

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

right to food zine

"Charity sees the need, but not the cause."

Why I Eat Sugar Right Out of the Bag
Not Welcome at Canada's Table
Regaining Control of Our Food:
Surviving the Zombie Revolution

Issue 6 | Summer 2013



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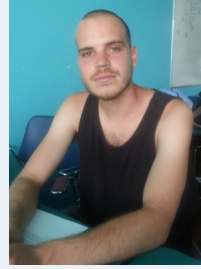
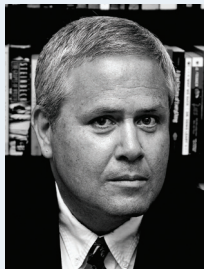
The *Right to Food (RTF) Zine*'s mission is to promote the human right to food that is healthy, nutritious, affordable, and presented with dignity. Our voices reflect the diversity that is the Downtown Eastside. Our articles, research, and recipes will speak to DTES residents, social justice groups, and beyond. Our readers will be kept informed, yet hungry to know more and to become more engaged. We are part of the local community and strive to act as a community-building tool.

ZINE CONTRIBUTORS



Above, left to right: Donna, Rory, Rebecca, Ricki, Ludvik, Stan, Kim, James, Peter.

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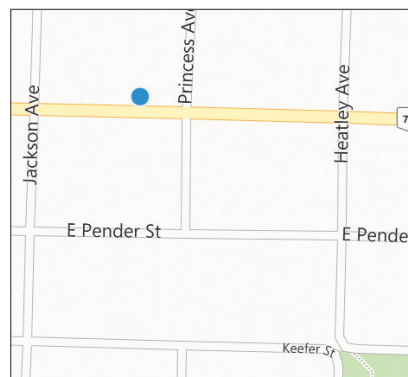
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Why I Eat Sugar Right Out of the Bag

By *dm gillis*

I have type 1 diabetes. It's necessary for me to inject insulin multiple times a day, and closely monitor my blood sugar levels. I'm also on what the BC government calls BC Employment and Assistance for People with Disabilities, which means I receive a small amount of money every month to pay all of my expenses. This includes a small allowance for people with diabetes, but in one of Canada's most expensive cities, it's just not adequate.

The money's usually all gone after a week, maybe two. I buy groceries, of course. But there is never enough, and I inevitably go hungry during the last week of each month.

The insulin injections, however, cannot stop. I can reduce the amount I inject by trying to guess ahead of time how many carbohydrates I will or won't be consuming. And for the most part, I can get it right. But sometimes, more times than I like to admit, I don't get it right. I get it terribly wrong. The result is a condition referred to as hypoglycemia, often severe hypoglycaemia.

Hypoglycemia is low blood sugar, or glucose, the fuel the body and brain need to function. It becomes severe when there is no treatment. Situations where no treatment occurs arise when the individual lacks hypoglycaemic awareness or there is no means by which to treat it.

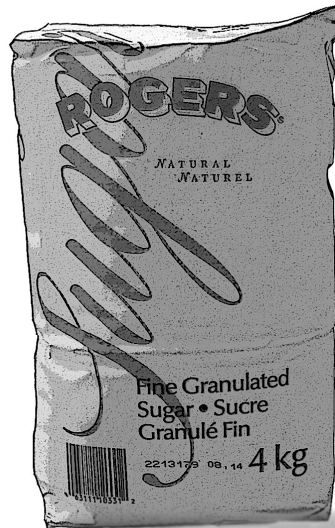
The Canadian Diabetes Association defines severe hypoglycemia in the following way: Severe hypoglycemia, a major concern in the treatment of type 1 diabetes, is generally defined as a plasma

glucose level <4.0 mmol/L with neurogenic and neuroglycopenic clinical manifestations sufficiently disabling to require outside assistance (1,2). The proportion of patients affected and event rates for severe hypoglycemia are high, with an accompanying array of transient and sometimes permanent physical and psychological disabilities. Death rates range from 2 to 4% in adults to 8% in children (1).

In other words, the outcomes of severe hypoglycemia are serious. One can even die. The Fire Department in my neighbourhood knows me by sight and by name. That's how often they've had to revive me from unconsciousness or intervene as I entered into seizures. The simple treatment is food. Some quick sugar, glucose tablets are best but unaffordable, followed by something more substantial, like a peanut butter sandwich. But if I'm going hypoglycemic due to a lack of available food, how do I treat it with food?

Regarding people of lower socioeconomic status, the Canadian Diabetes Association has said this: Lower socioeconomic status is also associated with food insecurity: according to results of the Canadian Community

Health Survey (4), 48% of Canadians in the lowest income adequacy category were found to have food insecurity, and 60% of individuals on social assistance had moderate or severe food insecurity. Food insecurity includes compromised quantity and quality of foods consumed, and disruptive eating pat-





terns that could influence the onset, treatment and recurrence of severe hypoglycemia.

Well, that’s me in a nutshell. With little or no food in my apartment, or in my near future, I still have to inject insulin. My eyes, heart, kidneys, fingers, toes, limbs and peripheral nervous system depend on my maintaining healthy blood sugar levels. And yes, blood sugars, in the absence of adequate insulin, can rise even if one doesn’t eat. That’s why I always have a bag of sugar in the cupboard. It’s cheap and easy to store.

This morning, for example, I injected a comparatively small amount of insulin because I had very little food for breakfast – tomorrow is cheque day. By 1:00

That’s why I eat sugar right out of the bag, because that’s what you do if you’re poor

pm, I don’t eat lunch – I can’t afford it – my blood glucose level was at 2.1 mmol/L. A healthy fasting level is between 4.0 and 7.0. I felt seizures coming on. And because I had nothing else, I knew it was time to get the bag of sugar from above the fridge. Three to four tablespoons usually works for me, gets my blood glucose level above 4.0. Today, I consumed four tablespoons, each tablespoon swallowed whole followed by a gulp of water.

