



SUSTAIN

Alliance for healthy, just and sustainable food & farming
Working across Indigenous Territories / Ontario

Buy Local Food: Diversify and strengthen Ontario's regional food economies

- With trade in fruit, vegetables, meats, and beverages to be affected by the Canada-U.S. **trade conflict**, it is time for Ontario to, more seriously, invest in its local food economies.
- Ontario faces challenges with regional food processing and distribution infrastructure, access to financing, and support for small-scale abattoirs, limiting local food production and procurement.

Recommendations:

- **Invest in local food infrastructure** such as processing facilities and distribution networks to build a robust, resilient local food system.
- **Expand** Ontario's social financing options for small and medium-sized food and farm enterprises, food hubs and related businesses.
- **Invest** in the creation and expansion of **regional food hubs across the province** to act as shared-use facilities that help manage the aggregation, processing, and distribution of food products from local and regional producers, enabling them to access broader markets.
- **Incentivize private investment in local food systems** and infrastructure by creating an Ontario Community Enterprise Development Tax Credit
- **Support small and medium-sized abattoirs** by reducing regulatory and financial burdens, and providing property tax credits.
- Modify regulations for local fish, eggs, and meat to **ease market access for small producers**.
- Set clear targets to increase **public sector local food procurement** and offer financial incentives to municipalities and institutions.
- **Support farmers' markets** with consistent provincial regulations and incentive programs for low-income individuals.
- **Promote agri-tourism as a sustainable income stream** for small farms through financial incentives and zoning reforms.

These policies have been created with the input of 90+ Ontario organizations collaborating over 4 months and have been vetted by the Sustain Board as of February 4, 2025. For more information, please go to:
<https://sustainontario.com/vote2025/>