over 1,300 farmers, farm workers, their families, and the greater community through appearances at 10 events held in western Washington throughout 2019 (see **Appendix A**).

In addition to outreach at community events, WSU has partnered with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to launch a video campaign as part of a long-term communications and marketing strategy. With permission from the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare, WSU adapted the [Suicide Prevention Public Service Announcement \(PSA\): Fishing Buddies commercial](#)<sup>13</sup> for Washington audiences. Since June 1, 2019, the PSA has been broadcast on Skagit21 Television, the Skagit County local access channel, every 90 minutes. Estimated viewership for the channel is 16,000 people daily. The goals are to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and educate viewers about the national hotline number.

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<sup>12</sup> Link: <https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/suicide-prevention/>

<sup>13</sup> Link: <https://vimeo.com/335963662>

## Awareness of the Pilot Program

The pilot program has received attention from various print outlets, including *Go Skagit*, *Capital Press*, and the *Washington Ag Network*.

- Jacqueline Allison, “Suicide prevention program for farmers starts in Skagit County,” *Go Skagit*, June 22, 2019. Available online: [https://www.goskagit.com/news/local\\_news/suicide-prevention-program-for-farmers-starts-in-skagit-county/article\\_5a900d2d-2527-5ca1-b49c-0aec144f58bb.html](https://www.goskagit.com/news/local_news/suicide-prevention-program-for-farmers-starts-in-skagit-county/article_5a900d2d-2527-5ca1-b49c-0aec144f58bb.html).
- Don Jenkins, “WSU Extension posts suicide-prevention website,” *Capital Press*, June 14, 2019. Available online: [https://www.capitalpress.com/ag\\_sectors/rurallife/WSU\\_SKAGIT\\_Skagit-extension-posts-suicide-prevention-website/article\\_3194b5f0-8e2e-11e9-b7a6-4fefe903881b.html](https://www.capitalpress.com/ag_sectors/rurallife/WSU_SKAGIT_Skagit-extension-posts-suicide-prevention-website/article_3194b5f0-8e2e-11e9-b7a6-4fefe903881b.html).
- Glenn Vaagen, “WSU Skagit County Working To Address Farmer Suicides,” *Washington Ag Network*, August 1, 2019. Available online: <https://www.washingtonagnetwork.com/2019/08/01/WSU-skagit-county-working-to-address-farmer-suicides/>.

Additionally, KING 5 News highlighted pilot program activity on [July 16, 2019](#)<sup>14</sup> with a segment on agriculture specific stressors and the suicide prevention efforts. This outlet estimates a viewership of 1 million.

## Next Steps

WSU continues to develop resource materials for farmers, agricultural workers, and stakeholders; host suicide prevention trainings; and expand its network to include community health services and agricultural groups.

Indicators point to financial stress as a leading factor impacting agricultural behavioral health. As a result to the pilot program outreach, the Northwest Agricultural Business Center (NABC) recently began offering free financial consultations to agricultural workers experiencing financial stress. WSU is also exploring an opportunity to partner with NABC to perform a financial feasibility study of the [Michigan State University Extension Telfarm Program](#)<sup>15</sup> to include in the final report to the legislature due in 2020. MSU has extension agents that are farm financial advisors who work regionally throughout the state to support farmers in financial matters (cleaning up accounts, working through bankruptcy, succession planning, cash flow projections, etc.). These services are offered at a reduced price, and the extension agents also

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<sup>14</sup> Link: <https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/skagit-county-launches-campaign-to-prevent-farmer-suicides/281-4707eeb3-d1d1-48b7-a10a-051ff43d85ae>

<sup>15</sup> Link: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/2018-farm-financial-benchmarking-results-from-msu-extension-telfarm-program>

gather financial information that is useful to creating financial benchmarking reports by commodity.

WSU is leveraging their role as an [AgrAbility hub](#)<sup>16</sup> (providing services to agricultural workers with disabilities across racial and cultural backgrounds) and their AgrAbility partners, to further address the issue of finances as a stressor among farmers and farm families. The Northwest Access Fund (NAF) has committed to offering free financial coaching for farmers and farmworkers who have been disabled or experienced a disabling injury. Further, in qualifying cases, NAF will offer low- or no-interest loans to farmers to purchase adaptive equipment to ensure a safe return to work post injury.

WSU will work to identify and differentiate the behavioral health concerns, suicide risk, deaths by suicide, and other factors that may affect the specific occupations within the agricultural industry. They will also evaluate the number of people an effort serves, the effectiveness of services, and the success of outreach strategies.

