

# The Road to Local Food

Increasing Local Food in Broader Public  
Sector Organizations





## A Special Thank You

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- Chris Jess
- Leslie Carson
- Mark Kenny
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# Introduction

Imagine a region in Ontario where local food is celebrated everywhere. Imagine a place where local municipalities have implemented their own local food policies and helped hospitals, schools, child care centres, and long term care facilities do the same.

This is a place where students purchase meals prepared with local food, while learning to preserve, prepare, and grow local food in their own schools and communities.

Picture a hospital visit with local food proudly presented on the menu or a long-term care facility where local food is central to the seasonal menu. Imagine menus across the region branded with the taste ● real symbol, highlighting the stories of local farm families so that customers can learn more about where their food comes from.

It's happening here in Guelph and Wellington County. Since 2005 the Guelph Wellington Local Food initiative has brought more locally grown and raised food to your dinner table. Today we're taking a step further. Building on our success, our most recent project is focused on bringing the enjoyment of local food to the places we need it most: our schools, hospitals, day cares and long-term care facilities. These are the seeds that you are helping to plant by your commitment to bring more local food to your organization.

Thank you for that commitment.

Many organizations are looking to purchase and serve more local food; they understand the growing demand, and can see the benefits however, they are unsure how to get started. This guide is designed to inspire food service managers, dietitians, chefs, cooks, kitchen staff, purchasers, and others to develop a plan to adopt fresh, local products into menus in simple steps.

This guide will help you turn your challenges into successes. It will provide examples from others in the broader public sector who have already found fun, creative and economical solutions to increasing the amount of local food featured on their menus.

The Resource Section includes a series of tools with more information about local food policies, seasonal purchasing, local wholesale suppliers and distributors and worksheets that will facilitate the transition of your kitchen.



# Who We Are



Guelph Wellington Local Food (GWLF) wants to make local food available to everyone in our community, from citizens to private businesses and public institutions. We work with many community partners including farmers, government, non profit organizations, businesses and other stakeholders to highlight the benefits of local and create a prosperous local food system.

Since 2005, Guelph Wellington Local Food has provided leadership through networking and promotion of our local food producers. Our projects continue to expand to meet the needs of both local food producers and consumers in the region as demand for local food continues to grow.

In 2011 GWLF received funding from the Greenbelt Fund. With support from the Ontario government, the Greenbelt Fund is helping to increase the amount of Ontario food served in daycares, schools, universities and colleges, hospitals and long-term care facilities through the Broader Public Sector Investment Fund: Promoting Ontario Food. This funding will give children, patients and residents the chance to eat more of the nutritious food grown and produced in both Guelph Wellington and Ontario. We at GWLF are committed to helping with this change by acting as a resource to food distributors, farmers, buyers and operators to increase the use of local food, creating a ripple effect of change across the broader public sector.

## PROJECT PARTNERS

### Lead Agency



Guelph Community Health Centre - dedicated to Meeting the needs of people who may find it difficult to access health care. See [www.guelphchc.ca](http://www.guelphchc.ca) for more information

### Funder



Greenbelt Fund

### Community Partners



Centre Wellington  
[www.centrewellington.ca](http://www.centrewellington.ca)

Centre Wellington



Town of Minto



The Township of Puslinch



Wellington County



The Township of Wellington North



Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health



# Local Food - Defined

There are many different definitions of “local”. Many people use the concept of “100 miles”, but in general the closer food is consumed to its production site, the more “local” it is. For the sake of this toolkit we will define local as:

## 1. The County of Wellington

Spans 2,569 km<sup>2</sup> and borders the Counties of Grey, Bruce, Huron, Perth and Dufferin, the City of Hamilton and the Regions of Waterloo, Halton and Peel. Wellington County is composed of the following municipalities: Centre Wellington, Erin, Guelph/Eramosa, Mapleton, Minto, Puslinch, Wellington North, and the City of Guelph.



## 2. Grown or Produced in Ontario



**Foodland**  
ONTARIO

When an item cannot be found within our region the next step is to look for products from Ontario. Ontario products are identified with the Foodland Ontario logo or other logos specific to particular products. More details about what classifies as grown or produced in Ontario can be found in the Resource Section.

### DID YOU KNOW



There are many farmers and local food producers in Guelph Wellington. One way to make it easier to find them is by the recent establishment of a local food brand for our region, taste•real.

The farmers and producers who are members of the brand are diverse, strong and growing every year. More information on taste real can be found in the Resource Section.

# Local Food

## - A Popular Choice

### WHY CUSTOMERS WANT LOCAL FOOD

A recent survey by the Canadian Cooperatives Association entitled "Local Food Initiatives in Canada" found that local food ranks second in importance to consumers when compared to other attributes such as; whole grain, family size, free range, sustainably farmed, organic or fair trade.

Canadian Cooperatives Association. (2008)  
*Local Food Initiatives in Canada.*  
Toronto, ON: Canadian Cooperative Association.

Ontario consumers are increasingly interested in reading origin labels on the food they purchase with a preference for buying locally grown. A vast majority also state they would buy more locally sourced food if they could find it in their grocery store.

Environics in partnership with the Greenbelt Fund. (2001)

Local Food attracts consumers who have a desire to know more about where their food comes from, who produces it and how it is grown or raised. This often results in a desire to have a more personal relationship with the people involved in growing, processing and selling food.

Other reasons for choosing local food are for;

- Freshness
- Quality
- Contribution to the local economy
- Better taste
- Less impact on the environment
- More variety
- Pure enjoyment!



### Cool Food Facts

Here's just some of the new food being produced in Ontario today!

- Citrus
- Hazelnuts
- Figs
- Sea Buckthorn
- Paw-Paw
- Purslane
- Water Buffalo
- And the list keeps growing!



# Local Food

## - The Food System in Your Neighbourhood

The Local Food System (often referred to as the Regional Food System) is really about connecting the people who need food with the people who grow and produce food, while keeping proximity in mind. This type of food system focusses on building relationships and helps us learn more about where our food comes from. A healthy regional food system includes all the steps from field to plate;

- Farming
- Processing
- Storing
- Distributing
- Transporting
- Selling - in many different venues from grocery stores, farmers markets, roadside stands to cafeterias in public institutions and restaurants to name a few.

Wellington County has a diverse farming community representing 4.5% of the farms in Ontario and 8% of dairy, hog and poultry operations. Out of the ten counties in Western Ontario, Wellington County has the 4th largest vegetable growing region and 6th largest fruit growing region.

