

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Fiscal year ending March 31, 2024





This report contains links to additional reports and other knowledge products. For the best experience, we recommend viewing it online here:

[Annual Report 2023-24](#)



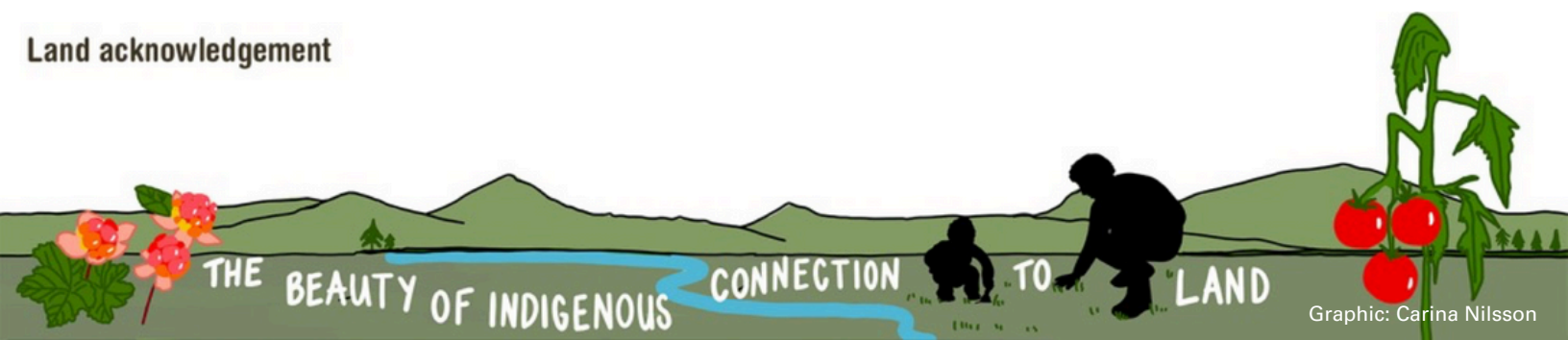
Our team and partners, with whom we are privileged to work alongside, reside across the diverse lands of the many First Nations, Inuit and Métis people of what we now call Canada. We are honoured and privileged to facilitate initiatives that connect children and youth across this country to their food and the land and waters it comes from. In doing so, we are deeply committed to centering Indigenous food sovereignty and to working in meaningful partnership with Indigenous communities by honouring and amplifying their voices, values and perspectives.

Our approach is one of respect, honesty, humility and utmost gratitude for those who have forged a path before us, and to those who walk alongside us on this journey. To learn more about this commitment, please visit

[www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/nourishing-relations/](http://www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/nourishing-relations/) 

*We gratefully acknowledge that Farm to Cafeteria Canada's head office is located on the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyám (Musqueam), s<sup>k</sup>wx<sup>w</sup>ú7mesh (Squamish), and selílwitlh (Tsleil-Waututh) nations*






## Land acknowledgement





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# Message from the Board Chair & Executive Director

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The 2023/24 fiscal year has been one of building at Farm to Cafeteria Canada. Building relationships, building our programs and grant offerings - and building our team and governance structures - all to support a growing momentum to transform school food in Canada for current and future generations of children and youth.

In this report, we reflect on the goals we set out at the end of last year in alignment with our strategic priorities areas: *Grow, Connect, Fund and Inform*, and our progress toward them. Without a doubt, highlights included the launch of a new 4-year partnership initiative, Nourishing Indigenous Food and Foodways in Schools, and the growth of our grant programs, for which we've heard loud and clear from school communities across the country that there is a continued and growing need.

We are honoured to be a recognized and trusted provider of flexible grants that support healthy school food environments in Canada and, as we look ahead, we are prepared to further scale-up our efforts and ability to deliver grants and other essential capacity-building resources in support of the highly-anticipated National School Food Policy.

