2022

2022 Sprouting Chefs Annual General Report

Barb Koyanagi – Executive Director,
Sprouting Chefs
1/1/2022

Land Acknowledgement

Sprouting Chefs Society would like to acknowledge that we are on ancestrial and unceded homelands of the Coast Salish Nations of Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish. We are grateful to be able to be able to teach, learn, play and live on this territory.

Sprouting Chefs Society AGM 2022 – Executive Director's Message

When I think back on the school year of 2021/2022, I am in awe of all the wonderful moments we have had from the various programs returning to full swing such as the after school cooking classes at both Forest Grove and Edmonds ending with a wonderful community feast, to working alongside one of our most committed students Casey Lo, and all the way to the amazing week we had this past summer with the return of our Wellness and Cooking Camp. The wonderful moments have outshone any shadows of the past affirming just like with nature, that everything is always in a state of growth, change and evolution as part of the potential possibility of the future.

Our programs thrived this year due to both financial supports coming from a generous donation from a set of private investors as well as a fresh start in the garden beds resulting in an abundance of crops. We worked with what we had including what Mother Nature threw at us in a much cooler wet spring season. Students continued to show up despite the showers of rain for the Garden Clubs, working hard to ensure our crops grew all the way into the fall season. A new group of cooking class students at Edmonds joined sessions both in person and were resilient enough to continue in January in a virtual setting, creating amazing meals for themselves and their families. Forest Grove Cooking Class students finally also returned to in person after a 2 year break, learning that their favorite parts about cooking classes are the times they can sit down and eat together.

Many seeds were planted both in the gardens and in the minds of a variety of youth we worked with. New crops in the gardens included melons, asparagus in the Edmonds garden transplanted by a main plant at Forest Grove housed in the Burnaby Mountain Greehouse as well as cucumbers and tomatoes from the revitalized greenhouse space. A bridge of connection between the elementary Garden Club students and the teens was established in this way allowing for a wide variety of learning. Seeds planted in the minds of these youth included the ability to create and plan a project that would benefit their own school community and beyond via the development of a self watering system for the outdoor garden bins. Our younger students continuing to learn from the teen mentors in all our programs but most especially, the summer camp and greenhouse project.

Saying goodbye is never an easy thing to do and there were goodbyes from many long time cooking class students at Forest Grove as well as our longest member of any program, Ms. Casey Lo after an epic year of the Burnaby Mountain Greenhouse Project ending in an Environmental Award via the City of Burnaby. I am learning to say "goodbye for now"

as my hope is that some of these long time committed students return as valuable staff leading us all in their ways of enthusiasm and curiosity for the potential possibilities of the future.

– Barb Koyanagi, Founder/Executive Director

Thank You and Acknowledgement

We are extremely grateful for the support of our various sources of financial funding during 2022.

Private Investment via Bruce Forester and Pat Stephenson - $30,000 (After School Programs at Edmonds Community School – Cooking Class Spring Semester, Windsor Elementary Garden Club, Seed to Table Program at Forest Grove, Edmonds Community School and Windsor Elementary)

Trans Mountain's Burnaby Neighbourhood Legacy Benefit Project - $25,000 (Forest Grove School Garden Program for 2022/2023)

McGrane Pearson Endowment Fund - $4,000 (After School Garden Club activities at Forest Grove, Community Lunch Events at Edmonds Community School and Forest Grove Elementary June 2022)

ASSAI Funding - $9,580 (After School Sports and Art Initiative Funding via the Burnaby School district) – After School Garden Clubs & 1 session Virtual Cooking Classes at Edmonds Community School)

Various Private/Individual Donations $

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Inspirational Story- Casey Lo, Youth Committee Head, Forest Grove Garden Club Alumni, Winner of City Of Burnaby Environmental Award

My first ever memory of Casey was as a young 6 yr old Gr. 1 student at Forest Grove, climbing up a pile of soil in a pristine Easter dress and white tights as she was helping me re pot new seedlings for the new school garden at Forest Grove. Casey was fearless when it came to plants and learning as much as she could about them with me. She quickly became a regular member of the After School Garden Club next along with her younger brother Nathan. Both Lo kids were keen to help wherever they could but Casey also had a knack for getting right in wherever she was no matter the weather including doing little jig dances in rain puddles and walking barefoot in the warm soil too while Nathan preferred to dig in the compost on drier days.

