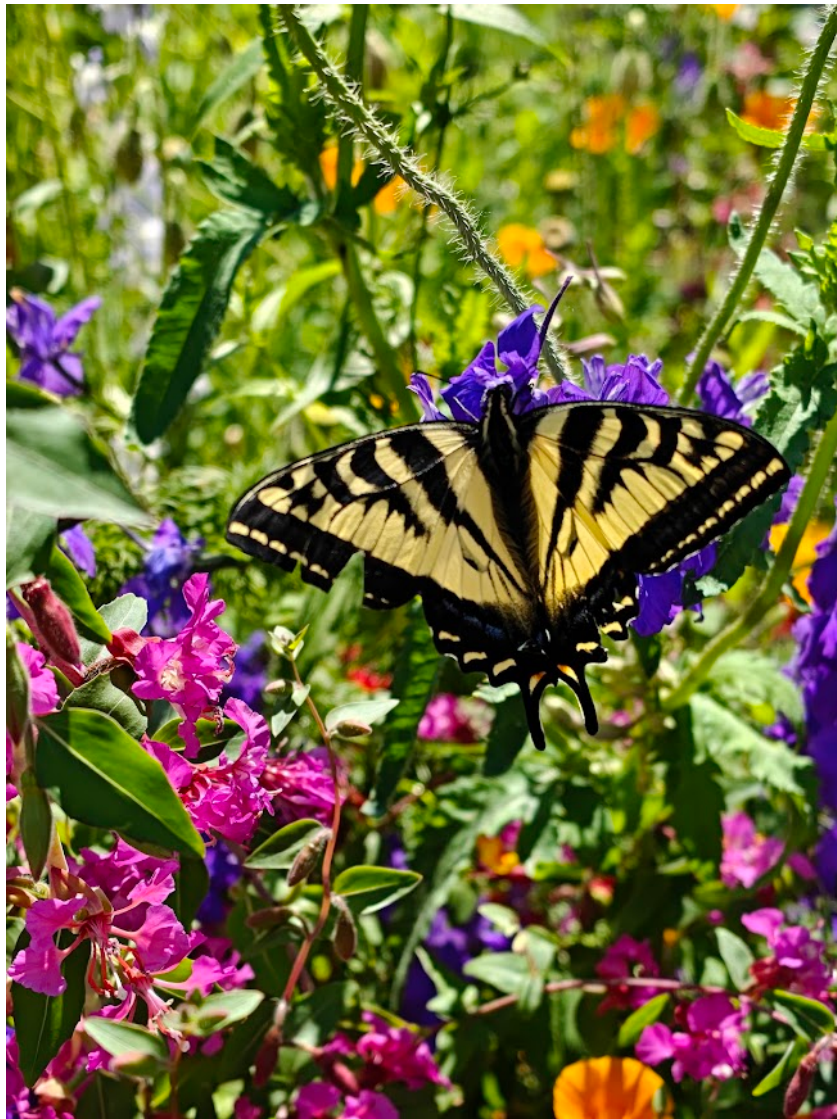




Urban Bounty



Annual Report 2025

BOARD REPORT

Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Urban Bounty Board of Directors I am pleased to provide this report for the 2025 Urban Bounty Annual General Meeting.

2024-25 marked the first full year of leadership by our new Executive Director (ED) Cheney Creamer. Cheney is an Organic Master Gardener with a rich background of experience in Horticultural Therapeutic Gardening, Community Garden management and leadership/mentoring. Cheney “hit the ground running” and made several excellent staff hiring decisions which have allowed her to put into practice her operational plans in support of the Board’s Mission, Vision and Values.

Our Richmond Community Garden family grew again during the fiscal year with the commissioning of the Alexandra Community Garden at 9620 Odlin Road. Waitlists for all Richmond Community Garden sites are robust, reflecting the strong demand for our programs in the community. Our contract with the City of Burnaby to manage its Community Garden program was renewed and we have been approached by both the City of Delta and City of Langley for potential contracting to manage Community Garden initiatives in their respective jurisdictions.

Urban Bounty remains committed to working with other community non-profits in Richmond to foster a more vibrant and resilient local food system through advocacy, education and community-building initiatives.

Urban Bounty receives generous financial support through grants from the Provincial and Municipal governments in addition to financial contributions from corporate donors and individuals who recognize the value of the Urban Bounty’s programs and impact on the local community.

I wish to thank my fellow Board members for their continued dedication and support of Urban Bounty’s program initiatives throughout the year, with special thanks to our now departed Finance Committee Chair, Stephanie Fan, who had given many years of service to the Board.

