

Media Advisory – May 27, 2010

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Reardon, farmers launch nonprofit “Growers Alliance”

On Tuesday, June 8, Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon and local farmers will roll out the creation of a new nonprofit organization devoted to advancing economic growth among county farmers.

The new nonprofit is a direct result of Reardon’s agriculture initiative launched in 2007 and is a key aspect of the recently released “Snohomish County Growers Alliance Charter Business Plan,” prepared by Community Attributes with a \$45,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The business plan, put together with guidance from a dozen local farmers during the past year, highlights the need for an independent nonprofit structure promoted by local farmers but with assistance from county and municipal governments.

“This is an opportunity for local farmers to take ownership of their financial future,” Reardon said. “This nonprofit organization will be owned and operated by farmers who want to increase their opportunities locally and regionally.”

Led by local farmers, the nonprofit growers’ alliance will assist in the development of a permanent and year-round farmers’ market, find additional ways to increase farm productivity and profitability, and provide a voice for the agriculture industry within Snohomish County.

“It is the mission of this alliance to turn local farmers’ financial vulnerability into profitability by providing markets that will supply high quality and locally grown food to our neighbors,” said Carol Krause, a local farmer and the nonprofit’s president. “The formation of the growers’ alliance is the first step in organizing ourselves so that we, the agricultural community in Snohomish County, will be in a position to provide support for our local industry.”

The nonprofit’s first goal is to gain 100 members in 100 days, Krause said.

Beginning at 10 a.m., at Swan's Trail Farm, 7301 Rivershore Road, Snohomish, Reardon, Krause and other members of the alliance will discuss strategies for reaching that goal as well as talk about next steps including a future farmers’ market.

“We know that since the last agriculture census, farmland and farmers in Snohomish County have increased,” Reardon said. “It’s important to continue building on those successes while also working to preserve farmland for future generations.”

To read the Snohomish County Growers Alliance Charter Business Plan, go to www.snocobiz.org/news.php.

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