

SPEC ANNUAL REPORT 2013



Society
Promoting
Environmental
Conservation





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Environmental
Conservation

spec.bc.ca

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WHAT WE DO

Through partnerships and collaborations, SPEC empowers and engages capacity within local communities to motivate lasting behaviour change towards urban sustainability.

SPEC develops practical solutions through education, outreach, advocacy and research in the following areas:



ENERGY

promoting energy conservation and the use of renewable energy



FOOD

building a more sustainable and resilient local food system



LAND AND WATER

helping to protect our green and blue spaces



TRANSPORTATION

advocating for sustainable transportation



WASTE

promoting practices that lead to waste reduction





LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The news of human impact on our environment can be overwhelming:

- » Massive tropical storms strengthened by record ocean temperatures;
- » Large areas of the ocean contaminated with plastic debris; and
- » Historic losses of biodiversity.

The best response that we can give people under this situation is to offer them practical solutions that they can incorporate into their daily lives. It is important to give them a sense of community in which to explore those solutions. I believe SPEC excels at doing just that.

We have a forty-five year history of advocacy and lobbying and we continue to perform this important work. A special emphasis is also placed on providing

education about pragmatic solutions to the sustainability issues that we face. We show children how to grow local, healthy food, we help restaurants reduce waste and we offer real-world demonstrations of how to use renewable energy to power homes.

Our small but dedicated staff team, hard-working board and inspiring volunteers continue to work to develop more programs that offer practical solutions at the local level and solutions that respect both people and the planet. We invite you to join our community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rob Baxter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

» Rob Baxter
2013 President
Society Promoting Environmental Conservation

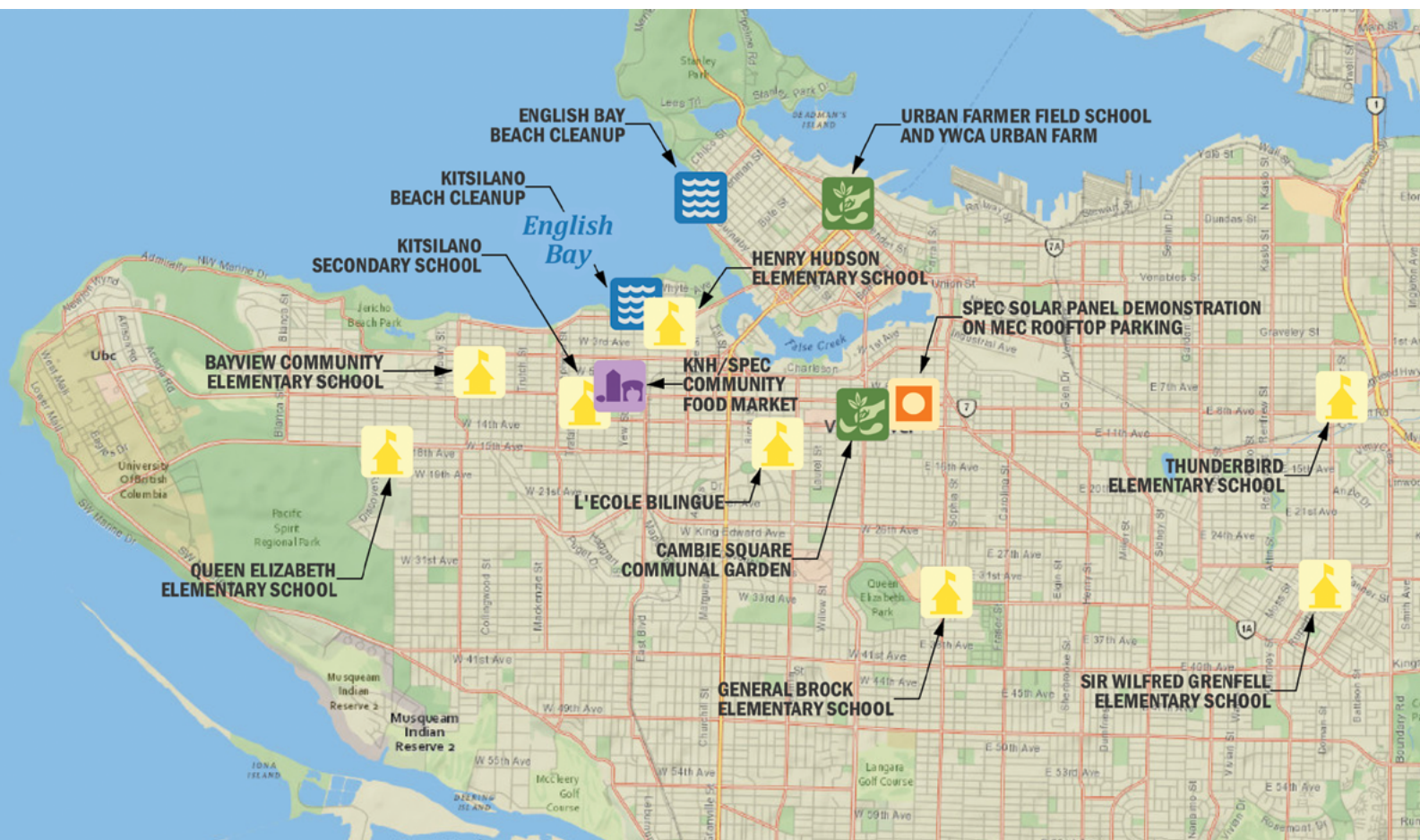
SPEC'S 45 YEARS OF HEARTS AND HOME SERVICE

