

# URBAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES IN CANADA:

## A SURVEY OF CANADIAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS





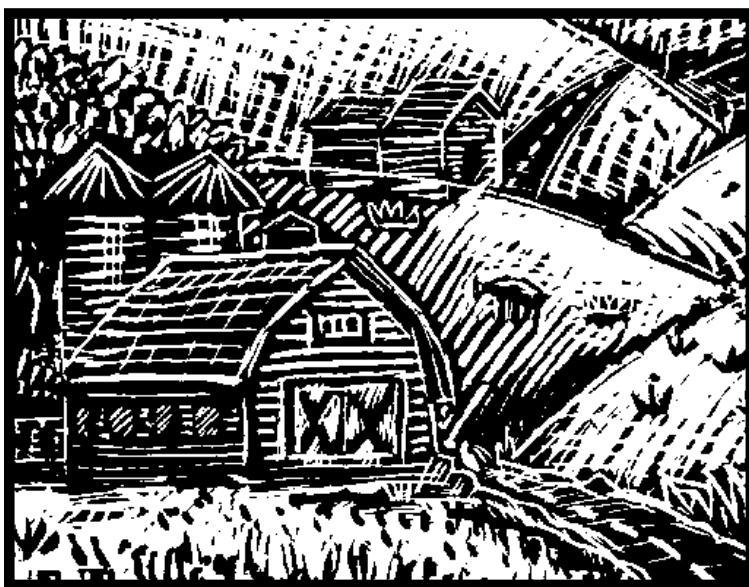
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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***Jacinda Fairholm***






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**Urban  
Agriculture  
& Food  
Security**

# Urban Agriculture & Food Security

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## Urban Agriculture & Food Security



# Urban Agriculture & Food Security

## F O R W A R D

Urban Agriculture and Food Security Initiatives in Canada: A Survey of Canadian Non-Governmental Organizations, provides an overview of existing community based organizing efforts to create more just and sustainable food systems. This survey identifies the many organizations and their networks currently working to achieve this goal and seeks to identify areas where there is still need for further research, work and creativity.

A community enjoys food security when all people, at all times, have access to nutritious, safe, personally acceptable and culturally appropriate foods, produced in ways that are environmentally sound and socially just. A combination of hunger, degradation and loss of agricultural lands, limited economic viability of small and medium sized farms and a general dissatisfaction with the food system in general has propelled community organizations to action.

Individuals and groups envision a variety of strategies to recreate food production and distribution systems. They are investing time, energy and resources into reconnecting people to food and the land. Urban food production and alternative marketing mechanisms are being implemented to diversify and localize the food system. Projects are undertaken that work to improve health and food access. Others are taking on environmental and land use issues. Effort is being made in areas of education, public participation and the building of a political voice to effect change at a structural level.

While there is skepticism of the abilities of urban food production to feed cities, evidence is being gathered that great possibility exists for feeding urban populations closer to home. Beyond pure food production, the ability to decrease transportation costs, provide employment and increase green space in cities are proving to be other strong motivators for action. We found most food production organizing to be around community and allotment gardening, rooftop gardening, and backyard gardens and urban farms. Many expressed that limited access to land, by-law restrictions, input requirements, and restrictive urban planning were challenges to seeing the full potential for urban food production. Among examples of the initiatives listed in the report are Community gardens in Montreal, and the Rooftop Garden Resource Group.



Many organizations across Canada are working cooperatively with market gardeners, regional farmers and urban dwellers to create alternative food distribution and purchasing models. This document highlights alternative marketing in the forms of Community Supported Agriculture and Farmers Markets, as well as alternative purchasing through forms of food cooperatives, buying clubs, and Community Kitchens as strategies to reclaim control of food systems. Case studies chosen as good examples of viable distribution and purchasing initiatives are FoodShare of Toronto, and Regroupement des Cuisines Collectives du Quebec

An important aspect of distribution is access to food. Currently many Canadians have a varied and nutritious diet year round, but many do not. The use of emergency food distribution services is steadily rising and we have also featured initiatives

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whose objectives are to improve individuals access to food and building self reliance through gardening, such as the Canadian Association of Food Banks and the Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank.

Food Education and Skills Development efforts at the community level are also explored in this report. Almost all non-governmental and community based organizations linked to food security issues offer resources, information and educational opportunities to the public. Many also host Youth and adult skills development programs such as LifeCycles of Victoria, and the Environmental Youth Alliance of Vancouver.

The following information is meant to point researchers and the public to organizations that are working on different aspects of food security and make known tangible community based organizing efforts. This document is testimony to the scope and breadth of community based actions in Canada. In the final section you will a bibliography, a list of resource groups and a directory of organizations by region that is cross-referenced to the chapter of the report referring to its work and focus.

This document has several functions. This work raises the profile of Canadian



## Urban Agriculture & Food Security

*“Far from disappearing, hunger and malnutrition are on the increase, even in advanced industrialized countries like Canada, where each year an estimated 2.5 million people depend on food banks.” (Koc et al., 1999: 1)*

# Urban Agriculture & Food Security

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

community organizations as significant actors in addressing urban food security. It provides national and provincial contacts for community-based groups working the various sectors of food security. Finally, it seeks to support the growing analysis of the current food system and highlight viable alternatives.

A backdrop to both urban agriculture and community food security is the issue of access to food. To this end, this document draws a general outline of community food security within the Canadian context and explores issues of production and distribution. The document encompasses a diversity of community responses and is organized into six sections: Urban Food Production, Urban Food Production Technologies, Alternative Food Distribution, Emergency Food Distribution, Food Education and Skills Development, and Food Networks and Policy Organization. Each section gives an overview of the concept and is followed by specific case studies from across Canada. Also included in each section is a contact list of groups and organizations whose work is related to the category. All of the organizations and their contact information are also listed by region at the back of the report. A symbol by each groups name indicates which category their case study can be found in. Resources geared toward information and action are also listed.

It is difficult to organize the activities of community organizations into strict categories. Most community organizations working toward greater food access offer a multitude of services and programs. Near the beginning of each section a more detailed case study illustrates the multi-faceted approach and activities that many organizations take. Overall, the categorization reflects areas of strength within each listed organization but note that it is somewhat limited considering the nature of community food security action.

The intent of this document is to inform both the research community of grassroots capacity and the general public about food security issues. To this end, the focus of the report is information rather than analysis. There is a lack of in-depth research, analysis and evaluation on the role Canadian community organizations play in addressing food security issues. It is hoped that this document will encourage and contribute to a comprehensive approach to food security issues in Canada.

### The Arrival

Like a tide it comes in,  
wave after wave of foliage and fruit,  
the nurtured and the wild,  
out of the light to this shore,  
In its extravagance we shape  
the strenuous outline of enough.

—Wendell Berry



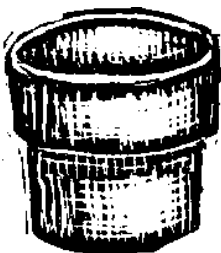
## COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY IN THE CANADIAN CONTEXT

Overall Canada does have a plentiful food supply, with well-stocked supermarkets that provide most foods most of the time, including mangoes in January. Prices are largely affordable with Canadians spending 14.2% of their income on food. Yet food insecurity is an increasing reality for many Canadians. Over a million Canadians, half of whom are children, go hungry each day. Lack of food is not the cause of hunger in Canada. It is a question of access, distribution and income. Examining food security involves looking at the underlying system of food distribution.

There are ecological, economical and social challenges with the current food system. It relies on a network of food production, processing and distribution that for the most part is energy intensive, environmentally harmful and does not necessarily meet the needs of everyone. Concentration of ownership by large-scale agri-business of the inputs for production, means of production, processing, transportation, wholesale and retail of food insulates decision-making about food production and distribution from social accountability. Small farmers are squeezed out of business by high operating costs, low prices and poor access to markets. Companies relying on cheap labour and malleable regulations in other countries import much of our food. Food is treated as a commodity to be traded for the highest profit. Nutritional value and community health are compromised; the poor are unable to access healthy food.

The global food system is characterized by a process of distancing. Consumers are separated from the sources of their food. Spatial distancing refers to the physical separation of producers and consumers; vast quantities of energy are required to process, refrigerate and transport food to the consumer. This process fosters temporal distancing which increases time between harvest and consumption by means of transportation and increased shelf life. Consumers are so separated from their food that they are often unable to recognize it in its raw unprocessed form. Cultural rituals as well as skills related to food production and distribution are lost. It is a food system that is largely unresponsive to individual and community needs.

The combination of hunger in Canadian society and dissatisfaction with the food system has propelled community organizations to re-evaluate the process of food production and distribution. Community ventures such as farmers' markets, urban gardens, Community Supported Agriculture and community kitchen programs are flourishing across the country. Collectively, these efforts comprise re-emergence of community-based food systems, and powerful examples of alternatives to the dominant corporate model.



The community food security movement links these efforts together with a comprehensive vision of a just and sustainable food system. A community enjoys food security when all people, at all times, have access to nutritious, safe, personally acceptable and culturally appropriate foods, obtained through normal food distribution channels. Food security broadens the traditional conception of hunger, embracing a systemic view of the causes of hunger and poor nutrition within a community while identifying the changes necessary to prevent their occurrence. The framework for food security integrates many perspectives including public health prevention-orientation, ecological systems analysis, and community development place-centered focus and emphasis on local economic development.

## Urban Agriculture & Food Security

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# Urban Agriculture & Food Security

*Canadian organizations are confronting hunger and poverty with creative community-based solutions that feed people today, while creating the means for a permanent solution.*

## COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY IN THE CANADIAN CONTEXT

The community food security movement is founded upon five central principles focusing on the needs of low-income people.

- Community food security moves beyond the anti-hunger campaign with broader goals of skill development, urban greening and community building.
- The focus on community means strengthening local food resources to meet local needs
- Community food security emphasizes the self-reliance of individuals and families to provide for their own food needs rather than depending on external sources such as food banks.
- Promoting local agriculture and encouraging rural-urban links is an important aspect of this approach.
- Community projects are multi-faceted and incorporate many sectors. This approach reflects analysis and action on local food systems.

A movement towards community food security has far reaching implications. There is "economic investment in local food systems through the entry of new farmers, expansion of existing farms, new food processing businesses and expanded local markets" (Anderson and Cook, 1998: 7). Community control over the process improves environmental stewardship of the producing landscape. Another element of a community food system is increased community cohesion, identity and viability.

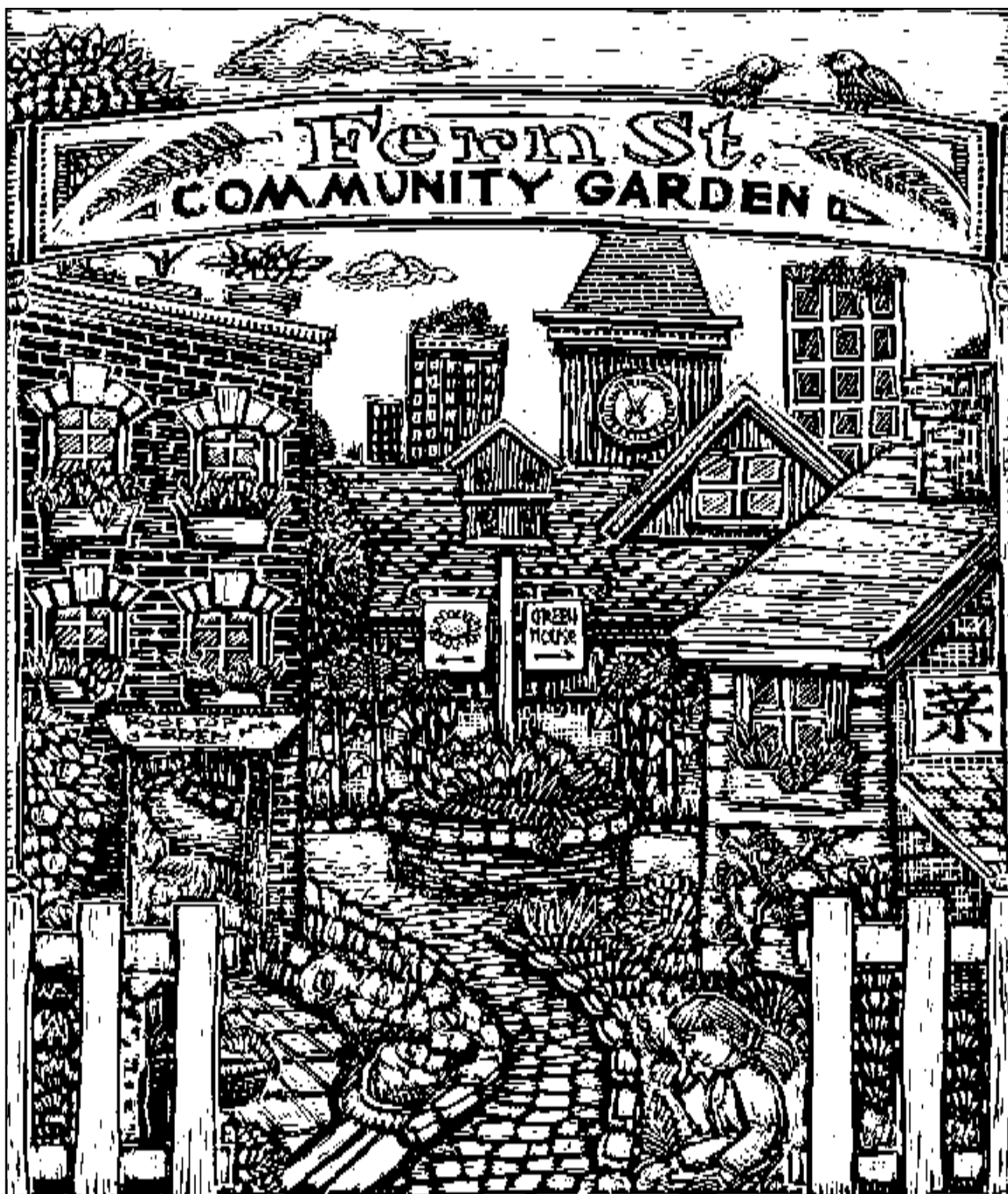
Canadian communities are increasingly looking to build local food security. Urban food production and alternative marketing mechanisms are being implemented to diversify and localize the food system. Projects deal with a diverse range of issues such as health, job training and urban land use. Effort is being made in areas of education, public participation and the building of a political voice to effect change at a structural level. Most community organizations working in the area of food are re-evaluating their analysis and action with a systems approach. Food is so central that all aspects must be incorporated to effectively change the manner in which communities have access to it. Canadian organizations are confronting hunger and poverty with creative community-based solutions that feed people today, while creating the means for a permanent solution.







# URBAN FOOD PRODUCTION



# Chapter One

***Urban agriculture refers to “food production occurring within the confines of cities. This production takes place in backyards, rooftops, community vegetable and fruit gardens and unused or public spaces. It may include commercial operations producing food in greenhouses and other spaces, but is more often small-scaled and scattered around the city.”***

## I. URBAN FOOD PRODUCTION

Part of the vision of moving toward community food security in Canadian cities includes exploring avenues for urban food production. Urban agriculture refers to “food production occurring within the confines of cities. This production takes place in backyards, rooftops, community vegetable and fruit gardens and unused or public spaces. It may include commercial operations producing food in greenhouses and other spaces, but is more often small-scaled and scattered around the city” (Nugent, 1997: 2).

Around the world, urban agriculture is part of a survival strategy for the urban poor. Its contribution to food security appears to be substantial in many developing world cities. Smit *et al.*'s (1996) research indicates that there are 200 million urban farmers in the world who supply food to 800 million people, or about 12% of the world's population. They point out that in many Asian cities, food production is promoted and recognized as a critical urban function. For example, Hong Kong one of the world's most densely populated cities produces two-thirds of the poultry, one-sixth of the pigs and close to half of the vegetables eaten by its citizens. With such potential, urban agriculture as a strategy to increase food supply should not be, and increasingly is not, limited to the developing world.

The experiences of cities around the world offer community organizations and municipal leaders in Canada models for increasing urban food security. Urban environments have the potential to produce substantial quantities of food. One study revealed over 6,500 acres of cultivable land in the City of Vancouver - enough to feed its entire population even by conservative estimates of productivity. This

finding is complemented by the widespread reports that gardening is the favorite pastime of Canadians. Levenston of City Farmer believes urban agriculture is exactly that—the time honored tradition of backyard gardening. From Halifax to Victoria, almost all Canadian municipalities have active community gardens; urban food production is indeed a present reality in Canadian cities.

Foremost among the benefits of urban agriculture are the obvious contributions to household food supply and additional spending income. A United States Department of Agriculture study estimates that urban gardening in America has a market value of \$16 million. This represents a considerable percentage of household income made available to fulfill other needs. Despite debate over the potential ability of urban agriculture to fully feed city populations, it is obvious that it contributes to increased food security at an individual and community level.



Urban food production has far-reaching implications. There are several economic benefits. In cities where food is produced, industries develop to provide inputs, marketing and processing services. This ranges from individual backyard growers selling surplus produce to commercial market gardens and aquaculture operations. Farmers' markets and Community Supported Agriculture initiatives are methods of ensuring the viability of urban farmers. Local food production contributes to currency exchange within the local economy and supports local employment, rather than being drained out to pay for imports.

Environmentally, urban food production contributes to better waste-management. Cities generally operate on throughput, i.e. resources in, wastes out). Organic wastes can be used in urban agriculture operations, providing mechanisms to close this urban “nutrient loop” (Nelson,



1996:14). By promoting growing in the city, transportation of food over long distances no longer becomes necessary.

Fossil-fuel emissions are curbed, refrigerating costs are cut and packaging is reduced. Urban bio-diversity is increased, not only by the tendency of local gardens to grow a wider range of foods, but through providing habitats for urban wildlife. Further benefits include the mitigation of storm-water runoff, oxygen production, noise reduction and temperature control via shade and transpiration.

Socially, urban food production contributes to a sense of community and self-reliance.

"Community gardening makes the food system visible in urban areas. We see community gardening as community development" (Cosgrove & Shields, 1994 quoted in Cook, 1996). It breaks down the process of distancing. Individuals are in greater contact with the process and source of their foods. People have access to fresh foods with all its implied health benefits. Urban food production also represents a significant opportunity to regain cultural and horticultural knowledge.

Urban food production, in the form of community and rooftop gardening, is increasingly part of the Canadian urban landscape. As poverty and hunger intensify and public assistance evaporates, urban communities are coming together around gardening and food security - cultivating neighborhood gardens and rooftop space for community cohesion, nutritional sustenance and economic opportunity.

## COMMUNITY GARDENING

For the purposes of this paper, a community garden is "where people share basic resources - land, water and sunlight" (Lindayati, 1996: 10). This definition includes allotment gardens (where plots of land are allotted for a fee) as well as communal open spaces such as demonstration sites and gardens linked to

schools, community or faith centres. Community gardening represents a collective action to secure land for the purpose of food production. The 1997 edition of the Community Greening Review looks at the range of current research that support community gardens. Research reveals that community gardening combines per-

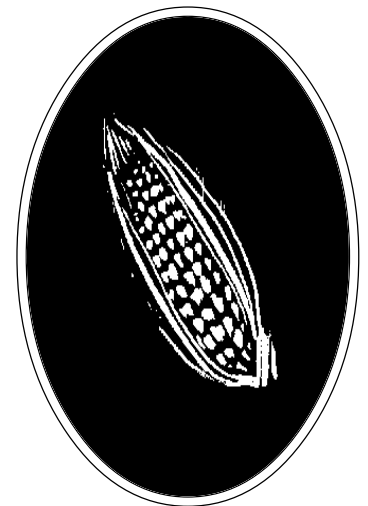
*"...community gardening provides people, many who are economically disadvantaged, with the opportunity to grow fresh food, supplementing both their diet and income."*

sonal benefits together with clearly demonstrated community advantages.

"Community gardens provide significant economic benefits to unemployed people and impoverished families. Food produced in community gardens supplements limited incomes<sup>1/4</sup>investment in community gardens and their expansion will return significant economic, physical and psychological benefits" (Hassen, 1994: 15) The fact that community gardening can play a vital role in urban food production is echoed in the experience of the Francis Beaver Community Garden located in Toronto's urban core. Gardening on 4 x5 foot plots, the low-income seniors were able to supply their entire fresh produce needs from June to October. The Multicultural Greening Project of Greenest City calculated the garden crop value to be approximately \$7200 a year. This, among other studies, illustrates that community gardening provides people, many who are economically disadvantaged, with the opportunity to grow fresh food, supplementing both their diet and income.

The benefits of community gardening go beyond nutritional and financial value. Community greening promotes healthier communities by providing a space to gather and socialize. Community gardens enable people to maintain their cultural heritage by growing plants that play an

## Urban Food Production



# Chapter One

*The first community gardens in Canada were the Railway Gardens (1890-1930). Designed and maintained by the Canadian Pacific Railway, these community gardens were located in town stations across the country and manifested local community spirit in the pioneering West.*

important cultural role. Gardens also contribute to the development of a “healthy city” through the removal of air pollution, regeneration of soil and composting of organic wastes. Community gardens represent productive use of vacated or unused land. Urban gardening also provides community residents with an essential connection to nature, fueling work and physical activity along with experiential learning.

Community gardening also enhances both the informal and formal economies. Trading and bartering occurs for land, equipment, seed, composting, fencing, information and educational materials. It brings increased business at local greenhouses, nurseries and garden supply stores. Some community gardening projects emphasize entrepreneurialism through market gardening and micro-enterprises while others address food access by promoting farmers’ markets.

Community gardens are an important link in many community food security initiatives. They provide the common ground for building community links and growing food. Community-based programs that emphasize community gardening tend to integrate many of these factors, such as skill building, nutritional education, community economic development, environmental stewardship and food access, into their activities.

tions across the country and manifested local community spirit in the pioneering West.

The same period witnessed the growth of School Gardens. As part of the Nature-Study Movement, each student had a plot to grow flowers and vegetables from seed. This wave of activity was expanded upon by the Relief Gardens of WWI and eventually the Victory Gardens of WWII. Thousands of gardens were coordinated to provide food for the war efforts. A fourth stage in Canadian community gardens fell between the wars. Municipalities encouraged Vacant Lot Gardens as a method to improve the appearances of communities and as a charitable provision of employment and food for the poor. The post war years brought the car, suburban living and processed foods and community gardening declined. The counter-culture movement between 1965-1979 saw the revival of urban gardening in response to concerns about the environment, energy conservation, self-reliance and community breakdown. Current community gardens evolved out of the 1970’s movement; their legitimacy in the urban setting supported by the call for community open space.



## HISTORY OF COMMUNITY GARDENS IN CANADA

Urban community gardening in Canada has experienced waves of interest over the past hundred years. Roughly six overlapping periods of community gardening are part of Canadian history. The first community gardens in Canada were the Railway Gardens (1890 - 1930). Designed and maintained by the Canadian Pacific Railway, these community gardens were located in town sta-

## CONTEMPORARY COMMUNITY GARDENING IN CANADA

Community gardens are currently found in the majority of Canadian urban centres both large (Montreal 73), medium (Vancouver 26) and small (Victoria 9). The experience of civic community gardening across the country varies considerably. Common to all community gardening initiatives is that they are rooted in grassroots demand. Management, coordination and growth of gardens tend to differ greatly between communities depending on the initiative of the community, civic support and city regulations and policy. In some situations, community action has led to municipally-en-

**CASE STUDY 1: CITY COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM (MONTREAL)**

The City of Montreal is renowned for its community gardening program. In a population of over 2 million, the Montreal Urban Community has over 100 community gardens. The City of Montreal itself maintains 73 gardens with 6,278 plots, providing an estimated 14,000 people (1.5% of the city's population) with, alternative access to food.

While community areas have been gardened for years, gardening literally became a "growing institution" in 1975 after a community group enlisted the support of the city's Botanical Department to obtain a lot vacated after a fire. Under the wings of director Pierre Bourque, community gardening was coordinated across the city through the allotment of city sites. Coordination of the program was eventually transferred to the Parks, Recreation and Community Development Department and policies developed to outline both the services provided by the city and rules for garden growing.

For a \$10 registration fee, any resident of the City of Montreal can garden at a nearby site. The City supplies the land, equipment (including outdoor furniture) and materials necessary for the program to function efficiently. It also provides water, collects refuse, and offers the services of horticultural animators. The four animators are responsible for visiting the gardens on a rotating basis, giving technical advice to the gardeners and liaising with volunteer garden committees.

The gardens are run by elected volunteer committees who also represent the garden at a municipal level. The committees supervise daily activities in the garden sites, manage the distribution of plots and are responsible for ensuring that the gardens are maintained to city standards. Standards call for a minimum of five types of vegetables grown in each plot using organic techniques only. The partnership between committees and the city help ensure standards are maintained and the urban environment is protected.

There is an emphasis on education in the Montreal gardening program. The Botanical Department offers courses in areas such as organic gardening, landscaping and medicinal herbs. An additional 440 youth garden plots are set aside for horticultural and natural science education; summer programs introduce children, ages 9-14 years, to the vegetable garden and the process of food production.

One distinctive feature of Montreal's program is its zoning regulations. Roughly two thirds of the gardens are located in parkland zones providing long-term protection from development. The other gardens are located on city-owned land slated for eventual construction. If, and when, the need to be moved arises, the city attempts to find new space for the gardens. Montreal relocated 12 gardens between 1986-89, at the capital cost of \$400,000.

The gardens are extremely popular. There is 25% more demand than the current system can fill and the membership renewal rates are approaching 100%. Expanding to meet citizens demand, ensuring the permanence of existing gardens and finding land for new ones are some of the challenges Montreal's community gardening program faces in the late 1990's. Other challenges are coordinating the roles, resources and responsibilities of various departments in an era of budget constraints. The municipality has lost half of their animators, down from eight. Despite such challenges, gardening and greening remains intrinsic to Montreal's political and social identity.

*For more information, contact: Michel Confortate, City of Montreal Community Gardening Program, Recreation, Parks and Community Development Department, 5319 Notre Dame de Grace Ave., Montreal, PQ H4A 1L2 Tel: (514) 872-6363 Fax: (514) 872-4585*

## Urban Food Production



# Chapter One

***Community gardens can play a vital cornerstone in local food security initiatives by providing an accessible common ground for vegetable growing and social cohesion.***

dorsed and coordinated gardening programs. In many cities, the process has evolved in a more fragmented and informal manner. Separate communities take independent initiatives to establish gardens with neither a centralized community voice nor a coordinated municipal response. There is no single model for community gardening in either Canadian municipalities or community organizations.

Some cities, such as the Montreal Urban Community, have an extensive, municipally supported community gardening program. Established in 1975, the larger municipal area now has approximately 100 gardens, supported by the city through provision of land, equipment and personnel. The program is regarded as one of the best in North America and is considered a model for other municipalities. Several Canadian municipalities such as Winnipeg, Regina and Halifax have adopted this centralized model to varying degrees.

The development of Toronto's community gardens differs substantially. The city and its citizens traditionally lacked both a gardening consciousness and a comprehensive approach to community greening. This, however, has evolved as of late. With concerns about food security and health gaining ground, the number of gardens in the region is increasing. The 1997 inventory of gardens identified 68 gardens up from 41 in 1993. In 1996, the Department of Parks and Recreation partnered with community groups to install several gardens and purchase land for demonstration sites. Studies find a consistent demand for garden space, with a waiting list each year. In response the growing prominence and importance of gardens in the Metro Toronto area, an informal group, Friends of Community Gardening, has been formed to advocate for gardens at a political level. This pattern of demand, growth and response to gardens is echoed in the experiences of cities such as Calgary (Community Garden Resource Group) and Edmonton (Community Garden Network) where community groups are coming together to represent a centralized community voice. The development of municipal policy and infrastruc-

ture that supports the growth of community gardening is related to the capacity of community groups to keep gardening on the agenda.

The Greater Vancouver Regional District is home to 26 community gardens. Their development is highly individualistic. "While there are certainly long time Vancouver community gardens, such as regional allotments at the Burnaby allotment garden (BRAGA), there are also many newer efforts as a community garden consciousness has arisen during Vancouver's sustained economic boom. The need to think seriously about land use decisions in the face of growth has helped a kernel of support for community gardens to germinate" (Cosgrove, 1998: 13). The more recent interest in community gardening was sparked by the activities of the Strathcona gardeners who in the last decade battled to reclaim 7 contiguous acres for over 300 plots.



