Salt Spring Island
Area Farm Plan Renewal

2020-2030

A guiding document for
SSI agriculture

Prepared for the Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance
March 2020

Prepared by upland agricultural consulting

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Three Working Groups delved expertly into specific subject matter and drafted relevant sections of our renewed plan:

Working Group 1: Regenerative and resilient agriculture
Members: Ruth Waldick (co-chair), Nick Jones (co-chair), Theresa Duynstee, Kaleigh Barton, Angela Mcintrye

Working Group 2: Re-localization and community action
Anne Macey (co-chair), Dolores Bender-Gray (co-chair), Takanobu Okamoto, Angela Mcintyre, Joshua Frisbie, Elisa Rathje

Working Group 3: Protection of small-scale agriculture
Members: Conrad Pilon (chair), Elizabeth White, Susan Grace, Freyja Skye, Dolores Bender-Gray, Ian Clement

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Tony Beck, President, Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance

Acronyms

AFP	Area Farm Plan
AGRI	BC Ministry of Agriculture
AACP	Agricultural Advisory Commission Panel
ALC	Agricultural Land Commission
ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve
ALUI	Agriculture Land Use Inventory
AWDM	Agriculture Water Demand Model
BCA	BC Assessment
BC CAI	BC Climate Action Initiative
GGD	Growing Degree Days
GHG	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
ING	Island Natural Growers
SSI	Salt Spring Island
SSIAA	Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance
SSIFLT	Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust
SSIWPA	Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance

Executive Summary

Vision statement

The Salt Spring community collaborates to produce healthy abundant food from island farms that support a diverse local economy, are regenerative, and resilient to climate change.

Background
The first Salt Spring Island (SSI) Area Farm Plan (AFP) was completed in 2008 to support the long-term viability of agriculture and local food production. Substantial progress has been made on its recommendations. however significant challenges remain, including small farm viability, the immediacy of climate change, and the low income of SSI farmers.

This renewed AFP builds on progress made and intends to further advance agricultural activities on SSI through to 2030. The ability of Salt Spring's agricultural sector to thrive and respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead will be partly determined by the strength of the renewed AFP, and the community's commitment to its implementation. The development of this renewed plan was coordinated by the Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance (SSIAA), with extensive farmer and community participation, including two well attended town halls, a Steering Committee, and three Working Groups.

Accomplishments since the first Area Farm Plan (2008-2019)
Much has been accomplished in the last twelve years, *inter alia*:

- The SSIAA, made of the main farming organization on SSI, was established in 2008 to implement the original AFP.
- The SSI Farmland Trust was established in 2009 and in 2012 acquired a 62- acre parcel in the Agriculture Land Reserve, which has been brought into full production with farm rentals and three acres of community allotment gardens. The Farmland Trust acquired a second property in 2013 – named the Root - which is in development as a local food centre.
- The Salt Spring Abattoir opened in 2012.

There have also been challenges. Human capital and capacity has been a limitation. Securing funding for projects requires additional time from volunteers. The establishment of a composting facility on SSI as a key method to increase agricultural capacity and reduce waste has proven to be a challenging endeavour.

SSI Agricultural Sector today

- There are 2,943 hectares of ALR on SSI, and more than 3,000 additional hectares of land outside the ALR with zoning that allows agriculture and/or that is classified as 'agriculture' by BC Assessment for tax purposes.
- The 2017 Agricultural Land Use Inventory found the following agricultural activities occurring on SSI.

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	Land Cover	In ALR (ha)	Outside ALR (ha)	Total area (ha)
Actively Farmed	Cultivated field crops (including forage and pasture)	769	309	1,078
	Farm Infrastructure	31	21	52
	Greenhouses	2	1	3
Inactively Farmed	Unused/unmaintained field crops	90	45	135
	Farmed Total	**891**	**376**	**1,267**

Most agricultural land is used for pasture (43%), forage (29%), and forage and pasture (19%). Forty five percent of farms are under 10 acres, and an additional 41% of farms are between 10-69 acres. There is significant potential for increasing land under production:

- There are approximately 1,197 hectares of land in the ALR that may be available for farming. Of these parcels, 80% currently have a residential use, but the residential use is also compatible with agricultural activities. There are 32% of privately owned parcels that have no apparent land use – these parcels may provide the simplest opportunities to increase agricultural use as they generally have little to no development and low improvement values.
- Of the 1,197 hectares available for farming, 733 hectares are currently forested. Farming activities such as agroforestry and/or silvopasture activities that retain tree cover are potential uses for some of these lands.
- In 2017 there were 90 hectares of inactively farmed land within and 45 hectares of inactively farmed land outside of the ALR. Bringing these 135 hectares into production may be the easiest opportunity to increase farming on SSI.

In addition, although the age of farmers has also been steadily increasing and now stands at 58.3 years, there have been an increase in the numbers of young farmers. Farming is a marginal economic activity; in 2016, average annual net income was some $9,554 for the 196 farms reporting.

The climate challenge

Modelling suggests that on SSI climate change will bring about an increase in temperature and in Growing Degree Days, a decrease in summer rains somewhat offset by increases in winter rains (due to more frequent extreme storms), and a decrease in the days with frost. Water availability is already a limiting factor for some SSI farmers and water availability during crucial growing periods is expected to worsen with climate change. Other potential impacts include:

- Decrease in productivity and quality of crops and livestock under water stress during summer
- Interruptions to plantings, increase in nutrient and input leaching
- Increase in excessive moisture and site-specific flood risk during winter
- Increase in winter survival rates of pests

Some 40% of SSI Greenhouse Gas emissions come from imported food, which includes emissions of all greenhouse gases from land clearing, agriculture production as well as the storage, transport, processing, retail and consumption of food. Various farming practices that reduce GHG emissions and

sequester carbon in soils and vegetation are already used on SSI, and purchasing foods grown on SSI can help to reduce the overall GHG emissions of the SSI community.

Expected results

The renewed AFP sets our goals, strategies, recommendations and actions that stem from the vision statement introducing this summary. This summary sets out the main intended results of the renewed AFP and how to achieve these. A more detailed implementation plan will be developed to complement this document.

Goal 1: To ensure long term viability of farming and increase local food production on SSI

Context: A lack of financial and human resources is threatening the long-term viability of farming and food production on SSI.

- None of the local farming organizations have paid staff; all are managed by committed volunteers. Development of much needed infrastructure is dependent on community fundraising, and more support from government agencies to secure funding could help craft financially sustainable infrastructure services.
- Local food production makes up less than 10% of the available food on SSI.
- High land prices and the housing crisis on Salt Spring severely limit opportunities for new farm enterprises. Younger farmers are seeking agricultural opportunities but cannot afford to purchase land. There is also an acute shortage of housing on SSI for farmers and farm workers.

Strategies

- Build capacity to implement the farm plan
- Increase cooperative marketing and resource sharing, and strengthen the linkages in the supply chain
- Reduce the cost of farm inputs and increase production efficiencies
- Facilitate increased access to farmland for new entrant farmers

Goal 2: To respond to the climate emergency

Context: Much of the agricultural production on SSI is an exception to global negative trends where agriculture and transport of food is a serious environmental problem; food growing practices on SSI are for the most part small-scale and sustainable. However, more can be done on SSI to increase soil health and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions through agricultural practices that sequester carbon. A robust local food system has the potential to reduce SSI's carbon emissions through increased production, offsetting emissions from more GHG intensive imported food, and through more focus on regenerative growing practices.

The lack of available finished compost on SSI limits the ability of sustainable, regenerative agricultural production and soil carbon sequestration. Best practices for water management for water retention and storage are needed to ensure the availability of water during dry summer months, and for managing excess water in the winter and spring.

