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# CURRENT

Volume

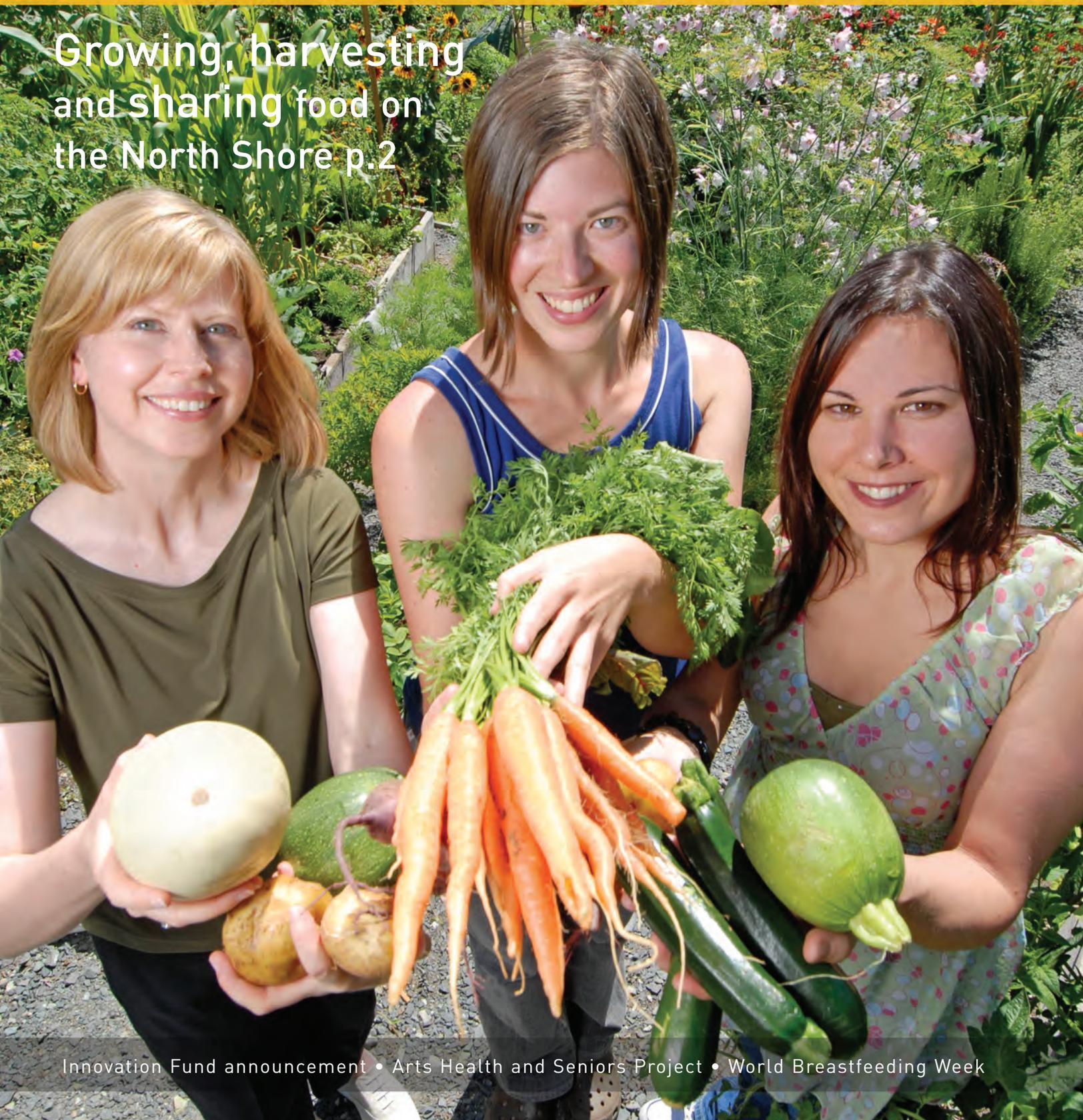
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Promoting wellness. Ensuring care.

