

# 2021

## Annual report

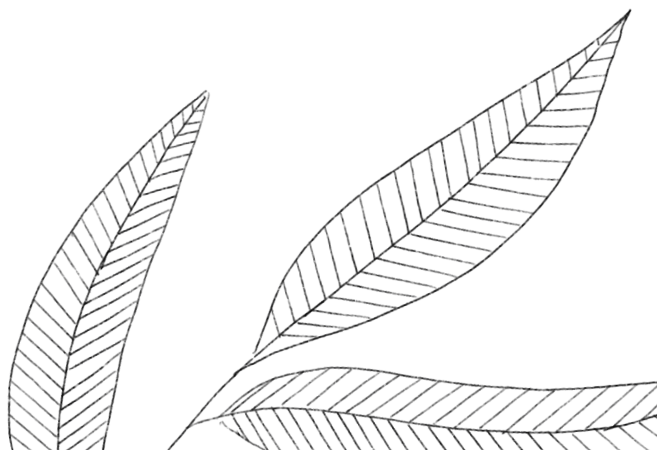




**The Station**  
by Jennifer Lawson

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# About us

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

In our role as one of Community Food Centres Canada's 'Good Food Organizations', and as an Island Health designated 'Food Hub', we work tirelessly to increase awareness and build local capacity with all our community partners. Our reach is constantly expanding with programs such as the newly renamed Farm and Food Hub, the Resiliency Project, and the reFRESH Coupon Program. We love working with all members of our community, from young to old, as we know that everyone plays a critical role in sharing knowledge and building a stronger local food system.





# Message from the Board President

Cowichan Green Community, lead by our amazing Executive Director Judy Stafford, has had another inspiring year. A piece of work of which CGC Directors are proud is the writing of a land acknowledgement. Inspired by staff, our intention was to create a very visible statement that sincerely acknowledges our living and working on unceded territories and our debt to the peoples who preceded us, and who continue to welcome us and work in partnership with us. This acknowledgement will be prominently posted, in its entirety, where all may see and read it.

A few other highlights:

- Summer camp - we had our best enrollment ever as parents decided outside, farm activities were just what their children needed more than ever.
- reFRESH Coupon program - through additional funds raised we were able to expand the number of participants to 120 low income families and seniors.
- Food Processing and Innovation Hub - although we faced a few obstacles, the Hub project is still moving ahead with successfully rezoning the property on Beverly Street, and receiving a 35 year lease from North Cowichan along with financial support.
- Food Recovery - an incredible 292,956 pounds of excess food was recovered! What an amazing effort by the staff and the grocery stores and farmers.
- Community Cob Oven - we were awarded the contract with the City of Duncan to take over the management of this community jewel located in Centennial Park - stay tuned for the renovations and grand opening Spring 2022.

The focus of CGC, both the Society and the Foundation, is food. Food security, education, distribution, recovery - all of these are important roles and goals, critical to ensuring that people in the Cowichan Region have access to healthy, safe and nutritious food, whatever their background or economic status. And that brings us to the true core of CGC: people. You, me, people who need assistance, people who give support. Very often those are the same - the generosity of those who live with little is a byword. People building community together is what makes our organizations the amazing success that they are. People whose roots in the Region go back thousands of years, people who have only just arrived.

The past year was one of extreme weather - heat, floods, blizzards, fires - and the ongoing pandemic. Throughout these events, what has also been evident is the care and support the people of Cowichan Region have for each other. Through your generosity and the hard work of Judy Stafford, our staff, and our volunteers, CGC has been able to provide support to many of the most vulnerable in the Region. On their behalf and ours, thank you.



**Lucy Thomas**  
President

# Message from the Executive Director

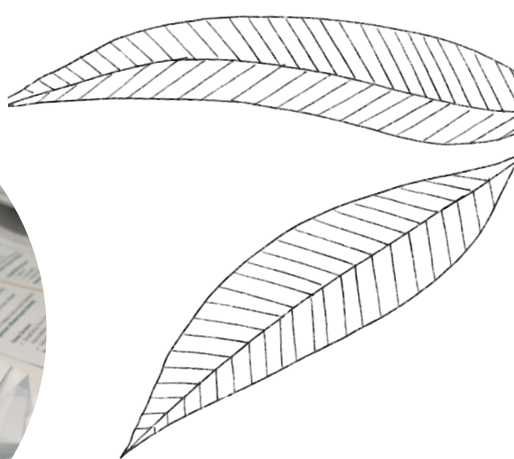
As I reviewed last year's report, I was reminded how much was different from 2020 but also how much was the same. Who knew we would still be working through a pandemic. I enjoyed some of my proudest CGC moments this past year - I've been consistently astounded at how the staff, interns, and volunteers continuously pivoted to ensure our essential services and programs continued. When the kitchen team was off sick, the office team jumped in without hesitation to cook all the Meals on Wheels. We did not miss one meal no matter the obstacles.

