

From Field to Table: Increasing Connections between Local Farmers and People in the City

Greenbelts: Local
Solutions for Global
Challenges

Thursday, March 24, 2011

Debbie Field,
FoodShare Toronto



FoodShare

Good, healthy food for all



Greenbelts are surrounded by the capacity to grow food for cities...

... and around the world, new distribution systems and food hubs are being developed which improve urban food access and market access for farmers particularly in the greenbelt around cities where there are large populations.



For 18 years, FoodShare Toronto has built a food hub, relationships and a place -- the “to” between “Field” (farmers) and “Table” (city consumers), particularly those living in low income communities:

- Good Food Box
- School and Fresh Produce Program for Agencies
- Good Food Markets

Field to Table Programs



Part of our larger non-profit organization's many programs working on reducing three problems in the food system (hunger, agricultural unsustainability and diet related illnesses caused by poor food access.

FoodShare's vision is:

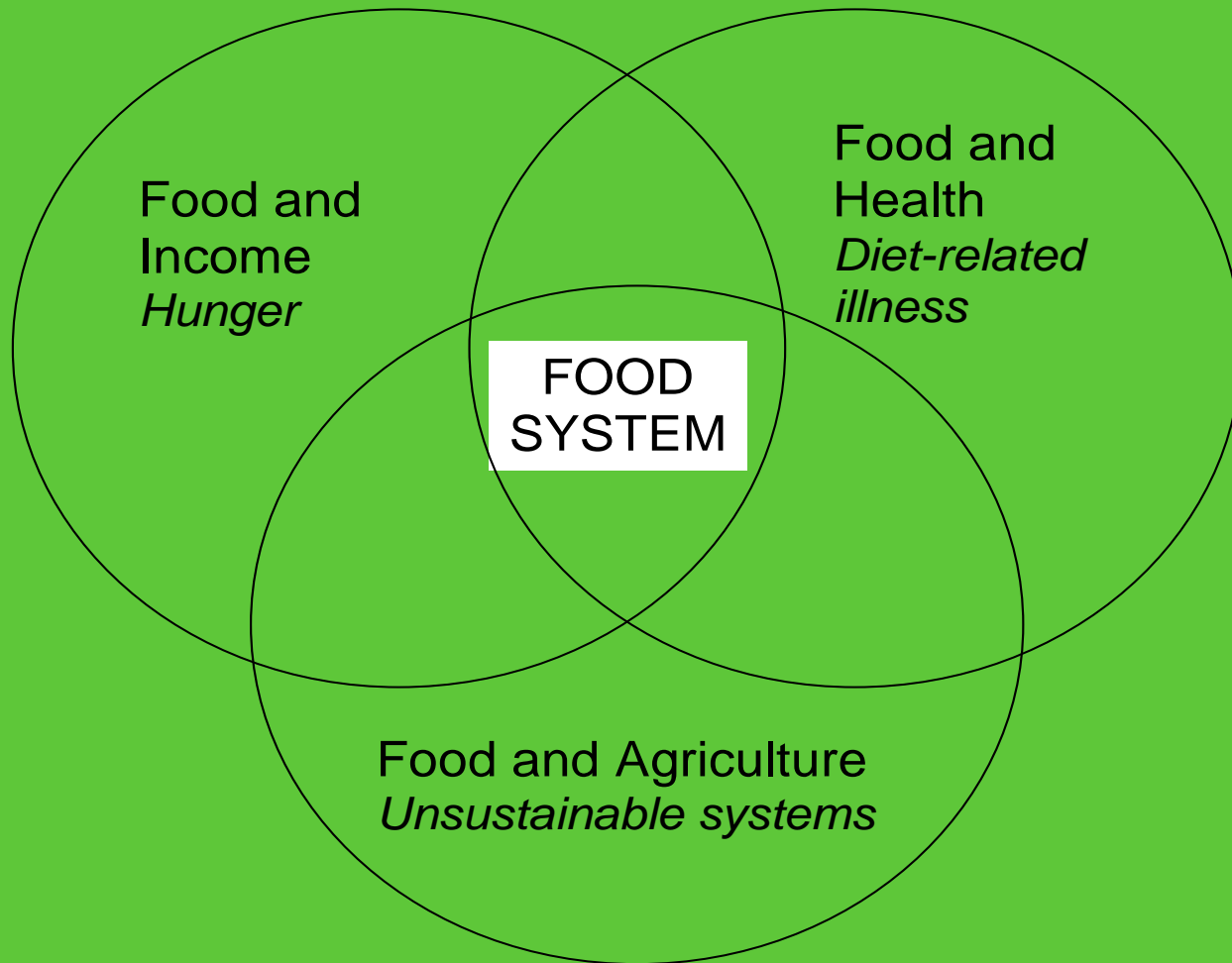
Good and healthy food for all



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Problems in the Food System



FoodShare started in 1985 when anti-poverty activists asked the City to do something about hunger: increasing social assistance rates and getting trucks to sell produce in low income communities, encouraging the City to:

- ..press the Province to raise welfare rates to bring recipients above poverty line.”
- ...mount a campaign in support of urban gardening similar thousands of “Victory Gardens” during WWII.”
- ... act to extend the Board’s of Education’s snack/education program to more schools, develop other nutrition education programs, especially in high school curriculum.”
- .. become a catalyst in the creation of food co-ops by providing vehicles for transportation of food orders from the Terminal Market to distribution sites.”



From Field to Table.....

