


# Hamilton Food Strategy

Healthy, Sustainable, and Just Food for All



Hamilton



Food does so much more than just feed people. We place much of our personal, social, and cultural identity in the food we eat, how we prepare it, and who we eat it with.

...Respondent, Food Strategy Survey



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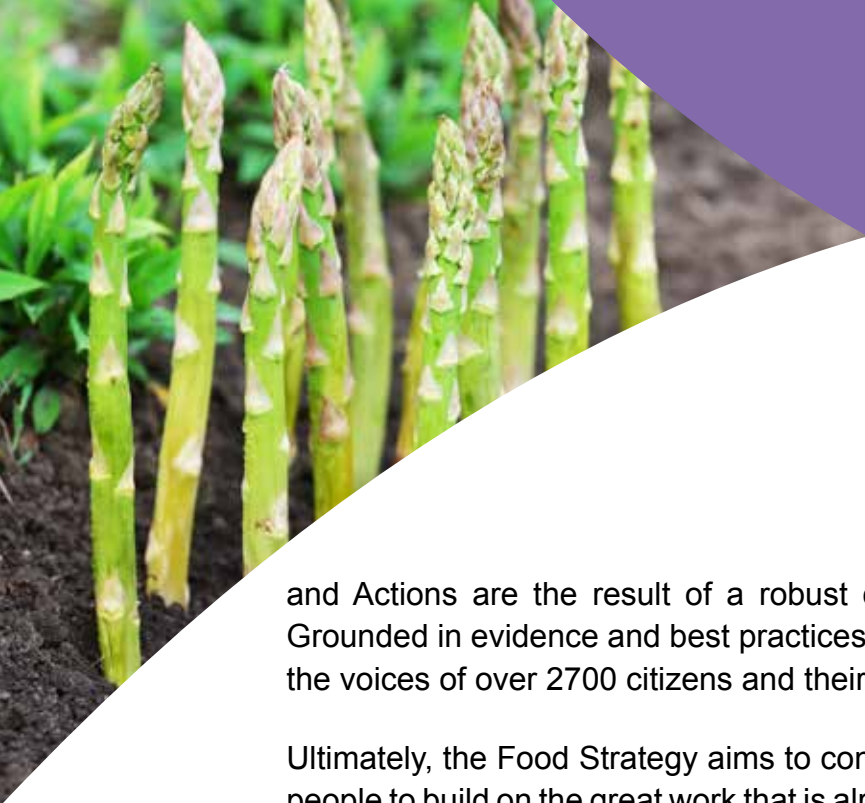
# Forward



Food plays a vital role in the lives of our citizens and our city – food nourishes us, connects us with each other, and adds to a vibrant and prosperous community. Two years ago, the City of Hamilton endorsed a vision of Hamilton as “a city with a sustainable food system where all people at all times have economic and physical access to enough safe, nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences.”

To make that vision a reality, Public Health Services has collaborated with Planning and Economic Development, Community and Emergency Services, and Public Works on the development of the Food Strategy. This Strategy will serve to guide the food related work of City departments while supporting collaboration and innovation within the City and with community partners from all sectors of the food system. It takes a holistic approach that looks at all the parts of a food system to optimize the allocation of resources for food actions.

This Food Strategy highlights the rich food-related history of our city as well as food-related initiatives already underway. Building on the strength of current food actions, the logical next step is to address the gaps and challenges to our vision. The Food Strategy Goals, Recommendations,



and Actions are the result of a robust community engagement process. Grounded in evidence and best practices around food systems, they reflect the voices of over 2700 citizens and their priorities around food in our city.

Ultimately, the Food Strategy aims to connect food policies, programs, and people to build on the great work that is already happening, while addressing gaps and working more effectively together. We envision this Food Strategy as a powerful tool that will guide our progress toward a healthy, sustainable, and just food system for all Hamilton residents.

We bring this Food Strategy Report to Council for endorsement with confidence and pride. Thank you to the community leaders, citizens, and staff who have shaped this plan. It has been a privilege to be a part of it.

Dr. Tran,  
Associate Medical Officer of Health  
City of Hamilton Public Health Services

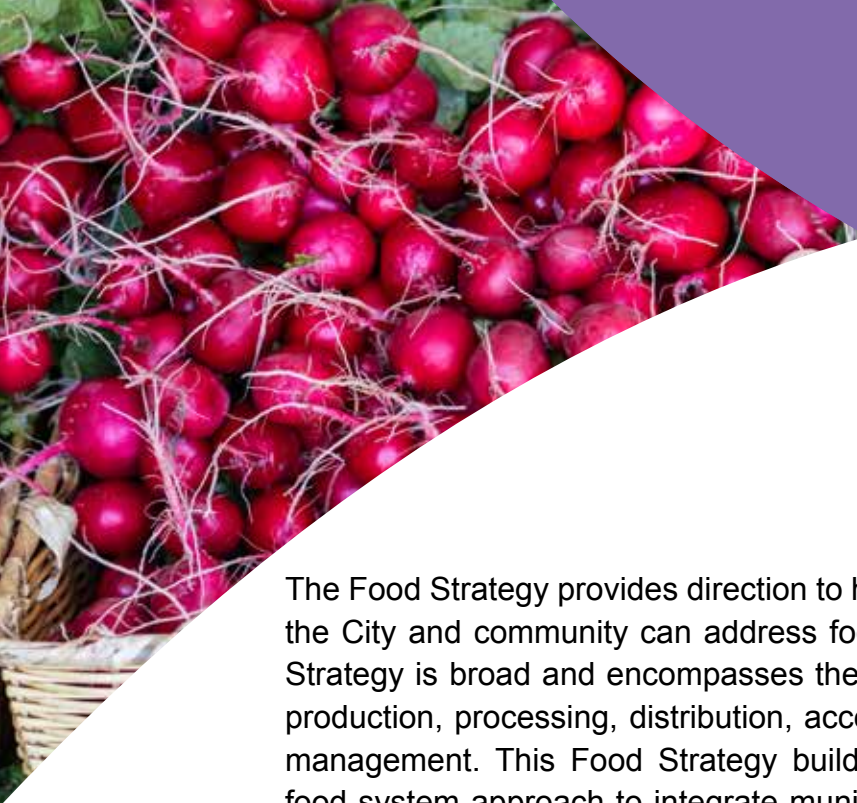


## Executive Summary

Hamilton's rich history of food actions has led to many positive outcomes. However, some actions have led to stand-alone policies and programs that require monetary and staffing resources. In addition, Council often receives funding requests for "stand-alone or one-off" food programs and actions that may not be sustainable, supported by evidence, or best practices.

In 2012 Council requested that a comprehensive Food Strategy be developed to prioritize responses to community requests for City resources for food actions and to create a strategic plan for actions over the next ten years to ensure a healthy, sustainable, and just local food system for all residents. Public Health Services was directed to lead the development of the Food Strategy in collaboration with Planning and Economic Development, Community and Emergency Services, and Public Works.

An extensive community engagement process was completed to ensure that the community's concerns and aspirations were consistently understood, considered, and reflected in the Food Strategy. Over 2700 Hamiltonians participated in providing input to the Food Strategy. Four major themes emerged, affirming that the community wants system-wide approaches, ensure there is universal access to healthy foods (not constrained by income or location), a focus on local food and local agriculture (urban and rural), and enhanced food literacy for all. Hamiltonians said they expect innovation and leadership from the City in all areas of our local the food system.



The Food Strategy provides direction to help guide decision making on how the City and community can address food issues. The scope of the Food Strategy is broad and encompasses the entire food system including food production, processing, distribution, access, consumption, and food waste management. This Food Strategy builds on our assets and is a holistic food system approach to integrate municipal food decisions together from separate policy and program areas.

The Food Strategy provides a vision for our community, core principles that underpin the Strategy, four overarching Goals, 14 Recommendations, and 46 Actions based on a food system framework. Five priority actions from the 46 Actions have been identified to focus on first over the next two to three years. The Food Strategy is the result of an extensive community engagement, in addition to being informed by evidence, best practices, and local existing work and expertise. Like any strategy or plan, the Food Strategy should be considered a living document that is open to review and consideration of new opportunities with strong potential to ensure Hamilton has a healthy, sustainable, and just food system.





# Background



## Introduction

Because food impacts our daily lives, it is increasingly being recognized as an important issue in building great cities and neighbourhoods. Food is one of the powerful tools in the City's toolbox for achieving many municipal goals and objectives.

Every day we make food choices that impact our health, local economy, and environment - whether we choose to shop for locally grown and produced food, prepare healthy meals, or compost our food waste. In turn, our local food system influences our food choices. A lack of access to grow food, a lack of income or physical access to easily obtain food, or being surrounded by unhealthy food can negatively impact our food choices.

Many cities, other levels of governments, and organizations around the world are thinking strategically of how to create sustainable local food systems. At the municipal level, this is a growing area of strategic planning and policymaking that addresses local food production, distribution, access, consumption, and food waste management. A holistic food system approach integrates municipal food decisions together from separate policy and program areas. This attention to local food systems results in food strategies that prioritize actions intended to achieve the most effective results.

Hamilton's Food Strategy is a guide to help people think about, engage in, and implement effective food actions. Specifically, the intent of the Food Strategy is to present a ten year plan to guide the City and community stakeholders in decision making for food initiatives that require resources, such as funds, infrastructure, policies, programs, and staffing. Like any strategy or plan, the Food Strategy should be considered a living document that is open to review and consideration of new opportunities with strong potential to ensure Hamilton has a healthy, sustainable, and just food system.



## Report Format

The Food Strategy report is presented in a step-wise format. The first part of the report begins with background information, including an overview of Hamilton’s significant food actions, the development of the Food Strategy, and the framework used to guide its development. Highlights of the current context of Hamilton’s local food system are also presented.

Next, the Food Strategy’s vision and principles are presented, followed by a summary of the community consultation results that helped shape the final goals, recommendations, and actions. The Food Strategy goals and what success will look like when they are achieved are described. This is followed by the 14 recommendations and 46 strategic actions that are intended to be implemented to reach the goals.

The last part of the report presents five priority actions identified from the 46 actions that will be the focus over the next two to three years. In addition, four easy “low hanging fruit” actions and three community actions currently underway have also been identified. The report concludes with the next steps needed to ensure that the Food Strategy is effectively implemented, monitored, and evaluated.






# Hamilton's Rich History of Food Actions

Addressing food actions is not a new phenomenon in Hamilton. In almost every City department, staff are engaged in food actions, from where food can be grown and sold to managing food waste. City led strategies, such as the Community Vision, Neighbourhood Action Strategy, Cultural Plan, Climate Change Action Plan, and our involvement in the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance demonstrate how food is integral to building a healthy, vibrant city for everyone.

Many citizens and community stakeholders have contributed to Hamilton's rich history of food actions. Advisory committees have given input to food related policies that address community gardens, urban agriculture, farmers' markets, and other important issues, such as household food insecurity.







While not explicitly stated as such, Hamilton's food policies and programs have been working toward a healthy, sustainable, and just food system:

- In 2010, Hamilton passed the Community Garden Policy. New community gardens are being developed each year, with the City leasing space and offering free compost and wood chip deliveries.
- City funding has helped the Community Garden Network to continue to provide start-up support, resources, and connect gardeners to each other.
- In September 2014, City Council passed the Urban Hamilton Official Plan Amendment and amendments to the seven zoning by-laws to permit urban agriculture (urban farms and community gardens) in certain geographic areas within the City.
- In April 2015, Council passed the Urban Hamilton Official Plan Amendment to permit urban farmers' markets in certain areas within the City. An urban farmers' market would be permitted subject to certain regulations, in conjunction with institutional and recreational facilities, as well as commercial areas.
- The Hamilton Farmers' Market is seeing new food vendors start up and a new Board of Directors established.
- Since 2009, Hamilton has been an active partner in the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance and the Food and Farming: An Action Plan 2021.
- The City Enrichment Fund now includes the Agriculture and Environment streams, with guidelines and applications for 2016 funding through the Operating Grants stream for non-profit agricultural organizations.



- The McQuesten Urban Farm is currently under development, with the goal of commencing operation in spring 2016. The farm will run as a social enterprise with the goal of making fresh food available for McQuesten and other nearby neighbourhoods, as well as providing food education and job skills training to residents.
- Since 2007, Council has allocated up to \$350,000 in one-time funding from the City of Hamilton Reserves to off-set costs for food and staff shortages at the City's food banks and for the Christmas Hamper Program administered by Hamilton Food Share and its member agencies. In 2015, council approved this programming be supported through Provincial homelessness funding, a more sustainable funding source.
- In the East Hamilton area, City funds will ensure that community stakeholders include a commercial kitchen and food skills teaching space as part of the food bank development in Riverdale's Neighbourhood Action Plan.
- In fall 2015, the City awarded \$400,000 (\$200,000 Capital, \$200,000 Operating) for 2016 and will consider future approval of up to an additional \$800,000 over the following 4 years for Neighbour to Neighbour to create and operate a community food centre on the West Mountain.



## Examples of Hamilton Food Actions across the Food System, 2016

Production	Processing & Distribution	Buying & Selling	Consumption	Waste Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Farms</li> <li>• Community Gardens</li> <li>• McQuesten Urban Farm</li> <li>• Victory Gardens</li> <li>• School Gardens</li> <li>• Farm Map</li> <li>• Farm Tours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Processors</li> <li>• Artisanal Food Processors</li> <li>• Kitchen Incubators</li> <li>• Grain Terminal</li> <li>• Bike Delivery</li> <li>• Shipping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers' Markets</li> <li>• Mustard Seed Coop Grocery Store</li> <li>• Good Food Box</li> <li>• CSA</li> <li>• Independent, locally owned restaurants &amp; cafes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Kitchens</li> <li>• Food Literacy</li> <li>• Community Food Advisors</li> <li>• Nutritious Food Basket</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Bin Program</li> <li>• Backyard Compost Program</li> <li>• Multi-residential Waste Diversion Program</li> </ul>



## Examples of Current Hamilton System-wide Resources & Tools

- Hamilton Community Garden Policy, 2010
- Zoning By-law amendments, 2014, 2015 (Urban Agriculture and Farmers' Markets)
- Food for All, A Food Charter for Hamilton, 2014
- City Enrichment Funds, Nobody is Hungry/without Shelter, 2014
- City Enrichment Fund, Environment and Agriculture streams, 2015
- Small Business Enterprise Centre
- Food Advisory Committee, 2016
- Hamilton Community Garden Network





## Development of Hamilton's Food Strategy

Hamilton's rich history of food actions has led to many positive outcomes. However, some past projects have led to stand-alone policies and programs that require monetary and staffing resources. In addition, City Council often receives funding requests for "stand-alone or one-off" food programs and actions that may not be sustainable, or supported by evidence or best practices.

