



**Poverty Reduction Strategy for the
City of Kawartha Lakes and County of Haliburton**

**Food Security Action Plan:
Background and Resources**

August 2014



County of Haliburton

Food Security and Poverty Reduction

Food security is defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as "a condition in which all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."¹ Having enough healthy, nutritious food is not only vital for good health it is a basic human right. It is our vision that every person in the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton has access to sufficient and healthy food.

In its simplest interpretation, food insecurity includes problems in obtaining enough, nutritionally adequate and safe foods. Food insecurity can range from worrying about running out of food to missing meals. The root cause of individuals and families not having enough food to eat is directly linked to income insecurity². Income insecurity is due to many factors, usually the same factors that lead to poverty – inadequate income, unaffordable housing, unemployment and underemployment, unaffordable childcare and lack of transportation. Theoretically, when these issues are effectively addressed, food security is addressed.

According to Health Canada and the research paper "Municipal-level responses to household food insecurity in Canada: A call for critical, evaluative research", food insecurity is higher in households with low – middle incomes including those who rely on government assistance such as Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) where 65% "have some form of food insecurity and 27% experience severe food insecurity", Old Age Security (OAS) and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), those who rent, and families with children, especially lone-parent female led families (35%), families with young children or families with three or more children. Those who rely on worker's compensation and employment insurance (37%) also experience high levels of food insecurity.^{3, 4}

¹ <http://www.ryerson.ca/foodsecurity/definition/>

² http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/income_food_sec-sec_alim-eng.php

³ http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/income_food_sec-sec_alim-eng.php#concl

⁴ <http://journal.cpha.ca/index.php/cjph/article/view/4224>

According to the 2013 Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge (HKPR) District Health Unit Cost of a Nutritious Food Basket (NFB) Report, a family of four on Ontario Works with 2 adults and 2 children age 8 and 14 have a total income of \$2112. Their monthly expenses for rent, heat and hydro and a NFB are \$2124. Funds remaining = \$ -12. They are spending 52% of their monthly income on rent, 11% on utilities and 38% on food for a total of 101%. They have no funds to pay for essentials such as toiletries including toilet paper, laundry soap, toothpaste or any other monthly expenses such as phone/internet service, transportation and other goods and services. To cope they will likely access the food bank.

(Source: Cost of Nutritious Food Basket, Haliburton, Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit
[http://www.hkpr.on.ca/Portals/0/PDF%20Files%20-%20Adults/NFB%20Communication%20Tool Public FINAL.pdf](http://www.hkpr.on.ca/Portals/0/PDF%20Files%20-%20Adults/NFB%20Communication%20Tool%20Public%20FINAL.pdf))

In Ontario, a total of 1.7 million Ontario seniors receive OAS and 475,000 seniors receive the GIS.⁵ This means that roughly 30 per cent of Ontario's seniors can be described as financially insecure. According to Statistics Canada, a staggering 34% of older Canadians (65+) who live at home are at nutritional risk.⁶ Senior citizens, especially single women over the age of 65, struggle to meet their basic needs of housing, food and other essentials as they tend to have inadequate pensions and retirement savings. It has been noted that more seniors locally in our community and across the country find themselves accessing food banks to help them meet their food needs due to rising shelter costs and unexpected medical expenses.⁷

Concern for our aging family members and neighbours is a legitimate concern according to the report, *Falling Behind: Ontario's Backslide into Widening Inequality Growing Poverty and Cuts to Social Programs*.⁸ Considering that 23% of Kawartha Lakes and 28% of County of Haliburton residents are over the age of 65, this should signal us to be vigilant in monitoring and addressing food security in the senior population.

⁵ CARP, *Financial Insecurity Among Older Canadians: CARP Pre-Budget Submission to the Standing*

Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs (February 1, 2011).

⁶ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/82-003-x2013003-eng.htm>

⁷ <http://www.oafb.ca/assets/pdfs/HungerReport2010.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.weareontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/OCF-RPT-FallingBehind-20120829.pdf>

“Ontario’s income gap between the richest and poorest families is now at levels not seen since the Great Depression in the 1930s.... Fifteen per cent of Ontario’s children live below the Low Income Measure, according to Statistics Canada.”

