

For Immediate Release- June 15, 2009

## **Green business shows strong growth, as Organic Islands Festival gears up for 5th annual event.**

Victoria BC – By now many Southern Vancouver Island residents have heard of the Organic Islands Festival and Sustainability Expo. In less than five years, it has become Canada's largest outdoor green festival "walking the talk" with its zero waste commitment and solar power usage, while showcasing green businesses and leaders in sustainability to over 15,000 people who come to learn how to green up their everyday lives.

The festival brings together Vancouver Island's finest green exhibitors and draws businesses and attendees from across North America as well. They present everything from eco furniture to landscape design, fashion forward clothing to alternative energy sources, and delight attendees with samples of premium organic foods, micro-lot coffee and beverage elixirs.

This year, organizers are excited by the overall growth of this business sector – particularly during the global economic downturn.

"Exhibitor interest has definitely increased with over 25% more signing up this year. We've had to open up new areas at the 10 acre garden venue to meet demand"

This summer, over one hundred and fifty exhibitors will display leading edge eco-friendly practices and local products and services on July 4 and 5, 2009 - 10 am to 5 pm at Glendale Gardens and Woodland, 505 Quayle Road, Victoria, BC. Attendees will enjoy Island-style food, inspiring people, innovative ideas and musical entertainment at this community celebration of all things green.

Here are some program highlights:

The 2009 Organic Islands Festival and Sustainability Expo focuses the spotlight on the Vancouver Island Diet which, more than the widely publicized 100 Mile Diet, makes sense for our island's bioregion. In the 1960's Vancouver Island produced 85% of Islanders' food; now, over 90% of our food supply is shipped in from off-Island. Local food activists will join Carolyn Herriot author and educator who promotes and lives the "Zero Mile Diet" in Saanich, and Dr. Bill Code, past president of the Island Farmers Alliance for a main stage presentation on July 4 about "Reviving the Vancouver Island Diet".

You will also find:

\* Local chefs committed to the Vancouver Island Diet demonstrating their favourite dishes at the Home Grown, Island-Style Terasen Gas Cooking Stage and providing

samples of delectable food grown at their gardening and cooking schools, or sustainably caught off the shores of Vancouver Island.

\* A farmers market with food products grown and processed on Vancouver Island available for sale, and food vendors offering fresh, seasonal fare and wild foods locally harvested to enjoy at the festival.

During the festival exhibitors will provide live demonstrations of sustainable technology at work and offer visitors practical ways to integrate green living into their lives whether it's growing food in their own backyard or on an apartment balcony, harvesting rainwater or converting a vehicle to biodiesel. Sustainability Guru, Dirk Becker from Lantzville, on the main stage on July 5th will inspire those who are just getting started on the path to sustainability and those who want to go further.

Music Performances by:

- \* Jeremy Fisher (main stage)
- \* The Grapes of Wrath (main stage)
- \* Lester Quitzau (main stage)
- \* Oliver Swain (main stage)
- \* Buskers throughout the gardens

Storytellers on the Storytellers' Stage in the half-acre Children's Village & Play Zone.

Silk Road Japanese Tea Ceremony in Japanese Garden performed by Urasenke Nagomi Tea Circle

Think locally... grow locally... buy locally... it's the way to develop truly sustainable local living -- and it works!

The Organic Islands Festival and Sustainability Expo is a rallying community-based event providing a look at who's who in the green community. Canada's largest outdoor green festival features over 150 Exhibits, Presentations, Natural Food Demos, Children's Village & Play Zone, Storytellers Stage and more! Sponsored by: Level Ground, LifeStyle Markets. Main Stage sponsored by: Hemp & Company and the Good Planet Company.

[www.organicislands.ca](http://www.organicislands.ca).