

# Healthier Food, Healthier People Project

## A Joint Initiative

**Public Health Agency of Canada  
Atlantic Regional Office**

**Health Canada  
Atlantic Regional Office**

**JANUARY 2007**



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

**Canada**The wordmark for Canada, with a small red maple leaf icon integrated into the letter 'a'.



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Public Health Agency of Canada, Atlantic Regional Office

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January 2007

Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : *Des aliments plus sains, des gens plus en santé: Une initiative conjointe.*

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The inventory of food security initiatives was submitted by:

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## **PREFACE**

The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project involved two main components, each of which are described in this report:

### **1. The Inventory of Atlantic Canada Food Security Initiatives**

The project supported the development of an inventory describing food security initiatives and stakeholders across Atlantic Canada. The inventory can be used as a tool for stakeholders as they move forward with their food security initiatives, and by government for strategic decisions regarding possible future funding or policy development.

### **2. The Atlantic Food Security Forum**

The Atlantic Food Security Forum was held on March 14 and 15, 2006, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Forum participants included a limited number of people (just over 30 individuals with a minimum of five from each Atlantic province) working on food security issues in Atlantic Canada.

In order to guide the project, a steering committee was created. The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project Steering Committee was composed of representatives from all four Atlantic provinces involved in a wide array of food security initiatives, including Family Resource Centres and other community-based organizations, provincial governments, community health centres, and universities. The group met three times by teleconference between January and March 2006. Steering Committee members' input into the development of the participant list and the forum agenda were invaluable in ensuring participation from rural and remote as well as urban communities throughout the region and in ensuring a practical and relevant agenda. (See Appendix A for a list of the Healthier Food, Healthier People Project Steering Committee members.)

This project experienced a number of limitations, including delays and uncertainty related to funding, the short time frame for the project, and the challenge of Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada staff having to work on this project over and above their regular work duties.

The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project was a worthwhile endeavour for the Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada and for those from around the region who participated. These departments and various stakeholders are now more informed of the work happening on food security around the region, and forum participants said they appreciated the opportunity to discuss and share strategies for addressing food insecurity with those in other parts of Atlantic Canada.



## BACKGROUND

The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project was initiated by the Atlantic Regional Office of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC Atlantic) in the form of a proposal submitted to the Health Canada Innovations Fund for the year 2005-2006. Shortly after the proposal was submitted, one of the program consultants involved joined Health Canada's Health Products and Food Branch (HPFB), and the project became a joint initiative between the two governmental bodies. The project was approved and was carried out between January and March 2006.

The need for this project was identified in a report completed by PHAC Atlantic that presented an analysis of the role that PHAC Atlantic has played in supporting action on food security between 2000 and 2005. The report, *A Review of Public Health Agency of Canada, Atlantic Region, Supports for Action on Food Security*, outlined how PHAC Atlantic has addressed food security through:

- support to community-based organizations (e.g., funding programs including the Population Health Fund, Community Action Program for Children [CAPC], Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program [CPNP], Aboriginal Head Start [AHS], AIDS Community Action Program [ACAP], and the Diabetes Prevention and Promotion Contribution Program),
- knowledge development and dissemination activities (e.g., publications), and
- intersectoral collaboration initiatives.

The report recommended that PHAC Atlantic further enhance efforts to address food security and specifically called for opportunities for regional stakeholders to enhance relationships and collaborations and learn from each other.

The overall goal of the Healthier Food, Healthier People Project was to build capacity to address food security in Atlantic Canada. Specifically, the anticipated outcomes of this project were to:

- increase knowledge of food security and its impacts on the determinants of health,
- increase support for networking and collaboration, and
- enhance understanding of and ability to address gaps in policy, research, and community capacity.

In order to achieve these outcomes, the following activities were proposed:

- to enhance intersectoral partnerships among food security stakeholders or food stakeholders with an interest in food security in Atlantic Canada by hosting a meeting of stakeholders in the region and initiating discussions to develop a regional food security strategy,
- to increase knowledge of food security research initiatives across the Atlantic region by including opportunities for information sharing and discussion at a regional stakeholder meeting as well as by conducting a scan of key food security stakeholders, initiatives, and documents in the Atlantic region through a review of

- existing documents and lists, as well as through a survey via telephone conversations and email correspondence, and
- to enhance collaboration and coordination of food security initiatives across the region by beginning the development of a strategic plan for addressing food security in Atlantic Canada.

The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project aimed to enhance existing work by intersectoral groups in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as active organizations in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. The project also helped broaden the scope of impact throughout Atlantic Canada, fostering new links and information sharing for addressing food security. New collaborations were discussed to include a broad range of food security stakeholders from community organizations, all levels of governments, and universities across Atlantic Canada .

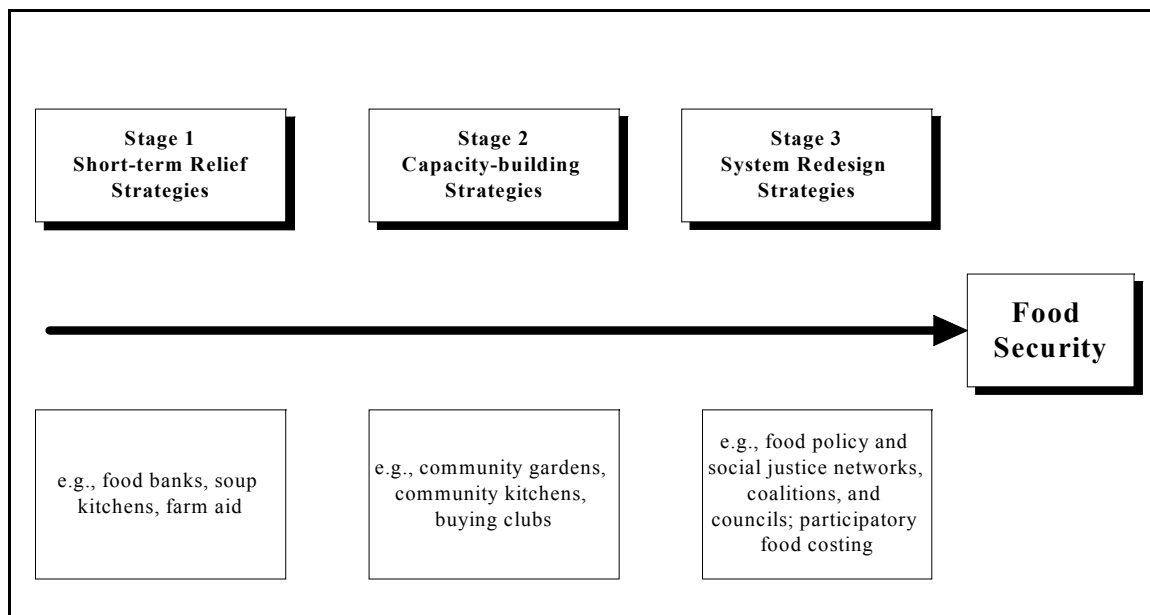
# SECTION 1: INVENTORY OF ATLANTIC CANADA FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

Available evidence suggests that food insecurity has increased in recent years in Atlantic Canada, particularly among vulnerable groups such as the unemployed, socially assisted, lower-educated, ill, recent immigrants, Aboriginal peoples, and female-headed lone-parent families and their children.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Food insecurity may have negative and interrelated impacts on healthy eating,<sup>5,6,7</sup> chronic disease prevention and management,<sup>8,9</sup> healthy child development,<sup>10,11</sup> educational achievement,<sup>12,13</sup> and social inclusion.<sup>14,15</sup> Clearly, food insecurity is a barrier to the social, cultural, and economic development of families and communities in Atlantic Canada.

Food insecurity has been identified as a key social determinant of health<sup>16,17</sup> and, as a result, this issue has been increasingly on the radar of political agendas in Atlantic Canada and across the country.<sup>18,19,20</sup> Government and other stakeholders are beginning to recognize its potential negative effects on population health and the advantage of implementing programs and policies to address the issue.

Strategies to address food insecurity have been organized along a continuum of strategies comprised of three main stages: short-term relief strategies, capacity-building strategies, and redesign strategies (Figure 1).<sup>21,22,23,24</sup> Short-term relief actions provide immediate, but temporary, relief from hunger and food insecurity. Capacity-building strategies involve the development of personal skills and organizational structure and resources. Capacity-building strategies can help bring individuals and/or communities together to identify problems affecting them and to discover solutions. System redesign strategies, often with policy change as a goal, examine social, economic, and environmental structures that affect food insecurity.



**Figure 1. Continuum of Food Security Strategies**<sup>25,26,27,28</sup>

While past efforts to address food insecurity have tended to focus on short-term relief and capacity-building strategies, consensus is forming that efforts must shift dramatically toward policy and system redesign strategies to truly address the underlying social, political, and economic structures that perpetuate food insecurity.<sup>29,30</sup> McCullum and colleagues<sup>31</sup> have described “evidence-based strategies and activities associated with a three-stage community food security continuum.” This continuum provides practical examples of what citizens, health professionals, and government can do to help build food security by working to redesign the food system with the goal of sustainability, establishing integrated policies which ensure that all community members have the capacity to buy healthy foods, as well as increasing access to locally produced foods.

A study, conducted in 2002 with key informants involved in policy-related food security work across Canada, identified challenges to policy and system change.<sup>32,33</sup> Key challenges included recognizing the sensitivities and priorities of all parties, building support across sectors, and identifying specific barriers and facilitators to influencing policy. In order to build capacity for system and policy change that supports food security, it is important to consider the varied perspectives of all stakeholders involved. However, information is lacking on the scope of activity in Atlantic Canada directed toward addressing food insecurity, and on the opportunities and challenges to system change at multiple levels of the system from the perspective of key stakeholders.

## **PURPOSE**

This section of the report is an attempt to provide an up-to-date collection of names, contact information, and brief descriptions of key food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada, as well as references and links to key documents and organizations. It is intended that this information serve as a resource to stakeholders regarding gaps in policy, research, and programs as well as on common priorities and recommended next steps for addressing food insecurity in Atlantic Canada.

The aim of this section is to encourage intersectoral partnerships through collaboration and sharing of resources, thus strengthening food security efforts. It was also intended to be a resource to the Atlantic Food Security Forum participants and others in the region. The opportunity to compile an inventory of food security initiatives in the Atlantic provinces can begin to bring together various perspectives and strategies used in the region and can help build collaboration, networks, and sharing of ideas and resources to strengthen food security efforts in Atlantic Canada.

## **METHODS**

### **Establishing Eligibility Criteria**

Food insecurity, from the individual level to the international level, is influenced by multiple social, cultural, economical, and environmental factors. For the purpose of establishing eligibility criteria for inclusion in this survey, food security was defined as a condition in which all people, at all times, have access to nutritious, safe, personally acceptable, and culturally appropriate foods, and that the food supply is procured, produced, and distributed in ways that are environmentally sound and socially just.<sup>34</sup> Specifically, non-profit organizations, government agencies, academic institutions, or ad-hoc community groups based in the Atlantic provinces which were currently implementing or had carried out a program/project/initiative in the last five years, involving the concept of food security, were invited to complete the survey.

### **Participant Selection**

Healthier Food, Healthier People Project Steering Committee members and Atlantic Food Security Forum participants were included in a contact list to receive the survey. Steering Committee members and Forum participants also contributed suggestions of potential eligible programs/projects/initiatives to be included in the survey, as did other groups, including the many partner organizations and contacts of the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects.

To further build on other potential survey participants, survey respondents were asked to recommend other initiatives to the research team, thus a snowball sampling technique was used. All recommendations were incorporated into the contact list.

Internet searches were also conducted to find information on certain initiatives such as breakfast programs and community garden programs. In certain cases, national offices were contacted to request access to provincial or regional contact information.

## **Survey Tool**

The survey was adapted from a tool developed by the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects for a national scan of various initiatives working to influence policy affecting food insecurity.<sup>35</sup> To meet the current survey's purpose, the original tool was expanded to gather all relevant contact information for the organization/initiative and to provide the opportunity for respondents to discuss funding sources, major accomplishments, contributing factors to any accomplishments, and to note any completed evaluations, reports, or other resources.

### ***Sections I and II: Organization/Initiative Information***

One of the objectives of this inventory was to describe food security initiatives across the Atlantic provinces; thus Sections I and II of the survey were designed to collect demographic information such as location, key contact people, source(s) of funding, and project time lines. Survey participants were also asked to identify what stages (short-term relief, capacity-building, or systems change) of the continuum of food security strategies their initiative encompassed, if there were any documents/resources they were able to share, and whether or not they had any formal or informal partnerships helping them reach their goals. Answers were captured using mainly closed-ended features. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B.

### ***Section III: Priorities, Opportunities, and Challenges***

Beyond listing current food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada, other expected outcomes of the Healthier Food, Healthier People Project were to increase knowledge of food insecurity and its impact on the determinants of health; enhance stakeholder understanding of gaps in policy, research, and programs; identify priorities for addressing food insecurity in Atlantic Canada; and strengthen commitment among multi-disciplinary stakeholders to collaborate and coordinate food security initiatives across the region. To facilitate opportunity for stakeholders to share their opinions around how to achieve these outcomes, a third section of the survey was created consisting of three open-ended questions.



## **Data Collection**

### ***Via Atlantic Food Security Forum***

Surveys were distributed to participants at the Atlantic Food Security Forum held March 14 and 15, 2006 in Halifax. An information sheet and consent form were included with the survey (see Appendix C). A survey drop box was provided as well as envelopes for Section III to ensure respondents' answers remained anonymous. Only forum attendees completed Section III as this sample population reflected geographical representation across the Atlantic region as well as being representative of initiatives lying along various points of the continuum of food security strategies.

### ***Via Email and/or Facsimile***

Sections I and II were also distributed via email or facsimile to members of the contact list not attending the Atlantic Food Security Forum. All potential participants also received an email reminder approximately one week after the initial email to invite them to complete the survey. The information sheet and consent form for those receiving the survey via email or fax was slightly modified to ensure the appropriate person with proper authority filled out the survey (see Appendix D). Respondents had the option to email, fax, or post their consent forms and responses.

Before finalization of this report, all respondents had the opportunity to confirm via email their organization/initiatives' information found in the inventory listing.

## **Data Analysis**

The information collected in Section I of the survey was entered into a Microsoft Excel workbook. Where appropriate, frequencies were conducted on questions in Section II (questions 1,2,4,5,6). Thematic analysis was applied to answers provided in Section III. One member of the research team analyzed the qualitative data collected in Section III for emerging themes. A second member reviewed the answers to establish inter-rater reliability.

## **Ethical Considerations**

This research project was approved by the Mount Saint Vincent University Ethics Review Board.

## RESULTS

A total of 174 contacts were identified via the participant selection methods detailed above. Twenty-seven questionnaires were returned: a 15.5% response rate. Of the 35 Atlantic Food Security Forum attendees, 18 surveys were completed (four each from Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, and six from Nova Scotia). Nine surveys were completed by respondents who did not attend the Atlantic Food Security Forum and were returned via email or facsimile. Of Newfoundland and Labrador's responses, two different Forum participants submitted a survey each for the same initiative, which were subsequently combined. Prince Edward Island had five responses, New Brunswick had seven responses, and Nova Scotia provided 11 responses.

