

The Potential of Schoolyard Farms!

Presentation to: PICB Central North
Chapter. Food Security Webinar
MARCH 15, 2023



**FRESH
ROOTS**

Growing food. Growing communities.

What is Schoolyard Farm?

What comes to mind when you hear “schoolyard farm”?

What experiences might you have had with schoolyard farms/school gardens/community gardens?

What is the value of such endeavors?



What is Fresh Roots?

We believe that everyone deserves access to healthy food, land and community. We cultivate schoolyard farms where students dig into meaningful connections with land, food and each other, inspiring communities to build just food systems.





Fresh Roots has the privilege and honour to work on this land that is not ours. This is the ancestral and unceded homelands of the s̓c̓əwəθən məsteyəx^w (Tsawwassen), kwik^wəłəm (Kwikwetlem), q̓íçəy̓ (Katzie), stó:lō (Sto:lo), x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam), selílwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh), qiqéyt (Qayqayt), and s̓kw̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Coast Salish peoples. As settlers, as farmers, and as educators, we acknowledge the harm that farming and schooling has done to Indigenous Peoples and the land across this region. We work towards ongoing reconciliation as listeners, food sharers, and land stewards.



Our Story



Transforming Food Education

In collaboration with schools, school districts and community partners, Fresh Roots is sowing the way to transforming education while helping to build resilient and sustainable local economies and healthy communities.



Grow Food

- 75 CSA Veggie Boxes Shares
- Train new young farmers
- Maintain 10+ acre of urban farmland
- 4 weekly markets

Experiential Learning

- 6000 youth !
- Field trips
- Workshops
- Professional Development
- Summer Camp

Youth Empowerment

- Grow, Cook, Share & Sell Good Food
- Hire 75 diverse Youth
- Afterschool programs

Share Good Food

- LunchLAB with Growing Chefs
- 2 Schools - Universal Meal Programs!
- Meals made by and for youth and kids.



Our Impact - 2021

10 years of experimenting, testing, learning about what is possible with
Schoolyard farms



10+ acres
Land Stewarded



42,060
Nutritious Meals Served
*including LunchLAB Feeding Programs



180+
Crop Varieties



23,282
Learning Hours



1,444
Weekly CSA Veggie Box
Shares Produced



\$75,184
Schoolyard Grown Produce
Sold to Community





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Why We Do It

The benefits to youth of getting their hands dirty growing, preparing and sharing food are countless and powerful. Providing space for youth to be themselves, learn, and grow builds confidence, resilience, a sense of place and justice, and social connection growing food for citizens of today and tomorrow.

“

SOYL made me realize that whatever I end up doing, I need to have some way of connecting to the Earth and the land we are coming from—you can't really accomplish any sort of justice without including ecosystems, because everything is connected.

— SOYL Youth 2021, Vancouver

“

With the state of the world today, specifically climate change, we need to find ways to be resourceful and knowledgeable of our food sources. Students need to learn how to treat our earth so that we may reap the rewards of its gifts. This program inspires students to learn and enjoy all aspects of where their food comes from and the delight of tasting it.

— Gays Dalla-Zanna, Grade 7 Teacher, Farm Observers Program



Summer Camp parents reported (2021):

- ★ 81.3% said their camper gained more knowledge of where their food comes from
- ★ 71.9% said their camper gained more knowledge of how plants grow
- ★ 68.8% and 62.5% of respondents shared they developed gardening and cooking skills respectively



Balancing Food Production & Education



Food For Community



Hands on learning and kids leading makes a huge difference



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Food as Connection & Celebration



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School Food in Canada

- Canada, alone amongst the G7 and majority of countries, has yet to develop a federally-supported School Food Program
- Ranked 37th of 41 in providing children with access to nutritious food



School Food in BC - Exciting times!

- BC Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food
- Recent Budget announcement to invest \$214 million over 3 years
- Huge SROI: gains in health and nutrition, education, social protection and gains to local agricultural economies



MOMENTUM IS BUILDING ACROSS CANADA AND IN BC FOR A NATIONAL SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM!

About BC Chapter

Support our work

BC Budget Action 2023

Readings & News

Members in BC

Tell your MLA to support School Food in Budget 2023



© Jack Chen - LunchLAB at Lord Roberts Elementary School



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What would it look like if...

- All schools had access to food/plant growing space for learning?
- Everyone could cook healthy food for themselves?
- Lunch was available to all students?
- Schools grew most of their vegetables for use in class & cafeterias?





Resources

- [Farm to School BC](#)
- [Food Share Toronto](#)
- [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#)
- [Growing Chefs](#)
- [Edible Schoolyard NYC](#)

Thank you! Stay in touch...



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Our Learning Goals

→ To have a healthy relationship with food

We Make Informed Food Choices, Make Healthy Delicious, and Become Active Food Citizens.

→ To have a healthy relationship with land and waters,

We acknowledge that Land and Waters Support Us, We Support Land and Waters, and honor Indigenous Relationships to Land and Water.

→ To have a healthy relationship with Community,

We feel the Power of Community, know that People Make our Food, and Celebrate Food and Culture.



What are Fresh Roots' Schoolyard Farms?

Vancouver Technical Secondary School
Northeast Vancouver
2600 E Broadway



What are Fresh Roots' Schoolyard Farms?

David Thompson Secondary School
Southeast Vancouver
1755 E 55th Avenue



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What are Fresh Roots' Schoolyard Farms?

Suwa'lkh School
Coquitlam
1432 Brunette Ave



What are Fresh Roots' Schoolyard Farms?

Farm Roots Mini School
Boundary Bay in Delta
6570 1A Avenue



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