



Wacky
Nut
Farm

2009 Recipient of Kitsap Conservation District Cooperator of the Year Award

Wacky Nut Farm was recognized for its exceptional efforts to protect natural resources and show implementation and use of conservation practices.

Wacky Nut Farm Equestrian Center Sustainable Design Features

Wacky Nut Farm is located on 19 acres above Blakely Harbor on Bainbridge Island. Earth friendly design was a priority from the beginning of the project. A site master plan was developed for locating the buildings to minimize their impact on the site. Environmentally responsible building materials and methods were used, and measures were taken to protect the natural landscape during construction. Trees logged on the property were milled on site, dried, and the lumber was used in construction. Kitsap Conservation District helped develop the farm operations plan which focuses on the protection and maintenance of soils, wetlands, and air and water quality as a means to improve human and animal health and safety.



SPECIFIC EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

Use of Wood Gathered from Clearing The Site

- Douglas fir was used for flooring, wall and ceiling paneling and interior trim.
- Big Leaf maple, alder, madrone, yew and cherry were used for interior paneling, trim at window and doorways, cabinets and built-in furniture.
- Western Red cedar was used for exterior siding and trim on the farm house, barn, arena and utility buildings.
- Leftover milled wood was used for building the community garden shed, garden fence, raised bed containment and garden compost bins.
- Surplus logs were used to create edging, parking blocks and edging for horse trails.

Stormwater Runoff Management

- To address concerns about potential erosion below the site caused by runoff, a "tightline" drainage system was constructed to divert roof and clean surface runoff directly to Blakely Harbor. Runoff from unclean surface areas is collected separately and routed to a bio-filtration area developed with the Kitsap Conservation District.
- Piping was installed for a future rainwater catchment system to reuse roof water on site for irrigation and misting of the arena footing.
- Subsurface runoff in other areas flows to our on-site wetland to protect and maintain the health of the natural resources on the property.
- On-site trails have been established to avoid damage to environmentally sensitive terrain.



Waste Management

- Horse manure is collected twice daily from the barn, paddocks and pastures so leaching and runoff does not enter drainage systems.
- A cement composting structure was designed with three bins for decomposing horse manure. A roof keeps rain-water out, while all liquid and solid waste can be contained for 4-6 months of storage.
- Soft Stall flooring inside each horse stall diminishes bedding used by more than two thirds.
- Straw pellet bedding is used in horse stalls (instead of wood by-products), which reduces the amount of bedding needed daily and breaks down and composts more quickly.
- Compost is reused in the community garden and in additional gardens on site. If necessary, excess manure will be exported from the property to an approved composting facility or used by local gardeners.
- We follow principals outlined in the Kitsap Conservation Districts "*Animal Waste Nutrient Balance Sheet*" by spreading manure onto pastures during months when conditions allow for maximum forage production. Manure is not applied to excessively wet soils to avoid contamination of surface water.

Preservation of Local Wildlife & Habitat

A systematic plan was followed when clearing the property as part of the resource management system to:

- Provide a variety of food and water for wildlife.
- Provide a variety of cover types for wildlife (dense shrubs, tall grass, snags, etc.)
- Maintain current buffers around wetlands.
- Replant with native shrubs and trees to provide erosion control, wildlife habitat and climate control.
- Rotational grazing is utilized to gain optimal usage from the grass and to minimize overgrazing.
- An organic environmentally sensitive approach is used to managing weeds, insects, and other invasive plant species throughout the site.

Horse Care

- Horse supplements are administered in recyclable containers.
- Automatic waterers located inside each horse stall eliminate wasted water.
- Use of biodegradable products for cleaning and for horse care.
- Stalls, sand paddocks and turn out areas are cleaned twice daily to prevent waste from entering drainage systems.
- Horses are excluded from pastures and wet soils during winter months to allow plants to maintain vigor, while preventing overgrazing, soil compaction and erosion.

Community Organic Garden

One-third acre is dedicated for 20 families garden plots with a small fruit orchard extension.

- Use of recycled materials and logs milled from the site to build the garden fence, raised beds, shed and compost bins.
- Two 55 gallon barrels are used to collect roof rain water for garden use.
- 20 families utilize 25 raised beds to grow organically farmed produce.
- Garden Waste is composted and reused. Composted horse manure is utilized to amend soil.
- "Soil Soup," a compost tea, is combined with other organic amendments/microbes and is regularly applied.
- WSU Kitsap County Master Gardener Volunteers consult and oversee the garden operations.

The current farm plan is a working document designed to change as objectives change.
The plan serves as a record of decisions and provides a way of tracking progress
and impact on humans, livestock and natural resources.

