Creating Campus-Community Food Sovereignty

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Erik Chevrier

CultivAction Solidarity Cooperative

Concordia Food Coalition

Communal Lunch Project

Duff-Court Urban Farm

Lachine Mapping Project

Concordia Food Groups Research Project

How can postsecondary campuses act as hubs to cultivate food sovereign communities?

Building Food Sovereign Campuses: A Case Study of the Campus-Community Food Groups at Concordia University

Diverse Economies of Urban Agroecology









Cultivating Food Sovereign Campuses

(1) The global food system is causing social and environmental harm

(2) Universities can act as transition sites to create socially and environmentally just community-campus food systems

(3) We need to go beyond notions of sustainability and apply food sovereignty frameworks



What do You Know About Food?

What is the Difference Between a Fruit and Vegetable?









What is the Difference Between a Fruit and a Berry?









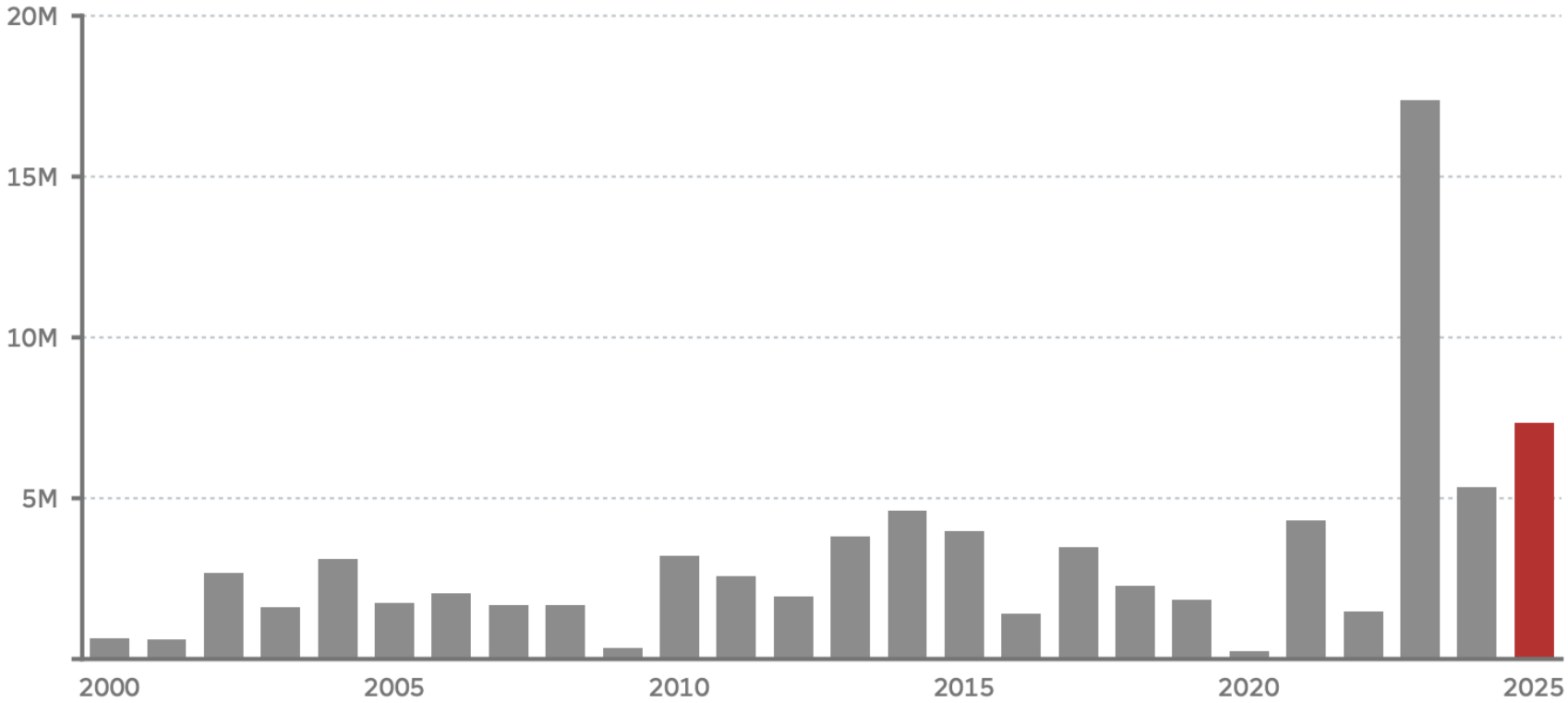


The Global Food System is NOT Sustainable

low much has burned so far this year in Canada

his year in Canada?

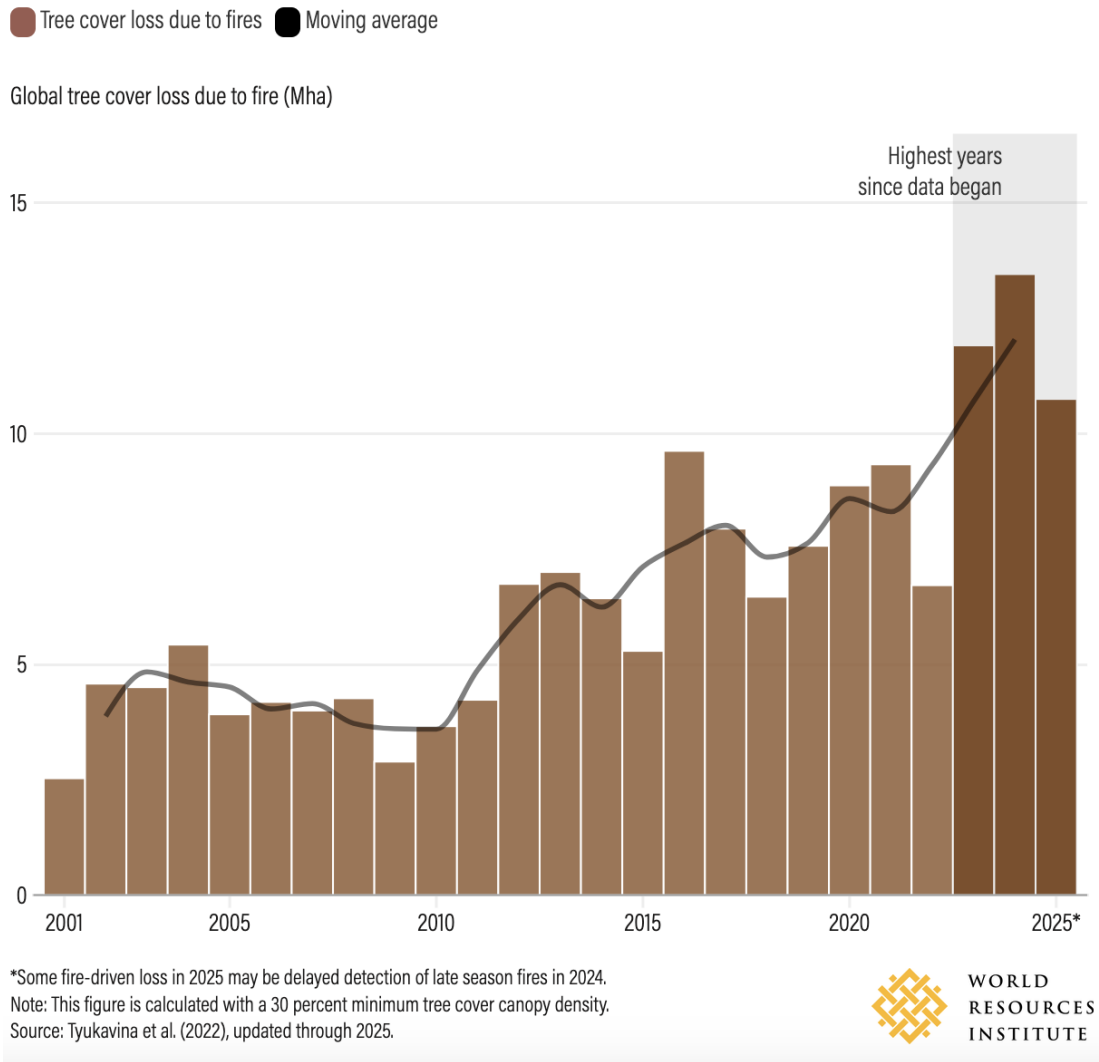
Number of hectares burned in wildfires by year



As of Aug. 10, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. ET

Source: Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CBC)

Forest fires now burn more than twice as much tree cover each year as in the early 2000s



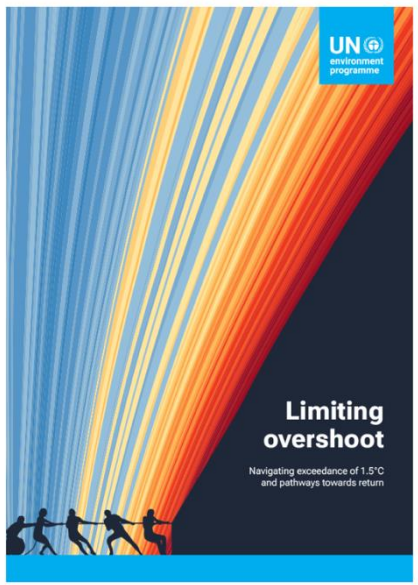
*Some fire-driven loss in 2025 may be delayed detection of late season fires in 2024.
Note: This figure is calculated with a 30 percent minimum tree cover canopy density.
Source: Tyukavina et al. (2022), updated through 2025.

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

02 SEPTEMBER 2026 | REPORT

Limiting Overshoot - Navigating exceedance of 1.5°C and pathways towards return

Authors: UNEP



Limiting global warming to 1.5°C remains a cornerstone of the Paris Agreement, yet under current policies and alternative near-term trajectories, exceedance of 1.5°C is now widely assessed as unavoidable.

