



Food News...

Fall 2015

It's definitely feeling like fall here at the Food Cupboard with our Garden and Harvest Rescue programs bringing in the last of the summer veggies and bushels of plums, apples and pears, as well as many local gardeners sharing their end of the season bounty. It is wonderful to see the shelves of the Food Cupboard stocked with so much healthy and locally grown produce, and to be able to let our customers take as much as they want.

As those programs wind up over the coming months, we are launching a new Cooking on a Budget program and gearing up for Holiday Hamper program.

Read on through this newsletter for more information about all those programs, a current fund raiser, an exciting new grant we have received, and our newest civic engagement project.

Nut & Dried Fruit Fund Raiser

As we move into fall, it's time to stock the pantry for the cold months ahead, and what better way to do it than support the Nelson Food Cupboard at the same time?

We are currently taking orders for various high quality nuts, dried fruit and confectionary items from Rancho Vignola, a family-run business in Armstrong. Orders will be available for pick up in November, just in time for holiday baking, giving and snacking. All proceeds from this fund raiser will be spent on the same high quality nuts and dried fruit that will be given to our customers in their Holiday Hampers.

Orders are due September 27th; the form is available on our website at:

<http://foodcupboard.org/rancho-vignola-fruit-nut-fundraiser/>

The Food Cupboard Garden

We started off the year with a plan to develop a garden on a vacant lot in Uphill and we are proud to tell you what a success it has been – people loved contributing in various ways and approximately 1,300 pounds of vegetables have been harvested to date.

One of the main goals of the program is to have low-income community members participating in the gardening work to learn to grow food for themselves, gain other transferable skills, and enjoy active social experiences which improve their physical and mental health. Our early results show we are off on the right path: participants are indeed telling us they are learning lots, trying new foods, improving their self-esteem and appreciating having the opportunity to contribute to a service they use at times.

The garden has also become a veritable teaching ground for several school classes and youth groups. Some have come for tours and others have rolled their sleeves up and pitched in to help. As this year's harvest season wraps up the Food for Life students from Trafalgar School will be helping put the garden to bed for the winter.

The huge transformation of the land to create this great garden would not have been possible without the contributions of many local professionals and businesses, and we thank them all enormously – Selkirk Irrigation, Harrop Procter Community Forest and Cornerstone General Contracting are just a few of the latest.



Participant Story

Allison joined the program after years of setbacks and unemployment. She loved the new gardening experience, the escape from home life it provided and all the positive encouragement she was receiving. Her mental health improved so much she was able to go off her medication. She learned about some new foods and how to identify plants; in her spare time in the woods with her family she was able to teach them to harvest wild currants. After a few months of participating in the program, she had gained enough confidence to apply for a full-time job which she got. In her own words, “The garden was the greatest stepping stone I could have had.” Even though she has moved on from the program, she continued gardening at home this summer and using her new found skills.

Harvest Rescue Shared Thousands of Pounds of Fruit

“We know that fresh fruits and vegetables are essential to people living with chronic illness such as Hep C and HIV, so we are so grateful to the Harvest Rescue Program for enabling us to give the people we support fresh produce throughout the harvest season.”

Laura Kearnes, Outreach and Support Worker, ANKORS

The Harvest Rescue coordinator and volunteers have been very busy this summer harvesting tree fruits and gleaning from farmers’ markets and fruit stands to be able to share more than 7,000 pounds of fresh produce with people using Nelson’s social services. Along with ANKORS, fruit was delivered to Cicada Place youth housing, the Transition House for Women, Stepping Stones homeless shelter, Our Daily Bread soup kitchen, several low-income housing buildings, Bigby Place and more. Most of the produce was given out directly, but at the Women’s Centre they were able to use some of it in cooking workshops and make peach jam, crab apple jelly, carrot and apple juice, and onion confit. The participants learned how to safely can and got to take a share of the canning home for the winter.



Here at the Food Cupboard, we gave away as much as we could and then volunteers froze peaches, made plum chutney and are now juicing apples, plums and grapes also to freeze. Next week, they will be making applesauce and pear jam at a harvest preserving workshop.

Now that school is back in session, kids from LVR, Waldorf and Wildflower schools are joining in to pick apples and pears, and then dehydrate them for Food Cupboard customers to enjoy later this fall.

The program is a win for fruit tree owners and volunteers too who each get to keep one third of the harvest, if interested.

Planned Giving

You can support the Nelson Food Cupboard Society year round with monthly donations online at www.canadahelps.org. We serve more than 1,200 customers every month through our food bank and engage people living on low incomes in capacity building activities at the Food Cupboard, the garden and through Harvest Rescue.

Eat Think Vote

As we lead up to the federal election, we are joining organizations across the country to call on the new government to develop a national food policy to address important issues such as the need for 4 million Canadians to use food banks, the lack of a national school lunch program, the huge challenges that face new farmers as the current generation retires, and the need for better access to healthy affordable food in the north. We have sent all candidates six related questions and you can learn their responses in the Nelson Star and on our website in early October.

We are also facilitating new voter registration for our low-income customers in early October with the hopes of getting more

Stay connected

We'd like to send you our seasonal newsletters via email. Please let us know your email address at: foodcupboard@shawbiz.ca.

Like us on [Facebook](#) and receive regular updates on our programs and activities.

The Good Food Grant

We are pleased to announce we have been awarded a \$50,000 Good Food Grant from Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC) as part of its Good Food Organizations program. The grant will enable us to launch a Cooking on a Budget program, enhance our garden program with additional infrastructure, and build organizational capacity with added staff time. Altogether this will help us shift from a focus on emergency food access towards upstream solutions to local food insecurity. In addition to the financial award, we will benefit from professional support from the staff at CFCC who have developed eight community food centres in cities across the country.

This November, the new cooking program will begin and an outdoor meeting space and season extension grow hoops will be added to the garden site.

We are joined by four other grantees selected from across Canada including Gordon Neighbourhood House in Vancouver; YWCA Peterborough Haliburton; Parkdale Food Centre in Ottawa, and NDG Food Depot in Montreal.



Nelson Food Cupboard

Open Hours: Monday & Wednesday 9am - 1pm or by appointment.