Wellington County has a strong local farming sector framed by a rich agricultural history and with a large consumer market nearby. Adding strength to the sector is the history of working with the University of Guelph, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Wellington Federation of Agriculture, and commodity partners. The market for fresh, quality local food products is growing, and there are opportunities in the food producing and processing industry. As of December 2010, 62 food manufacturers exist in Wellington County and Guelph.

- Wellington Waterloo Community Futures Development Corporation The County of Wellington. (2011). *Socio-Economic Profile*. Wellington County, ON: Jana Reichert

### DID YOU KNOW?

- In Wellington and Waterloo Counties combined, an estimated \$452.5 million is spent on food.
- There is an estimated \$25 million spent by the Broader Public Sector Institutions in Guelph and Wellington.
- There are over 217,000 people in Guelph and Wellington County. If a third of regional residents had access to and spent \$15 of their grocery budget on local food each week, this would contribute over \$56 400 000 to the local economy each year.
- Guelph and Wellington is home to over 2,500 farmers and more than 250 local food processors, retailers and distributors REFERENCE?

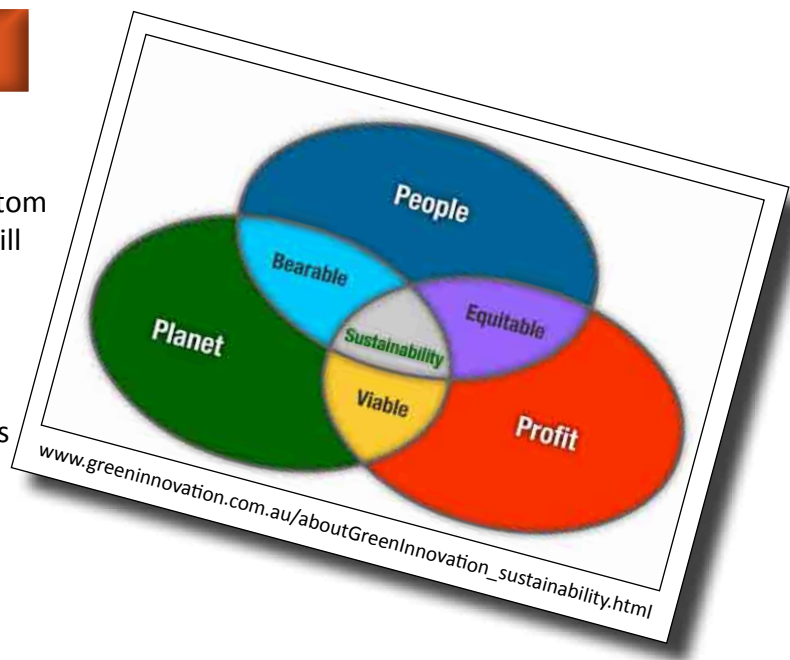


# Local Food



## - A Responsible Choice

Most businesses today are looking at the triple bottom line when making big decisions around how they will carry out their business. That means that success is measured by the impact a decision will have on the ability to make money but also - and equally important, the impact on the environment and the social impact. To summarize sustainable businesses care about the people, the planet and profit.



## Local Food is Good for Business

- Being known for providing local food can give you a competitive edge and help you stand-out from your competitors.
- If health is part of your mission and vision, aligning your purchasing practices with the mission and vision allows the public to see your commitment to health through local food. This not only attracts customers but also attracts and retains quality employees looking to work for an organization with similar values.
- Buying local helps money circulate in the local economy. Money spent at a local small business is spent again locally. For example, by buying chicken from a local farmer that farmer can then pay for his daughter's ballet lessons in town, this kind of economy is based on connections with people.

## Local Food is Good for People

- Harvesting local food at its peak allows the food to taste great on its own, needing little added salt, sugar or fat to enhance the flavour.
- Local food may retain more nutrients than food transported long distances because it is fresher.
- Purchasing from local farms and businesses contributes to local tax revenue, infrastructure, jobs and economic diversification. All of these enhance the resiliency of the community.

## Local Food is Good for the Planet

- Supporting local farms means having access to information to make choices about supporting farming practices that protect biodiversity, air and water quality, and preserve green space.
- Buying local reduces fuel costs needed for transport and eliminates wasteful redundant trade.

# Local Food - Expensive? Myth or Fact

When asking most organizations why they haven't started to use more local food the common answer is "It's too expensive and we have a tight budget." Surprisingly though when you talk to organizations where the commitment to local food is actualized the overwhelming feeling is that incorporating local food into their meal plans is very easy to do - even on a tight budget.

## **Buy Whole Food Over Processed Food**

Buying raw ingredients for meals and preparing them from scratch will cost less than buying processed and pre-packaged food and it is easier to source whole unprocessed food locally.

## **Develop a Seasonal Menu**

Fresh local produce tastes better than the unripened imported alternative. Serving strawberry shortcake in June will not only allow you to find a good price on local strawberries, it will also taste better than strawberry shortcake in February.

## **Concentrate on quality not quantity**

With the current health issues related to the obesity epidemic, a plate of overflowing food is no longer the healthy choice to present to your customer. It is preferable to give your customer a smaller portion of high quality food.

## **Look at Your Food Wastage**

It is estimated that average food wastage in the public sector is near 20% while it has been suggested that the average food wastage hospitals is closer to 50%. If preparing proper portioned quality local food can cut this food waste percentage down in the long run you may find you are actually ahead in your food budget.

## **A WORD FROM THE LOCAL FOOD COMMUNITY**

At St. Joseph's Health Centre Leslie Carson, Manager of Food and Nutrition Services has learned to think creatively when deciding to use a local food product. St. Joseph's was built 10 years ago with no infrastructure for cooking in the kitchen. With, at the time, only \$5 a day per patient to feed each of the over 300 people she's responsible for Leslie quickly realized she needed a plan. "It's impossible to feed a person on \$5/day using solely processed food - you need to use raw ingredients".

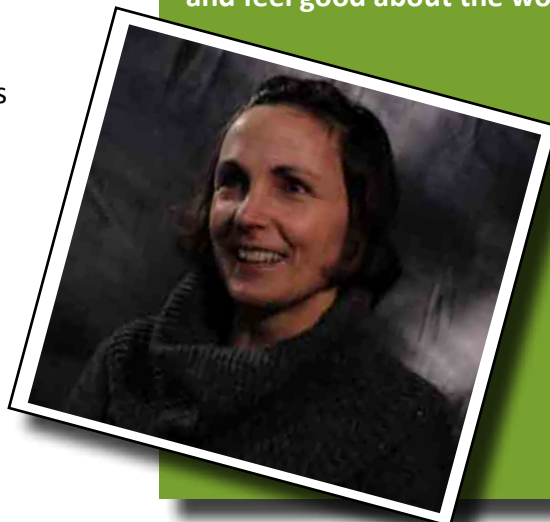
This meant adding work to the already busy kitchen staff. Leslie needed to balance the work to fit into the day so she made a choice. "I knew I could buy cookie dough and that the cookies would be fabulous. I can't buy a pre-made salad that can be anywhere near as good as a fresh local in season one made in house."

