

Peterborough in context: Phase One

**Documenting How Local Activities Align With the AMO Best Practices
in Local Food Guide for Municipalities**

**Prepared by Farms at Work & Peterborough Social Planning Council for the
Future of Food & Farming Working Group of Sustainable Peterborough**

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County City Health Unit

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Peterborough in context: Phase One

Documenting How Local Activities Align With the AMO Best Practices in Local Food Guide for Municipalities

Executive Summary

In July, 2013, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Ontario Municipal Knowledge Network (OMKN) released a Guide on best practices for municipal local food initiatives entitled **Best Practices in Local Food: A Guide for Municipalities**.

This present Report provides context from the perspective of Peterborough County on how those municipal best management practices are already being acted on by many local organizations and projects. It has been prepared by Farms at Work in partnership with the Peterborough Social Planning Council (PSPC), for the Sustainable Peterborough Future of Food & Farming Working Group. The intent of this local analysis is to provide a document that will:

- provide local municipalities with an overview of local food initiatives already underway across the County that address the best management practices in the AMO Guide.
- support the City and County in implementing the best practices and responding to the recently passed Local Food Act,
- provide further context and guidance for the work of Sustainable Peterborough's Future of Food & Farming Working Group and its members,
- help the many organizations, groups and projects forming part of our local food system to see how their work fits together within the framework of best practices,
- assist our community to plan for food security for everyone, and recognize the economic importance of a localized food system.

It is clear from this analysis that much work is being done in our community that supports best management practices. This work is supported through a multitude of programs, and funding streams. Many non-profit projects and volunteers are involved, along with the Peterborough County-City Health Unit.

This Report is intended as Phase One in a process of integrating a multi-faceted food system lens into decision-making in our community. The Report has documented many of the current projects and accomplishments of a wide range of organizations and volunteers.

However, if the goal established in the Sustainable Peterborough Plan of “feeding ourselves sustainably with local, healthy foods” is to be achieved over the next 20-25 years, there is much work to be done. Collaboration and the involvement of all levels of government, as well as non-profit, business and consumer stakeholders will be required over an extended period.

It is hoped that this Report, in the context of the passage of the Local Food Act in fall 2013, as well as the AMO Guidelines discussed here, will provide food for thought in planning further steps.

Introduction

In July, 2013, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Ontario Municipal Knowledge Network (OMKN) released a Guide on best practices for municipal local food initiatives entitled **Best Practices in Local Food: A Guide for Municipalities**.

This present Report provides context from the perspective of Peterborough County on how those best management practices are already being acted on by many local organizations and projects. It has been prepared by Farms at Work in partnership with the Peterborough Social Planning Council (PSPC), for the Sustainable Peterborough's Future of Food & Farming Working Group. The intent of this local analysis is to provide a document that will:

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- help the many organizations, groups and projects forming part of our local food system to see how their work fits together within the framework of best practices,
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Background:

In July, 2013, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Ontario Municipal Knowledge Network (OMKN) released a Guide on best practices for municipal local food initiatives entitled **Best Practices in Local Food: A Guide for Municipalities** (<https://www.amo.on.ca/AMO-Content/Policy-Updates/2013/AMO-and-OMKN-Receive-Report-on-Best-Practices-in-L.aspx>). AMO, OMKN and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF) developed the Guide with advisory support from the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) and Sustain Ontario. Research included 24 stakeholder consultations with 43 representatives from leading municipalities, regions and local food groups across Ontario, Canada and the United States.

From the Executive Summary:

“With the introduction of Bill 36, *Local Food Act, 2013*, maintaining and growing Ontario’s local and regional food systems has become a key government priority that will require municipal support and cooperation. To help promote local food systems and inform the development of local food goals and targets, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) explored best practices for local food initiatives in the context of the province’s local food priorities and proposed legislation.

The objective of this report is to provide municipal decision makers with guidance on how to align municipal activities with the expectations outlined in Bill 36 and build on local food innovations and experiences in Ontario and other jurisdictions. “

The AMO Guide also lays out the many benefits of a thriving local food industry. These benefits, relevant across Ontario, are excerpted in Appendix A to this Peterborough Report.

After the Guide was published, the Local Food Act, 2013 was passed on November 5, 2013, with some amendments. A final version of the Act, as passed, is attached as Appendix B.

Key considerations

The Guide identified four key factors municipalities should take into account to ensure the success of their local food initiatives:

1. Policies and programs must be embedded in the municipality to create a culture that supports and values local food.
2. When considering new policies or programs, diverse stakeholders must be actively engaged to set a consistent direction and build buy-in across the community.
3. Municipalities must assess their current situation and identify the mix of local food practices that will work best for them. Municipalities facing resource

constraints must prioritize high-impact initiatives and explore cost-effective means of implementation (e.g., partnerships).

4. It is critical for municipalities to measure and monitor the outcomes of their local food initiatives to ensure these initiatives are truly impacting the local food industry in a positive way.

Getting started

To ensure local food initiatives are successful, the Guide suggests municipalities first:

- understand the activities available to municipal council,
- identify challenges in the local food industry,
- recognize the municipality's unique situation, and
- locate a municipal champion to spearhead local food initiatives.

The Guide further suggests that municipalities conduct structured reviews of their food value chain management approaches by examining overarching local food strategies and goals and established policies, programs and partnership models.

According to the AMO Guide, local food industry challenges include outdated planning policies and zoning by-laws, high cost of labour, lack of processing facilities, potential higher cost of local food, and lack of awareness among consumers. Municipalities also face their own challenges, such as aligning policies with federal and provincial laws, coordinating programs across various departments and accessing funding for local food initiatives. The Guide recognizes barriers throughout the review of best management practices, and highlights “lack of scale” as a barrier that permeates all facets of the local food system in today's environment.

