

Grandview Woodland Food Connection 2019 Highlights

An enormous thank you to all who have supported the Grandview Woodland Food Connection (GWFC) or who have volunteered and participated in our programs this past year. We have achieved much and continue to work hard to build a just and equitable food system for all in our community.

2019 was indeed a challenging year with the heartbreaking reality of the climate crisis setting in. Global food security is very much at risk and will impact the local cost and availability of food, especially for those who can least afford it. Indeed we have our work cut out for us as we must fully begin to make the shift to a sustainable future in the decade. Here at the GWFC, we are putting more thought into what a more integrated and equitable food system might look like at the community level, with a focus on improved healthy food access. This challenges us to always look beyond our organization for opportunities to collaborate with others in new ways to help close the food access gap, work to build community and ensure that we are supporting ecologically sustainable food systems locally and globally.

The GWFC has also undertaken a strategic planning process this past year and has determined that our own organizational challenges require some immediate work if we are to attain a more sustainable footing into the future. Our current work load and capacity is no longer viable given the ever present food security issues and needs in our community. In part, we need to find new sources of funding to hire additional staffing. My first wish for the GWFC in 2020 is to secure part time funding to hire a school garden programmer to assume responsibility for this important food program. To this end, I am appealing for any support or ideas to help us achieve this first goal.

While our challenges remain significant, we also enjoyed a very full and successful year. Every day brings new ideas and the many personal connections that we make on a daily basis confirm both the importance and the enjoyment that this work brings to me personally. Here are our top highlights for 2019,

Ian Marcuse, Coordinator for the Grandview Woodland Food Connection

1. Our Place Food Strategy

The GWFC, together with a number of local agencies involved in food programming, is pleased to be supporting a community based food strategy that is foremost place-based and collaborative. Working beyond our individual agencies, and through a greater sharing of resources and skills we strive to apply a collective impact approach to improving food access for all in the Vancouver inner city. We are presently engaged in a baseline needs assessment to best determine challenges and opportunities.



2. Wild Minds

This summer garden program was a wonderful collaboration with the Environmental Youth Alliance providing hands-on food growing and ecology education for Britannia students in the beautiful Strathcona and Cottonwood Community Gardens. 13 amazing youth participated this year and learned about pollinators, native plants and soils, birds, seed-saving, composting and mulching, permaculture, animal habitat, garden maintenance, herbs and medicinals, and fruit growing, to name a few.

[Final Report](#)
[Wild Minds Photos](#)

3. Sustenance Festival Sharing Food Sharing Culture

The GWFC along with Flavours of Hope held an enjoyable cross cultural food sharing event as part of the Sustenance Festival. We were joined by three amazing newcomer women – from the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela who each shared some of their favorite recipes and food stories. A full house, including a rich diversity of community members joined in the preparation of the food, followed by tasting the delicious food and story sharing.



[Sustenance Photos](#)



4. Bulk Buy Food Program

Now into our 10th year, the bulk food fruit and veggie wholesale purchasing program now benefits 79 households saving them hundreds of dollars annually in food costs. With additional food donations from Choices Food Market, Discovery Organics and the Vancouver FoodBank, program participants receive a very large amount of quality food.

[Bulk Buy Photos](#)

5. Corn Festival

We always look forward to the Corn Festival, now a favorite tradition at Britannia and a unique taste of Latin America in East Vancouver during corn harvest time. Tasty food including pupusas, tamales, empanadas and tacos, celebrating the importance of corn to Latin American people and culture is dished up with lively music, song and dance.

[Corn Festival Photos](#)



6. FoodFit

We are now in our second year for FoodFit as part of a two year funding from the Community Food Centres of Canada and a partnership with Reach Community Health Centre. 55 Individuals have participated in this 13 week healthy living program with its mix of healthy activity and healthy food preparation and cooking. Participants are reporting feeling healthier and positive well-being as a result of the program.

[FoodFit Photos](#)

7. Fractal Farm Partnership

Fractal Farm is a local grower of sustainable vegetables based in East Vancouver and Richmond. They partnered with Britannia and the GWFC where Britannia provided Fractal Farm space to set up their Community Supported Agriculture program. In return, Fractal Farm donated \$2,737 worth of high quality organic vegetables that supported our seniors and elder food programs.

[Fractal Farm Photos](#)



8. Farm 2 School Summer Student Program

We were thrilled to partner with Farm 2 School and Fresh Roots this past summer in the hiring of three summer students to help us water and maintain our Britannia School garden over the summer period. These summer students worked at 8 schools in East Vancouver rotating through each school daily. The extra help was very much needed and allowed us to help maintain the gardens, especially watering during the dry periods, ensuring that we had fresh veggies growing for the school upon return in the fall.

[Farm 2 School Photos](#)

9. Grandview Woodland Community Seed Library

The Seed Library has been a success with 161 individuals who have now received 436 packets of free seeds. Look out for the pop-up Seed Library monthly throughout the growing season in the Britannia library and at special events. A huge shout out to Christine Mak, our awesome volunteer who has been managing the library since its start.

[Seed Library Photos](#)





10. Food Skills Workshops

The GWFC ran more food workshops and had more participants than ever, making this our best year to date. We organized a total of 12 workshops with 140 people participating. The workshops received high praise and included everything from fermentation to vegan cooking and Latin American to Syrian cuisine.

[Food Skills Photos](#)

11. Britannia School Garden

Our largest and most enjoyable program always is our school garden program which is all about connecting youth to the land and the source of healthy eating. Sure, for most children and teens, gardening is not foremost on their minds, but in the garden they are curious and eager to work. Many really connect to the garden and the tangible hands-on activities. This past year we worked with 5 classes and approximately 100 students in partnership with the Society for Environmental Conservation (SPEC)

[School Garden Photos](#)



 **IMPACT REPORT** SPRING 2019



12. Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Networks

The GWFC is proud to be an active member of the Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Networks bringing leadership and a strong voice to the food network movement in Vancouver. This year, for the first time, we produced our collective impact report aggregating the work of all 15 networks in Vancouver and which provides crucial data on food access and services city-wide.

[Read the Full Impact Report](#)