

## Foto van de maand



*Kinderen gebruiken lege flessen, flacons en blikken om tomaten, sla, komkommer, aardbei en passievrucht te telen.*

## Van de redactie

Even geen nieuwsFLITS in het Nederlands maar in het Engels deze keer! Ellie Month is een vrijwilligster uit de VS die ons twee maanden lang heeft ondersteund. Ze vertelt in deze editie over haar ervaringen.

## Letter from Ellie!

For the past 8 weeks, I've had the privilege to work with Fundación Alerta Verde in Cochabamba, Bolivia. I worked on the various projects Alerta Verde is implementing this year during my hands on learning experience in urban gardens. I not only learned about inexpensive, organic urban gardening practices, but also about sustainability, nutrition, the challenges faced in Cochabamba, and innovative ways to solve problems. I found my internship through the Foundation for Sustainable Development, a US based group that works in Bolivia with a variety of groups. I was provided with a seed fund for my own project and the opportunity to apply for further funding through a grant. I was privileged to win the grant, and spent my two months working with the Alerta Verde team to accomplish these goals, widening Alerta Verde's reach and impact in Cochabamba.



I worked with two cafes organizing the compost of their fruit peels and coffee rinds. My funds provided buckets and signs for the cafes that explain their sustainable efforts. However, I mainly focused my funds on the installation of and informative documents about vertical gardens. Cochabamba is in the middle of a climate change induced drought and healthy food sources are increasingly difficult to come by. Fortunately, vertical gardens improve yield and water retention - and take up less space.

The funds provided 10 two-meter vertical tubes that we cut 36-40 holes in to plant things including lettuce, cilantro, and strawberries. We also bought (and a bunch of extras were donated) 6 pallets that typically go on trucks to use as garden beds. If these now 10 pallets go well, we hope to implement them in every school and center we work in. Finally, we have funds for two wall gardens. These gardens

have shelves of wood for recycled material flower pots and fencing for plants to grow up on (tomatoes, cucumbers, passionfruit).

I organized which schools and centers receive which garden. Later I prepared the various parts (preparing the tubes, cutting the flower boxes, buying the supplies, planting in seedling boxes because the tubes need prepared plants rather than seeds) and had time to install a pallet and tube garden.

However, I didn't do any of these things alone. In fact, when I arrived at my first day of work, all I knew was that I was passionate about helping the environment and thought urban gardens were an interesting and productive solution. The Alerta Verde team was accepting and encouraging as I learned the various techniques and methods of gardening. They patiently answered all of my questions, made sure I was always busy with something that both challenged me and helped me grow and immensely helped me brainstorm, plan, organize, and implement my grant.

Working with Alerta Verde has given me confidence to return to my home and work with the organic gardens and compost groups there. I have the tools, ideas, and strategies to effectively make a difference. It has shown me that I can make the world a better place. Through communities, within NGOs, and with the many ideas and strategies of my teammates. It has been an experience that has helped me grow and provided me with confidence and independence, all of which I will return to and use throughout my professional life.

Ellie

### Een korte samenvatting in het Nederlands

Ellie heeft met twee cafés gewerkt die meedoen aan het compostproject. Het geld dat ze kreeg van een fonds heeft ze vooral gebruikt om verticale tuinen van buizen en pallets aan te leggen op scholen en in verschillende centra.

Door haar werk met Alerta Verde heeft ze ontzettend veel geleerd over de technieken en methodes van tuinieren.