



IT'S A NEW DAY
GOOD FOOD WHOLESOME

Nutritious

Greater Vancouver **food bank MARKET**

FARM FRESH

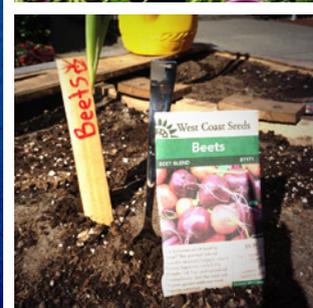
EAT DIVERSLY

EMPOWERMENT

EDUCATION

NOURISHING

COMMUNITY REPORT 2014



The Greater Vancouver Food Bank {GVFB} is a non-profit organization that was established in 1982 with the intention of being a temporary relief to the hunger crisis resulting from the economic recession.

Today, we provide assistance to over 28,000 people every week through 15 food depots and over 100 community agencies located in Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster and North Vancouver.

While we continue to provide assistance to help address the immediate needs of the community, we also recognize that emergency food as a standalone is not a long-term solution. The historical model of food banking is not sustainable, and it is time for change.

It is a new day at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank. We are evolving beyond food in isolation into a model that helps foster a path towards self-sufficiency. A model rooted in education, empowerment and sustainability.

On the heels of completing our first ever strategic plan, we have adopted a new vision of accessible, healthy and sustainable food for all, and a new mission to empower people to nourish themselves by providing access to healthy food, education and training. We look forward to sharing some of the highlights from this past year with you.

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SETTING OUR DIRECTION



It's been an encouraging year at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank as we set out on a new path, working with organizations to help create healthier communities in the areas we serve.

Our exciting journey began in July 2013 as we announced the completion of the organization's first strategic plan, setting out our new vision and mission.

I am pleased to say that a year later we have been able to plant some seedlings to help grow this vision.

I want to thank our staff, volunteers and all who came into contact with the Food Bank over the last 12 months for making this possible. Your understanding, your hard work and your feedback has allowed us to succeed and driven us forward.

You enabled us to launch our first Food Hub in August 2013, a new Food and Education department, transforming the way we approach sharing food. We created a fresh produce growing plan with over 12 local farmers and completed a project with Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) nutritionists looking at the quality of food we currently provide.

It's a new day at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank. There is still much work to be done, however, as a team and with the support of our partners and community, we are excited about the road ahead.

We hope that you join us in celebrating this new day.

Aart Schuurman Hess, CEO



A NEW DAY

VISION > **Accessible, healthy and sustainable food for all.**

MISSION > **To empower people to nourish themselves by providing access to healthy food, education and training.**



ESTABLISHING OUR GOALS

In order to fully embody our mission and vision, we had to set strategic goals. In July 2013, the Greater Vancouver Food Bank announced a set of targets to be achieved over the next five years:

- Putting the Food Bank on a sound foundation of systems, management practices and culture
- Significantly growing our level of financial support
- Enhancing our capacity to provide nutritious food to people in need – directly and through collaboration
- Providing education and training that fosters personal and community empowerment and sustainability
- Pro-actively connecting members in need with external support that can help them overcome the barriers to food security
- Securing a physical space that accelerates our progress towards our mission



UNDERSTANDING OUR VALUES

Looking at the organization from the ground up was an exciting challenge. It allowed us to collaborate and reflect on what the Food Bank stands for and who we want to be moving forward. After much discussion with staff we decided on the following:

- Leadership, Advocacy, and Challenging the Status Quo
- Collaboration
- Accountability
- Respect and Compassion
- Trust and Integrity

“During the last year we have committed ourselves to honouring our values in all of our actions, acting as the starting point for who we are and the role we play in the community.”



It has been a solid year of progress at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank and our people have hit the ground running, embracing the changes we outlined in 2013. Here is a quick highlight reel of some of our favourite moments.

OUR TEAM WORKED WITH
TWELVE LOCAL FARMERS

TO PUT TOGETHER A DEDICATED GROWING PLAN, ENABLING US TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF FRESH PRODUCE WE ARE ABLE TO SHARE WITH THE COMMUNITY.

