MELBOURNE CENTRE

Proposal by RSSB Australia Pty Ltd

For Place of Worship and Farming

April 2014
INTRODUCTION

This submission is made in support of an application by RSSB Australia Pty Ltd ("RSSB") to construct and use a place of worship on the property located at 275 Edward Road, Chirnside Park ("the Property").

RSSB Australia is an affiliate of the worldwide religious organisation of Radha Soami Satsang Beas which is headquartered in India and details of which can be found at www.rssb.org. In essence, the organisation promotes the worship of God through the teachings of the Saints. A synopsis of the teachings is attached in the form of a short essay (Appendix 1). This and other essays can be found at the website mentioned above.

The role of the property centres in each community is very important to followers. The centre becomes a place of worship where followers gather weekly and focus on their spiritual path. This takes the form of singing hymns of praise and devotion; listening to discourses on the teachings of past saints; holding classes on morality related issues for young people; initiating new followers into the meditation practice and voluntary service (seva). The service aspect is the fundamental reason why we want to own our own centre. The other practices can be conducted at rented halls but voluntary service is practical only at a centre which we own.

In each of the centres around the world, followers engage in gardening and maintenance activities and in larger properties, the focus is on farming fruit and vegetables. The produce grown makes the centres largely self-sufficient for the free food provided on site and enables the centres to donate produce to charities for the vulnerable members of our society. In this regard, no distinction is drawn between followers and members of other religions and communities. Our aim is to help everyone who needs help and to engender a spirit of charity and generosity.

One of our centres which has had a strong focus on farming is in Toronto, Canada, where there is an extensive farming operation. Due to the weather in Canada, the farm operates only between April and October. They have about 100 volunteers on weekends and about 50 on weekdays. They supply fresh fruit and vegetables to various food charities. A copy of some of the letters from these charities is attached (Appendix 2). Also attached is a summary, (Appendix 3) showing that the value of food donated is in the millions of dollars. A few photographs attached (Appendix 4) show the scale and organisation of the farming ventures.

A vital aspect of this farming activity is that it provides a group activity for our older citizens. In Toronto, it was noteworthy how many of the elderly who were stuck at home while their children went to work, now had a place to go. They could meet their friends and collectively work in the gardens. Their health, both physical and mental, improved enormously, so much so that they insist on coming to the property even when it is under snow and ice! People need to feel wanted and useful and the property centres provide a place which fulfils these needs for our aging members.
In Toronto there is also a substantial orchard of almond nut trees and olives and at our centre in Petaluma, California, there is a substantial olive tree orchard. We intend to focus on developing an olive tree orchard at Chirnside Park as well as growing vegetables.

We are a quiet, law abiding religious minded non-political group of spiritually dedicated people. We do not isolate ourselves from the general community by way of distinctive dress or separate community living. We are obliged to be independent and earn our own living. We pay our taxes and pull our weight. Appendix 5 includes a Fact Sheet of potential frequently asked questions which may provide assistance in appreciating our application. We are keen to enhance our lives and help others through the ownership of our own centre.

Michael Cooke
Chairman – RSSB Australia Pty Ltd
Telephone : 0400 016 342
APPENDIX 1

A Synopsis of the Teachings

Sant Mat - The Science of the Soul

*Sant Mat* means 'teachings of the saints. By 'saint' is meant a spiritual adept, one who has experienced union with the divine. These saints or masters teach a path of God-realization which has existed from the beginning of time and has been described through the ages in many different ways.

As modern technology and international mobility make our planet increasingly small, we frequently encounter religions and cultures foreign to our own. Now more than ever, we are able to appreciate the relativity of our own traditions and historical perspectives, even as the leaders of the great world religions reach out through ecumenical movements to identify and acknowledge their common ground.

Sant Mat concerns itself with this common ground which is the spiritual heart, or heritage, of every great religion. Spiritual masters come for this one purpose only: to reveal to the world this common heritage which links all humanity within God's love. By experiencing the oneness of God within us, we can experience for ourselves that we are all part of one spiritual family.

