

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021



October 2021

The UVic Campus Community Garden (CCG) is a 92 plot allotment garden for students, staff and faculty members located on campus, outside of Ring Road, at 2100 McKenzie Ave. In 2008, the CCG was relocated from its original site in the Technology Enterprise Facility (TEF) parking lot, where it was first created in 1998. Since its relocation to the 1.58 acre garden site, the CCG has seen an incredible surge in engagement with new students, educational projects, and food growth on campus.

**The purpose of the Campus Community Garden is to:**

- a) enhance the built environment of the University of Victoria;
- b) provide allotment garden space for students, staff, and faculty of the University of Victoria
- c) increase opportunities for students to access food and the process of food production
- d) provide volunteer opportunities for members of the campus
- e) provide an inclusive space for engagement, education and research on topics related to sustainable urban agriculture such as food security, permaculture, composting, organic gardening, native plant and perennial propagation, and healthy living.

The garden is committed to promoting an accessible community space for educational, agricultural and cultural purposes.

## **Campus and Community engagement**

- UVIC Student Internship Program
- Clubs days (online Jan 2021, in person Sept 2021)
- Social media engagement
- Email newsletters are being sent out monthly

Garden staff members Syd and Sofia co-developed and ran a 4 week internship program that highlighted garden planning, pollinators and flowers, permaculture and garden bed construction through sheet mulching. The program was well received and tons of fun to deliver!

Engaging with people via social media and online platforms has become our main avenue of outreach due to COVID-19. Our video tutorials have been very popular and we intend to continue making them. They are a great (and permanent) source of information that people can continue to access in years to come.

## **Social Media Outreach**

- All of our new video tutorials have been posted on our website, instagram and youtube.
- The UVSS facebook and instagram accounts have been featuring us in their posts and stories which has greatly increased our following
- Syd and Nicole did a takeover of the CRFAIR account in March.
- Instagram stories and highlights have been a useful tool for engagement. The Clubs Days table was a great way to gain instagram followers (we received over 200 followers from clubs days alone).
- Our main Facebook page continues to be an extremely valuable location for keeping information about our events and workshops in one localized place. Many attendees mention Facebook to be one of the places they found out info about our events and workshops.

## **Events and Workshops Overview**

- Fermented Veggies
- Gluten Free Sourdough

This year, we found workshops to be difficult, as in person workshops were not possible, and zoom fatigue was very prevalent. We hosted two zoom workshops and there was no attendance by undergrad students (although attendance from non-uvic community members was high). We decided not to have any other in person events such as the harvest parties or farm crawls due to COVID-19. Garden work parties were well attended over the winter and into the early spring, and were kept to a maximum of 10 people. Work Parties were canceled for the month of August 2021 due to low staff capacity to facilitate. As of the middle of September, work parties resumed with a capacity of 20 volunteers and have been going swimmingly.

## **Infrastructure & Site**

- New Bed construction

- Two new orchard trees
- New deer netting
- Farm stand
- Ferrocement beds
- Hand Rail for ramp to gazebo
- Plans are made for the implementation of a new irrigation line and new gravel pathways to be completed by the end of November 2021
- The welcome sign fell over and is still in need of replacement

The hand rail completion, based on last year's plan, was a big victory in setting in motion the accessibility plans for the site. In addition to being a functional handrail, a new flower bed was also implemented in front of it, and the handrail structure was used to support a trellis for growing peas and sweet peas. Numerous plot renters complimented the initiative and commented on how the new flower bed livened up the entrance. CCG Site Officer Nicki built a beautiful farmstand that lives outside the garden gates and has attracted the attention of many curious passers-by. Next growing season, we are excited to share our food with more folks through the farmstand. Plot renters have been excited about it, and have already started sharing their produce on it.

Hatchet and Seed were contracted to build two new ferro cement beds at the entrance to the garden. Volunteers were given an opportunity to help at two different stages: during the initial application of cement and in painting the beds. We plan to add at least one more matching bed in the garden and are hoping to replace the SUB beds with ferro cement beds eventually.

The Composting Toilet is moving forward, even if at a very slow pace. The project has been re-routed through the special projects stream in facilities, and has been assigned a project manager. Once the project package is “bid” on, we will have an estimate of the project cost.

## **Work Parties**

### Work Party Times

On-site work parties are/were held every Friday from 1-2:30 and 3-4:30pm throughout the year and on Wednesdays from 5-6:30pm, weather permitting. Friday work parties will continue through this fall, although still subject to weather. Work Parties have returned to their normal time from 3-5pm on Fridays, sign up is still required and turnout has been awesome. Special safety protocols are strictly adhered to at each work party in order to maintain the safety of everyone involved.

### Work Party Volunteer Statistics

From Oct 2020 - Sept 2021 there were approximately 300 volunteers who attended CCG workparties. These numbers do not portray individual volunteers but instead the sum amount of volunteers per work party. The estimated amount of volunteer hours in this October-September time period is 743.5. These numbers are significantly lower than the previous year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent shut down of UVic campus. All typical volunteer tasks were attended to by CCG staff over the March-September time frame.

