



reachout

Faculty of Land and Food Systems
 Grounded in Science | Global in Scope

Garden Project Benefits Aboriginal Health



Erika Mundel

Plant, water, weed, harvest and cook up communal meals. These activities sound simple enough, but within the Urban Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden Project they have proven to change lives.

In fact, Erika Mundel, a PhD student in the Integrated Studies in Land and Food Systems Program, says she's amazed by the holistic impact of the Garden Project, a joint initiative between the Vancouver Native Health Society and the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm.

Since 2006, Erika has been working along side participants and interviewing them for her MSc thesis on Aboriginal health and food security, which she completed last fall. Study participants reported physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health benefits.

"By being out in nature and surrounded by fields and forest with eagles flying overhead, they're finding a place to celebrate their culture and to build supportive relationships," says Erika.

Throughout the course of the year, the Garden Project sees about 450 people, many travelling from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and the Musqueam Reserve. They convene about one to five times per week, depending on the season.

Members look after the half-acre plot, planting crops as varied as strawberries, cauliflower, beets and carrots, and others for medicinal use or spiritual significance such as tobacco. During harvest season, they gather in the community kitchen several times a week, preparing wholesome feasts.

For more information, visit: www.vnhs.net, then click on "Garden Project."

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Fostering Food Security in East Africa

On a trip to East Africa this past winter, Afton Halloran observed how a small "closed cycle" farm is working to enhance food security in that region.

Afton, a fourth-year Global Resource Systems student, attended a course in rural project development at Makerere University in Kampala, the capitol of Uganda. She spent some time studying a local initiative called the Katende Harambe Rural Urban Training Centre.

A five-hectare, integrated organic farm, Katende Harambe is located on the outskirts of Kampala. It creates bio-fuel from animal excrement, recycles waste-water, composts and also has on-site animal breeding and fodder production.

"Katende Harambe is training new generations of farmers in low-cost, high-yielding organic agriculture," says Afton.

She explains that 85 per cent of the Ugandan population makes its living directly or indirectly through the agriculture sector. By default most of the farming in Uganda is already organic since small-scale farmers cannot afford to buy the expensive fertilizers and pesticides. However, farmers have contributed to soil degradation, a phenomenon that Katende Harambe aims to reverse.



Afton Halloran



Murray B. Isman, Dean

Work Life Balance in Action

Dean Isman makes a save and takes the inside curve

Dean's Message Stewarding UBC Farm for Future Generations

At the Faculty of Land and Food Systems, we are fortunate to steward Vancouver's only working farm. As one of UBC's founding faculties, our core mission includes food security and sustainable agriculture. We are keen to secure the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm for future generations of students and the greater community.

The UBC Farm is located on South Campus, a 24-hectare parcel that hosts diverse activities, many of them led by students. These include student-run farmer's markets and an Urban Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden Project. Numerous field studies are underway, ranging from hands-on education for K-12 school children to the kinds of secrets honeybees may yield about boosting the human immune system.

In December 2008, the UBC Board of Governors directed that UBC administration develop "an academically rigorous and globally significant" strategic plan based on the UBC Farm's current 24-hectare location on South Campus, focusing on a Centre for Sustainability. The Board directed that the new plans enhance UBC's position as Canada's most sustainable university and a recognized world leader in campus sustainability.

Over the next six months, a committee led by UBC Provost and Vice President, Academic, David H. Farrar, will devise the strategic academic plan, drawing upon expertise throughout the UBC community. The committee will explore existing and emerging visions from researchers, administrators and students. This Faculty, along with others, will consider how a living laboratory and outdoor classroom on South Campus can enhance teaching and research goals across all academic disciplines at UBC.

These are exciting times which invite innovation and a renewed commitment to discover solutions to the world's problems. As our Faculty charts a new course with other UBC stakeholders, we will hold fast to our key principles: education and research that are grounded in science and global in scope.

