

Annual Report: Outline

Table of contents:

1. Introduction
2. Programming
3. Projects
4. Partnerships and collaborations
5. 2014-15 Budget and actuals

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1. Introduction

### WHO WE ARE

The Concordia Greenhouse Project is a collectively run, consensus-based, non-profit organization. It uses the Henry H. Hall Building rooftop greenhouse as an all-organic space geared towards community, education and sustainable horticulture. The Greenhouse is a year-round green space that hosts workshops, projects and events raising awareness around food issues and alternatives to mainstream consumerism.

We aspire to strengthen the urban agriculture movement at Concordia University and in Montreal by growing local produce using ecological practices, providing experiential learning opportunities through volunteering, internships and jobs, and networking with other individuals and organizations.

### OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide a welcoming, organic green space that fosters community by providing experiential learning opportunities within a year-round growing environment.

### OUR VISION

Our vision is for locally empowered sustainable urban gardens at Concordia University and beyond.

## VALUES

1. Ecological principles - Maintaining healthy, organic and sustainable practices within the Greenhouse, as well as advocating for the use of these principles in the community.
2. Empowerment - Providing space for experiential learning, capacity building, peer-to-peer learning, education, volunteering, internships and DIY culture to flourish.
3. Community partnerships - Cultivating reciprocally-nurturing, collaborative networks with individuals, organizations and community groups in our community.
4. Non-profit organization - Consciously governing our organization as a collective, using non-hierarchical decision-making principles.
5. Food sovereignty - Fostering space where education and dialogue about food accessibility, security, and quality are implemented alongside local growing practice.
6. Accountability and transparency - to stakeholders and the community at large
7. Inclusive and safe space - Providing a common space that is non-judgemental, open to all, welcoming and positive.
8. Openness to change - Honouring the richness of an environment that is constantly learning, evolving and growing towards positive change and development.
9. Celebration - Appreciating the joy of working with plants, a bountiful harvest, and the richness of people who contribute to the growth and development of our organization and community.

### **Our Collective and Staff**

The Concordia Greenhouse is managed by a consensus-based Collective, who are responsible for the organization's primary day-to-day operations, programming, outreach, financial management, policy setting and strategic planning. During the 2016-17 year, our collective was made up of the following people - Andrew Alford (Four Seasons Growing Coordinator); Sheena Swirlz (Services Coordinator); Andrea Reichert (Financial Coordinator), Jackie Martin (City Farm School Co-Coordinator), Chesley Walsh (City Farm School Co-Coordinator), Paul Fournier (Houseplants and Tea Atrium Coordinator).

The organization's programming is made possible by our staff as well as countless volunteers and community members who provided meaningful contributions and inspiration.

### **Our Board**

As ambassadors and advisors for the Concordia Greenhouse organization, the Board of Directors is comprised of volunteer directors. Their responsibilities include: writing and setting policies, organizing and conducting the Annual General Meeting (AGM), facilitating professional development and mediation, ensuring financial integrity and legal integrity, and ensuring the organization's mandate, mission and vision are respected.

During the 2016-17 year, the Concordia Greenhouse membership voted in nine Board of Directors: Leah Peck, Stephanie Zahara, Prisca Ayassamy, Melina Cucciniello, Myrah Graham, Ina Kaplan, Emmerika Alexander and Cedric Yargeau.

## OUR HISTORY

While rooftop green space and high-rise farming are popular ideas in urban sustainable design, Concordia's greenhouse was actually part of the original planning and infrastructure of the Sir George William campus. The Greenhouse was built in 1966 when the Hall building was constructed, to be used by the biology department for experiments. The Greenhouse faces south-west for optimal sun exposure and isn't blocked by the shade of any of the surrounding buildings, making it an ideal space for growing in the heart of downtown Montreal. In addition to the biology department's research and education, part of the space was used by a horticulturalist to grow tropical plants for regular plant sales.

When the SGW and Loyola campuses merged in 1974, the sciences moved to Loyola and a new Greenhouse was built. Plans were made to tear the old greenhouse down, but interested students and faculty, as well as Sustainable Concordia, successfully petitioned to have the structure assessed and to commence a "rejuvenation" project in 2006. Two years later, during the 2007-2008 school year under the hard work of Arlene Throness, the re-vitalized Greenhouse atrium was opened to the public as a working group of Sustainable Concordia.

In 2013, the Concordia Greenhouse left the umbrella of Sustainable Concordia after successfully gaining a \$0.12 / credit undergraduate fee levy. Following this, the Greenhouse registered as an independent not-for-profit organization, with its own board of directors.