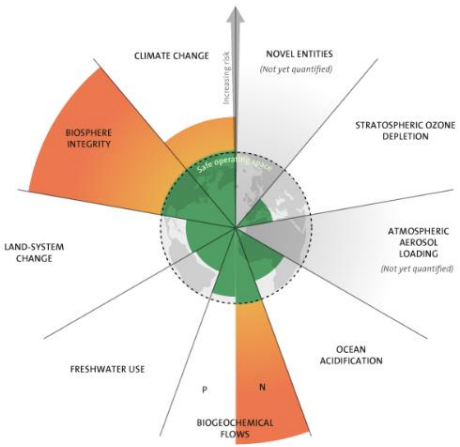
FULL REPORT

FURTHER RESOURCES

- → Full Report
- → Key messages - Chinese
- → Key messages - English
- → Key messages - Russian
- → Key messages - Spanish
- → Web story: Overshoot explained: 5 things to understand about a world beyond 1.5°C

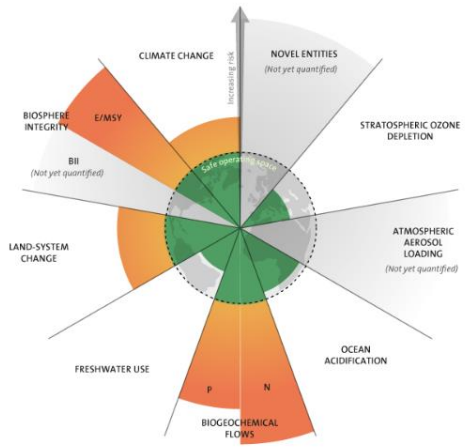
Planetary boundaries

2009



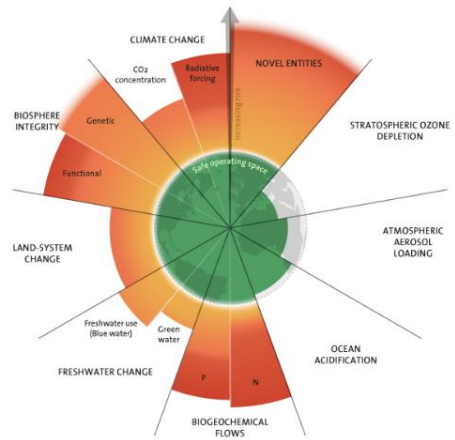
7 boundaries assessed,
3 crossed

2015



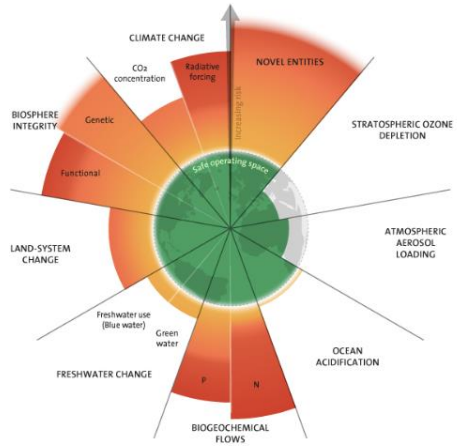
7 boundaries assessed,
4 crossed

2023

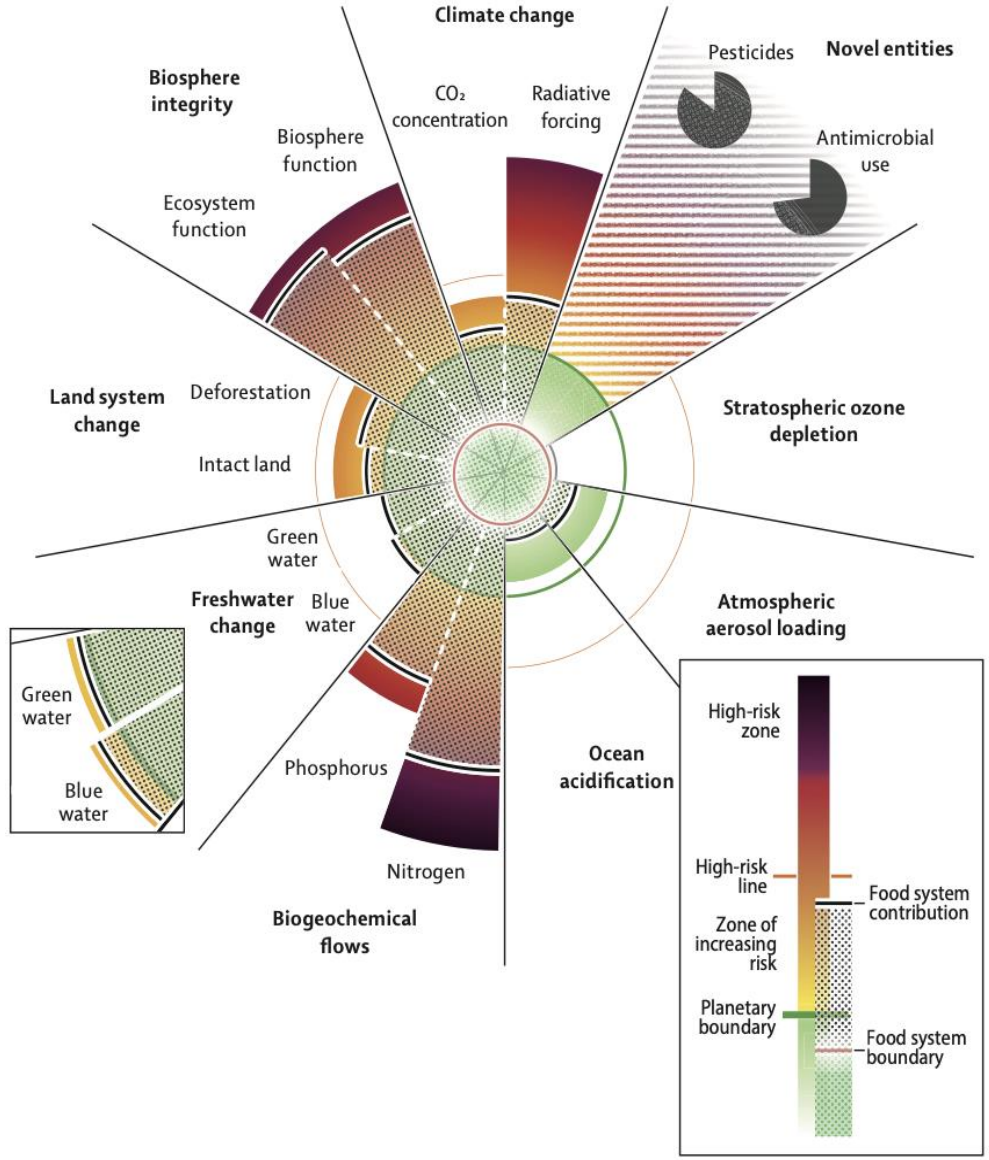


9 boundaries assessed,
6 crossed

2025

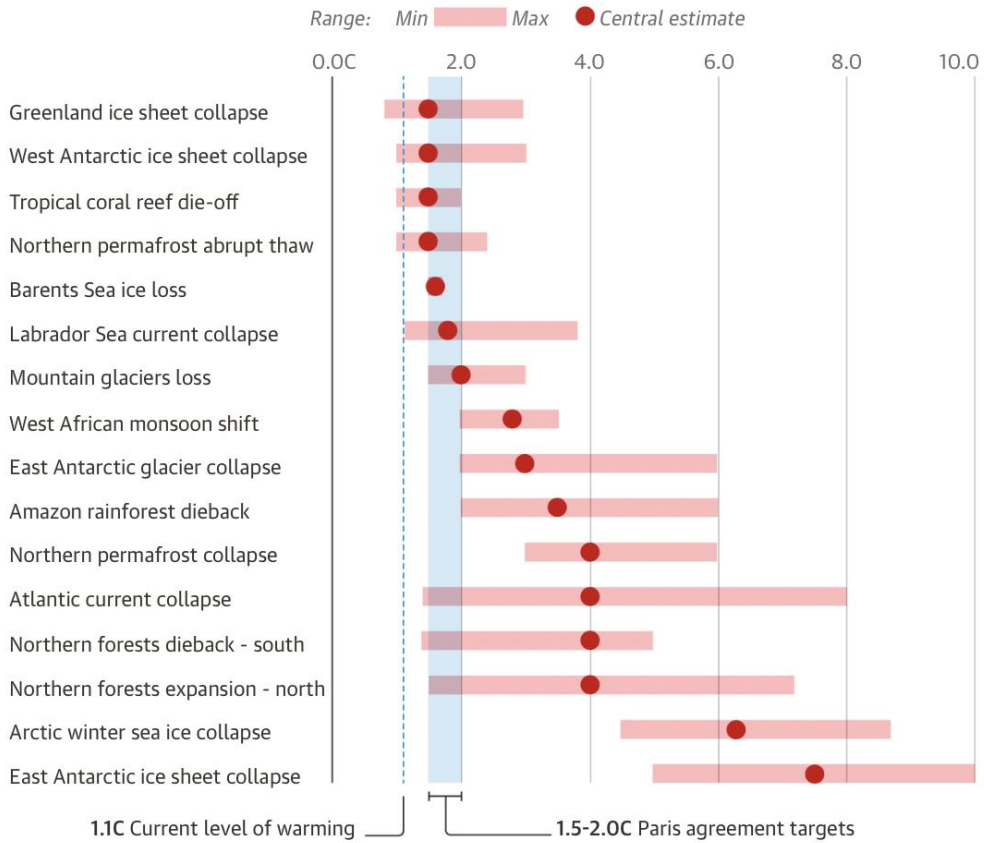


9 boundaries assessed,
7 crossed

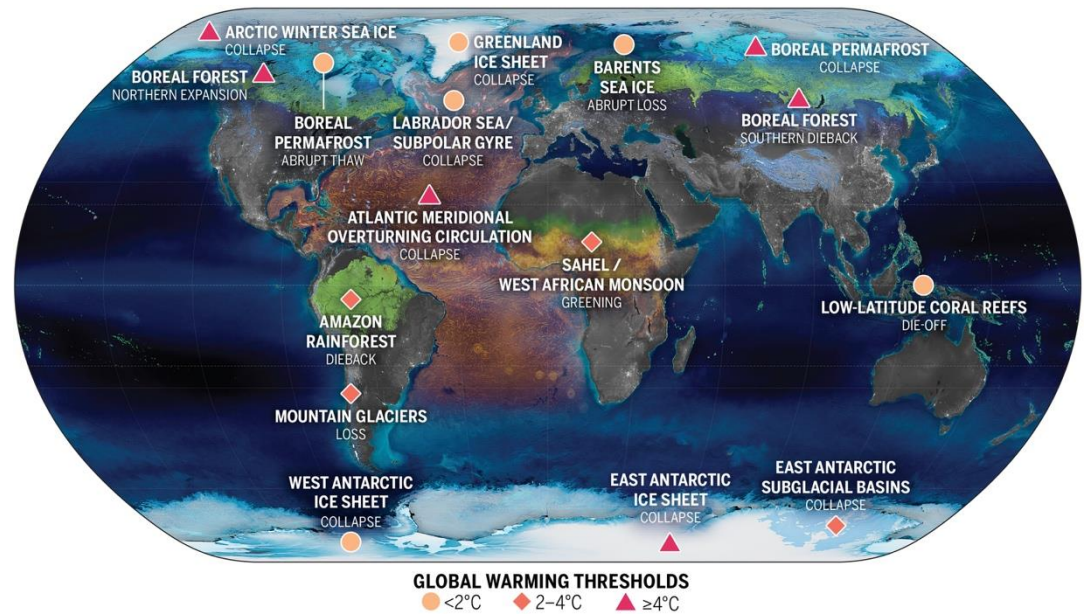

Climate change
CO₂ concentration
Radiative forcing
Novel entities
Pesticides
Antimicrobial use
Biosphere integrity
Biosphere function
Ecosystem function
Land system change
Deforestation
Intact land
Stratospheric ozone depletion
Green water
Freshwater change
Blue water
Atmospheric aerosol loading
Ocean acidification
Phosphorus
Nitrogen
Biogeochemical flows
Green water
Blue water
High-risk zone
High-risk line
Zone of increasing risk
Planetary boundary
Food system contribution
Food system boundary

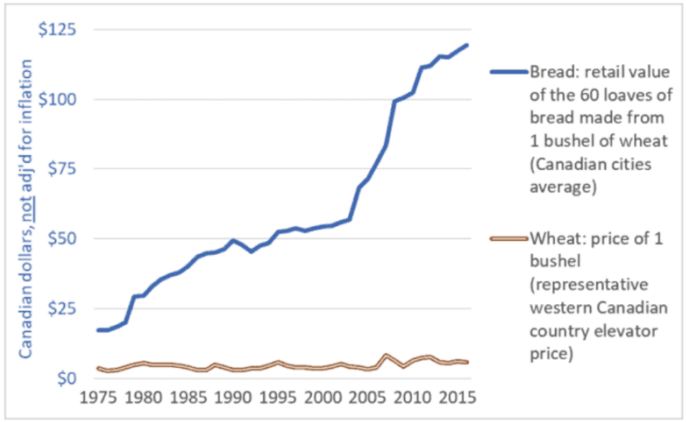
The risk of climate tipping points is rising rapidly as the world heats up

