



# ..... Planting the ..... **SEEDS** *of* **CHANGE**

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## 2016 REPORT FROM THE BOARD

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This year we've been busy "upping our game" in governance. We worked with experts to identify our strengths and weaknesses and develop new practices to ensure optimal decision-making and record-keeping.

We reviewed and revised our policy manual, our board application and welcome packages. In response to new provincial requirements for non-profits, we also updated our bylaws.

Board members participated in Food Cupboard events such as the Edible Garden Tour and Like the Dickens; we also volunteer at the food bank and for the holiday hamper program. Our reception area has become more "social," and our cooking classes and community lunch program are very popular.

Director Sophie DePauw left the board to return to school and we thank her for her service. We also welcomed four new members – Tara Keirn, from the Credit Union, who now serves as our Treasurer, and directors at large: Carol Pleasants, Deryn Collier, and Susan Lamb.

Board directors feel that we are now in a very solid position to govern the Food Cupboard as we evolve, expand operations, and initiate new programming – all to realize our vision of universal access to good food, greater social justice, and a healthier community.



*Tim Powell*

**Nelson Food Cupboard  
BOARD CHAIR**

## PROMOTING GROWTH

People thrive when they have access to good food, the knowledge to prepare healthy meals, and friends to share it with. Academics say this, and so do the rising number of community members who use our food bank, garden and skill-building programs. As the Nelson Food Cupboard evolves, we've been keeping this in mind, and are creating programs that are about much more than giving out food – they include gardening and cooking education, opportunities to foster social connections, chances to volunteer, and welcoming environments.

In 2016, we spoke with many people who use our food bank and participate in our programs, as well as low-income community members who don't come to the Nelson Food Cupboard. We wanted to know what we were doing well, how we could improve, and what else is needed.

We discovered that many people who come to our food bank and participate in our programs feel better mentally and physically. Also, that making social connections is a big benefit. People told us they make healthier choices after participating in our cooking program, and that they love the hands-on classes offered in our garden.

But we also learned that, for many people, there is still a lot of stigma associated with food banks, that we need a

cheerier environment for them to feel more dignified, and for better program participation we need more overlap in terms of the times programs are offered.

We're proud to share that we're working on these changes and are getting positive feedback already. Our reception area is now bigger and includes café-style tables, books and toys (on occasion, we offer fresh-pressed juices and snacks as people wait). Our new cooking program lets people share lunch and take home leftovers – it runs on Wednesdays, so people who come into the food bank can also check out the cooking class. We also added a Weeds are Wonderful program in the garden – people learn to make food, body care products and pest repellants from common weeds.



*"I learned...how much healthier it is to cook from scratch."*

— Donnaye, cooking class participant



*"I loved coming to the cooking program offered in your garden... a big part of my day that was social and practical."*

— Susan, cooking class participant



# 200

VOLUNTEERS HELPED US OUT WITH OUR VARIOUS PROGRAMS

*"There is way less stress in my life because I know I can come to the Food Cupboard."*

DAVE, FOOD BANK VISITOR

# 16,408

visits to the Food Cupboard's food bank in 2016

# 96%

say Good Food Tuesdays makes them feel more confident preparing healthy meals at home

# 64%

say their mental health has improved thanks to the Food Cupboard

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## NEXT UP

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*“The garden provides us with a connection to our food and community.”*

— John, garden volunteer



*“This program made a big difference in my life because I’m cooking healthier meals and I made new friends.”*

— Freya, cooking class participant

There’s more to be done, so we are continuing to talk with our community and follow best practices in our field as we develop new ways to address our community’s needs. In our 2015 strategic planning process, we committed to offering a broader array of programming in a purpose-created space. Since then, we have spoken with lead staff from all other local community resource organizations and have received full support. We are currently investigating various options for an improved space.

At the same time, we are working closely with Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC), a national organization that has established Community Food Centres in eight cities across the country. With their guidance, we are moving toward our long-term vision to be a community food centre—a welcoming place where people gather to access healthy food in various ways, participate in a wider array of skill building programs, enjoy the social experiences of being together, and work toward positive community change. CFCC is offering us significant funding, mentorship and inspiration for the planning and implementation of this vision. Their proven program model aligns perfectly with the Nelson Food Cupboard’s original vision and mission.

We look forward to meeting a larger number of community needs around

food in a stigma-free space where people gather. Already, we’ve found wide support for a low-cost market where community members can buy healthful food at discounted rates, and feel better about it than with the food bank “hand-out” model. We also know community members want long-term cooking programs through which they can prepare meals for a few days at a time—and more opportunities to cook in the garden. And we know people are craving opportunities to socialize in a cheerful, upbeat environment.

We are aware there’s plenty of work ahead. We have the energy and commitment we need to make a positive change for the people we serve and the community in general. Stay tuned in 2017 and sign-up for our newsletter at the website address below.

# 1,540 lbs

of produce harvested from the Food Cupboard garden

*“(In the garden) I made a huge mental health shift because I felt more connected to the community and developed social connections.”*

JUNE, GARDEN VOLUNTEER

# 10,625 lbs

OF FRUIT GLEANED THROUGH HARVEST RESCUE

**100%**  
enjoyed the social experience of cooking classes

*“I learned how to be adventurous with food and try new things.”*

COOKING CLASS PARTICIPANT



# Thanks very much!

Food and financial donations of all sizes, and more than 3,000 hours of volunteer labour, enabled us to do what we do. Due to limited space, only major donors and funders are featured here – but thanks very much to everyone for their help!



**community food centres**  
CANADA good food is just the beginning



**mazon**  
CANADA



**Hume Hotel**

**Kootenay**  
co-op

**save on foods**



**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

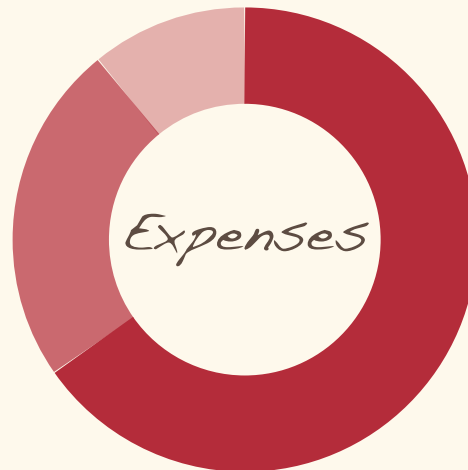
Supported by the Province of British Columbia

**Columbia Basin trust**

## FOOD CUPBOARD FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

FISCAL YEAR

(November 1, 2015 – October 31, 2016)

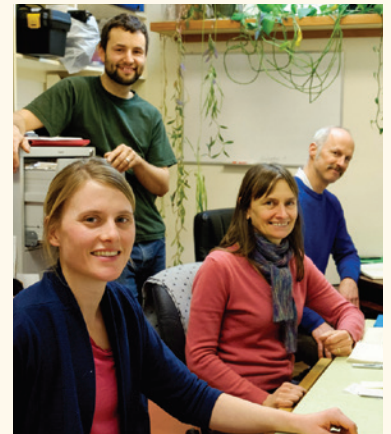


- Donations - 56.8%
- Government grants - 37.4%
- Private grants - 5.7%

- Programs - 65%
- Administration - 24%
- Fundraising - 11%

*Food Cupboard Staff*

L-R: Kim, Amos, Marya & Andrew



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