

From: [Jeffrey Delapena](#)
To: [Clark County Citizens United, Inc.](#); [Cnty 2025 Comp Plan](#); [Jose Alvarez](#); [Oliver Orjiako](#); [Bart Catching](#)
Subject: RE: The Agricultural Study Committee should not be corralled into biased feedlot information
Date: Tuesday, November 25, 2025 8:06:20 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Good day, Susan,

Thank you for your feedback related to the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update.

These will be entered into the Index of Record. We will ensure they are also forwarded to the Agricultural Advisory Commission as well.



Jeff Delapena
Program Assistant
COMMUNITY PLANNING

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From: Clark County Citizens United, Inc. <cccuinc@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, November 24, 2025 7:54 PM

To: Cnty 2025 Comp Plan <comp.plan@clark.wa.gov>; CommDev OA Land Use <CommDevOALandUse@clark.wa.gov>; Michelle Belkot <Michelle.Belkot@clark.wa.gov>; Glen Yung <Glen.Yung@clark.wa.gov>; Wil Fuentes <Wil.Fuentes@clark.wa.gov>; Matt Little <Matt.Little@clark.wa.gov>; Sue Marshall <Sue.Marshall@clark.wa.gov>; Kathleen Otto <Kathleen.Otto@clark.wa.gov>; Jose Alvarez <Jose.Alvarez@clark.wa.gov>; Oliver Orjiako <Oliver.Orjiako@clark.wa.gov>; Bart Catching <Bart.Catching@clark.wa.gov>; Jeffrey Delapena <Jeffrey.Delapena@clark.wa.gov>

Subject: The Agricultural Study Committee should not be corralled into biased feedlot information

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Clark County Council
County Community Development
County Planning Commission
Clark County Agricultural Study Committee
P.O.Box 5000
Vancouver, Washington 98666

November 24, 2025

Clark

FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Re: The Agricultural Study Committee should not be corralled into feedlot information

Dear Councilors, Staff and Commissions,

Clark County Citizens United, Inc., a 501c4 non-profit representing approximately 6,000 rural citizens, believes the

decisions of the Agricultural Study Committee should not be made in a manner that corrals them into a feedlot where they are fed a diet of select information. That leads them to make decisions that have been pre-determined and makes for a meaningless public process. Such activity is not the best use of tax dollars! It appears a number of the Committee members, as well as one Clark County Councilor, are members of the environmental group, Friends of Clark County. This lifts a “red flag” for possible bias. When two Open Houses, supposedly meant to educate the Committee, were already showing completed data and maps, before the public arrived, one must wonder who made the data and those maps. The Committee's work was not finished, so where did all of that information come from?

There also appears to be a lack of objectivity when it comes to staff directing all public comments directly to the Agricultural Study Committee for review, prior to making policy. In CCCU's research, we see staff is not providing the members with direct and easy access to all public comments relevant to their work. Those comments are necessary, as they help inform the work of this committee and should facilitate informed discussions that result in accurate and meaningful work. In all of the Agricultural Advisory Commission meeting, only a few public comments were presented.

11/19/2025 - 6:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda 	<p>A SPECIAL MEETING of the Agricultural Advisory Commission will be held on Nov. 19 in a hybrid format with both in-person and virtual participation options for commissioners and the public. You can join in person, on the 6th floor of the Public Service Center, Hearing Room, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, WA 98666, or virtually via WebEx.</p> <p>CCCU NOTES: Only two person's testimony is in the Public Comments Received Meeting Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October Meeting Notes • Agricultural Lands Study • Public Comments Received • Commission Member Survey Results
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10/29/2025 - 6:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda 	<p>A SPECIAL MEETING of the Agricultural Advisory Commission will be held on Oct. 29 in a hybrid format with both in-person and virtual participation options for commissioners and the public. You can join in person, on the 6th floor of the Public Service Center, Hearing Room, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, WA 98666, or virtually via WebEx.</p>
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CCCU Notes : Only one person's testimony is in the Public Comments Received Meeting Materials

- [September Meeting Notes](#)
- [Agricultural Resource Lands Study Presentation](#)
- Agricultural Lands Study 10/28 Open House Materials
 - [Agricultural land base map](#)
 - [Current use program map](#)
 - [Farmland Classification map](#)
 - [Parcel size map](#)

09/24/2025 - 6:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda 	<p>The September 24 Agricultural Advisory Commission meeting will be held in a hybrid format with both in-person and virtual participation options for commissioners and the public. You can join in person, on the 6th floor of the Public Service Center, Training Room, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, WA 98666, or virtually via WebEx.</p>
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CCCU NOTES: Only one person's testimony is in the Public Comments Received Meeting Materials