Estimated range of global heating needed to pass tipping point temperature

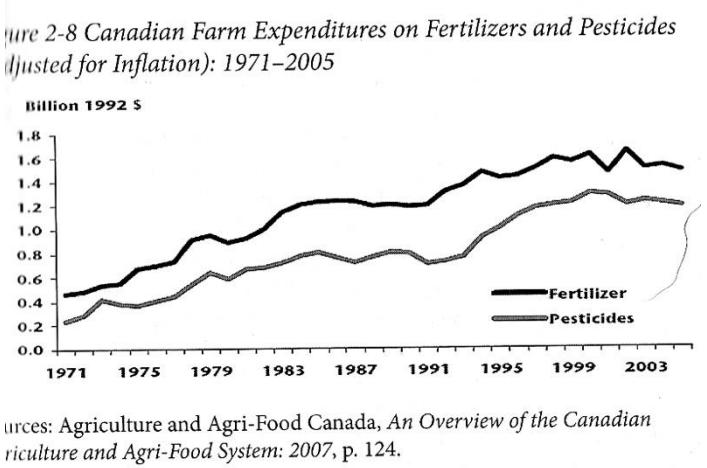


Guardian graphic. Source: Armstrong McKay et al, Science, 2022. Note: Current global heating temperature rise 1.1C Paris agreement targets 1.5-2.0C

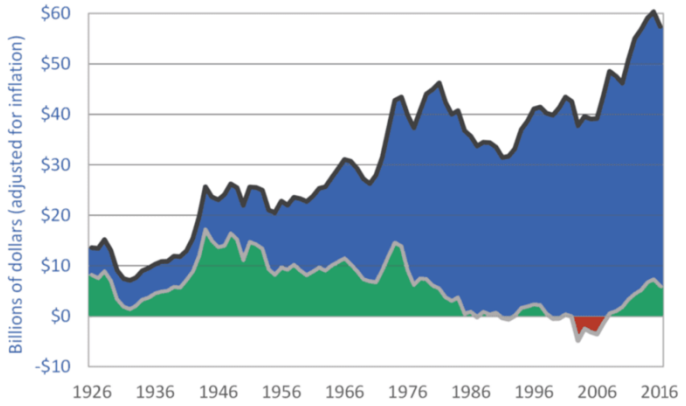




Canadian retail store bread price and farm-gate wheat price, 1975-2016

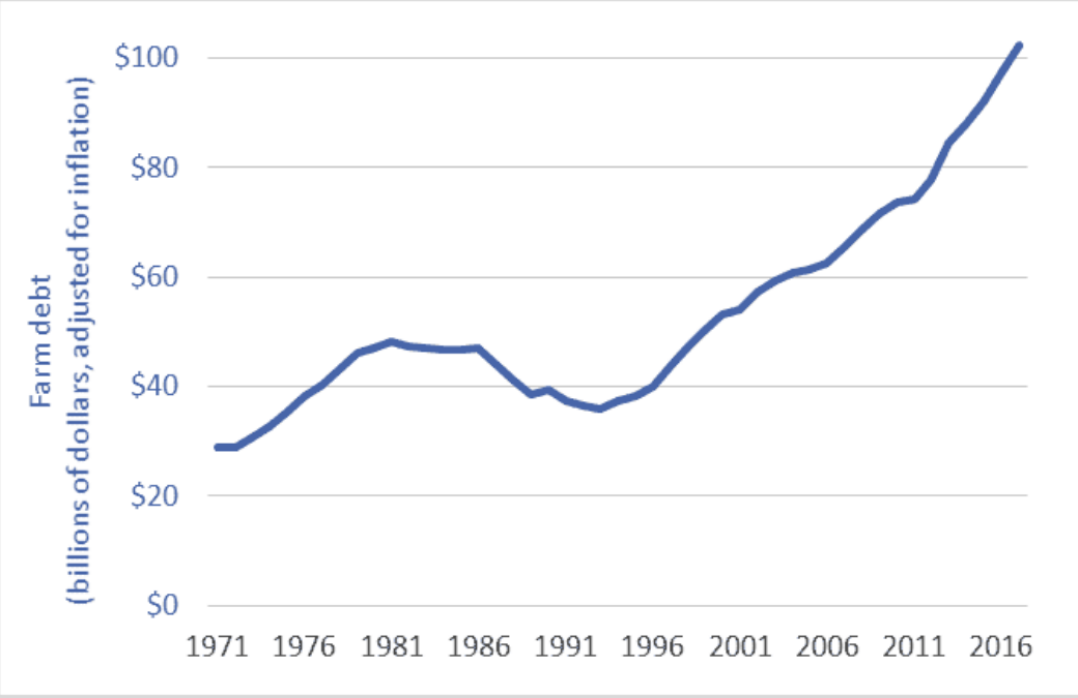


urces: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, *An Overview of the Canadian riculture and Agri-Food System: 2007*, p. 124.

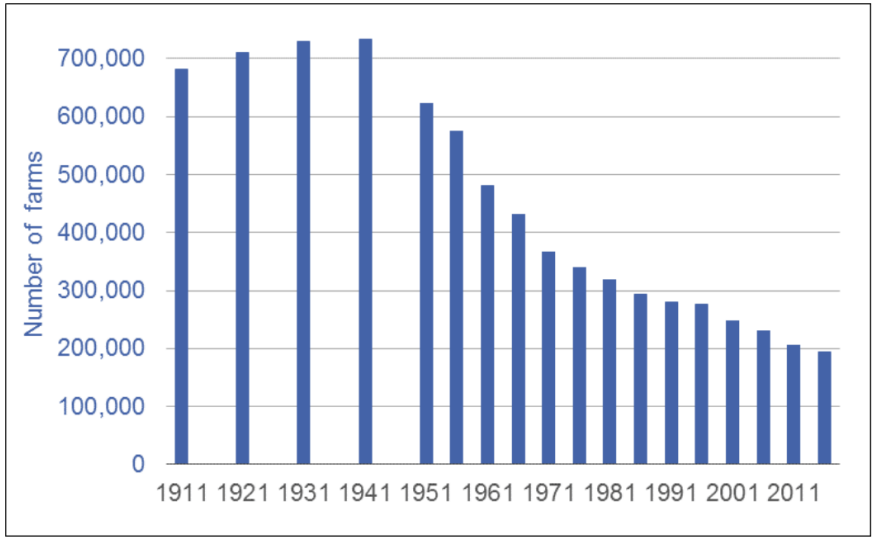


Canadian net farm income and gross revenue, inflation adjusted, net of government payments, 1926–2016.

The Global Food System is Not Economically Viable



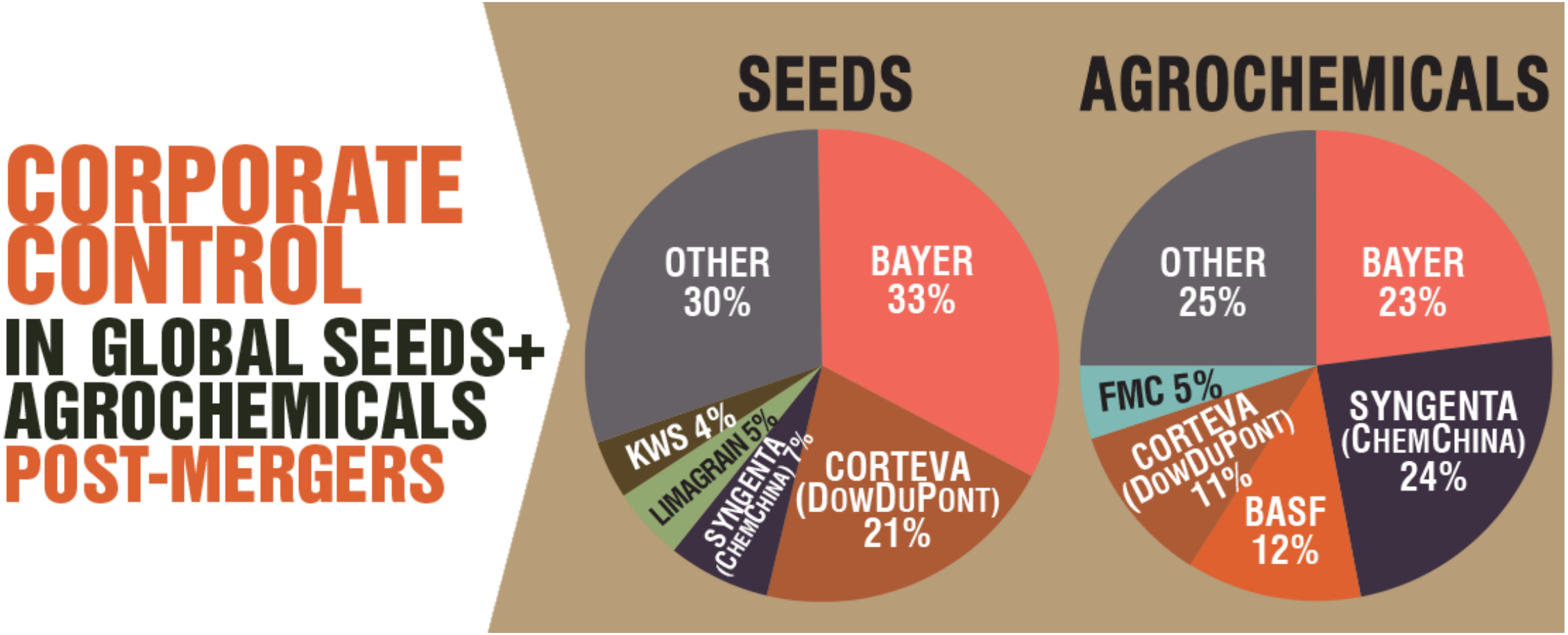
Losing the farm(s): Census data on the number of farms in Canada



Number of farms in Canada, Census years, 1911 to 2016

The Global Food System is Not Economically Viable

The Global Food System Becoming Increasingly Concentrated



Corporate Concentration of the Agrochemical Market

Table 2.1
Hourly Real Wage among Full-Time Workers (2015$)

	Average	10th Percentile	50th	90th	99th	99.9th	$GAP 99.9th -50th
1980	25.73	11.64	23.37	41.50	71.93	150.99	127.61
1985	25.15	10.23	22.97	41.22	71.19	156.2	133.23
1990	25.64	10.16	23.29	42.24	75.69	170.47	147.18
1995	25.21	9.64	22.65	41.69	76.19	190.52	167.87
2000	26.52	9.79	22.97	44.03	91.87	265.53	242.56
2005	28.31	10.31	23.67	46.64	102.64	372.16	348.49
2010	31.00	11.40	26.07	52.06	112.04	340.52	314.45
Compound annual growth rates							
1980-2010	0.62%	-0.07%	0.36%	0.76%	1.48%	2.71%	3.01%
1980-2000	0.15%	-0.87%	-0.09%	0.30%	1.22%	2.82%	3.21%
2000-2010	1.56%	1.52%	1.27%	1.68%	1.98%	2.49%	4.81%

Source: Duclos and Pellerin (2016-Table 3) plus author's calculations

Figure 2.1
Real Average Canadian Hourly Wage in 2015 dollars 1914-2000
CANSIM ii V l603501 ; Urquhart et al "Historical Statistics of Canada"



Sources: Statistics Canada, CANSIM ii V I603501 and Urquhart et al., "Historical Statistics of Canada."

