

# We Cannot Afford To Waste Valuable Ag Land



This residential subdivision, located south of Karcher Road, is completely surrounded by prime agricultural land. It is typical of the type of questionable “spot development” that can happen when Conditional Use Permits, rather than rezoning, are used by developers to advance urban development. Many other similar “spot development” CUP projects in Canyon County have been approved but now stand empty, not a single residence having been completed. This results in a permanent loss of valuable agricultural land with an accompanying loss in revenues to local governments. Canyon County is one of only a very few of Idaho’s 44 counties to use the CUP in this fashion.

## Saving Farmland Is Important

Effectively managing growth and development to avoid the irresponsible loss of agricultural land is about way more than just preserving a rural atmosphere or blocking responsible development. Here’s why: Economic ripples spreading out from an ag producer can eventually touch nearly every segment of the Canyon County economy. This includes food processors, seed companies, local tax revenues, meat processing, livestock, agricultural service companies, fuel suppliers, irrigation companies, orchards, wineries, dairies and cheese factories, crop and livestock insurance, auto dealers, fertilizer companies, individual paychecks spent in local companies – you get the idea. Altogether, agriculture represents a \$2.5 Billion economic impact in Canyon County.<sup>1</sup>

Here’s what we lose when 150 harvestable acres of farmland gets turned into vacant, weed-covered residential subdivisions:<sup>1</sup>

**\$1,245,180 in sales; \$200,000 in wages; \$29,751 in indirect business taxes; and 10.4 jobs.**

The hit and miss use of Conditional Use Permits to advance urban growth at the expense of agriculture has resulted in a virtual tidal wave of relatively small spot development projects with an enormous cumulative potential impact on the future of Canyon County agriculture.

## Poorly Managed Growth At The Expense Of Agriculture Results In Valuable Farmland Lost Forever



A fire hydrant in an unfinished Canyon County subdivision project in the middle of prime farmland provides stark evidence of how using Conditional Use Permits rather than traditional rezoning can hurt our agriculture economy.

The Coalition for Agriculture’s Future is formed from more than two dozen of the area’s largest agri-businesses, financial institutions, ag-related associations and other companies and individuals with agricultural interests in the Treasure Valley. You can learn more about the issue and the Coalition by visiting our web site:

[www.agriculturesfuture.org](http://www.agriculturesfuture.org)

1. Canyon County – Two Worlds, Urban & Rural, University of Idaho 2004.