

North Okanagan Valley Gleaners Society Newsletter No. 4 (March 2009)

Since the summer of 2007 and the inception of the Christian based North Okanagan Valley Gleaner Society we have been looking for a home in the Vernon area. Originally a local family was hoping to donate land in Coldstream for a facility; however this site was rejected by the Agricultural Land Commission as unsuitable early in 2008. It was not long after that another property as shown above came along and with the cooperation of the owner a plan was conceived to make this the home of the NOV Gleaners. This site was part of a former ginseng farm. The farm is now owned by dairy farmers located in Armstrong who grow corn and have no need for the buildings. The property has a home, workshop and most important a 20000 sq ft building, which may seem large to some but has inside the benefit of 2 large dehydrators, 2 large coolers, a vegetable washer and other equipment, much of what will be needed to operate a fruit and vegetable dehydration operation, which is the basic idea behind gleaners. We would be scouring the area for large quantities of produce for dehydration and mixing it into a soup mix product for shipment to areas of the world where hunger is a daily problem. As a matter of fact there is already a produce supplier close at hand near Lumby called Creighton Valley Farms who has been a constant shipper to the Okanagan Gleaners at Oliver, BC.



In Aug 2008 we made a joint application with the owner to the Agricultural Land Commission for permission to operate the processing plant as an Industrial Agricultural site and also to refigure the property boundary so that there would be a 5 acre parcel around the buildings. This application had to first be approved by NORD and after careful scrutiny by the planning department was backed unanimously by the NORD Board in Mid January. It has now been forwarded to the Agricultural Land Commission, a process expected to take about 4 months. Although we have confidence in this effort we know that this is a work that will require God's hand to complete as there are major obstacles to overcome in this acquisition and then of course financial considerations to operate such a facility. It's fortunate that we have an example in the Okanagan Gleaners operation that we can model ourselves after. Many local people already volunteer and support that facility and we have the Okanagan Gleaners full support in this endeavor as the need for this food is increasing every day. And we are especially thankful for the local support we have had in Lumby.