

OrganicLives increases production and makes a healthy impact

Vancouver-based OrganicLives is positively impacting the health of our community and our planet. In addition to being a simply delicious organic and raw food restaurant, it also empowers people to manage their health. OrganicLives manufactures and distributes wholesale food products and offers specialized culinary workshops in its education centre. Its mission is to produce the purest, most nutritious organic foods on the planet using sustainably grown, fair trade ingredients.

Preet Marhawa, OrganicLives founder, discovered first-hand the benefits of embracing an organic and raw-food diet, as it significantly improved his own failing health. Given the improvement he experienced, Preet has dedicated his life to reconnecting people with their health through food. "It's our responsibility," Preet said. "We have a great amount of food resources; it's how we use the food that's the problem." He's been a featured speaker at such events as the United Nations Safe Planet campaign in Thailand and at the World Wellness Project in Australia. He believes food touches every social issue.

In addition to acting as a health guru and advocate, Preet is also highly committed to corporate social responsibility and the environment. OrganicLives sources ingredients grown on small family farms and in communities that use traditional farming practices, improving their eco-systems and increasing bio-diversity.

OrganicLives also strives to achieve its '100% Philosophy,' which means using the highest integrity possible when it comes to sustainability. From small decisions, such as purchasing new office equipment, to managing the far-reaching economic, social and environmental impact of the total food system life cycle, OrganicLives is striving to make a positive impact.

Due to advances in technology and the abundance easily available information, people are more educated than ever about the impact of food on their environment. Demand for OrganicLives products has been increasing rapidly throughout its first two years in business. Christine Bergeron, Community Capital Investment Manager, was impressed with OrganicLives's growth potential; it has doubled revenue year over year and increased its staff from 1 to 50 employees. The business also opened new cafés inside Y Yoga and the Deepak Chopra Yoga Center. Wholesale operations are extending to a number of retailers, including Whole Foods.

When the time came to scale up and purchase new equipment for its Richmond facility, Preet went to Vancity. He was already a business member and felt connected with Vancity's social and business values. Vancity Community Capital provided \$400,000 in equipment financing to help OrganicLives increase production and its positive impact.

Preet hopes OrganicLives will empower more people to reach their health potential. He'd like to provide more resources by building a foundation and opening more education centres. By enabling people to make more informed food choices, he believes OrganicLives empowers people to heal themselves, their community and their planet.