



News Release

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ISLANDS TRUST AND AGRICULTURE ALLIANCE TO CONDUCT LOCAL PRODUCE STUDY

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee and the Agriculture Alliance have initiated a program to better understand how much food is grown for human consumption by market garden farmers on the island. The study results will help the community identify how locally-produced food reduces greenhouse gas emissions when compared to importing food to the island.

The project is part of a larger program to develop a community energy and greenhouse gas emission inventory which will, in turn, be used as a baseline to monitor reductions in Salt Spring Island's greenhouse gas emissions. It will be used as part of a broader Islands Trust food security project.

Agriculture Alliance volunteers will conduct a telephone survey among the market garden farming community in February, 2010. The survey will repeat questions from a 2005 survey to allow for data comparison (www.plantofarm.org/Background.php) as well as ask some new questions. It will focus on gathering information about methods used by market garden farmers and include questions about the area of land in production, the source of inputs used in production, the use of mechanization and delivery methods.

The study will also gather general information on the volume of vegetables produced in typical backyard gardens on Salt Spring Island through interviews with a sample of home-gardeners. The results of the domestic produce review will be assessed as to its likely significance for overall food production and consumption on Salt Spring Island.

"The Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan states as part of the community vision that 'Our need to protect the land must also ensure its agricultural future, not only because agriculture is a traditional way of island life, but also because in a changing world it is imperative that we enhance the security of our supply of food,'" noted Sheila Malcolmson, Chair of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee.

"The Local Trust Committee is committed to the support of local food production and improving our food security," said local trustee George Ehring. "We know that local food can be a significant factor in reducing food transportation costs and greenhouse gas emissions – and besides that, it's healthier and good for our local economy," he said.

Detailed information on greenhouse gas reduction is available on a new climate change section of the Islands Trust website at <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/climatechange>. The webpage includes key decisions and other resources about climate change relevant to island communities. Subscribers to "Climate Change News" can receive e-mail alerts of significant project updates.

Information on the Produce Study will be posted on the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee website under Projects and Bylaw Reviews at <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/ltc/ss/default.cfm> when it becomes available.

Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

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

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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