

RICHMOND'S FIRST

FOOD FOR ALL

DIALOGUE



MAKING RICHMOND FOOD SECURE

Friday, February 29th 9am - 4:30pm
Saturday, March 1st 9am - 4:30pm
Gilmore Park United 8060 No.1 Road

CONFERENCE REPORT



**Richmond
Food
Security
Task
Force**

Vancouver
CoastalHealth



**Richmond
Poverty
Response
Committee**

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OVERVIEW

On Friday, February 29th and Saturday, March 1st, 2008 the Richmond Food Security Task Force (RFSTF) hosted Richmond's first food security conference entitled the **Food For All Dialogue**. The conference attracted almost 200 participants over the 2 days and featured 28 speakers. (Appendix I) Keynote speakers and workshops were held in the morning and after lunch; participants interacted in a World Café where ideas and visioning for the future were shared. Food was catered and wherever possible, sourced from local farms

A special thanks to...

Vancouver Coastal Health - Community Food Action Initiative Grant (CFAI)

Conference Coordinators: Jason O'Brien, Arzeena Hamir

Conference Registrar/Administrator: Robin Winskill

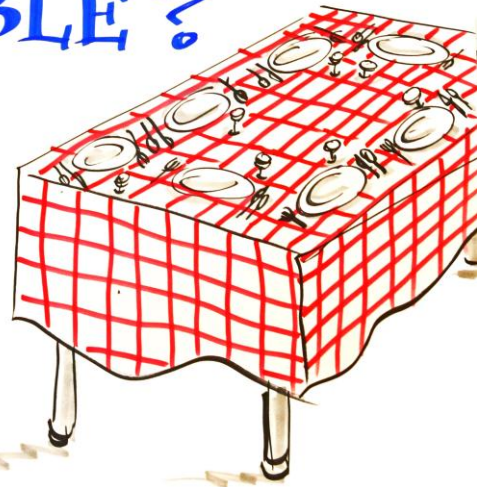
Photo Credits: Brian Phillips

GILMORE PARK UNITED CHURCH Staff and Volunteers, Karen's kitchen volunteers, the workshop moderators and all the others who so generously gave their time when it was sunny outside and our gardens were calling out to us.

PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

The RFSTF felt that education and awareness building around food security issues was the number one goal of the conference. The term "food security" is still not widely understood in the larger population so the idea behind the conference was to bring dynamic speakers into Richmond in order to spark dialogue around all the issues. It was anticipated that Friday would attract professionals working in Richmond from the City, Health Board, School District and non-profit groups while Saturday would be more attractive to the general public. In addition, it was hoped that the conference would engage local citizens to be more pro-active in food security issues and possibly agree to sit on the RFSTF.

**WHO ELSE
WOULD WE LOVE TO
BRING TO THE
TABLE ?**



ORGANIZATION

Although the idea for a dialogue or conference had been established in the summer of 2007, work on the components of the conference didn't actively begin until Nov/Dec of 2007. Three part-time staff were hired to work on organizing the conference layout, registration forms, and registration system, as well as keep track of registrations and promote the conference to the wider community.

VENUE



Finding a venue was the first challenge for the committee. Although the RFSTF had a small budget, it was felt that costs needed to be kept to a minimum in case unexpected costs were to arise. The RFSTF approached both the City of Richmond and the Richmond School Board to see if either City Hall or a local high school were available to host the conference. Unfortunately, City Hall was booked and the cost of renting a high school for the weekend, even on a Pro-D day, was prohibitive. Thankfully, community connections revealed that Gilmore Park United Church was available at not cost. The Church has a variety of meeting room sizes plus a dining area that seats 150 people.

MEDIA AND OUTREACH

In December, when the RFSTF was able to confirm that the conference was proceeding, an initial e-mail was sent to the food security e-mail list, City staff, school board e-mail list, and Poverty Response Group list to inform them to set aside the 2 days. By late January, the conference brochure was printed and circulated through all the above contacts and e-mailed to as many outlets that didn't require print brochures. The Richmond Poverty Response Group agreed to host on-line registration through their website which helped smooth the registration process and the Richmond Food Bank enabled phone, mail and in-person registration.

The local press was very supportive and ran 2 front-page stories leading up to the conference. Local writers, including Arlene Kroeker and Mary Gazetas also helped advertise the conference through their columns in the paper. (Appendix II Newspaper clippings)



STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE

Both Friday and Saturday were structured similarly. After early morning registration and a continental breakfast, to kick-off both days, a dynamic keynote speaker was scheduled. Kim Sutherland, an Agrologist with the BC Ministry of Agriculture, spoke on Friday on Food Security in Richmond. Chef Ian Lai, a well-known Richmond resident, spoke to Saturday's crowd on the need to grow your own food and the importance of "coming to the table."

Following each keynote speech, a series of three 1-hour workshops were held. Topics included Community Economic Development (CED), Healthy Schools, Youth and Food, Balcony Food Growing, Community Gardens, and Local Diets. A moderator was assigned to each



workshop to take notes and then report back at the end of the day to inform others, who were not present, what came out of that particular workshop. A coffee break was available after the first set of workshops to energize participants as they then entered the second set of 3 workshops.

After lunch, moderators gave their reports and participants were introduced to the first of 2 facilitators for the afternoon. Avril Orloff, a graphic facilitator, captured the key findings of each workshop on a large canvas so that all the participants were able to have a visual understanding of each of the workshops. While the moderator's report was underway, volunteers set up a World Café in the lunchroom and participants were then ushered in to this setting and introduced to Ali Grant, the World Café facilitator.

The afternoon was reserved for participants to help answer key questions that the RFSTF had developed in conjunction with both Ali and Avril. Friday's questions included "What could food security look like in Richmond?" and "How could I help to make Richmond more food secure?" Saturday's World Café built on these questions by asking "Who else would we love to bring to the table?" and "How can we work together to grow and nourish these relationships?"



