



Food and Farming on
Denman Island:
Consumer and Producer
Perspectives

Submitted to:
The Denman Island Agriculture Plan
Steering Committee

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DISCLAIMER

Agriculture and Agri Food Canada (AAFC), the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (BCMAL), and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAF) are pleased to participate in the production of this report. We are committed to working with our industry partners to address issues of importance to the agriculture and agri food industry in British Columbia. Opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and not necessarily those of IAF, BCMAL, or AAFC.

Funding provided by:



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INTRODUCTION

“An island where we feed each other abundantly because farming is a viable and valued foundation of our sustainable community.”¹



Food security and sustainability are very current topics on the Gulf Islands. This study is nestled within a multi-year effort that examines ways to increase local food production, specifically on Denman Island. It taps into the wealth of information and opinion of the people that live here and know food; that is, those who grow it and those who eat it. This local context, added to previous research conducted about food and agriculture on Denman Island, sets the tone for future agricultural planning.

On its own, this study also has an educational purpose. It informs our community, and others, about the ways we produce food here and how we shop and eat. It is intended to provoke thought and discussion about what it would take to produce *and* consume more local food.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

BACKGROUND

The Denman Island “Agriculture Plan Steering Committee” -made up of local farmers and other representatives- was established to guide the development of an Agricultural Strategy and, ultimately, the Agriculture Area Plan, henceforth referred to as the “Farm Plan”. Representing one of the first milestones in this process, the *Denman Island Agricultural Strategy* was submitted on January 15, 2011. The Strategy determined the current context for farming and developed recommendations for maintaining and enhancing agriculture on Denman Island.

¹ Denman Island Agriculture Plan Steering Committee Mission Statement.

As a next step, to further inform the Farm Plan, this study presents the results of consumer and producer surveys completed on Denman Island during the summer of 2011. These surveys were developed by the Agriculture Plan Steering Committee members.

METHODS

Two separate surveys were drafted by the Steering Committee: a consumer and a producer survey (see Appendices A and B respectively). Both surveys were completed by Taina Uitto, a Denman Island resident, between July and September, 2011 on Denman Island.

Consumer surveys included full and part time residents. In-person surveys were conducted randomly at the local Farmer's Market, General Store, Recycling Centre, and restaurants, as well as other random community locations. Some surveys were completed on the phone, also based on random selection.



The Local Food Directory and the Denman Island Agricultural Strategy were used as the starting points to identify producers, as previous work has been done to determine who produces and markets and/or barter their products, thereby distinguishing 'producers' from 'home gardeners'. However, there are some exceptions and, therefore for the purposes of this survey, the definition of 'producer' remains broad.

Some producers, who chose to be included in this survey (and were listed in the Food Guide), reported not currently marketing or bartering any products, while others in the same position decided not to be included in the survey. There are also producers on the Island who market or barter products but are not in the Local Food Directory or the Agricultural Strategy for various reasons. For this reason, this survey also included producers suggested/identified by respondents. Additional producers not included in this report (due to time limitations) may be listed in the Farm Plan inventory.

Interviews lasted from 10-60 minutes. Most interviews were completed in-person, while some preferred to do the survey over the phone.

All respondents were asked set survey questions, but were also given a chance to openly comment on anything related to farming, local food, and the future Farm Plan.

Quantitative results were analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Qualitative results were arranged in themes based on frequency of occurrence.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of the consumer surveys was to gather information about Denman Island residents' present and anticipated food purchasing and consumption habits. The producer survey collected information about current farm practices and production on Denman Island, both to provide context for planning as well as benchmarking. It also gathered producer perspectives about enhancing food production on Denman, as well as other voluntary insights that would inform the Farm Plan.

RESULTS

CONSUMERS

100 interviews were completed with 13 part time and 87 full time residents. This group represents 226 residents, based on number of reported household members. This equates to roughly 21% of the Island's total population according to 2006 census figures.

Interviews lasted from 3-20 minutes.

SHOPPING HABITS

Some quick facts about where people buy food on Denman. Of the 100 people interviewed:

- 91% shop at the General Store
- 81% shop at the Farmers Market
- 78% shop at independent produce stands, farmers, or gardeners



- 39% barter with local growers/producers, and this figure is only slightly higher for full time residents compared to part time residents (36% and 23% respectively)
- 11% buy 100% local produce
- 71% get 100% of their eggs locally
- 13% get 100% of their meat locally

The following three figures represent the percentage (of total consumption) of local produce, eggs, and meat consumed by Denman Island residents between May and October.

