CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS
2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT
Innovation from field to fork to achieve resilient, thriving, and socially just food systems for all.

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm is a research centre and local-to-global food hub working towards a more sustainable, food-secure future. The 24-hectare UBC Farm includes integrated organic farm and forest ecosystems located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓-speaking xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. CSFS supports collaborative research, teaching and learning opportunities for UBC students, faculty, and staff as well as local and international academic, community and industry partners. CSFS supports the development of innovations in agroecosystem management for food security and ecosystem services, while honouring, respecting, and protecting diverse ecosystems and knowledge pathways within Indigenous and agrarian food systems.

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm wishes to acknowledge the passion and hard work of our dedicated faculty members, staff, students, and volunteers, as well as our donors and research funders. Thank you for your support in championing our vision as we continue to grow and evolve.
In 2017-2018, our rapidly growing team of students, staff, and CSFS Faculty Associates pushed the boundaries of interdisciplinary and community collaboration at UBC and beyond.

We are proud to host a UBC Research Excellence Cluster for Diversified Agroecosystems, which acts as a hub and catalyst for CSFS members and global partners to evaluate the socio-ecological drivers and outcomes of diversified agroecosystems.

Our momentum with student engagement has grown dramatically. Our for-credit Land and Food Systems Internship program has more than doubled in size, showing keen interest from students and community partners alike. We supported a student referendum that now offers students a discount on UBC Farm produce, while our new Community Kitchen initiative brings students and community members together. These programs exemplify how CSFS combines research, teaching, learning, and community-building for food literacy, intergenerational learning, wellbeing, and food security for our students and the greater community.

As we move forward, we aim to strengthen the local and global role of CSFS at UBC Farm in modelling stewardship of diversified foodlands, through research, teaching and knowledge dissemination. We invite you to visit us to see how good food and healthy land serve to build and foster community.
The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems is an interdisciplinary and inclusive hub for solutions to local and global food systems sustainability. The UBC Farm provides researchers with a platform where social, economic, and environmental interventions can be designed, tested, and monitored within a living food and ecological system.
Crop-Protection Research and Innovation for Adaptation to Climate Change in BC

**Funding:** Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC – Farm Adaptation Innovator Program, BC Ministry of Agriculture, NSERC

Hughie Jones, a PhD student working with Drs. Andrew Black and Paul Jassal from the Faculty of Land and Food Systems, conducted field plot experiments at the UBC Farm, Mackin Creek Farm and Cropthorne Farm to evaluate the effectiveness of mulches and low tunnels in the modification of microclimate and plant growth. This evaluation aims to inform season extension and cushion crops from the adverse effects of future climate change.

Seed Sovereignty and BC Seed Trials

**Funding and collaborations:** SSHRC, Bauta Initiative for Canadian Seed Security, FarmFolk CityFolk, Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC

The goal of the BC Seed Trials is to contribute to resilient agri-food systems in British Columbia through participatory research which engages farmers in producing knowledge relevant to seed systems development. Led by CSFS postdoctoral fellow Alexandra Lyon, the project partners at the UBC Farm and FarmFolk CityFolk are identifying seeds through province-wide variety trials that are well adapted to the local climate and ecosystem. The project will increase expertise among local farms in seed trial design and crop evaluation and support scaling up of ecological seed production.

CSFS researchers are pushing the boundaries – we use ecological and systems analysis perspectives to conduct innovative research across the food system.

Research in 2017-2018 focused on several key foci from our Strategic Plan (2016-2020), including developing our Agroecological Research Station, and expanding the Global Food Systems Research and Policy Network and Land-Based Knowledge Systems and Health Networks.