Objectives of this Peterborough in Context Report

The purpose of this analysis is to provide the local municipalities with an overview of local food initiatives already underway across the County that address the best management practices in the AMO Guide. This is a first step in supporting our local municipalities to consider the implications of the Local Food Act and the government's Local Food Strategy for Peterborough. Specifically this report will:

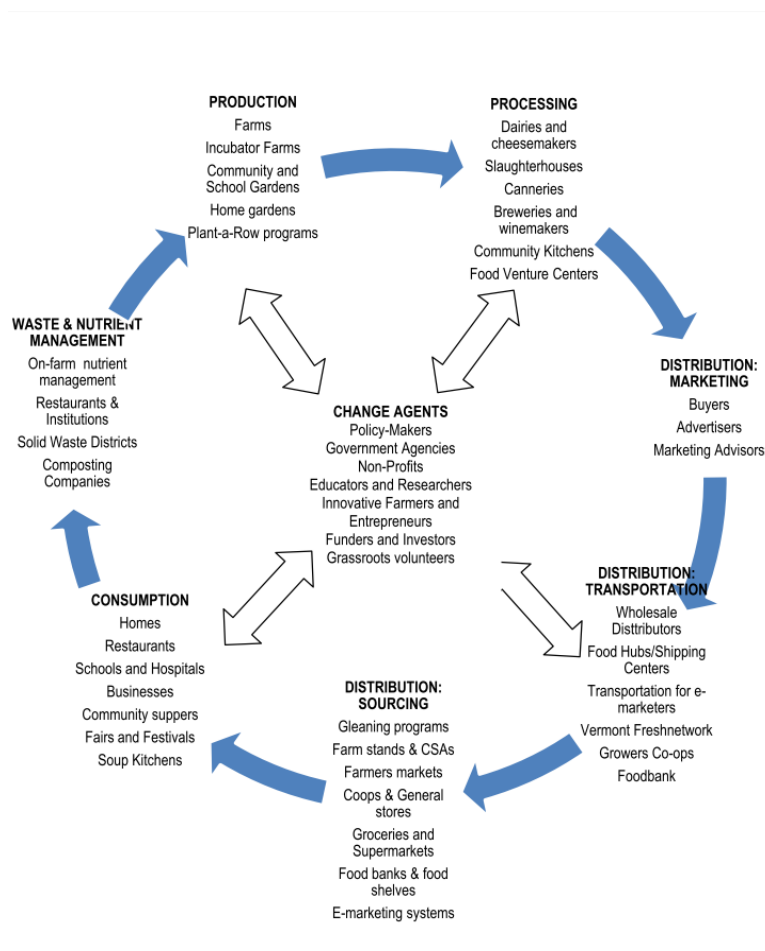
- provide local municipalities with an overview of local food initiatives already underway across the County and City that address the best management practices in the AMO Guide.
- support the City and County in implementing the best practices and responding to the recently passed Local Food Act,
- provide further context and guidance for the work of Sustainable Peterborough's Local Food & Farming Working Group and its members

- help the many organizations, groups and projects forming part of our local food system to see how their work fits together within the framework of best practices,
- assist our community to plan for food security for everyone, and recognize the economic importance of a localized food system.

Best Practices

The Guide identified a series of best practices or tools available to municipalities, beginning with Strategy and Governance. The remaining best practices were organized along the six links in the food value chain. This analysis mirrors the visual representation used locally in our first Local Food Summit, held October 2012 at Market Hall (below).

The complete food system



Source: Proceedings from “The Future of Food & Farming Summit”, October 11 2012, Peterborough Market Hall

This review will look at each of the seven areas identified by the AMO Report. As we work through the proposed best practices, it is important to remember that the Guide stressed the need to customize them, saying “**municipalities must choose the best mix of local food initiatives based on their unique needs and circumstances**. Key situational factors to consider are: size and type of municipality, level of municipal resources, agriculture and processing base, proximity to a large centre, and the activeness of the local food sector” p.3 Executive Summary.

Strategy and Governance

“Best practices in strategy and governance include establishing a food policy council and developing a food charter. Food policy councils bring diverse members together to discuss food issues, create and support local food initiatives, encourage collaboration, and review and influence policies. Food charters identify key values and priorities for developing a sustainable food system and combine vision statements, principles and goals for a coordinated municipal food strategy.” p.2 Executive Summary

The advantages of creation of a food policy council and food charter are, according to the report, the opportunity to bring together diverse groups involved in the food chain, including the municipality, to shape and support the local food system, recognize its economic importance and promote infrastructure to support it.

The Guide outlines a series of steps for creation of a council which include recruitment of members from diverse backgrounds, ideally representing the entire food system and building on the goal to adopt a holistic approach to improving the food system.

Locally:

In Peterborough County and City there is presently no food policy council or charter. However, we have a community willingness to undertake this work. There is a strong base of commitment from a variety of stakeholders working towards change.

In October, 2012, PSPC & Farms at Work hosted the first “Future of Food & Farming Summit”. The goal of the session was to increase awareness of the links between food, health, community economic development, food security and farming within the context of planning for the future of Peterborough County. Twenty-seven community leaders attended, from non-profit and government interests, to farmers and others throughout the value chain of local food system. Another dozen invitees were unable to participate but asked to be kept on the list of interested parties and to receive the proceedings.

The full proceedings from the Summit include:

- documentation of local issues facing the future of food and farming in our County

- the creation of a Working Group of local representatives on food, farming and community development

The Future of Food & Farming Working Group has since been adopted by Sustainable Peterborough (SP) to further SP's strategic directions on food and agriculture. The full membership, as well as proceedings and documents produced by the Working Group and its members can be found on the Sustainable Peterborough website at <http://sustainablepeterborough.ca/take-action/accomplishments/ag-local-food/>.

