

Community Focus Bulletin: ***Creating Community Conversations***



Prepared by Merriam & Associates

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September is proclaimed local food month – get involved!

For more details on events go to: <http://localfoodmonthptbo.ca/>

The City and the County of Peterborough have again declared this September as Local Food Month.

Through the support and efforts of Transition Town Peterborough and Farms at Work, *Local Food Month* is being planned with a wide variety of events that will celebrate and support local farmers and culture workers and thus strengthen rural and urban connections and support area tourism.

Throughout September, the community is invited to participate on tours and in events, take the Local Food Challenge, through taking part in tours and events and eating local at home or elsewhere. The celebration of local abundance all comes together at the 6th year annual Purple Onion Festival on Sept 25th.

According to Mayor Bennett and Warden J. Murray Jones, “local food deserves its own month-long focus because it shines light on Peterborough area farmers and how they feed cities. The Month also links citizens up close with area restaurants, food processors, gardeners, other food-related enterprises and those non-profit organizations partnering to make greater local food production and consumption possible for all.”

The month will showcase local food as a growing driver of regional economic development leading to more local and sustainable jobs and businesses. Agriculture and Local Food are high priorities in the *Community Sustainability Plan* officially supported by City, County and area First Nations. The *Plan* will reduce carbon emissions and address local food security in the face of climate change impacts as well as enhance our understanding of where to find local food, how to prepare it and why it is important to the local economy.

Eat local. Buy local. Think local.

Why is Local Food Month Important?

In March, 2015, Sustainable Peterborough's Future of Food & Farming Working Group hosted "**Peterborough: The Future of Food & Farming Summit 3**"

The results of the discussion indicated that if we are to have a vibrant food industry and have food as an economic driver we need to take bold steps to engage the public as follows:

Education of Consumers about:

- where food comes from,
- the importance of food production to the local economy,
- the value of nutritious food

Education of Farmers and Producers:

- increase supports and training opportunities for new farmers,
- develop mentorship opportunities for older and experienced farmers to share knowledge

Education of Youth:

- about from where food comes,
- increase learning in the school curriculum and the role schools play in that education

Education of Food Service Providers (Grocery stores, large institutions such as Trent, Fleming, hospital, elementary school nutrition programs) about:

- opportunities to buy local
- importance of food to the local economy

Education of Policy-Makers (or Related to Policy) about:

- Top/down with direction from provincial government to set a standard starting point
- Full food system direction and policy
- Implications of food regulations all government levels
- Clear direction from Province to develop a local food standard
- Advocacy – senior levels of government need to consider and monitor impact of policy
- Urgency for action on food security (community/global)
- The role of food in localized economic development

For the full report go to: <http://sustainablepeterborough.ca/about-us/working-groups/future-of-food-and-farming-working-group/>

For more information about our upcoming Community Focus Bulletins go to

<http://www.merriam-associates.com/contact-us>

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