

Viva Farms
Root Systems
Agricultural connections in pandemic times

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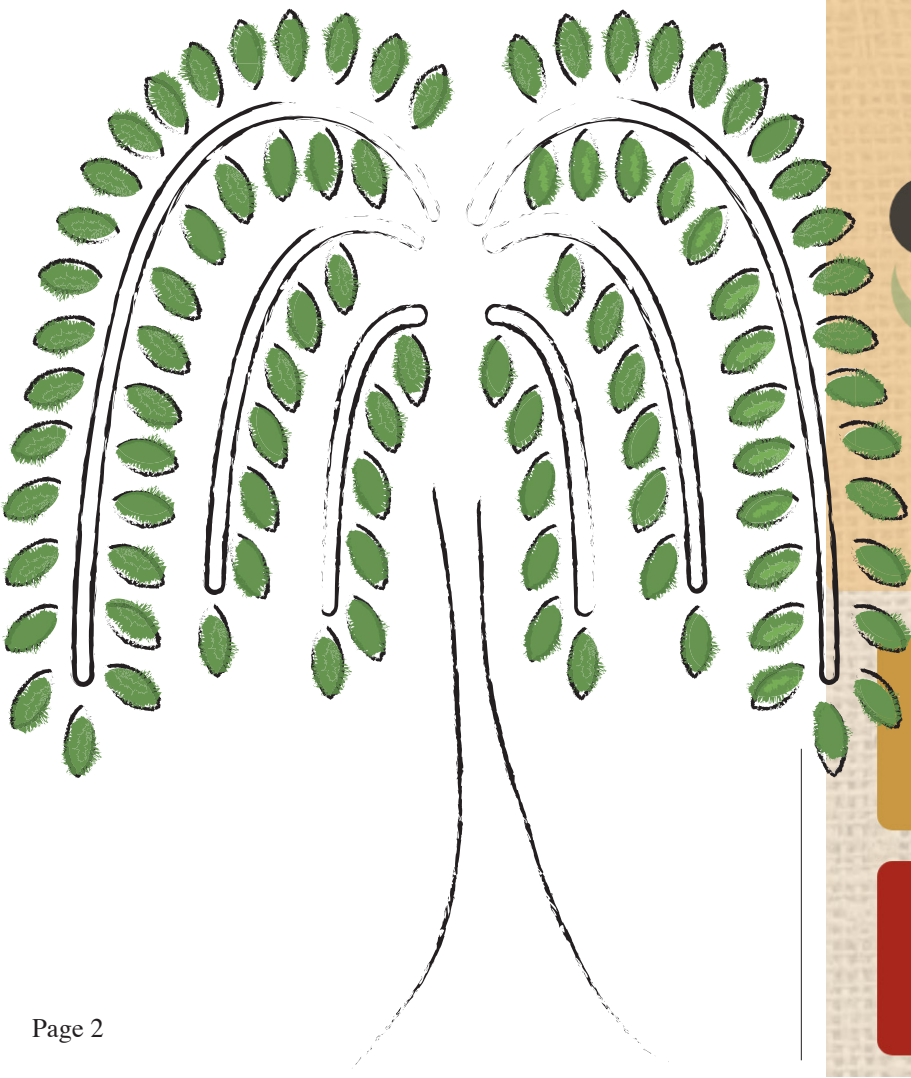
Land acknowledgement of the Sammamish (Willow) people

We remember that we live & work on the unceded ancestral lands of the Coast Salish & Duwamish peoples.

We recognize that the University of Washington Bothell was built upon the unceded homeland of the s-tsay-PAHBSH (Sammamish) Willow people. The campus also touches on the shared waters of tribes and bands within the Suquamish, Tulalip, and Muckleshoot nations.

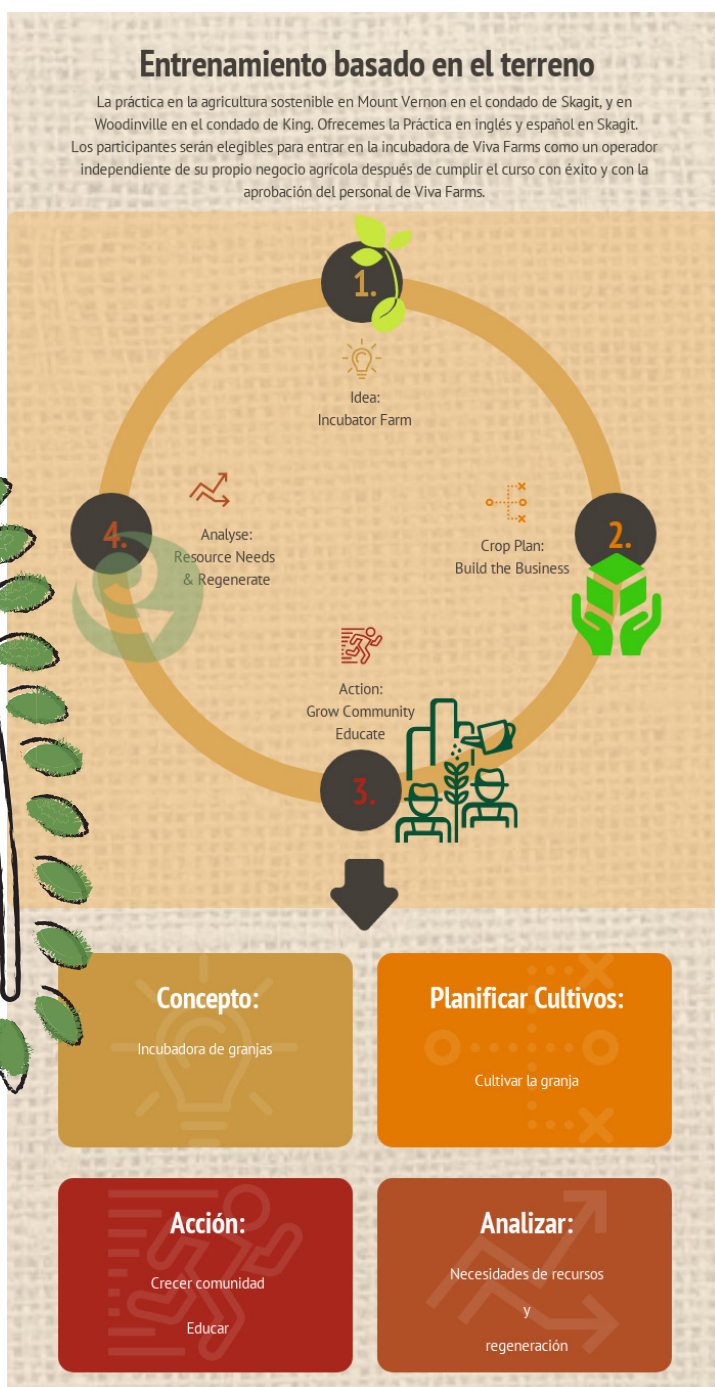
We are grateful to be guests in these lands, and show solidarity for the continued fight for indigenous sovereignty.

