

Spring 2025

BOWEN ISLAND FOOD RESILIENCE SOCIETY (BIFS)

- We envision a thriving, local food ecosystem on Bowen/Nexwlexm.
- We value and support initiatives that restore biodiversity and organic, regenerative, local food production.
- We believe that healthy food should be accessible to all.



The **Mission** of BIFS is to contribute to building the skills, knowledge, networks and farms & gardens needed to create an inclusive, healthy, resilient, and humane, community-based food system that addresses the climate emergency and the realities of life on an island.

Mark Your Calendars!

Grafton Commons Garden Season Opening!

Saturday, April 12th, 1:00 to 3:00 pm

- Come see how the garden grows
- Check out the box garden
- Visit the pop-up market with local garden produce
- Meet up with volunteers
- Purchase a straw bale for your garden
- Enjoy refreshments

Photo: Gate to Grafton Commons Garden with our 'Certified Wildlife-friendly Habitat' sign'



GROW YOUR OWN FRESH PRODUCE AT GRAFTON COMMONS

We have 4 garden boxes for individuals who want to grow some of their own food this season! We provide healthy, nutrient-rich soil and support you in learning how to grow food the regenerative way.

In exchange, we ask for a commitment of 2 volunteer hours per month minimum to help maintain the garden area. It's an opportunity to learn, grow, and be part of a gardening community!

Interested? Contact Jennifer Allen at jennifersallen2020@gmail.com

VOLUNTEERS & DONORS WELCOMED -- AND NEEDED

Want to connect with your community and contribute to something worthwhile? Help us build food resilience on Bowen.

Food is always important - what we eat, how it's grown, and now, more than ever, where it comes from. Only 34% of the BC food supply is grown within the province, and almost ¼ of what we import comes from the U.S.

Bowen Island Food Resilience Society is a non-profit. Your donations of time, energy and, yes, money are appreciated.

Join us at Grafton Commons or ask about helping with Low Hanging Fruit or the Farmers' Market. Contact BIFS: bowenfoodresilience@gmail.com



GARDEN UPDATE **Introducing Linda**

"Hi my name is Linda, and I am excited to join the garden this year and be a part of this season of growth. I will be organizing the Garden Party for volunteers to join the fun. My intention is to be a bridge for people on Bowen to come and learn how to grow and work with the land and soil. It's been so amazing being involved with Grafton Commons; there are many wonderful mentors with a high level of mastery in so many fields and so fun to be around. Learning a truly organic and regenerative way to grow food and being a steward of the land is such a gift to me. And the food grown in the garden is some of the best I've ever had! Hope my message can inspire more of the community to come hang, learn and play."

Photo: Linda in the Grafton Commons Box Garden with her puppy, Nova



The April 12th Grafton Commons Season Opening is a perfect time to meet Linda. Join us from 1:00 to 3:00.

Seedling Workshops

Jackie Bradley held two hands-on workshops at the garden on how to plant and transplant seedlings. These are two of the tips from the handout Jackie prepared for the workshop:

- For best results, place sprouted seedlings under a light. Seedlings reach for the light and will become leggy if your light is too far away. Light should be about 3" above seedlings and should be raised as the seedling grows.
- Transplanting is stressful for plants. It's best to plant on a shady day or later in the day.



Photo: Top - Shauna and David transplanting seedlings; Bottom - peas, cabbage, triticale

LOW HANGING FRUIT - Combatting Waste & Increasing Yields

We have now wrapped up the fourth year of the Low Hanging Fruit (LHF) project. In 2024 we gleaned over 1000 pounds of fruit (many varieties of apples, crabapples and quince) during 26 harvests across Bowen Island.

Proceeds from market sales this year totalled over \$1,200. Of that amount, \$250 was donated to the Bowen Island Food Bank and \$100 will be donated to the Bowen Island Historic Preservation Association. The balance will be used for new harvesting and pruning equipment and to support the ongoing project.



Photo: Pop-up Market at Grafton Commons with Rabia selling LHF apples.



Photo above: Kaihley Goode explaining how to prune.



Teaching people how to prune their trees is another way that LHF helps build food resilience on Bowen. This March 2025, with the trees in their dormant period, we hosted two free, hands-on workshops outlining the basic principles of fruit tree pruning. These were led by Kaihley Goode, head gardener for David and Aubin van Berckel here on Bowen Island. Assisted by Kaz Shamsudeen and held at Grafton Commons community garden, two groups of participants joined in and were guided in the steps to creating well-pruned, productive fruit trees.