The following speaking events for 2020 will include topics such as Identifying Signs of Stress, Managing Excessive Stress, Asking the Question, Connecting to Resources, and Safer Homes:

- The Western Washington Seed Workshop (January 10, 2020)
- The Western Washington Potato Workshop (January 21, 2020)
- Skagit Ag Summit (January 31, 2020)
- Country Living Expo and Cattleman's Winterschool (January 2020)
- The Western Washington Berry Workshop (March 6, 2020)

## Conclusion

This preliminary report highlights the elements and implementation status of the pilot program to support behavioral health improvement and suicide prevention efforts for members of the agricultural industry workforce. Setting a sound, sensitive, and informed foundation for addressing behavioral health and suicide prevention in all agricultural communities across Washington is the critical mission of the pilot program. Significant progress has been made in the short six-month timeframe, and key accomplishments and lessons from the pilot program will be clearer as it moves forward. The outcomes provided in the final report will inform the legislature, and benefit agricultural workers and their families throughout Washington State.

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<sup>16</sup> Link: <http://www.agrability.org/>

# Appendix A: WSU Pilot Program Outreach Tracking Log



## Speaking Events

Event	Location	Date	Attendance	Total Reach
Farmers Breakfast	Mt Vernon, WA	4/5/2019	40	
Skagit Ag Summit	Mt Vernon, WA	2/8/2019	110	
Western Washington Seed Workshop	Mt Vernon, WA	1/11/2019	70	
Western Washington Potato Workshop	Mt Vernon, WA	2/24/2019	100	
Western Washington Berry Workshop	Mt Vernon, WA	3/8/2019	50	
Skagit County Commissioner Quarterly Review	Mt Vernon, WA	6/18/2019	24	16,000
A Team Meeting, WSU	Pullman, WA		20	
Sorticulture	Everett, WA	6/7-9/2019	100	17,000
Silvana Fair	Silvana, WA	7/27/19	400	1,000
Skagit County Fair	Mt Vernon, WA	8/7-10/19	400	6,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,314</b>	<b>40,390</b>

## TV

Event	Location	Date	Audience
Skagit Access 21	Skagit, WA	Daily since 6/1/19	16,000
King 5 News	Western WA	7/16/19	1,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,016,000</b>

## Web Traffic – Google Analytics

Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time	Entrance	Bounce Rate	% Exit
/skagit/suicide-prevention/	155	128	113.82	102	74.26%	63.87%
/skagit/suicide-prevention/providers-professionals-2/	46	20	239.73	3	66.67%	34.78%
/skagit/?not-found=extension.WSU Skagit.edu/skagit/suicide-prevention/providers-professionals-3/	1	1	0.00	1	100.00%	100.00%
/skagit/?not-found=extension.WSU Skagit.edu/skagit/suicide-prevention/usda nifa farm and ranch stress	1	1	0.00	0	0.00%	100.00%
/skagit/?not-found=extension.WSU SSkagit.edu/skagit/suicide-preventiondurante	1	1	0.00	1	100.00%	100.00%
/skagit/?s=suicide	1	1	3.00	0	0.00%	0.00%
/skagit/event/question-persuade-refer-suicide-prevention-in-rural-communities-training/	1	1	0.00	0	0.00%	100.00%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>155.97</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>74.53%</b>	<b>57.77%</b>

## Appendix B: Pilot Program Marketing Materials



**ASK. KEEP THEM SAFE. BE THERE.  
HELP THEM CONNECT. FOLLOW UP.**

If you're struggling, call the Lifeline at  
**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**





# El trabajo agrícola puede ser estresante.

**“Es irónico que quienes cultivan la tierra, cultivan y cosechan las frutas, verduras y otros alimentos que llenan las mesas en abundancia no tienen nada para ellos mismos”.**

– Cesar Chavez

Los últimos años han sido difíciles para los trabajadores agrícolas y sus familias. Muchos sienten el estrés financiero y emocional como resultado. Hay varias señales y síntomas que debe tener en cuenta cuando el estrés ha comenzado a afectarle a usted o a alguien que conoce:

- Aumento de accidentes en la granja
- Sus niños muestran signos de estrés
- Tensión relacional
- Pensamientos de hacerse daño
- Falta de la energía / motivación para realizar las tareas habituales
- Pérdida del interés en sus actividades favoritas
- Adicción / abuso de alcohol y / o sustancias
- Retirada de otras personas



WSU | AGRICULTURAL SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM

**No está solo.** Hay otros que pueden relacionarse y, más importante pueden ayudarle si tiene algún problema para hacer frente.

**Gratis, confidencial, 24/7.**

Red nacional de prevención el suicidio

**1-888-628-9454**



## Appendix C: Pilot Partners

Partners working with WSU Skagit Extension in pilot's efforts include:

- [The Washington Commission on Hispanic Affairs](#)
- [Volunteers of America Western Washington](#)
- [The Northwest Agriculture Business Center](#)
- [Sea Mar Community Health Center Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program](#)
- [Skagit County Public Health](#)
- [Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Migrant and Bilingual Education Office](#)
- [Catholic Community Services Burlington, WA](#)
- [Washington State University's 4-H Youth Development Program](#)
- Skagit Extension programs - [Cultivating Success](#) and [Cattlemen's Winter School](#)

## Appendix D: (2018) Second Substitute House Bill 2671

AN ACT Relating to improving the behavioral health of people in the agricultural industry; adding a new section to chapter 43.70 RCW; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the agricultural industry is an integral part of Washington's economy and sense of common identity, and that the behavioral health of workers in the industry and their family members is a statewide concern.