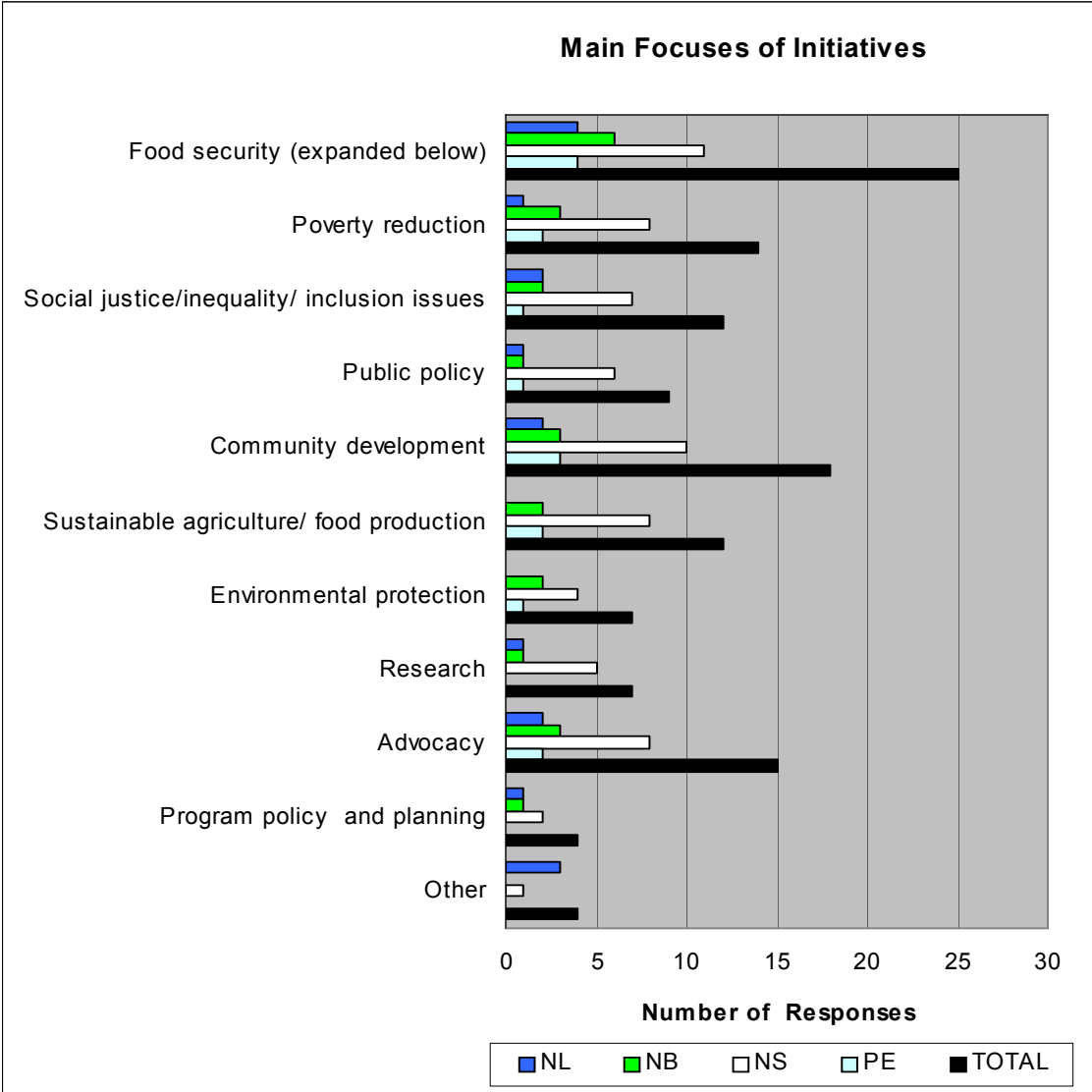
### Survey Responses

A breakdown of responses by survey section and question follows.

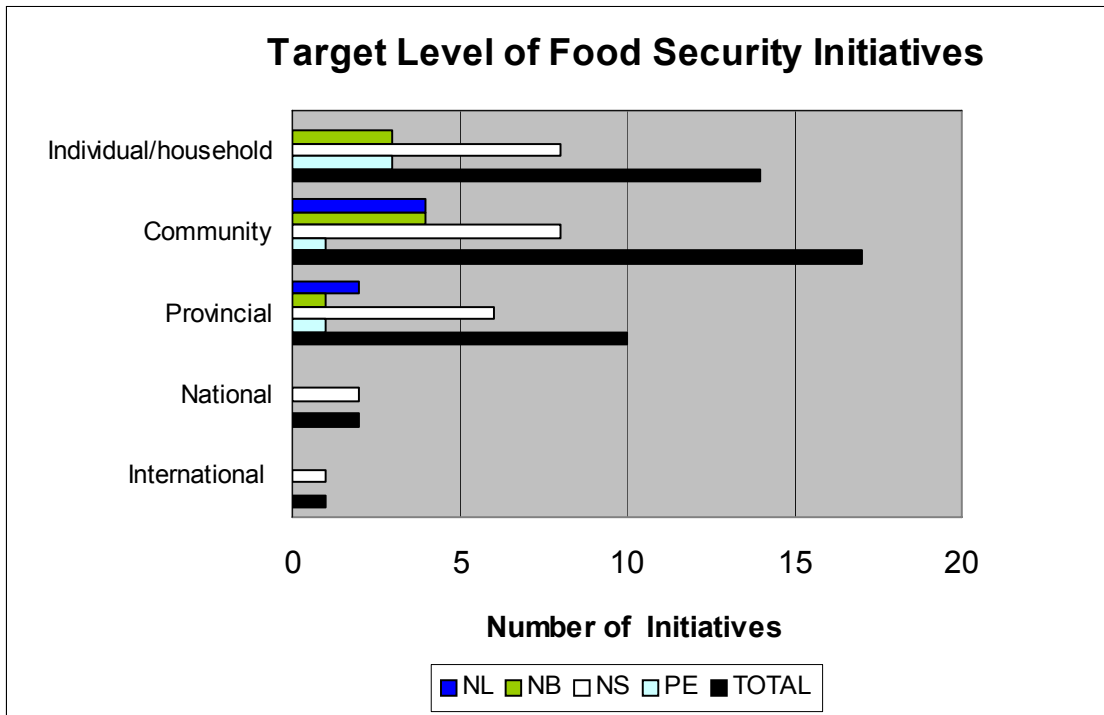
#### ***Section II: Organization/Initiative Information***

*Question 1. What is the main focus or purpose of your food security initiative?*

Of the 27 respondents, all but one group cited food security among their main purposes (this group listed their food relief and food advocacy work in the "other" category). Figure 2 breaks down the respondent-identified main focuses or purposes of their initiatives into the 11 categories provided in the survey. Figure 3 displays by province the target level of food security the initiative is working towards. Building food security at the individual/household and community levels is clearly a priority for the majority of surveyed initiatives.



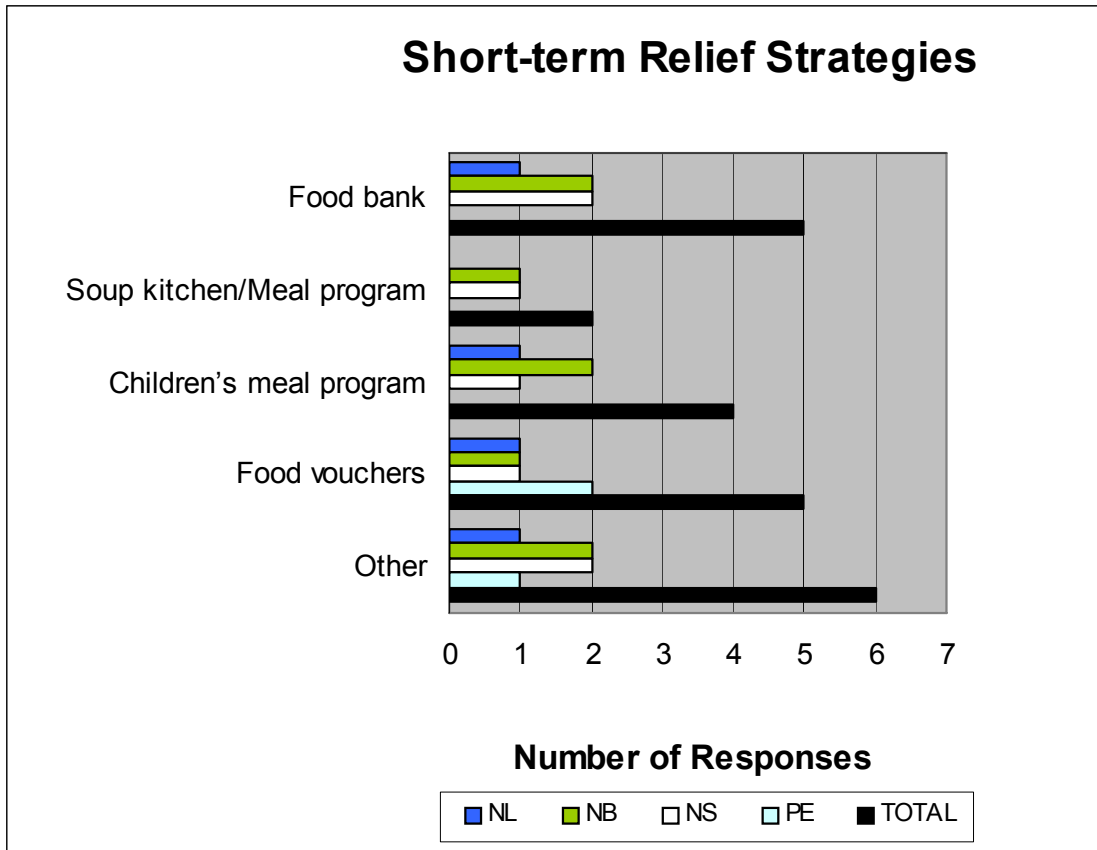
**Figure 2. The Main Focus(es) of Food Security Initiatives in Atlantic Canada by Province (initiatives could identify more than one main focus)**



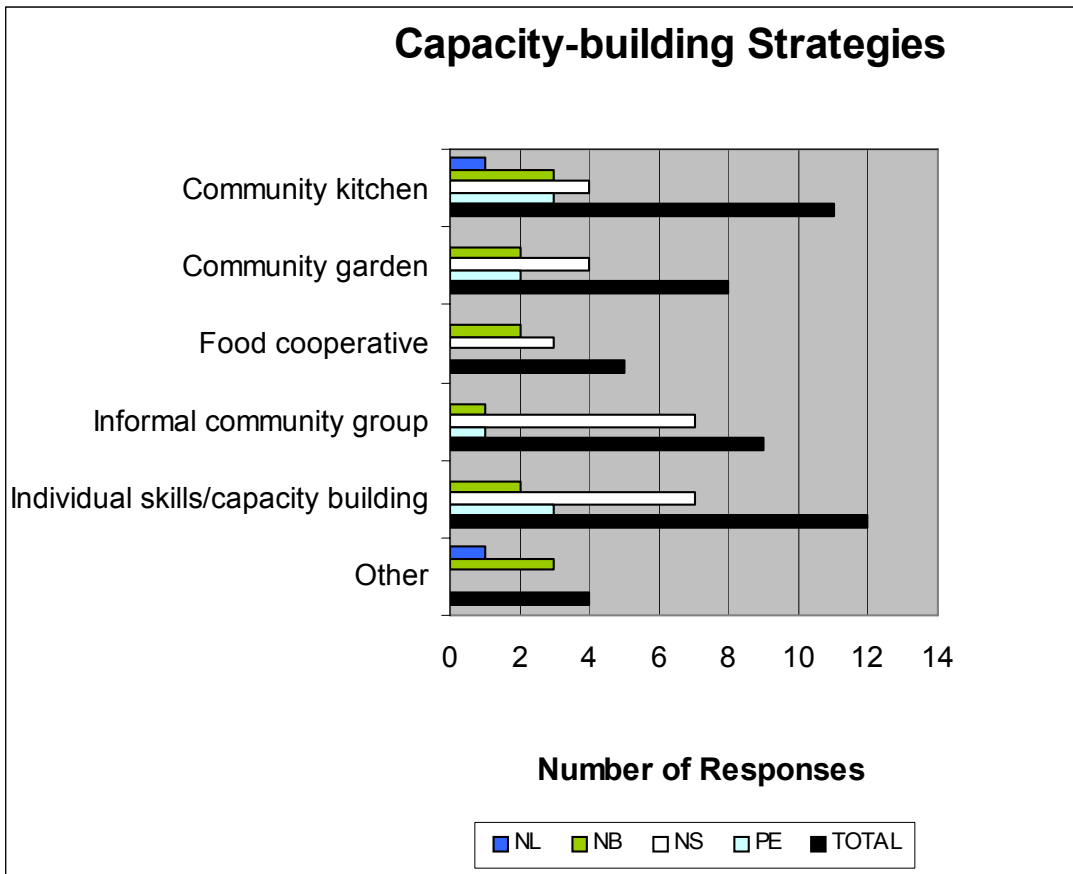
**Figure 3. Target Level of Food Security Initiatives by Province**

*Question 2. Strategies to address food security fall into three broad categories: short-term relief, capacity building and system change. Some initiatives may be involved in one or more of these categories. How would you describe the main focus of your initiative?*

All of the respondents in each of the four provinces demonstrated a preference for strategies which work towards capacity building and system change; however, initiatives considered to be a part of the first two stages of the continuum of food security strategies (i.e., short-term relief and capacity building) were reported throughout the four provinces. Figures 4 and 5 and Table 1 provide pictorial displays of where responding initiatives reported putting their efforts. The three defining categories established in Table 1 were adapted from McCullum et al “Three-Stage Community Food Security Continuum.”<sup>36</sup> Activities and strategies falling within the first two categories, initial system change and system change in transition, create smaller but significant changes to the various systems acted upon and collectively work together to develop and stabilize policies and programs that sustain food security across all systems. In total, 13 groups in the Atlantic region reported being involved in advocacy for system change, and seven groups in policy development.



**Figure 4. Short-term Relief Strategies Being Carried Out by Initiatives in Atlantic Canada**



**Figure 5. Capacity-building Strategies Being Carried Out by Initiatives in Atlantic Canada**

**Table 1. System Redesign Strategies Carried Out by Initiatives in Atlantic Canada**

|   | NL | NB | NS | PE | TOTAL |
|---|----|----|----|----|-------|
| <b>Initial System Change</b>                                    |    |    |    |    |       |
| Promotion of local, seasonal, or organic foods                  | 0  | 4  | 8  | 2  | 14    |
| Advocacy on behalf of individuals for access to healthy foods   | 2  | 2  | 6  | 2  | 12    |
| Participatory action research                                   | 0  | 4  | 4  | 2  | 10    |
| <b>System Change in Transition</b>                              |    |    |    |    |       |
| Creating multi-sector partnerships and networks                 | 2  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 10    |
| Facilitating participatory decision making                      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 1  | 7     |
| Connecting short-term relief with capacity-building initiatives | 1  | 1  | 3  | 1  | 6     |
| <b>System Redesign for Sustainability</b>                       |    |    |    |    |       |
| Advocacy for system change                                      | 2  | 1  | 7  | 3  | 13    |
| Policy development  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 3  | 7     |

*Question 3. What have been your major outcomes, accomplishments or milestones in the past five years?*

The responding initiatives have been very busy in the last five years in their efforts towards building food security. Notable accomplishments ranged from establishment of a lunch program for primary-school-aged children, to gaining the commitment of over 500 agriculture operations to improve the sustainability of their farms, to providing evidence through research on the need to increase provincial income assistance and minimum wage rates.

*Question 4. What do you think contributed to these outcomes, accomplishments or milestones?*

Across the four Atlantic provinces, over two-thirds of all those surveyed answered that partnerships, awareness and education, funding, and knowledge sharing had contributed to their organizations' respective outcomes. This was followed closely by community mobilization and resources other than funding. Just over one-third of all respondents cited organizational capacity, while just under one-third cited the role of research and evidence as factors that had contributed to their accomplishments.

*Question 5. Has your initiative conducted an evaluation of your food security initiative?*

Of the 27 organizations and groups surveyed, nine had conducted an evaluation of their initiative. These initiatives were primarily focused on system change (4), followed by capacity building (3), and short-term relief (2). Evaluation reports were reported to be available from the following initiatives:

- Agriculture Producers Association of New Brunswick
- St. Joseph's Community Health Centre in New Brunswick
- Pathmariout Acadie Haiti and ONG Solidarité Acadie-Haiti (based out of Université de Moncton)
- Volunteer Family Services in New Brunswick
- Kids First Association in Nova Scotia
- Parent's Place in Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia Food Security Projects
- SunRoot Eco-Solidarity Association in Nova Scotia
- Queens Coalition for a Brighter Future in Prince Edward Island

*Question 6. Does your initiative work with other organizations or groups on the issue of food security?*

Over 70% of all food security initiatives surveyed (19 of 27) work with other organizations or groups on the issue of food security, with almost half (9) of those doing so as part of a formal network.

