



The South Lanark Community Garden

Annual Report 2023

To the Membership

Primary Activity: 6242 – Community Food and Housing (Not For Profit)
Ontario Corporation Number (OCN): 1982091
Business Number (BN) 773918404RC0001

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Letter from the Chair

April 2024

Members

Last year, 2023, was the second year that The South Lanark Community Garden (SLCG) operated as an incorporated not for profit organization. Another milestone and a turning point in the evolution of the community garden.

This past year saw our greenhouse receive its covering and gable ends many thanks to the volunteers that turned out to make this happen. This spring will see its completion with the installation of the electrical system next week and the solar system in the coming months.

In the next few weeks we will be transferring new seedlings to this green house for growing out. We will also be transferring our potting up operation at the same time and selecting plants to be grown to maturity within the greenhouse itself.

More importantly this community garden has continued to advance its goals of maintaining itself as one big garden that takes on the persona of a true Market Garden sized operation. An operation that is flexible enough to meet the needs of its volunteers and yet scalable to address the ever increasing needs of the food insecure. To assist these goals the SLCG Chair has registered and committed to taking the "Market Garden Masterclass" course with Jean Martin Fortier and the Quebec based Market Gardening Institute. In doing this, the SLCG will gain access to a treasure trove of Market Gardeners developed and proven techniques, processes and guidance information on operating a successful Market Garden and experience driven information that can be readily converted to standard operating procedures for the SLCG process. To some extent the SLCG was already on the same path as the Market Gardening Institute when we started to grow in permanent beds. A conversion to the 100ft bed length started in 2022 and continued through 2023. The year 2024, will see the garden divided into four major blocks of 100ft beds with a windbreak bed after every 10th bed.

In December, SLCG was successful in getting a Perth & District Community Foundation grant to purchase a BCS Rototiller which will be used to reduce our reliance on tractor driven rototillers. In addition SLCG received \$1500 from the Carrot Cache Foundation to partially cover the costs of a Power-Harrow attachment for the BCS. It will enable us to convert our production to a minimum tillage process. SLCG also received a grant from the Perth Eco group of \$1000 a welcome gift.

In 2023, we are entering our 2nd season as a corporation and surprisingly our 7th year as a community garden with an increased sense of purpose and direction. There are lots of good ideas amongst our volunteers, we need only to select and act on them. So for those of you who have an idea or new direction that you feel deserves consideration, please speak up, pass them on. Thank you to everybody who has been part of this venture. It is proving right for the times.



Cliff Neudorf
Chair
The South Lanark Community Garden

Our Appreciation and Thank You!

First of all our heartfelt thanks and gratitude continues to go out to all our volunteers, our members and our followers within the gardening community, including those of our social media community and those of the community at large. Without you and your support, in all the different ways that you have shown it and provided it, the South Lanark Community Garden could not exist. You have helped us to fill a significant gap within the food vulnerable sector of our County. Thank you for a job well done.

Second, SLCG needs to express its gratitude and thanks to the following special agencies and persons who are in some cases generous supporters and in other cases great partners in working on the food security issues of our larger community. Thank you for being there for us and with us.

Plan B Charitable Community Organization in the Lanark Highlands

The Table Community Food Centre

The Lanark Food Pantry

The Lanark Highlands Youth Centre

The Lanark Highlands Public Library

The Hunger Stop Lanark County Food Bank

Sarah Allison – Master Distributor

Canada Summer Jobs

Oakfield Rugby Park

Lanark County

Little Stream Bakery

Commonwell L.E.A.F. - Learning and Engagement Accelerator Fund

Perth & District Community Foundation

The Carrot Cache Community Resource Inc.

Garden Activities

Seedling/Transplant Development

This program has continued to alleviate the high costs of purchasing transplants for the garden. It is now a major annual event and a major supplier of plants for our annual spring fund raiser.. It continues to operate in three stages, each stage involving a volunteer workforce for whom we are quite grateful and indebted. The first stage is the planting and germination of the seed in vermiculite with hydroponic nutrients; this year we were able to start all the plants in the small greenhouse at the upper barn.. The second stage is the growing out of the seedlings under our light table. The third is a repotting stage where this spring we will move the seedlings to our new greenhouse and repot them in larger containers for growth to garden transplant size. .