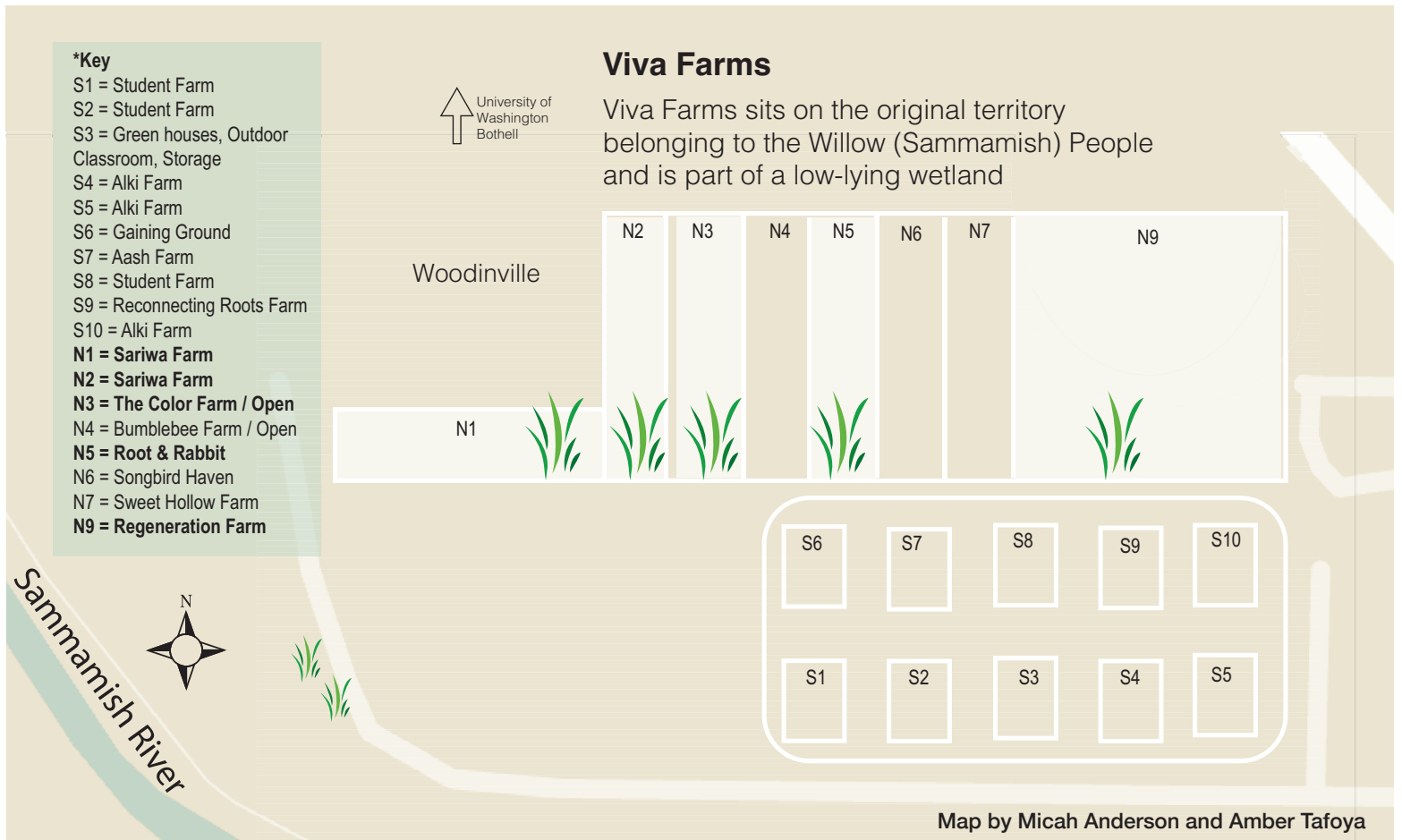
after Dr. Ching-In Chen
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*This map changes each year as farms grow and/or launch to independent sites and new incubating farmers are added.

Viva Farms: Seeds of Change

By Hannah Mendro

Since the first arrival of settlers in the colonial United States, agriculture in this country has been tied to exploitation of people, land, and the environment. The establishment of farms as they exist today began with the theft of Indigenous land, persisted with the forced labor of slaves stolen from Africa, and continued after the abolition of slavery with sharecropping and the exploitation of migrant workers. All of these systems have created vast disparities in land “ownership” and control of food systems that still exist today, and the farming practices meant to achieve the most profit have taken a toll on people and the environment alike.

But as these divisions become more and more apparent, several small farms and farming programs have been stepping up to do what they can to change that - and that includes our partners for this zine, Viva Farms. Viva Farms is a training and support program for small farmers. “Our farm’s mission is to empower aspiring and limited-resource farmers by providing bilingual training and holistic organic farming practices,

as well as access to the five essentials... training, land, infrastructure and equipment, capital, and marketing,” says Micah Anderson, Farm and Education Assistant at Viva Farms King County. Viva Farms recognizes the hidden costs of starting a farm, but also the different ways each small farmer can try, in their own small way, to mitigate the agricultural situation in this country.

When asked about his view of the agricultural situation, Anderson moves back and forth between hope and dismay. “There’s lots of folks who have an environmental ethic and who care about access and making sure that people have access to healthy foods,” he says. “And they’re innovative - there’s all these cool innovations for small farms... So all that is new and exciting.” But on the other hand, “looking at the statistics and hearing stories in the national news is kind of depressing... more and more conglomerates of industrial agriculture, the bigger farms buying out and pushing out small farms for commodity agriculture, not using very environmentally friendly practices, animal welfare, working conditions... and

probably much more of the nation’s food intake comes from that industrial system.” In the face of all this, the mission of Viva Farms is “trying to promote these small family farms that are the antithesis of that.”

The various farms working in the Viva Farms program all have their own focuses and goals. “We have farms that are interested in the market farming approach,” says Anderson, “We have some folks that are interested in no-till... we have some folks that are interested in their cultural heritage. So we try to support everybody where they’re at and each farm looks a little bit different.”

In this zine, we explore four of these farms: Regeneration Farm, Root & Rabbit Farm, The Color Farm, and Sariwa Farm, looking at their different approaches and our experiences working with them. All of these farms are small in the face of the vast inequalities in the agricultural system today, but all of them are working in their own innovative ways to promote a different way of farming. As Anderson says, “It’s small, but it’s important.”

Liberation in Willows



The Taming of the Slough – A Brief History of the Sammamish River

Prior to European colonization, the Sammamish River corridor was a system of vast willow-infested wetlands with a narrow, meandering channel. The complex system of emergent, shrub, and forested wetland provided ideal habitat for fish, large and small mammals, and birds. Authors Stickney and McDonald described “dense forest [that] clothed the land and shut in the winding waterway.”

— Excerpt from *King County Streams Monitoring Update, September 2018*

Our Foods Are Part of Our Culture and Way of Life

Our seeds contain histories of our people and contain the security of future generations. In this generation we will insure that our fish, root crops, buffalo, forests and other foods are retained for the generations yet to come.

— Excerpt from *Indigenous Seed Sovereignty Network*

Farmers: Antoine Wilson & Andrew Green
By Amber Tafoya

Antoine Wilson gently pulled apart a straw nest that circled the base of a blueberry bush, revealing rich, deep brown soil underneath. Worms retreated, wriggling deeper into the ground as he cupped the soil in his hand.

“Dark, rich, flaky. Almost chocolate cakey,” Wilson said behind his mask as he toured Regeneration Farm after a strong spring rain swept the Woodinville area. The sun broke through the clouds as Wilson described how he and his partner Andrew Green use an agroforestry alley cropping system to manage their farm and focus on the health of the soil. In an agroforestry system, a variety of trees, plants, grasses, and animals work together as a system to fertilize the soil and remove natural barriers to farming.

“Farming like this is one of the most beneficial ways to collaborate with the earth, in terms of agriculture. Why have one field of lettuce when you can have layers and layers of plants that are doing that same thing but maximizing all of the beneficial aspects of the way in which plants interact with each other,” Green said.

The farm evolved since the pair broke ground three years ago. Over the past year, Wilson and Green planted alders, willows, chokecherry, and elderberry shrubs. On the east side of Regeneration lies a messy edible garden where Green laid down wood chips to encourage mushroom growth and planted a



smattering of blueberry bushes. Once planted, this layered system grows without much assistance from the farmers as plants die and become part of the soil.

