



2015-2016

THE Annual Report



GROWING  chefs!
CHEFS FOR CHILDREN'S  URBAN AGRICULTURE

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OUR MISSION

To get kids excited about wholesome healthy food!

OUR VISION

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

OUR 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 good, healthy cuisine.

To support and encourage the development and growth of food education for children and families.

Letter from our

Board Chair



SPENCER
SANDOR
President &
Board Chair

ourselves, and our families and... helps us prepare food that is healthy, tasty and affordable."

Although many of us view cooking and meal planning as basic skills, there are still those in our community who do not have access to food education, the knowledge, or the resources needed to purchase, prepare and consume healthy, affordable food. The London-Middlesex Health Unit reports 89% of local residents are not meeting their daily fruit and vegetable requirements.

The Food Policy Assessment reports 90% of the London-Middlesex community agrees that it is important that children, youth and young adults learn about food and the food system and recognizes Growing Chefs! as an organization worth investing in to promote food literacy and create lasting change in our local food system.

For example, our Fresh Food Frenzy program introduces students to local farmers and vendors at the Covent Garden Market to learn about locally produced food and the farming process from seed to market. Students then prepare a three-course meal using local farm and market fresh ingredients – and

of course they get to enjoy the fruits (and vegetables) of their labours!

Fresh Food Frenzy is open to any organization interested in participating and has become so popular that there is now a waiting list. Families who participate in the program report that their children bring home an increased interest in home cooking, a willingness to try new food, a desire to learn more, and most importantly, they want to share their excitement with the whole family!

Empowering people to prepare healthy, affordable and local food at home provides wide ranging opportunities for meaningful outcomes that can help improve our community. Skills and knowledge gained through food literacy initiatives such as those offered by Growing Chefs! can help lower household expenses, support local farmers and producers sustain and grow their business and create local jobs, and improve community health and wellbeing.

We have had a great year and we are looking forward to continuing to deliver food literacy programs. We couldn't do it without your support so on behalf of the whole team here at Growing Chefs! THANK YOU for helping us grow a healthy community!

Dear Growing Chefs! friends and partners,

Thank you all for the warm welcome to the Growing Chefs! family! I am thrilled to have the opportunity to be part of such a great organization and am excited to work with our amazing staff, volunteers, donors, and supporters in the community. I also want to thank the Board members who have departed this year – your passion and dedication to Growing Chefs! have set the bar high for the new and returning members.

This spring, we gained a clearer picture of our local food system with the release of the London-Middlesex Food Policy Assessment which was prepared by the London Community Foundation, London-Middlesex Health Unit, and London Food Bank. A key area of the report is food literacy which is "a set of skills that helps us plan, prepare and cook meals for

Letter from our

Executive Director



ANDREW FLEET

Executive
Director
& founder

Dear Growing Chefs! Community,

What a year! While it is so hard to believe that another year has already come and gone, we have accomplished a truly astounding amount in these past twelve months.

We hope that this report will give you some insight into the incredible work that the Growing Chefs! team has done and continues to do on a daily basis. I have the unique opportunity to watch this passionate, tireless, and above all dedicated team of staff and volunteers work their magic, day in and day out. I wish there was a

way to show you the enthusiasm and knowledge that they bring to each and every lesson, workshop, cooking class and event that they lead, and just how much of an impact they have on the young people in our community. My hope is that this report will give you a small glimpse into what I get to see day in and day out.

I am beyond thrilled about our new projects we will be launching this upcoming year as well. Please accept this letter as a formal invitation to come out and join us for one of our classes, workshops, or events this year, and become part of the movement to get our community excited about cooking and sharing good food together!

I would also like to take this opportunity to formally welcome our new Sous-Chef for The Beet Café, Christopher Large, as well as our new

Education Assistants Noelle Coughlin and Luke Despard-Young. We are so excited to welcome these wonderful people to our team. Not only is our staff growing, but this year we also welcomed over twenty new volunteers to the team. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts to everyone who has dedicated their time and energy to our organization. We are so excited to see our team growing.