The root of the word "religion" is "re-ligare," which means "to bind back." The true purpose of all religions is to bind back, or reunite, each individual soul with God. Problems come when saints, the great teachers of reality, die. Their followers, formalize their teachings in an effort to conserve them, or to gain personal power and prestige. This is how separate religions are born, as the simple common foundations are developed into complex edifices, shaped and coloured by the historical and geographical conditions of the time. Issues of power and wealth gain precedence, and the original teachings become obscured. Spiritual practice is relegated to second place while maintaining the organizational status quo becomes paramount. Soon we find one religion setting itself against another, and man killing his fellow man in the name of God.

Yet if God is one and he is our Father, then we are all his children, a fellowship of humanity. This is what the great saints of all religions teach: There is one God for all humanity, although he is known by a multitude of names. Whether we refer to him as God, Christ, Jesus, Khuda, Wahiguru, Ram, Lord, or by any other name, we are speaking of the same, supreme, omniscient, and omnipotent Being.

Saints teach that God, undifferentiated and one, through his own power, projects himself and creates and sustains the creation. This dynamic power of God is also known by many different names. In Christianity it is the Word, the Holy Ghost; in Judaism, the Word, the Name, the Holy Spirit; in Chinese philosophy, the Tao; in Islam, it is the Kalma; in Indian philosophy, the Shabd, the Word, the Unspoken Language. Each religion, differing in time and place, has described the same power with different words. Saints tell us that each and every living being is imbued with this power. When we refer to the soul within any being, it is to this power that we are referring.
Since every living creature is enlivened by a power which is the projection of God himself, so everything that lives is in essence a part of him. Conversely, the supreme Being is imminent and present within every living creature. The soul is nothing other than pure spirit; but to function in the worlds of mind and matter, it is endowed with various coverings which conceal its true nature, and it becomes subject to the fundamental dynamics of the creation, the law of cause and effect. This is a law of perfect justice by which all action in the creation must be compensated - thus we live in an invisible prison of debts and credits. The soul, knotted to its covering of mind, is born again and again in different forms to settle this account.

Of all the creatures in the universe, only human beings are self-conscious. But as we live out our daily lives in the physical creation, our essential nature remains hidden, concealed by mind and matter, like a bright and shining light mapped in many layers of black cloth. Thus, in spite of having the attribute of self-consciousness, most of us remain blind to our true selves.

It is only when we finally meet a saint or master that a soul can rise above this level of duality, of action and reaction, reward and punishment, and discover its true spiritual nature. It is this divine essence within us that is permanent and not subject to the law of justice. Saints and Masters have the power to awaken us to the divine spirit within, by acting as a mirror to our soul and reflecting our pure essence to ourselves in spite of the dense coverings that obscure it. They explain the technique of discovering God within the body and teach a practical method of internal prayer, or meditation. Meditation enables the practitioner to still the mind by withdrawing the soul currents from the outside world and concentrating them instead at the eye-centre, the spiritual heart. Once the mind is absolutely focused at this point, he or she becomes conscious of God.

Sant Mat is not related to any race, nation, community, cult, or sect of any kind. Despite the relatively large numbers of people practicing this way of life, it remains a personal, private bond between each individual and God. The teachings have no bearing on the external aspects of life, other than the requirements that a practitioner be at least twenty-four years old, lead a moral life, abstain from all alcohol and mind-altering drugs, maintain a lacto-vegetarian diet, and give time daily to spiritual practice. Masters do not require anyone to change his or her religion, they never charge fees, and they unfailingly support themselves from their own earnings. They teach us how to nurture the spiritual dimension of life while fulfilling our family and social responsibilities. In doing so, we expand our spiritual horizons and experience for ourselves that divine spirit which enlivens the entire universe. We receive internal proof that we are indeed all children of the same God.
Hiding their light under bushels of produce?

Spiritual group quietly does good works

Text and photo by Jeannine Severin

The Radha Swami Society has a major contribution to make in the local community. They have been involved in various community projects and have received praise for their efforts. One such project is the distribution of fresh produce to local residents. The group has partnered with local organizations to ensure that the produce reaches those in need. The produce is sourced from local farms and is of high quality. The group's efforts have been recognized by the local community, and they continue to work towards making a positive impact. 
Mayor Gord Krantz  
Councilor Brian Penman  

Radha Soami Satsang Beas  
Science of the Soul  

Mayor Krantz  

I have been asked by the above to advise you of their contribution to the Town of Milton.  

