

## Overview of Fresh Roots Urban Farm Society for Donor-Advised Funds

**Registered Charity #:** 84245 7357 RR0001, **Founded:** 2011

**Location:** Vancouver & Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada

### Who We Are

Fresh Roots cultivates thriving educational farms on school grounds, where youth, schools, and communities grow together through food, learning, and leadership. We transform underutilized schoolyards into vibrant farms that produce fresh, local food while serving as outdoor classrooms and inclusive community spaces. Our core values are at the heart of everything we do; they are: joy, community, inclusivity, empowerment, and lifelong learning.

### Our Mission

We cultivate educational farms and place-based programs where youth develop healthy relationships with food, land and community through growing and sharing food that nourishes themselves, their communities, and the planet!

### Our Core Programs

#### **Food Access & Community Engagement:**

Each year, our farms produce over 8,000+ pounds of fresh food, distributed through youth-led markets, community-shared agriculture (CSA) boxes, school meal programs, and donations to food security organizations, nourishing our broader community.

#### **Youth Leadership Pathways:**

Our Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL) program is a six-week, paid summer pre-employment experience for high school students, primarily from equity-deserving communities. Youth gain hands-on green job experience in urban farming, food literacy, and climate action while earning stipends that ensure financial accessibility.

Many alumni continue through our Leadership Pathways returning as peer mentors, seasonal staff, and facilitators. This multi-year continuum builds long-term leadership, employment, and civic engagement skills, empowering youth to grow into community leaders and agents of change.

#### **Sustainable Agriculture & Climate Action:**

Fresh Roots transforms underutilized schoolyards into thriving urban farms that model regenerative agriculture in the heart of the city. Our sustainable practices (such as composting, soil regeneration, and pollinator habitat creation) restore ecosystems, reduce carbon footprints, and increase local food resilience. Growing over 200 varieties of crops, including native plants and medicines, these farms serve as living examples of how communities can adapt to and mitigate climate change.

#### **Experiential Learning:**

A suite of hands-on programs for children and youth make up our Experiential Learning programs that integrate farming, cooking, science, and environmental stewardship. Over 4,000 participants annually engage in experiential learning across our three schoolyard farms, gaining tangible skills and a deeper connection to food and the land.

## Our Impact (2025 Highlights)

- 3 urban schoolyard farms in operation (Vancouver & Coquitlam)
- **8,500+ lbs** of food harvested and shared locally
- **200+** crop varieties grown, including native plants and medicines
- **4,000+** children and youth participated in farm and land-based education
- **26,000+** hours of experiential learning delivered to youth participants
- **70+** youth participated in paid, pre-employment SOYL program
- **20+** seasonal staff hired across farms and educational programs

## Focus Areas for Donor Alignment

Fresh Roots' work intersects with multiple philanthropic priorities:

- ☒ Food Security & Access
- ☒ Youth Employment & Leadership
- ☒ Environmental Sustainability & Climate Action
- ☒ Education & Experiential Learning
- ☒ Mental Health & Well-being
- ☒ Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- ☒ Indigenous Reconciliation & Land-Based Learning

## Why It Matters

By connecting youth to the land, food, and each other, Fresh Roots creates ripple effects that strengthen community well-being, food resilience, and environmental stewardship. Every seed planted grows not only nourishment, but confidence, belonging, and future leadership.

**Join us! Your support helps grow healthy food, resilient communities, and the next generation of leaders rooted in community, justice, and care for the planet - one schoolyard farm at a time.**

## Contact

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**Growing food, youth and community.**

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