Source: Falling Behind: Ontario’s Backslide into Widening Inequality Growing Poverty and Cuts to Social Program

Families with children as noted above are also more likely to experience food insecurity. No child should go hungry, yet some families with children in the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton experience food insecurity as reflected in the number of families with children who access the food banks. According to research, in Canada, 38% of those receiving food bank services are children.⁹

Good nutrition is essential for healthy growth and development. Food insecurity is detrimental to children’s physical and mental health. “Children that lack proper diets are less able to concentrate and perform well at school, which makes it more difficult to learn the skills they will need as adults. Ensuring that all children and youth have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods for their everyday activities are critical for a vulnerable population.”¹⁰

Food Insecurity Facts in the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton

Understanding the level of food insecurity in our broad and diverse communities will help us develop food security initiatives and programs that address the needs and are accessible, inclusive, and respectful of the dignity when moving forward to solutions.

- In the City of Kawartha Lakes, 1600 – 2100 people of whom 40% are children use the food bank on a monthly basis.¹¹
- In Haliburton County in 2013 approximately 271 households accessed the food banks on a monthly basis. This is an increase of 6.3% from 2010. About 30% of those accessing food bank services are children.¹²
- Food banks have noted each year there is an increase in the number of employed individuals and families accessing the food banks.
 - Individuals and families can access a food bank once per month and are given enough food for only three days. Food banks provide short term relief for emergency situations. Below is a typical sample of food given to a family seeking the services of a food bank.

⁹ http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/income_food_sec-sec_alim-eng.php#concl

¹⁰ <http://www.breakfastforlearning.ca/conference-board-of-canada-suggests-a-national-meal-program/#sthash.6p0I74wu.dpuf>

¹¹ Verbally reported by Roberta Sommerville, Executive Director of Kawartha Lakes Food Source

¹² Verbally reported by Rosie Kadwell, Dietitian HKPR District Health Unit

¾ pound of ground beef, 1 small can of fish, 1 can of flaked ham, 6 eggs, 1 bag of milk, 1 small container of margarine, 4 small containers of pudding, muffin mix, 1 loaf of bread, a box of cereal, a small box of cereal bars, 1 box of macaroni and cheese, 1 jar of peanut butter, 1 small can of fruit, 1 package of Jell-O, 1 rice side dish, 1 sleeve of crackers, 2 cans of soup, 2 packages of pasta, 1 can of pork and beans. *How would you meal plan and stretch your food dollars on a three-day supply from a food bank.*

Unless low-income earners live close to a grocery store or live in a rural area and have their own vehicle and the means to pay for gas or other modes of transportation to get to a larger chain grocery store, they are more likely to shop at convenience stores where they pay more for groceries, have fewer nutritious food options and are more likely to purchase packaged processed food than had they shopped at a larger chain grocery store.¹³

Strategies to Address Food Insecurity

Systems Change

Addressing the systemic causes of food insecurity has the greatest impact in reducing or eliminating food insecurity. This includes advocating for and developing local municipal, provincial and federal programs, policies and strategies related to income security, affordable housing, employment, and transportation as outlined in other components of the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton County Poverty Reduction Strategy. For example, given the link between housing affordability and food insecurity, municipalities can increase the number of affordable housing stock which increases the likelihood that low-income families may have enough money to purchase enough healthy food to meet their families' needs after paying for their fixed expenses of rent or mortgage and utilities.

Municipalities can develop and support partnerships across the many sectors within our communities who are addressing food security and food system work. They can share ideas and successful food security initiatives between the County of Haliburton and the City of Kawartha Lakes. They can strengthen local agricultural and local food system initiatives through the development of policies and by-laws that support local food systems at all levels including production, processing, retail and access.

¹³ Linking Health and the Built Environment in Rural Settings. Evidence and Recommendations for Planning Healthy Communities in Middlesex County. Middlesex-London Health Unit. www.healthunit.com

Food – how and where we grow, process, distribute, sell, and eat it – is a fundamental human concern and central to the health of our communities, economy, environment, and bodies. Food is elemental, yet the system we have built around it is complex, rigid, and opaque. There is growing concern that our current food system is not working well – some would say it is broken. In Ontario, many farmers are facing an income crisis. Too many people lack access to healthy food. And, despite growing demand for local food, our centralized, large-scale food processors, distributors, and retailers are unable to provide it. Efforts to rebuild the local food supply chain and restructure Ontario’s food and agriculture system have been building momentum in the last few years. Ontario’s residents are expressing a burgeoning desire to create a food system that is more sustainable, equitable, and economically viable.”

