

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario: policy responses to support the transition from food charity to local food security

**Toronto Food Policy Council Discussion Paper Series
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This is a work in progress. The Toronto Food Policy Council is interested in discussing the issues and strategies presented here as part of its on-going efforts to improve the food and agriculture system in Canada, and to help create food security. Please forward any comments, and requests for additional copies, to the Toronto Food Policy Council, 277 Victoria St., Room 203, Toronto, ON M5B 1W1

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Foreword	5
1.0 Introduction	6
2.0 A brief overview of the current dilemma	6
3.0 The vision: food security fulfilled	8
4.0 Analytical framework	9
5.0 Full employment as social and economic policy	12
5.1 Introduction	12
5.2 Efficiency-stage strategies: making the current system more effective	13
5.3 Substitution-stage strategies: starting towards full employment	15
5.4 Redesign-stage strategies: full employment	15
6.0 Green economic renewal and industrial strategy	16
6.1 Introduction	16
6.2 Efficiency-stage strategies: retrofits and pollution prevention	17
6.3 Substitution-stage strategies: the case of the Food Fair concept plan	18
6.4 Redesign-stage strategies: green taxes to modify behaviour and economic activity	21
7.0 Food self-reliance	23
7.1 Introduction	23
7.2 Efficiency-stage strategies: building local access	24
7.3 Substitution-stage strategies: community economic development	24
7.4 Redesign-stage strategies: demand/supply management and coordination	25
8.0 Food as health promotion	27
8.1 Introduction	27
8.2 Efficiency-stage strategies: reforming food banks	28
8.3 Substitution-stage strategies: community food projects	29
8.4 Redesign-stage strategies: integrating the food and health systems	30
9.0 Concluding remarks	35
Endnotes	36

Executive Summary

In the past 10 years, our perceptions of food banks have changed dramatically. First seen by policy makers and the general public as an emergency, short-term and caring response to what was supposed to be a time-limited hunger problem, they are now viewed, at least implicitly and often reluctantly, as one of the cornerstones of society's anti-hunger and anti-poverty strategy. Although there is much talk about eliminating the need for them, concrete strategies to effect such an outcome remain elusive.

In this discussion paper we present an evolutionary series of policy initiatives designed to eliminate the need for food banks (Table 1). These initiatives recognize both the government's fiscal dilemmas and the responsibility of many sectors of society for both the current problem and the potential solutions. They are rooted in the principles of community health promotion, equitable wealth generation and environmental sustainability.

Our first stage strategies, the easiest to implement and furthest advanced of existing change proposals, focus on the reform of food bank operations to better serve client needs, changes to siting and pricing policies of food retailers, client counselling to ensure maximum access to existing social services, job training and social assistance reform.

Our second stage strategies, requiring new policy initiatives that have not traditionally been supported by the policy system, include supports for community food development projects and a shifting of some food distribution to public and community spaces, and new approaches to economic renewal.

Our third stage strategies require the most fundamental transformations. They require that the policy system integrate different policy fields, including food, agriculture, health, social and economic policy. These strategies will take the longest to implement but will ultimately eliminate the need for food banks and a charitable food distribution system.

Table 1
Summary
Strategies for Change

Strategic Direction stage	Full Employment	Green Economic Renewal	Food Self-reliance	Food as Health Promotion
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Social policy reform ! Training programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Energy & water retrofits ! Environmental industrial activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Local food access projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Reforming food banks
Substitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Tax overtime hours ! New lieu time programs ! Salaried positions converted to hourly wage ! Pro-rated benefits to all part-timers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Food Fair food processing model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Community Economic Development ! Community Supported Agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Field to Table ! Community markets ! Community gardens ! Community kitchens ! School food programs
Redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! 4-day, 32 hr work week (Tues - Friday) ! Stop collection of UI ! 100% overtime tax on work > 1600hr/yr ! 20% raise in minimum wage ! Cancellation of paid time off for statutory holidays ! Increase wages by 15% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Green taxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Demand/Supply coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Optimize food quality ! OHIP covers food staples ! Breastfeeding is normative ! Full information for consumers ! Food security taxes

Foreword

Why is the Toronto Food Policy Council distributing a series of discussion papers on food policy matters

This Working Paper is written with the purpose of engaging the larger community in the debates around food policy issues. In fact, there are few policies in Canada which clearly bear the label of "food policy". There are, however, several policies which bear upon the food system in Canada, and the health and food security of Toronto residents, visitors, and workers. It is this range of policies which form our interests, and around which we frequently engage in debate.

TFPC members are drawn from several different sectors as well as political orientations. While we can readily agree on shared goals such as alleviating hunger, protecting our economic and environmental base, and valuing our communities and citizenry, we often differ on what we see as the problems and solutions. It is usually only after lengthy reflection and debate that a policy position emerges and strategies for implementation become clear.

Our discussion papers are designed to bring forward the less easily available data on the issues we struggle with. Historical information is often cited so that we can understand intentions and processes of change in the past. We frequently propose long-term solutions that some find difficult to imagine, but we believe strongly that a vision of a better society must be supported with the means for its attainment.

For us the questions of food policy, or policy related to food security, tug at both our minds and our heart. It is in the spirit of broadening the debate and listening to more voices that we are sharing these discussion papers.

1.0 Introduction

In the past 10 years, our perceptions of food banks have changed dramatically. First seen by policy makers and the general public as an emergency, short-term and caring response to what was supposed to be a time-limited hunger problem, they are now viewed, at least implicitly and often reluctantly, as one of the cornerstones of society's anti-hunger and anti-poverty strategy. Although there is much talk about eliminating the need for them, concrete strategies to effect such an outcome remain elusive. The present Ontario government promised to take the actions necessary to eliminate them within the term of their current mandate, but upon reflecting on the fiscal dilemmas and political pressures facing them, determined that such an objective was impossible to accomplish within 4 years.

At the heart of the government's decision lie the elements of the current dilemma. It is clear that a vast infusion of cash into the social assistance system and a full employment policy strategy could virtually eliminate the demand for emergency food handouts. Due to numerous political and fiscal pressures¹, to which the current government has bowed, neither of these policy responses are likely to be forthcoming in the near future. Nor is it apparent that the government and its civil service have the creativity to develop alternative scenarios. Moreover, even were there willingness to spend, it is increasingly evident that the assumptions of exponential growth, implicit in government spending cycles, cannot be supported. The case against increased spending is made even stronger when considering arguments in favour of sustainable development².

Unfortunately, anti-poverty community agencies have also had difficulty articulating, given current realities, an evolutionary transition strategy that policy makers could find acceptable and take action on³. It is such a transition strategy that we propose here in the hope that it will guide both community activists and policy makers in their thinking about how hunger can be ended in Ontario.

2.0 A brief overview of the current dilemma

The roots of the current dilemma lie in the workings of both the larger economy (and its associated safety nets) and one of its major subsystems, the food and agriculture economy (and its associated separation from health policy). In this section we quickly review the conditions that have created current levels of hunger and food bank use.

One Canadian in five is thought to be living below the poverty line. Over 2 million Canadians per month use the services of over 450 food banks, collectively receiving over 50 million lbs of food per year (Canadian Association of Food Banks, 1993). Ontario food banks support over 250,000/month⁴. The origins of food banks can be traced to the economic slump of the 1980s. This phenomenon, in association with the gradual dismantling of the social safety net, created the conditions in which private charity has surmounted public policy as the primary response to hunger (Riches, 1989).

Hunger and poverty in Canada are linked to the restructuring of the Canadian economy. This economic restructuring is characterized by a growth in part-time employment, changing patterns of employment, job loss, an erosion of the wage structure and a polarization of the

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

job market. While there has been heightened opportunity for some few at the top of the corporate and private income ladder, 1.5 million people are officially out of work. Many of the employed receive poverty wages.

The latest recession has been deeper than that of 1982-1983 because the massive job loss in the industrial and manufacturing sector has been joined by losses in the service sector. The free trade agreements with the United States and Mexico will lead to a permanent realignment of resources. Losses in the manufacturing sector are particularly telling in the Greater Toronto Area; in 1991 and 1992, 38 major businesses closed their doors in Metro. 87,000 full time jobs were lost in 1991 and another 37,000 in 1992. Employment in all sectors (including food) in the City of Toronto continues to decline (through 1993) except institutional⁵.

Forty-eight percent of Metro Toronto families living below the poverty line are working. Many of these depend on food banks at some point in the month. Total food bank demand reached 165,000 in mid 1993, and has now declined slightly to 152,000 (van Rijn, 1994). Approximately 20% of food bank users are minimum wage earners. Between December 1990 and 1991, food bank dependence rose by 60% in Metro Toronto; Toronto has more food banks than McDonalds outlets. Where once the food bank user represented a small group of Canada's poor, today food bank users include a large portion of Canada's "lower-middle class". These changes reflect the shifts in employment patterns. Those shifts can be categorized as a growth in part-time employment, non-unionized jobs, jobs at poverty level wages and, most recently, a pattern of contract work which has employees moving from one short-term contract to another or piecing together several small contracts. One in five jobs in Metro is a part-time job; of the 9,000 new part-time jobs created in 1992, 2 out of 3 did not last a full year. In Canada today, 24% of workers depend on contract work for their economic survival⁶. This has meant that these workers have low or no benefits and contributions to CPP, many are excluded from Unemployment Insurance and as contract or non-unionized workers, have no rights or protection in the workplace. It also means that not only are many employees poor now, they will continue to remain poor and dependent on social service transfers throughout their lives.

Despite the efforts of food bank workers, this system is unable to respond adequately to the needs of the hungry. Demand has more than doubled in the past 3 years. The amount of food collected in food drives is levelling off, after several years of growth. This is problematic for reasons of both volume and nutrition, as the food drives, although generally responsible for only 30% of total volume collected, have helped provide a nutritional balance to the contributions from the food industry that are primarily refined carbohydrates. Systems are in place to ration the amount of food received per visit and the number of visits permitted per month. The nutritional value of the food received is generally inadequate to meet the nutritional requirements for the allotted time period (Travers, 1993).

Not only is this system inadequate for meeting individual needs in the short term, but it also helps to sustain public policies that perpetuate the conditions that create hunger. This outcome is a product of a public policy environment in which food, agriculture and hunger issues have been fragmented. This fragmentation is apparent in the health, economic and social policy fields.