WE COMPLETED A TWO YEAR PILOT PROJECT WITH VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH, COMPLETELY REINVENTING THE
NUTRITIONAL CONTENT
OF OUR INFANT & YOUTH PROGRAMS.

INCREASED CAPACITY BY 30%

OF OUR DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE COMMUNITY KITCHENS PROJECT, ALLOWING STAFF TO SPEND MORE TIME FACILITATING KITCHENS AND EXPANDING OUR WORK TO SUPPORT 26 SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY (SRO) HOTELS.

IN AUGUST 2013, WE LAUNCHED OUR FIRST
FOOD HUB
ON THE NORTH SHORE, CREATING AN OPEN, DIGNIFIED SHOPPING EXPERIENCE FOR OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

IN JANUARY 2014, WE WELCOMED
PROJECT CHEF
TO OUR WAREHOUSE AND OFFICES, MAKING THE GREATER VANCOUVER FOOD BANK THEIR NEW HOME.



ENGAGING TO EDUCATE

Over the last 30 years we are fortunate to have built meaningful relationships with individuals, health and community organizations, educational institutions and various levels of government.

When we announced our strategic plan we were able to reflect on these relationships and really appreciate the role they play in helping shape our future.

We are in a unique position as a facilitator and therefore we have a unique opportunity to work collaboratively with our stakeholders.

Together, through engagement and education we believe we can promote positive change at the individual, community and policy levels.

We have increased our focus on education and training as it relates to food literacy. We also created the Food and Education department, tying the two themes together as central to what we do.

Working collaboratively with our partners and stakeholders, we want to address the educational gaps in our local food system such as:

- Food knowledge
- Cooking skills
- Nutrition
- Healthy food
- Access to local fresh produce
- Food preservation

In order to achieve healthy, sustainable food systems we must bring together our diverse and collective interests. It is through this lens that we are beginning our new journey towards creating a shared Food Philosophy.



BUILDING & IMPROVING FOOD SKILLS

We have continued to focus on capacity building through education and engagement throughout 2014. A major part of this is our work with community kitchens.

- Fresh Choice Kitchens provided **24 community kitchens** with over **3,000 pieces of kitchen equipment valued at over \$15,000**
- **Renovated our teaching kitchen** to better facilitate group workshops and create a space for community kitchen facilitators and participants to meet and discuss best practice
- Delivered workshops to approximately **150 Community Kitchen leaders** and participants
- Collaborated with **VCH's Aboriginal Health Initiatives Program** to facilitate the sharing of food safety practices and cooking skills in rural and urban communities
- Completed a project with seven **UBC Land and Food Systems Faculty** students to further develop our Train-the-Trainer canning manual

- Fresh Choice Kitchens received a **grant from Hains Celestial Canada** and part of this funding was used to purchase over **\$7,900 worth of new kitchen equipment**

Some of this equipment was used to stock the **Fresh Choice Kitchens Equipment Room**, which is accessible to community kitchens across the lower mainland to obtain their own equipment.

- From the grant, we supplied large capacity kitchen equipment to **seven Neighbourhood Food Networks**, supporting their food skills programs:
 - Hastings Seasons of Food
 - Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House
 - South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
 - Renfrew Collingwood Food Security Institute
 - Grandview Woodlands Food Connection
 - Environmental Youth Alliance
 - Westside Food Collaborative



In addition to providing training for other community kitchens, we also facilitate them through the Downtown Eastside Community Kitchens (DECK) project.

In 2014 we increased the capacity of this project by 30% allowing us to support 26 kitchens and spend more time working within the single room occupancy hotels.

This work resulted in providing **35,280 healthy meals, which benefited approximately 650 individuals** on a weekly basis. We also partnered with other agencies in the Downtown Eastside to support the creation and operation of community kitchens around specific health and social issues such as Hepatitis C and Type Two Diabetes.



HELPING GROW HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

There are many fantastic organizations in Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster and the North Shore doing wonderful work within their communities.

Currently we work with over 100 organizations which include at-risk youth, women's centres and other social service agencies. Through community kitchens and meal programs alone we have indirectly impacted over 4,000 people.

In 2013 we held two town hall meetings to hear from partner organizations and gather feedback on the Food Bank's new direction. We also shared what was important to us and spoke about everything from communication, food procurement and capacity building programs to ordering and food quality.

