



MAPPING THE POSSIBILITIES OF FOOD
COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRES CANADA
2013-14 PROGRESS REPORT



A BIG COUNTRY FACING BIG PROBLEMS

An estimated **3.9 million Canadians are food insecure**, without regular access to healthy food. The majority of food insecure households are employed. Canada does not have a national food strategy, nor do we have dedicated social policies that ensure adequate household income for food.¹

People are hungry because they are poor. Poverty costs us an astonishing **\$72 to \$84 billion every year**.²

We collectively pay those costs in overburdened hospitals, lost productivity, mental illness, social isolation and shorter lives. And the income gap is widening, concentrating more wealth into the hands of fewer people.³

Inequality is linked to poorer health outcomes.⁴ Chronic diseases and diet-related illnesses disproportionately affect people of low socio-economic status, and their

costs weigh heavily on our health-care system.⁵ **The annual economic burden of Type 2 diabetes alone is \$12 billion**, an amount that has almost doubled since 2000 and is expected to increase an additional 39% by 2020.⁶ Studies show that people in low-income communities also experience higher rates of social isolation and lower rates of civic engagement than their higher-income neighbours.⁷

We are at a fork in the road. We can continue treating the health of our families and neighbours, our cities, and our environment as disconnected issues, or we can connect the dots and start investing in joined-up, prevention-focused solutions that work toward long-term systemic change.

1 PROOF Report on Household Food Insecurity in Canada 2012.

2 Ontario Association of Food Banks. *The Cost of Poverty: An analysis of the economic cost of poverty in Ontario*, 2008.

3 David MacDonald. *Outrageous Fortune: Documenting Canada's Wealth Gap*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2014.

4 Sheila Block. *Rising Inequality, Declining Health*. Wellesley Institute, 2013.

5 Public Health Agency of Canada, 2011.

6 Canadian Diabetes Association. *Economic Tsunami: The cost of diabetes in Canada*. 2009.

7 Stuart et al. Poverty, Sense of Belonging and Experience of Social Isolation. *Journal of Poverty*, 13:2, 175-195, 2009.

A BIG IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME

At Community Food Centres Canada, we use food as an agent of change. We work with partners across Canada to build Community Food Centres that bring people in low-income communities together to grow, cook, share and advocate for good food for all. We also work with the broader food movement to empower communities to work towards a healthy and fair food system.

Through these partnerships, we make connections between healthy food access and food skills and better health; between increased food literacy and empowerment; between local farmers and low-income communities;

between neighbours and the issues that affect them; and between engaged communities and better public policy. We make the connection between an investment in good food and healthier, more equitable communities.

It's time to invest in new solutions to the seemingly intractable problems of hunger, poor health and social isolation facing far too many of our communities. It's time to find out what happens when we give good food the attention it deserves.



A BIG OPPORTUNITY

Since we launched Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC) two years ago, we've had the great privilege of criss-crossing the country visiting cities and towns facing up to the challenges in our food system. What we've seen is incredibly energizing: there's remarkable grassroots work being done in the food space as it relates to low-income people — gardens and kitchens, shared dining, advocacy for stronger social and economic policies, as well as food literacy education for children.

Yet poverty, hunger and poor health continue to stalk far too many of our communities. And though this grassroots work is passionate, committed and necessary, much of it is run on shoestring budgets, with inadequate space and staff who are never really certain if their jobs will be there tomorrow.

These are some of the realities that drove us to establish CFCC. Today, more than ever, we can see that our innovative, upstream approach to food access — building adequately resourced organizations and a powerful movement of people that reflect the fair, healthy, respectful and hopeful future we want to see — is vitally important.

When we prioritize good, healthy food for everyone, so much is possible. At our growing number of Community Food Centres, we are seeing people become healthier, learn new skills, build friendships, feel less overwhelmed and more engaged in their community and, so importantly, become more hopeful about the future. We know this is true because our commitment to evaluating the work we do at these centres — both to improve and prove its value — has enabled us to surface stories and data that confirm we're on the right path.

