



# SAN JUAN ISLANDS AGRICULTURAL SUMMIT 2023 Summary Report



**The 11th annual San Juan Islands Agricultural Summit was held on March 3 and 4, 2023** on San Juan Island. Venues included on-farm workshops, Brickworks Event Center and a full day at University of Washington - Friday Harbor Labs.

The Ag Summit is a valued annual event that provides a unique opportunity for the food and agricultural community from across the islands, and beyond, to gather.

Designed as a space for inspiration, education, and camaraderie, the Ag Summit rotates islands and features keynotes, hands-on workshops, presentations by farmers and regional specialists, panel discussions, meals and social events.

Our 2023 theme, **The Changing Tides of Island Agriculture**, honored the intersections of water and agriculture in the islands, the challenges and opportunities for water use and conservation, as well as the rapidly evolving landscape of our local food system. Ag Summit programming was oriented around four tracks: Plants, Animals, Water and People.



View the full Summit program at:  
<https://extension.wsu.edu/sanjuan/ag-summit>

Program produced by:  
*Kelsey Green & Kristen Arnim*



Let us take a moment to recognize and honor all peoples who have ancestral ties to these lands and waters and who have contributed their labor, experience, and knowledge to nourishing communities since time immemorial. Through the Summit we are continuing to educate ourselves and our community about the historic and current ties of Indigenous communities to stewardship of the San Juan Islands and the surrounding waters.

Throughout the Summit, and in our work and efforts throughout the year, we commit to:

- *Fostering relationships and respect.*
- *Respecting Coast Salish identity, culture, connection to these land and waters, and Usual & Accustomed treaty rights.*
- *Recognition of trauma and what removal from land truly means.*
- *Deepening our understanding of our actions and their impacts, including the real impact of agriculture on Indigenous people in the area, and that land management decisions affect health outcomes of Indigenous people on an individual basis.*
- *Upholding our responsibility to steward the land in a reciprocal and responsible way.*
- *Uplifting and supporting Indigenous stewardship practices, knowledge systems, and adaptive management strategies.*
- *Building connections across cultures and finding ways to facilitate dialogue, bring in voices that have been silenced, marginalized and excluded, and share learning opportunities that bring communities together.*

With humility, we offer this acknowledgment as a stepping stone to deeper understanding, as our community builds connections across cultures and uncovers what it means to inhabit these lands and waters together.

## 2023 PLANNING TEAM

**BROOK BROWER**  
DIRECTOR, WSU  
EXTENSION SJC



**KELSEY GREEN**  
SUMMIT PRODUCER



**KRISTEN ARNIM**  
SUMMIT ASSISTANT



**FAITH VAN DE PUTTE**  
AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE  
COMMITTEE COORDINATOR



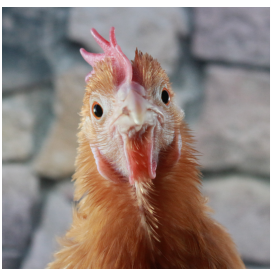
**CAITLIN LECK**  
(SHE/HER), STEERING  
COMMITTEE



**PAULINE CHIQUET,**  
SAN JUAN ISLANDS  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT



**STEPH COFFEY,**  
SAN JUAN ISLANDS  
AGRICULTURAL  
GUILD



**BRUCE ROBINSON,**  
SAN JUAN ISLAND  
GRANGE



**JAIME BEECHUM,**  
STEERING COMMITTEE



**EMMA RASTATTER,**  
SAN JUAN ISLANDS  
AGRICULTURAL GUILD



# 2023 SUMMIT OVERVIEW

## THURSDAY, MARCH 2

### SUMMIT NETWORKING

Early attendees gathered in Friday Harbor to visit and connect.



## FRIDAY, MARCH 3

### SUMMIT HUB

A central gathering place at Brickworks Event Center, for attendees and the public to join, check out resource tables and catch up.



### WORKSHOPS AROUND THE ISLAND

Eight workshops throughout the day around San Juan Island, centered around four tracks: Plants, Animals, Water and People.



### FARMER ROUNDTABLE

A chance for islanders to connect for discussion and idea generation around issues important to them.

### HOEDOWN CELEBRATION

Everyone kicked up their heels at Brickworks Event Center with bluegrass music, delicious island dinner and island drink offerings.



## SATURDAY, MARCH 4

### SUMMIT CONFERENCE DAY

Summit attendees joined at the beautiful University of Washington Friday Harbor Marine Laboratories for the main Summit Conference Day. Keynote Katie Pencke of Alluvial Farms delivered her talk "From Water Conservation to Lard Lip Balm: A Story of Leveraging Challenges to Fuel a Thriving Farm Business". Twelve breakout sessions followed the Summit's four tracks: Plants, Animals, Water, People, and attendees had an opportunity to connect over breakfast and lunch. Kid's programming was available in the morning and afternoon through Little House in the Forest.