Source: <http://metcalfoundation.com/publications-resources/view/menu-2020-ten-good-food-ideas-for-ontario/>

Municipalities can incorporate food security initiatives, such as the designation of lands for community gardens into their official and sustainability plans. Other supportive strategies that could be included in the Official Plans include policies related to the availability, accessibility and affordability of healthy foods. This includes policies related to mixed-use zoning in new housing development sites over a specific size so that food retail centres are in close proximity to the new housing development or be built in close proximity to existing food retailers. They should include provisions for the grocery stores to be connected to residential areas by safe walking and/or cycling routes and public transit services. They can encourage Farmer’s Markets or other programs that increase the availability of more nutritious food in rural communities, especially in areas where there is no grocery store as a means to improve access to healthy local produce.

Individual and Community Capacity Building

Other strategies that address food insecurity include individual and community capacity building. These strategies help to improve food security by building skills and improving sustainability. Strategies include community/collective kitchens, food skills training programs, and educational components such as food label reading and budgeting. It also includes community gardens, Universal Student Nutrition Programs and the Good Food Box program.

Collective/community kitchens address food security by bringing small groups of people together in a neighbourhood who pool their resources to make healthy nutritious, low cost meals together. They learn cooking skills by cooking together. Often they share a meal together and take their portion of the food they have prepared home to share with their families.

Collective kitchens are there to teach us about budgeting, shopping, cooking healthy and nutritious meals for our families. Collective kitchens have the potential to expand by giving the participants skills that could turn into opening doors for jobs like Safe Food Handling and Smart Serve. Most of us have developed a passion for cooking.

Samantha participant in a CKL collective kitchen

Community/collective kitchens offer more than just meals and food preparation. They also increase skill development. Incorporating skills and certification courses happen in many community kitchen programs.¹⁴ With some critical planning and economic development support, community kitchen programs have the potential to enhance job skills for citizens looking to edge into the workforce. Projects that provide food for people and job training should be seen as potential interventions with sustainable components. The Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto is one example of expanding learning opportunities and self-advocacy for its clients. They have courses on nutrition, how to grow food, safe food handling and cooking.¹⁵ Peterborough Eats is a social enterprise that provides Employment Advancement Training Service (EATS) that helps underemployed and unemployed individuals an opportunity to gain practical skills sets.¹⁶

Community gardens are also a good strategy to address food security as they increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Participants learn how to grow food and there are social benefits as well. Locally, Fleming College in Lindsay has increased the number of plots in their community garden from six to eighty-eight over the past ten years. The United Way in Lindsay has partnered with several groups to develop a community garden. The Haliburton Highlands Community Garden Network started with two community gardens and now has twelve.

Short Term Relief – Emergency Use

Another strategy used to address food insecurity is to provide an immediate, emergency response through food banks and food charity programs such as soup kitchens. It is important to emphasize emergency use services are band –aid solutions. They cover up the problem for the short term, but do not address the underlying causes of food insecurity. Although they do not address the underlying causes of food insecurity, people working and volunteering in these programs advocate for systems change and community capacity building strategies which are more protective against food insecurity.

Although food banks, soup kitchens and other specific targeted programs in the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton are critical in the fight against hunger,

¹⁴<http://www.foodbankscanada.ca/About-Us/Programs/Community-Kitchen-Fund.aspx>

¹⁵<http://www.thestop.org/>

¹⁶<http://coin-ced.org/category/peterborough-eats>

they are temporary stop gap measures that address the immediate, desperate needs of individuals and families in need of food. When one seeks the services of the food bank, the food bank provides the client with only enough food for three days. Clients are only able to seek the services of the food bank once a month. Food banks may have an insufficient supply of food and therefore cannot meet the demands. They are also unable to meet one's food preferences. Fresh food is limited and often not available due to storage issues. Often the food typically found at food banks is not adequate in nutritional value.¹⁷

While the quality, nutritional value, and cultural acceptability of donated food are all factors that should be investigated in further detail, it is clear that as a short-term solution to problems of hunger and waste, these charitable organizations provide a valuable service for both communities in need and corporate donors.