### Work Party Tasks

Work party tasks varied weekly depending on the priority of tasks set by staff in weekly staff meetings. Most work parties offered a variety of tasks in different areas of the garden, but consisted mainly of tending to plants in the greenhouse, giving gardens, hedgerows and turning the compost.

### Work Party Morale Initiatives

Due to COVID-19 we switched to pre packaged snacks for volunteers. We had granola bars available at the end of every work party as well as fresh produce from the garden.

## **FOOD PRODUCTION**

Increasing student's opportunities and access to local food, as well as increasing their awareness of the process of food production, is one of our priorities. From October 2020 to October 2021, a total of 559 pounds of food was grown and donated. This is down quite a bit from last year, in which we recorded 796 pounds, which includes harvests for volunteers. Our prediction is that this is due to the loss of so many zucchini and winter squash plants in the cold snap, as well as our inability to grow brassicas due to club root.

The berry bushes and other fruits around the site were plentiful during the summer. The raspberries, elderberries, goji berries, strawberries, and gumi berries produced a large number of fruits, while the blueberries did not have much of a yield. The apple tree produced many apples again this year, however, we don't know who has harvested a lot of the apples this year again. During a chat with a visitor in the garden, we learned that the apple tree is a King Heirloom variety and is ripe at the end of October, and that the tree is in good health. Our Hunza Mulberry tree in the forest garden died this year, and produced no fruit.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

In 2020/2021 we had 20 new plot rentals out of our 92 allotment plots, mostly from students. This was up one from the 2019/2020 year! The wait list time is around 8-12 months for students, and is longer for staff being at approximately 2 years, which is significantly longer than last year's 14 month wait. This is a large jump, and a likely cause of this is a greater turnover with students so the waitlist moves more quickly due to graduating, co-op, etc. So, less turnover with staff waitlists means longer waitlist time.

We noticed this year that our percentage of plots is still 50/50 for students/staff, however, the percentage of undergraduate/graduate students was roughly 25/75. CCG team has noted this and will be making an effort to balance that percentage in the next year.

We also began the process of extending three plots in rows K, L, and M in order to add 3 half plots to help move the waitlist time down. We also have reserved plot H3 in order to hold for a future accessible garden bed.

An addition to the Membership Agreement for Allotment Plots this year is: “I will not expand my full size plot beyond 3x4 metres.” This is because quite a few plot renters expanded their plots, not always with permission.

Student groups that gardened with us this year included Environmental Restoration Club, Uni 101, Aboriginal Coalition to end Homelessness, and Centre 4 & 5 Daycare groups.

### **FISCAL YEAR FINANCES May 2020 -May 2021**

Income	<b>\$124,610.00</b>
Balance from previous year	<b>\$70,774</b>
<b>Staff Salary Expenses</b> (Coordinator, Outreach Officer, Site Officer)	<b>\$69,495.64</b>
<b>Admin Expenses</b> (Rent, food discount, office supplies, misc)	
<b>Events and Outreach Expenses</b> (workshops, events, workparty food etc)	
<b>Site Expenses</b> (infrastructure, tools, plants, seeds, compost, straw bales, greenhouse, misc)	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	
<b>END OF 2019/2020 FISCAL YEAR BALANCE</b>	<b>\$147,000</b>

#### **Major expenses:**

See Budget Expenses spreadsheet Finances 2020/2021 in google drive.

For the entire fiscal year we received the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, which covered 75% of staff wages. Over the two years that we received this subsidy, we accumulated quite a large sum of unspent funds that we have now reallocated to major projects such as accessibility and the compost toilet.

#### **Sources of income:**

Due to our referendum in February 2018, the garden funding doubled. The garden previously received \$1.50 per full-time student, and \$0.75 per part-time student from UVSS Student fees, and now receives **\$3.00 per full-time student**, and **\$1.50 per part-time student**. This gives the Campus Community Garden its main source of revenue at approximately \$110,00 per year, up from previously \$60,000 per year.

Plot renters will continue to pay a \$30.00 membership fee to rent a garden plot or \$15 for half a plot, and pay for subsidized site materials for their individual plots (e.g. compost and straw bales @ \$5-10/wheelbarrow).

Plot renters helped with cost recovery from subsidized materials delivered to the site such as fish mulch, horse manure, leaf mulch, wood chips, sawdust, compost and straw bales. This is categorized under miscellaneous income for 2020/21.

## **2020-2021 STAFF**

**Garden Coordinator:** Nicole Cymerys was hired as a Temporary Garden Coordinator and stayed until June 18th 2021. Stephanie Enevoldsen returned as of March 2021.

**Work study Project Assistants:** Bronte Elphick-Milner, Emily Hiser

**Outreach Officer:** Syd Welsh >>>> Jen Chenatte

**Site Officers:** Sofia Silverman, Nicola Gjerdalen, Emily Hiser, Syd Welsh

## **2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Undergraduate Members:** Jake McCurdy, Jessie Booker Alistair Knox, Eve Kenny, Rylie Cameron, Christine Constable, Shannon Swan, Ray Buendia