



# FIELD NOTES

KITSAP'S LOCAL AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND SEASONAL NEWS

## THE GIFT OF SUMMER

As we find ourselves fully immersed in the busiest season of the year, it's important to pause every now and then and simply notice. Notice the birds singing in the trees before the rest of the world has woken. Notice the quiet contentment of the animals around us. Notice the people who step in to help when we need it - whether we ask for it or not.

Summer can often feel like a season of constant motion, especially if you have children home on vacation, a career to balance, a household to manage, crops to tend, or farmers markets to attend. The world seems to speed up. Yet we can be intentional about slowing down and taking in the abundance that surrounds us during this time of year.

For most of the year, I find myself looking forward to summer. When it's cold, I long for the warmth. When it's dark, I look forward to the light. When life feels full between farming, off-farm work, children's sports and music lessons, and everything else that fills our calendars, I find myself dreaming of the slower pace of summer.

And then summer arrives.

The farm is bustling, the days are long, and the work can feel all-consuming. These are the moments when it becomes most important to pause, look around, and appreciate that the very thing I've worked so hard for is the bounty right in front of me.

My hope for you this summer is that, amid the busyness of the season, you find pockets of time to return to yourself - to take a deep breath, feel your heart beating, and experience gratitude for all that surrounds you.

Blessings to you and yours,

Karissa Holcombe  
KCAA Vice President

# SAVE THE DATE: THE 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL KITSAP FARM TOUR!



**The 4th Annual Kitsap Farm Tour will take place this year on August 8th & 9th, 2026, from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.!**

The Farm Tour is a free, self-guided event that invites the public to explore farms across Kitsap County at their own pace. The tour is organized by the Kitsap Agritourism Coalition (KAC) – a group of local farmers working together to promote agritourism in the county, with support from WSU Kitsap Extension, sponsorship from Visit Kitsap Peninsula, and fiscal sponsorship through the Kitsap Community & Agricultural Alliance (KCAA).

This year's tour expands to two full days. Most participating farms will be open both days, but some farms are open for only one day, so please check each farm's listing and review their Operating Hours before you go.

Admission is FREE, with a suggested one-time donation of \$10 per family/car. Donations help support KAC and continue to grow and improve the Farm Tour for future years. To stay informed, follow the [Kitsap Farm Tour Facebook page](#) for updates.

The Farm Tour is always in need of volunteers! Save the dates and be on the lookout for more information on how to volunteer at one of the host farms below:

## **NORTH KITSAP FARMS:**

Bainbridge Vineyards  
Bluetree Farm and Forest  
Tilthy Rich Farm  
Beaver Bend Farm  
Farm Kitchen

## **CENTRAL KITSAP FARMS:**

Courter Country Farm

## **SOUTH KITSAP FARMS:**

Red Roof Ranch  
EB Daniel's Farm & Garden  
Dragon Wheels Farm  
Olalla Vineyard & Winery

# 2026 KITSAP FAIR AND STAMPEDE



★ Freedom Built ★ Tradition Raised ★

The 2026 Kitsap Fair and Stampede is scheduled to take place from August 26-30 at the Kitsap Fairgrounds in Bremerton, WA.

Highlights will include the Junior Livestock Auction, FFA and 4-H exhibits, PRCA-sanctioned rodeo and Xtreme Bulls, live music performances, and a midway carnival.

**The KCAA is proud to support the next generation of Kitsap agriculturalists.**

The Junior Livestock Auction at the Fair is something that the KCAA is exceptionally passionate about, giving young farmers the opportunity to put months of hard work into practice while learning responsibility, animal husbandry, business skills, and the value of seeing a project through from start to finish. This year, **KCAA and the Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau** partnered on the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Junior Livestock Youth Scholarship. Together, we provided 21 scholarships to help cover the upfront costs of some of our youth's animal projects.

In addition to the 21 scholarships, KCAA is also donating \$20 to each youth project in the 2026 auction. We're proud to invest directly in the young people who are helping build the future of agriculture in Kitsap County.

Join us in supporting our young farmers at the Junior Livestock Auction on Saturday August 29 at 12:00 pm at the Swine Ring - right beside the horse barns. This year's auction will feature beef, lamb, pork, goat, rabbit, chicken, duck and turkey projects.