The newly formed Diversified Agroecosystems Research Cluster positions the UBC Farm as a Long-Term Socio-Ecological Research Station, as a central hub in a Coordinated Distributed Experimental Network of diversified research farms. We are also working to advance an open source technology platform for Data Driven Agroecology in organic, integrated, smallholder, and diversified farming systems to assess and inform farm management decisions and outcomes.
Evaluating the Impact of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society's Food Hubs Programs on Dietary Intake and Food Security

*Funding: CIHR*

Each week, 28,000 people rely on food from the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society (GVFB) to help feed their families. Yet, we do not know much about what health issues they face and what makes it difficult for them to access a healthy diet. GVFB is now changing how they work by providing food that is more nutritious and inviting members to choose their own foods. Professor Jennifer Black and her students partnered with GVFB to help better understand the experiences of the Food Bank members to inform GVFB’s strategies to improve the quality and impact of their work.

Indigenous Land Based Pedagogies and Food Sovereignty in Urban Contexts

*Funding: SSHRC*

This study seeks to better understand how food landscapes are experienced in cities by investigating the relationship between Indigenous land-based pedagogies, food sovereignty, and food security. This project, led by Professor Eduardo Jovel, works in collaboration with three Indigenous teaching gardens at the UBC Farm (Tal A’xin: Maya in Exile Garden, Tu’wusht Garden Project, and xʷc̓ic̓asəm Garden) and other Indigenous communities in BC engaged in food security and food sovereignty initiatives. The study uses a decolonizing research framework to engage with diverse traditional food systems and Indigenous Ways of Knowing.

For a complete list of all our research projects and publications visit ubcfarm.ubc.ca/csfs-research

“CSFS is a state of the art facility for important agricultural research. We’re pushing the boundaries in specific scientific ventures. CSFS has the potential to be an important hub of change and to connect researchers on campus, especially those who are interested in food systems, food production and the environment.”

– Sean Smukler, Assistant Professor, Applied Biology & Soil Science, UBC Faculty of Land & Food Systems
CSFS provides leadership and support for teaching and learning on topics related to sustainable food systems. We support classroom instruction, experiential, community, and service-based learning. We provide opportunities for professional practice related to sustainable food systems education, food literacy workshops, and a Practicum in Sustainable Agriculture.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- 40 Food Systems Internships
- 2,312 Students Engaged in 28 CSFS-Related Courses Across 8 Faculties
- 483 Workshop Participants
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAMS

Food Systems Internships
The LFS 496 Career Development Internship program program experienced a dramatic increase in interest and engagement both by students and our expanding community partnerships, growing from 15 student registrations in 2016-2017 to 40 in 2017-2018.

UBC Future of Food Global Dialogue Series
This campus-wide initiative brings together food security and sustainability experts from across UBC and the globe to engage audiences with the food system. These dialogues spur new ideas and collaborations by attracting audiences and speakers across faculties and departments. A partnership between CSFS, the Liu Institute for Global Issues and UBC Reads Sustainability (an initiative of UBC Sustainability), the seven lecture-based events of 2017-2018 attracted over 175 attendees.

Expanding the Living Laboratory
CSFS developed open-access curriculum and case studies for Urban Agriculture, Ethnobotany, UBC Farm through a Sustainable Lens, Dining Environments, and Indigenous Food Sovereignty, accessible as open-access teaching resources for UBC faculty and the global sustainable food systems education community. Supported by the UBC Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund and BC OpenCampus.

FEEDING GROWTH

Through community engagement and education activities, Feeding Growth amplifies the local food economy and the development of exceptional, healthy, sustainable, and socially responsible retail and packaged goods companies.

The third year of this successful partnership between CSFS, Vancity, and Fluid Creative saw the delivery of “Scale your Progressive Food Business”, a five-workshop series that teaches successful food business development, as well as two “Coffee Series” workshops.

- 175 people from 129 food businesses participated in Feeding Growth workshops
- 15 established food industry experts and business leaders presented on subjects ranging from values-based branding, sustainable manufacturing, and financing growth
The UBC Farm Practicum in Sustainable Agriculture’s mission is to inspire and cultivate new farmers and sustainability educators who will transform their communities and their food systems.