In the past 7 years, Sagar Aggrawal of the Science of the Soul has been associated with the Milton Good Neighbours Community Day in the capacity of a Director. The Science of the Soul has been an active participant in the clean-up of the rubbish and garbage on 4th and 5th Line on Community Day. During the 7 years, they have actively contributed an estimated 6000 man-hours without any request of recognition for their efforts. In addition, they have contributed in kind items to assist our overall success of the Community Day, requesting to be anonymous.  

The Science of the Soul has also supplied several organizations in the Town of Milton with much needed vegetables from their farm on the 5th and 6th Line.  

Please let me know if you have any questions and/or require additional information.  
Regards,  

Len Lee  
Chair,  
Milton Good Neighbours Community Day
Michael Loranger  
Science of the Soul Study Centre  
6566 Sixth Line R.R.#1  
Hornby, ON L0P 1E0  

July 30, 2009  

Dear Michael:

I hope this letter finds you in good health and enjoying the summer! I wanted to thank you for supporting our organization over the past several years. As you know we feed hungry children and youth in schools throughout Halton Region. We do this with our dedicated team of 1,200 volunteers that go above and beyond to ensure no child goes hungry!

Procuring food to feed more than 22,000 students is quite the undertaking and with your help and support we are able to bring fresh local produce to schools. Your in-kind donation not only reduces the overall cost of running our programs but also educates our students on where their food comes from. We have begun a Farm to School program and having access to foods grown on a farm in our Region is especially wonderful.

The array of delicious fresh potatoes, onions, peppers, carrots, turnips, beans, squash, tomatoes, watermelon and eggplants to name just a few are simply the best! I often wonder if the students know just how lucky they are!

I cannot thank you enough for allowing our school volunteers to pick up the produce on a weekly basis. This partnership is priceless. Thanks so much!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gayle Cruikshank  
Executive Director
October 22, 2004

Dear Prem,

On behalf of the patrons, volunteers and staff of House of Friendship’s Emergency Food Hamper Program, we want to thank you and your coworkers for all of your hard work providing food donations to low income persons in the Region of Waterloo. Without your help, many people would suffer from a lack of excellent quality, nutritious food.

I reckon this has been the best year ever for receiving food from the farm, in terms of the quantity and variety of foods. We have also refined our distribution system here in town so that we are able to ship food out to low income neighbourhoods, soup kitchens and other emergency food programs. We were able to freeze some of the tomatoes we received at a donated cold storage facility; we will use these tomatoes in the winter when we run out of canned tomato sauce.

In terms of our Program, it has been a busy year. We expect to serve about 18,000 different persons this year, 1/3 of whom are children 12 years of age and under. As you know, people do not want to come to an emergency food program, but often have no where else to turn to for help. Since 1939, House of Friendship has been assisting people who need assistance.

Let me assure you that we appreciate all of your efforts to assist low income persons with nutritious food. If you ever have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to call us at 519-570-3976.

Sincerely,

The Staff of House of Friendship’s Emergency Food Hamper Program

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Addiction Services
- Alcohol (Women)
- 174 King St. N. (Men)

Community Services
- Appliance Repairs
- Christmas Hampers
- Emergency Food Hampers

Family Services
- Camp Sponsorships
- Live & Learn
- Community Centres

Residential Services
- Cramer House
- Kiwanis House
- Eby Village
- Charles St. Men’s Hostel

*Member agency of United Way of K-W & Area*
June 5, 2007

Radha Soami Society Beas – Canada
Science of the Soul Study Centre
Oakville Creek
Route 1
Hornby ON L0P 1E0

Re: Food received by House of Friendship

At House of Friendship we are very grateful for the food items we have received.

In 2006 we received approximately 130,000 pounds of food. This included potatoes, onions, carrots and mushrooms.

From July to early November we usually make 2 trips per week to pick up food.

The majority of food goes to our emergency Food Hamper Program. This program distributed 27,000 food hampers in 2006. We also distribute some to our residential programs and family services programs.

We have been receiving food items since at least 2000. I think it might be longer.

If you have any other questions please contact me at 519-742-8327 or email me at

Sincerely,

Anthony Bender
Program Director
Community Services
July 3, 2009

Dear Friends,

Over the past several years your support has helped us at the Emergency Food Hamper Program to distribute food to thousands of families as they struggle through difficult economic times.