For people with diabetes, food is medication. It’s taken in concert with insulin or, in the case of many with type 2 diabetes, oral medication to maintain healthy blood glucose levels. But when there is no food to be had, something must take its place.

That’s why I eat sugar right out of the bag, because that’s what you do if you’re poor and inject insulin in Canada. Oh, Canada!

Neither Nor

My evening’s entertainment is a stroll to a tiny liquor store in a deserted strip mall where it’s a choice between Ritter Fine Extra Dark Chocolate and St. Remy brandy impossible necessities haunted as I am by an empty fridge the weekly specter of succumbing to a food bank middle-class casualty in the great collapse equity strapped and equiposed between melodrama and history.

-TST





Food and Community: An Interview with Vanessa, DTES Vegetarian and Foodie

By Rebecca Ipe

As I greet Vanessa, two things strike me: her stunning aquamarine hair and her sweet smile. An artist, resident of the Downtown Eastside, and a vegetarian of First Nations heritage, I can't wait to dig deeper into Vanessa's food story.

RI: So when did your love affair with food start? This is presupposing that you have one!

V (laughs): I would say it started when I became a vegetarian, about three years ago trying out different things.

RI: What prompted you to become a vegetarian? Was there a specific reason?

V: Oh, it was a transition for various different reasons. Ten years ago I stopped eating red meat. I was only eating chicken and then I realised, I can live without it.

RI: Do you feel that being a vegetarian has made you more conscious of the food you eat?

V: Definitely, especially in finding alternative sources for protein and making things more interesting. Not just relying on packaged foods; you think more about whole foods. And fresh fruit and vegetables! I really love that!

RI: So that was when food stopped being something you just put into your body; when you started exploring things.

V: Yes. And I think I've discovered that when I eat healthy food, my body feels a lot better, so I continue to strive for that. Eating healthy makes people happy...

RI: So true! I find that when I eat a whole lot of carbs and nothing fresh, I just become a monster! What sort of food do you love to cook?

V: I love to cook a lot of curries and stir-fries and more recently, pastas. I made vegetarian lasagna which was really great and spaghetti with tofu balls.

RI: Mmm, that sounds good.

V: And I love baking cookies. Love baking cookies!

RI: What food do you love to eat? Any guilty pleasures? Cravings for anything?

V: I really love hummus and vegetables. Any sort of fresh veggies with hummus, like carrots or broccoli or zucchini.

Trying to eat well with less money is hard. What's changed now is that I still don't have a surplus of income...I don't necessarily like cooking just for me, so it's really great to cook for everybody, to get everybody to enjoy healthy vegetarian food!





R: I should really snack healthily like you! What part does your First Nations heritage play in your food choices? For me, being East Indian plays a huge role in my food choices and how I eat.

V: I think more about what to eat locally. I also eat salmon on rare occasions. If I go to a family event, where the salmon was caught specifically for that event, then I'll have a piece because that's as close as you can get to natural food. And someone told me, "Eat the food where you are from." If you're from somewhere where they eat fish, then eat fish because your body is more in tune with that than bread or milk. I can't eat a lot of bread or milk because that's not really native to where I'm from.

RI: That's really interesting. Often we eat things because they're available and not because they come from the land. Making a choice to eat something of the land, that's an appealing angle. So you love to buy local. As a resident in the DTES, do you find it hard to find local, affordable places for healthy food options?

V: I wouldn't say so because it seems to be more pricey when you go to other places. What I like best about something that's more affordable is that you can get food in season too and that's really good because you're more than likely to get a local product.

RI: Where are your favourite places to shop in this neighborhood?

V: Most definitely Sunrise. And Nestors, because it's close! (laughs). If I need to, I'll go up to the Drive. So if I'm not in Sunrise, I'm usually on Commercial Drive.

RI: Was there any time in your life where you had a hard food story, where you wanted to eat good healthy food but circumstances prevented you from doing so?

V: I would say definitely when I wasn't working and staying with family and not having access to food that I did when I had more money. Trying to eat well

with less money is harder. What's changed now is that I still don't have a surplus of income, but I cook more for myself. Where I live I cook for the group and it's easier to cost share that way.

RI: You live with a group of women together. Does that help?

V: Yes, in women's housing we cook and take turns cooking, so that's really good.

RI: How do you cost share? Do you have a communal food budget?

V: Yes and we all do chores.

RI: That's really good. I like the community aspect in your housing.

V: Yes it's really good because a lot of people come and build friendships and relationships around food. I don't necessarily like cooking just for me, so it's really great to cook for everybody, to get everybody to enjoy healthy vegetarian food!



Lessons from Cuba: Urban Agriculture as Necessity

by Matthew Kyriakides

The City of Vancouver is attempting to follow an ambitious food strategy which aims to localize the ways in which our food is grown, consumed, distributed, and generally regarded within the city. One of the major problems with this plan, however, is illustrated by the Cuban model.



Cuban agriculture has been historically insecure. From the early years of Spanish rule, through American intervention and Revolution, until the end of the Soviet Union in the early 1990's, the resources the island produces and the ways in which it operates have been dictated by forces outside of its borders. Even after the US embargo was enforced following the Cuban Revolution of 1958, the island found copious sources of energy from a growing partnership with the Soviet bloc. They traded sugar and other market staples to the east for a secure supply of oil,

pesticides and chemical fertilizers with which to fuel their energy intensive agricultural methods.

This tenuous partnership came to an abrupt end with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and with it tumbled the entire food system of an already fragile island. The right of the Cuban people to food was tested to its limits, and the government had to re-orient their entire agricultural system. The tractors, tillers, and other gas powered vehicles were suddenly made uneconomical; so, too, were the many herds of cattle, which required more grain to feed than the island could produce.