We talked openly about relationship building and what can be improved as we move forward together.

Here are a few examples of some of the great organizations we support:

- **KidSafe**, an organization focused on providing **positive experiences for at-risk children** outside of school hours.
- **Strathcona Community Centre Backpack Program**, which provides **weekend food support** for children referred by local schools.
- **Environmental Youth Alliance** (EYA) is a local, youth driven non-profit organization dedicated to the health of our urban environment, our planet, and the well-being of its people. They recently went the extra mile by providing us with **200 seedlings** to distribute amongst the Mount Pleasant Community.
- Our neighbours **Cottonwood Community Garden** are regulars in donating fresh produce to the Food Bank. In collaboration with us, they also worked with the **Strathcona Beekeepers Association** to create new homes for bees within the garden.



FOOD RECOVERY

By recovering good, nutritious food we can help reduce hunger; by preventing food from being wasted, we help make our community a greener, more sustainable place to live.

The Community Angel Food Runners (CAFR) program recovers perishable food from a variety of sources including hotels, caterers and grocery stores, seven days a week. This includes entrées, bread, fish and produce which is delivered the same day to over 20 partnering agencies. These organizations are working to alleviate hunger and improve the health and wellness of our most vulnerable population.

This food contributed to providing approximately 50,000 meals served by community agencies every month.

Over 80 food donors currently contribute to the CAFR program. We are always on the lookout for new partners that are interested in sharing healthy food with the community.

2014 saw us intensify our emphasis on **recovering healthy foods.**

Thanks to a donation from Whole Foods Market, the Food Runners vehicles were outfitted with new shelves in the spring of 2014. This has allowed our team to

better organize and streamline the food we are sharing with the community.



LEARNING FROM THE PROFESSIONALS

In February 2012, alongside our strategic planning, we engaged dietitians and nutritionists from Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) to evaluate the nutritional content of the items that we were providing through our Kids Picks and Basics for Babies Programs.

Over the course of a two year partnership, VCH looked at a number of key areas, for example, improving the level of iron (which helps brain growth and development) and teaching babies' the taste and texture of simple, whole foods.

Thanks to the expertise of the VCH nutritionists and a team of dietetic interns, we were able to implement their recommendations and make a significant difference in the calorie and nutritional content of the bags, resulting in a healthier, more balanced offering.

This included:

- Calories increased by more than 1000
- The amount of iron was doubled
- Fiber content increased by almost a third, from 20 to 28 grams

Although the recommendations were seemingly small adjustments, they are extremely meaningful in their impact. Fruit leathers were replaced with fresh fruit, canned tuna with canned salmon and processed cereals and snacks with whole grain alternatives. Healthy proteins such as nut butters and cheese were also added.

Thanks to the knowledge and care brought forward by the VCH team, these changes didn't come at any additional expense to the Food Bank. The overall level of nutrition was dramatically increased for both programs while keeping costs neutral for the organization.

We are pleased to report that the success of this project has paved the way for further exciting changes. In fact, as we speak, the Greater Vancouver Food Bank is using this model and building on this work to create the foundation of our overarching Food Philosophy. This is work that will continue well into the next calendar year.



As a public health dietitian with Vancouver Coastal Health, I am honoured to contribute my 20 years plus of public health nutrition experience towards supporting the critical and significant shift of the GVFB. The Food Bank supports the most vulnerable citizens in Vancouver; citizens who struggle with food insecurity and are at increased risk for chronic health disease. In the past, food banks redistributed foods without much thought to nutritional quality being a top priority, yet this is shifting dramatically with the GVFB. Promotion of fresh vegetables, fruits and other whole foods along with cooking from scratch are key components of their new guiding principals. I am excited to continue our support in collaboration with the GVFB to help reduce food insecurity and increase individual and community health and well-being in our community.



Barbara Crocker, RD, MA

City-Wide Public Health Dietitian
Raven Song Community Health Centre

INTRODUCING THE COMMUNITY FOOD HUB

The past year has seen us focus on building and strengthening relationships. We are exploring a model of increased engagement, collaboration and choice with a transition towards community food hubs. Our goal is to create welcoming and accessible environments where additional support and services can be included as part of the community coming together.



