



Sooke Region Food CHI Society “Sustaining Food Systems”

Annual General Meeting
January 28, 2016



Acknowledgements

This past year, 2015 – our ninth year of Sooke Food CHI's voluntary organization programs – was once again a most rewarding year! We wish to thank our many volunteers, supporters, members, donors and funders who help us sustain our mission and purposes.

Food CHI fosters and supports local food production and access to local foods. We support our farmers, backyard gardeners, the marketplaces and community gardens. We do this through education, workshops, special events and mentorship. Since 2007 we have formed a number of partnerships and facilitated a collaborative approach, engaging many citizens and community organizations to enhance our regional food shed and local economy.

2015 Funders and Donors

- 99 Monsters Design
- BC Hydro
- District of Sooke
- EPCOR
- Frederique Phillip
- Friends of Pia – Memorial Garden Donations
- Jeremy Smith
- Les Monnington's Gravel Pit
- Linda Gilkeson (Linda Gilkeson West Coast Gardening books)
- Reber Creative
- Reliable Control
- SEASOIL
- Sooke Awareness Film Night
- Sooke Community Arts Council
- Sooke Garden Club
- Sooke Harbour House
- Sooke Kids Garden Club
- Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce
- Sooke Soil Landscaping
- Vancity
- West Coast Seeds

In Kind Support – Sooke Region

- Alan Wickheim
- ALM Farm
- Anisa Newell Kids Art
- Apple Fest volunteers, vendors & musicians
- AUVSideKick
- Brendan Dueck Irrigation Services
- Camosun College, Horticulture School
- Cast Iron Farm
- District of Sooke
- Double D Gardens
- Edward Milne Community School (too many classes to mention)
- Eric Wickheim
- Food CHI Fruit Tree gleaning volunteers
- Glen's Gardening Services
- Grow a Row volunteers
- Jack Most Photography
- LeCoteau Nurseries
- Mainroad South Island Contracting Ltd.
- Marwell Enterprises
- Maywell Wickheim
- Rolex Signs
- SEAPARC
- Seedy Saturday vendors and volunteers
- Sooke Region Museum
- Sooke Awareness Film Night crew
- Sooke Community Association
- Sooke Disposal
- Sooke Food Bank
- Sooke Harbour House
- Sooke Home Hardware
- Sooke News Mirror
- Sooke Philharmonic Garden Tour
- Sooke Power Supplies
- Sooke Transition Initiative
- Sooke Voice News
- Sunriver Community Garden volunteers
- Sunriver Healing Gardens – Hilary and Glyse
- Sunriver Community Orchard volunteers
- Sysco
- VIHA Integrated Health Network volunteers
- Village Food Market
- Western Foods
- Wittich Cherry Lane stables

Front Cover: Apple Fest 2015, AUVSideKick



Sooke Region Food CHI Society

Who are we and what do we do?

Established in 2007, we are a registered society and voluntary non-profit organization, with over 300 members representing our different rural communities of the Sooke region – from Port Renfrew to Jordan River, Shirley, Otter Point, Sooke District and East Sooke, a population of approximately 15,000.

Our activities include:

- Promoting the local food movement through events and programs e.g. Seedy Saturday, Apple Fest and a presence at community events and fairs
- Supporting and mentoring new farmers
- Promoting the conservation of farm lands and agricultural planning
- Promoting farming as a viable economic activity
- Organizing farm and local food events
- Sponsoring community gardens
- Supporting a community orchard
- Producing food to distribute to the hungry
- Participating in development of food policies with local government
- Supporting slow food and our distinctive regional cuisine

Sooke Food CHI Board Highlights

This year several new actions were implemented from the Sooke Region Food CHI Strategic Plan 2020, including creating volunteer position descriptions to ensure positive outcomes for volunteers, delivering a grant-writing interactive workshop, and updating the Farm & Food Guide to a contemporary format. We also hosted ongoing events – Farm Tour, Apple Fest, Awareness Film Night and Seedy Saturday.

We recognize how much our talented volunteers strengthen Food CHI and we wanted to hear more from them. After each major event (Seedy Saturday, Farm Tour and Apple Fest), several volunteers participated in debriefs, giving their feedback on how to improve each event and on their volunteer experience. This feedback helped better define volunteer position descriptions and advanced the events.

My special thanks to our Board directors – their energy and passion inspires us to do great things. Special thanks to Phoebe Dunbar, a founding member of Food CHI, for her dedication, enthusiasm and mentorship.

The following pages showcase our activities. I invite you to become involved – there is something for everyone! You can view our annual plan on the website: www.sookefoodchi.ca

Thank you to the many people who have donated time, energy and resources, and to those who attend our many activities. You help to make Food CHI's events successful and our community so livable.

