



Cowichan Green Community
Cultivating food, community, and resilience

2022 Annual Report

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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 started to focus 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.

We envision a food secure Cowichan nourished by celebrating our connection to food, to our environment, and to each other. CGC cultivates resilient, inclusive and healthy local food systems and vibrant social fabric. Our Mission is to cultivate food, community, and resilience. Our food security projects include the creation of food policy documents such as the Cowichan Food Charter and the Cowichan Food Security Plan, projects like reFRESH Food Recovery, FruitSave – a fruit gleaning project- and community gardens. We also run educational programs like our KinPark Kids, and organize Seedy Sundays to promote the role of ecological agriculture in the local community.



Message from the Executive Director

It feels like the past year went by in a blur! It seems like yesterday I sat down to write 2021's report. Living, working, and adapting with Covid is now more of a routine; we have definitely persevered and managed to keep everything ticking along, even through the many challenges we had no idea we would face.

One very positive outcome from the last few years has been that we have built stronger community partnerships. We are grateful for all the groups we work with. We have continued with the connections we have built with our Food Recovery program and we broke records of how much food we have collected – 2500 pounds in just one day during Christmas – but the most exciting news is we have now recovered over \$1Million pounds of food since 2018! That's an incredible feat and the staff and volunteers have been steadfast even through the crazy inclement weather we experienced.

We expanded our kitchen programming to include a homeless youth meal program – I can only imagine how much impact those delicious meals have on the kids who are living on our streets. Again, our incredible community partners have made this possible. Our Cowichan has been instrumental in a number of initiatives we've been involved with including the youth meals. We work with Island Health and their support team who pick up the meals and connect with the kids on the streets. We know they love the food, sometimes their only meal for the day.

We continued with some events, although modified, including our annual Donor Breakfast which was held on our computers again. Some lucky attendees received a fabulous breakfast, delivered to their doorstep and they continued to open their wallets! And we organized a modified Seedy Saturday at Charles Hoey Park – it was so amazing to see so many of our local gardeners even though it was a blustery day.

Since March 2020, we have continued to lead the Emergency Food Task Force. The ongoing dedication of the team is amazing as we navigated the increasing demand for emergency food services that continues today.

In April, under the guidance of our partners at Our Cowichan, another group of concerned people started to meet and organize Extreme Weather Temporary Shelters, and we're so pleased that many folks worked relentlessly to open an overnight shelter when it snowed in December. Thank you to all involved especially the St Andrews Church for opening their doors for such a critical service.

Grant funding was definitely our biggest challenge. As much as we have worked hard to diversify our income, we still have a strong dependence on grants. We found it be an unprecedented year with some grants we had been receiving for years either changed direction or had such an increase in demand that were not successful. We continued to be creative but only we were successful in 56% of the grants submitted which is definitely down from year's previous 69%. This proves more than ever, how much we appreciate our donors and other support.

Even with all the continued challenges, we still offered paid opportunities to over 80 employees and paid interns. We were very fortunate to work with the Ministry of Social Development for the second year to offer paid positions to 20 more community members on disability. This was a very beneficial program, which we hope will be offered again!

Looking ahead, 2023 promises to be just as busy with providing meals to the new supportive housing project on White Road, expanding our homeless youth meal program, the pizza nights at the Cob Oven in Centennial Park as well as continuing to work on the Food Hub project. We are hoping to begin construction in Fall 2023 – stay tuned.

Thank you again so much to all our incredible supporters and partners – we continue to come together as a community to get 'stuff done!"

"If you really want to make a friend, go to someone's house and eat... The people who give you their food give you their heart." – Cesar Chavez



Judy Stafford
Executive Director

Message from the Board President

CGC, under the direction of our Executive Director Judy Stafford, has successfully wrapped up another challenging year. The Board of Directors were blessed with new applicants who have joined CGC and we're grateful for their commitment to our mission and to the community overall who have supported us to achieve our goals.