The staff actually enjoy spending more time making fresh food as they get compliments from the patients. Food wastage is only 10% and the amount of local food served is up to 20% all while staying within budget.

"At the end of the day we have to go home and feel good about the work we do."

Using local food let's us do this as it produces a quality product."

- Leslie Carson,  
St. Joseph's  
Health Centre



# Local Food

## - The Start Small Philosophy

### A WORD FROM THE LOCAL FOOD COMMUNITY

We asked some local food champions what they thought were the easiest products to source local. Their answers included:

- Apples
- Root Vegetables
- Honey
- Meat
- Produce (especially in the summer)
- Cheese
- Honey

They also suggested having the following tools:

- High quality food processor - this allows you to peel, slice, and dice vegetables quickly increasing your use of local fresh fruit and vegetables.
- High quality mixer - this allows you to make from scratch baked goods and real mashed potatoes.

Many organizations feel that increasing the amount of local food they use is a daunting task. We'd like to suggest you start small. Wherever you are right now decide to make one small change. Perhaps it's as easy as offering a basket full of local apples or one locally sourced menu item once a week in the cafeteria. Once you feel comfortable with your first small step and you begin to see increased customer satisfaction you will find that the next changes are a lot easier.

Hospitals and schools often feature a daily soup special. This provides an exciting, easy and fun way to incorporate local ingredients into your menu without impacting your budget. Making your own soup will allow you to reduce harmful levels of sodium found in most prepared products without compromising on taste. It is an easy way to decrease food waste as you can use leftover rice, beans or vegetables the next day in soups or casseroles. Kitchen staff will have fun coming up with new recipes to try, and clients will welcome the change.

These small steps also help build the excitement for local food within your organization. By documenting and measuring the benefits of these first small steps you will gain the information you need to justify moving forward.



### Cool Food Facts

The University of Guelph, which feeds 20,000 people began their commitment to local food with one small step. Across campus anywhere that you can buy food you will find a basket of Ontario apples - all year round. They have committed to selling these apples at a price that is lower than the cost of an imported apple.



# Local Food - Words of Wisdom



Farmers just want to talk about their produce and how great it is, and people like to see the faces of the farmers and know where their food comes from.

- Mark Kenny



We do a real dis-service to our future populations to not give them some handle on the trades. . . a good scientist should know how to make a good soup. Students need time with a cutting board and a knife, making risotto.

- Chris Jess



Local food makes you think about the ingredients and puts chefs back in their passionate state of using great authentic, quality ingredients, you have to think about the process and that makes a better product.

- Franco Naccarato



Buying local isn't new and it's not a trend. It is the way it always was before - the tradition of farming and community values.

- Dana Thatcher

# Local Food

## - Starting Your Journey

### A WORD FROM THE LOCAL FOOD COMMUNITY

Jaco Lakker, Executive Chef at the University of Toronto wanted to bring local organic milk and yogurt to the campus residences. He knew that this would be expensive and that his budget wouldn't allow it. Searching for ways to save this money he discovered that an average of 200 pounds of food per student was being wasted every year. Wasted food is wasted money. Time to think creatively. . .

He set up large displays in the residences featuring 200 pounds of rice and a sign stating "It's Your Choice - This is how much food you waste every year". The demonstration explained that if this amount could be decreased he would be able to provide the campus with local organic dairy products. It worked!

This story proves that decreasing food waste will allow more money for purchasing some of the higher priced local food such as dairy. Creatively marketing local foods can have a huge impact in your organization. And finally, never underestimate the ability of your clients to change if it is for something that they want too!

- Franco  
Naccarato,  
Greenbelt Fund



To get started work through the "Starting Your Journey" worksheet in the Resources section. Really take the time to consider the questions there, which include;

### What is your annual food budget?

Remember to look at ways to save money by:

- Using smaller portions of a higher quality local food.
- Using the whole product - for example if you have a salad bar and make your own soups you can use the broccoli crowns for the salad bar and the broccoli stalks in a soup.
- Decreasing food waste by:
  - Making sure food is tasty and satisfying.
  - Making sure if your clients have mobility issues they can open the food you are giving them so that it doesn't end up left on the tray e.g. apple slices in a plastic package may be too challenging to open, or whole apples may be too difficult to bite into.

### Who are your customers and what is important to them?

This is the first, and most important, question to ask before considering any major changes to your menu. Public institutions feed a vast array of people with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, of different ages, with different levels of health and wellness, and different values when it comes to food. Despite the challenges these differences pose to running an efficient and cost effective kitchen, where little is wasted before and after meals are served, two things are certain: the food must be healthy and delicious.

### What kind of food are you currently serving?

Primarily fresh

- It is fairly straightforward to switch to comparable seasonal items at a reasonable cost from local farmers. See the Whole Sale Map in the Resource Section.

Primarily frozen or processed

- Find growers, distributors or a co-op that can provide flash frozen local products.
- Switch to a small selection of fresh fruit.
- Consider other regional products you could use such as jams, honey, maple syrup, ciders or dairy products.

## How many customers do you serve?

The size of your organization will determine the way you purchase local food, but even large organizations can easily increase the use of local food.

Smaller organizations may find working directly with farmers, CSAs, or small distribution companies more beneficial as they can accommodate smaller, more frequent deliveries. This may be a benefit if you don't have large storage capacity or are serving a smaller number of clients.

Larger organizations often need to work with larger distribution and food service companies to ensure that there is adequate supply and that the order arrives at a specified time. Working with fewer suppliers means less paper.

Whether large or small check out the "Supplier & Distributors" list in the resource section. These companies have shown a commitment to providing local products to organizations in Guelph and Wellington County.

## How much flexibility do you have in your menus?

Consider changing menus seasonally and use the "Availability Guide" in the resource section. If you are regulated and have to submit menus for approval consider giving yourself some leeway by using terms such as:

- Chef's Feature
- Soup of the Day
- Salad or Vegetable of the Day
- Fresh Fruit Basket

## Do you have the equipment and skilled labour needed?

You will need:

- Storage space
- Prep space
- Cooking space, equipment and infrastructure
- Employees trained to work with fresh food

Start with whole fruits and vegetables or regional ready-made products. If your orders are large enough, see if the farmer or distributor will deliver more frequently.

