



2016 Annual Report



Cowichan Green Community
Cultivating food, community, and resilience

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Message from the Board President

Nadeane Nelson
Board President



Looking back at 2016, much was undertaken, much was accomplished and the challenges thrown our way were generally well met.

Food security awareness is growing, but unfortunately, the number of people with first-hand experience of being food insecure is growing as well.

Since the most vulnerable in our community are the least food secure, that's our focus— to provide the food skills of growing, preserving, and preparing fresh food. As Judy says, 'How can we see the vulnerable and not be compelled to seek funding to offer more?' CGC gets more grants, space is squeezed out for yet another desk, folk are hired, skills are learned, mentoring happens, and lives are bettered. CGC grows.

We strive to meet the challenges of growth, including staff and administrative costs. Most grants are given with the implicit expectation that the necessary infrastructure will already be in place, meaning that very limited grant dollars can be used for overhead, or core salaries.

Through our vibrancy, there is always much to celebrate. The CGC Foundation was granted charitable status in the summer, and although we threw our hats in the air and danced a jig, the complexity of what was ahead of us quickly settled in. Since the majority of CGC programs meet the CRA definition of charitable, they will be moved to the new Foundation. Growing the Foundation from no more than a name to a fully operational organization, while continuing to also manage the CGC Society kept both boards of directors busy through the fall and will continue to do so throughout 2017.

We were also blessed to receive a bequest from the estate of Barbara Dowd. Ms Dowd, it seems, lived by beliefs aligned with the Irish proverb; 'It is in the shelter of each other that the people live.' We are exceedingly grateful to her for her trust in us.

One of our newest investments was the purchase of Island Farm & Garden magazine. This successful Island-wide magazine in its 4th year was looking for a new owner, and found one at CGC! Eric Morton, a seasoned editor and publisher, agreed to take up the challenge of shepherding our latest social enterprise along the rocky path of magazine production. The team proudly published two of five annual issues in the final quarter of 2016.

We want to express sincere thanks to all of you who've held our vision strong so together we can continue to build a food secure Cowichan.

Message from the Executive Director

Wow – what an incredible year that went by in a blink of an eye. So many successes and so many challenges. It seems like we are never to rest on our laurels – and maybe we wouldn't want it any other way. Living just on the edge seems to keep us moving ahead and boy, did we ever this year! Another financial milestone surpassed with our revenues increasing substantially. And we've been so fortunate to have provided paid employment opportunities to 62 folks including interns and students.

We continued to increase our creative capacity, starting new projects such as the *Let's Chop it Up* and *Before Your Plate Skills link Programming*, supporting youth in skill building and employment skills, as well as our newly launched *Cowichan Incubator Seed Farm* – and how inspiring to watch all those participants learn, grow, and succeed.

The world out there is a crazy place – from LNGs, to GMOs, to the US election there's a lot out there to overwhelm even the most even-keeled. But it's easy to remember why CGC is here and why what we do matters. On the toughest days, all I have to do is walk into our awesome commercial teaching kitchen and watch the *VIU W.E.S.T.* students baking shortbread cookies, or stroll to KinPark and hang out with some of our summer camp kids learning how to harvest garlic and I remember what's really important.

Losing the last of the local government funding from the City of Duncan was a very sad day indeed. We've been very proud of our partnerships with the local government, first losing the CVRD funding last year and then losing the City funding this year, can only speak to us loud and clear that there's a more urgent message we need to relay to our local politicians who might not see the urgency of food insecurity in this region.

We see it on the ground, day in, day out. From working with and supporting someone who showed up for a job interview who hadn't eaten in 3 days to seeing the faces of gratitude from participants in the *Farmer's Market Coupon Program*, we know there is a need – a need to keep bringing this issue to the forefront of the table.

With food prices predicted to increase between 3-5% in 2017, equating to \$420 per family, according to Canada's Food Price Report, and our island's increasing vulnerability to climate change adversely affecting distribution, our priorities from local government need to start shifting much more rapidly toward an increase in support for local agriculture – not a decrease.

Now as we gear up for 2017, there are many unknowns for CGC including the ever-changing financial picture. But in the words of Kyle Cease, "Get in love with not knowing and ...what if more things could happen if you fall in love with not knowing ...way more things *could* happen!"

So join us as we continue to look ahead into the unknown – always exciting times indeed.



