Public Health Association of BC

FOOD BANKS BC

Community Food Systems Development

#CFSD-BC

Growing Community Food System Resilience in the Nechako Region

Vanderhoof and surrounding rural areas, on the traditional territory of Saik'uz First Nation

Nechako Healthy Community Alliance

Nechako Valley Food Network

Who We Are

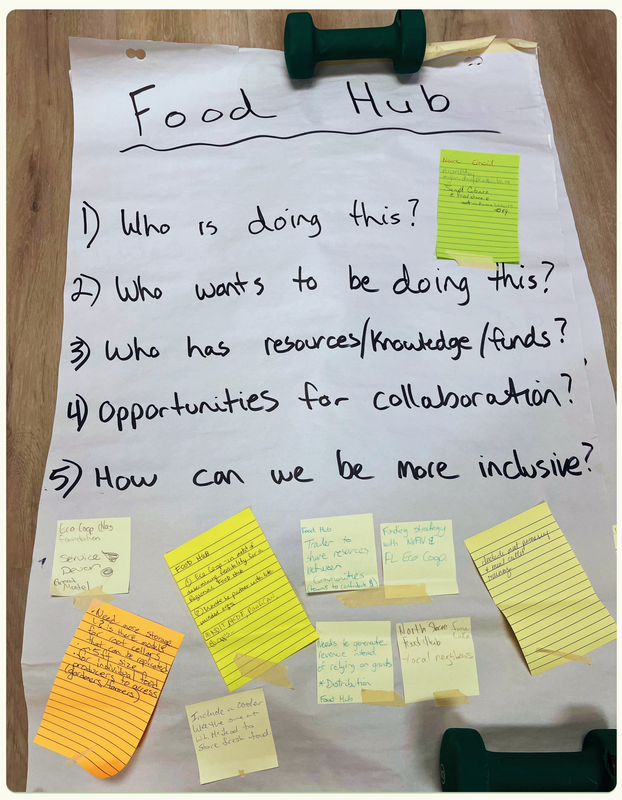
The Nechako Valley Food Network is one of three working committees of the Nechako Healthy Community Alliance. Collectively, we strive toward a healthy sustainable community for people and the environment. NVFN was formed in 2009 to improve food security in the Nechako Valley Region. Projects include developing a community garden, promoting local food producers, creating a Tool Lending Library and hosting educational events.

Project Overview

This project aimed to improve the sustainability of the NVFN and its projects, ensuring that food security work continues into the future. We hired a coordinator to develop 27 written procedures, organize two community meetings, summarize feedback, and seek funding for a permanent Food Security position. We also invested in the Vanderhoof Seed Library, signage, and outreach to promote NVFN and increase volunteerism.

Key Highlights

This project helped the NVFN communicate our programs and services, created a space for a community discussion on food security concerns, stimulated efforts for community groups with complimentary objectives to work together, provided direction for the NVFN's future priorities, and supported the community Seed Library. Hiring a coordinator allowed us to develop written procedures, helping our group be more sustainable.



Stories of Impact

Part of our investment in Seed Security and the Vanderhoof Seed Library included hosting a free presentation on Seed Saving. We shared the event on Facebook, where a community member's comment demonstrated the value of us offering this workshop free to the community:

"This makes me so happy!!!! Thank you for offering this"
-Alycia Neidrauer

Next Steps

Our long-term goal is to continue offering our services to our community and region. Through this project, we identified a need to improve year-round access to locally grown food. With funding received from Ideas Lab, we aim to address this need in the medium-term by working with local producers across the region to explore ways to make local food more accessible.

Stages of Food Systems Transformation

Seeding

- Create spaces and opportunities for communities to gather
- Build skills, competencies and leadership
- Engage in critical reflection

Germinating

- Strengthen networks and coalition building
- Foster equitable relationships and collaboration
- Create processes for accountability and transparency

Rooting

- Facilitate mutual knowledge and resources sharing
- Stimulate co-creation of knowledge
- Leverage community leaders and assets

Growing

- Engage in transformative collective action projects
- Engage in transdisciplinary action research
- Strengthen social movements

Contact

Maya McCully
info@nvfoodnetwork.com
sullmaya13@gmail.com
250-570-2194

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