

Market Gardener Training Program

February 17 2020 – October 16 2020

The **Market Gardener Training Program** is designed to create Market Gardeners interested in growing produce for markets.



Beginning in early February, students will embark on an eight-month long Market Gardener practical skills training that begins at the North Island College, Redford Rd. Campus in Port Alberni learning plant and soil biology applying agroecological farming practices. You will then be engaged in learning greenhouse management methods at the college and the Shelter Farm, involving greenhouse plant propagation and how to prepare seedlings for planting in the Market Garden.

As the season progresses most of your training will be held at the farm direct seeding crops and transplanting seedlings in the market garden. You will also learn intensive greenhouse production methods of growing crops such as tomatoes and peppers. Participants will learn about crop management, developing skills in irrigation, weeding, Integrated Pest Management and disease control.

In September you will be taking Business Planning and Entrepreneurship courses ending in October. This program is designed for newcomers to gardening, as the curriculum starts with the basics and builds on that knowledge as the season progresses. You do not have to be a North Island College Student to apply. This Market Gardener Training Program is open to everyone!

Market Gardener hours are made up of time in the greenhouse, market garden and farmers market. During your Market Gardener training, you will work with other members of the program to manage the market garden at the Shelter Farm, as well as managing your group's collective garden plot.

Course Descriptions

Introduction to Market Gardening (February to April)

This series of courses is designed to familiarize student with the main theories, concepts and practices of organic agriculture. The courses will be presented by a number of experienced organic farmers and horticulturalists. Participants will also develop business management skills in crop planning, budgeting, and marketing.

- **Market Garden Planning and Design**
- **Use Safe Market Gardening Work Practices**
- **Safe Use of Market Gardening Tools**
- **Crop Planning, Crop Rotation, Cover Crops**
- **Sustainable Market Gardening Practices**
- **Certificates in First Aid, FoodSafe and WHMIS**



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Greenhouse Skills (March to May)

From March to May students will work in the Shelter Farm Greenhouse on growing seedling that will be transplanted into the market garden beds. During these work sessions, students will work directly with the Greenhouse Staff to learn about seedling production and greenhouse growing. This session is where it all begins! Here you will learn to start all manner of vegetables and herbs from seed.

- **Greenhouse Management**
- **Compost and Soil Science**
- **Fertility and Soil Management**
- **Plant Propagation**
- **Pests & Disease Management**

Market Gardener Skills (June to August)

Market Gardeners will move out to the fields to plant seedlings they started in the greenhouse and direct seed crops. During weekly garden shifts students will work on the upkeep of a functioning market garden.

- **Transplanting Crops in the Market Garden**
- **Direct Seeding Field Crops in the Market Garden**
- **Irrigation of Crops**
- **Crop Maintenance, Weed and Pest Management**
- **Market Gardening Harvesting Methods**



Market Gardener Business Planning and Entrepreneurship - (September to October)

In this course students learn business planning, sales and marketing, financial management and budgeting and communications skills. The students will register with Futurepreneur Canada and complete a Futurepreneur Business Plan. The plan they complete during the course is a comprehensive business plan and is their application to Futurepreneur for start-up funding to get their market garden business off the ground. Futurepreneur provides up to \$45,000 as a business start-up loan to young entrepreneurs, as well as business mentorship for two years.

- **Budgeting for the Market Gardeners**
- **Developing a business plan for a farm business**
- **Principles of Profitable Farm Leasing**
- **Marketing for Market Gardeners**
- **Preparing Crops for Sale at Farmers Markets**
- **Producing Value Added Products from the Market Garden**



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Selling Crops at Local Farmers Markets – (June – October)

All students must attend 3 Saturday Farmers Markets to complete the program and receive their certificate. You will apply the business skills you have gained through your Market Gardener training by preparing crops for sale at local farmers markets and engaging with customers. Farm Interns will learn how to organize a market garden stand for local farmers markets. Learn how to attractive display produce. Learn how to:

- deal with customers & handle cash sales
- increase your customer base
- promote your CSA and Shelter Farm programs
- educate the public about ecoagriculture and regenerative agriculture



Bringing your produce to market is one of the most rewarding aspects of this program. Shelter Farm Market Gardeners will have the opportunity to showcase their produce at number of different markets throughout the season, some of which are listed below. Students are expected to help in all aspects of the market – promotions, harvesting, packaging and selling.

