



Harvesting Abundance

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How To Start A Fruit Tree Project -Harvest the Abundance-

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Introduction

What is Community Stewardship?

The word stewardship means to take control or give guidance to a person place or thing, with the intention of helping that person, place or thing grow and flourish. In this case stewardship is referring to a community taking an initiative to care for their own environment and the community as a whole. This means not only taking steps to improve things in the present, but also planning for a sustainable future for ourselves and generations to follow.

Who's Behind This Manual?

The First Provincial Meeting of Fruit Tree Projects was held on February 2, 2002. People in attendance represented Fruit Tree Projects from Vancouver, Richmond, Victoria and Nelson. This manual includes input from all of the projects but is essentially a revised version of materials put out by the Nelson and Vancouver Projects.

It is our hope that this meld of information will provide a broad outline as to the basic structure of a Fruit Tree Project, capable of fitting the needs of most any community. We wish to encourage the growth of this fantastic project thus the creation of this manual.

LifeCycles and the Victoria Fruit Tree Project would like to acknowledge the work of the Nelson and Vancouver Projects for providing us with such a solid base. We would also like to thank Human Resources Development Canada and the Office of Learning Technology for funding the creation and publication of this manual.

What is the Fruit Tree Project?

The Fruit Tree Project began as a way to make use of a valuable and neglected food source, help people gain access to nutritious and healthy foods, and bring the community closer together. It has since evolved (and is still evolving) and taken on new forms and formats to fit the needs and goals of people in each community that has adopted the program.

The concept is that fruit that is currently going unharvested is collected and shared equally between those who donate fruit from their trees, those who harvest the fruit, and various community organizations. The project is operated by members of the community for the community.

Reduction of food waste equates to increased local food security. A large portion (1/3 or more) of the fruit collected is donated to various non-profit local organizations, which can in turn provide people with healthy, free food.

History:

British Columbia has a rich history of agriculture, and is home to some of the finest orchards in the world. European settlers planted fruit trees as early as 1826. With our busier lifestyles, few of us find time to cultivate and harvest fruit trees and many old trees now drop their annual loads on someone's lawn. While the wasps gorge on homegrown fruit, folks bring home bags of shiny Granny Smiths shipped from, the US or New Zealand. Such market varieties are chosen for durability and good looks rather than flavour, quality or historical importance. As a result, many varieties that were valued in the past for exceptional texture, taste, good storage ability or tradition are being lost. With them goes centuries of history and careful selection - along with our ability to discern and appreciate subtle nuances of their flavours.

The Victoria Fruit Tree Project (FTP) was created to harvest the abundance of fruit available in Victoria. Lee Herrin was a key initiator of the FTP. While working at Shady Brook Farm juicing apples, he saw the irony of passing falling fruit from residential trees. Lee and other community members began to organize informal picking parties through the summer of 1998. After the busy first season, LifeCycles agreed to house the project to support further development.

In 1999, just one year after Victoria's project began, sister Fruit Tree Projects were set up in both Vancouver and Nelson. Today there are five Fruit Tree Projects established in B.C. (Vancouver, Nelson, Richmond, Kaslo, and Victoria) and more cities have requested start-up information. Lee credits the growth of the movement, in part, to a deep-seated cultural attachment to apples. Whatever the reason, the Fruit Tree Project has undeniable appeal, in Victoria and beyond. Word spreads quickly about a project that is essentially "the most common sense type of community development" (*Ian Fawcett, Coordinator of the Fernwood Community Centre*).

Each of the aforementioned projects evolved in almost absolute isolation from one another, and therefore they have come to form their own unique dynamics. Each of the projects has had to deal with different situations regarding volunteer support, equipment, community needs, funding, etc. Differences in demographics, geography, and fruit tree density also play a major role in the structure of each individual project.

What began as a project to connect people with fruit has become a project connecting people. The Fruit Tree Project mobilizes diverse segments of the population to harvest, process and distribute local fruit.

Starting your Fruit Tree Project

There are several things to consider when you first start out with your Fruit Tree Project. This section outlines some of the key things to think about from the outset.

Is the project necessary in your community?

Does your community have lots of fruit going to waste? Is there a need for fresh produce in your community? Do unharvested fruit trees attract bears or wasps into your community? If you responded "yes" to two or more of these questions then continue the planning process. If not you may wish to consider another project related to improving security.

What area will your project encompass?

The Fruit Tree Project has the potential to be both a demanding and rewarding project. There is much to be gained from the practical experience of organizing, coordinating, and actualizing a project that secures a local sustainable food source while helping to feed hungry people. This project will be what you make it -set goals and make plans to create a project that is both manageable and stimulating. And keep in mind that this is a process. The Fruit Tree Project becomes more stable, organized, and larger every year.

Projects range from covering an entire city (The Victoria Fruit Tree Project) to only covering a few neighbourhoods in the city (The Vancouver Fruit Tree Project). When deciding the range of your project, think about how the project will be structured, as well as the interest level is in the community, how many fruit trees appear to be in the area, and your capacity for transportation and storage. Though it might be tempting to start out big, a good infrastructure for the project might be more important in the beginning, leaving room to expand each year.

Meeting Places

If you don't have an office or workspace that will adequately double as a meeting place, look for a community centre to use. They are usually quite supportive of this type of project, and will often provide space free of charge. They may even advertise your meeting in their newsletters or schedule of events, which may mean new volunteers. If your group is small enough a local coffee shop or member's kitchen table works well.

Structure

The structure of the project will partially determine how much area it can cover, or the capacity of the project to take calls from tree owners and organize volunteer fruit pickers. Typically projects are structured in one of two ways. Volunteer run or centrally run with hired project coordinators who do the majority of the coordination, facilitation of events and transportation of the fruit.

