

# SJI GRANGE #966

GROWERS, MAKERS, AND KEEPERS WORKING TOGETHER FOR  
MUTUAL BENEFIT AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

## What's in this newsletter?

Read John Latimer's article to learn more about the **FARM Fund**—what it is and what it means to local farmers. The FARM Fund is supported by the Grange.

In his monthly letter on page 3, Grange president Roger Ellison. will tell you **how Grangers can become involved in the San Juan County Fair.**

See page 4 for Gulf Islands gardening guru Linda Gilkeson's most recent online missive, on **how to prepare a winter garden.** (Hint: Do it now!) Winter vegetable starts will be given away at the Grange display in the Ag Tent at the fair!

On page 5, Bruce Robinson reports on the county **Ag Org Retreat**, where the Grange was a key player.



Installation of an irrigation system at Seagate Farm, enabled by a FARM Fund grant

## Throwing a Lifeline to Island Farmers: The FARM Fund

By John Latimer

The San Juan Islands Agriculture Guild and the FARM Fund Advisory Committee is offering another grant opportunity this year to strengthen and develop local, sustainable agriculture in San Juan County and to increase availability of healthy, local food. The "Regenerate San Juan Islands" grant from the FARM (Food, Agriculture, Relationships,

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## SAN JUAN ISLAND GRANGE #966

San Juan Island Grange #966 is a grassroots, non-partisan advocacy group supporting a resilient community on San Juan Island.

The Grange serves San Juan Islanders with legislative programs and community activities, such as talent and craft contests, scholarships, and more. You don't have to be a farmer to belong, though many are. Our elected officers are volunteers, and our "work" is done through committees. The heart of our mission is fostering community well-being, and we enjoy gathering to celebrate this.

We are a 501(c)(8) organization, accepting donations towards our programs and to maintain Grange Hall, in downtown Friday Harbor.

Officers of San Juan Island Grange #966 may be found at [sanjuangrango.org/officers.html](http://sanjuangrango.org/officers.html)

Our bylaws and resolutions may be found at [sanjuangrango.org/structure.html](http://sanjuangrango.org/structure.html)

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and Markets) Fund supports adoption of regenerative farming practices. The grants are made possible by generous gifts from the Orcas Food Co-op, the Regen Fund, San Juan Island Grange #966, Orcasong Institute, and two anonymous donors.

Last year, Seagate Farm on San Juan Island received a FARM Fund grant to cover part of the costs for installing an irrigation system, some needed equipment, purchasing native and bee-beneficial plants, compost, and mulch. Receiving the grant enabled them to do the necessary project and covered most of the expenses. A few photos of the project and their results are shown here.



Farmers John and Shane, planting lavender



If you are interested in applying for the FARM Fund grant this year, the deadline is this Friday, July 7.

More information on the grant and on the rolling FARM

Fund loan program may be found at [www.sjiagguild.com](http://www.sjiagguild.com) website, or email [FARMfund@sjiagguild.com](mailto:FARMfund@sjiagguild.com) with questions. The fund has \$26,900 to distribute this cycle, and producers throughout San Juan County are eligible to apply for grants of up to \$500 and microloans of up to \$2,500.

# Letter from the President

It's time to start planning for the San Juan County Fair. We want our Grange and our Grangers to make a big splash at the fair this year. You've probably noticed that the contests and displays have had fewer entries in recent years, which is a problem since the fair gets operating revenue based on how many entries are submitted to its contests. Your Grange wants to see more entries in all categories, from fruits, vegetables, flowers, livestock, arts, photography, textile arts, to preserved foods. Entries are judged not against each other, but against an ideal, so many entries in the same category may win a first prize blue ribbon. We especially want to see a good turnout from members of our Growers' Circle, showing off their well-grown and well-presented produce as a guide and inspiration for others. To make things a little more interesting, the Granger who wins the most ribbons at the fair, in any category, will get a special mention in these pages and at a Grange meeting. You can find the [2023 EXHIBITOR'S GUIDE \(sjcfair.org\)](#) here.

This year the Ag Tent will be more centrally located, and the Grange will be a big presence there, both in informational displays and in presentations. Nirmela Arsem [narsem@outlook.com](mailto:narsem@outlook.com) is coordinating the creation of our traditional Grange display. Think of it as a beautiful carpet woven of fruits and vegetables, eggs and nuts, and jars of preserved foods, grains and seeds. SJI Grange has been setting up our display for several years now and we are looking forward to a gorgeous display this year, so please contact Nirmela and offer produce from your garden.

The Fair will run from Wednesday, August 16 through Saturday, August 19. You can find more information at [San Juan County Fair - Event \(sjcfair.org\)](#).