Judy Stafford
Executive Director

About Us



2016 CGC Staff

Cowichan Green Community Society (CGC), is a non-profit organization located in Duncan, BC that has been focusing on environmental sustainability in the Cowichan Region since March 2004. Since 2007, our mandate has revolved mainly around improving food security by developing strong relationships with local food producers and increasing urban and rural food production. We consistently see how important increased access to healthy food, food education, and increased food production is to our community's health and well-being.

Continuing in our role as one of Island Health's designated Food Hubs, we work tirelessly to increase awareness, and program capacity with all our community partners. Our reach is constantly expanding with new programs such as *The Cowichan Incubator Seed Farm*, *Preserving Our Wisdom*, *Cowichan Agriculture Training Program* and *Skills Link*. We love working with all members of our community from children to elders, as we realize everyone plays a critical role in sharing knowledge and building a stronger local food system.

Staff



Nora Arajs
Ceres Edible Landscaping
Manager



Heather Kaye
KinPark Youth Urban
Farm Supervisor



Jennifer Dorby
Food Security
Coordinator



Tony Sferrazza
Social Media and Marketing
Program Manager



Madelaine MacLeod
Facility Manager and
Administrative Assistant



Foster Richardson
Incubator Seed Farm
Supervisor



Cyle Serra
Ceres Lead Gardener



Alyssa Loucks
Skills Link
Coordinator



Adrian Tomei
Skills Link
Coordinator



Leslie Rault
Garden Pantry Store
Manager



Sonya Young
Bookkeeper



Rosalie Sawrie
Volunteer
Coordinator



Jan Scott
Maintenance



Mel Demkiw
Ceres Gardener



Dayne Wright
Facilities Manager and
Administrative Assistant



Steph Cottell
CAT Program
Supervisor



Vanessa Goodall
Events and Food
Security Coordinator

Board of Directors



Alison Stark
Director



Mark Hazell
Treasurer



Beverly Hill
Director



Haley Atchison
Director



Amy Luck-MacGregor
Secretary



Erika Mundel
Director



Nadeane Nelson
President



Alan Philip
Director



Kim Robinson
Director



Beverly Suderman
Director

2016 Cowichan Agriculture Training Program Interns



Shannon Cook



Darrell DeVries



Mike Feld



Kurtis Howes



Bre Quigley



Brandon Wilson



Jasmine Soucey



Abbi Spencer

2016 KinPark Intern



Larissa Bouvier

Volunteers



2016 was another strong year, full of volunteer leadership throughout our many programs and events. Events like our *Donor Breakfast* in the spring, information booths, *The Garden Pantry Store*, fruit picking and delivery, *Seedy Sunday*, our *Annual General Meeting*, as well as workshop help and facilitation, would not be possible without the hard work of our dedicated volunteers.

Thank you for all of your effort, time, and support! Volunteers are the heart of the CGC.

Here is a list of just some of our 370 amazing volunteers who helped us achieve our goals in 2016:

Rosalind Adams
Louis Butler
Catrina Carney
Chelsea Cleaugh
Lawrene Collins
Emily Crowe
Pat Crowther
Mel Denkin
Mike Kelly

Stephanie Dunn
Reed Early
Duncan Euing
Katherine Loudon
Kendal-Lynn Hart
Maureen Hayes
Beverly Hynes
Anna-Marie Loudon
Bonnie Mills
Saronj Sund

Kirstyn McKenzie
Gaylene McMullen
Sandy McPherson
Lydia Montgomery
Jan Nelms
Susan O'Connor
Justin Philips
Lynda Diamond
Ruth Fenner
Grace Olafson

Serena Sinclair
Rachael Sinclair
Barbara Sobon
Hilary Stead
Bryanna Terlien
Darian Tielemans
Susan Tremble
Mary Ann Masyk
Holly Howe
Laurel Walton

A Special Thank You

Haley Atchison worked tirelessly for our *FruitSave* Program. She has worked many hours organizing picks, harvesting, and delivering fruit.

Thank you, Haley, you rock!

Haley Atchison

FruitSave Harvest Facilitator



For more information about *FruitSave* see page 20.

The Garden Pantry Store

This year the changes implemented in 2015, continue to produce positive results and growth for *The Garden Pantry Store*.