VOLUNTEERS

For each day of the conference required approximately 22 volunteers. Karen dar Woon,



who catered the event, needed 2 sets of 4 volunteers to help set up breakfast and help with both morning and afternoon food requirements. Two volunteers were required for each workshops session; one volunteer acted as a moderator and one as a "gopher". A tech support volunteer floated through each session ensuring that the AV equipment was in order and set up and clean-up volunteers were needed at the start and finish of the conference. Conference staff either floated through each workshop, troubleshooting, or manned the registration table.

A number of volunteers came to the conference through organizations such as Family Services' Community Kitchen, the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project, local high schools, and the Poverty Response Committee. One member of the RFSTF coordinated these volunteers and ensured that they were each assigned a duty and were given phone call reminders.



BUDGET

From the onset, conference organizers tried to keep costs to a minimum to enable as many people to participate as possible. A registration price of \$30 per day or \$50 for 2 days was established to help offset costs. Volunteers, speakers, and conference organizers did not pay for their registration.

Funding for the conference was allocated with funds received from the Vancouver Coastal Health's *Community Food Action Initiative* grant. In-kind contributions included the venue space, equipment, and some speakers waived their speaker's fee.

The total cost of the ambitious two-day *Food For All* conference was over \$ 19,000. Revenues from registration fees totaled just under \$ 3000 (For a more detailed budget summary – see Appendix III)

OUTCOMES

First and foremost, the goal of educating the public and providing a venue for dialogue was certainly met. Friday saw a number of City staff mingling with health officials and non-profit members. Saturday was filled with mostly local residents who heard about the conference through the media or through contacts with the Poverty Response Committee.

One of the outcomes of the World Café was a series of beautiful graphic representations of community input. Conference organizers are hoping to laminate them and use them at future community events.



Key themes that emerged from the World Cafés included the need to **educate** more people, **connect** with food and farmers, and **support** local food production. These themes may well serve to be a guideline for future work of the RFSTF.

LESSONS LEARNED

What worked?

- Delegates were really impressed – they felt the conference was very well organized and professionally done
- Great to hear "experts" to set the context - Quality of speakers was impressive
- Two days worked
- Brochure created a good "wow" factor – good quality showed we're serious
- Heads were "full"
- Door prizes did help encourage people to stay until the end
- Venue was friendly and intimate - Rooms were big enough
- Parking wasn't an issue
- Breakfast was really important for networking
- Food was great – worth every penny
- Food toss was great!
- Karen takes her food safety very seriously – good work Karen!
- She used some rescued foods to save money ie fruit and yoghurt
- Murals were gorgeous and were appreciated by the church congregation
- We had a great mix of ages
- Questions at the World Cafe worked well. Momentum grew



For the next conference

- Have a core group of people review graphics would be more efficient
- Need a hierarchy of who is reporting to who, a timeline and a conference chair person
- If we plan ahead we would be able to have high school students get permission to leave.
- Need to attract more teachers
- Would have been interesting to hear from people involved in different food producing areas in Canada ie fishing, livestock
- Include "some subsidies available" in the brochure
- Perhaps have a student/seniors rate
- There were a number of other conflicting events
- If we had publicized that you got in free if you volunteered more low income people might have attended
- It is more dynamic to NOT have a designated facilitator/recorder
- Should involve the developers as well
- We lost people after lunch
- For 2009 consider a one day conference instead of two

Appendix I

Speakers / Workshops / Moderators notes

Workshop A: Community Economic Development -How can CED foster change in our food system?

David Holben PhD, RD School of Human and Consumer Sciences
Professor / Director, Didactic Program in Dietetics Food, Nutrition, and
Hospitality, Ohio University. Fulbright Scholar

Liz Green Liz is the Manager of Social Enterprise with the Vancity Community
Foundation. She is the past executive director of Pot Luck Café in Vancouver. She
has extensive experience within the food security and social enterprise sectors.

Moderator's Notes:

David Holben

- He comes from Apalachian Ohio with a population of 20,000
- He shopped in Steveston and could not buy anything locally grown
- ACENET is a non-profit group that helps low income families become more food security and develop their own business.
- Innovative food systems – gleaning, community gardening, value-added products, marketing assistance
- First step
 - Develop kitchen incubator – rent a facility
 - 20 new businesses start annually
 - Partner with a graphic artist for labelling
 - David showed some locally grown products
- Next Step
 - Develop a regional flavour
 - Build relations between tourism, farming and artists
- Final step – create sustainability
- What was learned... non profits are key catalysts
- Has developed into a vibrant region

Liz Green

- Potluck Cafe – social enterprise in DTES
- Started due to the need to provide nutritious meals for United We Can
- Partnership with Loving Spoonful, United We Can, Portland Hotel, Potluck Cafe
- Program – nutrition program
- Meals to residents mostly at the Portland Hotel
- 600 subsidized meal per month, 3000 /month for hard to house
- Community Kitchen
- Teach how to make a meal on limited income
- 20 residents each week cook – eat – clean together
- Employment Program
- Employs up to 11 people at one time
- \$200,000 in direct wages
- Employs people who fall through the gas
- David – if a small community of 20,000 can do it so can we
- We should help low income people create own businesses
- Help our own economy
- Liz – creative way to meet a variety of needs
- Assists people with a variety of barriers to have nutritious meals

Workshop B: Healthy Schools -Are we meeting the needs of our children?

Bruce Beairsto Bruce is the Superintendent of Schools for the Richmond School District. The District has identified Health Promotion as a developmental priority, which includes implementation of new Food and Beverage Guidelines for schools developed by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education.

Ian Lai Ian is a culinary chef and instructor. He is the founder and executive director of the Terra Nova Schoolyard Project and is actively engaged within the Richmond community to build a healthier tomorrow.