The Agriculture and Local Food Theme of Sustainable Peterborough, based on wide community consultation, sets out the following goals and strategies, which currently drive the workplan of the Working Group:

Where Do We Want to Be in 25 Years?

Our Goal: We will feed ourselves sustainably with local, healthy foods.

How Are We Going to Get There?

By following our Strategic Directions:

- **Maintain adequate farmland availability to support our sustainable agricultural needs.**
- **Facilitate the production, storage, processing, distribution, and marketing of local, healthy food.**
- **Encourage farmers to practice good environmental stewardship.**

The Working Group, through its diverse membership, has many strengths:

- The City and County planners who are members of the Working Group, along with Farms at Work and supported by the PSPC have specific

knowledge around farmland protection and have already undertaken ground-breaking research on this topic through the Land Use Task Force.

- The Peterborough Community Food Network (PCFN) was created as a workgroup of the Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network in 2007. Chaired by the PCCHU, it brings together a diverse group of community members with an interest in safe, affordable and healthy food in Peterborough City and County. (see <http://www.foodinpeterborough.ca/>)
- The planning and research expertise of the Peterborough Social Planning Council is moving us forward in many areas including understanding the local food challenges perceived by the public (through a survey conducted in 2012), looking for practical solutions to ensuring distribution channels are available and challenges facing our rural community infrastructure. (see <http://www.pspc.on.ca/>)
- Farms at Work's mission to keep farmland active and healthy drives its work in promoting new local markets for local farmers (eg through its Find Local Food online system), as well as providing business and practical training for new farmers. (see farmsatwork.ca)
- Farms at Work is also active in on-farm stewardship, as a member and co-ordinator of the Kawartha Farm Stewardship Collaborative, along with community partners such as our Conservation Authorities, Stewardship Council, Soil and Crop Improvement Association and others. (see kawarthafarmstewardship.org)

Peterborough Economic Development coordinates the Kawartha Choice Farm Fresh brand initiative, running since 2003, and participated in the Local Food Business Retention and Expansion Study, 2011-12. (see www.kawarthachoice.com)

- The vision of Transition Town Peterborough is to build community resilience in the face of three converging predicaments of climate change, resource depletion and global economic contraction. TTP's mission is to focus on economic localization to build community resilience. TTP has run the highly successful Purple Onion Festival for three years, celebrating local food in the County. (see transitiontownpeterborough.ca)
- The YWCA is leading the Nourish Peterborough project which seeks to engage, empower and support communities throughout Peterborough County and City who share a common desire to build health, equity and

community through food. Inspired by new community food centres such as The Stop in Toronto, Nourish partners are exploring the idea of creating places for food in the City and throughout the County. (see nourishproject.ca and nourishpeterborough.ca)

- Various partnership projects are underway among the members of the Working Group, from research to facilitating the strengthening of local food awareness in our schools.
- The Working Group is fortunate to have input from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- Sustainable Peterborough is an active participant and has embraced our Working Group to support its work.
- We currently have commitment from Farms at Work and the Peterborough Social Planning Council to facilitate the tasks of the Working Group.
- The Working Group is building on the extensive consultation conducted through Sustainable Peterborough consultations, our two recent local food Summits as well as previous efforts of many in our community over a period of more than twenty years.
- the Proceedings of the two summits, “The Future of Food & Farming Summit” and “The Future of Food & Farming: Next Steps” document the issues for a strong community system of food and farming that provide some direction for future change in relation to these AMO guidelines. (See Appendix 3)

Best Practice: Producing

Best practices in producing include:

- urban agriculture,
- community gardens and
- planning policies and zoning by-laws.

Urban agriculture refers to the production and harvesting of fruits and vegetables, raising of animals or cultivation of fish for local consumption or sale within and around cities. **Community gardens** are pieces of land gardened by community members to grow fresh local produce for direct consumption, and may also play a part in urban agriculture. Municipalities can promote

agricultural land protection and local food production using the Official Plan for general land use planning goals and zoning by-laws for prescriptive regulations (p.18 of the Guide).

Locally

Consultations held by the City of Peterborough for its Official Plan Review (Plan It) have reflected the growing interest by the public for supporting urban agriculture and increasing access to community gardens.

A significant submission entitled “Plant It” was prepared by the Community Food Network in 2011. Public and stakeholder comments received during Phase 1 of the City OP Review have been categorized into 5 themes, and comments related to food are integral to the first three, namely: 1) Complete Healthy Communities; 2) Environmental Sustainability; and 3) Economic Strength. Planning for Access to Local Food is listed as a Major Policy Direction under Environmental Sustainability.

The draft Policy Directions Report, 2012 explains this direction as follows:

“Through the Plan It Peterborough process it grew evident that there is a growing interest and movement in the community to grow and purchase and increase access to local food. As a result, the need to provide further support for urban agriculture and a local, sustainable food system was identified. Stakeholders would like residents to be able to feed themselves sustainably with local, healthy foods.” p.34

<http://www.peterborough.ca/Assets/City+Assets/Planning/Documents/OP+Review+Draft+Policy+Directions+Report.pdf>

Some highlights of the public/stakeholder comments include: identifying and protecting food growing land; promotion of urban agriculture in both public and private space, edible landscaping (e.g. fruit trees in parks); promotion of local food vending in all neighbourhoods; promotion of farmers markets; support for community kitchens, food processing facilities, a community food “hub”; and strengthened connections with regional agricultural producers.

The City’s Urban Forest Strategy also supports urban agriculture best practices.