Resilient and regenerative agricultural practices such as integrating livestock and crop production, adoption of permaculture practices, agroforestry systems and other methods of increasing healthy ecosystems all contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change, while increasing opportunities for more food production at the same time promoting environmental sustainability.

Strategies

- Build resilience to climate change through agricultural practices
- Promote and build regenerative practices while increasing local food production

Goal 3: To engage the public and governments on the value of buying local food and protecting land for farming

Context: Throughout the AFP renewal process SSI community members emphasized the need to increase local knowledge about agriculture and the benefits of local food production. Equally important is to debunk myths about local food, such as it being too expensive, in order to encourage increased local purchasing. Building upon and expanding partnerships with other organizations, institutions and government is crucial in continuing to create awareness and knowledge to support farmers and food processors.

The SSI agriculture community has been in discussion with local government to ensure land use regulations support sustainable agriculture on the island, including in relation to farmworker housing. Discussions should continue with the Capital Regional District and Islands Trust to ensure policies and bylaws are consistent across jurisdictions and supportive of agriculture. For agricultural production to increase on SSI, farmworker housing must be addressed.

Strategies:

- Provide opportunities for community participation in the local food economy
- Advocate for new and improved regulations that enable farming on SSI

1. A Renewed Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan

The first Salt Spring Island (SSI) Area Farm Plan (AFP) was completed in 2008 to support the long-term viability of agriculture and local food production. In the following 12 years substantial progress has been made on its recommendations; however, significant challenges remain. These include:

- Small farm viability, related to the supply and demand for local food
- The immediacy of climate action and need to preserve biodiversity and build resilient farm systems
- The extremely low median income of farmers on SSI

The renewed AFP intends to build on progress made and further advance agricultural activities on SSI through to 2030, when environmental conditions related to climate change, along with other social and economic factors, will have altered the island in ways both predictable and less so. The ability of Salt Spring's agricultural sector to thrive and respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead will be partly determined by the strength of the renewed AFP, and the community's commitment to its implementation.

2. Background and Context

This background and context section sets the stage for the AFP renewal process. The changes in the agriculture and food sector since 2008 are highlighted, along with current agricultural activities. Prominent environmental aspects such as water resources and the threat of climate change impacts are detailed. Finally, the overall current community support for local food and agriculture and initiatives occurring on the Island are outlined. A stand-alone Background Report accompanies this document, describes the 2008 AFP, and outlines accomplishments from that plan. Highlights from the Background Report are provided below.

2.1 The 2008 Area Farm Plan

In 2006, the SSI Farmers Institute and Island Natural Growers (ING), in collaboration with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, and Islands Trust, initiated the first AFP process. The goals of the AFP were to:

- Re-establish agriculture as a social, cultural and economic priority
- Facilitate the growth of associated farming activities
- Encourage the adoption of environmentally and socially considerate farm practices.

Seven key issues were identified:

1. Local authority for agricultural decisions
2. Protection and use of agricultural land
3. Environmental stewardship
4. Local agricultural knowledge and awareness
5. Supporting infrastructure and services
6. Economic viability
7. Food security and self-sufficiency.

To address these key issues and achieve the vision for food and agriculture on SSI, the AFP made three key recommendations and 22 supporting recommendations. The three key recommendations were:

1. **Establish a Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance**: The Alliance would assume responsibility for the implementation of the AFP from the existing Steering Committee and provide a central contact point and coordinating role for agricultural matters on or involving SSI.

2. **Establish a community farmland trust:** Create a local community farmland trust that can accept, acquire and manage farmland and ensure that it is farmed in perpetuity.

3. **Establish key community facilities that support the expansion of agricultural activities:** Pursue the establishment of key agricultural infrastructure such as an abattoir, and cold storage, processing and composting facilities on Salt Spring.

The plan provided an implementation road map for the SSI Agricultural Alliance to guide and assist the implementation process.

2.2 Accomplishments Since the Area Farm Plan (2008-2019)

Much has been accomplished in the last twelve years. The community investment and achievements to date are a strong foundation for work over the next decade. Since the plan's creation, the three key recommendations from the 2008 AFP have been fully or partially completed:

- The Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance (SSIAA) was established in 2008 to implement the AFP. The SSIAA is a non-profit membership-based organization made up of the SSI Farmers' Institute, ING, SSI Farmland Trust, Transition Salt Spring, SSI Chamber of Commerce, and the Community Market Society.
- The SSI Farmland Trust was established in 2009 and in 2012 acquired a 62- acre parcel in the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR). The site, Burgoyne Valley Community Farm, has been brought into full production with farm rentals and three acres of community allotment gardens. The Farmland Trust acquired a second property at 189 Beddis Road in 2013 – named the Root - which is in development as a local food centre, providing local food storage, processing, demonstration regenerative food production, and a Community Seed Bank. The Farmland Trust is currently working on the development of a Community Composter in collaboration with SSI Community Services.
- The Salt Spring Abattoir opened in 2012.

Other important accomplishments include:

- Two vibrant weekly markets in Centennial Park for farmers and food producers – the Saturday Market and the Tuesday Farmers Market.
- Many new entrant farmers.
- An increasing number of small-scale food processors.
- A climate action initiative that integrates food and agriculture.
- A large bank of regenerative agriculture knowledge in the community.
- Reconciliation work that acknowledges and honours the relationships that First Nations have with the land and the Salish Sea that have fed people in the region for millennia

While there have been many successes implementing recommendations from the 2008 AFP, there have also been challenges. Human capital and capacity to implement all actions has been a limitation, as all organizations implementing the AFP are run by volunteers. Securing funding for projects requires additional time from volunteers. The establishment of a composting facility on SSI as a key method to increase agricultural capacity and reduce waste has proven to be a challenging endeavour. Addressing these challenges and, importantly, ensuring community resources are available to implement the actions will be critical for the successful implementation of the renewed AFP.

2.3 The Salt Spring Island Agricultural Sector Today

To identify the key issues facing the SSI food and agricultural sector and how to address these, we need to understand what changes have occurred and what the sector looks like on SSI today.[1]

Agricultural Land Base and Agricultural Activities

- There are 2,943 hectares of ALR on SSI, and more than 3,000 additional hectares of land outside the ALR with zoning that allows agriculture and/or that is classified as 'agriculture' by BC Assessment for tax purposes.
- The 2017 Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) found the following agricultural activities occurring on SSI.

	Land Cover	In ALR (ha)	Outside ALR (ha)	Total area (ha)
Actively Farmed	Cultivated field crops (including forage and pasture)	769	309	1,078
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- Most agricultural land is used for pasture (43%), forage (29%), and forage and pasture (19%). Most of these forage and pasture activities are taking place on field sizes of four hectares or smaller.
- At least ninety different kinds of vegetable and fruit crops are grown.
- Livestock activities are of a small-scale nature; poultry (meat birds and laying hens) occur on the greatest number of parcels, with less than 100 birds for most farms. Horses, sheep, and goats are other types of commonly found livestock.
- The farm size is small; 45% of farms are under 10 acres and an additional 41% of farms are between 10-69 acres.
- The methods used by farms are generally consistent with small-scale, organic and sustainable agricultural practices, with limited use of chemical pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides.[2] Farmers use a mix of field row and bed planting and use self-made compost and mulches as common

[1] Several existing reports and data sets are used to provide the agricultural context on SSI. The main sources of data regarding agricultural activities are the 2017 Agriculture Land Use Inventory and the Census of Agriculture (2006, 2011 and 2016). Other reports and anecdotal summaries are also used to paint the picture of the food and agricultural sector as it has changed on SSI since the 2008 Area Farm Plan Report.

[2] Agricultural update: produce production on Salt Spring Island. 2016. Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance.

