



## **SJCC LAND BANK SPECIAL MEETING - DECEMBER 17, 2021**

### **OUTLINE FOR COFFELT FARM PRESERVE GUIDED DISCUSSION**

#### **MEETING PURPOSE**

Clarify the Land Bank's continued investment in Coffelt Farm Preserve (CFP) and determine how best to not only keep the farm in active agriculture, but to also provide educational opportunities for farmers and other community members, and to devise a management model that's sustainable, equitable and fiscally responsible, while heeding constraints of the *Conservation Easement* as well as protecting the ecological values outlined in the Land Bank's *Stewardship and Management Plan*.

#### **MEETING OBJECTIVES**

- 1) **GOALS** - *Determine the Land Bank's goals for the farmed portion of Coffelt Farm Preserve*
  - a) What public benefits do we want to encourage or require?
  - b) What benefits to the greater agricultural community do we want to we want to encourage or require?
- 2) **INVESTMENT** - *Reach consensus on the general level of LB financial investment in the farm*
  - a) The Reserve Study recommends budgeting \$297,565 for maintenance of the property over a 10-year period, to include structures, fencing, roads/parking, and septic, water and electrical systems. Should the Commission adopt the proposed 10-year maintenance budget and schedule recommended in the Reserve Study? If not, what changes are recommended and why?
- 3) **MODELS** - *Select desired operating model or models for future lease / management*
  - a) The possible models outlined in the CART report are:
    - Model #1: Protect with conservation easement and sell the farm
    - Model #2: Single farmer lease
    - Model #3: Multiple leases with multiple farm enterprises
    - Model #4: Non-profit education and research farm
    - Model #5: County (or other public entity) operated farm
    - Model #6: Regional employee-owned vertically integrated cooperatives

What model(s) are we open to, what model(s) do we prefer (and why), and what models do we want to eliminate from further consideration (and why)?

**4) LEASE/REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) - Determine key details of Lease and RFP**

- a) The market rent study recommends an annual lease rate of \$28,300 (or about \$2,350 / mo.) for the farm, based on (a) \$4012 for land, (b) \$16,800 for farm manager's residence, and (c) \$7500 for farm structure support. (Note that at this rate, gross revenue would total \$283,000 over ten years, an amount almost equal to the estimated infrastructure costs in the Reserve Study.)
  - i) Are these calculations reasonable, or should there be some adjustment for any of the three categories?
  - ii) Since the recommended annual market rent does not include the tiny house or any other equipment, should there be an adjustment in the rent?
  - iii) In addition to the value of the land and infrastructure outlined in the market rent study, the lessee derives great benefit from stepping into an established farm with high visibility and customer base -- essentially a turnkey business opportunity. However, not considered in the market rent study is the fact that the lessee will also be subject to: public access and scrutiny, governmental oversight including on-site office, performance standards, public outreach and education, sharing facilities/equipment with other farmers and a life estate at the core of the property. Do these positives and negatives balance out or should there be an adjustment to the rent?
  - iv) Should the Commission accept the recommended Market Rent recommendation?  
If not, what adjustments should be made, and why?
- b) Lease term length
  - i) How long of a lease should we offer?
- c) Request for Proposal (RFP) and Lessee Selection
  - i) The CART Report recommends these considerations for the RFP and subsequent lease:
    - Demonstrated farming experience
    - Financial viability (detailed financial statements)
    - Ecological sustainability / soil health
    - Community benefit
    - Benefit to agricultural community
    - Agricultural education / opportunity for beginning farmers
    - Require submittal of a detailed business plan as part of RFP

Are there any other considerations that should be included in the RFP and Lease?

- ii) The Draft Agricultural Policy reviewed this morning states: *Complex or long-term leases will include a third-party advisory committee made up of representatives from agricultural agencies to assist with ranking of applicants by point system.*
  - (1) Who will make up the advisory committee to evaluate potential lessees of Coffelt Farm?
  - (2) Will this same advisory committee assist with the creation of the RFP, or will there be a separate RFP committee consisting of Land Bank staff and commissioners only? If the latter, who will make up the RFP committee?

Anne Stoltz [annest@msn.com](mailto:annest@msn.com)

December 7, 2021

Subject: Lum Farm on Coffelt Farm Preserve

Hello! Dropping a note to say that I really hope there is a way to secure a longer term future for Lum Farm on the Coffelt Farm Preserve. The Lums are such great land stewards, community members, and significant contributors to quality of life on Orcas. I really value them as an asset and I know others do, too.

Fingers crossed for a path forward that means Lum Farm can continue to be productive caretakers for this invaluable asset.

Thanks!!

Anne Stoltz  
Rosario Road

To: San Juan County Land Bank  
From: William and Lene Symes  
200 Wareham Way  
PO Box 43  
Orcas, WA 98280  
713-205-2419  
Sparrowhill200@gmail.com  
Re: Future of Coffelt Farm Reserve

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute our point of view to this decision process. We greatly appreciate the enormous amount of effort and time has already been invested, by CART and everyone else involved in this complex and difficult undertaking. Getting it right is tremendously important to the future quality of life on this island.

