

Community Food Markets in Vancouver

LFS 350 Final Community Project Report

Group 5

University of British Columbia

**LFS 350 Group 5 - Final Community Project Report****Community Food Markets in Vancouver****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In our project, we described the perceived benefits, facilitators as well as challenges of Community Food Markets (CFM) situated in Vancouver. CFM are small farm markets with fewer than 10 booths (City of Vancouver, 2013). We aim to understand the demographics and food security goals of each CFM through our objectives, while our inquiry questions involve the community benefits, and operational barriers and facilitators regarding CFM.

Our interview questions (Appendix 1) were used amongst all the CFM coordinators to elicit comparable responses. We designed these questions to understand the process of how CFM acquire, transport, and store their produce, as well as other factors about their operations that they wish to improve. Through interviews, we were able to assess many beneficial aspects that CFM bring to local communities, as well as the struggles that they go through.

Our results showed that the goal of all CFM is to provide accessible, fresh produce and other foodstuffs to high-density, lower-income neighbourhoods. They target areas without convenient grocery stores, also known as “food deserts”. At these locations, CFM are able to accommodate residents without conveniently accessible produce choices, especially if they live with physical impairments.

An advantage that CFM have is that they are natural places of community congregation and dialogue. They attract people of different ages, ethnicities and backgrounds, and are valuable

promoters of verbal communication and neighbourhood bonding. In this sense, CFM act secondarily as public space enhancers, going beyond being just another food source.

Our hope is that this project can help the City of Vancouver better understand the experiences of CFM, as well as build more community food security by increasing support for CFM in Vancouver. We recommend that the City of Vancouver aid CFM by providing cold storage and transport vehicles that can be shared amongst all coordinators. There is also a need to simplify the process of how CFM acquire permits for operation, as that was an area of frustration for some coordinators. Additionally, we hope the city can recognize CFM as an important asset to Vancouver's food security, and offer them more publicity in mediums such as the city website, the official city food guide, and the Vancouver Food Strategy (VFS).

## INTRODUCTION

### *Aim*

The aim of this project is to describe Community Food Markets (CFM) as an asset in building community food security in Vancouver.

### *Significance*

Community Food Markets (CFM) are community-run markets that serve socially and/or economically vulnerable populations. CFM contribute to community food security by making nutritious, locally-produced food accessible for individuals and their families. If we can help to alleviate select barriers facing the CFM community, we can provide more residents with a food-buying experience that cannot be replicated in conventional chain-store grocers.



**Figure 1: Where CFM fall in the food system**

(Original source: City of Vancouver (2013) “What feeds us: Vancouver Food Strategy”)

***Objectives***

1. To explore the contexts and experiences of CFM serving vulnerable populations in Vancouver by interviewing vendors and visiting markets.
2. To determine common themes and experiences between different CFM.

***Inquiry Questions***

1. What are the successes that CFM enjoy which benefit the communities they serve?
2. What are barriers that prevent current CFM from expanding and new CFM from arising, and how can they become facilitators?

**BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

In BC, 12% of residents live under the poverty line (the highest rate in Canada), and 7.7% are food insecure (Dietitians of Canada, 2011, p. 3). Food insecurity is defined as having limited access to sufficient food and nutrition due to cost and proximity to healthy food retailers (FAO, 2016). Community Food Security (CFS) advocates seek to ameliorate food security at the community level. As defined by Hamm and Bellows (2003), CFS is the condition when "all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice" (p. 40).

Within a country or city, there are food deserts that lack fresh produce due to the lack of easily accessible farmers markets or other healthy food suppliers (Gallagher, 2011). Studies exist that explore strategies used to address issues of food deserts and community food insecurity, such as increasing access to supermarkets by leveraging the role of local grocery stores, and engaging alternative food provision models that seek "to support farmer income and

simultaneously to address the needs of low-income consumers" (Short, Guthman and Raskin, 2007, p. 354). CFM fall into the latter category.

The Vancouver Food Strategy (VFS) is an aspirational document compiled by the Vancouver Food Policy Council describing a plan for strengthening CFS in Vancouver (City of Vancouver, 2013). As seen in Table 1, CFM are assets that improve food access and empower vulnerable and isolated populations (City of Vancouver, 2013).