Murray B. Isman, Dean
Faculty of Land and Food Systems





Prof. Gwen Chapman

Canadians Like Their Comfort Foods

Researchers at UBC and Dalhousie University have found that Canadian families, regardless of ethnicity, take comfort in traditional foods. Their findings also suggest that despite the comfort, some food choices may lead to above-average risk for heart disease and diabetes.

UBC Nutrition Prof. Gwen Chapman and co-authors interviewed Canadians of European, Punjabi and African descents in British Columbia and Nova Scotia. Their three-year study is the first to explore the layered meanings of food choices in ethnic communities and will contribute to better health promotion and nutrition education.

The researchers found that most Nova Scotians of African descent value “black ways of eating,” choosing hot and spicy dishes or “soul food” as a way of asserting their cultural heritage.

In B.C., Punjabi families, especially new immigrants, routinely prepare two separate meals to accommodate elders who need dishes like roti, dahl and subjee to feel satisfied and younger family members who prefer to balance Indian and “Canadian” foods.

For families of European descent, “meat and potatoes” meals represent a source of comfort. However, they also place higher value than other communities on “healthy foods” as defined by nutritional science.

Faculty Advisory Council

Twice a year, the Faculty of Land and Food convenes the Faculty Advisory Council with representatives from industry, students, academia and the community.

We recently welcomed new members:



Don Enns
Chief Executive Officer,
Cantest Ltd.



Kirsten Flood
President,
Agriculture Undergraduate
Students Society



Marc Fortin
Assistant Deputy Minister
Agriculture &
Agri-Food Canada

Faculty Advisory Council members also include:

Bruce Archibald
Deputy Minister, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

Harold Kalke
President
Kalico Developments

Erik Karlsen
Chair, Agricultural Land Commission

Anne Lindsay
Anne Lindsay & Associates Ltd.

Silvia Martinez
Program Director
Tec de Monterrey – UBC Joint Academic Program

Larry Pedersen
Deputy Minister
B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Yves Potvin
President and Founder
Garden Protein International

Nola Kate Seymoar
President & CEO
International Centre for Sustainable Cities



John Kennelly
Dean, Faculty of Agricultural,
Life & Environmental
Sciences, University of Alberta



Katy Proudfoot
Land & Food Systems
Graduate Student
Representative



Bobbe Wood
President & CEO
Heart & Stroke Foundation
of BC and Yukon



Allison Barnes

Changing Faces

New Faces

Allison Barnes, Graduate Programs Manager

Allison has a keen interest in horticulture and brings many years of UBC experience from her roles in the Dept. of Zoology, Graduate Studies and the Sustainable Development Research Institute.

Grahame Brown, Managing Director, Botanical Garden

Grahame joins us from the UK where he was working in the areas of strategic business development and planning, architectural consultancy and environmental design. His professional experience also includes landscape architecture, ecology and arboriculture.

Jung-Un Choi, Research Assistant and Technician, Food, Nutrition and Health Program

UBC alumna Jung-Un holds a MSc in experimental medicine. She has extensive experience from her previous positions as a teaching assistant for a course on international nutrition and research assistant for physics, neurobiology and acculturation research labs.

Renee Haggart, Botanical Garden Administrator

Renee comes from UBC's Dept. of Earth and Ocean Sciences where she worked as undergraduate secretary. Her previous career experience includes archives and records management at the Vancouver Port Authority and freelance commercial art and design. Renee volunteers for the Vancouver Paleontological Society.

Wayne O'Brien, Director, Finance and Operations

Wayne joins us from Ottawa where he was Senior Financial Analyst at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Wayne also served as the Manager, Finance & Administration for the Animal Care and Veterinary Service Unit within the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa.

Erin Sawyer, Researcher

As a member of the UBC Community Partnership Unit, Erin is evaluating strategies, resources and structures that will strengthen the Faculty's engagement with external communities. With the Faculty until June 2009, Erin's position is in collaboration with the UBC Learning Exchange and UBC Community Learning Initiative.