We strive to provide a short term supply of emergency food assistance that will last 3-5 days. Last summer your donations of root vegetables, greens and other vegetables allowed us to meet the needs of the people who visit us each day and also to share with other agencies and groups who work locally to help people who have nothing to eat.

It is always a challenge for us to provide nutritious and healthy food hampers; your donations of fresh vegetables help us to consistently achieve that goal. Your donations are especially important in the summer months during which we typically receive fewer donations from the local community.

This year has been a very busy year for us, exceeding all previous records for distribution and demand. In the first six months of this year alone we have served over 18,000 emergency hampers. This represents a 20% increase over the same period last year. Each day we distribute food to an average of 150 families and individuals. These are new Canadians, seniors, people with disabilities, and hardworking people who’ve lost their jobs or have suffered an injury and can no longer work. About 30% of the people who receive the food we distribute are children under the age of 12 years.

When we share with supporters and recipients of our work the story of your organization and tell them of all the work you do their gratitude is overwhelming.

At the end of the growing season last year, you had requested that we keep an ongoing record of the types and quantities of food that you donate to us. This season we will implement a system of record keeping to do this. Please let us know how you would like us to share the information with you. We can send you weekly or monthly updates if you would like.
Last summer we had requested an opportunity to come as a group and visit your farm to learn a bit more about your organization and to possibly share some of the work of harvesting and tending the crops. Unfortunately our schedules didn’t match up, but I would like to see if it would be possible to try again this year. We are closed the first Wednesday of each month and if it is possible, may we come as a group of 8-10 people to visit and spend part of the day at the farm on Wednesday August 5th? We would appreciate this unique opportunity to share the experience of the farm as a group and to learn more about the people who spend their time there.

I understand if this is not possible. You can reach me at 519-570-3976 or via email at mattc@houseoffriendship.org if you would like to discuss it further.

Thank you for your kind consideration of our program and the people we help. The depth of your generosity and the hard work you do to grow and share the tremendous bounty of your farm is truly humbling. We look forward to continue working with you this summer.

Gratefully yours,

Matthew Cooper
Program Coordinator
Emergency Food Hamper Program
House of Friendship
ReFresh Foods
Box 52121 Oakville
ON L6J 7N5

To: Gordon Krantz - Mayor of Milton
Barry Lee Town Councillor-Ward 1
Richard Day Town Councillor-Ward 1
Brian Penman Town Councillor-Ward 1

On behalf of everyone at ReFresh Foods and our member agencies I am writing to inform you of the wonderful relationship that ReFresh Foods enjoys with the Radha Soami Society Beas in Milton (located on 6th line). ReFresh Foods is a food recovery charity that collects surplus foods from food manufacturers, suppliers, distributors and local farms for redistribution to local food banks and social service agencies across Halton region. ReFresh Foods places special emphasis on fresh foods, especially produce. ReFresh Foods is now in its second year of operations and we are very proud to partner with the RSSB in Milton to help feed hungry people in our community.

The RSSB in Milton was the first local farm to support our program and their generosity was unsurpassed. Every Tuesday from August 2009 to December 2009 our refrigerated truck visited their farm on 6th line to pick up fresh produce that was distributed the same day to hungry people in Halton. During this time the RSSB donated 6,300 lbs of fresh produce to ReFresh Foods which made them our largest supporter from the agricultural community in 2009.

They provided us with a rich diversity of organically grown vegetables including: carrots, turnips, onions, potatoes, beans, lettuce, cucumbers and cabbage. This produce provided vital nourishment to many vulnerable people in our community who visit social service agencies & food banks every month for food assistance. They were thrilled and especially thankful since fresh produce is usually missing from their diets. The RSSB weekly produce donations helped to support many local organizations including: The Georgetown Bread Basket, Salvation Army-Milton, Compass Bible Church, Food For Life Canada, Kerr Street Ministries, Compassion Society Burlington and Halton Food for Thought (just to name a few!).

The support that we enjoyed from the RSSB was an integral component to our success this past year. The RSSB is an organization that not only exemplifies the spirit of generosity but also dedication to ones local community. ReFresh Foods is proud to partner with the RSSB as we continue to pursue the goal of reducing hunger in Halton region.

