



Future of Food on Vancouver Island

**Presented by
Linda Geggie**

Overview

1. Current Situation-
Our Food System
2. Global Food
Economy
3. Local Food
Production
Capacity?
4. Re-localization
Efforts!



Our Current Situation on Vancouver Island...

The Good,
the Bad,
and the Ugly!



Vancouver Island

- Traditionally key foods were salmon, seal, octopus, herring, cod, deer, ducks, shellfish, greens, root vegetables and berries.
- Foods and practices
- changed dramatically with
- settler populations



The Food System plays a large role in island life...

Food System accounts for:

- 20% of retail sales
- 20% of service jobs
- 20% of car trips
- 40% of garbage and
- 80% of organic waste



Vancouver Island

- 2855 Farms
- Over 1200
primarily producing
livestock
- and 1500 field
crops



Vancouver Island

- Estimated expenditures on food over \$5.369 billion
- Gross farm receipts \$163.7 million

- That's only 3%



On Vancouver Island
we import over 90%
of our food.
(50 years ago we
imported about 10%)



CRD Region-Food Production

- 7% of land base in the ALR
- approximately 975 farms
- 50% of farms are under 10 acres
- 50% farms earn between \$2,500 to \$25,000
- 30 organic farms, many more transitional
- 25 wineries and a cidery in Greater Victoria and nearby Cowichan Valley

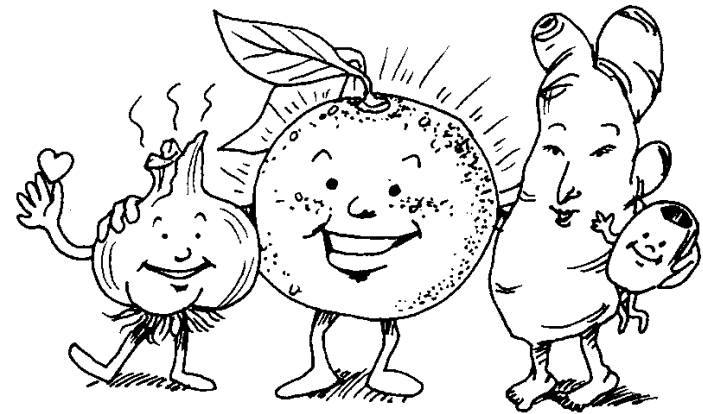
What we grow in the CRD

- **Field crops** 4,232 h
(almost 3000 Hay)
- **Fruits and Berries** 257 h
(apples strawberries
grapes)
- **Vegetables** 355 h (corn,
cabbage carrots, squash)
- **Livestock** (chickens
600,000, 4,000 Cattle,
800 dairy cows, 9,000
sheep, 388 hogs)



CRD -Food Distribution

- Most local vegetables, fruits and berries are bought direct from the farm gate not through grocery retailers
- Majority of residents purchase food from 5 major grocery chains who are supplied by 5 major distributors

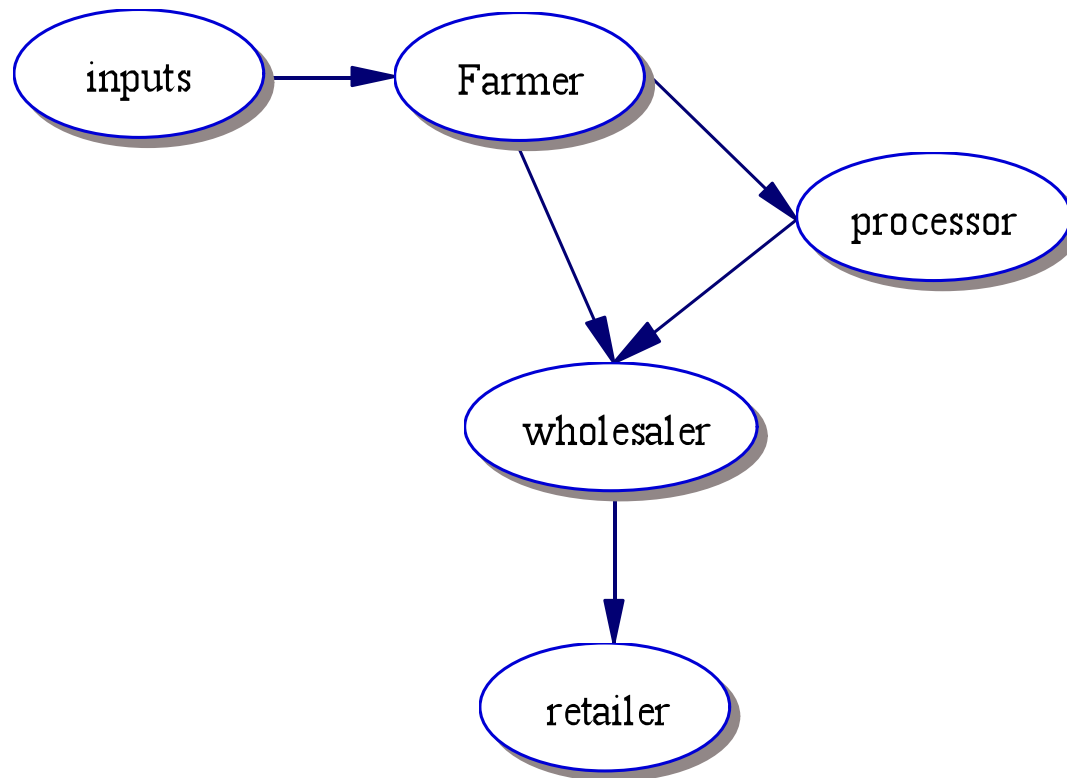


Fruits of a Global Food Economy

- Accessible, nearby
- Food abundance
- Wide range of foods
- Available year round
- Food affordable
- Ability of people to maintain cultural diets



Food Supply Chain



Global Food Supply through AGRIBUSINESS Model

"agribusines is more than just owning and cultivating the land to raise crops and livestock (agriculture production).

Agribussiness is also the financing of agriculture and the manufacturing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of farm machinery, fertilizers, chemical pesticides, seed, feed and packaging materials (agricultural inputs).