Finally, a note of appreciation for ED Cheney Creamer and our Urban Bounty staff and volunteers. Urban Bounty continues to be more visible and recognizable in the community and that is a direct result of your hard work and dedication.

Respectfully,

Phil Carriere

President, Urban Bounty Board of Directors



2024-2025 Board of Directors

Chair of the Board - Phil Carriere
Vice Chair - Luther Sy
Treasurer - Stephanie Fan
Secretary - Christine Middlemass
Director - Donna Kwan
Director - Gerry Mulholland
Director - Erzsi Institoris
Director - Joanne Ha
Director - Elizabeth McManus

2024-2025 Staff Team

Current team:

Executive Director - Cheney Creamer
Community Programs Manager - Paige Leslie
Community Engagement Coordinator - Tova Gaster
Operations Manager - Laurel McBride
Land Stewardship Coordinator - Callum McCaffrey
Events and Volunteer Coordinator - Kat Seow
Seed Security Coordinator - Loki Wallace
Seed Security Coordinator - Kareno Hawbolt

Bookkeeper - Geethu Kurian
Community Programs Manager - Grace Augustinowicz
Community Engagement Assistant - Cat Hung
Community Programs Assistant - Daniel Shikaze
Community Programs Assistant - Susie Thulliez
Fruit Gleaning Coordinator - Dawn Levelton

OPERATIONS REPORT

Message from the Executive Director

The 2024-2025 fiscal year marked a season of renewal for Urban Bounty. We planted seeds for the future by launching new programs, implementing fresh processes, and welcoming new staff members—all in service of our ongoing vision to cultivate healthy people, community, and environment. Like any gardener knows, this was a year of careful planting, and now we're watching with excitement as those first green shoots begin to emerge!

We increased our staff to include an Events & Volunteer Coordinator (Kat Seow), a Land Stewardship Coordinator (Callum McCaffrey), and a Community Engagement Coordinator (Tova Gaster), to better support our gardeners and the environment in which we grow. We also hired an Operations Manager (Laurel McBride) to increase effectiveness and efficiencies in our finances, operations, grant processes, and all things needed for the staff and office. Paige Leslie continued as our part-time Community Programs Coordinator (now a full-time Manager), and Loki Wallace and Karen Hawbolt oversaw our Seed Security program as co-coordinators. We were also grateful to have the opportunity to work with some amazing people for short periods of time, Dawn, Cat, Daniel, and Suzie (thank you!). I'm incredibly honoured to have been able to work alongside such fabulous, inspiring people.

In 2024-2025 we focused on 5 core community programs:

1. **Community Gardens** (building and maintaining safe, inclusive, welcoming community garden spaces and providing practical gardening education and information – we help people grow!)
2. **Wellness in the Garden** (creating therapeutic, shared gardening areas and interactive events to encourage gardening for improved health and well-being)
3. **Urban Food Forestry** (planting and maintaining Community Forest Gardens, coordinating local fruit recovery, and facilitating Plant Walks and Food Forestry workshops and events)
4. **Living Soil Land Stewardship** (delivering workshops, walks, talks, and hands-on environmental enhancement projects to help our community repair the land, deepen their sense of place, and increase interest in supporting biodiversity and environmentally sound land care practices)
5. **Seed Security** (managing a Seed Library and Seed Donation Program, while also growing seed demonstration gardens where we can teach and share best practices for seed production and saving)

Our **Community Gardens** program thrived this year, creating abundant harvests and meaningful connections across 18 garden sites in Richmond and Burnaby. Nearly 750 individual gardeners and over 35 local partner organizations benefited from these vibrant community spaces. We welcomed our newest site, Alexandra Community Garden, brought to life thanks to the huge help of dedicated volunteers from Starbucks.

We partnered with The Sharing Farm and Delta Farmland & Wildlife Trust to protect critical growing areas at Terra Nova Community Garden. Working alongside keen volunteers, we cleared invasive species and established a new pollinator patch, creating an essential buffer zone for The Sharing

Farm's organic certification while supporting our local ecosystems. These collaborations exemplify the community spirit that makes our gardens flourish.

To maximize benefits of our community garden spaces, we started strategic initiatives to 1) reduce untended plots through proactive outreach and support, 2) improve garden space allocated to local organizations for free programming, and 3) create meaningful volunteer opportunities for waitlisted gardeners through our Urban Bounty programming plots, allowing more people to get their hands in the soil while contributing to garden beautification and health. Our commitment to creating welcoming environments for everyone in the community drove several key improvements including the installation of wheelchair-accessible raised beds, development of more native wildflower areas and pollinator-friendly pathways, and enhanced accessibility features across multiple sites.

This year demonstrated our gardens' power to nourish both people and the environment. As we continue growing, we remain focused on fostering safe, inclusive spaces where community connections bloom alongside the harvest, ensuring every person who enters our gardens feels welcomed and valued.

