Short Course in Biodynamic Agriculture
The first BIO-technology

Barry Lia PhD, Henning Sehmsdorf PhD & Elizabeth Simpson PhD
S&S Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Homestead Farm
Lopez Island WA

Abstract
This Short Course will introduce students to proven BD approaches to soil, crop and animal husbandry, and position them for transition to BD practices through lectures, experiential exercises, and hands-on learning on the farm.

The sustainable agriculture field and the broader public should become aware of what BD has to offer agriculturally, economically, and socially.

Curriculum
The curriculum will be based upon a thorough, scholarly European text which combines proven BD methods with up-to-date management. Well illustrated with photos, graphics and tables, this book draws on case studies and the authors’ years of experience.

The PI’s for several years have held on-farm BD workshops and developed training material.

Standard scientific study of biodynamic practices will be presented.
We will also address the complementary phenomenological science, stemming from Goethe’s pioneering morphological studies, which is the primary background for the biodynamic approach to ecological farming.

Research
Recent research by WSU researchers on S&S Homestead farm asked whether BD treatment might obviate the need for ecologically-costly liming of the acidic soils of Lopez Island.

BD “preparations” were applied on random plots for comparison with liming and control treatments.

BD treatment effectively raised pH into the range for efficient mineral availability.

At the same time, forage amount and crude protein per unit weight were significantly increased above those for liming treatment.

Impact
In a recent editorial, Michael Pollan called for the next “Farmer in Chief” to adopt a “sun-food agenda,” as a response to global agricultural and energy crises.

BD BIO-technology has long been available to answer this call.

This Short Course will introduce practitioners to this proven, low-input, ecologically-sound, solar-powered farming system.

References
1IAASTD.
2Sattler & Wistinghausen, Bio-dynamic Farming Practice (1992), BDAA.

BIOAg Program mini-grant.