The struggle for this corridor raised the public profile of community gardening and encouraged several other communities to develop sites. In 1996 the Vancouver Parks Board adopted the first official community gardening policy in the region; this policy states that upon demonstrating neighborhood support, the Park Board will provide information and help identify a site for community groups to garden. The Parks Board will provide start-up assistance and lease land to non-profit societies in 5-year increments. The more independent and informal development of community gardening in Vancouver is mirrored in other Canadian cities such as Victoria.

Community gardens can play a vital cornerstone in local food security initiatives by providing an accessible common ground for vegetable growing and social cohesion. Community gardening is largely a community led activity. Some citizen groups form their own non-profits.

Others come under the wing of stronger, more established community-based organizations. Community-based organizations themselves may lobby for and build community gardens to meet the needs of the population they serve or they may play a

***“Community gardening is currently experiencing a revival in cities across Canada.”***

lead networking or advocacy role to ensure that the larger community gardening culture has a political voice. However, it appears that a coordinated approach to community gardening in most Canadian cities is still in its infancy. This is mirrored at a national level. Unlike the US, there is no strong national umbrella organization coordinating and advocating for the larger community gardening movement. To this day Canadian community gardeners are linked only informally through an Internet network (the Canadian Community Gardeners Network) and e-mail. There is much room for this to change however. A growth and an evolution in gardening consciousness is occurring across Canada; it remains to be seen exactly what role Canadian community organizations will play and how they are championing gardening as a tool for increased food security and political action.

## **ROOFTOP GARDENING**

Canadian cities are characterized by a lack of affordable land and high density development. With few places to grow, people are beginning to look up. A snap shot of any Canadian city will reveal vast amounts of empty flat roofs, representing potential growing space in cities. In Europe, where sprawl is no

longer possible, city planners have adopted rooftop greening out of necessity. Some German municipalities have decreed by law that new industrial buildings must have green roofs; Swiss cities regulate that new construction must recre-

ate the displaced green space. Even existing buildings must convert 20% of their roof space into greenery.

As with community gardening, the benefits of rooftop greening are numerous. One type of rooftop greening is a vegetation roof covered with moss or hardy grass for aesthetic or insulation purposes. Another type, the roof garden, can “be used as a laboratory for experimentation, an outdoor place for play and performance, a school garden or just a quiet place to read and write” (Kuhn, date unknown: 17). One might add increased food production to this list.

While use of rooftop space is appealing, there are several factors that need to be taken into account. The load-bearing capacity of the roof is critical. As one cubic foot of “wet earth” weighs approximately 100 lb., the garden design and structural capacity must be compatible. The roof must also be waterproof and have an effective irrigation and drainage system. The extreme microclimate of the rooftop can make growing difficult. Wind breaks and hardy plants suited to a hot and sunny environment become necessary.

These obstacles can be overcome. The resources do exist to turn rooftops into urban gardens. Changing regulations in Europe “have spawned a whole new industry which specialized in lightweight growing mediums, filter cloths, roofing membranes, plant stock and how-to books and kits” (Rooftop Garden Resource Group fact sheet). While it is largely hidden from public view, many Canadian enterprises and organizations are beginning to experiment with the roof as a place to grow food. In Vancouver the Environmental Youth Alliance just completed building a garden on the roof of the VanCity Place for Youth. Toronto’s Royal York Hotel grows fresh herbs and spices on their roof. The Rooftop Garden Resource Group has helped establish numerous gardens on roofs of the Metro Toronto area. The use of Rooftop garden as farming spaces has considerable potential to produce substantial amounts of food and contribute to a sustainable urban environment.

## **CHALLENGES**

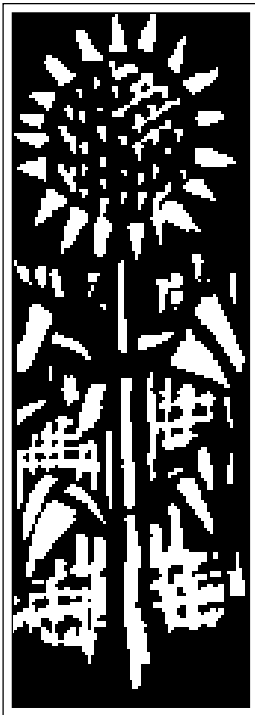
## **Urban Food Production**



***The use of rooftop gardens farming spaces has considerable potential to produce substantial amounts of food and contribute to a sustainable urban environment.***



# Chapter One



## C A S E S T U D Y

### **CASE STUDY 2: ECO-INITIATIVES (MONTREAL)**

Through comprehensive programming, Eco-Initiatives works to improve accessibility to food among the elderly and low-income population of Montreal. They teach people how to garden and coordinate a sharing backyard program as well as an organic CSA project involving 20 farmers. They have partnered with community health clinics to implement projects in pre-natal health, nutrition education and community kitchens. Eco-Initiatives has international links with community gardening initiatives in Cuba and will be working closely with a Cuban specialist in setting up their permaculture demonstration garden.

*For more information, contact: 5590 Sherbrook St. W., Montreal, PQ H4A 1W3 Tel: (514) 484-4129 Fax: (514) 484-4277 E-mail: [ecoini@cam.org](mailto:ecoini@cam.org)*

### **CASE STUDY 3: MENNONITE CENTER FOR NEWCOMERS (EDMONTON)**

Established in 1995, this community group works with immigrants to establish community gardens on old railway sites. They are developing a network of 8 gardens. The community connections, increased self-reliance and the ability to grow specific cultural foods all play a role in helping immigrant families adjust to life in Canada. The Mennonite Centre for Newcomers is also spearheading the Immigrant Bio-diversity Conservation Project; they work with the Canadian Green Bank to facilitate the process of immigrants bringing seeds into Canada.

*For more information, contact: Anne-Marie Brose, 101-10010-107A Ave., Edmonton, AB T5H-4H8 Tel: (403) 423-9693 Fax: (403) 424-7736*

### **CASE STUDY 4: GREENEST CITY (TORONTO)**

Greenest City works on action-oriented greening projects to ensure the livability of the city and health of urban dwellers. One of their current initiatives is a multicultural greening project working primarily with East Asian communities to gain access to unused land and develop community gardens. In 1998 Greenest City worked with eight immigrant communities to support garden creation, maintenance and food production. This year the Francis Beaver Community Gardens, 1000 square feet of land divided into 26 plots, produced three harvests a season of bok choy, kai lan, green onions, tong auo and other Chinese vegetables. The garden is administered and run by the Francis Beaver Manor, a metro housing seniors building. It continues to provide support and resources. Greenest City recently published an information package on urban food production initiatives in Ontario Feeding the City From The Back Forty: Case Studies in Regional and Urban Food Production and A Guide to Resources in Sustainable Food and Transportation Systems.

*For more information, contact: Monica Tang, 238 Queen St. W., Lower Level, Toronto, ON M5V 1Z7 Tel: (416) 977-8659 Fax: (416) 392-6650 E-mail: [greenest@web.net](mailto:greenest@web.net) Web Site: [www.web.net/~greenest](http://www.web.net/~greenest)*



## URBAN GARDENING AND URBAN FARMS

A cross Canada in every city urban backyard gardening is a widespread practice. Depending on climate, in some areas (such as southern coastal zones) we are able to garden year round. The backyard or kitchen garden is still prevalent in many households even as the urban landscape changes. Community based organizations are working in their regions to ensure that as urbanization and its accompanying densification occurs, that there are still opportunities for gardening. Some of this work is through organizing community gardens, or rooftop gardens as has been mentioned, but there are also programs to assist people to create backyard, or balcony gardens. The HomeGrown Gardening Program of LifeCycles in Victoria BC is such a program. It has enabled over fifty low-income Victorians to create home gardens as well as assisting them with ongoing organic gardening advice. This program is based on the Kitchen Gardens Project model from Olympia, Washington.

Another innovative way for apartment dwellers to access land has been through Sharing Backyards programs such as those coordinated by LifeCycles and Eco Initiatives of Montreal. This program allows apartment dwellers or those without access to land to share nearby neighbor's backyards. Not only does this encourage better utilization of urban backyards but also has community building potential. FarmFolk/CityFolk's Garden and Land Access Directory in Vancouver is a database, which also supports these kinds of linkages.

While apparent anomalies against a modern urban backdrop, Urban Farms are gaining attention. While they are predominantly initiated by individual households, many tend to become neighborhood gathering spots as people come by to look over the fence at the chickens or drop off compost. Communities are recognizing the importance of exposing children raised in cities to a farm experience. Urban farms can provide this opportunity. The Inner City Youth Works, an

organization that works with the Victoria street youth community has recently taken over an urban farm for its programs. Lack of coherent government support for urban food production methods is common. Many community garden initiatives are faced with fragmented support in municipalities. While departments do offer important services, often overall coordination is lacking. Identification of a lead department to coordinate across health, planning and recreation departments, for example, is a necessary step towards increasing urban food security.



## Urban Food Production

*Communities are recognizing the importance of exposing children raised in cities to a farm experience. Urban farms can provide this opportunity.*

# Chapter One

## C A S E S T U D Y

### **CASE STUDY 5: ROOFTOP GARDEN RESOURCE GROUP (TORONTO)**

This organization aims to create a rooftop gardening culture in Metropolitan Toronto through public education, community action, and the media awareness. The group is made up of landscape architects, permaculture designers, engineers and urban planners. They are committed to making Toronto's environment a greener and healthier place to live through supporting urban food production, improving air quality, increasing bird habitats, and promoting diverse use of space. To this end they partner with community groups such as schools, food security organizations, fledging enterprises and public housing initiatives to help design, build and maintain rooftop gardens. They produce a map of rooftop gardens in Toronto, conduct tours of the urban rooftop landscape and maintain a list of professionals with expertise in building rooftop gardens. For those interested in building a rooftop garden, the Rooftop Garden Resource Group has a questionnaire to introduce the perspective gardener to the issues involved in setting up a garden, fact sheets for \$10 per package and a resource library.

*For more information, contact: Monica Kuhn, 14 Sackville Place, Toronto ON M4 X 1A4  
Tel: (416) 923- 9034 Fax: (416) 923-0875*

### ***Reasons to Rooftop Garden...***

Insulate buildings

Increase habitat for birds

Delay storm water runoff

Support urban food production

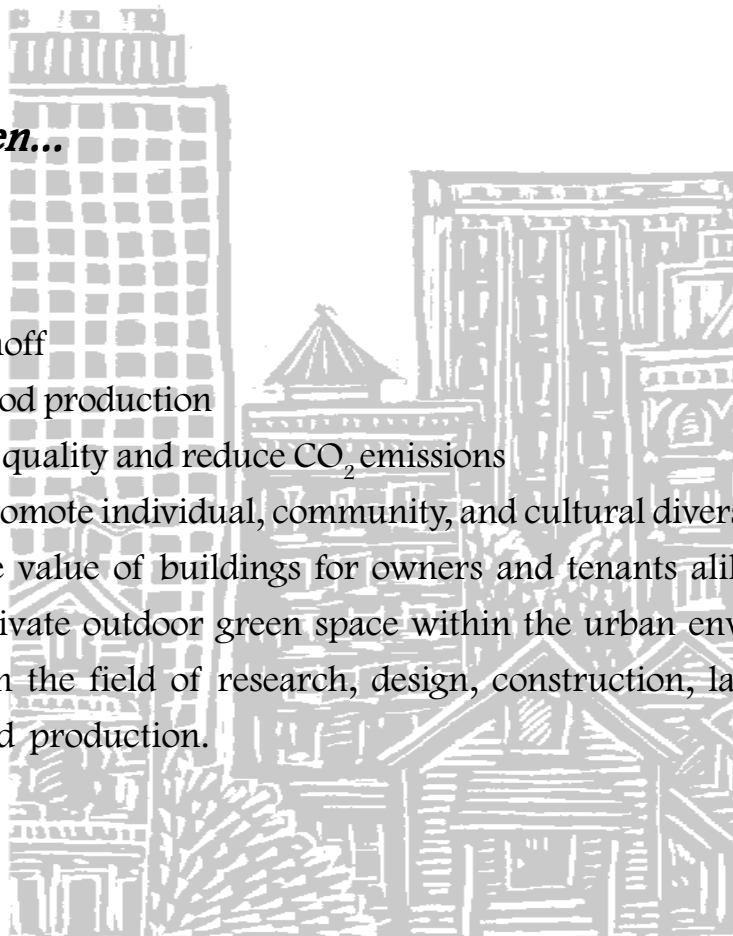
Improve air quality and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

Promote individual, community, and cultural diversity

Increase the value of buildings for owners and tenants alike

Increase access to private outdoor green space within the urban environment

Create job opportunities in the field of research, design, construction, landscaping, gardening, health and food production.



The revival in community gardening culture and recent experiments with rooftop gardening clearly points out that Canadian urban dwellers are interested and engaging in forms of urban food production. For urban food production to flourish, local governments and community groups in many Canadian cities need to address a number of existing and emerging challenges.

Existing bylaws and policy often prevent urban agriculture alternatives such as commercial greenhouses, nurseries or urban farms with small livestock. Such policies reflect general attitudes that separate the urban from the rural along the lines of food production. These laws can be reversed to look at rezoning for urban food production. Zoning changes is an indicator that the potential for urban food production is being taken seriously. Land access and tenure is a common challenge for community gardens. Municipalities could help ensure the viability of urban agriculture initiatives, community and rooftop gardening among others, by zoning for urban food production, designate public space in parklands for the purpose of producing food, or requiring development projects to integrate food producing space into their proposals.

Waste-management represents another challenge to increased urban food production. Municipalities across Canada are working in positive ways towards more coordinated and efficient waste-

pal compost programs, grey water recycling systems and sewage treatment programs. Cooperation between health, engineering, parks and recreation and planning departments is required to establish regulations and systems to reflect the importance of urban food production.

These barriers are few among the many to increasing urban food production.

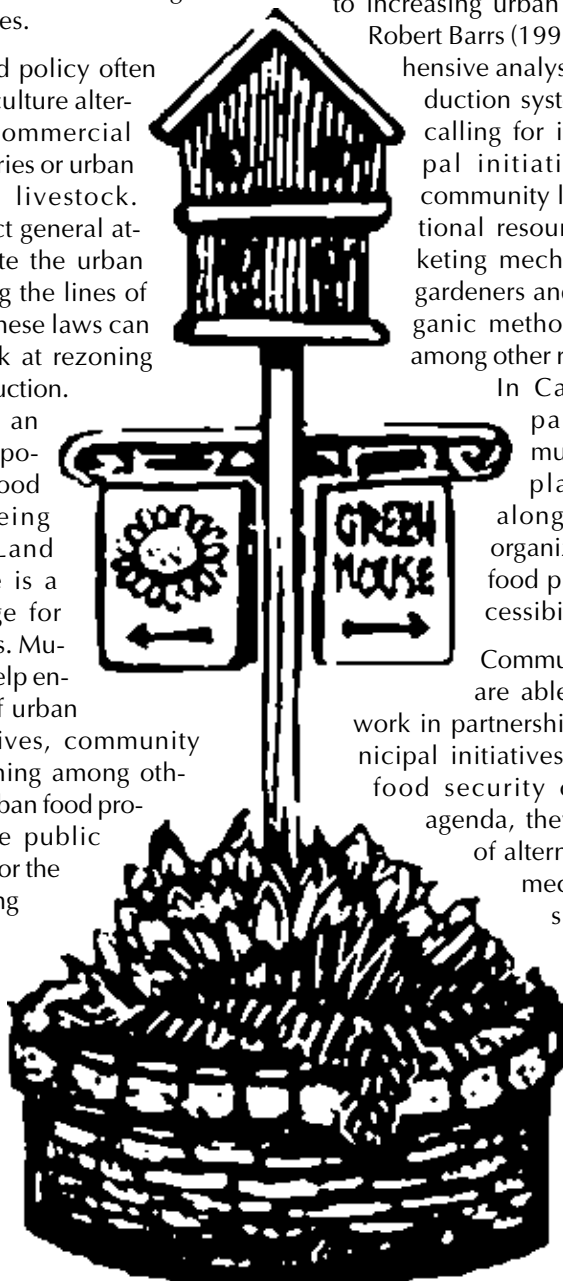
Robert Barrs (1997) gives a comprehensive analysis of the food production system in Vancouver, calling for improved municipal initiatives in areas of community land trusts, educational resource persons, marketing mechanisms for urban gardeners and emphasis on organic methods of production among other recommendations.

In Canadian municipalities, there is much room for urban planners to work alongside community organizations to improve food production and accessibility.

Community organizations are able to facilitate and work in partnership with many municipal initiatives. Beyond putting food security on the political agenda, they provide models of alternative food-access mechanisms, are positioned to educate

the public about issues of food security and should be instrumental contributors to any municipal action to food security. For urban food production to flourish, a coordinated

response by both community organizations and municipal leaders is necessary.



## Urban Food Production

*Existing bylaws and policy often prevent urban agriculture alternatives such as commercial greenhouses, nurseries or urban farms with small livestock. Such policies reflect general attitudes that separate the urban from the rural along the lines of food production.*

# Chapter One



## C O N T A C T      G R O U P S

### URBAN FOOD PRODUCTION:

#### Bytowne Urban Gardens

# 303 - 352 Somerset St. W  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0J9  
Tel: (613) 234-0387  
Fax: (613) 593-8863  
dhodgson@chatcan.ca  
Dwayne Hodgson  
*BUGS coordinates 2 community gardens in the downtown area of Ottawa. BUGS is a good contact for the loose network of community gardens in the Ottawa-Carleton area and is linked with a wide variety of local community groups working on food issues.*

#### Canadian Community Gardens Network

<http://wabikimi.carleton.ca/~wmunroe>.  
*Find here the beginning of a comprehensive listing of gardens across Canada. The gardens are listed by first by province and then by city. Contacts and location are provided.*

#### Community Garden Resource Group

c/o Calgary Horticultural Society  
208-50th Ave., SW.  
Calgary, AB T2S 2S1  
Tel: (403) 287-3469  
Fax: (403) 287-2896  
Athena Dorey  
*Network and information clearinghouse on community gardens in the Calgary area.*

#### Community Gardens in BC:

<http://www.cityfarmer.org>.  
*A list of community gardens in the Greater Vancouver region and the City of Victoria is provided with the garden location, contact person, garden size and charges, if applicable.*

#### Community Gardens in Ontario

<http://www.icangarden.com/gardens>.  
*Here is a list of allotment gardens available in cities in Ontario. Garden contacts are listed in 20 cities in Ontario with basic information about plots, size of gardens and charges, if applicable.*

#### Eco-Initiatives

5590 Sherbrook St. W  
Montreal, PQ H4A 1W3  
Tel: (514) 484-4129  
Fax: (514) 484-4277  
E-mail: [ecoini@cam.org](mailto:ecoini@cam.org)  
*This organization works in several areas including: community gardening, a sharing backyard program, and a CSA project. They have partnered with community health clinics to focus on pre-natal nutrition and health.*

#### Environmental Youth Alliance

PO Box 34097 Station D  
Vancouver, BC V6J 4M1  
Tel: (604) 689-4463  
Fax: (604) 689-4242  
Doug Ragan  
[laragan@hotmail.com](mailto:laragan@hotmail.com)  
*The Environmental Youth Alliance are the stewards of the Cottonwood Youth Garden, a permaculture demonstration garden and training site for youth skill development projects. They have also built a rooftop garden. They are currently exploring partnership initiatives with southern counterparts in Mexico around food security issues.*

#### Greenest City

238 Queen St. W., Lower Level  
Toronto, ON M5V 1Z7  
Tel: (416) 977-8659  
Fax: (416) 392-6650  
E-mail: [greenest@web.net](mailto:greenest@web.net)  
Monica Tang  
*Greenest City recently facilitated a multicultural greening project working primarily with Eastern Asian communities to develop community gardens. Greenest City also works to incorporate composting facilities at the community gardening sites.*

#### Grow Regina Community Gardens

Community Services Department  
Social Development Division  
Queen Elizabeth II Court  
Box 1790  
Regina Saskatchewan S4P 3C8  
Tel: (306) 777-7546  
Fax: (306) 777-6774  
[pviaa@cityregina.com](mailto:pviaa@cityregina.com)  
Paul Viala  
*The City of Regina has eight different garden sites with over 700 plots. The largest garden "Grow Regina" has 250 garden plots and can produce food for 1,100 people. The city provides administrative support, equipment, soil, water, and site facilities in addition to technical advice.*

#### Halifax Community Gardens

Recreation and Leisure Services  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
PO Box 1749  
Halifax, NS B3J 3A5  
Tel: (902) 490-4731  
Fax: (902) 490-4736  
Janet Landry  
*The municipality coordinates several community gardens and collective kitchens under the recreation department.*

## Urban Food Production

### London Community Gardens Project

50 King St.  
London, ON N6A 5L7  
Tel: (519) 663-5317 ext. 2556  
Fax: (519) 663-9581  
Mary Yanful

*This urban gardening project has overseen the development of six sites in the area as well as expanding public education about food security through workshops, farm tours and U-Pick trips.*

### Loyola Arupe Rooftop Garden

515 Parkside Drive  
Toronto, ON M6R 3B1  
Tel: (416) 766-7977  
Peter Boland

*This 1995 partnership project between the Four Villages Community Health Centre and the Seniors Centre produced a community gardening space. Through the use of containers, this garden provides fresh food and outdoor space for residents of nearby non-profit housing, seniors, and community members. They are now developing a rooftop greenhouse for the garden.*

### Mennonite Center for Newcomers

101-10010-107A Ave.  
Edmonton, AB T5H-4H8  
Tel: (403) 423-9693  
Fax: (403) 424-7736  
Anne-Marie Brose

*This group is working with immigrants establish community gardens, seed conservation and a garden network in the Edmonton area.*

### Montreal Community Gardening Program

Recreation, Parks and Community Development Department  
5319 Notre Dame de Grace Ave.,  
Montreal, PQ H4A 1L2  
Tel: (514) 872-6363  
Fax: (514) 872-4585  
Michel Confortate

*The City of Montreal has 73 gardens that are coordinated by the Recreation, Parks and Community Development Department. The City supplies land, equipment, supplies, water and technical support. The Botanical Department offers courses on organic gardening, and has youth and children's horticulture and natural science programs.*

### Parkland Healthy Families Association

5413 51 St.  
PO Box 2695  
Stony Plain, AB T7Z 1Y2  
Tel: (403) 963-0549  
Fax: (403) 963-3876  
Susan Penstone

*This organization runs a project to improve family health by involving them in the gardening program. They are also involved with building a regional community gardening network.*

### Rooftop Garden Resource Group

14 Sackville Place  
Toronto, ON M4 X 1A4  
Tel: (416) 923-9034  
Fax: (416) 923-0875  
Monica Kuhn

*A resource group dedicated to establishing a rooftop gardening culture through public education and community action. Available from the Rooftop Garden Resource Group is a questionnaire to introduce the perspective gardener to the issues involved in setting up a garden, fact sheets and a resource library.*

### The Urban Farm

1032/1038 Mason St.  
Victoria, BC V8R 6P5  
Tel: (250) 920-0257

*In downtown Victoria, this farm holds old growth fruit-bearing trees, vegetable produce, and over 50 chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys. Produce is distributed locally and it is open to visitors and for compost drop-off.*

### Winnipeg Community Gardens

Athletic Facilities and Park booking Services  
1539 Waverly St.  
Winnipeg, MB  
Tel: (204) 986-2665  
Fax: (204) 986-7510  
Barb Colitz

*The City of Winnipeg has between 580-630 allotment plots available for a small fee. There are also two large community gardens and many small ones.*







# URBAN FOOD PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES



## Chapter Two

*The term organic, and the variations such as bio-dynamic, restorative and/or ecological, agriculture refers to a technique of producing food that excludes synthetic chemical inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides or additives.*

## URBAN FOOD PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES

### II. URBAN FOOD PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES

Urban food production must take into account the ecological, social and environmental aspects implicit in growing food in the city. Thus the technologies employed require diverse techniques and varied approaches. Technologies such as composting, small-space use, green houses, permaculture, edible landscapes and water conservation systems all contribute to a more sustainable food production system.

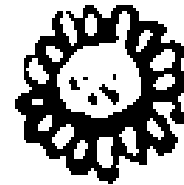
#### ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

The term organic, and the variations such as bio-dynamic, restorative and/or ecological, agriculture refers to a technique of producing food that excludes synthetic chemical inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides or additives. Soil fertility is maintained by natural techniques such as manure, composting and crop rotation. The use of mechanical cultivation, mulches and burning techniques controls weeds while biological pest management and companion planting helps control pests and disease. Food produced using this method contains no chemical pesticide residues.

The organic farming movement is more than just producing food without chemicals. It manifests not only ecologically viable practices but also encompasses an ethical dimension. Philosophically it is about social responsibility, low human impact and a sustainable society. Organic

agriculture is the cornerstone of sustainable food production and is the most common growing method employed in community endeavors.

Produce is certified as organically grown by regional organizations. These agencies inspect production and processing system to make sure they meet the regulations on fertilizers and soil amendment use, compost making and pest control techniques. Most farms are certified over a four year period. During this period farmers are designated as first, second or third year transitional. When all requirements are met in the fourth year, the farm is declared "certified organic" (Meagher, 1997: 6). There are 47 regional certification bodies in Canada now accredited and working with the criteria set by the Canadian Organic Advisory Board.



Many organizations have created learning centers and demonstration sites such as the Agro-Ecology Demonstration Site of LifeCycles in Victoria, or of City Farmer in Vancouver. These sites serve as on-site education and training programs that teach about soil health, water conservation, organic fertilizers, green manures, mulching, pest and disease prevention and control, and small space technologies such as terracing and trellising.

It is possible, through urban agriculture, to restore organic nutrients to the soil and continue to utilize them to produce the

food needed for urban consumption. By reusing wastes to increase local food production, cities move towards a measure of

*“Organic agriculture is the cornerstone of sustainable food production and is the most common growing method employed in community endeavors. “*

**CASE STUDY 6: ANNEX ORGANICS (TORONTO)**

Established in 1996, Annex Organics is a socially and environmentally responsible enterprise dedicated to producing high quality, organic food in urban environments. Annex Organics specializes in food production and alternative technology development; food is produced using rooftop gardening, greenhouse and "living machine" techniques.

Working on a 5000 square foot roof, Annex Organics has been developing growing systems for commercial, rooftop food production. They have tested a variety of rooftop growing systems including a passive hybrid hydroponics system alongside more conventional soil cultivation. They are currently experimenting with a container method of growing plants to ensure roof loading capacity.

In partnership with Field to Table and the Latin American Environmental Group, Annex Organics recently built a rooftop greenhouse. The 600 square foot greenhouse houses sprout, herb, vegetable and heirloom plant seedlings. Seedlings are used in the rooftop garden, sold to other growers or to local restaurants and food distributors. Made with many recycled materials, the greenhouse was constructed for \$2500 including design and labour costs.

*"... Annex organics has been developing growing systems for commercial, rooftop food production."*

Annex Organics develops multi-purpose and non-capital intensive technologies for food production. The "living machine" is an example of a simple self-contained eco-system constructed with three components: fish, filter and plant tanks. Fish swim in plastic barrels; their waste is converted into useful nutrients by microorganisms in the filter tank. These nutrients are taken up by the hydroponically grown plants; the water filters through the plant system and drains into the fish tanks on a gravity feed system. These living machines could be applied to larger scale commercial food production, for food production in the home or as education tools in schools.

In addition to experimenting with innovative growing techniques, Annex Organics manages a certified organic sprouting operation that supplies sprouts to local retailers, caterers and food box programs. The sprouts are grown on a hydroponics sprouting unit, built with reclaimed pallets and salvaged buckets, and produce between 600-700 packages of sprouts each week.

Working with community-based organizations, Annex Organics provides consulting, design and education services. They offer workshops on sprouting, heritage seeds and seed saving, rooftop gardening, wet waste and greenhouse management, permaculture and food systems. They conduct practical, hands-on workshops on a variety of gardening topics and have begun to design gardens in the cities.

Future plans for Annex Organics include establishing several productive, consistent growing technologies, exploring potential city markets for unique produce, and continuing education work with the model of low-risk low capital business venture.