Sincerely,

Michelle Huser
Manager, Corporate Food Solicitation
ReFresh Foods
michelle@refreshfoods.ca
905-873-7082

A HALTON COLLABORATION LED BY FOOD FOR LIFE
Refresh Foods Box 52121 Oakville, ON L6J 7N5 905 407 4986 info@refreshfoods.ca

refreshfoods.ca
Chris Cavalier  
Hospitality Teacher  
Robert Bateman High School  
5151 New Street  
Burlington, Ontario  
L7L 1V3

Dear Mr. Aggarwal;

I am a teacher at one of the schools that have been picking up free produce that you are kindly donating. My students and I would sincerely like to thank you for this service you are providing to the community. Our particular school has a cooking program which teaches young students to become chefs, cooks, bakers and many other skilled jobs in the hospitality field. The food that is produced in these classes is sold to students in the school at a reduced rate for lunch and snacks. We also provide a breakfast program (again at a much reduced rate) for any students that do not have time to eat before coming to school. Your generous contribution has been really helpful to our program - any extra money we make goes back into the program to buy new equipment etc. I would also like you to pass along my appreciation to your staff at the farm who have gone out of their way to be so helpful any time I have come.

Again, Thank you so much

Yours Sincerely

C. E. Cavalier
Thanks! Thanks big time! It was SO nice! Thank you!

Thank you! Wow! You're the best!

Maybe a little too much! (Not really! You could never be thanked enough!)

Mr. Cooper
This organic produce was so well received by our staff and students. Thank you for your donation.

From the Staff and Students of Robert Bateman High School!
Farm of the Sixth Line of Oakville

To Whom it may concern

Greetings from St Thomas Aquinas Secondary School. We greatly appreciate your generous support of our Breakfast Programs and initiatives with your gifts of fruits and vegetables.

Last school year we initiated a tri-level breakfast program to help some of our students who are struggling as well as giving our staff and students a nutritious ways to begin their school day. To begin, we created a small area in the cafeteria called The Raider Café to sell nutritious items (at cost – no profit) & enable all our school body the chance to have an inexpensive nutritious breakfast. Every item we sell is 50 cents and any items that are donated are given away for free. Secondly, we have a free snack program that targets our at risk students – students who struggle with attendance, who have special circumstances at home, or those who are struggling with the whole high school experience. We offer, twice a week, a healthy, free snack. Your donations will greatly augment this program in our school. Finally, we have a funded lunch program where 10 students in great need will have a free hot lunch every day.

We thank you for your generosity and if there is any way we can be of service to you please do not hesitate to ask. Also, if you have any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact myself, Mrs. Wright, the chaplain at St Thomas Aquinas for I am co-ordinating the Raider Café initiative.

Sincerely,

Catherine Wright
Ste. Louise Outreach Centre of Peel
32 Haggert Ave. North, Brampton, Ontario, L6X 1Y3
Tel: (905) 454-2144

September 3, 2005

Radha Soami Society Beas – Canada
National Headquarters
Science of the Soul Study Centre
Oakville Creek
6566 Sixth Line RR1
Hornby, Ontario
L0P 1E0

To whom it may concern;

Please accept our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for your recent donation of wonderful fresh produce, this is such a special treat for our Center. We are overwhelmed by your generosity.

May God bless all of you for your hard work and dedication to helping organizations such as ours. All of us at the Ste. Louise Outreach Centre of Peel wish you success in all your future initiatives and peace throughout 2005.

Gratefully yours,

Catherine Rivera
Executive Director
Ste. Louise Outreach Food Bank
Ste. Louise Outreach Centre of Peel

32 Haggert Ave. North, Brampton, Ontario, L6X 1Y3
Telephone: 905-454-2144 / 416-704-0946
email: stelouisefoodbank85@hotmail.com

August 18, 2006

Radha Soami Society Beas – Canada
National Headquarters
Science of the Soul Study Centre
Oakville Creek
6566 Sixth Line RR1
Hornby, Ontario
L0P 1E0

To whom it may concern;

The Ste. Louise Outreach Centre of Peel Food Bank registration # 0717900-09-13 would like extend our special thanks to all of you for the fresh produce that you donated to our Centre last season. We are hoping that you will be able to continue this wonderful service as we are currently assisting approximately 250-350 families each month.

If it were not for caring individuals such as yourselves we would not be able to provide our families with nutritious vegetables each week.