**Table 1: Action areas of the Vancouver Food Strategy**

(Original source: City of Vancouver (2013) "What feeds us: Vancouver Food Strategy")

Action Area	Priority Focus
<b>1. Food production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and enable all forms of urban agriculture (specifically community gardens and urban farms), and make stronger connections with all parts of the food system.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Empowering Residents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance access for individuals to participate in the activities of neighbourhood food networks and other community-based food programs, particularly for vulnerable and isolated groups.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Food access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to healthy, local, affordable food for all by increasing the number of healthy food retail including farmers markets, community food markets, and piloting healthy food retail programs.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Food processing and distribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address gaps in local food processing, storage and distribution infrastructure by exploring possibilities that might include a food business incubator or food hub.</li> <li>Increase the percentage of local and sustainable food purchased by City facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Food waste</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce food waste going to landfill or incinerator.</li> <li>Expand and support food waste disposal programs.</li> <li>Expand local collection and composting options</li> </ul>

As stated in the VFS:

“Community food markets provide vibrant – although smaller scale – gathering places where neighbours can get to know each other, provide opportunity for food jobs and residents can enjoy affordable fresh food.”

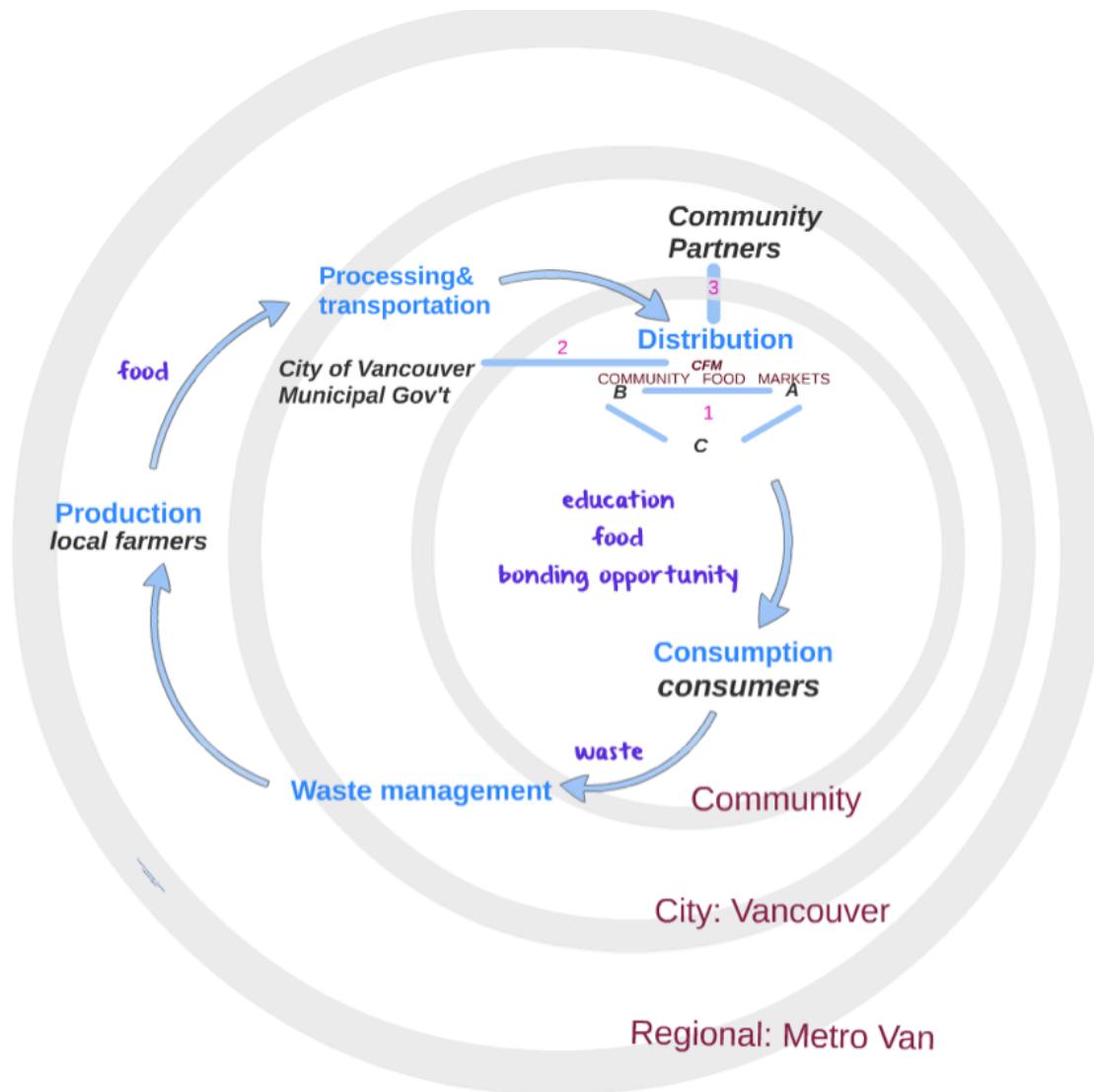
- Vancouver Food Strategy p. 104

Food accessibility encapsulates affordability--financial access--and availability--geographic access. CFM may contribute to addressing food security issues by selling fresh foods at affordable prices, targeting certain food deserts to help empower vulnerable and underserved populations (City of Vancouver, 2013). According to the VFS, food accessibility matters because, despite being prosperous, Vancouver is not immune to social, health and economic inequities (City of Vancouver, 2013). Therefore, CFM could address certain barriers to the accessibility of healthy foods (City of Vancouver, 2014). Since they are mobile, CFM can be run by neighbourhood houses, BC Housing sites, community centres, and other community groups (City of Vancouver, 2014). Figure 2, our systems diagram, situates CFM in Vancouver’s food system.

In a Metro Vancouver assessment of CFM, also known as pocket markets, Evans and Miewald (2010) outline a number of benefits and challenges facing CFM. Benefits include increased sales channels for local producers, interface opportunities for food literacy education, and increased food access for low-income, vulnerable communities (Evans and Miewald, 2010). Conversely, one of the main challenges is how to sustain CFM (Evans and Miewald, 2010). Factors that come into play include current public unfamiliarity with CFM as an "emerging