Practicum students are trained in a wide array of skills including crop protection, sustainable cultivation methods, soil fertility management, business management, and marketing. Now marking its 10th year, the UBC Farm Practicum in Sustainable Agriculture has graduated a total of 95 students.

Simone McIsaac and Sarah Stewart (McMillan) met during their practicum at the UBC Farm in 2008, and are now co-owners of Rootdown Organic Farm, a mixed-vegetable farm serving restaurants, grocery stores, and CSA members in the Pemberton and Whistler area. Since 2010, the farm has developed into a multi-acre project, serving 20 restaurants and grocery stores, with over 70 CSA members, as well as raising heritage pigs. The practicum program served as a foundational stepping stone for both Sarah and Simone, providing an array of organic farming resources on a spectrum of topics that has allowed them to grow into the farm that they are today.

CSFS workshops offer hands-on, integrative, interactive, and experiential learning opportunities for people at UBC and across Vancouver.

- 53 total workshops, 40% increase from 2016
- 483 total participants
- Program gross revenue increased by 17%
CSFS is advancing dialogue on sustainable community engaged education that builds common ground across age, ability, political views, socioeconomic status, culture, belief, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender. We value the diverse knowledges and experiences that community supporters bring to CSFS.

12,000+ PARTICIPANTS IN 542 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

7,000 FOOD LITERACY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

929 VOLUNTEERS 6,963+ HOURS
The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems (CSFS) at UBC Farm is located on the unceded ancestral territory of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓-speaking x̱w̓məθkw̓ay̓am (Musqueam) people, whose guidance and collaboration is vital to all activities on the Farm.

Four Indigenous initiatives have their home at the UBC Farm: Tal A’xin: Maya in Exile Garden, established in 2000 as one of the longest-running community-based projects at the UBC Farm, Tu’wusht Garden Project, initiated in 2005 with partner Vancouver Native Health Society, xʷčičasam: Indigenous Health Research & Education Garden, part of LFS Indigenous Research Partnerships, and the Culturally Relevant Urban Wellness Program (CRUW), developed in 2011 by Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society. Each year, these initiatives bring thousands of visitors to the Farm and engage hundreds of UBC students through academic connections such as class visits, group projects, graduate research, and directed studies.

INDIGENOUS INITIATIVES

Highlights
- **1,355 people** engaged in Indigenous programs at the UBC Farm in 2017-2018
- We are honoured to host the Tu’Wusht Garden Project for its 13th year. Tu’Wusht runs a weekly community kitchen with urban Indigenous participants who grow, prepare, and eat food while sharing knowledge and skills with members of the UBC community and beyond
- The xʷčičasam Garden saw more than double the number of volunteer hours in 2017-2018
- **CRUW** accepts 30 participants and four youth mentors annually for the UBC Farm program, working with elders, knowledge keepers, staff, and guest instructors over eight months to foster wellness and skill development in vulnerable youth. CRUW has since initiated three new streams of the program for alumni of the UBC Farm program
CSFS food literacy programs engage youth of all ages in hands-on activities to explore their food systems from field to fork.

FarmWonders

The FarmWonders program is a community education initiative that allows preschoolers through to secondary students to engage in hands-on activities at the UBC Farm through day camps and field trips. Children learn about the social and ecological aspects of food production through science-based, experiential learning.

FarmLeaders, for children aged 12 to 14, furthers this learning into a leadership role.

- Involved seven Community Field Experience (CFE) teacher practicum students from the UBC Faculty of Education
- 2,063 children participated in 117 FarmWonders Field Trips
- 292 participants in 10 FarmWonders Camps

Intergenerational Landed Learning

The Intergenerational Landed Learning Project, based in the UBC Faculty of Education, is a unique program dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and understanding of sustainable living, learning, and practice through land-food community-based environmental education programs and research. Elementary students and adult mentors (with an emphasis on older adults) learn together in the field. Teachers work with project staff to integrate and extend the experiential component of the program with classroom lessons across the curriculum.

