



# 2014 Annual Report

The Compost Education Centre (CEC) is a project of the Victoria Compost and Conservation Education Society, a not-for-profit, charitable organization. It is located in Victoria at 1216 North Park Street.

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



# 2014 Highlights

## Rainy Days Open House

In April we hosted our first in a series of open-house style educational days, called 'Rainy Days'. This super fun day encouraged participants to learn more about rainwater harvesting systems and practices in our community and was so popular we repeated it in September!

In partnership with the CRD's Integrated Watershed Management (IWM) department and with generous in-kind assistance from Van Isle Water Systems, these events brought community and municipal groups involved in rainwater management together in our beautiful demonstration gardens.

Over 200 residents attended free workshops about watershed processes and rainwater harvesting methods and learned about the Centre's new rainwater irrigation systems.

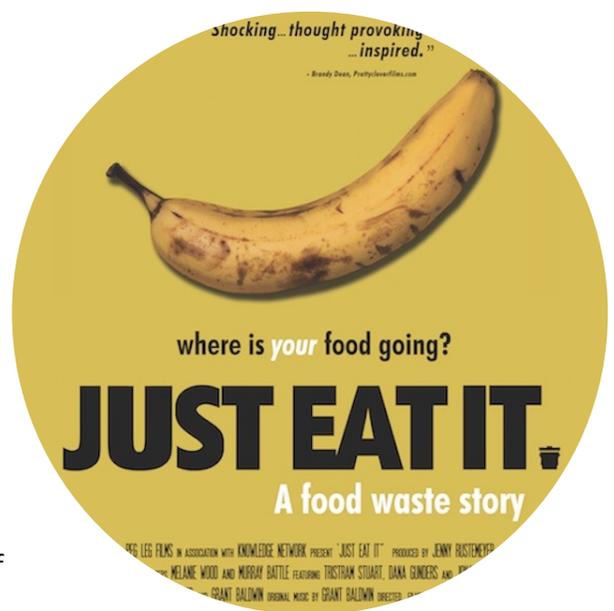


## 'Just Eat It' Victoria Premiere Screening

We were proud to be invited to speak on the discussion panel at the Victoria Premiere of **Just Eat It: A Food Waste Story**. This new documentary from the makers of **The Clean Bin Project** looks at food waste and the billions of dollars worth of good food that is tossed away each year in North America.

The film is based around filmmakers Jen and Grant's pledge to quit grocery shopping cold turkey and survive only on foods that would otherwise be thrown away for six months. Powerful images and stories of commercial and residential food waste intertwine with the filmmakers' passion and excitement over the discovery of how well they could eat using only discarded or 'expired' food.

Sponsored by Open Cinema, the CRD and reFUSE Resource Recovery, the discussion that followed drew on-line viewing of over 80,000 people and addressed the gaps and opportunities which exist in our own region regarding food waste and food insecurities.



# 2014 Highlights



## Launch of Soil Science 101

To get ready for 'International Year of Soils' in 2015, we created a new workshop called Soil Science 101. Soil is capable of supporting plant life and is vital to life on earth, yet we understand very little about its complexities.

This workshop offered in the spring and fall aimed to highlight soil properties and processes and relationships to plant growth, environmental quality and society. All sessions were sold out, proving how excited our community is to learn about the foundations of our earth and how that understanding can improve garden health and food production.

## Exciting Upgrades to the Site and Garden

The site went through many exciting changes in 2014. We built a new, larger greenhouse to accommodate our interactive site tours and we transformed our Straw Bale teaching classroom into a more welcoming learning space by painting the inside with eco-friendly paint, installing efficient lighting and adding an updated heating system.

We introduced new plants and shrubs into our demonstration gardens to increase pollinator habitat and complement the existing array of native plants, berry bushes and seasonal vegetables.

