

# Community Living Agreements & Site Rules for Finca Fruición

- Last Edited December 2021

## **I agree to make the following commitments as a person living at Finca Fruición:**

- Align with and support Finca Fruición's **Mission, Vision, and Goals.**

**Mission:** *To embody a lifestyle of compassionate care for the land, community, and ourselves, where people from various cultures come together to cooperatively steward the land, resources, integral enterprises, practice thriving, and participate in a solution-based way of life.*

**Vision:** *To cultivate a harmonious environment that integrates healthy human and ecological interaction and offers a living model for thriving (the ability to thrive). Finca Fruición incorporates permaculture design, sustainable food systems, holistic healthcare, compassionate communication, contemplative education, family nourishment, and integral business ethics to fulfill this vision.*

- ❖ Follow all policies, guidelines, and procedures established by the community & the Fruition Center, and willingly accept the consequences of noncompliance.
- ❖ Pursue some path(s) of personal awareness and growth, and prepare myself to take responsibility for my emotions, ideas, beliefs, behaviors, and their effects on others.
- ❖ Practice nonviolence towards others through respectful speech & action; and maintain clear, open, and honest communication with all community members.
- ❖ When faced with conflict, misunderstanding, or challenges with the community or an individual, I will willingly and openly look at my own role, patterns, reactions, and motivations.
- ❖ Inform the community of situations in my life that I believe may pose a risk to Finca Fruición and its residents.
- ❖ Be cordial and welcoming to guests, visitors, and program participants.
- ❖ Not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, social class, economic status, "disability," or sexual orientation with regard to offering membership or inclusion in community activities.
- ❖ Treat children with love and respect.
- ❖ Clean up after myself, my children, and my pets, leaving things in better condition than I found them.
- ❖ Treat all plants, animals, and fungi with reverence and respect. Acknowledge the beings that we cannot see that are integral to the health of the land and thus our community and the planet.
- ❖ Honor my agreements with Finca Fruición, the Fruition Center, and the individuals within, or if /when necessary, initiate clear communication toward setting new agreements.

**Holistic Culture & Ecology:** Finca Fruición is dedicated to cultivating a holistic culture of wellness that supports the individual, the family, community, and ecology.

- ❖ I agree that while I am a resident at Finca Fruición, I will remain open to my own personal growth and development as a whole being, part of a larger ecological system, and honor and respect all beings around me, from microorganisms to humans.
- ❖ I will treat the environment with care and consider how my thoughts, words, and actions affect me and those around me.

### **Types of Community Residents:**

- ❖ **Roots** – Shareholding residential members of Finca Fruición who form a perennial relationship with each other and the land, who are also members of the Community Council.
- ❖ **Wings** – Residents who are passing through via the Fruition Center, these take the form of staff, interns, volunteers, eco-farmstay guests, and renters. Perennial eco-timeshare members (also involved in the community council) are also Wings Members.

**Supporting the Fruition Center for Holistic Culture & Ecology:** Finca Fruición hosts the Fruition Center, which is an Education and Event Center that needs the support and compliance of everyone who lives on-site in order to carry out its educational mission. This support manifests in the following ways:

- ❖ Maintain the facilities and grounds in an appealing and clean fashion so that guests, visitors, and clients have a pleasant experience (this is nice for us too!).
- ❖ Keep ALL Fruition Center office equipment, instructional materials, tools, cleaning supplies, bedding, heaters, food preparation items, etc., where they belong with an awareness that they are Fruition Center resources, and several people are accountable to their placement and use.
- ❖ During events, courses or conferences, help our visitors find the people that can best meet their needs.
- ❖ Fraternizing with course participants or conference guests in ways that distract them from their activities while here (especially involving the use of mind-altering substances) is prohibited.
- ❖ Help maintain the health of residents and participants by washing hands before sitting down to meals, engaging in any manner of food preparation, as well as after each trip to the bathroom. It's likewise important to remain particularly vigilant during any periods of illness or infection, even well after your symptoms have subsided.