The Vendor Showcases, where we support local producers and artisans, through an innovative plan of low space rentals in the redesigned brick and mortar space, returning 100% of their sales back to the vendors and through the support of marketing efforts, the increase in traffic flow and visibility of *The Garden Pantry Store* continues to grow monthly. This response from the marketplace has

- brought repeat customers back on a regular basis to “see what is new” and to repurchase staple items;
- increased opportunities to educate more people on what CGC is and how the programs fit together ;
- increased opportunities to expose the general public to our workshops and events allowing for ease of registration and payment; and
- increased store revenues with the addition of space rental income from new vendors joining the “Showcase” on a fairly regular basis.

The Garden Pantry Store continues to sell items that complement CGC’s focus on food security, specifically tools and items to grow and preserve your own food, which are all donated by our very generous community.

The value-added items made in our community commercial kitchen by our *KinPark Youth Outreach Team* and *Preserving Our Wisdom* program participants such as jams, jellies, relishes, chutneys, and antipastos continue to be a positive and very tasty contribution to the store’s revenues.

With the help of a dedicated team of volunteers, the store’s outreach continues to grow and to support many of CGC’s community projects. In addition, several of the store volunteers have truly embraced our up-cycling initiative, producing wonderful hanging vases, tiered cake plates, wind chimes, and the now “signature” store bags made from previous years’ *Buy Local, Buy Fresh Food Maps*!



The Station

Since the grand opening in June of 2014, *The Station* has become the green hub for the Cowichan Region. And we continue to be proud of the impact it has had in the Duncan community and beyond. The upstairs is home to a great group of solid renters who commend CGC for providing affordable, central residential space. The draw of the main floor tenants, *Cycle Therapy* and *Harmony Yoga*, keeps our space busy, and the *Garden Pantry Store* complements the unique shopping experience along Duncan Street.

During 2016, The commercial kitchen was busy daily with local food artisans baking, mixing, and producing a range of products for sale in and around the Cowichan Region. Several job initiative programs including *Skills Link* and *Preserving Our Wisdom*, utilize it as a teaching space for people interested in pursuing employment in the food industry. As well, the year saw numerous food preservation workshops. The boardroom was rented weekly for many meetings, workshops, and special events.



Cowichan Incubator Seed Farm

Foster Richardson
Seed Farm Supervisor



2016 was the first year of the exciting new *Cowichan Incubator Seed Farm* project. The seed farm was created to produce locally adapted seed, train new seed farmers, house a community seed library, and offer education about seed saving and food security to local community members.

The 3.4 acre lot on Beverly Street was acquired in summer 2015 through a lease agreement with North Cowichan. This spring, under the supervision of Foster Richardson, four interns were hired to get this project started.

The property was cleared, tilled, and amended, and two acres were cultivated and planted in seed producing crops. We were able to surround the property with deer fencing, and a well was drilled courtesy of Drillwell Enterprises. A micro-drip irrigation system was installed just in time for the hot summer weather.

Despite our seasonally late start, we were able to produce over 100 lbs of beautiful locally adapted, regionally appropriate seed. Crops that did not mature for seed collection were welcomed by other CGC programs, or donated to food banks and other persons in need in our community. We planted an orchard, and have plans for an educational native plant and marsh area in the future.



Seed Farm Interns



Jonah Turton



Paula Masyk



Carly Sawatsky



Bill King



Ceres Edible Landscaping

"What *is* edible landscaping?" many people ask.

Our team of organic gardeners are happy to demonstrate the many ways to incorporate edible plants into all areas of your landscape. It may be perennial vegetables, berries, fruit trees, native fruit-bearing shrubs, annual crops, or nectar plants for pollinators. The team behind our organic landscape program works with residential and commercial property owners to develop low maintenance and healthy gardens. Our portfolio includes garden design and installation of large family food gardens, to commercial landscapes, utilising the principles of permaculture and holistic design to build ecologically sound landscapes and increase food security.

We enjoyed another growth-filled year, and the interest in our approach to developing edible, sustainable gardens continues to increase throughout the Region. Highlights from the year include, recreating a woodland garden where a forest had once stood, increasing the food capacity in our downtown demonstration food forest, and utilizing polyculture systems for a lakefront forage garden.

One of our community projects was creating a vegetable garden for a new immigrant family from Syria. They wanted to grow their food but were struggling with poor soil and the ever present deer, eating everything. The Ceres team donated their time, sourced plants and materials, and created a 40' x 15' fenced garden with a plum tree, rows of raspberries and strawberries, garlic, kale, roses and other greens. The six children all got involved with the planting and it turned into a memorable day for all. Our team will continue working towards a more resilient and food-secure future for our Region.