Moderator's Notes:

Presentation

- Great change will come through relationships not policies or mandates
- Involve parents by invitation
- Be patient
- Find your champions
- Build the skills of children that they can take home ie seeds to plant at home
- Build relationships amongst the City of Richmond and the School District
- Build relationships in elementary schools to build the capacity

Dialogue

- How do you sustain a project? You involve the parents
- If the change is "planted" at the elementary level, the children will create change in the high schools
- What to do in the winter? Winter garden!
- Important to plant seeds that are value based not policy based

Workshop C: The Future of Agriculture in Richmond

Kathleen Zimmerman Kathleen is the Regional Agrologist with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. She works with the local governments of Richmond, Delta and Surrey to implement the BC Ministry of Agriculture Strengthening Farming Program.

Dave Semple Dave is currently Director of Parks and Public Work Operations for the City of Richmond. He received his undergraduate in Kinesiology from SFU and conducted graduate work in Parks Planning and Maintenance at the U of Ottawa. He is interested in farming, particularly the future of dairy farming.

Moderator's Notes

Kathleen Zimmerman:

- Richmond has 5,182 hectares in the ALR
- 28% of Richmond ALR land is non-farmed
- 1996-2006 there was an increase in the total area farmed
- BC has predominately small scale, family owned farms
- Most farmers are aged 55 or older
- Total gross farm receipts is down 30% in Richmond since 1996
- Top crops are pasture, cranberries and blueberries
- It takes 6 city lots to feed a person (for a year?)
- Local challenges / Land prices
- Wildlife damage
- Movement of farm traffic
- Water supplies and drainage
- Illegal fill dumping
- Must maintain an agriculture land base
- Local opportunities – proximity to markets, 100 mile diet trends, value added products (craisins), specialty crops, agri-tourism/culinary tourism
- The future – how we all act locally (citizens and government) can make a difference

Dave Semple

- Farming can be a tough business
- Richmond used to be known as a cornucopia
- Quota system in Canada helps sustainable practices
- How do we retain farms?
 - There are only three dairy farms in Richmond
 - Consumers need to educate themselves about food
 - Changing attitudes, people are starting to care about where and how their food is produced
 - Climate change, we need to respond in the future
 - Technology and farming may save us if we're lucky
 - Use marginal and – greenhouses
- ALR land is the future
- Get kids involved, establish a connection in nature and growing Future is youth
- Save farmland and use it!

Workshop A: How Can We Plan for Food Security in Richmond? Lessons from other communities.

Ione Smith (MSc, AAg) Ione is the Special Projects Coordinator at Smart Growth BC. Her role is to work with communities to protect and enhance greenspace, with a particular focus on farmland and food security. In her volunteer time she is heavily involved with the ALR-Protection and Enhancement Committee.

Claire Gram Claire is Vancouver Coastal Health's Regional Coordinator for Food Security and Healthy Communities. She sits on the Provincial Community Food Action Initiative (CFAI) committee, helping to fund community food security initiatives around BC.

Moderator's Notes

Presentation

- ALR is the greatest tool to manage growth and balance development
- Regional planning
- Official community plan, zoning bylaws
- Local food charter – access to locally produced food
- Provincial – core program – Food security – CFAI Core programs
- Partnerships and community
- Increase awareness

Dialogue

- Edge planning – hot sizes
- Increase quality of food in residential care

Main Points:

- Enhance and protect farmland (Canada dependent), green space, ALR tool
- Manage development
 - Smart Growth
 - Zoning bylaws
 - Official community plan
 - Density

Do this work together – Provincial /City / Neighbours / Community Groups / People / Ministry of Health

Workshop B: Youth And Food - How do we get young people excited about agriculture?

Kent Mullinix, Ph.D. Kent is a Sustainable Horticulture/ IPM Specialist at the Institute for Sustainable Horticulture, Kwantlen University College.

Shannon Cowan, (née Binns), PhD. Shannon is an Assistant Professor of Agroecology in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems, UBC, where she facilitates student-centered learning that is enquiry-based and experiential, addressing the integration of knowledge.

Moderator's Notes

- Agro ecology – saving growers – our future
- Critical issue – attract – lose knowledge

Viable Agricultural Economy	Productionist Paradigm
Movements	Disdain
Community involvement	Corporate concentration
Direct distribution	Mass distribution
Coordinate efforts	Industrialized farming systems
1940 - 50% live on farms	
2006 – 1.6% live on farms /average age 60	

Barriers

- 1) Economic strain
 - a) No time to train
 - b) No 100 kilometre farms
 - c) Many farmers are 5 years from retirement
- 2) New farmers have no experience
 - a) Urban students
 - b) Limited entry
 - c) No practical learning
- 3) Consolidation (industrial farms)
- 4) Cost of land
- 5) Profitability
- 6) Farmers .40 - .28
 - Industrial .15 - .25
 - Marketing .45 - .65

Workshop C: Global to Local Perspectives. How Does Richmond Fit into the Big Picture?

Herb Barbolet Herb is an Associate Professor with SFU's Sustainable Communities (Centre for Sustainable Development) Herb is the co-founder of FarmFolk/CityFolk and is a monthly participant on CBC Almanac's Food Panel. He has recently conducted food systems research in Richmond.

Carole Christopher Carole is the Co-Chair of the Vancouver Food Policy Council and has a Doctorate in Nutrition. She has developed and taught university courses on nutritional ecology and community nutrition, consulted with the US Federal Trade Commission on regulating advertising of food products to children.

Moderator's Notes

Herb Barbolet: Ecological thinking – food is part of a larger system. The mainstream is an industrialized, global food system that is controlled largely by a few corporations. Reliance on oil and climate change will change the food system. The alternative is the ecological paradigm – a local food system. The local food system builds community, economy and everything that builds human society. Food security planning for sustainable, long-term food policy, along with specific short-term goals is needed. Small initiatives can have profound, necessary effects (eg 100 mile diet). Food policy councils are essential. Capacity building is vital followed by community economic development (re design of food system). Make meaningful connections. Increase of food access = increased sale of local food = increased internal and external policy.

