

Nitro Factors



edmonton aquaponics society

FAQ's:

- how can I get involved?
- what's new in aquaponics?
- where is the project located?
- how much is it going to cost?
- why utilize aquaponics?
- when will the project start?
- give us a little bit of background...

More News:

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EAS Speaks! BY DEREK REID

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Edmonton Aquaponics Society's (EAS) newsletter *Nitro Factors*. Nitrogen cycling is the fundamental force that makes aquaponics work. In biology, factors are catalysts, or facilitators of change. The newsletter will provide a forum to define many of the factors that could influence a paradigm shift of how we feed ourselves. This publication is the next logical step in the evolution of our society.

This first issue's brief intent is threefold. We'll talk about how you can get involved

in this publication, 'cause I'm already tired of seeing my name on every article.

We'll talk about where we are at in our partnership with the City of Edmonton, the agreement we have reached for use of space, and volunteer opportunities.

Finally, we'll talk about fine-tuning our capital budget for the initial project build and how those funds might be raised.

We hope you are eager to get involved. And please, as always, spread the word. You don't have to look very far these days to see the power of networking.

EAS partners with City of Edmonton BY DEREK REID

On July 7, 2011 the culmination of two years of discussions with the City of Edmonton resulted in a Memorandum of Agreement being reached. This allows our volunteers to utilize the Greenhouse space within the ACT Aquatic and Recreation Center at Rundle Park.

This process began in 2009 when I was looking for an existing group to whom I could pitch a crazy idea, to partner with them so that our community could build a small-scale aquaponics project.

At about that same time, the City of Edmonton's Volunteer Services Program Manager, Anna Paranich, and the ACT's foreman, Chris Biensch placed an ad on the web looking for proposals to use a Greenhouse there. Hello serendipity!

Anna and I initiated a series of meetings and emails between her, Chris, Enviso Supervisor Kevin Bokenfohr, and several other City stakeholders.

In September 2010 a Board of Directors was formed and the society was born.

Anna placed another ad on her site, and we were able to attract all kinds of folks that understood the importance of this sort of project for our community.

Thanks to Anna, Kevin, and Chris, our board of directors, and a supporting cast of other city staff that were all very supportive, we have achieved this MOA.

So, I met with Chris and Pamela Logan, the current Volunteer Manager, recently, to discuss how to move forward.

The outcome of that meeting is that we are now ready to take applications to assist with the de-commissioning of existing structures. Chris will provide volunteers with a brief safety workshop. We will conduct ourselves with the same professionalism as any other contractor.

Once we build the project, and go public, Pam's office will become involved with orientation. We're a ways off from that.

So if you're handy, handsome or not, we could use your help. Please sign up.

Edmonton Aquaponics Society

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It costs WHAT? BY DEREK REID

Dr. Nick Savidov, Greenhouse Crops Research Scientist, Marc Legault, Bio Industrial Engineer, and I met recently to discuss the details of building our project.

Nick's team at the Crop Diversification Center, South in Brooks, Alberta started researching aquaponics 9 years ago. Marc was brought on to help transition the system from research to industry.

Our meeting helps the process of putting together an accurate estimate. Every tank, pump, pipe, and valve has to be accounted for. Earlier work suggested a figure between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

To put it in perspective, this is about the same amount that folks spend on a new snow machine, ATV, or motorbike.

An accurate cost estimate means a credible budget, and this will certainly be vital when we enter the fundraising phase. Speaking of fundraising, it was our original intent to use "charitable

status" to raise most of our funds. Our application for charitable status is in the works, but it is a delicate process that requires careful wording to see success. That application can take several months to process, so we won't be able to offer tax-deductible receipts any time soon.

We have a couple options in the interim. One is to build a working micro-model of the project for display and, if we can make it portable, use as a teaching tool to take on the road. This would require a fraction of the cost of the eventual project. The other avenue to explore is forging an arms length partnership with a corporate leader that places community investment ahead of tax avoidance.

It would be prudent to consider both.

If you want to get involved in the charitable status application, costing and budget process, or fundraising initiatives, please give me a shout.

Send Us Your Stuff BY DEREK REID

This newsletter is a forum for all of us with news to share relating to the science and technology of food sustainability, safe food, local food, organic food, alternative food production methods, restaurants that feature local foods, and workshops relating to food. It goes without saying that if it's related to aquaponics, we're all ears!

We will be actively seeking input from experts in the local food production, distribution, and preparation movements, but that doesn't exclude someone with an opinion, a great idea, or a bit of experience to speak out, too. Yeah, you!

So don't be shy! Drop us a note or a manifesto. We reserve the right to edit

for content and length, but will offer feedback before we butcher your stuff.

Articles can be pretty much any length, but if your going to prattle on for 1000 words, please make every word count. Any claims you make or quotes you use must be verifiable by the editor.

Opinion pieces, mostly positive we hope, should be no longer than 250 words. If you have a bone to pick with people, perhaps have a chat with them first, and let us know how that went. Rants without merit will likely end up in the same deep end they came from, so be mindful.

We hope to publish once a month to start with. Here's hoping you write soon!

About Our Organization...

Aquaponics is a man-made "wetland" that mimics natural biodiversity while integrating aquaculture and hydroponics.

The Edmonton Aquaponics Society (EAS) will provide healthy, local food, educational opportunities, and forums to build awareness and shift paradigms.

We formed a board in September 2010 and became a Society in January 2011.

Our project will be 1/20th the size of the commercial system developed by Dr. Nick Savidov's team in Brooks, Alberta at the Crop Diversification Center, South.