Nora Ajais
Manager
Ceres Edible Landscape



Cowichan Valley Co-operative Marketplace

The Cowichan Valley Co-operative Marketplace launched its year-round online farmers' market, www.cow-op.ca in August of 2015 and has been helping its co-operative of Cowichan farmers and food processors sell their products ever since.

In 2016, the Cow-op sold over \$25,000 of Cowichan grown fresh produce, value added products, meats, and eggs through the website from local food processors direct to consumers. There are currently 47 members in the co-operative and 370 registered customers.

How does the online marketplace work?

Each week, orders can be placed online between Friday and Tuesday. On Wednesday, farmers harvest their orders, and on Thursday orders are dropped off to CGC's commercial kitchen, then picked up by the customer that afternoon.

The Cow-op has plans to offer a downtown Duncan delivery service and to expand into the Victoria market in 2017.

Farm to plate with a click!



www.cow-op.ca
The Cowichan Region's first **online** farmers' market

Farm to plate...with a click!

HOW DOES IT WORK?

-  **SHOP ONLINE** Order fresh online or with mobile device
- ↓
-  **ORDER COMPLETE** Farmers harvest your order
- ↓
-  **PICK-UP** Pick up your order downtown Duncan (360 Duncan St.)

Buy Local! Buy Fresh! Cowichan Farm Map

In 2016, CGC produced the 7th edition of the *Buy Local! Buy Fresh! Cowichan Farm Food and Drink Map*. This project is aligned with CGC's efforts to increase food security in the Cowichan Region.

This year, the map featured 60 Cowichan Region farms and was supported by 18 community advertisers including local politicians, businesses, and farmers markets. 8,000 maps were printed and distributed throughout the region and beyond.

Each year farmers submit their farm information, including a unique marketing tagline and description of available products. Consumers can search by farm name, farm type, production methods or farm-gate availability. Paper listings are also synched with an online listing making it easy for consumers to find the information they need.

The map continues to be a hallmark of CGC's support for local food and farms. Supporting a diverse range of small-scale producers, the map is a direct marketing tool for farms and a comprehensive guide for consumers wishing to support local agriculture and a localized economy, not to mention fresh taste!

"A chef from one of the Valley's local restaurants was interested in my grass-fed lamb and in that one call, I sold all of our legs of lamb. All the info he needed was on the map prior to the call. So, it really does work!"

Nathan Harban, Local Forage Farm.



Heather Kaye
Buy Local! Buy Fresh!
Map Coordinator/Designer



Farmer's Market Nutrition Coupon Program

CGC was fortunate to host the *Farmer's Market Nutrition Coupon Program* for the 4th year in partnership with the Duncan Farmers' Market.

Delivered by the BC Farmers' Market Association and funded by Healthy Families BC, the program gave 60 low income Cowichan families and seniors \$15 a week to purchase fresh, local produce, eggs, nuts, herbs, dairy, fish, and meat from the market for 16 weeks.

This year's Program Coordinator, Hilary Stead, administered an organized and well coordinated program, receiving positive feedback throughout the 16 weeks.

CGC is proud to report that 2016 saw a 90% coupon redemption rate, with 3624 coupons being distributed. Just another way that CGC is helping to facilitate access to fresh local food for as many residents of the Cowichan Region as possible.



Hilary Stead
Program Coordinator



FruitSave Program

2016 was *FruitSave's* 11th year of operation and its biggest year to date. What started out as a transition year for the program, ended with record totals and a strong vision for 2017. *FruitSave's* mission over the past decade has been to collect surplus fruit from across the Cowichan Region and divert the would-be waste from compost to emergency food providers in the area.

Led by Haley Atchison and a team of dedicated volunteers, home and businesses in the region had their fruit collected and distributed in a timely and professional manner.

Including picks from Ladysmith to Mill Bay, the volunteer *FruitSave* team harvested 15,789 pounds of fruit, an increase of 5,017 pounds from 2015. Of this total, 6,320 pounds were donated to regional emergency providers and 5,300 pounds were donated to livestock. The remaining fruit was processed and used by our many programs including both of our *Skills Link* programs and *Preserving Our Wisdom* programs in baking and processing workshops. The results... fresh apple juice pressed by Pressing Matters, fresh apple butter, apple chips, apple sauce, and apple pies.

Our list of recipients grew this year to not only include the regions registered food banks but community meal programs, many of the area's elementary schools including Alexander Elementary, health centers, and nonprofits.



