

Farm to Cafeteria

BC Communities
Share Paths to
Success



Content

Introduction	1
Farm to Cafeteria Sprouts in BC	2
Goals, Objectives, and Models	4
Stories From The Field	9
Lessons Learned	28

Electronic versions of
Farm to Cafeteria: BC Communities Share Paths to Success
may be downloaded from:

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Farm to Cafeteria programs connect farm to fork

- bringing healthy, local, and sustainably produced foods into public agencies. Farm to School, Farm to Campus, and Farm to Hospital are all Farm to Cafeteria programs. These programs capture the imagination because they have the potential to address significant societal concerns - from the diet and health of school children and hospital patients, to rising food costs, and the loss of local farms. While the full impact of the programs remains to be seen, early studies reveal many benefits. Students are eating more fresh fruits and vegetables and a greater variety of foods. Food service staff state there is less food waste when local food arrives at the patient's bedside. Farmers are diversifying their market and enjoying a modest reliable infusion of income. Nearly everyone who gets involved expresses a greater sense of connectivity and belonging.

Farm to Cafeteria programs have been the focus of much media attention. The public, practitioners, and policy makers alike are clamouring to hear more. They seek to understand the various program models, how they work, their strengths, their challenges, and their impact. This document has been created in response to this demand. Following a brief overview of Farm to Cafeteria history and concepts, 5 "stories from the field" are shared. These stories are drawn from every corner of British Columbia illuminating the many paths communities have travelled to bring healthy, local, and sustainable foods to students, patients, and staff.

The Farm to School Salad Bar is one of the most popular Farm to School models. For approximately \$3.00/meal school children feast on a salad bar filled with fresh local fare including a choice of 6 vegetables, 3 fruits, 1 protein and 1 grain. Tried and true this program has been launched and sustained in dozens of communities - urban, rural, and aboriginal alike



Farm to Cafeteria Sprouts in BC

Efforts to bring local foods into public agencies

can be traced back for nearly a century - when farms and gardens were commonplace on school and hospital grounds. Activity on this front has come in waves in response to a variety of health, food, and farming concerns. Between 2007 and 2010, the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC) initiated a new wave in the Farm to Cafeteria movement. Working collaboratively with many partners the Association championed the launch of more than a dozen Farm to School Salad Bar Programs. Since then more than 60 Farm to School, Farm to Campus, and Farm to Hospital programs have emerged in communities across the province. Today BC has one of the most extensive Farm to Cafeteria networks in all of Canada.

Victory Gardens were created in World War I and again in World War II to reduce pressure on the public food supply brought on by the war effort.





IT TAKES A COMMUNITY

Many public agencies, organizations, and individuals have contributed to BC's Farm to Cafeteria movement. For example, the Chetwynd District Hospital became one of the first hospitals to grow foods on the premises for a Farm to School program at a nearby high school; the University of Victoria instituted local food procurement practices raising the amount of local foods served on premises to 48%; and British Columbia's Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation (BCAITCF) expanded their Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program to ensure fresh BC fruits and vegetables now reach more than 1300 schools. While there have been many partners in the Farm to Cafeteria movement, the BC Ministry of Health and regional health authorities have been strong, steadfast pillars of support.

All Farm to Cafeteria programs share a common goal...

To increase access to healthy, local, and sustainably grown foods in public agencies.

And all *aspire* to a common set of objectives...

- ❖ To close the distance between farm and fork.
- ❖ To support the production, processing and delivery of healthy, local foods to public agencies using sustainable practices.
- ❖ To increase the amount of healthy, local, and sustainably produced foods purchased by public agencies and to increase the consumption of these foods.
- ❖ To improve knowledge about local foods, the local food system, and healthy eating.
- ❖ To enhance skills around growing, producing, preserving, purchasing and serving healthy, local and sustainably produced foods.
- ❖ To contribute to the health of the environment.
- ❖ To adopt supportive food policy.

While programs aspire to the set of objectives - they may focus on one or two initially and bring in the others as context and capacity permits.

What do we mean by local? Local foods are foods grown, harvested, and processed as close to the public agency as possible. Local farms are those farms located as near to the public agency as possible.

What do we mean by sustainable? When we are speaking about food, sustainable means produced, processed, and delivered in ways that do not compromise the health and well being of our people, place, or planet for future generations.

