

SALT SPRING ISLAND FARM CENTRE FOR FOOD SECURITY

A Game Changer for Local Food – A Model for B.C.

WHAT IT IS

The Farm Centre for Food Security will be a new resource for Salt Spring Island farmers, food producers and the community. It's a catalyst for change, designed to support our island's transition from dependence on unsustainable imported foods to greater reliance on food grown right here at home.

The Farm Centre will be a centrally-located food processing, distribution and storage facility, operated on a break-even basis as an incubator for increased local food production. Our aim is to increase production on Salt Spring by making it easier for local growers to bring their harvest to market, add value to it and connect with consumers on the island and in the surrounding region.

A hub for food initiatives and the development of new value-added products using Salt Spring-grown produce, the Farm Centre will also serve as a centre for education on food security, food safety and value-added processing and will provide access to food-related vocational rehabilitation programs that do not currently exist.



WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

FOOD SECURITY

Although Salt Spring Island is a rural community with a long history of agriculture, only six per cent of the food local residents eat is grown on the Island. As concern over the future availability of cheap imported foods grows, the need to support increased local food production has become obvious.

INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

We believe the potential for increased production by Salt Spring Island farmers and small-scale value-added processors is tremendous. A facility designed to transform their great ideas into creative and innovative, high-quality food products will spur increased agricultural production and new opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

By promoting a shift from almost total dependence on imported food that's shipped huge distances, we will dramatically reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with locally-consumed food while encouraging increased production on Salt Spring's agricultural land, much of which currently sits unused.



LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

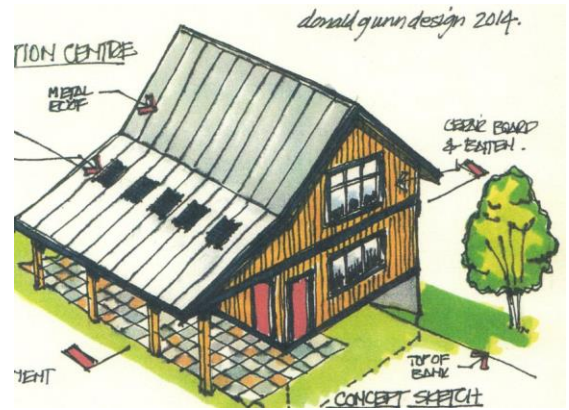
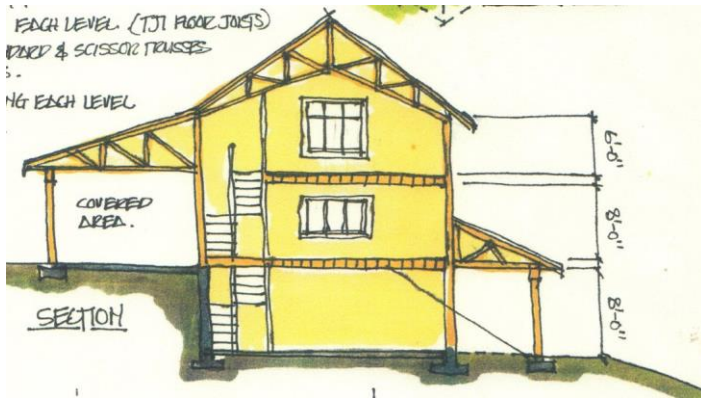
Over time, our support of local food production will strengthen Salt Spring Island's economy, with new farmers and food processors going into business and new collaborations diversifying and enhancing our local economy. While many individual producers will likely be quite small in scale, their combined impact on our local economy could be massive.

WHAT'S ALREADY BEEN ACCOMPLISHED

In 2012, the Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society acquired a 0.6 hectare site for the Farm Centre. Since then, the Trust has been working with the Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance to plan and develop the Farm Centre.

The project partners formed a broad-based planning committee, which undertook extensive community consultations and worked to build partnerships with community agencies such as Salt Spring Island Community Services Society. We worked with a designer and other professionals to create plans for a modest yet innovative and environmentally responsible 3,000 square foot facility.

We obtained a development permit for the project in 2012 and got approval for an amendment in 2015 to match our vision for the project.



Located at 189 Beddis Road, the site came to us from a developer – along with a commitment to an additional cash or in-kind contribution – as a result of land use decisions by the Agricultural Land Commission and Islands Trust.

In addition to the new main building, which will house a processing facility as well as storage space and a caretaker's suite, our plans call for greenhouses, a honey extraction house and site development such as permaculture

plantings, storm drainage and irrigation ponds, driveways and parking. Plans also call for the rehabilitation and use of an existing barn on the property to be used for storage.

We received Islands Trust approval for our master plan in 2015.

WHAT STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE

The need is clear. The support in our community is strong. A plan has been developed. Commitments are in place for land and cash or in-kind contributions valued at approximately 40 per cent of the total project cost. The Salt Spring Island Farm Produce Centre for Food Security is now a shovel-ready project.

To get work on this important and innovative project underway, we now need to obtain funding for the remaining 60 per cent of project costs, which will total about \$800,000. We have applied to several foundations and non-governmental agencies to help meet this challenge.

We are now looking to our provincial and federal governments to participate in a significant way, to help us bring this vision to fruition.

Please work with us to make it happen.