As the years rolled by, Casey was also a part of the first group of students who created the tomatillo salsa recipe we sell each year to raise funds for the garden. Although she was not available for the After School Cooking Classes, she was one of the first to participate in the Community Lunches provided to the school, helping to harvest and create a salad for the school to taste.

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When Casey moved on to the local high school, Burnaby Mountain Secondary, she did not forget about our time together and would return to help after school with the Garden Club whenever she could as well as marching along with us for climate action.

Casey was also one of the youths who reached out to us directly during our struggles with the Covid pandemic. She reached out to volunteer in any way she could starting as being a regular volunteer at Garden Club as well as volunteering her time during the summer of 2021 at Edmonds Summer Session and becoming involved with the Youth

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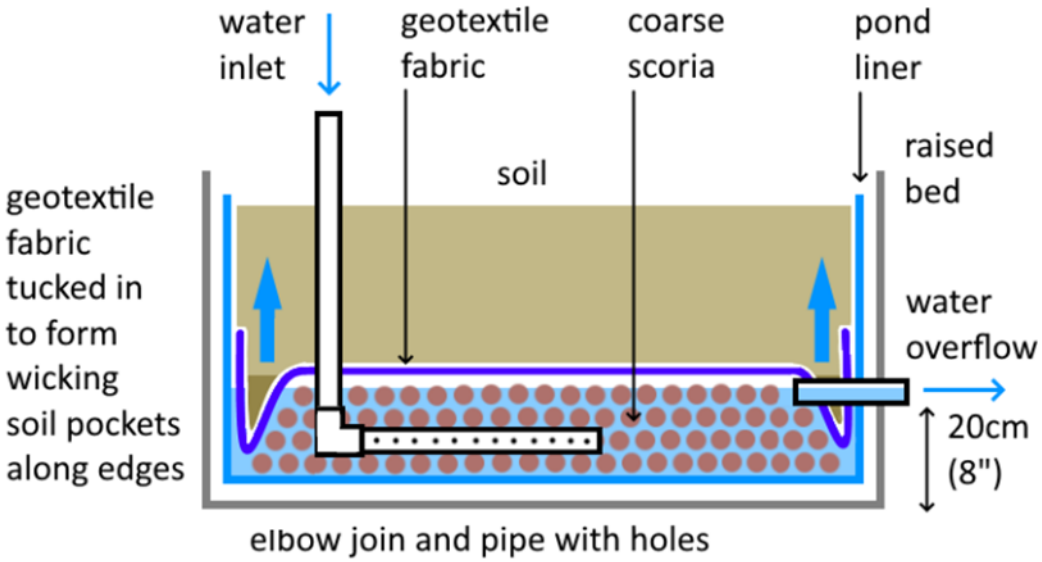
Committee . It was during the summer of 2021, that she and Owen Ebose, former Youth Committee Head and I all came together to support our ideas of what Sprouting Chefs could be.

Casey took on the task of Youth Committee Head last year for her Gr. 12 final year at Burnaby Mountain with her first project being to revitalize the indoor greenhouse left empty for at least 6 years. What is serendipitous is Casey first visited the greenhouse herself, 10 years before as a Garden Club member. Now she was taking on the task of getting it growing again.

In the winter of 2022, Casey secured a grant via the Youth to Sea Organization which awarded her just over $950 in funds to purchase various plants, soil, and materials. To satisfy her STEM goals, Casey also created a self watering system for the outdoor metal bins which have the potential to be a system for other schools to adopt to sustain their gardens in the summer months. The grant she was awarded allowed her to purchase the various materials to test this system. Along with the Earth Wise club at the high school, the students came together to both set up the self watering system and re create a space in the school to grow food in again.