At Council's request in 2012 for a comprehensive Food Strategy, Public Health Services led the development of the Strategy in collaboration with Planning and Economic Development, Community and Emergency Services, and Public Works (See Appendix A for detailed Timeline).

# Milestones in Developing Hamilton's Food Strategy



## August 2012

- Board of Health requested a food strategy be developed



## July 2013

- Interdepartmental Food Strategy Steering Team formed



## December 2013

- Internal scan of City resources allocated to current food initiatives



## November 2014

- Food Summit, "soft launch" of community engagement



## August 2014

- Board of Health approved community engagement and endorse Food Charter for Hamilton



## June 2014

- Food Strategy vision, principles, and goals drafted



## March 2015 to September 2015

- Formal community engagement, over **2700** citizens provided input



## November 2015

- Food Advisory Committee approved to start in 2016
- 2 Open Houses present and confirm community engagement results



## December 2015 to May 2016

- Food Strategy Report drafted



## August 2016

- Food Strategy and recommendations presented to Board of Health for endorsement and approval to create the Implementation Plan



## Alignment of the Food Strategy with City Strategies and Plans

<b>City Initiatives</b>	<b>Alignment</b>
<b>Our Future Hamilton Community Vision</b>	<p>Healthy &amp; Safe Communities theme aims to ensure everyone eats healthy and has physical and economic access to healthy local food, and that food providers offer nutritious local food options and nutrition information</p> <p>Economic Prosperity &amp; Growth theme aims to promote and support our local food sector and enhance opportunities for employment</p>
<b>Cultural Plan 2013</b>	<p>Celebrating our vibrant, local food scene and promoting the culinary arts inspires and connects people, fosters community identity, and builds strong communities</p>
<b>Golden Horseshoe Food &amp; Farming: An Action Plan 2021</b>	<p>Growing, promoting, and supporting our local food and agricultural sector contributes to our local economy and sustainable livelihoods</p>
<b>Economic Development Strategy</b>	<p>Business Development, Agri-business and Food Processing: Establishing Hamilton as a major Food and Beverage Processing centre in Ontario goal contributes to strengthening our local economy and position the City as a leader in food innovation</p>



<b>City Initiatives</b>	<b>Alignment</b>
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**Neighbourhood  
Action Plans**

Urban agriculture and community kitchens contribute to creating engaged and healthy neighbourhoods, where residents can access nutritious food and achieve food literacy

**Climate Change  
Action Plan**

Supporting local food production and buying local reduces the distance that food travels from farm to consumers, which contributes to reducing Greenhouse Gas

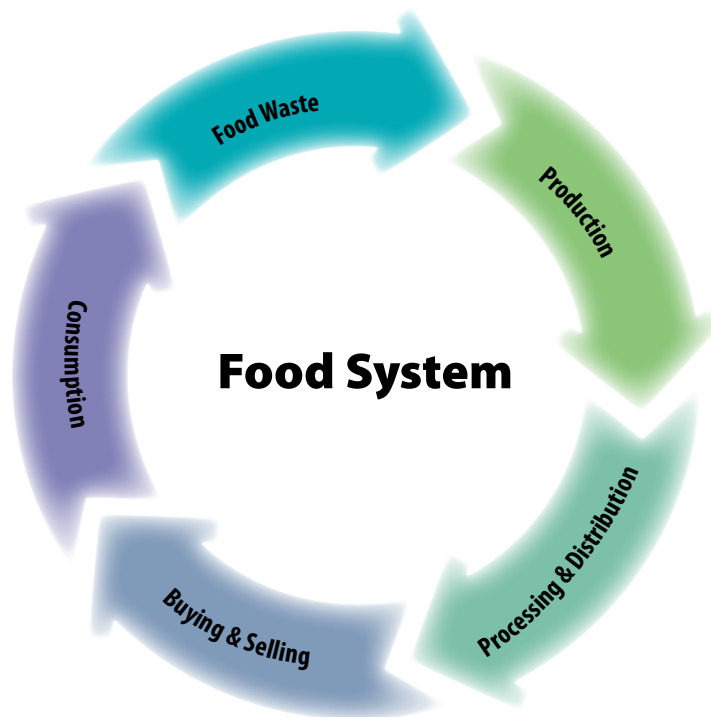




## Food Strategy Framework

Hamilton's Food Strategy was developed using a food systems framework to ensure food policies and programs address all the processes that impact what and how people eat. A healthy community food system is one where all of these components work together to enhance the environmental, economic, social, and nutritional health of a community.

The following food system framework was used to guide the development of the original proposed Food Strategy goals that formed the basis for community consultation discussions (See Appendix B for original proposed goals).





## Components of a Food System

### Food Production

- Food production includes rural and urban farming and gardening practices that involve growing our raw food crops (e.g., vegetables, fruit, grain, etc.) and providing animal-based foods (e.g., meat, milk products, eggs, etc.).

### Processing and Distribution

- Food processing takes raw food and converts it into another edible form (e.g., canning vegetables, smoking meats, milling flour, roasting coffee, etc.). Food distribution is the final connector in the food supply between food producers/processors and consumers – it is how food gets from the farm or garden to our table, and all the stops along the way.

### Buying and Selling

- Food buying and selling involves conventional retail outlets (e.g., grocery, convenience, and big box stores, specialty food stores, restaurants, cafes, etc.) and alternative direct-to-consumer retail (e.g., farm gate sales, food box programs, community supported agriculture, farmers' markets, etc.) where citizens can access food.

### Consumption

- What and where we eat, and who is at the table are all related to food consumption. Our eating habits are affected by our food skills, knowledge, culture, social networks, and our physical and economic access to food.

### Food Waste

- Food waste is all the edible food that gets produced but not eaten and all of the food packaging used to get food to consumers.



## Hamilton's Food System

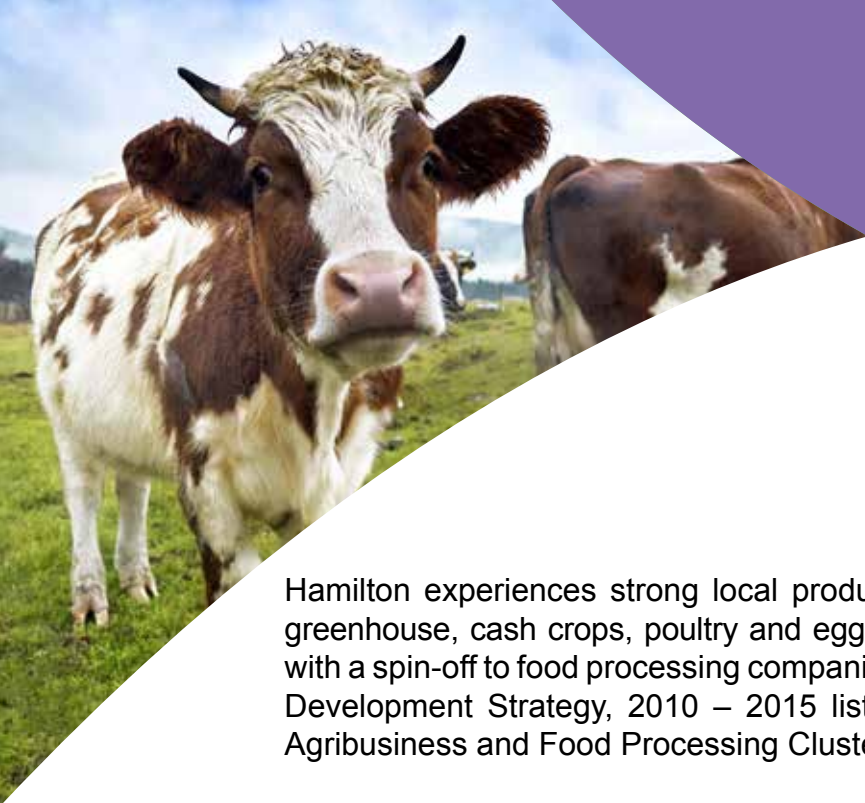
To develop the Food Strategy and monitor its effectiveness, it is important to know how robust our local food system is currently. Based on available data, the following presents a high level overview of Hamilton's food system and a starting point to help establish performance measures for the Food Strategy.

### Food Production

#### **Commitment to a Strong Agricultural Sector**

Hamilton has a vibrant and productive agricultural sector, benefiting from quality soil, a mild climate, and an adequate water supply. The majority of land within Hamilton's boundaries (approximately 220,000 acres) is considered rural, of which 56% is prime agricultural land. Considering only 5 percent of the Canadian land mass constitutes prime agricultural land, the importance of this resource to our community cannot be understated.

A recent Agriculture Profile of the Golden Horseshoe and City of Hamilton report shows that agriculture is a significant component of the local economy and generates approximately \$893 million in economic activity into the City of Hamilton on an annual basis. This is a direct increase of approximately \$70 million over the impact calculated in the agricultural profile from 2008.



Hamilton experiences strong local production in nursery, sod and maple, greenhouse, cash crops, poultry and egg, vegetable, mushroom, and dairy, with a spin-off to food processing companies. The City of Hamilton Economic Development Strategy, 2010 – 2015 lists 580 businesses as part of the Agribusiness and Food Processing Cluster.

The City of Hamilton developed a long term Agricultural Action Plan in 2007 that identified tasks to support and sustain Hamilton's agriculture sector, which is largely reflected in the City's new Rural Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

“Agriculture is a vital component of the physical, environmental, economic, cultural, and social structure of the City of Hamilton. The strength, diversity and potential of this industry are recognized by Council and the community it represents, and will be protected and promoted so it can continue to grow and evolve.”



## Number and Size of Hamilton's Rural Farms over Time

Farmland is essential to Hamilton's food system; however, despite a strong commitment to Hamilton's agricultural sector, external forces such as the global food system and the challenges of maintaining a sustainable livelihood by farming have impacted local agriculture.

Since 1981, the number of farms has been decreasing across Ontario and in Hamilton. According to the 2011 Census of Agriculture, in 1981 there were 1,553 farms in Hamilton; by 2011, this number declined to 885 farms. Between 2006 and 2011, Hamilton experienced a 9% decrease in number of farms, which is comparable to the provincial decrease in number of farms. Overall, compared to 30 years ago, there are 28% fewer farms in Hamilton. And the average size of Hamilton farms (148 acres) is below the provincial average of 244 acres.

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of Hamilton farms by farm type saw a slight decrease in almost all types, with the exception of cash crop farms, which experienced an increase. In addition, Hamilton experienced a 5.6% reduction in total census farm acres from 1991 (138,382 acres) to 2011 (130,589 acres). During this same timeframe, the total percentage of farm acres owned decreased by 10%, with a concurrent 10% increase in this land being rented, leased, or crop shared.

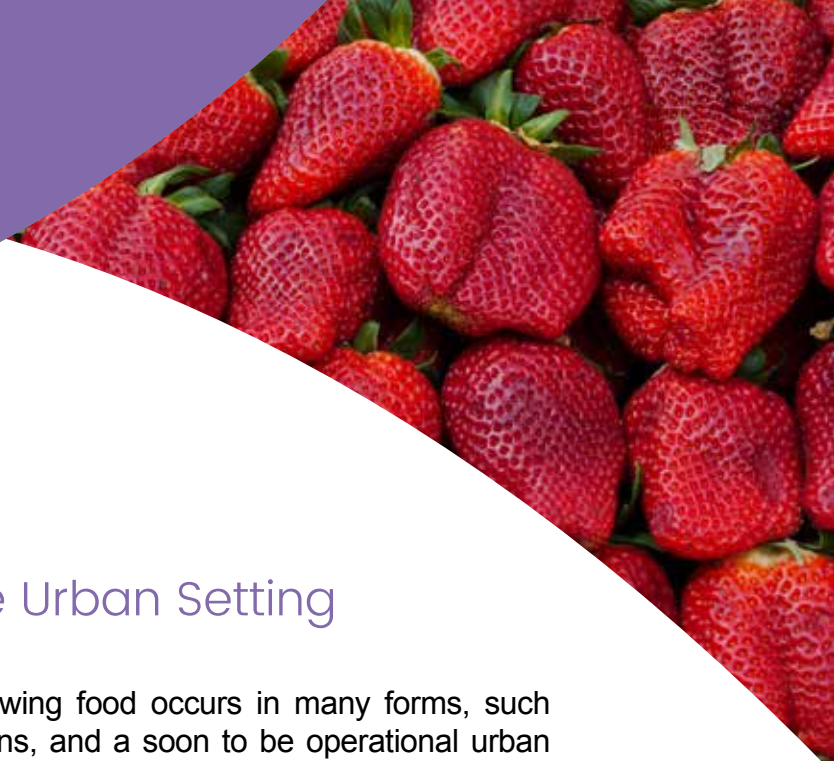
Overall, Hamilton is experiencing a slow decline in farmland, with fewer, but larger farms. As more farms move toward cash crop farming, there is a decrease in the type of farms that produce food that could feed our community. Currently, Hamilton's agricultural industry does not grow enough food for everyone to eat local, yet the demand for local food continues to grow.





The City, for the past several years, has partnered with Environment Hamilton to produce a hard copy and online version of the Hamilton Farm Map and Directory, which promotes local agriculture to consumers, tourists, and businesses. There is strong community support to enhance current efforts to strengthen the connections between local food producers and consumers by exploring innovative ways to build on the promotion of the Hamilton Farm Map and Directory. Many municipalities have established strong marketing and promotional initiatives. For example, Taste Real™ is a collaborative of over 120 partners in the Guelph area supporting local small food businesses and farms to grow a vibrant, local food economy and be a food tourism destination.





## Food Production in the Urban Setting

In the urban areas of Hamilton, growing food occurs in many forms, such as home gardens, community gardens, and a soon to be operational urban farm. Many cities have now recognized the health, social, environmental, and economic benefits that urban agriculture can bring to residents. Opportunities or challenges for growing food within a city can be impacted by many factors, such as access to land and other resources, municipal zoning and by-laws, and transportation to and from garden sites.

One of Hamilton's food system strengths is the existence of regulatory tools that facilitate food production within our urban boundary, including the Community Gardens Policy and the Urban Hamilton Official Plan Amendment zoning by-laws that permit urban agriculture (urban farms and community gardens) in certain geographic areas within the City.

The City of Hamilton defines urban agriculture as consisting of urban farms and community gardens. Together, these are considered part of Hamilton's community infrastructure, providing opportunity for social inclusion, local economic development, education, and learning. Urban agriculture contributes to community and neighbourhood sustainability, community health and nutrition, and provides land use diversity that helps achieve complete communities.