A few highlights:

- Summer camp – we had another fun year with summer days filled with laughter and learning with the camp quickly filling up with many days having a wait list. Even with the heat dome, staff navigated the hot days with lots of cool activities to hundreds of keen young farmers.
- reFRESH Coupon program – the demand for this program continued to increase. We have worked hard on raising sufficient funds to provide access to fresh, healthy food to 120 families and seniors. The impact of this program is far-reaching and all the recipients are so grateful.
- Food Processing and Innovation Hub – even with more obstacles than we can count, this project is still moving ahead, albeit slowly. When you drive by the farm on Beverly Street you will see some changes, with the last being prepped for the warehouse and kitchen construction, new pathways, new growing beds and expanded greenhouse, the site is a going concern! Stay tuned for the shovels going in the ground soon!.
- Food Recovery – it's incredible to think, and visual, that we have recovered over \$1Million pounds of food since we first initiated this program in 2018. It's inspiring to see the impact this food makes in our community. We have such gratitude to our partners, grocery stores, and farmers who have been donors to this program.
- Community Kitchen – CGC's kitchen team really stepped up this year, preparing delicious healthy meals for our Meals on Wheels clients as well as the residents at the Trunk Road Temporary Housing, as well as starting a new program making yummy meals that are handed out to youth who are street entrenched. We're grateful for the partnership with Our Cowichan and Island Health that has made that program possible.

With the price of food at the grocery stores continuing to rise, CGC's work is more important than ever. Whether it's the food coupon programs or the workshops at the farm, our community needs us. You can be a part of our amazing team, through volunteering or making a monetary donation, you can be part of the solution.

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. With gratitude, we wish a healthy, happy 2023 to you and your families.



Lucy Thomas
Board Vice President

Board of Directors



Mike Smith
President



Lucy Thomas
Vice President



Nadeane Nelson
Treasurer



Chris Davies
Director



Danielle Bellefleur
Director



Eduardo Sousa
Director



Julia Rylands
Director



Penny Lehan
Director



Suzanne Didier
Previous Director
2022

Current Staff



Alyssa Krawchuk
Program Manager



Angela Nessel
Sr. Food Services
Manager



Carol Kastelic
KinPark Supervisor



Chris Campbell
Farm Hub Staff



Corbin Rolfe
reFRESH Staff



David Martin
Maintenance



Desiree Tompkinson
Kitchen Staff



Hannah Auer
Project Coordinator



Heather McKenzie
Admin Assistant



Hugo Millere
Website Development



Jan MacKirdy
Ceres Manager
Farm Hub Supervisor



Jasmin Hachey
Kitchen Supervisor



Julika Pape
reFRESH Manager



**Kristen
Panzenboeck**
Bookkeeper



Leela Hamilton
General Manager



Lekha Hayes
Farm Hub Staff



**Linda Williams-
Martin**
reFRESH Staff



Mathew Pettit
Cob Oven
Coordinator



Melissa Parker
Farm Hub Staff



Michael Elford
reFRESH Driver



Naomi Kulhawy
KinPark Supervisor



Nathan Harben
Program Manager



**Rhythm
Hunter**
Kitchen
Supervisor



Sean Burdett
reFRESH Staff



Tracy Pocock
Kitchen Staff

Throughout the years, Cowichan Green Community has been blessed to have such dynamic teams full of dedication, passion, hard work, and a rainbow of skills and strengths. CGC's staff are the driving force behind CGCs projects, programs and other operations. Through hard work and dedication, CGCs mission and values are brought to life, and for that CGC is beyond grateful for all who contributed as staff in 2022:

Arletta Jim

Caitlin Jones

Chantel Stacey

Dani Stancer

Elke Cole

Evan Smith-Richards

Graham Fielding

Jake Brewer

Jennifer Senkpiel

Jennifer Sutton

John Vickers

Kalon Kappenman

Kristopher SteithBart-Tasa

Kurtis Howes

Kym Young

Lauren Bosch

Lauren Ziffle

Levi Bryant

Mariko Margetson

Megan Henwood

Nickolas Joseph

Phil Reilander

Rook Tutty

Rosina Rodighiero

Scott Dieckbrader

Simon Katz

Tony Monk



Interns & Summer Students



Azeem Syed
Farm Hub Intern



Blare Conlin
KinPark Intern



Chloe Laprise
Office Intern



Chrisabelle Ravadilla
Farm Hub Intern



Cynthia Lavoie-Maltais
Office Intern



Darcie Snider
Camp Counsellor



Denzy James
reFRESH Intern



Dorothy Settles
reFRESH Intern



Emily Harris
Camp Leader



Emmanuelle Baumann
Ceres Intern



Gabrielle Gauthier
Office Intern



Hannah Large
Farm Hub Intern



Holly Williams
Office Intern



Lara Harder
Farm Hub Intern



Laurence Denis
Office Intern



Liam Brockley
FruitSave
Coordinator



Mathilde Bourque
Office Intern



Nqobami
Farm Hub Intern



Prakhar Bhardwaj
Farm Hub Intern



Sierra Lennek
KinPark Intern



Victoria Kovacs
Camp Counsellor

Volunteers

2022 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 Marketplace, at KinPark and the Cowichan Farm Hub, through Meals on Wheels 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 3,500+ hours to helping us achieve our goals in 2022:

Beet Turnipseed
Belinda Wright
Bruce Coates
Carol Hayes
Dave Woodall
Debra Lamb
Elke Cole
Jacqueline Troger
Jayne Lin
Jordan Cain
Joy Emmanuel
Judy Appleby
Karen Burnham
Kol Melnychuk
Marian VanWieren

Maya Webb
Michel Appleby-Millette
Michele Devost
Murray Milne
Nancy Horn
Robert Mills
Sandra Junkin
Sandy McPherson
Sharon Court
Susan Smith
Tom Devereaux
Valerie Townsend
Wilma Appleby-Millette
Zoe Koritko

A Special Thank You



Vivianne Allen has been a dedicated volunteer at the Farm and Food Hub for the past several years. This year, Vivianne has contributed over 200 hours and is an essential part of our weekly rhythm at the farm. Vivianne brings joy and curiosity to her work here, and supports in so many ways. Vivianne has been a core FruitSave volunteer for many years, and has brought her care and generous spirit to that position. We are so grateful for the many hours of dedication that Vivianne has contributed to supporting local food security.

Ceres Edible Landscaping

Ceres celebrated its 12th year in bringing more gardening knowledge to the Region and providing education and support for those in our community who want to grow more food, setup edible landscapes, and understand more about our growing climate.

As our fabulous Manager, Jan MacKirdy took on a new role supervising at the Farm Hub, she stepped away from the day-to-day manual labour and relied on a crew to take over most of the heavy lifting. We were grateful to be able to support several interns through the Ministry of Social Development's, Opportunities Work Fund, providing work experience to interns with varying abilities.

We did have some challenges with hiring a Supervisor to take over from Jan (some people really are irreplaceable!), with various obstacles popping up which lead to a higher turnover in staff than we anticipated.

We are also grateful to some of our long-term clients who remained supportive during this transition and we look forward to more positive changes in 2023.



Janice MacKirdy
Ceres Manager

Cowichan Grown Farm, Food, & Drink Map

2022 marked the 13th year of the Cowichan Grown Farm and Food Map. 55 farms across the regions listed on the map along with 25 advertisers. The map received sponsorship from Tourism Cowichan and Economic Development Cowichan. Tourism Cowichan included a cyclist route across the region highlighting a few farms and businesses featured on the map. Economic development collaborated with staff to choose a beautiful photo to use for the front cover. At least 6,000 people were reached through partnered distribution across the Cowichan Region.

This map continues to be a highly sought after publication popular with locals and tourists, highlighting the great diversity and bounty of good food available in our region and celebrating the hardworking farms who make the region such a special place to be.

FREE LOCAL FARM MAP

Your year-round guide to locally produced food and drink in the Cowichan region.

Over 50 farms, vineyards, and Cowichan food processors listed



**BICYCLE ROUTES INCLUDED.
PLAN YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE!**



Cowichan Farm Hub

Previously known as the Cowichan Agricultural Seed Hub, and then the Garden Education Centre, the newly branded Cowichan Farm and Food Hub at 2431 Beverly Street has had a tremendously successful year in 2022.

The farm had a record sales year on Cow-Op, selling out continually and doubling our net sales from the previous year. Rather than relying on just the Cow-op and walk-in customers, we were able to secure interest from five local restaurants for our produce. Our Garden Centre sales improved over the 2021 sales as well, with a visually refined and reorganized sales area and more plant varieties available. The farm team feels confident that this trend will not only continue, but that we are in a fortuitous position going forward into 2023 to supply our community with fresh, locally grown produce.