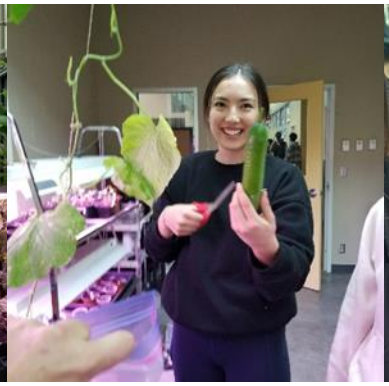
Sprouting Chefs

Wicking Bed Design



A unique bridge of connection was formed as Casey remained a volunteer with the Forest Grove Garden Club. In the late winter months, elementary students at both Forest Grove and Edmonds, planted tomato and cucumber crops to be housed in the indoor greenhouse at Burnaby Mountain. Teens met regularly to tend to the new seedlings, plant other crops for the foods classes and learn methods of indoor growing from Casey herself. The student became a teacher in this process.

By the Spring of 2022, plants in the greenhouse had grown all the way to the ceiling of the building filling the space with life and vitality. Approximately 10 cucumbers were grown and harvested for the cooking classes. No small feat as there were no natural pollinators in the space and Casey herself had to diligently self pollinate each one. Tomato plants grew very well but sadly were not able to be transplanted until quite late into May. This gave us another unique opportunity for Casey's leadership to be highlighted. On May 27, the students of Forest Grove came to visit Casey in her greenhouse space at Burnaby Mountain. At the end of our visit, we managed to bring back several tomato plants to transplant back into the Forest Grove garden space.



Casey's efforts and passion for learning about ways to sustain the environment have led her to the halls of the University of BC with scholarships and awards for her efforts along the way. She has ambitions to continue her STEM studies while also playing softball for the UBC Thunderbird team.

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Due to all her passion and drive, we along with the Vice Principal of Burnaby Mountain nominated Casey for the Youth Environmental Award via the City of Burnaby where she was successful in June 2022. Casey continues to provide support and inspiration to our Youth Committee as well.

We hope Casey's story demonstrates the impact Sprouting Chefs has had after the years of working with the same students.

Seed to Table Classes – Forest Grove, Edmonds and Windsor Elementary

During the Fall of 2021, we were able to provide a set of land-based learning lessons at Forest Grove Elementary before the numbers due to Covid set us back in the winter months of 2022 where we were unable to return in person until the Spring season. Fall classes focused on land-based learning with tree identifications thanks to the forest environment of the school. This was important to note as the one main cherry blossom tree was a main focal point at now 11 years of age. Students learned the value of 3 main trees in their surround playground space as well as the Gr. 6/7's planting a new tree near the playground and one in the front of the school as a legacy project. We took pauses simply sitting and noticing our surroundings during a forest bathing session. Nutrition and wellness were also a focus with a variety of seasonal local foods were also sampled with some of the classes.

A total of 3 school gardens were planted thanks to our Seed to Table Program in the Burnaby School District in the spring of 2022. With each school garden space, came unique challenges from Windsor with its abundance of weeds and less sun exposure resulting in very slow unpredictable growth, to Edmonds metal bins with an abundance of crops but steady vandalism and rat issues. Forest Grove also had a soil nutrient depletion and lack of water drainage issue which gave us the chance to focus on re building the soil with the introduction of planting cover crops and in a sense, starting over with new soil deliveries in the spring at all the schools.

Classes in the spring focused on a variety of lessons with the most popular being discussions and observations of worms and even having one Gr. ¾ class housing and caring for the worms over the fall and winter months.

