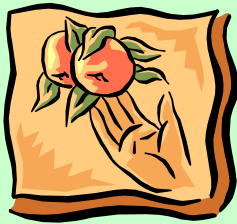


# Food *Connections*



## The Gardens at Cecil Facer...and I'm Not Talking Hockey

Submitted by: Tammy Cheguis, Registered Dietician, Sudbury & District Health Unit

It's a cool, rainy mid-summer day and I find myself walking through the well manicured lawn at Cecil Facer Youth Centre. Allan Basso, a youth worker at the facility, accompanies me on a very special tour of the grounds. Allan has taken time out of his busy summer schedule, when he takes a break from corrections, to explain the gardening program he runs from May to October. This program can accommodate up to eight students, runs half days for five days of the week and counts for two co-op credits.



Allan Basso, youth worker at Cecil Facer Youth Centre.

As we approach the first of eight gardens, Allan points out that because of cooler spring weather the corn is only half the height it was this time last year. This doesn't seem to worry him too much. He and his students have already harvested one batch of broccoli and expect to harvest two more batches before the season is through. The eight large gardens that span the property on average, yield between 10,000 to 13,000 lbs of produce annually and last season boasted potatoes that weighed up to three pounds apiece.

We trek from one plot to the next and I'm truly amazed at the variety of vegetables available everything from carrots, cucumbers, celery to turnips, tomatoes, and pumpkins and even an entire plot dedicated solely to strawberries. Besides produce, the program also makes its own compost, mostly from grass clippings from the property, mixed with small quantities of fruit peels collected from residents, and horse manure donated by a local farmer.

Students in the gardening program till soil, plant seeds, weed and pick off potato

bugs/larvae by hand, operate and maintain gardening equipment and harvest crops at the end of the season. This valuable program teaches these youth important life skills, responsibility and team work. Allan comments that most of the residents don't know the first thing about growing food but are quite knowledgeable by the program's end.

Another very noteworthy aspect of the program is that it allows these students an opportunity to give back to the community. Last year 3,000 lbs of produce was donated to the soup kitchen and mission in Sudbury.

As my drenched tour guide leads me back to the main building, I can't help but think that this is exactly the type of program that is lacking in the regular school curriculum. Kids nowadays have no idea where their food comes from or how it is grown, let alone how to cook it. With governments and multinationals ultimately deciding the fate of our food supply, I can only hope that more programs like the one at Cecil Facer Youth Centre exist in some form and are taking up the challenge to provide fresh, wholesome locally grown food to their communities.

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# Reducing Our Food Miles

Submitted by: Doreen Ojala, The Foodshed Project

The Foodshed Project recognizes that the food system must become a leader in practices that reduce the amount of transportation greenhouse gases (GHG). Produce from California, Mexico and Chile is common in our stores during the middle of winter. The global food system transports a continuous variety of imports and exports throughout the seasons, but at what expense? Did you know that lamb chops from New Zealand may have traveled 193 times farther than their Canadian counterparts, and can produce over one thousand times as much CO<sub>2</sub> because they travel by plane? (Fighting Global Warming at the Farmers Market, FoodShare Field to Table, January, 2004)

In the Sudbury and Manitoulin Districts, we produce a variety of berries and vegetables, and have a considerable number of beef farmers. Supporting our farmers is important, especially during the fall harvest season. We have a long way to go before we are locally food self-reliant. For example, it seems absurd that most of our raw products are shipped to Southern Ontario for processing and then shipped back for local distribution. Are we missing out on economic opportunities? Are we thinking about being sustainable?

The Foodshed Project recently received funding from Environment Canada for an initiative called *Counting Our Food Miles*. Over the summer, consumers were surveyed to determine their knowledge of climate change, meal planning skills, and shopping habits. This knowledge will assist us in developing a Climate Friendly Shopping Planner. The planner will be designed to take action on climate change and support the development of our local food sources.

The Shopping Planner is based on the food mile concept. Food miles are the distance between where food is grown and how far it's travelled to get to your dinner plate. Thinking about food miles helps us understand the link between food transport, fossil fuel usage, GHG emissions, and climate change. Reducing our food miles reduces climate-changing transportation GHGs.

What is a greenhouse gas? A greenhouse gas traps heat which warms up the earth's surface and causes climate change. Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and other gas emissions. Carbon dioxide is released when we burn fossil fuels in our car and for energy use, and is the most abundant greenhouse gas.

Though many will say there is no scientific evidence that climate change is real, we do know that permafrost and glaciers in the Arctic are melting, sea levels are rising, and our growing seasons and weather in general are becoming increasingly erratic. The average temperature of the earth is rising and that is a measurable change that is being attributed to an increase in heat trapping greenhouse gas emissions.

