



# Washington Association of Wheat Growers

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## **Wheat growers head to nation's capital to focus on trade, the future farm bill, and to build relationships**

Fresh off their successful lobbying trip to Olympia, leadership and staff of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers are headed to Washington, D.C., next week to take their message to a national stage.

“Many of our issues, such as maintaining and expanding overseas markets with sound trade policies, improving on farm bill programs that are critical for risk management and supporting agricultural research, go far beyond the borders of our state and are greatly impacted by decisions made at the federal level. By spending time in D.C., meeting with our congressional delegation, agency heads and representatives of the new administration, we are making sure that our priorities and concerns are being heard,” said Nicole Berg, chair of the National Legislation Committee of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG).

“With the 2018 Farm Bill fast approaching and trade programs under a microscope, it is more important than ever that the Washington wheat industry has a seat at the table,” said Ben Adams, President of WAWG. “With 90 percent of our state’s grain being exported, trade programs such as Foreign Market Development (FMD) and Market Access Program (MAP) are essential tools for maintaining the trade surplus we currently have.”

In this time of political transition, the WAWG delegation will also be advocating for improvements to the upcoming farm bill, including the removal of sequestration from farm program payments. “Programs under the current farm bill were sequestered at a rate of 6.8 percent in 2016, greatly impacting the bottom line of many growers. With historically low commodity prices, it is critical to maintain Title 1 programs, in addition to crop insurance, during these tough economic times in the wheat industry,” said Michelle Hennings, Executive Director of WAWG.

Other priorities for the organization include:

- Support for publicly funded agricultural research at the fully funded authorized amount in the 2014 Farm Bill of \$10 million.
- Opposing the removal or breaching of any dams on the Columbia-Snake River System.
- Making regulatory reform a top priority during this Congress.

While back east, the wheat growers will also take part in the U.S. Wheat Associates and National Association of Wheat Growers’ winter conference.

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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](http://wawg.org) for more information.