In 1992, after a Toronto Food Policy Council Meeting, a farmer (Jeff Wilson) and a low income activist (Nan Hudson) suggested programs to help farmers secure stable markets and sell excess produce while also meeting the needs of urban populations, especially those who were food insecure.

Mary Lou Morgan and Ursula Lipski developed Field to Table travelling food truck, which in 1994 evolved into the Good Food Box.



From Field to Table was influenced by subsidized city run food markets in Brazil: Sacalao Markets and Direct from Producers



Good Food Box



- Subsidized distribution of fresh produce
- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- 1,000 boxes packed each week
- 180 stops
- Farmers receive full price, urban consumers price is subsidized

The Good Food Box Program... collecting orders

Good Food Box ORDER FORM FoodShare Field to Table Centre

Group Name _____ Contact Name _____

Telephone # _____ Buzz # _____

Address _____

Delivery Instructions _____



| GROUP ID NUMBER: | | | Delivery Date/Time: | | | Date of Order: | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------|--------------|
| Customer Name | Phone | GFB \$17 | Small GFB \$12 | Wellness \$12 | Large Org \$32 | Small Org \$22 | Fruit \$12 | Comm |
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | |
| BOXES SUBTOTAL | | | | | | | | |
| FREE BOXES | | | | | | | | |
| BOXES TOTAL | | | | | | | | total boxes: |
| TOTAL PAYABLE \$\$\$ | | | | | | | | total \$: |

Working with communities to improve access to affordable and healthy food – from field to table
www.foodshare.net



Good, healthy food for all

Ordering produce



| | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|------|
| Our Product | Good Food Box | Box Price | 17.00 | Transportation | 0.00 |
| Order Date | Friday Sep 19, 2008 | Target Margin | 0.28 | Newsletter | 0.10 |
| Covering our product orders for the following date range: | | | Packaging | 0.10 | |
| From | 16-Sep-08 | To: | 19-Sep-08 | Box & Wash | 0.00 |
| | | Boxes to fill: | 269 | Other Cost(s) | 0.00 |