We held our first virtual donors' breakfast, which we worried would be a bomb. Nevertheless, our very generous supporters not only showed up early in the morning on their computer screens, but they blew us away by donating an unprecedented amount of money.

We continued to lead the Emergency Food Task Force. The diligence and commitment of the members ensured all emergency food programming continued. We raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for hampers, gift cards, coupon programs, frozen meals, and gas cards. We even won the EcoStar Covid-19 Community Leadership Award.

In direct response to the flooding, we raised \$25,000 for emergency meals for those who had to evacuate their homes. The kitchen team is still busy making and freezing meals that will be 'stockpiled' in case of another community tragedy - we'll be ready this time.





**ECOSTAR AWARD 2021**  
 COVID-19 Community Leaders  
 Cowichan Green Community  
 Sponsored by District of Saanich

In addition, the number of grants submitted last year was a team effort with an unprecedented 87 grants written and submitted with 50 being successful, 22 rejected and 15 still pending. It's been an honour to mentor staff in the art of grant writing - many of their submissions were successful. And even with all the challenges finding skilled staff, we offered paid opportunities to over 80 employees and paid interns. We have expanded our kitchen team and we were very fortunate to work with the Ministry of Social Development to offer paid positions to 10 community members on disability. This was a very beneficial program, which we hope will be offered again.

Looking ahead 2022 promises to be just as demanding with providing meals to the new housing projects. We also initiated a homeless youth meal program in partnership with Our Cowichan. CGC is happy to be able to support these community members with homemade, delicious meals.

Thank you again so much to all the people who supported us this year from our donors, funders, and the members of the Emergency Food Task Force - looks like our work is not done yet!!



*"I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; I will not refuse to do the something I can do. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature."*

