

NEWS RELEASE

Rescuing Fruit: Latest Action in Poverty Reduction Strategy

Ladysmith, May 18, 2023 – Do you have extra fruit on trees or veggies in your garden that you could use some help picking?

Each year, an abundance of apples, cherries, plums and more are grown locally, but not always harvested. As part of the CommUNITY Together to End Poverty Hw-nuts'-ulwum Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Town of Ladysmith is supporting the Ladysmith Resource Centre Association (LRCA) in launching a Fruit Rescue project to make sure any extra food grown is harvested and shared within the community.

The LRCA is coordinating the project with grant funding awarded to the Town of Ladysmith through the Union of BC Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Grant.

“There are so many benefits from a project like this. The most obvious one is that fresh, locally grown food will be eaten instead of potentially wasted. Plus there is a wonderful social aspect to people coming together outside, meeting new people and picking the fruit, as well as the added value of community organizations sharing the food with participants in programs that they offer. There will also be opportunities for cooking, baking and preserving what is collected together.” says Fruit Rescue Coordinator, Shannon Crowards.

How it will work: Residents within and around Ladysmith and Stz'uminus are invited to sign up with the LRCA if you have fruit trees or gardens that you would like help harvesting, or if you would like to volunteer to pick fruit (or veggies). The LRCA will coordinate between the owners and volunteer harvesters to schedule dates and times to harvest when it's ready. They will also provide any tools needed to do so. After each harvest, one third of what is collected will go to the owner, one third will be shared with the volunteers and the last third will go to the LRCA Food Bank and/or other partner organizations who will distribute the fruit within the Ladysmith and Stz'uminus communities to those who need it.

Anyone wanting to participate can connect with the LRCA directly at <https://www.lrca.ca/programs/food-security/fruit-rescue>, by calling 250-245-3079 or emailing shannon@lrca.ca.

The Town of Ladysmith has been taking action to implement the [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) adopted by Council in 2021, focusing on solutions to address local food security as well as creating opportunities for cultural awareness and reducing stigma in the community.

The Town was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Union of BC Municipalities in April 2022 following the completion of the Strategy, which involved widespread public engagement and participation from both the Ladysmith and Stz'uminus communities. A portion of these funds will be allocated to the Fruit Rescue program for the 2023 season.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy can be found on the Town of Ladysmith [website](#).

-30-

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