### **2016-2017 at a glance**

The Concordia Greenhouse continues to develop within the realm of urban agriculture initiatives at Concordia University, and in the larger Montreal community. This year, the Board and Collective focused on expanding the Greenhouse's services in particular offering more internship and volunteer opportunities. We also put a great deal of effort into our fee levy campaign. We are incredibly grateful for the continued support shown to us by the Concordia undergraduate students in granting us our fee levy increase. We are already well underway in our plans to repair and improve the greenhouse to make our space better for all our members.

## **2. Programming**

### **a. The Tea Atrium Lounge: Public Space and garden**

The Tea Atrium Lounge is a public area open to the community for a variety of activities. It features desks and tables for studying, a beautiful panoramic view and is filled with tropical plants and sweet smelling herbs year-round. The atrium was kept open to the public, Mondays through Fridays from 11am to 5pm, the fall and winter semesters. It was available to students and community members, who used the space to study, sunbathe, relax, and socialize. Though it is difficult to calculate, we estimate that 40-50 people pass through the atrium daily.

One of the main features of the Atrium lounge is the abundance of greenery housed within it. Plants featured in this space include tropical fruits (e.g. grapefruit, fig, papaya, pomegranate) and many herbal teas grown for our communal kitchen. These plants are cared for by our houseplants and atrium coordinator, Paul Fournier, with the aid of about 50 volunteers, more than 1800h hours are dedicated to these plants every year.

We offered, by-donation, approximately 1 kg of herbal teas in the adjacent communal kitchen. These teas were mostly grown on site in the atrium garden planters, and harvested during our tea atrium garden volunteer sessions. At these sessions, our volunteers learned about and performed basic gardening tasks such as planting, harvesting, watering, pruning, pest control and fertilizing.

### **i.5 à 7 Event bookings**

The popularity of our events has continued to grow again this year. Our atrium was busy with a variety of different events at least 3 or 4 evenings every week it was open with nearly every event reaching capacity for attendance! Some of our most well attended social events include: Open Houses, Music Parties and our new annual Seed Swap as well as student art exhibitions. Our space also continues to be a popular spot for many groups from the Concordia community. Organizations, musicians and individuals can and have booked the atrium for public events. We offer our atrium at affordable rates or free to event hosts. We have shared our space with so many campus groups the past year. We've hosted weddings, annual general meetings, art exhibits, cultural showcases, club meetings, student-hosted creative write nights and more over the past year. If you are interested in partnering with the greenhouse, get in touch with us!

### **b. The Houseplant Collection**

The Concordia Greenhouse grows a variety of indoor houseplants, ranging from majestic birds of paradise to adorable succulents. This collection both beautifies our public areas, and is used for our houseplant propagation program. The propagation program has been a great way to introduce students and community members to the basics of plant care. Approximately 50

volunteers joined us last year to learn about various vegetative propagation methods on an assortment of plant species at our weekly volunteer session. The plants are then sold at our semesterly plant sales. Each of our 3 annual sales provides approximately 700 plants for sale ranging in price from \$3.00 to \$30.00, last year reaching a new revenue high of \$8000.

c. **Four Seasons Growing**

The Four Seasons Growing Project, started in 2008, has continued to play an important role in Montréal's urban agriculture scene. This year, the project generated 175kg of microgreens and 22kg of vegetables. The project hosted several credited student internships and offered 2 free workshops each semester to anyone wanting to learn the art of growing indoors.

Although we were reluctant to let him go, Andrew Alford our former Four Seasons Growing coordinator is on to greener pastures. We wish him all the best with his new adventure - starting an organic farm in Ontario! He has left us in good hands though. We are very happy to have the talented Charleen Kotiuga join our team this year. With years of experience teaching workshops, growing microgreens and organic farming under her belt, we look forward to what she will bring to the project.

d. **Workshop series**

Creating accessible educational opportunities and connecting community is something that the Greenhouse collective is passionate about. We are ever expanding in the amount of events we host, listening to feedback about the hot topics in urban agriculture and developing our event series. We offered close to 3-4 educational workshops each week, many facilitated by our very own workshop pro - Sheena Swirlz. We try to offer a variety of workshops and talks hosted by experienced facilitators from around Montreal and even outside of the city. Workshop costs are kept minimal to create accessible learning, while providing materials for creating kits for attendees as well as supplying individuals and non-profit organizations with an opportunity for income.

In the past our ever popular workshops were offered exclusively on weekdays between 5:30 -7:30pm fall and winter semesters. But last year we decided to break that mold, taking our show on the road with our "Workshop Caravan". In our inaugural year our caravan made stops at Eco-Quartier Peter McGill's event "Neighborhood on the Move", un plante de tomate a la fois, and the ville de Montreal horticultural society amongst others. The caravan was well received everywhere it went and we will be happy to be on the road again next summer.