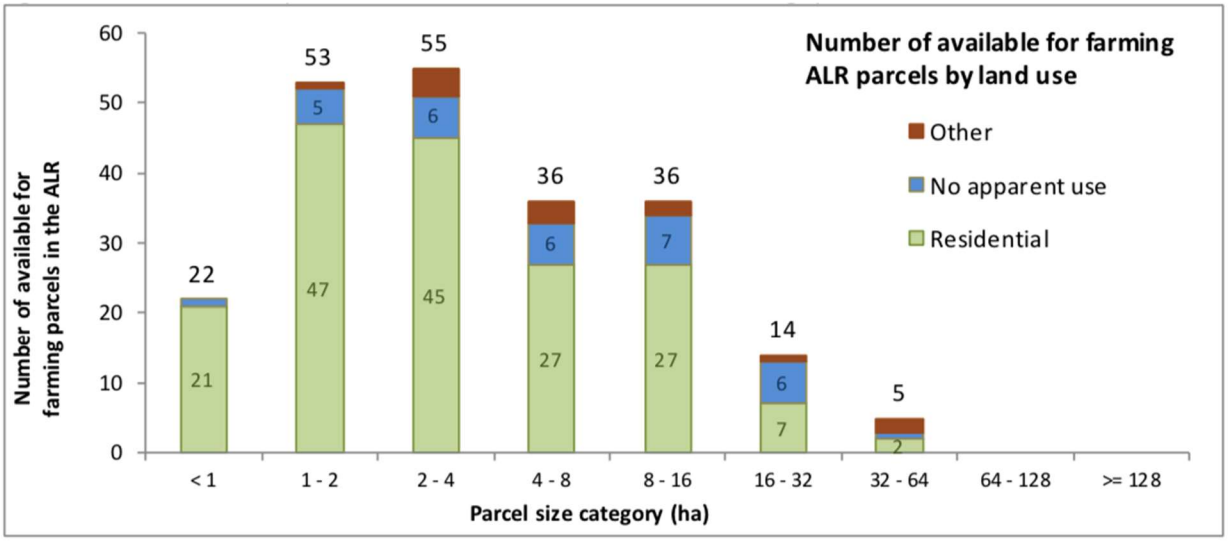
practices. Farm labour is predominantly done using hand tools as opposed to using mechanized systems.

- In 2009, 145,430 kg of produce were commercially grown on 101 acres of farmland.[3] There have been increases since then, but precise data is not available.
- Many SSI farmers build their soils by composting on-farm; however finished compost, soil amendments, and other key agricultural inputs such as livestock feed are trucked onto SSI from off-island.

Potential Land Availability for Farming Activities

- There are approximately 1,197 hectares of land that may be available for farming, on various sizes of parcels in the ALR (Figure 1). Of these parcels, 80% currently have a residential use, but the residential use is also compatible with agricultural activities.[4] There are 32% of privately owned parcels that have no apparent land use – these parcels may provide the simplest opportunities to increase agricultural use as they generally have little to no development and low improvement values.
- However, of the 1,197 hectares available for farming, there are 733 hectares that are currently forested. Farming activities such as agroforestry and/or silvopasture activities that retain tree cover are potential uses for some of these lands.
- As mentioned in the table above, in 2017 there were 90 hectares of inactively farmed land within the ALR and 45 hectares of inactively farmed land outside of the ALR. Inactively farmed land means forage and pasture field crops which have not been cut or grazed during the current growing season (unused), unmaintained field crops, and unmaintained greenhouses. Bringing these 135 hectares back into production may be the easiest opportunity to increase farming on SSI.

Figure 1 Land use and parcel size distribution of available for farming parcels in the ALR. (Source: ALUI)



[3] Salt Spring Island Produce Study. 2010. Patricia Reichert.

[4] These parcels have at least 50% of their area and at least 0.4 ha in land with potential area for farming.

Farm Number and Economic Viability

The number of farms and farm operators has increased on SSI over time (Table 4).[5] However, although the age of farmers has also been steadily increasing and is higher than the provincial average (56.3) there have been increases in the numbers of young farmers.

		2001	2006	2011	2016
Number of Farms		170	167	192	196
Number of Farm Operators		255	245	295	290
Average Age of Farmers		52.4	53.3	57	58.3

Year	Under 35	35-54	55 years & older	Average age of farm operators
2011	10	100	185	57
2016	15	75	195	58.3

https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3210044201&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.2016

- In 2016, 64% of farms reported gross farm receipts of less than $10,000.[6]
- In 2016, total SSI farm expenses were $11,931,661, leaving a per farm average annual net income of approximately $9,554 for the 196 farms reporting.[7]

Food System Supply Chain

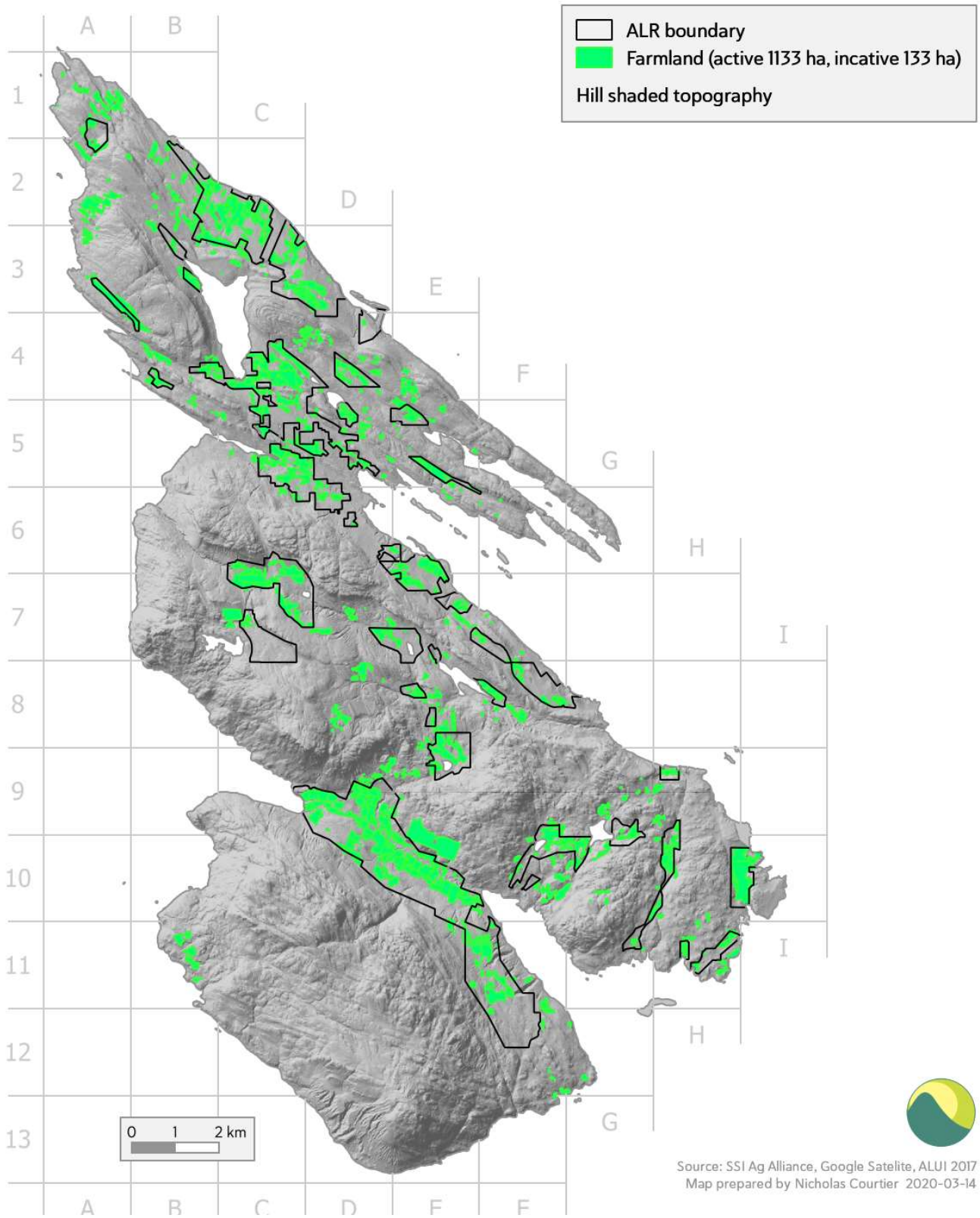
- Many farmers on SSI sell their products through farm-gate methods; directly from farm to individual residents of SSI or to tourists visiting the island:[8]