### ***Section III: Priorities, Opportunities, and Challenges***

In order to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share their opinions around their perceived enablers and barriers to achieving food security, Section III provided three open-ended questions for participants attending the Atlantic Food Security Forum to offer their comments.



*Question 7. What do you believe should be the top priorities or next steps for building food security in the Atlantic Region?*

The majority of respondents cited building and maintaining networks among those who work on issues of food security as one of the top priorities for building food security in the Atlantic region. Similarly, many participants pointed to the need to maintain momentum, form policy councils, and develop a food security charter as high priorities. Respondents emphasized the need for these networks and councils to advocate for policy change with all three levels of government. Some of those surveyed suggested that further research into key priorities, existing policies, and systemic causes of poverty is necessary in order to take any further steps. Several people took a social justice approach, pointing to a need for a livable wage for both consumers and farmers, and a number identified linking farmers with consumers as an effective strategy for increasing food security.

*Question 8. What do you see as major opportunities presenting to Atlantic Canada for achieving these priorities or next steps?*

In keeping with the above responses, the most widely noted area of opportunity was building on the experiences and resources of existing initiatives and networks. The work being done by the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects, such as developing the tool, *Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Policy*, was mentioned as a good example of an effective network of researchers, community members, and government working together to build food security. Survey respondents pointed to the key role of emerging government support in order to facilitate further steps.

*Question 9. What do you believe are the main barriers or gaps in policies and programs that need to be addressed in order to build food security in the Atlantic region?*

Though funding was barely cited in response to question 7 regarding priorities for building food security in the Atlantic region, the lack of sufficient, consistent funding was the most widely noted barrier to achieving food security. Lack of awareness of the prevalence of food insecurity in Atlantic Canada and lack of understanding about food insecurity (both among the general public and government) followed closely behind. Many respondents expressed a need to explore and convey to government (at municipal, provincial, and federal levels) the extent and severity of food insecurity in order to effectively work towards food security through a program of social services and policy changes (such as an increased minimum wage). Respondents also indicated a sense of urgency for further work on addressing food insecurity in order to move beyond the emergency response to system redesign and to translate research into action. The need to promote local food and stricter environmental legislation was also addressed.

## INVENTORY OF ATLANTIC CANADA FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES

The following inventory of food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada, by province, was generated by responses to the survey.

### NEW BRUNSWICK

**Organization:** Agriculture Producers Association of New Brunswick

**Initiative:** Environmental Farm Plan Program

**Contact:** John Russel, Environmental Farm Plan Coordinator

**Address:** 259 Brunswick Street, Suite 303, Fredericton NB E3B 1G8

**Phone:** (506) 381-2887

**Fax:** (506) 452-1085

**Email:** john@nbfarm.com

**Web site:** www.nbfarm.com/committees.htm

**Project Start Date:** 1996

**Project End Date:** March 2008

**Funding Source:** Federal government, provincial government

**Description:** This program works to improve the sustainability of farms in New Brunswick and to increase farmers' awareness of environmental issues. A major accomplishment of this program is that to date, approximately 500 farms have developed a plan to improve their sustainability.

**Organization:** Mapleton Teaching Kitchen Incorporated

**Initiative:** Mapleton Teaching Kitchen

**Contact:** Charline Mallet

**Address:** 1111 Mountain Road, Moncton NB E1C 2S9

**Phone:** (506) 858-8252

**Fax:** (506) 857-3170

**Email:** mtk@nb.aibn.com

**Web site:** www.monctonheadstart.com

**Project Start Date:** 1992

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** United Way, Mazon Canada, fundraising, in-kind donations

**Description:** The Mapleton Teaching Kitchen specializes in nutrition and consumer education for at-risk families and individuals. The programs and services offered aim at enhancing food security and improving the quality of life for families and individuals with limited resources in the Greater Moncton area. Major accomplishments include developing a collective kitchen specifically for seniors and a recipe booklet for people in rural areas, and forming a food purchasing club to complement the Money Smart "Budgeting" Program the kitchen runs.

**Organization:** Moncton Diocese Justice and Solidarity Team

**Initiative:** Survey of Your Pastoral Unit

**Contact:** Aurea Cormier, Coordinator

**Address:** 1 Alward Avenue, Moncton NB E1C 3M2

**Phone:** (506) 854-6839

**Fax:** (506) 389-9705

**Email:** aureacormier@aol.com

**Project Start Date:** March 2, 2006

**Project End Date:** June 15, 2006

**Funding Source:** Moncton Diocese

**Description:** The Moncton Diocese Justice and Solidarity Team seeks to create awareness of and advocates for many social justice issues, including food-secure communities. The team has surveyed the availability of food banks and soup kitchens in the parishes, always attempting to ensure that the needy have access to healthy, sustainable food choices. This survey was often carried out with the input of community members affected by the issues being addressed. Through their work, multi-sectoral partnerships have been created, and the problem of food insecurity is better documented. It can thus be presented to parochial groups.

**Organization:** Saint Joseph's Community Health Centre

**Initiative:** Saint John Food Purchasing Club and Emergency Fund

**Contact:** Martha MacLean, Community Dietitian

**Address:** 116 Coburg Street, Saint John NB E2L 3K1

**Phone:** (506) 632-5729

**Fax:** (506) 632-5539

**Email:** macma@reg2.health.nb.ca

**Project Start Date:** May 1995

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Membership fees, Greater Saint John Foundation, and a variety of grants, as needed

**Description:** This food purchasing club offers affordable fruits and vegetables to members of the community most at risk for limited access to such food.

**Organization:** Université de Moncton: École des sciences des aliments, de nutrition et d'études familiales

**Initiative:** Partenariat Acadie-Haiti (PAH) et ONG Solidarité Acadie-Haiti (SAH)

**Contact:** Lita Villalon, Professeure Titulaire

**Address:** Faculté des sciences de la santé et des services communautaires, Université de Moncton, Moncton NB E1A 3E9

**Phone:** (506) 863-2011

**Email:** villall@umoncton.ca

**Project Start Date:** June 2001 (SAH), 1995 (PAH)

**Project End Date:** June 2007(SAH), 2000 (PAH)

**Funding Source:** Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for PAH and public, private, and community organizations for SAH

**Description:** These two initiatives seek to improve conditions in north and north-eastern Haiti through the development and implementation of a food security strategy. Although not focussed on improving the food security of Canadians in the Atlantic region, community groups from Acadian regions in New Brunswick are involved. With partnerships among the Université de Moncton, non-governmental organizations, and community groups in Acadia and Haiti, improvements to the diets and quality of life of residents of 22 villages have been made.

**Organization:** Victorian Order of Nurses Canada New Brunswick Branch Inc.

**Initiative:** Healthy Baby and Me

**Contact:** Christine LeBlanc, Provincial Coordinator

**Address:** 1077 St. George Boulevard, Suite 320, Moncton NB E1E 4C9

**Phone:** (506) 387-6254

**Fax:** (506) 387-6268

**Email:** Christine.LeBlanc@von.ca

**Web site:** www.von.ca

**Project Start Date:** June 2005

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) and Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)

**Description:** The Healthy Baby and Me program offers eggs and juice as part of prenatal and postnatal programs. A major accomplishment was expanding from being able to provide participants in just one or two service areas one dozen eggs and a container of juice each week to being able to provide these foods to all provincial participants. Program staff and participants have also conducted some advocacy work around the issue of food insecurity. Healthy Baby and Me has a staff representative on a national project with the goal to enhance the capacity of CAPC/CPNP projects across Canada by providing an opportunity for learning and mentoring through training in the use the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects' workbook, *Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Policy*.

**Organization:** Volunteer Family Services (VSF) Inc.

**Contact:** Valerie Carmichael, Executive Director

**Address:** 844 Main Street, Unit 9, Woodstock NB E7M 2G1

**Phone:** (506) 328-4938

**Fax:** (506) 328-1093

**Email:** vfsfood@nb.aibn.com

**Project Start Date:** July 1987

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** New Brunswick Department of Family and Community Services and benevolent organizations of the greater community

**Description:** VFS Inc. provides an emergency food supply lasting four to five days to people in need, Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. Additional to this service, VFS Inc. has organized business partners, volunteers, and family services to administer a breakfast program in 20 area schools. It also provides weekly cooking classes with emphasis on nutrition; personal, mental, and social development; and eating together; as well as the opportunity to take food home to families.

#### NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

**Organization:** Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador

**Contact:** Sherril Gilbert, Coordinator

**Address:** 756 St.Thomas Lane, Paradise NL A1L 3V6

**Phone:** (709) 739-5775

**Fax:** (709) 895-8339

**Email:** sherril\_g@hotmail.com

**Web site:** www.foodsecuritynews.com

**Project Start Date:** August 2005

**Project End Date:** March 2008

**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's Population Health Fund

**Description:** The Food Security Network is a non-profit organization which brings together individuals and organizations involved in health care, education, farming, community development, family services, anti-poverty work, emergency food aid, school nutrition programs, and environmental protection to work on the issue of hunger in the province. Major accomplishments include raising awareness of the issue, providing a voice and a mechanism for networking on food security issues, responding to consultation documents, submitting briefs, and participating in advocacy meetings.

**Organization:** Kids Eat Smart Program

**Initiative:** Meal Program for School-aged Children

**Contact:** Paula Dawe, Coordinator

**Address:** Box 394 Station B, Happy Valley-Goose Bay NL A0P 1E0

**Phone:** (709) 896-8684

**Fax:** (709) 896-6014 (c/o Peacock Primary)

**Email:** dawepaula@hotmail.com

**Web site:** Peacock@K12.nf.ca (Kids Eat Smart and school breakfast program under "special events" link)

**Project Start Date:** September 1999

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Kids Eat Smart Foundation, community support

**Description:** The Kids Eat Smart Program ensures that the nutritional needs of the children in Peacock Primary (kindergarten to grade three - 475 children) are met on a daily basis. They have garnered support from many stakeholders, and 70% of the program is supported by community groups.

**Organization:** Organization for Community Action Initiatives Inc.

**Initiative:** Family Outreach Resource Centre

**Contact:** Bonnie Randell, Executive Director

**Address:** 8 Oak Terrace, P.O. Box 712, Corner Brook NL A2H 6E6

**Phone:** (709) 634-2316

**Fax:** (709) 634-2319

**Email:** forc@nf.sympatico.ca

**Project Start Date:** June 1994

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's CAPC/CPNP, National Child Benefit

**Description:** The Family Outreach Resource Centre provides short-term relief to children, parents, and pregnant women through food vouchers and healthy snacks. The Resource Centre has a staff representative on a national project with the goal to enhance the capacity of CAPC/CPNP projects across Canada by providing an opportunity for learning and mentoring through training in the use the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects' workbook, *Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Policy*.

## NOVA SCOTIA

**Organization:** Agra-Point International

**Contact:** Av Singh, Organic and Rural Infrastructure Specialist

**Address:** 199 Innovation Drive, Truro NS B2M 6Z4

**Email:** a.singh@agrapoint.ca

**Web site:** www.agrapoint.ca

**Funding Source:** Agra-Point (Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture)

**Description:** Agra-Point is a for-profit organization with a mission to provide innovative development services that empower the agri-food industry to create new value. It offers many services around field crops, livestock, organics, community farming, and food safety, among others. More specific to food security, the major accomplishments of Agra-Point include facilitating the creation of local food guides and farmers' markets, and the hosting of organic workshops and festivals celebrating agriculture. They also offer a "start small, stay smart" workshop for new entrants to farming and agriculture.

**Organization:** Antigonish Farmers Market Association

**Initiative:** Public Place-Public Market

**Contact:** Stan Mizgala, Member

**Address:** 4 Ohio Lake Road, RR#1, Antigonish NS B2G 2K8

**Phone:** (902) 867-6333

**Email:** Stanley.mizgala@ns.sympatico.ca

**Web site:** in progress

**Project Start Date:** November 2004

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Personal

**Description:** Antigonish Voices, a volunteer advocacy group, was formed to respond to various issues that arose when the last grocery store in the downtown area closed. In December 2005, the project to establish Public Place-Public Market was taken up by the Antigonish Farmers Market Association and works to promote access to local, seasonal, and/or organic foods. It is also attempting to increase public awareness and gain political support and inter-organization cooperation around issues affecting food security.

**Organization:** Ecology Action Centre (EAC)

**Initiative:** Food Action Committee and HelioTrust

**Contact:** Mark Butler, EAC Managing Director,  
Jen Scott, HelioTrust

**Address:** EAC: 2705 Fern Lane, Halifax NS B3K 4L3

HelioTrust: 178 Red Bank Road, Centre Burlington NS B0N 1E0

**Phone:** EAC: (902) 429-2202

HelioTrust: (902) 757-1640

**Fax:** EAC: (902) 422-6410

**Email:** EAC: [membermail@ecologyaction.ca](mailto:membermail@ecologyaction.ca)

HelioTrust: [jen@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:jen@ns.sympatico.ca)

**Web site:** EAC: [www.ecologyaction.ca](http://www.ecologyaction.ca)

HelioTrust: [www.helioTrust.ca](http://www.helioTrust.ca)

**Project Start Date:** 2003

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** The Food Action Committee is completely volunteer-run with temporary contract staff funded through eco-friendly grants and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada student grants. The Committee also runs fundraisers and receives donations. HelioTrust has established an endowment fund and also runs projects based on successful grants.

**Description:** The Food Action Committee's mission is to promote the social, economic, and environmental benefits of locally produced food and to promote socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable ways of growing, processing, and distributing food. Major accomplishments include an annual Harvest Festival which promotes local and ecologically friendly foods, the *Eating for a Better World* brochure that helps consumers choose foods with lesser food miles, an Urban Garden Mentors Project which connects mentors and youth to pass on gardening skills and knowledge, and a seasonal cookbook promoting local foods. A sub-committee of the Food Action Committee, HelioTrust's mission is to conserve and share farm land, resources, and knowledge. It accomplishes this by running an organic farm in addition to hosting numerous projects including the Farmer-Mentor Project, solar energy and bio-diesel fuel workshops, gaining conservation easements, assisting in the re-introduction of Red Fife Heritage Wheat to Nova Scotia, and promoting locally produced foods. Open Farm Days are every Friday from May to October at the Red Fox Co-op, from 10 am to 5 pm.

**Organization:** Kids First Association  
**Contact:** Michelle Ward, Executive Director  
**Address:** PO Box 966, New Glasgow NS B2H 5K7  
**Phone:** (902) 755-1213  
**Fax:** (902) 755-1630  
**Email:** kidsfirst@ns.aliantzinc.ca  
**Project Start Date:** 2002  
**Project End Date:** ongoing  
**Funding Source:** Nova Scotia Food Security Projects, Public Health Agency of Canada's CPNP

**Description:** This initiative runs a variety of activities oriented towards food security including community gardens, cooking classes, and baby food making classes. Through its partnership with the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects, the initiative's participants were engaged in the provincial participatory food costing project and community dialogues. This snowballed into the formation of a community working group involved in advocacy via a letter-writing campaign that is currently looking at public transportation possibilities for their community and surrounding area. The Kids First Association has a staff representative on a national project with the goal to enhance the capacity of CAPC/CPNP projects across Canada by providing an opportunity for learning and mentoring through training in the use the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects' workbook, *Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Policy*.

**Organization:** Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre  
**Contact:** Dawn Chisholm, CPNP Coordinator  
Michelle Magarit, Program Planner, CAPC  
**Address:** PO Box 1149, 12 La Planche Street, Amherst NS B4H 4L2  
**Phone:** (902) 667-7250  
**Fax:** (902) 667-0585  
**Email:** maggies@ns.sympatico.ca  
**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's CAPC/CPNP, Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, United Way, Cumberland Community Health Board  
**Description:** Maggie's Place provides food boxes in partnership with other local organizations, offers various workshops, and places a heavy emphasis on system change through advocacy and increased public awareness of food security issues. Major accomplishments include creating an advisory poverty action committee, community dialogues around the issue of food security, and involvement in the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects and Milky Ways Project (a Dalhousie/Mount Saint Vincent University study focussed on food insecurity in female-headed single-parent families).

