



**RIGHT**  
**TO**  
**FOOD**  
**ZINE**

Harvest 2019  
VOL.22

*free*



sustenance  
festival

## SUSTENANCE FOR THE SOUL

AVA CALDWELL

2019 heralds a critical breakthrough in personal choices that benefit community and culture. It's the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Sustenance Festival across Vancouver. It's not just about food, it celebrates life, diversity and the human condition. Foremost, the festival provides innovative approaches to awesome, nutritious, organic foods; great talks, walks, music, art and information of community resources; best of all, we get to know our neighbours and appreciate their roots, our talents and skills, and we share our favourite foods. Some of us even bring seeds, tiny plants, cuttings and expertise to share. There is room for all.

The Sustenance Festival is building upon years of success in building bonds for people who have lost touch with family and friends. We reach out to elders, refugees, families. The goal is to support life and health, through community festivals and displays that provide more than nourishment for our bellies. Sustenance means support for not only the body, but the mind and soul.

This year is the most amazing year of all. We are looking at the inter-connections of west-coast life, from the life-giving salmon that provide so much to so many BC residents to making sure that we include and celebrate diversity of all kinds. No matter where your path takes you, in September, come to one of the many community celebrations of life, food, and building strong social ties to our Vancouver. October means harvest, honey, humour, art and music. Come out and enjoy life, learn about multi-cultures, but especially, learn about your relationship to helping access great food, love and support. Learn where to access harvest over-runs and excesses, learn to make jam and learn how to turn your lawn into great vegetables.



Artwork by Joyce Liao

*The Sustenance Festival runs from  
September 19 to October 18, 2019*

This amazing festival features the best of the harvest, using food, art, music, and it builds friends and community all over Vancouver.

There will be an opening ceremony at the Roundhouse Community Centre on September 19<sup>th</sup> at 5pm. For more information visit [sustenancefestival.ca](http://sustenancefestival.ca)

There will be amazing arts and music extravaganzas and performances, gardeners sharing their secrets with neighbours, food feasts from every nation, cooking demonstrations, bee-keepers and bees (they are such great pets with benefits!)

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## RIGHT TO FOOD ZINE

Downtown Eastside  
Neighbourhood House  
573 East Hastings St.  
Vancouver, BC V6A 1P9  
*Unceded Coast Salish  
Land & Waters*

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the original authors and contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House.

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## ABOUT SUSTENANCE FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 19–OCTOBER 18, 2019

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, Sustenance Festival features food, art, and culture events, including family-friendly meals, workshops, and dialogues. This festival celebrates the food traditions of communities alongside artists, activists, community groups, and social service organizations in the City of Vancouver.

For a list of full programs and events, visit [sustenancefestival.ca](http://sustenancefestival.ca)

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*Sustenance Festival 2019*

## Feasting For Change exhibit

SEPTEMBER 19–28, 2019 AT  
ROUNDHOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE

*“Food will be what brings  
the people together”*

—Secwepemc Elder William Jones  
'Wolverine' Ignace

What does a just transition to building a regenerative practice look like in the arts? In this exhibit, curator Dawn Morrison of Wild Salmon Caravan draws upon a creative arts practice embedding Indigenous perspectives of regeneration, sustenance, and life spirit.

A regenerative practice moves away from linear, production-oriented thinking and shifts towards holistic perspectives. It is a life-giving paradigm to regenerate society, reflect on our daily lives and give ourselves time to work and heal in different ways.

“The life cycle of wild salmon provides a powerful metaphor for a regeneration of life spirit,” says Morrison. “The relationship between wild salmon and Indigenous people are interlinked as keystone species for biodiversity and cultural heritage. With loss of cultural diversity, we lose biodiversity. A regenerative paradigm underlines our Indigenous worldviews. Human creativity is critically important to address environmental and social crises in the world we live in today.”

Inspired by these ideas of a regenerative practice, this exhibition explores a selection of community-engaged arts to push the boundaries between art, culture, food, and life spirit.



We Ain't Got Fish, But by Csetkwe Fortier (2013)

Original work from exhibition “Don't Go Hungry—Be Hungry” by Csetkwe Fortier and Bracken Hanuse Corlett at grunt gallery.

Image by Henri Robideau, courtesy of grunt gallery.

Presented in partnership with Sustenance Festival, Wild Salmon Caravan, Vancouver Park Board and Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre.

Feasting for Change exhibit is part of an annual exhibition titled “State of the Practice” that highlights Vancouver Park Board's longstanding commitment to artists working in community to engage citizens in creative practices.

For more info about the exhibit and programs, please visit [sustenancefestival.ca](http://sustenancefestival.ca)



# Wild Salmon of East Vancouver

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY KAI ERICHSEN  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY JARMILA STORKOVA

Still Creek, August 2019

Tasked with writing a story about wild salmon, the first thing that comes to my mind are the 2 nearest and best-known salmon bearing rivers around downtown Vancouver, the Capilano and the Seymour. I recall a fall afternoon many years ago, lying back in the cold water of the Seymour river in between rounds of a sweat lodge ceremony I was attending. I was literally steaming hot, the river was perfectly cold, and an endless flow of pink salmon made their mad rush upstream, swimming directly over, around and perhaps even through me.

**TO BE IN NATURE HAVING A GREAT DAY, AND THEN BEING CAUGHT IN SUCH A VIBRANT STREAM OF WHAT CAN ONLY BE CALLED LIFE ITSELF, WAS TRULY EXCITING AND AN EVENT I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER.**

It was crazy, so many fish, and I was part of it! Sadly, that river's salmon runs have fallen on hard times, with poor annual returns and substantial habitat destruction caused by a major rockfall far up the Seymour valley, essentially cutting off their prime spawning grounds. So sad.

Now, there aren't a lot of wild salmon returning to the Capilano river, but there are some. The Capilano is a very controversial river. This river short runs only about 7 kilometers from the ocean up to a big fish hatchery just before Cleveland Dam. The pressure that this urban river is under is immense—in season, anglers stand shoulder to shoulder on one side of the river while on the other side a native fishery is taking place, all as sea lions gorge themselves on salmon in the water between them. Sometimes things get heated as the competition for fish intensifies.

