

# Cultivating Success

## Sustainable Small Farming and Ranching

Fall 2019



**CULTIVATING  SUCCESS™**  
sustainable small farms education



Skagit  
County

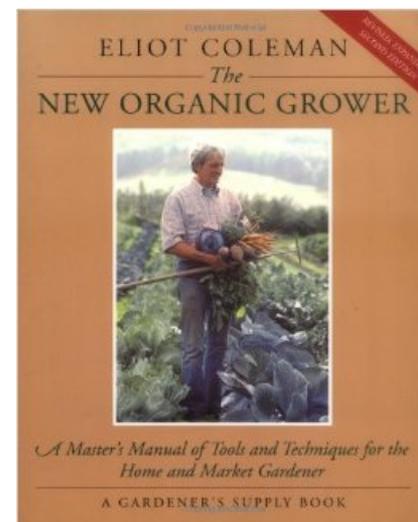
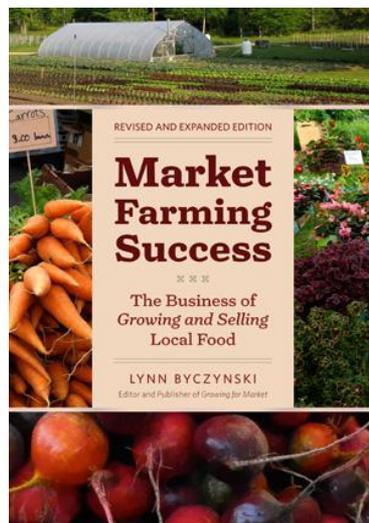
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION



Where Learning  
Comes to Life

# Course Format

- Community member and Skagit Valley Student participants
- Weekly Guest Speakers
- Group Discussions
- Producer Profiles
- Supplementary Readings
- 2 Saturday Field Trips



## Textbook

Market Farming Success – Lynn Byczynski

The New Organic Grower – Elliot Coleman

Additional resources and reading materials provided on course website

<http://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/agriculture/cultivating-success/small-acreage-farming-ranching-course/>

# Course Objectives

- To gain knowledge of the practical aspects of whole farm planning for a wide variety of enterprises
- To gain an understanding of components of sustainable small-scale farming systems
- To gain skills in assessing the feasibility of developing a viable, sustainable, small-scale farming enterprise
- To learn about available resources and support networks for sustainable farming in Northwest Washington
- To develop a whole farm plan that meets social, environmental, and financial goals

Date	Topic
Week 1: September 26	Sustainability Concepts
Week 2: October 3	Developing your whole farm plan
Week 3: October 10	Evaluation of Resources and Enterprise Assessment
Week 4: October 17	Sustainable Crop Production
Week 5: October 24	Ecological Soil Management
Week 6: October 31	Integrated Pest and Weed Management
Week 7: November 7	Market Channels
Week 8: November 14	Sustainable Livestock and Poultry and Grazing Management on Small Acreages
Week 9: November 21	Tools for Success ; NRCS and EQIP Funding
Week 10: November 28	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK
Week 11: December 5	Final Presentations
Field Trip 1: October 5	Festival of Family Farms
Field Trip 2: TBD	Equipment and Facilities

# Participant introductions

- Name
- Interest in the class/farming experience
- Type of production you are interested in

# Looking at sustainability on the farm



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## Sustainable Small Farming and Ranching



# What is Sustainable Agriculture?

Definition by USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education

- Satisfies human food and fiber needs
- Enhances environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends
- Makes the most efficient use of nonrenewable and on-farm resources and integrates, where appropriate, natural and biological cycles and controls
- Sustains the economic viability of agricultural operations and their communities
- Enhances the quality of life for farmers and ranchers and society as a whole