**Organization:** Nova Scotia Agricultural College  
**Initiative:** Women's Health in Rural Communities  
**Contact:** Johanna Nesbitt, Research Assistant for Theme IV (Nutrition)  
**Address:** Rural Research Centre, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, PO Box 550, Truro NS B2N 5E3



**Phone:** (902) 893-6227  
**Fax:** (902) 893-6230  
**Email:** jnesbitt@nsac.ca  
**Web site:** www.bringinghealthhome.com/whirc  
**Project Start Date:** October 2004  
**Project End Date:** October 2008  
**Funding Source:** Canadian Institute of Health Research  
**Description:** Theme IV is in its initial stages but it will be focussed on researching the dietary habits of young rural women.

**Organization:** Nova Scotia Food Security Projects  
**Initiative:** Various research projects fall under the organization's umbrella  
**Contact:** Dr. Patty Williams, Principal Investigator  
**Address:** Department of Applied Human Nutrition, Mount Saint Vincent University  
166 Bedford Highway, Halifax NS B3M 2J6  
**Phone:** (902) 457-6394  
**Fax:** (902) 457-6134  
**Email:** patty.williams@msvu.ca  
**Contact:** Rita MacAulay, Co-chair of Projects' Steering Committee  
**Address:** 201 Brownlow Avenue, Dartmouth NS B3B 1W2  
**Phone:** (902) 481-5858  
**Email:** Rita.MacAulay@cdha.nshealth.ca  
**Contact:** Projects' Main Office  
**Address:** Melody Drive Research House, Mount Saint Vincent  
University  
166 Bedford Highway, Halifax NS B3M 2J6  
**Phone:** (902) 457-5549  
**Fax:** (902) 457-5547  
**Email:** foodsecurity@msvu.ca

**Web site:** publications available at: www.nsn.ca and www.ahprc.dal.ca

**Project Start Date:** 2001

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's Population Health Fund, Canadian Diabetes Strategy, CAPC/CPNP; Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection; National Project Fund

**Description:** The Nova Scotia Food Security Projects are a partnership of many intersectoral groups including government departments, universities, community and volunteer groups, agricultural corporations, and food banks. Together, the partners have been successful in acquiring more than 10 grants to conduct various research studies and host workshops focussed on building capacity to influence policy to build food security in Nova Scotia and across Canada. Major studies include provincial participatory food costing studies to determine the affordability of food for low-income families. A model for ongoing provincial food costing as a means to monitor food security was also submitted to the Nova Scotia government. The Projects have carried out community

dialogues to raise awareness of food security and developed a workbook titled, *Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Policy*, and an accompanying DVD that will be used throughout Canada in various Family Resource Centres and with community groups. A policy backgrounder and lens have also been developed to support provincial policy makers to take action on food security. A national scan of food security strategies to influence policy was conducted in order to help inform the various tools that have been developed. Many reports, papers, and presentations have been disseminated over the past five years, all increasing awareness of the health, social, and economical implications of food insecurity.

**Organization:** Parent's Place

**Contact:** Holly Thomas, Executive Director

**Address:** 34 Barnard Street, Yarmouth NS B5A 3T5

**Email:** [parentsplace@eastlink.ca](mailto:parentsplace@eastlink.ca)

**Web site:** [www.parentsplaceyarmouth.org](http://www.parentsplaceyarmouth.org)

**Project Start Date:** September 2001

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's CAPC

**Description:** This family resource centre runs both a community garden and cooking programs for adults and children and has been extensively involved in the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects.

**Organization:** South Shore Family Resource Association

**Initiative:** Lunenburg and Queens Food Action Committee

**Contact:** Debbie Smith, Project Manager

**Address:** 156 York Street, Bridgewater NS B4V 1R3

**Phone:** (902) 543-1301

**Fax:** (902) 543-1828

**Email:** [capc.bri@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:capc.bri@ns.sympatico.ca)

**Project Start Date:** 2002

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's CAPC, Public Health Services, grants for research projects

**Description:** The South Shore Family Resource Association participated in provincial food costing for the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects, developed a Food Action Committee, organized and held a forum on food security, and invited all candidates in the 2006 federal election to speak on the issue of food security at the resource centre.

**Organization:** SunRoot Eco-Solidarity Association

**Initiative:** Community Voice Program

**Contact:** Evelyn Jones, Jen Melanson, Steve Law, Charles Levkoe, and Airin Stephens, Co-Directors

**Address:** 3101 Highway 236, RR#1, Kennetcook NS B0N 1P0

**Phone:** (902) 632-2497

**Email:** sunroot@ns.sympatico.ca

**Project Start Date:** May 2000

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Carrot Cache, Cumberland-Colchester Community Health Board, Nova Scotia Department of Community and Social Services

**Description:** For the past six years, this association has provided organic vegetables to over 40 lower-income people and offered 30 community workshops on canning, preserving, herbal medicine, advocacy, legal rights, and cooking. SunRoot also organizes an annual garlic festival.

**Organization:** Sunrise Trail Community Economic Development Cooperative

**Contact:** Rob Assels, President

**Address:** Box 77, River John NS B0K 1N0

**Phone:** (902) 351-FILM (3456)

**Web site:** www.tatafilmfest.ca

**Project Start Date:** January 2005

**Funding Source:** Fundraising, Cooperative Development Initiative

**Description:** This cooperative offers a wide array of capacity-building opportunities including a community kitchen, a community garden, a food cooperative, workshops, and a breastfeeding support group. Through their Local Exchange Trading System, they promote social justice by encouraging a living wage of at least \$10 per hour through their unique currency system. It is also working on a commercial community kitchen.

#### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

**Organization:** Certified Organic Producers' Cooperative

**Contact:** David MacKay, Executive Director

**Address:** PO Box 1776, Charlottetown PE C1A 7N4

**Phone:** (902) 894-9999

**Email:** organicpei@web.ca

**Web site:** www.organicpei.com

**Funding Source:** Provincial government

**Description:** This cooperative supports alternative marketing and delivering strategies for organic agriculture operations and provides opportunities for producers to market directly to institutions (such as schools, long-term care facilities, etc.).

**Organization:** CHANCES Family Resource Centre

**Contact:** Ann Robertson, Executive Director

**Address:** 16 Brighton Road, Charlottetown PE C1A 1T4

**Phone:** (902) 892 8744

**Fax:** (902) 892 3351

**Email:** prenatal@isn.net

**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's CPNP

**Description:** CHANCES is a non-profit organization that offers programs for families with preschool-aged children, pregnant women, and their partners. A major accomplishment for CHANCES is the 2005 workshop it hosted on food security which brought government, food bank staff, public health nurses, and nutritionists together to begin work on the issue.

**Organization:** Cooper Institute

**Initiative:** Citizen Hearings into Food Issues

**Contact:** Ann Wheatley, Marie Burge

**Address:** 81 Prince Street, Charlottetown PE C1A 4R3

**Phone:** (902) 894-4573

**Fax:** (902) 368-7180

**Email:** cooper@isn.net

**Project Start Date:** September 2001

**Project End Date:** December 2004

**Funding Source:** Metcalf Foundation and the Cooper Institute

**Description:** The Citizen Hearings on Food Issues were part of a three-year project titled "Rural PEI: Community Democracy and Productive Dialogue around Food Security" funded by the Metcalf Foundation. Hearings were held in three regions of Prince Edward Island with presenters representing fishing, farming, organic producers, and people working on the issue of poverty and affordable food. A full report and accompanying video is available from/at the Cooper Institute.

**Organization:** Cooper Institute

**Initiative:** PEI Working Group for a Livable Income

**Contact:** Ann Wheatley, Marie Burge

**Address:** 81 Prince Street, Charlottetown PE C1A 4R3

**Phone:** (902) 894-4573

**Fax:** (902) 368-7180

**Email:** cooper@isn.net

**Project Start Date:** September 2003

**Project End Date:** ongoing

**Funding Source:** Metcalf Foundation and the Cooper Institute

**Description:** The PEI Working Group for a Livable Income is a coalition of various groups, supported by the Cooper Institute, formed in September 2003. The basic goal of the Working Group is to influence the attitudes and actions of the community, employees, employers, and public policy makers around the advantages of a livable income for all people. The following organizations are members of the Working Group: ALERT, Association des femmes acadiennes et francophones de l'Î.-P.-É., Citizens United for a Living Wage, Cooper Institute, PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women, PEI Federation of Labour, PEI People First, Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin (SSTA), West Prince Minimum Wage Interest Group, and the Women's Network PEI.

**Organization:** Main Street Family Resource Centre  
**Contact:** Barbara Lundrigan, Director  
**Address:** 120 Main Street, P. O. Box 682, Souris PE C0A 2B0  
**Phone:** (902) 687-3928  
**Fax:** (902) 687-4086  
**Email:** mainfrc@pei.aibn.com  
**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's CAPC  
**Description:** The Main Street Family Resource Centre offers educational nutrition programs by partnering with local employment programs. It provides food supplements to pregnant and breastfeeding women and helps participants access local seasonal foods.

**Organization:** Voices for Children Coalition Inc.  
**Initiative:** Carousel Prenatal and Postnatal Program  
**Contact:** Darlene Mellish, Community Action Program for Children Project Coordinator  
**Address:** P. O. Box 133, Montague PE C0A 1R0  
**Phone:** (902) 838-4600  
**Fax:** (902) 838-4645  
**Email:** aileen@pei.aibn.com or darlene@carouselvfc.com  
**Funding Source:** Public Health Agency of Canada's CPNP  
**Description:** The Voices for Children Coalition's food security initiatives include a community kitchen, a community garden, and a variety of educational workshops.

## DISCUSSION

The broadest definition of food security includes the element of people being able to earn a living wage by growing, producing, processing, handling, retailing, and serving food, as well as when the quality of the land, air, and water are maintained and enhanced for future generations.<sup>37</sup> It was exciting to see both social justice and environmental/agriculture views represented in survey responses. Decision makers and stakeholders must realize these two perspectives. Although they allow different approaches to building food security, they are both contained in the inclusive definition of food security and must both be considered in order to achieve food security for all Atlantic Canadians.

An example of an excellent integrated approach is the SunRoot Eco-Solidarity Association's Community Voice Program in Nova Scotia. This organic farm and teaching centre outreaches to over 40 lower-income individuals in the area to provide their families with organic produce, something often beyond the financial budget for those with limited resources. SunRoot also offers workshops in canning, preserving, herbal remedies, and much more, building the individual capacity of participants. Other areas of opportunity for collaboration between the agriculture sectors and those working in poverty reduction can be seen in Family Resource Centres and Projects, teaching kitchens, and school feeding programs that connect with local farmers to provide fresh, wholesome fruits and vegetables to those most in need of nutritious foods.

Purchasing locally grown, seasonal foods has many benefits. Oxfam America has found for every dollar spent within the local food system, three dollars goes back into the local economy.<sup>38</sup> Buying directly from producers (via farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture, road side stands, etc.) means the farmer receives a greater share, if not all, of the profit, instead of having monies diverted to packaging and distribution costs. This helps provide the farmers with a livable income.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, when you buy directly from the farmer, the food travels less, contributing to fewer food miles, meaning less transportation costs and pollutants. When government and stakeholders are seeking to provide food aid to vulnerable populations, they should seriously consider the resources in their own community first.

Networks and network building were considered a top priority for building food security in Atlantic Canada, and the existence of current networks/initiatives and their resources and experiences were considered a major opportunity to address identified key priorities. This clearly speaks to the effectiveness of working together and using an intersectoral approach to address lacking food security-related policies and programs. The Atlantic Food Security Forum in March 2006 represented one medium to encourage and maintain networks. Another option arising from survey responses was the establishment of provincial or regional food security networks/coalitions, possibly with a paid coordinator to organize communications and foster the sharing of resources among initiatives. The Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects are examples of intersectoral provincial groups, but both noted lack of

funding as a major barrier to fully carrying out the work they feel needs to be done in their provinces. Government could support such groups by funding research proposals, providing infrastructure, continuing to support networking via teleconference calls, and dedicating a staff person to the issue of food security.

System redesign strategies are the most effective means of building food security because they recognize and focus on policy change to affect the underlying social, political, and economic structures that perpetuate food insecurity.<sup>40,41,42,43</sup> Government and stakeholders acknowledge that the charity model of addressing food insecurity is not the answer. Short-term relief strategies such as food banks provide temporary relief to a chronic condition and do little to address the root causes of food insecurity or affect the problem in the long term. Food banks are the most common response to food insecurity in Canada.<sup>44</sup> According to the Canadian Association of Food Banks,<sup>45</sup> Newfoundland and Labrador has 85 food banks and affiliated agencies, Prince Edward Island has six, New Brunswick has 60, and Nova Scotia has 149. An examination of the barriers listed in Table 1 clearly expresses a need for actions addressing more than just food hand-out, band-aid solutions to food insecurity.

## **LIMITATIONS**

There are significant limitations to conducting a mail-out survey targeting a population working towards food security. Though the research team identified 174 potential food security initiatives or individuals involved in food security work in Atlantic Canada, only 26 responded; a 15.5% response rate. The time frame of the project was not long enough to allow for follow-up with the non-respondents, which could have improved the response rate.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project, consisting of the Atlantic Food Security Forum and the compilation of this Inventory of Food Security Initiatives in Atlantic Canada, brought together stakeholders, allowing them to network, raise their voices, and share their learnings.

Three recommendations can be brought forward for PHAC Atlantic and Health Canada's Health Products and Food Branch based on the results of the inventory:

- Repeat the survey within a longer time frame, to gain a more conclusive database of initiatives in the Atlantic region, in order to paint a more detailed picture of programs and efforts to address food security, so that it is possible to build on successes and lessons learned.

- Assist in developing a stronger network of food security initiatives across the four Atlantic provinces to build on community, provincial, and regional efforts and solutions.
- Explore strategies for bringing together food security advocates from differing perspectives. These could be addressed in a modified survey and through annual fora.



## **SECTION 2: THE ATLANTIC FOOD SECURITY FORUM REPORT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

On March 14 and 15, 2006, the Atlantic Food Security Forum was held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, hosted by the Atlantic Regional Office of Health Canada's Health Products and Food Branch (HPFB) and the Atlantic Regional Office of the Public Agency of Canada (PHAC Atlantic). It was funded by the Health Canada Innovations Fund as an integral part of a project which also saw the development of an inventory of Atlantic initiatives related to food security (as described in the previous section of this document). Over 30 participants representing various sectors from communities throughout Atlantic Canada attended the event (see Appendix E for a list of forum participants). The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project's Steering Committee members were influential in identifying the key stakeholders and developing the program for the forum. This section summarizes the discussions and presentations that took place.

### **Agenda**

The two-day forum was designed to provide the opportunity for participants to interact and to share information on current food security initiatives and the underlying causes of food insecurity, as well as to explore potential solutions and challenges.

#### ***Tuesday, March 14***

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 9:00  | Welcome and introductions                               |
| 9:45  | Objectives, expectations, and background of the project |
| 10:00 | Preparation for provincial presentations                |
| 10:30 | Provincial presentations                                |
| 12:30 | Lunch   |
| 1:30  | Issue exploration                                       |
| 4:00  | Wrap up and review of tomorrow                          |

#### ***Wednesday, March 15***

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 9:00  | Highlights of previous day                 |
| 9:15  | Panel presentation                         |
| 10:45 | Small group planning by province and issue |
| 12:00 | Lunch                                      |
| 12:45 | Next steps and follow up                   |
| 1:45  | Wrap up and evaluation                     |
| 2:00  | Departure                                  |

## **DAY 1**

Opening comments and greetings were shared by Beth Sherwood, Acting Regional Director of PHAC Atlantic, and Annette Daley, Regional Director of HPFB. Facilitators shared the objectives and background of the project with participants, who in turn expressed their expectations for the forum.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the event were to:

- provide a forum for sharing the work being done throughout Atlantic Canada related to food security,
- increase understanding of the aspects of food security and insecurity,
- understand each province's key priority areas in food security, and
- explore possibilities for future collaboration among participants and with PHAC/HPFB.