Community Gardens:

Established in 2008, the **Peterborough Community Garden Network (PCGN)** brings together four community agencies (YWCA, GreenUP, PCCHU, and Fleming College). The City of Peterborough Community Garden Policy was enacted in 2010 after consultation with community gardeners, local food security organizations and members of the PCGN.

The Network is comprised of over 400 growers, organizations, teachers, garden coordinators & community members. Its mandate is to grow community gardens in our region and seed vibrant

connections between gardens, local growers and community food security organizations. The PCGN aims to support poverty reduction, food security and environmental integrity, inclusion and community development by working with communities to *Cultivate Resilience & Vibrant Communities, One Garden at a Time*.

In response to a growing need for community garden space, the PCGN has helped facilitate the expansion of 3, and the creation of 12 new community gardens. This has resulted in the creation of over 100 new community garden plots. Currently, there are 26 community gardens in the City of Peterborough, and 7 additional ones in the County.

The gardens are located on federal lands, municipal property, the front yards of local organizations, Church property, and school yards.

The **Nourish Project** held roundtable conversations throughout the County in the spring of 2013. They brought together individuals and groups involved in the full spectrum of food-related endeavours, from farm to table, in all 8 townships. Participants were asked to describe what they would like to see happening in the next five years around food in their Township. Community gardens were mentioned in all the conversations, but Douro Dummer, Havelock, North Kawartha, Asphodel Norwood, Selwyn and Trent Lakes identified community gardens as one of their three main goals. Havelock has since moved forward and launched a community garden on private land in the spring of 2014.

Municipal planning policies and zoning by-laws:

The best practices outlined in the AMO Guide relate to topics such as protection of farmland, flexible zoning for value-added activities, use of smaller parcels of land for agriculture and access to land for new farmers.

As noted above, the City of Peterborough is currently engaged in an Official Plan review and has been considering the role of food production/urban agriculture in its future. The County Official Plan review may be launched in 2014.

The Land Use Task Force of the local Future of Food & Farming Working Group of Sustainable Peterborough has been working over the last year to produce a backgrounder on farmland in the County. This document illustrates the history of farmland use in the County since 1971, and makes projections over the next couple of decades. It also look at how much land we need to feed ourselves in the County, and reviews the percentage of the County's working farmland presently protected through official plans as "Agriculture".

The Working Group plans to use the results of this research in preparing input into the County OP Review as well township official plans.

Best Practice: Processing/Preparing

Best practices in processing/preparing include public sector support for processing and incubator kitchens. Public sector support involves promoting value-retention (eg pre-cooling, washing and waxing, sorting, packing, slicing, drying, storage) and value-add facilities, such as further processing facilities. Incubator kitchens support start-up companies in the food sector by providing technical assistance in food processing and training in general business management skills (p29 of the Guide).

Locally:

Peterborough County boasts three red meat and one poultry abattoir at present. A new red meat processor is planning to start up over the next couple of years. A second, well-established poultry processor is located outside Omemee. If interest in locally produced and processed meats increases, there may be opportunities for further expansion of local capacity.

Primary processing for grains (mills) in the immediate area is very limited.

Northumberland County plans to have a municipally-owned small batch processing facility running by fall 2014, including packaging, cold storage and test facilities.

Nourish Peterborough is exploring how to create places for food in urban spaces throughout the County. It has plans to create a commercial kitchen space in the City, which could support local food processing businesses in their start-up phase.

Best Practice: Distributing

Best practices in distributing include public sector-led procurement policies and food hubs. Public sector-led procurement policies are municipal policies that support the purchase of locally-produced food by governmental agencies. Food hubs are organizations that manage the aggregation, distribution and marketing of source-identified food products from local and regional producers and processors. (p 25 of the Guide)

Locally:

Distribution of local food in the County is primarily accomplished directly from farm to consumer through farmgate and farmers' market sales. Sales to restaurants usually require delivery by the farmer.

However, as wholesale demand increases, there may be an opportunity for one or more intermediaries to provide physical distribution services. The very tight margins in food

distribution suggest that business planning will be key and that existing distributors may be best positioned to take this on. Several small-scale food distribution attempts have failed in the past in the County.

The challenges and potential demand from local grocery stores for locally-grown food has been the subject of a study in early 2014. PSPC, in partnership with Farms at Work and Transition Town Peterborough, have undertaken a survey of local food stores with help from students through the Trent Centre for Community-Based Education regarding barriers to and policies for buying local products.

School food programs – from breakfast programs to University meal plans – are looking for avenues to increase local food procurement. Farms at Work and the Ontario Campus Food Systems Project are working together to determine barriers and opportunities for increased local food at Trent University. PCCHU, the YWCA and Farms at Work have a joint project working with school breakfast programs in the County.

The recently passed Ontario Local Food Act will result in local food procurement targets being set after consultations with municipalities. A starting place for Peterborough would be an analysis of the scope and impact of municipal procurement, listed as a best practice in the Guide. Compared to larger centers, municipal procurement may be quite limited.

Farms at Work has also designed a “Find Local Food” feature for its regional website (farmsatwork.ca). The feature will be launched in February 2014, and will enable a wholesale purchaser (e.g. restaurant, school, distributor) to prepare a Request for Proposal online within a matter of minutes. The Request will be immediately sent to producers throughout the region who sign up for the free service, and will also be posted publicly on the website. This “virtual hub” approach, connecting wholesale buyers to farms in real time, will begin to build an open market environment. Information will automatically be created about demand and supply, opportunities for new entrants, diversification and expansion. Funding for continuation of this project is being sought.

