

Kosai Farm  
B Street north of NW 29th Street  
Auburn  
King County  
Washington

**HABS No.** WA-211

*HABS  
WASH  
17-AUB,  
1-*

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Western Region  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California 94107**

HABS  
WASH  
17 - AUB,  
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**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING<sup>S</sup> SURVEY**  
**THE KOSAI FARM**

**Location:** B Street North of NW 29th Street  
Auburn, King County, Washington 98001

**UTM Coordinates:** 10-580050-5242550

**Legal Description:** Tracts 1 to 8, inclusive, Block 3, Christopher Garden Tracts, according to plat thereof recorded in Volume 23 of Plats, page 6, records of said county, EXCEPT portion of said tracts 6, 7 and 8, described as follows:

Beginning at a point 491.5 feet north of southeast corner of said tract 8 on the east marginal line of said tract 8; running thence west 844.61 feet to a point 485.5 feet north of the south marginal line of tract 6; thence south 485.5 feet, more or less, to the south marginal line of said tract 6 at a point 844.61 feet west of southeast corner of said tract 8; thence east along said south marginal line of tracts 6, 7 and 8 to the southeast corner of said tract 8; thence north along the east marginal line of said tract 8 to point of beginning.

Subject to the public for slopes and fills on road, streets and alleys.

Easements of record under King County Auditor's file #175201 and #3255112.

**Present Owner:** La Terra, Limited Partnership, Owner  
Northwest Racing Associates, Auburn, Washington, Lessee

**Present Use:** Vacant

**Historic Use:** Dairy and truck farm with residence, barns, sheds, and garages

**Construction Dates:** 1919+

**Architect:** Unknown

**Builder:** Unknown

**Significance:** Participation by Japanese immigrants in the economic, cultural and political life of the Pacific Northwest in the early twentieth century is part of a larger pattern of relocation, settlement and assimilation. This pattern is similar to that of many ethnic immigrant groups. However, the history of Japanese-Americans is unique in their confrontation with anti-alien land laws, prejudice, racial discrimination, and their internment and evacuation during World War II.

The Kosai Farm, located in Auburn, Washington. It is associated with a pattern of agricultural development in the White River Valley and the presence of Japanese immigrants in dairy farming in the area. It is also significantly associated the political history of Japanese-Americans and the discrimination that they faced in the first half of the twentieth century. Kiichiro Kosai and his son, Frank Kosai, original owners of the Kosai Farm, embodied this struggle through their acquisition of the dairy farm site in 1919, and the subsequent legal battle over its ownership in violation of the State's Anti-Alien Land Law of 1921. The Kosais' struggle also anticipated tragic events which occurred between 1941 and 1945 with the internment and forced evacuated of Japanese-Americans from their homes in Washington, Oregon and California.

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Auburn, Washington 98001

**Report Date:** May 23, 1995

**Significant Exterior Features:**

- Flat rural site originally located in a flood plain
- Railroad tracks on the east and west
- Adjacent streets on the north and east
- Fenced pasture lands
- Wood frame construction, with post and beam with pier or concrete footings
- One, two-story residence with gable roof, and painted, beveled wood siding with corner boards, wood shingle roofing, and single-lit, double-hung, and fixed wood windows
- Eight barns, sheds, and garages with gable roofs, painted and unpainted rustic wood siding and metal panel siding, wood shingles roofing and corrugated metal roof panels

**Significant Interior Features:**

**Residence:**

- Painted walls and ceilings, originally plaster over lath walls and ceiling; with some non-original, painted gypsum wall board surfaces
- Stained and painted fir flooring, base and trim, and multi-panel, panel fir doors

**Barns, Sheds and Garages:**

- Exposed wood framing, wood and metal panel siding, and wood shingle and metal panel roofing
- Milking Barn with stalls and concrete floor
- Main Barn, originally with partial hay loft, and with non-original addition of concrete floor

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

### History and Development of the White River Valley

Settlement of the White River Valley by white pioneers began in the 1850s. Military roads traversed the valley beginning in 1853. These roads provided the first east-west overland route through the Cascade Mountains from eastern Washington Territory to Puget Sound, and set the location for future growth.

The White River Valley's development as an agricultural area in the late nineteenth century was based on hop and berry farms, and in the early twentieth century on dairies and truck farms. The city of Auburn originated in the 1886 when the early town of Slaughter was platted. This town became Auburn when the city was incorporated in 1891. Because of its central location between Seattle and Tacoma and Stampede Pass in the Cascade Mountains, Auburn became an early market center.

Early industries in the Auburn area were regionally-based. They included hop and charcoal kilns, breweries, lumber mills, dairies and dairy processing plants, and a terra cotta plant. The city's identity as a market center was strengthened by the nearby convergence of national railroads. When an extended line was run through the valley in 1883 the railroads connected Auburn to Seattle, 22 miles to the north, and to Tacoma, 14 miles to the south. The beginning of the "railroad era" in the White River Valley began when the Northern Pacific constructed its main line from Duluth, Minnesota to its terminus in Tacoma in 1886. In 1893 the Northern Pacific line was laid. It also provided local access to farms, lumber mills and dairies in the Auburn area.

Electric trains began operation when the Interurban Railroad opened in 1902, providing local passenger service between Auburn, Seattle and Tacoma. Local depots at Orilla, O'Brien, Thomas, Meredith, and Christopher also allowed farmers to ship full milk cans and fresh produce to city accounts and markets. In 1909 the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad Company ran lines through the valley. Other lines ran trains on existing lines.<sup>1</sup>

In 1910, the Northern Pacific Railroad selected Auburn as the site of its western freight terminal. Auburn's population in 1891, the year of the city's incorporation, was 165. This figure grew gradually to 489 in 1900, and nearly doubled in the next decade to 957 in 1910. A population boom ensued during and after World War I with an increase in the city's population to 3,163 in 1920.<sup>2</sup>

In 1898 the Valley's first milk canning facility opened in Kent. (It later closed but was reopened by the Carnation Company as creamery and canning facility for canned milk with a manufacturing capacity of over 3,000 cans daily.) This factory, and the growing Seattle and Tacoma retail markets provided a stable customer base for the local dairy farms. In 1903 the Borden Company opened a milk condensing facility which expanded the market for dairy products nationally.

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1 Vine, p. 56.

2 Vine, p. 57.

Due to a depressed market for dairy products after World War I many dairy farms were lost. The Valley's first milk creamery closed. However, the Borden Company continued production, and the valley's fertile farmlands continued to produce fruits and vegetables for local consumption and distribution to Seattle and Tacoma.

The national railroads which crossed the White River Valley enhanced the Valley's emerging agricultural economy, and helped to create its early industrial economy. The railroad's presence also minimized the effects of the nationwide recession and Depression of the 1930s. Other local industries were effected however. Auburn's terra cotta plant closed in the 1930s.

The dairy industry in the Auburn area and throughout the Puget Sound region continued to grow despite regional and national economic conditions. This growth was demonstrated by Washington state's ranking in 1909 as third nationally in condensed milk production, 13th in butter and 15th in cheese production.<sup>3</sup> The local interurban rail line that ran through the White River Valley was closed in 1928. This closure effected the physical development of several small depot communities along its line, and access by small farms to city markets was made making more difficult.<sup>4</sup> However, by that time a Seattle-based marketing organization, the Milk Shippers Association, had been established in the Valley to distribute local dairy products to Seattle and Tacoma.

#### Japanese Immigration and Settlement in the White River Valley

The presence of Japanese immigrants in Washington State and Puget Sound in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is a part of a larger pattern of relocation, settlement and assimilation. This pattern was similar to the heroic story of many ethnic immigrant groups. However, West-coast Japanese-Americans have a unique and tragic chapter in their early history due to their confrontation with anti-alien land laws, prejudice, and racial discrimination which culminated in their internment and forced evacuation during World War II.

Washington State's first Japanese visitors arrived in 1834, when three fishermen were washed ashore at Cape Flattery. However, considerable Japanese immigration did not begin until the late nineteenth century. In 1880 there were only 140 Japanese living in the U.S. Between 1891 and 1900, over 17,000 Japanese immigrants passed through the Ports of Entry in Seattle, Portland, Tacoma and San Francisco.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Dairy cooperatives were formed early in the century address market conditions. The Milk-Shippers Association was one of many in the Puget Sound area. Twelve of these cooperative associations merged to form a marketing federation, the United Dairymen's Association (UDA) in 1918. In 1930 the UDA became known as Consolidated Dairy Products, and in 1961, through a merger of affiliated cooperatives in King, Snohomish, Skagit, Kittitas and Clallam Counties, it became the Northwest Dairymen's Association (NDA). The NDA was renamed Darigold in 1984. In 1993 Darigold represented over 1,300 dairy farm members. This information is from a 1993 brochure produced by Darigold Farms.

<sup>4</sup> Kirk and Alexander, p. 277.

<sup>5</sup> Ito, p. 22.

Japanese workmen, sought economic opportunities and relief from poor economic conditions in their homeland by emigrating to the U.S. They arrived in large numbers only after 1880, in part, because of anti-Chinese immigration policies which stopped the plentiful supply of Chinese labor. Chinese had been used to lay railroad tracks, and work in the sawmills, mines, and canneries of the pioneer West.

The Pacific coast states received the greatest number of Japanese immigrants. California served as the adopted home to the greatest number, followed by Washington State. Japanese settlement in Washington concentrated initially in Seattle and Tacoma, and in surrounding areas in King and Pierce County, as suggested by census statistics of those of Japanese birth or ancestry.<sup>6</sup>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Total, U.S.</u>	<u>Total, WA State</u>	<u>Total, King Co.</u>	<u>Total, Pierce Co.</u>
1880	148	NA	NA	NA
1890	2,039	NA	NA	NA
1900	24,329	5,617	3,212	627
1910	72,157	12,929	7,497	1,940
1920	110,010	17,387	10,954	2,652
1930	70,993	17,837	11,895	2,661
1940	NA	14,656	9,863	2,050
1950	NA	9,694	6,856	665

Labor statistics from the early part of the twentieth century indicate that Japanese immigrants in urban areas worked in service sectors, and those in rural areas worked primarily in industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy. Early Asian immigrants were primarily working class men who came to work for wages rather than invest in assets.<sup>7</sup> Of all male Japanese immigrant laborers in Washington State in 1913, 46% were general wage laborers, 21% were employees of Japanese-owned business establishments, 20% worked in farming (11% as employees and 9% as independent operators), and 7% operated independent businesses.<sup>8</sup> For hard working rural immigrants there was an opportunity to develop a self-owned business on leased or purchased property. Farming in particular appealed to families where a farmer's wife and children could work along with the family's primary bread-winner.

