

**Extending BC Local Food Purchasing on Campus: Connecting SPUD with Sage Bistro**

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## **Abstract**

A food system at the University of British Columbia (UBC), which obtains food from local sources can have direct benefits to consumers in the form of fresh and nutritious food. As well, the local economy is boosted when local farmers and food producers are supported, and reduced food mileage saves the environment. Finally a sense of caring and community can be fostered at UBC as consumers build a connection to their food source. Supporting and strengthening the local food shed is essential in creating a sustainable campus. The UBC Food Systems Project (UBCFSP) is implementing new initiatives to move the UBC food system towards sustainability. Guided by the objectives of Scenario 4 of the UBCFSP: Extending BC local food purchasing on campus, Group 4 investigated the following: Local food initiatives adopted by the University of Toronto (U of T) in collaboration Local Flavor Plus (LFP), The Vancouver Food Policy Council, Small Potato Urban Delivery (SPUD), UBC Food Services (UBCFS), Sage Bistro and Natty King (a local producer). Data was collected via literature reviews, phone interviews and email correspondence. Group 4 acted as a catalyst in initiating a business relationship between Sage Bistro, SPUD and UBCFS. The project culminated as a focus group attended by representatives of the organizations listed above as well as Liska Richer, UBCFSP Coordinator and Group 4 members. As a result of the focus group Sage Bistro will incorporate local foods acquired from SPUD into their menu on a trial bases to test customer reception and further explore the business potential of incorporating local foods into their menu. In the long-term alternative local food producers and distributors will need to be explored as a means to meet increased quantity and variety demands by Sage Bistro and potentially other UBC food providers.

## **1.0 Introduction**

The UBC Food System Project (UBCFSP) is a community-based action research study which was created in 2001 by the Faculty of Land and Food Systems and the Sustainability Office's Social Ecological Economic Development Studies Program (SEEDS). The overarching goal of the project is to create a sustainable food system within the UBC community, which will protect and enhance the environment and increase community awareness and responsibility.

Over the past six years, students in AGSC 450 have worked together in groups to examine the sustainability of the UBC food system. In 2006, Group 23 tested the feasibility of incorporating local, seasonal foods into the UBC Residence cafeteria menus. In addition, Group 19 researched the practicalities of purchasing local foods, and investigated whether it was an economically viable option. This group successfully created the foundation of knowledge required to increase local food purchasing by researching the contracts, statistics, and purchasing procedures of UBC Food Services (UBCFS) and AMS Food and Beverage (AMSFB).

This year, our group (Group 4) was given the opportunity to work on Scenario 4, which entailed extending BC local food purchasing on campus. We used a two fold approach to tackle this goal. To address the big picture, research was conducted on successful local food initiatives occurring at other institutions, such as the University of Toronto's partnership with Local Flavors Plus. Once we determined how this partnership facilitated the move towards a local sustainable food system at the University of Toronto, we scanned the BC environment to identify local distributors, producers and other groups that may be able to partner with UBCFS in a similar manner to increase local food

procurement. Some of these groups were contacted to assess their interest in participating in the UBCFSP.

We decided to narrow the focus of the project so that we could concentrate on one small scale change that would represent a small step towards a more sustainable food system. One UBC food outlet, Sage Bistro, was identified as a good pilot location that could serve locally produced foods supplied by one local retailer, Small Potatoes Urban Delivery (SPUD). Efforts were made to increase connections between these groups and UBCFS. Ultimately, the goal is to increase the number of UBC food outlets participating in the local foods mandate in stages, until the whole campus is supplied by local producers.

## **2.0 Definitions**

When the word sustainability is mentioned, many people automatically think of environmentalism. However, sustainability goes beyond protecting the environment. It is based on three pillars: social, economic and environmental. To be sustainable, an activity must be able to continue over the long term without compromising any social input, economic factor or natural resource. A general definition of sustainable development that our group all agreed upon was from the International Institute on Sustainable Development, and it reads as follows:

*Sustainable development focuses on improving the quality of life for all of the Earth's citizens without increasing the use of natural resources beyond the capacity of the environment to supply them indefinitely. (IISD, 2000)*

We chose a definition of development that addresses the need of our current society to develop into one that is more sustainable. We recognize this development as different from the economic notion of growth, since it encompasses more than increasing gross domestic product of any one country.

As we assessed the sustainability of UBC's food system from this definition, it became clear that a movement toward a more local food supply was needed. The environmental concerns related to the fossil fuels required to ship products long distances, and the growing of these products in monoculture systems are staggering (Halweil, 2002). Reducing shipping distances, diversifying agricultural land, bringing consumers closer to their food and keeping money in the local economy are efficient ways of achieving a more sustainable food system (Halweil, 2002). Moving toward a more local system will put pressures on local land bases to produce a greater diversity of products. This will protect farmers from crop failure and market fluctuations (Gliessman, 2000). Furthermore, diversity has always been a protective characteristic of natural ecosystems, as it helps expand nutrient availability and cycling while protecting against disease and pest epidemics (Gliessman, 2000). By strengthening agroecosystems, reliance on inputs will diminish, reducing farming costs and pressures on the environment (Gliessman, 2000). Bringing consumers closer to the source of their food will give them a greater sense of place, helping them appreciate their food and the natural mechanisms that created it. By internalizing this thought process, more time will hopefully be spent planning nutritious meals and enjoying them with family and friends. As consumers begin to spend more money on local food, this money will remain in the local economy

and will have a snowball effect as this money is circulated back into the local market (Halweil, 2002).

In order to make recommendations on how to achieve a local food system, we must first define what we mean when we say local. There has been much debate on whether local is strictly dependant on distance, disregarding political borders, or if it takes these borders into account, preferring, in our case, a product from the Peace River region over one from Washington. One of our project partners, SPUD, had a strict definition of local based solely on distance, with products from within 200 km being ultra local, and products from within 800 km being local. Under this scale international products from across the border are included.

After some discussion our group agreed that our definition would include more than distance. Local, for us, means food shed sovereignty. By keeping local within political boundaries, it becomes an expression of our values and morals beyond the environment. We should be able to control our food through more than just our dollars. A product from Washington may be closer, but its production may have been under different labor laws or input regulations. We should be able to lobby our government to assure that these laws reflect our goals as a society for a sustainable food system.

### **3.0 Problem Definition**

The overall goal of Scenario 4 was to increase the levels of local food procurement on the UBC campus. To achieve this goal it was necessary to identify local food distributors, retailers and producers willing to sell local food products to UBC food providers while being able to meet important criteria, such as dependability, sufficient



quantity, high quality, and low costs. To make the goal more attainable, we narrowed our focus to one campus food outlet, Sage Bistro, which is operated by UBCFS. We reasoned that by concentrating on a single food outlet, a staged approach could be used where different food service locations are gradually added to the local foods mandate. This would allow UBCFS to evaluate the advantages and difficulties inherent to using local products and give local farmers time to increase their supply of desired fruits and vegetables. Sage Bistro was chosen as a good pilot location because this fine dining and catering outlet would likely be better able to absorb the potentially higher cost of local items and may be more interested in using seasonal products in their menus. A previous Agsc 450 group (Group 19, 2006) had identified SPUD as an “exciting opportunity for collaboration” and a provider of local foods that warranted more investigation. With this in mind, we decided to concentrate our efforts on determining the interest and feasibility of starting up a business relationship between Sage Bistro and SPUD, a possible retailer.

#### **4.0 Vision Statement**

In order to work towards the overarching goal of the UBCFSP, we adhered to the seven guiding principle of the Vision Statement:

1. Must protect *and* enhance the diversity and the integrity of the natural ecosystem and resources that supports it.
2. Relies on local inputs when possible, where inputs and waste are recycled and/or composted locally.
3. Is a secure system that provides food that is affordable, available, accessible, culturally, ethically and nutritionally appropriate, and safe and can adapt to changes.

4. Nourishes the present generation to provide for healthy diets that do not compromise the food security of present or future generations.
5. Nurtures feelings of community and promotes enjoyment of food around the food table.
6. Fosters awareness, understanding and personal responsibility within the community of every component from production to disposal.
7. Contains a balance of imported and local foods that come from socially and ecologically conscious producers to ensure long-term financial viability.

The Vision Statement for a sustainable UBC food system has laid out seven guiding principles as an outline of goals and objectives that must be fulfilled in order to make progress in the UBCFSP. Our group went through and discussed all of the 7 guiding principles. We agreed that statement #2, which states the importance of relying on local inputs when possible, was most pertinent to our case. The more we can rely on local foods, the more we will create opportunities for increased production in our local communities. Also, statement #7, which talks about balancing local and imported foods that come from socially and ecologically conscious producers, is very important to our case because it is not feasible at this point to live on 100% local food. There was a discrepancy in opinion between our group members about providing affordable, accessible, cultural, and ethical foods in statement #3. Some of our group members thought that access to cultural foods was important, but were concerned as to what extent these products should be imported from vast distances to provide complete cultural diets. If local food is to be relied upon then statement #3 is somewhat contradicting the overall vision because many regions can not provide all cultural food items locally, and would have to rely heavily on imported foods. The other group members who did agree with

statement #3 thought that it was important, especially with the diverse ethnicity in Canada, to make sure that all cultures are provided with appropriate foods; however it was agreed that there is some confusion on where we should draw the line. For the rest of the vision statement goals, our group agreed that they were all vital for the success of a sustainable food system, and that they were the principles by which we would try to abide by throughout this project. We feel that the vision statement is a functional reference guide to follow not only on this project, but in our everyday lives.

### **5.0 Identification of Value Assumptions**

Our group is composed of different ethnic cultures and family backgrounds, yet we all have a passion for creating a more sustainable food system. All of us hold a weak anthropocentric viewpoint in addressing our problem statement. We do prioritize human needs, but at the same time, we recognize our dependence on the intricate connectivity of natural ecosystems to ensure our own health. Essentially, all creatures rely on each other by cooperating with the environment. We view our project through the lens of an ecologically integrated paradigm. A sustainable food system depends on mutual and symbiotic relationships that emphasize diversity and social equity. Economic goals cannot be neglected since economics is one of the three pillars of sustainability. The three pillars need to be balanced by the guiding principles so that none of the pillars are overly emphasized and tip the scale.