There is no cookie cutter approach to the way programs are operationalized. Trusting in the wisdom of the community to come up with a model to meet their unique contexts and needs has been key to the success and sustainability of programs. The result has been the development of many models - each arguably a best practice in itself. Programs differ primarily in the way food is distributed from the farm to the public agency AND they differ in the way the foods are served once they arrive at the agency.

FUNDING

While Farm to Cafeteria programs are designed to be self-financing, almost all require funding for initial planning and/or start up. As a rule of thumb, plan to spend at least \$1,500 in the planning phase of the program (for promotional materials, facilitation, and meetings). In the implementation phase, plan to spend a minimum of \$5,000 (primarily for kitchen equipment and honorariums). Current funding sources are posted on the BC's Farm to School website www.phabc.org/farmtoschool, and on the national Farm to Cafeteria Canada website www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca.

Food Distribution Models

Onsite Farm

In this model, food is grown and harvested on the premises of the public agency.



Direct Farm Relationship

In this model, an agreement is established between farm and public agency. The farmer agrees to produce a certain volume and type of foods which are purchased by and delivered to the agency.



Cooperative of Farms

In this model, an aggregate of farmers come together to provide additional volume and variety of local foods that are purchased by the public agency.



Farm to Central Kitchen

In this model, foods are delivered to a central kitchen where they are diced and sliced and delivered to one or more public agencies.



Farm to Food Distributor

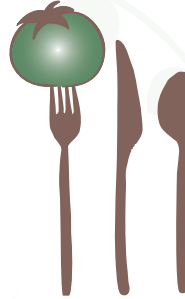
In this model, the public agency institutes local food procurement policies requiring the food distributors to provide a specific amount of local foods during the year. Such policies define local and they may even list the local farms they wish the distributor to use.



Food Service Models

Farm to Salad Bar

In this model, fresh local foods are delivered to the public agency and prepared on-site and served in a portable salad bar unit.



Farm to Meal Service

In this model, foods from nearby farms are integrated into the meal service within the public agency. The meal service may be a breakfast, lunch, and/or diner service and it may offer hot or cold foods.



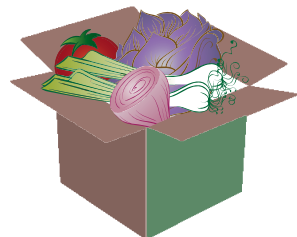
Farm to Snack Program/Vending Machine

Local and sustainably produced foods are served as part of a snack program in the public agency.



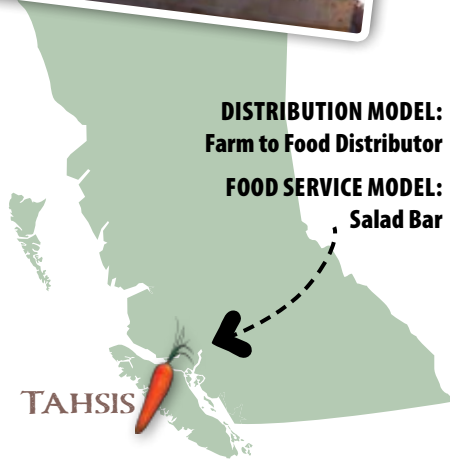
Farm to Fundraiser

In this model, foods from local farms are delivered to the public agency where they are boxed up and sold to the community in order to raise funds.



What to do When There is no Farm? The Tahsis Farm to School Story

The community garden in Tahsis is growing more than greens -it is growing community.



Tahsis is a remote place where the notion of a Farm to School program seems a little far fetched - given there is no farm in the community. Most food arrives in Tahsis the same way visitors do - by vehicle along a long winding mountain pass.

Stories From The Field

“Take the ferry from Horseshoe Bay to Departure Bay. Then travel 2 hours north of Nanaimo to Campbell River. Then head west for about an hour to Gold River. Take the logging road across the mountain pass for another hour or so. At the end of the road you find the village of Tahsis. When you get there you’ll understand why locals wear T-shirt’s that read

“I survived the road to Tahsis.”

Joanne Bays, National Manager Farm to Cafeteria

Understandably, foods - particularly delicate items like produce - can get a little bumped and bruised in the process. And the longer the distance between farm and fork the greater the chance the produce will be diminished in quality and the greater the chance it will be higher in price.