- Intergenerational Landed Learning Project hosted 87 children and youth from four elementary schools from grades 3 to 7 (2017-2018)
- Intergenerational Landed Learning engaged 48 community volunteers

Think&EatGreen@School

The 2017-2019 Think&EatGreen@School (TEGS) project was newly funded by the City of Vancouver, and is now based at CSFS in partnership with the Vancouver School Board. TEGS builds on the 2010-2015 SSHRC- and CIHR-funded phases of the project. TEGS supports teacher food literacy professional development through school-year workshops and Summer Institutes, and offers small grants to schools and non-profit organizations, as well as support for research on food literacy and sustainable food systems education.

- 4,464 children and educators participated in 18 Think&EatGreen@School initiatives
GATHERING AND CELEBRATING

Community education and outreach activities encourage education in sustainability, environmental stewardship, healthy diets and lifestyles, and social development.

EVENTS

The UBC Farm is a gathering place for diverse communities to support CSFS and celebrate sustainable food systems.

- Over **500 guests** attended **Joy of Feeding**, a unique intergenerational, international food festival and fundraiser for CSFS chaired by Meeru Dhalwala of Vij’s and Rangoli Restaurants
- Our inaugural **UBC Farm Fall Fair** attracted more than **1,000 visitors** featuring workshops, demos, research presentations, and Farm tours
- The 15th annual **FarmAde**, now hosted by CSFS, encourages new and existing students to discover the UBC Farm
- Our new **Community Kitchen** events bring UBC students and the community together for food and cooking education
- Our inaugural al fresco **Long Table Dinner** series launched a new partnership with UBC Food Services

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The CSFS Volunteer Program enhances community food literacy, increases student experiential learning, and supports organic production at the UBC Farm.

- The **Urban Farmers** volunteer program teaches participants about all aspects of sustainable farming, from weeding to planting and harvesting
- Volunteers at the **xʷc̓ίčasam and Tu’wusht gardens** gain hands-on experience with traditional foods and medicines and learn from Indigenous Elders
- Market volunteers gain business and retail experience at the **UBC Farm Farmers’ Market**
- Volunteers with **FarmWonders** learn to lead children’s food literacy activities
- Volunteers of all-ages learn sustainable growing and cultivation skills in the **Children’s Learning Garden**

Highlights

- Over **12,000 people** participated in **542 CSFS community-engaged initiatives**
- **929 people** gave over **6,963 volunteer hours**, engaging in **252 volunteer activities**
The UBC Farm is situated within a 90-year-old coastal hemlock forest that comprises a mosaic of cultivated annual crop fields, second-growth forest, perennial hedgerows, fruit orchards and educational demonstration gardens. A collaborative research, teaching and learning space, the UBC Farm cultivates over 200 varieties of fruits, vegetables and herbs, and also features honey beehives, seed production, flowers, and egg-laying, open-pasture hens.
UBC Farm food cultivation provides opportunities for research, teaching, and hands-on engagement in the food system for UBC students. Produce sales create community partnerships and provide a revenue source for CSFS through the UBC Farm Farmers’ Market and campus food engagement with UBC Food Services.

UBC Food Services created the Food Vision and Values Commitment in partnership with CSFS in 2017-2018, committing to:

- Purchase high-quality, nutritious, sustainable foods; prioritize fresh and minimally processed ingredients
- Purchase seasonal foods from local producers, as close to UBC as possible, to reduce our environmental impact, provide fresh ingredients, and strengthen BC and Canada’s economies
- Strongly support the UBC Action Framework for a Nutritionally Sound Campus by helping to lead the Food and Nutrition Working Group and working toward achieving its goals
- Encourage reduced meat consumption by making vegan and vegetarian options readily available, abundant, and affordable, to reduce our impact on our air, land, water, and climate

This commitment prioritizes purchasing from the UBC Farm to achieve these goals, and serves as a model for other university farms.
Connect with us!
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