

## MPU grant announcement August 2010

Salt Spring Livestock Producers are eligible to receive a grant of at least \$100,000 towards a mobile meat processing unit if they can raise matching funds. However the grant could be as much as \$150,000 if cut and wrap services can be provided at the same location. The funding comes from the Meat Transition Assistance Program, which is managed by the BC Food Processors Association.

Salt Spring Island farmers have had to take all livestock and poultry to Vancouver Island since the 2007 changes in the meat regulations. The result has been a steady decline in red meat and poultry sold here, including Salt Spring lamb. Farmers expect that with licensed services available locally meat production including poultry will soon be restored to the 2004 level and eventually surpass it if the demand for local food continues.

Mobile meat processing is not a new idea. This has been operating successfully in the San Juan Islands since 2001 with great success. Bruce Dunlop of Lopez Island Farm drives his mobile unit to "docking stations" on many farms on neighbouring islands and can process 20 sheep a day for 2 consecutive days before having to unload them for longer term refrigerated storage. Salt Spring farmers plan to have only one docking station, and would like butchering to be on the same site.

The applicant for the grant was the Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance, the group that was created to oversee the implementation of the Area Farm Plan. Fundraising will begin shortly with tax receipts issued if requested at the time of the donation. Pledges may be made by e-mailing [HYPERLINK "mailto:chocolate-beach@shaw.ca" \o "blocked::mailto:chocolate-beach@shaw.ca" chocolate-beach@shaw.ca](mailto:chocolate-beach@shaw.ca) . For further information about the status of this project contact Margaret Thomson at [HYPERLINK "mailto:windrush@telus.net" \o "blocked::mailto:windrush@telus.net" windrush@telus.net](mailto:windrush@telus.net) or 250 537-4669.