## Meetings, Circles, Check-ins:

- ❖ Meetings held at Finca Fruición are done through sociocratic circles that focus on specific logistical elements of community functioning (for example, Animal Circle, Management Circle, Food Production Circle, Boundaries Circle, etc.). These meetings are open to involvement by members of Finca Fruición, as well as to individuals willing to commit at least a 1-month stay with one of the Fruition Center programs.
- ❖ As Finca Fruición is in its development phase, Circle meetings may be joined together for greater efficiency, and people may be involved in multiple circles. As the community grows in number, so will the number of individual circles.
- ❖ Sociocratic Circle Meetings will be held weekly, monthly, or as needed. They remain small in the number of participants, generally ranging from 2-5 individuals.
- ❖ Circles are consensus-based, and the Community Council must agree upon all decisions that affect the overall community.
- ❖ Weekly Check-ins – these are all resident check-in gatherings that hold space for people to share what they are experiencing and have an opportunity to speak and be heard by all present. Anyone staying on the farm is welcome at these gatherings, and they operate through a speaking stick model, where there are no cross conversations, attacks, or defenses. While a person shares, the group listens, thus it is a safe place to express oneself.
- ❖ Wisdom Circle – This is a mediation circle involving people who are having conflict and an empathetic listener. The mediator and individuals share their perspectives and listen to each other express themselves. Then through understanding, a solution from the people in conflict can arise, the mediator encourages the individuals to find their own solutions themselves.
  - When I am involved in a Wisdom Circle, I agree to be respectful and listen, even if I feel angry, sad, hurt, or fearful.
  - I agree to take space from the conflict and individuals involved in it before seeking a Wisdom Circle Mediation so that I am not reactionary and emotionally charged while in the circle.

## Housing

- ❖ Rental Prices: The Fruition Management Co. (FMC) has a chart with housing costs and associated fees/deposits.
- ❖ Who gets to live where? Housing is delegated on a seniority basis, favoring existing residents on good terms with the community before introducing brand new people. I will request a change of residence to the FMC in writing if I want to move to a new space, signing a new lease and accompanying documents. Specific housing is set aside for the use of volunteers and sometimes visitors. Other space may be reserved for program participants or guest instructors, contract workers, or other guests.

- ❖ Landscaping: I will check with the FMC before starting any landaltering project.
- ❖ Exteriors: I will take responsibility for keeping relevant porch and deck areas visible to the general public tidy and free of clutter.

### **Composting Toilets:**

- ❖ At Finca Fruición, we use dry composting toilet systems, which recycle nutrients back into bananas and fruit trees. These toilets are mainly for solids, as urine can make them more acidic and smelly.
- ❖ Fruit trees thrive when fed with the nitrogen from urine, so “watering” them is encouraged.  
(A lady’s pee toilet or bucket may be made available upon request.)
- ❖ Toilet paper can be deposited directly into the composting toilet.

### **Using the Natural Streams & Waterfalls:**

- ❖ The use of any soaps/toothpaste/sunscreen lotions (these release grease) is prohibited in natural waters, even if biodegradable. When washed directly into the water, these substances affect the microbiology and Ph of the water.
- ❖ Biodegradable soaps may be used in solar/compost showers. There are greywater filter systems in place that use gravel, rocks, microorganisms, and plant root systems as natural filters before the water reaches the underground water.

### **Laundry:**

- ❖ Laundry is located in the Fruition Center and is a pay-per-use system.
- ❖ They are honor-box operated. Please read the signs and make appropriate contributions.
- ❖ There is also a sink for handwashing, soap, and a solar clothes dryer near the washing machine.
- ❖ The laundry sink is available for handwashing clothes and is free.
- ❖ Additional clotheslines are also available near hostel & camping areas as well.
- ❖ If you choose to bring your own soap to wash laundry (or anything else for that matter), it must be biodegradable and chemical-free. The health of our greywater systems depends on it. If you are not sure or need advice on finding such items, feel free to contact us.

### **Use of Community property: (i.e., bikes, tools, cleaning equipment, etc.)**

- ❖ If/when using Finca Fruición’s property and resources, I will keep it clean and in good working order.

- ❖ I will return it to the location it came from in the condition I borrowed it unless otherwise communicated with the Fruition Center's Staff.
- ❖ If something is broken or lost, I will notify the Fruition Center Staff immediately.
- ❖ If the loss or damage of Finca Fruición's property is due to my negligence, I may be asked to compensate somehow.

