

ONTARIO FOOD & NUTRITION STRATEGY



Oct 1 & 2, 2013

First Nations On-Reserve Discussion Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy (OFNS) is the proposal for a cross-government, multi-stakeholder coordinated approach to food policy development. The OFNS is largely the result of the work of the Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity, The Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy Design Team and a larger Stakeholder Advisory Group.

Food security challenges for First Nations living on-reserve and in remote and Northern communities are unique. A broader First Nations community discussion was identified by the Ontario First Nations Integrated Health Promotion Strategy (OFNIHPS) to learn more about the considerations to be taken into account in developing the OFNS which would have relevancy to First Nations communities in Ontario.

Seventeen participants attended meetings held October 1st and 2nd in Thunder Bay representing the areas of food/nutrition, health, PTOs, education and First Nations communities. Participants geographically represented 7 communities in Northern Ontario and 6 communities in Southern Ontario. To provide context for the discussions, food security presentations from given by Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) and First Nations and Inuit Health Branch.

In both large and small group work, participants discussed the OFNS Vision, Goals and Strategic Directions identifying challenges and opportunities. Six themes emerged:

- Health is wholistic and recognizes that physical, spiritual, mental and emotional well-being is key to the health and wellness of First Nations communities
- A Food and Nutrition Strategy should be community-based, community driven and based on the principles of food sovereignty
- Traditional food systems are made up of not just one food system but a multiplicity of food systems
- Traditional food systems are tied to life with strong connections between food and the health of the environment
- Traditional food systems, food practices, values and beliefs are integral to First Nations self-identity and the circle of life
- Resilient First Nations communities can only thrive where there is an equitable distribution of resources and where fair treatment in addressing food security issues that respond to the unique needs of communities

These themes form the foundation for future discussions with the OFNS Design Team. The suggestion has been made by participants to share the full OFNS document more widely in communities where food champions and food actionists can give the OFNS its momentum and validation in First Nations communities.

INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy (OFNS) is the proposal for a cross-government, multi-stakeholder coordinated approach to food policy development. The OFNS (see Appendix 1) is largely the result of the culmination of work architected by the Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity, the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy Design Team and a larger Stakeholder Advisory Group.

While the draft OFNS has been two years in the making, there has not been previously the opportunity to bring First Nations peoples living on-reserve and in remote regions of Ontario into the discussion around this group's specific needs. Food security challenges for First

Food security “exists when all community residents obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self-reliance and equal access for everyone” (DC Community Food Security Paper, 2007)

Nations living on-reserve and in remote and Northern communities are unique. Hunting, fishing, gathering of traditional food and traditional food practices are different on- and off-reserve.

A broader First Nations community discussion was identified by the Ontario First Nations Integrated Health Promotion Strategy (OFNIHPS) to learn more about the specific challenges and opportunities for First Nations communities living on-reserve with respect to food and nutrition. The OFNS First Nations On-Reserve Discussion was held October 1st & 2nd, 2013 in Thunder Bay (see Appendix 2), supported by a Contribution Agreement between Health Canada and Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and funding support provided by the COO through OFNIHPS. A discussion to address the needs of First Nations living off-reserve, Métis and Inuit peoples is taking place in a separate process.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Learn about the Strategic Directions, Priorities and Actions of the OFNS, NAN's Food Strategy and FNIHB Food Security initiatives
2. Identify and discuss First Nations on-reserve opportunities related to food, nutrition and the OFNS
3. Identify synergies and gaps as related to First Nations on-reserve food and nutrition opportunities and the OFNS Strategy developed to date
4. Identify actionable steps for integrating this information into the OFNS

PARTICIPANTS

A total of 17 participants attended the Discussion representing areas of food/nutrition, health, PTOs, education and First Nations communities. Six participants were members of the Discussion Planning Committee. Participants geographically represented seven communities in Northern Ontario and six communities in Southern Ontario (see Appendix 3).

This report gathers the feedback and suggestions made by the participants attending the Meeting in discussing the OFNS Vision, Mission, Goals, Strategic Directions and Priorities. It takes a strengths-based approach to understanding not only the challenges but the opportunities, strengths and resources that also exist in communities. It presumes that every person, family and community holds the key to meaningful change. The appendices include the draft Strategy, participant feedback and a glossary of terms.

PRESENTATIONS

Wendy Trylinski, Community Program Manager, Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), welcomed participants to the 2-day Discussion and introduced Elder Jackie Fletcher, Missanbie Cree who opened the meeting with a morning prayer. **Elder Jackie Fletcher**, Missanbie Cree First Nation, encouraged participants to look for ways their communities can take control over their right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food. First Nations people have so many skills and gifts. There are many examples of successful projects. Praise and support needs to be given to the work being done when talking to other communities.

Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic, NAN, brought greetings and support from NAN for the OFNS. He spoke about the 32 First Nations communities that have food shipped in and his grave concern about the high costs of freight and travel. Food is expensive to buy and it is not always fresh. NAN's First Nations communities are unique. Unique communities need unique solutions. Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic believes that physical activity is an important part of this solution. Help is needed to address prescription drug abuse, suicide rates and hopelessness to help people embrace life.

Deputy Grand Chief Les Louttit, NAN, attended NAN's First Nations 3-day economic summit. It is clear that there are so many qualified people that can be drawn on to address food and nutrition issues such as looking at grocery stores to improve prices. He emphasized the importance of ensuring that First Nations people have a voice.



Candace AQUI, Junior Research Associate, Cancer Care Ontario, presented a background and overview on the development of the OFNS. The OFNS is supported and coordinated by the Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (OCGHEPA) and Sustain Ontario. OCGHEPA is a provincial collaboration of not-for-profit, public health and academic organizations dedicated to addressing population-based issues relating to health as it relates to healthy eating and physical activity. A comprehensive food and nutrition strategy would improve linkages and encourage more multi-sector health planning to address food insecurity, childhood obesity, chronic disease, unhealthy lifestyle behaviours, unhealthy food choices and food skills.

The Goals of the OFNS are:

1. To promote health through healthy eating and access to healthful food for all Ontarians
2. To reduce the burden of obesity and chronic disease on Ontarians and the Ontario health care system
3. To strengthen the Ontario economy and environment through a diverse, healthy and resilient food system

This will be accomplished through 3 Strategic Directions identifying initiatives which will enable:

1. Ontarians to have the access to and the means to obtain safe, healthy, local and culturally acceptable food
2. Ontarians to have the information, knowledge, skills, relationships and environments to support healthy eating and make healthy choices where they live, work, learn and play
3. Ontario to have a diverse and sustainable food production system that contributes to an equitable and prosperous economy

When asked what is needed to support an OFNS in communities, participants suggested and raised the following:

- Identify community needs through an ongoing dialogue with First Nations through stories and community initiatives that have been successful
- Include an education component (e.g. cooking)
- There are different needs, in addition to food, for remote communities
- Traditional food systems are healthy. What makes food systems unhealthy are market foods
- Make the distinction between “culturally appropriate” and “healthy”
- Engagement of local and regional governments, as well as Aboriginal governments, is needed. Jurisdictional divides exist, government initiatives need to be shared
- Continue engagements so that there is more representation from all over Ontario. How is this strategy leveraging opportunities given competition for funding? How do all health initiatives feed into this?
- Identify community strengths. There are a lot of good things happening in communities in both the North and South. Where are the strengths and how can we build on this?

When asked what questions participants had about the OFNS, they said:

- Will we have an opportunity to deliberate the Strategy should a clause be added/modified?
- If there are additional needs to be added to the OFNS, you will want to hear from First Nations communities
- Our communities need help. Sixty percent need a food bank. Community gardens are good initiatives but what about kids in schools? In some homes, help might be as basic as a place to store food if you do not have a fridge or freezer.

For the OFNS’s objectives to be realized, the OCGHEPA Group and Sustain Ontario’s next steps will include initiatives that will help support the development of a coordinated provincial mechanism to address food and nutrition policy and programming; a systematic approach to monitoring, measurement and analysis of key indicators; and, building sufficient capacity and resources to sustain all elements of the OFNS. For more information contact Rebecca Truscott, Vice Chair OCGHEPA & Co-Chair OFNS at Rebecca.Truscott@cancercare.on.ca.

“You will not get the full picture sitting on a big committee unless you talk to the communities who face challenges. It is the only way that you find out about the gaps and how to address them”

Joseph Leblanc, Food Strategy Coordinator, NAN, presented highlights from the NAN Food Strategy. The NAN Food Strategy aims to rebuild First Nations food sovereignty through access to food that is safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate and affordable for the nation all times. The Strategy has as its foundation the 6 pillars of Food Sovereignty in NAN.

Food sovereignty initiatives are community-based and community-owned. NAN’s Chiefs’ Resolution 11/40 was passed in 2012 mandating the development of a food security strategy. The NAN Food Strategy development engaged 7 NAN Food Actionists and 2 NAN staff. NAN’s *Get Growing Program* is an example of a 2-year pilot program supporting the development and implementation of community-led food projects in 4 NAN communities that address healthy eating and physical activity. Communities are also engaged through a Health Advisory Group, the Food Sovereignty Advisory Group and Food Symposiums. Externally, NAN is collaborating with the Canadian Executive Service Organization, First Nations Statistical Institute and Health Canada.

NAN Food Strategy Objectives:

- All food sovereignty initiatives are community-based, community-owned and respect our rights and the OCAP principles (i.e. ownership, control, access and possession)
- By 2013, NAN communities will be encouraged to host seasonal community feasts and celebrations that honor and promote the nations traditional food.
- By 2013, NAN has a food policy in place for all organization’s events, meetings and gathering
- By 2015, 10 communities have community-based Food Charters and Food Plans endorsed by their Chief and Council
- Increased food security in at least 50% of NAN communities by 2018 as measured by the NAN Community Food Assessment
- By 2018, increased ability to personally manage chronic disease through traditional food related activities and improved diet across all communities as measured by the NAN Community Food Assessment
- By 2018, there will be an increase in children and youth actively engaged in rebuilding food sovereignty in 50% of NAN communities through skill development and learning opportunities provided in school, community and at home as measured through the NAN Community Food Assessment

Joseph pointed out that NAN's community food assessments can be shared with other First Nations communities but may need to be adapted for their use. NAN's Food Charters help communities to articulate their needs for a food system. Although NAN exists as a resource to support community-level food strategy activities, Joseph emphasized that NAN will not force it on communities ... The end goal is always determined by the community. For more information, contact Joseph Leblanc, Food Strategy Coordinator, Nishnawbe Aski Nation at jleblanc@nan.on.ca.

Sharmaline Fernando, Acting Regional Nutritionist, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Ontario Region presented on Ontario Region's Food Security Initiatives. Since 2010, when food security funds have been allocated through the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative, a decision was made by OFNIHPS to allocate food security funding universally to all 133 communities. Each community receives \$2,750.

The Region has used a "Food Security Continuum" to address short, medium and long-term food security needs:

Short-term Objective: Create awareness about food security in communities

- Develop and distribute resources, support material (e.g. fact sheets, briefings on People's Food Policy)
- Engage communities – ADI Project Fund (e.g. RFPs for diabetes-related activities)
- Sharing knowledge/experiences (e.g. photo essay to share what's happening and to document how the fund is being used)

Medium-term Objective: Build community capacity

- Annual Regional trainings included information on Breakfast Clubs of Canada, the ADI Orientation Manual and community presentations (e.g. "How To" Start a Good Food Box, Mohawks of Akwasasne First Nation)
- Ontario Region's Food Security Workshop and community presentations (e.g. community gardens, Temagami First Nation)
- NADA Conference and Sustain Ontario's "Bring Food Home 2013" Conference
- Indigenous Community Health Approaches Program: a broad health-practice focused course which included Food Security/Food Sovereignty

Long-term Objectives: Establish effective partnerships

- Ontario First Nations Integrated Health Promotion Strategy
- Annual NAN Food Symposia; Grand Council Treaty #3 Food Security Training
- Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Eating, OFNS First Nations On-Reserve Discussion
- National Regional Food Security Advisory Group: development of Regional Food Security Planning Tool with Indicators
- Healthy Child Development (e.g. CPNP), Mental Wellness, Nutrition North Canada/NAN)

- **Challenges:** unknown what will happen after 2015 with ADI renewal in climate where the Federal government is downsizing
- **Opportunities:** there is no need to limit ourselves with boundaries. Conversations and planning is happening. The National office will be pulling every region's activities together as not every region is doing things the same way.

For more information, contact Sharmaline Fernando, Acting Regional Nutritionist, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch at Sharmaline.fernando@hc-sc.gc.ca.

A VISION FOR A FIRST NATIONS ON-RESERVE FOOD AND NUTRITION STRATEGY

OFNS Vision

A productive, equitable and sustainable food system that supports the health and wellbeing of all Ontarians

Participants were asked to write down what their community's vision for food, nutrition and health and wellness. They were then asked "Does the OFNS Vision "fit" with your community's Vision? A number of comments were shared by participants (see Appendix 4):

- Participants voiced the need to recognize that there is not just one food system but a multiplicity of food systems such as traditional food harvesting of wild plant/animal resources, agricultural activities and activities in communities which exhibit economic viability and practice food justice
- Participants also said while there were many challenges there are also many ways in which communities have addressed food security including Good Food Boxes, community gardens and Farmers' markets
- Foods systems were also envisioned as needing to be positive, collaborative, affordable, accessible, culturally appropriate in supporting the health and well-being of First Nations communities
- Sustainable food systems in First Nations communities are seen as wholistic and integrate the concepts of food safety, food security, resiliency, economic viability and food justice
- Indigenous Food Sovereignty (see Appendix 5) is unique to Indigenous cultures and requires the OFNS Vision to recognize the role of First Nations communities within an Ontario system that would empower communities to create a system that works for

them but yet is flexible enough to address the food security challenges and opportunities that exist in communities today

- Traditional food systems, food practices, values and beliefs are an integral part of First Nations self-identity and the circle of life. Integrating First Nations community-based and community driven food systems that promote, protect and utilize Traditional foods is key to creating food systems that work for them.

“There is a respectful relationship and connectivity to land, water, animals, plants and connectivity to the land, water, animals, plants and our bodies... understanding the systems that nourish us... respecting people’s food” choices.

GOALS FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS

OFNS Goals

1. To promote health through healthy eating and access to healthful food for all Ontarians.
2. To reduce the burden of obesity and chronic disease in Ontarians and the Ontario health care system
3. To strengthen the Ontario economy and environment through a diverse, healthy and resilient food system

Participants were asked to think of whether the goals of the OFNS reflected areas in food and nutrition that were important to their communities (see Appendix 4). If not, what would they change?

Goal 1: To promote health through healthy eating and access to healthful food for all Ontarians.

In **Goal 1**, partnerships were seen as important in enabling First Nations people to fully participate and have ownership of food and nutrition issues. Participants suggested adding “Building relationships and opportunities” to reflect this in Goal 1.

Goal 2: To reduce the burden of obesity and chronic disease in Ontarians and the Ontario health care system

In **Goal 2**, it is important to recognize in that food systems are not only connected to chronic disease but also to other social determinants of health such as poverty and education. The

promotion of healthy eating and traditional foods and activities with youth was seen as part of the solution in taking an intergenerational approach to reducing the chronic disease epidemic.

Goal 3: To strengthen the Ontario economy and environment through a diverse, healthy and resilient food system

As in the Vision, participants voiced the need to recognize in **Goal 3** that there is not one food system but a multiplicity of traditional food systems. Health is not only viewed wholistically across physical, spiritual, emotional and mental experiences but also across the life span setting the groundwork for not only what is but also for what is to come. Participants suggested that by reducing the chronic disease epidemic the Ontario economy will be strengthened. In creating diverse, healthy and resilient food systems the focus must be on the environment and teaching future generations about reclaiming traditional food systems.

Participants said that it should not be assumed that communities know about the OFNS. Animate the OFNS by reflecting the needs of grassroots communities in the Vision and Goals. Learn to listen, listen to learn. Raise awareness, get people excited and talking about it and share their ideas and experiences to make this process meaningful. Have this happen “organically” through breakfast conversations, community meetings, etc. Recognize that communities are unique and that a “cookie cutter” approach will not work.

OFNS Strategic Directions

1. Ontarians have access to and the means to obtain safe, healthy, local and culturally acceptable food
2. Ontarians have the information, knowledge, skills, relationships and environment to support healthy eating and make healthy choices where they live, work, learn and play
3. Ontario has a diverse, healthy and resilient food production system that contributes to an equitable and prosperous economy

THE OFNS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

All participants were provided with the OFNS Vision, Goals, Strategic Directions and Priorities to review the night before and asked to note down anything they would like to discuss. At Day 2’s open participants were asked to write down on post-it notes what they thought were the major food and nutrition challenges and opportunities that existed in their communities.

Once completed, they were asked to post each of their comments under the Strategic Direction with the best “fit” (See Appendix 4).



Strategic Direction 1 - Ontarians have access to and the means to obtain safe, healthy, local and culturally acceptable food

Participants' views on **challenges** were themed based on the social determinants of Aboriginal Peoples' Health (Loppie Reading C and Wien F, 2008):

- Income inequalities: lack of financial means for individuals and families to buy and prepare food
- Health behaviours: competing priorities for available funds such as prescription drug abuse, perceived loss of dignity in utilizing resources available such as food banks and Good Food Boxes
- Physical environment: high costs of food due to the high cost of transporting market foods to remote communities, long distances to travel to purchase reasonably priced groceries, lack of transportation and poor weather impeding the purchase of a variety of fresh or market foods, corporation monopoly dictates food costs
- Educational Systems: lack of universal student nutrition programs to provide food and knowledge about healthy food choices, lack of knowledge about available healthy food choices
- Community infrastructure, resources and capacities: need for volunteer capacity and to identify funding sources to assist with food security programs, food banks are limited to people receiving social assistance, no permanent spaces for food security programs such as food banks

- Environmental Stewardship: restrictions on harvesting, hunting and fishing healthy, nutrient dense traditional forest and freshwater foods

Participants also shared **opportunities** that existed at the community level to improve food security including:

- Physical environments: implement community gardens and community freezers to sustain local food sources
- Education: promote healthy foods in schools to allow ripple effect from child to parent to community
- Educational Systems: look to organizations such as Breakfast Clubs of Canada to help provide kitchen equipment and food for breakfast programs
- Community infrastructure, resources and capacities: improve access to food producers (e.g. farmers and wild rice harvesters)

Strategic Direction 2: Ontarians have the information, knowledge, skills, relationships and environment to support healthy eating and make healthy choices where they live, work, learn and play

Participants shared the **challenges** that existed in their communities to having access and the means to support healthy eating including:

- Physical Environment: weather variability makes it difficult to hunt and harvest for food
- Health behaviours: learned taste preferences for highly processed foods
- Educational systems: nutrition education needs to be community-based, community-led and culturally relevant
- Community infrastructure, resources and capacities: lack of community involvement in food security programs, improve knowledge of health agencies inspecting forest and freshwater foods in institutions

Participants also shared the **opportunities** that existed at the community level to improve healthy eating including:

- Physical environment: promote community gardening, food harvesting, greenhouse growing programs and community kitchen initiatives to support the growing of local foods
- Health care systems: develop partnerships between communities and health access centres, public health units, etc. to enhance knowledge and skills in food and nutrition, educate medical professionals on the importance of traditional foods, food practices and preferences

- Community infrastructure, resources and capacities: engage community members to develop working groups at the community level to increase access to food, build on First Nations knowledge of traditional food harvesting, preparing, preserving and storage of food
- Educational system: utilize culturally relevant messaging to inform public understanding and awareness of strategies to support healthy eating (e.g. newsletters, media etc.). Educate communities about diabetes prevention and management. Include education on food preparation, gardening, food safety and traditional foods in the school curriculum.
- Self-determination: support community champions that can be leaders, give them the resources that they need to address food security issues
- Colonialism: acknowledge and address the impact of colonization of First Nations people on food relationships



Strategic Direction 3: Ontario has a diverse, healthy and resilient food production system that contributes to an equitable and prosperous economy

Participants suggested that the use of “production system” be replaced as it did not reflect First Nations food systems. They shared the **challenges** that existed in their communities to having diverse, healthy and resilient food systems including:

- Physical environment: uncertainty about current food systems and how they will impact future environment, economy and health, low community participation in gardening, etc.
- Employment and income: financial insecurity, affordability and accessibility of hunting/fishing supplies
- Community infrastructure, resources and capacities: insufficient attention to needs of Northern communities, limitations of Nutrition North Canada

- Environmental stewardship: impact of pollution, mining, resource extraction on environmental quality

Participants also shared the **opportunities** that existed at the community level to enhance food systems that included “home-grown” initiatives:

- Employment and income: look at large and small scale food production initiatives which would open up job opportunities for community members, market opportunities for trade
- Physical environment: provide opportunities to set up community gardens, growing traditional foods, Farmers’ markets
- Educational systems: start school gardening programs, establish food policies in schools to support local and traditional food consumption
- Community infrastructure, resource and capacities: establish community-based and community-owned food banks, Good Food Boxes, engage government to acknowledge their role in making healthy food choices economically viable
- Environmental stewardship: energy and water conservation and protection, enhance waste management systems (e.g. composting soil, EPR – extended producer responsibility for paper and food packaging), advocate for government policies to protect heritage seeds, address land impact of GMOs, herbicides and corporate farming practices
- Cultural continuity: teach young people how to hunt and harvest traditional foods including wild game, wild rice, corn, beans and squash

Physical activity, as Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic pointed out, is key to addressing chronic disease prevention. Participants identified that extra funds are needed to support the promotion of sport and recreation. Empowerment was mentioned several times in the discussions as a central theme in enabling First Nations communities to be healthy and well.

Following discussions around food and nutrition challenges and opportunities, participants self-selected a Strategic Direction breakout group that they were interested in adding their voice to.

THE ONTARIO FOOD & NUTRITION STRATEGY – MEETING THE NEEDS OF FIRST NATIONS ON-RESERVE

While the draft Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy has been two years in the making, the October 1st and 2nd meetings provided the first opportunity to bring First Nations peoples living on-reserve and in remote regions of Ontario into the discussion around this groups’ specific needs.

Having heard the discussions and stories shared by presenters and participants in Days 1 and 2, participants moved into small groups to talk about the OFNS and the specific needs of First Nations communities living on-reserve. Participants voiced the need to emphasize the role of social enterprise and to frame SD1 in a way that mitigates the burden of cost for community members. To be successful, participants said that information needed to flow to the grassroots, or community worker, level.

Overall, participants said that social enterprise should be incorporated into each of the Strategic Directions. Consideration needs to be given to who is reading the OFNS and to make sure that the language used is understood by all. Allow opportunities for communities to figure out what works best for them.

Food systems should allow for other enterprises to grow that relate to food (e.g. tourism or hunting/gathering) and combine and create a new section for forest and fresh water foods. Communities needed to be recognized as knowledge holders and the conversation needs to be continued with regional or local food advisors to keep traditional and non-traditional food systems healthy. Micro versus macro aspects of the economy needed to be considered and the processes for accountability mapped out. Environmental stewardship, funding for First Nations on-reserve school nutrition programs and support for improving access to healthy eating information would all be an important part of a First Nations On-reserve Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy. A recount of the discussions appears below noting that due to time constraints, not every priority has been addressed.

Strategic Direction 1

SD 1.1: Increase individual and household food security

1.1.1 Support policies to improve individual and household income

Aboriginal peoples experience far greater income inequality than the rest of Canadians. More than half of First Nations adults living on-reserve reported an income below \$20,000 (FNIGC, 2012). Participants identified the cost of living, inequality in wages and remoteness of communities as barriers to healthy eating. Participants heard that Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy identified that wages on-reserve were not comparable to off-reserve and further that education dollars are not equitable.

Healthy foods provided in day care and HeadStart pre-school programs were examples given of food and nutrition initiatives that were making a difference for children in programs until age 6 years.

1.1.2 Use cost of Nutritious Food Basket (NFB) to determine rates for Social Assistance, Ontario Disability Support Program and Special Diet Allowance

The NFB is a survey tool that is a measure of the cost of basic healthy eating based on current nutrition recommendations and average food purchasing patterns. Participants said

that studies should be conducted in Northern communities to determine whether the NFB is an appropriate measure to reflect the foods that were available in communities. It was pointed out that in Thunder Bay and Kenora, the cost of the NFB was not used to determine rates for social assistance. The Revised Northern Food Basket was developed in 2007 and monitors trends in the cost of healthy eating in isolated northern communities eligible for the Nutrition North Canada program.

In Curve Lake, food vouchers are available but only for non-taxable food items. In Bay of Quinte the Mohawk community buys *President's Choice* brand food, one of few stores accepting food vouchers. The Northern shopping market serves remote, northern Canadian communities but at a cost. Participants shared that food at the Northern Stores is expensive and prices are not government regulated which they should be.

SD 1.2: Increase access to safe, healthy, local and culturally acceptable foods, especially for vulnerable populations

1.2.1 Increase the availability of healthy and local food in education, health care, workplace and other facilities

Participants shared their perspective foods can be high cost and of poor quality and close to their expiry date. People should advocate to make a change to this practice.

“The community needs to be aware of this practice and say “no”. People say it’s so complicated and will do nothing about it...”

Participants said that there has been no accountability for food costs. Under the old Food Mail Program price surveys were conducted. Nutrition North Canada (NNC), the food subsidy program that has replaced the Food Mail Program, has not continued this and relies solely on a self-report price monitoring system by retailers. The North West Territories has been very vocal about rising prices and as a result, the Auditor General is now conducting an audit of the NNC. There is also a belief that Health Canada wants to download their responsibility for food security programs to the province.

1.2.2 Provide a student vegetable and fruit program

Participants said that First Nations on-reserve programs should be explored and supported by the Federal government. The food distribution system is complicated and is a deterrent to setting up a sustainable fruit and vegetable program.

1.2.3 Support community food access solutions that promote the availability and affordability of fresh, local or regional foods

Participants pointed out that this priority should be thought of as more broadly to include food production supports and sustainable growing aids which could be funded through existing programs such as the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative.

Growing local is a challenge up North as the growing season is shorter but communities have found their way. Hoop house gardens have extended growing seasons improving crop yields in these outdoor greenhouses. In one community, an old arena was converted into a greenhouse when garden plots were destroyed by vandalism.

1.2.4 Conduct research that looks into the effect of subsidizing nutritious ingredients, beverages and foods

Participants said that research is needed to determine subsidies needed to sustain hunting and fishing to promote the availability of local foods. Social enterprise should be explored to support creative solutions and community initiatives such as the restoration of canoes to help with the hunting and harvesting of forest and freshwater foods.

Participants said that communication is the key in encouraging communities to make healthy food choices. In one community with safe drinking water, there is a policy to serve only water flavoured with cucumbers, strawberries and herbs. The Good Food Box is another good program but sustainability of the program is often an issue. The First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study will gather information from 100 First Nations communities across Canada about the nutritional benefits of First Nations diets, food and water as well as the impact of environmental contaminants. The Ontario First Nations Integrated Health Promotion Strategy was also named as a source of food and nutrition information (www.ourtimeourhealth.org).

1.4.1 Support farmers and processors to deliver healthy products in demand

Participants identified water safety and the availability of hydro as examples of challenges in food production. Communities need to explore and promote local production where possible. Fresh food is at the center of culinary tourism in the Delaware Nation at Moraviantown which offers cooking classes, teachings around traditional foods, etc.

1.6.4 Fund the development and implementation of municipal and regional food councils to advise on food access and policy development

Participants suggested that local food councils should be supported so they could provide advice. The development of a toolkit for communities to develop their own food strategies was suggested. One participant questioned whether this was a priority or pertinent to First Nations communities.

Strategic Direction 2

SD 2.1: Increase public understanding of healthy eating practices and skills for making healthy food choices through the lifecycle

2.1.1 Provide funding to increase healthy eating knowledge

Participants pointed out that printed information is preferred over electronic as not everyone has access to a computer or internet. Of note, the 2008/10 First Nations Regional Health Survey found that over 1/3 of First Nations households did not have a computer and almost half did not have an internet connection (FNIGC, 2012). Participants shared that computer access may be further restricted by parents to reduce sedentary activity or they may be sold to buy prescription drugs. Participants felt that most people are aware of what is “out there” but for those who are not, efforts should be made to more widely share education materials in these communities.

Depending on the size of communities and funding allocations, communities may have an Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative worker or Healthy Babies worker that can provide health information. Education can also be provided through video conferencing, local radio stations and where there is internet, through on-line websites. However, distribution of education materials can sometimes stop at the Chiefs office. Establishing key contacts in the community that can receive resources was suggested as a way to get information where it needs to go. Participants said they were seeing a difference in health behaviours because of education programs in their communities. For example, more community members are putting their money into providing healthier lunches for their kids. Traditional foods like moose, fish, etc. are being served up more often at community lunches and community members are being encouraged to join in and add to the number of cooks in the kitchen.

2.1.2 Increase marketing of healthy foods

Children’s food choices are affected by food advertising on the television, internet, video and billboard ads, grocery stores and schools. Participants said that we need to work more on developing teaching tools that teaches community members essential food and nutrition skills such as gardening and cooking within their budget. Kids need to learn how to prepare, cook and make healthy food choices. Storytelling about traditional foods, values and practices was suggested as a way to teach youth. It’s important to start upstream with prenatal nutrition and teach moms and dads as early as possible about promoting a healthy pregnancy. Participants emphasized the importance of focusing on prevention rather than ‘fighting fires’.

Examples of successful community initiatives that are already in place in some communities included: mini healthy food lessons for children in elementary school and pairing the Good Food Box program with a healthy eating lesson.

2.1.3 Provide access to free nutrition information and education and healthy eating

Participants said that new food and nutrition information can be shared anywhere and everywhere. Education is not limited to a classroom. Shopping trips to the grocery store can provide a lesson on healthy food choices. There are many sources of free food and nutrition information that can be accessed including EatRight Ontario, a toll-free phone line and website of the Dietitians of Canada providing nutrition advice. Many participants were not aware of this free service.

2.1.4 Ensure widespread promotion and support for pre/post-natal nutrition education, breastfeeding and infant feeding programs

Research shows that a healthy start to life can promote healthy habits into adulthood. NAN's breastfeeding initiative is one example of an intervention that is promoting healthy growth and development of infants. Participants shared that breastfeeding is discouraged in communities with a high prescription drug abuse issue. Whether a mother breastfeeds or not depends on many factors such as the amount of support given by a nurse, dietitian or lactation consultant, community support and family pressures to breastfeed or not.

2.1.8 Support public health and community-based healthy eating and food literacy programs in school and community settings

Participants identified the need for free resources or lending libraries so that community members can access the food and nutrition information they needed.

2.1.9 Provide urban dwellers and rural gardeners with easy access to education and information about how to grow food

Participants suggested that providing healthy eating guidelines would be a good place to start.

Strategic Direction 3

Ontario has diverse, healthy and resilient food systems that contributes to a diverse, equitable and prosperous economy

Food systems are seen as the foundation of the community. There is a push to support a prosperous local economy through social enterprise, keeping funds within the community to boost economic development and capacity building. Participants pointed out that “diverse” should refer to involving all levels of government. It should include support of small community food production systems alongside larger scale operations. Prosperous local, regional and provincial economies should be promoted and community food champions and expertise recognized. Allow room for communities to figure out what works best for them.

3.1 Ensure Ontario's farms are economically viable and can support sustainable livelihoods

An example of an economically viable venture is the “Healthy Store” project as part of the “Get Growing” NAN initiative. More can be found on this program on the web at: <http://sustainontario.com/2013/04/24/15719/blog/digital-media-videos-infographics-digital-stories/growing-good-food-ideas/growing-good-food-ideas-nishnawbe-aski-nation-get-growing-project>. Another participant spoke about how pulses can supplement the diet and that growing pulses in First Nations communities should be promoted as locally produced, giving momentum to the social enterprise movement. The Manitoba Northern Healthy Food Initiative was mentioned as another initiative (<http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/nhfi.html>).

3.2 Protect and preserve farmland and food producing land from commercial or residential expansion

Indigenous peoples are caretakers of Mother Earth and realize and respect her gifts of water, air and fire (AFN, 2013). Environmental degradation affects fish, wildlife, habitats and communities. Participants pointed out that environmental stewardship requires a high level of commitment by all key stakeholders and can be complicated. Use of the term “management” of food production rather than “protection” was seen as a more feasible goal.

3.3 Foster or promote that there is a skilled workforce that is able to meet the needs of the food and farming sector

A wholistic, experiential and place-based approach to learning builds capacity and connects learners with family, community and culture (Stroink ML et al., 2012). Participants encouraged looking at building a skilled workforce based on this approach. Use of words such as “foster”, “promote”, “empower” or “enable” as it relates to learning should be used. The Manitoba Northern Healthy Food Initiative was provided as an example of a program that was working well (see: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/nhfi.html>).

3.5 Ensure that regulations and their enforcement support a safe, environmentally sound, healthy, robust and growing food and farming sector

Participants identified that there needs to be cohesion on where the line is drawn for regulations around food with respect to impact assessments and accountability, Participants supported an approach which built in flexibility around local regulations distinct from regulations that would apply to commercial production.

One participant spoke about how First Nations people have trouble accessing traditional foods in institutions such as hospitals or long-term care.

“Traditional foods promote healing and a sense of well-being for Elders who are used to eating traditional foods and must change the diet due to hospitalization”

Public Health Inspection regulations prohibit traditional meats being served in some of these facilities. Public Health Inspectors need to be educated around the importance of traditional foods. Training First Nations peoples to perform these inspections was a suggestion to address this limitation.

“An example is Meno-Ya-Win Health Center where traditional foods are offered as part of meal choices for patients”

Safety of traditional foods is an issue where the Ministry of Natural Resources policies mandate crop spraying with pesticides. These policies need to be considerate of people in the community who want to gather traditional foods such as blueberries.

3.6 Enable innovative financing for the food and farming sector

Look at ways to facilitate access to funding by individuals rather than organizations. Hydro is very costly in communities. Finding new ways of growing will need to consider cost efficient methods of doing this. To be sustainable it needs to be simple and effective. The Manitoba Northern Healthy Food Initiative is one example of where this challenge is being addressed (see: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/nhfi.html>).

3.7 Ensure that there is adequate infrastructure to support the continued growth of the food and farming sector

Participants shared that the Manitoba Northern Health Food Initiative has many examples including the creation of gardens, greenhouses, freezers and small scale livestock operations in 9 communities (see: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/nhfi.html>).

3.8 Ensure that Ontario food products are preferred in all markets

Participants pointed out that one cannot legally “make” someone “prefer” something. The use of language is important. Participants suggested that “promote” rather than “prefer” be used.

3.12 Protect and manage forest and freshwater food systems to provide a sustainable source of food.

Indigenous peoples are caretakers of Mother Earth and realize and respect her gifts of water, air and fire (AFN, 2013). Environmental degradation affects fish, wildlife, habitats and communities. Participants pointed out that environmental stewardship requires a high level of commitment by all key stakeholders and can be complicated. Use of the term “management” of food production rather than “protection” was seen as a more feasible goal. Invest in teaching traditional harvesting by implementing school curriculum-based education.

DIABETES – A CONVERSATION

Jackie Fletcher, Elder, spoke about making good choices. A wholistic approach to health and wellness needs to be considered. Healthy doctor/patient relationships and having support persons around are key to getting the information people need to take care of themselves. The use of food as medicine and training is not captured in the OFNS. Food regulations and food safety are important issues which protect people.

Diet and exercise are central to diabetes management. The strength of food to address health and social issues, such as suicide, was raised. What is the role of food in building strong communities? Food is the foundation of a healthy society. This is not captured in the strategy.

The health care system is set up in such a way that questioning the medical establishment is not an option and doesn't relate to the First Nation's way of life. Empowering First Nation peoples to speak up for their right to healthy food, good nutrition and culturally relevant First Nations-centered care could be enhanced through cross cultural training so that there is understanding all the way around

EMERGING THEMES

Participants believe that a Food and Nutrition Strategy should acknowledge the needs of First Nations communities and be based on the following themes:

- Health is wholistic and recognizes that physical, spiritual, mental and emotional well-being is key to the health and wellness of First Nations communities
- Self-determination is an important determinant of health influencing all others (Ioppie Reading C and Wien F, 2009). A Food and Nutrition Strategy should be community-based, community driven and based on the principles of food sovereignty.
- Traditional food systems are made up of not just one food system but a multiplicity of food systems that include local natural resources and the patterns for their use within the culture (Kuhnlein HV and Chan HM, 2000)
- Traditional food systems are tied to life with strong connections between food and the health of the environment
- Traditional food systems, food practices, values and beliefs are integral to First Nations self-identity and the circle of life
- Resilient First Nations communities can only thrive where there is an equitable distribution of resources and fair treatment in addressing food security issues that respond to the unique needs of communities (Making Two Worlds Work, 2008)

A food and nutrition strategy relevant to the needs of First Nations communities should recognize communities as knowledge holders. Conversations need to continue at the local, region and provincial levels to keep traditional and non-traditional food systems healthy.

NEXT STEPS

The OFNS First Nations On-Reserve Discussion Planning Group will take back everything heard and prepare a report that can be shared back with participants. The Planning Group will also discuss the recommendations being made by communities and share this with the OFNS Design Team and the OFNIHPS Working Group. Wendy Trylinski has offered to be a liaison for all materials to be shared with the meeting participants. Table talks within the community were suggested as a way for communities to add their voices. How the meeting report will be written to integrate the recommendations still needs to be determined. Communities were assured that there will be opportunities in the future for them to stay involved. The key requirement to support the OFNS will be the involvement of a provincial mechanism behind it. It is clear from the discussions that there will need to be other government sectors, such as the Ministry of Natural Resources, involved in order for this feedback to be heard and activated.

Participants questioned whether there was interest in developing an OFNS toolkit that will help communities develop their own local food strategy. Asset building and training was identified as a more immediate need to enable communities to work together and share community practices. It was pointed out that for this to happen, current communication channels needed to be improved. Participants said that “we did not have to wait to do this, that we should just go ahead and do it”. Another resource that participants raised awareness of is Ontario Nature’s website which has a draft report on forest and freshwater foods. The suggestion was made to share the full OFNS document more widely, either formally or informally, to tap into community resources such as food champions and food actionists that would give the OFNS movement the big “push” that it needs to get going.

EVALUATION

A total of 15/17 participants completed the post-meeting survey circulated (see Appendix 6). About half of the participants identified that their organizations represented the area of health, 1/5 represented food/nutrition concerns and the remainder self-identifying as representing education, PTO or First Nations communities. Almost all participants strongly agreed or agreed that they had the materials and information they needed to feel prepared for the meeting. Almost all participants felt that the objectives of the meeting had been met with the exception of one participant who felt that they did not have time to finish the discussions.

All participants strongly agreed or agreed that their voices were heard and that their ideas had been respected during the meeting. Almost all strongly agreed or agreed that the event

had enhanced or created a new network of resources for the community. All participants were interested in being engaged in future OFNS events or activities.

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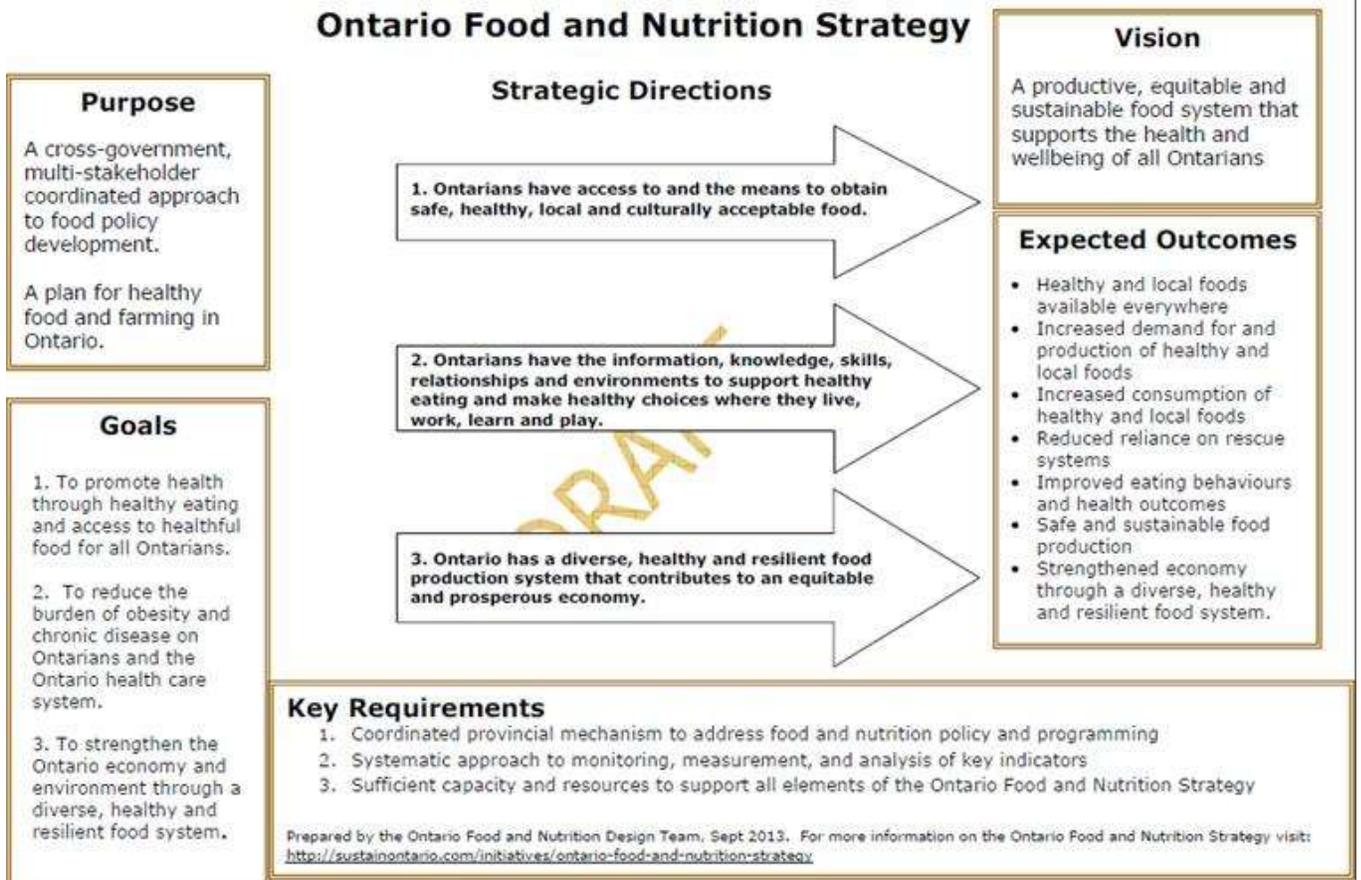
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Appendices

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

OFNS First Nations On-Reserve Discussion Agenda

Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy

Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (OCGHEPA)

First Nations On-reserve Discussion – Participant Agenda

Purpose:

Bring together key First Nations informants, subject matter experts and organizations in Ontario to provide specific input and direction on the development of the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy.

Objectives:

Participants will

1. Learn about the Strategic Directions, Priorities and Actions of the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy (OFNS), Nishnawbe Aski Nation's Food Strategy and First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Food Security Initiatives.
2. Identify and discuss First Nations on-reserve opportunities related to food, nutrition and the OFNS.
3. Identify synergies and gaps as related to First Nations on-reserve food and nutrition opportunities and the OFNS Strategy developed to date.
4. Identify actionable steps for integrating this information into the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy.

Date and Time:

October 1st, 2013 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm

October 2nd, 2013 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

Location: Thunder Bay, ON

Venue: Fort William Historical Park

Hotel: Best Western Plus Nor'wester Hotel and Conference Centre, 2080 Hwy 61, Thunder Bay, ON, P7J 1B8

Draft Agenda:

Agenda	Time	Duration
Day 1: October 1 st , 2013 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm		
Shuttle from hotel to Fort William Historical Park	11:15 am	15 min
Lunch and Registration	12:00 pm	45 min
Elder's opening prayer -Jackie Fletcher- Missanbie Cree Welcome from Chief Georjann Morriseau- Fort William First Nation and Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic from Nishnawbe Aski Nation Opening Remarks – Bernadette deGonzague, COO	12:45pm	15min
Participant Introductions – Carol Seto	1:00 pm	15 min
The Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy: background, milestones and accomplishments – Candace Aqui , CCO	1:30 pm	45 min
Break	2:15 pm	15 min
NAN Food Strategy – Joseph Leblanc- Food Strategy Coordinator	2:30 pm	20 min
First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Food Security Initiatives – Sharmaline Fernando, FNIHB	2:50 pm	20 min
OFNS, NAN Strategy and First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Food Security Initiatives : the role of current initiatives in informing the integration of a First Nations component to the OFNS – Carol Seto	3:10 pm	20 min
Discussion of the vision and goals of the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy – Carol Seto	3:30 pm	60 min
Wrap up of Day 1/Review activities for Day 2/Discuss homework activity – Carol Seto	4:30	30 min
End of Day 1 - Shuttle back to hotel	5:00 pm	

Agenda	Time	Duration
Day 2: October 2 nd , 2013 8:30 am to 3:00 pm		
Breakfast – on your own		
Shuttle to Fort William Historical Park	8:00 pm	30 min
Reconvene/Recap of Day 1/Review homework activity/Discussion of linkage between OFNS strategic directions and identified FN food and nutrition opportunities – Carol Seto	8:30 am	45 min
Breakout sessions to discuss strategic directions/priorities/actions – Carol Seto	9:15 am	60 min
Break	10:15 am	15 min
Breakout sessions to discuss strategic directions/priorities/actions (continued) – Carol Seto	10:30 am	60 min
Lunch	11:30 am	60 min
Report back on breakout session discussions– Carol Seto/Participants/Small Group Facilitators	12:30 pm	90 min
Next steps for Integration– Bernadette deGonzague/Carol Seto/Rebecca Truscott	2:00 pm	45 min
Wrap up – – Sharing circle – Wendy Trylinksi	2:45 pm	15 min
Closing Prayer and Adjournment – Elder Jackie Fletcher	3:00 pm	

Appendix 4

OFNS Vision: A productive, equitable and sustainable food system that supports the health and wellbeing of all Ontarians

Participants shared their feedback around the OFNS in considering the Vision, Goals, Challenges & Opportunities and Strategic Directions which would need to be considered for an indigenous food and nutrition strategy for Ontario. Their comments appear below verbatim as heard:

Be Productive ...

- Food **systems** that are resilient, exhibit economic viability and practice food justice¹
- Explore what works in each community: Good Food Boxes, community gardens, food markets, teaching food gardening & hunting, accountability*
- Access to fresh fruit and vegetables at reasonable prices. Encourage people to be involved in doing the work for themselves.*
- A positive, collaborative and sustainable food system that supports the diverse needs that contributes to a healthy community¹

Be Equitable ...

- A productive, equitable, AFFORDABLE and sustainable healthy food system ...
- Look at the remoteness factor as a separate core point. Remote communities, like non-remote communities, have food security issues but they are very different from one another.
- Add: affordable, accessible
- Supports and promotes health. Nutritious local food that is affordable.
- ...That supports overall wholistic health and well-being of all Ontarians
- An affordable, sustainable, culturally appropriate and accessible food system that supports the health and well-being of all First Nations communities¹
- Access to fresh fruit and vegetables at reasonable prices. Encourage people to be involved in doing the work for themselves such as gardening, for example.*

* Appears in more than one Vision element

Be Sustainable ...

- Food safety and security
- Food systems that are resilient, exhibit economic viability and practice food justice*
- Educate, wholistic, environmentally sustainable
- Explore what works in each community: Good Food Boxes, community gardens, food markets, teaching food gardening & hunting, accountability*
- An affordable, sustainable, culturally appropriate and accessible food system that supports the health and well-being of all First Nations communities*
- A positive, collaborative and sustainable food system that supports the diverse needs that contributes to a healthy community*

Address Indigenous Food Sovereignty ...

- A system where community-based initiatives are fully supported without external expectations, parameters or limits
- Add: adaptable, flexible, empower and confidence
- A recognition of First Nations contribution to an Ontario food system
- Empowering communities and creating a system that works for them but is flexible enough to enable address of challenges with confidence
- Community-based systems that promote and protects and utilizes Traditional foods. Empowerment of communities to create a system that works for them.*
- A positive, collaborative and sustainable food system that supports the diverse needs that contributes to a healthy community*

Address Traditional Foods, Food Practices, Values & Beliefs ...

- Traditional activities such as fishing and hunting supplies communities with healthy foods although it is not always regarded that way
- Respectful relationship and connectivity to the land, water, animals, plants and our bodies. Understanding the systems that nourish us. Respecting people's food choices.
- A wholistic approach to promote and provide the mental, physical, emotional, spiritual and environmental health and well-being of all First Nations
- Community-based systems that promote and protects and utilizes Traditional foods. Empowerment of communities to create a system that works for them.*
- An affordable, sustainable, culturally appropriate and accessible food system that supports the health and well-being of all First Nations communities*

* Appears in more than one Vision element

GOALS - General Comments

- Reflect the needs of grassroots communities and get them talking about it to get people excited (how can this happen organically – breakfast conversations)
- Have community meetings that encourage input with the grassroots people
- Need passion around it. Listen to learn, learn to listen.
- Involve communities, don't just tell them about the OFNS
- Recognize that communities are unique and a cookie cutter approach will not work
- Make no assumptions that people know about the OFNS
- Should be wholistic, provide education, support empowerment and encourage leading by example – Learn to listen, listen to learn.

Goal 1

To promote health through healthy eating and access to healthful food for all Ontarians

- Add “building relationships and opportunities”

Goal 2

To reduce the burden of chronic disease and obesity on Ontarians and the Ontario health care system

- There are other burdens involved with the food system include poverty, mental health issues and social determinants of health factors
- Recognize that burden on health care system and burden on people are two different things
- Use “epidemic” vs “burden”
- Include youth and the role of traditional foods

Goal 3

To strengthen the Ontario economy and environment through a diverse, healthy and resilient food system

- Change “system” to “systems” to acknowledge that there is not one but many traditional food systems
- Strengthen the Ontario economy by reducing the burden on health care system
- Focus more on the environment and teaching future generations

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

SD1 Challenges & Opportunities

Ontarians have access to and the means to obtain safe, healthy, local and culturally acceptable food

CHALLENGES

- Access to food
- Some communities are 200km from nearest grocery store
- No store in community and nearest store is 45 minutes in Nipigon or 20 minutes in Beardmont where food costs lots. Thunder Bay is 2 hours away.
- May rely on someone else to provide transportation to access food, especially Elders who no longer drive or families without a vehicle
- No vehicles or other means of transportation to buy foods
- Food distribution: distance and cost
- Not enough food to meet the demand
- Distance, ice roads, sled, spring thaw, blizzards
- Cost
- Affordability
- Need to address the poverty issue to increase food security issue. Education is key. (SD1.1)
- Financial means for individuals and families to buy healthy foods
- Poverty: access to store foods and traditional foods (equipment, gas, etc.)
- High cost of healthy food choices
- Monopoly by corporations making a profit off of people's health
- Living on Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). Unable to afford taxi trip and food on fixed income (nb policy implications)
- Donations are based on "we get what we get". It should be "we get what we need".
- Food bank is limited to people on OW (identified as SD 1&2)
- OW is insufficient and is not tied to the cost of living but is predicated on other sources of income
- Low income
- Freight schedules to remote communities is a priority
- Focus on children and youth
- Lack of universal student nutrition programs, not bound by policy
- Hunger, dependence on food bank

- Limited food options
- Lack of volunteers to assist with implementation and maintenance of programs around food security
- Knowledge of resources ... we post flyers but community members may not be able to read it and may not have internet, TV or radio to know (Identified as SD 1&2)
- Traditional lands
- Food selection
- Restrictions on healthy, nutrient dense forest/freshwater foods
- Dignity of community members who are embarrassed to utilize programs such as food banks and Good Food Boxes
- Imported food quality: selling expired items to communities
- Rescue programs
- Access to healthy, culturally appropriate food choices
- Poor health – “vicious circle”
- Need better services for programs (Identified as SD 1&2)
- No snacks, short of funds
- People selling their Good Food Boxes for PD (identified as SD 1&2&Pkg Lot)
- No money left for food after prescription drug use
- No permanent space for food bank building

OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop working groups at the community level to increase access to food
- Implementing the Good Food Box (3)
- Promotion of healthy foods in schools. Children learn easily and teach their parents. (identified as SD 1.4&2). This can translate into what’s available in stores. Link with health promoters in the community.
- Breakfast Clubs of Canada provides kitchen equipment and food to schools (SD 1.7)
- Access to food producers (ex farmers, wild rice harvesters)
- Community gardens are coming back
- Social enterprise
- Community freezers
- Treaty #3: some communities have schools not bounded by provincial policies

SD2 Challenges & Opportunities

Ontarians have the information, knowledge, skills, relationships and environment to support healthy eating and make healthy choices where they live, work, learn and play

CHALLENGES

- Education needs to take on a community focus and be defined by the community
- Lack of community involvement in programs. No volunteers, ending up to be same person doing [it] all the time.
- On inspected F&FW foods in institutions
- Raising families on highly processed foods impacts learned taste preferences
- Weather variability
- Need to develop promotional/educational materials

OPPORTUNITIES

- A chance to make a difference by engaging community members. Each community knows their needs. Let's not assume.
- Engaging communities in a collaborative and consensual process to acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of community discussions regarding food issues and their health outcomes
- First Nations have the knowledge of traditional foods – obtaining, preparing, preserving.
- Storage: root cellars, smoking, drying, canning – individuals, families, communities
- Canning
- Community gardens
- Food harvesting
- Infrastructure (greenhouse – skills)
- Community kitchens
- Invite people out to community kitchens and activities using a buddy system
- Social enterprise
- Education and communication to increase public understanding (ie newsletters, First Nations magazines, etc.) (SD 2.1)
- There are community champions that can be leaders. Need to be supported and given resources needed.
- Collaborative evaluation of what traditional foods are
- Learning to prepare/harvest traditional foods

- Make resources culturally appropriate so they can relate to it (SD 2.3)
- Partnerships between communities with health access centres, public health units, etc.
- Education of medical professionals on nutritional importance of traditional/cultural values re: traditional food practices and preferences. Impact of colonization on food relationship.
- Promoting breastfeeding and homemade baby food
- Food policies in schools (ie no pop)
- QMS nutrition program provides a hot lunch and 2 snacks daily to ALL students
- Media – web info to increase knowledge transfer

SD3 Challenges & Opportunities

Ontario has a diverse, healthy and resilient food production system that contributes to an equitable and prosperous economy

GENERAL

- Not only large production but consider also community and home-grown initiatives
- SD3 statement suggests that it is working well now

CHALLENGES

- Financial insecurity
- Industry and others excludes First Nations (ie Purvès and Wikwemikong)
- Low participation in gardens. Lack of consistency. Discouraging. Silo food initiatives.
- Community garden - [have] no funds for supplies, gas, repairs, honorarium dollars. Wildlife in communities eat gardens.
- Affordability and accessibility of hunting/fishing supplies
- Current food systems impacts on environment, economics and health and what that means for our future. Dream a new way.
- Impact of environment and of water quality and control on wild rice
- Food safety regulations with wild game, etc. are not acceptable
- Impact of mining/resource extraction on environmental quality
- Ontario forgets about remote Northern communities. [Ontario needs to be]inclusive of all Ontarians.
- Connection to Nutrition North Canada

OPPORTUNITIES

- Larger scale food production – job opportunities, community feasts, market opportunities for sale
- Home gardens strengthen families
- Community gardens
- Land base for gardens
- Traditional foods
- Community food bank
- Market opportunities for trade
- Social enterprise
- School garden/community garden
- School food policies to support local and traditional foods served at schools
- Farmer’s market
- Food movement is happening now. Capitalize on that energy.
- Good Food Box, Good Baby Box
- Energy and water protection/conservation. Waste management – compost soil, extended producer responsibility (EPR) for paper and food packaging
- Engaging governments to acknowledge their role in making healthy food choices economically viable
- Gov’t policy to protect heritage seed, land impact of GMOs, herbicides, corporate farming practices (ie bees dying off)
- Teaching young people hunting/harvesting
- Wild game, wild rice, harvesting
- Pulses, 3 sisters, Ontario grown [produce], transport

Appendix 5

Glossary of Words and What They Mean

<p>Equitable (Source: Building an Equitable Green Economy: Forum for Sustainable Development)</p>	<p>Results in human well-being and access to opportunity for all people</p>
<p>Food Sovereignty (Source Def 1: La Via Campesina)</p> <p>(Source Def 2: The “Declaration of Atitlan” from the 1st Indigenous Peoples Global Consultation on the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty, Guatemala, 2002)</p>	<p>Def 1: The right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture system</p> <p>Def 2: The right of Peoples to define their own policies and strategies for sustainable production, distribution and consumption of food, with respect for their own cultures and their own systems of managing natural resources and rural areas, and is considered to be a precondition for Food Security.</p>
<p>Food System (Source Def 1: Wikipedia; von Braun J and Asby Brown M <i>Ethical questions of equitable worldwide food production systems</i>, 2003; OFNS Feedback)</p> <p>(Source Def 2: Dietitians of Canada, PEN Food Security Background, 2011)</p>	<p>Def 1: includes cultivated and non-cultivated food production and procurement, food processing, food distribution, food access, food consumption, farmland preservation and stewardship, food skills and education and waste management</p> <p>Def 2: Systems comprised of all the processes involved in moving food from farm to table to disposal, including production, processing, distributing, preparing, marketing, accessing, consuming and disposing. Food systems also involve people, farms, business, communities, interventions, policies and politics.</p>
<p>Food Justice (Source: Food Justice)</p>	<p>Communities exercising their right to grow, sell and eat healthy food</p>
<p>Food Security (Source: FAO Agricultural and Development Economics Division, World Food Summit, 1996. Available from: Available from:</p>	<p>Exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods for a nutritious diet.</p>

<p>http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/al936e/al936e00.pdf</p>	
<p>Ontario First Nations Integrated Health Promotion Working Group (OFNIHPS WG)</p>	<p>The OFNIHPS Working Group is a collaboration between Chiefs of Ontario, PTOs' (Union of Ontario Indians, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians), Independent First Nations, the Province of Ontario (Ministry of Health & Long Term Care and Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport) and the Government of Canada (Health Canada, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Ontario Region).</p>
<p>Productive (Oxford Dictionary)</p>	<p>Producing or able to produce large amounts of goods, crops or other commodities</p>
<p>Social Enterprise (BC Centre for Social Enterprise)</p>	<p>Revenue-generating businesses with the goals of achieving social, cultural, community economic or environmental outcomes and to ear revenue. The mission is at the centre of business with income generation playing an important supporting role</p>
<p>Sustainable (Source: Growing Food Security in Alberta/SELRS Pillars)</p>	<p>Does not compromise the environmental, economic, health or social well-being of present and future generations</p>
<p>Traditional Food System (Source: Kuhnlein HV and Receveur O. Dietary change and traditional food systems of indigenous peoples, 1996)</p>	<p>All food within a culture available from local natural resources and which is culturally acceptable. It also includes the sociocultural meanings, acquisition/processing techniques, use, composition and nutritional consequences for indigenous peoples.</p>

Appendix 6 Evaluation

Twenty-two participants (17 community organization representatives + 5 members of the planning committee) attended the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy First Nations On-Reserve Discussion meetings October 1st and 2nd. A total of 15/17 participants completed the post-meeting survey.

Category	No. ¹	Comments
1. What area does your organization represent?		
Food/Nutrition	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One participant self-identified that the areas their organization represented as food/nutrition, health, education and clinic* • Another participant identified food/nutrition, education and their affiliation as a volunteer with Beausoleil First Nation community gardens, Beausoleil First Nation Education Advisory Committee, Georgian College Aboriginal Student Advisor and Committee member on the Karma Project Steering Committee in Penetanguishene* • Another participant identified that food/nutrition, health and education was their organization's mandate*
Health	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One participant self-identified that the areas their organization represented as food/nutrition, health, education and clinic* • Another participant identified that food/nutrition, health and education was their organization's mandate*
PTO	1	
Government	0	
Education	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One participant self-identified that the areas their organization represented as food/nutrition, health, education and clinic*

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another participant identified food/nutrition, education and their affiliation as a volunteer with Beausoleil First Nation community gardens, Beausoleil First Nation Education Advisory Committee, Georgian College Aboriginal Student Advisor and Committee member on the Karma Project Steering Committee in Penetanguishene* • Another participant identified that food/nutrition, health and education was their organization’s mandate*
Other	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One participant identified that their organization represented a First Nations community
No Response	1	
2. I had the materials and information I needed to feel prepared for this meeting.		
Strongly Agree/Agree	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More First Nations areas should have been invited • Was forwarded agenda beforehand • Most of the strategy was available but not all • I googled OFNS. A link with background documents, etc. could have been helpful [beforehand] but background was provided on Day 1
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not receive strategy prior to session • OFNS handout wasn’t available and I couldn’t see the presentations
3. The objectives of the engagement were achieved.		
Strongly Agree/Agree	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, I learned lots • Pretty clear but summary page would be helpful • A good beginning • To the extent it is a good start • Took a while but we got there • Opening doors [to] understanding [and] outcome from other regions
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Didn’t have time to finish

Other	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undecided. Still to be determined.
4. The meeting met my expectations.		
Strongly Agree/Agree	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great networking and group • I hoped to get a better perspective of those in northern communities to help me understand the needs of the students I work with • Nice to hear others [and] what they are doing • Yes, learned lots how each community is affect[ed] [by] difficulty
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little time for discussions • I was surprised by how open you were to hearing out input

5. I felt that my voice was heard and my ideas were respected.		
Strongly Agree/Agree	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great facilitators • Like input process • Always the last to speak so I can be heard • Enjoyed the sharing [with] other participants
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	0	
6. This event enhanced or created a new network of resources for my community.		
Agree/Strongly Agree	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking, connecting to others • To bring awareness for our community members • Hoping that emails and addresses are forwarded • New contacts
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	1	

7. I am/My community is interested in being engaged in future OFNS events or activities.		
Agree/Strongly Agree	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to attend a similar event dealing with food and health issues affecting off-reserve First Nations peoples • Nice to hear what worked in other places • It is very important for our First Nations
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	0	
8. Other comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great get together. Good teams. Maybe a little more time for review/summary. • I wear many hats but am here first as a member of my First Nations community. Miigwech, I look forward to the next steps in all my roles. • Need more time. • I was really impressed by the participants' grasp of the issues affecting their communities and the suggestions they offered for alleviating some of the problems related to access and use of culturally appropriate foods for the purpose of achieving better health outcomes. • OFNS as questions for what community are??? • It will be interesting to see how much of this info (North) will be reflected in the strategy. • More First [Nations] Northern Remote Ontario presence. • Information to make good choices for eating. 		

¹ Note: participants may have self-identified their affiliation with an organization that focuses on multiple areas (marked with an asterisk (*))



Fort William Historical Park