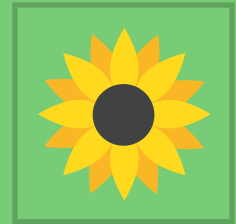


PUBLIC PRODUCE & THE BUTLER URBAN FARM



CAITLIN QUIST

JANUARY 20, 2021



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge that this research takes place on the unceded traditional territory of the Secwépemc Peoples, within the unceded lands of Secwepemcul'ecw. The land on which the Butler Urban Farm sits belongs to these Peoples and I am grateful to be a guest here. As a guest, I commit to respecting this land and its Peoples, and seek opportunities to learn and grow in this regard.

Thank you to Mitacs and Thompson Rivers University for providing the funding for this research through the Mitacs Research Training Award. Thank you to my academic supervisor, Dr. Terry Kading, for guiding me through this process. As well, thank you to the Kamloops Food Policy Council, and those on the Farm Committee for supporting me in this project.

A big thank you to this season's farm managers, Kevin Pankewich and Chris Torres, for being so helpful in getting out the volunteer survey, providing input, and making the Butler Urban Farm a great place to be.

Thank you to all who participated in the survey and interviews, your community perspective was invaluable.

Thank you to the other community farms and gardens, community orchards, and community food forests which participated in this research.

- Sudbury Shared Harvest (Sudbury, ON)
- Wark Street Commons (Victoria, BC)
- Edible Garden Project (Vancouver, BC)
- The Table (Perth, ON)
- Prairie Urban Farm (Edmonton, AB)

Photos are by the author unless otherwise stated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Project Overview	4
2. Research Aims	4
3. Methods	5
4. Executive Summary	6
5. Description of Site	7
5a. Irrigation System	9
5b. The Back Half	10
5c. The Front Half	15
5d. The New Side Section or "The Triangle"	17
6. What is Public Produce	20
7. History of Public Produce in Kamloops	23
7.1 Victoria Street Garden (2011-2012)	23
7.2 MacDonald Park Garden (2012)	26
7.3 Elm Street Garden (2012 - Present)	27
8. Jump Gardens to The Butler Urban Farm	29
8.1 2015-2016	29
8.2 2017	31
8.3 2018	34
8.4 2019	35
9. The Butler Urban Farm in 2020	37
9.1 Overview	37
9.2 Defining a Management Structure	40
9.3 Strengths	42
9.3.1 Community Connections and Partnerships	42
9.3.2 Volunteer Capacity	45
9.3.3 Organization and Leadership	46
9.3.4 Attractive Site	50
9.3.5 Community Building	50
9.3.6 Experimentation and Growing Regenerative Farming	52
9.4 Challenges	54
9.4.1 Continuity	54
9.4.2 Social Space and Safety	58

9.4.3	Accessibility.....	59
9.4.4	Seasonal Availability of Produce.....	60
9.4.5	Consultation with Neighbors.....	61
9.4.6	"Toxic" Slope.....	61
9.4.7	COVID-19.....	62
9.4.8	Planning, Organization, and Consultation.....	63
9.4.9	Funding.....	63
9.4.10	Land Under Loan.....	64
9.4.11	Inconsistency in Volunteer Force.....	64
9.4.12	Wavering Levels of Community Support.....	65
9.4.13	Signage and Communication Systems.....	65
9.5	Ideas, Plans, and Opportunities.....	68
9.5.1	Workshops and Education.....	68
9.5.2	Social Enterprise.....	69
9.5.3	Food Forest and Perennial Crops.....	70
9.5.4	Expansion.....	70
10.	Volunteer Response.....	73
10.1	Challenges and/or Areas for Growth.....	72
10.2	Strengths of the Farm.....	75
10.3	What Brings People to the Farm.....	76
10.4	The Farm and Food Security in Kamloops.....	78
10.5	Practical Questions.....	80
11.	KFPC Member Response.....	81
11.1	Assessing Awareness/Engagement with the Farm.....	82
11.2	Strengths of the Farm.....	83
11.3	Challenges/Areas for Growth.....	83
11.4	The Farm and Food Security in Kamloops.....	84
12.	Other Urban Farms, Community Gardens, Food Forests.....	86
12.1	Overview.....	86
12.2	Responses.....	87
12.3	Springridge Commons.....	90
13.	Conclusion.....	96
14.	References.....	98
15.	Appendices	
15.1	Appendix A (Volunteer Questionnaire).....	101
15.2	Appendix B (KFPC Member Questionnaire).....	102
15.3	Appendix C (Urban Farms, Community Gardens, Food Forests Questionnaire).....	103

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Butler Urban Farm is a community farm initiative on Kamloops' Northshore, situated on a vacant lot provided by a local business, Butler Auto and RV. The farm was started in 2015 by an organization known as JUMP Kamloops (Jubilee Urban Movement and Partners), and was passed into the management of the Kamloops Food Policy Council (KFPC) in 2020. The farm operates primarily relying on volunteers and donations, with the support of one paid staff member as Farm Manager. The farm also receives the support of the KFPC Farm Committee members. The goal of the farm is to "grow as much food as possible in the space but also provide opportunities for people in the community to engage with us in growing that food" (KFPC, 2020). This includes growing food with the goal of sharing it with individuals and organizations in the community with the guiding mindset that no one will ever be turned away empty handed. Intended as a space for community building and knowledge sharing, Butler Farm also acts as a leverage point to increase food production Kamloops-wide, and in turn, build local food system resilience. In the face of an unexpected global crisis such as COVID-19, which affects both our supply chains and our economic system, local production and the ability to feed our communities becomes vital.

While this is the first research report on the Butler Urban Farm, research has been conducted on other Public Produce projects in Kamloops spanning the period of 2011-2018. I draw upon these reports for this research and seek to provide an update on the current picture of Public Produce in Kamloops. The concept of Public Produce will be described in a subsequent section of this report.

RESEARCH AIMS

In June of 2020 while I was working as a volunteer at the Butler Urban Farm, the KFPC expressed an interest in research about the farm. Funding made available through the Mitacs Research Training Award made this project a possibility. The goal of the research was ultimately to assess what could make this space thrive, and sustainably into future years. I sought to evaluate how we could continue to build it in the vision of volunteers and community members, and learn from past projects the Kamloops Public Produce experience, as well as from other projects across Canada. Additionally, I wanted to assess the viability of the Public Produce model in contributing to local food security.

The research aims were:

1. To determine what challenges past Public Produce projects in Kamloops have faced
2. To determine what led to the success of past Public Produce projects in Kamloops
3. To determine what challenges the Butler Urban Farm faced in the 2020 season
4. To determine what led to the success of the Butler Urban Farm in 2020
5. To learn what volunteers and community members would like to see the farm evolve towards
6. To determine what the potential of the Butler Urban Farm could be in the future
7. To draw from the experiences of other community food production initiatives within Canada to inform decision making at the Butler Urban Farm

METHODS

This research was conducted through the following methods:

Participatory Action

Through participating in daily farm processes in a volunteer capacity, I was able to observe and experience the strengths and challenges at the farm during the 2020 season. Working with the farm manager, KFPC, as well as other volunteers, we identified challenges, sought out solutions, and worked to continually improve the project. This required a process of continuous reflection, learning, and action. The need for this research was identified by project stakeholders, and supported by management, volunteers, and community members. This report is intended not as a stand-alone piece, but as part of a continued process of reflection and improvement.

Online Surveys

Two online surveys were created for this research. One was for volunteers at the farm which was distributed through an email contact list, as well as posted on the farm's message board. The second was for KPFC community members, which was also distributed through an email list.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with several members of the Butler Urban Farm's Farm Committee, as well as with one volunteer.

Questionnaires

After conducting online research to find other organizations within Canada doing similar projects, these organizations were contacted by email for either a phone interview or written questionnaire.

Review of past research of Public Produce in Kamloops

Three bodies of work were relied on heavily to evaluate the history of Public Produce in Kamloops. This included:

KFPC. (2012). Public Produce Strategic Plan 2012. <https://kamloopsfoodpolicycouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Public-ProduceFinalStrategyReportSept2012.pdf> Reid, R., & Besanger, K. (2018).

The Kamloops Public Produce Project: A Story of Place, Partnerships, and Proximity in an Edible Garden Setting. In T. Kading, No Straight Lines: Local Leadership and the Path from Government to Governance in Small Cities. (pp. 145-174). University of Calgary Press.
<http://hdl.handle.net/1880/106722>

Sedgman, E.(2013). Public Produce: Growing Food in Public Spaces A Start Up Guide.
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourHealth/HealthyLiving/FoodSecurity/Documents/Public%20Produce%20-%20A%20Start%20up%20Guide.pdf>

Due to COVID-19 limitations most outreach occurred digitally. In accordance with precautions to limit unnecessary in-person interactions, some data was collected during routine interactions by KFPC leadership and relayed to the researcher. This includes feedback received by the Farm Manager or volunteers by neighbors passing by, feedback to the Farm Manager or Gleaning Abundance Program (GAP) Coordinator by recipient organizations during produce delivery, and volunteers to the researcher during farm work.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through the historical study of Public Produce in Kamloops, the in-depth evaluation of the BUF, and the study of several other community food projects in Canada, this study aims to gather the knowledge gained from these experiences to reference for current and future projects. The study reveals that while all projects face different challenges due to differing community circumstances, they all face the common problems of maintaining consistent volunteer labour, maintaining support of the city and community, and accessing consistent funding. All projects find strength in the knowledgeable and generous community networks which grow and develop throughout the project. Additionally, this study notes the importance of Public Produce projects in community building and the creation of a resilient local food system.

Image: A variety of tomatoes from harvest day.



DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The Butler Urban Farm (BUF) is located on Kamloops' Northshore; bordered by Aspen Electric, Pine Grove Care Centre, a private residence, and Butler Auto and RV - the owners of the property. It also sits in close proximity to the Kamloops Food Bank. The site is approximately one acre large, and has undergone significant transformation from the vacant lot it once was.



Image: Front view of farm in August 2020

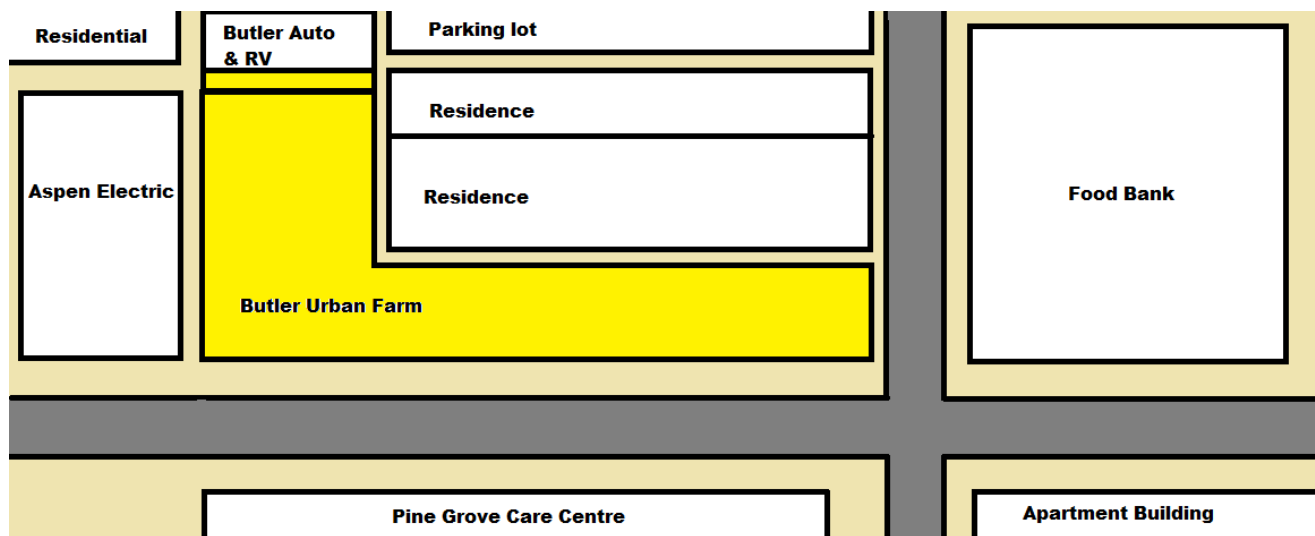


Image: Diagram of the Butler Urban Farm and surrounding area



Image: The location of the farm within the North Shore (Google Maps, n.d. -a).



Image: The location of the farm within Kamloops (Google Maps, n.d. -b)

IRRIGATION SYSTEM

The farm uses a Rainbird irrigation system wherein sprinkler heads have been placed along the irrigation line in order to have zone to zone reach. These sprinkler heads can be adjusted to cover a 180° or 360° radius. The zones are numbered from 1-5 to note which valve in the irrigation box controls which zone in the field.



Image: Rainbird sprinkler head

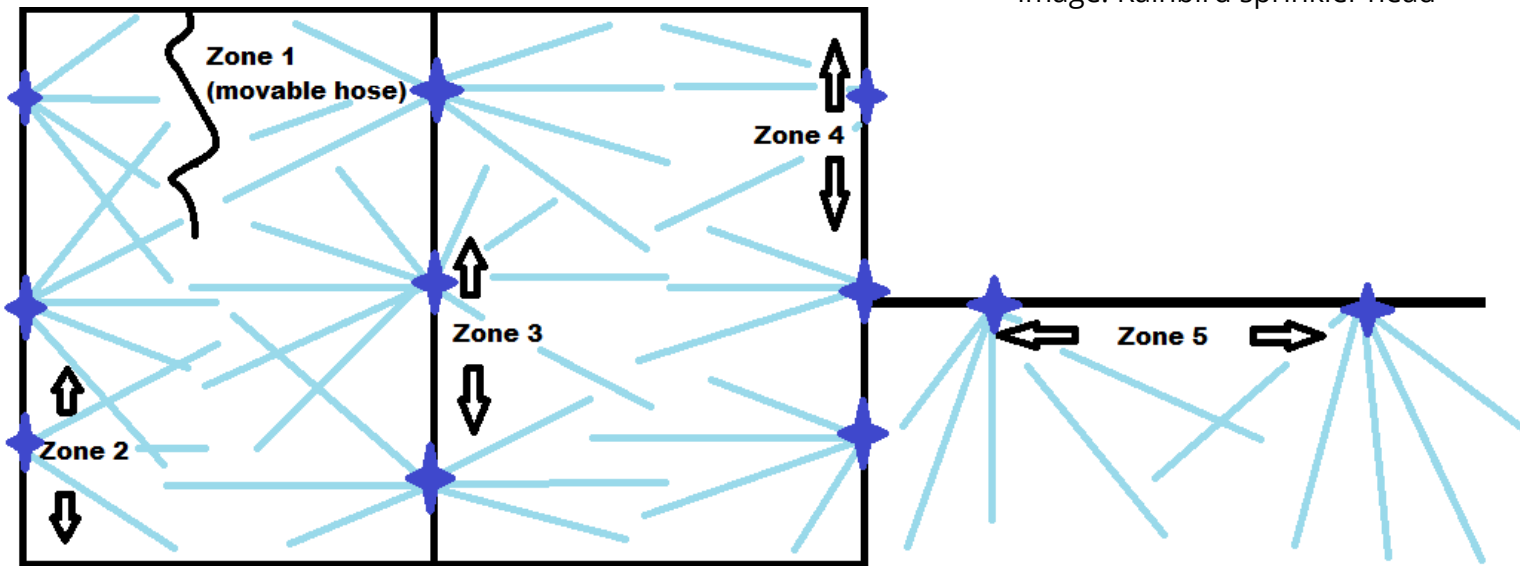


Image: Diagram depicting zone to zone irrigation coverage. Please note that this diagram is simplified and there are more sprinkler heads than pictured.

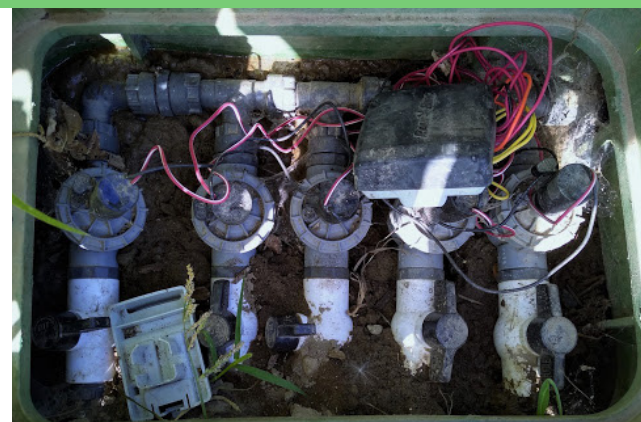
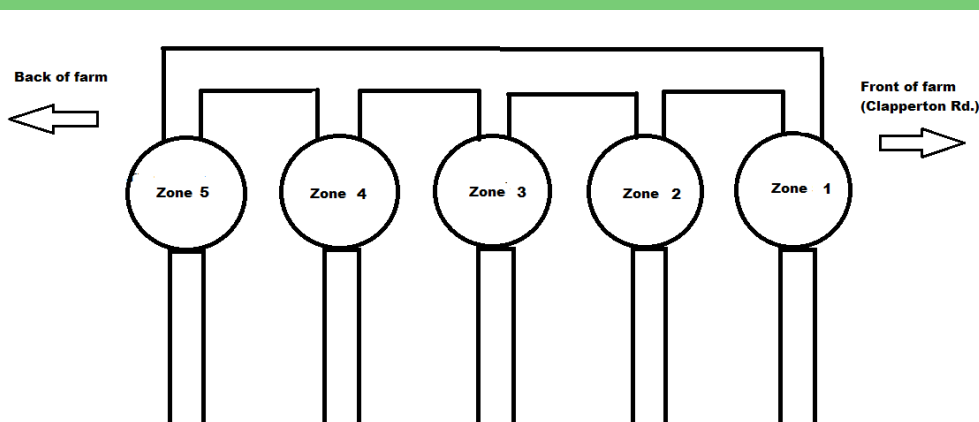


Image: Diagram of irrigation controls corresponding with zones, and photo of irrigation controls.

THE BACK HALF

For the purposes of the following diagrams, I have divided the farm into the back half, the front half, and the new side section.



The back half of the farm is home to the four private half-beds on the property, currently in the back-right corner of the farm. This location was chosen due to its distance from the main foot traffic occurring in and around the site, to dissuade passers-by from harvesting from these beds. Clear signage is also needed to keep these beds separate from the commons. More information about the private beds can be found on page 40.

Image: Sign indicating a private plot

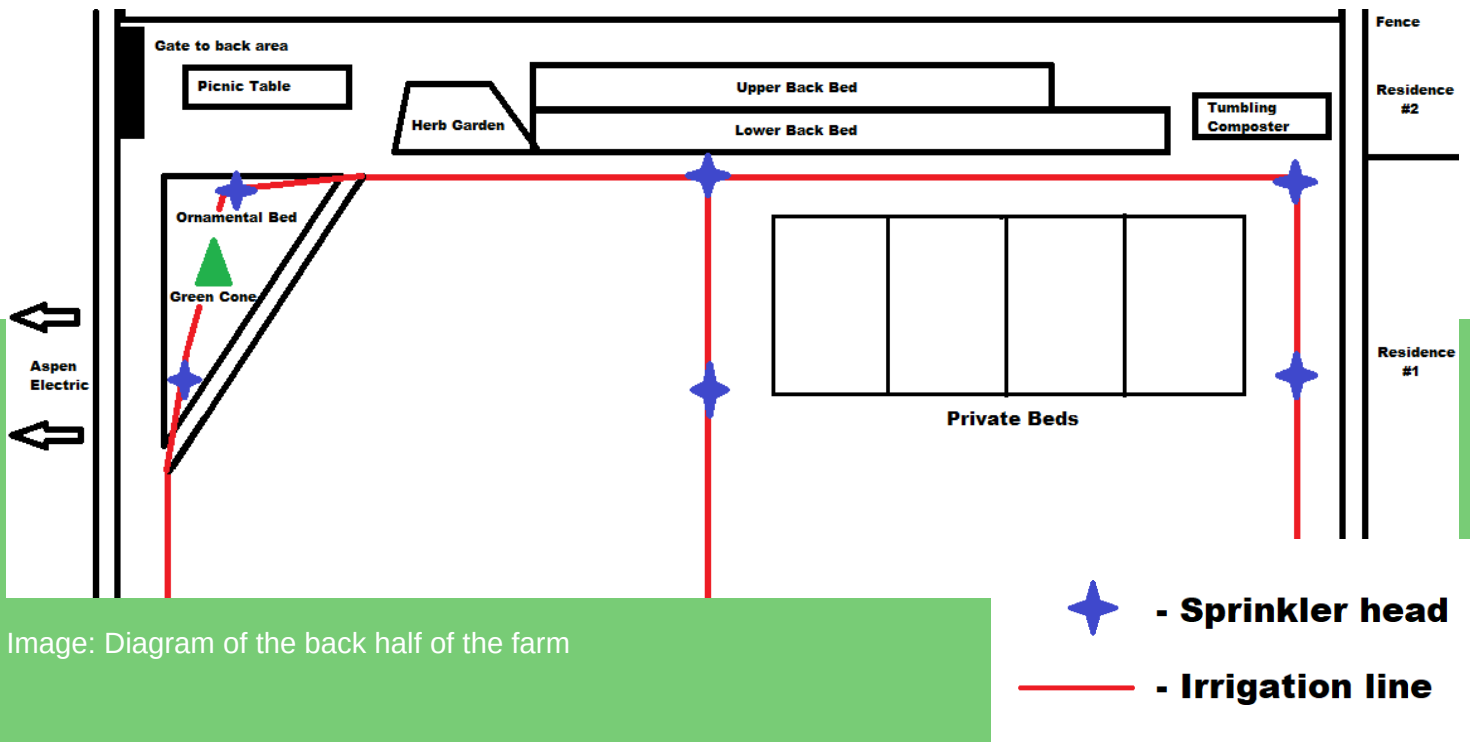


Image: Diagram of the back half of the farm

The rest of the planting beds in this area are still a part of the commons. In addition to the main crop beds, there is also an ornamental bed, a herb garden, and an upper and lower back bed near the fence line. The ornamental bed has had its wooden containment structure removed due to its poor condition. Much of the structure had collapsed on itself and was buried into the soil. While volunteers spent many days trying to clean all the debris and garbage out of this bed, in the end it was deemed too contaminated to grow food crops and was designated ornamental. It brings a bright and beautiful arrangement of flowers to the back end of the property. This bed also contains a Green Cone Digester, one of the composters on site.