Last year we offered over 100 events to over 2000 participants in our space and an additional 20 events throughout the community.

e. **City Farm School**

**i. Market Gardener Internships**

This year, again, we were blessed to have another stellar group of people join our program. Throughout the season 59 people took part! This internship which is designed to introduce people to the experience of growing veggies for market, while also working collectively to design and manage a typical scale community garden plot. Starting in March, we embarked on a full season - from growing over 12,000 seedlings, to holding weekly markets and volunteering weekly for the NDG food depot's market. On top of putting in over 5000 hours of farm work, this dedicated group attended 12 full-day farming workshops. Topics covered during the workshops included - garden design, composting, fruit tree propagation, seed saving, fermentation and beekeeping.

## **ii. Medicinal Plant internships**

This season 24 people joined us for the growing season as we learned how to grow, use and transform a few common medicinal plants from north america over this introduction to herbal medicine course. Taking place at both Loyola City Farm School Herbal Medicine Garden and the Concordia Greenhouse over the course of 6 months. Students learned the basics of how to grow, harvest, preserve, transform and apply some common herbs such as Yarrow, Raspberry Leaf, Lemon Balm, Marshmallow, Lavender, St-Johns Wort, Comfrey and more. They also delved into the methods of transforming the herbs to useful products such as salves, balms, tinctures, throat lozenges, syrups and suppositories to just name a few. We also made products available to the wider public in tea and salve forms, donating many to community orgs and selling some at our farmers markets.

## **iii. Student Led-Workshop series**

As part of the internship, all participants are required to offer a workshop on a topic of their choosing. This year our talented interns from both the medicinal and market gardener streams offered more than 20 free workshops to the community.

## **iv. Spring Seedling Sale**

Our annual "epic seedling sale" was, once again epic! To meet community demand we partnered with "On Seme" to make our plants available at a second, more accessible venue. This partnership created new opportunities to us to network with many other farmers, gardeners and community activists and introduce our students to a wider community. The nearly 12,000 plants grown and cared for by our dedicated CFS interns all found their way to gardens across the city during our two sale dates. These 12,000 seedlings consisted of 67 different vegetable varieties and 20 different herbal, medicinal and flowering plants. This was no small task and it took many hands to make it work. Thank-you to our greenhouse collective, board of directors, all the CFS interns and the many volunteers who contributed to this project which raised over \$18,000 for our organization.

## **3. Projects**

### **a. Balcony Garden Project**

The Balcony Garden Project – created by the vision of constructing a fake example balcony garden within the atrium lounge of the rooftop Concordia Greenhouse. The project aims to simulate a balcony gardening experience year-round by featuring a variety of vertical gardening and small space planter systems which are perfect for low-budget small-space gardens. Each week volunteers were invited to participate in researching, designing and building planters from mostly recycled materials.

This year was the second year for this project and it continued to be one of our most popular. The balcony garden workshops, a popular workshop theme for the Montreal community, showing the value to the local community. Check out our handy online resources for balcony gardening to get yourself inspired -

<https://concordiagreenhouse.com/projects/demonstration-balcony-garden/>

#### **4. Partnerships and collaborations**

##### **a. Visiting projects**

##### **i. HydroFlora**

As a group they believe that investing in alternative agriculture practices is a crucial step towards sustainable urban living. By spreading awareness about hydroponic practices and its benefits, we hope to shed more light on this underdeveloped sector. Our latest workshop was during the Transitions conference at Concordia in early February. We gave participants a short introduction into hydroponics before we let them customize, assemble and seed their own hydroponic setups. HydroFlora also offers consulting services. We work closely together with our clients to cater our designs towards their specific needs. Our core team is made up of students and graduates from a highly diversified ethnic and educational background. We encourage anyone interested in soil-less growing to become involved with HydroFlora. Whether you want to install a hydroponic system at home or get your own research project off the ground, we're looking forward to providing the support you need!

If you want to contact HydroFlora you can visit us in the Concordia greenhouse, follow us on Facebook at HydroFlora Concordia or write us directly via [hydrofloraconcordia@gmail.com](mailto:hydrofloraconcordia@gmail.com).

##### **b. Collaborations**

##### **i. [Concordia Farmer's Market](#)**

The Greenhouse has the opportunity to sell its microgreens, city farm school produce and herbal products at the Concordia Farmer's Market, which ran throughout the school year on Wednesdays, in front of the Downtown Hive Café (2nd floor Hall building).