Every food system is different due to cultural, geographical, economic, environmental and social distinctiveness. However, UBC, as an internationally recognized educational institution, can be used as a model to demonstrate how a

sustainable food system could operate. The university, with its own community, its own farm and its own distribution network, can be viewed as a microcosm of the larger food system; a microcosm that may be capable of encouraging larger steps towards world food sustainability. There are barriers and limitations to implementing policies for a more sustainable food system at UBC but we feel that this is a worthwhile goal to work towards. Through collaboration with local distributors/retailers and relationship building, we feel that we are paving the way towards a greater path of sustainability. We can promote an awareness of the benefits of consuming local foods to our health and to the health of our ecological systems while considering consumer preferences, seasonality and business logistics. We hope that UBC will ameliorate not only its food system by incorporating more local foods, but also function as one of the pioneers in the aggrandizement of community based networking and communicating.

## **6.0 Methodology**

In order to conduct effective research in the context of the UBC food system, our group based this research project on the “community-based action research” methodology. Community-based research is most useful in community settings. In order for this method to be effective all members of the community must be involved in the design and implementation of research projects (Stringer, 1999). This approach favours consensual and participatory procedures that “enable people (a) to investigate systematically their problems and issues, (b) to formulate powerful and sophisticated accounts of their situations, and (c) to devise plans to deal with the problems at hand.” (Stringer, 1999). Our research followed these guidelines by collaborating with UBCFS,

Sage Bistro, SPUD and UBC students to help devise future research and action goals together.

We employed a variety of research collection methods including literature reviews, phone interviews, email correspondence, surveys, and the organization of a ‘focus group’ meeting. Before any phone or email contact we sent copies of the project introduction letter and ethics consent form to ensure that we met the ethical guidelines of the UBCFSP.

Our literature reviews included past findings from AGSC 450 students, current class material from AGSC 450, scholarly reviewed journals, magazine and newspaper articles, and an array of websites. The focus of our initial literature review was to obtain current information on the topic of extending B.C. local food purchasing on campus and to generate ideas for a specific project focus.

After key contacts were identified, email correspondence was initiated with the following organizations: Vancouver Food Policy Council, Local Flavour Plus, the University of Toronto, SPUD, UBCFS and Natty King (a local producer). This correspondence was in part done through collaboration with other groups in the same UBSFSP scenario. Specifically, questions were devised by all groups for each of the respective organizations and then compiled into individual surveys and sent out via email. See Appendix A for copies of these surveys. Our group later contacted Sage Bistro directly and an email survey was sent out. Some of the correspondence with SPUD was made via phone (see Appendix A.4).

Our list of possible producers was obtained by visiting the Certified Organic Association of British Columbia, as well as the Fraser Valley Marketing Association

websites, which list producers by region and product. (See Appendix C.2 for a list of local producers)

### **Meeting Organization**

After initial research results and further consultation with the teaching staff, it was decided that we would focus our project on identifying the interest and feasibility of starting up a business relationship between Sage Bistro and SPUD. In this vein, a focus group was organized between SPUD, Sage Bistro, UBCFS, and the UBCFSP. The following parties were contacted by email or in person to ascertain interest in attending this meeting and determine availability: John Flipse, Manager of Sage Bistro; a chef from Sage Bistro; Darren Stott, Marketing and Purchasing Manager SPUD; Andrew Parr, Director UBCFS; Dorthy Yip, General Manager of Retail Operation, Purchasing & Project Coordination UBCFS; Liska Richer, UBCFSP Coordinator, Sessional Instructor AGSC 450; DeLisa Lewis, Teaching Assistant AGSC 450; and representatives from Scenario 4 AGSC 450.

Once a meeting date was established for March 19<sup>th</sup> and a venue was secured, invitations, meeting objectives and a meeting itinerary were devised and emailed to each of the parties invited (See Appendix B). The meeting was held from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. at the Vancouver SPUD office located at 1660 E. Hastings St. One of our group members facilitated the meeting, another gave a brief 'pitch' for local food purchasing, and the others took notes. An MP3 recorder was obtained on loan from the Land and Food Systems Media department and the entire meeting was recorded and later transcribed and summarized into detailed notes (See Appendix B.3). An entirely local dish was also prepared by our group and served at the meeting. Minutes of the meeting were sent to all

attendees the following week and another email follow-up was made three weeks after this meeting to Sage Bistro, SPUD and UBCFS.

## **7.0 Findings and Discussion**

### ***7.1 Local Flavors Plus***

Local Flavour Plus (LFP) is a non-profit organization that acts as a link between local farmers and consumers. The interest in this organization related to the UBCFSP stems from LFP's recent collaboration with the University of Toronto (U of T) aimed at bringing local food to the U of T campus. We contacted the Vice President of LFP, Mike Schreinre, to get information on how exactly LFP and U of T are working together. Unfortunately Mr. Schreinre was extremely busy, as their organization has been receiving an enormous amount of attention and could not answer our survey. (See Appendix A.1 for the survey intended for LFP). Since we could not get these questions answered directly we did some of our own research on Local Flavour Plus. Most of the information was obtained from the LFP website.

Certification standards are the key component of LFP's work in that a set of standards for farmers and processors have been established by LFP which must be passed in order to be eligible for certification (Local Flavour Plus, 2007). Certification is determined using a points system, whereby points are given to certain aspects of an operation. A minimum score must be achieved to be eligible for certification. (LFP, 2007). The standards include whether a business is local, methods of crop/animal production, fair labor, practice biodiversity, low energy use, and little packaging (LFP, 2007). (An overview of the LFP standards is provided in Appendix C.1.) Once a farmer

or producer has met the standards set by LFP, it is connected to an institution like U of T (LFP, 2007). U of T and their consumers benefit from LFP certification as they have the assurance that the farmers and producers supplying the food are local and adhere to sustainable practices. LFP certification distinguishes local and sustainable businesses from others and helps them generate more revenue by connecting them with institutions like U of T.

### ***7.2 University of Toronto***

Anne MacDonald, Director of Ancillary Services at the University of Toronto, was helpful in answering questions regarding the process U of T is undergoing to incorporate local and sustainable foods into the campus food system. This movement was initiated when the founder of LFP approached U of T with the idea to bring local and sustainable foods on campus. U of T jumped onboard, as they have been working to become a greener campus over the last few years and liked the idea of supporting local food producers. The movement is still in its early stages with only a few items being incorporated into the menus of most residences and food outlets at the St. George campus (Thring, 2006). Food continues to arrive on campus as it always has; many of the producers that U of T has always ordered from meet the criteria to be certified by Local Flavour Plus. In addition, local farmers have been integrated into the existing distribution system. Long-term goals for the U of T food system include participation in the movement by more campus food outlets, incorporation of a greater number of local and sustainable food items into campus menus, and certification of additional local farms by LFP so that more local producers can supply the university food system. At the same time food, costs must remain manageable.



(Please refer to Appendix A.2 for the detailed email interview with Anne MacDonald).

The collaboration between LFP and U of T although in its early stages, has so far been successful. We feel that the development of their business relationship should be followed and could perhaps function as a model for creating a sustainable food system at UBC. The Vancouver Food Policy Council was contacted as a potential resource for support in establishing an organization similar to LFP in Vancouver.

### ***7.3 The Vancouver Food Policy Council***

The Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC) is a multi-disciplinary group whose main goal is to “examine the operation of a local food system and provide ideas and policy recommendations for how it can be improved” (City of Vancouver, 2007). One of the VFPC’s current initiatives is the Vancouver Food Charter that was recently adopted by the City of Vancouver and tries to encourage the production and use of sustainable and local products (City of Vancouver, 2007). Because we recognized that the VFPC’s vision and goals are similar to those of the UBCFSP, we initially considered trying to forge connections between the VFPC and LFP in the hopes that such a relationship would lead to LFP establishing a BC branch or the VFPC facilitating the formation of a similar organization in Vancouver. To this end we emailed a representative of the VFPC with a number of questions (see Appendix A.6 ). Yona Sipos responded that the VFPC would certainly support such an organization if it were to move to or be established in the area, but would likely not be involved in its formation.

### ***7.4 Sage Bistro***

Sage Bistro prides itself on using only high quality ingredients and being the only fine dining restaurant on the UBC campus. As a restaurant they are open only for lunch,

with a peak time between noon and one. They can seat 160 customers, who are made up of mostly UBC faculty and administration staff. In the evening, they cater weddings and conferences.

Sage Bistro creates weekly and biweekly menus based on a 12 season year. Each month consists of a different season, and the chefs prepare menus based on seasonal foods. Currently, Sage Bistro acquires as much fresh produce as possible from the UBC Farm. However, the UBC Farm is not a traditional farm in that their purposes is not for profit, but for student research and education, and so are not always able to supply adequate varieties and quantities of produce to Sage Bistro. In addition, Sage Bistro currently markets local wines, and serves local poultry and milk.

The restaurant is looking to serve more local foods. Although some customers would like to see more organic items, Sage Bistro, as a company, desires to offer a menu with more local foods being a priority over organic. Sustainability is one of the current mandates of UBC, and Sage feels it is important to represent that belief by providing customers with local foods. A menu with local ingredients would be feasible as the chefs are able to design menus based on foods that are locally available and in season.

Although the menu changes frequently, the restaurant always serves some variety of potatoes and lettuces. Some of the produce they use are small pumpkins, spring mix, spinach, and sprouts. Furthermore, they serve specialty ingredients, such as purple cauliflower, different colored carrots, and tiny zucchinis. One of their staff members has a large garden, and he provides many of the tomatoes they serve, some of which are actually grown on site at Sage. In addition to growing tomatoes, they also grow some of their own herbs.