- Helen Keller



**Judy Stafford**  
 Executive Director

# Staff



**Alyssa Krawchuk**  
Project Manager



**Anthony Monk**  
Kitchen Manager



**Bobbi-Anne Piercy**  
Bookkeeper



**Carolyn Morris**  
JCP Supervisor



**Dailynn Middlemiss**  
Camp Counselor



**Dani Stancer**  
Food Hub Manager



**David Martin**  
Cleaner



**Destiny Underwood**  
KinPark Camp Leader



**Elke Cole**  
Cob Oven Coordinator



**Frank Joe**  
Cleaner



**Georgia Paddle**  
Ceres Worker



**Hannah Auer**  
Community Coordinator



**Heather McKenzie**  
Administrative Assistant



**Jake Brewer**  
Assistant Kitchen manager



**Janice Mckirdy**  
Manager - Ceres



**Jennifer Sutton**  
Office and Building  
Manager



**Judy Stafford**  
Executive Director



**Julika Pape**  
reFRESH Cowichan Market-  
place Manager



**Laura Boyd-Clowes**  
Manager - Kin Park



**Lauren Bosch**  
Summer Student



# Staff



**Lauren Ziffle**  
KinPark Supervisor



**Leela Hamilton**  
General Manager



**Linda Williams-Martin**  
reFRESH grocery clerk



**Lorena Bucklee**  
Building Manager



**Michael Nickel**  
Cleaner



**Micheal Elford**  
Driver



**Naomi Kulhawy**  
Manager



**Nathan Harben**  
reFRESH Food Recovery  
Supervisor



**Owen Vaags**  
Ceres Worker



**Pardeep Kumar**  
GEC Supervisor



**Raine (Sierra) Robinson**  
Meadow Making Asisstantat



**Sandy Munns**  
Installation Manager



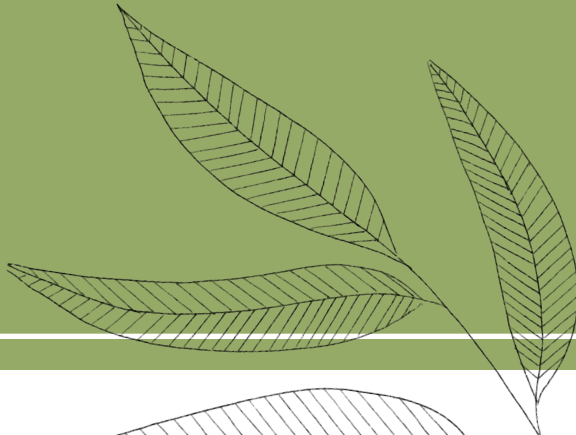
**Stacie Newcombe**  
Grocery Clerk



**Tessa Stiven**  
GEC



**Victoria Kovacs**  
Summer Camp Counselor



# JCP Participants



**Lekha Hayes**  
Greenhouse and Farm  
Worker



**Louisa Berto'k**  
JCP Kitchen



**Mariko Margetson**  
Greenhouse and Farm  
Worker



**Arletta Jim**  
JCP Kitchen



**Chanel Parent**  
Admin and Volunteer  
Recruitment



**Megan Henwood**  
JCP Volunteer and Farm



**Phil Reilander**  
Marketing HUB JCP



**Regina Montag**  
Greenhouse and Farm  
Worker



**Rosina Rodighiero**  
Greenhouse and Farm  
Worker



**Tara Bangs**  
Kitchen



**Kalon Kappenman**  
Marketing



**Trevor Tallis**  
GEC



**Marisa Herrera**  
JCP

# Interns and Summer students



**Nqobami**  
Resiliency Project intern



**Prakhkar Bhardwaj**  
Resiliency Project intern



**Amanda Macaro**  
Resiliency Project Intern



**Laura Bernier**  
Food access administrator



**Mahjabeen**  
Marketing



**Arianne  
Panet-Raymond**  
Food access administrator



**Camille Maltais**  
Food Security Administrator



**Camille  
Desrochers-Moreau**  
Food Security Administrator



**Melodie Cote**  
Food Security Administrator



**Karen Dolinar**  
Resiliency Project Intern



**Marlene Smith**  
reFRESH Assistant



**Dorothy Settles**  
reFRESH Intern



**Lara Harder**  
Resiliency Project Intern



**Blare Conlin**  
Farm Intern



**Jonas Rey-Sierro**  
Food Security Administrator

# Board of Directors



**Lucy Thomas**  
President



**Nadeane Nelson**  
Past President/ Treasurer



**Suzanne Didier**  
Secretary



**Eduardo Sousa**  
Director



**Julia Ryland**  
Director



**Danielle Bellefleur**  
Director



**Penny Lehan**  
Director



**Cathy Gilbert**  
Previous President/Director



**Chloe Boyle**  
Previous Director



# Volunteers

2021 was a busy year, full of volunteer leadership throughout our programs and initiatives. You may have met some of CGC's wonderful volunteers in the reFRESH Cowichan Marketplace, at KinPark and the Garden Education Centre, through the Resiliency Project or maybe in the kitchen cooking up a storm. No matter what role they take on, CGC's work wouldn't be possible without volunteers.

Here is a list of just some of the amazing people who contributed 3,000+ hours to helping us achieve our goals in 2021:

Belinda West  
Bob Isbister  
Bruce Coates  
Donna and Ken Zipse  
Dora Mager  
Dorothy Cross  
Gail Mitchell  
Jane Douglas  
Jasmine Hammil  
Marian Van Weiren

Martha Lescher  
Murray Milne  
Naomi Bertin  
Renee Russell  
Sandy McPherson  
Sierra Stacey  
Steve Mitchell  
Susan Smith  
Ted Leischner  
Valerie Townsend





# Ceres Edible Landscaping

Ceres Edible Landscaping is a social enterprise of CGC. With a crew of interns and hired employees, we serviced a core group of faithful, permanent clientele throughout the Cowichan Region.



Our season started in February with ornamental and fruit tree pruning and by March we began our regular maintenance contracts that kept us busy until the middle of November. Our ability to interact on a daily basis with the general public is a useful opportunity to inform and educate our community on the variety of relevant programs CGC is involved with.

Regardless of all the difficulties that 2021 brought us, it was one of our best seasons to date.



**Janice Mckirdy**  
Manager - Ceres



# Cowichan Grown Farm, Food and Drink Map

2021 was CGC's 12th year producing the Cowichan Region's guide to local farm-fresh food and drinks; 55 Farms were listed and 24 businesses placed advertisements on the map. Tourism Cowichan and Economic Development Cowichan generously supported the map again and collaborated with us to choose the front cover image. Their contribution helped us reach at least 6,000 people and highlight the amazing local producers and businesses in this Region, Greater Victoria area, and Salt Spring Island.