It was Dec 1968 when Derrick Mallard, a psychology instructor at SFU, and his wife Gwen started convening their friends and colleagues at their home in Coquitlam, BC. As campers and canoers, they had grown increasingly concerned about waste pouring into BC waterways and the environmental damage and social injustice happening around the Fraser River in the Lower Mainland. Their personal concerns led them to read and learn more about global environmental issues through UN reports. The sum of their personal observation and informed learning sparked them to take action and create what is today called SPEC. Fast forward 45 years and SPEC is still sparking action within communities across Vancouver.



SPEC SPARKS IN THE CITY

In 2013, SPEC cultivated 13 community food markets, 8 school gardens, 4 beach cleanups, 1 urban farm and 1 communal food garden. We also hosted over 30 sustainability workshops across Vancouver engaging children, youth and adults in sustainability.



2013 AT A GLANCE

IN THE COMMUNITY

Over **1800 young people** engaged in food education and growing through SPEC's School Gardens Project;

13 weekly food markets hosted in Kitsilano connecting local food growers to local consumers and contributing over \$15,000 to the Vancouver green economy;

Launched **Green 2 Go**, a new SPEC project aimed at raising awareness and developing solutions for food container waste;

4 beach clean-ups on Vancouver beaches in partnership with Surfrider Foundation;

Launched SPEC's first crowd-funding campaign, **Growing Healthy Kids**;

Hosted over **300 adults** in SPEC workshops, presentations and events on urban agriculture, renewable energy, food waste, energy conservation, ocean health and zero waste;

Over **2,500 volunteer hours** donated to Vancouver's environmental movement by SPEC community volunteers; and

Over **500 kg of fruit and veggies** grown at the YWCA urban farm managed by SPEC.

ON THE LINE

Over **18,700 visits** to the SPEC website in 2013
» spec.bc.ca

Over **25 posts** on our demonstration garden blog
» specgardens.blogspot.ca

Over **1,300 views** of SPEC's new video starring Betsy, our youngest volunteer » spec.bc.ca; and

16,000 (yes, sixteen thousand!) **views** of SPEC's Backyard Chicken Video with Vicky Baker » spec.bc.ca/films.

THE SPEC FAMILY

SPEC 2013 COMMUNITY STARS



Catriona Gordon (SPEC School Garden Coordinator) and **Russ Evans** (Tupper Technical industrial arts/shop instructor), School Garden Champions

SPEC Stars of 2013 is awarded to **Russ Evans** and **Catriona Gordon** for their commitment, dedication and leadership in bringing school gardens to the community. Thank-you!

"To the myriad of people involved... It never fails to move me when I see the connections being made with each other and the larger community – how trepidation turns into affection – how stereotypes are broken and new awareness is created. Thank you. You are all doing so very much for our communities and the planet as a whole by engaging/supporting such a simple process as a 'community build day' not to mention the learning that takes place at a later date; when the earth science is learnt 'by doing'."

Russ Evans 2013 following Community Build Day at Henry Hudson

Over the past six years, Catriona and Russ have been coordinating community build days across Vancouver. Community build days work by teaming up high-school students with elementary students to saw, hammer and construct garden beds and composters destined for schoolyards across the City. Russ's planter design and garden storage units have been so successful that they are now the official designs used by the Vancouver School Board!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (AUGUST 31, 2013):

Rob Baxter	President
Carole Christopher	Vice President
Adam Fontana	Treasurer
Barry Warren	Secretary
Tara Moreau	Director
Tova Plashkes	Director
Sara Blenkhorn	Director
Leane de Laigue	Director
Ross Moster	Director
Matthew Unger	Director



We would like to acknowledge and thank our dedicated Board of Directors for volunteering so much of their valuable time and energy to help SPEC continue to move forward. A special thank you and farewell to Leane de Laigue, Rowena Anderson and Adam Fontana, who have stepped down during the last 12 months to pursue other adventures.

Leane was on SPEC's Board for several years helping out with the communications and the School Gardens Project, among other

things. We thank her for her great support and wish her all the best with her studies and upcoming travels.

