



Project Story: Community Garden Party

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The Community Garden Party was a great success! The party was an open house at Grafton Agricultural Commons on Bowen Island on July 10, 2022, organized completely by volunteers, who:

- designed advertising to post on social media and send to local organizations, created road-signage and an announcement for the local newspaper;
- created 3 posters explaining the regenerative agriculture method used at Grafton Commons;
- readied the garden for visitors (weeding, etc.)
- purchased materials (soil, small pots, seeds, kids' stickers, and jars);
- created a children's activity;
- set up shade tents and the refreshment table, and organized parking;
- provided samples of garlic scape powder made from the garden's garlic (as well as printed copies of the recipe for garlic-scape pesto);
- donated baked goods, made herbal tea, and solicited a donation of apple cider; and
- gave tours of the garden and were on hand to explain regenerative agriculture's contribution to biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

One of our goals for the event was to “bring community members together to enjoy their community garden.” We anticipated 21 to 50 people would come to the Party, including volunteers already involved with the garden. In fact, 65 people visited Grafton Commons for the first time, as well as 9 volunteers, for a total of 74.

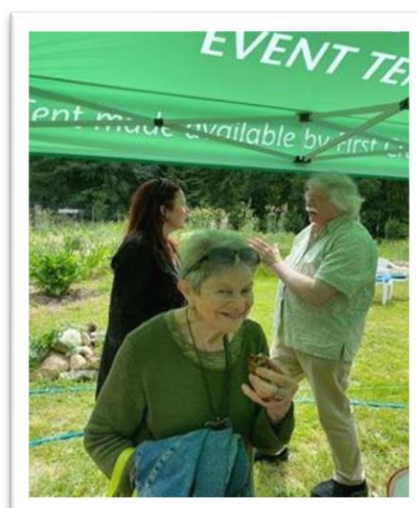




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A second goal was to ‘introduce people to the principles of regenerative gardening.’ The posters and the tours accomplished this. People arrived in a steady stream of small groups throughout the day, which made it possible to answer questions during tours and spend time explaining regenerative agriculture. The posters illustrated the science behind regenerative agriculture and the hope it offers for dealing with biodiversity loss and the climate emergency. The posters are printed on durable material, so they will be used many times in the future.



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A third goal for the Garden Party was to “inspire people to support and feel engaged with food resilience on Bowen.” Comments we heard made us feel positive about this goal. People said they learned a lot and were impressed by the low water demands of the advanced beds, and at least one person took photos of the posters, so she could review the information. As well, a half-dozen people left their names and requested to be contacted to volunteer in the garden.

At the end of the event, some participants lingered to pick strawberries, and volunteers stayed to debrief. Everyone agreed it was a great success. Our thanks go to the Neighbourhood Small Grants fund, the Vancouver Foundation, and the Bowen Island Community Foundation for their support that made the Commons Garden Party possible.



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