We discovered the Coffelt farm not too long after becoming involved in the Orcas community in 2005. In recent years, we have come to rely on the farm for meats, eggs, and (to a lesser extent) produce and dairy products. We greatly appreciate the high quality locally grown goat, lamb, beef, and pork that the farm has made available to local residents, local restaurants, and to the Food Bank. We also very much value the presence at the farm stand of produce from other island farms – this is a valuable service that complements the Farmers' Market and the local food offerings of the Co-op. We are also aware of the collaboration between local farmers that has its nexus at Coffelt, for example the shared slaughter facility, and the efforts of the current tenant to work towards remedying past farm management deficiencies, for example by an organized and aggressive program of compost soil amendment.

The presence of a high-quality working farm – in fact, of a number of such farms – cannot be taken for granted in contemporary America. We Orcasians are very, very lucky to have Coffelt and the others. The inherent value of local food production, and the concomitant educational and cultural enhancement, is difficult to assign a dollar value, but it is very real and one of the great attractions of this community.

In view of this added value, we urge you to be very cautious in revising the lease rate upwards. The current Lessee (the Lums) have greatly improved the the farm operation, as we see it, in the face of extraordinary difficulties – not just the long-deferred maintenance and lack of staff housing that stymied previous management, but a pandemic that forced them to change their planned MO dramatically, almost as soon as they took up the lease. They appear to us to have been as creative and responsible as one could hope, and so far, have managed to make the farm work for them and for the community. That is an incredible achievement, and we hope that you proceed in full awareness of the extraordinary good fortune their work represents to the Land Bank and the community.

While there may be some room for lease rate adjustment, we doubt that anything close to the 50%+ increase proposed by the valuation consultant is remotely reasonable. We hope that you work with the Lums to identify an arrangement that you and they can accommodate, allowing

for the value that their tenure adds to the farm and the community. While we understand that the Land Bank will re-let the farm long term, and likely consider other applicants, we believe that the Lums are exemplary (and, of course, established). We don't think you're likely to find a tenant that will contribute more, or more creatively, and we really don't think you'll find anyone who will make the farm work economically with a substantially higher cost basis, and without any possibility of sharing in equity growth.

Cathy Vierthaler [cathyvierthaler@rockisland.com](mailto:cathyvierthaler@rockisland.com)

December 7, 2021

Subject: Coffelt Farm Preserve

I'm writing today to express my support for Lum Farm operating on Coffelt Farm Preserve. The Lum family continues to embody the commitment to the land and community that Vern and Sidney Coffelt fostered for so many years. Not only do they provide a wide range of local food, they fully support the community with their generosity and learning programs, not to mention jobs!. Our family purchases eggs, cheese, meat and vegetables from the farm on an ongoing basis.

I fully support a long-term lease for the Lums to offer them the stability needed to continue to thrive and grow.

Cathy Vierthaler  
Eastsound

Charles Beadnall [charles@beadnall.com](mailto:charles@beadnall.com)

December 12, 2021

Subject: Coffelt Farm

Dear Land Bank Commissioners,

My family has relied on Coffelt Farm since Vern and Sidney's farm stand was a part of their basement. Seeing their diverse farm model was an inspiration for us to move to the island and begin down the path of raising our own animals and garden.

In an era when dairy from New Zealand, beef from Argentina, wheat from Russia, shrimp from Vietnam, and blueberries from Peru are commonly transported around the world to our grocery stores, the Lum's are expertly contributing to local food sustainability in Vern and Sidney's model.

Food is the largest greenhouse gas-emitting impact we have on the environment, and having more farmers able to raise more food locally reduces our ecologic impact and increases island resilience to fragile supply chains.

Farming is not a high profit industry and based on my analysis of Coffelt costs and rents the Land Bank is net neutral maintaining the land as Sidney intended when she sold to the Land Bank. Honoring her expectation to keep Coffelt dedicated to farming is tantamount to future owners being willing to sell to the Land Bank at below market prices.

I strongly support finding a path for the Lum's to have a long term lease so they can continue to feed both our bellies and our community through their generous outreach.

Sincerely,

Charles Beadnall

Charly [charlyarr@hotmail.com](mailto:charlyarr@hotmail.com)

December 5, 2021

Hello Land Bank staff,

I am writing to give comment on the Coffelt Farm Preserve. As a long-time friend of Sidney (& Vern) Coffelt, & early volunteer & staff member on the preserve, I believe that the Lum Family is fulfilling the original vision of the Coffeltes beautifully. As a community member on Orcas, I am incredibly grateful for the Lums' hard work & generosity. I feed my family from their farm, & my daughter has a connection to where her food is coming from. That is a rare and precious thing. The fact that they are able to produce such abundance, steward the land so well, AND be a source for farm education is incredible to me. Eric & Amy are impeccable with their kindness, & their support of the Orcas Food Bank and our schools & preschools is inspiring.

I have worked on Coffelt farm & seen its changes, & I understand the challenges that both the farmers & the Land Bank face in managing that property. I truly believe that what the Lums are doing on the farm is the ideal use of the property, & I whole-heartedly support them. They enrich our lives.