“We plant the things to bring them down. To build up the soil,” Wilson said. “Over time, that soil will be dense and rich because it was built from a diverse number of plants and biomass from the farm.”

Instead of prioritizing planting for profit, which often involves a formulaic maximization of land, Regeneration Farm prioritizes the health of the soil and surrounding ecosystem. Wilson points to a row of willow saplings that line the West end of the farmland and said the willows serve as a line of defense against the Southwest wind that can

wear down topsoil and knock down smaller trees that are starting to root. The fast-growing willow trees also help pull in moisture from the low-lying wetland, preventing the area from getting oversaturated and allows the farmers to work the land for a longer period each year. Alder trees grow a large amount of biomass and help form a protective layer for the forest floor as they age and fall back into the earth, Wilson said.

“That’s one of the reasons we started transplanting,” he said while pointing to a small sapling branch. “You can cut these branches and you stick them in the ground. Where those branches were cut off, that’s where new roots will start and they’ll just grow. There’s so many things right in front of us we can use.”

The tall green grass that grows next to the trees are given freedom to grow, adding another layer of carbon to feed the soil. Wilson and Green usually set hogs out to graze, but with the pandemic restrictions to handle on top of managing duties as new fathers they now manage the grass by mowing and raking it. The farmers leave the clippings on the ground to let nature decompose it and feed the soil.

“We just want to facilitate. That’s through building the topsoil and bringing the branches down and mixing straw with the grass. Helping cycle nutrients. The earth would do all of that anyway, but we just want to facilitate that process,” Wilson said.

One of the benefits of this approach to



farm management is that the soil and plants become stronger, more durable, and resilient. Farmers can also hyper-localize resources like fertilizer which prevents the need to truck in materials and reduces greenhouse gases.

“We are not bringing in straw from Bellingham. We are allowing nutrients to cycle and funnel through the system,” Wilson said.

Growth Through Education

To reap all of the benefits and create a hyper-local environment, the farm must be at a larger scale than the 2-acre plot they manage. As Wilson and Green build up the health of the soil on their small farm, they host workshops and seminars for the public.

As Wilson and Green take on more responsibilities as new fathers and managing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Green said the farm is shifting its focus from production to make more room for more educational programming, which works well on their small farm.

“We are building something folks can come to and come back and apply to their own settings,” Green said.

Wilson and Green also recognize a need to incorporate information about privilege and white supremacy in agriculture. “Agriculture is an extremely white field,” Green said. “There’s this mythical white idealized farm. Unpacking that, communicating it, is part of this message, what we feel is important. To acknowledge and change in agriculture



is essentially the survival of communities. The ability to withstand change in massive ways.”

According to the United States Department of Agriculture's 2017 census, there are 3.4 million producers (those who are the people involved in decision-making roles at the farm). About 3.2 million of those producers are white, 95 percent of the U.S. total.

The temperature dropped as we walked from the edible garden and hail started to fall, bouncing off of a garden tarp in scattered taps. Wilson examined a sapling as we stood in the open field.

“We’re not going to push this narrative of like, oh, we’re just small farmers,” Wilson said. “No, we have financial stability, and we get to do whatever we want in terms of how we run this farm and I feel blessed that we are choosing to do it in a way that I feel is regenerative all across the board, not only for the land but also for us and our families,

America's Farmers

American Indian/Alaska Native	1.7
Asian	0.6
Black	1.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1
White	95.4
More than one race	0.8

Farms in the U.S.

- **2.04 million** farms in the U.S.
- **57.7%** of farmland belongs to 85,127 farms that exceed 2,000 acres.
- Average size is **441 acres**.
- On average, a farm earned **\$32,217** in 2017.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture's 2017 census

> *Story continues on page 6*

"At Regeneration Farm we steward unceded Sammamish Land. We are building a functioning wetland permaculture farm using an agroforestry alley cropping system." — <https://www.regenerationfarmnw.com/>

> Liberation in Willows from page 5

but also taking the time and the privilege to really poke holes in all those other narratives that put people in these really toxic situations around farming."

"Our privilege has allowed us to have access to having better options to be able to make those choices," Wilson said. "People believe that farmers say, oh, I'm just going to get ten acres and I'm only gonna do annuals and if you're going to do that you're going to bust your ass and you might be in debt the whole time. And it's not because you're not working hard enough. That narrative of the small family farm is garbage. We need to move away from that. We need to understand that if we're going to do anything substantial that it's got to be large scale and it's got to take into consideration the way in which we do what we do, and how that affects the most marginalized populations in the entire world. And if we're not moving from that perspective, we're not moving in the right direction."

As Wilson discussed the time it takes to build this ecosystem with Green and the

privilege he has to invest this time into the farm without expecting a profit gain, he said that he does not expect his farm to offset or impact the climate crisis. "The two-acre farm or 10-acre farm is not going to be the thing to do it. It's going to be these vast swaths of land that collectively we are going to have to manage regeneratively and sustainably."

Wilson recognizes that the methods used at Regeneration Farm are rooted in indigenous practices and argues that farmers should give Indigenous Peoples credit and support. Wilson, who identifies as African American and Chicano, said people could also support other communities that hold ancestral knowledge including Black farmers in the U.S.

"We need to uplift and support indigenous sovereignty, the heart of indigenous stewardship is a collective and we can learn from that," he said. "If we fight and support for indigenous sovereignty, we are going to poke holes in the problematic and dominant theme of the current state of agriculture in the U.S. and in the world."



— Stand in solidarity with First Peoples of this land by paying Real Rent. <https://www.realrentduwamish.org/> —

Reimagining the World on Two Acres

By Amber Tafoya

During my interview with Antoine, he said that although he thinks the methods he uses as a farmer can help the surrounding environment, his small-scale farm would not significantly change problems we share as a culture, including global warming. The farm would have to run at a much larger scale to turn a profit and provide employment for staff.

So, for now, Andrew and Antoine are focusing on small-scale goals as they develop their approach to farming and connecting with the people and the land.

"I am a Black and Chicano farmer who gets to focus on how I want to farm. Showing my privilege is one of the most important things to highlight. There is an inherent imbalance to how I need to move through the world. When I go to a meeting when I meet with executives, they say 'I just want to hear what you think.' As a black man, walking into a room full of white men with positions of power, that is an imbalance. So as long

as systemic racism is in force, I am always going to feel there are roadblocks. There are challenges to things. But that is set within the context of my privilege and accessibility."

As Antoine acknowledges his privilege and its connection to profit and identity, he is reworking how his farm can be valued by building a new version of the world. By continuously building and rebuilding their farm according to the needs of the land, Antoine and Andrew are reimagining the future. As they fold in workshops for the community, they are creating a narrative that can inspire others to shift their way of thinking and doing.

People who visit Regeneration Farm can see themselves as curators and guardians of the earth. Through their education programs and approach to farming, they are writing a new narrative. Although the farm won't change the world at this moment, it can plant a seed that the imagination of the collective can grow in the form of a community garden

"We want to create more succinctness around how we talk about white supremacy and the way in which that's connected to agriculture and land accessibility and acquisition."

— Antoine Wilson.

or changed practices as a consumer.

In *Octavia's Brood*, a collection of short stories by activists who explore different futures, Walidah Imarisha writes, "We believe this space is vital for any process of decolonization, because the decolonization of the imagination is the most dangerous and subversive form there is..."

World-building as a collective is just as important as growing food to eat. It nourishes our insight into possibility as we acknowledge the present and explore how things could be by building new narratives and actions layer by layer. Making room for the imaginations that contribute to world-building is vital to survival and liberation for us all.