For more information, contact: Lauren Baker or Tracey Loverock, Annex Organics, 200 Eastern Ave., Toronto, ON M5A 1J1 Tel: (416) 363-6441 Fax: (416) 363-0474 E-mail: [annexorganics@hotmail.com](mailto:annexorganics@hotmail.com)

## Urban Food Production Technologies



## Chapter Two

*The word, permaculture, was coined by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren to describe a comprehensive approach to small-scale sustainable agriculture. Permanent agriculture enhances the web of life while at the same time providing food and materials for human life.*

sustainability. Cities produce a vast quantity of potentially useful resources currently regarded as waste. Leaf litter, sewage, food wastes and yard trimmings could all contribute to the productivity of urban gardening efforts or local farming operations. Canadian cities are increasingly turning to on-site organic waste composting as an environmentally friendly and economically sound waste reduction option at the source. Many community organizations develop educational facilities where backyard composting techniques are demonstrated to the public.

### URBAN WASTE MANAGEMENT: COMPOSTING

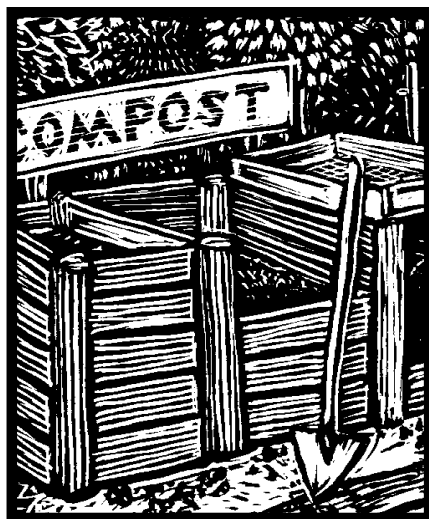
“From the perspective of ecosystems integrity, cities significantly alter natural biogeochemical cycles of vital nutrients and other chemical resources” (Rees, 1997:2). The current food system involves hauling food into the city and hauling wastes back out, not to be recycled back into the land, but dumped in landfills. Unlike healthy ecosystems, in which nutrients such as phosphorus, nitrogen contained in organic waste are converted back into energy needed for

*“Permanent culture is a result of people’s learning on how to live with the web of life and with themselves.”*

growing, the typical urban food system is a dead end. Along with nutrients, the current food system contributes to the degradation of agricultural soils and the contamination of the land.

### GREENHOUSES

Greenhouses are commonly found in urban landscapes, where the climate does not allow for year-round outdoor gardening and farming. Community gardening and rooftop sites often have greenhouses to grow seedlings, incubate special varieties of plants and extend the growing season. There are many technical paths for designing, constructing and managing a greenhouse. Groups such as Annex Organics built their rooftop greenhouse out of recycled materials. Size, structure and technology will vary according to the space and use. They differ with types of plants grown, energy used and ecosystem management. Several groups including Oxfam-Canada’s Halifax office are experimenting with urban greenhouses to incubate community gardening plants and contribute to the urban food production infrastructure. Some organizations are experimenting with organic hydroponics systems as well.



### PERMACULTURE

Increasingly agricultural groups, be they rural or urban, are utilizing permaculture techniques to grow food. The word, permaculture, was coined by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren to describe a comprehensive approach to small-scale sustainable agriculture. Permanent agriculture enhances the web of life while at the same time providing food and materials for human life. Permanent culture is a result of people’s learning on how to live with the web of life and with themselves. “Permaculture is the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which

**CASE STUDY 7: CITY FARMER (VANCOUVER)**

City Farmer is one of the country's oldest urban agriculture organizations. Established in the 1970s, City Farmer has long advocated for homegrown, community food production and efficient use of resources to do so. Among their many activities, City Farmer hosts a 2500 square foot demonstration garden. Opened in 1982, the garden demonstrates the quantity of food one person can grow in a city yard using intensive organic methods of cultivation. Raised beds were later added to make the gardens accessible for wheelchairs and demonstrate the possibilities of horticultural therapy. Since 1990 the City Farmer garden has functioned as the City of Vancouver's Compost Demonstration site, featuring and testing compost options, including worm composting. City Farmer now hosts the Greater Vancouver Regional District's compost Hotline. Through the garden, City Farmer provides hands on instruction on composting, organic food gardening, and water conservation methods for the general public and school groups. The water conservation project demonstrates the feasibility of using a rain barrel water collection system and encourages the use of native plants to reduce water consumption. City Farmer is now one of a dozen compost demonstration gardens in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley. Director Michael Levenston is the creator of City Farmer: Canada's Office of Urban Agriculture, a comprehensive website devoted to promoting urban agriculture.

For more information, contact: #801 - 318 Homer St., Vancouver, BC V6B 2V3 Tel: (604) 685-5832 Hotline: (604) 736-2250 E-mail: [cityfarm@unixg.ubc.ca](mailto:cityfarm@unixg.ubc.ca) Web Site: [www.cityfarmer.ca](http://www.cityfarmer.ca)

**CASE STUDY 8: COMPOSTING COUNCIL OF CANADA (TORONTO)**

The Composting Council of Canada is a national non-profit organization that serves to advocate for and advance the use of composting to government, industry and the public. The Council aims to support municipal and industrial composting systems, provide a national information network, develop markets for compost, sponsor research and educate the public. The membership is diverse, including operators of compost systems, waste-management experts, public interest groups, research organizations, compost system manufacturers and designers and government branches. The Council hosts an annual National Conference and Meeting. The Council also sponsors National Composting Awareness week.

For more information, contact: 16 rue Northumberland St., Toronto ON M6H 1P7 Tel: (416) 535-0240 Fax: (416) 536-9892 E-mail: [ccc@compost.org](mailto:ccc@compost.org)

## Urban Food Production Technologies

*City Farmer is one of the country's oldest urban agriculture organizations. Established in the 1970's, City Farmer has long advocated for homegrown, community food production and efficient use of resources to do so.*

## Chapter Two

have the diversity, stability and resilience of natural ecosystems" (Barrs, 1997: 40). Permaculture is organic, uses wastes as resources, maximizes vertical and horizontal space, places emphasis on site design, and requires low energy input. Permaculture represents a philosophy, a system of ethics, and ecologically restorative techniques enabling farmers to use the land sustainably. Permaculture in an urban context is designed to reverse the global tendency of consumptive cities toward more productive, self-reliant and sustaining urban ecosystems. Groups such as the Environmental Youth Alliance and Eco-Initiatives use permaculture as guiding principles of land reclamation and urban gardening.

Attempts to publicly disseminate the concept of permaculture are underway. In

both rural areas and urban centres across Canada, institutes and networks promote a permaculture approach through research, courses, workshops and reference centres.

There are as many varieties and techniques in food production as there are individuals and groups to experiment them. While community organizations employ alternative techniques, often it is research bodies, municipal branches or commercial ventures that are more likely to possess the resources to experiment with a wide range of methods to food production.

*There are as many varieties and techniques in food production as there are individuals and groups to experiment with them.*





**CASE STUDY 9: CAN-AG (WESTERN CANADA)**

Can-Ag has been conducting a 5-year study with the University of Alberta into sustainable urban agriculture and organic systems. Their garden investigates soil practices that promote sustainability and models of good stewardship practices. One of the issues this garden is currently addressing is manure management. Using composted manure, Can-Ag is experimenting with different manures to test crop responses, yields and quantities. Another project explores natural ways to amend soil contaminated with petroleum by-products. Soil issues are the link between Can-Ag and the community.

Can-Ag promotes gardens as the linkage between soil, plants and peoples' health. They offer their project research to groups, helping them grow healthy soil while growing their gardens. They also work with community groups to design, create and maintain community gardens. Currently Can-Ag is working with 10 other gardens in the Edmonton region to initiate a community gardening network.

For more information, contact: Susan Penston, 14809 119th Ave. Edmonton, AB T5L 2N9  
Tel: (403) 434-0400 Fax: (403) 482-1260 E-mail: [canag@planet.eon.org](mailto:canag@planet.eon.org)

## Urban Food Production Technologies

*"In the 20th century urban growth has reached unprecedented levels in most parts of the world. In three recent decades alone, the urban population in developed countries doubled, from 448 million in 1950 to 875 million in 1990. In the same period the urban population in developing countries more than quintupled, from 280 million to 1.6 billion. In 1990, 33% of the world's population was living in cities."* (Koc *et al*, 1999: 1)



## Chapter Two



## C O N T A C T      G R O U P S

### URBAN FOOD PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES

#### Annex Organics

200 Eastern Ave.  
Toronto, ON M5A 1J1  
Tel: (416)363-6441  
Fax: (416)363-0474  
Email: annexorganics@hotmail.com  
Lauren Baker, Tracey Loverock

*An market gardening enterprise that uses rooftops, hydroponics and living machines. They specialize in wet waste management, composting and organic production.*

#### Can-Ag

14809 119th Ave.  
Edmonton, AB T5L 2N9  
Tel: (403) 434-0400  
Fax: (403) 482-1260  
Email: canag@planet.eon.org  
Susan Penstone

*This organization works with the University of Alberta to study soil systems and food production.*

#### City Farmer

#801 - 318 Homer St.,  
Vancouver BC V6B 2V3  
Tel: (604) 685-5832  
Hotline: (604)736-2250  
Email: cityfarm@unixg.ubc.ca  
Web Site: www.cityfarmer.ca  
Michael Levenston

*City Farmers hosts the compost education and demonstration garden for City of Vancouver. It is also the home of Canada's Office of Urban Agriculture.*

#### Composting Council of Canada

16 rue Northumberland St.  
Toronto ON M6H 1P7  
Tel:(416)535-0240  
Fax: (416)536-9892  
Email: ccc@compost.org

*National organization which advocates the use of composting to government, industry and the public. Holds annual conference on composting and sponsors Composting Awareness Week.*

#### Crow Compost

61 Beachview Crescent  
Toronto, ON M4E 2L6  
Tel: (416) 691-8200  
E-mail: crowsnest@intradigital.com

*An enterprise specializing in urban composting.*

#### Eco-Initiatives

5590 Sherbrook St. W  
Montreal, PQ H4A 1W3  
Tel: (514) 484-4129  
Fax: (514) 484-4277  
E-mail: ecoini@cam.org

*This organization works in several areas including: community gardening, a sharing backyard program, and a CSA project. They have partnered with community health clinics to focus on pre-natal nutrition and health.*

#### Environmental Youth Alliance

PO Box 34097 Station D  
Vancouver, BC V6J 4M1  
Tel: (604) 689-4463  
Fax: (604) 689-4242  
Doug Ragan  
laragan@hotmail.com

*The Environmental Youth Alliance are the stewards of the Cottonwood Youth Garden, a permaculture demonstration garden and training site for youth skill development projects. They have also built a rooftop garden. They are currently exploring partnership initiatives with southern counterparts in Mexico around food security issues.*

#### LifeCycles

2175 Dowler Place  
Victoria BC V8T 4H2  
Tel: (250) 383-5800  
Fax: (250) 386-3449  
Email: lifecycles@coastnet.com  
Linda Geggie

*This community food security organization coordinates school gardening projects, community gardening training, a CSA cooperative, a demo site and the regional Food Roundtable*

#### Mouvement pour L'Agriculture Biologique – Region Metropolitaine

#2 - 4560 de Bellechase  
Montreal, PQ  
Tel: (514) 872-6363  
Fax: (514) 872-4585

#### Oxfam Canada

300-294 Albert St.,  
Ottawa, ON K1P 6E6  
Tel: (613)237-5236  
Fax: (613) 237-0524  
Email: enquire@oxfam.ca  
Web Site: www.oxfam.ca

*An international development agency, Oxfam works on global and local initiatives in the area of food security. There are 7 regional offices working in close partnerships with communities. They are solid contacts for food security initiatives across Canada (see list in Food Education section for details).*

## C O N T A C T   G R O U P S

### Permaculture Community Action Worknet

104 Bridlewood Blvd.  
Agincourt, ON M1T 1R1  
Tel: (416) 497-5746  
Email: mulchman@web.net  
Richard Griffith

*This non-profit promotes permaculture education throughout Ontario and offers courses on permaculture, design, synergistic agriculture and its urban applications.*

### Victoria Compost Education Centre

c/o 1923 Fernwood Rd  
Victoria, BC V8T 2Y6  
Tel: (250) 386-WORM  
*A composting resource and demonstration site in Victoria.*

## Urban Food Production Technologies

### Vancouver Permaculture Network

Tel: (604) 589-7275  
E-mail: hwaldock@alternatives.com,  
clyford@alternatives.com  
*A loose network of gardeners, landscapers and architects who provide public education, permaculture workshops and coordinate workparties in the city's community gardens.*

### Sowing

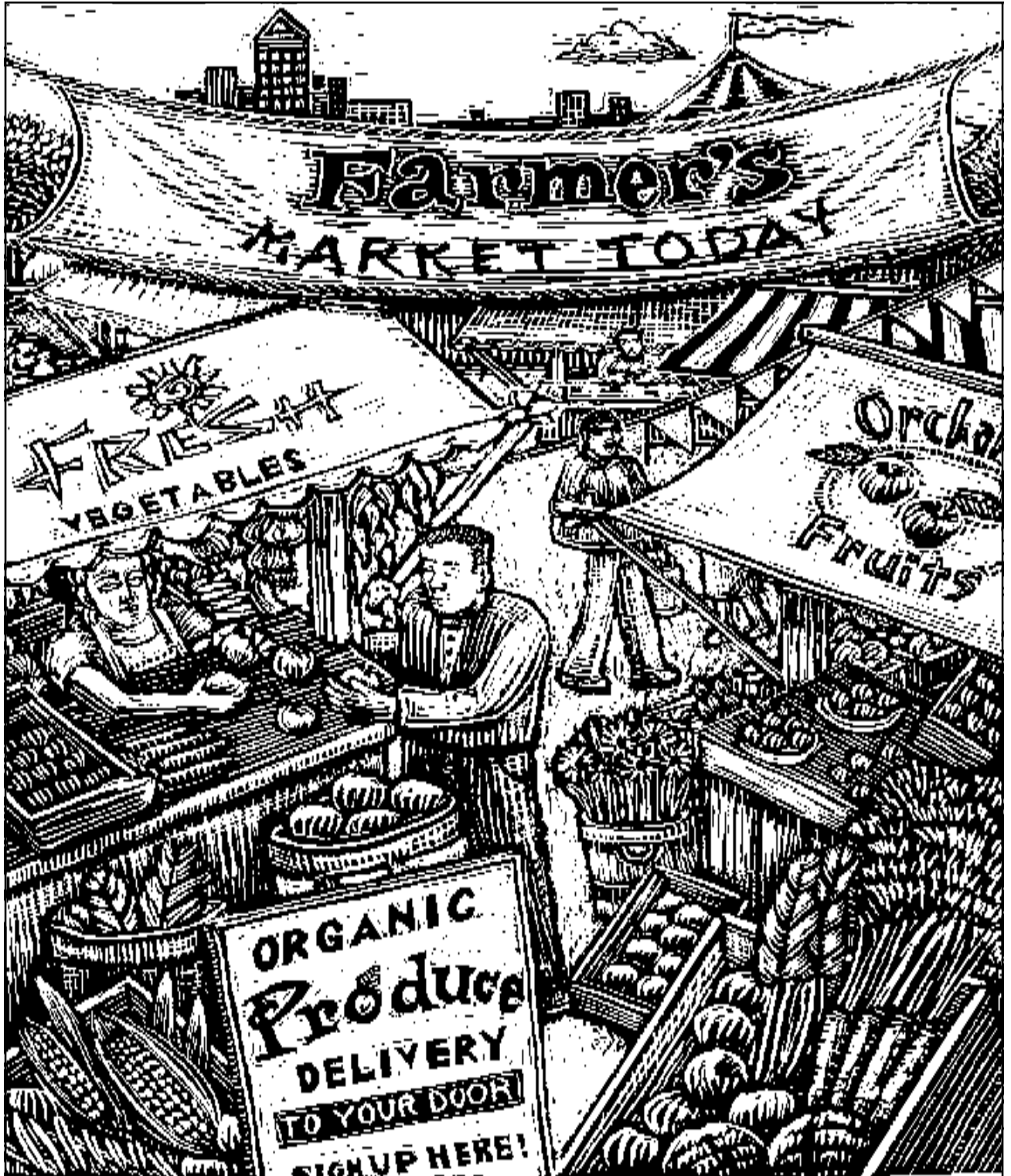
In the stilled place that once was a road down  
from the town to the river, and where the lives of marriages grew  
a house, cistern and barn, flowers, the tilted stone of borders,  
and the deeds of thier lives ran to neglect, and honeysuckle  
and then the fire overgrew it all, I walk heavy  
with seed, spreading on the cleared hill the beginnings  
of green, clover and grass to be pasture. Between  
history's death upon the place and the trees that would  
have come

I claim, and act, and am mingled in the fate of the world.

—Wendell Berry



# ALTERNATIVE FOOD DISTRIBUTION



## Chapter Three

*Community supported agriculture (CSA) is a form of direct marketing that provides an alternative method of securing food, connects rural and urban communities and sustains agriculture in regions of rapid urbanization.*

## ALTERNATIVE FOOD DISTRIBUTION



### III. ALTERNATIVE FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Alternative forms of purchasing and marketing agriculture goods are quickly taking root across Canada. Mechanisms such as farmers' markets and Community-Supported agriculture initiatives attempt to reverse global trends by emphasizing the capacity for local production to meet local need. They operate to shorten the food chain, reducing potential disruptions beyond community control. Buying clubs and good food box programs work to increase community food security by pooling resources and stretching the purchasing dollar. The overall emphasis of such initiatives is feeding people rather than treating food as another commodity to be sold unaccountable or wasted, depending on market economies and profitability.

#### ALTERNATIVE MARKETING

Groups and communities are building direct links between farmers and eaters nationwide. Small producers, finding barriers to selling to wholesalers and retailers, and community members, seeking local (and in some cases organic) products are creating venues and mechanisms for alternative forms of distribution through community based marketing. Farmers markets, direct farm gate sales, and diffenet forms of community supported agriculture are flourishing.

*"The overall emphasis of such initiatives is feeding people rather than treating food as another commodity to be sold unaccountable or wasted, depending on market economies and profitability."*

#### COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

Across the country consumers are increasingly able to obtain their food circumventing the mainstream food system. Community supported agriculture (CSA) is a form of direct marketing that provides an alternative method of securing food, connects rural and urban communities and sustains agriculture in regions of rapid urbanization. Community supported agriculture is a mechanism of a local food system which lends itself to building community food security.

Although the CSA movement began concurrently in Europe and Japan thirty years ago, the first documented CSA farm in North America was the Indian Line started in 1985 in Northeastern USA. The 90's have witnessed substantial growth. Currently it is estimated that 600 CSAs are now operating in the USA and Canada.

In its simplest definition, CSA is a marketing arrangement whereby the farmer enters into pre-arranged agreement with a group of local consumers. Each consumer purchases a "share" at the beginning of the season; the collective share covers the costs of farming and provides a fair wage for the farmer. In return the shareholders receive a weekly supply of vegetable harvest throughout the growing season. Implicit in this agreement is shared risk and increased interdependency between the producer and consumer.

Most CSAs have between 35 - 200 members. A study of 14 Canadian CSAs observed that share prices varied between \$200 - \$400, depending on box size, per 14-16 week growing season. CSA costs seem to be reasonable. One detailed three-year study demonstrated that shareholders would have paid 37% more at their supermarkets for an equal amount of conventionally grown food.



**CASE STUDY 10: FOODSHARE (TORONTO)**

Founded in 1985, FoodShare was mandated to coordinate emergency food services. Over the years, FoodShare has broadened its focus to look at the entire food system - how food is produced, distributed and consumed. The outcome is a comprehensive approach to food, an approach that encompasses issues of hunger, nutrition, poverty, social justice and the environment. Looking for long term solutions to hunger, FoodShare has implemented food-access programs such as co-operative buying clubs (See below for information on the Good Food Box), collective kitchens, community gardens and food programs.

FoodShare promotes innovative programs in the areas of community gardening and community kitchens. FoodShare's Neighbours Growing Together trains community members in community processes and horticultural techniques to plan multi-use gardens for vegetable cultivation. FoodShare offers guidance and support to schools that wish to plan a garden as an outdoor classroom.

Through the FoodLink hotline FoodShare provides food service referrals to over 500 callers a month. To move beyond food banks, FoodShare is currently updating the hotline with information on over 1700 food services in the Metro area including pre-natal support programs, nutrition counseling, community gardens and the Good Food Box program. The Hotline system is being mapped digitally to link the callers' location with the range of services available in their area.

FoodShare, in partnership with the public health sector, offers training to agency staff and community volunteers to enable them to set up community kitchens in their neighborhood. FoodShare provides a complete information package on establishing a community kitchen in addition to coordinating monthly support meetings for the 40 plus network and sponsoring an annual conference-What's Cooking.

Through job training and creation, FoodShare/Field to Table partnership projects seek to address the question of income. The "Just Grow It" program employs 14 young people to learn about gardening and horticulture through hands-on training. Focus on Food is an employment training program for low-income women; some graduates are employed in the Field to Table Catering Company. The training program and catering company share use of Field to Table's large industrial kitchen; the "Toronto Kitchen Incubator" is an initiative that allows small business to operate without incurring huge capital expenses. This "incubation" model is extended to other community organizations as FoodShare sponsors and offers in-kind support to groups such as Greenest City and Annex Organics.

FoodShare often plays an umbrella role for Metro wide initiatives such as organizing a network for the 70 plus active Metro community gardens and establishing a Metro community gardening land trust. Working with groups such as the Toronto Food Policy Council and the Food 2002 roundtable, FoodShare advocates for the redistribution of income toward low-income communities and alternative economic development that would allow people to buy healthy, local food. FoodShare believes that practical initiatives must be complemented with political action, education and advocacy.

In 1997, FoodShare put out several how-to-do publications: The Good Food Box Guide, How Does Our Garden Grow - A Guide to Community Gardening and The ABCs of Baby Food Train-the-Trainer Manual. They are available for \$20 each.

*For more information, contact: Debbie Field or Kathryn Scharfe, FoodShare, 238 Queen St. W., Toronto, ON M5V 1Z7 Tel: (416) 392-6653 Fax: (416) 392-6650 E-mail: fdshare@web.net*

## Alternative Food Production Technologies



## Chapter Three

*A farmers' market is a place where a number of local farmers and vendors come together to sell a wide variety of goods including fruits, vegetables, herbs, baked goods, preserves, honey, fresh flowers and crafts.*

There are basically four models of Community supported agriculture. 1) The subscription CSA is farmer-driven; the farmer organizes the CSA and makes most of the management decisions. 2) A shareholder CSA is one initiated by a consumer group looking for a farmer to grow what they want. The primary decisions lay with the consumer. 3) When farmers pool their resources to supply customers, a farmer cooperative CSA is formed. This model allows the CSA to offer a wider variety of products. In this arrangement it is not necessary for a smaller farmer to devote space to land intensive, low-value crops such as pumpkins or for the larger farmer to become involved with labour intensive crops like carrots. 4) A variation on this theme is the farmer-consumer cooperative whereby the land and resources are co-owned and food is co-produced.

The advantages of the CSA model are clear. Economically the CSA allows for the risk of food production to be shared among many; the access to capital decreases the farmers' reliance on government subsidy or bank loans. The CSA contributes to the local economy by providing jobs and establishing stable markets for regional produce. On the environmental front, most CSA farms are organic, contributing to the overall sustainability of the region. The CSA model also reduces energy waste in form of transportation and mechanization associated with modern farming. Socially, the CSA model supports community development in many forms. Through work parties and harvest events, a relationship between the urban consumer and rural producer is fostered. By eating locally the shareholders gain a greater understanding of seasons, food and its production. Fresh chemical free vegetables are clearly beneficial to the health of the consumer. A survey of consumer at Twin Oak Farms CSA in Saskatchewan reveals that 94% of shareholders join CSAs to obtain fresh vegetables. "It seems like people are willing to forego the quest for the cheapest food possible if they perceive other values are being upheld"

(Fieldhouse, 1996: 46)

The challenge to CSA development is the considerable effort and skill required in marketing the concept, organizing the production and facilitating membership. The potential success of CSA rest upon the ability to form a core group of consumers, increase consumer involvement in the farm process and run the operation efficiently.



### FARMERS' MARKETS

A farmers' market is a place where a number of local farmers and vendors come together to sell a wide variety of goods including fruits, vegetables, herbs, baked goods, preserves, honey, fresh flowers and crafts. This direct marketing mechanism is making a considerable come back to Canadian cities and towns. At the turn of the century most cities and towns had at least one farmers market. The number of farmers' markets began to decline in the 1920's with the advent of the modern supermarket and the connection between food production and consumption began to dissolve. Although farmers' markets declined after 1940, they never disappeared. Today Canadian cities are witnessing the rebirth of the

*"Today Canadian cities are witnessing the rebirth of farmers' market."*

farmers' market. In British Columbia the number of farmers' markets has increased from less than 15 in the early 1980s to more than 65 in 1996. The Alberta Farmers' Markets coordinate over 100 markets across the province. The boom includes expansion in size as well as increase in number. The number of vendors in the Duncan, BC farmers' market has risen from 15 in 1994 to 60 in 1997. The farmers' market in Kitchener Ontario has grown to over 125 vendors. This growth has been supported by the corresponding number of customers. "Over 5000 people went through our Saturday

**CASE STUDY 11: A SEED (MONTREAL)**

The Montreal-based organization Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Development (A SEED PQ) is dedicated to research and public education on issues relating to the environment and social justice. Created in 1992, A SEED has focused its actions principally on food security and ecological transportation projects. A SEED has two agricultural initiatives. It coordinates a network of Community-Supported agriculture projects in Quebec and initiated Together in the Green Zone, a project to collectively garden fallow land on the outskirts of Montreal, providing food to low-income families and gardening training for employees.

In 1995, A SEED began a CSA project with one farm; it has now grown to coordinate a network of 29 farms with over 2000 sharers. A SEED plays a central coordinating role through outreach, public education and membership development. A SEED markets the CSA model through pamphlet distribution, press releases, and articles for the newspapers and interviews on the radio. They produce Le Toupinambour Hurlant, a news bulletin published quarterly to inform the community of its activities.

By maintaining a directory of CSAs, A SEED connects potential sharers with CSA farms. A SEED helps sharers group by neighborhood allowing for coordinated drop-off points and minimal transport time and cost to the farms. If there is more interest than available membership space on one CSA, A SEED will coordinate a community meeting and help potential sharers through the initial steps of setting up a new CSA. Sharers may contribute to the workings of the A SEED network through a voluntary \$5 levy included in farm share prices.

A SEED maintains the standards of the network through the selection of farms. To join the network potential CSA farmers first attend an information system and go through a review process. All farms pay a \$30 membership fee. Those that use the listings and publicity services contribute 2% of their CSA income to A SEED. All farms in the network must be organic and supply local produce. The A SEED network does take farms that are in the process of making the transition to organic certification; the CSA support facilitates and eases this transition. The average farm is family run and has between 30-80 sharers; some farms employ 4-5 people, with the largest having 150 sharers. Although CSA prices are cheaper than produce in stores, A SEED and several farms are exploring CSA models that allow for low-income shares to make CSA participation more accessible.

In the next year, the CSA network hopes to increase the number of participating farms, publish a book and video on the CSA experience, search for stable funding and work with "core share groups" to build community capacity in the areas of organizing work days, social events, newsletters, and meetings.

A SEED has put out several resources in the area of food security available for a reasonable price. Publications include: Justice sans faim - A Montreal Guide to Ecological and Socially Just Food Choices, Coffee with a Cause - A Guide to Fair Trade, and Seedlinks, the international magazine of A SEED.

For more information, contact: Elizabeth Hunter, A SEED PQ, 3rd Floor, 3647 University Ave., Montreal, PQ H3A 2B3 Tel: (514) 398-8969 Fax: (514) 398-8976 E-mail: A SEED@cam.org

## Alternative Food Production Technologies

*"Sustainable urban food systems inherently enhance local ecosystems and come with a guarantee that all residents have the opportunity to benefit from them." (Hamm & Baron, 1999: 57)*

## Chapter Three



### C A S E S T U D Y

#### **CASE STUDY 12: EAST VANCOUVER FARMERS' MARKET**

Established in 1995, the market was the brainchild of a partnership endeavor by community organizations and community residents to create a food-oriented community development project. Initially sponsored by FarmFolk/CityFolk, it is now an independent non-profit organization managed by a part time staff person. The market features over 40 vendors, attracting between 3000-5000 customers a week for a 22 week period between May and October. One of the aims of the market is to work closely with the community. To this end, the market supports several education and action initiatives. It supported a local health board project "Healthiest Babies Possible" through a vendor-food coupon program for low-income pregnant women. Table space has been made available for backyard gardeners and a free toy exchange for individuals to share their extra bounty with the public. Free spaces are reserved every week for community agencies to educate the public about their services. The market arranges to have a registered nutritionist and a Master Gardener come monthly to give the public free advice. In addition the market produces a monthly newsletter The Bumper Crop. It rounds out the market experience with recipes, community events and information about farming, horticulture and food systems.

