

USC CANADA
ANNUAL REPORT 2016

YOU ARE GROWING GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

USC CANADA

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COVER PHOTO: FREDDY CONDORI, BOLIVIAN FARMER (K. CLARK/USC CANADA)
PAGE 2 PHOTO: K. CLARK/USC CANADA

THANK YOU FOR A YEAR OF GROWTH AND COMMITMENT



EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Jane Rabinowicz

Martin Settle

It's been a tumultuous year. While change affected governments and policies in Canada and around the world, the shifting global conversation on climate may be the most significant and troubling. We've seen that conversation move from a rare international agreement reached in Paris in 2015 to a state of uncertainty following the U.S. election last fall. As if to make a point, 2016 ended as the hottest year on record.

The people you support are feeling the impacts. Drought and unseasonal rains in Mali, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Timor Leste, Honduras, Bolivia and Canada have meant major crop failures, and real threats to farmers and the people who rely on them for food. Around the world, farmers are experiencing climate change at the front line of its advance.

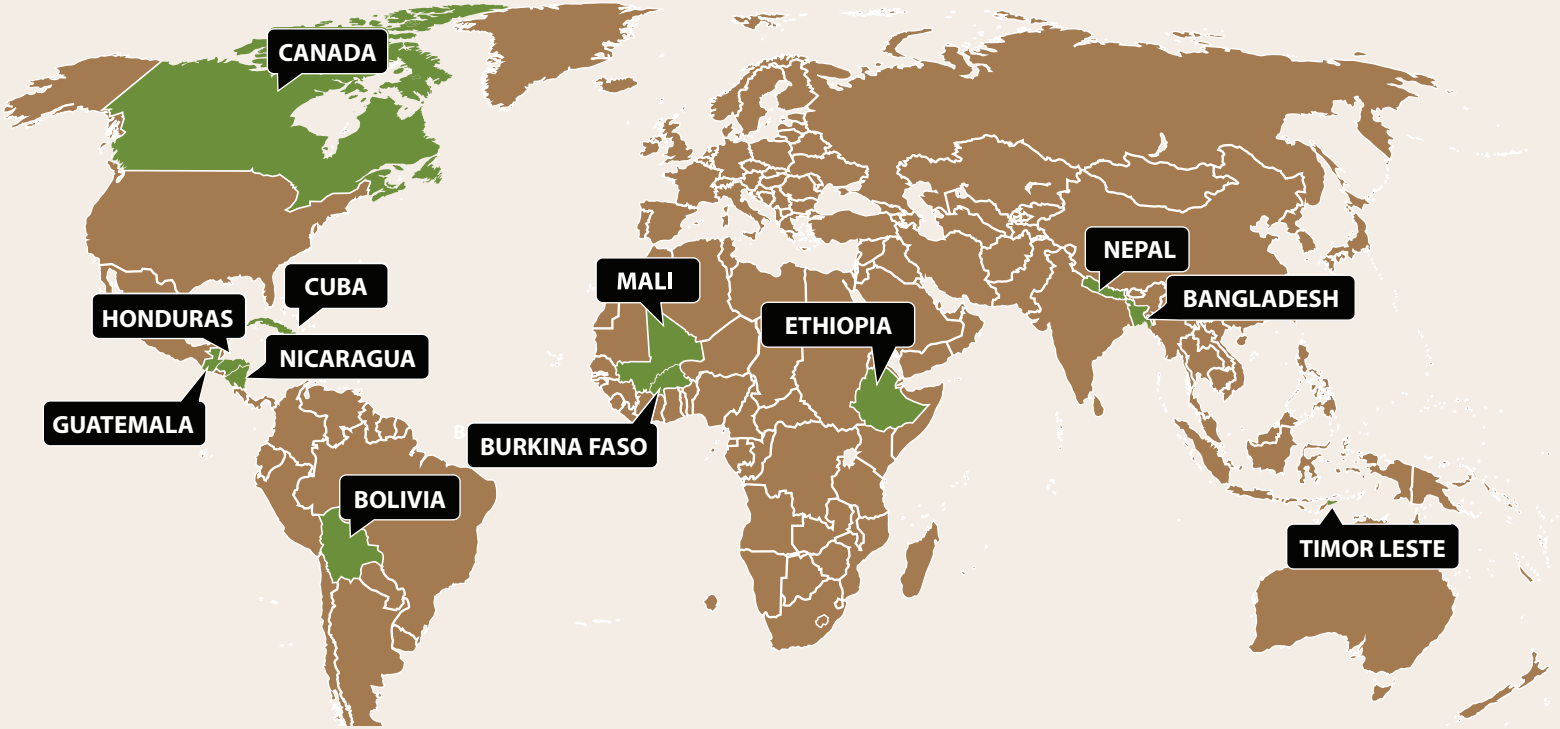
Our Seeds of Survival (SoS) program works to creatively address that experience. SoS communities are more resilient because they have the knowledge and tools to enhance seed diversity and grow food sustainably. As this annual report attests, their locally adapted and diverse crops can better withstand unpredictable weather, and their farmers are more likely to thrive in the face of climate change. Resilience is the foundation of Seeds of Survival.

