

# Section Four:

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## Next Steps

### *Resources for Expanding your Project:*

- ⑤ *Connecting with Social Enterprise*
- ⑤ *How to start Community Kitchens, Farmers Markets or Community Canned/Bakeries*
  - *Plans for thinking outside the box*

## Next Steps: Expanding your project

*Want to do more? Information about social enterprise in community gardens and tips on starting a community kitchen, farmer's market, cannery or other creative food project.*

If your garden project is thriving, your community may start thinking about how to expand beyond growing and into other aspects of food production. This can take many forms. Your group may be interested in selling some of your harvest or looking at other techniques for earning money for your project and gardeners. Or, you may be wondering how you could establish a program to engage other residents in your community. Below are some introductory resources for starting a social enterprise based around your garden, as well as a few different types of projects you can consider: Community Kitchens, Farmer's Markets and Community Canneries/Bakeries. The end of the section highlights a few more creative ways to expand the work your garden is doing, such as beekeeping or community composting.

### Social Enterprise

Social Enterprises or social ventures are **income-generating initiatives that have a positive social impact**. Just like other types of businesses, social enterprises come in many different sizes and forms, from small catering companies run by a few people to large-scale businesses like Mountain Equipment Co-op. The difference is that social enterprises always provide a social impact as a part of the work they do. This could mean supporting the work of an associated non-profit organization, providing employment to a vulnerable group, or by a number of approaches.

Expanding your garden program to include a social enterprise component can be an excellent way to earn revenue to help make your project self-sustaining or to build a source of income for residents. There are many food-based social enterprise models you can consider developing with your community. Many of them will require an industrial kitchen which has been inspected and certified. You could try catering, selling food to restaurants, starting a community food co-op, or selling seedlings or cut flowers.

Building a successful social enterprise requires good planning and some specific skills – knowing how to properly produce, market and price the goods or service you are selling. However, you don't need to learn to do all these things on your own! If you are interested in social enterprise, there are many organizations across the province that can support your group in designing and developing a model that suits your community.

If you think social enterprise is something that your group might want to consider, take a look at APPENDIX O for information on how to figure out if you are ready to start this kind of project. Also, take a look at the RESOURCES section for groups that work on Social Enterprise development and support. If you would like more information about what social enterprises look like, what this kind of initiative might look like in your community or where to gain additional support, contact the SEED team at [emartyn@hscorp.ca](mailto:emartyn@hscorp.ca). SEED can connect you to local resources and provide support for different marketing options, such as selling to restaurants, farmers markets or other alternative markets.

Below are a few examples of projects that could be used to expand your garden initiative. These could either take the form of social enterprises or could operate as non-profit projects, depending on the interests of your community.

### Community kitchens

A community kitchen is a place where people get together to cook affordable, nutritious food. Each person who comes must take part in the work. Members all help to choose the menu, go shopping, and to prepare and cook the food.

Community kitchens are a place for people to meet neighbours, practice English, learn new cooking skills, and cook nutritious food. They can break down barriers and help people feel they belong to a community. Community kitchens can help people save money by teaching people how to cook on a budget and buy food in bulk.

Community kitchens often use fresh fruits and vegetables and teach people about choosing good quality food and using it before it spoils. They also teach people about where food comes from: how it is planted, nurtured and harvested and how it gets to the table. Most importantly, community kitchens help feed people who are isolated and lack access to healthy food.

### How to start a community kitchen

To start a community kitchen, first think about where the group will cook. Many housing buildings have a kitchen attached to the recreation room. You could also meet at a local community centre or place of worship. Many community centres have the kind of space you will need. A community kitchen needs a large kitchen, a program coordinator and may need funding to help pay for the food. You will also have to choose what kind of recipes the group will cook, decide how you will buy groceries, who is in charge of the money, how you will divide the work and what rules will guide the group. The resources below can be very helpful in figuring out these details.

