

# Exploring Food Sovereignty in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside

# **Exploring Food Sovereignty in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside: An Indigeniszed Food Hub for the DTES**

**Prepared by Kanatiao for consideration by the DTES Food Sovereignty Collaborative**

**kanatiao@gmail.com  
(450) 479-8053**

**© Copyright**

**Iotorhkowa (The Big Cold—January) 2022**

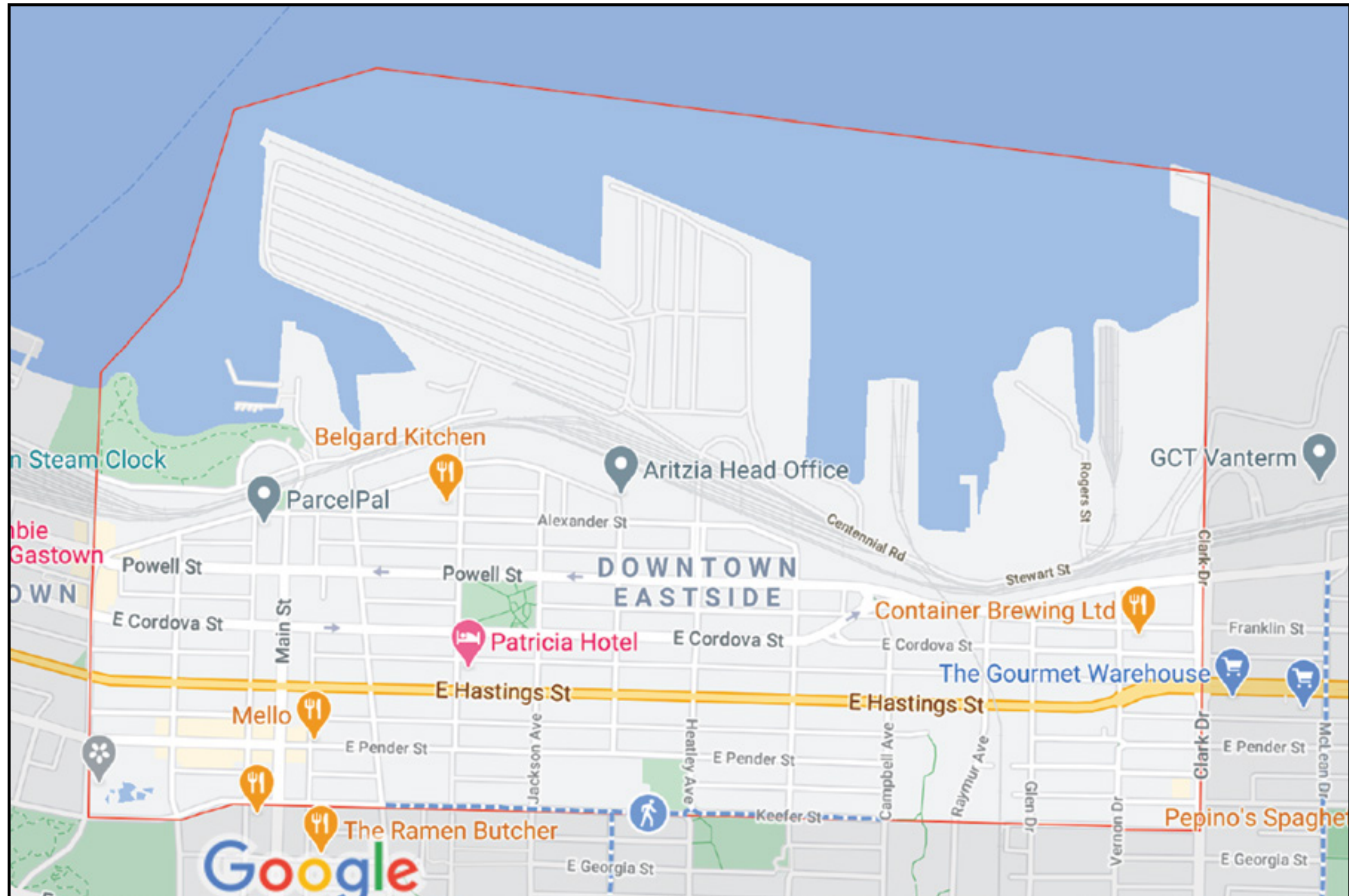
**Nia:wen (Thank you)...**







# Vancouver's Downtown Eastside: The Rez...



# The Gordeon Knot

**Tangible factors**

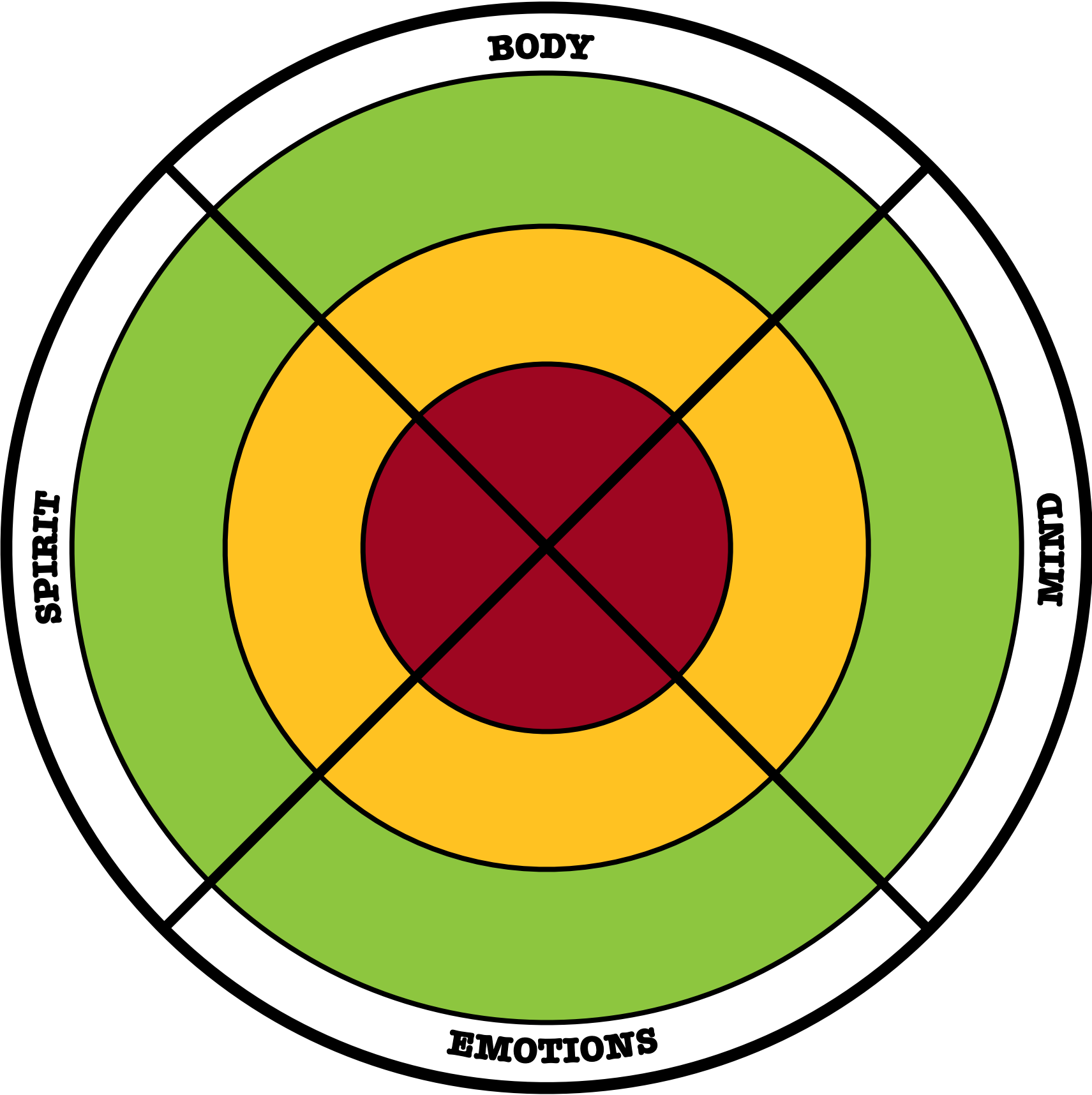
- ☐ Hunger
- ☐ Poverty & Inequity
- ☐ Houselessness
- ☐ Addictions
- ☐ Poor health outcomes

**Intangibles**

1. SID (Stigma, Ignorance, Discrimination)
2. Self Image
3. Loneliness
4. Grief & Mourning
5. Despair
6. Perpetual Crisis
7. Powerlessness
8. Malnutrition
9. Health outcomes



# The Rotinonsionni Way



# Hub Summary

## Life in DTES

### Rooted in Historic Abuse

- 1. Symptoms of genocide brought on by Colonization and colonialism
  - ☐ Dispossession
  - ☐ Displacement
  - ☐ Forced cultural co-habitation
- 2. Intergenerational Legacy
  - ☐ Unresolved Trauma
  - ☐ Lateral Violence

### The Abuse Continues

- 3. It's getting worse
  - ☐ DTES population growing
  - ☐ Shortage of low-income housing
    - ☐ People in SROs face renoviction for gentrification
    - ☐ Residential silos replacing older buildings
  - ☐ And, in the larger context:
    - ☐ Unmarked graves at Residential Schools
    - ☐ Wet'suwet'en

## Covid Crisis

### Crisis Response

- 1. Worsened health outcomes
  - ☐ People struggling to cope with the crisis
    - ☐ Forced Confinement
  - ☐ People in secure housing shut in & isolated
  - ☐ People hungry
  - ☐ Spike in overdoses
- 2. The dispossessed & displaced need to eat
  - ☐ We need to put food in the pot
  - ☐ What do we feed them?
  - ☐ How do we feed them?
  - ☐ How do we all cope with the crisis?