Garden Spring Prep and Planting

Again kudos to our spring garden cleanup crew. These volunteers started and finished the garden cleanup, then moved straight into planting the garden.. Many hands make light work as they say. Our volunteers prepared the beds, transplanted the greenhouse plants into the garden, and direct seeded rows. The installation of irrigation equipment went very well as evidenced by the retuning volunteers. SLCG was greatly helped by a grant from Lanark County for the hiring of a person to part time work in the garden during the months of May and June and then in the fall months of Sept and October. Ali McCormick was hired for this position and did a remarkable job, enough that we found suitable funding to keep her on 1 day a week through the months of July and August. For the 2023 season we purchased local specially milled garden stakes and they worked very well. It remains notable that we are seeing the benefits of growing in beds with permanent aisle ways. There is less pressure in bed maintenance for rock picking and removal, and the white clover continues to work its magic and takeover in the older aisle ways with a notable reduction of weed pressure in them. We have continued to use the narrow ride-on mower and are now purposely shaping our beds to accept this use.. For 2024 SLCG will need to purchase an aisle way edger/trimmer to keep aisle way plants from creeping into the beds and a source of Ramial wood chips for the aisle ways as well. Both to conserve the amount of volunteer labour required to manage these areas.

Garden Layout and Design

During 2023, we implemented plans to convert the garden space into 4 blocks. Each block will be labeled A through D and be 100 ft in length with a vehicle access between each block. Block A with its 100 foot beds was created for the 2023 growing season. Blocks B,C and D will be created for the 2024 growing season. In addition the will migrate to a 30 inch wide bed and the beds will be placed on 5 foot centres. The 30 inch bed width is based on the working width of the BCS walk behind tractor that we have purchased. This will enable the bed preparation for planting to take place without having to take place with a suitably qualified volunteer operating the BCS.. This will also enable SLCG to continue using its more conventional tractors and equipment in the maintenance of the beds throughout the growing season. Also included in the bed layout will be a windbreak bed after every 10th growing bed. It is intended that these windbreak bed consist of wild flowers, and perennials with fruit bushes and shrubs not over 10 ft in height. In 2024 it is planned that they will be sunflowers. SLCG will need to rely on and is seeking input and advice from its volunteers for the types of plants that we would want to establish long term in these wind break beds.

Garden Management and Conversion to Minimum Till Beds

In 2023 with the help of the Perth & District Community Foundation SLCG was able to purchase a BCS 739 walk behind rototiller. With this machine will be able to till the garden beds using volunteer help. This will reduce SLCG reliance on larger 4 wheel tractors in the garden and reduce the environmental impact of our presence. It will also enable the pathway to maintaining microbe life in the soil. In addition to this the Carrot Cache Community Resource fund provided 50% of the funding to purchase a power harrow that will attach to the BCS. We will need to fund raise in 2024 to for the remaining 50% to purchase the power harrow. Its use in the community garden will very much contribute to the maintenance of a healthy living soil in the garden. The value of the power harrow is in its ability to stir and prepare the surface of a seed bed for seeding without having to till into the soil and disturb the microorganisms resident there. SLCG will be enabled to start 3 beds in 2024 that are minimum till. Such a process will reduce the amount of sweat equity invested by volunteers in the weeding and maintenance of the beds while produce is being grown. This combination of tools will also provide an opportunity for knowledge transfer from the garden to the volunteers that are in the garden.



Greenhouse

With the Commonwell L.E.A.F. Learning and Engagement Accelerator Fund SLCG purchased a 30ft by 48ft high tunnel greenhouse in 2022 including with funding for an off-grid solar power source and an internal water system. In 2023 a greenhouse anchoring system was installed, the greenhouse was covered, the gable ends installed and two beautiful pine hinged doors handmade by Larry Gower were installed. The water tank donated by Little Stream Bakery has been installed and filled and can be used in a gravity watering system. The greenhouse is now expected to be operational from late spring of 2024. We will be potting up plants in it by the end of April 2024.

The electrical panel and wiring system are scheduled to be installed in mid April of 2024. In late spring/summer the solar system is scheduled to be installed.

The greenhouse will enable new directions and capabilities for the garden. SLCG continues to welcome input from persons within our community who have a vision and personal knowledge in the operation of a greenhouse of this size. We need your ideas. SLCG has established a committee for the operation of the greenhouse, please reach out to Greg Stevenson, Board Member and committee lead if you would like to be involved or have ideas concerning the operational direction of this greenhouse.