Figure 1: Percent of local produce consumed by residents

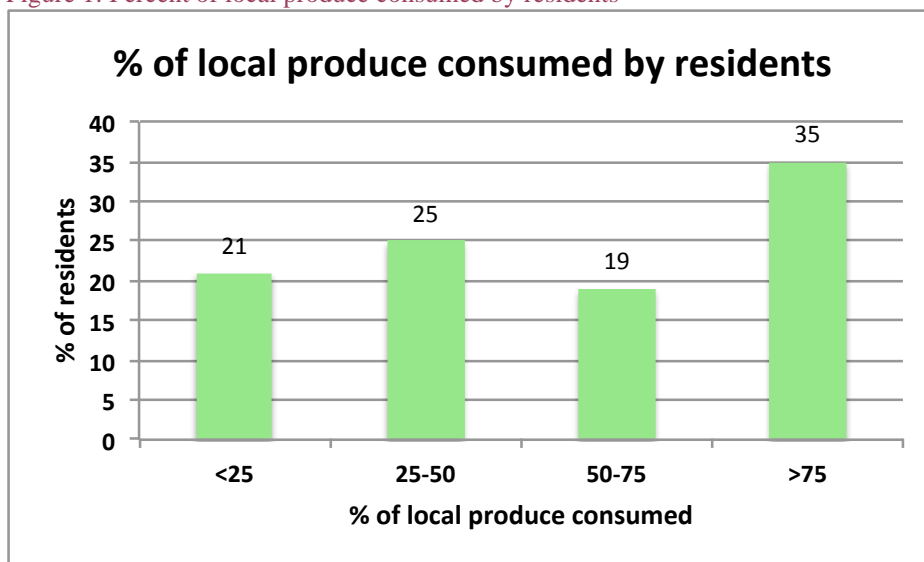
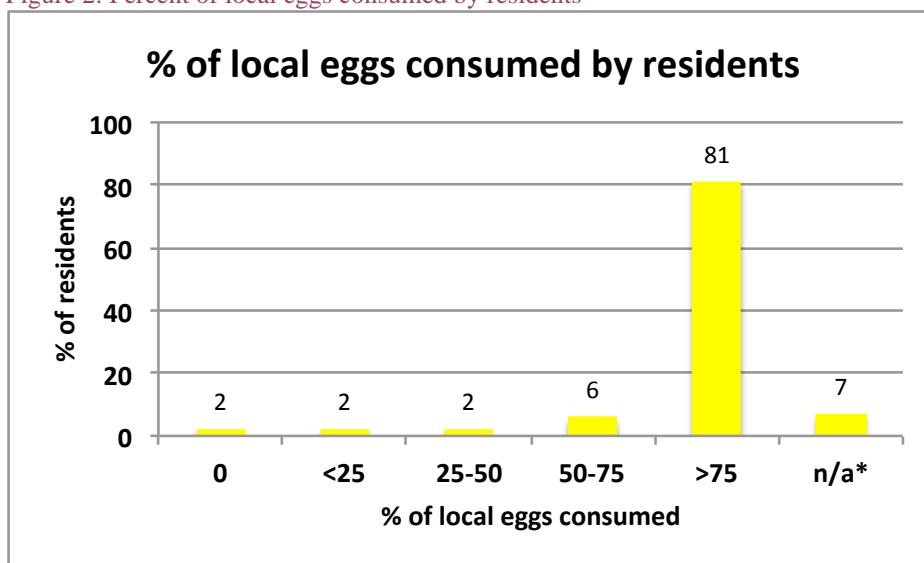
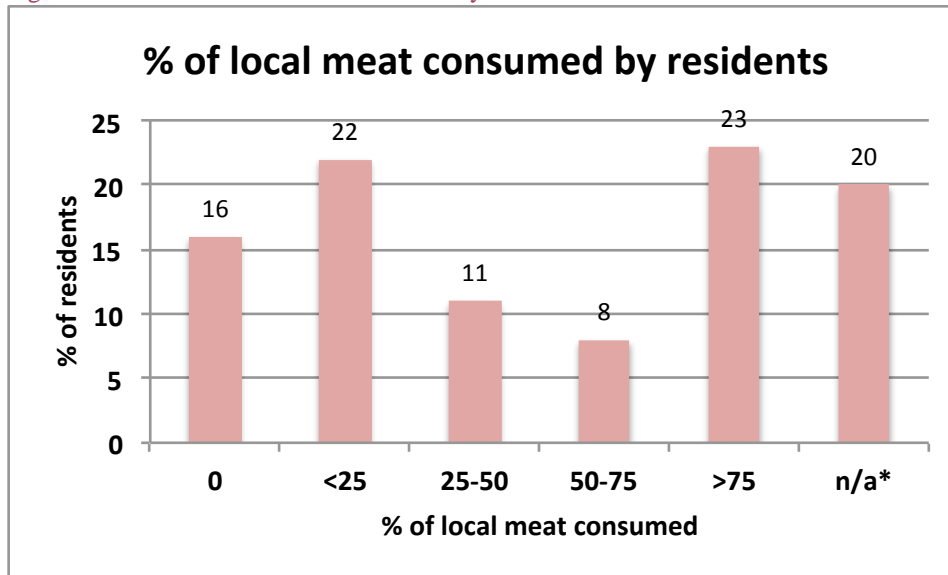


Figure 2: Percent of local eggs consumed by residents



*n/a= does not consume eggs

Figure 3: Percent of local meat consumed by residents



*n/a= does not consume meat

When asked whether residents would like to buy more Denman-grown and produced food, 89% of respondents said “yes”. The three most-often quoted obstacles that keep residents from buying more of their food on Denman Island (with the corresponding number of respondents in brackets) are:

1. Availability (41) (the specific types of availability mentioned were “seasonal”, “consistent”, “regular”, and “central” availability, and well as “unpredictability of availability”)
2. Price/cost (16)
3. Convenience/time (16)

Below is a list of other reasons cited for not buying more food on Denman.

- Selection/variety (11)
- Lack of information (11)
- Shopping/eating habits (5)
- Time/time on Island (1)
- Lack of freezer space (1)
- Lack of organic selection (1)
- Government rules and regulations (1)
- Relationships with farmers (1)
- Consistency (1)

- Access (1)
- Taste of local meat (1)

8% of respondents could not think of obstacles preventing them from buying more Denman-grown and produced food.

Of the people that stated that they would not like to buy more Denman-grown and produced food, the majority stated that they are either self-sufficient or are satisfied with what is available.

WISH-LIST

When asked what food items residents would like to see available on Denman that they are not seeing now, the top three wish-list items (with the corresponding number of respondents in brackets) were:

1. Meat chickens (23) (one respondent specified free range chickens)
2. Dairy products (20) (specific products mentioned were milk, goat milk, butter, cheese, and yogurt)
3. Other meat (19) (specific products mentioned were pork, sausages, bacon, lamb, and “small portions of meat”)



Other food items on the residents’ wish lists include:

- Fruits (17) (specific fruit types mentioned were apricots, melons, blueberries, strawberries, and pineapples)
- Vegetables (17) (specific vegetables mentioned were onion, carrot, squash, garlic, winter vegetables, avocados, asparagus, mushrooms, eggplant, cauliflower, peppers, and green beans, as well as certified organic vegetables)
- Honey and full-comb honey (7)
- Grains (7) (one respondent specified wheat)
- Seafood/fish (5) (specific seafood mentioned were trout and oysters)
- Tofu (3)
- Prepared/value-added foods (2)
- Lower priced produce (2)
- Staples (2)
- Unpackaged local foods (1)
- Nuts (1)

- Goose (1)
- Whole-grain bread (1)
- Unsliced bread (1)
- Almond milk (1)
- Beer (1)
- Wine (1)
- Wild rice (1)
- Community water (1)
- Seaweed (1)

HOME-GROWN FOOD

In addition to buying food, many Denman Island residents grow their own food and keep chickens and other animals for meat and eggs. The following are some quick facts about home-grown food on Denman Island. Of 100 Denman Island residents:

- 70% grow food in a garden (78% of full-time residents, and 15% of part-time residents)
- 54% grow food trees
- 19% keep chickens for eggs (0% part-time residents)
- 12% keep chickens for meat (0% part-time residents)
- 11% keep other animals for food (Rabbits, trout, goats, cows, sheep, turkeys, ducks, and pigs were mentioned. One person mentioned deer as a source of their “own” local meat. Bees were notably missing.)
- 77% freeze, can preserves, make cheese, or process food for saving in some way
- 53% would like to learn food processing/preserving methods (the majority of respondents who said “no” said they already know how)



The figures below illustrate the percentage of residents’ own produce, eggs, and meat produced between June and October.

