



TLC The Land Conservancy



DATE _____

Stewardship Agreement

Between:

And: TLC The Land Conservancy of British Columbia

Welcome to *TLC* and the community of Conservation Partners that you are about to join!

The Conservation Partners Program (CPP), a province-wide initiative of The Land Conservancy, brings a collaborative approach to uniting ecological conservation with sustainable agriculture values and practices. The program supports and promotes our partners – exemplary farmers, ranchers and vineyard & orchard owners who use their land not only to produce food, but also to protect natural habitat and biodiversity. Our partners are distinguished by the butterfly label, a tool to spark public interest in this community and its contribution to the long-term viability of food production and ecosystem health in BC.

We use our 'butterfly' logo as an educational label to raise the profile and understanding of the importance of sustainable agriculture.

Our partnership is intended to be beneficial to you, your farm and TLC. Each of us has a unique role in this partnership. The following are the responsibilities in this collaboration:

TLC's responsibilities:

- Delivery of a 'butterfly' sign for your farm gate, butterfly labels for your products, farm profile on *TLC's* website, and delivery of communication materials/text that is useful for promotion of this program and the values it represents
- Verbal presentation and promotion of your farm, ranch, or vineyard/orchard 'story' to the public through communication materials. This includes sustainable farming practices, products and vision featured at farmer's markets, exhibitions, agricultural events and talks with students and community groups
- Use of *TLC's* Conservation Partner Purchasing Policy, whereby staff are encouraged to purchase partner products for events, Conservation Holidays, and Boat Cruises
- If desired by a partner, organization of events (including Conservation Holidays) on your farm as a way to support our partnership
- When possible, we will create a baseline map of your property as a communication tool to identify conservation areas and features in relation to cultivated areas
- Engage the Conservation Partner community through our quarterly newsletter – the *Cultivator*
- Visit your farm at least once a year to discuss concerns or answer questions. We will endeavour to keep in touch by telephone at least twice a year.

{Insert farmer}'s responsibilities:

- Become a member of *TLC* The Land Conservancy
- Install Butterfly sign at farm gate
- Display Butterfly labels on products (when feasible)

- Display CPP promotional materials at farm market booth – these can be designed collaboratively (cost can be covered by *TLC*, unless there is a unique design requiring cost-sharing)
- Provide CPP information and butterfly logo on your website (linked to *TLC*'s website)
- Express pride in being a Conservation Partner by informing others of our partnership when appropriate – in interviews, articles, marketing and through conversation with the public
- If desired, you can suggest hosting an event on your farm to garner more customers for you and to promote this partnership and *TLC*

This partnership will be in effect until there is notification in writing by either party stating that this partnership is no longer desired.

The Land Conservancy

farmer and farm

Partnership Guidelines

Our partnership with you is based on guiding principles that your farm has met. These guidelines are good measures of your success in being an ecologically responsible farmer. The first guiding principle, ***Protect and enhance wildlife habitat and biodiversity***, is the most critical conservation action you can do. Your farm may also follow some of the other listed guidelines. They are listed here to demonstrate the breadth of conservation efforts that *TLC* supports on-farm. Our intent is to qualitatively see your “whole farm” as an integrated agro-ecological landscape that balances economic, social and environmental considerations.

Guiding Principles

There are four guiding principles that frame our visit on agricultural lands. Examples of on-farm activities are listed below each guiding principle.

1. Protect and enhance wildlife habitat and biodiversity

1.1 Protect existing natural habitats

Examples: protect native vegetation, fencing, invasive exotic species control, educational signage, minimize undue exposure to synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Some important habitats are: riparian areas, native grasslands, wetlands, forested areas and rocky slopes.

1.2 Protect special habitat features

Examples: wildlife trees, rock piles, coarse woody debris, and structures such as old sheds and barns.

1.3 Restore important habitats that have been affected by past land use activities

Examples: water-based habitat can usually be restored by fencing out livestock, avoiding cultivation into riparian areas, and replanting native vegetation along streams and lakes. Arid habitat is usually more difficult to restore.

1.4 Enhance farmland to create habitat

Examples: install bird, bat or mason bee boxes, install bird perches for predatory birds, plant riparian areas, create water features, plant vegetation that attracts beneficial insects and provides habitat, sow cover crops, keep grass unmowed during bird migration or reproduction periods.

1.5 Maintain wildlife movement corridors

Examples: allow for connectivity between neighbouring properties, plant hedgerows to provide diversity and nesting habitat, create linkages between natural areas.

1.6 Non-lethal management practices for problem wildlife

Examples: bird scare tactics (except Starlings), snake tolerance or exclusion fencing, deer fencing.

1.7 Natural resource planning

Examples: timber extraction on farms should minimize negative impacts on biodiversity, farmer involved in regional activities to enhance habitat.

2. Reduce on-farm energy consumption

2.1 Water conservation

Examples: use irrigation techniques that will aid in the maintenance of water levels and water quality for wildlife and agricultural use, relocate ditches to natural creek channels to store more water.

2.2 Minimize packaging

Examples: reuse/recycle packaging containers, use baskets instead of plastic bags.

2.3 Reduce or eliminate synthetic pesticides and fertilizers

Examples: Use integrated pest management (IPM) to deal with pests, use spot treatments for problem areas.

2.4 Minimize fossil fuel use

Examples: sell at your farm gate or local markets.

3. Provide healthy and humane care for livestock

3.1 BC SPCA standards for animal welfare husbandry standards are met

Animals have the opportunity to express behaviours that promote physical and psychological well-being
Examples: no conventional battery cages for hens laying eggs; rooting materials for pigs; access to pasture and/or an outdoor paddock for dairy cows; and transportation times are as short as possible.

3.2 Avoid the use of hormones, antibiotics and genetic engineering

4. Community-based engagement in farm activities

4.1 Support or encourage education on your farm

Examples: WOOFers, educational signage, workshops, farm tours, apprenticeships, agricultural interns, TLC Conservation Holidays, collaborate with universities and interested organizations

4.2 Farm is open to the local community

Examples: market days, wood-fired oven for camaraderie over freshly baked food, opportunity for local residents to volunteer, special events