Source: Food reclamation as an approach to hunger and waste: A conceptual analysis of the charitable food sector in Toronto, Ontario

Food banks and soup kitchens experience many other challenges. They are expensive and labour intensive to operate. There are high costs in terms of capital costs and in attaining the human resources needed to deliver food through the food banks, food cupboards and soup kitchens. They are highly dependent on volunteers and must give consideration to the location of their services which should be barrier free and in synch with any existing rural transportation routes. This can be difficult and not always possible especially in our rural communities.

The Kawartha Lakes Food Source, its 15 member agencies, the non-member agencies in the City of Kawartha Lakes and the Haliburton County food banks have little or no core funding. They rely upon donation-driven-projects, both in food and cash. Donations can be inconsistent and paradoxically more donations are needed just when communities have less to give. Fund-raising and food collection are time-consuming, creating even more pressure to attract and keep volunteers.

Food banks also rely on food reclamation centres for provisions. Food that is close to shelf date is redistributed through reclamation centres. The competition for reclamation food is growing with the expedient growth of food security programs with discount store chains.¹⁸ There is also an ethical question of large food chains saving waste diversion costs by selling food under the identity of reclamation food. Twenty-five years ago, this food was often considered waste and went to landfills where now it is an economic consideration.

¹⁷ <http://journal.cpha.ca/index.php/cjph/article/view/4224>

1596 volunteer hours were required to operate 9 food banks in the City of Kawartha Lakes in March 2014. In the calendar year of 2013, the Kawartha Lakes Food Source recorded 3,588 volunteer hours which were dedicated to raising money, collecting and sorting food, member agency meetings and various committee and board meetings. The Minden Food Bank reports it has 63 volunteers who contribute 4,000 hours to help it operate.

Source: Verbally reported by Roberta Sommerville, Executive Director of the Kawartha Lakes Food Source and Rosie Kadwell, Dietitian, HKPR District Health Unit

As mentioned food banks are highly dependent on volunteers. Although Volunteer Canada continues to see volunteerism remain steady with some growth, there are trends in how people wish to volunteer and where. Locally there are challenges that include demographic shifts, limited rural transportation, and even winter weather is a factor some years. There is a cost to recruitment, training, retention and recognition in addition to an added value of the hourly work that should be considered in the cost of providing basic food needs for people in our communities.

Current Food Security Initiatives in the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton

In both the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton, we are fortunate to have a network of food systems that includes non-profit organizations, municipal departments, the HKPR District Health Unit, faith leaders, Kawartha Lakes Food Source - with nine food cupboards/banks, Haliburton County FoodNet - which includes over 20 different food programs and or agencies, the Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition, service groups, donors and volunteers. These are invaluable assets and partnerships!

In the City of Kawartha Lakes, the Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition (KL) received an official nod from the municipality for its KL Food Charter. The KL Food Charter, which was developed by the community and endorsed by community decision makers, is a document to guide the development of food related policies and programs in the City of Kawartha Lakes. According to CKL Food Charter, a just and sustainable food system means: a vibrant community food culture, food security, community health, a strong farming economy and a healthy ecosystem.

The food charter development process, in the City of Kawartha Lakes, took many community meetings, consultations and visioning days. After 3 years of hard work of the CKL community, the Food Charter was developed and endorsed by the CKL Council in March 2011. Following the development of the food charter, the “Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition (KLFC)” was developed in March 2013. The KLFC represents individuals, organizations and stakeholders for the City of Kawartha Lakes community. The KLFC currently consists of 119 individuals that represent 88 different organizations including people representing community kitchens, the student nutrition program, community gardens and local food advocates to name a few. They are an action group and aim to foster programs within the community that ensure a just and sustainable food system and attain the ideals of the Kawartha Lakes Food Charter. The KLFC members have identified issues and developed action plans on “food security” as well as “regulatory hurdles regarding local food”, “growth and sustainability of local farms” “workforce development within the food system”, collaborative marketing for local food, “processing and distribution capacity of local food”, and “healthy ecosystems”.

The *Our Kawartha Lakes Integrated Community Sustainability Plan* supports the implementation of the KL Food Charter. It also contains an entire section in the document on agriculture which further signifies councils’ strong commitment to food security and food policy in the City of Kawartha Lakes.