Agribusiness also manufactures, processes and markets food (agricultural outputs)."

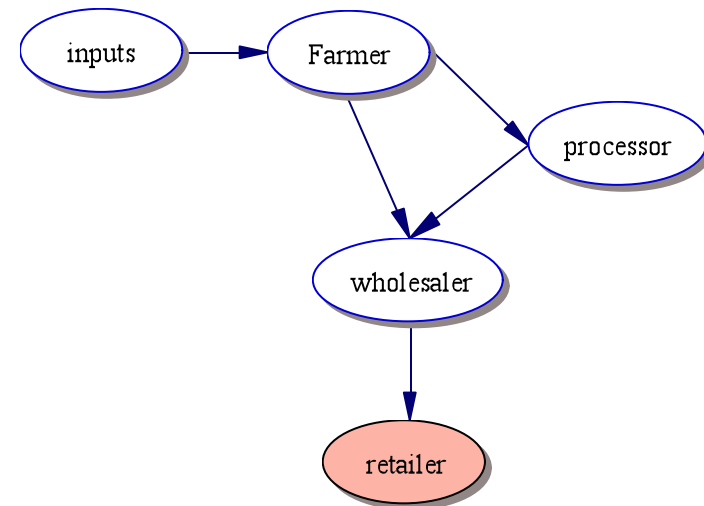
Emergence of Food Company Clusters

- 4 companies control the seed market
- 3 produce most nitrogen fertilizers
- 9 companies collect all Canadian Grain
- 4 companies mill 80% of flour
- 4 companies dominate beef packing



Canadian Grocery Retail

- 80% of retail is through six companies
- The combined market share of the Loblaw Companies Ltd., Sobeys Inc., exceeds 50%.
- Loblaw's has estimated 35% of the market -the max allowed by Canada's Competition Bureau.



Global Trend

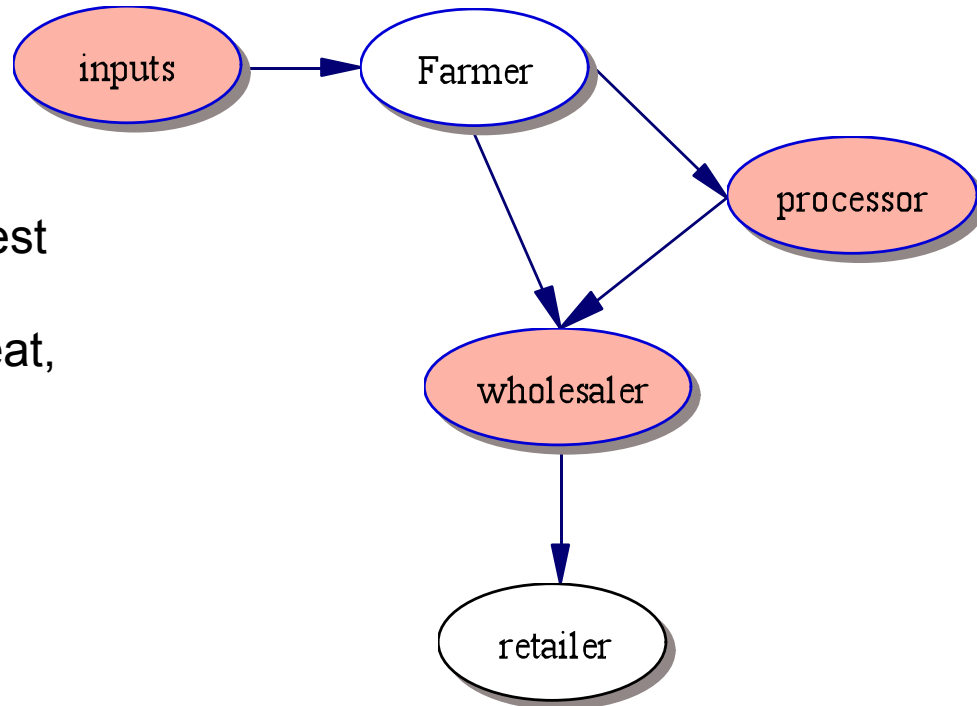
- United Kingdom: top five retailers control about 76.5% of the market (J Sainsbury plc, Wal-Mart-owned Asda Group and Tesco)
- United States: five retailers are established as the grocery industry's frontrunners (Kroger, Supervalu, Safeway, Ahold and Wal-Mart)

Owning the Chain-Cargill in US

- 1st in Corn Exports (Continental Grain)
- 1st in Soy exports
- 1st in Grain handling facilities
- 3rd in animal Feed plants
- 3rd in Beef Packing (Excel)
- 3rd in Pork (Swift)
- 3rd in Turkey (Cargill's Turkeys)

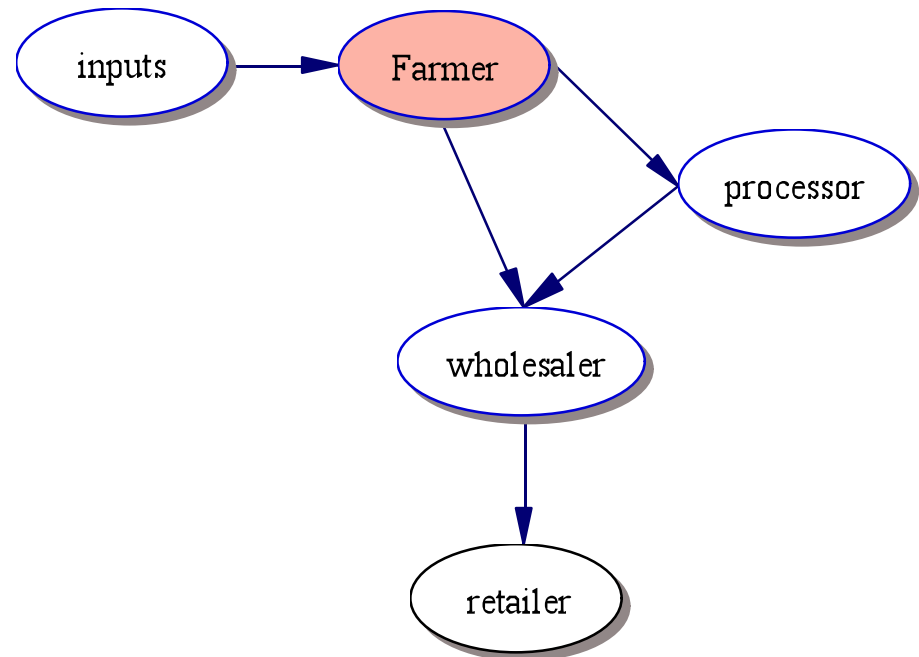
Cargill in Canada

Cargill is one of Canada's largest agricultural merchandisers and processors with interests in meat, egg, malt and oilseed processing, livestock feed, salt manufacturing, as well as crop input products, grain handling and merchandizing.