It's also extremely encouraging to see that our integrated, holistic approach to working on food issues is inspiring other communities as they move away from the passive hand-out and any-food-will-do mindset. Through our webinars, manuals, workshops, public talks and newsletters, we're working with hundreds of organizations, including many food banks, and supporting them to grow, cook, share and advocate for good food, and to think more expansively about the links between access to good food and health, community-building, the environment and a more just society.

Of course, all of these efforts require financial resources and spirited collaborators. A sincere thank-you to our generous financial supporters, partner Community Food Centres, other like-minded organizations and committed staff and volunteers who have embraced our mission. Together, we are building a paradigm shift around food in this country that will lead to better health and greater opportunities for our fellow Canadians. We hope you'll join us in mapping the possibilities of this good food shift. Together we can make the case that an investment in prevention and innovation will create a better society for everyone.



NICK SAUL
*President and CEO,
Community Food Centres Canada*



SANDY HOUSTON
*President and CEO, Metcalf Foundation
Chair, Community Food Centres Canada*

A PLACE FOR FOOD

SPACE MATTERS

Dignified physical space is at the heart of our approach to food in low-income communities. We work with partners to develop Community Food Centres that are welcoming places where people can access the food, friendship, and skills they need to lead healthy lives. Food access programs meet an immediate need. From there, community members can join food skills and education and engagement initiatives that aim for deeper impact. Our goal is to create spaces that reflect an attitude of warmth and respect and encourage cross-pollination between programs.

EATING TOGETHER

Studies have shown that eating alone can mean eating a less nutritious diet. In the dining room, the beating heart of the Community Food Centre, healthy meals featuring locally sourced ingredients are served at the table, creating a warm, welcoming and dignified setting. Several Community Food Centres offer meals aimed at particular groups: in Toronto, for example, the **Regent Park Community Food Centre's** Family Dinner strives to offer a welcoming environment for parents and children. And The Local's 60+ Lunch Out brings seniors together for a meal and friendly conversation. *"It's the highlight of the week. I'm happier when I'm here,"* said a community member.

INCREASING ACCESS TOGETHER

Drop-in meals, healthy food banks and affordable produce markets increase the availability of healthy food in low-income communities. In Winnipeg, the **NorWest Co-op Community Food Centre's** fruit and vegetable market not only provides access to fresh produce, it also creates a gathering place that brings people together around food. *"I don't feel embarrassed or ashamed. I come in here and everyone is happy and helpful and treats you equally,"* said a community member.

COOKING TOGETHER

It takes skills and knowledge to feel empowered to make healthy food choices within the constraints of your economic situation and ability. Community kitchens like the one at the **Dartmouth North Community Food Centre** teach food skills, give people a place to share nutrition knowledge, and strive to be a starting point for long-term dietary change. A food skills program participant at **The Stop Community Food Centre** in Toronto describes it this way: *"I have achieved a healthier lifestyle and made an excellent group of friends. I arrived here alone and found a family here."*

GROWING TOGETHER

Studies show that the relationship between green space and physical and mental health is stronger for people with a lower socio-economic status. At **The Table Community Food Centre** in Perth, a team of volunteers works together to sow and harvest the 8,000-sq.-ft. garden. Produce is shared between gardeners and The Table's programs. In the After School Program, kids learn how to incorporate produce they've grown into healthy recipes. *"I just feel better after working in the garden and breathing in the fresh air, feel stronger physically, build up more stamina,"* said a garden volunteer.

MAKING CHANGE TOGETHER

Community Action Training, Social Justice Clubs and public education activities empower community members to take action on the issues that affect them and work together toward systemic change. Peer advocates with a lived experience of poverty are trained and supported to provide support and referrals to fellow community members in the Advocacy Office. **"The Local Community Food Centre** truly understands and combats the root causes of poverty. This place pulsates with energy and optimism. The community solidarity is outstanding. This place gives me hope. That's why I come," said a participant at The Local.