There are a few challenges with offering local foods on the menu. First and foremost, local foods can often be more expensive. John stated that his major concern is cost, whereas the chef is more concerned with quantity. Students are not the only ones sensitive to prices; staff and faculty also perceive increases in menu items. For this reason, Sage is unwilling to substantially mark up the price of foods. However, Sage pointed out that it is the only fine dining restaurant at UBC and customers have no other choice if they wish to stay on campus.

In addition to prices, Sage has had a difficult time getting the variety and quantity they desire from Allied Foods. At times orders are submitted to Allied Foods that at the last minute can't be filled. For catered events, customers often want special ingredients that Allied Foods is often unable to deliver. Sage frequently has to edit their menu at the last minute to make up for the missing ingredients.

Sage appears to recognize their customers' values and needs. Although they do not heavily market local foods, patrons of the restaurant are able to see the tomatoes growing on the roof and pick from local wines on the menu. John and the chefs are aware that customers perceive price in quality, and feel that most people are cooperative in paying more for local ingredients.

### ***7.5 UBC Food Services (UBCFS)***

UBCFS is the main food provider at UBC. It is a self-sufficient, self-funded business at the university that operates cafeterias, snack bars and franchises, food services at the residences, catering, and a fine dining/catering option at Sage Bistro. UBCFS is one of the key partners in the UBCFSP and has implemented some of the suggestions made by past student groups in an effort to move towards a sustainable food system.

Sustainability is identified in the UBCFS vision statement as one the core values that will “flavor” its operations and growth. Some examples of their sustainability initiatives include their use of only fair trade, organic coffee at all food service outlets (excluding franchise operations) and their purchasing of some produce items from the UBC farm.

Some important goals of our project were to confirm UBCFS continued interest in increasing the use of local produce in its operations, to determine where UBCFS is now in terms of local purchasing and to discern whether the attitudes and facts reported by previous Agsc 450 groups remained constant. A presentation given by Andrew Parr, Director UBCFS, and Dorothy Yip, the General Manager of Retail Operation, Purchasing & Project Coordination UBCFS, and a focus group/meeting with SPUD were useful for obtaining this information. A record of questions and answers discussed at the UBCFS’s presentation is provided in Appendix A.3 and a detailed report of our meeting with UBCFS, SPUD and Sage Bistro is given in Appendix B.3.

### **UBCFS’s Attitude in Regards to the Use of Local Products**

UBCFS reaffirmed their desire to make their food operations more sustainable and expand their local food initiative. They would like to be able to market themselves as leaders in sustainability and expressed pride in the success of their fair trade organic coffee project. An article in the Vancouver Sun newspaper recently featured this project and is prominently presented on the UBCFS web page. Although there is some consumer demand for local, sustainable food items, Andrew Parr and Dorothy Yip both made it clear that it is the management team at UBCFS that is driving the sustainability movement because of their own personal interest and because it is part of their organization’s mission statement.

Economic sustainability is of course of utmost importance. Although UBCFS would like to buy all local items they have to consider their bottom line and the fact that local products can be more expensive. In terms of local purchasing, UBCFS would like to start off small enough that their prices are not greatly affected. Students and faculty are generally price sensitive and because they are not driving this initiative, time is needed to educate them on the advantages of local food. As UBCFS has indicated, consumer education is very important so a marketing and awareness campaign should be a part of their local food project.

**Baseline: Where UBCFS is Now in Terms of Local Purchasing**

UBCFSP groups from previous years have investigated options and feasibility for increasing the procurement of local products by UBCFS. Group 19 in 2006 corresponded with Dorothy Yip, and found that UBCFS already obtains most of its meat and eggs from local producers and would like to “focus on produce with respect to sufficient volume and product availability” (Wan et al., 2006). Obstacles to local purchasing by UBCFS that were identified by Group 19 include costs, year round availability, volume, exclusivity contracts, and a reported reluctance on the part of UBCFS to order seasonally since “seasonal purchasing could potentially complicate purchasing procedures and interfere with current exclusivity contracts” (Wan et al., 2006). UBCFS’s current distributor, Allied Foods, already works with fourteen local producers (Wan et al., 2006). Allied Foods is reported to have an interest in accessing more local foods so Group 19 recommends working with Allied Foods to increase the supply of local food to UBCFS outlets (Wan et al., 2006).

Sage Bistro and the Barn are food outlets that UBCFS is currently targeting for their local food initiative. Sage Bistro already purchases as much produce as possible from the UBC farm but finds that the farm cannot meet its high volume needs. In 2003, about \$1100 in produce was purchased from the UBC farm by UBCFS, most of this for Sage Bistro (UBCFS, 2007).

UBCFS is interested in working with seasonal products. Contrary to what was previously reported, UBCFS expressed a willingness to order seasonally and stated that there is some flexibility in their contracts with current suppliers. This may reflect forward movement in how much effort UBCFS is willing to put into bringing local food to campus. The use of seasonal menus not only increases the consumer connection to the local food cycle, but it also helps with the issue of costs. Locally grown produce, in season, should not be more expensive than products produced elsewhere unless substandard wages or unsustainable practices are driving low prices. In fact, locally grown products are often cheaper because of lower shipping costs.

### **Future Directions**

In our discussion with UBCFS, a number of feasible options for increasing local food procurement emerged. The idea of purchasing products directly from local producers, co-ops or from SPUD was well received by UBCFS. They would prefer to work with a co-op or group made up of multiple farmers that could coordinate supply and delivery. The group would have to be able to tell UBCFS how much of a certain product they could supply at what time. UBCFS also mentioned the possibility of preallocation where a group of farmers would grow certain items specifically for UBC. This would help address the problem of sufficient supply. UBCFS needs large volumes and local

farmers may have to build up their production in order to meet the needs of such a big consumer. UBCFS emphasized the importance of initial meetings with such groups but implied that the producers or another go-between would have to be responsible for approaching them with their proposals. Darren Stott, Marketing and Purchasing Manager SPUD, suggested several local farmers who UBC might consider partnering with, as described in more detail in the SPUD section of this paper.

UBCFS also mentioned that the summer season, when local produce is most available, is their slowest time of the year, implying that it is difficult to buy local products at other times. It should be remembered, however, that a number of root and other vegetables can be produced locally year round. Making full use of seasonal products in their menus and ensuring that these are purchased from a local source would be a great step in the right direction for UBCFS. Sage Bistro already has seasonal menus that change monthly and makes use of a lot of specialty products. This location therefore has good potential for purchasing local products.

### ***7.6 Small Potatoes Urban Delivery (SPUD)***

While looking into possible local food suppliers for the UBC campus in 2006, group 19 from the UBCFSP came across a company called Small Potato Urban Delivery (SPUD). We noted that the company was consistent with UBCFSP goals and that the company was already investigating the possibility of expanding into cooperate deliveries, starting with UBC and SFU (Wan et al., 2006). Group 19 made initial contact with Erin Nichols, the Promotions Supervisor at the time, who welcomed continued dialogue with future AGSC colleagues (Wan et al., 2006). Nichols further recommended that the

project continue correspondence with SPUD and stay up-to-date on their progress regarding expansion into corporate deliveries (Wan et al., 2006).

After background research, we confirmed that SPUD fits into our vision of a sustainable and local food system. Small Potatoes Urban Delivery is an organic retailer that integrates economic, environmental and social values into its business activities.

SPUD integrates these values by taking measures to:

- protect the environment by buying local, organic, minimally packaged, and eco-friendly products;
- build community by creating more direct connections between food producers and consumers.
- reduce traffic congestion and pollution by delivering groceries on a set route;
- educate customers about important food issues through a weekly newsletter; and
- donate leftover food to food outreach groups and disadvantaged families (SPUD, 2007).

Since the foundation of the company, SPUD has grown by increasing warehouse facilities, establishing a growing customer base, and building greater connections with like-minded producers and distributors. Currently, it delivers a wide range of grocery items via online orders to people in the greater Vancouver, Calgary, Victoria, and Seattle regions. 100% of the products it sells are organic and over 50% of them are local. SPUD has two main definitions of local. The first is an ‘ultra local’ definition which includes food produced within a 200 km radius of its warehouse; the second is a ‘local’ definition that considers food produced within an 800 km radius.

### **SPUD Corporate Delivery to UBC**

When asked if it was still interested in expanding into corporate delivery, Darren Stott, Marketing and Purchasing Manager at SPUD, stated that it is interested and has



done some research in this area, but it hasn't expanded into corporate delivery areas yet (Stott, personal communication, survey). When asked about potentially supplying UBC campus with local foods, David Van Seters, founder and CEO, mentioned that he is aware of the price constraints that large food establishments like those at UBC face in terms of purchasing, and explained that SPUD is a retailer, which means that it has to mark-up the prices that it gets from its own distributors. David did show interest in SPUD supplying the campus directly with small-scale orders, but recommended that for large-scale (campus wide) purchases it would be more economically viable for UBC Food Services to go to the distributors directly. SPUD's main distributor for produce is Discovery Organics. Another Agsc 450 group involved in the 2007 UBCFSP is investigating the possibility of working with this distributor, therefore we didn't pursue this avenue. Through this initial research we realized that SPUD has not expanded into large cooperative delivery and isn't able to currently supply all UBC Food Outlets with local produce; however, we still saw some potential for a smaller-scale business relationship, specifically with Sage Bistro as discussed in a previous section.

### **Starting Small: Setting up a Business Relationship with SPUD**

As a group we met and decided that SPUD has a lot of benefits as a starting point for local food procurement on campus on a small scale and short-term basis. They are able to provide grocery orders weekly at free-delivery costs, and it has a central facility with which to gather local food from many producers in the Vancouver area. We were interested in finding out more about the capacity that SPUD would have to supply Sage Bistro with local produce items. David Van Seters was interested in hearing more from us

and collaborating on this scale (28 February, 2007). He turned us over to his Marketing and Purchasing Manager, Darren Stott, to develop this contact further.