| Product | Case Count | Case Cost | Unit Cost | Units per Box | Extended Cost | Total Required | Cases to buy | | Supplier | Org / Local | Ori |
|----------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|----------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | | | | | | | Calc'd | To Order | | | |
| organic tomatoes -HH | 25 | 15 | 0.6000 | 2 | 1.20 | 538.0 | 21.5 | 21.5 | Pfennings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Pears | 1 | 1.95 | 1.9500 | 1 | 1.95 | 269.0 | 269.0 | 269.0 | Lincoln Line Orcha | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| onion-yellow | 24 | 11.75 | 0.4896 | 1 | 0.49 | 269.0 | 11.2 | 11.2 | Food Terminal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| peppers- green | 40 | 10.75 | 0.2687 | 3 | 0.81 | 807.0 | 20.2 | 20.2 | Food Terminal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Potatoes-white | 10 | 2.9 | 0.2900 | 3 | 0.87 | 807.0 | 80.7 | 80.7 | Glen Huron Apples | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| cantaloupes-18 | 18 | 13.25 | 0.7361 | 1 | 0.74 | 269.0 | 14.9 | 14.9 | Food Terminal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| carrots | 24 | 11.75 | 0.4896 | 1 | 0.49 | 269.0 | 11.2 | 11.2 | Food Terminal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| corn | 60 | 13.5 | 0.2250 | 6 | 1.35 | 1,614.0 | 26.9 | 26.9 | Andrew's scenic ac | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| lettuce-red leaf | 24 | 16.75 | 0.6979 | 1 | 0.70 | 269.0 | 11.2 | 11.2 | Food Terminal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| bananas | 18 | 16.75 | 0.9306 | 1 | 0.93 | 269.0 | 14.9 | 14.9 | Food Terminal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| apples | 1 | 1.65 | 1.6500 | 1 | 1.65 | 269.0 | 269.0 | 269.0 | Glen Huron Apples | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| cucumber-english | 12 | 9.75 | 0.8125 | 1 | 0.81 | 269.0 | 22.4 | 22.4 | Food Terminal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Produce subtotal _____
 Total Cost _____
 Target Cost _____
 Difference _____

Local _____
 Actual Margin _____
 Target Margin _____

Scroll right for more...



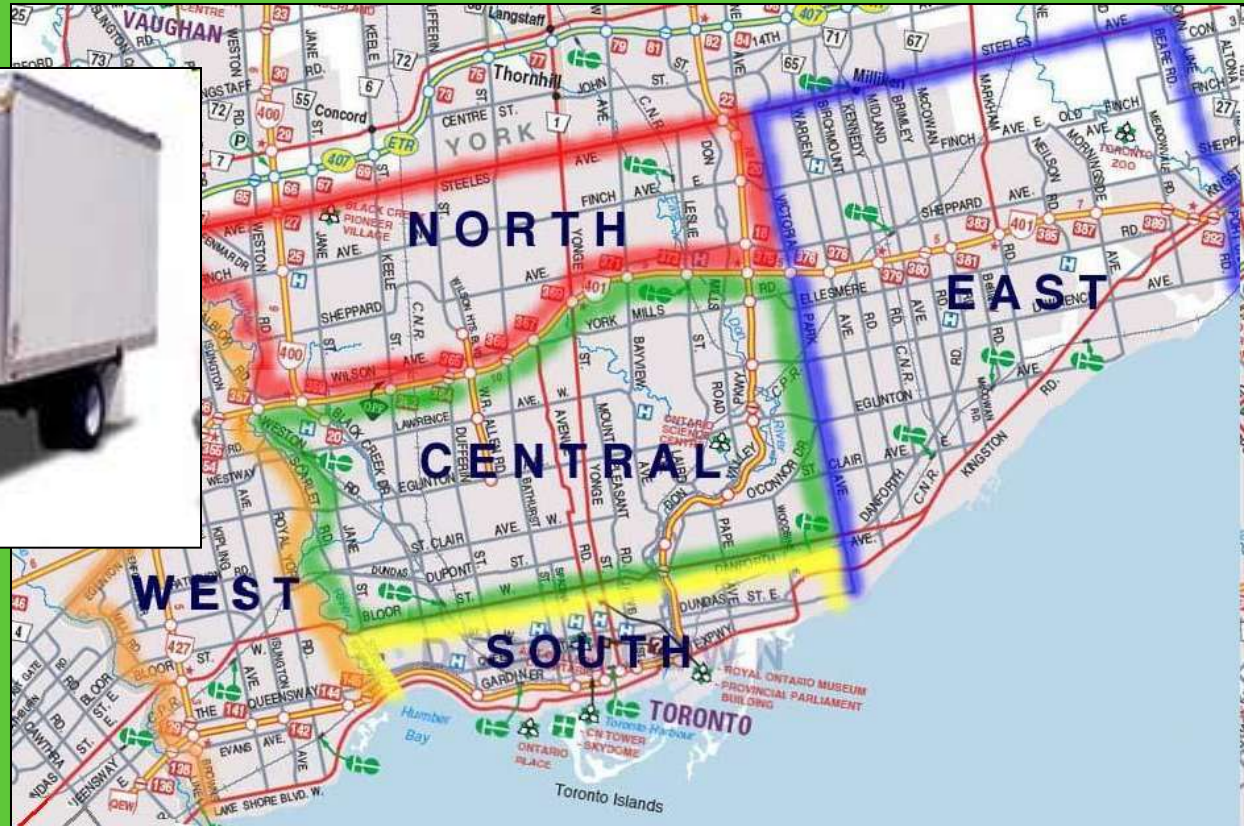
Every Tuesday a small army of volunteers gathers to pack hundreds of Good Food Boxes at our Distribution Hub warehouse