Whitewashed Hope

A message from 10+ Indigenous leaders and organizations
Regenerative Agriculture & Permaculture offer narrow solutions to the climate crisis

Introduction

Regenerative agriculture and permaculture claim to be the solutions to our ecological crises. While they both borrow practices from Indigenous cultures, critically, they leave out our worldviews and continue the pattern of erasing our history and contributions to the modern world.

While the practices 'sustainable farming' promote are important, they do not encompass the deep cultural and relational changes needed to realize our collective healing.

Where is 'Nature'?

Regen Ag & Permaculture often talk about what's happening 'in nature': "In nature, soil is always covered." "In nature, there are no monocultures." Nature is viewed as separate, outside, ideal, perfect. Human beings must practice "biomimicry" (the mimicking of life) because we exist outside of the life of Nature.

Indigenous peoples speak of our role AS Nature. (Actually, Indigenous languages often don't have a word for Nature, only a name for Earth and our Universe.) As cells and organs of Earth, we strive to fulfill our roles as her caregivers and caretakers. We often describe ourselves as "weavers", strengthening the bonds between all beings.

Death Doesn't Mean Dead

Regen Ag & Permaculture often maintain the "dead" worldview of Western culture and science: Rocks, mountains, soil, water, wind, and light all start as "dead". (E.g., "Let's bring life back to the soil!" — implying soil, without microbes, is dead.) This worldview believes that life only happens when these elements are brought together in some specific and special way.

Indigenous cultures view the Earth as a communion of beings and not objects: All matter and energy is alive and conscious. Mountains,

stones, water, and air are relatives and ancestors. Earth is a living being whose body we are all a part of. Life does not only occur when these elements are brought together; Life always is. No "thing" is ever dead; Life forms and transforms.

From Judgemental to Relational

Regen Ag & Permaculture maintain overly simplistic binaries through subscribing to good and bad. Tilling is bad; not tilling is good. Mulch is good; not mulching is bad. We must do only the 'good' things to reach the idealized, 99.9% biomimicked farm/garden, though we will never be as pure or good "as Nature", because we are separate from her.

Indigenous cultures often share the view that there is no good, bad, or ideal—it is not our role to judge. Our role is to tend, care, and weave to maintain relationships of balance. We give ourselves to the land: Our breath and hands uplift her gardens, binding our life force together. No one is tainted by our touch, and we have the ability to heal as much as any other lifeform.

Our Words Shape Us

Regen Ag & Permaculture use English as their preferred language no matter the geography or culture: You must first learn English to learn from the godFATHERS of this movement. The English language judges and objectifies, including words most Indigenous languages do not: 'natural, criminal, waste, dead, wild, pure...' English also utilizes language like "things" and "its" when referring to "non-living, subhuman entities".

Among Indigenous cultures, every language emerges from and is

therefore intricately tied to place. Inuit people have dozens of words for snow and her movement; Polynesian languages have dozens of words for water's ripples. To know a place, you must speak her language. There is no one-size-fits-all, and no words for non-living or sub-human beings, because all life has equal value.

People are land.

Holistic includes History. Regen Ag and Permaculture claim to be holistic in approach. When regenerating a landscape, 'everything' is considered: soil health, water cycles, local 'wildlife', income & profit. 'Everything', however, tends to EXCLUDE history: Why were Indigenous homelands steal-able and why were our peoples & lands rape-able? Why were our cultures erased? Why does our knowledge need to be validated by 'Science'? Why are we still excluded from your 'healing' of our land?

Among Indigenous cultures, people belong to land rather than land belonging to people. Healing of land MUST include healing of people and vice versa. Recognizing and processing the emotional traumas held in our bodies as descendants of assaulted, enslaved, and displaced peoples is necessary to the healing of land. Returning our rights to care for, harvest from, and relate to the land that birthed us is part of this recognition.

Composting

Regen Ag & Permaculture often share the environmentalist message that the world is dying and we must "save" it. Humans are toxic, but if we try, we can create a "new Nature" of harmony, though one that

is not as harmonious as the "old Nature" that existed before humanity. Towards this mission, we must put Nature first and sacrifice ourselves for "the cause".

Indigenous cultures often see Earth as going through cycles of continuous transition. We currently find ourselves in a cycle of great decomposition. Like in any process of composting there is discomfort and a knowing that death always brings us into rebirth. Within this great cycle, we all have a role to play. Recognizing and healing all of our own traumas IS healing Earth's traumas, because we are ONE.

Where to go from here?

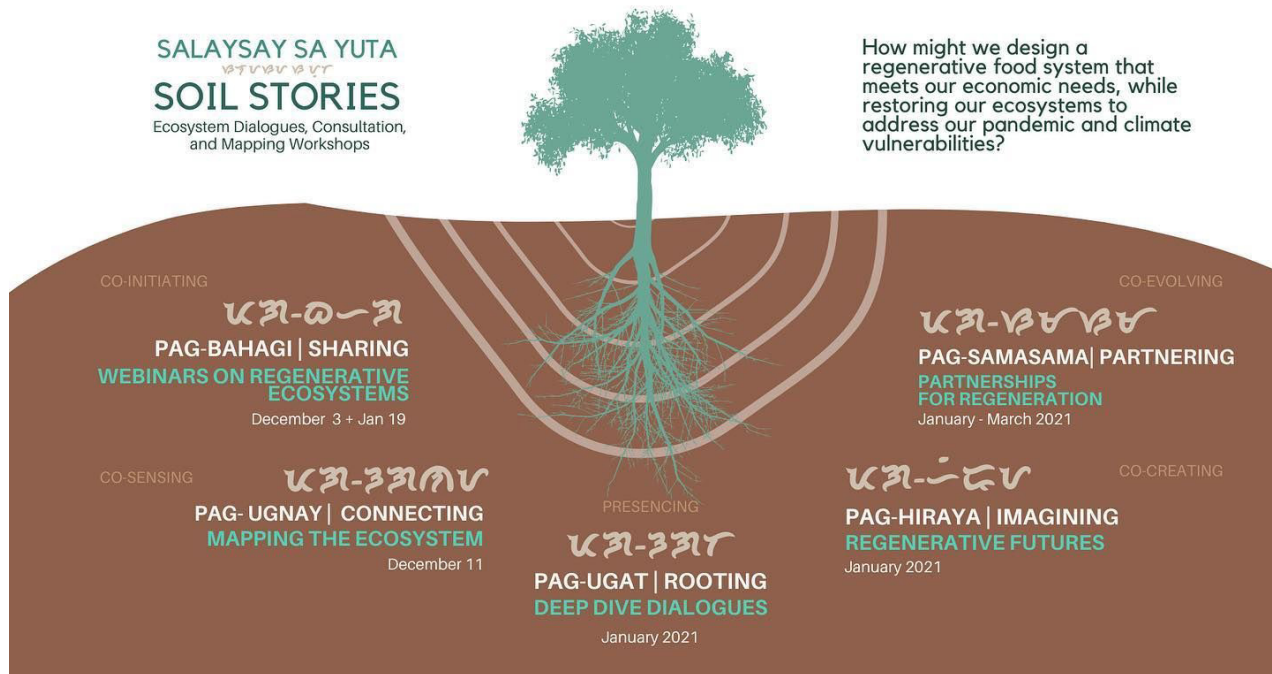
Making up only 6.2% of our global population, Indigenous peoples steward 80% of Earth's biodiversity while managing over 25% of her land. Indigenous worldviews are the bedrocks that our agricultural practices & lifeways arise from. We invite you to ground your daily practices in these ancestral ways, as we jointly work towards collective healing.

- Learn whose lands you live on (native-land.ca), their history, and how you can support their causes and cultural revitalization.
- Watch @gatherfilm and Aluna documentary.
- Amplify the voices and stories of Indigenous peoples and organizations.
- Follow, support, donate to, and learn from the contributors to this post.
- Help republish this open-source post: <https://bit.ly/IndigenousWorldViews>

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Rooted in History: Sariwa Farm in Context



Source: Green Releaf Initiative, Salaysay sa Yuta series.

