

THE Annual Report

2014-2015





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Who We Are

Mission

To get kids excited about wholesome, healthy food!



Vision

To build and maintain a healthy, empowered community that is engaged with our food system.

Core Values

- **Community:** To engage, strengthen and support communities in their ongoing conversations around food.
- **Food:** To celebrate the positive change that we can create through food.
- **Health:** To foster healthy bodies and minds through positive relationships with food.

Goals

- To provide an avenue for chefs and growers to get more involved in the community and to support food education.
- To provide children with the confidence, knowledge and enthusiasm to grow and prepare healthy, wholesome meals.
- To support and encourage the development and growth of food education for children and families.



Letter from our Board Chair



KAYLA SMITH
PRESIDENT &
BOARD CHAIR



Dear Growing Chefs! friends & partners,

2014/2015 was a hallmark year for Growing Chefs! Ontario, and none of this could have been achieved without the tireless work of our Executive Director, Andrew Fleet.

He continues to inspire all those around him to see the bigger picture - help the London community and its children to gain an appreciation for where our food comes from and keep us excited about cooking healthy food.

Through grants, sponsorships and personal giving campaigns we were also able to expand our staffing complement this past year. Andrew has created a dynamic, talented and engaged team that helped Growing Chefs! Ontario connect more children and families to our critically important food education programs. Thank you Sunni, Katherine, Anna and Chris!

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we would also like to thank all of our 40+ chef volunteers and over 125 community volunteers. From running programming, to leading fundraising initiatives, to helping with research we are forever grateful for the time and enthusiasm this incredible group of people bring to Growing Chefs! Ontario.

We know that the year ahead will be another very busy year. Our team is already preparing to launch another school year filled with wonderful programs that help connect our community to grow stronger and healthier. We feel very grateful for the journey that has brought us to this point.

We can't wait to see what delicious treats are in store for this year!

- Kayla Smith



Letter from our *Executive Director*



ANDREW FLEET

*Executive
Director
& founder*

*Dear Growing Chefs!
friends & partners,*

This past year has been, without a doubt, the biggest year Growing Chefs! has had to date. There has never been a more exciting time to be a part of this team.

In 2014-15 we welcomed a record number of new partners, funders, great new volunteers, and added new programming partnerships with community agencies. This progress wouldn't have been possible without

the support, hard work and dedication of the entire Growing Chefs! community. I would also like to single out a few people in particular.

This past year we were so fortunate to welcome Chef Katherine Puzara as a full-time member of our team. Chef Katherine is the lead chef for our School Project, Fresh Food Frenzy, and Growing Communities. Chef Katherine has helped to redesign and improve upon our workshops and lesson plans, and has worked very hard to challenge the perceived limitations of children and youth in the kitchen. Chef Katherine has taken the Growing Chefs!



experience to the next level and we could not be more excited and proud to have her at the helm of the Growing Chefs! Kitchen.

We are also extremely proud to welcome Sunni Vann in the role of our Projects Coordinator. We were so lucky that Sunni decided to do a placement with Growing Chefs! in 2014. We are even luckier that we were able to keep her on as a full-time team member. Sunni has been at the heart of everything Growing Chefs! this year, from communications, coordination, working on

(cont'd on following page)

Executive Director



*Letter
continued*



front lines, to making things happen behind the scenes - there has been no job too big or small! We are so blessed to welcome Sunni on our team this past year and moving forward.

This past March, we have also added Chef Chris Meloche to the Growing Chefs! staff team as the Lead Chef for The Beet Café. Chris has been volunteering with us as of 2008. Over the past 7 years, Chris has arguably put more volunteer time into Growing Chefs! than anyone. We are thrilled for Chris to take over The Beet for this summer's festival season and for our brand new hot lunch program this coming fall.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you. Whether you are a volunteer, partner, funder, cheerleader, or participant, thank you for believing in our team! Whether supporting us by attending a fundraiser, bringing your children to a workshop, telling a friend or a neighbour about us, clicking the like button on social media, making a personal donation, giving your time, energy and passion, or simply by reading this far - your support has been invaluable.

Thank you!





Just want to say how impressive your program is; so organized, great team spirit and support of each other and your passion for benefiting the many children you come in contact with. I'm proud to be a volunteer for such a worthwhile endeavour.