Renderings: Jordan Edmonds, Hilgitch Architects



MAPPING CHANGE

A POWERFUL INTERVENTION AT WORK

We use a robust evaluation framework to measure and demonstrate program outcomes in the areas of food access, physical and mental health, and social inclusion. 2013 Annual Program Surveys at established Community Food Centres **The Stop** (Toronto), **The Local** (Stratford), and **The Table** (Perth) show a powerful intervention at work. Here are some of those results:



of community members surveyed report that Community Food Centre programs are an **important source of healthy food**



of food skills program participants report **positive changes to their physical health**



of Food Fit program participants with pre-existing health problems report being **better able to manage their condition** since they participated in the program



of food skills program participants report **improvements in their mental health**



of Food Fit program participants report **cooking more healthy meals at home** because of what they learned in the program



NEW PROGRAM: FOOD FIT

We strive to develop programs that empower low-income people to make measurable and sustainable changes in their lives while taking into account their interests, assets and the limitations that come from living in poverty.

Our **Food Fit** pilot program was developed with advice from medical professionals, and is based on the latest research on healthy eating and how people are motivated to make change. Coordi-

nators work with people who can't afford gym memberships or special diets, but who are committed to improving their health. **Food Fit** combines cooking sessions, clear nutrition information and exercise in a social atmosphere, and uses realistic group goal setting to keep people making the small changes that lead to big change. Participants measure changes to blood pressure, resting heart rate and waist circumference over time, which allows them to see the results of their efforts.

MAPPING CHANGE

CREATING REAL IMPACT

“Community Food Centres represent a new form of community centre. Or, rather an old form that’s been rediscovered and reinterpreted. They address the connection between planning and health, they provide education for young people, they celebrate cultural diversity, they provide economic opportunity, and they encourage local stewardship and healthier communities. In our jargon, Community Food Centres are a new building type.”

— JOE LOBKCO, ARCHITECT, THE STOP’S GREEN BARN

THE TABLE ●
THE LOCAL ● THE STOP ●



of food skills program participants have **increased confidence in making healthy food choices**



of people surveyed feel they **belong to a community** at their Community Food Centre



of food skills program participants surveyed report **making healthy changes to their diets**, including reducing salt and sugar consumption and eating less meat



of parents say their children showed **increased confidence in the kitchen** after having participated in an After School Program



of community members surveyed report that they've **made a new friend** since coming to their Community Food Centre

FOOD IS CULTURE

Through food, we express our culture, our background, our history. At Community Food Centres, people from 38 countries speaking 21 languages come together to share food customs, stories and practices in the kitchen, the garden and the dining room. Cultures are reflected in the crops that are grown — from bitter melon and long beans to lemongrass and hairy gourds — to the food that’s prepared — from arepas, injera, and sushi to borscht, bannock and banh mi.

SUPPORTING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

We know we can’t have a healthy food system without a thriving local food economy. Community Food Centres strive to support local farmers, distributors, and producers wherever possible through program and event purchasing and mutually beneficial partnerships. Resources like our *Putting Our Money Where Our Mouth Is* brochures aim to highlight local farmers and producers and contribute to the conversation around local food systems.



TAKING IT FURTHER

GROWING COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRES

Four new Community Food Centres will come on stream in the next 12 months, bringing us closer to our goal of 15 Community Food Centres by 2017. At each Community Food Centre, staff work closely with the community to develop a suite of programs that meets local needs.

“CFCC combines my three favourite things: disruptive innovation of a service, helping vulnerable populations with a basic need, and the creation of a culture of care.”