Marcia Thomson, Development Officer

Marcia brings a strong commitment to the Faculty's mission and goals as a former Land and Food Systems graduate student and a Sessional Lecturer who taught AGSC 350. Marcia works closely with the Botanical Garden and Centre for Plant Research, and the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm.

Samantha Turner, Wine Research Centre, Research Communications Coordinator

Samantha is managing the administrative, finance and communications aspects of research projects, as well as overseeing grant applications for the Wine Research Centre. Samantha moved here recently from Portland, where she was working as the Executive Coordinator for the Director of the Oregon National Primate Research Center at Oregon Health and Science University.



Grahame Brown



Wayne O'Brien



Marcia Thomson



Samantha Turner



Fans of the Vancouver Fruit Tree Project

Harvesting the City's Fruit

Sun-ripened plums or crisp new apples herald summer's bounty. Yet, a large percentage of fruit from Vancouver's private and public trees ends up rotting rather than going toward feeding the hungry.

"There's a brief window when the fruit has to be picked, but a lot of people lack the time or the equipment," says Jason Barton, a PhD student in Integrated Studies in Land and Food Systems and a board member of the Vancouver Fruit Tree Project (VFTP).

Established in 1999, the VFTP coordinates a database of fruit trees – about 200 trees to date – and organizes volunteer pickers who can set out on short notice armed with poles, ladders and rakes. These pickers must also deliver the harvested fruit to community partners that include food banks, neighbourhood houses, daycare centres and community kitchens.

In 2006, VFTP had its biggest year, harvesting more than 2,200 kilograms (5,000 pounds) of fruit, of which about 80 per cent were apples with the rest comprising pears, plums, cherries and quince.

"Our goal is to double that amount this summer," says Jason, adding that a priority at VFTP is recruiting more volunteers, especially those who enjoy taking on organizational tasks.

For more information or to register fruit trees, contact: Jason@vancouverfruitree.

continued from 'Changing Faces' page 4

Maternity leave replacements

Lorraine Chan, Communications Manager

Lorraine is stepping in for Jennifer Honeybourn, who is on maternity leave until January 2010. Lorraine comes from UBC Public Affairs where she was the Communications Coordinator working with the Faculties of Arts, Education, Law and the Sauder School of Business among other UBC units.

David Magnuson-Ford, Acting Director of Development

David recently moved from Winnipeg where he established a strong profile in development work with experience that includes VP Development and Alumni Affairs for St. Paul's High School, Senior Development Officer and Campaign Manager for the Victoria General Hospital Foundation and Senior Development Officer, Major Gifts, for the University of Manitoba. David is replacing Bobbie Duvall, who is on maternity leave until August 2009.

Elishah Velji, Faculty Liaison

Elishah Velji will be covering for Melanie Train's maternity leave until December 2009. This will be Elishah's first time living on the West Coast, having moved from Toronto where she worked for the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

Promotions

Andrew Hill, Curator-Horticulturist

Andrew works in all areas of the David C. Lam Asian Garden. A UBC Botanical Garden horticulturist since 2001, Andy's noteworthy achievements include the recent refurbishment of the Physic Garden and overall responsibility for the planting and maintenance of the developing Carolinian Forest Garden.

Barbara Hsiao, Director, Human Resources and Administration

Barbara is responsible for the strategic planning and direction and implementation of all aspects of human and physical resources, labour relations and administrative activities for the Faculty. She provides leadership, broad advice, strategic guidance and support to the Dean, Associate Deans, Program Directors, and staff throughout the Faculty.

Mindy Li, Human Resources and Finance Assistant Manager

Mindy provides effective and efficient day-to-day management of the Faculty's human resource and financial activities, working with all areas to implement "best practices" according to internal and UBC-wide policies and procedures.

Prof. Kim Cheng works with chickens and quail that hold the key to a safer poultry supply

Living Avian Genetics Library

Avian Genetics Prof. Kim Cheng is building a living library that puts B.C. on the map as a key resource for the global poultry industry.

At the Avian Genetic Resource Centre (AGRC), Kim is studying nine lines of chickens and nine lines of Japanese quail. These represent a collection of unique genetic variations and may hold the key to a safer poultry supply and higher economic potentials.

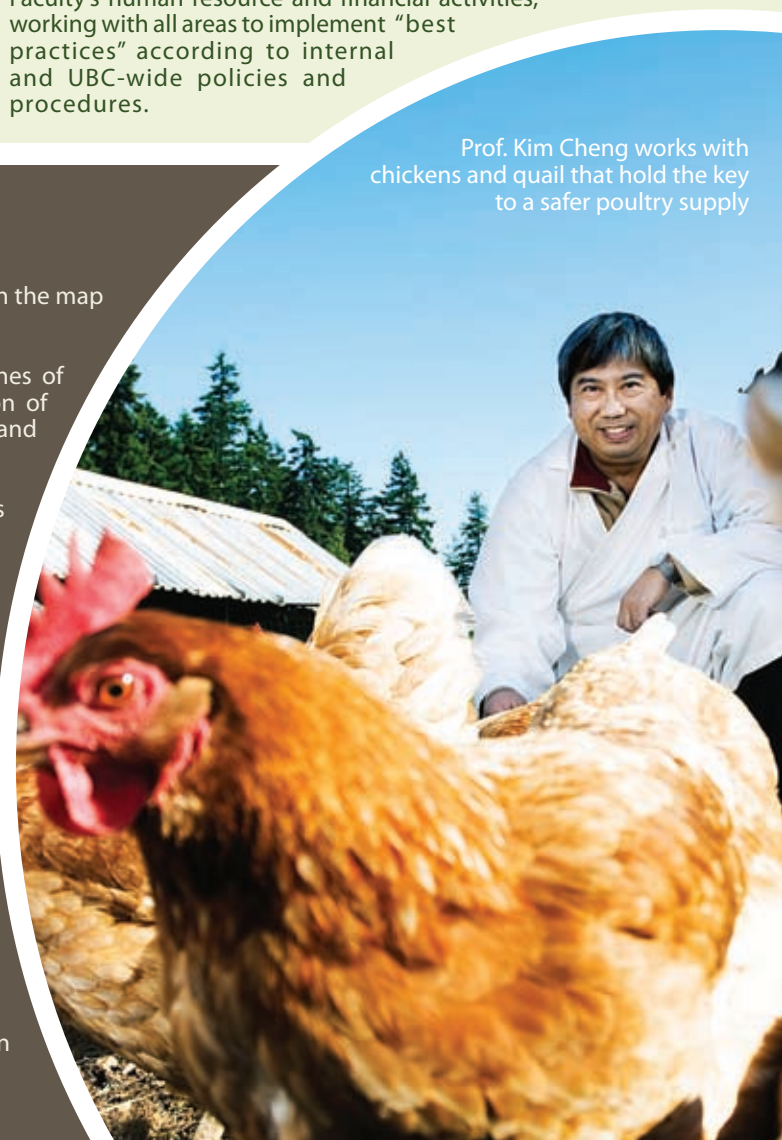
The AGRC is a partnership between the Faculty of Land and Food Systems and Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada and is based in the Pacific Agricultural Research Centre in Agassiz, B.C.

"Poultry stocks today are exposed to more diseases than ever," says Kim. "Chronic use of antibiotics has also slowed down the process of new genetic variations that could resist new pathogens."

As well, there are currently only two international chicken breeding companies that supply commercial breeding stocks to the entire world. Kim explains that the lack of genetic variation leaves the door wide open for large-scale disease outbreaks from new strains of virus such as Avian Flu.

At the AGRC, each of the more than 3,500 chickens and quail is carefully bred and pedigreed. Collectively, they build a living genetic library consisting of a wide variety of genetic mutations. In addition, genetic materials from most of the major chicken breeds in Canada are kept in the deep freeze for preservation.