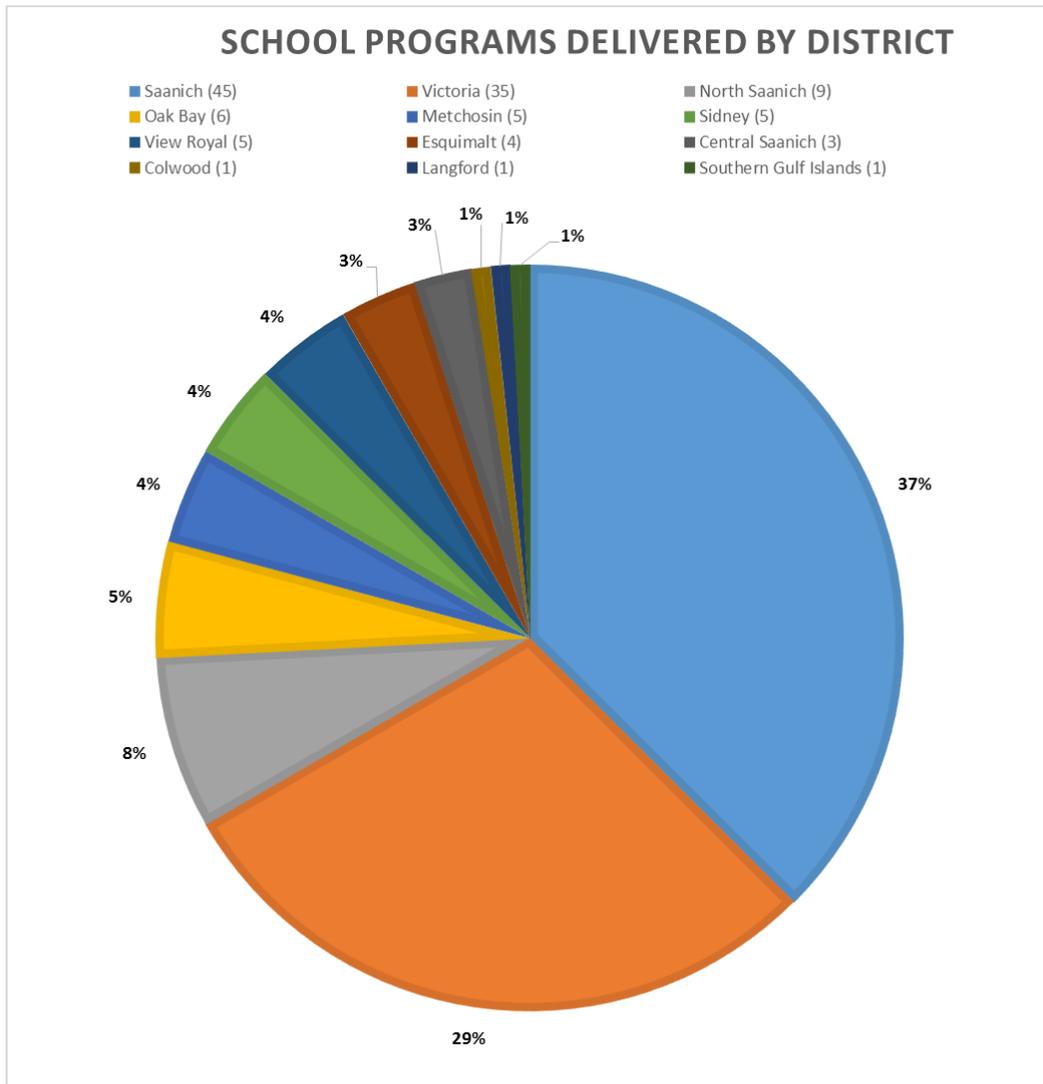
Rebuilding our raised veggie beds and inoculating the woodchip pathways with Garden Giant mushrooms completed our fall series of hands-on skills training workshops. Finally, the installation of a new 400 gallon rain cistern allowed us to increase both our rain-water harvesting capacity and ability to teach about this important conservation technique.