If needed, are there grants or fund-raising opportunities to allow for retrofitting or renovating your space?

## A WORD FROM THE LOCAL FOOD COMMUNITY

What we eat is based on so much more than just being hungry; all of us have grown up in a cultural or ethnic background where certain foods are staples, provide comfort, are considered inedible, or even forbidden. Knowing some of these answers can help you in determining where to start your local food journey and it will help your organization know how to market the switch.

For example at St. Joseph's Health Centre in Guelph many of their patients have a long history of working in the agricultural sector and many are also of an Italian background. Highlighting the benefit of purchasing local food from local farmers really made it easy for patients to adopt the new purchasing practices and the traditional eating styles of hearty Italian cuisine gave the kitchen staff a starting point for their new menus.



# Local Food

## - It's About Relationships



### A WORD FROM THE LOCAL FOOD COMMUNITY

The University of Guelph has shown a huge commitment to local food. However, Mark wanted to improve the way this commitment to local food was marketed. To promote local food on campus, Hospitality Services ran a one day event to highlight some smaller local businesses that they support, but cannot purchase from on a regular basis. They sold sausage on a bun for one day across campus to highlight local sausage from Thatcher Farms and buns from With the Grain, a local bakery. The event was a huge success.

The benefit of running a special event like this is that it can allow you to highlight a local company that you may not have the budget to carry on a regular basis, it shows your clients your commitment to local food, and it highlights the great work being done by local farmers and producers in your area.

- Mark Kenny, Purchasing Coordinator in  
Hospitality Services, University of Guelph



### Open The Lines Of Communication

Let your suppliers and distributors know about your plan to use more local food. Ask them what your options are, let them know what you are looking for and ask if they can get it for you. Ask your suppliers where their products are coming from, and encourage them to find out as much about the food you're purchasing as they can. As more customers begin to have this open conversation with suppliers and distributors the more likely there will be an increase in the amount of local products offered.

### Working With The Farmer

Here are some tips to help you buy from local growers.

- **Know what's in season** - Producers in Ontario are adopting creative strategies to extend their growing seasons. Strawberry season now extends from June up to the first hard frost. Using "hoop-houses" fresh herbs and salad green season runs from March to December. Some farmers with root vegetables and orchard fruits have year round cold storage. Mushrooms and greenhouse tomatoes, cucumbers, and bell peppers are commonly available year-round in Ontario.
- **Know the industry standards for weight and packaging** - It's important to know ahead of time how the food will arrive at your door. Odd weights are often accommodated, if you ask.
- **Ask questions and tell your farmers what you want** - If you're looking for a specific apple, ask for it. Chances are, if they don't have it, they'll know someone who does or can recommend a good alternative. Find out what else your local grower produces and when it's available. You might be surprised how many different crops one farm can produce.
- **Consider the growing season when planning your food contracts** - many farmers would be happy to let you commission a crop but they need to know that before they plant to ensure an adequate supply. This means that they need to know in the winter to plan for the upcoming season. Again, being familiar with what's in season will be helpful here.
- **Be prepared to spend more time on food prep in the kitchen** - Local carrots and potatoes should come clean to your kitchen, but they won't be always be peeled and sliced for you. Make sure you have the staff, proper facilities and time to spend preparing raw fruit and vegetables.

## Working With Existing Distributors

Some distributors have a large selection of local options already, while other companies are still catching on. Working with your existing distributor might be an easy process or it may be an area where your commitment to local is challenged. Many of the same tips for working with farmers apply to working with your existing or new food distributors.

- **Ask for local products** - If you are looking for locally sourced product, you can ask your distributor if they have it or if they can get it. If they can sell it to you, they will. They want to keep your business.
- **Ask for information** - If you have a solid working relationship with your regional sales representative, do not hesitate to suggest to him or her that you would like the origin of the products on the sales sheet. Many distributors are already responding to their clients' desires for more local food options by identifying the region or province that the product was grown or raised in, some companies even identify the farm it came from. If your distributor is not doing this, ask them to. You need to be specific about wanting local food options; they need to know that for you this is not a "nice to have", but that it is something that your organization is committed to.

If your supplier can't or won't look into more local options set up a time line to move your business to another distributor. See the Supplier and Distributor List in the Resource Section to find companies committed to the local food movement.

## MARKETING LOCAL FOOD ON SITE

You're committed to local food, you've spent the time getting to know local farmers, you've even come up with new menu items that you are proud of and your customers are happy with the changes you've made. It's time to let everyone know!

### Some Marketing Ideas:

- Highlight one or two farmers in each newsletter issue, or on your website.
- Have a special event that highlights one or two farmers products.
- Send information or recipes home with students.
- Link to the farmer's website from yours.
- Identify farms on your menu
- Have a display board in a central location with weekly local features.
- Invite the farmer to annual meetings or other events your organization may hold.
- Arrange for students or staff to visit the farms you buy from.
- Have a farmer come to visit your organization - have a taste test of their product compared to the imported version.
- If your organization uses volunteers ask the farmers if they'd like to have a role.

# Local Food

## - Be A Champion



### A WORD FROM THE LOCAL FOOD COMMUNITY

The Guelph Community Health Centre (CHC) runs an ID clinic weekly where clients who face barriers, such as having no permanent address, can apply for identification such as SIN cards and Health cards. At the clinic a snack is provided - most times it's bananas, cheese and crackers. When the commitment to use more local was made the local food team thought an easy quick win would be to source local cheese and replace the bananas with local apples. The team approached the outreach workers to make this change. This example shows how having people on the local food team who work in areas across the organization ensures you have realistic knowledge of your client's needs.

Now Guelph CHC offers local cheese, crackers, local whole apples, local apple slices, and bananas. It may be a small step, but it's a step in the right direction while still being respectful of the needs of the client.



When speaking with people at organizations who have already made the commitment to local we asked them where to start the journey. Overwhelmingly they all spoke about passion. Having passion for local food makes it easier to get out and meet people already in the movement, from farmers to distributors, to people in other organizations and even your clients - listening to their stories will help build your passion. Before you know it you'll be one of the Local Food Champions in your organization.

### Building Support

- Start by listening to employees at all levels of the organization, clients, and current distributors and suppliers. They may have ideas that you haven't even thought of. If they have concerns, provide some background information around the reasons to go local. Take the time with people at the beginning of this journey as every person you help see the benefit of the change will become an advocate for local food.
- Sign the Food Charter in the Resource Section and hang it somewhere where people will see it.
- Develop a communication strategy – Keep it simple; employees need to see a clear goal with a plan for achievement.
- Assemble a local food team with representatives from across the organization. This will help get the idea of local food out to everyone and the whole team can take ownership and pride in each success. It will also help you to see how changes may impact different areas differently.
- Identify internal champions of the cause – ensure that they are given responsibility and resources to implement change.