Food Share

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Delivering the Good Food Box



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First home box delivery program in Canada, now Good Food Boxes in close to 100 cities across Canada



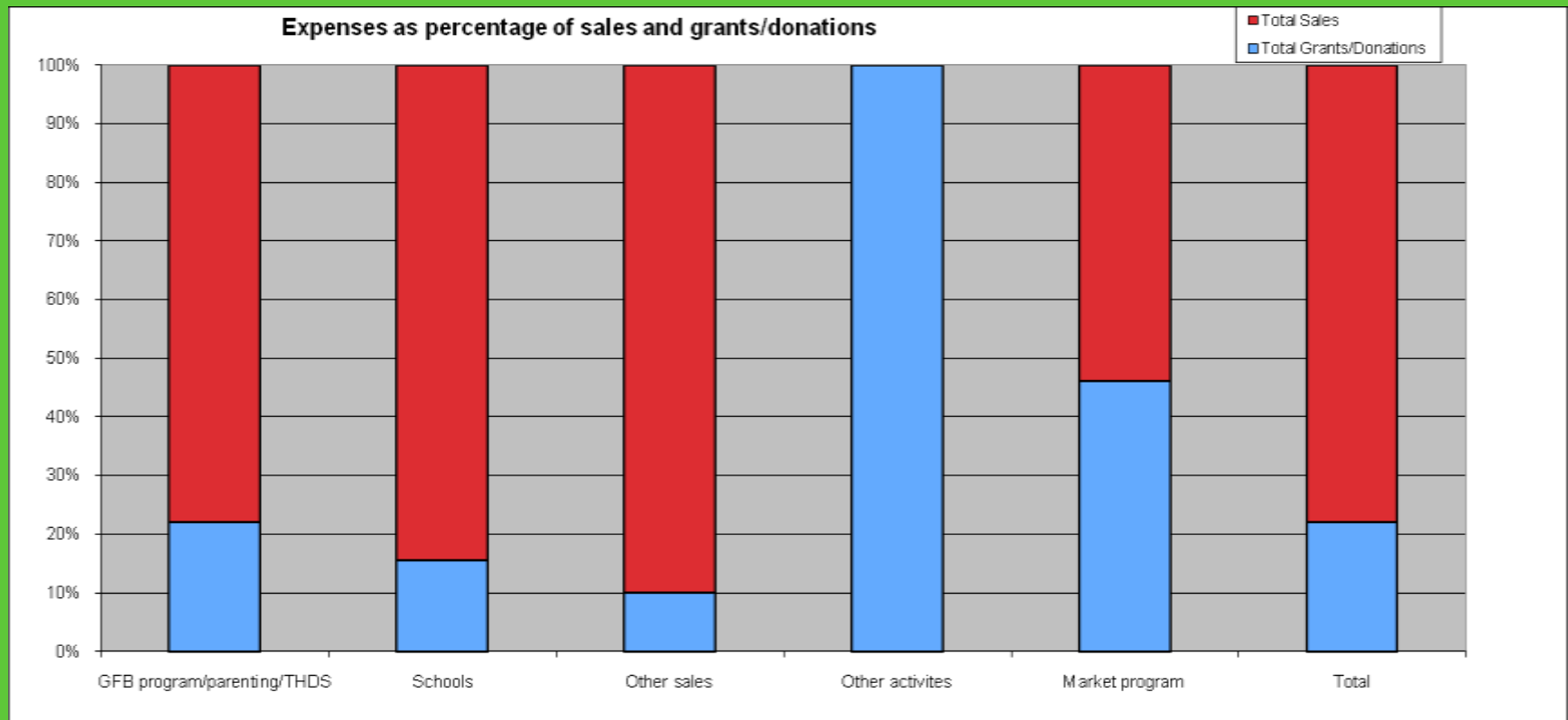
FoodShare

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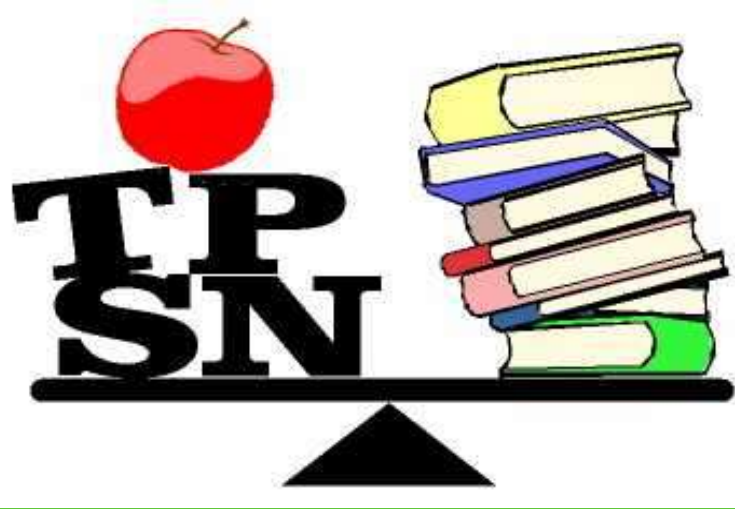
Price comparison of Good Food Box, Good Food Market and three grocery stores

| Good Food Market and Large Good Food Box price comparison | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | Good Food Box | Good Food Market | Grocery store #1 | Grocery store #2 | Grocery Store #3 |
| | Quantity | Cost | Cost | Cost | Cost | Cost |
| Apples | 3lb | \$ 2.00 | \$ 1.80 | \$ 2.62 | \$ 2.99 | \$ 2.99 |
| Bananas | 1 bunch | \$ 1.29 | \$ 1.20 | \$ 1.34 | \$ 1.58 | \$ 1.58 |
| Broccoli | 1 unit | \$ 0.99 | \$ 0.90 | \$ 0.99 | \$ 1.49 | \$ 1.99 |
| Cabbage | 1 unit | \$ 1.86 | \$ 1.50 | \$ 2.49 | \$ 2.99 | \$ 2.49 |
| Cucumber-English | 1 unit | \$ 1.51 | \$ 1.50 | \$ 1.69 | \$ 1.49 | \$ 1.99 |
| Grapefruit | 4 units | \$ 1.17 | \$ 1.20 | \$ 1.58 | \$ 2.68 | \$ 2.76 |
| Lettuce-Green leaf | 1 unit | \$ 1.03 | \$ 0.80 | \$ 0.99 | \$ 1.49 | \$ 1.29 |
| Onions | 2 lbs | \$ 0.62 | \$ 0.55 | \$ 0.84 | \$ 0.96 | \$ 0.99 |
| Oranges | small | \$ 1.24 | \$ 1.25 | \$ 1.96 | \$ 3.74 | \$ 1.49 |
| Parsnips | 1 lb | \$ 1.51 | \$ 1.40 | \$ 1.49 | \$ 1.49 | \$ 1.49 |
| Peppers-Red | 2 units | \$ 0.94 | \$ 1.00 | \$ 1.25 | \$ 3.49 | \$ 3.49 |
| Potatoes-Yukon | 5lb | \$ 2.03 | \$ 1.50 | \$ 2.29 | \$ 2.79 | \$ 2.79 |
| Squash | 1 unit | \$ 0.81 | \$ 0.80 | \$ 2.58 | \$ 2.58 | \$ 2.58 |
| WHAT YOU PAY | | \$ 17.00 | \$ 15.40 | \$ 22.13 | \$ 29.79 | \$ 27.92 |
| | | | \$ saved | % off bill | | |
| | Average Good Food Box Savings | | \$ 9.61 | 36% | | |
| | Average Good Food Market Savings | | \$ 11.21 | 42% | | |

Good Food Programs: percentage of revenue from sales vs. grants/donations by program



Student Nutrition



- 800 schools
- 145,000 students
- Snack, Lunch, Breakfast

Schools and Fresh Produce Bulk Program



280 Schools Student Nutrition Programs

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Good Food Markets

- Community Animators
- Fresh produce stalls + added value projects
- Local and Imported
 - Healthy, affordable culturally appropriate
 - Local, greenbelt, LFP, organic as possible;
 - Fair Trade

Barriers to increasing local...



We can prioritize local produce in the Good Food Box.

But in our school and market programs, it is more complicated as the “consumer” is the school student nutrition coordinator or good food market coordinator choosing what they order.

So we are developing new strategies geared to increasing interest in ordering local.

What can encourage increased local procurement especially at markets and schools?

Through funding from the Greenbelt Foundation, and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food OMIF and Broader Public Sector Fund, we are developing:

- Harvest of the Month
- Market Tastings
- Curriculum changes
- Recipe Development
- High School Pilots



Harvest of the Month

“Harvest of the Week”, a vegetable sourced from Greenbelt or local farms offered at a slight reduction in cost and accompanied by free sampling provided our Good Food Markets and schools and community agencies with a discounted Harvest of the Week.

Good Food Market's Feature Farmer

Carron Farms

Farmer: **Jason Verkaik**
Today's feature:
carrots
Other produce grown: **beets, cabbage, potatoes, and onions.**

History

In 1934 the Verkaik family purchased a parcel of land on the west side of the Holland Marsh in Ontario's Greenbelt. They began clearing and farming the land that same year. Most of the produce farmed in the early years was sold to farmer's markets throughout Ontario.



Over the next few years the farm and families of the Verkaik brothers were continually growing and in 1967 the farm was divided into separate family farms. One of these family farms was run by Jacob (Jake) Verkaik and his family. They named the farm by combining the letters of the farms two prominent vegetables: Carrots and Onions. Thus, Carron Farms Ltd. was created. Jake continued farming with his family until the mid 1970's when he passed away. At which point Doug and Jack Verkaik, two of his son's, took over the responsibility of running Carron Farms. During the next number of years Doug and Jack developed a state of the art onion curing and storing facility as well as a carrot storing and packaging facility.

Under new direction from the next generation in the Verkaik family, Jason Verkaik (Doug Verkaik's son), Carron Farms continues to be a strong and successful farming operation in the Holland Marsh.



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TASTES of the Greenbelt

from FoodShare's Good Food Programs



Roasted Root Vegetables with Honey, Balsamic and Chilies

(Serves 4)

- 1 Small squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 2" pieces
- 2 Sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 Parsnips, peeled and cut in 1" rings
- 1 Carrot cut in 1" rings
- 2 Onions, peeled and quartered (optional)

Glaze

- 6 Tbsp Olive oil
- 1/4 cup Balsamic vinegar
- 3 Tbsp Honey
- 1 Tsp Dried chili flakes
- 1 Tsp Dried thyme
- 1 Tsp Salt

- 1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
- 2. Whisk together all Glaze ingredients in a large bowl.
- 3. Add vegetables to the glaze mixture, toss to coat. Transfer to a baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes, or until vegetables can be pierced with a fork.



Carron Farms
Auraria, Ontario
Farmer: Joan Verbak
Carrots, beets, cabbage, potatoes, and more

Carron Farms

In 1934 the Verbak family purchased a parcel of land on the West side of the Holland Marsh in Ontario's Greenbelt. Over the years, the farm and families of the Verbak brothers were continually growing, and in 1967 the farm was divided into separate family farms.

One of these family farms was run by Jacob (Jake) Verbak and his family. They named the farm by combining the letters of the family's two previous generations: carrots and onions—Carron Farms. Jake continued farming with his family until the mid 1970's when he passed away, at which point Doug and Jack Verbak, two of his sons, took over running Carron Farms. During the following years, Doug and Jack developed a state-of-the-art sorting and packing facility as well as a carrot storage and packaging facility.

Under new direction from the next generation in the Verbak family—Joan Verbak (Doug Verbak's son)—Carron Farms continues to be a strong and successful farming operation in the Holland Marsh.

FoodShare

FoodShare is a Toronto non-profit community organization and Canada's largest community food security organization whose vision is *Good Healthy Food for All*. Founded 26 years ago to address hunger in our communities, FoodShare takes an innovative multifaceted and long-term approach to hunger and food issues. We work to empower individuals, families and communities through food-based initiatives, while advocating for the broader public policies needed to ensure that everyone has adequate access to sustainably produced, good healthy food. Working "from field to table," we focus on the entire system that puts food on our tables: from the growing, processing and distribution of food to its purchasing, cooking and consumption. Our programs, which reach over 145,000 children and adults per month in Toronto, include Student Nutrition, Field to Table Schools, The Good Food Cafe, Focus on Food youth internships, the Good Food Box, Good Food Markets, Fresh Produce for Schools and Community Groups, Baby and Toddler Nutrition, Community Kitchens, Field to Table Catering, the Food Link Hotline, Power Soups, Community Gardening, Composting, Beekkeeping and Urban Agriculture.

FoodShare's Good Food Programs, which include the Good Food Box, Good Food Markets, and School and Bulk Produce, are subsidized fresh produce distribution programs. FoodShare's distribution of fresh produce started 15 years ago as a way to create linkages between field and table. The goal was to increase the income of farmers, at the same time making affordable produce more accessible to Toronto communities, particularly prioritizing low income people. Today, FoodShare's Good Food Programs distribute almost \$2 million worth of fresh produce annually, purchasing this produce directly from at least 25 family farmers, and supporting many more farms through purchases made through wholesalers at the Ontario Food Terminal.

Please visit us at 90 Chestnut Street, Toronto, ON M5H 1R5 to see all of our programs in action!
Call 416-363-6441 ext 239 to arrange your tour.

Find Fresh Local Food Fast! www.greenbeltfresh.ca.



www.foodshare.net

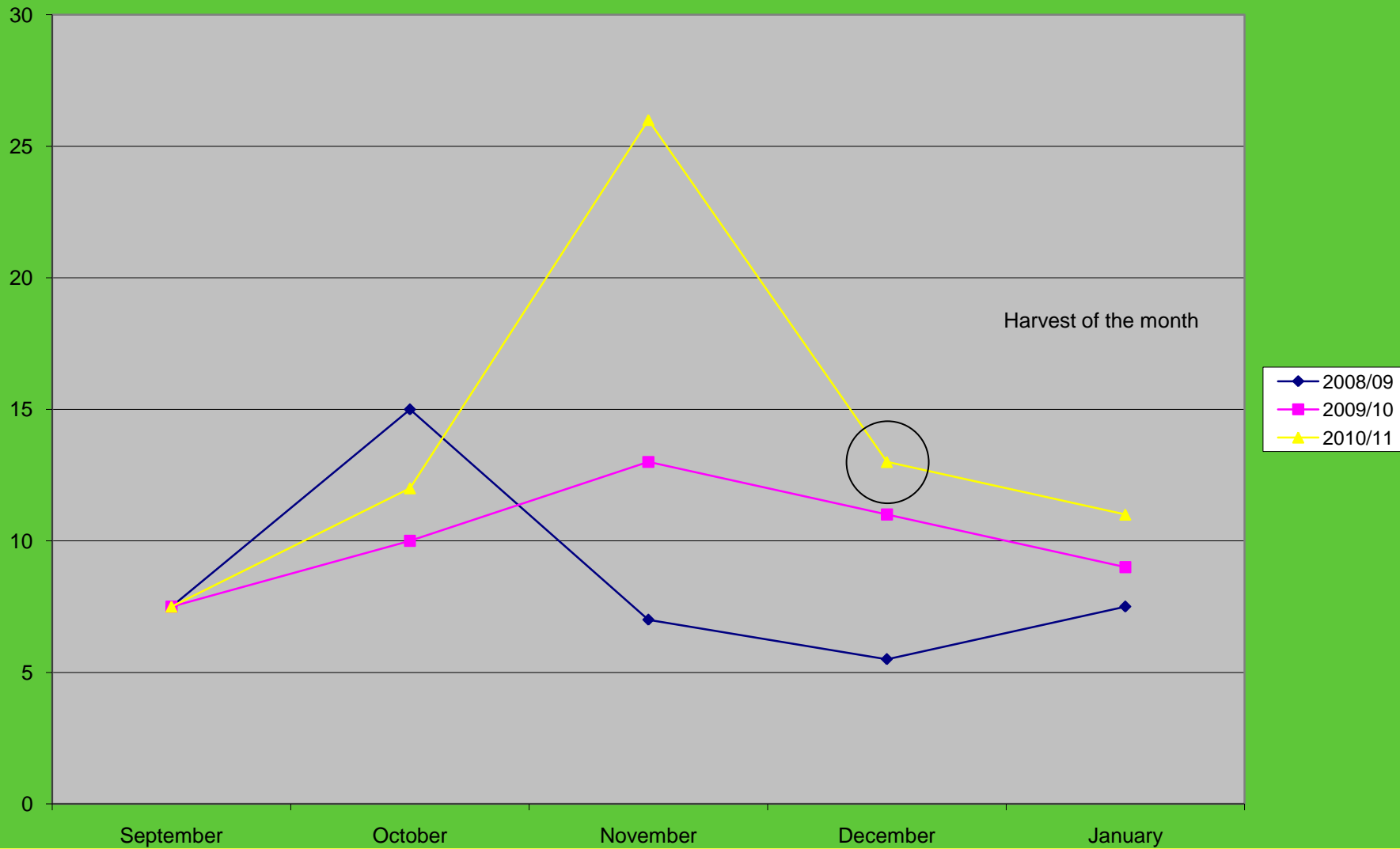


Cookbooks and recipes that promote eating foods that are grown in the Greenbelt or Ontario.



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Sweet Potato cases by month 2008-2010



Field to Table Schools



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Salad Bars, modeled after US Farm to School Salad Bar Program



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Urban Agriculture, Community Gardening, Bendale Market School Garden



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Recipe for Change

Food Literacy

- Changing the Grade 12 Diploma so no student can graduate without food literacy, including learning how to cook and grow food at school.
- Learning about food can prepare students for a life long commitment to healthy and local eating by equipping them with the skills to grow, select and cook food.



The Great Big Crunch



- Event in March, tasty, juicy local apples that kids will love;
- Partnership with Norfolk Fruit Growers Association and Heart and Stroke Foundation

ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services)

- Bryan Gilvesey and his work expanding ALUS holds out the most concrete way to change the financial incentives for farmers
- ALUS is currently designed to support Environmental Land Use Services, but could be used to provide incentives for farmers who grow for the local market.



Building stronger connections between local Farmers and People in the City

- Enhanced partnerships between farmers and community partners;
- Public Sector procurement openings;
- Advocating for provincial and federal policies that will support local farmers like ALUS.
- Increasing local procurement through Harvest of the Month, recipe development, curriculum development.