CONNECTING TO THE BIGGER PICTURE

The Global Food System is Also NOT Socially Just





Harms of Global Food Systems

Food insecurity – there are close to a billion people starving in the world today!
Lack of food sovereignty – peasants and farmers are being affected by trade agreements and food dumping!
Herbicides – glyphosates are being identified as cancer causing!
GMOs and privatization – restricted access!
Cost on farmers – family farms are not sustainable!
Reduction of biodiversity – we are destroying nature!
Unwanted genetics spreading onto non-GMO farms – lawsuits!
Loss of Indigenous farming methods – on stolen land!
Soil arability – we are killing our soil!
Pesticides kill pollinators – fruits need bees!
Creating dead zones in waterways – we are polluting our water!
Corporate concentration of agribusinesses – former war companies are now food chemical companies!
Health – our food contains toxins!
Carbon intensive practices – agroecology and permaculture methods can sequester carbons!
Structural racism, colonialism and patriarchy – glaring systemic issues!
Rising cost of seed and chemicals – we don't need to buy seeds!
Research funding being directed to GMOs instead of traditional breeding methods – 'science' is not only about GMOs!
Pest and weed resistance to Bt crops and glyphosate!

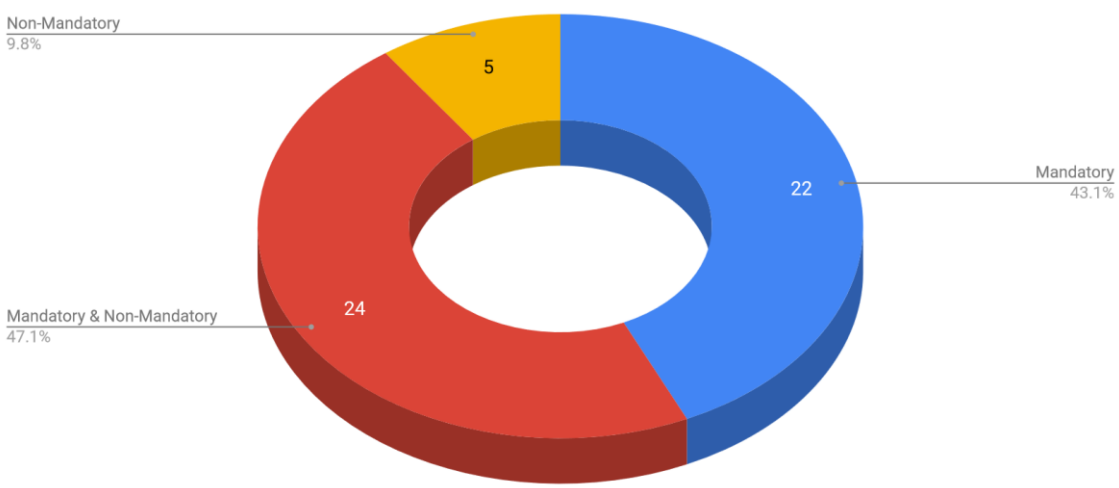
There are so many more critiques!

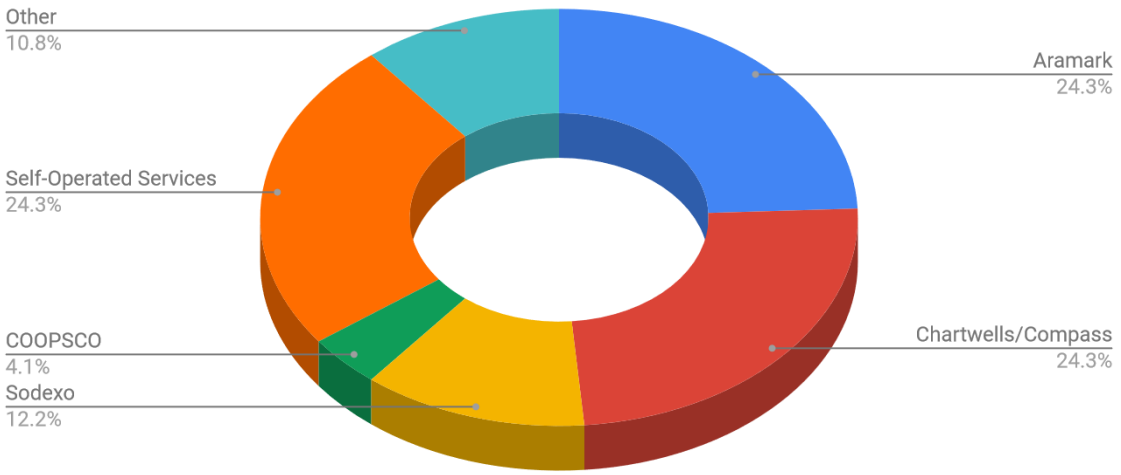
We Need To Transform Our Food System

Calls to “fix a broken food system” assume that the capitalist food system used to work well. This assumption ignores the food systems long, racialized history of mistreatment of people of colour. The food system is unjust and unsustainable, but it is not broken. It functions precisely as the capitalist food system has always worked, concentrating power in the hands of the privileged minority and passing off the social and environmental “externalities” disproportionately to racially stigmatized groups.

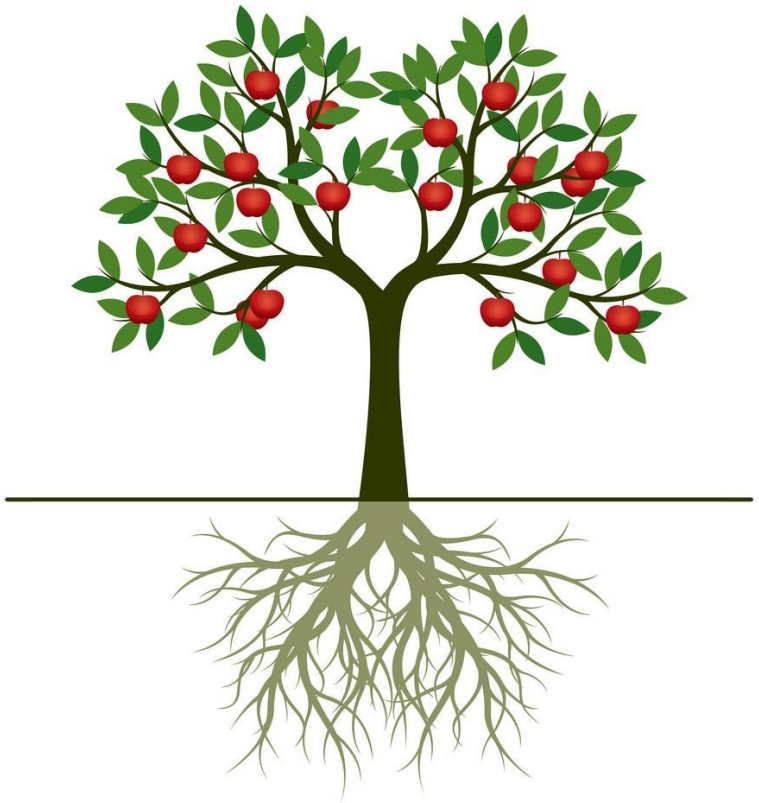
Holt-Gimenez, E. (2017) A Foodie’s Guide to Capitalism: Understanding the Political Economy of What We Eat, Monthly Review Press, New York.

Canadian University Foodservices

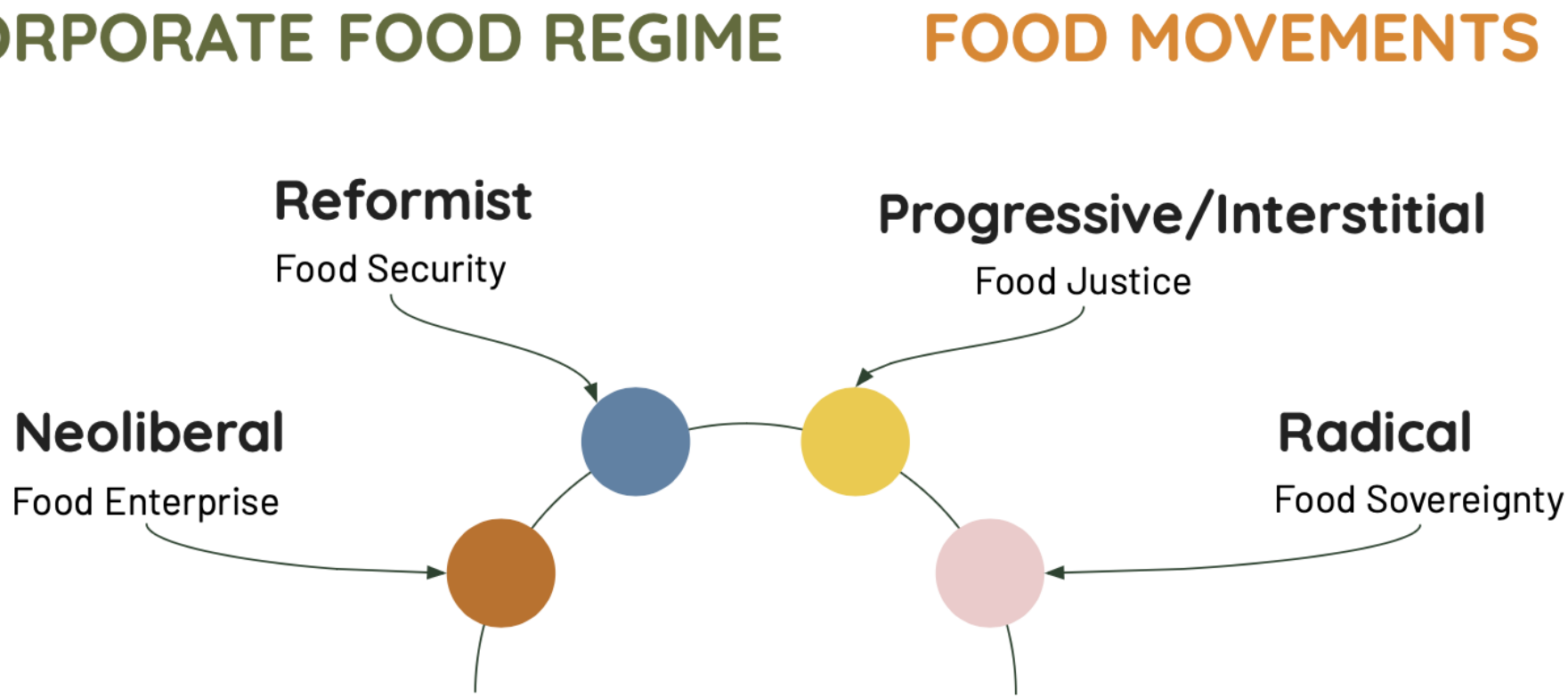




What Can We Do to Fix the Problem?