Thank you for your consideration,

Charly (Robinson) Taylor



Darryl Duke [darryl.duke@gmail.com](mailto:darryl.duke@gmail.com)

December 12, 2021

Subject: Comments on the Coffelt Farm Lease Rate and Reserve Study and Draft Ag Policy

Dear SJC Land Bank Commissioners,

First of all, thank you for your significant and sustained efforts toward determining the best future for the Coffelt Farm Preserve.

As a full-time resident and landowner on Orcas Island, I am very interested and concerned about the long-term potential the Coffelt Farm Preserve has for our community. With that in mind, I have taken the time to review all of the documents listed as relevant to the current planning process and public meeting on December 17, and offer the following feedback:

1) I was impressed by the thoroughness and reasonableness of the Fred Strickland lease rate and reserve study, and was happy to see that the fair market rental value was approximately equivalent to the projected costs over the ten year period.

However, it's not clear how improvements beyond the current structures' repairs and maintenance would be funded. Based on the comments of farmers interviewed in your study, expecting the lessee to make investments that will endure beyond the lease term is unreasonable.

So I would hope that the lease terms provide a way to address the funding and prioritization of such improvements. Because these will affect the ability to execute short- and long-term plans, this process should be efficient for and substantially driven by the lessee.

Also, if Land Bank funds or other public funds are to be allocated, for transparency it would be great to have that spelled out as part of this process.

2) Thank you for publishing the Sample Farm Lease Proposal Ranking Criteria Template. The template makes clear that the selection process will be based on a rational, relevant, and thorough scoring process. When tailoring the template to the CFP, I would hope that the criteria gives strong weight to uses of the CFP that form a community backbone with multiple bridges into the community. Examples would be:

- a) education (schools, general education, volunteer opportunities, etc.)
- b) access to locally grown food for all socio-economic levels of residents and visitors (through restaurants, the Food Bank, the Community Foundation, and farmers markets)
- c) fundraising activities for community benefit, including donations of farm resources and output
- d) encouraging and contributing to a vertically integrated food ecosystem (by supporting other farmers, value-add activities, distribution, emerging and established restaurants, etc.)

These, of course, should be in addition to a viable and sustainable agricultural and food value-added model. I know these to be reasonable goals for the CFP as the interim lessee (Eric and Amy Lum) currently provides all of these.

3) I strongly believe that the best path for the CFP is a single-farmer lease arrangement. This is based on:

- a) the collected comments about the difficulty of running a financially viable farm
- b) the insufficient water resources on the CFP
- c) the lack of a management and coordination mechanism
- d) the likely negative impact on Sidney Coffelt
- e) the increased pressure (and therefore costs) for maintenance that is likely with multiple parties running operations compared to a single operator

4) To avoid potential disruption and conflict for both the Land Bank and the lessee, I would hope that the long-term lease stipulates what the disposition of the main farm house will be in the event that Sidney is no longer able to occupy it.

5) Finally, I would hope that Sidney Coffelt's input in the lessee-selection process would be given substantial weight, in recognition of her (and Vern's) grant of the conservation easement and the fact that her daily life will be directly and materially impacted by the activities on the CFP.

Thanks very much for your consideration,  
Darryl Duke  
Eastsound

Erika Davis [erika@crescentidesign.com](mailto:erika@crescentidesign.com)

December 6, 2021

Subject: Lum Farm on the Coffelt Preserve

I am writing from a few miles down Crow Valley Rd from Lum Farm. I get fresh eggs weekly, meat of various kinds including my turkey for Thanksgiving and a ham for Christmas from Lum Farm. I am so grateful to have access to such a wonderful local food resource! In addition to their food, they also host many educational programs and events. I can't imagine a better use of the Coffelt Preserve than Lum Farm.

Please renew the contract with the Lum's to continue providing their extraordinary services from the Coffelt Preserve to the community of Orcas Island.

Thank you,

Erika Davis  
4072 Crow Valley Rd.  
Eastsound, WA 98245

J.E. Pi [pdx314@gmail.com](mailto:pdx314@gmail.com)

December 12, 2021

Subject: Public Comments for Dec 17 meeting

Having a working farm on public land (CFP) has enriched my life in several ways. I would like to see the current arrangement continue for the following reasons.

Firstly, the quality of the eggs and poultry I buy from the farmers, Eric & Amy Lum, is outstanding! Not just because it's all organic, but because it is hyper-local. Rather than spending days in transit from a mega-producer off-island, it is grown and sold right here. It is the absolute freshest you can get without having your own hen house. That freshness enhances the taste and texture of my meals.

Second, being allowed to spend time watching the goats or chickens up close is a quick stress-reducer for me. Lots of us have plenty of opportunities to see trees and streams and ocean waves, but not all of us get to see farm animals very often. Getting to see and hear the farm animals is not only fun, but it also keeps me aware of where my food comes from, which reminds me to respect the animals, the land, and the farmers.

Third, the Lum's and ALL their farm employees are incredibly friendly, welcoming, and helpful. They are always looking for ways to engage, educate, and help; not just each other or their visitors, but our community as a whole. They are the most giving and forgiving family I know.