## DTES

### Myths & Misconceptions

- ☐ People choose to be there
- ☐ People want to live that way

### SID:

- ☐ Why bother?
- ☐ You can't fix anyone
- ☐ They'll never get better

### Judgment

- ☐ Pathologization
- ☐ Problematisation

## But the reality is...

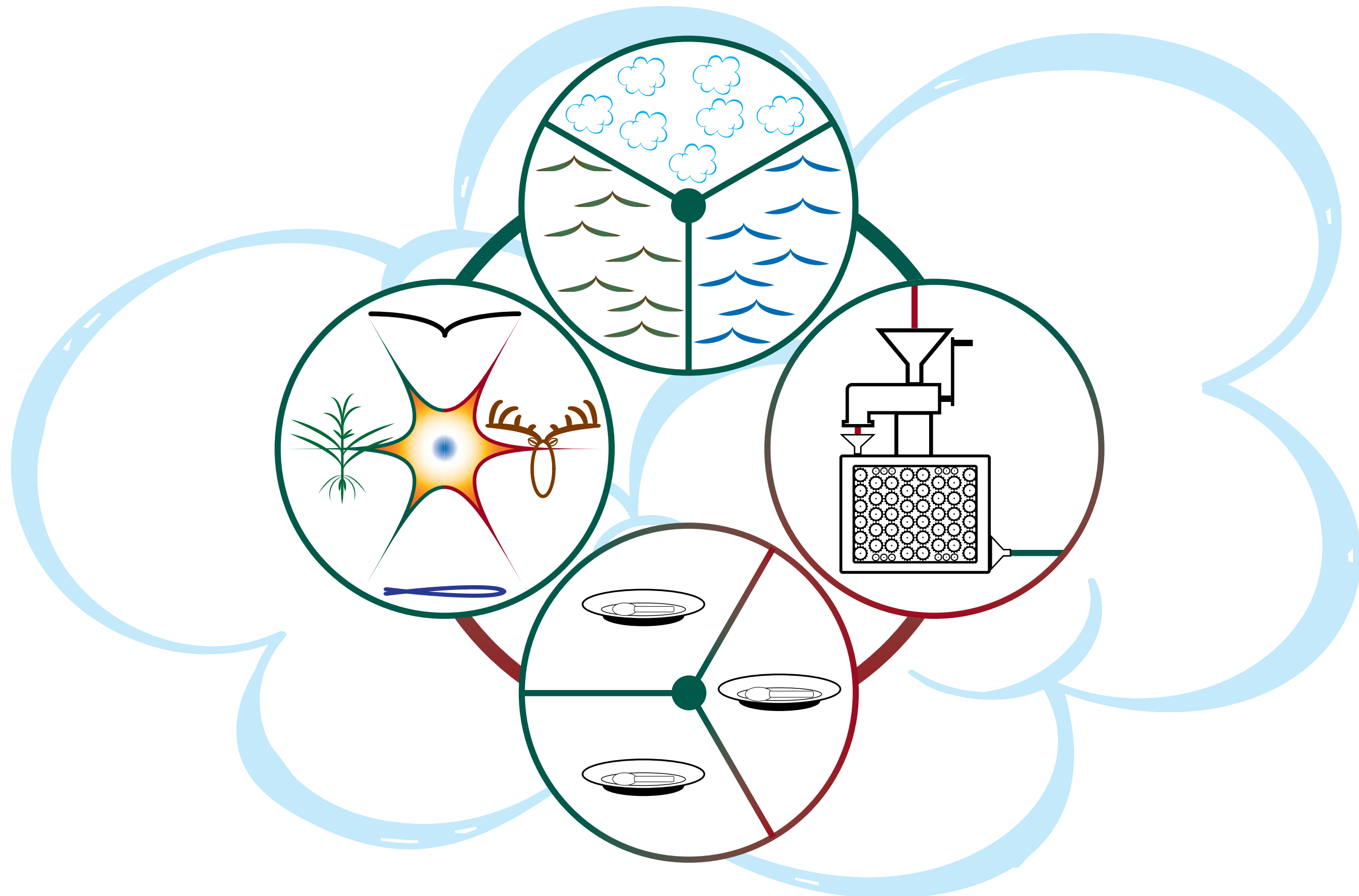
### There's Community Here

- ☐ Kid on the Block
- ☐ Man Down (one man's heart attack)
- ☐ Chrissie at the KT Camp at Strathcona Park (Produce Row Refugee Camp)
- ☐ The local economy: you got \$25 bucks?
- ☐ And then there's Autumn...