Rowena provided SPEC with much needed fundraising guidance; we thank her for helping us strengthen SPEC's fund development capacity. We wish her all the best for the future and congratulate her on the new baby!

Adam was our Treasurer for the last year and provided support not only in the finan-

cial field but also got involved with projects. We hope that he is still able to sell his honey at our Westside Community Food Market if he is back in Vancouver next summer!

Finally, we want to thank Sara Blenkhorn for her service on the Board. We are glad to now have her on our staff team to which she brings valuable professional experience as well as a great knowledge of SPEC from her 8 years on the Board.

STAFF



We would like to thank our dedicated staff for helping SPEC continue to grow. 2013 was a year of many changes and new faces.

Our long time staff Marnie Newell moved on in August to begin her full time teaching career in a North Vancouver school. After 4 years of being with SPEC, Marnie has left her mark through her passion, and commitment. Thank-you Marnie for your service to SPEC and to our City!

Mik Turje helped us set up the Urban Farmer Field School as well as running the spring months at the roof top garden. We were very sad to see them move to Ontario. But you never know, maybe one day they'll be part of the SPEC team once again.

Alisha Hackinen hit the ground running and joined SPEC to run the Roof-Top Garden at the YWCA once the planting season had already begun. It's wonderful to have her on our team.

Sara Blenkhorn, who previously sat on SPEC's Board joined as in a staff position to run some of the waste projects, including Green 2 Go. We are all delighted to continue to count with Sara's energy, ideas and hard work.

This year we had two great summer interns that brought a lot of energy, knowledge and skills to the organization. Katie Schilt came as the PICS (Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions) intern to work on food waste related

research. Jeanie Lim was hired as the summer intern with funding from the Canada Summer Jobs Program and helped us with the School Gardens Project, the Westside Community Food Market and the Urban Farmer Field School. Jeanie is currently helping us with communication work.

Last but not least, Catriona Gordon and Oliver Lane continue as our star staff at SPEC. Catriona continues her wonderful work as the School Gardens Project coordinator, working with over 1800 children, teachers and parents. Oliver continues to manage SPEC's daily operations providing support to the many teams of staff, volunteers and programs.

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

SPEC is a collaborative organization, both internally and externally. Internally, we work within and across our theme committees, and externally we build partnerships that bring community resources together to pursue local sustainability. We celebrate our partnerships with the community and thank our partners and financial supporters for working with us. A SPECtacular thank-you to:

YWCA Metro Vancouver
Whole Foods Market
West Coast Seeds
Village Vancouver
Vancouver Renewable Energy Coop
Vancouver Maritime Museum
Vancouver Foundation
Vancouver Food Policy Council
Vancity
University of British Columbia
Trafalgars Bistro
Tiffin Project
Think and Eat Green @ Schools, UBC
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

“One of Whole Foods Market’s Core Values is caring about our communities and environment, which is why SPEC’s work is so important to us and our shoppers. SPEC invites our community to get to know fresh and healthy food while celebrating the joy of growing our own produce. Whole Foods Market is proud to support SPEC.”

Lindsay O’Donnell, Whole Foods

Surfrider Foundation
Styrofree Challenge
Steve Nash Fitness World
Semperviva Yoga
Science World
Rona Home & Garden Centers
Rocky Mountain Flatbread Company
Recycling Council of British Columbia
Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions
Mushboo Mushrooms
Mountain Equipment Coop.
Modo Car Coop

“Vancouver Foundation recognizes the high quality education programs regarding environmental conservation and stewardship that SPEC provides for learners. SPEC has a great track record of working collaboratively with the local School District and other stakeholders to raise awareness and understanding of food systems and urban farming through their School Gardens project.”

Niveria Oliveira, Vancouver Foundation

Metro Vancouver
Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
Grouse Mountain
Granville Island Brewing Co
Government of Canada
Government of British Columbia
City of Vancouver
Bull Frog Power
Boathouse Restaurants
Bike Doctor
Banyen Books and Sound
Art Knapp Plantland

SPEC CAMPAIGNS

*SPEC campaigns, programs,
projects: Either way you
call it, it's action!*

*Sustainability is a science. Sustainability is an art. Sustainability is a system. At SPEC, we have found that practical solutions for sustainable cities come in many shapes and sizes. The focus of our campaigns in 2013 was on **energy, food, land & water** and **waste**.*



SPEC ENERGY PROJECTS 2013

The energy committee provides education and demonstration programs centred on renewable energy and energy conservation. Our goal is to help people reduce their dependence on fossil fuels and other non-renewable resources.



One of the major tasks in 2013 was to find a new home for our solar photovoltaic energy system. This system was the first grid-tie system installed in the city of Vancouver. Over the last 8 years hundreds of people attended tours of the system and we are happy to announce that we have found a new home for it. In the next few months we will complete the installation and expansion at the MEC store in Vancouver, in partnership with MEC and Bull Frog power.