Tony Sferrazza
FruitSave
Program Manager



KinPark Youth Urban Farm And Youth Outreach Team



The KinPark Youth Urban Farm is a youth-led sustainable agriculture demonstration site and market garden. KinPark is also the site of 20 community garden plots.

In 2016, KinPark began the fourth year of an important partnership with VIU's *Workplace Essential Skills Training (WEST)* program for 12 students facing a variety of disabilities. The students learn valuable worksite training, employability and community-building skills, while the farm benefits from help with mulching, seeding, planting, and harvesting.

In 2016, our youth and family drop-in program included farmin' fun drop-in days and work parties. KinPark was also a work placement site for the *Cowichan Agricultural Training Program* interns and host to work parties and tours with students from Queen Margaret's School and Cowichan Secondary School. We also hosted 2 summer students this year and two regular volunteers, Emily and Darian, who helped water, weed, and harvest in the gardens.

In Spring, KinPark partnered with the VIU Carpentry Program to purchase a new tool shed with a green roof. We also coordinated the *Storytime* program with Vancouver Island Regional Library in the summer.

In August, we welcomed Agricultural Intern, Larissa Bouvier to the team.

Food grown at the park, such as zucchinis, tomatoes, greens, carrots, and beans, was used for the *Kids' Camp* cooking classes, drop-in family cooking classes, *Skills Link* interns' kitchen training, and canning for the *Preserving our Wisdom* workshops and community meals. Our "world-famous" garlic and squashes were sold in the *Garden Pantry Store*.

KinPark Family Drop-In and Youth Outreach Team

From 2014 to 2016, with funding from Community Action Initiative (CAI), the *KinPark Family Drop-In* ran free programming for community members to connect with further networks, get involved in community projects, and explore opportunities to discover their strengths and learn new skills.

The *Drop-In* provided free family cooking classes, farm drop-in activities at KinPark, and other family-friendly drop-in events hosted at The Station and KinPark. This year, the drop-in also hosted the second annual *Chill Fest* event in partnership with Canadian Mental Health Association, and the second annual *Pink Shirt Day* in collaboration with Cowichan Secondary students for bullying awareness.

Using local food as the *Drop-In's* framework, the focus was to support those who are struggling with mental health and problematic substance use who are either isolated from their community or would benefit more through an alternative supportive approach. The *Drop-In's* two-year funding from Community Action Initiative has now ended, but CGC will continue to run the *Youth Outreach Team*, which was an integral piece to our drop-in programming.

The *Youth Outreach Team (YO Team)* are a group of 8 youth in the community who are growing their leadership skills and internal strengths by assisting with the drop-in programs and other CGC events, with the goal of creating a safe and inclusive place for children, youth and families to hang out. The *YO Team* has successfully organized and hosted two fundraisers in which they raised funding to support their continued community work. This funding will help towards the YO Team's involvement in upcoming projects for 2017 including the continuation of cooking classes, and preserving workshops.



2016 Youth Outreach Team



Family Drop In

KinPark Kid's Summer Camp

This summer marked the third year of running the *KinPark Kids Summer Camp*, which is an educational camp for children ages 6 – 12 that focuses on the importance of growing food locally and sustainably. Based at the *KinPark Urban Farm*, each day highlights a theme that is reflected in the day's activities, discussions, and games.

The camp's goal is to teach children how to grow, harvest, and cook healthy food in a fun, hands-on, and engaging way, and how to live sustainably. They also learn team building and leadership skills through activities and games. Many of the activities and games promote group problem solving, and leadership taking for those who are older and wish to take on more responsibility at camp.

This year, 184 children attended our camp, and engaged in various activities including canning, planting, harvesting, and growing a wide variety of vegetables and herbs, cooking with fresh produce from KinPark, learning about bugs and bees, and of course creating fun and memorable memories through games, crafts, swimming, and even bowling.



Preserving Our Wisdom

CGC received a grant to host a series of 20 food preservation workshops and 8 community meal workshops from March 2016 to March 2017. The project goals are to engage elders in our community, utilize waste foods, and bring back the art of food preservation.

To date we've had 10 elder facilitators share their knowledge of preservation, engaging 404 participants through our workshops on canning, freezing, dehydrating produce, and meal preparation. The project has created meals for *Meals on the Ground*, the *Homesteading Fair*, Day of Donations, and the Duncan Manor . In total 755 mouths have been fed.