May God bless all of you for your hard work and dedication to helping organizations such as ours. All of us at the Ste. Louise Outreach Centre of Peel wish you success in all your future initiatives and peace throughout 2006.

Gratefully yours,

[Signature]

Catherine Rivera
Board President
Ste. Louise Outreach Centre of Peel

32 Haggert Ave. North, Brampton, Ontario, L6X 1Y3
Telephone: 905-454-2144 / 416-704-0946
e-mail: stelouisefoodbank85@hotmail.com
Registered Charity # 11917-2856-RR0001
Website: www.stelouisefoodbank.ca

September 12, 2007

Radha Soami Society Beas – Canada
National Headquarters
Science of the Soul Study Centre
Oakville Creek
6566 Sixth Line RR1
Hornby, Ontario, L0P 1E0

Once again we are very grateful and would like to express our sincere thanks to all of you for your kindness and generosity. Every donation truly helps our food bank support the families who come to us for assistance. The demand in the community just continues to grow and our challenges are increased with each passing day and especially through the summer.

Our outreach program serves anywhere from 250-400 families in need each month and we have long since exceeded 900+ families registered at our Center. Most of these families have several small children to feed. They are families suffering from loss of health and income. They are single parent families struggling to make ends meet. They are individuals trying to recover from abusive relationships. Some come to us for assistance once or twice, and others will continue to be dependant on our services.

The Ste. Louise food bank is non denominational and will assist any person that comes to our door. We also do food sharing to help support other help centers throughout the Brampton area. We share with several School and Rotary Club breakfast programs. We work together with the Elizabeth Fry society, St. Leonard’s Halfway House for men and the Regeneration breakfast program.

The summer months are always challenging for food banks and this year is no exception. If it were not for your vegetables we would not be able to help our families in need. We have learned through 25 years of experience that without ongoing community support from incredible and caring people like all of you, these things would not be taking place and we would not be able to continue our work.

Sincere thanks,

Catherine Rivera, Board President
Radha Soami Society Beas – Canada  
National Headquarters  
Science of the Soul Study Centre  
Oakville Creek  
6566 Sixth Line RR1  
Hornby, Ontario, L0P 1E0

November 11, 2009

Dear Prem and all at RSSB-C National Headquarters;

Thank you ALL so much for demonstrating your compassion towards our families and for understanding the needs of those less fortunate. We are very grateful for being a part of another beautiful season to receive vegetables from you for our food bank. We are truly blessed that you have once again considered the Ste. Louise Outreach program.

Through our years of experience, we have come to realize that for many families, it is food or housing, they cannot handle the expense for both or for anything extra. There never seems to be an end to the people coming through our doors in a terrible state. From battered women struggling to get out of harmful relationships, to families who suffer from temporary loss of income that never thought they would ever need a place like ours. So many seniors and individuals who are physically and emotionally disabled, that will be eternally dependent on our services, that is why we have to keep our operation going. The list goes on and on why families need to come through our doors. Thank you for helping us to be here for them, without caring individuals like all of you, we would not be able to continue to assist so many.

We appreciate all that you have done for us for 4 consecutive years, during the toughest season that food banks are challenged with each year. THANK YOU ALL.

May God bless all of you and your families,

Catherine Rivera,  
Board President
Certificate of Appreciation

Presented to

RADHA SOAMI SOCIETY BEAS

CANADA - NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

FOR your ongoing support to St. Louise Food Bank.
FOR helping us to alleviate hunger in the Brampton Community for 4 consecutive years.
FOR all of your hard work, wonderful vegetables AND the beautiful way you welcome us each week.

Gratefully yours,
St. Louise Outreach Centre of Peel Food Bank
Board President

Catherine Rivera
APPENDIX 3

Summary - Value of Produce (Toronto, Canada)

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<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Weight (kg)</th>
<th>Value $ (CAD)</th>
<th>No. of Charities Supported</th>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>39,789kg</td>
<td>$101,620</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>33,992kg</td>
<td>$55,365</td>
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<td>34,519kg</td>
<td>$76,914</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>78,731kg</td>
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<td>99,766kg</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>134,548kg</td>
<td>$328,895</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 4

Photos at Toronto Centre
APPENDIX 5

Facts Sheet - Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Who is RSSB?**

   The Applicant for Development Approval is R.S.S.B Australia Pty Ltd. This company is owned by Radha Soami Satsang Beas Australia, an Australian religious association (“RSSB”). RSSB has been operating in Australia for 22 years. Prior to that, there was an informal organisation of followers which has been functioning for the past 50 years at least. RSSB is affiliated with Science of the Soul which conducts the religious activities throughout Australia.

