

# Coastal Agriculture Roundtable aka “the Harvest Table”

Wednesday November 17<sup>th</sup>, 9:30am – 11:30am  
Via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82338185420>



**Present:** Louise Rogers, Lorna Watson, Nicky Ling, Tina Windsor, Erika Goldt, Paula (last name), Sarah Holden, Julia Comerford, Rachel Dickens, Bruce Grieg, Colin Robinson, Baylie Sjodin, Mike Keefer.

## 1. 9:15am **Welcome!**

Erika called the meeting to order and introductions were made around the table. She set the context referencing recent flooding and extreme weather across BC and noted that our region is very familiar with only having one route in and out, with many ongoing food security challenges and opportunities.

Erika spoke to the terms of reference and explained that there will be honouraria available for Coastal Agriculture Roundtable members in the future.

## 2. 9:30am **Roundtable Introductions**

Erika: CBT and ED at TUCG.

Tina: Picnic Charcuterie who has recently moved to Port Alberni and is becoming a member of the Port Alberni Food Hub.

Lorna Watson at Ucluelet Local Food- ULF is folding and combining with Tofino Community Food Initiative. The garden at the junction will be increasingly run by YFN who have a new plan. Everyone wants the garden to serve the community better than it has.

Louise Rogers – co owner of Tofino Urban Farm compost collection and generation for 10 years. Co-owner of Long Beach Farms, growing veggies in hoop greenhouses at the airport, growing and expanding!

Nicky Ling – Alt director for ACRD Area C, board of CBT, food nerd, background in public health and nutrition and organic master gardener.

Paula – standing in for Leah and Helene from Tofino Community Food Initiative. They’re running a film festival this weekend fundraising for school garden, where they’ve got their first carrots, cabbage, and kale.

Sarah Holden and Julia Comerford– Uchecklesah Government where they started a community garden that supported 10-15 families per week with healthy food boxes

Heather Shobe – Ag support worker with ACRD and co-host of the roundtable group.

Stefan Ochman – Anacla in Pacheena bay (Huwauuat) – they’ve got a community garden there and work in collaboration with community gardeners in Bamfield.

Rachel Dickens - Dietitian working for NTC.

Erika noted that the CBT catchment area is technically Hequiaht down to Macoah, but this ACRD agricultural work focusing on the west coast brings together Huuayaht and Uchecklesah.

## 3. 9:45am **Mini Presentation**

Mike Keefer and Baylie Sjodin, consultants for ACRD who is working on a Nuu-chah-nulth Food Sovereignty Community Consultation project. Indigenous people and relationship to plants cannot be understated in these conversations. He reviewed their work to support agricultural work for both public sector clients mostly in the Kootenays, directly with farmers and farm associations, and directly with First Nations focusing on the Indigenous success and barriers in the food sector.

## Nuu-chah-nulth Food Sovereignty Project

- Seeking partnership with NTC and engage with 10 ACRD NCN Nations
- Learn to incorporate traditional cultural into policy and planning
- Bringing into forefront the parallel-to-agricultural permaculture style relationship west coast Indigenous communities have had with food plants – for example, Camas (the potato of the west coast)
- Potential to develop a food sovereignty plan

Before end of year, they will meet with NTC Executive and begin to strengthen relationships. Will be kicking off the project in earnest in the new year. The group then had a chance to do a question and answer session with Mike.

## 4. 10:00am **Role of the Coastal Agricultural Roundtable**

- Connection to the ACRD and its agriculture committees but grounded on the west coast. The three other ACRD agriculture committees are
  - Advisory committee
  - Development committee
  - West coast committee
- ACRD Agricultural Development Committee 'Systems Change' grant overview
  - \$300K grant from Vancouver Foundation
  - Parts are focused within ACRD and there is a provincial collaboration
  - Goal is to increase influence of regional initiatives for agriculture and food security – shift power balance so local voices are more heard in provincial programs
  - 3 tactics in region
    - Collaborative platforms for community voice (e.g. this table)
    - Core funding to regional food orgs – for example, increase capacity for Eat West Coast and CBT to lead and administer this table, core funding for Tofino Community Food Initiative
    - Core funding to regional NCN good orgs and governments
- Honouraria for community committees: some members are attending while on staff time of a big org, but others are self-employed or farmers, volunteers, and not paid to be there – increase equity at the table.
- Membership – the group re-visited the member list in preparation to update the list as required for the re-ratification of the committee at the January ACRD board meeting.

## 5. 10:15am **Updates and progress!**

- Eat West Coast – EWC was formed through Island Food Hubs (Island Health) and now EWC is becoming a permanent inhouse program at CBT after being a contract position. This means increased stability and funding overall
- Farm to School – coastal and remote schools advisory; F2S is looking to tailor and develop programs to better serve non-urban schools on the west coast of the Island
- Growing Resistant Community Gardens - Octopus Garden meetup Nov 23<sup>rd</sup>
  - CBT Funding – Neighborhood Small Grants and Food Fund for Knowledge Sharing; many awesome food-related NSG projects have continued growing and there is specific funding for food NSG (this is truly the ground level community realm, vs the high-level policy arena).
  - CBT Pathways to Equity Dialogues – reflecting on how grant programs, decision making, policy, can unintentionally exclude equity-denied groups. Through CBT's 10-year UNESCO Periodic Review, NCN communities directed CBT to better serve them as the current programs are not working.

## 6. 10:30am **Break**

7. 10:40am **Coastal Food System Infrastructure** – what we've learned, what is needed to support our work

- The last few years have been challenging for storing and distributing food, triggering some much needed development on the coast. TUCG received government funding to get delivery vehicles and storage containers with solar-powered refrigeration systems. Food bank on the Edge is moving forward with developing a new building with increased capacity and out of the Tsunami Zone
- CBT is progressing with developing a Biosphere Centre with a Commercial kitchen – linked to Alberni Food innovation hub
- Ahousaht has exciting momentum for food transportation funding (previously it was all ad-hoc boat wrangling)

8. 10:50am **Making Connections and Harvesting Ideas – Break Out Rooms**

- Reconnect in small groups to share updates about recent agri/food adventures and projects
- Harvest ideas on our coastal infrastructure as it relates to your interests or work – what are the gaps, where can we work together?

9. 11:10am **Reporting Back**

- Internal Group relationships: Lorna would like to be in touch with Julia and Nicky – request for everyone's emails to be shared within the group
- Food Bank: At DoU, Bruce voiced that there is great need at the Food Bank; Cris Martin at FBotE should be looped into these conversations; perhaps a letter of support from roundtable could help with grant applications; building up at Tugwell Fields would have storage and distribution capacity plus kitchen space for offering meals and teaching... opened conversations about whether this should kitchen be a municipally-administered space as the admin capacity is already there.
  - YFN has industrial commercial kitchen in Hitacu
  - Idea for Cris to present at April Coastal Agriculture Roundtable meeting
- Community Gardens: Sarah spoke about the physical infrastructure being there but the challenge of getting the human capacity there – funding for gardener time, plus getting volunteers/community members excited. A full time manager and funding for labour would go a long way
- Long Beach Farms: limitations on accommodation (on site) for farm workers – need to keep this ball afloat.

10. 11:20am **Closing and Checkout**

- Next Meeting: April 2022.
- Erika will follow up with an email that includes all relevant links and resources discussed today.

*We acknowledge the traditional territories of Hesquiaht First Nation, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations, Toquaht Nation, Ahousaht, Yuułu?i?ath, Huu-ay-aht First Nation, Ditidaht, and Uchucklesaht First Nation in the spirit of truth, healing, and reconciliation.*