



THE LITTLE MOUNTAIN
NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE



FOOD HUB HANDBOOK



LEARN ABOUT HOW WE GROW FOOD
AND FEED OUR COMMUNITY!



**LITTLE MOUNTAIN
NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE**
NEIGHBOUR HELPING NEIGHBOUR

A special and sincere thank you to all the staff and volunteers involved in the creation of the Little Mountain Neighbourhood House Society Food Hub Handbook.



‘Welcoming Wall’
([Joey Mallet](#), 1999)

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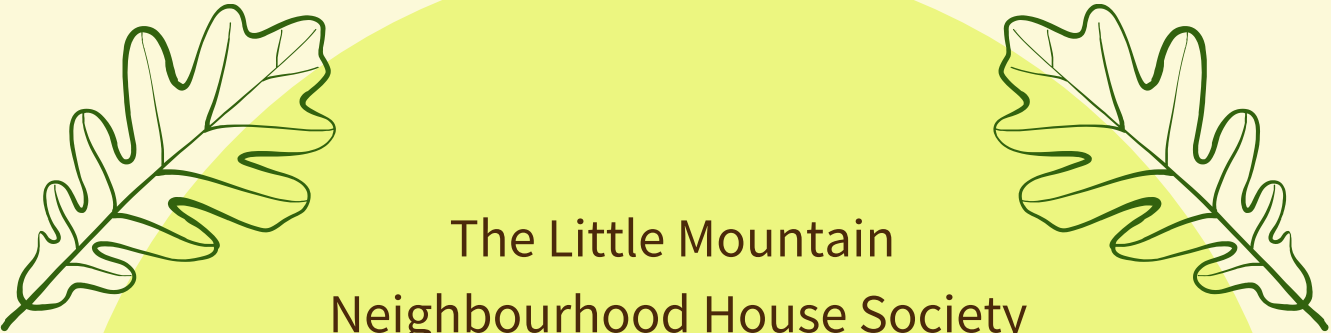
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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



The Little Mountain
Neighbourhood House Society
(LMNHS) acknowledges that we live,
work and play on **unceded** Indigenous land
cared for since time immemorial by the **Coast
Salish peoples**, including the territories of the
x^wməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh
(Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh
(Tseil-Waututh) Nations.



JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, DECOLONIZATION, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY (JEDDIA) STATEMENT

Little Mountain Neighbourhood House Society values **diversity**. We foster an **inclusive, respectful environment** where individual differences among us, including but not limited to, **differences** in race, religion, colour, age, gender, national origin, culture, sexual orientation, physical or mental capabilities, and family and socio-economic status are respected, appreciated, and recognized as a **source of strength**.

We recognize that our membership, our Board of Directors, our volunteers and our staff bring their own **unique capabilities**, experiences and characteristics to their work.

We **value** such diversity at all levels as it enriches the organization and workplace. Diversity **benefits** individuals, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House and our **community**. We expect that all who provide or receive services will extend the same respect to all they meet.

ABOUT LMNHS



LMNHS is a grassroots, volunteer-driven organization with a vision to **connect, engage** and **empower** community members to create a vibrant, **inclusive** and caring neighbourhood.

Our mission is to develop and facilitate social, educational, cultural and recreational programs and initiatives that **strengthen neighbourhood life** for a diverse group of community members. We value diversity, responsiveness, integrity, engagement, accessibility, caring, excellence and empowerment.



A TALE OF RESILIENCE AND UNITY

On July 2nd, 2023, LMNHS experienced a fire at our premises on 3981 Main Street. Though we are most grateful that no one was harmed in the incident, the loss of our home base was devastating.

We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our community and community partners for their overwhelming support throughout this difficult time. With your help, we are able to journey towards a swift recovery.



Photo Credit: Sarah Mantini, 2022



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OUR FOOD HUB

The LMNHS Food Hub is our response to increased food insecurity in our community and the ongoing climate crisis. Our mission is to create a local, decolonized, **community-led food system**.

We aim to reduce food insecurity and increase access to **healthy food** in a way that promotes **dignity, equity** and **respect**.

We are dedicated to providing space to grow food, build community, and care for the unceded lands on which we live, work, and play.

