

Newman Farm Update—Calendar Year 2021



The following summary report is from The Farmlands Trust (Greater Victoria) Society which outlines our key activities at Newman Farm during the period of the calendar year of 2021.

The Farmlands Trust (Greater Victoria) Society
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FLT Society Charitable Number: 80839 3359 RR0001

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FLT Society Charitable Number: 80839 3359 RR0001

1. Organizational Background

Founded in 2008, the FLT Society is a charitable not-for-profit organization based in Saanichton, BC – Registered Charity #80839 3359 RR0001.

Our mission is to enhance farming capacity in the Greater Victoria area by

- protecting local farmland,
- protecting eco-sensitive and culturally special areas,
- producing food for those in need,
- providing relevant educational opportunities,
- promoting the economic viability of farmland, and
- providing community access and public awareness programs.

The FLT Society is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of Greater Victoria community members who have a diverse array of competencies that enrich the planning and implementing of farmland preservation and local food security activities.

The FLT Society team is also comprised of an honorary Patron, Founder, volunteer community advisor, Newman Farm volunteer at-large, part-time farm manager, part-time farm assistant, and contracted webmaster/social media specialist.

The FLT Society is a recognized model for sustainable farming and food re-distribution in the Greater Victoria region, utilizing national award-winning certified pollinator-friendly farm practices.

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2. Agricultural Stewardship at Newman Farm



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.

A Brief Chronology

The District of Central Saanich is the landowner of the historic Newman Farm in Saanichton, BC.

In May 2012, the FLT Society signed a three year Letter of Understanding with the District of Central Saanich to serve as stewards of a designated portion of Newman Farm off Central Saanich Road.

From October 2015 to present, the FLT Society is advancing a 10-year license agreement (October 2015 – October 2025) with the District of Central Saanich to continue the Society's agricultural stewardship of the historic Newman Farm.

The *License to occupy for agricultural park purposes* agreement facilitates the future long term stewardship of the historic Newman Farm.

Please refer to Appendices A and B for an excerpt of said agreement and a map of the current licensed area.

During this time, the FLT Society team installed an irrigation line and deer fencing; pruned, ploughed, planted, harvested produce at the historic farm; installed a new fruit orchard; and installed raised garden beds (for assorted vegetables and herbs) as part of the FLT Society's "field to plate" initiative – whereby produce grown and harvested at Newman Farm is primarily shared with Our Place Society.

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As a pollinator advocate, the FLT Society engages in pollinator-friendly farming practices – includes the “field of dreams” sunflower and wildflower field; installation and maintenance of lavender garden beds; and installation and maintenance of hedgerows.

As part of the regional food supply chain, via the “field to plate” initiative - the FLT Society grows, harvests, and re-distributes fresh local produce at Newman Farm to food insecure populations (e.g., homeless people and individuals living in poverty) in the Greater Victoria region (Sooke to Sidney, BC).

3. 2021 Activities

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).

The FLT Society is a service provider for vulnerable populations and provider of food and agriculture – as part of the Greater Victoria food supply chain for food insecure populations.



With our mission in mind, and continued reality of safely operating during a pandemic, the following are notable highlights of the FLT Society’s activities in 2021:

FLT Society “Field to Plate” Initiative

- During 2021, we continued to expand and diversify crops grown at Newman Farm - focusing 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.

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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, snacks, 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.



- 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.



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Certified Pollinator-Friendly Farm Practices

- Each 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.



Farm Management and Operations

- 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.



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- 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.



- At the end of each farming season, the FLT Society collaborates with Saanichton Farm in ploughing and planting fall/winter cover crops at Newman Farm to support organic (fall/winter) fertilization and soil revitalization.



Educational Walkabouts and Guided Tours

- In July and August 2021, with COVID-19 protocols in place, the FLT Society team led a series of walkabouts and guided tours of Newman Farm which brings an experiential component of our work with strategic partners, collaborators, and funders.



Also, the District of Central Saanich hosted a drop-in picnic event in August 2021 for the public at large to visit Newman Farm. FLT Society volunteers were on hand to discuss our volunteer work on a licensed portion of Newman Farm. For more information about the District of Central Saanich August 2021 picnic event, visit <https://www.centralsaanich.ca/our-community/events/picnic-newman-farm-0>.