This past year, the farm developed a new wheelchair-accessible snack track on the south side of greenhouse #1. The area now has a clean, professional look, accentuated by the pollinator beds that will be updated in the spring of 2023 to add more curbside appeal. Another exciting addition to the farm this year was a cob bench, built using invasive Scotch Broom as the fibre. This project was led by a youth intern with the Canadian Conservation Corps and a group of community volunteers, and has created a comfortable shaded seating area for the Inclusion Garden and Elders' Gathering Garden participants. New planting beds were developed on our higher ground and more areas have been cleared and mulched to give us extra growing area.

The farm continued to host school groups, volunteers as well as several workshop groups. During the summer, the farm was a buzz of activity and we had many of our neighbours stop in to check out the improvements and find out more about our project.

We are excited and optimistic that 2023 will bring more growth, and grateful for the community support.



Cowichan Food Hub

The Cowichan Green Community (CGC) team has been working diligently in moving forward with the Cowichan Valley Food Processing and Innovation Hub. This Food Hub will be a place for local producers to access professional food production equipment, a HACCP certified kitchen space, and support to help grow their local food production businesses. The goal is to support the creation of food and financial security within our region.

Our prefabricated steel warehouse arrived on site in November 2022, and awaits the approval of our Development Permit and Building Permit to begin assembly and construction. The land the Food Hub is to be built on is leased from the Municipality and is on a previous floodplain/estuary and, through consultation with Geotechnicians, an appropriate foundation for the building in the form of pilings was chosen. Due to several further municipality requirements, anticipated construction for the building is fall/winter of 2023.

We have acquired substantial equipment for the kitchen throughout 2022, including a Rational Combi Oven, 2 large walk-in cooler/freezer units, and other various food processing equipment.

As a start to community food education by the Food Hub team, CGC held 2 Kombucha workshops in 2022, and we look forward to offering further educational food processing and preservation opportunities to the community as the Food Processing and Innovation Hub begins to take shape.



Angela Nessel
Sr. Food Services
Manager

Food Recovery Program

Well, it was quite the year for the Food Recovery Program. With record amounts of food coming in, the program picked up an astonishing 324,920 pounds of food. We were able to redistribute 231,130 pounds straight back to the community through the 18 service providers we support. A large amount of the remaining food was offered in the reFRESH Cowichan Marketplace to both the public and reFRESH Coupon Program participants. Our kitchen was able to add a lot of nutritious fruit and vegetables to their creations for Meals on Wheels and other community meals. The remainder went to local farmers to feed livestock, creating a closed loop system where nothing is wasted.

By the end of 2022, the program reached a historic milestone of 1 million pounds of food picked up and diverted since the inception in 2018. This can be attributed to a huge team effort of CGC staff, volunteers, service providers and retail distributors, all working together.

We would like to thank all our retail partners who make this possible by separating the very eatable food into our bins, and of course our very dedicated driver Mike, who spends his mornings driving our van around picking up thousands of pounds every day. We look forward to an even bigger 2023 as food insecurity continues to affect more and more people in our community.



Nathan Harben
Program Manager



FruitSave

It was a very different year for the FruitSave program for 2022. With an unusually wet and cold spring, and poor pollination, many fruit trees struggled to produce much viable fruit compared to previous years. This was felt all over the Island and so many fruit tree varieties saw a lower yield. The program pushed on and did collect over 2348 lbs with the help of 27 volunteer pickers and 33 tree owners who signed up. The program did improve its coordination and management system with a new online form through the Cowichan Farm & Food Hub website (cowichanfarmandfood.ca) which helps with the logistics.

The community benefited with hundreds of pounds being donated to the many service providers CGC supports, while the imperfect fruit went to Valley Cider for turning into creations of cider and soda.

We hope next spring will be much different and produce a much bigger bounty by the fall. Stay tuned for more good things around our amazing selection of fruit trees in the Cowichan Region.