Roger Ellison, 2023 President


**GROWERS' CIRCLE COFFEE HOUR**

AT THE GRANGE HALL

EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 8AM

Currently via Zoom. Email [roger.ellison@gmail.com](mailto:roger.ellison@gmail.com) for the link.

OPEN TO ALL WHO INTERESTED IN LOCAL FOOD AND LOCAL FIBER. PROVIDED TEA AS WELL, SOMETIMES.

**FREE!**  **SAN JUAN ISLAND GRANGE #966**

THE GRANGE IS NONPARTISAN AND SO IS THIS EVENT. ALL ARE WELCOME.

**Notice Board** 

**Grange Exchange**

Free for the taking: Band saw. Lots and lots of automotive parts and tools. Contact Grace at [gracefelt09@gmail.com](mailto:gracefelt09@gmail.com)




## Plant Now for Winter Harvest

By Linda Gilkeson, adapted with permission

It hardly seems possible, but we are starting into the main planting season for vegetables that will be harvested over next winter. Crops for winter harvests must do their growing in the growing season, which means sowing them early enough that they have time to mature before the shorter, colder days of October. Ideally, in October your living refrigeration (the garden) will be bursting with vegetables—but it all depends on getting those seeds planted at the right time. You can print out a planting chart showing when to plant what veggies at: <http://www.lindagilkeson.ca/pdf/Linda%20Gilkeson%20Planting%20Schedule.pdf>.

Late June is the main planting window for sowing seeds of winter broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage varieties that take less than 90 days to mature. Sow them directly in the garden or start them in flats, whichever works for you. I find that so many critters attack Brassica family plants (birds, slugs, cabbage root maggot, caterpillars, etc.) that I usually start mine in flats so that I can bring them indoors to safety at night while they are small.

Overwintering varieties of broccoli and cauliflowers are hardy biennials and not the same as the annual varieties sowed this spring. Osborne Quality Seeds lists a couple of purple sprouting varieties—an excellent and reliable purple cauliflower.

If you are not growing your own seedlings, watch for starts of Brussels sprouts, cabbage, winter broccoli, and winter cauliflower for sale at nurseries next month. Don't bother buying summer varieties of broccoli and cauliflower (Snow Crown, Snowball, Romanesco, etc.) for late summer planting. They just don't work!

Early July is the next planting window for important winter crops. Planting the first week of July gives the roots enough time to reach full size by October. In early July, you can also sow beets, rutabagas, kohlrabi, as well as endive and radicchio (a surprisingly hardy vegetable). You may want to sow more seeds of Swiss chard or kale in early July to have additional overwintering plants.

Remember to shade the seed beds of these summer plantings to keep them evenly moist during germination. Use anything to shade beds: burlap, old towels or sheets, plastic compost bags, etc. Check daily for germination and remove covers when the first green tips appear. Beware of cabbage root maggots! See [http://www.lindagilkeson.ca/root\\_feeders.html#69](http://www.lindagilkeson.ca/root_feeders.html#69) For anything in the Brassica, you should just assume they are out there and protect your plants accordingly.





## Ag Organization Retreat!

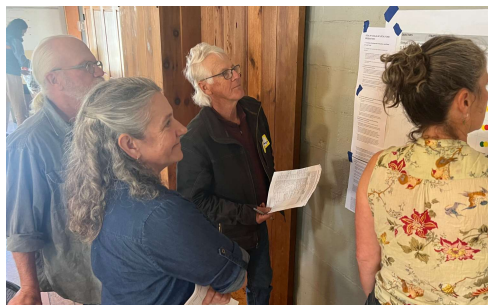
By Bruce Robinson

On May 11, 2023 many of the agricultural organizations in San Juan County gathered at Brickworks to collaborate in the development of a food systems plan for the islands. The San Juan Island Grange was represented by Roger Ellison, Jon Latimer, Candace Jagel, and Bruce Robinson.

Lead by Caitlin Leck, coordinator of the Food Systems Team, and Faith Van De Putte, coordinator of the Agricultural Resource Committee, attendees identified pathways to increase food production through 94 goals and strategies. The Grange was determined to be a key player in this process, being designated a partner in pursuing fifteen of these strategies. These mainly centered on the increase in commercial and domestic food production and sales by:

- supporting local seed production and sharing
- conserving and increasing soil health
- supporting educational and vocational pathways in agriculture
- supporting the use of public lands for food production
- providing the infrastructure for food production and preservation
- increasing food production in the shoulder and winter seasons
- providing opportunities to celebrate food through potlucks and cooking classes
- supporting value-added food production and sales
- supporting the mental health of farmers and gardeners
- collaborating with other agricultural organizations

With the support of the SJI Grange membership, the Agricultural Support Committee will continue to use these strategies to bring more locally grown food to our tables.



Ag org representatives drill down on 94 goals and strategies to grow the local food system