Figure 4: Percentage of residents' own produce grown between June and October

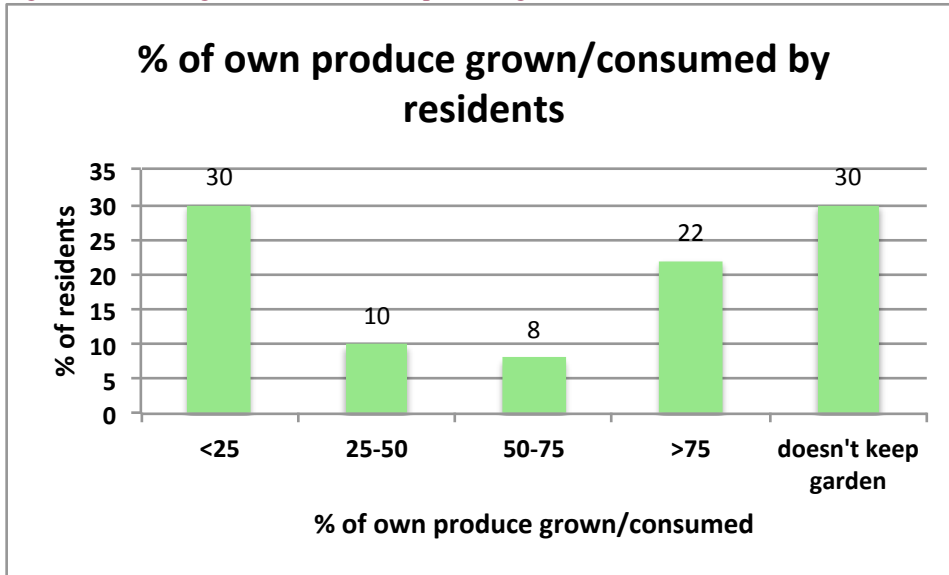


Figure 5: Percentage of residents' own eggs produced between June and October

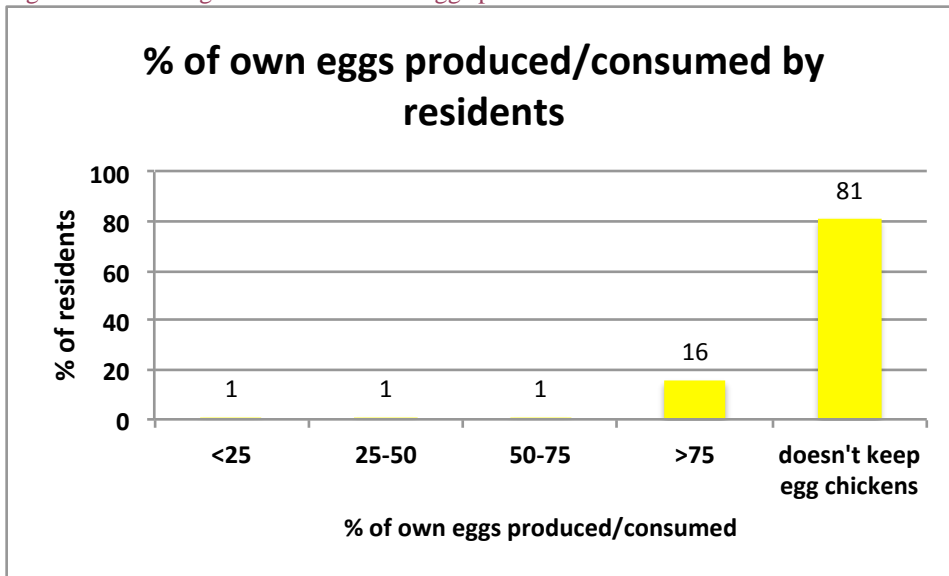
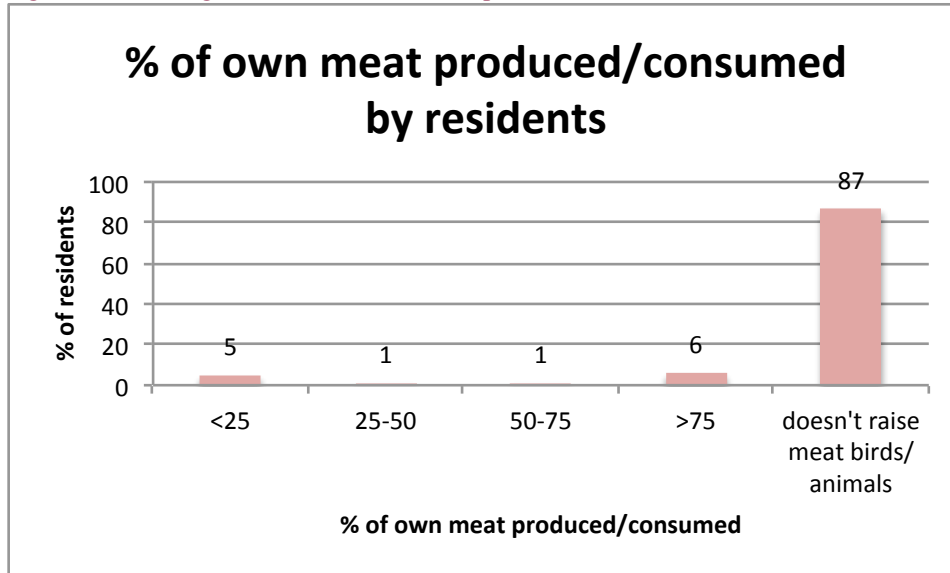


Figure 6: Percentage of residents' own meat produced between June and October



In the figures above, in the >75% category:

- 11% produce 100% of their own produce
- 15% produce 100% of their own eggs
- 3% produce 100% of their own meat

When asked whether residents aspire to grow/produce their own food for sale:

- 22% aspire to grow food for sale
- 10% aspire to raise farm animals for meat or livestock sales
- 9% aspire to raise poultry for meat or eggs sales
- 11% aspire to process food for sale



FURTHER COMMENTARY

At the end of the survey, all respondents were given the chance to comment on anything related to food, farming, or the future Farm Plan. In addition, any notable comments were recorded during the survey.