Liam Brockley
FruitSave Coordinator

Inclusion Garden & Elder's Gathering Garden

The Inclusion Garden continues to be a safe inclusive space for community members to gather, connect, and learn from each other. This year we continued to work on the farm with supported participants with varying disabilities and mobility issues. These volunteers helped us seed, water, plant, and harvest alongside the farm staff, and we were moved once again by the therapeutic nature of working with the earth. The feeling of belonging and community that we are growing are equally as important as the organic beets and cabbage.

The Elder's Gathering Garden is a community garden space that is safe and welcoming for seniors to garden, and share their wealth stories and experience with each other and the wider community. The individual garden beds have been built to accommodate folks with varying needs and physical limitations, including two wheelchair accessible beds. We have had another successful season in the elder's garden, and are grateful for the beautiful group of elders who have been coming to the farm to grow alongside us.



Hannah Auer
Project Coordinator

KinPark Kids Camp

KinPark Kids Camp had another fabulous summer at KinPark Youth Urban Farm! Our park was full of laughter, learning, and joy amongst our camp counsellors and the 70 children ages 6 – 10 who registered this year, giving us a total attendance of 213 throughout the summer.

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 for some afternoon bowling fun, and swimming at the Aquatic Centre. This year, campers got to visit the North Cowichan Fire Hall for a lesson on fire safety and tour of the hall and trucks.

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 garlic scape pesto, zucchini bread, latkes, kale chips, and chocolate beet brownies!

When the campers weren't busy with their hands in the soil, and cooking up a storm in the kitchen, our summer camp team, Em, Darcie and Victoria led multiple games, crafts, silly icebreakers, and other fun-filled activities.

Camp also had a series of workshops including a visit from our feathery friends at the Northwest Pacific Raptor Centre, volunteers from St. John's Ambulance, cedar rose weaving from our friend Muriel Peter, cob birdhouse making with Pat Amos, STEAM workshop with Nicole Jansz, and special guest appearance from Laura Boyd-Clowes sharing her wisdom on seeds and how they travel.

We can't wait for another fun-filled summer next year at KinPark Kids Camp!



Alyssa Krawchuk
Program Manager

KinPark Youth Urban Farm

For the past year, the work at KinPark Youth Urban Farm came with many changes, welcoming a new supervisor, Carol Kastelic, to the team, and welcoming back Naomi Kulhawy as park coordinator. The Cowichan High School students in Science and Environmental Stewardship continued their learning with an enthusiastic interest in helping where needed, and busy gardeners kept the park lively in our community garden beds.

The growing season at the farm presented many challenges especially during the hot dry summer. Regardless, we had a good variety of vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers growing at the farm! Zucchini and other squash were abundant as was the garlic leeks, beets, radishes, kale and lettuce,

This past fall, preserving a variety of the garden harvest added to a new line of food to sell to market. This included medlar fruit butter, apple butter, apple sauce, pear jam, garlic scape pesto, frozen garlic and zucchini relish. A variety of herbs were dried and sold as well such as celery powder, celery seed, garlic powder, garlic flakes and rosemary.

With funding, a food pantry was built in the spring to help those who were food insecure. This project was initiated by Blare Conlin with the help of The Fraser Institute and the University of Victoria students as well as other volunteers. The idea behind it is to take what you need and leave what you can. The pantry is stocked daily with food from the CGC food sort as well as contributions from the Food Bank and food and personal hygiene products purchased with the help of a grant. It is empty or almost empty daily which shows an ongoing need to provide for those in need.

Overall, the farm this year did well despite the challenges we faced. Planning has already begun for the upcoming growing season with some tree pruning, adding some new varieties of vegetables in addition to more flowers. Programming will be increased with additional programs for elementary school students in addition to some workshops.



Naomi Kulhawy
KinPark Supervisor



Carol Kastelic
KinPark Supervisor

reFRESH Cowichan Marketplace

2022 was a fantastic year for reFRESH!

We started off with the introduction of our reTHINK Zero Waste initiative in February that allows customers to purchase a variety of pantry staples in returnable mason jars. The project has been a great addition to the store.

Throughout the year, we had a number of volunteers, Summer Youth employees and interns come and go, making for frequent changes in our staffing and coverage at the till.

We were able to add new local food products to our shelves, and we added 2 new wholesale suppliers to our roster for our dairy and grocery items as well.