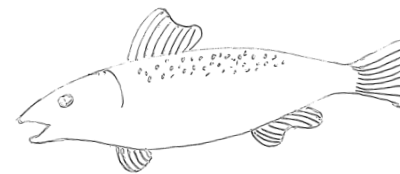
Accusations about poor conservation practices are commonplace. But you know what? It's not a natural river, nor are the salmon runs natural. The flow of the river is as measured as the numbers of salmon hatchlings released by the hatchery every year, everything is controlled. "Ethical harvest" on this river has a lot more to do with the appearance of being polite than benefitting the fish in any way. Once I saw a coho doe spawning with two bucks in a redd they had made just before the salmon hatchery. I stood in awe at these three fighting to engage with nature as so many of their species swam just a bit further, and had their spawning efforts converted into a laboratory process made possible by human hands. It was nature, in spite of humanity, really cool to see. Immediately,

someone cast their fishing lure a metre upstream from the spawning trio. This is the Capilano river.

But there is a spot in Vancouver where, if you know where and when to look, you can find wild salmon spawning under intense urban pressure, and definitely against all odds. This tiny annual run of Chum salmon travel up the Fraser, into the Brunette river in Coquitlam, then up into Burnaby Lake, then into Still Creek in East Van. This is where it gets interesting. As their path winds through industrial areas it eventually becomes a series of culvert that spans areas such as the parking lot at Superstore on Rupert and Grandview. In fact, these salmon routinely spawn in gravel beds in the creek across from the Vancouver Film Studios! Look in the ditch—its full of fish!

**GREAT TO SEE A WATERWAY THAT WAS TOO POLLUTED FOR 80 YEARS COME BACK TO BECOME A VIABLE HABITAT WHERE SALMON CAN THRIVE, EVEN IN SUCH CLOSE PROXIMITY TO US.**

The City of Vancouver has big plans to enhance the habitat for both wildlife and people along the exposed sections of Still Creek, we will see. Still Creek will always be part of Vancouver's rain catchment plan (that means technically, it is a sewer), but that's okay; now that they have found their home again, hopefully wild salmon will always remain, at least in some small part, a part of East Vancouver, too.



## Honey, Sweet Honey: At What Cost to the Bees?

AVA CALDWELL

My earliest memories of honey is the golden elixir being poured on still steaming bread, slathered with sweet creamery butter. I can taste the yummy deliciousness, layer upon layer of soft fragrant yeasty dough, made with love every Friday morning before my mother went off to university as a mature student of home economics and later, social work. I followed in her footsteps, both with education and with honey challah.

Honey, beautiful golden honey, is the life's work of industrious honey bees. Bees are having a pretty hard time right now. They have always been sought for their precious gold, by animals, birds, insects and humans.

A new phenomenon is displacement. Due to dwindling populations worldwide, farmers began to create portable bee colonies on 18 wheel trucks. They drive the bees from field-to-field. The "Drive and Pollinate" movement spread to other types of crops that require pollination for fruit production. Bees' superior pollinating abilities have resulted in bee abuse. They are mistreated and used by the farming industry in an effort to increase crop yield. Evicted from their homes, the bee's entire life cycle and community structure has been destroyed.

Pesticide use is sadly, at its most dangerous peak for 70 years. There is no relief in sight for all types of bees. Bee culture has been eradicated by humans. Again.

The solution is simple, yet difficult as industry and economics often take precedence over ecology and environment.

## PESTICIDE USE MUST CEASE.



Natural solutions deter insects that help themselves to a pre-harvest dinner. Cinnamon is used to deter ants when they attack cherry trees. There are lots of scientific reasons for this natural effect. Bear in mind that cinnamon has long been known to act as a aphrodisiac, so those ants might have procreation on their tiny brain instead of working!!

*Bee-keeping.* To Bee or not To Bee. Bees mean everything to humans, for pollination and more. For more information on helping bees survive in an urban setting, or being a Bee Host Home on your condo patio, please contact: Golden Meadows Honey Farm, 604-272-1921 or [INFO@WESTCOASTBEESSUPPLY.CA](mailto:INFO@WESTCOASTBEESSUPPLY.CA) Steve: Honey Farm at [eastvanhoney.com](http://eastvanhoney.com) They come to your condo, home or business and teach you how to keep a happy hive and how to harvest some of the golden honey. Perhaps you will start bottling your own special honey for your family and friends!

Happy buzzing! In every backyard, every apartment rooftop garden, every park, every community centre, and in every school, we should create "How-To" workshops and provide ongoing support to new bee-keepers.

In California, decades ago, it was the almond farmers who decided to harness the pollinating power of bees for their failing crop production. Farmers had noticed a steady decline of bee populations since the 1920's when extremely toxic pesticides such as DDT were used to control all pests (locusts, weevils, beetles, cockroaches and ants). The decline of small family-run farming also resulted in less bee-keeping.

Bees bring benefits and dividends beyond economics. Happy memories of having bee friends and sharing in their harvest will foster an understanding of life cycles and respect for all forms of life. We all do interrelate and we share a genetic background.



The following recipe is for a yeasty buttery challah bread, enriched with eggs and love. It's best to bake at least 2 loaves, as they seem to disappear into thin air. I know that some people believe in sliced bread; myself, I am simple. I tear off chunks and smear on cultured butter and pour on flower-infused clover honey from my trusty bear honey jar.

Yum yum. Thanks, Momma!!

### Honey Challah Recipe

The secret of any good bread is time. It is essential for best taste to let the yeast work its magic and go through several rises and falls. Like the Roman Empire, make this bread dough the night before you want to bake it. Make it a night do some self-care, to read a good book and work your muscles out with kneading. Bonus workout!

You can make a number of delicious breads with this special enriched dough. brioche, challah, or honey dinosaurs, they are all yummy, yummy, YUMMY. Please remember that leftover breads are happily recycled into divine french toast.

#### INGREDIENTS FOR 2 LOAVES

1 package dry yeast (1 TBSP)  
¼ CUP warm water  
1 TBSP sugar  
Mix together in a big bowl. Make sure that the yeast is bubbling and growing. After 5 minutes it should be frothy.  
Mix in and beat with a large wooden spoon:  
1 CUP warm milk  
½ CUP warm water  
½ CUP wildflower honey  
6 eggs  
Add 1 CUP all purpose unbleached flour. Cover with a damp clean dishcloth and let rise for ½hr in a warm spot. Stir to release bubbles in dough. Have a massage and bubble bath while it rises and the yeast starts to grow.

Add ½ TSP salt and 3 cups flour to make a batter. Let rise for ½ hour-1 hr. This might be a time to soak your tired feet

with Epsom salts or have a little nap. After all, you are a renowned bread purveyor. Punch down dough with your fists.

Add 1½ cup flour. Again, let rise for at least 1 hr. Dough is very giving at this point. You can continue the cycle (of rising/punching/add flour/sugar) indefinitely as the best flavour is developed over 2-3 days. However, be aware that yeast is a mass of living creatures. They eat, grow, make babies yeasts within a really short time, just 3 hours. So if you don't control the population explosion by punching down, the yeast family, and adding more food (flour) the family will simply run out of food. Your dough will start to stop dividing when the food is gone.