If you are planning on being a volunteer run project, be aware of the necessary time commitments and find out what kind of time the other volunteers can commit. A project of this nature can easily demand two full time workers. In either case a volunteer advisory committee is a good way to distribute the work load and make sure that the project's memory is not lost as people come and go.

Becoming a project of a related organization or creating your own society will enable you to be recognized as a legal body and allow you to access grants and insurance. Becoming a society in BC is voluntary. Visit <http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/registries/corppg/crforms.htm#soc>, (see Appendix A) to download forms. If you are living outside of BC call your provincial or state government and ask them how to incorporate your society.

Becoming a registered charity is a federal issue and is usually a much lengthier process. However, if your project is clearly of a charitable nature it doesn't take that long to get a number. The Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project received a charitable number in two months. It is necessary to become a charity if you wish to apply for money from foundations or issue tax receipts to folks who make donations. The Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) registers qualifying organizations as charities, gives technical advice on operating a charity, and handles audit and compliance activities. According to the Richmond Group the most important part of the application is the description of project activities. For more information phone 1-800-267-2384 or visit their website <http://www.ccradrc.gc.ca/tax/charities/menu-e.html>. (see Appendix A)

Richmond is the only Fruit Tree Project that is incorporated and recognized as a society. The others fall under the umbrella of a parent organization.

Funding

It is not necessary to have funding in order to run a successful Fruit Tree Project, but it certainly doesn't hurt. Initially Victoria, Vancouver and Richmond projects were operated quite successfully on a solely volunteer basis. It may be possible to borrow equipment and transportation, and there are advertising mediums available at little to no cost. However, a Fruit Tree Project requires a lot of coordinating and there are ways of obtaining funds to support a contract position.

In the past Fruit Tree Projects have relied on government grants, especially youth grants such as BC E-Teams and Youth Community Action to cover staff costs. Though these provincial programs no longer exist the federal government still offers grants through Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) through Youth Services Canada (YSC) and Job Creation Partnerships (JCP) (see Appendix B). Government cutbacks and a poor stock market have made it more difficult to find funding however there are still many foundations and organizations that can help. The Green Source (see Appendix B) offers a fairly comprehensive list of potential funders. Projects may wish to seek funding elsewhere by approaching local credit unions or larger businesses for corporate sponsorship, by asking your municipality for financial assistance or you might ask local service clubs for a donation. Revenue generating activities such as the sale of fruit, preserves or juice (see Juice) and donor campaigns are other ways you may wish to secure unrestricted funds. Exploring the possibility of formalizing sales from the Fruit Tree Project into a business is another source of sustainable income.

Setting up meetings with the funder to discuss the project and its possibilities drastically increases your chances of securing money. Through an informal conversation the funder may find out things about the project that might not necessarily fit into a grant application. It also gives them the opportunity to help you shape your idea to best fit the fund's criteria. As a final piece of advice, finish writing applications well before the deadline and have the funder review your initial draft. Never send in a cold application.

More Sound Fundraising Advice

- Homework and research is on going. Find out who supports your program. Is your project eligible? Is there a fit? Start a binder. Some funders are listed on the Internet (see Appendix B)
- Create a plan or strategy. List potential funders and what it is they'll consider and when. Have one person coordinating applications and make sure everyone in your group knows who is being approached.
- Start locally because many businesses and regional foundations support local initiatives and application reviews tend to take a shorter time.
- Create a budget. Funders will consider operating assistance or funds for a specific use like purchase of equipment.
- Always identify partners. Who is helping you? Who are you working with to reach your objectives. This really counts when an application is being reviewed.
- Records are extremely important. Most funders like measurable results.
- Follow their guidelines. Don't send in too much information unless it's requested.
- Work hard on a case statement. Why does your project need funding? What is the need? Benefits? Most donors want to know how your project will provide donor recognition. Keep case statement to one page if possible.
- Many potential donors will say fax something or email a brief description first. Most foundations require a letter of inquiry before they'll invite a full application.

- Some funders now encourage group applications. They'd rather fund a coalition or partnership approach. This trend will likely increase in the future.
- Another trend is that some businesses would rather donate employee time or a service instead of cash. Employee picking teams are popular in Richmond. Other ways a company may be able to help are for things like a mail out through their postage system, photocopying, accounting services etc.
- Find a company who updates their computers on a regular basis. Their obsolete computer or fax machine may be all your project needs.
- Attach media clippings to your applications.
- Send Thank you letters and cards promptly. Invite potential and secured donors to all of your events. Most don't show up but they appreciate an invite.
- If a potential donor's eligibility guidelines don't match the project's goals and philosophy - don't compromise the project's integrity by forcing a fit just for the sake of a grant.
- Remember the value of using one successful grant or a community recognition award as leverage to apply to other funders.
- The importance of multiple sources of funding/revenue is a critical element. Always identify what your project can contribute in the way of your own fundraising efforts (raffles, juice/fruit sales, donor campaigns). This indicates the project isn't relying solely on grants.

Timeline

A project of this nature can have many different aspects: community outreach and events, publicity, workshops, picking, distribution, revenue generation, ect. This can make for a very confusing and busy schedule. The best way to stay organized and ensure that you are meeting all of your objectives is to create a timeline. Make this your first step (after reading this manual of course!) in the creation of your project. Keep your timeline very broad, and be aware that it will probably be altered greatly throughout the course of your project. The purpose of the timeline is not to be a strict daily agenda, but rather a general guide through the major components of your project. See Appendix C for Program Activities Timeline.