Thus access to high quality affordable fruits and vegetables and was a driving force behind the creation of their Farm to School program. It was also one of the reasons the community was chosen to be a part of the BC Ministry of Health’s Produce Availability Initiative in remote communities.

The BC Ministry of Health’s Produce Availability Initiative was a 3 year initiative (2009-2012) led by the BC Ministry of Health in partnership with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada to improve the year-round availability and quality of produce in remote BC communities.



The Farm

Where to start when there is no farm? The community of Tahsis decided to take a three-pronged approach. First, they worked with the current food system - approaching the local grocery store to organize the purchase of more BC and island grown foods. Second they explored alternatives to the current system - sleuthing out the closest farms and organizing the best trade routes. At times this meant ordering foods online from a grocery outlet supplying foods from island farms and then corralling a local to pick it up on weekly trips to the city. Third, they took a long hard look at the future and the capacity of the community to feed itself. Then they rolled up their sleeves to build their own garden and greenhouse in order to grow their own gardeners, greens, and local food economy.



Captain Meares Elementary and Secondary School offers a Farm to School Salad Bar program including fresh greens from the community garden.

Stories From The Field

The School

In the fall of 2010, despite the fact that the community lacked a farm and the new garden had not yet produced a crop, Scott Cobbe, the principal of Captain Meares Elementary and Secondary School took up the challenge to start up a Farm to School Salad Bar program when approached by the community. The plan seemed straight forward - find a coordinator and volunteers, source as much local, island, and BC foods as possible, redesign the school kitchen, and offer children a soup and salad bar program twice per week - keeping the price of meals affordable for every child.



For Every Speed Bump A Solution

While the Farm to School Salad Bar concept seemed simple enough, implementation came with a number of speed bumps - most related to the timing and the context. However one of the delightful aspects of Tahsis is a growing core group of “foodies”. Foodies are sustainable food system advocates who are problem solvers - they are resourceful and have a “can do attitude”. For every problem there was a solution . . .

- ❖ No Soil? Truck it in from nearby Zeballos. Start a composting program.
- ❖ No Farm? Build a green house and a community garden.
- ❖ No local food? Use island or BC foods until a more local supply is established.
- ❖ No Coordinator? Find a chef or a gardener - someone passionate about food! Raise enough money to pay the coordinator a small stipend a week for at least 6 months. Open the program up to the community to raise additional funds. Host annual fundraisers. Look for ways to integrate the program into school and community food programs already underway.
- ❖ Limited buy in from teachers? Invite community members into the school to teach students basic food safety, food preparation, food preservation, and food composting skills. Get students to put skills into practice in the garden, the greenhouse, and the kitchen.
- ❖ Limited volunteers? Look for elders, and students. Bring newcomers to meetings. Check neighboring villages and invite them to participate.

TAHISIS

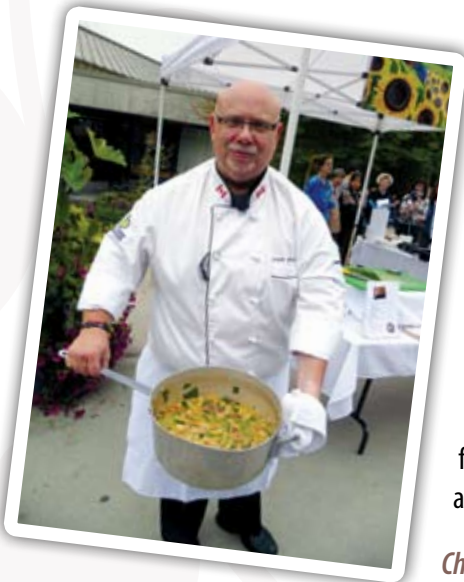
Tahsis Program Contact

Silvie Keen, Farm to School Coordinator, silvie@nootkagold.com

From Farm to Campus: UBC Digs In!

DISTRIBUTION MODEL:
Onsite Farm &
Farm to Food Distributor

FOOD SERVICE MODEL:
Meal Service



Steve Golob has been a chef at Vanier Hall at the University of British Columbia for 15 years and is passionate about local, fresh, healthy food. Vanier Hall serves over 2500 students per day, plus staff and faculty. When a student spends, on average, \$5.90 for one of Steve's meals, they're in for a treat! With a local food procurement strategy in place, Vanier Hall serves the freshest, healthiest and most delicious local food available, including fresh fruits and vegetables, local pork and poultry, and Ocean Wise certified seafood.