The cities and countryside were completely re-organized during the Special Period (the name given to the years following the collapse of the USSR). Any available land in the cities was taken over by urban farms and small markets, while dairy and beef consumption was heavily limited by the government in order to reduce the numbers of cattle the island held. Small, cooperatively managed enterprises called organopónicos actively took control of public space in an effort to supply food crops to the people of Cuba. They were heavily subsidized by the government, which also encouraged the use of organic pest management and imposed limits on the amount of chemical fertilizer and pesticide used by the farmers.

A telling measure of the effect the Special Period had on Cuba is in the stats: from 1989 to 1995, the average per capita caloric intake fell from 2,900 to 1,800 calories a day. Protein consumption fell at least 40%, and trade with foreign markets fell drastically. It took many years of trial and error, and buckets of sweat, to coax an appreciable amount of food from the soil. To view Cuba today brings up a slightly different image, as Venezuela and China have picked up much of the economic slack left by the USSR. The farms of the cities and countryside remain, but



shortages and scarcity of key crops are a common occurrence.

Cuba stands at the vanguard of global urban agriculture, but they do not do so of their own accord. They were forced to adopt a more sustainable model of agriculture by a very specific set of historical circumstances. The failure of a foreign political and economic system they relied on, as well as the trade routes blocked by frayed relations with their northern neighbours, showed just how precarious their situation was.

Vancouver may be trying to introduce many of the features of the Cuban model like urban farms, farmers markets, and a legislature supporting urban agriculture but until a real necessity hits, these plans will remain just that--plans, with very little support from the public or reason to move away from an over-reliance on external food sources.

The province of British Columbia, and the city of Vancouver, are also food insecure. Much of our food comes from outside of our borders, while the food we produce is often exported for trade. The importance of the Right to Food can be measured by the food grown and consumed within the boundaries of the city and

its surrounding regions. Vancouver may be trying to introduce many of the features of the Cuban model like urban farms, farmers markets, and a legislature supporting urban agriculture but until a real necessity hits, these plans will remain just that--plans, with very little support from the public or reason to move away from an over-reliance on external food sources. It will take more than good intentions to transform the local food system in any real way.





Not Welcome at Canada's Table

By *dm gillis*

When Oliver De Schutter, the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, released his report on the state of food security in Canada, Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration countered, "I think this is completely ridiculous. Canada is one of the wealthiest, most democratic countries in the world. We believe that the UN should focus on development in countries where people are starving and we think it's simply a waste of resources to come to Canada to give them political lecturing."

From his comment, it appears Kenney, like most Canadians, is either in denial, or views hunger as a tap that is either turned on or off. For Kenney, hunger is a problem existing exclusively in the developing world. Canada, on the other hand, has a well fed citizenry that enjoys all the freedoms of a northern democratic paradise. To Kenney, and others like him, there is no middle place where hunger resides. No place, like in some households in Canada, where a meal is a once perhaps twice-a-day occurrence, where portions are too small for hungry children, and where the gnawing pain of hunger dominates, dehumanises and disconnects us as a nation.

But the Special Rapporteur's report wasn't questioning whether Canada is wealthy or democratic. Certainly we are a wealthy country, and we meet at least some dictionary definitions of 'democratic'. What the report highlights is the reality of food insecurity in Canada, a serious public health concern. Food insecurity is associated with poor nutrition and decreased physical and mental health. And that is why the fact of your hungry neighbour is such a disgrace.

The most recent data shows that nearly one million Canadian households lived with daily food insecurity in 2007–08 . The cause was lack of money, a crime in one of the wealthiest, most democratic countries in the world. In households that face food insecurity, children and adults eat less or skip whole meals. And the foods they eat are of low quality. Some spend large portions of their day standing in food lines. Time that could be better spent seeking employment, or pursuing more of the benefits of living in a wealthy democracy.

All of this does another thing. It sends a very clear message to those living with food insecurity. And that message is that they aren't welcome at Canada's table. They do not share in the wealth other Canadians enjoy.

Hunger and food insecurity, and the estrangement they cause, may also continue in Canada because they are hallmarks of countries that exist under the conceit of being great democracies, and therefore immune to injustice.

1.) <http://www.nupge.ca/content/5026/canada-without-borders-asks-pm-clarify-who-responsible-poverty-file>
2.) <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/insecurit/key-stats-cles-2007-2008-eng.php>



Photo: Tracy Hunter





A Home Becomes a Garden: DTES Senior Women Living in Burnaby

by Stan Shaffer

What happens when 20 women of disparate backgrounds but most with a connection to the DTES find themselves living in single suites in a home for mature women in North Burnaby? Among the activities that can bridge the personal and communal gaps, gardening is perhaps the most healthful and fulfilling.

Elspeth House is an Atria Women’s Resources Society-run residence for approximately 20 mature women on social assistance who have been referred by organizations such as Lookout, Raincity, and Carnegie Senior Services. For now, they live in a quiet leafy suburb and many have taken up gardening this spring and summer.

Last year, Atira CEO Janice Abbott wanted to create a community garden at Elspeth House, but the experiment with raised boxes supplied by ReStores, planted by student volunteers and tended by staff didn’t take root. This year more ReStore boxes were added, VanMar Constructors provided soil, and the residents paid for the seeds and plants. Interested women had to sign up for a box, and some were skeptical saying it wouldn’t work. Nevertheless, all 13 boxes were claimed. In addition, about 40 feet of overgrown flower beds have been cultivated and planted. Most common garden vegetables, plus strawberries and flowers, are flourishing, and many boxes have artistic touches such as little lights, plastic flowers, and wrought-iron birds. Linda Taylor, the house manager, and Janice Abbot, Atira’s CEO, were both supportive of a Zine story about the gardeners.