Standard Composting

SLCG will be operating two composting systems, one is the standard composting system described here. The other is Fungi dominant composting bioreactor described below in the next section. SLCG envisions its standard composting system to be somewhat larger than a normal garden composter. We are intending to turn the compost using a front end loader. SLCG is planning on larger compost bins that are from 6ftx6ft to 10ft by 10 ft in size . 75 pallets for this purpose were donated by 3M of Perth and delivered free of charge by Willis Transport of Perth. Thank you folks for this and a great job in getting the pallets delivered quickly. These pallets need now to be assembled and the composting season started.



Fungi Bioreactors



The SLCG partnered with [ONfungi](#) representatives Scott Hortop and Kelvin Hodges to install 4 of their bioreactors in the community garden and develop fungi dominant inoculant compost for the garden. We are using shredded maple and oak leaves from the 21/22 winter in the reactors. In October of 2022 we harvested a small amount of very well composted fungi dominant compost. This fungi dominant compost will be added to our regular compost as a fungi inoculant. This program has continued as a regular part of the SLCG compost program in 2023 but now will be altered to take into consideration the Johnson-Su bio-reactor design. It is constructed on pallets allowing it to be brought into warmer areas over the winter thus promoting a more robust development cycle

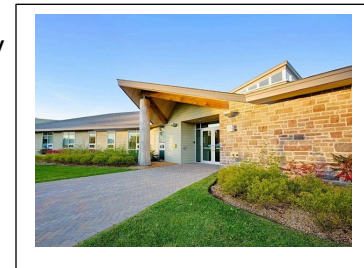
for the fungi. This newer process will enable the development of spayable fungi dominant teas that can be used directly on our plants.

SLCG Youth Program

The youth program has been sidelined until such time as we are able to host the necessary volunteers to manage this program. In this vacuum initial SLCG has established contacts within the Maple Grove Public School of Lanark. It is quite apparent that there is a need and an interest on the part of school children in the grades 2-4 years to be involved with gardening and being shown how fresh produce is grown that they can take home. Indeed for many of these children this experience will help set the tone for their future development. The reestablishment of this program will be further pursued in the 2024 season as time and the availability of volunteers who are willing to take on a project such as this are identified, and as teachers come forward who are willing to involve themselves and their time in the realization of this project.

Algonquian College. Perth Campus – Collaboration Activity

At the suggestion of one of our volunteers, SLCG initiated contact with personnel of Algonquian College to see if there is any opportunity for collaboration between our two organizations. The College was quite receptive to this discussion and our initial contact with them was very positive. This remains an open item for further discussion and development.



The Harvest Report

The 2023 harvest was not very good. We do not have the actual garden results as such as the data sheets were misplaced. In analyzing the 2023 year, SLCG had a very low production level with the Squash, Melons and Pumpkins. This may be attributed to a nutrient deficiency in the soil and the fact that we did not plant them in mounds which we normally do. This we are looking at closely for the 2024 season. SLCG also had a failure with the cucumbers. We had a large amount of very good looking plants. Indeed we expected a great harvest. However we were hit with cucumber beetles that transmitted a blight throughout the cucumbers. To deal with this in 2024 we will be using more of our Neem oil treatments and we will be acquiring a nematode that actively hunts the larva of the cucumbers beetle when the first wave of eggs are laid. We will also be looking at utilizing netting to cover the plants up to the point of flowering. A third area where we experienced problems was with many of our cabbage plant bolting in high heat of the early spring. We will try to plant these plants earlier in the spring. We also had a problem last year with blight in our tomatoes. We will be establishing new procedures in the planting, spacing and removal of suckers and lower leaves to prevent bacteria migrating from the ground to the tomato plant.



Fundraising

During the 2023 year SLCG was successful in raising \$10,090 in income. The following activities contributed to this income.

Spring Plant Sale

Again we partnered with the Lanark Highlands Youth Centre and put together our second annual plant sale as a fundraiser for the Community Garden. The Lanark Highlands Youth Centre sold hamburgers, hot dogs, and drinks. This year we opened the plant for 2 consecutive weekend Saturdays. Sales were very good considering that we experienced a lot of rain on the first Saturday. There was a good turnout, great fun and a great learning experience for the garden. It was nice to have the Youth Centre present and it generated good energy.



