



# Grain or Produce Processing for Spokane University District



**University District Board of Directors**  
**September 3, 2025**

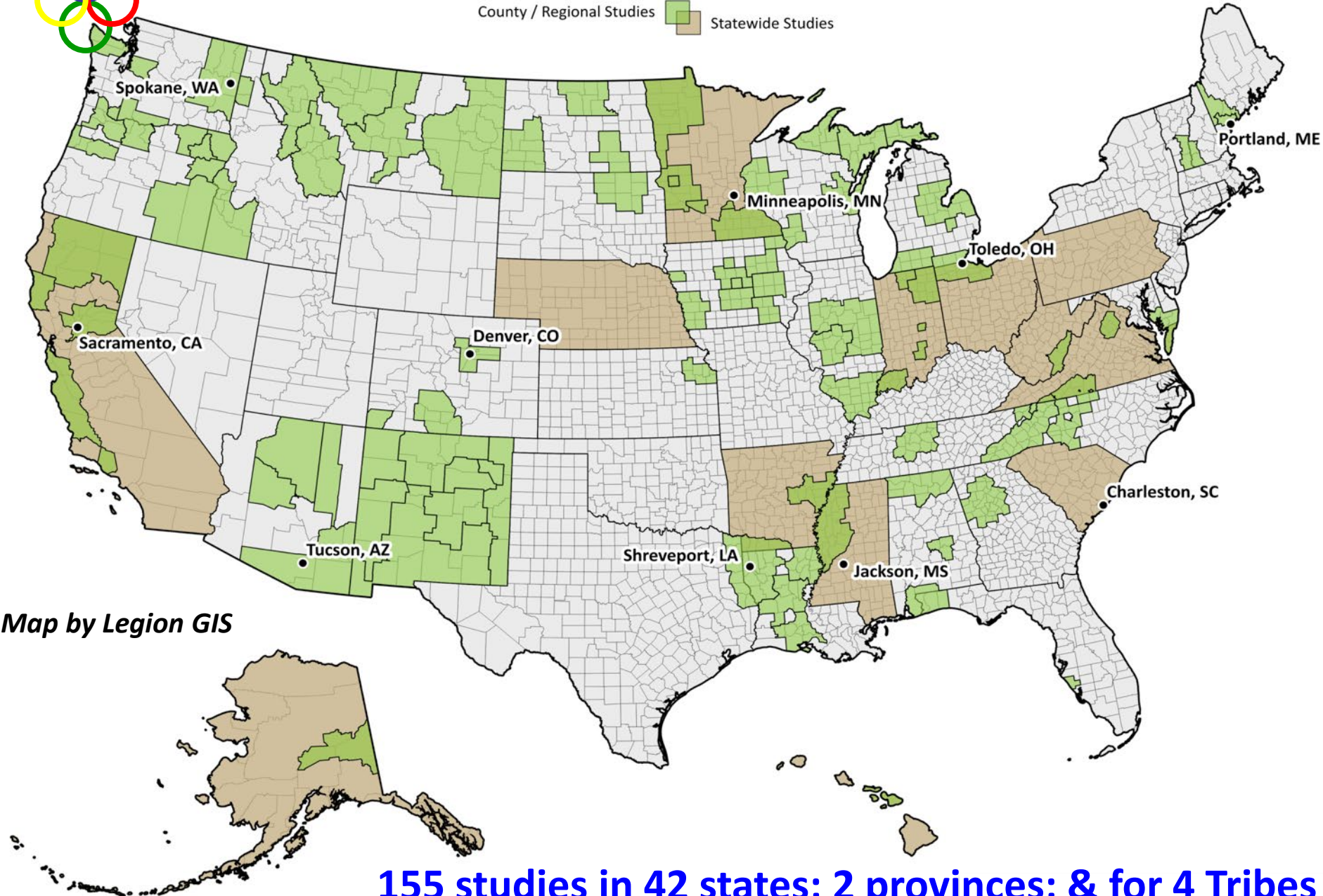
**Ken Meter** Crossroads Resource Center (Minneapolis)



