



2021/2022 FLT Society Annual Report

From April 2021 to April 2022, The Farmlands Trust (Greater Victoria) Society [FLT Society] engaged in protecting local farmland, protecting eco-sensitive and culturally special areas, producing food for those in need, and providing relevant educational and related public awareness opportunities.

Our charitable not-for-profit organization advanced the following suite of initiatives and related activities in 2021/2022:

Farmland preservation and management

The FLT Society is a charitable not-for-profit organization and a recognized model for sustainable farming and food redistribution in the Greater Victoria region, utilizing national award-winning certified pollinator-friendly farm practices.

In 2021/2022, we focused our initiatives on producing food for those in need and protecting eco-sensitive areas.

From 2012 to present, the FLT Society is the agricultural steward of the historic Newman Farm in Saanichton, BC. As a charitable not-for-profit society, the FLT Society continues to gradually return the 100+ year-old historic Newman Farm in Saanichton to active agricultural uses.

At Newman Farm, the FLT Society team advances the "field to plate" initiative where we grow, harvest, and redistribute local, fresh produce at the Farm to vulnerable populations (food insecure and homeless populations) in the Greater Victoria region (Sooke to Sidney, BC). During 2021, we continued to focus our efforts on our "field to plate" initiative (producing apples, assorted herbs, assorted squash, beans, beets, cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, cauliflower, garlic, kale, leeks, lettuce, onions, parsnips, pears, and turnips).

In 2021, we grew, harvested, and shared 17,381 lbs., worth over \$62,000 of fresh, local produce. ***Our cumulative "field to plate" initiative total is nearly 90,000 lbs. of produce grown, harvested, and shared with food insecure populations in the Greater Victoria region, worth over \$240,000.***

The produce grown at Newman Farm is primarily provided to Our Place Society in support of their regional meal and snack programs (e.g., preparation of entrees, soups, side vegetables, nutritious salads, and desserts).

We installed additional raised-beds and now have 26 raised garden beds. This allows us to grow an additional crop which extends our "field to plate" initiative into the fall season each year.

We upgraded the irrigation system for the Newman Farm field and installed a new irrigation system for the raised garden beds. This irrigation system results in a more efficient use of irrigation water for growing crops and maintaining our national award-winning certified bee-friendly meadow, and raised garden bed program.

In recognition of the important role that trees play in aesthetics, air quality, soil and water conservation and protection of the environment, a 30+ fruit tree orchard at Newman Farm continues to flourish with in-kind support from Bartlett Tree Experts who maintain the health of the orchard. The orchard provides another food source to share with vulnerable populations in the Greater Victoria region.

Also, every year at the Newman Farm, we plant a portion of our lands into a bee-friendly meadow; including sunflowers, wildflowers, buckwheat, and clover. This beautiful display of flowers is an attractant for birds and bees from the local agricultural lands to support pollination activity. A series of lavender beds and assorted pollinator-friendly flowers and crops are also thriving as part of our national award winning certified bee-friendly farming program.

The FLT Society's licensed area of Newman Farm is a certified bee-friendly farm via the Pollinator Partnership Bee-Friendly Farming Program.

COVID-19 pandemic

As the FLT Society needed to limit access to and from Newman Farm due to the COVID-19 pandemic and variants, we conducted our farm operations under COVID-19 protocols to coordinate a small group of dedicated volunteers to support the FLT Society Newman Farm Manager and Farm Assistant with spring planting, summer garden maintenance, fall harvesting, and winterizing of Newman Farm. This included assisting us with the irrigation line set up and take down in 2021.

The FLT Society's Newman Farm Program aligns with the Government of British Columbia's pandemic essential services: service provider for vulnerable populations and provider of food and agriculture – as part of the Greater Victoria food supply chain for food insecure populations.

As in-person contact continued to be limited this year, the FLT Society Board of Directors met via videoconference call.