I hope the LB will consider (as part of the selection process for lessees) whether the farmer(s) have a friendly, welcoming attitude, and invite the public to spend time with the animals. If not, the experience for visitors to CFP would take two big steps backward.

Best regards,

J.E. Pi

"Whatever you are, be a good one." ~A. Lincoln

Jeff and Deb Hanson [hanson@blkdog.org](mailto:hanson@blkdog.org)  
December 11, 2021  
Subject: Coffelt Farm Comment

Dear San Juan County Land Bank,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the future of the Coffelt Farm.

The Land Bank has done a tremendous job with its research about the future of Coffelt farm. You have taken your time, interviewed a wide variety of stakeholders, hired a highly respected consultant and worked to define the values of the agricultural properties in your portfolio. We can't pretend to have digested all of that material, but we do have a sense of where it is pointing. Though there are many operation models that could help meet the Land Bank's proposed agricultural policy, in our opinion the single tenant model is the one which has clear advantages for the Land Bank, the tenant, the land and the community. With a single tenant the Land Bank has just one entity to work with, making it easier to have effective lines of communication and defined responsibilities leading to the best chance for success with a shared strategy and control over operations. This also should provide the community with a clear focus and understanding of the products, activities and benefits of the farm.

The temporary leaseholder, Lum Farm, has literally transformed the image of Coffelt Farm. Where once it highly appreciated by a few islanders for its beauty on the landscape and a place to find local organic meats and a few other items, it is now appreciated by a huge variety of islanders for everything from a wide variety of fine farm meats and vegetables, but also as a valued source of food, both purchased and donated, for the Food Bank. Finding Lum meats in a dish at a restaurant is a sign of high quality. But perhaps more than all of this, under the Lum's tutelage, it is widely known as a community asset where school classes come to meet and learn about the farm, where Christmas trees sales support local charities, where a variety of useful and creative products are found and where you always feel welcome. As a clear sign of this, when islanders have visitors, Coffelt Farm has joined the list of "must see" places on the island right alongside Mt. Constitution and Turtleback.

As noted in reports and many conversations, the Land Bank needs to make a concerted effort to improve infrastructure and soil condition. The expense is necessary to meet Land Bank goals. A balance of costs must be found to allow tenant farmer to succeed or the goals will all go unfulfilled.

The Lums have demonstrated that with current lease cost, incredibly hard work and ability to obtain grants, that the farm can succeed financially, provide extensive community benefit and meet many of the Land Banks agriculture and conservation goals. The lease price determined by consultant may be reasonable, but for success, we think the initial lease cost must be closer to the temporary lease cost of \$1,500/mo. Increases could be considered in future years based on the annual review of how the operation is succeeding for both the Land Bank and the tenant.

Thank you again for your concerted effort to find the best way forward for this important property. We recognize that a leaseholder decision won't be made until next year, but as they have clearly helped make the Coffelt Farm a stronger asset for the community, we think a long term lease for the Lums would be a big step toward accomplishing your goals.

Sincerely,

Jeff and Deb Hanson  
198 Crows Nest Lane  
PO Box 2018  
Orcas Island

Email: Jeff Johnson [browndog1962@icloud.com](mailto:browndog1962@icloud.com)  
December 1, 2021

May I suggest never get rid of the Lum family on this farm. You will be hard pressed to find a suitable replacement. They are excellent stewards of the farm and really promote the agricultural community on Orcas Island.

Kind Regards,  
Jeff Johnson  
360-376-7107

Sent from my iPhone

Jule Eron [juleeron@gmail.com](mailto:juleeron@gmail.com)

December 7, 2021

Subject: Lums at Coffelt Farm

As a farmer and full time island resident, I strongly support a long term lease for the Lum Farm. I worked for two years beside Eric Lum at the farmers market. Each Saturday, we sold our home grown goods and chatted between customers. Eric is a wealth of information about farming and generous with his help. He and Amy are two of the most hard working and kindest people I have ever met.

The Lums have proven year after year to fulfill the Coffelt Farm Stewards mission that the land remains "in productive and sustainable agricultural use." They not only feed and clothe the island, but also provide education to beginning farmers like me.

Kind regards,

Jule Eron, Wise Owl Wellness Farm



Justine Owen [justineosaur@gmail.com](mailto:justineosaur@gmail.com)

December 10, 2021

Subject: Please Extend Lease for Lum Farm on Coffelt Farm Preserve

I'm writing to urge you to offer Lum Farm a long-term lease on Coffelt Farm Preserve. They are an absolute treasure on Orcas Island, providing agricultural, economic, environmental, and community benefits for residents and tourists.

I moved to Orcas only 5 months ago and live in Olga on the other side of the island from them, but their influence and impact is inescapable even at that distance! In that short time:

- Friends recommended their eggs and meat, which are excellent and sustainable
- I had the pleasure of visiting during the island farm tours (which is only one of the many educational outreach programs they participate in)
- I saw that they were awarded a [Farm Heroes award](#)
- I learned that they've helped maintain flocks from other farms that haven't fared Covid times so well, and donated eggs to the food bank (I can't find the link to the article, but they're acknowledged on the [Orcas Food Bank site](#))

It's clear they love the land they're on and the community they're in. They enhance Coffelt Farm Preserve and I can't imagine what could replace them that offers greater value.