# CRC Farm & Food Economy Studies

County / Regional Studies

Statewide Studies



Map by Legion GIS

**155 studies in 42 states; 2 provinces; & for 4 Tribes**

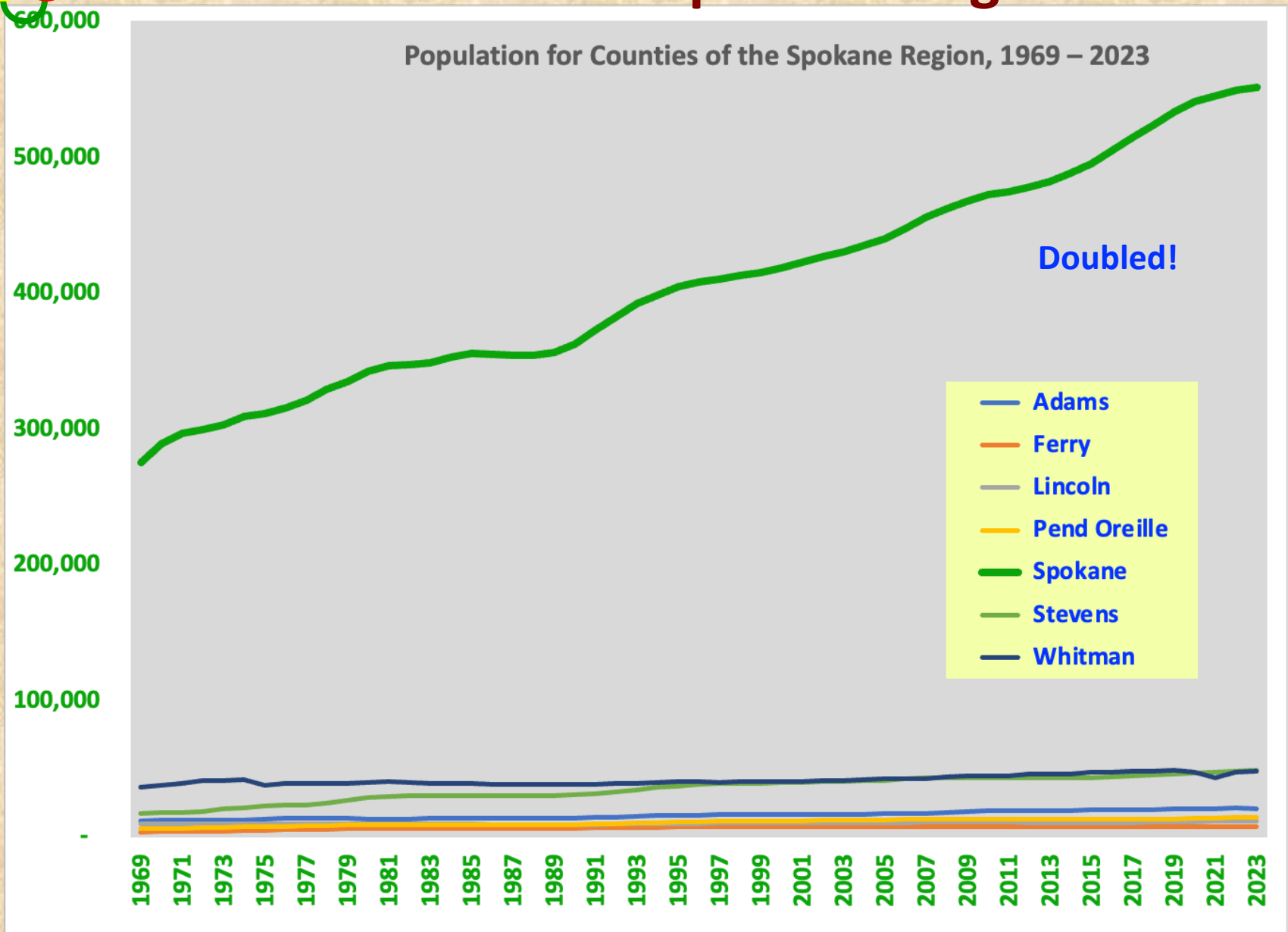




*Mural, The Food Project — Boston*