Chef Steve Golob prepares a sumptuous soup.

IMAGINE IF ALL CAFETERIAS HAD THIS TYPE OF MENU!

Students' Favourite Menu Items from Vanier Hall:

- ❖ Local Fresh Roasted Vegetable Soup
- ❖ Roasted Fennel Tomato Sauce with Multigrain Pasta
- ❖ Wild BC Cream of Mushroom Soup
- ❖ Wild BC Grilled Salmon with fresh BC flat leaf parsley, BC white wine and lemon
- ❖ Cream of Cinderella Pumpkin Soup
- ❖ Roasted Chicken with local, fresh rosemary olive oil and fresh local basil
- ❖ Potato, Swiss Chard, and White Bean Soup
- ❖ Tomato, Local Zucchini and Spinach Soup
- ❖ Fresh Salmon Chowder
- ❖ Grilled Chicken Breast with BC red wine sauce and wild BC mushrooms
- ❖ Stir Fry with local green and yellow beans, oyster mushrooms, garlic, ginger, and local tofu
- ❖ Smoked Tofu with roasted BC nugget potatoes and Swiss chard

VANCOUVER

Stories From The Field

How local can you go? Try the UBC Farm on Campus.

Five years ago, Steve began purchasing produce from UBC's on-campus farm. According to Steve, "It would be criminal for a chef not to use the best produce available!" In this case, the best comes from UBC Farm, sent to him once a week for use in Vanier Hall's specialty dishes. Between August and November 2011, Vanier spent \$4,300 on foods from UBC Farm – an increase of 73% from the previous year. However, UBC Farm is primarily a research centre, and therefore does not always have produce available. When Steve looks elsewhere for produce, his priorities are "fresh, local, and if possible, organic".

UBC Food Services, on the whole, spends 50% of its total procurement budget on locally raised or processed foods – within 150 miles of campus – and \$300,000 on organic produce. Regular purchases include wild salmon, nugget potatoes, beets, Chilliwack honey vinegars, seven varieties of organic apples, and BC wines. Most local and organic produce are distributed by Discovery Organics in Vancouver, or Steve picks them up personally at the local farmers market.

Mouth-watering dishes can be made with fresh, local, and organic ingredients



More than Food Preparation: A Vision for Farm to Cafeteria at Vanier Hall

Through the provision of delicious local food, Steve hopes to show the student population that local fresh produce is better than highly processed foods. As Steve says, “Food is grown on a farm – not on a shelf!” Fresh local foods not only taste better, but have health benefits that far out-weigh the cost.

In addition, Steve aims to expand food literacy in the student population through cooking demonstrations, presentations, and possibly a future cookbook. Steve’s energy and excitement for local food is contagious, and UBC students are taking advantage of the opportunity to learn how to cook their favourite recipes at home.

Cultivating Champions

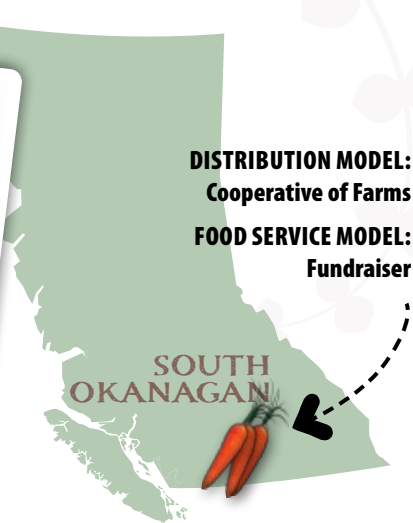
Steve’s vision for Farm to Cafeteria extends beyond the walls of Vanier Hall. He sees Farm to Cafeteria as an avenue to fight hunger in the classroom, to prevent diabetes in youth, and to improve the health of our students. He encourages other chefs and cooks to join the program, but recognizes that there are challenges to be overcome. According to Steve, consistent financial support from all levels of government is required to ensure all schools have the equipment, training, and space needed to prepare proper meals. To overcome these barriers, Steve stresses the need for ‘internal champions’ to advocate for support, commitment and guidance from governments and institutions alike. He would know – he is the perfect example of what this type of advocate can accomplish!

