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The Dock+ Port Alberni Food Hub Kitchen Opens

In partnership with the City of Port Alberni, with funding support from the Province of British Columbia and Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET), the Port Alberni Port Authority (PAPA) is pleased to announce the opening of The Kitchen located at The Dock+ food hub.

The Dock+ started operating for its aquaculture food processor anchor tenants this past July. While these businesses began operations, work continued towards the completion of the commercial kitchen space. Despite challenges posed by COVID-19 during the construction period, The Kitchen at The Dock+ is now ready and available for any business, charitable organization, individual or others requiring a facility to make their food or beverage products.

All users of The Kitchen at The Dock+ will be able to rent blocks of time in advance that best meet their needs through an online reservation system. Whether you are an individual wanting to try your hand at a mass quantity bake of your favourite cookie recipe to give to family, friends and colleagues, or a start-up business needing a larger kitchen to make soups or other consumer products, The Kitchen has the equipment, time and fee flexibility to meet your needs. By becoming a member of The Kitchen, all users will be provided an initial orientation session that includes important training about the facility's equipment, safety and cleaning protocols, as well as key card for entry and online reservation system access.

PAPA President and CEO, Zoran Knezevic states that "we are all very proud to announce the completion of this next phase in the development of The Dock+. So many people have been excited to learn of when The Kitchen will be ready. We share their enthusiasm and look forward to seeing all kinds of great baking, soups, juices, jams, meals, etc. made there to help launch new business growth."

"Congratulations on the opening of The Kitchen! This space will further enhance the Dock+ food hub and help the region's food and beverage processors take their products to the next level," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. "Food hubs play an important role in growing the local economy, creating jobs and providing increased business opportunities, and we're proud to invest in them so we can have greater food security and support British Columbians on the road to economic recovery."

"We are thrilled that all the hard-work and tenacity to make The Dock+ food hub a reality has come to fruition," says ICET CEO Line Robert. "Helping small scale food producers scale up is a cornerstone of our work and integral to the sustainability of the region's agri-food industry. We're honoured to have been a part of this journey."

Port Alberni Mayor Sharie Minions says: "The Kitchen at the Dock provides individuals and small businesses with an opportunity to access equipment that would otherwise be

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unaffordable. The possibility to create a business from a culinary passion will fulfill a dream for many and we are grateful to the funders and the Port Authority for making the food hub a reality.”

Further developments towards the completion and growth of The Dock+ includes a retail shop and an opportunity for the development of a new café or boutique restaurant in a nearby building that would focus on locally-produced food and drink, also owned by PAPA. “Having a shop and a restaurant, such as an oyster bar, using products made in The Dock+, would really highlight the food hub within our community. The goal is to achieve the amazing potential of our local food sector and proudly share it with the world!” explains Mr. Knezevic.

For information about The Dock+ and how to reserve your time in The Kitchen, please visit www.thedockplus.ca

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