



# Poverty Reduction Strategy for the City of Kawartha Lakes and County of Haliburton: Food Security Action Plan

August 2014



*County of Haliburton*

The June 30, 2012 Poverty Reduction Strategy report for the City and County presented background information and a description of local needs. Based on this report and recognizing the cost of poverty is serious and rising, City and County Councils requested the development of a Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy was developed by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Steering Committee. All action plans are based on findings from extensive community consultations, local research and an assessment of literature on best practices for reducing poverty.

## Food Security Action Plan

### Why is food security important to our community and all of its residents?

In Kawartha Lakes, 1600–2100 people use food banks on a monthly, 40% of them children.

In the County of Haliburton, 271 households access food banks on a monthly basis, 30% children.

Sources: Kawartha Lakes Food Source and HKPR Health Unit

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."<sup>1</sup> 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.

The root cause of individuals and families not having enough food to eat is directly linked to income insecurity<sup>2</sup>. 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.

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

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/income\\_food\\_sec-sec\\_alim-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/income_food_sec-sec_alim-eng.php)

Food insecurity is higher in households with low to middle incomes including those who rely on government assistance such as Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program, Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement.<sup>3</sup> A staggering 34% of Canadians 65 and over who live at home are at nutritional risk.<sup>4</sup> 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.

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 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.

The responsibility for most of the recommendations lies with the City and County as they will determine the extent of action and in most cases co-ordinate action. The specific departments or individuals that may participate will need to be identified through appropriate processes. The shared responsibility of individuals, community agencies and other levels of government in poverty reduction was a common theme through the development of the initial strategy report and this Action Plan and their contributions and support for all initiatives will be equally vital to the success of this plan.

These recommendations are presented to the Councils of the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton as part of the overall Poverty Reduction Strategy.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/income\\_food\\_sec-sec\\_alim-eng.php#concl](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/income_food_sec-sec_alim-eng.php#concl)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/82-003-x2013003-eng.htm>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Food Security Action Plan Recommendations</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Primary role or responsibility?</b></p>			
	Municipal	Provincial	Federal	Community
<p>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.</p>	●	●	●	●
<p>2. Incorporate policies related to food systems, healthy eating, community design and the built environment into municipal official plans.</p>	●			
<p>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.</p>	●			●
<p>4. Support innovative community food security initiatives and programs.</p>	●	●	●	●
<p>5. Support the Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition in the implementation of the KL Food Charter and endorse and support the implementation of the Kawartha Lakes Food Action Plan.</p>	●			
<p>6. Develop a food charter and food action plan for the County of Haliburton.</p>	●			●