We're proud of the accomplishments made this past year, grateful for the many people and organizations who have contributed to them, and optimistic about the future of school food in Canada.



**Cynthia Buckett**  
Board Chair



**Jesse Veenstra**  
Executive Director

# Mission

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We exist to **transform** how food is experienced, learned and celebrated in all schools across Canada.

**We believe** that food is a powerful connector, both to place and to others. Encouraging curiosity through food and food systems, and fostering these connections, allows children to learn how the health of their community and the planet is connected to their own health and wellness.

**We understand** that school communities are the experts in what their children need most, but they often don't have the tools to get there.

**We grow the capacity of diverse school communities** across the country to foster vibrant school food systems by connecting students to food and the local systems that produce it.

**Our strategic priority areas:**



**Grow**



**Connect**



**Fund**



**Inform**

[Learn more about who we are and how we work.](#) 



## GROW



**Nourishing Indigenous Food & Foodways in Schools**

## CONNECT

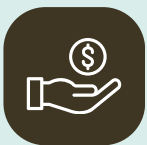


**Developing a National Training & Resource Hub**

# 2023/24 in Review

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## FUND



**Expanding School Grant Programs**

## INFORM



**Supporting Local Food Procurement & Distribution to Schools**



“ —  
|

When you want something to grow, you need to start with the children.

Participant of the Learning Circle from Tk'emlups te Secwépemc and Skeetchestn Indian Band



# Nourishing Indigenous Food & Foodways in Schools

This 4-year \$2.8M initiative intends to support Indigenous school communities throughout the country to have more capacity to harvest, preserve, grow and serve more Indigenous food and other nourishing food to children and youth, including harvested plants, game and fish from nearby lands and waters, and to engage students in Indigenous foodways and gain food skills. It builds on and is in response to what we have heard in our [Nourishing Relations](#) work, which began in 2021.

Much of the 2023/24 year was spent designing this initiative, securing funding, and planning its implementation, which began in January 2024. We are honoured to host this work in partnership with Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations, school communities and a Circle of Advisors, from across the country.

## Core activities of this initiative include:

Develop and roll out a dedicated grant stream for Indigenous school communities along with peer mentorship opportunities.

Create a K-12 learning journey for educators and others working in schools, inspired by Nourish's [Food is Our Medicine](#) learning journey.

Host a Canada-wide Indigenous school foodways gathering and other in-person and virtual events and conversations to support relationship building and knowledge sharing.

## Learn more about this initiative







# Dig in! Seed Grant Program

In September 2023 we launched this exciting new grant stream in partnership with The Schad Foundation.

Designed to support schools looking to get started on their farm or local food to school journey, these new grants were designed to fill a gap we heard existed from school communities across the country:



**Access to small, flexible grants with limited barriers to application for those looking to get started on small projects to improve their school food environments.**

**\$75,350**      **27**      **9+1**      **10,031**

In grants distributed

School recipients

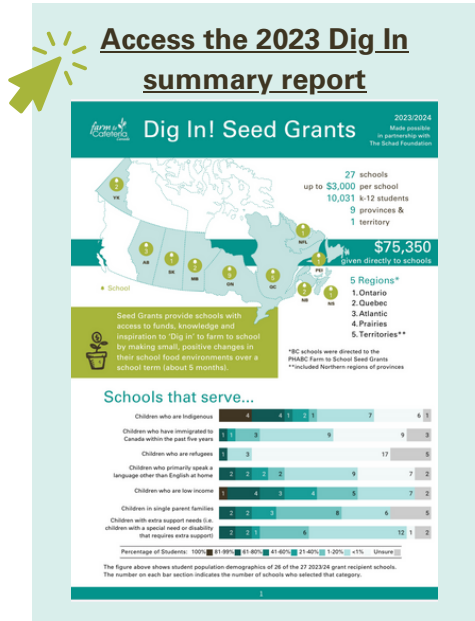
Provinces + Territory

Students reached

Individual grants were provided in amounts ranging from \$500 - \$3,000 with funds being used to purchase equipment and/or facilitate activities that would improve students' access to healthy, local and culturally appropriate food and food literacy activities.