Organizing Pickings

First you must have a way for volunteers and tree owners to contact you. Then have some idea of the information you want to get from them (see Appendix D&E).

We have found it easiest to contact the tree owners first to determine how much fruit is on the tree, and when they would like us to harvest. Using this information, we can then contact volunteer pickers based on their availability and arrange for them to meet at the house. Depending on the demand for your project you may have time to scout properties before scheduling the pick. Scouting helps for determining the number of volunteers needed and whether or not the tree is worth picking (ie. Is the fruit ripe? Does it taste good? Can we reach the fruit safely?)

Landowners

Landowners are absolutely crucial to your project. No landowners, no fruit. Write a landowner specific press release and do a landowner specific poster campaign. There are so many benefits! Free fruit with no effort at all. A sense of having contributed to the community. Clean yards. In addition to a third of the fruit, you might consider providing the landowner with a manual that includes information about the project, fruit tree care and bees. At the end of the season send the homeowners a thank you card and a letter detailing the project's successes of the year.

When a landowner registers their trees, ask him/her when the fruit will be ripe. At this point you have a couple of options. One, call the landowner a short while before the ripe time to set up a time for the picking to take place. Or ask the landowner to call to you a week before their tree is at its peak. In either case, make sure to ask about any special considerations that pickers should take into account such as dogs, fragile plants, tricky gates, how much fruit they want (they don't always want a third).

Something we discovered, especially during the hectic time (Sept- early Oct) is that to spare frustration on both ends, it may be best to let the homeowner know the picking crew is entirely self-sufficient (they don't have to be there) and try to establish a range of time in which the picking could be done (i.e.: Would you prefer a specific day or could we come by anytime next week?). This could take a lot of pressure off.

Volunteers

Volunteers are without a doubt the backbone of any Fruit Tree Project. As with the landowners, there are many benefits (See Appendix F). Free fruit! Training! Valuable volunteer experience (always looks good on a resume)! Folks can perform their community service hours and get food at the same time.

Be sure to give a thorough orientation, telling pickers of expectations, safety considerations, time commitments, etc. Some people may already be familiar with the intricacies of fruit picking, and won't want to hear your training session. Fair enough, but try and make sure that everyone actually has some idea of what they are doing. Also, volunteer need to know where they're going, when they're supposed to be there and informed about upcoming workshops and special events. Try to strike a balance between dependable and consistent volunteers and involving new people to help build community.

Ask volunteers to bring to a picking:

1. Closed-toed shoes (no sandals)
2. Appropriate clothing
3. Water
4. Snacks- in case you tire of fruit..!
5. A bag to take home their harvest

Inform volunteers of office tasks that need to be done (these tasks could range from entering data to retrieving boxes to returning phone calls) and find out if they want to be involved. Remember it takes time to support a volunteer - decide how much time both of you are willing to spend before you delegate any task.

At the end of the season host a Volunteer Appreciation Party to let them know how grateful you are and to continue to build the community.

Transportation

You could use a ten-foot bike trailer or a car with roof racks, but a truck works best for transporting equipment. Cars tend to get scratched by ladders and fruit pickers and fruit juice inevitably will leak into the interior of the trunk. While a bike cart works well for cherries or plums it tends to get too heavy to pull during apple season. The important thing is to have your vehicle commercially insured whether your organization has a truck, you rent, or you have volunteers use their personal vehicles. Commercial vehicle insurance usually costs about an additional \$30/month.

Equipment Needed For Harvesting

10ft. Orchard Ladders

Picking Baskets (important as it will allow volunteers to have use of both hands)

Working Fruit Pickers with extensions

Clipboard

Map Book

Bathroom Scale (to weigh the harvest)

First Aid Kits Specialized to Meet the Needs of the Fruit Tree Project (see Appendix)

Hundreds of boxes - these can be retrieved at your local grocery store, produce boxes

(apple, pear, plum, banana) work best as they are easy to stack and are not very deep so their weight usually does not surpass 40 pounds.

Harvesting

Bruised fruit will rot much faster than intact fruit. Be careful when picking the fruit, putting fruit in boxes and stacking boxes so as not to bruise or crack the skin of the fruit.

Try to pick fruit with the stem attached, as this will also extend the storage life of the fruit (this is not always possible, especially when using fruit pickers).

Windfalls, and any fruit that touches the ground during harvest must be segregated from the rest of the fruit. This fruit must be either used as pig food or juiced and pasteurized to kill any possible bacteria. It is useful to separate useful windfalls out from pig feed fruit.

Fruit Pickers are invaluable, and in many cases more practical than ladders. Orchard Ladders (3 legged) are a million times more practical and safer than standard 4-legged stepladders. A rake and a shovel are useful if there are large quantities of windfalls.

Shaking trees is not advisable for the following reasons:

- Fruit will bruise and consequently not keep as long
- Fruit that touches the ground is at risk for E.coli contamination
- It is unprofessional, and can give a poor image of the project to the fruit tree owners and the public
- Trees can be damaged from being shaken

Distribution

The reason for starting your project will help determine your distribution formula. The Victoria Fruit Tree Project divides its harvest into thirds. A third goes to the homeowner and volunteers, a third to community groups and organizations that could use fresh produce and the remainder is kept and used to generate funds for the project through fruit and/or juice sales.

It is important to know what you are going to do with the fruit before you start picking. Ideally fruit is sorted at the harvest site and is ready to be distributed on the return trip. This ensures that distribution centres are receiving the highest quality fruit. Look for local non-profit organizations, food banks, transitions homes, shelters, senior centres, hospitals, thrift stores, or any such place that could make use of the harvest. Be sure to make arrangements with your distribution points in advance, and try to get in touch with several different organizations so that you don't swamp one place. Because fruit varies dramatically in quality so try to find organizations that are able to use seconds for cooking.