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<sup>6</sup> Schmidt, p. 35 and 101. Figures for the total U.S. figures through 1920 are from Nishinoiri, p. 2. Figures for the 1930 totals are from the US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau. Figures were not calculated for 1940 and 1950 by the Bureau, but in 1960 the total number in the U.S. rose again to 109,175.

<sup>7</sup> In 1905 the average Japanese immigrant brought the equivalent of \$37.78 to the U.S., in comparison with those from England (\$57.65) and Germany (\$43.72). In 1907 the average farm laborer in the U.S. made \$2-\$3/day or \$60-\$75/month. In Washington day wages were less, averaging \$1.50-\$1.90. From Japanese Immigration: An Exposition of Its Real Statistics, p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Murayama, p. 261.

Most of those who moved to the White River Valley were farmers drawn to the rural areas of the Yakima River and White River Valleys because of the fertile bottom lands and rich alluvial soil. The immigrants were able, as cooperative groups of single men or as families, to start and build successful farming enterprises. For their own farms they tended to work "spoilage," land from which timber had been cut, but which had not been previously cleared or cultivated. Japanese immigrants established vegetable or truck farms, berry farms, greenhouses and dairy farms on leased and purchased property. (They tended not to raise orchards, which required years of cultivation and thus greater capital investment.)

Growth in Japanese-American-owned or leased farms in Washington State was noted in U.S. Census surveys. In 1910 there were 326 such farms with an estimated 11,439 acres. In 1920 the number more than doubled to 699 farms with 25,340 acres. Statistics indicated that 50% of the Japanese-American property was in pasture in 1920; 30% was in vegetables and 20% to fruit. King County was the site of about half the State's Japanese-American vegetable and fruit farms and 90% of pasture, for an estimated total of 70% of all Japanese farming in the State. Adjacent Pierce County, which included the Puyallup River Valley, comprised nearly 20%. Immigrant farmers residing in these areas were responding to the availability of leased or owned land, and to nearby and growing marketing opportunities in Seattle and Tacoma.<sup>9</sup>

#### Anti-Japanese Discrimination

Japanese settlement patterns throughout the American West were shaped in part by a variety of national and state immigration acts. The earliest law effecting Japanese immigrants was the federal Chinese Exclusion Act, passed in 1882. This legislation eliminated Chinese immigration, but it allowed for imported labor from both Japan and Hawaii in the 1880s. This law resulted in an influx of Japanese, primarily of men with farming and other labor skills.

Japanese immigrants, similar to Chinese immigrants before them, faced discrimination in housing and employment and personal prejudice. Gradually discrimination began to be legalized. In 1907-1908 the so-called "Gentlemen's Agreement" was made between the two governments of the U.S. and Japan. This agreement prohibited further immigration by men from Japan. Later, abrogated by the Immigration Act of 1924, the agreement allowed the parents, wives and children of those who had already immigrated to the U.S. to settle in America.

The demographic composition of Japanese communities in America shifted in part as a result of the agreement with a decrease in the number of single men and an increase in the number of families. Between 1900 and 1910 the population of the Japanese in Washington more than doubled with an increase of 7,312. Most of this growth was due to birth of children. In 1910 there were 4,502 American-born Japanese living in the U.S.. By 1920 this number had grown to 29,672.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Census statistics cited in Nishinoiri, p. 9-14, note that in 1920 Japanese-Americans owned or leased 1.1% of the farms in the State. However, these farms covered only 0.2% of the total farm area in the state. Japanese farms were typically smaller and more intensely cultivated. Nishinoiri notes the loss of Japanese farms in Washington due to the State's Anti-Alien Land Law, citing a total of 246 farms comprising 7,030 acres between 1920 and 1925.

<sup>10</sup> Schmidt, p. 35 notes that, "the numerical gain (during the decade, 1900 to 1910) was the largest ever added during any single decade in the history of the state."

The children of immigrants, second generation Japanese-Americans, are known as *Nisei*, in contrast to the first generation of immigrants, the *Issei*. These two generations were treated differently by federal and state laws effecting immigration and discrimination against aliens. In 1913 California was the first state to pass an Alien Land Law.

World War I was accompanied by a period of economic expansion. However, after the war legal discrimination against the Japanese grew throughout the country. Anti-alien land laws were passed in twelve other states including Washington by the early 1920s. These state laws restricted land ownership to citizens, a status which was provided only the *Nisei* by virtue of their birthplace but not to their parents of the *Issei* generation.

In response to these restrictions most Japanese-American farmers in the state shifted their efforts to leased properties. In 1920 only 927 acres of farm land in the State were owned by people of Japanese ancestry, and these by American-born *Nisei*; an estimated 13,635 acres, were leased lands. In King County during this same year 9,493 acres were leased by Japanese-American tenant farmers; only 401 acres were owned by these immigrants.<sup>11</sup>

In 1921 and 1923 the Washington State legislature prohibited not only land ownership, but also the use of land through share-cropping, leasing or renting by non-citizen aliens. These restrictions were extended further in 1937 to include crop contracts, even those between family members. As a result of these laws, the economic reward for hard work, savings, and investment was limited severely. By 1930 it was estimated that almost all the leased farm land would be taken from Japanese-American farmers due to expired leases.

Some Japanese families emigrated from the Pacific states back to Japan or to states to the east which allowed land ownership. Others changed their occupations to focus their economic livelihood on urban and commercial activities which relied less on land ownership or cultivation. Statistics suggest that many remaining Japanese-American farmers became tenants and laborers again, often working on land they previously owned. The effect of the law was both economic and psychological: "After (passage of the Anti-Alien Land) law Japanese immigrants found that the government could easily take away the wealth they had accumulated. This was a betrayal of those who had believed in the American system of success and worked so hard for it."<sup>12</sup>

In 1922 the Federal Cable Act made aliens of American women who married Asians, and eliminated citizenship to Asians who married American citizens. National discrimination against Japanese included a 1924 federal immigration law which used the category of "aliens ineligible to citizenship" to exclude all Asians. This racially-based immigration policy further disenfranchised Japanese-Americans and weakened their political base. It excluded entire ethnic communities from assimilation into the American "melting pot."

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<sup>11</sup> Nishinoiri, p. 15 - 17.

<sup>12</sup> Murayama, p. 295.

For Japanese-Americans the resulting sense of injustice and separateness from the majority culture were probably exacerbated by differences in cultural traditions and language, particularly for the *Issei*. Some have suggest that this alienation may have served to galvanize efforts of their children, the *Nisei*, as evidenced by the formation of political associations such as the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). The JACL , chartered in Seattle in the late summer of 1930, was the first major organization of second generation American citizens of Japanese descent. In contrast to earlier issue-organized groups which had been concerned with intra-community issues, the JACL organized to address anti-discrimination, citizenship, and acculturation issues.<sup>13</sup>

### Historic Resources of Japanese-Americans in Washington State

The White River Valley Chapter of the JACL was one of a number of organizations in which Japanese immigrants participated in the Auburn Area. The Chapter was organized in September, 1930, composed of six community sub-chapters including those in Thomas, Christopher, and Auburn. Other Japanese-American organizations in the White River Valley and Auburn area included the Japanese Language School, established in 1913; the Auburn Japanese Association, established by *Issei* in 1915; and the Valley Civic League, a group organized in the early-1930s under the umbrella of the JACL. In addition there were churches which served the Japanese community -- the Community Christian Church, established in Christopher in 1920; St. Paul's Episcopal Mission, which began organizing in 1922; and the White River Buddhist Church, established in 1912. Japanese parents organized the Thomas Japanese PTA in 1928.

The history of early Japanese-American settlement in Washington State is embodied in part in churches and structures such as these which are associated with cultural, civic and political organizations. Because of the tragic treatment of Japanese-Americans during World War II, however, most of the physical historic resources have been lost. (The White River Valley Buddhist Church is one of the enduring institutions which currently remains. The church building, however, dates from 1964.)

Some of the previously mentioned churches had Caucasian members, and some local civic groups and activities in the White River Valley were open to Japanese as well as Caucasian participants. Historic photos and newspapers indicate that Japanese-Americans in the White River Valley were somewhat involved in some aspects of the community including the annual Kent Lettuce Festival and Auburn Day Parade. Japanese-Americans participated in a number of baseball teams including the original White River, Auburn, Fife and Tokyo Giant Baseball Teams, and in local high school teams. Under leadership of an older immigrant, a Judo Dojo (club) was established also in the Valley.

The economic presence of Japanese immigrants in Washington state has been associated with late-nineteenth century lumber mills and canneries, and with twentieth century mining sites, sawmills and agriculture and commercial enterprises such as the Kosai Farm. Other recognized historic resources in the state include Japanese districts in Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, and Auburn. Some of these properties still exist, but most of the early structures have deteriorated or been removed.

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13      Kitano, p. 56 - 57.

Farmhouses, barns and greenhouses of Japanese farmers in the White River Valley, in areas near Wapato, Spokane, Puyallup, South Park, Georgetown, Bellevue, and on Vashon and Bainbridge Islands are closely associated with Japanese immigrants' involvement in agriculture until 1942. Few extant buildings associated with this historic theme remain. Those that do include barns and residences such as the Kosai Farm, the White River Garden homes and farm site, a Growers Association Plant, and the Natsuhara Store in Auburn; several farm sites on Bainbridge Island; and a fruit and vegetable processing plant on Vashon Island.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Historic resource types are listed and described further in Dubrow, p. 73 - 83. In addition to agricultural and industrial buildings there are those which relate to commerce or social themes in local history. Extant buildings which embody cultural and political themes in Washington include the Japanese Language Schools in Seattle and Tacoma, Buddhist and Christian Churches, and the Seattle office of *The Courier*, the first all-English daily paper for Japanese-Americans and the house of its publisher, James Yoshinori Sakamoto; and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce Hall at the Seattle Yacht Club which is associated with the establishment of the Japanese American Citizens League.