UBC Program Contact

Steve Golob, Chef, Vanier Place Residence, UBC, steveg@exchange.ubc.ca

VANCOUVER

Farm to School Fundraiser: Local Food in the Bag



Founded in March 2011 as a partnership between 2 Okanagan businesses, the Farm Bag Fundraiser is a healthy alternative that supports regional food security and community resilience. Through the program, participating schools and community organizations pre-sell monthly 20lb 'Farm Bags' of locally grown produce, earning 20% commission for every Farm Bag they sell. The program strategically operates from October to April – aligning with the school year and supporting local farmers over the typically 'quiet' winter season.

“The Farm Bag Fundraiser is a win-win-win program. It supports local farmers, raises funds for schools, and it provides students and their families increased access to fresh, local, and sustainably foods.”

Jennifer Vincent, Co-Founder, Farm Bag Fundraiser

Doing The Math

11 Fundraising Groups: 6 schools, 4 community groups and 1 college participated in the 2011/12 pilot program. On average, each group sold 27.5 bags each month over the 7-month program.

19 Farms: The Farm Bag Fundraiser purchased from a total of 19 farms in the past year. Procurement policies prioritize organic as well as hyper-local produce. As availability over the winter months wanes, some products are purchased from the Lower Mainland. The Farm Bag is 100% BC produce.

Revenue: 34,020 lbs of produce (1,701 bags) sold, which equates to \$25,515 of direct income to local farmers and a total of \$8,543 in raised funds.

Potential: Accessing a greater number of schools could positively impact farmer revenue and school funding in a very significant way.

SUPPORTING FOOD LITERACY

The Farm Bag model is a great enabler:

- ❖ It encourages exploration of new foods.
- ❖ It supports new cooking methods.
- ❖ It provides easy recipes and useful tips on food storage and preparation.
- ❖ It highlights the seasonality of food, and the abundance of the region.

Growing Forward

The first year of the Farm Bag program served as a pilot year, testing the farm distribution-through-fundraising model. Little Green Book, a network supporting collaborative projects, provides the administrative support and Localmotive, an organic delivery service, handles procurement and distribution. Moving forward, the Farm Bag team believes there is great potential to expand the model throughout BC and even across Canada, using a custom-built online platform. Future plans include mapping the re-investment of the raised funds, creating a visual representation of how local food has helped to build community resilience.

“I firmly believe that supporting local business is a path to building community resilience, both economically and socially. By bringing the Farm Bag Fundraiser to schools and community groups we are enabling the next generation to develop a love for fresh and seasonal produce. We’re bringing affordable food to families and building a cycle of learning to customers as they endeavour to use items they might not normally purchase. We’re also supporting farmers over the winter months, providing fair prices for their produce. Finally, we’re building awareness and pride about what is grown in our own regions.”

Jennifer Vincent, Co-Founder, Farm Bag Fundraiser

South Okanagan Program Contact

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Farm to Health Care: Farmers on 57th Juice it UP



DISTRIBUTION MODEL:
Onsite Farm

FOOD SERVICE MODEL:
Snack Program



A market garden with a 30 share CSA on hospital grounds, a community garden for residents who are low income, and a raised bed garden for patients in wheelchairs. And yet, the most revolutionary part of the Farmers on 57th initiative at George Pearson Center may actually be a blender!

When the project started in 2009 near Cambie and 57th, the idea of a farm and garden on land managed by Vancouver Coastal Health was innovative enough. During its first year, Farmers on 57th concentrated on making gardening accessible to the residents of George Pearson Center, whose conditions range from spinal cord injuries to ALS to MS.

Stories From The Field



Residents at the George Pearson Centre in Vancouver BC have a special relationship with their urban farmers, - who grow, market, and serve up local foods right on the site.

The raised bed planters allow residents to garden alongside the beds at a comfortable height. Each set of two planters costs approximately \$70 and measures 4 feet by 3 feet. In addition, specialized tools were developed to allow residents to be able to reach into the beds or point to where they wanted plants transplanted or weeds taken out.

Because the planters are raised but fairly shallow, an automatic irrigation system was installed to prevent the beds from drying out. This was an investment, critical to the success of the garden, says Jen Rashleigh founder of the project.

Once the beds were installed, volunteers from patient families, the neighbourhood, and the Master Gardener program in Vancouver, family members and Farmers on 57th staff launched the Garden Club. Beets, carrots, peas, kale and lettuce were planted. Staff would even come on their day off to volunteer at garden.