Poultry and its allied feed and processing sectors are a major industry in Canada. The value of poultry products totaled \$2.6 billion in 2004.



New Walk and Learn Program

People can now exercise mind and body at the UBC Botanical Garden and Nitobe Garden. The "Walk and Learn" program is a new initiative funded by the UBC Dept. of Health, Safety and Environment. From April through October, visitors can pick up a map and handheld audio guides which provide interpretive audio clips along designated routes.



Bridges and platforms soar high into the rainforest

UBC Botanical Garden Opens Canopy Walkway

A bird's-eye view of the rainforest is now available thanks to a unique eco-attraction at the UBC Botanical Garden and Centre for Plant Research Centre. Unveiled last fall, the treetop walkway is the only one of its kind in Canada and one of only two in North America.

The Greenheart Canopy Walkway soars more than 17.5 metres (57 feet) high and spans 308 metres (1,101 feet). Eight platforms and nine bridges give close-up views of tree species, Pacific coastal mosses, lichens, birds and insects. A motorized wheelchair device makes the walkway accessible to people with disabilities.

"This will be a destination for education and interactive learning, adding to UBC's reputation as a global leader in research, teaching and sustainability," says Murray Isman, Dean of UBC's Faculty of Land and Food Systems.

Sustainable construction technology has been used to secure the walkway to trees. Instead of using invasive fasteners that can damage trees, the walkway is secured by a patented "treehugger" system of interlaced steel cables, provided by Greenheart Conservation Company, a private eco-attraction company from Vancouver that built the walkway.



Agroecology students Ashley Peterson and Jian Cheng enjoying their creation

Orchard Garden

The Orchard Garden is the brainchild of students in the Agroecology Directed Studies and AGSC 450 courses and the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm. Last spring, students tilled and prepared the soil of the 600-square-metre plot located on the south end of the historic UBC Orchard – on the west side of MacMillan Building.

Previously occupied by portable offices, this area is now designated as informal learning space within UBC Vancouver's new Public Realm Plan. The Orchard Garden complements UBC Farm as an outdoor classroom for hands-on learning about small-scale urban farming and sustainable practices – from food production to end disposal.

In the months to come, diners at Agora Café and the Agriculture Undergraduate Society's weekly barbecues will taste delicious "backyard" garden treats that include early potatoes, garlic, beets, kale and squash.



Donor Support Thank You

The Vancouver Foundation has donated \$23,500 to the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm. "Changing the Food System to Change the Climate" is a multi-year project that looks at reducing the impact of the food system on climate change. This project has also benefited from funding from Vancity's enviroFund™ and Environment Canada's ecoAction grant program.

TD Friends of the Environment has provided \$5,000 to the Botanical Garden's Education and Outreach Program. The program provides dynamic and interactive tours for school groups and the public, inspiring kids to get connected to the diversity of nature around them.

In memory of John Schildroth and his contributions to the Faculty and to agriculture in B.C., the John Schildroth Memorial Scholarship has been endowed by friends and family. The first recipient is Meredith Bragg, a fourth-year student in the Global Resource Systems program.

UBC Donors Celebrated

Under the glow of giant globe-shaped lights, on the covered ice of the new Thunderbird Arena, more than 900 of UBC's most generous donors enjoyed an evening of recognition, food and entertainment. Held in October 2008 this was the largest-ever gathering of its type at UBC.

Dean Murray Isman and David Magnuson-Ford, Acting Director of Development, hosted faculty donors who have provided support for the Botanical Garden, UBC Farm, and a variety of scholarships.



Milestones

Fellow of the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society

Assoc. Prof. Rick Barichello has been named a Fellow of the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society. The Society's highest award recognizes exceptional and continuous contributions to agricultural economics and farm management. Rick is the 25th person to be named a Fellow within the Society's history.

Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology

Food, Nutrition and Health Prof. Eunice Li-Chan was awarded the distinction of Fellow by the Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology for her extraordinary accomplishments in the field of food science and technology.