### Dairy Farming in Washington State

Dairy farming constituted one of the most important early agricultural pursuits in Washington State. The industry began as early as 1870 in the fertile river valleys of Western Washington. Because of limited distribution, however, the earliest dairy farms were typically small rural operations, or larger companies which developed concurrently with rail transportation to access urban markets.

One of the first dairies in the White River Valley was the Thomas M. Alvord operation which was established in the mid-1870s. In 1885, when regular train service began, Alvord began marketing his milk in Seattle. (Records from the Alvord farm indicate several payments made to Japanese laborers for farm work in 1893.)

Many former hop farmers in the area turned to dairy activities in the early 1890s after a depression in the hop market. Another influence in their decision to establish dairies may have been a local cheese factory, which was established in the small valley community of Pailschie in 1894, and a condensed milk cannery which opened in Kent in 1898. (The cannery went bankrupt but was reopened in 1899 under the direction of Carnation Milk's founder, E.B. Stuart.) After the Borden Company opened a condensing milk facility in Auburn in 1903 and demand for milk products increased in response to a national market.

Early dairies in the White River Valley included the Zeeuw Dairy in Thomas, dating from the late 1890s, and later the De Maas Purebred Holstein Farm. The largest of the early dairies was the Standard Dairy with 603 acres; in 1930 this became the Smith Brothers Dairy. In August, 1930 the former Standard Dairy barn burned. The Smith Brothers replaced it with a new, 40' by 240' facility, described as " 'the most modern in this part of the country,' " which was "inaugurated with a barn dance attended by over 3,000 people."<sup>15</sup>

Almost all of the White River Valley's dairies, both American and Japanese-owned, were members of the Seattle-based Milk Shippers Association (which later became Darigold). The Association was a marketing organization which sold milk to dealers or canning companies and thus controlled the city's milk market.

Kiichiro Kosai's farm, at an estimated 72 acres, was much larger in size than the average Japanese vegetable and berry farms in the valley. According to Kiichiro's son, Kiso, the dairy had an estimated 60 cows. Horses were used for cultivation until the family purchased a caterpillar tractor in the 1930s. After its acquisition the Kosais provided tractor cultivation services to other farmers; apparently their tractor was one of the earliest ones in the valley. The family had already purchased early vacuum-type milking machines prior to internment, and they were considering new machines, an improvement which would allow for more efficient milking. The Kosais' investment – in land, equipment, and cattle – suggests a capital base, and personal commitment which was much greater than that of many Japanese tenant farmers in the area.

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<sup>15</sup> Descriptions of early farming in the Thomas area are from Flewelling, p. 72 - 76.

The Farm's Association with the Kosai Family

The Kosai Farm is associated with three generations of the Kosai family (a.k.a. Kozai), an early Japanese-American family in the White River Valley. Its historically significant association is with its original owners, Kiichiro Kosai and his son, Frank Kosai.

Kiichiro Kosai was the Japanese-born son of early Japanese immigrant, Shinya Kosai. (Kiichiro was also identified as "Tom" in some records.) Shinya Kosai was born in Shiga Ken, near Kyoto on July 4, 1862, and emigrated to Puget Sound around 1899. He moved to the White River Valley around 1900. As one of the earliest settlers he gradually acquired hundreds of acres of land in the Auburn area including the property where the North Auburn Shopping Center is currently located.<sup>16</sup>

Shinya Kosai's Japanese-born sons, Kiichiro and Suejiro, immigrated to the U.S. in 1902. His wife, Suma, and son Gizo immigrated in 1905. Kiichiro was born in 1888, and was 14 years old when he arrived in the U.S.. Shinya Kosai died on July 7, 1919; his body was returned for burial in Japan, accompanied by his grandson, Gizo and his wife, Suma.

As had their father, Kiichiro and Suejiro worked as a farmers in the Valley. Frank Kosai was born in 1915, the oldest of eight children born to Kiichiro and his wife, Sumi. Other children born to Kiichiro and Sumi, included four sons -- Kiso (b. 1917, currently a resident of Algona), Ben (b. 1921, resident of Japan after release from the Tule Lake Camp), and Minoru (b. 1922, currently a resident of Federal Way); and four daughters -- Sueko Kubo (b. 1919, of San Jose), Kiyoko Ando (b. 1925, of Spokane), Mitsuko Matsuyama (b. 1927, of Detroit) and Yoneko Tamura (b. 1929, currently a resident of Bellevue, also known as May Y. Tamura).<sup>17</sup>

Kiichiro's brother, Suejiro Kosai (b. 1894, d. 1954) was also a dairy farmer in the White River Valley. In the 1920s, however, Suejiro's barns were burned several times. The family attributes these fires to arson. Suejiro thus left the Valley, and moved his family to Tacoma in the late 1920s where he purchased the Grand Hotel.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Norikane, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Biographic information about the Kosai family was derived from an interview with Joe Kosai of Tacoma on March 13, 1995, and from a discussion with Joe, Minoru, and Kiso Kosai and Yoneko Tamura in Algona, Washington on March 17, 1995.

<sup>18</sup> Fires burned other dairies in the Valley, including the Smith Brothers Dairy in 1930 and the 1926 fire which destroyed the Itabashi barn and killed 74 cattle in 1926. These disasters are listed in Flewelling, p. 113.

The fire at Suejiro Kosai's farm was attributed to arson according to Joe Kosai. According to Ito, p. 127 - 128, Kiichiro Kosai's dairy barns were burned down in the 1920s, along with barns of the Buichiro Itabashi and Jyojio Yasamura. Ito attributed these fires to arson stemming from anti-Japanese prejudice.

By 1925, 65% of all of the Japanese farms in Washington State were located in the White River Valley. Japanese farmers developed most of the Green River area of Thomas and Christopher, the small unincorporated area where the Kosais settled.<sup>19</sup> The extended Kosai family was a part of an established immigrant community. Kiichiro and Suejiro Kosai were two of an estimated 200 Japanese-American farmers in the White River Valley in the 1920s. The Kosai Farm thus represents a historic socio-economic pattern of development in the area.

The significance of this farm, however, goes beyond its emblematic meaning. The Kosai Farm was directly involved in a critical legal case over discrimination and land ownership. As described in a 1924 manuscript documenting the history of Japanese farmers in Washington, the Kiichiro Kosai family was one of ten local legal cases challenging the State's Anti-Alien Land Law.

On December 4, 1919, K. Kosai made a contract with Daniel Kleinberg to buy a piece of land on installments. In 1921 he gave his interest in the land to his American-born child, Frank Kosai. S. Osawa and Pierce Longergan (sic) became trustees for the child and Kiichiro Kosai became an employee under their supervision. . . The attorney for the state considered this a violation of the Alien Land Law of 1921 and prosecuted K. Kosai, Frank Kosai, (and trustees) S. Osawa and Pierce Longergan.<sup>20</sup>

District Court Judge Davidson decided this case in favor of the defendants. He found that Frank Kosai, as an American-born citizen, although a minor, could hold title to the land, and that his father's role was an employed foreman. The State Attorney appealed Judge Davidson's decision to the State Supreme Court, but the higher court affirmed the lower court's decision.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> See Figure 10, located at the end of the text in this report.

<sup>20</sup> Nishinoiri, p. 79.

Ito, p. 169, notes that the case by the King County Prosecutor, was against " Mr. and Mrs. Kiichiro Kosai. . . a cattle rancher in Thomas, along with Frank Kozai, Shigeru Osawa, Lonergan and Janisch." He quotes the *Yakima Heigen Nihonjin Shi (History of the Japanese of Yakima Valley)*, p. 121: " 'Except for King County, in all other counties there were very few cases of Japanese being sued for violation of the Alien Land Law. Therefore those who were living in (other) counties felt less threatened. But because of the frequency of the exposures in King County, considerable numbers of the Japanese population grew over anxious and threw away their property or quit business. In this sense the Alien Land Law achieved its purpose for the most part.' "

Ito also provides a profile of Shigeru Osawa, Kosai's co-defendant, p. 95, 239 and 916. Osawa was a *Nisei* born in Seattle in 1891, and a recognized businessman. He was involved in Japanese-American civic and athletic organizations, and served as president of the Seattle Japanese Association, established in 1921, and the general manager of the Nippon Athletic Club, established in 1924

<sup>21</sup> Nishinoiri, p. 80.

The Kosais were fortunate in this legal battle. In four other similar cases the decision favored the State prosecution, and farmlands owned by Japanese-American's in the names of their *Nisei* children was surrendered to the State. The critical difference in the outcome of the Kosai's legal case was attributed to the written legal documents which had been set up to identify trustees for Frank, who was a minor at the time. These documents specifically identified Kiichiro as an employee of the farm.<sup>22</sup>

A contemporary account of the Kosai's legal battle, written by a Japanese-American scholar, concluded that many Japanese-Americans would be forced unjustly to leave farms that they had established due to the State's Anti-Alien Land Laws:

How cruel, inhuman and unjust it seems that a wealthy pioneer state like Washington, with a sparse population and thirteen million acres of farm land of which half is yet unimproved, should desire to force out a handful of simple, law-abiding, hard working Japanese farmers. There seems to be no reason why they should give up the farms so dear to their hearts other than that the state has so willed. This is not merely a petty legal interpretation of the Act, or a theory of state authority; it is a fundamental question of human justice.<sup>23</sup>

### Internment and Evacuation

The internment and forced evacuation of the Japanese Americans are considered tragedies of America's twentieth century political history. Fear of and hostility against Japanese-Americans grew in the late 1930s and early 1940s due to Japan's aggression in Asia, and America's alliance with Japan's enemy, Russia. The National Japanese American Citizens' League recommended that *Nisei* express their loyalty to the U.S. through investment in Defense Bonds and enlistment in military service. Japanese-American individuals and JACL chapters throughout Puget Sound responded to this call with pledges and public declarations of loyalty to their adopted land. Advertisement in the local newspaper stated that "American-Japanese Citizens League and the American-Japanese parents generation are supporting America . . . its policies and the defense program."<sup>24</sup>

Japanese-Americans were extremely alarmed by the December 7, 1941 attack by Japan on Pearl Harbor. This devastating event followed several decades of increased discrimination and anti-Japanese immigration and land ownership policies in the U.S. The bombing of Pearl Harbor spread panic and fear across American, and especially in the West. Anything "Japanese" was linked to the treacherous act of the Imperial Japanese military.

