

Langley workshop is on the business of farming

- by Ronda Payne - Langley Advance
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PHOTO: Chris Bodnar, Close to Home Organics

The Langley Sustainable Agriculture Foundation wants to see farmers be successful in all aspects of their business. It's a business with many benefits, but chair of the foundation, Dave Melnychuk noted, farmers still need to pay the bills.

On Saturday, Nov. 14 a workshop will run from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the Langley Events Centre about farm business planning. This session brings experts together under one roof to help make farmers more profitable at doing what they love.

"Agriculture is not simple. It's complicated," Melnychuk said on a late October farm tour when speaking about the upcoming workshop. "It's the backbone of every society."

In his opening comments to a recent ag tour, Langley Township Mayor Jack Froese noted 75 per cent of Langley land is in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Kwantlen Farm School instructor, Chris Bodnar of Close to Home Organics will speak about his experiences operating a 135 member community-shared agriculture program, selling at farmers' markets, and the steps he sees as important to get ahead.

From the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Clint Ellison, an agri-food business development specialist will cover business plan development, why it is important, and what to know about financial analysis and business management.

The third speaker is Chris Henderson, a CPA and CA who is a consultant with the Ministry of Agriculture Canadian Farm Business Advisory Service. His main areas of focus include taxation, succession, and business planning.

"There's a thirst out there for knowledge [about farming]," said Melnychuk. "I've never seen anything like it."