Farmers?

In 2000, Canada had
276, 548 farms (down
from 430,522 in
1966).



Trans-national Sourcing

- Transnationals look to purchase goods at the cheapest cost and move them to where they can be sold at the highest price
- On Vancouver Island it is hard to compete when across the globe workers in rural areas receive less than \$5 a day and health and environmental regulations do not exist or are unlikely to be enforced.
- Size matters!



How is Global System doing at feeding people?

6 Billion People in the world

Estimated that of these:

- 1 Billion underfed (800 million children)
- 1 Billion overfed

In the CRD, approximately 40% of adults overweight, while at the same time there was a 25% increase in use of food banks in the last 10 years (1 in 6 children).



Our Health

- Diet related illnesses are on the rise (diabetes epidemic, cardio vascular, osteoporosis, and cancers)
- Our children's life expectancy is lower than ours.

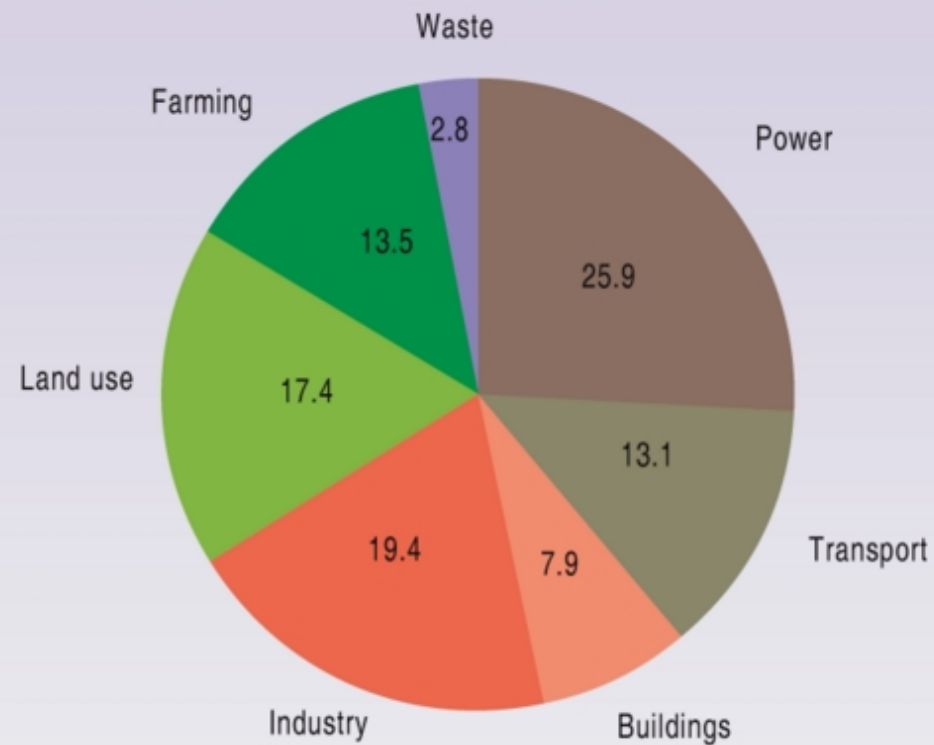


Our Planet

- Falling Water Tables
(especially in key areas of agricultural production)
- Deterioration of rangelands that supply majority of world's protein
- Soil erosion, loss of topsoil and continuing destruction of croplands
- The collapse of global fisheries