Fellow of the Canadian Weed Science Society

Assoc. Dean, Graduate Studies, Mahesh Upadhyaya, also a professor of plant science, has been named a Fellow of the Canadian Weed Science Society. Mahesh's research contributions include the effects of ultraviolet-B radiation on plants, the role of mycorrhizae in plant-plant interaction, allelopathy and seed banks.

Richards Service Award

Agroecology Assoc. Prof. Art Bomke received the Richards Service Award for his outstanding service and "living and breathing the faculty's mission." Each year, this award honours a faculty member and is named for Jim Richards, a Dean Emeritus much appreciated for his unstinting generosity toward other faculty, students and staff.

Shynkaryk Award

Operations Manager Jurgen Pehlke won the Shynkaryk Award and many accolades for always being there to assist others with a cheerful attitude and ready smile. The annual Shynkaryk award is named for former LFS staff member Kathy Shynkaryk, honouring her and others' outstanding service to students, faculty, staff and the public.

Slonecker Award for Outstanding Volunteer Contributions

Prof. Emeritus Iain Taylor, Dept. of Botany, has been awarded the 2009 Slonecker Award for Outstanding Volunteer Contributions to UBC Vancouver. The annual award recognizes volunteer who has contributed outstanding leadership and service to UBC over a sustained period of time. Iain is also a professor in the UBC Botanical Garden, as well as an Associate Member of the UBC Centre for Applied Ethics.

Hans Schreier Honoured for Mountain Research

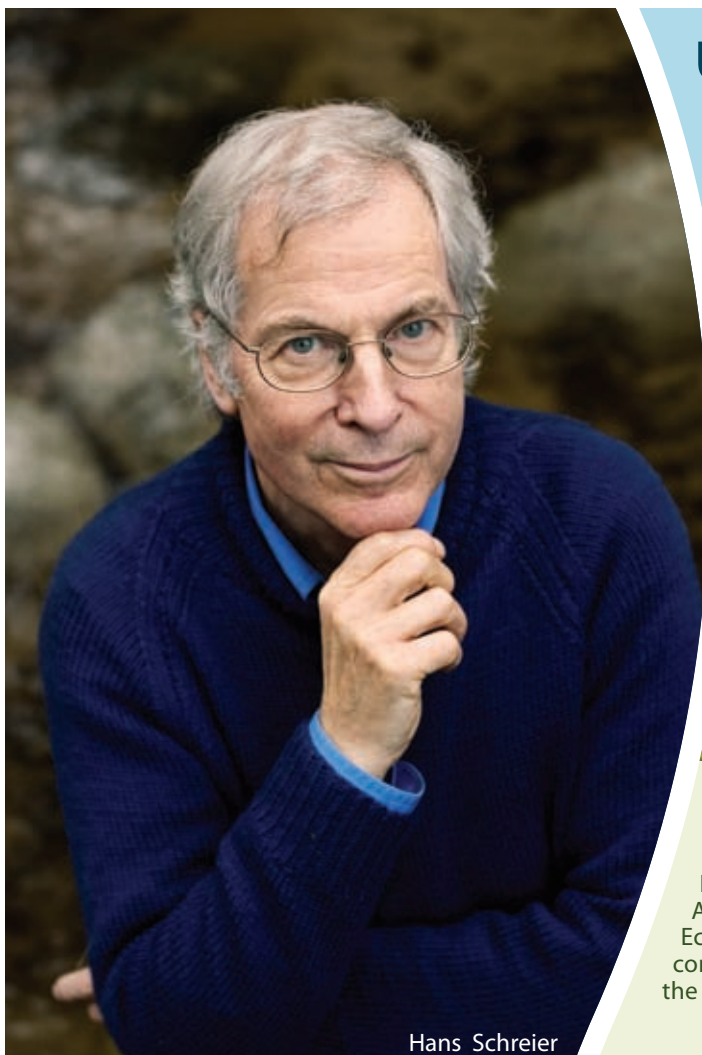
Prof. Emeritus Hans Schreier travelled to his birthplace of Switzerland last fall to receive the King Albert I Memorial Gold Award for his contributions to mountain science.

