

## Graduate Internship Opportunity

### Summer 2025

#### PROJECT TITLE

### **Net Zero Food Hub Project: Victoria Community Food Hub's Journey to Carbon Neutrality**

#### ORGANIZATION

Victoria Community Food Hub Society

---

#### Project Background

In 2020 the Victoria Community Food Hub Society (VCFHS) launched the South Island Farmhub program local food and produce aggregation and distribution centre, followed by the Kitchen Connect Food Business Incubator and Processing Facility. Our food hub is located on Southern Vancouver Island, in Victoria, and is part of the larger BC Food Hubs Network. Co-located at our food hub is the Food Rescue Initiative that receives and redistributes food from local grocers and growers to a network of agencies addressing food insecurity in the region.

#### Project Description

The VCFHS, along with its South Island FarmHub and Kitchen Connect programs, is committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. Our goal is to minimize our carbon emissions across all operations, from food processing and facility management to transportation, packaging, and waste management. Local food hubs are uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between local food production, small scale agriculture and regional food security. By pursuing the Net Zero goal, we aim to demonstrate leadership in sustainability, contribute to a healthier environment, inspire positive change, while fostering innovation in achieving net zero emissions across the food system.

The project involves a Carbon Footprint Assessment, benchmarking our performance, setting emission targets, and documenting our findings to advance our action plan for immediate and measurable carbon footprint reduction in our priority areas food waste reduction and low carbon packaging.

## Scope of Work

The project will be scoped in the areas of food waste reduction and low carbon packaging. Scholar will work alongside our senior management team to ensure feasibility and capacity considerations. Assessing and implementing food waste and packaging strategies will involve our Food Hub Operations Team and its key partners.

Through the project we will measure the amount of waste reduced through the processing of rescued food in our Kitchen Connect facility, the amount of packaging reduced and/or new types adopted, as well as low carbon packaging utilized and its carbon footprint reduction over the course of the project.

By the end of this project, we will have: 1) A plan with SMART goals for reaching carbon net zero by 2030, 2) Beginnings of a reduced carbon footprint through changes in food waste and packaging 3) Educational tools, tips and resources for partners, and local food makers on achieving carbon reduction in their businesses.

## Key Deliverables

- Conduct a Carbon Footprint Assessment
- Propose emission reduction targets
- Recommend methods/actions for emissions reduction and offset
- Support creation of a toolkit for the food hub to provide businesses operating in our space and share amongst our networks

## Time Commitment

- May: Launch Project Team, review project plan and budget, establish clear roles.
- May-June: Initiate Carbon Footprint Assessment and establish process.
- June-July: Verify major sources of emissions and set targets with milestones for priority areas. Set baseline, begin to implement strategies and measurement of food waste and packaging reduction. Support the creation of education and outreach tools for network partners, food hub tenants and program participants.
- August: Conduct project evaluation.

## Preferred Skills & Background

- ☐ Excellent research and writing skills
- ☐ Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- ☐ Demonstrated interest in local food systems

- ☐ Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- ☐ Experience conducting Carbon Footprint Assessments, is an asset
- ☐ Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- ☐ Community engagement experience
- ☐ Strong analytical skills
- ☐ Ability to work independently
- ☐ Deadline oriented
- ☐ Project management and organizational skills
- ☐ Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- ☐ Design and layout skills

### Additional Project Requirements

This project involves occasionally working out of our warehouse and commercial kitchen facility. While the Scholar will not be performing any warehouse or food processing activity they will be around our equipment and will be briefed and trained on health and safety protocols. VCFHS will reimburse the Scholar for mileage expenses incurred beyond regular commute. Any required PPE and food safe apparel while conducting research in our warehouse and kitchen facility will be provided as needed.

### Program Information

**Dates:** May 1—August 15, 2025

**Compensation:** Scholars are paid approximately \$31.80/hr for 250 hours of work (based on UVic Research Assistant pay rate)

**Application Deadline:** January 31, 2025

**Contact:** Laurel Currie ([sustainability-scholars@uvic.ca](mailto:sustainability-scholars@uvic.ca))

[Visit our website](#) to learn more about eligibility and application requirements.