Finally I want to say thank you to all of our dedicated funders and community partners. Thank you for sharing our vision to build a healthy community. We couldn't do what we do without all you. Thank you for believing in Growing Chefs!

See you all in the kitchen!

- Andrew





Word in THE Kitchen



“ Growing Chefs! Ontario is one of the most innovative creative and rewarding programs in all of Ontario. I can only imagine the impact you have had on the many happy little Sprouts who have walked through your doors, and the difference they in turn have made in their own homes and families. Keep up the great work nurturing the Earth and Her children! ”

- Maggie Fraser

Can I tell you something? This was a great salad. Actually, this was the best salad ever.

- Grade 4 student

“ The magic chefs are here! ”

I didn't think I liked fruits and vegetables, but now I know that I like to try them!

- Grade 3 student

“ This is such a worthwhile project! Students get hands-on experience cultivating and creating food! There are so many benefits to the program: understanding of nutrition, learning math in an authentic way, learning how to challenge taste buds, and growing a garden. Students learn that it is really easy to eat good foods that are healthy. The biggest take-away is the students' joy in experiencing success and being able to transfer these skills and teach their families about growing, preparing and eating nutritiously. ”

- School Project teacher, St Marguerite d'Youville Catholic School

“ With the fast food crisis that our kids are facing today, Growing Chefs! Ontario is a light at the end of the tunnel. It allows students to take control of their eating and ways to make healthy choices. Many of our students only know about fast food options, so this program is a necessary means of delivering important information. ”

- Grade 1 Teacher

Our Projects

School Project

Our school-based projects encompass all of our educational programming done in partnership with the Thames Valley District School Board and the London District Catholic School Board. This includes Fresh Food Frenzy, our field trip program in partnership with the Covent Garden Market, and our in-class, curriculum-supported food literacy and cooking lessons. We were thrilled to grow the project again this year and visit such a large number of students. However, we are currently seeking ways to further expand our project and serve the thousands of children on our programming waitlist.

"Our students gained a greater sense of confidence in being able to prepare simple healthy meals and snacks. Often they go home and wait for parents to come home. They now know they have options in food prep. Introducing them to different flavours and foods also created greater interest and enthusiasm. It was so incredibly inclusive. Our hardest to serve students achieved great success and were happy. Thank you!"
- School Project Teacher, St. Sebastian Christian School

Project Income

Title Sponsors

Westminster College Foundation	\$15,000
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation	\$10,000
32 Additional Community Partners	\$40,859
Total raised in sponsorship program	\$65,859

Total project income

\$132,573

3,000+
students served

360+ volunteer hours

8 schools visited



Our Projects

Growing Communities

Growing Communities cooking workshops are delivered in partnership with dozens of community groups across London and area. This year, due to a \$10,000.00 grant from Great-West Life/London Life/Canada Life we were able to conduct 36 workshops with seven new community organizations across the city who would otherwise have been unable to access these services.

"The Growing Chefs! program has helped our son in many ways. We enrolled our son Westly in Growing Chefs! to familiarize himself with a kitchen setting so he could start to learn to cook more at home. Westly now has attended ten classes since 2014 and he has learned great habits about cleanliness, organization and that everything has an order in which it must be done to be successful. He enjoys all of the foods he has made and has tried many things he has never had before. The staff are great with the children and are very organized. They are great at getting all the children involved and getting them to try all the different foods they have made. This is a great program and my son will be a regular until he is too old to sign up, then maybe be a volunteer, and one day join the team. We thank you, Growing Chefs!"

- Vanessa Mack, parent

Project Income

Foundations & Grants	
<i>Growing Communities Fund</i>	\$20,958.54
Services & Contracts	
<i>Community Partners</i>	\$31,520.00
TOTAL	\$52,478.84

140+ cooking
classes offered

20+ partner organizations

3,500+ participants



Our Projects

THE Beet Cafe

The Beet Cafe is our youth employment program - a skill-building project for youth with a focus on healthy food preparation, hospitality and business development. This year, we have continued with our summer youth employment project with our food stand at summer festivals. This year also marked the launch of our scratch-made lunch program for the children of the Montessori Academy of London Toddler and Casa (preschool) programs and The London Waldorf School, as well as the London Children's Museum summer camps and London Girls Rock Camp. We are thrilled with how the program has been received, and have already reached capacity in our kitchen facility. However, more than a dozen additional schools have inquired about the service.