# Education Programs

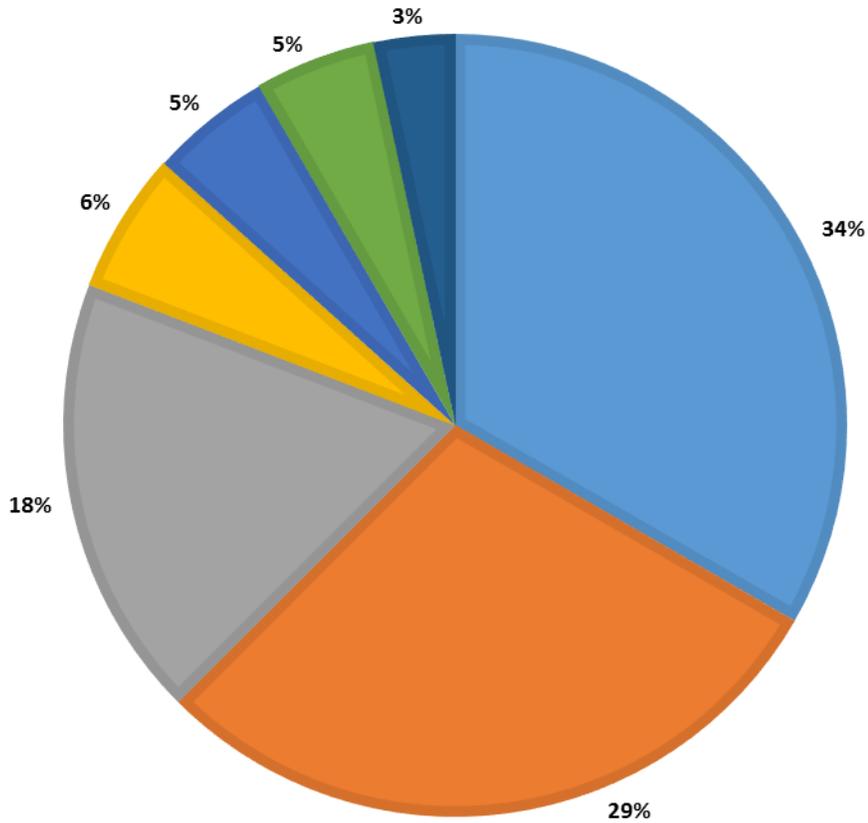
In 2014 we continued to teach thousands of children and adults about composting, soil, and growing food. We taught a total of 523 adults in 64 workshops and presented 120 school programs to 2,645 students and teachers.



## Education Programs (cont'd)

### SCHOOL PROGRAMS DELIVERED

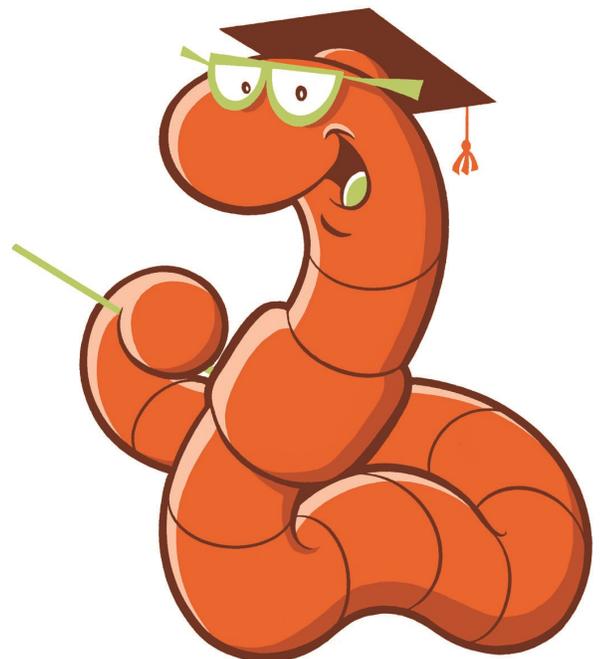
■ Wrigglers at Work (40)   ■ Interactive Site Tour (35)   ■ Custom (22)   ■ Corey's Compost Story (7)  
■ Soil Sleuths (6)   ■ Wonderful Wastes (6)   ■ Worms Eat My Garbage (4)



### What teachers are saying about our programs:

“The preschoolers learned a lot about waste, compost, and red wigglers! We had a lot of conversations in the days and months following the workshop about healthy and unhealthy foods for worms . The kids look forward to “Feeding Friday” each week and have begun to ask what happens with the rest of our waste, opening us up to some interesting conversations.”