In this environment, the workings of the food and agriculture economy have been divorced

from our health policy objectives. We do not have a food and agriculture system designed to provide opportunities for optimal nourishment (cf. MacRae et al., 1990a). Our food and agriculture economy (consistent with the workings of the broader economy) also produces wealth in a manner that favours a small group of powerful economic players at the expense of the majority (Winson, 1992; MacRae et al., 1993)⁷. Consequently, the food and agriculture economy itself is a contributor to job loss, unemployment and poverty⁸. The food distribution system is also not affordable for low-income people⁹. Traditional interpretations of affordability have largely ignored the issue of food prices, a significant oversight given that any assessment should include both income and the purchasing power of that income. In Canada we have created a food distribution system that makes food more expensive at the retail level than it need be¹⁰.

Regarding social policy, the role of food in promoting individual and community health, empowerment and development has been largely ignored by social policy units. Social policy analysts have focused on income security as the means to alleviate hunger, and have ignored the other dimensions of food security. This deficiency is consistent with traditional view of social policy in the modern welfare state - that social policy is defined by, and subordinated to, economic policy (Walker, 1992). In Ontario, as examples of this approach, many social policy experts have been extremely reluctant to endorse food community development projects and school food programs.

The food bank movement has contributed (largely unwittingly) to this situation in three main ways. First, it has helped perpetuate a belief that food charity can help alleviate hunger. Little public attention is given to the deeper structural issues that create hunger and the integrated and comprehensive public policy changes required to produce long-term solutions. Secondly, it has provided an opportunity for many large food corporations to cast themselves as good corporate citizens, and to hide their contribution to the current situation. Thirdly, it has diverted attention and resources from community development initiatives designed to reduce reliance on food banks and contribute to individual and community empowerment.

In summary, the food charity system, although driven by caring individuals and organizations, does not have the capacity to address any of the deeper structural issues that have created conditions of poverty and hunger. It is our belief that policies to support local food security are essential to the eventual elimination of hunger.

3.0 The vision: food security fulfilled

Campbell et al. (1988) have identified 6 components of food security. Implicit to these components is a recognition that consumption of adequate amounts of nutritious food is essential to good health.

1. The availability of a variety of foods at a reasonable cost.

This component speaks particular to the way food is produced, processed and distributed. These systems must produce a diverse range of products in a manner that ensures the economic and environmental sustainability of the participants and the

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

resources they employ.

2. Ready access to quality grocery stores, food service operations, or alternate food sources.

This component addresses issues of urban design, siting of food retail outlets, and mobility of customers and the associated transportation systems. It also refers to the existence of food sources that are not part of the dominant food distribution system. In an urban area such as Metro Toronto, these sources are organized primarily around community food development projects.

3. Sufficient personal income to purchase adequate foods for each household member each day.

This component speaks to the need, in a market economy, for wealth and income (whether from employment, investment or social assistance) to purchase a nutritionally adequate diet. In an informal (non-market) economy, non-monetary exchange can be substituted for income (e.g., skills, other products, community supports).

4. The freedom to choose personally acceptable foods.

This component acknowledges that individuals and communities will make different choices, based on many behavioral and community structural realities.

5. Legitimate confidence in the quality of the foods available.

This component addresses both food safety issues and matters related to the nutritional value of the foods produced and processed.

6. Easy access to understandable accurate information about food and nutrition.

This component relates to questions of labelling, advertising, promotion, grading and formal and informal education about food and nutrition.

To this we add an additional dimension (Kneen, 1989; MacRae et al., 1990b):

7. The existence of a sustainable food production system on which distribution and consumption is based.

This last component addresses the need for a long-term and secure food supply, one that is not threatened by the degradation of the food production resource base, nor by political forces beyond its border.

When all these conditions are met, the population of Ontario could be considered food secure.

Currently, these conditions are not fully met (as we have described in section 2.0), but food security can be created by changing both public policy and the focus of community action. The rest of this discussion paper provides examples of strategies to be employed to create food security in Ontario.

4.0 Analytical framework

In previous work on transition in the food and agriculture system to a more just and sustainable scenario, an Efficiency (Reformist) - Substitution (Transitional Demand) - Redesign (Radical Restructuring) spectrum has been employed to explain the various stages that policy makers can follow to create a more sustainable future¹¹ (Hill, 1985; MacRae et al., 1990b, 1993).

Efficiency (Reformist) strategies involve making minor changes to existing practices to help create an environment somewhat more conducive to the desired change. The changes would generally fit within the context of acceptable charity responses to hunger or minor modifications to social assistance delivery, and would be the fastest to implement. Substitution (Transitional demand) strategies focus on the replacement of one practice, characteristic or process by another, or the development of a parallel practice or process in opposition to one identified as inadequate. Examples in this case would be replacing a food bank with a community food market or developing a green infrastructure financing program to replace existing government job creations programs focusing on roads and sewers construction. Finally, redesign (radical restructuring) strategies are based on reconceptualizations of both the roots of the targeted dilemma and the solutions that will address them. They take longer to implement and demand fundamental changes in the use of human and physical resources. Full employment as both a social and economic policy response would be an example. Redesign is unlikely to be achieved, however, until efficiency and substitution strategies have been attempted and found wanting, due to the incremental nature of most policy and program development. Ideally, efficiency and substitution strategies should be selected for their ability to inform analysts about redesign (the most underdeveloped stage at this point) and to contribute toward a smooth evolution to the redesign stage.

Consequently, we present under four organizing themes (the next 4 sections) a description of conditions that will permit food security to be met, and then outline efficiency, substitution and redesign strategies to help achieve them. The four themes collectively address all the dimensions of food security outlined in Section 3.0. Fundamental to these four themes, and the strategies presented for each, are the guiding principles of community health promotion and equitable wealth creation.

Community health is created (Hancock and Duhl, 1986) when communities exhibit the following characteristics:

1. A clean, safe, high quality physical environment.
2. An ecosystem which is stable now and sustainable in the long run.
3. A strong, mutually-supportive and non-exploitative community.
4. A high degree of public participation in, and control over the decisions affecting one's life, health and well-being.
5. The meeting of basic needs (food, water, shelter, income, safety, work) for all the community's people.
6. Access to a wide variety of experiences and resources with the possibility of multiple contacts, interaction and communication.
7. A diverse, vital, innovative and sustainable economy.

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

8. Encouragement of connectedness with the past, with the cultural and biological heritage and with other groups and individuals.
9. An optimum level of appropriate public health and sick care services accessible to all.
10. High health status (both high positive health status and low disease status).

Wealth is central to creating food security: individual wealth to produce, distribute and acquire what's needed; community wealth to provide the necessary infrastructure; and food system wealth to produce, process and distribute food.

Wealth is constantly created by human activity. It has both economic and non-economic dimensions. The non-economic dimensions are those things, valued by communities and families, that produce social well-being (e.g., love, spirituality, friendship, sense of place and history). In capitalist economies, however, these dimensions receive minimal attention relative to the economic ones: goods and services of monetary value that are bought and sold in the market place; and non-monetary supports to economic activity that are not traded in the market (e.g. "biological" capital).

Equitable wealth creation is characterized by (Ekins et al., 1992):

1. The redefinition of land as environmental capital, providing resources for human activity, and environmental services (e.g., climatic control, habitat, nutrient, water and energy cycling). This redefinition encourages different forms of "ownership" of land - private, public and collective.
2. Recognition that "wastes" (in the conventional economic sense) are valuable resources for utility, the environment and the strengthening of the capital stock.
3. Acknowledgement that the built environment (physical infrastructure, e.g., buildings, communications) can have a positive effect on wealth creation.
4. The integration of the present concept of labour into an expanded concept of human capital - knowledge, skill, health and motivation.
5. Acknowledgement that social organizations and institutions create enormous wealth.
6. Acknowledgement that human welfare is improved by sources other than consumption; that the human experience is itself wealth creating - what we do, how we "be" on the planet, how we relate to others.

Some specific proposals that emerge from these principles, and are relevant to the four themes discussed below, are:

- ! Changing the regulations governing how corporations are structured and behave. Corporations were originally instruments of public good, but regular legal revisions to the regulations have produced an entity that maximizes private gain over public needs. In particular, regulations that direct in which endeavours corporations put their retained corporate earnings could be effective, as such earnings are the most significant source of productive investment financing (cf. Mintz and Cohen, 1976; Nader et al., 1976; Kierans and Stewart, 1988).
- ! Changing the investment criteria of pension funds. Canada has over \$351 billion in workplace pension funds (Roberts et al., 1993). These are often the largest pools of surplus capital, but historically they have been managed according to conventional investment criteria, even when democratically controlled by the members (Bienefeld,

1993). About 15% of the money in these funds is invested overseas, and could be repatriated, employing different investment criteria (Roberts et al., 1993).

- ! Controls over currency speculation because it creates financial instability and does not produce any productive investment (Bienefeld, 1993).
- ! Limiting the salaries of senior public and private sector leaders to three times that of the lowest paid employees of the organization (cf. Cameron, 1991).
- ! Changing the tax rules so that all income, regardless of how it is earned, is treated the same. Currently, income earned in less "productive" ways often receives more favourable treatment (cf. McQuaig, 1987; Ontario Fair Tax Commission, 1993).
- ! Full cost accounting (including social and environmental costs) to help ensure that wealth is generated in a sustainable way. The simplest way to achieve this would be the introduction of green taxes (cf. Roberts et al., 1993).

These principles are now being used to redesign our economic models and theories so that they may replace eventually the dominant conventional principles that are creating the current problems (cf. Daly and Cobb, 1989; Ekins and Max-Neef, 1992). The proposals outlined in the rest of this paper could be implemented more quickly if these larger changes to our economic systems were enacted.

5.0 Full employment as social and economic policy

5.1 Introduction

The growth of hunger and poverty are not only linked to economic and income policies, but also to the implementation of a conservative ideology which has its roots in Canada's earliest tradition of individual self-reliance and the charity model. The last decade has witnessed an erosion of the social safety net which was consciously created in Canada in the period after World War Two. This safety net was erected on three pillars: full employment, an industrial growth strategy and income security through a social insurance system.