We determined through email correspondence that Stott was enthusiastic to attend our planned meeting; he even offered the SPUD office as a location. Through this meeting, the above information was affirmed. SPUD didn't feel it could supply UBC Food Services with large orders and noted that even though they sell some wholesale items such as Avalon milk to Safeway, they specialize in single unit sales. They reaffirmed that they do have mark-ups on prices due to being a retailer and that their online price lists are subject to change monthly. They recommended that if UBC was to look into substantially increasing local food supply on campus in the long run it would be best to go through the distributors themselves or go directly to the producers. SPUD was willing to help out in this process, by giving names of producers that they buy local produce from, including: Richmond Specialty Mushrooms, Myers Organic Farms, Cucum farm, and B.C. hothouse. Meyers, in particular, was noted as having amazing quality products. Thomas Reed was also noted as a supplier for organic poultry and an unnamed potato farmer in Pemberton was noted as currently looking to expand into other produce items. These would all be producers that UBCFS could further connect with.

(Stott, 19 March 2007)

These developments were all looked at as longer term projects, but, in the meantime, SPUD was interested in being the 'start up' company for Sage Bistro. Namely, it would be a place where Sage Bistro could start ordering local food on a small scale to test the waters in their menu and in their prices. SPUD advised Sage to start small by introducing some items into its menu that could be marketed as local and organic foods to

elicit customer support. SPUD agreed to put together a wholesale and retail price list for Sage Bistro under confidentiality and to contact them regarding setting up weekly orders, and, if need be, extra delivery services to campus outside of their Wednesday delivery depending on quantity needs. In short, SPUD would start supplying Sage with some fresh produce items and this would be a first step in determining customer response and willingness to pay for the extra benefits of organic local produce in the short term. In the long run, if the foods are received well, SPUD recommends that UBCFS obtain foods directly from distributors and producers to meet quantity, variety and cost demands. (Stott, 19 March 2007)

### ***7.7 Natty King - Hazelmere Organics***

Hazlemere Organic Farm in South Surrey produces certified organic produce for the organic grocery stores, wholesalers, and fine restaurants in the Vancouver area (Capers, 2006). By practicing traditional methods of top soil management with a respect for the environment, they aim to supply the local community with nutritious, GMO free organic products (Capers, 2006). The six acre farm grows over 115 varieties of products, though it is famous for fava beans, green onions and beets. Many of these products are staple seasonal ingredients in many top local restaurant kitchens, including Bishop's. Hazelmere along with Bishops have begun programs to help young farmers and culinary students nurture a sustainable food future (Capers, 2006).

Gary and Natty King run Hazelmere Farms. Natty King is particularly interested in community events focusing on community, conservation, cultivation and cuisine (Capers, 2006). Through dinner parties, regional meetings, and connections through the community, Natty is devoted to improving the food system in the Lower Mainland

(Capers, 2006). Furthermore, she is a staple contributor to the Faculty of Land and Food Systems' Fall Community Dinner. Through helping plan a local menu, and gathering ingredients, Natty is an invaluable source for this community based event. Natty King was out of town when our meeting with SPUD occurred but expressed interest in hearing more about the UBCFSP in the future.

## **8.0 Recommendations**

### ***8.1 Sage Bistro***

Sage Bistro will be able to successfully incorporate local foods into its menu with several small steps. John Flipse stated that it would be easy to incorporate a local vegetarian dish into the menu, although meat dishes might be harder. Sage might be able to start with one small entrée at lunch, depending on what ingredients are in season for that month. We suggest that Sage start out relatively small, and partner up with SPUD and one or two distributors. Once they test the waters to see if it is a sustainable undertaking, they can branch out with more ingredients and producers. If it is feasible, perhaps the chef can develop more local meals to add to the menu.

The restaurant currently offers inexpensive meals, but might have to have a premium price on local entrees. The increase in price might be deflected by absorbing some of the costs in catering expenses. In addition, some of the additional fees can be balanced out by narrowing the profit margins. If the premium price is not successful with customers, Sage has the option of offering smaller portions. Since the restaurant is open mainly for lunch, it can be more flexible with portion size. Overall, the chefs would like

to offer quality over quantity. Furthermore, Sage should be able to adjust the price accordingly for local ingredients in their catering menus.

Marketing and public relations should play a big role in their conversion to a local menu. It is important to promote consumer awareness and sense of pride when participating in UBC's sustainability movement. Sage can easily create a marketing package around the menu, and incorporate local foods into existing entrees. In addition, Sage Bistro can create specials that are not part of the regular menu, which will help them market the local food movement. Furthermore, SPUD suggested that Sage can create charts which indicate to the customers the percentage of local ingredients in the menu, and set a goal for next year. To make this venture successful, it is important to encourage customer participation in creating a more sustainable food system.

## ***8.2 UBCFS***

UBCFS is definitely moving in the right direction in terms of sustainability and states a desire to increase its local food procurement. Our recommendations for UBCFS and suggested three year target to further this goal are listed below. These recommendations also point to potential areas of research for future Agsc 450 groups as some coordination and legwork may be necessary.

- Support Sage Bistro's tentative plan to introduce local and sustainable items to their menu by enabling them to order products from SPUD. Aim for an order being place by summer of 2007 with the goal of building a business relationship.
- Encourage marketing and public awareness campaigns at Sage Bistro and the Barn that explain the importance of local foods. Marketing strategies can be as simple as having a sign in the restaurant reporting how much locally produced food is being used or an icon on the menu identifying a "sustainable" item.

- Investigate the possibility of building a partnership with a local producer or group of producers. Darren of SPUD, local producers recommended by Darren and Natty King are good contacts to explore. Agsc 450 groups can look into the feasibility of having a producer grow a number of items for Sage Bistro or a single item for all UBCFS outlets. Aim to have an initial meeting with such a group by spring 2008.
- Begin communications with Natty King from Halzelmere Organic Farm to further expand the business connection with UBCFS and Sage Bistro. Natty has extensive experience with connecting local restaurants and grocery stores with local and organic produce. She would be an invaluable ally when sourcing for Sage Bistro's future local menus.
- Keep track of the amount of money going towards local produce for UBCFS outlets and the number of local food initiatives being tried. Increase the amount of money spent and the number of initiatives implemented each year for 3 years. This is a rather open target but we recommend focusing on building processes to enable local food purchasing rather than on strictly numerical targets.
- Assess the success of local food initiatives annually to decide which ones to build upon and which ones to alter or discard.

### ***8.3 SPUD***

As a group we agree with all the recommendations made by Darren Stott as mentioned above, and we encourage future colleagues to continue correspondence with SPUD. Spud has proven to be a very helpful information source for local food in the Vancouver Mainland and a great starting point for Sage Bistro to begin purchasing local organic foods.

### ***8.4 LFP and U of T***

We feel that future students involved in the UBCFSP should follow the development of the business relationship between LFP and U of T. Further incorporation of local foods into U of T food outlets and success of the program should be monitored. It

is possible that some of the methods employed by U of T in an effort to become a sustainable campus could be adopted by UBC.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

It is our hope to bring more local produce to UBC in order to continue it's transformation into a more sustainable food system. As a group we recognize the need to have both short-term and long-term goals for this transformation. In the short-term we have initiated a business relationship between Sage Bistro, an outlet of the UBCFS, and Small Potato Urban delivery. This relationship will provide Sage Bistro with an opportunity to increase their local food purchasing in order to determine the possibility of larger-scale purchasing and implementation of local foods into their menu in the long run. This small step will help Sage Bistro and UBCFS access consumer response and willingness to pay for fresh local food menu items. We hope that Sage Bistro will function as a template for other campus retailers and be a small step in the direction towards sustainability. In the long-term, in order to fill its large scale food demands at reasonable costs, it seems that UBCFS will have to develop a direct connection with local food distributors and the producers themselves. We anticipate that our work will be an inspiration to future colleagues who continue to pursue these opportunities for increased local food procurement on the UBC campus. Not only will this help our economy, it will help build a sense of community in the Lower Mainland, increase social awareness, and enhance environmental sustainability.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Appendix A.1: Survey Question for Local Flavour Plus**

- 1) What proportion of total food is currently supplied to U of T with the program
- 2) What is the history of how the program got up and started?
- 3) How did you work around existing distributing contracts?
- 4) Is there possibilities that Local Flavour Plus could expand to have a Vancouver/BC branch?
- 5) How can Vancouver/UBC begin to start a program like Local Flavour Plus?
- 6) Are members of a Food Policy council in Toronto involved in the program?
- 7) How is the program working with U of T so far?

### **Appendix A.2: Email Correspondence with University of Toronto**

Email interview with Anne MacDonald;  
Director of Ancillary Services at U of T

██████████  
e-mail: ██████████

Monday February 26, 2007

Hello Anne MacDonald,

I'm writing to you on behalf of my classmates in the faculty of Land and Food Systems at UBC. As part of a major term project the students of AGSC 450 are working to make the campus food system more sustainable. We are interested in the movement the University of Toronto has made (in collaboration with Local Flavor Plus) in incorporating local and sustainable foods into the campus food system. We have a few questions that we were hoping could be answered for us.

Please see the attached consent for as well as more information on the project.

Thanks in advance for your help,

Sincerely Stacie Andriashyk

- 1) What was the driving force that pushed you to make the change to local and sustainable food?

U of T has been working hard to become a greener campus over the last few years:

<http://www.media.utoronto.ca/universitymatters.htm>

<http://www.sustainability.utoronto.ca/>

When LFP approached us with this project, the timing was excellent (we were about to commence a RFP process for our foodservices) and given our commitment to increasing our sustainable practices in other areas, this made a lot of sense.

- 2) Did Local Flavor Plus approach you with the idea or vice versa?

LFP didn't exist at the time that this idea took shape – the founder of LFP approached the University first with the idea for a partnership and was able to form the organization as a result of our agreement to participate.

- 3) Are all food outlets on campus participating in the transition to serving local and sustainable foods? If not how many are currently participating?

Most of our food operators are participating; the ones that did not initially participate seem interested in doing so next year.

- 4) Are there plans to bring more local foods onto campus over time? Are your goals to provide 100% local?