### **Participant Expectations**

Participant expectations included:

- seeing people network both within their own province and with the other Atlantic provinces,
- developing unique partnerships among groups that do not usually work together,
- seeing how other provinces are meeting the nutritional needs of school-aged children,
- learning about different programs in place in communities to see if their own programs are in line with them,
- identifying what "safe" and "nutritious" mean to people,
- gaining workable ideas, contacts, and information to take back to share with people in own province or community,
- discussing the marketing of organic food,
- hearing about the successes and challenges that other groups have faced, and
- coming up with a definition of food security that includes the social justice aspect and reflects the complexity of the issue.

### **Provincial Presentations**

Participants, grouped by province, were asked to make a presentation that outlined their particular issues and initiatives. The following questions were provided to each province as a guide:

- What is the main issue/problem/challenge to do with food security for you?
- What is the extent of the issue or problem?
- Why is it an issue/problem?
- What has contributed to the development of the issue/problem?

- How long has it been an issue/problem?
- How many systems/people does it impact?
- What populations are affected?
- What has been done to try to resolve the issue/problem in the past?
- Are there policies that specifically target this issue?

The following are highlights of the presentations that were made.

### ***Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Presentation***

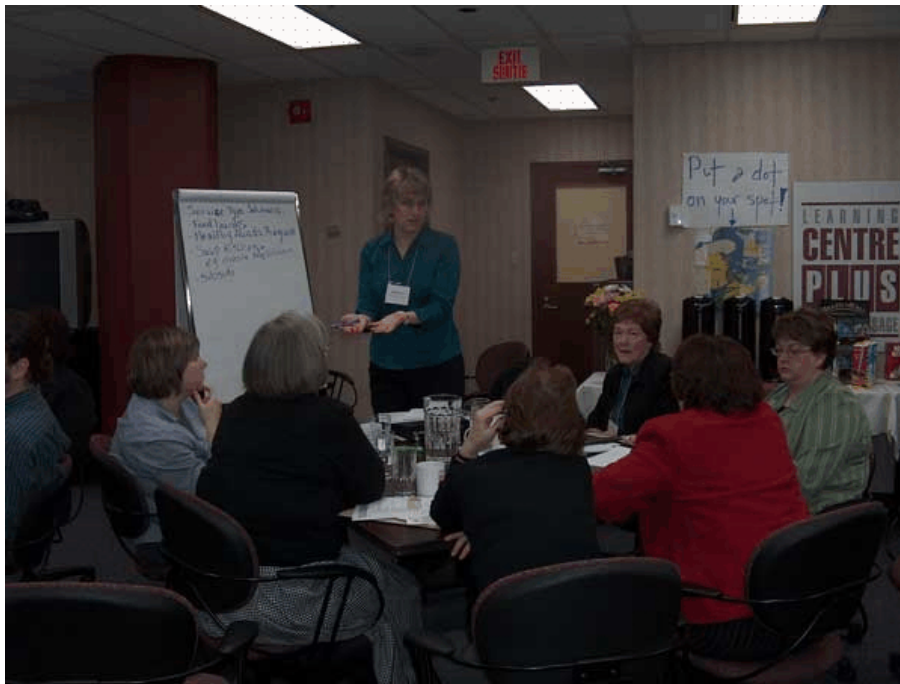
The Newfoundland and Labrador contingent shared with the larger group several provincial initiatives that relate to food security. The provincial government recently announced the new Poverty Reduction Strategy, and Strategy staff have been consulting with community organizations and people affected by food insecurity. The province's recently released wellness plan, "Let's Go Healthy Newfoundland and Labrador," includes a section on nutrition. Another provincial initiative, "Healthy Students, Healthy Schools," addresses healthy eating and physical activity in schools.

The Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador is working to raise awareness of food security and to advocate for policy change. Active groups in the province have been involved with a process of conducting food costing, including the documentation of scenarios of how food insecurity affects families in the province. Results of this work have been shared with policy makers. Forum participants from Newfoundland and Labrador identified their key food security issues as poverty and social exclusion; physical and geographic inaccessibility to healthy and affordable food; and the loss of traditional ways of cooking, preparing, and preserving foods. There are great inequities in health status, and high rates of chronic disease, obesity, and poor nutrition are prevalent among some groups. A reliance on food banks has been the predominant response to food insecurity and hunger in the province, although the group is hopeful that their Food Security Network and the "Healthy Students, Healthy Schools" initiative will address some of the root causes of food insecurity. The province's Poverty Reduction Strategy has identified three main factors as contributing to poverty in the province: social trends such as out-migration; labour market conditions such as unemployment; and government policies, such as a low minimum wage.

### ***New Brunswick Provincial Presentation***

The group from New Brunswick discussed several key issues contributing to food insecurity, including poverty, inadequate transportation, lack of social supports, and low levels of literacy and cooking skills. The dominant approach to addressing food insecurity in New Brunswick is a service model and the group feels this must change to be more prevention-focussed. They identified the populations most affected by food insecurity in the province to be seniors, especially older single women; people with

mental health issues; people with low incomes; single parents; seasonal workers, and immigrants.



### **The New Brunswick group at work**

The group from New Brunswick discussed several societal or cultural dynamics that impact on people's ability to be food-secure. These include a loss of community ties and apathy towards others' struggles, as well as a sense of entitlement to affluence among some. These act as barriers to ensuring vulnerable people's needs are met and inequities are addressed. The group also identified as a problem the mass media and marketing of unhealthy foods, as well as parents' challenges in resisting these influences.

The New Brunswick government recently announced a new school food policy and provincial wellness strategy. Many service-type supports are in place, such as food banks, soup kitchens, subsidized housing, and day cares. As well, several mechanisms exist for food-related teaching and skill development, including food purchasing clubs, teaching kitchens, parent upgrading, and skill development programs for people on income assistance or employment insurance. The New Brunswick contingent would like to see more farm-to-table programs, greater connection among farms and the rest of the food chain, and the development of a New Brunswick food security committee.

### ***Prince Edward Island Provincial Presentation***

Poverty was identified by the Prince Edward Island group as the main issue contributing to food insecurity. Their feeling is that a charitable response to poverty exists, but that the provincial government will have to move beyond this to address root causes. A group already working to this end is the Working Group for a Livable Income. It advocates for decent wages and emphasizes the need for adequate social supports to allow for dignity and health for all.

Local Island producers say that marketing and competing with large corporations is a huge challenge: as most grocery stores have centralized food purchasing, smaller producers are not able to have their products sold there. As a largely agricultural province, Prince Edward Island has substantial capacity to produce healthy food for all. On a positive note, farmers' markets are an integral part of direct marketing to residents, and some local producers have established partnerships with large entities, such as the University of Prince Edward Island's food service.



### **The Prince Edward Island group in discussions**

Several Family Resource Centres on Prince Edward Island are involved in food security, working to support families' empowerment through education about nutritious and low-cost food, as well as providing skill development opportunities around buying and cooking food. The PEI Healthy Eating Alliance, a diverse group of dietitians, community organizations, educators and government representatives, is actively engaged

in public education in schools. Forum participants from Prince Edward Island shared that they would like to see the establishment of a provincial food security network.

### ***Nova Scotia Provincial Presentation***

The Nova Scotia Food Security Projects group has been active on various provincial and national projects since 2000. Its major strength was identified as the ability to embrace diverse perspectives so that many groups can be involved and work together to leverage resources. Strategies to address food insecurity in the province cover the spectrum: from the food bank network and provincial breakfast programs to community projects that address policy impacting on or impeding food security.

Examples of current innovative food security work includes the Ecology Action Centre's Food Action Committee and the Women's Health in Rural Communities projects. The Nova Scotia contingent discussed barriers such as a lack of understanding of the complexity and depth of food security and the lack of time and resources.

The work of two provincial government departments was highlighted: the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and the Department of Agriculture. The Department of Health Promotion and Protection recently identified food security as one of the four priority areas in Nova Scotia's new Healthy Eating Strategy. Health Promotion and Protection also supports participatory food costing work in Nova Scotia and the development of a policy lens document which will be presented to policy makers from several related government departments. The Department of Agriculture provides information and expertise on agricultural sustainability and business development.

### **Issues Exploration**

Based on the provincial presentations, six key food security issues were identified:

1. culture
2. information/education
3. access
4. distribution of resources
5. networking
6. production and marketing

Using an open space process, facilitators led participants through a three-part interactive activity where these issues were discussed and elaborated upon in small groups. Participants were asked to answer the questions of what needs to be done, by whom, and when. Although six distinct categories were explored, the issues are highly interconnected. To honour participants' comments, we share them in their entirety below, despite the existence of some repetition.

## **1. Culture**

### *Increase capacity:*

- increase the capacity of families by teaching home economics in schools and offering life skills classes that are culturally relevant and appropriate for different learning styles and abilities
- create and nurture mentoring programs or open a learning centre
- support programs which allow older adults to share knowledge with youth regarding food production, processing, distribution, preservation, and consumption
- develop a strategy using the new Canada Food Guide to address food security issues
- undertake an Atlantic-wide awareness campaign regarding the impact of culture on foods
- involve provincial departments of education, Family Resource Centres, Aboriginal governments and land claim groups
- get people who have a high public profile on board, especially for the social marketing campaign.



**Forum participants working on issues exploration**

*Values play a large role in culture:*

- bring together different generations to link today's trends with traditional knowledge and learnings
- ensure culturally appropriate foods are available
- preserve traditional food acquisition methods balanced with sustainability
- offer culturally relevant life skills classes
- recognize and honour values placed on food and farmers
- recognize and support the 17% of food-insecure Nova Scotians
- model Nova Scotia's example of the agriculture sector recognizing its connection to food security
- examine corporatization and its impact on the food system; there is more profit involved with branded non-healthy processed food and more profit in treating sickness than in promoting wellness
- analyze fast food or convenience food production in terms of health and environmental impact on local agriculture and its long-term implications.

*Inclusion:*

- foster multiculturalism, create awareness, and discourage homogenization of communities
- work at the community level and involve those who are most vulnerable in developing solutions
- include cultural minorities in planning to better recognize unique food needs
- acknowledge cultural differences and integrate these differences into programs.

## **2. Information and Education**

*Information:*

- be mindful of different learning styles and literacy skills so people are informed in ways in which they learn best (e.g., visual, auditory, hands-on)
- define the message and the best media to deliver it
- be prepared and able to explain what food security means.

*School-based initiatives:*

- implement a school food policy for the whole school system (access to and education on healthy foods), not school by school
- implement home economics classes in schools for all students
- educate teachers, school administrators, and parents about healthy eating
- educate children so they can make healthy food choices by promoting nutrition in schools.

*Awareness campaigns:*

- conduct education campaigns in the media about local food production, food security, and how important it is to our communities and province



- offer a consistent message ranging from school nutrition to workplace nutrition to society
- promote healthy foods in the mass media, creating a greater awareness of potential health improvements
- encourage more consumer education about local products
- conduct consumer awareness initiatives to address charity versus social justice policies
- increase awareness of, and dialogue on, the social determinants of health
- initiate community dialogues to increase awareness and spark action on food security with the tool, *Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Policy*
- make food security issues, work, learnings, and tools easily available to the public
- find leaders and well-known personalities to assist with consumer spending awareness campaigns.

*Programs:*

- use research to explore food security through a health literacy lens, broadening our understanding of the links between food security and literacy
- continue to educate people through programs and information sessions (nutrition, cooking, food preparation, storage, shopping, budgeting, etc.)
- share more about programs in the Atlantic region that work well
- establish a common tool for the assessment of programs.

### **3. Access**

*Focus on what is in the community already:*

- conduct research to find out the strengths and barriers related to access; include the participation of marginalized groups in the community, such as newcomers, persons with disabilities, and Aboriginal groups
- use asset mapping to find out what exists in the community and use that knowledge for advertising, programs, and resources
- implement inclusive lunch programs where you pay what you can afford, but all children have the same healthy food provided to them.

*Get others involved to encourage a supportive environment and reduce isolation:*

- provide access to relevant information about food security and where to access food security supports
- offer self-esteem programs as a way to help people break the difficult cycle of isolation
- partner with community entities (e.g., churches, service clubs) the public feel most connected to so these community members will see and become aware of the need for food security
- develop strategies to make access to food a priority among communities, organizations, and governments

- provide outreach to bring food and resources to where people are
- open food banks in the evening
- remove the stigma around poverty by campaigning to change attitudes and promote social justice over charity
- work with stores in rural areas on lowering cost and increasing variety
- provide subsidies to cover production and transportation costs of healthy foods to remote areas
- establish local farmers' markets, community food systems, buying clubs, community gardens, and local production and breakfast programs to help remove barriers to accessing local foods
- establish mass-buying clubs supported by no-interest loans for start-up costs and for long-term storage
- provide programs to provide access to shared or public transportation in urban and rural areas
- establish programs in the community (e.g., a car for loan, bicycle rental, local exchange trading system) provided by grassroots organizations that are universal rather than targeted to a particular person.

#### ***4. Distribution of Resources***

##### *Income and livable wage:*

- raise income support rates and decrease basic costs
- use real-life examples to demonstrate that much work needs to be done on poverty (e.g., more affordable housing and more social housing, prescription drug coverage for those not on income support but who have low income)
- expand labour force development, including skills training and attainment of higher education levels
- increase public awareness of the concept of a living wage and how to get the best nutritional value for a person's food dollars
- ensure a guaranteed income
- create coalitions that include anti-poverty groups and other social justice groups
- get communities interested and active on addressing inequities, but ensure supports are provided to facilitate action
- provide better supports to families
- conduct a social marketing campaign that makes it more attractive and desirable to share the wealth or to work towards more equitable distribution strategies
- talk about the reality that food is the flexible part of a low-income budget so it is often cut out when money is limited.

##### *Government and accountability:*

- develop an accountability structure for all agencies: government, business, individual people, etc.
- use the data collected from the Nova Scotia Food Costing Project to prove to government that there needs to be an increase in minimum wage, social

assistance, and old age pension, since the cost of living does not match people's income

- recognize the impact of global forces and trade policies
- re-evaluate what a resource is and how it is valued, e.g., environmental resources are worth more than market value
- mobilize to put food security on the political agenda
- work with necessary players to put a better distribution of resources in place (e.g., revenues, food-related education and private sector awareness)
- look at the interaction among different government policies, programs, and benefits
- look at all policies from a living income perspective and find creative approaches toward increasing living wage
- involve communities and the voices of those affected by these issues in policy development, perhaps with an inclusion lens or a participatory approach as the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects have done.

## ***5. Networking***

- establish a food security committee, action group, or council in each Atlantic province (if it does not already exist) and find ways for these groups to communicate with each other
- build an Atlantic food security network to continue the momentum coming out of this forum, starting perhaps with another meeting with more provincial and/or federal government representatives who are responsible for policy
- create opportunities for networking (such as this forum), but include public fora and workshops
- think broadly, especially in terms of the determinants of health
- partner with government organizations, individuals, businesses, economic development boards, town councils, etc.
- establish university and community collaboration in research, practice, and policy development
- find partners to leverage in-kind contributions and to increase buy-in, such as health institutions and provincial or national non-profit organizations
- bring people who work on the issue of food security together regularly to share tools, resources, ideas, and concerns through conference calls, online discussion fora, or face-to-face meetings
- promote community dialogue by starting a small local committee with keen community partners all working on the issue of food insecurity
- provide more training regarding shared understanding of food security at all levels, including senior government officials
- include those currently or previously affected by food insecurity in local and provincial networks
- establish food security as a topic for the Atlantic Council of Premiers so there can be collaboration in the region

- develop and circulate a contact list for people and groups who are working on this issue from each province
- take advantage of the virtual: Internet-based fora, Internet news, blogs, web sites, to share food security projects and ideas of what works and develop an email listserv
- find a high profile champion to speak on and support food security.

*Funding and other mechanisms:*

- support groups that are trying to build networks and coalitions and maintain or expand funding for programs that have proven track records
- maintain or increase the funding commitments of provincial and federal governments for organizations and institutions that address the root causes of food insecurity
- put food security on the agenda everywhere so more funding can be made available
- share resources (e.g., space, staff) among not-for-profit groups, particularly those with shared goals
- provide specific, long-term core funding to support food security work on an ongoing basis
- create a mechanism for ongoing dialogue.

## **6. Production and Marketing**

*Producer/consumer relationship:*

- establish direct marketing relationships that connect consumers with their food sources through farmers markets, buying clubs, community-supported agriculture, and fair trade
- make the community and government aware of the importance of supporting local producers.