Our Food Hub focuses on two priorities:

Growing Our Food
and
Feeding Our Community



GROWING OUR FOOD

We grow food in the Riley Park Community Garden (RPCG), through the Yard Garden Harvest Project (YGHP), and in partnership with local urban farmers.

Our programs and partnerships improve our community's food sovereignty and allow people to develop **connections** with neighbours and **learn** how to **grow** their own food.

The food we grow also provides healthy, **neighbourhood-grown produce** for our Food Distribution Program and builds resilience in our neighbourhood.

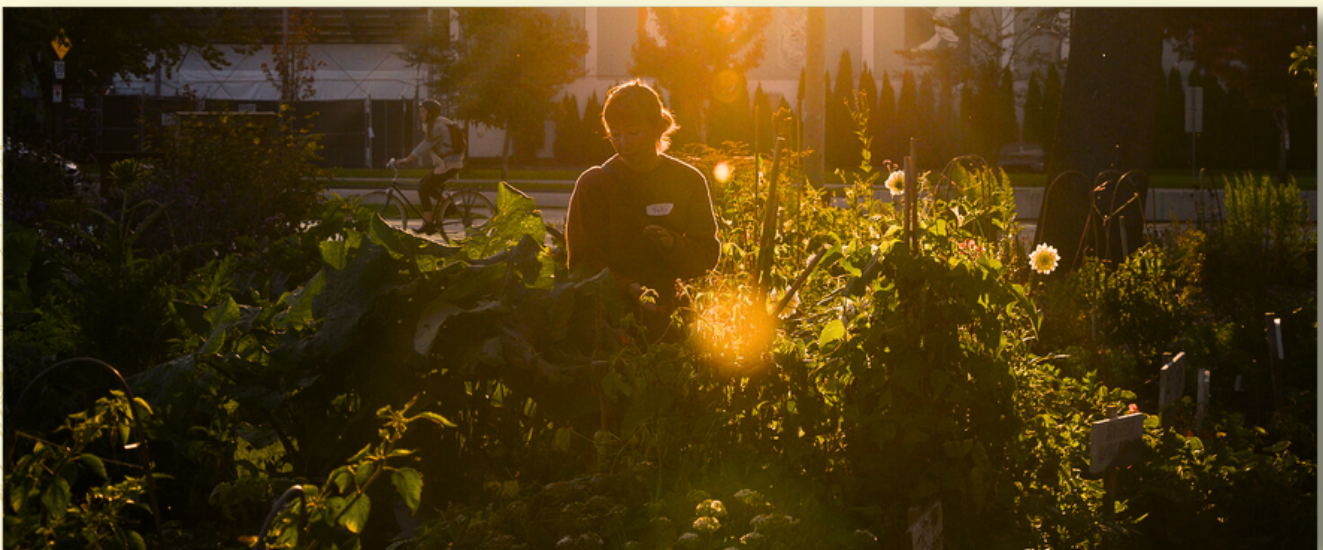


Photo Source: Michelle Huisman



Photo Source: Brianna Thompson



Photo Source: Brianna Thompson

Gardening and growing food is a fun way to get **exercise**, **socialize** with others, **connect** with our food and improve emotional and physical **health**.

Our community gardens help to improve the **ecological health** of our environment by increasing **biodiversity**, capturing **carbon** in our plants and soil and mitigating the impact of floods by improving **water drainage** in our soils.

They also add **beautiful** and **biodiverse** landscapes to our neighbourhood and provide spaces for community members to gather and share knowledge, stories and skills.



Photo Source: Breagha Zakaib



Photo Source: J MacKinnon

FEEDING OUR COMMUNITY

We run a weekly **Food Distribution Program** (temporarily at the Holy Cross Church) and provide gift cards to individuals and families.

We run a monthly Donation Station at the Riley Park Farmers Market where community members and farmers can **donate** money and produce for our food literacy programs.

We partner with the BCAFM to deliver the Farmer's Market Nutrition Coupon Program where participants receive coupon sheets to buy **fresh produce** at their local farmer's market.



Photo Source: Maria Amortegui



Photo Source: Joanne MacKinnon





Photo Source: Joanne MacKinnon



Photo Source: Maria Amortegui

Having access to nutritious food is an important part of living a healthy life. We aim to provide **healthy, culturally appropriate, fresh produce** and non-perishable food items at **no cost** while allowing community members to build connections to one another and to staff and volunteers at LMNHS.