— DR. MIKE EVANS,
PHYSICIAN AND GOOD FOOD CHAMPION



Community meals, kitchens, and advocacy programs began at Toronto’s **Regent Park Community Food Centre** in 2014, quickly followed by gardens. *In partnership with CRC.*



In Winnipeg, all signs point to the **NorWest Co-op Community Food Centre**. Extensive renovations will give way to a dynamic food space with a bright dining room and kitchen, outdoor garden, and fruit trees. *In partnership with NorWest Co-op Community Health.*



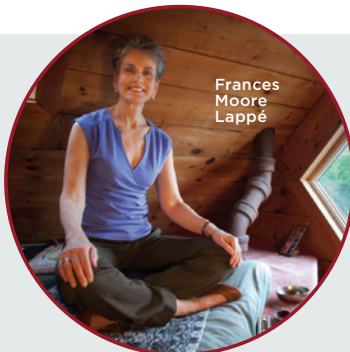
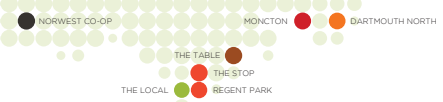
A former grocery store will provide a home for the **Dartmouth North Community Food Centre**, launching in early winter 2015. The CFC is already building relationships with good food ambassadors like chef Lynn Crawford. *In partnership with Dartmouth Family Centre.*



In Moncton, a new Community Food Centre will work alongside area agencies to provide additional community food programming in a high-needs neighbourhood. *In partnership with the YMCA of Greater Moncton.*



By 2017, 15 Community Food Centres will offer a coordinated approach to alleviating hunger, poor health, and social isolation, and create a national voice calling for a focus on food issues.



Frances Moore Lappé

GOOD FOOD CHAMPIONS

These Good Food Champions have joined their voice to ours in calling for a healthier and more equitable food system.

James Chatto, author of *The Man Who Ate Toronto*

Mark Cullen, gardening expert and writer

Olivier De Schutter, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food

Naomi Duguid, author of *Burma: Rivers of Flavor*

Dr. Mike Evans, physician and creator of *23½ hours:*

What's the single best thing we can do for our health

Frances Moore Lappé, activist and author of *Diet for a Small Planet*

Dr. Danielle Martin, family physician and Vice-President, Medical

Affairs and Health System Solutions at Women's College Hospital

Jamie Oliver, chef

Raj Patel, author of *Stuffed and Starved*

FINDING COMMON GROUND

CREATING POINTS OF EXCHANGE

Creating a community of shared knowledge is an important part of our work. Through The Pod Knowledge Exchange, bimonthly webinars, workshops, training, and events, we strive to foster a stronger community food sector and to engage the public in food issues.

“The Community Food Centres planned across Canada are an entirely new species that tackle the fight against hunger and the poverty at its root. It sees food insecurity, health, environment and social isolation as interconnected issues, and deals with them all at once.”

— THE OTTAWA CITIZEN



TRAINING

Since 2011, **2,500** people have attended **12** webinars on everything from program evaluation to food justice to nutrition education programs.



RESOURCES

2,702 individuals and **1,084** organizations have accessed The Pod Knowledge Exchange, home to program, organizational and issue-driven resources.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

CFCC and CFC staff gave over **140** talks and presentations at events, workshops, and conferences across the country in 2013.



EVENTS

In 2013, **5** Share the Health events brought together more than **2,000** people to support local farms and raise money to purchase sustainable food for Community Food Centre programs.



CONFERENCE

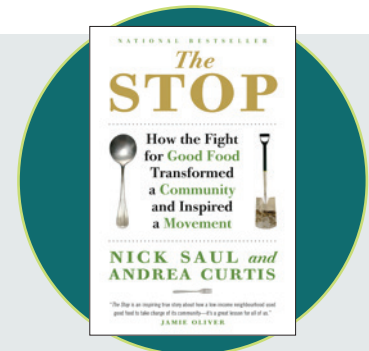
In spring 2015, our first annual gathering will bring together staff from all Community Food Centres and the broader sector to share learnings and build on local practice.

FOOD TALKS

Our work received more than 180 media mentions last year in places such as the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, the *Stratford Beacon-Herald*, CBC Radio, the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the *New Republic*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, the *Guardian*, NPR, and others.