Garlic Sales and Perth Garlic Festival

In the spring SLCG made a decision to seek a path of self-sustainability in terms of its income needs. One direction chosen was to treat the garlic being grown as a cash crop and sell the garlic through the Perth Garlic Festival and other sales outlets and direct sale at the garden. The garlic festival was successful in that we attended and a small amount of garlic and honey was sold. Sales were low principally because we were not known by festival attendees and we had a poor sales location. On the positive side we did attract attention from many of the festival attendees because we were very local and we are a community non-profit organization. It is felt that we should repeat the Garlic Festival for 2024 to see if there is potential for increased sales. Certainly we would not get better exposure and PR for what we are doing. Also is to noted that because of the high volunteer labour hours to sell the garlic it is probably better for SLCG to seek a bulk purchaser of the garlic. The Big Carrot in Toronto comes to mind as a potential client.



Oakfield Rugby Park Fundraiser

Volunteers of SLCG organized and delivered a solid night of entertainment at the Oakfield Rugby Park hall. This was a fundraiser concert for SLCG and it was packed. The hall and bar services were provided freely by the management of Oakfield. Many thanks to them for supporting this non profit. The stars of the show were Ali McCormick pictured to the right and Jillien Allinson pictured below. Thank you Ali and Jillien for a job well done, There was a lot of good feeling in room. Enough that we would like to repeat this fundraiser in the fall of 2024. Many thanks go out to the volunteers who organized the concert. Also to Steve Tenant who advanced our concert to his "listening room" audience. Also to the Humm for helping to promote this event and to Lake 88 for featuring us on their station to help promote this event as well



Employment, Community Service

Canada Summer Jobs

In 2023, the SLCG was fortunate to receive funding for one youth lead gardener for 8 weeks at 35 hrs per week, and 2 youth gardener positions for 8 weeks at 35 hrs per week. Unfortunately we did not get any applications that were suitable. We had one but it did not work out. As a result our agreement with Canada Summer Jobs was terminated. It was noted by the Canada Summer Jobs representative that SLCG was not alone in not receiving job application. This was occurring across Canada. For the 2024 season SLCG has put in an application for 3 post-secondary level students and 2 high school level students. SLCG has also increased the agreed upon salary to be \$20/hr for the post-secondary level student and \$17/hr for the secondary school level student.

Student Volunteer Hours

Over the past several years the SLCG has been putting forward the message to high schoolers that the community garden is a great place to perform your community service hours. We were able to attract one student in 2023. We had been looking to attract more.

Financial Report

P&L 2023 Annual Financial Statement

	General			
	Jan - Dec 23	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
Garlic, Honey Sales	945.00			
Fundraising Events & Activities	6,098.62			
Donations	2,401.97			
Interest	645.01			
Total Income	10,090.60			
Expense				
Gasoline, Fuel and Oil	158.69			
Total Non-Profit Management	1,834.93	2,196.58	-361.65	83.54%
Garden Inputs				
Total Garden Inputs	3,337.44	2,600.00	737.44	128.36%
Garden Tools & Other Assets				
Total Garden Tools & Other Assets	600.70	1,910.00	-1,309.30	31.45%
Support Staff				
Total Support Staff	1,869.62			
Support Workers	898.56			
Training				
Total Training	0.00	625.00	-625.00	0.0%
Composting Operation				
Total Composting Operation	0.00	1,650.00	-1,650.00	0.0%
Conversion of Garden to No-Till				
Total Conversion of Garden to No-Till	0.00	1,000.00	-1,000.00	0.0%
Events, Fundraising & Other				
Total Events, Fundraising & Other	1,482.65	2,815.00	-1,332.35	52.67%
Total Expense	10,182.59	12,796.58	-2,613.99	79.57%
Net Ordinary Income	-91.99	-12,796.58	12,704.59	0.72%
Net Income	-91.99	-12,796.58	12,704.59	0.72%

Balance Sheet 2023 Annual Financial Statement

	31 Dec 23
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	
Alterna	46,208.98
Total Chequing/Savings	46,208.98
Total Current Assets	46,208.98
TOTAL ASSETS	46,208.98
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
SAL A/P	430.48
CPP Payable	42.88
EI Payable	35.11
Deferred Revenue	
Greenhouse Grant	42,678.23
Total Deferred Revenue	42,678.23
Total Other Current Liabilities	43,186.70
Total Current Liabilities	43,186.70
Total Liabilities	43,186.70
Equity	
Retained Earnings	3,114.27
Net Income	-91.99
Total Equity	3,022.28
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	46,208.98