

TORONTO FOOD NETWORKS SUMMIT



9/17/2015

Report

This report provides a summary of the Toronto Food Networks Summit held on September 17th, 2015, including key messages, feedback provided by the participants, and resources shared by the presenter and the panelists. The Summit brought together around 60 representatives of 15 food networks to share ideas and explore opportunities for collaboration.

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Toronto Food networks Summit

REPORT

BACKGROUND

On September 17th, 2015 the Flemingdon-Thorncliffe Food Security Network supported by Toronto North Local Immigration Partnership (TNLIP) in partnership with Food Forward held a Toronto Food Networks Summit.

The idea of the summit came through a number of discussions among food networks that saw a need for strengthening and expanding collaboration between various neighbourhood networks. A summit was seen as an opportunity to bring the networks together to share best practices and challenges, and discuss opportunities for development, sustainability and partnerships.

PROGRAM & PARTICIPANTS

The Toronto Food Networks Summit brought together 60 representatives of 15 food networks from all over the city.

The program of the event included:

- A keynote presentation by Charles Z. Levkoe (please refer to the “Resources from keynote speaker” section for some of the presentation materials)
- Panel discussions:
 - Building and sustaining your networks
 - Ideas worth growing
 - Resident engagement, working with diverse communities
- Round table discussions on:
 - Advocacy
 - Funding
 - Network sustainability
 - Economic development

KEY MESSAGES

Advocacy

- Hire peers from the community to help residents with individual issues and engage in larger social justice issues (such as basic income)
- Postcard campaigns to ask the provincial government to raise social assistance rates, access to affordable housing and the minimum wage to \$15/hr.
- Writing letters, interpreting, tapping into lived knowledge, sharing information
- Trying actively to “put ourselves out of work” thinking of a world where food insecurity doesn’t exist (finding sustainable solutions)
- Engage funders in a conversation about the issues and sustainable solutions
- Making it easier for residents to engage in advocacy through childcare, volunteer hours, certificates, tokens (secure funding!)

Funding

- Community Food Centers in Canada provide core funding to 7 community health centres; any organization that does food work can become a “good food organization” and access small funding pots
- For gardening projects; Live Green Toronto (funds children engagement and greening initiatives); Weston Foundation (job start program for unemployed and people transitioning from unskilled to skilled work)
- City’s Community Service Partnership (CCSP) program funds work to improve social outcomes for vulnerable, marginalized, and high risk communities
- Toronto Conference of the United Church of Canada offers grants for community work
- Other funders: Heart and Stroke Foundation, Atkinson Foundation, Metcalf Foundation, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Junior League of Toronto, “Investing in Neighbourhoods” through Ontario Works, United Way Toronto Enterprise Fund, TD Friend of the Environment, Forbes Projects-Community Bonds
- Ways to strengthen your proposals:
 - Partnerships (especially small organizations with larger organizations)
 - Talk to grant officer before writing grant application

- Detail other sources of funding and in-kind donations
- Show how you plan to make project sustainable over time
- Other resources: “Grant Connect” funders’ database that could be accessed at a library; Sally Miller- consultant experienced at writing successful good food grants

Economic Development

- Projects for income supplement generation
- Skills training
- Community economics (bartering)
- Sharing resources
- Long term investments
- Encourage markets to purchase produce from community garden
- Community markets and festivals to sell and exchange their products (home-based businesses, garden produce)
- Business in a Box: mobile community kitchens, pop-up catering, rotating caterers
- Delivery services (biking food for restaurants)
- Senior home markets
- Food preservation: canning, drying, freezing, baking
- Accessing kitchens for small business use
- Restaurants renting out kitchens
- Providing credentials to caterers (food handling)

Network Sustainability

- Finding dependable funding sources
- Creating partnerships
- Resident engagement: hiring local residents (Investing in Neighbourhoods program), skills development for youth, peer leadership programs, develop incentives to engage residents

(leadership, certification, tokens, childcare, honorarium, etc.), focus on assets not needs and engage a diverse community

- Keeping track of skills and abilities of service providers and residents (mapping resources exercise)
- Collaborations: Toronto Youth Food Policy Network (TYFPN), connect with faith groups, create a Network of Networks
- Walking alongside rather than taking “charge”.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Top five things that the participants likes about the event:

- the key note speaker
- the panel on community engagement
- networking with food security agencies
- hearing ideas from a diverse group of people
- the panels

Top five suggestions on how the event could be improved:

- shorter evaluation forms
- panels need to have microphones
- time keeping should be in place
- setting up intentions for the day in the beginning would help participants stay focused
- more solution focused discussions would be beneficial

What would participants be able to use in the work right after the event?