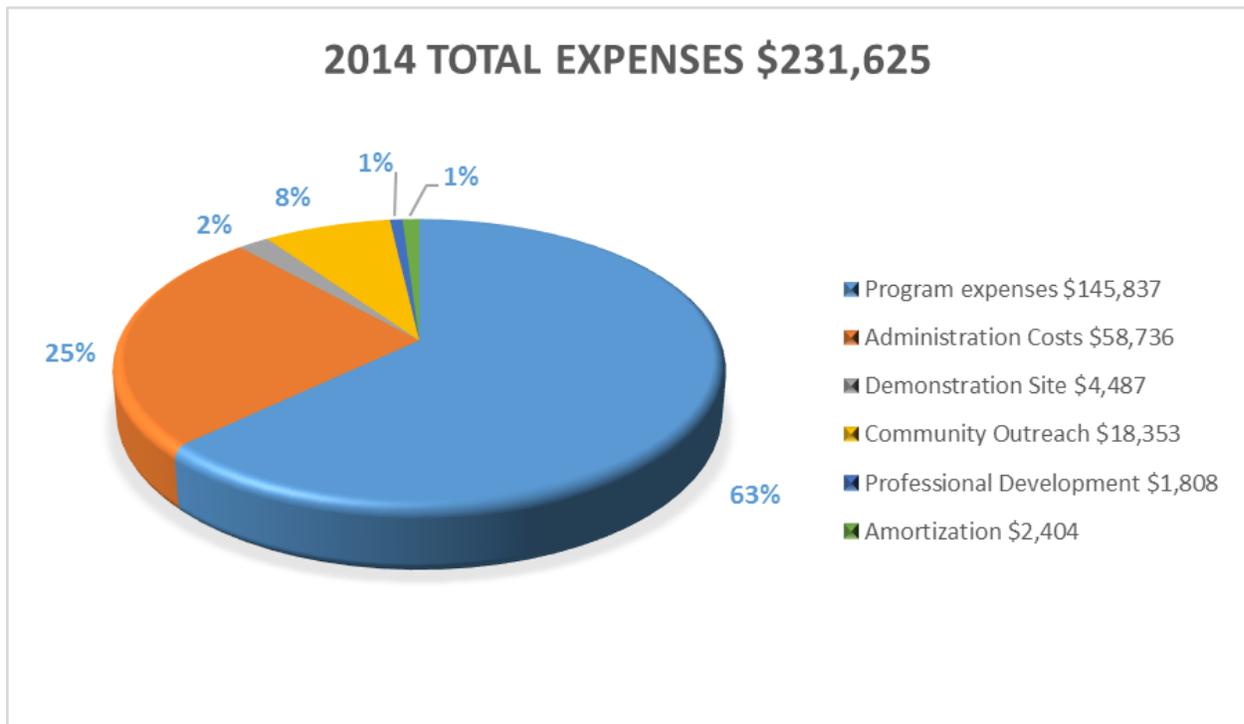
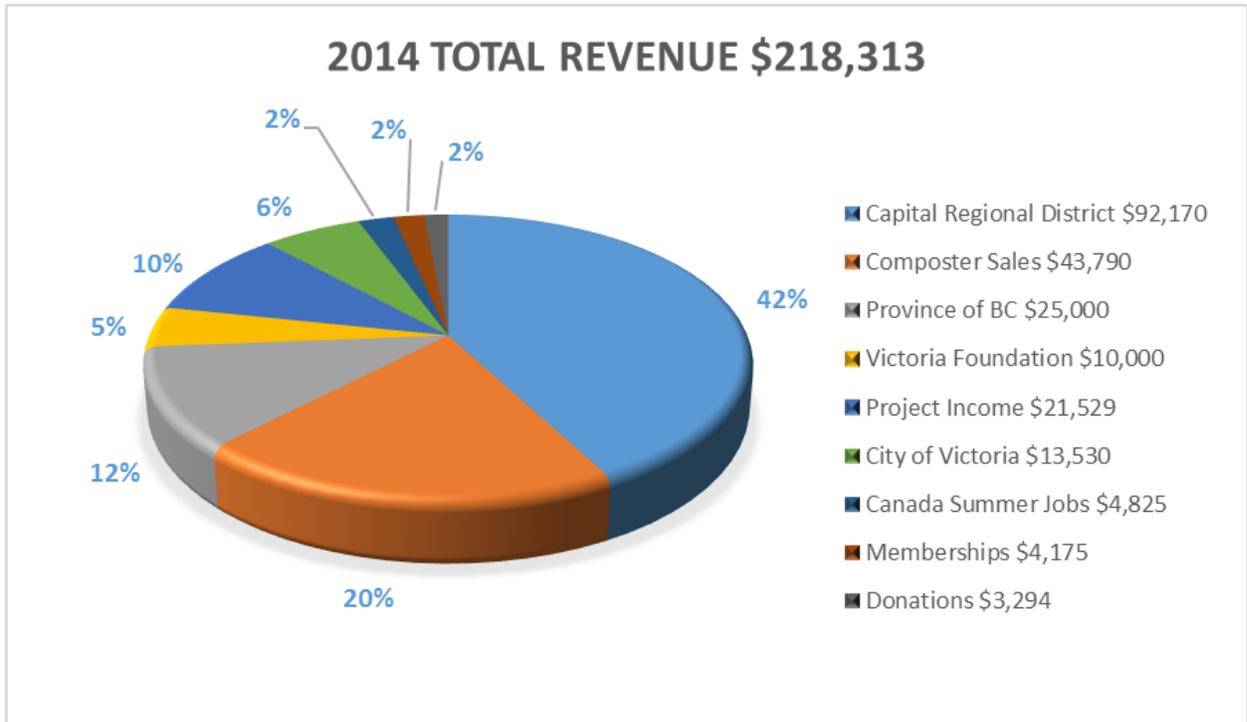
“The students learned a lot about soil and soil stewardship and were very engaged with the workshop! It also fit right in with what we were learning in science class.”