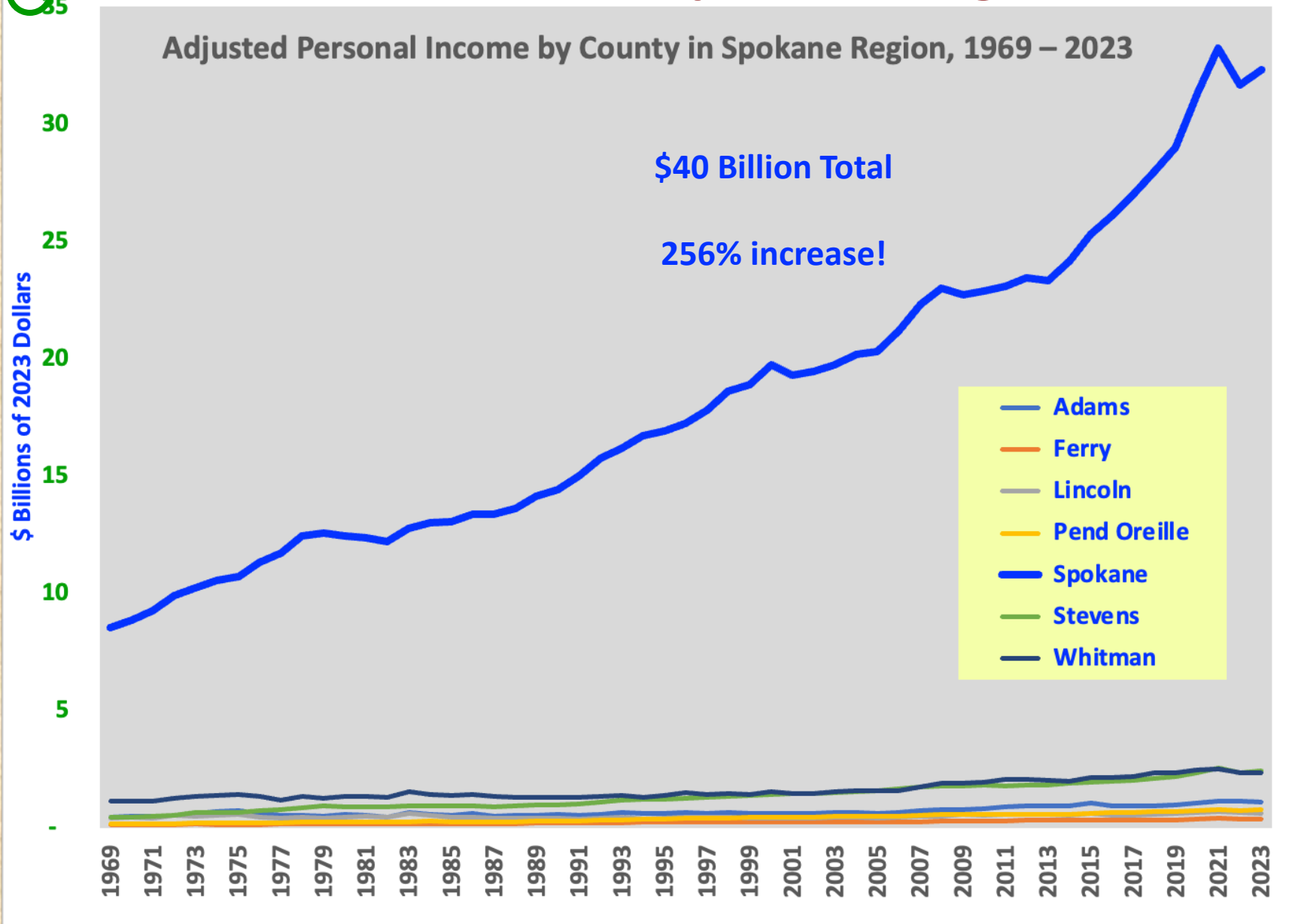
# Economic Context — Spokane Region





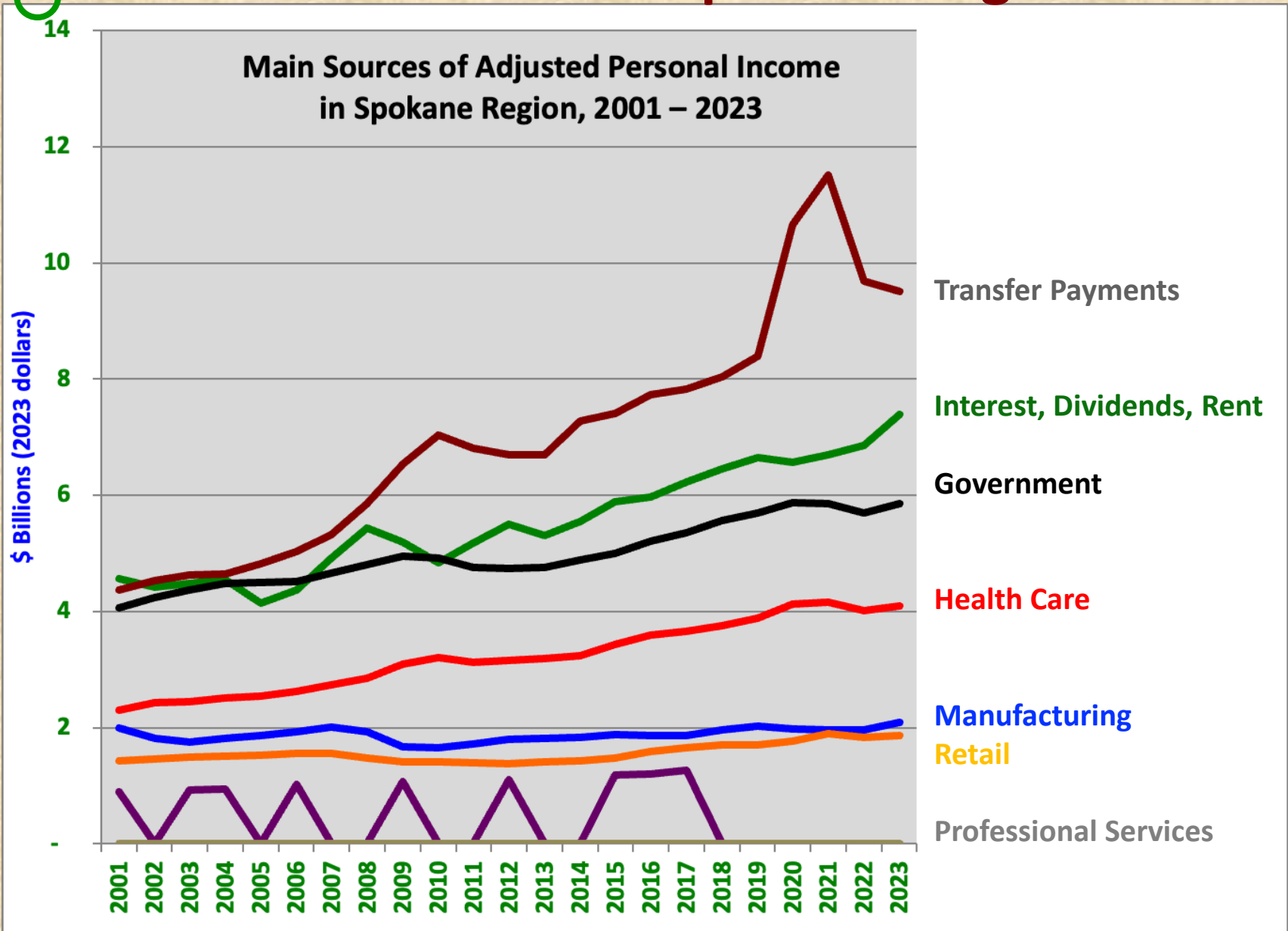


# Economic Context — Spokane Region





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# Farms Sell \$1.2 Billion of Products / Year

