



# EcoCooks

Climate action never tasted so good.

## 2024 Annual Impact Report

A partnership between





## Dear Friends,

As we look back on the past year, we are eager to share the 2024 EcoCooks Impact Report, showcasing the remarkable progress we've made together.

EcoCooks, a joint initiative between Unbounded Canada Foundation and Elements Society, continues to flourish, bringing innovative environmental education programs to more learners connecting them to community, food systems, and our planet.

With the support of the EcoCooks community, we are particularly excited to share that we have:

- Nearly doubled program reach
- Successfully piloted EcoCooks Elementary
- Expanded EcoCooks Club to Langley

These milestones, and many more included within, have further strengthened our ability to equip young people with the skills and knowledge needed to tackle food waste and climate challenges within our food systems. Within programs, youth and community members have reduced carbon emissions, water usage, and land use while preparing and enjoying delicious sustainable foods together.

The support of this community has and continues to be, the driving force behind our determination to make EcoCooks available to more learners.

Thank YOU for joining us on this transformative journey!



**Pamela Murkin**

Executive Director  
Unbounded Canada  
Foundation



**Samantha Rogers**

Executive Director  
Elements Society

# Table of Contents

Year in Review	4
Programs At a Glance	6
EcoCooks Club	7
EcoCooks School	12
EcoCooks Community	17
EcoCooks Digital	21
Thank You	23

**“I liked everything. I liked the variety. I thought the learning parts were important and made me think about my choices.”**

Student, Marshall Springs School, Calgary



# Year in Review: Our Collective Impact

Small steps, when taken together, can create significant ripples of positive change.

This year, EcoCooks actions added up to...



