



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Food Map for Campbell River to promote local businesses and food products

Interested in growing or buying local food? The City of Campbell River, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, is developing a *Food Map* to make it even easier to find local food products and promote local businesses.

The web-based *Food Map* will help raise awareness about local food production, processing and purchasing by identifying retailers, restaurants and farms selling local, regional and Vancouver Island-sourced agricultural products.

“This project will help strengthen the local economy and support a positive business climate. The Food Map builds on the Chamber’s ‘Think Local’ initiative by promoting local businesses that offer agriculture and food products grown and produced in our community,” says Colleen Evans, president and CEO of the Campbell River Chamber of Commerce. *“Our ‘Think Local’ campaign is designed to strengthen the local economy by increasing awareness about our local businesses and the services and products they offer.”*

The Food Map will also contain an inventory of public and private land that can be made available for food growing. Private land owners will be able to list their property as available space for small scale local food production.

“Business locations, backyards or farms are potential community gardening spaces. For example, schools that want to expose students to the food system, or aging residents who find it difficult to manage their property can benefit from partnerships with people and organizations interested in growing local food,” explains Amber Zirnhelt, the City’s sustainability manager. *“The City will also provide information about things to consider and types of agreements between land owners and people interested in growing food.”*

The City has received \$12,900 from the Real Estate Foundation of BC toward the development of the food map and supporting tools to encourage local food initiatives.

“During the development of our Sustainable Official Community Plan, we heard from the community that access to locally grown food is important – as a healthy lifestyle choice, and as a way to reduce environmental impacts associated with transportation of food,” says Councillor Larry Samson, who holds the Council portfolio for the environment and community planning. *“People are interested in community gardening, urban agriculture, and buying local food, and the Food Map will help support more opportunities for growing food in Campbell River. This project can also contribute to a local food culture in Campbell River and will help profile businesses that carry local products.”*

Primary goals of the City’s *Agriculture Now Plan* and the *Sustainable Official Community Plan* are the development of local food systems and access to local food markets. The plans also set food security and self-sufficiency targets for Campbell River, aiming for the capacity to grow the equivalent of 10 per cent of local food supply by 2031 and 50 per cent by 2060. To ensure that the *Food Map* meets the needs of the community, focus groups and interviews will take place in the coming months.

For more information, watch for updates on the Sustainable Campbell River Facebook page, visit www.campbellriver.ca or contact the *Food Map* coordinator at richard.buchan@campbellriver.ca.

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