The Community has been an incredible support through donations of jars, produce, preservation equipment, and personal time. A great success of the project thus far has been elders sharing their knowledge with students in our school systems. Cowichan Secondary School, Queen Margaret's School and Vancouver Island University students have either taken a preservation workshop and/or helped make a meal for the community under the guidance of an elder mentor.



Jennifer Dorby
POW Program
Coordinator



Skills Link- Let's Chop It Up !

Let's Chop It Up is a federally funded *Skills Link* employment program for young adults facing barriers to employment who are interested in working within the Cowichan Region food community. Participants are taught and guided through the basics required of most food-based jobs. Emphasis is placed on communication skills, confidence building, and self-awareness. Participants complete an internship with a local food service provider and gain hands-on experience in a professional job setting. Of the eleven previous *LCIU* graduates, nine are currently employed and two are back to school. Ten have remained in the Cowichan Region.

Through *LCIU*, the CGC has encouraged food security by directly supporting and working with a plethora of local food providers, such as: Island Bagel, Arbutus Café, Café La Vie, The Duncan Garage Café, Alderlea Farm & Café, Folki Herbs, Cripple Creek Preserves, Country Grocer, M'Akola Housing Society, Flynn's Fish 'n' Chips, True Grain Bakery, Raincoast Aquaponics, Organic Fair, Drumroasters Coffee, Red Arrow Brewing, Cherry Point Estate, OUR Ecovillage, Home Grown Foods, Cowichan Pasta, and more.

Our amazing contributors have presented lectures, led discussions, engaged participants in workshops, demonstrated hands-on skills in the kitchen, and even guided medicinal-plant tours!

Skills Link: Let's Chop It Up comes to a close in February 2017, when the final group of participants graduate. CGC is excited to pursue more *Skills Link* programs in the future.



Adrian Tomei
Skills Link LCIU Coordinator



Skills Link- Before Your Plate

Focusing on local agriculture and food, *Before Your Plate* sets the table for a vibrant opportunity for young adults to experience and learn a variety of skills: hands-on cooking classes, food workshops, budgeting, and buying ingredients, tours, talks from local food and horticulture experts, classroom discussion, self-exploration, teamwork exercises, and employment skills for today's job world.

After four weeks of rich learning and skill building, participants will have nine weeks of hands-on work experience with a placement in the local food and/or farming community. Upon completion of the program, participants are equipped with applicable work experience, improved resume and cover letter skills, and a stronger connection to the Cowichan Region.

The *Before Your Plate Skills Link Program* runs from September 2016 to April 2017, in two 14-week terms and helps a total of 10 young adults solidify their employment skills. In 2016, the first team of 5 participants graduated and either found full time employment or returned to school. CGC is very excited to run a second team of 5 young adults in the upcoming New Year!



Alyssa Loucks
Skills Link BYP Coordinator



Events & Workshops

Hosting fun and engaging community events and workshops is a staple activity at CGC. Focused on hosting events that assist to increase regional food security, we seek to create and partner on unique opportunities that are tasty and that build community.

In addition to our annual events, such as the *Duncan Seedy Sunday* and *Edible Farm and Garden Tour*, CGC was thrilled to partner with local organizations on some amazing food security awareness events such as creating community meals and teaching food preservation skills through *Preserving Our Wisdom*, and *The Taste of Spring Fundraiser* in partnership with local farms, wineries, and The Old Firehouse Wine and Cocktail Bar. This event helped CGC do some commercial kitchen renovations.

Duncan Seedy Sunday



Taste of Spring Fundraiser



Edible Garden Tour



CVRD Environmental Outreach

CGC was awarded our fourth contract to conduct environmental outreach for the Cowichan Valley Regional District. Under this agreement, CGC delivers public information on three of the CVRD's services, including water conservation, energy management, and zero waste, by attending community events and delivering workshops in regional schools.

The CVRD Outreach booth attended 9 public events throughout the Cowichan Region including the One World Festival, Christmas Chaos, the Wild Salmon and Mushroom Festival, and two Capitals hockey games. With the goal of engaging the general public and schools on some of the key environmental concerns in our community, the outreach team offers simple solutions that community members can adopt at a household level to make the Cowichan a more sustainable place to live.

Michelle Staples, a long-time educational outreach facilitator, worked to deliver public workshops on environmental stewardship. In 2016, Michelle brought 20 workshops to schools and organisations, which directly reached 400 keen learners. This year featured a film project which looked at how our environment has changed, what is changing it, and what kind of future will be left for our grandchildren. This project reached over 3000 people.

