

# Urban Farm Hands 101

## Land, Food and Community II

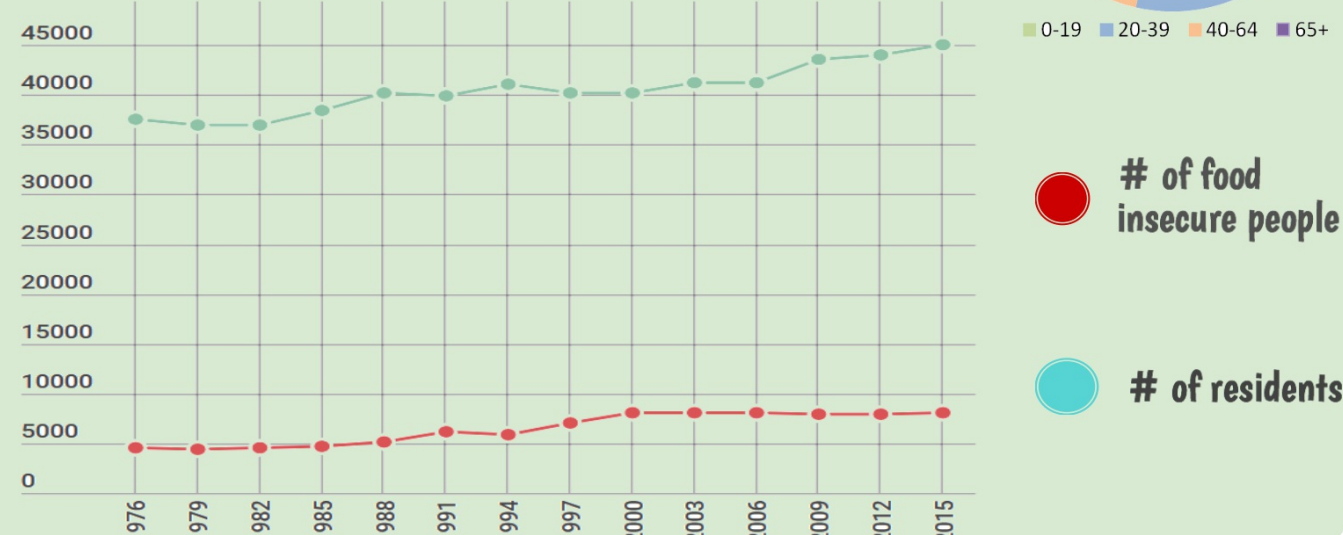
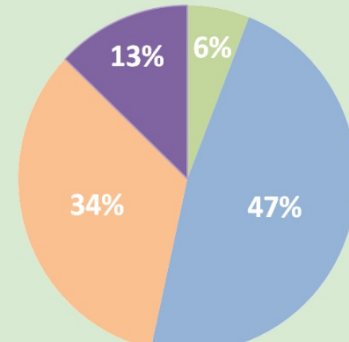


### WEST END DEMOGRAPHICS<sup>2</sup>

**45,000** residents

**Gender Profile**  
**55%** Male **45%** Female

#### Age Profile



### OUR COMMUNITY PARTNER

"TOGETHER WE GROW"



Gordon Neighbourhood House strives to ensure that the West End of Vancouver is a vibrant and active community, where everyone is empowered to play an active role in civil society.<sup>4</sup>

### ISSUE:<sup>1</sup>

Growing metropolitan populations impart unsustainable demands on external food suppliers. As a result...

...the number of food insecure households in the West End region of Vancouver gradually increases over time

### 1 HARVEST

Gathering fully-mature crops from the gardens

### 2 OBSERVATIONS

Conducting weekly observations of micro-climate factors, pests and weeds

### 6 WEEDING

Discarding any unwanted invasive species

### 5 WINTER PREPARATIONS

Constructing over-winter crop covers

### 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Developing site-specific recommendations

### 8 DISTRIBUTION

Harvested produce is packaged and delivered to various city locations

### 3 OVERCOMING GAPS

Resolving gaps in objectives through regular recap sessions

### 4 SOWING

Planting seeds in preparation for winter transitions

### OUR 8-STEP APPROACH

#### Objectives:

- To familiarize ourselves with the urban garden setting while engaging in all-farm based activities with the Head Farmer
- To create a year-round crop plan that presents a more comprehensive illustration of seasonal growing cycles

#### Significance:

Our ongoing engagement with the urban gardens allowed us to formulate a crop plan capable of laying down a foundation for improving the productivity of future garden endeavours, which has the potential to increase food security in the West End community

#### FINDINGS

- High pest pressure
- High weed pressure
- Growth of unsuitable crop types

#### EXPLANATIONS

- Lack of direct sunlight resulted in dark and humid growing conditions suitable for invasive species
- Lack of a comprehensive, all-year round crop plan for growing cycles

### EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

...raising students' awareness of food insecurity while providing lunch-time meals

### PUBLIC EVENTS

...raising public awareness about food insecurity through event booths and produce stands

### COMMUNITY LUNCH PROGRAMS

...increasing food affordability through pay-what-you-can meals and low priced menus

The wide-spread distribution of harvested urban-grown produce imparts positive changes on regional food security levels by...<sup>3</sup>

### HOSPITALS

...raising patients' access to local produce through the introduction of meal alternatives to hospital foods

### PRODUCE MARKETS

...increasing the West End residents' food accessibility through daily produce sales within former food deserts

### SUGGESTIONS

#### Improved Crop Plan

#### Features:

- Veggie Types
- farm site location
- Harvest Months

#### Additional Features:

- Sow timing
- Harvest timing
- Growing period

### FUTURE STEPS

- Raise public awareness about the benefits of urban agriculture
- Development of longitudinal studies on urban gardening and its impact on food security

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our special thanks of gratitude to Susanna Millar who aided in the process and completion of our project.

Urban agriculture is not a solution, but an essential strategy to promote food security and provide access to nutritious and healthy produce - Head Farmer, GNH

Take Home Message

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### References

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- <http://gordonhouse.org>

BLOG LINK: <https://blogs.ubc.ca/lfs350group14winter2016urbanfarmhands101/>