CRD Contract Targets	CEC Outcomes
<p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Design, coordinate and implement the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools &amp; community groups outreach (30 per year)</li> <li>• Quarterly newsletter</li> <li>• On-site workshops and presentations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Please see Page 4 for school program numbers delivered by municipality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools and community groups outreach: 120 completed from Jan– Dec 2014</li> <li>• 400 % completed this year to date</li> <li>• Quarterly newsletter and monthly e-letter sent</li> <li>• 64 on-site workshops and presentations completed from Jan - Dec 2014</li> </ul>
<p>Compost Hotline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operate a compost hotline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compost Hotline operated from Wed-Sat 10am-4pm (after hours messages recorded and returned promptly)</li> </ul>
<p>Demonstration Site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operate a demonstration site</li> <li>• Offer education on composting, resource conservation, and organic gardening at least 2 times per month from May to October</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compost systems demonstration and teaching gardens open to the general public Wed-Sat 10am-4pm from Jan-Dec</li> <li>• 4-6 workshops on average offered monthly from Feb -Nov</li> </ul>
<p>Mobile Compost Demonstrations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 per year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 mobile demonstrations and outreach events completed from Jan-June 2014</li> <li>• 128 % completed this year to date</li> </ul>
<p>Volunteer Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train, manage and utilize appropriate number of volunteers</li> <li>• Offer at least one recruiting and training session every 2 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Compost Educator Volunteer Training Program (CEP) held in Sept 2014 with 6 participants</li> <li>• Site and garden volunteers trained at Work Bee sessions once per month from April-Oct</li> </ul>
<p>Advertising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1000 spent per year on advertising of compost and conservation education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$4,812 spent on advertising from Jan-June 2014</li> <li>• 481 % completed this year to date</li> </ul>

