



# 2016 Annual Report

The Compost Education Centre (CEC) is a project of the Victoria Compost and Conservation Education Society which is a not-for-profit, charitable organization.

Started in 1992 by the Fernwood Community Association, the CEC provides composting and conservation education to Capital Regional District (CRD) residents with the goals of reducing waste and improving local soils through the use of compost. The CEC promotes organic gardening as a means of reducing the health and environmental effects of chemical gardening practices as well as promoting the health, environmental and social benefits of local food production.



*Celebrating 25 Years  
of Composting & Conservation Education*





# 2016 Highlights



## For the Love of Soil Fundraiser Launch

The 1st annual Spring Fundraiser, *For the Love of Soil*, was held April 12th at the Fernwood Inn, offering the community a chance to give back to the earth while having fun, listening to uplifting live music, chatting with friendly folks and bidding on fantastic silent auction items. Proceeds from the fundraiser directly funded our school workshops and projects such as the *Healing City Soils*. This kind of community support allows the CEC to continue to expand our reach in educating children and adults about the importance of soil conservation, composting and creating and sustaining local food systems.

## Healing City Soils

*Healing City Soils* (HCS) is a partnership between the Victoria Compost Education Centre and Royal Roads University BSc in Environmental Science Program. In 2016 HCS offered free soil testing for heavy metals such as lead, arsenic and cadmium at 137 garden sites across Victoria and Esquimalt to support people who are interested in growing food in their backyards, front yards, boulevards and community gardens. In addition to site testing, the students created an open-access soil health quality map highlighting areas where heavy metals may need to be addressed before growing food. This map is paired with factsheets and beginner-level soil science workshops in order to empower people with the knowledge and skills to grow food safely or to heal their soil with compost, plants and mushrooms.



## One Million

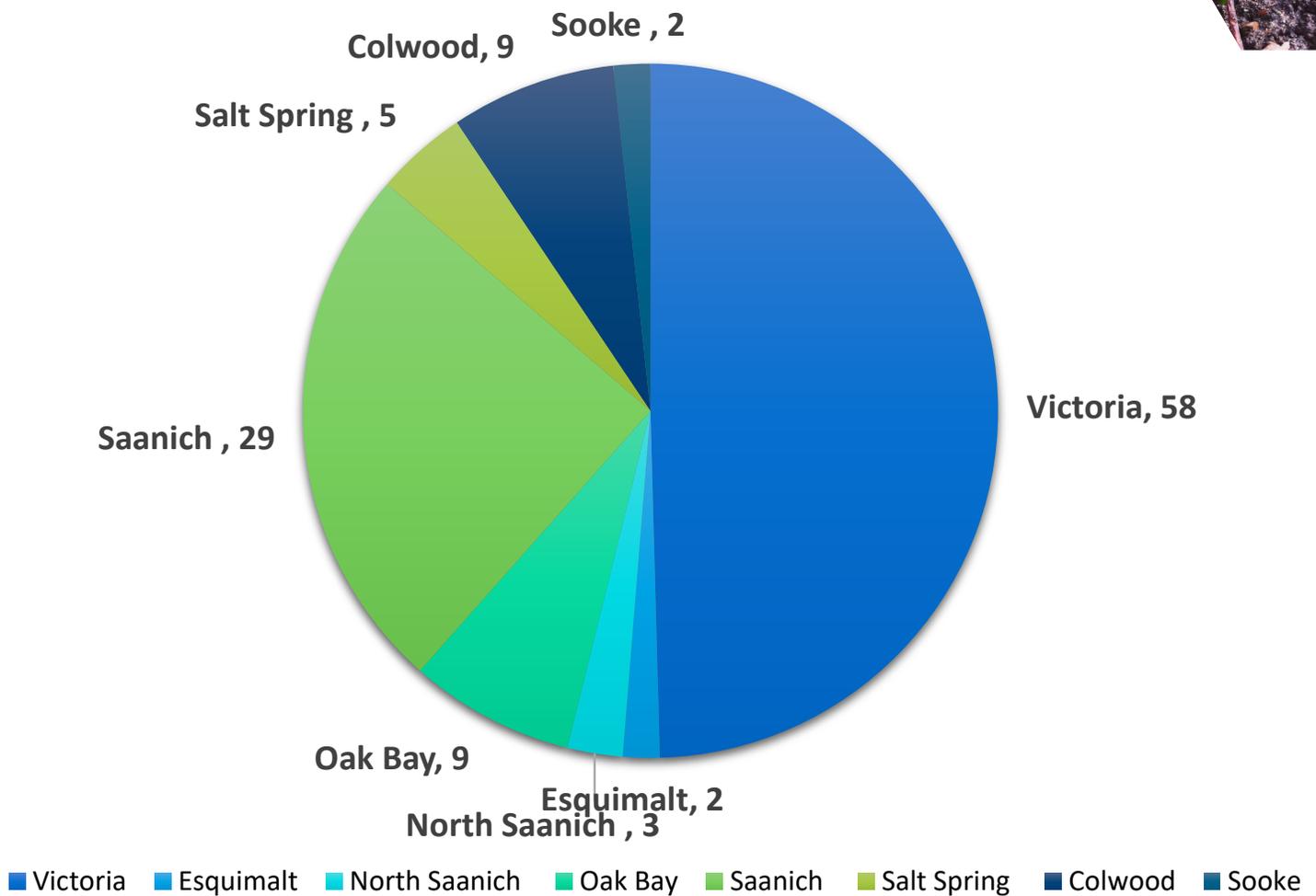
In 2016, The Centre celebrated reaching one million residents with the CEC's message of composting and conservation since it began operating in 1992. This milestone was achieved on the heels of its 25th anniversary, which the CEC celebrated throughout the year, but in particular, in the spring of 2017. Since 1992, over 50,000 backyard composters and food waste digesters have been distributed to CRD residents in support of the 2006 ban of yard waste and the 2015 food waste ban to the landfill.