**c. Class / student collaborations**

We collaborate with teachers to offer tours, private workshops and engagement opportunities with students. Each semester we converse with the Graduate Skills program to provide private skill building workshops to this registered members. This year we offered workshops on balcony gardening and growing micro-greens. Additionally, professor Satoshi Ikeda worked with our team to offer a workshop on traditional Japanese fermentation.

**5. Our Finances**

| <b>CONCORDIA GREENHOUSE</b>      |                           |                           |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                  | <b>BUDGET<br/>2017-18</b> | <b>BUDGET<br/>2016-17</b> | <b>ACTUAL<br/>2016-17</b> |
| <b>REVENUE</b>                   |                           |                           |                           |
| <b>FEE LEVY</b>                  |                           |                           |                           |
| CSU Fee Levy                     | 170,000                   | 85,000                    | 87,583                    |
| Bad Debt (student drop-out)      | (1,400)                   | -                         | -                         |
| <b>TOTAL FEE LEVY</b>            | <b>\$168,600</b>          | <b>\$85,000</b>           | <b>\$87,583</b>           |
| <b>SERVICES</b>                  |                           |                           |                           |
| Space Bookings                   | 500                       | 1,000                     | 2,637                     |
| Tours                            | 500                       | 500                       | 470                       |
| Product Sales                    | 1,000                     | 1,000                     | 1,375                     |
| <b>TOTAL SERVICE REVENUE</b>     | <b>\$ 2,000</b>           | <b>\$ 2,500</b>           | <b>\$ 4,481</b>           |
| <b>PROGRAMMING</b>               |                           |                           |                           |
| Four Seasons Growing             | 9,500                     | 10,000                    | 9,464                     |
| Houseplants                      | 8,000                     | 6,700                     | 8,397                     |
| Events                           | 2,500                     | 2,500                     | 9,812                     |
| City Farm School                 | 56,268                    | 63,335                    | 57,848                    |
| <b>TOTAL PROGRAMMING REVENUE</b> | <b>\$76,268</b>           | <b>\$ 82,535</b>          | <b>\$ 85,521</b>          |
| <b>OTHER REVENUE</b>             |                           |                           |                           |
| Donations                        | 320                       | 100                       | 180                       |

|                                                        |                       |                       |                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Other Revenues                                         | 600                   | -                     | 639                   |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>                                   | <b>\$ 247,788</b>     | <b>\$ 170,135</b>     | <b>\$ 178,405</b>     |
|                                                        |                       |                       |                       |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>                                        | <b>BUDGET 2017-18</b> | <b>BUDGET 2016-17</b> | <b>ACTUAL 2016-17</b> |
| <b>PROGRAMMING</b>                                     |                       |                       |                       |
| Four Seasons Materials                                 | 1,100                 | 900                   | 1,006                 |
| Atrium Garden Materials                                | 130                   | 230                   | 1,693                 |
| Houseplants Materials                                  | 1,230                 | 1,215                 | 623                   |
| Workshop Materials                                     | 1,000                 | 1,000                 | 4,578                 |
| Product (sales) Materials                              | 500                   | 500                   | 249                   |
| City Farm School Materials                             | 22,068                | 14,935                | 8,875                 |
| Events                                                 | 510                   | 450                   | 835                   |
| <b>TOTAL PROGRAMMING</b>                               | <b>\$26,538</b>       | <b>\$19,230</b>       | <b>\$ 17,859</b>      |
|                                                        |                       |                       |                       |
| <b>ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES (PAYROLL)</b>               |                       |                       |                       |
| Services Coordinator                                   | 22,489                | 21,624                | 22,814                |
| Financial Coordinator                                  | 18,387                | 17,680                | 18,360                |
| City Farm School Co-coordinator                        | 36,774                | 35,360                | 35,103                |
| City Farm School Co-coordinator                        | 32,178                | 22,100                | 26,711                |
| Four Seasons Coordinator                               | 32,178                | 30,940                | 32,368                |
| Atrium Garden/Tea Kitchen, & Houseplants Coordinator   | 13,790                | 13,260                | 14,160                |
| Cleaning Staff                                         | -                     | -                     | -                     |
| Infrastructure program manager, part-time              | -                     | -                     | -                     |
| Contract workers                                       | -                     | -                     | -                     |
| <b>TOTAL PAYROLL</b>                                   | <b>\$ 155,796</b>     | <b>\$ 140,964</b>     | <b>\$ 149,517</b>     |
| <b>OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES</b>                   |                       |                       |                       |
| Office Supplies                                        | 900                   | 900                   | 1,037                 |
| Enterprise Resource Management Software                | 38                    | 38                    | -                     |
| Business Fees                                          | 936                   | -                     | -                     |
| Health Insurance (ASEQ)                                | 759                   | 936                   | 1,147                 |
| Insurance, Director's liability and commercial general | 1,334                 | 759                   | -                     |