(2) Several factors related to the agricultural industry may affect the behavioral health of workers in the agricultural industry, including job-related isolation and demands, stressful work environments, the heightened potential for financial losses, lack of access to behavioral health services, and barriers to or unwillingness to seek mental health services.

(3) A 2016 report from the federal centers for disease control and prevention studied suicide data from the year 2012 and found that workers in the farming, fishing, and forestry industries had the highest rate of suicide, eighty-four and one-half suicides per one hundred thousand workers, among the occupational groups that it studied.

(4) The legislature finds that there is an urgent need to develop resources and interventions specifically targeted to helping workers in the agricultural industry and their family members manage their behavioral health needs.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1)(a) The state office of rural health shall convene a task force on behavioral health and suicide prevention in the agricultural industry with members as provided in this subsection.

- (i) The secretary of health, or the secretary's designee;
- (ii) The secretary of the department of agriculture, or the secretary's designee;
- (iii) The secretary of the department of social and health services, or the secretary's designee;
- (iv) A representative of Washington State University;
- (v) A representative of an association that represents counties;
- (vi) One representative each from two different associations representing both farm and ranch families in Washington;
- (vii) A representative of the commission on Hispanic affairs established in chapter 43.115 RCW;
- (viii) A representative of the dairy products commission established in chapter 15.44 RCW;

- (ix) A representative of the grain commission established in chapter 15.115 RCW;
- (x) A representative of the tree fruit research commission established in chapter 15.26 RCW;
- (xi) A representative of an association representing rural health clinics;
- (xii) A representative of an association representing federally qualified health centers;
- (xiii) A representative of an association representing community behavioral health agencies;
- (xiv) Two representatives of associations representing mental health providers; and
- (xv) One representative of an association representing substance use disorder treatment providers.

(b) The task force shall select cochair, one of which shall be from the department and the other shall be either representative from (a) (vi) of this subsection.

(2) The task force shall review the following issues:

- (a) Data related to the behavioral health status of persons associated with the agricultural industry, including suicide rates, substance use rates, availability of behavioral health services, and utilization of behavioral health services;
- (b) Factors unique to the agricultural industry that affect the behavioral health of persons working in the industry, including factors affecting suicide rates;
- (c) Components that should be addressed in the behavioral health and suicide prevention pilot program established in section 3 of this act, including consideration of components that relate to similar programs funded or partially funded by the federal office of rural health policy; and
- (d) Options to improve the behavioral health status of and reduce suicide risk among agricultural workers and their families, including individual focused and community focused strategies.

(3) Staff support for the task force shall be provided by the department. (4) Task force members are not entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses if they are participating on behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for other members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.

(5) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to the governor and the committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over health care issues by December 1, 2018.

(6) This section expires July 1, 2019.

**NEW SECTION. Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose not to exceed two hundred thousand dollars per fiscal year, the department shall establish a pilot program to support behavioral health improvement and suicide prevention efforts for members of the agricultural industry workforce. By March 1, 2019, the pilot program shall be established in a county west of the Cascade crest that is reliant on the agricultural industry.

(2) When implementing the pilot program, the department shall consider the report of the task force on behavioral health and suicide prevention in the agricultural industry established in section 2 of this act. (3) In implementing the pilot program, the department shall contract with an entity that has behavioral health and suicide prevention expertise to develop a free resource for workers in the agricultural industry. When selecting an entity, the department shall seek to use an entity that has an existing telephonic and web-based resource, including entities that have prepared similar resources for other states. The contracting entity must be responsible for constructing and hosting the free resource and linking the free resource to the web sites of the department, the department of agriculture, and other relevant stakeholders. (4) At a minimum, the free resource must:

- (a) Be made publicly available through a web-based portal or a telephone support line;
- (b) Provide a resource to train agricultural industry management, workers, and their family members in suicide risk recognition and referral skills;
- (c) Provide a resource to build capacity within the agricultural industry to train individuals to deliver training in person;
- (d) Contain model crisis protocols that address behavioral health crisis and suicide risk identification, intervention, reentry, and postvention;
- (e) Contain model marketing materials and messages that promote behavioral health in the agricultural industry; and (f) Be made available in English and Spanish.

(5) A preliminary report shall be made to the legislature on the elements and implementation of the pilot program by December 1, 2019. A final report containing information about results of the pilot program and recommendations for improving the pilot program and expanding its availability to other counties shall be made to the legislature by December 1, 2020.

