

Citizens care deeply about the UBC Farm
[The Vancouver Sun](#). Vancouver, B.C.: [Jul 24, 2008](#). pg. A.14

Letters to the Editor

The reassurance about the fate of the **UBC Farm** issued by Murray Isman and Stephen Owen had some of the intended effect. The fact that officials have publicly responded is good news. Advocates of sustainable land use, however, should not be complacent. The full 24 hectares, which are wildlife habitat and have potential for agricultural use, are not yet preserved. As food prices rise and demand for local produce grows, four or even seven hectares in cultivation, as Isman and Owen suggest will be the case, may not be enough. The entirety of the **UBC Farm** should be preserved.

Randall White

Vancouver

Credit: Randall White; Vancouver Sun

The UBC Farm is a treasure and a necessity. The issue is not whether this one farm can be a breadbasket and feed us all. It can't. But it does so much more. It is a valuable teaching and research space, as well as a provider of food for the weekly UBC Farmers' Market and for some of the campus food requirements.

Very importantly, it serves the surrounding community. Stroll through it and you'll see schoolchildren tending plots, day camps teaching about agriculture, Downtown Eastside residents watering their produce and beekeepers with their hives. It helps all of us to understand the connection between rural and urban and the absolutely vital role this plays in our future.

UBC has a long history of downsizing the farmland on its property. The consultation process surrounding changes to the farm has been sorely lacking. I'm involved in farmers' markets. I started a petition urging that no dramatic changes be made to the UBC Farm and quickly collected 1,200 signatures.

Mel Lehan

Vancouver

Credit: Mel Lehan; Vancouver Sun

Re: "Misplaced concerns about UBC's farm," Issues & Ideas, by Murray Isman and Stephen Owen, July 22

If this article was supposed to calm our fears about the future of the UBC Farm, it failed.

Coincidentally, my husband and I, both UBC alumni, went for a walk around the UBC campus this past Sunday. We often visit it and used to enjoy its seasonal offerings, but in the last few years our visits have left us more frustrated than pleased.

The destruction of green space that started with the removal of second-growth forest in 1992 has been ramped up to the extent that even lawns, shrubs and flowerbeds are being sacrificed. Even the grove of specimen trees off Main Mall adjacent to a building housing botany specialists has disappeared.

This rampant destruction of green space throws into question UBC's commitment to environmental sustainability. The equally rampant development also causes us to question its commitment to the UBC Farm. I don't doubt it will continue in some form, but I do worry that "efficiency" will be translated into "expediency" when it comes to the possibility of cramming in yet another expensive subdivision. The farm not only serves university students and faculty but is a benefit to the surrounding community, providing people of all ages with the chance to learn something about food production. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Anita Romaniuk

Former park board commissioner

Vancouver