Introduction Hannah Mendro

This region is loud with untold history. There are narratives we have learned of our past, narratives built and shaped by an unequal world. Always, lurking beneath the surface of these stories are the voices unheard, voices ignored. Even the tales told from below rely on the loudest tellers.

This is the case for the labor history of Washington and the Pacific Northwest. The tales we learn of farmworkers and labor strikes center Cesar Chavez and the Mexican farmworkers who participated in the Delano Grape Strike. The dominant narrative focuses little on the Filipino workers who first organized the strike, their leaders Larry Itliong, Philip Vera Cruz, and others, the struggles and exploitations that led to Filipino unionization. It is a narrative still present, faintly, for those who listen carefully, but it is not the one most often told.

I had never heard it until I spoke with Lorna Velasco of Sariwa Farm. Lorna grows traditional Filipino foods and uses her farm to keep her own cultural heritage alive. She told me of the Filipino role in the Delano Grape Strike, of

their impact on farm labor organizing in the Puget Sound Area, and I had never heard of it before. I do not know if the narratives I was fed or my own disinterest are responsible for my lack of knowledge, but I know it is something I should have known. Something I wanted to learn.

It is something we all must come to terms with, in our country, in our region, in a world built on the backs and the labor of so many people whose histories have been trampled beneath our feet. The very earth we stand upon was farmed and tilled by the hands of people forgotten, people rendered silent and invisible by the force of the market and the long march of history, by those who were silenced when they tried to tell their stories - and by those who refused to listen. I live in the world built by these hands, built on these bodies, and still there is too much I do not know.

Some stories are silenced on purpose, some incidentally - muffled by force and circumstance and a vast, cruel indifference. Too many of these stories, I do not know, and have never been curious enough to find out. But at last, I am trying to learn better.

I said “untold history” before - but that is not quite right. The history has been told - by these laborers, by

> *Continued on next page.*

Some stories are silenced on purpose, some incidentally — muffled by force and circumstance and a vast, cruel indifference.



these union members, in their own voices. For in these stories of struggle, I do not want to treat these workers as victims. They were powerful participants in history; they rose up to stand up for themselves and create change; they told their stories and left them for others to find and read and document. I have heard some of these stories - some from those telling them; some from others documenting the history - and none of them are mine to tell. I have benefited from the exploitation of farm laborers, from the silencing of Filipino workers; I have read the incomplete narratives. I was introduced to the fuller tale only days ago. I am not fit to retell it to you in my own words, and so I would like to let their words stand on their own.

On page 19, you will find a brief timeline of Filipino labor organizing in the twentieth century, in Washington and along the West Coast. I have compiled this timeline from a few primary and secondary sources documenting the history. Included within this timeline is Lorna's own family history, along with the story of her farm in her own words.

I want to note that all of these sources are questionable in their own ways: official historical sources have a tendency to whitewash history and underestimate the devastation of colonization. Because of the limits of the sources, and my own knowledge and experience, I know this timeline is imperfect and incomplete. For this reason, I have also included a bibliography of books, articles, and archives so that you can learn more about this history from the sources, and let the participants speak for themselves and reclaim their narrative.

At last, it's about time.

> Go to page 18 to see Lorna's story and timeline.

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The Fabric of Community

By Kalen Schack

As I stepped out of my vehicle onto the coarse gravel road, I first noticed the smell of the air. It smelled of sweet grass clippings and soil, tamped and muddled by the pattering rain. When I arrived, the clouds hung gently in the sky, and occluded the sun. I met Max of Color Farm, a fledgling textile and natural dye farmer, near several long, plastic-sheathed greenhouses where many farmers at the incubator farm grew their starters. Max was introduced to textile farming through his studies in industrial design. "I was doing bag design a lot." Max said, "I loved designing stuff and being able to make it too".

Max's interest in sustainable and natural fiber farming led him to take part in the practicum in sustainable agriculture provided by Viva Farms. Max elaborates on the program and his process up to the present: "...it's a non-profit organization that does farm education and helps people access farming and get into it that might not have the land or resources to do it otherwise. So they have a location in Skagit County and this location in King County and they do a practicum in sustainable agriculture which is offered through a couple of the community colleges around here but also offered to individuals, which is how I came into it."

Max and I spent time with a group of students taking part in the program, learning how to use a new piece of machinery, the BCS tractor. After a detailed lesson and a lot of walking, Max used the new machine to till half of his plot of land as inquisitive students looked on.

Viva Farms' practicum in sustainable agriculture teaches both the farming and the business side of agriculture. "You just learn the basics of farming and growing things and the business structure of farming because to start a farm, you have to kind of have an understanding of how a small business works", Max said. "After you do that program, then you're eligible to apply for a spot on their incubator farm, which is where we are right now. The incubator farm is however much land they have available, they'll decide how many spots they have for the next year."

Around the farm, I felt a buzz. It was a much busier day than usual. The sun was



starting to raise its head from behind the clouds and brought with it a jovial atmosphere. Around the farm, everyone wore masks unless they were in the fields. The surreal feeling of being surrounded by beauty and growth yet reminded of an invisible danger created a strange juxtaposition within me.

Max and I spoke about his interest in textiles and natural dyes as we sat in two foldable armchairs next to his freshly tilled plot. Max became interested in textiles because he

wanted to know more about the manufacturing processes, the materials and the community that surrounded the textile industry. He became interested in a movement called Fibershed. Max goes on to explain: "Fibershed is kind of based on the idea of a watershed, meaning that kind of a localized region in which all of the materials and processes of making fibers and garments and textiles are all localized within one hundred fifty-mile radius. The idea of that is that our current model of textile production is totally globalized and so everything, all of the materials are grown on one side of the world, processed on another side of the world and then shipped to the final destination. So, it's kind of trying to localize all of that and through that revive local economies and communities and production methods that have kind of gotten lost in time." You can learn more about Fibershed by visiting <https://fibershed.org>

At one point during our conversation, I mentioned how much money could be made from creating artisanal textiles because of the level of specialization, but Max reminded me that most people cannot afford to pay designer prices and that Fibershed and Viva Farms is more about supporting the community than

> Story continues on page 12



> *Fabric of Community from page 10*

about profit. I was stuck in the capitalist mindset, and that small realization was like drinking a glass of cool water.

When we talked about how COVID-19 affected the practicum class and his process, Max said, “Just like for everybody, it was a total change...” Max mentioned that the practicum was on the verge of being cancelled, but they were able to proceed, using both online and in-person education. When asked how the pandemic affected the application process and whether it stunted the growth of his farm, Max responded, “In a way I feel like it did the opposite. I feel like for me and for other people it was like a pivot point, and I just feel like now's the time to start a business. If I fail, it's fine because everyone is failing right now.” Max worked at a national clothing retailer doing alterations before his store closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each of the individual farms on Viva Farms' incubator are their own small business and many have shareholders that support the farms. “Each of us on the incubator has our own business, so that's through my business model and then Viva is just here

to offer assistance like equipment and record-keeping.”

As our conversation concluded, we walked through the fields, across a makeshift wooden bridge back to where I was parked. I asked Max what he would say to aspiring farmers: “For people that are trying to get into agriculture, it's definitely something that seems really hard and can be really hard, but there's also a lot of organizations that are trying to help people get into farming, so looking out for those is good... For textiles and textile farming, I think a lot more people are going to start doing that more and more as there's more of a focus to localize the textile economy and I think it's helpful for people to know where their clothes came from and understand the difference between natural and synthetic fibers.”