### FINAL GATHERING

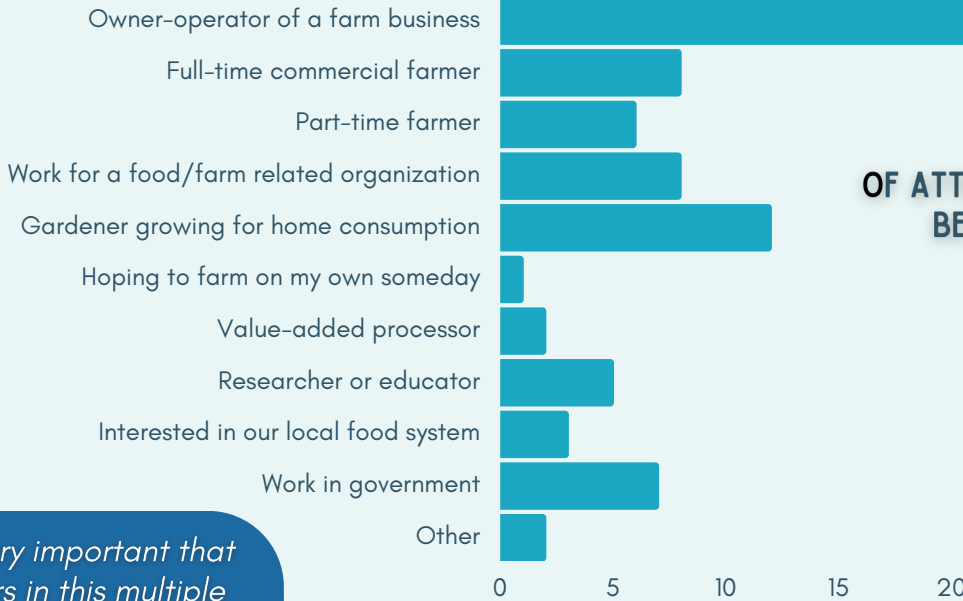
New friends and old gathered one last time to enjoy island brews before heading home.



# PARTICIPATION & EXPERIENCE

## 227 UNIQUE REGISTRATIONS FOR THE 2023 AG SUMMIT

### ATTENDEES



60%

OF ATTENDEES WHO FARM ARE BEGINNING FARMERS

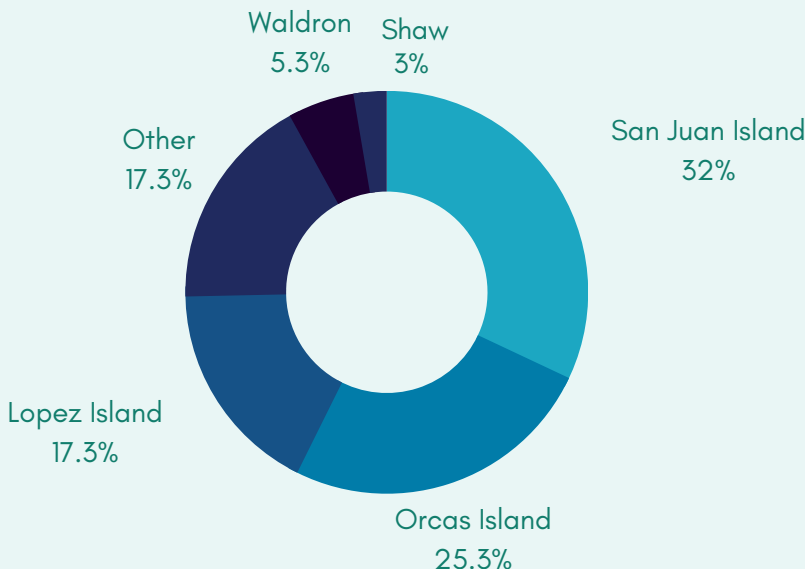


*"It's very important that farmers in this multiple island county have a place to connect, exchange information and learn."*

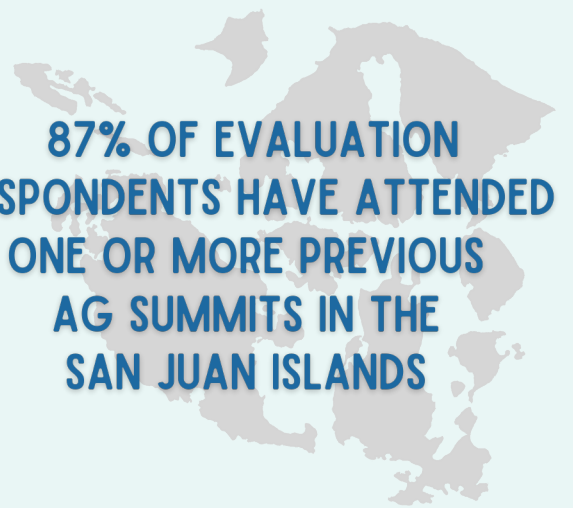
59% OF EVALUATION RESPONDENTS HEARD ABOUT THE SUMMIT FROM AN EMAIL



### ATTENDANCE BY LOCATION



87% OF EVALUATION RESPONDENTS HAVE ATTENDED ONE OR MORE PREVIOUS AG SUMMITS IN THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS



**100%** OF SURVEY RESPONDERS RATED THEIR OVERALL SUMMIT EXPERIENCE AS 'EXCELLENT' OR "GOOD"

**2 DAYS FILLED WITH 8 WORKSHOPS & 12 SESSIONS, PRESENTED BY 38 SPEAKERS WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO NETWORK AND SOCIALIZE**



**4.8**

Average rating on Friday Workshop quality, on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent).