You can also use refrigeration to slow down the life cycle of yeast-based dough. I leave the dough overnight covered with wrap and make sure that I punch it down when I pass by. You can also freeze dough at this stage. It does take more time for the frozen dough to get activated again. Think of frozen bees; yes we can re-activate life forms such as yeast easily.

Shaping the challah, dinosaurs or brioche loaf (shape it into any form, it's really delicious)

### Challah:

Divide dough in half. Separate each half into three. Using your palms, till each third is a long roll. Melt some butter, and brush each roll with butter. Pinch the ends together and start to braid together. Shape with your hands to form a braided loaf, and place on a greased cookie sheet. The bread will grow considerably so only put one challah on each baking pan. Apply egg wash, and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Let rise for 1½ hours. Apply egg wash very gently. Preheat oven to 375°F.

Bake for 35-40 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes. Tear off chunks and put on as much butter and honey as you want. Yum. Yum. Bees are fun. They make everything YUM!!

## Urban farming poh-pohs: Chinese seniors garden project develops space for elders' food security in the Downtown Eastside

ERICA ISOMURA



Last spring and summer, a group of poh-pohs (Cantonese for “grandmothers” or “elderly women”) gathered every Saturday to grow fresh vegetables in raised beds and pots on the edge of the parking lot at E. Hastings and Jackson. With support from the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House and Carnegie Community Centre, this Chinese Seniors Community Garden became a brand new space for seniors to share skills and stay healthy.

Unlike many other community garden spaces, these elderly Chinese women tended to the garden beds in a communal fashion and shared the harvest. In addition to obtaining produce and new garden skills, they cultivated stronger friendships and community with one another.

### SENIORS' PHOTOGRAPHY SHARES PERSONAL MEMORIES

In Fall of 2018, the Sun Wah Centre on Keefer Street hosted CHINATOWN GENERATIONS as part of the Heart of the City Festival. This intergenerational community event celebrated Chinatown and its ongoing presence of cultural

heritage. It featured a photo exhibition by and of urban farming poh-pohs and their gardening activities in the Downtown Eastside.

Upon my arrival to the event, one of the senior participants, Kong Tai (Mrs. Kong) came over to say hello and handed me a small photo album. Mrs. Kong is a well-known elder in the Chinatown community who advocates on issues of housing justice. Despite the language barrier between us, the photos she offered me conveyed her excitement and happiness for the garden project.

As I flipped through the photo album, the 4x6 prints displayed the unmistakable aesthetic of a disposable camera. I realized these photos were taken by the poh pohs themselves. The photos captured many bright faces, green growth, and blurred smiles: Mrs. Kong and her friends working in the garden, a group of elderly women happily displaying large bunches of Asian greens and a harvest of juicy mo gwa (fuzzy melons).



Photography by Clare Yow

**“No one needs expensive coffee or skateboards, but we need groceries”**

While the Chinese Seniors Community Garden project is joyful, it is also critically important. With increasing gentrification in Chinatown, 55% of grocery stores have closed down or moved out of the neighbourhood within the past decade (according to a report by hua foundation). As Mrs. Kong expresses in the Carnegie Community Action Project Report titled, *We Are Too Poor To Afford Anything*,

**“We had all the grocery stores and herbal stores, cafes, a variety of restaurants to eat dim sum or dinner, which are important social spaces for us Chinese people... [but] there are not even a lot of grocery shops left.** A big problem is that the new places opening in Chinatown are either a coffee shop or a nightclub. These places are really expensive and they don't sell things that we need, nor are they welcoming spaces for us. They are unsuitable to our needs. I never go into these places and I drink my coffee at the Carnegie. No one needs expensive coffee or skateboards, but we need groceries.”

## SENIORS OFTEN OVERLOOKED IN WESTERN SOCIETY

Beyond the needs of the Chinatown neighbourhood, increasing numbers of seniors are unable to afford to feed themselves. In December, CBC reported that approximately 10,000 seniors—a figure on the rise—access the food bank each month in BC. As life expectancy increases, food insecurity for seniors is expected to worsen, too. For seniors who live in poverty, BC's disability and welfare rates do not support them to afford healthy foods. Nearly a third of seniors are deemed “at risk” of not getting adequate nutrition from their diets according to Statistics Canada.

At the intersection of age, class, gender, and race, many elderly Chinese women experience discrimination while navigating social services. For years, service providers in the Downtown Eastside have recognized the need for more culturally-specific services for Chinese seniors.

“The [seniors] that are healthiest come [to resource centres in the Downtown Eastside] in the biggest groups. They don't have any education. They can't read. They can't write. But the way they're happy, the way they survive, and part of why they're healthy, is because they have each other.”

—Deanna Wong, Chinese seniors outreach coordinator in *Old, Alone and Victims of Racism in Downtown Eastside* (article in The Tyee, April 2013)

The success of the Chinese Seniors Community Garden is even more meaningful with an understanding of how immigrant seniors' needs are not adequately met by Western society. The role of friendship and community in this neighbourhood are necessary for survival. Growing gardens may be the vehicle, but this multi-lingual, culturally-focussed project will have lasting impacts through its built relationships.



Photography by Clare Yow

## A FUTURE WITH FOOD FOR ALL, SENIORS INCLUDED

As the gardening season begins again, more local food security projects are centering the needs of seniors in other parts of the city, too.

In the coming months, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House will launch “Sowing the Seeds of Inclusivity,” a gardening project at Riley Park Community Garden to specifically support food security for seniors in Little Mountain-Riley Park neighbourhood. In addition to gardening and cooking activities, the project will provide lunches in the garden and shuttle rides to and from the sessions, as a means of increasing accessibility.

For those who are looking to get involved or are passionate about seniors’ food security, the Chinese Seniors Community Garden is welcoming new volunteers and gardeners, with no prior experience needed. They hosted a public re-opening celebration at the end of April which celebrated the new growing season with an official lion dance opening. Riley Park Community Garden is also looking

for new members to join their Seniors Engagement Committee for their “Sowing the Seeds of Inclusivity” project.

As the food movement shifts to prioritize more and more underrepresented voices, like those of our elders, I hope we will continue to listen to elders’ stories and learn from the wisdom they have to offer. I hope projects like the Chinese seniors garden plant the seed for more of Vancouver’s food communities to address seniors’ specific needs to access healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods with dignity and respect.

The Chinese Seniors Garden project is supported by the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House, Carnegie Community Centre, New Horizons for Seniors, and Wing Wing Sausage Co. Limited.

Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House (DTES Right to Food Network) and the Riley Park Community Garden (Little Mountain-Riley Park Neighbourhood Food Network) are part of the Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Networks.

Learn more at [vancouverfoodnetworks.com](http://vancouverfoodnetworks.com) or follow [@vanfoodnetworks](https://www.instagram.com/vanfoodnetworks).

# SAVE THE SEEDS! ON SEED LIBRARIES, CORPORATIONS AND SAVING

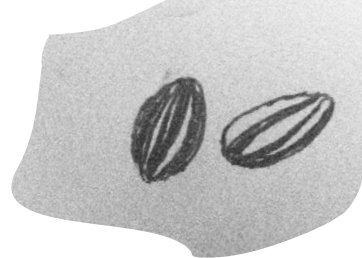
*Written & Illustrated by Kaylie Higgs*

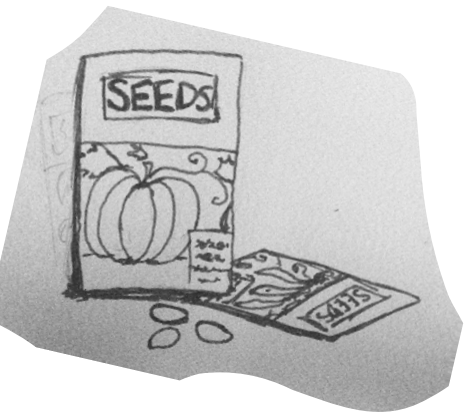
Seeds are a critical part of our lives, yet their health, presence, and relationship with us is often not discussed in mainstream media. This time of year, harvest, local food, art, culture—the things that sustain and nourish us—come-up as important pieces of our communities. And it’s also important to consider how that harvest and food came to be, which in some way or another usually involves seeds. In particular, this time of year has huge potential to consider, conserve, and care for seeds, to prepare for future plantings, and to save them as they become ready for harvest.

## Seed SAVING

Seed saving is the process of keeping seeds from plants or their harvest to store for planting in future years. Seeds are often collected from plants in gardens or farms, but they can also be taken from fruits or other seed-bearing plant parts (e.g. tomato seeds can be cleaned, dried, and planted from any tomato).

This process of saving seeds has been practiced for thousands of years, around the world, and is a key piece of the diversity of our foods and an important part of growing many of them.





**Seed saving can help to create locally adapted varieties of plants, support community or individual self-reliance, maintain diversity and resilience of seeds, and even lead to new plant types!**

This kind of seed saving can also be a cost effective way of sharing and keeping seeds from year to year (rather than purchasing seeds from seed companies).

On a larger scale, saving seeds has also been recognized as an important part of conserving biodiversity and plant varieties in the face of climate change or other potential world disasters. This has led to a variety of initiatives, including investments in large vaults (by governments and other organizations) to store thousands of seeds from around the world.

### **Seed CORPORATIONS**

Not only can seed saving be positive for human and plant resilience and health, but the process itself can also be seen as a form of critical activism in the face of increasing private ownership and consolidation in seed companies.

**Around 60% of sold seeds are sourced from just a handful of powerful corporations,**

which are detached from local contexts and communities and largely double as chemical/pharmaceutical companies. This presents issues around power dynamics, conflicting interests, genetic diversity, and food sovereignty.

For instance, [the last issue of the Zine](#) featured an article on the large seed and chemical company Monsanto. Monsanto recently merged with Bayer, another large company that focuses on chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and seeds, resulting in further power consolidation. Companies such as these have patented some seed varieties, leading to stipulations on plant growers' abilities to save and breed seeds and to court cases over these rights. Many of these large companies also work on genetically engineering seeds, often pairing resistance in these seeds to chemicals they produce (such as the pesticide glyphosate in Round-Up) so that they can sell both seeds and pesticides.

Even after purchasing these seeds, some of the seeds sold by companies like this cannot be saved as there may be legal restrictions (more common for larger scale farming) or genetic reasons that do not allow for the plant to openly pollinate or reproduce the same variety of crop (for instance, some hybridized crop varieties).

These large companies are disconnected from our communities, focused on profit (which can lead to the prioritization of toxic chemicals over the health of land, water, or life), and do not produce the same genetic diversity or regional context of locally saved seeds, important elements of resilient and adapted crop varieties. Reliance on these seed companies also decreases power and choice for food growers and communities, impacting food sovereignty.

### **Seed LIBRARIES**

Still, there are many local seed organizations, companies, co-ops, and farmers who are working to grow, save, and share diverse seeds. An exciting initiative is seed libraries, which are places where people can take seeds for free with the intention of growing the plants and then trying to save seeds and bring a portion of them back to the library to be stored for library users to plant in the next growing season. For many plants, this means taking seeds in the spring and then saving seeds from some of the plants to bring to the library in the fall.

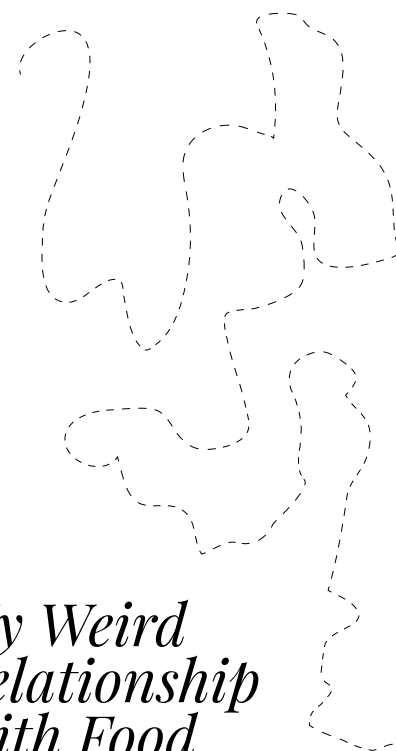
Seed saving varies in how it is done depending on the type of plant, but is generally fairly simple. It usually includes removing seeds from a fruit, possibly washing or rinsing them, drying them, and then storing them in dry, cool conditions. Many seed libraries offer free workshops on how to save seeds as well as other food-related topics to help support their members.

There are a number of seed libraries around the city of Vancouver, including ones at the Carnegie, Kitsilano, and Mount Pleasant branches of the Vancouver Public Library, at community centers, like the Strathcona Community Center, at mobile locations, through groups such as Village Vancouver, and at neighbourhood houses, like the Gordon Neighbourhood House.

Seeds are a critical part of our lives and saving, planting, and sharing them with our communities can be important parts of supporting a more resilient, diverse, just, and local food system.