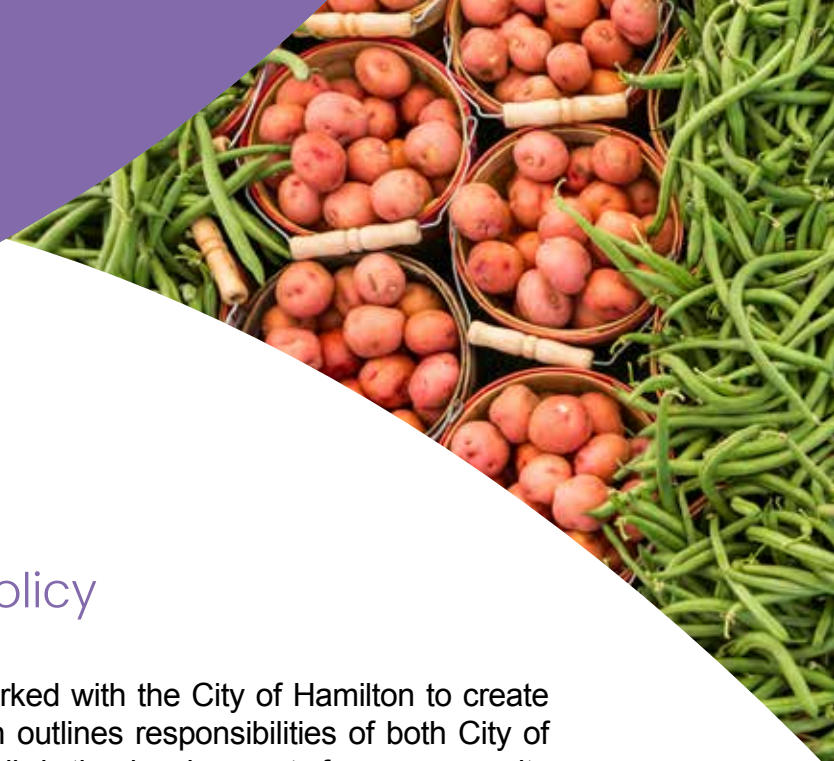
## Home Gardens

The popularity of gardening continues to grow across Canada as people look for ways to take control over what they eat. Fifty percent (50%) of Hamilton respondents from the Food Strategy survey reported that they grow some food for their household. Respondents with a higher level of education and income were more likely to grow food. Over three quarters (78.8%) gardened on their own property, while ten percent (10.2%) used a community garden. Respondents with a lower income were more likely to use a community garden or container garden, likely reflecting lower home ownership compared to respondents with a higher income.

## Community Gardens

Historically, community gardens or victory gardens have been used during periods of war when there was a disruption in normal food distribution resulting in food shortages. In general, a community garden can be defined as any piece of land, public or private, where plants are grown and maintained by a group of individuals in the community. Community gardens generally produce food for individual consumption, to provide produce for emergency food services, or for educational purposes. In some cities, such as Vancouver, Toronto, and Halifax, rooftops and brownfields have been converted into community gardens.





## Community Garden Policy

In 2010, community stakeholders worked with the City of Hamilton to create the Community Garden Policy, which outlines responsibilities of both City of Hamilton staff and members of the public in the development of new community gardens on City lands. Hamilton's Community Garden Policy defines community gardens as follows:

“Community Garden” shall mean land used for the growing and harvesting of plants, vegetables or fruits and provided the crops are for the sole use, donation or consumption by the individual or individuals growing or working the community garden. It shall not be considered as landscaped area, landscape open space, and landscaped strip or landscaping.”

However, community gardening in Hamilton was well established before this policy ever existed. In 2007, the Hamilton Community Garden Network (HCGN) was formed and has been going strong ever since. The HCGN is a food asset that supports Hamilton's garden community to access resources and garden space through their online interactive garden directory and map. City resources and several community organizations, such as Green Venture and Neighbour to Neighbour, have been instrumental in keeping the HCGN alive and thriving.



As of May 2016, there were 87 community gardens included in the HCGN database. Included in this count, are the 34 community gardens located on CityHousing Hamilton properties. The community gardens at the non-profit housing sites owned and operated by the City of Hamilton are an example of how the City can use its infrastructure and be a leader in creating supportive environments so that residents have increased access to nutritious food.

It has been 6 years since the Community Garden Policy was created. Given the trend to explore other innovative ways to grow food in the city, there is strong support to review this policy to help facilitate these initiatives.



For the past few years, there has been community interest in developing a list of publically-owned parks and vacant land that could be suitable for community gardens. In addition, opportunities for innovative alternative modes of growing good, such as on roof tops, greenhouses, or vertical gardening should be assessed. This inventory could be used for the site-specific identification of properties and a useful administration resource in support of community gardening in the City.





## Hamilton Victory Gardens

Hamilton Victory Gardens is a non-profit made up of approximately 250 community volunteers with the mandate to alleviate hunger and food insecurity. This dedicated group has been transforming empty city lots into places of community, education, and growth since 2011. Their approach combines urban agriculture and charitable giving, where students and volunteers learn about sustainable agriculture methods with the ambitious goal of growing thousands of pounds of fresh produce for local food banks and hot meal programs. In 2015, Hamilton Victory Gardens grew 45,004 pounds of produce on 12 garden sites.

## Urban Farming

Up until 2014, Hamilton regulations did not permit urban growers to sell their produce because these regulations only allow for the growing of food for personal consumption or for donation. Recognizing that there was community interest in selling produce grown in urban areas, the City incorporated zoning by-laws into its Urban Hamilton Official Plan Amendment to permit urban agriculture in certain geographic areas within the City. This means that urban growers can pursue some forms of larger, more sophisticated urban agriculture operations within the City where this is a permitted land use with the intention of selling the produce on-site.

As part of Hamilton's Neighbourhood Action Strategy, the McQuesten Neighbourhood Action Plan includes an urban farm, which is planned to launch in 2016. The goal is to grow and provide organic produce to residents at low cost. In 2015, Hamilton Victory Gardens built over 200 garden plots at the McQuesten Urban Farm. Some of the harvest was sold at a low-cost on-site farmers' market to residents in the neighbourhood, setting the stage for future actions to emerge from the urban farm.



## Food Processing and Distribution

Ontario's food and beverage processors purchase about 65% of the food produced on the province's farms.

Farming is the base for a thriving secondary manufacturing industry in Hamilton. In the global food system, farmers receive little of the profits associated with the retail cost of food. It is through the processing and distribution steps that most value is "added" to food, increasing profit margins beyond raw, unprocessed food. Transportation, packaging, advertising, and other energy and labour costs all contribute to the cost of food by the time it reaches consumers.

The entire agriculture and agri-business sector in Hamilton employed 9,400 people in 2012. The agri-food cluster in Hamilton is dominated by smaller businesses and a few large employers involved in food processing.

### Food is the New Steel

The City of Hamilton is home to a considerable number of food and beverage companies involved in food processing. Food and Beverage manufacturing is the second largest manufacturing industry in Hamilton both in terms of revenue and employment. Some of the larger food processing operations in Hamilton include Maple Leaf Foods, Oakrun Farm Bakery, Bunge, and ED Smith. There is also a growing trend of mid to small scale food processing entrepreneurs in Hamilton, such as those operating commercial kitchens for rent, coffee roasters, and retail and commercial bakeries.

Distribution of food is heavily supported by infrastructure, such as roads, trucks, rail, air, and ships. Infrastructure also includes grain mills, abattoirs, storage and packing facilities, and the businesses and services required to move food from farms throughout our city and globally. In Hamilton, food distribution

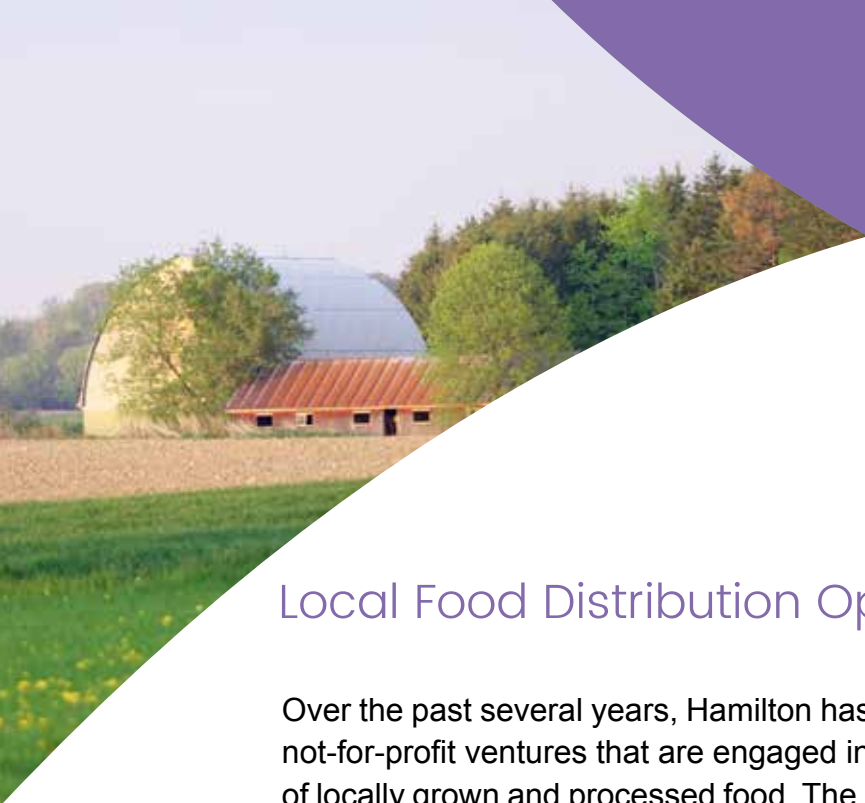




occurs in many ways, including both traditional (e.g., trucking, shipping) and alternative (e.g., bike delivery, community pick up points) distribution models.

Hamilton's port is ideally located for agri-food exporters and is a major driver in the local economy. In recent years, the Port of Hamilton has attracted \$200 million in private sector investment to upgrade storage facilities, grain handling facilities, and upgraded rail lines. The Port of Hamilton is one of Ontario's primary agricultural gateways, with agri-food tonnage exceeding 1.8 million tonnes in 2013. Agricultural commodities, including grain and fertilizer, now represent 18% of the Port's total tonnage (2015), up from 9.8% in 2009.





## Local Food Distribution Opportunities

Over the past several years, Hamilton has seen growth in both for-profit and not-for-profit ventures that are engaged in food aggregation and distribution of locally grown and processed food. The Farm Network, an artisan gourmet and specialty food distribution company based in Hamilton is an example of local food entrepreneurs who aspire to connect local small-scale farm and artisan products to consumers.

One of the challenges that smaller growers face in getting their product to market is achieving volume and consistency that will attract retail buyers. While the demand for local food continues to rise, there are distribution challenges for medium and small scale food producers, such as a lack of a local supply network or a food hub.

A 2009 study assessed whether there was sufficient industry support to establish a regional food distribution initiative in the Hamilton and Niagara areas. The findings confirmed that there was a perceived need to establish this type of initiative in the Hamilton and Niagara areas.

Hamilton has a strong base to build upon, and strengthening existing local food infrastructure would provide alternate means of distributing food between farmers and local businesses. Exploring the feasibility for a regional food hub would allow small and medium sized producers to pool their resources and provide larger, more predictable quantities of produce, increase local processing capacity, and reach more consumers.

### Best Practices

In 2004, the Elmira Produce Auction Cooperative was established in Waterloo Region to provide both a market to producers of local food and an outlet for retailers who want to have local food on their shelves. Members pay 10% of all sales to help cover overhead costs, and buyers must purchase three or more boxes of produce. Since opening sales have increased 600 per cent, and the warehouse was expanded to handle more volume.





# Food Access & Consumption

## Food Access

Economic and geographic access to nutritious food is vital to maintaining good health. Grocery stores, convenience stores, discount department stores, and even drug stores offer many opportunities for accessing food.

The food environment plays a critical role in shaping how people make food choices every day. The “community food environment” generally refers to the number and types of food outlets in a neighbourhood. This is what is often measured to assess people’s geographic access to food. The “consumer food environment” refers to food availability, variety, price, and quality of foods and the consumer information found within food retail outlets. These features are what people experience once they are in the store.

## Food Deserts or Food Swamps

Food deserts are low income neighbourhoods or communities with limited or no geographic access to healthy food retail. The existence of food deserts in the United States is well supported by research; however, in Canada evidence is lacking for widespread food deserts within urban centres. With the exception of a few studies, the majority of Canadian studies have found no differences between disadvantaged and advantaged areas in terms of geographic food access. In some studies, disadvantaged areas actually had better geographic access to healthy food.

Conversely, food swamps are neighbourhoods or communities with easy access to unhealthy food, generally at fast food restaurants and convenience or small corner stores. In Canada, the existence of food swamps is more of a problem than food deserts.





## Hamilton's Community Food Environment

Mapping of food retail locations in 2010 showed that Hamilton had just over 300 convenience stores. The abundance of these stores (in comparison to approximately 65 supermarkets/grocery stores in Hamilton) highlights the many opportunities for Hamiltonians to access unhealthy foods typically sold in these outlets.

In 2012, a randomized telephone survey of 500 Hamiltonians was conducted to gain an understanding of where they shop for food and why they choose the retailers they do. Some key findings showed that

- 90% shop at supermarket/grocery stores
- convenience and price top the list of reasons to shop or not shop at local neighbourhood establishments
- a lack of local healthy shopping options decreases the amount of grocery shopping respondents did in their neighbourhoods
- respondents without access to a car are less likely to think they have healthy food retail in their neighbourhood
- overall, 44% of respondents said they would shop a corner store if they sold a variety of healthy foods
- in contrast, 61% of respondents without access to a healthy local grocer or a car said that they would shop at one if they were given the chance



In follow-up to the 2012 shopping survey, a 2014 Hamilton survey of eight corner stores in Hamilton areas with limited access to a supermarket or grocery store showed that these stores

- offered very few healthy food options
- usually carried basic staples, but at almost double the price of grocery store prices
- were not inviting to shop in because of poor lay out, lack of prices on products, and uncleanliness

A photograph of a market stall with several wooden baskets filled with fresh produce. The baskets contain items like yellow squash, green cucumbers, and various peppers. A person's hand is visible on the right side, reaching for a product. A large purple circle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text.

Retail interventions, such as a healthy corner stores program present opportunities to increase healthy food options in underserved neighbours in Hamilton. These programs work with small-scale retailers to increase the availability of healthy food options within their stores, while also providing consumer education to encourage healthy food purchases.