## THE BERRY THAT BRINGS US TOGETHER

The 2026 Bremerton Blackberry Festival returns to the Bremerton waterfront over Labor Day weekend, September 5-7. With more than 150 vendors offering handmade goods, berry-themed products, and tasty treats, there's plenty to explore.

Add live entertainment, beautiful waterfront views, and a whole lot of community spirit, and you have a festival that's as fun and flavorful as a handful of fresh-picked berries! More info at: [www.BlackberryFestival.org](http://www.BlackberryFestival.org)



Friends of the Farms

## FARM-TO-TABLE DINNER

*Annual Celebration*

August 14, 2026 - 5:00pm

6974 Island Center Rd, Bainbridge Island  
(formerly Garden Country School)

Buy your tickets here  
or by visiting  
[friendsofthefarms.org/rsvp2026](http://friendsofthefarms.org/rsvp2026)



Early bird tickets, available through July 17th - \$160  
Regular tickets - \$175

## FARMER SPOTLIGHT: CYNTHIA MORA - THE FARM ON RODSTOL LANE

There are people who spend a lifetime becoming experts. And then there are people like Cynthia Mora, who are always learning something new.

Cynthia, also known as "*Farmer Rosie*," and her husband Tony Mora own, **The Farm on Rodstol Lane** in Port Orchard.

KCAA's Erika Anderson recently sat down with Cynthia to talk about how she got started in farming, the lessons she's learned along the way, and how those early beginnings have shaped the farm she has today.



**Cynthia & Tony Mora**

**Erika:** When I asked Cynthia how she became a farmer, she didn't begin by talking about crops, livestock, or the property itself. She began with a confession.

*"I didn't know anything about farming."*

Years ago, when she and her husband, Tony, decided to purchase the family farm, Cynthia knew one thing: If they were going to make it successful, they had a lot to learn.

**Cynthia:** *"We knew we were going to buy the farm, and I thought, 'Well, if we're going to do this, I better go learn.'"*

That decision led her to a WSU Extension 'Sustainable Farming' Workshop. She expected practical knowledge - how to grow food, improve soil, care for livestock, and build a working farm. Instead, she found something much bigger.

*"It was fantastic. It taught me so much,"* she recalled. *"And it connected me to people that really became my mentors."*

As Cynthia reflected on those early years, every story began with another person's name. Before she talked about what she had accomplished, she talked about the people who had encouraged her.

Marilyn Holt.

Diane Fish.

Sharon Howard.

And, before long, Nikki Johanson.

Cynthia laughed as she remembered her instructors insisting there was someone she needed to meet. *"They kept saying, 'You really need to meet Nikki.'" (Pheasant Fields Farm in Silverdale)*

When they finally met, Cynthia understood what everyone had been talking about. *"We just connected, like she does with everybody. You just become her friend. She wants you to succeed. She'll help you do whatever she can. She'll be a voice for you."*

It's a simple story, but I think it says a lot about the agricultural community in Kitsap County. People shared what they knew. They introduced each other. They helped each other get started. There was always someone willing to answer a question or point you in the right direction.

The WSU Extension course ended, but Cynthia's learning didn't stop there. Whenever she had the chance, she sought out farmers with more experience. She worked alongside Sharon Howard to learn how to process poultry. She asked questions, listened, and watched.

Then Cynthia used a word that stuck with me. *"I just really made a point of staying in touch with people... to glean from them."*

### **Glean.**

Farmers use the word "glean" to describe gathering what remains after a harvest, making sure nothing useful goes to waste.

Cynthia used it to describe how she learned. She listened to experienced farmers, asked questions, and took away whatever she could from each person she met. One lesson at a time, she built her knowledge.

### **An Invitation**

One of the more surprising parts of our conversation came when I asked Cynthia about community-supported agriculture. I expected her to describe a traditional CSA - weekly boxes of produce and members sharing in the seasonal harvest. Instead, she smiled and shook her head.

*"No CSA," she said with a laugh. "I'm really intimidated by that. I don't have those skills... or really, the desire. What I really wanted to create here was a place for community."*

Cynthia isn't inviting people to the farm just because she has vegetables to sell. She wants them to come, spend time there, and experience what a farm can be.