As the Covid-19 pandemic continued, the opportunity to support our local food and drink makers is greater than ever and your support is highly appreciated. We also implemented a new cyclist tour map, a fun trip option for bicycle riders who wanted to check out a string of wonderful spots. Our cross-promotion with Cow-Op.ca continued and allowed us to highlight more delicious fresh food to purchase from our hard working farmers. This partnership provided folks with a wide variety of options which helps to promote our local economy. The map is a great resource guide for locals and tourists alike and is also available online in an interactive format for all to enjoy on CGC's website.



**Lauren Ziffle**  
KinPark Supervisor

# Cow-Op

In 2021 the Cowichan Co-operative was hard at work catching up with the sudden growth that they experienced in early 2020.

They continued to offer a hybrid model of home deliveries and pickup points as an accessible means to get local producers products onto our communities' tables. Three new pickup points and community partnerships were opened: The Hub at Cowichan Station, Wild Poppy Market in Ladysmith and Farm's Gate Foods & Catering in Lake Cowichan. In 2020 around 50% of customers preferred to order through pickup points & 50% via home delivery.

Perhaps the biggest news of the year is that Cow-op is moving back in with The Cowichan Green Community! In 2020 operations were moved fully out of the CGC's location on Duncan Street as they had outgrown the packing space, cooler space, freezer space and more. In huge gratitude to Judy Stafford & the CGC, Cow-op was included in the plans for the new Cowichan Valley Innovation Food Hub. Design plans have ensued for the Cow-op's new warehouse to be built at the Beverly St. location and plans are underway to make the move in 2022.



In 2021 the Cowichan Co-operative received the support of 2 x Canada Summer Jobs internships, a new Community Facilitator position supported by their partnership with Community Evolution, and a United Way grant to create a coupon program to increase accessibility for shopping on [www.Cow-op](http://www.Cow-op) for members of the Malahat First Nations. Additionally, in partnership with the CGC, the Cowichan Co-operative received funding through the Supply Chain Resiliency grant to increase their packing efficiency through LEAN consulting and increased infrastructure for their packing procedures.



**Derrick Pawlowski**  
Executive Director



# Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program is funded by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture. For the 8th year, CGC acted as the local Community Partner for the Cowichan Region. BC Farmers Markets approved us for 90 spots on the program and each participant received \$21 in market coupons weekly for 16 weeks.



The Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program is funded by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture. For the 8th year, CGC acted as the local Community Partner for the Cowichan Region. BC Farmers Markets approved us for 90 spots on the program and each participant received \$21 in market coupons weekly for 16 weeks.

We also got the opportunity to distribute an additional 50 Coupon Sheets to individuals on our waitlist and thus, supported a total of 100 individuals and families through the program.

Overall, we distributed 1490 coupons sheets, which equals a \$31,290 value for our local farmers.

The cost of living in our area has been steadily increasing due to a variety of factors, so many families in the Cowichan Region are struggling to make ends meet. Participants of this program appreciate having access to high quality local products during these difficult times.

The program also benefits our local farmers with booths at the Duncan Farmers Market. This year, \$34,539 worth of coupons were redeemed at the market, showing it is popular enough for individuals from other areas to travel here and use their coupons at our local market.



**Julika Pape**  
reFRESH Cowichan Market-  
place Manager



# Food Hub

The Cowichan Valley Large Scale Food Processing and Innovation Hub, or as we're lovingly calling it, the Food Hub, is a member of the BC Food Hub Network that will offer a HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) Ready commercial teaching and processing kitchen, and an aggregation space to local food producers and processors. Once completed, we will offer local food and agricultural businesses access to shared processing infrastructure, processing and testing equipment, business advisory services, product development services, analytic services, applied research opportunities, and education and training abilities and facilities that are related to food processing and food safety. Businesses will have the ability to process a wide variety of food and beverage products, while working in a collaborative environment.

The Food Hub is a shared-use space between food and agricultural businesses that increases access to commercial processing spaces that includes equipment, expertise, and resources to help grow their businesses. We hope to aid in improving the coordination and collaboration between agriculture and food stakeholders across the value chain.