We launched our first food hub in August 2013, introducing ideas such as designated time slots to avoid the need for line ups, enabling people to choose their own items and checkout when they are ready. Through strategies like this we are creating more of a shopping experience, reducing barriers for the community to connect.

Our partners, both new and longstanding, are helping us to facilitate larger, more open spaces to create a comfortable, relaxed social environment. Inviting partners such as speech therapists and fresh produce vendors has also started to shift the whole experience to a positive, dignified space that promotes accessibility.

By continuing to work within this model we are building upon our success to date and utilizing it as a template for further rollout across the city.

To help facilitate this, the **McConnell Foundation** is kindly supporting our work through a grant which enabled us to hire two new contract staff.

We are also working on securing additional grants to further support this transition.

DELIVERING ON OUR VISION

We have started a dialogue with key stakeholders and donors around the need for healthier food donations. We are thrilled that this has resulted in more donations of simple, whole foods and fewer processed foods high in sugar and sodium. We have also launched a fresh produce growing plan, introducing 26 locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables thanks to the efforts and hard work of 12 local farmers.

Together this has enabled us to increase the amount of nutritious food we are able to provide to our members and deliver on our goal of increasing the overall health of our community.



Our team moved **7,858,506 pounds** of food last year.

The operations team consists of **9 members** who together have **over 50 years** of service at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank.

On average we purchase **3,300 dozen eggs or 39,600 individual eggs per month** for our members. That would make one really big omelette!



THREE CHEERS FOR VOLUNTEERS

The shift in our strategy and evolving approach to food means we have an increased opportunity to engage volunteers throughout the organization. Due to the size of the population we serve, non-perishable foods are always going to comprise a large part of what we provide. Fortunately, having BC and all its farming goodness as a backyard gives us some unique tools at our disposal.

August 2013 saw the first bus loaded with over 100 Canuck Sports & Entertainment staff and families head out to the farm to harvest potatoes. This was a great team building exercise and a wonderful community moment for us. After a full day of work, 100 people managed to harvest 40,000 pounds of potatoes. To put this in perspective, that is enough potatoes for one week's distribution to Food Bank members.

Other groups of volunteers helped us to develop and look after our pallet gardens that provide herbs for community kitchens, a learning experience for staff and the occasional boost to our emergency food stream.

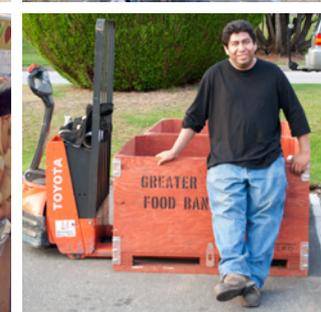
Local agency Edelman contributed its time via its Little Give initiative and completely transformed our group volunteer area into a more positive and inviting space.

With less than 30 staff working at the Food Bank, approximately 70% of food donations are processed by our amazing volunteers. Up to 500 volunteers participate in sorting food each month.

In total, **volunteers contributed over 100,000 hours last year.** We are looking forward to continuing to build upon these experiences and find increased ways for people to contribute to the organization in keeping with our strategic plan.

Thank you for your amazing contributions, we couldn't have done it without you!





FOOD, FUNDS & TIME



We feel honoured to do the work that we do and if it wasn't for the support of our community partners, it simply wouldn't be possible.

From our largest corporate donors and sponsors to our dedicated regular volunteers, we recognize the meaning in every contribution, no matter how big or how small. As part of this, the Food Bank

is honoured to have received numerous bequests from caring citizens. Their gift lives on and continues to help us make a difference to many individuals and families in our communities.

While it would be impossible to thank everyone within the pages of one report, we have the sincerest gratitude for all who come together to help us serve the community.



Greater Vancouver food bank Society

THE FOOD BANK GOES NUTS

FOR HUNGER AWARENESS WEEK
MAY 5 - 9

HERE'S A LIST OF NUT BUTTERS TO CHOOSE FROM:
ALMOND BUTTER
CASHEW BUTTER
HAZEL NUT BUTTER
PEANUT BUTTER
PECAN BUTTER
PISTACHIO BUTTER
WALNUT BUTTER, any nut butter!