It would be great to have 100% local foods on campus, but I'm not sure that is a realistic goal – it is not our goal at this point. Our goal has simply been to participate and to increase the amount of our participation each year. Each foodservice operator has set its own targets for purchasing (and our largest food contractor has been given targets to meet as part of their contract with U of T).

As LFP certifies more farmers and producers, we will buy from them. The response from students and other community members has been extremely positive, and the food tastes great. As long as we can add products and not increase our food costs beyond a manageable amount, there's no reason for us to limit our local purchases.

- 5) How do you work around the seasonal variations in availability of produce? For example do food outlets have seasonal menus?

LFP has certified a greenhouse operation and many "hardier" types of foods can be stored by farmers for several months (apples, potatoes, squash). There are also foods that are available year-round, like dairy, chicken and beef.

The chefs do work with seasonal menus as well – this fall the chef from our largest residence experimented quite a bit with pumpkin and squash recipes (the ravioli with pumpkin filling was particularly good!).

6) What does the U of T define as local and sustainable?

The criteria are described on the LFP website:

<http://www.localflavourplus.ca/standards/farmer/intro>

7) How does the food get to the campuses?

LFP has worked and continues to work with existing food supply chains, so the food gets to campus the way that food has always gotten to campus. The difference is that certified farmers are integrated into the existing distributors' systems. Some local producers do ship themselves (dairy in particular, which is a high volume item in university residences with meal plans, so it is not cost-prohibitive to do this).

8) How did you work around existing contracts with food distributors?

See above response – in some cases we found that we were ordering from producers that met the criteria anyway, in which case LFP has certified those producers. In other cases, we have worked with distributors to get local, sustainable food into the supply chain. U of T does have substantial purchasing clout, which helps us negotiate (or LFP negotiate on our behalf).

### **Appendix A.3: Notes on Communication with UBCFS**

Personal communication with Andrew Parr and Dorothy Yip after their presentation for Agsc 450:

- Are really interested in working with SPUD. Andrew had a lunch meeting with him at Sage a few years ago and were really interested, then nothing came of it
- They are going to provide us a list of what Sage uses monthly by unit in the next week
- Sage is a great partner to work with- they already develop monthly menus and could tailor their menus to seasonal availability
- They noted that a large percentage of the local food available is in the summer when the demand is low on campus
- They wanted to know what SPUD thinks of BC hot house
- Gave us the contact of general manager at Sage bistro who would also be interested in attending the meeting. [REDACTED]
- They are available Monday, March 19 and the morning of the 20th

Notes from the UBCFS Presentation: Andrew Parr, Director, and Dorothy Yip

Agsci 450 Wednesday, March 7, 2007. 1:00pm

**Points important to group 4's final project are highlighted in bold**

- **Sustainability concept is part of their internal mission statement.**
- **Parr quote have “moved environmental impact and other sustainability issues to the forefront of business policy”**
- They have a new contract with Centennial meats who provide all the campuses meat needs and donate 1% of their sales to sustainable initiatives
- **Economic sustainability is really important to them. Cost and associated selling prices. “They have to be very prudent economically.”**
- ½ of cash operations is by branding companies (Starbucks, Tim Hortons, Subway). This is where a lot of the demand and money is. They can't effect the sustainability of these business operations.
- **Sage bistro makes up 7% of UBCFS total revenue. This business already uses some produce from the UBC farm and is interesting in expanding further into more local and seasonal menus and products**
- **He mentioned the option of preallocating what they would purchase from local distributors in order for the supply to be met**

Answers questions posed to Parr and Yip:

1) When does the UBC Food Services contract actually end with distributors? Do you have a copy of the contracts? What are the terms and conditions of this contract?

2) Does UBC Food Services have a fiscal year budget which outlines their spending abilities for specific products? Do you also have ordering lists of which products you most order from, broken up (perhaps) by each division of UBC Food Services? (I.e.: catering, campus foods, etc)

The contracts all end at different dates: examples: February, May (dairy), June (general groceries)

She has copies of all these contracts, who supplies what and when they expire upon request

Allied food is the one that supplies fresh produce, Dorthy said this ends in May

She also noted that part of these contracts do include a sustainability section

3) Are the quantities fixed throughout the year or can there be more seasonal foods throughout the school year?

They generally look for Fixed pricing for a certain length of time to maintain prices for consumers

Cost of food: They generally target 33-34% spending based on revenue

4) Do products strictly have to come from one company (i.e. maybe mayonnaise could be obtained from Allied Foods, and maybe organic vegetables through another source)?

(They ended up answering a different questions)

(Outlets) make their own orders- some outlets use certain products more than others- these are available upon request

But they deal with the main suppliers for all products for all services

Basically they send out a list of all units of food products out to the various outlets who then choose their own desired units

Generally UBCFS prefers to use as much seasonal products as is possible – the suppliers generally switch to local products seasonally on their own because it is more cost effective for them.

UBCFS can request a certain amount of local food but has no stipulations and generally doesn't know where the suppliers get their food from

These suppliers go for what is cheapest at the time and pass these savings on internally and then to customers

5) How far ahead does UBC Food Services order?

UBCFS can order daily (ex. milk), 2-3 times a week ( ex perishables), depending on product.

6) We believe that buying local will inevitably go hand in hand with buying seasonally (perhaps divided in to 2 'seasons'). Is this something that would be possible with the current ordering scheme, and if not, what are the logistical barriers to shifting purchases twice during the year?

Yes, she would like to work with us to have more seasonal produce in UBCFS outlets and seasonal menus- especially the Barn

7) Would it make a difference to distinguish between:

a)changing the foods we ordered throughout the year, but ordering from the same farmers,

or

(preferable) b) keeping the foods ordered the same throughout the year, but ordering locally for half the year, and from further producing areas the other half

The specific question was raised in class was whether they UBCFS could request their suppliers to let them know when they were switching to non-local products so that they could maybe take these products off their menus. Andrew thought it was a good idea.

She talked about how they respond to food availability. If one of her suppliers had a special on cucumbers, they would make cucumber salad on the salad bar

- 8) If we were to increase the amount of food we buy from local farmers, would it be more logical to:
- a) encourage our current distributors to purchase directly from the farmers;
  - b) encourage our current distributors to purchase from small scale distributors or farmers' organizations (ex SPUDS or Coops);
- or
- c) have our food services purchase directly from small scale distributors

She mentioned that they don't tell their suppliers where to buy and don't have much flexibility here- we would have to contact them directly if we wanted to know these things

So answer c)- \*they are definitely interested in working with local co-ops, producers and SPUD. They would need to set up an initial meeting

- 9) When contracts come up for renewal and the bidding process begins, is it possible to add a stipulation about a certain % local food delivered? (or to add this as a stipulation for contract extension if this is the context we're in now?)

They both mentioned that there is flexibility within the contracts! Though I think she said that allied will always be about 80-85% of their supply due to volume. Ex. It takes 70 pounds of potatoes for one day of potato salad at the residences

- 10) We recognize that it may be easier to incorporate local foods into the UBC food system in stages. The University of Toronto, for example, has adopted this approach and is currently introducing local products to their campus in a staged manner. At UBC would it be feasible to choose a few pilot locations, such as Sage Bistro, where local products would be used? A staged approach where different food service locations are gradually added to the local foods mandate would allow UBCFS to evaluate the advantages/difficulties inherent to using local products and give local farmers time to increase their supply of desired fruits and vegetables.

They agree- yes

- Someone asked what a small scale farmer would be to them:
- They said they don't know but would prefer to work with multiple farmers- with one group to coordinate the supply and delivery
- They would have to come to UBCFS directly and state how much they could grow at a specific time
- Initial meetings are quite important

11) One of the project groups would like to concentrate on developing connections between a campus food service outlet, such as Sage Bistro, UBCFS, SPUDS and other local producers. We hope to facilitate a meeting between interested parties to discuss ideas and possibilities. Would a representative of UBCFS be interested in attending such a meeting?

UBCFS would be very interested in setting up a meeting with us

Their longer term goals are:

- the expansion of their local food program
- to be able to promote themselves as leaders in sustainability among other campuses. Right now they don't feel like they can promote themselves as such.

#### **Appendix A.4: Email Correspondence with SPUD**

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

Dear Small Potatoes Urban Delivery,

I am part of a group of students who are conducting an ongoing study on the feasibility of extending BC local food purchasing by the University of British Columbia (UBC). We are currently looking for potential suppliers of local food in the Vancouver area and are aware that you have shown some interest in collaboration with our food project last year. We are still in the beginning stages of this process and would appreciate your help by filling in the below questionnaire. Please email it back to [REDACTED] when it is completed along with any other comments you might have. Your help is much appreciated.

Interview Questions:

- 1) If you haven't already done so, are you interested in expanding into cooperate delivery projects in Vancouver? Have you made any initiatives to expand your operations lately?
- 2) a. What local (B.C. grown) food items are you be able to supply all year round?  
b. What local (B.C. grown) food items are you be able to provide seasonally? These don't need to be organic certified products, just food items produced in BC.
- 3) How do your costs generally compare to other non-organic, non-local suppliers after transportation costs are factored in?
- 4) a. Would you be interested in building a business relationship with the University of British Columbia food providers (UBC Food Services and/or AMS Food and Beverage department)?  
b. Specifically, would you have the capacity to supply *all* of UBC with a few key local

produce items available year round (like potatoes, apples, lettuce, and tomatoes)?

5) If not, what capacity do you have to supply local food to the University?

For example, would you be able to provide only *one* UBC food outlet on campus with key local produce items available year round? Seasonally?

Thank you for your time.