Growing, harvesting  
and sharing food on  
the North Shore p.2



# Growing fruits and veggies

Vancouver Coastal Health's partners grow, harvest and share local food on the North Shore



(L to R) Heather Johnstone of the Edible Garden Project, VCH nutritionist Margaret Broughton and Nicole Fitzsimon of the Harvest Project gather vegetables in a community garden in North Vancouver.

It's Saturday morning and a group of volunteers are spending a few hours weeding, watering and practicing gardening tips in a backyard garden in North Vancouver. They're cultivating the garden, which was donated by the homeowner to the Edible Garden Project, to harvest vegetables for low-income families and individuals.

"Early in the spring we dug up the backyard, weeded it and planted a variety of vegetables," says **Lynne Quarmby**, a North Vancouver resident who volunteers in the garden. "We're growing potatoes, beans, peas, carrots and squash right now. And we'll be planting winter crops, like broccoli, soon."

Quarmby, who hadn't gardened since she was a kid, decided to get involved after watching the documentary *Seeds in the City: The Greening of Havana*. The film tells the story of city dwellers now growing 20,000 urban farms in Havana to combat food shortages and widespread hunger.

"I feel good about what we're doing in our community," she says, "because all of the vegetables we grow are donated. We're also learning a lot about gardening as we go, including composting and organic pest control."

Last year the Edible Garden Project was able to collect over 300 kilograms of fruit and vegetables. It won an environmental award from the City of North Vancouver.

All produce picked goes to the Harvest Project, which distributes the food to their clients and other community programs. Harvest also recovers dairy, meats and non-perishable foods from grocery stores that would otherwise end up in a landfill—even though the food is healthy and edible.

**Margaret Broughton**, a Vancouver Coastal Health nutritionist, explains that VCH's Community Food Action Initiative grant allowed the launch of both projects.

"We're proud we are increasing residents' access to healthy fruits and vegetables," says Broughton, who also leads the North Shore Food Action Advisory Committee. "We know healthy eating plays an important role in preventing disease. Sadly, it is often individuals on low incomes who risk their health because they cannot afford to buy fruit and vegetables."

# for those in need

Broughton says that studies have looked at the food choices available to people on a limited budget. One dollar would buy a bag of chips and a pop—enough to stop hunger pains—but it would only buy a small snack of carrots, making it an impractical solution to a grumbling stomach.

Both projects are funded by VCH through the province's ActNowBC program ([www.actnowbc.ca](http://www.actnowbc.ca)) under the direction of the North Shore Food Action Advisory Committee.

To learn more, visit [www.ediblegardenproject.com](http://www.ediblegardenproject.com) or [www.harvestproject.org](http://www.harvestproject.org).

## Get involved get growing!

Donate your garden's fresh fruit and vegetables  
at the following drop-off locations:

- 🍅 Mondays, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Harry Jerome Recreation Centre  
123 East 23rd Street, North Vancouver
- 🍅 Tuesdays, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., North Shore Neighbourhood House  
225 East 2nd Street, North Vancouver
- 🍅 Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., West Vancouver Seniors Centre  
695 21st Street, West Vancouver
- 🍅 Tuesdays to Fridays, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and  
Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Harvest Project,  
201 Bewicke Avenue, North Vancouver

Donate the use of your backyard garden or fruit tree, or volunteer as a gardener. Call 604-987-8138 ext. 209 or e-mail [edible@vcn.bc.ca](mailto:edible@vcn.bc.ca).

Volunteer to help distribute the produce through the Harvest Project. Call 604-983-9488 ext. 316 or e-mail [wendy@harvestproject.org](mailto:wendy@harvestproject.org).

Join the North Shore Community Food Action Advisory Committee. The goals of the committee are to increase awareness about food security and increase access to local healthy food. E-mail [margaret.broughton@vch.ca](mailto:margaret.broughton@vch.ca).

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