Thanks for your consideration,  
Justine Owen, Olga

Kari Van Gelder [bossysfeltworks@gmail.com](mailto:bossysfeltworks@gmail.com)

December 12, 2021

Subject: Coffelt Farm Public Comment

Hello,

I am writing in response to this statement in the call for comments:

"The enormous task before the Land Bank Commissioners is how best to not only keep the 185-acre Orcas Island property in active agriculture, but to also provide educational opportunities for farmers and other community members, and to devise a management model that's sustainable, equitable and fiscally responsible."

While I cannot comment on the full scope of the statement, I would like to share my experience with Lum Farm in providing educational opportunities to the community.

I think that it is important to recognize that a single farmer model can provide educational opportunities to the community. Education is not the exclusive purview of a non-profit farm management model. The Lums have been providing education since moving their operation to the Coffelt Farm Preserve in 2019 on a short term lease. In an informal way, the transparency of their entire operation is educational for the community. From conversations on the farm, answering questions in the farm stand, sending out newsletters, and participation in agricultural events and programming, the Lums bring and share knowledge with their community.

In the 2020-2021 school year, my Salmonberry 4th-7th grade class spent every Friday at the farm. The Lums offered us an outdoor, covid-safe experience during a very difficult school year. They provided my class with animal husbandry knowledge and practical farm skills. My students collected and washed eggs, milked goats, and fed and watered hundreds of stock and poultry. In addition, we participated in the seasonal rounds of the farm, from pressing cider to shearing sheep to cuddling baby lambs. After weeks of anticipation, my class also was awed witness to the birth of goat triplets. Amy, Eric and their farm crew made it all possible. The kids learned so much, and take this knowledge of farming, food, and systems forward with them.

The Lums have done a tremendous job in a very short time. I sincerely hope that the Land Bank will do everything it can to create an RFP and plans that will make it possible for the Lum Farm to continue farming in service to community, education, and sustainability at Coffelt Farm Preserve.

Sincerely,

Kari Van Gelder

Kathleen Lunde [pearfarm285@yahoo.com](mailto:pearfarm285@yahoo.com)

December 10, 2021

Subject: Coffelt Farm

I am writing to voice my support for the Lum family to continue to operate the Coffelt Farm Preserve. As a 41 year resident on Orcas, I remember when Vern retired from Opalco and he and Sidney started selling meat out of a freezer on their porch. Now the Lum's offer so much more to the island, variety of fresh meats, eggs, goat cheese and more. They work very hard to communicate available products and have a great online ordering system. AND they are among the nicest people on the island.

Thank you

Kathleen and Timothy Lunde

Orcas Island

Larry Horak [lhhorak@aol.com](mailto:lhhorak@aol.com)

December 6, 2021

Subject: Lum Farm operating on the Coffelt Farm Preserve

Orcas Island Land Bank:

I'm continually amazed by the Lum Farm operation on the Coffelt Farm Preserve. The Lums and their farm crew have created an entity that is practically a community unto itself and a strategic asset to Orcas Island society. They have a very productive "protein farm" which supplies fresh product to local citizens, businesses, and island non-profits. On occasion, they are able to invite "other" businesses to set up shop on the farm which is good, expansive business exposure for the local economy. The Lum Farm, via bright, interesting public relations, is bringing notoriety to Orcas Island, which in turn strengthens island economy. The Lums not only have an interesting array of food and soft goods for sale in their farm store, but they also provide farm tours. The product sales and farm tours, along with interesting PR have made the Lum Farm an island institution. Through school visits and field trips, the Lums have enabled local students to appreciate agriculture, the work that is involved in farming and the role that agrarian pursuit plays in our lives. The farm has also provided a beautiful, natural backdrop for small musical concerts and such.

The Lum Farm has turned the Coffelt Farm Preserve into an island "destination!" The Lums must be allowed to continue their farm operation as they have for the last year or so. Their operation has far-reaching effects and has evolved into more than just a "farm!" The Lums have done so much with the Preserve and have plans for even more endeavors in the future.

Thank You for providing this opportunity for the Lum Farm to grow and prosper!

Sincerely, Larry Horak

To: San Juan County Land Bank  
From: William and Lene Symes  
200 Wareham Way  
PO Box 43  
Orcas, WA 98280  
713-205-2419  
Sparrowhill200@gmail.com  
Re: Future of Coffelt Farm Reserve

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute our point of view to this decision process. We greatly appreciate the enormous amount of effort and time has already been invested, by CART and everyone else involved in this complex and difficult undertaking. Getting it right is tremendously important to the future quality of life on this island.

We discovered the Coffelt farm not too long after becoming involved in the Orcas community in 2005. In recent years, we have come to rely on the farm for meats, eggs, and (to a lesser extent) produce and dairy products. We greatly appreciate the high quality locally grown goat, lamb, beef, and pork that the farm has made available to local residents, local restaurants, and to the Food Bank. We also very much value the presence at the farm stand of produce from other island farms – this is a valuable service that complements the Farmers' Market and the local food offerings of the Co-op. We are also aware of the collaboration between local farmers that has its nexus at Coffelt, for example the shared slaughter facility, and the efforts of the current tenant to work towards remedying past farm management deficiencies, for example by an organized and aggressive program of compost soil amendment.