“The Garden Club really helped to cut down boundaries between staff, patients & families, relates Rashleigh. “People come on their day off and relate to patients as fellow gardeners. The garden also gave families something to do and a non-medical place to meet with their loved ones”.

With all the beautiful bounty ready to harvest, Farmers on 57th came up against their next challenge: how to get the fresh, organically grown produce incorporated into the residents’ diets? With such a large percentage of residents who have difficulties swallowing, the farmers were unable to prepare fresh salads. There weren’t even cutting boards or knives on hand if they wanted to.

After some brainstorming, the idea of blending the produce was developed. Now, every Tuesday from June to September, up to 30 residents take advantage of fresh smoothies filled with both fruit and greens from the garden. Instead of using the standard thickener, the dietetic students introduced yoghurt to up the nutritional content of the smoothies.

In addition to the Garden Club program, Farmers on 57th are now maintaining a 1-acre market garden that also supplies a monthly community kitchen for residents and their caregivers. The menu is planned around what’s in season and the farmers pay their “rent” for using the lands by supplying this kitchen.

George Pearson Centre program Contact

Jen Rashleigh, Project Coordinator
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HAIDA GWAI



DISTRIBUTION MODEL:
Direct Farm Relationship

FOOD SERVICE MODEL:
Meal Service & Salad Bar

It Takes An Island: Growing Local in Haida Gwaii



*Riverworks
Farm, Tlell, BC*

A remote group of islands just south of the Alaskan panhandle and 100 km off the northern coast of British Columbia seems an unlikely location for Farm to Cafeteria - yet an amazing cluster of programs flourish there. Farm to School, and Farm to Hospital programs seeded in the fall of 2010 are taking root in Haida Gwaii thanks to start up funding from the Produce Availability Initiative. Great strides have been made to realize a common vision - a strong, sustainable island food system.

Equipped with funds earmarked for redesigning school kitchens and dining areas, building gardens and greenhouses, and purchasing school and farm equipment - this island community has established and linked 3 different farms with 8 different public agencies.

Three Farms

Three farms provide foods to local hospitals, health care centres, and schools - Riverworks Farm, Sangam River Farm and the Lavoie Family Farm. Each is unique with respect to their history, their size, their methods of food production, and their reasons for being involved. Sangam River Farm is a small newer operation of a few acres, and the owner prefers to provide foods in small increments matching the schools food needs with his capacity to grow. Riverworks Farm is a mid sized permaculture farm that has been in operation for more than 2 decades. Farmer, Bill McKay is able to supply large quantities of organic food and is looking for a larger market. The Lavoie Family Farm is owned and operated by the close knit Mennonite community. The Lavoie

Stories From The Field



Sangan

River Farm, Masset, BC



family is making their local food available all over the island including at grocery stores, restaurants, road side stalls and the Farm to School Program. All farmers readily assert that they are not simply growing food for profit, they are engaged because they want to grow a new generation of farmers and to create an island that is food self-sufficient.

Five Greenhouses

No less than five greenhouses are in various stages of development on the island - two on farms, one at an elder's centre and two in the schoolyard (one elementary and one secondary school). While each is designed (in part) to produce foods for Farm to Cafeteria programs, each has a strong emphasis on retaining or enhancing skills and knowledge about local and/or traditional foods and the ways to produce, harvest, and preserve those foods. While George M. Dawson Secondary has completely renovated their kitchen and they have integrated their F2C meal service into home economic classes, the greenhouse is viewed as a the centre piece of the Farm to cafeteria program - equal to the meal service. Teachers have integrated

greenhouse activities into science, math, English and arts curriculum.

A new outdoor classroom at George M Dawson Secondary School, Masset, BC



HAIDA
GWAII

Stories From The Field



Haida Gwaii students dish up local.



Seven Schools

One hundred percent of schools in Haida Gwaii have established a version of the farm to Cafeteria programs including - Port Clements Elementary School in Port Clements, George M. Dawson Secondary in Masset, Queen Charlotte Secondary School in Queen Charlotte, Chief Mathews Elementary School in Old Masset, Sk'Aagdaa Naay Elementary School in Skidegate, ALM Elementary Junior Secondary School in Sandspit and Tahayghen Elementary School in Masset. Each of these programs is unique in the way food is delivered from the farm to the fork, and/or in their meal service. Sk'Aagdaa Naay Elementary, Queen Charlotte Secondary, Port Clements Elementary

and George M Dawson Secondary have established a direct relationship with a farmer. Each school purchases a box a week of foods from the farmer (whatever is available and in season). Menus are built around the foods that are available. Port Clements offers a soup and sandwich lunch and George M Dawson offers a full soup and salad bar service plus a hot entrée. Chief Mathews Elementary and Tahayghen Elementary receive hot entrees and fresh salads from a culinary arts program run by Old Masset Village Office. A box of local foods is delivered to the culinary arts program once a week from two farms. Once at the school the food is dished out by teachers or student volunteers.