The commitment to full employment saw unemployment reach record low levels of between one and two percent annually. Canada's industrial strategy involved a two-pronged approach; financial assistance to industry to retool and rejuvenate, and government's direct involvement in research and development. Income security policies were economically viable because they were based on a full employment tax base where Canadians contributed to their own security through a system of deductions at the employment source. As late as 1975, Canada was considering a guaranteed annual income as a remedy against the level of poverty and hunger experienced by Canadians during the depression of the 1930's.

But any public policy commitment to the traditional view of full employment has died. One of the discussions underway in the progressive community, however, is a new approach to full employment based on a re-allocation of work and work hours. Sorting out the philosophy and strategy of this new approach will take time, and the advocacy required to convince policy makers and businesses of its merit even longer. In the short-term (efficiency stage), certain changes to social policy, social assistance, and labour force development can move our systems in the direction of this new full employment approach. O'Hara (1993), a recent contributor to this discussion, provides a transition plan consistent with the substitution and

redesign framework used here.

5.2 Efficiency-stage strategies: making the current system more effective

It is widely recognized that current social policy systems do not work, and that the loss of commitment to full employment is a major reason why. Increased levels of financial support, although helpful¹², would not, in themselves, resolve current problems which are rooted in deeper structural and historical decisions. Social policy critics have long felt that social insurance and assistance systems were never properly implemented. In their view, successive federal Liberal governments, starting from the 1940s, divorced social policy from economic policy, did not ensure that the preconditions for successful programs could be sustained, and failed to implement the entire package proposed by the 1943 Marsh report, instead introducing pieces of it in way that dissipated the coherence and integrity of the proposals. Consequently, once full employment (an essential precondition) began to disappear, our social assistance systems began to collapse¹³ (Philp, 1994a).

Social policy reform and labour force adjustments have been significant parts of the Ontario public policy agenda for some time. The 1988 Social Assistance Review Committee report *Transitions* remains the standard for social assistance reform in Ontario. The report contained 274 recommendations calling for both radical changes to social programs and more modest improvements in the welfare system (National Council on Welfare, 1992). Some recommendations were acted upon immediately by the then Liberal government. Since that time, there has been a definite attempt by government to distance itself from the other, more significant and in some cases more costly, recommendations of the report. Three subsequent reports, designed to address what could be done in the current fiscal environment, have been released by the Advisory Group on New Social Assistance Legislation. The first was "Back on Track" with 88 proposals and an estimated implementation cost of \$450 million. The second, "Time for Action" was released in mid 1992 and focused on the legislative reforms required to create a unified and less confusing system of social assistance. The third, "Turning Point" was released in mid-1993 by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and represents, in a sense, the government's response to the last 2 reports. Its stated reform objectives were: to assist people in moving back to work as quickly as possible; to provide long term support to those who are unable to work; and to help families to raise their children without having to rely on welfare. The government's intention was to replace the existing social assistance programs - General Welfare Assistance and Family Benefits - with new legislation and programs addressing these objectives.

Government action on most of the recommendations in these reports has been deferred, primarily because of the government's perception of its fiscal dilemmas. Those recommendations of the four reports that have been implemented fall into the efficiency-strategy stage - reasonably easier to implement, and not requiring truly substantial changes to the delivery of social programs.

The recently announced Federal social policy review, initiated by the Minister of Human Resources Development, has as its stated objectives to reduce federal expenditures on social

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

insurance and assistance; to create fairness; to integrate more effectively social insurance and assistance with labour market adjustments and economic renewal. Optimists believe that, contained in the federal government's review process, are opportunities for limited reforms consistent with the efficiency stage of change presented in this paper. They believe that some small steps can be taken to reconnect social and economic policy (e.g., tying welfare and unemployment insurance more closely to job training, workforce re-entry, and economic renewal), and that existing programs can be better targeted to the neediest segments of society (Philp, 1994b). Others believe that the federal government is engaged in a cynical spending reduction exercise, has adopted a perverse sense of equity (by shifting program expenditures amongst the already disadvantaged in Canada and not between the advantaged and disadvantaged), and wants to shift people into low wage jobs as part of efforts to cut business wage bills. The document reflects, they believe, a profound denial of collective responsibility for social welfare. Critics acknowledge that reform is required, but propose instead many of the kinds of measures addressed here¹⁴.

In addition to what has already been done, more substantial implementation of SARC (through the other 3 reports) would greatly ease pressure on the food bank system, and would provide some greater degree of food security for many. Such actions are essential in the short term as we attempt to make profound changes to the way our economy and society function. As well, certain efforts that are currently well-funded need to be changed in order to make them more effective. For example, the provincial and some regional governments have invested tens of millions of dollars in job training for the unemployed and those on social assistance. These programs have focused on preparing people for re-entry into the job market. Some have been successful. The Supports to Employment Program (STEP) resulted in a significant rise in employment activity and earnings between Sept. 89 and March 91 (National Council of Welfare, 1992). Others, however, are opposed by social and community agencies¹⁵ because programs:

- ! do not take a whole person approach to training; they fail to recognize that it is not just pertinent job skills that keep people from participating in the workplace;
- ! represent a movement towards workfare;
- ! are designed to compensate for existing worker layoffs;
- ! effectively "employ" people at less than minimum wage;
- ! offer limited, and insufficiently lengthy training opportunities;
- ! have unclear objectives, and little consultation with consumers has taken place;
- ! may provide new skills, but in the absence of economic renewal, clients are likely to remain unemployed.

These kinds of programs would receive more support if:

- ! alternative payment procedures were in place whereby agencies received monies for welfare and top-up and then issued pay cheques;
- ! following training, people would be again entitled to welfare if no jobs were immediately available or their job search was unsuccessful;
- ! pay scales were commensurate with those of the agency, and at least at minimum wage;
- ! participation was voluntary, without coercion from welfare workers;
- ! basic supports to work were provided or facilitated (child care, life skills, transportation assistance, etc.);

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

- ! they demonstrated a balance between encouraging employment and retraining, and acknowledging the conditions that restrain people from taking advantage of such opportunities.

The more profound of the SARC proposals have not been implemented, including:

- ! Removing children and people with disabilities from welfare rolls and supporting them through child benefit systems or disability insurance programs.
- ! New programs for child care, housing and dental care.
- ! A true market basket approach to determining assistance rates.
- ! Implementing meaningful opportunity planning .
- ! Merging Family Benefits and General Welfare.
- ! Making significant changes to program delivery to ensure user friendliness.

These recommendations need to be reviewed in the context of the new full employment proposals to ensure that they do not impede the transition to this policy approach. Their implementation is not an end in itself because they fail to address the underlying reasons for poverty and the forces that have created the need for a massive social assistance system.

5.3 Substitution-stage strategies: starting towards full employment

O'Hara (1993) believes that our economy suffers from an excess of unemployment and overwork. Both of these situations contribute to serious economic, social and health problems¹⁶, all of which we each end up paying for through taxes and excessive consumption. He proposes progressive implementation of changes to employment standards legislation in the first phase. Employers would have 6 months notice of the new rules and, would be provided detailed support on changing payroll accounting systems.

Phase I (2-year implementation once decision taken to move in this direction)

1. An employers' tax on all overtime wages paid to employees (50% in the first year, 100% thereafter).
2. Lieu time programs - businesses would pay tax only on hours in excess of 2000/year.
3. All salaried programs converted to hourly wage positions.
4. Employers pay pro-rated benefits to all part-time employees.

The biggest change produced by these actions would be reduced overtime. O'Hara predicts that this, on its own, would increase hirings in most organizations by 4%. Part-time workers would be cushioned by the existence of guaranteed benefits.

5.4 Redesign-stage strategies: full employment

The final shifts, according to O'Hara, would take place 2 years after Phase I began. Again, most of these changes would be effected through changes in employment standard legislation.

Phase II

1. A 4-day 32-hour work week (Tuesday - Friday).

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

2. A 100% overtime tax on work hours over 32/week (1600/yr).
3. 20% increase in the minimum wage.
4. Cancellation of paid time off statutory holidays
5. A one-time raise of hourly wages by 15%, effective the date of implementing the 32-hour work week
6. The federal government stops collecting Unemployment Insurance contributions from both employers and employees (supports paid out of general revenue).

O'Hara posits the following impacts from these initiatives:

1. Take home pay at 95% of former levels, with no income losses for low-income people. The 5% loss in pay would be compensated by lower costs - less commuting, child care, eating out, etc.
2. Increased productivity of the workforce (about 5%).
3. Increased wage bill for employers of 5%.
4. Increased aggregate consumer demand of 4%, therefore more business activity.
5. An 8% increase in the number of jobs available.
6. Double shifting for some services and businesses (Saturday - Monday).
7. Significant government costs in the first year of implementation, recouped following the 2nd year of transition. Reduced health care, welfare, crime, capital costs (due to more efficient use of infrastructure associated with double shifting). Overall, 20% reduction in government expenses, with raising tax revenues as wages rise and unemployment falls.

Although this analysis is not complete (and O'Hara discusses the ways in which it might go awry), it provides a starting place for a very significant discussion of the nature of work and how it creates individual and community food and income security. Industry and labour are already moving in this direction. For example, "as of January, 1994, 100,000 workers in Volkswagen factories are reducing their pay cheque by 10% voluntarily and working 20% less time in order to save 30,000 jobs with Volkswagen"¹⁷.

6.0 Green economic renewal and industrial strategy

6.1 Introduction

Traditional approaches to economic renewal are not working and there are many reasons for this. Based on advice from the Premier's Council on Economic Renewal, the provincial government has initiated an economic renewal strategy based on supports for high technology innovation (Premier's Council on Economic Renewal, 1993). Although there is some merit to these concepts, we believe that these renewal efforts will ultimately fail.

According to the Premier's Council report, current thinking is predicated on the belief that "incorporating the role of ideas (technology innovations) into the neoclassical theory of economic growth results in major new insights, and forces a reconsideration of economic policy and regulations. We learn that a sustained investment in ideas to produce tradeable goods and services can permanently raise a country's economic growth rate" (Premier's Council, 1993:1-2). Additionally, new institutional arrangements are necessary, arrangements

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

that focus on the integration and interaction of key sectors to create a framework of cooperative action and continuous learning. Identification of Innovative Business Enterprises (IBEs) is fundamental to this process.