## Farm to Consumer Initiatives

Direct-to-consumer marketing is a growing trend across Ontario and Hamilton. Consumers interested in supporting local farmers and processors can purchase food from specialty markets that focus on local products, or purchase food at direct-to-consumer options, such as farm gate sales and farmers' markets. In 2015, over 500 individuals and families participate in Hamilton's Good Food Box Program. Other opportunities to purchase local food directly from the producer in Hamilton include two year-round and nine seasonal farmers' markets, seven Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms, numerous small road-side farm stands, and 'pick-your-own' farms.

In collaboration with City of Hamilton's Economic Development staff, Environment Hamilton's on-line directory lists over 90 farms that sell food directly to consumers. Information is lacking on the percentage of Hamiltonians' total food budget that is being spent on direct-to-consumer local food and food products.





## Farm to School Food Programs

Making connections between local farms and schools is an approach that supports local agriculture while improving access to healthy food within the school environment. 3Acres, Tastebuds' Local Harvest Program works with local farms that are located within 62 kilometers from downtown Hamilton to bring fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruit into schools. The initial pilot ran for 12 weeks in 2013 at seven sites and still continues to this day. Local farms, such as Plan B Organic Farm also participate in Farm to School fundraising programs as a healthier alternative to raise funds for schools.

## Farm to Charitable Food Programs

Some Ontario farmers plant crops specifically for their local and area food banks. An estimated 25 million pounds of vegetables and fruit are disposed of, or tilled back into the soil, each year in Ontario. Organizations, such as Community Harvest Ontario work with communities to gain access to this food by building partnerships with community groups to glean and donate local produce for charitable distribution. A Hamilton Harvest Program is co-ordinated by Hamilton Food Share.





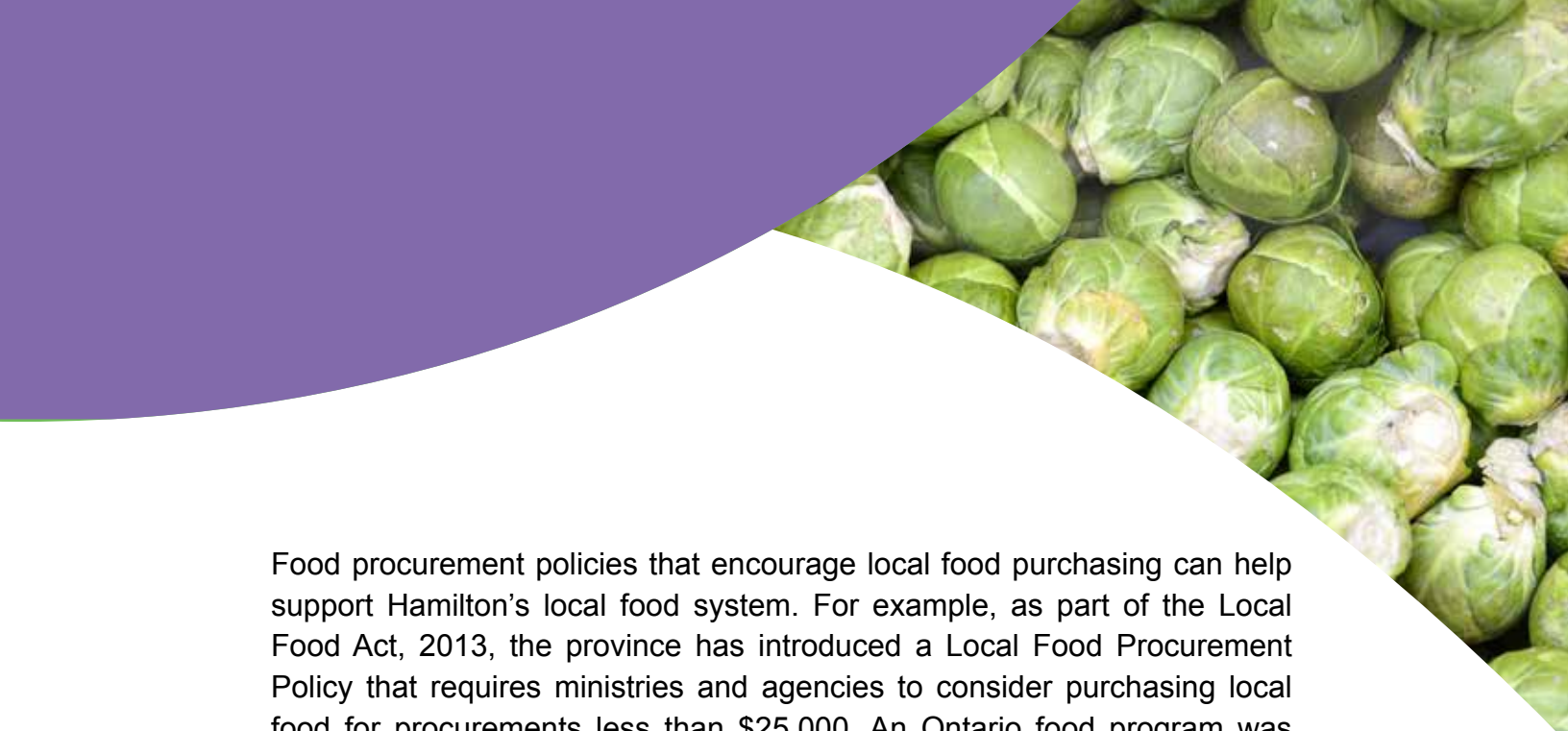
## Farm to Institution

Large institutions need significant supplies of food to meet the requirements of those they serve and employ. The Broader Public Sector (BPS) in Ontario (hospitals, long-term care homes, schools, prisons, and colleges and universities) spends an estimated \$745 million per year on food. A recent institutional purchasing study identified more than \$11 million in spending that could be replaced with local vegetables, fruit, and eggs. Increasing the amount of locally and regionally produced food purchased by these institutions has the potential to significantly impact our local economy.

One barrier to increasing the amount of local food purchased by the BPS is that most large institutions use food service management companies and/or group purchasing organizations. These companies generally require that their suppliers be able to guarantee year-round purchasing in their supply contracts. This requirement limits small producer access to both the food distributors and the BPS institutions. Other barriers also exist, including infrastructure-related challenges in handling and distributing local and regional foods, limited access to on-farm cooling and refrigeration facilities, and transportation equipment.

The Province has been instrumental in achieving some progress toward increasing the amount of local food purchased by institutions. Since 2010, the Greenbelt Fund has supported projects to link farmers to public institutions, retail, and foodservice markets.

- ✓ The City of Hamilton, in collaboration with other municipalities, has been successful in securing Greenbelt Funds to examine the opportunities, barriers, and food skills training needed to bring more local food into City owned long term care facilities.
- ✓ Mohawk College's Sustainability Office has been successful in securing Greenbelt Funds to increase local food procurement within its food service operation and serve as a model for other Ontario colleges. City staffing will be providing consultation support to this project.



Food procurement policies that encourage local food purchasing can help support Hamilton’s local food system. For example, as part of the Local Food Act, 2013, the province has introduced a Local Food Procurement Policy that requires ministries and agencies to consider purchasing local food for procurements less than \$25,000. An Ontario food program was built into the most recent contracts to run the 17 provincial government cafeterias. Municipalities, school boards, and other BPS institutions can also have procurement policies that “prefer” locally sourced food in their contracts and bid systems.



Given the number of meals served by Hamilton’s institutions, including colleges, universities, public and private schools, day care and health centres, assisted living facilities, hospitals, and government and corporate dining facilities, Local Food Procurement policies are potentially significant drivers of demand for local farm and food products, while supporting our local economy.

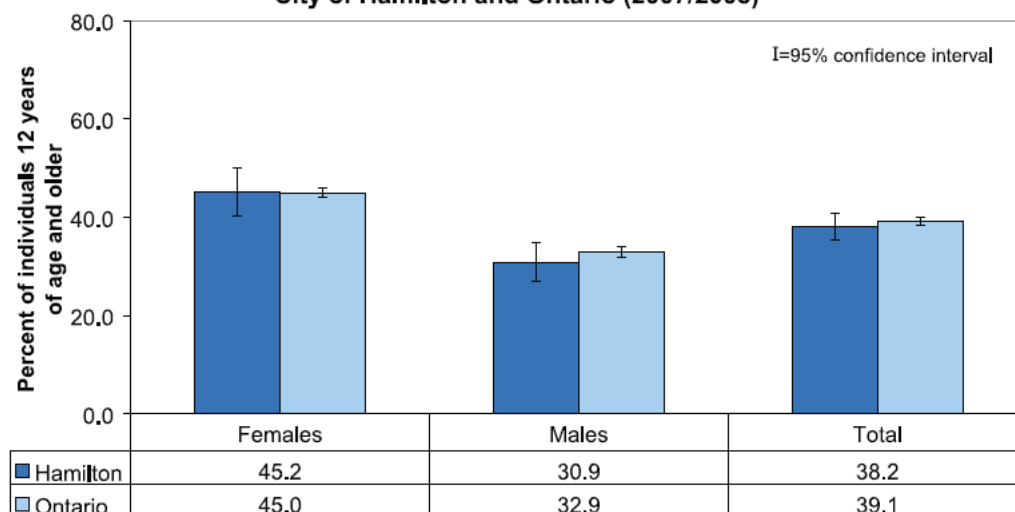


## Consumption

Vegetable and fruit consumption is associated with many health benefits including a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and some cancers. People who eat adequate amounts of vegetables and fruit are also more likely to be physically active, have a healthy weight, be non-smokers, and for women, not abusing alcohol. Vegetable and fruit intake is commonly used as a good proxy for healthy eating and is also the area where diets most commonly fall short of meeting Canada Food Guide’s recommendations.

In 2007-2008, only 38.2% of Hamiltonians 12 years of age and older reported eating vegetables and fruit five (5) or more times a day, similar to most Ontarians (39.1%). Women were more likely to consume vegetables and fruit five or more times a day than men.

**Figure 5. Percent of individuals 12 years of age and older who consume vegetables and fruit five or more times per day by sex, City of Hamilton and Ontario (2007/2008)**



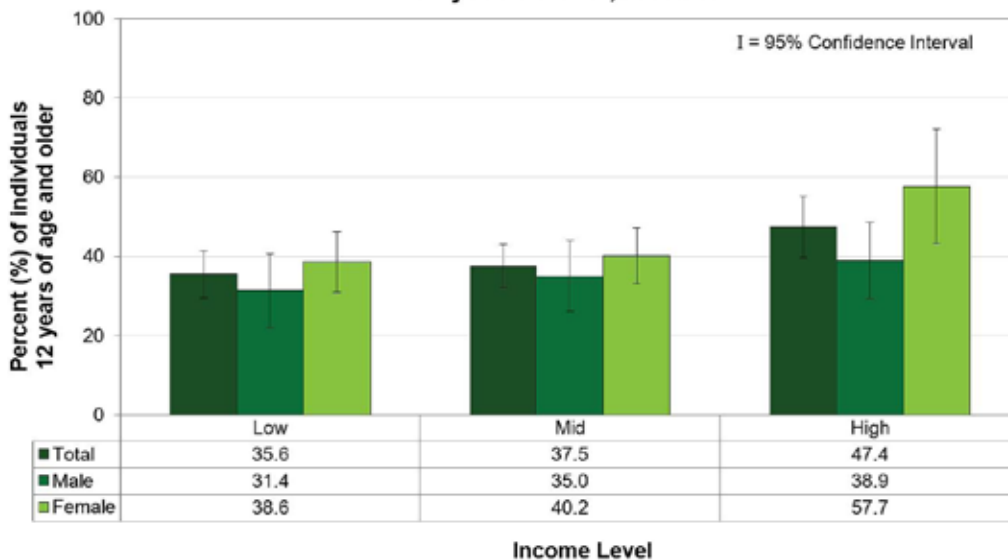
Source: Canadian Community Health Survey 2007/08, Share File, Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-term Care.






In 2009-2010, almost 36% low-income Hamiltonians 12 years or older reported they ate vegetables and fruit five or more times a day, compared to 47% of high income adults. More women of all income levels consumed vegetables and fruit more times per day compared to men. In general, the majority of Hamiltonians, regardless of income, do not meet healthy eating recommendations.

**Figure 4. Percent of Hamilton residents 12 years of age and older who consumed vegetables and fruit 5 or more times per day, by sex and household income level\*, City of Hamilton, 2009/10**



\*Based on self-reported household income and self-reported vegetable and fruit consumption.

Source: Canadian Community Health Survey 2009/10, Share File, Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-term Care.



Supporting and encouraging all citizens to eat well may reduce the risk of some preventable chronic diseases, improve quality of life, and reduce the economic burden on our health care system.

Strengthening food literacy efforts could contribute to increased consumption of a local, seasonal diet based on Canada's Food Guide, including eating at least five servings of vegetables and fruit per day. Supporting the production and marketing of local food could increase job opportunities and enhance our local economy.





## Food Consumed Outside the home

In 2011, 78.5% of Hamiltonians 18 years or older reported that they ate food prepared outside the home at least once in the past week. On average, individuals who reported eating food prepared outside the home said they did so about three times a week, regardless of income. These rates have remained fairly consistent since 2006. Over half (55.6%) of those surveyed reported that eating a nutritious meal when eating out was important to them.

The Food Strategy survey showed that higher income residents were more likely (82.2%) than people living on a low income (61.2%) to eat prepared food made outside of the home on a regular basis. When dining out at a restaurant or fast food place, the quality of the food (94.1%), quality of service (83.4%), reputation (74.7%), locally owned (74.0%), and healthy options available (70%) were more frequently rated as important/very important compared to only 14.2 % of respondents who considered brand recognition as important/very important.

Hamilton's vibrant food scene is a growing trend, with new restaurants, cafes, and food trucks creating many opportunities for Hamiltonians to dine out. The City of Hamilton's Small Business Enterprise Centre provides information and tools for entrepreneurs to grow their businesses. Tailoring activities to supporting food entrepreneurs, such as through training programs and workshops focusing on food safety, healthy eating, and business management has the potential to increase healthy food choices in local dining establishments and enhance our economy.



## Student Nutrition Programs

Hamilton's student nutrition collaborative (TasteBuds) is a partnership of community agencies and community members that support and facilitate local student nutrition programs for children and youth. The inclusive program engages students in enjoying meals and snacks in a welcoming setting to improve student success, support healthy growth, development, and lifelong eating habits. Priority is given to ensuring that programs are in place in vulnerable neighbourhoods, although the services are universal and open to all students. In 2016 in Hamilton, there were 172 Student Nutrition Programs at 120 sites. On average in 2014 - 2015, Tastebuds volunteers served healthy snacks to 30,082 students per day.