### **Individual property:**

- ❖ Suppose I choose to share my personal property with the community by leaving it in a shared space or an area where others might be tempted to use it or remove it. In that case, I will label it with my name and other appropriate information.
  - I am aware that items I open to community use may be rendered unusable in a very short time.
  - I understand that there are children in the community, and therefore I will not leave out valuable, inappropriate, fragile, dangerous, or other items which young children may damage.
  - I may also choose to donate goods to the community or the center responsibly. I will not leave my undesired junk here and consider it a gift or donation.

### **Roads:**

- ❖ I acknowledge that the roads are shared by Finca Fruición guests & members, residents of the town San Agustín, children, ducks, and other occasional livestock. Therefore I will use them with awareness and caution.
- ❖ I will help keep bikes and other small vehicles out of the roads and pathways when not in use
- ❖ I will observe a speed LIMIT of 16 KM/Hr (10 MPH ) on the road through the neighboring pueblo, San Agustin, and 5 KM/Hr on the internal roads of Finca Fruición.

### **Emergencies**

- ❖ In the case of an emergency, I will contact a Fruition Staff member as soon as possible and explain the situation as calmly as I can.
- ❖ If I or someone near me is involved in an emergency, I will yell for help if I cannot come to the Fruition Center or call a cell phone for help.
- ❖ Emergency phone numbers are:
  - 911 for the ambulance
  - xxxxxxxx Jason
  - xxxxxxxx Albis (groundskeeper - understands some English)

- ❖ Health concerns that are not emergencies, at first, can turn into emergencies if not dealt with.
  - I will inform someone on the Fruition Staff if I have prolonged pain, open sores, diarrhea, or other health concerns that are not healing within a day or two.

### **Water A Sacred Resource**

- ❖ Water coming from our springs is to be honored and used consciously. All greywater returns to our land, so I will only use biodegradable soap and sparingly.
  - I will be very conscious of excessive water use for cleaning or watering plants (especially during the dry months), as fresh water is a precious and diminishing resource. We currently use municipal electricity for pumping in some areas.

### **Sustainability**

- ❖ Energy Usage: I will turn off lights/appliances when not in use.
- ❖ Laundry: I will hang laundry on the line. I will add Finca Fruición's laundry to personal laundry to create full loads, if appropriate.
- ❖ Compost: I will take out compost when I notice it is full, cover the pile, and clean the bucket before returning it to the kitchen.
- ❖ Recycling: I will CLEAN and sort my recyclables correctly in bins by the laundry area and pay attention to the signs.
- ❖ Waste: When trash bins are full, I will tie them up and take them to the recycling/trash center by the swimming pond. I will line the trash can with a new bag.
- ❖ Toilets: I will wash my hands every time I use the bathroom. I will cover my deposit with sawdust, rice hulls, or leaves when I am finished. I will clean the area after I cover my deposit and refill the containers of cover material if I empty them. I will notify the Fruition Center Staff when the compost toilets are 3/4 full so that they can be changed.

### **Food and Community Kitchens**

- ❖ I will leave the cooking utensils and food preparation equipment in the kitchen to prepare meals and return them to their proper locations when they are dry.
- ❖ If I use a communal kitchen, I will remember that we are ALL SHARING THE SPACE. I will clean up my dishes or other messes immediately. The Kitchen Manager may restrict access to the Fruition Center Kitchen during events or if residential members request the space to be private.

**Personal Guests and EcoFarmstay Guests:** People staying on Finca Fruición's property who are not involved in an educational program, a volunteer, or a renter must have a host who is a current roots resident or renter.

- ❖ EcoFarmstay Guests: EcoFarmstay guests are those who are participating in Fruition Center programs. Typically the Fruition Center staff handles tours and overnight accommodations for these visitors.
- ❖ Personal Guests: Personal guests are roots residents or renters and have been invited to spend time with us here for personal reasons.
  - I will notify other Finca Fruición community members of my guests in advance of their stay, using email or during a check-in circle.
  - I will share this Community Living Agreements document with my guests and take note of the most updated Guest Policy for charges and other rules associated with guests.
- ❖ Unannounced or Uninvited Visitors:
  - Finca Fruición sometimes has people come on property without notifying us beforehand. It is a part of Costa Rican culture to visit on weekends and to stop by unannounced. These people are welcome on the property; however, they might not speak any English. Therefore it is important that these guests are put in contact with a Spanish-speaking community member of Finca Fruición.
  - There are, however, people who may wish to take things from us or use the land in a way that is not in alignment with our agreements and needs. It is important that we kindly investigate when we see new faces.
  - I will use the following protocol for uninvited guests or visitors:

**Handling encounters with people whom I do not know or are suspicious of:**

**S.C.A.N.**

1. See – See the person, make eye contact, note their appearance
2. Contact – Contact them in a casual manner. “Hi, have we met?” or “Hola, me llamo \_\_\_\_\_. Como se llama usted?”
3. Ask – Ask if they need assistance. “Can I help you find anything?” “Are you looking for someone in particular?” “Puedo ayudarle?” or “¿Busca a alguien?”
4. Notify – Notify others that you greeted the unfamiliar face and ask for help if appropriate.
5. If I feel something is suspicious, I will alert the community to my experience so we know what to look out for.

## Children

- ❖ As parents, we request that all community members be proactive and honest with the children of the community. We ask that visiting parents also share their expectations about how the community can best support the relationships between the children and community residents, as well as the ways in which the parent(s) are expecting support from the community.
- ❖ The children of Finca Fruición are equal members of the community and deserve the same respect as any adult member. That being said, children also will test boundaries and may behave inappropriately. Adults who witness violent, disrespectful, confrontational, destructive, or belittling behaviors are requested to compassionately reflect to the children what they are seeing and how it makes them feel. They are not, however, to punish them. Instead, share what they have witnessed with the parents, ideally at a check-in meeting where the children are present, or request a circle with the parents and the children.
- ❖ If a child or children are in direct danger, adults are requested to intervene, remove the threat and speak to the children(child) reflectively.
- ❖ I agree to speak compassionately with the children and assist in holding boundaries of safety and respectful conduct.
- ❖ Children are not allowed to use guest computers, although they will most likely ask. The children have a media budget that they use and are not allowed to watch movies or play video games without consent from their parents.
- ❖ I will hold firm boundaries regarding my electronic devices with the children, even if they ask me repeatedly to use them.
- ❖ The children and their parents will pick up toys and dishes left in communal spaces and around the property and put them away in agreed-upon places. Parents are requested to be aware & proactively supportive of the ways that their children leave spaces, treat the community (members, animals, & things), other people's personal property, or affect community gatherings, business meetings, or events that we are hosting.
- ❖ Bikes or other toys are to be removed from the pathways, as they create a potential hazard in the dark.
- ❖ Children are to leave the toy spaces in public areas in relative order after playing there, and all adults may encourage clean-up.
- ❖ I agree to be conscious of my language, conduct, and behavior when I am around the children and will keep in mind that I am an influence on their growth and development.



## Quiet Hours

- ❖ I will help ensure that quiet time is honored from 10 pm - 6 am daily to the best of my ability. Note the dorms and rooms are part of the center and are close to the hammock and kitchen when applying the quiet hours.
- ❖ Community Residents may play music around the fire circle after 10 pm with permission of the people sleeping in the camping area and other residents. Respectful volumes are to be maintained at night.

## Pets and Animals

- ❖ All new animals have a “trial period” to determine if they will fit well with the community.
- ❖ Dogs can threaten wildlife and sometimes behave unpredictably around a large number of people, including young children or other pets who regularly flow through Finca Fruición.
- ❖ Cats can have a severe impact on the native small mammals, reptiles, and birds, which can disrupt the web of life.
- ❖ Small indoor animals, such as hamsters, and goldfish are unlikely to present a problem.
- ❖ I will keep my dog on a leash until the community approves this dog to be off leash.
- ❖ I am responsible for properly acclimating my animal to people, other animals, and spaces of Finca Fruición and ensuring that my animal's needs are met.
- ❖ Finca Fruición is not responsible for my animal.
- ❖ I agree that I am responsible for any damages done by my animal(s) and am willing to pay for any reimbursements that result from my animal's behavior.
- ❖ If I am interested in introducing an animal to Finca Fruición, I must agree to and abide by the pet policy in writing. I can read and sign the Finca Fruición Animal Policy online at ([www.fincafruicion.com/animalpolicy](http://www.fincafruicion.com/animalpolicy))
- ❖ I will pay a pet deposit for any animals that I keep on the property.
- ❖ Exotic or particularly aggressive or large pets will require special arrangements.