As I packed my things and began to leave, the sun was receding behind the tall trees and plumes of dust spat out from behind the tires of a passing pickup. The kindness and positivity I felt at Viva Farms draws me back again, to learn more about these unique farmers and their individual goals.



> *Coloring Beyond the Lines from page 11*

clouds & sun overhead. Micah popped his head in from time to time to say hi and see how things were going.

Amy had to leave early, so Max & Sam saw her off before heading over to the farm. The earth needed watering.

They anchored the hose, punched in the drip tape, and extended them in parallel lines across the long beds. They surveyed their work & turned the water on. It ripped across the system, ripping open a few stretches of tape, reminding Max how important controlling the water pressure was. It wasn't perfect & things still needed to be brought in to make it all fit, but it was as good as it gets -- for today, for the time being. As he got into the cab of his pickup truck, Max looked beyond the earth so he could see it spring forth with flax for linen; hemp for the future; marigolds, indigo, coreopsis, hollyhock for natural dyes. He hoped Amy would be pleased; it was a good day & he was heading her way.

Atop the ridge, the red alder & sumac leaned together, recalling 40 million years of fire & ice that used to scorch & scour the land, natural cycles that levelled the playing field for many species. These species that rooted & rested here, abided amongst each other for a time, each in their season; the leaves whispered, shaken by the wind.

You can learn more about Fibershed by visiting <https://fibershed.org>



Partnership as Praxis: A Critical Resource

by Sam Prudente

The University of Washington is invested in multiple levels of partnership. The UW Bothell's Office of Community-Based Learning and Research helps to address public problems in leading the institution's civic engagements. But how well does UW listen to, sit with, work for, and work with partners to reach their goals, in ways that become invested in longer term, extra-institutional ways? I use the term extra-institutional to fix a praxis for the future: resistant to institutionalization, and beyond the goals of the institution's classes, projects & programs.

What are the protocols for partnership, when the institution itself recognizes it relies heavily on personal connections between faculty and the community partners they bring into the fold? Students undertaking intellectual labor pay for the privilege of working through their own education. The CBLR site describes student roles in "direct service, research, creative process, tutoring, advocacy or consulting in collaboration with a community entity (organization, farm, industry, business, K-12 schools, local government)." while faculty are supported to implement their CBLR courses, and the office does its utmost to connect with partners.

When you ask single people about their experience with monogamous relationships, you may get a colorful trove of personal anecdotes, vulnerability willing. Ask bisexual, ambisexual and multisexual people about their experience and you may be excused if you expect to find more complex and complicated issues that come up. Yet anecdotal evidence point to cis-heteronormative monogamous frameworks still playing an impressive role in formulating relationship goals. Multi-party relationships are polyamorous in nature. If we need to learn valuable lessons in communality & collaborative lessons for the future,

perhaps we need to look beyond monogamy & monocropping to polyamory & regenerative communities - not with dread, unease, fetishization & dark curiosity, but with the courage to stretch one's capacity for The Work.

UW Cultural Studies professors Harewood & Krabill have worried at (over) a decade's worth of reflection on the Master of Arts in Cultural Studies (MACS) program at UW Bothell. These worries dovetail with the 2020 cohort's concern about the frictions & messiness of moving forward, about "lost bodies", the end-points of research relationships and the desire to sustain collaboration commitments. Sustainability encourages a reassessment of Partnerships & the meta-process of Cultural Studies versus iterative rebuilding. Building and rebuilding every role & every relationship, through every partner & every collaboration within, then beyond the university becomes more sustainable if there were a space, a vessel and processes that support multi-world, multi-player, multiple narratives. For MACS students, identifying and committing to our collaborations then become even more crucial determinations: partnerships & collaboration work that go beyond the personal, that reaches for and touches communities and institutions, and beyond that, shows how our praxis models possible futurities.

In responding to professors Harewood & Krabill; working through Burgett et al. & Fine et al.; reflecting on the hybridity of workshop processes from Sylvia Gale & Social Presencing Theatre; witnessing dynamics of community & communication in the Reciprocity Network & the Labor Colloquium, The Work of creating organic nodes & hubs around CBLR praxis becomes more urgent. It is now contingent on the university to respond from what the Covid health crisis has produced, and work for recombinant outcomes that are more responsive, scalable, reciprocal & sustainable. What we may need now is an anti-virus for the viral replication of the partnership process we have tried to sustain. Vaccination helps produce protective antibodies, and empowers organic systems to regenerate. We have seen virus variants as well as alternative vaccinations emerge. For UW Bothell's CBLR, would it be a praxis for the partnerships of the future?

The Five Essentials: Reflection on Viva Farms

“Our farm’s mission is to empower aspiring and limited resource farmers by providing bilingual training and holistic organic farming practices, as well as access to the five essentials...: training, land, infrastructure and equipment, capital, and marketing.”

Quotes by Micah Anderson; poetry by Hannah Mendro

Training

“We have a nine month hands on training program that gives people the basic information and skills to start farming. And we have a student farm so folks get hands-on practice and they help manage the farm over the season and get that practical learning.”

Wandering Viva Farms, letting my feet follow the curve of the road between acres, sheds, greenhouses, beds, all I can think is *green*. Lush tall grass, tender sprouts in tiny trays, thriving beneath loving hands, each seed an opportunity. I fancy I can see the growth here, in the greenhouses swelteringly hot and lovingly visited, can hear it in the words of student and farmer exchanging experience, knowledge, offers of time of seeds of shared understanding.

Land

“We’ve got 10 acres here, so folks that graduate and apply and are accepted into the incubator program receive access to land. Most of the folks here start at an eighth of an acre, quarter of an acre, and our biggest farm is maybe two acres. They pay on a subsidized rate . . . and that’s true for everything, and part of that is to help people get their feet on the ground.”

Their feet on the ground.
Because how can you stand if there is nothing beneath you? It is the difference between farmer and laborer: not the work, but the freedom, the ability to sweep an arm out over a plot and declare, “this is mine!” I see the glee in her face as she does so; see the power to choose method and product; see the freedom this has always entailed, that has been denied to so many people. I see what it means to do what you will with what is yours.



Illustration by artist and social activist Favianna Rodriguez. Reproduced for educational purposes. www.favianna.com | Instagram @favianna1

Infrastructure and equipment

“ You've got shared greenhouse and tunnels, tractors and equipment, irrigation, wash pack, all the things folks need which can be pretty expensive. ”

Capital

“ Farming is big on expenses in the spring and then you get paid as you harvest in summer and fall, so . . . we have big purchases that folks can do and then pay us back later in the season. ”

Marketing

“ We have a big CSA that folks can access . . . And we have programs in Seattle for low-income folks to have matched payments or low payments, and we also have wholesale accounts with Whole Foods and some others. And so folks can go through our marketing channels while hopefully making their own as well. ”

the hidden costs, denied
to many even when the rest was ostensibly granted, the unseen prohibition. I see the open sheds, the bucket of gloves, hooks of rakes, enough for far more than us three: the ease with which the farmers here navigate this shared space, these shared tools, knowing there will be no surprises.

The essential, in this world
of division and greed, when *gaining*
is contingent on *having already*.
We feign a *leveling*
of the playing field – or of the field itself? –
but still this piece is missing, still used
to deny, deny, deny.
There are deeper
inequities this system cannot fix, but still
when to *have* is so necessary,
what relief to be *given*?

Marketing channels.
This is the role we have found ourselves playing
in this collaboration, different for each need:
promoting, sharing, but perhaps we can think of it as
making connections, forging relationships,
planting seeds. *The market*
feels almost sinister to me,
disembodied concept of greed, and yet
in these small farms, I can see the beauty in it:
having a goal, a *good*, to share
and wanting to share it. Produce, natural fibers,
regenerative growth, culture
and history. Viva is a farmers' market
of choice: colorful stalls and generous faces,
fresh (*sariwa*)
food and fibers and promises
of a new way
to grow.

