



food action society
of the North Okanagan



2017-2018

Annual Report

www.foodaction.ca

Message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

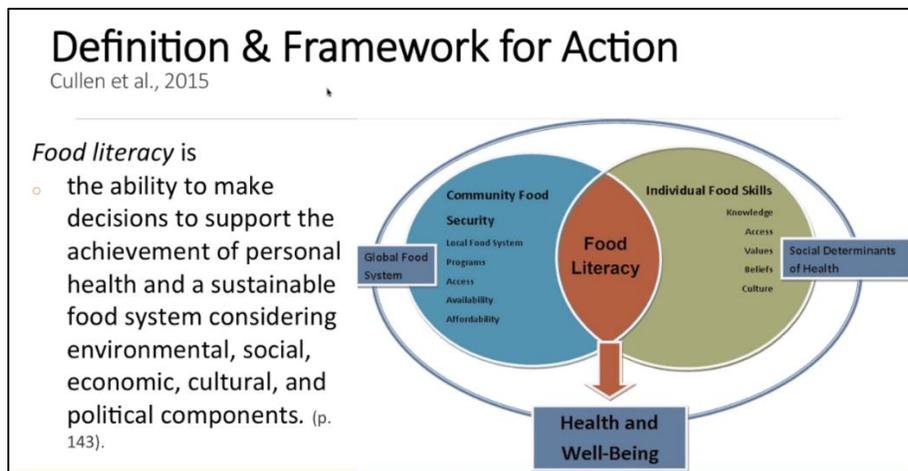
I'm pleased to present you with our Annual Report for 2017/2018. It's been another fantastic year of community collaboration and meaningful conversations about food. I'm very excited about our impact, as well as the phenomenal growth we are experiencing.

This past year, our focus was on food literacy as a means of improving food security. As we now know, the root cause of household food insecurity is poverty. As a small organization, we can't do much to combat low income. However, we *can* give people skills and experience to help them make the most of the food and land they can access. Check out our infographic to see how many people we reached this year!



Samara Sonmor, Executive Director & Program Manager

It turns out food literacy work is cutting edge when it comes to food security. The new Canada Food Guide (2019) emphasizes the importance of food skills as part of healthy eating. And the BC Ministry of Health places food literacy at the center of community and individual food security, as you can see in this slide from a recent webinar on this topic:



This year also marks a shift in our thinking. We've started framing our work in terms of **food resilience**, rather than **food security**. Food security is a hugely overwhelming topic – there are a ton of interactions and players, and often we can't see the garden for the weeds.

By reframing how we think about food systems, and aiming for resilience instead of security, we can reshape food systems from the ground up – in practical terms people can understand and connect with. Creating community and individual food resilience will be the focus of our work in 2019/2020. We'll be planting more seeds, and as always, cultivating change in our community.

In gratitude,



Vision

A community where access to local, healthy, sustainably-produced food is the norm.

Programs



Cooking

Our cooking programs helped groups of all ages to improve food preparation skills and knowledge about healthy ingredients.



Gardening

Our gardening programs taught hands-on skills to community members. We also created new gardens, facilitated access to land for people wanting to garden, and raised crops to help feed vulnerable people in the community.



Connecting

We engaged community members and increased awareness of food security and food system issues through workshops, events, and presentations.



Our Impact infographic 2017/2018

food action



111 Community Kitchens 252 cooks 150+ meals



4 school programs 49 classroom sessions 104 students and teachers 2 partners (OC, UBCO)



6 gardens 214 gardeners 5 non-profits
3 schools 1 college 600+ visitors
1,032 kg of food harvested at Patchwork



21 workshops and events 399 attendees 10 event invites & presentations (est. reach 1,500+ people) 2x charity of choice at events



15 meaningful jobs 4 JCP participants 4 young adults 2 mature students 3 single moms 2 disabled persons 1 FTE



263 volunteers 12 nursing students 12 board members 5 mentors 52 members 3 former staff partner orgs 1000+ social media followers

engagement



1,400+

volunteer hours



5,000+

community members



Program Closure – The Good Food Box

The Good Food Box was a bulk-buying social enterprise where we would purchase fresh produce in quantity to pass savings on to Good Food Box customers, once a month. Customers purchased a box at a low price. The program goal was to assist and encourage access to healthy food.

However, starting in 2014/2015, the rising cost of food and lack of customers buying boxes created issues in the program. We believe more home gardens, an emerging consumer preference for organic local produce, and the appearance of new market players like FarmBound and CSA programs began to whittle away customers who supported the Good Food Box.

We increased the price slightly to combat the problems, however, the program continued to lose money and customers. As you will see in our financial statements, the Good Food Box program became completely unstable in 2016/2017 - running huge deficits and draining our operational reserve fund.

Program losses continued, and after reviewing the program, in early 2018 the Board determined we had neither capacity or resources available to continue the Good Food Box. The program was closed in March of 2018.

In 2018, volunteers and the coordinator involved in the program formed a new non-profit organization, and this new organization is now delivering the Good Food Box once per month.

To help transition the program over to the new folks, we transferred over everything we'd used to run the program, including all equipment, supplies, inventory, a custom software/database package, the website and domain name, existing marketing materials, customer data (by consent), operating manuals, and social media assets. We wish them nothing but success and are grateful the program is still running!

Fundraising

Our fundraising efforts were minimal in 2017/2018. Running programs does not leave much time for fundraising! It's essential we move forward with some major fundraising in 2018/2019.

As a result of the loss a significant amount of operating reserve, replenishing our finances this year will be critical to continue our work in the future. I hope you'll join us in our fundraising efforts this year.

Financial Statements

Many thanks to Bruno Guenette and Robin Bristow for preparing our annual financials. Copies will be available at our annual general meeting and on our website.