## Emergency Food Programs

Food insecurity is mainly the outcome of income insecurity and poverty. Twelve non-profit social service agencies are part of the Hamilton Emergency Food Network whose mission is "to connect people living in poverty to a network of hunger related services that relieves hunger now, and advocates towards a "hunger free community." The Network's vision is that "no one goes hungry." For many Hamiltonians facing financial crisis and inadequate incomes, the emergency food providers within the Emergency Food Network provide important portals for opportunity and stability for food insecure households by offering food as well connecting people to supports and programs.

Distributing over 5 million pounds of food each year, the organizations within the Emergency Food Network provide a vital gateway to over 100 community programs to provide a continuum of care for people living in poverty: approximately 15 per cent of the poorest households in Hamilton access an emergency food centre. The emergency food providers within the Network serve over 12,000 Hamilton residents (over 5,000 households) in need every month. These programs offer over 40 food related programs, such as public meal programs, Christmas hampers, grocery programs, and skill-building programs such as community kitchens, gardens, and nutrition information.



On a typical day in Hamilton, over 700 people will access a food bank, 276 children will line up at a food bank, and over 30 seniors will seek help to access food.

In addition to the food programs offered by the Network members, they connect people to over 50 in-house programs and community resources, such as clothing and furniture, seniors' programs, childcare, medical referrals, financial literacy, and legal support. By providing these services, the members of the Emergency Food Network aspire to alleviate hunger by providing a range of services and programs for many Hamiltonians experiencing food insecurity.



## Poverty and Household Food Insecurity

Because food insecurity results from a household's inability to access adequate food due to limited incomes, poverty is closely linked to food insecurity. In 2013, 79,450 Hamiltonians, or 15.7% of Hamilton's population, were living in poverty. A 2011-2012 survey showed that 11.6% of households in Hamilton, or more than 1 in 9, experienced some degree of food insecurity. Food insecurity is categorized on three levels: worrying about running out of food (marginal food insecurity); compromising quantity or quality of food consumed (moderate food insecurity); or reducing food intake and disrupting eating patterns due to lack of food (severe food insecurity). For 8.2% of households in Hamilton, the degree of food insecurity was moderate or severe.


The annual Nutritious Food Basket (NFB) survey provides Hamilton data on the cost of nutritious food. In 2015, the estimated average cost for a family of four to buy basic nutritious food in Hamilton was \$191 per week or \$827 per month.

The cost of living can have a major impact on the amount of money available for purchasing food among lower-income households. NFB 2015 data combined with average market rate rental housing costs in Hamilton shows that households with minimum wage employment or receiving social assistance (Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program) are likely to have incomes that are insufficient for basic living. For many living in poverty, certain fixed costs, such as paying for rent and utilities come before paying for food, which can lead to some degree of household food insecurity.

To help address poverty and ease the financial burden on families without adequate income for daily living, organizations such as those within the Emergency Food Network provide access to emergency sources of food, programs, and support to households who are paying 50-100% of their income on rent.

The most effective way to ensure all Hamiltonians are food secure is through ensuring that everyone in Hamilton has access to adequate income. This approach is most likely to reduce and possibly eliminate household food insecurity. Until all Hamiltonians have access to adequate incomes, many Hamiltonians will continue to rely on emergency food services.



A diverse group of smiling people of various ages and ethnicities, including men and women of different backgrounds, are posed together against a white background. A large purple circle is overlaid on the lower-left portion of the image, containing white text.

Improved incomes, through adequate social assistance rates, living wages, and other policies and programs that enhance household financial resources, along with increased access to affordable housing, are critical to alleviating household food insecurity. Addressing financial income inadequacy must be central in advocacy efforts to ensure nutritious food is economically accessible to Hamilton's most vulnerable residents.



## Food Waste Management

A 2014 study estimates that the quantifiable value of food waste annually in Canada is \$31 billion. When factoring in the other costs to produce and distribute food, such as energy, labour, water, and other resources, the true cost of food waste in Canada is estimated to be \$107 billion. For consumers, avoidable food waste can increase the cost of food by ten percent or more. Regardless of how much food is wasted in the home, everyone pays for the waste that occurs before it even reaches consumers.

A comprehensive approach to food waste management requires

- reducing food-related waste, such as the packaging used for food products
- reducing the amount of edible food that is wasted by increasing efficiencies in production, processing, distribution, purchasing, and preparation in as many settings as possible
- reducing compostable food items, such as food scraps and food-soiled paper that end up in landfill

The City of Hamilton is a leader in creating policies and programs to help residents practice the “3 Rs” to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste. The City’s Green Bin program enables citizens to dispose of inedible food so that it can be composted and recycled back into the food system. Composting is a process that turns kitchen and yard waste into a dark, nutrient-rich soil called humus. The soil that is produced has many environmental benefits when returned back to the soil on farms and gardens. Hamilton’s Green Bin Program produces premium compost that is food-grade, meaning that it is valued for its safe use on farms.



## Green Bin Program

In September 2002, the Organics Demonstration Project was launched in 2300 Hamilton homes. Following its success, the Organics Demonstration Project was expanded to another 2500 homes in May 2004. By April 2006, the Green Bin program was rolled out City wide to eligible curbside collection properties (single family residential properties, including family homes with less than six units). Hamilton is celebrating its 10 year anniversary of the Green Bin Program in homes across the city. In November 2010, the completion of the implementation of Multi-residential Waste Diversion Program in 1000 buildings, including 45,000 units, provided full organics and recycling programs.

To measure resident participation in Hamilton's waste diversion programs, single family curbside waste composition studies were completed in 2005, 2008/2009, 2012, and spring of 2014. Key findings from the 2014 audit of single family waste composition study indicated that 59% of households participated in both the Green Bin and blue box programs; whereas, 30% households participated in only the blue box program. The study indicated that 41% of the material in the garbage stream was compostable and could have gone into the Green Bin versus a garbage container. The Food Strategy survey showed that 76.1% of the respondents reported using the Green Bin to dispose of their food waste.

Multi-residential waste composition studies were completed in 2010 and May 2015. The 2015 study indicated that 11% of the material in the garbage stream was compostable and could have gone into the Green Bin versus garbage container. It should be noted that compostable material includes compostable paper liner bags, yard waste and paper, in addition to food waste.





## Backyard Composting

Backyard composting is a simple way to reduce the amount of waste that residents place at the curb each week. The City offers backyard composters for sale and education materials to get started. The Food Strategy online survey showed that 19.9% of the respondents reported participation in backyard composting.



Increasing the number of participants who use the Green Bin program and backyard composting where possible is an opportunity for the City to reduce compostable food items, such as food scraps and food-soiled paper ending up in landfill. And incorporating food waste management into food literacy education in as many settings as possible is another opportunity to reduce the amount of edible food that is wasted during production, processing, distribution, and purchasing.





# Community Engagement



## Food Strategy Vision

In 2014, City Council's endorsement of Food for All, A Food Charter for Hamilton helped anchor the municipal commitment to the principles of a healthy, sustainable, and just food system. In turn, the Food Charter's vision and principles helped set the foundation for the development of the Food Strategy.

Guided by a food systems framework, the Food Strategy takes a comprehensive approach to ensure community food security. Ensuring food security exists for everyone in a community includes consideration of the "Five A's of Food Security"

- Availability - Sufficient food for all people at all times.
- Accessibility - Physical and economic access to food for everyone at all times.
- Adequacy - Access to food that is nutritious and safe, and produced in environmentally sustainable ways.
- Acceptability - Access to culturally acceptable food, which is produced and obtained in ways that do not compromise people's dignity, self-respect, or human rights.
- Agency - The policies and processes that enable the achievement of food security.

### Vision

A city with a sustainable food system where all people at all times have economic and physical access to enough safe, nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences





## Food Strategy Principles

The Food Strategy's principles are derived from the Food Charter and are strongly supported by the community engagement results. The Food Strategy principles envision a healthy, sustainable, and just food system as the following:

### **A Healthy Food System will**

- Enable the overall health and well-being of Hamiltonians
- Lower the risk of chronic diseases
- Reduce the risk of food-borne illness
- Allow for nutritious and personally acceptable foods in all places where food is available, such as home, workplace, school, retail settings, community centres, and entertainment complexes

### **A Sustainable Food System will**

- Ensure the economic viability of the Hamilton food sector for producers, processors, distributors, and retailers
- Preserve and protect Hamilton farmland, watersheds, and the species diversity of animal, plant, and seed stock
- Allow for the development of urban agriculture
- Use processes that sustain or enhance the natural environment in both rural and urban settings at every stage of the food system
- Lessen the impact of variations in food supply
- Celebrate food that is grown locally

### **A Just Food System will**

- Provide opportunities for all residents to acquire safe, nutritious, and personally acceptable food
- Give a voice to people marginalized by the present food system
- Reflect the real cost of food production
- Support a living wage economy to allow everyone to buy food



## Community Engagement

Community engagement serves many purposes, such as to convey and explain information, to gain support for an initiative, and to collaborate in decision-making. Based on the International Association for Public Participation's Spectrum of Participation, the community engagement process was a multi-pronged approach aimed at gaining the maximum community participation needed to make positive changes happen.

An extensive community engagement process was undertaken to ensure that the community's concerns and aspirations were consistently understood, considered, and reflected in the Food Strategy. Over 2700 Hamiltonians participated in the community engagement process. A number of creative tactics were used, including an online survey, workshops, and face-to-face communications and consultations (See Appendix C for details).

Four major themes emerged that affirmed that the community wants system-wide approaches, ensure that there is universal access to healthy foods (not constrained by income or location), a focus on local food and local agriculture (urban and rural), and enhanced food literacy for all. Hamiltonians said they expect innovation and leadership from the City in all areas of our local the food system.

“There is a high level of interest in the Food Strategy and any initiatives toward its development would be strongly supported by community members.”

...Research Consultant, Food Strategy Survey





## The Food Strategy Survey

The online Food Strategy survey conducted by Hendershot Research resulted in 1584 citizens from all areas of the city completing the survey on several food issues, including shopping, dining, gardening, and their opinions about what is important to focus on in the Food Strategy.

The results of the survey show that the vast majority of Hamiltonians feel that all aspects of food are important in Hamilton, whether it's protecting our agricultural lands or having access to good quality, local food in their neighbourhood. Eighty-four percent (84%) of Hamiltonians give the food they eat a lot of thought.

### What We Heard

- 95% think that a healthy food system contributes to the quality of life in Hamilton
- 91% think that the City should do more to promote its food sector
- 83% think that the City should promote more cultural food events
- 70% think that food attracts tourists

A Food Crawl similar to art  
crawl would be great  
...Respondent, Food Strategy Survey



The top three themes from the survey results indicate that the Food Strategy should focus on supporting rural and urban agriculture and promoting local food; ensuring economic and geographic access to healthy food for all; and education about healthy food and nutrition.

Examples of common comments:

“local food is everything - it is THE most important thing that the City of Hamilton can improve”

“strengthen the market for local foods by requiring all publicly funded institutions to purchase locally produced foods”

“educating people about the importance of supporting local food producers and making it easier to access locally produced food”

“healthy food in convenience stores, at public arenas, for local institutions, at municipal centres”

“access for all to enough healthy food”

“food banks having healthier foods, produce, fruits etc. all year round”

“healthier food options for low income families”

“access to healthy food education programs at all age levels - children, parents, community members, food preparation employees....everyone”

“educating on not to waste food”



## Community Workshops

At the first community workshop, participants focused on further refining the original proposed Food Strategy goals. The second community workshop gave participants an opportunity to comment on the results of the first workshop and explore actions of how the goals could be met.

The top three themes that emerged from the Food Strategy survey were repeated, affirmed, and enhanced throughout all of the community engagement activities. For example, the community workshop participants said that the Food Strategy should focus on

- access to healthy food – especially for vulnerable populations and it should be easy to get to (within reasonable walking distance/public transportation) and at publicly funded institutions
- local food should be a priority and its production should be protected and enhanced
- the City of Hamilton should take leadership to ensure local healthy food is available in local institutions and facilities
- education to enhance and support food literacy for all

At the CityHousing workshop, residents said that to them, a healthy food neighbourhood was one where they could easily access fresh food and community gardens, and have places to learn about growing and cooking healthy food. Participants expressed their desire to have healthy food at food banks and that City funding for food programs should have criteria to ensure that these funds are used for healthy food options.

“Food access meets the needs of all neighbourhoods (including rural, suburban, urban, lower SES) through a variety of ways and emphasises local and healthy foods”  
Participant,  
Workshop 1



## SuperCrawl

In September, 2015, over 100 Hamiltonians were engaged to express what food meant to them, while four local artists captured the themes that emerged. Overall, Hamiltonians said that food is essential for life and should be accessible to everyone; food is about bringing family and people together; and that learning about and growing food is important.

## Community Stakeholder Consultations

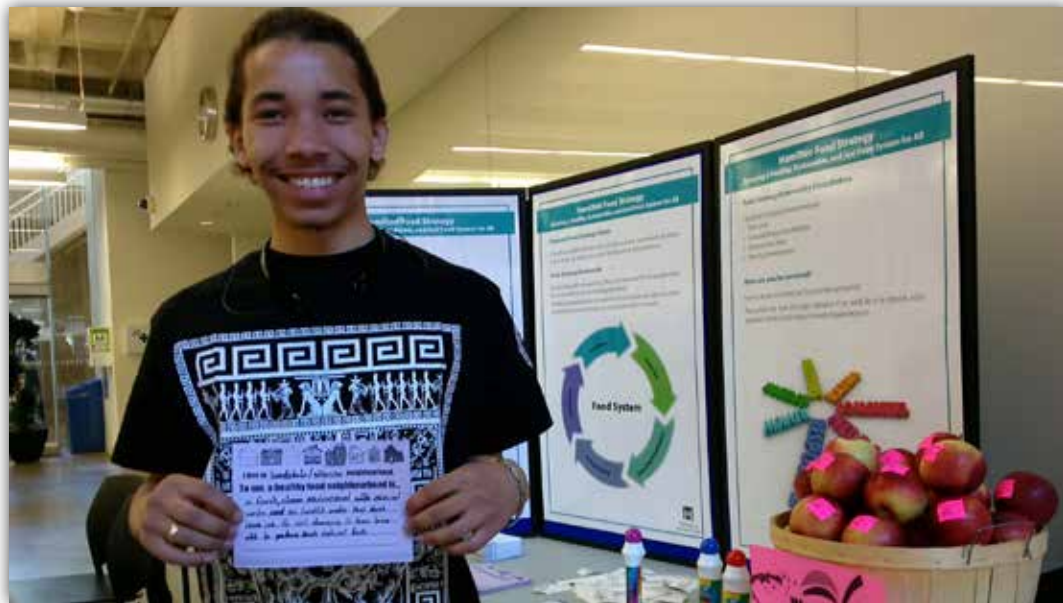
Consultations were held with five food-related committees in order for stakeholders to provide input on what they believed are the most important food issues to focus on and the actions to address these priorities. Themes that emerged from these consultations included food access, protection of agricultural land and support for producing and processing food, advocacy for adequate incomes, and food/nutrition education. In addition, many stakeholders expressed their desire to continue to be involved as the Food Strategy progresses.