Still, resilience is not an end-state. We'll never be able to check a box that says we completed the task. To be resilient, a community must always be learning and adapting. Your contributions allow USC Canada to invest in deep and long lasting collaborations with our partners. You make this possible.

Your support also allows us to invest in the resilience of USC Canada as an organization. This past year we moved to a new, more flexible office space (still at 56 Sparks Street, of course!), adopted a collaborative Executive Director model, and grew our capacity for monitoring, evaluation and learning so we can continue to improve our work in Canada and around the globe.

Despite the many challenges we see ahead, we enter this new year with great energy, strength, and renewed commitment to our work. We commend our partners and staff for their ongoing dedication, and **we extend profound appreciation to you, our loyal supporters, for providing the means, motivation and inspiration we need to grow a better world**.

YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK AROUND THE WORLD



HONDURAS

YOUR SUPPORT HELPS FARMERS LEAD THE WAY

Local grassroots farmer research teams called CIALs (*Comités de Investigación Agrícola Local*) have been the strong heart of our program in Honduras – and serve as a model for other countries in the region. The CIALs have consistently proven to be remarkably effective in improving food security, livelihoods, and community solidarity. **With your donations, the program was able to expand this year from 59 to 133 communities. Twenty-four new CIALs were established in 2016 alone. Remarkably, they have recently developed seven unique bean varieties and six maize varieties for wide use.**

In the most marginalized rural areas of Honduras, these teams draw together farmers' own valuable knowledge and pass it on to the next generation. Your donations support them in further learning, field research, organizing, and marketing – and feeding their communities.

The success of these CIALs is being recognized by national institutions – which influences national seed and agriculture policies. **This is a significant step in enabling the work to spread and benefit more Honduran families**.

Our Partner:
The Foundation for Participatory Research with Honduran Farmers (FIPAH)



PHOTO: L. LÉVEILLÉ/USC CANADA

Odir Ariel Palma Castro is the son of a CIAL member in Honduras.

OFF TO A GREAT START

In this first year of our Seeds of Survival program in Guatemala, USC Canada was able to begin working in 17 communities and supported the creation of seven farmer research teams. **Your support meant that 42 families were able to create gardens to produce locally adapted vegetable seeds for their communities**.

Thanks to you, two municipal agrobiodiversity fairs were held in 2016 where hundreds of farmers showcased a vast diversity of traditional varieties of seeds.

USC Canada's Seed Security Assessment methodology with local farmers is a key tool and milestone that also surprisingly **revealed the existence of five species of maize which had never been previously reported.**

The assessment also exposed the threats to this diversity. Our future global food security depends on securing these invaluable natural resources.

