



## Bureau du président du conseil de l'AEUM

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

### SSMU Office of the Speaker

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# MOTION REGARDING ELEVES DES CHAMPS ISG APPLICATION AND FEE LEVY 2025-01-30

Submitted for: 2025-01-30

<b>Submitted to:</b>	SSMU Legislative Council	<b>Document no.:</b>	LEG-PUB-MOT-2025-01-30-003
<b>Moved by:</b>	Hugo-Victor Solomon <i>Vice-President (External Affairs)</i>	<b>Current Status:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROVAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> POSTPONED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPROVED
<b>Seconded by:</b>	Hamza Abu-Alkhair <i>Services Representative</i>		

## Issue

This motion supports giving independent student group (ISG) status to Élèves des champs (EDC) and the creation of an opt-outable, \$1.25/student/semester fee levy for the group. This would give SSMU members and initiatives access to ecologically-grown produce by and for students and create opportunities for SSMU members to get involved with sustainable agriculture—by means of volunteering, employment and workshops.

## Background and Rationale

EDC (formerly known as the Macdonald Student-Run Gardens/MSEG) is a 2-acre, entirely student-run vegetable farm on Macdonald Campus. It has been providing over 40 types of ecologically-grown vegetables and a student-run farmer incubator program for over 10 years. EDC has been historically self-financed under the administration of the Macdonald Campus Farm, but it was incorporated as a non-profit in 2024 in order to establish a more financially and logistically sustainable model and develop its educational and solidarity programming to a wider audience.

As an ISG, EDC could offer large amounts of ecologically-grown produce to SSMU members and initiatives (e.g. Midnight Kitchen, SNAC, the McGill Farmer's Market and the nascent SSMU food bank). In Fall 2024, they donated over 800 lbs of produce to Midnight Kitchen and Mac Happy Belly.



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With a \$1.25 fee levy, they could donate their entire fall harvest to campus food groups, equivalent to over \$20,000 worth of produce or hundreds of pounds of food per week (with potential for growth). This would facilitate the expansion of affordable, student-led food options on campus in line with SSMU's 2023 Food Security Policy, in which EDC was named (as MSEG).

Furthermore, EDC can provide SSMU members with experiential learning opportunities and educational events through expanding our volunteer days and event programming. EDC's student-run farm space and outdoor events have proven popular – the volunteer days this past fall were often at max capacity. With a fee levy and ISG status, EDC would also expand its programming downtown to (co-)host events, such as speakers and films related to our mission.

Finally, EDC could dedicate a certain number of its farm worker positions to be filled by SSMU members to ensure SSMU involvement in its operations and increase the number of sustainable, full-time, summer jobs available on campus.

Since EDC provides free produce to aligned groups and prioritizes hiring workers with little agricultural experience, it is not possible to provide adequate compensation to worker members without external funding (see Appendix C). A fee levy would make the above-listed operations possible and enable EDC to enact its social mission.

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### Alignment with Mission

MSEG was named in the 2023 SSMU Food Security Policy, as were Midnight Kitchen and SNAC, to whom EDC can provide food. EDC also aligns with the 2023 SSMU Sustainability Policy by promoting social and climate sustainability on-campus. Finally, EDC supports SSMU's mission of empowering students and providing them with opportunities, economic and social.

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### Consultations Completed

- *Vice-President External Affairs*: met three times to discuss the process, required application details, and specifics of the financial information to submit. The Vice-President fully supports the motion.
- *Political Campaigns Coordinator*—Facilitated discussions with the SSMU Executive and provided important context to the SSMU Executive regarding the previous work of EDC and the scope of their



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operations. The Political Campaigns Coordinator fully supports the motion.

- *General Manager*: Consulted regarding the financial situation of Eleves des Champs, including the proposed budget of the group and the previous year's expenses. The General Manager was in support of the motion.
- *Vice-President (Finance)*: Consulted regarding the future finances of the group accounting for the proposed fee levy of \$1.25 per student per semester.
- *Director of Clubs and Services / Services Representative*: Consulted regarding the process of securing full ISG status and overview of the club constitution.
- *Policy and Advocacy Coordinator*: Reviewed document for adherence to guidelines and new template procedure.
- *Midnight Kitchen*: Consulted in Winter 2024 to ensure that EDC's food services would be beneficial to the growth of their service.
- *The McGill Farmer's Market*: Consulted in Winter 2025 to ensure that EDC's food services could be beneficial to improving the sustainability and affordability of the Farmer's Market.

I have read and completed the requirements outlined in the Consultation Policy.

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## Risk Factors and Resource Implications

One risk of the motion is the many environmental variables affecting the delivery of EDC's services. EDC has been consistently providing food and education for over 10 years, but climate conditions such as wildfire smoke, flooding and heat waves have threatened our operations temporarily in the past and will likely continue to do so at an increasing rate.

Another risk is increased hazards that come with hosting events in a farm space. However, EDC has managed this risk successfully over the past 10 years through proper safety and event protocols and is independently insured for general liability. Should EDC receive ISG status, a memorandum of agreement will be signed between EDC and SSMU to ensure proper risk management is followed on site (see Draft in Appendix E).