Between the booth at events and the school outreach program the 'Green Team' has reached 5,798 community members.



Jennifer Dorby
Program Coordinator



Michelle Staples
CVRD Outreach Facilitator



The CVRD Environmental Outreach Booth



ISLAND FARM & GARDEN

In August 2016, CGC very proudly purchased *Island Farm & Garden Magazine* from its founder, Lesley Lorenz. This successful Island-wide magazine was in its fourth year and looking for a new owner to grow and expand it to the next level. CGC was the perfect home!

It's been a lot of fun putting together the first two issues and now we feel like seasoned magazine publishers! Eric Morton is our editor extraordinaire, and came to us from the Newsleader Pictorial. He brought great skill and creativity to the publication and we are thrilled to have him on our team.

Look for the *Island Farm & Garden* around town now. You'll read about reflections and connections in the agricultural community, and find details on events happening all over the Island.

Let's all grow together!

Eric Morton
Island Farm & Garden
Editor



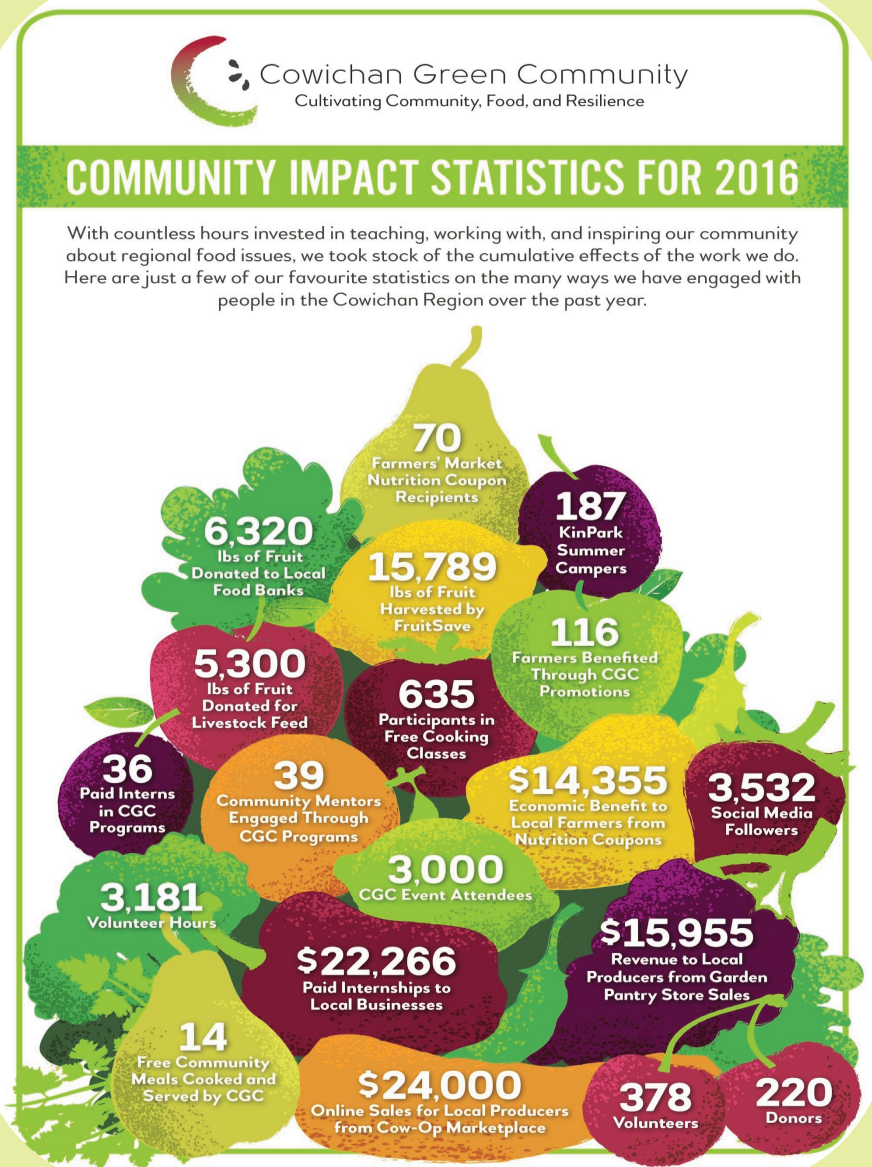
Food Advocacy– Cowichan Food Security Coalition

CGC is incredibly fortunate to be in the position of engaging with local government and our community on local food issues. The Coalition is a network of regional food security stakeholders who were busy this year creating the *Cowichan Food Security Report Card*, monitoring and advising on a CGC food waste recovery project called *Preserving Our Wisdom* and diligently meeting once a month to share all food security related discoveries.