Anita Wasiuta, president, Sooke Region Food CHI Society



Food CHI Board of Directors – 2014/2015

Officers

President – Anita Wasiuta
Vice President – Phoebe Dunbar
Treasurer – Mark Batten
Secretary – Britton Jacob-Schram

Directors

Mary Alice Johnson
Darrel McLeod
Keeley Nixon

Standing Committees

Sunriver Allotment Garden Council

Special Event Committees

Sooke Seedy Saturday
Farm Tour 2015
Apple Fest 2015

Part-time contractors supporting Food CHI initiatives and programs

- Kay Lovett (Lovett Pictures) – Videographer
- Paula McCormick – Grow A Row Coordinator
- Zach Ogilvie (Ogilvie Creative) – Webpage rebuild
- Rachel Voth – Farm Tour Host Coordinator

Highlights

Seedy Saturday – February 28, 2015

Every February, on the last Saturday of the month, Sooke Food CHI puts on Sooke's very own Seedy Saturday in the funky, 1937-built wooden Sooke Community Hall. Our 6th Seedy Saturday brought many folks, farmers, gardeners, vendors and foodie "wannabees" together. It's our kick off to the temperate west coast growing season, enjoyed by all ages. Over 50 vendors participated in the 2015 event.



Food Waste: Farming & Film Gala Evening – April 8, 2015

Co-sponsored with Awareness Film Night, Food CHI organized a well-attended 2015 Farming and Film Gala at Sooke's Edward Milne Community School. The featured screening, "Just Eat It: A Food Waste Story" (by Peg Leg Films, in partnership with British Columbia's Knowledge Network), addressed the billions of dollars in food waste and the concept of food rescue – from farm to fridge. The event also included local food producers selling produce and seeds.



Grantsmanship Tips Evening – April 23, 2015

Presented in partnership with Sooke Region Volunteer Centre, this evening was an informative event on funding grants. Representatives from the Victoria Foundation and Vancity Community Foundation led discussions on availability of funding, partnership opportunities for non-profits, and models for sustainability. Over 40 participants were treated to a set dinner menu, courtesy of the students from the Edward Milne Culinary Arts Program, while discussing the actionable areas of collaboration between the various non-profits.



Farm Tour – July 19, 2015

This year welcomed back the Sooke Farm Tour, our fourth bi-annual event, aimed at raising awareness of our productive farms in the Sooke region. This tour was offered as the "working tour" with eight farms open to the public throughout the day. This was an inspiring day with close to 200 people taking part. The day was successful once again because of our incredible volunteers, planning committee, our generous farmers and eager-to-learn public.



Apple Fest – September 27, 2015

Our second annual Apple Fest was a stunning success. With more than 1000 attendees, food vendors, apples galore, incredible pies, pie auction, local art sales, kid's art and games, generous sponsors, musicians, hand-pressed apple juice, Sooke Harbour House sorbet tasting from mountain wild berries, apple tree sales, orchard tours – how could it not succeed? The Apple Fest was most fruitful as a fundraiser to sustain our Sunriver Community Orchard.



Pia's Memorial Garden

This special root cellar roof top garden was started in the spring of 2015 to honour the memory of Pia Carroll, a woman who gave so much to Sooke's culinary art students and was a founding member of Sooke Food CHI. Next year her memorial garden will see the construction of a beautiful arbor, as well as a contemplative sitting space. More of her favourite "other food" trees will also be planted. The Board of Directors wish to extend their deep appreciation for all the donations that came in to support Pia's Memorial Garden. The garden is located at the north end of the Sunriver Garden Orchard.



Tribute to Maywell Wickheim April 2, 1925 to July 17, 2015



Maywell, for 90 years, one of Sooke's longest born-in- and stayed-in-Sooke citizens, contributed so much to Sooke's food producing history – from his early childhood at the “old place,” the family homestead on Blythwood, to his last home garden, which flanked his Kaltasin Road waterfront shipyard and where Maywell carried on his Norwegian family's farming traditions. We will always remember his early farm stories, the ones he wrote of and better yet the ones he shared with us through his tireless storytelling.

Since its inception, Sooke Food CHI benefited greatly from Maywell's support, including the 2005 development of the community garden at CASA on Townsend Road, the Edward Milne school student community garden, and the Sunriver Community Garden at Phillips Road, which began in 2010. His accomplishments were many – always there to help us plan, design and build the sheds, fences, gates, apple shack, pond, native gardens, root cellar, gazebo, outhouse, cob oven roof... the list is long!

The photo of Maywell was taken in late June 2015 at the Sunriver Community Orchard a few weeks before he passed away. That day, Glen Thelin and Kenny Jones thanked Maywell for all his kind and generous contributions by showing him the special beech tree planted in his honour. This columnar tree will grow up to be 30 to 40 feet tall, casting little shadow on the fruit trees nearby.