Farm Products and Sales Channels	Number of farms
Farms selling unprocessed agricultural products	122
Farms selling through farm gate, sales, stands, kiosks, U-pick	115
Farms selling at farmers' markets	24
Farms selling value-added products	22
Farms selling through CSA	12
Farms selling through other methods	2

- The Salt Spring Abattoir processes small-scale poultry, lamb, goats, hog, beef and rabbits.
- There are limited food processing facilities on SSI; however, there are several small-scale processors on the island, many using local inputs.

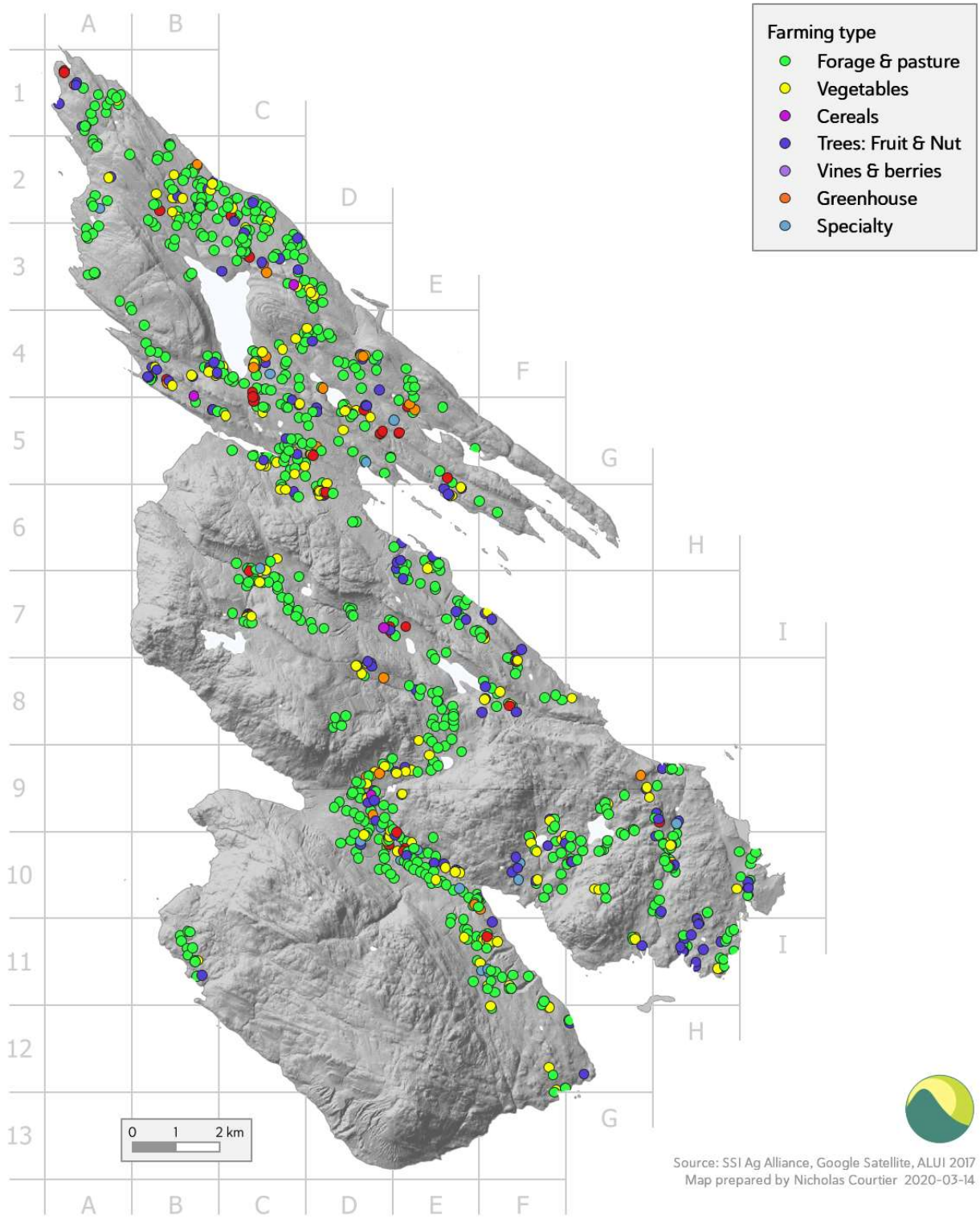
[5] Total Farm Area. 2016. Statistics Canada.
[6] Gross Farm Receipts. 2016. Statistics Canada.
[7] Agricultural Land Use Inventory Salt Spring Island. 2017. Ministry of Agriculture.
[8] Census of Agriculture. 2016. Statistics Canada.

Farming and the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)



Source: SSI Ag Alliance, Google Satelite, ALUI 2017
Map prepared by Nicholas Courtier 2020-03-14

Farming



Source: SSI Ag Alliance, Google Satellite, ALUI 2017
Map prepared by Nicholas Courtier 2020-03-14

2.4 Environmental Context

Climate Change

Modelling suggests that on SSI climate change will bring about an increase in temperature and in Growing Degree Days (GDDs), a decrease in summer rains somewhat offset by increases in winter rains (due to more frequent extreme storms), and a decrease in the days with frost. Potential impacts to agriculture on SSI from these changing weather and climate conditions include, among others[9]:

- Decrease in productivity and quality of crops and livestock under water stress during summer
- Interruptions to plantings, increase in nutrient and input leaching
- Increase in excessive moisture and site-specific flood risk during winter
- Increase in winter survival rates of pests

Some 40% of SSI Greenhouse Gas emissions come from imported food, which includes emissions of all greenhouse gases from land clearing, agriculture production as well as the storage, transport, processing, retail and consumption of food. Various farming practices that reduce GHG emissions and sequester carbon in soils and vegetation are already used on SSI, and purchasing foods grown on SSI can help to reduce the overall GHG emissions of the SSI community.

Water

Water availability is already a limiting factor for some SSI farmers and water availability during crucial growing periods is expected to worsen with climate change. Often on SSI, depending on soil type and crop coverage, a moisture deficit is experienced between May and August, when evapotranspiration losses exceed precipitation levels. Total irrigated area on SSI in 2016 was 143 hectares, which is approximately 11% of the total area farmed.[10] Most of the cultivated vegetables are irrigated (93%), mainly using sprinkler and trickle systems. The vine and berry crops are almost all irrigated (97%) using trickle irrigation systems. The forage and pasture crops are rarely irrigated (6% of forage crops). Both surface water and groundwater sources are used for irrigation. In terms of livestock, horses had the highest demand for water, followed by sheep and beef.[11] The AGRI Agricultural Water Demand Model found that in a future dry scenario (with climate change factored in) it is possible that water demand will be 20% higher than a current dry year. Increasingly dry summer months are likely to mean irrigation systems will be required in the future where they are currently not used.