## Community Check-In Open Houses

The input from all of the community engagement activities were analysed and presented back to the community at two Community Check-In open houses. Participants used Idea Rating Sheets to assess the level of community agreement with themes categorized under the food system components and potential actions that would address these themes. The results from the open houses were further coded and analyzed, and then compared to other food strategies, evidence, best practices, and are reflected in the Food Strategy goals, recommendations, and actions.





## Revised Food Strategy Goals and Framework

The original 12 proposed Food Strategy goals were organized by food system components. During the community engagement process, themes emerged that led to the development of broader goals that address aspects of more than one food system component. As a result, the original proposed goals have been refined to be true to the spirit of Hamilton's commitment to public engagement.

The original food systems framework used during the community engagement process has been revised. As a result of community input, two components (Buying and Selling, and Consumption) have been combined into one to become Food Access and Consumption. Attention to system-wide tools also needed to be added to the framework. The updated food system framework is used to organize the Food Strategy's recommendations and actions to ensure a comprehensive approach and that they reflect the results from the community engagement.

To achieve a healthy, sustainable, and just food system, the Food Strategy consists of four overarching goals, 14 food system recommendations, and 46 food system actions that help to meet one or more of the overarching goals. The recommendations and actions are the tangible initiatives that contribute to one or more of the goals to ensure a healthy, sustainable, and just food system exist in Hamilton.

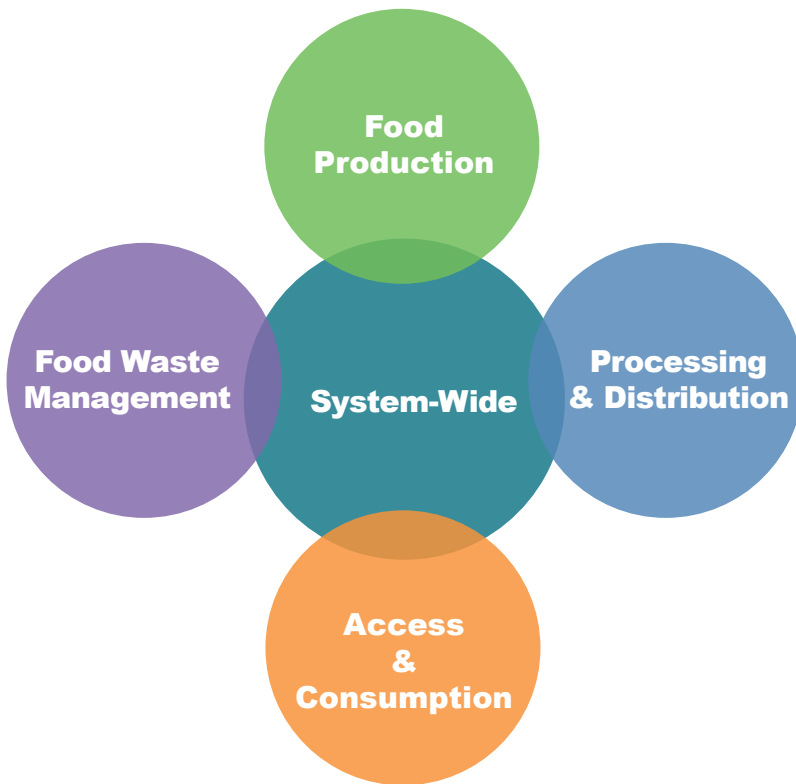
The Food Strategy is based on a systems thinking approach, which focuses on the way a system's components interrelate. A holistic food systems approach contrasts with traditional approaches that address one system's component in isolation to another component. System-wide actions reach the largest number of citizens because they address the issues that create barriers and enhance our assets. And policies are only as good as the programs and other resources that are needed to support them. Multilevel collaborative programs and policies are needed for the Food Strategy to reach its full potential impact.



**4 Overarching Goals**



**14 Food System Recommendations**



**46 Food System Actions**





# 4 Food Strategy Goals

# Food Strategy Goals

Goals are statements of aspiration – they describe what success will look like once they are achieved. They help set the direction for our efforts by answering

- Where do we want to go?
- What do we want our local food system to look like in the future?

The goals are grounded on input from over 2,700 citizens, best practice, evidence, other Canadian municipal food strategies, and alignment with City of Hamilton strategies and plans. Each goal is represented by an icon and a description of what our food system will look like when that goal is achieved.



## Goal 1

Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all residents



## Goal 2

Increase food literacy to promote healthy eating and empower all residents



## Goal 3

Support local food and help grow the agri-food sector



## Goal 4

Advocate for a healthy, sustainable, and just food system with partners and at all levels of government



### **Goal 1**

Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all residents

#### **What success will look like when Goal 1 is achieved**

- Neighbourhood and community infrastructure is built, retro-fitted, or repurposed to include food actions, such as food skills programs or spaces to grow food
- Each neighbourhood is designed to build new or build upon existing food assets to meet the unique needs of its residents, while creating supportive physical and social environments, and protecting the natural environment
- All neighbourhoods and communities city-wide benefit from policies that help citizens access healthy food
- All schools, workplaces, child care centres, institutions, and City-run facilities have healthy food and beverage choices
- Healthy, local food is easily accessible within reasonable walking, transit, and cycling distance for everyone in the City through various options, such as grocery stores, healthy corner stores, farmers' markets, mobile farmers' markets, community gardens, etc.
- Policies and programs are in place to encourage and support the development of healthy food retail and alternative food resources in underserved areas so the healthiest food choices are the easiest food choices





## Goal 2

Increase food literacy to promote healthy eating and empower all residents

### What success will look like when Goal 2 is achieved

- Residents are knowledgeable of the full range of food skills needed to follow healthy eating guidelines, including how food is produced, purchasing and preparing healthy meals, and handling food waste
- Residents are engaged and participate in food related community development, municipal decision making, and identifying and supporting food policies and programs
- Local food systems information is easily accessible so that residents are empowered to learn about, share, and participate in food initiatives through various ways, such as networks, online communications, programs, or other means
- Cooking food and culinary skills are valued, and resources are available, including access to local, healthy, and culturally appropriate food, and storage and cooking capacity to transform preparing food into a daily celebration



### Goal 3

Support local food and help grow the agri-food sector

#### What success will look like when Goal 3 is achieved

- Farmers, food processors, distributors, and food entrepreneurs have sustainable livelihoods because Hamilton is a place to do food related business
- Food related skill-building and job creation opportunities exist to support food entrepreneurs and food-related social enterprises
- Hamilton has the infrastructure required to support the food and farming industry to meet the demand for healthy, local food
- The agri-business and food processing sector is a priority, making Hamilton a centre for food innovation
- Sustainable practices integrating climate change mitigation/adaptation strategies are in place to minimize the environmental impacts of food production, processing, distribution, and waste
- Hamilton's robust food system creates and retains good food jobs with opportunities for training and upward mobility available to residents of all backgrounds
- Production, processing, distribution, and marketing of local food is substantially increased



#### **Goal 4**

Advocate for a healthy, sustainable, and just food system with partners and at all levels of government

#### **What success will look like when Goal 4 is achieved**

- Hunger is eliminated because citizens have the income to access healthy food, making food banks no longer necessary in Hamilton
- Hamilton has supportive policies, programs, and stable funding to ensure community food security
- All citizens have the physical and economic means to access healthy food choices through a healthy, sustainable, and just food system
- Partnerships are strong and work collaboratively to ensure the best use of resources across the community food security continuum
- A food system lens is applied to initiatives so that neighbourhoods and communities contribute a healthy city for all citizens
- The health and well-being of all citizens will be a fundamental component of a just food system
- Increased investments in the economic stability of residents through jobs, healthcare, and public assistance will reduce hunger













































**14**

**Food System  
Recommendations**

# Food System Recommendations

Food System Recommendations	Alignment with Goals			
<b>System-wide</b> 1. Strengthen advocacy to eliminate poverty to improve individual and household food security.				
<b>System-wide</b> 2. Strengthen funding criteria for community food initiatives.				
<b>System-wide</b> 3. Ensure that food system enabling policies, tools, and other approaches are in place.				
<b>Food Production</b> 4. Build stronger City-Farm relationships to enhance the growth and development of local food.				
<b>Food Production</b> 5. Improve children and youth's eating habits, food skills, and knowledge of food systems through food literacy.				
<b>Food Production</b> 6. Support and create diverse ways for people to grow food in the urban landscape and support participation in urban agriculture activities.				
<b>Food Processing and Distribution</b> 7. Foster Hamilton's food innovation and entrepreneurial spirit.				
<b>Food Processing and Distribution</b> 8. Enhance the promotion and marketing of Hamilton's local food industries.				
<b>Food Access and Consumption</b> 9. Increase the amount of healthy, local food in publicly owned facilities to make the healthy choice the easy choice.				
<b>Food Access and Consumption</b> 10. Promote physical access to healthy, local foods in all neighbourhoods.				
<b>Food Access and Consumption</b> 11. Integrate food literacy and food systems education and training where residents live, learn, work, and play.				
<b>Food Access and Consumption</b> 12. Support the physical and social infrastructure needed to empower citizens to take action.				
<b>Food Waste Management</b> 13. Foster innovation to reduce food-related waste through diversion and composting.				
<b>Food Waste Management</b> 14. Promote a culture that values healthy, local food to reduce food waste through food literacy.				





# 46 Actions

# System-Wide Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## System-Wide Recommendation

1. Strengthen advocacy to eliminate poverty to improve individual and household food security.

### Actions

- 1.1** Work with local stakeholders and partners to advocate at all levels of government for adequate incomes.
- 1.2** Facilitate movement along the food security and economic spectrum with a focus on food skills, job creation, and fair wages.



# System-Wide Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## System-Wide Recommendation

- 2.** Strengthen funding criteria for community food initiatives.

### Actions

- 2.1** Create a formal, transparent process for requests for municipal funding for community food initiatives/programs as they arise at any City of Hamilton subcommittee meetings, Council via Council motions, delegations, or staff direction.
- 2.2** Establish criteria to ensure that community food initiatives/programs that receive municipal support (funding, staffing, etc.) align with the Food Strategy goals.
- 2.3** Create a process by which municipal funding recommended for community food initiatives, such as programs, events, and activities comply with healthy eating guidelines.

## System-Wide Actions

### Alignment with Goals



### System-Wide Recommendation

**3.** Ensure enabling policies, tools, and other approaches are in place.

#### Actions

- 3.1** Create a toolkit to assist landowners to incorporate food system elements into developments.
- 3.2** Continue to participate and support the Golden Horseshoe Agriculture & Agri-Food Strategy – Food & Farming: An Action Plan 2021.
- 3.3** The local food system is considered during consulting, planning, and implementing community initiatives.
- 3.4** Improve coordination among funders, stakeholders, and all levels of government to ensure reliable and sustainable financial support of neighbourhood based food initiatives, particularly those delivered by local food networks.

## Rationale for Connection between Goals and System Wide Approaches



System-wide policies, regulatory tools, and other approaches have the highest potential to ensure community food security and that citizens can access food with dignity.

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Improved access to food resources and information empowers citizens to support initiatives that celebrate a healthy, sustainable, and just food system.

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Building the capacity for citizens to create sustainable livelihoods in local food-related enterprises supports our local economy.

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Applying a food system lens to existing and emerging initiatives is a fundamental component to building a healthy City for all citizens.



# Food Production Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Production Recommendation

- 4.** Build stronger City-Farm relationships to enhance the growth and development of local food.

### Actions

- 4.1** Strengthen access and opportunities to farm as a living, particularly for new farmers.
- 4.2** Encourage local farms to increase their production of food to meet the nutritional needs and cultural preferences of Hamiltonians.

# Food Production Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Production Recommendation

- 5.** Improve children and youth's eating habits, food skills, and knowledge of food systems through food literacy.

### Actions

- 5.1** Incorporate food system education in schools and in other learning programs.
- 5.2** Expand school-to-farm learning opportunities.

# Food Production Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Production Recommendation

**6.** Support and create diverse ways for people to grow food in the urban landscape and participation in urban agriculture activities.

### Actions

**6.1** Strengthen the City's commitment to Hamilton's Rural Official Plan and Zoning By-law to support and protect agriculture through protection of land and allowing for innovative agricultural land uses.

**6.2** Ensure planning policies and regulations are supportive of residents who want to grow food.

**6.3** Expand community garden programs to promote community development opportunities with local schools and other local organizations as part of their education programs.

**6.4** Promote the use of food-bearing plants and trees as part of landscaping for residential, commercial, and institutional uses.

**6.5** Encourage the development of gardens to grow food at all local schools, city facilities, and new developments.

**6.6** Promote the use of environmental best practices to ensure healthy soil, air, and water are available for community gardens and urban and rural farms.

**6.7** Strengthen access to community gardens, particularly for those who live in neighbourhoods that lack spaces to grow food or are food insecure.

## Rationale for Connection between Goals and Food Production Actions



An increased opportunity for citizens to grow food enhances food security, improves their diet, and promotes social inclusion and community capacity-building.



Hands-on learning about where food comes from and healthy eating sets children and youth up for a lifetime of good health and creates a culture that values a sustainable, local food system.



A strong local food market allows existing farm operations to diversify and expand their product offerings, making local food an economic engine and tool for workforce development.



Having regulatory policies, tools, and other approaches in place enable citizens to learn, access healthy food, and pursue sustainable food-related livelihoods.



# Food Processing & Distribution Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Production & Distribution Recommendation

**7.** Foster Hamilton's food innovation and entrepreneurial spirit.

### Actions

**7.1** Create innovative ways to connect and support food initiatives and food organizations.

**7.2** Support businesses and social enterprises involved in processing and distribution of local, healthy, and sustainable food.

**7.3** Determine feasibility of a food business incubator to provide the space, training, resources, and distribution network for entrepreneurs to access wholesale or retail markets.

**7.4** Establish or strengthen programs to help entrepreneurs start a food related business.

**7.5** Address gaps in the infrastructure needed to support local and sustainable food processing and distribution.

**7.6.** Determine feasibility to establish a food terminal or hub for local food producers to distribute their products.

