

Biogaian Meeting 1/28/25

Facilitator: Brent Scribe: Patricia

Laura, Ka, Eileen, Reuben, Patricia, Helen, Brent, Anita, Brian, Sylvan

- Compost update (Reuben) would like to open the conversation about building a new compost system and talk about the worms. A small group is getting ready to begin working on options. (Laura, Anita, Helen, Reuben) Anita has some new innovative ideas from Elaine Ingram.
 - Compost piles are ok, removed the lids because they were getting too broken and they are heavy, but the piles are getting a bit too wet. Thinking about covering with greenhouse plastic and coffee bags.
 - Several people are helping make piles – David, Diane, Anita....
 - Trying to make piles every two weeks
 - There is a lot of compost waiting to be processed – we tend to get behind in the winter. Four full bins is the minimum to build a pile.
 - Need to begin thinking about a rebuild or/and expanding
 - When designing a replacement/new system – consider rat mitigation, location? Making the fencing a separate design item.
 - Hazel has a perennial worm bin that she can harvest both the worm castings and worm tea from....field trip?
- Honeybees have been ordered and they will be here in April
- David's arborist tool – We decided in December to use \$700 left in our tool budget to buy a long battery powered saw. It didn't get purchased and needed a battery pack and now the cost is \$1000. Have to decide to take it out of our reduced supply line and/or the contingency fund that is going to be used for arborists. We really need David here to discuss this further.
- Have you seen our new posting on WWOOF website? Go look at it! Have gotten some inquiries since it has been posted.
- Garden log - useful but takes a lot of time. The data entry is the time consuming part. Sylvan is willing to take the totals and make an art project out of it. Could we do it digitally? Maybe we could add the totals that way. No longer needed to demonstrate that the harvest justifies the program – also a celebration of the abundance. Might also be needed for grants that we might ask for. If you really want it to consider then we need to find others willing to do the data entry.
- Sylvan's gift – finding a location for a root cellar. Brian is willing to walk around with Sylvan to look for an appropriate place. This is part of the contribution that Sylvan offered for the work on the property.
- Garden wall by eggplant – We need to find an appropriate date (weekend) to build it. The idea that Nartano had was adopted (one used behind Unit 3 and Unit 11) and all of the materials were purchased last year. Will allow us to match the height of the soil a bit better. Need a good plan for the steps and the gate that goes in the southwest corner. David and Sylvan are planning on working on that. Scheduled for April 12th.
- Fig tree on Unit 3 terrace – just pull it out. Sylvan said it is not a great tasting fig.
- Dry Farming expansion and relocation of blueberries and golden raspberries. We intend to plant again in the tomato area from last year. We have also talked about a few other places where blackberry has been dug out near Patricia's and the cleared hügelkultur by the eggplant. Got some resources from Eliza. Ellen has some seeds from a dry-farmed melon

that she would like to add to the list. Sylvan is willing to do a class on melon planning in February.

- Contract labor budget and MDs
 - Contract Labor Planning Group (Misty Dawn, Helen, Patricia, Anita, Brian and David) to Define Labor and Coordination for Misty Dawn's Team; including labor status (employee or contractor), taxes, Social Security contributions, and Workman's Compensation contributions.
 - March to November experiment by Misty Dawn's Team to connect with Land Care knowledge keepers and labor to document Landcare Processes/Procedures/Norms and seek improvements (example: Tool Care/Cleaning/Sharpening).
 - We need to know more about the legal issues around hiring contract labor. Brian did some research on the issues. The question is whether we need Washington L&I insurance in case someone is injured. If someone got injured, then we would have to pay the cost of the L&I and a penalty. The contractor exemption has changed and we would no longer be exempt. The ballpark cost of Worker's Comp for agricultural workers is 2% of wages.
 - We need to know how much might be available from other Songaia projects to make a decision about how much to offer Misty Dawn for the coordination.

PARKING LOT: for future decisions requiring detailed planning for implementation.

- Songaia sign area – Sylvan has not yet gotten to it.

Meeting Evaluation:

What went well?

- It is only 8:15
- The text on the board is readable
- Almost all the key people were here
- We started closer to 7
- Brent is a good facilitator

What could improve the process?

- Have the agenda out beforehand
- Have a check-in question

Next Meeting: Tuesday (2/25/25)

Facilitator: Sylvan

Scribe: Brian