

Leverage Points from the Forum

(Local Core Food Team)

Education - create awareness of the issue, of existing sources of local products, of the value of a local food system, the cooking, storing and growing of local food, of the link to sustaining community, of the complexity of the food system

- we need to work on the education of the public-where the food comes from, what it takes to get here, and that it is okay if that sometimes some food isn't available
- people need to know what it actually means when something is labeled as "local" or "Canadian made"
- there have been skills that have been lost along the way such as using recipes that use the produce that is in season, preserves, the freezing of fresh vegetables
- there are generational barriers; mothers didn't teach their children to cook; we are only two generations past, but I think it is too late; cooking with fresh food, preserving, etc. is a lost art
- Mom canned chickens because we didn't have electricity until I was 12. When chickens got old and we got the new chicks we would cut the heads off the old ones. Then we plucked and cleaned the chicken and mom would can it. Boy was it ever good
- Someone said "what were you doing last week in the heat?" Well I pickled; dill pickles, mustard pickles, million dollar relish, blueberry jelly. That is what I give as Christmas gifts, when you are on a limited budget
- There was no waste. We had no saran wraps or plastic bags
- Would like to see more Family Support Centers and more community kitchens. Open up community halls; teach people how to cook seasonally and cheaply. Because of transportation issues, community kitchens need to be available in all the rural communities.
- Put money in the Education budget specifically earmarked for food and nutrition. Students are not getting cooking and other information in family studies, and there is no home economics and very little information on nutrition. Children are not learning these skills at home so schools need to teach how to eat and cook properly. When schools are working with a global budget, even those classes that could teach cooking end up making bread and pizza, because they are inexpensive and it is all they can afford. The province would have to earmark the funds
- It is really important to learn as a child that you can always grow your own food. Even if you are not wealthy, not living on a large piece of land, you can still grow food.
- Knowledge, some may not know how to grow/process their own foods.
- The catch to growing local is to educate companies on the environment so they are not using up resources to haul their products

- Now, they do not have Home Ec in school so you learn how by watching mom. So if kids aren't learning at home there will be a generation that does not know how to cook, same thing as gardening.
- Links to health
- Benefits of home canning/making
- Chronicle the benefits
- Food costing
- What's happening in the community – connecting the system – local food system facebook page
- Community garden
- Recipe exchange on home canning – edible local plants – diversity in diet, list benefits of edible plants (nutritional content)

Relationships - local food is a critical and concrete way of connecting consumers with producers and producers with distributors so they can talk, understand, and work together

- family time and values need to be incorporated into these tasks such as cleaning beans, picking gardens, etc.; they may not enjoy it, but it teaches them lessons
- It is a lost art. Even baking cookies. The grandchildren ask me to bake cookies as soon as I come in. We made bread once we had flour everywhere. They ate the bread they made, dirt and all, they didn't care
- Food is a social experience. I want it to look and taste good and I want to feel I'm getting what is good for me. I have far more security about those issues if I buy locally.
- Local food is good value and good taste. You have a sense of who the farmer is.
- Even when traveling, I go to farmers' markets. This supports local people, gives you a better chance of knowing what you're getting, and reduces your exposure to chemicals and pesticides. Eating locally grown foods is a health issue as well.
- Most farmers grow for the love of it, not to make money. They are proud of what they produce. When you buy from them, you feel like you are part of the good work.
- That people growing it are respectful of the land and living that way themselves.
- Honoring the land by feeding the soil, using organic methods. Even if not certified organic, they care about the food and eat their own crops.
- Not chemicalized and not grown to sell to big companies.
- Buying local links communities and is another part of the web.
- Small family farms where you can get to know your food producer, get to know your butcher, your farmer. You can talk about what happened and how they grew it and in some places you can visit the farm and have a relationship with who grows your food.
- Community gardens are where people learn together.
- Conversations about home making of baby food/preserves

Distribution - create a consistent local distribution system which serves our community and is accessible to everyone