- Information on community engagement methods
- Ideas about economic development
- Understanding of how to implement food sustainability
- Information on funding opportunities
- New partnerships

Partnerships

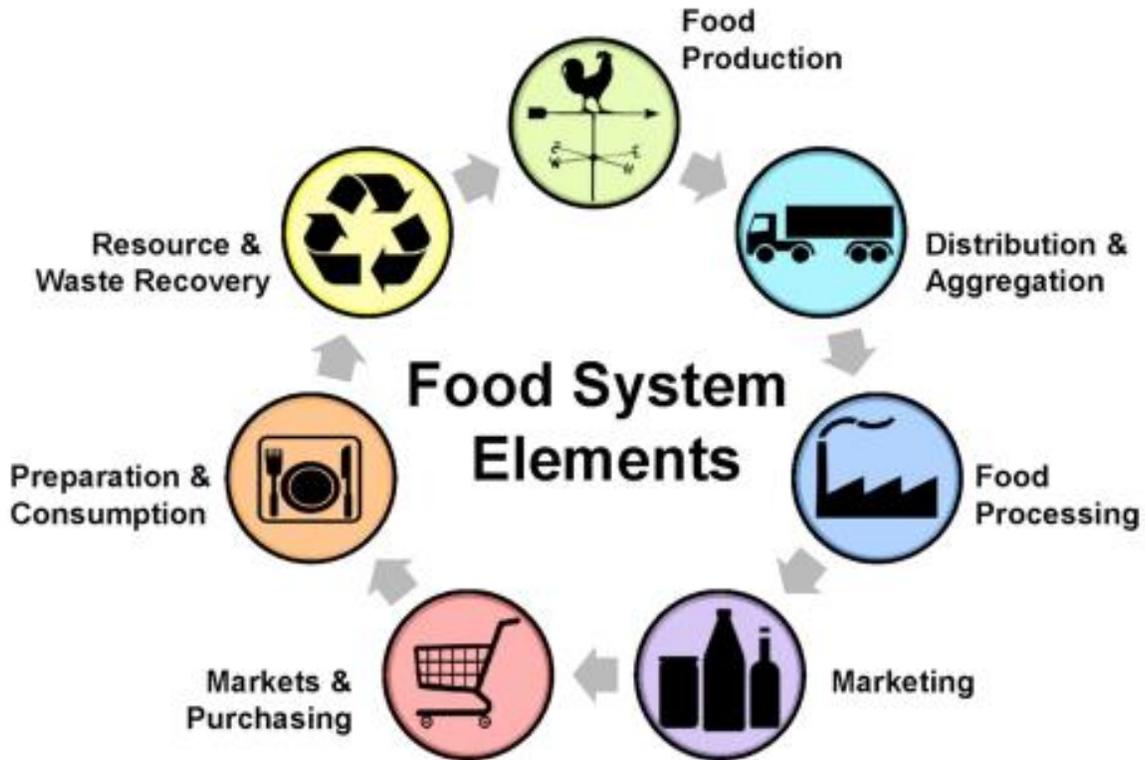
100% of the Summit participants that completed evaluation forms noted that they were able to establish new contacts and over 60% of the respondents confirmed that learned about possible partnerships that they could pursue within the next few months.

Suggested follow-up activities:

- More networking events for networking
- E-mail listserv
- Ideas for information sharing
- Report back on the event
- Summary of the ideas discussed at roundtables
- Another conference focusing on one issue (themed)

