

Washington's Centennial Farms, 25 Years Later

2016 Addendum

In 2016, after the close of the *Reconnecting with Washington's Centennial Farms* project, seven Centennial Farms contacted WSDA and provided the information requested in the project questionnaire. This addendum includes a listing for each of these farms – providing a 2014 snapshot of the farm's ownership, family connections, size of operation, and crops and livestock produced. Each listing includes comments about changes in the last 25 years and, as much as possible, is in the voice of the respondent.

The listings note the page number for the farm's profile in the 1989 book, *Washington's Centennial Farms – Yesterday and Today*, available on the WSDA website at <http://agr.wa.gov>. A farm's 2014 listing is best understood and appreciated when read with its 1989 profile, where you'll find information on the farm's establishment and its operation at the time of the state's Centennial.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY

Getchell Ranch, est. 1873

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Current Owner: Everett D. and Alex G. Alexander

Relationship to 1989 Owner: same

Current Operator: Everett (operations) and Alex Alexander (restorations)

Relationship to Owner: same

Original Acres Retained		Acres			Crops or Livestock Raised	
		Farmed	Owned	Operated		
1989	2014	1989	2014		1988	2014
100	100	345	100	100	Hay, grain, cattle	Hay and livestock

Changes in the Past 25 Years: Approximately \$390,000 has been devoted to restoration of the original home, second barn, and second/third group of

outbuildings. The original orchard was also restored. Since 1998, Alex Alexander, a retired plant physiologist, has been engaged in restoring Getchell Ranch as an Environment-Integrated, Sustainable Family Farm. **Additional Information:** Histories of the farm and the Getchell family were prepared by A.G. Alexander. Getchell Ranch history has been intimately associated with the history of the Lowell community, which is immediately west, across the Snohomish River. Lowell's 150th and the farm's 140th anniversaries were jointly celebrated in 2013. The property is joined by the Snohomish River on three sides, has never been diked, and has survived major flooding in the years 1916, 1921, 1933, 1951, 1959-60, 1973, 1986, 1990, 1995, 2006 and 2009.

Revisions to 1989 Farm Profile: Martin and Olive Getchell, the current owners' great-grandparents, purchased the property from Eugene D. Smith (the founder of Lowell and brother-in-law of Martin) in 1873. The property was, and is now, the nearest high-quality farmland to Lowell, resting on a gravelly glacial hillside.

Contact: Alex Getchell Alexander, 3914 52nd St. S.E., Everett, WA 98201

SPOKANE COUNTY

The Bliesner Farm, est. 1887

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Current Owner: Pauline Gallion

Relationship to 1989 Owner: same

Current Operator: Tom Pottratz

Relationship to Owner: no relation

Original Acres Retained		Acres			Crops or Livestock Raised	
		Farmed	Owned	Operated		
1989	2014	1989	2014		1988	2014
160	160	160	160	160	Winter and spring wheat, peas, cattle	Wheat, lentils

Changes in the Past 25 Years: No house and no buildings.

Additional Information: Tom Pottratz still farms our land. My mother selected him before she passed away and I continue to lease the farm to him.

Contact: Pauline Gallion, 5812 N. Audubon St., Spokane, WA 99205



The Eickmeyer Farm, est. 1884

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Current Owner: Eickmeyer Farm Trust: Lee Eickmeyer, trustee
Relationship to 1989 Owner: Lee is Henry Merwin Eickmeyer's nephew
Current Operator: Lee Eickmeyer
Relationship to Owner: same

Original Acres Retained		Acres			Crops or Livestock Raised	
1989	2014	Farmed	Owned	Operated	1988	2014
280	280	600	560	760	Grain, hay, honeybees	Wheat, hay

Changes in the Past 25 Years: The machinery being used to farm the land is much bigger and is steered with GPS guidance. Buildings that were built in the late 1930s and 1940s are still being used.

Additional Information: Henry Merwin Eickmeyer owned the farm until 2009 when ownership went to the Eickmeyer Farm Trust.