I interviewed several women in Elspeth’s dining room, but before that had a tour with Linda and the Home’s lead gardener, Rose, a shy woman from Kenya. Rose had extensive gardening experience in her homeland and in addition to tending a handful of boxes has cleared and planted a large swath of overgrown flower beds. She’s growing typical vegetables—radishes, cauliflower, broccoli, peppers, potatoes, kale, chard, beans, and a pumpkin. Rose uses them for salads and cooking, including the young cauliflower leaves. She offered me one and I was surprised by its delicate, not bitter taste. She spends three to four hours per day tending her new spaces and boxes, as well looking after others. “Rose is awesome,” another resident says and tells a story about Rose watching another woman digging with her hands and saying, “You’re an African woman gardener because God gave us all

“When there is doubt go into the garden and the garden will heal you.” Patrick Lane, BC poet

the tools we need to grow things.”

A second resident gardener, Sue, has had many surgeries after a traffic accident but over the past year has graduated from a wheelchair to walking without help. Only one day out of the hospital this spring, she started planting. She had no gardening experience but did it “for something to do.” She looked up information on the internet and spends





a couple of hours a week weeding and thinning. Keeping a garden is a “personal challenge” and makes her feel “self-accomplished.” Spinach has been her best vegetable but weevils or maybe a racoon got her onions. Sue says gardening has helped with self-esteem and independence. She also praises an Elspeth volunteer, Marilyn, who comes every Friday afternoon for several hours. Burnaby is Sue’s original home, and she loves living there again.

J., another resident, doesn’t want to be called senior or mature and prefers “young at heart.” Her father-in-law lived in Surrey and although he didn’t garden, she helped him do lots of canning. She decided to garden because the boxes were available, it’s “economical for low-income people,” and she enjoys sharing the harvest with the community. J. has good feelings about watching things grow, is vegetarian and will make casseroles. She would garden again and freeze some of the produce, and suggests adding fruit trees next year.

Raj grew up in Ladner on a large hobby farm where her mother gardened, so gardening at Elspeth House brings back warm memories. Now she rarely has to buy vegetables and enjoys eating organic and being healthy. She recalls that her mother baked a zucchini dish by scraping out the seeds, adding meat and rice and topping it with cheese. (See recipe this issue.) She always keeps an emergency kit after experiencing blizzards in Alberta. Raj now works at Brentwood Mall and loves her quiet, calm life in Burnaby. (See Recipe page 16)

Doreen has lived at Elspeth for over a year and was sceptical about gardening but since she’s started, “it gets me out of my room.” She adds, “It’s also helpful for mental health because there are lots of judgments about other people’s activities so that we forget the good parts which include gardening.” Moreover, gardening can lead to other things such as canning, sharing ideas, and improved mental and physical health from working outside. The best parts are that “sometimes I didn’t have much to eat,

but now I make my own organic salads” and that she can “see my garden from my balcony.” As well, “gardening is part of the process of sharing,” and she’ll leave extra vegetables on the kitchen counter.

The last Elspeth gardener I interviewed is Alex, a young developmentally delayed woman who lived at Elspeth before Atira took over. Alex is friendly with all the women and has a part-time job cleaning the breakfast dishes. This is Alex’s first experience gardening and she was helped by her mother Susanna. She wanted “to try something new” and says she “smiles when she sees the vegetables growing.” Alex likes that some residents talk about their gardens and show them to her.

Finally, Marilyn Guetta volunteers at Elspeth House one day a week, offering the women emotional and moral support and playing games such as Rumkin, Scrabble, and cribbage. She had a garden in her Winnipeg home, “loves gardening,” and supplied some of the tomato plants. She helps all the gardeners when asked and suggests saving seeds from this year’s harvest to plant next year.

The noted BC poet Patrick Lane is a devoted gardener at his Victoria-area home. In his books about the moral and spiritual value of gardening, Lane claims that “When there is doubt go into the garden and the garden will heal you,” and similarly, “There is no quieter pleasure than to spend a long morning in the garden working.” The responses of the women at Elspeth House illustrate the myriad ways that gardening provides mental and physical healing, inspiration, self-esteem, cooperation, and sharing.

Final note: The City of Burnaby has informed Elspeth House that watering for residential properties is between 1am-6am. No exceptions for this multi-residential building. “The best laid plans...”



Regaining Control of our Food: Surviving the Zombie Revolution

by Anna Cavouras

Someone once told me to only shop the perimeter of the grocery store. They correctly pointed out that everything that was actually ‘food’--dairy, meat, produce, bread--was located around the edges of the store. This forced shoppers to walk through aisles of processed and packaged food to get to these items.

The intention was that shoppers would be drawn to these other convenience items and buy things they hadn’t planned to. This became apparent to me when I took my grandmother shopping one day. She insisted on going to a certain small grocer out of her neighbourhood because she wasn’t daunted by all the other products available. She told me that she didn’t recognize what half the things were in the bigger stores and that she just needed the basics. I realized in that moment that my future food philosophy would be to eat things my grandmother would recognize. And in the next moment, I realized I had basically no idea how to make, grow, or prepare any of the things that she knew.

My grandmother is a woman of skills. She is now 85 and until a few years ago she was still chopping her own wood for the winter. She collects rainwater in a barrel. She can plant, nurture, and identify plants for food and medicine. She can hunt, fish, clean and prepare whatever she might catch. Baking bread, putting up preserves, organizing a root cellar – these are skills she’d mastered decades ago.

To compare my own skill set, I can look up all these things on YouTube and then try to do them. I am a reasonably competent bread baker, a mediocre gardener, a terrible woodchopper, and I have been fishing exactly three times. I would be close to useless in a post-apocalyptic society and my brain would

My garden is in the ground. I’m building a root cellar. I’ll keep practicing with the bread. And I’ve got grandma working on a herbal anti-zombie potion.

be eaten by zombies in the first few days. To my own credit, I have understood the necessity to learn these basic survival skills for myself, especially because alarming global conditions force us to rethink our lives in urban settings. As the world becomes more abstract through computers and we become more removed from many of the realities of our food production, some of us long to connect back to something tangible and to try to create something for ourselves, instead of giving autonomy over our food to others.