Greenhouse gas emissions in 2004 by source



SOURCE: IPCC, Working group 1, 2007

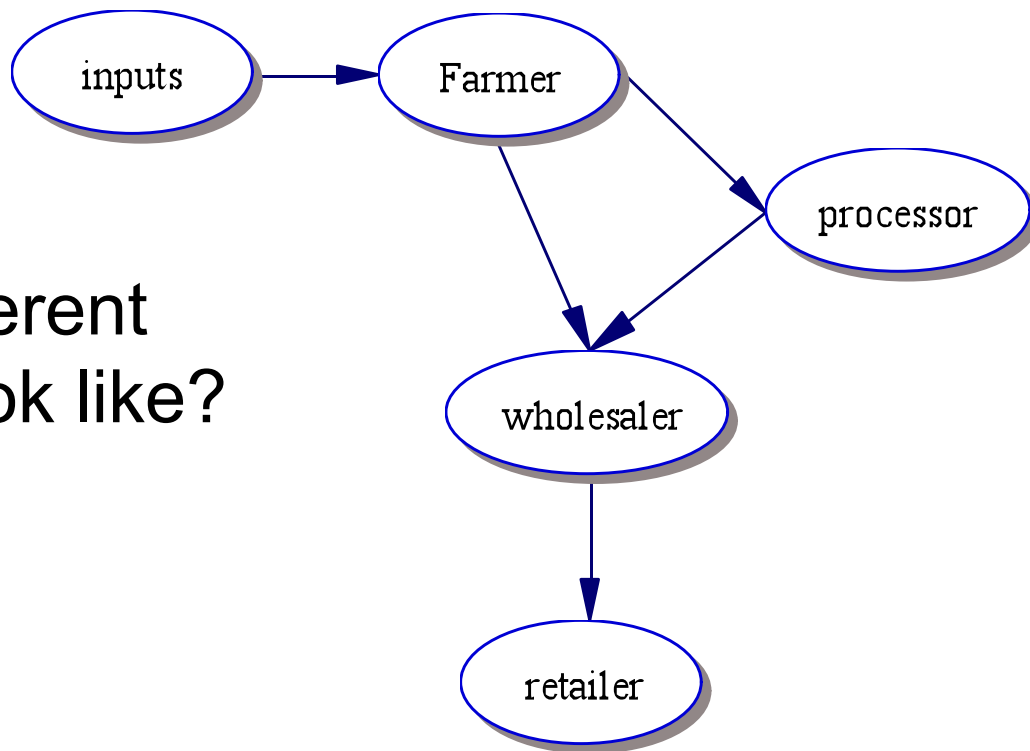
IAASTD/Ketill Berger, UNEP/GRID-Arendal

Many Downsides

- Overfed and underfed
- Decreasing Health and wellbeing
- Reliance on long distant transport
- Reliance on industrial production methods
- Loss of farms and rural communities
- Limited control of supply
- Disaster and disruption
- Peak Oil and Price

SO WHAT?

What could a different
food system look like?



Re-localization Movement



What is our current capacity to feed ourselves closer to home?

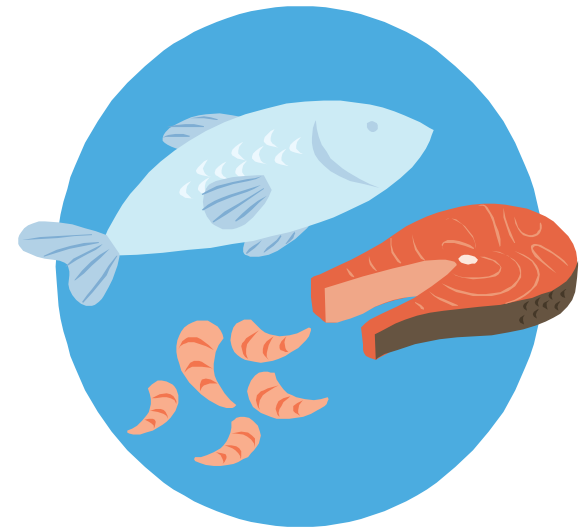
We don't really know!

We need to better understand, at regional and sub-regional levels, patterns of food consumption and production

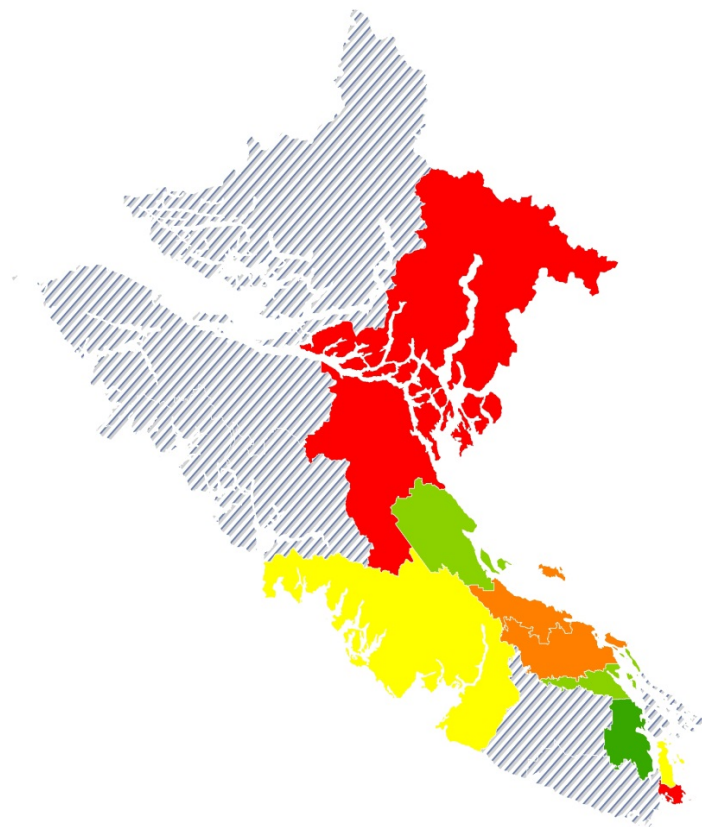


What is our current capacity?

Dr. Aleck Ostry is
conducting a study to
compare food being
consumed with
current **production**
levels for major food
categories
in our local health
areas.
(2006 figures)



Preliminary Results: Dairy Self-Sufficiency(Ostry 2009)



% Self-Sufficient

■ 160% - 170%

■ 42% - 150%

■ 17% - 41%

■ 0.41% - 16%

■ 0% - 0.4%

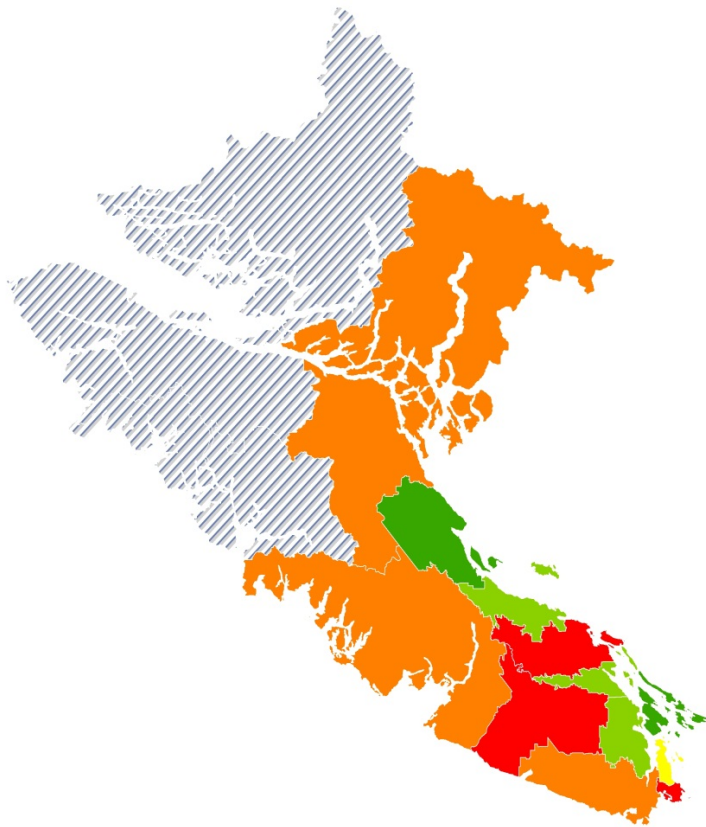
■ No Data

LHA

Dairy SSR

Greater Victoria	0.0%
Sooke	x
Saanich	24.3%
Gulf Islands	0.0%
Cowichan	169.5%
Lake Cowichan	x
Ladysmith	128.5%
Nanaimo	7.8%
Qualicum	15.7%
Alberni	40.7%
Courtenay	152.4%
Campbell River	0.4%
TOTAL	35.50%