There are also programs and services in the City of Kawartha Lakes that address food security. They include: a number of *community/collective kitchens* that teach healthy cooking skills, budgeting and nutrition; *MAGG (Member Agency Advocacy Group)* which is a food bank networking, advocacy and advisory group who support the Kawartha Lakes Food Source to help them reach their goal to reduce hunger by maintaining a central warehouse to supply food to organizations that provide food to individuals in need; a number of *community gardens* located across CKL – however, there is a need for more; the *Good Food Box program*; *CKL Food for Kids Program* which serves a free,

universal healthy breakfast, snack and/or lunch to 10,000 students every day; and the *Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)* which provides a nutritious meal each week to pregnant and new moms and their families. Moms who are pregnant and moms who breastfeed their infant up to six months, receive a \$10.00 food voucher each week.

The Haliburton Food Net is a leader in the County of Haliburton that is comprised of stakeholders and community leaders who have created initiatives that include community gardens, community kitchens, food networks and food bank systems. They have been successful in attaining funding for food security initiatives. They collect data which helps them identify needs in the community.

Harvest Haliburton is grass roots, volunteer committee that supports the development of a sustainable food system for the County of Haliburton and is a program of the Haliburton County Community Cooperative. Through networks, partnerships and collaboration, Harvest Haliburton's role is to raise awareness, create supportive environments and local food policies that are vital to a sustainable, local food system. They are working with key stakeholders including municipality representation from Dysart et.al, Algonquin Highlands and Minden Hills on a community food assessment report. The report will provide baseline information necessary for wise decision making and long term planning in the food, farming, cultural and culinary tourism sectors while building formal and informal multi-stakeholder networks contributing to the strength of the community as a whole.

The County of Haliburton also has many programs that support individual skill building and community capacity including:

- the *Haliburton Highlands Community Garden Network* which has 12 community gardens located throughout the county;
- the *Good Food Box Program* which provides fresh fruit and vegetables once a month at the best price possible price to individuals and families – an average of 233 boxes are delivered monthly;
- the *Haliburton County Food for Kids Program* which provides a universal healthy breakfast and/or lunch program to students in all schools – 4,000 healthy breakfasts and snacks are served to students each week;
- *Dig In* which is a series of educational workshops about learning how to grow, prepare and preserve food;
- *Garden Buddies* which is a peer mentorship program where avid gardeners are paired with individuals and families in the community wishing to learn how to garden;
- the *Haliburton County Food Bank Network* which meets monthly to collaborate on how to serve their clients better and advocate for healthier food choices; the *Community Kitchen* which meets twice a month to prepare dozens of meals that are distributed to community agencies and SIRCH groups to help individuals and families who are experiencing food insecurity or illness;
- and the *Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program(CPNP)* where pregnant and new moms learn about low cost meal preparation and are provided with a nutritious lunch. They also receive a \$10.00 food voucher weekly to purchase milk, fresh fruit and vegetables.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Steering Committee is cognizant of the efforts these groups and supports them in their work. It is based on their vision, the challenges they have identified, their recommendations and their commitment to address food security that the following recommendations for the food security component of the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton Poverty Reduction Strategy were made.

Conclusion

Our communities are working hard to address food security. There needs to be continued commitment to work together to develop innovative food security initiatives to address the food security needs of our community. At the same time, it is imperative the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton address income security, employment, affordable post-secondary education, affordable housing, affordable childcare and transportation as these are critical factors in addressing food security. Addressing both specific food security initiatives and the root causes of food insecurity increases the likelihood that more people in our community will be food secure.

Action Plan Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

Advocate to the federal and provincial governments to develop policies and programs that take a comprehensive approach to address poverty and food security including income security, employment, affordable housing, and transportation

Activity

Advocate to higher levels of government for programs and policies that address income security, employment, affordable housing, and transportation. The municipality will continue to support a wide range of municipal support services including subsidized child care, employment, income supports and RGI/affordable housing.

