

Alberni Valley Food Charter

History of this Food Charter

Amidst significant conversation about a Food Charter for this region, this Food Charter was put forward in 2012 by Vicki Lee, then president of the Port Alberni Farmer's Market. It was endorsed by the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District, the City of Port Alberni, Alberni Valley Social Planning Council, the Alberni Valley Transition Town Society, and the ACRD Agricultural Development Committee. The goal of which is to promote Food Security and to strengthen our local food system.

Principles

Community Economic Development

Locally-based food systems enhance the City and the Region's economy. Greater reliance on local food systems strengthens our local and regional economies, creates employment, and increases food security.

Ecological Health

A whole-system approach to food protects our natural resources, reduces and redirects food waste, and contributes to the environmental stability and well-being of our local, regional, and global communities

Social Justice

Food is a basic human right. All residents need accessible, affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food. Children in particular require adequate amounts of nutritious food for normal growth and learning.

Collaboration and Participation

Sustainable food systems encourage civic engagement, promote responsibility, and strengthen communities. Community food security improves when local government collaborates with community groups, businesses, and other levels of government on sound food system planning, policies and practices.

Celebration

Sharing food is a fundamental human experience. Food brings people together in celebrations of community and diversity.



Food Security Exists when all people, at all times, have access to nutritious, safe, personally acceptable and culturally appropriate foods, produced in ways that are environmentally sound and socially just.

Definitions

Culturally appropriate food:

refers to essential nutrients within specific cultural diets.

i.e. foods of the First Nations peoples of the Region.

Local producers:

Anyone who is producing food as a way of supporting their household whether financially with commercial foodstuffs or as a homestead, farm, or backyard garden.



To create a just and sustainable food system, we can:

1. Be leaders in municipal and regional food-related policies and programs. Support regional farmers and food producers. Expand urban agriculture and food recovery opportunities.
2. Promote composting and the preservation of healthy soil and encourage humane treatment of animals raised for food.
3. Support sustainable agriculture and preserve farm land resources
4. Improve access to healthy and affordable foods and increase the health of all members of our City and Regional District.
5. Talk together and teach each other about food while celebrating our City's and Region's diverse food cultures.
6. Champion the importance of food security to federal, provincial, and regional government partners.
7. Champion the right of all residents to have access to adequate amounts of safe, and nutritious food without the need to resort to emergency food providers and advocate for policies that support the secure and dignified access to the food people need
8. Sponsor nutrition programs and services that promote healthy growth in children and help prevent diet-related diseases in later life.
9. Partner with local producers, community, cooperative, business, and government organizations to increase the availability of healthy local foods.
10. Support events that highlight the City and Region's diverse food shed. Promote food safety programs and services.
11. Foster a civic culture that inspires all City and Regional residents and all local government departments to support local food producers and food programs that provide cultural, social, economic and health benefits by adopting food purchasing practices for City and Regional sponsored events that serve as a model of health, social and environmental responsibility.
12. Encourage the use of our community gardens to increase food self-reliance, improve fitness, contribute to a cleaner environment, and enhance community development.
13. Advocate for the protection of local producers, agricultural lands and support agriculture through initiatives that highlight the importance of our farmers by working towards an equitable economy that values food producers and the land they grow food on.
16. Foster policies that encourage and assist City residents to produce their own food in their gardens and back-yards.
17. Recognize that water is an intricate and essential element to a healthy community and advocate for responsible usage and the protection of our watershed.
18. Work with community agencies, residents' groups, businesses and other levels of government to achieve these goals



Wild deer. A common traditional food local to the Alberni Valley.