This Green Cone was generously donated by a volunteer. This composter sits partially underground, and is unique in the range of waste it can accept; including meat and seafood. It is also noted for its low maintenance and odour containment, which makes it a highly usable compost system for a shared space.



Images: Ornamental bed; Green Cone

The upper and lower back beds are being kept in place by structures constructed several years ago, with a combination of wood and cinder blocks. In the 2020 season, two Saskatoon bushes and a peach tree were planted in the lower bed. A rhubarb plant remains in this bed from prior years, and a variety of flowers and herbs were added this year. The lower bed also became home to some extra seed potato which arrived later in the season. The upper bed was planted with wild asparagus plants which are expected to take 3-5 years to mature.



Image:Upper and low back beds



Images: Wild asparagus

To the left of the upper and lower back beds is a small but flourishing herb garden. In 2020, this herb garden had a variety of herbs as well as strawberries, yarrow, and borage.



Image:Herb garden

On the right side of the upper and lower back beds is the Jora Composter which was donated to the farm by the Fraser Basin Council. This large, tumbling composter has greatly improved the farm's capacity to compost waste, and use of the composter has been extended to volunteers so long as care is taken to sort waste properly.



Image: Jora Composter



Image: Back toolsheds



Behind the back fence is space that is largely unused at the time of writing this report, but which may be developed in the future. This area can be used for extra storage of materials and is currently home to several tool sheds.

As seen in the image to the left, this space is sometimes still used by Butler Auto & RV for storage. Although, during the majority of the 2020 season there were little to no vehicles parked in this area.

Image: Area circled in red indicates area currently used in back area, (Google Maps, n.d.- c).

THE FRONT HALF

The front half of the farm has a smaller tool shed for storing everyday items such as shovels, gloves, and rakes. Adjacent to the toolshed is the old washing station which has been largely out of use for the past few years. This structure is where the message board is displayed; a chalkboard which briefly explains farm procedures, and allows individuals to leave messages and record self-harvested produce. This area is undergoing improvements at the time of writing this report.



Image: Old washing station being used to hang and dry beans

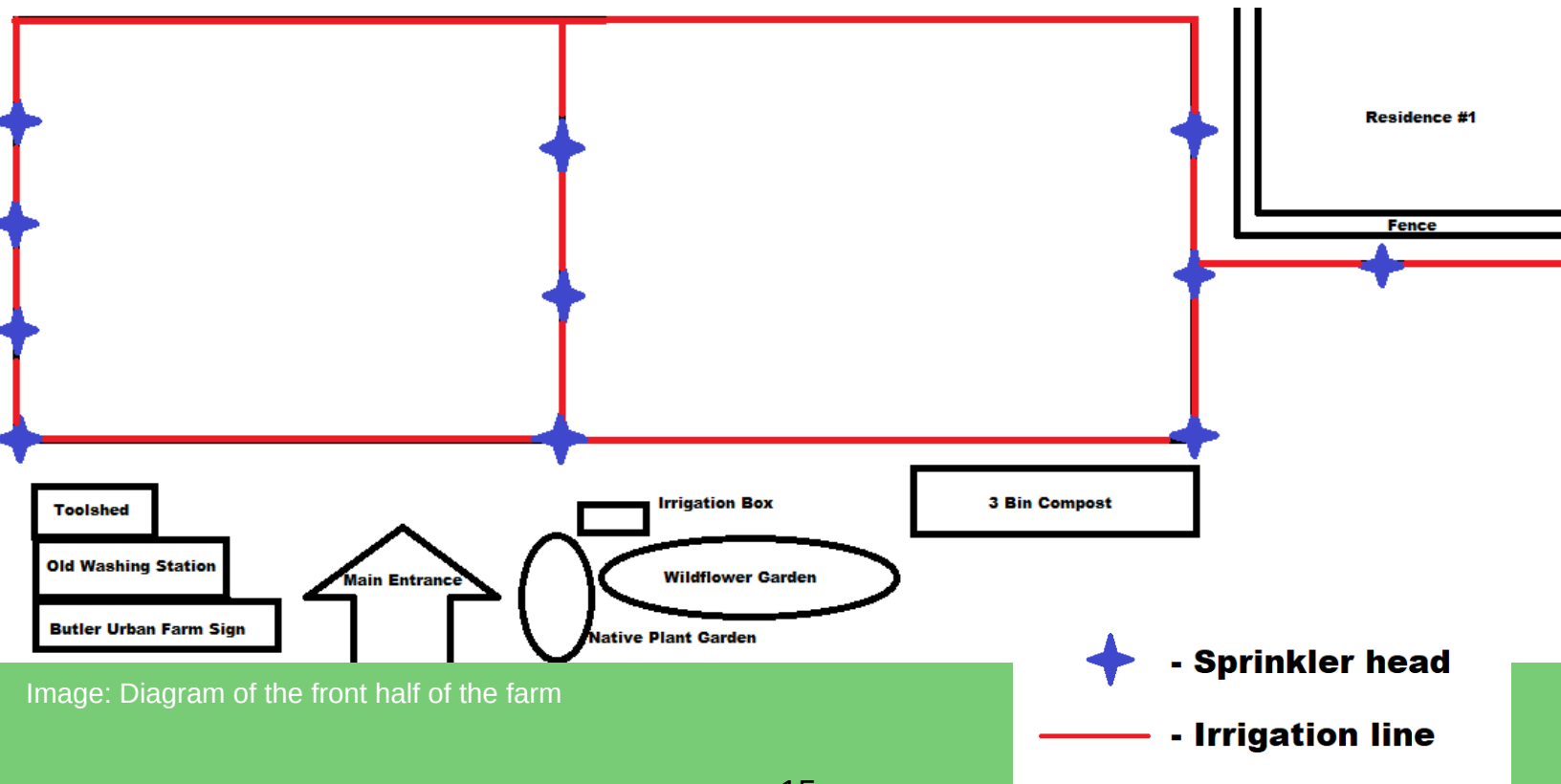


Image: Diagram of the front half of the farm



The front half is also home to a second ornamental garden planted by volunteers, and a native plant garden planted by the Kamloops Naturalist Club. There is also a 3 bin composter in this area which was the only composter on the farm prior to 2020. Tucked next to the ornamental garden is the access point for the irrigation system controls.



Image 1 (top left): Native plant garden by the Kamloops Naturalist Club.

Image 2 (mid left): Front ornamental bed.



Image 3 (bottom left): 3 bin composter.



Image 4 (bottom right): Squash plant growing alongside irrigation boxes absorbing a small leak.

THE NEW SIDE SECTION, OR "THE TRIANGLE"

An exciting development of 2020 was the extension of the farm into a new area of the property. The "triangle" (which once appeared more triangular due to how the space was being used) was often used for storing large quantities of wood chips and manure. While it still is partially being used for this purpose, it slowly transformed over the course of the summer. Beginning with a social enterprise herb garden started by the Elizabeth Fry Society, other areas followed a routine to become suitable for planting. Due to the prevalence of bindweed in this neglected area, we have used a layer mulching technique to create beds which could suppress weeds and be of higher soil quality. Shortly afterwards, an irrigation line was installed to reach this area. This allowed us to expand into this area for planting food crops. Next, a section of land was planted with a mow-able wildflower mix, as a potential seating area. A second native plant garden was planted alongside the road, as a personal volunteer project through the Vancouver Foundation's Neighborhood Small Grants program.



Image: Elizabeth Fry herb garden near the fence, the beginnings of a wildflower garden in the center. Beans, sweet potatoes, and peppers planted in the rows.

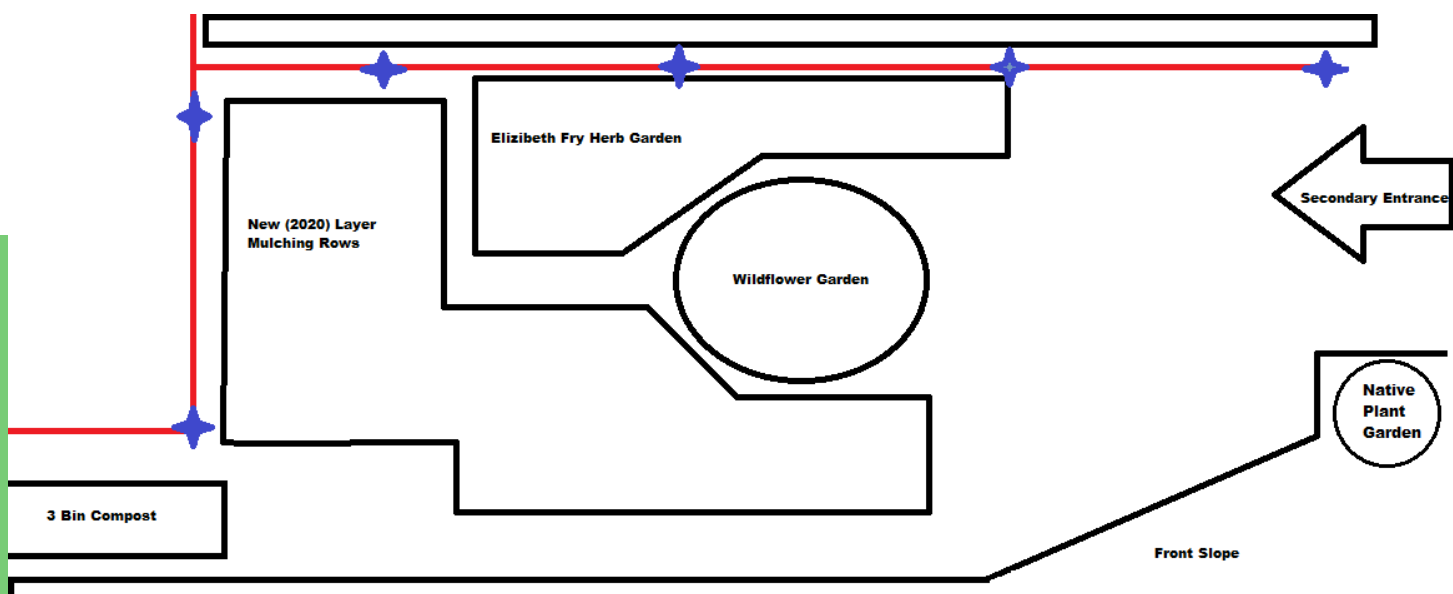


Image: Diagram of The Triangle

-  - **Sprinkler head**
-  - **Irrigation line**



Image: The Triangle in 2017. At this time the area is being used for picnic tables. Photo by Kevin Pankewich



Image: The Triangle in early 2020, before development started. Piles of manure and soil are being stored in this area. Photo by Kevin Pankewich



Image: The Triangle in stage 1 of development. Bindweed is removed to make space for the new herb garden, and three new rows. Layers of cardboard and soil are added.



Image: The Triangle in stage 2 of development. Several more rows are added and the work towards the mow-able wildflower bed begins. Photo by Kevin Pankewich.



Image: The Triangle in stage 3 of development. Woodchips are added between pathways to make walking easier and suppress weeds from creeping up between the rows. The wildflower mix has been sprinkled and sprouts are started to come up. Photo by Kevin Pankewich.

WHAT IS PUBLIC PRODUCE?

The term “Public Produce” was popularized from a book published by Darrin Nordahl of the same name. The first edition, released in 2009, initially states that public produce can be defined as “municipal agriculture” (Nordhal, 2009, p. xiii). In the second edition of Public Produce, published in 2014, we can see how the idea has grown beyond public agriculture led by the municipality, towards simply creating a food commons within public space. Public space in its definition is also extended from simply space owned by the municipality to include “places that are freely accessible by the public” (Nordhal, 2014, p.61). While this could be public land such as a park or city hall, it could also be a privately owned, unfenced vacant lot. While the municipality can still lead these initiatives, or play an important role in supporting them, a food commons can be created by any individual or group. The term “food commons” can apply to any aspect of the food system, encompassing knowledge, production, processing, and/or distribution. Public Produce can take many shapes; from community orchards, to large urban farms, to small planter boxes along an urban street. For the purposes of describing the Kamloops experience, the term Public Produce is used to describe spaces which host edible food plants which are both free of charge, and easily accessible by the public (KFPC, 2012).

Public Produce projects have the capacity to:

1. Build community and social cohesion
2. Improve access to fresh foods for all in the community
3. Serve as a space for education, demonstration, and experimentation
4. Build local food system resilience through increasing supply
5. Grow food in a sustainable, transparent, and equitable manner
6. Increase greenspace within an urban center
7. Improve usage of urban space

(KFPC, 2012; Nordhal, 2014).

The need to build Kamloops’ food commons was identified in the 2020 Assessment of Kamloops Food System, as this area was deemed to be in its “seed” stage of development. Meaning, at this time there was little to no development, but plenty of potential (Pletsch & McLean). In this report, Pletsch and McLean include several different aspects of a food commons which all provide avenues to grow, eat, cook, and share food with one another. While several areas have shown growth, including farmers markets, community gardens, and commercial kitchens, the sharing economy still needs development. The sharing economy includes initiatives such as commons gardens, shared kitchens, and platforms for bartering. In order to work towards this, the community of Kamloops will require both a shift in mindset and power dynamics. Without moving away from the learned principles of “food and land as commodity, scarcity and individualism” (Pletsch & McLean, 2020) the food

commons and Public Produce projects will struggle to reach their full potential. However, a successful Public Produce project may be exactly what is necessary to begin shifting mindsets.

The term “re-commonification” is used in an article by Jose Luis Vivero Pol to describe the intentional reversal of the “excessive commodification” of our current food system (2013, p.14). Vivero Pol states that this re-commonification is an “essential paradigm shift in the global fight against hunger and malnutrition (2013, p.15), as commodification of food has led to several negative outcomes including: high pricing, land-grabbing, and “excessive patents of life” which prevent farmers themselves from pursuing innovation (Vivero Pol, 2013, p.17). By re-commonifying food, we can increase our ability to work collectively to protect the resources associated with food production, and ensure the nutritional, social, cultural, and economic needs of the global population are met by the food system.

In visualising this transition from commodification to commonification, Vivero Pol draws upon the work of Elinor Ostrom who suggests an alternative model to economies dominated by private sector power. Instead, Ostrom suggests a model of polycentric governance which includes collective actions by local groups acting in tandem with state-led rules and incentives, which then interact with the market (Ostrom, 2009). Increasingly reclaiming the food commons through protecting knowledge, land, water, soil, seeds, and public health and nutrition must be done through this polycentric governance being driven by collective action at the local level.

Moving from an individualistic to community oriented mindset, while simultaneously reconceptualizing how we view food and land, is no small task. However, it is an achievable one. We see many different initiatives working towards community based ownership and management, bottom-up or lateral decision making, and pushback against rampant commodification. Public produce can be a piece of this larger puzzle. By demonstrating how a community can work together outside the traditional economic system, we can imagine a world which is more equitable and sustainable. By reinstating trust in one another and our community, we can foster connection and communication rather than division and misunderstanding.

By putting into action a project which invites people in rather than fencing them out, and manages a space which relies on sharing over ownership, we can prove that people have the capacity to act with a community mindset over an individualistic one. While the system is not always perfect, it is worthwhile to try.

In relation to encouraging community minded behavior, a volunteer made an interesting point during our interview while discussing the “no-fences” model that Public Produce seeks to embody. The volunteer told a story of working in a middle school and having the walls being overrun with graffiti and vandalism. Rather than continually erasing and discouraging the graffiti, the individual purchased frames and hung-up artwork from students in the hallways, which put the graffiti to a complete halt. The volunteer explains, “when people start to take pride and they feel like they're

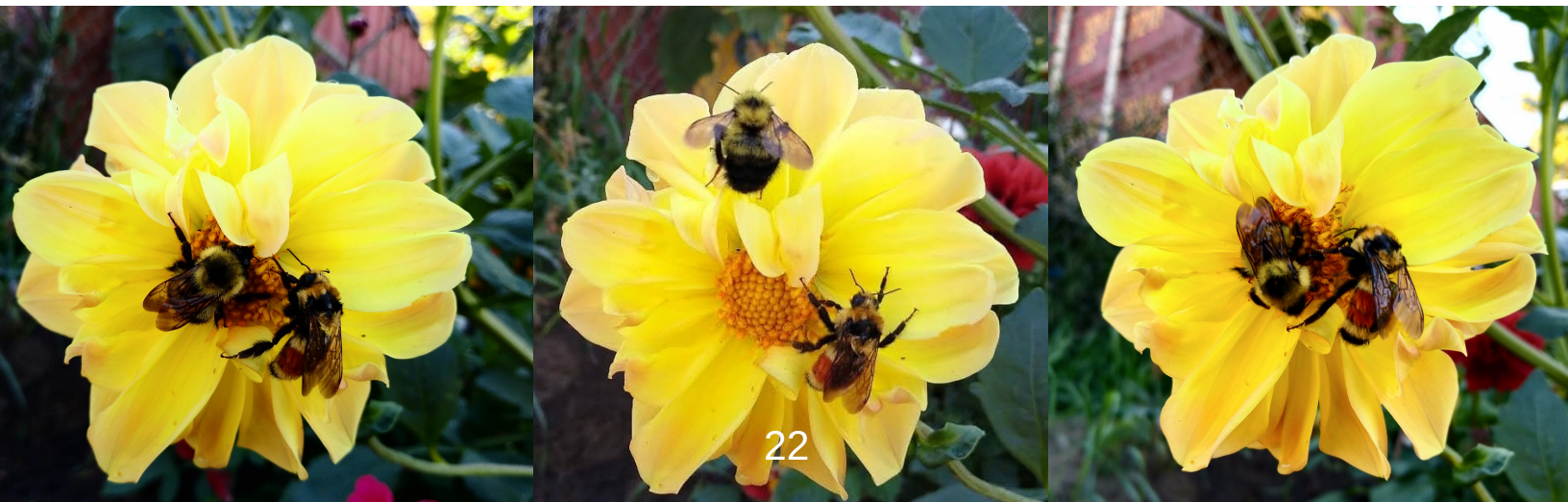
involved in what's going on, so again to go back to communication in that yeah, this is open for anybody..." essentially they're more likely to respect and protect it. The volunteer adds, "If people wanted to come in and destroy it or pull everything out or do whatever, they would have." (personal communication, September 18,2020).

When encountering the farm, some individuals struggle to understand the concept of food which is truly free to access, and for everyone. Even as some can easily understand a garden which grows food for low-income people, they struggle to understand that it is meant for the community as a whole. A volunteer described their outlook during an interview, "a big thing there though is this is not to help anybody. Nobody needs help. We're just here to share" (personal communication, September 18,2020). This is an important principle to maintain, as this protects the farm as a true community asset. By eliminating distinctions between those who may be more or less able to purchase food, we seek to make the space more welcoming, equalizing, and comfortable. We also reassert the role of food as something with a social, spiritual, and cultural value beyond that of a simple commodity, and therefore something everyone should have the right to access.

A note from Kevin Pankewich, the farm manager in summer 2020, explains this idea well.

" Another shift in thinking/language here this year came from some graffiti on the side of the SPCA: 'Helping those in need is not charity, it is humanity.' You don't see stuff like that often enough. Eager to show my worth to people in 2017, when asked what I was doing I frequently framed the garden project as 'growing food for people who need it'. This year it was 'helping grow food for people.' This shift in thinking is crucial for this to work. Nobody wants to take food that is ostensibly reserved for people that they perceive as being more needy than they are – and the people that do come to rely on this are then made to feel needy for taking it. All of this is implicit in charity work. One person actually withheld taking food offered from this project this year on these grounds – they just couldn't wrap their head around the idea that this was an everyone garden. Sharing is equalizing."