*For more information, contact: Devorah Kahn, East Vancouver Farmers' Market, 3242 Woodland Drive, Vancouver, BC V5N 3R4 Tel: (604) 879-3276 Fax: (604) 875-9631*

#### **CASE STUDY 13: ONTARIO NATURAL FOOD CO-OP**

The mission of the Ontario Natural Food Co-op (ONFC) is to promote and maintain an alternative co-operative distribution system of organic, natural and ecologically sound foods and household products for member organizations. Organized in 1975, ONFC is member owned and operated. ONFC sells to both buying clubs and the commercial market.

Part of ONFC's mandate is to help develop and maintain consumer food co-ops and buying clubs. It supports over 330 buying clubs in 100 communities across Central and Eastern Canada. Each buying club must be made up of at least 5 adult members; the average buying club has 10-15 families. ONFC calculates that through the buying clubs ONFC provides food for 8-10,000 individuals. In addition to helping groups set up buying clubs, they maintain a list of buying clubs and co-ops open to new membership. Members are provided with the Guide to Food-Buying Clubs. Co-ops and clubs invest in ONFC to finance the inventory, equipment, two trucks and 33,000 square feet warehouse required for food distribution, as well as expenses associated with co-op education. Money is raised by a loan levy, currently 4% collected on each invoice. The first \$10 of the levy goes to pay a nonrefundable membership fee required by provincial law. The rest of the loan is refundable upon group's resignation as a member.

ONFC continues to work towards educating the public about the cooperative alternative. They produce a quarterly newsletter Food for Thought with information on food security issues, recipes, cooperative model education, event/conference information, permaculture, sustainable agriculture techniques and more. Through educating the public and maintaining its cooperative status, ONFC offers a solid example of an alternative distribution system.

*For more information, contact: Kim De Lallo, Ontario Natural Food Co-op, 70 Fima Crescent, Etobicoke, ON M8W 4V9 Tel: (416) 503-1144 ext. 33 or 1-800-387-0354 Fax: (416) 503-2848 E-mail: onfc@pathcom.com*



market on a good day. That is an estimated 20 fold increase in 6 years" observes Eva Durance, president of Penticton BC's farmers market.

Behind this dramatic revival is a straightforward set of factors. Citizens are concerned about the quality and security of their food, the health of the environment and the vitality of local communities. A study by Thompson (1994), among others, have found that freshness is by far the leading reason why consumers patronize markets. Lyson *et al* (1996) notes that while convenience remains important to consumers, it now competes with a demand for safer and more nutritious food.

***"...farmers' markets thrive because they offer, among other benefits, a sense of social connection."***

Farmers' markets also create economic and social opportunities contributing to the building of community. Christopher Shirley (1995) argues that farmers' markets thrive because they offer, among other benefits, a sense of social connection. Urban consumers have an opportunity to talk to the growers and farmers; they can learn about the process of food production and the larger farming community in the region. Many community organizations use the market space to educate the public about issues of social concern. The market becomes a weekly event - a place to listen to music or socialize with neighbours. The sense of connection is further enhanced by the knowledge that the local economy is benefiting.

Beyond enhancing business opportunities of vendors, the market plays an important "incubating" role. Vendors can de-

velop business skills and entrepreneurship without investing considerable capital; they can assess consumer interest and solicit feedback. The market can be a mechanism that bridges the informal and formal sectors. For part-time growers and vendors the market provides supplementary income; an urban market gardener in Saskatoon supplements his income by \$214 a week on average, over a 13-week period.

While they cannot provide all the goods that consumers want, both Community-Shared agriculture initiatives and farmers' markets meet many domestic needs with domestic supply. These variations of direct marketing have potential for rebuilding and re-valuing the role of local family farm, providing nutritious safe food, sustaining the local economy and building community through shared effort and participation. These alternative forms of marketing are part of a larger strategy to develop secure food sources for Canadian communities.

## **ALTERNATIVE PURCHASING**

Groups and communities across Canada are looking at mechanisms for increasing consumer purchasing power. "By changing our purchasing patterns as consumers, we can help alter the market so that it better reflects the needs and wishes of all consumers, particularly families and individuals with low income" (Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, 1997:18). For some, income is spread thinly to meet basic needs such as rent, transportation, heat and hydro. Little money remains for food. Food co-operatives, buying clubs, Good Food Box programs and community kitchens are all methods for increasing food access through increasing purchasing power.

## **FOOD COOPERATIVES AND BUYING**

# **Alternative Food Production Technologies**

***"By changing our purchasing patterns as consumers, we can help alter the market so that it better reflects the needs and wishes of all consumers, particularly families and individuals with low income"***



## Chapter Three

### C A S E S T U D Y

#### CASE STUDY 14: FIELD TO TABLE (TORONTO)

Field to Table was born out of a 1991 Toronto Food Policy Council initiative to look at the feasibility of bringing together farmers and low-income people in an attempt to address inadequate food access. Working in close partnership with FoodShare, the Good Food Box has become one of Field to Table's most successful projects.

The Good Food Box operates as a large buying club, distributing fresh produce effectively through centralized buying and coordination. Established in 1994 with 40 boxes, Field to Table now packs an average of 4,000 Good Food Boxes each month. Almost 56% of the boxes are sold to people under the poverty line. This success means that over 2000 low-income families are getting a large box of nutritious fresh produce for \$15 per month. The Good Food Box reaches out to different communities with several varieties of boxes ranging from \$15 - \$30: the family Good Food box, the individual Small box, the Caribbean Food box, the certified Organic box, and the senior's Reach for Five Box. The consumer pays only for the cost of the food. FoodShare reports that staff time, warehouse facilities and trucks are subsidized through financial contributions of individuals, government and foundations.

To deliver 4,000 boxes a month requires careful coordination and organization. The process of wholesale buying, billing, order collection, transport coordination, taking inventory, packing and delivering boxes is a considerable job that entails streamline efficiency. The key to sustaining the program is the volunteer support. Volunteers clean and pack the boxes, maintain the packing location and write the newsletter. Every month, on at least four separate days, 160 people come to the Field to Table warehouse to help with the packing.

The project has grown organically, largely through word of mouth and name recognition. Last year the project sold almost \$750,000 worth of produce. The project hopes to increase its sales to 10,000 boxes per month, which would allow Field to Table to engage in further job creation. The success of the project can be measured by the rate at which it is spreading to communities across Canada; many Canadian cities have versions of the program. FoodShare just published "The Good Food Box Guide: How to start a program in your community" to help communities establish this program.

*For more information, contact: Mary Lou Morgan, Field to Table, 200 Eastern Ave., Toronto, ON M5A 1J1 Tel: (416) 363-6441 Fax: (416) 363-0474 E-mail: [ftt@web.net](mailto:ftt@web.net)*





## CLUBS

A food cooperative is made up of a group of people who come together to provide food for themselves and their families. They form an incorporated non-profit organization that has a mandate to buy food at wholesale prices. By doing so cooperatives offer greater control over food quality, price and source. Their sizes may range from small groups of five to ten individuals operating much the same as a food-buying club to large groups of 500 members. Cooperatives are membership-owned and directed. To become a member of a cooperative, individuals may be asked to help with the functioning of the organization or require a financial commitment in form of a refundable loan. A food-buying club is similar to a food co-op insofar as it is a group of people who come together to strengthen their purchasing power. They range in size from 5-50 families or individuals. In a buying club one member distributes the catalogue of goods to purchase, collects orders from families and combines them into one order; this order is then placed monthly or bi-monthly to a wholesale or retail distributor. The total quantity of goods is delivered to one house or a drop-off point. The buying club members are responsible for dividing and distributing the food. The buying-club is a mechanism for saving money through collective purchasing as well as taking on the bulk of the distribution workload.

### THE GOOD FOOD BOX

The "Good Food Box" program is a buying club with a centralized system of purchasing and distributing. Gleaned from self-help models and bulk-purchase consumer movements in countries like India, the Good Food Box program combines the economies of scale involved in bulk purchasing with extensive community involvement. Initiated in Canada by Toronto's FoodShare, the Good Food Box program is a model for at least ten other food box programs across Ontario;

several organizations in other Canadian urban centres have also initiated a Good Food Box program or are in the process of developing them. Organized into groups of 8-10 individuals or families, customers pay a minimum of \$15 in advance for a box. Community coordinators place the order collectively and three weeks later, receive a box of fresh fruit and vegetables at a lower price than if purchased at the supermarket. Coordinated by community agencies, staff

***Community kitchens are groups of usually four to six individuals who come together to share the cost of meal preparation.***

buy fresh, top quality produce from wholesalers and, where possible, directly from local farmers. The food is then boxed by volunteers and delivered to pre-arranged community drop-off points. An informative newsletter is also included in the box, offering

cooking suggestions, nutritional information, recipes and updates regarding the coordinating community agency. See the Case Study on Field to Table for more information.



### COMMUNITY KITCHENS

Many food access projects do not fit into firm categories of purchasing, marketing, distribution or food production. As organizations experiment with methods to increase access to food, they tend to build on and combine existing models into new forms, encompassing several elements of the food system. Community kitchens provide such a case. In part buying clubs, community kitchens may be subsidized by food distribution agencies. They may plant and harvest a community garden as a source of fresh vegetables. However kitchens obtain their food, they are emerging as a unique self-help approach that enables individuals to feed themselves and their families in a dig-

## Alternative Food Production Technologies

***The "Good Food Box" program is a buying club with a centralized system of purchasing and distributing.***

***Gleaned from self-help models and bulk-purchase consumer movements in countries like India, the Good Food Box program combines the economies of scale involved in bulk purchasing with extensive community involvement.***

## Chapter Three

*In 1986 Montreal established the first community kitchen in Canada. There are now over 300 community kitchens currently running in the Province of Quebec alone. There are more than 140 operating in British Columbia, while dozens more are sprouting up all across the country.*

### C A S E S T U D Y

#### CASE STUDY 15: REGROUPEMENT DES CUISINES COLLECTIVES DU QUEBEC

Founded in 1990, Le Regroupement des Cuisines Collectives du Quebec is a coalition promoting the emergence and consolidation of collective kitchens through out the province. The coalition provides training, referral, information and networking services to its members. RCCQ represents its members to the media and funding agencies. It advocates for greater food security and gives the collective kitchen movement greater visibility throughout Quebec.

For more information, contact: 1605 rue de Champlain, Montreal PQ H2L 2S5 Tel: (514) 529-3448 Fax: (514) 529-1359 E-mail: [rccq@cam.org](mailto:rccq@cam.org)

#### CASE STUDY 16: COMMUNITY KITCHENS VANCOUVER

Sponsored by BC Gas in partnership with the Food Bank, REACH Community Health Centre and Vancouver Health Board, Community Kitchens Vancouver provides a model for a centralized resource person who works to develop community kitchens citywide. Working with over 45 kitchens the coordinator educates groups about the community kitchen model and how to start one plus workshops on canning and food preservation. This project is also exploring ways to hook community kitchens up with community gardens and farmers' markets initiatives. One of the goals of Community Kitchens Vancouver is to create a provincial network of the 140 plus community kitchens in BC; this process has just begun with a newsletter.

For more information, contact: Diane Collins, 1145 Commercial Drive, Vancouver BC V5L 3X3 Tel: (604) 254-8300 Fax: (604) 254-8789 E-mail: [massyn@uniserv.com](mailto:massyn@uniserv.com)



nified manner. Community kitchens are groups of usually four to six individuals who come together to share the cost of meal preparation. Most groups meet twice a month - first, to plan menus and grocery lists, and second, to cook five or six meals to take home to their families. Each group decides on the focus of the group, how it will run and what kind of food will be cooked. Although community kitchens operate differently across communities and groups, they are often supported by community centres, churches or community organizations. In some cities, community organizations coordinate the kitchens and train facilitators to lead them. Other groups are completely self-directed. There may be a community kitchen resource person linked to the local health department to help groups start up. Canadians adapted the community kitchen model

from Peru. In the late 1970s, inflation in Peru was so severe that food became unaffordable and malnutrition was rampant. Groups of poor urban Peruvian women took matters into their own hands; groups of 20-50 women would pool their resources to buy food in larger quantities, negotiate lower prices and cook for their communities in comedores populares. In 1978, there were 100 kitchens; by 1989, there were 2,300; in 1998 there are approximately 10,000 kitchens feeding about three million people in cities all over Peru. A 1992 study demonstrated that two-thirds of the comedores populares prepare meal covering 85 - 90% of daily caloric needs and a full days worth of protein; they reduce family food expenditure by 50%. The comedores populares create a space for women to take on management and leadership roles while building a sense of community empowerment.

Community kitchens play a similar role in Canadian communities. In 1986 Montreal established the first community kitchen in Canada. There are now over 300 community kitchens currently running in the Province of Quebec alone. There are more than 140 operating in British Columbia, while dozens more are sprouting up

all across the country. In Toronto more than 70 community kitchens have been established in the past few years. The rapid growth of community kitchens speaks of their advantages. They provide an economical advantage as individuals pool their resources to buy in bulk; they ensure that families have nutritious food prepared at the end of the month when money may be low. Cooking several meals at once in a group not only saves time but also creates a space to socialize, talk and share. 57% of participants in a community kitchens in Kamloops, BC felt that the social benefits of the program were the greatest. Community kitchens contribute to increased skills in cooking, improved self-esteem, increased access to nutritious food and enhanced social support system, making them part of a community solution to the global crisis in food management.



The role of community-based organizations in facilitating a collective move towards alternative methods of obtaining food varies both across communities and the range of strategies. In some cases, such as A SEED's CSA network and Field to Table's Good Food Box program,

the community organization plays a central role in outreach, management and coordination. Likewise, community kitchens are mostly commonly hosted, coordinated and promoted by a community group. On the other hand, CSA enterprises, buying clubs or co-ops may often be the initiative of a family, a group of friends or another type of informal community group. Farmers' markets may be revitalized in the community due to farmers' initiatives or municipal planning. Alternative marketing and purchasing strategies are not the domain of community organizations. Rather community-based organizations are one of many groups who are engaging in and promoting a movement toward a more localized and equitable food system.

## Alternative Food Production Technologies

*The rapid growth of community kitchens speaks of their advantages. They provide an economical advantage as individuals pool their resources to buy in bulk; they ensure that families have nutritious food prepared at the end of the month when money may be low.*

## Chapter Three

*“A recent study in Germany found that the ingredients of a container of yogurt (including the milk, strawberries, and the cardboard and ink for the container) moved more than 11 000 km before reaching the consumer but could easily have been produced within 80 km of the consumer (Norberg-Hodge, 1994 cited in Perkins, 1999: 60)*

## C O N T A C T G R O U P S

### ALTERNATIVE FOOD DISTRIBUTION

#### A SEED Quebec

3647 University, 3rd Floor  
Montreal, PQ H3A 2B3  
Tel: (514) 398-8969  
Fax: (514) 398-8976  
Email: aseed@cam.org  
Elizabeth Hunter

*A non-profit organization dedicated to research and public education. Its actions focus primarily on food security and ecological transportation projects. They are working in areas of fair coffee trade, Community supported agriculture and community gardening.*

#### Alberta Farmers' Markets

17507 Fort Rd  
RR #6  
Edmonton, AB T5B 4K3  
Tel: (403) 415-2313/422-1789  
Fax: (403) 422-6096  
Simone Demers Collins

*This branch centrally administers over 100 farmers' markets in province. It provides information and resources on direct marketing.*

#### Alberta Market Gardeners' Association

CDC-S, SS 4  
Brooks, AB T1R 1E6  
Tel: (403) 362-1309

#### Bathurst Healthy Communities

37 Rue Centenaire  
Edmunston, NB E3V 3H5  
*This group initiates and coordinates several community food projects in building sustainable communities.*

#### Better Beginnings for Kingston Children

134 Elliot Ave.,  
Kingston, ON K7K 2P9  
Tel: (613) 542-2813  
*This organization supports alternative distribution methods through a Good Food Box program and community kitchen.*

#### British Columbia Direct Marketing Association

Building 20, 8801 E. Saanich Rd.  
Sydney, BC V8L 1H3  
Tel: (250) 656-0941  
E-mail: brent.warner@gems8.gov.bc.ca  
Web Site: www.agf.gov.bc  
*This branch coordinates direct marketing in three BC regions.*

#### Capital Health Region Prevention Services - Nutrition Program

3995 Quadra St.  
Victoria, BC V8X 1J8  
Tel: (250) 744-5120  
Fax: (250) 479-3413  
E-mail: lorie.way@caphealth.org  
Lorie Way  
*Public health services provide support and resources for community kitchens and community gardens in the Greater Victoria region.*

#### Child Hunger and Education Program

Room 210 - 230 Ave. R South  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0Z9  
Tel: (306) 655-4635  
Fax: (306) 655-5895  
Karen Archibald  
*Established in 1989, CHEP is involved with school feeding programs, a traveling market, coordinating community kitchens, gardening a community patch, and operating a good food box program.*

#### Collective Kitchens

Community Health Resources  
Calgary Regional Health Authority  
PO Box 4016  
Station C, 320-17th Ave. SW  
Calgary, AB T2T 5T1  
Tel: (403) 228-7420  
Fax: (403) 228-8212  
*A community nutritionist serves as central resource and coordinating person to help get community kitchen groups started and provide resources.*

#### Collective Kitchens

Community Care and Public Health  
Dickinsfield Amity House  
9213-146 Ave.  
Edmonton, AB T5E 2J9  
Tel: (403) 478-5022  
Fax: (403) 473-8979  
Diane Thursby  
*Community nutritionist coordinates and provides support for community kitchens in Edmonton area.*

#### Community Development Council of Quinte

C4-344 Front St.  
Belleville, ON K8N 5M4  
Tel: (613) 968-2466  
Fax: (613) 968-2251  
E-mail: cdc@lks.net  
Web Site: www.lks.net/~cdc  
Roni Summers  
*CDC coordinates educating the public about Good food and good lunch box programs, community allotment gardens, collective kitchens and food co-ops. They are part of a partnership project Planting Seeds for Change which builds and harvests school gardens for emergency food aid programs. They coordinate a gleaning project called Second Helping. CDC is an active member of the regional Task Force on Hunger and conducts anti-poverty research.*

### Community Kitchens Vancouver

1145 Commercial Drive  
Vancouver BC V5L 3X3  
Tel: (604)254-8300  
Fax: (604)254-8789  
Email: massyn@uniserv.com  
Diane Collins

*A partnership project with the health board to provide one central city resource on community kitchens.*

### Dartmouth Farmers' Market

Dartmouth Downtown Development Corporation  
12 Queen St.  
Dartmouth, NS B2Y 1E7  
Tel: (902) 466-2997  
Fax: (902) 465-2233

*This producer-only market will be incorporated in the plan to build a "people place" on the Dartmouth waterfront.*

### Dartmouth Parents Resource Centre

47 Wentworth St.  
Dartmouth, NS B2Y 2T1  
Tel: (902) 464-2203

*A family food resource with a soup kitchen, basic shelf program and community kitchen.*

### East Vancouver Farmers' Market

3242 Woodland Drive  
Vancouver, BC V5N 3R4  
Tel: (604) 879-3276  
Fax: (604) 875-9631

Devorah Kahn  
Initially a community economic development project, market flourished with over 40 vendors, educational activities and strong community links.

### Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation

#810-10117 Jasper Ave.  
Edmonton, AB T5J 1W8  
Tel: (403) 424-7543  
Fax: (403) 425-5911  
Gail Campos

*This community organization runs is a member of the WECAN food co-op, runs a community garden, works with a barter exchange and has a collective kitchen.*

### Field to Table

200 Eastern Ave.,  
Toronto, ON M5A 1J1  
Tel: (416) 363-6441  
Fax: (416)363-0474  
Email: ftt@web.net  
Mary Lou Morgan

*Field to Table runs a Good Food Box program with over 4000 boxes a month in addition to hosting food training projects and an incubator kitchen.*

### Food First

#200 – 107 Seventh St.  
Brandon, MB R7A 3S5  
Tel/Fax: (204) 729-0492  
commonground@mb.sympatico.ca

*A Healthy Communities initiative, this project offered hands-on experience creating and harvesting a garden, collectively cooking and starting a catering company.*

### FoodShare

238 Queen St. W.,  
Toronto, ON M5V 1Z7  
Tel: (416)392-6653  
Fax: (416)392-6650  
Email: fdshare@web.net  
Debbie Field

*With a comprehensive approach, FoodShare serves the community through community gardening, community kitchens, healthy baby and job training projects. It houses the FoodLink Hotline of all Metro Toronto food-related services and plays a significant advocacy and networking role in the region. It also hosts Toronto's Friends of Community Gardening advocacy group.*

### Gravenhurst Food Co-op

RR #2, Box 33A  
Kilworthy, ON P0E 1G0  
Tel: (705) 689-2432  
Fax: (705) 689-8856

*This community group provides healthy low-cost food to the community as well as supporting other ventures such as a community kitchen and garden project.*

### Harvest Collective

877 Westminister Ave.,  
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1B3  
Tel: (204) 772-4359  
Fax: (204) 786-5648

*A food co-op with 200 members.*

### Healthiest Babies Possible

Vancouver/Richmond Health Board  
2610 Victoria Drive  
Vancouver, BC V5N 4L2  
Tel: (604) 872-2511/877-4674  
Fax: (604) 872-2368  
Karin Schreurs, Christina Scheuer

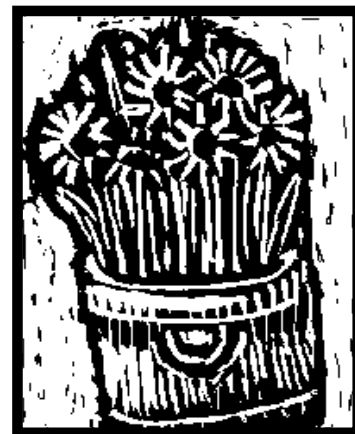
*A community health project working with low-income parents in area of nutrition and lifestyles counseling. They coordinate a Good Food Bag program for 65 families and initiated a community gardening project in the summer of 1998.*

### Kamloops Food Share

South Central Health Unit  
905 Southill St.  
Kamloops, BC V2B 7Z9  
Tel: (250) 372-0815  
Fax: (250) 376-4708  
Laura Kalina

*FoodShare has programs in community kitchens, coordinates 4 community gardens, work with the food bank and spearheads a food policy group.*

## Alternative Food Production Technologies





## Chapter Three



## C O N T A C T      G R O U P S

### Life\*Spin

360 Queens Ave.  
PO Box 2801  
London, ON N6A 4H4  
Tel: (519) 438-8676  
Fax: (519) 438-7983  
E-mail: rbarrs@london.skyscape.net  
Tara McDonald

*Life\*Spin is involved with numerous food security projects to combat hunger and malnutrition. In addition to the Green Market Basket, a food box initiative, Life\*Spin has implemented a school food garden program. Life\*Spin also hosts the London Food Security group.*

### Montreal Community Gardening Program

Recreation, Parks and Community Development Department  
5319 Notre Dame de Grace Ave.,  
Montreal, PQ H4A 1L2  
Tel: (514) 872-6363  
Fax: (514) 872-4585

*The City of Montreal has 73 gardens that are coordinated by the Recreation, Parks and Community Development Department. The City supplies land, equipment, supplies, water and technical support. The Botanical Department offers courses on organic gardening, and has youth and children's horticulture and natural science programs.*

### Nanaimo Food Share

1125 Seafeld Crescent  
Nanaimo, BC V9S 4S1  
Tel: (250) 753-7470  
Trish Fitzpatrick

*Nanaimo FoodShare coordinates programs in food sharing/donations, surplus gleaning, community kitchens and community gardens. It is also connected with hot meal and school nutrition programs.*

### Niagara Peninsula Homes Community Resources

178 King St., 3rd Floor  
Welland, ON L3P 3J5  
Tel: (905) 382-3461/788-0166  
E-mail: babaker@niagara.com  
Web Site: <http://www.nphcr.on.ca>  
Betty Anne Baker

*Niagara Peninsula Homes provides a forum for job training, nutrition and health education. It coordinates a Good Food Box program as well as initiating a community economic project for women entrepreneurs to market locally-processed food.*

### Ontario Farmers' Markets

75 Bayshore Rd, RR#4  
Brighton, ON K0K 1H0  
Tel: (613) 475-4769/1-800-387-FARM  
Fax: (613) 475-2913

*A networking and information association for the 130 plus farmers' markets across the province.*

### Ontario Natural Food Co-op

(Ontario Federation of Food Co-operatives and Clubs)  
70 Fima Crescent  
Etobicoke, ON M8W 4V9  
Tel: (416) 503-1144 ext. 33/1-800-387-0354  
Fax: (416) 503-2848  
Email: onfc@pathcom.com  
Kim De Lallo

*This large coop promotes alternative distribution of natural foods. It works with over 330 buying clubs and distributes across Ontario and Eastern Canada.*

### Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger (REACH)

Box 4482  
Regina, SK S4P 3W7  
Tel: (306) 347-3224  
Fax: (306) 525-0107  
Lee Beck

*REACH's mission is to provide people with easily accessible food on a non-profit basis. They are members of the Regina Food Security Project. REACH coordinates the regional Good Food Box program.*

### Regina Home Economics For Living Project (HELP)

2156 Albert St.  
Regina, SK S4P 2T9  
Tel: (306) 347-7877  
M. Lucille Saum

*This group supports families in developing nutrition and home management skills; they coordinate community kitchens project.*

### Regroupement des Cuisines Collectives du Quebec

1605 rue de Champlain  
Montreal, PQ H2L 2S5  
Tel: (514) 529-3448  
Fax: (514) 529-1359  
Email: rccq@cam.org

*A network of community kitchens throughout the province of Quebec.*

### Silver Mountain Food Group

RR #1 Nolalu, ON P0T 2K0  
Tel: (807) 475-8761  
Diana Bockus

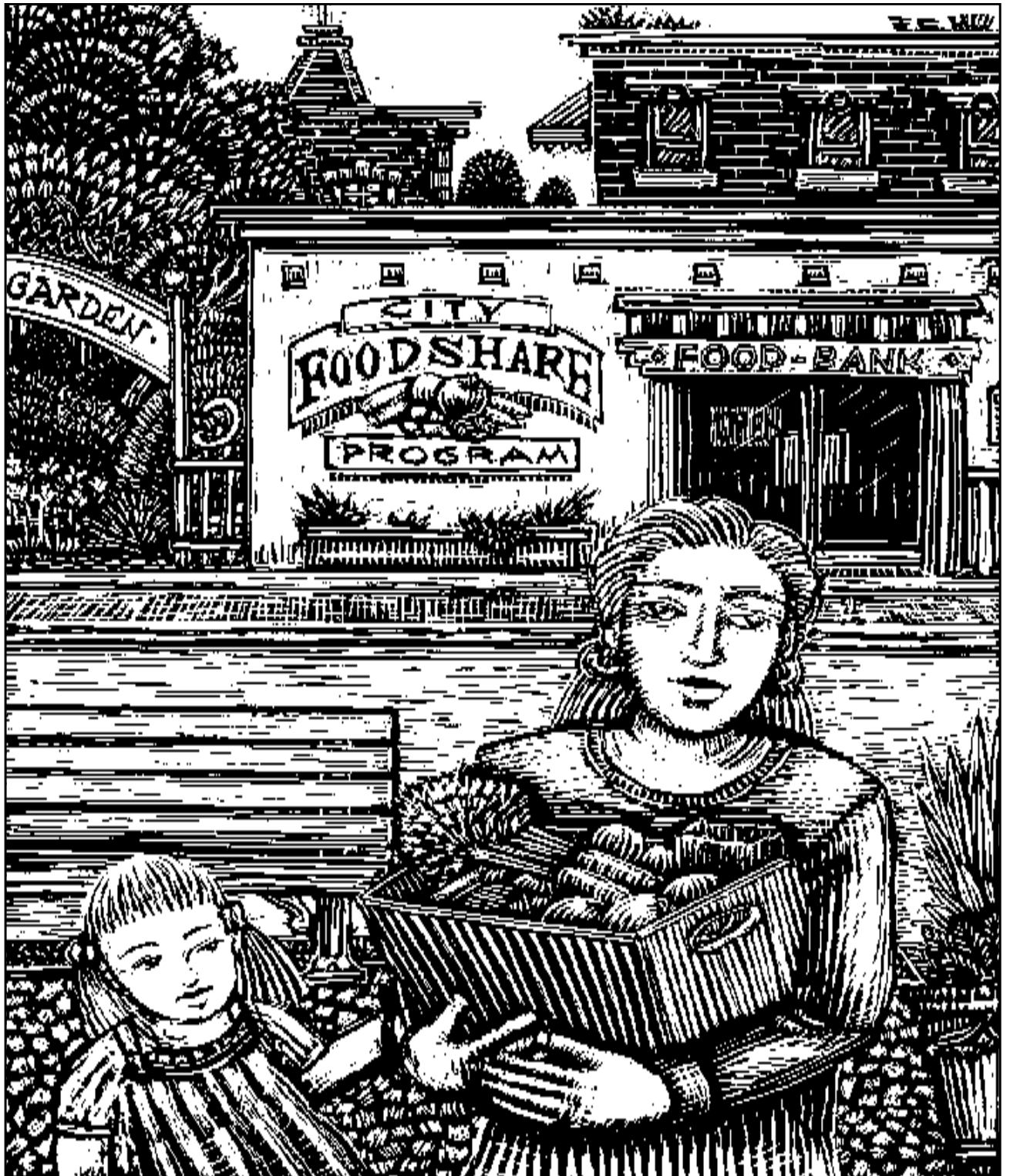
*This group works with 225 families organized into buying clubs. Food is local and natural. They deliver to a 450 kilometer radius in Northern, Ontario.*







# EMERGENCY FOOD DISTRIBUTION



## Chapter Four

*The problem of hunger does not appear to be abating in the late twentieth century, but rather the opposite. In March of 1997 the Canadian Association of Food Banks conducted their annual Hunger Count - 669,877 persons, representing 2.24% of the Canadian population, received emergency food aid from food banks in the one month alone.*

### EMERGENCY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

#### IV. EMERGENCY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Food insecurity is an increasing reality for many individuals in Canadian towns and cities. The problem of hunger does not appear to be abating in the late twentieth century, but rather the opposite. In March of 1997 the Canadian Association of Food Banks conducted their annual Hunger Count - 669,877 persons, representing 2.24% of the Canadian population, received emergency food aid from food banks in the one month alone. Food banks provide essential assistance to individuals and families in times of need.

ment and unequal distribution of wealth. The result is that many Canadians lack adequate income to purchase food through normal channels such as supermarkets. "Food is not equally available to all. Only wasted or unwanted food, much of dubious nutritional value, is handed out to the poor. Hunger is primarily a political issue and a matter of distributive justice" (Riches, 1997: 54).