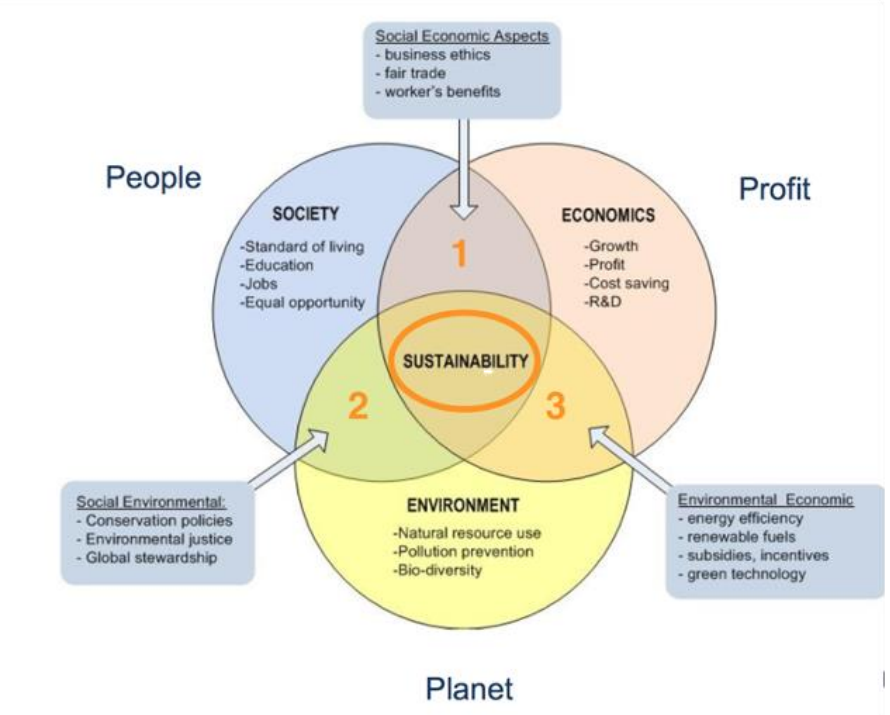


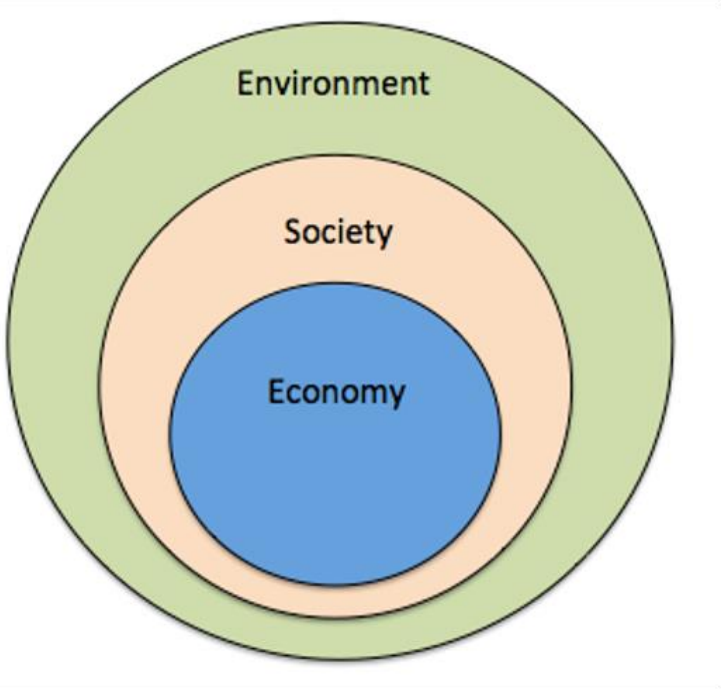
Food System Change



Holt-Gimenez, E. (2017) A Foodie's Guide to Capitalism: Understanding the Political Economy of What We Eat, Monthly Review Press, New York.

From Weak Sustainability to Food Sovereignty





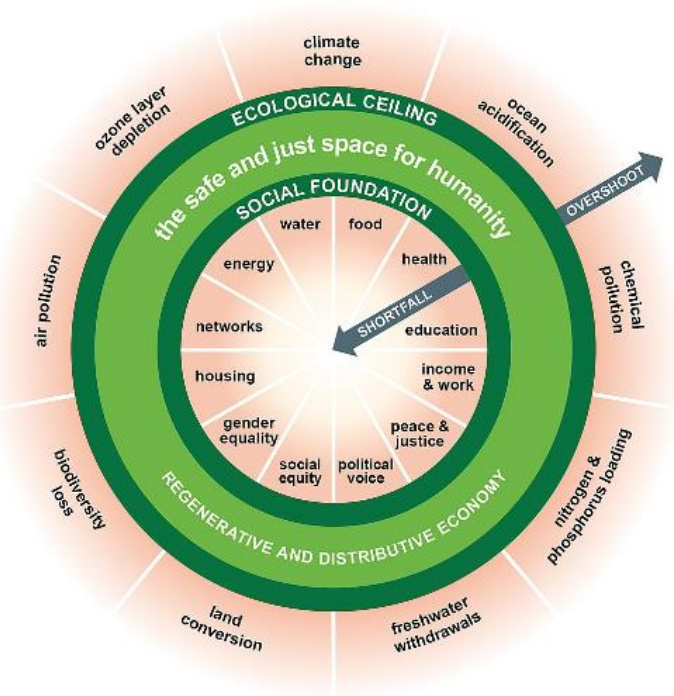




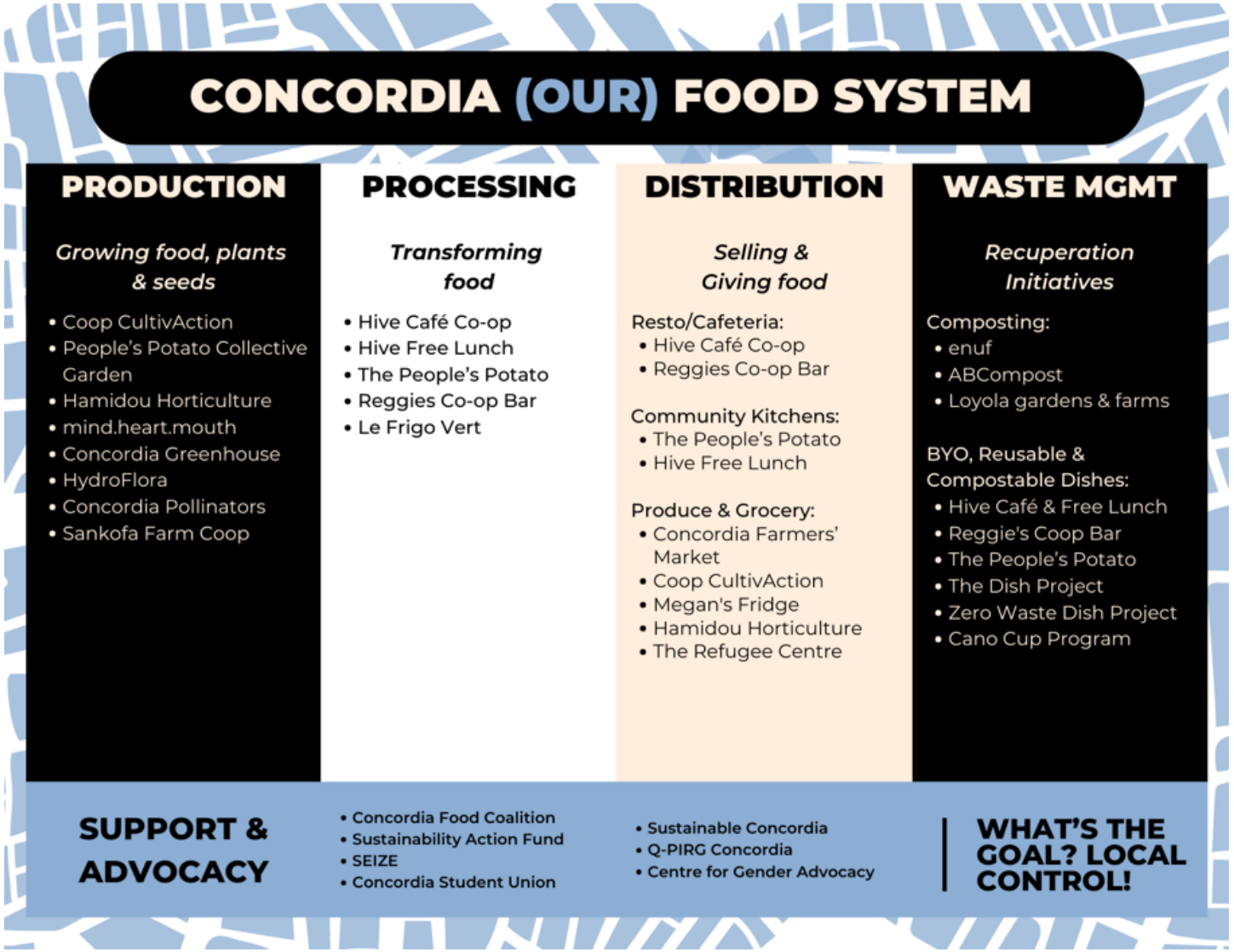
Figure 1. Food System Sectors

Gibson Graham – Take back the Economy

Gibson-Graham, J.K., Cameron, J., Healy, S. (2013) Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming Communities, University of Minnesota Press

LABOR	TRANSACTIONS	PROPERTY	ENTERPRISE	FINANCE
Wage	Market	Private	Capitalist	Mainstream Markets
ALTERNATIVE PAID Self-employed Reciprocal labor In-kind Work for welfare	ALTERNATIVE MARKET Fair trade Alternative currencies Underground market Barter	ALTERNATIVE PRIVATE State-managed assets Customary (clan) land Community land trusts Indigenous knowledge (Intellectual Property)	ALTERNATIVE CAPITALIST State owned Environmentally responsible Socially responsible Non-profit	ALTERNATIVE MARKET Cooperative Banks Credit unions Community-based financial institutions Micro-finance
UNPAID Housework Volunteer Self-provisioning Slave labor	NON-MARKET Household sharing Gift giving Hunting, fishing, gathering Theft, piracy, poaching	OPEN ACCESS Atmosphere International Waters Open source IP Outer Space	NON-CAPITALIST Worker cooperatives Sole proprietorships Community enterprise Feudal Slave	NON-MARKET Sweat equity Family lending Donations Interest-free loans

Concordia Students Create Conditions of Campus-Community Food Sovereignty



The Story of CultivAction Solidarity Cooperative



How CultivAction Solidarity Cooperatives Came to Be



Community Food System Map Snapshot

This table displays the community food system and places groups in categories in which they are active.
Click on the individual food groups to learn more about their different activities, needs and assets.