SPEC FOOD PROJECTS 2013



This year we also continued work on preparing for the launch of our Fossil Fuel Free campaign and helped teach the Solar Greenhouse workshop for the Urban Farmer Field School. In 2014 we will once again be offering tours of the photovoltaic system. We will also formally launch our Fossil Fuel Free campaign, which will help provide education on how we can make the transition to a fossil fuel free community.

This year's Energy team was powered by: Rob Baxter (Committee Chair), Barry Warren, Jesse Eckert, and Brookes Bayfield.

The energy group would like to thank Bull Frog Power and MEC for their support of the work we do.

Food is a complex network of inputs, outputs, services and cells. It is our breakfast, lunch and dinner. It may also be the key ingredient to manifesting resilient people and communities that can live within the ecological boundaries of 1 planet. SPEC's Food Committee was started in 2007 by Dr. Carole Christopher, Dr. Tara Moreau, Dr. Joanna Robinson and Karen Wristen with the goal to advance just and sustainable food systems that nourish body, soul and planet. Equipped with a creative, organized and active committee of volunteers and staff, SPEC's Food projects work in the areas of education, research, advocacy, outreach and demonstration.

"Rebuilding a local food system is the work of a lifetime, and the vigilance required to sustain it is the task of generations."

Philip Ackerman-Leist, 2013

We would like to thank the funders that supported SPEC's food projects in 2013: Vancouver Foundation, BC Gaming, Think and Eat Green @ Schools, UBC, Whole Foods Market, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS), and Vancity.



1. FOOD WASTE

Food waste is emerging as *the* hot sustainability issue for 2013. Media attention, videos and E-forums have helped to bring much-needed attention to this issue. Working in partnerships with the Vancouver Food Policy Council, the idea for this project was to research and evaluate food waste issues in Vancouver and examine the relevant policies impacting (1) food waste prevention, (2) food waste recovery and (3) neighbourhood composting. Check back with SPEC in 2014 to read the finalized report and review our infographics!

PEOPLE AND PARTNERS: Emme Lee, Katie Schilt, Dr. Tara Moreau, Vancouver Food Policy Council, Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS), 12 food waste stakeholders



HIGHLIGHTS

- » Collaborated on a research project with the Vancouver Food Policy Council to evaluate the policy landscapes impacting food waste in Vancouver;
- » Received \$10,000 funding from the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions to hire SFU co-op student Katie Schilt for research work;
- » Interviewed over 12 food-waste stakeholders in Metro Vancouver; and
- » Presented preliminary research results to over 65 people at a Vancouver Food Policy Council meeting.



2. SCHOOL GARDENS

The SPEC School Gardens Project is growing more than just food! Now in its 6th year, SPEC is bringing gardens and food education to over 1500 students in 8 Vancouver schools. Our goal is simple: connect children to their food, to each other, to nature and to their community. We do this because we believe that school gardens empower and enable sustainable communities. We do this because we have to.

As school garden cheerleaders, SPEC's work varies depending on the unique features of a school community. We assist with garden planning & planting, applications to the Vancouver School Board to install gardens, and curriculum programming and



funding proposals to support garden infrastructure. SPEC also works directly with teachers and within classrooms to offer over 20 hands-on lessons and activities that get kids connecting with nature, healthy food and each other.

PARTNERS, PEOPLE AND PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

SPEC is fortunate to work alongside an amazing community of school-garden champions, including: The University of British Columbia, Think and Eat Green @ Schools (UBC) Program; The Vancouver School Food Network (VSFN); Vancouver School Board; and daycares, community centres, churches and many more.

Growing long-lasting school-garden projects requires careful tending, watering and care. SPEC currently works in 8 schools across Vancouver, including:

- » **Bayview Community Elementary**
- » **General Brock Elementary**
- » **Henry Hudson Elementary School**
- » **Kitsilano Secondary School**
- » **L'Ecole Bilingue**
- » **Queen Elizabeth Elementary School**
- » **Sir Wlfred Grenfell Elementary School**
- » **Thunderbird Elementary**

SPEC is engaging students in:

- » Developing awesome attitudes about growing their own healthy food;
- » Developing nature exploration skills, understanding and knowledge;
- » Expanding their confidence through gardening-based learning; and
- » Growing their own food with their peers in a fun and supportive environment.

SPEC is supporting teachers to:

- » Start their own school food garden on-site and help to develop hands-on gardening experiences for students;
- » Increase their knowledge of sustainable food production, preparation and education; and
- » Enhance their comfort level, abilities and skills to teach gardening and food security curriculum.

SPEC is supporting parents to:

- » Develop exploration and inquiry skills around food gardens;
- » Enhance their knowledge of gardening and food system issues; and
- » Engage in growing their own food and having fun with their children.