Two broad community responses have emerged in Canada to counter food insecurity: those functioning as food assistance programs and those attempting to enhance resources of low-income households through community development models. The food charity response has



The roots of hunger in Canada are complex and beyond the scope of this report. Suffice it to say lack of food does not cause hunger in Canada. It is a question of access, distribution and income. Causes are intricately linked with "the structural preconditions of poverty, inequality and powerlessness, all of which are increasing" (Riches, 1997: 53). A steady combination of social and economic restructuring and government agendas focused on deficit reduction and free trade has resulted in unemploy-

become an institution on the Canadian social landscape. A food bank was established in Edmonton in 1981 as a stop-gap measure against food insecurity. By 1995, the number of food banks had jumped to 480. The steady rise of charitable food banks as the primary institution providing food to those in need is

*"The roots of hunger in Canada are complex and beyond the scope of this report. Suffice it to say lack of food does not cause hunger in Canada. It is a question of access, distribution and income."*



## Emergency Food Distribution

***“Food is not equally available to all. Only wasted or unwanted food, much of dubious nutritional value, is handed out to the poor. Hunger is primarily a political issue and a matter of distributive justice”***

the most obvious indicator of increasing levels of hunger in Canada. The increasing numbers also point out that the charity model has largely failed to mitigate the problem of hunger “because it does not have the capacity to address the deeper structural issues that have created the condition for poverty and hunger” (Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994: 7).

On one hand, food banks provide necessary emergency and supplementary relief to hungry people. “On the other hand, food banks tend to de-politicize the issue of hunger in Canada by undermining the governments’ legislated obligations to guarantee adequate welfare benefits and by obviating the need for responsible public action. Food banks allow us to believe that hunger is being solved. This is not so” (Riches, 1997: 62-63). Hunger is more than a charitable concern; it is a matter for social and political action.

The second community response to personal food insecurity has focused on community development. Increasingly organizations working from a community development perspective are attempting to feed people through community food security programs. This approach comple-

ments the larger goal of changing the underlying structures. “This necessitates going beyond issues of social security reform and requires developing comprehensive policies, focused on rethinking full employment, supporting the renewal of green economies, developing food self-reliance and understanding food policy as health promotion” (Riches, 1997: 72).

Community food security programs seek to build on a community’s self-reliance and resources in order to reduce its dependence on charitable food donations. It also does appear that charity institutions are re-evaluating their response to hunger. Food banks are increasingly working in partnership with community development organizations and implementing alternative food access programs such as community gardens or community kitchens. Food banks continue to play an essential role in helping individuals and families in times of need. Until other structures are in place, emergency food relief continues to serve a critical function.

## Chapter Four

*“Food banks and other community assistance programs should only be relied on as emergency measures, rather than being institutionalised as permanent mechanisms for food access”*

(Koc *et al*, 1999: 6)

### C A S E S T U D Y

#### CASE STUDY 17: CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOOD BANKS

The Canadian Association of Food Banks (CAFB) was established in 1988 as a national coalition of organizations that gather food for redistribution. In 1993, CAFB established a national Food Sharing System; all large donations of food are coordinated centrally to ensure that food is transported and distributed efficiently to member food banks. It also plays an advocacy, education and research role. CAFB gathers and disseminates information on food sources and fundraising to member organizations. Each year CAFB releases the Hunger Count, an assessment of the need for food across Canada. CAFB advocates for the hungry at a national level and acts as the primary liaison between food banks, industry and government. CAFB has an extensive resource library on issues related to poverty, hunger and food security. They produce a directory of food banks in Canada, public education materials and the Provisions newsletter.

For more information, contact: 530 Lakeshore Blvd. W, Toronto, ON M5V 1A5 Tel: (416) 203-9241 Fax: (416) 203-9244 E-mail: [cafb@icomm.ca](mailto:cafb@icomm.ca)



#### CASE STUDY 18: CAMBRIDGE SELF-HELP FOOD BANK

The Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank works with several food distribution methods. The primary model is based on a concept of membership and work in exchange for food. The Self-Help Food Bank provides bi-weekly hampers to members who have paid an \$8 membership fee and completed 4 hours of work per month. Members work in the organization providing services such as administrative support, peer mentorship, and fundraising. This model currently provides 500 hampers a month to feed families with over 600 children. The food bank also operates an emergency hamper program. They provide supplementary food hampers four times a year and distribute 220 emergency hampers each month. In addition, the Self-Help Food Bank also coordinates a Good Food Box program in the region in partnership with the public health office and community centres. The organization sponsors healthy baby food projects, school nutrition enhancement programs, and referral/resource services. Moving beyond the charity model, the Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank illustrates a multi-faceted approach that many food banks are taking to ensure greater measures of food security.

For more information, contact: Pat Singleton, 56 Dickson St., Cambridge, ON N1R 1T8 Tel: (519) 622-6550 Fax: (519) 622-9076



## EMERGENCY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

### Canadian Association of Food Banks

530 Lakeshore Blvd. W  
Toronto, ON M5V 1A5  
Tel: (416) 203-9241  
Fax: (416) 203-9244  
E-mail: [cafb@icomm.ca](mailto:cafb@icomm.ca)

*This national coalition of food bank organizations coordinates food distribution and plays an educational and advocacy role.*

### Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank

56 Dickson St.  
Cambridge, ON N1R 1T8  
Tel: (519) 622-6550  
Fax: (519) 622-9076

Pat Singleton

*This food bank has three methods of food distribution - emergency hampers, membership program and Good Food Box. It also has healthy baby project, school nutrition programs and referral services.*

### Kawartha Food Share

PO Box 1413  
Peterborough, ON K9J 7A2  
Tel: (705) 748-1680  
Fax: (705) 748-1681  
E-mail: [kwic@pipcom.com](mailto:kwic@pipcom.com)

*This network is developing a central warehouse to distribute food fairly amongst all local food banks, food cupboards and food action programs. This centre will offer users referrals and community resources.*

### Winnipeg Harvest

1085 Winnipeg Ave.  
Winnipeg, MB R3E 0S2  
Tel: (204) 982-3666  
Fax: (204) 775-4180  
E-mail: [harvest@xpressnet.com](mailto:harvest@xpressnet.com)  
Web Site: [www.xpressnet.com/harvest](http://www.xpressnet.com/harvest)

*A food bank, this organization is networked with church groups, social agency and community organizations in the Winnipeg area.*

## Emergency Food Distribution

*“...the basic principles underlying an antihunger perspective include the following:*

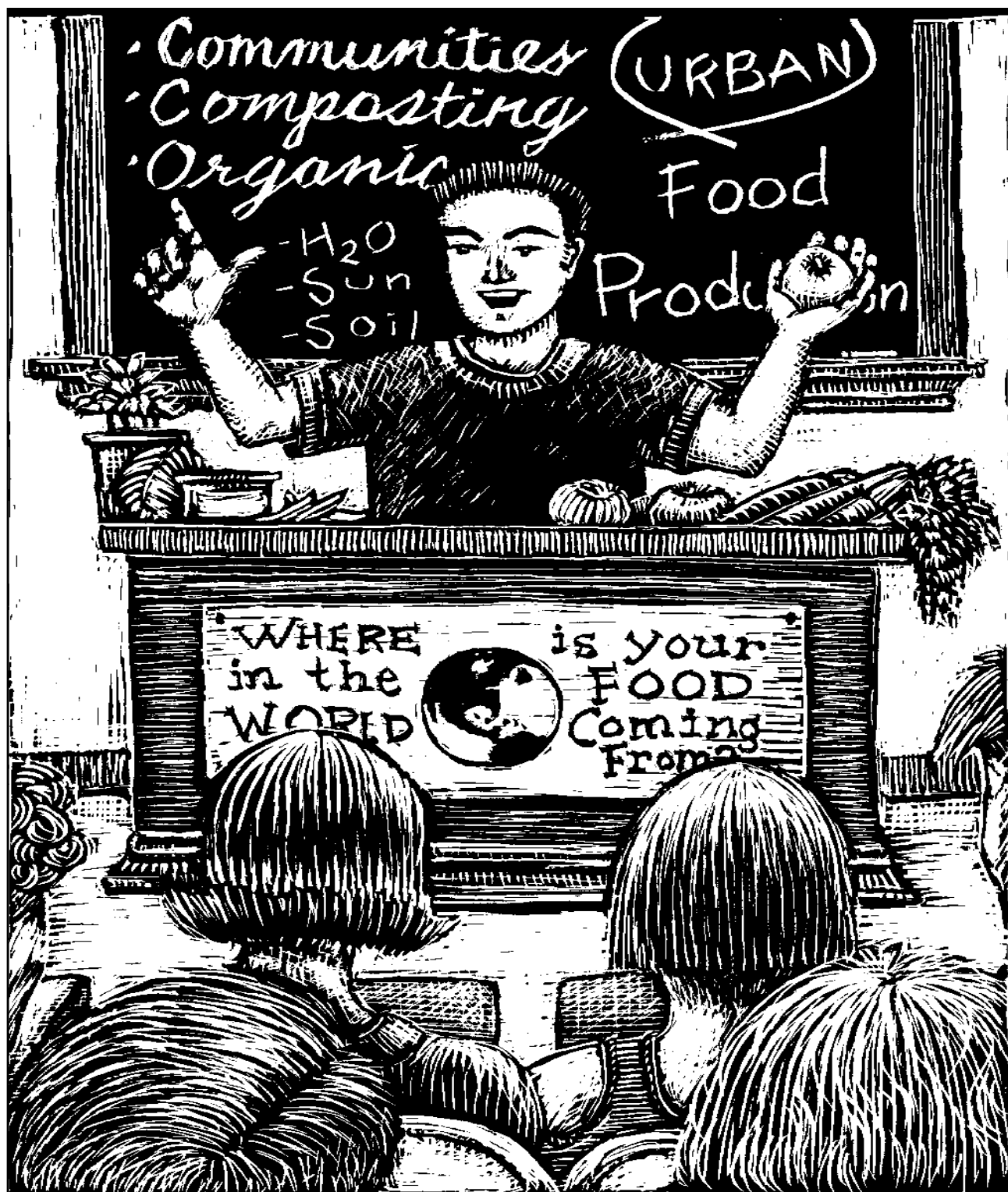
- *The notion of a human right should be meaningfully extended to include access to food;*
- *Marginalised people should be empowered to insert their interests into public-policy agendas; and*
- *Social-service agencies, including food banks, should be challenged to render services in ways that uphold the dignity of their clients (that is, low income people).”*

(Husbands, 1999: 108)





## FOOD EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT



## Chapter Five

*Currently, there is considerable investment in young people at many levels of Canadian government. Grant support is given to organizations that are dedicated to training young people in the hands-on skills associated with community gardening, food production techniques, culinary training, environmental stewardship and community economic development.*

### FOOD EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

#### V. FOOD EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Almost all non-governmental and community-based organizations linked to food security issues offer resources, information and educational opportunities to the public. Public awareness is crucial to the viability of alternatives to current food systems. Many organizations are available to give community workshops and presentations. It is common for organizations to partner and put on events such as roundtable, community tours, conferences, and lecture series open to the public. For example Oxfam-Canada's regional offices partner with community organizations across the country to raise awareness about local and global food systems on World Food Day each October 16th.

The Sustainable Urban Food Systems Conference hosted by Ryerson University with the support of the International Development and Research Centre in May of 1997 is another excellent example. It was an event that brought together community, government and academic representatives to share information, and build capacity in both Canadians and southern counterparts to work on food security issues.

Currently, there is considerable investment in young people at many levels of Canadian government. Grant support is given to organizations that are dedicated to training young people in the hands-on skills associated with community gardening, food production techniques, culinary training, environmental stewardship and community economic development. Groups such as LifeCycles, the Environmental Youth Alliance, Oxfam's Youth for Social Justice and FoodShare all have programs for young people to learn about gardening and food production. Likewise, areas such as community kitchens and food preparation offer solid venues for

skill development in low-income persons. FoodShare provides a leading example in this area with their "incubation model". Participants of training programs such as Focus on Food may form their own catering companies and work out of a large, fully equipped industrial kitchen that FoodShare provides at a low cost. Considering the level of necessity, the convergence of food action programs and skill development projects provides a strong foundation for educating about alternative food systems.

In addition to skills development programs for youth and adults, there are school programs coordinated by, and curriculum materials produced by community based organizations. Following the example of school yard greening that has been a strong movement in the United States, Canadian organizations are working with elementary and secondary schools to green school yards and create school food gardens. The Evergreen Foundation School Naturalization program and LifeCycles' Growing Schools program are examples of organizations working with children, teachers, parents, School Districts, and Maintenance Unions to create food and native plant gardens in schools. There is also a growing resource base available for teachers to implement garden programs in their schools. (Please see the Case Study on LifeCycles).

It is somewhat difficult to separate food education out from the multitude of other activities that Canadian community organizations do. The act of planting a garden is building skills. The opportunity to go visit a community supported agriculture farm is educational. Education is a component of almost all food-action projects whether they are food banks, community kitchens, buying clubs or food policy organizations.



**CASE STUDY 19: OXFAM-CANADA**

Oxfam-Canada is an international development agency committed to the equitable distribution of wealth and power through fundamental social change. Food security is one of Oxfam-Canada's priority areas. Working through long standing relationships with community based organizations, Oxfam-Canada concentrates on local consumption vs. production for export, gender relations in the food system and access to land, credit and training.

In 1995, Oxfam-Canada merged with the World Food Day Association of Canada (WFDAC). Working out of ten offices across Canada, Oxfam spearheads World Food Day Activities each October 16th. For example, the Saskatoon office is collaborating with other community groups to organize week-long educational activities around food security issues. In this region, Oxfam has chosen the potato as an entry point for discussing issues of nutrition, access to food, the politics of food at a local and global level and the impact of international trade on food. Events range from a luncheon cooked by local chefs using potatoes grown by local producers to a public panel discussion on the role of food in community economic development and an evening drama multi-cultural potluck cooked by a local immigrant society.

Beyond World Food Day, the Saskatoon Oxfam-Canada office is a partner in several other community food security initiatives. In partnership with Food Futures, Oxfam is developing a regional analysis of food security in Saskatchewan and drafting a regional action plan. In partnership with groups such as the Child Hunger and Education Program Oxfam-Canada has organized volunteers, purchased plots and solicited seed and tool donations to help build several community gardens. A fixture in ten Canadian cities, Oxfam-Canada is a community partner in initiatives such as these.

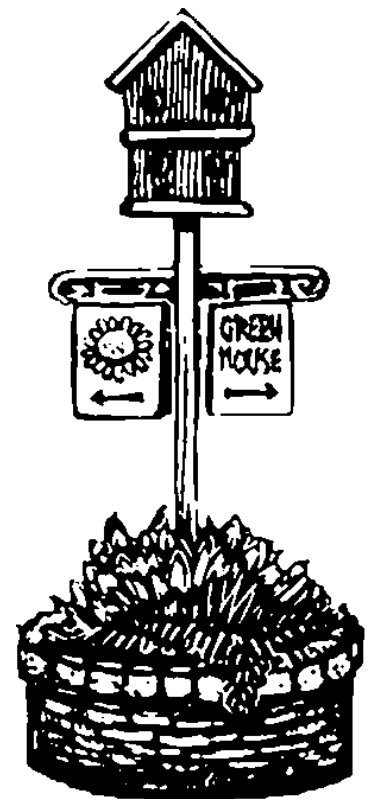
Looking at global food security issues, Oxfam-Canada has spearheaded fair trade initiatives across Canada. The Oxfam-Canada Vancouver Fair Fruit Initiative is using the banana as the focus of an educational campaign to raise awareness about the social, health and environmental impacts of the fruit trade. The long-term vision is to work in partnership with a Southern producers cooperative to bring fairly traded fruit into British Columbia.

Oxfam-Canada links the Canadian situation to the global one through partnership initiatives in Africa and the Americas. The historic partnership between the National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Oxfam Global Agricultural Project has led to the linking of Canadian farmers and their communities with counterparts in developing countries. Oxfam-Canada also works in partnerships and projects overseas to improve food security in Africa and the Americas. They work with groups such as the National Union of Farmers and Rancher (UNAG) of Nicaragua and the Central American Association of Peasant Organizations for Cooperation and Development (ASOCODE) among others to support women's role in production. Food security is one of the common grounds upon which relationships in the north and south can be built.

Working to educate the public about food security Oxfam-Canada, has published several resource and action guides: World Food Day Activity Guide (annual), The Food Security Tool Kit (1997), Food Fight: Community Action to Build Local and Global Food Security (1995), The Hand that Feeds the World (1993), Food in the International Market Place (1992) and Cultivating Our Communities (1991).

*For more information, contact: 300-294 Albert St., Ottawa, ON K1P 6E6 Tel: (613) 237-5236 Fax: (613) 237-0524 E-mail: [enquire@oxfam.ca](mailto:enquire@oxfam.ca)*

## Food Education & Skill Development



## Chapter Five

*“The UNDP - [United Nations Development Programme] commissioned study estimated that 800 million people are now engaged in urban agriculture worldwide; of these, 200 million would be producing for market and 150 million would be employed full time.”*

(Smit *et al*, 1996 in Mougéot, 1999: 17)

### C A S E S T U D Y

#### CASE STUDY 20: ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH ALLIANCE (VANCOUVER)

The Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA) is a youth-driven collective dedicated to improving the social and ecological environment. In the early 1990s, EYA worked with community members to reclaim abandoned parkland and build the 3.5 acres Cottonwood Community Garden. This garden, contiguous with the nearby Strathcona Community Garden, provides space for both a demonstration garden and plots for residents of the Downtown East Side. Within the Youth Garden demonstration site is a native plant garden, herb garden and a permaculture forest. The site is complete with a native plant nursery, an espalier project and full composting facilities; the garden and its facilities have been designed and constructed by youth participants. In the spring and summer of 1998, EYA's Young Women Creating Change project worked with community partners to design and build a rooftop garden in the new VanCity Place for Youth. With roughly 30 planters, this garden of food producing native plants will be a place for relaxation and harvest. It is through the Youth Garden and other projects that EYA trains approximately 60 young people a year in land rehabilitation, alternative building techniques, organic growing methods and food production and use. Building on the 1995 North-South partnership Home Is Where We Live project, EYA is currently exploring partnership initiatives with southern counterparts in Mexico around food security issues.

For more information, contact: Doug Ragan or Susan Kurbis, PO Box 34097 Station D, Vancouver BC V6J 4M1 Tel: (604) 689-4463 Fax: (604) 689-4242 E-mail: [laragan@hotmail.com](mailto:laragan@hotmail.com)



#### CASE STUDY 21: PERMACULTURE COMMUNITY ACTION WORKNET (ONTARIO)

The Permaculture Community Action Worknet (PCAW) is a non-profit corporation founded in 1995 and geared towards the promotion of permaculture in Eastern Canada. PCAW organizes regular course and workshops to educate people about the principles and practices of permaculture, investigates and promotes alternative technologies and publishes a regular newsletter. PCAW offers week-long courses in design, synergistic agriculture and urban permaculture. The urban permaculture course covers topics such as the city as an ecosystem, maintaining bio-diversity, urban food production, green economies, alternative housing, appropriate technologies, convivial spaces and urban networks. As the permaculture approach is widely applicable, its principles are essential for any urban dweller that wants to achieve sustainability.

For more information, contact: Richard Griffith, 104 Bridlewood Blvd., Agincourt, ON M1T 1R1 Tel: (416) 497-5746 E-mail: [mulchman@web.net](mailto:mulchman@web.net)



**CASE STUDY 22: LIFE CYCLES (VICTORIA)**

LifeCycles Project of Victoria, BC is a predominantly youth-driven organization. Their programs are geared towards the education and connection of youth with community through hands-on projects that work towards creating better local and global food security. A unique aspect of LifeCycles work, the combination of providing community service with youth skills development, won them a Canadian Best Practices Award in 1996 for youth and environment projects.

Through community partnerships and a mentorship learning model, young people deliver programs that create urban gardens, promote learning in their peers and the greater community about food, health and environmental issues as well as developing community economic development ventures in the micro food production and processing sector.

The following programs are part of LifeCycles' strategy to build capacity in Victorians to become more food secure:

LifeCycles' **Growing Schools Program** was developed to meet the need of schools that wanted food gardens on school grounds to use as "outdoor classrooms". They successfully started 8 school gardens, and delivered workshops and assistance to over 400 students during the three seasons the program has been active. The Growing Schools Manual is a resource for developing gardens in schools.

The **HomeGrown Gardens** are started in the backyards and balconies of low-income families. The demand for these gardens far outstrips the capability to put them in. In two seasons, the project has built over 50 gardens, and delivered workshops and follow-up instructional sessions

**CSA:** Youth participants in the program grow produce, collect produce from local organic growers to put into a box delivery service, and promote CSA and Farmers Markets. Victoria residents who are involved in the project receive a fresh box of locally grown organic produce on a weekly basis

**Sharing Backyards Program:** People who live in apartment or rental properties with no access to land are linked with neighbours who have land to share by the Shared Backyard Program. There have been successful linkages for over 60 participants. Many partnerships are with land-poor students and seniors who need help to grow gardens due to physical limitations, but have a wealth of knowledge to share.

**The Hive Demonstration Site:** The Hive is a busy place that demonstrates agro-ecological principles for food production and land management. Tours and workshops are given regularly to build community capacity to garden in an urban setting.

LifeCycles works with organizations in Rosario, Argentina (Sociedad21), Mexico City (Permaculture Institute of Mexico), and Montevideo, Uruguay (REDES and GJAE). They work with these organizations both through technical information exchanges, capacity-building exercises, and at the international policy development level.

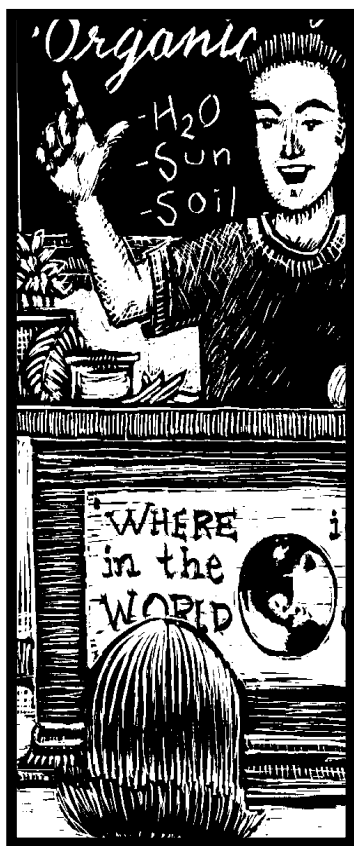
Resources produced by LifeCycles: The Urban Agriculture Handbook, Growing Schools: A Manual for Creating Food Gardens in Schools, Teacher-Gram: the Sustainable Agriculture Series, The Veggie Manual, Where is the Action? A Jiggle Towards Sustainability, The Community supported agriculture Handbook, Doing it Green and Sustainably (DIGS) Youth Scrapbook, The DIGS Kitchen Cookbook.

For more information contact: Linda Geggie, LifeCycles at 527 Michigan, Victoria BC V8V 1S1, phone: (250) 383-5800, fax (250) 386-3449, e-mail: lifecycles@coastnet.com

## Food Education & Skill Development

*The HomeGrown Gardens are started in the backyards and balconies of low-income families. The demand for these gardens far outstrips the capability to put them in. In two seasons, the project has built over 50 gardens, and delivered workshops and follow-up instructional sessions*

## Chapter Five



## C O N T A C T G R O U P S

### FOOD EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT — LIST OF CONTACTS

#### Clean Nova Scotia

PO Box 2528 Central  
Halifax, NS B3J 3N5  
Tel: (902) 420-3474/1.800.665.5377  
Fax: (902) 424-5334

E-mail: hgordon@clean.ns.ca

Web Site: www.clean.ns.ca

Heather Gordon

*This organization coordinates 30 educational program; it runs community garden, backyard composting and organic waste-management programs.*

#### Ecological Agriculture Projects

MacDonald Campus, McGill University  
Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, PQ H9X 3V9  
Tel: (514) 398-7771

Fax: (514) 398-7621

E-mail: info@eap.mcgill.ca

*EAP collects, organizes and disseminates information, gives workshops, conducts research and provides analysis on sustainable agriculture. It has a library with extensive coverage of all aspects of farming and gardening.*

#### Ecology Action Centre

1568 Argyle Street, Suite 31

Halifax, NS B3J 2B3

Tel: (902) 429-2202

Fax: (902) 422-6410

E-mail: eac\_hfx@istar.ca

Web Site: www.chebucto.ns.ca/Environment

Thea Hammond-Wilson

*They provide information, advice and workshops on starting and maintaining community gardens.*

#### Environment Jeunesse

4545 Piere-de-Courbertin

Montreal, PQ

Tel: (514) 252-3061

*This organization works with high school students giving workshops on compost, waste-management and organic food production.*

#### Environmental Youth Alliance

PO Box 34097 Station D

Vancouver, BC V6J 4M1

Tel: (604) 689-4463

Fax: (604) 689-4242

E-mail: laragan@hotmail.com

Doug Ragan

*A youth-driven environmental group, EYA focuses on skill-building through land reclamation and community/rooftop garden development.*

#### LifeCycles

527 Michigan

Victoria BC V8V 1S1

Tel: (250) 383-5800

Fax: (250) 386-3449

Email: lifecycles@coastnet.com

Linda Geggie

*This community food security organization coordinates school gardening projects, community gardening training, a CSA cooperative, a demo site and the regional Food Roundtable.*

#### Nova Scotia PIRG

Student Union Building

Dalhousie University

6136 University Ave.

Halifax, NS B3H 4J2

Tel: (902) 494-6662

Fax: (902) 494-5185

*They coordinate a university garden, a food co-op and do education on food security.*

#### OPIRG Guelph

1 Trent Lane

Guelph, ON N1G 2W1

Tel: (519) 824-2091

Fax: (519) 824-8990

E-mail: opirg@uoguelph.ca

*This permaculture action group has built a community garden.*

#### Oxfam-Canada Calgary

233-10 St. NW

Calgary, AB T2N 1V5

Tel: (403) 270-2826

Fax: (403) 270-8832

E-mail: calgary@oxfam.ca

#### Oxfam-Canada Halifax

209-2099 Gottingen St.