For a more complete list of seed libraries across Vancouver, the [Vancouver Food Network](#) has a [list on their website](#).

Kaylie is a white settler of mixed European ancestry. She grew up around UBC and is currently a student there studying land and food systems.

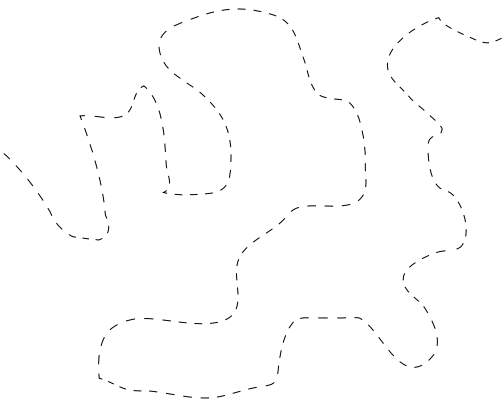


## *My Weird Relationship With Food*

### **KAI ERICHSEN**

I grew up the youngest of three boys whose parents were first generation immigrants and often reminded us kids how very scarce food was in post-war Europe. Nonetheless, the family diet was very meat and potatoes oriented with mom cooking up a storm during my youngest years. Things got worse as time went by, and the home became dysfunctional due to alcoholism, poverty and all that comes with it. By the time I was a teenager I was obese and ashamed, with absolutely no sense of what nutrition was all about. Family meals had long since been replaced by pre-packaged meals, fast food, junk food and sometimes nothing at all. Speaking of junk food, I recall my mother bribing/comforting us kids with junk food at times when my father was causing chaos in our house, which was most of the time. The comfort food was a priority, nutrition was not.





Not much changed for me over time, as I had become a drug addict myself, and a big part of my life's unmanageability was centred around food. Poor choices beget more poor choices, and an active addict like me had more important priorities than mapping out a healthy diet. Even after getting help for my drug issues and experiencing some degree of recovery from my crazy past, nutrition never did make it up high on my list of priorities. Junk food is good! It is pleasure! Less work than cooking! I knew of few other ways of rewarding or comforting myself in those days.

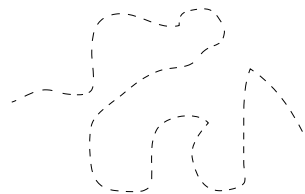
Things did change a bit after getting married and having kids of my own. My nutrition definitely improved, but junk food was still a big part of my personal diet, away from family meal times. My attitude towards food had not changed despite having made changes in so many other areas of my life, and it was dragging everything else down.

Now I am 50, and my health is slowly leaving me. Arthritis in my knees reminds me constantly that I am overweight and that life would be better if I were not so heavy. Thankfully, my cravings for the sweet and salty stuff that were staples of my diet seem to be diminishing, and the logic of healthy eating makes sense to my mind in a way that it never has before. But now I feel old and sore, my metabolism isn't what it used to be, and everything I do to benefit my health now comes with the added cost of pain and increased effort.

I started volunteering at the Downtown Eastside Neighborhood House specifically because they focus on food—not that I want to eat it all, I just want to learn and be around people who are food and nutrition positive! I need the constant reminder to make healthy eating choices, avoid “bad” foods and just improve my overall attitude about food and eating.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not fully a recovered healthy eater; however my nutrition is better than it used to be, and for me that is an ongoing victory. Two years ago I started on a slow and gentle journey to regain my health, and I have made progress. My goal isn't weight-based or measured by the size of my pants. My goal is to simply keep trying my best, every day, to make food choices that are healthy, and it's working. And the more I talk about it, write about it, and even engage with the preparation of healthy food here at the Downtown Eastside Neighborhood House, I am tipping the scales of my nutrition towards good rather than bad, and over time those choices add up to my benefit. Bottom line is, I feel better, all around. My greatest regret is that I didn't figure it out sooner.

If you are a person who, like me, has a crazy relationship with food, I wish you the best and encourage you to make it a “thing”—talk about it, share it, own it, and maybe you can improve it. I did, and there is nothing special about me. Of course, always consult your doctor concerning your nutrition and health, but if you just want to talk about it, the Downtown Eastside Neighborhood House is a great place to meet like-minded people who are concerned with food and nutrition. You don't need to be a slave to the poverty junk food trap like I was for such a long time.



## The Beauty of The Vine

Ava Caldwell, VanDusen Master Gardener

Vinegar has such wonderful medicinal properties. In some cultures, a spoonful is ingested daily, on its own. The French and the Italians use an oil/vinegar vinaigrette on a simple green salad to incorporate this acid into their daily diet. Some Polish dishes such as sauerkraut use the natural fermentation process without vinegar to create a natural “souring” and vinegar-production. In Poland, there is even a soup that uses the vinegar from pickles to flavour a “Pickle Soup”. The French have perfected the art of pan sauces for haute cuisine, which use vinegar to balance flavours.

Vinegar allows for easier absorption of vitamins and promotes digestion. Once you experiment a little, and have developed a more sophisticated palate, you can easily incorporate it into many dishes, drinks and health supplements.

Essentially, vinegar is wine gone sour. Yes. We humans try to recycle everything, don't we? Fermented anything means that we tried one science experiment with food and it morphed into another culinary delight. Bonus!

Each year, as the garden brings me fragrant and tangy red raspberries or juicy yellow plums or too much lemon thyme, I make essential vinegars. Each one makes refreshing summer libations, and the yin and yang of sweet and sour tastes climax in a beautiful tangy icy froth that will leave you begging for more.

The vinegars can also be used to make lip-smacking sauces for lamb, chicken, beef and tofu. You haven't really tasted fine cuisine until you try “Pink Peppercorn Rack of Lamb” or created an unforgettable chocolate mint vinaigrette. Somehow, a tall tumbler, filled with ice and a superb “Mint Julep,” will become embedded in your summer memories of 2019.

### *How-To-Make Flavoured Vinegars*

#### YOU WILL NEED:

4 litres of white vinegar (other kinds can be used, please do experiment)

4 litre canning jar

4 1-litre glass bottles (for the final presentation)

**FRESH RIPE FRUIT:** I recommend raspberry, plums, kumquats, guava, blackberries, lemons, or cherries. Some fruits are very pulpy, like ripe peaches, which tend to be cloudy and not as appetizing, but they will taste great!!! These fruits require more straining, but any fruit you like can be used.

**FRESH HERBS:** oregano, chocolate mint, lemon thyme, lemongrass, Thai basil, licorice, root beer, ginseng—any herb can be used.