# Three Aspects of Agricultural Sustainability

- **Environmental**

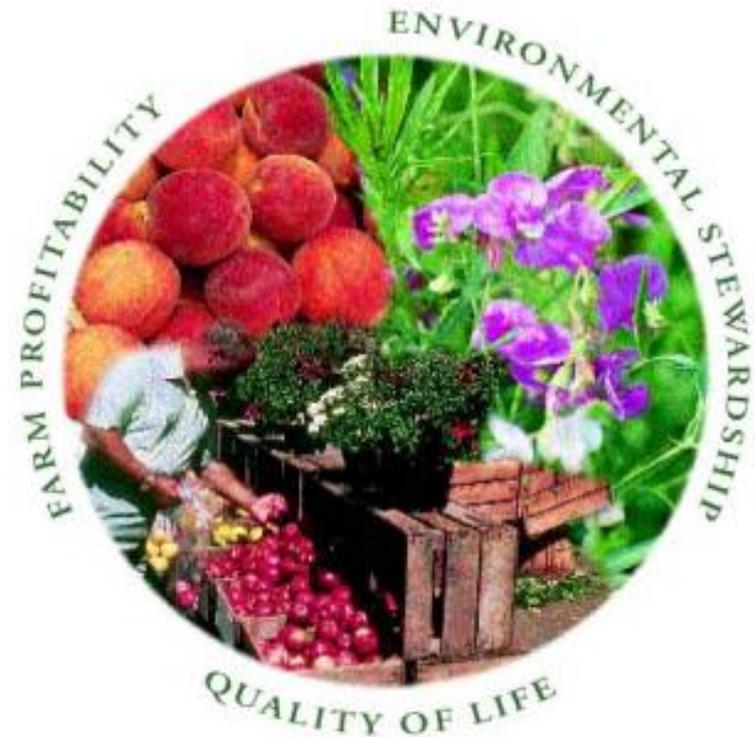
Promoting environmental stewardship

- **Social**

Promoting stable, prosperous farm families and communities

- **Economic**

Providing a more profitable farm income



# Goal 1: Promoting environmental stewardship

- Improving soil quality
- Reducing dependence on non-renewable resources
- Minimizing adverse impacts on safety, wildlife, water, natural resources



# Goal 2: Promoting stable, prosperous farm families and communities

- Building community connection
- Keen attention to health and safety of family and farm workers
- Purchasing local products, inputs, and equipment
- Working for farmland preservation



# Goal 3: Providing a more profitable farm income



- Diversifying product base
- Capturing more of the consumer dollar for products
- Reducing expenses – inputs, fertilizers, etc.



# Tools of Sustainable Farming and Ranching

- Integrated Pest Management
- Soil conservation and building
- Water quality / wetlands
- Cover crops
- Crop and landscape diversity
- Rotational Grazing
- Nutrient management
- Crop rotations
- Season Extension
- Alternative Markets
- Direct Marketing
- Values Based Production
- Value-Added Products

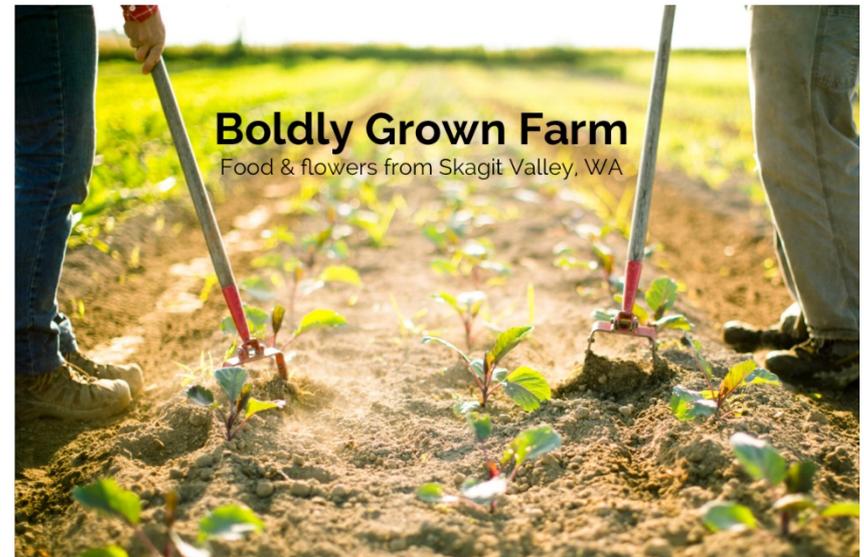
# Creating your Whole Farm Plan

A comprehensive road map for production

- Week by week we will approach the different elements of the farm plan
- By the end of the course you will have developed a whole farm plan specific to your interests and resources.
- For last class each participant will present one component of their Whole Farm Plan.
- Specific elements of the Whole Farm Plan that will be discussed in Week 2

# Producer Profile: Boldly Grown Farm

- Three acres, year three
- Fall vegetables and flowers
- Experience in production and farm management
- Lease at Viva Farms
- CSA, Coop, Puget Sound Food Hub, restaurants,
- Certified Organic



# Readings and Assignments

- Exploring Sustainability in Agriculture SARE
- Applying Principals of Sustainable Farming ATTRA

Links Available on Cultivating Success Skagit County Website

<http://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/agriculture/cultivating-success/small-acreage-farming-and-ranching-course/>