**HOMESTEADERS
EMPORIUM**





Homesteaders Emporium is just down the street from where I work at the Neighbourhood House on Hastings. I met with its founder Rick to hear his thoughts on lost skills, wood chopping grannies, regaining control of our food, and zombies. Rick eloquently echoed some of my thoughts on the renewed interest in these skills saying that there is a clear movement to becoming more involved in our food: “People come to this from a lot of different directions. Producing your own food is a tactile experience and it seems more real than what much of our day-to-day lives have become. Lots of people work at a computer, leave to run on a treadmill, and then go home to play video games. A real visceral experience is missing from these lives.” He rightly pointed out that in a post-apocalyptic world it is likely that YouTube wouldn’t be available, hinting that I might need a back-up plan. I’m working on one. My garden is in the ground. I’m building a root cellar. I’ll keep practicing with the bread. And I’ve got grandma working on a herbal anti-zombie potion.

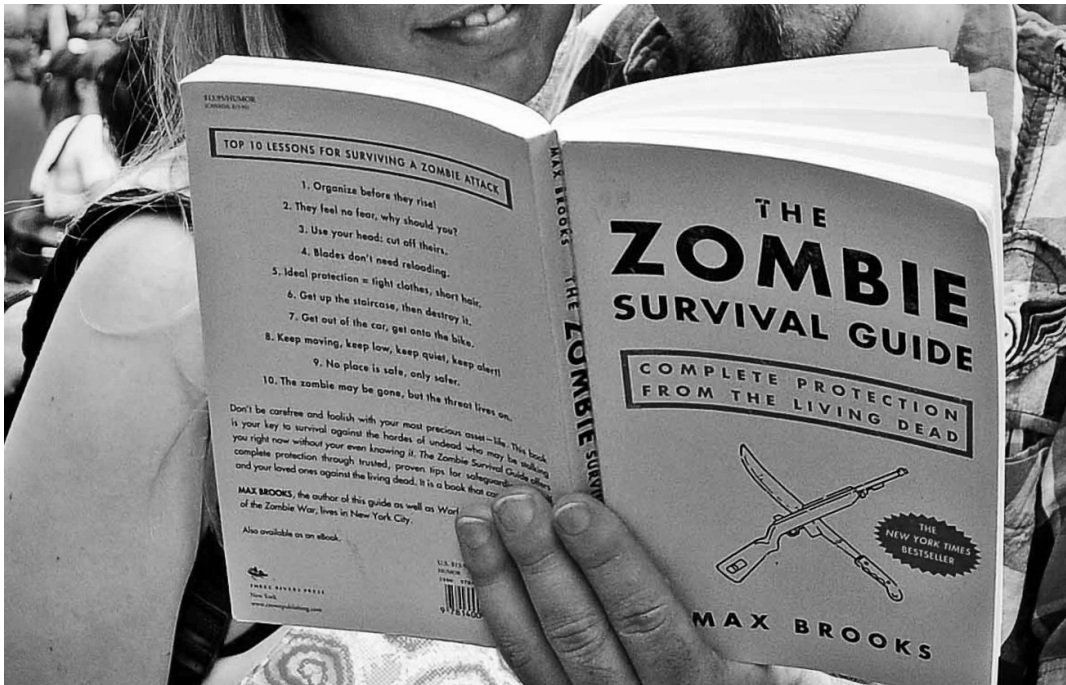


Photo: dm gillis





The DTES Kitchen Tables Project Community Food Access Map: Asserting the Right to Food in an Undignified System

by Doris Chow & Jenna Drabble

As a program of Potluck Café Society, the DTES Kitchen Tables Project has the overarching goal of increasing the availability, nutritional quality and choice of food served with dignity in the DTES. Working in collaboration with multiple stakeholders including DTES residents, food provider organizations, policy makers, healthcare workers and others, the DTES Kitchen Tables Project is building a more coordinated and sustainable food system

not people will receive food and if it will meet their specific dietary needs.

While acknowledging the work that others have dedicated to creating food lists, DTES Kitchen Tables saw that in many cases organizations simply do not have the time or budget to create or update the information despite seeing a need for such a resource. With this in mind and with food as its focus, the DTES Kitchen Tables Project developed the Com-

The DTES Food Map illustrates the need for food to be accessible around the clock for residents who rely on publically available food, which can only be achieved through neighbourhood-wide coordination and communication.

neighbourhood-wide from seed to compost. The DTES Community Food Access Map is one of our most recent initiatives, which lists free and low-cost meals offered in the DTES.

Navigating the charitable food system is no easy task. There are a number of places in the Downtown Eastside where residents can find free and low-cost food throughout the week and many people rely on these services. Keeping track of the times and days that food is available at a variety of locations is a challenge in itself, not to mention all of the other details that people need to know in order to obtain a meal. Information such as how many meals are provided at each location, the type of food being served and who is permitted to access the service affects whether or

community Food Access Map, which lists accessible food in a new and innovative manner. Organized by time, the DTES Food Map shows when and where food is available over a 24-hour schedule, 7 days a week, with icons that provide information about what can be expected at each meal being served. For example, the map indicates whether a meal is breakfast, lunch, dinner or snack, if there are vegetarian or vegan options, if there is a mandatory sermon or if the meal is reserved for particular groups or requires a membership. The DTES Food Map is a work in progress towards affirming an individual's fundamental Human Right to make informed choices about where and what they are eating, in a neighbourhood where





people often have little choice but to rely on charitable food.