Once the final permits have been completed, we will begin construction Summer 2022, with hopes of opening the Food Hub in the fall. This past year, we successfully rezoned the land to include food processing, received funding support and signed a new 20-year lease with the Municipality of North Cowichan, welcomed a new Food Hub Manager, and continued to work with our team of engineers and contractors to finalize the construction.

2022 will see the Food Hub team grow as we bring on new staff to help with the development of programming. We are planning on launching a website in the spring to host our online Food Hub - home to virtual workshops, cooking classes, cooking videos, and a recipe hub. Come the fall, we'll be excited to invite you into the Food Hub to explore and enjoy everything it has to offer, but for the time being, we hope you'll join us through our virtual programming.



**Dani Stancer**  
Food Hub Manager

The Food Hub will be one half of the Cowichan Farm & Food Hub located where the existing Garden Education Centre (soon to be renamed to Cowichan Farm & Food Hub) is on Beverly Street.



**COWICHAN**  
**FARM & FOOD HUB**

# Food Recovery Program

Wow, it was quite the year for the food recovery team. A record breaking 292,957 lbs was recovered from an increasing number of retail outlets and donations from local farms. Of this, 219,420 lbs were directly injected back into the community providing over 16 service providers with quality, nutritious food. The program saw a large increase in donations of dairy, bread, and protein which previously was unavailable. However, with more stores connected with food waste initiatives and tracking



'apps', our program had greater access to these foods and was able to pass them on to the many clients the program supported.

Our trusty delivery van received a large upgrade of a refrigeration unit which now keeps all food cool and fresh during its longer travels. A small percentage of the food from select stores went into our refresh Marketplace to support our very popular reFRESH Coupon program, as well as into the kitchen to provide fresh ingredients to support the Meals On Wheels program.

We want to give an extra big shout out to our driver Mike - he's an invaluable part of the CGC team, we wouldn't be able to do what we do without him. Mike ensures all the service providers we support are kept well stocked with food and anything else they need. We are also very grateful to our retail partners who we work closely with to reclaim as much food as possible. We are looking forward to an even bigger 2022!



**Nathan Harben**  
reFRESH Food Recovery  
Supervisor





# FruitSave

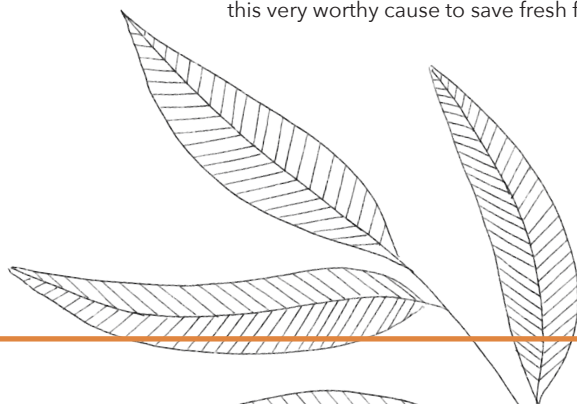
With record summer temperatures this year, many fruit tree owners and pickers saw quite a dramatic change in the both the size and yield of their fruit, but also the time when fruit was ready to harvest. This caused fruit to ripen and 'drop' much earlier than expected and kept pickers very busy with an influx of calls for help to pick trees as soon as possible. with Despite these challenges, the FruitSave team was able to pick over 9,000lbs of fruit from local backyards, farms and orchards. A total of 32 pickers signed up to help collect fruit from 72 homeowners.



A percentage of the fruit went directly to local service providers with the rest going directly to Mcbarleys for our annual apple pressing. This juice then went to our friend Bruce at Valley Cider who in turn, will produce a very limited and delicious cider that will be released later in the year. Bruce donates all proceeds to CGC that helps keep this food security program going. A big thank you to Valley Cider and everyone who participated in this very worthy cause to save fresh fruit!



**Nathan Harben**  
reFRESH Food Recovery  
Supervisor





# Garden Education Centre (Farm Hub)

The Garden Education Centre (GEC) continued to grow and develop with a great team developing initiatives that strive to foster and empower food security in the region. The Seed Farm field was planted, cared for and harvested to provide 25 different seeds for sale. We take great care in harvesting viable seeds that are locally adapted to our region. The plants are grown using IOPA certified organic methods that further support soil regeneration. Germination tests were thorough, and product quality is continuously reviewed and kept to a high standard.