From,

Jennifer Redvers  
Faculty of Land and Food Systems  
University of British Columbia  
[REDACTED]

## **Appendix A.5: Phone Correspondence with SPUD**

### SPUD Phone Interview

David Van Seters (founder and CEO of SPUD); [REDACTED]  
p.m.; [REDACTED]

- He didn't receive my initial email (I told him I would resend it) and he is happy to reply to it.
- He is interested in starting an active relationship with UBC and our food project.
- He is well aware of the economic constraints facing UBC food outlets; specifically, he understands that it would be viable economically (for U.B.C.) to do business with them directly for smaller orders of around \$150 dollars a week. He recommends this approach especially for small-quantity items like spices.
- He states that they do have a mark-up as they are a retailer. They buy their food from various distributors so this would be practical only on a small scale.
- They come to campus on Wednesdays and can supply a large range of groceries.
- For larger-scale local food needs across the campus, he recommends dealing with the distributors directly (to save costs for the university – bypassing the retail price mark-up)
- Some of his distributors are: Discovery Organics (especially produce), Horizon distributors (especially groceries), among others.



- He recommends dealing with Discovery Organics directly.
- He showed interest in supplying one food outlet on campus (Sage Bistro) with their grocery needs.
- He is interested in hearing more from us and collaborating with the campus. He is interested in attending a meeting.

**Appendix A.6 E-mail Correspondence with the Vancouver Food Policy Council via Yona (an Agsc 450 TA)**

Hi Yona,

I hope you don't mind me contacting you with some questions we had for the Vancouver Food Policy Council. I know that you are a member and thought you might know the answers to some of these questions. If you'd like me to submit a more formal email with the correspondence forms please let me know.

We are from group #4 and working on scenario #4. In researching the nonprofit group Local Flavors Plus, we were struck by how much such an organization could help in the logistics and organization behind getting local food into large institutions like UBC and into the community as a whole.

- 1) Do you know of any similar organizations that operate in BC?
- 2) Would you be interested in developing connections with LFP to encourage some activity in BC?
- 3) Would you be interested in facilitating the development of such an organization in BC?

We know that there is only so much that the Agsc 450 class can accomplish in its short time frame and thought that a more permanent group working on this issue would be very beneficial.

Thanks,

Michelle

Michelle,

I am so sorry that I never responded to your previous email. I think it just got lost in the email madness. In cases like that, it's perfectly alright to email with a reminder (not exactly a :hey! respond! but close.)

Ok, your question is: do I think the VFPC would be interested in facilitating the formation of a group similar to Local Flavors Plus"?

Well, I know that the Council is very supportive of initiatives that promote local foods and overall food system sustainability. So, there is little doubt in my mind that the Council would eagerly support such a program. Would the Council facilitate its formation? Likely not. That is not really the role of the VFPC, which is to be more of a coordinating, engaging, linking, outreaching aide to city council. We don't really start new projects, but we help and sometimes enable others to do so. Does that make sense? If you want to meet up to discuss I could do so before class on Wed. Let me know. Otherwise, hope that's helpful.

Good luck! cheers  
Yona

### **A.7 Email Correspondence with Natty King**

Dear Natty King,

I am writing on behalf of a group of AGSCI 450 students from the Faculty of Land and Food Systems at UBC. We are working on a project to increase the sustainability of UBC's Food System. This year, our goal is to connect local food producers with UBC Food Service providers in an attempt to increase local food sustainability. We've identified Sage Bistro as a great pilot location to demonstrate how the use of local food products can add appeal to a restaurant's menu while supporting local food initiatives. We are interested in connecting Sage Bistro with local food producers, who will be able to provide fresh vegetables and other ingredients. We are also working in collaboration with UBC Food Services and hope to connect with a local company called SPUDS, which provides organic food. We are hoping that you could lend some of your expertise and contacts to help us assess the feasibility of this project.

If you are interested, we would like to arrange a meeting with all interested representatives (SPUDS, UBC Food Services, Sage Bistro) to discuss this idea. This meeting would take place at Sage Bistro sometime this month.

In addition, we have some general questions. Please see the attached consent form from the principal investigator of our study and course instructor, Dr. Alejandro Rojas.

- 1) Considering your experiences with Bishops and Capers, do you believe that it would be feasible to support a completely local lunch menu at Sage Bistro?
- 2) What produce do Bishops and Capers purchase from local farms?
- 3) Does Bishops have a completely local menu?

- 4) Do you have access to a list of local organic producers that provide produce to capers and bishops?
- 5) Would you be willing to collaborate with the chef at the Sage bistro at UBC to create a local menu?

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Faculty of Land and Food Systems  
University of British Columbia

## Appendix B

### Appendix B.1: Meeting Objectives

The overall meeting goal is to discuss the feasibility of incorporating more local foods into the UBC community. Specifically, to identify the interest and feasibility of starting up a business relationship between Sage Bistro, an outlet of UBC food services, and SPUD, a possible retailer.

#### Objectives:

- 1) Briefly address the benefits of increasing local food in UBC food outlets; and
- 2) Identify the interest and feasibility of starting up a business relationship between Sage Bistro, an outlet of UBC food services, and SPUD, a possible retailer.
- 3) Identify short-term and long-term goals necessary to continue and strengthen this potential business partnership.

Specific issues that will be discussed are:

- Coming up with a definition of local food that all stakeholders can agree upon;
- Determining seasonal availability of local food from SPUD;
- Identifying types and quantities of food used by Sage Bistro and what they might be interested in obtaining from SPUD;
- Addressing cost issues and other business logistics;
- Discussing any other concerns from the parties present.

### Appendix B.2: Meeting Invitation



*You're invited...*

*What: Meeting between AGSC 450 students (Group 4), SPUD, Sage Bistro, and UBCFS*

*Why: To discuss the feasibility of incorporating local foods into the UBC community, namely Sage Bistro*

*When: Monday March 19, 2007, 4:30 pm*

*Where: SPUD Office, 1660 E. Hastings Street*

*\*\* Please bring with you a summary of your objectives and any relevant information*



### Appendix B.3: Meeting Summary

Date: March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
 Time: 4:30p.m. to 5:50p.m.  
 Location: SPUD Office at 1660 East Hastings

#### Attending parties:

Darren Stott	Marketing and Purchasing Manager, SPUD
John Flipse	Manager of Sage Bistro
Andrew Parr	Director UBC Food Services
Dorothy Yip	General Manager of Retail Operation, Purchasing & Project Coordination UBC Food Services
Liska Richer	UBCFSP Coordinator, Sectional Instructor in AGSC 450
Rob Lazzinnaro	Land, Food and Community 450 UBC students
Jenn Redvers	(Group 4)
Michelle Hasebe	(Group 4)
Stacy Andriashyk	(Group 4)
Hoi Ting Chi	(Group 4)
Maggie Elizabeth Baynham	(Group 9)

#### Meeting Objective:

Identify the interest and feasibility of starting a business relationship between Sage Bistro, a UBC food services outlet, and SPUD, a potential retailer offering sustainable organic products.

#### Tentative Agenda of the meeting:

##### 1.) Opening:

- Introductions
- UBC students' opening statement

##### 2.) Round table discussion:

- a) Definition of local food
- b) Determine seasonal availability of local food from SPUD
- c) Identify types and quantities of food used by Sage Bistro and what they might be interested in obtaining from SPUD
- d) Address cost issues and other business logistics
- c) Discuss any other concerns from the parties present

##### 3.) Conclusion:

Identify short-term and long-term goals necessary to continue and strengthen this potential business partnership.

End of meeting.

With our focus in bringing more local foods to Sage Bistro, our group thought that it might be feasible to bring SPUD into the picture since they specialize in local food sales. Last year's (2006) Agsci 450 colleagues recommended that we strengthen our relationship with SPUD. Therefore, we decided it would be a small but important step to have UBCFS, Sage Bistro and SPUDS meet together to discuss the feasibility of collaboration between Sage and SPUDS and the idea of Sage incorporating more local produce into their menu.

After numerous e-mail and phone contacts, we were able to secure the time, place and attending parties without much difficulty. On March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007, we arrived at the SPUDS office at around 4 pm. We were warmly welcomed and directed towards the conference room which was set up for the meeting. Attending parties arrived one by one as we served a salad with all local ingredients made by one of our fellow group members. After a general introduction by all parties, one of our members went on to state the benefits of collaboration between Sage and SPUD. Due to the increased consumer interest in local foods, augmented concern about individual health and expanded knowledge base of Vancouver citizens, it would be wise for Sage, as a fine dining restaurant in an established institution to incorporate local foods into its menu and be a pioneer in creating a sustainable food system on campus. Successful examples include the Rain City Grill and the Bishop. If SPUD, an established local produce distributor in Western Canada decide to expand its client base to a reliable market such as UBC, it would surely be beneficial to both business and image.

The discussion then started off by SPUD first clarifying that it is a local retailer, specializing in online shopping and home delivery in the form of single units. The representative from SPUD stressed that it is not a distributor. Although it does sell wholesale such as Avalon milk to Safeway, it is not as competent as other distributors. SPUD defines local in 2 categories: ultra local and local. Ultra local is within 200km radius and local is within 800km radius which includes Washington. SPUD maintains a good relationship with several local distributors such as Pro Organics and Discovery organics which are certified 100% organic distributors. Spud also obtains their produce directly from some local farms: for example Richmond Specialty Mushrooms, Myers Organic Farms, Cucum farm and BC Hothouse. Due to SPUD's higher pricing as a retail unit, they recommend introducing a local distributor or a local farm into the project and that Sage can have direct contact with the distributor/farm instead.

The discussion then proceeded to an introduction by John, the manager of Sage as to the operating methodology of Sage and reasons Sage and UBCFS would like to incorporate more local produce. Cost and quality is his main concern if they were to purchase directly from a local distributor or farm. John also seemed earnest in possible cooperation with SPUD and viewed the incorporation of local produce as a potential marketing tool which could raise the awareness of Vancouver's citizens to fine dining with local produce. Moreover, the UBCFS have always been an active participant in Agricultural Science 450 food project every year. UBCFS is open to more new ideas on how to transform UBC into a more sustainable food system. One significant example of

their effort is providing free trade organic coffee on UBCFS food outlets not including Starbucks and Tim Hortons.