Storage

Fruit will keep much better if it is unbruised, if the skin is unbroken and if the stem is still attached.

Store fruit in as cool a location as possible, out of the sun.

Rotten fruit will spread and can spoil other fruit (one bad apple...).

Very ripe fruit can induce nearby fruit to ripen faster.

Rodents are a concern, particularly if the fruit is stored outside. (Rodents can also spread E.coli!)

Ideally fruit is stored off the ground to prevent contamination.

Storage for Fruit Tree Projects has varied from backyards, sheds, to office space. It is important to store fruit in an area that can be monitored daily so that none of it rots. You know what they say one bad apple spoils the bunch.

Records:

Aside from your "landowner database", it is advised to keep documentation on all the relevant information related to the project. Keep records of the amount of fruit picked (see Appendix G) and distributed (this is where the bathroom scale comes in handy), the number of volunteers and volunteer hours, your contacts, media releases, out going letters, funders, outreach events, sales, etc. This stockpile will act as a valuable reference library and greatly reduce the workload required of the project in future years. Records document tangible results which can be very useful in grant writing.

Safety, Liability, and Coverage

Safety

Safety is, of course, a major consideration for a Fruit Tree Project. All of the volunteers you are working with will need a thorough safety orientation. The last thing you want is someone getting hurt while working on the project. Most of the safety considerations are common sense issues, but never assume that everyone you are working with is as informed as you.

Most importantly, make sure that every volunteer is comfortable with the work to which they have been assigned. Be sure that each site is inspected by those picking for the following:

- Terrain Hazards (sink holes, drop offs, erosion, etc.)
- Low hanging power lines
- Signs of bears
- Broken or weak tree limbs
- Bee or wasp's nests
- Anything else you feel may pose a threat to the picker

Liability

You may also want to consider liability issues when it comes to volunteer activities. It is a good idea to have all volunteers sign a waiver (see Appendix H) before they start picking.

There are all kinds of possible scenarios that could arise with varying consequences (ie. Ladder through window or volunteer falls off ladder). Therefore if you have the means and are recognized a legal entity (ie. You are a registered society or are a project of a registered society) seeking Commercial General Liability Insurance is also wise. It protects the organization and individuals working for the organization from any property or bodily damage. It will also give landowners peace of mind. There is a minimum \$1,000,000 premium that will cost roughly \$650-\$700 per year. When researching an insurance policy make sure to request to have Voluntary Medical Coverage Payments included in the coverage and request to have volunteers added to the "Named Insured".

WCB

Get in touch with your local WCB branch and tell them about your project. Ask for information regarding which of their rules and regulations will apply to you. Any volunteers working on your project are neither accountable to nor covered by WCB, but anyone receiving pay is!

Bears

Because bears recognize fruit trees as an easy source of nourishment, it is not improbable to encounter a bear while picking. There is no need for this to be a frightening experience, so long as everyone on the project knows what to do in the event of a bear encounter. The two most important things to remember are:

- Make plenty of noise when approaching the site, and while working. If a bear knows you're there then it probably won't stick around
- Stay cool!! Never run from a bear. Instead, walk away facing the bear in a very slow and cool manner

Outreach

Before beginning to do outreach, it is important to consider how you want people to contact you if they have trees, or want to become volunteer fruit pickers. In the beginning, it is easy to give out a home number in order to gauge the interest of a particular area. But when the phone starts ringing uncontrollably you may wish you had set up a separate voice mailbox to act as a hotline.

The hotline idea works well. It is basically a phone number connected to a voice mailbox that you can check from any phone. This number can then be widely publicized with no fear of your home line ringing uncontrollably.

Creating a website and establishing an email address are other ways you may wish people to contact you. The use of electronic communication can save a lot of phone messages. The Victoria Fruit Tree Project has become so popular that homeowners and volunteers can register on line.

Logo:

Create a logo and use it on all of your print material so that people associate it with you when they see it.

Map:

A map of your community visually shows where fruit trees are distributed in your town/ city/ neighbourhood. All of the points on the map come from individuals registering their fruit trees by putting a pin of the appropriate colour on their property found on the map. Clusters of pins may show evidence of orchards that once thrived in the past.

The map is an excellent visual outreach tool thus the importance of striking a balance between size and transportability. It attracts people to a table display, and gives people an opportunity to involve themselves in the project in some small way.

There is occasionally some confusion about whether putting a pin in the map is equivalent to wanting fruit harvested (which it is not!), but in these cases, it is usually straight forward to point out that there is a separate sign-up sheet for people who want their trees harvested.

A map of your community can usually be purchased from your City Hall Planning Division.

Media:

Depending on the size and scale of your project, you may or may not wish to use media (ie. Television, radio, newspaper, etc) to promote your project. Your phones will probably ring off the hook after a "media hit". This can be either a blessing or a curse, depending on the capacity of your project. In some cases it may be best to steer clear of such mass media, until you feel the project is ready to handle the potential flood of interested participants.

If you do wish to rope in a large number of participants, mass media is definitely the way to go. Newspapers will often offer free advertising in the "Volunteers Wanted" section. "Community Events" sections in the newspaper, or on the radio or television are often another means of free advertisement. Press releases (See Appendix I) can be written for local newspapers and newsletters and printed at no cost. Save media clippings to attach to grant applications and final reports.

You may also wish to submit articles to local newsletters. Organic food box delivery programs, food related non-profits, and neighbourhood associations often have newsletters that could include information about the project.