DID YOU KNOW?
Nut butter really packs a punch! One 500g jar provides enough servings to be part of a healthy breakfast every day for two weeks!

One little jar is a quick and easy way to provide a healthier food choice for the 28,000 people who count on us each week.



Greater Vancouver food bank Society

BCfresh
Grown from the ground up

GLOBAL SOCCER FOOD DRIVE

BRITANNIA SECONDARY SCHOOL FIELD,
1001 COTTON DRIVE, EAST VANCOUVER
JUNE 27, 2014

FEATURING

VANCOUVER WHITECAPS FC VS VANCOUVER METRO LEAGUE'S AC CAMPOBASSO

VANCOUVER WHITECAPS FC ALUMNI

VANCOUVER METRO LEAGUE'S AC CAMPOBASSO

AC CAMPOBASSO WILL OFFER A SOCCER CLINIC FOR KIDS BEFORE THE MAIN MATCH:

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Every year organizations graciously host community events on our behalf. Here are just a few highlights from this year:

Our first ever **Nut Butter Drive** took place in **May 2014 as part of Hunger Awareness Week**. Working with grocery stores, community centres, churches and financial institutions, the event raised awareness and lots of nut butter. **Of the thousands of jars of nut butter that came in, our generous partner Whole Foods Market donated 2,300 of them.**

Did you play hockey for food? **Five Hole for Food's** cross-country, multiple city tour has raised hundreds of thousands of pounds of food since it was inspired by Canada's Olympic Gold Medal Hockey win in 2010. So popular is the Vancouver stop on the tour that in 2014, two full blocks of Granville Street were shut down to set up several rinks to accommodate food-generating hockey games. The day was a huge success, bringing in more than **37,000 pounds of food and just under \$10,000.**

Last October, the BC Film & Television industry came together and created **The REEL Thanksgiving Challenge**, raising a whopping \$55,000 in food and funds!

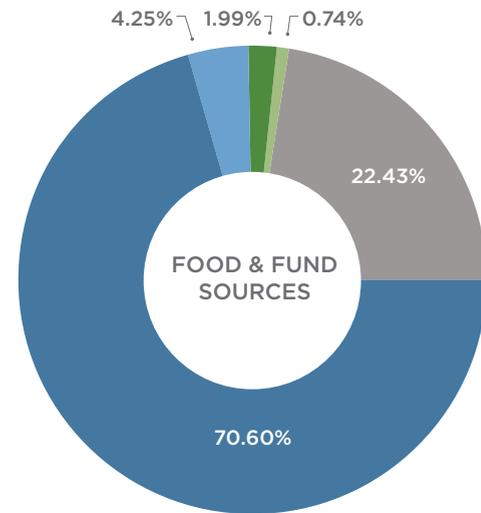
Nothing quite captures the spirit of the Christmas season like the **Rogers Santa Claus Parade**. The Food Bank and 100 of its most dedicated volunteers were on hand to ring in the season and accept more than **2,000 pounds of food and nearly \$9,000 in cash donations.**

Canstruction is quite possibly the most creative food collection event on the planet. Operating every spring in downtown Vancouver for over a decade, Canstruction features the design and assembly of structures of just about anything you can imagine, built entirely from cans of food. This year, the event generated **43,500 pounds of food and nearly \$4,000.**

A big thank you to everyone involved in making these events a success and so much fun!

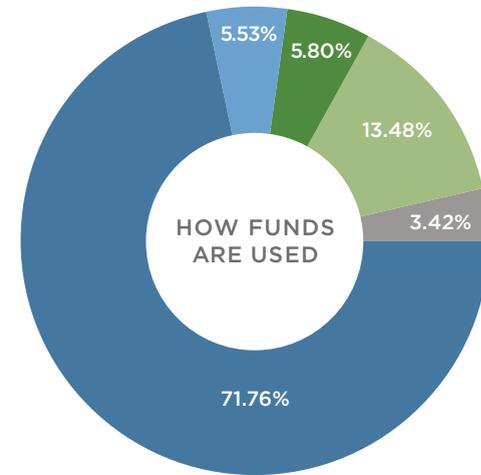
ACCOUNTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

We are fortunate to have a broad level of support which includes donations of both food and funds from across the community. Where volunteers are the lifeblood of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank, donations provide the foundation for us to be able to continue our work.



