

Anna Baumgartel
Lia Monteferrante
Lily (Xin) Li
Miriam chen
Raisa Andriani
Rossie (Siyi) Lou

PROPOSAL REPORT

Introduction

The goal of this project is to address and acquire a better understanding for both Galiano island residents and students regarding community food security issues by investigating the reliance of ferry service to deliver food to the island and the self-sustainability of the residents. It is an exciting opportunity to explore the strategies when faced with ferry stoppage and complexities of an island food system, especially with the difficulties that may arise due to environmental and circumstantial difficulties such as weather conditions. The community partner involved with this project, is the Galiano Food Program, which was created in 2008 by the Galiano Club (established in 1924). The Program is meant to bring people together with the goal of maintaining food production and agriculture on the island. On top of that, it aims to re-establish the skills in agriculture that may have been lost over the years. Through community events, the Galiano Food Program strives to bring all the residents together through recreation and education. (J. Wolverton, Personal Communication, September 21st, 2016).

Significance

Food security is stated as something that “exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (Food and Agricultural Organization, 2003). The members of Vancouver Island Community Research conducted a comprehensive analysis of the local food system and proposed strategies to improve food security on the island. One of the limiting factors to food security identified in their report is insufficient food production which fails to reflect the good soil fertility of the island due to “increasing land values, increasing labour and input costs, loss of processing and distribution infrastructure, and the shrinkage of farming population” (Alliance, Vancouver Island Community Research, p. 9). Another critical problem is the shortage of storage units which leads to surpluses either being wasted or shipped off island (Alliance, Vancouver Island Community Research, 2011, p. 11). These two major issues increase the island’s reliance on imported foods, thus making the food system more vulnerable to factors that disrupt transportation, such as weather and natural disasters. On the contrary, backyard farming is identified as a strength that contributes to food security on the island. The trend of community gardens and backyard plots are improving the island’s ability to sustain its population with its own food and increasing available food options for the residents to keep a balanced diet (Alliance, Vancouver Island Community Research, 2011, p. 11). Based on the strengths and limitations of the current food system, Vancouver Island Community Research (2011) suggests possible opportunities for action; such as maximizing self-reliance on food, achieving high quality standards on food produce, and to practice sustainability that the island food system can rely on (p. 12). This research provides insight to an island food system and points out practical strategies regarding food security that can be transferred to other island food systems. However, due to variation in demographics and infrastructure, each island may face different challenges and possess different assets, therefore requiring a separate in-depth study. Our project targets Galiano Island and we are using the Vancouver Island research as a backbone to support our work.

Since the two islands are geographically close to each other, food security on Galiano Island may also be affected by transportation, mainly ferries. Our research will help us understand how dependent the Galiano residents are on ferries to import food and how they can overcome the limitations by building on the facilities they already have to further improve food security.

Objectives and Inquiry Questions

The objective of this study is to acquire a better understanding of community food security on Galiano Island by investigating the reliance of food imports and the level of resident's self-sustainability. This research is designed to investigate the ability of residents to survive if the ferries that import food to Galiano Island were to cease transportation. This involves surveying and interviewing residents, grocers and community stakeholders about the security of their food. In addition, this study aims to further understand about the food environment and cycle of resources on Galiano. This includes investigating which community members and what facilities are responsible for contributing to the sustainability of agriculture and food, monitoring and managing the input of resources on the island. Further, a specific objective of this study is to determine how frequently residents face food shortages and what policies and procedures are in place to handle these shortages. After qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews, this study hopes to investigate different interventions that could be used to increase the self-reliance of residents and propel the independence of the island's food-system. After all observations are completed, the aspiration of those conducting the research is to fulfill all objectives while gaining a new understanding about Galiano Island food systems.

Inquiry Questions:

1. For what duration of time could residents on the island survive if the importation of goods were to cease? What must residents do to survive without food imports?
2. Which facilities contribute to the sustainability of the community food system and which stakeholders are responsible for managing and monitoring the input of resources?
3. How frequent are food shortages on the island and what is done by residents and community leaders to compensate for the shortage?
4. What interventions can be pursued to increase resident's self-reliance and the independence of the island's food system?

Research Methods

1. Explore facilities on the islands (including but not limited to: grocery stores, gardens, educational institutes, community sites).
 - a. Take note of programs on the island, including the Galiano Food Program, and how they integrate food security education through the community.
 - b. Participate in community activities (such as volunteering).
2. Collect information that will gain insight; answering the objectives of this project.
 - a. Make observations at each establishment visited.
3. Talk to residents who are work or dedicate their time at each establishment.
 - a. Data collection through semi-structured interview of residents of the island (see Appendix 1 for interview questions)
4. Combine the collected information into a graph and make an estimate as to the amount of time most people are able to last during ferry cancellations and see how sustainable the local food system is.

Budget:

Estimated costs of resources you will need to carry-out the project?

- Accommodation- \$150
- Travelling to and back - ferry tickets, \$285
- Vehicle - no public transportation available on the island
- Food (Estimate: \$40 per person for the weekend)

References:

Alliance, Vancouver Island Community Research (2011). *Office of Community-Based Research, University of Victoria, 1-44*. Retrieved from <http://deslibris.ca.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/ID/241418>

J. Wolverton, (2016, September 21st). [Personal Communication]

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (2003). *Food security: concepts and measurement*. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/Y4671E/y4671e06.htm#fn31>

Appendix 1: Interview Questions for Galiano Residents

1. Do you always find what you need, or have there been shortages? (If so, how do you manage with these shortages? How big of an imposition is this?)
2. Do you grow food yourself? If so, are there any limitations? (With respect to water, soil/land, obtaining seeds)
3. How convenient is grocery shopping and how often do you go?
4. Is it easier to eat out, or cook your own meals?
5. What do you think of the prices at the grocery stores here?
6. Approximately how much do you think you spend on food? Do you think this is a reasonable amount?
7. Are you a participant of the Galiano food program? If yes, how much do you think it benefits you? If no, why not? (Or did you know about this program at all?)