A combined 12,000 Twitter and 8,000 Facebook followers helped spread the word about Community Food Centres to hundreds of thousands of people.

The Stop: How the Fight for Good Food Transformed a Community and Inspired a Movement, which details the growth of The Stop Community Food Centre and how it inspired our national work, became a national bestseller and was nominated for an Evergreen Award, a Taste Canada Award, and a Toronto Book Award.



A RISING TIDE

WORKING WITH THE BROADER FOOD SECTOR FOR GREATER IMPACT

There is exciting work happening from coast to coast that is bringing communities together around good food. We are also seeing an ever-increasing number of community health centres, food banks, and other agencies moving toward offering dignified food programs that satisfy an immediate need and strive to engage participants over the longer term.

Our new Good Food Organizations initiative creates a new level of affiliation with CFCC based on shared principles. Organizations that join can access customized training and resources, and work with dozens of organizations across the country to catalyze, support, and measure change at the community level. An accompanying small grants stream will enable organizations to put their commitment to change into practice.



“To optimize health, we must put the needs and experiences of people at the centre of how services are organized and delivered. This includes services beyond traditional health care and extends to the social determinants of health, including access to good food, dignity, and social inclusion. Community Food Centres Canada has a dynamic and effective approach to programs. Its innovative, integrated, and multilevel program mix has tremendous potential for both individual and population health and health equity.”

— DR. DANIELLE MARTIN, VICE-PRESIDENT,
WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL,
MEDICAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH
SYSTEMS SOLUTION

THE GOOD FOOD ORGANIZATIONS INITIATIVE PROVIDES ACCESS TO

- Small group consulting and workshops
- Manuals and resources
- An annual conference
- Good Food Grants, a new funding stream that will invest in community food programs

THE RESULTS WE WANT TO SEE

- More communities coming together around food
- Increased community engagement on food and social justice issues
- A more robust and well-resourced community food security sector
- A social consensus that an investment in healthy food and food programming is an investment in healthier and more connected communities

A SHARED JOURNEY

COLLABORATION LEADS TO CHANGE

PARTNERSHIP: MORE THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

The Community Food Centre is developed through a partnership with a **strong local organization** in a community with established need. The project is seeded with investment from **Community Food Centres Canada**. This ongoing core funding supports the development of programs that impact thousands of low-income community members.

COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT

An investment of expertise and resources by CFCC promotes stability and growth:

- **Program development support** facilitates the establishment of a responsive and multi-dimensional program mix.
- **A collaborative fundraising approach** foregrounds local leaders, galvanizes local support, and ensures long-term sustainability. Fundraising and communications committees, planning and campaign support, and resource development help build local capacity.
- **Rigorous evaluation systems** establish program metrics, and measure program outcomes.

- **Leadership support** provides governance guidance and increases and leverages local capacity.
- **Tailored knowledge exchange** opportunities allow Community Food Centres to connect to each other, to Good Food Organizations, and to the broader sector.
- **The result:** A network of strong Community Food Centres that offer programs that reduce hunger, encourage better physical and mental health, and reduce social isolation, and that work with organizations across the country to build a stronger food movement.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

- Community Food Centres and Good Food Organizations act as a magnet, connecting with farmers, chefs, teachers, health practitioners, home cooks, backyard gardeners, local businesses, funders, community agencies, leaders, and advocates, politicians, and the general public, creating the possibility for even greater impact.

WHAT WE'RE WORKING TOWARDS

- Equal access to healthy food for all.
- Greater physical and social health.
- A vibrant and well-resourced community food sector that's a driver of progressive social change.

“Support from CFCC has been integral to helping us meet our \$1.1 million capital campaign goal. Our partnership helped us build our capacity and our confidence to tell the story about the need in our community and how we will address it. Resources and advice helped us to leverage local funds and establish important new connections to Winnipeg's donor community.”