Process

- partner with local organizations and stakeholders of food security programs to identify gaps and issues that require change by provincial and federal governments
- advocate in partnership with organizations such as the OMA and OMSSA to the federal and provincial governments, for programs and policies that address income security, employment, housing, transportation and other issues related to poverty reduction
- advocate to the provincial government for enhanced funding as well as provide municipal funding for the Student Nutrition Programs for the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton
- develop a strategic communications plan to advocate for programs and policies to address poverty reduction as specified above
- develop a common message to be delivered at informal or unexpected occasions when meeting with officials
- contact ministry officials, MPP and MP to schedule meetings
- establish a community round table to coordinate advocacy work
- continue to provide municipal support services including affordable/subsidized child care, employment and income supports, and RGI/affordable housing so that families are more likely to have an enough income to meet their needs for enough nutritious food and pay for their other fixed expenses

Responsibility

- Agencies/organizations/groups currently involved in food security initiatives
- Municipalities—several departments
- HKPR District Health Unit
- Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition
- Haliburton County Food Net
- Harvest Haliburton
- School Boards
- OEYC
- United Way

Timelines

2014-2019

Resources Required

- Haliburton and CKL municipal staff expertise
- Haliburton County Council members and CKL Council members
- HKPR District Health Unit staff expertise
- School Boards and Ontario Early Years Centre staff expertise
- Poverty Reduction Round Table (to be determined and appointed)

Measurable Indicators

- # of gaps and issues identified
- # of advocacy efforts in partnership with other groups
- enhanced funding for school nutrition programs obtained
- communications plan and common messaging developed
- # of meetings held with political leaders and officials
- councils are advised by staff of updates on provincial and federal poverty reduction strategies and monies available on a quarterly basis
- a poverty reduction round table is established with members of both communities which includes a councillor from each municipal boundary

Recommendation 2:

Incorporate policies related to food systems, healthy eating, community design and the built environment into the official plans.

Activity

Increase the availability and access to healthy affordable food to all residents in the municipalities through planning policies

Process

- develop mixed-use zoning plans and policies in new residential developments over a certain size to ensure access to food retail facilities are in close proximity to the housing developments
- create plans and policies to support new housing developments in areas where there are existing medium to larger food retailers
- develop plans and policies to support the development of more affordable housing stock in areas in close proximity to grocery stores
- ensure there are policies and by-laws that allow for retailers of healthy foods in urban and rural areas such as grocery stores, farmers markets and food hubs
- develop and enhance policies related to active and public transportation so that retailers of healthy food such as grocery stores and farmers' markets are located where possible within walking/cycling proximity and/or public transportation systems
- ensure the official plans includes sustainable food systems which includes but is not limited to community gardens, food hubs, agriculture and food production
- include in the parks and recreation plans land designation for community gardens in the existing municipal parks
- include in the official plans land designation for both parkland and community gardens in new residential developments

Responsibility

- City of Kawartha Lakes and County of Haliburton councils and municipal departments
- *With the support of:*
- HKPR District Health Unit
- Other community partners

Timelines

2014 – 2019

Resources required

Expertise of council and municipal departments

Indicators

- # of plans and policies developed with respect to zoning and access to residential development
- # of municipal parks and municipal lands that have a community garden

- # of policies and by-laws that support a sustainable food system
- # of policies and plans that increase affordable housing stock, address employment and income supports

Recommendation 3:

Support food security initiatives including community gardens and community/collective kitchens and by waiving or assisting with the rental fees and insurance costs of municipally owned lands and facilities that may be used for food security initiatives by non-profit organizations.

Activity

Provide accessible and safe municipal lands for community garden initiatives, support community/collective kitchens that teach healthy cooking skills, budgeting and the benefits of healthy eating and develop and implement a plan to assist with rental fees and insurance costs

Process

- identify and provide a list of municipally owned lands including RGI/social housing units, municipal park lands and other lands owned by the municipality suitable for community gardens and have access to sufficient supply of safe water
- develop an inventory list of municipal facilities with certified kitchens that may be used for collective/community kitchens
- establish links between community gardens and community/collective kitchens so that food from the community gardens can be used at the community/collective kitchens
- identify communities and neighbourhoods wishing to create or operate community gardens and/or collective /community kitchen programs that are barrier-free and accessible (transportation)
- identify and obtain funding for community gardens and community/collective kitchens in partnership with community groups/agencies/organizations working on food security initiatives
- allocate funding and staffing support for community gardens on municipal lands to assist with capital costs including infrastructure, such as rototilling, fencing, water and composting units
- support municipal housing staff working at RGI/social housing sites with an annual budget and the tools needed for a community garden and community/collective kitchens initiatives
- identify food security groups, agencies, organizations, businesses, local schools, institutions, private sector partners and other interested parties willing to support and manage community gardens and community/collective kitchens
- develop policies and by-laws in partnership with local food security groups as required for the regulation of community gardens and for the use of municipal sites for collective/community kitchen initiatives
- provide advice and support in partnership with community partners overseeing community garden and community/collective kitchen initiatives for an educational curriculum such as how to grow, harvest and preserve food, cooking skills, safe food handling, label reading, menu planning, budgeting and nutritional education
- design and implement pilot community/collective kitchen programs, in partnership with community partners that incorporate job readiness skills such as safe food handling, cooking, menu planning, canning and food preparation