Carole Christopher: Food security task force in Richmond grew out of the Poverty Response Committee. Vancouver's Food Policy Council came out of City Council. Food System Planning is central to municipal planning currently, yet many think that it is regional, provincial or national. Cities can do quite a bit to transform the food system eg 2010 new community gardens by 2010. Municipalities should feel comfortable using their influence to impact the food system, even if the issue outside their jurisdiction (e.g. Fraser Valley). Ask your counselors what their interest in food is. The Vancouver Food Charter was adopted by Vancouver City Council in 2007.

Recommended Reading: The Green Tables / Ocean Wise / In Defense of Food

Dialogue: Will this negatively affect developing countries? If we speak up, companies will listen. An ecological approach (a local food system) is needed. Promote short-term relief through charitable and other means – build capacity – redesign food system that builds the local food system. Engage policy makers in a conversation about their interest in food and the local system. Food system planning is central to municipal planning.

Rich MacDonald

An Introduction to Seattle's P-Patch Community Gardens and the P-Patch Trust

Rich MacDonald has been the manager of the P-Patch program with the Department of Neighbourhoods in Seattle for over 10 years. In this time the program has grown from 35 gardens to 69, directly serving 1800 households and offering 2500 plots to more than 6000 urban gardeners on 23 acres of land.

Seattle's P-Patch program is a leader in urban agriculture in North America. The program, housed within the City of Seattle's Department of Neighborhoods, is dedicated to providing community gardens to the Citizens of Seattle and currently offers more than 2500 plots to over 6000 gardeners on 23 acres of land.

Rich MacDonald, Manager of the P-Patch Program, described the importance of the program to Seattle residents, particularly those from new immigrant communities. Not only have P-Patch gardens been the site of food cultivation, but they have also empowered neighborhoods and citizens to take an active role in the development of their own communities. Outcomes include public art installations created by gardeners themselves and donations of over 10,000 tons of food to local food banks.

The staff of the P-Patch program have made a concerted effort to engage with the local community so demand for garden plots is high with a 4 year wait list in some gardens. When asked how the City of Richmond could learn from Seattle's example, MacDonald answered, "Gardens need to be built first. You can't create demand for something that doesn't exist".

**Workshop A: How Can Neighbourhoods Grow More Food?
Case studies from around Metro Vancouver**

Ron Plowright Ron is the coordinator of the Urban Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden Project at UBC Farm and the Community Outreach Team coordinator for FarmFolk/CityFolk.

Sharon Hanna Sharon runs the gardening program at Queen Alexandra Elementary. Her newest venture is "HotBeds" - food garden installations, gardening lessons - helping folks get growing in the city.

Farhat Khan Farhat's primary role at City Farmer is teaching the popular worm composting "wormshops" (a City of Vancouver subsidized program) but when possible she also assists with other activities at the demonstration garden including maintaining the Water Wise garden.

Moderator's Notes

Ron Plowright

- Studied dietetics (to become a dietician)
- Cure for cancer – help people eat well
- Buy local = less food miles = less carbon
- Prevention – how do we live better?
- Ron's new job – community developer / food security / Fraser Health Authority
- Paradigm shift – help people develop feeling of comfort & positivity – good heart & good mind
- Important to put good energy in food and prayer
- Do things in a culturally and community appropriate way
- Respect elders, much experience to share
- Work in culture / old ways that speak and teach from the heart
- Representing organizations – show emotion (tears & laughter) important
- Capacity building

Sharon Hanna

- Writes for Garden Wise magazine
- Doesn't dig in soil but uses layers in garden
- All equipment / material donated
- 40 page hazard report from VSB on school gardens at QE - Cost more than gardens
- Soil laid out in shape of medicine wheel
- Basalt boulders donated by a landscape company
- West Coast Seeds – Sharon used to work for them writing seed catalogue

Farhat Kahn

- Worm lady @ City Farmer
- Call for volunteers – composting demo
- Dry leaves turn into carbon / earth covers up smell
- Playground sand/grit/old soil – bacteria is good – potting soil is too clean

Dialogue

- Cats in garden deterrent
- Different aspects of work composting
- Garlic bread celebration – 9 months of growing
- Capacity building
- Volunteers from Master Garden Assn of BC
- Teach kids Latin names of plants
- Jail garden
- Grant from Evergreen
- Fence costs more than rest of 10,000 sq. ft. garden

Workshop B: How Can I Grow Food on My Balcony?

Susan Lee Hem Susan's interest is exploring the possibilities of gardening and composting in a town house setting, which resulted in a container gardening business: Small Space Gardening and Design. Her training in Early Childhood Education has also led her to create and run summer programs for children, with environmental/ gardening/ cooking themes.

Moderator's Notes

- Susan showed a power point presentation of development of her own balcony garden.
- It is a way to feel connected to the earth, nature and the seasons
- Started with desire for aesthetics, then wanted to grow food.
- She described the containers to use, the soil, the differing effects of balcony orientation re sun and watering needs,
- Stressed the importance of Composting: made with layers of green waste, dried leaves, worms, soil; puts on 3 x a year March, June and Nov. Keeps in 3 garbage cans. Uses aerating stick regularly.
- Answered many Qs from the enthusiastic audience of 20. Has consultation business: www.smallspacegardening.ca
- Also teaches children in summer programs; good to get hands dirty!
- Compost is the Secret Ingredient; Black gold.
- Provides access to fresh, naturally grown produce.

Workshop C: How Can We Support Food Production on Richmond Farms?

Bill Jones Bill owned & operated Jones Nurseries at No. 7 Road from 1972 to 2006. A Board member of Richmond Farmers Institute, Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee, Touchstone Family Association, Richmond Family Place and Richmond Museum Society.

Carol Southgate Carol Southgate is a horticulturist and a member of Richmond's Agriculture Advisory Committee. She has been a resident for 15 years and currently lives in the McLennan area where she grows blueberries, raspberries and dwarf apple trees.