**16,264** Kg's CO<sub>2</sub>e saved

Equal to driving  
from **Victoria to  
Charlottetown**  
**11 times!**



# Year in Review: Our Collective Impact



**3,053**  
EcoCooks  
learners



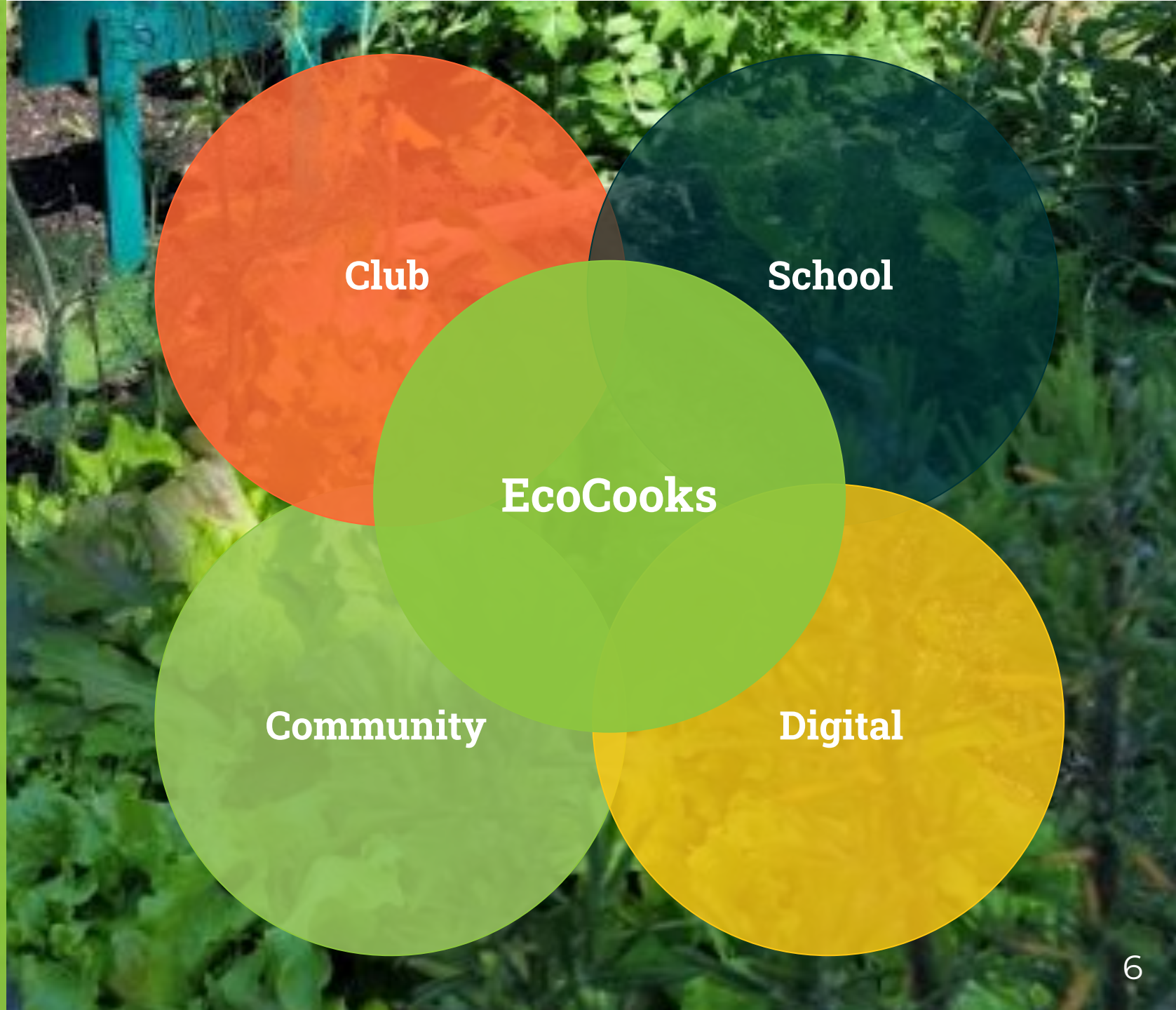
**525**  
EcoCooks  
workshops



# EcoCooks Programs: At a Glance

Whether online, in the community, or in a club or classroom setting, all EcoCooks programs aim to:

- Enhance Knowledge
- Develop Skills
- Inspire Action
- Build Community





# EcoCooks Club

**“EcoCooks got me trying new foods. Got me thinking more about our environment and how we can help.”**

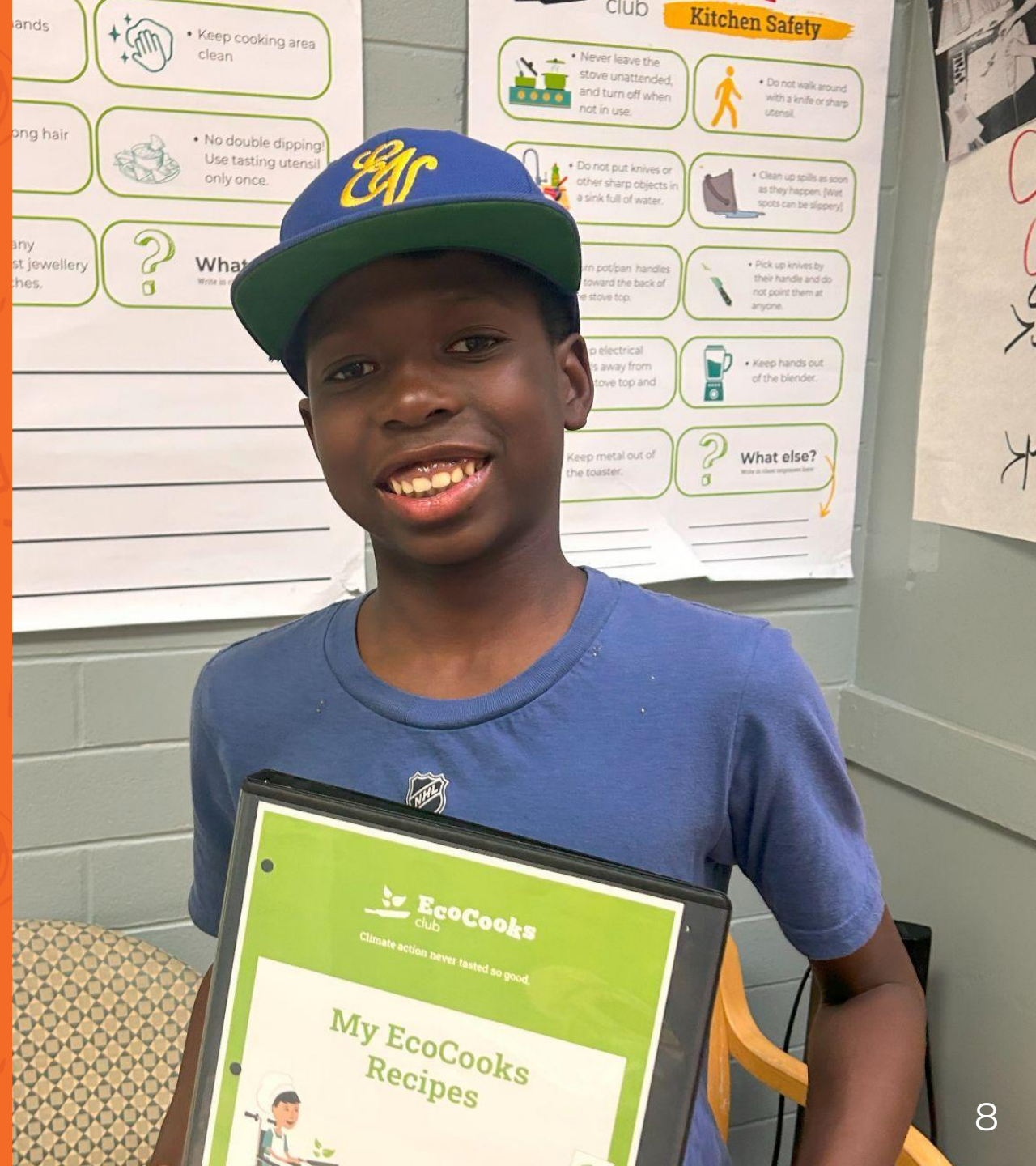
Matthias, 10, Kelowna





EcoCooks Club delivered 123 Metro Vancouver and Okanagan workshops to Grade 4-7 youth who:

- **Learned important skills to cook delicious and nutritious meals** like squash-tastic soup, tofu rainbow stir fry, and more!
- Were empowered to address climate anxiety through a **deeper understanding of food systems and how meaningful actions can combat climate change**
- Went on **field trips in their local communities** to Indigenous food forests, food security gardens, and zero-waste refilleries
- Were further engaged through **alumni workshops, volunteering opportunities, and the creation of the EcoCooks Youth Leadership Team**





**“I didn't realize the true impact EcoCooks had...until he brought home the take home meal kit to make for the family! His confidence is soaring and he now...help[s] me cook at home.”**

Parent, Kelowna



### **Take Home Meal Kits**

Our amazing youth utilized their new cooking skills by preparing 147 take home meals kits plus more planet-positive meals for their families!



## FAMILY IMPACT

# From Picky Eater to Culinary Explorer

Before joining EcoCooks Club, Bing was known for his selective palate and lack of interest in cooking. The program's blend of culinary and environmental education piqued Bing's curiosity and "helped him connect the dots between our food choices and their impact on the planet" his mother, Allisha shares. His excitement was evident, particularly when he was given the chance to lead a group activity.

Bing's busy activity schedule contrasted with the engaging pace of EcoCooks.. He loved replicating his favourite meals at home, especially the take-home meal kit, preparing a whole meal for his family to delight in. He also really enjoyed the trip to Bulk Barn, which taught him about sustainable shopping practices.

"I noticed a huge difference after the program, he was willing to try new things" Allisha exclaimed.

As demonstrated during a family trip to Vietnam, where Bing eagerly sampled various local dishes, "which I know he wouldn't have done if he had not attended EcoCooks." This openness and new skills have made him more involved in family cooking and more curious about reducing food waste.