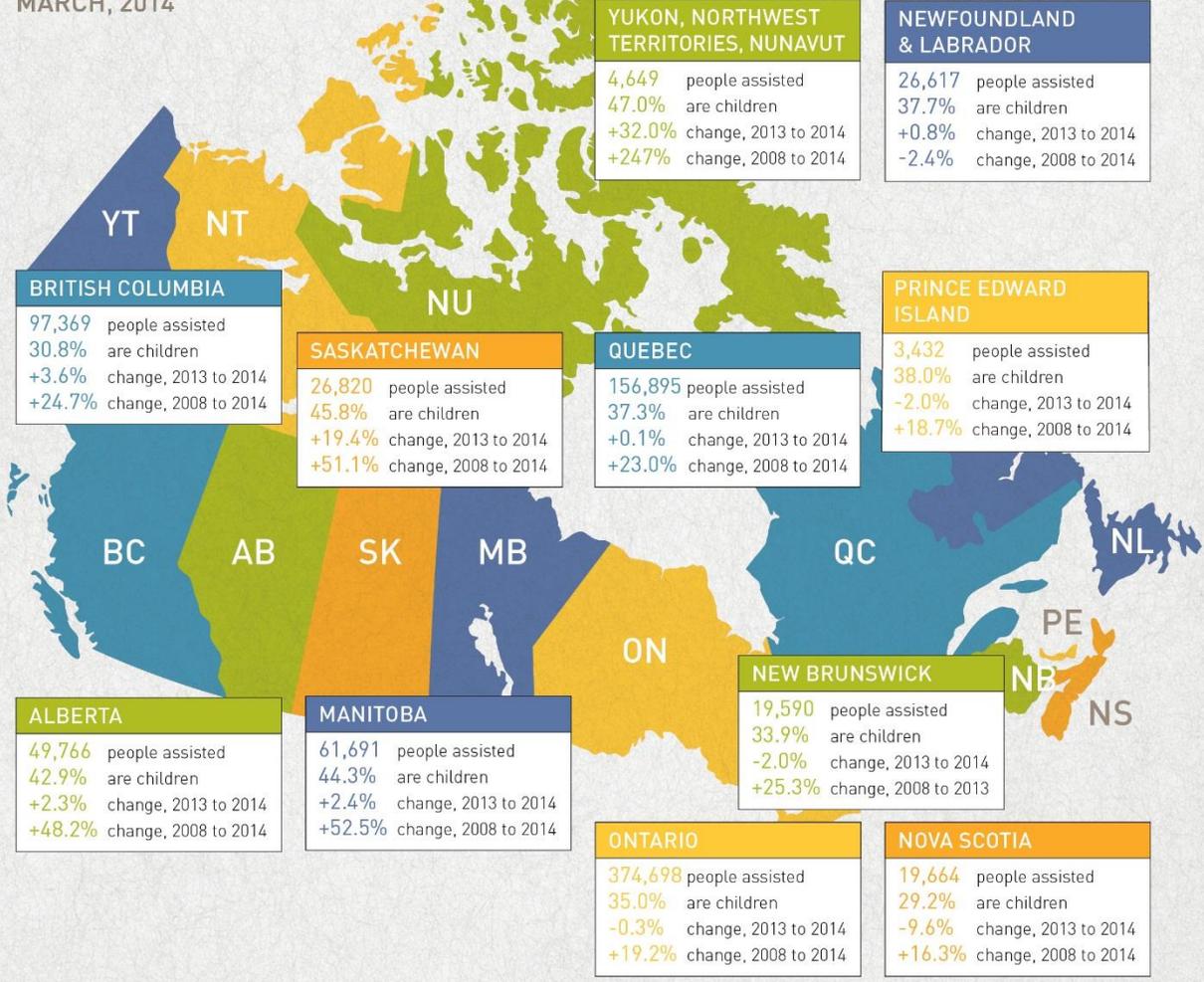
RESOURCES FROM KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Below are some of the resources from the presentation by the keynote speaker, Charles Z. Levkoe.