Best Practice: Retailing

Best practices in retailing include farmers’ markets and mobile vendors. Farmers’ markets provide farmers with a direct market outlet for their fresh and value added products and link these individuals with community members. Mobile vendors refer to trucks that bring local food into underserved communities and include mobile farmers’ markets, mobile grocery stores and produce carts. (p. 28 of the Guide)

Locally:

Farmers markets

In 1889 Town Council approved plans for the construction of a new Market Hall. The new building, managed by the City, would replace the much smaller market on Water Street that had been operating since construction of Peterborough's first town hall in 1851.

The Peterborough Farmers' Market continues, 162 years later, at the Memorial Centre. But today, the County boasts at least 7 smaller farmers' markets, most of which have started in the last 5 years. Residents continue to call for increased access to local farm produce, and markets are an attraction for seasonal tourists and cottagers. The main challenge is finding enough producers to fill the market stalls, as most small producers do not have staff dedicated separately to production and marketing.

Also, the number of fruit and vegetable producers in the area is still quite small. It will take time for existing businesses to diversify and new entrants to fill the niche of producing for farmer's markets. Farms at Work offers diverse training and business support for new farmers, and works closely with local post-secondary programs that in the last 3 years have begun to offer programming for new entrants.

Best Practice: Consumption

Best practices in consumption include marketing, public awareness and tourism. Marketing involves efforts to raise the profile of local food, including creating a municipal or regional brand. Public awareness focuses on increasing consumer awareness of the benefits of local food, as well as where and when to get it. If the municipality has a rich local food base, culinary tourism may be an option to increase the consumer base beyond municipal borders (see page 31 of the Guide).

Locally

"Kawartha's Own Locally Grown" was a brand launched in the late 1980's. Eventually, Kawartha Choice came on the scene in 2002 after the BSE crisis hit the beef industry, and producers were looking for alternative markets. After a flurry of activity in the early years, Kawartha Choice amalgamated with Kawartha Farm Fresh in the City of Kawartha Lakes to become Kawartha Choice Farm Fresh. For a fee, producers are listed on a map, and online, in order to reach consumers with product from the farm gate. Kawartha Choice Farm Fresh is currently under review in Peterborough County.

The Peterborough Social Planning Council (PSPC) designed and circulated a survey on attitudes towards buying local food in late 2012. The main goal was to gauge the public's purchasing

habits and attitudes toward local foods in order to advance policy development efforts in this area.

Respondents were asked about:

- their purchasing habits, perceptions and attitudes towards local foods;
- how they define local foods (in terms of distance travelled and region of production);
- how they see their role in the local food economy (consumer, producer, distributor, etc.);
- their access to and the availability of local foods from different food retailers.

The results were published in 2013 under the name **“Local Food & What We Think About Buying Local: the Future of Food & Farming”** (for the complete report see www.pspc.on.ca)

There were 538 responses to the survey. Here are some of the findings:

- Nearly all survey respondents (94%) had bought local food in the last six months. Farmers' markets were the most popular spot to buy it, followed by grocery stores. Farm gate sales and health food stores were considerably less popular.
- Nearly all survey respondents bought local vegetables. Fruit was also highly popular. Far fewer respondents bought local cheeses, meats, and maple syrup or honey.
- The top five definitions of local food among respondents were, in descending order: grown in my region, grown within 100 km, grown in Ontario, grown in my county, and grown on a family farm.
- For most respondents, the distance necessary to travel to buy local food was not prohibitive. Nor was the time it takes to find local food when shopping. Respondents were split about whether or not the cost of local food is comparable to what they would otherwise buy. More people disagreed than agreed that it is difficult to know if food is local or not. Most respondents find it easy to get locally produced foods in summer, but less so in winter.
- About one-third felt to some degree that they have little control over whether or not they buy local food.
- Seven-tenths of survey respondents strongly agreed that the government should promote buying locally grown food.
- Slightly fewer, but still far more than half, strongly agreed that the government should promote the institutional purchasing of locally grown food.
- Just over half of all survey respondents strongly agreed that they would order more locally produced foods in restaurants if they were clearly marked on menus.

A Community Connector has recently been hired in Peterborough by the Ontario Culinary Tourism Association to support restaurant accreditation. The new Feast ON program certifies restaurants carrying a minimum percentage of food produced in Ontario, but will also help to support local food producers within our region.

Best practices also include education. The need for education was highlighted by participants at the October 2012 Food Summit. Partners in the Community Food Network, such as the Peterborough County-City Health Unit, are committed to the development of food literacy and food skills. Programs such as collective kitchens and Come Cook With Us focus on healthy food preparation and use of local foods.

The Nourish Project ran a successful pilot at Taste of Nourish programming. Participants learned to cook local foods in season from the Peterborough Downtown Farmers Market and then received Farmers Market Vouchers at the end of classes that allowed them to purchase local food at the Market afterwards.

Recently, Food for Kids has partnered with the YWCA and Farms at Work to ensure that more local food is used in school breakfast programs throughout the County and City, and that students are exposed to local farmers and education about where food comes from.

Best Practice: Waste Management

Best practices in waste management include composting and gleaning. Composting encourages the breakdown of plant wastes to be reused as natural soil amendments, which improves soil conditions for subsequent crops and creates a sustainable local food chain. Gleaning is the practice of collecting and donating leftover crops from farmers' fields, usually to provide low-income individuals with access to locally-grown food (see page 32 of the Guide).

Locally:

The **Peterborough Gleaning Program** is local grassroots group of volunteers connecting gleaners to farmers and growers. It funds and organizes bus trips to area farms to pick produce. For smaller growers they organize cars of gleaners. The growers donate some of their crops for gleaners to pick for free. There are about 20 communities in the city involved and many other individuals from the county. Each city community has a community contact who organizes their neighbours for a bus stop. There are volunteer gleaners and supervisors also. Most gleaners are on low income and pick for themselves, their relatives, neighbours and food banks/meal programs.