Moderator's Notes

Carol Southgate:

- With the commodification of food, the poor go hungry
- Low produce prices may not include hidden costs
 - Cost of infrastructure
 - Wear on roads
 - Underpaid labour
 - Subsidies to Agro-business
 - Water depletion
- Corporate "greenwash", eg Monsanto and Dow go green
- Rules of corporate finance require profits above all
- Sustainability can be achieved by:
 - Regionally-based food systems provide some protection from market volatility
 - More accountable
 - Is more accessible; addresses social injustices
 - Urban agriculture is a powerful solution - brings food into population centres
 - Fresh foods instead of the nutrient poor products of industrial growing practices - preservatives; grown for durability rather than taste and nutrition
- Land Conservancy model works toward affordable and accessible land for young farmers
- Kwantlen College is aiming to be North America's first post-secondary school focused on urban agriculture.
- Fairview Gardens (in the US) is surrounded by high-density residences - feeds about 500 families; provides jobs
- A regional diet consumes 17 times less oil than when transported
- Local growers maintain species variety and diversity
- Job creation occurs with local agriculture
- Consumers can get to know and trust the quality of food purchased locally
- There is a valuable social aspect to farm market shopping
- Become an engaged food citizen
- Defeat corporate agriculture by going around the corporations - set up local food systems
- We are lucky in Richmond to have such good farmland in close proximity

Bill Jones:

- Has been fighting to sustain arable lands in Richmond for 34 years
- We have a common goal: to preserve farmland
- Bill Zylmans has Richmond's largest farm - his children will not continue farming
- All levels of government must work together to:
 - Educate young farmers
 - Make land available
 - Keep land in the ALR
 - Entice young farmers
- Citizens need to take control of lands to make available as lease-hold to young farmers
- City could buy lands as they become available from retiring/selling farmers
- Agriculture must "keep up with the times" to succeed
- Government must take an active role in containing arable land for future use
- Farmers need drainage; poor engineering practices are causing flooding

Dialogue notes

- Consumers need to be educated
- City could buy lands as they become available from retiring/selling farmers
- 5% of BC is arable; most land in ALR is in Peace River
- City could buy older houses, demolish and use land for parks till they can be assembled for agriculture
- Corporations will not farm on expensive Richmond land; could be available for small-scale farming
- Education for farmers/agriculture must be affordable - there is a model in the US
- Education of consumers and growers is imperative
- Growing locally will become a necessity
- We are getting close to the critical point where we "get it"
- Are there legalities that impede using small bits of land for agriculture?
- We need an info bank that links available small parcels of land with prospective growers
- The city could create an urban agriculture legacy using money from the oval lands sale
- We must CHANGE - but how?

Thoughtful and productive change requires that we consider alternatives and consequences

Workshop A: Community Gardens -How to start one in your own neighbourhood?

David Tracey David is a journalist, environmental designer and Executive Director of Tree City, an ecological engagement group "helping people and trees grow together" He coordinates the Vancouver Community Agriculture Network project together with City and public health officials to create more community gardens, especially among people lacking access to healthy, affordable food.

Jason O'Brien Jason is the founder of the My Own Back Yard Community Assn and Coordinator of the Richmond Food Security Task Force. The MOBY Community Gardens were built with direct support from the City of Vancouver and were first to be counted towards the 2010 gardens by 2010 initiative.

Andrea Reimer Andrea is a member of the Vancouver Food Policy Council, working on the 2010 gardens by 2010 initiative. She is the Executive Director of the Wilderness Committee with a diverse background in community development, social justice and the environmental movement.

Moderator's Notes

Andrea - Vancouver Food Policy Council

- Challenges in dealing with the City and ways to overcome challenges
- Look at the services provided and find ways to "speak in their language" to meet our goals, managing risk, saving face, being organized and being prepared to work with all City Departments
- Jason: MOBY – 4 year project beside Broadway and Commercial Skytrain
- Emphasized building a community of committed people
- Give it a name/identity, have sustainability plan
- Work with community groups, city, police, Translink, university
- "Community is what it's all about. The harvest is secondary"

David

- Emphasized building community is key
- Connections with youth, City, Vancouver Coastal Health, vegan, disenfranchised
- Need wider supported organization to coordinate and liaise with the City
- Identify land that is available, how to use co-operative organization
- Community gardening is about "Community"

Main points

- Meeting the challenge of working with bureaucracy
- One person with vision joins with others to empower the community and take pride in themselves
- Joining into larger groups to coordinate assessment, need, matching

Workshop B: Grow Food in Your Own Back Yard -and make money doing it?

Ward Tuelon Ward was born and raised on a farm in Saskatchewan, a Professional Agrologist since 1989, and a passionate gardener for over 25 years. Currently owner/operator of City Farm Boy, building custom food gardens and growing food in urban gardens for the local market.

Notes

Ward Teulon's is an urban farmer. Originally from a farm in Saskatchewan, he is now producing food within the city of Vancouver by converting backyard gardens into food producing plots. He then markets this produce at farmers markets in Vancouver.

Often, homeowners do not charge him to use their backyards. They save money by not having to pay for landscaping and they often get produce in exchange for allowing Teulon access to their backyards.

Teulon's tips for growing successfully:

- Plant thickly so that weeds do not have space to compete
- Place sprinklers on a timer
- Use light coloured hose so that water doesn't heat up and scald plants
- Grow produce with a high return such as salad greens and baby carrots
- Experiment with "new crops" such as wheat for flower arranging
- If you can be the first at market with any produce or flowers, you will often get the best price
-

Teulon is willing to help anyone interested in beginning something similar to CityFarmBoy in other parts of the Lower Mainland. His contact number is 604-812-7848 and his website is www.cityfarmboy.com

Workshop C: Local Diets -Lessons from the 10 and 100 Mile Diets

Mary Gazetas Mary is the Chair of the Richmond Fruit Tree Project, Co-chair of the Richmond Food Security Task Force; local food activist, visual artist, writer who has lived in Richmond for 25 years.