These programs also provide **non-judgemental, low-barrier** spaces where individuals experiencing food insecurity can feel welcomed and supported.



WHY OUR FOOD HUB WAS CREATED

Food insecurity affects many people in Vancouver and refers to **inadequate** or **insecure** access to food due to financial and accessibility barriers and involves a range of experiences such as:

Running out of food and not having enough money to buy more.

Being unable to afford food that supports a balanced diet.

Missing entire meals, or not eating, for whole days

(1)

COVID-19 has greatly impacted levels of food insecurity in Vancouver's communities. A recent survey conducted by the British Columbia Center for Disease Control found that:

Over 1500

Riley Park/South Cambie residents worry about running out of food before they can afford more(2)

10.9%

of Vancouverites worry about running out of food before they can afford more(2)



As of 2022, The Greater Vancouver Food Bank (GVFB) supported over 4600 new clients and distributed more food than they have in previous years(3).



14%

of GVFB clients were seniors(3)



26%

of GVFB clients were children(3)



60%

of GVFB clients were adults(3)

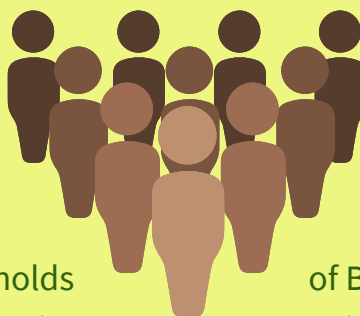
Importantly, the experience of household food insecurity in Canada differs by racial identity and immigration status.

17.1%

of recent immigrants experience food insecurity

11.3%

of East and Southeast Asian households experience food insecurity



28.2%

of Indigenous households experience food insecurity

28.9%

of Black households experience food insecurity

(1)



CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD SECURITY ARE CONNECTED

Research suggests climate change will negatively impact these **four pillars of food security**:

Availability of Food

Due to reduced yields and challenges related to storing and transporting food.

Access to Food

Due to rising food prices and the effect of extreme weather events on food supplies.

Utilization of Food

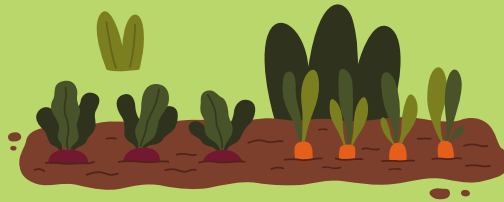
Due to issues with food safety and nutrient availability in plants as a result of heat, high CO2 levels and water runoff.

Stability of Food

Due to increased crop failures, conflicts, and the impacts of extreme weather events.

(4)

To reduce our impact on climate change our food hub prioritizes the use of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.



We care deeply about our soil. In all of our "Growing Our Food" programs we use growing techniques that protect soil life and store carbon in the soil including:



Composting



Cover Cropping



Mulching

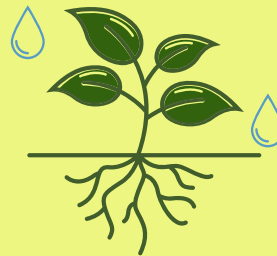
Creating communal green spaces also helps us adapt to the impacts of climate change and:



Reduce Urban Heat Islands



Increase Biodiversity



Reduce Stormwater Runoff



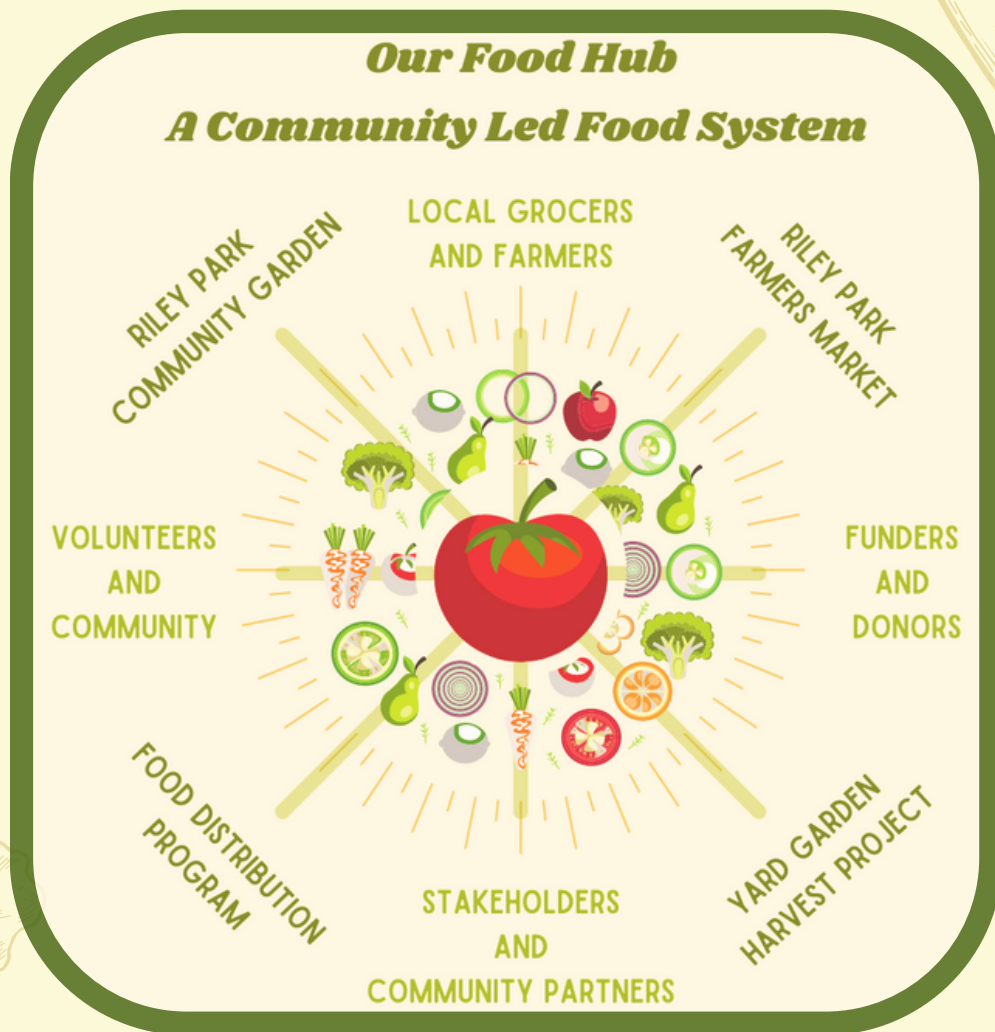
Reduce Reliance on Large Supply Chains

(5,6,7)



A SYSTEMS CHANGE MODEL

We use a **systems change approach** to think about our food systems as a whole and identify root causes of food insecurity and climate change that are impacting our community and our environment. Understanding the root causes of food insecurity and climate change allows us to take action to address these issues and develop new systems based on the principles of **food, social, environmental, and economic justice.**



The actions we take to engage in systems change work and develop our food hub programs are guided by the **Good Food Principles** and the concepts of **Food Sovereignty, Food Justice, Food Security** and **Food Dignity.** (1)



THE GOOD FOOD PRINCIPLES AND HOW WE ENACT THEM



Taking action from the individual to the systemic

- Providing a range of educational workshops led by diverse community members related to growing, cooking and preserving food.
- Conducting a survey with Food Distribution Program participants to discover their favourite vegetables and growing food in the YGHP based on the results.



Believing and investing in the power of good food

- Creating safe, comfortable spaces where community members can come together and share in the joy of growing, cooking and eating healthy, delicious food.
- Using sustainable and organic gardening practices in our programs.



Creating an environment of respect and community leadership

- Translating signs, information, and program materials so individuals feel included, represented, and empowered.
- Offering a variety of volunteer opportunities, including leadership opportunities, for community members and program participants to engage in.



Meeting people where they're at

- Offering support that goes beyond providing food including providing referrals to other programs and providing spaces for connection and socialization.
- Using a dignified food access approach in all our programs and checking in with participants to ensure they feel seen, heard and valued.



Aiming high for our organizations and our community

- Creating supportive volunteer programs and organizing volunteer appreciation events led by paid coordinators.
- Building relationships with funders to increase the sustainability of our programs.

