

2013 Vancouver Urban Farming Forum Agenda & Session Descriptions | Current as of November 8

9:00-9:30	Registration		
9:30-10:00	Opening & Welcome		
10:00-11:00	Carrot Sessions		
	Next Directions for the Vancouver Urban Farming Society: What can we do for you and together?	Intercultural Food Literacy: Local Produce Alternatives & Food Literacy for the Hua (Ethnic Chinese) Community	The Future of Urban Composting in Vancouver
11:00-11:15	Morning Break		
11:15-12:15	Eggplant Sessions		
	Chewing into the Urban Farming Practices Research	Indigenous Food Sovereignty	Media Thinktank
12:15-1:30	Lunch		
1:30-2:30	Kale Sessions		
	Mapping out Barriers to Desired Practices	Interrogating the Motivations, Multifunctions and Meanings of Urban Farming Initiatives in Vancouver, BC	Professional Credentials for a New Generation of Organic Farmers
2:30-2:45	Afternoon Break		
2:45-3:45	Blueberry Sessions		
	Urban Farming: Municipal Planning Perspectives	Effective record keeping for small scale farmers: maximizing the benefits of your data	Open Space: Debrief Your Day
3:45-4:30	Closing		

Carrot Sessions | 10:00-11:00

Next Directions for the Vancouver Urban Farming Society: What can we do for you and together?

Karen Ageson & Wes Regan, Vancouver Urban Farming Society Board of Directors

About the Session Hosts

Karen Ageson is a researcher in environmental studies and economics and an urban farmer. For 5 years she has co-operated the Farmers on 57th market garden, a 1/2-acre urban farm located on Vancouver Coastal Health land at 57th Avenue and Cambie Street. At Kwantlen Polytechnic University Karen is part of a research team designing a bio-regional food system for southwestern British Columbia. She is a founding director of the Vancouver Urban Farming Society and has served as Vice President for the past two years.

Wes Regan is a founding director and Treasurer of the Vancouver Urban Farming Society. Wes is also co-founder of Urban Stream, a food systems technology firm creating self-contained small plot intensive farms and urban composting solutions inside repurposed shipping containers. Since 2009 he has worked in community economic development, primarily in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, as a project consultant and coordinator and as the Executive Director of the Hastings Crossing BIA. Wes has an Associate's Degree in Geography from Langara College and a BA in Urban Geography from SFU, where he is currently completing his Master's Degree in Urban Studies.

What inspired them to host this session?

VUFS has been crafting its vision and direction for years – arguably since October 2010 - before being formally incorporated. After several conversations including a founding board of directors (BOD) retreat in 2012, a mission and vision has been penned. Now, the BOD wants to hone in on priorities and strategies under the umbrellas of education, advocacy, and networking.

What are the goals of the session? What will you walk away with as a participant and who should attend?

The BOD would like to present the mission and vision statement to its membership and broader community and develop priority items for the society to pursue. Participants will walk away knowing that they have informed the

direction of the society for the next few years as well as a sense of what the visioning and planning process for VUFS has been.

Anyone interested in helping shape what the society does is welcome to attend. Is there something not being accomplished you would like to see? Do you want to get more involved through volunteering, joining the board, or a committee?

Background & Contact Information

The VUFS Vision and Mission being put forward are:

Vision – To grow urban farming in Vancouver and beyond

Mission – To strengthen urban farming through education, networking and advocacy

Intercultural Food Literacy: Local Produce Alternatives & Food Literacy for the Hua (Ethnic Chinese) Community

Kevin Huang, Claudia Li & Jess Van, Hua Foundation

About the Session Hosts

In their work on shark fin issues at Shark Truth, Claudia Li and Kevin Huang began to see that many members from their community were yearning for deeper engagement on environmentalism. Subsuming Shark Truth as a project of Hua Foundation (Hua is the peoples of ethnic Chinese descent) this new, expanded organization will fuse together the two worlds of cultural heritage and environmental action. Utilizing our experience and skills in community organizing, our first project will be to engage our community on food literacy and security.

What inspired them to host this session?

Hua Foundation's new Intercultural Food Program aims to engage the Hua community by creating more purchasing options for culturally appropriate local food. In Vancouver, there is a gap between the environmental movement and many of the diverse ethnic communities. There are a variety of barriers including conflicting cultural values in messaging, linguistic inaccessibility and also, a lack of consumer options when it comes to eating traditional foods that are also local (ex. where can we purchase organic bak-choi?) We are looking to create market solutions for young consumers who want to buy/eat, locally, the foods that also make them feel at home.

