Introduction to sustainable food systems

Part 1 in the Sustainable Food Systems series

February 13, 2014 • 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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RECORDING NOTICE: This webinar is recorded and will be made available to the general public on the HC Link website.
What is a Sustainable Food System? Experiences from Waterloo Region

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Sample student projects completed through this course

- Stakeholder Perceptions of Community Supported Agriculture in the Waterloo Region
- Compensating Our Stewards: Paying Farmers for Ecosystem Services
- Urban Livestock: Barriers and Opportunities Faced by Homesteaders in the City of Waterloo
- Barriers to the Use of Emergency Food Programs by Low Income Populations in Waterloo Region
- Comparative analysis & assessment of best practices of young farmers’ initiatives internationally
- The Potential of the Local Food Economy in Waterloo Region
Outline

• Waterloo Region
  ▫ Regional context
  ▫ Local food system development
• Partnerships for a healthy, sustainable food system
  ▫ Local government roles (Public Health)
  ▫ Networking organizations & the food movement
  ▫ Local & sustainable food supply
Wayne Roberts: re-branding the food movement

- Solutions-focused
- Interest is growing steadily: 5%
- About mainstream issues, not the fringe: job creation, inclusivity
- Building bridges –addressing the rural-urban solitude
- Silo-busters: overcoming problem of a health care system that doesn’t care about food & a food system that doesn’t care about health
Mid-sized urban community
Vibrant countryside
Local food system development in Waterloo Region

1. Strong presence of farmer’s markets
2. Strong leadership of Public Health department
3. Foodlink Waterloo Region established (2001)
5. Waterloo Region Food System Roundtable established (2007)
Public Health as facilitator of a healthy food system

- Research
- Economic Development
- Community-based Partnerships
- Policy Development
- Organizational Change
- Capacity Building for Advocacy
- Food System Plan
- System-wide networks

Building Healthy and Supportive Communities
Food-related reports by Region of Waterloo Public Health
http://www.wrfoodsystem.ca/phreports?na=43

- The **Potential of the Local Food Economy in Waterloo Region** (September 2013), 14-slide presentation
- **Food Friendly Municipalities in Waterloo Region** (August 2013), 45 pages
- **Rethinking Healthy Eating in the Workplace** (2012), 218 pages
- **School Nutrition Policy Process Evaluation** (April 2013), 48 pages
- **Community Gardening Storytelling Project** (May 2013), 51 pages
- **Waterloo Region’s Food System: A Snapshot** (May 2013), 4 pages
- **The Health of Waterloo Region’s Food System: An Update** (May 2013), 61 pages
- **The Economic Development Potential of the Local Food Sector in Waterloo Region** (May 2013), 19 pages
- **Supporting Advocacy on Municipal Official Plans** (January 2013), 94 pages
- **Sources of Emergency and Low-Cost Food** (March 2011) 4 pages
- **The Cost of a Nutritious Food Basket** (September 2010) 2 pages
- **Food Skills of Waterloo Region Adults** (January 2010) PDF File - 3.07 MB, 4 pages
- **Neighbourhood Markets** - Outcome Evaluation (March 2009) PDF File - 3.62 MB, 26 pages
- **Annotated Bibliography of Public Health Reports and Studies Related to Waterloo Region’s Food System** (December 2008) PDF File - 40 KB, 4 pages
- **Neighbourhood Markets Initiative** (February 2008) PDF File - 1.6 MB, 28 pages
- **A Healthy Community Food System Plan** (April 2007) PDF File - 654 KB, 22 pages
Food-related reports by Region of Waterloo Public Health

- **Redundant Trade Study** (February 2006) PDF File - 104 KB, 23 pages
- **Food Miles: Environmental Implications of Food Imports to Waterloo Region** (November 2005) PDF File - 144 KB, 24 pages
- **Region of Waterloo Food Flow Analysis Study** (November 2005), PDF File - 1.88 MB, 125 pages
- **Urban Agriculture Report** (November 2005), PDF File - 540 KB, 28 pages
- **Toward a Healthy Community Food System for Waterloo Region** (November 2005) PDF File - 2.2 MB, 36 pages
- **Optimal Nutrition Environment for Waterloo Region, 2006 - 2046** (June 2005), PDF File - 101 KB, 18 pages
- **Buy Local! Buy Fresh! Map 2004, Evaluation** (March 2005), PDF File - 227 KB, 30 pages
- **A Glance at Access to Food** (September 2004), PDF File - 163 KB, 4 pages
- **A Fresh Approach to Food: Local Food Buying in Waterloo Region** (February 2004) PDF File - 159 KB, 2 pages
- **Growing Food and Economy Study** (Oct 2003)
- **How the Food System Contributes to the Quality of the Air We Breathe**: A Literature Review, March 2003 (Revised Sep 2004), PDF file - 171 KB, 19 pages
Healthy Food System definition

All residents have access to, and can afford to buy safe, nutritious, culturally acceptable food that has been produced in an environmentally sustainable way and that sustains our rural communities.
2006: Public Health led 13 community focus groups with different stakeholders - to learn about their perspectives & encourage their involvement.
Priority Actions:

1. Promote local food
2. Pilot mobile farmers’ markets
3. Farm-institution programs
4. Expand local food label
5. Address zoning issues for farming
6. Investigate incubator kitchens
7. create new body to oversee new Plan – Roundtable

Result: April 2007

Healthy Community Food System Plan
Who would be at the table?