PRODUCTION	PROCESSING	DISTRIBUTION	WASTE MANAGEMENT
Food	**Cooking or Transforming**	**Market Based**	**Composting**
COVIQ	Extended Hands	Concert'Action System Alimentaire Durable	COVIQ
GRAME	Le Club des Personnes Handicapées du Lac-Saint Louis	COVIQ	GRAME
Revitalization Saint-Pierre	l'Oeuvre Soupe Maison	GRAME	l'Oeuvre Soupe Maison
Knowledge	L'Association des popotes	La P'tite Maison de Saint Pierre	Revitalization Saint-Pierre
Concert'Action System Alimentaire Durable			Saint-Vincent de Paul Saint-Pierre-aux-Liens





























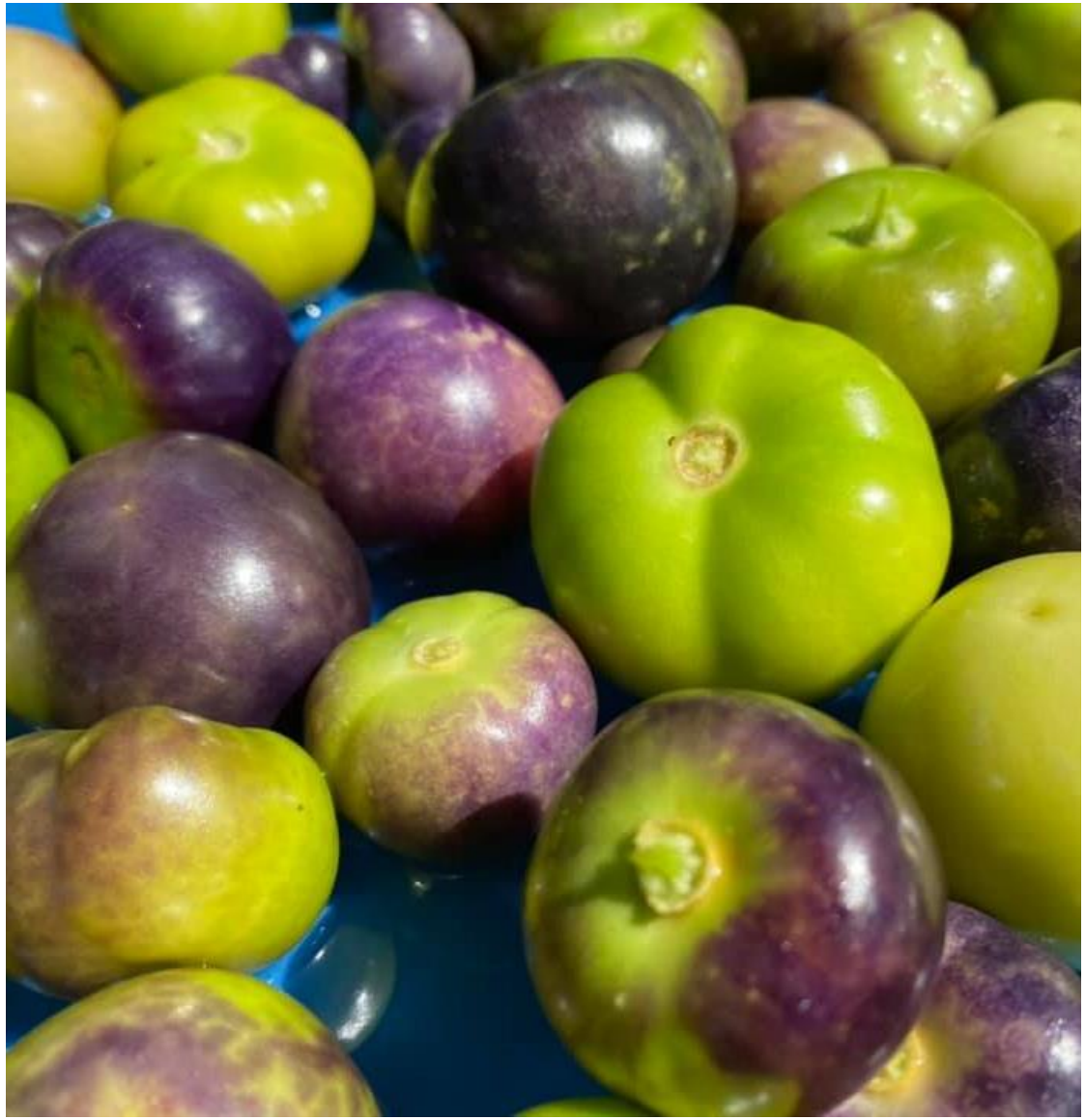














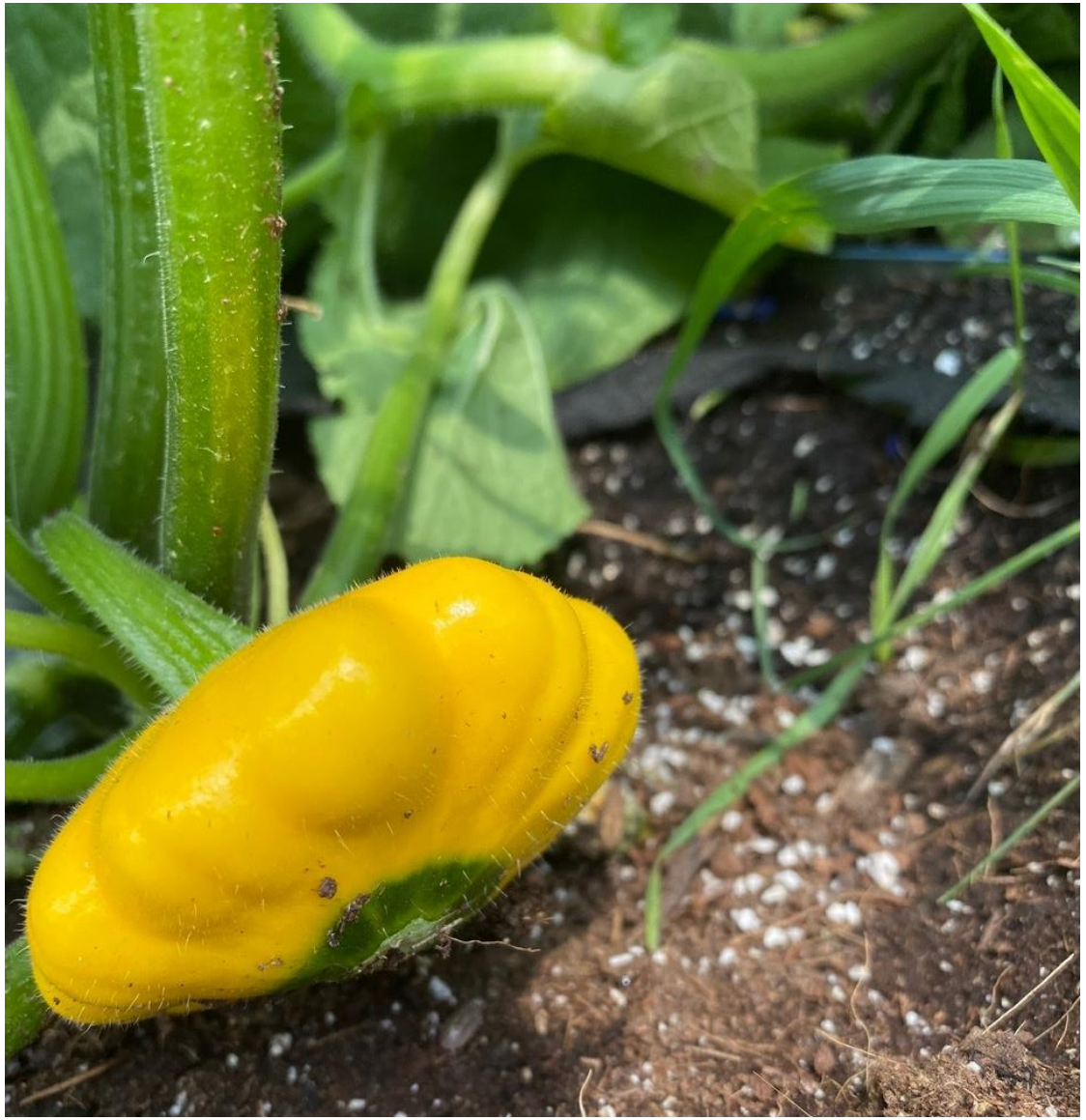









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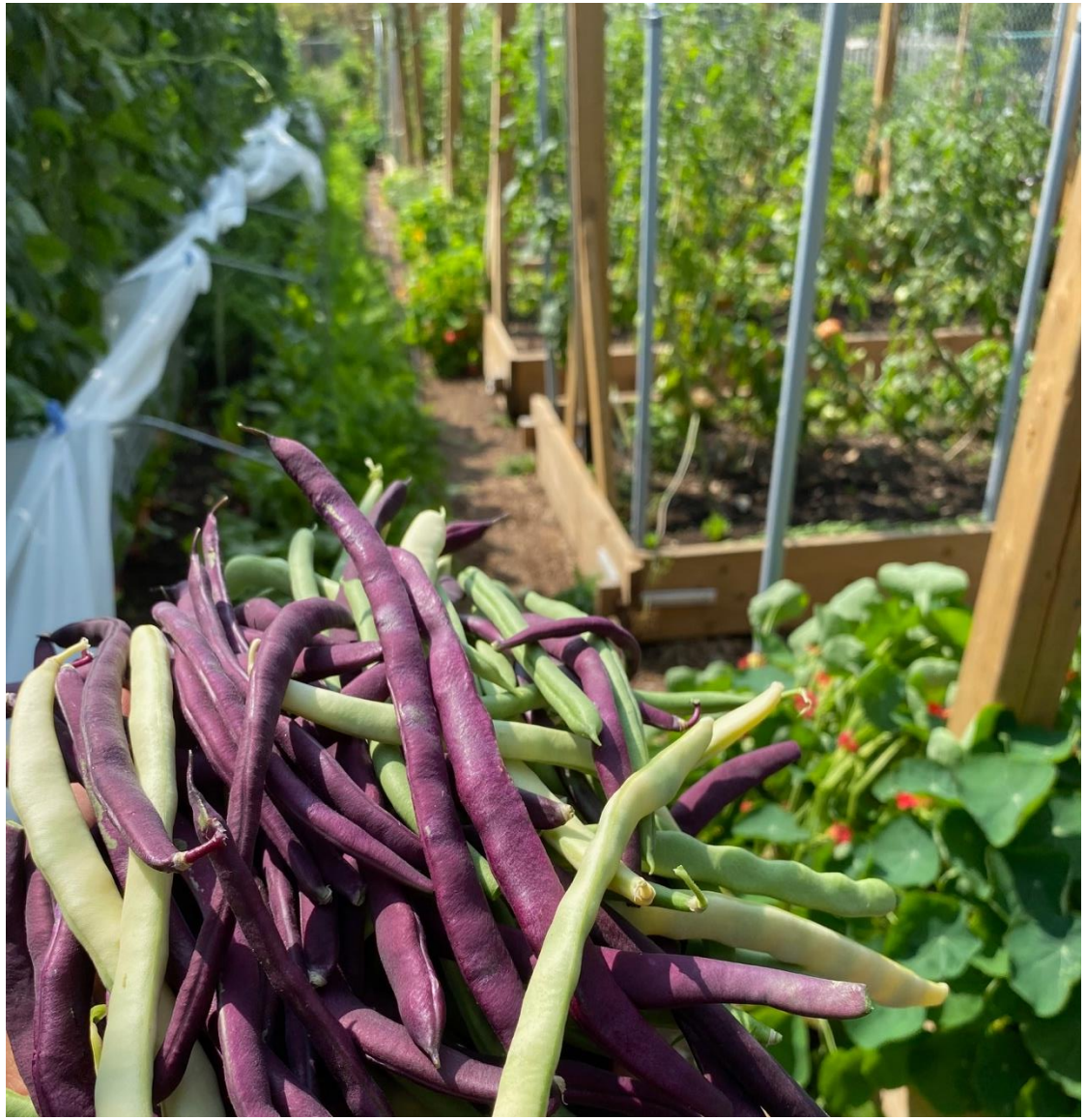