**"It is such a great program for our children to learn how to cook healthy, nutritious meals that are cost effective and planet friendly."**

"Thank you so much for offering such a great program to our community. I wish this was something all students could participate in."

~ Allisha, Parent, Kelowna

After participating in EcoCooks Club:

**78%**

of youth are eating more nutritious planet-positive foods

**90%**

of youth help with cooking at home a few or more times a month

**86%**

of families now consider the environmental impact of their food choices



# EcoCooks School

**“Thank you for helping  
to shape our future —  
one student at a time!”**

Teacher, Calgary





**EcoCooks**  
school

# Year Book



Total Workshops

★ **379** ★

Classrooms

★ **91** ★

Schools

**23**

In Metro Van & Calgary

Total Students

**2171**

Favourite Recipe

**Rainbow  
Tacos**

I can help reduce the effects of climate change just by changing some of my eating habits and still eat tasty food nonetheless.

– Student, Gladstone Secondary, Vancouver

School Districts

**10**

**“I may not bring a large change,  
but I do hope to bring small  
positive ones.”**

Student, Gladstone Secondary, Vancouver



## EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

# Serving up climate solutions!

EcoCooks School continued to respond to high demand by nearly doubling program delivery for Secondary students. We also piloted an Elementary program in Vancouver which we look forward to launching across Metro Vancouver and Calgary next year!

**Throughout the programs, students investigated where their food comes from, including how it grows and the steps it takes on its journey to their plate.**

They discovered the different amounts of land and water required to grow different foods, as well as the greenhouse gases emitted in the process. We also explored ways to prevent food waste and imagined what sustainable food systems might look like in the future.

Applying this knowledge in the kitchen, students honed their culinary skills to create tasty and planet friendly meals including Sweet and Spicy Tofu, Rainbow Tacos, and Rice Paper Wraps!

TEACHER IMPACT

## Connecting New Ideas



"My Environmental Studies 11 class has connected so well with the presenters and as a result of the connection and the fun and dynamic activities they engaged in, **they have learned so much about the resources and energy that goes into the food we eat!**

The cooking session at the end was a highlight and a celebration of food. I know that they have taken away a lot because they keep bringing some of that information up in our new discussions in class."



Jana,  
Math & Science Teacher

TEACHER IMPACT

## Taking Action in the Kitchen



**“We ABSOLUTELY loved the EcoCooks program,** we have every year. It is so interactive and hands on and the students are always asked to get up and move about, so they stay focused and engaged. The material is interesting, relevant and super important. It’s an all round great program.

Our students really love the cooking day best as they get to make food. Even the students who are firm meat eaters enjoy cooking a plant-based meal. It’s very reinforcing for them to eat something delicious that is all plants after learning about the environmental impacts of food choices.

...[my student] often shows me what he is eating and is always particularly proud to show me when he has lots of vegetables in his meal. The EcoCooks lesson has reinforced for him that he is ‘helping the environment’ when he eats plants. This is certainly a win in terms of learning!”

~ Eugene, Science Teacher, Richmond





Where  
Does it  
Grow?

# Community

TANYA

This year, EcoCooks was delighted to be involved in events happening throughout our communities!

## In the Community



*“The content was interesting. It has made me motivated to think more about the food that I eat and where it comes from and to make changes to the way I eat”*

- Calgary Community Workshop Participant



Sharing a booth with the City of Calgary and Green Calgary at Calgary Teachers' Convention, interacting with 185 teachers in just two days!



The team hosted a Kid Zone booth and Educators Jen and Anna presented at VegFest Kelowna with over 1,000 in attendance.

# Seniors Luncheon Inspires Sustainability



EcoCooks hosted its first Seniors Luncheon at the Salvation Army in Kelowna, where 79 attendees enjoyed a plant-powered meal of Chickpea Sandwiches and Squash-tastic Soup. EcoCooks Educator, Anna, shared that switching to an eco-friendly meal like this for their weekly luncheons for a year would save 2,620 CO<sub>2</sub>e, equivalent to driving all the way from Kelowna to Nova Scotia, which surprised everyone in the room!