Preliminary Results: Fruit Self-Sufficiency(Ostry 2009)



% Self-Sufficient

■ 18% - 75%

■ 7.5% - 17%

■ 4.7% - 7.4%

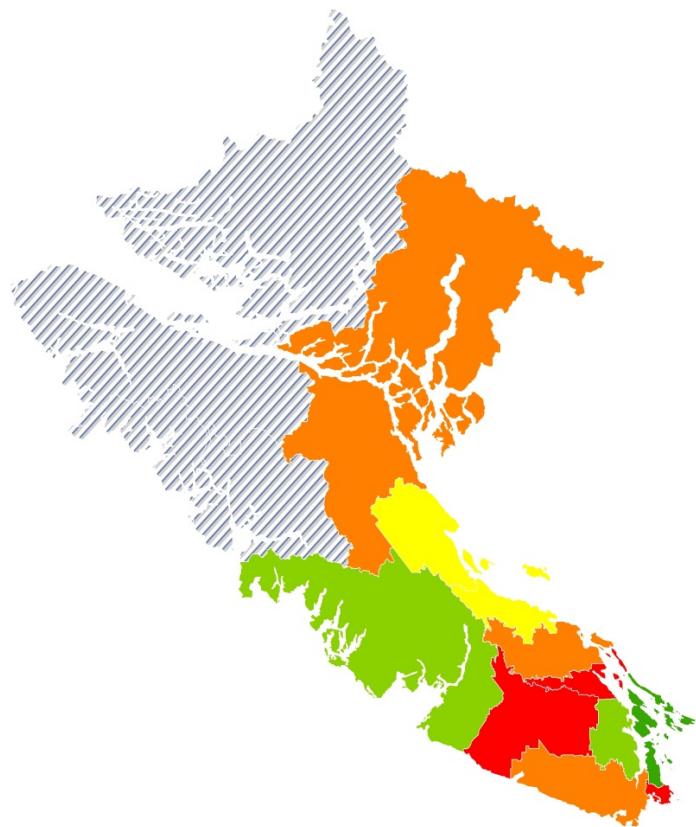
■ 3% - 4.6%

■ 1% - 2.9%

▨ No Data

LHA	Fruit SSR
Greater Victoria	1.0%
Sooke	4.1%
Saanich	7.4%
Gulf Islands	75.0%
Cowichan	17.3%
Lake Cowichan	2.5%
Ladysmith	8.9%
Nanaimo	2.9%
Qualicum	8.9%
Alberni	4.6%
Courtenay	17.6%
Campbell River	3.4%
TOTAL	8.1%

Preliminary Results: Vegetable Self-Sufficiency (Ostry 2009)



% Self-Sufficient

■ 22% - 23%

■ 10% - 21%

■ 4% - 9.9%

■ 1.5% - 3.9%

■ 0.3% - 1.4%

▨ No Data

Vegetable SSR

Greater Victoria	1.1%
Sooke	3.4%
Saanich	23.2%
Gulf Islands	21.9%
Cowichan	15.7%
Lake Cowichan	0.3%
Ladysmith	1.4%
Nanaimo	2.0%
Qualicum	5.1%
Alberni	24.3%
Courtenay	10.7%
Campbell River	4.3%
TOTAL	7.3%

We will need more land in production.....

To produce a healthy diet based on the recommendations of the Canada Food Guide for British Columbians (given existing production technology) irrigated farmland will need to increase by 49% in BC by 2025.

BC Food Self Reliance Report (MAFL)

Challenges for Local Food Production

- **Loss and Cost of land**
- **Loss of infrastructure**
- **Loss of farmers
(retiring/operations
viability)**
- **Labour skills/costs**
- **Increasing/changing
policy and regulations**
- **Consolidation of
grocery industry**



Challenges for Food Production

- **Competition from cheaper imported food**
- **Lack of consumer knowledge of food system**
- **Consumer expectation of cheap food as opposed to “better value food”**



But....

Growing Awareness of relationship with food (health, environment, sustainability and re-localization movements)

Temperate Climate and long Growing Season

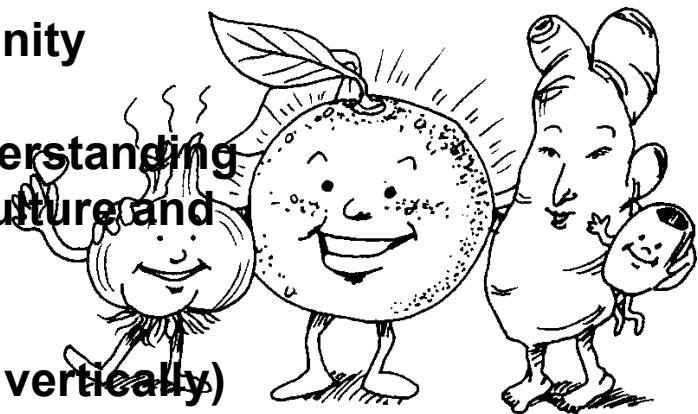
Good arable land, and forest diversity, proximity to seas

Diverse and Talented farming community

Great diversity of initiatives active community

Our Politicians/public service gaining understanding of the value and importance of local agriculture and food

Increasing collaboration (horizontally and vertically)



So what is being done?