**SPICES:** salt, pepper, ground and whole mixed multicoloured peppercorns, honey or white sugar.

PROCESS:

Prepare the fruit/herbs/spices for infusion into the vinegar. Wash, pit, cut into slices, and mash the fruit. Place about 2 CUPS of fruit/chopped herbs into the canning jar.

Heat up the vinegar to the boiling point, then add 2 TBSP each of salt, sugar, and 1 TBSP peppercorns. Seasoning can be adjusted after aging.

Pour the hot vinegar over the fruit or herbs. Tighten the lid, but do not seal in a water bath. Place the jars into the fridge and let them age for 2 weeks to a month.

Using a cheese cloth over a bowl, strain each batch separately, making sure to use new cheese cloth for each flavour of vinegar. If there are a lot of particles, you may have to strain it twice. Please feel free to add some of the original fruit, either whole or slices, right into the fancy glass bottle that will show off your culinary creations.

**Recipe #1 Pink Peppercorn Rack of Lamb**

Coat the entire 2-kilo rack with Dijon mustard and coarsely ground salt and pepper. Roast on a metal roasting pan in a 400°F oven for 35 minutes, reduce heat to 325 and continue roasting for 35 minutes. Remove meat and tent with foil. Add 2 T butter, 1/2 clove garlic, and 2 finely chopped shallots. Cook over medium heat until golden. Add 2 TBSP pink peppercorns, 1/2 TSP Ground black pepper, 2 TBSP Better Than Bouillion beef bouillon, 1 TSP Lemon zest. Cook together for 4–6 minutes, stirring constantly. Add 1/4 CUP water and 1/4 cup raspberry vinegar. Simmer for 10 minutes, adding more water if necessary. Slice rack into ribs, and pour peppercorn sauce over. Delish!

**Wellness Shot Recipe**

Imran Rai

Basic recipe used for all Wellness Shots:

2 TBSP of apple cider vinegar  
6 TBSP of juice/warm water  
essential oil or spice to taste

Add black pepper or cayenne (as an activation agent)

If you drink about 1 oz of this before meals and snacks, it helps your body breakdown and digest the food you are eating.

Generic Shot:

2 TBSP of apple cider vinegar  
6 TBSP of warm water  
1 TSP of honey/sweetener to taste  
1 TSP of coconut oil  
1/8 TSP of cinnamon  
1/8 TSP of cayenne/black pepper  
squeeze of lemon

You can dilute this with juice to make it a drink or top it off with sparkling water.

**Recipe #2 Mint Julep**

Fill a large tall glass with ice and 2–3 springs of fresh mint. Zest and Juice 2 limes, add 2 TBSP of spearmint-Infused vinegar, then fill glass with spring, tonic or soda water. Refreshes and revives the spirit and body.

Please remember to REFRIGERATE your Infused VINEGARS. There are NO preservatives or additives, so ensure a longer shelf life by keeping it safely in the fridge.

Variety is really the vinegar of life, and sometimes we need a “tang” to get us back on track—the digestive track, that is!

Canada's

**NEW**

**NATIONAL FOOD POLICY**

*Explained*

KAI ERICHSEN

Did you know that Canada has not had a formal National Food Policy until 2019? First promised by the Trudeau government in 2015, Canada's long-awaited national food policy will receive \$134.4 million in cash over five years, starting in the year 2020.

The policy, outlined in the 2019 federal budget, appears to be a 4 point plan:

- Helping eliminate food waste
- Improving access to healthy food for ALL Canadians
- Establishing a focus on Canadian foods, both here at home and around the world
- A special focus on food security in Northern and remote communities

Of course, details are few and far between. This plan also includes a federal commitment to work with provinces and territories to develop a nation-wide school food program designed to make sure Canadian school kids have access to healthy food both before and during school. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food (yup that's what they call it) will be tasked with spending \$50 million to establish a “Local Food Infrastructure Fund” to be handed out over the next five years. This money is supposed to help fund and support “infrastructure for local food projects” at food banks, farmers' markets and other community-driven projects.

The Minister of this department, The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, has a thoroughly eastern pedigree, so it will be interesting to see how much of this money makes its way west (or north!) of Toronto.

Need more maple syrup and poutine in your life? This budget will also sponsor a new five year, \$25 million “Buy Canadian” marketing campaign designed to promote Canadian agriculture products both here at home and around the world. I have no doubt the world would be a sweeter place if we could introduce everyone to Nanaimo Bars and Chilliwack corn! Just as long as we keep enough for us locals...

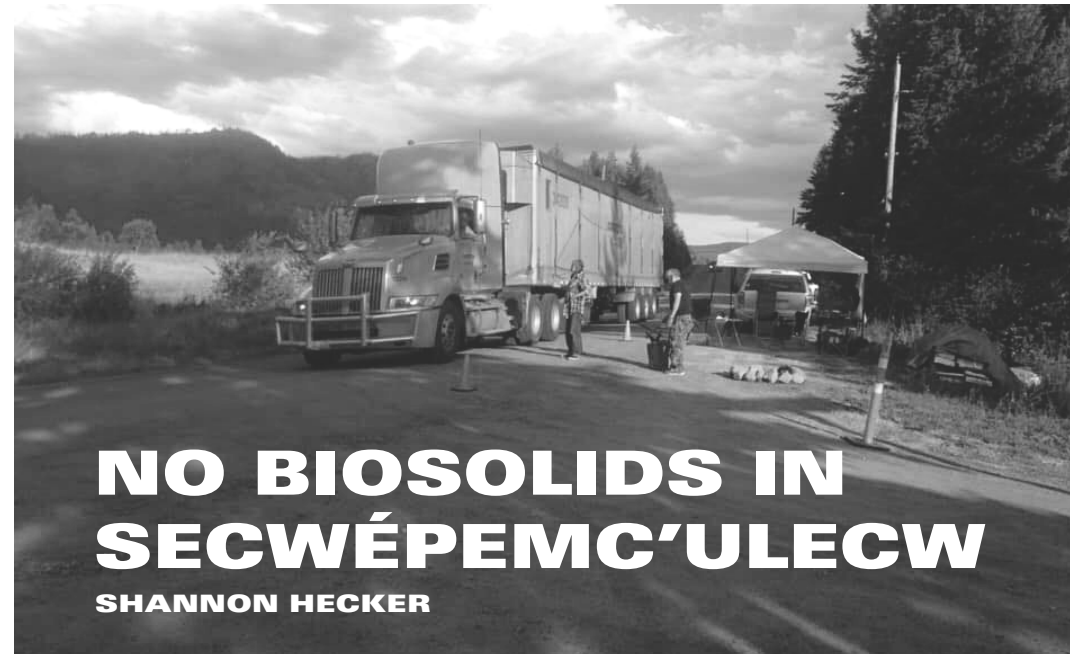
And that’s not all. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency will be receiving a \$24.4 million boost in their efforts to fight food fraud. There doesn’t seem to be a lot of details available for this particular project, but the overall goal is to prevent companies from tampering with or misrepresenting ingredients in their products. That is a TON of cash earmarked to help prevent misleading labels on food. I remember when China discovered baby formula manufacturers were putting melamine into its powder to help boost the overall protein content of their product, an incident that devastated an industry and resulted in a lot of sickness and death. Better to be on the safe side, I guess!