Despite efforts by Japanese-Americans to demonstrate loyalty to the United States, the federal government arrested a predetermined number of "enemy aliens" after war was declared in early December, 1941. Contraband – including radios, cameras, binoculars – was ordered surrendered by all "enemy" aliens in the western states. In December the Treasury Department forbade money transactions of any kind with Japanese aliens.

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<sup>22</sup> According to Joe Kosai in an interview, March 13, 1995.

<sup>23</sup> Nishinoiri, p. 88.

<sup>24</sup> Tacoma News Tribune, December 13, 1941.

In January, 1942 a series of orders establishing military exclusion zones were issued by the Attorney General. The first of these zones was Military Zone 1 consisted of the entire west coast, including Washington west of the Cascade Mountains.<sup>25</sup>

In February enemy aliens in the designated zones were restricted by curfews and travel limits. In March of 1942 President Roosevelt created the War Relocation Authority. The WRA was charged with implementing a program of evacuating restricted persons from military zones. Travel and curfew restrictions were extended to all Japanese-Americans, regardless of citizenship, and voluntary evacuation was prohibited.

To many outside of the Japanese-American community, the behavior of evacuees in the Puget Sound region appeared stoic. A newspaper in Tacoma described the evacuation as "cheerful" and the participants as "resilient." Officials in charge of the operation praised the Japanese: " 'It's a neat job, they made it easy for us. When they saw it was inevitable, they went ahead and cleaned up the mess for us.' "<sup>26</sup>

By June 1942 removal was complete. An estimated 110,000 to 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, including 30,000 children, were forcibly removed from Military Zone 1. In the White River Valley the internment and evacuation by mid-May 1942 resulted in non-voluntary relocation of approximately 2,000 *Issei* and *Nisei* residents<sup>27</sup>

The speed of the evacuation forced Japanese-Americans to give away or sell their possessions at severely reduced value; their remaining property and savings were confiscated. Despite claims by federal and local government agencies that the interests and properties of farmers would be protected, the reality of pre-internment was one of uncertainty and loss. FHA loans and guarantees from the Federal Reserve, and qualified operators approved by the Wartime Civilian Control Administration and Farm Security Administration provided inadequate assistance to Japanese-American farmers. Rather the efforts of these agencies were directed to assuring continued farm production.<sup>28</sup>

Evacuation and internment camp conditions during the war were desperate. During the next three years 29,490 people were interned at Tule Lake, California, one of ten WRA camps. Camp residents included the Kosai family and other Japanese-Americans from Kent and Tacoma. Camp internees suffered overcrowding, poor shelter and hygiene, lack of privacy, censorship of mail and written materials, limited food and medical service, and the separation of families.

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25 In states east of Washington, Oregon and California exclusion zones were much smaller, often limited to an area within 1,000 feet of a dam site, airport or military installation.

26 Tacoma News Tribune, May 20, 1942.

27 Flewelling, p. 116.

28 Tacoma News Tribune, March 19, 1942 and March 29, 1942.

For *Nisei* who were America citizens or those educated before the war, the lessons of the internment were particularly poignant. "The *Nisei* were formally socialized in an education system that promoted the ideals of a democratic society for all citizens. The actual experience of Japanese-Americans, though, was marked by hostility, prejudice and discrimination."<sup>29</sup>

Evacuation restrictions against Japanese-Americans were revoked in January of 1945. Relocation centers and internment camps were closed in early 1946. Many evacuees, who had been interned for up to three and a half years, returned home to face hostile or racist attacks and a total loss of their property and assets. Economic devastation occurred throughout the west coast, with an estimated \$400 million lost to evacuees.<sup>30</sup>

Local newspaper records describe the overt hostility, stereotyping, and discrimination faced by those who returned to Auburn, Sumner and other nearby agricultural areas. The Homestead No. 1 Chapter of the Remember Pearl Harbor League, an anti-Japanese organization, was formed in the White River Valley in 1944 with an estimated membership of over 600 people.

The Sumner-based newspaper, The Standard, supported the Pearl Harbor League with editorials and articles. This paper was particularly virulent in its racial prejudice. The League vowed to boycott all returning Japanese and those businesses who served them. The League's constitution stated its purpose as including "steps to advance agriculture in the state, promote ownership of the land by persons of Caucasian ancestry, and prevent occupation by persons of Japanese ancestry who are not citizens of the United States."<sup>31</sup>

Other measures by the League called for an amendment to the U.S. constitution which would exclude Japanese, both foreign and native born, from the U.S. and its possessions.<sup>32</sup> These discriminatory goals were supported by other groups including the American Legion. The Washington Farmer's Products Control Board, Inc. called for a ban on Japanese or Japanese-American ownership, leases or "other means of occupying property on the Pacific Coast and especially the Puyallup and White River Valleys."<sup>33</sup> As a result of this type of prejudice many returning evacuees and former farmers were forced out of their original communities. Over 3,000 people or 30% of King County's former Japanese-American residents never returned.<sup>34</sup>

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29 Hirabayashi, *The Impact of Incarceration on the Education of Nisei Schoolchildren*, Daniels, et al.

30 The figure was estimated by the Federal Reserve Bank, reported IACL Pictorial Album of the History of the Japanese of the White River Valley, p. 67.

31 Tacoma News Tribune, October 27, 1944.

32 Tacoma News Tribune, October 7, 1944.

33 The Tacoma Times, January 31, 1945.

34 Extrapolated from population statistic provided in Schmidt, p. 35.

Before the war some Japanese-Americans had moved east from the West Coast to states where forced evacuation had not been ordered. Some *Nisei* were students in colleges and universities in the mid-west and east. Still others learned new skills which provided easier working conditions than the arduous labor in industry and agriculture.

These factors, combined with the personal prejudice and legal discrimination faced by evacuees returning to Washington, Oregon and California, contributed to a post war resettlement pattern.

In early 1945, as internees arranged to leave the internment camps, only "1,495 of the 28,541 (who reported their plans) indicated that they would return to the west coast cities. The War Relocation Authority (WRA) estimated that the West Coast would have a postwar Japanese population numbering in the low thousands compared with the 110,000 living there December 7, 1941."<sup>35</sup> Many resettlers moved to the mid-west, particularly to Chicago, Cleveland and Cincinnati. There they faced less overt prejudice and fear, and a new start.

Regardless of the reception they received upon returning to their former homes, Japanese-Americans "suffered incalculable economic loss as a direct result of wartime internment. They lost property, businesses, jobs and savings. The economic gains of half a century of work by the immigrant generation were wiped out. After the war the Japanese American community had to start up the economic ladder from the bottom rung again. The immigrant generation already nearing retirement age in 1945 had to begin their lives over again. Many ended their working lives just as they had begun, as day laborers."<sup>36</sup>

Three generations of the Kosai family had resided at the farm in 1941.<sup>37</sup> During the internment, between 1941 and 1945, Kosai family members (Kiichiro and his children) were sent to Pinedale, near Fresno, and then to the Tule Lake Camp in northern California, and finally to the Minadoka camp in Idaho. Kiichiro died in the camp, at the age of 57, on April 6, 1945.<sup>38</sup> Frank Kosai was sent to Montana to work. His wife, Aiko, and their family were sent to the Minadoka Camp. The Kosai family's farm was leased out during their internment, but all of the farm's machinery, including the caterpillar tractor, were sold prior to their evacuation. Many personal possessions were left at their home and simply lost.

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35 Tacoma News Tribune, March 6, 1945.

36 Dubrow, p. 36.

37 The JACL Japanese American Directory for 1941 has no listing for a Kosai family in Auburn or Kent. However, the Kosais lived in Thomas until May 1942.

38 Birth and deaths of the male members of the Kosai family were indicated on WRA Records, provided by Kiichiro's nephew, Joe Kosai. Frank Kosai and his wife, Aiko, currently reside in Cleveland, Ohio. His brothers, Kiso and Minoru, and sister, Yoneko Tamura, moved out of the area after the end of the war, but currently reside in Algona, Federal Way and Bellevue respectively.

During the internment the Kosai Farm was managed by non-family members. An undivided one-sixth interest in the property which was confiscated by the federal government during World War II.<sup>39</sup> Despite discrimination and prejudice, the Kosai family retained ownership of the property until late June of 1953. By that year, however, the balance of property taxes owed on the farm grew too large, and five of the adult children in the family sold the property to Frank A. and Ida A. Fassbind.<sup>40</sup> Just as it had on many other Japanese-Americans, the internment and evacuation had a lasting economic impact on the Kosai Family of the White River Valley.

Court decisions declared that the U.S. government in error for the wartime evacuation, and in 1988 federal legislation was passed to apologize and pay monetary compensation to internees. Still, the economic devastation of the internment experience continued. Kosai family members lost all of the value of their machinery and farm equipment, and almost all of their personal possessions during the war. Due to the consequences of the evacuation, they sold the farm in 1953.

#### Post-War History of the Auburn Area

Until the rise of the aerospace industry in the late 1960s, and high-tech industries in the 1970s and 80s, the economic character of the Northwest remained concentrated in the primary or extraction industries – collection and processing of forest, fish and agricultural resources – rather than the secondary or productive industries of manufacturing, service or construction.