Luckily we also focused on growing cooler weather crops with a steady amount of rain and cooler weather in the forecast. This actually resulted in an abundance of lettuces, peas, and radishes but delayed our warmer crops of tomatoes, squash and cucumbers. Having the indoor greenhouse space came in very handy as a result.

Cooking Classes Steady and Strong – Edmonds and Forest Grove Students Return

Sprouting Chefs had the privilege of working with 2 sets of cooking class students at Forest Grove and Edmonds Community School in 2021/2022. There was a brand-new group of Gr. 6/7 students invited in to be taught a variety of cooking lessons at Edmonds who were identified as being "at risk". This was a program supported in combination with the After School Sports Art Initiative funding via the Burnaby School District and direct private funding via Sprouting Chefs. The group was coined as The Boys N' Ivy as there were 10 boys, with 2 girls, Ivy Liu included. Although the Fall was an in person program, the Covid numbers increased so that in January, the class moved to online.

What's interesting to note is that Forest Grove had an abundant of registrations but when we were forced to pivot to virtual classes in January, none of the Forest Grove students wanted to participate. Their reason was they preferred and said the best part of cooking class was sitting down and eating together. If they couldn't do that, they'd rather wait until the later Spring months. And wait these kids had to do. Originally, the Forest Grove families registered in the Fall for winter classes but had to wait till May to actually start.

Regardless of the starts and stops, both groups did a phenomenal job. The virtual classes at Edmonds meant the students needed to pick up their ingredients each Tues at lunch hour before the class after school. Students gathered to sort, organize and portion out their supplies which were also enough for their families to eat as well. Each week, these students prepared a meal at home in their own kitchen to enjoy. Support from Buy Low Foods was also much appreciated with donations of gift cards from the store. In the Fall season, when we were still meeting in person, one of the factors we were able to explore was the food supply chain issues BC started to face after the floods in November of 2021.

Although teaching a cooking class virtually to children is never preferred, it was great to see the finished dishes in photos sent to us via the parents of the students. Pride could be felt both from the parents and from the students themselves with one student now having the ambition to open his own cupcake business after never cooking before at all!

Once classes finally did start back at Forest Grove, a sense of mixed emotions was felt as the core group of returning students were also returning for the last time as they were all heading to high school next. Jeremy, Hailey, Erin, Tyler, and Leanne were all an instrumental part of the overall success of this popular program having been a part of it from the very beginning in 2016.

Although the large school Community Lunch Event was not yet possible last year, we decided that we would at least celebrate both the groups in the Garden Clubs and the Cooking Classes by bringing them together for a lunch event at the end of the school year in June. Garden Club acted in the important role as the farmers growing the food that would end up on the plates while the Cooking Classes were the chefs preparing and serving the meal.

At Edmonds, the students enjoyed a menu of tomato pasta, potato salad grown in tubs, pickled radishes and a dessert of strawberry shortcakes where the whole team of cooks made furiously just before the meal! In attendance as invited guests included other after school programs representatives who support the school community along with our own private investors and board member, Jocelyn Robertson.

It was one of the first times the parent community at Forest Grove came together in an event and a great chance for proper goodbyes and farewells to our Gr. 7 students.

Awards of Certificates were given to each of the students to acknowledge their participation and commitment.

Garden Clubs – Forest Grove, Edmonds and Windsor

Garden Clubs at each of these schools continue to be instrumental in terms of the success of the growing season and into the next school year. Forest Grove and Edmonds having volunteer support during the summer months means we can easily start the fall seed to table programs as well as having crops to harvest for the cooking classes. Now that we are also connecting with a high school greenhouse program means we can start crops earlier in the season to transfer into the elementary school garden spaces in the spring as well as growing crops in the winter months for either fundraising efforts or foods classes within the high schools. Garden Clubs also are able to weed, water or separate young seedlings to provide the right amount of space needed for the most yield possible.