## DID YOU KNOW?

- **Procurement** – the act of buying goods and services
- **RFQ** – Request for Quotes – a process to invite suppliers to bid on specific products or services.

You have the passion and the team is on board and excited to bring in more local food. Why not take it to the next level and incorporate your beliefs around local food into organizational policy. See the Resource Section for a guide.

Many organizations are including local food procurement in their sustainability guidelines and policies to highlight their commitment reducing their environmental footprint and to increasing their connection to their community.

Consider adding the following to your sustainability policy:

- A statement of your commitment to purchase of local food when it is in season.
- A requirement for all food services to redesign their menus on a seasonal basis.
- A suggestion to ask caterer's used and off site locations booked about their use of local food.

If your organization is bound by guidelines and contracts you may have to make changes when new RFQs are issued.

Consider adding the following to your RFQs:

- A statement of your commitment to purchase a certain percentage of your order from locally sourced product.
- A requirement that caterers, suppliers and distributors identify local products on their sales lists, or provide locally sourced products in specific categories in order to win the contract.



## Cool Food Facts

In Canada, we import \$4 billion more in food than we export. Research undertaken by the Region of Waterloo Public Health Department in 2005 revealed that a significant quantity and variety of food items, all of which are possible to grow in south-western Ontario, are actually imported and have traveled an average of about 4,500 kilometers from where they were grown or raised.

- [www.mysustainablecanada.org/projects/sustainable-consumption/61-assessing-the-capacity-for-local-food-in-hospitals-st-marys-hospital-case-study](http://www.mysustainablecanada.org/projects/sustainable-consumption/61-assessing-the-capacity-for-local-food-in-hospitals-st-marys-hospital-case-study)

# Local Food

## - Safety & Traceability



### A WORD FROM THE LOCAL FOOD COMMUNITY

Since 1919 Morton Wholesale has been a distributor for independent restaurants and food service providers in Southwestern Ontario. Their main goal is to provide quality local food options. To help achieve this goal they have developed the Ontario Grass Roots Program that works with farmers to ensure healthy and sustainable methods are practiced. The program includes beef, chicken, veal, fish and produce. In the future it will expand to also include duck, pork, cheese and honey.

"It gives an identity and brand to products from Ontario and gives the customer the food safety and quality aspect so when they serve that plate of food to their customers they can rest assured that the quality is there."

- Jean Beauchemin,  
Morton Wholesale



### Food Safety

Safety is a concern for anyone handling food, but especially for those handling food in the public sector. Under federal and provincial regulations it is the farmer's responsibility to ensure that the production, harvest, handling, packaging and storage of the crop is practiced in accordance with relevant legislation. These regulations are enforced by the federal and provincial government and public health inspectors. It is safe to purchase these products from licensed producers using standard farming practices either directly or through a distributor or retailer.

### Place of Origin Definitions

Knowing what is in food and where it comes from helps in making smart purchasing decisions. Unfortunately, it's still difficult to know where many of the items that line the grocery store shelves and the distributor's product list were produced, processed and packaged. Heavily processed foods contain any number of common and obscure ingredients, often from all over the world, thereby creating a long list of places of origin—often none of which are declared on the product's label.

**Guelph Wellington** - Local food sourced closer to home may be branded by a "buy local" food group such as Guelph Wellington's taste•real brand. Often, these food products include the name of the family farm that produced the food, and contact information through which the farmer may be reached right on the packaging or label. Some local food distributors have implemented the practice of including the name and location of the producer of each of the products on their product lists, allowing chefs and kitchen managers to purchase food from preferred farms.

**Ontario** - The easiest way to look for products from Ontario is to look for the Foodland Ontario Logo. Products considered to be Ontario grown and raised are defined in the resource section. Or for more information on the Ontario Foods Definitions, please refer to the following website: [www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/industry/ind-definitions.html](http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/industry/ind-definitions.html)

**Canada** - The use of certain labelling claims are legislated through Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) legislation. Under CFIA legislation claims made about a product are voluntary and if a claim is made by the food industry it must be; truthful, clear, simple and transparent. More details around this legislation can be found at [www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/guide/toce.html](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/guide/toce.html)

## Traceability

In the wake of the many recent outbreaks of dangerous food-borne pathogens and contaminants food traceability has become a priority issue for the food sector and the consumer. Food traceability allows health protection and promotion officials to track and recall products quickly and easily during an outbreak. It also enables early identification of the source and type of contamination in order to prevent the crisis from spreading. Beyond promoting and enhancing the safety of our domestic food supply, traceability helps producers and processors, communicate with suppliers regarding the quality of specific ingredients, and verify the claims of specific products which may be labelled “organic”, “natural” or “kosher”.

## A WORD FROM THE LOCAL FOOD COMMUNITY

Green Liner Produce is entering into it's fifth season of a unique program that allows them to work directly with farmers in a whole new way. They have been working with a farmer to grow products directly for some of their clients.

They approached a local farmer 5 years ago with the request to use part of his land to grow some harder to source produce. They purchased premium seed and respected that the farmer was the expert in growing while they were the experts in selling. The experiment was a huge success. They now have 25 acres where they grow such things as a wide variety of different types of lettuces, heirloom tomatoes, and heirloom carrots.

- Evva Vandervoort,  
Green Liner Produce

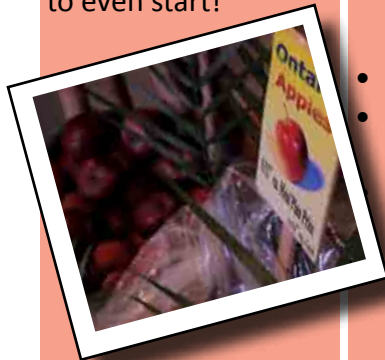


# Local Food

## - Turning Challenge Into Success

### Challenge

"It's too big an effort to even start!"



### Success Strategies

- Start small - try to adding a basket of apples, then add a weekly feature menu, or local salad option, and continue with small changes until before you know it you are a local food champion.
  - Use the resource section to work through the process in small steps.
  - Pre-existing resources such as the taste real brand, the GWLF Map, and Foodland Ontario can be a big help.
- Work with another organization to share information and strategies with.

"Local will cost more."

