



Project Story: Low Hanging Fruit

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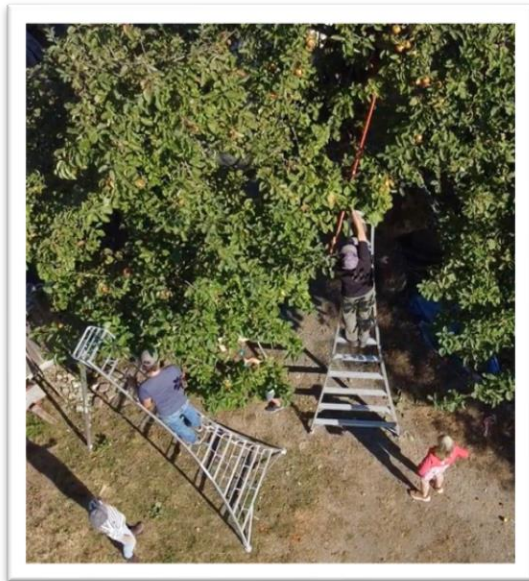


We have now wrapped up the second year of our very successful Low Hanging Fruit (LHF) project, an initiative of the Bowen Island Food Resiliency Society (BIFS). The project was supported with generous funding from Bowen Island Community Foundation, Vancouver Foundation, Regenerative Bowen Island (RBI), and BIFS, as well as the Neighbourhood Small Grants Program for a well-needed roof rack to carry the orchard ladder.

The purpose of LHF is to add resilience to our island's food system and decrease food waste. Many property owners on Bowen have fruit and nut trees that do not get harvested due to either lack of time, equipment or sometimes overabundance. LHF brings volunteers together to pick the fruit from these trees so that it can be enjoyed and used on the island.

We connect with many Bowen fruit tree owners (donors) who were happy to offer pickings of the fruit trees as well as over 20 islanders of all ages who offered their services as volunteer pickers. A total of 27 harvests took place from all across the island.

Equipped with ladders, extendable fruit pickers, bags and boxes, 405.5 pounds of various fruits were picked, including a number of apple varieties, plums, crabapples, grapes, quince and medlar. As well as fruit, we also harvested 50 beautiful blue and purple hydrangea flower stems.





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Most of these fruits and flowers were sold at the Saturday morning Bowen Island Farmers Market with sales of just over \$600. Of that amount, \$200 has been donated to the Food Bank and the balance is ear-marked for new equipment and support towards the ongoing LHF project. To note, the rougher looking fruits (bruise, damaged or “ugly”) went for pressing or for animal feed.



In October, we joined Sarah Haxby, the Community School Coordinator, and a grade 6/7 class from BICS to pick apples at Davies Orchard. Over 100 pounds went towards classroom learning as well as making delicious pies for sale at the Thanksgiving weekend Farmers Market in support of Bowen Island Heritage Preservation Association. There is a short video created by Phil Gregory on that very pick. Check it out at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SveEOpdtIHK>



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We all learned a lot this year, including a need for pruning workshops for donors, and are planning for the 2023 season. Many thanks to Neighbourhood Small Grants Bowen Island for supporting the purchase of a roof rack to transport the orchard ladders, eased our work load tremendously. And thanks to Bowen Islanders for joining in on the Low Hanging Fruit project!



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