Sunriver Community Gardens – 2380 Phillips Road, Sooke

Sponsored by Sooke Food CHI in partnership with the District of Sooke

In partnership with many and support from hundreds, we enjoyed our sixth year at Sooke's largest community garden.

2015 had a mellower pace to it, since most of the major garden development is now complete. With terrific community support, keen volunteers and volunteer leaders we continue to sustain and care for this special 2.5-acre garden. Highlights include our most successful voluntary Grow A Row program that contributes thousands of pounds of local food produce to those in need, distributed through the Sooke Food Bank and Sooke's Child and Family Services.

The community garden's main features include:

- 124 allotment plots, including 12 special raised beds
- Community food growing plots and greenhouse, Grow A Row program, harvest shed facility
- Healing Garden
- Social gathering picnic areas: all-weather gazebo, cob oven, fire pits, kids play areas

The Sunriver Community Orchard

Beginning in 2011 after much clearing, grading, irrigation installation, creation of drainage swales, construction of an apple shack learning centre, tool shed and root cellar and development of a permanent all weather gravel service lane to make for easier access to the orchard we now have a functional orchard! The first trees were planted in 2011, and now four years later we are enjoying the first significant bounty to share with our Sooke citizens.

There was no waste of these fine heritage apples harvested this year. Volunteers made up special jams and fruit leathers for the Apple Fest and over 300 pounds of orchard apples were sold at the Apple Fest. This fall five more apple trees were planted and two more pear trees.



SOOKE REGION FOOD CHI SOCIETY

Balance Sheet

as at August 31, 2015

	Food CHI General Fund	Projects Program Fund	Sunriver Community Garden Fund	Total
Current Assets				
Petty Cash	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Coast Capital Chequing	9,160.99		3,813.29	12,974.28
Coast Capital Shares	5.00			5.00
Allotment Chequing Coast Capital			2,516.53	2,516.53
Orchard Chequing Coast Capital			1,411.00	1,411.00
Vancity Chequing		5,498.36		5,498.36
Vancity Shares			21.43	21.43
Mountain Equipment Co-op Shares	5.00			5.00
	9,170.99	5,498.36	7,762.25	22,431.60
Grants Receivable			1,800.00	1,800.00
GST Recoverable (prior years)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Accounts Receivable			110.00	110.00
	9,170.99	5,498.36	9,672.25	24,341.60
Investments				
Irrigation System			3,877.31	3,877.31
Equipment			400.00	400.00
Fence/Gates/Signs			7,055.00	7,055.00
Shed			2,317.20	2,317.20
Gazebo			13,401.65	13,401.65
Outhouse			1,310.23	1,310.23
Greenhouse			2,604.00	2,604.00
Shed			3,031.09	3,031.09
Apple Shack			2,467.69	2,467.69
Harvest Shed			750.38	750.38
Accumulated Amortization			-14,319.56	-14,319.56
	0.00	0.00	22,894.99	22,894.99
Total Assets	9,170.99	5,498.36	32,567.24	47,236.59
Current Liabilities	125.00	5,499.57	1,130.00	6,754.57
Accounts Payable	125.00	5,499.57	1,130.00	6,754.57
Deferred Revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fund Balances				
Externally Restricted Funds				0.00
Invested in Capital Assets			22,894.99	22,894.99
Unrestricted Funds	9,045.99	-1.21	8,542.25	17,587.03
	9,170.99	5,498.36	32,567.24	47,236.59
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	9,170.99	5,498.36	32,567.24	47,236.59

Thank you to our 2015 funding partners

District of Sooke, Vancity, Sooke Community Arts Council, BC Hydro and Epcor, and funding support provided, in part, by the BC Government's Buy Local program; delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC with funding from the BC Ministry of Agriculture.

SOOKE REGION FOOD CHI SOCIETY
Income Statement
for the period ending August 31, 2015

	Food CHI General Fund	Projects Program Fund	Sunriver Community Garden Fund	Total
Revenues				
Sales				0.00
Grants		8,000.00	7,000.00	15,000.00
Memberships/Fees	90.78			90.78
Events		381.54		381.54
Plot Fees			5,280.00	5,280.00
Donations	66.26		645.95	712.21
Interest	4.95			4.95
Seedy Saturday		4,193.75		4,193.75
Apple Fest		3,150.70		3,150.70
Farm Tour/Harvest		2,270.00		2,270.00
Farmer 2 Farmer Grant		2,800.00		2,800.00
Total Revenues	161.99	20,795.99	12,925.95	33,883.93
Expenses				
Food CHI Administration	1,324.32			1,324.32
Food Systems, Farmer to Farmer		1,830.00		1,830.00
Food Systems, Food Guide				0.00
Food Systems, Gleaning				0.00
Events - Annual - Apple Fest		1,583.41		1,583.41
Events - Farm Tour		1,160.93		
Events - General	514.89	757.10		1,271.99
Events - Seedy Saturday		843.48		843.48
Sunriver Gardens			13,394.43	13,394.43
Mentorship Program		2,500.44		
Amortization			2,543.91	2,543.91
Total Expenses	1,839.21	8,675.36	15,938.34	26,452.91
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	-1,677.22	12,120.63	-3,012.39	7,431.02

SOOKE REGION FOOD CHI SOCIETY

Investments in Capital Assets

	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	2015 Net Book Value
Irrigation System	3,877.31	1,557.78	2,319.53
Equipment	400.00	199.24	200.76
Fence/Gates/Signs	7,055.00	3,097.39	3,957.61
Shed	2,317.20	1017.33	1,299.87
Gazebo	13,401.65	5,883.79	7,517.86
Outhouse	1,310.23	575.23	735.00
Greenhouse	2,604.00	700.41	1,903.59
Shed	3,031.09	610.90	2,420.19
Apple Shack	2,467.69	568.69	1,899.00
Harvest Shed	750.38	108.80	641.58
	37,214.55	14,319.56	22,894.99

Sooke Region Food CHI Society Financial Statements For Fiscal Year: September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015

Sooke Food CHI Society Board Comments:

- 1 Sooke Food CHI Society functions on a fiscal year, from September 1 to August 31. Some of our programs are calendar in nature such as the *Grow a Row* program which runs from April to October. Such funds are carried over to the next fiscal year.
- 2 GST recoverable has been removed. We will be revisiting this in the near future to determine if there is any GST credit available to Sooke Region Food CHI Society.
- 3 We received a grant from Vancity in the amount of \$8,000 for our Mentorship Program. The program ended earlier than anticipated. The outstanding grant funds of \$5,498.36 shown on the Balance Sheet were returned to Vancity after our year end of August 31, 2015.
- 4 The Balance Sheet shows "Unrestricted Funds." The majority of our funds are targeted project/program funds – e.g. 2015/16 Community Orchard, farm support, Seedy Saturday events.
- 5 The Sunriver Community Garden Fund shown on the Income Statement as expenses includes expenses for the Allotment Gardens, Community Orchard, Grow A Row along with other minor expenses for the Sunriver Community Garden proper.



Octavien Lacatusu/Sooke News Mirror
Mary Alice Johnson, founder of the ALM Organic Farm in Sooke, says the idea is to raise interest in farms and farming with youth and adults alike.



Down on the farm

Sooke Farm Tour offers participants hand's-on experience

Octavien Lacatusu
Sooke News Mirror

Ever wonder as a kid what your grandparents were doing out working on the farm in the middle of a summer day? This Sunday (July 19), you get to find out as you will tour not one, but eight farms in Sooke.

And unlike your grandparents, who would more than likely ask you to sit aside with a little shovel in hand and watch, visitors will engage with the farmers thanks to an all-hands-on immersive experience.

"In previous years, people just came and looked, but this year, we're gonna put them to work," said Mary Alice Johnson, founder of the ALM Organic Farm in Sooke. She added that the idea here is to raise interest in farms and farming with youth and adults alike.

"It's about getting people doing things on the farms, touring the farms, but it's also to share our passions and our challenges," Johnson said.

With an expected 300

attending this year, the tour can be either self-guided or fully-engaged with the farmers who will be there to talk to people and take part in activities. The tour starts at 11 a.m. and ends at 5 p.m.

There's also a whole new set of different activities this year, including seed cleaning and soil blocking – a process in which visitors will be able to create separate cubes of soil without using a single piece of plastic.

Johnson said children are especially welcome (kids 12 and under are free), as there will be several activities for them to take part in, such as "bug bingo" and a sculpture hunt around the farm where they get to find all these hidden animal statuettes such as a pig, a dog, and a rooster.

"We're hoping to get a lot of people with kids, because there will be kids who live on the farm that will want to work with the kids who come to the farm, and that's just fun for everybody," she said, adding that she hopes the experience

will connect kids with food and eating healthy.

Johnson said all proceeds from the event goes to support growing more food in the local community, adding that the money will indirectly trickle back into mentorships for new farmers. The goal is to try to get an incubator farm to help people get started on farming.

"Our passions are the growing of the seed, creating good food, sharing it with the community," she said, adding that ALM has always been a teaching farm.

"ALM" is Arabic for All Lem Mim, which stands for "the Beginning, the Middle, and the End." Johnson said the name was chosen by her late husband Jan for his consulting company. She added that sees farming as cycles and seasons, so her farm adopted the same name.

Tickets for the Farm Tour can be purchased for \$15 at People's Drug Mart, Shoppers Drug Mart, Sooke Country Market, Stick in the Mud and Sooke Home Hardware.

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