**23** organizations provided resource tables at the Friday Summit Hub

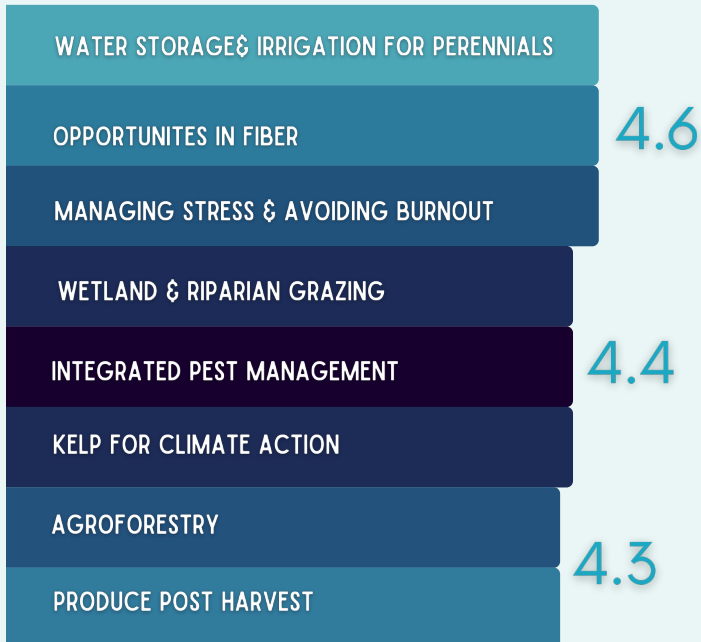


*"Always so helpful to see farms in action."*



**107** people registered to kick up their heels at the hoedown social event! Featuring food from The Market Chef and live music with River Rye Bluegrass and Friends.

## TOP-RATED SATURDAY SESSIONS



Based on participant feedback, ideas for **future Ag Summit topics** include: flower farming, U-Pick operations, infrastructure development, grant writing, Korean natural farming, organic certification, cover crops, haying, biochar, forest health practices, wild fire prevention, economics of small farming, business planning, value-added regulations, fringe crops, composting, growing mushrooms, pruning fruit trees, equitable food access, indigenous views throughout, farm worker housing, climate adaptation, more time for networking, and more of the same!

# IMPACTS & OUTCOMES

ON AVERAGE, 70% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS SAID THEIR KNOWLEDGE CHANGED A "GREAT DEAL" OR "A LOT" BASED ON THE FRIDAY WORKSHOPS

*"I learned about some grant opportunities that may allow us to expand our business."*



*"We attended the "Indigenous Foodways. I left feeling the pressure of the moment, but also hopefulness that many (all?) groups of people can come together to make choices that are significant and effective for our collective benefit. My thinking about the ultimate benefits and success of slow, environment-centered actions is strengthened going forward."*

COMBINED ACREAGE MANAGED BY EVALUATION RESPONDENTS BETWEEN 1,039-3,660 ACRES

*"Thank you so much! I am an aspiring farmer looking to start my own silvopasture so it was great to learn and see it in real life!" (Silvopasture Workshop)*

*"This class will definitely improve our operation." (No-till Market Garden Workshop)*

## CHANGES

Based on the 2023 Ag Summit,

**81%**

of those surveyed said they will make changes in the way they farm/garden.

Based on past Ag Summits,

**51%**

of those surveyed said they made changes in the way they farm/garden.

# THANK YOU TO OUR SUMMIT PARTNERS



WSU EXTENSION  
San Juan County



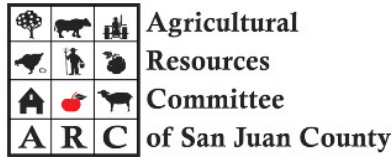
SAN JUAN ISLANDS



CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT  
SAN JUAN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

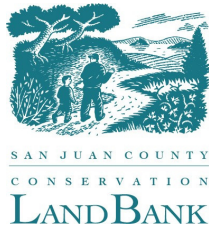


SAN JUAN ISLANDS  
AGRICULTURAL GUILD



# THANK YOU OUR SUMMIT SPONSORS

## SUSTAINING



## FARM CHAMPION

BLACKTAIL  
BASS & BEEF



Washington  
State Department of  
Agriculture

Regional  
Markets  
Program

## FARMER



SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR ANONYMOUS DONORS

# THANK YOU FOR A GREAT SUMMIT!