Financial

Many thanks to the following individuals and organizations who supported the FLT Society in 2021-2022 with regard to farmland preservation and local food security protection activities in the Greater Victoria region, in particular, our work at Newman Farm in the form of financial and/or in-kind donations: Arbutus Grove Nursery, ARDCorp, Bartlett Tree Experts, Coast Capital Savings, Col. R.O. Bull Fund through the Victoria Foundation, District of Central Saanich, District of North Saanich, Flagstone Fund through the Victoria Foundation, FLT Society donors/supporters (individuals and families), Gobind Farms, Integrity Sales and Distributors, Nature's Path, Peninsula Co-op, Provincial Employees Community Services Fund, Royal Bank of Canada, Saanichton Farm, Save-on-Foods, Sea Cider, Silver Rill Farm, Stanhope Organics, Town of Sidney, United Way of Southern Vancouver Island, Vancity Savings, Vancouver Foundation, Victoria Foundation, West Coast Seeds, and Western Forest Products.

In particular, in 2021, the FLT Society received local government Safe Restart COVID-19 grants from the District of Central Saanich, District of North Saanich, and Town of Sidney respectively to assist us with our charitable agricultural stewardship and food redistribution projects.

Said funds made our charitable work possible in maintaining and improving the FLT Society's agricultural stewardship work which included growing fresh, local produce for redistribution to Greater Victoria's most vulnerable populations using national award-winning certified pollinator-friendly farm practices.

The FLT Society Board of Directors continues to be most appreciative of the District of Central Saanich granting our charitable not-for-profit society with a multi-year permissive tax exemption. The permissive tax exemption provides certainty to the FLT Society as a means of advancing our farmland management activities at Newman Farm.

Governance

Carol Pickup has been generously volunteering her time with the FLT Society since 2009 – as a FLT Society supporter, strategic planning participant, inaugural FLT Society Patron and then serving on the FLT Society Board of Directors (as Chair and Board Director).

After volunteering for over a decade with the FLT Society, Carol left the FLT Society Board of Directors in March 2022 to pursue a new role as President of her Strata Council/Board.

Carol, thanks for your contributions to the FLT Society and great memories!

Communications and public outreach

For more information about the FLT Society, visit

- FLT Society website: www.farmlandstrust.org
- Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/The-Farmlands-Trust-Society-190493347776568/>
- Follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/FarmlandsTrust>

Looking to the future

During 2022/2023, the FLT Society Board of Directors are proposing the following activities:

- **“Field to Plate” Initiative - Crop Production Program.** The FLT Society is sustaining its licensed area cultivated by continuing to (1) diversify crops, which includes purchasing seeds, starter plants, and gardening tools; (2) expand the current Newman Farm vegetable garden; (3) expand the range of produce that we grow in the coming years; (4) support organic (fall/winter) fertilization and cover crops to support soil revitalization; (5) expand the raised garden bed program; and (6) maintain the FLT Society fruit orchard.
- **“Field of Dreams” - Certified Bee-Friendly Farming/Pollinator Program Activities.** This includes continuing to offer forage – providing good nutrition for native bees on approximately 30% of the licensed area. To conduct and maintain this program requires planting a continuous bloom of different flowering plants throughout the growing season, especially in early spring, offering a clean water source for bees, providing a variety of habitats for nesting and mating utilizing hedgerows, natural brush, and buffer strips, and

practicing Integrated Pest Management – utilizing no chemicals on the Farm. This program requires an annual maintenance and revitalization program to operate these activities utilizing pollinator-friendly wise practices.

- **Irrigation Management.** Repair, maintain, and update our irrigation line and watering systems at Newman Farm to support optimal food growth (includes our fruit orchard, vegetable and herb garden boxes) and our national award-winning certified bee-friendly farming practices. The FLT Society maintains the water line on the designated portion of Newman Farm that we manage, and we also monitor any risks of deficiencies in the irrigation system infrastructure throughout the growing season. Irrigation line upgrading supports our “field to plate” initiative and award-winning certified bee-friendly farm practices on our three-acre+ Farm.
- We will explore the advancement of small scale seasonal volunteer work parties at Newman Farm during the 2022 farm season - aligning our farm practices with the provincial health officer’s health and safety protocols.

Many thanks to our 2021/2022 FLT Society Founder, Patron, Board of Directors, Community Advisors, Volunteers-at-Large, Farm Manager, Farm Assistant, Webmaster/Social Media Specialist, Newman Farm Volunteers, Donors and Funders, and Supporters for your ongoing commitment to regional farmland preservation and food security protection in Greater Victoria!