Comments were wide-ranging: from communal cows to cooking, farm to plate. Residents certainly have a lot to say about food and the way things should and could be. While not inclusive of all comments, below are some common themes from the surveys. A comprehensive list of comments can be found in Appendix A.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL FARMERS AND FOOD

“The honour box system is good and precious”

“Everything I need is here.”

“I am thankful that people farm here.”

GETTING ORGANIZED

“The Farm Plan is a wonderful idea. We need more community effort around food and we need leadership.”

“A more cohesive food system on the Island is required.”

“The better this farm thing becomes, the more accessible it will be.”

“We need more community gardens.”

BETTER MARKETS AND MARKETING

“Denman should grow a brand for its produce”

“Marketing is not the strong suite of growers”

“We can learn from the Arts community. They are doing good things to let us know they are

serious. Denman farmers need to brand themselves better.”

“The Saturday market is great, but most of the growers are not there. One permanent space would be great.”

EDUCATION

“A Denman Island Agricultural Project would involve a school and adult education. The eco-school on Saturna is a very interesting project.”

“Kids should be involved, like classes at school or camps.”

“The more people know about farming the better.”

“The garden tour should take place in the summer when there are more opportunities to share and learn.”

ETHICS AND ENVIRONMENT

“I would like to reduce my carbon footprint.”

“Fish culture would take pressure off the soil and land.”

“We need to encourage rainwater collection.”

“Make sure to include animal ethics in the Plan.”



PRODUCERS

40 surveys were completed with producers on the Island. While the exact total number of producers on Denman Island is not known, this group represents roughly 47% of the 86 producers identified through the Agricultural Strategy, the local Food Directory, and by word of mouth.



PRODUCTION

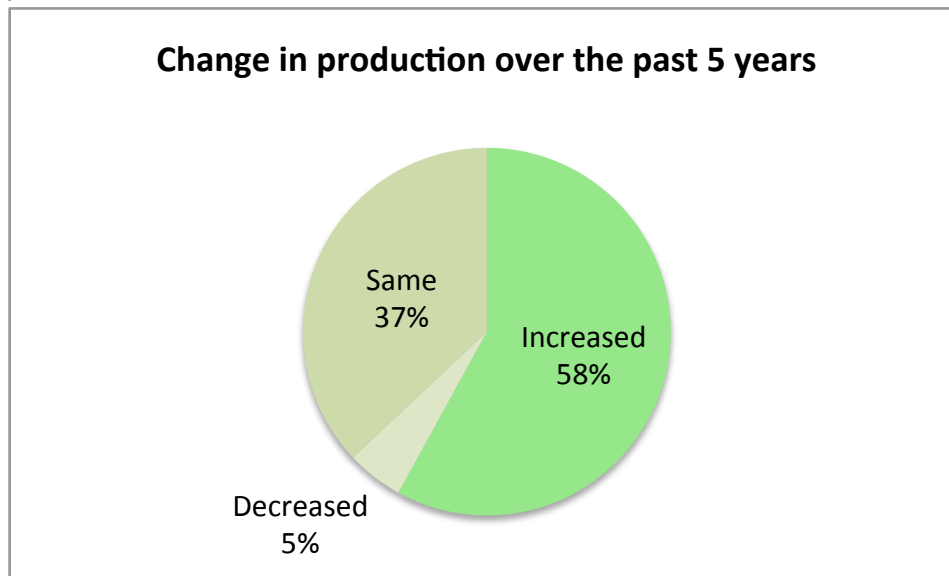
Below are some statistics about production on Denman, based on information provided by 40 producers.

- The total combined area in production and grazing is >236 hectares² (583 acres)
- The productive areas ranged from 0.1 hectares (.25 acres) to 59 hectares (145 acres), with the average number of 6 hectares in production being (15 acres)
- The number of years producing agricultural products on Denman Island ranged from 1-100 years³, with an average of 18 years
- 58% reported an increase in production over the past five years, while 8% reported a decrease/downsizing, and 35% stayed the same (see figure 7 below)

² One producer could not provide an estimate of acres in production, and therefore the real area is greater than reported.

³ While the question was framed to include set-up time, respondents may have interpreted the question differently.

Figure 7: Change in production over the past 5 years (or total years of production if <5 years)



- The percent change in production over the past 5 years was reported to be from 0-500%, with an average change overall of +91%
- 73% of producers use season extenders, with a combined area of 1054 square meters (11 348 square feet)
- The average size of a greenhouse (or other season extender) is 38 square meters (405 square feet)
- 83% of producers save seed, and 75% are interested in the Denman Island Seed Bank initiative

When discussing the Denman Island Seed Bank initiative, a few producers qualified their interest by saying that it should be more “serious” or “organized”. Two out of 40 producers were not sure whether they were interested or not. One was “indifferent”.

- 55% of producers undertake value added processing of their products, with 5-90% of their products

The four most common value-added products are, with their corresponding number of mentions in brackets:

1. Juice (12)
2. Canning (6)
3. Freezing (4)

4. Jam/jelly (5)

Other value-added products were:

- Baked goods (2)
- Processed meat (2)
- Dried food/flowers (2)
- Vinegar (1)
- Pickling (1)
- Wool (1)
- Soap (1)
- Cheese (1)
- Yogurt (1)
- Craft wood from bamboo (1)
- Herb braids (1)

WATER

Below are some facts about water use on Denman Island farms:

- 78% of producers irrigate their crops (does not include water for animals)
- Of those producers that do irrigate, 58% could not give an estimate of roughly how many liters they use in a day, week, or season
- The producers that were able to provide a rough estimate, reported water use in a season ranged from 2271- 4 088 244 liters/season (600-1 080 000 gallons)
- Without the anomaly of 4 088 244 liters, the average water use was 164 199 liters/season (43 377 gallons)
- Of those producers that irrigate, 26% report experiencing water shortages



Producers made some comments about water. While one respondent said “there is never enough”, a few others boasted that their water sources are “endless”, or more humbly consider themselves “lucky”. The majority of producers reported “managing” their water, or having made some kind of “provisions”.

“The well is only used for the house. The rainwater ponds are for the garden.”