The Garden Club program also had a unique focus on nature based activities in the winter as well as a service based effort creating cards of inspiration to the women of the downtown east side in Vancouver via the charity organization, Beauty Night. Students at Edmonds and Forest Grove focused on the virtue of generosity by creating these cards using inspirational quotes they feel comforted by and decorating the cards using pieces of nature from their surrounding schools.

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A main highlight of the year with the Forest Grove kids was taking them on a field trip to Burnaby Mountain to see the various green spaces as well as visit the greenhouse in person. Garden Club kids were then able to take a few of the tomato plants they had started from seed back to the elementary school garden. It was amazing to see a full circle moment with Casey leading them through the various effort she made by revitalizing the areas around the high school, inspiring the younger students and teaching them the value of the effort of creating a meaningful project.



During the summer months at Forest Grove, our focus was to cement in the rocks lining the walking path at the outdoor labyrinth. We gathered a variety of Garden Club members, both past and present as well as a few teens and former parents together over a series of 2 work bees to complete the heavy hard task. Moments like these define what community truly means: a group of people coming together for a project to make the surrounding area a better place.

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Garlic was harvested at Forest Grove and brought to Burnaby Mountain to dry and cure, ready now for the upcoming Cooking Classes. Calendula and Lavender were dried and infused in oil for future skin care wellness classes too.

Another work bee at Forest Grove focused on creating more compost bins to effectively demonstrate the food system cycle.

Edmonds had a smaller group but equally committed throughout the year. Our focus was with the 21 garden bins, toping them with mulch and later a new batch of soil, planting early crops, with the group learning a variety of nature based activities including making bird feeders, tree identification, and also planting early crops to be housed in the Burnaby Mountain greenhouse.

The support via the ASSAI (After School Sports and Arts Initiative) funding from the Burnaby District has allowed this program to build solid roots in the school as a way to inspire the students to keep the garden growing, giving them the

lesson of service as well as the value of understanding where their food comes from. All of this was celebrated with the end of year feast where the Garden Club students were able to enjoy the fruits of their labor in the form of a meal made by their fellow cooking class students.

In the summer months as noted above, volunteer groups made up of Garden Club families took care of the space at Forest Grove, while at Edmonds, a group of Arabic Women who regularly meet at the school took up watering the 21 bins. This was a unique community building opportunity for the women who would normally be isolated and alone. The women met in small groups to encourage each other to socialize and work in the garden together.

Crops did well as a result of this support with an abundance of color and varieties from tomatoes, beans, herbs, and greens to wildflowers.

Windsor Elementary had a very solid group of students committed to the Garden Club. Although this group only meets for part of the year, February to early June, the group is quite dynamic with students from Gr. 2 to Gr. 7. With the group quite large and not wanting to turn too many students away, Sprouting Chefs sought support from the feeder high schools where we found a teen from Burnaby Central, Anika Wu. Anika joined us each Garden Club and was a lovely mentor leader for the group with her knowledge of gardening with the project at Burnaby Central.

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Summer Wellness and Cooking Camp Returns to St. Timothy's

For the last week of July 2022, we gathered 15 camp participants together in the basement of St Timothy's Church for our Wellness and Cooking Camp. Our program included a morning yoga session led by an instructor from our friends at Yoga Buggy, cooking a lunch menu together and then creating a wellness craft in the afternoon. Parents noted the difference our camp makes with our teen youth leaders. We had Vanessa as a previous camper, Josh a recent Gr. 12 graduate entering an engineering program at BCIT but avid foodie and cook, Kaya from the Youth To Sea Organization and Anika, our volunteer who was helping us at both Windsor's Garden Club and Edmonds After School Cooking Classes. Together, these teens created an awesome sense of support for both myself as the main facilitator and to the kids themselves.



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Each day the campers would learn the virtue themes of Trust, Patience, Confidence, Peace and Gratitude via the platform of a kitchen, cooking, yoga and a craft to tie everything together. From homemade pasta to a Korean home recipe of ttkebooki, the kids enjoyed many aspects of learning about food. Time spent outdoors however, was limited this week due to the extreme heat. We were as a result, grateful to be in the basement where we managed to stay cool.