What are the goals of the session? What will you walk away with as a participant and who should attend?

Along with educating our audience on the cultural gap, we will also be presenting one of our ideas as a case study: a pilot CSA (community supported agriculture) box program of locally grown Asian produce. We will then tap into the room's collective knowledge on the best way to run a CSA program and structure a discussion around specific questions we have. Finally, we plan to open up the floor with a callout for potential collaborators and partners.

Background & Contact Information

huafoundation.org | facebook.com/huafoundation | twitter.com/huafoundation | info@huafoundation.org

The Future of Urban Composting in Vancouver

Emme Lee, Vancouver Food Policy Council's Food 'Waste' Working Group

About the Session Hosts

Emme Lee is a Sustainable Food Systems student at UBC with a keen interest in soil science, composting, and policy. She is also a member of the Vancouver Food Policy Council and chair of the Food 'Waste' Working Group. Recently, she managed a research project which looked at food 'waste' policy in the Metro Vancouver region.

What inspired them to host this session?

This session builds on the challenges, questions, and opportunities around composting that were identified in 2012. The compost scene is slowly evolving. Although current policies may be a barrier to composting operations in the urban environment, there are opportunities to create change. We need the vision of urban farmers to help identify those changes, and drive the vision for what urban composting in our region could look like.

What are the goals of the session? What will you walk away with as a participant and who should attend?

The goal of this session is to produce a collective vision of what urban composting could look like in our region. What does the urban farming community envision? This session will also look at uncovering how specific needs of urban farmers can be met through urban composting operations. Some discussion topics will include: infrastructure gaps, current and desired resources, research questions, compatibility of composting and farming practices, quantity and quality of soil amendments, logistical challenges, market potential/costs, etc. Participants will walk away with a clearer vision of what the future of urban composting might look like in our region. Participant feedback will help guide future policy and advocacy work around urban composting.

Background & Contact Information

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Eggplant Sessions | 11:15-12:15

Chewing into Urban Farming Practices Research

Zsuzsi Fodor, Vancouver Urban Farming Society Research Coordinator

About the Session Hosts

Zsuzsi has been coordinating the VUFS practices research project with Shelby Tay since 2012 and will continue in this role for the next year. Zsuzsi's background is in urban planning with a focus on sustainable food systems, food policy, and community development. When she is not collaborating with the urban farming community, Zsuzsi works in the neighbourhood house and Neighbourhood Food Network movements and co-chairs the Vancouver Food Policy Council.

What inspired them to host this session?

After a year of community research on urban farming practices which engaged 20 urban farming organizations in Metro Vancouver, we will present highlights from the project and use the workshop as an opportunity to capture feedback on what we found. This is grounded in our approach to the research which believes in the knowledge and lived experience of those farming this place and 'giving back' the work to the people who informed it as a way of validating and refining it.

What are the goals of the session? What will you walk away with as a participant and who should attend?

The goals of the session are to share the research with the community and convene discussion on the findings. Feedback from this workshop will shape a revised version of the practices report. Anyone interested in the research and urban farming practices is welcome to attend. We especially welcome farmers who were interviewed and surveyed for the project.

Background & Contact Information

The 2012 Vancouver Urban Farming Forum report has baseline information on urban farming practices and can be accessed at www.urbanfarmers.ca | research@urbanfarmers.ca

Indigenous Food Sovereignty
Dawn Morrison

Session Information TBA

Media Think Tank
Matthew Unger

Session Information TBA

Kale Sessions | 1:30-2:30

Mapping out Barriers to Desired Practices – Session Information TBA

Interrogating the Motivations, Multifunctions and Meanings of Urban Farming Initiatives in Vancouver, BC

Camil Dumont & Will Valley, UBC Faculty of Land & Food Systems

About the Session Hosts

Will Valley and Camil Dumont are co-directors of Inner City Farms, Inc. and graduate students in the Faculty of Land & Food Systems at UBC.

What inspired them to host this session?

This session is based on a study conducted by a team of researchers from the Faculty of Land & Food Systems on four commercial urban farming organizations and analysis of the policy climates of the municipal and institutional programs that support urban food production initiatives. The team is comprised of Will Valley, Camil Dumont, Brent Mansfield, Dr. Hannah Wittman, and Joshua Edwards.

What are the goals of the session? What will you walk away with as a participant and who should attend?