— KRISTINA MCMILLAN, MANAGER,
NORWEST CO-OP COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE



THE ROAD AHEAD

BOLD IDEAS NEED FUEL

There has been an explosion of interest in food and food issues in recent years, but not everyone is able to take part. The more we learn about how lack of access to healthy food, inequality, and social exclusion impact individual and community health, the more we see **we cannot have healthy and equitable communities without a broad range of investments in healthy food for all.**

Thanks to committed supporters who believe in our mission and understand that flexible funding is necessary for new ideas to thrive, Community Food Centres Canada has become an established voice that combines **effective community-level action** with **national reach and leadership**. We're also a trusted broker of funds and expertise that is working to empower communities and organizations to broaden and deepen the important work around food, health and income that's happening from coast to coast.

“We believe strongly in investing in new approaches and in taking risks when we believe the result will be better health for our neighbours.”

— JULIANA SPROTT, THE SPROTT FOUNDATION

We need more visionary supporters to thrive. We need people who are willing to invest in groundbreaking new ideas and innovations of traditional models when the result can be better quality of life for all.

It takes a broad spectrum of donors and supporters to make change: individuals, foundations, the private sector, and government must all play their part in building the future we want to see. **Please join us. Together, we can prove that Canada can be at the forefront of mapping the possibilities of food.**

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

We are grateful to the following individuals, foundations, government agencies, and businesses for their generous support between January 1 and December 31, 2013. Supporters are recognized in this report for contributions of \$1,000 or more.

\$1,000,000+

The Sprott Foundation

\$250,000+

Joannah and Brian Lawson
Public Health Agency of Canada
The Lawson Foundation

\$100,000+

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The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
Ultima Foods, Community Kitchens**

\$50,000+

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\$20,000+

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\$10,000+

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Richmond Station**
Select Food Products
The Caring Foundation
The Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation
The Wesley and Mary Nicol Charitable Foundation
Yorkshire Valley Farms **

\$5,000+

Beatrice and Arthur Minden Foundation
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Erica Shuttleworth and Michael Rothfeld
Keith, Tanja and Kiera Thomson Fund
at the Toronto Community Foundation
Taylor Irwin Family Fund
at the Toronto Community Foundation
Whole Foods Market
W.P. Scott Charitable Foundation

\$1,000+

Alison Loat and David Skok
Borden Ladner Gervais Foundation
Doug Ewart
John and Pat Saul
Laura MacFeeters
Robin MacAulay and Charles Gane

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Founding Partner, Community Kitchens