# 2014 Financials



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 high 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 of funding were obtained in 2014:

## Funders

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

## Individual Donors

- Kyle Ostman
- Nelda Turner
- Dale Gordon
- Claude Moreau
- Karla Wagner
- Chris Broadbent
- James Buchanan
- Hally Hofmeyr
- Faye Carter
- Connie Charnell
- Sarah Zimmermann

## Cash and In-kind Donations

- Black Press
- Monday Magazine
- Chatterblock
- D.I.Y Fungi
- Hoynes Brewery
- Pedersons' Rentals
- Big Barn Garden Centre
- Borden Mercantile
- Ellice Recycle
- Danica Nursery
- Dig This
- Fernwood NRG
- Fernwood Coffee
- Fernwood Community Association
- Garden Works
- Little Elf Garden Centre
- Meadow Oak Nursery
- Soap Exchange
- Thrifty Foods
- Mason Street City Farm
- Van Isle Water Systems
- CANARM

## Additional Revenue

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



## Summary of Programs and Services

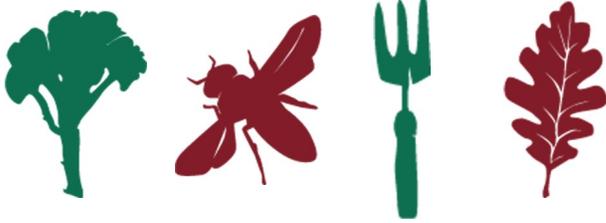
In 2014, the Compost Education Centre (CEC) delivered 120 school presentations to 2,645 children from Pre-school to Grade 12, and facilitated 64 community workshops on topics from Composting Basics to Soil Science 101 and Mushroom Garden Pathways. Over 90,000 Capital Regional District (CRD) residents visited the CEC's demonstration site or participated in one of its 32 educational community events, documentary nights and compost demonstrations.

The CEC hosted six core community events in 2014, including a spring and fall Organic Plant Sale, Pollination Education Day and Mushroom Education Day. The CEC expanded its programming in 2014 to include a spring and fall rainwater harvesting educational series called Rainy Days in partnership with the CRD's integrated Watershed Management department. The CEC reached a total of 250,392 residents in 2014 through all avenues of our educational mandate, an increase of 210% from 2011! Since 1992, the GVCEC has made over 832,073 contacts with CRD residents.



## Staff

**Executive Director:** Marika Smith  
**Site Manager:** Alysha Punnett  
**Education Coordinator:** Clare Pepper  
**Site Intern:** Emily Bellinger



## Board of Directors

**Chair:** Nik Hill  
**Vice Chair:** Marion Wylie  
**Treasurer:** David Neate  
**Secretary:** Janet Hockin  
**Member at large:** Tamara Chirovsky  
**Capital Regional District Representative:** Wendy Dunn  
**Fernwood Community Association Representative:** Bill McKechnie

### Message from the Executive Director

The Compost Education Centre has been operating for 23 years and during that time we have grown into a trusted and valuable community resource hub for urban food production, soil conservation and on-site composting. Together with our dedicated staff, Board of Directors and fabulous volunteers, we annually reach over 250,000 CRD residents with our educational mandate and practical solutions for living more sustainably.

In 2014 we added new workshops on topics such as Grow Your Own Mushrooms, Soil Science 101 and Residential Rainwater Harvesting. We were also invited to participate in several research projects about food waste reduction and community-scale composting programs. One such project is called the Solutions Agenda and will be presented in Ottawa to Parliament in the spring of 2015!

We believe that we can grow the seeds of community through accessible and valuable education programs that empower CRD residents to become more self-sufficient and lower their carbon footprint. The CEC is proud to be an educational resource for composting, organic food growing and teaching children to be stewards of our beautiful and diverse natural resources. We look forward to another fruitful year and welcome everyone to our beautiful urban oasis in the heart of Fernwood in Victoria BC.