"The Hot Lunch program has been a wonderful addition to the Casa and Toddler classrooms this year. The children have had the opportunity to try so many new foods as well as practise their practical life skills daily while setting the classroom tables, serving themselves a variety of foods, and being a part of clean up after each delicious lunch...The children loved the delicious pancakes, turkey sausage and hashbrowns. Thank you!"

- Lesley Prentice, Montessori Academy of London
Teacher and Site Supervisor

Project Income

Festival Food Sales &
Hot lunch program contracts

TOTAL

\$169,960.61



Montessori
ACADEMY OF LONDON



LONDON GIRLS
ROCK CAMP

1700+ youth
employment hours

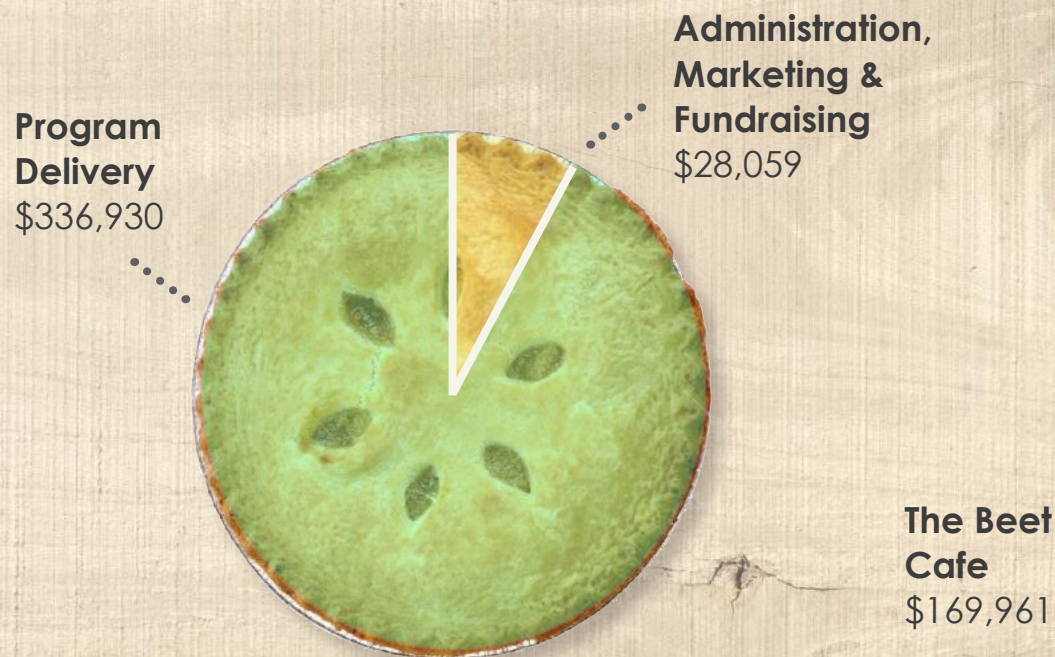
7 festival stands

15 youth
staff



Statement *of* Financial Position

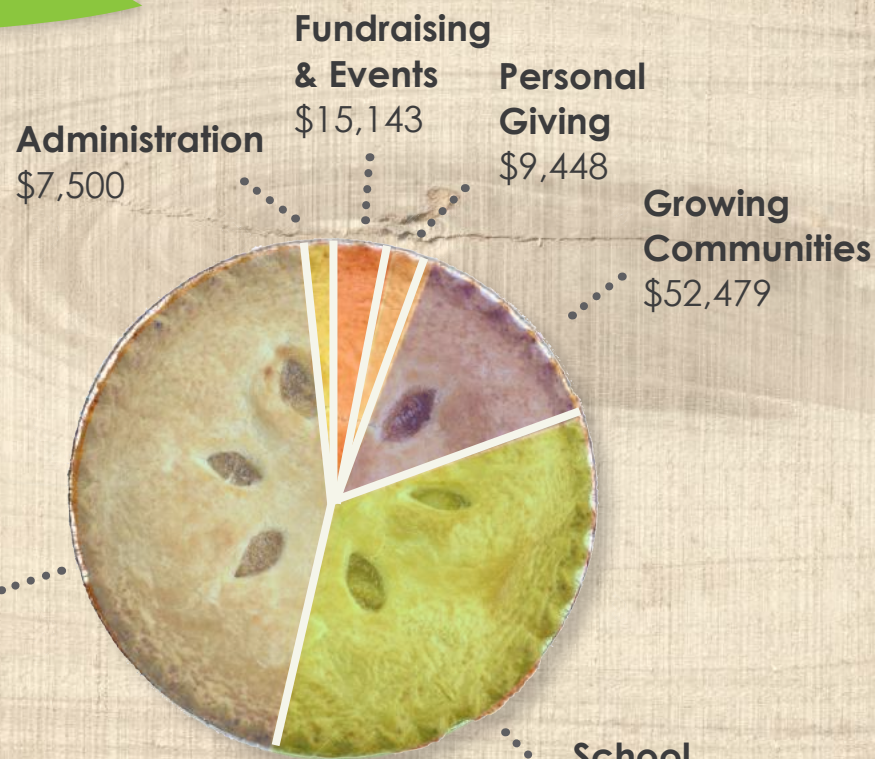
2015-16
*Fiscal
Year*



Total \$364,989

EXPENSES

(ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST DOLLAR)



Total \$387,104

INCOME

(ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST DOLLAR)

Strategic Plan

This was the first full year of our newly developed three year strategic plan. Here's what we've been working on!



Thank you
Sterling
Marking
Products!

Thank you
Meals on
Wheels
London!

VOLUNTEERS

Goal: To create and maintain an engaged and dedicated community of volunteers.

This year we: implemented several strategies to better highlight the work of our volunteer team, with a focus on our returning and long-term volunteers, as well as designed and implemented a new volunteer orientation process.

Next year we: want to grow our volunteer base to include more student opportunities, create more workplace volunteer opportunities, and improve our volunteer scheduling strategies.

FUNDING

Goal: For our financial situation to be stable and diverse, ultimately ensuring sustainability.