model", policy gaps, and market locations that rely on other organizations (Evans and Miewald, 2010).

Extending their work, we seek to describe the existing successes of CFM and how, with adequate support, certain barriers can become operational assets that we call "facilitators". This illustrates how this project utilizes an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which moves away from traditional needs-based deficit models of community development to enhancing existing strengths through capacity building (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003). Furthermore, this Community-Based Experiential Learning (CBEL) project aims to present information on how to enhance the effectiveness of CFM in addressing the complex issue of food insecurity in Vancouver.



1. . The markets communicate with each other to select market sites strategically, share resources and introduce relationships to local farmers
2. The City of Vancouver provide information regarding permits, policies and publicity; as well as opportunities for grants and funding
3. Community partners provide market location, share storage, advertise and outreach into the communities

**Figure 2: Food systems diagram illustrating inputs, outputs, and interactions among stakeholders, the City of Vancouver and CFM**

(Source: Group 5 LFS 350 Winter 2016)

## METHODS

### *Participants*

The participants in our research project consist of coordinators at three CFM operating in the Vancouver area.

### *Recruitment*

CFM coordinators were contacted initially through email and/or phone. Then an interview time and location was planned. To start, we reached out to a CFM that one member of our group members was familiar with. From the first coordinator, we received contact information regarding some other CFM. Additionally, other CFM were located via the City of Vancouver's website, or in the VFS. We interviewed two of the three coordinators at their markets, while the other coordinator preferred a phone interview.

### *Data Collection*

We collected qualitative data via interviews. Prior to each interview, we prepared semi-structured questions that would guide each interview in a parallel direction (Appendix 1). We asked all three markets questions pertaining to our inquiry questions of perceived benefits, barriers, and facilitators, focusing on the ABCD approach. During each interview, group members transcribed notes and recorded an audio file for post-interview analysis.

### *Analysis*

We compiled notes from live-interviews, and phone call and audio recordings. For each question, we qualitatively analyzed and cross-referenced all answers to find common themes

relating to our objectives. Using the coded data, we answered our inquiry questions and contrasted the similarities and differences between the three CFM.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

Each interview participant was briefed on the nature of our project, our reasons for performing the interview, and how we would use the information. Unless given written consent, we did not release their identity, and were careful not to release potential identifiers of participating CFM or interviewees.

