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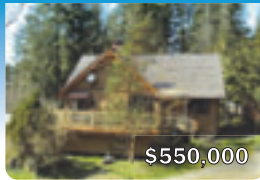
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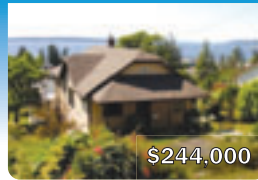


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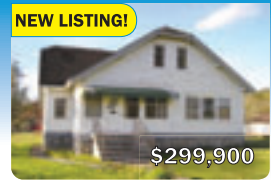
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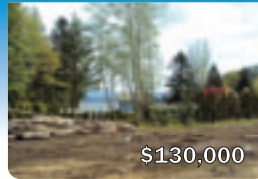


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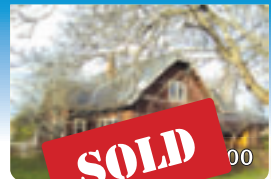
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A NOTE ABOUT OUR PAPER STOCK

Home Grown is printed entirely on paper made at the Powell River Catalyst mill. The cover stock is Electraprime—the company's smoothest and glossiest uncoated grade, made only in Powell River... on #10 Paper Machine. It is a cornerstone of the Powell River operation and is technically challenging to produce. As you can see, it's worth it: the characteristics of the sheet results in rich, deep images that approach photographic quality. Most of the inside pages are Electrabrite 70, which is made on both #9 and #11 machines, and is again unique to Powell River.

ON THE COVER

The de Villiers family operates Mayana Adar Family Farm located on Paradise Valley Road.

Photo by Isabelle Southcott

Welcome

Strides in local agriculture

By Jay Yule



After declining for decades, local food production is on the rise.

In the last year, a growing number of people have become interested in producing food. Some have a handful of laying hens or are growing vegetables for their own consumption while others are producing food to sell.

And the interest doesn't end there. People are actually choosing to move to Powell River because of agricultural opportunities.

In recent years, agriculture's role has been minimized in the economic development of Powell River. Farmers, the people with dirt beneath their fingernails growing food that keeps us alive, haven't been as highly valued as other professionals.

But times are changing.

The opportunities to increase food production in Powell River are endless. Powell River farmers produce between three and five per cent of food consumed here, yet locals want to buy even more local food. In fact, those who sell food they produce say they can't keep up with demand.

The good news is that farmers like Alan and Cathy Rebane of Creekside Farm, who sell eggs and meat birds, are looking to expand by raising pigs and selling pork and sausages. The Lund Shellfish Festival and the new Spot Prawn Festival recently put our area's fishing industry in the spotlight by bringing fresh product to the consumer. At the same time, prawners, keen to teach us the difference between spot prawns and tiger prawns, explained that spot prawns are what we catch along Powell River's coastline while tiger prawns are the prawns usually farmed in Asia.

There's a definite interest in local agriculture and food security. People want to know how their food was raised and who raised it. They would rather eat vegetables raised in the Powell River Regional District than vegetables grown in Chile or Mexico.

This year's *Home Grown* celebrates what local growers are doing and how those interested in producing some of their own food can find information and support. 🍎

Jay Yule is the president of the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society.

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Grow your own

Publisher's message

By Isabelle Southcott

When you think about agriculture do you think about huge wheat fields, row upon row of corn and potatoes? A herd of Holstein or Angus? Do terms like a quarter section or acreage spring to mind?

If so, you're not alone. Most of us think that agriculture requires large tracts of land but the truth is, that's not always the case.

According to the dictionary, agriculture is the science or practice of farming, including cultivation of the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, wool, and other products.

Nowhere does it say on 10 or 50 or 100 acres. Nowhere does it say herd or

flock size or any other such measure.

Theodore Roosevelt, 26th president of the United States said: "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."

Not everyone has acreage but that doesn't mean they can't grow food. They might not be able to grow a lot of food but even folks living in an apartment can grow tomatoes and herbs in pots on their patios. They can join a community garden (we have five and one demonstration garden in Powell River) and get together to grow food on someone else's land.

There's a lot of agricultural support in Powell River from long time farmers, the Powell River Farmer's

Institute and Powell River Food Security Project. Even if you have a tiny yard (like I do in the Townsite) you can have a vegetable garden, berry plants and the odd fruit tree.

Nothing compares to the satisfaction and pride I feel when we've grown our own vegetables and I serve them to my family. Fresh broccoli, tomatoes, basil, potatoes, beets and lettuce. I don't grow enough to sell but I do grow enough to supplement our diet during the summer and my children understand what growing food involves.

So join the latest trend, that of the urban farmer, and begin to grow your own today. 🍅

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The family farm

Growing food, and kids

By Isabelle Southcott

There's T-Bone, the meat cow, then there's Esther, the dairy cow who's expecting any day, and Maria, Esther's daughter. More than a dozen lambs, ewes and a ram. Laying hens. Meat birds. A vegetable garden, and some ducks.

This is what you'll find at Mayana Adar Family Farm.

Located on Valley Road, the de Villiers' farm has been growing since Dirk and Ingrid purchased it three years ago. "Our goal was to put food on the table," says Ingrid. "We wanted to know where our food was coming from," adds Dirk.

The couple moved to Canada from South Africa in 2002. They lived in Port Hardy and then Ontario but

wanted to come back to BC. Dirk, a pharmacist who recently opened The Medicine Shoppe, says that Powell River chose them when he was offered a job here.