- Individual action
- Education Initiatives
- Organizations Projects
- Networks/coalitions
- Inter-sectoral collaboration
- Policy and Planning
- Links to regional, national, and international efforts

Supporting Local Food Production and Distribution

- **Consumer Awareness** and education campaigns to support buying local
- **Training New Farmers:** Entrepreneurship, Apprenticeship, Training, Mentorship Programs
- **Accessible Land:** Farmlands initiatives such as Trusts, Community Farms Program, Farmlands Conference
- **Investment** in farmers (ICC, MAL)
- **Cooperative processing and marketing initiatives**
- **conferences and events**



Associations Active!

- Small Scale Food Processors Association
- South Island Organic Producers Association
- 4H Clubs
- Island Natural Growers
- Southern Vancouver Direct Farm Marketers



Island Farmers' Alliance

Supporting & Promoting Agriculture on Vancouver Island

To strengthen unity among Island producers and to ensure sustainability of Island agriculture

Proudly Sponsored by the Vancouver Island Buy Sell & Trade

- The Island Farmers' Alliance mission is to ensure the sustainability and growth of the Island agriculture
- 60 members: beef, vegetable, eggs, poultry, dairy



Focus on Farmlands Our Foodlands Our Future

A working conference on ensuring the viability and accessibility of farmlands for food production in BC's Capital Region

More people are looking to "buy local" but our farmlands are more often growing estates rather than food.

This conference will take a hard look at:

- Sky rocketing land costs and accessing farmlands for farming
- Models and opportunities for leasing, and land sharing
- Emerging ideas for farm succession
- Tools and ideas for local and regional planners and governments
- Lessons from other regions facing similar challenges

Come to learn, share what you know, and plan to put the pieces in action

When: November 27, 2008 - Schedule TBA
Where: Mary Winspear Center, 2243 Beacon Avenue, Sidney BC
What: Private sector, community groups, local and provincial planners, governments and authorities exploring strategies for farm viability and accessibility of farmland in BC's Capital Region

To become a sponsor, request a conference program, or for more info contact
 Linda Geggie at lggegjie@telus.net or 250-727-9605.

Farmlands Project



Funding provided by:



Northbrook Farm

Land Sharing



Cooperative Processing and Marketing

Nanaimo Heritage Food Co-op

The purpose of the co-op is to mobilize partners to rebuild local food systems in the Island Coastal region.



The co-op's business plan includes providing distribution, warehousing, co-packing services aimed at the 'foodservice' market channel: institutions, restaurants, etc. ...[Google: Edible Strategies](#)

Food Distribution

FoodRoots Distributors Coop

- Buys from 25 local farmers
- Distributes through pocket markets and the “Fruit Loop” as well as warehouse sales



Farmers Markets 2008

- **Huge growth in Markets**
- **\$3.09** Billion
- **28** million shopper visits
- **\$32.06** avg. purchases per shopper visit
- **1-5** avg. jobs created per vendor
- **50-199** avg. customers per day per vendor
- **\$100-\$999** avg. sales per day per vendor

Urban Agriculture

- Community Gardens
- Fruit Trees and edible landscaping
- Therapeutic Gardens
- Neighborhood pocket markets
- Backyard poultry
- Spin Gardening
- “Edible” Commons and Parks
- Demonstration sites



Zero Mile Diet!





LifeCycles Projects

Urban Agriculture Hub

Home Grown Gardens

Growing Schools

Food Miles

Victoria Fruit Tree Project

Farmlands Project

Policy and Planning

YouthCore



Victoria Compost Education Center

Our 5th Anniversary - Pumpkin Smash !

The Pumpkin Smash will be held November 7th and 8th from 10am to 3pm each day. Bring your family and friends, and of course your pumpkins, and join us for Pumpkin Bowling and other fun family games to help us raise awareness for composting!



Backyards and Community Gardens

Nurseries estimate that vegetable seed and start sales were up 30% this year in the CRD!



Edible landscaping



Health and Access

- Emergency Food Distribution Agencies
- Fruit Tree Project
- Quest Victoria
- Healthy Eating Active Living Project
- Aboriginal Food Gathering and Gardens initiatives



Just in Greater Victoria

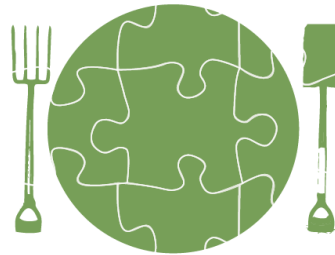
46 programs are offered by 39 agencies.

Every week, 39 agencies serve up to 20,195 meals and 5770 snacks as well as provide food, food vouchers and hampers for 2375 guests to take away.

26 agencies serve a high proportion of homeless or unstably housed guests in their food and meal programs.

2974 volunteer hours are spent each week with food and meal programs

Food Resources Directory



AGENCIES &
ORGANIZATIONS
PROVIDING FOOD
RESOURCES IN
BC'S CAPITAL REGION
2009

Food Recovery

Grocers throw out 200 lbs of fresh produce a day on average (Angrove 2008)



Good Food Box

a bulk-buying program that aims to lower your grocery bill by buying bulk, fresh fruits and vegetables from local farms and distributors.

What kinds of boxes are there and how much do they cost?

- \$5, \$10 or \$15 Fruit and Veggie Box
- \$12 All Fruit Box
- \$15 Natural/Organic Box

Can anyone buy a box?

Yes, anyone can buy a box. In fact the more people who buy into the program, the more people who will benefit.

Community Kitchens

- Community kitchens support folks to work together to plan, and prepare meals to share and take home.



Fruit Tree Projects

- Sooke, Western Communities and Greater Victoria
- This year the LC FTP aims to match or exceed last year's harvest of 30,000 pounds of fruit.



Feasting For Change

Reconnecting Food, Land and Culture

Aboriginal Peoples in South Vancouver Island come together around Traditional Food Feasts to discuss food security in their communities.