2.5 Support for Local Food and Agriculture

The weekly farmers markets, CSA offerings, and agri-tourism events are thriving and well-attended by SSI residents and tourists. There are also a number of organizations working to support farmers including the SSI Farmers' Institute, SSI Farmland Trust, ING, Salt Spring Community Market Society and SSIAA. However, the overall proportion of foods available at retailers originating from local producers is small, despite the number of organizations supporting agriculture. A study conducted in 2009 found that production levels by SSI farms was sufficient to feed between 530 and 570 people annually, or the

[9] Cowichan: BC Agriculture and Climate Change Regional Adaptation Series. 2013. BC Agriculture and Food, Climate Action Initiative.

[10] Agricultural Land Use Inventory Salt Spring Island. 2017. Ministry of Agriculture.

[11] Agriculture Water Demand Model - Report for Salt Spring Island. 2017. Ministry of Agriculture.

equivalent of almost 6% of the Salt Spring population through the course of a year.[12] An increase in local food production is needed simultaneously with demand from SSI residents and food retailers for locally grown and processed foods.

Overall this context demonstrates that SSI will face many of the same challenges as small rural communities throughout BC, in particular stresses causes by climate change. The AFP offers the community the means to deal with these stresses while building on past achievements and community support.

3. The AFP Renewal and Community Engagement

Development of the 2008 AFP was a community-driven process and the current AFP renewal built on the success of that process, replicated its community-driven nature through extensive participation, and strived to ensure that future agricultural planning is based on the perspectives and needs of the whole community. As well as being a process that respects the diversity and knowledge of the community, it was recognized that without community participation there would be limited buy-in to implementation.

The SSIAA Board began the AFP renewal process in June 2018 through a general call-out to the community to join the Steering Committee which would guide the process. Members of the Steering Committee represented a variety of stakeholders (farmers, food processing businesses, SSIAA member organizations, local government, agricultural specialists, etc.). Consultants (Upland Agricultural Consulting) were hired in October 2019 through a competitive tendering process to facilitate community input and support drafting of the Plan.

The Steering Committee has facilitated the overall process of updating the AFP, in particular:

- Designing and supporting implementation of the AFP renewal work plan;
- Contributing to identifying key issues and recommendations; and
- Providing input into the draft AFP renewal document.

In addition to the Steering Committee, three working groups were formed to focus efforts on identifying specific solutions to key challenges. The members of the working groups were key in consulting with stakeholders and identifying key recommendations for the AFP renewal.

Two Community Town Halls were held in November 2019 and February 2020. Approximately 90 people attended the first Town Hall, including farmers (both new and established), gardeners, local organizations, including local government elected officials, and the general population. There were however few representatives from the food processing sector, and no representatives from local or regional First Nation governments. During this first Town Hall, the public was introduced to the AFP renewal process, and facilitated discussions occurred around specific key issues (Water, Land Access, Food System, Communication and Collaboration) to gather input into the issues from participants and determine solutions for addressing the key issues. Community input supported the formulation of the first draft of the renewed AFP.

[12] Salt Spring Island Produce Study. 2010. Patricia Reichert.

The second Town Hall meeting in February 2020 saw approximately 75 people provide their feedback on the draft AFP Renewal document. During this Town Hall, the participants had a chance to discuss the goals, strategies, recommendations and actions suggested in the draft AFP. Small group discussions were held on the three draft goals and actions to achieve these goals. Overall, participants were in agreement with the direction of the goals and strategies and provided feedback on details relating to specific actions and the prioritization of recommendations.

In addition to the Town Halls, the Steering Committee reached out extensively to other SSI organizations and stakeholders for feedback and input. Concurrently Transition Salt Spring has been working on the Climate Action Plan for Salt Spring Island (CAP2.0) to respond to the climate emergency and the committees have worked together on developing recommendations related to food and agriculture.

4. 2020-2030 Vision, Goals, Strategies, Recommendations and Actions

4.1 Vision

The SSI community crafted the following vision statement:

The Salt Spring community collaborates to produce healthy abundant food from island farms that support a diverse local economy, are regenerative, and resilient to climate change.

The vision statement captures both the challenges to the future of food production as well as our vision of how to overcome these challenges, and provides direction for the goals set out in 4.2.

The following terms are to ensure a shared understanding of the vision statement

<u>Regenerative Agriculture</u>

Regenerative agriculture is a conservation and rehabilitation approach to food and farming systems. It focuses on topsoil regeneration, increasing biodiversity, improving the water cycle, enhancing ecosystem services, supporting bio-sequestration, increasing resilience to climate change, and strengthening the health and vitality of farm soil. Practices include recycling as much farm waste as possible and adding composted material from sources outside the farm. (from Wikipedia)

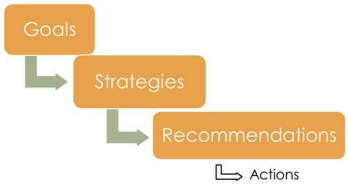
<u>Resilient Agriculture</u>

Resilient agriculture is the ability of the system to withstand shocks and disturbances without losing its function. A resilient agricultural system is capable of self-organization, learning and adaptation that continues to grow crops for the SSI community in the face of unexpected shocks and disturbances.

The vision embraces the idea of community food system where all component parts are interrelated and supportive as illustrated in this diagram (Source: FLEdGE) from

Adopting a Food Systems Approach: A Case Study of Just Food, Ottawa. Nadia Ibrahim

4.2 Goals, Strategies, Recommendations and Actions



Based on good practice in strategic planning, the Renewed AFP is organized into goals, strategies, recommendations, and associated actions (the "results chain" in planning terminology). There is a logical flow from higher to lower level results, and it ensures progress can be tracked over time, and that all relevant actions are included and prioritized. Considerable effort was put into the design to ensure its relevance to community priorities, and it was tailored to meet the needs of both individual farmers and community enterprises.

Three overarching goals have been identified by the community to achieve Salt Spring Island's vision for agriculture and food production. Strategies and associated actions are suggested to reach each goal. The three goals and their recommended strategies and actions represent the AFP priorities and direction for the next ten years. Many recommendations are interconnected and a holistic approach with actions on a diversity of fronts is presented. Implementing the AFP will be an iterative process involving many stakeholders, and the recommendations are not set in stone. They should be reviewed at regular intervals to assess their ongoing relevance and priority.

Table 1 in Section 5 presents a summary of the strategies, recommendations and their associated actions and the level of priority. The organizations and agencies most suited for leading and supporting implementation for each recommendation are also identified in Table 1.

The three goals to achieve the AFP vision are:

1. To ensure long term viability of farming and increase local food production on SSI
2. To respond to the climate emergency
3. To engage the public and governments on the value of buying local food and protecting land for farming

This Section sets out the rationale for each goal, and goes on to outline the strategies, recommendations and suggested actions.

Goal 1: To ensure long term viability of farming and food production on SSI

Local context

A lack of financial and human resources is threatening the long-term viability of farming and food production on SSI. Since 2008, several agriculture and food system organizations have been established to advance the recommendations of first AFP. These organizations have accomplished many of the 2008 AFP goals, and continue to advance local and sustainable agriculture. The organizations help to connect agricultural producers with the services they need, connect producers to eaters, and share knowledge of the benefits of local agriculture and food with SSI residents and visitors, among other food system activities. However, the capacity of these organizations is limited. None of the organizations have paid staff; all are managed by committed volunteers. It is important that gains already made are not lost. Development of much needed infrastructure is dependent on community fundraising, and more support from government agencies to secure funding could help craft financially sustainable infrastructure services. Supporting the existing infrastructure and developing more capacity will increase the viability of all food businesses and expand food production.

While many SSI residents and businesses support local producers, local food production makes up less than 10% of the available food on SSI. The challenge, and the opportunity, is to develop a more functional local market and increase food infrastructure needed to link producers with processors, other food services and eaters. For producers to be economically viable and increase agricultural production, there needs to be an increase in availability as well as incentives to purchase locally grown foods. Individuals, businesses, organizations and institutions all have a role to play. There are opportunities to support farmers who want to diversify their markets to include larger sales to grocers, institutional food buyers, small scale food processors, and tourists. Greater cooperation and coordination among farmers and food processors should also bring benefits including economy of scale and more resilient food production.