Up to 20% of the grants could also be allocated toward purchasing food, with an emphasis on purchasing from, and developing relationships with, local farmers or other local food providers.

This grant program is made possible thanks to partnership with:







# Farm to School Canada Grants Program

Delivered in partnership with Whole Kids Foundation since 2016, this flagship grant program encourages a comprehensive approach to school food where students experience hands-on food literacy and have access to a healthy, culturally appropriate meal service where students are encouraged to build their own bowls and create their own plates using a salad bar model.

This year the recipients of the 4th cycle of these grants continued with their activities that started last year, while our team launched the 5th cycle (2024-2026) call for applications of projects to begin in September 2024.

**\$320,800**

In grants distributed

**33**

School recipients

**9+1**

Provinces + Territory

**9,745**

Students reached

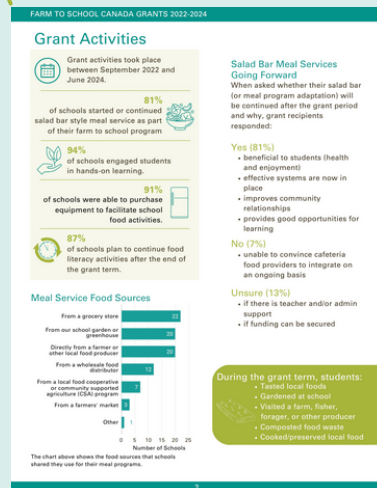
“

*[This grant] has been such an added bonus to our work area by giving us the opportunity to purchase all the added equipment and small appliances that have turned our kitchen into a totally fully functional teaching work-space.*

*We were able to transform an old unused science lab into a kitchen of everyone’s dreams...receiving the Farm to School Canada Grant money was a dream come true for our school and our community.”*

-School grant recipient

## Access the 2022-2024 Canada Grant summary report





# School Food & Education Training Hub

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*“I rarely find that any professional development directly helps me with food literacy learning. It just doesn't really exist out there.”*

*-Educator & needs assessment interviewee*



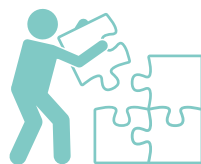
For years, educators have shared with us a need for more resources and professional development opportunities to help them teach about food and make connections between curricula and food systems.

This initiative aims to develop the first-of-its-kind Canada-wide training and resource hub to provide educators and other school food practitioners with access to knowledge, tools, resources, connections and inspiration to grow their capacity to design and deliver engaging, equitable and evidence-based food literacy programs across Canada. With the right tools, there is potential to reach thousands of students each year.

**Phase 1:**  
Plan



**Phase 2:**  
Develop



**Phase 3:**  
Pilot



**Phase 4:**  
Sustain



Launched this year, our efforts focused on the first of four phases: **planning**. As a partnership-based organization, it is important to our team that this work be developed in meaningful collaboration with the communities it will serve. Our planning started with 1) a needs assessment, including interviews with educators from across the country to inform next steps; and 2) the development of a competencies framework to which hub offerings will be linked.

Work will progress into the Develop phase in the year ahead.