"Powell River is a wonderful place to raise a family," says Ingrid, cradling six-week old Kyla.

Besides Kyla, the de Villiers have four other children: Aidan, 7; Steffan, 6; Francois, 3 and Leeya, 18 months.

The family loves animals. Their menagerie began with Gilbert, a potbellied pig. "I said this is such a sad farm, we only have a pig," says Ingrid. "Then we got some ducks and some chicks."

In order to obtain farm status, the de Villiers needed agricultural



activity on the 10-acre farm. And so, like their family, they began to grow their farm.

When Ingrid told her husband that she wanted a cow for her birthday, he looked at her in disbelief. "I thought she was joking!" he says.

That is how Esther entered their lives.

Next came the laying hens and then the meat birds. Once you have tasted chicken you have raised you realize how different they taste from those bought in the grocery store. "With farm chicken, you can taste the chicken," says Ingrid. When T-Bone is slaughtered this fall he'll supply the family with all the beef they need.

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FAMILY FARM — Dirk and Ingrid and their children: Aidan, Steffan, Francois, Lee Ya and baby Kyla.

Because Esther and Maria are Jerseys, they are the milkers. “We started milking Esther when she had Maria. We had milk and cream and I started making butter, cream cheese, feta, Gouda and kefir [cheese].

Last year they planted a vegetable garden. “For the very first time last year, everything on our plate was food that we grew ourselves,” says Ingrid.

Farming has been a learning curve for parents and children.



“I didn’t grow up with a vegetable garden,” explains Ingrid. “I grew up in the city.”

The children are learning by doing right along with their parents. “Francois loves planting seeds. They all love picking peas and eating them right out of the garden,” says Ingrid.

There are lessons to be learned off the land. The children are home-

is their new Bed and Bale offering for horse lovers. The trail system that begins across the road is inviting to horse owners wanting to escape with their equine friends.

On Valley Road, farming and family go hand in hand.

The de Villiers grow enough food for themselves and also sell free-range chickens, eggs and lamb. 🍎



schooled and farming, with its challenges, present opportunities for them.

“In creation everything is multiplication. So one seed becomes 1000 which is so different from how the world works,” says Dirk.

Ingrid has been learning at the same time. She’s learned that she wants her herb garden near the house so it’s easy to get fresh herbs for a meal.

The de Villiers have a horse barn and riding ring, which, along with a cabin,



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Twenty acres in Paradise

Locally raised pork and sausage

By Linda Wegner

It's been a long journey from the farm in Wisconsin to the farm in Powell River but the Rebanes are home at last.

Alan and Kathy enjoy living in what some call more isolated areas.

The couple moved to Canada from Wisconsin more than 20 years ago after purchasing a fishing lodge in Ontario. Later they lived in Ladner in the Lower Mainland, then on to the Lower Sunshine Coast where, they thought, they'd found the perfect spot. That was until the area experienced a major increase in population and the financial chaos resulting from the economic downturn of 2008.

"I was in contracting and after the crash we had to start all over again," Alan told *Home Grown*.

Once more the couple was on the lookout for the life they were seeking in a "smaller [community] or in the bush". While Powell River didn't really qualify as bush, it was small enough to meet their expectations and most importantly, their dream of being back on the farm now seemed



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achievable. Two years ago they packed up, purchased land and livestock and started farming on Valley Road.

“Now we’ve got 20 acres, some under plow and some under hay. We run four Hereford cows, chickens and Berkshire pigs,” he continued. “Farm land was very expensive where we were.”

While the couple is a team in their farming venture, there is a distinct division of responsibilities: Alan continues to work as a contractor and Kathy looks after the business and bookkeeping as well as the day-to-day care of the animals and farm-gate sales of chicken and eggs.

The move, the shared work load and, yes, even the barn cleaning, are all part of fulfilling their goal of providing Powell River and area residents with a source of locally raised, butchered and packaged pork.

As the discussion moved to this aspect of their venture known as *Creekside Farms*, Alan was quick to point out that their objective is to fill a niche in the local market, not detract from what is already available.

“I want to be sure it’s known that we’re not out to compete with other local retail outlets. Our goal is to have a butcher shop that meets provincial Hazard Analysis and Critical



Control Point (HACCP) regulations and fills a gap in the market,” he says.

As the Rebanes see it, raising and slaughtering locally raised animals is the gap in that niche market.

“We’ve got breeding stock and we’re hoping to sell an average of two pigs a week as well as our homemade sausage. Although we are very close to being organic we can’t meet that standard. Our idea is to sell pork in smaller packages — that makes it less expensive for the consumer,” he explains.

There are still challenges to opening a provincially approved butcher shop, most of them involving the expense

of things such as regulation compliance and the initial cost of a slaughter licence. Kathy and Alan aren’t deterred by the slow pace of putting all the pieces together, though — they’ve prepared their business plan, determined what’s required for HACCP compliance and look forward to launching farm-gate sales of pork in August.

At the very top of their list, however, is the desire to work with the community in providing top-quality and locally raised food. “We want to be able to say that what we are doing is a co-operative effort with our neighbours by offering food that is raised on a local farm.” 🍎

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Land & Sea

Fish bought the farm

By Isabelle Southcott

Fish, chickens, blackberries, raspberries, horses and children can all be found at Frederick Island Farm in the Paradise Valley.

For Doug and Christine Mavin, and their children Gracie, 12, Claire, 10, Ceilidh, 7 and Lyndon, 4, nothing beats life on a farm.