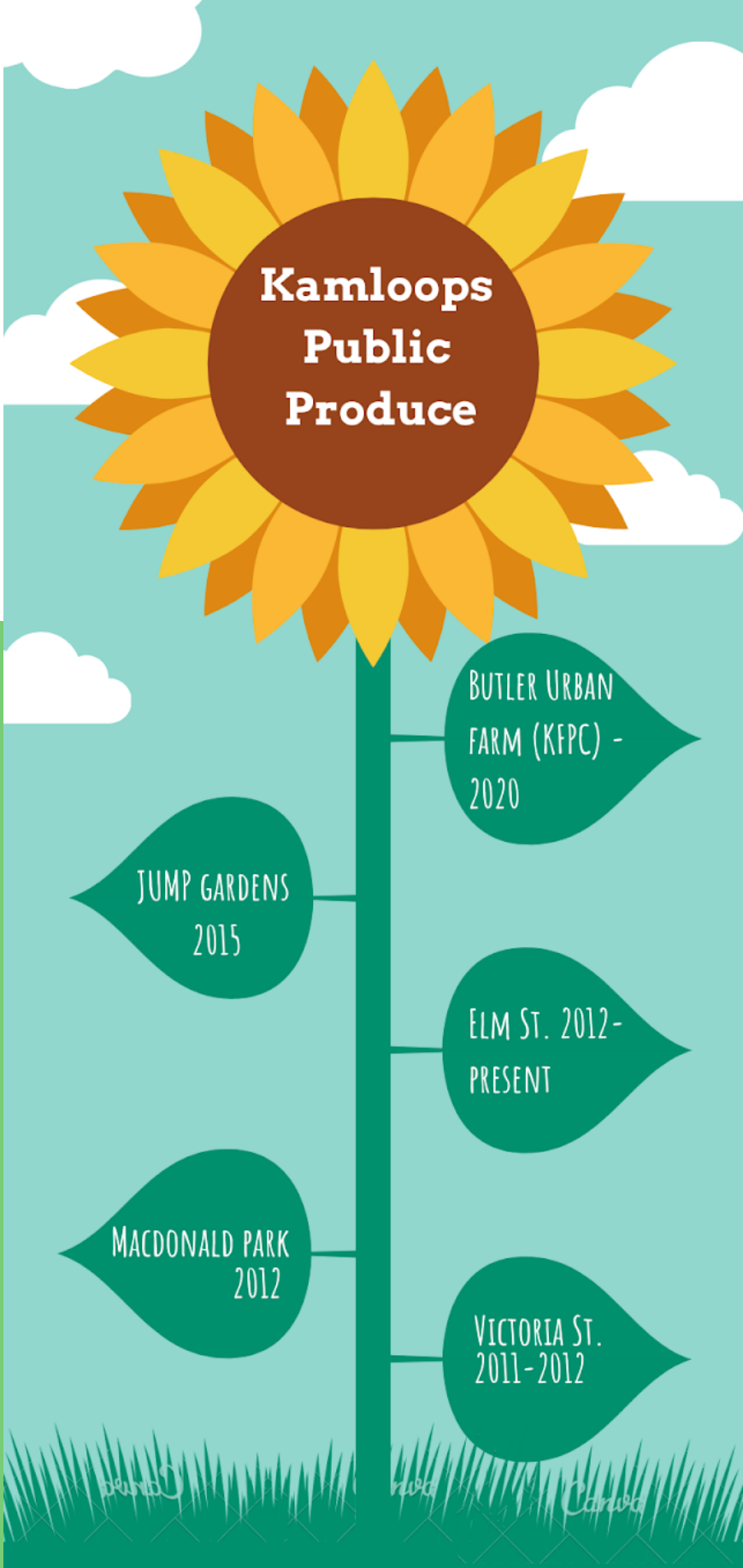
(Kevin Pankewich, personal communication, September 10, 2020).



HISTORY OF PUBLIC PRODUCE IN KAMLOOPS

VICTORIA STREET GARDEN (2011-2012)

Long before the creation of what is now referred to as the Butler Urban Farm, Kamloops has been home to an innovative and strong Public Produce movement. The origins of this movement can be traced back to 2011 with the creation of the Kamloops Public Produce Project, located on Victoria Street. Several factors led to the creation of this project; a recently vacated lot was offered up for use by a local business owner (Reid & Besanger, 2018), a food security grant was obtained through the Interior Health Authority, and a recent workshop featuring Darrin Nordhal (the author of “Public Produce”) highlighted the potential of such a project (Sedgman, 2013). This first garden is a model of success for community engagement, and it is worth exploring the reasons for its success.



TIMELINE

From its inception, the project was a grassroots initiative that relied on the passion and hard work of volunteers. Yet simultaneously, it worked hard to garner much needed support from the municipality. A skilled and dedicated group of volunteers working with the garden manager (Kendra Besanger) participated in planning and design as well as preparing and planting the garden (Reid & Besanger, 2018).

Beyond its food production capabilities, the garden thrived as a result of its ability to engage the community through a variety of methods. Workshops offered learning opportunities from vermicomposting to seed saving (Reid & Besanger, 2018), while also offering unique opportunities to engage through art. The site featured not only art installations by local artists, but also art which was created at a mobile studio set up at the farmers market. This mobile studio allowed the general public to participate in the project beyond weeding or planting, while adding life to the space through vibrant signs exclaiming “Tiptoe through the Turnips,” and “Talk to Strangers” (Reid et al., 2013, p. 219). A TRU student constructed a biodegradable mural on a wall adjacent to the garden, and other students used the project as a topic for research or other projects. TRU students are a major asset for community projects in Kamloops, through providing a basis of support, engagement, and research. The garden relied on having a well-defined image, clear mission, and the name recognition of the KFPC to gain such widespread support of the community (Reid & Besanger, 2018). The support for the project was evident in the diverse population that visited the space, as well as the respect and care afforded to the plants and infrastructure.



Image: Victoria Street Public Produce Garden (Sedgman,2013).

The Public Produce Project of Victoria Street was so successful it led to momentum encouraging further edible landscapes throughout Kamloops - even an edible garden in front of City Hall. However, not all edible landscape attempts across the city received the same level of support. A small guerilla garden in front of the TNRD Library was removed due to liability concerns and a preference for a traditional ornamental arrangement (Reid & Besanger, 2018). At the time of writing their 2012 Public Produce Strategic Plan, the KFPC listed several targets for Public Produce. This included having at least one public produce project in each sector of the city (City Centre, North, South, etc.), having a city policy requiring developers to include 10% edible plants in landscaping, encouraging new construction to incorporate gardening space into developments, and having an edible demonstration garden within Kamloops (KFPC, 2012).



Image: The City Hall Public produce garden in 2011 (Sedgman,2013).

Identified in the 2012 Public Produce Strategic Plan by the KFPC were 5 key lessons learned (KFPC, 2012). Most of these lessons are still very relevant to Public Produce in Kamloops today.

1. The need for volunteers
2. The need for sponsorships and partnerships
3. The need for involvement from the City of Kamloops
4. The need for simplicity – public produce projects must be kept simple in order to be effective and manageable.
5. The need for fun

MACDONALD PARK GARDEN (2012)

As momentum for Public Produce grew, a second garden was opened in Macdonald park in 2012. This garden was described as a beautiful space by those involved in the project, but one which would face more challenges than the Victoria Street location. This garden was intended as a showcase allotment garden and a Public Produce initiative, managed in partnership by the City of Kamloops and Interior Community Services. Initially, the garden was attractive and engaged the community. A Family Day invited children and families to engage and learn at the site through a variety of activities, and the garden featured a berry orchard, and a pergola with grapes growing over it.

However, this project can serve as a “cautionary note” about corporate partnerships/sponsorships due to the outcome of a grant from Scotts Canada (Reid & Besanger, 2018, p.168). A grant totalling \$5000 cash and \$5000 credit towards Scotts products was awarded to the project. However, as noted by Reid and Besanger “Scotts Canada is the sole distributor of Monsanto’s herbicide Roundup, and this fact alone does not jive with the political position of the Kamloops Food Policy Council” (2018, p.168). Furthermore, Kamloops’ community gardens are mandatorily organic, and therefore could not use any Scotts products. The grand opening featuring Scotts advertisement made the sponsorship extremely visible and tarnished the community driven nature of the project. This partnership/sponsorship should provide guiding knowledge in response to any potential sponsorships in the future (Reid & Besanger).

The Master Gardeners were also initially involved in the project; the Master Gardener program being a program which puts participants through an intensive training program, and in return they shared their knowledge and skills back with the community. However, this group did not continue to support the project as they felt there were not as many teaching opportunities as expected. As the capacity to look after the space dwindled, the space became increasingly occupied by people sleeping, consuming alcohol and drugs, and leaving garbage and needles. The neighbors became increasingly displeased until they ended up taking it upon themselves to remove branches and bushes to open the visibility of the space up and make it more unattractive for use. Eventually the city was called to remove the pergola and the tables, leaving only a few small planted beds.

ELM AVENUE GARDEN (2012-PRESENT)

As the Macdonald Park garden struggled, the Victoria Street garden was forced to relocate due to a vacant lot adjacent to the public produce garden being developed, turning the space into a noisy construction zone. The garden and much of its original structures were moved to a new location at Elm Avenue where another vacant lot was donated for use by a local business owner (Sedgman, 2013). The arbor and garden boxes from Victoria Street were transported to Elm Avenue, and irrigation was set up through donated water from the city line.

This location offered the opportunity to grow not only in boxes, but directly in the ground following extensive soil improvements through wood chips, compost, and manure. One of the greatest strengths of the Elm location was its visibility - with many neighbors and passersby, everything was always picked and maintained and there were many opportunities to engage. The aesthetically pleasing nature of the garden made it inviting for volunteers, with flowers growing alongside and amongst produce.



Image: Elm Avenue garden in 2012 (Sedgeman, 2013)

The nature of this project being located on the North Shore rather than downtown did shape its experiences in both positive and negative manners. The North Shore is an area which is known to have higher concentrations of poverty and social issues relative to the rest of the city (Reid & Besanger, 2018), and the new location faced new social issues. However, its proximity to those experiencing social issues is also an asset as it increases the garden's accessibility to those who might be experiencing food insecurity. There was an increase in people sleeping on or around the site, as well as some increase in garbage. While not a frequent occurrence, there was the occasional used needle in this area which demands a high level of caution due to biohazard danger.

This opens the conversation about usage of public space. The open and accessible nature of a garden allows for a rich and vibrant community, where volunteers interact with passersby, and the young interact with the old (and everywhere in between). However, when activities occurring in public space become something deemed to be unsafe or undesirable by the public, law enforcement, or neighbors, this accessibility may become problematic. Volunteers are less likely to want to dig into soil which may contain biohazards, and families may be less likely to bring their children into a space which feels unsafe. This begs the question of who decides who gets to access public space, and how, why, or should exclusion occur. As noted by an individual through community interviews, "people would go sit there and drink, but it wasn't vindictive. Like there was no vandalism, it was just people using that space" (personal communication, September 15, 2020).

The garden had a period of thriving success, but passed hands through several community groups and in doing so lost some of the initial Public Produce Project momentum. The community groups in charge of the project had struggled to find the volunteer power and time necessary to keep such a project running, and at times lacked the gardening expertise required to do so. Additionally, differing visions for the space changed how the community interacted with it. Efforts to maximize the productive potential of the garden took away some of its appeal for volunteers, as the site saw decreased volunteer involvement following the loss of some herbs and ornamentals. A landscaped and aesthetically pleasing site not only attracts more volunteers, but can increase support of the neighbors and city for the project.

The Elm Avenue garden is still in use, though to a much lesser degree than in previous years. It is currently under debate whether or not it is viable to continue using this space for Public Produce. This will be further described in the below sections.

JUMP GARDENS TO THE BUTLER URBAN FARM

2015-2016

This leads to 2015 and the creation of what is now known as the Butler Urban Farm - previously referred to as the JUMP gardens. Glenn Hilke, founder of JUMP Kamloops (Jubilee Urban Members and Partners) stumbled upon the once vacant lot one day and envisioned its potential to be filled with food. He asked an individual on the street if they knew who owned the lot, and was directed to Joe Butler of Butler Auto and RV. After simply walking in and asking to speak to Mr. Butler, Hilke pitched the idea. Mr. Butler immediately gave Hilke permission to use the site, and then things quickly began to come together. As this occurred in March/April it required a strong effort from this group of volunteers to prepare the site in time for spring planting.

The space was filled with tree stumps, and had potentially contaminated soil. The city came in to remove the stumps, and a neighbor to the site had a front-end loader which he offered up for use. The front end loader was used to pull away the top layer of soil due to concern with contaminants, which is what created the slope at the front of site. Manure and compost was donated from Todd Mountain Ranch, and Ron Fawcett lent a truck to transport the matter to site. In order to get the site in a suitable condition, this required about 15-20 trips. To till the soil, Hilke contacted a man off of Kijiji.com who was advertising rototiller service. Upon hearing about this project, he offered to till the site free of charge, a practice which continued up until Butler Urban Farm received its own rototiller. Seeds were donated from the Smorgasboard's Country Garden Greenhouse and Home Depot. This year was productive and successful, especially considering the limited timeline and resources available to complete a project of this scale. This is due to the volunteers who worked tirelessly on this project; a group of about 6 people, mostly older individuals, as well as large groups who

would come for a day of volunteering as part of the United Way's Day of Caring initiative. Days often started at 5:00 or 6:00 am in order to beat the heat, and required intensive labour at times. The initial success of this project (as well as throughout) can be attributed to passionate volunteers, as well as the impressive organizing power of JUMP - an action focused organization dedicated to meeting the community of Kamloops' needs.

At this time, food distribution and donations were also organized by JUMP. The produce would go towards JUMP's Saturday Suppers and Free Produce Market, as well as being distributed to those waiting in the Food Bank lineup. From its inception, the garden has been intended to be open to those wishing to come harvest for themselves. As Hilke describes, "Food insecurity has effects on mental health. Standing in line for hours in the worst weather conditions, wondering where to get the next meal..." (personal communication, September 16, 2020). The Public Produce model has the power to address this by allowing people to have access to food in the way that fits their preferences and time. It can serve as a way to become more self-sufficient.

Hilke has always emphasized to passersby, "This is your garden". How involved in the project an individual would like to be is entirely up to that individual, a concept which still drives the garden today. If people need or want food, they have access with no obligations and no questions asked. If people have the time, desire, and physical ability to weed it is appreciated, but it is important to understand that the differing circumstances of people's lives need to be considered and should not act as a barrier.



JUMP's vision encompasses meeting peoples needs not only on a physical level (eg. food, warm clothes) but on a social level as well, through creating opportunities for connecting community members to one another. As a guiding idea for JUMP and the JUMP Garden Project, Hilke professes "The most radical thing you can do nowadays is introduce two people who otherwise would not have met" (personal communication, September 16, 2020).

“

We create opportunities for people of all ages struggling economically, socially and nutritionally to stabilise their lives and meet the challenges of sustaining a healthy and community-based lifestyle, and facilitate a network of peer support that helps individuals and families build personal capacity as well as our community by participating together as volunteers to achieve food security, social integration and community development

”

(JUMP Kamloops, n.d.)

2017

In 2017, JUMP found themselves increasingly busy upon opening a new centre, The Royal Social Club. This centre would give JUMP a much needed space of their own to prepare and serve meals, provide social space and activities, as well as create a community pantry. However, this meant less time was available to look after the garden and led JUMP to hire a summer student who could devote time and energy solely to the garden project. The first student hired was Kevin Pankewich, a student at TRU with a background and interest in horticulture and permaculture. Pankewich proved well equipped to manage the garden that year, and brought his expertise, enthusiasm, and knowledge of permaculture principles to guide his work. Additionally, he created a detailed report of his methods in this year which could guide future farm managers. This is a necessity, especially when using non-traditional methods.

For example, Pankewich spread myceliated alder wood chips in between rows to trap moisture in the soil, as well as reduce the need for weeding. The *Stropharia rugoso-annulata* (Garden Giant/Wine Cap/Garden Stropharia) mycelium was intended to pull any heavy metal contamination from the soil into its body, and then be discarded - remediating the soil. While these mushrooms are edible, Pankewich advised against advertising them as such due to the risk of possible misidentification by volunteers. In order for this process to be effective, it was important that these rows be maintained and woodchips not be tilled into the soil due to their ability to absorb nitrogen as they break down.



Image: Mycelium. Photo by Kevin Pankewich

Unfortunately, the wood chips were ultimately mixed into the soil in later years, and while this had no lasting negative impacts, it was an avoidable issue. Errors such as this could be minimized in the future through more standardized protocols to pass knowledge from one farm manager to the next.



Images 1-3 (previous page): The progress of the farm in early summer 2017. Dripline is laid, rows are tilled and formed, and woodchips are added between planting beds. Photos by Kevin Pankewich.

Pankewich utilized methods which would maximize the productive potential of the space. Including planting in a “zig-zag” pattern and creating triangular valleys beneath the path in a way which maximizes root space while also allowing paths between rows to be comfortably wide. He also advised crop rotation methods and practiced seed saving. Pankewich describes his “Mistakes and Reflections” from the year, which give much needed insight into the garden in 2017. An interesting observation from reviewing this document was how relevant most of these observations still were.

These observations included:

1. The need for a noticeboard. “...a noticeboard by which we can communicate with the community walking by Clapperton. It should be chalkboard and possibly include a calendar of upcoming events, including the summer students’ rough schedule. This could also provide a crucial space for drawing diagrams of correct and incorrect ways to harvest plants, as well as information regarding what is ready to harvest during a given week. A corkboard with posters of community events would also heighten the sense of community being built around the Clapperton community garden.”
2. The need for an improved irrigation system, “a fully automated system that doesn’t require manual switching of valves. Throughout the 2017 year I have gained the knowledge required to design and install such a system”.
3. The potential for perennial food plants on the site. “The area nearest the food bank...” - what is now referred to as The Triangle - “...should be put to use as a perennial food forest system including fruit trees, berry bushes, and a lush grassy area for volunteers to have some chill space and enjoy the garden. This will mean a minimal irrigation set up, even a basic hose/sprinkler setup would bring this area to life. As well, we will need a good five cubic meters of soil to get this area started. Being that it will be a perennial system, the sooner we can get started on this the better”.
4. “The need to improve the barren hillside...” (often referred to as “the slope”) “...by planting flowers which could outcompete the mustard which dominates this area”.

(Pankewich, personal communication, September 10, 2020).

Image: The slope covered in weeds, overlooking The Triangle in 2017.

Photo by Kevin Pankewich.



2018

In 2018, JUMP was able to employ two students from Thompson Rivers University (TRU) on a part time basis to look after the gardens. During this period of time, there were not many regular volunteers (people who you could expect to see at least one or twice a week). Therefore, most work was done by the two farm managers or large volunteer groups who could come for one day. This often involved church youth groups, which presented a great learning and engagement opportunity for a younger population. However, sometimes these large group volunteer days proved to be slightly unproductive, as having people with little expertise come to the garden to do work required more supervision and instruction than anticipated, and resulted in less work getting completed. Although, as education and engagement are goals of Public Produce, sacrificing time for a day of volunteer engagement is to be expected as part of the routine. However, this is only realistic in a scenario where farm managers are able to keep up with daily farm needs and activities. In attempts to manage this problem, the farm manager found it was useful to bring in volunteer groups on the days where a large project needed to be completed rather than daily farm activities which can have many components and require a variety of instruction (personal communication, September 29,2020). This way, all volunteers can work together with the farm manager and can be more easily engaged and guided.

Regarding the Elm Avenue property during 2018, the problems were equally as pronounced as in previous years and had similar effects on the productivity and engagement occurring at this space. A sentiment that has been voiced by many involved with the Elm Avenue location is that no matter how strong the desire is to make that location succeed and help those struggling with social issues in the area, there is also an element of safety which needs to be considered. As well, it is crucial to take into consideration how this affects the site. Perception of a hazardous environment by volunteers will lead to lower volunteer turnout - easily observable when comparing engagement of Elm Avenue garden versus the Clapperton Road garden (Butler Urban Farm). Additionally, the site itself will become less functional for the purposes of growing food as more time must be devoted to keeping the site safe - whether that means cleaning needles or repairing damage to plants or infrastructure. In comparison to the Clapperton Road location, Elm Avenue has seen a much higher prevalence of theft, harvesting things before they were ready, destruction of the site intentionally or otherwise, and tense confrontations. Efforts to make the site a community gathering space became complicated when this gathering began to take a different form. A stage was constructed with the intention of putting on community performances, but the flat, raised surface provided a more comfortable place to sleep for those without housing. This led to neighborhood complaints and the eventual deconstruction of the stage. Drug use also became a problem on the site as a safety concern for buried needles in the soil.

In speculating why Elm Avenue has had such a different experience there could be several reasons which all relate to location. Clapperton Road is slightly more off the beaten path, it is not directly on Tranquille Road (known for having social issues) and it is slightly below street level so entering into the garden requires more intention.