High land prices and the housing crisis on Salt Spring severely limit opportunities for new farm enterprises to emerge. As noted above the average age of farmers on SSI is 58, and many will be retiring over the next decade. At the same time, younger farmers are seeking agricultural opportunities but cannot afford to purchase land. The SSI Farmland Trust is providing innovative long-term land tenure arrangements for new farmers at Burgoyne Community Farm, and there is the potential on SSI to provide more land access than currently available. Geography, economics, and cultural preference dictate that Salt Spring farms are small and diverse, which requires labour-intensive farming practices. Skilled labour to increase food production on SSI is lacking. There is an acute shortage of housing on SSI for farmers and farm workers. The problems are not unique to SSI and the solutions for farm succession, increasing skilled labour and farmworker housing will involve working with all government agencies. At the same time in order to protect farmland it is imperative that there is no net loss of ALR land.

Strategy 1.1 Increase capacity, coordination and collaboration among all stakeholders

Recommendation:
1.1.1 Build capacity to implement the farm plan

In order to overcome capacity challenges associated with ongoing volunteer-based efforts, it is recommended that funding be sought to engage contractors to support AFP implementation. Required functions include grant-writing, administrative and management support, organisational capacity building, and project coordination. Emphasis should be placed on collaboration and cooperation across all SSI food and agriculture organizations to coordinate activities.

Actions:

- Seek immediate funding for a consultant to develop an AFP implementation strategy on behalf of the SSIAA and its member organizations and others working to promote local food production.
- Seek immediate funding for a grant-writer to identify and apply for funds in support of the AFP implementation strategy.
- Engage administrative and management support and project coordinators as funding becomes available.
- Secure stable, reliable funding to ensure that people can be paid to do the work that needs to be done.

Strategy 1.2 Increase cooperative marketing and resource sharing, and strengthen the linkages in the supply chain

Recommendations:

1.2.1 Support The Root

The Root promises to be an important part of SSI's food system. It houses the Community Seed Bank, and will include a commercial kitchen with food processing equipment, storage, and space to facilitate the distribution of local food into the community. The property will include a regenerative demonstration food garden and related education programs. Food knowledge, skills training and demonstration of best practices are key mandates.

Actions:

- Secure stable, reliable funding to ensure the maximum potential of this regional facility is realized.
- Fully operationalize the capacity of the facility to support increased food production.
- Support the Root's ability to contribute to achieving community climate action goals related to food and agriculture.

1.2.2 Support ongoing development and sustainable operations at the Salt Spring Abattoir

The community abattoir plays a key role in ensuring livestock production remains a viable option for farmers on Salt Spring as part of a sustainable agricultural system, but it is not yet providing all the services farmers need. Currently the abattoir is dependent on community fundraising and volunteers for on-going success. Solutions for the long-term success and sustainability of the abattoir need to be established.

Actions:

- Explore opportunities for collective and/or coordinated marketing of livestock to meet demand and increase supply of local meat.
- Add infrastructure to facilitate increased production of value-added meat products.
- Increase retail opportunities for selling local pasture-raised meat.
- Investigate operational and other improvements to optimize financial viability.

1.2.3 Connect producers with a diversity of local buyers

To facilitate more local produce being grown and sold on SSI, producers need to know they will have a secure market, and buyers need to know they will receive consistent food quantity and quality. Several producers and grocery stores already have agreements in place with individual farms; however, a larger SSI-wide coordinated effort would enable more produce to be sold in grocery stores. Coordinated crop planning, aggregation of produce and collective marketing to restaurants, food retailers, and CSA programs have the potential to increase sales of local produce.

Actions:

- Design and implement a market development program which may include the following initiatives:
    - collaborative crop planning to meet buyer needs.
    - 'crop substitution' focused in meeting island demand for a single crop over a longer season (e.g. kale).

- diversified marketing opportunities via grocery stores, farmers markets, neighbourhood and island wide box programs, covered market for extended season sales etc.
- incentives for producers to work towards GAP Food safety certification to increase sales to the wholesale market
- on-line inventory and sales platform
- print and on-line resources to connect producers to eaters.

Strategy 1.3 Reduce the cost of farm inputs and increase production efficiencies

Recommendations:

1.3.1 Establish a composting facility on SSI
A local option for organic matter disposal is required both to develop a finished compost product for local farms and to reduce GHG emissions associated with hauling compostable waste off-island and transporting finished compost on-island. A local source of compost will reduce the cost of farm inputs and help to build soil organic matter for increased carbon sequestration, water holding capacity, overall soil health, and increased food production.

Actions:
- Support the Farmland Trust and Community Services in installing a composting facility at the Farmland Trust's Burgoyne Valley Community Farm.
- Organize a system for collecting household Class A compostable materials (e.g. yard and untreated wood residue).
- Ensure methods of composting that will minimize the release of GHG during the composting process.
- Work with local businesses to expand wood chipping, reduce burning of slash, and ensure their support for the composting facility.

1.3.2 Coordinate the purchasing and storage of farm inputs to reduce costs to producers
Currently farmers are trucking in their farm inputs from off island individually. The coordination of bulk purchasing for the importation of farm inputs (compost, water management equipment, etc.) would reduce the cost to producers and reduce GHG emissions from transportation.

Actions:
- Establish a farmers' group/collective to coordinate purchases and transport of inputs.
- Use local SSI equipment and businesses to coordinate bulk purchasing.
- Identify locations for bulk storage of farm inputs.

Strategy 1.4 Facilitate increased access to farmland for new entrant farmers

Recommendations:

1.4.1 Support SSI Farmland Trust's role in land matching activities
Salt Spring has a substantial amount of inactive farmland which, if farmed, has the potential to increase food production. Several landowners on SSI have indicated their willingness to lease their farmland under the right terms and conditions. The SSI Farmland Trust is well positioned to continue acquiring land into trust and facilitate land matching to increase land access for farmers. The SSI Farmland Trust has long-

term tenure agreements and management experience that are a foundation for building a full land matching system on Salt Spring.

Actions:

- Secure financial resources to the SSI Farmland Trust to expand land matching initiatives and farm lease management services.
- Include the following elements in a SSI Land Matching Program:
    - Landowner outreach program;
    - Linkage with Young Agrarians and other online land matching programs;
    - Knowledge sharing;
    - One-on-one consultations;
    - Adaptation of land tenure agreements, including farmworker housing addendums;
    - Management services if requested.
- Consider the agricultural potential of publicly-owned land on SSI and how it might be brought into production using the Capital Regional District Regional Foodlands Access Program Feasibility Study as a guide.

Goal 2: To respond to the climate emergency

Local context

The climate emergency cannot be ignored. Climate change is already impacting agriculture on SSI and will continue to impact food production both locally and globally. Summers are becoming drier and hotter and winters are becoming warmer and wetter. Population growth, agricultural water use and summer droughts have resulted in ground and surface water depletion and deterioration in water quality. Ecosystem biodiversity and health is under threat around the world due to climate change, pollution, over-exploitation, human encroachment and unsustainable agricultural practices. Degraded ecosystems are limited in their ability to deliver the services that are vital to human lives and well-being. Much of the agricultural production on SSI is an exception to these global trends; food growing practices on SSI are small-scale and sustainable. However, more can be done on SSI to increase soil health and mitigate GHG emissions through agricultural practices that sequester carbon. A robust local food system has the potential to reduce SSI's carbon emissions through increased production, offsetting emissions from more GHG intensive imported food, and through more focus on regenerative growing practises.

