

Coastal Agriculture Roundtable aka “the Harvest Table”

Wednesday November 23, 2022
Long Beach Lodge, Tofino



Present: Louise Rogers, Nicky Ling, Erika Goldt, Julia Comerford, Rachel Dickens, Monica Whitney-Brown, Randy Oliwa, Emerita- Gaia Grocery, Rosalee Brown- CBT, Dion Olin, Heather Shobe, April, Robson, Alex Masso, Nitanis Rampanen
Regrets: Lisa Morgan, Richard George, Ali Sawyer

1. Welcome!

Erika called the meeting to order and introductions were made around the table. She set the context referencing the rural and remote region, acknowledgement of indigenous food sovereignty, extreme weather across BC and the future of climate change in our environment, and the many ongoing food security challenges and opportunities that come with these.

Erika spoke to the terms of reference and explained that there will be honoraria available for Coastal Agriculture Roundtable members, as well as travel expense reimbursement.

2. Roundtable Introductions

Louise & Dion – Operators of Long Beach Farms at the Long Beach Airport
Nicky – representation ACRD Area C and grower on off grid property
Erika – Lead of Eat West Coast, CBT and Director, TUCG
Julia – Coordinator with Uchucklesaht Nation, community garden and food box program
Rachel – Dietitian, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
Monica – District of Ucluelet, Planning
Randy – Ucluelet resident supported of local growing projects
Amortia – owner of Gaia Grocery, Tofino
Rosalee – Clayoquot Biosphere Trust
Heather – Agricultural Support Worker, ACRD
April – Board of Directors, Tofino Community Food Initiative
Alex – Project Manager, Hithuiis Spirit Construction, working on growing infrastructure
Nitanis – Traditional Food Knowledge Coordinator, Ahousaht; Developing growing initiatives with MHSS

3. What is Eat West Coast?

Erika provided an overview of [Eat West Coast](#), a food security and food sovereignty initiative of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, with year to year support from [Island Health Food Hubs](#). Questions? erika@clayoquotbiosphere.org

4. Role of the Coastal Agricultural Roundtable

Erika and Heather provided a history of the Roundtable and its purpose:

- 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
- Honoraria 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. Key Areas of Discussion

- Waste management including seafood waste – reuse for soil building
- Dire need of sifter at compost venues – currently not usable finished product
- Issues and policies on foraging and over-foraging (Covid-19)
- Sustainability of local food system
- The ‘growing cycle’ of learning and doing, how to we acknowledge in our planning
- Simplifying easy grows
- Educate, make ‘unlearning’ in the context of growing among the history of residential schools a happy event with ownership
- Food sovereignty – ensuring people have a say in their food
- Improving direct networks with Vancouver Island farms discussion
- Paid position in each community would be ideal for our region
- Larger scale equipment for community use like freeze drying could be a shared resource
- Have children more involved in the planting, growing and harvesting process
- Think smaller than our major grocery stores
- Tofino Ucluelet Culinary Guild satellites
- ACRD and Alberni Farmer’s Institute a source of connection

6. Review of Roundtable Strategic Plans

- Participants worked in small groups to review priorities and goals outlined in the Strategic Plan
- The top two key priorities identified were
 - Supporting and increasing food production projects
 - How to take advantage of local knowledge and expertise and find gaps
 - Infrastructure funds
 - ‘business case’ being realistic about what to grow and for who
 - Understanding value – study of how community supported growing can decrease food costs
 - Building relationships, particularly in the region
 - How can we get dedicated human resources?
(noted that currently we have ACRD Support Worker part time in Port Alberni, Eat West Coast 15 hours per week, Traditional Food Coordinators Ahousaht and Yuułuʔiłʔatʰ working on growing projects)

- Role of EWC in 'matchmaking' needs to local resources and expertise
- Suggestions of more meetings, longer meetings, or meetings with other areas of food security – to be explored more in the spring
- Erika will be taking away the discussion and updating the Strategic Plan to be reviewed by the group to inform work going forward in 2023

7. Resources:

- [Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program](#) (REDIP) Funding up to 100% for two years applications open into January
- Meat Processing Training through ACRD – more info to come