Furthermore, a discussion on possible ways Sage could obtain local produce within reasonable pricing started. SPUD's online price lists for its products are subject to change monthly and SPUD realized that it may not be able to produce the amount UBC needs, nor can it satisfy all the speciality products Sage demands. SPUD therefore, suggested Sage to establish direct contact with local farms and distributors. Sage will then be able to obtain speciality products needed for a lower, more reasonable price and farmers are guaranteed a stable market. Some farms which Sage or UBCFS can consider include: Myers Organic Farm which is a long running well established farm in the Fraser Valley with amazing quality products. Products include spinach, radishes, and organic greens. SPUD had a satisfying relationship with them. Another one is a potato farmer in Pemberton that is looking to grow other produce. UBCFS and Sage are interested in the idea, but would prefer SPUD to be the middleman since Sage expressed interest in starting small and prefer purchasing one type of produce at a time. If the collaboration works, they would like to expand the business relationship to a local farm or distributor. After John produced a copy of Sage's seasonal menu and monthly orders for Darren, Darren agreed to constitute a wholesale and retail price list for some of the items discussed. Darren also suggested Thomas Reed as a supplier for organic poultry.

Moreover, some practical steps were outlined for the build of possible business relationship. People nowadays are more concerned about their health and are willing to pay more for quality local produce. One example is a wedding held early this year where the bride and the groom were very precise about the origin of the food on the menu and were willing to pay a higher price. Ways to cut down costs include: starting by incorporating one to two items into the existing menu. Some potential local products include range local chicken, free range eggs, or seafood. Sage only operates at lunch, therefore could be more flexible with portion sizes, for example reducing portion size to prevent a sudden surge of prices. An explanation could also be put forward in the menu, clarifying the benefits of local produce, such as better quality, taste and increasing sustainability of the food system. This will encourage and promote awareness of local foods by diners while increasing their pride as local citizens contributing to the sustainability of one's own society. SPUDS agreed to put together a price list for wholesale and retail products suitable for Sage and advised Sage to start small, test the consumer's reaction and then push forward other locally produced menu items. UBCFS and Sage both agreed that this is a great start and hope that this is a baby step to a more sustainable food system in UBC in the near future. All parties gave their thanks and exchanged contacts and business cards. We decided to do a follow up 2 weeks later.

Overall, the meeting went smoothly and all parties were fervently discussing the matters, facilitation from our group was minimal. Moreover, John, Sage's general manager seemed to be very enthusiastic in local produce. He has participated in conferences regarding sustainability and would love to see the execution of a more sustainable food system in UBC with Sage as a focal point. Sage has always been in promotion of local purchasing and dining. B.C. wines are already in use to pair with their

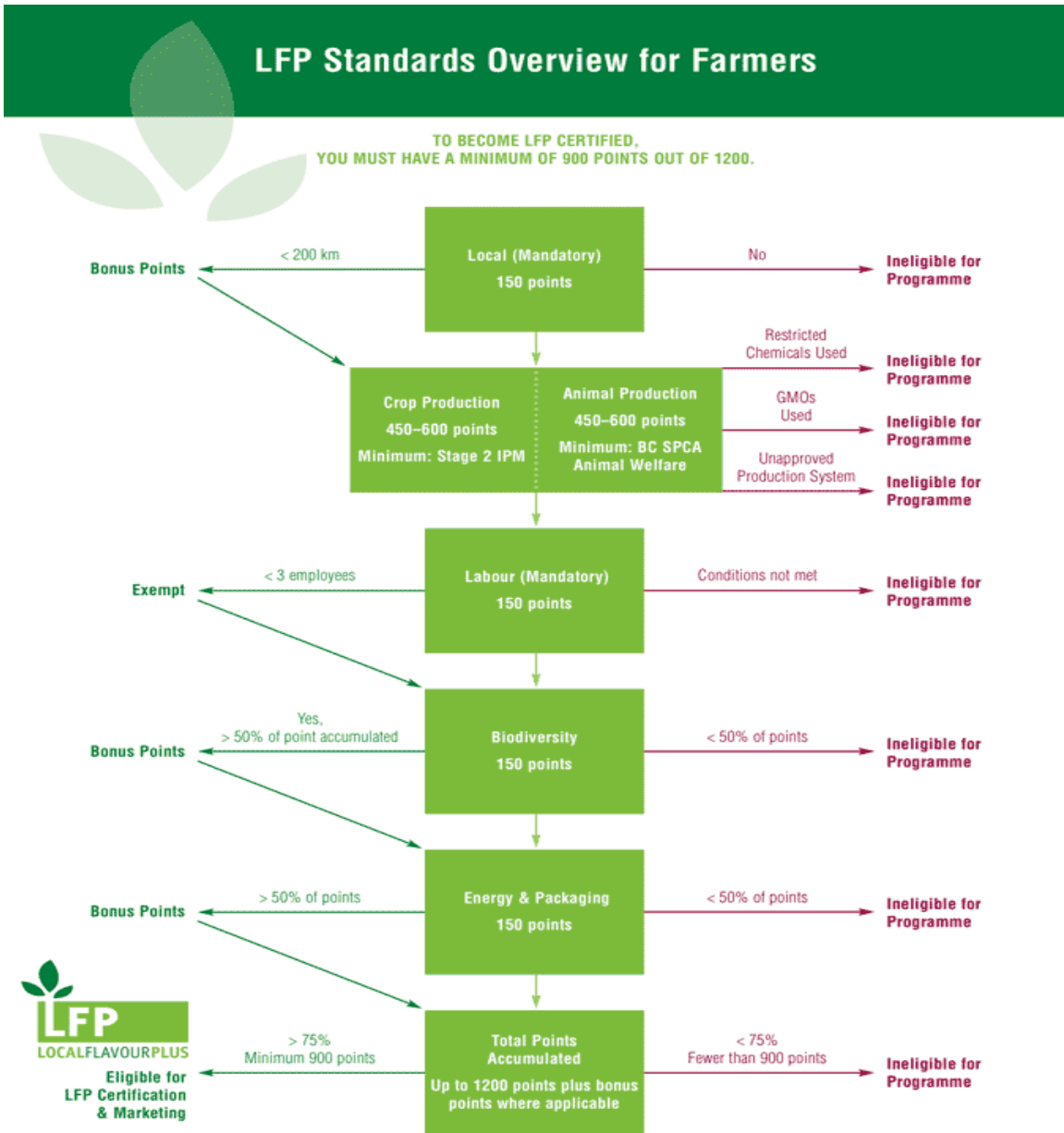
cuisine and healthy heart items which were previously on their menu. UBC farm and self produce were not able to meet Sage's demands in terms of availability in season and quantity. The UBC farm hosts another popular weekly farmer's market and we feel that the weekly market may be a possible place for Sage to obtain its local produce. This is a potential point future groups could investigate. Therefore, the next year's group could look into the feasibility of direct contact between Sage, other UBCFS food outlets and a local farm or distributor to ensure demands from food outlets met and a reliable market for farmers. The presence or absence of contracts will depend on agreements and conditions in the future. Of course, business logistics are very important and drastic changes in prices are undesirable. Therefore, starting with one type of produce on the menu and using it as a marketing technique not only facilitates the introduction of local food dining, but also promotes pride in fellow citizens as participants of the movement. Some possible executions include charting the progression of local food incorporation in Sage available to the sight of diners, eye catching slogans or explanations in the menu of the benefits in local food dining (taste, sustainability and quality). SPUD has been very kind and has suggested several farms and agreed to put together a price list of SPUD's produce for future reference. The meeting ended in good terms.

Our group therefore encourages future colleagues, if they decide to follow up on this possible collaboration, to investigate in the link between Sage and a local distributor/farm directly. We hope that our project can be a start in embarking UBC on its transformation to a more sustainable society.



Appendix C

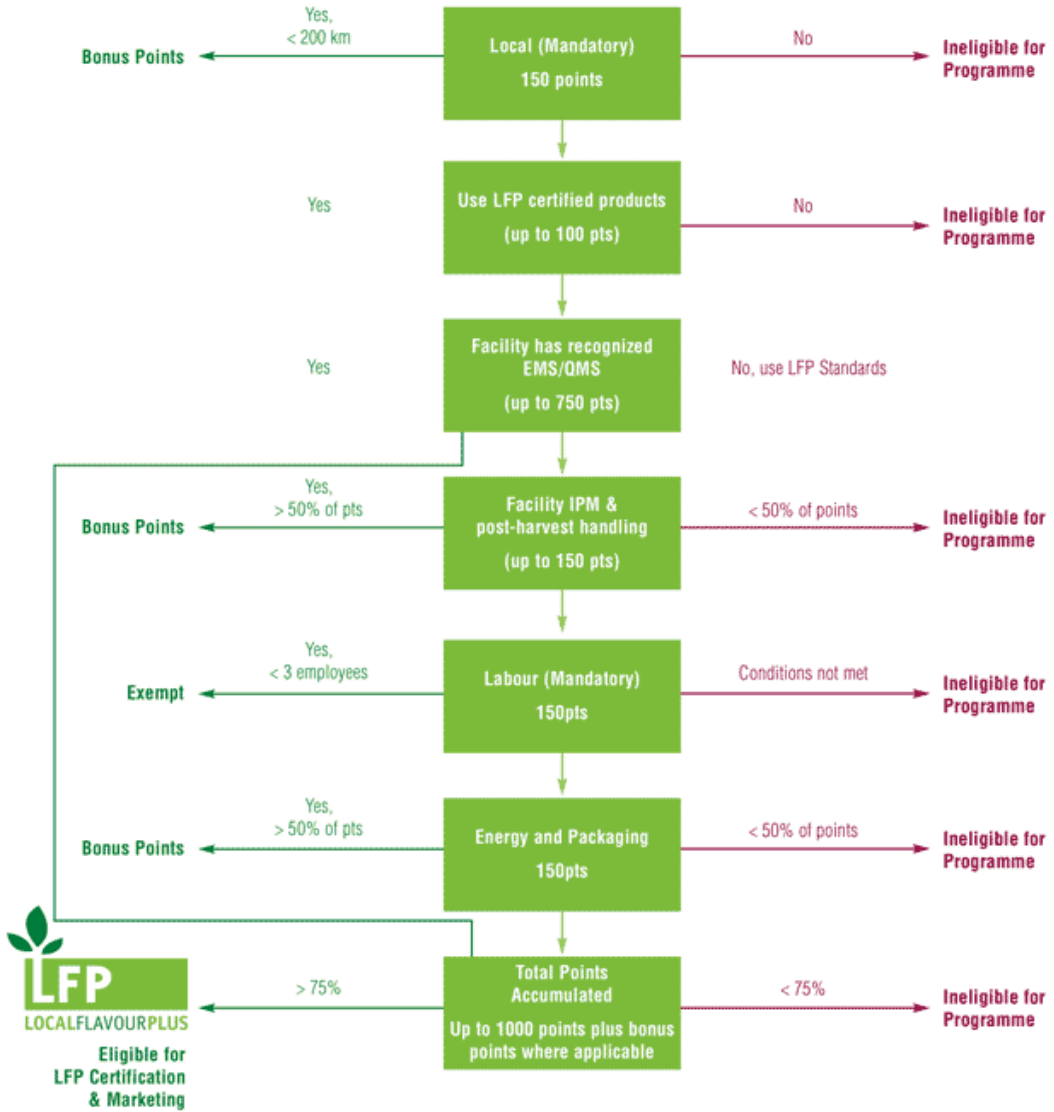
Appendix C.1: LFP Standards for Farmers and Processors