- “Community Kitchens Toolkit” Web site: <http://www.communitykitchens.ca/main/?en&CKToolkit>
- “Community Kitchen Toolbox.” Web site: [www.foodshare.net/toolbox\\_kitchens01.htm](http://www.foodshare.net/toolbox_kitchens01.htm)

Community Kitchen Best Practices Toolkit: Newfoundland and Labrador

[http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/Publications/Community\\_Kitchen\\_Best\\_Practices\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/Publications/Community_Kitchen_Best_Practices_Toolkit.pdf)

Winnipeg Cooks Together:

[http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/prohealth/nutrition/files/nutrition\\_3.pdf](http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/prohealth/nutrition/files/nutrition_3.pdf)

### Farmers’ markets

At Farmers’ markets, farmers sell the food they grow directly to the consumer. Customers are able to talk to the farmer and learn how the food is grown. Farmer’s Markets are a good way to bring people from different cultures and backgrounds together to learn about food and they offer a wide variety of foods that may not be available in the grocery store. Setting up a Farmers’ market in your community is a good way to connect with neighbours and other groups in your area, and to let them get to know your community.

## How to start a farmers' market

Starting a farmers' market takes a lot of time, money and knowledge. If your group is thinking about starting a farmer's market, think about asking a local organization to help develop the market. Or, consider the model of the "good food market" below, where you operate a single food stand with a wide range of fruit and vegetables.

- Foodshare's Good Food Markets. Information about how a Good Food Market operates. <http://www.foodshare.net/animations02.htm>
- Farmers' Markets Ontario. Information about existing markets and how to start a new one. <http://www.farmersmarketsontario.com/>
- "Establishing and Operating a Community Farmers' Market." A very useful and practical guide to creating a farmers' market. Web site: [www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/aec/aec77/aec77.pdf](http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/aec/aec77/aec77.pdf)
- "Making Links: A Toolkit for Local Food Projects." This kit includes information on how to set up a community food project to help people in cities get good, affordable food. Web site: [www.sustainweb.org/pdf/pov\\_making.pdf](http://www.sustainweb.org/pdf/pov_making.pdf)
- "Public Markets" page of the Project for Public Spaces site. This site has useful information about starting a market, good examples and workshops on "How to Create Successful Markets." Web site: [www.pps.org/](http://www.pps.org/) markets.

## Community Canneries/Bakeries

Community Canneries or Bakeries are places where community members gather to preserve foods or bake bread on a large scale. Community Bakeries/Canneries are not businesses or cooking schools, their aim is to develop their local community in one of many ways. They seek to enhance people's skills, or to strengthen their relationship to local farmers, to combat social isolation or to encourage people to take control of their food system. Their focus is on involving a range of people from the local community and on creating a project that will make that community stronger and more vibrant.

### How to start a community cannery/bakery

West End Food Co-op Community Cannery Guide. This free guidebook gives an overview to a range of community cannery models and provides information on how to start up and maintain a cannery, as well as possible recipe ideas.

<http://web.uvic.ca/~ccgarden/wp-content/uploads/2008/01/Community-Cannery.pdf>

Knead to know: The Real Bread Starter. This is a UK based guidebook which describes how to start up a community supported bakery or a community baking operation.

[http://www.sustainweb.org/realbread/knead\\_to\\_know/](http://www.sustainweb.org/realbread/knead_to_know/)

## THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

The best part of community food projects is how they can constantly grow and allow for more creativity. Below is a taste of some of the more creative ways you can expand your project – possible ways to turn your community into a complete food system! For more inspiration on dynamic community food projects, take a look at this incredible project in the UK, Incredible Edible Todmorden <http://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/home>

### Beekeeping

Keeping bees lets you improve pollination in your garden and create a healthy, edible product you can sell – honey! There are costs and concerns to think about when starting to keep bees, but many groups have done this successfully in urban areas. Generally, bees will be kept on a roof, away from people and other buildings to avoid stings. For more information on beekeeping in Ontario, connect with the groups below.

Toronto Beekeepers Coop [www.torontobees.ca](http://www.torontobees.ca)

Ontario Beekeepers Association [www.ontariobee.com/](http://www.ontariobee.com/)

### Orchards

If your site has lots of extra space, or areas with too much of a slope to put garden beds, consider starting a community orchard. Community orchards are spaces where residents collectively care for trees and share the fruit they harvest. Fruit trees can be an excellent addition to your community, providing shade, attracting pollinators, and producing abundant fruit with little effort after the first years of establishment. For more information, take a look at the resources below.

