



News Release

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ISLANDS TRUST LAUNCHES FOOD SECURITY PROJECT

VICTORIA — The Islands Trust has initiated a project to address the issue of food security in the Islands Trust Area and provide public education through a new food security web page.

“The Islands Trust can support food security by creating policies that deliberately link land-use planning with community development, ecological conservation and socio-economic sustainability,” said Sheila Malcolmson, Chair of the Islands Trust Council. “Food security is about more than simply having enough to eat. It is also about supporting local farmers, protecting farmland and the environment, reducing our carbon footprint and strengthening our local economies and communities. By improving our food security we build community resilience.”

“Island communities are particularly vulnerable to food supply issues resulting from natural disasters, climate change and the rising cost of transporting food from off island,” Malcolmson added. “These risks are compounded by the fact that far fewer people are farming because land is expensive, operating costs are high, water can be scarce and there may be a lack of affordable housing for farm workers. Islanders buy almost all of their food from ‘off-island’ but farmers need local customers to keep their farms profitable.”

“The good news,” she added, “is that islanders are in a strong position to address this topic because we have excellent growing conditions and our communities are increasingly supportive of local food production.”

During the coming months Islands Trust staff will be researching food security issues and making an inventory of initiatives in island communities to share with the public. Planner Kaitlin Kazmierowski is eager to answer questions and receive any information the public can offer on local food security at 250-405-5194 or kkazmierowski@islandstrust.bc.ca. The results of this research will be presented to the Islands Trust Council in September at its quarterly council meeting on Bowen Island. This public presentation will identify food security challenges and opportunities in the Islands Trust Area and identify steps that Local Trust Committees and Bowen Island Municipality can take to improve local food security.

A new Islands Trust web page provides information on food security, contacts for island organizations involved in the issue, funding opportunities for food security projects, and links to upcoming courses, workshops and events. The page can be accessed from a link on the Islands Trust homepage or by going directly to: <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/foodsecurity/foodsecurityhome.cfm>

The Islands Trust Council is a federation of independent local governments that represents some 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

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Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

Bowen, Denman, Hornby, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Lasqueti, Mayne, N. Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, S. Pender, Thetis