**[Learn more about this project and its activities.](#)** 



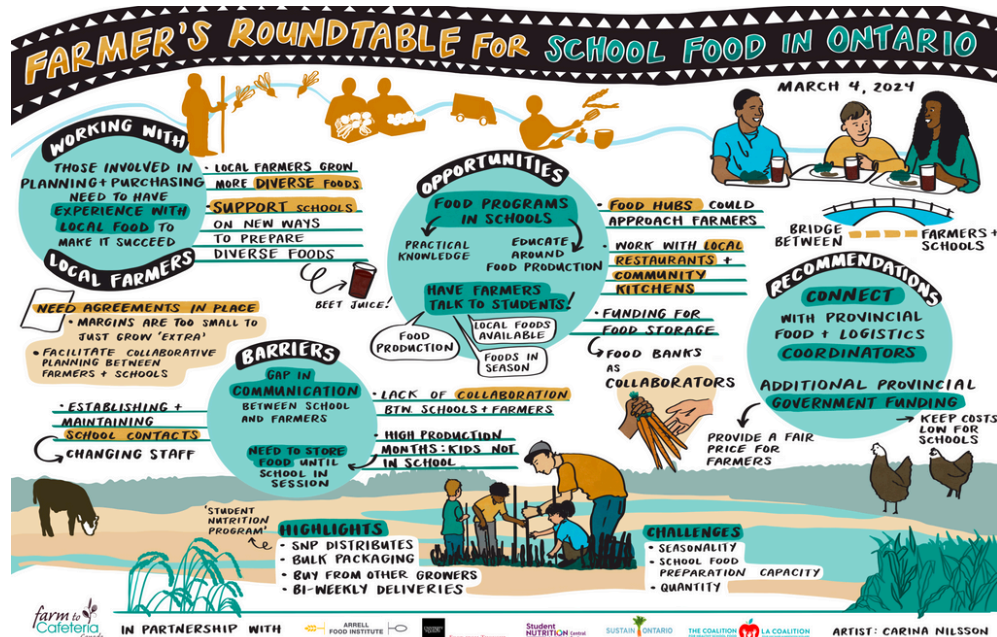
# Local Food in Schools

With a vision for food systems that nourish people and the planet, local food systems have always been central to our work. However, connecting to local food sources and distribution networks remains one of the most commonly cited challenges we hear from the school communities with which we work. This year, 2 projects focused on understanding and addressing this challenge.

First, in partnership with Farm to School BC, we launched a 3-year pilot in the Kootenay region of BC to develop a new farm to school regional hub that seeks to explore and leverage economic development opportunities for farmers and other local food providers in response to the provincial Feeding Futures commitment announced in winter 2023.

Second, we were fortunate to partner with the University of Guelph on an 8-month project as part of the *Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Agri-Food Systems* course. We worked with 4 graduate students to explore a food system challenge: the untapped potential to purchase and serve local food in school food programs. One of the several activities undertaken as part of this work was an Ontario farmers' roundtable, summarized in the graphic below.

Learn more about this project and its activities. 



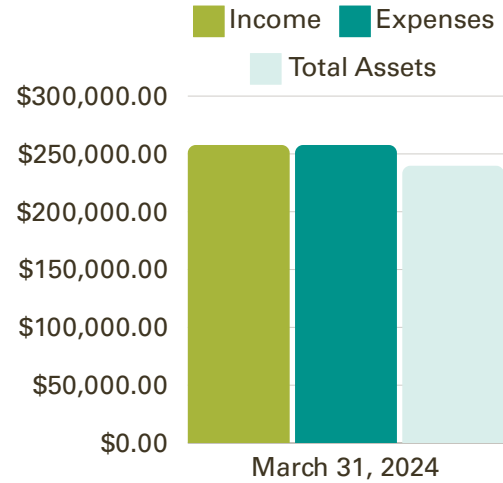
# Financial Snapshot

As reported in our last Annual Report, the previous fiscal year was one of transition from an administrative host, under which F2CC had previously operated since 2014.