# Food Processing & Distribution Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Production & Distribution Recommendation

- 8.** Enhance the promotion and marketing of Hamilton's local food industries.

### Actions

- 8.1** Expand marketing efforts to focus on Hamilton's local food and farming sector.
- 8.2** Enhance culinary tourism to promote local food businesses and events.

## Rationale for Connection between Goals and Food Processing & Distribution



Increased opportunities to connect citizens to local food businesses helps build the capacity for these businesses to operate as successful healthy food retailers in under-served neighbourhoods.

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Food literate citizens are empowered to request healthy, local food from producers and for healthier options where food is served and sold by "voting with their fork."

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A strong local food economy ensures local producers, processors, and other food businesses thrive and meet the increased demand for local food.

Infrastructure for production, processing, distribution and marketing of local food substantially increases, improves, and develops local food businesses, creating new jobs and supporting existing ones.

# Food Access & Consumption Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Access & Consumption Recommendation

- 9.** Increase the amount of healthy, local food in publicly owned facilities to make the healthy food choice the easy choice.

### Actions

- 9.1** Reduce access to unhealthy foods in public facilities, particularly where vulnerable groups visit (e.g., children).
- 9.2** Conduct an environmental scan to measure the percentage of healthy, local food that is procured by the City.
- 9.3** Review policies and explore opportunities for City facilities to increase the percentage of healthy, local food purchased by their facilities.
- 9.4** Policies and programs are in place to increase healthy food options in publicly-owned, neighbourhood, and community facilities (e.g., recreation centres, workplaces, schools, etc.).



# Food Access & Consumption Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Access & Consumption Recommendation

- 10.** Promote physical access to healthy, local foods in all neighbourhoods.

### Actions

- 10.1** Explore the feasibility of innovative ways to increase healthy food retail in neighbourhoods where it is limited (e.g., farmers' markets, mobile produce truck, healthy corner stores, etc.).
- 10.2** Pilot and evaluate promising/evidence informed programs in partnership with community stakeholders that improve physical access to healthy food in neighbourhoods with limited healthy food retail options.
- 10.3** Tailor physical food access to the context of each neighbourhood/community (e.g., food delivery programs, bulk buying clubs, etc.).

# Food Access & Consumption Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Access & Consumption Recommendation

**11.** Integrate food literacy and food systems training and education where residents live, learn, work, and play.

### Actions

**11.1** Advocate for mandatory food literacy curriculum in schools.

**11.2** Facilitate comprehensive approaches to incorporate food skills, community kitchens, and other capacity-building programs in community settings, in addition to providing food.

**11.3** Offer a food skills and employability program, particularly for vulnerable groups.

**11.4** Provide and support food skills and nutrition education programs that are accessible to all Hamiltonians.

# Food Access & Consumption Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Access & Consumption Recommendation

- 12.** Support the physical and social infrastructure needed to empower citizens to take action.

### Actions

- 12.1** Build, retro-fit, or re-purpose community and neighbourhood infrastructure to support food initiatives, such as community kitchens, food markets, community gardens, etc.
- 12.2** Facilitate the creation of food networks to assist in capacity building, information sharing, and the ability to access community-based food programs.
- 12.3** Assess the availability of community spaces with kitchens where people can learn and cook for themselves.

## Rationale for Connection between Goals and Food Access & Consumption



Increased investment in the infrastructure for food and nutrition programs improves the health of all citizens, and creates spaces to connect and learn the skills needed to follow healthy eating guidelines.



Strengthening individual food-related knowledge, skills, and behaviours supports community food security and promotes healthy eating.



Increased access to healthy, local food where citizens work, learn, live, and play supports our local food sector.



Improved food access and consumption is a catalyst to reduce inequities in neighborhoods.

More effective advocacy can be achieved with strong coalitions consisting of many stakeholders working toward a healthy, sustainable, and just food system.



# Food Waste Management Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Waste Management Recommendation

**13.** Foster innovation to reduce food waste through diversion and composting.

### Actions

**13.1** Expand programs to increase the use of composting in all settings (e.g., apartments, workplaces, schools, etc.).

**13.2** Explore the feasibility of food recovery programs to divert edible food from being wasted or in landfill.

**13.3** Investigate the feasibility of innovative ways to deal with food waste to ensure our environment is sustainable.

# Food Waste Management Actions

## Alignment with Goals



## Food Waste Management Recommendation

- 14.** Promote a culture that values healthy, local food to reduce food waste through food literacy.

### Actions

- 14.1** Enhance marketing and education programs to reduce food waste at home, work, school, and other public facilities.

## Rationale for Connection between Goals and Food Waste Management



Increased access to infrastructure and programs to support food waste management creates the supportive environment needed for citizens to keep waste out of landfills and promote composting.

Diverting edible food from being wasted can contribute to reducing health disparities due to increased access to food.



Enhancing programs to reduce food waste empowers citizens with the knowledge and skills to reduce their food waste, save money, and contribute to a healthier environment.



# Priority Actions





## Food Strategy Priority Actions

The 14 recommendations and 46 actions outline the strategic actions that are intended to be implemented to reach the Food Strategy goals. In addition to identifying the 46 food system actions, five of these actions to focus on immediately have been identified based on the following criteria

- Achievable within 2016/17 to 2019
- Within the Municipality's jurisdiction/control
- Resources are available for implementation
- Contribute to meeting more than one Food Strategy Goal
- Align with at least one or more key themes identified by the community (local food and agriculture, food literacy, geographic and economic food access for all)



## Five Priority Actions

1. Create a formal, transparent process for requests for municipal funding for community food programs as they arise at any City of Hamilton subcommittee meetings or by Council via Council motions, delegations, or staff direction.
2. Offer a food skills and employability program, particularly for vulnerable groups.
3. Build, retro-fit, or re-purpose community and neighbourhood infrastructure to support food initiatives, such as community kitchens, food markets, community gardens, etc.
4. Facilitate the creation of food network(s) to assist in capacity building, information sharing, and ability to access community-based food initiatives.
5. Expand marketing efforts to focus on Hamilton's local food and farming sectors, while enhancing culinary tourism to promote local food businesses and events.

Appendix D outlines how these priority actions align with Food Strategy goals and recommendations. Examples of potential projects and City departments involved in preliminary discussion/scoping to achieve these priority actions are also included.



## Easy (Low Hanging Fruit) Actions

There are a number of relatively easy actions identified in the Food Strategy that also contribute to achieving the Food Strategy goals. These actions are easy because they are within the Municipality's jurisdiction and would not require significant resources. The City can readily give its support to the following easy Food Strategy actions:

**Action:** Assess the availability of community spaces with kitchens where people can learn and cook for themselves.

- This action can easily be achieved within the year by a Nutrition Masters' student or dietetic intern under the guidance of a Public Health Registered Dietitian preceptor

**Action:** Promote a culture that values healthy, local food to reduce food waste through food literacy

- Staff from Public Works and Public Health Services are collaborating on key messages to incorporate food waste avoidance into waste management presentations and other communication materials

**Action:** Establish or strengthen programs to help entrepreneurs start a food-related business

- The Small Business Enterprise Centre will tailor programming, such as workshops and seminars, focusing on food business development.

**Action:** Create a toolkit to assist landowners to incorporate food system elements into developments.

- A Masters' student will scope out the development of an edible landscaping toolkit under the guidance of a Planning Manager within Policy Planning, Planning and Economic Development Department.



## Community Actions Underway that Support the Food Strategy

Beyond identifying and prioritizing the five priority actions to work on immediately, other initiatives are currently underway within the community that align with Food Strategy recommendations and receive municipal resources, such as funding and/or staffing consultation.

**Food Access & Consumption Recommendation:** Increase the amount of healthy, local food in publicly owned facilities to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

- Mohawk College Sustainability Office's Local Food Procurement Initiative
  - o With funding from the Greenbelt Foundation, this initiative aims to increase local food procurement within their institution and provide food literacy training to food service staff and students. City staff from Public Health Services will be a member on Mohawk's Advisory Committee for this initiative.
- City of Hamilton Long-term Care Local Food Procurement Initiative
  - o With funding from the Greenbelt Foundation and as part of the Food & Farming Action Plan, Hamilton is one of several municipalities collaborating to assess the feasibility of increasing local food procurement within municipal-owned facilities. In Hamilton, Public Health Services will be working with management from Community and Emergency Services - Long Term Care Division.





**Food Access & Consumption Recommendation:** Support the physical and social infrastructure needed to empower citizens to take action.

- Neighbour to Neighbour (N2N) Community Food Centre
  - o The City of Hamilton has awarded \$400, 000 (200,00 Capital, 200,00 Operating) for 2016 and will consider future approval of up to an additional \$800,000 over the following four years for N2N to create and operate a community food centre on the West Mountain. Any funding beyond 2016 be contingent on N2N reporting on outcomes, uptake, and budget pressures by second quarter of 2017. In addition to City funding, staffing resources will also be contributing to this initiative.

# Setting the Table to Move into Action

<h1>4</h1> <h2>Food Strategy Goals</h2>		Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all
		Increase food literacy to promote healthy eating and empower all residents
		Support local food and help grow the agri-food sector
		Advocate for a healthy, sustainable, and just food system with partners and at all levels of government

<h1>14</h1> <h2>Recommendations</h2>	<b>3</b> System-Wide <b>3</b> Food Production <b>2</b> Distribution & Processing <b>4</b> Access & Consumption <b>2</b> Food Waste	<b>All Contribute to Achieving 1 or More Food Strategy Goals</b>
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# Next Steps





## Next Steps

The Food Strategy Report presents the “what” we need to do to ensure that Hamilton has a healthy, sustainable, and just food system that will contribute to creating a food secure community. Once Council has endorsed in principle the Food Strategy, the next step will be to develop a year by year implementation plan of “how” to achieve the Food Strategy goals, recommendations, and actions. At that time, each action will be further developed within the implementation plan.

To move forward in making the Food Strategy a reality, the next steps are

- Start the process to implement the five priority actions
- The Interdepartmental Food Strategy Steering Team will develop a detailed Food Strategy Implementation Plan by the second quarter of 2017. It will include identifying funding requirements and indicators to monitor and evaluate the Food Strategy outcomes. This will be achieved by
  - engaging community partners to look for innovative solutions to achieve the Food Strategy goals, recommendations, and actions
  - involving the Food Advisory Committee in supporting and advising on the implementation of the Food Strategy





## Supporting the Food Strategy Implementation

The Food Strategy aims to expand traditional thinking and approaches, to show leadership and encourage innovative actions and decision making. This means some community stakeholders, individuals, City departments, and staff may be impacted by the Food Strategy recommendations. Conversely, the Food Strategy provides a single policy framework that integrates the full spectrum of the food system to coordinate existing and emerging food issues and actions.

Active involvement of the City, citizens, and community partners is needed to strengthen coordination and collaboration to provide better services, better use of resources, and better decision-making. Strong partnerships and collective responsibility will ensure that food actions happen holistically across our local food system.

To ensure the effective implementation of the Food Strategy, everyone who has a stake in food systems initiatives, such as rural and urban agriculture, social enterprise, food procurement, food retail, etc., is instrumental in sharing their knowledge, learning and talking about, contributing to, and participating in the implementation of the Food Strategy.

## Supporting the Food Strategy Implementation





## Measuring the Food Strategy's Success

Establishing baseline measures, from which indicators can be determined, can be challenging if there is limited data or limited access to it. Also, measurement tools change over time, and the resources required to gather and update local data is not always available. Nonetheless, attention to creating performance measures, or indicators, is needed to help inform the monitoring and evaluation of the Food Strategy.

Performance measures for consideration are provided below. Further refining of these indicators will be completed during the development of the implementation plan. An annual update, in addition to a Food Strategy Report Card every two years will be developed in order to report back to the Board of Health and the broader community on the Food Strategy's progress in creating a healthy, sustainable, and just food system for all.

Food System Components	Indicators
<b>System-Wide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of City budget allocated toward food initiatives/actions</li> <li>• Percent City resources allocated toward food initiatives in alignment with Food Strategy goals</li> <li>• Number of policies that consider community food security</li> <li>• Number of advocacy efforts undertaken</li> <li>• Number of partners and stakeholders involved</li> </ul>
<b>Food Production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and size of farms</li> <li>• Number of new farmers</li> <li>• Number of acres in production</li> <li>• Percent of agricultural land</li> <li>• Number of community gardens and edible landscaping projects</li> <li>• Number of urban farms</li> </ul>



Food System Components	Indicators
<b>Processing &amp; Distribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of infrastructure initiatives that support the agri-food sector</li> <li>• Number of food processors and by type, size</li> <li>• Number of jobs related to agriculture and agri-food sector</li> <li>• Number of community kitchen programs</li> </ul>
<b>Access &amp; Consumption</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of food-related projects started or implemented</li> <li>• Number of residents participating in food literacy projects/programs</li> <li>• Number of residents consuming vegetables and fruit at least five times per day</li> <li>• Number/percent of residents relying on charitable food programs</li> <li>• Percent/number of households experiencing food insecurity</li> <li>• Cost of a nutritious food basket</li> <li>• Number of food banks</li> </ul>
<b>Food Waste</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of residents participating in the Green Bin program</li> <li>• Number of residents participating in backyard composting</li> <li>• Number of residents reporting less food waste within the home</li> </ul>





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A close-up photograph of several bright red strawberries with green stems and leaves. A large, semi-transparent teal circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the word "Appendices" in white text.

# Appendices



## Appendix A: Timeline

July 2013

- Representatives from four City departments formed the Interdepartmental Food Strategy Steering Team.

December 2013

- An internal departmental environmental scan of current food initiatives that the City allocates resources to was completed. The scan showed that the City was addressing many components within the food system. However, the scan also revealed that there are a number of gaps, and that there are opportunities to be more effective by shifting toward more innovative actions and building on community assets.

June 2014

- Based on a review of existing food strategies in Canada and other countries, the Hamilton context, and the internal departmental environmental scan, the Steering Team drafted the Food Strategy vision, principles, and goals that formed the basis of discussion starters with the community.

August 2014

- A Board of Health Recommendation Report received approval for completing a community engagement process to inform the development of the Food Strategy.
- Board of Health endorsed Food for All, A Food Charter for Hamilton .

November 2014

- Public Health Services hosted a Food Summit. A “soft launch” of the Food Strategy’s work-to-date was presented and participants started the process of providing feedback on the proposed goals.

A teal graphic element in the top left corner and a close-up photograph of a red apple in the top right corner, both partially overlapping the white background.