Customizing Best Practices

While the AMO report provided a long list of local food best practices, it was made clear that municipalities must choose the ideal mix of local food initiatives based on their unique needs and circumstances. Key situational factors to consider are: size and type of municipality, level of municipal resources, agriculture and processing base, proximity to a large centre, and the

activeness of the agri-food sector. This Guide provides a framework to help municipalities align their initiatives with these situational factors.

The AMO Guide recognizes that municipalities face resource constraints that could impact their ability to implement local food initiatives. Municipalities dealing with these constraints must choose between local food initiatives, focusing on the ones that will deliver the highest value and return on investment. High-value local food initiatives identified in this Guide include municipal/regional promotion, farmers' markets, planning policies and zoning by-laws, education and awareness, and community gardens. It is important to note that there are local food initiatives available and accessible to all municipalities, regardless of their size or level of resources.

Locally:

There are many aspects of the best practices outlined in the Guide that have not yet been explored by the community, and there may be best practices that are not included in the Guide at all, but that would be appropriate in Peterborough County and City.

Further work is required to look beyond the work already done, and plan a customized approach to best practices in Peterborough County and City.

Implementing and Measuring

Implementing local food initiatives can occur through a variety of methods. Municipalities may choose to implement initiatives entirely on their own, or they may explore partnership opportunities with non-governmental organizations, private sector businesses or other municipalities in the region to achieve economies of scale. The degree to which a municipality takes on a leadership or supporting role will depend on the municipality's expertise and level of resources. In the Guide, five different strategies for implementation are laid out (p.40).

Measuring the outcomes of local food initiatives is a critical step in building the local food sector and a key focus of Bill 36. The AMO Guide provides a comprehensive list of outcome-based metrics for municipalities to measure the effectiveness of their local food practices. Municipalities are encouraged to build their monitoring capabilities to ensure initiatives are impacting the local food industry in a positive way.

Locally:

Our community has an amazing base of activity upon which to build ongoing implementation of best practices, and many achievements are outlined above.

Some measurement/monitoring is already in place. The Future of Food & Farming Working Group of Sustainable Peterborough and the Agriculture Economic Impact and Development Study prepared in 2006 for the County, have documented the history of some metrics around agriculture in the County over the last 40 years.

Conclusion:

This Report is intended as Phase One in a process of integrating a multi-faceted food system lens into decision-making in our community. The Report has documented many of the current projects and accomplishments of a wide range of organizations and volunteers.

However, if the goal established in the Sustainable Peterborough Plan of “feeding ourselves sustainably with local, healthy foods” is to be achieved over the next 20-25 years, there is much work to be done. Collaboration and the involvement of all levels of government, as well as non-profit, business and consumer stakeholders will be required over an extended period.

It is hoped that this Report, in the context of the passage of the Local Food Act in fall 2013, as well as the AMO Guidelines discussed here, will provide food for thought in planning further steps.

Appendix A

Benefits and opportunities of a thriving local food industry

A thriving local food industry provides direct economic benefits as well as other key benefits related to the local and global environment, health benefits that result from eating fresher food, and social benefits that can result in linkages established and maintained among people in the community.

Economic benefits

The economic benefits of local food have been highlighted in studies across Canada and other jurisdictions. In 2010, the Ontario automotive sector had \$43.6 billion in revenue, while food processing, agriculture products and farming grossed close to \$50 billion.⁴ A major benefit of an active local food industry is the multiplier effect, which refers to the economic impact of initial spending that leads to increased consumer spending in a community.⁵ When a consumer purchases a local food item from a farmers' market, the farmer retains a greater share of the food dollar and is more likely to spend the money on local employees who in turn spend their earnings locally. In an economic impact study conducted by the Waterloo Region, it was estimated that for every job in the region's agriculture sector, four additional jobs are supported in the economy.⁶ Another study estimated that if every household in Ontario spent \$10 a week on local food, there would be an additional \$2.4B in the economy.⁷

Environmental benefits

Due to many factors such as agricultural practices and transportation, food systems are major contributors to burning fossil fuels, which releases greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. For instance, food items sold in Southern Ontario have travelled approximately 4,500km on average from the place they were grown or raised.⁸ The potential for global climate change increases as a result of this trend, but the effects can be mitigated when communities consume food from local sources. According to a Leopold Center model, if 10 percent of 28 fruits and vegetables were purchased from local sources, up to 17 times less carbon dioxide would be emitted than if the foods were purchased from global sources. This translates to saving up to 436 thousand gallons of fuel in one year.⁹

Health and Safety benefits

Compared to food items imported from the global food system, the local food system may offer food items that are fresher and more likely to retain more nutrients, as the travel distance to the retailers and consumers can be decreased. Local food is produced to Ontario standards, which may be more stringent than elsewhere; they may also involve less processing, which means fewer chemicals and additives for the food items. Also, an active local food system leads to increased access to local food across the community, which provides more opportunities for people, especially those in underserved communities, to include fresh local produce as a part of their diet.

Social benefits

Farmers' markets and community gardens act as gathering places for the members of the community to socialize and work as a mechanism to reinforce a sense of place and community identity. It is estimated that people have 10 times more conversations at farmers' markets than the average supermarket, which shows the increase in social capital formation.¹⁰ In addition, local farmers and processors can be more easily identified compared to the global system, which allows the opportunity for consumers to personally connect with the food providers and become engaged in their local food industry.

