



Food security is when people can easily obtain and afford safe, healthy and familiar food.

“Food secure” communities value local food and work to preserve and protect the land, water and other resources needed to produce food.

Focus on Food in Simcoe Muskoka

Food Security

What would food security look like in our community?

- Community partners help develop local food charters, urban agriculture guidelines, local food procurement policies and land-use planning policies.
- Local land use planning policies make sure there are grocery stores, community gardens and farmers’ markets within easy reach.
- Property taxes, land-use decisions and other laws and guidelines help local farmers, and those who process and sell food, compete fairly with imported food.
- Food is produced and sold within the local region.
- Social assistance and minimum wage is based on local living costs and covers the cost of a healthy diet and other basic needs.
- Education and training help people choose local foods and prepare them in healthy ways.

Food security has many benefits

- Keeping money spent on food in the community supports local farmers and others in the food sector by creating jobs, income and security.
- Makes healthy foods more available so people can meet their nutrition needs.
- Increases the number of vegetables and fruit people eat, which is an important part of a healthy diet.
- When people buy local and eat foods in season, it helps to reduce greenhouse gases and improve air quality.

Definitions

Safe Food— We can say that food is safe when nothing gets in or on it, on its journey from field to table, that could cause a person illness or other harm.

Local food —means different things to different people. Food produced within a 170 km (100 mile) area is a common definition. Local food can also be described as foods that come from your own community, or are produced regionally, provincially or nationally.

Other factsheets available in this series:

Urban Agriculture is growing food in or around cities, towns or smaller communities. Some examples include backyard gardens, beehives, berry patches, shared gardens, container gardening, edible landscaping, greenhouse agriculture, herb gardens, urban farms, orchards and vineyards, rooftop gardens and schoolyard gardens.

A Sustainable Local Food System allows people to eat a healthy diet and provides fair payment to local farmers and those who process and sell food. It provides a safe and quality food supply now and into the future.

Local Food Procurement Policy gives direction to institutions such as government, colleges, school boards/schools and hospitals on the type of local food to buy and where to get it. It helps local farmers and those who process and sell food compete fairly.

Everyone deserves food security

Check out these links for more information:

FoodShare Toronto www.foodshare.net

FoodNet Ontario www.foodnetontario.ca

For more information or to access the other factsheets available in this series contact *Your Health Connection*.



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DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

Tel: 705-721-7520
Toll free: 1-877-721-7520
www.simcoemuskokahealth.org
Your Health Connection