## RESULTS

We successfully interviewed coordinators at three markets within the City of Vancouver. These three markets included a small community organization, Vancouver Food Bank project, and non-profit food network. From the interviews, we gathered information about each CFM, such as source of food, mode of transportation, food storage, and community partnerships.

These findings are displayed in Table 2.

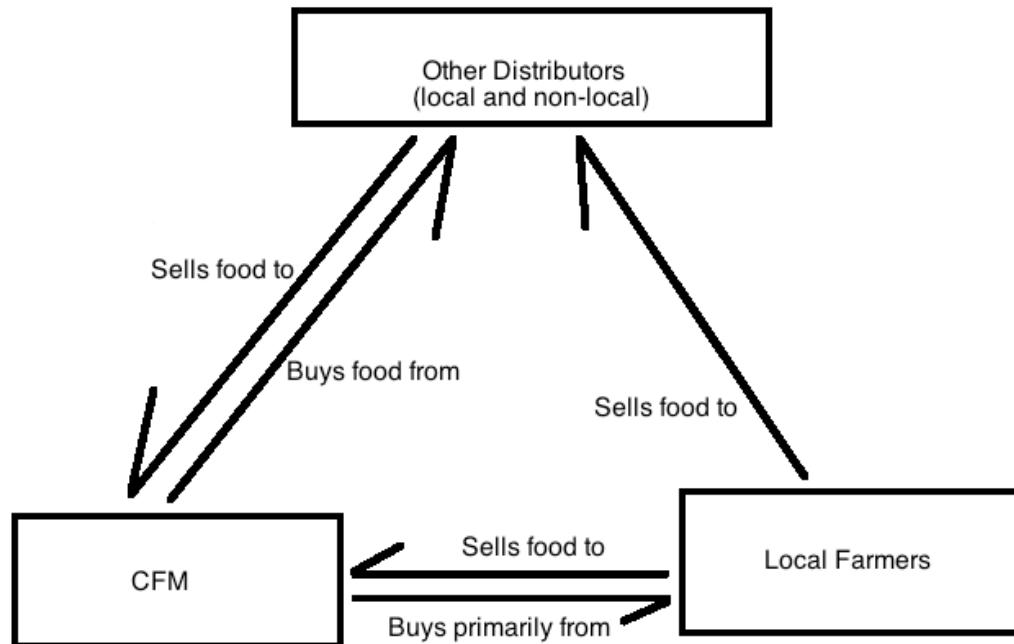
**Table 2: Snapshot of three CFM in Vancouver**

	<b>Market A</b>	<b>Market B</b>	<b>Market C</b>
Description	Small community organization	Vancouver Food Bank project	Non-profit Food Network
Location	- Community centre - Church sidewalk space	- Community centre - Neighbourhood house - Senior's centre	- Community centre - Neighbourhood houses - BC Housing sites
Frequency	- Year-round - Weekly (at each location)	- Summer - Weekly (at 2 locations), Twice/week (at 1 location)	- Year-round - Weekly (bi-weekly at each location)
Source of Food	- 10-12 Local farmers	- 70 farms in the	- Local urban farm,

	<p>and bakers (depending on price and availability)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buys Local coffee from a family farm in Brazil</li> </ul>	<p>Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4-5 orchards in the Okanagan</li> <li>- Buys onions from Washington</li> </ul>	<p>local food distributor, - Buys bananas from South America - Bartering System</p>
Mode of food transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal Van</li> <li>- Pick up food from farmers at farms and/or farmers' markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Truck with cold storage</li> <li>- Pick up food from farms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Borrows neighbourhood house van</li> </ul>
Community Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local urban farm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vancouver Food Bank (Market B is a food bank project)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local neighbourhood houses</li> <li>- BC Housing</li> </ul>
Target Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low Income/High density</li> <li>- Food Desert areas</li> <li>- First Nations communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low Income/High density</li> <li>- Food Desert areas</li> <li>- Elderly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low Income/High density/Low accessibility</li> <li>- Food Desert areas</li> <li>- Elderly</li> <li>- People with physical</li> </ul>

			disabilities
Food Storage	- Cold Storage (borrowed from community partner)	- Pick up/sell food in same day - Leftovers stored in truck's cooler	- Cold storage (borrowed from community partner)

Throughout our interviews, we found that all three CFM try to purchase from local sources when possible (Figure 3). These sources can either be local farmers or local food distributors. However, depending on availability and price, they sometimes resort to alternative, non-local sources as well.