Halifax, NS B3K 3B2

Tel: (902) 425-7677

Fax: (902) 425-7778

E-mail: hal@oxfam.ca

Shannon Lynch

#### Oxfam-Canada London

356 Queen Ave.

London, ON N6B 1X6

Tel: (519) 432-2123

Fax: (519) 432-4096

E-mail: lond@oxfam.ca

#### **Oxfam-Canada Moncton**

311-96 Norwood Ave.  
Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 6L9  
Tel: (506) 859-4256  
Fax: (506) 859-7182  
E-mail: moncton@oxfam.ca

#### **Oxfam-Canada Saskatoon**

c/o Global Farmer's Project  
National Farmers' Union  
250 C 2nd Ave. S  
Saskatoon, SK S7K 1M2  
Tel: (306) 242-4097  
Fax: (306) 664-6226  
E-mail: sask@oxfam.ca

#### **Oxfam-Canada St. John's**

382 Duckworth St.  
St. John's, NF A1C 1H8  
Tel: (709) 753-2202  
Fax: (709) 753-4110  
E-mail: stjohs@oxfam.ca

#### **Oxfam-Canada Toronto**

1011 Bloor St. W  
Toronto, ON M6H 1M1  
Tel: (416) 535-2335  
Fax: (416) 537-6435  
E-mail: toronto@oxfam.ca

#### **Oxfam-Canada Vancouver**

2524 Cypress St.  
Vancouver, BC V6J 3N2  
Tel: (604) 736-7678  
Fax: (604) 736-9646  
E-mail: van@oxfam.ca  
Jennifer Colson

#### **Oxfam-Canada Victoria**

527 Michigan  
Victoria, BC V8V 1S1  
Tel: (250) 360-0799  
Fax: (250) 388-5258  
E-mail: vict@oxfam.ca

#### **Permaculture Community Action Worknet**

104 Bridlewood Blvd.  
Agincourt, ON M1T 1R1  
Tel: (416) 497-5746  
Email: mulchman@web.net  
Richard Griffith  
*This non-profit promotes permaculture education throughout Ontario and offers courses on permaculture, design, synergistic agriculture and its urban applications.*

#### **Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs)**

*There are 16 PIRGs operating on university campuses across Canada. They are dedicated to community activism and are good resources on community activities on food security.*

#### **QPIRG McGill**

3rd Floor -3647 University St.,  
Montreal, PQ H2A 2B3  
Tel: (514) 398-7432  
Fax: (514) 398-8976  
E-mail: qpirg@vub.mcgill.ca  
*The Global Cooperation Network working group concentrates on local and global food security issues.*

#### **Stewards of Irreplaceable Land - SOIL**

2876 Inez Drive  
Victoria, BC V9A 2J1  
Tel: (250) 381-2916  
*This is an organic farm apprenticeship program on British Columbia farms: minimum four week commitment in return for room and board.*

#### **The Garden Institute**

Box 1406, #194, 3803 Calgary Trail  
Edmonton, AB T6J 5MB  
Tel: (403) 430-0538  
Fax: (403) 434-7413  
E-mail: rempel@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca  
Sharon Rempel  
*This institute promotes organic gardening through research and education. They offer courses in soil health, yard rejuvenation, heritage gardens, seed saving and medicinal plant usage.*

#### **Vancouver Island PIRG**

Student Union Building, Rm.144  
Box 3035, University of Victoria  
Victoria, BC V8W 3R3  
Tel: (250) 721-8629  
Fax: (250) 721-8728  
E-mail: vipirg@sol.uvic.ca  
*They run a food co-op, a university garden and a native-plants working group.*

#### **Willing Workers on Organic Farms**

WWOOF Canada  
RR #2, S. 18, C.9  
Nelson, BC V1L 5P5  
Tel: (250).354-4417  
Fax: (250) 352-3927  
John Vanden Heuvel  
*This network of 250 organic farms across Canada take volunteers to work and learn in exchange for room and board. Registered members get a directory and contact hosts to arrange work period. There are WWOOFING programs in 15 countries around the world.*

#### **Youth for Social Justice**

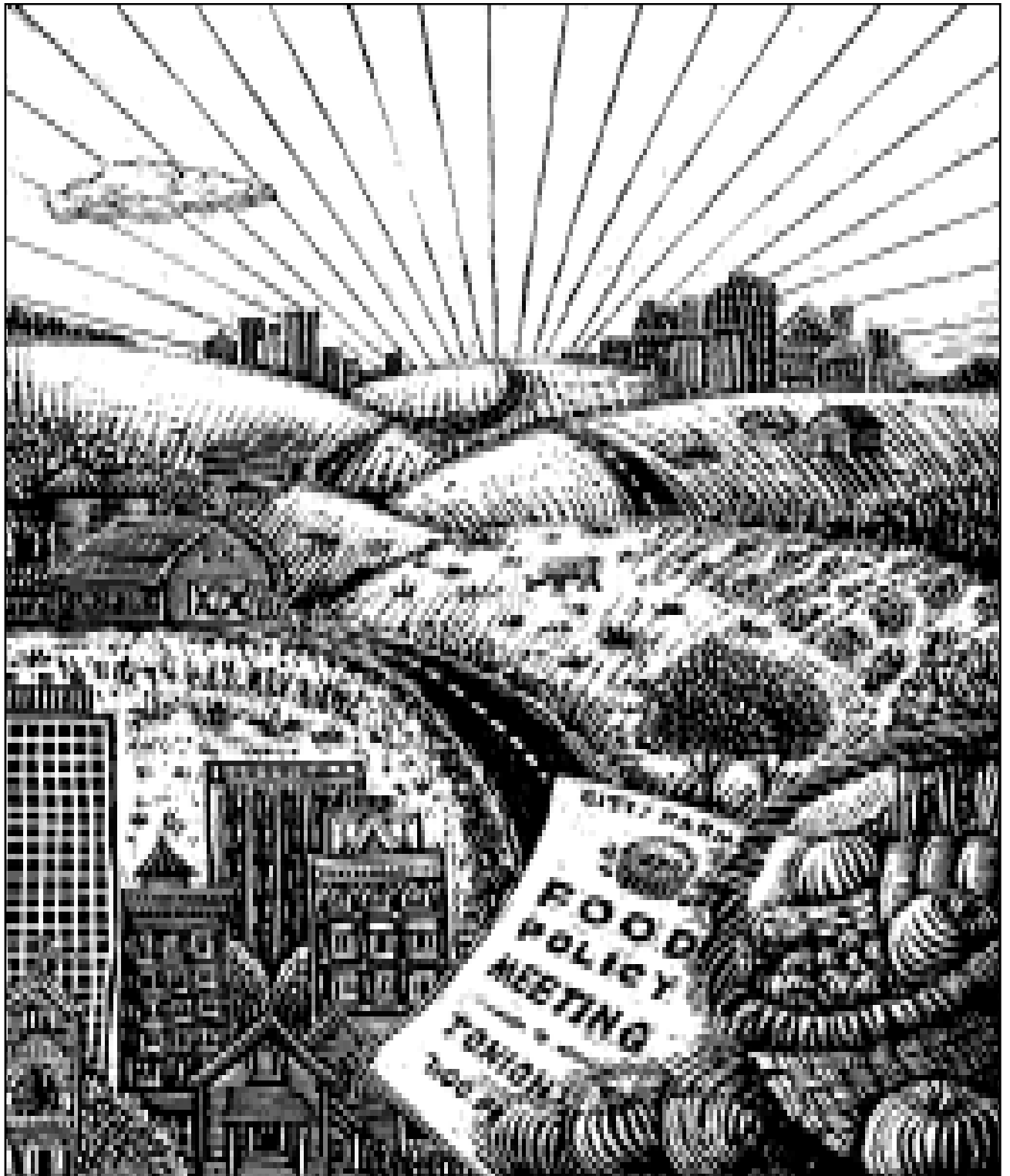
RR#3, Belle River, PE C0A 1B0  
Tel: (902) 659.2570  
E-mail: aaronk@isn.net  
Aaron Kolezar  
*Working with Oxfam, YSJ received a training grant to establish a community garden in Charlottetown.*

## **Food Education & Skill Development**





# FOOD NETWORKS AND POLICY ORGANIZATIONS



## Chapter Six

*“Food policy organizations are community, city or region-based groups which aim to improve the security of the local food system. It is a vehicle for food activists to undertake projects and programs which move toward a sustainable food policy”*

### FOOD NETWORKS AND POLICY ORGANIZATIONS

## VI. FOOD NETWORKS AND POLICY ORGANIZATIONS

With food as a central issue, community groups are coming together in networks, coalitions and policy organizations to solve problems linked to hunger, nutrition and environmental degradation. While these functions are often blurred, strictly speaking, networks provide an opportunity for organizations to share information on a common issue while coalitions are formed to take an advocacy position. Food policy organizations tend to bridge these roles providing the common ground for information sharing, advocacy and policy change.

Meeting to exchange information provides community stakeholders with an opportunity to learn the status of key areas of food insecurity within their regions. This information tends to propel analysis of causes of hunger and eventually ideas for action. Networking provides the space to envision more holistic approaches and activities while forming partnerships across sectors. Canadian communities are coming into this process differently, employing a variety of tools and strategies for greater food security. What is certain is the increasing number of networks and coalitions, made up of a diverse body of actors, moving towards a common vision of a sustainable food system.

Organizations in Canadian municipalities have responded to food insecurity through emergency food services such as food banks, and through action initiatives such as community gardens. As they realized that change needed to occur in the larger framework rather than the system parts, communities started to approach food issues from a policy angle. “Food policy organizations are commu-

nity, city or region-based groups which aim to improve the security of the local food system. It is a vehicle for food activists to undertake projects and programs which move toward a sustainable food policy” (Kneen *et al.*, 1997: 40).

*“A food policy organization initiates, supports and connects projects and programs to policy development.”*

A food policy organization initiates, supports and connects projects and programs to policy development. Membership reflects most aspects of the food system to include producers, consumers, service providers, local government, business and health boards among others. These representatives contribute to the larger vision of community food security and allow for communication links across sectors. “Food policy organizations begin with a vision of a sustainable and just





**CASE STUDY 23: FARMFOLK/CITYFOLK (BRITISH COLUMBIA)**

FarmFolk/CityFolk (FF/CF) is a non-profit networking and information resource for individuals and organizations concerned about food, agriculture, health and the environment. Established in 1993, it focuses on local BC food production and consumption, promotes research on food issues and acts as a clearinghouse.

To this end, FarmFolk/CityFolk offer an important service to the public. The office hosts an extensive library on food issues, runs a list serve and produces a quarterly 16 page newsletter filled with information on agricultural policy, events, and project updates. FarmFolk/CityFolk organizes several "Food-Land Connections" directories: Linking Land and Future Farmers brings together those who have spare land and organic farmers, Garden and Land Access Directory links small scale land owners with gardeners, and Agriculture Land Use Resource documents large scale production sites. FarmFolk/CityFolk houses a database of food security organizations, Community supported agriculture initiatives, organic delivery enterprises and community garden projects in British Columbia.

Many FarmFolk/CityFolk activities focus on education and research. To raise public awareness, FarmFolk/CityFolk host a number of workshops, events and conferences. Each year FarmFolk/CityFolk organizes "Feast of Fields" and "Granville Island Market After Dark" to bring together chefs, restaurateurs, diners and local farmers in celebration of BC food production. Some FF/CF projects include: a baseline study of BC's food system looking at all aspects of the current regional food distribution, the Vancouver Food History Project on the historical development of the regional food system and a Food Miles Project which tracks the path of three fruits and three vegetables as they make their way to British Columbia.

FarmFolk/CityFolk are currently working to translate their analysis of the food system into action. Working in partnership with health boards and emergency food sector among others, FarmFolk/CityFolk have spearheaded the Vancouver Food Policy Organization and is now facilitating the development and network of local food policy organizations in forty BC communities. The organization coordinates a Think-Tank; its current objectives are to contribute to the Ministry of Agriculture's Agri-Food Policy and to produce an implementation plan in the form of a business plan in collaboration with the industry and community.

FarmFolk/CityFolk plays an umbrella role for other project initiatives providing the in-kind support, direction and infrastructure. It worked with the community to organize the Colony Farm Regional Park Community Gardens project; seven acres have been set aside for use as community gardens and a permaculture demonstration site. FarmFolk/CityFolk sponsored the innovative The Living Wall Project; 15 youth gained hands-on training in designing and building a vertical garden as well as confidence and creativity.

The long-term goal of FarmFolk/CityFolk is the establishment of a sustainable food system throughout the Pacific Northwest. It has produced an important publication A Baseline For Food Policy in British Columbia. FarmFolk/CityFolk play a key role in the growing understanding of British Columbia's food system.

For more information, contact: Herb Barbolet, #208-2211 West 4th Ave., Vancouver, BC V6K 4S2

Tel: (604) 730-0450 or toll free for BC 1-888-730-0452 Fax: (604) 730-0451 E-mail: office@ffcf.bc.ca List serve: ffcf-l@alternatives.com (send a blank message with "subscribe" in the subject heading) Web Site: www.ffcf.bc.ca

## Food Networks & Policy Organizations

*FarmFolk/CityFolk are currently working to translate their analysis of the food system into action. Working in partnership with health boards and emergency food sector among others, FarmFolk/CityFolk have spearheaded the Vancouver Food Policy Organization and is now facilitating the development and network of local food policy organizations in forty BC communities.*

## Chapter Six

### C A S E S T U D Y

#### **CASE STUDY 24: EARTH KEEPING (EDMONTON)**

Initiated in 1973, Earth Keeping is made up of over 250 farm families and city folks advocating for a food and agricultural system which reflects justice, stewardship and compassion in food production, distribution and consumption. Their activities include research and policy development on food issues such as land use, environmentally sustainable agriculture, trade, food security and maintaining family farms. Another focus is public education that seeks to link food producers and consumers, examines the relationship between consumer choice and sustainability and encourages community-based solutions. They work in partnership with Agriculture Forum, a network of agriculture organizations and with the Alberta Environment Network.

*For more information, contact: #205, 10711 - 107 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5H 0W6 Tel: (403) 428-6981 Fax: (403) 428-1581 E-mail: [earthkpg@web.net](mailto:earthkpg@web.net)*

#### **CASE STUDY 25: TORONTO FOOD POLICY COUNCIL**

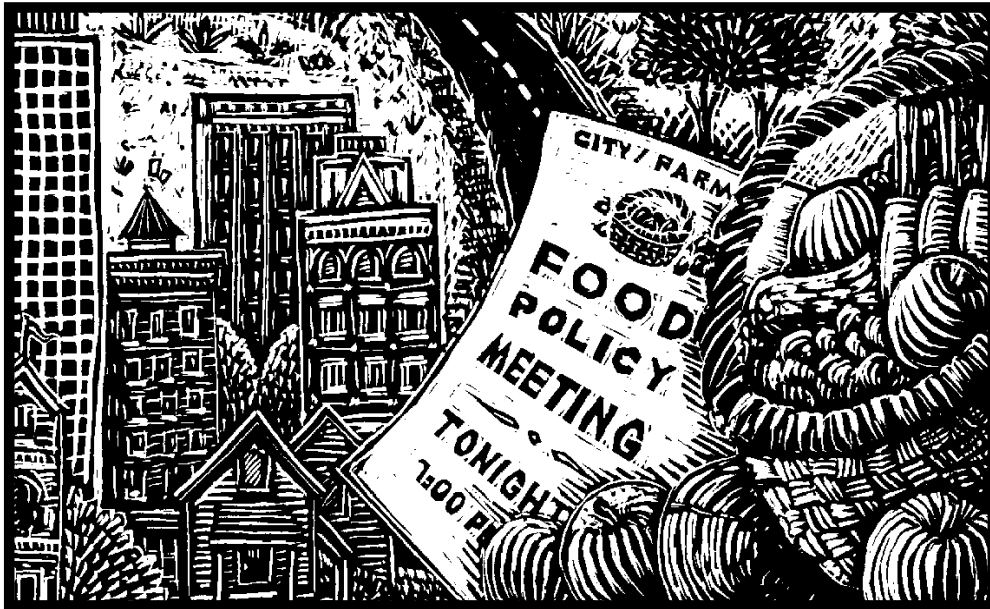
A 21-member sub-committee of the Toronto Board of Health, the Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) was established in 1990 to facilitate collective action on food-based issues. The membership includes representatives from large food corporations, conventional and organic farms, cooperatives, unions, social justice and faith groups and City Council. This group, along with three full time staff people, has produced an action-oriented council with innovative projects.

TFPC is a facilitative body. They produce series of discussion papers to encourage discourse and action on food issues. The TFPC has worked to find ways to reduce food bank dependence, helped communities raise funds for food access projects, influenced governments to direct funds toward food, educated citizens about healthy food choices, and aided groups in establishing new economic opportunities. TFPC produces a newsletter, offers speakers programs, coordinates food security events, and conducts food system research. Current projects include coordinating a conference Feeding the City and working with FoodShare to catalogue all food-projects in Metro Toronto for the purpose of providing the public with the FoodLink Hotline.

Such initiatives are backed by longer-term efforts to develop policies at a municipal and provincial level that will support Ontario farmers and provide quality food to urban dwellers. The TFPC was instrumental in creating the Interdepartmental Working Group on Urban Food Production to assess municipal capacities in increasing food production in the city. Recommendations to this effect were passed by the Council in 1993; implementation is ongoing. The success to which the TFPC has spearheaded innovative food-access initiatives, supported a diversity of community organization, contributed to network development and put food security on the political agenda makes it a model for municipalities across North America.

*For more information, contact: Sean Cosgrove or Rod MacCrae, 277 Victoria St., Suite 203, Toronto, ON M5B 1W1 Tel: (416) 392-1107 Fax: (416) 392-1357 E-mail: [fpc@web.net](mailto:fpc@web.net)*





## Food Networks & Policy Organizations

*The larger role of food policy organizations is to make clear the connection between projects and policy, deal with the cause and effect of hunger and work toward both long and short term changes in community food security.*

food system. They insist that food policy must be based on the visions expressed in the range of projects that they foster" (Kneen *et al.*, 1997: 47). Action is aimed across the full spectrum of food issues - production (community gardening, CSAs), processing (research in local processing systems), distribution (buying clubs, farmers' markets, food banks), waste reduction (composting) and policy (working with governments to create direction for local food policy).

Dalhberg (1994) summarizes a process for developing a community food policy organization. While each community will adopt a different development and action strategy, all groups make decisions about structure, staff, membership, funding, leadership and evaluation processes. Peterborough, Ontario has a food policy action group that is informal with no paid staff beyond contract projects. In contrast, the Toronto Food Policy Council is a 21-member sub-committee of the Board of Health, complete with three full time paid staff and an action-oriented structure with two main working groups (Community

Development and Advocacy and Urban Rural Working Group). While Dahlberg's research supports the observation that food policy organizations with consistent staff and budgets are the most successful, Kneen states that food policy organizations can be effective through volunteer or contract work

or when policy work is part of other paid work. To this end, all food policy organizations in Canada are linked to the district health boards. These often house key players who take on key lead roles and provide invaluable resources in terms of staff time and overhead costs.

Regardless of size and development process, food policy organizations play a catalytic and facilitative role. Once secured, project ownership is transferred to community organizations. The larger role of food policy organizations is to make clear the connection between projects and policy, deal with the cause and effect of hunger and work toward both long and short term changes in community food security.

***"Food policy organizations begin with a vision of a sustainable and just food system. They insist that food policy must be based on the visions expressed in the range of projects that they foster"***

## Chapter Six

*“Policy-making simply at the level of the federal government, which remains ambivalent about the right to food, is not enough. ...nations need to engage in fulfilling a huge and comprehensive agenda for change. It [is] also rightly asserted that their efforts will only be effective if local communities and marginalized peoples are allowed to play full roles in regaining the right to food.”*

(Riches, 1999: 207)

### C A S E S T U D Y

#### **CASE STUDY 26: SCARBOROUGH HUNGER COALITION**

The Scarborough Hunger Coalition (SHC) is the united voice of the Scarborough community against hunger. The network is broad with over 100 members including representatives from communities, health departments, churches, hospitals, and school boards. The coalition is linked with food bank activities, community gardens, community kitchens, food-buying clubs and a gleaning project. Last year SHC received funding to study hunger in the Scarborough area; this research is being used to lobby the city council for increased support and action.

For more information, contact: Janice Stoveld, #500 - 55 Town Centre Court, Toronto, ON M1P 4X4 Tel: (416) 396-7450 Fax: (416) 396-5299 E-mail: [Fultony@city.scarborough.on.ca](mailto:Fultony@city.scarborough.on.ca)

#### **CASE STUDY 27: PRINCE GEORGE FOOD SECURITY NETWORK**

Serving a wider population of 80,000, the Prince George Food Security Network (PGFSN) is moving towards constructing an alternative food system in the Northern Interior of British Columbia. Almost two years old, the network is made up of health board representatives, academics, faith groups, farmers, consumers, students and hungry citizens. PGFSN holds monthly meetings, conducts community needs assessments, produces a newsletter and a lecture series, and supports food action projects that build local food security. These projects include establishing the Prince George Community Gardening Society, developing community kitchens and food-buying clubs, supporting Community supported agriculture farms and establishing a permanent site for the local farmers' markets. Currently PGFSN is working with FarmFolk/CityFolk on a one-year baseline studies project to support BC communities in their endeavors to coordinate local food systems. With their membership rapidly expanding, the PGFSN provides a model for uniting the many actors in the area of food security, linking together rural and urban communities across a large geographic area.

For more information, contact: Joanne Houghton, PO Box 1078, Mackenzie BC V0J 2C0 Tel: (250) 997-3367 Fax: (250) 997-5551. E-mail: [houghton@perf.bc.ca](mailto:houghton@perf.bc.ca)

#### **CASE STUDY 28: TORONTO FOOD RESEARCH NETWORK (TFRN)**

Toronto Food Research Network (TFRN) was formed in August 1995 by a number of practitioners, researchers, and academics who share a research interest in food security. Food security, simply defined as the right of all people, at all times, to personally acceptable nutritious food, in a manner that respects their dignity, has long been a global issue. Concerned with the increasing threats to food security in our communities, TFRN members decided to get together once a month to share research findings, exchange information, and develop joint research and teaching initiatives for food security (in an informal and cooperative setting). TFRN has been organizing monthly meetings during fall 1995 and spring 1996. Currently it has over 75 members. Ryerson Food Research Network has been hosting the meetings.

For more information contact: Jennifer Welsh, School of Nutrition, Consumer and Family Studies at Ryerson (Phone: 979 5000 ext:6931, e-mail: [jwelsh@acs.ryerson.ca](mailto:jwelsh@acs.ryerson.ca)), or Mustafa Koc, Dept. of Sociology, Ryerson (Phone: 979 5000 ext: 6210 e-mail [mkoc@acs.ryerson.ca](mailto:mkoc@acs.ryerson.ca)). Website: [www.acs.ryerson.ca/~foodsec](http://www.acs.ryerson.ca/~foodsec)

## FOOD NETWORKS AND POLICY ORGANIZATIONS — LIST OF CONTACTS

### Food Security Working Group

Ontario Public Health Association  
468 Queen St. E, Suite 202  
Toronto, ON M5A 1T7  
Tel: (416) 367-3313/1-800-267-6817  
Ursula Lipski  
*A provincial level policy group for food security.*

### Community Food Foundation

PO Box 145  
Barrie, ON L4M 4S9  
Tel: (705) 725-1818  
Fax: (705) 725-1732

### Earth Keeping

#205, 10711 - 107 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5H 0W6  
Tel: (403) 428-6981  
Fax: (403) 428-1581  
Email: earthkpg@web.net  
*This is a network of over 250 farm families and city folks advocating for a just food and agricultural system. Their activities include education, research and policy development on food issues.*

### Farm Folk/City Folk

#208-2211 West 4th Ave.,  
Vancouver, BC V6K 4S2  
Tel: (604) 730-0450/ 1-888-730-0452 (BC only) Fax: (604) 730-0451  
Email: office@ffcf.bc.ca  
List serve: ffcf-l@alternatives.com (send a blank message with "subscribe" in the subject heading) Web Site: www.ffcf.bc.ca

### Food For Change

Centretown Community Centre  
340 rue MacClaren St.,  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0M6  
Tel: (613) 563-4771 ext. 170  
Fax: (613) 563-0163  
Olly Wodin  
*A network of food and poverty action groups.*

### Food Futures

Room 210 - 230 Ave. R South  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0Z9  
Tel: (306) 655-4635  
Fax: (306) 655-5895  
*A multi-sectoral community group aims to work with key stakeholders to develop local food policies, promote equitable food production and distribution systems and facilitate public education about food security issues. Food Futures is partnered with the Saskatoon District Health, National Farmers Union, Oxfam, CHEP, regional social services, local producers and consumers.*

### Global Network on Food Security

130 Slater St., Suite 900  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6E2  
Tel: (613) 232-5751  
Fax: (613) 563-2455  
E-mail: unac@magi.com  
Web Site: www.unac.org  
*This network aims to promote community action linked to global discussion on food security. Canadian members of the GNFS are Canadian Food Grains Bank, CHF-Partners in Rural Development, Indigenous Peoples Bio-diversity Network, National Farmer's Union, OXFAM, Rural Advancement Foundation International, and United Nations Association Canada.*

### Kitchener/Waterloo Food Security Coalition

Public Health Department  
3rd Floor - 99 Regina St.,  
Waterloo, ON N2J 4B3  
Tel: (519) 883-2110  
Fax: (519) 883-2241  
E-mail: ddcarole@region.waterloo.on.ca  
Carole Desmeules  
*This food security coalition brings together community gardens, good food box programs, CSAs, farmers' markets and nutrition for learning programs in the region.*

### Peterborough Food Policy Action Committee

Public Health Unit  
10 Hospital Drive  
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1  
Tel: (705) 743-1000  
Fax: (705) 743-2897  
Susan Hubay  
*The Food Policy Action Committee is linked with alternative food distribution programs in the region such as community gardens, gleaning projects, food lending cupboards, collective kitchens, good food box programs, pre-natal nutrition programs, CSAs and breakfast clubs for children.*

## Food Networks & Policy Organizations





## Chapter Six



### C O N T A C T      G R O U P S

#### Prince George Food Security Network

PO Box 1078  
Mackenzie BC V0J 2C0  
Tel: (250) 997-3367  
Fax: (250) 997-5551  
Email: houghton@perf.bc.ca

Joanne Houghton

*The PGFSN brings together key actors to support an alternative food system through networking, research, public education and community action. The network include representatives from the community gardening, community kitchens, food buying clubs, Community supported agriculture farms, and farmers market sectors.*

#### Red Cross Task Force on Hunger

1623 Yonge St.  
Toronto, ON M4T 2A2  
Tel: (416) 480-2500  
Dennis Fair

*Metro Toronto Red Cross is involved with numerous food programs and services in the areas of food banks, community gardens, healthy babies and community kitchens. The Task Force has been looking at issues of community access to resources, improving communication between community organizations, initiating additional alternative anti-hunger programs and supporting the idea of a regional food information clearinghouse.*

#### Scarborough Hunger Coalition

#500 - 55 Town Centre Court  
Toronto, ON M1P 4X4  
Tel: (416) 396-7450  
Fax: (416) 396-5299  
Email: Fulton@city.scarborough.on.ca  
Janice Stoveld

*The Scarborough Hunger Coalition (SHC) has over 100 members representing communities, health departments, churches, hospitals, and school boards. It is linked with food bank activities, community gardens, community kitchens, food buying clubs and a gleaning project.*

#### St. John's Food Security Network

PO Box 344  
Tor Bay, NF A1K 1E4  
E-mail: astapenhorst@nf.sympatico.ca  
Tel: (709) 437-5680

*This volunteer organization deals with food advocacy and food policy. They coordinate an organic co-op and projects on food production. They work on fisheries issues and partnered with Oxfam.*

#### Thunder Bay Food Action Network

c/o Thunder Bay District Health Unit  
999 Balmoral St.  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6E7  
Tel: (807) 625-5900

Janice Piper

*This network is linked with numerous food action programs in Thunder Bay food banks, community kitchens, community gardens, Community supported agriculture projects and prenatal programs.*

#### Toronto Food Research Network

Centre for Studies in Food Security  
350 Victoria St.  
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3  
Tel: (416) 979-5000 ext. 6210  
Fax: (416) 979-5273  
E-mail: mkoc@acs.ryerson.ca  
Web Site: [www.acs.ryerson.ca/~foodsec](http://www.acs.ryerson.ca/~foodsec)

Mustafa Koc

*A network of over 100 members, mainly in the Toronto region, drawn from universities, government and community, engaged in research, practice and debate on issues related to food security.*

#### Toronto Food Policy Council

277 Victoria St., Suite 203  
Toronto, ON M5B 1W1  
Tel: (416) 392-1107  
Fax: (416) 392-1357  
Email: fpc@web.net  
Sean Cosgrove

*The Toronto Food Policy Council facilitates initiates policy discussion and collective action on food issues. TFPC produces a newsletter, offers speakers programs, coordinates food security events, and conducts food system research. TFPC also produces discussion papers on food issues.*

#### Vancouver Policy Organization

c/o FarmFolk/CityFolk  
#208-2211 West 4th Ave.  
Vancouver, BC V6K 4S2  
Tel: (604) 730-0450  
Toll free for BC: 1-888-730-0452  
Fax: (604) 730-0451  
E-mail: [office@ffcf.bc.ca](mailto:office@ffcf.bc.ca)

*This advocacy group networks with key stakeholders to produce analysis, action and policy for the Greater Vancouver Regional District food system*





# Urban Agriculture & Food Security

*Communities are seeking to retain a focus on community, meet the needs of low-income people, build self-reliance, encourage the development of local agriculture and view food as part of a system. Collectively these actions represent a movement toward building community food security.*

## C O N C L U S I O N

Urbanization continues to build steam as we near the new millennium. With this monumental shift to living predominantly in cities, there is a growing awareness of the accompanying interfacing concerns of environmental health, poverty, hunger and food security. The concept of productive and sustainable cities is being promoted by a growing number of constituents. In particular people are coming together and taking proactive approaches to providing innovative solutions that address challenges within our current food system. Communities are seeking to retain a focus on community, meet the needs of low-income people, build self-reliance, encourage the development of local agriculture and view food as part of a system. Collectively these actions represent a movement toward building community food security.