The presence of a high-quality working farm – in fact, of a number of such farms – cannot be taken for granted in contemporary America. We Orcasians are very, very lucky to have Coffelt and the others. The inherent value of local food production, and the concomitant educational and cultural enhancement, is difficult to assign a dollar value, but it is very real and one of the great attractions of this community.

In view of this added value, we urge you to be very cautious in revising the lease rate upwards. The current Lessee (the Lums) have greatly improved the the farm operation, as we see it, in the face of extraordinary difficulties – not just the long-deferred maintenance and lack of staff housing that stymied previous management, but a pandemic that forced them to change their planned MO dramatically, almost as soon as they took up the lease. They appear to us to have been as creative and responsible as one could hope, and so far, have managed to make the farm work for them and for the community. That is an incredible achievement, and we hope that you proceed in full awareness of the extraordinary good fortune their work represents to the Land Bank and the community.

While there may be some room for lease rate adjustment, we doubt that anything close to the 50%+ increase proposed by the valuation consultant is remotely reasonable. We hope that you work with the Lums to identify an arrangement that you and they can accommodate, allowing

for the value that their tenure adds to the farm and the community. While we understand that the Land Bank will re-let the farm long term, and likely consider other applicants, we believe that the Lums are exemplary (and, of course, established). We don't think you're likely to find a tenant that will contribute more, or more creatively, and we really don't think you'll find anyone who will make the farm work economically with a substantially higher cost basis, and without any possibility of sharing in equity growth.

Luke [lukenewtonwork@gmail.com](mailto:lukenewtonwork@gmail.com)

December 8, 2021

Subject: Coffelt Preserve

Hello-

I'm reaching out to comment on the Coffelt Farm Preserve planning process and share how deeply we appreciate the way that Lum Farm has reinvigorated Coffelt Farm. We appreciate their deep roots, their community orientation and their thoughtful and committed approach to local food production. Orcas needs more local, sustainable and community oriented food production. As local market gardeners we know first hand how hard it is to access farmland and how farmland is increasingly dissolving into expensive estates that have no intention of continuing farming. It's hard to imagine another operation that has the level of experience, commitment and community orientation that the Lums have and we strongly support the long-term continuation of their stewardship of Coffelt Farm.

Thanks,

LUKE NEWTON

Mandy Troxel [orcasmandy@gmail.com](mailto:orcasmandy@gmail.com)

December 12, 2021

Subject: Coffelt Farm

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments regarding the Land Bank and Coffelt Farm Preserve. As a 20-year resident of Orcas Island, Coffelt has always been part of my island experience, and I have watched its evolution through the years.

Full disclosure: For the past 1 ½ years, I have been a full-time employee of Lum Farm, managing their farm stand and marketing, as well as working as a farmhand. While admittedly this position keeps me from being completely objective, it also gives me an up-close lens into how islanders are reacting to the partnership between Lum Farm and CFP.

[Here I wrote a very long list of all the ways in which islanders have come to the farm and expressed appreciation, or exclaimed at how good things look, or are generally just so pleased to not only have access to this special place, but feel sincerely welcomed as well. To save you time, I erased all these examples and will suffice it to say:]

I believe that the Single Leaseholder model is the right one for Coffelt Farm Preserve. I also feel strongly that the success of this model, and its alignment with the expressed priorities of education and sustainability, is hugely reliant on WHO that single leaseholder is.

Eric and Amy Lum are a golden opportunity as long term lease-holders. They are a one-of-a-kind combination – they have the skill and stamina to caretake the land and their animals. They are community-minded and education-focused, and are constantly brainstorming and saying “Yes” to ways in which the public can engage with the farm. They have fostered a lovely relationship with Sidney Coffelt, making sure that she knows she is considered a valuable member of the farm community.

For me personally, the single leaseholder model resulted in my full-time employment. In 20 years on Orcas, I have been one of the many islanders who held multiple part-time jobs while barely scraping by. Now I am working a deeply-fulfilling job AND relishing the financial security of full-time year-round work. It has been literally life-changing.

The amount of growth, community focus and accessibility that has taken place over the past two years of the Lums’ short-term leaseholding has been stunning. Just imagine what they can accomplish when they have the security of a long term lease.

With much appreciation,  
Mandy Troxel



Mara Williams [mara.annani@gmail.com](mailto:mara.annani@gmail.com)  
December 6, 2021

Subject: Lum Farm

Please keep it!!

Love what is happening since Amy and Eric took over.

Thank you, Mara Williams.

Michelle [michelle@nextweek.io](mailto:michelle@nextweek.io)

December 3, 2021

Hello, hello and happy first Friday of December!

I'm writing to express my deep gratitude for the presence of Lum Farm on Coffelt Farm Preserve on Orcas Island.

Having just moved to Orcas last summer, Lum Farm has become a beautiful and uplifting anchor of community support and a connection to the earth for me and my family during a challenging year.