**Figure 3: Relationships between the three primary agents of CFM food sourcing**

*(Source: Group 5 LFS 350 Winter 2016)*

CFM also collaborate with multiple community partners to help them operate. In some cases, community partners aid CFM with resources, such as cold storage and transportation. Demographically and geographically, all three markets target areas with high-density, lower-income populations in Vancouver (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: Distribution of CFM locations (those represented in this report) in Vancouver**

(Original map source: City of Vancouver (2013) “*What feeds us: Vancouver Food Strategy*”)

### ***Perceived Benefits and Challenges***

From the interview data, a number of key themes emerged, helping us to better understand the experiences of CFM in Vancouver. We grouped these themes into perceived benefits and challenges, summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Perceived Benefits and Challenges of CFM in Vancouver**

<b><u>Perceived Benefits</u></b>			
<b>Common Themes</b> <i>(Y = yes, applicable N/A = no, not applicable)</i>	<b>Market A</b>	<b>Market B</b>	<b>Market C</b>
Higher food availability and affordability	Y	Y	Y
Increase human interactions - Community gathering	Y	Y	Y
Food literacy education -Educational outreach	Y	Y - Sharing recipes and cooking skills	Y - New food and concept - Gardening community and produce bartering
<b><u>Challenges &amp; Facilitators</u></b>			
Common Themes <i>(F = Facilitators, C = Challenges, and BOTH = Facilitators and</i>	<b>Market A</b>	<b>Market B</b>	<b>Market C</b>

<i>Challenges)</i>			
Cold Storage Space  - Have to share with other stakeholders and rent additional storage	BOTH	F  - Have own truck and small cooler space	BOTH
Permits and Regulations  - The process is quite tedious and difficult  - Different permits needed for various types of food products	C	C	C
Publicity  - Not mentioned in the City's website  - Partnerships with food organizations (access to locations, supplies, advertisement)	C	C	F
Expansion:  - Lack of stable government funding available  - Don't have own van for transportation	C	BOTH  - However, the market still needs more capital to expand	BOTH

We found that all three markets increase food availability and affordability by targeting high-density, lower-income populations living in food deserts. These include communities with elderly people who are limited in their access to food, by price and/or restricted mobility. One market coordinator expresses this:

“They [the elderly] just can’t walk up themselves. Even if they can jump on the bus, they can’t actually afford the produce they are selling, because of the nature of the price point.”

- Market B Coordinator

In addition to seniors with restricted mobility, CFM also serve families with younger children, second-language and non-English speakers, and visitors to the city (Market A Coordinator, personal communication, January 21, 2016).

Furthermore, all three markets created spaces for community to gather and connect. Naturally, these spaces facilitate food literacy learning and knowledge-sharing. Consumers can share recipes, stories, and, in one market’s case, even home-grown vegetables through an informal bartering system.

From our findings (Table 3), certain barriers and facilitators for market operations could be interchangeable, depending on the support--or lack thereof--the market has. These aspects generally include cold storage space, regulations, publicity, and plans for expansion. Cold storage space can either support or impede CFM based on availability of space. We found that all CFM struggle with permits and regulations, as the process of obtaining various permits can be

tedious. One of the market coordinators addressed the limitation of food types being categorized as low-risk and high-risk, as per guidelines provided by the City of Vancouver, which must be followed to obtain sales permits (Market A Coordinator, personal communication, January 21, 2016).

In terms of publicity, one of the issues we found is that the City of Vancouver did not include two of the markets we interviewed on their website, or in the VFS. The Market A coordinator specifically mentioned that the City is not up to date with newly emerging CFM and collaborative CFM projects. Insufficient exposure to the community, along with shortage of transport vans and cold storage hinder the expansion of CFM.

## **DISCUSSION**

By describing the context and experiences of CFM in Vancouver, we can create more awareness and understanding of CFM in both the community and policy circles. As described in our results, CFM increase accessibility to food retailers. We have identified a number of perceived benefits, as well as facilitators and challenges of three CFM.

