

# Sustainability Projects Fund Application

## McGill, Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Gardens (MSEG)

Email: [macdonaldstudentgarden@gmail.com](mailto:macdonaldstudentgarden@gmail.com)

### Budget Requested

\$15,376.00

### Project Group

Name	Email
Pauline Richard	Pauline.richard@mail.mcgill.ca
Clémence Briand Racine	Clemence.briandracine@mail.mcgill.ca
Alice Pradel	Alice.pradel@mail.mcgill.ca
Vincent Bonner Guénette	Vincent.bonnerguenette@mail.mcgill.ca

### A. Project Overview

The McGill Student-run Ecological Gardens (MSEG) is a student initiated and student-run group dedicated to ecological agriculture. MSEG's vision is to feed academic investigation into ecological agriculture by cultivating land for sustainable vegetable production on university grounds. This group is also committed to connecting and helping groups working towards local and sustainable food sourcing for McGill and Macdonald food systems. By bringing together students, staff and members of the community through workshops, market stands, education and employment opportunities, MSEG strives to become a living laboratory for ecological food systems and practices.

Over the last 3 years, MSEG has grown both in land base and outreach. Our greatest successes this last season were deepening our integration with faculty as well as increasing our vegetable production.

Our links with academic curriculum are developing and strengthening. There are seven courses that have committed to using MSEG as a teaching tool (Appendix A). The course Soil Fertility and Fertilizer Use (SOIL 315) has been unable to conduct their laboratory in the garden as planned since MUNACA members were on strike. A dietetics stagiaire (NUTR 510) collaborated with MSEG by helping facilitate two canning workshops. She also provided MSEG with pertinent information on food processing regulations of the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec, and provided recipes for our food baskets. Currently, nine students - including the four core members of MSEG - are taking a special topics course on crop planning (PLNT 451) that uses MSEG as its experimental model. This course considerably improves the learning process as it involves the actual implementation of production-planning and the management. Also, many of the students participating in the class - and many others - have demonstrated an interest in working for MSEG.

Linking faculty with MSEG is steadily progressing. We are exploring which courses could cross-pollinate the project. In other words, MSEG is developing as a hands-on teaching tool for ecological agriculture and in exchange, student research serves to improve our production methods and

integration in the food system. For the continuity of MSEG and for its relevance to academia we are currently in dialogue with our Dean, Chandra Madramootoo, about ways to further institutionalize MSEG. [In response](#), we are updating our constitution and will soon be presenting our project to a Faculty meeting. From this meeting, our hope is that opportunities for closer collaboration will present themselves and that more faculty members will develop an academic interest in the project.

MSEG now cultivates a quarter acre in the Horticultural center and since 2011, an extra acre in Senneville. Also, MSEG maintains the Meditation Garden, next to the Macdonald Community Garden. This mix of perennial plants and medicinal herbs will be complemented by the Butterfly and Scent Garden coming this summer. Our one-acre [plot](#) neighbors [two other organic vegetable producers](#), Les Jardins Carya and Ferme du Zéphyr.

This year, in order to sustain the variety of activities in which the project engages, MSEG will employ 5 students from May to August at full-time hours and 10 [students](#) part-time from September to October, funding permitting.

## **B. Objectives**

MSEG's [primary objectives](#) are:

1. To increase McGill's capacity for applied ecological agriculture education and research while bridging the gaps between departments,
2. To become an integral part of the movement reshaping our food system on Campus,
3. To educate the campus and local community about the importance of sustainable food systems and how they can actively take part in this from soil to their plate.

MSEG strives to become a platform for participative learning in the field of sustainable agriculture at McGill. In the last year, seven courses from different departments committed to integrate MSEG in their curriculum either for laboratories, research projects or internship opportunities. Many other professors have demonstrated genuine interest in using MSEG as a teaching tool. Our next step is to invite graduate students to apply their research using MSEG.

Last year, MSEG has worked with the dietetics program; bringing departments closer together and providing workshops on produce transformation. These workshops were very successful, reaching out to over 35 students. This year, we plan to offer more of these workshops as well as increase the number of talks from guest speakers on different aspects of agriculture and food issues (cf: Timeline). By assessing participation and feedback, we will continue evaluating the benefit of these activities and respond to the expressed topical interests related to our mandate.

Through our basket and market services, we are providing staff, students and community with an opportunity to connect with their food and the farmers producing it. The opportunity to volunteer at the gardens further enriches this connection. Last season we sold at three different markets and provided thirty fall baskets. This year, we will maintain our presence at these three markets and increase our baskets to twenty in summer and sixty in fall, providing a growing number of people with ecologically-grown vegetables. Through satisfaction surveys, we will be able to meet the community's vegetable needs. MSEG has also [sold](#) vegetables to McGill Food and Dining Services. We donated [d](#) to Happy Belly club for their free weekly student meals. The Out of the Garden project is a devoted ally

laying the building blocks for a student-run café. Steadily, we are actively shaping an alternative food system and by doing so, changing behaviour in food consumption.

In the upcoming season, MSEG will reach out to the wider community by initiating a school to farm program. We believe that our educational mandate should be extended beyond the university's scope to allow children to benefit from a hands-on experience on a farm. Moreover, in conjunction with other active student clubs, we hope to build relationships with local elementary schools and develop workshops for young children.

This successful season has increased MSEG's visibility and outreach as demonstrated by students' interest and participation in the project. In order to make MSEG responsive to the McGill student body's requests & wishes, open forums will be held each semester. These will be an opportunity to promote the project, develop on new ideas for a better food system and increase student participation and network with other groups.

MSEG is a space for people to develop a culture of sustainability on campus on the social and academic levels. MSEG is bringing back *culture* into *agriculture*, with workshops and social events that celebrate seasonal developments, potlucks and through the creation of market space.

## C. Project implementation

### Stakeholders

The Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (FAES) and the Macdonald Campus Student Society (MCSS) have vested interest in the continuation of the project. This has been translated into commitment to some financial support and potential contribution to our changing governance structure.

The professors and research supervisors listed in Annexe A are stakeholders in our project since they committed to integrate MSEG in their curriculums. There are other conversations concerning potential research experiments, special topics courses and the like, which may become involved as the season progresses. MSEG will be present at the plant science faculty meeting in March to develop new relations with professors and graduate students - offering them an opportunity to benefit from the ecologically managed field for courses and research.

Les Jardins Carya have lent the student-run garden considerable assistance, educationally and logistically (machinery, water from their well, washing station and storage facilities). Indeed, the physical proximity of Les Jardins Carya allows MSEG to benefit from their valuable knowledge about vegetable growing and marketing. We are in the process of developing a more structured relationship in order to fully benefit from the educational service that they are willing to provide - like the supervision of the Internship in Agriculture/Environment (AGRI 310) which they did in 2011 for Pauline Richard. Fermes du Zéphyr also agreed to pursue their logistical support. The Macdonald Horticulture Center has committed to lending us some space for storage and washing vegetables.

The community buying MSEG's produce, as well as the students who benefit from our workshops and who volunteer with us, are important stakeholders in our project. Their feedback is overtly positive and encouraging. Support for this project, also comes from the collaboration with

several student groups including the Out of the Garden, Green Drinks Ste. Anne, Gorilla Compost and Happy Belly.

The project team members are dedicated to the project: meeting weekly to bi-weekly, attending the special topics course on crop production and planning (AGRI 482). Also, Alice Pradel and Pauline Richard who worked with MSEG last year are participating again this year in part to transfer on the acquired knowledge from the previous year and to further assist the fruition of the project. Pauline is also an active member of Out of the Garden Project, demonstrating MSEG's clear commitment to actualizing its potential to feed the campus. Furthermore, the members' considerable [contribution](#) of volunteered [time](#) demonstrates their commitment and enthusiasm.

Over the long-term, the project aims to become a [financially self-sufficient](#) (that is, requiring minimal to no external funding in order to persist) ecological farm that provides the backbone for a sustainable food system at Macdonald campus as well as the basis for ecological agriculture research at the university. To become economically sustainable and more accessible to future student employees, revenues from sales will be reinvested in the following year's salaries and expenses. For continuity of the project, we are drafting an updated constitution. The purpose of the constitution is [to](#) facilitate the transition of individuals involved with MSEG from year to year and to develop a clearer governance structure. As mentioned above, Dr. Madramootoo has invited us to present our project to the Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences in order to explore opportunities for closer partnerships. MSEG's upcoming constitution will specify a structure of governance that will welcome involvement from Faculty, [whilst maintain student direction over most aspects of MSEG's structure and operations](#).

### Timeline

This is a rough timeline that the project will follow, heavily dependent on variables such as weather and funding.

January - February	PLNT 451: Crop planning course starts. Weekly meetings with team members. Communication with Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. Charter redaction. Open Forum aimed at engaging dialogue with the campus community Presentation to PGSS Green Drinks, Invitation of a Guest speaker, Robin Tunnicliffe
March - April	Greenhouse seedling preparation – soil, trays, fertilization Workshops (Mushroom inoculation and Sprouting). Events such as Contra dancing & potlucks to celebrate springtime. Volunteering begins.
May	Field preparations. First transplanting, putting into action the production plan developed in PLNT 451. In class presentation to dietetics class on sustainable agriculture Preparation of school to farm workshops
June	Start of market sales (in Ste-Anne de Bellevue and the Macdonald Stewart Lobby) Workshops. School to farm field trips begin. Workshops with elementary school students (in school and in the field)
July	Field maintenance and harvest. Continuation of markets & start of basket sales.

	Workshops (urban agriculture). Workshops with day camp children
August	Field maintenance and harvest. Workshops (Pollinator management & Permaculture principles). Tours. Possible transformation of vegetables. Organizing of the Sainte Anne-de-Bellevue Farmers Market Tomato Festival Workshops with day camp children
September	Field maintenance and harvest. Workshops (Canning & Cooking in Season workshops in collaboration with Dietetics department & Seed saving) Tours with Macdonald students Workshops with elementary school students (in school and in the field)
October	Planting over-winter crops and cover crops, mulching. Market closure & Basket sales ends. Open forum Events such as Contra dancing & potlucks to celebrate our harvest.

### Coordinator's tasks

Coordinator	Tasks and responsibilities
Alice Pradel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Market &amp; CSA (harvest, sales and market table; co-coordinator with Clémence Briand Racine)</li> <li>● Volunteer Coordinator (and volunteer recruitment)</li> <li>● Website (update with information, events, pictures and videos)</li> <li>● Outreach (co-coordinator with Clémence Briand Racine)</li> <li>● Pest control</li> </ul>
Pauline Richard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Field operations (includes coordination with Les Jardins Carya, Zéphyr and Mike Bleho from the Horticulture Center, (co-coordinating with Vincent Bonner Guénette) cover crop, mulching, tools, oversee that documentation is being done)</li> <li>● Workshops</li> <li>● Email (check them and delegate)</li> <li>● Transformation ( post harvest, storage, canning)</li> </ul>
Clémence Briand Racine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Market &amp; CSA (harvest, sales and market table; co-coordinator with Alice Pradel)</li> <li>● Faculty Link (development of links between MSEG and research projects and</li> <li>● Farm-to-School, presentations and tours</li> <li>● Meditation Garden</li> <li>● Outreach (co-coordinator with Alice Pradel)</li> </ul>
Vincent Bonner Guénette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Field operations (coordination with Les Jardins Carya, Zéphyr, and Mike Bleho from the Horticulture Center for machinery , cover crop, mulching, tools,) (co-coordinator with Pauline Richard)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Financial accounting</li> <li>● Community event (forums, Tomato festival, potlucks, and harvest social events)</li> <li>● Mushrooms cultivation</li> </ul>
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This division of coordinators' role does not imply division of labour but rather the appointment of a person the responsible for overseeing that these tasks are adressed. The division of tasks above is subject to modifications throughout the season. All members will participate in field tasks and a variety of market and harvest-related activities.

**Related Experience of Project Leaders**

Pauline Richard is an Environmental and Agricultural Science student specializing in Ecological Agriculture. She is passionate about sustainable food and has a strong interest in natural nutrition. Pauline was one of the four students who initiated the Out of the Garden project and worked with MSEG as a full-time employee last year where she did her internship (AGRI 310).

Alice a student in International Agriculture and Food Systems who worked with MSEG last season. She is involved in Gorilla Composting as part of her dedication for soil quality and intelligent waste management. Alice will be comparing ecological pest control methods this summer as part of her Bachelor's final project (AGRI 490).

Clémence is studying in Environmental Biology and specializing in Ecological Agriculture. Last summer, she has volunteered with MSEG and was part of an internship in urban agriculture in Mali through Alternative. She is eager to work on the development of MSEG's projects with a special interest in developing the farm to school aspect of MSEG.

Vincent is a biologist now studying Ecological Agriculture. He worked as an environmental facilitator in a non-profit organization and on several organic farms. He is eager to work with MSEG this upcoming season to apply sustainable agriculture by producing vegetables ecologically, which ~~is~~ he would like to pursue after his studies at McGill.

These four coordinators foresee working for the entirety of the season, May through October.

In the table below, the farming positions would be tasked with management, planting, weeding, harvesting, cleaning and selling at markets and other field work. The education position would be tasked with coordinate workshops and give tours of the farm to school children, community members and campus members, as well as documenting MSEG's progress online. In practice, this position's roles will be distributed between all full-time employees. The five employees will commit themselves to working 40 hours per week during the summer (May-August). When the fall semesters starts (September-October) , MSEG plans to have a total of 10 employees at 10 hours per week.

### Employees Salaries

Description	# positions	\$/hr	Hrs/wk	# Weeks	\$/ Position	Total Cost
Full-Time 4-month, Farming (May to August)	4	10	40	16	6400	\$25,600
Full-Time 4-month, Educating coordinator (May to August)	1	10	10	8	800	\$6,400
Part-Time 2-month, Farming (September to October)	10	10	10	8	800	\$8,000
<b>Total amount required for salaries</b>						<b>\$40,000.00</b>

### D. Expenses

#### Projections of Expenses for 2012

<b>Field Materials and Operational Costs</b>	Seeds	\$1,500.00
	Irrigation, Tools and Trellising	\$365.00
	Carya Services (tractor use, water pump use)	\$200.00
	Transportation (gas only)	\$1,000.00
	Market Supplies (plastic bags, market tent rental)	\$604.00
	Miscellaneous expenses, Containers, and Office Supplies	\$365.00
<b>Educational Material</b>	Workshop materials and guest speakers and special events	\$1,485.00
	Promotion	\$100.00
<b>Salaries</b>	(table above showing break down of salaries)	\$40,000.00
<b>Total Expected Expenses</b>		<b>\$45,619.00</b>

#### Funding needed

<b>Total Expected Expenses</b>		<b>\$45,619.00</b>
<b>Revenue from 2011*</b>	Sales from previous season minus vehicle expenses	\$13,760.00
<b>Expected funding needed for 2012 season</b>		<b>\$31,859.00</b>

\*All revenues from the past year were kept to pay for salaries the following year. Moreover, the revenue made this next year will be used for salaries the following year. In this way, students have a secure

source for salaries before the season begins, making the participation in the project feasible for more students.

**External Funding**

<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	
Revenue from 2011* (Sales from previous season minus vehicle expenses)	\$13,760.00	
<b>Funding Requests</b>		<b>Confirmation</b>
Macdonald Campus Students' Society	\$3,104.00	No
Agricultural and Environmental Science Undergraduate Society	\$2,325.00	\$500.00
FAES Deans' Office	\$12,879.00	No
<b>Sustainability Projects Fund**</b>	<b>\$15,376.00</b>	No
<b>Total funding requested</b>	<b>\$31,859.00</b>	

\*\*The unconfirmed funding sources may not be capable of granting the amount requested which may significantly compromise MSEG's foreseen operations. If MSEG is faced with a lack of funding and no alternative source is found, a resubmission of a fund request may be put forward to the FAES Dean's Office and the Sustainability Projects Fund.

**Final Commentary**

The SPF provided for MSEG [in](#) 2010 and 2011, launching the project into the next stage of its evolution with expanded land, outreach and relevance to the University and student reality. The emphasis this season will be to keep improving the quality of how we deliver produce and education opportunities at this scale and further developing economic self-sustainability. This and our efforts to develop a relevant governance structure will take the project [into](#) a stage of steady flight. With this season's funding application MSEG hopes to express its eagerness to grow and to make the most out of the investment by the SPF and other funding bodies. By supporting a part of the salary for MSEG employees, the SPF is investing not only in the interwoven learning and stimulation of a student-run organization but also stabilizing the groundwork for what this group represents; students wholly involved in their learning experience, applying their classroom knowledge first hand, and reaching for opportunities for research.

The Macdonald Student-run Ecological Gardens is a harbinger of the new sustainable directives being taken across the university.



## Appendix A: Current and Future Faculty Links

### Current Faculty Links

#### AGRICULTURE & PLANT SCIENCE

**PLNT 451** Special Topics 3 - Dr. Caroline Begg (3 credits, Fall or Winter)

**AGRI 310** Internship in Agriculture/Environment - Dr. Caroline Begg (3 credits, Fall or Summer)

*Description: Internship on working farms or in other appropriate businesses of the agri-food/environment industries.*

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#### NUTRITION & DIETETICS

Stages established through Mary Hendrickson:

**NUTR 510** Professional Practice Stage 4 - Sandy Phillips, Heidi Ritter (14 credits, Fall)

*Description: Four interrelated modules of directed experience in clinical nutrition, foodservice management, normal nutrition education and community nutrition, in health care settings and the private sector.*

**NUTR 614** Graduate Professional Practice 4, Community Nutrition - Maureen Rose, Sandy Phillips (8 credits, Fall or Winter)

*Description: Nutrition and Dietetics : Assessment, planning, implementation, communication, and evaluation of public health and community nutrition programs for a variety of individuals and population groups. Focus is on intervention strategies and their evaluation.*

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#### SOIL SCIENCE

**SOIL 315** Soil Fertility and Fertilizer Use - Joann Whalen (3 credits, Fall)

*Description: Plant nutrients in the soil, influence of soil properties on nutrient absorption and plant growth, use of organic and inorganic fertilizers.*

**SOIL 445** Agro Environmental Fertilizer Use - Joann Whalen (3 credits, Winter, alternate years)

*Description: A sustainable, agroenvironmental approach to nutrient management planning at the farm scale, consistent with guidelines and laws governing fertilizer use in Quebec and other jurisdictions.*

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#### BIORESOURCE ENGINEERING

**BREE 497** - Bioresource Engineering Project - Shiv Prasher (3 credits, Fall, Winter or Summer)

*Description: Independent study for design and experimental work on a bioresource engineering topic chosen in consultation between the student and departmental staff.*

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Future potential courses that could apply their learning in the Student-run Gardens:

**NUTR 209** Professional Practice Stage 1 - Joane Routhier, Hugues Plourde (2 credits, Summer)

*Description: Nutrition and Dietetics : Directed, supervised experiences in nutrition services and food service operations management; integration into the professional team.*

**NUTR 409** Professional Practice Stage 3 - Joane Routhier, Hugues Plourde (8 credits, Winter)  
*Description: Four interrelated modules of directed experience in clinical nutrition, foodservice management, normal nutrition education and community nutrition, in health care settings and the private sector.*

There is discussion with faculty lecturers in Plant Science and Nutrition and Dietetics.

## Appendix B – Letters of Support



McGill

**Faculty of Agricultural  
and Environmental Sciences**

McGill University  
Macdonald Campus

Department of Plant Science

**Faculté des sciences de  
l'agriculture et de l'environnement**

Université McGill  
Campus Macdonald

Département de sciences végétales

Tel.: (514) 398-7851  
Fax: (514) 398-7897  
www.mcgill.ca/plant

21,111 Lakeshore  
Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue  
Québec, Canada H9X 3V9

Letter in support of Macdonald Student Run Ecological Garden (MSEG)

February 11 2012

The Macdonald Student-run ecological garden has evolved from four plots in the Mac community garden run by two students to furnish food for Happy Belly in 2009 to 1.25 acres employing 10 student employees and feeding over a 100 people a week during the growing season in 2011. This is an amazing increase in growth and outreach to the Macdonald student community and to McGill as a whole. MSEG sold vegetables to students and faculty in the Macdonald Stewart Foyer last fall (2011) and downtown at the McGill Farmer's market.

MSEG has been actively pursuing opportunities to institutionalize their activities. For example one member did AGRI 310 internship in agriculture/environment over the summer under the supervision of Alex Flores an owner of Ferme Carya. MSEG held canning workshops in the fall 2011 for students under the supervisor of a Dietetics student. MSEG provided vegetables for a harvest dinner sponsored by the Out-of-the Garden-Project, fall 2011 where there was a discussion about local food and production. This winter 2012 there are nine students taking PLNT 451 a special topics on crop planning (seed order to transplants plus budgets and special projects) for the summer production. The interest in this first time course is strong and it was never advertised. The plan is to offer it every year and if possible transform it into a regular course. Various other student projects have been done in collaboration with the MSEG team.

Placing MSEG within the system is difficult. For it to be truly sustainable it must make a profit by selling vegetables. This ongoing project enhances student learning and understanding in terms of how an enterprise works – they are developing a vision statement; objectives; establishing an educational component for the team and others; budgeting and finance; and at the same time producing high quality vegetables for sell. This is a rare life experience with hands on learning and research offered at the Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

I highly support this application for funding.

Sincerely

Caroline Begg, Ph.D.

514-398-8749 Raymond R2-028a

Email: caroline.begg@mcgill.ca

Ecological Agriculture Specialization, minor and certificate coordinator and advisor

Director of Stage (Internship), FMT Program,

Faculty Lecturer, Plant Science, McGill University

Associate Member, McGill School of the Environment, Faculty of Science



**School of Dietetics and  
Human Nutrition**

**École de diététique et  
nutrition humaine**

Tel.: (514) 398-7842

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**Faculty of Agricultural  
and Environmental Sciences**

**Faculté des sciences de  
l'agriculture et de l'environnement**

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Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue  
Québec, Canada H9X 3V9

McGill University  
Macdonald Campus  
9 February 2012

Université McGill  
Campus Macdonald

McGill Office of Sustainability  
1010 Sherbrooke Street West, Suite 1200  
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2R7

To Whom It May Concern:

It is a privilege to write this letter in support of the application for a Sustainability Project Fund Grant by Pauline Richard, Clémence Briand Racine, Vincent Bonner Guénette and Alice Pradel for funding of the Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Gardens (MSEG) positions, including an education coordinator. Their project goal of increasing the knowledge about sustainable practices and the availability of fresh, local produce to the McGill community promotes a shared philosophy with Department of Dietetics and Human Nutrition's Dietetic Stage Program.

Students in the McGill Dietetic Stage Program learn to promote the consumption of vegetables and fruits to prevent diabetes, obesity, cancer and heart disease. During the academic year of 2011, Dietetics Stagiaires have also had the opportunity to learn more about the benefits of sustainable eating by participating in the Sustainable Eating Project where they taught other McGill students how to purchase and prepare healthy meals using locally grown produce. Dietetic Stage students and MSEG members have partnered to provide sustainable education to McGill students through campus cooking workshops during the spring and fall semesters. Pauline and other members of MSEG collaborated with the Dietetics Stage program this fall by placing a Level 4 Dietetics Stagiaire for a five week food service rotation. The stagiaire greatly appreciated the opportunity to actively learn about sustainable practices by implementing canning workshops, developing protocols for producing and selling canned goods at MSEG's Farmers' Markets, and creating recipes for produce boxes using seasonally available produce.

MSEG group is firmly committed to educating McGill students about sustainable practices, as shown by their willingness to guest lecture to NUTR 200 Summer term, non-nutrition major students. Four representatives from MSEG provided an engaging presentation for my May, 2011 course, and have kindly agreed to present again May, 2012 (even though it is prime gardening time). Peers modeling of sustainable practices can have an enormous impact on changing social norms. Having an education coordinator would enhance the outreach work MSEG does.

I am pleased to support this project by continuing to link sustainable practices in courses I teach, and by coordinating the placement and supervision of Dietetic Stagiaires who will partner with the Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Gardens. This project offers unique interdisciplinary collaboration that will benefit McGill students and promote sustainability for future professional practice.

Sincerely,

Mary Hendrickson-Nelson, M.Sc., R.D.  
Clinical Coordinator – Professional Practice (Stage) in Dietetics  
School of Dietetics and Human Nutrition  
Tel: 514 934 1934 ext: 44706 Fax: 514-398-7631  
E-mail: [mary.hendrickson-nelson@mcgill.ca](mailto:mary.hendrickson-nelson@mcgill.ca)

To whom it may concern,

We, the Macdonald Campus Students' Society, support the initiatives of the Macdonald Student Ecological Garden. As one of the most active clubs on this campus, we commend them for their hard work and dedication to the cause of sustainable agriculture on campus. We encourage their efforts of students growing food for students. Their novel projects have thus far brought them great success. In fact, last year they expanded the project with the donation of 1 acre of land from the Macdonald farm. They have strong communication with the Macdonald community through their various events such as selling produce in our busiest lobby, and organizing canning workshops, etc. They have even collaborated with professors for the garden to be used as a teaching tool. This improves student awareness of the MSEG, as well as provides a wonderful research opportunity to students interested in sustainable agriculture. Who knows, perhaps in the future internships will be offered through this brilliant project!

The Macdonald Student Ecological Garden is not limited to this campus. In fact, they participate in the local farmer's market of Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, improving McGill's relationship with the local community. Furthermore, they have formed partnerships with other clubs on campus, and have organized several events through the "Out-of-the-Garden" project. Their aspirations of establishing an alternative café will hopefully become a reality as there is a clear demand for more food service options on campus. At this year's consultation fair, students, staff, and faculty came out and highlighted the irony that we are an agricultural/dietetics campus yet we are lacking dining facilities! The MSEG is looking at selling the food they grow back to students and staff/faculty. May their efforts to bridge this gap not go unnoticed, and may we continue to support this project.

Sincerely,  
Kerry Blake-Savery (MCSS President)

February 12- 2012

Dear Madam/Sir

For the past two years, students from the McGill/ Macdonald Student run Ecological Garden (MSEG), have been using a piece of land located at the Macdonald Campus's Horticulture Research Center. The students grew a wide variety of vegetable species and have done an excellent job of taking care of the land.

It is our pleasure to offer them the use of this land again this year and to support them on any technical aspects of their project including the use of some of our physical facilities such as cold rooms and water use for washing their produce.

This is a worthwhile project where students learn a lot about how to grow food from the planning stage right through to the marketing of their Horticultural products.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at the email address below.

With best regards,  
Mike Bleho

Mike Bleho  
Senior Technician  
Plant Science dept.  
514-398-7875  
[Michael.bleho@mcgill.ca](mailto:Michael.bleho@mcgill.ca)

February 10, 2012

To whom it may concern,

We are writing this letter in support of the McGill student's ecological farming initiative. They have demonstrated great dedication and passion for this project in the 2011 season and we are pleased to further collaborate with the team in 2012. We will continue to support the project with tractor work, knowledge and resource sharing, irrigation and job shadowing. The students have expressed an interest in intensifying this collaboration for the coming season by offering a few man hours per week in terms of apprenticeship in exchange for dedicated learning time on topics of their choosing which we are happy to provide.

It is very inspiring to see McGill's students take on such an ambitious initiative and we hope to see the project continue for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Alex Flores, Lee Mundy and Ramzy Kassouf of Les Jardins Carya

February 14, 2012

The MSEG garden project , in my estimation was a great success in the summer of 2011. The student garden team worked hard and well, especially given that it was a first year at vegetable production .

Ferme du Zéphyr strongly supports the MSEG project on the McGill field enclosed by the arboretum and Ramzy Kassouf's property.

As in 2011 Ferme du Zéphyr is offering technical assistance on preparation and maintenance of ½ acre of land contiguous to 3 ½ acres being cultivated by Zéphyr on the McGill field. This includes tractor field prep and cultivation and rototilling, if necessary.

Provided that the irrigation water source is still being provided by Ramzy Kassouf's well, Zéphyr is offering irrigation through its irrigation pipes.

Technical advice is also offered.

We believe that this student project is a very positive project for the students and for the university community and we hope it can continue to be funded.

Stephen Homer Ferme du Zéphyr  
514-550-6980



13.02.2012

Re: Sustainability Project Fund, MacDonald Students Ecological Garden (MSEG)

The McGill Farmers' Market (MFM) would like to express its support and overwhelming gratitude for MSEG. As the only student-run produce contribution to both the farmers' market and CSA project, MSEG is an important partner in MFM's sustainability mandate.

MSEG has contributed to the MFM's activities for numerous years, and continues to add to the vibe of the market. As well as providing the downtown campus with local, delicious produce for 16 weeks this past year, by participating in MFM and CSA program, MSEG has also helped to form a unique student-run food system, whereby the food is grown by students, brought to a student-run market, and sold to students. In doing so MSEG is also helping to link the two McGill campuses, and their respective sustainability-focused initiatives, together.

The MFM completely supports MSEG's work and has no reservations in recommending them for this opportunity.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions.

Diana King and Alyssa Bauer

Coordinatrices étudiantes du marché des fermiers à McGill 2011-2012  
McGill Farmers' Market coordinators 2011-2012

c: 514-632-4880

e: [mcgillfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:mcgillfarmersmarket@gmail.com)

To Whom It May Concern:

The Macdonald Student Ecological Garden is the product of a successful collaboration between a motivated student group and the faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at Macdonald Campus. It provides the students of Mac Campus with practical experience in farm management and an alternative to the conventionally run farms already present on campus. The garden (known as MSEG) is one of our most successful clubs in its ability to support itself through sales and its visibility within the student body on campus. By offering open workshops on new ecological production methods and providing a space for experimentation MSEG, is responsive to the needs and interests of the campus. Since its inception the garden has been incorporating multiple generations of students ensuring its continuation for many years. More recently MSEG is collaborating with the Macdonald Agro-Ecology Group, the Macdonald Campus Student Society, the Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Undergraduate Society and the Out of the Garden Project to formulate a solution to the food service problems at Mac that have recently come under scrutiny for its unsustainability, ineffective management and distributive measures.

The Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Undergraduate Society is fully supportive of the development of MSEG and provides additional resources to the project through our new council position of Sustainability Campus Projects Advisor to be filled in March of 2012.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Undergraduate Society with any questions or concerns regarding our support of this project.

Thank you,

Lauren Anderson  
A.E.S.U.S. President  
[aesusatmac@gmail.com](mailto:aesusatmac@gmail.com)

February 13, 2012

I would like to convey my support to the Macdonald Campus Student Run Ecological Garden (MSEG). I have worked closely with the MSEG members over the last year. This is a close knit group of students, dedicated to converting hard work into high quality organic produce for the McGill Community as well as the surrounding community of Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue. It was my pleasure to involve them in our Harvest Feast in November. Part of the mandate of the Out of the Garden project, under which I work, is to promote the MSEG and include them in our plans for a student run cafe at Macdonald campus. The MSEG contributed produce such as butternut squash, red potatoes, carrots and beets. This vegetarian feast was a big success mostly because it was truly a cooperative effort to promote a sense of community at Macdonald Campus. I look forward to a continuing collaboration with the MSEG students.

Sincerely,

Amy Van Elslande, Alternative Food Services Coordinator  
MSc. Candidate  
School of Dietetics and Human Nutrition  
McGill University  
MS2-023, Macdonald Stewart Building  
21111 Lakeshore Road  
Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec H9X 3V9

February 13, 2012

To: McGill Sustainability Projects Fund

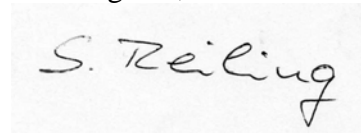
### **Support for the MSEG Project**

The MSEG group has been initiated several semesters ago, and until today they belong to the most active, energetic, and determined groups on Macdonald campus. As MCGSS environmental advisor as well as a Mac student, I was able to meet most members of the MSEG group individually and am very proud of their work and the effort they put into this project to make it successful.

In summer 2010, MSEG decided to widen their horizon and created the beautiful Meditation Gardens, which in turn led to the idea to create a butterfly and scent garden in the same area. These two projects have great potential, not only to attract wildlife and pollinators for the campus garden plots, but also to demonstrate the complex relation between insects, plants and man-made environments. Its educational impacts are broad and could affect ecological awareness for both students and the general public. Once fully established, the gardens will serve as readily accessible site for class field trips in horticulture, entomology, botany and environmental sciences. I am in close contact with the John Abbott College Environmental Studies Coordinator, and this summer we want to integrate several JAC students into the planning, execution and maintenance of these gardens. Some of them will be chosen to monitor the presence of wildlife such as insect and bird species in the gardens.

I strongly support the MSEG initiative and wish the people who stand behind this project all the best. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Reiling". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

---

Sarah Reiling  
MCGSS Environmental Advisor, PhD student  
Institute of Parasitology, McGill University



# McGill

**Dr. Chandra A. Madramootoo, Eng.**

**James McGill Professor and Dean**

Faculty of Agricultural  
and Environmental Sciences

McGill University  
Macdonald Campus

**Titulaire d'une chaire James McGill et Doyen**

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February 14, 2012

Professor Jim Nicell  
Associate Vice-Principal (University Services)  
Chair, Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group  
C/O Office of Sustainability  
Ferrier Building,  
840 Doctor Penfield, Room 216  
Montreal QC  
H3A 1A4

Dear Professor Nicell,

On behalf of the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (FAES) and the Macdonald Campus, I am pleased to write this letter in support of the McGill Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Garden (MSEG).

The MSEG project has been a true success story. The project has enabled the Faculty to create an ecological farm which is a valuable learning, research and community outreach tool for the University.

Students with an interest in ecological agriculture now have the opportunity to implement plans developed in various courses and undertake independent research projects in this unique environment. The project is beginning to expand and develop relationships with other disciplines in the Faculty; for example food production, nutrition and dietetics and the many students involved in this project are developing strong entrepreneurial and project management skills; skills that will serve them well in their future careers.

I fully support this project.

Should you require any additional information; please feel free to contact me.

Chandra Madramootoo, Ph.D., Ing., FCSBE, FASABE  
James McGill Professor and Dean

CAM/md



**Faculty of Agricultural  
and Environmental Sciences**

McGill University  
Macdonald Campus

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**Faculté des sciences de  
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February 14, 2012

Sustainability Projects Fund  
McGill University

Re: Macdonald Student-run Ecological Gardens

It is a pleasure for me to send this letter of support for the Macdonald Student-run Ecological Gardens. Their goal of producing good food is achieved by carefully selecting low-input farming practices, consistent with the principles of ecological and sustainable agriculture.

As a professor of soil science, I see natural links between the students leading the Macdonald Student-run Ecological Gardens and students enrolled in my courses Soil Fertility and Fertilizer Use (SOIL 315) and Agroenvironmental Fertilizer Use (SOIL 445).

One of the goals in SOIL 315 is to have students devise a fertilizer plan for a farmer, based on the soil test analysis and the crops grown. The challenge for the students in this course is to select fertilizers that are locally available, economical and consistent with the production goals of the farmer. For instance, the fertilizers selected for a farm that is certified organic could be quite different from those used in a conventional farming system.

I conducted an in-depth site visit of the Macdonald Student-run Ecological Gardens in fall 2011, so that I was familiar with their farm plan and practices. Now, I am in the process of developing an exercise for my SOIL 315 class. This will involve an in-class presentation from the MSEG group, followed by a site visit. The students in the SOIL 315 class will be given the task of collecting soil samples from the various garden plots, and undertaking soil analysis and interpretation of the data. They will prepare a fertilizer plan for each set of soil-crop combination, which can then be used for the 2013 growing season. A written fertilizer plan will be prepared by each group, and it will be verified and corrected by the professor. Then each group will give an oral presentation about their fertilizer plan. Members of the MSEG group will be invited to attend the final oral presentations and will receive the corrected fertilizer plan from each group. This is an excellent example of peer mentoring and integrating Sustainability Projects Fund activities into the classroom.

Another opportunity to integrate the Macdonald Student-run Ecological Gardens in the classroom comes in SOIL 445, where student teams need to do a complete nutrient management budget for a farm. There is a project for a team of two or three students to evaluate the Ecological Gardens in the context of a whole farming operation and determine its compliance with Quebec agricultural regulations (Règlement sur les exploitations agricoles). This will ensure that all of the environmental regulations that govern a sustainable farming operation are respected. Again, this is an opportunity for student leaders and

supporting farms to interact with students in the classroom, many whom expect to become professional agronomists and spend their career working with Quebec's farm community.

Through these interactions, there will doubtless be students from the SOIL 315 and SOIL 445 classes who are inspired to join the Ecological Gardens group, thereby insuring the continuation of the project over the long-term.

In my view, the Macdonald Student-run Ecological Gardens are a "practical training ground" for the student gardeners that are becoming fully integrated into the culture and classrooms of the Macdonald Campus, thereby ensuring the future of this sustainable project. As such, I wholeheartedly support the continuation of funding to the Macdonald Student-run Ecological Gardens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joann Whalen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Joann K. Whalen, Ph.D, agr.  
William Dawson Scholar  
Associate Professor, Soil Science



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McGill University  
Macdonald Campus

Université McGill  
Campus Macdonald

9 February 2012

McGill Office of Sustainability  
1010 Sherbrooke Street West, Suite 1200  
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2R7

To Whom It May Concern:

It is a privilege to write this letter in support of the application for a Sustainability Project Fund Grant by Anna Elbon and Pauline Richard for funding of the Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Gardens (MSEG) positions, including an education coordinator. Their project goal of increasing the knowledge about sustainable practices and the availability of fresh, local produce to the McGill community promotes a shared philosophy with Department of Dietetics and Human Nutrition's Dietetic Stage Program.

Students in the McGill Dietetic Stage Program learn to promote the consumption of vegetables and fruits to prevent diabetes, obesity, cancer and heart disease. During the academic year of 2011, Dietetics Stagiaires have also had the opportunity to learn more about the benefits of sustainable eating by participating in the Sustainable Eating Project where they taught other McGill students how to purchase and prepare healthy meals using locally grown produce. Dietetic Stage students and MSEG members have partnered to provide sustainable education to McGill students through campus cooking workshops during the spring and fall semesters. Pauline and other members of MSEG collaborated with the Dietetics Stage program this fall by placing a Level 4 Dietetics Stagiaire for a five week food service rotation. The stagiaire greatly appreciated the opportunity to actively learn about sustainable practices by implementing canning workshops, developing protocols for producing and selling canned goods at MSEG's Farmers' Markets, and creating recipes for produce boxes using seasonally available produce.

MSEG group is firmly committed to educating McGill students about sustainable practices, as shown by their willingness to guest lecture to NUTR 200 Summer term, non-nutrition major students. Four representatives from MSEG provided an engaging presentation for my May, 2011 course, and have kindly agreed to present again May, 2012 (even though it is prime gardening time). Peers modeling of sustainable practices can have an enormous impact on changing social norms. Having an education coordinator would enhance the outreach work MSEG does.

I am pleased to support this project by continuing to link sustainable practices in courses I teach, and by coordinating the placement and supervision of Dietetic Stagiaires who will partner with the Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Gardens. This project offers unique interdisciplinary collaboration that will benefit McGill students and promote sustainability for future professional practice.

Sincerely,

Mary Hendrickson-Nelson, M.Sc., R.D.  
Clinical Coordinator – Professional Practice (Stage) in Dietetics  
School of Dietetics and Human Nutrition  
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