As previously mentioned, the lack of available finished compost on SSI to build soil organic matter and soil health greatly limits the ability of sustainable, regenerative agricultural production and soil carbon sequestration. Best practices for water management for water retention and storage are needed to ensure the availability of water during dry summer months for food production and healthy ecosystems, and for managing excess water in the winter and spring.

Resilient and regenerative agricultural practices such as integrating livestock and crop production, adoption of permaculture practices, agroforestry systems and other methods of increasing healthy ecosystems all contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change, while increasing opportunities

for more food production at the same time promoting environmental sustainability. The AFP's response to climate change is summarized in the Box below.

> "Salt Spring's agriculture and its local food system both play vital roles in mitigating our contribution to climate change and helping us adapt to the coming changes. Through collaboration of the whole island, from our farmers, gardeners and community gardens, to our schools, restaurants and institutions, we can reduce our GHG emissions and increase our resilience to climate change. By eating locally and using regenerative agricultural practices to grow food, atmospheric carbon is sequestered in the soil and plant biomass, the health of the island's ecosystems is improved, and our community resilience and local food system is strengthened."
>
> – Area Farm Plan Working Group 1

Strategy 2.1 Build resilience to climate change through agricultural practices

Recommendations:

2.1.1 Build resiliency in the local food and agriculture system

Resilience is the ability of a system to withstand shocks and disturbances without losing its function. A resilient agricultural system is one that is able to handle unexpected disruptions without losing the ability to produce food. A key strategy for increasing resiliency is to create redundancy or duplication so that vital components of a system have backups if the primary system fails. In this context redundancy is a positive rather than negative attribute.

Actions:

- Promote redundancy in critical inputs for farming (i.e. backup power, multiple sources of water).
- Promote diversity in crops, livestock, and farm ecosystems
- Increase human capacity through knowledge sharing and skill building.
- Encourage increased food production at all levels from home gardens to commercial farms.
- Showcase resilient systems on demonstration sites and farm tours.

2.1.2 Increase the supply of locally adapted, good quality seed

A reliable supply of good seed is essential for food production and food security and fundamental to developing a resilient food system

Actions

- Work with the Salt Spring Seed Sanctuary and local seed growers to:
    - Preserve and adapt heritage seed for our region
    - Bulk up the supply of locally grown seed for commercial production
    - Conduct trials for ongoing improvement and selection for our region

Strategy 2.2 Promote and build regenerative agricultural practices while increasing local food production

Recommendations:

2.2.1 Improve integrated water management on farms

Water is often a limiting factor in agriculture, and water management will be a crucial factor for producers and growers as the impacts of climate change intensify. Water will become scarcer in summer and more intense rainfall will occur in winter. Growers will need to adopt best water management practices to ensure that the demand for water on farms is met without reducing water availability for the surrounding ecosystem and other human activities.

Actions:

- Compile best practices for water conservation and disseminate to SSI producers and growers (See Appendix B for a preliminary list).
- Promote best water management practices through peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing events; e.g. showcase water management methods on demonstration sites and farm tours.
- Coordinate bulk-buying of water management equipment for SSI producers.
- Create opportunities for farms to share water storage reservoirs for irrigation (ensuring legal rights and agreements of usage are in place).
- Demonstrate feasibility of a water conservation method(s) on farm trial sites.
- Work with water organizations and groups on SSI to promote water conservation.

2.2.2 Build soils and Improve soil heath

A focus on building healthy soils is essential to increasing food production on the island. The limited availability of high-quality compost not only impacts farm profitability, but also opportunities to sequester carbon and increase water holding capacity in soil. Today, organic materials are being shipped off island at considerable cost because there is no composting facility on the island. This must change.

Actions:

- Establish a composting facility on SSI as outlined under 1.3.1
- Look into new technologies and methods for composting different waste streams.
- Work with CRD to purchase chipping equipment to manage wood waste for mulch and composting as an alternative to burning wood/yard waste.
- Promote best practices to build soil organic matter and prevent nutrient loss.

2.2.3 Widely adopt regenerative agricultural practices

Regenerative agriculture is a rehabilitation approach to food and farming systems. It focuses on soil health, increasing biodiversity, improving the water cycle, enhancing ecosystem services, enhancing carbon sequestration, and increasing resilience to climate change. See Section 4.1 for a definition.

Actions:

- Communicate best practices for regenerative agriculture to SSI producers and growers (See Appendix B for a preliminary list).
- Learn from and work with Indigenous communities to revitalize traditional food production, harvesting and foraging.
- Promote increases of food production on land already cleared rather than clearing new areas and encourage additional tree planting in farm landscapes.
- Encourage the use of local sources of compost for soil health.
- Explore potential for biochar on SSI and its role for carbon sequestration.

2.2.4 Promote and showcase resilient, regenerative and Indigenous agricultural practices

Farmers will likely benefit from information on how resilient and regenerative agricultural practices work and support farm economic viability. Many farms on SSI use regenerative agricultural practices. Several options for demonstrating additional regenerative agricultural practices on SSI exist. The SSI Farmland Trust could allocate existing land or could acquire additional land for producers willing to grow using regenerative practices. Indigenous perspectives for food cultivation should be integrated in trials whenever possible. Existing farms on SSI could sign up to trial or showcase different regenerative agricultural systems on their farm such as agro-forestry, silvopasture, or other demonstrations of integrated livestock & cropping systems.

Actions:

- Gather data on regenerative practices already being used on SSI and more widely
- Establish demonstration sites and farm trials on SSI (on several individual farms and/or a demonstration farm)
- Provide incentives for farmers to conduct trials on-farm (e.g. cost-sharing, funding, fees from workshops/tours
- Host workshops and farmer-to-farmer field tours of regenerative practices currently being used on SSI
- Seek funding opportunities for Indigenous food projects and work with Indigenous communities to support the revitalization of traditional food production, harvesting and foraging.

2.2.5 Increase habitat for pollinators across the island

Pollinating insects are crucial for a viable agricultural system. SSI growers and landowners can support the health of pollinators through habitat preservation and adoption of regenerative agricultural practices to increase plant diversity.

Actions:

- Provide information to residents and growers on the different types of local pollinators and plants that enhance their habitat.
- Summarize and share research on ways to prevent pollinator decline (e.g. pesticide use, effects of telecommunication towers and other infrastructure, loss of habitat).
- Monitor and review research on linkages between pollinator decline & EMF technology and advocate & respond accordingly
- Consider the Bee BC partnership program for funding opportunities.

- Consider requirements for sustaining both native bee and honey bee populations

Goal 3: To engage the public and all levels of government on protecting land for farming and increasing local food production

The support for a local food system and protection of agricultural land is influenced by the general public's knowledge and awareness of local food products and farming. Throughout the AFP renewal process SSI community members emphasized the need to increase local knowledge about agriculture and the benefits of local food production. Equally important is to debunk myths about local food, such as it being too expensive, in order to encourage increased local purchasing. Organizations that focus on the local food system and partnerships therein are established on SSI and are well positioned (with increased financial support) to continue to work on advancing the vision of a regenerative and resilient local food system through engagement with the public and various levels of government. Building upon and expanding partnerships with other organizations, institutions and government are crucial in continuing to create awareness and knowledge to support farmers and food processors.

The SSI agriculture community has been in discussion with local government to ensure land use regulations support sustainable agriculture on the island, including in relation to farmworker housing. Discussions should continue with the CRD and Islands Trust to ensure policies and bylaws are consistent across jurisdictions and supportive of agriculture. For agricultural production to increase on SSI, farmworker housing must be addressed. Discussions with the CRD and Islands Trust should be continued to ensure regulations reflect the needs of the agriculture sector. Local regulations will also need to align with those set forth by the ALC for lands within the ALR.

