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WHATCOM COUNTY
COUNCIL



WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

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Kaylee Galloway
Kathy Kershner

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO WHATCOM COUNTY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY and COMPLETE ALL ITEMS

Name: ISAIAH DEL GIORGIO Date: 3/11/2023

Street Address: [REDACTED]

- Name of board or committee-**please see reverse:** HORTICULTURE PEST & DISEASE BOARD
- You must specify which position you are applying for.
Please refer to vacancy list. 2-YEAR TERM VACANCY
- Do you meet the residency, employment, and/or affiliation requirements of the position for which you're applying?
(If applicable, please refer to vacancy list.) ----- (X) yes () no
- Which Council district do you live in? ----- () One () Two () Three (X) Four () Five
- Are you a US citizen? ----- (X) yes () no
- Are you registered to vote in Whatcom County? ----- (X) yes () no
- Have you ever been a member of this Board/Commission? ----- () yes (X) no
If yes, dates: _____
- Do you or your spouse have a financial interest in or are you an employee or officer of any business or agency that does business with Whatcom County? ----- () yes (X) no
If yes, please explain: _____
- Have you declared candidacy (as defined by RCW 42.17A.055, see instructions) for a paid elected office in any jurisdiction within the county? ----- () yes (X) no

You may attach a résumé or detailed summary of experience, qualifications, & interest in response to the following questions.

10. Please describe your occupation (or former occupation if retired), qualifications, professional and/or community activities, and education.
I GROW A LARGE VARIETY OF VEGETABLES, SMALL FRUITS, AND CUT FLOWERS, DEALING WITH A BROAD SPECTRUM OF PESTS AND DISEASES. I DO FIELD PRODUCTION, HIGH TUNNEL PRODUCTION, & GREENHOUSE SEEDLINGS. I USE BOTH ORGANIC & CONVENTIONAL PRACTICES TO PRODUCE FRUIT & VEGETABLES THAT ARE HIGH QUALITY AND GROWN IN A WAY THAT IS SUSTAINABLE.

11. Please describe why you're interested in serving on this board or commission: I AM WORKING TOWARD CROP SPECIALIZATION AND AM INTERESTED IN THE PESTS AND DISEASES IN WHATCOM COUNTY. A VARIETY OF PEST MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS ARE NECESSARY FOR DIFFERENT SCALES/TYPES OF PRODUCERS TO FIND APPROPRIATE SYSTEMS FOR THEIR UNIQUE OPERATION, WHILE CONTRIBUTING TO MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL MANAGEMENT ACROSS THE ENTIRE REGION.
References (please include daytime telephone number): JASON WESTON: JOE'S GARDENS (OWNER) 360-739-4148
MIKE BOXX: BOXX BERRY FARM (OWNER) 360-410-0403 • PAUL CARLSON: CARLSON STEELWORKS (360) 739-9682

Signature of applicant: Isaiah Del Giorgio

Subject: FW: Horticulture Pest and Disease Management
Date: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 11:03:58 AM
Attachments:

From: Isaiah Del Giorgio [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 8:32 PM
To: Kaylee Galloway <KGallowa@co.whatcom.wa.us>; Todd Donovan <TDonovan@co.whatcom.wa.us>; Tyler Byrd <TByrd@co.whatcom.wa.us>; Kathy Kershner <KKershne@co.whatcom.wa.us>; Ben Elenbaas <BElenbaa@co.whatcom.wa.us>; Barry Buchanan <BBuchana@co.whatcom.wa.us>; Carol Frazey <CFrazey@co.whatcom.wa.us>
Subject: Horticulture Pest and Disease Management

Dear County Councilmembers,

I submitted an application by mail today for a vacant position on the Horticulture Pest and Disease Board, but I also wanted to follow up by email to introduce myself and express my interest in serving. Attached is my cover letter as well as my resume. I am 18 years old and started farming full time just four years ago, when I had the opportunity to convert a two-acre field that had been hayed biannually for three decades without inputs, into fertile land for growing fresh market crops. Battling perennial weeds, low soil nutrient levels, soil-borne and aboveground insects and diseases, I have learned firsthand the challenges of growing specialty crops. I must meet the quality demands of both wholesale and retail customers, using production methods that deliver a product that is attractive, flavorful and nutritious, while suiting my customers' vision of how their food is grown.

In the years before I had the opportunity to farm, I did extensive research on the subject of agriculture, dreaming that I might one day have the opportunity to apply the knowledge I had gained. Pest management in specialized vegetables and small fruits can be extremely challenging. One of the most damaging insect pests in fresh-market production today is the Spotted Wing Drosophila. This insect has become increasingly notorious for its effect on berry production, causing growers to resort to much more intensive and costly management strategies, while still falling short of satisfactory results. On a smaller scale farm, such as my own, with a greater diversity of crops, the amount of time pests must be managed is far longer than with monocultures. Each crop has its peak harvest season, and one rolls into the next, each with its specific pest and disease pressures, and often with overlap. For example, tomato harvest typically starts in July to mid-August, as berry seasons are starting to wind down. The end of berry season signals the decline of crop quality and health, and the number of Drosophilas swells. Discarded and fallen berries provide ample food, and a sizable population of Drosophilas is soon searching for fresh crops to infest, just as tomatoes become susceptible.