\$20 million is going towards helping prevent food waste. The government will focus on three areas: grocery retailers (no more throwing away “ugly” fruits and vegetables!), the food service industry (kindly send all unwanted surplus steak and lobster to Kai the Guy c/o Downtown East Side Neighborhood house!) and food processors (fish head soup is good! Waste NOTHING!). There has been some progress made in this area already, but it will be interesting if anything relevant gets passed into law, criminalizing the act of wasting food. Because there ought to be a law!

I find this next one odd: \$6.3 million is going towards encouraging less food waste among federal employees, as well as at federal institutions. My friend lives in Kent Institution, and he often regales me with tales of the substandard, carbohydrate-laden empty-calorie diet he is forced to endure as an inmate. I know he is being punished, but crappy food shouldn’t be part of the deal. And the government will somehow make sure their employees finish all their carrot sticks at lunch instead of tossing them in the compost? Prisoners will finish their baloney sandwiches OR ELSE!?! Leave it to the feds to criminalize lunch!

This part I find fascinating: Canada’s northern and other isolated communities will receive \$15 million in new funding, over five years, for community-led projects and to help cover associated costs for “training” and “equipment”. This includes things like community freezers, greenhouses, and training programs for Indigenous agriculture projects or local food production projects. Maybe build a dairy pipeline, and do something about those \$20 jugs of milk! The North certainly has its own unique food security issues, and it’s not hard to offer improvement to a system that is just...bad.

Well, that’s a whole lot of money, and my best explanation of where it is supposed to go! So don’t bother waiting by your mailbox, the government is not sending you a cheque for this one. The benefits of all that money will be spread far and wide with the greatest benefit hopefully experienced by those who need it badly (hungry school kids and our friends up North!). Keep your eyes open in 2020 and look for these initiatives, and get involved if they are happening around you!



## NO BIOSOLIDS IN SECWÉPEMC’ULECW

SHANNON HECKER

Protestors turning away trucks on July 22 2019. Photograph provided by Turtle Valley against Biosolids

**35,000** tonnes of biosolids containing untreated sewage and hospital waste have been contracted out by the city of Kamloops to Arrow Transport and is intended to be dumped just a few hours away in Spelqweqsetkwe (Turtle Valley). For months now, Secwépehc people and local residents have been turning away the Arrow Transport trucks loaded with tonnes of the city’s unwanted waste. You may be wondering, what exactly are biosolids? Basically, anything people flush down the toilet and also all sorts of medical waste. There could be waste from amputations, dialysis transfusion, abortions, pharmaceutical drugs or illicit, funeral waste, veterinary waste and the list goes on. Not to mention the danger of spreading disease with raw sewage from sick people. All this mixed together and stored in anaerobic containers for 160 days and is then reclassified as Class D Fertilizer, marketed as NutriGrow.

**THIS DISGUSTING SLUDGE IS NOT FERTILIZER. THE CITY OF KAMLOOPS NEEDS TO DEAL WITH THEIR SHIT! FIND A BETTER SOLUTION IMMEDIATELY & PLAN LONG TERM.**

Sadly a few of the trucks have already gotten through. Not long after, local Shuswap beaches have been testing very high in e. Coli bacteria and warnings have been made for people to avoid swimming in those areas. Not only is Turtle Valley home of many painted turtles, but it is also above one of the largest aquifers in the area.

**ANY CONTAMINATION WILL AFFECT THE DRINKING WATER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA INCLUDING THE TOWN OF CHASE.**

There are many neighbouring farms and where they are intending to dump is a bison farm sold for consumption. Turtle Valley is also where many deer graze and berries and other traditional foods grow.

## YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT. DO YOU WANT BIOSOLIDS AS FERTILIZER IN YOUR GARDEN?

The city of Kamloops has made illegal deals with Little Shuswap Indian Band of the Secwépemc Nation—they did not have the consent of the Secwépemc Nation as a whole. A sacred fire has been lit as the people of the Secwépemc Nation have not been consulted and do not consent. An injunction has been served to local residents who had been turning away trucks since April 2019 which resulted in many of those protectors going home fearing legal recourse.

However, the mothers and elders of the sacred fire counsels of the grassroots Secwépemc will not be deterred. The sacred fire counsels assert that they are not residents, they are title holders—having never given up title or ceding the lands of their territory, which includes Spelqweqsetkwe (Turtle Valley). Standing on natural law and upholding hereditary responsibilities, elders and matriarchs continue to stand vigil and turn away Arrow Transport trucks attempting to invade their territory to dump toxic bio-sludge.

“Our natural Matrilineal Laws are enacted, and we do not give permission nor consent to destroy our water systems and poison our wildlife and plant life. Water is life and we will protect it for all future generations and faces yet beneath the earth!”

July 15th 2019—Secwépemc Elders Sacred Fire—  
NO Bio-Sludge in Secwépemc'ulecw

There are only a handful of folks showing up to stop the trucks and unfortunately some of trucks did get through. Both the womens' and elders' sacred fire counsels have declared this an

**“EMERGENCY SITUATION. WE NEED ALL SECWÉPEMC AND SUPPORTERS TO STOP THE DESTRUCTION OF WETLANDS AND WATERSHEDS.”**

August 6th 2019—Secwépemc Elders Sacred Fire—NO  
Bio-Sludge in Secwépemc'ulecw

If you are able to, take some time off of work and travel up to help stop the dumping of toxic bio-solids onto a huge aquifer and foodscape! Bring a tent and food and strong heart. If you can't go but want to support, help buy food, gas and supplies for the mothers taking time off work to protect the water for all of us and future generations! e-transfer [SACREDWATER78@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SACREDWATER78@GMAIL.COM) or to go fund me link for protection of Turtle valley. All help appreciated! Kukstemc

**STOP BIOSOLIDS being DUMPED  
in SECWÉPEMC'ULECW**

Media contact: Miranda Dick  
Email: [sacredwater78@gmail.com](mailto:sacredwater78@gmail.com)  
Phone: 250-299-2773