This year we: found a new chair for our Fundraising Committee, which has now grown to 9 members, and is still recruiting additional members. We have developed non-monetary community partnerships with more than 15 community partners. We also met our fundraising goals for the year - hurray!

Next year we: need to improve upon building our personal donor base.

PROGRAMMING

Goal: To ensure programs are meeting the needs of London community stakeholders.


This year we: increased the number of children and youth we reached to just over 6000 in 2015-16.

We have also secured a Growing Chefs! vehicle (to help increase our programming capacity) by means of a partnership with Meals on Wheels and Sterling Marking Products.

We are also very proud to have been named a finalist in the Pillar Community Innovation Awards.

Next year we: need a new home base for our four successful food education projects, which cannot continue to expand in our current locations. The capacity to run multiple projects out of one location will help to make our projects more cost effective, reduce long wait lists, and will allow us to create valuable learning opportunities for community members that we can't currently provide.





How you can help

As a small charity, without the help of our incredible group of supporters and donors and partner organizations we wouldn't be able to do the work that we do. Here's how you can help too!

- **VOLUNTEER**

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

- **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.

- **PARTICIPATE**

Don't miss out on all the fun things we have going on - attend one of our adult cooking workshops, our annual spring fundraising dinner at The Springs Restaurant, or join in for one our fundraising campaigns! Sign up for our newsletter via our website to make sure you don't miss a thing.

- **DONATE**

You can help us work with more children and address our 11,000 child waitlist by making 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

Be a part of
something
delicious!