*Building partnerships:*

- work together with those experiencing income and access issues; talk to communities about what works for them and what they need to link to producers, retailers, and food markets
- celebrate success stories!
- pool resources by collaborating with others
- involve community, food producers, grower organizations, universities, voters, marketers, funding bodies, development agencies, and government
- don't take it all on at once - perhaps start with pilot projects and work to understand perspectives and build mutual understanding
- provide access to local food markets with direct marketing infrastructure; education about food miles may be one solution
- promote and foster local produce through markets, cost breaks, community-supported agriculture, and food cooperatives

- establish farm-to-table programs
- use Family Resource Centres as hubs for access and education, increasing community capacity building by providing transportation to programming combined with a farmers' market set up once a week outside centres
- explore alternative food distribution and marketing opportunities.

*Policy development issues:*

- provide tax breaks for local producers
- provide easier access to local foods
- make transportation subsidies available to equalize access to fresh and frozen products, especially dairy
- conduct research, grounded in communities, regarding policies that help or hinder production and marketing
- establish polluter-pays regulations, with a plan for enforcement
- promote community gardens and support local agriculture with subsidies so that the product can compete with imports
- consider environmental health by looking at food miles, greenhouse gas emissions, etc.
- recognize that energy issues impact on the price, availability, and abundance of food
- focus on food safety and nutritional adequacy.

## **DAY 2**

The second day began with a panel presentation of specific regional and national initiatives contributing to food security.

### **Panel Presentation**

*Becca Green - Inventory of Food Security Initiatives in Atlantic Canada*

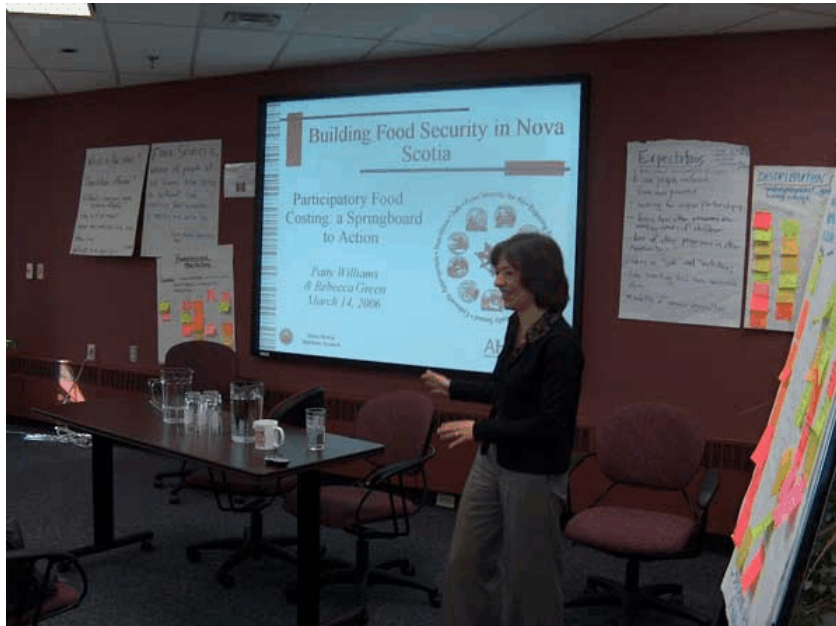
Becca is a Research Assistant with the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects through Mount Saint Vincent University and the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre. Her presentation described the development of the Inventory of Food Security Initiatives in Atlantic Canada (part of the Healthier Food, Healthier People Project), explaining the sections of the survey to be used to collect the data, why the information is being asked, and how it will be used.

*Christine Johnson - Food Secure Canada*

Christine is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Human Nutrition at St. Francis Xavier University and the Atlantic representative for the newly established group, Food Secure Canada. Christine shared the overarching goals of Food Secure Canada and the current year's priorities. The group is developing an inventory of national resources and is working to increase the capacity to discuss and communicate among its members.

*Karl Nightingale - Public Health Agency of Canada*

Karl is a Program Consultant with PHAC Atlantic, working with the Population Health Fund. PHAC came into existence in September 2004 and has supported many food security initiatives in the past. The Agency's mandate is to increase and support community capacity, promote intersectoral collaboration, and to develop and exchange knowledge.



**Patty Williams presenting to the Forum**

*Patty Williams - Nova Scotia Participatory Food Costing Project*

Patty is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Applied Human Nutrition at Mount Saint Vincent University and has played a lead role in the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects. The Participatory Food Costing Project, a partnership with Family Resource Centres, was one of the group's key activities in the last couple of years. Food costing was carried out in communities throughout Nova Scotia at various food stores using the National Nutritious Food Basket as a guiding tool. Research results determined that many different low-income family complements could not afford and/or do not have access to a basic nutritious diet. Patty also presented on different but related projects currently under way, including the development of a food security policy lens document as well as Atlantic involvement in the PHAC-funded national project, "Capacity Building for Food Security Through Mentoring."

## **Moving Forward: Next Steps**

### *Next Steps for Participants*

Following the panel presentation, participants were asked to regroup by province and discuss the following questions:

- Based on what you have heard in the last two days, what stands out for you?
- Is there anything new that your provincial group wants to consider doing in the next three months? in the next year?

#### *Prince Edward Island*

Participants from Prince Edward Island said they wanted to begin talk to people to see who would be interested in coming together to form a food security network. Participants from Family Resource Centres were also interested in receiving training on how to use the tool *Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Policy*. The group saw the Summer Institute at the University of Prince Edward Island as a potential partner for networking and getting the word out about food security through displays.

Within the next year, the group wants to hold a symposium and to network more with the teachers' federation and other potential partners. There is some human capacity to do this work; however, funds would need to be identified to carry out the symposium.

#### *New Brunswick*

Participants from New Brunswick expressed the strong desire to continue networking. They plan to have a meeting in June to develop an action plan, discuss funding, and explore the idea of food costing in partnership with l'Université de Moncton. They also hope to hold a provincial gathering.

#### *Newfoundland and Labrador*

Working with the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador, participants felt that the first step would be to promote their work and the issue of food insecurity in general in order to try to get more outside people involved. Other important actions include seeking funding, increasing public awareness, and making links among groups who are doing work that might not be labelled "food security." The group considered planning a food security assembly in the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

#### *Nova Scotia*

All Nova Scotia participants at the forum were members of the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects. They wanted to keep the current momentum going with their various projects and saw the key issue as securing funding and commitment to support ongoing work. They want to continue the collaboration between researchers and the community.

### *Atlantic Region*

When considering an Atlantic-based approach, participants made the following general comments:

- the collective group has a stronger voice and is more empowered
- there is value in not reinventing the wheel and in sharing resources
- there is a need for another in-person meeting.

Participants identified the following as possible Atlantic collaborative work on food security:

- four participants – Hannah Westner, Lita Villalon, Margie Coombes, and Patty Williams – expressed interest in exploring the development of a common Atlantic food costing model, first through conducting research on the differences among the provinces (culture, geography, politics)
- developing an Atlantic electronic forum (email/listserv) to share information among forum participants and others active on food security.

### *Next Steps for PHAC Atlantic*

PHAC Atlantic made commitments to:

- send out the Healthier Food, Healthier People Project report to forum participants
- send information on the solicitation process for the Healthy Living and Diabetes programs as information becomes available
- explore avenues for possible future funding for an Atlantic food security work
- organize at least one conference call with the forum participants in the next six months.

### *Participant recommendations to PHAC Atlantic and Health Canada*

- governments should increase their awareness and understanding of the geographic and social differences in the Atlantic region; employees' work should be informed by travel to the areas and communities they support to see the realities firsthand, and this understanding should then be worked into decision making
- decision makers should not lose sight of environmental sustainability during food costing discussions and research
- the national healthy food basket should be reviewed to be more representative of the geography and cultural diversity of Canada
- more insightful input is needed for the next review of Canada's Food Guide
- government departments should develop a policy which states that locally produced food should be sought for meetings such as this gathering
- continue in-person gatherings and consultations to address the issue of food security.



## **PARTICIPANT EVALUATION**

All forum participants were requested to complete an evaluation form related to the proceedings (see Appendix F), and final comments were shared before the forum was adjourned.

Results of the evaluation forms indicated that participants were satisfied with the forum. All respondents agreed that the forum was relevant to them and rated it as good or excellent overall. Participants particularly enjoyed the background activity, provincial presentations, and issue identification on the first day. Some also singled out the presentation made by Patty Williams on the second day as helpful and interesting. Many expressed their appreciation for the opportunity and information offered by the forum, indicating a willingness and desire to move the issue of food security forward and to collaborate again in the future. Many indicated that the opportunity for networking within their own provinces and across the Atlantic region was the most beneficial aspect of the forum. The vast majority of respondents felt that they had sufficient opportunity to network with colleagues. Participants also appreciated the sharing of information, tools, and resources. The forum increased their understanding and knowledge of the issue of food security and provided the tools and motivation to take action.

Suggestions for improvements included more discussion on the agricultural, food production, and environmentally sustainable aspects of food security, as well as the component of living wage. One participant would have liked to have explored international activities on food security and how they could be applied in Canada. More information and communications in advance of the forum would have allowed people to participate more productively. Some respondents requested the use of local caterers and products, preferably organic.

Some felt that the forum could have been of longer duration, allowing for more discussion on next steps and solutions, which was rushed on the second day. Another suggestion was to broaden the representation even more, so that those directly affected, minorities, and potential partners could be included.

A summary of the forum participant evaluation responses can be found in Appendix G.



## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project was a worthwhile endeavour for those from around the region who participated, as well as for PHAC Atlantic and Health Canada. The need for the project was articulated in the report, *A Review of Public Health Agency of Canada, Atlantic Region, Supports for Action on Food Security*, published in March 2006. The report described the support PHAC Atlantic has provided, mostly in direct funding to community-based organizations for time-limited food security projects, over the past five years. Through this work, community and government stakeholders identified food security as a priority public health issue in Atlantic Canada. The report stated that while this funding has certainly contributed to food security efforts in the region, increased Agency support of intersectoral collaboration was recommended.

The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project attempted to address this recommendation by increasing intersectoral collaboration on food security in the region. The project was limited by a three-month time limit, staff and volunteer time, and financial resources. The Healthier Food, Healthier People Project Steering Committee would have preferred to have had more time to work to ensure representation from a more culturally diverse group of participants. Likewise, limited human, time, and financial resources impacted on the ability to offer a completely bilingual event at the Atlantic Food Security Forum.

However, and fortunately, the Healthier Food, Healthier People Project constituted the first time PHAC Atlantic has collaborated with another federal department, Health Canada, to support an Atlantic-wide initiative. It is felt that this collaboration is key to the development of a strategic approach to address food insecurity in Atlantic Canada. Given PHAC's mandate to address the social determinants of health and reduce health inequities, and given Health Canada's and PHAC's common mandate of regional and national emergency preparedness, which certainly involves food security, the project steering committee feels future collaboration on food security in the Atlantic will be important.

The project was successful in bringing together a wide cross section of food security stakeholders, including Family Resource Centres, researchers, organic producers, provincial government policy makers, anti-poverty advocates, and nutritionists. Participants in the Atlantic Food Security Forum saw much value in future Atlantic-wide collaboration on food security, and follow-up is already in the works. Based on participant evaluations, the forum has assisted in building community capacity to address food security in Atlantic Canada, having offered an opportunity for learning, networking, and strategizing. However, the Inventory of Food Security Initiatives in Atlantic Canada and the forum are just a beginning point in developing an Atlantic food security strategy.

A number of conclusions and recommendations can be made from the findings of this two-part project. One overarching conclusion is that the best approach to improving the

situation of food insecurity in Atlantic Canada is to address its root causes. This can be done through an analysis of the interconnected systems impacting food security and a redesign of these systems to ensure equitable access to affordable, nutritious, culturally appropriate, sustainably produced food. Stakeholders also recognize the need to continue to support short-term relief strategies and capacity-building strategies. Another broad conclusion is that a large number of partners and groups must be involved to successfully and promptly address the issue of food insecurity. This includes funding bodies, development agencies, Family Resource Centres, anti-poverty and other social justice groups, grassroots organizations, businesses, government at all levels, economic development boards, town councils, universities, health institutions, the media, schools, service clubs, food producers and marketers, and those most directly affected by food insecurity.

The findings of the inventory and forum reinforce the importance of collective efforts to:

- examine government policy at the municipal, provincial, and federal level to see its impacts on food security
- address the root causes of food insecurity such as poverty, for example increasing income assistance, minimum wage rates, and other support programs
- ensuring sufficient and consistent funding to support food-security initiatives
- address the lack of awareness about the prevalence and reality of food insecurity in Atlantic Canada
- strengthen relationships between food producers and consumers and understand the importance of supporting local producers and initiatives
- recognize the particular needs of stakeholders around the region, especially as they relate to culture
- build and maintain networks among those who work on food security issues
- build support across sectors and encourage intersectoral partnerships through collaboration and sharing of resources.

There are specific actions that were recommended to Health Canada and PHAC Atlantic staff throughout the project:

- Health Canada and PHAC Atlantic should continue to work collaboratively on the issue of food insecurity in the region and explore the involvement of other federal government departments such as Environment Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.
- PHAC Atlantic and Health Canada should support the development of an Atlantic food security strategy, by facilitating communication among key stakeholders, particularly forum participants, and fostering relationships with those initiatives outlined in the inventory.
- PHAC Atlantic should enhance funding for food security work, supporting community capacity building for using population health approaches to address

food security as well as for increasing community involvement in developing healthy public policy on food security.

- Health Canada and PHAC Atlantic should consider funding research proposals, providing infrastructure, and dedicating a staff person to food insecurity.
- PHAC Atlantic and Health Canada staff should consider further developing their own understanding of the differences, uniqueness, and realities of food insecurity issues in communities across the Atlantic.
- In planning future food security or other public events, Health Canada and PHAC Atlantic should endeavour to support environmentally sustainable practices by providing food which is purchased from local producers.
- PHAC Atlantic and Health Canada should expand and update the inventory of food security initiatives.

The PHAC Atlantic and Health Canada staff involved with the Healthier Food, Healthier People Project applaud the innovative and varied work being carried out by stakeholders across the Atlantic region to address the problem of food insecurity. Continued collaboration and partnerships are anticipated and welcomed.



**APPENDIX A**  
**HEALTHIER FOOD, HEALTHIER PEOPLE PROJECT**  
**STEERING COMMITTEE**

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**APPENDIX B**  
**SURVEY OF FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES**  
**IN ATLANTIC CANADA**

**Section I: This section is about YOU and YOUR ORGANIZATION and will be included in the resource booklet. NOTE: If your organization has more than one food security initiative, please list the name of each (below) and, if possible, use this survey to describe all initiatives collectively. If this is not possible, you may complete Sections I and II for each initiative.**

1. Your name and title/role:
2. Name of organization:
3. Name of official representative and title (if applicable):
4. Name of initiative, project, or program (if applicable):
5. Contact information (mailing address, phone and fax numbers, e-mail):
6.
  - a. Approximate start date of initiative (month/year):
  - b. Approximate end date (month/year) if applicable:
7. Main source(s) of funding:
8. Titles of relevant reports, resources, etc. related to your initiative (include web links if available):

**Section II: This Section is about YOUR WORK and will be included in the resource booklet.**

1. What is the main focus or purpose of your food security initiative? Mark all that apply with an X.  
a. Food security: \_\_ individual/household \_\_ community \_\_ provincial \_\_ national \_\_ international  
b. Poverty reduction  
c. Social justice/inequality/inclusion issues  
d. Public policy  
e. Community development  
f. Sustainable agriculture/food production  
g. Environmental protection

- h. Research
- i. Advocacy
- j. Program policy and planning
- k. Other. Please describe:

2. Strategies to address food security fall into three broad categories (described below). Some initiatives may be involved in one or more of these categories. How would you describe the main focus of your initiative? Please rank the major categories that apply, with “1” =most applicable and “3” = least applicable. If a major category does not apply please indicate with a “0.” Please mark all sub-categories that apply with an X.

a. Short-term Relief: These strategies are directed at the people who are the most food insecure. They provide short-term, and sometimes emergency relief of hunger.