- [August Meeting Notes](#)
- [Agricultural Resource Lands Study Presentation](#)
- [Data Mapping](#)
- **Public Comments Received**

08/27/2025 - 6:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda 	<p>The August 27 Agricultural Advisory Commission meeting will be held in a hybrid format with both in-person and virtual participation options for commissioners and the public. You can join in person, on the 6th floor of the Public Service Center, Training Room,</p>
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CCCU NOTES: Only one person's testimony is in the Public Comments Received Meeting Materials

- [Draft Bylaws](#)
- [Draft June Meeting Notes](#)
- [2009 Agriculture Preservation Strategies Report](#)
- [Agricultural Resource Lands Study Presentation](#)
- [Public Comments Received](#)

The public participation process is foundational to everything under the Open Public Meetings Act and the Growth Management Act RCWs and WACs. All comments must be posted in a way that ensures all people, especially the committee members, elected officials and citizens, can easily access the information for review, prior to any action by the Committee or the Council. CCCU has had to carefully search out information, important to this process.

These questions must be answered by the Committee, county staff and the Council:

- 1. Were the members able to get both sides of the story, prior to discussion and decisions, when covering such a vital topic?**
- 2. Is bias allowed to go unabated?**
- 3. Why didn't CCCU's numerous items of testimony, submitted prior to these meetings, wind up in the "Public Comments Received." for each meeting?**
- 4. Why were only two public comments entered into the agenda for review for the last Agricultural Study Committee meeting and only one for all of the others?**
- 5. Why aren't all comments, relevant to this work, directly before the committee, at all of their meetings?**
- 6. Shouldn't their work be exposed to a broad spectrum of views and voices, so the members are able to intelligently confer over issues?**

Abraham Lincoln wrote; *"I am a firm believer in the people. If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet any national crisis. The great point is to bring them the real facts,"*

Additional research by CCCU demonstrates important facts, points and data that must be considered, before any recommendations move forward to the Council. That information is included in this testimony and is very critical to the agriculture designation and zoning process under the Open Public Meetings Act.

There are volumes of data in the record that confirm without prime and good soil, and in the case of Mr. Ruud van der Salm, adequate water for irrigation, the majority of the rural and resource land in Clark County is not agriculture land that meets the letter of the law. Landowners shouldn't lose their development rights because of a committee of people who have not had the access or the time to do the research and discover those critical facts.

The Growth Management Act demands that land designated as Agriculture must have long term commercial significance, and the land must be considered for highest and best use. CCCU sees under the Meeting Materials for the 11-19-25 Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting a topic that was added to the agenda after the meeting was over, titled [Commission Member Survey Results](#). The documents, in grid form, claim the final results of the Commission according to each member. Again, a red flag goes up, because these folks didn't say these things during the meeting, and it appears that staff has taken over the reins.

In that report, one of the members who is also a FOCC member, claims:

"1. Protecting current ag lands as a part of the comprehensive plan update. Ensuring that other lands that should have been designated previously are included. Farmland affordability begins with protecting our ag land."

This is clearly a reference to the Rural designation zoning and the old Agriforest designation zoning, which was deemed illegal in the courts. What CCCU has seen, throughout this whole agricultural land determinations activity, is a biased, manipulated and flawed process, which cannot be allowed and must be corrected.

Sincerely,

Susan Rasmussen, President, on behalf of the Membership

Clark County Citizens United, Inc.
P.O. Box 2188
Battle Ground, Washington 98604

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-_____ 2 3 An ordinance creating the **Agricultural Advisory Commission** for 4
Clark County 5 6 7 **WHEREAS**, the Clark County Council adopted the Clark County 20-Year 8 Comprehensive
Growth Management Plan 2015-2035 (2016 Plan), Ordinance 2016-06- 9 12 on June 28, 2016; and

*WHEREAS, the Clark County Council desires the input of agricultural producers
16 and others associated with agriculture on land use and growth management proposals,
17 and policies, economic strategies, and collaborative partnerships that directly or indirectly
18 affect agriculture in Clark County; and WHEREAS, the Clark County Council finds that
19 the establishment of an Agricultural Advisory Commission would help inform the Clark
20 County Council on proposals, policies, strategies, and partnerships relating to protecting
21 and enhancing the long-term viability of agriculture; and*

- One member from the Clark Conservation District;
- One member from the Cowlitz Tribe;
- One member from the agricultural processing industry;
- One member representing the consumers of agricultural products;
- One member who has expertise in agricultural programs; and
- The remaining eight voting members are to include agricultural producers representing both large-scale and small-scale producers of a variety of agricultural products produced in Clark County.