An underlying intention of the DTES Food Map is not only to provide a resource for DTES residents on where and when food is available, but also when food is not available, which is equally important. As heard by the DTES Kitchen Tables Outreach Team, many residents do not ascribe to the “banker hours” of Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, finding it most difficult to access food during the night and early in the morning, which is most concerning for people who need to take food with medications, work throughout the night or who need sustenance before going to work or volunteering. The DTES Food Map illustrates the need for food to be accessible around the clock for residents who rely on publically available food, which can only be achieved through neighbourhood-wide coordination and communication.

With the help of the DTES Kitchen Tables Outreach Team, 2,500 copies of the first version of DTES Food Map were distributed at the HomeGround Festival in February 2013, with an additional 500 distributed to organizations throughout the neighbourhood. Since the launch, the roving DTES Kitchen Tables Outreach Team has gathered feedback, suggestions and information from residents to improve and update the Food Map. This input was used to create an updated and revised version, which was released in July 2013. Additionally, 30 permanent copies are available at various organizations including Carnegie, Oppenheimer Park, the Downtown Community Health Clinic, the DTES Neighbourhood House, Salvation Army and many more. For a full list of locations, to get a copy of a Food Map, to give feedback on the Food Map or to add or change your food program listed in the Food Map, please email the DTES Kitchen Tables Project Manager, Doris Chow at doris@potluckcatering.com or call 604-683-0073 ext. 222. For those who have access to a printer, the Food Map is also available for download on our website at www.dteskitchentables.org/ distribution. For more information about the Project,

visit www.dteskitchentables.org. Many thanks to our generous supporters who helped make the DTES Food Map a reality: BCGEU, Potluck Café Society and Vancouver Foundation.



Photos: dm gillis

recipes

Bibi's Baked Zucchini

by Raj, a gardener at Elspeth House in Burnaby. With culinary love from her daughter

My brothers and I enjoyed my mother Bibi's recipe when we were growing up. The basics are below, but you can add a variety of different veggies, nuts (almonds & pistachios are great), and even fruit (golden raisins or cut apple).

Ingredients

- 1 lb. lean hamburger (ground chicken or turkey or soft tofu works)
- firm, large zucchinis, 1 per person
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1/2 of green and red peppers, chopped
- 1 stalk celery, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley, coarsely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp each of onion powder & cumin seed
- sea salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 cup cooked rice

Instructions

1. Brown meat or tofu about 15 minutes; drain and discard any fat
2. Blend all ingredients except zucchinis.
3. Slice zucchinis lengthwise and hollow out centres.
4. Stuff each zucchini half with the blended ingredients and wrap in foil.

5. For large zuckes, bake at 350 for ½ hour (smaller ones 20 minutes), or until tender.
6. Serve topped with any cheese (optional).

Ingredients

- 4 cups rolled oats—a whole bag is \$2.70 (non-organic) or \$4 (organic)
- 1 cup of nuts (I like to use almond slivers)—\$2.40 for a bag of almonds (nuts can be found cheaper at stores with bulk sections)
- 1/2 cup sesame seeds—\$1.20
- 1 cup dehydrated apple, finely chopped—\$1.40
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup syrup can be agave, maple, or even honey—\$2.30
- 1/3 cup oil (olive or grapeseed works well)
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350°F.
- In a large bowl, combine oats, nuts, sesame seeds, cinnamon, and salt. Add syrup, oil, and vanilla. Stir until well mixed.
- Spread evenly on one or two baking pans and bake for 20-25 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes.
- Let granola cool before stirring in apples.

Makes about 8 cups.



recipes

Judy Graves All Year Round Potato Salad

Summer Version:

- "waxy" potatoes, boiled, cooled, peels rubbed off, coarsely chopped
 - as many eggs as potatoes, also boiled, peeled, coarsely chopped
 - finely slivered sweet onion and celery to taste
 - a large dollop of mayonnaise
 - salt to taste
- Stir it all together, refrigerate immediately, serve a few hours later, or the next day.

Winter Version:

- baking potatoes, eggs, celery as above
- drained sauerkraut
- winter onions fried until golden and fragrant
- optional crisp, crumbled bacon, or sliced cooked sausage links, or finely sliced garlic sausage
- mayonnaise stirred with a little French's mustard
- mix it all together, heat through thoroughly before serving. Leftovers will taste even cozier tomorrow.

I like these recipes because they are simple and people love them. Comfort food, not expensive, but filling, and you can make them with only a hot plate or microwave, a knife, spoon and bar fridge. It adapts to serve one person living alone, or 50 folk coming to dinner.

Bon appetit!





About the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House

The secular, grassroots Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House (DTES NH) embraces people of all ancestries, genders, ages and descriptions, annually welcoming almost 9,000 DTES residents in a community where 70% of our neighbours have low incomes, 700 are homeless and 5,000 are under-housed.

Those who built the DTES NH put the right to food at the heart of our work, as nutritional vulnerability is a theme familiar to all. Our goal around the right to food is to reform the nutritional impact, quality, abundance and delivery of food in the DTES in consultation with residents, community food providers, non-food community organizations, healthcare professionals, policy makers, growers/suppliers, food/beverage industry professionals and researchers.

Visit our website for more information about the Neighbourhood House: <http://dtesnhouse.ca>

The Right to Food Commons

Are you interested in gardening and growing some lovely vegetables? The Right to Food Commons is looking for you! We are a group of food security-minded gardeners looking to set up a farm in the DTES in partnership with the Neighbourhood House. Our aim is to keep the food and labour within the community.

We need more hands and voices! If you are interested in learning more, helping out, or giving us some suggestions, we encourage you to join our farm bund. We meet weekly at the Neighbourhood House. For more information contact Kim at kimdvg@dtesnhouse.ca or swing by the house and say hello.

Contributing to the Zine

Interested in contributing to the *RTF Zine*? We're always looking for articles, artwork, or ideas that reflect the right to food. Find us online at <http://dtesnhouse.ca/zine> or let us know who you are at zine@dtesnhouse.ca.

