



At the Nelson Food Cupboard, we love **Summer** because our doors are constantly swinging open to welcome people bringing in their summer bounty. Our food bank shelves are loaded with fresh fruit and veggies grown in our own Garden Program or by generous community members or gleaned through our Harvest Rescue program, and our Good Food Tuesdays class stays busy creating new recipes from all this goodness.

Our community members clearly appreciate the access to all the fresh food; they regularly thank us and tell us of all the salads, stir-fries and smoothies they make.

Read on through this newsletter for more information about our programs, ways to contribute, and upcoming events.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Report Card on Homelessness for Nelson BC

The Nelson Committee on Homelessness' recently released Annual Report Card is an excellent, reader-friendly booklet that demonstrates the challenging housing reality that many low income people in our community face through statistical information and personal stories. The official vacancy rate in October, 2015 (when it was last recorded) was 0%, the average cost of a one bedroom rental this spring was \$938! The report is chock full of enlightening statistics relating to Nelson's homeless residents, the housing market, social service use in the community and the ever increasing costs of living in BC, and certainly worthwhile to at least skim through.

It was researched and prepared by the Nelson Committee on Homelessness, a volunteer committee of service agencies, City and federal government representation and concerned citizens dedicated to long-term solutions to poverty and homelessness in Nelson BC.

Take a look at the report here: <http://nelsoncares.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/FINAL-DRAFT-of-8th-annual-report-card-1.pdf> or pick up a print copy at Nelson CARES, 521 Vernon Street.

## Growing Food for our Community

Over the last few months, our gardeners have planted and nurtured an impressive garden that is yielding bushels of vegetables and herbs that are helping to stock the shelves of our food bank. Peas, kale, chard, broccoli, green onions, lettuce and our first crop of strawberries have been harvested.

We've had a diverse crew of gardeners helping out this year, including volunteers, supported employees and school classes. The supported employees are part of the Thrive program offered by the Kootenay Career Development Society. They are working under the supervision of the garden coordinator and their job coach to learn new skills to help prepare them for employment, as well as acquiring gardening knowledge and getting to take home some of the produce they grow.

Everyone is welcome to join the program as a volunteer and participate in the weeding, watering, harvesting and the last of the infrastructure creation projects. If you are interested in playing in the dirt, please join us Monday, Wednesday or Friday mornings from 9:00 to 11:30. You can call Kim ahead of time at 354-1633 or just drop in.

**Our garden will be featured on the Edible Garden Tour on Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup> from 9am – noon**, so that will be a great time to stop by and see what's growing and hear some positive stories of the community that's developing around the garden.



### Weeds are Wonderful

Or so thinks our Garden Coordinator, Kim Charlesworth, who is offering four workshops this summer to teach people practical ways to use and eat many common garden weeds. In July, she taught participants natural remedies for garden fungus and pests, medicinal uses of horsetail – a weed all Nelsonsites seem to have in abundance, and how to make dandelion tea. Coming up on Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> is 'Making Cosmetics from Weeds' and on August 17<sup>th</sup> the class will focus on cooking and making salads from edible weeds. **The workshops are free and open to all members of the community**, so here's your chance to learn how weeds can be wonderful. Workshops are at our garden on the corner of Hoover and Ward from 10:30 – 12:00.

## Good Food Tuesdays are all about Good Food

Garlic scape pesto, Japanese vegetable fritters, kale salad, quinoa beet salad. These are just a few of the delicious dishes participants in our Good Food Tuesdays cooking program have been making this summer. Each session focuses on making meals based on seasonal produce, but summer is definitely the most exciting season when the choices of fresh produce are so wide open.

Participants in the program also learn kitchen skills, share tips on cooking on tight budgets, and enjoy the meals they make together. They finish the program and tell us how inspired and confident in the kitchen they've become and that they are making healthier meals. One of the participants in our spring session said, "I've changed my diet a lot - I'm making better choices and I've learned that cooking from scratch is a lot healthier."

Offering a social experience in a safe, healthy environment is another important aspect of the program because we know many people living on low incomes often feel socially isolated – they lack the social opportunities that happen in work places and places that cost money to attend, such as gyms and coffee shops. So we're gratified when participants tell us that cooking together as a team and the sense of community and group support they feel around the kitchen cook island and lunch table are highlights of the program.

In September we'll be offering a four part food preserving workshop to teach community members how to take advantage of the early fall bounty by canning and drying fruits and vegetables. If you'd like to participate, call Kim Watt, our Food Skills Coordinator at 354-1633 for more information.

### Our Wish List

- Food Processor
- Toaster Oven
- Plug-in Kettle
- Immersion Blender
- Office Chair

If you have any of these items that you are ready to pass on, please give Kim a call at 354-1633 and we will put them to good





## Making Sure no Harvest Goes to Waste

Harvest Rescue volunteers have had a busy month gleaning fruit from backyard gardens in and around Nelson. The season started with a Grandmother Star cherry pick in Blewett, then the raspberries and currants ripened, and now the transparent apples and early plums are flourishing. Volunteers are also picking up weekly donations of apricots and peaches from Nathalie's Fruit Stand at 1 Mile.

Volunteers get to take home a share of the produce and the rest is brought to the Nelson Food Cupboard and given out through our food bank. Later in the season when harvests are more abundant, fruit will also be shared through other social service agencies, low-income housing buildings and youth programs.

If you are interested in participating as a volunteer or fruit donor this season please contact Emily, our program coordinator at [harvestrescue@gmail.com](mailto:harvestrescue@gmail.com) or call (250)551-8343.

- If you have a tree you'd like picked, please try to call us one week in advance so volunteers can be coordinated.
- If you'd like to volunteer, you're welcome to take home approximately one third of the produce – great for making jam, pies or freezing for winter smoothies.



### **A Note from One of our Community Members**

*“Just wanted to share that since I come here (the Nelson Food Cupboard), the quality of food has been a game changer in my present hungry pre-menopause situation. Those meals (prepared foods from the Hume Hotel’s kitchen) and the vegetables has improved my level of energy, it uplifts my spirit, gives me more focus to think more clearly to find solutions to remedy my condition. Thank you so much.”*

## Announcements

### Become a Perennial Partner

You can make a difference in our community all year round by supporting our programs through monthly financial donations.

Join our 'Perennial Partner Program' we have with the Bank of Montreal to facilitate monthly donating through direct debits.

Benefits include:

- It's convenient, you never have to write a cheque again,
- You won't receive regular fund raising solicitation from us,
- It may be easier for you to budget for smaller monthly contributions, than an annual donation, and
- We can better fund our programs.

Call us to set up a plan that works for you.

**Board Members Wanted** – We are currently looking for two people to join our board of directors. Requirements include a commitment to our vision and mission, a contribution of at least ten hours of time per month, and ideally some relevant experience, such as human resource management, policy development, or previous board experience. Call us to learn more about this opportunity from one of our Board Co-chairs.

### Stay connected

We'd like to send you our seasonal newsletters via email. Please let us know your email address at: [foodcupboard@shawbiz.ca](mailto:foodcupboard@shawbiz.ca).

Like us on [Facebook](#) and receive regular updates on our programs and activities.

### Nelson Food Cupboard Hours of Operation:

We are open to the public Mondays & Wednesdays 9am - 1pm or by appointment, however staff are on site working most week days, so please call for information or assistance.