When asked about the farm practices used to minimize water use, the three most common responses (with their corresponding number of respondents) were:

1. Mulching (17)
2. Drip irrigation (14)
3. Hand watering (7)

Other specific ways respondents stated minimizing water use were:

- Rainwater collection (6)
- Time of day watering (early a.m. or late p.m.) (4)
- Selective watering (3)
- Monitoring of water use and/or water levels (2)
- Good soil management (2)
- Conservative watering (2)
- Water storage (2)
- Gravity feeding or seepage watering (2)
- Smart planting (1)
- Multiple water systems (1)
- Hugelkultur⁴(1)
- Dry cropping (1)

ORGANICS

Producers were asked to rate their farming practices on a scale of 1-10, 10 being certified organic:

- 58% chose ‘10’, but only 5% (or two farms out of 40) are formally certified organic
- The average rating was 9.4
- Only 5% stated using synthetic pesticides or herbicides
- Non-organic feed was the most common reason for not choosing a higher rating



⁴ The practice of using woody waste in composting in order to build soil fertility and improve drainage and moisture retention.

On the topic of organic, some discussion ensued over the meaning of organic, and many producers debated what inputs were allowed under the formal definition of organic.

A few producers commented that there was no additional benefit to become formally certified, an/or that certification was too expensive.

“What we make in a year does not justify organic certification.”

“Organic certification is expensive and not worth it.”



OFF-ISLAND INPUTS

With regard to other farm inputs, the following three were the most common (with the number of mentions in brackets):

1. Feed for chickens and livestock (20) (grains, chicken pellets, hay, alfalfa)
2. Lime (12)
3. Seeds (8)

Other specific off-Island inputs mentioned were:

- Fertilizer (9)
- Meals (5) (canola meal, bonemeal)
- Trees/plants (4)
- Livestock (1)

- Sulphur (1)
- Manure (2)
- Bird bedding (1)
- Straw (1)
- Rootstock (1)
- Scion wood (1)
- Peat moss (1)
- Rock phosphate (1)
- Minerals for livestock (1)
- Perlite (1)
- Top soil (1)
- Bark mulch (2)

On the topic of bulk orders of off-Island farm inputs, the majority of producers expressed interest, while some were not interested at all. A few producers specified that only some items would make sense as bulk-orders.

INVENTORY

Each producer was asked to run through a typical annual farm inventory of assets relating to livestock or produce. The table below provides a snapshot of production. It details the types and numbers (if applicable/data available) of livestock, chickens, turkeys, ducks, vegetables, fruit trees, nut trees, berries, and other. The total number is reported below if the producers were able to provide inventory figures; For example, in the case of vegetables and berries, most producers were not able to estimate pounds produced. The last column in the table refers to the percent of farms that market or barter the given products that they produce, i.e. the reported figure is not a percentage of all farms surveyed.

Table 1: A Denman Island farm inventory of assets relating to livestock and produce, based on 40 producers surveyed

Type	% of farms surveyed	Types and number	Total number (or other unit of measurement)	Of those producing, % marketing and/or bartering
Livestock	55	Cows (553) Pigs (15) Sheep (86) Goats (12)	668 animals	55

		Rabbits (2) Horses (7) ⁵		
Chickens	58	Layers (612) Meat (223)	835 birds	61
Turkeys	10	Meat (184)	184 birds	75
Ducks	23	Layers (18) Meat (133)	151 birds	44
Vegetables	90 ⁶	Various	Data not available	53
Hay	38	Various	>16540 bales ⁷	53
Grain	13	Oats Wheat Barley Quinoa Rye	Data not available	20
Fruit Trees ⁸	95	Apple Pear Plum Fig Cherry Nectarine Crab apple Peach Quince Persimon Jujube Mulberry + various other	4203 trees	53
Nut Trees ⁹	68	Hazelnut Walnut Chestnut Edible Oak Butternut Yellow horn Heartnut Pecan Burtnut + various other	>769 trees ¹⁰	30
Berries	83	Blueberry Strawberry Raspberry Blackberry	Data not available	39

⁵ Producers were given the choice whether to include horses in their inventory. The ones that did, qualified their inclusion in the survey because they generate manure.

⁶ This percentage is likely higher as some producers did not want to include vegetables grown solely for home use in the survey.

⁷ Four out of 13 producers could not provide the number of hay bales produced, therefore the reported number is the minimum produced.

⁸ Includes producing trees, immature trees, and nursery stock.

⁹ Includes producing trees, immature trees, and nursery stock.

¹⁰ Two out of 24 producers could not provide an estimate for the number of trees, and therefore the reported number is the minimum number of trees.

		Loganberry Boysenberry Tayberry Gooseberry Nectarberry Honeyberry Currants Marionberry Guava Goumi + various other		
Grapes	65	Table Wine Raisin	5473 vines	35
Other	23	Bees/honey (170lbs) Nursery plants (100's) Kiwi vines (33) Hops (4) Tea (10) Edible bamboo (50)	Data not comparable	75

MARKETING

Producers were provided the opportunity to think about what products they could or would sell more of if markets were available. The following list details their answers, with the corresponding number of mentions in brackets:

- Apples (3)
- All fruits (3)
- Eggs (3)
- Nursery stock (3) (Fruit trees)
- Hay (3)
- All vegetables (2)
- Blueberries (2)
- Broccoli (2)
- Zucchini (2)
- Walnuts (2)
- Berries (2)
- Poultry (2)
- Grapes (2)
- Pork (2)
- Snow peas (1)
- Spinach (1)

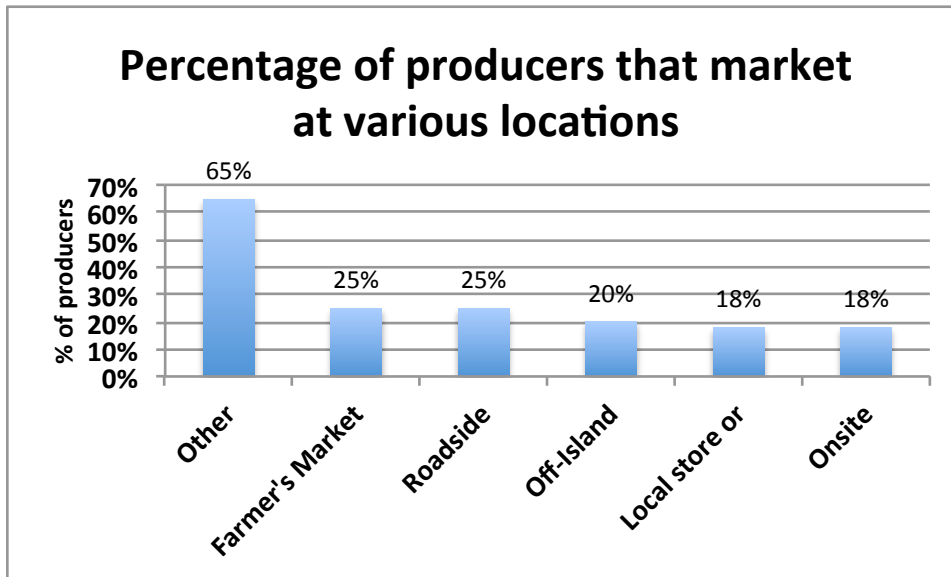


- Greens (1)
- Bedding plants (1)
- Figs (1)
- Beef (1)
- Peas (1)
- Brassicas (1)
- Potatoes (1)
- Lamb (1)
- Sausage (1)
- Free-range turkeys (1)
- Kale (1)
- Cilantro (1)
- Edible bamboo shoots (1)
- Arugula (1)

35% of producers said that there isn't anything more they would or could sell more of this year, even if markets were available.