- 1. Food bank
- 2. Soup kitchen/Meal program
- 3. Children’s meal program
- 4. Food vouchers
- 5. Other. Please describe:

b. Capacity Building: These strategies help improve food security and the sustainability of the food system by building skills and helping people to work together for change.

- 1. Community kitchen
- 2. Community garden
- 3. Food cooperative
- 4. Informal community group (e.g., no set rules, or terms of reference, or board, etc.)
- 5. Individual skills/capacity building (e.g., workshops, dialogues, training)
- 6. Other. Please describe:

c. System Change: These strategies aim for improvements to policies, including all levels and all sectors that affect systemic issues of food availability, affordability, accessibility, and quality.

*Initial System Change*

- 1. Promotion of local, seasonal, or organic foods
- 2. Advocacy on behalf of individuals for access to healthy foods
- 3. Participatory action research
- 4. Other. Please describe:

*System Change in Transition*

- 5. Creating multi-sector partnerships and networks (e.g., food policy councils)
- 6. Facilitating participatory decision making
- 7. Connecting short-term relief with capacity building initiatives

8. Other. Please describe:

*System Redesign for Sustainability*

9. Advocacy for system change (e.g., minimum wage, affordable housing, food labelling standards)

10. Policy development

11. Other. Please describe:

3. What have been your major outcomes, accomplishments or milestones in the past five years?

4. What do you think contributed to these outcomes, accomplishments, or milestones? Mark all that apply with an X.

a. Funding

b. Awareness/Education

c. Partnerships

d. Research/Evidence

e. Knowledge sharing

f. Community mobilization

g. Organizational capacity

h. Resources other than funding (e.g., volunteers, donations, supplies, etc.).

Please specify:

i. Other. Please describe:

5. Has your initiative conducted an evaluation of your food security initiative?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, please describe briefly:

If yes, are results publicly available?

a. Yes

b. No

6. Does your initiative work with other organizations or groups on the issue of food security?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, please list key groups or organizations that you have worked with in the past five years

If yes, is this a formal partnership or network?

a. Yes

b. No

THANK YOU!

**Section III: This section is about YOUR THOUGHTS and will be compiled as a summary of key themes. Your anonymity in this section is assured. Please be sure to seal this page in the envelope attached and return to the drop-box provided. Thank you!**

*(Section III was completed only by attendees at the Atlantic Food Security Forum.)*

7. What do you believe should be the top priorities or next steps for building food security in the Atlantic Region?
8. What do you see as major opportunities presenting to Atlantic Canada for achieving these priorities or next steps?
9. What do you believe are the main barriers or gaps in policies and programs that need to be addressed in order to build food security in the Atlantic Region?

**APPENDIX C**  
**SURVEY OF FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES**  
**IN ATLANTIC CANADA**  
**INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR**  
**PARTICIPANTS IN THE ATLANTIC FOOD SECURITY FORUM**

**INVITATION AND PURPOSE OF SURVEY**

Have you been involved in efforts to improve the food security of people and communities in Atlantic Canada? Any organization or initiative (project or program) with a primary mandate or goal that encompasses food security, whether from a food systems or social justice perspective, is invited to participate in a survey being conducted by the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The purpose of the survey is to create a resource booklet providing an up-to-date collection of food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada. This will include contact information and brief descriptions of initiatives throughout the region as well as opportunities, challenges, and priorities for addressing food security in Atlantic Canada as identified by those directly involved in this issue (you!). This information will help begin to paint the landscape of food security efforts in the region and create a knowledge base for people interested in building food security in Atlantic Canada.

This project is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Atlantic Region, to support the researchers in providing a resource booklet to assist PHAC in their strategic planning to better address the barriers to building food security in Atlantic Canada.

**ROLE OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

In Sections I and II, you are asked to share information about your organization and/or initiative and food security-related activities as well as the resources and capacities needed for these activities. Section III contains three questions regarding opportunities, challenges, and priorities needed to address food security and are based on your opinion. Given the potential sensitive nature of this section, you will be provided a blank envelope to return your responses for this section. This will ensure these responses remain anonymous. Interested participants should return surveys by Wednesday March 15th in the drop-boxes available at the Forum. Participation in this survey is voluntary. You may choose to complete the entire survey or only certain questions and may withdraw at any time. The entire survey should take about 15 minutes.

## **ROLE OF THE RESEARCH TEAM**

The researchers will compile information collected from Sections I and II in an up-to-date booklet of pertinent information on food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada. Answers to Section III collected anonymously at the Forum will be summarized by key themes in a separate section in the booklet. All original data collected will only be accessible to the researchers and kept secure at MSVU. All participants will receive a draft copy via e-mail for review to ensure accuracy of information.

## **POTENTIAL RISKS AND BENEFITS**

There are no foreseeable risks in completing this survey. Measures have been taken to ensure anonymity for responses that are potentially sensitive; participants may choose not to respond to questions in this section.

A resource booklet of Atlantic Food Security Initiatives will be distributed electronically to all participants by the research team in the spring of 2006. As well, it will be available publicly and free of cost through the PHAC Atlantic web site. The booklet can be used by anyone interested in building networks and working with others to build food security in Atlantic Canada.

Contact Information of the Research Team:

Dr. Patty Williams, Principal Investigator  
Department of Applied Human Nutrition  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
patty.williams@msvu.ca  
(902) 457- 6394

Rebecca Green, Research Assistant  
Nova Scotia Food Security Projects  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
rebecca.green@msvu.ca  
(902) 457-5549

You may also contact Sophie Pitre-Arseneault (PHAC representative), who is not directly involved in the survey, with questions at (902) 426-7364 or via e-mail at [sophie\\_pitre-arseneault@phac-aspc.gc.ca](mailto:sophie_pitre-arseneault@phac-aspc.gc.ca).

If you have questions about how this survey is being conducted, you may contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Board (UREB), c/o MSVU Research and International Office, who is not directly involved in the study, at (902) 457-6350 or via e-mail at [research@msvu.ca](mailto:research@msvu.ca).

## CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION

If you have read the preceding information outlining the purpose of the survey and are willing to participate, please read the following and indicate your informed consent below.

I understand that:

1. I will participate in a brief survey regarding the food security initiative I am involved in and will return my responses in the drop-off boxes provided at the Forum.
2. Participation is completely voluntary and I may choose to complete all sections or only some questions. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and I may withdraw from the survey at any point.
3. Only members of the research team will have access to original data.
4. Survey results will be incorporated into a resource booklet on food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada; a final draft of the resource booklet will be made available to participants for review.
5. The final resource booklet be provided to the Public Health Agency of Canada, Atlantic Region, which in turn will make this information publicly available on their web site.
6. I am welcome to discuss any questions or concerns about my involvement in this survey with the research team, a Mount Saint Vincent University Representative, or a PHAC representative, whose contacts have been provided.
7. I may keep a copy of the information sheet and informed consent form for my records.

If you understand the purpose of the survey and agree to provide information as an official representative of your organization, please sign your name below. This will indicate your consent to participate and provide approval to disclose information for the resource booklet.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (your name and organization), agree to participate in the survey of food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada and allow this information to be shared in a resource booklet.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature).

If you participate, we may wish to contact you to follow-up or clarify some responses.

Would you agree to a follow-up discussion? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please provide preferred method of communication: Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail

\_\_\_\_\_.



**APPENDIX D**  
**SURVEY OF FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES**  
**IN ATLANTIC CANADA**  
**INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR CONTACTS**  
**NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE ATLANTIC FOOD SECURITY**  
**FORUM**

**INVITATION AND PURPOSE OF SURVEY**

Have you been involved in efforts to improve the food security of people and communities in Atlantic Canada? Any organization or initiative (project or program) with a primary mandate or goal that encompasses food security, whether from a food systems or social justice perspective, is invited to participate in a survey being conducted by the Nova Scotia Food Security Projects at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The purpose of the project is to provide an up-to-date collection of food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada. This will include contact information and brief descriptions of initiatives throughout the region, as well as opportunities, challenges, and priorities for addressing food security. Information gathered from this survey and from participants attending an Atlantic Food Security Forum will be compiled into a resource booklet. This information will help begin to paint the landscape of food security efforts in the region and create a knowledge base for people interested in building food security in Atlantic Canada.

This project is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Atlantic Region, to support the researchers in providing a resource booklet that will assist PHAC in their strategic planning to better address the barriers for building food security in Atlantic Canada.

**ROLE OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

In Sections I and II of the survey, participants are invited to share information about their organization and/or initiative and food security-related activities as well as the capacities and resources needed for these activities. Participants should return surveys by March 30th, 2006 either via fax or e-mail. Participation in this survey is voluntary. Participants may choose to complete the entire survey or only certain questions and may withdraw from the survey at any time. The entire survey should take no longer than 10 minutes. Participants will have the opportunity to review responses in a draft booklet.

## **ROLE OF THE RESEARCH TEAM**

The researchers will contact potential participants via e-mail to participate in the survey. One reminder e-mail may be sent to those who have not responded within a week. The researchers will compile information collected from Sections I and II and include this in an up-to-date booklet of pertinent information on food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada. All original data collected will only be accessible to the researchers and will be kept secure at MSVU. The researchers will provide a draft booklet to all participants for review to ensure accuracy of information. Once finalized, the research team will distribute the resource booklet to all participants.

## **POTENTIAL RISKS AND BENEFITS**

There are no foreseeable risks in completing this survey. If any one question is perceived as sensitive, participants may choose not to answer these questions.

A resource booklet of Atlantic Food Security Initiatives will be distributed electronically to all participants in the late spring or early summer of 2006. As well, it will be available publicly and free of cost through the PHAC Atlantic web site. This booklet can be used by anyone interested in building networks and working with others to build food security in Atlantic Canada.

Contact Information of the Research Team:

Dr. Patty Williams, Principal Investigator  
Department of Applied Human Nutrition  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
patty.williams@msvu.ca  
(902) 457- 6394

Rebecca Green, Research Assistant  
Nova Scotia Food Security Projects  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
rebecca.green@msvu.ca  
(902) 457-5549

You may also contact Sophie Pitre-Arseneault (PHAC representative), who is not directly involved in the survey, with questions at (902) 426-7364 or via e-mail at [sophie\\_pitre-arseneault@phac-aspc.gc.ca](mailto:sophie_pitre-arseneault@phac-aspc.gc.ca).

If you have questions about how this survey is being conducted, you may contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Board (UREB), c/o MSVU Research and International Office, who is not directly involved in the study, at (902) 457-6350 or via e-mail at [research@msvu.ca](mailto:research@msvu.ca).

## CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION

If you have read the preceding information outlining the purpose of the survey and are willing to participate, please read the following and indicate your informed consent below.

I understand that:

1. I will participate in a short email survey regarding the food security initiative I am involved in and will email or fax my responses to the researcher at the provided contact information.
2. Participation is completely voluntary and I may choose to complete all sections or only some questions. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and I may withdraw from the survey at any point.
3. Only members of the research team will have access to original data.
4. Survey results will be incorporated into a resource booklet on food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada; a final draft of the resource booklet will be made available to participants for review.
5. The final resource booklet will be provided to the Public Health Agency of Canada, Atlantic region, which in turn will make this information publicly available on their web site.
6. I am welcome to discuss any questions or concerns about my involvement in this survey with the research team, a Mount Saint Vincent University Representative, or a PHAC representative, whose contacts have been provided.
7. I may keep a copy of the information sheet and informed consent form for my records.

If you understand the purpose of the survey and agree to provide information as an official representative of your organization, please sign your name below if replying via fax, or mark with an X if via e-mail. This will indicate your consent to participate and provide approval to disclose information for the resource booklet. If you wish to pass this survey on to an individual in your organization most knowledgeable about the food security initiative for completion on your behalf, please indicate this below.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (your name and organization), agree to participate in the survey of food security initiatives in Atlantic Canada and allow this information to be shared in a resource booklet. \_\_\_\_\_ (signature or X).

As an official representative of \_\_\_\_\_ (organization), I give approval for this survey to be completed by \_\_\_\_\_, a knowledgeable staff of the food security initiative.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature or X) \_\_\_\_\_ (signature or X)  
(Official representative) (Survey respondent)

If you participate, we may wish to contact you to follow-up or clarify some responses.

Would you agree to a follow-up discussion? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please provide preferred method of communication: Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail

\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX E**  
**ATLANTIC FOOD SECURITY FORUM PARTICIPANTS**

| <b>Name</b>   | <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Address</b>   | <b>Numbers</b>  | <b>Email</b>                             |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>                      |   |  |   |  |
| Margaret Coombes,<br>Regional<br>Nutritionist         | Health and<br>Community<br>Services, St.<br>John's Region   | P.O. Box 13122<br>St. John's NL<br>A1B 4A4                       | (709) 752-4911<br>(709) 752-4833-<br>fax  | margaret.<br>coombes@hcssjr.<br>nf.ca    |
| Sherril Gilbert,<br>Provincial Project<br>Coordinator | Food Security<br>Network of<br>Newfoundland<br>and Labrador                                       | 756 St. Thomas<br>Line<br>Paradise NL<br>A1L 3V6                 | (709) 895-8333<br>(709) 895-8339-<br>fax  | sherril_g@<br>hotmail.com                |
| Kim Cooper,<br>Coordinator                            | Gander Bay<br>Community<br>Action Program<br>for Children   | General Delivery<br>Wing's Point NL<br>A0G 4T0                   | (709) 676-2396  | capc@nf.aibn.<br>com                     |
| Bonnie Randell,<br>Executive Director                 | Family Outreach<br>Resource Centre<br>Organization for<br>Community<br>Action Initiatives<br>Inc. | 8 Oak Terrace<br>P.O. Box 712<br>Corner Brook NL<br>A2H 6E6      | (709) 634-2316  | forc@nf.<br>sympatico.ca                 |
| Paula Dawe,<br>Coordinator                            | Kids Eat Smart<br>Program   | Box 394<br>Station B<br>Happy Valley-<br>Goose Bay NL<br>A0P 1E0 | (709) 896-8684<br>(709) 896-6014-<br>fax  | dawepaula@<br>hotmail.com                |
| Priscilla Corcoran<br>Mooney,<br>Wellness Facilitator | Primary Health  | P.O. Box 79<br>Branch NL<br>A0B 1E0                              | (709) 227-4140  | pcorcoran_<br>mooney@hotmail<br>.com     |
| Marjorie Flowers,<br>Team Leader                      | Government of<br>Nunatsiavut,<br>Department of<br>Health and Social<br>Development                | Box 135<br>Hopedale NL<br>A0P 1G0                                | (709) 933-3834<br>(709) 933-3645-<br>fax  | marjorie_flowers<br>@nunatsiavut.<br>com |
| Sonya Blake   | Labrador Métis<br>Nation  | P.O. Box 2341<br>Station B<br>Goose Bay NL<br>A0P 1E0            | (709) 896-2976<br>fax Darlene Wall<br>at<br>(709) 896-0594<br>(709) 896-3578<br>(h) | sonya-<br>blake@hotmail.<br>com          |

