

November 14, 2013

Farming for profit and providing local community food options

Interested in becoming a farmer? Looking for tips on how to turn a profit from your food growing hobby or find a career that fits with your passion for local food?

North Island College's *Lettuce Grow* program is offering a workshop to help empower people interested in learning to farm. On Saturday, November 16 from 1 to 3 p.m. Hans Rhenish will share his extensive knowledge and success in the business of farming. The workshop will focus on direct farm marketing and community promotion.

Did you know Campbell River currently produces less than one per cent of its food?

"The demand for local food is growing rapidly, and has outstripped supply island-wide. In response to community interest, the latest Sustainable Official Community Plan sets a target for Campbell River to have the capacity to produce 10 per cent of its food by 2031. This would allow the agriculture sector to directly and significantly contribute to the local economy," says Kira DeSorcy, lead instructor for the *Lettuce Grow* program.

To register for this *Lettuce Grow* workshop, visit <http://www.nic.bc.ca/continuingeducation/> and search for course code GENI 7944 or visit an NIC campus in person.

This workshop is among several upcoming events and initiatives that will help to encourage more people to farm.

The Young Agrarians will put on a Land Linking workshop to serve Vancouver Island on Saturday, November 23 from 2 to 6 p.m. in Cowichan Station.

"You don't have to be young to be a Young Agrarian; you just have to care about food, farmers, nature and community," says DeSorcy, a member of the Young Agrarians. *"Young Agrarians are the movers and shakers of a new food movement: agriculturists, farmers, urban farmers, market and community gardeners, community groups and academics, organizations and people who want to ecologically rebuild, promote and inspire agriculture of our country."*

The Young Agrarians land linking event series will facilitate a space for people to meet, make connections and discuss best land linking practices.

"If you're lucky, you may meet your future farmer, or find the right land owner with a great piece of land to farm on," DeSorcy adds.

The Young Agrarians Land Access Guide, a resource to support people wanting to gain access to food-growing land, along with a digital Resource Map are being launched as part of this event series. To find out more, visit <http://youngagrarians.org/>.

The City of Campbell River is also putting an effort toward land linking resources with the creation of an interactive land map to help farmers and those looking to access land for community gardens and small scale urban agriculture. This tool is part of the *Food Map* project being funded by the Real Estate Foundation of BC, and the City expects to have the tool available in 2014.

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