

Economic Development Cowichan  
Cowichan Region Area Agriculture Plan  
Cowichan Basin Water Management  
June 3, 2010



# Background



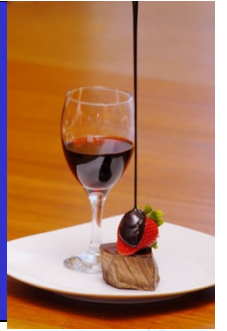
- EDC identification of agriculture potential
- Approval by CVRD Board
- Plan timeline

# Area Agriculture Steering Committee



- Ian Christison, Chair
- Gerry Giles
- Kate Miller
- Pete Keber
- Mike Tippett
- Wayne Haddow
- Jim Van Barneveld
- Graham Myers
- George Seymour
- Judy Stafford/John Milne
- Geoff Millar
- Kathy Lachman

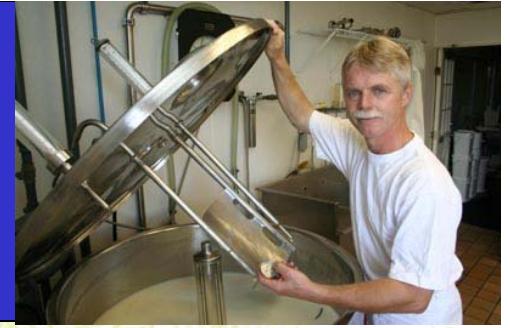
# Why Are We Doing This?



- Important economic driver
- Best agriculture land on Vancouver Island
- Decline in our ability to provide food for the local population
- Support- Cowichan Food Charter signed by Economic Development Commission, CVRD Board



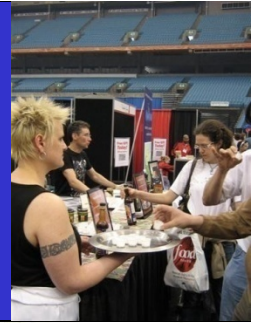
# Why Are We Doing This?



- 18% of our food comes from local sources generating \$47.5 million in gross receipts.
- Provides rural lifestyle



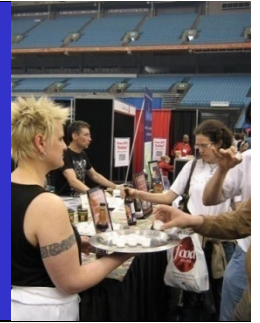
# Why Are We Doing This?



- Cowichan Region gaining national and international reputation a 'food' region



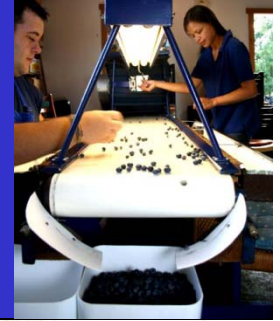
# Process



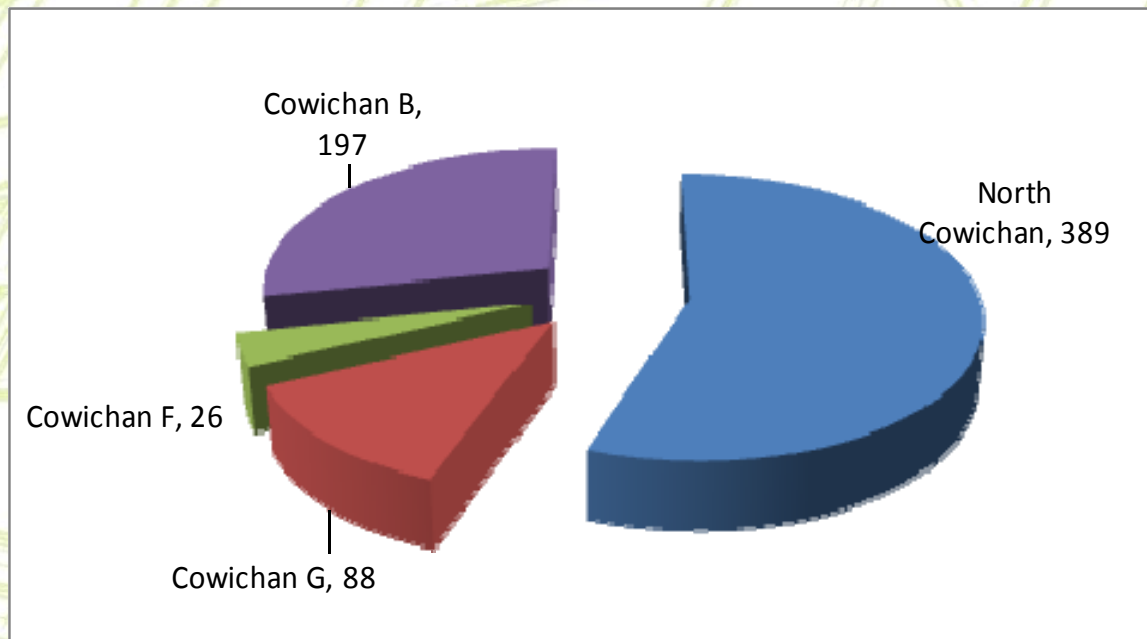
- January 2009, From The Ground Up Consulting (Gary Rolston) was hired
- Most of 2009 spent on developing the plan