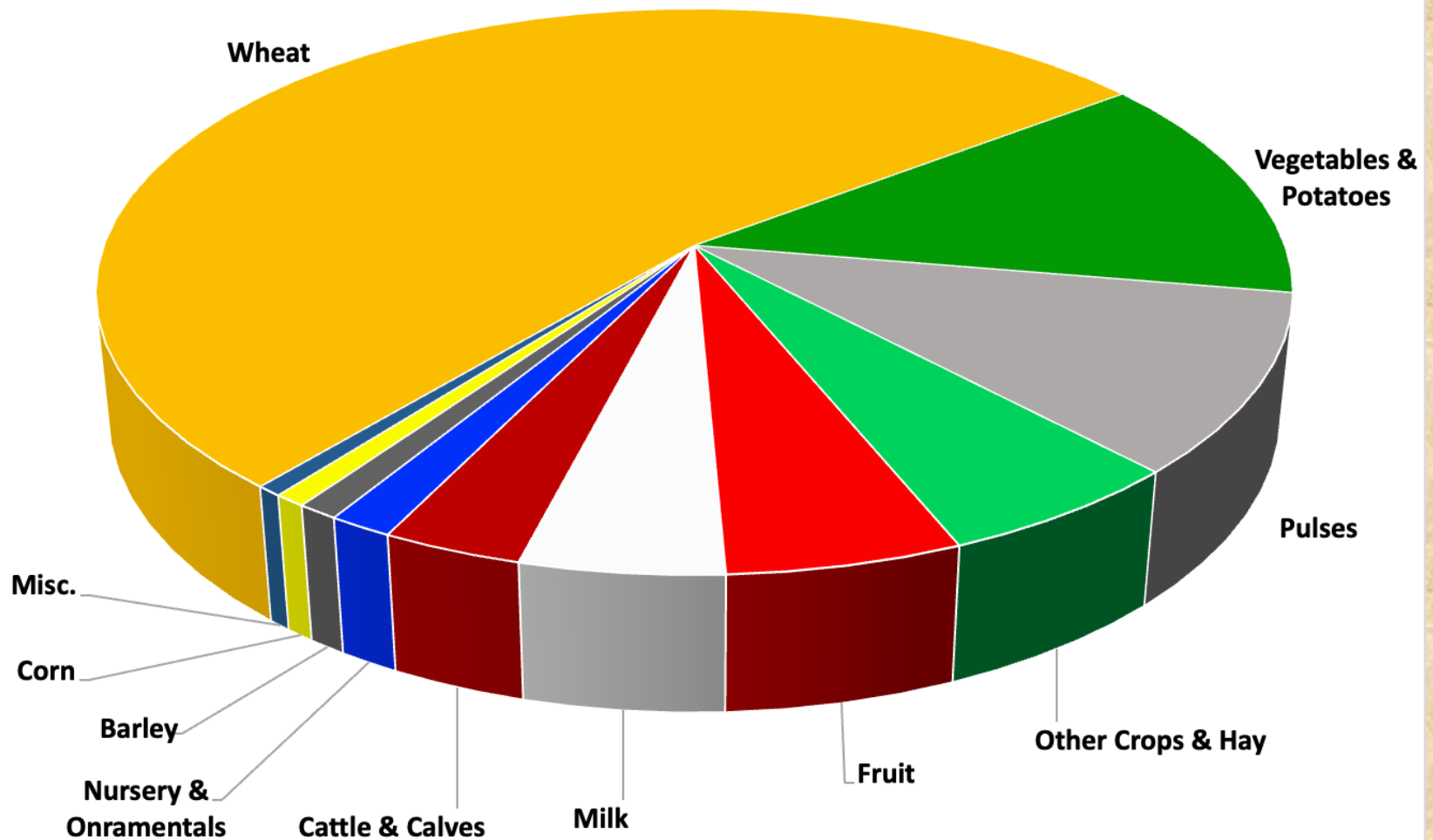
	\$ Millions
Wheat	704
Vegetables & Potatoes	171
Pulses	135
Other Crops & Hay	77
Fruit	72
Milk	62
Cattle & Calves	43