Our Partner:
Asociación de Organizaciones de Los Cuchumatanes (ASOCUCH)



PHOTO: B. OLIVER/USC CANADA

Achieving such rich, beautiful soil in such a dry area of Guatemala is definitely something to smile about!

NICARAGUA

DEFEATING DROUGHT

Climate change coupled with a harsh El Niño meant many farmers in Nicaragua experienced an intensely dry year. Your donations support farmers in the Dry Corridor region, which faces the most serious effects of these drought conditions. **Last year, thanks to you, USC Canada was able to work in 34 rural communities, helping more than 4,000 people diversify and improve their crops to withstand the ongoing drought**. As well, 10 grassroots farmer research teams were established to increase agricultural innovation.

Together, farmers and scientists are developing new varieties of corn that mature early and require less rain.

They also promote crops like sorghum that thrive in dry conditions. This cereal crop, which originated in Africa, requires much less water than corn and has higher nutrition content. The farmer-improved variety known as *Sorgo Blanco Tortillero* can be ground into a fine flour for tortillas – a traditional and tasty mainstay of the Central American diet.

Our Partner:
Federación de Cooperativas para el Desarrollo (FECODESA)



PHOTO: B. OLIVER/USC CANADA

Liliam Morales lives in one of the driest areas of Nicaragua. With SoS support, Liliam has diversified her farm, learned how to improve the health of her soil, and created her own organic insect repellents.

BOLIVIA

BETTER NUTRITION

Your donations are helping Bolivian farmers in isolated rural communities in northern Potosí, an area prone to frosts, hail, and other increasingly extreme weather. The Quechua Indigenous peoples of this region have deep agricultural and cultural traditions. **Your support for our Bolivian partner, PRODII, has allowed communities to develop farmer-run associations and agricultural enterprises**. Their best practices in post-harvest transformation (e.g. turning oca – a colourful root vegetable – into nutritious biscuits and beverages for school children), as well as marketing and sales, have become **a model for USC Canada's other Seeds of Survival programs**.

PRODII is also **piloting extremely important nutrition work to complement food security programming**. Farmers are **encouraged and trained in the cultivation of more diverse vegetables in order to improve their diets**. The pilot even provides discussion groups for advice on how to include more vegetables in traditional cooking. Early results are promising!

Our Partner:
Program de Desarrollo Integral Interdisciplinario (PRODII)



PHOTO: K. CLARK/USC CANADA

Don Condori lives in Panacachi, Bolivia and farms with his son, Freddy, whose photo is on the cover of this report.

CUBA

SECURING THE FOUNDATIONS OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

USC Canada has been working with Cuba's National Institute for Agricultural Sciences since 2007 through their Program for Local Agricultural Innovation (PIAL) to strengthen food and economic security. **Through this, your donations help fortify the local seed supply**.

In 2014, USC Canada developed and piloted a Seed Security Assessment in Cuba, which is now being used throughout our Seeds of Survival program. Carried out primarily by local farmers, **these assessments are fundamental in determining seed and biodiversity resources and for designing follow-up strategies**.

In 2014, farmers carried out assessments in three municipalities and **their success has led to the completion of six more in 2015-16**. Follow-up has already begun with training and international learning exchanges on local seed certification and variety registration **that will increase the quality and quantity of local seeds**.

Our Partners:
National Institute for Agricultural Sciences
Sciences Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation Welthungerhilfe, Germany



Maritza Dominguez Gonzalez and her father Leonides not only grow an impressive array of vegetable crops, but they also preserve a banana grove with 84 different varieties of banana!

PHOTO: MICHEL POU

ETHIOPIA

AVERTING A CRISIS

This year **El Niño triggered droughts and food shortages which affected 10 million Ethiopians**. The farmers we work with in South Wollo reported no rain at all from February to April 2015 and traditional May rains didn't arrive until July. Households expected they would have only three months of food at the end of the growing season.