- Evelyn Hayman, Volunteer

As an educator, it didn't take long to see how empowering a Growing Chefs! session can be for students. Within minutes of the Growing Chefs! team stepping into a classroom, an environment of cooperation, engagement and hands on learning is in full effect. Just as impressive as the practical cooking component are the cross-curricular ties that cooking need. Things like measurement, the elements of design and even historical background are all part of the Growing Chefs! experience. With the dedication and talent of the Growing Chefs! team, it is a guarantee that all learning will be fun, practical, and delicious.

- Andrew Bell, teacher candidate practicum volunteer

A selection of what we've been cooking!



Heirloom beet, blood orange & fennel salad with student-made vinaigrette



Shredded pork tenderloin, cherry tomatoes, smoked jalapenos, quinoa, avocado & Slegers corn shoots



Miso honey stir fry with spring vegetables and classroom-grown micro greens



Crispy pancetta, sage and butternut squash risotto



Word in THE Kitchen



“ This is an amazing program that allows students to return to the roots of healthy eating and cooking, invaluable knowledge that will help them live healthy, happy lives! ”

- Grade 7 teacher
J.P. Robarts Public School

“ Growing Chefs! offers a unique hands-on learning experience that is absolutely necessary in a society where the obesity and diabetic rate are trending upwards. ”

- School Project teacher participant

“ The School Project had an impact on students for sure - students tried vegetables they had not even heard of before! They went home and tried to make salad dressing with their families, and now feel more aware of where our food comes from. They analyse their lunches and try to include local produce. ”

- Grade 3 teacher
St. Jude's Catholic School

“ There has been a consensus among students and staff that the students learned a great deal about food, how to prepare it and plate it. They also experienced a great sense of accomplishment in preparing, and plating the food they ate. ”

- Fred Polci,
School Project Champion

🌱 School Project 🌱

- What was once known as the Classroom Gardening Project has had an overhaul! Now redesigned as a full-school project, our team visits every class in each partner school. This new model also allows for schools to contribute time and effort in the coordination piece of the project so that no cost is passed on to students and families.
- With this new model, we will reach three times the number of students - that's 2,600 students up from 800. Now, 1,800 more children per year will have a chance to participate in our programming.
- All lesson plans have been redesigned, featuring brand new curriculum-linked activities, while still including some classic Growing Chefs! favourites. Each lesson also features recipes designed by Project Chef Katherine.

By the numbers:

Project Income

School Project & Fresh Food Frenzy Sponsorships

Top tiers

Westminster Community Foundation \$15,000.00

Western Charity Ball \$7,984.15

Richard & Shelley Baker Family Foundation \$5,000.00

Other tiers \$23,172.85

Total \$51,157.57

2,600+
students served

400+ volunteer hours

7 schools visited



Our
Projects

🌱 Fresh Food Frenzy 🌱

- For our field trip project, elementary school classes visit the Covent Garden Farmers' Market to learn about the importance of producer-based markets, healthy eating, and food preparation.
- Students tour the market, shopping for the ingredients of a multi-course meal that they will prepare and enjoy together.
- Participating classes make recipes that focus on seasonal cooking - from the tart apples and hearty squash risotto of autumn, to the spring tang of rhubarb and the snap of fresh asparagus.

Please see School Project page for Project Income.




40+ youth chef
apprentice hours

130+ volunteer hours

175+ youth employment
hours

350+ students served





“ Many students said
they have made their families
meals and there has been significant interest in
becoming chefs. Students were also able to cook
and eat “real” food! Students also have reported
that they have been able to work closer with peers
because of the positive experiences of
cooking together. ”

 *- School Project teacher participant*

Our Projects

Growing Communities

- This project offers fun, educational and hands-on cooking experiences, guided by professional chefs to children, youth and families. Growing Communities is offered in partnership with community agencies and youth groups in and around London.
- Program delivery is designed to constantly adapt in order to best meet the particular needs of each partner organization and their participants. Workshop themes have included everything from cooking on a budget, a celebration of local food, to a picnic - all made from scratch, of course!