### ***Perceived Benefits***

Our results show that market coordinators perceive CFM in Vancouver as benefits to communities through increasing food accessibility, community interactions, and food literacy. These themes align closely with those identified by Evans and Miewald (2010) in their study of CFM in Metro Vancouver. Another benefit found in their study--sales increases for local farmers--was not as strongly reflected in our findings. This may be because our research focused more on how CFM benefit consumers, and only had one question on sourcing food (Question 2, Appendix 1). Even so, we did find that all markets try to source as locally as possible. Interestingly, all markets highlighted community interaction--whether through sharing food knowledge, or facilitating new relationships--as one of the most meaningful parts of a market. CFM create spaces for consumers and market coordinators alike to build community. As one of the coordinators expresses, consumers go to CFM not just to get food, but also to give it:

“I have all these adopted Chinese grandmothers now, and they make me food every week!”

-Market C Coordinator

She further elaborated on the personal significance of these community interactions:

“I think for me personally, it allows me to interact with a group of people that I never normally would. I live in [a neighbourhood that’s] like mid-twenty-something white people. And I really love coming to markets ‘cause I get to interact with my elders, and different races and languages. And I miss it when I am not doing that. It feels really healthy too.”

-Market C Coordinator

CFM foster intercultural, intergenerational connections between market organizers and visitors. They also foster positive relationships between the market organizers themselves. When asked about the most rewarding part of the market, both of the coordinators we interviewed at Market C replied the same thing:

“Well, I would say knowing [the second coordinator]!”

“And I would say knowing [the first coordinator]!”

Evidently, CFM provide access not just to local, fresh food, but also community connections and friends. As Evans and Miewald (2010) write, CFM “provide benefits for farmers, consumers, and community organizers” (p. 141).

### ***Facilitators and Challenges***

From our findings, we learned that CFM also face practical barriers, including lack of: easily accessible cold storage space, support in acquiring permits, publicity, access to vehicles for food transportation, and initial network building with community partners. In comparison to Evans and Miewald's (2010) study, the challenges found in our project reflect more specific aspects of the more general challenges they outlined, such as public unfamiliarity, infrastructural limitations, and government regulations. Our finding that regulations and permit acquisition processes are tedious and difficult is also supported by findings from Beckie et al.'s (2012) study, which illustrates how strenuous guidelines provided by Vancouver have been a barrier for CFM. While Evans and Miewald (2010) outline financial sustainability as another key challenge facing CFM, we suggest that the infrastructural and regulatory challenges described in our project are important market components that *require* financial sustainability.

### ***Suggestions for CFM in Vancouver***

We suggest that, by identifying common themes among CFM in Vancouver, we can contribute to building stronger ties between the markets themselves. As many of the barriers we observed were shared among more than one market, there is opportunity to create ways for CFM to support each other practically and mutualistically. One idea might be an “inter-CFM hub” for market organizers to gather, share resources and information, and learn from one another. Currently, the coordinator at Market B seems to connect with and offer support to various other CFM in Vancouver. This capacity is likely because Market B is supported by the City through its nature as a food bank project. Also, CFM currently share resources with other community partners, such as cold storage and vans. More structured, operationally supported partnerships *between* CFM could empower the CFM community as whole to more effectively and resourcefully serve the people and diverse neighbourhoods they currently, and aspire to, serve.

We recommend that the municipal government provide more funding for CFM, as lack of funding is a common barrier to expansion. The city could fund the use of cold storage, meeting spaces, and staff to help facilitate permit applications and publicity. These are practical ways that the government can support CFM so that the challenges stated in the VFS (City of Vancouver, 2013) can become facilitators--things that enable CFM to operate successfully and sustainably. However, it should be acknowledged that the City has implemented initiatives in the past, such as the Pocket Market Coupon Program (2010); and wants to further integrate CFM with the local school board and community centres (City of Vancouver, 2013).

### ***Limitations***

A number of limitations pertain to our interview method approach. By interviewing only the market coordinators, we heard one-sided perceptions of the benefits, challenges and potential facilitators of CFM. The responses may have been subject to bias in favour of a positive portrayal of their particular CFM, or CFM in general. The perspectives of other important stakeholders, such as the consumers, farmers, and government officials, were not included. Since we were not able to converse with consumers, we were unable to verify the reliability of the market coordinators' answers. Additionally, we were only able to interview three CFM, thus would not be able to generalize our findings to all CFM in the City of Vancouver.