“Come summer the girls pick blackberries and sell them,” said Christine. “They have raspberries canes for sale now.”

The Mavins lived in Prince Rupert for seven years where Doug fished before moving to Powell River. “The fish bought the farm,” laughs Christine.

Doug, a long time fisher, comes from Pender Harbour. “His whole

family fishes,” says Christine. “He’s out prawning right now. I won’t see the whites of his eyes till July.”

So this time of year, it’s all about prawns. When Doug returns home from fishing they sell fresh halibut, snapper and lingcod and crab. Doug’s uncle fishes salmon so they sell also salmon.

“It’s important for us to know who is catching the fish so we know how they keep their



FAMILY FARM — Christine Mavin (centre) and her children (L-R) Ceilidh, Claire, Lyndon and Gracie.

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boat and treat the fish. I feel better when I know I am eating Uncle Dave's fish. When someone buys our fish we know it is the best it can be," says Christine. "Doug, being a fisherman, knows what good is so he can keep on top of quality."

Christine says they always sell out when they have a fresh fish sale. "I have actually sold my supper," she laughs.

The Mavins hold both a processing and a food-vending license so they are able to cut up fish.

"We sell to Manzanita, Skeeter Jacks and the fish and chips place in Cranberry," says Christine.

Two horses live on the farm and Gracie belongs to 4H. The older girls sold eggs and made enough money to buy Misty and her gear. They now use their egg money to sponsor two foster children through the Watoto Children's Choir.

The girls sell free-range eggs through their hut located at the foot of their driveway. They use the the honour system and people have been very good, they note.

Their dogs keep the chickens safe as they wander about the farm during the day but they always return to coop at night, apparently to catch up on the news. "Because the CBC radio is always on there," says Christine. 🍅

Ag fun facts · Honey bees must tap 2M flowers to make one pound of honey; they visit 50-100 flowers on each honey collecting trip.

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FOR THE LOVE OF PRAWNS — Dave Smith weighs some fresh spot prawns right on the boat in the Lund Harbour. Local prawners educate about the quality of spot prawns and the sustainability of their industry.

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Local rabbitery

Offers workshops on butchering and cooking

By Linda Wegner

Jacqueline Huddlestone's life has led her from her birthplace in Bordeaux, France to the United States where she met her husband Mark and finally to Powell River. Moving to the community was the fulfillment of a dream for her husband, opening a rabbitery, the fulfillment of one of her ambitions.

"We were living in Bellingham and Mark began applying for work here. He was hired as an Environmental Health Officer for Vancouver Coastal Health," she said.

Because Mark was employed under a three-year work permit the couple opted to rent. The first place they chose was located south of town and it was there Jacqueline set up Serendipity Rabbitery. All didn't go as planned, however.

"Last summer the well went dry and we were then forced to look around. We got very lucky and the first place we saw in Wildwood we now are renting. The owner allowed us to operate the rabbitery there," she said.

As she described the operation they've set up in Wildwood, it's impossible to doubt Jacqueline's enthusiasm — it's in her eyes and her voice, even in the way she introduces the animals: Spencer, Caesar and Simon,

Kate, Cleo and Honey, Sherman, the dog, a few of the Muscovy ducks and a delightful goat named Lucky Luke.

Now settled into their new place and with Mark's immigration process underway, Jacqueline again concentrated on raising and





butchering New Zealand rabbits for their personal consumption.

The next challenge was obtaining a licence under BC's new meat inspection regulations. She's got it now—the first recipient in the region to reach that goal.

“Outside the original group who worked for exemptions, I am the first recipient.”

Her husband was not the one who did her site inspection. “Because Mark is in the business, I have to be so far above board on my adherence to the rules,” she explained.

According to Jacqueline, it was a “far above adherence to the rules” confirmation by an out-of-town inspector, along with the work done by local farmers in obtaining an exemption for remote, ferry-dependent communities that has enabled her and others to expand local food production capacity.

“We definitely were drawn here because of the exciting meat regulations—it is something I can do for my family and it allows me to follow my own ethics,” she continued.

Both she and Mark are committed to raising and enjoying food that is GMO-free “slow food,” local and organic.

“We have been trying to stay away from factory raised meat. Neither of us wants to participate in those things. Raising our own rabbits doesn't require a lot of time and space,” she explained. “Every life on this farm is treated with respect and dignity from birth to death. This is part of our new farm sign.”

Now that she holds a Class D Licence from Vancouver Coast Health, Jacqueline is entitled to sell meat at the farm gate or to the Powell River public through local retail outlets, including restaurants and butcher shops. One such outlet has changed its out-of-town product sourcing and now buys from her. As well, she offers workshops on how to cook rabbit meat and complimentary invitations to come and learn how to butcher the animals. She occasionally works as guest chef at Manzanita a local restaurant.

“I believe that demand will outstrip supply and there will be a need for more people to go into [the business]. I welcome people to the rabbit world.” 🍎

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Bees and pollinators

Tiny workhorses

By David Parkinson

Even in this region, where people are paying increasing attention to the abundance and economic viability of our food supply, it is easy to forget about the invisible contributions of the bee species, which do the priceless work of pollinating our crops. Without pollination there would be no fruit, no seeds, and no crops the following year. Bee populations, especially honeybees, are in decline everywhere and this is a serious threat to regional food security. Luckily, we have some good resources in the region and people here are working hard to strengthen our wild and domesticated bee species.