Appendix B

Bill 36, Local Food Act, 2013

Current Status: Royal Assent received Chapter Number: S.O. 2013 C.7

An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013 and to amend the Taxation Act, 2007 to provide for a tax credit to farmers for donating certain agricultural products that they have produced

Preamble

Ontario has robust and resilient local food systems: a highly productive agricultural land base, a favourable climate and water supply, efficient transportation and distribution systems, and knowledgeable, innovative farmers, food processors, distributors, retailers and restaurateurs. These resources help ensure that local food systems thrive throughout the province, allowing the people of Ontario to know where their food comes from and connect with those who produce it.

The variety of food produced, harvested and made in Ontario reflects the diversity of its people. This variety is something to be celebrated, cherished and supported. Strong local and regional food systems deliver economic benefits and build strong communities.

Maintaining and growing Ontario's local and regional food systems requires a shared vision and a collaborative approach that includes working with public sector organizations. The process of setting goals and targets to which the people of Ontario can aspire provides an opportunity to work with industry, the public sector and other partners to promote local food and to develop a shared understanding of what needs to be done to support local food in Ontario.

Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

Purposes

1. The purposes of this Act are as follows:

1. To foster successful and resilient local food economies and systems throughout Ontario.
2. To increase awareness of local food in Ontario, including the diversity of local food.
3. To encourage the development of new markets for local food.

Definitions

2. In this Act,

“agency of the Government of Ontario” means a public body designated in regulations made under the Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006; (“organisme du gouvernement de l’Ontario”)

“hospital” means,

- (a) a hospital within the meaning of the Public Hospitals Act,
- (b) a private hospital within the meaning of the Private Hospitals Act that received public funds in the previous fiscal year of the Government of Ontario, and
- (c) the University of Ottawa Heart Institute/Institut de cardiologie de l’Université d’Ottawa; (“hôpital”)

“local food” means,

- (a) food produced or harvested in Ontario, including forest or freshwater food, and
- (b) subject to any limitations in the regulations, food and beverages made in Ontario if they include ingredients produced or harvested in Ontario; (“aliments locaux”)

“Minister” means, unless the context requires otherwise, the Minister of Agriculture and Food or such other member of the Executive Council as may be assigned the administration of this Act under the Executive Council Act; (“ministre”)

“ministry” means, unless the context requires otherwise, the ministry of the Minister; (“ministère”)

“public sector organization” means,

- (a) a ministry of the Government of Ontario,
- (b) an agency of the Government of Ontario,
- (c) a municipality within the meaning of the Municipal Act, 2001,
- (d) a university in Ontario and every college of applied arts and technology and post-secondary institution in Ontario whether or not affiliated with a university, the enrolments of which are counted for purposes of calculating annual operating grants and entitlements,

(e) a board within the meaning of the Education Act,

(f) a hospital,

(g) a long-term care home within the meaning of the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007,

(h) a corporation described in clause (f) of the definition of “designated broader public sector organization” in subsection 1 (1) of the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010,

(i) any other organization prescribed by regulation. (“organisme du secteur public”)

Local Food Week

3. The week beginning on the first Monday in June in each year is proclaimed as Local Food Week.

Goals and targets

4. (1) The Minister shall, to further the purposes of the Act, establish goals or targets to aspire to in the following areas:

1. Improving food literacy in respect of local food.
2. Encouraging increased use of local food by public sector organizations.
3. Increasing access to local food.

Timing

(2) Each goal or target shall be established within one year after the day the relevant paragraph in subsection (1) comes into force.

Additional goals

(3) The Minister may, to further the purposes of the Act, establish additional goals or targets to aspire to in respect of local food.

Consultation

(4) Before establishing or amending a goal or target, the Minister shall consult organizations that, in the Minister’s opinion, have an interest in the goal or target.

Scope

(5) A goal or target may be general or particular in its application and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, may be established in respect of,

- (a) one or more types of local food specified in the goal or target;
- (b) one or more entities specified in the goal or target, including one or more public sector organizations; or
- (c) one or more specified geographic areas.

Identification of public sector organization

(6) If a goal or target applies to one or more public sector organizations, the goal or target shall specify the public sector organization or organizations to which it applies.

Publication of goals and targets

(7) The Minister shall publish each goal and target established under this section on a Government of Ontario website, together with a summary of the information the Minister relied on to establish the goal or target.

Non-application of the Legislation Act, 2006, Part III

(8) Part III (Regulations) of the Legislation Act, 2006 does not apply to a goal or target established under this section.

Information to be provided to Minister

5. (1) The Minister may direct a public sector organization to provide the Minister with specified information in order to assist the Minister in,

- (a) establishing a goal or target or determining the actions required to meet a goal or target;
- (b) understanding the steps that are being taken or have been taken to meet a goal or target;
- (c) assessing the progress that is being made or has been made toward meeting a goal or target; or
- (d) preparing a report under section 6.

Public sector organization to provide information

(2) If the Minister directs a public sector organization to provide information, the public sector organization shall provide the information on or before the deadline specified by the Minister in the direction.

Annual report

6. (1) The Minister shall prepare an annual report that,

(a) summarizes the government's activities in respect of local food;

(b) describes the local food goals or targets that have been established under the Act;

(c) summarizes the steps that have been taken and the progress that has been made by public sector organizations in respect of goals or targets; and

(d) includes such other information as the Minister determines.

Publication

(2) The Minister shall publish the report on a Government of Ontario website.

Regulations

7. The Minister may make regulations,

(a) limiting what constitutes local food under clause (b) of the definition of "local food" in section 2;

(b) prescribing organizations for the purposes of the definition of "public sector organization" in section 2.

Taxation Act, 2007

8. (1) Subsection 16 (2) of the Taxation Act, 2007 is amended by striking out "sections 17 to 22" at the end and substituting "sections 17 to 22 and 103.1.2".