### The Charity Model Doesn't Work

- ☐ Charity breeds dependence & entitlement
  - ☐ If you build it they will come
    - ☐ If you create space & opportunity, they will come build it with you

# Hub Summary





# Hub Summary

## An Indigeniszed Food Hub

### DTES Food Sovereignty Collaborative

- DTES is:
  - ☐ Watari
  - ☐ DTES SRO Collaborative
  - ☐ DTES Neighbourhood House
  - ☐ Grandview Woodland Food Collective
  - ☐ DUDES Club
- Mainly front-line & health services workers. As organizations, all cook in the cultural context of their work, but none has the mission of feeding people as a central part of their mandate. Since March 2020, however, they have had to ramp up their response to the Covid crisis. They:
  - ☐ Are only one part of a larger response by many individuals & organizations
  - ☐ Appreciate everyone working to meet the need
  - ☐ Know the burden is made heavier by a lack of long-term resources
- What fuels DFSC:
  - ☐ Love and Compassion
  - ☐ Desire for peace and balance
  - ☐ Desire for systemic change
- We've been exploring a plan to get us out of crisis response
  - ☐ Goal 1: Feed People
    - ☐ Vision, Model, Plan

## Hunger

### Tip of the iceberg

- ☐ Always has been
- ☐ Larger reality known
  - ☐ Charity model doesn't work
  - ☐ People want to build their community

### What We Know

- ☐ Good health starts with good healthy food
- ☐ Local control over every aspect of our food supply chain is essential to enhancing quality and access of the food available
- ☐ Onkwehonwe thrived for thousands of years before we were discovered
- ☐ Traditional Knowledge Systems
  - ☐ Concepts of balance
    - ☐ Individual rights/responsibilities
    - ☐ Collective rights/responsibilities
  - ☐ Traditional Innovation
    - ☐ Pedagogy
    - ☐ Research
    - ☐ Methodology
    - ☐ Technology

### An Indigeniszed Food Hub

- ☐ What does that look like from a decolonized perspective?
- ☐ We've been exploring that question and the others that arise in such times
- ☐ Here's one answer.

## A Principled Approach

### Starts with three questions

- ☐ What's to eat?
- ☐ Where do we get it?
- ☐ How do we get it?

### Reclaiming Onkwehonwe ways:

- ☐ Responsibility in walking softly
  - ☐ Taking only what we need
  - ☐ Using all we take
  - ☐ Reuse, Reduce, Recycle
  - ☐ Permaculture

### Cultural Paradigms

- ☐ Onkwehonwe Worldviews
  - ☐ Creation
    - ☐ Teachings
    - ☐ Ceremony
    - ☐ Ritual
      - ☐ Philosophy
      - ☐ Law

## The Way It Is With Us

### It's Time to Collaborate

- ☐ Piecemeal approach a failure
- ☐ No more boondoggles
- ☐ Need better plan
- ☐ Starts with listening to community

### A Vision, Model and Plan

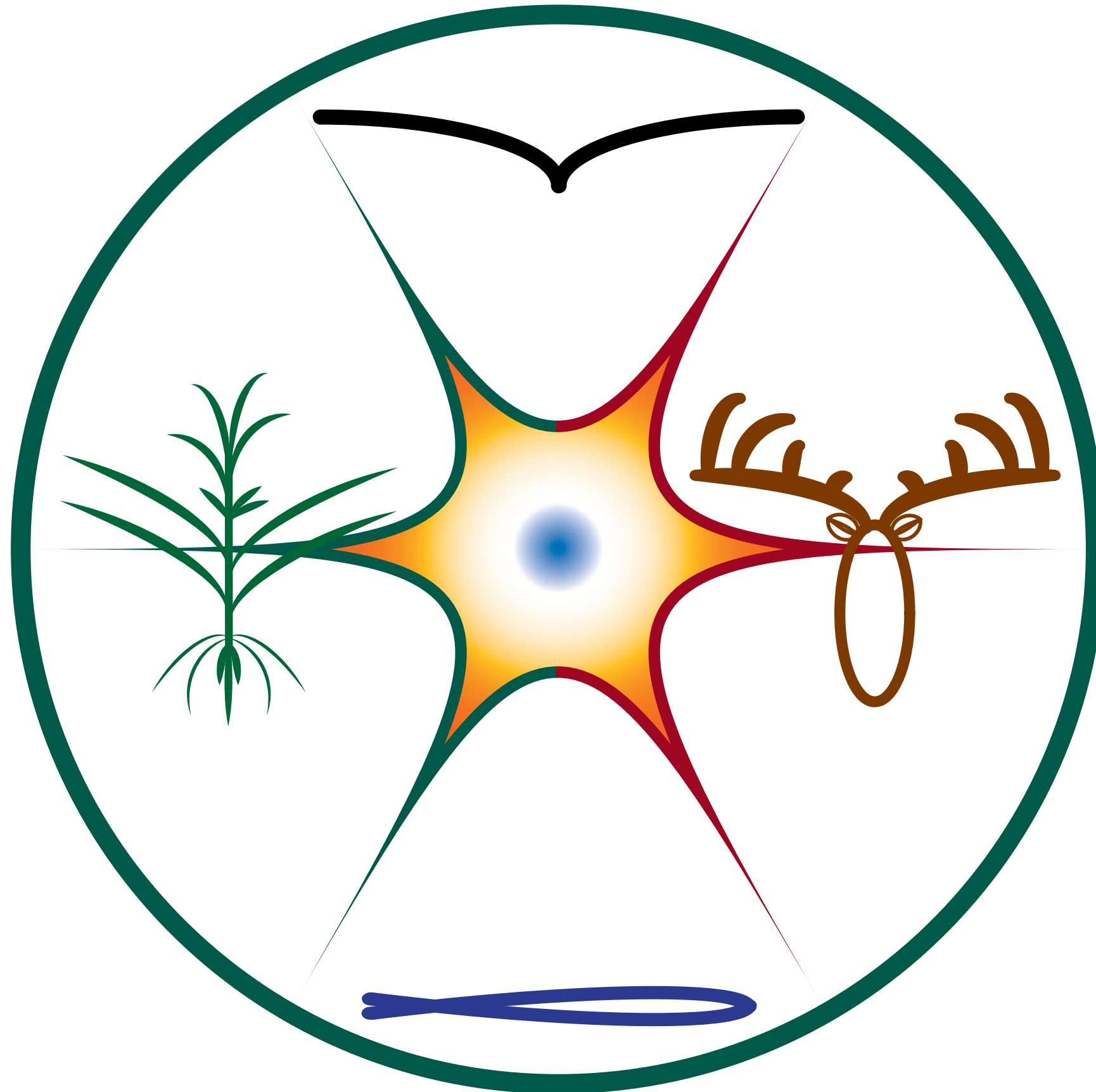
- Reconnection
- Resourcing
- Re-Resourcing
- Rematriation

