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Rooted in sharing good food for years to come.

As many are aware, food security in isolated northern communities is a pressing concern. When I first moved to northern Saskatchewan in 2015, I visited the grocery store in Fond du Lac and found that a pumpkin cost \$61! In the next aisle, you could purchase a single bell pepper for \$17, or a jug of milk for \$20.

I have read articles addressing this topic where people have commented that community members should just grow their food already! What these people don't realize is that the terrain in these communities is not suitable for gardening – our land is made mostly of sand & rock, and only hardy weeds, thin trees & certain berries tend to grow here.

But this summer we were able to use some of our Nutrition North funding to start some interesting new projects, one of which is the Garden Tower! The rotating Garden Tower 2 is a

composter that grows 50 plants in 4 square feet nearly anywhere. It turns kitchen scraps to organic fertilizer via vermicomposting. The Garden Tower replicates a natural ecosystem allowing plants to access nutrients recycled through the composting processes. It has a minimal footprint and eliminates weeding, electricity, nutrient loss and most water loss associated with conventional gardening.

In two of our communities, Stony Rapids & Uranium City, we were able to bring in and distribute towers. Stony Rapids received a total of 84, and Uranium City a total of 21 towers. Towers with casters & grow lights were given to the local schools & our long term care unit so that they could experience year round growth. The rest of the towers were distributed to community households – an

opportunity for empowerment by allowing people to grow their own produce, a chance to learn how to garden & compost, and potentially some personal healing through a little gardening therapy.

This project has only just taken root, but we hope that it will continue to grow & flourish over the coming years!

Garden Towers start at \$459 (plus taxes & shipping), and can be purchased through Frank Tecklenburg of Earth Connections Garden Centre (<http://earthconnectionscorner.com>). Earth Connections will ship to anywhere Canada Post delivers in Canada!

