Local seed initiative shifts focus to economics

Seed security won’t happen if it doesn’t pay the bills

by RONDA PAYNE

VANCOUVER – FarmFolk/CityFolk is receiving $100,000 over two years under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership to promote the production of BC-grown vegetable seed.

Chris Thoreau, program co-ordinator for the Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security with FarmFolk/CityFolk, said the funding will help the Vancouver-based not-for-profit address the business side of seed production. “[We’ve] been sort of exponential growth over a lot of years. In agriculture, it’s built on small seed businesses plan and prepare to manage a new seed enterprise.”

The new funding complements a larger grant of $130,000 from the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC. Vancity has also contributed to the mobile seed cleaner making part of the project.

The funding will support development of a mobile seed-processing unit to help small and mid-sized seed farmers across BC process seed efficiently and affordably. It will also extend seed production training through focused in-person sessions and webinars and help new entrants and small businesses plan and prepare to manage a new seed enterprise.

“The seed enterprise budget spreadsheet allows farmers to actually calculate how much input, labour, resources (and) time goes into producing a seed crop and what their prospective return on that is,” says Thoreau.

Seed security with Family Initiative on Canadian vegetable seed. Production of BC-grown vegetable seed is part of an economically diverse farm that fits the way you farm. With two deluxe cab, MFD models at 110 and 120 HP respectively, there is a Utility Farmall U tractor that fits the way you farm.

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For more information about growing seed and tools to help, see [www.bcseeds.org].

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