

January 23, 2013

Grow your garden and eat it too!

Take food security into your own hands, and beautify the neighborhood? Yes, you can!

With a three-day food supply on Vancouver Island and less than one per cent of Campbell River's food produced locally, according to Carolyn Herriot, author of *The Zero Mile Diet*, maybe edible landscaping is for you.

Edible landscaping is a growing trend that enhances landscaping beds with food plants. If you're not ready to go whole hog right away; start by mixing a few edibles in with your flowers. Kale is an easy-to-grow edible and an attractive addition to any flower bed. It's also hardy right through winter and will provide year-round greens in the garden and on your table.

Sherrill McKay, a gardener at the Laughing Willow Community Garden, came up with a great combo last season. She explains: "I just scattered cosmos seeds liberally around my asparagus patch, and they looked great with the maturing asparagus fronds come July!"

Asparagus is a long-living, low-maintenance perennial with attractive red berries and delicate green frond foliage that will grow up to four feet tall. To make sure it comes back year after year allow some of the spears to mature into fronds each season.

Learn everything you need to know to get started on producing your own delicious fresh produce right in your own yard, no matter how small at the next *Lettuce Grow* workshop, Feb. 10 at North Island College.

Edible garden designer and permaculture expert Helena Hartwood of Hartwood Garden Designs will teach participants about variety choice, bed preparation, planting and harvesting – all using sustainable practices. For more information, or to register, visit <http://www.nic.bc.ca/continuingeducation/> or call Julia Peters at 250-923-9724.

Like this article? What to hear more? Is there a workshop you would like us to organize? Send questions and requests to growlocal@campbellriver.ca.

The *Lettuce Grow* courses and article series support the implementation of the City's Agriculture Plan and the community sustainability goal of local food self-sufficiency and resiliency.

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