**Most all leaves the region!**



# What Do Farms Sell?

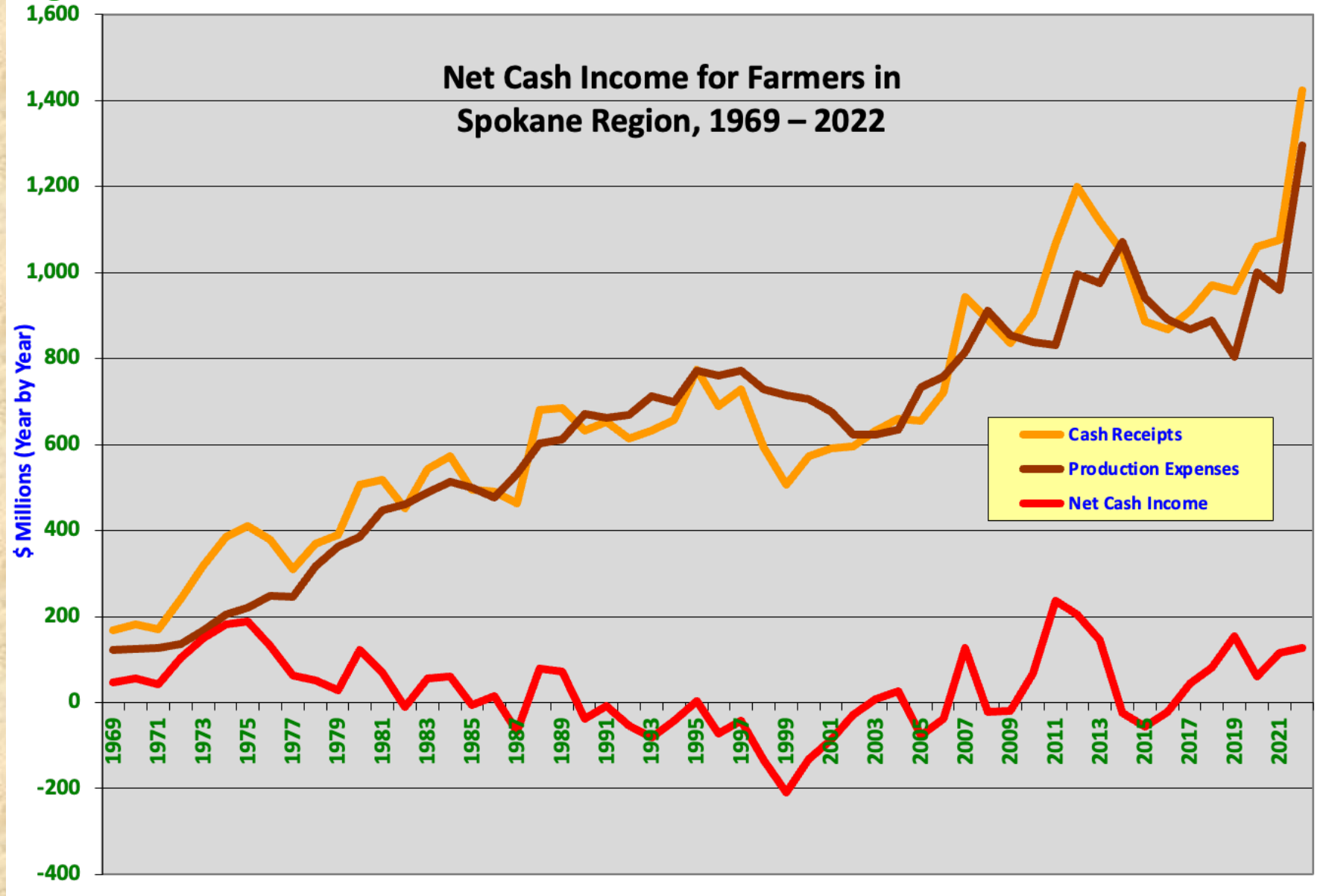
Main Crops & Livestock Sold by Spokane Region Farms, 2022