These limitations can be addressed by including wider perspectives and more comprehensive data. However, the nature of this CBEL project would allow future LFS 350 students to build on our project. If given more time and resources, we could interview more diverse participants and include perspectives from consumers, farmers, policy makers,

government officials and, ideally, all of the market coordinators in the City of Vancouver. This would provide a more accurate overview of the benefits, challenges and facilitators of CFM.

## CONCLUSION

CFS is achieved when the whole community has a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally sufficient diet at all times (FAO, 2016). Fully meeting these criteria would optimize community self-sufficiency and increases social justice to support a sustainable food system (Hamm and Bellows, 2003). An indicator of CFS is accessibility at the community level, found through the sum contributions and locations of all food producers in a community (Short, Guthman and Raskin, 2007). An important issue found in low-income communities is the lack of proximity to supermarkets (Short, Guthman and Raskin, 2007). CFM may contribute to solving food security issues by increasing overall access to healthy, fresh, locally produced fruits and vegetables in vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities (City of Vancouver, 2014).

In addition to empowering low-income and vulnerable communities living in food deserts, according to various CFM coordinators and Evan and Miewald's (2010) study, CFM also benefit communities by providing food literacy education and building community relationships. Based on our results, we believe that CFM give consumers a unique experience that local supermarkets cannot. Despite facing challenges, such as lack of funding, permit acquisition, publicity and modes of storage and transportation, we believe that, with adequate support from the City of Vancouver, community partners and each other, these barriers can become facilitators. Through careful analysis, we come across one important unanswered question: Where would the City of Vancouver acquire their resources from to help support and facilitate CFM practically and efficiently?

We believe that CFM have a strong foundation, are run with passion and provide meaningful benefits as a viable alleviator of community food insecurity. We believe that the

information we acquired can be used to produce an updated, improved version of the Vancouver Food Strategy. To further enhance the potential of these markets, we believe that by having more people in low-income communities see CFM as a more rewarding alternative to supermarkets, there will be an increase in people that benefit. In conclusion, we think that by increasing support from the City of Vancouver and community partners, their challenges can be nurtured into assets that position CFM as key players in increasing community food security in Vancouver.

### CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

“LFS 350 project was an valuable experience for me because this gave me a chance to get in depth with community food markets. I am surprised to see how much the coordinators are contributing to these projects just to improve the living standard of low-income populations. Although we were a little off track when we were not settled with a specific topic, we were able to get things together and effectively complete all the tasks. We have approached various issues when contacting and interviewing the coordinators. During the process of solving these problems, I have gain more knowledge on the various methods of data collecting and analysis. The flexible learning session, which gave us more time to ensure that our group is on track was really helpful. Our group cooperated well and has conquered many challenges together. Tasks were being separated evenly and we were able to respect each other’s opinions. The most significant of this project was that I was able to relate to individuals and have learn a lot on food safety from researching experiences. Overall, I think that this is a good opportunity for more community engagements, improvement on communication and data analysis skills and is thankful to have meet such loving group mates.” - *Student I*

“This was a very enriching experience. It was difficult at times, and the control I was used to having in a course was stripped from me. Although relying on others is not a new concept for me, it can still make me uncomfortable to have to do so, especially when having to compromise. It was as if I was an only-child for my whole life, and suddenly my parents adopted four others who I had to immediately adjust to. For me, this course is only partly about the finished products such as the blogs, the AER paper, or this report. The more valuable part of this course is gaining experience of group work throughout multiple assignments, and performing autonomous research with agents who are not part of the school system. I felt like I learned that

through teamwork, more can be accomplished. Differing perspectives can save remarkable amounts of time compared to working alone. The drawbacks are having to compromise to what others want, and finding a balance of work distribution that makes sense. However, the advantages of group work is imperative in almost every career, so it's a good idea to get familiar with it now. By interacting with others outside of the UBC system, I have grown in confidence about making external connections, and have learned that determination and preparation will help me obtain and perform successful interviews. Years after I graduate and am working in my future career, the majority of course material that I learned at UBC will have fallen out of memory, but the experiences from LFS 350 will not.” - *Student 2*