It's very rewarding to hear - "I've heard of the Fruit Tree Project." Radio, television, newspapers appear to love Fruit Tree Project stories.

Project awareness and continued promotion is important. Attending community events helps to build a profile.

Places To Outreach:

- Local Farmers
- Community Festivals
- Community Centres and Food Banks
- Libraries

What To Bring?

Brochures, map, sign up sheets, any fruit that you may have harvested and do bring photographs (1 picture is worth 1000 words).

Spin off Projects:

Workshops

Workshops are an excellent way to advertise and attract new faces to your project. Workshops give us the opportunity to share skills such as canning, pruning and grafting, as well as being a very fun and social way to build the community. They also make for an excellent way to keep volunteers interested in the program.

You may wish to ask for a small donation to cover the cost of the workshop.

Preserving Workshops:

These workshops require a fair amount of planning, organizing and equipment. Most of the equipment list can be purchased for a reasonable price at garage sales, thrift stores, etc. These items are also frequently found collecting dust and spider webs in the basements of past canners. With a little persistence, one could probably acquire an arsenal of canning equipment at no cost at all. Be sure to a skilled and experienced volunteer to lead facilitate the workshop. Remember canning can be dangerous if done incorrectly. Another option for cost recovery is to allow each person to take home one jar of canning and keep the remaining jars to sell.

Pruning and Grafting:

Even the most basic pruning techniques, when properly applied, can be tremendously beneficial to the health and yield of any tree. You may wish to include pruning as one of the services offered to landowners involved in the project. This is a great way to extend the longevity of a Fruit Tree Project into the winter months. If your project does not have the capability to handle such an undertaking, you may wish to consider hosting a pruning workshop. Arming landowners, volunteers, and community members with even the most basic tree care knowledge equates to bigger, healthier harvests for the project in future seasons. You will find pruning and tree care tips in Appendix J.

Bear Aware:

Depending on your particular location, this workshop may or may not be necessary. We have to realize the only way we are going to prevent bears from entering our communities is by taking pro-active measures to ensure that there is nothing of interest (namely food - in this case fruit) for them to find.

Try to get in touch with a local Bear Aware program and combine your efforts. If Bear Aware is not available in your community, then contact the regional district, local conservation officer or even the city police for information on bear "hot spots" and any

bear safety tips, etc. The more you know bears' motivation for entering the city, the better prepared you will be to start educating people on "bear proofing" their area.

Juice

Juicing is an excellent way to make use of your harvest, especially for the "seconds" (scarred or insect damaged fruit, windfalls, ect.) Not only will juicing substantially increase your useable yield, it can also be used as a source of sustainable revenue. If you plan to sell or distribute any of the juice you make, be aware that there are strict health regulations pertaining to juices. Subcontract the services of someone with a certified press and pasteurizer in order to produce a saleable product.

The Victoria Fruit Tree Project has net over \$1000 dollars in juice sales for the past three years and is investigating the possibility of formalizing sales into a business.

Events

Those of you from the Old World may be familiar with Apple Day, a traditional festival still celebrated in parts of the U.K. Invite your community to participate in an event inspired by this ancient rite. Invite local storytellers, folk musicians, fruit growers, fruit experts, to take part, and, of course, graft lots of apples into the event to honour your community's bounty of fruit. Carve an apple monster, dance to an apple jig, hear stories to make your stem shudder, and (the true motivation) sample some of the most mouth-watering, crispy apples ever assembled in one place! An event of this nature may tempt community members to harvest backyard trees after trying the tasty apples picked from yards all around the city.

Gleaning

Gleaning is defined as the gathering or collection of produce after the initial harvest has been performed. This initiative recognizes that consumers often want perfect looking vegetables and are unwilling to pay for funny shaped or sized produce and that some market conditions make it unprofitable for the farmer to harvest. At the same, a huge need exists among people who normally can't afford fresh produce. Gleaning addresses both of these issues by working with local farmers to harvest produce left in the field after the commercially viable produce is harvested. The Richmond Fruit Tree Project has successfully gleaned for the past two years. Gleaning easily falls into the Fruit Tree Project's scope because it makes use of an existing resource.

If you are a registered charity with the Government of Canada let farmers know that you can issue them tax receipts for the commercial value of your harvest (Note: tax receipts should note that the donation was made as in-kind).

Other spin-off project include: Community kitchens, orchard tours, lectures, fruit tree propagation, and blue orchard mason bee workshops.

Appendices

Contacts:

The Victoria Fruit Tree Project:

LifeCycles Project Society, 527 Michigan St., Victoria, BC, V8V 1S1.

Phone: (250) 383-5800 E-mail: fruittree@lifecyclesproject.ca

Web: www.lifecyclesproject.ca

The Vancouver Fruit Tree Project:

Phone: 604-873-1191 E-mail: fruit@vcn.bc.ca

Web: www.vcn.bc.ca/fruit

Nelson Fruit Tree Mapping Project

Earth Matters, PO Box 726, Nelson, BC, V1L 5R4

Phone: (250) 352-2140 E-mail: info@earthmatters.ca

Web: earthmatters.ca/about.htm

Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project:

c/o #42-5840 Dover Cr., Richmond, BC V7C 5P4

phone: 604 270-9874 e-mail: info@richmondfruittree.com

web: www.richmondfruittree.org

BC Fruit Testers Association is an organization of people who are interested in the science and cultivation of all fruit. Their goal is to promote the cultivation and development of healthy fruit. Members range from backyard hobbyists to professional fruit growers.

Direct general inquiries and submissions to:

BC Fruit Testers Association

P.O. Box 48123, 3575 Douglas St.