By the numbers:

Project Income

Foundations & Grants	
<i>Growing Communities Fund</i>	\$5,514.00
Services & Contracts	
<i>Community Partners</i>	\$31,983.00
Total	\$37,497.00

150+ cooking
classes offered

15+ partner organizations

3,200+ participants



Our Projects

THE Beet Cafe

- The Beet is an educational, skill-building project for youth with a focus on healthy food preparation, hospitality and business development. Led by some of London's top chefs, youth staff lovingly prepare delicious, healthy food for school hot lunch programs and select events and festivals, all while learning invaluable life skills.
- The Beet Cafe has moved on from Chef Katherine's leadership in 2014 into the hands of our newest staff member - Chef Chris Meloche. Chef Chris has brought nearly 20 years of kitchen experience to the team. Welcome Chef Chris!

By the numbers:

Project Income

Foundations & Grants

Libro Community

Builder Grant

Walter J. Blackburn

Community Foundation

\$15,000.00

\$5,000.00

Food Sales

\$31,424.00

Total

\$51,424.00

1000+ youth
employment hours

6 festival stands

14 youth staff





Fill your bellies
and your hearts!

- *unofficial Beet motto.*

“ Best food at the
whole event!!! Congrats
to The Beet for doing
such a great job!

- *Yoda Olinyk,*
Owner of Yoda's
Private Catering

I love it!
I get to be submerged in the
positive festival atmosphere
and spend my work day
advocating for an organization
that is empowering children
to understand the value of
nourishing, sustainably sourced
food! It's such a fulfilling gig and
I'm glad to be learning along side
some pretty great people!

- *Noelle, Beet Cafe
youth staff*



Montessori
ACADEMY OF LONDON



*Looking
Forward*

to 2015-2016



The Beet Cafe joins forces with Montessori Academy of London!

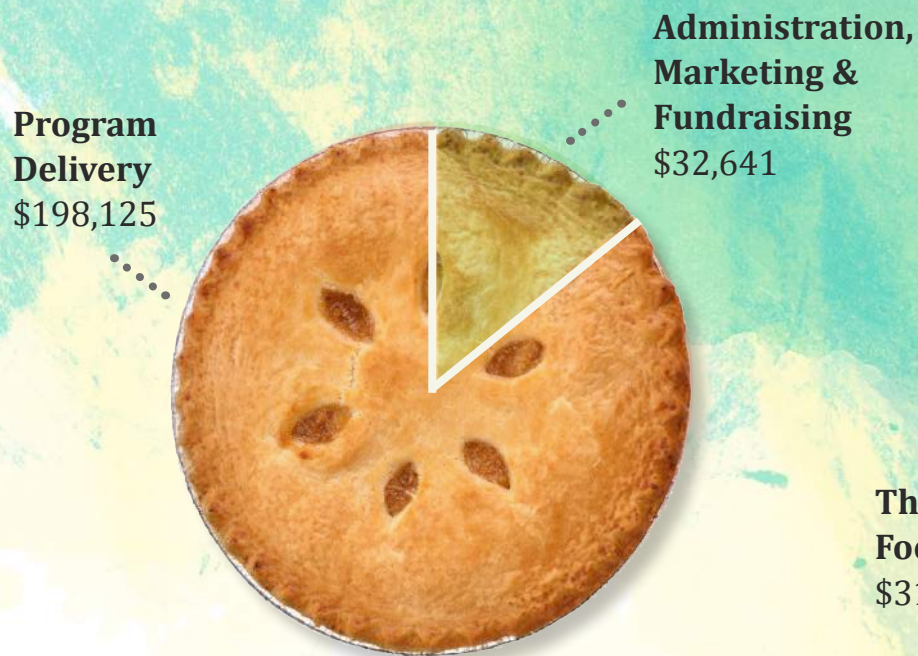
Starting September 2015, The Beet Cafe will launch the pilot of their brand new Hot Lunch Program. The Beet team is very excited to partner with our good friends at the Montessori Academy of London to provide meals for their Toddler and Casa programs.

The children have already had a taste of the menu during our June trial - and by the looks of the leftovers at the end of the day, it was a hit!