Transcription Note

By Hannah Mendro

The spoken word flows differently from the written.

It wanders, meanders like a hiker off the trail: making wrong turns, stumbling through brambles, tripping over false starts and filler words until they find the path they were seeking, before taking the next turn into the undergrowth again. The written word is a built trail - still wandering, perhaps, but detours deliberate, carefully crafted after hours of raking and shoveling, digging those drainage ditches for the water to run off. The written word is crafted over time, the product controlled; the spoken word is responsive to the thought of the moment - harder to craft, harder to keep in line.

(I should clarify here that I mean the conversational spoken word, the answers given to questions unexpected. I do not speak of stories carefully preserved through years of oral tradition, carrying memory along with them.)

“This interview has been edited and condensed for length.” It’s the phrase I see before all the transcripts of interviews I’d rather read than listen to - but now, in doing that condensing myself, I see all that is left out. The unrehearsed spoken word is not crafted; it defies corralling; it wanders where it will, and the transcriber must herd it into some sort of order.

And all of these words make me think of control.

In this zine, we have included interviews, or snippets of interviews - our best possible way of representing our partners in their own words. And yet, in the end, that control is up to the transcriber - spoken sentences that never quite stop, filler words as punctuation, questions made into statements

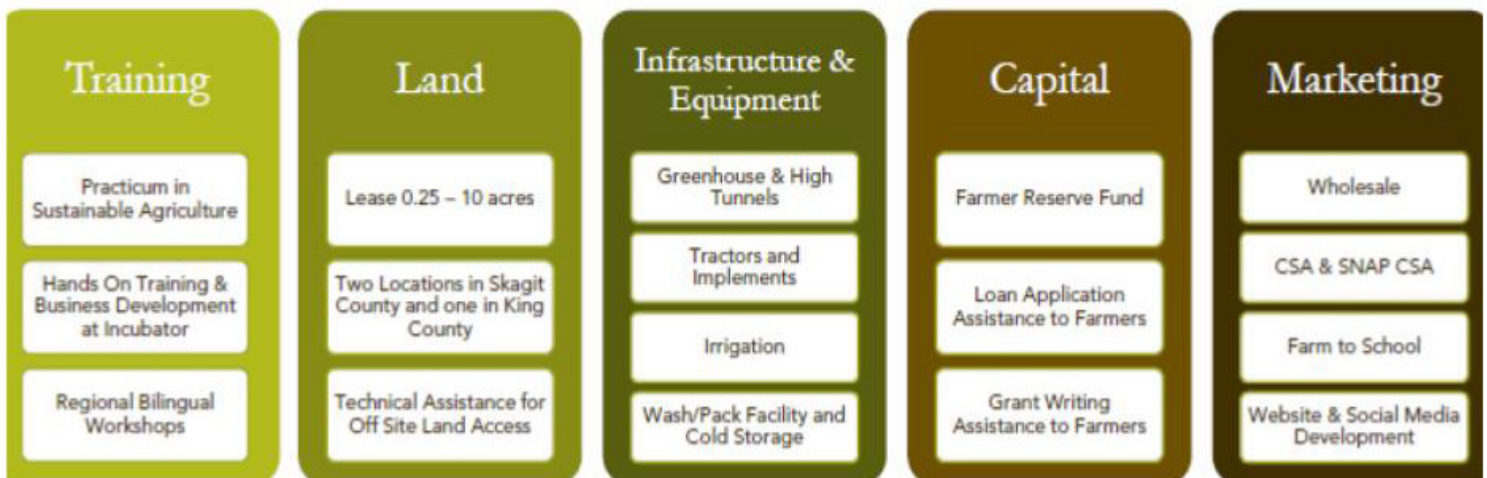
and statements into questions. Phrases that make no sense divorced from tone and context, from the trail of thought they follow, that the transcriber must rake into a trail others can follow.

In their discussions of white supremacy culture, Tema Okun and Kenneth Jones describe the “worship of the written word.” In this culture, we are perhaps too inclined to value words fixed as trails others can follow, rather than stories told and retold, weaving a fabric of community, carrying memory through orality. In our attempts to create something written, we must impose a structure on these spoken words that their very cadence defies. And in doing so, things are bound to be erased - moments of crucial hesitation, places where the speaker begins to say one word and changes it to another. Dialects, the cadence of speech. All these moments are revealing. All these moments are important. All these moments cannot be edited and condensed. Cannot truly be transcribed.

As transcribers, we have had to make decisions. We have had to choose to cut down sentences, to erase fillers, to change the cadence of thoughts. Throughout this process, we have tried to preserve the integrity of the speakers’ intentions, of their original words - but we acknowledge that all this is read through the filter of our transcription. It is of necessity a kind of violence, one perpetrated with the best of intentions, but perpetrated nonetheless. The best we can do is name this violence, claim our role in it, and remind you to read with this in mind. As so many of our thoughts, creations, and lives are filtered through this white supremacy culture, so too are these interviews. We cannot unproblematize the written word, and so we name it here and remind ourselves - and you - that it is present even when we minimize it as best we can.

WHAT IS A “FARM BUSINESS INCUBATOR?”

We empower aspiring and limited-resource farmers by providing bilingual training in holistic organic farming practices, as well as access to **THE FIVE ESSENTIALS:**



Courtesy: Viva Farms

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> Continued from page 9

In her own words: Lorna's story

Lorna Velasco

"I come from a farming community, farming background: my parents were farmers; my grandparents were farmers, and farming wasn't seen as something that's done or a way to be lucrative. Actually the peasant population are the ones who are the farmers, and so being a farmer meant you were poor..."

"When I left San Francisco... coming here (Kirkland, eastside of Seattle) from an urban environment that was incredibly diverse, predominantly Latino, African American, and also other Filipinos, I found myself somewhat lost, so farming in a way, was me literally trying to find my roots."

"...and realized that there could be an opportunity for me in leasing my own land and learning about farming...I live in a community where almost all of the time, my kids are the only Filipino kids in the classroom. And so it was one way for me to retain my Filipino cultural heritage and also use food and farming and storytelling as a way to pass on traditions to my kids..."

"I bring them (kids) to the farm where we specifically farm produce that I use to make Filipino food, and so they know about Filipino cuisine and Filipino dishes. I also do an annual music and harvest festival called Arkipelagroove, where we amplify and highlight QTBIPOC farmers in the local area and also highlight Filipino artists, musicians, filmmakers... a way to create awareness about Filipinos as artists, as farmers - this is our historical stamp into this area - through culture and art...."

"I think continuing to farm culturally specific foods that are hard to find - like, I'm not gonna find bitter melon in Safeway, right? And so I'm having to drive all the way down south just to find culturally specific produce that's also sustainably grown... I'm trying to grow it here in my area and I'm making sure that I produced it sustainably and I'm able to share it with my community ..."

"...trying to financially sustain a family of four on a half acre of land is not possible. But I know that this is a benefit, I am providing a healthier lifestyle for my direct family, but also to provide a resource for my greater community...Farming has become a way to sustain my heritage, my culture, and, has connected me to the deep historical legacy of Filipinos in America.."

"I think I hold a particular place as well, as a mother...We carry a lot of the work and a lot of the burden that may seem also invisible? I produce and provide food, I'm an income earner, and I'm a nurturer and caretaker, not just for my kids but for my greater community, and that part of mothering is invisible or a given, this invisible work is leadership work."

"...trying to financially sustain a family of four on a half acre of land is not possible. But I know that this is a benefit, I am providing a healthier lifestyle for my direct family, but also to provide a resource for my greater community...Farming has become a way to sustain my heritage, my culture, and, has connected me to the deep historical legacy of Filipinos in America.."