3. KNH/SPEC WESTSIDE COMMUNITY FOOD MARKET

The idea of the Westside Community Food Market is to create a weekly event where individuals can gather to buy and sell food, share expertise and enjoy time with their neighbours. This was the 3rd year that Kitsilano Neighbourhood House (KNH) and SPEC collaborated to transform a stretch of sidewalk into a community food market. Community food markets are smaller than farmers' markets and typically host no more than 10 vendors. Once again, the project included a coupon program to help subsidize the cost of food at the market given what we know about people in the west side community with barriers to accessing food. Music provided by DG Adams created a great space for local residents to meet and buy from small-scale



local food producers. Outreach by SPEC, Village Vancouver and KNH serves as an educational vehicle to promote local and sustainable food networks, all the while enabling neighbours to connect with each other and their food.

This Westside Community Food Market is brought to you by Zsuzsi Fodor, Oliver Lane, Dr. Carole Christopher, Catherine Leach and a number of hard-working volunteers including Tracey Scallion Moore, Lily Schinde, Joey Liu, Holly Haixin Liu, Hailey Swift, Karly Pinch, Annie Lei, Lisi Ding and DG Adams. Generous funding is provided by VanCity, the City of Vancouver, vendor fees, donations and Canada Summer Jobs program. The space is provided by Linden Tree Place.

HIGHLIGHTS

- » \$15,200 total reported sales in 2013;
- » Over \$50,000 reported in total sales over three seasons (2011-2013);
- » 13 weekly Thursday markets at the corner of West 8th Ave and Vine Street in Kitsilano; and
- » 100-200 visitors per market

LOCAL GROWER	LOCAL PRODUCT
Adam's Honey	Honey
Barefoot Farms	Produce
Cherry Lane Farms	Produce
Cherry on a Bike	Dehydrated fruit, pastries, and bread
Frisch Farms	Produce
Judith Jelly	Black currant jelly
Larke Miller	Raw cereals and baking
Lili and Vicky	Juice
Nice Pops	Popsicles
Rick's	Curry chicken
Sev's Bread	Bread
Tarts Bakery	Tartlets
Vanley Fresh Foods	Produce

4. URBAN FARMER FIELD SCHOOL

The seed for the SPEC|YWCA Urban Farmer Field School (UFFS – sounds like the French word *oeufs*) was planted at a SPEC climate change and agriculture workshop in 2010. Similar to other gardening and food workshops that were being taught by SPEC, the event had been widely publicized within the community, yet the turnout was particularly poor. This happened many times. Apparently, people in Vancouver were keen to learn about canning and growing food in small spaces but they were not interested in learning specifically about climate change. As a result, rather than hosting individual workshops on climate change with very few people in attendance, what if we developed a skills-based social enterprise experiential education program that had climate change embedded within each class? How cool would that be?

Fast-forward four years and after careful tending, SPEC is thrilled to have harvested 23 classes from the 2013 UFFS season. We had close to 200 registrants participate in fun, skills-building workshops that had climate change education embedded into the



experience. Inevitably, the level of climate change education varied across the classes depending on the instructor, their class topic and the student-driven class discussions. However, we see progress in the process. We are perfecting our understanding of climate change communication and acquiring the wisdom of our craft... even though we had to cancel this year's Carrots and Climate Change workshops due to poor registration.



URBAN FARMER FIELD SCHOOL FACILITATORS

For 2013, SPEC enlisted 19 local experts to teach the diverse subjects of the urban farmer field school including: Vicky Baker, Rob Baxter, Molly Campbell, Dr. Carole Christopher, Leila Darwish, Fiona De Balasi Brown, Caitlin Dorward, Ada Dragomir, Alisha Hackinen, Sonja Hebert, Norm Kaethler, Duncan Martin, Dr. Saber Miresmailli, Dr. Tara Moreau, Dr. Kent Mullinix, Melanie Sylvestre, Lis Thomas, Grant Watson, and Lisa Weih.



Class Facilitators & Local Experts

SPEC is always looking to support local experts and educators! Please contact fieldschool@spec.bc.ca if you love teaching others about your craft and are keen to get involved.



5. YWCA URBAN FARM MANAGERS

The YWCA Metro Vancouver Urban Farm features raised beds and containers that grow kiwis, blueberries, raspberry bushes, fruit trees, and a constantly rotating roster of lush seasonal vegetables. Initially designed as an ornamental garden, the space was converted into an intensive urban farm in 2006 through the vision of now-retired YWCA Facilities Manager Ted Cathcart and his team of dedicated volunteers. All of the food harvested from the garden is grown to nourish low-income single mothers and their children at YWCA resource centres. In addition to being an urban oasis for wildlife such as birds and native pollinators, the garden also serves as the classroom for many of the Urban Farmer Field School courses, where students learn how to plan, grow, harvest and maintain small-scale production systems.