|                                           |                       |                       |                       |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| CSST                                      | 15,268                | 1,207                 | 3,575                 |
| Employer Contributions                    | 465                   | 13,814                | 14,907                |
| Phone/Internet                            | 222                   | 465                   | 490                   |
| Bank Fees                                 | 794                   | 222                   | 351                   |
| Payroll (Desjardins)                      | 0                     | 794                   | 890                   |
| Marketing and Promotion, 0.5%             | 200                   | 2,552                 | 1,847                 |
| Freight                                   | 200                   | 200                   | 467                   |
| Atrium/Kitchen Supplies                   | 1,200                 | 200                   | 1,407                 |
| Staff/volunteer Appreciation, .005%       | 1,239                 | 1,200                 | 691                   |
| Fee levy drop-out                         | 85                    | -                     | 52                    |
| <b>TOTAL OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE</b>         | <b>\$23,640</b>       | <b>\$ 23,287</b>      | <b>\$ 26,861</b>      |
| <b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES</b>      | <b>\$179,436</b>      | <b>\$ 164,251</b>     | <b>\$ 176,378</b>     |
| <b>OTHER EXPENSES</b>                     |                       |                       |                       |
| Board of Directors Discretionary Fund, 1% | 2,478                 | 1,701                 | 1,597                 |
| Collective Professional Development, 1.5% | 3,717                 | 3,423                 | 2,177                 |
| Greenhouse Maintenance                    | 2,200                 | 1,000                 | 2,281                 |
| Small Tools and Machinery                 | 1,000                 | 1,000                 | 99                    |
| Professional Fees                         | 3,300                 | 2,300                 | 50                    |
| Capital Projects                          | 1,500                 | -                     | -                     |
| Building Fund                             | 10,000                | -                     | -                     |
| Contingency Fund NEW                      | 2,000                 | -                     | -                     |
| New staff training NEW                    | 1,400                 | -                     | -                     |
| <b>TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES</b>               | <b>27,595</b>         | <b>9,424</b>          | <b>6,203</b>          |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>                     | <b>\$ 233,569</b>     | <b>\$ 192,905</b>     | <b>\$ 200,440</b>     |
| <b>DEBT REPAYMENT</b>                     | <b>BUDGET 2017-18</b> | <b>BUDGET 2016-17</b> | <b>ACTUAL 2016-17</b> |
| Internal loan                             | 15,000                | -                     | -                     |
| <b>TOTAL DEBT REPAYMENT</b>               | <b>\$ 15,000</b>      | <b>\$ -</b>           | <b>\$ -</b>           |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>                      | <b>\$247,788</b>      | <b>\$170,135</b>      | <b>\$178,405</b>      |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>                     | <b>\$233,569</b>      | <b>\$192,905</b>      | <b>\$200,440</b>      |
| <b>TOTAL DEBT REPAYMENT</b>               | <b>\$ 15,000</b>      | <b>\$ -</b>           | <b>\$ -</b>           |
| <b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>                  | <b>(781)</b>          | <b>(22,770)</b>       | <b>(22,035)</b>       |

| <b>DISCRETIONARY FUNDS</b>         | <b>BUDGET<br/>2017-18</b> | <b>BUDGET<br/>2016-17</b> | <b>ACTUAL<br/>2016-17</b> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Canada 150 Fund                    | -                         | 5,000                     | -                         |
| Lojiq                              | -                         | 2,000                     | -                         |
| Gainey Foundation                  | -                         | 7,000                     | -                         |
| Telus                              | -                         | 10,000                    | -                         |
| CCSL                               | -                         | -                         | 500                       |
| Bauta (Seeds of Change) (2016-17)  | -                         | 2,000                     | 1,313                     |
| AVEQ (2016-17)                     | -                         | -                         | 2,500                     |
| Fondation de grand Montreal        | -                         | -                         | 10,150                    |
| SAF (2016-17)                      | -                         | -                         | 10,000                    |
| CCSL Special Project (2017-18)*    | 1,500                     | -                         | -                         |
| Other grants (2017-18)*            | 10,000                    | -                         | -                         |
| Bullfrog (infrastructure)**        | 25,000                    | -                         | -                         |
| CSU Food Policy (infrastructure)** | Unknown                   | -                         | -                         |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                      | <b>\$36,500</b>           | <b>\$26,000</b>           | <b>24,463</b>             |