



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release: July 22, 2013

Long table 'Freedom to Farm' fundraising dinner honours plight of local farmer

Feast to support local growers' rights to farm and keep animals on BC Agricultural Land Reserve properties.

[Long Table Dinner II – Freedom to Farm](#) - Tickets: \$100 each

5:30 p.m. on Sunday, September 8, 2013

[4064 Vaux Road, Glenora](#)

(Victoria, BC) The story of Dan and Regan Ferguson's legal battle brought on by a noise complaint from a neighbour took years to resolve. Authorities were forced to investigate the 'unbearable burden' caused by animal noises coming from the small, family-owned Dragonfly Farm west of Duncan, which the neighbour further claimed diminished the property's value.

In response, the Farm Industry Review Board asked the Fergusons to prove they upheld normal farming practices as per 'The Right to Farm Act'. The District A Agricultural Institute and the Cowichan Agricultural Society intervened, claiming animal noises are natural to basic farming practices not just for the Fergusons but for all BC farmers.

Even so, Dan and Regan Ferguson were left with a bill for more than \$40,000 in legal fees. Because they were forced into the review board's tribunal process, they do not meet remuneration criteria.

Which is why the Island Chef's Collaborative (ICC) chose the Fergusons to be recipients of funds raised from their second Long Table Dinner in celebration of the Island's bounty and, more importantly, growers' 'Freedom to Farm'.

"Our members are heartened by the fact that BC's agricultural community has already come forward with \$18,000 to offset some of the Fergusons' legal costs," said Dwane MacIsaac, ICC President and owner of Passioneat Foods. "Many of our members are chefs and local growers themselves who see the Fergusons' case as precedent-setting." The Fergusons are the first farmers in BC to prove noises from farm animals are natural to agriculture for all BC farmers, reinforcing everyone's right to farm and keep animals on provincially reserved land, MacIsaac added.

Humbled by the generosity of their fellow Island chefs and farmers, Dan and Regan Ferguson claim the fundraiser serves another purpose. "We wanted to find a way to help other farmers facing similar problems," said Dan Ferguson. "The business of unnecessary dispute resolution hurts small, family farms like ours. We'd rather put our energy into farming, to be honest. We hope this event can raise more awareness about the issue and press authorities to seek more appropriate resolution methods."

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The Event

The second Long Table Dinner boasts five courses of locally grown food prepared by members of the Island Chef's Collaborative. Guests will be seated at a luxuriously long table situated in the Ferguson's Dragonfly Farm field.

Menu Details

Starters: Merridale Cider canapés.
Courses from: Fatima DaSilva - Bistro 161 and Vinoteca.
Bradford Boisvert - Amuse on the Vineyard.
Bill Jones - Deerholme Farm.
Daniel Hudson - Hudson's on First.
Brock Windsor - Stone Soup Inn.

Tickets

Tickets are \$100 per person and can be purchased at:

[Vintage Spirits](#) at [Hotel Rialto](#)

[Stone Soup Inn & Dining](#)

[Spinnakers Gastro Brewpub](#)

[Cook Culture](#)

Blue Grouse Winery

Averill Creek Winery

Vignetti Zanatta

Updates

Visit our website – iccbc.ca

Visit our [Facebook](#) page.

Click here for a [Map](#) and directions to the event.

For more information, please contact –

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