Contact: Lee Eickmeyer, 22925 N. Monroe Rd., Deer Park, WA 99006

WAHKIAKUM COUNTY

The Foster Farm, est. 1865

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Current Owner: Mary Foster Doumit Thomas
Relationship to 1989 Owner: daughter

Original Acres Retained		Acres			Crops or Livestock Raised	
1989	2014	Farmed	Owned	Operated	1988	2014
320	20	324	20	none	Beef cattle	none

Changes in the Past 25 Years: We still have the land where the home was – 20 acres – but it is no longer a working farm. The rest of the farm – it was all boggy land – was sold to Columbia Land Trust for a refuge and natural wilderness and bird sanctuary in 2009 and 2012.

Additional Information: Recently, we had to take down the homestead house as it would have taken thousands and thousands of dollars to fix it. There are no original buildings left, but the orchards are still there.

Contact: Mary Doumit Thomas, P.O. Box 405, Cathlamet, WA 98612

WALLA WALLA COUNTY

The Leid/Hansen Farm, est. 1889

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Current Owner: Norman J. and Melissa J. Hansen
Relationship to 1989 Owner: son and daughter-in-law
Current Operator: Norman Hansen
Relationship to Owner: same

Original Acres Retained		Acres			Crops or Livestock Raised	
1989	2014	Farmed	Owned	Operated	1988	2014
160	0	420	41.1	41.1	Wheat, barley, dry peas, oats	Grass

Changes in the Past 25 Years: Robert William Leid purchased his first farm on top of Coppei Mountain in 1889. According to the Walla Walla County Index of Deeds, he bought more land in the area in seven purchases between 1892 and 1901. The original 160-acre parcel left family ownership in 2009; the land still owned by the Hansens is just to the northeast, at the end of Leid Road. Norman and his wife have been the farm owners since 2006.

Additional Information: In 1913, Robert W. Leid bought another farm near Waitsburg on the Coppei from Walter Woods, where he lived in later years; it is now owned by Jim Leid of Waitsburg. The Hansens live in the home that was moved from the original farm and remodeled in 1947. The original blacksmith shop, sheds, and even the original water cistern are still being used. Norman's parents, Jim and Geraine Hansen, were named Pioneers of the Year by the Waitsburg Historical Society in 2014.

Contact: Geraine Hansen, 2194 S. Fork Coppei Rd., Waitsburg, WA, 99361

WHATCOM COUNTY

The Steele Farm, est. 1883

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Current Owner: Bonnie Steele Burns

Relationship to 1989 Owner: same

Current Operator: Dean Postma

Relationship to Owner: neighbor

Original Acres Retained		Acres			Crops or Livestock Raised	
1989	2014	Farmed	Owned	Operated	1988	2014
38.4	38.4	38.4	38.4	38.4	Hay and corn	Grass and corn for silage

Changes in the Past 25 Years: There have been no changes in the farm in the past 25 years. Postma Farms still farms the land, sometimes in grass and sometimes in corn.

Additional Information: It's a great place to live, situated on the Sumas River and next to the foothills.

Contact: Bonnie Burns, 9200 Telegraph Rd., Sumas, WA 98295

WHITMAN COUNTY

The Draper Farm, est. 1873

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Current Owner: Dale and Evelyn Draper

Relationship to 1989 Owner: first cousin

Current Operator: Scott Draper and Daniel Draper

Relationship to Owner: son and grandson

Original Acres Retained		Acres			Crops or Livestock Raised	
1989	2014	Farmed	Owned	Operated	1988	2014
160	0	1,732	720	1,385	Wheat, barley, lentils, peas, hay, beef cattle	Soft white winter wheat, soft white spring wheat, barley, garbanzos

Changes in the Past 25 Years: Malcolm Brown passed away in 1994 and the portion of the farm that included the original parcel was sold to other area farmers. Our farm ground adjoins the original parcel. Our operation has become minimum-till based and uses precision farming.

Additional Information: Like Malcolm, Dale is a grandson of George A. Draper. George A. Draper's barn and grain silo are still in use, though no longer owned by the family.

Contact: Daniel Draper, 1951 Draper Brown Rd., Garfield, WA 99130

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