### Gradual transition

- ☐ Onkwehonwe worldviews:
  - ☐ SEMB
    - ☐ Spirit
    - ☐ Emotions
    - ☐ Mind
    - ☐ Body

# Hub Summary

## 1. Reconnection





# Hub Summary

## 1. Reconnection

### Eat your territory to be healthy

- 1. Country Food
  - ☐ Creation-connected
  - ☐ Basis of Indigenous Cultures
  - ☐ Need-based

### Filling dietary gaps

- 2. Local Food
  - ☐ Culturally-appropriate alternatives
  - ☐ Adopted from Indigenous Cultures

## Urban Farming

- ☐ Active
- ☐ Relevant
- ☐ Popular
- ☐ Connecting

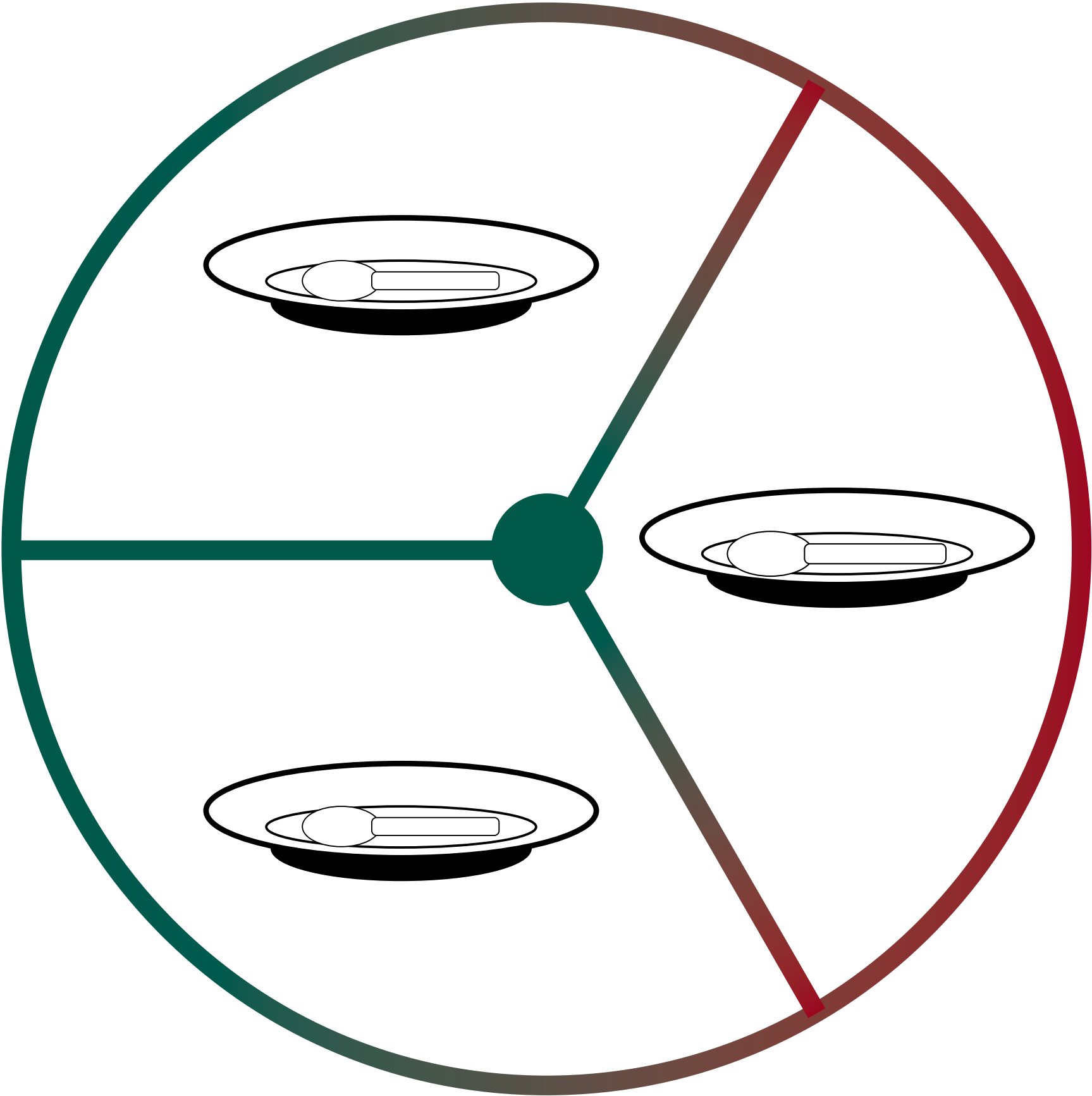
## Wildcrafting

- ☐ Gathering
- ☐ Agriculture

## Fishing and Hunting

- ☐ On the land
- ☐ In an urban environment

2. Resourcing





# Hub Summary

## 2. Resourcing

### It ain't over

- ☐ Once the Covid crisis ends, we return to our normal, which is still a humanitarian crisis