Imagine fresh local foods on all hospital trays.

One Hospital

Northern Health's Haida Gwaii Hospital orders a \$40.00 box of produce each week from 2 island farms. Boc choy, squash onion, and even salad greens arrive at the hospital year round. These foods are sliced, diced, and sauteed and then worked into the core menu. The result? Savoury soups and crispy salads add vibrant colours, tantalizing smells and a new crunch to patient lunch.

HAIDA GWAII: FARM TO CAFETERIA FIRSTS

One of the first clusters of Farm to Cafeteria programs that have placed equal emphasis on the redesign of the regional food system, AND the redesign of institutional food systems AND the sharing/building of community skills and knowledge in the process.

One of the first clusters of Farm to Cafeteria programs to receive funding earmarked for the purchase of farm equipment shared between farmers for the production of foods for local schools and hospitals.

One of the first School Districts to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with a farming organization to support Farm to Cafeteria programs and the sharing of resources for this purpose.

One of the first programs in BC where local foods from farms are delivered to schools by school bus.

One of the first Farm to Hospital programs in British Columbia integrating local food into patient meals.

One of the first programs where the central kitchen is an aboriginal culinary arts program located on reserve, and the schools that receive the foods are located both on reserve and off.

Finally, one of the first communities that has seen the creation of a food security funding stream from the local aboriginal funding agency - Gwaii Trust. The whirlwind of Farm to Cafeteria activity has undoubtedly been a factor in this development.

HAIDA
GWAII

Haida Gwaii program Contact

Shelly Crack, Community Nutritionist, Northern Health, shelly.crack@northernhealth.ca

Lessons Learned

Learnings

Across BC, farmers, gardeners, chefs, teachers, principals, hospital administrators, students, parents, elders - whole communities - are rolling up their sleeves to grow Farm to Cafeteria. They are at the table because they believe everyone deserves access to the highest quality of foods in the places where they live, learn, work, are healed and play. Their passion, commitment and resourcefulness are foundational to the success of BC's Farm to Cafeteria movement. These leaders offer the following insights to anyone wishing to develop a Farm to Cafeteria program.

❖ **Champions are essential.**

Some of the most successful programs are integrated into every nook and cranny of the school, university or hospital. It is important to have the head of the ship on side as you embark on your F2C adventure.

❖ **Know the food culture.**

If possible, develop your program in a place that has a culture that values and celebrates local foods.

❖ **Build it and they will come.**

Programs that involve redesigning the physical environment - providing a space to grow, harvest, process, store, serve and eat local foods (as well as compost food wastes) - have been tremendously successful.

❖ **One salad does not fit all.**

There are many ways to pet the cat. The key is a solid vision and goal and set of objectives.

❖ **Trust in the wisdom of community**

- they always have the perfect answers.

❖ **Build upon what exists.**

There is no point in heaping one more item on an already full plate. The best programs are integrated into the existing systems and programs.

❖ **Rome was not built in one day.**

Dream big, but remember small is beautiful. Allow 1-2 years to realize your vision. When planning, bear in mind that most farmers plant in the spring and harvest in the fall. As a first step, try introducing local berries into your breakfast program.

❖ **Celebrate often!**

The Future? A Carrot Within Arms Reach



*Students at
Oliver Elementary
School, Oliver, BC.*

ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT SETTING UP A FARM TO CAFETERIA PROGRAM?

- ❖ Visit PHABC's farm to School Website: www.phabc.org/farmtoschool
- ❖ Read A New Crunch in School Lunch: BC's Farm to School Guide, 2nd Edition.
- ❖ Peruse New Tools From the Shed, practical tools created by BC Farm to School enthusiasts.
- ❖ Visit the Farm to Cafeteria Canada website: www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca



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Public Health Association of BC



Healthy FamiliesBC 