Fresh, organic produce was also grown in our fields and sold onsite, at the reFRESH Marketplace, via Cow-Op, and various other local stores and restaurants. An additional greenhouse was built onsite to house garden beds specific for food production, and has offered great opportunity for growing fresh produce year round.

We launched the Elder's Gathering Garden, a new project which provided community garden beds to 10 seniors looking for community and growing opportunities. The Plant Nursery onsite was expanded and includes edible, native, and medicinal plants.

We offered workshops including Seasonal Gardening, Soil Health 101, Compost Tea preparation, Native Plants, Seed Saving, and Hugelkultur. They were well attended, and contributed to community education and sales.

Students regularly attended the GEC to lend a hand and learn about farming and gardening skills. Approximately 20 grade 8 students from Quamichan School and the VIU WEST students came twice weekly to foster their employment skills.



The Seed Bank and Community Seed Library inventory was reviewed and germination tests completed to ensure high seed quality. Documents were created to better guide Seed Library members in their use of the Library and we're excited to further promote use of this initiative and foster community seed saving skills and community exchange of quality, locally adapted seeds.



Much attention was put into further developing the sales system (Square), IOPA tracking and certification, marketing plans for food, seed & plant sales, volunteer activity, long term crop planning, soil regeneration, and further establishing ourselves as a place of inspiration, motivation and opportunity for local, resilient food production.

As we transition into 2022, the name of our initiative has changed, and the GEC is now part of the Cowichan Farm & Food Hub.



**Carolyn Morris**  
JCP Supervisor

# KinPark Kids Camp

KinPark Kids Camp was yet again another fantastic summer full of fun, learning, and friendship. Our park was full of laughter, learning, and joy amongst our amazing camp leader, Destiny, and counselors, Dailynn and Victoria, and the 71 children ages 6 - 10 who registered this year, giving us a total attendance of 222 throughout the summer.



KinPark Kids Camp continues to be a combination of education and fun in the garden, in the kitchen, and in other spaces throughout our community including Centennial Park and Duncan Lanes, the Aquatic Centre, and Cowichan Library. This year we also welcomed guests for special activities and presentations, which included raptors from the Pacific Northwest Raptors, cob building from local expert Pat Amos, natural dye making, felted soap making, and much more! The campers even got to join in with CVRD summer camp for some ice skating! What a great way to literally cool down in the hot summer we had.

Each day, our campers and camp counsellors engaged in farming and gardening activities such as planting, watering, seeding, harvesting, and even weeding! Taste testing throughout the farm was always a favourite activity; especially when being used in our cooking classes. With a huge variety of farm fresh produce harvested by the campers themselves, we turned it all into tasty and healthy goodies during our once a week cooking classes at CGC's kitchen. The menu this year included fresh veggies and homemade dips, energy bites with fresh berries from the park, beet brownies, and other yummy garden recipes.

Our summer camp team truly made this summer magical, and we could not thank them enough. Stay tuned for another fun-filled summer next year at KinPark Kid's Camp!



**Alyssa Krawchuk**  
Project Manager



# KinPark Youth Urban Farm

KPYUF had another bountiful year. At the start of 2021, the team consisted of, Laura Boyd-Clowes, Naomi Kulhawy, and Lauren Ziffle.

Trees were pruned with the help and expertise of Jan MacKirdy of Ceres Edible Landscapes. With all of the tree cuttings, wattle fences were established around several trees and shrubs around the park, adding a whimsical touch to the space. Signage was created for plant identification to add a self-directed educational component to the park. The passive solar greenhouse was the hot spot for our trays of seedlings, to which they'd be planted out in the market garden and succession plantings continued on their timeline as harvests occurred to maximize growing space and output. An onsite market cart was created for the park by repurposing an old bbq stand.

Speaking of construction projects, the Kinsmen Community Garden had several ergonomic updates to the raised beds and are now double the height. Another practical update is a double sink was donated and installed beside the greenhouse and is now used as the wash station for Wednesday harvests. In June, roles changed and Lauren was made Supervisor. A farm intern was hired, Blare Conlin joined shortly after, and the team is now a duo.

Summer of 2021 was a hot one and the 1/4 acre market garden was thriving, lots of greens for salad mix, root vegetables such as carrots, beets, leeks, turnips, and radishes. Cauliflower, chickpeas, edible flowers for our signature salad mix, herb bundles, squash, asparagus, and fruit such as apples, pears, figs, and raspberries. The park had great help from 4 PWD participants, Cowichan Highschool Earth Sciences, and the Environmental Stewardship class. 4 mini meadows were planted at the park and an overgrown corner was revived and is now a native and pollinator plant bed.