HIGHLIGHTS

In 2013, SPEC farmer Alisha Hackinen and her team of volunteers harvested over 1100 lbs of fruit and vegetables from the YWCA rooftop. Every Tuesday morning, rain or shine, volunteers helped harvest, clean, and weigh the produce. In the afternoon, more volunteers helped maintain the garden by planting, weeding, and turning the ever-growing piles of compost. Swiss chard, tomatoes and blackberries were the star producers, while beans, corn, and parsnips also filled the harvest bins. We celebrated the first major harvest from several fruit trees and harvested 180 lbs of kiwi-fruit in a single day. The YWCA repurposed urban farm demonstrates how a small amount of space can provide food, education, and wildlife habitat to the community and its city.



PEOPLE AND PARTNERS

Alisha Hackinen	SPEC Urban Farmer
Dale Bradley	YWCA Facilities Manager
Dr. Tara Moreau	SPEC Food Chair
Oliver Lane	SPEC Coordinator
Vanessa Wellington	YWCA Donor Relations Manager
Elyse Freeborn	YWCA Fund Development Coordinator
Kathy Lilyholm	YWCA Senior Manager, Fund Development
Clare Marriott	YWCA

And many thanks to all the volunteers that helped at the garden.

6. CAMBIE SQUARE COMMUNAL GARDEN

The Cambie Square Communal Garden is a communally-run demonstration garden, located across from City Hall, whose volunteers have a keen interest in food, gardening, biodiversity, and sustainable systems. Using techniques such as companion planting, vertical gardening, and square foot gardening, we gather on Sunday mornings throughout the year to grow food and friends. You can also follow what's happening in the garden on SPEC's Gardens Blog.

HIGHLIGHTS

- » 7th year in operation as a communal garden;
- » 20 different varieties of fruit grown;
- » 18 different varieties of vegetables;
- » Over 25 posts on the SPEC Gardens Blog in 2013; and
- » 5 new beds built and installed.

PEOPLE POWER

Dorothy Bootle, Kelly Brown, Vicky Baker, Gaik Beng Khoo, Itzia Paz, Alexandra Rue, Denise Salmons, and Selene Shen



We are currently seeking gardeners (experienced or not) for our fourth season to help plan, plant, and harvest the garden. Contact us if you want to join the team.

SPEC LAND & WATER PROJECTS 2013



SPEC's Land & Water Commission has been making waves throughout 2013. What started as a drop in the bucket in 2012 created a ripple effect along BC's coastline, inspiring new campaigns, partnerships and sponsors. Forming a pod of strategic alliances with partners like Surfrider Foundation, Hands Across The Sand, Kits Eco Arts, The Vancouver Maritime Museum, The City of Vancouver, Doze, BCIT and SFU, we are proud of what we have accomplished.



HIGHLIGHTS

- » 1,100 pounds of shoreline waste recovered at 4 beach cleanups;
- » Completed 3 "Plastic Ocean" presentations & workshops;
- » Over 100 new volunteer participants at our Earth Day Beach Cleanup Festival;
- » Launched SPEC's first crowd funding campaign using Indiegogo; and
- » Conducted SPEC's first marine waste audit training workshop.

None of this could have been possible without the hundreds of hours contributed by an incredible group of people, our volunteers and the sponsors who have kept our projects afloat.

SPONSORS

Thank you to each of our 2013 sponsors:

Boathouse Restaurants
Granville Island Brewing Co
Grouse Mountain
Modo Car Coop
Mushboo Mushrooms
Rocky Mountain Flatbread Company
Rona Home & Garden Centers
Science World
Semperviva Yoga
Steve Nash Fitness World
Surfrider Foundation
Vancouver Maritime Museum
Whole Foods Market



WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON FOR 2014? ►

While the success of the 2013 campaign is cause for celebration it's only the tip of the iceberg for what we have in store for 2014. We are excited to have Matthew Unger take on a more active role as Chair of the Land & Water Commission and set sail on an exciting campaign schedule for the upcoming year.

More details on these projects on the SPEC website soon. See you at the beach!

COASTAL COALITION

Raise awareness and conduct research on BC's coastal waters and watersheds to strategically target plastic ocean waste, single use plastics, food waste, marine coastal planning and BC land use.

BEACH CLEANUP FESTIVAL SERIES

3 festivals on April 19 (Earth Day Weekend), June 8 (World Ocean's Day), and September 27 (International Beach Cleanup Day). A fun event with activities for the whole family.

WASTE AUDIT & BEACH TRANSECT WORKSHOPS

Workshops to learn how to contribute to global ocean waste research in a few simple steps. Free for SPEC members!

2014 OCEAN RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS

Learn how to conduct relevant, cutting edge marine research in the field and participate in remote shoreline clean-ups.