- enhance community/collective kitchen initiatives and programs in the County of Haliburton — which could include greenhouse projects and marketing of food products
- develop memorandums of understanding to use municipally owned lands and facilities that waive or assist with rental fees and insurance costs for non-profit organizations working on food security initiatives
- offer municipal lands and municipal certified kitchens to the above who will engage volunteers and experts to develop and support community gardens and community/collective kitchen initiatives
- put in place four, one-year test sites for community gardens and community/collective kitchen initiatives
- re-evaluate and expand the number of locations and facilities as appropriate
- encourage those who participate in community gardens to donate any extra produce to community/collective kitchens/food banks or others in need
- create a feedback tool to track the number of community garden plots, the number of community/collective kitchens, the demand for more plots/gardens/ community collective kitchens, the number of individuals/families using the community gardens and community/collective kitchens
- engage media partners to assist with delivery of the educational messaging as a means to build on-going support

Responsibility

- Municipalities-several departments including *economic development* for guidance and advocacy to source partners, investment funds for food security projects; *social services*
- Housing staff to facilitate community gardens and collective/community kitchens projects on the RGI/social housing sites; *parks and recreation; municipal legal advisors* with respect to MOU's and insurance and *other departments* as appropriate
With the support of:
- Food security coalitions and networks
- Agencies including non-profit agencies/organizations/groups willing to facilitate community gardens and community/collective kitchens
- Environmental/Green Up groups
- Food Banks
- Fleming College
- Haliburton Highlands Community Garden Network
- United Way
- Sustainable Agriculture Co-op
- HKPR District Health Unit expertise in nutritional education, food safety, safe food handling and food facility inspections
- SIRCH
- Towards Balance Support Network
- Residents
- Private landowners – donation of lands
- Media

Timelines

2014-2018

Resources Required

- CKL and Haliburton municipal staff resources and expertise
- Funds from Provincial and Federal funding agencies such as the Job Creation program
- Fleming College- students and faculty expertise in regard to water filtration and collection systems and sustainable agriculture
- Community volunteers
- Appointed coordinators and stakeholders to establish opportunities to source a percentage of food grown in community gardens for good food boxes/food cupboard/collective kitchen programs/student nutrition programs
- In kind donations of time
- HKPR District Health Unit
- United Way and SIRCH staff time and expertise

Measurable Indicators

- # number of municipal lands identified as suitable for community gardens
- # of municipal facilities with certified kitchens
- # of sites that link joint municipal lands for the use of community gardens and community/collective kitchens
- # of additional community garden and community collective programs mapped on the C-Links and CKL Social Asset Map
- # of communities wishing to create/operate community gardens and community/collective kitchens
- amount of funding secured
- # of memorandums in place for multi-year commitments to provide in-kind donations of fencing and water by municipalities and private sector partners
- # food security groups or community stakeholders identified and willing to lead projects
- # and type of current policies and by-laws reviewed or developed
- type of advice and amount of support given to develop an educational curriculum
- 2 new community/collective kitchen programs that include job readiness skills i.e. Safe Food Handling, Cooking and Menu Planning, Canning and Food Preparation are designed and implemented
- # of enhancements to community/collective kitchen initiatives and programs in the County of Haliburton
- # of municipal lands and facilities offered to community organizations/partners/agencies working on food security initiatives
- # of plots, demand for more plots, demand for more community gardens
- # of individuals and families that participate
- # of community gardens that chose to donate part of the yield to local community/collective kitchens, food banks, Good Food box programs or to others in need
- # of public awareness campaigns

Recommendation 4:

Support innovative community food security initiatives and programs

Activity

Investigate opportunities to start various new and innovative food security initiatives