| Name   | Organization   | Address  | Numbers  | Email                       |
|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------|
| Aisling Gogan,<br>Director, Poverty<br>Reduction Strategy                      | Income<br>Employment and<br>Youth Services<br>Branch<br>Department of<br>Human<br>Resources,<br>Labour and<br>Employment | P.O. Box 8700<br>St. John's NL<br>A1B 4J6  | (709) 729-6053<br>(709) 729-5139-<br>fax                   | aislinggogan<br>@gov.nl.ca  |
| <b>Prince Edward Island</b>  |  |  |  |                             |
| Marilyn Norton   | Chances Family<br>Resource Centre  | 110 Mason Road<br>Stratford PE<br>C1B 2H6  | (902) 367-6744<br>(902) 892-0267-<br>fax                   | prenatal@isn.net            |
| Ann Wheatley   | Cooper Institute<br>and PEI Working<br>Group for a<br>Livable Income   | 81 Prince Street<br>Charlottetown PE<br>C1A 4R3                                    | (902) 894-4573<br>(902) 368-7180-<br>fax                   | cooper@isn.net              |
| David MacKay,<br>Executive Director  | PEI Certified<br>Organic<br>Producers'<br>Cooperative  | Box 1776<br>Charlottetown, PE<br>C1A 7N3   | (902) 894-9999<br>(902) 894-9799-<br>fax                   | organicpei@web.<br>ca       |
| Barbara Lundrigan,<br>Coordinator  | Eastern Kings<br>Coalition   | Main Street<br>Family Resource<br>Centre<br>P.O. Box 682<br>Souris PE<br>C0A 2B0   | (902) 687-3928<br>(902) 687-4086-<br>fax                   | mainfrc@pei.<br>aibn.com    |
| Darlene Mellish  | Voices for<br>Children   | Carousel Family<br>Resource Centre<br>P.O. Box 133<br>Montague PE<br>C0A 1R0       | (902) 838-4600<br>(902) 838-4645-<br>fax                   | darlene@<br>carouselvfc.com |
| <b>Nova Scotia</b>   |  |  |  |                             |
| Rebecca Green,<br>Research Assistant,<br>Nova Scotia Food<br>Security Projects | Atlantic Health<br>Promotion<br>Research Centre  | Suite 209, City<br>Centre Atlantic<br>1535 Dresden<br>Row<br>Halifax NS<br>B3J 3T1 | (902) 494-2764<br>(902) 494-6642<br>(902) 494-3594-<br>fax | rebecca.green@<br>msvu.ca   |

| <b>Name</b>  | <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Address</b>  | <b>Numbers</b>                           | <b>Email</b>                     |
|--|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Patty Williams,<br>Research Associate                      | Department of Applied Human Nutrition,<br>Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre | Evaristus 354<br>Mount Saint Vincent University<br>166 Bedford Highway<br>Halifax NS<br>B3M 2J6               | (902) 457-6394                           | patty.williams@msvu.ca           |
| Doris Gillis,<br>Associate Professor                       | Department of Human Nutrition,<br>St. Francis Xavier University                     | P.O. Box 5000<br>Antigonish NS<br>B2G 2W5   | (902) 867-5401<br>(902) 867-2389-<br>fax | dgillis@stfx.ca                  |
| Lesley Ehler,<br>Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program         | Kids First  | P.O. Box 966<br>New Glasgow NS<br>B2H 5K7   | (902) 755-5437<br>(902) 755-1630-<br>fax | pictoukidsfirst@ns.aliantzinc.ca |
| Polly Ring,<br>Coordinator                                 | Parents' Place,<br>Yarmouth Family Resource Centre                                  | 34 Barnard Street<br>Yarmouth NS<br>B5A 3T5   | (902)749-1718<br>(902) 749-1325-<br>fax  | pollyring@eastlink.ca            |
| Jamey Coughlin,<br>Planning and Development Officer        | Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries                                 | P.O. Box 2223<br>Halifax NS<br>B3J 3C4  | (902) 896-7088                           | coughljp@gov.ns.ca               |
| Trudy Reid,<br>Public Health Nutritionist                  | Cumberland Health Authority   | Public Health Services<br>18 South Albion St.<br>Amherst NS<br>B4H 2W3  | (902) 667-2885                           | tdreid@ca.internet               |
| Michelle Amero,<br>Coordinator,<br>Healthy Eating Strategy | Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection   | 1800 Argyle Street<br>Suite 520<br>P.O. Box 487<br>World Trade and Convention Centre<br>Halifax NS<br>B3J 2R7 | (902) 424-3749<br>(902) 424-3135-<br>fax | ameromd@gov.ns.ca                |
| Rita MacAulay,<br>Public Health Nutritionist               | Capital District Health Authority Public Health Services                            | 201 Brownlow Avenue, Unit 4<br>Dartmouth NS<br>B3B 1W2  | (902) 481-5858<br>(902) 481-5803-<br>fax | rita.macaulay@cdha.nshealth.ca   |
| Christine Johnson,<br>Assistant Professor                  | Department of Human Nutrition,<br>St. Francis Xavier University                     | P.O. Box 5000<br>Antigonish NS<br>B2G 2W5   | (902) 867-3224<br>(902) 867-2389-<br>fax | cjohnson@stfx.ca                 |

| <b>Name</b>  | <b>Organization</b>  | <b>Address</b>   | <b>Numbers</b>   | <b>Email</b>              |
|--|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| Av Singh,<br>Organic and Rural<br>Infrastructure<br>Specialist | AgraPoint  | 199 Innovation<br>Drive<br>Truro NS<br>B2M 6Z4   | (902) 896-0277<br>(902) 896-7299-<br>fax                                     | a.singh@<br>agrapoint.ca  |
| Johanna Nesbitt  | Food Action<br>Committee   | Ecology Action<br>Centre<br>1568 Argyle Street<br>Suite 31<br>Halifax NS<br>B3J 2B3                                    | (902) 429-2202<br>(w/t)<br>(902) 420-9882<br>(h/r)<br>(902) 422-6410-<br>fax | jnesbitt@dal.ca           |
| Rick Manuel,<br>Director, Policy and<br>Planning               | Nova Scotia<br>Health Promotion<br>and Protection                                | 5th Floor, Suite<br>520<br>World Trade and<br>Convention Centre<br>1800 Argyle Street<br>Halifax NS<br>B3J 2R7         | (902) 424-8638<br>(902) 424-3135-<br>fax                                     | manuelr@gov.ns.<br>ca     |
| <b>New Brunswick</b>   |  |  |  |                           |
| Suzanne Clair,<br>Project Manager                              | Department of<br>Health and<br>Wellness  | P.O. Box 5100<br>420 King Street<br>Fredericton NB<br>E3B 5G8  | (506) 453-6369<br>(506) 453-8702-<br>fax                                     | suzanne.clair@<br>gnb.ca  |
| Charline Mallet  | Mapleton<br>Teaching Kitchen<br>Inc.,<br>Moncton<br>Headstart                    | 1111 Mountain<br>Road<br>Moncton NB<br>E1C 2S9   | (506) 858-8252   | mtk@nb.aibn.<br>com       |
| Christine LeBlanc,<br>Provincial<br>Coordinator                | VON Healthy<br>Baby and Me,<br>VON Canada<br>New Brunswick<br>Branch, Inc.       | 1077 St. George<br>Boulevard<br>Suite 320<br>Moncton NB<br>E1E 4C9   | (506) 387-6254<br>(506) 387-6268-<br>fax                                     | leblancc@von.ca           |
| Lita Villalon,<br>Professeure titulaire                        | École des sciences<br>des aliments, de<br>nutrition et<br>d'études<br>familiales | Faculté des<br>sciences de la<br>santé et des<br>services<br>communautaires,<br>Université de<br>Moncton NB<br>E1A 3E9 | (506) 863-2011<br>(506) 858-4283-<br>fax                                     | villall@<br>umoncton.ca   |
| Hannah Westner,<br>Program Manager                             | Healthy Eating<br>Component of the<br>New Brunswick<br>Wellness Strategy         | 207 Thompson<br>Road<br>Fawcett Hill NB<br>E4Z 2Y8   | (506) 381-0493-<br>cell<br>(506) 453-3158                                    | hannah.westner@<br>gnb.ca |



| Name  | Organization   | Address                                       | Numbers                                  | Email                       |
|---|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Rhonda Broad,<br>Regional Home<br>Economist | Department of<br>Family and<br>Community<br>Services | 644 Queen Street<br>Fredericton NB<br>E3B 1C2 | (506) 453-3178<br>(506) 457-7379-<br>fax | rhonda.broad@<br>gnb.ca     |
| Martha MacLean<br>RD<br>Nutritionist        | Community<br>Health Centre                           | 116 Coburg Street<br>Saint John NB<br>E2L 3K1 | (506) 632-5729<br>(506) 632-5539-<br>fax | macma@reg2.<br>health.nb.ca |



**APPENDIX F**  
**FORUM PARTICIPANT EVALUATION FORM**

**ATLANTIC FOOD SECURITY FORUM**  
**MARCH 14-15, 2006**

1. This Forum was relevant to me.  
Agree Disagree
2. In general, how would you rate this Forum?  
Excellent Good Fair Poor
3. How would you rate the individual portions of the Forum?
- |                                       |           |      |      |      |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|
| Introduction and Background (day 1)   | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Provincial Presentations (day 1)      | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Issue Identification Activity (day 1) | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Panel Presentation (day 2)            | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Group Discussions on Issues (day 2)   | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |

4. What will you take away from this Forum that will benefit you most?

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5. What would you have liked to have seen or discussed that was missing?

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6. Did you have sufficient opportunity to network with your colleagues?  
Yes No

7. General comments:

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Thank you for joining us!

Français au verso



## APPENDIX G

### FORUM PARTICIPANT EVALUATION SUMMARY

Twenty-six completed surveys were returned to the organizing committee to be included in this report.

**1. The Forum was relevant to me.**

Agree - 25  
Disagree - 0  
No answer - 1

**2. In general, how would you rate this Forum?**

Excellent - 18  
Good - 6  
Fair - 0  
Poor - 0  
No answer - 2  
Comment written in: Excellent as a first gathering.

**3. How would you rate the individual sessions of the Forum?**

***a) Introduction and Background (day 1)***

Excellent - 17  
Good - 5  
Fair - 0  
Poor - 0  
No answer - 4

***b) Provincial Presentations (day 1)***

Excellent - 18  
Good - 6  
Fair - 0  
Poor - 0  
No answer - 2

***c) Issue Identification Activity (day 1)***

Excellent - 20  
Good - 4  
Fair - 0  
Poor - 0  
No answer - 2

***d) Panel Presentation (day 2)***

Excellent - 12

Good - 12

Fair - 1

Poor - 0

No answer - 1

***e) Group Discussions on Issues (day 2)***

Excellent - 13

Good - 12

Fair - 0

Poor - 0

No answer - 1

Comments written to accompany these ratings:

- Patty did an excellent presentation
- Patty was excellent, the other presentations were good
- more time for group discussions on day two
- group discussions on day 2 were a bit rushed.

**4. What will you take away from this Forum that will benefit you most?**

***Networking and sharing:***

- Networking with others interested in food security from my province
- interaction and discussion with others
- good networking connections
- the importance to work in partnership - develop a better network
- The need to develop networks and pathways to begin united discussion in New Brunswick
- Nova Scotia is a leader; it will be interesting to learn from the other three provinces, perhaps for something we missed
- the opportunity to network with Atlantic colleagues; although there are many differences, we are dealing with similar issues
- the connections made with others
- connections within our province and key stakeholders identified
- the networking and connections that I have made
- the sharing of information on projects in other provinces (Nova Scotia)
- networking and government contacts
- the connections I made with others from my province.

***Understanding and knowledge:***

- greater understanding of what is happening in Atlantic Canada and of food security
- I have a better idea of what food security is

- I will take away a deeper, more meaningful understanding of food security; an understanding that I will take back to the community advocacy committee I work with and the communities I help move forward
- a much better understanding of food security in general
- I have a better sense of what is going on in the province and region
- more knowledge of food security issues in Atlantic Canada, especially in my own province
- better understanding of food security and issues surrounding food security
- knowledge of what is happening in other provinces and better understanding of a complex issue.

***Tools and motivation to act:***

- need to focus more energies on food security
- resources
- learning about tools and resources available from different groups
- that there are many people doing a lot of work in other provinces and Prince Edward Island need to get on board
- encouragement - we are getting organized around the issue
- the recharging that comes from conferences.

***Other:***

- this was my first time being involved in the topic of food security; I found everything to be very informative and useful

**5. What would you have liked to have seen or discussed that was missing?**

*(Note: Nine respondents left this section blank.)*

***Topics and discussions:***

- more discussion on local (organic) food production
- more on agricultural side - the environmentally sustainable issues of food security
- more discussions about environmental sustainability and access to local foods (which are generally more nutritious/healthier) in institutions and provinces
- component of living wage (economic impact, policy changes, etc.)
- I still would like to see more “unique” partnerships since food security affects all
- more discussion on solutions: Community Shared Agriculture, collective kitchens, etc.
- deeper level of discussion on issues (like information/education) on one project
- more concrete funding; however, I recognize that is not possible right now
- more time for discussion in small group work
- more opportunity to discuss next steps (maybe in small group first, then as a large group)
- international activities on food security; what we can take and internationalize in Canada.

***Participants and planning:***

- there were gaps in representation; I'm sure that this was considered but with short time to organize, it may have been difficult for some to attend
- more involvement from minorities and others directly affected
- could have used much better information and preparation beforehand; there was NO contact with our steering committee representatives and I had very little idea of what it was we were going to do or what the purpose was
- local food at break and lunch.

***Other:***

- nothing that I can think of
- I can't imagine that we missed anything
- this was my first workshop in this area; I enjoyed the discussions with different people
- since this was my first exposure to this topic, I felt that I learned a lot; now I would like more opportunities for follow up.

**6. Did you have sufficient opportunity to network with your colleagues?**

Yes - 23

No - 2

No answer - 1

Comments written:

- yes, but could have/can always use more (two responses)
- yes, but never enough.

**7. General comments:**

***Suggestions:***

- let's get some local food caterers next time
- Donna mentioned how she wants to work on increasing cultural/language issues; it would be a greater challenge to have the meals be local and seasonal (preferably organic); it's hard to do, but you get an appreciation of what we want our consumers to do
- maybe too worried about being on time; Tuesday ended too soon
- more representatives from impacted groups
- I felt somewhat out of the loop as far as being prepared ahead of time; I came from Prince Edward Island and hadn't had any contact from our provincial representative on what to expect.
- provincial presentations - would have liked to have a discussion with my New Brunswick colleagues prior to coming to the forum so that the time spent



discussing with provincial colleagues at the forum would have been more productive

- do more pre-planning communications with delegates before meeting
- 1 ½ days was a bit too short
- what next? Somebody needs to take the lead or funding is needed to go forward; it is sometimes difficult to add more work to people
- we do need another forum; working toward an Atlantic Food Security Coalition would be wonderful
- suggestion for future workshop/forum: focus on agriculture, organic farming, farming challenges in provinces, locally produced food, etc.

***Appreciation:***

- excellent organization, meals and facilitation; thank you! Together we can bring about change!
- super! Thanks so much for supporting this great opportunity.
- it was terrific to share ideas within my own provincial group and with the other provinces; the entire forum was well run with the opportunity for everyone to have a voice; thank you for giving me this opportunity; well done
- a great opportunity to get together, gather momentum and strategize next steps; many thanks to PHAC for this.
- thanks for the invitation! It certainly prompts me to do something more and to get involved with other Atlantic CPNP projects.
- thanks; you were all great, very relaxing.
- as much as it was great to meet people from the Atlantic region, it was great to have the chance to re-meet people from my province
- very good forum - well organized and executed
- good atmosphere - supportive staff
- very well organized - kept to times despite lots of discussion
- this was great - thanks for organizing it
- well worth the time spent on focussing on food security
- again, marvellous! Lots of content - tangible ideas from other provinces and theory that helped me understand this issue more fully
- I really enjoyed the forum. Thanks for the opportunity
- thank you for making this possible; it was fantastic to connect with people from my own province I have never met before
- thank you for putting this together
- thank you for the opportunity
- thanks; I look forward to future collaboration
- facilitator tag teaming worked very well
- it was a wonderful opportunity - you were great facilitators and I appreciated this opportunity to learn and network.



## APPENDIX H USEFUL WEB SITES

Some useful web sites that were posted during the course of the forum include:

[www.n SNC.ca](http://www.n SNC.ca) Nova Scotia Nutrition Council

[www.foodthoughtful.ca](http://www.foodthoughtful.ca) to access an electronic version in French or English of *Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Policy*

[www.gov.nl.ca/hrle](http://www.gov.nl.ca/hrle) Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

[www.organicpei.com](http://www.organicpei.com) PEI Certified Organic Producers' Cooperative

[www.foodsecurecanada.org](http://www.foodsecurecanada.org) Food Secure Canada

[atlantic.phac.gc.ca](http://atlantic.phac.gc.ca) to learn more about the Public Health Agency of Canada's programs, research, and funding opportunities

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/nutrition](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/nutrition) for on-line progress of the revision of Canada's Food Guide (Health Canada)



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