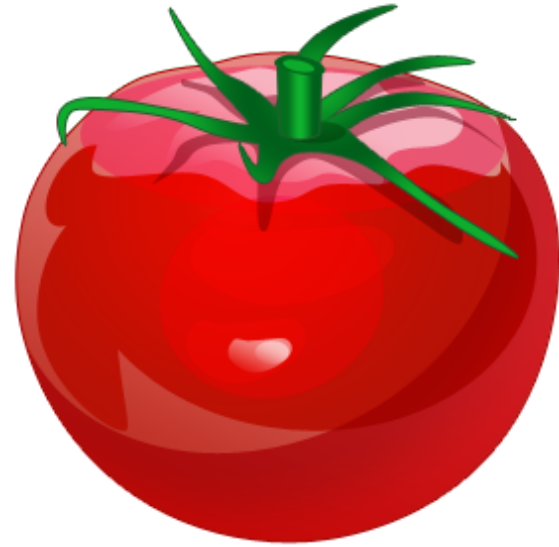


Public Education

- Speakers and Celebration Events
- Garden and Farm Tours
- Buy Local Directories (Fresh from the Island, LifeCycles Good Food Directory)
- School programs
- Markets and Fairs

Tomato Challenge

- Go Local Tomato Challenge
- Saanich Municipal Staff



Island Chef Collaborative

- Over the last five years, the ICC has provided \$22,000 worth of equipment to 16 small farms on Vancouver Island
- The ICC's inaugural Defending Our Backyard in 2008 raised funds to provide \$9,500



Slow Food

- Slow Food Victoria
- Slow Food Canada
- Slow Food International



Policy and Planning

- Health, Agriculture, Environment, Social Welfare, Trade policy and regulations impact food systems
- All levels of government
 - Agriculture Area Plans
 - Food Charters
 - Food Strategies and Health Action Plans

Capital Region-Food & Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable

- BC Govt and Service Employees' Union
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Community Social Planning Council
- GroundWorks Learning Centre
- Island Chefs Collaborative
- Island Farmers' Alliance
- LifeCycles Project Society
- Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Fisheries
- Small Scale Food Processor Association
- The Land Conservancy
- Vancouver Island Health Authority



Capital Region Food Charter

A Proposal

Canada is committed to the United Nations Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights specifying the right of everyone to adequate food, and endorses an Action Plan for Food Security that states: "the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger" and "food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." To meet this national commitment, and to make food security work in our community, the Capital Regional District and other local organizations adopt the following vision and support the following elements as the basis for a Capital Region Food Charter.

Our vision is a sustainable and secure local food and agriculture system that provides safe, sufficient, culturally accepted, nutritious food accessible to everyone in the Capital Region through dignified means.

Food Security and Production

1. Food is an integral part of the economy of the Capital Region and surrounding area. Commitment to building bridges between urban and rural communities on food security will strengthen the farm sector's self reliance, growth and development. By building on the mutual interdependence of producers and consumers, we can encourage local farm and food businesses (e.g., Farmers Markets, fine dining, agri-tourism).
2. Local agriculture and agricultural land are important to producers and consumers alike. By setting aside agricultural land and supporting urban and rural food security initiatives, we can preserve farms, watersheds, wildlife habitat and green space.
3. Urban agriculture can be advanced through the establishment of community, backyard, rooftop and boulevard gardens and fruit trees that contribute directly to the economic, environmental and social life of city residents.
4. Food must be produced in a manner that is environmentally sustainable, safe for consumption and socially just.

Food Security and Justice

5. Food is more than a commodity. It is a basic right. Every Capital Region resident should have access to an adequate supply of nutritious, affordable and safe food without social and economic barriers.
6. In the Capital Region, we must work with those communities most affected by lack of access to nutritious, affordable and safe food. By supporting programs like the Fruit and Veggie Box, we can link people who need fresh fruits and vegetables with local producers.

Food Security and Health

8. Food security contributes to the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional well-being of residents.
9. Food security is a core function of public health. A healthy population requires healthy food which in turn requires a healthy food system.
10. Nutrition education and consumption of wholesome, healthy foods are important factors in population health. Promotion of healthy eating begins with prenatal nutrition and breastfeeding.
11. By encouraging people to eat locally, we increase consumption of fresh, nutritious, wholesome food as well as contributing to environmental health by reducing food miles.
12. Food brings people together in the celebration of family and community, strengthening links between diverse cultures and communities. The preparing, eating and sharing of food engages individuals and families in a social and community fellowship that balances physical and spiritual needs.
13. Food is a social good that sustains and supports us and our communities.

Food Security and Globalization

14. Ensuring domestic and local ownership in our food supply is critical for the future of the region.
15. Any international agreements entered into by our governments must respect the full realization of people's right to adequate, nutritious, accessible, affordable, safe food at home and internationally.
16. National, provincial and local governments must guarantee the right of communities and individuals to food security through supporting viable, sustainable, agricultural production; optimal population health based on the key determinants of health; and equitable income distribution.

Food Charters

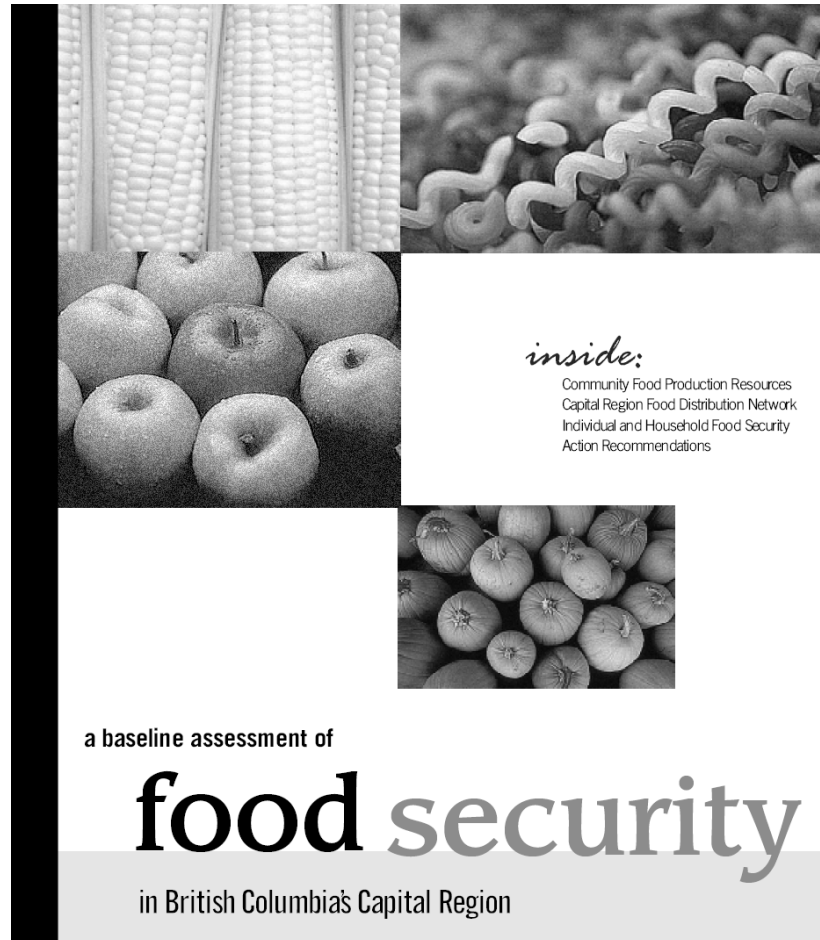
Several Canadian municipalities have passed food charters:

- Toronto (2001)
- Saskatoon (2002)
- Prince Albert (2003)
- Sudbury (2004)
- Kaslo Village (2007)
- And Central Saanich and North Saanich!



Final Report, Phase 2:
Capital Region
Food and **Health**
Action Plan

Measure Progress



Local Government Initiatives

- Agriculture Area Plans
- Urban Agriculture Resolution
- Community Garden Policies
- Land Use Planning Strategies
- Public lands for food production and Farmland Acquisition



Land Acquisition: District of Saanich and the Haliburton Community Organic Farm



Research and Community University Partnerships

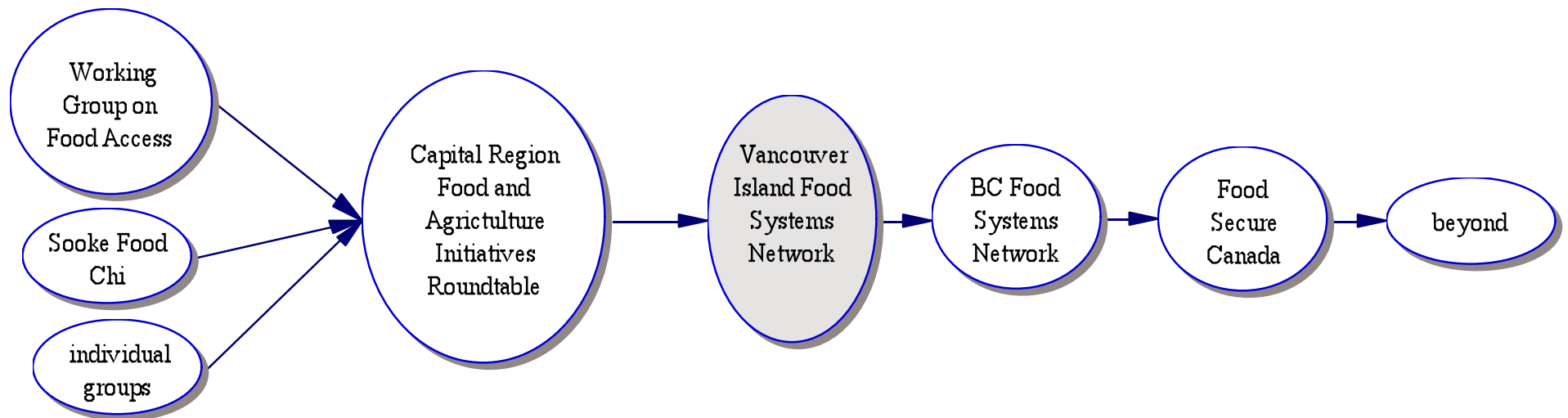
- Uvic Office of Community Based Research Searchable Database and Inventory
- Buy Local Purchase Policy
- Sharing Food and Knowledge Forum
- Community based research projects
- Vancouver Island Community University Research Alliance (VICRA)



Working Together

- Vancouver Island Farmers Alliance
- Vancouver Island Food Systems Network
- Vancouver Island Traditional Foods Network
- Small Scale Food Processors Association
- VIHA area “Food Security Hubs”-
(Courtney, Nanaimo, Duncan, Capital Region and Western Communities)

Grass Roots Linkages



Conclusions

- Global Food Economy and retail market difficult to shift, may take external forces ?
- Local Food Production Capacity investment
- Processing and Distribution models and infrastructure
- Promise in markets, independent grocers, grow your own movement
- Continued need for education and awareness
- Shifts in Policy and Planning



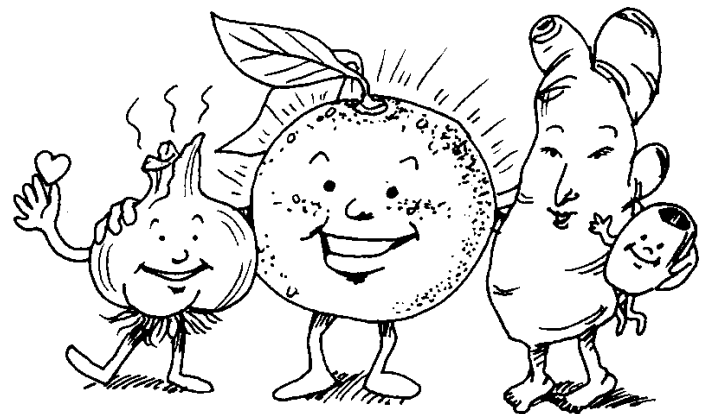
The Future of Food on Vancouver Island

What type of food
system do you
want?



What are things you can do to contribute to
a healthier sustainable food system on
Vancouver Island?

What things need to be a focus for
collaborative work?



More info?

Linda Geggie

lgeggie@telus.net

www.lifecyclesproject.ca

www.communitycouncil.ca

