



# PEMBERTON FARMERS INSTITUTE

## NEWSLETTER

### About Us

The Pemberton Farmer's Institute supports and promotes agriculture in Pemberton. Our membership includes seed potato growers, organic producers, agri-tourism operators and livestock and equestrian outfits. In recent years, our membership has widened to include many non-farming producers and community members. This widening membership base is consistent with the increased attention being paid to the importance of securing well-grown and good tasting local food. Anyone may join the Pemberton Farmer's Institute provided they pay their annual dues.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Website Launch Party \_\_\_\_\_ April 21<sup>st</sup>, 7pm, Library  
 Community Garden Party & Plot Sign-Up \_\_\_\_\_ April 22<sup>nd</sup>  
 WI Plant Sale/Seed Swap \_\_\_\_\_ May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9am-noon, Legion  
 Slow Food Cycle Sunday \_\_\_\_\_ August 16<sup>th</sup>, 9-4pm, Meadows Rd

[pembertonfarmers.com](http://pembertonfarmers.com)

**Looking for local food? Available right now on the Farm Stand page: root vegetables, baking, preserves, apple juice, garlic, honey and harvest box sign-up information.**

**Go to [www.pembertonfarmers.com](http://www.pembertonfarmers.com) to see what's available in Pemberton today.**

**Also look for information on jobs, events and producers in the Pemberton area.**

## Spring Time in Pemberton

### PEMBERTON FARMER'S MARKET

The Pemberton Farmer's Market is scheduled for Wednesday evenings in the Pemberton Supermarket parking lot. Once again, our local grocers are taking care of farmers as Richard from Solstice passes the torch to Mark at the Supermarket. Pick up your harvest box, look for fresh baking, those famous samosas and of course, local produce fresh from the field. Pemberton can grow almost anything and several new growers are in the area to prove it! Stay tuned at [pembertonfarmers.com](http://pembertonfarmers.com) for opening day.

### SEED POTATO

It's time to ship Certified virus-free seed potatoes. It is also time to spend hours in the lab (or Plant Propagation Facility) preparing "nuclear stock" which in four years will become the cash crop you see leaving the valley in big trucks. This seed is shipped primarily to the Lower Mainland, Washington and Oregon, as well as California, Alberta, Manitoba and even PEI. For more information on Pemberton's Seed Potato industry, visit [www.pembertonfarmers.com](http://www.pembertonfarmers.com).

### ORGANIC POTATOES & MIXED VEGETABLE

Most of the spring work is happening in the greenhouse with transplants at this time and building new fences and structures. Peas, kale, and some other cold hardies have been planted in the field. Those going to farmer's market have them lined up and harvest box orders are still being taken. First full harvest can be expected as early as the beginning of June! The snow is gone, the garlic shoots and nettles have sprung out of the ground and we are all keen to get out in the fields.

### LIVESTOCK

Spring is a busy time for livestock farmers. Many farmers are still feeding hay, patiently waiting for the new green grass to get a strong hold. It is the beginning of calving for some and the end of calving for others. Some farmers separate cattle close to birthing into pens inside the barn, or outside the barn, and some cattle calve out in the fields. Farmers sometimes get little sleep during calving time as they are often at the barn checking on cows and looking for any that may be experiencing birthing complications. First time mothers sometimes need assistance, and occasionally a calf may be in the wrong position. It is a wonderful experience to watch a newly born calf bond with its mother and feed for the first time.

### COMMUNITY GARDENS

In early spring a new gate and pickets on the fence, loads of manure to be dug up and delivered to the garden and composting bins will be built. Any seeds that were collected and stored can be swapped. It is fertile ground to test community values and where we live within Mother Nature's seasons. It a gathering place to hear or learn about the latest dirt, challenges oneself, and venture into the inspiring world of plants. It is a place to get dirty, to grow food and friendships. Gather up your \$50 for your family plot and sign up on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Community garden work party!

## Current Topics in Agriculture

Pemberton's Agricultural Advisory Committee, a group responsible for advising the SLRD on agricultural issues, has been urging the SLRD to embark on an Area Agricultural Plan for the Pemberton Valley. We are excited to announce that on March 9<sup>th</sup>, SLRD directors awarded a \$60,000 contract to Zbeetnoff Agro-Environmental Consulting and Quadra Planning Consultants to develop an Area Agricultural Plan (AAP) for the Pemberton Valley. This is welcome news for our farming community at a time when the Pemberton Valley is experiencing rapid population growth and increasing development pressure.

The AAP will include lands designated as Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), which total approximately 7300 hectares, as well as adjacent lands that also impact the success of local agriculture. The success of the AAP will be dependent on the involvement of local farmers, communicating strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats affecting local agriculture. The four main goals of the AAP are to:

- 1) Discover practical solutions to issues,
- 2) Identify opportunities to strengthen farming,
- 3) Establish clear policies that serve to protect and promote agriculture while preserving the rural character of the Pemberton Valley, and,
- 4) Contribute to local and regional food security and the community's long-term sustainability.

Information will be gathered in a variety of ways including a mail out survey and public meetings.

There is awareness that farmers are busy working on their farms with little time for meetings. Should farmers not be able to attend meetings yet wish to have input they may contact Agricultural Advisory Committee Chairperson, Brenda McLeod, and the information will be passed on to the consultants; Tel: 604-894-6885 Fax: 604-894-6865 Email: [soovent@telus.net](mailto:soovent@telus.net)

"Eating is an agricultural act" -Wendell Berry

Please contact Alisha Dick at [icecaporganics@gmail.com](mailto:icecaporganics@gmail.com) if you have any questions, concerns or topics you would like to read about in our next issue