Clark Conservation District

Cowlitz Tribe

Agricultural Processing Industry

Consumers of Agriculture Products

Expert in Agricultural Programs

Zorah Oppenheimer

Amy Treasure

Ruud van der Salm

Holly Hansen

Diane Dempster

Mo McKenna

Dillon Haggerty

Justin Burger

Kevin Dobbins

Joe Zimmerman

Matthew Cornwell

Isaiah Irish

Tyler Behrendsen

Agricultural Producers

[Friends of Clark County, Washington](#)

Friends of Clark County Members

Our board and our community engagement coordinator at our most recent board retreat:

*Left to Right: Jim Byrne, Karissa Halstrom, Jackie Lane, Ann Foster, **Diane Dempster**, Val Alexander, **Joe Zimmerman**, and **Mo McKenna***

Vice President: Diane Dempster, dianedempster36@gmail.com. Diane recently retired from Charlie's Produce, Seattle where she managed their .

Feb 18, 2024 – **Mo McKenna**, of MoMo Flower Farm in Ridgefield has joined the board and has immediately contributed new energy, awareness, perspective and

Apr 28, 2025 – By **Justin Burger**, owner of Burger Family Farms and Friends of Clark County board member. Farming in Clark County is already tough, but for .

Apr 15, 2025 – I'm a member of **Friends of the Columbia Gorge**. Our mission is to ... In 2019, **Kevin Dobbins** grew clover on the remaining 20 acres of the.

Jun 4, 2025 – **Matthew Cornwell** discussed the history of the Clark County Food Bank, who the key contributors are, the acreage they have, and the number of

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program - Round 2 in Clark County, Washington, 1995-2024

[Dillon J Haggerty](#)

Vancouver, WA 98682

\$424

.(Articles from the Reflector and the Columbian)

U.S. Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, D-Skamania, met with farmers from Clark and Cowlitz counties during a roundtable discussion at Our American Roots, a wholesale flower seller located between La Center and Woodland. (Wholesale grower of lily bulbs, hostas, peonies, crocosmias, dahlias, hemerocallis and supplier of tulips, daffodils and dutch iris.)

Erin Thoeny, a member of the [Clark-Cowlitz Farm Bureau](#), said farmers in Southwest Washington are at a pinch point, citing a lack of direct market demand and processors increasing imports due to pressure from chain stores. "We have had personal problems with the direct markets, (such as) the farmers market in Vancouver, where they are more engaged for being entertainment zones rather than being geared for farmers who can actually drive in their trucks and sell on their trucks," Thoeny said.

Several farmers said they have used USDA resources to sustain their businesses, including Specialty Crop Block Grants, Value-Added Producer Grants, and crop and livestock insurance. However, most agreed the applications take too much time and are often filled with technical jargon.

Ruud van der Salm, general manager of Our American Roots, said some of the grants are too specific to be helpful. He said one application, which took an office worker an entire day to look at, didn't allow for the money to be spent on equipment, salaries of family members or new facilities. He didn't follow through with the application. **Agricultural Processing Industry**

(Van der Salm Farms Inc has received an SBA PPP loan for \$150,000-350,000 from Columbia State Bank.)

Torres-Small said she was impressed by the ability of Clark County farmers to pivot when facing market challenges. She pointed out that **50 percent of farmers in America are operating at a negative income.**

AI Overview - You **need loamy, well-drained soil with a good amount of organic matter** for hostas, tulips, iris, and peonies. This ideal soil has a balanced mix of sand, silt, clay, and organic materials, which **provides good drainage** and retains enough moisture for the plants. An ideal pH for these plants is between neutral and slightly acidic, typically 6 to 7.

. Soil type and amendment

- **Ideal soil:** **Sandy loam is the best soil type**, as it balances drainage and moisture retention.
- **For hostas:** While they tolerate many soils, they thrive in loamy soil enriched with humus (organic matter like compost).
- **For tulips:** They need well-drained, sandy soil with organic material to prevent bulb rot.
- **For peonies:** Peonies prefer loamy soil with good drainage and a pH between
- **For iris:** They tolerate most well-drained garden soils but benefit from improvements to heavy clay soils with sand or humus to improve drainage.

How to improve your soil

- **Add organic matter:** Incorporate compost, rotted animal manure, or other humus into the soil to improve its structure and fertility.
- **Improve drainage:** To improve drainage in heavy or clay soil, add sand, coarse sand, or gypsum. Raised beds or planting on a slope can also help.
- **Check the pH:** Test your soil's pH level and adjust as needed to stay within the range

Key considerations

Drainage is critical: **All these plants are susceptible to rot in waterlogged conditions, so good drainage is crucial.**

The majority of the land in Clark County does not have these credentials.

Clark County Citizens United, Inc. P.O. Box 2188 Battle Ground, Washington 98604 E-Mail cccuinc@yahoo.com