Our local partners shifted focus to climate adaptation strategies and getting farmers access to seeds of fast maturing crops through seed banks and family supplies. They also successfully set up a grain reserve system and added two more seed banks.

Your timely support for seed banks and agricultural biodiversity saved hundreds of farming families from serious food shortages.

Ethiopia, the birthplace of our Seeds of Survival program nearly three decades ago, remains our model for strengthening farmer seed-supply systems and networks of Community Seed Banks, which are crucial for resilience in these times of climate chaos.

Our Partner:
Ethio-Organic Seed Action (EOSA)



PHOTO: JIM RICHARDSON

Hawa Yesuf cooks injera, a flat bread made of teff flour, over a traditional oven built for the purpose in her house.

SPREADING KNOWLEGE AMONG WOMEN AND YOUTH

Burkina Faso is a parched country increasingly facing political instability, intense land degradation, unpredictable rains, and serious threats to biodiversity. In the first year of our new five-year plan, **your donations helped the program expand to three new communities** reaching out to 1,600 households.

Thanks to your support, almost 15,000 men, women and young people were able to participate in SoS agricultural programs.

This year, **four agricultural sites were set up** – with domestic and market gardens, as well as tree nurseries – in areas deeply affected by climate change.

Thanks to you, at one of these sites, 259 young people – almost half of them young women – are learning agroecological farming techniques. In the Djibo area, 40 young people received entrepreneurship training that resulted in 20 project designs – with business plans to boot.

Our Partner:
Association pour la protection de la nature au Sahel (APN Sahel)



PHOTO: E. JONES/USC CANADA

Mother and child are in a Community Seed Bank (CSB). CSBs aren't just crucial repositories of seeds - they're also community centre-like hubs.

MALI

BUILDING LONG-TERM RESILIENCE

Sixty-five per cent of Mali's territory is dry or arid land on the edge of the desert. Your support has been growing ecologically sound agriculture in the extremely challenging growing regions of Douentza and Mopti for the past twenty years. The investment is paying off.

Because of your help, and in spite of the unstable political situation, a strong network of eight Community Seed Banks provides an increased supply of local seeds. Farmers are selecting and breeding new seed varieties – ones that work best in their local conditions.

This frees farmers from the need to purchase less effective and costly imported seed, pesticides and fertilizers which damage their soils.

Adding winter vegetable production has improved family diets and nutrition during the lean periods of the year. **Your donations are building market gardens, vegetable storage facilities, and post harvest processing for dried foods, all of which support family food security and family incomes**.

Our Partners: *USC Mali and CAB Dèmèso*



PHOTO: USC MALI/USC CANADA

Mariam Sy has worked with the Mali Seeds of Survival program for 24 years and in that time has seen much improvement in gender equality in the villages where she works.

BANGLADESH

YOUNG WOMEN BECOMING LEADERS

The dry northwest region of Bangladesh is one of the most food insecure parts of the country and has become the focus of our reorganized and expanded program.

Thanks to your donations, we were able to quadruple the number of young women farmers and seed growers we support – from 2,500 to over 10,000 participants in 2016. In this crowded country where land is scarce, virtually all were able to gain access to small plots of land to grow vegetable gardens.

By cultivating five to nine different vegetables over the three growing seasons of the year, **these young women were able to increase their family's access to healthy, nutritious food – and were able to sell surplus to local markets.** As well, close to 700 promising young women learned how to maintain quality seed lines, and multiply them for important vegetable crops such as taro, sweet potato and banana.

Our Partners:
Samajik Kollan Songstha (SKS),
Udayankur Seba Sangstha (USS)



PHOTO: K. GREEN/USC CANADA

Sonali Rai makes about 10 kilograms of high quality vermi compost each month. Using vermi compost, more than two thirds of our program participants have increased their farms' and gardens' soil fertility.

