

ACADEMIC INSTITUTION	The University of the Fraser Valley	PROJECT NAME	Oak and Earth
NEED AND AUDIENCE			
<p>Oak and Earth is a social enterprise that markets, produces and sells handcrafted candles. The candles are made from 100% natural soy wax (no additives, paraffin, or dyes). Paraffin wax that is often used in candles is made out of petroleum, coal or shale oil which contains 11 known toxins and 2 carcinogens. This makes it the leading cause of indoor air pollution and can cause asthma attacks and cancer. Accordingly, we chose soy wax for our candles because it is biodegradable and a natural renewable resource. Every purchase of our 9oz candles saves 1.1 pounds of CO2 emissions and 0.5 pounds for every 4oz candle. We also package our candles in reusable organza pouches and natural raffia, diverting cardboard waste from entering landfills. While the UN SDG #13, climate action, is a central pillar of our business, Oak and Earth also addresses goal #10, reduced inequalities. The recent discovery of unmarked graves at residential schools shocked Canadians and placed a global spotlight on Canada’s unsavory history of colonization. Between 1863 and 1998, more than 150,000 Indigenous youth were removed from their homes and communities and placed in residential schools. The aim of residential schools was to force Indigenous peoples to abandon their traditions, cultural practices and languages. While Canada continues to work towards redressing the legacy of residential schools, more action is required. A report from the Canadian Reconciliation Barometer determined that 46% of Indigenous people disagree that Indigenous cultures are doing well. Further, a 2019 study by the National Collaborating Center for Indigenous Health found that vital education, health, and child welfare programs for Indigenous families are underfunded. We strive to promote Indigenous culture and support community programs through our product design and business model. The candles scents have been selected and developed in collaboration with local Indigenous communities. Each candle comes with a culture card which was designed by a local Indigenous artist, Jason Reed, and explains the significance of the scent. Also, the scent labels are written in Indigenous languages. 50% of our profits are invested in the non-profit organization Fraser River Indigenous Society (FRIS)— a non-profit organization that promotes Indigenous culture and provides social programs in the Lower Mainland. FRIS offers a variety of services including interventions, support and healing circles, homeless outreach, and traditional teachings such as the Medicine Wheel and the Seven Sacred Teachings.</p>			
ACTION TAKEN			
<p>Previously, Oak and Earth sold only directly to consumers. This year, we revamped our business and production model to sell wholesale to retailers. Our retail partners and bulk purchasers include the Stó:lō Gift Shop, Sqéwqel Development Corporation, the Seabird Island Band, the Cheam First Nation Band and SQDC Gas Bars. We are in the process of negotiating to sell our product at three additional store fronts. Growing our network of retail partners will help Oak and Earth scale up and maximize profits We are also launching body scrubs and essential oil rollers. We worked with the Indigenous Knowledge Keeper from the Kwantlen band to determine medicinal and meaningful scents (and the corresponding story on the culture card), product name and packaging. The rollers are ready for sale and the body scrubs are in the testing stage.</p>			
IMPACT			
<p>\$1,563.40* invested in FRIS since March 01, 2021 and \$1,960 since December 2020. 34.5 lbs of cardboard waste diverted since March 01, 2021 and 43.8 lbs since December 2020. 379.5 lbs CO2 emission diverted since March 01, 2021 and 481.8 since December 2020.</p>			

PROJECT START DATE	12/2020	IS THIS PROJECT WHOLLY-OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE TEAM?	Yes
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STANDARD METRICS (These metrics are related only to the project presented and represent work done since March 1, 2021)			
Individuals educated on climate action	0	Businesses educated on climate action	0
Litres of water conserved	0	Metric tonnes of waste diverted	0.017
GHG emissions diverted	379.5 lbs	Dollar value of waste diverted in CAD \$	Not known

*This figure differs from the value shown in the video submission as we have sold additional candles since the video was produced.