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Funding and Related Charitable Donations



- Many thanks to the following individuals and organizations who supported the FLT Society in 2021 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
 - 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
 - Western Forest Products

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



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2021 Our Place Society Testimonial

Our Place Society's mandate is to nourish hope and belonging and provide core services to some of the most marginalized people in one of the most expensive regions of our country. The hard work of Farmlands Trust (FLT) Society volunteers ensured food security was bolstered for people experiencing homelessness, poverty, mental health issues and addictions....In 2021, FLT produce was part of the 241,974 meals Our Place Society served to folks experiencing tough times.

FLT tripled almost the fruits of your labours this year through one of the hottest summers and wettest falls in recent memory. The FLT Society "field to plate" initiative at the historic Newman Farm was able to adapt and navigate the "heat dome" in late June/early July 2021 - with an extended drought for the remainder of summer 2021.

Our Place Society "family members" were the beneficiaries of your in-kind donation of 17,381 pounds (7,891 kg) of 11 different types of locally grown field-to-table ingredients for those meals. The valuation of \$62,685 for that labour, that several staff witnessed first-hand on a summer day tour of the Newman Farm site, is sound and so appreciated.

Rising food costs lead us to estimate that an Our Place average meal cost is 20% higher than last year, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the entire agricultural food supply chain as well as the growing impacts of climate change on farming practices. Our fuel costs to pick up the bounty also increased. Due to the pandemic restrictions on limits to volunteer engagement, we saw a drastic reduction in corporate meal sponsorships too. Several other local farmers who had provided small amounts of produce are retiring from this demanding occupation. Yet, in spite of all these constraints and factors, FLT gallantly perseveres and FLT is our largest single source of donated fresh local vegetables to boost the needed nutrition of the folks we serve.

Thank you all.

-Marg Rose (Our Place Society Director of Philanthropy) on behalf of Julian Daly (Our Place Society Chief Executive Officer)

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4. Cumulative Experience

The FLT Society “field to plate” food re-distribution initiative assists Our Place Society and its expanding regional meal and snack programs which include, but are not limited to,

- 919 Pandora Avenue dining facilities,
- Muncey Place on Blanshard Street,
- Capital City Centre Hotel on Douglas Street,
- Howard Johnson Hotel on Gorge Road,
- Tiny Homes Village on Caledonia Avenue,
- Russell Street Shelter,
- My Place Shelter on Yates Street,
- First Metropolitan Church Shelter,
- Pandora Night Shelter,
- New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community in View Royal,
- Jaymac Place Recovery Home, and
- Our WorkPlace on Quadra Street.

The FLT Society continues to be the largest single supplier of produce to Our Place Society - linking food production to aid in relieving poverty and mitigating food insecurity.

The following table provides an overview of annual weight and dollar value equivalent for food grown and harvested as part of the FLT Society’s “field to plate” initiative at Newman Farm.

FLT Society Newman Farm “Field to Plate” Initiative Summary (2013/2014 – 2021)

Year	Amount/Weight (in lbs.)	Value (in \$)
2014	3,500 lbs.	\$ 7,005.00
2015	2,400 lbs.	\$ 4,900.00
2016	7,580 lbs.	\$16,005.00
2017	15,830 lbs.	\$32,373.75
2018	17,585 lbs.	\$38,147.60
2019	18,127 lbs.	\$54,711.50
2020	7,369 lbs.	\$24,353.79
2021	17,381 lbs.	\$62,685.50
TOTAL TO DATE	89,772 lbs.	\$240,182.14

Table Notes:

1. 2013/2014 was the pilot testing phase of the FLT Society’s “field to plate” initiative at Newman Farm.
2. 2014 – 2019 heavily focused on assorted squash as the “menu options” for food grown at Newman Farm - based on consultations between FLT Society representative(s) and Our Place Society.
3. Newman Farm 10 year license agreement signed in 2015 between the District of Central Saanich (Newman Farm landowner) and the FLT Society (licensee). As such, the FLT Society is the agricultural steward of a licensed area of Newman Farm from 2015 to 2025.
4. In 2016, Bert James was retained to provide FLT Society Newman Farm management services. Bert’s work has continued from 2016 to present.
5. From 2020 to present, Our Place Society and the FLT Society Newman Farm Manager updated the “menu options” to diversify produce grown at Newman Farm - based on the expanded regional meal and snack programs offered by Our Place Society across the Greater Victoria region.
6. The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Access to and from Newman Farm by volunteers during the 2020 and 2021 farm seasons was restricted due to provincial health orders on safe distancing, etc. Farm operation protocols and COVID-19 protocols were established in adherence with provincial health orders which facilitated the FLT Society to continue safely operating during the 2020 and 2021 farm seasons. Part time farm labour assistance was coordinated by the FLT Society to support the FLT Society Newman Farm Manager during the 2020 and 2021 farm seasons.
7. From 2013 to present, the FLT Society team recognizes and endeavours to adapt to the annual effects of extreme weather conditions and related climate change considerations. In particular, drought and windy conditions at Newman Farm during the annual farm season placed stress on the soil, produce, and pollinator-friendly plants. In 2021, British Columbia experienced a “heat dome” in late June/early July 2021 - with an extended drought for the remainder of summer 2021.

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5. Looking Ahead

During the 2022 calendar year, the FLT Society Board of Directors are proposing the following activities as they relate to Newman Farm:

- **“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. 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.
- **Volunteer Engagement.** 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.



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Interested in knowing more about the FLT Society and Newman Farm?

Visit our website: www.farmlandtrust.org

Volunteer with the FLT Society: <http://farmlandtrust.org/join-us>

Donate to the FLT Society: <http://farmlandtrust.org/donate>

Join us on Twitter: @FarmlandsTrust

Join us on Facebook: The Farmlands Trust Society

Email us: farmlandtrust@gmail.com

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Many thanks to our FLT Society Founder, Patron, Board of Directors, Community Advisor, Volunteer-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!

Sincerely,
FLT Society Board of Directors

Note: Photo contributions for the 2021 Newman Farm Summary Report are courtesy of Natasha Caverley (FLT Society Board Secretary) and Bert James (FLT Society Farm Manager).

Appendix A: Background information about the Newman Farm License Agreement

LICENSE TO OCCUPY FOR AGRICULTURAL PARK PURPOSES

THIS AGREEMENT (this “Agreement”) dated for reference August 20, 2019,

BETWEEN: THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH
1903 Mount Newton Cross Road,
Saanichton, British Columbia, V8M 2A9

(the “District”)

AND: THE FARMLANDS TRUST (GREATER VICTORIA) SOCIETY (Inc. No. S-0053429)
P.O. Box 9
Saanichton, British Columbia, V8M 2C3

(the “Licensee”)

WHEREAS:

- A. The District is the registered owner of that parcel of land known as the Newman Farm located in the District of Central Saanich and legally described as:

Parcel Identifier: 009-396-985

Those Parts of Section 3, Ranges 3 and 4 East, South Saanich District, Lying to the South of Parcel K (DD 477991) of Said Sections, and to the East of the Road Dedicated by Plan 7532, except Part in Plans 3 RW, 2306 RW and 2319 RW

(the “Park”);

- B. The portion of the Park named Upper Field and Mid Field Remnant highlighted on the plan attached as Schedule A hereto, comprising approximately 1.3 ha, called the “License Area”;
- C. The Licensee wishes to be granted a license and the District wishes to grant a license of the License Areas for the Licensee to establish and operate a productive organic farm dedicated to enhancing local food security through sustainable practices and community engagement, and preserving the cultural heritage of the License Areas, on the terms and conditions of this Agreement;

NOW THEREFORE in consideration of the covenants and agreements hereinafter set forth, and other good and valuable consideration (the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged by the Parties), the District and the Licensee (collectively, the “Parties” and individually, a “Party”) hereby covenant and agree as follows:

Source: Excerpt from updated license agreement between the District of Central Saanich and the FLT Society – signed August 20, 2019.

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Appendix B: Current Site Plan of Newman Farm Property

Note: FLT Society licensed area is in the Upper Farm – ALR (upper field and mid field remnant areas of Newman Farm).

SCHEDULE A SKETCH PLAN OF LICENSE AREAS