Economic and social transformation of the White River Valley occurred after World War II. The city of Auburn's boundaries were expanded to include the Kosai site in 1959. Its population grew to 6,497 in 1950, and to 11,933 in 1960 during a period of increased industrialization and suburbanization which effected the entire valley. New transportation systems gradually replaced the railroad. These included Seattle-Tacoma Airport, which was constructed initially in 1943 and subsequently expanded. In the late 1950s and 1960s the system of federal highways was expanded to include Freeways I-5, and 405. Use of the freeways increased truck freight and brought an end to the historic railroad era.

Transportation-related industries, such as distribution warehouses, continued to develop in the White River Valley. Before the war, manufacturing had been concentrated near northwest cities. Growth in service industries occurred in Seattle and Tacoma due to their seaport connections to the Pacific and railway hubs. The transportation network of the 1960s allowed this type of growth to occur outside of historic urban centers.

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<sup>39</sup> The one-sixth undivided interest was taken by the U.S. Government had been "indentured" during the war because of its ownership by Kiichiro's son, Ben, who lived in Japan during and after World War II. The federal government became the Alien Property Custodian in accordance with the Trading with the Enemy Act, Executive Order 9788 and 9095, as indicated in the King County Auditors Vol. 3271 of Deeds, p. 563-565.

<sup>40</sup> The Fassbinds purchased this interest from the government on July 8, 1953; and an underlying mortgage on the property, held by the Federal Land Bank of Spokane for Frank S. Kosai, on July 24, 1953, according to King County Auditor's File No. 4365622. From a video interview with Frank A. and Ida Marty Fassbind, May 3, 1993.

After World War II, however, industrial locations became more dispersed along highway corridors throughout Puget Sound. New highways, industrial plants and warehouses began to transform the White River Valley area into an distribution center serving the entire Puget Sound. After the war, the Boeing Company opened an aircraft plant in Auburn, and FAA and GSA facilities were opened in Auburn.

Two other nearby developments demonstrate regional changes in the White River Valley and the area near the farm. Construction of the Auburn Airport, located approximately a mile and a half southeast of the site and the city's Sewage Treatment Facility, located one-half mile southeast, occurred in the 1960s. (Both of these facilities have expanded since that time.) In the 1970s tracks for the former Interurban Railroad, located on the west perimeter of the Kosai Farm, was removed to create the Interurban Trail, a paved path for use by pedestrians and bicycles. These developments exemplify the growth of Auburn as a suburban city, increased presence and influence of government services, distribution, transportation, and manufacturing in the local economy, and the decreased presence of agriculture in the White River Valley.

The Kosai property and surrounding properties are currently zoned M-1 or M-2 which are both industrial zones. Future developments in the area include the proposal for a new thoroughbred racetrack on a site which includes the former Kosai Farm by Northwest Racing Associates.

Recent History and Current Plans for the Kosai Farm Site

The Kosai farm property, listed in Metsker's Atlas of King County, 1936, consisted of Christopher Garden Tracts, Block 3, Lots 3, 4, 5 and parts of 6, 7 and 8 under the ownership of S. Osawa and S. Osawa, et. al. (Frank Natsuhara was listed as the owner for parts of 6, 7 and 8, but the Kosais acquired his portion in the summer of 1936.)

Title company records reviewed by the current developer disclose recordation of crop mortgages affecting portions of Lots 6, 7 and 8 in Block 3 of Christopher Garden Tracts which correspond to the Kosai ownership area, an approximately 72-acre parcel.<sup>41</sup>

Records suggest that the farm was rented to a variety of tenants after it was purchased by Frank A. and Ida A. Fassbind in 1953. Tenants included dairy farmers Joe Marty, Paul Gros Nickelaus (sic) of Switzerland, and Hans Wilhelm, and non-dairy tenant, Bill Spyksma. Physical remnants in the barn suggest that it housed some animals, but its dairy functions apparently ceased approximately six years ago.<sup>42</sup>

The Kosai Farm site was acquired by La Terra Limited Partnership with Northwest Racing Associates as their leasee in 1993. The farm is a part of their proposed 165-acre development of valley property as a horse racing track. The racetrack site is bounded on the east by Burlington Northern Railroad tracks, on the north by 37th Street NW, and on the west by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. The south boundary is approximately 1,300-feet north of 15th Street NW.

The racetrack development will include an one-mile oval racetrack, a six-level, 6,500-seat grandstand, parking lots for 5,100 vehicles, barns with 1,400 stalls and related facilities for a new thoroughbred racing track. Buildings on the dairy farm site will be removed for construction of new buildings and the horse barn detention storage pond.

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41 Crop mortgages are referenced as King County Auditor's vault files, No. 1985175 and 1989640.

42 Video interview with Frank A. and Ida Marty Fassbind, May 3, 1993.

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

### The Farm Site

The setting of the Kosai Farm site was originally a flood plain. The property was located approximately three-quarters of a mile west of the Green River. In the late-nineteenth century the area, known as Christopher, had developed as an agricultural area with nearby private railroad facilities. On the west side of the site were the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul tracks. Parallel tracks for an electric line were identified on a 1936 map as the Puget Sound Power and Light Company right-of-way.<sup>43</sup> Along the east property line of the farm ran the lines of the Northern Pacific and Great Northern Railroads which jointly used the track. Currently the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad tracks are along the east boundary.

The property includes buildings and structures on an approximately 72-acre, level parcel, which extends up to 1,448.08' west from B Street and the 100'-wide right-of-way for the Northern Pacific Railroad. 37th Street served as the north edge. The property thus formed an irregular shape around a portion of lots 6, 7 and 8 which were owned by a neighbor, Frank Natsuhara.

The buildings on the site are set 56' to 114' west from the center of the railroad tracts. Originally access was provided via a driveway from the south through the Natsuhara property. Access to the front of the property is provided currently by a paved driveway which rises approximately eight feet to cross the raised grade of the tracks and lead to an unpaved gravel and turf area yard in front of the barns. With the exception of the yard, farmhouse and barns, the balance of the property is still in open pasture.

Little formal landscaping or mature trees remain on the property. Five poplar trees mark a portion of the south property line and an apple tree is located just west of the farmhouse garage. On the open area in front of the farmhouse and barns the Kosai's raised hothouse rhubarb; behind the house they raised produce including lettuce beans and cabbage. Along the railroad they cultivated blackberries and raspberries. Pea vines and corn were also grown on the site for silage.

King County Property Tax Assessment Records which date from as early as 1938, list the farm as belonging to fee owner, S. Osawa. Osawa was one of the original trustees for Frank Kosai. These records also indicate that the Main Barn, was the earliest building, constructed in 1919, and that the Kosai house was constructed in 1921. Other buildings which existed in 1938 are simply listed rather than described on the tax records. These were "Farm Buildings B, C, D, E, F and G." A small shed, identified as "Building F," was located west of the Feed Pens. It was demolished by the late 1940s.

King County Property Tax Assessment Record photographs, which date from the late 1940s, also show an original wood-frame cylindrical grain silo which appears to have been located south of the Main Barn. The records also note a "new, 8'x70' addition and raised roof 5' . . . basin used for hay storage" which were constructed in 1942.

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<sup>43</sup> The Puget Sound Electrical Railway, commonly known as the Interurban, ran on the electric line. It was owned by Puget Sound Power and Light Company according to Stan Flewelling.

The Milk Barn and adjacent Creamery to the south, identified in the tax records as "Building "N," were constructed between 1954 and 1955. The property owner identified at this time was Frank Fassbind. Fassbind is listed as the owner or contract purchaser of the farm as of June 13, 1953. According to his own recollections, he constructed the Milk Barn, Feed Pens (also known as "Loaf Sheds") and the Creamery. He also lowered the floor level of the Main Barn approximately two feet and provided it with a concrete floor. The Fassbinds also remodeled the residence, adding indoor plumbing at a bathroom and providing gypsum wallboard finish at the upper floor.<sup>44</sup>

The following written text describes the nine existing buildings on the site. These buildings are grouped in two clusters which is a typical arrangement for smaller agricultural sites. The Farmhouse, Farmhouse Garage and Farmhouse Shed are on the southern portion of the site. These three buildings are associated with domestic functions. The Barn Complex to the north consists of buildings for animals, equipment, and agricultural processes. For identification each of the nine buildings on the site has been numbered separately as listed in the HABS Photo Index.

#### The Farmhouse (Building A) (HABS No. WA-211-A)

Original construction drawings for the Kosai Farm not available. Photographs and records from King County's Archival Property Tax files show simply detailed, wood-frame structures characteristic of Northwest vernacular architecture.

The original farm house (HABS No. WA-211-A) is identified in the tax records as Building "A." It is a one and one-half story, simple bungalow structure. It is located approximately 100' west of the center of the Northern Pacific tracks. The primary facade and gable end of the house faces east toward the front of the property and B Street. A small, gable-roofed, porch projects 6' from the front of the house. The roof extends 9" on all sides to form an overhang.

By comparing property tax records with current conditions it appears that the house was constructed in 1921 as a six-room, 24' by 28' one and one-half story dwelling. It was approximately 24' tall at the roof ridge, with a floor area of 672 sq. ft.. Two 7' by 8', one-story lean-to structures and an 8' by 8' porch projected from the back of the house increasing its total floor area to 818 sq. ft.

The house was expanded by 1938 with removal of the back structures and their replacement with a single, one-story, shed-roof, 12' by 27' addition on the west end, and later in 1941 with the enclosure of the front porch. The back addition, which increased the building area to 1,020 sq. ft. was constructed, according to Kosai family members, to accommodate the growing, inter-generation Kosai family. The family included Frank's wife, Aiko after their marriage in 1941.

These pre-war changes appear to have been constructed very consistent with the architectural vocabulary of the original building. The original floor plan accommodated four rooms on the first floor and two rooms on the upper attic floor. With the west addition the lower floor was expanded by to six rooms and the attic to three rooms. The front porch became a first floor bedroom for Frank and Aiko Kosai.

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<sup>44</sup> Video interview with Frank A. and Ida Marty Fassbind, May 3, 1993. Several of the Fassbinds' recollections were confirmed by Kiso Kosai during a tour of the farm site on March 17, 1995.