The debate surrounding the Elm Avenue property continues to this day. Should the issues this site encounters lead to abandonment of the site completely - a site which has flat ground, good soil, and a water line? Does the high prevalence of social issues in this space demand creative, inclusive solutions? Perhaps the social issues in this location make it even more crucial that this land be used to help people in need, meeting them where they are. It is important when speaking about the social issues in this space to look deeper at why they occur and consider them beyond what may feel like an inconvenience or barrier to a more productive garden. The past farm manager recalls days where people just came by to seek shade, or protection from a storm, or seeking water during Kamloops' brutal heat. An individual seeking shelter at the garden, or using drugs near the space is a result of social problems that the community needs to continue working to address. Whether this is through providing more affordable housing, safe injection sites, mental health and addiction supports, or simply supporting people in meeting their basic needs while they go through a rough time.

2019

Data from the 2019 season is limited due to the lower levels of engagement with the farm during this year. The primary reason seemed to be that potential volunteers found the site less enticing and impressive due to lack of maintenance. The lack of maintenance also led to less produce available for harvest, which is normally a major draw for individuals to the site. As well, some community members recall coming to the site with the intention of becoming involved but couldn't find a staff member present to help them learn about the project or its protocols. The lack of clear farm hours with a manager present made it difficult for the project to attract or retain volunteers.



Image: An overgrown site in 2019. Photo by Kevin Pankewich

In 2019, the neglect of the site led to the space becoming overgrown throughout the course of the summer, and the city was called to site on the Unsightly Property Bylaw due to the height of the weeds. Following city landscaping staff coming to site to do maintenance, it was discovered that the weed wackers had punctured the drip line underneath the mass of vegetation. This resulted in the garden receiving a bill from the city for the cost of the cleanup, and resulted in the loss of the irrigation system which the team from 2018 had invested much time and energy setting up. This irrigation damage would also affect the 2020 season, as will be explained in later sections (see pages 38 & 53).

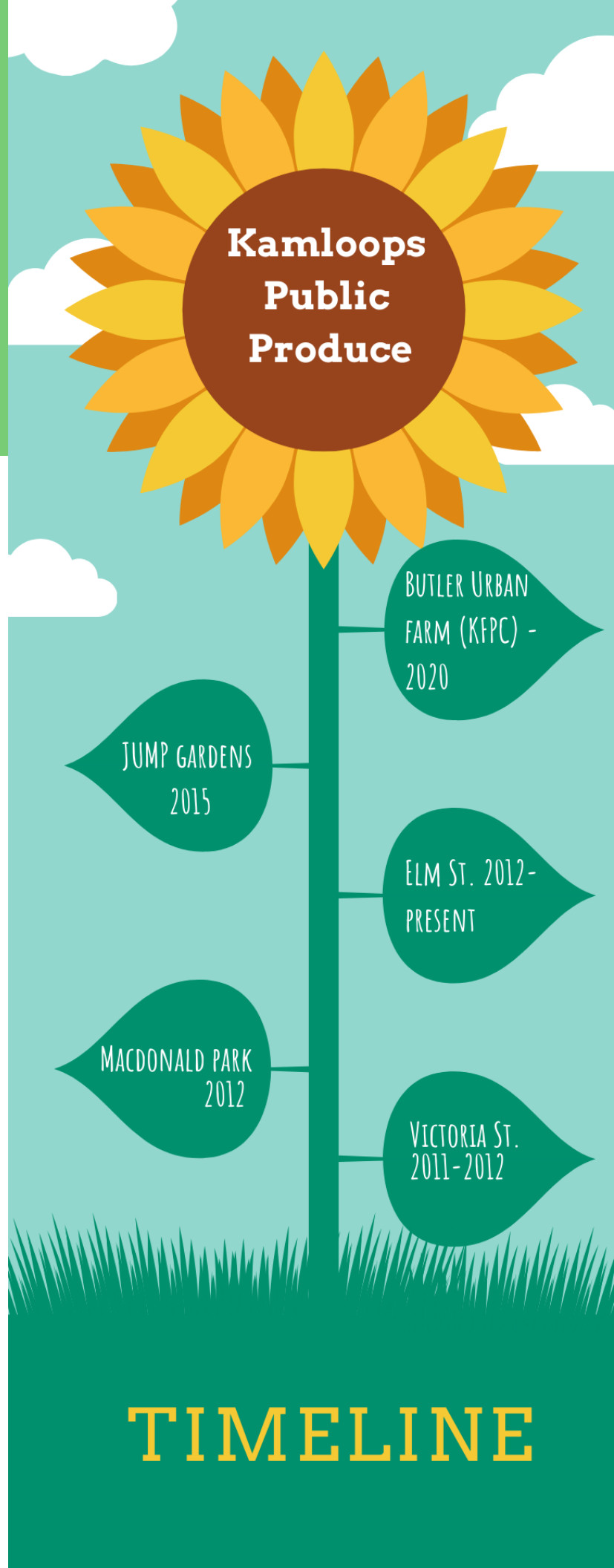
The lack of maintenance of the site was perceived to be due to the farm manager becoming overwhelmed with the amount of work which needed to occur on site, corresponding with less than expected volunteer support. In addition to this, the farm manager of 2019 lacked the horticultural expertise necessary to take on such a large project. While 2018's farm managers also did not have formal horticulture training, they benefited from having each other to share the workload and test different methods. While the 2019 season was less successful than others, it still produced a harvest which JUMP was able to use in its programs. This season may have also led to some important lessons learned moving forward, including the need for increased oversight and management of the project. Additionally, this season demonstrated the ways that the reputation of the garden from year-to-year can affect its future; from relationships with neighbors and volunteers, to overall perception by the city.

THE BUTLER URBAN FARM IN 2020

OVERVIEW

As the COVID-19 pandemic began to spread across the globe during March 2020, several factors led to the change in leadership of the site from JUMP to KFPC. Many emergency meal providers in Kamloops shut down due to public health and social distancing measures and as a result there was a gap in services for the food insecure. In response to this, members of JUMP, Glenn Hilke and Cynthia Travers (as well as others) created the Kamloops Covid Meal Train project - a grassroots, volunteer and donation driven mobile food service serving breakfast and lunch. Now serving approximately 250 meals a day, and having recently opened a more permanent centre The Loop Lunch and Learn, the organization found themselves with a lessened capacity to give time to the farm (KFPC, 2020b).

Shouldering the added burden led to Glenn Hilke approaching KFPC to ask for their help with the farm, giving over management of the project while joining the Farm Committee which would advise the project. As the project seemed to be “the right thing at the right time” (S. Frangiadakis, personal communication, September 15, 2020) KFPC agreed to take over management of the farm. This project aligned with their resiliency gardening campaign, which intends to help the community weather the pandemic by helping them in producing more local food. This also included an online gardening course, continued gleaning, and promoting backyard garden sharing.



TIMELINE

The season began with Pankewich, Hilke, and members of their families fixing up and tending to the site. The summer students from previous years and other friends also came to site to help. Harry, the community member who had been tilling the site for several years once again came to help with site preparation. Much time was spent weeding and re-measuring beds, but the support of a group who was familiar with the site and procedures made for much easier and quicker work. Pankewich notes he was happy to see the mycelium still thriving in the soil from 3 years before.

Seeds were given to Pankewich from KFPC, and he began to grow them in his home greenhouse. While this worked well for this year it highlighted the need for BUF to obtain a greenhouse of its own in the case that future farm managers have limited space. Gardengate continued to support the project through provision of many plants from their greenhouse, as well as their expertise. Local business, Country Garden Greenhouse (the Smorgasboard Deli) also supported the project by donation of plants and seed as they have done in previous years. Seed potatoes came from a variety of people and places, from local farmers to volunteers. Much of the sourcing of these materials occurred through community "call-outs" for needed seed or supplies. Reliance on local networks was used during this time, through platforms such as Facebook (Kamloops Covid Meal Train page, KFPC's page).



Image: Butler Urban Farm in September, and the fall farm manager Chris Torres (KFPC, 2020a).

Once plots had been prepared, planting began. However, lack of an established irrigation system proved to be a challenge. During this time, all watering had to be done manually. Pulling the hose around the garden, and trying to water evenly and effectively was at times a task taking several hours. The repair of the irrigation system was also a task that seemed to rapidly consume days. Installation of this system required planning, measuring, trips to and from the irrigation store, and the digging of trenches roughly a foot wide by a foot deep. During this time, as plans for the irrigation system had not been laid out in advance, there were disruptions that could have been avoided. Setting up the irrigation system was noted as one of the biggest challenges of 2020. Luckily a community member with irrigation expertise eventually passed by the project and offered his services.



Image: Harvest day. Photo by Sylvia Neufeld

PRIVATE PLOTS

2020 also introduced a small number of private plots into the space. This was done to reduce the amount of area that the farm manager was solely responsible for, and provide a space for individuals to experiment with their own ventures growing produce. One private plot owner experimented with growing flax for use in creating natural fiber fabric, an exciting example of the creative ways individuals may use these private plots.



Image: Flax growing in early September

One of the greatest benefits of these private plots was that they ensured a regular volunteer presence on the farm. While individuals would come to tend to their own plot, they would often end up spending time contributing to the upkeep of the rest of the space as well as building a community with other regular volunteers. The volunteers with private plots dedicated an incredible amount of time to the communal space in the garden, and regularly donate extra produce from these plots back into the commons. While keeping this private portion of the space relatively small is important to preserve the communal nature of the project, it did not threaten the commons to any degree during this season. In order to secure a plot, previous volunteers are given first choice. Pankewich collected the contact information of those who indicated interest in having a private plot in 2021, and these individuals will be contacted in the spring. These plots are all provided free of charge with the expectation that the plot "owners" will contribute to the communal plots. Some conditions were created for these private plots, which made expectations clear and effective.

Conditions for private plots (Pankewich, personal communication, July 27, 2020).

1. "That the volunteer keeps the area weeded (meaning none spreading out from bed/seeds dropping). [Send a friendly text message if getting bad]
2. That the volunteer respects our organic principles and does not use pesticides or chemical fertilizers. [Not an issue this year]
3. That the volunteer lets us know of any other organic amendments they may be using on their soil. We have the right to veto this if we ever have to, but this was never an issue [ie no plastic/bad compost]
4. That they help out a bit around the farm every now and again, meaning being familiar enough with conventions to help someone who doesn't know.
5. That they make a clear sign for it [Better luck next year! No one really did this!]
6. In return, they get to manage what happens to the plants and harvests on that plot, meaning less work for me and the other volunteers."

DEFINING A MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

As the summer progressed, the need for guidelines regarding decision making at the farm was highlighted. On-site farm management and volunteers gathered to brainstorm a vision of how decisions should be made, what responsibilities should most dominantly fall on the farm manager, and where might the farm manager need more support. Some highlights of this document include;

1. Responsibility of the farm manager to act as an advocate for volunteers and “observe and absorb the wants and needs of the community members, and translate this into actionable practices” (personal communication, September 7, 2020)
2. Making the farm a place where all community members feel welcome, comfortable, and feel a sense of belonging and ownership towards
3. Embody a positive spirit and work ethic to lead volunteers at the farm
4. Responsibility of the farm manager to manage both food production AND social engagement
5. The role that strong social infrastructure plays in driving farm productivity
6. Make decisions aligning with KFPC's lateral decision making structure
7. Ensure lines of open communication between the farm manager and farm committee
8. The need for a weekly update to be produced by the farm manager to the farm committee
9. A set decision making and consultation guidelines instructing the farm manager how and when to consult the farm committee about actions

The creation of this document (personal communication, September 7,2020) provided a good starting point for conversations about decision making, planning, and the role and relationships of the farm committee. It led to conversations surrounding the need to align the farm with broader KFPC goals, and how to achieve this. Largely, this exercise led the group to discuss the need for overall increased planning, reporting, and continuity. However, as the farm passed into management of the KFPC quickly and unexpectedly during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was less time to prioritize and plan as what would normally occur. Throughout the course of the summer, these conversations built a strong base with which to start the subsequent season.

STRENGTHS OF BUF

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Butler Urban Farm (BUF) would not be able to thrive as it does without the strong network of community support behind it. From lending resources, volunteers, and expertise, the farm's support network ensures that the farm manager has many avenues to choose from when needing assistance or advice. While BUF has a network which extends in many directions throughout Kamloops, some of the strongest partners come from the organizations which sit on the Farm Committee board. Interested individuals from the KFPC Board of Directors form the Farm Committee, and are tasked with support and decision making about the farm. These individuals represent a variety of organizations and perspectives.



Some members of the Farm Committee had been involved previous to KFPC assuming management of the farm, and others are newer to the project. All members greatly contribute to the farm through offering expertise, resources, and assisting with grant writing and accessing funding. This expertise has advised the BUF not only in growing food, but also in how to manage a not-for-profit project.

Rob Wright of GardenGate emphasized systems in managing space and people, and devoting time to engaging participants of a project. With advice from this organization, BUF was able to create a culture within the space where people listen, watch, and learn and then move forward to share, demonstrate, and teach. With loosely described guidelines and expectations, volunteers worked together to create a space and culture which they desired.

“People caught on super fast to what was going on where, and then taught others how this was happening. It was the formation of a culture in a space. In every space there is a culture and often unspoken rules that we follow. Whether this is a kitchen, a bar, a dinner table, a street, a bathroom, a workplace, or a riot, the expectations of our behavior change with our surroundings, and our surroundings change with our behavior.” (Pankewich, personal communication, September 10,2020).



Image: Farm research meeting. Photo by Kamloops Food Policy Council.

The Kamloops Naturalist Club also supported this project through many forms. As Jesse Ritcey of the Kamloops Naturalist Club is a member of the Farm Committee, he was able to use the club's expertise and community links to support the project. Through finding and applying for grants, finding local businesses which could donate materials (ex. woodchips), enhancing community awareness of the project through its organization's networks, and in turn bringing in more volunteers and community interest. The club also led a planting of one native plant garden on site, as well as supported the creation of a second. The club is also in the process of developing a mural on site in partnership with Kamloops Next Gen, which would beautify the space as well as create an opportunity for learning and engagement with youth creating the mural.



Image: Farm research meeting. Photo by Kamloops Food Policy Council.

As the founding group of the project, JUMP Kamloops continues to support the farm through supporting community connections, as well as the wealth of knowledge that has come from the past five years that the farm has been operational.

Additionally, KFPC's community network has been integral for the farm's success; whether this meant access to a larger volunteer pool through the Gleaning Abundance Program (GAP) or monthly network meetings. The farm management notes the impressive volunteer turnout during GAP led harvest days as a key factor for success. Pankewich recalls difficulty keeping up with harvesting back in 2017, as well as trouble coordinating pickup of produce with each individual organization. Using the GAP coordinator, van, and volunteer base resolved these issues in 2020.



Image: GAP Coordinator Mariana Guerra and Sylvia Neufeld, a volunteer. Photo by Kamloops Food Policy Council.

As well, through the relationship between the farm and Kamloops Covid Meal Train/The Loop ensured that food was going where it was needed. Cynthia Travers, manager of The Loop, would drop by the farm while on a trip to the Food Bank across the street. This allowed her to select exactly what she needed, observe what produce would be ready soon, and plan meals accordingly.

VOLUNTEER CAPACITY

Having a consistent volunteer presence at the farm was integral for the success of this project throughout its life. While 2020 was not able to host many large volunteer groups, or the traditionally used United Way Day of Caring due to COVID-19, BUF was well supported by a small but dedicated group of volunteers. Having extra volunteer support to tend to the day-to-day needs of the space allowed the farm manager to dedicate time to improving the space above and beyond what it had been in previous years. This included setting up signage, developing a new area of the lot, and tending to irrigation. The volunteers of 2020 were skilled and enthusiastic, and led to a vibrant farm community. The farm manager ensured to value and work with volunteers in order to build this community.

“People are there because they want to be, work is getting done, food is being harvested, and needs are being met.” (Kevin Pankewich, personal communication, September 10, 2020).

In attracting volunteers to site, many aspects were noted through the volunteer survey (to see survey responses in detail, see pages 72-80). This includes an attractive site, good management, learning, community, and a sense of belonging and agency towards the farm.



Image: Harvest day. Photo by Kamloops Food Policy Council.

“Critical to all of this was a constant dialogue with whoever was there, neighbours and volunteers, about whatever idea was being considered at the time, asking second and third opinions from the people that were spending their time there for free. Without these people wielding actual decision-making power, however informally this may be, this project is adrift” (Kevin Pankewich, personal communication, September 10, 2020).

ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

This year saw increased organization, signage, and record keeping; all of which led to increased community support and engagement. As described within the volunteer survey results, the strong management and organization was a major factor drawing in and retaining volunteers.

Signage added to the farm this season was to protect against problems the farm manager had

experienced in 2017, which involved people harvesting produce prematurely or improperly. New signage which stated clear farm hours where a staff person would be available to help individuals collect produce for harvest led to less produce being harvested incorrectly. However, in order to keep the farm open for independent harvest, a message board was also set up to allow individuals to record their harvests. Allowing this independent harvest is integral to the project, as this allows people to access food without the barrier of having to be somewhere at a certain time (like many emergency food providers require). Additionally, it can allow individuals to access produce without having to interact with a staff member, which could be beneficial for individuals wishing to maintain anonymity or avoid stigma. This signage also allowed the farm to communicate with the community while a staff member was not present. It briefly described the purpose and the procedures of the farm to those who may have been unfamiliar with it. The chalkboard, which allowed individuals to record their harvested produce, encouraged good record keeping procedures. Strong efforts were also made by farm managers and KFPC staff to record how much produce was harvested. This increases the farm's ability to track progress and success, and report this information to the community and possible funders.



Image: Creation of the Butler Urban Farm sign. Photo by Kevin Pankewich



Image: Farm hours sign. Photo by Kevin Pankewich

An excerpt from Pankewich's 2020 report (personal communication, September 10, 2020):

"This year I wanted to know what our output would be. This meant creating a system where people could both access all the food they need and we could know what's going in and what's going out. We made every effort to harvest correctly with people and weigh whatever was taken from the garden. This provided us with about a ten minute opportunity to communicate what was happening here to anyone that was interested enough to stop by, including protocols surrounding harvest hours. It basically resulted in a three stage system:

Option #1 (Preferred): Show up during a Gleaning Abundance harvest between 9:00-11:00AM on a Monday or a Thursday and you'll get a share of a big harvest. Most reliable.

.Option #2 (Also preferred): Show up during Harvest Hours (posted on the board) and the farm manager or a volunteer will help you get what you need. Less reliable, as the garden is picked out every Monday and Thursday. Still, lots of food around. No one gets turned away.

Option #2½ (OK): Call or text me and set up an appointment at the farm outside of harvest hours. I'll be there or at least make an effort to be there when you need me, or I can call on a volunteer to guide you. For people working during harvest hours, etc.

Option #3 (Less preferred): Show up whenever and grab what you need. We'd prefer it if you harvest with us at least a few times before you do this, but sometimes you just need an extra tomato, basil, or whatever and you don't have one. Totally cool. Just make sure you write it down on the board by the sinks so we can average it and keep it in our records. Our core volunteers do this whenever."



Image: KFPC summer staff member, Inwon, recording harvest data



Image: Sorting vegetables for weighing and recording purposes

ATTRACTIVE SITE

At Butler Urban Farm, planting ornamental beds sometimes raised concerns from community members; inquiring, why use valuable space for plants which simply decorate, when they could be plants which feed? While growing as much food as possible is commendable, keeping the garden attractive and interesting in other ways will increase community support - a necessity for a successful public produce project. Not to mention the benefits that planting pollinator friendly (while inedible) plants can have for the garden. In fact, a member of the KFPC's planning committee voiced the need for increased landscaping and beautification of the site in efforts to make the site appear more "intentional" rather than simply a re-purposed vacant lot. A notion that was echoed by other committee members. As described in the volunteer survey response, volunteers connected the beauty of the site in 2020 to its increasingly positive community perception.



Photo by Sylvia Neufeld

COMMUNITY BUILDING

The responses gathered from the volunteer survey voice a dominant opinion that the farm's community building capacities are what draws people to the project, as well as what makes it so strong and vibrant. Individuals report that they enjoy the farm as a space to meet new people, share knowledge, share produce, and help others in their community. During a volunteer interview, an individual noted seeing people from all different backgrounds come to the farm for all different reasons. Then while working on the farm, they connected through what they have in common; like

hometowns, professions, or favorite foods. This space has the ability to do exactly as Hilke intended in its foundation, which was to introduce two people who otherwise would not have met (personal communication, September 16, 2020). Through seeing the relationships and ideas which blossom from these meetings, one gains a deeper understanding of how/why this can amount to a “radical” or powerful event.



Image: Fall farm manager, Chris, and volunteer, Chaun. Photo by Sylvia Neufeld.