Strategy 3.1 Provide opportunities for community participation in the local food economy.

Recommendations:

3.1.1 Support ongoing program development and activities at The Root facility

The Root has the potential to increase public engagement through demonstration and skills training for the general public and food service businesses, and working with schools, and other educational activities that increase our shared food knowledge that grows our local food system.

Actions:

- Build partnerships between The Root, producers, food retail businesses, restaurants, schools and other local organizations.
- Provide resources to continue program development at The Root.

3.1.2 Expand agriculture and food knowledge among SSI residents and visitors

Share knowledge about the importance of a local food system through collaboration between organizations, new events and programs in fun and creative ways. Appendix B outlines the topic areas

identified as missing by the SSI community that can be used to build knowledge resources. Possible topics: knowledge exchange via Q & A (pool of expertise on local food); produce availability and maps; and resources on the importance of local foods.

Actions:

- Continue to promote local food and agriculture at community events.
- Create an online platform for sharing information about agriculture and food on SSI.
- Host skill-building workshops and other learning activities for community development.
- Build on current work in the school gardens on SSI and create further educational programming for school-age children.
- Further develop an agri-tourism strategy to supplement income for farm businesses while adhering to ALC rules and regulations.
- Identify ways to engage residents and visitors through events, tools and resources (e.g. resources to promote how to "eat local").

Strategy 3.2 Advocate for new and improved regulations that enable farming on SSI

Recommendations:

3.2.1 Broaden Role of Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission

The SSI Official Community Plan already provides for the Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission (AAPC) to advise the Local Trust Committee (LTC) on many matters related to agriculture. The AAPC terms of reference should be updated to allow the group to provide input on agricultural issues beyond land use applications in or adjacent to the ALR. AAPC meetings can be used as a venue to receive and discuss public input on urgent matters related to agriculture. Issues that could be reviewed by the AAPC include farmworker housing, commercial cannabis production, and composting regulations.

Actions:

- Expand the role of the AAPC with LTC and Islands Trust to allow the AAPC to provide consistent representation of agriculture to local government.
- Promote community dialogue about cannabis zoning with local government, cannabis producers and community members.

3.2.2 Work with local government to ensure that policies and regulations support agricultural production and protect farmland

Discussions with local governments (e.g. CRD, Islands Trust) should be continued to ensure regulations reflect the needs of SSI's agriculture sector. Local regulations will also need to align with those set forth by the ALC for lands within the ALR. The LUB is long overdue for an update to bring agricultural provisions into alignment with the OCP. The recent OCP review of strategic priorities identifies potential updates of the existing and generally strong provisions for agriculture, and is a preliminary step for the bigger task of updating the LUB. The update of the OCP and LUB provides an opportunity to include the relevant recommendations provided here.

Actions:

- Place agriculture/local food production as a top priority in the Islands Trust strategic plans.
- Include "no net loss" of agricultural land (both land within the ALR and productive land outside the ALR) provisions in the OCP and LUB and ensure there is no removal of prime agricultural land.
- Align wording and provisions in the LUB and OCP relating to agriculture
- Ensure that local government decisions do not create barriers to the production of agricultural Class A compost that aligns with provincial government regulations.
- Request tax-based support of agricultural infrastructure on SSI, similar to other community supported infrastructure and facilities.
- Carry out advocacy work at the provincial as well as local level to put in place policies supportive of small to medium scale agriculture.

3.2.3 Increase availability of farm worker housing to keep new farmers and skilled labour

Adequate, compliant housing is a prerequisite to increased agricultural production on SSI. Apart from the small number enrolled annually in the seasonal foreign worker program, there is little data on the number of farmworkers on SSI or their housing conditions. The numbers of individuals living year-round and seasonally on farms in non-compliant accommodation is also unknown. CRD and Island Trust policies and bylaws should be consistent across jurisdictions and supportive of agriculture.

Actions:

- Include farmworkers as a subset in CRD/Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment reports for SSI.
- Conduct a survey of farmers and farmworkers to determine housing needs and develop and implement a remedial plan of action based on this survey.
- Investigate Temporary Use Permits as an avenue for farmworker housing outside the ALR.
- Make standard provisions for farmworker housing within the OCP/LUB regardless of zoning; encourage ALC to review SSI provisions for farmworker housing in the ALR on SSI and provide their feedback.
- Provide consistency in the OCP/LUB so that farmworker housing and farm business provisions apply to all zones where agriculture is a permitted use.
- Require use of an annual Statutory Declaration and/or other mechanisms (Housing Agreement, Covenant) to ensure that both year-round and seasonal farmworker housing is used only for farmworkers.
- Explore an 'eco village' designation on a "home plate" portion of a property with a farm business to enable families that co-own a farm to live and work on their property if it is outside the ALR.
- Reduce the environmental impact of farmworker housing through design by requiring rainwater catchment systems and encouraging the use of composting toilets and greywater systems.

5.0 Implementation Strategy

Four priority areas for implementation were identified.

1. Complete infrastructure projects envisioned in the first Area Farm Plan
    a. ROOT
    b. Community composting
2. Source funding and hire people to implement projects that have potential for significant positive impact on farming and food production on SSI.
3. Focus on opportunities for more collaboration among producers to strengthen their businesses and the local food system
4. initiate a land matching program to provide more opportunity for farming and food production on existing farmland.

Further work on the implementation strategy and action plan was halted with the need to response the COVID -19 pandemic. An Emergency Agriculture Response and Recovery Plan was developed building on the recommendations identified in this Area Farm Plan Renewal document. Priorities for immediate action were quickly identified given the importance of food production as an essential service in a time of crisis and the major adaptations required of farmers to operate in the new reality. The time frame of the Emergency plan is three months (see http://plantofarm.org/covid-19 for more details). The Recovery Plan will transition into the Implementation Strategy for the Area Farm Plan Renewal based on revisiting the recommendations and determining new priorities from the lessons learnt in 2020.

Table: Summary of Goals and Recommendations at 11 March 2020 – to be revisited as indicated above and developed into an Implementation Plan for the next 5-10 years.

Goals and Recommendations	Priority	Lead Organization	Supporting Partners
Goal 1: To ensure long term viability of farming and food production on SSI			
1.1.1 Build capacity to implement the farm plan			
1.2.1 Support The Root			
1.2.2 Support ongoing development and sustainable operations at the Salt Spring Abattoir			
1.2.3 Connect producers with a diversity of local buyers			
1.3.1 Establish a composting operation on SSI			
1.3.2 Coordinate the purchasing and storage of farm inputs to reduce costs to producers			
1.4.1 Support SSI Farmland Trust's role in land matching activities			

Goal 2: To respond to the climate emergency			
2.1.1 Build resiliency in the local food & agriculture system	Long term		
2.1.2 Increase supply of locally adapted, good quality seed			
2.2.1 Improve integrated water management on farms			
2.2.2 Build soils & improve soil health			
2.2.3 Widely adopt regenerative agriculture practices			
2.2.4 Promote and showcase resilient, regenerative and Indigenous agricultural practices			
2.2.5 Increase habitat for pollinators across the island			
Goal 3: To engage the public and all levels of government on protecting land for farming and increasing local food production			
3.1.1 Support ongoing program development and activities at The Root facility			
3.1.2 Expand agriculture and food knowledge among SSI residents and visitors			
3.2.1 Broaden Role of Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission			
3.2.2 Work with local government to strengthen regulations to support agriculture and enable production	Short term		
3.2.3 Increase availability of farm worker housing to keep new farmers and skilled labour	Short term		

Appendices

Appendix A – Explaining the terms relocalized agriculture, regenerative agriculture and resilient agriculture.
Appendix B – Community ideas for sharing knowledge
Appendix C – Funding opportunities

These are to be found in a separate resource document