In September, we partnered with Victoria Orange Shirt Day to sell Orange Shirts for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. Building new and existing partnerships, we also sold gift cards and gift bags to community groups throughout the year.

During the summer, we experienced a shortage of produce received through the Food Recovery Program, but we were happy when things picked back up in the fall. We also continue to sell produce from Kinpark, the Farm Hub as well as Honeybush Farm.

Besides our own reFRESH Coupon Program, we also administered the Farmers Market Coupon Program through BC Farmers Markets again. In addition to our 100 regular spots on the 16 week long program, we received 40 extra spots for seniors. In partnership with the Elders Garden Project, we supported 12 elders that are working at the garden during the summer with a coupon to shop in the store in the off-season. We also hand out meat and eggs through Margaret Moss's Pregnancy Connections Program.

While the store is open to the public, about half of our customers are Coupon Program participants.



Julika Pape
reFRESH Manager

reFRESH Coupon Program

The reFRESH Coupon Program supported 120 low-income families, individuals and seniors with a \$25 coupon to shop at reFRESH Marketplace each week throughout the year. These coupons can be used for almost all items in the store, including grocery essentials, organic dairy, local meat, frozen meals, zero waste products, and of course recovered produce.

In 2022, a whopping \$119,511.34 worth of reFRESH Coupons were redeemed in total!

With the cost of living skyrocketing, our wait list grew steadily throughout the year, reaching up to 50 people hoping for a spot on the program.

In February, Chek News visited us at reFRESH and filmed a short segment on the program and our fundraising efforts.

Fearing that we would not be able to keep running the program in 2023, we started another fundraising campaign for the program in November 2022. As part of the 'Gift of Giving' campaign, we spoke to Juice FM about our need for donations for the Program. We also hosted a booth at Christmas Kickoff in Downtown Duncan and sold popcorn and apple cider in support of coupons. In addition, we had kitchen staff and volunteers make a variety of soups that we offered in the store in exchange for a donation.

This program is essential to the participants, and we hope to continue it in 2023.

"I look forward to my weekly visit to the store - not just for the wonderful gift of food, but for a brief time to chat with your staff who are a delight to know. The food has made a great difference to the quality of my life, and probably my health too. Since I retired to live on a pension, I have never been able to afford to eat the way I have in the past year. Thank you reFRESH, you are a blessing, in more ways than you know."

- Coupon Program Recipient



The Resiliency Project

The Resiliency Project is a meadow making project, focused on planting native wildflower meadows in local parks, and shared green spaces to create habitat for bees, butterflies, and other essential beneficial insects. This year, we worked closely with five local schools to involve youth in the planting, tending, and seed saving of these native plants, and offering educational programming.

We continued to expand and diversify the plantings at each of our five community meadow sites, with the support of a great group of interns from the Canadian Conservation Corps. We also continued to grow the community native seed bank, gathering local wildflower seeds from the meadow sites, and processing and storing them in the seed vault at the Food and Farm Hub. These seeds are available to all community members, or school/community groups working on rewilding. In June 2022, we hosted Pollinator Month, a festival honouring pollinators and creating opportunities for the community to become more engaged in local rewilding efforts. We had over 80 people come and participate in Pollinator Month activities!

We are grateful for the community support, for the generosity of the earth, and for the opportunity to plant these seeds.



Hannah Auer
Project Coordinator

Cowichan Green Community Foundation

The Foundation's team experienced another successful year, despite all the uncertainty the world still faced. The kitchen continued to be a hub of community meals, ensuring everyone who is participating in a meal program including The Village, the Meals on Wheels, the Emergency meals, as well as meals for youth who are street entrenched enjoyed the delicious food.

Staff turnover has been a challenge, but with such a strong, resilient team, they always ensured the meals were prepared and delivered even when they've been short staffed. Huge shout-out to Angela Nessel who joined the team as the Senior Food Services Manager and who has been instrumental in ensuring all the proper processes are in place so they're always at the ready. They are excitedly awaiting the opening of the White Road Supportive Housing project which should be summer 2023.

The team is so grateful for the interns and volunteers who also jumped into the kitchen to support not only the meal preparation but also enthusiastically acquiring new skills and enjoying the opportunity to work in such a welcoming and inspiring community space.