- FOOD DONATED
- MONETARY DONATIONS
- COMMUNITY EVENTS
- FUNDED COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
- INVESTMENT INCOME

With food as our primary mandate we work diligently to ensure that funds are focused on the food needs of the community. In 2013-14 we have also invested in educational initiatives, fresh produce and our capacity to engage and empower people through our programs.



- FOOD DISTRIBUTED
- FOOD PURCHASED
- DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING
- GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATION
- OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank is overseen by a Board of Directors elected by its members at the Annual General Meeting. The Board is accountable to its members, the community and its donors.

The expertise of the Board in key areas such as HR, finance and food operations guides our direction and helps us to be accountable to our strategic goals. They meet monthly to review our progress, discuss how we can maximize our resources, while empowering the management team and staff.



Murray Penner
BOARD CHAIR

David Brodie	Director
Colin Campbell	Director
Jake Letkemann	Director
Murray Penner	Board Chair
Dale Saip	Director
Ann Wicks	Director
David Wilks	Director
Dallyn Willis	Treasurer
Warren Wong	Director

ADVOCACY

Over the course of the year we continued to participate in the larger discussions around our food system at a local, provincial and national level. This dialogue takes place in a number of different ways, from our membership with Food Banks Canada and Food Banks BC to being on the Board of Directors of Food Secure Canada and the BC Food System's Network, collaborating at every level of the community.

BC Food Systems Network (BCFSN)

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank has a long history of being a member of the BCFSN and this year we were honoured to contribute and learn at a Board level. The BCFSN highlights the way food issues cross cultures, sectors, and age groups. Through this network, we share insights, initiatives, strategies and critical analysis of events in the food system. We also share our own work and stimulate each other through an exchange of ideas. This past year we attended the annual network gathering in Sorrento, BC, and came away with some valuable insights, all of which play into key themes developing at the GVFB.

Food Secure Canada (FSC) Network

This past year we traveled to Montreal as part of the Local and Sustainable Food Systems Network facilitated by Food Secure Canada and supported by the McConnell Foundation. We are very honoured to be part of a network that unites organizations across Canada to strengthen and improve local and regional food systems. Our involvement in this network has built upon our understanding of how, moving forward, we can work towards supporting a variety of strategies that support a food system that is local, sustainable and just.

Being given an opportunity to connect and learn from each other, from all different entry points of the food system, has had a positive influence on how we take care of business at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank.

OUR STAFF

We are admittedly biased but we have an incredible team. We cook together, eat together, learn together and grow together. Although we are small in numbers, by way of comparison to the community we help care for, our staff are the heart and soul and provide key guidance and support to the organizations, donors and volunteers who work with us.

We realize the importance of the well being of our staff and understand that being accountable for the service we provide has to start by delivering for our team. Personal and social transformation go hand in hand and for this reason, we began our year by introducing a monthly all staff gathering called the Soap Box.

Each month we gather for a team huddle at the Soap Box where we share key ideas, successes and challenges. This huddle is then followed by a collective educational experience on a variety of topics that have been suggested by the staff.

Through these experiences we share meaningful discussions that build on our individual and collective understandings and skills. We learn more about each other, our experiences individually and in the

community. The Soap Box ends with a delicious, homemade meal that gives us all an opportunity to get to know each other better, share some laughs, thoughts and reflections, and ultimately deepen our connection and trust amongst each other as a team.



THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

If 2013-14 has been about laying down the foundations for change, then the coming years are about delivery. It is about continuing our momentum and working harder than ever with our partners to improve how we serve the community. Providing empowering and engaging environments, ramping up our educational opportunities and putting in place key systems that will set us up to succeed are all on our busy list.

The contribution of staff, volunteers and our partners in the community has been amazing in embracing and contributing to the shifts that we have been able to make so far. Thank you all for being a part of this. There are many more changes to come as we continue to evolve. I can only ask for your continued support and feedback to help us through this next crucial stage in our journey.

Aart Schuurman Hess, CEO





Greater Vancouver food bank

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Registered Charity Number: 107449787RR0001