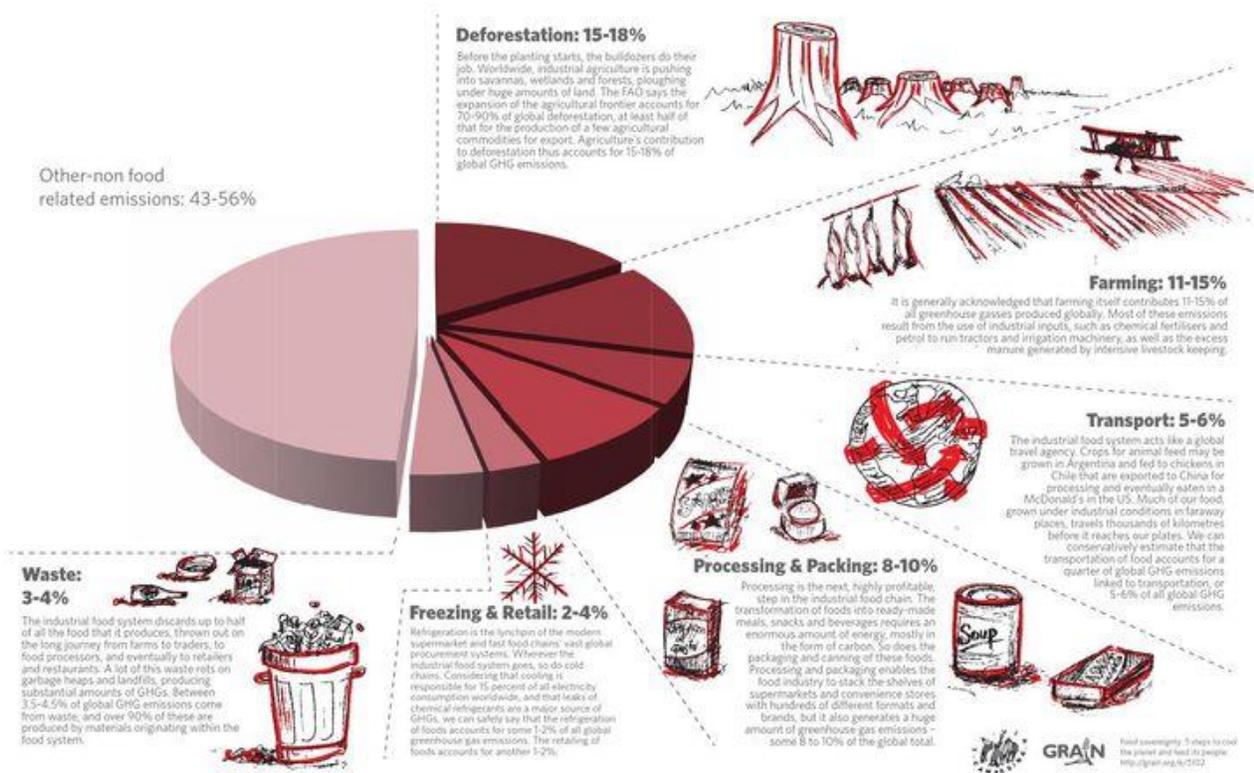
FOOD BANK USE IN CANADA BY THE NUMBERS

MARCH, 2014

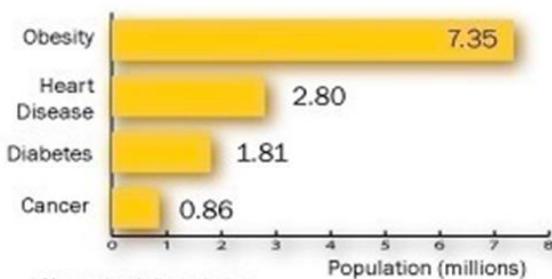


How the industrial food system contributes to the climate crisis

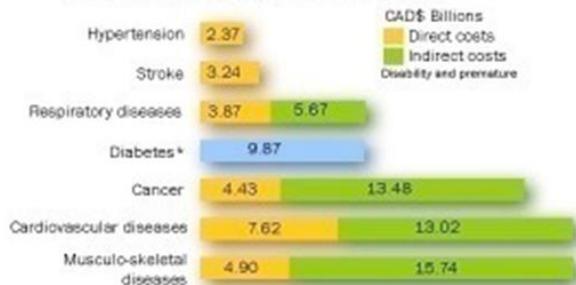
Between 44% and 57% of all GHG emissions come from the global food system



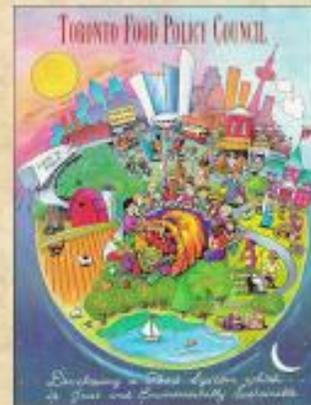
Prevalence of chronic disease in Canada, 2004



Chronic disease costs in 2005 dollars



The Food Movement: A Network of Networks



RESOURCES FROM PANELISTS & PARTICIPANTS



FoodReach Toronto

The Procurement Portal for you

WHO WE ARE

FoodReach helps community organizations to order fresh and healthy foods in a convenient and affordable way. FoodReach is a one-stop online food ordering system which provides delivery right to your door.

THE FOODREACH ONLINE PORTAL

An easy-to-use website for ordering fresh produce, dairy and bread products at wholesale prices.

The portal allows you to:

- Place food orders easily and reliably
- Save costs by streamlining your procurement process
- Track your orders and track prices
- Receive fresh produce and dairy orders the next day
- Access resources such as recipes, nutrition guides, menu planning materials and more
- Be part of a group of community food agencies influencing the food supply stream and prices

GOOD FOOD, GOOD PRICES

FoodReach allows you to better manage your food budget by simplifying and streamlining the food ordering process. Collective buying power allows all sizes of community organizations (from small to large) to benefit from bulk pricing. This also allows local farmers, suppliers and processors to pack and ship food more economically.

SIGN UP TODAY

Membership is free! To become a member, please visit www.foodreach.ca today and submit an online application form. There is no minimum order. For orders under \$50, a \$7 processing fee applies.

Our Partners

- Toronto Public Health
- Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre
- FreshTech Inc.,
- The Ontario Food Terminal
- Student Nutrition Toronto

Contact Information

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