- ☐ In the meantime...

## Current Sources

### With much appreciation

- ☐ Community gardens
- ☐ Local growers
- ☐ Industrial farms
- ☐ Commercial sources
- ☐ Food industry
- ☐ Donations
- ☐ Charity

## Current Response

### Food Distribution

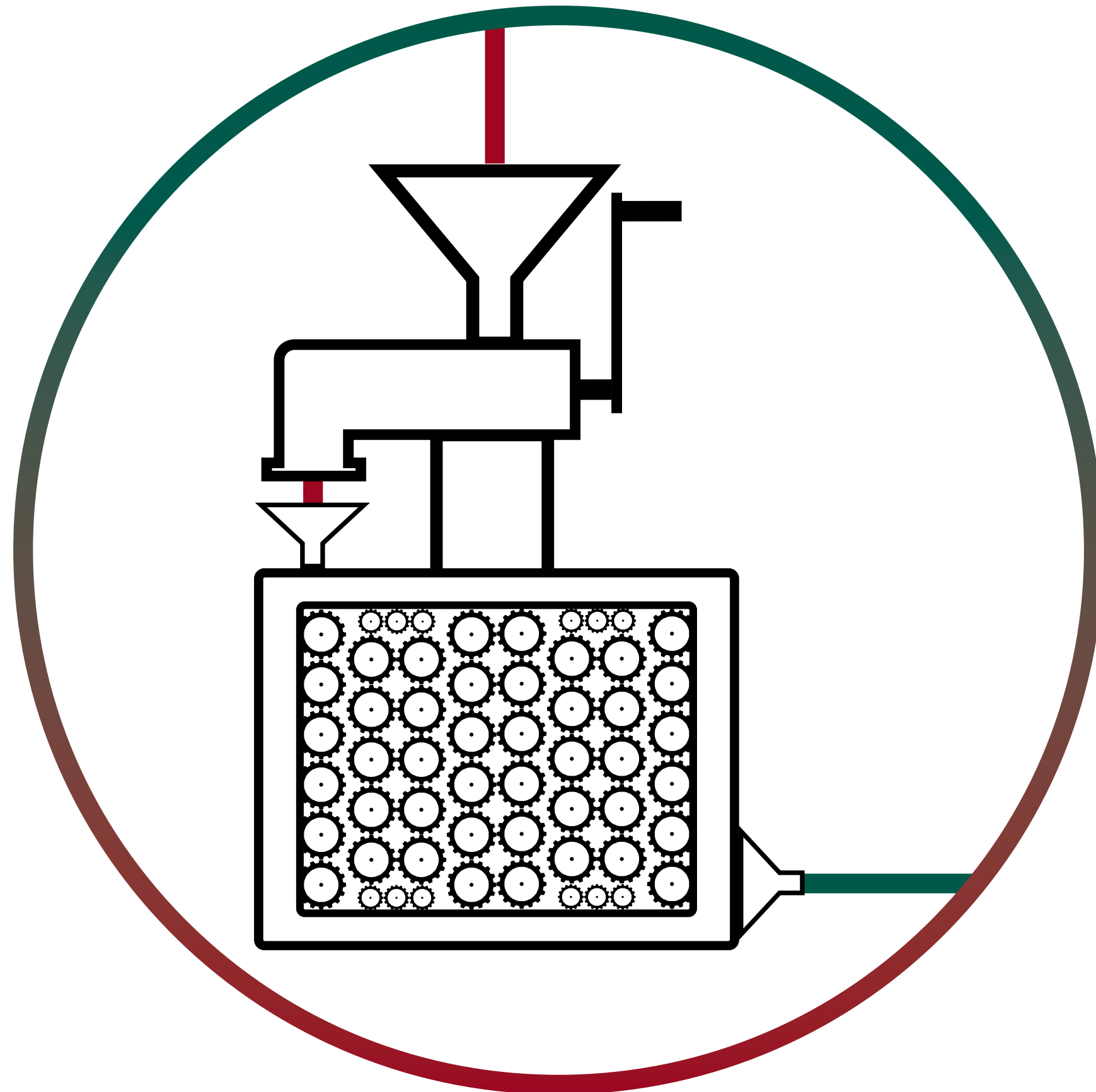
- ☐ Every week, we prepare & distribute:
  - ☐ 11,400 meals:
    - ☐ Hot prepared meals
    - ☐ Cold meals (sandwiches, etc.)
    - ☐ Perishable snacks (fruit, veg, dairy)
    - ☐ Non-perishable packaged snacks
  - ☐ We also distribute raw ingredients to cooks
  - ☐ 1,200 grocery hampers to Elder shut-ins
- ☐ Operations (food and other programming) temporarily based at 41 East Hastings:
  - ☐ No cooking or adequate storage on-site
  - ☐ Anti-poverty program
  - ☐ Overdose Response program
  - ☐ Street Degree program

