

PRESS RELEASE

The Aarhus Art Building presents the exhibition

GROWING VEGETABLES ON A CORAL ISLAND

with Søren Dahlgaard

22nd January – 3rd April 2011

Growing vegetables on a coral island is an exhibition about alternative and sustainable food production. In 2002 Søren Dahlgaard moved with his Maldivian wife and their child to the Maldives to explore the potential for growing fruit and vegetables locally. This resulted in a two-year pilot project where Dahlgaard rented the 17-hectare desert island Hibalhidhoo for test-growing various vegetables and fruit plants. The aim was to identify a number of vegetables that can be grown in the special conditions on a small tropical coral island: no soil – the ground is sand; no fresh groundwater – only salt water. The very high air humidity and in particular the night temperature are problematical for most vegetable plants.

In the exhibition at the Aarhus Art Building Søren Dahlgaard takes his point of departure in the project in the Maldives. Parts of the project are recreated in the exhibition halls of the Art Building along with documentary material from the project in the Maldives. In one of the exhibition halls there will be Maldivian air humidity and temperature – a stark contrast with Denmark in January. In another hall grow tomatoes, chili peppers and cucumbers, which have been planted directly in the exhibition premises. A range of equipment of the kind used in the greenhouses in the Maldives will be installed, and in this hall too the temperature will be regulated so that it is 20-25 degrees by day and 15 degrees at night, so that the plants can thrive and grow. Furthermore, a couple of hundred special non-stinging greenhouse bees will be given a habitat in this hall, so the plants can be pollinated in the exhibition period.

The exhibition will also present charts, pictures, equipment, books, periodicals etc. that tell the story of the process in the Maldives. Altogether the exhibition will provide quite specific insights into alternative and sustainable food production.

The exhibition is part of the theme for the year – *IMAGINE – towards an ecoaesthetic* in 2011 at Aarhus Art Building.

The Aarhus Art Building is collaborating with the non-commercial photo gallery Galleri Image in Århus on this

exhibition. At Galleri Image in the period 7th January – 20th February 2011, under the title *HIBALHIDHOO*, Søren Dahlgaard is exhibiting an overall installation where you can experience everyday life and the building-up of production in the Maldives. Among other ways through photos and video, this exhibition shows a different angle on the project in the Maldives. Read more at www.galleriimage.dk