- local chicken producers sell to a company in Toronto, then chicken come back locally to be sold to consumer
- “the customer is losing and that is the bottom line”; they are paying too much for their food; “something is going wrong somewhere and I cannot agree to it”; “families struggle every month to pay for overpriced food
- there are members of government setting the prices on meat and other foods
- the middlemen hold onto local meat because it is cheap at the time and sell more expensive imported meat
- there needs to be a commitment from the distributors that local product sells first so that the demand is maintained
- It would be nice for fishermen to be able to get into the stores, same with the farmers. Have it come in fresh
- Food safety issues are a concern. There is less chance of contamination if food is grown/processed local. It means it is not stuck in a truck or plane trying to get to the grocery stores. Being more environmentally safe and leaving less of a foot print.
- We have our one market which is on Thursday morning and I love the market. I go to the market as much as I can but the variety is not there
- Depends on the time of year...because like this time of the year local is Lunenburg county but in the winter local would be Canadian.
- Chain stores/box stores have started to promote a few local things...not sure what difference that has made. They started with an organic section so why not have a local section.
- [Food costing](#)
- [Feed N.S. – link to schools](#)

Engagement - need to engage the community, the youth, and the political agendas

- In Hawaii, there are rotational markets much like here. In tourist accommodations, they have fridge magnets with the weekly schedule of markets. It would be a good idea for the provincial tourism or agriculture departments to support this kind of advertising.
- We need a tourist bureau on the highway to help direct people to local farms, markets, etc. Even highway pull-off areas where bulletin boards could be used to advertise, similar to rest stops in Quebec, which feature maps and lists local events.
- Bylaws and regulations very frustrating- e.g. whole raw milk. Makes you feel that government is not for the people but rather about corporations making money.

Sometimes government gets in the way. Regulations need to be adjusted to fit the reality.

- I think a community garden would work better in the cities where it is a novelty and status symbol. In the rural areas it is considered work because they did this when they were a child.
- It is the whole system, it is such a complicated issue; it's transportation, it's financial, it's social justice, it's regulation/legislation sort of stuff, environmental, every kind of system you can think of is involved somehow
- Sampling...demos...recipes would interest people in grocery stores and farmers markets.
- Look at ways to engage – what would work – communication packages
- Updates to Gary Ramey- MLA
- Generate ideas for others to take action on
- Baking clubs in schools
- Ways to link students with cafeterias for cooking
- School curriculum – childcare, parenting, life skills
- Food costing

Policy - look at the policies that are impacting producers and advocate for change where necessary, identify ways we can leverage change to support the local food system

- there are so many regulations on the export of food and it effects the quality of the food
- quality is lost in order to fulfill these regulations
- “people are starving and tonnes of food is thrown in the garbage/compost” because of regulations and standards set by people other than the producers and consumers
- local meat farmers cannot get decent prices for their product; they need to get rid of the middleman and work directly with the grocers
- I think there is so many rules and regulations, which is good for us, it protects us but I don't know how it is for the farmers and fishermen
- I want to know true local. I want stores to label their local food. I would pay the extra 10 cents to support local.
I want to know local meats. I want local meats. I don't know where it comes from in the stores. I want to know my meat is coming from Nova Scotia. I have been eating more fish because I know where it comes from but not meat.
- I have a big concern about the local grocery store not promoting local food but still having cheaper access to food from Chile or United States or whatever.
- Yes that there has to be some sort of regulation that promotes local food...that they require that a certain percentage of the food they sell needs to be produced locally.
- Look at fish trucks...I would love to be able to support it but with the regulations. Inspectors will ask where did the food come from/who sold it; especially meat, fish and seafood.

