



Education
Programs
2023/2024



WESTERN FAIR
district
PARTNERS IN FOOD & AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION



GROWING **Chefs!**

Growing Chefs! Ontario Impact Report - Garden Programs





London LUCIOUS

Thank you to all of our sponsors!
Winter Edition 2024: January 19 - February 11

In 2022, Growing Chefs! Ontario purchased the local Londonlicious Festival and it now runs as a nonprofit. The primary aim of the reimagined festival is to enhance a strong, local food economy, with fantastic local restaurants and the best locally grown products at the heart. The festival spotlights what is unique and delicious in London, Ontario.

The Londonlicious Festival will support us in realizing our vision of a healthy community that is engaged with our food system! All sponsorship of the bi-annual festival also supports our children's education projects.



For more information on the new
Londonlicious Festival visit www.londonlicious.ca

Notes from the Field!

Through our greenhouses, learning gardens and food forest, as well as visiting school and community garden projects, we've been able to deliver dozens of garden programs since the start of summer. We've worked with Childreach, the London Public Library, Indwell, JA Camp, the Western Fair District, Kensal Park French Immersion, the City of London and more to deliver these hands-on and impactful programs. We were also able to build on our partnership with the South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre to provide access to our free community food boxes over the summer months, allowing uninterrupted support to the families we reach through the school year in partnership with the Ontario Student Nutrition Program - Southwest Region.

Gardens can teach us about seasons, ecosystems, and how to grow food. But more than that, gardens allow us to build bridges between cultures and ability levels, create connections, share memories and exchange knowledge. We take pride in being able to facilitate programs for english language learners and newcomers who exchange vocabulary words with us, share memories of their favourite recipes, and express their excitement to see a vegetable or herb growing in our garden that they haven't been able to find in Canada yet. Our Garden Programs Coordinator Ilana searches out rare and culturally-significant seeds that represent the diverse backgrounds of Londoners, and makes sure she saves and shares them as much as possible. Some of these include Palestinian kusa squash, Lebanese za'tar, Caribbean seasoning peppers, Chinese and Turkish varieties of eggplant, and many more fragrant herbs and culturally relevant greens. There's nothing we love more than bringing people together through food!

Keep reading for a taste of what we've had growing on in our gardens lately!

- Christy Cook, Education Projects Manager



Our Know Your Roots Campers loved exploring our Growing Community Gardens on a garden scavenger hunt!

They tasted new flavours, practiced their photography skills, and got up close and personal with pollinators!



Program spotlight: Children's Gardening Program!

For the second summer in a row, we partnered with Childreach to welcome toddlers and their parents to our HQ Learning Garden for our Children's Gardening Program series. For four weeks, little ones and their families explored with us, got their hands dirty, munched on garden snacks, and expanded their vocabulary! Lessons centred around the parts of plants, the things plants need to grow, the pollinators and animals that call our garden home, and exploring our senses through play and games.

One of our families shared with us that by the end of the series, their young gardener (pictured below on the right) convinced them to install a raised garden bed in their backyard, which they check on everyday to water, make mud pits for worms, and observe the insects that are living in the habitat they created. It's stories like these that keep us growing!






Dig in!
It's harvest time
in the garden!




Testimonials



“The program was well thought out with lots of visuals and hands-on experience. Ilana and Lauren adapted the program on short notice because of the rain so that it could be indoors. They also came on an earlier date to look at our garden so the program could feature our own edible plants. Our English Conversation participants were given time to ask questions and share their own knowledge. I know they were impressed with the depth of knowledge Ilana and Lauren have and especially appreciative of Ilana's familiarity with Arabic and Spanish. We can't thank them enough!”

- Frances C, Literacy Facilitator, London Public Library



“In-person gardening is awesome! My little girl can see and touch the real plants!”



- Miya C, Children's Gardening Program

The 2023-2024 School Food Education Project
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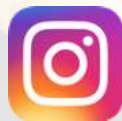
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