One of them is Ted Leischner, a new Powell Riverite who is passionate about all bees: honeybees and the at least 200 species of wild bees in our region. Now that the dreaded Varroa mite has been detected in local honeybee hives, our beekeepers must know how to deal with this threat to honey production and pollination. This spring, Ted offered a course to 15 local beekeepers on the basics of beekeeping and managing the Varroa mite. He is very

proud to see his students making an impact on other beekeepers in the region, and looks forward to offering this course again next year. Ted has also developed a mix of seeds which produces a lovely and nutritious blend of pollen and nectar and suggests that as many people as possible plant a patch of bee forage in their yards. His eventual goal is to see large patches of bee forage in pastures and along roads and highways.

Another bee species, which is fast becoming every gardener's pollinator of choice, is the orchard mason bee. Don Boese has been raising and studying mason bees for over 25 years and constructs mason bee houses that let gardeners keep and care for their own swarm of pollinators. This spring Don has sold about 100 locally, and he also has a DVD which demonstrates the best way to care for mason bees.

For more information on Ted Leischner's beekeeping course and honeybee seed mix, contact Ted at 604 414-0468 or tgleisch@shaw.ca. To buy a mason bee house, contact Don at 604 487-4475 or visit Mother Nature. 🍓



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The Woodhead family farm

Growing food since 1915

Dawn Hughes never dreamed that one day she'd be growing vegetables or looking after chickens or turkeys or cows. But then she also didn't count on marrying a man whose family owned Texada Island's oldest farm.

Dawn and her husband Brad have been farming the Woodhead Farm on Crescent Bay Road for the last seven years. The 88-acre farm is the oldest on Texada. "It's been supplying food for the people of Texada since 1915," says Dawn as we walk down a path towards the chicken coop.

Willis and Alice Woodhead moved to Texada from Hedley, BC to purchase the property in 1915. They carried what they needed to the farm from Blubber Bay on their backs — a distance of three miles — until they got a horse and buggy.

As we near the apple orchard, Dawn recalls hearing how Great Grandpa Woodhead carried the apple trees that are still growing in the orchard off the Union Steamship onto the property.



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At one time, Willis and Alice Woodhead grew a large field of strawberries to sell. Dawn points out where the old plot was located. According to an article written by Margaret Woodhead in the Texada Lines in 1993, Mrs. Woodhead, Catherine and her two younger brothers, Cecil and Philip, tended the strawberry field. Kirby, the oldest boy, wasn't mentioned in this article.

Willis' granddaughter, the late Nora Hughes (Brad's mother), and her husband cared for the farm for many years, says Dawn. Brad's mother grew vegetables and berries for the market garden before Dawn took over the growing and selling at the market in Powell River on Sat-



FARM FRESH — Dawn Hughes, left, and her daughter sell at the Open Air Market in Powell River, and the Farmers' Market on Texada.



NAP TIME — Contented cows enjoy chewing their cud lying down.

urdays and the Texada market on Sundays. Interestingly enough, Dawn sells 98% of her produce in Powell River. "Most people on Texada have their own gardens," she says. Perhaps that goes back to the early days when the barge would only come in once a month with fresh produce and freezers had not yet been invented. It's been a wet spring and Dawn says she's late getting her garden planted. As she looks over the freshly tilled soil, she smiles. "I think this is my favourite time, no weeds!" There's always something to do on a farm. "The cows busted down the back fence and got into my raspberry patch," she says, surveying the 70-foot long patch. Dawn loves the farm and wishes she had more time to work on it. "We both work full time and we are learning as we go."

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She's torn. "I love it here. I love my job at the Credit Union but if I could afford it I'd do this full time. When you stand here and you listen to the birds and hear the bees and the water. It smells so good. It's a good place to be."

What Dawn loves the best is producing naturally grown food. "I like seeing how satisfied people are when they buy our produce. People really appreciate it."

Besides fresh vegetables, she sells jams, salsa, pies and relishes that she makes.

The farm is growing again. Besides the pear and apple trees, the Hughes have a saw mill on the property and started a blueberry patch a few years ago. Brad built an apple press and grinder this past winter and they are now able to make different varieties of apple juice.

When I asked Dawn what she likes best about the farm, she finds it hard to say just one thing. "I love sitting up here when the sun is going down. I love people being satisfied with our produce and beef — that really gives me a good sense of well being." 🍎

SPECIAL EVENTS



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Canada Day

Monday, Aug 1 • 4:30 – Dusk
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Saturday, Aug 13 • 10:30 – 12:30

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COMMUNITY GARDENS

Powell River has four community gardens and one demonstration garden. A community garden is a place where people come together to garden for the purpose of growing food. Having a common garden allows people to share ideas, tools and labour and provides garden space for those who might not otherwise have any. A demonstration garden is a garden where people can learn about gardening, growing food, food preservation and preparation.

Seventh Day Adventist Church Garden

Pastor Ernie Dunning • 604 485-7106

Kelly Creek Community Garden

Pastor Mike Martinig • kellyck@telus.net or Pat Lewis at 604 487-9238, palewis@shaw.ca

Sliammon Community Garden

TlaAmin Community Health, Shelley Clements • 604 483-3009 or Shelley.clements@sliammon.bc.ca

Demonstration garden

at the Community Resource Centre • Liz Lane, 604 485-0992 or manager@prcrc.org

Club Bon Accueil Garden

For club members and students of École Côte du Soleil only • Rhea Zajac, 604 485-3966 or rhea-z@telus.net

Edible Garden Tour

Saturday, August 27
David Parkinson • 604 485-2004 or fsp@prepsociety.org

Hot Summer Night Market (15)

Misha Brooks-Thoma • 604 483-5283, or prnightmarket@gmail.com
Thursdays, June 30 to Sept 1, 6 pm – dusk.
Now at the Blue Cat Square below Decibels.
Come down to the market to shop, eat dinner, hula hoop, meet gypsies or your neighbours & listen to good live music. Support your community by being part of it! New vendors always welcome.
prnightmarket.wordpress.com

50-Mile Eat Local Challenge

August 7 to August 27
David Parkinson • 604 485-2004 or fsp@prepsociety.org

Blue Cat Square Outdoor Market

Misha Brooks-Thoma • 604-483-5283.
Every Tuesday & Thursday from 11 am to 5 pm through Sept 15. Vendors and musicians welcome.