**A place where people can come together.**

**A place where children can learn about agriculture.**

**A place where curiosity can take over.**

One of my favorite stories from our conversation was when Cynthia talked about mushrooms. After hosting a workshop with Jen Clark (*Roots Farm in Poulsbo*), she inoculated a pile of straw with wine cap mushroom spawn. Months passed before anything happened. Then one day, while she was mowing the orchard, she spotted mushrooms coming up through the mulch. She immediately grabbed her phone.

*"I called Jen and said, 'Jen! It works! I grew mushrooms that I can eat!'"*

Then she laughed at herself. *"I'm kind of an easy lead."*

That little story says a lot about Cynthia. Even after twenty years of farming, she still gets excited when she learns something new.

When our conversation turned to **Farm Camp**, she didn't start with lesson plans or schedules. She talked about the kids.

*"They'd dig up potatoes," she said. "They'd find one... then another... then another. They thought it was treasure!"*

Some had never gathered eggs. Some had never met a chicken. Some had never stood in a field and realized that carrots, onions, strawberries, and potatoes grow in the dirt.



***"I didn't need the farm to be full of food. I wanted it to be full of people who cared about food."***  
**- Cynthia Mora**



*"I wanted people to experience agriculture - not just read about it. There's something special about meeting the animals and seeing the farm come alive."  
- Cynthia Mora*

As we talked about the workshops, Farm Camp, and all the different ways people have gathered at the farm over the years, I started thinking about how much the farm has changed - and how much the way farms connect with their communities has changed, too.

Like many small farms across Washington, The Farm on Rodstol Lane grew during a time when farming was becoming harder to sustain. Selling produce alone often wasn't enough to keep a small farm going, so farmers began looking for other ways to make it work. For some, that meant opening their farms to the community through agritourism, educational programs, workshops, festivals, and other events.

For Cynthia, those experiences had always been part of what she wanted the farm to be, but making that happen turned out to be more complicated than she expected. As regulations around agritourism and on-farm events changed, so did the challenges of running a farm that welcomed the public.

*"It was hard,"* Cynthia admitted. She talked about how disappointing it was. Not because the plans had changed, but because it became harder to bring people together.

Throughout our conversation, Cynthia returned again and again to the same idea. **She wanted people to experience agriculture.**

Not read about it.

Not hear someone else explain it.

Experience it.

When some of those opportunities became harder to offer, Cynthia had to figure out what came next. She could let go of the vision, or she could find another way to make it happen.

Instead of dwelling on what was no longer possible, she started thinking about what she could still do. Some events changed or became smaller. New partnerships came together, and different educational opportunities took shape. The farm kept finding ways to welcome people whenever and however it could.

Years earlier, when Cynthia was learning how to farm, she had asked for help. She found people willing to teach her and farmers willing to share what they knew. When she wanted to build community, she opened the gates. And now, faced with a new challenge, she did what she had done from the beginning: **she found another way.**

She wants people to have a reason to come to the farm to gather, learn, ask questions, and get curious.

That curiosity has been part of Cynthia's story from the beginning. It's what led her to take that first farming class. It's what pushed her to seek out experienced farmers and "glean" from what they knew. And it's still what brings people through the gates today.

## **Still Growing**

When I asked what gives her hope for the future of farming in Kitsap County, she talked about people. Young farmers willing to try something new. Families who want to know where their food comes from. Neighbors who choose to shop locally. People who are curious enough to ask questions.

And those questions make her hopeful. Because she remembers asking them herself.

*"If somebody wants to learn,"* she told me, *"I'm happy to share what I know."* Then she added, *"I'm still learning, too."*

## The Harvest

For some farmers, legacy is measured in acres. For others, it's the crops they've grown or the businesses they've built.

When I asked Cynthia what she hoped people would remember about The Farm on Rodstol Lane, she didn't talk about any of those things. She talked about people.

She hopes people remember the farm as a place where they felt welcome. A place where they could ask questions without feeling like they should already know the answers. A place where kids could discover where their food comes from, families could spend time together, and people could simply reconnect with the land around them.

### And maybe that's the real harvest.

As the conversation wrapped up, I asked Cynthia what she was most proud of and she didn't hesitate.