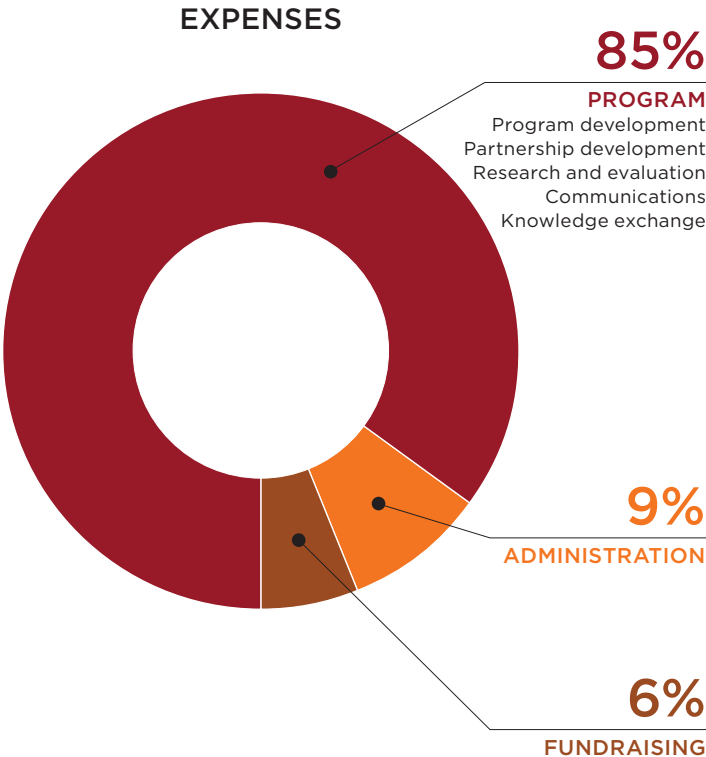
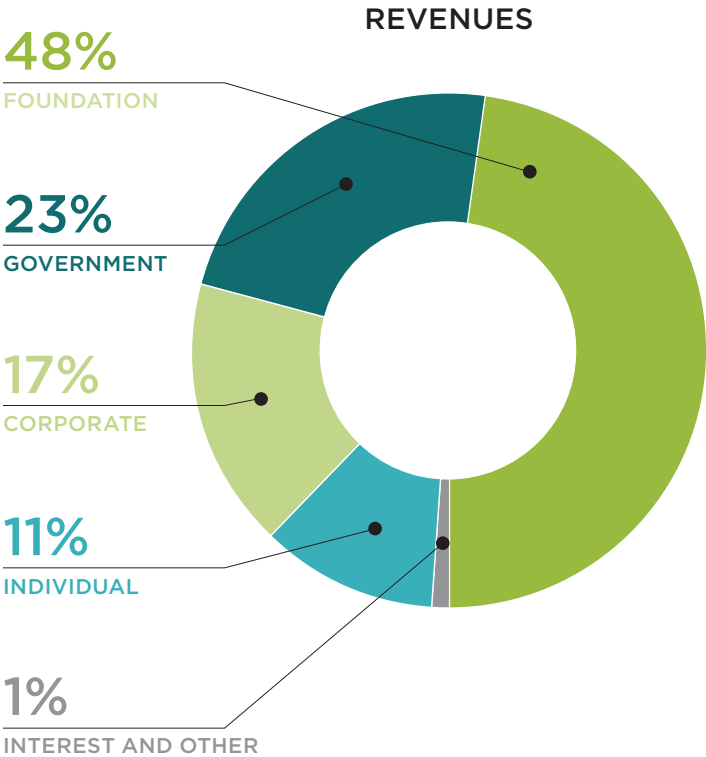


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2013 FINANCIAL SUMMARY



**Audited financial statements available upon request.*



Zoe Alexopoulos, Terry Manzo, Sarah Edmundson, Anna Prior Photography.

Organic Garden
Garlic
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the power of food

GROW COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



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 @aplaceforfood Community Food Centres Canada

Charitable # 83391 4484 RR0001

OUR MISSION

Community Food Centres Canada provides resources and a proven approach to partner organizations across Canada to create Community Food Centres that bring people together to grow, cook, share, and advocate for good food. CFCC also works with the broader food movement to build greater capacity for impact and to empower communities to work toward a healthy and fair food system.

PARTNER COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRES

**The Stop Community Food Centre
 Toronto, ON**
 (founding partner)
www.thestop.org

**The Table Community Food Centre
 Perth, ON**
www.thetablecfc.org

**The Local Community Food Centre
 Stratford, ON**
 (in partnership with the United Way Perth-Huron)
www.thelocalcfc.org

**The Dartmouth North Community Food Centre
 Dartmouth, NS**
 (in partnership with the Dartmouth Family Centre)
www.dartmouthfamilycentre.ca/index.php/community-food-centre

**The NorWest Co-op Community Food Centre
 Winnipeg, MB**
 (in partnership with NorWest Co-op Community Health Centre)
www.norwestcoop.ca/community-food-centre

**The Regent Park Community Food Centre
 Toronto, ON**
 (in partnership with CRC)
www.trcr.ca/rpcf

**The Moncton Community Food Centre
 Moncton, NB**
 (in partnership with the Greater Moncton YMCA)
www.cfccanada.ca/moncton-cfc