The Urban Farm continues to grow and expand biodiversity with the help of folks with green thumbs, we are looking forward to another wonderful year! Happy gardening, with love from KPYUF.



**Lauren Ziffle**  
KinPark Supervisor



# reFRESH Cowichan Marketplace



At reFRESH Cowichan Marketplace, our vision is to increase community access to delicious, healthy food. This year, we worked especially hard to achieve this goal and we served more customers than ever before. We continued to make improvements to the storefront in 2021.

For example, we had an outdoor produce stand built, additional window decals installed, we upgraded our till counter top and added lighting to our vendor shelves. These continuous improvements are paying off and we have received a lot of great feedback from customers who love the welcoming atmosphere in the store. We are also working on finessing our inventory, offering more local and sustainable options, and we welcomed a number of new local vendors and suppliers.

Our website received an overhaul and you can now find all relevant information about reFRESH Cowichan under [refreshcowichan.ca](https://refreshcowichan.ca). We also started our own social media channels in order to market the store individually.

Our reFRESH Coupon Program, initiated as a response to Covid, is now ongoing and supports 120+ seniors and families with a \$25 voucher to shop for groceries every week. The coupons can be used for almost all grocery items, including organic dairy, pantry staples, local meat, homemade frozen meals, and a wide variety of recovered produce. Many of the participants have shared with us this program is essential to them and their families as it provides fresh fruit, vegetables, and other groceries they might otherwise be unable to afford.



**reFRESH  
COWICHAN**  
recover • share • nourish



**Julika Pape**  
reFRESH Cowichan Market-  
place Manager



# The Resiliency Project

This past year at the Resiliency Project, we continued to expand the network of community meadows throughout the community. We planted over 500 native plants throughout the community, with the support of community volunteers, and other organizations.



We had 46 community volunteers participate in the project, through various community work bees and workshops, with a total of 1,680 volunteer hours. This includes 5 interns from the Canadian Conservation Corps, who were each involved with the project for three months, supporting the community restoration efforts. We hosted 12 workshops, focused on rewilding, ecological gardening, and native pollinators, and had over 230 workshop participants!

We continued to gather seed for the community native seed bank we have been developing, and this past season we harvested and processed over 25 different varieties of local native wildflowers and other species. These native seeds were all harvested ethically from cultivated sites, and are being stored in the seed vault at the Farm Hub. The seed bank is accessible to any community member working on rewilding their yard, garden or a community space.

This year we also collaborated with teachers and students from Quamichan School, Cowichan Valley Open Learning Co-op, and Cowichan Secondary School, in hands-on restoration work. We had over 160 students work with us in different meadow sites throughout the community, including a school meadow we have been working on at the CVOLC school grounds.



## THE RESILIENCY PROJECT

planting seeds of community connection



**Hannah Auer**  
Community Coordinator

# Work Experience Opportunities Grant

CGC was awarded with the Work Experience Opportunities Grant in 2021. This program helps British Columbians who have barriers to employment, gain new skills and participate in paid work experience opportunities. The program was flexible and we were allowed to make the duties work for the individual. Most of the participants enjoyed working at the farms where the duties included pulling weeds, watering, seeding, lawn mowing, and transplanting. Another participant taught indigenous art to the drop in youth group at KinPark and yet another mastered skills in the kitchen preparing meals for the community.

Here is a testimonial from one of the participants at the Garden Education Centre:

“ I loved working at the farm through the work experience program. The team was so supportive and welcoming, and I really felt like my neurodiversity was honoured and supported. I loved working on the land, and getting my hands in the dirt, and also helping with creative project planning, harvesting, and seed packaging. I learned so much about being a part of a team, about plants, and how I can use my skills and knowledge to help support a beautiful project.





# Cowichan Green Community Foundation

The pandemic continued to bring changes to the Foundation. We were unable to reinstate the Food Fit youth cooking classes but other programming saw a dramatic increase including catering for the temporary housing shelters.

Meals on the Ground, the free meal program offered at the Duncan United Church three nights a week continued even when they had to pivot to serving outside in takeaway containers that CGC supplied. CGC made community meals on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays to ensure evening meals were available seven days a week.

