

## Youth and Family Programs

### Young Cooks

Last year we ran 10 Young Cooks sessions (8 after school Young Cooks and 2 summer camps). We worked with 125 students, ages 10-18, who were immersed in 2463 participant hours and cooked and served 930 meals. These programs ran in a 6-week after-school, or 5-day summer camp cooking program (15 to 30 hours), providing a hands-on immersion in food literacy, and a long standing positive engagement with healthy food. For the first time we partnered with K'òmoks First Nation to co-host a well enjoyed, Indigenous foods Young Cook program with a K'òmoks elder and K'òmoks youth sharing their food knowledge.

### ValleyDads- Little Chefs Program

Through a partnership with the Comox Valley Early Years Collaborative, LUSH held monthly workshops for fathers, male family members/caregivers and their little ones to cook and share a meal together.



## Staff and Program Support

**Maurita Prato** - Executive Director

**Andrea Cupelli/Bridget Horel** - Communication & Program Managers

**Emma Hutchison** - Community Garden Coordinator

**Jame McKerricher** - Fruit Tree & Farm Gleaning Coordinator

**Karen Comer** - Finance

**Stephen Hextal** - 2018 Summer Student

### Community Kitchen & Garden Workshop Facilitators

Dona Amlani - Sheila Buchanan - Larry Church - Lorraine

Edward - Jonathan Frazier - Eliza Haugrud - Sonja

Limberger - Kimiko Nakamura - Kim Nanun - Diana Newson

- Alberto Pozzolo - Catriana Richardson - Lynda Smith -

Masako Thir - Gregg VanHieren

## Board of Directors

Jen Wrye - Kaite Phelan - Karen Comer - Bunny Shannon -

Matt Low - Heather Mcansh - James McKerricher - Bridget




Horel - Michael Williams

## Contact Us

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## A HUGE thank you to our volunteers, members, and community

### Major Contributors (over \$5000)

BC Gaming - City of Courtenay - Comox Valley Community Foundation - Peninsula Co-op - Vancouver Foundation - VIHA (wellness and food hub)

### Funders and Donors (under \$5000, or in-kind)

BC Housing - Bianic Trust - Comox Valley Early Years Collaborative - Comox Valley Growers & Seed Savers - Comox Rotary - CVRD - Luna Trust - Service Canada - TD Friends of the Environment - United Way  
In-kind: ABC Printing - Anderton Nursery - Blue Moon Winery - Budding Landscapes - City of Courtenay - Grow Tree Care - Thrifty Foods - Vancouver Island Enterprises - and more.

### Program Partners and Networks

Amara Farm - BC Food Security Gateway - Black Creek Community Association - Community Food Centres Canada - Courtenay Recreation - CV Coalition to End Homelessness - CV Early Years Collaborative - CV Family Services - CV Farmers Market - CV Horticultural Society - CV Transition Society - CVRD - Highland Secondary - Immigrant Welcome Centre - K'òmoks First Nation - Lake Trail Neighbourhood Connections - Merville Organics - Mid Island Farmers Institute - North Island College - School District 71 - VIHA Island Food Security Hubs - VIHA Mental Health and Substance Use - Village of Cumberland Recreation - Wachiyay Friendship Centre - Washington Inn - ...and many more!

## 2018-2019 Financials

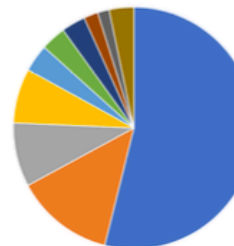
### REVENUES

Workshops 3%  
Donations 3%  
Product Sales 4%  
Other Income 8%  
Internal Project Charge-outs 11%  
Grants 71%



### EXPENDITURES

Program Wages 53%  
Internal Admin Charges 13%  
Contract Facilitator 8%  
Food Supplies 7%  
Payroll Expenses 4%  
Print/Graphic Design 3%  
Depreciation 3%  
Rent 2%  
Office Supplies/Insurance 3%  
Other 3%



# LUSH VALLEY



## 2018-19 Annual Report



## 🍎 Executive Director's Report

At LUSH Valley we work hard with our partners to help people gain food-systems skills and knowledge with a goal of increasing food security, self-sufficiency, and local food production across the region.

In the last year LUSH reached 9320 people through our programs and outreach. We provided 356 workshops and events, including cooking and food growing workshops. We organized over 200 harvesting events and distributed over 55,000lbs of local fruits and veggies. We provided 20,624 servings of local fruits and vegetables, and cooked and served over 729 meals with our community. To achieve this, LUSH Valley worked with 49 local partners and supporters, and over 150 volunteers.

