



**Capital Families Association**  
West Shore Child, Youth and Family Services Centre  
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## Report and Recommendations of the February 23 **GO LOCAL** Food Summit

On Saturday, February 23, 2008, eighty-three people gathered to share their stories, hopes and ideas for a sustainable food future. The **GO LOCAL Food Summit** enabled community members an opportunity to help create the **GO LOCAL West Shore Food Strategy**, an action plan for presentation to West Shore municipal councils.

A series of speakers set the stage for inspired input offered by community members representing a diversity of local interests, all eager to roll up their sleeves to find new (and old) ways to build healthier and more sustainable communities – an integrated approach involving the whole community in helping define local solutions to our growing food security challenge.

The day's speakers included:

- **Tom Henry**, of Lamb's Leap Farm in Metchosin and editor of *Small Farm Canada Magazine*, spoke about the challenges facing small growers on the Island today, as well as the prospects for improving their situation through increased local support for farmers and increased demand for their farm products.
- **Ken Hueston**, chef/owner of Smoken Bones Cookshack and President of the celebrated Island Chefs' Collaborative, took the audience on a passionate odyssey outlining how he has committed himself, and his business, to marketing and **profiting by promoting delicious local cuisine** (Ken has been nominated as BC Chamber of Commerce Young Entrepreneur of the Year).
- **Carolyn Herriot**, local gardening guru (The Garden Path Centre) and champion of 'The New Victory Garden' at Glendale Gardens, spoke about the need that climate change presents for growing food in our own backyards and community gardens... and reminding us that **over 50 varieties of winter veggies can be grown in our climate**, and that we CAN feed ourselves!
- **Sharon Rempel**, nationally-recognized innovator and leader in the grassroots organic and heritage seed movements, underscored the deep connections most of us have to foods we eat, and how by reestablishing our cultural connections to food (*Putting Culture Back Into Agriculture*), we can begin to **find the path back to local agricultural self-sufficiency**.
- **Kathryn Kusyszyn** of *Sooke CHI* (Community Health Initiative) outlined the many and varied food-related activities our very active neighbours in Sooke are undertaking through many community projects involving food, health and local culture.

### **GO LOCAL Food Summit** Participants included:

Farmers | Educators  
Chefs | Restaurant/Café Owners  
Politicians | Community Leaders  
Persons With Disabilities  
Business | Youth  
Retired Persons | Parents  
Marketing Specialists  
Environmentalists

Break-out sessions provided Summit participants an opportunity to build on the powerful stories shared by our speakers. Input and ideas served to strongly reaffirm input from various public consultations over the past 18 months, and reinforced the **community's resolve to take action on local food security**.

Participant input and ideas fell into four basic categories (following page) and informed the recommendations contained in the proposed **GO LOCAL West Shore Food Strategy** (attached).

### **Next Steps**

Please review the attached proposed **GO LOCAL West Shore Food Strategy**, and **provide your comments via email to one of the project organizers listed below by Friday, March 28, 2008**. The proposed strategy document will be presented to the five West Shore municipalities during April.

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The Food Summit was made possible by the generous support of the **Capital Families Association**, **VIHA Community Food Action Initiative**, **Van City** and the **West Shore Chamber of Commerce**.

## Education

- Highlight the value of local food – economic, social and environmental
- Teach how to preserve local food to extend availability
- Teach the public about the true cost of "cheap food"
- Community education about farming (including beekeeping)
- Producers educating consumers on the various uses of their products
- More education on gardening techniques for small spaces
- Schools having their own gardens
- Taking kids through the entire food growing process – seed to food

## Marketing

- Make access to markets easier by publishing bus routes to markets (on the BC Transit website)
- Have more "pocket markets" in the West Shore
- Produce a farm guide for the West Shore
- Make distribution to institutions easier
- Make local markets as fun as possible, with entertainment
- Have farm tours for kids and families
- Target your market
- Collaborate on advertising
- Celebrate specialized products

## Policy development

- Enhance political commitment to the ALR
- Coordinate policies in different municipalities
- Invest in real information and research
- Introduce mobility to business licences
- Public investment in "pilot" projects
- Encourage partnerships within the local system

## Farm support

- Matching people with land to people who garden
- Swapping labour for food
- Urban SPIN (small plot intensive) farming, where land is rented from home-owners to grow food
- Farm apprenticeship program – area teens work on farms over the summer, with subsidized wages
- Local bylaws supporting farming

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our speakers, participants and everyone who took part in this important session. Special thanks to Rev. Ken Gray and the generous members of the Anglican Church of the Advent, who again welcomed a community gathering in support of West Shore food security and sustainable community living, and to our group facilitators. Special thanks also to Kelly Sturmeay who prepared us a wonderful "GO LOCAL" lunch, and to Royal Bay Bakery for the lunch buns and yummy coffee treats!

## Organizers of the GO LOCAL Food Summit

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