Kale Force

Community Resource Centre
David Parkinson • 604 485-2004 or fsp@prep-society.org
Gardeners, growers and food lovers meet at 5 pm on the second Wednesday of every month at the Community Resource Centre to share food and ideas about how to increase the amount of food being grown locally. Special guest speakers and workshops on various topics from time to time.

Lund Co-op

Thursdays at Hot Summer Nights market, 3 – 5 pm. Fridays at the Lund Water Taxi, 3 – 5 pm. Lund area farmers get together to offer a variety of locally-grown items, including eggs, greens, honey and more.

Open Air Market (16)

McLeod Rd, Paradise Valley • 604 344-0021 or jesseblack@gmail.com
Locally grown farm & garden produce, home baking, preserves, perennials, crafts and more. Entertainment, a children's play area and pony-cart rides. The market supports sustainable methods and the humane treatment of animals. Saturdays 10:30 am to 12:30 pm and Sundays 12:30 to 2:30 pm.

Powell River Farmers' Institute

Has existed since 1915 to improve the conditions of rural life so that settlement may be permanent and prosperous • info@prfarmers.ca
President • Erin Wilson 604 487 0101 or erinwilson2005@yahoo.com
V-P • Wendy Devlin at 604-483-9268 or wd2006@shaw.ca.

Powell River Fall Fair

At the Paradise Valley Exhibition Grounds
Saturday, August 26 & Sunday, August 27
Noon to 5 pm

Skookum Food Provisioners' Cooperative

4486 Marine Ave, 604 485-7940
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www.skookumfood.ca

Skookum Gleaners

(formerly Powell River Fruit Tree Project)
604 485-4366 or gleaners@skookumfood.ca
A volunteer-run project that works to save all the fruit in the region which might otherwise be wasted. Volunteer picking teams are sent to clean off fruit trees for homeowners. Split evenly between the pickers, the community and the homeowner. Last year over 700 kilograms of fruit picked. Pickers and fruit trees needed.
www.skookumfood.ca

Texada Island Farmers Market

Ball field, Gillies Bay, Sundays 11 am to 2 pm
Julinn9@gmail.com or 604 486-7371
Fresh vegetables, fruit, preserves, food, crafts, jewellery and clothes. Runs from June till the second weekend in October each year. An indoor market takes place in the winter at the Texada Community Hall.

Transition Town Powell River

604 483-9052 or transitionpowellriver@gmail.com.
Local food is one way to increase our self-reliance. Join us to work on community resilience around food, transport, our local economy, energy and more.
transitiontownpowellriver.ca

Winter Farmers' Market (14)

Community Resource Centre
4752 Joyce Ave, 604 485-0992
Saturdays, October to April.

The celiac farmer

Home-food culture in Wildwood

By Janet May

A gluten-free diet is medicine for those who have celiac disease. But for Will Langlands and Nicole Narbonne, their chosen diet goes beyond the rules of avoiding wheat, barley, and rye. Their diet affects more than their health. It directs the way they live; it is their culture.

The couple believe that culture is about food. "North America has been stripped of culture by industrial food," says Will. We don't know where the food in the supermarket is grown any more and we have allowed the "power of food to be in other people's hands." Nicole



CARING FOR THE LITTLE ONES — Nicole starts peppers, basil and tomatoes under the lights.

adds her concern that we are losing the know-how to cook "real food." "I

grew up in the Betty Crocker generation, when home cooked was not given the value of packaged food." She and Will are both passionate about keeping the culture of home grown, preserved, and cooked food alive in their home.

Working with Will's sons, Jake and AJ, they cleared about 0.1 of an acre of alder from behind the chicken coop and started building healthy soil. Nicole traded website construction for horse manure and seaweed to add organic matter and nutrients. They used the money from the alder wood to build a courtyard to shelter plants,

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GREAT FOOD! — Nicole looks over her kale crop while Will takes care of weeding the lettuce crop.

and established a variety of herb and berry bushes around their new greenhouse. Will built two fences, one around the property line and one for the vegetable area, essentially creating a moat for their two dogs to patrol

Nicole's Basic Basil Pesto

Nicole's advice is good for all kinds of cooking...

Use the best ingredients you can afford, alter them as little as possible and everyone will think you are a wonderful cook.

- 2 c • fresh basil leaves
- 4 lg • garlic cloves, chopped roughly
- 1 c • very good olive oil
- 1 c • very good hard cheese (Parmesan or soy parmesan)
- 3 tbsp • toasted pine nuts (optional)

Blend basil and garlic in a blender until pretty fine. With the blender running, add the olive oil slowly. Blend a minute or two and add the cheese. Blend a minute. If you are going to add pine nuts, toast about 3 tablespoons of pine nuts and add them now. Blend until nicely broken up.

