

## News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 6, 2021

### **Cowichan Food Innovation Program wraps up with virtual showcase event**

**DUNCAN, BC** – Economic Development Cowichan is inviting the public to participate in a virtual showcase of evolving local businesses to celebrate the conclusion of a 12-week food innovation program.

Beginning in April 2021, a talented group of food and beverage entrepreneurs participated in a free virtual program to shake up the local food industry and help build a thriving food and beverage ecosystem in the region. The Cowichan Food Innovation Program, delivered by Spring Activator, proved to be a catalyst for brewing new friendships and connections and baking up an abundance of ideas and successful business opportunities.

The Cowichan Food Innovation Program featured a variety of guest speakers, supporting participants on two journeys: an ‘incubator’ to take entrepreneurs from idea to launch preparation, and an ‘accelerator’ to take existing businesses to the next stage of their evolution. As the program wraps up, the cohort now has an opportunity to present their products and services, their growth during the program, and their learnings. Through a virtual showcase on July 13, the participants will share their unwavering passion for food and beverages, and their commitment to bettering their community and planet.

“The event will be a refreshing snapshot of how our local food entrepreneurs are persevering in the face of COVID, keeping our communities fed while innovating at the same time,” said Barry O’Riordan, Manager of Economic Development Cowichan.

From artisanal teas to mushroom-powered products, the showcase will include something for everyone. Hear innovation stories from familiar names like Old Firehouse Wine & Cocktail Bar, Stillhead Distillery, and Farm Table Inn, as well as newcomers such as Affinity Ciderhouse and Lost Cuzins.

“Supporting food innovation is crucial,” said Allison Gibson, Program Manager of Food Innovation at Spring Activator. “Eating is something we do every day, and food helps us come together and build communities. Food innovation is also important in building successful and self-sufficient food ecosystems. We encourage everyone to support this amazing cohort of entrepreneurs by attending the showcase event.”

To register for the Cowichan Food Innovation Program Showcase, visit [ecdevcowichan.com/food-program-showcase](https://ecdevcowichan.com/food-program-showcase).

*For more information, please contact:*

Barry O'Riordan  
Manager, Economic Development Cowichan  
250.709.1119  
[barry.oriordan@cverd.bc.ca](mailto:barry.oriordan@cverd.bc.ca)