My 82 year old mom (who was sheltering in place with us during the first waves of the pandemic) was seeking ingredients on Orcas for the kind of bone-soup her family made when she was growing up in Michigan (e.g., bone-soup where all the parts of a well cared-for animal are honored :)). I wasn't having much luck in finding these special ingredients until I learned about Lum Farm. And then I quickly became a regular online customer with scheduled pick ups at the farm stand.

We have now expanded our curiosity beyond just bone-soup ingredients to include fresh fruits and vegetables from the farm, wool dryer balls, cheese, holiday gift cards for friends, and ways to support Lum Farm in their support of the Orcas Island Food Bank.

The farm keeps on joyfully giving to the Orcas community through the energy and dedication of the Lum Farm team and family. We are most grateful.

With gratitude,  
Michelle Yee

Orcas Island

Molly Johnson [trombonemolly@gmail.com](mailto:trombonemolly@gmail.com)

December 6, 2021

Subject: Coffelt Farm Preserve

Hi I just want to express my support for the wonderful work Lum Farm is doing. They are an island treasure, providing the majority of our egg, cheese, milk, meat, and produce throughout the year, as well as hosting beautiful small community gatherings. I hope they will continue many long years farming at this location.

Sincerely,

Molly Johnson

Paul Freedman [dancingmonkey@rockisland.com](mailto:dancingmonkey@rockisland.com)

December 7, 2021

Subject: Coffelt Farm Comment

Dear SJC Land Bank,

I am writing this letter in support of the Lum family and their stewardship of the Coffelt farm site. Specifically, my knowledge of their farm management relates to the educational aspect of their work. Over the years, the Lum's have provided myriad educational opportunities to the Salmonberry School kids and community, through offering hands-on workshops, summer camp sessions and guest instruction.

Specifically in 2020-21, as Salmonberry was developing strategies to mitigate risks during the Covid outbreak, our 4-7th grade students spent one full day each week at the farm. The Lum family and their staff went out of their way to set up the teacher and students with practical knowledge, skill building activities, classroom space and many ways that they could participate in the farm management and food production. Our students were able to gather, clean and sort eggs. They got to milk goats. And they learned best practices in terms of animal husbandry and land stewardship. This experience at Coffelt farm was a significant and rich enhancement to our program, and it facilitated our school to be able to keep kids in learning activities during a time when they were severely at risk.

Because of their community orientation and endless willingness to share their knowledge, wisdom, resources and skills in an educational capacity, I want to express my full support for the Lum's continued stewardship of Coffelt Farm.

Sincerely,

Paul Freedman  
Head of School  
Salmonberry School  
Eastsound, WA

Sarah Layman [portlandlayman@yahoo.com](mailto:portlandlayman@yahoo.com)

December 6, 2021

Subject: Lum Farm

To all:

I am very much in favor of continuing a long term lease with the Lum Family at Coffelt Farm Preserve. Lums have done a fantastic job with managing the farm and all its animals, utilizing all parts of the property, rotating "herds" as needed to maintain the land's health. They have provided eggs, produce, fruit, beef, chicken and pork for everyone on the Island thru their farm store AND through ongoing donations to the Orcas Island Food Bank. In addition, they are constantly expanding the Farm Store to include local merchants and their products, as well as turkeys for Thanksgiving, Christmas Trees, and wreaths (provided by the local Montessori School for fund raising).

The Lum Family and their employees work tirelessly to ensure the health of the animals and land. They have also worked hand in hand with local schools to provide field trips where "city" children are exposed to farm life. I particularly like the self-guided tours they have offered for visitors as I can bring my granddaughters to visit all the animals.

While some may argue the land should be divided among others, I cannot imagine such a division will maintain the health of the land the way the Lums have done since they took over. Some might argue their produce and meats provide them income, it fills a niche for those of us trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle with organically raised crops and humanely raised meats.

Please allow them to continue with this lease. I can only imagine what they will come up with next to increase their community focus.

Sincerely,

Sarah Layman

Sue Kimball [sue@mountaincedar.com](mailto:sue@mountaincedar.com)

December 8, 2021

Subject: Coffelt FArm

Hi,

I am writing in support of the Lum's management of Coffelt Farm. Their presence/management has brought new life to the farm. Driving by one always see goats, chickens or lambs in the field. We get delicious fresh eggs there each week as well as fruit, vegetables, meat, locally made cheese - all delicious! Now there are Christmas trees, wreaths, wooly gifts... its wonderful.

I have know Amy and Eric for years and they are hard working people with a lot of integrity.

I highly recommend keeping them in place at the farm!

Sincerely,

Sue Kimball

Orcas year round resident for 19 years.

Warwick Hubber [woca@gardenartnz.com](mailto:woca@gardenartnz.com)

December 1, 2021

To Whom it may concern,

As a 20+ year resident of San Juan Island, a backyard farmer, professional landscaper and environmental advocate, a former chef, and community member/participant I would like to share some ideas I have regarding the future use and potential for the Coffelt Farm Preserve.