Arlene Kroeker Arlene is a director of the Terra Nova Schoolyard Society, an instructor, and writer. Arlene writes about food every Thursday in the Richmond Review and is currently completing her masters in creative writing at UBC.

Shirlene Cote Shirlene is the co-founder of Vancouver's 100-Mile Diet Society. She has a Master's Degree in Ecological Education at SFU and manages the BC Sustainable Energy Association's Climate Change Program in schools throughout the GVRD. She is the past outreach initiatives coordinator for the Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG).

Moderator's Notes

- For Mary Gazetas the 10 mile diet was the healthiest time of her life
- She enjoyed the challenge of hunting for food, the joy of discovery, learning more about local farms
- Using farmers as a resource ie cooking and preserving tips
- Food connects us all
- Food is essentially the common ground for revolution
- Check out 100milediet.org and face book group
- Making locally grown food can be challenging for busy people
- There is a need for prepared local food
- Community kitchens are a great resource
- Learn how to preserve and can
- Washington State has a subscribe to farms service
- "tailgate" farmer's markets
- Sharing back/front yards for gardening
- Eat spot prawns
- Help new immigrants

Main points

- More 10-mile events and educational opportunities needed
- Greater interest in local eating / seasonal eating
- Raise awareness
- Bet parent advisory committees involved
- Recipe exchanges / canning weekends
- Not a "secret" society

Appendix II
Detailed Budget

Budget Summary

REVENUES

Vancouver Coastal Health CFAI Grant	16486.
Registrations	3000.
Total Revenues	\$ 19,486.

EXPENDITURES

Speaker/Facilitator Fees	4315.
Speaker's Travel	628.
Conference Admin/Coordinator Contracts	4687.
Scholarships for Teachers to attend	600.
Printing/Photocopying	1150.
Newspaper ads	750.
Meals, Refreshments	5200.
Materials and Supplies	233.
Speaker Gifts	623.
Donation to Gilmore Park United Church	500.
Final Report and Photocopying	800.
Total Expenditures	\$ 19,486.

Appendix III

Newspaper clippings

Need for sustainable sources of food production has reached a critical stage

March 05, 2008



Mary Gazetas, Arlene Kroeker and Ian Lai gave a presentation on the 10-Mile Diet during the Food For All Dialogue on Saturday.

Mark Patrick photo

Need for sustainable sources of food production has reached a critical stage

The Food For All Dialogue was held this past Friday and Saturday at Gilmore United Church, its purpose, in part, to assess and discuss the current state of sustainable food production sources and to plan for the future in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley.

Here, in Richmond this refers to protecting areas which remain in the Agricultural Land Reserve and embracing a trend toward more urban gardening through a hands-on, educational approach for city residents.

Overall, the calibre of speakers at the dialogue was outstanding. However, there was one seemingly acceptable mind-set which warranted a huge red flag. It was an explanation of how big, multinational corporations practise good corporate citizenship. While this may be true in a majority of cases, it certainly does not reflect the true intentions of some unscrupulous corporate land developers who don't give road apples about preserving farmlands. Is it not this type of complacency which has allowed for the chipping away of ALR lands over the past 30 years?

With Richmond's population projected to increase by more than 40 per cent in the next 25 years, the need for sustainable sources of food production has reached a critical stage. Proponents of this brave, new initiative need to beware and adopt hard line strategies to outsmart those less honourable corporate

land developers and illuminate the way for Richmond to continue its role as a model for other cities to follow!

Adriana Gamble

Richmond

Find this article at:

http://www.bclocalnews.com/richmond_southdelta/richmondreview/opinion/letters/16317461.html

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

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The future of food

By Matthew Hoekstra - Richmond Review - February 27, 2008



Arzeena Hamir and Jason O'Brien have helped organize Richmond's first conference on food security.
Mark Patrick

The two-day event begins tomorrow at 9 a.m. Tomorrow, planters, planners and people who just like to eat healthy food will mull ideas about the future of local food in Richmond's first food security conference.

The two-day event is being organized by the Richmond Food Security Task Force. Speakers will lead discussions on everything from supporting food production to creating community gardens to growing food on balconies.

"It's really educational and awareness-building," said co-organizer Arzeena Hamir.

"Hopefully, it will have to really come from the community that there's enough energy to now go forward and do some amazing things." Momentum is already building in Richmond around food security issues, said Hamir, as more and more people are supporting the idea of locally grown food.

Each day of the conference will feature workshops, a locally-sourced lunch and a World Café forum, where participants can share thoughts from the day's presentations. "It's a place where there's no bad ideas," said co-organizer Jason O'Brien.

“It’s a brainstorming session, we’re using it to generate a lot of ideas in a very short period of time. We’re using it to connect people together.” O’Brien said similar conferences have been held in Vancouver, and said this one gives a voice to anyone interested in healthy food.

“I really hope it generates some really good dialogue between residents and policy makers in Richmond,” he said. Hamir, an agrologist who regularly helps out at the Richmond Food Bank, recognizes food security issues can be overwhelming. But simple changes can make a difference, she said.

“Small changes in the way that they approach food can have such a huge impact—whether it’s buying your potatoes from a local farmer versus having the imported potatoes, or eating more squash.”

The Richmond Food Security Task Force previously organized events around World Food Day, has hosted a local food bus tour and supported The Richmond Review’s 10-Mile Diet last year.

The task force has also floated a new plan for the Garden City lands—one that incorporates community gardens, small farm plots, research and education.

The task force is helping plan another 10-mile diet challenge this year and is working on a map that will indicate where locally-grown produce can be purchased. Hamir said Steveston is talking about hosting a farmer’s market this year, and the task force is hoping to start a “pocket market”—a smaller, mobile market that can be set up in a parking lot.

“Something that really allows local people who probably don’t have access to cars, who can’t get out to local farms, bringing all that produce to the city centre and hopefully East Richmond as well.” She hopes this weekend’s dialogue will also bring new energy and new ideas to the task force.