The structure of the expanded house continued to consist of wood framing with 2x6 trussed rafters, 2x8 floor joists placed 24" on center, and conventional stud framing. 4x6 beams spanned up to 12'. Corner joints were boxed. The house was constructed over a crawl space with a post and pier foundation. The first floor was 8.5' in clear height, and the attic, 7'. The exterior was finished painted rustic wood siding with corner trim, and wood shingle roofing. Windows were double-hung in single and grouped compositions, each sash typically containing a single lite. Typically the windows were trimmed in a simple manner with an apron and a projecting head; side rails on the sash were dropped.

The house originally had a brick masonry chimney flue which served a wood stove located in the living room. Interior finishes consisted of stained fir flooring, 1x6 tongue and groove cedar wainscoting, and wallpaper walls and fir base in six of the nine rooms. Ceramic tile was provided in the kitchen floor and drain board in 1949. Historic interior finishes have been replaced subsequently by the current finishes which consist of painted gypsum wallboard walls and ceilings, vinyl flooring and carpeting. Consistent with the other Craftsmen-like details in the house, the original interior doors were stained and painted fir, five-panel types. Several of these doors remain.

Tax records suggest that the house was constructed without a bathroom. In the 1949 addition a tub, toilet and basin were added. Currently there are no doors nor remnants of original light fixtures, appliances or built-in furnishings. Plumbing fixtures appear to date from the 1949 era.

#### The Farmhouse Garage (HABS No. WA-211-B) and Farmhouse Shed (WA-211-C)

Two separate buildings on the site are associated with the domestic use of the farm. These include a 20.5' by 22.5' by 13' tall, one-story, gabled roofed garage (HABS No. WA-211-B), which is located 19' feet south of the house.

The second building is a simple, 15' by 24' by 10' tall, gable-roofed shed (HABS No. WA-211-C) located 5' behind the house to the west end. It contains two separate rooms constructed to the west of the house. According to the property tax records for the house neither of these buildings were constructed with it in 1921. It appears that the garage was constructed later for automobile storage. The shed appears to have been used for storage. Although its two-room configuration suggests it may have been constructed or used also as a bathhouse the recollections of Kosai family members are that such a bathhouse was to the south of this shed.

Both the Farmhouse Garage and Shed are constructed of conventional wood framing, with no interior finishes, wood shingle roofs and rustic wood siding, and dirt floors. The roof of the Shed is in very poor condition and some of roofing shingles and structural framing members are missing.

#### The Barn Complex

The Barn Complex, located approximately 216' north of the farmhouse, and west of the Northern Pacific railroad line, currently includes six structures. The space between the barn complex and the farmhouse buildings is a relatively flat, unpaved area which was once used by the Kosai family for cultivation of hot house rhubarb. Tax records suggest that the Main Barn (HABS No. WA-211-D) was the first building on the site, constructed by the Kosais in 1919 along with a nearby wooded grain silo. A small, 10' by 10', one-story, wood-frame, concrete floor Milk House was constructed along with the farmhouse in 1921. This building no longer exists and there are no physical or written records about it.

Other existing buildings which are a part of the Barn Complex include the Milk Barn, (HABS No. WA-211-E) and the Creamery (HABS No. WA-211-F) which are adjacent, inter-connected buildings. Three nearby, associated farm structures comprise the three-part Feed Pens (HABS No. WA-211-G), an open loaf shed, known as the Northwest Shed (HABS No. WA-211-H), and a garage-like structure, the Northeast Shed (HABS No. WA-211-I).

The Main Barn (Hay Barn, Building B) (HABS No. WA-211-D)

The Main Barn is located approximately 114' west of the center of the existing railroad tracks. Portions of this building are the oldest structure on the site, and are associated with the Kosai Dairy. The Main Barn is identified by tax records as a "Sup'l Farm Bldg.," and as Building "B." These records indicate it was constructed in 1919.

The barn was originally a simple, 50' by 70' rectangular structure with post and beam construction, 2x12" plank floors, and a gable roof. On the back or west side was a one-story addition which is identified as a hay basin. The exterior of the barn was sheathed with unpainted rustic horizontal siding and wood roof shingles. A small, gable-roofed monitor projected above the center of the roof ridge and provided ventilation. The barn contained a loft which was used for hay storage. The barn was remodeled between 1939 and 1942 with the addition of an 8' by 70' hay basin to the west end and an increase in the roof height of this area by 5'. Currently the roof rises from a bottom edge height of 26' to the gable roof ridge, an estimated 38' above grade. The rear portion of the barn is an estimated 26' tall at the rood ridge.

The Milk Barn (HABS No. WA-211-E)

The Milk Barn, located just south of the Main Barn, is typical of specialized dairy facilities of the mid-twentieth century. Tax records identify this building and the adjacent Creamery as Building "N." The Milk Barn function is associated with the Kosai Farm site, however the current building was constructed in 1954 - 1955 by a subsequent owner of the property, Frank Fassbind.

The barn is, a 38' by 93' rectangular plan, gable-roofed structure with an estimated height of 23' at its roof ridge. The interior is divided symmetrically into 30 individual stanchions, 15 on each side of a center aisle, and each originally containing a continuous, plumbed, trough-like basin for feeding and milking. The center aisle is defined by posts and short sections of concrete stem walls along the trough basin which support a linear extension of the hay loft above, and separate the stalls from the access aisle. The concrete floors of the aisle and the stanchion areas slope to two drainage valleys.

Exterior side walls of the Milk Barn are punctuated, each with nine window openings. These contain simple, wood-frame, operable casement windows. Access for the diary cows was provided through one opening at the north side of the building and two on the back or west end. There is also a wider opening at the west end of the aisle. Each of these openings was once closed by a sliding door; currently only the overhead steel tracks of the doors remain. The east end the Milk Barn is essentially a two story space with a 33' storage and hay loft which connects to the linear loft over the central aisle.

In comparison to the Main Barn, the Milk Barn and adjacent Creamery (HABS No. WA-211-F) evidence some formal design. Both buildings' gable ends face east toward the front of the property. The overhanging gable roofs are carried by simple, knee braces at the gable ends. The Milk Barn has a symmetrical facade with a large central opening which apparently was used with a sliding door. (An overhead steel track remains.) Five, rectangular windows arranged on three levels about the center of the gabled mass. The windows are simple, multi-lit wood frame fixed sections.

Exterior wood siding and exterior concrete walls of Milk Barn and the adjacent, smaller Creamery Building are painted, currently a white color on the Milk Barn and a faded but clear blue color on the Creamery. With their more symmetrical facade compositions and color, Milk Barn and Creamery buildings contrast with the unfinished, natural wood and utilitarian quality of the other structures which make up the Barn Complex.

#### The Creamery (HABS No. WA-211-F)

The Creamery is a smaller, 18.75' by 15' building located approximately four feet south of the Milk Barn. It is connected to the Milk Barn by a gable-roofed concrete walk. The Creamery is similar in construction and age to the Milk Barn. It is a much smaller building, an estimated 12.5' tall at the roof ridge. The Creamery, like the Milk Barn, is wood-frame structure with a shingle-clad gable roof and wood siding. Exterior walls are of 2x4" construction on top of a 6' wide, reinforced concrete stem walls and foundations. The floor of the barn is of reinforced concrete construction. Interior walls consist of painted concrete and wood paneling.

Currently the south side of the Creamery is almost entirely obscured by blackberry brambles which have grown uncontrolled on the site since it ceased to operate as a dairy.

#### The Feed Pens (HABS No. No. WA-211-G)

The Feed Pens are three attached structures located northwest of the Main Barn. These pens are open structures which were described on property tax records as "feed roofs", three individual roofed structures, each nominally all 100' long, and 8', 18' and 8' wide, and an estimated 10' at the top of a typical roof ridge. The Feed Pens are characterized by an open structure consisting of paired 3x6 posts which sit on low concrete curbs, perimeter shed roofs, and a central gable roof forms over trussed wood joists. Roofing consists of metal panels. Exterior walls are only partially framed.

The three linear structures delineate separate, sheltered feed stalls. One row of stalls is provided in the two separate perimeter roof structures, and two below the wider center one. Concrete paved aisles are provided between the three structures. The overall structure footprint is 96.5' by 67'.

#### The Northwest Shed (New Loaf Shed, Building F) (HABS No. WA-211-H)

The Northwest Shed is a skeletal, gable-roofed structure located west of the Main Barn. It is described as a "New Loaf Shed" or Building "F" in the property tax records. It is an open, 39' by 45.6', gable-roofed form with its structure consisting of eight wood trusses supported on 6"x6" wood posts, spaced approximately 6.5' on center. The posts rest on a poured-in-place, 6"-tall concrete curbs. The building was constructed with only a dirt floor. The roof was noted originally as metal, but no roofing currently exists. The overall building height is 18' from grade to the top of the ridge framing. A concrete trough is placed at the southwest corner of this Shed.

Property tax records indicate that this current shed was constructed in 1951. It replaced a former building which was described as a stock shelter and identified as "Sup'l E." This earlier building was built in 1925, and demolished in 1941. It was a 40' by 80, gable-roofed open shed. Its construction consisted of conventional wood framing and trusses structure set on a low concrete block wall with no floor structure or finishes. The exterior was sheathed with rustic horizontal (shiplap) siding, and the roof clad with wood roof shingles.

#### The Northeast Shed (Building T) (HABS No. No. WA-211-I)

The Northeast Shed is the closest building in relation to the Northern Pacific rail line. It is located between the Main Barn and the railroad, approximately 56' west from the center of the railroad tracks, and 36' east from the Main Barn. The building is identified as Supplementary Building "T" on the tax records and is described as a garage with rustic siding, wood-frame construction, a dirt floor and shingle roof. This description, which dates from 1954, is consistent with the existing structure.

The building is a simple 21.25' by 29' single-volume, one-story structure, an estimated 13.5' tall at the roof ridge. It is characterized by a gable roof with a north-south ridge line which is parallel to the railroad tracks, and a single large opening with a sliding door on the south end. Two small, wood frame windows with fixed glazing are placed on the north end and one on the west side. This building was used as a storage shed for farm equipment, machinery and products awaiting shipping.