Statement *OF* Financial Position

FISCAL YEAR 2014–2015
(ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST DOLLAR)

EXPENSES

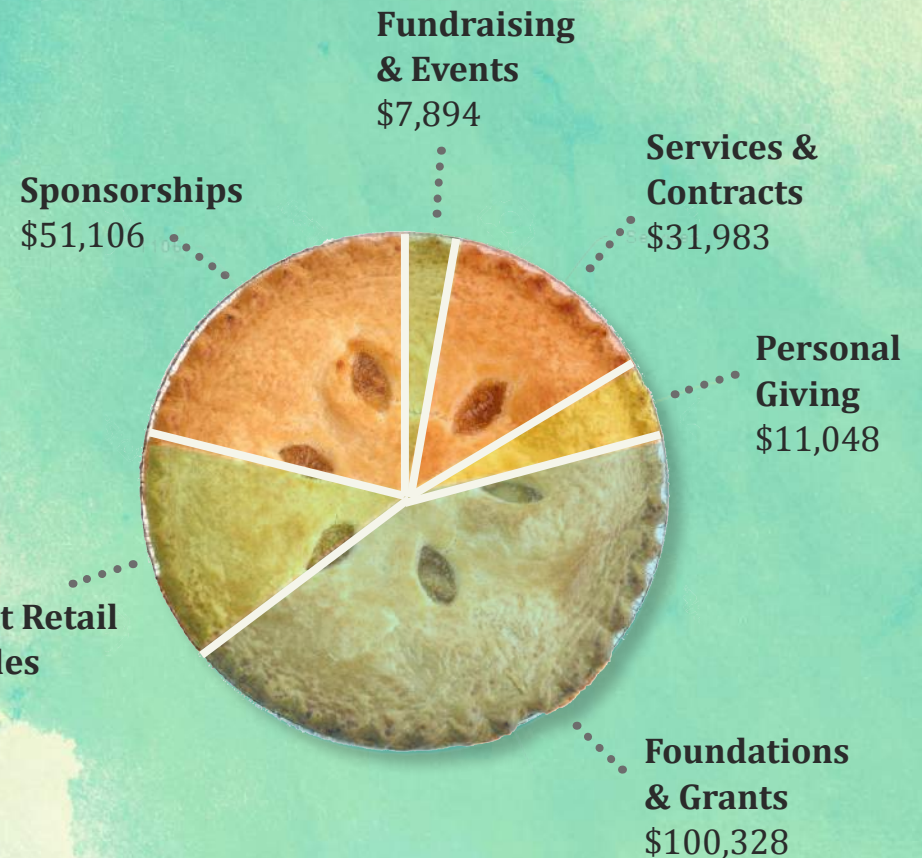


TOTAL: \$230,766

2014-15 Fiscal Year

FISCAL YEAR 2014–2015
(ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST DOLLAR)

INCOME



TOTAL: \$237,812

Share

Help us spread the word!

Find us on social media:

Twitter: @GrowingChefsON

Instagram: Growingchefsontario

Facebook: Growing Chefs! Ontario

How you can help

Volunteer

Growing Chefs! Ontario is a grassroots organization that could not function without the commitment of our volunteer community. We work to create a personalized volunteer experience - join our team today!

Donate

Make a personal donation or become a monthly donor.

Your contribution will:

- Help get kids excited about wholesome, healthy food
- Help connect local chefs with the community
- Help kids develop basic cooking skills to share with their families
- Help people understand the connection between food and their communities

Participate

Don't miss out on all the fun things we have going on - attend one of our events, throw your own, or help us with our fundraising campaigns! Look out for our new 1000 Apron Challenge, and another round of our raffle.

Sponsor

One of the aspects of Growing Chefs! that we are most proud of is the financial support we receive from local businesses and organizations.

Join our family and help us to lay the foundations for building a healthier community in years to come.

You can also become a Growing Chefs! Ontario Champion and help us to recruit sponsors! Try asking the businesses you frequent, or your local community organizations.

Be a part of
something
delicious!





❖ Thank You ❖

Dear Growing Chefs! supporters,

With another year comes another great big thank you to all of our partners, supporters and volunteers. For those of you who have worked closely with us during this year's big steps, we hope that you felt as if you were a key part of our team's success. We may be a small charity, but we always have the pleasure of feeling like we're steadily gaining speed, helped along by innumerable hands.

Because of the strong community that our supporters build around us, we feel that we're a part of something that is not only strong, but also so much bigger than we are. Each volunteer, friend and partner has given us valued guidance and a much appreciated helping hand. We feel that you are all a part of helping us work towards a future where all children are able to discover the joy of the kitchen. Here's to another great year ahead together!