Buying local food is one way to reduce greenhouse gases and is also one of the mandates of the recently adopted Food Charter. Shortening the food chain stimulates community economic development, and increases our sense of responsibility towards our environment and our community's food security.



## Eat it, Grow it, Share it

The following is an excerpt from "Food Share Policy".

This is the second part of a three-part series, 10 points that puts food first - in our social policy, in our neighbourhoods and in our lives.

## Part 2: GROW IT

**Know where your food comes from...Grow food in your community... Don't truck it in or out-compost!**

4. Buy local at farmers' markets and stores that make it a priority to buy from Ontario farmers, or through Good Food Box (if your community doesn't have one then consider starting one!) or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) projects. Buying from your local farmer lets you know how and where your food is grown.
5. You can grow food close to home - on your balcony, in your backyard, on your windowsill, at a community garden, on a rooftop...Choose seeds of heritage varieties that aren't genetically modified. Grow sprouts during the winter.
6. Complete the growing cycle by composting-in your backyard, community garden, apartment or offices. Close to a third of all garbage is wet waste, so everything from air quality to waste management to food production improves when we compost.

# Transportation for Food Security Programs

Submitted by: Paula Worton, Public Health Nurse, Sudbury & District Health Unit

RideShare is a non-profit transportation service designed to eliminate transportation barriers for families with young children. Through the RideShare program, children and their families who have no other means of transportation may be eligible to receive a ride, free of charge, to child development programs, recreational activities and to medical/dental appointments.

Recently, RideShare has expanded its program to include transportation for structured food security programs. Any agency with a food related program/project whose participants include children, and who are not able to attend due to transportation issues, may request rides on behalf of their participants. RideShare will assess their ability to provide transportation on a case by case basis.

The majority of the rides are provided by volunteer drivers. Volunteer hours are flexible and mileage expenses are paid. If you are a caring, experienced driver and would like the personal satisfaction of directly helping children in your community, call Brenda or Tracy at (705) 670-8920, ext. 1 or email [geode@on.aibn.com](mailto:geode@on.aibn.com).

The Sudbury & District Health Unit offers workshops to assist communities with organizing and operating successful school meal and snack programs.

As a member of the Northern Healthy Eating Project, the Sudbury & District Health Unit was involved with the development of the **School Meal and Snack Program "How to" Kit**. This community resource is an essential how-to guide for individuals and groups who are considering starting a new meal or snack program. Also, it is a great resource for leaders of existing programs who are looking for ways to improve their school meal and snack programs.

Workshops may cover information on **how-to...**

- set up a meal or snack program in your school
- make sure that the program is well managed
- focus on helping students do well in school
- get participation of parents and students
- develop partnerships and bring together parents/guardians, community groups, businesses and other nutrition programs
- make the best use of staff and volunteers
- develop funding plans
- create a positive setting to help children develop lifelong, healthy eating habits

Workshop participants will receive a copy of the **School Meal and Snack Program "How to" Kit**, practical information, key resources and the opportunity to network with other breakfast and snack program operators. For more information on attending or hosting a workshop, call the Sudbury & District Health Unit, School Health Promotion Team at (705) 522-9200, ext. 314.



## Composting

The arrival of fall does not mean the end of composting. You can compost all year round. Keep a well shovelled path clear to the compost bin and you can continue to add kitchen scraps all through the winter. The waste will freeze, breaking down the fibres. In the spring, remove the finished compost, and add a couple of shovels full of soil to the remaining compost. Mix the pile thoroughly to help restart the process of decomposition.

**Fact:** Composting reduces the amount of household garbage by about **one third**.<sup>1</sup>

**You can compost:**

Leaves	Fruit scraps	Pencil shavings	Egg shells
Grass	Tea bags	Coffee grounds	Pet fur
Plants & weeds	Shredded paper	Old potting soil	Vegetable trimmings

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Environment and Energy, *Compost Right!* Composting Council of Canada, *At Home With Composting*, retrieved: September 29, 2004 from: <http://www.compost.org/backyard.html>



## Transport pour participer aux programmes de sécurité alimentaire

*Préparé par : Paula Worton, infirmière-hygéniste, Service de santé publique de Sudbury et du district*

RideShare est un service de transport sans but lucratif, mis sur pied pour éliminer l'obstacle d'un moyen de transport que rencontrent les familles avec des jeunes enfants. Grâce à ce programme, les enfants et les familles qui n'ont pas de moyen de transport pourraient être admissibles à du transport sans frais pour se rendre à des programmes de développement de l'enfant, à des activités récréatives et à des rendez-vous de médecin ou de dentiste.

RideShare a récemment décidé d'ajouter à cette liste les programmes structurés reliés à l'alimentation. Les agences ayant des programmes ou des projets reliés à la sécurité alimentaire auxquels des participants avec des enfants ne peuvent pas assister en raison de problème de transport, peuvent demander du transport au nom de ces participants. RideShare évaluera au cas par cas sa capacité à répondre à une demande de transport.