Victoria, BC

V8Z 7H4

Canada Customs and Revenue

The Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) registers qualifying organizations as charities, gives technical advice on operating a charity, and handles audit and compliance activities.

phone: 1-800-267-2384 (English) or 1-888-892-5667 (bilingual)

web: <http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca/tax/charities/menu-e.html> English
<http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca/tax/charities/menu-f.html> Français

Government of British Columbia - Ministry of Finance

From this page you can download and print, to your own printer, most of the common statutory forms filed with the Corporate Registry.

phone: To call the Victoria office free of charge call Enquiry BC at
1-800-663-7867 and ask them transfer you to (250) 356-8673

web: <http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/registries/corppg/crforms.htm#soc>

Click on Society under the heading Popular Topics

Funders:

Human Resources Development Canada

Youth Services Canada:

<http://www18.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/programs/youthser/desc.asp>

Job Creation Partnerships:

<http://www18.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/programs/jobcreation/desc.asp>

The Green Source:

http://www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction/grnsrc/index_e.cfm

A database that lists the names of funders.

Program Activities Timeline

January

Fundraising (Applications take time to be reviewed. As a general guideline plan for at least two to three months before you hear anything back.)

February

Fundraising
Winter Pruning

March

Winter Pruning and whip and tongue grafting
BC Fruit Testers AGM

April

Quiet time of the year. Enjoy!

May

Quiet time of the year. Enjoy!

June

Recruit new landowners.

Send out mail out to homeowners that includes any changes made to Project logistics, dates for workshops and special events.

Recruit volunteers. Start by contacting folks on the volunteer list from the previous harvest season.

Send out press release letting folks know your season begins on July 1st.

The Harvest

All major logistical issues (i.e. storage, transportation, staffing, event planning) should be resolved before the harvest season begins. The middle of August to the middle of September is extremely busy. We receive approximately 3 times as many calls as we can handle during this time period.

Note: Ripening Times will vary depending on your geographic location

July- Cherries

August - Golden plums, Transparent Apples, Bartlett Pears

September - Italian Prune Plums, Pears, Apples, Grapes

October - Pears, Apples

November - Pears, Winter Apples

July

Start Picking
Gate sales begin
Summer Pruning

August

Summer pruning and bud grafting
Picking
Gate sales

September

Picking
Gate sales
Salt Spring Island's Annual Apple Day

October

Picking
Juicing begins
UBC Annual Apple Festival
BC Fruit Testers' Annual Fall Fruit Show

November

Celebration of Apples
Picking ends sometime in the middle of November depending on the year.
Juicing continues
Volunteer Appreciation Party
Wrap Up:

- Send out Thank You Cards to volunteers, homeowners, and partners
- Compile Data
- Write Final Reports
- Clean Equipment
- Project and Staff Evaluation



Victoria Fruit Tree Project Tree Registration Form



Date: _____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Neighbourhood: _____

E-mail: _____

Do you want to keep some of the fruit? Yes No

How did you hear about the Fruit Tree Project? (circle one)

Previous Participant Times Colonist Radio TV Publications Friend

Other

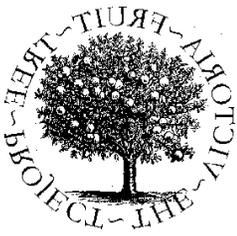
Is there anything we should know regarding access or yard safety?

(e.g. dog in yard) _____

| # of trees | Type of Tree | Species if Known | Height of Tree | Location in the yard | Ripe Time | Sprayed? With What? |
|------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Please call us to confirm at least two weeks in advance of when your tree is ready to be picked at 385-PICK (385-7425) or e-mail us at fruittree@lifecyclesproject.ca. We will schedule you for picking at that time. Thank-you for registering your tree with the Victoria Fruit Tree Project!

Data Entered
By who? _____



Victoria Fruit Tree Project Volunteer Registration Form



Today's Date: _____

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Neighbourhood: _____

E-mail: _____

How did you hear about the Fruit Tree Project? (circle one)

Previous Volunteer Times Colonist Radio TV Other Publications
Friend Other

Do you have wasp/bee allergies? _____

Would you be interested in volunteering for bicycle led picks?

Yes No

Do you prefer to have a regular weekly picking shift? _____

Please indicate your availability below with a check mark.

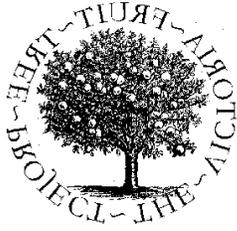
| | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat |
|----------|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| 9am-12pm | | | | | |
| 1pm-4pm | | | | | |
| 6pm-8pm | | | | | |

Would you be interested in volunteering for other LifeCycles Projects?

Yes No _____

Thank you for your interest in the Fruit Tree Project!

Data Entered
By who? _____



Victoria Fruit Tree Project

Volunteer Information



What is the Victoria Fruit Tree Project?

The Victoria Fruit Tree Project harvests fruit from private trees that would otherwise go to waste. Up and picking since 1998, the project is aiming to match or exceed last year's harvest of 20,000 pounds of fruit. The Mustard Seed Food Bank, Upper Room, Blanshard Community Centre and Streetlink Emergency Shelter are some of the places that benefit from the donations of fresh plums, apples and pears. The rest of the fruit is split between volunteer pickers, tree owners and the Fruit Tree Project.

While minimizing food waste is the major goal of the project, the Fruit Tree Project is really about getting the community involved. We are always looking for committed volunteers to pick fruit, but for those interested in helping the project but not keen to climb trees, the project is also looking for volunteers to preserve our bounty, to return phone calls and to enter data.