The figure below illustrates where Denman Island producers market their products.

Figure 8: Percent of producers that market products off-Island, roadside, farmer's market, local store or restaurant, on-site, or other.

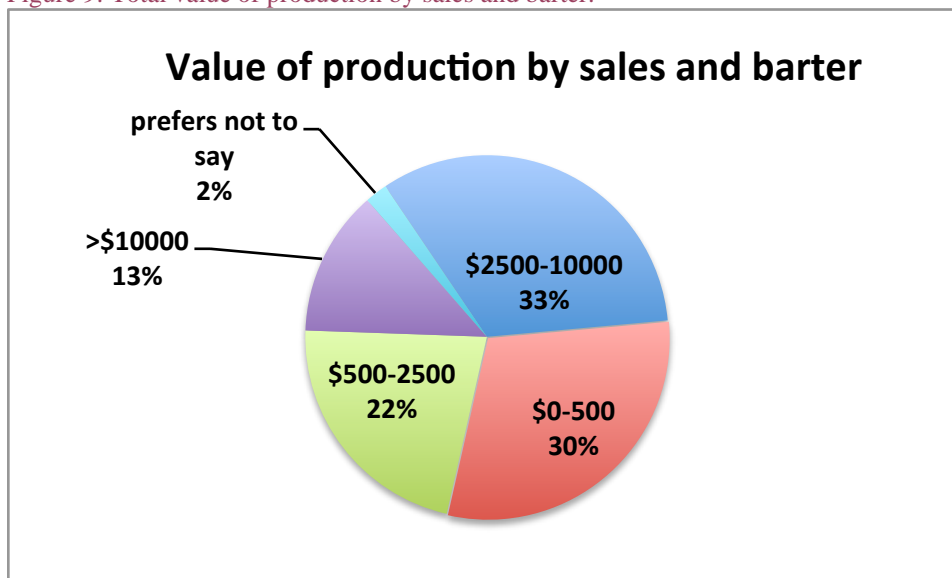


In the figure above, “roadside” refers to end of the driveway, whereas “onsite” refers to a location on the property. The “other” category includes, with the corresponding number of mentions in brackets:

- Word of mouth (18)
- Internet (5)
- Local newspaper (2)
- Neighbours/private (2)
- Christmas Fair (1)
- Seedy Saturdays (2)
- Business cards (2)

By sales and/or barter, the following diagram represents an estimate of production value of the 40 producers surveyed:

Figure 9: Total value of production by sales and barter.



CHALLENGES

Producers were asked to comment on the greatest challenges to the success of their farming operation. While one respondent threw up her hands and exclaimed that “the whole thing is challenging”, and one other could not think of anything, other respondents specified the top three challenges of (with the corresponding number of mentions):

1. Markets/marketing/sales (11)
2. Predators/pests (10)
3. Labour/work load (9)

Other challenges mentioned were:

- Weather (6)
- Water (5)
- Time (5)
- Motivation/inclination (3)
- Financing/capital (2)
- Economics/returns on time invested (2)
- Machinery/equipment (2)
- Islands Trust zoning/regulations (2)
- Soil (1)
- Disease (1)
- Ferry cost (1)
- Land for grazing (1)
- Health regulations (1)
- Invasive weeds (1)
- Ducks not laying (1)
- Legal/regulatory control over the sales of meat (1)
- Disease (1)



OPPORTUNITIES

Producers were asked to share their thoughts on ways to enhance food production on Denman Island. The following themes emerged, with the corresponding specifics in producers' own words (duplicates are not listed).

EDUCATION/AWARENESS/INFORMATION

"Education about predators, fencing, and soil."

"There is a large gap in understanding about labour and dependency on nature that consumers don't understand."

"Educating people about better food."

"Talking about farming more."

"More information."

"Educating people to eat in season and support local food."

"Education about what it takes to farm."

"Awareness about food issues."

"Educate people to do it themselves."

"Consciousness change through public education."

"Education about why local and free-range food is more expensive."

"Education about where to sell."

"More public awareness/attendance at the Saturday market."

"Communication."

"Education about how to store stuff- if we grow in bulk, we have to learn how to store it."

BIGGER MARKETS/INCREASED MARKET ACCESS

"Creating market."

"Contract markets."

"Off-Island market access."

"Expanding markets."

"Year-round markets."

"Bigger market."

"During the summer there could be a market everyday downtown."

INCREASED ORGANIZATION/COOPERATION

- "More organization."*
- "Community garden."*
- "Filling in the gaps."*
- "Collaboration/cohesion."*
- "Cooperative marketing of Island products."*
- "More cooperative projects."*
- "Shared freezers."*
- "Shared equipment."*
- "More efficient organization."*
- "Cooperative type operation."*
- "More cooperative use of land."*
- "A little organization would go a long way."*
- "Equipment share."*

LAND ACCESS/LAND PRICES

- "Cheaper land for young people."*
- "More direct access to cheaper or leased land."*
- "Lower land prices."*
- "More acreage for farming."*

MARKETING/PRICING

- "More marketing."*
- "Advertising about local products."*
- "Competitive pricing."*

“It’s all about marketing (but) after you grow it, you don’t want to spend the effort marketing.”

REGULATIONS

”All ALR land should be producing food, if not, taxed higher; ALR land should not be for private parks or horses.”

”Less provincial regulations about farming that shut down all small operations.”

“Islands Trust regulations prevent farmers from getting additional income- e.g. U-Pick, ecotourism.”

”Exemption for being an isolated community for processing of meat.”

“The rules need to change for meat chickens- the time and stress is too much, and there are no certified organic slaughter houses.”