Many of these pests have become ubiquitous obstacles for farmers because conventional chemical programs do not provide adequate control, or at least not in all circumstances. Agricultural research for our region has been on the decline for the last decade, and growers are left to work with the limited research that still is conducted, standard practices based on dated research, and research conducted outside our region. Many of the medium-to-large growers I have spoken with lament the lack of current research and feel they are left to simply attempt to control pests the same way year after year, or risk trying new methods on their own. To help agriculture continue in an economically

viable manner, it is necessary to further develop Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies. Introducing new conventional chemicals, and finding better ways to use existing chemicals, will likely continue to be the most important part of IPM for the near future. However, I am also interested in some of the promising areas that are just being explored, which have potential to become part of future strategies in the IPM approach.

If appointed to a position on the board, I could provide outreach, contribute to pest and disease identification, and explore new models for future programs, moving Whatcom County farming forward. Thank you for your consideration,

Isaiah Del Giorgio
Adagio Farm (a DBA of Caffè Adagio, LLC)

Isaiah Del Giorgio

March 11, 2023

Whatcom County Executive's Office
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 108
Bellingham, Washington 98225

Dear County Council,

I am a first generation farmer in Whatcom County, growing fresh market vegetables, berries, apples and commercial varieties of flowers. I began farming at age 14, along with my nine-year old-brother. I scraped together my savings to buy an old Massey Ferguson 165 and a few basic implements, and converted a two-acre field into a productive farm. I have a keen interest in applied soil science, biological farming practices, and solving issues relating to pest and disease pressure.

My parents own Caffe Adagio in Downtown Bellingham and I grew up in the business, occupying my time with reading books about history, farming, science, geography, architecture, hunting, fishing, and mycology. I had ample opportunity to converse with customers who worked in various fields, and I was able to explore my interests by getting connected with various internships. I've attended City Council meetings, talked with former County Council members, and sit in on all board meetings for the King Tut Road Water Association. I completed a two-year college degree, earning academic honors, at age 17, meanwhile working multiple jobs and farming full time.

While I may be one of your youngest applicants, I've attended numerous conferences, workshops, and lectures on the subject of pests, diseases, and other aspects of agronomy; I've done extensive research, talked with some of the top farmers in the Pacific Northwest, and have spent the past four years confronted by the ever-present reality of pest and disease pressure that is inherently a part of farming. I would bring to the table my current knowledge and experience, an ability to identify pests and diseases common to our climate, a drive to continue education in the field, as well as energy to work with farmers and the community in an effort support the health of Whatcom County farming.

Please consider my application. It would be an honor to serve on the board.

Sincerely,

Isaiah Del Giorgio

ISAIAH DEL GIORGIO

OBJECTIVE

I am seeking to fill a current vacancy on the Horticulture Pest and Disease Board.

EXPERIENCE

ADAGIO FARM, LLC; LYNDEN, WA – 2019-PRESENT

I currently own and operate a two-acre vegetable farm, growing both wholesale and fresh market crops. I grow nearly every type of vegetable, with the greatest amount of acreage devoted to heirloom pumpkins and winter squash, sweet corn, and heirloom tomatoes. I started the farm from scratch, converting an old, unmaintained hayfield into vegetable fields, working with soil tests to help design customized fertilizer blends in order to balance soil nutrients.

CARLSON STEELWORKS; BELLINGHAM, WA – 2021-PRESENT

Job duties include shop cleaning, stocking steel, constructing chainlink fence panels, assisting customers, and measuring, cutting, and bending metal to fill orders.

CAFFE ADAGIO, LLC; BELLINGHAM, WA – 2022-PRESENT

My family has owned and operated Caffe Adagio in Downtown, Bellingham, since 2006. Growing up in the business, I learned to conduct myself in a professional environment. I currently work in the kitchen, assisting with food preparation, baking, kitchen maintenance, dishwashing, as well as providing customer service in the front of the house.

EDUCATION

WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE; BELLINGHAM, WA – AA–SPRING 2022

I graduated with a 4.0, earning an Associate of Arts degree at age 17. I received a Student-of-the-Year award in Geography, with a focus on sustainability. Areas of study include history, writing, economics, physics, math, business management, and chemistry.

WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE – HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA– 2022

SKILLS

Critical thinking, problem solving, writing and communication, research, basic MIG welding, fabrication, woodworking, wood fence building, applied soil and plant science knowledge, horticulture pest and disease knowledge, greenhouse seedling production of plug and potted vegetables and flowers, practical experience operating farm equipment, lawn care (including fertilization and weed control), dishwashing, commercial bread baking, cashiering, and customer service. I hold a sawyer certification with the Forest Service and am first-aid and CPR certified.