Meals on Wheels (MOW) continues to be a welcomed and appreciated program within the community. Over the entirety of 2022, MOW was able to serve approximately 7,468 meals to an average of 26 clients each month. On several occasion clients have commented how much they appreciate having healthy, delicious, and dependable access to prepared meals. Some clients have even confessed that the program has helped to allow them to stay in their homes while dealing with a disability or recuperating from injury, surgery, or bouts of mental illness.

In addition, CGC was thrilled to partner with the City of Duncan to help work on the revitalization of the Centennial Park, Community Pizza Cob Oven. The kitchen team has been busy testing pizza recipes and are excited to launch the 'free' youth pizza nights in early 2023!

Other programs such as the Pregnancy Connections program that supports pregnant and new moms with fresh meat and eggs also continued with support from the Rotary Club who organized the fabulous OctoberFest event that helped raise funds for this essential service.

The support the community has provided to the Foundation has been outstanding. All the donations, whether cash or in-kind or the gift of time has been instrumental in helping sustain the great work of this organization. Please consider making a donation – every dollar is important!



Amanda Vance
Treasurer



Jane Nares
Director



Brent Wingham
Director



Tina Reynolds
Director



Stephen Bishop
President

Community Pizza Cob Oven

Almost ten years ago, the Cowichan Region's First Public Outdoor Cob Kitchen was initiated by Cowichan Community Kitchen and is located in Centennial Park in Downtown. It's hard to believe it's been so long since the idea of erecting such an incredible community space was first conceptualized. CGC has gratefully taken the torch from CCK and has entered into an agreement with the City of Duncan to manage the oven after significant repairs were completed.

This unique community gathering space will host a number of events including birthday parties, educational opportunities, and celebration. One of the upcoming plans is to offer free pizza for youth who are at risk of homelessness or part of the street community. We look forward to serving delicious food and creating many memories with all the amazing families who frequent the park in the warm summer days. Please email info@cowichangreencommunity.org for more information on booking the space for your next event or party!



Mathew Pettit
Cob Oven
Coordinator

Meals for Community

The commercial kitchen located at CGC Headquarters has been busy making meals to support our community! The fun and cohesive kitchen team works hard seven days a week, 365 days a year. The team includes full and part time staff, students from the VIU West program -developing marketable job skills, as well as various other programs that help people gain skills and join the workforce. Our kitchen culture has special focus on inclusiveness, acceptance of all abilities, recognition of strengths, and embracing all diversities and personalities. Much of the food prepared in the kitchen comes from our Food Recovery program - helping provide a variety of nutritious food to the community programs it serves.

Daily the team feeds between 15-20 seniors through the Meals on Wheels program every day of the year. The clients using the program can be self-referred, or are referred through Island Health - ensuring they receive a hot, nutritious meal as required.

When The Village at Trunk Road formed, CGC was asked to support the 34 residents with a hot evening meal, along with a light breakfast, delivered by our staff to the Village seven evenings a week every day of the year.

Monday to Friday, each evening, the Discovery Youth Outreach team stops into the kitchen and collects 15 prepared meals to take to the streets and help connect and support our vulnerable, unsheltered youth.

CGC has a great relationship with Cowichan Valley Youth Services, who are provided eight frozen meals weekly for their youth program. These meals are used to help support those who could use a hot meal. Through the summer months, the youth in their summer camp program are provided with lunches out of the CGC kitchen.

On top of the above community programs, CGC produces frozen meals for our reFRESH Store with the proceeds helping fund the coupon program - a dignified grocery shopping experience for low income individuals who may be facing food insecurity. The kitchen also makes and stores 500 frozen meals to be ready to support our neighbours in the case of a community disaster. They are a busy team indeed!



Rhythm Hunter
Kitchen
Supervisor



Jasmin Hachey
Kitchen
Supervisor

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 Men Who Care
Canadian Conservation Corps
Children & Family Council of the
Cowichan Valley
Cobble Hill Farmers Institute
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Cowichan Valley Heritage Quilters
Cowichan Valley Naturalist Society
Cowichan Valley Open Learning Centre
Cowichan Valley School District 79
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Fast Eddy's Tree Work
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