



Washington State Fairs Association

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Agricultural Fairs are Washington's Largest Classroom & Emergency Support Location

Capital Budget Request – Health and safety improvement grants for agricultural fairgrounds

Each biennium the Capital budget has included \$2,000,000 for the Washington State Department of Agriculture to operate a competitive grant program to support capital projects that make health or safety improvements to agricultural fairgrounds.

Many fairgrounds have aging facilities. Grant funds are typically used for restroom improvements, ADA access, hand washing facilities, improved lighting, roof repairs, etc.

There is at least one Fairground in every nearly every county in Washington State. (Benton and Franklin Counties share a fairground. Mason County is the only county without a fair.)

In many areas of the state, fairgrounds are used during disasters. Fairgrounds have been used as staging areas during wildfires, evacuation areas during floods and warming centers during power outages. In rural areas, the fairground is often the only facility with the capacity to feed and house large groups, allow a helicopter to land or hold evacuated animals.

Increasingly, fairgrounds are used as reunification locations in the event of a natural disaster or evacuation of public schools.

These grants allow fairgrounds to maintain much needed facilities.

This money is not in the Governor's budget – it must be added.