# LFP Standards Overview for Processors



TO BECOME LFP CERTIFIED,  
YOU MUST HAVE A MINIMUM OF 750 POINTS OUT OF 1000.



## **Appendix C.2 List of Local Producers**

**The following farms were specifically mentioned by SPUD, and should be considered in following years of this research project.**

### **Myers Organic Farm**

Myers Organic Farm in Aldergrove has 40 very productive acres that produces a substantial amount of healthy food that will sustain their community and family for generations (Capers, 2006). As a completely family run farm, Myers Organic knows the benefits of a healthy food system and community. Their land produces a variety of products including eggs and tree fruit, but the quality of their spinach is well known (Capers, 2006). Their direct involvement with retailers and the community would make them a good contact for future planning.

### **Richmond Specialty Mushrooms**

Specialize in white button, oyster, shiitake, portabello in crimini organic mushrooms (RSM, 2006). They use state of the art computer monitored mushroom environment controlled production methods (RSM, 2006). Because no pesticides or chemicals are used in the growing process, the mushrooms have organic certification (RSM, 2006). Very few mushroom growers have organic certification so that there is little competition for the large and growing organic market (RSM, 2006).

### **BC Hot House**

Weather or not greenhouse products are considered local is up for debate. BC Hot House uses controlled environment methods to produce a large amount of products and a small amount of land (BC Hot House, 2004). These products included tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers (BC Hot House, 2004). Some concerns that are associated with greenhouses are light and air pollution, high use of inputs, loss of agricultural land and wildlife habitat, increase infrastructure, and labour issues.

### **Fraser Valley Certified Organic Producer List** Retrieved from [www.certifiedorganicbc.com](http://www.certifiedorganicbc.com)

#### **Amabile's Garden**

Terri Giacomazzi

██████████ ████████████████████  
██

Certified Organic products: Corn, squash, artichokes, melons

#### **Anderson Organic Farm**

Joseph & Judy Blades

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Certified Organic products: Mixed Vegetables, Small Fruit & Mixed Tree Fruit

**Animal Farm**

George & Laura Klassen

[Redacted] [Redacted]

Products: Certified: Raspberries, eggs

**Asia Pacific Farm Enterprises Inc.**

Jules Hou, David Chu

[Redacted] [Redacted]  
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Products: Certified: Speciality mushrooms

**Basil Olive Oil Products**

Helen & Basil Koutalianos

[Redacted] [Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Products: Certified: Golden Olive Eleni Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Golden Olive Evangeline Balsamic Vinegar, Golden Olive Evangeline Corinthian Currant Raisins, Golden Olive Vassiliki Kalamata olives

**Biota Farm**

Karl Hann

[Redacted] [Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Products: Certified: layer hens and eggs

**Bradner Farms**

Rob A. Donaldson

[Redacted] [Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Certified Organic products: Forage Crops and pasture for Organic Milk Herd, Organic Milk, Feed Mill, Dairy Cows, Chicken Layer Flock, Meat Birds, and Eggs/Egg Grading

**Brandy Farms**

Ben Brandsema

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Cow - Dairy

**Brookside Farm**

Diane Prinsen

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] -

Certified Organic products: Dairy Goats, Goat's Milk, Pasture & Hay

**Buttar Farm (HDB Farm)**

Harjit & Daljit Buttar

V2R 4N3

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Blueberries, pasture, layer hens-eggs

**C.M.A. Farm**

Maureen & Stan Donhuysen

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Hazelnuts, beechnuts, currents, walnuts

**Canadian Hazelnut Inc**

Pentti Hanninen

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Hazelnuts, Processing and Handling of Hazelnuts & Garlic

NOP Product: Hazelnuts, Processing and Handling of Hazelnuts & Garlic

**CasaBlanca Farms**

Ross & Marlene Dalpre

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Alfalfa, hay, apples, pears, peaches, hazelnuts, grapes, strawberries, raspberries

**Champs Mushroom Inc**

Marlene Freemantle,

Owner: Duke Tran

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: White Mushrooms

**Cipangu**

Gonzalo Naranjo

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Culinary Herbs & Mixed Vegetables

**Coast Mushroomtech Ltd.**

Gouping Xiao,

Murray Lightman

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Specialty Mushrooms: Oyster, Shiitake, Portobello, maitake

**Coastwise Fisheries Inc.**

Terry & Sherry Babcock

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Canned Beans

**Donnachaidh Holdings Ltd.**

Brad & Fred Reid

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Broiler Chickens, Pork, vegetables, compost

**Earthcycle Certified Organic Farm**

Yvonne Bonner

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Tomatoes, broccoli, squash, watermelon, lettuce, peppers, radish, beet, onions, cucumbers, pumpkins, corn, gold melon, peas, beans, spinach, carrots, parsley, basil, chives, oregano, thyme, dill, cilantro, potatoes, alfalfa, buckwheat, pears

**Forstbauer Natural Food Farm**

Mary & Hans Forstbauer

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Mixed Vegetables, blueberries, eggs, fruit, hay, pasture

**Friesen Farm**

Ann & Albert Friesen

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Salad greens, mixed vegetables

**Glen Valley Organic Farm**

John Switzer,  
Alyson Chisholm

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Vegetables, salad greens, eggs, flowers, and goats

**G & E Produce**

George & Flory Boer

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Cabbage, Kale, Leeks, Concord Grapes

**Glen Valley Organic Farm**

John Switzer,  
Alyson Chisholm

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Vegetables, salad greens, eggs, flowers, and goats

**Glorious Garnish & Seasonal Salad Co. Ltd.**

Dave McCandless,  
Susan Davidson

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Salad greens, herbs, flowers, specialty vegetables, handler of salad greens

**Hammer Farm**

Dennis Hammer

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Products: Hazelnuts

**Hidden Leaves Ltd.**

Colin Lacey

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Products: Portabella and crimini mushrooms

**In-Season Farms Ltd.**

Rod Reid (owner),

Gwen Bryson (manager)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Asparagus, processor of animal feeds, handler of hazelnuts

**Lowland Herb Farm**

Boni Townsend

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Herbs

**Matsqui Blue Farms**

Jennifer Cichanovich

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Blueberries, hazelnuts, rhubarb, pasture

**Nathan Creek Organic Farm**

Stephen Gallagher

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: greenhouse seedlings, mixed vegetables; CSA (box program)available

**Oddball Organics**

Randy Thompson

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Certified Organic products: Garlic & Sweetcorn (seed production), Oddball Brand Garlic Based Syrups (Garlic Nectar, Nuclear Nectar, Nasty Nectar) & Spice Mixes (Smoked Garlic Chipolte Salt, Pipe Cleaner, Grandma Mac's Belly Rub)

Transitional Organic products: 3rd Year: Hay (Site 3 - 162 MacDonald Rd. Quesnel)



**Olera Farm**

Fred Reid,  
Sharmin Gamiet

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Broiler Chickens, raspberries, black currants, grapes, apples, pears, vegetables, handler of raspberries

**Organa Farms**

Leo & Shelley Deschamps

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Grower of turkey and wild boar, handler of lamb, pork, chicken, duck, turkey, beef and bison

**Origin Organic Farms Inc Langley**

Raymond Wong

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Beefstake Tomatoes, Long English Cucumbers, Sweet Bell Peppers

**Pine Creek Farm**

Cye Khazaie

[REDACTED]

Products: Certified: Greenhouse tomatoes, scallions, peas, radishes, sweet peppers

**Roots Organic/Evergreen Herbs**

Ron & TJ Brar,

Dave Fontaine

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Parsley, Marjoram, Mint, Oregano, Sage,

Savory, sorrell, thyme, tarragon, basil, rosemary, bay leaves, lemon balm, lemon verbeena, lemon thyme, lavender, edible flowers, misuna, tatson, lettuce (lola rosa, romaine, butt

**Sandmoen Farm**

Monty Sandmoen

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Products: Blueberries, Frozen Blueberries, Blackberries, Plum (Yellow), Peach, Pears and Apples

NOP Product: Blueberries, Frozen Blueberries, Blackberries, Plum (Yellow), Peach, Pears and Apples

### **Two Bie Creek Farm**

Brain & Barb McClellan

██████ ██████████

████████████████████**Products:** Organic herbs, edible flowers, organic butters, layer hens-eggs

### **Woodfield Farm Organics**

Linda & Julian Kenney

██████ ██████████

████████████████████**Products:** Certified: Greenhouse vegetables, apples, cherries, plums, pears, red & black currants, nuts, flowers