Ben Nobleman Community Orchard: <http://communityorchard.ca/orchards-101-2/>

Community Orchards Handbook: <http://www.england-in-particular.info/orchards/o-corch.html>

## **Roof Gardening**

One way to garden as much of your community as possible is to get growing up on the rooftops! Roof gardening can take two forms: green roofs and roof container gardens. Green roofs are generally very expensive and involve construction work and technical expertise – which can be appropriate if your building is undergoing renovation. Roof container gardens are just like balcony gardens, but on roofs where the plants can receive lots of sun and water – these are the more likely option for most communities. Some buildings will have accessible rooftops with proper guardrails that are appropriate for gardening. Roofs in older buildings may not be safe, for people or for the added weight of soil and planters. If you're interested in roof gardening, this is something to discuss with your property manager and or housing provider. Do some research at the sites below before you approach them so you can feel confident presenting your idea.

Green Roofs for Healthy Cities [www.greenroofs.org/](http://www.greenroofs.org/)

Edible Rooftop Garden Guide [http://rooftopgardens.ca/files/howto\\_EN\\_FINAL\\_lowres.pdf](http://rooftopgardens.ca/files/howto_EN_FINAL_lowres.pdf)

## **Maple Syrup**

Got maple trees? Try making maple syrup! This is one of the more unconventional ideas, there aren't many groups doing it because maple syrup can be quite labour intensive. It takes at least 40L of sap to make 1L of syrup, and in some cases it can be as much as 80:1. Still, maple syrup making can be a fun, creative project and a great way to make use of an existing resource on your site. Your group may decide it's a good way to make money or just a worthwhile project to supply community residents with syrup. Some regions can have strict bylaws protecting trees from injury, so do your research, and find out more information with the resources below.

Tap my trees: <http://www.tapmytrees.com/>

Not Far from the Tree: Syrup in the City: <http://www.notfarfromthetree.org/archives/1184>

## **Livestock**

Depending where you live, adding livestock to your gardening project may be a real possibility. Check your regional bylaws for details, but even big cities like Toronto allow keeping of some rabbits and pigeons. One of the most popular and simplest animals to keep are chickens for eggs. Not keeping roosters, which are loud and prohibited, but hens which generally lay one egg a day, can be a great community project. More and more resources are now available to address issues like coop design, feed, vet care and protecting your flock from predators.

Urban Chickens <http://urbanchickens.org/>

Backyard Chickens <http://www.backyardchickens.com/>

## **Community Composting**

Community composting can be a great way to reduce waste in your neighbourhood and provide the large volume of compost needed for your gardening project. Community composters are central places where all residents can bring their food scraps and volunteers oversee turning them into rich compost. Community compost projects require strong public education about what can and cannot go into composters and how to compost without attracting pests, so there needs to be a community member or external group who can provide this training. Community composting can be done with traditional wood or plastic bins, or through vermicomposting, composting with worms. This technique uses special worms called red wigglers, which can eat their body weight in food scraps in 2 days, easily creating a nutritious compost source.

Community Compost Network <http://www.communitycompost.org/>

Compost Council of Canada [http://www.compost.org/English/ENGLISH\\_INDEX.htm](http://www.compost.org/English/ENGLISH_INDEX.htm)

## **Gleaning**

Gleaning is visiting farm fields and harvesting the produce that remains once the farmers have finished with the fields. Late season produce may be smaller or yield per plant may be lower, meaning it isn't worth the farmer's time to pick them clean. Gleaners can come in and clean out these crops free of charge and take them home. This is a great way to get residents out of the area and collect free food that can be used for a community meal or a canning project. Look for a farm in your area, especially one which already offers U-Pick, and speak to them about organizing a gleaning trip. The only cost will be transporting residents to the site, and your housing provider may be able to help with this cost.

Community Harvest Ontario [http://oafb.convio.net/site/PageServer?pagename=oafb10\\_home](http://oafb.convio.net/site/PageServer?pagename=oafb10_home)

Fresh Food Partners <http://yrfn.ca/programs/fresh-food-partners-gleaning-program/>

## **Medicinals**

Expanding your garden project to include medicinal plants in addition to edibles is a great way to improve health and environmental awareness in your community. In fact, once you start looking into medicinal properties of plants, you'll realize that many of the "weeds" you've removed from your garden are valuable healing plants. Growing medicinal plants in your garden can lead to workshops on making healing teas, salves, ointments and tinctures and build on existing community knowledge of natural medicine

Annie's Remedies: [http://www.anniesremedy.com/herb\\_detail155.php](http://www.anniesremedy.com/herb_detail155.php)

Evergreen First Nations Medicinal Garden [http://nativeplants.evergreen.ca/lists/view-list.php?list\\_ID=00200](http://nativeplants.evergreen.ca/lists/view-list.php?list_ID=00200)