FROM all of us at
Growing Chefs!



≡ Staff ≡

Andrew Fleet
Executive Director

Chef Katherine Puzara
**School Project,
Growing Communities
& Fresh Food Frenzy**

Chef Chris Meloche
The Beet Cafe

Sunni Vann
Projects Coordinator

Anna Carroll
**Youth Project
Coordinator**

Andrew Burmatoff
Youth Chef Apprentice

≡ Board Members ≡

Kayla Smith
(Fearless Leader)
President & Board Chair

Katie Burns
(Archivist/Record Keeper)
Secretary

Jim Hunking
(Financial Wizard)
Treasurer

Elsa Rose Eastabrook
(Yoga Teacher/Zen Master)
Co-Founder

Marc Gammal
(Navigator of Stormy Seas)
Past President & Business Advisor

Johanna Kaipainen
(Health & Literary Guide)
Registered Dietitian

Malcolm Scott
(First Phone Call Receiver)
Legal Council

Jessica Faria
(Life of the party)
Certified Event Planner

Cori Wiza
(HR extraordinaire)
HR Specialist

Andrew Wolwowicz
(Culinary Guru)
Chef

Thank you!

Anything Grows Seed Co.
Arva Flour Mill
Bio.Power
Bonafide Events Studio
Booch Organic Kombucha
Canadian School of Natural Nutrition
London Branch
Chatham-Kent Table
Cornerstone Classroom
Desi & Tess Elizabeth Boutique
Dorchester Horticultural Society
East London United Church Outreach
Eastabrook Yoga
EllipsisDigital
Epicure
Faith Tilk Memorial Fund
Fire Roasted Coffee Company
Forest City Beer Festival
Forest City Free School
Friends of the London Civic Garden
Complex
Friends of the Tillsonburg Public
Library
Grickle Grass Festival
Happy Rock Holistics
Home County Folk League
Heeman's Greenhouses & Strawberry
Farm
Hutton House
Hybrid Fitness
Investing in Children
Islamic Centre of Southwest Ontario

Jill's Table
Kiwanis Club of London
Libro Credit Union
London Public Library Landon Branch
Locomotive Espresso
London Children's Museum
London Community Foundation
London District Catholic School Board
LondonFuse
London InterCommunity Health Centre
London Middlesex Master Gardeners
Lululemon Athletica
Luna
McSmith's Organic Farm
Mama Deb's Kitchen
Middlesex Federation of Agriculture
Mike Fish of Hobbs & Co.
Milos' Craft Beer Emporium
Nature's Aura
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Ontario Edible Education Network
Optimist Club Of Thorndale
Patrick's Beans
Paul Paschink, Cast Iron
Pillar Nonprofit Network
Purdy Natural
Pure-Health Wellness Center
Red Sun Farms
Richard & Shelley Baker Family
Foundation
Scissorkitty Rock N Roll Hair
Simply Kept Catering
Slegers Greens
Sustain Ontario
Thames Valley District School Board
The Child and Youth Network

The Covent Garden Market
The Covent Garden Farmer's Market
The Hungary Butcher
The Holistic Health Diary
The Only On King
The Pristine Olive Tasting Bar
The Richard & Shelley Baker Family
Foundation
The Root Cellar Organic Cafe
The Springs Restaurant
Thorndale Agricultural Society
U-Turn Program
University of Western Ontario
Victoria P.S. School Council
Western Charity Ball
Western Fair Association
Western Fair Farmers' and Artisans' Market
Westminster Community Foundation
YMCA of Southwestern Ontario
Yoda's Private Catering
Yoga Shack
Digital Media Sponsor
Digital Echidna
Printing Sponsor
Sterling Marking Products



Consider supporting us in our efforts!

Visit www.growingchefsontario.ca/help-us-grow
for more information, or email us at
info@growingchefsontario.ca



Growing Chefs! Ontario is a registered charity based in London, Ontario.
We unite chefs, growers, educators and community members in children's food
education projects. Growing Chefs! Ontario has been incorporated since 2008.

Growing Chefs! Ontario

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 Growing Chefs! Ontario  @GrowingChefsON  [growingchefsontario](http://growingchefsontario.ca)

Charitable # 85895 9026 RR0001