The weaknesses we see in this approach are 5-fold:

- ! There is an acceptance of traditional neoclassical growth theory, and a belief that modifications to this theory can help us achieve sustainable development. An examination of sustainable development literature, however, contradicts this assumption (see section 7.0).
- ! A failure to recognize the need to develop an economy that respects ecological principles¹⁸.
- ! The focus is too much on the identification of IBEs and not enough on the creation of new public/private collaborative institutional forms.
- ! Ontario's economic renewal will revolve, in this view, around its ability to carve out a place in a globally competitive economy. Our view is that the economy and food security will suffer with this approach (Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994).
- ! It is unlikely, given the traditional economic actors involved in this process, that the preconditions necessary for successful renewal identified in the Premier's Council report will be met.

A new approach, rooted in ecological principles, called green economic renewal is gaining momentum (Roberts et al., 1993). In its practice, green economic renewal attempts to devise economic strategies that create employment, reduce demand for social assistance and increase environmental stewardship all at the same time. Table 2 provides a summary of these ecological principles, how conventional economic renewal initiatives contravene them, and what green renewal approaches are based on these principles.

6.2 Efficiency-stage strategies: retrofits and pollution prevention

Two promising proposals for increasing local economic activity and employment, and producing environmental improvements are energy/water retrofit programs and pollution prevention programs.

Residential energy and water conservation retrofit programs - the City of Toronto is undertaking an initiative expected to create 30,000 construction and renovation jobs, to release \$300 million a year in disposable income now spent on energy, avoid \$5 billion for electrical transformers and sewage filtration plants, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20%. This requires a \$2 billion investment, paid for by different levels of government, utilities and homeowners themselves (Roberts et al., 1993). The provincial Green Communities Initiative contains residential energy/water retrofit programs as a core piece. Twenty six Ontario communities will soon be participating, supporting 10,000 new jobs and generating \$500 million in retrofits¹⁹.

Environmental industrial activity - Pollution prevention, waste management and environmental remediation industries already employ 30,000 people in Ontario (Ernst and Young, 1992). Across Canada, the industry is worth \$11 billion and employs 150,000 people (Canadian Press, 1994). Sales are rising at a rate of 10% per year (Westell, 1994). As a result,

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

the federal government has announced an environmental industrial strategy, with direct spending commitments of \$57.5 million, some reallocations of existing spending to focus on green procurement, training for staff involved in trade missions, and some support for the development of national certification programs to ensure the authenticity of environmental claims associated with these industries (Westell, 1994).

There remain, however, significant opportunities for expansion given that Canada has a \$1 billion deficit in trade of environmental industry goods and services. Despite the recent federal announcement, those involved in the industry feel that Canada is losing its natural advantage. Government failure to enforce existing (or create more stringent new) environmental regulations mean that environmental business opportunities (and associated environmental improvements) are lost (Canadian Press, 1994).

6.3 Substitution-stage strategies: the case of the Food Fair concept plan

Correcting for the weaknesses of the Premier's Council approach does produce some interesting possibilities. Gertler (1991) provides an outline of how policy might be employed, based on a production strategy of flexible specialization. In this approach, producers focus on economies of scope (an emphasis on responding quickly to changes in customer preferences and niche markets) rather than on economies of scale. Exporting is a consequence of developing a domestically successful, quality product that has international appeal. In this system, spatial clustering and cooperative linkages between the different firms that supply those firms producing the final goods are essential. In Italy, where until recently this approach was successfully employed, the policy apparatus was able to support the development of small firms, local technical schools, family supports such as day care, and land use policies that discouraged speculation. This approach has also been successfully employed with regions specializing in food products (Friedmann, 1993). What has been absolutely essential to this success, however, and what is missing from the Ontario approach to date, is a commitment to the region in which production takes place. Institutions and communities want to be located where they are, therefore they create innovative forms of economic activity (employment, products and services) to sustain the communities of that region²⁰. The drive for both innovation and trade emerges from this commitment to place.

The Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) has been promoting an economic renewal project, originally targeted to the Stockyards Industrial District of Toronto, consistent with this kind of thinking. A confluence of external factors provide a unique opportunity to develop an innovative cluster of food processing and related activities in the City of Toronto.

- ! the meat industry and the Ontario Stockyards have downsizing operations
- ! all levels of government are looking for new employment creation opportunities
- ! Ontario farmers and food manufacturers are looking for new niche markets
- ! Toronto's diverse communities are consuming a tremendous variety of fresh and processed foods, many of which could be produced or processed in Ontario if the infrastructure were in place
- ! the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Rural Affairs is looking for ways to increase the economic viability of Ontario farmers, to promote rural community economic development, and to support the transition to sustainable agriculture
- ! consumers are increasingly health and environment-conscious

The TFPC believes that a food processing cluster plan should be designed around the following concepts:

1. Plans should recognize the historic character of the Stockyards site as a place for food and food-related activity, but should allow for a new image to evolve, based on the way the food system and the local food economy is changing.
2. The plan should focus on how to build upon, and upgrade where appropriate, the existing infrastructure of the District. Public investment in infrastructure would be time-limited and on a diminishing scale, after which operations would be fully financed out of current revenue generated from public and private sector services rendered.

Table 2 Principles (laws) of nature in relation to economic renewal strategies²¹			
Law of nature		Some contraventions of this law in traditional economic renewal	How laws are respected in green renewal strategies
1.	<p>Survival is based on: Needs (food, space, shelter, clothing, education and other quality of life factors).</p> <p>Availability of the resources on which these needs depend.</p> <p>The incidence of mortality factors.</p>	<p>! Much of our economy is geared to supplying not real but manipulated needs</p> <p>! Much of the economy is dependent on non-renewable resource inputs (particularly fossil fuels).</p> <p>! Health compromising initiatives often receive treatment equivalent to health promoting ones (e.g. costs of treating disease are considered as economically positive)</p>	<p>! Values approaches rooted in ecological realities</p> <p>! Use of analytical tools that employ a longer time frame and account for non-renewability.</p> <p>! Rewards finding economic solutions in health promoting activity.</p>
2.	Relationships in the environment are cyclical.	! The economy focuses on linear nutrient flows with their associated dependence on non-renewable resources and resultant pollution.	! Economic renewal designed to work with cycles (e.g., waste, energy, water recovery and reuse)
3.	Limits exist within the environment which, if not respected, result in the degradation of the environment.	! Economic system limits ability to read ecological signals. ! Our economy often encourages harvesting beyond replacement.	! Use of processes and technologies that respect limits. ! Focus on products and services that respect time and space.
4.	<p>Over time, ecosystems tend to increase in complexity, in the functional diversity of their species, and in their resilience.</p> <p>Although competition, strife, conflict and parasitism exist in nature, evolution usually depends more on cooperation and symbiotic relationships.</p>	<p>! Economic systems reward technologies that simplify ecosystems, e.g., in the food system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reduced gene pool - monocultures - removal of competitors - creation of uniform soil conditions - removal of non-productive areas such as hedgerows, wetlands, woodlots. <p>! Solutions to problems deal primarily with symptoms.</p>	<p>! Renewal designed to find economic opportunities in variability</p> <p>! Multidisciplinary teams and approaches used.</p>
5.	Most processes follow non-linear relationships and exhibit threshold responses, that often produce rapid transformation to complex re-organizations with new linkages.	! Failing to act on early signs of economic problems. ! Skyrocketing unpaid costs of environmental clean-up and social problems.	! Designed to recognize early warning indicators and causes of problems.

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

6.	Under natural conditions ecosystems exhibit numerous benign self-maintaining and self-regulating processes that if interfered with result in degeneration and population explosions or declines.	!	Boom and bust economic cycles in certain commodities.	!	Spending respects the capital base of the ecosystem.
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3. The land controlled by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Rural Affairs should be an anchor for the economic renewal of the district. The plan should reflect a timely transition from stockyard and related activities, to new uses of the land associated with the food processing cluster.
4. In addition to physical infrastructure, the cluster should provide R&D and marketing expertise to firms located there.
5. Proximity to markets should be a guiding principle. The fresh or "just-in-time" market could be well serviced from the District. The District could also serve as a secondary processing area, following primary processing in other regions of Ontario where foods are produced.
6. The plan should focus on attracting many small enterprises, perhaps anchored by a larger operation. These enterprises could be new ones or established ones looking to relocate. The businesses should be linked and compatible. They might provide goods and services to each other, and offer a package of things to prospective customers.
7. The area should be well linked economically to rural community development initiatives. Small regional primary processing facilities should be encouraged, and linked to secondary processing activity in the Stockyards District.
8. In association with the food processing cluster, the District would serve as a model for ecological management of water, heat, refrigeration and waste recovery. This would permit the development of a range of associated services and light industrial facilities focusing on innovative packaging, container reuse and recycling, transformation of organic materials into feeds or compost, and energy and water efficiency systems.
9. The District would function as a public-private sector collaboration. The public sector would assist with infrastructure development, and set guidelines, consistent with the new vision of the District (in particular guidelines related to point #8), for private sector initiatives. The private sector would lease land from government, or purchase or lease from existing private sector firms. It would provide all the other required goods and services associated with the economic activities of the District.
10. The activities of the District would also link with other public sector initiatives. For example, the provincial government might operate a procurement agency that coordinated the sale and distribution of food products processed in the District to both community development projects (such as school food programs, Field to Table) and to public sector institutions (hospitals, prisons).
11. The plan should also provide for food-related services to the residents of the area (e.g., community gardens) and agricultural educational opportunities (e.g., demonstration gardens and hot houses).

Unfortunately, there has been limited enthusiasm for this kind of approach. The dominant economic development theory still holds sway at a provincial level. There are enough potential business and policy allies, however, to make this kind of initiative worth pursuing.

Successful adoption of such a project would represent a significant advance - maintenance of industrial jobs, community economic renewal, supports for the local food economy. It does not represent, however, a thorough integration of the five major policy fields that comprise food security policy. That would be accomplished at the redesign stage.