Our success with all our programs continues to be measured in how we have made an impact with our students. From parents reporting better eating habits to kids telling us they made the recipe they learned in class, at home for their families, it all adds up to children evolving into their true potential, discovering their skills and talents. We are especially proud when a child tells us that a mindfulness tool they learned with us helped them overcome their anxieties, fears or build their inner confidence. Happily, there were many moments of these throughout the year with all our kids!

A Look Ahead – Youth Committee, Deepening Connections

Originally started with Owen Ebose as our first Head of our Youth Committee, we took the time to revisit the various ideas and goals Owen had in the beginning. Noted were the ideas of creating a network between all the various high schools in the Burnaby District which was a challenge due to Covid in the past few years. Despite not directly building the network, by creating the Greenhouse Project at Burnaby Mountain, we have created a space and place for various youth to gather and learn from.

Casey Lo's efforts in the past year have created a solid foundation for our new Youth Committee Head, Caio, to takeover from. A key ingredient to this important continuation and group is the virtue of Curiosity which each of our committee heads really encompass. One of the key feedback from Owen himself was to create a chance for youth to gather via the greenhouse workshops or any other youth project in a relaxed less structured way to allow for time to reflect, pause and connect with each other. What's been noted is with all the pressures of high school especially for our Gr. 12 students, Sprouting Chefs can provide a space that allows for the sharing of various tools for the youth to learn ways of managing the pressures and setting up routines for self care. Although the majority of the goals at the greenhouse and with the Youth Committee will be sharing resources to support the various greenspaces, its also a goal to support each other.

Sprouting Chefs will be hosting a series of Tuesday workshops at Burnaby Mountain for such times. Part of these workshops will have a focus on a variety of learning from vermicomposting and building healthy soil, to learning ways to maintain a healthy mind and body. Funds have been secured for this group via Caio himself writing another grant to Youth To Sea Organization, securing enough funds for the year ahead as Casey did last year. These funds will go towards the various materials and supplies to maintain the greenhouse, outdoor bins and pollinator garden the group

set up last Spring. Caio is now merging the Earthwise Club and Greenhouse Project together with like minded teens with the hopes of gaining more club members at the upcoming club day at the school itself.

The ability to plant early crops with each of the Garden Clubs meant we were able to have a solid Seed to Table Program in the later spring months. Students are learning directly the effects of climate change via this process. Discussions on when to plant and the timing of bringing crops outside are all top of mind at each school but especially, with the teens at Burnaby Mountain who are becoming the hub for all the indoor growing supports.

Burnaby Mountain Greenhouse is also becoming a new model for other Burnaby high schools and their feeder elementary schools. We are hearing reports of Byrne Creek Secondary as one that has the potential to possibly start a similar project as well as Burnaby North with the new construction that will include both learning gardens as well as a meditation space. Our hope is to continue to develop the greenhouse at Mountain along with the wicking system for the outdoor bins to inspire other schools to do the same.

One particular school that we hope to inspire most is Kumsheen Secondary in Lytton BC. With the school directly impacted by climate change from the wildfires and floods, students there are needing the inspiration of what to do next and to continue to have hope for the future. In speaking to them about creating a legacy, Sprouting Chefs will be creating a variety of videos to share with any school wishing to start a garden or greenhouse project. Teens inspiring teens, children inspiring other children and creating connections is a vision with our future and current programs.

A Look Ahead - Goals of 2022/2023

- Youth Committee Head – Caio Condrat
    - Greenhouse Workshops
- Seed to Table Program at Forest Grove and Edmonds
    - Gr. 6/7 Legacies, Rain Gardens, Tomatoes
- Garden Clubs
    - Continuing to create connections between us all
- Cooking Classes
    - New Students at Edmonds
- Summer Wellness & Cooking Camps
    - 3 Main Weeks