LES
P'tits
Marchés
CONCOURS
CONTEST


LES




LES
P'tits
Marchés
DE Lachine







Loyola Farm














INTERCROPPING
Is the practice of planting two or more crops in the same field side by side in the same or overlapping season.
COMPANION PLANTING is grouping certain plants that protect each other by attracting pollinators, repelling pests, and increasing productivity.
ROW/STRIP INTERCROPPING: Different crops support different parts of the soil microbiome, so row intercropping is a strategy we use to support all parts of the complex web of soil life.
SQUASH
CALENDULA
KALE
cultivaction






UCT



























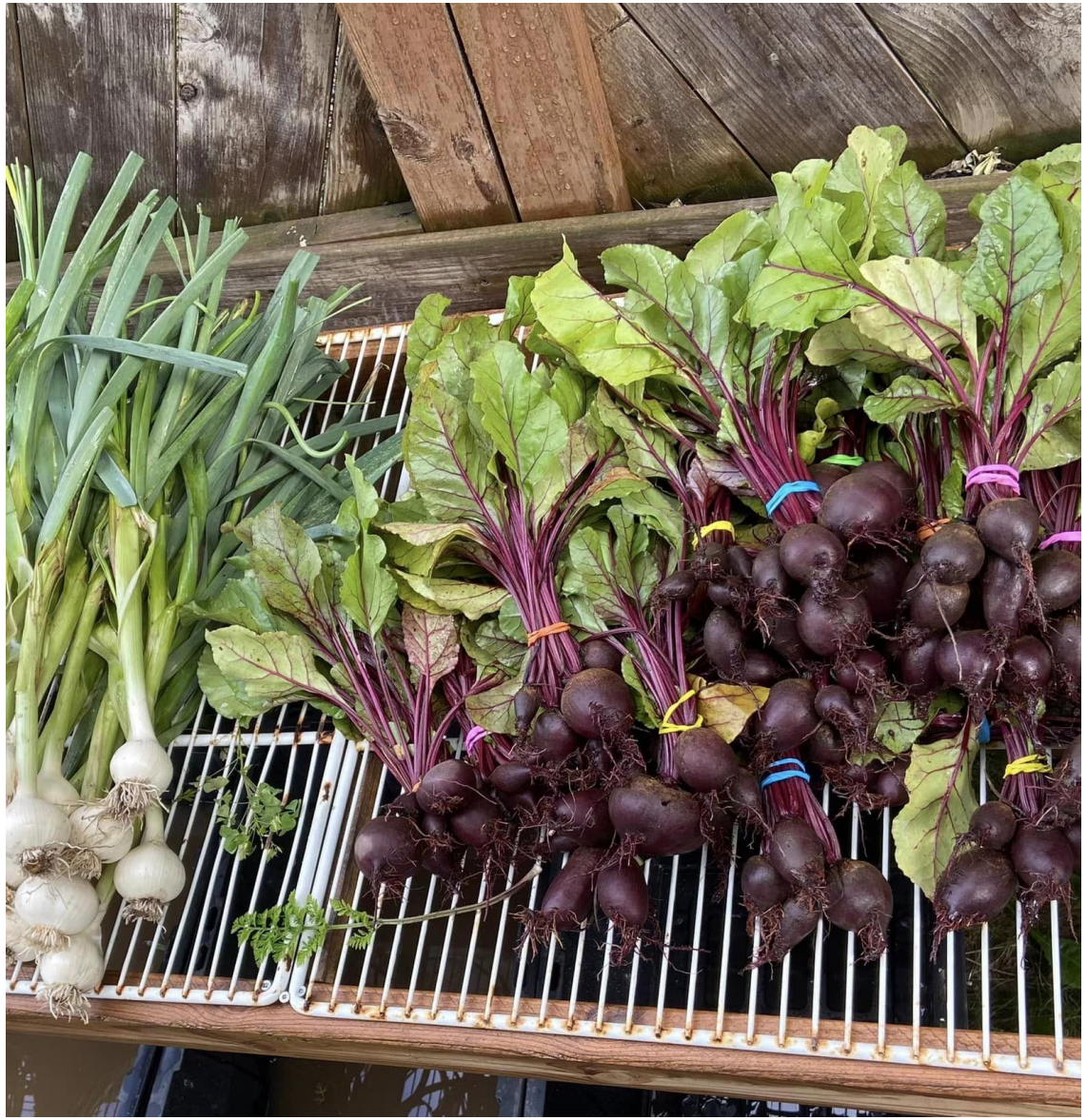














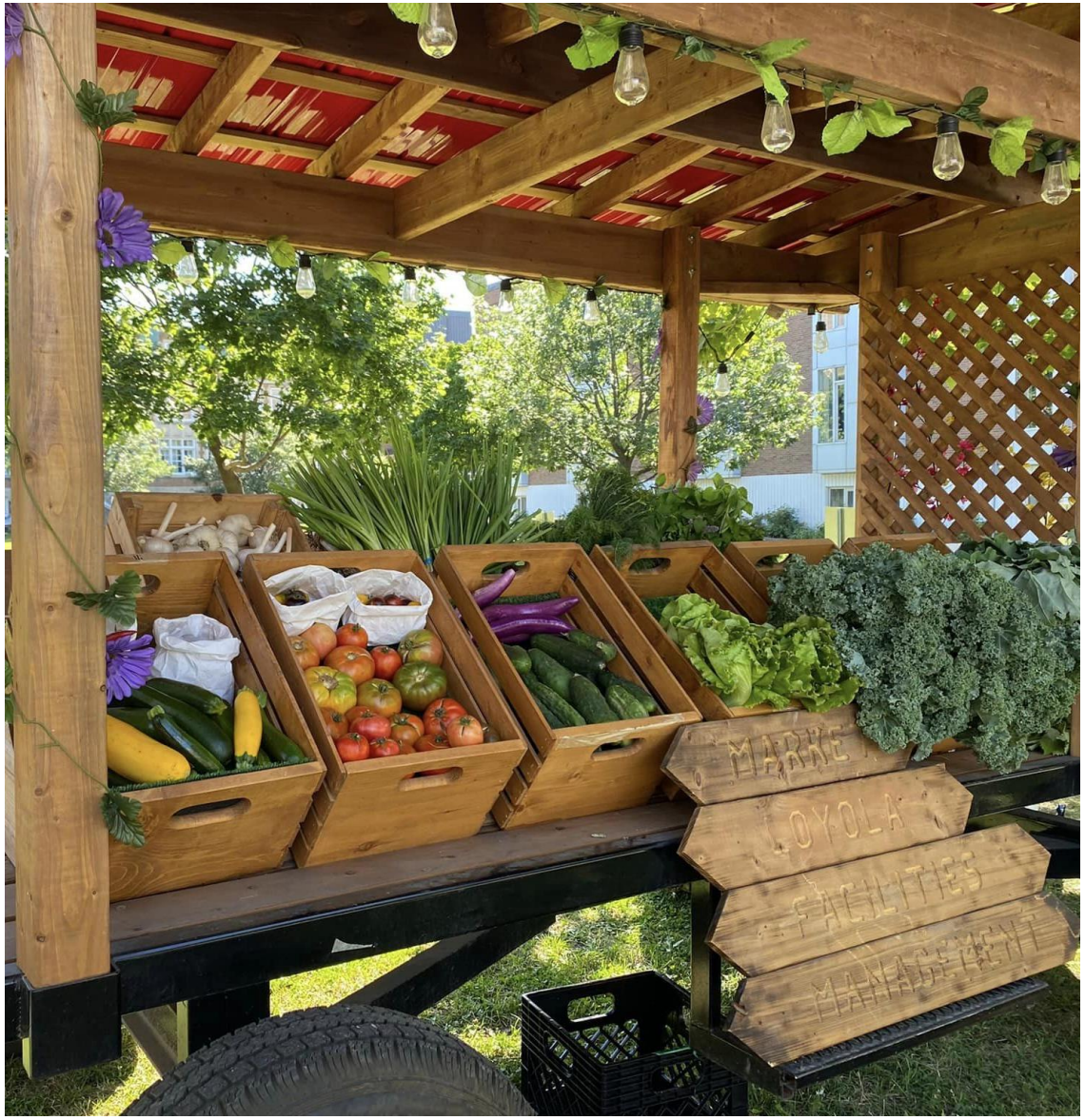




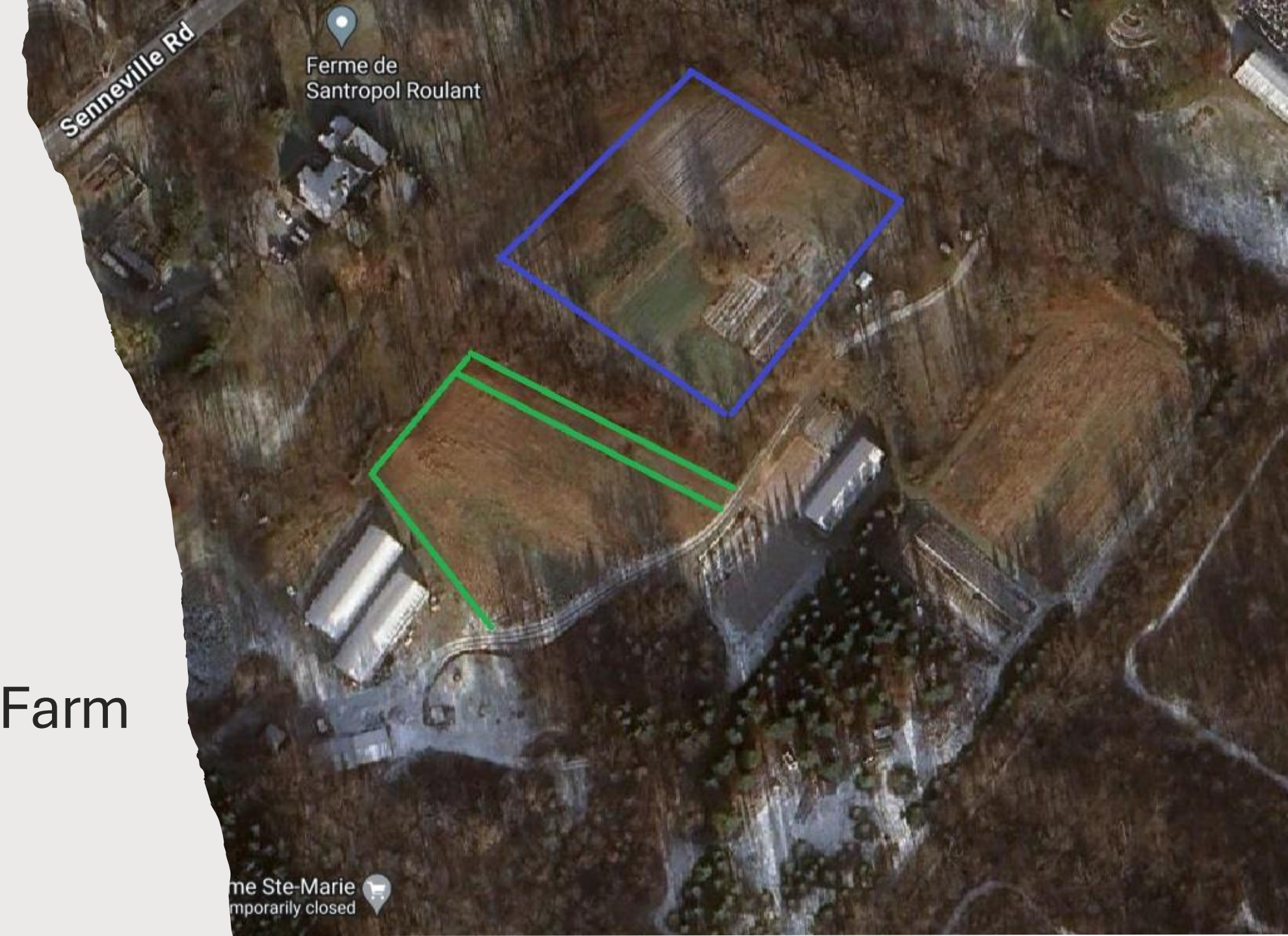





ESPACE 4 TH SPACE


MARKET
LOYOLA
FACILITIES
MANAGEMENT

Senneville Farm












SCORPIONS
UNBREAKABLE
















































Full Bush
WINNIPEG MINOR
BASKETBALL ASSOCIA











Impact of CultivAction Solidarity Cooperative

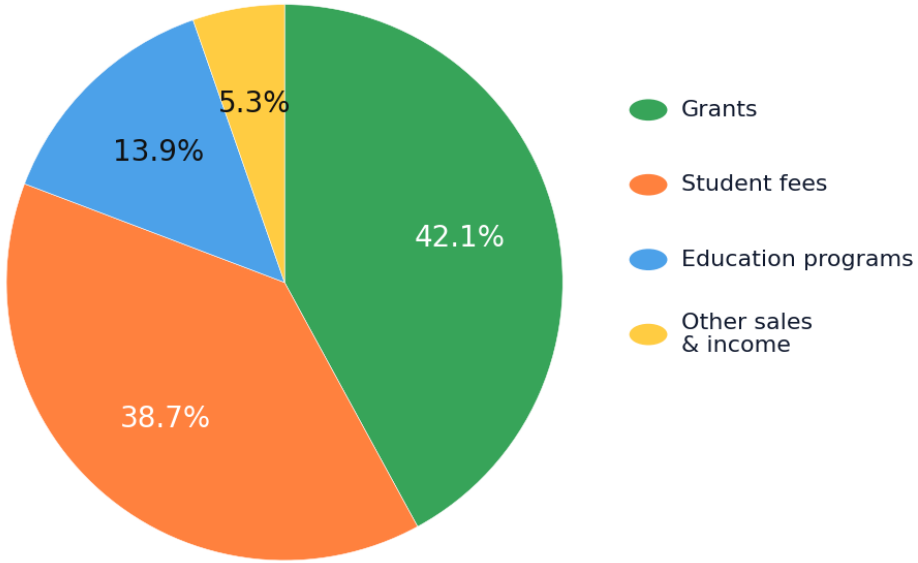
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2025 Income Distribution

Total Income: $304,819



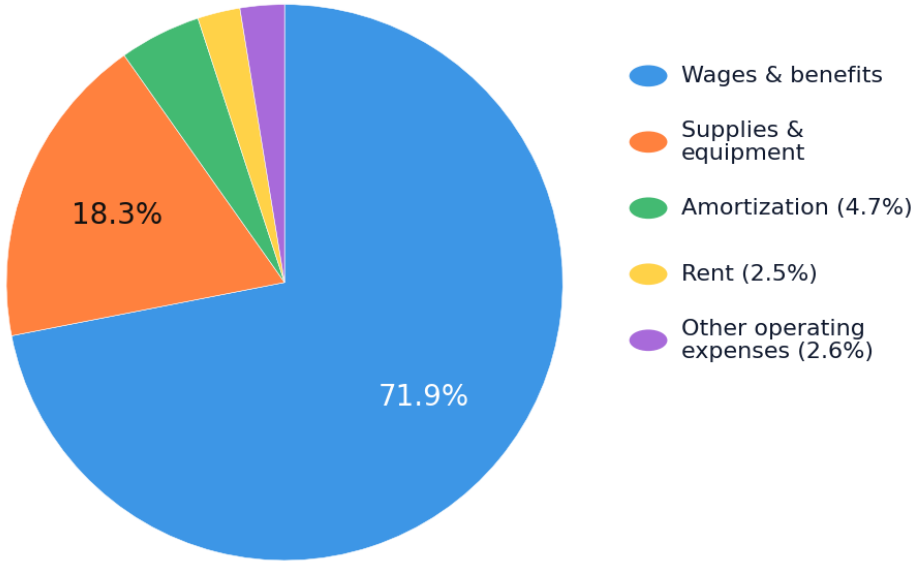
Income Category	Amount (CAD)
Grants	$128,216
Student fees	$117,996
Education programs	$42,335
Other sales & income	$16,272
Total Income	**$304,819**

Sources: Draft 2025 reviewed financial statements (p. 4) and Education Budget for 2025.
Education is provisionally allocated within “Sales and other income” ($58,607); confirm with accountant.

Financial Income

2025 Expense Distribution

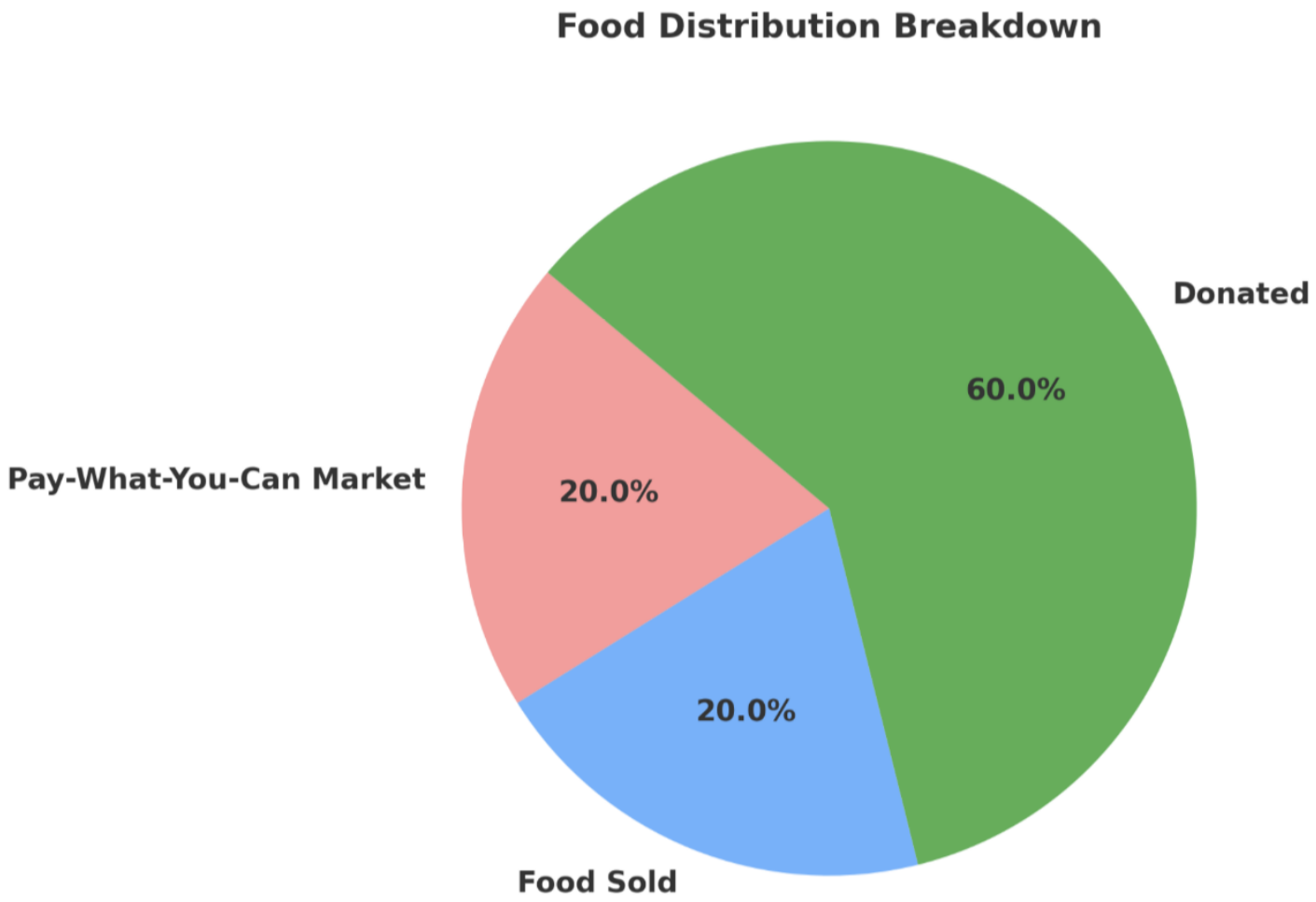
Total Expenses: $232,497



Expense Category	Amount (CAD)
Wages & benefits	$167,227
Supplies & equipment	$42,523
Amortization	$11,019
Rent	$5,751
Other operating expenses	$5,977
Total Expenses	**$232,497**

Source: Draft 2025 reviewed financial statements (p. 4). Operating expenses exclude capital purchases. Other operating expenses combine insurance, professional, office, promotion and bank charges.

Expenses



Food Distribution



Labour

- CultivAction Staff
- - 6 Worker members