I believe that the SJ County Land Bank with ownership of the Coffelt Farm is in a unique situation to greatly assist in mitigating some of the major deficiencies present within our county farming systems.

To identify some of the obviously deficiencies in the current system and challenges for our local farmers I have prepared the following list,...

- *Processing of island animals;* IGFC which was originally established to facilitate slaughter and butchery of animals in the islands is now for varying reasons is no longer meeting current demand within the islands, alternative operations ( Del Fox Meats etc) are reluctant to service the islands due to increased home kill demand off island, and complicated logistics with the ferry service to and from the islands. This puts farmers with livestock ready for market in a bind when slaughter dates cannot be arranged and schedules not met,... farmers end up holding animals longer than necessary creating added feed and labor costs, and having excessive impact on land and pastures.
- *Transportation;* to and from the islands due to ferry service disruptions, impact animal feed supply and farm supply or goods runs to, and from the mainland.
- *Storage of island grown meat and produce;* farmers are currently responsible to store, market and distribute their own products, these tasks are not typically a farmers forte and take away from tasks farmers could be better focused on, on the farm. Using the current IGFC system means relying on the WSF ferry system to travel to the mainland to collect the perishable meat products from the butchery and transport back to the island or, pay a transportation company to deliver the meats back to the island, which takes the time or incurs further costs to the farmer.
- *Distribution;* as shown by the grassroots organization of the Islands Food Hub an inter-island distribution system is crucial to balancing out local production meshing local supply with demand and allowing all participants

opportunity to participate, farmer, vendor, restaurant, bakery, customer etc.

The deficiencies within our islands farm production, and food supply system were significantly brought to light and definitely exacerbated by the Covid pandemic in early 2020, but these problems are by no means a result of the pandemic itself. These are not new problems there have been issues within the island farm systems for many years, but in the past there has always been another option, or a work around that farmers have arranged to allow them to get by, these work arounds are now being exhausted for example the IGFC alternatives ( Del Fox Meats for example) are not as readily available for home kill in the islands and have spoken about discontinuing island service out here. This will have a huge impact not just on our productive livestock farms but also on our popular 4H community which is a vital part of introducing our 'young farmers' to animal care and breeding, it offers our children and their families essential insight and building blocks to hopefully want to become our future farmers for tomorrow. Farmers too will be changing their models to adapt to the lack of infrastructure or the dysfunction within the current system, animal numbers will be reduced, disbanding breeding programs, pastures will be left fallow a detriment to the community soils etc.

The Coffelt Farm is a beautiful, well laid out property offering potential for any number of great farming operations, however I don't see the islands hurting for another farm. Primarily, I think the real community need is to assist and facilitate the established farmers we already have and give them a place that can offer reliable processing facilities, a stable and reliable local market place and accommodate a storage and distribution hub within the islands.

In short I see the property of Coffelt Farm becoming the Islands Agricultural Center and could offer some, all or more of the following services to our community,

#### Processing,

- a processing facility built that would house an animal slaughter facility with adequate lairage area, and refrigeration suitable to hang and age whole animal carcasses for adequate periods of time.
- a meat cutting and processing space, perhaps combined with a commercial kitchen used on alternate days/weeks.
- commercial kitchen to be used for value ad product production, vegetable washing etc.

#### Storage,

- refrigerated and freezer storage space.
- dry store space for value ad products, grains and cereals etc.
- community seed storage to operate as a community seed bank/library.

#### Pasture utilization,



- Coffelt Farms pastures could be used as additional grazing or for hay production to be used by island farmers when needed, or as a substitute to buying hay product/winter feed from Eastern Wa etc.
- field testing, run seed and soil amendment trails on an ongoing basis.
- breeding facility, not every farm wants to manage and house boars, bulls, rams etc,... this could be a great place to maintain and care for valued bloodlines within livestock.

#### Farm Utilization,

- utilize the farm by facilitating a needed farm practice, growing particular grains, seeds or staple vegetable, milk production, cheese production, fruit or nut production, wool weaving etc. This could be done by any of the means outlined within the CART report within the management, leasing or employment configurations.

#### Education,

- prepare and establish a training and educational program / curriculum based select farm functions such as typical farming applications, pasture management, animal husbandry, ecology etc and other intermittent workshops could be facilitated through the scheduled functions of the facility, value-add production training, marketing, butchery, sheep shearing etc.

Ok, Well that is all I had to say!

Tanja (with a 'J'),... I know you'll make sure this gets to the right peoples ok!

Best,  
Wocka

Warwick Hubber  
Garden Artisan Landscapes  
1311 Three Meadows Lane,  
Friday Harbor, Wa 98250  
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Anne Stoltz [annest@msn.com](mailto:annest@msn.com)

December 7, 2021

Subject: Lum Farm on Coffelt Farm Preserve

Hello! Dropping a note to say that I really hope there is a way to secure a longer term future for Lum Farm on the Coffelt Farm Preserve. The Lums are such great land stewards, community members, and significant contributors to quality of life on Orcas. I really value them as an asset and I know others do, too.

Fingers crossed for a path forward that means Lum Farm can continue to be productive caretakers for this invaluable asset.

Thanks!!

Anne Stoltz  
Rosario Road