Basil pesto can be stored in freezer bags, flattened, on a shelf in the freezer. When it is frozen, it can be broken off in chunks of the appropriate size to the dish you are making. Enjoy!



SELF-PRESERVATION — Nicole and Will put some of their seasonal produce into the pantry as home canned preserves.

against bears, racoons and other garden thieves. Seven years later they are growing enough vegetables to keep themselves through the winter. “We need to buy some things like rice, sugar, seasonings, and soy milk, and we get our meat from Hatch-a-Bird farm, but otherwise what we grow or trade and preserve will feed us.” In May, when the larder should be almost bare, Nicole still had plenty of jars of apple sauce, honey, and canned or dried vegetables and fruit.

Sharing their wealth is paramount for Nicole and Will. “We like to feed our friends, and to share our recipes, but sometimes our friends can’t get the quality ingredients to repeat the recipe.” As a website designer, Nicole found that writing ideas down in her blog was another way to share her knowledge.

“The learning curve when you first tackle a celiac diet is overwhelming. But the blog is really about eating real food that just happens to be gluten-free. All the recipes are favourites.”

For more information, scan the code at right, Google the celiac farmer, or visit farmgirl.skeenaastreetstudio.ca. 🍎



Sheep and salt air

Farming by the ocean

Five years ago Gordon and Judi Tyabji Wilson began farming Duddles' Lair on an ocean-side property south of Powell River.

"The sheep we raise are a heritage breed called Coloured Romneys," says Judi. "They are what is called 'dual purpose' which means they are raised for meat and for wool (or pelts)."

Photos by Wendy Pulkrabek



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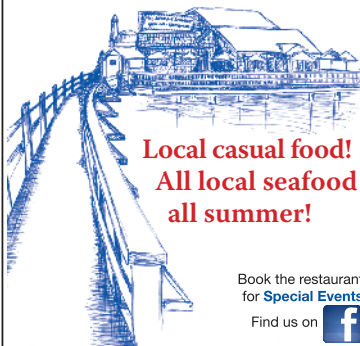


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The Wilsons farm vegetables, fruit, sheep and sometimes chickens.

"We wanted to make sure our food is safe and our animals have a good life before they are slaughtered. We do not support factory farming, which is the method of farming for most of the meat available in grocery stores. Our farm is not certified organic, however it is a natural farm with heritage products and no herbicides or pesticides allowed. We do not feed the sheep additives, hormones, or medication to plump their weight," says Judi.

Thanks to the hard work of the local farm association, Duddles' Lair is a licensed farm for sheep meat. "We have learned over our five years of farming that there is a much higher demand for locally grown food than

our little farm can produce. We hope more farmers will join the local agricultural society to strengthen local food production."

Gordon is the main farmer, says Judi. "I help and in terms of our job descriptions, he produces the food while I process it."

The most common comment the Wilsons hear when most people learn they raise their sheep for meat is 'You are mean.'

"I find this odd, since farming is a lot of hard work and our animals have a wonderful life! I hope more people learn about farming so that they can stop supporting the farmers who crowd animals, raise them in dirty conditions, medicate them, and treat them badly," says Judi. 🍎

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Powell River's dairy industry

Can it happen here? Again?

By Linda Wegner

As residents of Powell River Regional District work toward increasing local food production and sustainability, it is encouraging to note that this area once supported a vibrant local and export dairy industry. Alphonse Karr once said: "The more things change, the more they are the same." The same interest that drove the early residents of the Upper Sunshine Coast is now motivating local farmers and residents to look at the possibility of filling in the dairy part of the food puzzle.

According to the August 9, 1928 edition of the *Powell River News*, it's been nearly ninety years since Joe Dorval launched the Westview Dairy "on a 50-acre pre-emption that he had taken up in 1913." In the summer of 1923,

improving the soil and producing an income for the farmer...."

Then, as always, there were criticisms of the fledging dairy industry and within the first year of operation people were complaining about the price of milk. In response to complaints that appeared in the gossip column of a Powell River Company news magazine, *The Digester*, however, local farmers reminded shoppers that they were getting "the best milk on the continent." Records from 1930 show that "about 250 gallons of milk was sold in Powell River daily at a rate of twenty cents a quart, whereas Comox milk was selling for fifteen cents a quart."

Fast-forward eighty years when the dairy industry in the Courtenay/

growing number of local farmers and the increasing call for locally raised or produced food, is it possible to give this community's once thriving dairy industry new life? *Home Grown* contacted Ben Janzen, Secretary-Treasurer of the BC Milk Marketing Board, for his response.

While Janzen stopped short of saying "yes," his comments were encouraging. He began by outlining basic changes to the operation of the provincial industry.

"Dairy production used to be regionally-based. For example, Creston-Kootenays used to be one region as was Prince George and area. Now it's just one provincial region," he explained.

Under the one region policy and current provincial regulations, the option for this region is to apply for a Cottage Industry License. That license carries its own set of limitations, but doesn't demand quota-level production.

"That would allow local farm operations to produce and process their own milk for making cheese and ice cream but it doesn't include sales of fluid milk," he said.

"However," he continued, "There is a way to make it happen."

An example of that kind of an exception involved an application from Lasqueti Island. Janzen said it [the application] had been processed and although he wasn't sure if local farmers had implemented their plans, he noted that the Board had been able to facilitate the request from the Lasqueti farmer.

As interest and demand for this important part of food production increases, communication is foremost, Janzen said.