*"Community."*

It made sense. So much of her story came back to the people she had met along the way. She learned from them, built friendships with them, and eventually became someone others could learn from, too.

Cynthia once told me she didn't know anything about farming. What she did know was how to ask questions, listen, and learn from the people around her.

That's still a big part of what happens at The Farm on Rodstol Lane today. People come to learn, ask questions, spend time together, and sometimes just see what's growing.

As KCAA works to strengthen the connection between our community and the farmers who grow our food, Cynthia's story is a good reminder that farming is about more than what comes from the soil. It's also about the people who are willing to share what they know and help someone else get started.

Sometimes it's as simple as answering a question or teaching a child how to dig up a potato.

Sometimes it's just opening the gate.

Cynthia has been doing that for years.



**Community Event on the Farm**

***"What I really wanted to create here was a place for community."  
- Cynthia Mora***



Seasonal Recipes  
that we're loving!

# Savor the Season

## Cucumber Tomato Salad



*You only need five minutes of hands-on time to make this flavorful summer salad in three steps:*

### Ingredients:

- **1 large English cucumber:** quartered lengthwise and sliced into 1/2-inch pieces
- **1 lb. chopped tomatoes:** Use whatever kind of tomato you have - from heirlooms to Romas.
- **Kosher salt and black pepper:** 1 1/4 tsp. kosher salt, 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- **2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil:** Helps dress the cucumbers and tomatoes and provides the base of the dressing.
- **2 Tbsp. Sherry vinegar:** Sherry vinegar is a complex vinegar with lots of flavors you won't find in alternatives like white wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar. It's caramel and nutty, a great option for this salad, but use another if it's what you have on hand.
- **1/4 cup chopped fresh tender herbs:** Use a combo of basil, mint, and dill as you prefer.
- **1 medium Shallot:** thinly sliced into rings. Provides a bit of onion bite without the assertiveness of a white or red onion. You can take some of that onion flavor out by soaking the shallot slices in ice water for a few minutes before adding to the salad. Just be sure to dry them well.

**Step 1:** First, gather the ingredients and toss the cucumber, tomatoes, and some salt in a colander set over a medium bowl. Let it stand for 15 minutes, and discard the liquid.

**Step 2:** Make the dressing. Whisk together oil, vinegar, pepper, and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt in a medium serving bowl.

**Step 3:** Add drained cucumber and tomatoes along with herbs and shallot; toss to coat. Serve immediately.

## KITSAP COUNTY FARMERS MARKETS

Farmers markets across Kitsap County:

**Poulsbo Market:** Saturdays, 10am-2pm  
Location: Gateway Fellowship Parking Lot, 18901 8th Ave NE, Poulsbo

**Port Orchard Market:** Saturdays, 9am-2pm  
Location: Downtown Waterfront Marina

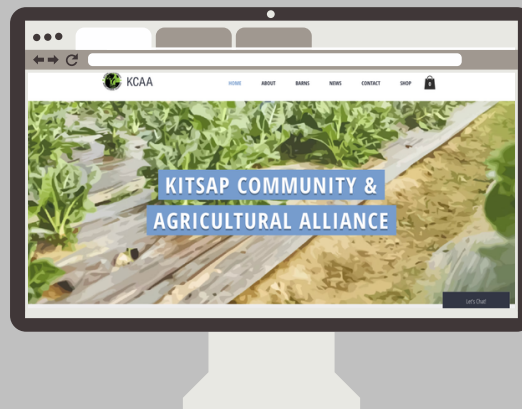
**NEW! Port Orchard Wednesday Market,** 3pm-7pm  
Location: South Kitsap Helpline on Mile Hill

**Bainbridge Island Market:** Saturdays, 10am-2pm  
Location: Town Square at City Hall, 280 Madison Ave N, Bainbridge Island

**Bremerton Community Farmers Market:** Thursdays, 4-7pm. Location: Evergreen Rotary Park, 1400 Park Ave., Bremerton

**Kingston Public Market:** Sundays, 10am-3pm.  
Location: Next to the Kingston Ferry Terminal

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**[www.KitsapAg.org](http://www.KitsapAg.org)**