

A Peek into the Pantry - Spring 2021 Dalhousie Food Cupboard Newsletter

Do you have a Green Thumb? Would you like to help us with our courtyard garden?



We are getting ready to re-open the Dalhousie Courtyard Garden, and recruiting volunteers for April-May setup and the growing season.

Last year, in a small, sunny unused courtyard at the Bronson Centre, we designed and installed raised cedar beds, added wheels, filled them with organic soil, seedlings and hope: Dalhousie Courtyard Garden was born.

To make the most of the space, we opted for Square Foot Gardening, a gardening method that divides the growing area into 1-foot sections to create a densely planted vegetable garden. According to the Square Foot Gardening Foundation this method is estimated to cost 50% less, use 20% less space, 10% of the water and only 2% of the work compared to single row planting. Additional benefits are – virtually no weeding, no digging, rototilling and no heavy tools are needed. It is the perfect answer for the older people we hoped and hope to attract to tend the garden and share their wisdom.

This chance to build a vegetable garden came about thanks to our landlord's willingness to let us use outdoor space, and a share in an ESDC Horizons grant supported and administered by the Bronson RISE team. Covid-19 made it more difficult to execute but did not take our chance away.



The goal was to develop a gardening program inclusive of all ages and abilities with a particular focus on attracting seniors (55+). In addition, the project brought us a step closer towards our goal to move beyond an emergency food bank. The pandemic dashed our hopes to involve an army of volunteers, but with the help of a small number of helpers we managed to grow and harvest enough vegetables to share at least 58 baskets with our clients. Clean-up during April will kick off this year's

growing season. To increase our supply of garden-fresh vegetables for our clients, this year's plan includes the preparation of another of Bronson's hidden courtyards. This means there will be a wide variety of tasks to suit many interests and abilities, from mid-April through to end of season.

If you have the time and energy to help us with our gardening program, please contact us by email at garden@dalhousiefoodcupboard.ca.

Food Basket Delivery project

We are very excited to announce that we officially started our Delivery Pilot Project earlier this year, thanks to a new partnership with Ottawa Cares (www.ottawacares.ca). Ottawa Cares is an amazing, volunteer-based organization that came together at the beginning of the pandemic to help food bank agencies deliver food to clients. Seniors, folks with mobility-challenges, and any other clients who face barriers in accessing the Food Cupboard are able to have their grocery boxes delivered straight to their door.



So far the program has been very successful, and we have received some great feedback. We were very pleased to receive this note from one of our clients: “As I have a limited income, I rely on the Dalhousie Food Cupboard almost every month but due to Arthritis of the hip it has been increasingly difficult to carry the generous amount of food home. The delivery service is the answer to my prayers!” - DFC Client

Fundraiser Spotlight: Virtual Wine Tasting with The Door Youth Centre and Cyranos Restaurant

This Valentine’s Day, DFC teamed up with [The Door Youth Centre](#) and [Cyranos Restaurant](#) to raise money for both our organizations through a unique virtual wine tasting experience. With over 60 tickets sold, participants were treated to lovely prepared meals from Cyranos they could enjoy right in their homes along with a trio of perfectly matched wines. Experienced sommelier Rob Beardall led participants through a guided tasting of all three wines and took lots of time to answer questions from those enjoying a nice glass and a fine meal across the city. We hope you can join us for our next virtual event!

Moo Shu Instagram Takeover



Over this past challenging year, we have learned that community support comes in many different ways. One recent example of this is the “Moo Shu X DFC Instagram Takeover” that the DFC recently did. We are so grateful that local ice cream and snack shop, [Moo Shu](#), lent us their large Instagram following. From March 22nd-April 1st, we shared information about our mission, food insecurity in Ottawa, our Courtyard Garden, and much more.

It really helped to amplify our voice and spread the word about the work we do.

You can check out our “Takeover” on Moo Shu’s Instagram profile ([@mooshuicecream](#)) saved in their highlights section under “Food Security”. You can also go enjoy some delicious ice cream and snacks at their store, located at 477 Bank St.

The Big Squeeze: New Grapefruit Products at the DFC - By James Witherspoon

“You can’t squeeze water from a stone” - a cliché almost everyone has heard before. One of the biggest things I have learned so far from the pandemic is that you can – with friends who are willing to help.

Last year the Dalhousie Food Cupboard made some amazing friends in the community who have been phenomenal partners in the effort to support those facing food security challenges and other symptoms of poverty within the community.

One of these amazing partnerships has been with **Beyond the Pale Brewery**. Thanks to their ongoing donation of grapefruits, and the success of the "Fuzz on Fire" hot sauce we made using those grapefruits, in partnership with Meow! That's Hot (learn more about these partnerships [here](#)), we are continuing on the grapefruit train!

We have since made friends with **Potty Mouth Soaps**, who are making an amazing Grapefruit soap named “Pink Fuzz and Suds” and **Betty’s Pickles and Preserves**, who just made us 48 jars of the best tasting grapefruit salsa you could ever hope for.

Proceeds from the sales of all these items are helping the Dalhousie Food Cupboard aid those facing food insecurity in our community and will be helping us provide new services in the future.

Follow us on social media - Instagram: [@dalhousiefoodottawa](#) and Facebook: Dalhousie Food Cupboard - to purchase these products. These partnerships really demonstrate you can squeeze a lot from a stone, or a grapefruit, when you work together with those around you.



We're seeking new Board Members

DFC is seeking to expand the membership of its Board of Directors to better support the mission and operations of the Food Cupboard. Do you or someone you know have a passion for issues of food security, poverty and equity? Are you looking for opportunities to get more involved with the DFC and your community?

If you answered YES to any of these questions and can commit some of your time and skills to the DFC, we would love to hear from you! Please contact Lucas@dalhousiefoodcupboard.ca with the subject: DFC Board Candidate