

Natural Harvest Farm

Open Farm Day - June 14, 2008

Your hosts: Sue Clark, Chabo Miyoshi, Lee Kametani, Will Newman

OSALT Welcomes You

This tour narrative is designed to help you see more deeply into the twenty acres we humans share with wildlife and our domestic animals. OSALT sponsors this tour to bring visitors closer to a small farm (this one feeds 15 families plus customers at a farmers market), to consider where your food comes from, and to encourage you to think about a more sustainable future. From 2-3 p.m. today join Will in a conversation about sustainability and the future of food.

In order to keep Natural Harvest Farm as a farm for the future, it is owned and protected by Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Land Trust (OSALT), which was formed:

- *to keep agricultural land in agricultural use,
- *to research sustainable growing, and
- *to share that information with the community at large.

Cautions:

- *Please, No Tobacco Use
- *We have bees. if you're allergic, carry your remedy!
- *No dogs allowed, due to our own collection of animals.

Farming, Rising Fuel Prices, and Spring 2008

Weather this spring has been very wet and cool, making mowing and working the soil difficult. Today as you walk around you'll see tall grass where we wish it were shorter. This year, although the unmown grass doesn't look tidy, the good news is it's an indication of the terrific pasture our sheep have been enjoying.

Fuel is a fairly minor part of this farm's operation, but every gallon we use is much more costly than last year. Every bite of food you eat has had petroleum inputs, from tilling, fertilizers (often made from petroleum), harvesting, processing, and transporting. Both the heat and refrigeration in grocery stores probably uses natural gas or petroleum products.

Higher gas prices will continue to show up in higher food prices. We're all feeling the pinch. Buying locally and growing your own food are two ways to reduce oil use.

Self-Guided Tour

Look for numbered signs that match the numbered items below. Arrow signs are used to keep you going in the right direction. From the welcome tent, proceed to:

- 1. Clay Bake Oven Project:** volunteers are building an outdoor bake oven being made with concrete rubble, local clay, sand, and firebricks. It will form the basis for community bread bakes, since once it is hot, several batches of bread can be baked. Sounds delicious!
- 2. Greenhouse:** The plants are being allowed to set seed for next year's crops, saving money and producing seeds acclimated to our soil and climate. The water barrels help moderate temperature.
- 3. Fragrant Rose: (Zepherine Doughin):** the arch welcomes you to our house yard, which is filled with edible and fragrant plants including figs, oregano, maple, more roses, honeysuckle, raspberries, and horseradish. The bare soil is where a privet shrub was removed to give the fig tree more room.
- 4. Raspberries, compost bin:** thornless red raspberries fruit well here even in partial shade; the closed compost bin keeps food waste from attracting unwanted wildlife.
- 5. Mound:** begun on a pile of debris, this mound gives plants good drainage. Sage is in bloom, lavender buds will open soon; oregano, plum, marionberry, and almond make it a fruitful area.
- 6. Bamboo:** several types of bamboo from this grove planted for the useful stakes and poles (local lumber) as well as just being pretty. Farms produce building materials as well as food.
- 7. Buartnut and hackberry:** Unusual trees that contribute to our diverse farm, the buartnut bears nuts, as you might guess, and the hackberry's fruit is said to have been dried, ground, and used as a substitute for wheat flour. See the invasive rootstock sprouts from the almond tree we removed?
- 8. North fields:** This sloping field reaches to the road you arrived on. Plans are underway to contour it to catch rainwater in shallow swales. A mix of trees and shrubs will be planted along the swales to benefit from the improved water absorption.
- 9. New grape trellis:** OVS, a local business, has donated the materials for this new style of trellis said to be particularly beneficial for table grapes. The last parts have just arrived, so wires will be strung in the near future. Over a dozen varieties of grapes are planted along the driveway.
- 10. Mushrooms and asparagus:** Under the oak tree you'll see a pile of logs used to grow mushrooms. These logs have been drilled, inoculated with mushroom spores, and soaked in water; both oak trees and shade help mushrooms thrive. Harvest comes later in the summer.
- 11. Blocks O, N, M, and L (the order you'll walk by them):** The farm is laid out in blocks of beds for vegetable growing, each named with a letter of the alphabet. The soil in these blocks is being improved with chicken tractors, mulch, and compost. They were recently spaded and are ready for planting. Chabo and Lee are working hard to reclaim from the extremely vigorous growth of grasses and weeds this spring. O and N will be used for winter crops. M has squash seedlings that were just transplanted this week, and L is being solarized with plastic to kill weeds.
- 12. West garden:** This area will become a "City Options" garden, one of several demo gardens showing how people in cities might landscape their yards for beauty, food, medicine and crafts. It has a grapevine-covered fence, curly willows, colored bark willows (for basketry), apples, pears, and an almond tree.