EXPERIMENTATION, LEARNING, AND GROWING REGENERATIVE FARMING

The farm should also be maintained as a site for experimentation and learning around regenerative farming techniques; for example, Pankewich's use of mycelium for enhancing soil. This includes researching new methods through literature or community knowledge sharing, experimenting with these methods, monitoring results, and recording these results for future reference. If recorded and reported, these experiences can inform future farm managers at BUF, in addition to external agricultural operations. Pankewich has kept records of some of the methods used during his time as farm manager, and this practice should continue in the future.



In 2020, Pankewich planted a variety of legumes with the main goal of fixing nitrogen into the soil. With proper monitoring and record keeping, farm managers could gather useful information surrounding how well these methods have worked at this site. This information can then be shared with others in the community. The site has gone through much trial and error, and Pankewich notes that sometimes not every crop or every method attempted leads to success. However, this is a great way to learn. While Pankewich was discussing with another volunteer his intentions to use these legumes to fix nitrogen, the volunteer noted that letting crops go to seed limits their ability to fix nitrogen. This demonstrates the farm is a space which encourages mutual learning and sharing.

Additionally, Pankewich has used the farm as a space to grow and save heirloom seeds and rare varieties of produce. This site has the potential to act as one which grows and protects biodiversity in food crops within Kamloops. The BUF and the knowledgeable volunteers and staff which visit it allow a great opportunity for seed saving and adding to the KFPC's seed library.

These seeds could support the farm and help protect Kamloops seed sovereignty. Pankewich has already put efforts towards this initiative, as he has been saving, propagating, and planting seeds at BUF throughout the years. KFPC has a winnower of their own, and we have also leaned on local farms (SSOL Gardens) for expertise and equipment. However, it is necessary to improve our shed/greenhouse space so we can have an appropriate dry, protected area for seed cleaning. As noted by a KFPC farm committee member, proper facilities would give BUF the ability to run seed cleaning workshops; functioning as an educational opportunity which will also help save seed for the project, and give some to participants to take home.

BUF has the capacity to act as a hub for knowledge transfer and learning between new and old farmers, community members, and other agricultural actors within the province and region.



CHALLENGES OF BUF

CONTINUITY

A potential challenge that this project faces arises from a lack of continuity with the farm manager position. As referenced in the earlier sections of the report which describe past years of BUF or other Public Produce projects, sometimes a change in leadership can disrupt the progress of the project. If certain methods regarding plant care or soil remediation take place over a multi year period, it is important that these methods are being continued from year-to-year. For example, what soil amendments have been used, or what plants were planted in which area of the farm. Furthermore, familiarity with the site and past experiences can be useful in guiding future actions on the farm.

In 2020, BUF enjoyed the benefits of having Pankewich return as summer farm manager. Pankewich worked as farm manager in 2017, and assisted in a volunteer capacity in 2018 and 2019. This has proven to benefit the project enormously, as familiarity with the site and past failures and successes guided Pankewich's decision making throughout the year, ensuring the same mistakes were not made twice. Additionally, one of the 2018 summer students was able to return to help install irrigation in 2020, using the knowledge he had gained setting up the previous system. Being able to draw on past experiences gives BUF a major advantage in its work to becoming an increasingly resilient project.

In 2020, due to inconsistency in the level of upkeep of the site in the previous year, the bulk of early spring was spent repairing and rebuilding. In particular, the rebuilding of the irrigation system. This set-back led Pankewich to install an underground Rainbird irrigation system, due to easier repair in comparison to a drip system. Pankewich did this so if in the case that the garden reached the same level of neglect again, and weed wackers were brought to site, this system would be more protected. While drip may be objectively better for plants if properly set up, the farm manager's familiarity with the site and its previous challenges was able to guide decision making to avoid making the same mistakes in the future. This choice was further reinforced when the irrigation line was damaged while harvesting potatoes and it was an hour long, \$7 fix opposed to a much lengthier troubleshooting process required to fix drip.

In moving from 2017 to 2018, Pankewich prepared a document explaining the methods he used in that year as well as the rationale behind them. This helped the farm managers in the following year

to plan and prepare. Keeping this in mind in 2020, both the summer and fall farm managers prepared a final report documenting their experiences throughout the season. This is done to ensure that the progress of the site builds upon the progress of previous years, and less time is spent repairing or relearning. Creating a guide for easy reference regarding irrigation, soil etc. could be useful in this regard.

Another issue has been the dependence on summer students and funding from the Canada Summer Jobs program, as this employs a farm manager for a shorter season than the position demands. As the university summer break, as well as funding for this position, runs only from May to September this does not cover the full length of time needed for pre-season planning and preparation, or fall cleanup. Fortunately, this federal funding was changed in 2019 to widen eligibility to anyone between the ages of 15-30, rather than just students. This allows management to select from a larger labour pool, as well as extending the time period the farm manager is available to work if not dependent on summer break. However, this would still require extra funding beyond the term covered by the Canada Summer jobs program.

A solution for this problem could be to have a farm manager who is hired for a longer season (February - November), and then have a farm assistant hired from May - September to support them. This would take some of the burden off of a sole farm manager to support the farm under varying levels of volunteer support, as well as would allow for longer term, continuous planning and employment. Moreover, this could improve continuity and create a pool of skilled and experienced individuals who could sit in the role of farm manager in the future as a sort of training program. However, this is subject to the availability of funding.

Another alternative is to have members of the farm committee fill some of the gaps at either end of the season, particularly in terms of planning. In 2020, a new fall farm manager (Chris Torres) was hired in September when Pankewich needed to return to school. This worked well as there was a week-long crossover training period between the two farm managers which made for a very smooth transition.

While continuity could still present some challenges in the future, a great deal of progress has already been made in addressing these challenges. Continued record keeping and having the same people involved in the project from year to year through the farm committee and KFPC will continue to enhance continuity.

The following six images show the irrigation system being installed over the course of the summer, and the progress of the plants that ensued. Photos by Kevin Pankewich.





SOCIAL SPACE AND SAFETY

Another issue faced by the garden this year was the question of creating a space where volunteers could gather, relax, and refuel, as well as find much needed solace from the sun. While farm management was aware of the need for such an area, this idea faced some pushback from the neighborhood residents due to concerns of illicit activity occurring once sitting or shade structures were constructed. At present, the only real place to get shade and seating is a picnic table in the far back corner. This area comfortably provides seating for 4 people maximum, and perhaps even less under COVID-19 social distancing measures. Additionally, it is far from the front end of the garden and can be a burden to get there if already suffering from too much sun or for people with mobility issues. While this year the strategy was to avoid the creation of any such structure, the future demands increased shade and seating. Especially with any plans to expand the project and host more volunteers, workshops, and community events.

One suggested idea was a pop-up tent, similar to those you see at farmers markets. This way, the tent could be removed at night to minimize incentives to occupy the site after-hours. Another possibility is to construct a seating and shade area, but ensure sight-lines are kept open to see the area from the street as a natural security measure. At present, the site has faced minimal illicit activity or persons sleeping on the site. Keeping a regular presence at the site acts as a natural surveillance against crime. In the case that people are sleeping on site, generally they move on quickly once asked to leave. When this occurs however, it is important to also offer help and connections to community resources rather than simply pushing people out. Keeping the farm a welcoming, inclusive community space which people have an interest in protecting will also keep the site safe. With all these things in mind, it is still worth being cautious due to issues experienced at other sites such as the Elm street location. It is also important to keep positive relationships with residents surrounding the site both out of respect, and to protect the future of the project.

Another reason why an aesthetic seating area or more social infrastructure have not been constructed, is a lack of funds and time. As noted in meetings with the farm manager, most of the resources so far have been spent establishing the ecosystem of the garden and less time on the social systems. Having the support of the farm committee and the organizations they represent could lead to this social infrastructure becoming much more developed in the coming years. There is a definite desire for increased social events, such as community dinners, as indicated within volunteer survey responses (see pages 72-80).



Image: The seating area currently. A little bit of shade comes from the fencing behind.

ACCESSIBILITY

Another concern has been the safety and accessibility of the site. Volunteers have voiced concerns over the safety of the site at times, as problems with the irrigation system set-up led to irrigation trenches being open for extended periods of time. However, this was a result of larger problems involving the irrigation set-up, as discussed previously. Now that these problems have been resolved, and the garden has received large donations of wood chips, the ditches have been filled and the paths have been widened. During the spring set up in 2021, care will be taken to maintain wider, more stable pathways between the rows. Additionally, plants and weeds should be more maintained in order to prevent their encroachment into the rows. A main culprit of this was the tomatoes, which will be staked according to a different system in the coming years.



Image: Tomato plants growing over walking pathways in between rows.

Unfortunately, the property is set down below road level and the entrances can be steep and uneven at times. Care could be taken to try to make these entrances more user friendly, but it would likely require heavy machinery. Efforts will be taken to make the site more level and accessible, but creating an accessible section might be a more realistic solution. There is potential for the new side section to become a space for raised beds for people with mobility issues. This section could also have social space infrastructure (tables etc.), so people with mobility issues could come interact with the community and the farm without necessarily moving throughout the whole site. However, getting down the steep entryways remains the biggest barrier.

The repair of the washing station will also increase accessibility in the future, as it will provide an elevated surface for washing and sorting vegetables to minimize the amount of time volunteers have to spend hunched over.



Image: Current system for washing and sorting. Photo by Sylvia Neufeld.

SEASONAL AVAILABILITY OF PRODUCE

Another issue noted by both volunteers and organizations receiving produce from BUF was the seasonal fluctuations in produce. Some recipient organizations noted a large, unmanageable influx of produce at once, with no capacity to store or process. As well, if individuals or organizations lack the capacity to store food for the winter, the farm is limited to supporting community food security only throughout the summer months. Need for community freezers or root cellars is highlighted through this, as well as finding a way for individuals and organizations to access this resource throughout the winter. Additionally, education surrounding preserving vegetables for use throughout the winter could be useful here.

CONSULTATION WITH NEIGHBORS

Past years at the Butler Urban Farm neglected to consult or engage some of the neighbors to the site at an appropriate level. This led to feelings of animosity, and likely contributed to the problems arising from the site's maintenance issues and bylaw presence. While the relationship had rocky beginnings which discouraged future consultation, it is still important to continue to build the most positive relationship possible. If a more positive relationship with neighbors was established, then perhaps dissatisfaction with the level of upkeep of the site could have been directed to farm management rather than bylaw. Though more importantly, it is important to respect and consider the experiences of those in the surrounding community. As Pankewich notes, "they need to be able to veto ideas here because they have to live with them in a way that I don't" (personal communication, September 10, 2020).

In 2020, efforts were made to build relationships with neighbors and it had a highly positive impact on the project. When new ideas were brought up, the neighbors would be casually consulted in order to keep both parties happy. Their biggest concerns were simply the encroachment of weeds under the fence into their yard, unsightly levels of weeds in the lot, and keeping the lot free of crime or unsafe activities. This now more positive relationship demonstrated how simple gestures and conversation can diffuse tensions. A neighbor donated some of their extra seedlings to the site, at times kept an eye on the site and reported suspicious activity after-hours and BUF shared some produce in tandem. While it is not always this simple and there will likely be disagreements in the future, these must be addressed with compromise and understanding. For example, the farm manager proposed the idea of planting a small lawn on a section of the lot in order to create a place for volunteers to relax. However, when consulting the neighbor they expressed concerns about this idea due to its potential to attract unhoused persons looking for a place to sleep. The compromise was a mow-able flower mix which could be mowed for community events, but only temporarily exist for this purpose.

"TOXIC SLOPE"

One concern which limited activity on the farm for many years was the presence of soil contaminants on site. As previously mentioned, when Hilke surveyed the site in 2015 he was told that there was risk that the soil was contaminated as it had been sitting for so long unused, and had been used for a variety of purposes. This is why the top soil had been piled around the perimeter of the garden creating a large slope which ran parallel to Clapperton Road. This slope took up valuable growing space, required a buffer of ornamentals and distance from crop rows to protect from contaminants, and was unsightly and home to many weeds.

Throughout the 2020 season, we brainstormed many ideas about how to improve the slope. We suggested trees, but needed to keep sightlines open. We suggested native plants, and even began that process on a small area of the slope. As time progressed, the farm committee began to discuss stronger solutions to the problem. The committee discussed the potential need to dig up the area with bobcats and remove toxic soil, and potentially create an area for more parking. This was under debate as doing so would be costly, disruptive, and difficult as a volunteer had been spending many weeks weeding the mustard off of the potential parking area. Others explored ideas for removing some of the toxic soil and replacing it with plantable soil. The farm manager also explored the potential to try remediating the soil over time through the use of mushroom mycelium. However, in September the decision was made to test the soil to first figure out for certain what contaminants the soil contained. It was discovered that the soil actually was not contaminated, and was in fact safe for planting food crops. The future of the slope is still under debate, but with the news of safe soil there are many exciting possibilities.

COVID-19

In 2020, the farm experienced several challenges due to COVID-19. Under social distancing measures, volunteer outreach was limited to keep numbers safely low, and in-person workshops and events were cancelled. Days which would normally host large volunteer groups such as schools, summer camps, or a United Way Day of Caring were cancelled during this season. This led to a lower level of engagement than what the BUF would normally expect, particularly in regards to community social events. Volunteer support for the project shifted from large groups of single instance farm visitors, to smaller numbers of individuals who volunteered at a more regular frequency. As COVID-19 highlighted some of the weaknesses in our global food system, there was an uptick in interest in producing one's own food. Some people also found themselves with more free time to spend in their local community. As the province declared community gardens and food production an essential service, the garden was allowed to remain open (Government of BC, 2020).

The farm pivoted by offering an online, free gardening course in partnership with Kamloops Naturalist Club in order to continue to engage with the community and support educational initiatives.

KFPC's GAP coordinator also noted that the number of organizations receiving produce for community meals had shrunk, as many kitchens closed temporarily due to COVID-19 concerns.

PLANNING, ORGANIZATION, AND CONSULTATION

Due to the quick and unexpected change in management which occurred in 2020, there was limited planning which could occur before the season began. Increased planning could lend to stronger linkages between the BUF and KFPC's other initiatives and goals. More frequent meetings between the farm management and the farm committee could also more clearly define goals and objectives to be met, and lead to clearer communication.

There is also potential to further support a bottom-up community approach to the farm, something deemed important to volunteers and farm management. Providing opportunities, whether formal or informal, for volunteers, neighbors, and community members to voice opinions and make decisions about the space could increase the efficacy of the farm in supporting its community. This could include a pre and post season survey, an onsite comment box, or similar engagement opportunities. In 2020, the quick change in management combined with COVID-19 limitations limited community outreach. This outreach could provide opportunities to consult those external to the existing BUF volunteer community regarding what sort of initiatives they would like to see from BUF in 2020.

FUNDING

Difficulty sourcing funding for the farm is a problem which has limited its growth at times, and can lead to an uncertain future. In the past, lack of funding led to poor infrastructure on site as some volunteers mentioned within the survey. 2020 was a lucky year in this regard, as BUF was able to access a grant from Peavey Mart which will allow the construction of a new washing station, greenhouse, and tool sheds in the future. As previously mentioned, sourcing funding for staff on site can also be a challenge at times. If the farm manager did not meet requirements for the Canada Summer Jobs program, funding would need to be found through some other source. The potential for a social enterprise at the BUF has been discussed, but there is no intention to begin selling the produce from the site as this would detract from the farms purpose of free public produce. More creative solutions may need to be explored for social enterprise, which will be discussed in the section Ideas, Plans, and Opportunities (page 68).

LAND UNDER LOAN

The land that BUF sits on is currently under unofficial loan from the Butler family, of Butler Auto and RV. While this has not been a problem thus far, it makes for a more uncertain future, especially with rising land values throughout Kamloops. It could limit the KFPC's ability to construct any truly permanent infrastructure or buildings, or may make investments in planting trees on site unwise in the case the farm suddenly has to move to make space for a new development. However, the guiding viewpoint so far has been to move forward with the intention of the farm being operational for many years to come. Keeping community relationships positive and gathering community support going forward will aid in protecting the farms position on this site.

INCONSISTENCY IN VOLUNTEER FORCE

Another challenge BUF faces is an insufficient volunteer force at times. Levels of volunteer support waver, and can sometimes be lacking during the most crucial times, such as early season set-up in spring. Additionally, the task of scheduling, coordinating, and recruiting volunteers can fall to the wayside when the farm manager is busy with the daily tasks of running the farm. A potential solution is the creation of a volunteer coordinator position. With this position, there could be more capacity to recruit volunteers through increased social media engagement, work parties, workshops, and social events.

Another observed challenge in regards to volunteers is the lack of involvement from the younger generation, or new volunteers not already within Kamloops' or KFPC's gardening networks. As part of the goals of the farm is to educate, skill share, and see learning across many different backgrounds and generations, work needs to occur to bring in new groups of volunteers. When brainstorming solutions to this problem, we suggested simply increasing awareness of the project throughout the city, as well as maintaining a good reputation. Additionally, establishing clear routines, systems, and expectations should make it easier for new volunteers to become involved.

Pankewich notes more success in maintaining a strong volunteer force in 2020 relative to 2017, as he established regular farm hours when volunteers could expect the presence of a manager. The presence of a manager helps new volunteers get oriented and established, until eventually they don't require guidance and can come to the farm at any time.

WAVERING LEVELS OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Over the 5 years the farm has been operational, it has received different levels of community support. Letting the standards of the project fall can lead to the loss of faith in the project from the community, and loss of support. This can be seen in the changed levels of community support in the project following the overgrowth in 2019, and conversely how support increased after such a visibly successful year in 2020. It is important to continue to keep the site clean and attractive, as well as continue to engage the community. Engaging the community and inviting them to play a role in the project can protect the farm against any opposition which may arise.

SIGNAGE AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

An area for improvement which was identified by several volunteers, was the need for increased signage. While the farm added some informative signage in 2020, improving from previous years, there is still room for growth. This will make it easier for community members to engage with the farm properly and safely. It can also simply make the site more interesting and fun. One volunteer noted that some individuals may not know how to harvest items, what can be harvested or eaten, or how to prepare the food. She notes that signage could aid in BUF's ability to become "a real learning space that people can just kind of wander" (personal communication, September 18, 2020). She notes how signs could be created educating individuals on the edible flowers in the garden, or the need for New Zealand Spinach to be cooked in order to be safe and pleasant to eat. Additionally, these signs could be used to communicate what is ready to be picked, what are private plots rather than communal, and even simply the names and facts about certain crops.



Image: Sign explaining how to harvest (KFPC, 2012).



Images: Signage from a Quebec City Public Produce Project in front of City Hall. The top left image shows an area which is not open access as the produce is intended for use in the restaurant inside City Hall. The bottom left image describes the project and tells individuals the produce is free to take. The image on the right shows clear signage indicating that this plot is open for individuals to pick.

Other food organizations have developed helpful literature surrounding communication in public gardens that can be applied here. The Community Garden Best Practices Toolkit notes developing a communication system as being integral to the success of a project. This includes keeping volunteers up to date on garden activities, giving them an avenue to provide input, and to document activities with photos, videos, and annual reports (Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2011). The report by Sedgeman also notes the need to create systems of communication (2013). This includes creating a strong logo to communicate with outside groups, create a reference map for volunteers which shows aspects and crops of the garden, and educational signs. The author also recommends an erasable message board which allows for easy changes and updates, which was implemented in 2020 (Sedgeman, 2013).



Image: Message board attached to the washing station. Photo by Kamloops Food Policy Council.

IDEAS, PLANS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

WORKSHOPS AND EDUCATION

In looking toward the future at BUF, both community members and the KFPC have identified a desire to grow the educational potential of the BUF. This can range from education surrounding growing food to processing food; for individuals, school groups, and families. The farm could experiment with workshops around soil, seed saving, container gardens, or composting.

Additionally, BUF could offer workshops concerning canning, pickling, or interesting ways to use food “waste” (for example, carrot top pesto). This education surrounding how to properly preserve or store food could help address previously mentioned concerns surrounding seasonal influxes of produce from BUF. Opportunities to demonstrate a “farm-to-table” approach to eating could lead community members to further reconnect to the food system. This could occur through a workshop which leads participants from the seed stage through the processing stage for a specific food item; for example, starting a jalapeno plant from seed, nurturing it, then making homemade hot sauce. The farm could also follow suit of previous Public Produce projects and seek to engage the community through art. For example, the Victoria Street Garden’s living mural, or the MacDonald park garden which hosted events with crafts. A variety of workshops or opportunities for engagement should make it easier for the BUF to be accessible or interesting to many different individuals within the community. While the farm committee can come up with creative ideas in this regard, asking the community what they would be interested in learning is also a useful approach.