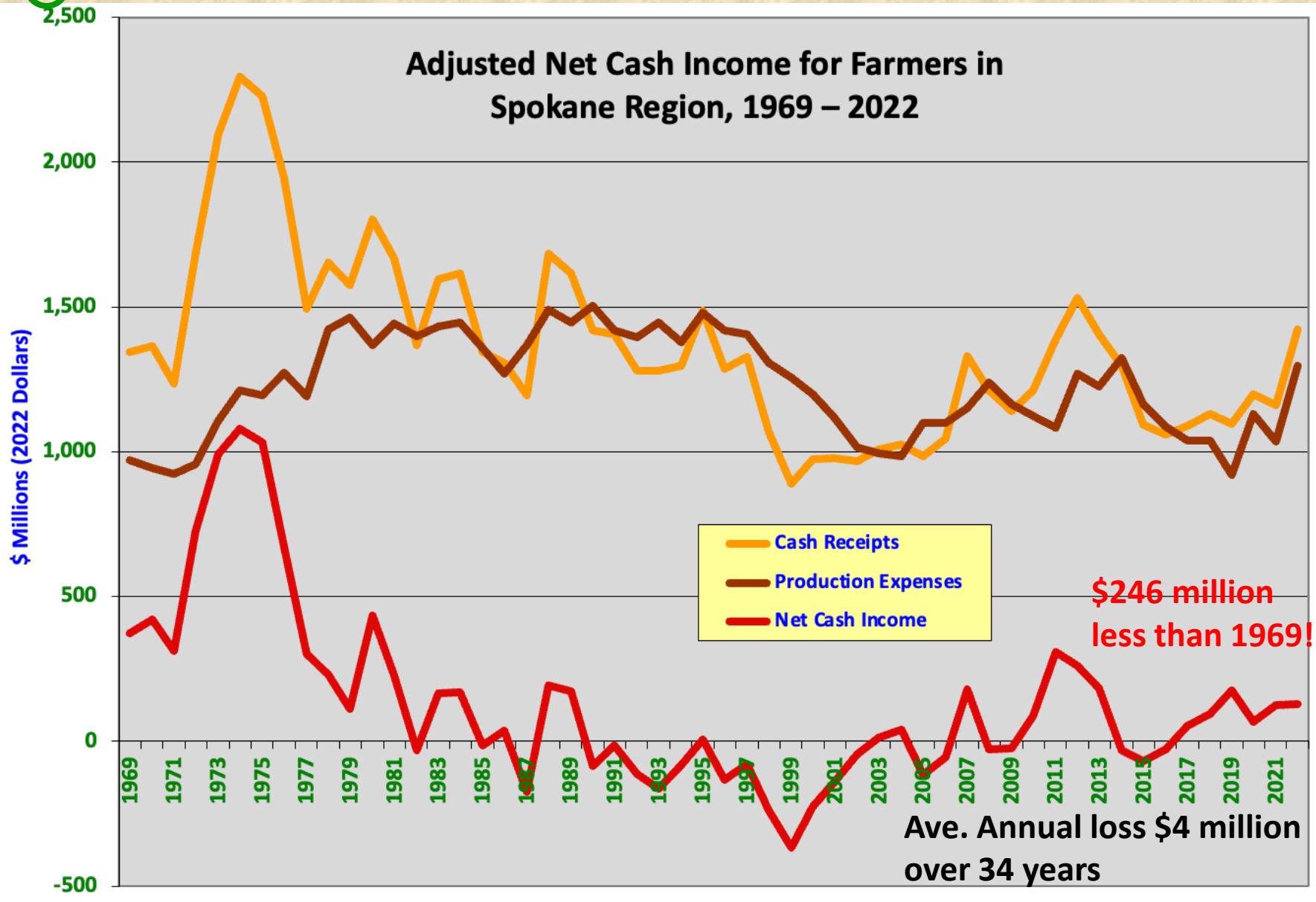
# Farm Net Cash Income — Spokane Region





# Farm Net Cash Income — Spokane Region

Adjusted Net Cash Income for Farmers in  
Spokane Region, 1969 – 2022

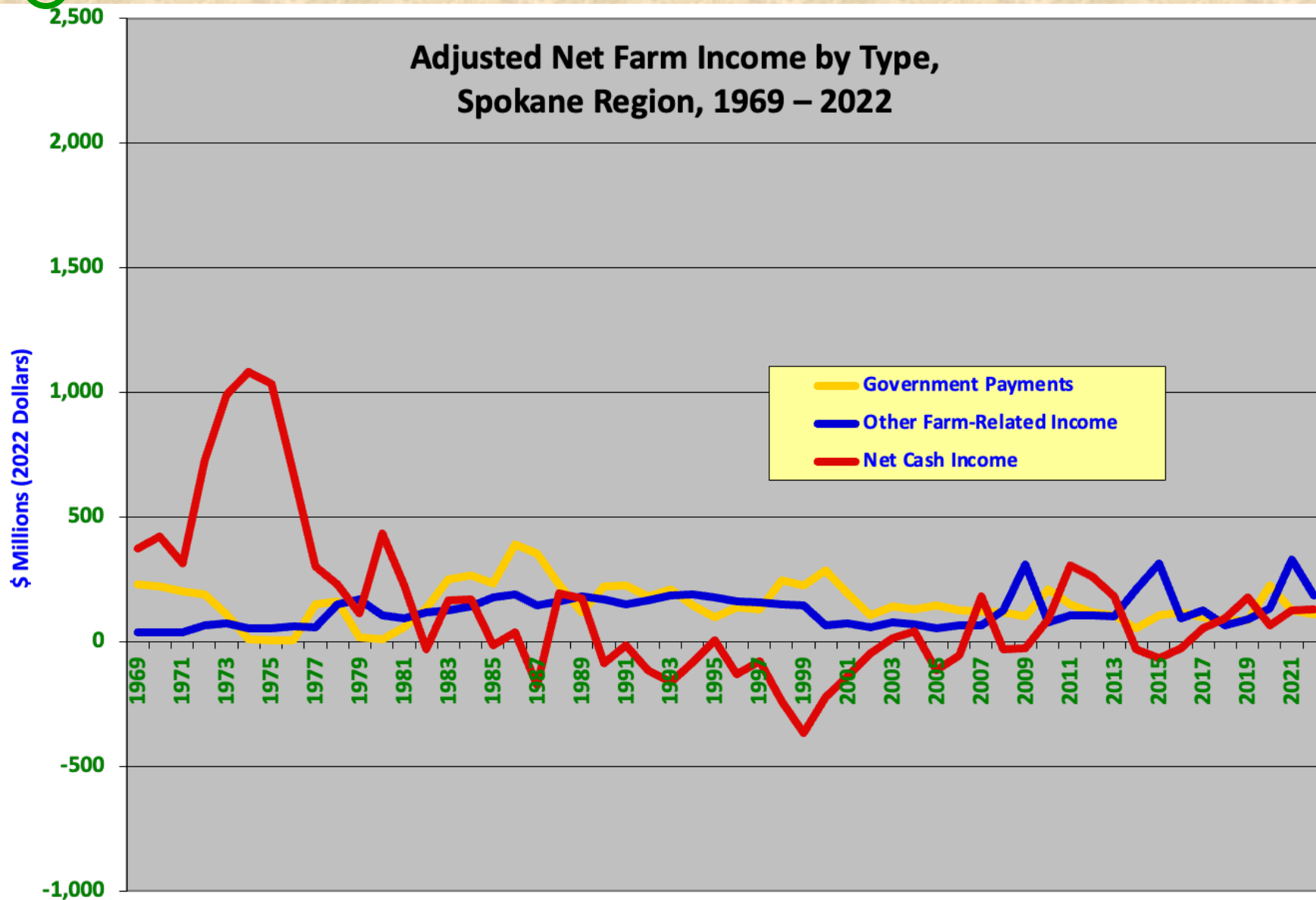






# Types of Net Farm Income — Spokane Region

**Adjusted Net Farm Income by Type,  
Spokane Region, 1969 – 2022**







# Consumer Markets for Food



***Casa Cano Farms Store***





# Consumer Markets for Food

Spokane Region residents purchase \$2.6 billion of food each year, including \$1.5 billion to eat at home

## *Home purchases:*

	<b>\$ Millions</b>
Meats, Poultry, Fish, & Eggs	313
Fruits & Vegetables	315
Cereals & Bakery Products	188
Dairy Products	143
“Other,” incl. Sweets, Fats, & Oils	558

**90% (\$2.3 billion/yr) spent buying food sourced outside**



## Consumers matter

If each resident bought \$5 of food directly from some Spokane Region farm each week...

...farms would earn **\$183 Million**  
**15% of current cash receipts**





# How We Assessed Feasibility







## 33 interviews (part 1)

Jeremy Bunch — Shepherd's Grain

Jorge Cano — Casa Cano Farms (Valleyford, Washington)

Ross Carper — Feast World Kitchen

Shanon Davis — Main Market Co-op

Kendra Dean — Northeast Washington Educational Service District — ESD 101

Brian Estes — LINC Foods

Tobe Finch — Happy Day Local (Lewiston, Idaho)

Krysta Forberg — Happy Mountain Mushrooms (Colbert, Washington)

Atania Gilmore — Spokane Farmers' Market

Bret Gordon — Lumberbeard Brewing

Leah Harp — Valley School Food Service (Valley, Washington)

Hal Jackson — Whitestone Mountain Farm (Tonasket, Washington)

CJ Kalysten — LINC Foods

Joni Kindwall-Moore — Snacktivist Foods (Coeur d'Alene, Idaho)

Karen Lehman — Potlikker Capital (Minneapolis, Minnesota office)

Sarah Masoni — Oregon State University Food Innovation Center (Corvallis, Oregon)



