

Vancouver Island Heritage Foodservice Co-op

Submitted by Frank Moreland

The Vancouver Island Heritage Foodservice Co-op was launched at the founding members' meeting on February 17, 2008. The co-op was incorporated in November 2007 as a multi-stakeholder co-op. The purpose of the co-op is to mobilize partners to rebuild local food systems in the Island Coastal region. The co-op's business plan includes providing distribution, warehousing, and co-packing services aimed at the 'foodservice' market channel: institutions, restaurants, etc.

The co-op brings together non-profit organizations concerned with health, food security, community economic development and climate change with farmers, alternative distributors, workers and co-packing kitchens in the Island Coastal region. The co-op mobilized 35 members in its first month of operation.

Nanaimo Foodshare, as an incorporating member of the co-op, is sponsoring a community based research project in partnership with publicly funded food purchasers on the Island, as well as developing a pilot project seasonal box program in the Nanaimo Region. Nanaimo Association for Community Living, another founding member of the co-op, is leading a workforce development strategy to introduce potential workers to farming, food processing and greenhouse work opportunities.

The co-op is open to membership from individuals and organizations that wish to support farmers to be able to increase their production by offering them premium prices and facilitating value-adding product development. The co-op will incorporate values of sustainable production, fairness for workers, stewardship of the land and ensuring wealth generated is maintained in the community.

For information, contact Frank Moreland, Project Manager.
Frank@ediblestrategies.com.