



MEDIA ADVISORY

Prince George Communities in Bloom

FOOD for THOUGHT: Exploring Food Security & Sustainability in Northern BC with Guest Expert, Dr. Kent Mullinix, PhD.

EVENT 1: Free Public Presentation: Food for Thought

With **Dr. Kent Mullinix, PhD.** Director of Sustainable Agriculture & Food Security, Institute for Sustainable Horticulture, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

When: Thursday, January 21st @ 7:00 PM

Where: UNBC, Weldwood Theatre (Room 7-238)

Event Details: Food Security & Sustainability for Northern B.C. (followed by a Moderated Question & Answer Session)

For more information, contact Jackie Pement 250.649.0959

EVENT 2: Free Interactive World Café: Food for Thought

with Dr. Kent Mullinix, myPG & Northern Health

When: Friday, January 22, 2010, 9:30am -1:00pm (light lunch provided)

Where: The Power of Friendship Hall, PG Native Friendship Centre

Event Details: Food security & sustainability in Prince George

Please RSVP to HEAL@northernhealth.ca or 250.565.7455

-30-

Communities in Bloom is a national program that Encourages Community Participation, Urban Greenspace & Environmental Excellence in our Communities.





MEDIA RELEASE

COMING EVENTS: (Spotlight & City Matters)

Free Public Presentation: Food for Thought 1. Please join **PG Communities in Bloom** on Thursday, January 21st, 7:00pm; Weldwood Theatre (Room 7-238), UNBC for Presentation by Dr. Kent Mullinix on **Food Security & Sustainability for Northern BC**. Dr. Mullinix is Director of Sustainable Agriculture & Food Security, Institute for Sustainable Horticulture, Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

For more information, contact Jackie Pement @250-649-0959

COMING EVENTS:

Free Workshop: Food for Thought 2. Join us for an important exploration of Food Security and Sustainability on Friday, January 22nd from 9:30am-1:00pm at the Power of Friendship Hall, Prince George Native Friendship Centre. Visiting expert, Dr. Mullinix, will lead a dynamic World Café style discussion on the future of food security and sustainability in Prince George. Coffee, muffins and a light lunch provided.

Please RSVP to HEAL@northernhealth.ca or 250-565-7455.

“Food for Thought Events” are jointly sponsored by Prince George Communities in Bloom, Healthy Eating & Active Living (Northern Health), myPG and the City of Prince George.



Prince George Communities in Bloom

PUBLIC PRESENTATION : FOOD FOR THOUGHT

January 21st, 2010 7:00 p.m. Weldwood Theatre UNBC (Room 7-238)

Food Security & Sustainability for Northern B.C.

Integrating Agri-Culture and Urban-Culture: Bio-Regional Agri-food Systems and Municipal Enabled Agriculture in British Columbia, Canada

Dr. Kent Mullinix, PhD. Institute for Sustainable Horticulture, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Surrey, British Columbia

Presentation Synopsis:

For the first time in human history the majority are urban dwellers. In Canada and the United States only 1.5% of the population is engaged in production agriculture. Effectively then, the vast preponderance of our populations have next to nothing to do with agriculture- production, processing or marketing. Food, in urbanized North America has become little more than another throughput- it comes in (in untold quantities and forms) and its waste products (which are many) go out. Urbanites have no substantive, meaningful relationship with this fundamentally critical aspect of their sustenance and daily lives. Agriculture and agriculturists are increasingly relegated to the socio-cultural margins.

In British Columbia, Canada, as elsewhere, there is a growing awareness that the combined effects of peak oil, peak water, climate change, rapid urbanization, continued population growth, loss of farms and farmers as well as the current status, configuration and dominance of conventional industrial agriculture have the potential to threaten food security and ultimately result in an agri-food system that is not sustainable. This undermines the resilience of our cities. Municipal governments are at the forefront of and regularly wrestle with contentious and polarizing issues around population growth, economic vitality and urban encroachment onto agriculture lands regularly.

The Institute for Sustainable Horticulture is contributing to an expanding discussion on sustainability issues that examine the strategic significance of food security (supply) and food sovereignty (control). In British Columbia we are working with private sector entities and municipal governments to conceptualize and implement agri-food systems innovations that will confer regional food security and sovereignty, substantively contribute to local/regional economies and evoke a renewed agrarian sensibility among urban dwellers. We contend that human-scale municipal-focused agriculture should form the basis of a bio-regional agri-food system as a necessary pre-condition for creating urban sustainability.

It is the objective of this presentation to describe and discuss strategies and initiatives we believe can be undertaken to advance a sustainable regional agri-food system. Included in

this presentation will be a discussion of the basis for agriculture system reform, the concept of bio-regional food systems and *Municipal Enabled Agriculture*. Various MEA initiatives and models we are currently undertaking to create sustainability and resiliency in the regional agri-food system of southwest British Columbia will also be discussed. We believe that these models are scalable with potential applicability to other urban centers. We describe *Municipal Enabled Agriculture* (MEA) as the full integration of agriculture and the food system within the planning, development and function of our rapidly urbanizing communities. It is an agri-food system element intended to connect urbanites, in real and meaningful ways, to their environment and to a human enterprise that is undeniably crucial to their future well-being. It is a way of reducing vulnerability and dependence on an ecologically unsound and increasingly vulnerable agri-food system while simultaneously reducing our food system ecological footprint and stimulating real regional wealth generation.