## 33 interviews (part 2)

Charlie Michel — Northwest Food Hub Network; Mission West (Ronan, MT)  
Vanessa Miller — Oneida Integrated Food System Initiative (Wisconsin)  
Kevin Morse — Cairnspring Mills (Burlington, Washington)  
Marcia Ostrum — Washington State University Extension (Wenatchee, Washington)  
Kris Raasch — Chartwell food service (Idaho)  
Courtney Shirk — Main Market Co-op  
Juliet Sinisterra — Spokane University District  
Amanda Tonnemaker — Tonnemaker Hill Farm (Port Royal, Washington)  
Luke Tonnemaker — Tonnemaker Hill Farm (Port Royal, Washington)  
Jan Tusick — Mission West (Ronan, Montana)  
Brittany Tyler — Scale House Market  
Nathan Underwood — University of Idaho food service  
Madyson Versteeg — Casa Cano Farms (Valleyford, Washington)  
William Verwoort — Oneida Integrated Food System Initiative (WI)  
Harold Wilken — Janie's Mill (Illinois)  
Joel Williamson — The Grain Shed; LINC Foods  
Michelle Youngblom — LINC Foods



# Spokane Region Farms







**Map by LINC**



# The Food Landscape in Spokane

**26 school districts partner with ESD 101**

**ESD 101 launched several collaborations  
between farmers and schools**

**ESD 101 & LINC coordinate regional food  
networks much like Mission West does in  
Montana**



# Food Landscape in Spokane

## 15 Farms Sell through Main Street Market

- Allicins Ranch (Moyle Springs, Idaho)
- Eisenman Farms (Spokane)
- Full Bushel Farm (Medical Lake, Washington)
- Gracey's Flower Farm (Fairfield, Washington)
- Greenacres Grown (Spokane Valley)
- Hirschel Heritage Farm (Latah, Washington)
- Jackson Farm (Spokane Valley)
- Lilac City Harvest (Spokane Valley)
- Moose Meadow Farm (Clark Fork, Idaho)
- Nine Mile Farms (Spokane)
- Okanogan Producers Marketing Association (Okanagan, Washington)
- Rivers Edge Ranch (Chewela, Washington)
- Tolstoy Farms (Davenport, Washington)
- Vinegar Flats Farm (Spokane)
- Western Montana Growers Cooperative (Missoula, Montana)