Some members of the Cowichan Food Security Coalition

Community Impact Statistics for 2016



With countless hours invested in teaching, working with, and inspiring our community about regional food issues, we took stock of the cumulative effects of the work we do. Here are just a few of our favourite statistics on the many ways we have engaged with people in the Cowichan Region over the past year.

A Very Special Thank You

In Spring of 2015, we learned that one of our members, Barbara Dowd, had passed. A lovely spirit and a skilled weaver, Barbara first connected with CGC through our *Wild Food Walks* series. She attended many, if not all, of our walks carefully noting information in her booklet and not shying away from climbing into the bush or reaching high to sample all the various wild edibles our guides introduced us to. A generous supporter of a number of regional organizations, we remember Barbara for her enthusiasm for nature and her generous spirit. She generously donated a beautiful hand knit scarf to one of our silent auction events.



Following her passing, we were even more touched when it was learned that Barbara had named CGC in her will designating us as one of several community organizations to inherit a significant donation from her estate. We are grateful for this major contribution to our operations and programming, and will be recognizing Barbara at our *Incubator Seed Farm* in 2017. We are certain it is a place she would have loved to come and sit to watch the gardens grow, and the birds and bees thrive.

Thank you Barbara!

Thank You !

We thank all community members who have donated to CGC. Your generosity supports programs with limited or no funding including: *FruitSave, Farmer's Market Coupon Program, Community Gardens, KinPark, and Cowichan Incubator Seed Farm.*

We would also like to thank the following supporters:



Partners

Community Options Society
Cowichan Community Policing
Cowichan Secondary School
Cowichan Tribes
Cowichan Valley Co-operative
Marketplace
Discovery Youth & Family Substance Abuse
Services
Duncan Christian School
Duncan Farmers' Market
Eye Opener Films
Farm and Ranch Safety and Health
Association
Global Vocational Services
Island Farmers Alliance
NewLife Ministries
Municipality of North Cowichan
Queen Margaret's School
School District 79
Town of Lake Cowichan
Transition Cowichan
U Fix-it Bike Works
Vancouver Island Regional Library
VIU WEST Program
Volunteer Cowichan



Funders

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Bauta Initiative for Canadian Seed
BC Association of Farmers Markets
BC Real Estate Foundation
BC Recreation Foundation
Canadian Diabetes Association
City of Duncan
Coastal Community Credit Union
Community Action Initiative
Economic Development Cowichan
Island Coastal Economic Trust
Island Health
Province of BC
SE Catalyst
Service BC
Service Canada/Government of Canada
VanCity Credit Union



Businesses

AAE Structural
Apex Soil & Landscaping
Beechwood Tree Service
Buckerfields
Community Farm Store
Cowichan Bay Seafood
Cowichan Lake Sports Arena
Cowichan Lake Timber
Cowichan Lodge
Cowichan Recyclists
Cowichan Valley Meats
Cowichan Valley Voice
CVRD Waste Transfer Facility
Dinter Nursery
Double D Fencing
Drillwell Enterprises
Duncan Christian Reformed Church
Duncan Garage Café & Bakery
Excellent Frameworks
Juice FM
Monk Office Supply
Peninsula Co-Op
Polster Environmental Services
Reber Creative
Sawmill Sales Direct
Serious Coffee
Shaw TV
Tagz Contracting
The Market Garden
Thrifty Foods
Tree Island Yogurt
True Grain Bakery
Warmland Irrigation
Ye Old Dogwood Lumber

Farms

8 ½ Acres
Bird's Eye Cove Farm
Don Maroc
DragonFly Farm
Fern and Feather Plant Nursery
and Art Studio
Growing Opportunities
Community Farm
Happy Goat Farm
Hope Farm
Island Shire Farm
Living Soils Farm
Many Hands Farm
Mossy Banks Farm
Notta Farm
OUR EcoVillage
Providence Farm
Qualicum Beach Taters
Sweet Maggie's Farm
Tatlo Road Farm
Westholme TeaFarm
Valleyview Farm
Wilberry Orchards

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