The Meals on Wheels program continued to see increases in demand and no matter what the weather or last minute delivery changes, the staff and volunteer drivers managed to adjust to ongoing health authority protocol changes to ensure all the clients received their meals without skipping a beat. Meals on Wheels has proven to be a very popular and needed program within our community. By the end of December Meals on Wheels was serving approximately 612 meals each month to 36 clients in and around Duncan. These clients have expressed on several occasions how much they appreciate having healthy, delicious, and dependable access to prepared meals. Some clients have even confessed that the Meals on Wheels program has helped to allow them to stay in their homes while dealing with a disability or recuperating from a health setback.

The Emergency Relief funds raised through several foundations help to provide community members with emergency meals, hampers, and gift cards. CGC's amazing kitchen team was an incredible hive of activity whipping up delicious, healthy, food for dozens of local people who rely on this service.

We continue to be so grateful to all the funders and donors who allowed us to support our most vulnerable community members to ensure people had healthy, nutritious food on their tables through these challenging times.



**Stephen Bishop**  
President



**Mike Smith**  
Vice President



**Jane Nares**  
Secretary



**Chris Hall**  
Previous President



**Amanda Vance**  
Treasurer





# Highlights 2021



Resiliency Project



Ceres Edible  
Landscaping



Garden Education Centre  
(Farm Hub)

# Thank You

We would like to share a special thank you to our community members who have donated to CGC. Your generosity supports programs with limited or no funding. We would also like to thank the following supporters:

## Partners & Donors

100 Warmland Women	Island Ford
Canadian Conservation Corps	Island Savings Credit Union
Children & Family Council of the Cowichan Valley	Kroffat Brake & Wheel LTD.
Cobble Hill Farmers Institute	Libra Tree Services
Cowichan Secondary School	Municipality of North Cowichan
Cowichan Valley Naturalist Society	Quamichan Middle School
Community Seniors Community Foundation	Queen Margaret's School
Cowichan Valley Basket Society	Royal Bank of Canada
Cowichan Valley Heritage Quilters	Sandpiper Gardens and Glass
Cowichan Valley Open Learning Centre	Save On Foods Duncan
Cowichan Valley School District 79	St. Edwards Church
Country Grocer Cobble Hill	Thrifty Foods Duncan
Country Grocer Lake Cowichan	Thrifty Foods Mill Bay
CVRD Summer Camps	Valley Cider
Dogwood Lumber	Vancouver Island Regional Library
Duncan Christian School	Vancouver Island University WEST Program
Duncan Garage & Café	Victoria Foundation
Duncan Paving	Wilder Restoration
Fisher Road Recycling	

## Funders

Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada	McConnell Foundation - Innoweave
BC Association of Farmer's Markets	Ministry of Agriculture - LEAN
City of Duncan	Ministry of Agriculture - Innovation & Adaption Services
Community Food Centres Canada	Province of BC - Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
Duncan Dabber Bingo Society	Province of BC - Community Gaming
Ethos Career Management - Work BC	Rotary Club of Duncan
Food Banks BC	Royal Bank Foundation
First West Credit Union	United Way Central and Northern
First West Foundation	Vancouver Island
Government of Canada - New Horizons for Seniors	Vancity Credit Union
Government of Canada - Canada Summer Jobs	Vancouver Foundation
Government of Canada - Enabling Accessibility Fund	Victoria Foundation
Investment Agriculture Foundation	WorkBC - GT Hiring Solutions
Island Coastal Economic Trust	WorkBC - Ethos Career Management Group Ltd
Island Health	Young Canada Works
Island Savings Credit Union	
Leadership Victoria	

## Businesses

Ajac's Equipment  
Ampersand Distilling  
Buckerfield's  
Cowichan Hydroponic Supplies  
Cowichan Valley Voice  
Dogwood Lumber  
Duncan Plants 'n Ponics  
Dinter Nursery  
Fast Eddy's Tree Work  
Polster Environmental Services Ltd  
Island Ford  
Little Guy Supply  
McBarley's  
Peaks Coffee Co  
Portofino Bread  
Progressive Growth Nanaimo  
Reber Creative  
Saltspring Seeds  
West Coast Seeds

## Farms

Elderberry Grove  
Farm Table Inn  
Glenora Farm  
Green Fire Farm  
Home for Hooves  
Honey Bush Farm  
Hope Farm  
Island Hothouse  
Keating Farm  
Local Forage Farm  
Lockwood Farms  
Muddy Feet Farm  
Westholme Tea Farm



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