Sponsoring the dialogue is the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, which in 2006 sponsored a food system analysis of Richmond and found that Richmond is “food insecure.” The report cited a lack of community gardens, decreases in local food production and loss of farmland as all issues.

Food for All dialogue

- Organized by the Richmond Food Security Task Force, the dialogue will feature a diverse array of workshops and a locally-sourced lunch.
- Speakers include Kim Sutherland of the Ministry of Agriculture, Richmond School District superintendent Bruce Beirsto, Ione Smith from Smart Growth BC, local farmers Carol Southgate and Bill Jones and chef Ian Lai from the Terra Nova Schoolyard Project.
- Friday, Feb. 29, and Saturday, March 1, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Gilmore Park United Church, 8060 No. 1 Rd.
- Cost is \$30 per day or \$50 for both days.
- More information and online registration www.richmondprc.org; or register at the Richmond Food Bank (604-271-5609).



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MARY GAZETAS: It's more than just about growing food

By Mary Gazetas - Richmond Review - March 07, 4008

Last Saturday night a group of us gathered to celebrate that we had pulled off a successful two-day conference that focused on the importance of sustainable local food systems.

When we sat down at the end of a long day we were more than a tired happy, we were thrilled. An audience of at least 200 people, young and old, showed up at the Friday and Saturday event who were thirsty to learn more about “food for all,” which is a movement that’s building momentum around the world. One of our goals was to energize a community, and with the help of many generous people, we did it.

Inside the roomy Gilmore United Church on No. 1 Road one couldn’t help being aware of a nice buzz. Smells of freshly baked goodies, homemade soup, and an impressive array of other locally sourced foods brought a variety of participants to the table.

People talked, listened, networked, and exchanged ideas. In the afternoons everyone had a chance to contribute toward a vision that was being drawn on the wall of how to make Richmond more food secure. Some of the reoccurring themes included challenges about how to increase the numbers of small farms; who would take the place of aging farmers; sustain the knowledge and skills of growing food that valued elements concerning engagement, access and consumption.

Education becomes so important, especially in light of creating opportunities to bring urban people into agriculture. And even more important—to create the potential of bringing urban agriculture into the “heart of the community.”

I kept hearing references from the majority of speakers that growing food is way more than just being about growing food. This is something I am very aware of because of my experiences in the last few years related to the Sharing Farm Project. Many people have sought us out because of a disturbing disconnect to where food comes from and how it is grown. Having the land protected, and available, to do community-based farming has become a precious resource.

Then on Wednesday, seven of us were lucky to visit the Providence Farm in the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island.

I was looking forward to leaving Richmond for a day—leaving thoughts behind about unfinished business to do with the conference, and the Garden City Lands. The idea to see this farm was introduced several months ago by Coun. Linda Barnes and Dave MacDonald who is the executive director of the Pathways Club.

We were toured slowly through an active 63-acre farm which is part of a larger 400-acre property that this “therapeutic community” leases from the Sisters of St. Ann. This is a place where many men and women come to work the land and grow food together in a climate that encourages healing and recovery. This is a place that again is about something that transgresses beyond a farm that grows food on a one-dimensional level.

Later on our way home on the Queen of Alberni, as we sailed south on a calm sea, we talked in an animated fashion about possibilities of how to start some partnerships with the Pathway Club members, and the city, at the Sharing Farm. And maybe elsewhere.

My thoughts returned to what I had heard at the food conference in that people here in Richmond have to take control of available lands to grow food for the future. And that more people are now recognizing that there is a different kind of “community need”—one which also recognizes the sanctity of keeping such lands available to grow more of our own food. And that they’re not talking about a distant future—the future has arrived and it is now.

Mary Gazetas is a director of the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project, instructor, artist and writer. Her column appears every weekend in The Richmond Review.

Find this article at:

http://www.bclocalnews.com/richmond_southdelta/richmondreview/community/16396951.html

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Sunday » March
30 » 2008

Richmond to host food security forum

Tracy Sherlock

Richmond News

Thursday, February 21, 2008

Imagine long lineups to get into the grocery store, empty shelves once you're inside and \$20 loaves of bread.

That could be the future of food, given increasing oil prices, global warming and the rise of biofuels, which increases the price of staples such as wheat or corn, warns Richmond agrologist Arzeena Hamir.

Will there be enough accessible, affordable food here in our "Garden City" over the next decades?

Those are some of the questions that will be examined at Food For All Dialogue, a food security conference being organized in Richmond Feb. 29 and March 1 by the Richmond Food Security Task Force.

"The predictions are really quite dire," said Hamir. "These are predictions from agrologists, who tend to be quite conservative as far as fear mongering, but it is quite alarming what's happening."

Hamir, like some scientists, says a food crisis may be coming in the near future.

"(The price of food) will be going up because right now the majority of our food is coming from the U.S. which is going to be going through its own issues with climate change," Hamir said.

"It's predicted that by 2015, which is not that far away, California will be a net importer of food because of the drought, and because of climate issues. On top of that you put peak oil, which is driving up the price of transporting food.

"It really brings to mind how critical local food is going to be in keeping the price of food down and keeping food accessible to the average person."

The Food For All Dialogue forum is intended for food and land professionals, as well as community members interested in increasing food security for themselves and the region. It will feature workshops and speakers on topics ranging from growing your own vegetables on your balcony to the global food issues. Lunch is included, and organizers plan to make salads, soups and sandwiches from locally grown products.

The keynote speaker for the Friday session is Kim Sutherland.

"She'll be talking about the challenge of food in an urban area like Richmond," Hamir said.

She's a farmer herself from Manitoba - at least for now - but she predicts her own farm will be barren in the next 20 years for lack of water due to climate change.

Richmond is currently in the midst of a debate on the future of the Garden City lands - 136

acres in the heart of the city that have never been farmed.

"Like me, (Sutherland) feels that every single farmable piece of land needs to be saved because we will be needing it, for sure, in the future," Hamir said. "We have fabulous soil - even under Garden City lands. Don't let anyone tell you that's not farmable - all the agrologists I've talked to have said that it's farmable land."