More information available on facebook pages:  
[Turtle Valley against Biosolids & Secwépemc Elders Sacred Fire—NO Bio-Sludge in Secwépemc'ulecw](#)

[Three Shuswap Lake beaches test positive for high E. coli levels](#)

## SUSTENANCE SONG

Ava Caldwell, BSW  
July 26, 2019, 6:28 PM

The Planet needs us to care  
We need to change what we eat,  
use, and wear  
The world is dying but we can  
turn it around  
If everyone just gives a damn

Sustenance, Sustenance  
Its what we all need  
Mind, Soul and Body  
Part of a community  
Share alike with friends and family  
Sustenance, Sustenance  
We treasure our planet

I don't know why people are mean  
I don't understand why they're  
indifferent or in-between  
The NIMBY's the Wanna-Be,  
The Nay-Sayers and the Trolls

I say, be Gone  
Back to your holes  
Recycle, compost and grow yourselves  
Its the way to go

Sustenance, Sustenance  
Its what we all need  
Mind, Soul and Body  
Part of a community  
Share alike with friends and family  
Sustenance, Sustenance  
We treasure our planet

If we take care with the water,  
air and earth  
We replenish what we use  
Return to a simpler life, based on  
love and worth  
Even the salmon and hummingbirds  
Will rejoice in our choices

Ava sings songs of love, resilience, and passion, but sustenance of life is what is most important to her.

She will be performing this song at the opening of the Sustenance Festival on September 19th.

## A Tool for Community Building

SHANNON HECKER

Many people ask, what do we do as the Right to Food Zine? How do we actually impact change around the very critical issue of our Human Right to Food? Do we help make food more accessible? It can be difficult to measure the tangible effects. From my experience, this publication has changed my life dramatically. I first learned of the Zine by chance on a Wednesday afternoon when I walked into the DTES Neighbourhood House to check out the community drop-in meal advertised on the chalkboard out front. Recently I had moved closer to E. Hastings & Skeena, but as a single mother on disability I found shopping in the DTES at places like Quest & Sunrise Foods to be substantially more affordable than other neighbourhoods and therefore worth the trip.



Photography by Shannon Hecker

That day I stumbled into one of the Zine's weekly meetings where I met the Zine family and was invited to join the group. As an undergrad at UBC I was delighted at the opportunity to have some of my work published and to be able to amplify some of the current issues around sustainability and food sovereignty, in particular Indigenous Land Struggles and how that pertains to our Human Right to Food.

The Zine has been especially beneficial for me personally as I joined the team at a time in my life when I was going through a huge transition. I came to the realization that I needed to take time to heal myself and exercise self care to maintain both my mental and physical well being. It wasn't an easy time and I was experiencing feelings of inadequacy. I went from being a highly valued member of society attending university to collecting disability assistance and being on a fixed income.

*There is a huge stigma in capitalist society around those who suffer from issues with mental health and/or mobility issues. Many employed people look down on folks with disabilities (visible or not) for their perceived lack of contribution to society—or paid income.*

I did not feel that with the Zine. In fact our main artist at the time, Jujube Jacinto was very celebratory about her issues with mental health and shared with the world through various artforms.

I was truly inspired. The Zine was a place for everyone; we all have something to give. Being a part of the Zine family gave me a sense of belonging that I had not felt previously. For me, the best part of the Zine is that it is volunteer run and FREE. Yes, FREE. We do get support from various sponsors, but no one is paid and

we give our Zines out to the community freely. Everyone is welcome! Although the focus of the Zine is to promote health and wellbeing in the DTES, it's also meant to be a tool for community building. It is a medium that community members can utilize to be a part of the larger framework of food sovereignty. Just like water, food is something we can all relate to and we all need it. We are better together.

*Through skill sharing and collaboration anyone can participate, and all skill levels are welcome.*

Although I had previous experience writing in school, with the help of our editor and other Zinesters I was able to improve my writing and editing processes greatly. I'm honored to now have the role of editor, something I could not have achieved without the mentorship of our editor emeritus, Stan Shaffer. He has since retired from chairing meetings and leading our Zine as he did when I first joined, but he still offers his assistance in reviewing during our editing process.

Through my participation with the Right to Food Zine, I have become more involved with other initiatives such as the Sustenance Festival and Wild Salmon Caravan. It's been an awesome experience learning how to work better within a team setting and our Zine family is always growing! We are looking for writers, editors, artists, photographers & designers. Also, we happily mentor folks who want to learn new skills. Our current designer, Brittany Garuk, has been leading workshops on InDesign in a group setting or one on one. If you want to join the Zine family, you will be welcome to participate in these workshops, and we have a computer for members to work from if accessibility is an issue. Have a skill to share? We want to learn!

Join  
the  
Team



**RIGHT TO FOOD ZINE'S MISSION IS TO PROMOTE THE HUMAN RIGHT TO FOOD THAT IS HEALTHY, NUTRITIOUS, AFFORDABLE, AND PRESENTED WITH DIGNITY. OUR VOICES REFLECT THE DIVERSITY THAT IS THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE. OUR ARTICLES, RESEARCH, AND RECIPES SPEAK TO THE DTES RESIDENTS, SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUPS, AND BEYOND. WE INFORM OUR READERS, WHILE FOSTERING THE DESIRE TO KNOW MORE AND TO BECOME MORE ENGAGED. AS PART OF THE DTES COMMUNITY, WE STRIVE TO BE A TOOL FOR COMMUNITY-BUILDING.**

Interested in contributing ideas, articles, poems, illustrations, artwork, or photographs to Right to Food Zine?

As a community partner, we are deeply interested to hear from you and what you feel is important. Find us at the DTES Neighbourhood House on Wednesdays from 1-2pm or get in touch with us at [rtfzine@gmail.com](mailto:rtfzine@gmail.com)

Find us Online

[rtfzine.org](http://rtfzine.org)  
 facebook: [fb.com/rtfzine](https://fb.com/rtfzine)  
 instagram: [@rtfzine](https://instagram.com/rtfzine)  
 email: [rtfzine@gmail.com](mailto:rtfzine@gmail.com)

Right to Food Zine relies on generous donations from the community to produce each issue. If you like what we are doing and want to show your support, please visit our website [rtfzine.org](http://rtfzine.org) to donate or get involved.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of:



sustenance festival



# sustenance festival

sept 19th  
- oct 18th

*Celebrating 10 years*



art. culture. food.

[fb.com/SustenanceFestival](https://fb.com/SustenanceFestival)

for a list of full programs and events, visit [sustenancefestival.ca](http://sustenancefestival.ca)

[@sustenancefest](https://instagram.com/sustenancefest)

artwork by joyce liao