As illustrated throughout this report, community-based organizations are active in a wide variety of spheres. The strength of these organizations is primarily in their ability to play umbrella roles for grassroots activities, spearhead or incubate new food action strategies, provide training opportunities, inform the public or facilitate a community voice in policy development. Traditionally independent community groups have organized to produce food through gardening. Currently rapid growth of community gardens across Canadian cities is propelling community associations to undertake advocacy roles to ensure the viability of this movement. As the concepts of urban food production and food security gain ground, taking wider scope coordinating roles is an area of potential growth for community organizations. Although there are still challenges around the awareness about and legitimacy of urban agriculture and its role in food security, there is also plentiful opportunity and interest in an expansion of research on appropriate technologies for food production and diverse distribution systems in cities.

Some notable examples of current community based initiatives that show real promise and also the scope that can be achieved through community organizing are Good Food Box programs, and Community Kitchens. The exponential growth of programs like the Good Food Box in the last 4 years in Toronto, and its expansion to over 10 communities in Ontario, highlights the critical niche community organizations are filling. Continued growth in alternative distribution mechanisms, be they CSAs, Farmers' Markets or Good Food Box programs, is anticipated. As well we will continue to see the proliferation of urban production in community gardens and further creation of more demonstration facilities and training programs. Community organizations will play a central public outreach and coordinating role.

Both a strength and a challenge for community organizations is the ability to network across a wide spectrum of actors. Projects, initiatives and organizations tend to be independent, and often duplicated. To their credit, the proliferation of food roundtables and food policy councils visibly points to an increasingly coordinated pat-



## C O N C L U S I O N

tern of community analysis and response to overall food systems. It mirrors and builds upon the comprehensive approach that many community organizations have adopted at a grassroots level. Food policy work clearly holds potential for community organizations to work in close partnership with local governments to achieve mutual goals.

Within all of this promise and activity exists a serious threat. This threat is the ability of community organizations to achieve long-term organizational viability. Funding is always tenuous, often based on concrete projects and outcomes and linked to the political agenda of the day. As core funding is difficult to obtain, considerable energy goes into securing funding on a project-to-project basis. Resources and staff time is spread thinly; volunteer contribution enables many programs to function. Until community food security is viewed as a legitimate political concern and the central role of community organizations acknowledged, community organizations will continue to fight for their survival each year.

***“Until community food security is viewed as a legitimate political concern and the central role of community organizations acknowledged, community organizations will continue to fight for their survival each year.”***

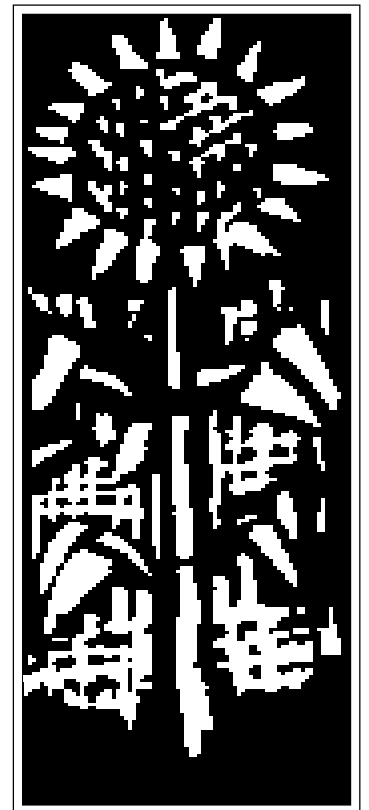
A stabilizing factor is that some organizations strengthen community activities with partnerships. The degree to which community organizations work in partnership with academia, the private sector, government or southern counterparts varies considerably. While there are links between academia and community organizations, as illustrated by the efforts of the Toronto Food Research Network, partnership endeavors with academic institutions do not appear to be a priority of most community organizations. While service and action are the key elements of community organizations, the movement toward policy level strategies may bring community groups in greater contact with academic perspectives and government at all levels.



Private sector partnerships also seem to be growing as more integrated approaches are seriously considering economic variables within the larger social and environmental agenda. Community Economic Development (CED) is not only being seen as a community based development strategy but also a way to achieve greater organizational viability. The jury is still out as to whether mixing revenue-generating activities within programs is prudent. However, it is an avenue that is being seriously considered by more and more groups. This is resulting in a cultural shift for community based organizers as they see socially and responsible businesses as not only logical partners, but also as frameworks for programs.

It is clear that most organizations are working in partnership with similar and complementary organizations locally, regionally and nationally. Some organizations have formed partnerships with southern organizations. LifeCycles, OXFAM and FoodShare have worked in conjunction with Latin American organizations, conducting exchanges and sharing information. Other groups are focused primarily on the immediate commu-

## Urban Agriculture & Food Security



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## C O N C L U S I O N

nities they serve. The potential and success of international work relies on funding, organizational principles and staff capacity. Partnership projects have proven to bring a global perspective to local initiatives as well as allowing for a transfer of skills and technologies between the partner groups. As urban poverty increases in Canada, southern counterparts who have been working at the community level on hunger issues may be solid sources for adaptable models and strategies.

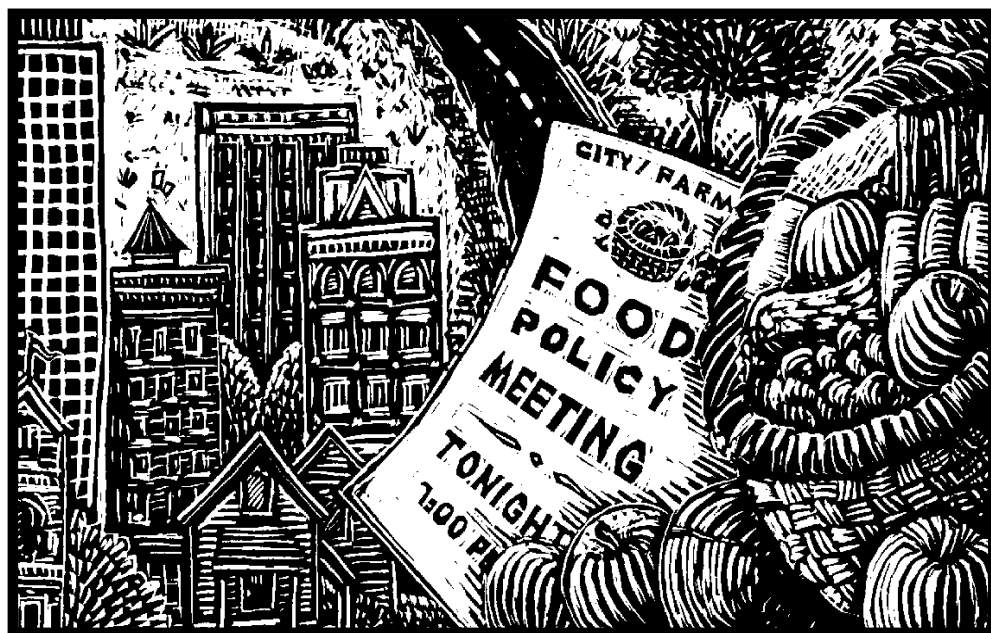
Overall there appears to be a scarcity of research conducted on the community contribution to food security. Directories like this one exist in some areas at the local level. For example in Victoria, B.C. there is both the Hunger Barometer which presents data regarding local and national emergency food distribution demand and serving local agencies, as well as the Bioregional Organic Food Guide which lists local producers, farmgate sales, farmers markets, CSA programs, organic food restaurants, retail outlets, and advocacy and training organizations. Although most organizations do evaluations of individual programs, as a rule there is little comprehensive data about the scope or of the long-term effectiveness of food security related projects.

A community food security approach is gaining ground in Canadian cities and towns. It is in its infancy stages. Across Canada there is an increasing awareness of the need for a multifaceted approach to food security that incorporates issues of access, production, distribution and sustainability. As this report illustrates, there is a diversity of action at the community level. Resources such as this report, and continued efforts to share information and work together, will strengthen the capacity of community organizations to proceed with their valuable work.

### Community Food Security

*A community food security approach is gaining ground in Canadian cities and towns. It is in its infancy stages.*

*Across Canada there is an increasing awareness of the need for a multifaceted approach to food security that incorporates issues of access, production, distribution and sustainability.*





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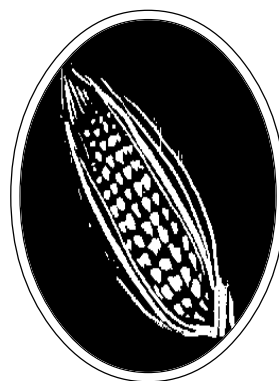
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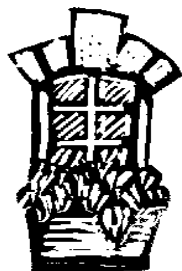
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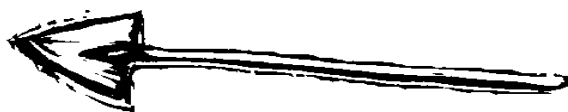
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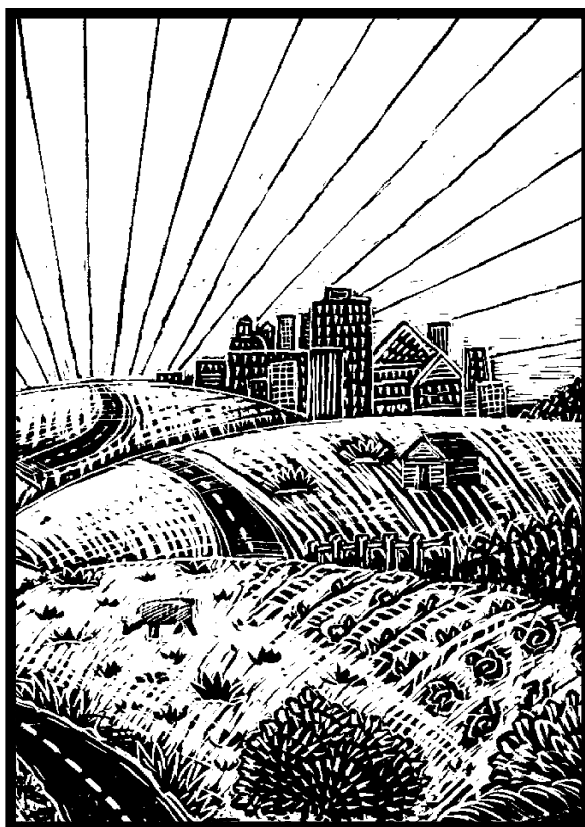
Kneen, Brewster and Cathleen, and Cynthia McDougall. 1997. A Baseline for Food Policy in British Columbia. FarmFolk/CityFolk. Vancouver, BC.

Perkins, Ellie. 1999 "Pubic Policy and the Transition to Locally Based Food Networks" In For Hunger-Proof Cities: Sustainable Urban Food Systems edited by Mustafa Koc, Rod MacRae, Luc J.A. Mugeot, and Jennifer Welsh. International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Ontario.

Toronto Food Policy Council. 1994. "Reducing urban hunger in Ontario: policy responses to support the transition from food charity to local food security." Discussion Paper Series #1. Toronto Food Policy Council, Toronto, Ontario.

*This group supports families in developing nutrition and home management skills; they coordinate com-*

## Urban Agriculture & Food Security



# Urban Agriculture Directory

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## DIRECTORY OF RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

This directory features additional organizations working on food production and food security. Each listing contains the organization name, address, phone, fax, and where available, an e-mail address, web site, contact person and a brief description of the organizational activities. This list is by no means exhaustive.

### American Community Gardening Association

100 N. 20th St., 5th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495

Tel: (215) 625-8280

Fax: (215) 625-9392

E-mail: smccabe@pennhort.org

Web Site: communitygarden.org

*ACGA plays national research, education and advocacy role in the USA.*

### Annual Organic Conference

Box 116

Collingwood, ON L9Y 3Z4

Tel: (705) 444-0923

Fax: (705) 444-0380

E-mail: organix@georgian.net

Tomas Nimmo

*An annual event with workshops on topics such as cropping systems, livestock, farmer-consumer links and global organics.*

### Canadian Healthy Communities

Suite 404, 126 York St.

Ottawa, ON K1N 5T5

Tel: (613) 233-1617

### Community Food Security Coalition

PO Box 209, Venice CA 90294 USA.

Tel: (310) 822-5410

E-mail: afisher@aol.com

Web Site: www.foodsecurity.org

Andy Fisher

### Community Supported Agriculture Resource Centre

Ecological Agriculture Project

MacDonald Campus, McGill University

Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, PQ H9X 3V9

Tel: (514) 398-7771

Fax: (514) 398-7621

E-mail: info@eap.mcgill.ca

*A center with information on CSA development and directories of Canadian CSAs.*



### Ecological Agriculture Projects

MacDonald Campus, McGill University

Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, PQ H9X 3V9

Tel: (514) 398-7771

Fax: (514) 398-7621

E-mail: info@eap.mcgill.ca

*EAP collects, organizes and disseminates information, gives workshops, conducts research and provides analysis on sustainable agriculture. It has a library with extensive coverage of all aspects of farming and gardening.*

### Ecological Farmers' Association of Ontario

Maitland Valley Conservation Authority

Box 127, Wroxeter, ON N0G 2X2

Tel: (519) 335-3557

Evergreen Foundation

Suite 5A-355 Adelaide St., West

Toronto, ON M5V 1S2

Tel: (416) 596-1495

Fax: (416) 596-1443

E-mail: info@evergreen.ca

Web Site: www.evergreen.ca

*Its mission is to preserve urban environment through education and action programs such as school naturalization*

### Linking Land and Future Farmers

Box 807

Sooke, BC V0S 1N0

Tel/Fax: (250) 642-3671

*This organization seeks to link up landowners with unused land and organic farmers looking for a place to farm in the South Vancouver Island area.*

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### North American Direct Marketing Association

343 South Union St.,  
Sparta, Michigan USA  
Tel: (616) 887-9008  
Matt McCulum  
Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition  
1202-415 Yonge St.  
Toronto, ON M5B 2E7  
Tel: (416) 408-4841 / 1-800-766-3418  
Fax: (416) 408-4843  
E-mail: info@opc.on.ca  
Web Site: www.opc.on.ca/ohcc

### Planting Seeds Project

1035 Commercial Drive  
Vancouver, BC V5L 3X1  
Tel: (604) 255-1788  
Fax: (604) 255-2370  
E-mail: seeds@web.apc.org  
*A grassroots network of organic farmers and gardeners in British Columbia working to rescue viable organic seed varieties.*

### Rooftop Garden Resource Group

14 Sackville Place  
Toronto, ON M4 X 1A4  
Tel: (416) 923-9034  
Fax: (416) 923-0875  
Monica Kuhn  
*A resource group dedicated to establishing a rooftop gardening culture through public education and community action. Available from the Rooftop Garden Resource Group is a questionnaire to introduce the perspective gardener to the issues involved in setting up a garden, fact sheets and a resource library.*

### Sustainable Agriculture Association

PO Box 1181 Station M  
Calgary, AB  
Tel: (403) 686-3310  
Fax: (403) 686-0075  
E-mail: raphael@echobio.com

### The Urban Agriculture Network

1711 Lamont St. NW  
Washington DC, USA 20010-2601  
Tel: (202) 483-8130  
Fax: (202) 986-6732  
E-mail: urbanag@compuserv.com  
info on www.cityfarmer.org  
Jac Smit  
*The goal of TUAN is to establish urban agriculture as a productive food alternative, maximizing food security of cities and income of farmers. The network has three programs: communication, research, and project development assistance. TUAN is networked with 80 countries and 6000 members, 600 of which are in NAFTA.*

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## DIRECTORY OF ORGANIZATIONS BY REGION

Regions: British Columbia, Prairies, Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes and National. This directory list organizations included in this report location. Each entry contains the organization name, address, phone, fax, and where available, an e-mail address, web site, contact person, and a brief description of the organizational activities. This list is by no means exhaustive.

### BRITISH COLUMBIA



#### British Columbia Direct Marketing Association

Building 20, 8801 E. Saanich Rd.

Sydney, BC V8L 1H3

Tel: (250) 656-0941

Email: [brent.warner@gems8.gov.bc.ca](mailto:brent.warner@gems8.gov.bc.ca)

Web Site: [www.agf.gov.bc](http://www.agf.gov.bc)

*This branch coordinates direct marketing in three BC regions.*



#### Capital Health Region Prevention Services - Nutrition Program

3995 Quadra St.

Victoria, BC V8X 1J8

Tel: (250) 744-5120

Fax: (250) 479-3413

Email: [lorie.way@caphealth.org](mailto:lorie.way@caphealth.org)

Lorie Way

*Public health services provide support and resources for community kitchens and community gardens in the Greater Victoria region.*



#### City Farmer

#801 - 318 Homer St.,  
Vancouver BC V6B 2V3

Tel: (604) 685-5832

Hotline: (604) 736-2250

Email: [cityfarm@unixg.ubc.ca](mailto:cityfarm@unixg.ubc.ca)

Web Site: [www.cityfarmer.ca](http://www.cityfarmer.ca)

Michael Levenston

*City Farmers hosts the compost education and demonstration garden for City of Vancouver. It is also the home of Canada's Office of Urban Agriculture.*

### Community Gardens in BC:

<http://www.cityfarmer.org>.

*A list of community gardens in the Greater Vancouver region and the City of Victoria is provided with the garden location, contact person, garden size and charges, if applicable.*



#### Community Kitchens Vancouver

1145 Commercial Drive  
Vancouver BC V5L 3X3

Tel: (604) 254-8300

Fax: (604) 254-8789

Email: [massyn@uniserv.com](mailto:massyn@uniserv.com)

Diane Collins

*A partnership project with the health board to provide one central city resource on community kitchens.*



#### East Vancouver Farmers' Market

3242 Woodland Drive  
Vancouver, BC V5N 3R4

Tel: (604) 879-.3276

Fax: (604) 875-9631

Devorah Kahn

*Initially a community economic development project, market flourished with over 40 vendors, educational activities and strong community links.*



### Environmental Youth Alliance

PO Box 34097 Station D  
Vancouver BC V6J 4M1

Tel: (604) 689-4463

Fax: (604) 689-4242

Email: [laragan@hotmail.com](mailto:laragan@hotmail.com)

Doug Ragan


*A youth-driven environmental group, EYA focuses on skill-building through land reclamation and community/rooftop garden development.*


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 Farm Folk/City Folk

#208-2211 West 4th Ave.,  
Vancouver, BC V6K 4S2  
Tel: (604)730-0450/ 1-888-730-0452 (BC only)  
Fax: (604)730-0451  
Email: office@ffcf.bc.ca  
List serve: ffcf-l@alternatives.com (send a blank  
message with "subscribe" in the subject heading)  
Web Site: www.ffcf.bc.ca

 Healthiest Babies Possible

Vancouver/Richmond Health Board  
2610 Victoria Drive  
Vancouver BC V5N 4L2  
Tel: (604) 872-2511/877-4674  
Fax: (604) 872-2368  
Karin Schreurs, Christina Scheuer  
*A community health project working with low-income parents in area of nutrition and lifestyles counseling. They coordinate a Good Food Bag program for 65 families and initiated a community gardening project in the summer of 1998.*

 Kamloops Food Share

South Central Health Unit  
905 Southhill St.  
Kamloops, BC V2B 7Z9  
Tel: (250) 372-0815  
Fax: (250) 376-4708  
Laura Kalina  
*FoodShare has programs in community kitchens, coordinates 4 community gardens, work with the food bank and spearheads a food policy group.*

Kootenay Permaculture Institute  
Permaculture and Organic Agriculture Training  
Program

Box 43, Winlaw, BC V0G 2J0  
Tel/Fax: (250)226-7302  
Email: lynx@netidea.com  
*Offers 6 month courses in permaculture design and techniques in planning, producing, harvesting and marketing an organic garden.*

 LifeCycles

527 Michigan  
Victoria BC V8V 1S1  
Tel: (250) 383-5800  
Fax: (250) 386-3449  
Email: lifecycles@coastnet.com  
Linda Geggie  
*This community food security organization coordinates school gardening projects, community gardening training, a CSA cooperative, a demo site and the regional Food Roundtable.*

Linking Land and Future Farmers

Box 807  
Sooke, BC V0S 1N0  
Tel/Fax: (250) 642-3671  
*This organization seeks to link up landowners with unused land and organic farmers looking for a place to farm in the South Vancouver Island area.*

Nanaimo FoodShare

1125 Seafeld Crescent  
Nanaimo, BC V9S 4S1  
Tel: (250)753-7470  
Trish Fitzpatrick  
*Nanaimo Foodshare coordinates programs in food sharing/donations, surplus gleaning, community kitchens and community gardens. It is also connected with hot meal and school nutrition programs.*

 Oxfam-Canada Vancouver

2524 Cypress St.  
Vancouver, BC V6J 3N2  
Tel: (604) 736-7678  
Fax: (604) 736-9646  
Email: van@oxfam.ca  
Jennifer Colson

 Oxfam-Canada Victoria

527 Michigan  
Victoria, BC V8V 1S1  
Tel: (250) 360-0799  
Fax: (250) 388-5258  
Email: vict@oxfam.ca

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#### Planting Seeds Project

1035 Commercial Drive  
Vancouver, BC V5L 3X1

Tel: (604) 255-1788

Fax: (604) 255-2370

E-mail: [seeds@web.apc.org](mailto:seeds@web.apc.org)

*A grassroots network of organic farmers and gardeners in British Columbia working to rescue viable organic seed varieties.*



#### Prince George Food Security Network

PO Box 1078

Mackenzie BC V0J 2C0

Tel: (250) 997-3367

Fax: (250) 997-5551

Email: [houghton@perf.bc.ca](mailto:houghton@perf.bc.ca)

Joanne Houghton

*The PGFSN brings together key actors to support an alternative food system through networking, research, public education and community action. The network include representatives from the community gardening, community kitchens, food buying clubs, Community Supported Agriculture farms, and farmers market sectors.*



#### Stewards of Irreplaceable Land -

##### SOIL

2876 Inez Drive

Victoria, BC V9A 2J1

Tel: (250) 381-2916

*This is an organic farm apprenticeship program on British Columbia farms: minimum four week commitment in return for room and board.*



#### The Urban Farm

1032/1038 Mason St.

Victoria BC V8R 6P5

Tel: (250) 920-0257

*In downtown Victoria, this farm holds old growth fruit-bearing trees, vegetable produce, and over 50 chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys. Produce is distributed between the volunteers and local food banks.*



#### Vancouver Island PIRG

Student Union Building, Rm.144

Box 3035, University of Victoria

Victoria, BC V8W 3R3

Tel: (250) 721-8629

Fax: (250) 721-8728

Email: [vipirg@sol.uvic.ca](mailto:vipirg@sol.uvic.ca)

*They run a food coop, a university garden and a native-plants working group.*



#### Vancouver Permaculture

##### Network

Tel: (604) 589-7275

Email: [hwaldock@alternatives.com](mailto:hwaldock@alternatives.com),

[clyford@alternatives.com](mailto:clyford@alternatives.com)

*A loose network of gardeners, landscapers and architects who provide public education, permaculture workshops and coordinate workparties in the city's community gardens.*



#### Vancouver Policy Organization

c/o Farm Folk City Folk

#208-2211 West 4th Ave.

Vancouver, BC V6K 4S2

Tel: (604)730-0450

Toll free for BC: 1-888-730-0452

Fax: (604)730-0451

Email: [office@ffcf.bc.ca](mailto:office@ffcf.bc.ca)

*This advocacy group networks with key stakeholders to produce analysis, action and policy for the Greater Vancouver Regional District food system.*



#### Victoria Compost Education

##### Centre

c/o 1923 Fernwood Rd

Victoria BC V8T 2Y6

Tel: (250)386-WORM

*A composting resource and demonstration site in Victoria area*



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## PRAIRIES



Alberta Farmers' Markets

17507 Fort Rd

RR #6

Edmonton AB T5B 4K3

Tel: (403)415-2313/422-1789

Fax: (403)422-6096

Simone Demers Collins

*This branch centrally administers over 100 farmers' markets in province. It provides information and resources on direct marketing.*

Alberta Market Gardeners Association

CDC-S, SS 4

Brooks AB T1R 1E6

Tel: (403)362-1309



Can-Ag

14809 119th Ave.

Edmonton, AB T5L 2N9

Tel: (403) 434-0400

Fax: (403) 482-1260

Email: [canag@planet.eon.org](mailto:canag@planet.eon.org)

Susan Penstone

*This organization works with the University of Alberta to study soil systems and food production.*



Child Hunger and Education

Program

Room 210 - 230 Ave. R South

Saskatoon, SK S7M 0Z9

Tel: (306) 655-4635

Fax: (306) 655-5895

Karen Archibald

*Established in 1989, CHEP is involved with school feeding programs, a traveling market, coordinating community kitchens, gardening a community patch, and operating a good food box program.*



Collective Kitchens

Community Health Resources

Calgary Regional Health Authority

PO Box 4016

Station C, 320-17th Ave. SW

Calgary AB T2T 5T1

Tel: (403) 228-7420

Fax: (403) 228-8212

*A community nutritionist serves as central resource and coordinating person to help get community kitchen groups started and provide resources.*



Collective Kitchens

Community Care and Public Health

Dickinsfield Amity House

9213-146 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5E 2J9

Tel: (403) 478-5022

Fax: (403) 473-8979

Diane Thursby

*Community nutritionist coordinates and provides support for community kitchens in Edmonton area.*



Community Garden Resource Group

c/o Calgary Horticultural Society

208-50th Ave., SW.