Spirit Square Farmers Market (Saturdays 8:30am-12:00pm) This market happens weekly throughout the entire season. It is located at the beautiful Harbour Quay.

Uptown Urban Market (Friday and Saturday 12:00pm-6pm) This market gives us the opportunity to bring our produce right into the downtown core

Cherry Creek Farmers Market: (Saturday 8:30am-12:00pm) This market boasts a real community feel and features lots of local and organic produce for sale at very affordable prices.

Admission Requirements

Upgrade with us to meet prerequisites

1. Complete and submit the NIC Application for Admission form. (We are offering continuous intake for this program).
2. Complete a learning assessment.



Market Gardener Training Program

Supply List

You will require the following equipment before starting the program:

- CSA-approved, steel-toed footwear
- Calculator
- Safety Glasses
- Work gloves
- Rainwear - rain jacket, rain pants, rubber boots
- Notebook, paper, pen and ruler
- Binder for course materials
- 1" x 25'/7.5M measuring tape
- 16-Oz Hammer
- Tool pouch
- Lineman's pliers
- Utility knife

Recommended Equipment

Laptop Computer

You will need access to a computer (a Mac computer is not recommended), the Internet and access to email. The computer will require a minimum operating system of Windows 7 or higher and a minimum of Office 2013 or higher with MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint software. Additional software, supplies or equipment may be required for some courses. You will need to access on-line video and audio tutorials on a regular basis to complete assignments.

Tuition & Costs Estimate

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|--------------------|-------------|
| • Tuition | \$7,225 |
| • NISU Fees | \$45 |
| • Lab Fees | \$400 |
| • Books | \$200 |
| • Learner Resource | <u>\$50</u> |
| • Total | \$7,920.00 |

Market Gardener Training Program

About Our instructors

Guy Langlois – Shelter Farm Manager - Lead Instructor, Market Gardener Training Program.

Guy Langlois has managed several farms over the past 10 years. He received his Provincial Instructor Diploma in 2010 and has taught and developed curriculum in Horticulture, Green Building, Renewable Energy and Carpentry at several universities and colleges throughout BC. Guy will be providing instruction and hands-on experiential learning in Market Gardening production methods and agroecological practices throughout the training program at North Island College and the Shelter Farm.



Connie Kuramoto – Soil Science, Plant Science, Greenhouse Propagation Instructor.

Connie Kuramoto studied botany at University of Massachusetts and earned a Diploma in Greenhouse Horticulture at Malaspina University College. Connie was an instructor at Malaspina University College's Horticulture Department for over 20 years. She is currently an instructor in Gaia College's Organic Master Gardener Program. Connie will be providing instructional services for the Market Gardener Program in Plant Science, Soil Science and other aspects of Greenhouse Propagation and Production.



Bob Haugen – Business Planning and Entrepreneurship.



Bob Haugen has been a co-owner of the Chiron Group for the past 20 years engaged in social development, business development and publishing. Bob was a workshop facilitator for Community Futures in northern BC and served on the board of the Enterprise Centre in Dawson Creek for 15 years. The Enterprise Centre was an entrepreneur training centre and new business incubator hosted by School District 59.

Bob has delivered many workshops and courses in change management, entrepreneurial development, clean energy and climate change mitigation/adaptation. He has a Masters Degree in Leadership and is very interested in helping entrepreneurs develop successful business enterprises. He is also the managing director of The Canadian Solar Cities Project.