



zations at O.U.R. and all interested parties.

The cooperative has begun to implement this plan through the creation of a business plan in order to secure financing for the purchase and further development of the property.

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Membership at O.U.R. Ecovillage Cooperative

The co-op has adopted a unique membership structure, reflecting the goals and direction of the community. A member is someone who has purchased a membership share which entitles them to one vote (irrespective of how many shares they may own) in the governance of the Cooperative with all the rights and responsibilities of membership.

Membership is allocated to 5 membership classes, each of which represents one aspect of involvement in the activities of the community.

- Hearthkeeper Stewards are those adults who intend to take up residence on the land in Shawnigan Lake and hold the space for the realization of O.U.R. Vision and Mission.
- Education Stewards will be those members who participate in education programs directed by the cooperative.
- Agriculture Stewards will be those members who organize and carry out agricultural activities on the land.
- Sustainable Enterprise Stewards will be those who carry on business from space they lease or rent on the property of the co-op.

- Community Stewards will be those members who are not directly connected to the co-op's property, but support the activities of the co-op and its connection to the broader community.

Each class of membership is entitled to be represented on the board of directors by one of its members, with the exception of the hearthkeeper stewards. Hearthkeeper stewards are entitled at all times to have a majority of the directors' positions. Hearthkeeper Stewards are also required to purchase \$50,000 in membership shares, while all other membership classes are only required to purchase a single membership share at \$5,000.

The capital structure of the cooperative also includes investment shares that may be sold to members, or to those who do not wish to enter membership with the cooperative. Investment shares have a par value of \$1,000 apiece.

O.U.R. Ecovillage Cooperative uses consensus decision-making

Decisions are made on a consensus basis. Within the framework of the Cooperative Association Act, which gives members the right to vote, directors work to consensus at meetings of the board of directors, and general meetings work to consensus except where the Act requires a vote with a specific majority. At any time, however, a member may require a vote, at which point a vote is taken at any meeting. The group values its consensus decision making, and members are trained in the process and value of consensus decision-making.

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Sepp Holzer and his Krameterhof in Austria

How to learn more about his unusual growing methods

For many years, the Austrian Holzer family had to go on nurturing their Alpine hillside paradise while their neighbors thought them a bit crazy for not farming the "traditional" way. But suddenly, after so many decades of struggling with local authorities, everyone wants to know how family father Sepp Holzer has been transforming his unlikely stretch of family land in such cold parts of the Austrian Alps (comparable to Siberian climate) into such a paradise. Fish ponds, thousands and thousands of fruit trees, bushes and unusually productive vegetable patches and herbal varieties thrive for him. Meanwhile Sepp and his family enjoy life watching the fruits of their labor continue to produce "without much ado", least of all with endless digging, weeding and pruning.

Yes indeed, how does this Rebel Farmer get various citrus and other mild-climate fruit trees to grow at that altitude and with those challenging temperature ranges - fruit trees and vegetables that shouldn't be able to grow there? We even saw the surprised faces of pink lilies sticking out from under an untimely snowfall and red-cheeked prunes covered with a bit of snow. And we saw them nurture certain water creatures, such as indigenous crab, so as to restock them into Austrian rivers where they are threatened with extinction. And what about the pumps that work without electricity and his little power-generating hydroelectric turbines?

Sepp Holzer and his son Josef now travel all over the world to reveal their secrets of "farming with Nature". Sepp has become known throughout the German-speaking world as the "Rebel Farmer", famous for his radical permaculture-approach to farming, and our readers are familiar with him and his methods. But how can we learn more about growing citrus in unlikely areas such as the Alps at their most inhospitable

altitudes and producing such amazing variety of food, pasture, and livestock on self-sustaining family land without fertilizers, pesticides, weeding or irrigation?

Sepp has produced several book, notably "The Rebel Farmer," which has been translated from the German original into English. There are also DVD's available and you can find Youtube films that help to learn more about this wonderful, natural approach which evolved from a single man's unswerving determination, coupled with trust into Mother Nature and silent, patient observation of her rules and laws.

Although Sepp is very busy now and chooses his teaching commitments very carefully, preferring larger venues which need support and will render far-reaching results (such as his work with arid areas in Portugal and Spain), he and Josef will visit well-planned teaching arrangements such as their recent trip to the Washington and Oregon areas in the US. For instance, if your ecovillage venture can carefully design a schedule for them which will also include the local community in such a learning opportunity, I would not be surprised if he puts down the piece of bread his wife Veronica baked lovingly from some rare wild grains with jam from the berry patches somewhere up on the hillsides where his beautiful, large-eared pigs dig up the soil for him and the chickens fertilize his ground while scratching right along, so he can leave for the airport to help with a worthy project.

Check www.krameterhof.at/en/ for more information.