6.4 Redesign-stage strategies: green taxes to modify behaviour and economic activity

A further significant component of green economic renewal is the setting of green taxes with revenues earmarked to environmental initiatives²². These proposals are designed to reduce non-renewable resource consumption and raise funds for other environmental initiatives, which in turn create new economic activity. The greatest revenue raiser proposed is a BTU or carbon tax (Coalition for a Green Recovery, 1992). There are now a host of proposals covering all sectors of the economy. Of particularly relevance to this discussion are the proposals for agriculture²³.

The program has three principle objectives: a) taxing purchasing that is an impediment to sustainability; b) ensuring revenue neutrality for the taxed party by shifting those revenues raised directly to programs that promote sustainability within the affected sector; c) transferring urban financial resources to rural areas to support the transition to agricultural sustainability²⁴.

1. The Provincial Sales Tax (PST) is applied to all synthetically-compounded pesticides and fertilizers sold to farmers (see below for additional options). An exemption could be maintained for biological pesticides and fertilizers, except those that are the product of genetic engineering (biotechnology).

To ensure revenue neutrality for those paying the tax, revenues generated are earmarked for:

- ! any costs associated with creating an exemption for biological pesticides and fertilizers (e.g., for lawn and garden products);
- ! the costs of a retail sales tax exemption on soil and input conservation farm equipment;
- ! programs to help farmers plan and finance the transition to organic/sustainable practices;
- ! the costs of government procurement programs to purchase preferentially Ontario and ecologically-produced foods²⁵.

The purpose is to provide additional incentives for farmers to make the transition to sustainable practices and to enhance the market for their products. It is consistent with such government programs as Land Stewardship, Food Systems 2002, and support (provincial and federal) for the Environmental Farm Plans. The taxes would raise revenues on a declining rate basis, because synthetic pesticide and fertilizer sales would slowly decrease as farmers made the transition. Financial supports for new programs would also decline over time, but this is consistent with the desired objective

of jump-starting market mechanisms that would, once functioning, fully reduce or eliminate the need for such programs.

1992 sales of synthetic pesticides were approximately \$137 million. Applying the PST raises \$11.0 million (assuming all purchasing farmers take advantage of their sales tax exemption). 1992 synthetic fertilizer sales were about \$268 million. Applying the PST raises \$21.5 million. Total monies raised would be \$32.5 million.

2. An additional option would be to apply a 4% surcharge (above the PST) to all retail sales of synthetically compounded pesticides and fertilizers (used in both rural and urban settings, including those applied to power corridors, rights of way and other non-farm, non-residential uses). This would apply to both domestically produced and imported products, except biologicals.

The purpose of this surcharge is to raise additional revenues, to shift some urban financial resources to rural areas, and to encourage urbanites to modify their lawn and gardening practices. A number of other jurisdictions already levy such a tax and use the revenues for environmental programming (e.g., Iowa, Germany).

The surcharge on synthetic pesticides raises additional revenues of approximately \$6.5 million (approximately \$1 million from lawn and garden sales). Applying the surcharge on fertilizers raises an additional \$10.7 million on the farm side²⁶. The total raised would be at least \$17 million.

Total revenues from applying the PST and the surcharge would likely raise over \$50 million.

3. On the spending side, program design would be determined by the allocation of costs among the 4 components, because 2 of the 4 programs could be very large if monies were available to allocate to them.

Sales tax exemption on biological pesticides and fertilizers - A very small percentage of current pesticide and fertilizer sales are biologicals, so maintaining the exemption for farmers would be a minimal cost in the early years. Creating an exemption for lawn and garden biological products would also be of minimal cost because, although they are a greater percentage of total lawn and garden sales, total sales of lawn and garden products is lower than farm sales.

Conservation equipment - in general farm equipment sales have been low for many years, but some conservation equipment sales have been growing, particularly no-till planters. Much of the truly innovative conservation equipment currently being used is purchased from out of the country. A sales tax exemption would reduce revenue, but could stimulate sales and possibly employment, especially if Ontario-based firms are established.

Transition services for farmers wishing to convert to sustainable practices are a growing area (e.g., IPM services, Farm Transition Planning, converting to organic production). A program to provide grants to 10,000 Ontario farmers for transition planning services

and periodic advice would cost (assuming hiring of independent consultants for 6 days consultancy @ \$400/day) \$24 million. Because local information is required, conditions are right for Ontario-based services firms to develop.

Procurement programs are currently being used to support the development of Ontario-based environmental businesses (e.g., post-consumer recycled fine paper). The same approach could be taken to support the development of Ontario ecologically-produced foods, supporting both farmers and the emerging new distribution sector. For example, local certified organic product can cost from 0 - 100% more than conventionally grown product, depending on the season and source. Funds could be allocated from these new tax revenues to cover the additional costs of government procurement or contracts with food service establishments. As the market for organic product grew, the price premium would likely decline (as has been found with other markets for environmentally-friendly goods).

Applying the PST to currently exempt pesticides and fertilizers will not likely, of itself, significantly reduce pesticide sales. Transition programs take a number of years to have impact. We would not, then, expect rapid declines in synthetic pesticide and fertilizer sales. Additionally, sustaining an exemption on biological materials would increase their market share. Employment lost in one sector would likely be offset by gains in the other. As well, an opportunity exists to promote an Ontario biological-inputs industry. Most of the significant synthetic pesticide manufacturers are branch operations of multinational firms. Multinationals are less dominant players in the fertilizer industry. A significant percentage of sales of biologicals is from smaller companies.

Such a tax program shifts economic activity towards things that can be sustained for the long-term. In combination with the other economic initiatives outlined in section 4.0, it sets a new economic course consistent with the creation of food security.

7.0 Food self-reliance¹

7.1 Introduction

For the redesign to be successful, the food and agriculture system must become a servant of food security policy. Achieving this requires that the food system be designed to meet domestic food needs, i.e., that it is oriented toward local, regional and national self-reliance.

We are not as self-reliant as we could be. When the grain trade is removed from calculations, Canada is a net importer of agricultural products. Until just after World War II, Canada was self-sufficient in basic fruits (plums, peaches, apricots, strawberries, pears), but by 1980, 28-57% of these five fruits were imported (Warnock, 1984). By 1987, Canada was only 71% self-sufficient in fresh vegetables, and 45% in all fruits and berries (Statistics Canada, 1988). These national figures, however, hide regional differences. For example, Saskatchewan is estimated to be supplying only 10 -15% of its vegetable requirements (Canadian Organic Producers' Marketing Cooperative, 1984; Waterer, 1993). Ontario in 1993 had a \$1.9 billion international deficit in agricultural trade, one third of this in horticultural products (OMAF, 1994). Some of the deficit in horticultural products is due to the seasonality of the Canadian growing season,

but a significant percentage of the crops that comprise this deficit could be produced and stored here if it were a priority of domestic agricultural policy (Warnock, 1984; Kneen, 1992).

Daly and Cobb (1989) have argued that the greater the degree of self-sufficiency of trading units, the greater control each unit has over the terms of trade and the greater the likelihood of benefits accruing to all units. This holds provided that there is a degree of confidence and mutual concern among the members of a community or political system that permits some degree of specialization so that a wide range of goods and services can be provided (but not at the cost of community needs and community control as happens under our current system). They argue forcefully that this mutual concern can not realistically exist beyond national borders, and is, in fact, more likely to exist at a regional (or sub-national) level. "Hence, basic self-sufficiency in agricultural production should normally be a goal of national policy" (Daly and Cobb, 1989:269). In turn, this basic self-sufficiency lays the foundation for creating food security. It also creates new employment activity in the same way that initiatives presented in Section 6.0 do. Progressive initiatives to increase access, local economic activity and self-reliance are outlined in the next three subsections.

7.2 Efficiency-stage strategies: building local access

Most consumers acquire their food in supermarkets, superstores and convenience outlets. The majority of these stores are owned by 5 firms. The locations of these stores has historically been determined primarily by market forces: where store profitability is likely to be assured. There is evidence that urban neighbourhoods containing predominantly low-income people are often poorly served by quality retail outlets (cf. Olsen, 1992; Travers, 1993). This poor service results from either an absence of stores, or a monopoly or oligopoly situation resulting in higher prices than those found in higher income areas characterized by more competition and greater consumer mobility. This condition is sometimes aggravated in inner city areas where historical development patterns have kept retail store space small. Since retail-level product profit margins are small, retailers have relied upon volume to ensure profitability. Companies have been reluctant to operate stores whose size does not accommodate such volumes.

Low-income people and their organizations are confronting this reality by launching community research programs to identify poorly serviced areas, or chains whose pricing policies discriminate against low income people²⁸. Organizers hope to lobby both planning departments of local municipalities and the retail chains to change these circumstances that reduce access and increase costs. The result may be improved access, prices and/or quality. Such changes would not, however, change significantly the economic and employment conditions of those involved.

A second "first step" is buy local programs. OMAFRA has been running a Foodland Ontario program for many years, encouraging consumers to purchase Ontario foods, and helping institutional buyers to find appropriate sources of Ontario supply. OMAFRA has successfully raised public consciousness regarding support for Ontario farmers and the value of buying fresh local products, but, because the program has focused on marketing and marketing development, it has not been entirely successful. For example, food service companies have indicated their reluctance to buy local because they feel that the supply is inconsistent, farmers have difficulty meeting their quality and cleanliness specifications, and

buying local means having to deal with more suppliers. Although some farmers have been able to adapt to these conditions, most have not because the structural changes required to meet these requirements are often beyond the capacities of individual producers. These problems call for significant policy and program intervention on the part of OMAFRA, particularly regarding cooperative production, storage and marketing and investment in capital infrastructure. Because OMAFRA is not committed to a self-reliance strategy on a policy level, they have been unwilling to make these kinds of investments.

7.3 Substitution-stage strategies: community economic development (CED)

CED is "the process of organizing for local community renewal - economic, social, ecological" (OLE, 1994). It is guided by the following concepts (McKnight, 1994):

- 1) Identifying what goods and services are not freely available in a local community.
- 2) The new heart of society is the small associations (groups of citizens/people coming together) with a common cause, voluntarily and spontaneously to solve problems/issues, and assuming the responsibility and authority.
- 3) Communities must reclaim their own capacity, functions, and knowledge from institutional systems. Families should not be seen as merely "collections of clients" for the operation of larger (institutional) systems.
- 4) Democracy must be exercised through small associations of people in solving issues and problems.
- 5) Through associations and their initiatives, CED can effectively solve economic crises whereby "citizen spaces" are created, and discussions and processes for change are effected.