*"I have always felt accepted by the participants of LUSH and (I) am proud to spread the word about what LUSH does to anyone who will listen. You guys do great work!" -Natalie Fisher*

We piloted our successful Farm Gleaning program partnering with 12 local farmers, harvesting and distributing 5,500lbs of everything from blueberries to greens, reclaiming a value of over \$23,000, back to people in need. In May we purchased, and in November we 'wrapped' our new harvest vehicle. We strengthened relationships with School District 71 and Indigenous Education to support the Vanier Soup Program, which provides a healthy soup for up to 800 students a week across the region. We deepened a partnership with the Washington Inn tenants through our gleaning program and started providing Community Kitchens through BC Housing's 'People Plants and Homes' program.

Last fall we co-hosted a 'Soupfest' event with Black Creek Community Association. It was a sold-out event that showcased local produce, farms and chefs, with funds going to LUSH Valley's Fruit Tree Program. In November we moved into our new office location after working remotely for 3 years and hosted a strategic planning review with the entire LUSH team in January.

During the municipal elections we worked on a campaign to ensure that food security and food systems issues were on the table. Since the election we have been working closely with municipal and regional governments- and started setting the groundwork for a Comox Valley Regional Food Policy Council. We began community meetings with local growers, housing providers and people with lived experience to gather information as a basis for our 'Closing the gap on food security- Comox Valley housing and local food action plan'. It's an exciting time to be a part of food systems change in our community; thank-you for being a part of that change! - Maurita



## 🍎 Fruit Tree Program



*"I had the opportunity to work with wonderful staff and volunteers to pick locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables and my reward was to take home a generous amount!" -Iris Stefan*

The Fruit Tree Program organizes volunteers to harvest and redistribute fresh fruit and produce from homes, farms and orchards that would otherwise go to waste, and re-distributes it back to the community.

With the help of our new harvest vehicle, and seasoned coordinator James McKerricher, the 2018 season provided an abundance of fruit. We harvested 45,000lbs from 154 harvesting events with 616 tree stewards and 105 active volunteers. We reached dozens of community organizations and schools across the Comox Valley to provide fresh local fruit. Fruit that wasn't high enough quality to be distributed was sold to Blue Moon Farm and/or went to Pressing Matters, who sold our 'backyard blend' juice with profits going back to the project.

## Farm Gleaning & New Harvest Van



*"The tenants thoroughly appreciated and came to fully enjoy the fresh vegetables and especially the greens arriving in such abundance more than once a week. Thank you so much!" - Bev Miller, Tenant support worker.*

We worked closely with members of the Comox Valley Farmers Market, launching a farm gleaning pilot project, made of two major activities- 1 post-market pick up of unsold produce, and 2, providing volunteer labour on farms in exchange for unsaleable produce. We worked with 105 volunteers and 12 farms to harvest and distribute 5,800lbs of, mostly organic, farm vegetables and fruits to 10 community partners across the region.

With support from the Comox Valley Community Foundation we purchased a cargo van to support our Fruit Tree and new Farm Gleaning pilot program. Peninsula Co-op paid for a vehicle 'wrap' and gas, and with Verdi Creative's help we launched our beautiful new harvest van.

## 🍎 Share the Harvest Community Garden

We had a big season at the garden with 130 people participating in 709 engagement hours through 44 events, including workshops, work parties, potlucks, community meetings, and tours. We built 10 new garden beds including 4 new wooden raised bed, one new accessibility bed, 2 new compost bins, an arbour, picnic table, mural, an information kiosk, as well as many new perennials.

With the addition of our Garden Coordinator Emma, we built new partnerships with VIHA Mental Health and Substance Use and John Howard clients to provide garden space and a facilitated weekly therapeutic garden group for many. The national food security organization, Food Centers Canada, contacted us to feature the STH garden as an exemplary community garden in Canada.

In January 2019 we entered into a partnership with the City of Courtenay for the next 5 years (with the possibility of renewal for another 5) that provides coordination funding and a secure lease for the garden, and recognizes the garden as an important feature in the heart of our community.

*"Having a garden bed that I can access from my wheelchair has opened my world back up. Share The Harvest Garden is helping me get back to a place where I can grow my own food independently." -Slug Blume*



## Healthy Food Programming

Our healthy food programs include a number of cooking and food preparation programs and partnerships. The focus is on empowerment and skill building. Classes are inclusive, social, and encourage eating healthy food together in a celebratory way. In 2018/19 we hosted 312 healthy food workshops.

## Community Kitchen Workshops

For the last 9 years LUSH Valley has run the Community Kitchens program. The program is facilitated by different experts in our community including chefs, members of different cultural backgrounds, teachers, and local restaurant owners.

All of the facilitators have current food safe and offer a variety of healthy food skills. The program provides community meals and food skills throughout the Comox Valley region including: food skills for Indigenous youth, canning and preserving, family dinners, harvest meals, and multi-cultural cooking with newcomers. In the last 12 months we have delivered 145 Community Kitchen workshops and supported 1056 community kitchen participants. In January we partnered with the Washington Inn to start a monthly kitchen for tenants. These hands-on workshops contribute to food security, improved relationships, decreased isolation, and increased access to healthy food options and habits.