13. Mulch and Compost area: This area holds post-harvest debris, chipped tree trimmings, grape prunings, and street leaves from Canby. We work with a number of organizations to obtain compost and mulch materials that would otherwise go to landfills. These materials are nature's way of improving the soil. We use them to maintain fertility and soil tilth (crumb structure needed for good root growth, and to enable air and water to move through the soil).

14. Block I and J: You can see artichokes mulched with recycled burlap in Block J. Old greenhouse plastic is used to solarize weeds. Block I has fava beans, summer squash, beans, chard, spinach, lettuce, kale, parsnips, carrots, Brussels sprouts, radishes, turnips, and shallots. Wow! An heirloom rose is blooming and three fig trees line up along the barn's south wall.

15. Pasture and animal shelter: Our five sheep form a colorful (white, dark and light gray, dark and light brown) handspinning flock. Ever heard of growing your own clothing? Farms produce fiber for clothing as well as food. The pasture cross-fences allow the animals to graze a small area and then be moved on to another area. This helps in managing parasites and growing more forage.

(do a U-turn and go back toward the barn)

16. The Tube: Winter crops have just finished in here and the mustard is going to seed for next year's crop. The soil will be allowed to rest until time to plant again for winter crops in late summer.

17. Blocks A and B: In Block B the stakes will support the newly transplanted tomatoes. Block A is crammed with diversity: corn, garlic, cukes, celery, cabbage, fennel, and green onions. Nearly all the work is done by the hand labor of just two people, with only a few hours per year with a tractor and spader (less damaging to soil than a tiller) to prepare the soil and mix in organic matter.

18. Yurt: Built in 2003, this yurt houses OSALT grower-researchers. It is an example of low-tech, owner-built, relatively inexpensive housing, which will be important in a sustainable future. Chabo and Lee selected the yurt and worked with Will and Sue and volunteers to erect the structure.

19. View to the East: On a clear day there is a lovely view of Mt. Hood, and of the "trophy home" built on 20 acres of "land zones "Exclusive Farm Use.". No farmer could afford to buy that land now. This is one of the ways that farmland is being lost, converted to other uses.

20. Poultry area: This fenced area includes a seasonal pond, rabbit shelter, cottonwood trees, willows, and bamboo, as well as space for the ducks and chickens. The birds eat insects and grass and also help fertilize the orchard. The rabbits are grown for fiber and the poultry produce an egg crop.

21. Trellis House and Solar Shower: Created from wind-damaged greenhouse parts, it gives support to grape vines and forms a welcome shady spot in summer. Permaculture principles urge us to turn a problem into its own solution, and to look for multi-functionality of plants and structures. Solar Shower: An old water heater tank is now a solar water heater inside this plywood box. An outdoor shower is tucked in behind the trellis house.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Please return this guide to the Welcome Tent for reuse.

Did you know? A recent study found that small, local farms use 75% less energy than large ones to get food to your table.

A Brief History of Natural Harvest Farm

OSALT co-founders Will Newman and Sue Clark purchased the farm in 1988. During the nineties Will, Sue, and several working partners operated a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm on 3 acres of the land, feeding up to 75 families.

In February 1999, Will and Sue donated Natural Harvest Farm to OSALT and began making the farm available to several younger growers. In 2002 Chabo and Lee began farming here and you will see the results of their long hours of hard work as you take the tour. A beekeeper, Scott Hansen, works in partnership with OSALT, keeping hives here producing honey and providing pollination, improving fruit and seed harvests.

Our vision for this land includes continuing to design, implement, and teach about sustainability. That's the reason behind projects such as "City Options" demonstration gardens, sustainable forestry, rotational grazing, and others. We are developing resources and skills for sustainable living, while continuing to grow and sell a wide variety of vegetables, fruits and herbs - producing abundance and sharing the knowledge to help others create it.

OSALT was formed because Oregon farmland is disappearing. Most farmers are over 50, and in the next few years their lands will be sold, often not to another farmer. Oregon is a precious, highly productive state. If you are concerned about the future of Oregon farmland, please talk with us today, or see contact information below.

Will Newman's phone: 503.263.8392

email: info@osalt.org.

OSALT'S website: www.osalt.org

Toward Sustainability

Please join us in moving toward a more sustainable future. Here are some of our beliefs about creating a sustainable future:

Develop and support a local economy: Food and other goods need to be produced close to where they are consumed or used. Long distance transportation relies on decreasing supplies of oil and pollutes our environment.

Live simply: We believe that everyone deserves a chance to have enough to eat, a place to live, and basic comforts. All of us need to consume at a level about equal to what we produce. Especially in the U.S., this means we need to consume much less. In our experience, as we simplified our lives they became more joyful and fulfilling.

Use wisely: Imagine no garbage dumps! Everything should be used carefully, recycled, re-used, composted, etc. Soil needs to be fed so that what we harvest is replaced continually.

Become a bit more self-sufficient: If you have to buy everything, you must have money to live. Whatever you can produce for yourself, you can have even when money is hard to come by. Learn a skill, take a class, do something that interests you.