2. **What is your religion?**

   RSSB and Science of the Soul are part of a global religion called Sant Mat. The headquarters are at the home of the parent society, Radha Soami Satsang Beas being located in the town of Beas, Punjab, India.

   RSSB and its followers adhere to the teachings of the Beas line of gurus. These teachings stem from the founder, Swami Ji, in the 19th century.

3. **What is your form of worship?**

   Followers are expected to serve God and their fellow man in various ways:
   - by attending meetings where devotional songs are sung and discourses on God realisation are delivered; and
   - by rendering voluntary service to others;
   - by donating money to worthy causes;
   - by attending to meditation to control the negative tendencies of the mind and to enhance the religious / spiritual practice towards God realisation.

4. **Why farming?**

   Simple forms of manual labour working shoulder to shoulder in a classless environment is beneficial in the development of humility and fellowship. The farm produce is used for the needs of the centre, and any excess donated to worthy charities, encouraging generosity and charity in our followers. This tradition stems from the rural farming background of RSSB in the Punjab in India.

   In each of the centres around the world, our followers engage in gardening and maintenance activities and in larger properties, the focus is on farming fruit and vegetables. The produce grown makes the centres largely self-sufficient for the free food provided on site and enables the centres to donate produce to charities for the vulnerable members of our society. In this regard, no distinction is drawn between followers of Sant Mat and members of other religions and communities. Our aim is to help everyone who needs help and to engender a spirit of charity and generosity in our followers.
One of our centres which has had a strong focus on farming is in Toronto, Canada. Here there is an extensive farming operation. Due to the weather in Canada, the farm operates only between April and October. They have about 100 volunteers on weekends and about 50 on weekdays. They supply fresh fruit and vegetables to various food charities. The amount of food donated is quite substantial in value.

A vital aspect of this farming activity is that it provides a group activity for older citizens. In Toronto, it was noteworthy how many of the elderly who were stuck at home while their children went to work, now had a place to go. They could meet their friends and collectively work in the gardens. Their health, both physical and mental, improved enormously, so much so that they insist on coming to the property even when it is under snow and ice! People need to feel wanted and useful and the property centres provide a place which fulfils these needs for our aging members.

In Toronto there is also a substantial orchard of almond nut trees and olives and at our centre in Petaluma, California, there is a substantial olive tree orchard. We intend to focus on developing an olive tree orchard at Chirnside Park as well as growing vegetables.

5. **Do followers have to give up or change their religion to become participants?**

   No.

   RSSB is not a substitute religion but a means to become a better Christian, Muslim, Hindu etc. RSSB has no rituals or ceremonies to provide for events such as births, marriages, deaths etc. Followers are expected to continue to follow the practices of their own religious community or background.

6. **Do followers live separately from the general community?**

   No.

   Followers are discouraged from being in separate communities or groups. They are supposed to live and work and dress exactly like everyone else and not to distinguish or isolate themselves in any way. They should earn their own living, look after their families, pay their taxes, and abide by the laws of their country.

7. **How many people will attend the property?**

   There should be approximately 500 people on Sundays for a weekly meeting in the morning where discourses on the philosophy are given. On Saturdays, voluntary work may attract some 200 people. During the week, there may be 20 to 40 people coming to do volunteer work on the farming activity.

   There will be no evening activity, no parties (followers do not drink alcohol), no barbecues (followers are vegetarian). The quiet use and enjoyment of the facilities is unlikely to cause any disturbance to the surrounding community. In fact, they are hardly likely to notice the RSSB people.
8. Where else does RSSB own property?

RSSB owns a substantial property in Sydney at 1530 – 1540 Elizabeth Drive, Cecil Park, NSW, 2178 and this centre has been in operation since 2009.

9. Where can one find out more?

RSSB is an affiliate of the worldwide religious organisation of Radha Soami Satsang Beas which is headquartered in India and details of which can be found at www.rssb.org. In essence, the organisation promotes the worship of God through the teachings of the Saints with a focus on the Masters of Beas.