A (not so) familiar Timeline

of Contact > Colonization > Organization > Solidarity



1587

First contact with Indigenous folk.

As early as the mid1500s, both free & indentured Filipinos navigate to the West Coast & Acapulco as crew on the Galleon Trade, pre-dating the Mayflower.



1890s

1898

Spain *cedes* the Philippines to the U.S. Genocide ensues.

1899-1902

The Philippine-American War. American Public School System is established in the Philippines.

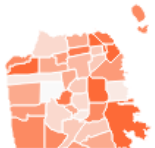
The Philippines will not be granted FREEDOM until 1946.

Filipinos emigrate in large numbers to the U.S.



1920s

1924 The Asian Exclusion Act does not include Filipinos, but they are often exploited for labor.

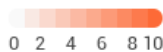


1930s



Filipinos' Labor Association begins organizing in Seattle.

1933 Formation of the Cannery Workers and Farm Laborers' Union.



1937 Pedro Aquino (Lorna's great uncle) travels on an American merchant ship from Manila to the San Francisco Bay Area where he finds work as a carpenter.



1940s

The CWFLU becomes the main cannery union known as Local 7.

1946 The Treaty of Manila grants the Philippines independence from the United States.



WWII

1937-1938 The Cannery Workers and Farm Laborers' Union suffers racism and discrimination by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) choosing instead to affiliate with the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

1960s

1962 Lorna's grandparents Maria & Felix Aquino travel by ship from Manila to the San Francisco Bay Area to work as farm laborers in the fields of California picking flowers and peaches.

1965 Larry Itliong & AWOC organize the Delano Grape Strike with over 2,000 Filipino farmworkers. Cesar Chavez joins him with the Mexican workers from the National Farm Workers Association. They form the United Farm Workers (UFW) with Cesar Chavez as the director.



1970s

1970 After years of striking and boycotts, grape growers agree to better wages and greater worker protections.

1971 Larry Itliong leaves UFW.

1977 Philip Vera Cruz resigns from UFW over treatment of Filipino elders and Cesar Chavez's support for the dictator Marcos in the Philippines. By then, many of the union members are predominantly Mexicans and Latin Americans.



1980s

1980 Maria & Felix Aquino return to the Philippines and retire in their home village Bani, Pangasinan

1981 Silme Domingo & Gene Viernes, Filipino American labor activists, were shot in Seattle ordered by the Philippines' dictator and President Ferdinand Marcos.

1982 Lorna's parents Remy & Noly Chui migrate to San Francisco, CA. with their elder children where they find work as laborers. Their children join the U.S. military.



1986 Lorna, and her older brother Felix migrate to San Francisco, CA

1990s

2000s

2010s

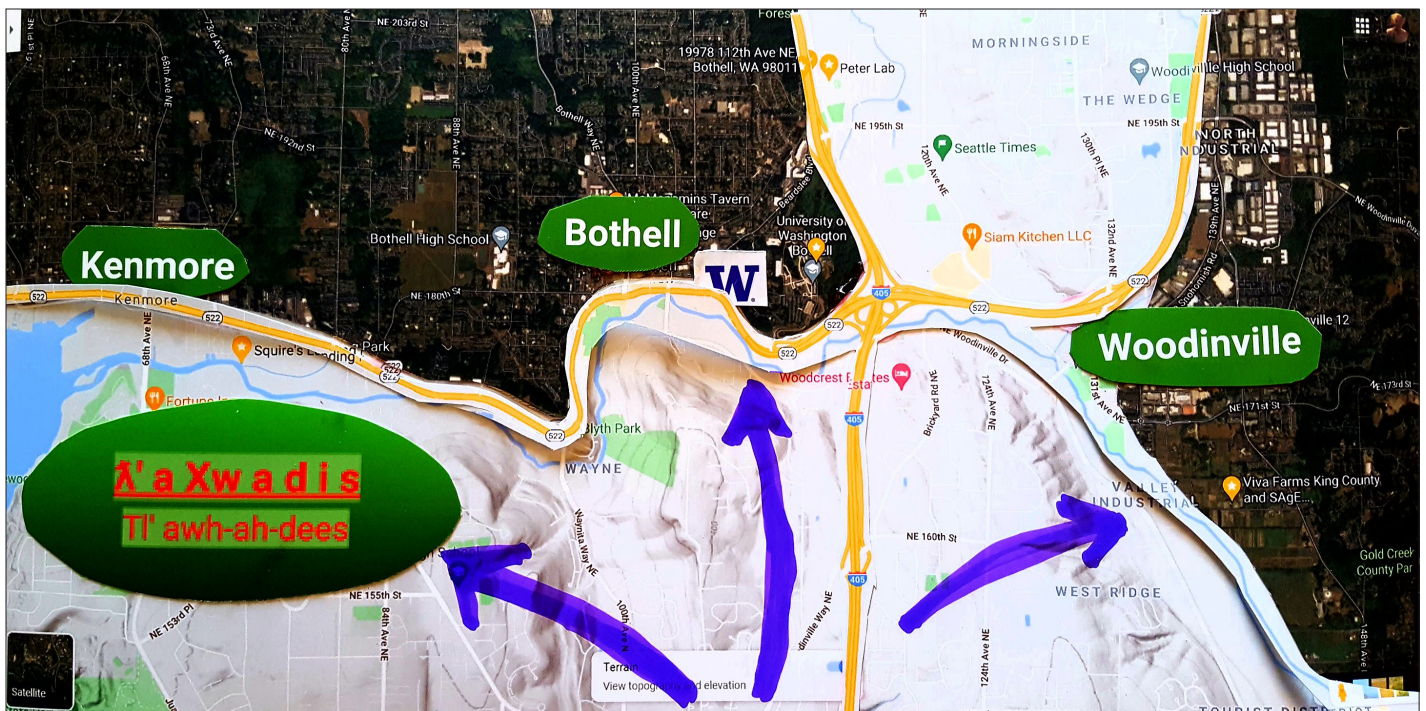
2017



Lorna establishes Sariwa Farm in Woodinville, WA.



Credit: Bothell Crow by Design



Bothell Crow by Design

Learn more about our collaborators!

Viva Farms

Vision: "Preserve sustainable farming by creating a strong and just local food system."

King County Location:

16215 140th Pl NE

Woodinville, WA 98072

Representative: Micah Anderson

Learn more: <https://vivafarms.org/>

Regeneration Farm

Vision: "Produce healthy food in the pacific NW while building a diverse farm ecosystem and educating about landscape regeneration, sustainability, carbon sequestration and resilient farming in the face of climate change."

Location: Viva Farms King County

Farmers represented: Andrew Green and Antoine Wilson

Learn more:

<https://www.regenerationfarmnw.com/>

Root & Rabbit Farm

Vision: "Focus on the entire farm ecosystem: using organic, regenerative and sustainable growing methods to

improve our soil quality and produce nutritious, seasonally ripe vegetables."

Location: Viva Farms King County

Farmer represented: Trevor Miller

Learn more:

<https://www.rootandrabbit.com>

Sariwa Farm

Vision: "Sariwa Farm's main practice is one of bayanihan (mutual support) and resilience whose main tenets include maintaining a healthy lifestyle, limiting carbon footprint, and retaining heritage and cultural traditions."

Location: Viva Farms King County

Farmer represented: Lorna Velasco

Learn more: <https://www.instagram.com/sariwafarm/>

The Color Farm

Vision: "To inspire and support community self-reliance by building shared knowledge and resources around local, natural textiles."

Location: Viva Farms King County

Farmer represented: Max Holden

Learn more: <https://www.thecolor-farmwa.com/>