# Food Landscape in Spokane

## 10 Farmers Markets in Spokane

- Chewelah Farmers Market — Chewelah (Fridays)
- Emerson-Garfield Farmers Market (Fridays)
- Fairwood Farmers Market (Tuesdays)
- Hillyard Farmers Market (Mondays)
- Liberty Lake Farmers Market (Saturdays)
- Millwood Farmers Market (Wednesdays)
- Northeast Washington Farmers Market — Colville (Wednesdays; Saturdays)
- Spokane Farmers Market (Wednesdays; Saturdays)
- Spokane Valley Farmers Market (Fridays)
- Thursday Market in the South Perry District (Thursdays)





# Food Landscape in Spokane



**Casa Cano Farms is Building a Produce Processing Building 30 minutes South**





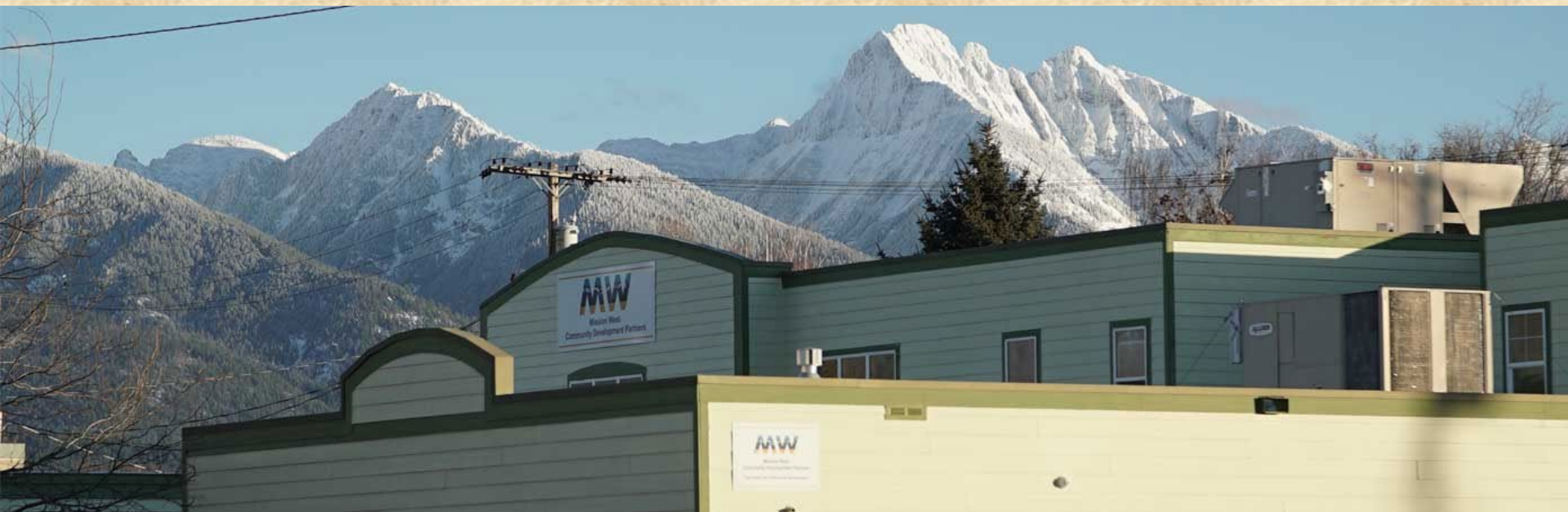
# The Model is in Montana







# Mountain West — Ronan, Montana



**Population 2,170**  
**Primary Market 44,000**

*Photo Courtesy of Mountain West*





# Mountain West — Ronan, Montana



**Jan Tusick, Director**



# Mountain West — Ronan, Montana

## **Services:**

- **Business Incubation**
- **Food Processing**
- **Coordinate with Agricultural Producers**
- **Cooperative Development**





# Mountain West — Ronan, Montana

## Innovative Products:

- “Montana Marinara” Sauce
- Beef-Lentil Crumble
- Lentil Burger



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**Montana Department of Agriculture  
Purchases & Distributes to Schools**





# Lessons Learned







## Lessons Learned

- **Spokane consumers have limited commitment to buying from local farms**
- **Farmers & nonprofits want an R&D center so they can ship smaller loads (practical?)**
- **Experts say “Start small”**
- **Shoulder this for the long haul**





# What is Your Purpose?

- **Build something unique to Spokane**
- **Develop stronger loyalty from consumers**
- **Construct an entire system — collaborate and build at farm level as well as in UD**
- **Elevate the heritage of worker-owned cooperatives**



# Recommendations

- **Cluster processing with other businesses**
  - **LINC**
  - **Main Market Co-op**
  - **d&B Partners (crafts and foods)**
  - **Feast World Kitchen**
- **“Spokane Food Commons”**





## Next Steps

### *Selected First Steps*

- Learn from ESD101, LINC, & Casa Cano
- Work with LINC to identify facility needs
- Invite partners to collaborate
- Build trust
- Contract with design & engineering experts
- Identify 1-5 products to start

CHEMIC  
FREE

WEST MONTANA



BRONZE CHIEF

WHEAT





# Food Landscape in Spokane



**Large-Scale Grain/Pulse Processing  
Does Not Seem Viable for UD**

*Photo by Ken Meter*







# **Spokane Region Farm & Food Economy**

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