Established in 1994, the King Albert I Memorial Foundation honours lasting achievements in the fields of science, art or social welfare that protect the world's mountains.

Hans' research areas include watershed analysis, integrated water resource management and the impacts of human and natural (climatic) events on mountain systems of the Andes, Himalayas and British Columbia. Hans and his team have also devised innovative information technology in community education.

Hans holds appointments in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems and the Institute for Resources, Sustainability and Environment at the College of Interdisciplinary Studies.

Hans Schreier

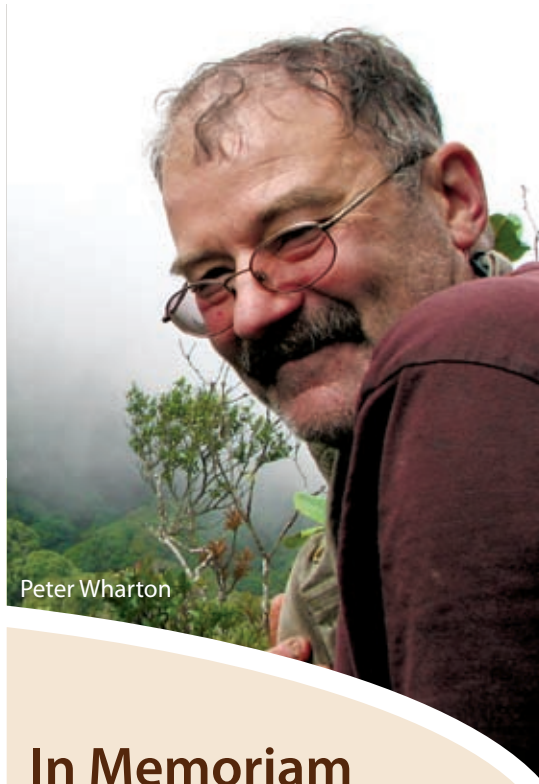




Peter Joliffe

Retirement

Agroecology Prof. Peter Joliffe recently retired after a rich and full career as a professor and program director of Agroecology. Peter has contributed to scientific understanding in research areas that include plant carbon dioxide relations and growth analysis and plant competition. He is also one of the few practitioners of agriculture in the Faculty, having operated a successful sheep farm in Langley, B.C. with his wife Anne for many years.



Peter Wharton

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RESEARCH & PROGRAMS:

- AAFC Avian Research Centre
- Agroecology
- Animal Welfare Program
- Biometerology and Soil Science
- Botanical Garden and Centre for Plant Research
- Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm
- UBC/DFO Centre for Aquaculture and Environmental Research
- UBC Dairy Education and Research Centre
- Food and Resource Economics
- Food Science
- Human and Animal Nutrition
- Wine Research Centre

In Memoriam

Peter Wharton was a passionate and eloquent advocate for plants and their habitats, a creative gardener and an expert plantsman. Peter passed away in June 2008. During his career at UBC Botanical Garden, he developed the David C. Lam Asian Garden, a beautiful garden filled with plants from around Asia, many of which were grown from seeds collected on Peter's expeditions.

To honour his contributions, UBC Botanical Garden established the Peter Wharton Cherry Grove. The grove will feature 25 Japanese flowering cherries that will provide colour and beauty for many spring times to come – a fitting tribute to a man who valued and created beauty around him.

The Peter Wharton Cherry Grove was made possible with a generous gift from the Hon. David C. Lam, a long time garden donor and plant lover. To further enhance Peter's legacy at UBC Botanical Garden, his friends and family have donated more than \$19,000 to the Peter Wharton Memorial Fund. This Fund will support an annual lecture series featuring distinguished speakers on topics such as plant conservation and biodiversity.



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