### March 2015 to September 2015

- The Food Strategy community engagement process was conducted, with over 2700 citizens providing input.

### November 2015

- Council approved the creation of a new citizen advisory committee to be established in 2016. The Food Advisory Committee mandate is to support and advise on the implementation of Hamilton's Food Strategy, and the development of inclusive and comprehensive food related policies and programs at the individual, household, and community/population level.
- Food Strategy Open Houses were held to present back to the community what we heard during the community engagement process and confirm that we captured the key themes and potential actions correctly.

### December 2015 to May 2016

- The Steering Team drafted the Food Strategy report outlining the goals, recommendations, and actions.

### August 2016

- The Food Strategy is presented to the Board of Health for endorsement and approval to create the Food Strategy Implementation Plan.

## Appendix B: Original Proposed Food Strategy Goals

The following proposed goals were used as conversation starters and a way to get citizens to apply a food systems approach when considering what a comprehensive food strategy could address.

### Food Production

- Hamilton has infrastructure and policies that allow urban agriculture and other means for citizens to access healthy food
- Every ward in Hamilton has at least one publicly available community garden in place

### Food Processing & Distribution

- Hamilton has the infrastructure required to support the food and farming industry
- Hamilton's agri-business and food processing sector is a priority
- Hamilton is a place to do food-related business

### Food Buying & Selling

- Healthy food is readily available within reasonable walking, transit, and cycling distance for everyone in the City (grocery stores, convenience stores, farmers' markets, mobile farmers' markets, community gardens)
- All schools, workplaces, child care centres, institutions, and City-run facilities have healthy food and beverage choices



## **Consumption**

- By 2023, people will have access to healthy food through means like food centres so that food banks are no longer necessary in Hamilton
- People who experience poverty have access to healthy food choices

## **Food Waste Management**

- Hamilton has the infrastructure to support residential food waste management
- Hamilton is a leader in food waste management by keeping waste out of landfills, creating compost for use in private and community gardens, and preventing edible food and packaging from ending up as waste
- Hamilton has food waste management programs to empower residents with knowledge and skills about composting and reducing all forms of food waste




## Appendix C: Community Consultation Tactics

### On-line Communication and Consultation

- The Food Strategy webpage: [www.hamilton.ca/foodstrategy](http://www.hamilton.ca/foodstrategy)
- Food Strategy e-mail address for correspondence: [foodstrategy@hamilton.ca](mailto:foodstrategy@hamilton.ca)
- Online and hard copy survey, 'Developing the City's Food Strategy' was open June – July 2015 and resulted in 1584 responses
- Developed and published an animated video about Hamilton's food system

### Face-to-Face Communication and Consultation

- Hosted the Hamilton Food Summit (November 4, 2014) with over 100 participants across multiple food sectors
- Held one-to-one meetings with 14 City Councillors, as well as the Mayor, to discuss the Food Strategy
- Attended the Hamilton Food Forum (January 29, 2015) to gain feedback on the proposed Food Strategy goals
- Attended the Durand Town Hall (March 9, 2015) to promote the Food Strategy

- 
- Facilitated two consultation workshops at the Environmental Summit (April 22, 2015) to gain input into the Food Strategy
  - Attended the 20,000 Homes Campaign community debrief meeting (April 30, 2015) to promote the Food Strategy
  - Held a 100in1 Day Hamilton Evergreen event to promote the Food Strategy and obtain input on what make a healthy food neighbourhood (June 6, 2015)
  - Held two community workshops, (1) Cultivating Food Strategy Goals for a Healthy, Sustainable, and Just Food System and (2) Digging into Food Actions to Achieve our Goals (June 25, 2015, and July 9, 2015) to gain input and feedback into the proposed goals and identify potential actions to meet those goals
  - Held a workshop with CityHousing tenants to gain input and feedback about Hamilton's food strengths, weaknesses, and potential actions to meet the food strategy's proposed goals (July 8, 2015)
  - Held a Culture & Food activity at SuperCrawl to gain an understanding of what food means to Hamiltonians (September 12 & 13, 2015)
  - Held two Community Check-in Open Houses to present back and gain further confirmation on the major themes and actions results from the community consultation (November 18 & 23, 2015)

## Consultation with Food Related Committees

- Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Hamilton-Wentworth (March 10, 2015)
- Community Food Security Stakeholder Committee (June 3, 2015)
- Food and Shelter Advisory Committee (June 17, 2015)
- Emergency Food Providers Strategic Planning Committee (June 24, 2015)
- Agriculture and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee (September 29, 2015)



## Appendix D: Priority Actions and Potential Projects

**Priority Action 1:** Create a formal, transparent process for requests for municipal funding for community food programs as they arise at any City of Hamilton subcommittee meetings/Council via Council motions, delegations, or staff direction.

### Food Strategy Goal Alignment: all 4

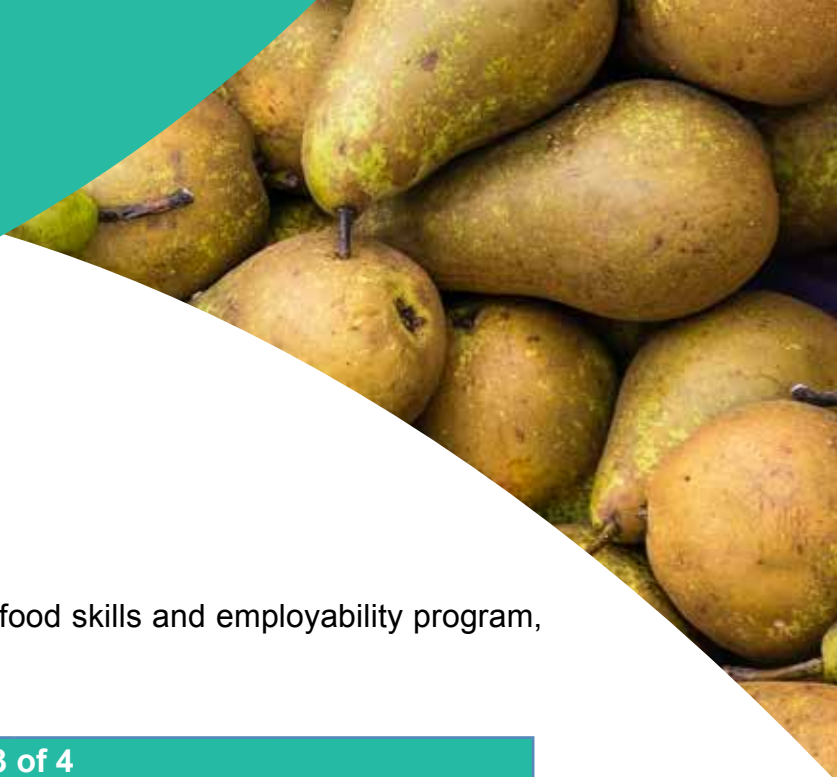
- Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all residents
- Increase food literacy to promote healthy eating and empower all residents
- Support local food and help grow the agri-food sector
- Advocate for a healthy, sustainable, and just food system with partners and at all levels of government

### System-Wide Recommendation

Strengthen funding criteria for community food initiatives.

Potential Projects	Dept. Involvement	Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of 2016, the Food Strategy Steering Team will develop the process, including monitoring/evaluation methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CES</li> <li>• PED</li> <li>• PW</li> <li>• PHS - HLD</li> </ul>	





**Priority Action 2:** Offer a food skills and employability program, particularly for vulnerable groups.

**Food Strategy Goal Alignment: 3 of 4**

- Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all residents
- Increase food literacy to promote healthy eating and empower all residents
- Support local food and help grow the agri-food sector

**Food Access & Consumption Recommendation**

Integrate food literacy and food systems training and education where residents live, learn, work, and play.

Potential Projects	Dept. Involvement	Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In 2017, adapt and implement Toronto's Good Food Works Program, which includes food safety, nutrition/healthy living, and job seeking components</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CES - NAS</li><li>• PED - Ec Dev</li><li>• PHS - HLD</li></ul>	



**Priority Action 3:** Build, retro-fit, or re-purpose community and neighbourhood infrastructure to support food initiatives, such as community kitchens, food markets, community gardens, etc.

**Food Strategy Goal Alignment: all 4**

- Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all residents
- Increase food literacy to promote healthy eating and empower all residents
- Support local food and help grow the agri-food sector
- Advocate for a healthy, sustainable, and just food system with partners and at all levels of government

**Food Access & Consumption Recommendation**

Support the physical and social infrastructure needed to empower citizens to take action.

Potential Projects	Dept. Involvement	Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the feasibility of creating community gardens at City facilities</li> <li>• Explore the feasibility of including community kitchens within recreation centres when built or renovated</li> <li>• Create “Garden to Kitchen and Back” Food Literacy Toolkit; pilot (e.g., East Hamilton food centre, McQuesten urban farm) with goal of rolling out to other spaces/programs</li> <li>• Evaluate outcomes at sites with and without a community garden using the toolkit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CES –NASD</li> <li>• PHS - HLD</li> </ul>	



**Priority Action 4:** Facilitate the creation of food networks to assist in capacity building, information sharing, and ability to access community-based food programs

**Food Strategy Goals Alignment: all 4**

- Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all residents
- Increase food literacy to promote healthy eating and empower all residents
- Support local food and help grow the agri-food sector
- Advocate for a healthy, sustainable, and just food system with partners and at all levels of government

**Food Access & Consumption Recommendation**

Support the physical and social infrastructure needed to empower citizens to take action.

Potential Projects	Dept. Involvement	Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host a Food Literacy event in fall 2016 to establish a Hamilton Food Literacy Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PHS - HLD</li> <li>• PED – Ec Dev</li> </ul>	



**Priority Action 5:** Expand marketing efforts to focus on Hamilton’s local food and farming sectors, while enhancing culinary tourism to promote local food businesses and events.

**Food Strategy Goal Alignment: 2 of 4**

- Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all residents
- Support local food and help grow the agri-food sector

**Food Access & Consumption Recommendation**

Enhance the promotion and marketing of Hamilton’s local food industries.

Potential Projects	Dept. Involvement	Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the Hamilton Eat Local Farm Map &amp; Directory and Hamilton eat local brand</li> <li>• Build/expand an internal or external online portal to incorporate local food, events, programs, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PED – Ec Dev</li> <li>• PHS - HLD</li> <li>• IT</li> </ul>	





# Acknowledgements

## Food Strategy Leadership

Dr Ninh Tran, Associate Medical Officer of Health  
Project Sponsor, Public Health Services

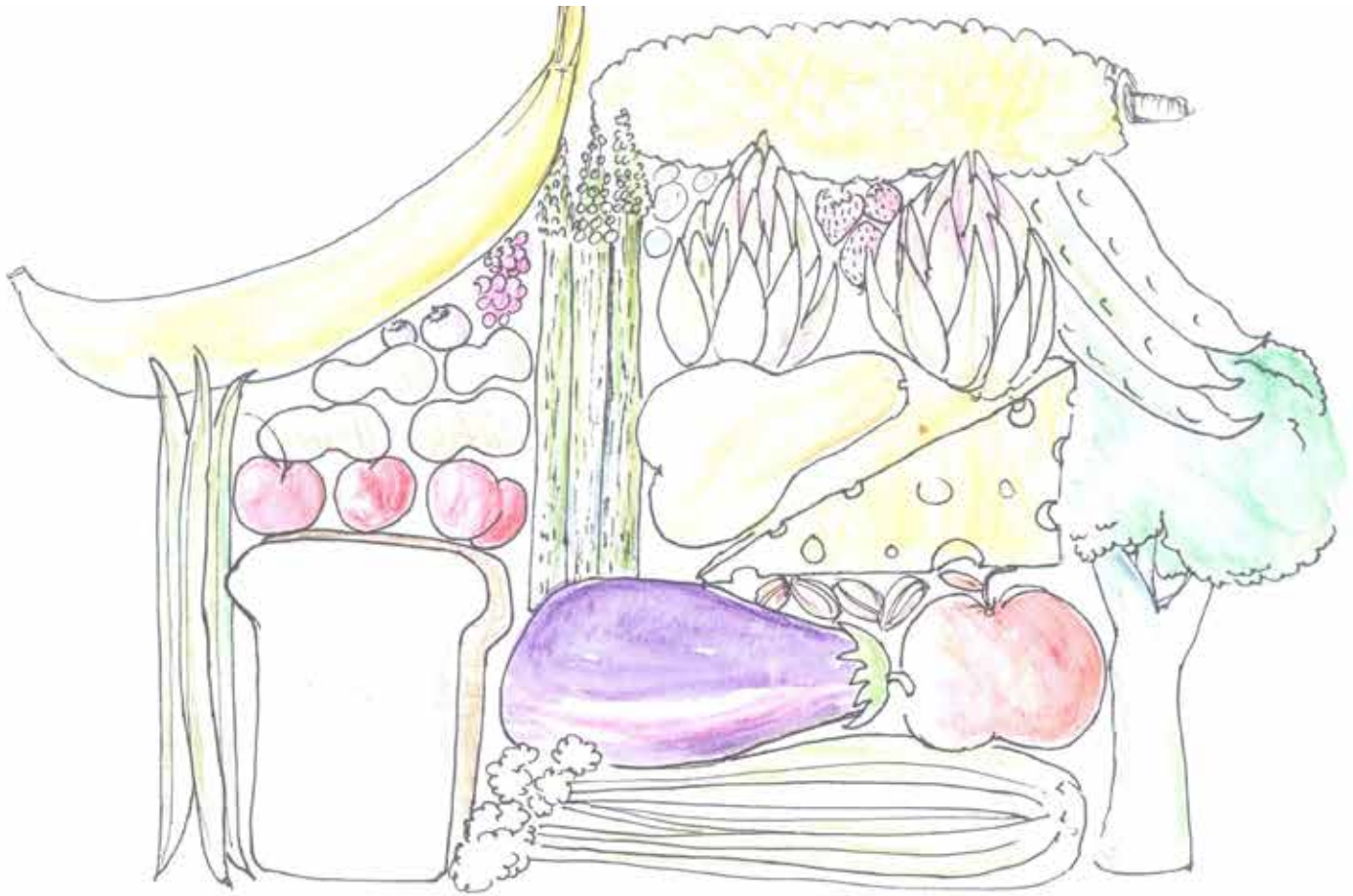
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## Thank you



## BUILDING BLOCKS OF A HOME

L. Klein '15

SuperCrawl, 2015  
Artist: Leah Klein



IT NEEDS to be HEALTHY  
& ACCESSIBLE for ALL  
PEOPLE REGARDLESS  
of FINANCES

SuperCrawl, 2015  
Artist: Gord Pullar



SuperCrawl, 2015  
Artist: Megan Sonke

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Hamilton