## Future Considerations

### Incrementally speaking

- ☐ In anticipation of annual surplus
  - ☐ Chinook barter & trade
  - ☐ Wholesale options
  - ☐ Retail options

## 3. Re-Resourcing





# Hub Summary

## 3. Re-Resourcing

### Permaculture, you say...?

- ☐ We invented that
  - ☐ It's how we lived
  - ☐ Tried and True Technology
  - ☐ Innovation
- ☐ It's where we were at our healthiest
- ☐ It's where we can be again...

## Re-imagination

### In keeping with Onkwehonwe principles

- ☐ We want to close the permaculture loop by using the waste resources we produce to generate energy (biofuel)
- ☐ Such processes break waste resources into three parts: liquid, solid and gas

## Models

### Viable models exist

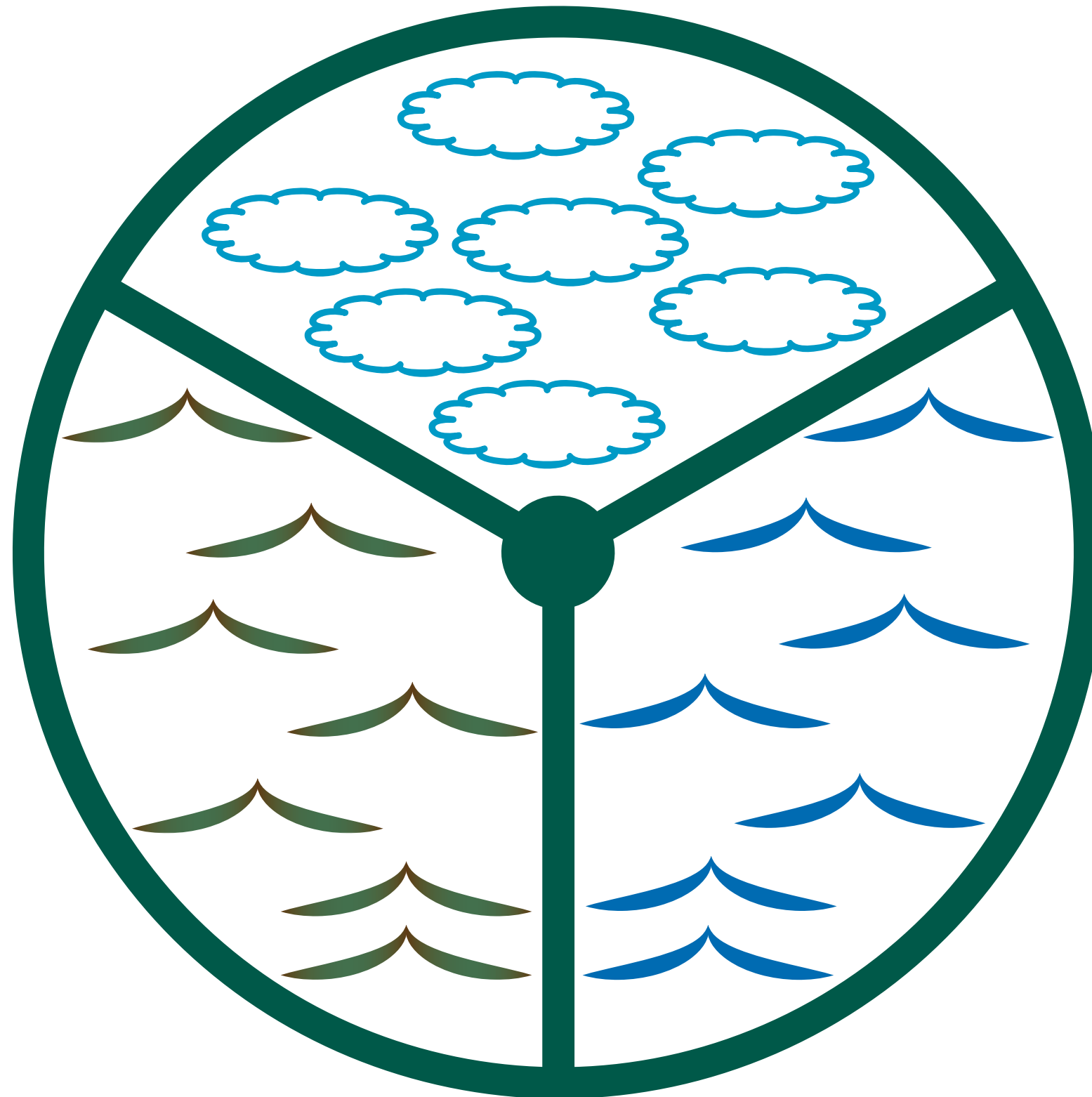
- ☐ Please click on the buttons for more information on the following
  - ☐ The Kenya model
  - ☐ Home example #1
  - ☐ Home example #2
  - ☐ The Kristianstad Model

