

## **Minutes of ALRC Meeting, 29 May 2001**

Meeting was attended by ALRC Members Nan Hammett, May Gerstle, Steve Macdonald and Rita Schenck, By Cooperative Extension employees Sylvia Kantor, Mara Dyczewski and Brad Gasolach, by Dawn Hooper from Ecology and by VIGA president Jasper Nyberg.

The topic of the meeting was the agricultural survey to be produced by Extension related to heavy metal contamination on Vashon-Maury Island. Sylvia provided some background on the genesis of the survey. It was initiated by the letter sent by VIGA to Ron Sims, King County Administrator asking for help understanding the effects of the Tacoma Smelter Plume on the island. At first King County planned some focus groups to better understand the needs of the Island, but after some interviews, decided a survey would be more effective.

Jasper gave some background on the needs and concerns of VIGA members. IN summary, VIGA was interested in finding out more about the risks of eating food grown on the Island, and of any risks to farmers themselves. She said that VIGA was interested in non-commercial as well as commercial agricultural production, and thought a survey of agriculture on the island would be useful not only for the heavy metal issue, but for others as well.

The survey was reviewed and edited for clarity. Of particular interest was the question that related directly to the needs for research on the heavy metal concerns. Brad had some very good suggestions that clarified the format of the answers, so that the question is no longer an “opinion” type question, but instead asks growers to rate research topics as to importance. We also added a question about what growers thought their customers were interested in.

There was extensive discussion about the financial questions. Ultimately, it was decided that they will be left in, but at the very end of the survey, and it will be made clear that answering them is voluntary.

In summary, the questionnaire asks basic information about what is being grown, cultural practices in use, health practices in use, and the growers opinions about the research that should be performed. Answering the survey should take about 15 minutes.

The VIGA board will have the opportunity to review the survey results and make any final changes, and then the survey will be sent to all the commercial growers on the island that Extension can identify, probably late June.

Respectfully Presented  
Rita Schenck