To make CED a reality requires that:

- ! Government and business focus on supporting many small initiatives and on creating local self-reliance
- ! Capital be available for small entrepreneurs, especially those with social objectives²⁹
- ! CED training be readily available to potential community entrepreneurs
- ! Business development supports be available, including the development of business plans
- ! Local exchange trading systems (LETS) expand to give communities more control over currency and exchange (Rotstein and Duncan, 1991).

Current CED food success stories on which we must build include:

- ! Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) - consumers "subscribe" to a farm (or farms) and receive shares of what is produced from it. In most models, money is paid at the beginning of the growing season, consumers are involved in planning the season, and farm products are delivered directly to consumers. In this approach, both farmers and consumers share the risks of the growing season, there are no "middlemen" and much more of the purchasing dollar remains with the farmer than in traditional distribution systems. Consumers generally receive higher quality and fresher product, and in well functioning CSAs, at costs below traditional retail³⁰.
- ! Niche food processing - for example, a study of the Niagara Region has identified

opportunities for high quality products, using local supply, of bakery goods, jams and jellies for the hotel/restaurant trade, specialty ice creams (with local fruit), and specialty pastas (Niagara Regional Development Corporation, 1994).

- ! Kitchen incubators - small-scale entrepreneurs develop skills and products using collectively managed industrial kitchen facilities. Products are targeted to ethnic communities and just-in-time markets³¹.

If these types of projects become the norm for economic development and are supported by the policy system then food security will be enhanced, at both the level of local food access, and employment opportunities.

7.4 Redesign-stage strategies: demand/supply management and coordination

There have been 5 significant studies addressing the potential for self-reliance in Canada (Warkentin, 1976; Warkentin and Gertler, 1977; Warnock, 1982; Harnapp, 1988; Van Bers, 1991). All reach similar conclusions, but the most comprehensive Canadian work has been carried out by Van Bers (1991). She examined, in a dynamic fashion, changes in Canadian demographics to the year 2031, desirable health promoting changes in the Canadian diet, and sustainable food production systems. Her assessment revealed self-reliance potentials both nationally and regionally (Table 3). Overall, Canada could be exporting grains, pulses, oilseeds and potatoes. Due to changing dietary patterns, the domestic needs for animal products could be met, but some importation of fodder crops would be required. Deficits would still exist for vegetables, fruits, and apples.

Some European studies are also informative for the Canadian situation. In the 1970s, Norway set out to redesign its food and agriculture system around both self-reliance and the macronutrient goals appropriate to a healthy (and optional) Norwegian diet³². They attempted to increase domestic food self-reliance from 39% of total calories to 52% by 1990 (Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture, 1975). They used such policy tools as: production and consumer subsidies; market promotion; consumer education; food labelling; and penalties for unhealthy food (Ringén, 1977). By 1988, they had reached 50% self-reliance, whole grain consumption had increased, as had quality of local production of both grains and potatoes. Greater improvements were limited by the absence of new organizational structures to properly implement these goals and by a lack of human and financial resources (Milio, 1988). Finland has been more successful than Norway. The country has been self-sufficient in all basic foodstuffs, except fruits and vegetables, for many years. Current research and policy efforts focus on the horticultural sector, with a particular emphasis on storage, and agricultural inputs (Kettunen, 1986).

Table 3
Land supply/demand ratios for Canada and the 5 regions in 2031
for the production of food and animal feed
(Van Bers, 1991; Van Bers and Robinson, 1993)

	BC	Prairies	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic	Canada
Grains	0.87	86.17	3.39	1.75	0.97	17.03

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

Oilseeds	0.42	21.39	1.30	0.02	0.02	4.29
Pulses	~	6.67	0.66	0.03	0.01	1.42
Vegetables	0.24	0.79	0.75	0.57	0.45	0.63
Potatoes	0.21	2.75	0.64	0.97	8.56	1.73
Fruits (not apples)	0.23	0.01	0.16	0.07	0.49	0.15
Apples	0.92	0.01	0.50	0.53	0.84	0.50
Forage/hay	0.69	0.87	4.15	5.24	3.33	1.17
Fodder	0.16	0.87	0.23	0.16	0.05	0.32

NB. A ratio of 1 means total self-sufficiency in land to produce the particular food for the population. Forage/hay and Fodder estimates provide some indication of our ability to be self-reliant in animal products.

These studies, though limited in number and sometimes in concept, suggest that a similar, if not higher degree of self-reliance is attainable in Canada. The financial opportunities and tradeoffs, however, remain unknown as economists and policy analysts have been reluctant to undertake these kinds of studies. A central theme of these studies is coordinating demand (optimal nourishment requirements of the population) with supply (volume, quality and location of production and processing)³³. The result of such a policy approach would be a food system providing for as much of the biological requirements of the population as was possible within the physical constraints imposed by the Canadian climate and geology. Its implications are profound:

- ! redesign of government departments of agriculture to increase capacity to collect data, and provide direction to business activity (Toronto Food Policy Council, 1995a [forthcoming])
- ! programs to help producers and processors shift locations or shift foods being produced or processed
- ! programs to assist start-up of new food businesses
- ! policy and programs to prevent intrusion of lower quality/lower cost international products

Such efforts could be financed out of the green tax program or from savings in health care expenditures (see next section).

8.0 Food as health promotion¹

8.1 Introduction

The Canadian food and agriculture system has never been designed to provide opportunities to promote optimal nourishment and health³⁵. This situation exists despite the opinions of some analysts that 60-70% of diseases have a diet-related dimension (cf. US Surgeon General, 1988). The Canadian health care system, although committed to optimal nutrition in concept, has failed to invest adequately in the provision of a nourishing affordable diet as a health

promotion measure³⁶. As a nation, Canada is left with the paradoxical situation of a private-sector driven food production and consumption system and a publicly-funded health care system. The consequence is that all Canadians end up paying for health care expenses associated with malnutrition, such as hunger, poor food choices, and poor food quality.

Redesigning the health care, food and agricultural systems to provide opportunities for optimal nourishment is clearly an enormous undertaking. Only a few nations have attempted even limited versions of such an exercise, and with limited, although promising, success (Milio, 1988). We propose that such a redesign would be characterised by:

1. A commitment to meld the best of private and public sector involvement in the food system. It has been argued by many analysts that food has never been a successful commodity (in societal terms) in the traditional market place because its biological properties and central role in human survival do not conform to traditional commodity definition (cf. Georgescu-Roegen, 1971; Ekins, 1986). The spirit of public-private sector collaboration that governs the health care and education sectors may be appropriate to food.
2. The use of ecological laws (cf. MacRae et al., 1990a) and healthy community principles (Hancock and Duhl, 1986) for the design of policy and delivery of programs.
3. A large investment in community-based food programming centred around the NGO community, Community Health Centres, and municipal public health departments. These programs would be guided by food security principles. Evaluations of these programs reveal opportunities for significant savings, particularly for those programs focused on perinatal and maternal health³⁷.
4. Provision of food with certain acute care services. Health care providers recognize, for example, that the effectiveness of treatment drugs is often limited by the poor diet of the patient. In such cases, food (rather than just supplements) could be prescribed with treatment.
5. Progressive elimination of toxic materials from all aspects of food production, processing and distribution. This transition is already underway and requires much greater support from the policy community (cf. MacRae et al., 1990a,b; Hill and MacRae, 1992).
6. Progressive redesign of production and distribution systems that optimize food quality. It is increasingly recognized that both our soil management practices and our reliance on centralized production and distribution systems (and the corporate agendas that support them) are reducing the nutritional value of our foods (cf. MacRae et al., 1990a, 1993; Kneen, 1992).
7. A progressive integration of food, agriculture, health and social policy and the institutional forms that create and enforce them. Such redesign must be rooted in emerging new public sector organizational principles (cf. MacRae et al., 1990a; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1995a [forthcoming]).

Steps to move us in this direction are provided below.

8.2 Efficiency-stage strategies: reforming food banks

In most food bank operations, users collect a designated basket of goods. The goods available vary from period to period depending on what has been donated. Users often find the

experience of going to food banks distressing, in part because they have little choice about what they receive. Consequently, some food banks have experimented with creating a supermarket atmosphere. This is achieved by providing "purchasing vouchers", by "pricing" food products, and by displaying products on shelves. Users then choose from what is available up to the designated value of the voucher. No money is exchanged.

A more elaborate example is provided by a foodbank set up in Montreal to address the needs of HIV positive people. Its focus is providing a nourishing diet for its clients to enhance their ability to combat the progression of AIDS; therefore fresh fruits and vegetables constitute much of what is sold. Clients choose their food as one would in a supermarket.

Organizers find that, because our society equates purchasing choices with individual empowerment, some of the users respond favourably to this approach. It is reasonably easy for emergency food outlets to organize because it does not require significant changes to their operating model. It does nothing, however, to change the conditions creating the need for foodbanks, nor does it address the conditions creating feelings of disempowerment experienced by food bank users prior to arriving at the door.

8.3 Substitution-stage strategies: community food projects

Ontario does not have a strong history of non-traditional food distribution: food buying cooperatives, community gardening, farmers' markets and direct consumer-producer linkages. Other parts of Canada have much stronger traditions, e.g., the food cooperative movement in the West and the community garden programs of Montreal. In part, this history is a product of public policy failure - an inability to recognize that alternatives to traditional food distribution channels are viable and need support.

The basic concept is that community and public spaces can be used for food distribution. Our history leads us to believe that the private sector delivers food and the public sector ensures that people have sufficient income to purchase from the private sector. Community agencies have largely been excluded from this process, except for deliver of food charity and collaboration with the public sector on projects for low-income people having a food component, but usually having other objectives. Increasingly community agencies and communities themselves are recognizing that the private sector food distribution system does not meet their needs, and are taking over some parts of distribution for themselves.