*Frances and Stan Shaffer.
She's 103, noted for her
Chocolate ice box cake.
And reads a book a day.*



Visit the RTF Zine website for more stories, references, and the podcast: <http://dtesnhouse.ca/zine>



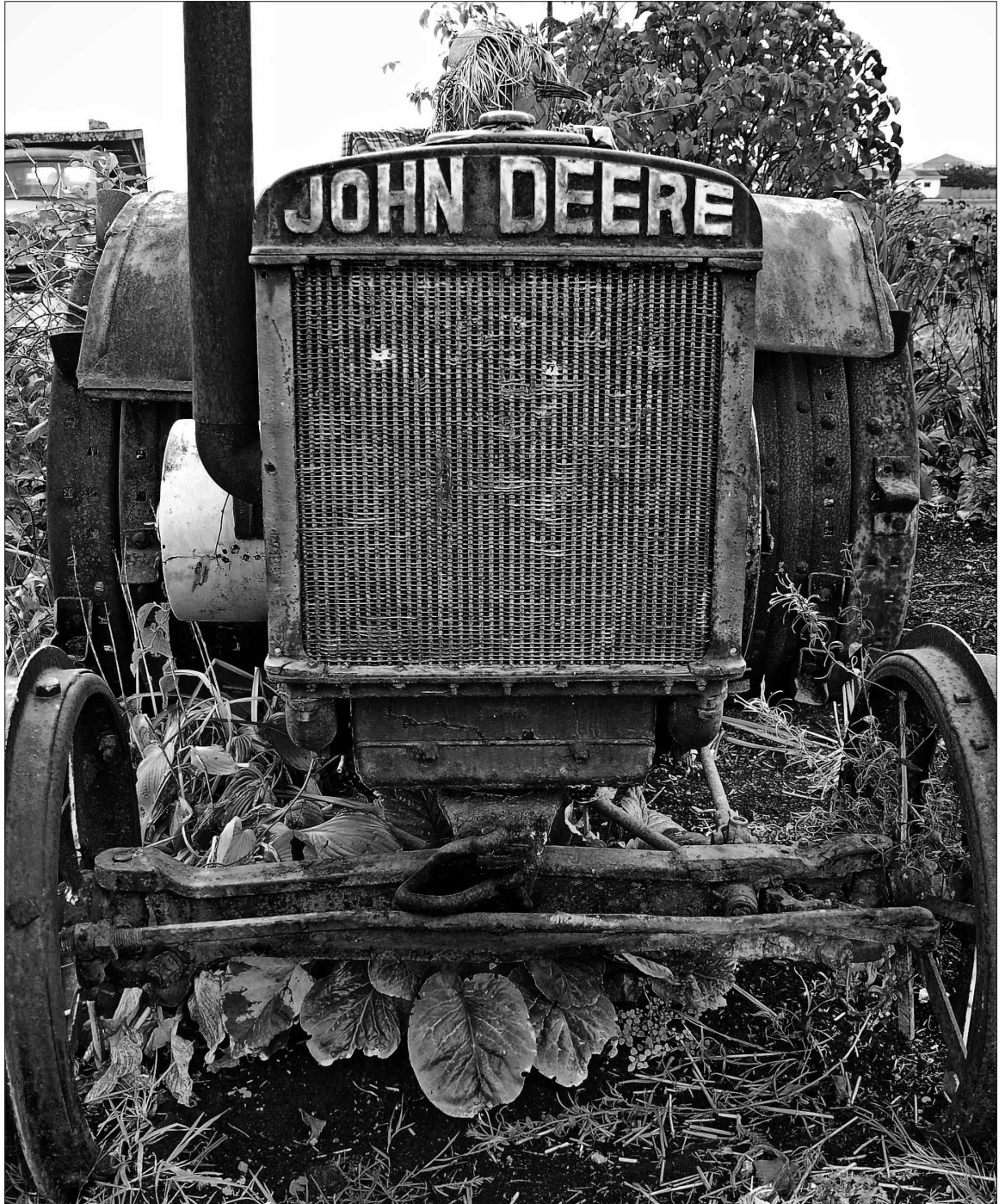


Photo: dm gillis





RTF Zine's Summer Food Book Suggestions

Food Tank is a New York City-based online publication founded by Danielle Niernberg & Ellen Gustafson. Their June 9 issue recommended 13 books on the food system that could save the environment. The RTF Zine includes several of these books.

The Urban Food Revolution: Changing the Way We Feed Cities by Peter Ladner

According to the World Health Organization, more than half of the world's population now lives in cities. The Urban Food Revolution looks at the ways in which urban food systems need to change in order to become healthier and more sustainable. (Note: the author is former Vancouver City Councillor.)

Bet the Farm: How Food Stopped Being Food by Frederick Kaufman

Bet the Farm starts with an unnerving statistic: in 2008, "farmers produced more grain than ever, enough to feed twice as many people as were on Earth. In the same year... a billion people went hungry." Kaufman delves into the problems with our food system and uncovers the financial underpinnings that motivate this dysfunctional system.

Diet for a Hot Planet: The Climate Crisis at the End of Your Fork and What You Can Do About It by Anna Lappe

Anna Lappe's Diet for a Hot Planet outlines the ways in which the current food system contributes to climate change, the barriers to a true reform, and what consumers can do to provoke change.