## Main Take-Aways

### Kenya Model

- ☐ 1 Unit = 5 gallons dung & 5 gallons water
  - ☐ Produces 1,000-1,500 litres biofuel
  - ☐ Dung (required) is least productive
  - ☐ Yields upwards of 5,000-7,500 litres possible
- ☐ Emissions
  - ☐ Water
  - ☐ Carbon Dioxide

## 4. Rematriation



Hub Summary

4. Rematriation

What We Give Back

1. Zero Discard: The Attainable Goal
- ☐ Clean Earth

☐ No more clear-cutting the lungs of the planet

☐ Reduced resource extraction

☐ Zero Discard
- ☐ Clean Water
- ☐ No more tourniquets or manipulating Mother’s circulatory system

☐ We want to implement an effective water collection, use and rematriation program.
- ☐ Clean Air
- ☐ No more dirty energy such as coal, nuclear, incineration

☐ Our model emits water and carbon dioxide

2. Justice Achieved:

☐ Social

☐ Peace, Balance and Good Health

☐ Environmental

☐ Human impacts on climate mitigated

☐ Economic

☐ Refocus of priorities

☐ Restructuring

☐ Walking softly on the face of Mother Earth and the Unborn Generations

Community

The opportunity we have

- ☐ It’s a choice
- ☐ Status quo vs a new community model

The Longer-Term

- ☐ Remediation (land, water, air)
- ☐ Habitat reclamation

☐ Habitat restoration

☐ Habitat creation

☐ Energy production

☐ Our new carbon capture technology

☐ A New Mindset

☐ A Return to Tried and True thinking

New Mindset

- ☐ Challenges
- ☐ Rage Curve

☐ SID

☐ Closed-mindedness

☐ Resistance to change

☐ Racism

The three tracks

1. Community Land Trusts
2. Community dialogue
3. Decolonialization conversation

DTES Today

Current Situation

- ☐ There’s always just barely enough

Short to Medium-Term Needs

- ☐ Supplies (raw ingredients) sufficient to meet need

☐ 3-5 times current levels?
- ☐ More access to gardening space

☐ Space for permanent food hub

☐ Receive, process, prepare, store and distribute ingredients and foods

☐ Butchery

☐ Processing

☐ Smoking, curing

☐ Dry and cold storage

☐ Refrigeration and freezing

☐ Preparation

☐ Distribution

☐ Transportation

☐ Peers

☐ Equipment

☐ Deliveries

☐ Continued peer engagement

☐ Consultation

☐ Opportunity

☐ Training

☐ Supports

☐ Spiritual

☐ Emotional

☐ Mental

☐ Bodily

Cutting the Gordian Knot

Longer-Term Need

- ☐ Conversation about the longer term
- ☐ Ecosystem needed to sustain the hub

☐ Can start now

☐ April 2021 One-Pager

Short-term Ask

- ☐ Space
- ☐ Environmental practices, technologies
- ☐ Timeframe: 3-5 years
- ☐ Coincide with VF grant timespan
- ☐ Support
- ☐ An Engineer

☐ Water & electricity (short-term)

☐ Latitude to run the model

☐ Financial Support