The goals of the session are to distinguish the multifunctional outcomes of urban farming (i.e. health, social, economic and ecological) and recognize and address major critiques of urban farming initiatives. Participants will walk away with a clear understanding of current frameworks for assessing the outcomes of urban farming as well as an awareness of common critiques from scholarly and popular sources. Through small and large group discussion, participants will have the opportunity to critically reflect on the motivations and multifunctional outcomes of urban farming in Vancouver.

Background & Contact Information

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Professional Credentials for a New Generation of Organic Farmers

Rochelle Eisen & Heide Hermary, Society for Organic Urban Land Care (SOUL)

About the Session Hosts

Rochelle Eisen is a standards junkie, working in organics for over 20 years as well as other certification systems. Like Einstein she believes "What is right is not always popular and what is popular is not always right" and assurance programs are a means to level ecological playing fields.

Heide Hermary spent the last decade developing and teaching organic horticulture curriculum for Gaia College. As co-founder of SOUL she was instrumental in the development of the Organic Land Care Standard and SOUL's certification program for organic land care professionals.

What inspired them to host this session?

There are currently over 600 certified organic farmers and processors in BC, but there are also close to 3,000 "uncertified organic" producers in BC. A significant portion of the uncertified organic producers are small-scale operators or new farmers who in most cases cannot comply with the land tenure requirements of the Canada Organic Standard or feel it is not economically feasible to secure organic product certification.

Until now, organic certification has been product based, involving an inspection process that guarantees organic farmers are following organic standards. COABC's 2012 Small Scale Certification report suggested that farmer certification system might be worth exploring. This new education-based personal accreditation being explored by SOUL offers an alternative approach to communicating an organic farmer's commitment to organic principles.

What are the goals of the session? What will you walk away with as a participant and who should attend?

During this session we would like input on the concept, how the program should work and feedback on the Draft Standard and Farmer Accreditation Model.

Background & Contact Information

More information, including a full history of the project and copies of essential documents at this website:

www.organiclandcare.org/farmer-accreditation.html

Blueberry Sessions | 2:45-3:45

Urban Farming: Municipal Planning Perspectives James O'Neill, City of Vancouver

About the Session Hosts

James O'Neill is a Social Planner for the City of Vancouver. His work spans a range of aspects of creating more sustainable food systems for the city, including urban agriculture and urban farming. He is also the staff liaison to the Food Policy Council.

What inspired them to host this session?

Urban farming is increasingly recognized to have a number of economic, social and environmental benefits in cities across North America. While Vancouver has several urban farms, a number of policies, licensing and regulatory barriers create challenges for urban farming to thrive. Specifically, while it is legal to grow food in Vancouver, there are limits where certain land uses, licensing and commercial activities are concerned.

What are the goals of the session? What will you walk away with as a participant and who should attend?

This session will examine urban farming research as it relates to municipal policy, including land use, zoning, licensing and regulation, and policy from other North American cities. It will explore the framework in which Vancouver is employing to develop policy recommendations. The session is intended for those people interested in land use, policy and municipal planning perspective.

Background & Contact Information

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Effective record keeping for small scale farmers: maximizing the benefits of your data

Scott Bell, Fresh Roots Urban Farm Society & Emi Do, Yummy Yards

About the Session Hosts

Scott has been farming for six years and comes from a background in web development and database management. During his time at UBC Farm he saw the value of merging these two skills sets for more efficient collection of data during the season and more accurate information to review during the winter.

Emi has been the farmer behind Yummy Yards for the past three seasons. Though she has always understood the importance of record keeping, it wasn't until she saw Scott's meticulous spreadsheets that she realized how easy and effective record keeping could be.

What inspired them to host this session?

When our crop plans don't unfold as predicted or we have leftovers at our market stands, we chalk these up as 'failures' and toss them into the compost heap. With the winter approaching it's a perfect time to improve record keeping systems for next season. Whether you need to better track your harvest, create crop plans or evaluate the cost/benefit of a specific crop, well thought out spreadsheets can make data collection simple and efficient. The information you gather will be invaluable when making decisions in the future and all those things you thought you'd remember become foggy and faded.

What are the goals of the session? What will you walk away with as a participant and who should attend?

Participants will walk away empowered with the key tools to build effective record keeping resources for their farms. More importantly, the workshop will highlight how record keeping can fit painlessly into daily and seasonal workflow. Anyone farming/ gardening who does not yet have an effective way to record, track and/or analyze their data will find some benefit from this session. Experience with Excel or any spreadsheet software will be helpful but is not necessary. Bring a laptop if you have one.

Background & Contact Information

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Open Space: Debrief Your Day – Session Information TBA