

# Focus on the 2015 Drought and Agriculture: Interim Report



Natural Resources Assessment Section

January 2016

## Background

The Washington State Department of Agriculture is working on an assessment of the impacts to agriculture due to the 2015 drought. This report is due at the end of 2016. An interim report on typical impacts seen throughout Washington agricultural areas during the 2015 drought was completed December 31, 2015. This intensive 6-week project was comprised of four components:

- ◆ Online survey of growers.
- ◆ Telephone and in-person meetings.
- ◆ Analysis of available USDA statistics for the 2015 harvest.
- ◆ Ground survey of impacted farms in the Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD).



The interim report was released on December 31, 2015 and is available here:

<http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/natresources/Drought.aspx>

## Results

### Crop loss estimates currently available (more to come in 2016):

- ◆ **Wheat:** \$212.4 million
- ◆ **Apples:** \$86.52 million
- ◆ **Red Raspberries:** \$13.9 million
- ◆ **Blueberries:** \$10.56 million

### Spotlight on Kittitas Reclamation District

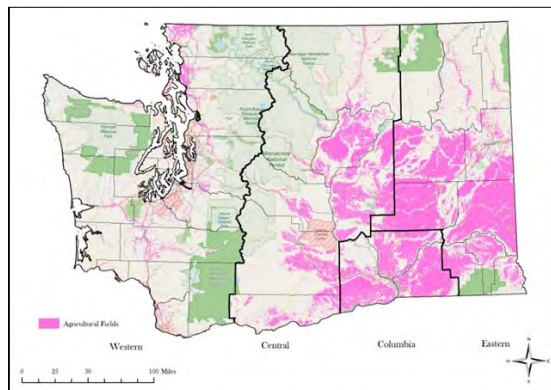
Field surveys in late September 2015 identified 33,253 acres of crop land damaged by drought, at an estimated cost to growers of **\$11.4 million**. **This only accounts for crop loss and no other costs to growers.**



# Results

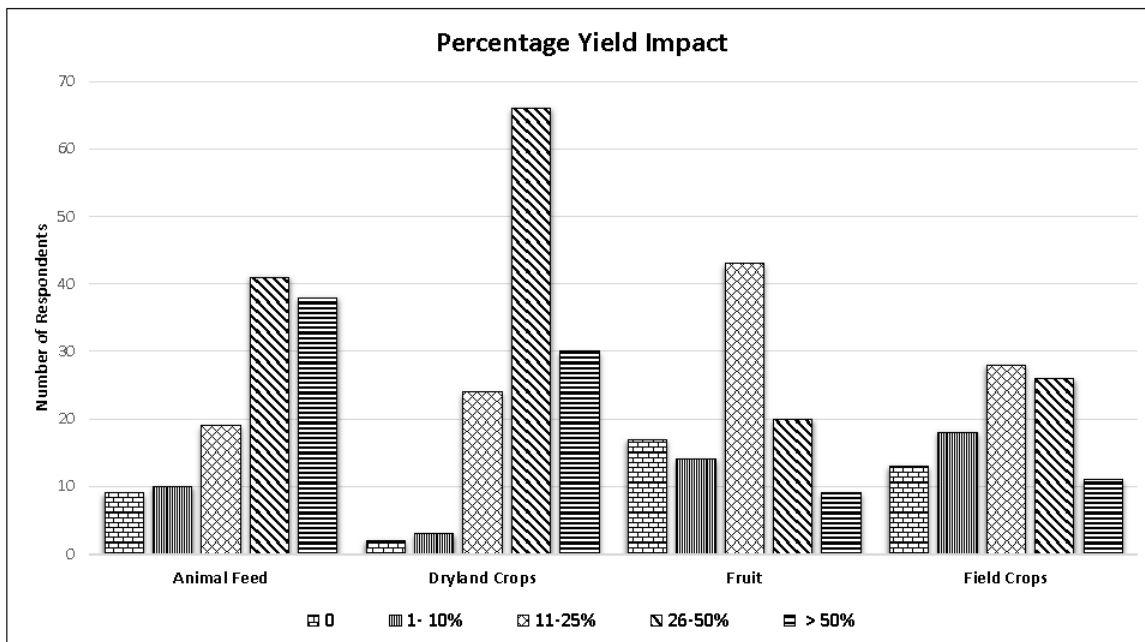
## Online Survey

WSDA launched an online survey for growers in early December. This short 3-5 minute survey asked general questions about the impact of the drought and extreme heat on yield, marketability, quality, storability, infrastructure, and pest pressure. More than 450 growers responded statewide.



Survey data was combined into four commodity groups (Fruit, Field, Dryland, Animal Feed) and four regions (Western, Central, Columbia, Eastern) of the state.

Growers throughout the state reported yield impacts, with animal feed (67.5%) and dryland crop (76.8%) respondents reporting greater than 26% yield reduction due to drought.



64.8% of producers stated that quality or marketability were negatively impacted by the drought and extreme heat.

## What's Next?

The complete assessment of the 2015 drought impacts will include additional USDA NASS data and grower information is available. Future data could include losses for juice and wine grapes, all tree fruit, corn, vegetable and seed crops, nursery/greenhouse crops, and livestock.

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