Across Ontario, there is a new wave of enthusiasm for community food projects. It includes school food programs, community gardens, markets and kitchens, and buying clubs and cooperatives. Many of these initiatives are supplied by a non-profit food distributor called Field to Table³⁸. These projects are based in public/community spaces: schools, publicly-funded housing complexes, health centres, and community service agencies. The emphasis in all these projects is on finding a community-identified balance between price, accessibility and nutrition. The successful programs are finding ways of acquiring food at below traditional retail costs, with increased accessibility (many are located in places poorly served by traditional retail), and with emphasis on increasing the nutritional value of the family diet (particularly an emphasis on fresh fruits and vegetables). Of particular interest to organizers

has been the desire of participants to support Ontario farmers with their purchases³⁹.

These initiatives have been supported in recent years by government grant programs. Municipalities and several provincial ministries have provided some financing. The next step is for government to commit to on-going partnerships with community organizations, to removing current government program and policy barriers to their success, and to building infrastructure to ensure their long-term survival. Some examples of actions government now needs to take:

- ! Setting up the infrastructure for province-wide school food programs. This might best be achieved by providing support to local health units for program coordination and financial administration of public/private pots of money to run these programs⁴⁰.
- ! Establishing new housing design protocols so that the infrastructure for community food projects is built into housing complexes.
- ! Setting up procedures for municipal government supports for community gardening (site identification, land tenure, water, fencing, animation)⁴¹.
- ! Provision of public funded warehousing for community food distribution projects⁴².

Such efforts do not eliminate food insecurity nor the need for charitable food distribution. They do, however, considerably reduce the pressures on the food charity system by ensuring that a significant percentage of people have better access to an affordable nourishing diet.

8.4 Redesign-stage strategies: integrating the food and health systems

The ultimate task is ensuring that the food and health systems function to achieve the same goals: the health (social, physical, emotional and financial) of the population. There are many pieces to this agenda, and we highlight here the most significant ones.

1. Changing food production, processing and distribution practices to optimize the nutritional value of food

Evidence is mounting that our food production and processing systems are reducing the nutritional quality of the food supply (Knorr and Vogtmann, 1983; MacRae et al., 1993). Redressing these problems will require significant changes to farm and manufacturing practice. The four most significant areas for action are:

- ! using sustainable soil management practices on all farms to ensure optimal nutrient uptake and minimize need for production chemicals (cf. MacRae et al., 1990a)
 - ! the redesign of animal holding systems to reduce animal stress, change animal stocking ratios, and accommodate optimal feeding programs (cf. Boehncke, 1985; 1988)
 - ! reduced reliance on imports as food quality tends to be lower than the same foods produced, processed and stored locally (cf. Kramer, 1989)
 - ! use of minimal processing and packaging systems
- #### **2. As part of the demand management system, basic food commodities are available to pregnant and lactating women as part of their OHIP card (or equivalent)**

In this scenario, basic commodities such as basic vegetables and fruits, some dairy and meat

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

can be purchased from all distribution systems with the health card. The costs are paid by the health care budget. Each individual has a total / month that can be debited. In any given month, there are approximately 176,800 pregnant and lactating women in Ontario⁴³.

What would the criteria for eligible basic commodities be?

- ! some from each of the food groups
- ! weight selection towards those things that the mothers typically underconsume (e.g., whole grains, fruits, vegetables)
- ! weight selection against those things that people overconsume (e.g., fat)
- ! focus mostly on products that are produced in Ontario (recognizing that they are not necessarily available all year round), except as it particularly compromises ethnic diversity
- ! focus on nutrient dense foods to ensure maximum nutritional return for dollars invested
- ! respecting ethnic diversity
- ! respecting some degrees of choice by providing options within categories

Criteria re: amounts and costs

School food program granting agencies encourage programs to provide 25% of daily nutritional requirements within 3 food groups. This scheme could be similarly designed, but extended to the 4 food groups (e.g., if four servings/day are recommended in the Canada Food Guide, then the cost of 1 serving/day would be covered). Monthly volume/weight and cost allocations would be based on: servings/day x days per month x monthly average prices.

Suggested foods:

Complex carbohydrate category: rice, potatoes, sweet potatoes, whole grain cereals, breads and pastas

Vegetables: carrots, squash, beets, brassicas, red/orange peppers

Fruits: apples, pears, peaches, cherries, melons

Protein: beef, pork, chicken, lamb, tofu, seeds, nuts

Dairy: Yoghurt, milk, cheese, kefir, cottage cheese

Delivery mechanism:

- ! OHIP card is magnetized with encoded information - acts like a debit card (WIC in the US is going to something related, so the technology seems not to be a problem)
 - ! As people purchase, costs of eligible foods are subtracted from amount allocated
 - ! Stores keep totals and submit to OHIP for reimbursement
3. Breastfeeding becomes the normative activity, with social and health system supports widely available, and with formula available only for medically indicated reasons

This approach is consistent with both the World Health Organization's Code on the Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and the Innocenti Declaration. Although Canada participated in the development of these codes, the federal government has done little to implement them.

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

Priority actions are:

- ! all expectant mothers have easy opportunities to learn about breastfeeding and arrange for appropriate workplace leave, family and community supports
 - ! all workplaces are mother-friendly, meaning they have appropriate leave policies, flexible breaks, and warm spaces within the workplace for nursing
 - ! all hospitals organize staff and maternal and infant care programs to prioritize breastfeeding
 - ! lactation consultants fees are covered by OHIP
 - ! all equipment to facilitate nursing and working is widely and cheaply available
4. New consumer information systems that make health-based food purchasing more feasible

Both health and sustainability are stated public policy objectives, but we believe that our food information rules and practices stand in the way of achieving them. Lacking a stated consensus on the purposes of public information about food, the information that is provided is left largely to the marketers of product. As a consequence, consumers are denied the opportunity to make informed decisions based on criteria such as source, growing and processing methods, ecological, social and economic factors of production and distribution, nutrition, and cultural/religious preference. The overarching problem is that no one has responsibility for determining the overall coherence of consumer food messages. Individual firms provide information that shows their products to best advantage. As a result, consumers get information that is incomplete, and which may contradict the information provided by another firm or government agency. Individual consumers do not have the resources to determine with any ease the accuracy or completeness of any firm's messages, particularly when faced with the size of food industry advertising budgets.

Government rules confound this problem because there is also little coherence between the parts and levels of government that have responsibility for advertising rules, labelling and grading systems. The healthy eating messages of health departments are often competing with contradictory messages permitted by the regulatory framework of other arms of government. Investments in programs that successfully promote environmental stewardship in agriculture are undercut in the market because consumers can not support those efforts with their dollars.

We believe that the current system is dominated by a number of implicit and explicit assumptions, all of which contribute in some way to consumer confusion about food:

- ! According to market theory, consumers are presumed to be acting rationally when they make purchases. In order to act rationally, they need all the relevant information. The reality, given the current system, is that the absence of full information helps to create a dysfunctional food marketplace in which partial and contradictory signals are sent to both producers and consumers.
- ! Consumer sovereignty is presumed to be served by public policy based on expert knowledge. However, some scientists are recognizing that to understand needs and behaviours requires a collaborative, participatory research approach, involving the people affected by the results (MacRae et al., 1989). Traditional categorization of

consumer behaviour and the mechanisms for providing information may be inappropriate. We believe that full information empowers consumers, by providing opportunities to express "informed consent" in their purchasing patterns (Thompson, 1993).

- ! Scientific knowledge is presented as objective, stable and reliable. However, the credibility of science, industry, regulatory agencies, and advocacy groups is in question, and can be enhanced by both recognizing and exhibiting healthy scepticism about what we know.
- ! Consumers are thought to be concerned primarily with price, quality and convenience. Increasingly, the evidence suggests that consumers have broader concerns, which can and should include comprehensive costing of our food and its social, environmental and health impacts.
- ! The role of government is to shape, monitor and correct deficiencies in the market place. However, policy makers have failed to design systems that reflect both where consumers are (i.e., what information they feel they need), and how fully informed consumers can help us achieve public policy objectives (e.g., improved health, sustainability).
- ! Businesses are assumed to not have any broader social obligations, aside from those related to food safety and product promotion regulations. Yet historically, those obligations arose from public demand for regulation. Health and environmental concerns are the contemporary equivalent.

The end result is consumer confusion:

- ! Following the latest food fads - the most recent piece of research evidence reported in the media (e.g., oat bran, no cholesterol products) or the latest popular diet. Policy makers, business people and scientists blame this problem on the media and on each other. Our view is that all the players bear some responsibility and that this phenomenon results from problems outlined above. In the absence of full information rules and practices, firms are rewarded for integrating incomplete, but favourable, research results into their promotion.
- ! Confusion about places of origin. For example, consumers often believe they are buying Canadian products and supporting Canadian producers and processors because the label states Canada #1. Of course, this is not necessarily so, and they may not look for, or find, the words that identify the product's country of true origin⁴⁴. (Example: fruit cocktail containing pineapple labelled "Product of Canada.")
- ! Bewildering profusion of brand names and claims. Consumers believe that there are many brands and types of products to choose from, when, in many cases, the products are quite similar, or many of the brands are made by one manufacturer.
- ! Misconceptions about product grade indicating nutritional value. Labels with Grade A or #1 markings make many believe that it is the top quality choice from a nutritional perspective, whereas grading criteria focus more on cosmetic factors.
- ! Contribution to eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia. Claims about products' creating ideal body types are reinforced by advertising playing to anxieties about body image.

Given these problems, we believe that it is important to create a unified scheme of consumer information that helps us achieve public policy objectives in the domains of health, social

justice and environmental sustainability. Some initiatives that could be part of such a scheme:

- a) Labels that tell consumers how their food product complies with the government's healthy eating guidelines (e.g., "Eating this product several times a week is consistent with Canada's Guidelines for Healthy Eating" or something to that effect); this might also be achieved with a colour coding system (e.g., different colours for high, medium and low compliance).
- b) Clear identification of products of controversial technologies, i.e., genetic engineering and food irradiation.
- c) Grading standards based more on nutritional than cosmetic criteria.
- d) Just as cigarette advertising has been restricted because of the serious health effects of smoking, we should eliminate advertisements that play on people's concerns about their body image and social acceptance, because anorexia and bulimia are becoming serious health issues, particularly among teenage women.
- e) Comprehensive product labelling that includes information on environmental and social justice impacts of production, processing and distribution. Several jurisdictions have started this process on a variety of consumer products, using simplified labelling schemes (e.g., Germany and their Blue Angel scheme)⁴⁵.

