Championing Public Health
Nutrition 2010

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Toronto Food Strategy

- Spearheaded by Toronto Public Health to:
  - Promote a food system that is health-focused
  - Identify and implement actions that the City can take
Why Think About Food Systems?

- How useful are nutrition policies without a food system that can support them?

- Many food-related problems that need to be addressed but they’re NOT individual unrelated matters, part of a system.
Paradoxes Call for System Solutions

**Surplus**

Food system provides 147% of food calories needed to feed all Canadians

**Hunger**

10% of households report food insecurity
Health Canada recommends 7-10 servings of vegetables & fruit per day.

Canada’s farms grow enough to provide each person:
- 1.3 servings vegetables
- 0.4 servings fruit
Ontario home to some of Canada’s best farmland

Average annual income earned by Ontario farmers from agriculture:
- $8,001
Paradoxes Call for System Solutions

Experts’ Knowledge

Know more about food & nutrition than ever before

Eaters’ Knowledge

Low levels of food literacy, cooking skills, children’s food education
Who Has Their Eye On The Big Picture?

- While public & private sector have enormous amount of expertise in specific areas,,..
  → ag policy, processing, logistics, food safety, nutrition, etc.

- How many public sector employees in Canada are assigned the task of understanding the full complexity of Canada’s food systems?
  
  thousands ?
  hundreds ?  ZERO
  dozens?
Two key points:
- Food system should be “health-focused”
- Cities can and should be key actors in food system renewal
Vision = “Health-Focused” Food System

- Nutrition & disease prevention
- Social justice
- Local & diverse economic development
- Food literacy
- Environmental protection
- Strong communities

Food System
Cities Should Be Key Players

- But food policies still tend to see cities as they were 100 years ago
Cities’ Traditional Food Roles

Federal, Provincial and private sector roles

→ food safety inspection
→ nutrition promotion
→ waste collection

Cities formal powers are downstream only
25 Food Connections to the City of Toronto

- Soil safety information
- Co-funds school meals for 122,970 students daily
- Promotes breastfeeding
- Food Security grants
- Community kitchens
- Runs nutrition education programs
- Food handler certification
- Supports growth of food processors
- Buys food for City services from local farms
- Green Bin composting
- Fosters farm to school links
- Promotes safe food handling at home
- Meals for 7,000 people/day in seniors' homes, shelters & childcare
- Licenses food sales
- Inspects 16,000 food establishments annually
- Food festivals & events
- Staffs the Toronto Food Policy Council
- Provides 2,500 garden allotment spaces
- Enables community gardens
- Funds Food Animators
- Promotes healthy eating & nutrition information
- Zoning bylaws
1. Support food friendly neighbourhoods

2. Make food a centerpiece of Toronto’s green economy
3. Eliminate hunger in Toronto

4. Connect city and countryside through food
5. Empower residents with food skills and information

6. Urge federal & provincial governments to establish health-focused food policies
Conclusion

- A focus on food system solutions needs to become a bigger part of our approach to food & nutrition problems

- Success lies in cities being proactive players and federal and provincial governments being enabling partners
Welcome to Food Connections!

This site is your connection to the Toronto Food Strategy project - a bold initiative to show how cities can help build a healthy and sustainable food system for the 21st century.

The newest Toronto Food Strategy report - *Cultivating Food Connections: Toward a Healthy and Sustainable Food System for Toronto* - was submitted to the Toronto Board of Health on June 1, 2010.

It reveals how urban leadership on food can help Toronto achieve its environmental, economic, social and community priorities, while improving health. The report highlights numerous positive changes that are already underway and proposes several next steps for City leadership.

This website is your gateway to learning about food system issues and discussing ways that the City of Toronto can champion and healthy and sustainable food system for all.

June 28, 2010 - We received lots of feedback on our February "Food Connections" consultation report. Check out the summary of what Torontonians had to say in the "What We Heard" report.

**Updates and Related Reports**

- *Food Connections Report to the Board of Health, Feb 16, 2010*

**Highlights:**

- *25 Food Connections*

www.toronto.ca/foodconnections