- Bust this myth by;
- Menu planning with the seasons. Purchasing local is less expensive when you plan for what will be in season.
- Reeling in the portion distortion - serving proper portion sizes of higher quality local food produces a superior product to bigger portions of a less quality food.
- Knowing your statistics on food waste before you increase your use of local food can give you a baseline to see that with the increase in local food use food wastage has gone down - essentially saving you money.
- Challenging whether "cheap" is really how food should be defined. Try on new standards such as "quality", "tasty", "nourishing", "healing", "brain-growing". After all food is the fuel your clients need to grow, learn, or heal!

"No one else at my organization is interested in local food."



- Be a Champion yourself - let others see your passion for local food.
- Find an agency similar to yours that has made local food a priority and learn from them, have them come and do a presentation at a Lunch and Learn.
- Find a partner organization to make local food changes together to build excitement within both locations
- Invite local farmers into your organization to talk about their product, or even better do a taste test of their product vs. the non-local option.
- Have your team watch the Guelph Wellington Local Food Shorts at [www.guelphwellintonlocalfood.ca](http://www.guelphwellintonlocalfood.ca) to be inspired by leading experts in local food in our area.
- Celebrate the small successes - did your customers rave about that local salad your staff created? That's cause for celebration! The more positive feedback staff hear the easier change will become.
- Get students, parents, patients, and other clients on board through councils, newsletters, recipe development, special local food events, social media.

## Challenge

"I don't think my distributor is interested in local food."

## Success Strategies

- You may be surprised to find out just how much local food your distributor is already carrying - or is willing to carry - you just haven't asked.
- Discuss your commitment to buying more local products with your distributor
- Ask your distributor to state the origin of the product on the sales sheet.
- Be persistent in your demand for local products.
- Try new suppliers – there are options out there and your supplier should work be willing to look at what you want to keep your business.

"My food purchasers and kitchen staff will have too much to learn and do - they're already so busy!"

- Don't under estimate your food service employees, they may be inspired to know that they will be able to work more hands on with food.
- Talk to individuals with a variety of functions about their hopes, concerns, and skills.
- Put together a communication strategy
- Create a procurement team with representatives from various departments
- Share benefits of local (Lunch and Learns)



"I'm going to need a policy on this. . ."

- Have your organization sign the Food Charter as a first step in your commitment to local food.
- Find other organizations who have developed written policy on local food procurement who would be willing to share with you.
- Use the templates provided in the Resources section of this toolkit.



## Words of Wisdom

**"Get on the train! It's a hopeful experience to be dealing with local food. . .do it with integrity and do it with authority."**

- Chris Jess, Centre Wellington DHS - Food School

**"Create relationships with farmers and producers."**

- Emily Richards, food writer and recipe developer

**"Be passionate because it will drive you to talk to people already involved with local food."**

- Mark Kenny, University of Guelph Food. . .

**"Start small and celebrate the small successes. All good changes take time."**

- Leslie Carson, St. Joseph's Health Centre, Food Manager. . .

**"Go out and explore - you'll be amazed at what you'll find growing in your backyard!"**

- Franco Naccarato, Greenbelt Fund

“It’s time to think local. . . ‘cause the apples are crisp and sweet and the cheddar can’t be beat. . . There’s good eating from just down the road.”

**- Andrew Queen**



## Resource Section

The first section of this guide was to provide you with background information to inform you of the local food movement. This section is provided to give you the tools, and resources to begin your local food journey, the next chapter in local food will be written by you. Thank you for your commitment.

- Starting the Journey
- The Guelph Wellington Food Charter
- Letter to Distributors
- Grown in Ontario
- Availability Guide
- Local Food Procurement Policy
- Wholesale Supplier List
- Resource List

# Starting the Journey Worksheets



## Getting Started

1. Who are you're customers and what is important to them.

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2. What do you see as your organization's strengths in moving forward with the commitment to local food?

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3. What do you see as your organization's weaknesses in moving forward with the commitment to local food?

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4. What do you see that might hold this project back?

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5. What are the opportunities of making the local food commitment in your organization?

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## Food Service Type and Volume

1. What kind of food are you currently serving? Check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Primarily fresh	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heat and serve
<input type="checkbox"/>	Primarily frozen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Semi-prepared
<input type="checkbox"/>	Primarily scratch cooking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Combination of _____ and _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Primarily packaged	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

2. Numbers served:

Breakfasts served per day: \_\_\_\_\_

Lunches served per day? \_\_\_\_\_

Dinners served per day? \_\_\_\_\_

Snacks served per day? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of sites where cooking occurs: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of sites where food is served: \_\_\_\_\_

## Current Budget

1. What is your current annual food budget?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_/year

2. On average how many customers do you feed:

per day: \_\_\_\_\_ per month: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your food budget per customer per day?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ /customer/day

4. This per day budget includes: (totals from above)

\_\_\_\_\_ (#) snacks \_\_\_\_\_ (#) meals

5. What is a typical order for fresh produce in dollars or volume by month or week?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_/week

\$ \_\_\_\_\_/month

\_\_\_\_\_ (volume)/week

\_\_\_\_\_ (volume)/month

## Logistics - ordering, payment, delivery

1. What are your current procurement procedures? Will they need to be altered to incorporate purchasing more local food?

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2. Do you have current contracts with distributors? When are they up for review?

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3. How many deliveries are made per week? What days of the week and at what times?

\_\_\_\_\_ times/week    ☐ Mon ☐ Tue ☐ Wed ☐ Thu ☐ Fri

4. How do you prefer to place orders?

☐ Telephone    ☐ Email    ☐ Fax

5. How often to you place orders?

☐ Monthly    ☐ Weekly    ☐ A specific day of the week

6. What are your payment procedures? How long will it take for your organization to receive the invoice and make payment?

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## Why do you want to purchase local food

What do you see as the advantages of offering local foods in your organization?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to fresher foods                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Building partnerships between your organization and the community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Higher quality of food                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Lower transportation costs  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lower costs of food                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Less use of pesticides, hormones, etc.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to purchase special varieties and types of food | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive public relations   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting greater consumption of fruits and vegetables  | <input type="checkbox"/> Fulfilling customer requests for local food                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knowing the product source                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting local economy and local farms                | _____  |

## Ontario Products Chart - Vegetables

The following chart shows products available in Ontario. Use the chart to see what products you are currently buying. If you are currently buying them non-local is this a product you would consider purchasing locally.

