

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



Prepared by Merriam & Associates

No. 11– 2016

Your input is requested on what a local food charter for Peterborough should look like.

What is a Food Charter?

A Food Charter is a value, vision or principle statement and/or a series of goals developed by a city, town or region that has a broad base of support and describes what a community wants their food system to look like. Food Charters help to raise awareness and education about food issues and can form a basis for action.

Why have a Food Charter?

Communities are becoming increasingly aware of rising costs of fuel, food, and health care. There is more awareness about the impact of these costs on food access. Communities and their citizens are recognizing that many of these concerns are the result of a fragile globalized food system. There is growing momentum to support and integrate an increasing number of community food initiatives and encourage the development of policy that supports a food system that is both just and sustainable. One of the primary tools communities use to coordinate their work and efforts around food is a Food Charter – a document that highlights a community’s vision for a healthy and sustainable food system.

A Food Charter has the ability to improve the economy of a region by encouraging a greater reliance on local, community based food systems. It can support the generation of new businesses and employment opportunities. By promoting a local food system communities are developing a greater demand for products from local producers. Through education consumers learn the importance of buying local products instead of imported goods. There is the skills-building component of how to grow and prepare food. All of this results in money being re-circulated throughout the regional economy which benefits producers, processors, distributors, and retailers at the centre of a community-based food system.

A common goal of many Food Charters is to improve the physical and mental health its constituents by enhancing community food security which exists when all residents are able to obtain a safe, culturally acceptable nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes self-reliance and social justice. Food Charters do have the capacity to enhance health by improving access to healthy food for all.

A Food Charter raises awareness and education about food issues and forms a basis for action.

You are invited to attend and participate in the upcoming meeting:

**A Community Consultation:
Development of a Food Charter for the County and City of
Peterborough**

Thursday, September 8, 2016

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Anstruther Lake and Buckhorn Lake Rooms (2nd Floor)

Peterborough Public Health

185 King Street, Peterborough ON

AGENDA

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| 1:00 – 1:20 p.m. | Welcome and Introductions
Dawn Berry Merriam, Sustainable Peterborough Future of Food and Farming Working Group and Carolyn Doris, Peterborough Public Health |
| 1:20 - 1:50 p.m. | Food Charters: An Overview and Opportunities
Russ Christianson, President of Rhythm Communications and Member of Northumberland County Food Policy Committee |
| 1:50 – 2:00 p.m. | Break |
| 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. | Round Table Discussions on themes of Draft Themes of Food Charter <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Health– Social Justice– Culture and Community– Education– Economic Sustainability– Environment |
| 3:00 – 3:30 p.m. | Reporting Back by Food Charter Themes |
| 3:30 – 4:00 p.m. | Next Steps and Commitments for a Food Charter and Beyond |

We need your input on the following draft Food Charter:

The following draft Food Charter is based on extensive research and community consultation that has been completed by organizations, agencies and individuals from a variety of sectors, including but not limited to the following sectors: economics, social justice, health, community change agents, social services, agriculture, community planning.

Peterborough City-County

FOOD CHARTER

Peterborough has a rich agricultural history and food production continues to be important to our community. There are many cross-sectoral collaborations and partnerships supporting social justice, food literacy and the local food system. Sustainable Peterborough identifies the goal of feeding ourselves sustainably with local, healthy foods. Despite the assets related to community food security, 11.5% of households report being food insecure. Locally 1 in 4 households with children (18 years of age and younger) are experiencing food insecurity.

This Food Charter is a guiding document to assist in the development of policies and programs to promote a healthy and just food system for all our Peterborough communities. The Charter acknowledges the right to food and is a commitment to work together to build a vibrant, sustainable, food secure community with healthy food for all.

BECAUSE WE VALUE HEALTH

WE SUPPORT

- Public policy that recognizes food's contribution to physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being
- Making food readily accessible for our county, city and First Nations residents, including adequate transportation links, neighbourhoods that encourage walkable and bikeable access to healthy food
- Strategies to prevent and manage chronic diseases through ensuring that all residents, at all times, have physical and economic access to nutritious, safe, personally and culturally appropriate foods
- Baby Friendly™ policies that protect, promote, and support breastfeeding and the importance of breastmilk as a first food
- Nutrition education and healthy food choices in schools, businesses and public places

BECAUSE WE VALUE SOCIAL JUSTICE

WE SUPPORT

- Dignified access to healthy food for all
- A living wage for the production of food, and a safe and respectful environment for all farmers and people who work to feed others

- Allowing land access for people interested in growing and/or processing food
- Income, education, employment, housing, and transportation policies and practices that support access to healthy, sustainable food

BECAUSE WE VALUE CULTURE & COMMUNITY

WE SUPPORT

- Celebrating and promoting respect for and inclusion of traditional, cultural, and spiritual food diversity
- Enhancing the dignity and joy of growing, preparing, and eating food
- Opportunities for all community members to be included and to make connections through the experience of sharing food.
- Strengthening links between the farm and the table

BECAUSE WE VALUE EDUCATION

WE SUPPORT

- Programs that train current and future farmers, home gardeners, food producers, and others involved in the food value chain
- Initiatives and programs that develop food literacy and skills for everyone
- Integrating food literacy, community gardening and seed saving into communities
- Public education about the connections between our health, the environment, and our food choices
- Public awareness of the role of agriculture in our lives

BECAUSE WE VALUE ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

WE SUPPORT

- Increasing the production, storage, processing, distribution, consumption and marketing of local, healthy food
- Promoting our region as a food, agricultural, and culinary destination
- Food and agricultural research that is innovative, sustainable, and includes alternative food systems
- Economic and physical services and infrastructure that support local farms and the development of local food related programs and businesses
- Maintain adequate farmland availability to support our sustainable agriculture needs

BECAUSE WE VALUE ENVIRONMENT

WE SUPPORT

- Farming practices and food production that promotes environmental stewardship
- Minimizing environmental impacts of the food system including reliance on transportation

Questions to consider:

1. What do you like about this draft Food Charter?
2. What changes would you suggest?
3. How can we implement a Food Charter and who needs to be part of the implementation?

Sources & Resources:

From http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/_pdf/projects/FPN/Ordinances_Model_Policies/An_Assessment_of_Canadian_Food_Charters.pdf

<http://sustainontario.com/resources-2/food-charters-2>

http://myhealthunit.ca/en/resources/Food_Charter_Discussion_Paper_FINAL_Revised_March_13_2014.pdf

For more information about our upcoming Community Focus Bulletins go to

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

Or email Dawn Berry Merriam at dawnbm@merriam-associates.com

or John Merriam at joh@merriam-associates.com

or call 705-743-8050.

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