



Washington Association of Wheat Growers

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WAWG helps fund study quantifying impact of West Coast port slowdowns

RITZVILLE, WA - The Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG) joined with other stakeholder groups, including the Washington Grain Commission, to fund a study on the economic impacts of the last year's West Coast ports slowdown on Washington State businesses.

According to the study, which was released in late February, between October 2014 and March 2015, slowdowns at West Coast ports cost Washington businesses approximately \$769.5 million. Those losses were incurred through products that were not shipped, increased fees for airfreight shipping, delayed delivery of imported goods and other additional fees including demurrage and truck idling costs.

“We knew the port slowdowns that occurred in 2014 and 2015 had a large economic impact across many Washington State industries, but until now, we didn't know exactly what those costs were,” said WAWG President Kevin Klein, a dryland wheat farmer from Edwall, Wash. “These numbers prove that our ports are a critical piece of our state's economic health, and any actions that impede the smooth, timely flow of goods in and out of those ports shouldn't be tolerated.”

The numbers in the study only reflect estimated short-term losses. It does not include long-term costs, such as lost customers or permanently rerouted supply chains.

“It could take years for some industries to rebuild markets that were lost because product shipments were delayed or canceled, and customers turned to alternative suppliers,” Klein added. “Some businesses may never fully recover, which could eventually impact jobs, wages and the state's economy.”

The study was prepared by Community Attributes Inc. for the Washington Council on International Trade, of which WAWG is a member. The study can be downloaded at wcit.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/WCIT-Port-Delays-Economic-Impacts-Report-FINAL1.pdf

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About WAWG: Education and outreach are the heart of Washington Association of Wheat Growers activity, all of which is aimed at helping Washington wheat families. Since 1954, WAWG has been dedicated to the enrichment of the Washington wheat industry as a nonprofit trade association, which depends on volunteers, membership dues and donations to carry out activities as representatives on the state and national levels. WAWG monitors state, transportation, research and natural resources policy and partners with the National Association of Wheat Growers to monitor national farm policy. Visit wawg.org for more information.