#### Current Conditions of the Kosai Farm Buildings

Changes in the last several decades to the Kosai Farm building have occurred due to neglect, delayed maintenance, and recently to vandalism. Currently portions of the house of the barns, and several of the sheds appears to be in very poor condition. Mechanical and electrical systems in the house are inoperative and utilities are not connected. Accessible windows and doors to the house, barns and sheds have been remain unlocked, and most of the original glazing has been broken. Interior features and finishes of the house have been partially destroyed by vandalism.

The Barn Complex, which consists of more utilitarian buildings, and appears to have suffered from gradual structural deterioration rather than deliberate destruction by vandalism. As a result portions of the structures have sagged or collapsed, particularly at the roof edges and other areas exposed to weather. Concrete walkway and aisles are spalling and delaminating, and are broken in many areas. Roofing and wall cladding have been patched in some areas with metal panels. Painted surfaces of the Creamery and Milk Barn are worn through to bare wood and concrete on exterior and interior areas. Throughout the buildings surfaces are dirty, and the barns and sheds are not clean. Although there is not much rubbish on the site, the barn yards are filled with silage, vegetation, hay, manure and other debris.

The site of the former Kosai Farm currently remains agricultural in character with fences and barns and outbuildings relatively intact. The property is currently characterized by open pastures, perimeter fences and a few landscape elements – three poplar trees along the southern boundary and an apple tree west of the farmhouse garage. Portions of a nearby farm, located southwest of the Kosai property, also remain. Most of the other nearby properties, however, have taken on a suburban and commercial character due to the construction of warehouses, low-rise commercial buildings, and developments of townhouses and apartment complexes. The physical context clearly expresses current economic changes in the White River Valley.

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Information was provided generously by Charles Payton, Community Museum Advisor, King County Cultural Resources Division, Seattle, Washington, (206) 296-7580; and by local historian Stan Flewelling, author of Farmlands: The Story of Thomas, A Small Agricultural Community in King County, Washington, (206)939-4523.

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Figure 17. Current Site Plan, Sketch, Boyle • Wagoner Architects, Seattle, April, 1995.

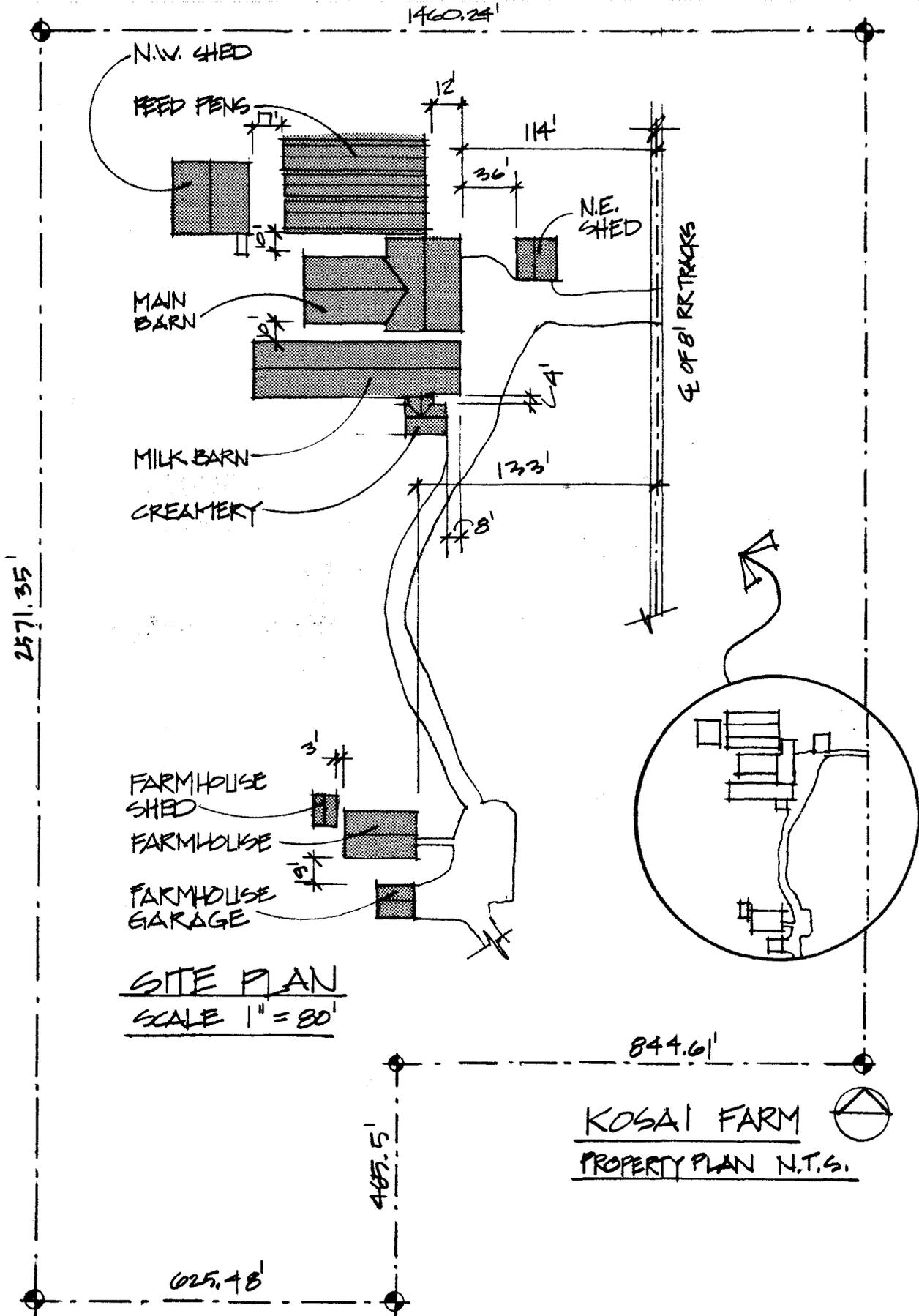
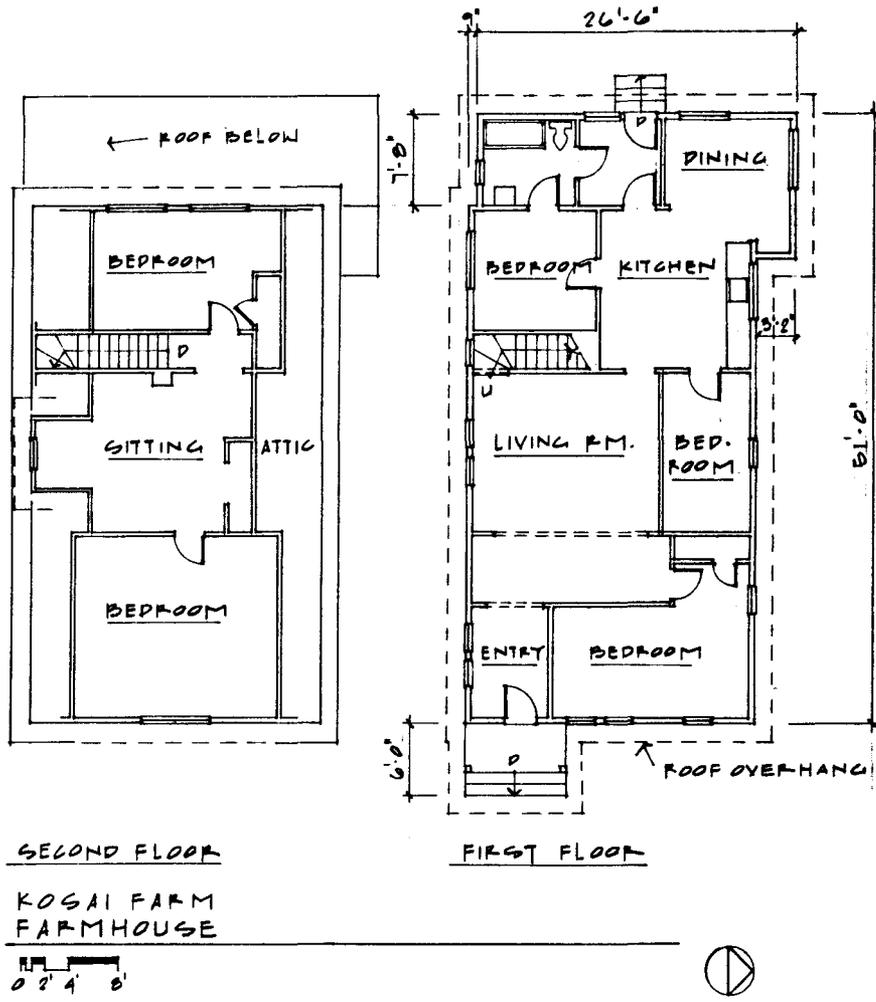
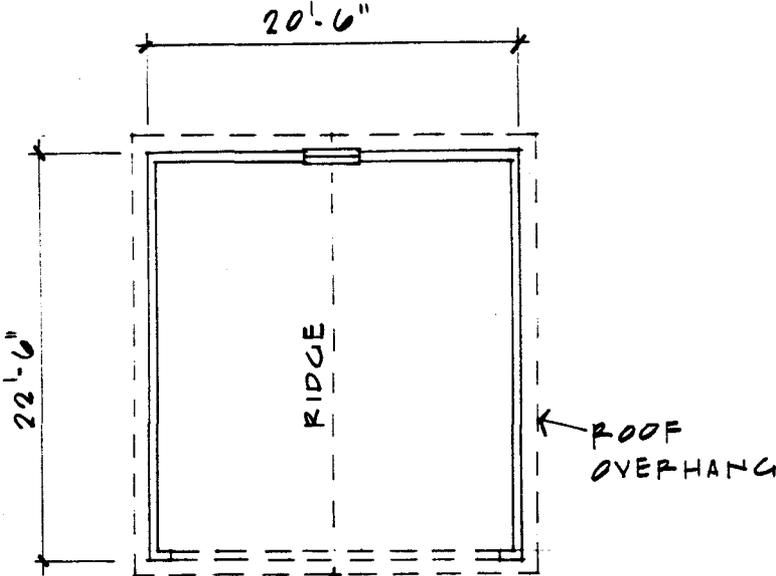


Figure 18. Farmhouse Floor Plans, Sketch, Boyle • Wagoner Architects, Seattle, February - March, 1995.