(8)



GUIDING CONCEPTS

Food Justice

Food Justice involves dismantling our current food system and building a new, equitable, food system where decisions related to the production and distribution of food are made by the community and those most impacted by food insecurity.(9,10)

How we engage in Food Justice:

- Conducting surveys and focus groups so our community can be involved in decisions and share ideas related to our programs.
- Collecting data to understand who accesses our programs and the systemic issues in our community that cause food insecurity.

Food Sovereignty is the right of communities to create their own food systems that are healthy, culturally relevant and produced with sustainable methods.(11)

How we engage in Food Sovereignty:

- Creating projects that allow community members to grow and access local, fresh food.
- Engaging in mutual aid partnerships so local farmers such as UBC Farm and City Beet Farm can contribute to community food security in a financially and socially sustainable manner.

Food Sovereignty

Food Security and Food Dignity

Food Security and Food Dignity refers to the ability to continually access safe, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods of their choice in inclusive and judgment free environments.(12,13)

How we foster Food Security and Food Dignity:

- Using a market style model of food distribution where individuals have increased autonomy and can choose food items.
- Building partnerships with local grocers, farmers, and food redistribution organizations to acquire fresh, local, and culturally meaningful food.



OUR FOOD HUB PROGRAMS

Food is an integral part of many LMNHS programs. We have **three core Food Hub programs**: the Riley Park Community Garden, the Yard Garden Harvest Project and the Food Distribution Program, which are all centred around **growing, harvesting, and distributing food.**



Photo Source: www.rileyparkgarden.org/

In addition to our core Food Hub programs we also offer/have offered:

- 🍏 Child and Youth Cooking Programs
- 🍏 Food skills for families
- 🍏 Child Development Centre Hot Lunch Program
- 🍏 Newcomer Community Kitchen
- 🍏 Middle Eastern Women Community Kitchen
- 🍏 Holiday Hampers
- 🍏 Food Preservation Workshops
- 🍏 Little Mountain Out of School Care Breakfast Program
- 🍏 Seniors Lunch
- 🍏 Offering healthy snacks at various programs

Whether we are distributing food, providing education about growing food, or cooking together, all our programming is centred around **dignified food access.**



Riley Park Community Garden




A Community Space Tackling Food Insecurity While Enhancing Community Engagement

RPCG has a **communal model** of community gardening, which means we share in the work and the harvest. Following organic gardening practices, gardeners come together to plan, plant, weed, and harvest. Harvests are shared among volunteers and are also used to support food literacy programs. The garden is an inclusive gathering space for the larger community. Novice gardeners work alongside experienced gardeners, sharing customs and stories about the food we grow and eat together. We grow a variety of culturally specific foods and have garden plots dedicated to Middle Eastern, Japanese, Asian, and Latino veggies. Regular formal and informal educational sessions also take place in the garden on growing seasonal food. There are **no waitlists** to join this community garden, just a willingness to show up and join in the fun of growing food!






Photo Source: www.rileyparkgarden.org/

We offer the opportunity to work alongside Master Gardeners and:

-  Learn about caring for pollinator plants
-  Experiment with growing a variety of food
-  Learn about composting

We also hold many events and workshops including:

-  Cooking In The Garden
-  Seniors In The Park
-  Multicultural Celebrations

Contact: info@rileyparkgarden.org

Location: Riley Park Community Garden, 50 East 30th Ave

Get involved: Visit www.rileyparkgarden.org/events to register for our garden events!

Yard Garden Harvest Project

Learning, Inspiring and Growing Together to Feed our Community

The YGHP grows food in our neighbours' yards to provide to LMNH's Food Distribution Program and has partnered with four caring neighbours to turn their lawns into foodscapes. It was an idea sparked by a group of individuals who wanted to expand the positive impact of the RPCG by providing food grown with organic practices to those experiencing food insecurity and expanding spaces for people to learn how to grow food. Our program is rooted in deepening connections by engaging with landowners and volunteers while growing food in a way that benefits the soil, the pollinators and our community! As a part of growing healthy produce for others, we provide opportunities to learn and practice sustainable growing methods. These actions build a stronger sense of community, increase local food security and contribute to a more sustainable community. We accept volunteers for the duration of the growing season from April to October and accept landowner applications year-round.