SPEC WASTE REDUCTION PROJECTS 2013



The waste committee works to increase waste prevention and reduction through targeted campaigns, such as Green 2 Go, educational workshops and social media awareness strategies.

GREEN 2 GO

WHAT DO WE WANT TO DO?

- » Raise awareness about take-out food container waste;
- » See restaurants reduce take out related waste; and
- » And ultimately eliminate Styrofoam waste from take-out containers.

WHO DO WE WORK WITH?

- » Restaurants, neighbourhood houses and consumers.

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

- » We do outreach at events and online;
- » We develop materials such as the Green 2 Go report and infographics;
- » We engage with restaurant owners and managers with an effort to prevent and reduce waste;
- » We communicate findings and recommendations through the social and traditional media; and
- » We depend on many very enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2013

- » One report produced on the pros and cons of to-go container options;
- » 4 info-graphics produced with waste reduction education for outreach; and
- » 1 study completed on to-go container usage, from the customer perspective.

NEXT STEPS: 2014

- » Green 2 Go outreach to 20 restaurants; and
- » Public outreach on prevention and reduction.





GOING ZERO WASTE

WHAT DO WE WANT TO DO?

Raise awareness about waste issues and offer practical solutions that can help individuals, families and organizations to reduce their waste footprint.

WHO DO WE WORK WITH?

Neighbourhood houses, organizations, businesses and consumers.

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

- » We do outreach at events and offer workshops; and
- » We develop presentation materials.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2013

Five workshops held at community centres, schools and neighbourhood houses.

NEXT STEPS: 2014

20 zero waste workshops with businesses and neighbourhood houses in the Lower Mainland.

WASTE COMMITTEE SUPPORTERS

We want to thank our funders Vancity and Metro Vancouver, as well as our Project partner The Tiffin Project. All this work would be impossible to do without the support, energy and knowledge of our team of friends and volunteers:

Sara Blenkhorn (SPEC staff), Marnie Newell (SPEC staff), Robyn Kimber (co-chair), Chris Karu (co-chair), Jennifer Kostenchuk, Angie Nicolás, Antonin Bois, Joey Liu, Bill Mills, Eyal Lebel, Lindsay Mackas-Burns, Hunter Moyes, and Melissa Chaun.

EVENTS AND OUTREACH

SPEC's staff and volunteers are permanently involved in communicating our message to the community and listening to the community's concerns. This year we managed to be present at a good number of events while continuing to carry out workshops for our programs in food, waste, energy and land and water. These are some of the events and workshops we were involved in:

EVENTS

	ATTENDANCE
Living Naturally Fair 2013 – Whole Foods Market	1000's
Four beach clean-ups on Kits and English Bay beaches	100's
Car Free Day on Main Street	1000's
Apple Fest at UBC Botanical Gardens	1000's
Westside Community Food Market	150 to 200 per day
Sustain on Main (Lululemon community event)	100's

WORKSHOPS

	ATTENDANCE
Urban Farmer Field School (23 workshops for the public)	200
Living Zero Waste workshops	50
Three "Plastic Ocean" presentations and workshops	40
Energy workshop	15
School Gardens Project lessons at 8 schools	1800

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

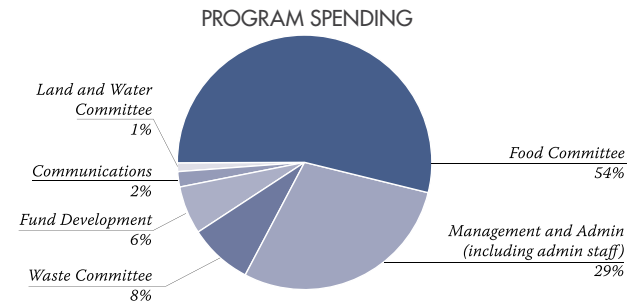
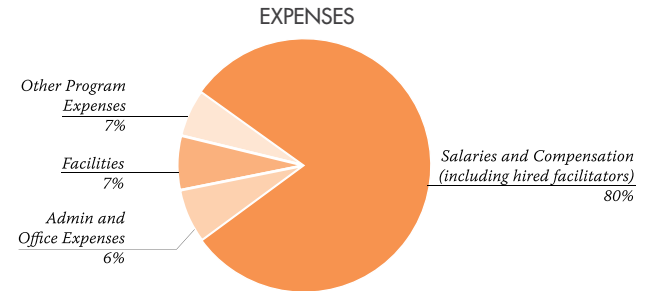
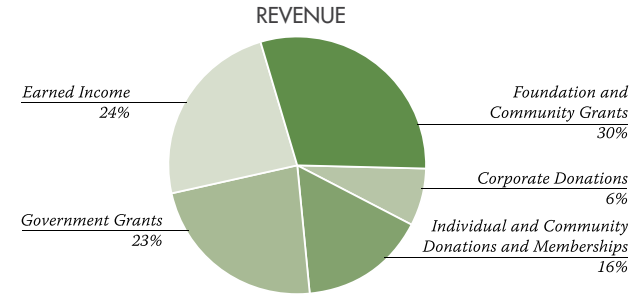
» FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEC continues its effort to diversify its funding streams. Currently our programs are funded through government and foundation grants, earned income from course registrations and services, individual donations and corporate donations and sponsorships. We look for innovative ideas and are currently launching SPEC's first crowd-funding campaign on Indiegogo.com and the matching donation campaign Triple Your Money.