“Islands Trust Regulations should be amended to allow farmers other sources of income, such as agrotourism, as set out in provincial regulations.”

“The Islands Trust cannot be anti development and business if we want a young and vibrant community.”

FARM PRACTICES

”Focus on tree crops and forget about food security based on vegetables.”

”People need to grow better food.”

ENCOURAGING FARMING/YOUNG FARMERS

"Encourage more farmers."

"Need more people growing food for sale."

"Getting people more involved."

"Get more people excited about farming."

"More young people."

"More encouragement for young people to farm."

"More people should grow more."

"We need cheap land for farming and young people for labour."

"Young farmers need assistance to be able to farm here."

ENHANCED VALUE

"Enhanced value through organic production."

"Greater emphasis on value-added processing."

OTHER

"Stop bringing in invasive weeds (buyer security)."

"Stop measuring success by dollars."

"Recognize the limitations of an island."

"Limiting exports."

"Increased labour and equipment availability."

"Tax funds to help farmers."

“We need to eradicate rats on Denman to protect the ecosystem and farm/crops.”

FURTHER COMMENTARY

At the end of the survey, all producers were given the chance to comment on anything related to food, farming, or the future Farm Plan.

A few producers were somewhat wrought with survey-saturation, and these individuals seemed to have some skepticism about planning outcomes. Two such interviewees still believed, despite challenges, that the future Farm Plan was worthwhile:

“The Plan should be done, the problem is labour.”

“The process of going through the planning is good for Denman Island agriculture.”

In general, the majority of producers vocalized support for the future Farm Plan and enthusiasm for getting more organized:

“The Plan is a good idea and a wake-up call since 95% of our food comes off-island.”

Some producers provided additional comments on the challenges with farming.

“We farm for ourselves and for farm status-young people need to know that there is no money in farming.”

“We need to double the population for services so we wouldn’t need to go off the Island. You can’t compete with the price of imports. You can’t make a living off farming.”

“We don’t pay ourselves for the time we put in to farm; In terms of economics, at what point do you say it’s not worth doing it.”

“The economics of small-scale farming don't make sense as people are not willing to pay.”

“Mink and raccoons have really increased and devastated us.”

Some others offered insight into what is currently working:

“The Alliance has a good thing going with the plucker.”

“The Growers and Producers Association is doing a lot.”

“General Store sales are going well and we get the best margins there. Roadside sales were difficult.”

“Regained/recaptured farmland is exciting.”

A few producers chose to provide further suggestions for going forward:

“Horses should be included in the Farm Plan and in land use regulations. There are roughly 80 horses on the Island.”

“The Farm Plan should include the shellfish industry, as it is another wonderful source of farmed food for the Island.”

“Fruits and nuts are the only thing that can be farmed here because the conditions are too poor for farming.”

“Perennial tree crops are a better food security strategy.”

“It comes down to getting people on-Island to work with you and buy from you. They need gain knowledge of the products sold here and trust the quality.”

“Preserve old orchards and farmland. Market at the dock. Equipment sharing is required. Old barns are a treasure that should be maintained.”



CONCLUSION

As individuals, the experience and insight shared by consumers and producers on Denman Island give us food for thought about our own consumption habits. They provide us an opportunity to think about what kind of food community we would like to have on this island, as well as what food security and sustainability might look like here.

The consumer and producer surveys provide valuable insight for future planning as well. Examining the current practices of both consumers and producers gives a good starting point for planning, as well as data for benchmarking the success of future Farm Plan initiatives. Furthermore, comparing data provided by consumers and producers will help to draw connections and opportunities for a more cohesive food system on the Island.



Farm Plan Consumer Questionnaire

The following questions refer to your household food consumption.

1) How many household members do you represent?

2) Are you a Full-time resident Part-time resident

3) Do you buy food at any of the following Denman Island locations:
(Please check all that apply)

Denman Island General Store, Farmer's Market, Independent Produce Stands or Farmers/Gardeners.

4) Do you barter with local growers/producers? Yes No

5) Between May and October, How much of the fruit and vegetable produce you consume is grown on Denman Island?

Less than 25%, Less than 50%, Less than 75%, More than 75%,
 100%

6) If you eat eggs, how many of those you purchase are from Denman Island farms?

Less than 25%, Less than 50%, Less than 75%, More than 75%,
 100%, None, Do not consume eggs

7) If you eat meat, how much of what you consume was raised on Denman Island?

Less than 25%, Less than 50%, Less than 75%, More than 75%,
 100%, None, Do not consume meat

8) Do you grow food or keep any chickens or other animals for food?

(Please check all that apply): Garden, Food Trees, Egg Chickens,
Meat Chickens, Other (Please specify) No (If not, skip to Q #12)

9) How much of your own fruit and vegetables do you produce between June and October?

Less than 25%, Less than 50%, Less than 75%, More than 75%,
100% NA

10) How much of your own meat do you produce annually?

Less than 25%, Less than 50%, Less than 75%, More than 75%,
100% NA

11) How many of your own eggs do your birds produce annually?

Less than 25%, Less than 50%, Less than 75%, More than 75%,
100% NA

12) Would you like to buy more Denman-grown and produced food?

Yes No

13) What obstacles keep you from purchasing more of your food on Denman Island?

14) What food items would you like to see available on Denman, that you aren't seeing now?

15) Do you freeze or can preserves, make cheese or process food for saving in any way? Yes No

16) Are you interested in learning food processing/preserving methods?

Yes No

17) Do you have any aspirations to begin any of the following: (check all that apply)

Growing food for sale Raising farm animals for meat or livestock sales

Raising poultry for meat or egg sales Processing food (canning, cheese making, other value added processing) for sale.

18) Do you have any other thoughts to share for the Denman Island Farm Plan?

END

APPENDIX B: PRODUCER SURVEY

Farm Plan Producer Questionnaire

1/ How long have you been producing agricultural products on Denman Island?

In the past five years has your agricultural production increased or decreased?

If changed by how many percent?

2/ Do you irrigate your crops? With roughly how many gallons ?

Do you experience water shortages? Comments?

What farm practices do you use to minimize water use?

3/ What is your typical annual farm inventory of assets relating to livestock or produce.