After three years of leadership and success, Hasan Hutchinson has decided to play a mentoring, but not organizing role in LHF. We would like to thank Hasan for the enthusiasm, initiative, energy, and dedication he brought to this role.

Photo: Hasan with BIFS' members Maureen Witney, Lisa Holland and Rabia Wilcox

The Farmers' Market

We are looking forward to another veggie packed, crafty farmers market this year. The market runs on Saturdays from May 10th to October 11th (the Thanksgiving Day weekend), 10am to 12:30pm.

We are pleased to have several events at the market this year.

- Seedling Sales - May 10th, 17th and 24th
- The Children's Center - May 31st
- Bowen Island Pride - June 7th
- Bowfest - August 23rd

The new Farmers' Market logo was designed by Erin Sinclair of Bowen. The logo was inspired by our unique island culture and the growers and crafters of the Farmers' Market.



**BOWEN
ISLAND
FARMERS
MARKET**

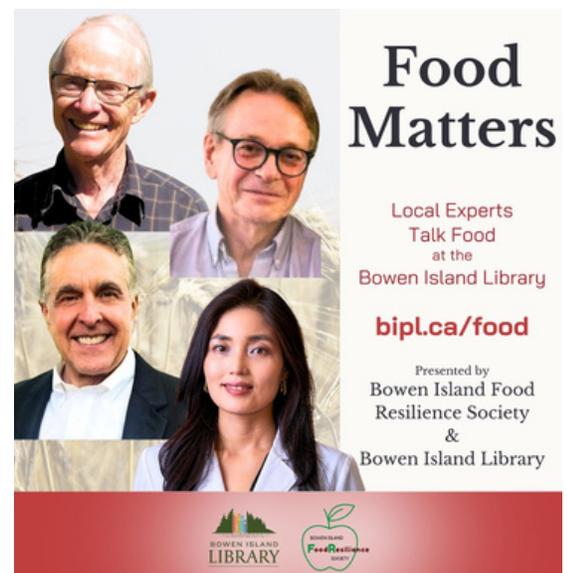
We would love to include as many Bowen growers and crafters as possible this year. We realize that not everyone has things to sell every market and may not need a full table to themselves. So we are offering both a growers table and a crafters table where this table is shared between two to three people - a maximum of 3 times in one season. This makes the financially more feasible and more fun too!

Last but not least, we are scheduling acoustic musicians for as many of the markets as possible for listening enjoyment and for local musicians to have an outlet for their creativity.

If you are interested in being a vendor - produce or crafts - or playing music at the market, email bowenagalliance@gmail.com.

FOOD MATTERS - Fall & Winter Talks

Food issues -- what we eat, how it's grown, and where it comes from - raise complex questions. In the past fall and winter, Bowen Island Food Resilience Society in partnership with the Bowen Island Library organized 'Food Matters,' a series of four talks by Bowen Island food experts. Each of the four speakers presented their own perspective on these issues, made even more timely by the current state of US-Canada relations.



To see more about these talks, you can view videos and slides of the presentations:

Dr. Phil Gregory spoke on "Food's Future: Nature or Technology?"

This is a link to a video of his presentation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5GG22r7qW0>

Dr. Hasan Hutchinson spoke on "Making the Canada Food Guide: Behind the Scenes." You can check out the [Canada Food Guide](#) and see what great resources are available to guide you family's food choices here

<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

Dr. Charles McNeill spoke on “Innovative Solutions to the Global Food System: Protecting the Climate and Biodiversity.” Here is a link to a PDF of his presentation:

<https://bowenlibrary.ca/files/2023/04/BIFS-Talk-Slides-12-Jan-2025-Final-PDF.pdf>

Dr. Hyunjoo Lee spoke on “Your Everyday Meal: A Recipe for Health and the Environment.” Here is a link to a video of her presentation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZgIPI4Wsrk>

Thank you

Bowen Island Food Resilience Society receives support from many individuals in the community: Garden Volunteers, Board Members, our accountant, Low Hanging Fruit pickers and tree owners, and people who help us build soil with donations of manure and woodchips. Thank you!

We also want to thank the private donors and organizations who have given us financial support in 2024 & 2025.

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ISLAND
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**BOWEN ISLAND
COMMUNITY
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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
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**Neighbourhood
Small Grants
Bowen Island**

Funded in part by the
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