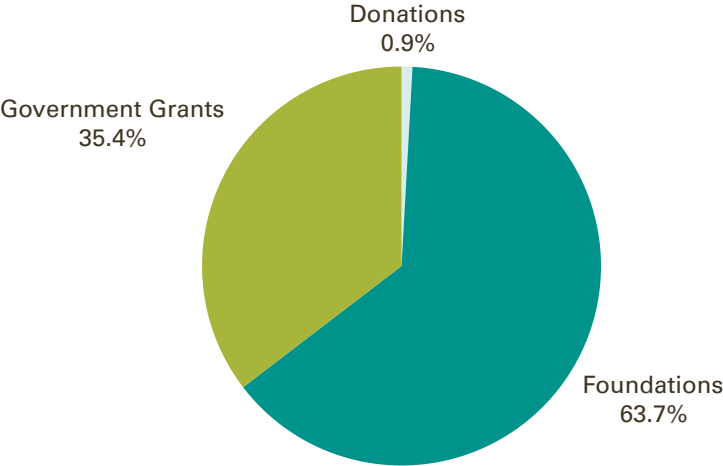
The 2023/24 fiscal year represented F2CC’s first full fiscal year as an independent charitable organization, during which we experienced steady financial growth.

We anticipate this growth to continue in the year ahead as our programs and services are further established in this new and exciting chapter for our organization, and for school food in Canada.

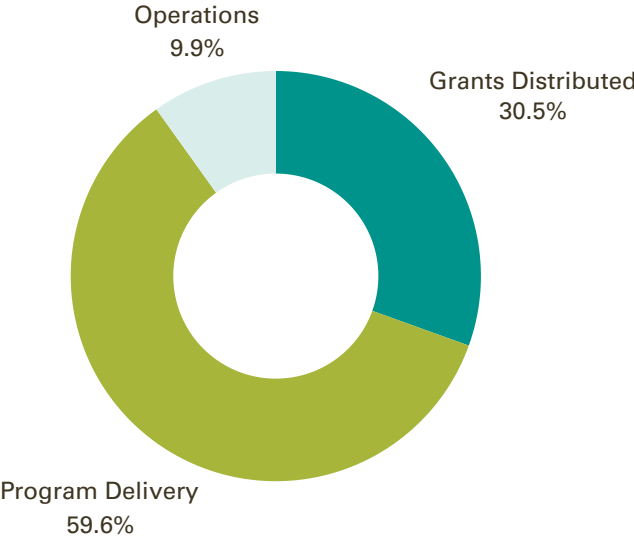
### INCOME VS. EXPENSES



### 2023/24 INCOME SOURCES



### 2023/24 EXPENSE DISTRIBUTION



# Gratitude

## Our Team

Jenna West  
Sue-Anne Banks  
Florence Plourde  
Carolyn Webb  
Tracey O'Neil  
Jesse Veenstra

## Advisory Council

Erin Beagle  
Grace Masse  
Joanne Bays  
Shiba Anjum  
Dr. Kathleen Kevany  
Arzeena Hamir  
Sibelle El Labban  
Soni Craik Christie  
Rachel Stolberg  
Kimberley Orren  
Dr. Amberley Ruetz  
Marianne Boire

## Project Consultants & Students

Sarah Keyes  
Alicia Martin  
Quentin Randall  
Gladys Rowe  
Heather Thoma  
Mary Thornbush  
Bruna Negri  
Manjurul Islam  
Sedley Benitz

## Board of Directors

Cynthia Bucket  
Vania Choi  
Sara Rezamand  
Suhail Nanji  
Iris Lee  
Sina Woerthle

## Indigenous Circle of Advisors

Diane Litman  
Ivan J White  
Kandy Kennedy  
North Star Scott  
Kitty Lickers  
Shay Paul  
Victoria Buffalo Robe  
Tammy Shakotko

## School Communities

It is a privilege to work with school communities across the country. The passion, dedication and innovative ideas they bring to this movement not only inspire us every day, but lead to lasting positive change. Our work would not be possible without you - **thank you!**

## Funding & Project Delivery Partners





*farm to*  
Cafeteria  
Canada

*De la ferme*  
à la Cafeteria  
Canada

**Together, we can transform how food is experienced, learned  
and celebrated in all schools across Canada.**

**Join Us!** 

Farm to Cafeteria Canada Society is a Registered Canadian Charity # 738633601 RR001

[www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca](http://www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca)