



Year in Review 2020



While 2020 was definitely not the year that we envisioned it would be, it was nonetheless one of deep learning, powerful moments of nature connection, spirit, and growth.

We are proud to share with you some of the highlights from this past year as we close 2020 with both gratitude and hope.

Sincerely,

Jillian Rodak

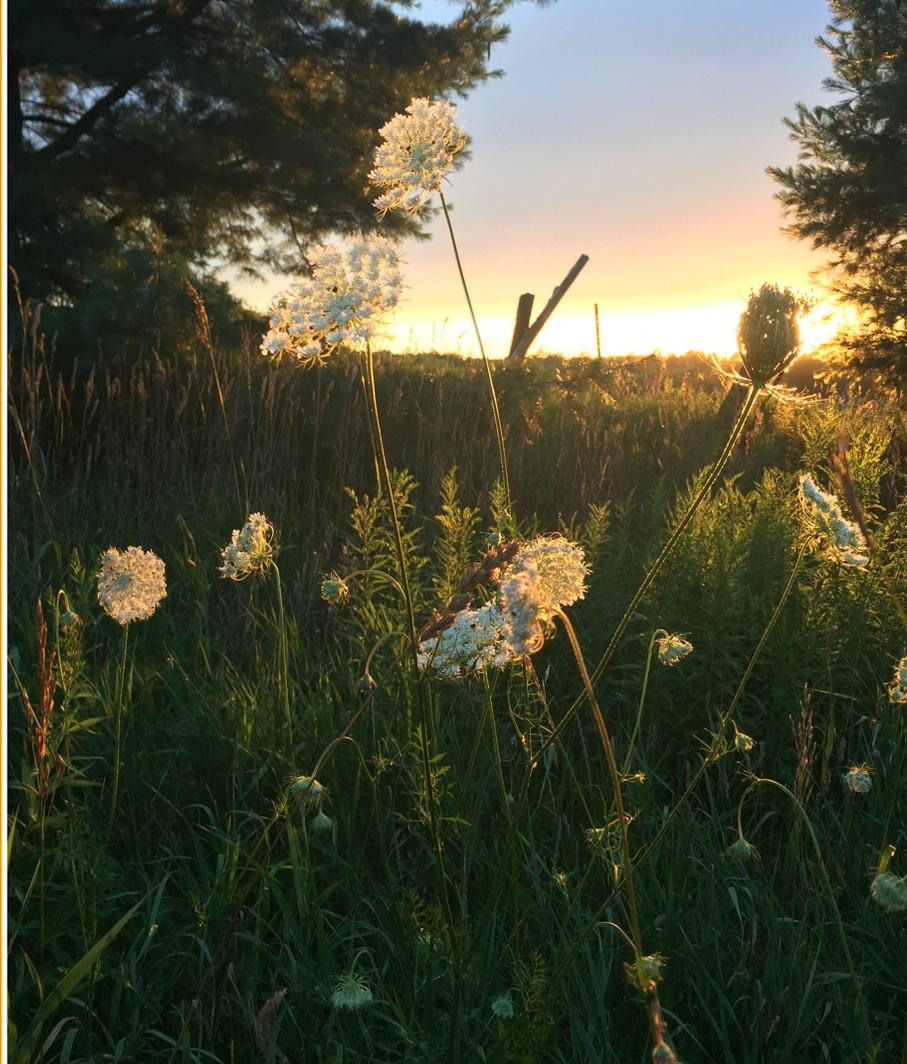
Chair of the Board of Directors

Risa Alyson Cooper

Executive Director

Allie Shier

Managing Director





In 2020,
we cared for our plants, bees and trees...

With the support of Shoresh's outstanding network of volunteers, this year we dove deep into our environmental stewardship efforts at Bela Farm, Shoresh's rural home for land-based Jewish learning and living in Hillsburgh, Ontario. Together we:

- Nurtured thousands of honey bees, **doubling the size of our apiary** over the course of the season;
- Cared for the one hundred flowering shrubs and trees in our **4-acre Bee Sanctuary**;
- Doubled the size of our **edible Food Forest**, planting wild black raspberries, elderberries, currants, horseradish, Jerusalem artichokes, and asparagus;
- Planted calendula, lavender, and borage for use in our line of **sustainable Jewish products**, including our healing calendula salve and lavender-infused honey.





We offered meaningful
outdoor Jewish programming...

Thanks to the outdoor nature of our land-based Jewish programs, we were able to offer community members safe and meaningful ways to gather, learn, and grow in person. This year we:

- Hosted **bi-monthly stewardship days** at Bela Farm to allow participants to connect to the earth, one another, and Jewish traditions;
- Welcomed families to our **Bela Farm Family Day**, giving kids a chance to meet some of our pollinator friends;
- Distributed **pollinator kits** to families in partnership with PJ Library Ottawa to bring pollinator learning into the home;
- Offered **professional development trainings to day school educators** to empower them to safely bring their lessons outside as students returned to school;
- **Relaunched the Shores Outdoor School** for family groups and learning pods to meet the increased demand for outdoor Jewish programming.





We found new ways to
share our eco Jewish products...



Despite the pandemic, our honey bees at Bela Farm thrived this season, gifting us with such abundance from their hives! We knew we needed to find new ways to share their sweetness and light with our community so we:

- Developed an **online store** to seamlessly offer a safe and convenient way to share our Bela's Bees Raw Honey and beeswax Shabbat and Chanukah candles;
- Created **new products**, such as our **naturally-dyed challah covers**, **healing calendula salve**, and **herbal teas** to bring healing, wellness, and spirit into the homes of our community members;
- Brought the buzzing energy of the Bela Farm Honey House to our community by **live-streaming our annual honey harvest** and producing a **Rosh Hashanah podcast** with fellow Jewish beekeepers;
- Hosted **markets for Rosh Hashanah and Chanukah** with pick up locations in seven Toronto neighbourhoods.



We nourished our community...



While we were unable to open Shoresh's Kavanah Garden in Vaughan and Maxie's Garden in Kensington Market to the community this season, we found creative ways to support our community in growing and accessing local, sustainably grown food. This growing season we:

- Transitioned the **Kavanah Garden** into an **allotment garden**, enabling some of our Vaughan community members to grow food for themselves and their families;
- Launched our **Dayenu Garden Initiatives**, connecting community members with local resources to empower them to grow dynamic garden spaces in their own homes;
- Donated our Bela's Bees Raw Honey and beeswax Shabbat candles to over **70 families experiencing food insecurity** through our partners at Jewish Family and Child Services, so they could celebrate Rosh Hashanah with sweetness and light.



We reflected,
and (re)committed
ourselves to fight for greater balance
and justice in our community and beyond.



This year highlighted, in many different ways, the great imbalances we must overcome if we are to leave our children a healthy, whole, and sustainable world. We spent time this year looking inwards, determining how we as an organization can elevate marginalized voices and advocate for justice. We:

- Explored themes of brokenness and loss through a **Tisha B'Av Fire Circle**;
- Co-authored a letter with other Jewish Community Farming organizations for **ejewishphilanthropy** about addressing **food insecurity** in our community;
- Proudly signed on to **No Silence on Race**, outlining steps Shoresh is taking to ensure the diverse voices in our community are welcomed and heard.

This year was a year like no other.

We hold deep appreciation for all the hands,
hearts, minds, and spirits that guided
and grounded our work in 2020.

We offer gratitude for the moments of radical amazement
and deep connection that defined our time in nature
and in community this season.

We look forward to all of the ways we can come together
to explore the rich intersections between people, earth,
and Jewish wisdom with one another next year.



SHORESH

CANADIAN SOIL • JEWISH ROOTS

