



Slow Food Cycle Sunday

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2,300 RIDERS SHOW SUPPORT FOR PEMBERTON AGRICULTURE

August 19, 2008 – Pemberton, BC –

Another Slow Food Cycle Sunday is in the books as a rousing success for Pemberton. The fourth annual celebration of local food and farmland attracted over 2,300 participants who made their way by bicycle up and down the Pemberton Meadows Road experiencing one of Canada's most valuable farming areas. Participants hailed from as far away as New Zealand and Kazakhstan, and as close by as Collins Road. Around 40% came up from the Lower Mainland, increasing from 30% in 2007. Over half of the participants came from Sea to Sky corridor.

The day started off with a little light rain to keep the dust down and the riders streamed into registration and onto the road. The sun broke through around noon and the temperatures rose, ensuring a brisk gelato and Happy Planet juice trade. Riders who were unused to pedaling 50 km discovered that fueling up is important and found plenty of it: coffee with groovy beats to kick it off, followed by potato salad, potato chips, potato pancakes, potato scones, potato samosa's, bags of potatoes, and hamburgers and pie and cookies. Carrot and garlic tops poking out of bulging back-packs and panniers were evidence of fresh vegetables gathered up along the way, with arts and crafts tucked into side pockets.

For many, the highlight of the day was the blessing by Martina Pierre at the Helmer farm. "There were hundreds of people and you could have heard a pin drop", said one rider wiping tears from her eyes after listening to one of the most highly respected elders in the region explain why we are honoring the land, the food from the land, and the people who have grown it. "She made this place seem like magic" said another.

Slow Food Cycle Sunday is supported by the Pemberton Valley Supermarket, The Community Foundation of Whistler, Village of Pemberton, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, Horizon Distributors, Whistler Blackcomb Foundation Enviro Fund, and Sea to Sky Community Services. Contributions from Limelight Screenprinting, Sumire Design and Dave Steers Photography guaranteed the aesthetic appeal. The hard work of a dedicated crew of volunteers ensured that it all came off without a hitch and Pemberton Search and Rescue kept us safe.

In addition to the bike ride, this year the Slow Food Cycle Sunday Society produced the Anything Grows event, held at Millennium Place in Whistler on Thursday August 14th. We gathered together 13 people involved in local food production, promotion and retail

and asked them to speak about what they do. Over 90 people were treated to fascinating stories and inspiring thoughts on the topic of the future of food in Whistler and Pemberton. A follow-up event is planned for the fall. The Community Foundation of Whistler sponsored this event.

Next year's Slow Food Cycle Sunday event is scheduled for August 16th, 2009. Check www.slowfoodcyclesunday.com for more details.