La majeure partie du transport est assurée par des chauffeurs bénévoles. Les bénévoles ont un horaire flexible et reçoivent un remboursement du millage parcouru. Si vous êtes un chauffeur d'expérience et soigneux qui aimerait avoir la satisfaction personnelle d'aider les enfants de notre collectivité, veuillez appeler Brenda ou Tracy, 670-8920, poste 1 ou envoyer un courriel à : [geode@on.aibn.com](mailto:geode@on.aibn.com).

## Food Directory Update

The Foodshed Project supports the Food Charter. Our programming includes children's and community gardens, and education on the impacts of climate change. We are currently developing a food miles shopping planner to support local food production. Our mandate is to link with the community to create partnerships that improve food security.

The Foodshed Project  
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## Food Security Network

### Co-Chairs

Doreen Ojala  
Kelly Daehn

### Food Security Core Working Group

Mike Soenens  
Helen Jarvi  
Gale Elliott  
Anne McCorkell  
Pat Marcotte

### Health

Tammy Chegus RD, Sudbury & District Health Unit  
Stephanie Leclair - City of Greater Sudbury  
Aline Easton - Cafeteria Eat Smart! Award Winner - 2003  
Kelly Daehn - Ontario Works, City of Greater Sudbury  
Paula Worton, Public Health Nurse, Sudbury & District Health Unit

### Community

Erika Espinoza - Breakfast Club Coordinator Human League  
Elin Flora - Community Member  
Carol Pilon - Sudbury Action Centre for Youth  
Monique Beaudoin - Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition

### Economy

Tom Reid - Nickel Chef  
Darcie Collinson, Market Square  
Marianne Matichuck - City of Greater Sudbury  
Casey Kesek - The Green Teapot Organic Food Buying Co-op

### Environment

Bill Bradley - Foodshed Project President  
Lorraine Goodmurphy, GreenLand Project, Carl Nesbitt Public School



## The Making of a Food Charter

The development of the City of Greater Sudbury's Food Charter

Submitted by: Bridget King, Community Nutrition Assistant, Sudbury & District Health Unit

In September 2002, the Sudbury & District Board of Health passed a motion to support the development of a food charter for the Sudbury & District Health Unit catchment area. Now, following an 18-month community consultation period, the food charter has been developed and endorsed by the Board of Health, the City of Greater Sudbury, the municipalities of Killarney, St. Charles and the Township of Tehkummah on Manitoulin Island.

**The Food System-** Food Charters are becoming increasingly popular as Canadians become more aware of the problems associated with the current food system. Some of the weaknesses associated with the current food system have recently been highlighted through a number of major food crises including Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and the "chicken flu". These and other crises have lead many individuals to rethink their relationship with the current food system; consumers now want to buy food that is free of additives such as genetically modified organisms and pesticides, and they want to purchase more locally produced food.

### Benefits of a Food Charter

Food charters provide an avenue for community members, governments, businesses, health professionals and other interested parties to re-evaluate the food system and to develop a common approach to sustainable food systems. Food charters outline the actions civic bodies, institutions and others can take to achieve the goal of food secure communities. The first Canadian food charter was adopted by Toronto City Council in June 2001. Since then, a number of other Canadian cities, including Saskatoon and Prince Albert, have developed and adopted food charters. The food charters from these cities were influential in the creation of the City of Greater Sudbury's Food Charter.

### The Food Security Network of Sudbury & Manitoulin Districts

The Food Security Network of the Sudbury & Manitoulin Districts played a key role in the development of the City of Greater Sudbury's Food Charter. The network is made up of individuals representing a variety of sectors including the city, foodservice industry, media, social services sector, farmers, food banks and concerned citizens. To develop the food charter, members reviewed food charters from other cities and gained insight through visits from key players in the development of Toronto's Food Charter, including Debbie Field, the Executive Director of FoodShare Toronto, and Dr. Wayne Roberts from the Toronto Food Policy Council.

### The City of Greater Sudbury's Food Charter

The Food Security Network developed a food charter that focuses on **four fundamental components of food security: health, economy, community and environment**. Within each of these areas a number of issues can be addressed including, among many others, food contaminants and additives, fair trade, access to healthy food, community gardens, and fish and animal habitats. The Food Security Network hopes to work with the community at large to gain a better understanding of how they would like to address food security issues, using the food charter as a guide. Educating the community will likely be an important first step. A "Buy Local" campaign will be a key component of increasing awareness around issues of food security.

Food charters can potentially guide the efforts of organizations and individuals that are in the process of creating a more food secure community. However, to ensure that this is achieved, it is necessary for all members of the community to become actively involved in food security initiatives.

This newsletter is made possible by support of the Sudbury & District Health Unit. The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Sudbury & District Health Unit.