# Education Programs

- ◆ In 2016 we continued to teach thousands of children and adults about composting, soil, and growing food.
- ◆ We taught over 8,000 adults in 55 workshops and 25 community outreach events, and presented 153 school programs to 2,825 students and teachers.



## School Programs by Municipality

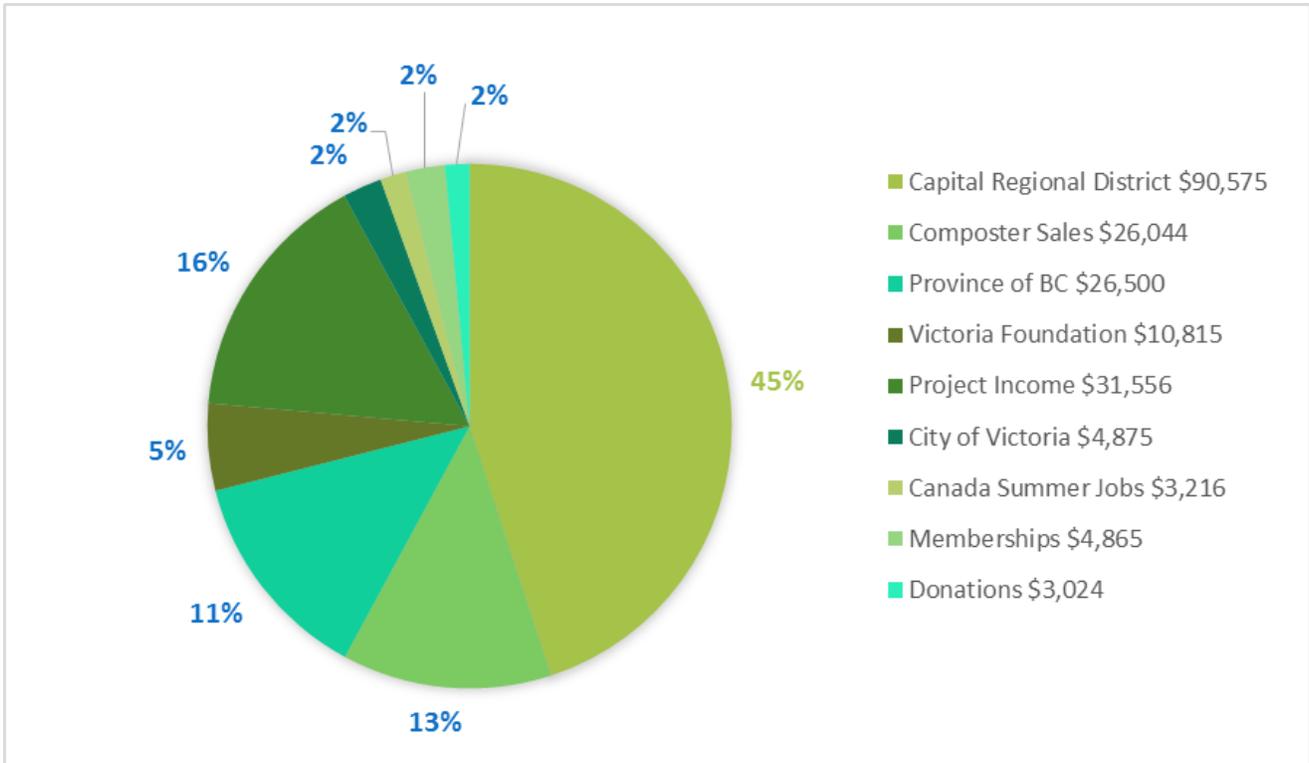


## What students are saying about our programs:

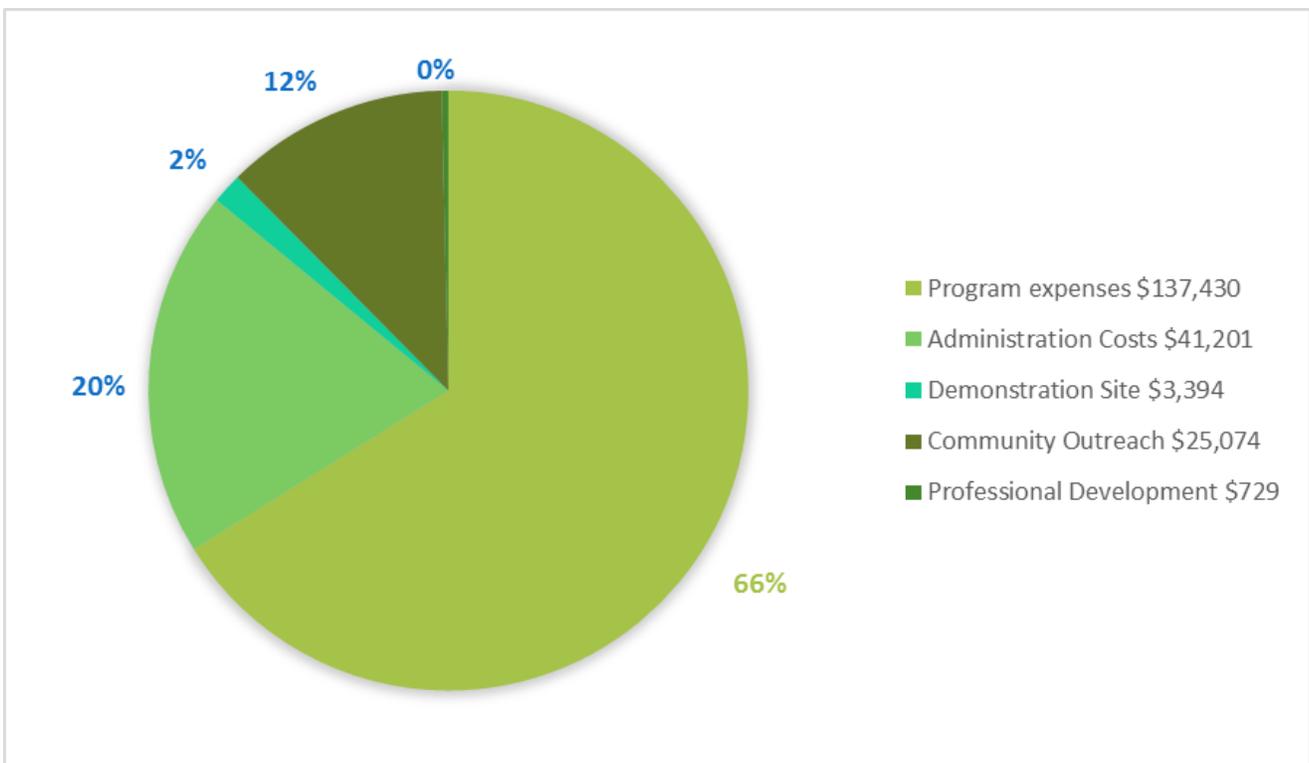
- ◆ “Thank you Kayla for inviting us to your garden. We loved many plants in the garden. The following list are our favourites: the flowering toilette, eating sorrel, spoon-fork rain chime, the fish were cute, mason bees, meeting Bing and Comfort Comfrey. Thank you for sharing!
- ◆ “We loved learning about worms: I loved digging in the dirt, looking through the soil and holding the red wiggler worms!