Photo Source: Brianna Thompson





Photo Source: Breagha Zakaib

We offer many opportunities to get involved in our mission including:

-  Volunteering for short garden shifts
-  Volunteering in leadership positions
-  Becoming a Yard Garden Landowner

We also put on many fun events including:

-  Educational Workshops
-  Volunteer Appreciation Nights
-  Social events like craft nights

Contact: ygc@lmnhs.bc.ca

Location: Six neighbours' yards in the Little Mountain/Riley Park area

Get Involved: Email us to become a volunteer!

Food Distribution Program

Increasing Access to Healthy Food and Building Community

The Food Distribution Program was created due to increased food insecurity in our community during COVID-19. After receiving emergency food funding in May and September of 2020, this program was created and has evolved into a market style program where food is displayed on tables allowing participants to choose their food items. Operating on a weekly basis, we aim to provide healthy, culturally appropriate fresh produce and non-perishable food items at no cost. We receive food donations from a variety of organizations and also connect with local farmers and grocers to acquire fresh produce for our program. Community engagement and feedback from participants is important to us. Our goal is for our program to not only be a space to receive healthy food, but also a space to meet others, build connections, and feel welcomed and supported by LMNHS and the wider community.



Photo Source: Maria Amortegui



Photo Source: Maria Amortegui

The need for fresh, healthy, and culturally appropriate food is high. In 2022, with the help of our partners and donors, we distributed



**85,575 pounds
of food items**
(~\$274,696 value)



254 gift cards
(\$6850 value)

Contact: fooddistribution@lmnhs.bc.ca

Location: Temporarily at the Holy Cross Japanese-Canadian Anglican Church at 4580 Walden St

Get Involved: Email us to register for our program or become a volunteer!



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WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

These are just a few ways you can become involved in our programs! Contact us to learn more about all the different volunteer opportunities we offer.

Riley Park Community Garden Opportunities

Email: info@rileyparkgarden.org

Community Gardener

Work Party Leader

Outreach and Promotions

Events and Workshop Organizer

Yard Garden Harvest Project Opportunities

Email: ygc@lmnhs.bc.ca

Gardener

Fruit and Produce Gleaner

Artistic Education Creator

Workshop Facilitator



General Food Hub Opportunities

Food Literacy Content Creator

Fundraising, Events and Workshop Volunteer

Food Distribution Program Opportunities

Email: fooddistribution@lmnhs.bc.ca

Stock and Inventory Volunteer

Weekly Program Volunteer

Farmers Market Donation Station Volunteer



PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all of our generous and dedicated partners and funders.

A collection of individual donors
Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm
City Beet Farm
City of Vancouver Neighbourhood Matching Fund
City of Vancouver Sustainable Food Systems Grant
Community Food Centres Canada Emergency Food Access Grant
David Suzuki Foundation Butterflyway Project
East West Market
Farm Folk City Folk Citizen Food Trials
Food Stash Foundation
Good Food Organization (Member)
Greater Vancouver Food Bank
Holy Cross Japanese-Canadian Anglican Church
Kevington Building Corp
Neighbourhood Matching Funds
Neighbourhood Small Grants
New Horizons for Seniors Program
Peak House
Services Canada Summer Job Grant
Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC)
Sustainable Food Systems Grant (COV)
TD Park People grant
UBC Chapman and Innovation Fund Grant
UBC Farm Practicum Program
UBC Partner Recognition Fund
United Way Recovery Fund and Regional Community Food Hub Funding
Vancouver Community Fridge Project
Vancouver Farmers Market and Coupon Program
Vancouver Food Runners
Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Networks (Member)
Vancouver Parks Board



GET IN TOUCH

Thank you for your interest in the LMNHS Food Hub! We are always looking for ways to develop and expand our Food Hub programs. Stay tuned for updates on our social media and websites!



[lmnhvancouver](#)



[lmnhfoodhub](#)



[rileyparkcommunitygarden](#)



[lmnhvancouver](#)



[lmnhfoodhub](#)



[rileyparkgarden](#)



[Visit the LMNHS Food Hub Website](#)



[Visit the Riley Park Community Garden Website](#)

We would also love to hear more from you. We know our community members have so much knowledge and ideas to share. Feel free to contact us at the emails listed below with any ideas you may have to expand our community-led food system and increase food access!



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