Calgary, AB T2S 2S1

Tel: (403) 287-3469

Fax: (403) 287-2896

Athena Dorey

*Network and information clearinghouse on community gardens in the Calgary area.*



Earth Keeping

#205, 10711 - 107 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5H 0W6

Tel: (403) 428-6981

Fax: (403) 428-1581

Email: [earthkpg@web.net](mailto:earthkpg@web.net)

*This is a network of over 250 farm families and city folks advocating for a just food and agricultural system. Their activities include education, research and policy development on food issues.*

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#### Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation

#810-10117 Jasper Ave.  
Edmonton, AB T5J 1W8  
Tel: (403) 424-7543  
Fax: (403) 425-5911

##### Gail Campos

*This community organization runs is a member of the WECAN food coop, runs a community garden, works with a barter exchange and has a collective kitchen.*



#### Food First

#200 – 107 Seventh St.  
Brandon, MB R7A 3S5  
Tel/Fax: (204) 729-0492

[commonground@mb.sympatico.ca](mailto:commonground@mb.sympatico.ca)

*A Healthy Communities initiative, this project offered hands-on experience creating and harvesting a garden, collectively cooking and starting a catering company.*



#### Food Futures

Room 210 - 230 Ave. R South  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0Z9  
Tel: (306) 655-4635  
Fax: (306) 655-5895

*A multi-sectoral community group aims to work with key stakeholders to develop local food policies, promote equitable food production and distribution systems and facilitate public education about food security issues. Food Futures is partnered with the Saskatoon District Health, National Farmers Union, Oxfam, CHEP, regional social services, local producers and consumers.*



#### Grow Regina Community Gardens

Community Services Department  
Social Development Division  
Queen Elizabeth II Court  
Box 1790  
Regina Saskatchewan S4P 3C8  
Tel: (306) 777-7546  
Fax: (306) 777-6774  
[pviala@cityregina.com](mailto:pviala@cityregina.com)  
Paul Viala

*The City of Regina has eight different garden sites with over 700 plots. The largest garden "Grow Regina" has 250 garden plots and can produce food for 1,100 people. The city provides administrative support, equipment, soil, water, and site facilities in addition to technical advice.*



#### Harvest Collective

877 Westminister Ave.,  
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1B3  
Tel: (204) 772-4359  
Fax: (204) 786-5648  
A food coop with 200 members.



#### Mennonite Center for Newcomers

101-10010-107A Ave.  
Edmonton, T5H-4H8  
Tel: (403) 423-9693  
Fax: (403) 424-7736  
Anne-Marie Brose

*This group is working with immigrants establish community gardens, seed conservation and a garden network in the Edmonton area.*



#### Oxfam-Canada Calgary

233-10 St. NW  
Calgary, AB T2N 1V5  
Tel: (403) 270-2826  
Fax: (403) 270-8832  
Email: [calgary@oxfam.ca](mailto:calgary@oxfam.ca)

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**Oxfam-Canada Saskatoon**

c/o Global Farmer's Project  
National Farmers' Union  
250 C 2nd Ave. S  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 1M2  
Tel: (306) 242-4097  
Fax: (306) 664-6226  
Email: sask@oxfam.ca



**Parkland Healthy Families Association**

5413 - 51 St.  
PO Box 2695  
Stony Plain, AB T7Z 1Y2  
Tel: (403) 963-0549  
Fax: (403) 963-3876  
Susan Penstone

*This organization runs a project to improve family health by involving them in the gardening program. They are also involved with building a regional community gardening network.*



**Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger (REACH)**

Box 4482  
Regina SK S4P 3W7  
Tel: (306) 347-3224  
Fax: (306) 525-0107

Lee Beck

*REACH's mission is to provide people with easily accessible food on a non-profit basis. They are members of the Regina Food Security Project. REACH coordinates the regional Good Food Box program.*



**Regina Home Economics For Living Project (HELP)**

2156 Albert St.  
Regina SK S4P 2T9  
Tel: (306) 347-7877

M. Lucille Saum

*This group supports families in developing nutrition and home management skills; they coordinate community kitchens project.*

**Sustainable Agriculture Association**

PO Box 1181 Station M  
Calgary, AB  
Tel: (403) 686-3310  
Fax: (403) 686-0075  
E-mail: raphael@echobio.com



**The Garden Institute**

Box 1406, #194, 3803 Calgary Trail  
Edmonton AB T6J 5MB  
Tel: (403) 430-0538  
Fax: (403) 434-7413  
Email: rempel@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca

Sharon Rempel

*This institute promotes organic gardening through research and education. They offer courses in soil health, yard rejuvenation, heritage gardens, seed saving and medicinal plant usage.*

**Winnipeg Community Gardens**

**Athletic Facilities and Park booking Services**

1539 Waverly St.  
Winnipeg, Man., R3T 0V7  
Tel: (204) 986-2665  
Fax: (204) 986-7510

Barb Colitz

*The City of Winnipeg has between 580-630 allotment plots available for a small fee. There are also two large community gardens and many small ones.*



**Winnipeg Harvest**

1085 Winnipeg Ave.  
Winnipeg, MB R3E 0S2  
Tel: (204) 982-3666  
Fax: (204) 775-4180

Email: harvest@xpressnet.com

Web Site: [www.xpressnet.com/harvest](http://www.xpressnet.com/harvest)

*A food bank, this organization is networked with church groups, social agency and community organizations in the Winnipeg area.*

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### ONTARIO



**Annex Organics**

200 Eastern Ave.  
Toronto, ON M5A 1J1  
Tel: (416)363-6441  
Fax: (416)363-0474  
Email: [annexorganics@hotmail.com](mailto:annexorganics@hotmail.com)  
Lauren Baker, Tracey Loverock

*An market gardening enterprise that uses rooftops, hydroponics and living machines. They specialize in wet waste management, composting and organic production.*

#### Annual Organic Conference

Box 116  
Collingwood, ON L9Y 3Z4  
Tel: (705) 444-0923  
Fax: (705) 444-0380  
E-mail: [organix@georgian.net](mailto:organix@georgian.net)  
Tomas Nimmo

*An annual event with workshops on topics such as cropping systems, livestock, farmer-consumer links and global organics.*



**Better Beginnings for Kingston**

**Children**

134 Elliot Ave.,  
Kingston, ON K7K 2P9  
Tel: (613) 542-2813

*This organization supports alternative distribution methods through a Good Food Box program and community kitchen.*



**Bytowne Urban Gardens**

# 303 - 352 Somerset St. W  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0J9  
Tel: (613) 234-0387  
Fax: (613) 593-8863  
[dhodgson@chatcan.ca](mailto:dhodgson@chatcan.ca)  
Dwayne Hodgson

*BUGS coordinates 2 community gardens in the downtown area of Ottawa. BUGS is a good contact for the loose network of community gardens in the Ottawa-Carleton area and is linked with a wide variety of local community groups working on food issues.*



**Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank**

56 Dickson St.  
Cambridge, ON N1R 1T8  
Tel: (519) 622-6550  
Fax: (519) 622-9076  
Pat Singleton

*This food bank has three methods of food distribution - emergency hampers, membership program and Good Food Box. It also has healthy baby project, school nutrition programs and referral services.*



**Community Development Council of Quinte**

C4-344 Front St.  
Belleville, ON K8N 5M4  
Tel: (613) 968-2466  
Fax: (613) 968-2251  
Email: [cdc@lks.net](mailto:cdc@lks.net)  
Web Site: [www.lks.net/~cdc](http://www.lks.net/~cdc)  
Roni Summers

*CDC coordinate and educate the public about good food and good lunch box programs, community allotment gardens, collective kitchens and food coops. They are part of a partnership project Planting Seeds for Change which builds and harvests school gardens for emergency food aid programs. They coordinate a gleaning project called Second Helping. CDC is an active member of the regional Task Force on Hunger and conducts anti-poverty research.*



**Community Food Foundation**

PO Box 145  
Barrie, ON L4M 4S9  
Tel: (705) 725-1818  
Fax: (705) 725-1732

#### Community Gardens in Ontario:

<http://www.icangarden.com/gardens>.

*Here is a list of allotment gardens available in cities in Ontario. Garden contacts are listed in 20 cities in Ontario with basic information about plots, size of gardens and charges, if applicable.*

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**Crow Compost**

61 Beachview Crescent  
Toronto, ON M4E 2L6

Tel: (416) 691-8200

Email: [crowsnest@intradigital.com](mailto:crowsnest@intradigital.com)

*An enterprise specializing in urban composting.*

### Ecological Farmers' Association of Ontario Field to Table

200 Eastern Ave.,  
Toronto, ON M5A 1J1

Tel: (416) 363-6441

Fax: (416) 363-0474

Email: [ftt@web.net](mailto:ftt@web.net)

Mary Lou Morgan

*Field to Table runs a Good Food Box program with over 4000 boxes a month in addition to hosting food training projects and an incubator kitchen.*

### Food For Change

Centretown Community Centre

340 rue MacClaren St.,  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0M6

Tel: (613) 563-4771 ext. 170

Fax: (613) 563-0163

Olly Wodin

*A network of food and poverty action groups.*



**Food Security Working Group**

Ontario Public Health Association

468 Queen St. E, Suite 202 Toronto  
ON M5A 1T7

Tel: (416) 367-3313/1-800-267-6817

Ursula Lipski

*A provincial level policy group for food security.*



**FoodShare**

238 Queen St. W.,  
Toronto, ON M5V 1Z7

Tel: (416) 392-6653

Fax: (416) 392-6650

Email: [fdshare@web.net](mailto:fdshare@web.net)

Debbie Field

*With a comprehensive approach, FoodShare serves the community through community gardening, community kitchens, healthy baby and job training projects. It houses the FoodLink Hotline of all Metro Toronto food-related services and plays a significant advocacy and networking role in the region. It also hosts Toronto's Friends of Community Gardening advocacy group.*

### Gravenhurst Food Coop

RR #2, Box 33A

Kilworthy, ON P0E 1G0

Tel: (705) 689-2432

Fax: (705) 689-8856

*This community group provides healthy low-cost food to the community as well as supporting other ventures such as a community kitchen and garden project.*



**Greenest City**

238 Queen St. W., Lower Level

Toronto, ON M5V 1Z7

Tel: (416) 977-8659

Fax: (416) 392-6650

Email: [greenest@web.net](mailto:greenest@web.net)

Monica Tang

*Greenest City recently facilitated a multicultural greening project working primarily with Eastern Asian communities to develop community gardens. Greenest City also works to incorporate composting facilities at the community gardening sites.*



**Kawartha Food Share**

PO Box 1413

Peterborough, ON K9J 7A2

Tel: (705) 748-1680

Fax: (705) 748-1681

Email: [kwic@pipcom.com](mailto:kwic@pipcom.com)

*This network is developing a central warehouse to distribute food fairly amongst all local food banks, food cupboards and food action programs. This centre will offer users referrals and community resources.*

### Kitchener/Waterloo Food Security Coalition

Public Health Department

3rd Floor - 99 Regina St.,

Waterloo, ON N2J 4B3

Tel: (519) 883-2110

Fax: (519) 883-2241

Email: [ddcarole@region.waterloo.on.ca](mailto:ddcarole@region.waterloo.on.ca)

Carole Desmeules

*This food security coalition brings together community gardens, good food box programs, CSAs, farmers' markets and nutrition for learning programs in the region.*

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**Life\*Spin**

360 Queens Ave.  
PO Box 2801  
London, ON N6A 4H4  
Tel: (519) 438-8676  
Fax: (519) 438-7983  
Email: [rbarrs@london.skyscape.net](mailto:rbarrs@london.skyscape.net)  
Tara McDonald

*Life\*Spin is involved with numerous food security projects to combat hunger and malnutrition. In addition to the Green Market Basket, a food box initiative, Life\*Spin has implemented a school food garden program. Life\*Spin also hosts the London Food Security group.*



**London Community Gardens Project**

50 King St.  
London, ON N6A 5L7  
Tel: (519) 663-5317 ext. 2556  
Fax: (519) 663-9581  
Mary Yanful

*This urban gardening project has overseen the development of six sites in the area as well as expanding public education about food security through workshops, farm tours and U-Pick trips.*



**Loyola Arupe Rooftop Garden**

515 Parkside Drive  
Toronto, ON M6R 3B1  
Tel: (416) 766-7977  
Peter Boland

*This 1995 partnership project between the Four Villages Community Health Centre and the Seniors Centre produced a community gardening space. Through the use of containers, this garden provides fresh food and outdoor space for residents of nearby non-profit housing, seniors, and community members. They are now developing a rooftop greenhouse for the garden.*



**Niagara Peninsula Homes Community Resources**

178 King St., 3rd Floor  
Welland, ON L3P 3J5  
Tel: (905) 382-3461/788-0166  
Email: [babaker@niagara.com](mailto:babaker@niagara.com)  
Web Site: <http://www.nphcr.on.ca>  
Betty Anne Baker

*Niagara Peninsula Homes provides a forum for job training, nutrition and health education. It coordinates a Good Food Box program as well as initiating a community economic project for women entrepreneurs to market locally-processed food.*

**North American Direct Marketing Association**

343 South Union St.,  
Sparta, Michigan USA  
Tel: (616) 887-9008  
Matt McCulum  
Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition  
1202-415 Yonge St.  
Toronto, ON M5B 2E7  
Tel: (416) 408-4841 / 1-800-766-3418  
Fax: (416) 408-4843  
E-mail: [info@opc.on.ca](mailto:info@opc.on.ca)  
Web Site: [www.opc.on.ca/ohcc](http://www.opc.on.ca/ohcc)



**Ontario Farmers' Markets**

75 Bayshore Rd, RR#4  
Brighton, ON K0K 1H0  
Tel: (613) 475-4769/1-800-387-FARM  
Fax: (613) 475-2913

*A networking and information association for the 130 plus farmers' markets across the province.*



**Ontario Natural Food Co-op**

(Ontario Federation of Food Co-operatives and Clubs)

70 Fima Crescent  
Etobicoke, ON M8W 4V9  
Tel: (416) 503-1144 ext. 33/1-800-387-0354  
Fax: (416) 503-2848  
Email: [onfc@pathcom.com](mailto:onfc@pathcom.com)  
Kim De Lallo

*This large coop promotes alternative distribution of natural foods. It works with over 330 buying clubs and distributes across Ontario and Eastern Canada.*



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**OPIRG Guelph**

1 Trent Lane  
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1

Tel: (519) 824-2091

Fax: (519) 824-8990

Email: [opirg@uoguelph.ca](mailto:opirg@uoguelph.ca)

*The permaculture action group has build a community garden.*



**Oxfam-Canada London**

356 Queen Ave.  
London, ON N6B 1X6

Tel: (519) 432-2123

Fax: (519) 432-4096

Email: [lond@oxfam.ca](mailto:lond@oxfam.ca)



**Oxfam-Canada Toronto**

1011 Bloor St. W  
Toronto, ON M6H 1M1

Tel: (416) 535-2335

Fax: (416) 537-6435

Email: [toronto@oxfam.ca](mailto:toronto@oxfam.ca)



**Permaculture Commu-**

**nity Action Worknet**

104 Bridlewood Blvd.  
Agincourt, ON M1T 1R1

Tel: (416) 497-5746

Email: [mulchman@web.net](mailto:mulchman@web.net)

Richard Griffith

*This non-profit promotes permaculture education throughout Ontario and offers courses on permaculture, design, synergistic agriculture and its urban applications.*



**Peterborough Food Policy Action**

**Committee**

Public Health Unit  
10 Hospital Drive  
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1

Tel: (705) 743-1000

Fax: (705) 743-2897

Susan Hubay

*The Food Policy Action Committee is linked with alternative food distribution programs in the region such as community gardens, gleaning projects, food lending cupboards, collective kitchens, good food box programs, pre-natal nutrition programs, CSAs and breakfast clubs for children.*



**Red Cross Task Force on Hunger**

1623 Yonge St.  
Toronto, ON M4T 2A2

Tel: (416) 480-2500

Dennis Fair

*Metro Toronto Red Cross is involved with numerous food programs and services in the areas of food banks, community gardens, healthy babies and community kitchens. The Task Force has been looking at issues of community access to resources, improving communication between community organizations, initiating additional alternative anti-hunger programs and supporting the idea of a regional food information clearinghouse.*



**Rooftop Garden Resource Group**

14 Sackville Place  
Toronto, ON M4 X 1A4

Tel: (416) 923-9034

Fax: (416) 923-0875

Monica Kuhn

*A resource group dedicated to establishing a rooftop gardening culture through public education and community action. Available from the Rooftop Garden Resource Group is a questionnaire to introduce the perspective gardener to the issues involved in setting up a garden, fact sheets and a resource library.*

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#### Scarborough Hunger Coalition

#500 - 55 Town Centre Court

Toronto, ON M1P 4X4

Tel: (416)396-7450

Fax: (416)396-5299

Email: [Fultony@city.scarborough.on.ca](mailto:Fultony@city.scarborough.on.ca)

Janice Stoveld

*The Scarborough Hunger Coalition (SHC) has over 100 members representing communities, health departments, churches, hospitals, and school boards. It is linked with food bank activities, community gardens, community kitchens, food buying clubs and a gleaning project.*



#### Silver Mountain Food Group

RR #1 Nolalu, ON P0T 2K0

Tel: (807) 475-8761

Diana Bockus

*This group works with 225 families organized into buying clubs. Food is local and natural. They deliver to a 450 kilometer radius in Northern, Ontario.*



#### Thunder Bay Food Action Network

c/o Thunder Bay District Health Unit

999 Balmoral St.

Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6E7

Tel: (807)625-5900

Janice Piper

*This network is linked with numerous food action programs in Thunder Bay - food banks, community kitchens, community gardens, community supported agriculture projects and prenatal programs.*



#### Toronto Food Policy Council

277 Victoria St., Suite 203

Toronto, ON M5B 1W1

Tel: (416) 392-1107

Fax: (416) 392-1357

Email: [fpc@web.net](mailto:fpc@web.net)

Sean Cosgrove

*The Toronto Food Policy Council facilitates initiatives policy discussion and collective action on food issues. TFPC produces a newsletter, offers speakers programs, coordinates food security events, and conducts food system research. TFPC also produces discussion papers on food issues.*



#### Toronto Food Research Network

Centre for Studies in Food Security

350 Victoria St.

Toronto ON M5B 2K3

Tel: (416)979-5000 ext. 6210

Fax: (416)979-5273

Email: [mkoc@acs.ryerson.ca](mailto:mkoc@acs.ryerson.ca)

Web Site: [www.acs.ryerson.ca/~foodsec](http://www.acs.ryerson.ca/~foodsec)

Mustafa Koc

*A network of over 100 members, mainly in the Toronto region, drawn from universities, government and community, engaged in research, practice and debate on issues related to food security.*

### QUEBEC



#### A SEED Quebec

3647 University, 3rd Floor

Montreal, PQ H3A 2B3

Tel: (514) 398-8969

Fax: (514) 398-8976

Email: [aseed@cam.org](mailto:aseed@cam.org)

Elizabeth Hunter

*A non-profit organization dedicated to research and public education. Its actions focus primarily on food security and ecological transportation projects. They are working in areas of fair coffee trade, Community Supported Agriculture and community gardening.*

#### Community supported Agriculture Resource Centre

Ecological Agriculture Project

MacDonald Campus, McGill University

Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, PQ H9X 3V9

Tel: (514) 398-7771

Fax: (514) 398-7621

E-mail: [info@eap.mcgill.ca](mailto:info@eap.mcgill.ca)

*A center with information on CSA development and directories of Canadian CSAs.*

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 Eco-Initiatives

5590 Sherbrook St. W  
Montreal, PQ H4A 1W3  
Tel: (514) 484-4129  
Fax: (514) 484-4277  
Email: [ecoini@cam.org](mailto:ecoini@cam.org)

*This organization works in several areas including: community gardening, a sharing backyard program, and a CSA project. They have partnered with community health clinics to focus on pre-natal nutrition and health.*

 Environnement Jeunesse

4545 Piere-de-Courbertin  
Montreal, PQ  
Tel: (514) 252-3061

*This organizations works with high school students giving workshops on compost, waste management and organic food production.*

**L'Alliance Communautaire pour la Formation et le Developpement (ACFD)**

2256 Asselin  
Longueil, PQ J4M 2M1  
Tel/Fax: (514) 647-3420

  Montreal Community

**Gardening Program**

Recreation, Parks and Community Development  
Department


5319 Notre Dame de Grace Ave.,  
Montreal, PQ H4A 1L2  
Tel: (514) 872-6363  
Fax: (514) 872-4585


*The City of Montreal has 73 gardens that are coordinated by the Recreation, Parks and Community Development Department. The City supplies land, equipment, supplies, water and technical support. The Botanical Department offers courses on organic gardening, and has youth and children's horticulture and natural science programs.*

 Mouvement pour L'Agriculture

**Biologique – Region Metropolitaine**

#2 - 4560 de Bellechase  
Montreal, PQ  
Tel: (514) 872-6363  
Fax: (514) 872-4585

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 QPIRG McGill

3rd Floor -3647 University St.,  
Montreal, PQ H2A 2B3  
Tel: (514) 398-7432  
Fax: (514) 398-8976  
Email: [qpirg@vub.mcgill.ca](mailto:qpirg@vub.mcgill.ca)

*The Global Cooperation Network working group concentrates on local and global food security issues.*

 Regroupement des Cuisines Collectives du Quebec

1605 rue de Champlain  
Montreal, PQ H2L 2S5  
Tel: (514) 529-3448  
Fax: (514) 529-1359  
Email: [rccq@cam.org](mailto:rccq@cam.org)

*A network of community kitchens throughout the province of Quebec.*

## THE MARITIMES

 Bathurst Healthy Communities

37 Rue Centenarine  
Edmunston, NB E3V 3H5

*This group initiates and coordinates several community food projects in building sustainable communities.*

 Clean Nova Scotia

PO Box 2528 Central  
Halifax, NS B3J 3N5  
Tel: (902) 420-3474/1.800.665.5377  
Fax: (902) 424-5334

Email: [hgordon@clean.ns.ca](mailto:hgordon@clean.ns.ca)  
Web Site: [www.clean.ns.ca](http://www.clean.ns.ca)

**Heather Gordon**

*This organization coordinates 30 educational program; it runs community garden, backyard composting and organic waste management programs.*

 Dartmouth Farmers' Market

Dartmouth Downtown Development Corporation  
12 Queen St., Dartmouth NS B2Y 1E7  
Tel: (902) 466-2997  
Fax: (902) 465-2233

*This producer only market will be incorporated in the plan to build a "people place" on the Dartmouth waterfront.*

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Dartmouth Parents Resource

Centre

47 Wentworth St.  
Dartmouth, NS B2Y 2T1  
Tel: (902) 464-2203

*A family food resource with a soup kitchen, basic shelf program and community kitchen.*



Ecology Action Centre

1568 Argyle Street, Suite 31  
Halifax NS B3J 2B3  
Tel: (902) 429-2202  
Fax: (902) 422-6410  
Email: eac\_hfx@istar.ca

Web Site: [www.chebucto.ns.ca/Environment](http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Environment)  
Thea Hammond-Wilson

*They provide information, advice and workshops on starting and maintaining community gardens.*



Halifax Community Gardens

Recreation and Leisure Services  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
PO Box 1749

Halifax, NS B3J 3A5  
Tel: (902) 490-4731  
Fax: (902) 490-4736

Janet Landry

*The municipality coordinates several community gardens and collective kitchens under the recreation department.*



Nova Scotia PIRG

Student Union Building  
Dalhousie University  
6136 University Ave.,  
Halifax, NS B3H 4J2  
Tel: (902) 494-6662  
Fax: (902) 494-5185

*They coordinate an university garden, a food co-op and do education on food security.*



Oxfam-Canada Halifax

209-2099 Gottingen St.  
Halifax, NS B3K 3B2  
Tel: (902) 425-7677  
Fax: (902) 425-7778  
Email: [hal@oxfam.ca](mailto:hal@oxfam.ca)  
Shannon Lynch



Oxfam-Canada Moncton

311-96 Norwood Ave.  
Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 6L9  
Tel: (506) 859-4256  
Fax: (506) 859-7182  
Email: [moncton@oxfam.ca](mailto:moncton@oxfam.ca)



Oxfam-Canada St. John's

382 Duckworth St.  
St. John's, Newfoundland A1C 1H8  
Tel: (709) 753-2202  
Fax: (709) 753-4110  
Email: [stjohns@oxfam.ca](mailto:stjohns@oxfam.ca)



St. John's Food Security Network

PO Box 344 Tor Bay  
Newfoundland  
A1K 1E4  
Email: [astapenhorst@nf.sympatico.ca](mailto:astapenhorst@nf.sympatico.ca)  
Tel: (709) 437-5680

*This volunteer organization deals with food advocacy and food policy. They coordinate an organic coop and projects on food production. They work on fisheries issues and partnered with Oxfam.*



Youth for Social Justice

RR#3, Belle River  
PEI C0A 1B0  
Tel: (902) 659.2570  
Email: [aaronk@isn.net](mailto:aaronk@isn.net)  
Aaron Kolezar

*Working with Oxfam, YSJ received a training grant to established a community garden in Charlottetown.*

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## NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



**Canadian Association of Food**

### Banks

530 Lakeshore Blvd. W  
Toronto, ON M5V 1A5  
Tel: (416) 203-9241  
Fax: (416) 203-9244  
Email: [cafb@icomm.ca](mailto:cafb@icomm.ca)

*This national coalition of food bank organizations coordinates food distribution. And plays an educational and advocacy role.*

### Canadian Community Gardens Network:

<http://wabikimi.carleton.ca/~wmunroe>.

*Find here the beginning of a comprehensive listing of gardens across Canada. The gardens are listed by first by province and then by city. Contacts and location are provided.*

### Canadian Cooperative Association

275 Bank St., #400  
Ottawa, ON K2P 2L6  
Tel: (613) 238-6711  
Fax: (613) 567-0658  
Email: [support@coopcca.com](mailto:support@coopcca.com)

*This association provides workshops, resources and support in helping cooperatives get started. They are connected with variety of cooperative initiatives, including food producers and regional food coops.*

### Canadian Organic Growers

PO Box 6408, Station J  
Ottawa, ON K2A 3Y6  
Web Site: [www.gks.com/cog](http://www.gks.com/cog)

*National network for organic farmers, gardeners and consumers. COG provides members with quarterly magazine, extensive library, workshops and other resources for organic growers. COG also publishes the Organic Resource Guide.*



**Composting Council of Canada**

16 rue Northumberland St.  
Toronto ON M6H 1P7  
Tel: (416) 535-0240  
Fax: (416) 536-9892

Email: [ccc@compost.org](mailto:ccc@compost.org)

*National organization which advocates the use of composting to government, industry and the public. Holds annual conference on composting and sponsors Composting Awareness Week.*



**Global Network on Food Security**

130 Slater St., Suite 900  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6E2  
Tel: (613) 232-5751  
Fax: (613) 563-2455  
Email: [unac@magi.com](mailto:unac@magi.com)  
Web Site: [www.unac.org](http://www.unac.org)

*This network aims to promote community action linked to global discussion on food security. Canadian members of the GNFS are Canadian Food Grains Bank, CHF-Partners in Rural Development, Indigenous Peoples Bio-diversity Network, National Farmer's Union, OXFAM, Rural Advancement Foundation International, and United Nations Association Canada.*



**Oxfam Canada**

300-294 Albert St.,  
Ottawa, ON K1P 6E6  
Tel: (613) 237-5236  
Fax: (613) 237-0524  
Email: [enquire@oxfam.ca](mailto:enquire@oxfam.ca)  
Web Site: [www.oxfam.ca](http://www.oxfam.ca)

*An international development agency, Oxfam works on global and local initiatives in the area of food security. There are 7 regional offices working in close partnerships with communities. They are solid contacts for food security initiatives across Canada (see list in Food Education section for details).*

### Resource Efficient Agriculture Production Canada (REAP)

Box 125, Glenaladale House  
St. Anne de Bellevue, PQ H9X 1C0

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#### Seeds of Diversity

Box 36, Station Q  
Toronto, ON M4T 2L7

Tel: (905) 623-0353

*Non-profit organization that encourages and coordinates seed-saving and trading.*

#### Unitarian Service Committee Canada

56 Sparks St.  
Ottawa, ON K1P 5B1

Tel: (613) 234-6827

Email: [knabe@fox.nstn.ca](mailto:knabe@fox.nstn.ca)

*This organization does community development work on food security, bio-diversity and seeds.*



#### Willing Workers on Organic Farms

WWOOF Canada  
RR #2, S. 18, C.9  
Nelson, BC V1L 5P5  
Tel: (250).354-4417  
Fax: (250) 352-3927

John Vanden Heuvel

*This network of 250 organic farms across Canada take volunteers to work and learn in exchange for room and board. Registered members get a directory and contact hosts to arrange work period. There are WWOOFING programs in 15 countries around the world.*