- - 2 Non-member workers

- Volunteers
- - Hundreds of student and non-student volunteers



Non-Market Farm Practices

- Volunteer labour
- Community involvement
- Foraging/gleaning
- Connecting community via social events
- Soil building (limited)
- Incorporating chickens and quails
- Sweat equity
- Worker managed cooperative



Alternative Market Farm Practices

- Worker and community owned enterprise
- Hybrid of markets and non markets
- Ethical principles (food sovereignty)
- Fair treatment of employees
- Rooted in community
- Market viability and non-market advantages



Positive Impact

- **Social capital –** We connect people to each other and to food.
- **Financial capital –** We are helping young farmers build projects.
- **Living capital –** We create fragments of urban biodiversity.
- **Intellectual capital –** We share knowledge of how to grow food.
- **Experiential capital –** We provide hands-on experience for growing food.
- **Spiritual capital –** We connect people to nature and the Earth.
- **Cultural capital –** We grow lots of varieties of food from many cultures.

Roland, E.C., Lanuda, G. (2013) Regenerative Enterprise. Optimizing for Multi-Capital Abundance

Contradictions

Labour vs food price.
Growing time vs productivity.
Food donations vs sales.
Farmers markets vs increased labour.
Volunteers and paid workers.
Free labour vs viability.
Farm space vs labour hours vs productivity.
Indigenous reconciliation/reparations vs land use.
Community involvement vs community interest.
Soil building vs time.
Animals vs care.
Funding sources vs stability.
Community value vs profit.
Internal conflicts vs organizational stability.
Democracy vs efficiency.
Food waste vs sales vs donations.
Administrative assistance vs hinderance.
We cannot feed the entire community but can inspire others to create new projects.



How can you help create conditions of food sovereignty?



Garlic Planting Party!!!

November 7
Noon – 4 PM
Loyola Farm



Thank You!

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COMMENTS?

WWW.CULTIVACTION.CA
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