

DRAFT SSIAA New release
January 24, 2011

Local Food Production gets a boost from VANCITY Credit Union.

The Salt Spring Agricultural Alliance has been awarded \$50,000 from Vancity's enviroFund to help establish the infrastructure necessary to increase local food production on Salt Spring Island. The project is a community initiative that will develop the three facilities identified by the SSI Area Farm Plan as key elements for the revitalization of agriculture and local food production on the island. These are the mobile abattoir; a produce processing, storage and distribution centre; and a central community composting facility.

Knowing where your food comes from will soon become a whole lot easier. If all goes according to plan it is expected that the abattoir will be up and running by the end of 2011. Plans for the fruit and vegetable processing, distribution and storage centre are just starting to be developed in consultation with potential users of the facility. We can expect more announcements within a few months. Also in 2011 a community composting pilot project will start up.

“While the obvious advantages are tastier fruit and vegetables and increased economic viability of small family farms, a local, sustainable food system offers many additional benefits to our community” says Anne Macey, Chair of the SSI Agricultural Alliance. “Produce picked in peak condition optimizes both taste and nutrition. Increased local food production, much of it organically grown, helps us meet our greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. It makes Salt Spring more self reliant and less dependent on food imports. A local abattoir will reduce travel stress for the livestock and make it more viable for farmers to raise poultry and lamb. Community scale composting recycles green and wood waste materials into a valuable farm input and reduces air pollution from burning. The project will strengthen our local economy and make our island community more resilient”.

The SSI Alliance extends its thanks to Vancity and all the individuals, organizations and businesses who have so generously contributed and continue to do so. The Alliance is also looking for other assistance to help bring these projects to fruition. Please contact Anne Macey (annemacey@shaw.ca) for more information.