"We made an exception for Lasqueti but the first step is to talk." 🍎



records show, a soil and crop specialist reported that land in the southern part of the Upper Sunshine Coast was especially suited to the growing of small fruits, vegetables and potatoes. The expert went on to say "I am convinced that a few head of stock, which would include a cow, several pigs and a few chickens, would go far toward

Comox Valley was challenged to produce enough milk to meet quotas. In response to their inability to supply their markets, a cheese industry emerged. Today at least one producer supplies a grocery store chain with their product.

But what about now and what about here in Powell River? In light of the

106 acre challenge

By the sweat of their own brows

By Linda Wegner

Rob and Julia love peas... and zucchini... and tomatoes... and, well you get the picture. Both are convinced that the consumption of vegetables, preferably grown and freshly picked from their gardens, is just about the ultimate in preferred dining.

Rob Hughes and Julia Adam share a common goal of eating from the “sweat of their own brows.” That in itself is not unusual as increasing numbers of peoples are looking for organic and, preferably, local sources of food to feed their bodies. What is a bit unusual, however, is why Julia and Rob moved to Powell River in 2009.

“We had lived several years in Ottawa and Victoria and we’d intended to grow food. We were going to work on an organic farm somewhere to learn more and then,” Rob paused.

“Then” was an opportunity that they couldn’t refuse — the offer of free land.

“Friends of the family offered us land to work and they told us that for years they’d been growing food. We’re growing mostly vegetables on the donated plot of land in Cranberry and it’s mostly fruit and nuts on the one acre place where we live in Westview,” he continued.

Along with the good fortune of being able to work donated land came the ability to channel their time and efforts into turning their good fortune into both a viable lifestyle and a business venture. They haven’t wasted those opportunities. Rob is currently employed at Career Link where he contributes to youth skills employment development — skills that also will prove invaluable in reaching the couple’s goal of gardening full time.

The opportunity to acquire land has yielded more than food for their own table. While their customer base is still small, they look forward to expanding their produce delivery program as crops increase.

“Technically it’s the Community Supported Agriculture

program but we call it the Box Delivery Program. The produce is strictly from our land — direct from the farm to the table. We currently have enough to supply eight customers and we also sell at the market,” they said.

Not content to restrict their services to delivery of garden vegetables, they also operate a nursery business that includes supplying edible bedding plants, garden installation and garden sitting.

“We have an all-in-one garden kit,” Julia continued. “We do the installation, including preparing the soil and planting, plus a one hour workshop about organic gardening. We also wrote an organic gardening handbook specifically for this region. It’s designed to help people get started on their first vegetable garden.”

Beyond their personal needs and aspirations, Julia and Rob decided to make their unique contribution to the growing call for food security and sustainability here in the Upper Sunshine Coast. They’ve challenged the community to increase its collective gardening

efforts, but with a specific goal in mind: dedicate and cultivate 106 acres of land to the sole purpose of growing vegetables.

According to Rob, that’s number of estimated acres required to feed Powell River area residents, based on Statistics Canada numbers plus “bumped up” calculations.

“We believe we need [to eat] more vegetables than they recommend,” he says.

At the time of the writing of this article, Julia reported that 75 participants in the project were growing vegetables on approximately fourteen acres of land.

“The really neat thing is that while it seems so small, it all adds up.”

Land, vegetables, food sustainability and co-operation: Seems like a great recipe for a healthy community! 🍅



LOVELY LETTUCE — Julia Adam and Rob Hughes hold a healthy head of homegrown leaf lettuce.



EXTRAORDINARY — Ron Berezan loves helping others with their gardening as much as he loves doing it himself.

A DAY ON THE FARM

Each year, Wendy Devlin opens her farm to young Powell River students to give them a taste of life on the land.



The urban farmer

Growing food in the city

By Isabelle Southcott

Ron Berezan has a passion for growing food in urban areas.

He had his first garden at the age of 19 and for the past eight years has been specializing in helping others grow as much food as possible in small plots.

He's just as passionate today about permaculture and bio intensive organic gardening as he was when he started his business in Edmonton.

Since moving to Powell River last year, Ron has continued to offer training, strategies and tools for people and community groups so they can bring agriculture back into the cities.

"I do a lot of teaching of gardening and permaculture design methods all across Canada," says Ron. "I also do design work for people who want to convert yards or public spaces to create an edible landscape."

Each winter Ron does two tours of Cuba where he teaches people about urban and organic agriculture. "Cuba is at the forefront of urban and organic agriculture," he says. "We visit farms, producers and research centres."

This year, local grower Doug Brown and filmmaker Jeremy Williams accompanied Ron. They are creating a documentary called *The Growing Revolution*, which takes a look at reclaiming control of the food we eat.

In addition to consulting on urban agricultural issues, Ron helps local governments plan food systems and food planning strategies that encourage more food production in cities. "The whole wave of interest in food security, local food and food production is growing and municipalities are not keeping up," he says, pointing to bylaws that make it difficult for people to grow food in cities. "Now that cities realize that urban agriculture is important, they need to know how to make it work. It's happening all around the world."

It's only in the last generation or so that the global food system has been in place to deliver an abundance and diversity of food year round to the grocery stores. "There are lots of reasons that we should look critically at this. We see tremendous threats to the global food systems. It takes 10 calories of fossil fuel for every one calorie of food on our plate."

Ron paused: "If the ferries stopped bringing food in tomorrow, how long would our food supply last? How long could we feed ourselves?"