Livestock _____ Type _____ Number _____ M/B* _____

Chickens _____ layers _____ Number _____ M/B _____

Meat birds _____ Number _____ M/B _____

Turkeys _____ Meat birds _____ Number _____ M/B _____

Ducks _____ layers _____ Number _____ M/B _____

Meat birds _____ Number _____ M/B _____

Vegetables _____ Type _____ Pounds _____ M/B _____

Hay _____ Type _____ Tons _____ M/B _____

Grain _____ Type _____ Pounds _____ M/B _____

Fruit tree _____ Type _____ Tree number _____ M/B _____ lbs _____

Nut trees _____ Type _____ Tree number _____ M/B _____ lbs _____

Berries _____ Type _____ Pounds _____ M/B _____

Grapes _____ Type _____ # vines _____ M/B _____ lbs _____

Other _____ Type _____ number _____ M/B _____

*M/B – means currently marketed or bartered.

If markets were available, what products would or could you sell more of this year?

4/ Approximately how many acres do you have in production or grazing?

5/ Where and how are your products marketed?

Off island marketing _____% Roadside_____%

Island Farmers Market _____% Local Store or Restaurant_____ %

Onsite Market_____% Other _____%

6/ Do you currently utilize greenhouses or other season extenders for producing crops ?
Roughly how many square feet?

7/ A group of Denman Islanders are organizing a seed bank.

Do you undertake seed saving? Are you interested?

8/ Do you undertake value added processing of your produce?

If yes what percentage? What type?

9/ What value (by sales or barter) would be a fair estimate of your production?

0 - \$500 __ 500 – \$2500__ 500 – \$10,000 __ greater than 10,000 __

10/ What are the greatest challenges to the success of your farming operation?

11/ In your opinion what needs to be done to enhance food production on Denman Island?

12/ Can we record inventory information on proposed farm plan mapping?

13/ What types and quantity of farm inputs come from off-island (eg. fertilizer, livestock feed etc.)?

14/ On a scale of 1 to 10 how organic do you consider your farm practices, 10 being certified organic)?

15/ Do you use synthetic pesticides or herbicides?

16. Do you have any other comments for the Denman Island Farm Plan?

APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM CONSUMER INTERVIEWS

The chicken tractor is a good idea.

Greenhouses would provide a steady market.

I would sell more but I don't know what to charge.

It's great that you are getting the community together.

I would like to see people growing fibres.

People should grow more food.

We need more places like community kitchens, food dehydrators, a more permanent market, and a community garden.

I like the honour box system.

I love that the General Store is selling local food.

It's a good idea to bring in fruit from the Okanagan.

The more food here means the less we have to go into town.

Butchering is a problem for many people and more people should be educated about this.

The fridge in the General Store should not be used for non organic or non local produce.

People that buy local want organic.

It's important to get the growers together.

We need a better place like the market.

We bring stuff to the Island because we don't know what's here when we get here.

How to get people to buy local is the question.

The market is good but most of the local growers are not there- one permanent place would be good.

We could grow all the quinoa we want.

We should grow more winter vegetables.

The green box program would be great.

We need more community places to eat and share.

Better marketing- people need to know about produce.

We need to encourage building water storage ponds and stocking them with trout.

The better the farm thing becomes, the more accessible it will be.

Marketing is not the strong suite of growers; farmers need a business plan- all they have are good ideas but no way to see them through.

Image is important- we need positive edification of farmers.

The market should go longer in the season.

We can learn from the arts community- they are doing good things to let us know they are serious; Denman Island farmers need to brand themselves better.

A shared wood chipper would be great for soil building.

We need community garden space. Permanent free access.

The plucker will make things easier.

Kids should be involved- a garden at school and classes/camps.

The garden tour should take place in the summer to see more products and learn.

The Farm Plan is a great idea.

I would encourage more marketing through the General Store.

A central location is important.

More equipment share is needed.

Why isn't the store selling more local food; local food means a lot to me.

The Plan is a wonderful idea: we need more community effort around food and we need leadership.

What about wild harvest?

Marketing is needed.

We need to encourage people with small parcels of land to grow food.

Sustainable community is a great idea.

The more people know about farming the better.

Free planting kits would be a great resource for low income families.

We should produce more on Denman. We are self-sufficient.

We need greenhouses for winter produce.

The market should be in a central location.

I am concerned about losing farmers as they age.

The honour box is good and precious.

I am interested in this field.

Expand the Saturday market.

Farmers' surplus is great- free food.

It's nice that the General Store advertises local food.

A more cohesive food system on the Island is required.

We need a lot more organization.

The General Store should have local food.

Encourage more rain collection and fish culture would take pressure off soil/land.

We need more community allotments.

Encourage maple syrup production.

We have enough land here to produce food for everyone- everyone should grow more.

The eco-school on Saturna Island is a very interesting project that we could learn from.

A Denman Island agricultural project would involve a school and adult education.

Bartering is a good thing.

Roadside stands are great.

Piercy Farm is an example of something that works.

It is not a question of growing more, just preserving it for the winter.

Provincial laws make it difficult to get dairy.

The collective nature of the farmers should increase; seek, when possible, assistance from food-based initiatives.

Storage availability on school grounds should be looked into.

A community greenhouse would be good.

The coop idea is a good one- no duplication of products, better synergy and economy of scale.

Young people should grow more food.

Denman should grow a brand for its produce.

Think globally, act locally can be applied to more farming.

Bartering is great; food coop esp. to deal with surplus would be a good thing

I am thankful that farm here.

We need incentives for gardeners to become farmers; water is an issue

When I think about what would be missing in an emergency I think dairy. A communal cow would be good food security wise.

Facebook (and other social media) is a good tool for local marketing

I have noticed more and more food grown here in the past years.

Make sure to include animal ethics in the Plan.

Raccoon control is needed on the Island.

We should grow more food.

There should be more education about how to farm.

I am very much in support of the Plan.

More organization is needed.

More roadside stands; the once a week market is not convenient for us.

Year round presence of farmers market.

Permanent market like Errington.

Because everyone has a garden, increased marketing might be a problem.

We need a permanent home for farmers to sell goods.

I would like to reduce my carbon footprint if possible.

I love fresh and local food.

It is really important to produce more food locally.

I can't always get to the market, would be better if it was more often.

I am in favour of food sustainability.

I am in favour of a more cohesive food system.

Don't cut down forest to grow food (CO2).

Certain types of food makes sense to import, cutting down forest for food production does not make sense.

I like that the grocery store is selling local food.

Coolers on the side of the road make sense as long as they are consistent.

The Farm Plan is a good thing.

Finding the time to shop here is difficult.

Getting more organized would be good.

If I spent more time here, I would be more interested.