

Columbia-Snake River Irrigators Association Water Policy Issues and Actions

DATE: Winter 2023

TO: WA State Gov. Jay Inslee; Governor’s Office Policy Staff
Comm. Hilary Franz, WA State Dept. of Natural Resources
WA State Legislators and County Commissioners

SUBJECT: Water Policy for the Irrigated Agriculture Industry—Real Dollar Meaning

State water policy governing the Irrigated Agriculture Industry has “real dollar meaning” to the economic life of Eastern WA and state citizens. It drives the future for irrigators, laborers, managers, scientists, entrepreneurs, manufacturers, and suppliers working directly within the Industry and to the thousands of people who sustain support services and community needs.

Political leaders’ water policy directives become agency actions, with agency staff interpreting statutes and administrative rules “to fit” the policy objectives. Those in the Industry say that political leaders should recognize the economic prevalence already in-hand and be working with Industry representatives to shape the future, not just react to it. Basic water supplies for irrigation are far more stable in Eastern WA than most other areas of the Western U.S. That puts the state in a unique position to further grow real dollar economic benefits.

Washington State Irrigated Agriculture Industry¹ Estimated Annual Household Income Value, 2021\$

Industry Sector	Estimated % Irr. Ag.	Direct 2021\$ Earnings/Income	Indirect/Induced Multiplier Impact	Estimated Total Impact 2021\$
Direct Irr. Ag. Production (Crops and Cattle)	85%	\$2,719,150,000	1.49	\$4,051,534,000
Ag. Services (Non-Forestry-Irr. Ag.)	75%	\$1,025,250,000	1.16	\$1,189,290,000
Food Processing/Manuf. (Irr. Ag. Products)	90%	\$2,569,500,000	2.60	\$6,680,700,000
Beverages (Irr. Ag. Products)	60%	\$429,600,000	2.20	\$945,120,000
TOTAL:		\$6,743,500,000		\$12,866,640,000

¹ **The Irrigated Agriculture Industry:** is comprised of the direct irrigated farm production, agricultural services (includes some crop/food packaging), and the food processing and manufacturing sectors. The non-irrigated Ag. sector is excluded. Impact multipliers applied here are adjusted to avoid inter-sector double counting.

Analysis Sources Include: USDA, National Agricultural Statistical Services (NASS), 2017-2018 Market Value Production Estimates and Irrigation Survey, Census of Agriculture, WA; NASS, Washington State Production Data, 2020, Statistical Bulletin, Production and Value Series, 2022; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Income by Major Industry (NAICS) Data Tables WA, 2021 Estimates (Earnings/Income); U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Economic Impacts Tools, Regional Input-Output Inter-Industry Modeling and Regional I/O Model Multiplier Estimates (Income/Employment) for WA and Central WA Counties, BEARFACTS; Inter-Industry Final Demand/Requirements Linkages for 2012 with 2020 Data Estimates.

Note: Impact estimates reflect broad sector impacts and are not specific to any independent project or sub-industry sector. Estimates prepared by the Pacific NW Project and are considered conservative and reliable for policy-based alternatives and decisions affecting WA State Irrigated Agriculture. Further information may be obtained by contacting CSRIA representatives at 509-783-1623 or CSRIA.org.