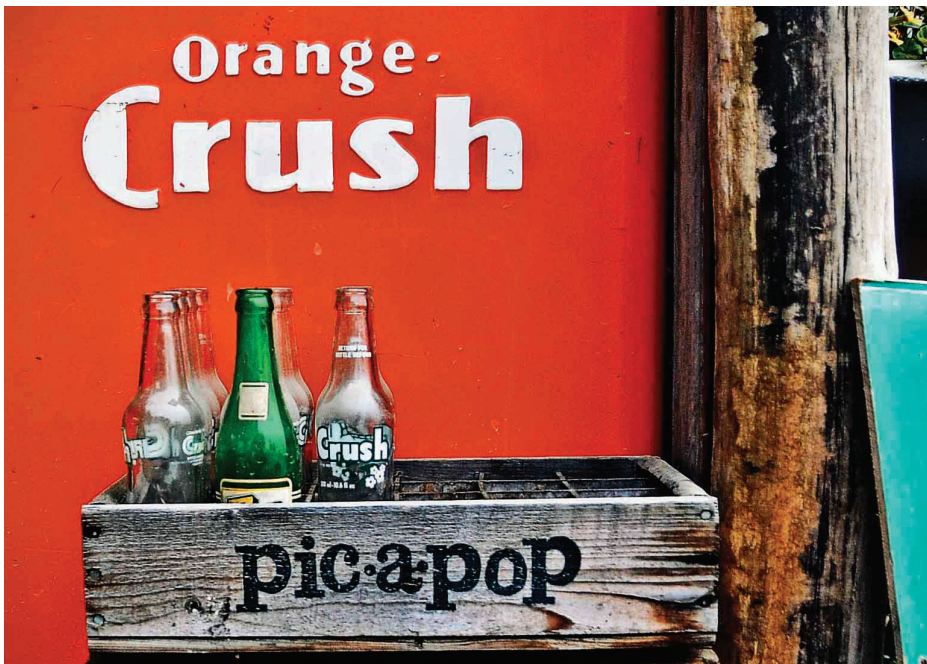
Behind the Kitchen Door by Saru Jayaraman

Exploring the food system from a different angle, Jayaraman points to the deeply troubling labor practices that exist in the food industry. With personal stories and interviews, Jayaraman unveils the low wages and grueling positions that farm and kitchen workers endure.

The Essential Urban Farmer by Novella Carpenter and Willow Rosenthal

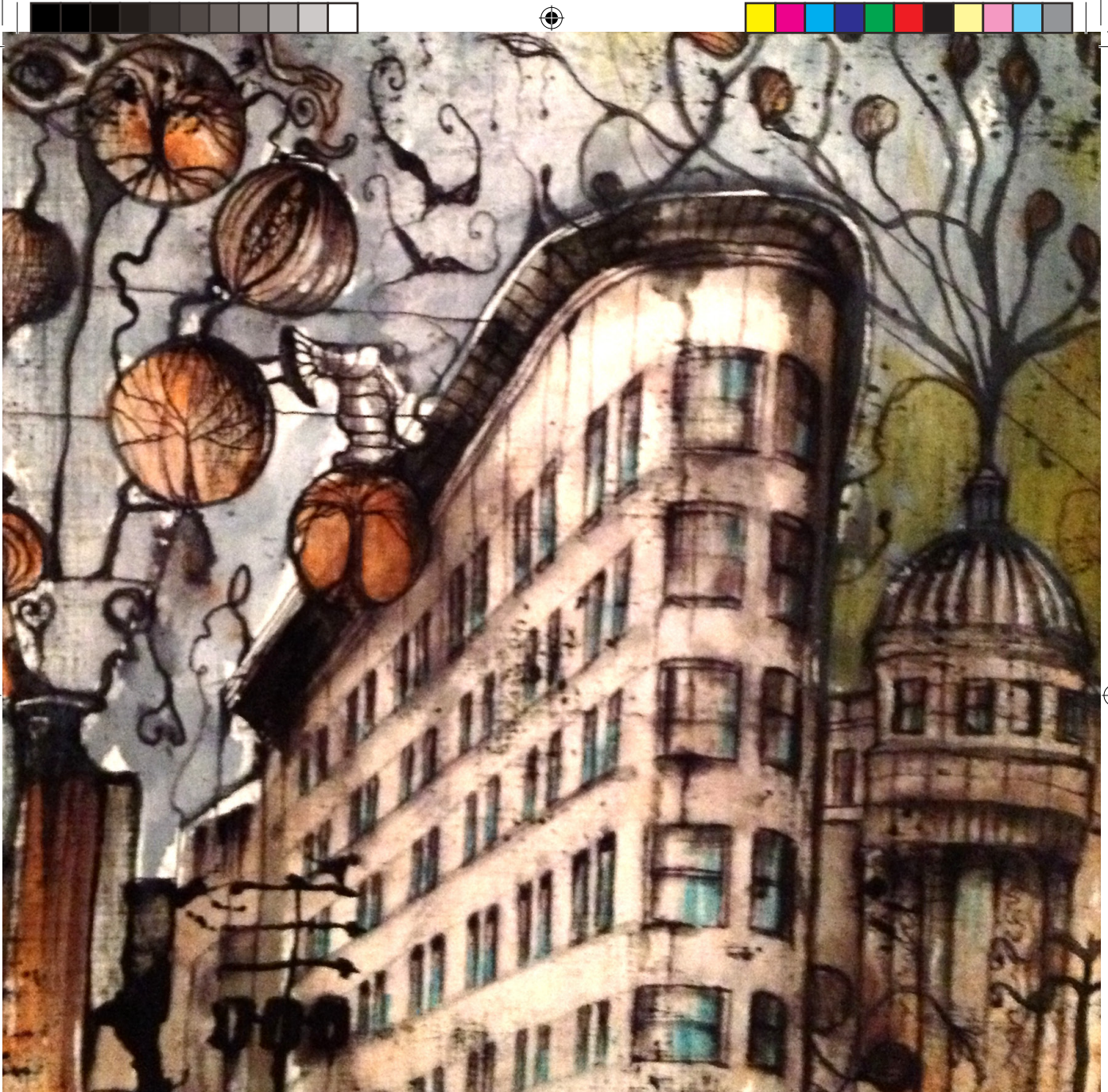
For those without a backyard, the Essential Urban Farmer is the essential tutorial to begin growing food in cities.





Photos: dm gillis





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