

Film explores food sustainability in the Sierra

By Kathryn Reed

TRUCKEE – Food is one of the basic needs to survive. Usually it is something people living the Lake Tahoe-Truckee region import.

But what if it didn't have to be trucked in?

Mayumi Elegado, publisher of Truckee's *Moonshine Ink*, and Stacy Caldwell with Tahoe Truckee Community foundation started exploring that concept earlier this year. Their brainstorming led to the creation of the 25-minute movie "Elevate Tahoe".



Truckee's growing dome is featured in "Elevate Tahoe".

Photos/Provided

SBS Media House created the film that profiles locals who are creating a sustainable food system. They raised more than \$5,000 through KickStarter to fund the project.

On the KickStarter page, it says, "In our Elevate Tahoe film, we will feature a program that gets kids to like kale and even request fresh vegetables to be put on the home grocery list, a farmer takes us underground to extend the growing season, and a forager dishes on the bounty that can be found in the woods

and your backyard, and how you can bring it home. All of these things are going on every day at the hands of normal people driven to improve the food they, their families, and their communities consume.”

While many people have small gardens in the summer, the film explores how food can be grown in this region throughout the winter, how to harvest native plants – including Manzanita, and how to preserve food so it can be used in the winter.

One segment of the film focuses on the growing dome that Truckee has. This was the inspiration for the two that will be built at Sierra House Elementary School this fall.

Another installment has organic farmer Gary Romano talking about what it takes to grow vegetables year-round. For much of his segment he is holding a copy of the book “Why I Farm” which was published by Bona Fide Books in Meyers.

Alicia Funk with the Living Wild Project shows how powder from Manzanita berries can be used as a flour or natural sweetener. The other bonus to native plants is they are drought resistant.

Elegado and Caldwell are making the film available to various entities, with the latest showing being Oct. 14 during the Truckee-Donner Chamber of Commerce breakfast. Their goal is to soon have it available via iTunes.