At the time of writing this report, it is uncertain what the summer of 2021 will look like in regards to COVID-19. Educational opportunities may be limited as a result, or will have to pivot to online delivery.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

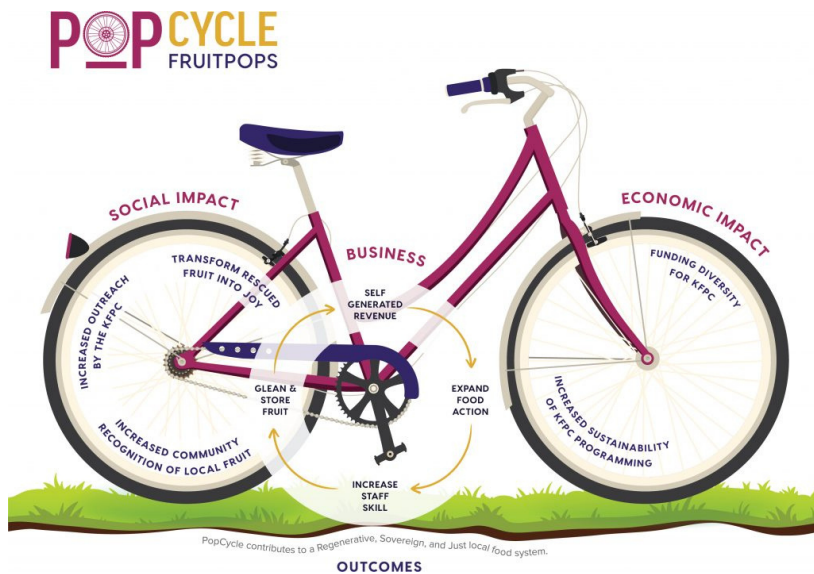
In the search for a more stable source of funding for the BUF, the potential for a social enterprise has been discussed at times. Despite this need for funding however, ideas for a social enterprise have been explored carefully in order to ensure that this enterprise does not take time or resources away from the original social mandate of the project.

Put forth as an idea for a social enterprise, or simply a way to increase Kamloops growing is the initiative “Propcycle”. Propcycle would be the successor to “Popcycle”, which was a KFPC enterprise which turned gleaned fruit into popsicles and sold them at events around town via a travelling bicycle (KFPC, n.d.). Propcycle however, would “prop”- agate fruit and nut tree seedlings on the Butler site, sell or give them away to interested Kamloopsians, and provide guidance in plant care. With this initiative, fruit and nut tree growing would increase Kamloops-wide, leading to more GAP harvests in the future.



Image: The Popcycle bicycle (Greer, 2019).

Through discussing Popcycle, the idea was raised of doing a similar initiative with value-added products from BUF. While sorting through the large quantities of tomatoes we had harvested that day, a volunteer noted the potential to create products for sale from extra produce. Perhaps a Butler Urban Farm tomato sauce, or a hot sauce from our many jalapenos.



This could provide a small source of revenue for the farm while also using our extra produce. However, as a farm committee member noted, we are usually always able to find a home for our produce and there is therefore no real waste to repurpose. In contrast, GAP was finding that the flood of fruit during the summer months was sometimes in such abundance it was a struggle to find a home for it all.

Image: The Popcycle concept (Greer, 2019).

FOOD FOREST AND PERENNIAL CROPS

The discussion of Propcycle led to an interest in growing more fruit and nut trees on the BUF site, as well as simply more perennial food crops. Further research on the viability of more perennial food crops at BUF should be explored, due to their ability to "maintain the soil cover, soil structure and biota and have deeper root systems than annuals and thus provide soil stability and enhanced soil health. They can also tap available soil nutrients, enhance biodiversity, make more water available to plants, and capture and sequester carbon" as well as they require less inputs every year to replant (FAO, n.d., p.2)

The idea of growing a food forest on the BUF site has been explored, but the long-term nature of the project under an uncertain land occupancy makes doing so difficult. Furthermore, the care and expertise needed for such a project may be hard to find. However, BUF does feature some perennial plants in the back bed as they came into our possession as donations or from Pankewich. This includes wild asparagus, saskatoon bushes, and a peach tree. While the asparagus will take 3-5 years to produce anything edible, it keeps the site as a place to have fun, experiment, and learn. A balance may need to be struck between building a base of perennial crops, and growing annuals to maintain a steady food source for the community.

EXPANSION

In consideration of expanding the Public Produce initiative to other locations, the farm committee expressed a preference to instead try to do one project very well, over doing several projects with strained capacity. Although, this raises the question of the Elm Avenue location, which this year was regarded as a secondary garden receiving much less attention and maintenance. While the intention was initially to ignore this property and focus on the success of BUF, Pankewich found himself with an excess of tomato plants to which we devoted a few days to planting and weeding at Elm Avenue. We set up a simple drip line system, and planned to weed the site when we could. Fortunately, a volunteer who had previously supported the former version of Elm Avenue Garden took it upon herself to look after the space. Her and her friends, a group of seniors in walkers, weeded and harvested the space mostly independently. She describes it as a valuable experience for older people to socialize and get outside, noting the site's accessibility to be weeded by rolling one's walker through the row. It's accessibility has led to its further consideration by the farm committee, as a space for wheelchair accessible planter boxes. This site benefits from flatter ground and a

street level entrance (opposed to the steep slope leading to BUF), making it a perfect spot for this project. As well, Elm Avenue benefits from its visibility and high level of foot traffic, increasing community awareness of the project. Seeing Public Produce gain momentum across Kamloops once again is an exciting prospect, but perhaps the best way to encourage this is to make these one or two properties really thrive.

That being said, while it may be beyond the capacity of KFPC to run several Public Produce projects at a time, there is always the possibility for other community organizations to begin a Public Produce garden on their own. These could vary in size and form, and KFPC could act as a mentor or partner in these pursuits.



VOLUNTEER RESPONSE

For a full list of questions asked during the volunteer survey, see Appendix A. The volunteers were asked a total of 23 questions, though they were allowed to skip any questions they did not want to answer. The total respondents to the online survey was 8, and 1 volunteer was interviewed instead of surveyed.

These questions were meant to assess several factors:

1. Challenges that the farm faces and areas needing growth or improvement
2. Strengths of the farm, or things that the farm is doing well
3. What brings people to the farm?
4. The farm and food security in Kamloops
5. Practical questions



CHALLENGES AND/OR AREAS FOR GROWTH

- What do you believe are some challenges that the farm faces?
- If you had more influence in how this space was run, what would look different?
- What would you like to see the farm look like next year? 5 years time?
- Have you witnessed any links to other social issues in this space? (homelessness, substance use etc.)
- Do you feel like you are clear on the procedures/guidelines of the farm regarding planting, weeding, harvesting, and recording harvests?
- Do you identify as Indigenous and if so would you be interested in knowledge sharing with the Butler Urban Farm?
- Are there any cultural or medicinal plants which you would like to see planted at the site? Would you be interested in participating in this process?
- Have you faced any barriers to volunteering at the farm?
- Do you feel the produce from the farm is shared fairly?

In response to these questions, many volunteers indicated being already very satisfied with how the farm already operates. However, several areas of improvement were identified. Some volunteers noted a need for improved infrastructure at the site, including a better tool shed as well as a new washing station. These two structures were in progress of being constructed at the time of writing this report. The need for shade provision of some kind was also highlighted, whether through a structure or trees.

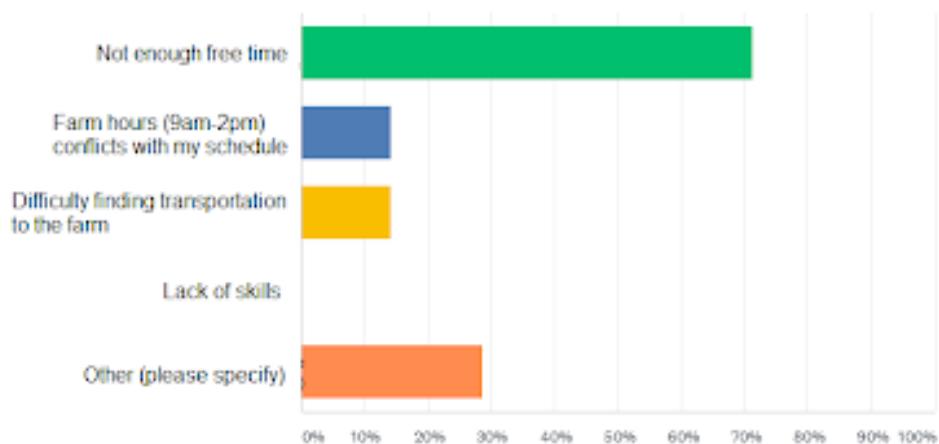
One volunteer commented that they would like to see there be less private plots than what currently exists on the farm, as to give more space for the commons. Others mentioned the need for more social spaces which could allow for community gatherings, including a small clover lawn for seating. The desire for harvest parties, barbeques, and social gatherings was noted as well.

The Elm Avenue property was also discussed. Some expressed the desire for the Elm property to become more protected through fencing. Others noted the difficulties in protecting the property as an open community resource, while also keeping volunteers, neighbors, and the produce safe from damage and biohazard waste (used needles). Comments were made regarding the need for more full time staff, coordination, and refinement. As well, improved composting systems and practices,

and better signage overall. A volunteer noted observing an occasional disconnect between decision making about the project, and those working with the project on the ground. Increased consistent volunteer labour, and volunteer labour which is capable of a certain level of physical activity were also identified as areas of improvement. The increased need for volunteers during set-up and take down relative to the rest of the year was also noted as a potential challenge. Increasing the profile of the farm within the community was offered as a solution to volunteer shortage problems. The need to tame some of the overgrown plants was also mentioned, as this impeded the ability of some to maneuver around site, and made harvesting more difficult. The tomato plants in particular were pinpointed as the source of this problem.

A respondent mentioned the need for increased clarity on which organizations in the community the produce is sent to. However, when asked the question “Do you feel the produce from the farm is shared fairly?”, all respondents replied yes.

Q5 Have you faced any barriers to volunteering at the farm?



The “other” category responses noted weather, as well as the ability to come to the farm outside of farm hours.

Several responses simply noted the desire for expansion of the project - hoping for other spaces and projects like Butler spread throughout the community. An individual noted that the project is limited by its relatively small space, and another noted the volatility of running a project like this on land which is subject to sale/land swapping. A volunteer expressed the hopes that this project could serve as a model project of its kind which others could learn from and scale out to other projects, and that it could be a space where people could come with questions and assistance with their own gardening initiatives. Volunteers also noted the desire for growing more medicinal and/or cultural plants, and responded that they would be willing to participate in growing this area.

The need for increased indigenous involvement was also noted. Several individuals mentioned the need and potential of the farm to act as a learning and meeting space for indigenous youth and elders, as well as the potential for knowledge sharing between elders and other community members. Particularly knowledge sharing related to medicinal plants and traditional foods on the site. When asked whether or not volunteers identified as indigenous and would be interested in knowledge sharing, two individuals answered yes to both questions while also recommending reaching out to the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc band itself.

In response to whether or not volunteers had witnessed many links to social issues in the space, one or two incidents were noted which described crime in the area, though unrelated to the farm itself. Some mentioned noticing homelessness in the surrounding area, as well the prevalence of food insecurity in the community. This is made more noticeable due to the proximity to the Kamloops Food Bank, as well through personal exchanges made during individuals coming to inquire about getting food from the farm.

STRENGTHS OF THE FARM

- What do you believe are the strengths of the farm?
- What have you learned or gained from volunteering at the farm?
- What about this project keeps you coming back?
- Has volunteering at the farm enhanced your feelings of connection to the Kamloops urban ecosystem?
- Do you feel like you are clear on the procedures/guidelines of the farm regarding planting, weeding, harvesting, and recording harvests?

In response to the strengths of the farm, many volunteers noted the strong leadership and engagement skills of the farm managers. The manager's knowledge regarding growing and harvesting the plants combined with their ability to explain the procedures and goals of the farm with clarity made volunteers feel confident in working independently. Their flexibility, kindness, and welcoming nature was also noted as a major draw for volunteers. One volunteer noted the farm manager's strength in being sensitive to the needs and wants of each individual volunteer, and working with them to integrate them into the project.

A general "open-door policy" was deemed by one respondent to be what makes the program "unique and impactful". A volunteer also mentioned the KFPC's involvement in strengthening the farm in 2020.

The beauty and visibility of the farm were also noted as strengths, due to the ability to attract and engage community members and retain volunteers. A volunteer connected the beauty of the site in 2020 to its increasingly positive community perception. Other volunteers mentioned the joy and amazement that comes from watching things grow; both the project itself as well as individual plants. Volunteers noted the value of feeling like they had a stake in the project, or a role to play in its growth. Through investing time and energy into the project and watching it grow and change, volunteers felt compelled to return.

The farm's ability to bring the community together and connect individuals was noted as a strength of the farm and also a draw for many volunteers. Many volunteers responded that the other volunteers were what made the farm so successful, as well as making the farm a pleasant and desirable place to be. Volunteers reported an increased sense of community after volunteering at the farm, as well as making new connections and friends. They also noted learning and sharing between volunteers. The dominant response to why volunteers keep coming back to the project was the people and the community of the farm. One volunteer stated that the farm "brings out the best in everyone who sees it".

Volunteers listed several different areas of learning in their time volunteering at the farm. These were: organic growing techniques, irrigation systems, growing annual crops, activism in Kamloops, and what it takes to run a project of such a large scale.

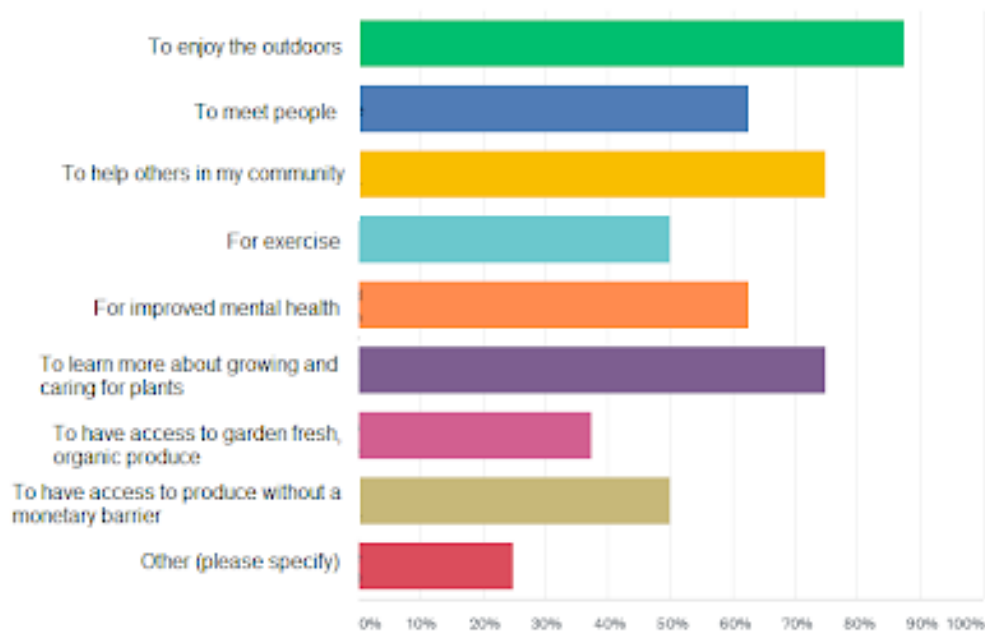
Several volunteers noted increased mental and physical health as a result of working on the farm. Additionally, they noted enjoying the fresh produce they harvested. Volunteers appreciated the project for its role in increasing food security in Kamloops, as well as its ability to help others in the community.

One volunteer noted that the farm has the power to inspire similar projects elsewhere in Kamloops, as its success can show people what is possible. Additionally, it can demonstrate to individuals that growing their own food is achievable and inspire them to do so.

WHAT BRINGS PEOPLE TO THE FARM?

- Why do you volunteer at the Butler Urban Farm?
- What is the link between the Butler Urban Farm and the world you want to live in?

Q2 Why do you volunteer at the Butler Urban Farm? (Select all that apply)



Responses under the “other” category noted compensation for volunteer hours through another program, and an opportunity to do what they love and share in that passion with others.

In response to the link between the farm and the world volunteers want to live in, there were a variety of themes. The dominant theme was reimagining alternatives to the current capitalist system. This includes increased sharing, operating outside the capitalist system, non-monetized exchanges, decentralized food production managed by community cooperatives, sense of a commons, and production rooted in “use and benefit rather than exchange and profit”. Additionally, increasingly self-sufficient communities and a strengthened local food movement.

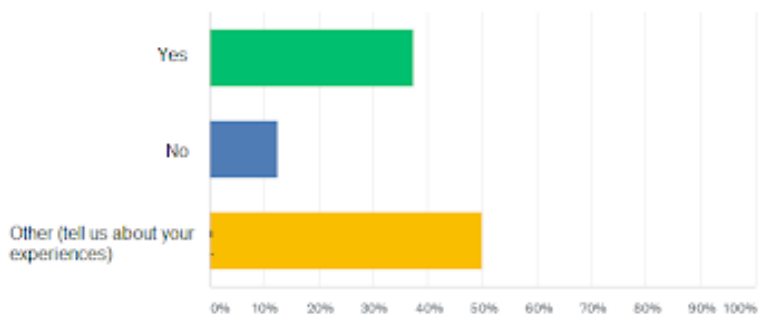
Volunteers noted the potential to re-organize labour in a way which is more community driven than profit driven; noting the desire for projects or communities where everyone is able to contribute, and people are able to contribute in the way they want to or are able to. Volunteers mentioned the desire for increasingly connected and social communities, which focus on collective living wherein everyone helps one another.

THE FARM AND FOOD SECURITY IN KAMLOOPS

- Do you grow food at home?
- Has the amount of food grown/success with growing increased as a result of your time volunteering at the farm?
- What do you believe are some of the causes of food insecurity in your community?

75% of respondents said that they grew food at home, and 35% said that the amount of food grown, or their success with growing food had increased as a result of their time at BUF.

Q4 Has the amount of food grown/success with growing increased as a result of your time volunteering at the farm?



Responses as part of the "other" category indicated that respondents were either unsure, or hadn't had a chance to use new knowledge yet but planned to in the future.

In response to what volunteers perceived to be the cause of food insecurity within their community, there were a variety of very rich responses. This would suggest that those choosing to volunteer at the Butler Urban Farm have a strong interest in food security. These responses have been sorted into 9 main ideas.

1.Lack of Affordability

The high and rising cost of food, housing, and other basic needs relative to income creates the conditions for food insecurity. Low, stagnant wages contribute to this as well as lack of employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

2. Dependence on global food supply rather than a local food system

Dependence on the global food system exposes communities to risk when a link in this system is disrupted. This can range from disruptions in transport, disruptions in the labour force, and disruptions in food growing production. Dependence on a small number of big-box grocers over local farmers and stores leaves communities vulnerable to disruptions. Additionally, in this system global trade agreements have the power to greatly influence the price, quantity, and quality of the food we need.

3. Land Use

By failing to prioritize the protection of agricultural land over residential and commercial development, there is less and less space to grow food crops close to the communities where we live, which impedes our local food security. This is related to the global food system dependence referenced in point 2, as well as rising housing costs noted in point 1. There also lacks spaces for growing within cities, especially for renters or people without yards. Communal growing spaces have the power to address this.

4. Food Deserts

Respondents noted that there are areas within our community which are not within accessible distance to a retailer offering affordable and nutritious food, these areas are referred to as “food deserts”.

5. Knowledge Gap

A lack of knowledge can be a barrier to food security. For example, people not knowing how to grow and/or prepare their own food, as well as meal plan, preserve, or store. A volunteer notes how this could be addressed through community education.

6. Seasonality of Local Food Production

A volunteer notes that being unable to grow food during cold winters can act as a barrier to food security.

7. Mental Health and Addictions

Individuals experiencing personal struggle may have difficulty accessing nutritious meals.

8. Structural racism

Structural racism in our communities can lead to some groups facing a much higher rate of food insecurity than others. This structural racism can be present in all stages of the food system, from production to consumption.

9. Profit over people

A volunteer notes the ways our current food system encourages a profit driven approach which does not protect or value people, land, or water. We see a widespread commodification of food, land, and water in this system, and agriculture being dominated by agribusiness. Profit is concentrated in the hands of few, wages stay low, and the quality of the food is low. Food that is affordable to the average person is of poor quality and from poor practices, and food which is of higher quality is often unaffordable relative to wages.

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS

- How do you prefer to stay in touch/be notified about farm activities?
- How often would you like to receive updates about the farm?
- While taking COVID-19 precautions into consideration, would future community dinners or social events be of interest to you, if/when they could occur safely?

Most respondents prefer to be contacted by email (85%) or text message (50%), receiving updates on a weekly (60%) or biweekly (35%) basis. All respondents were interested in future social gatherings.



Image: Picking ground cherries. Photo by Sylvia Neufeld.

KFPC COMMUNITY MEMBER RESPONSES

This survey was sent out to KFPC members through an email newsletter list. The aim of this survey was to reach those in the community beyond those already involved with the project. There were four responses total. For a complete list of questions see Appendix B.

These questions were meant to assess several factors

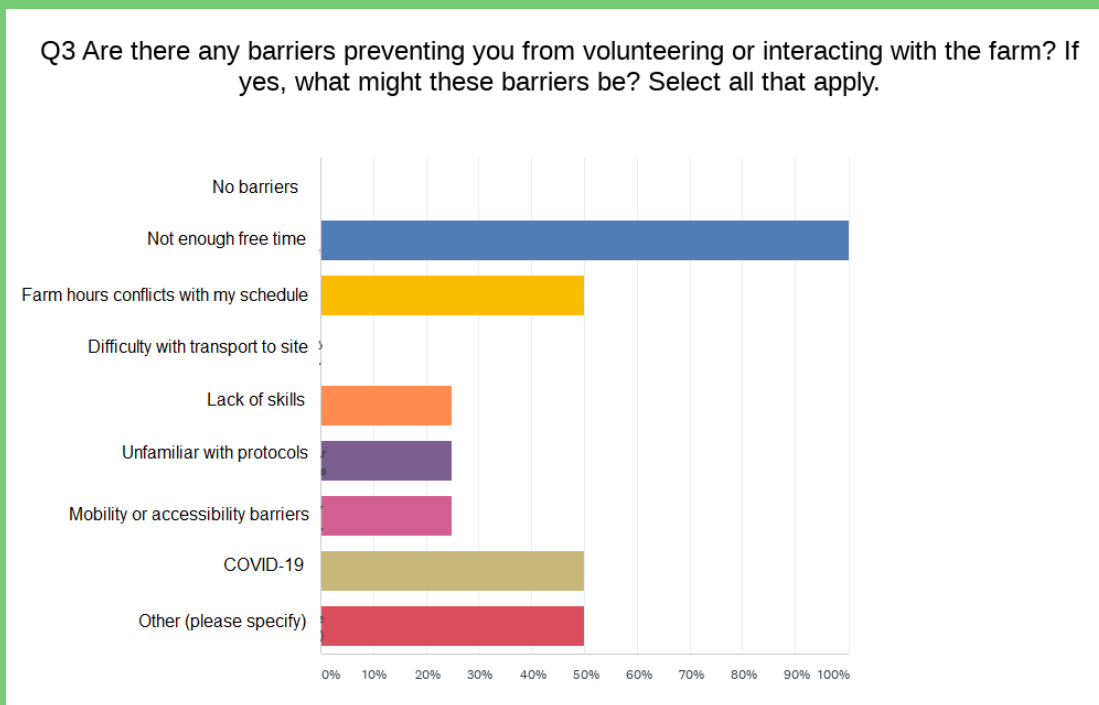
1. Assessing awareness/engagement with farm
2. Strengths of the farm
3. Challenges and/or areas for growth and improvement
4. The farm and food security in Kamloops



ASSESSING AWARENESS/ ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FARM

- Have you interacted with the farm this season? this can include: collecting produce from the farm, donating materials, volunteering, visiting etc.
- Do you see yourself becoming involved (or continuing involvement) in this project in the future?
- Are there any barriers preventing you from volunteering or interacting with the farm? If yes, what might these barriers be? Select all that apply.

75% of respondents had not interacted with the farm during 2020, with one respondent noting they didn't know that they could. In response to whether or not individuals saw themselves becoming involved in the project in the future, 25% responded yes and 75% responded maybe.



Additional comments in this section noted:

- A barrier due to a disability
- Not being aware of the project
- Other time commitments during this season

STRENGTHS OF THE FARM

- What do you believe are some strengths of the farm?

As strengths of the farm, respondents noted strong management and leadership, accessibility of the project, and good site planning and time management. Additionally, the farm's role in raising awareness of issues related to food security, its ability to provide more fresh local food, and its ability to provide a learning environment for sustainable food production.

CHALLENGES AND/OR AREAS FOR GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT

- What do you believe are some challenges that the farm faces?
- What would you like to see the farm look like next year? 5 years time?
- Are there any cultural or medicinal plants which you would like to see planted at the site? Would you be interested in participating in this process?
- Do you identify as Indigenous and if so would you be interested in knowledge sharing with the Butler Urban Farm?

One respondent noted that a lack of community awareness about the project was an area which could be improved upon. A response to the survey also voiced the sentiment that they felt that some individuals in need had been "left out" or unable to access the garden. This concern may come from a lack of awareness that the farm is open access, or distribution issues for those physically unable to come to site. The physical accessibility of the farm was mentioned as a barrier, and a respondent mentioned offering alternative tasks to those with mobility issues as a solution (for example, tasks which could be done while sitting). Other respondents noted lack of ongoing funding and lack of volunteers at times as a potential challenge moving forward. Additionally, the need for year-round agriculture was noted as a potential area for growth.

In envisioning what the farm could look like in the future, a respondent hopes to see the farm become as valued and accessed as the Kamloops Farmers Market. Furthermore, one respondent would like to see the farm increasingly act as a hub for education and demonstrations.

In response to cultural and/or medicinal plants being planted on site, one respondent mentioned an interest in planting Stevia plants, while other respondents noted a general interest in seeing this practice grow at Butler Urban Farm. However, one individual cautioned against the planting and use of plants of medicinal or cultural value as it could be appropriation if done by those outside of that culture or heritage. Individuals responded that none of them identified as Indigenous but would value knowledge sharing with the farm.

THE FARM AND FOOD SECURITY IN KAMLOOPS

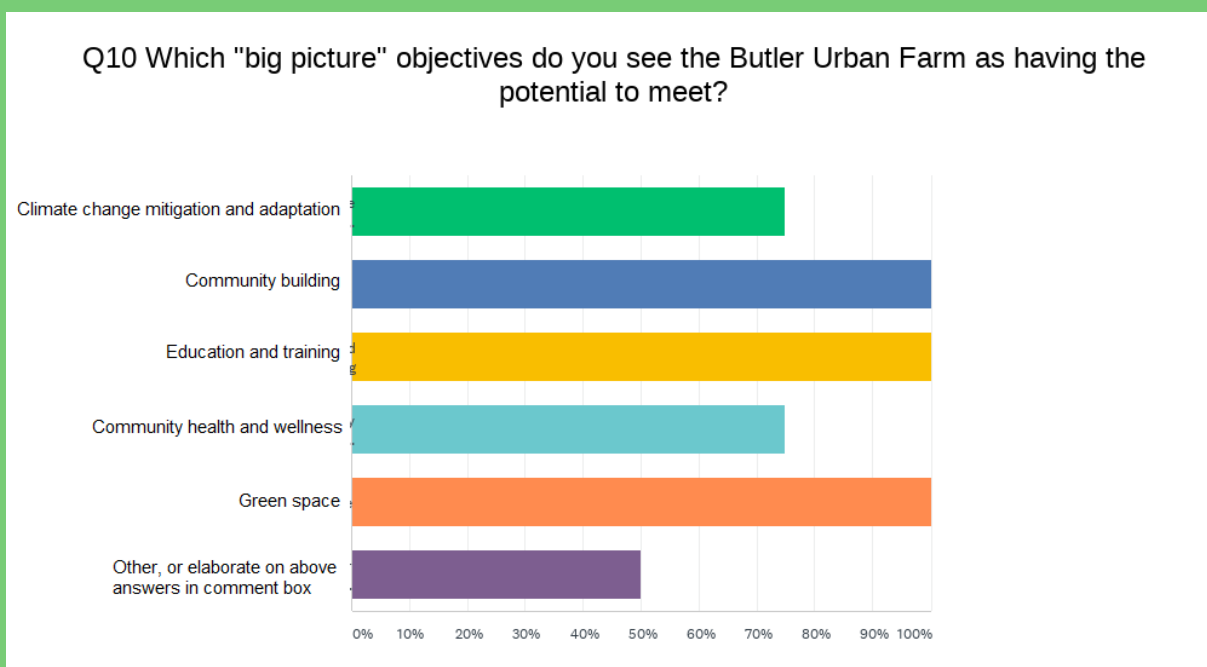
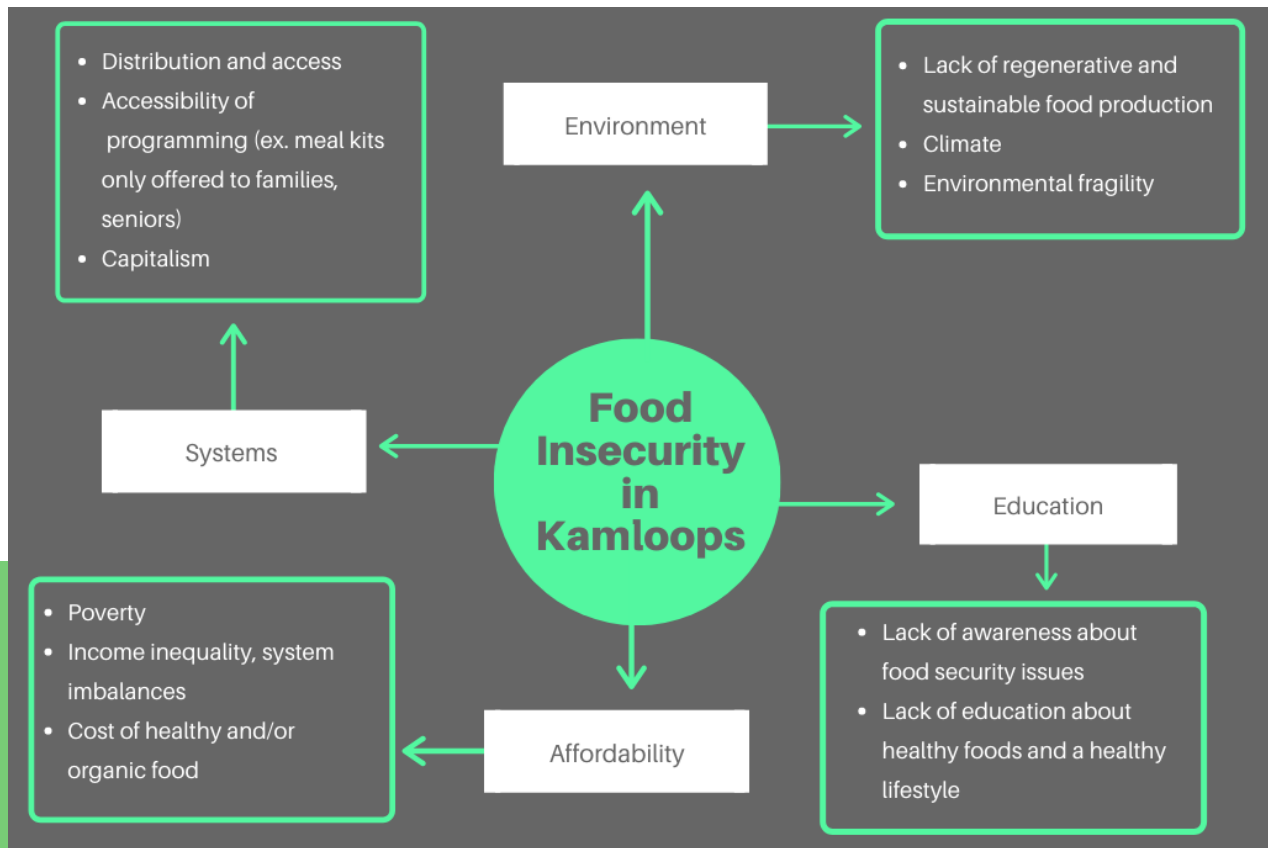
- What issues or gaps in our community do you believe the farm has the potential to address?
- How do you see the Butler Urban Farm Project aligning with the KFPC's vision of a local food system which is regenerative, sovereign, and just?
- What do you believe are some of the causes of food insecurity in the community?
- Which "big picture" objectives do you see the farm as having the potential to meet?
- Do you see the Butler Urban Farm as an upstream or downstream (or hybrid) solution to household food insecurity? Upstream meaning addressing some of the root causes of food insecurity. Downstream meaning addressing immediate need for food.

Individuals responded that the farm has the ability to build local food security, particularly for those with low income. Additionally, that it could increase access to healthy foods. Respondents also noted the farm's role in providing opportunities for learning, engagement, and outreach; both about gardening, food security, and a healthy lifestyle. It was also noted how the farm has the power to restore our connection to the land.

A respondent commented that the farm is in perfect alignment with KFPC's principles of a food system which is regenerative, sovereign, and just. Its use of permaculture and organic growing, seed saving, and a collaborative and open model support these principles.

In response to whether respondents saw the BUF as an upstream, downstream, or hybrid solution to food insecurity, 25% responded "upstream" and 75% responded "hybrid".

In response to what individuals believed to be the causes of food insecurity in their community, there were a variety of responses which have been sorted into four main categories: environment, education, affordability, and systems.



A response in the comment box noted “The garden needs more capacity and support to reach big picture objectives. Long term visioning- planting more trees, programming, infrastructure and land security.”

OTHER URBAN FARMS, COMMUNITY GARDENS, FOOD FORESTS

After searching online to find other organizations within Canada doing similar projects, several organizations were contacted by email for either a phone interview or written questionnaire. These questions were intended to draw from the experiences of these organizations in order to paint a broader picture of what Public Produce type projects look like in Canada.

Thank you to the organizations who participated in this research: Sudbury Shared Harvest (Sudbury, ON), Wark Street Commons (Victoria, BC), Edible Garden Project (Vancouver, BC), The Table (Perth, ON), Prairie Urban Farm (Edmonton, AB).

For a copy of the questionnaire see Appendix A.



Image: Tomatoes at BUF. Photo by Sylvia Neufeld

OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS

Sudbury Shared Harvest (Ontario)

“In 2013, a group of people started Fruit for All, to connect people having surplus fruit growing on their properties with soup kitchens and other community food programs that serve those in need. In 2014, the group partnered with Eat Local Sudbury Cooperative to develop the program and in 2016, they began requesting vegetable donations as well. In 2015, volunteers also began planting fruit trees and edible forest gardens in public parks. In the same year, the group registered as a non-profit, calling it Sudbury Shared Harvest. In 2016, they began planning Sudbury’s first community food forest.” (C. Regenstreif, personal communication, August 31,2020). Since then, they have expanded to several other food forest locations.

Wark Street Commons (British Columbia)

“Wark Street Commons has been operational for a couple of years and it has evolved from a pollinator garden to one that focuses on culinary herbs, edible flowers, an olive tree and native pollinators.” (M. Aitcheson, personal communication, September 17, 2020).

Edible Garden Project (British Columbia)

The Edible Garden Project (EGP) was formed in 2006, and is a program of the North Shore Neighbourhood House (NSNH). The EGP has three primary program areas: GROW - Urban Farming (two social enterprise urban farms), SHARE - Sharing the Bounty (over 12 tonnes of produce distributed since 2006 to those in need) and TEACH - Edible Garden Education Program (education and learning opportunities for students and adults). Through these program areas, the EGP has been building a community network of farms and gardens that: grow and share local food; provide hands-on environmental education; promote sustainable agriculture in the region; and facilitate social connections. The EGP engages community residents of all ages, abilities and cultures to learn new skills while contributing to the community by growing vegetables for North Shore residents. The EGP operates a growing number of Sharing Gardens (satellite gardens) throughout the community and two, 1/2-acre urban farms.” (C. McGillivray, personal communication, September 21, 2020).

The Table (Ontario)

“We operate a 500 square foot kitchen garden and a small greenhouse on site, as well as a 7000-square foot garden located in Last Duel Park just a 10 minute walk from The Table. In 2014 we added two food forest gardens to the Last Duel Park site. To visit the Last Duel park site enter the park off of South St. The Table is grateful to the Town of Perth for providing us with the space for the garden. Under the guidance of our Community Garden Coordinator, The Table's garden group takes care of the preparation, planting, tending and harvesting of the gardens. Together we grow over 40

types of vegetables and herbs organically and in community. The food we harvest is taken home by garden members and used in our Good Food Bank, Community Meals, and Community Kitchen programs. Our garden group is open to all community members and we take pride in making it a friendly space to meet new people and learn new skills, all in a beautiful environment.” (R.Hart, personal communication, September 2, 2020).

Prairie Urban Farm

“Prairie Urban Farm is approximately 1.5 acres, we are in our 7th year, and the number of volunteers varies widely, but I would estimate 25-30 frequent regulars, another 25 occasional regular participants, and another 25-50 participants visitors, each year.” (D.Davidson, personal communication, October 3, 2020).



Image: Sign at Edible Garden Project Sharing Gardens.(Edible Garden Project, n.d.).



Image: Planting beds at Prairie Urban Farms (Prairie Urban Farms, 2020).



Image: Planting food forest by Sudbury Shared Harvest (Living Hearth, n.d.).

HARVEST MODEL

OPEN ACCESS FOR
INDEPENDENT HARVEST

Sudbury Shared Harvest

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS
HARVEST

Edible Garden Project
The Table
Prairie Urban Farm

HYBRID
MODEL

Wark Street Commons

DISTRIBUTION

(if not independent harvest)

USED IN PROGRAMMING
BY THE ORGANIZATION

The Table

DONOR STEWARDSHIP
AND THANK YOU GIFTS

The Table

SOLD FOR REVENUE FOR
THE ORGANIZATION

Edible Garden Project
Prairie Urban Farm

DONATED TO PARTNER
ORGANIZATIONS TO
DISTRIBUTE

Edible Garden Project
Prairie Urban Farm

GIVEN TO VOLUNTEERS
OR PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS

ALL ORGANIZATIONS

DISTRIBUTED TO
INDIVIDUALS BY STAFF
OR VOLUNTEERS

Wark Street Commons

RESPONSES

In response to whether or not the site or plants had been damaged intentionally or unintentionally, most organizations reported minimal intentional damage. The Edible Garden Project reported some damage with some plants ripped out, garbage left around, greenhouse sides being slashed, some break-in attempts into sheds, and parts being taken or damaged from the sinks. However, in response to this Claire McGillivray of EGP states “It sounds like a lot, but overall the damage has not been too bad. We ensure to put away all equipment and lock all structures when we leave for the night. We see it as just part of the deal, and try not to worry about it too much” (personal communication, September 21, 2020).

A small amount of damage occurred by deer or other wildlife, as well as unintentional damage by city maintenance staff, some garbage and cigarette butts left behind, seeded beds being walked through, and accidental damage from volunteers. These issues are described as easily solvable through deer fencing, providing garbage bins, communicating with city staff, and signage and guidelines respectively. However, Claire McGillivray’s comment most accurately describes the approach most often taken by organizations towards any site damage. While it is important to do what we can to prevent this damage, if a small amount occurs sometimes it is just the nature of a shared community space.

In response to inquiries for volunteer engagement and retention, the organizations listed several strategies which have led to success.

- **Communication:** Social media, email newsletter
- **Social Events:** Volunteer appreciation events, annual volunteer dinner, seed exchange day, work parties with refreshments provided
- **Learning:** Provide guidance and educational opportunities, workshops, encourage volunteers to share their unique knowledge
- **Appreciation:** Emphasize thanks
- **Engagement:** Ensure positive experiences, build relationships with and between volunteers, offer a variety of volunteering roles for different interests and abilities, encourage participation in project planning and implementation, volunteer driven projects (medicinal herb garden, pollinator border)

Regarding community support for these various projects, most projects reported a generally supportive community. However, several of these projects are housed within public parks rather than private property like BUF. The benefit of being within a public park is differing expectations for use of the space, as well as regular monitoring and maintenance by city staff. Some concerns were initially

voiced towards Sudbury Shared Harvest's food forest as residents were worried about attracting bears to the area. However, as the project moved forward this was never an issue. The Table experienced challenges with a neighbor as volunteers occasionally parked along or on the edge of their lawn, but this was resolved with signage and discussion.

When asked about the evolving visions and goals of each of these organizations, most reported no major change in goals, but slight changes to how to reach these goals. Though these changes were largely unique to each organization's circumstances. Sudbury Shared Harvest opted to change plans from creating a larger food forest to creating several smaller ones, due to community feedback that people wanted a food forest closer to their own neighborhood. In contrast, the Edible Garden Project focused on consolidating and centralizing their efforts rather than trying to set up many different sites. As described by McGillivray of the Edible Garden Project, "We have found that centralizing our efforts increases efficiency, and also creates a feeling of attachment and care for the space. Lots of staff turnover 3 years ago also made us want to focus on getting acquainted with our main site before looking outwards to other sites and organizations." (personal communication, September 21, 2020).

In regards to funding, each organization relies on a different blend of methods. This includes; social enterprise through produce sales, collecting programming fees for workshops, funding through grants, or funding from the municipality. Each organization voiced a similar sentiment that applying for short term grant funding is time consuming and at times unpredictable and unsustainable.

Each organization also incorporates an educational component to their project, though to varying degrees. Prairie Urban Farm notes that sometimes keeping up with regular farm maintenance makes for very little time left for educational programming and workshops, a characteristic also experienced by BUF in past years.

In efforts to increase local food production past the borders of their own projects, all organizations tried to encourage learning through hands-on experience on site, but also through other methods. These methods included home-gardening workshops, sending volunteers home with kits for container gardening, seeds and seedlings. Some organizations also offer the expertise and time of their staff to other projects at schools, youth centres, and housing projects.

Some of the projects have tried a social enterprise model through the sale of a portion of their produce, though those who do so are cautious to set priorities and remain in accordance with their original social and environmental mandate. As described by Debra Davidson of Prairie Urban Farm in response to how they prioritize people over profit:

"First, in what we choose to plant, and how we choose to manage our farm. We are strong advocates of regenerative agriculture and permaculture principles, and that means no chemicals,

limited use of heavy machinery, maximization of diversity, continuous experimentation, and volunteer inclusiveness regardless of experience. All told, this translates into a production equation that may not produce as much income as we would if we managed the farm strictly on a market success basis. Pursuing these principles lead to regular conversations among our team, and require continuous re-assertion. Second, when it comes to the distribution of harvest, it requires another continuous conversation and reminder that our goal is not to maximize economic gain, but rather to make enough money to support our operations, and maximize the amount of production we can share with our volunteers, and with people in need. In both cases, these principles fly in the face of conventional views, and thus require continued conversation" (personal communication, October 3, 2020).

Another project is in the process of examining the possibilities of selling the honey from beehives they currently have on site. Other projects note that the commons model is preferable to one of social enterprise, as the goal is to ensure accessibility to all different income groups.

When asked about what aspects of their project or which initiatives have been the most successful, the organizations had a variety of answers. Wark Street Commons notes the importance of signage in a garden to maintain clear and consistent messaging (M.Aitcheson, personal communication, September 17, 2020). Additionally, they mention the success of volunteer work party days which often allow volunteers to take home plants for their own yards. Prairie Urban Farm describes people's excitement and engagement with any cooking workshop; the most notable being farm dinners where a chef prepares a meal solely with the harvest from the farm and offers a cooking lesson while doing so. Prairie Urban Farm also offers "cross-cultural knowledge holders, such as Indigenous elders, to the farm to hold workshops on food, culture, spirituality, etc" (Debra Davidson, personal communication, October 3, 2020).

In response to what aspects or initiatives have been less successful, several organizations note the wavering enthusiasm and volunteer supports for projects over time. Enthusiasm and support fluctuate unexpectedly which will drastically affect the outcomes of a project. The Table notes challenges around planting medicinal plants while lacking true experts in this area who could advise on their safe and appropriate use. Additionally, they note challenges in trying to establish a food forest in partnership with local permaculture practitioners.

"It's been a challenge to integrate this planting into our other garden programming because many of the species planted are not familiar foods to the vast majority of the community. It's playing a role education-wise but not doing much for us in terms of food production. Because the immediate benefits of this planting aren't as apparent as say, a row of carrots, it hasn't been prioritized for care and maintenance. We are working on overcoming this by adding some informative signs and trying to learn more ourselves about the different plantings in the garden." - The Table (R.Hart, Personal communication, September 2 ,2020).

Other issues identified by these organizations included:

- Getting permission and cooperation from the municipality.
- Involving low-income people on a participatory level, which requires making them feel comfortable and encouraged to access the space. The motivation behind this is to create a project where food is grown with people rather than for people.
- Making people feel welcome and comfortable engaging with a shared space, without needing supervision and guidance from a staff member.

As this research began during the summer which was largely characterized by the COVID-19 virus, these organizations were also asked what sort of effects this had on their operations. Most noted a large uptick in interest in their project, as local food began to seem more important due to grocery store shortages and supply chain disruptions. Additionally, need for free produce increased as many Canadians experienced the negative financial impact of the virus. Some organizations note a stronger volunteer team than ever before. Wark Street Commons also notes that due to more people than usual spending time outside (due to social distancing measures, working from home etc.), there was increased foot traffic near the garden and consequently increased interest (M. Aitcheson, personal communication, September 17, 2020). The Edible Garden Project mentions that as some individuals now felt unsafe going to the food bank to collect produce, they leaned more on produce from their organization. This organization also began to coordinate produce delivery from the gardens to the homes of individuals and families (C. McGillivray, personal communication, September 21, 2020).

However, COVID-19 also presented many challenges to these organizations and required them to re-imagine some of their strategies to comply with safe social distancing measures. This included limiting the number of volunteers per day, hosting several smaller work party events rather than one large one, implementing safety guidelines including mask-wearing and sanitizing tools, and requiring registration for volunteer drop-in days rather than simply dropping in. One organization notes the extra work burden placed upon staff to create and implement all these plans. The uncertainty and the lockdown during the beginning of the pandemic also hindered the ability of organizations to operate as usual.. The Edible Garden Project notes that the most difficult thing was to cancel educational programming in schools, and trying to imagine what it could look like in the future.

“We also had a lot of events planned, like featured farmers markets with activities for kids and live music, volunteer appreciation parties with a BBQ, community workshops and more. We’ve had to be ok with just hoping to do these events in the future.” - Edible Garden Project. (C. McGillivray, personal communication, September 21, 2020).

“Initially community gardens were not allowed to open but there was an effective lobbying effort that got that decision changed – but it was tough at the beginning trying to figure out what we’d be able

to do in the garden. Adapting our gardening program hasn't been that challenging as physical distancing is much easier in a spacious garden than in our dining room. We did cancel our monthly workshops but did a number of Facebook Live sessions that were well received." - The Table (R.Hart, personal communication, September 2, 2020).

Organizations were asked if they perceived any changes to their organization's activity as a result of future climate change. While the responses differed from organization to organization, most anticipated changes in growing conditions, seasons, more extreme weather events, higher pest populations relative to beneficial insects, and general unpredictability. Prairie Urban Farms mentions the potential rise in extreme weather to damage soil and crops, while also making it more difficult to work outside. The Edible Garden Project notes "the very cool wet spring this year meant that many of our crops had a lot of slug damage that we have not previously seen." (personal communication, September 21, 2020.). All organizations had different concerns for their communities, and have been watching and observing changes in order to prepare for the future. Sudbury Shared Harvest mentioned the resilience of many of the plants within their community food forest relative to that of a traditional annual vegetable garden. The Table alludes to a potential future project surrounding climate change mitigation and adaptation in relationship to the food system and affordable housing. Here, we see these various organizations taking both a mitigation and adaptation approach to future plans and strategies.

SPRINGRIDGE COMMONS

While there was no one from the organization available for comment, the Springridge Commons seemed an important case to note in the field of Public Produce. Springridge Commons, located in Victoria, BC, is Canada's oldest public food forest. Located on a half acre lot, what was once a gravel lot was transformed into a community food forest producing herbs and many different types of fruit, as well as a space for people and for pollinators ("Springridge Common", n.d). Located in the Fernwood community, the project has changed hands between community groups over the years. First Fernwood Community Association, then Lifecycles, then Fernwood NRG. The space has also seen drastically varying levels of support over the years, eventually scaling back dramatically in 2019.

In researching the history of the Springridge Commons, I was directed towards a video of a community town hall in 2014 which invited interested community members to discuss the state of the space (Howard, 2014). Problems noted in this town hall included: overnight camping, defecating on site, open drug trade, used syringes, garbage, rats, unconscious people, too many hiding spaces, persons accumulating belongings, and neighbors concerned about overgrown appearance. A partial explanation of why this garden started to fall into such a state of disrepair was that when Fernwood NRG took over the project, the expected amount of labour never materialized, and the variable

“Boom-Bust cycle of volunteers” proved insufficient for maintaining the space. A community member voiced their opinion that this was simply evidence of the need to ramp up volunteer recruitment efforts.

There was much dispute over what was occurring in this space and how to address it, as some argued for the right of everyone to access the space, while others argued that protecting the safety and legality of the space was the most vital. Neighbors near the site voiced their concerns that the site was becoming truly dangerous for their children and the community. Other community members noted that some of the homeless people who frequented the site were actually wonderful partners in monitoring and protecting the commons, if time was taken to build trust and relationships with them. As well, some community members noted that if there was concern about how some people were using the space, often the solution was as easy as having a conversation with these people. Additionally, many members of the town hall voiced the sentiment that if there are problems with individuals inhabiting the site, it is simply a representation of the larger social issue of inadequate affordable housing and services for those living in poverty. As well, perhaps the incidence of people defecating on site highlights the need for more public washrooms throughout the city. While all these are strong points, it may not have been sufficient to address the safety concerns some had about the area.



Image: Sign at Springridge Commons (Need More Spikes, 2019).

Moving into 2019, it was clear that some of these issues had persisted. The group in charge (Fernwood NRG) noted that complaints were mounting regarding improper use of the space. As the space was leased to Fernwood on a year-to-year (previously two year) basis, and under ownership of the school district, the lease was discontinued as a land swap occurred between the School District, the City of Victoria and the Capital Region Housing Corporation. Following this land swap, all seating, gazebos, etc were removed. The land is now under the ownership of the City of Victoria and “is no longer a neighbourhood controlled resource” (Herrin, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Through the evaluation of Public Produce projects in Kamloops and beyond, it is clear that these projects can take many different paths to meet a similar goal. These projects all set forth with the goal of not only producing food for those in their community, but also connecting people, providing an educational space, and creating greener communities. Many of these projects experience similar challenges, including maintaining volunteer capacity, maintaining support of the city and neighborhood, and accessing funding. Each organization has taken its own approach in addressing these challenges, and while it is useful to learn from one another, each project is unique in its circumstances due to location, community attitudes, and capacity as an organization.

Common to all projects is the necessity of engagement with the broader community, as well as the power of the community to drive success. As strong networks of community support develop, the Public Produce project will find itself with a team of community members ready to collaborate, problem solve, and grow the project. While setting priorities and planning is important for organization of the project, it is also important to leave room for the project to grow and change according to the vision of the community it belongs to.

Focusing on the experience of Public Produce within Kamloops itself, we can see how the movement has grown and changed over time. While some years have been more successful than others, if we continue to learn from past mistakes and experiences, then there will be an overall strengthening of Public Produce in Kamloops.

At the time of writing their 2012 Public Produce Strategic Plan, the KFPC listed several targets for Public Produce. This included having at least one public produce project in each sector of the city (City Centre, North, South, etc.), having a city policy requiring developers to include 10% edible plants in landscaping, encouraging new construction to incorporate gardening space into developments, and having an edible demonstration garden within Kamloops (KFPC,2012). While in 2012 the city expressed support for edible landscapes, this support seems to have declined over the years. Most notably, in March of 2019, former city councillor Donovan Cavers put forth a motion to have at least 5% of all landscaping planter beds be “edible ornamentals, such as fruit trees, berry bushes, herbs or gourds.” (Wallace,2019a). This motion was not moved forward to discussion, demonstrating a lack of support for edible landscapes within Kamloops by this council (Wallace, 2019b).

As described at the beginning of the report, Public Produce has the capacity to work towards decommodifying food, growing the food commons, growing the local food supply, and overall building a food system which is regenerative, sovereign, and just. An article by J.Hou describes

urban community gardens as “multimodal social spaces”, with the modalities of “as a convivial space, a cultural space, an inclusive space, a restorative space, a democratic space, and a resilient space” (Hou, 2017, p.113). This aptly describes the abilities of community garden projects to meet several goals, including economic, social, cultural, and environmental. Public Produce projects even go one step further beyond traditional allotment community gardens, as they remove the barrier of a membership fee or long wait list in order to participate. Additionally, BUF requires no scheduling commitment for volunteers to become involved which further removes barriers. By making the produce open for all to access, regardless of whether the individual contributed to the project, this further reduces barriers for community members to enjoy the benefits of the farm.

Gaining the support of the larger community for Public Produce is integral to its growth within the city, but this will require a successful demonstration that this concept can work. This is the first step towards shifting mindsets and gaining support. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed weaknesses in our global food system, but has also revealed the capacity of community members to support one another. Public Produce could be a part of the initiative to “build back better” (OECD,2020).

REFERENCES

- Edible Garden Project. (n.d.). Sharing Gardens. Edible Garden Project.<http://ediblegardenproject.com/sharing-gardens/>
- FAO. (n.d.). Perennial Agriculture: Landscape Resilience for the Future. <http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/agphome/documents/scpi/PerennialPolicyBrief.pdf>
- Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador. (2011). Community Garden Best Practices Toolkit: A Guide for Community Organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador. http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/Publications/Community_Garden_Best_Practices_Toolkit.pdf
- Google Maps. (n.d.). <https://www.google.ca/maps/@50.6812662,-120.3468844,15.14z><https://www.google.ca/maps/@50.6853989,-120.3694451,13.14z>Google Maps. (n.d.-.). [Back Lot of Farm]. Retrieved January 5,2020. <https://www.google.ca/maps/@50.68649,-120.3518701,110m/data=!3m1!1e3>
- Government of BC. (2020, December 10). COVID-19 essential services. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/essential-services-covid-19#food>
- Greer, A. (2019, July 18). Rescued Fruit to Fruitpops. <https://purppl.com/rescued-fruit-to-fruitpops/>Herrin, L. (2019, April 9).
- W(h)ither Spring Ridge Common(s)? . Fernwood NRG. <https://fernwoodnrg.ca/whither-spring-ridge-commons/>. Hou, J. (2017).
- Hou J. (2017). Urban Community Gardens as Multimodal Social Spaces. In: Tan P., Jim C. (eds) Greening Cities. Advances in 21st Century Human Settlements. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4113-6_6
- Howard, B. (2014, October 26). The Spring Ridge Commons Public Meeting 2014 [Video]. Youtube.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdkbkmeNyCI&ab_channel=BrentHoward.
- JUMP Kamloops. (n.d.). In Facebook [JUMP Kamloops]. Retrieved December 17,2020, from <https://www.facebook.com/Jumpkamloop>.
- KFPC. (n.d.). Popcycle Fruitpops. <https://kamloopsfoodpolicycouncil.com/fruit-popcycle/>

- KFPC. (2012). Public Produce Strategic Plan 2012. <https://kamloopsfoodpolicycouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Public-ProduceFinalStrategyReportSept2012.pdf>
- KFPC. (2020a). Butler Urban Farm. <https://kamloopsfoodpolicycouncil.com/butler-urban-farm/>
- KFPC. (2020b, September 21). Kamloops COVID Meal Train: Transporting Meals to Both Sides of the River. <https://kamloopsfoodpolicycouncil.com/kamloops-covid-meal-train-transporting-meals-to-both-sides-of-the-river>
- Living Hearth. (n.d.). Sudbury Community Food Forest. Living Hearth. <http://www.livinghearth.net/photo-album/sudbury-community-food-forest>
- Need More Spikes. (2019, August 20). School district removes Spring Ridge Commons furniture. <https://www.needsmorespikes.com/blog/spring-ridge-commons>.
- Nordhal, D. (2009). Public Produce (1st Edition). Island Press.
- OECD. (2020). Building Back Better: A Sustainable, Resilient Recovery after COVID-19. https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=133_133639-s08q2ridhf&title=Building-back-better-_A-sustainable-resilient-recovery-after-Covid-19
- Ostrom, E. (2009). A polycentric approach to climate change. Policy Research working paper WPS 5095. World Bank, Washington, DC.
- Pletsch, E., & McLean. (2020). <https://kamloopsfoodpolicycouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Assessment-of-Kamloops-Food-System-Final-Report.pdf>
- Prairie Urban Farm. (2020, July). A Very Wet Start to the Season. Prairie Urban Farm. <http://www.prairieurbanfarm.ca/2020/07/a-very-wet-start-to-season.html>
- Reid, R., & Besanger, K. (2018). The Kamloops Public Produce Project: A Story of Place, Partnerships, and Proximity in an Edible Garden Setting. In T. Kading, No Straight Lines: Local Leadership and the Path from Government to Governance in Small Cities. (pp. 145-174). University of Calgary Press. <http://hdl.handle.net/1880/106722>
- Sedgman, E.(2013). Public Produce: Growing Food in Public Spaces A Start Up Guide. <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourHealth/HealthyLiving/FoodSecurity/Documents/Public%20Produce%20-%20A%20Start%20up%20Guide.pdf>
- “Spring Ridge Common”. (2010). <http://crdcommunitygreenmap.ca/location/spring-ridge-common>

Vivero Pol, Jose. (2013). Food as a Commons: Reframing the Narrative of the Food System. SSRN Electronic Journal. 10.2139/ssrn.2255447.

Wallace, J. (March 4, 2019a). A call for more edible landscaping in Kamloops. Kamloops This Week. <https://www.kamloopsthisweek.com/news/a-call-for-more-edible-landscaping-in-kamloops-1.23652902>

Wallace, J. (March 6, 2019b). Kamloops council chews over, spits out edible plant proposal. Kamloops This Week. <https://www.kamloopsthisweek.com/news/kamloops-council-chews-over-spits-out-edible-plant-proposal-1.23655082>

APPENDIX A

Volunteer Survey

1. Why do you volunteer at the Butler Urban Farm?

Options: To enjoy the outdoors, to meet people, to help others in my community, for exercise, for improved mental health, to learn more about growing plants, to have access to garden fresh, organic produce, to have access to produce without a monetary barrier, other:

2. What do you believe are the strengths of the farm?

3. What do you believe are some challenges that the farm faces?

4. What is the link between the Butler Urban Farm and the world you want to live in?

5. What would you like to see the farm look like next year? 5 years time?

6. Do you grow food at home?

7. Has the amount of food grown/success with growing grown as a result of your time volunteering at the farm?

8. What are some barriers to volunteering at the farm?

9. What do you believe are some of the causes of food insecurity in your community?

10. What have you learned or gained from volunteering at the farm?

11. What about this project keeps you coming back?

12. If you had more influence in how this space was run, what would look different?

13. What lessons learned through this project could assist with the development of similar projects in other urban spaces?

14. Have you witnessed any links to other social issues in this space? (homelessness, substance use etc.)

15. Do you feel like you are clear on the procedures/guidelines of the farm regarding planting, weeding, harvesting, and recording harvests?

16. How do you prefer to stay in touch/be notified about farm activities? Email, phone, Facebook, Instagram, independent website/KFPC website?

17. How often would you like to receive updates about the farm? Weekly, bi-weekly, monthly?
18. While taking COVID-19 precautions into consideration, would future community dinners be of interest to you, if/when they could occur safely?
19. Has volunteering at the farm enhanced your feelings of connectedness to the Kamloops urban ecosystem?
20. Are there any cultural or medicinal plants which you would like to see planted at the site? Would you be interested in participating in this process?
21. Do you identify as Indigenous and if so would you be interested in knowledge sharing with the Butler Urban Farm?
22. Any additional comments

APPENDIX B

KFPC Member Survey

1. Have you interacted with the farm this season? This could include: collecting produce from the farm, donating materials, volunteering, visiting etc.

Options: yes, no, elaborate in comment box

2. Are there any barriers to you volunteering or interacting with the farm? If yes, what might these barriers be. Select all that apply.

Options: No barriers, not enough free time, farm hours conflict with my schedule, difficulty with transport to site, lack of skills, unfamiliar with protocols, accessibility/mobility barriers

3. What do you believe are the strengths of the farm?

4. What do you believe are some challenges that the farm faces?

5. What would you like to see the farm look like next year? 5 years time?

6. What issues or gaps in our community do you believe the farm has the potential to fulfill?

7. How do you see the Butler Urban Farm Project aligning with the KFPC's vision of a local food system which is regenerative, sovereign, and just?

8. What do you believe are some of the causes of food insecurity in your community?

9. Which "big picture" objectives do you see the farm as having the potential to meet?

Options: climate change mitigation and adaptation, building community, education, community health and wellness, community development, green space, other

10. Do you see the Butler Urban Farm as an upstream or downstream (or hybrid) solution to household food insecurity? Upstream meaning, addressing some of the root causes of food insecurity - downstream meaning, addressing immediate need for food.

11. Are there any cultural or medicinal plants which you would like to see planted at the site? Would you be interested in participating in this process?

12. Do you identify as Indigenous and if so would you be interested in knowledge sharing with the Butler Urban Farm?

13. Do you see yourself becoming involved in this project in the future?

14. Any additional comments

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire for Other Urban Farms, Community Gardens, and Food Forests

1. Please give a short description of your project (including how long have you been operational, approximately how large is the site, approximately how many volunteers).
2. Where does the food from this project go? Is it open access for individuals to come pick themselves, or do volunteers pick it and then distribute it to the community? Or alternatively is the food only available to volunteers to harvest, or intended for sale?
3. Have you faced any issues with people damaging the site and plants, intentionally or accidentally?
4. What strategies have you used for volunteer engagement and retention?
5. What strategies have you used to gain support of the neighbors and wider community? Have you experienced any pushback against having the project or having the project in a particular location?
6. Have the vision and goals for this project changed substantially over time? If so, why?
7. Do you try to incorporate educational opportunities into your project? Do you do this through workshops, hands-on learning, classroom visits etc.?
8. Does your project have any initiatives which aim to increase growing past the borders of your garden/farm/food forest?
9. Have you tried any social enterprise initiatives or other strategies to secure more long-term funding?
10. If you have used a social enterprise model, how have you addressed prioritizing people over profit, and not letting the need and pursuit for funding overshadow the original social mandate?
11. What products and / or services have you had the most success with (ex. workshops, community composting, specific crops or plants)?
12. What initiatives did not meet expectations and why?
13. Has the Covid pandemic raised the profile and community role of your organization?
14. What challenges has Covid created for your organization?
15. How do you see climate change in your area affecting your organization and activities?
16. What were some of the main challenges your project faced and how did you address these (if not already discussed through previous questions)?