Powell River has good wild resources for fish, game and berries but "we are vulnerable," he says.

Growing some of your own food helps.

"A generation of people have grown up without ever knowing gardening skills. We have a number of small scale farmers and gardeners here who are more than happy to share their skills and knowledge."

This fall, Ron will teach a permaculture design certificate course at St David and St Paul Anglican Church. In the process, they will design and install a new landscape for the church that will serve as a public example of what can be done in an urban area. 🍎

- Asparagus is a member of the lily family, related to onions, leeks and garlic.
- Pumpkins were once recommended for removing freckles!
- Fresh apples float because a quarter of their volume is air.

Bountiful opportunities

Local food production increasing

By Scott Randolph



Here we are: the second edition of Home Grown Powell River, an excellent resource to learn more about food production in our region. As mentioned by our society's president, Jay Yule, earlier in this publication, the Powell River region holds endless possibilities for the expansion of this industry. I can tell you that the Powell River Re-

gional Economic Development Society (PRREDS) is proud to be a partner in this publication as it helps to promote investment in a sector our organization believes holds great potential for entrepreneurship and job creation.

Over the past year we've seen an increase in food production in the region. In particular, land base agriculture has been expanding with existing farms acquiring new land to put into production as well as increasing their capacity with investment in new equipment. There has also been investment from outside of the area with new farms being established, and older ones being put back into production, in some cases for new endeavours such as agri-tourism. Our society has also seen an increased interest in large scale organic production and has been working with a few companies that have shown an interest Powell River because of its affordable land base and infrastructure. To top of it all off, local agencies have done an excellent job of encouraging households to grow vegetables and fruit as well as consider raising livestock through the urban chicken program. It has been wonderful to see such a diverse interest in food production and the region starting to rediscover its roots in agriculture.

Although there have been definite improvements in the region's food production sector, there are still a number of

things that need to be done to further its growth. Since the release of the Economic Development Plan for Agriculture last year, PRREDS and the Powell River Farmers' Institute have been working to implement the action items and projects identified in the document. Included among them are:

- Development of community pasture/forage space to increase the production of hay;
- Establishment of an equipment pool to assist farms that may not have the financial resources to purchase certain pieces of equipment;
- Encouraging the continuation of small farm development courses and other credit programs;
- Soil mapping of the region and the development of a land inventory;
- Establishment of the 'Full Circle Farm' concept or a provincial learning centre for dual credit programs in agriculture.

All of these efforts will not only require funding sources (a given these days), but the continued dedication of local agencies and the partnerships they have formed.

In short, Powell River appears to be on the cusp of a new direction economically. The business case is there. As agricultural lands in the lower mainland and the Fraser Valley continue to be redeveloped for residential and commercial endeavours, and worldwide demand for food continues to increase, the Powell River region with its affordable land base, moderate climate and geographic isolation is becoming more and more attractive as a place to invest in both small and large scale agriculture. The opportunity is within our grasp, we just need to stay the course in continuing to develop the capacity for food production in our region. In working together as a community, we will realize the goal of self-sufficiency as well as economic diversification. 🍎

MORE Ag fun facts

- It takes 24–26 hours for a hen to produce an egg
- A honey bee can fly 15 mph.
- Each worker honey bee makes 1/12th tsp of honey in its lifetime.
- A pig can run a 7-minute mile.
- Pigs can't sweat. Pigs have no sweat glands, that is why they roll around in mud to cool off.
- Apples are a member of the rose family, as are peaches.
- Fresh apples float because a quarter of their volume is air.

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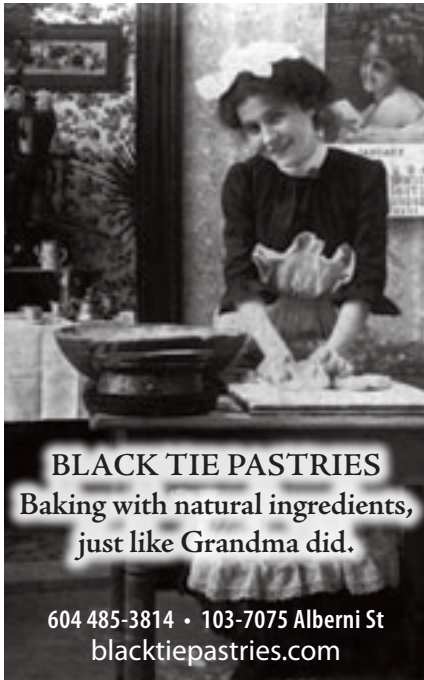
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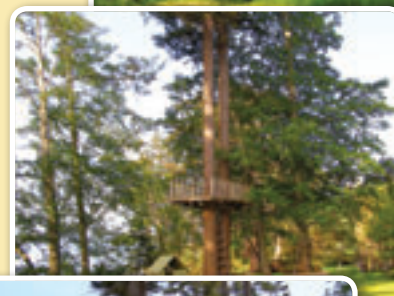
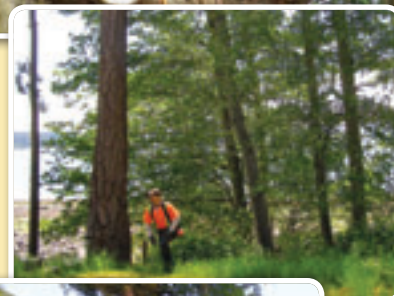
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Above: Photos from our most recent job on beautiful Texada Island.

At left: Stefan & Liz's new deck in Stillwater which uses lumber milled from their own trees.