TIMOR LESTE

A STORY OF COURAGE

This tiny but remarkably courageous new nation at the end of the Indonesian archipelago suffered severe impacts of El Niño in the last year, with uneven rains inland and almost none on the coastlines. The maize belt along the coast, important for the overall food supply of the country, was drastically affected.

Many crops in our program did not make it to harvest.

With its history of conflict, Timor Leste has lost a great deal of its seed genetic diversity and is striving to recover it. Seed saving and seed banking are crucial. For this reason, with your support, **we will build four Community Seed Banks**.

Our Partner:
Resilient Agriculture and Economy through Biodiversity Action (RAEBIA)

After a long struggle for independence less than two decades ago, working with farmers to grow more food, build soil health, and protect the environment is the natural next step in building a better future for this young country, says Xisto Martins, the Executive Director of our partner, RAEBIA.



PHOTO: K. GREEN/USC CANADA

NEPAL

FROM CRISIS TO RECOVERY

When a devastating earthquake struck Nepal in April 2015, thousands lost their lives. Large parts of the national road infrastructure were destroyed. Donors like you responded to our call and USC Canada was able to provide immediate food and shelter relief for people in our program.

Just as crucial, **your donations meant our partner could act quickly to get appropriate seed supplies to farmers in the affected areas so they could get them into the ground in time for the planting season**. In the months after the earthquake, the essential work of distributing more seed and supporting farmer cultivation of field and vegetable crops continued – and averted a potential food crisis.

In spite of the earthquake's devastation, last year **almost 4,000 farmers were able to use agroecological methods to grow more varieties of vegetables**. Keeping these varieties alive in farmers' fields means farmers can better respond to the changing, challenging, and diverse conditions throughout Nepal.

Our Partner:

Through a new central partnership with Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research, and Development (LI-BIRD) USC Canada works with four longstanding NGO partners: SHIP- Nepal, Parivartan, Dalit Welfare Organization, Machhapuchare Development Organization



PHOTO: L. TEMPER/USC CANADA

BUILDING A CANADIAN SEED MOVEMENT

Our Canadian Seeds of Survival program has been getting attention across the country and in the media. Since 2013, we have been working with farmers, seed producers, researchers, and civil society partners across the country to tackle pressing seed security and diversity needs right here. Together, we are building a resilient Canadian seed system to address our changing climate in different regions of the country. We are proud to highlight our achievements to date:

- With the University of Manitoba and more than 60 farmers, coordinated Canada's only national organic participatory plant breeding program on wheat, oats, and potatoes.
- Coordinated a project with 100 farmers who trialed 247 different varieties to improve Canadian vegetable seed.
- Provided more than 1,700 training events for thousands of farmers and seed producers.
- Awarded 150 grants to farmers and seed producers to help scale up seed production and attend training events.
- **Supported the increase of organically-grown field crops** as a founding partner of the Prairie Organic Grain Initiative.
- Launched a regional seed bank at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, along with support for more than 37 public seed collections.

This program, known as The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security and made possible through generous funding by The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, will need new sources of funding to continue into the future – a priority for the coming year.

Our Partners:

Seeds of Diversity Canada, ACORN, Everdale, Organic Alberta, FarmFolk CityFolk, University of Manitoba.

CANADA



PHOTO: TRINA KOSTER

Kim Delaney is a farmer and seed saver in Palmerston, Ont.

FARMERS VOICES AT THE POLICY TABLE



PHOTO COURTESY OF C. MCKENNA

Meeting with Minister Catherine McKenna. L to R: Mamadou Goïta, USC Canada Board Member, Mali; Xisto Martins, Executive Director RAEBIA, Timor Leste; The Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change; Faris Ahmed, USC Canada Policy & Campaigns Director.