Item	Processed (Frozen, canned, etc.)	Unprocessed (Fresh)	Currently Local	Currently Non-Local	Priority to switch to Local
Artichoke	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian Vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asparagus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beans (Green/Wax)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bok Choy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broccoli	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brussels Sprouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cabbage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carrots	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cauliflower	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Celery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cucumber (Field)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cucumber (Greenhouse)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eggplant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Garlic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lettuce (Assorted)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lettuce (Greenhouse)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mushrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Onions (Cooking)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Onions (Green)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Onions (Red)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parsnips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peas (Green)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peas (Snow)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peppers (Field)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peppers (Greenhouse)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radishes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rapini	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rutabaga	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spinach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sprouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Squash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweet Potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Item	Processed (Frozen, canned, etc.)	Unprocessed (Fresh)	Currently Local	Currently Non-Local	Priority to switch to Local
Tomatoes (Field)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tomatoes (Greenhouse)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zucchini	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Ontario Products Chart - Fruit

Item	Processed (Frozen, canned, etc.)	Unprocessed (Fresh)	Currently Local	Currently Non-Local	Priority to switch to Local
Apples	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blueberries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cherries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Currants (Red/Black)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grapes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Melon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pears	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plums	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raspberries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhubarb	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strawberries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strawberries (Day Neutral)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watermelon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Ontario Products Chart - Other

Item	Currently Local	Currently Non-Local	Priority to switch to Local
Eggs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Honey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maple Syrup	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yogurt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The logo consists of four squares in a row: orange, green, orange, and green.

# Guelph-Wellington Food Charter

One of the best ways to show your organization's commitment to the local food movement is to endorse and adopt the Guelph-Wellington Food Charter.

The Food Charter was developed by a working group of the Guelph-Wellington Food Round Table with input from a wide array of local groups. The Round Table has broad representation from community organizations in Guelph and Wellington County. The Charter draws upon the United Nations Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights and builds on food charters ratified by jurisdictions throughout Ontario and across Canada. It includes a series of statements that support access to healthy and sustainable food far into the future.

Our goal is to have the Food Charter endorsed by political councils, community organizations and local businesses in an effort to make a compelling statement about our collective intent to support sustainable food and farming.

## **The following are a series of steps that you can take to promote the Food Charter:**

1. Distribute the Food Charter to staff and board/council members.
2. Have your board or council pass a resolution endorsing the Food Charter (a sample resolution is provided).
3. Register your personal or business or organization's endorsement of the Food Charter by contacting [info@gwfrt.com](mailto:info@gwfrt.com) or by faxing your endorsement to 519-821-6148
4. Use the Food Charter to guide your own daily commitments to food
5. Consider implementing policies that reflect the principles listed in the food charter

## **Once you have registered your endorsement of the Food Charter you will receive:**

1. An official copy of the Guelph-Wellington Food Charter suitable for framing.
2. You may also choose to receive news from the Guelph Wellington Food Round Table

# Guelph- Wellington Food Charter



## **Motion for the Endorsement of the Guelph-Wellington Food Charter**

WHEREAS the Guelph-Wellington Food Round Table has developed the Guelph-Wellington Food Charter as a community document which clearly outlines a series of statements that support access to healthy and sustainable food far into the future; and

WHEREAS the principles included in the Guelph-Wellington Food Charter are based on the United Nations Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, with special attention focused on local priorities and issues;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Our organization endorses the Guelph-Wellington Food Charter as a document that identifies values and principles that are upheld by our organization.

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Endorsed by: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print name)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Send this information back to the Guelph - Wellington Food Round Table by email to [info@gwfrt.com](mailto:info@gwfrt.com) or by faxing it to 519-821-6148.



# Letter to Distributor - Sample

Sample letter to send to your food distributors as a request to emphasize Product of Ontario in their sales order forms.

Dear (insert name of vendor),

(Name of Organization) is currently seeking more locally grown and raised food to include in our menus. While we have enjoyed working with you in the past, we are optimistic that you will assist us with this effort by clearly identifying the place of origin of the products that you currently offer, and by expanding your local product line to include more seasonal fruits and vegetables, meats and processed foods. We are committed to purchasing as much local food when it is available, and would like your sales team to clearly highlight Products of Ontario on your order forms each week. We would also like to see an expanded, consistent and reliable supply of Ontario produce available for purchase when it is in season. The following is a list of Ontario products we will purchase when it is available:  
(Ontario produce, meats, cheeses, processed foods that you commonly purchase or would like to purchase.)

Thank you for considering this request.

Yours truly,  
(Name)  
(Contact information)

Ecology Action Centre. (2007).  
*Local Food Procurement Policies: A Literature Review*.  
Nova Scotia: Marla MacLeod and Jennifer Scott.



## What Does 'Grown In Ontario' Mean?

### Ontario Beef

Ontario beef will be born, raised, slaughtered and further processed in an approved facility in Ontario. When there are not enough calves born in Ontario to meet the demand for beef, calves may be sourced from within Canada. This beef will be raised, slaughtered and further processed in Ontario.

### Ontario Chicken

Ontario chicken will be hatched from eggs laid in Ontario or from newly hatched chicks which may be sourced from within Canada or the United States. These chickens will then be raised, slaughtered and processed in Ontario.

### Ontario Lamb

Must be born, raised, slaughtered and processed in Ontario.

### Ontario Pork

Must be born, raised, slaughtered and processed in Ontario.

### Ontario Dairy Products (yogurt, sour cream etc. – excludes milk and cheese)

More than 90 per cent of the milk in Ontario dairy products must be produced on Ontario dairy farms. Up to 10 per cent of the milk used for processing in Ontario can be sourced from within Canada. Any identified secondary ingredients need to be grown and produced in Ontario (e.g. peach yogurt).

### Ontario Milk

More than 90 per cent of the milk processed in Ontario is sourced from Ontario dairy farms. Up to 10 per cent of the milk used for processing in Ontario can be sourced from within Canada. Any identified secondary ingredients need to be grown and produced in Ontario.

### Ontario Cheese

More than 90 per cent of the milk in Ontario cheese is produced on Ontario dairy farms. Up to 10 per cent of the milk used for processing in Ontario can be sourced from within Canada. The curds and whey must be produced in Ontario from Ontario dairy inputs. Any identified secondary ingredients need to be grown and produced in Ontario (e.g. strawberry cream cheese).

### Ontario Eggs

Ontario eggs must be laid on egg farms in Ontario.

### Ontario fruit

Ontario fruit must be grown in Ontario.

### Ontario vegetables

Ontario vegetables must be grown in Ontario.

### Ontario hard wheat flour

A majority (over 80 per cent) of the final volume of the product must be grown in Ontario and 100 per cent of the wheat must be milled in Ontario.

### Ontario soft wheat flour (cake and pastry flour)

Due to extensive production of soft wheat in the province, 100 per cent of the Ontario soft wheat needs to be grown and milled in Ontario.