- **Food costing**

Sustainability - look local producers as more than local and explore ways of assisting them to stay in business for a healthy population which is vital to our economy. Build momentum – tell the compelling story of this campaign

- we need to create a new industry by using what we throw away
- co-operatives are an answer- “get together and build something”; everything has been done on a small scale, somewhere
- need to start working on producing products from the entire so that there is no waste; using the appropriate part of the product for producing the appropriate by product; for example, in NS the best parts of the pig are used for bologna and the too much of the pig is being thrown away, unused
- If we don’t buy from the local people, who will.
- **Pollination project**
- **Food costing**
- **Skill building**

Accessibility - municipal transportation, share resources to make food available/accessible within and between communities

- I look around the area and all I see is chicken farms everywhere, but I don’t see any local chicken in the grocery stores
- I look around and all I see is chicken farms, I haven’t seen a tomato field or a romaine field; “if I can do it in my own yard, anybody can do it”, “it doesn’t cost that much”
- We ask that people only come once per month if they can help it, if you are hungry you are hungry
- On a provincial level, I would like to see subsidies for farmers and a tax on junk food. The subsidized milk program in schools worked- children can pay 15 cents for milk instead of pop.
- I hope that farm markets continue to increase and expand. Road side stands working on the honor system have always worked well in some areas. Don’t put obstacles like taxes and regulations in the way of these local successes
- Local should be within our own province of Nova Scotia. The closer to the community I live in, the better
- We need more designated areas for people to sell local goods. A farmers market every week. Let us know who does what around here. Local grown meat would be great. Free range turkey I would like to have one.
- A challenge is people not knowing where to go. We need to develop a bulletin. We need to put it on the Pulse (local Computer paper), advertise these existing local foods.
- The poor are the hardest hit. The will and want is there and they care but reality dictates what they are buying at that time.

- The access to local food was much easier than it is here
- So for families who are wanting to eat healthy but don't have the budget to do that, that makes it difficult. So they can go to the farmer's market but there's not a lot, I don't think, that you would actually be able to afford, so the people who end up going there are the people who can afford it, who have transportation and can get there.
- So that if you were to choose and again it is a poverty issue... so if you were to choose for example at Superstore this week strawberries were 1.99 from the US and they weren't ripe or whatever but for 1.99 or if you were to buy local ones, they are at 3 something. If you were on a tight budget you would obviously choose the ones that have been exported for thousands of miles and probably sprayed with ethylene gas or whatever to make them ripen up on the outside but the nutritional value would not be the same. So I have a huge problem with that when you go in the store in the summertime and you have to buy garlic from Chile or from China, when we grow it locally.
- If I extend the system to the fisheries, I am happy to have immediate access to fresh fish...very happy about that.
- So having some sort of centralized buying or something like that; I don't know but it may make it more accessible to people
- [Home canning/baby food making](#)
- [Food costing](#)

Culture

- A challenge to local foods is resistance of some folks. We live in a disposable society and we are talking about changing people's lifestyle, taxing certain lifestyle choices, and earmarking budgets.
- It is up to the individual to make things happen. One person can make a difference.
- There is a disconnect from who we are and our own heritage. We need to reconnect with our place in time and space. We live in Canada, in a northern climate, by the Atlantic Ocean. We have been taught that we can have anything we want, whenever we want. We have been fed consumerism and commercialism. It is not right to have anything you want, whenever you want. If you want the other items, you might have to go somewhere else.
- as a child we would follow the season of produce, it was a cultural thing
- now there are no boundaries; you can get anything, anytime of the year because of the import of produce
- our culture today is materialistic; people will spend their money on TVs and cell phones, but not on local, healthy foods
- the current generation of parents are well educated and know better; now is the time to change
- We are too spoiled. We are used to fast and quick. We want what we want when we want it. We need a community that would be aware of what each other does.

- That's exactly it, a time to relax and talk and particularly for women, even though it might be a gender stereotype that we gather in the kitchen but we do...we do and the ritual of that I think is important.
- I think as westerners or North Americans we think that we have the right to consume everything from across the world and the rest of the world owes us their produce, their goods and I think we have to change that.
- People are busy