5. Food security taxes

Certain taxation measures related to food security should be implemented, many proposed by the Ontario Fair Tax Commission (OFTC, 1993). These measures both penalize activities that create food insecurity, and provide general revenue for the government, money that can support the health care system.

Low-income people are generally less mobile than other citizens, so physical proximity to quality food retail outlets is important. Sound planning procedures are central to ensuring this proximity. The costs of urban land, particularly in the downtown core, are another important dimension. The OFTC has examined taxation strategies, particularly those focusing on speculative activity, that might lower urban land costs. We support initiatives in this area, in order to enhance the retention of neighbourhood supermarkets in the downtown, and to make the development of alternative food distribution facilities more affordable.

As mentioned above, nutritionists are concerned about the potential negative impacts of overcapitalization and centralized distribution on food quality. One consequence of overcapitalization in food production and processing is the need for standardization of the characteristics of foods (maturity date, size, composition) and tight control over supply schedules. Both these phenomena can result in reductions in important nutritional parameters (MacRae et al., 1993). This overcapitalization is in part the product of federal tax provisions, such as the capital gains exemption and accelerated capital cost allowances⁴⁶. A comprehensive review of how these kinds of provisions negatively affect food quality is required.

Centralized distribution and transportation systems can also reduce food quality⁴⁷. To facilitate long-distance transportation, crops are often manipulated genetically to ensure ease of transport (Doyle, 1985) and are harvested before their optimal time (Kramer, 1989). In both cases, certain constituents important in nutrition may be lost, particularly vitamins.

Transportation or energy taxes may be one way of internalizing some real externalized costs associated with long-distance transport, and of encouraging more regional food production and distribution. We encourage discussions of energy taxes in order to consider these dimensions (e.g., a carbon or BTU or gigajoule tax).

Having sufficient income, from whatever source, to purchase nutritious food is the single most important dimension of ensuring food security. The OFTC has given considerable attention to addressing such related matters as: equity in income taxation, wealth taxes, and government revenues from taxes and what income maintenance programs they can support. Actions needed include:

- ! Equitable tax treatment of low-income people, to ensure that the wealthy (both individuals and corporations) are contributing their fair share, and that place government revenue generation systems on a firm foundation.
- ! Additional attention paid to how the tax system has a negative impact on equitable wealth generation. Corporate influence over tax policy has helped to ensure that wealth redistribution has little impact on the ability of Canada's elite to generate and capture more wealth at the expense of other sectors of society.

6. Taxes on non-nourishing foods

It is widely recognized that the costs of many products in a capitalist economy do not reflect their true price. The environmental, social and health costs associated with the production, distribution and consumption of many products is not accounted for by the market's determination of consumer prices. One strategy to redress this problem is taxation. For example, taxes are being used in the environmental field to discourage poor environmental stewardship. The same approach could be taken with food. Nutrient - poor foods (particularly those known as junk food) would be taxed highly.

9.0 Concluding remarks

This is clearly an ambitious agenda, one that will be opposed by many established interests in our economy. It represents a fundamental challenge to the traditional view of the relationship between the public and private sectors - between the market and health and social policy. It also challenges the traditional divisions between government departments. Implementing this agenda requires changes in the ministries of agriculture, community and social services, health, labour, and economic development.

Ultimately, in adopting such an agenda, our society would acknowledge that poverty and food insecurity are unacceptable - that an economy and food system that permits food insecurity is a sick economy and society. We are acknowledging that we all pay for the existence of food insecurity and we all must be involved in creating a different system. We must harness the spirit and commitment that has characterized the food charity movement and put it to work creating food security.

Endnotes

For an account of these pressures, see Graham and Lightman (1992).

These realities and their associated economic implications have been articulated in Ekins et al. (1992).

This is a problem common to much of the social policy field. Much criticism has been levelled at social science and social policy for its inability to address both social problems and propose innovative solutions (for discussion see Weick [1984]). There are, of course, exceptions to this general problem. Previous work by several policy analysts has laid the foundation for what we present here (see as examples Campbell and Ornstein [1987]; Korten [1989]).

Estimates from the Ontario Association of Food Banks.

Data from the City of Toronto Planning Department.

Reported in the Globe and Mail, July 12, 1993.

Canada has the most oligopolistic food economy of any country in the western world. A small number of powerful players (4 and fewer) control 40% and greater of many sectors of the food economy (cf. Mitchell, 1978; Cronck, 1978; Coffin, 1987; Hazletine, 1989; Winson, 1990). Our oligopolistic food economy contributes to higher retail prices than would be set if the resources of the food economy were more widely controlled (Cronck, 1978; Coffin et al., 1989; Winson, 1992). These prices do not entirely reflect costs, but rather a reflection of the corporations' abilities to manipulate the marketplace. One USA study estimates a 6% increase in prices for the year 1975 due to corporate concentration there (Parker and Connor, 1987). Such prices contribute to higher levels of profitability, but these profits do not produce widespread social benefit. This is particularly true for low-income people, a segment of society that the food and agriculture system has never been particularly interested in servicing (Winson, 1992; Clancy, 1993).

Data from the City of Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto Planning Departments who significant declines in food manufacturing jobs in Metro Toronto over the past five years.

In general, food is very reasonably priced for Canadians. Food consumed at home costs the average Canadian about 14% of his/her disposable income. For low-income people, however, food consumed at home accounts for about 30% of disposable income. This situation results, in part, and by definition, because people have less income than the average. Metro Toronto average estimates for different families on welfare show that: a) a couple with 2 children would spend approximately 40% of their gross income on food; b) a single parent with one child would spend 23% of gross income on food; and c) a single person would spend 35% (Social Planning Council of Metro Toronto, 1992).

This situation is a product of 3 key interacting forces: a) an oligopolistic food economy; b) centralized processing and distribution that adds costs to products; c) an approach to "adding value" to foods that emphasizes processing and manipulation over the nutritional value of the raw product.

Our assumption here is that the present situation can not be sustained for any length of time (even in the face of

Reducing urban hunger in Ontario

economic recovery), and that the current dilemma is a product of the same kinds of forces contributing to unsustainable futures in many other areas of human endeavour. For a review of sustainable development and its relationship to social policy, see Pearce (1992); Beresford and Croft (1992).

The Liberal government increased social assistance rates by 6% in January of 1990 and a measurable decline in food bank use. This effect did not, however, last long.

Some critics would argue that the roots of our current collapse are much deeper - buried in the contradiction of a capitalist economic system (cf. Walker, 1992).

See, for example, Caledon Institute of Social Policy (1994).

See for example the "Open Letter to Toronto Community Agencies from the Coalition for Social Assistance Reform Concerning Metro Toronto's "Job Incentive Project". January, 1994. Also see the Coalition's follow-up letter of March 10, 1994.

The relationship between unemployment and social and health costs is well documented (cf. Warr, 1987; Smith, 1987; Shah, 1994).

Quoted in the December 1993 issue of Stern Magazine, p. 37.

There is a vast literature on this topic. See Schumacher (1973); Henderson (1981); Ekins (1986); Robertson (1989); Daly and Cobb (1989); Ekins and Max-Neef (1992).

Keith Collins, Ministry of Environment and Energy, personal communication, 1994.

Friedmann, personal communication, 1994.

21. Adapted from Hill (1982); (1988); Walters and Holling (1984); Dryzek (1987); Wrabley (1989).

We recognize that earmarking is controversial and cannot be a generalized approach because of how other government services would be threatened.

These proposals were part of the TFPC's submission to the Ontario Fair Tax Commission, July, 1993.

We also recognize that other supports are necessary to ensure successful transition. In particular, financial institutions must have a fuller understanding of how sustainable farming is practised, and a biologicals input industry must be encouraged.

Although such procurement programs are discouraged by current trade agreements, the GATT includes language that may permit such government action if it is presented in the context of ensuring food security.

Plus 4% of sales to urban dwellers - such data would need to be collected by the government to determine the range.

For a fuller discussion, see FPC 1994.

Pilot projects are underway in 5 Ontario communities supported by the World Food Day Association's Food

urity Watch Program.

OMAFRA's new Farm GIC program is an example.

For more on this approach, see Groh and McFadden (1992).

This approach has been very successfully used by the Appalachian Community Economics (ACEnet) in Mansfield, Ohio.

Note that optimal diet does not mean population average diet. Each individual has unique dietary requirements (cf. Williams, 1974), so the concept of optimal diet implies developing a framework in which all population is well nourished and individuals' dietary needs are also obtainable. It also addresses the issue of food quality, an area not fully considered in traditional dietetics and nutrition (cf. Grimme et al., 1986).

This is analogous to demand management in the energy sector, where the type of energy is matched to the quantity of energy needed, and the volume of energy required is managed to ensure optimal efficiency of energy supply and use.

For a fuller discussion of these proposals, see Toronto Food Policy Council (1995b, forthcoming).

For historical interpretations of why this is the case, see Veeman and Veeman (1976); Warnock (1984); Forster (1985) and Skogstad (1987).

The most significant indicator of this condition is the fraction of a percent of the Ontario Health Care Budget allocated to public and community health nutrition.

Toronto Food Policy Council (1995b, forthcoming) reviews some of the evaluative studies.

A project of FoodShare Metro Toronto, the Food Policy Council and several urban and farm organizations.

In the traditional view, low-income people are not interested in anything but price and a limited understanding of quality. Organizers are finding this not to be true, as interviews and focus groups continue to identify a much broader range of interests, including local purchasing and environmental sustainability issues (Patterson, 1994).

The Food Policy Council has a report from the Coalition for Student Nutrition (1992) outlining the details.

See the Food Policy Council report to Toronto City Council entitled *Garden City: a program of supports for community gardening in Toronto* (1993).

Field to Table has been provided such a service through a cooperative agreement with the municipality of Toronto.

Calculations from the Toronto Department of Public Health, Health Information Section, Dec. 1994.

Note that the federal and provincial ministers of agriculture have made a commitment to reducing consumption regarding source of product.

A number of recent books provide analysis of companies and their products. See, for example, Helson et al. (1992).

For a summary, see MacRae et al. (1990b) and Ward et al. (1989).

Note that the evidence is not definitive as little research has been performed.