## Alcohol and Erosive Drug Use

- ❖ I agree with the Fruition Center Drug Policy ([www.fincafruicion.com/drug-policy](http://www.fincafruicion.com/drug-policy)) and understand that this is a zero-tolerance policy for erosive drugs, such as cocaine, heroin, and other addictive drugs.
- ❖ I will not misuse or abuse drugs, prescription or otherwise, while a resident at Finca Fruición. The consequences of misuse or abuse of drugs at Finca Fruición may result in the abuser having to leave the premises without a refund of unused time. I understand that drug misuse and abuse extend beyond the personal and affect the

community as a whole, including potential legal consequences for Finca Fruición, community relations with the local village, and potential danger for residents.

- ❖ If I use erosive drugs on the grounds, I may experience immediate dismissal.
- ❖ Behavior that appears to be affecting community relationships as a result of drug or alcohol use will be addressed in the form of a “Wisdom Circle” where a course of action may be established. A Wisdom Circle is a circle with specific people who can use empathetic listening, hear where a person is coming from, consider the wellbeing of that person and the community, and begin to find a solution to a particular challenge that the community is facing.

## **Tobacco**

- ❖ I will smoke only in designated areas, and I will be aware of who is affected by my smoking. I will **always** dispose of my tobacco waste in the proper containers, and I understand that throwing my tobacco waste on the ground or leaving it around is considered littering and unacceptable at Finca Fruición.
- ❖ I am also aware that tobacco waste can cause a fire, so that I will be extremely careful with embers and ash.
- ❖ I will not smoke near children, even if they follow me into a designated smoking area.

## **Compassionate Communication: NonViolence**

We are committed to using compassionate communication as a way of life through our speech, thoughts, and actions. Violence to oneself, others, property, or the environment is not acceptable at Finca Fruición. Acts or threats of violence will be immediately addressed and a solution sought through a Wisdom Circle. Repeated acts of violence will lead to expulsion from the community.

## **Swearing**

We consider a language pattern of swearing to be inappropriate behavior, especially when directed at another person in an angry or threatening way. I will choose to be conscious of how I use my words, focusing on appropriate language, while at Finca Fruición, especially in shared spaces and around children.

## **Repeated Infraction of Boundaries:**

- ❖ The Boundaries Circle is a small group of roots & wings residents at Finca Fruición that exists to organize community boundaries and/or policy infractions that need special attention.

- ❖ First, the person who has breached the boundary will be requested to attend a Wisdom Circle. The individual(s) and the Wisdom Circle will determine a course of action.
- ❖ If there is repeated misconduct or complaints, another Wisdom Circle will be held and new agreements made.
- ❖ Suppose the Wisdom Circle and the person unable to follow the agreements cannot find a way to change the inappropriate conduct, and conflict continues. In that case, there will be a Boundaries Circle meeting with a representative of the Wisdom Circle to determine the course of action, which may result in the individual(s) to whom the conflict pertains, to be asked to leave without a refund and if damage of property is involved, with additional payment.
- ❖ If I am in violation of any part of this agreement, another resident may enter me into the resolution process facilitated by the Wisdom & Boundaries Circle. I recognize that I will have a chance to be genuinely heard and assist in finding a solution to my challenge through my meeting with the Wisdom Circle.
- ❖ I also understand that the Boundaries Circle will be notified about my conduct. If I continue to breach this agreement, I will be placed in observation, which means I must be aware of how my actions affect others.
- ❖ Suppose I cause distress with multiple people onsite, enough that the Boundaries Circle cannot resolve community tensions. In that case, the Community Council will be addressed and may recommend an end to my residency, and I agree to leave peacefully and follow the course set out by the council.
- ❖ I agree to maintain healthy relationships with other residents, both roots and wings, to the best of my ability.
- ❖ I will proactively work to resolve any conflicts and/or misunderstandings in a timely manner. This includes making a good faith effort to work out interpersonal problems through third-party mediation, as appropriate and determined by the Wisdom Circle.

**I have read the Community Living Agreements and agree with its contents.**

Printed name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_