“This course and the LFS series in general has definitely encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone. There were so many up and downs throughout this journey and I am so proud of who I've become. Not only has this course increased my leadership skills, but it increased my teamwork skills as well. There were so many different aspects to the course, from the blog to interacting with various CFM coordinators; this allowed me to explore my creativity and increase my professionalism. I am thankful for the exposure that I had with CFM; the concept was an incredibly new concept to me because we don't have them in the city that I live. It's so inspiring and uplifting to see such devoted and immensely passionate market coordinators make a difference in those who are less fortunate. These insights definitely encouraged me to become more giving and generous to those in need. In addition, without the help of my amazing team I wouldn't have survived this term. I thank this course for pushing me to deal with a variety of different people with different backgrounds and career aspirations; learning how to interact and make relationships with people is definitely an important skill to have now and in my future

career. This course has taught me that people need people, welcome them into your life personally and professionally because you can't do this all on your own." - *Student 3*

"The end of LFS 350 and of our CBEL project comes with a sense of accomplishment, but so to a sense of bittersweetness. For me, the most meaningful part of this course has been working with my team. It will be sad to end this group project. We bring very different perspectives, strengths, and weaknesses to the table, and yet we've learned how to collaborate in a way that has not left us arch enemies (as, unfortunately, some group projects do!), but as friends. We constantly re-adjusted our ways of doing things, tweaking things that didn't work well. For instance, at first we wanted to group-write our blogs in sections, distributing the work equally. However, this resulted in a disjointed post. So, for the next blog, we decided to try something different, assigning two people to collaboratively write each remaining blog post, with other group members editing and providing comments. We did a lot better on those two posts! Working with each other to reach out to CFM coordinators, schedule and conduct interviews, and organize our data has produced this report; but it has also given us numerous opportunities, through the flexible learning sessions, class time, screen time and personal time to get to know one another as people. This experience has helped me to see that it is not just about work--it's about relationships. I saw this in our group work as we talked about our lives, and took funny photos in addition to working on project tasks. Though I often wrestled with the thought of us being distracted and unproductive during our group work times, I came to see that those moments for having fun and building relationships brought our team together--ultimately benefitting how we worked together and communicated. Such learning is valuable, and undoubtedly ongoing. Especially in a food systems context, how we interact, communicate, and listen to one another is integral for building sustainable, inclusive, and resilient communities. As

a previously task-oriented person, I have enjoyed sometimes being in uncomfortable situations in order to learn and experience these nuggets of gold, and look forward to bringing this new paradigm of relational teamwork into future classes, jobs, and friendships.” - *Student 4*

“This past three months has been a rollercoaster ride for me. It was very thrilling, yet exciting at the same time. Since we didn’t get any of our choices, we had to start out from nothing. The ride started off with a deep dive to the bottom of the tracks. But we are not about to give up and hard work has carried our group up when we successfully interview the first community food market. The CBEL project has broaden my views as we ventured into the community and experienced community food security first hand. I was very inspired by how passionate people can be to alleviate issues in the community and care for the disadvantaged populations. Despite the setbacks and challenges, they are willing to sacrifice their time and labour to run community food markets. The interactions among the stakeholders, community and residents are very empowering as well. Even though the course itself is ending, the knowledge I have gained will remain with me and continue to motivate me in the future. As a team, I have learned so much collaborating with individuals that possess different skills, values and personalities. Through our rides together, we bonded and learned to use our strengths to deal with the lows and highs. I cherish this opportunity to make connections with other fellow students from different streams of LFS and hoping to continue our rides into the unknown tracts of the future ” - *Student 5*

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## APPENDIX

### ***Appendix 1: CFM interview questions***

*Questions for CFM Coordinators - \* [ ] : Market Name*

1. How did [ ] start?
  - a. Seeing as your target consumer base falls under low-income, high-density, how does [ ] try to target them, and why?
  - b. how did [ ] find and collaborate with the location owners for market locations?
2. How do you source the food? How do you decide where to source from (guiding value)?
  - a. how does [ ] store the food?
  - b. how does the food get from the initial source to [ ]'s market locations?
3. What has been the most challenging?
  - a. How do you think the City of Vancouver can best support you in overcoming this?
  - b. What do you think a way the City can aid new food markets?
4. What part of the market would you hope/wish to change/improve?
  - a. e.g. financial constraints
  - b. what can be done to improve awareness for [ ]?
5. What is an asset of mobile markets, versus supermarkets?
  - a. e.g. accessibility and affordability (educating consumers?)
6. What has been the most rewarding aspect of this market for you?