(2) The Act is amended by adding the following Part:

Part IV.0.1

Non-Refundable Tax Credits

Community food program donation tax credit for farmers

103.1.2 (1) In this section,

“agricultural product” has the meaning prescribed by the regulations; (“produit agricole”)

“eligible community food program” means a person or entity that,

(a) is engaged in the distribution of food to the public without charge in Ontario, including as a food bank,

(b) is registered as a charity under the Federal Act, and

(c) satisfies the other conditions that are prescribed by the regulations; (“programme alimentaire communautaire admissible”)

“eligible person” means,

(a) an individual who carries on the business of farming in Ontario or his or her spouse or common-law partner, or

(b) a corporation that carries on the business of farming in Ontario. (“personne admissible”)

Qualifying donation

(2) A donation is a qualifying donation for a taxation year if both of the following criteria are met:

1. The donation is a donation of one or more agricultural products produced in Ontario by an eligible person and is donated by an eligible person to an eligible community food program in Ontario.

2. The donation is made on or after January 1, 2014.

Amount of the tax credit, individuals

(3) An eligible person who is an individual and who was resident in Ontario on the last day of a taxation year ending after the date prescribed by the Minister of Finance may deduct from the amount of tax otherwise payable for the year under Division B of Part II a community food program donation tax credit not exceeding the amount calculated using the formula,

$A \times B$

in which,

“A” is the sum of the fair market value of each qualifying donation, the fair market value of which was used in calculating the amount deducted by the individual under subsection 9 (21) in computing the amount of his or her tax payable for the year under Division B of Part II, and

“B” is 25 per cent.

Amount of the tax credit, corporations

(4) An eligible person that is a corporation may deduct from the amount of tax otherwise payable for the year under Division B of Part III, for a taxation year ending after the date prescribed by the Minister of Finance, a community food program donation tax credit not exceeding the amount calculated using the formula,

$C \times D$

in which,

“C” is that part of the person’s qualifying donations for the year that was deducted by the person under subsection 110.1 (1) of the Federal Act in computing the person’s taxable income for the year, and

“D” is 25 per cent.

Trusts

(5) A trust is not entitled to a tax credit under this section.

Regulations

(6) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations prescribing any rules the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary or advisable for the purposes of the proper administration of the credit under this section.

Commencement

9. This Act comes into force on a day to be named by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor.

Short title

10. The short title of this Act is the *Local Food Act, 2013*.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This Explanatory Note was written as a reader's aid to Bill 36 and does not form part of the law. Bill 36 has been enacted as Chapter 7 of the Statutes of Ontario, 2013.

The Local Food Act, 2013 is enacted. Highlights of the Act are as follows:

1. The week beginning on the first Monday in June in each year is proclaimed as Local Food Week.
2. The Minister of Agriculture and Food must establish local food goals or targets to aspire to in respect of the matters listed in the Bill. The Minister may also set additional targets. The Minister must engage in consultation before setting the goals or targets. The Minister may direct a public sector organization to provide information that would assist the Minister in establishing goals or targets, understanding steps that are being taken or have been taken to meet a goal or target, or assessing progress that is being made or has been made toward meeting a goal or target.
3. The Minister must prepare an annual report about local food activities.

Appendix C

The Proceedings of the two summits, “The Future of Food & Farming Summit” and “The Future of Food & Farming: Next Steps” document the issues for a strong community system of food and farming that provide some direction for future change in relation to these AMO guidelines.

The following excerpts from the Proceedings of the two summits, “The Future of Food & Farming Summit” and “The Future of Food & Farming: Next Steps” document the future actions for a strong community system of food and farming that were discussed at the 2 summits and provide some direction for future change in relation to these AMO guidelines.

Our October 2012 “The Future of Food & Farming Summit” Summit documented the following issues facing our food producers:

- More stakeholder involvement
- Multi-sectorial approach needed
- Access to funding (low rent)
- Skills and knowledge – who in the community has the skills i.e. distributing, marketing , organizing
- People changing attitude – wanting more local, both wild and farmed
- Distribution issue – can get sales in other venues but how do I get my products to areas in GTA
- Lots of small producers but need to pool together for distribution
- Need to develop strong relationships with food producers and identify how we can have common goals
- Need county to be part of priority setting exercise
- Should involvement be at the township level?
- Need stakeholder engagement at all levels
- Challenge for selling products to larger institutions
- Confusion around provincial and federal expectations Guide/requirements
- Agriculture in Canada is more regulated than anywhere else
- Over-regulation is a major issue and impacts local producers

In March, 2013 a follow up Peterborough Summit was held, entitled: “The Future of Food & Farming: Next Steps”. The proceedings from that summit document the discussion around recommendations to improve marketing of local food and products.

- It was proposed that a food distribution terminal would facilitate distribution and improved access.

- Increased and improved pick up sites and farmers market locations.
- Greater availability of local food in stores as well as increased numbers of market sites like public parks and community gardens. This would make it easier for consumers to access local produce.
- Community gardens markets as distribution points would have the added benefit of increasing public awareness of the connection between food and food production. This could encourage some to try gardening themselves.
- We need to identify emerging markets and innovations into the production of exotic or ethnic food products.
- The idea of available labels like “Proudly Peterborough” or “Peterborough Produce” was discussed. Seems this has been tried and challenges of enforcement were cited. Could these challenges be overcome?
- Increase awareness and demand, school presentations etc.
- It would be helpful to increase awareness of local available resources
- Develop a local/regional board to over-see food terminal and ensure/verify local produce is being sold
- Educate the community re the importance of buying local – enhanced marketing, promotion
- Encourage the community to push grocery stores to show what local products they sell – this will make store understand the growing demand/commitment to buying local
- Improve the clarity of labelling re where product was grown/developed