# 2016 Financials

## 2016 TOTAL REVENUE \$201,470



## 2016 TOTAL EXPENSES \$207,828



To request a full copy of the CEC's unaudited financial statements please email [info@compost.bc.ca](mailto:info@compost.bc.ca)

# Fundraising and Donor Recognition

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support from our funders, community partners, and Compost Club members who help us to deliver quality educational programming within our vibrant Capital Regional District. In addition to funds received from the Capital Regional District and the City of Victoria, the following sources supported our funding in 2016:

## Funders

- Capital Regional District
- City of Victoria
- Province of British Columbia
- 1% For The Planet Foundation Flow Through Fund
- Horne Coupar Law
- Hummingbird Foundation
- TD Friends of the Environment
- Victoria Foundation
- HRDCS (Canada Student Summer Jobs Program)

## Additional Revenue

- Organic Plant Sale
- Sales of composters
- Event Fundraising
- School programs
- Community workshops
- Memberships
- Donations

## Cash and In-kind Donations

- Black Press
- D.I.Y Fungi
- Hoyne Brewery
- Big Barn Garden Centre
- Borden Mercantile
- Ellice Recycle
- Danica Nursery
- Dig This
- Fernwood NRG
- Fernwood Community Association
- Fernwood Inn
- Garden Works
- GeoBC
- Little Elf Garden Centre
- Meadow Oak Nursery
- Mason Street City Farm
- Royal Roads University
- Van Isle Water Systems
- Victoria Aquaponics
- Sooke Voice News

## Summary of Programs and Services

In 2016, the CEC delivered 153 school programs to 2,825 children from Preschool to Grade 12, and facilitated 45 community workshops and learning events on topics from *Soil Science 101*, to *Grow Your Own Food* and *Composting Basics*. Over 96,500 Capital Regional District (CRD) residents participated in one of twenty-five community events, documentary nights and community compost demonstrations. In 2016, over 8,000 Capital Regional District (CRD) residents visited the CEC's demonstration site or participated in an educational community event or compost demonstration.

Over the course of the year, the CEC hosted five core community education open houses, including the spring and fall organic plant sales, *Mushroom Education Day*, *International Soil Awareness Day*, and *Rainy Days*, a weekend devoted to rainwater harvesting and water conservation education and awareness. These educational events encourage stewardship of the environment and give community residents the tools and skills to compost, grow their own food and conserve soil and water. The CEC continues to support the Capital Regional District's region-wide food waste ban by programming workshops and events that emphasize accessible education around food waste diversion, both on and off-site. The CEC promotes the use of backyard composting and food waste digesters and has increased its capacity 2016 to better serve the rural regions of Sooke and the Gulf Islands. Since 1992, the GVCEC has made **over 1,025,000 contacts with CRD residents.!**

## Staff

**Executive Director:** Marika Smith

**Site Manager:** Alysha Punnett

**Office Manager:** Clare Pepper

**Education Coordinator:** Kayla Siefried

**Summer Intern:** Emily Bellinger



## Board of Directors

**Chair:** Nik Hill

**Vice Chair:** Doug Mutch

**Treasurer:** David Neate

**Secretary:** Jelena Putnik

**Member at large:** Tamara Chirovsky

**Capital Regional District Representative:** Wendy Dunn

## Message from the Executive Director

The Compost Education Centre is on the cusp of its 25th birthday; in the past 25 years we have become a trusted and valuable community resource for urban food production, soil conservation and on-site composting.

Together with our dedicated staff, Board of Directors, and fabulous volunteers, we reach over 185,000 CRD residents annually with our educational services and practical solutions for living more sustainably. In 2016 we launched a new soil testing program in partnership with Royal Roads University to address soil health concerns in urban areas and empower people with the knowledge and skills to grow food safely or to amend their soil with compost, plants and mushrooms.

As a hub that connects soil health to food literacy, ecological restoration and bioremediation, the CEC is proud to be an educational resource for composting, organic food growing and teaching children and adults to be stewards of our beautiful, diverse natural resources. We look forward to celebrating our 25th anniversary and welcome everyone to our beautiful urban oasis in the heart of Fernwood in Victoria BC. ~ **Marika Smith**