In regards to resource implications, this motion would facilitate a significant contribution towards the sustainability of food systems on downtown campus and the ecological stewardship of McGill's campus. All of EDC's produce is grown according to organic conventions, without



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chemical herbicides, pesticides or fertilizers and their growing practices adhere to regenerative principles such as no-till and cover-cropping. EDC's food donations could greatly increase the availability of local, ecological, affordable and healthy food options on campus. Furthermore, the farmsite is a biodiversity hotspot that has amazing potential for environmental education outside of agriculture.

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### Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If this motion is approved by the Legislative Council, Élèves des champs (EDC) will receive status as a SSMU Independent Student Group and the question of creating a \$1.25/student/semester fee levy would be included in the Winter 2024 Referendum Period by Elections SSMU and sent to the Membership for approval. If the question is approved by the membership, the fee increase will go into effect as of the Fall 2025 semester.

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### Motion or Resolution for Approval

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the SSMU Legislative Council approves granting Élèves des champs the status of Independent Student Group.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT** the SSMU Legislative Council approves the following question for the Winter 2025 Referendum period:

*Do you agree to the creation of an opt-outable fee levy of \$1.25 per semester to support the agricultural, educational and social activities of a student-run farm site on Macdonald campus? The fee levy will go towards supplying weekly deliveries of free, ecologically grown vegetables to SSMU members via existing campus food services and funding the farm operations to ensure the long-term sustainability of the service. The fee will apply to all full and part-time members starting in Fall 2025 and ending in Fall 2029 (inclusive), at which point it will be brought back to the Membership for renewal. A majority 'no' vote would result in the farm being unable to provide vegetable donations, access to agricultural space, and student jobs for SSMU members.*

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT** the Legislative Council approves of the fee-levy proposal, and recommends the ratification to the Board of Directors.



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**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT** the Legislative Council adopts the actionable aspects of this question and that any grammatical or legal changes necessary do not need the re-approval of the Legislative Council.

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### Results of the Vote

In favour	<b>(UNANIMOUS)</b>
Opposed	( )
Abstain	( )

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## Appendix A : Eleves des Champs ISG Application

☰ Élèves des champs SSMU ISG Application

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## Appendix B: Constitution and Bylaws

☰ Élèves des champs Constitution + Bylaws

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# Appendix C: Current Finances Breakdown

During Summer 2024, we operated at a limited capacity while we got set up as a non-profit. As such, we are showing finances from Summer 2023 as it was our last season at full capacity. In 2023, we paid workers \$18/hr and our operational deficit was covered with a one-time donation from the Dean's Office at Macdonald Campus. In the past, this deficit has been managed by compensating worker members less through a monthly-stipend as opposed to by-the-hour wages. We felt the need to move past this financial structure because of its inaccessibility; it was not financially feasible for many people interested in working at the farm.

A more detailed financial breakdown can be viewed here:

[x Proposed 2025/2026 budget + 2023 Finances.xlsx](#)

Expenses	Amount
Summer Salaries	\$58,456.80
Fall Salaries	\$19,417.50
Accounting Fees	\$3,000.00
Truck/gas fees	\$554.00
Market fees	\$2,148.57
Tools/Equipment/Fertilizer	\$378.45
Seeds	\$3,574.40
Moneris fees	\$351.53
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$87,881.25</b>
Revenue	Amount
CSA Vegetable Basket Payments (Summer + Fall)	\$25,570.00
Marché Laurier (Summer + Fall)	\$12,355.02
Marché Ste-Anne (Summer + Fall)	\$17,281.46
Direct sales to Corbeille de Pain	\$1,195.00
Arugula sales to Mac Market	\$81.00
Emergency funds used	\$4,136.34
McGill Internship Grant Money	\$15,000.00
One-time donation from Office of Macdonald Campus Dean	\$12,262.43
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$87,881.25</b>





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## Appendix D: Finances Breakdown with Fee Levy

2025/2026 Expenses	Amount
Summer Salaries	\$58,456.80
Fall Salaries	\$19,417.50
Accounting/banking Fees	\$3,000.00
Truck/gas fees	\$554.00
Market fees	\$2,148.57
Tools, equipment and infrastructure renewal	\$1,000.00
Fertilizer	\$300.00
Seeds	\$3,574.40
Greenhouse rental	\$1,000.00
Greenhouse/Seeding Supplies	\$700.00
Insurance	\$1,200.00
Events fund	\$2,145.00
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$93,496.27</b>
2025/2026 Revenue	Amount
Summer CSA Baskets	\$15,240.00
Summer Markets	\$17,969.78
Fee Levy (Fall + Winter) ^	\$48,297.50
External grants/government wage subsidies	\$12,000.00
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$93,507.28</b>
^ Fee levy revenue: \$1.25/student/semester x 19,319 contributing students (~20% opt out rate)	



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## Appendix E: Memorandum of Agreement Draft

 SSMU/EDC MOA Draft

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