This fall, the Victoria Fruit Tree Project, volunteers and a couple of ladders are turning backyard fruit trees into a valuable source of food for the community.

Our Project Goals:

1. Minimization of food waste
2. Community Involvement
3. Promotion of local food production
4. Sharing knowledge of Victoria's fruit trees

What is the role of Fruit Tree Project volunteers?

As a volunteer, you will play a vital role in the success of this project. We need your participation to pick fruit, to return calls, to dehydrate fruit and tell others about the project. Above all, we need your help to build the Fruit Tree Project into a strong project with lots of community support.

What We Need From You:

Enthusiasm

No fruit picking experience? No worries. We can teach you everything you need to know in about 10 minutes. What we can't teach you- and what we need- is enthusiasm, good people skills, a bit of muscle and more enthusiasm.

Commitment

We need a certain number of people at each picking to make this project run. We understand that people's schedules fill up and that sometimes life gets way too busy. The only thing that we ask is that if you agree to a picking shift, that you show up. If you can't make your shift, please let us know ahead of time.

What do volunteers get in return?

- Fresh fruit - 1/3 of the fruit picked every day is set aside for landowners and volunteers
- Fruit picking experience
- Lots of new friends, of all ages
- Canning and preserving experience
- Satisfaction of helping to make the world a better place

Liability

All volunteers must sign a waiver form before beginning to pick. LifeCycles and landowners are not responsible for personal injury.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or ideas for the Fruit Tree Project, know someone with a fruit tree, or want to volunteer, please call us at 385-PICK.

- | |
|---|
| <p>Things to bring to a picking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Closed-toed shoes (no sandals)2. Appropriate clothing3. Water4. Snacks- in case you tire of fruit..! |
|---|



Victoria Fruit Tree Project
 Post-Pick Details Form
 Fruit Tree Project: 385-7425



Date: _____ Shift: _____ Team Leader: _____

Leave Fruit at the House: Yes No How Much: _____

On Site Details: _____

Occupants Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Neighbourhood: _____

| Tree Type | Weight-Grade A | Weight-Grade B | Windfall-Juicers | Windfall-Pig Food | Total | Lbs to Owner | Lbs to Pickers | Lbs to Project |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

Mileage: Start Odometer _____ End Odometer _____ Total: _____

Should we return next year? Yes No

Other comments _____

Volunteer Record

| Volunteer Name | Hours | Signature of Volunteer |
|----------------|-------|------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Total Number of Hours _____

Data Entered
 By who? _____



INDEMNITY AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

I RECOGNIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE that there are inherent risks and hazards involved in harvesting fruit. I agree to assume all such risks and hazards and bear all costs of medical attention. The following is a non-exclusive list of possible risks that could be encountered while volunteer fruit picking:

- falling from a tree
- falling off a ladder
- allergic reaction to an insect bite
- being poked in the eye by a tree branch
- having fruit or branches fall on your body
- damage to another person's property

I HEREBY REMISE, RELEASE AND FOREVER DISCHARGE the Victoria Fruit Tree Project, its employees, and advisory committee of and from all manner of actions, causes of actions, claims and demands whatsoever nature which I may have in respect to any injury, participation as a volunteer with the Victoria Fruit Tree Project.

I HAVE READ THIS INDEMNITY AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ACCEPT ITS TERMS.

Name of volunteer

Name of witness

Signature of volunteer

Signature of witness

Date

Date



L I F E C Y C L E S

527 Michigan Street

Victoria, B.C.

V8V 1S1

Phone: (250) 383-5800

Fax: (250) 386-3449

email: fruittree@lifecyclesproject.ca

Web: www.lifecyclesproject.ca

For Immediate Release

(If Press Release date is not specific and not immediate than insert the correct date: ex. For Release by the start of Earth Week)

Attention: Media Person you want the Press Release directed to

For more information Contact:
CONTACT NAME HERE
PHONE NUMBER HERE

The Headline is 90% of your Press Release!!! Make it a Catchy, Bold, Boastful Claim!!!

Use the standard 8 1/2" x 11" paper typed on one side only.

Leave wide margins for editors to write notes.

Use a standard, easily read font.

Make sure to space lines either 1.5 or double spaced.

Your release should only be one page in length.

Press releases sent via email should be inserted into the body of the message. Do not send attachments.

Section 1 – The summary. In just the first few lines of the release, you tell your whole story. Don't give all of the details. Just give a concise summary of what you are going to talk about. This leading paragraph is to answer who, what, where, when, why, and how. Use short words and sentences and make sure what you say is clear.

Section 2 – Quotations and Credentials. In this section you insert quotes that pertain to your issue. At the end of the quote, acknowledge the quotable person listed with one or more credentials. Never leave a quote dangling without some credentials to back up the person quoted.

Section 3 – Call to Action. In the final section you're going to make your "call to action." What do you want the person reading this release to do? This section is used to expand upon the information that you gave in the initial summary paragraph. Make sure to add a contact name again and give LifeCycles' phone number.

-###-

(Indicates that your text is completed)

Acknowledge Funders

Pruning and Basic Fruit Tree Care

Watering

The most obvious guideline is not your tree become so dry that it starts to wilt. In general, a deep watering once a week will be more beneficial than a sprinkle every few days. Mature trees need about an inch of rain a week, so watering is important during drier seasons. Watering is particularly crucial during the period of fruit expansion, usually three- four weeks prior to anticipated harvest.

Mulching

Mulching is a popular technique to conserve water and control weed. Several different kinds of mulch are suitable including straw, bark chips, hay and gravel. Leaves and grass clippings also work, although they will tend to mat down heavily around the base of the tree and prevent water from reaching the soil. Be sure to rake the mulch away from the trunk and exposed roots, as mulch provides habitat for mice that can damage the base of the tree.