### Ontario honey

100 per cent of the product must be produced, extracted and packaged in Ontario.

### Ontario maple syrup

100 per cent of the product must be collected, processed and packaged in Ontario.

### Ontario processed food products

Ontario processed food products must be made in Ontario from a majority of Ontario ingredients. More than 80 per cent of the total direct costs of production must return to Ontario. Primary agricultural ingredients will meet the individual Ontario foods definition. Example: "Ontario chicken pot pie" — 80 per cent of the total direct costs of production would have to return to Ontario and the chicken in the pie would have to be hatched from eggs laid in Ontario or from newly hatched chicks which may be sourced from within Canada or the United States. These chickens would then be raised, slaughtered and processed in Ontario.

- found at <http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/industry/ind-definitions.html>

# Availability Guide



 In Season  Harvest Time

Vegetables	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Artichoke												
Asian Vegetables												
Asparagus												
Beans (Green/Wax)												
Beets												
Bok Choy												
Broccoli												
Brussels Sprouts												
Cabbage												
Carrots												
Cauliflower												
Celery												
Corn												
Cucumber (Field)												
Cucumber (Greenhouse)												
Eggplant												
Garlic												
Leeks												
Lettuce (Assorted)												
Lettuce (Greenhouse)												
Mushrooms												
Onions (Cooking)												
Onions (Green)												
Onions (Red)												
Parsnips												
Peas (Green)												
Peas (Snow)												
Peppers (Field)												
Peppers (Greenhouse)												
Potatoes												
Radishes												
Rapini												
Rutabaga												
Spinach												
Sprouts												
Squash												
Sweet Potatoes												
Tomatoes (Field)												
Tomatoes (Greenhouse)												
Zucchini												

	In Season		Harvest Time
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# Availability Guide

Fruits	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Apples												
Blueberries												
Cherries												
Currants (Red/Black)												
Grapes												
Melon												
Pears												
Plums												
Raspberries												
Rhubarb												
Strawberries												
Strawberries (Day Neutral)												
Watermelon												

Other	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Eggs												
Meats												
Processed Foods												
Honey												
Maple Syrup												
Milk Products												

# Local Food Procurement Policy



## THE STEPS

Not all the below steps are necessarily relevant to every situation; rather they reflect the range of issues that should be considered. The steps are organized into phases: initial planning, policy development and policy implementation.

### Lay the Groundwork

- Identify management, staff, constituent and stakeholder needs and interests.
- Engage institutional leaders at all levels.
- Identify champions.
- Audit how supply chains work at present.

### Develop the Policy

- Establish a vision
- Assess limits and opportunities
- Additional time will likely be needed to work with and develop relationships with local suppliers.
- Establish strategies, standards, benchmarks and compliance mechanisms
- Create a statement of goals and objectives
- Develop an action plan
- Develop a statement of how the process will be managed, progress evaluated, and the policy adapted and improved over time

### Implement the Policy

- Involve stakeholders across the sectors
  - This could potentially involve producers, suppliers, procurement officers, students and parents, dietitians, and kitchen staff. Consult with those involved to ensure that they are active participants in the implementation of the new policy.
- Provide education and training opportunities especially for kitchen staff
- Implement the policy in a gradual manner
- Examine the contract process and specifications to ensure that they do not discriminate against local suppliers
- Review menus
  - Menus should reflect seasonal fresh produce available locally, and be geared to nutritional objectives
- Raise awareness and engage in educational initiatives
- Evaluate and publicize your success!

Ecology Action Centre. (2007).  
*Local Food Procurement Policies: A Literature Review*.  
Nova Scotia: Marla MacLeod and Jennifer Scott.







# Local Food Resource List



## Food Websites in Guelph

Guelph Wellington Food Round Table [www.gwrft.com](http://www.gwrft.com)  
Slow Food Guelph [www.slowfoodguelph.ca](http://www.slowfoodguelph.ca)

## Finding Food in Ontario

Farmers Markets Ontario [www.farmersmarketsontario.com](http://www.farmersmarketsontario.com)  
Foodlink Waterloo Region [www.foodlink.ca](http://www.foodlink.ca)  
Harvest Ontario [www.harvestontario.com](http://www.harvestontario.com)  
Ontario CSA Directory [www.csafarms.ca](http://www.csafarms.ca)  
Ontario Farm Fresh [www.ontariofarmfresh.com](http://www.ontariofarmfresh.com)  
Ontario Brewers [www.ontariocraftbrewers.com](http://www.ontariocraftbrewers.com)  
Wines of Ontario [www.winesofontario.ca](http://www.winesofontario.ca)

## Government Websites

County of Wellington [www.wellington.ca](http://www.wellington.ca)  
City of Guelph [www.guelph.ca](http://www.guelph.ca)  
Foodland Ontario [www.foodland.gov.on.ca](http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca)  
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs [www.omafr.gov.on.ca](http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca)  
Savour Ontario [www.savourontario.ca](http://www.savourontario.ca)  
Visit Guelph Wellington [www.visitguelphwellington.ca](http://www.visitguelphwellington.ca)

## Other Sites of Interest

Sustain Ontario [www.sustainontario.com](http://www.sustainontario.com)  
Slow Food Canada [www.slowfood.ca](http://www.slowfood.ca)  
Emily Richards [www.emilyrichardscooks.ca](http://www.emilyrichardscooks.ca)  
The Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care [www.greenhealthcare.ca](http://www.greenhealthcare.ca)  
The National Centre for Home Food Preservation [www.nchfp.uga.edu](http://www.nchfp.uga.edu)



# Local Food Resource List

## Local Food Cookbooks

The Stop. (2009) *Good Food for All: Seasonal Recipes from a Community Garden*. Touchstone.

Jeff Crump and Bettina Schormann. (2009) *Earth to Table: Seasonal Recipes from an Organic Farm*. Random House Canada.

Moir Sanders, Lori Elstone, Beth Goslin Maloney. (2010) *The Harrow Fair Cookbook: Prize-Winning Recipes Inspired by one of Canada's Oldest Country Fairs*. Whitecap Books Ltd.

Lynn Ogryzlo. (2011). *The Ontario Table: featuring the best food from across the province*. Epulum Books.

Elizabeth Baird and Emily Richards. (2011). *Child Care Cooks: Recipes from the Child Care Cooks of Guelph and Wellington County, Local Restaurants, and Celebrity Chefs*. Twin City Dwyer Printing Company.



Guelph  
Wellington  
*local food*

Passionate about the way local  
food is grown, prepared and  
presented, and how real it tastes!