Many seniors shared their commitment to climate action, with Charlene noting, **“I know our planet needs help, I want to do anything I can to reduce our impact!”** Nettie, 93, loved the Squash-tastic Soup so much that she asked for the recipe so she can make it for her family. Whilst Perry, a self-proclaimed non-soup enthusiast, was pleasantly surprised by the kale-infused creation.

As the event concluded, the sentiment was clear - food brings us together, but shared values sustain us. With smiles and full hearts, the participants departed with a renewed sense of purpose towards a greener future.

## COMMUNITY IMPACT

# Connecting with Community at The Alex



What started as a few guest appearances at The Alex Community Food Centre (The Alex) in Calgary last August has blossomed into a beautiful community partnership. Over the past year, **we've collaborated on 16 unique workshops engaging 78 youth and adults.** The welcoming atmosphere at The Alex, and the garden and industrial kitchen have allowed us to explore new activities, and reach new audiences within the Forest Lawn community in a meaningful way. Some of our favourite activities included planting microgreens, going on garden scavenger hunts and harvests, making sourdough pancakes, dumplings, mac and cheese and more!

“It was fantastic! ...Through the fusion of experiential education and environmental stewardship, EcoCooks exemplifies the principles of good food, dignified access, and community change. **By empowering youth with the knowledge and skills to make sustainable food choices, we are fostering healthier individuals and a more resilient planet, one meal at a time.**”

~ Ashley, The Alex



**Digital**



# EcoCooks Digital

Digital is a collection of fun and delicious eco-recipes, zero food waste tips, and program celebrations that inspire a global audience to join our EcoCooks community and take climate action through their food choices.

Our free digital content offers a platform for collaborations with community partners and funders, and is strategically shared across social media posts, reels, stories and newsletters.

## Published Content

228

posts/reels

127

stories

## Impact

209K  
reach

487K  
video plays



# Thank You to Our Supporters

## In-kind Supporters

Bulk Barn  
Canadian Tire  
Chaibaba Tea  
Chickpea Zero Waste Refillery  
Choices  
Coco Cake Land  
Dollarama  
Earnest Ice Cream  
Edible Flours  
Eric Scott Photography

GluteNull  
Herbaland  
MILA  
Naked Cafe  
Nature's Fare  
No Frills  
Oomé  
Pela  
Plant Curious  
Planty of Nosh

Real Canadian Superstore  
Safeway  
Save-On-Foods  
Staples  
Sydney Botting Design  
TMRW Foods  
Unicorn Print & Design  
Virtuous Pie  
West Coast Seeds

## Community Partners

Alberta School Districts  
The Alex Community Food  
Centre  
BC School Districts  
Calgary Horticultural Society  
Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood  
House  
Coalition for Healthy School  
Foods  
Diversecities  
Farm to School BC

Food Stash  
Fresh Roots  
Girl Guides of Canada  
KCR Community Resources  
Kimberley Foundation  
Kiwassa Neighbourhood  
House  
Langley Environmental  
Partners Society  
Lionsgate Community  
Centre

LEPS Learning Farm  
Langley Meals on Wheels  
Rainforest Adventure Camps  
The Salvation Army  
South Vancouver  
Neighbourhood House  
Vancouver Urban Food Forest  
Foundation  
Vancouver School Food  
Network  
The Vibrant Veggie Garden

## Funders



Chawkers  
Foundation

The **Milne** Family





**“EcoCooks transformed our curious cook into a confident chef! All while changing our whole household’s mindset on the environmental impact of our food choices.”**

Diane, Parent, Kelowna



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For more information please visit:  
[ecocooks.org](https://ecocooks.org)

For inquiries please contact:  
[marketing@unfc.ca](mailto:marketing@unfc.ca)

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