

## Feasting For Change Update!

The initial inspiration for Feasting for Change grew out of a feast that T'Sou-ke First Nation hosted in May of 2007. Representatives were invited from each Nation in the southern half of Vancouver Island to share crab, halibut, salmon, and other traditional foods. Elders and youth shared stories and ideas about how to "bring people together" and "get back to the basics" by utilizing traditional knowledge and expertise held by the community knowledge keepers. It became clear that this knowledge already existed within the communities. What emerged at the end of the feast was the innovative idea to continue supporting similar feasts in different First Nation communities providing a venue for cultural exchange and empowerment where all community members were invited for the purpose of strengthening Indigenous food sovereignty, and economic networking and development.

Over time, via much community consultation and hard work, the focus of the Feasting for Change Project has become more defined. Its purpose is to engage communities around their traditional foods to encourage greater learnings, teaching, sharing and celebration of the local cultural food practices.

To view our digital story about Feasting For Change Digital Story at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KF7PNeSoGV0>

To Learn more and keep up to date see our blog here

<http://feastingforchangevi.blogspot.com/2009/07/feasting-for-change-celebrating-2008.html>

<<https://webmail.viha.ca/exchweb/bin/redirect.asp?URL=http://feastingforchangevi.blogspot.com/2009/07/feasting-for-change-celebrating-2008.html>>

Recently in Alert Bay, a feast was held at the Namgis longhouse. Nitanis wrote this about her experience at the feast.

"My family and I were happy to attend in Alert Bay a "Feasting for Change" event held in the Namgis longhouse. This was my first time being on this side of the island (first of many I hope) It was a unexpected beautiful sunny day someone's prayers were answered! We had an outdoor pit cook with beautiful garden vegetables, cedar weaving workshop, balsam bark tea teachings, fear factor, nature walk, traditional foods bingo and trivia games, and followed with an amazing feast. The all day event ended with singing and dance performance from the local Namgis school children with acknowledgements and give away. Gifts throughout the day consisted of seaweed, canned salmon and homemade local jam.mmmm. Alot was learned and shared through this event. Thank you to Jean Smith, Jamie Hunt, Fiona Devereaux, Erin Rowsell, Jen McMullen, Earl Claxton Jr., John Bradely Williams and Sharon Gorden and the people of the Namgis First Nations for all your hard work and to the cooks, fisherman, berry pickers, and those who harvested and prepared the soul food for the day. Left with a full belly and new friends".

Nitanis Desjarlais