Process

- research successful food security related programs from other communities such as farm gates, farmer's market bucks
- explore and support opportunities for: "consumer-run -businesses, social enterprise, "hub" models and skills development incubator initiatives. (There are several models that vary in approaches i.e. Stop Community Food Centre¹⁹ or Trinity Square Café²⁰)
- research and attain funding for new programs
- identify the amount of investment funding for enhancements of current programs and development fund for new initiatives and programs
- assist food security groups with business plan development, letters of support, and marketing opportunities for food security related projects
- work collaboratively and establish partnerships to develop and implement food security initiatives

Responsibility

- KL Food Coalition
- Haliburton County FoodNet
- Municipal Economic Development department staff
- Members of the agricultural community
- Harvest Haliburton
- Abbey Gardens
- HKPR District Health Unit
- Lead non-profit partners and local stakeholders

Timelines

2014- 2018

Resources Required

- Regional experts in agriculture and business
- Municipal staff leads as identified internally
- HKPR District Health Unit staff expertise
- United Way staff and funding expertise
- Other interested community partners

¹⁹In Every Community a Place for Food The Role of the Community Food Centre in Building a Local, Sustainable, and Just Food System Metcalf Food Solutions The Stop Community Food Centre Kathryn Scharf, Charles Levkoe& Nick Saul June 2010

²⁰<http://trinitysquarecafe.webs.com/mission.htm>

Measurable Indicators

- # of doable projects identified
- # of funding opportunities identified and attained
- # of food security groups supported with business plan development, letters of support, and marketing opportunities for pilot food security related projects
- # of partnerships
- # of projects piloted

Recommendation 5:

Support the Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition in the implementation of the Kawartha Lakes Food Charter and endorse and support the implementation of the Kawartha Lakes Food Action Plan

Activity

Implement the KL Food Charter and Food Action Plan

Process

- establish quarterly meetings with municipal leaders to identify key policies or actions that are mutually required to benefit and improve access to affordable and nutritious food
- co-ordinate policies and actions with the *Our Kawartha Lakes Integrated Community Sustainability Plan*
- continue to have municipal staff and agricultural partners assigned to food action groups
- identify goals annually to address food security
- develop policies and regulations to help achieve for food security in CKL
- develop a tool to assess effectiveness and benefits of food security related programs

Responsibilities

- Agricultural stakeholders and partners, including KL Food Coalition
- Municipal Council and staff from several departments (as identified)
- Non-profit organization and other community partners
- HKPR District Health Unit

Timelines

2014-2017

Resources Required

- Local economic development department staff
- Staff expertise and time from HKPR and Social Services
- Local agricultural experts
- Expertise from Fleming College Sustainable Agriculture staff
- Partners and stakeholders in the KL Poverty Coalition
- Non-profit organizations

Measurable Indicators

- Quarterly Reports for municipalities, stakeholders and partners
- # of food security policies and by-laws developed
- # of food security related initiatives implemented as identified in the KL Food Action Plan

Recommendation 6:

Develop a food charter and food action plan for the County of Haliburton

Activity

Develop, in partnership with the community, a food charter and food action plan for the County of Haliburton.

Process

- initiate interest in the community for a food charter by raising awareness and education related to food charters and food action plans
- identify stakeholders and partners working on all parts of the food system
- hold a visioning day
- develop a baseline understanding of food and agriculture
- develop a vision statement
- prioritize issues, opportunities and actions
- develop a food charter steering committee which includes representation from the county
- develop a draft food charter
- seek input from the draft
- complete final draft
- endorse the food charter by the county council
- develop a food action plan

Responsibility

- Municipal staff (as identified through process) and Haliburton County councillor
- HKPR District Health Unit
- Community members and community groups
- Health Professionals
- Agricultural community – organizations and producers
- Processors
- Distributors
- Businesses
- Food security groups such as Haliburton County FoodNet, Food Banks, Harvest Haliburton, SIRCH etc.
- School Nutrition Coordinators
- U-Links

Timelines

2014-2018

Resources Required

- Staff resources from Haliburton County
- Staff resources HKPR Health Unit
- Costs associated with visioning day and meetings including in-kind funding
- Advertising/media public awareness associated costs

- Publication costs of final charter

Measurable Indicators

- # of public awareness campaigns
- # who attend visioning day
- vision developed
- # of issues, priorities and actions identified
- # of community partners
- Steering committee developed
- # and types of feedback given on the draft food charter
- final food charter developed
- quarterly reports on progress of the food charter to council
- development of a food action plan

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