- Diverse stakeholders who agreed that change is needed
- Small-scale and large-scale players
- Regional uniqueness: the local “champions”
Food system stakeholders (that the Waterloo Region Food System Roundtable seeks to represent)

- **‘feeders’**
  - organic
  - farmers and farm orgs
  - urban agriculture
  - Foraging (edible landscaping, wild foods)

- **processors**
  - small and large scale

- **distributors**
  - emergency food distribution
  - Elmira produce auction
  - small and large scale
  - CSAs

- **retailers**
  - institutional purchasers
  - retail shops small & large
  - food services/restaurants, hospitality progr.
  - food services/restaurants, hospitality progr.

- **‘eaters’**
  - low income consumers
  - Special needs consumers

- **Planners (zoning, bylaws, regulation)**

- **advocates, academics, marketing boards, brokers, promoters (e.g. Foodlink)**

- **Public Health (inspection, education)**

- **neighbourhood markets (small) & farm markets**
What is the Waterloo Region Food System Roundtable?

- a networking and policy group
- composed of 18 representatives
- from key sectors and interests of the local food system
- who share a common vision for a healthy food system in Waterloo Region
Who We Represent

- Farmers
- Emergency food providers
- Food manufacturers
- Urban agriculture advocates
- Food distributors
- Academics/researchers specializing in food system issues
- Educators/teachers
- Food retailers
- Land use planners
- Restaurants
- Institutional purchasers
- Low income consumers
- Ethnic food retailers/consumers
- Organic food advocates
- Economic development organizations/professionals
- Health professionals
- Food justice advocates
- Food marketing organizations
- Neighbourhood-based food programs
- Public Health staff
Food System Priorities

www.wrfoodsystem.ca/priorities

- Food Sovereignty
- Food Policy
- Urban Agriculture
- Local Food Infrastructure
- Farm Viability
- Access To Healthy Food

Building Healthy and Supportive Communities
What the Roundtable Does

- network/educate
- coordinate/analyze
- evaluate
- identify policy changes

Mission (website tagline): Connecting our community to the work of building a healthy food system
Headlines: Bungled Stories on Organics

Jan 22, 2014 02:30 PM
Posted by Theresa Schumilas

In the last few weeks, CBC has run sequential stories about pesticide residues on organic produce. As an organic farmer I’ve been following the twists and turns of this story and it seems to me that, as is often the case, the real story is hidden behind the headlines.

First, I’ll re-cap (in case you’ve been having a mid-winter slumber and have missed the story). The CBC made a freedom of information request to obtain data that were collected by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) from testing they did on both domestic and imported fruits and vegetables in the past two years. CBC needed to make this formal request to get the information because CFIA does not otherwise make it public. Which suggests to me the first headline should be: CFIA Keeps Consumers in the Dark about Pesticide Contamination. Of course considering CBC didn’t release the detailed information either once they bought it with our tax dollars, another headline might be: CBC Keeps Taxpayers in the Dark.

Since we don’t have any of the details I’m trying to piece them together, calculator in hand, from the stories as reported. I understand that some fruits and vegetables showed residues of pesticides, but the extent of the contamination and exactly what they are contaminated with, and the source of the contaminated...
City of Waterloo Adopts Strong Food Policies

Apr 03, 2012 02:00 PM
Posted by Krista Long

On April 2, 2011, the City of Waterloo adopted an Official Plan that:

- gives preference to small and mid-size food stores over large-format grocery stores,
- sets a goal of having a food store within 2km of every resident in the City,
- permits community gardens and temporary farmers' markets in all land use designations.

The strong food policies in the Official Plan are due in no small part to the work of the Waterloo Region Food System Roundtable, who advocated strongly for the inclusion of food policies in the Region of Waterloo's Official Plan, with which all municipalities must now comply. The Roundtable then advocated directly to the City of Waterloo on drafts of its Official Plan in September 2011 and March 2012.
Networks shaping Community-University Partnerships for healthy/sustainable food systems in Waterloo Region

Region of Waterloo Public Health

Waterloo Region Food System Roundtable

University of Waterloo: researchers, students completing course projects, students doing internship placements

Opportunities Waterloo Region

Community Garden Council

Diggable Communities Collaborative

Foodlink Waterloo Region

Canadian Organic Growers-Perth Waterloo Wellington

Waterloo Federation of Agriculture

Other Roundtable members: farmers, food distributors, food services…
Strong ‘local food’ movement

100 Mile Diet for K-W group introduced in local paper

Are 100 People Ready to try the 100 Mile Diet? by Dinah Murdoch

If you committed to a diet of food that was grown within 100 miles of your house, what would you miss most? Coffee? Spices?

It’s a valid question for Waterloo naturopaths Rachel VandenBerg and Michael Torreiter, who hope to round up 100 local residents to join them in eating “100-mile food” for 100 days.
Other local action for a sustainable food system

- Local organizations:
  - Foodlink Waterloo Region
  - Canadian Organic Growers
  - Community Gardening Council

- Other initiatives:
  - Direct marketing:
  - CSAs, food buying club, neighbourhood markets
Foodlink Waterloo Region

- Buy Local Buy Fresh map
- Taste Local Taste Fresh
- Links people to local farmers
Neighbourhood markets

- UW’s farm market – sells local food sourced from Elmira Produce Auction Cooperative and other farms – weekly through summer/fall season

- Neighbourhood Markets in Preston and 2 in Kitchener
Businesses in WR that model democratic control of food

BAILEY’S LOCAL FOODS
fresh, sustainable, important

PFENNING’S ORGANIC

Fertile Ground CSA

OAKRIDGE ACRES
COUNTRY MEAT STORE

Ontario Natural

THE HEALTHY BUTCHER
Why is it important to have everyone at the table?

- Building partnerships for a healthy food system
- Enriching and affirming each other’s work