Workshops at the upcoming forum are geared towards both professionals and residents.

"Saturday especially is very much (about) what people can do themselves about food security," Hamir said. "For instance, we have a workshop on growing food on your balcony - you can be in a highrise, growing food."

Another workshop is about how to grow food in your own backyard and make money doing it. The presenter is Ward Teulon, a Vancouver resident who grows organic food in backyards, provides the food to the homeowners and then sells the surplus food at the East Vancouver Farmers' Market.

"He actually makes a great living doing this," Hamir said. "He bicycles wherever he goes, so he's calling his food zero carbon food."

"I'd love to have someone hear that and say 'Hey we could be doing that in Richmond.'"

Herb Barbolet, a founding member of FarmFolk/CityFolk, will be presenting a seminar on global and local perspectives and how Richmond fits into the big picture.

The conference is about half full, but Hamir would like to see more community members register. Event organizers are also looking for volunteers, who get free admission.

Admission is \$30 for one day, or \$50 for both. Register online at www.richmondprc.org, or pick up a registration form at the Richmond Food Bank at 100 - 5800 Cedarbridge Way. For more information call 778-885-6457 or e-mail foodsecurity@richmondprc.org.

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CLOSE WINDOW

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Appendix IV

Evaluation Summary

What did we do right?

- Invited the right speakers, included a Saturday as an event day
- A wonderful variety of speakers and topics
- It's all great; excellent location
- Great people sharing about things I never knew before this weekend
- Giving volunteers an opportunity to attend workshops
- Efficient registration / Interesting sessions / Good food!
- This was a marvellous conference – we should have this every year
- Great speakers & topics! Great venue! Great FOOD!
- Everything! Local food, inspiring speakers, being informed on local community programs and activities. Great venue. Getting to share ideas with other like-minded people
- The big map of Richmond land was very effective and interesting
- The coleslaw was especially yummy!!!!

What should have been better?

- A Saturday and Sunday event – I had school and missed the first day
- No complaints whatsoever
- It was a little hard choosing between speakers that were at the same time
- Maybe only two session choices at each time (debateable of course). Some sessions did not stay on time.
- Maps on where to buy local food
- More handouts
- More time for questions and answers in workshops
- There was a long time between lunch and café
- Mic in sanctuary muffled voices – glad some speakers ignored it
- Coffee available at lunch
- Because of 3 speakers/group – really important to keep to time frame established

What was a waste of your time?

- None of it
- Nothing
- Having keynote speakers also doing a workshop leads to repetitive information (not really a waste of time)
- Information is never a waste of time

How have these sessions helped you to understand the meaning and importance of food security?

- Helped me by hearing the views from others
- Local facts were very interesting
- Basic learning – useful info leading to action
- Given us stats, issues and strategies
- Made me aware that my choices impact the food system
- They showed how important it is for all people to have access to organic, healthy, nutrient filled food
- We are all connected
- I realize I have some responsibility to grow some food
- Helped a lot – found out who's involved – how to grow – where local farms are
- Has always been important but good to connect with like-minded others
- Today I learned how challenging it is and the importance of "process" thru civic departments to develop community gardens. And how our history (over 5000 years) that have contributed to the bureaucracy that exists within our government which adds to the challenge of food security
- What more I can do myself to promote changes in behaviour, model to others, make a difference

How have these sessions helped you to understand how you can make yourself more food secure?

- Composting strategies and the interest groups
- Get involved!
- Realized I have been doing many things already
- Tips on growing food in small spaces (my balcony)
- Buying locally
- By getting informed and encouraging me to get active in my community
- Education at a young age is key
- I can help by buying local food to support local farms
- Found out what can grow in Richmond & how to do the 100/10 mile diet
- Connection with resources that will enable greater involvement
- The MOBY was a great example of how to create something beautiful

How have these sessions helped you to identify ways to make your community more food secure?

- Know who is involved
- The community needs to protect our farms, especially the small acreage
- Get involved!
- Made us aware of farmers' issues – lack of good drainage, price of land
- Not sure – we need to reach the Asian population.
- More info in Mandarin and Cantonese
- Yes – great place to network – my head is spinning with ideas
- I am inspired to create more opportunities for people to eat meals communally
- Fight to keep lands in the ALR
- They have shown me local sources of food I'd not been aware of
- Encouragement for farmers needed – irrigation and drainage problems
- Information sharing and resource sharing
- Go to Facebook & sign up to do the 10-mile diet. Get involved with issues such as Garden City Lands and having enough land to grow food for Richmond

Would you come to another session like this Food for All Dialogues?

Yes – 73 Maybe – 2 No – 0 Not answered - 2

Please share any comments you have about this weekend or about food security

- It would be very helpful to have a directory of local food sources. An incomplete list would be better than no list at all
- Great start to an important issue
- Thank you for this weekend; most informative and inspiring!
- I only came to volunteer in the kitchen and got to enjoy a couple of workshops. As a single mom of 2 my eyes have been opened about another option to teach my children. Thank you!
- Thanks you! Impressive event. Marvellous coordination! Thank you Arzeena! Thank you Task Force!
- Please keep this community event going as this is much needed in Richmond
- Thank you all for a great educational, networking experience. Did a general invitation go out to our teachers in Richmond Schools?? Public and private?? Future workshop for "PAC's" on getting a school garden
- Keep up the good work! "Plant On!"

- Perhaps a planner re: land use / a speaker on climate change and it's impact on growing food
- Great to see so much interest & support
- A fabulous weekend with some great opportunities to meet people & make connections & see who is involved in the many groups and individuals involved in food security. Thank you!
- World Café was super – great way to share ideas
- Great conference. Audience got informed on many projects and organizations that exist in Richmond. We are leading the Lower Mainland in examples of what can be done or is already happening. I leave feeling very hopeful on our future and in peoples power to change the mind set