Nutrients

The three major nutrients required for tree health and growth are nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. Nitrogen is necessary for the shoot growth and green leaf colour, and is often in short supply as trees use it heavily. It is usually necessary to supplement the soil, particularly when mulching, as decomposed organic material uses nitrogen. Phosphorous is necessary for the growth of roots, seeds and early leaves. Potassium is used in the production of fruit, growing roots, and resisting disease. Secondary nutrients such as calcium, magnesium and sulphur are also necessary, although in smaller quantities. Numerous trace minerals are required in very small amounts. These are often provided by means of a seaweed mulch or emulsion. The pH of the soil, a measure of acidity and alkalinity of the soil, is also important for healthy tree. Fruit trees prefer a slightly alkaline (pH greater than 7) soil. Adding calcite or dolomite lime will make the soil more alkaline (increase the pH) whereas adding sulphur will make the soil more acidic (decrease the pH).

Why do we prune?

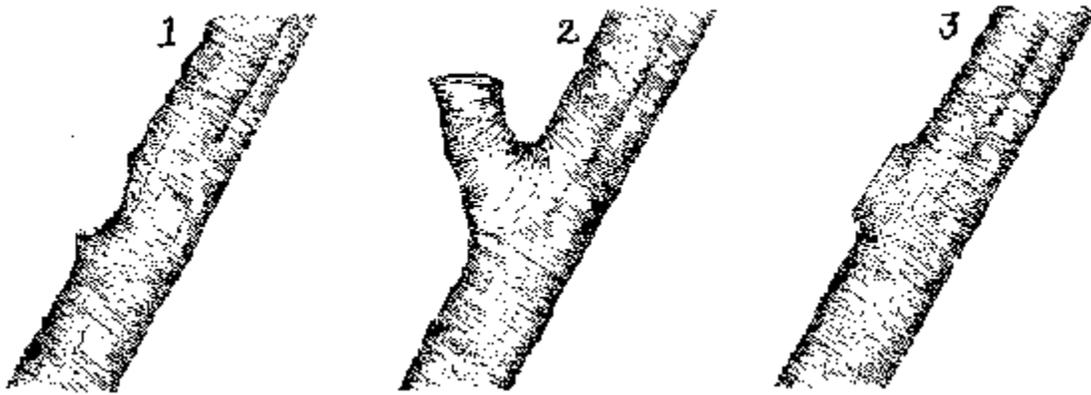
- While it is true that most trees will grow just fine all on their own without human intervention, fruit trees and humans have evolved together for a long time. Therefore, we have achieved a considerable degree of interdependence.
- We prune trees to create a specific shape, (open centre, central leader or espalier), to allow sun and air to penetrate the canopy of the tree, which inhibits disease and allows for better fruit ripening.
- We also prune to remove dead, diseased, and damaged wood, crossing and rubbing branches, and branches that are growing toward the centre of the tree.
- Also ensures that fruiting wood is renewed, or thinned
- To remove vegetative upright growth, and send energy into fruitful lateral growth.

When to prune:

- This has a lot to do with **what** you are pruning, but some general rules apply no matter what you are pruning.
- Summer pruning reduces growth and winter pruning encourages growth
- The best time for dormant pruning is in Feb./Mar. before the sap flows. However, heavy bleeders such as grapes, kiwis and walnut, should be pruned earlier in winter, or later in summer.
- When summer pruning, make sure it is done at least two months before the first frost of the year, to ensure the branch has time to heal.
- Plums sucker profusely when dormant pruned, therefore, summer prune.
- Peaches bear fruit on the previous season's growth, so renewal is important. Peaches should be pruned in fall after harvest.
- Young trees, (4 years and younger) should be dormant pruned to ensure a healthy root system.

How to prune:

- Make sure that you do not cut into the branch collar, but don't leave stubs either because this will encourage suckers, and disease.
- When cutting large branches, always use the three cut method.
- There are two main types of pruning cuts; heading cuts and thinning cuts.
- Heading cuts are cuts that shorten branches, trunks, or twigs.
- Heading cuts can cause irreparable damage. When a heading cut is made in the dormant season, the branch will send out suckers.
- Heading cuts are best performed on one year- old wood. Cut the new wood at a 45-degree angle to an outward facing bud, as this will help the tree develop fruiting spurs, and may help to shape the tree according to a desired form.
- Thinning cuts are made by removing the branch from where it originates.
- Thinning cuts will sucker much less than heading cuts, and will help to remove a lot of the clutter of the tree. They will also make it 'see-through', allowing more air and sunlight to penetrate the tree.
- The most crucial time to prune is when the plant is young. Once a tree has a good shape, it will only need renewal pruning in future.



Numbers 1 and 2 show improper cuts. Number 3 shows a good, flush with the collar of the branch.

When pruning, remove branches in the following order:

1. Cracked, broken and diseased branches - prevents further deterioration of the tree
2. Remove any new growth (suckers) can crowding in the canopy - increases light and air flow and inhibits fungi from growing
3. If two branches are rubbing, remove the least needed of the two - prevents damage and disease from entering bark wounds.

Pruning styles

There are many forms of pruning styles, but the most common are: open centre, central leader, custom, and espalier. Among the many styles of espalier there are: slender spindle, oblique cordon, the fan, and palmette verrier. Which of these styles you choose has a lot of determining factors: the type of tree that is grown, what rootstock it is grown on, how much space you have, and how much time you are willing to devote to pruning throughout the year.