Board

Spencer Sandor
President & Board Chair

Jim Hunking
Treasurer

Stephanie Ayres
Secretary

Elsa Rose Eastabrook

Geoff Curphey

Jordan Hypes

Malcolm Scott

Katie Van Den Berg

Andrew Wolwovicz

*Board members who have
departed our team this year:*

Katie Burns
Jessica Faria
Johanna Kaipainen
Kayla Smith
Cori Wiza

Staff

Andrew Fleet
Executive Director

Chef Katherine Puzara
School Projects,
Growing Communities

Noelle Coughlin
Education Assistant,
School Projects

Luke Despard-Young
Chef Assistant,
School Projects

Sunni Vann
Projects Coordinator

Chef Chris Meloche
The Beet Cafe

Chris Large
Sous Chef,
The Beet Cafe

Anna Carroll
Project Coordinator,
The Beet Cafe

Andrew Burmatoff
Youth Chef Apprentice,
The Beet Cafe

Thank You

Dear Growing Chefs! supporters,

Yet again we've come to the other side of a rewarding year and once more we have our incredible community to thank for seeing us through. So many of you have been a part of the changes, challenges and celebrations that this year has held.

We've reached more children, youth and families than ever before, we've made new friends and partnerships, our staff is growing, and we've moved to a new office home. We can't wait to see what next year will hold, and we thank you in advance for sharing this journey with us.

Thank you for your time, your dollars, your enthusiasm and your commitment to helping us connect our community to their kitchens, dinner tables, and the edible bounty that Southern Ontario has to offer. Here's to another marvellous year ahead!



all of us at
Growing Chefs! Ontario

Thank you!

Agape Foundation of London
Antler River School on Chippewa
on the Thames
Anything Grows Seed Company
Bio.Power
Bonafide Events Studio
Booch Organic Kombucha
Boys And Girls Club of London
BPM Fitness
C-K Table
Cafe of Life Chiropractic Studio
Canadian Culinary Federation
London Branch
Canadian School of Natural Nutrition
Charles & Jill Wright
Cornerstone Alternative Centre
Downtown London
East London United Church Outreach
Eco-Logic Nursery
Fanshawe College
Field Gate Organics
Fire Roasted Coffee Company
First-St Andrew's United Church
Forest City Free School
Friends of the London Civic Garden Complex
Frisa Farms
Great-West Life/London Life/Canada Life
Grickle Grass Festival
Habitual Chocolate
Healthy Kids Community Challenge
Heeman's
Historic Arva Flour Mill & Store
Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire
Islamic Centre of Southwest Ontario

Jill's Table
Jill Wilcox Foundation
Joyce Farms
JP Robarts Public School Breakfast Program
Kiwanis Club of Forest City-London
Lambeth and Community Harvest Festival
Libro Credit Union
Local Dairy
Locomotive Espresso
London Children's Connection
London Children's Museum
London Community Foundation
London Community Resource Centre
LondonFuse
London InterCommunity Health Centre
London Middlesex Master Gardeners
London Waldorf School
Maple Leaf Foods fund, a fund
within London Community Foundation
Maria Luisa de Moreno International
Foundation
Meals on Wheels London
Metropolitan United Church
Middlesex-London Health Unit
Mimnagh Law
Momos at the Market
Montcalm Secondary School
Montessori Academy of London
Mountsfield Public School
Museum London
Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre
Old East Village Community Association
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Optimist Club Of Byron
Patrick's Beans
Parkway Garden Centre
Pillar Nonprofit Network
Princeton Library
Pure-Health Wellness Centre/

Shulman Weightloss
Shangrila Yoga
Slegers Living Organic Greens
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
TD GenNext Committee
The Clark Family Foundation
The Covent Garden Market
The Covent Garden Farmer's Market
The Hungary Butcher
The Pristine Olive Tasting Bar
The Richard & Shelley Baker Family Foundation
The Root Cellar
The Springs Restaurant
Thorndale Agricultural Society
Thorndale Optimists
TOOK (The Only On King)
United Way of Chatham-Kent
University Heights Public School
UnLondon Digital Media Association
Western Fair District
Western Fair Farmers' and Artisans' Market
Westminster College Foundation
YMCA of Western Ontario
Yoda's Kitchen/Glassroots

Digital Media Sponsor

Digital Echidna

Printing Sponsor

Sterling Marking Products

Community
Supporters

AND Partners



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.

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