With a change of government, Canada's role and vision for international development and food security is also changing. In 2016, USC Canada engaged with policymakers at home and abroad on climate change, food security, biodiversity, seeds and human rights. Our call, amplified by coalitions with Canadian and global networks, was to put farmers at the centre of agriculture and food policy. We asked Canada to increase aid for smallholder farmers and support a transition to ecological agriculture based on biodiversity, local stewardship of land and ecosystems, and food sovereignty.

Our policy team also took active part in key international negotiations including the Committee for World Food Security (CFS), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

REACHING OUT TO CANADIANS

This year we reached thousands of Canadians through events and communications. We were thrilled to meet and speak with so many individual Canadians across the country.



K. CLARK

Tomato variety tasting at the World Social Forum in Montreal.



MCpl VINCENT CARBONNEAU, RIDEAU HALL, OSGG

Our Kate Green gave seed-saving tips to Governor General David Johnston and Sharon Johnston at the GG's Savour Fall Party.



K. CLARK



K. CLARK

Hundreds of kids and adults alike played our Name that Seed Game at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto.

USC CANADA STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Current Assets	2,916,882
Advances to partners	591,788
Due from USC Foundation	278,690
Capital assets	431,820
	4,219,180
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	326,523
Deferred contributions	3,552,687
	3,879,210
Net assets	**339,970**

Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Statement of Revenue and Expenses	
Global Affairs Canada	3,044,290
Support form general public	1,014,221
USC Foundation	1,361,100
Other (including investment income)	1,702,220
Total revenue	**7,121,831**
Program expenses	6,226,680
Non-program expenses	895,114
Total expenses	**7,121,794**
Excess of revenue over expenses	**37**

USC FOUNDATION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Current Assets	97,653
Investments	7,308,736
	7,406,389
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**6,370**
Due to USC Canada	278,690
	285,060
Net Assets	**7,121,329**

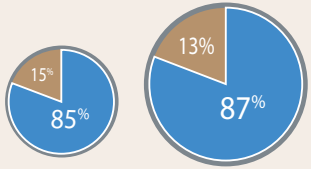
Net Assets Comprised Of

Lotta Hitschmanova Legacy Fund	6,547,444
Stewart Moore Endowment	267,606
Manson & Mary Toynbee Endowment	201,245
Kurt & Evelyn (Russell) Haas Endownment	93,221
Rick McTaggart Memorial Fund	**11,813**
	7,121,329

Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Bequests	427,822
Investments	93,041
Donations	**12,425**
Total revenue	**533,288**
Administrative & Fundraising Expenses	245,718
Contribution to USC Canada	**1,361,100**
Total expenses	**1,606,818**
Excess (deficit) of revenue over expenses	**-1,073,530**

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



2014-15 2015-16

Fundraising & Administration

Programs

For complete audited financial statements, visit **usc-canada.org/accountability.**

Contact us by phone at **1.800.565.6872** and press **1** for fundraising or by email at: **fundraising@usc-canada.org.**

THANK YOU!

We're very fortunate to have the backing of thousands of individual donors, businesses, corporations, foundations, employee funds, and United Ways from across Canada. We'd also like to acknowledge the crucial and ongoing support of **Global Affairs Canada**, the **R. Howard Webster Foundation**, the **Manitoba and Saskatchewan Councils for International Cooperation**. Finally, a big thank-you to **The W. Garfield Weston Foundation** and the organic farmers and local seed enthusiasts across Canada who are helping make The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security a success!

Special thanks also go to:

- All our Unitarian friends, volunteers and supporters
- Community Foundations from across Canada and United States
- Employee Funds
- United Way Chapters
- Schools, Universities and Churches
- Calgary Foundation - Virginia Middelberg Fund
- Calgary Foundation - Ethan and Joan Compton Sub Fund
- Campbell Webster Foundation
- Canadian Online Giving Foundation (Benevity)
- Conservation, Food & Health Foundation
- Derick Brenninkmeyer Charitable Foundation
- Doherty and Associates
- Dorothy and Oscar Rogers Foundation at Toronto Community
- Fondation Edward Assh
- Gordon Butler Bequest
- Howick Foundation
- Justin and Elisabeth Lang Foundation
- Link Charity Canada Inc.
- Maple Hurst Farms Ltd
- Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC)
- Montreal Kick Drum festival
- NWM Private Giving Foundation - Lewis Family Fund
- Private Giving Foundation
- R&M Lang Foundation
- R. Howard Webster Foundation
- Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation (SCIC)
- Seeds of Life
- Silver Dollar Foundation
- Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul
- Strategic Charitable Giving Foundation
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
- The Beatrice Enid Patterson Foundation Fund
- The Community Foundation of Ottawa
- The Green Panther
- The Guelph Community Foundation
- The Laura L. Tiberti Charitable Foundation
- The Stephen Ross & Mary O'Riordan Family Foundation
- The W. Garfield Weston Foundation
- VanCity Community Foundation
- Victoria Foundation (Doreen and Bernard Crook Fund)

HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY TO A TRUE CHAMPION

Long time USC Canada champion, David Smith, celebrated a century of well-lived life on December 6, 2016. David volunteered with USC Canada for decades: packing up clothes to send to people living in post-war and disaster zones overseas through the 1950s and 60s, serving on the Board of Directors, organizing annual fundraising garage sales in the 60s and 70s, and even picking up leftover soap from motels in and around London, Ont. to ship to those in need. David's dedication earned him an award from the government of Greece and made USC Canada a stronger, more caring organization. Most importantly, he inspired others to follow his example.

"We [his children] have done a lot of volunteering because that's obviously, clearly the way you're supposed to live," says Stephanie Bryant, his daughter. "He was a very dedicated volunteer for a long time… we were a Unitarian Service Committee family."



PHOTO: STEPHANIE BRYANT

David Smith holds a certificate from USC Canada on the occasion of his 100th birthday!

THANK YOU MONTREAL'S GREEN PANTHERS!

We would like to thank the staff at the Green Panther restaurants in Montreal, for their amazing fundraising efforts and their generous financial support for young women gardeners and farmers in Bangladesh. Thanks to their donation, young women are now growing nutritious food for their families and earning income from the sale of their ecologically grown produce.



PHOTO: THE GREEN PANTHER


PHOTO: K. GREEN/USC CANADA

YOUR DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

By supporting our Seeds of Survival program, you're helping farmers around the world to grow good food for their families in ways that are kind to the environment and that enhance biodiversity.

Donate Today

Donate online. It's easy, fast and secure!
Just visit: usc-canada.org/donate

Call our toll-free number 1.800.565.6872

Mail your cheque. Send your donation to USC Canada, 56 Sparks Street, Suite 600 Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5B1

Every dollar you donate to USC Canada's international work will be matched with three dollars, thanks to Global Affairs Canada.

Leave a Legacy

Over the years, hundreds of caring Canadians have generously left gifts in their wills to USC Canada.

These gifts are deposited into the Lotta Hitschmanova Legacy Fund of the USC Foundation, and are prudently invested to support farming communities for generations to come.

Thanks to the generosity of supporters who donated to our Legacy Fund, $825,000 was distributed last year in support of farmers.

For more information about leaving a legacy gift visit usc-canada.org/donate, or contact Brian McFarlane at 1.800.565.6872 ext. 249

I love USC! You combine commanding knowledge and compassionate ingenuity.
– Frances Moore Lappé, author Diet for a Small Planet

Seeds are our future. Their protection must be kept in the public consciousness. Thank you for your work!
– KS, Ottawa

Seeds of Survival is doing essential work. I really value the fact that it builds human capacity in local communities at the same time that food security issues are addressed.
– JH, Saskatchewan



YOUR OTTAWA BASED STAFF

PHOTO: USC CANADA

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USC CANADA

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Charity Registration No. 11927-6129-RR-0001

USC Canada was founded in 1945 as the Unitarian Service Committee by Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova.