

WAC 220-440-160 Valuation methods for commercial crop damage assessment. Several methods may be used to determine the extent of a crop damaged by deer and elk and the lost value of the commercial crop resulting from the damage. Assessment methods used by qualified crop adjustors under WAC 220-440-150 will be considered by the department. Evaluation of crop losses must consider other impacts to crop production including, but not limited to, fertilization, irrigation, precipitation, weather, timing of planting or harvest, and weed control and shall deduct those impacts from the loss value calculation. At least one of the following methods listed must be used to assess the crop damage:

(1) Amount consumed - Relies on wildlife-proof exclosures in the field; clipping similar sized plots inside and outside of exclosures; then comparing yields.

(2) Amount of stored crops consumed or damaged - Determine the bales or pounds of stored crops consumed or destroyed; then determine replacement value.

(3) Replacement value of horticultural trees lost as a result of damage; partial loss due to damage can be estimated per tree based on the percentage destroyed.

(4) Damage vs. undamaged areas - Using random sampling methods to compare the yields of damaged to undamaged portions of a field or two similar fields can provide an estimate of loss. Comparing similar fields assumes the fields are truly "similar" (soil type, aspect, slope, irrigation, fertilization, stand age, etc.).

(5) Animal use - Count the number of animals causing damage and the number of days they were present; then estimate the percentage of daily intake provided by the crop (generally less than 50 percent), and the amount of waste, trampling, or trailing; the result should also consider the timing of the damage and potential recovery of the vegetation prior to crop harvest.

(6) Decrease from average yield - Historic yields can be used for comparison; the difference between average yield and current yield may shed light on the extent of damage; changing weather or crop growing conditions from one year to the next make this technique less reliable.

(7) The department may require additional information about the assessment process used and may request additional assessment be undertaken, or may request additional documentation in order to consider the assessment accurate and complete.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, and 77.36.120. WSR 25-15-035 (Order 24-10), s 220-440-160, filed 7/8/25, effective 8/8/25. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), re-codified as § 220-440-160, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-120, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]