» TOTAL REVENUE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013: \$79,961

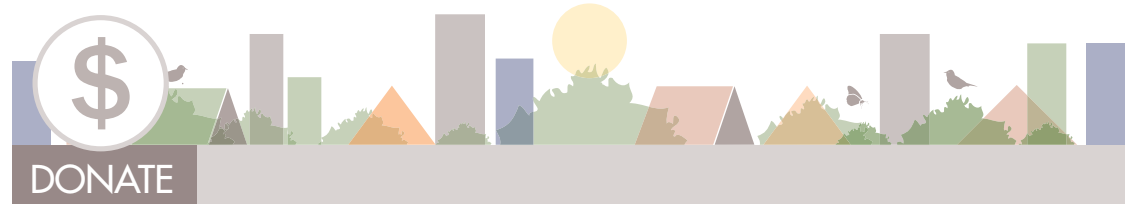
» TOTAL EXPENSES FISCAL YEAR 2013: \$113,296

Note: This fiscal year's deficit was covered by SPEC's retained earnings from previous years.



How to Support SPEC and Sustainable Cities

You've supported SPEC with your time, financially and with your friendship for nearly 45 years. Maybe you even voted for our video in the recent Community Challenge contest! Well, we want to thank you! And we hope that you can continue to support SPEC and your community. Individual donations are a key funding component of most non-profit organizations. Research shows not only that organizations like SPEC obtain most of their funding from individual donors, but that this is the most sustainable way to fund non-profit activities, making organizations less vulnerable to the fluctuating availability of government and foundation grants.



TAKE SPEC OUT FOR LUNCH ONCE A MONTH

The most effective way to support our projects is to become a monthly donor. As a monthly donor you will provide an important ongoing support, and of course, are able to stop donating whenever you want. Monthly donations can be as big or small as you like – you decide. For example why not give the equivalent of a monthly lunch at a delicious healthy local restaurant (approx. \$25/month) to SPEC? Visit Canada Helps, a secure, online portal to set up your monthly gift with us or contact us for other options. We can provide a charitable tax receipt.

And by the way, thanks to two private donors, you can Triple Your Money if you give to SPEC before December 31st, 2013. Pay for one lunch and get two for free!

ANNUAL DONATION

Some people prefer to give once or twice per year. Give in whatever way that works best for you; online, over the phone or sending a cheque in the regular mail. All cheques should be made out to “Society Promoting Environmental Conservation” and mailed to 2060 Pine Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 4P8. Online donation and membership forms are available on our website.

BECOME A MEMBER

At only \$30 per year this is a great start to show your commitment to local sustainability and environmental protection in your city. You can also enjoy discounts for events and at local businesses.

LEAVE A LEGACY

Do you want to keep giving even after you are gone? Honor SPEC's work in your will. Past SPEC supports have made significant contribution to SPEC this way, continuing to support their community.



BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Hands on urban food gardening, zero waste crew, beach clean-ups, teaching, researching issues, outreach, fundraising, helping with sustainability tours, communications, you name it! We have opportunities that might interest you and benefit your community.

ATTEND

Come to our workshops and participate in our activities, learn about sustainability, share your own knowledge and experience and meet new people.



A big thank you to all our volunteers, staff, Board, partners and supporters without whom nothing of all this would be possible!



If you need help with any of this or have questions please give us a call at **604-736-7732** or email us at **admin@spec.bc.ca**.

Note: You automatically become an honorary member when you give more than \$30/year) and you get a charitable tax receipt and access to discounts with our sustainably minded partner businesses.

LAST MINUTE GOOD NEWS!

To all of you that support SPEC and especially those of you that voted for our video in the BC Hydro Community Champions Program, we've done it, we won!!! SPEC's video was chosen by the community as one of the winners after a 30 day-long voting period. Funding will help SPEC develop a Solar Energy Toolkit and support parent involvement in our School Gardens Project.



spec.bc.ca

CONTACT SPEC

Whether you have a question or a suggestion, we like to hear from our community. You can always reach us at the SPEC office:

Email: **admin@spec.bc.ca**

Phone: **604-736-7732**

Snail Mail:

SPEC

2060 Pine Street

Vancouver, BC V6J 4P8

This report was prepared by Oliver Lane and Tara Moreau © 2013