—Figure 19. Farmhouse Garage Floor Plan Sketch, Boyle • Wagoner Architects, Seattle, February - March, 1995.



KOSAI FARM  
FARMHOUSE GARAGE

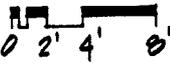
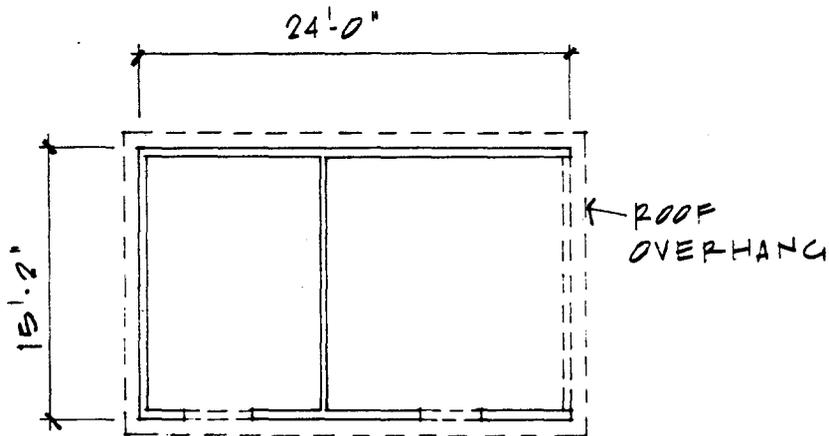


Figure 20. Farmhouse Shed Floor Plan Sketch, Boyle • Wagoner Architects, Seattle, February - March, 1995.



KOGAI FARM  
FARMHOUSE SHED

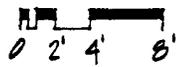


Figure 21. The Barn Complex: Main Barn, Milk Barn, Creamery, and Feed Pens, Floor Plans, Sketch, Boyle • Wagoner Architects, Seattle, February - March, 1995.

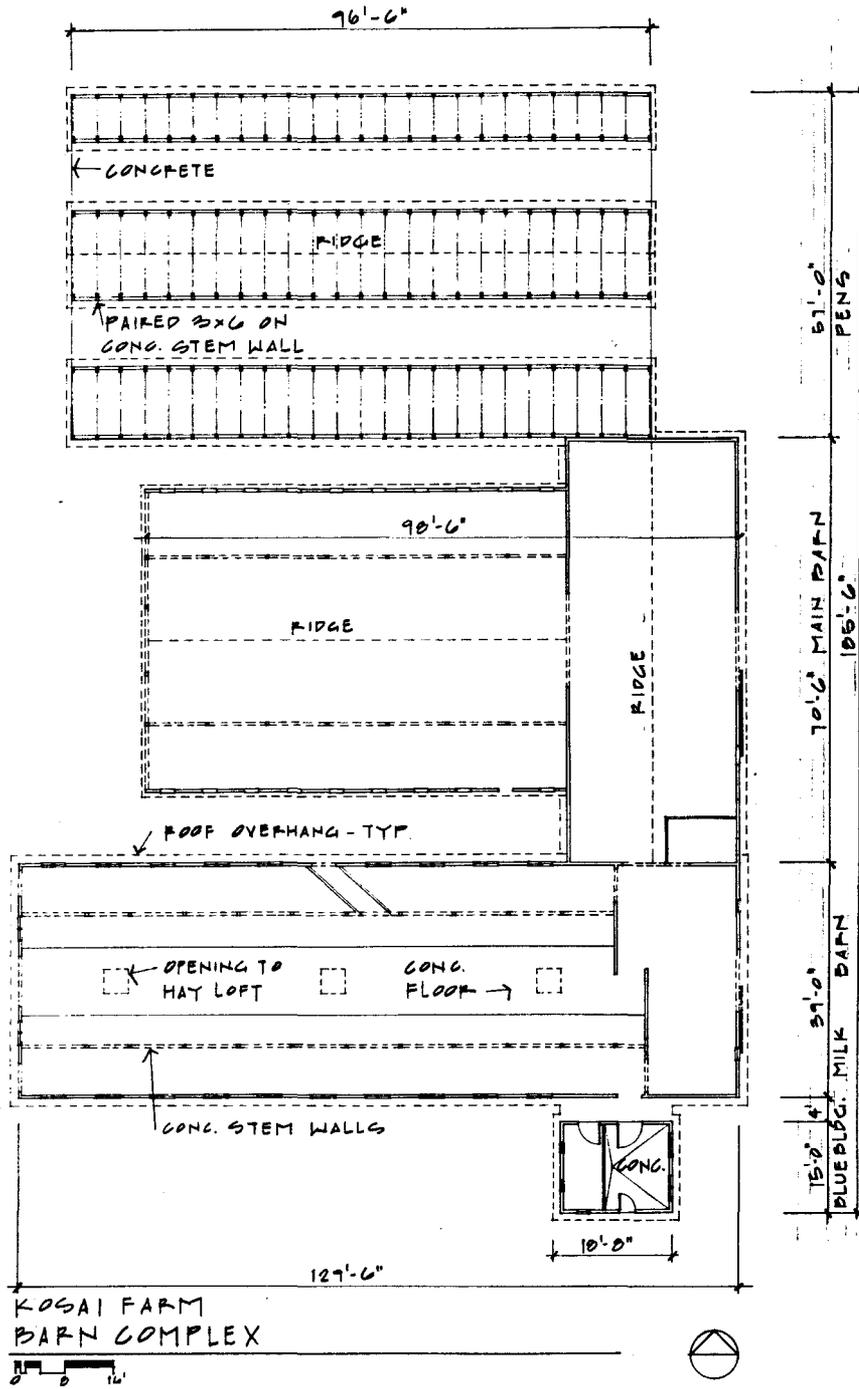
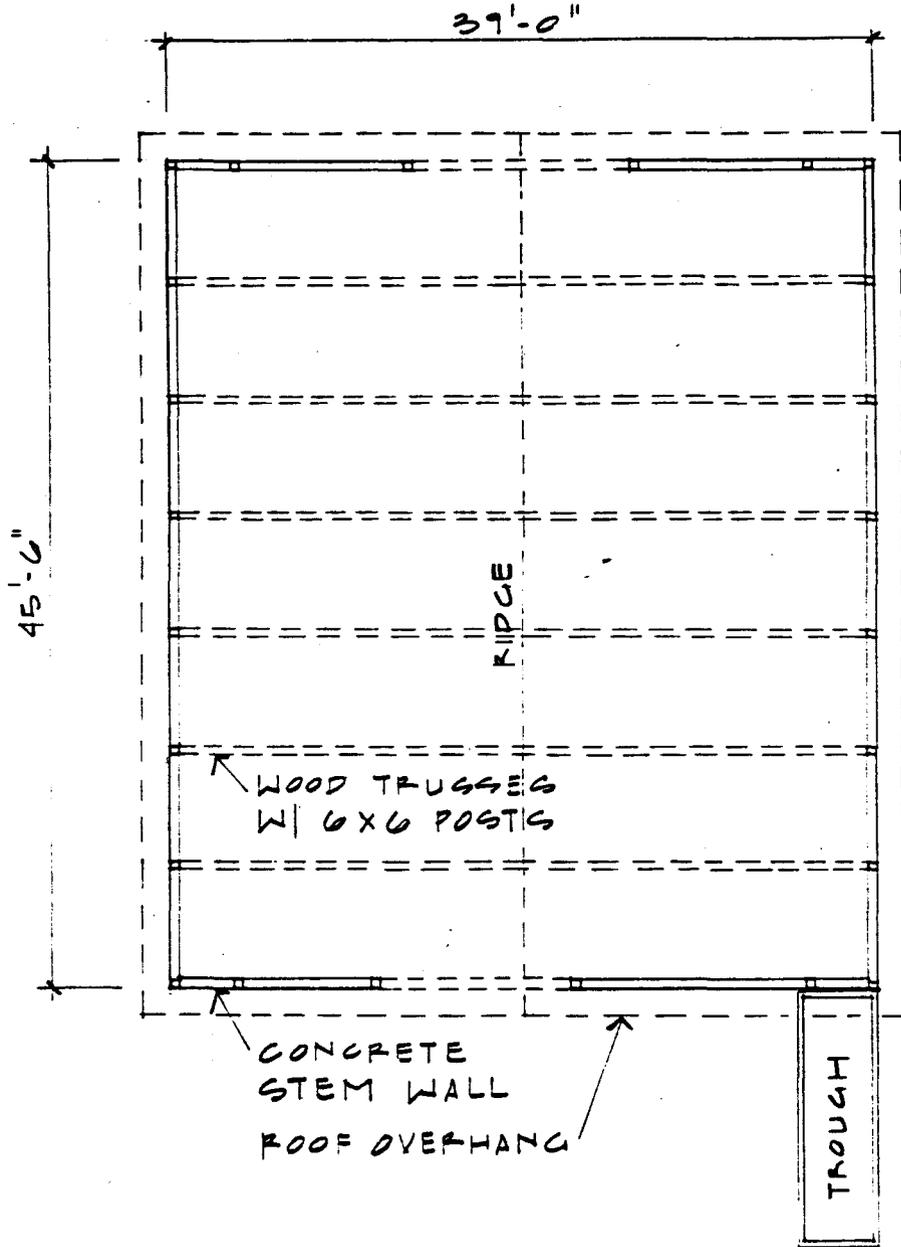


Figure 22- The Barn Complex: The Northwest Shed, Floor Plan Sketch, Boyle • Wagoner Architects, Seattle, February - March, 1995.



KOGAI FARM N.W.  
SHED

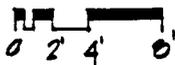


Figure 23. The Barn Complex: The Northeast Shed, Floor Plan Sketch, Boyle • Wagoner Architects, Seattle, February - March, 1995.