Through our **Wellness in the Garden** program, we've been able to share the nourishment and joy of gardening with a diverse array of community members. Our pilot project, "Garden Tastings & Talks," brought fresh produce from Sweet Digz Farm directly to seniors at Hamilton Community Centre and East Richmond Community Hall. Meeting bi-weekly in the community gardens beside these centres, participants had the opportunity to taste seasonal produce while learning about growing techniques and preparation methods. These sessions became lively spaces for storytelling, knowledge sharing, and hands-on learning in vibrant garden settings.

In summer 2024, we also held a community celebration at Terra Nova Community Garden called "Wellness in the Garden," and we facilitated a variety of specialized garden-based wellness programs designed for youth, school groups, and seniors. Each initiative demonstrates how gardens can serve as powerful venues for community connection, education, and wellbeing.

With our **Urban Food Forestry** program, we were able to create a small pocket Forest Garden in Paulik Park where we planted a variety of fruit and nut trees, thanks to some generous tree donations from the City of Richmond and Phoenix Perennials, and wonderful volunteer support from the Richmond Garden Club. Unfortunately, 2024 was a hard season for all fruit growers around the province. Many fruit trees were bare, and Urban Bounty had very limited staff during the early fruit picking season. Our 12 fruit picks harvested just under 1,000 pounds of fruit. This fruit was donated to the homeowners, volunteers, and several community organizations. Almost all the fruit picks in 2024 were managed by our fabulous and dedicated Fruit Gleaning Captain, Lauren Craze. Thank you so much to Lauren for all your hard work and continued efforts to keep our fruit trees gleaned and bellies full of fruit! To all our Fruit Gleaning Captains, volunteers, and dedicated staff who helped keep the fruit trees in our communities harvested and healthy for the future – we are immensely grateful!

The **Living Soil Land Stewardship** program involved providing a wide range of free public workshops on composting ("Scraps to Soil") and environmentally friendly land care practices ("Gardening for the Earth"). We continued to tend a new pollinator-friendly hedgerow at Cook

Community Garden with plans for expansion and more consultation with Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust. We also introduced a new initiative (still a work in progress!) called the Cover Crop Challenge for our gardeners, and the wider community to; 1) understand the importance of protecting soil all year long, and 2) apply simple practices that will help to cover and protect garden soil, conserve water, attract beneficial insects and repel pests, and improve the health and resilience of soil, plants, and the whole garden ecosystem.

With the renewal of our **Seed Security** program (huge thanks to Loki and Karen!), Urban Bounty, in collaboration with Sweet Digz Farm/Seeds of the Revolution and The Sharing Farm, we hosted the first Seedy Saturday in Richmond since 2019! Around 200 people braved the wind and rain to trade, buy, and learn about seeds from local seed celebrities. The Terra Nova Red Barn and Mary's Barn (generously provided by The Sharing Farm) were packed with 11 workshops, 6 community tables, 2 vendors, and visits from 3 elected officials.

Special thanks to Kymberlee Stogan of the Musqueam First Nation for opening our day and all our other collaborators; BC Eco Seed Co-op, FarmFolk CityFolk, Fusion Micro Farm, Garden City Conservation Society, Gone to Seed Farm, Mintgreen Apron, Richmond Garden Club, and River and Sea Flowers. We look forward to an even bigger event for 2026!

Urban Bounty continues to build new partnerships and work with collaborators and funders to make our programs possible, and accessible, to everyone in the community. I'd like to thank the City of Richmond, City of Burnaby, and all our community partners for working with us and helping us grow.

Our incredible gardeners and volunteers are the heart of everything we do. Working hand-in-hand with our staff, these amazing community champions help bring our community gardens and projects to life and keep our neighbourhoods thriving and connected. To every single gardener and volunteer – past, present, and future – thank you. Your dedication, creativity, and passion make our mission possible.

The most dedicated group of Urban Bounty volunteers is our wonderful Board of Directors. Each of you has made such an important contribution to our team and to the community – I can't thank you enough for your support, your guidance, your generosity, and your commitment. I am deeply honoured to be a part of this growing team and immensely grateful to know and work with you all.

Ready to join our growing Urban Bounty family? There could be a perfect spot for you! With exciting new initiatives launching this fall and winter, now is the ideal time to dive in, meet incredible people, and make a real difference in your community. Stay tuned for new job postings and more volunteer opportunities coming soon!

Together we grow,

Cheney Creamer

Executive Director, Urban Bounty

Donors, Funders, Partners and Affiliates



Richmond
Addiction
Services
Society



Richmond Garden Club