# Consultation Process



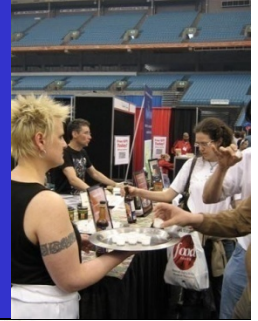
Background information:



Number of farms by electoral area



# Consultation Process



## Stakeholder consultations



# Reports Generated

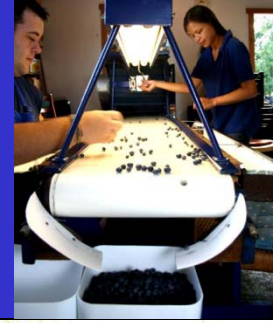


## Background reports:

- State of the Industry
- Issues and Opportunities

## Area Agriculture Action Plan

# Vision



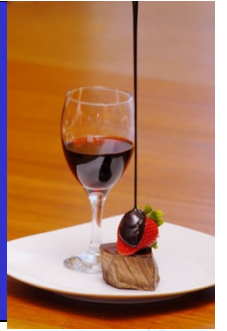
To develop a thriving and diverse agricultural industry in the Cowichan Region which:

- Provides a healthy, high quality diet for the people who live and visit, and
- Preserves or enhances the character, environment and quality of life of the community.



EDC  
cowichan

# Strategic Direction



Based on the consultation process, two key strategic directions will lead the industry towards its vision:

- Economic Development
- Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency

# Action Plan

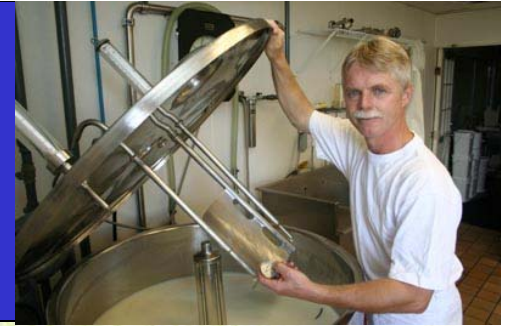


The Action Plan identified 78 recommendations

Four Broad Areas:

- Plan Implementation Structure and Communication
- Policy, Land Use and Environment
- Attraction and Marketing
- Education

# Action Plan Goals



- Communication network between agriculture and the community- 15 action items
- Government policy framework- 45 action items
- Access to markets- 10 action items
- Preservation of environment- 8 action items

# Water



- 32,830 hectares of arable land
- 9421 hectares are considered prime agricultural land
- However, 80% of this area requires irrigation to produce high value crops
- Only 2,465 hectares are currently irrigated

# Water Issues



Some have too much

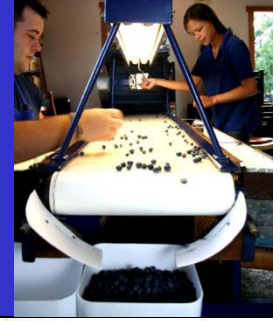


Others have too little





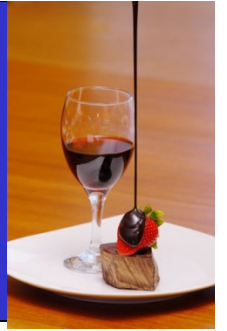
# Water Action Items



## Increase Access to Water for Irrigation

- Initiate discussions with Catalyst
- Allow farmers access to Municipal water
- Develop strategies to reallocate water within current infrastructure
- Revisit Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan
- Explore potential water storage options
- Provide support for irrigation improvements
- Encourage Environmental Farm Plans

# Water Action Items



## Improve Water use Efficiency

- Hold a workshop that deals with water, irrigation design and water use efficiency

## Improve Drainage

- Provide support to farmers to develop water management systems
- Assist with creation of Improvement Districts to coordinate maintenance of drainage channels

# Water Action Items



Develop and maintain water control systems in low-lying areas

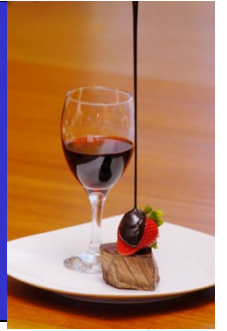


# Area Agriculture Steering Committee Request- May 4, 2010



Request that the Electoral Area Services Committee recommend that the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee comprised of government, community, farmers and other stakeholders to address the issues and actions identified in the Area Agriculture Plan.

# Request Approved



The CVRD Board will be forming an Agriculture Advisory Committee to oversee the recommendations (action items) within the plan



Questions?