



An Assessment of Canadian Food Charters

Highlights and Recommendations for the KFL&A Healthy Eating Working Group

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Executive Summary

Background

As rising costs of fuel, food, and health care draw attention to food access, municipalities and their citizens are recognizing that many of these concerns are the result of a fragile globalized food system. Food Councils are developing across Canada to support and integrate an increasing number of community food initiatives and encourage the development of policy that supports a food system that is both just and sustainable. One of the primary tools Food Councils utilize to coordinate their work is a Food Charter – a document that highlights a community’s vision for a healthy and sustainable food system.

Purpose

The overall aim of this assessment is to make recommendations to the Healthy Eating Working Group regarding the best methods for the development and implementation of a Food Charter in Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington (KFL&A).

Methods

This assessment involved performing a content analysis on 24 Canadian Food Charters, four telephone interviews, and seven electronic surveys. A SWOT analysis of the KFL&A Healthy Eating Working Group was also done to allow recommendations to be regionalized.

Recommendation

The key recommendations for the Healthy Eating Working Group as they develop a Food Charter for KFL&A are as follows:

- Take the time to learn what your community wants in their Food Charter. It is important to ensure the community is ready and accepting of such a document. If they are not, do more awareness raising and education.
- Ensure all members of the food system have a voice in the development of the Food Charter, everyone is welcome, and all perspectives are respected. Go beyond the members of the Working Group and gain input from community members who you envision utilizing the document.
- Create a baseline measure for evaluation by undertaking a community food assessment and set indicators to monitor the impact of the Food Charter.
- Attempt to get municipal staff and councillors on board early in the process to ensure they are aware of the concept of a Food Charter, informed on the process taken to develop the document, and given the opportunity to provide feedback.

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Introduction

As rising costs of fuel, food, and health care draw attention to the level of access to affordable and nutritious food in communities, municipalities and their citizens are recognizing that many of these concerns are the result of a fragile globalized food system.¹⁻³ Food Councils are forming across Canada to support and integrate an increasing number of community food initiatives. Moreover, these groups encourage the development of policy that supports a food system that promotes social justice and ecological sustainability while making nutritious food available, accessible, and affordable.⁴ One of the primary tools Food Councils utilize to coordinate their work is a Food Charter – a document that highlights a community’s vision for a just and sustainable food system.⁵

Food Charters act as a tool to portray the visions of the community members that developed the document. As a result, a Food Charter has the ability to guide programming, policy, and planning within a municipality.⁶ The first Canadian Food Charter is generally believed to have been developed in Toronto in 1991 as the Toronto Declaration on Food and Nutrition, then recreated at Toronto’s Food Charter in 2001.⁵ Since then these documents have been established at the provincial, regional, and municipal levels across the nation in areas such as Manitoba, Durham Region, and Saskatoon.

The Healthy Eating Working Group of Kingston, Frontenac, and Lennox & Addington (KFL&A) is embarking on the challenging process of developing a Food Charter; however, lessons can be taken from the Food Councils and Working Groups that have preceded it. This report is an assessment based on an extensive review of 24 Canadian Food Charters and testimony from 11 people involved in Food Charter development.

This report seeks to answer some key questions about Food Charters: What are the key principles? How are they developed? What stakeholders contributed to the development? How are they endorsed? How are they distributed? What are the uses? What were the challenges, and what are recommendations for those who are beginning the process of developing such a document?

Although every Food Council utilizes different methods to develop a successful Food Charter, there are a number of common strategies and common challenges. This report provides recommendations for Food Councils or Working Groups who are embarking on the process of developing a Food Charter. While it does not prescribe the best method for

developing a Food Charter, it is able to offer a collection of experiences and recommendations from people who have contributed to the creation of successful Food Charters within Canada.

Background

What is a Food Charter?

Food policy is a multidimensional discipline that is impacted by every aspect of the food system. While it is difficult to develop effective food policy that encompasses the broad perspectives of a food system, a Food Charter can assist with this task.⁵ A Food Charter is a statement of values, principles, and priorities for a just and sustainable food system that will promote health and food security for all.⁵ Developed by the public, a Food Charter represents the voices and visions of community members, resulting in a community-owned and locally focused action plan to improve food access and sustainability.

The primary role of a Food Charter is to act as a guide to foster the development of municipal food related planning, policy, and program development that can encourage a healthy food system.^{5,6} As a result, a Food Charter, which is developed by community members and intended to be endorsed by community decision makers, has the potential to be a powerful political document that can be utilized to encourage current and future municipal governments to foster the key principles of a sustainable food system that are outlined within it.^{7,9}

Features of a Food Charter

A review of Food Charters revealed that they can contain several components including: a background or rationale, vision statements, action goals, and key principles. However, a great deal of variance occurs from Charter to Charter in terms of length, detail, content, and intent. Food Charters may target the municipality and highlight strategies the local government can use to improve the food system.^{9,10} Other documents may be designed with the community in mind, highlighting the ways individuals and organizations can implement the Charter in everyday situations.¹¹ Some Food Charters like those of Guelph-Wellington or Medicine Hat encourage citizens or community agencies to sign the document to demonstrate their commitment to the principles that it stands for.^{11,12} It should also be noted that while the principles of Food Charters vary by region, some common principles included within these documents are food security, local food system support, food skill development, food safety, social justice, nutrition, and health,¹³ with many of the principles of Food Charters targeting dimensions of community food security.^{7,14}

Uses of a Food Charter

While the primary use of a Food Charter is to foster policy and programming, other purposes are evident. For example, a Food Charter can be utilized to promote an understanding of food security, to increase awareness of food systems, to guide municipal strategic planning,

and to create accountability within the government that endorses the document.¹⁵ Food Charters can also be utilized by citizens, community organizations, and government to encourage discussion about food systems and provide context for community action related to food systems, such as urban agriculture and community garden programs.^{5,16} By and large, Food Charters have the potential to encourage civic engagement that supports a secure and sustainable food system.¹⁵

Potential Benefits of a Food Charter

While there are several uses for a Food Charter, there are also many potential benefits that have been associated with the development and adoption of such documents. Such benefits have been connected to the health, economy, and environment of the communities they serve.

A common goal of many Food Charters is to improve the physical and mental health of its constituents by enhancing community food security which exists when all residents are able to obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes self-reliance and social justice.¹⁷ Thus, food security depends on three factors: food availability, food access, and food utilization. However, food access through proximity and affordability to nutritious food is considered the primary determinant for food security in North America.^{3,18,19} Improving health through the principles of a Food Charter can occur in a multitude of ways. For example, the document could lead to the establishment of community gardens which can increase one's access to safe and nutritious foods as well as being a venue for physical activity.²⁰ Another way Food Charters can improve health is by advocating for schools to improve meal programs such as offering breakfast programs.²¹ All in all, well implemented Food Charters have the capacity to enhance health by improving the access to nutritious food.

A Food Charter has the ability to improve the economy of a region by encouraging a greater reliance on local, community based food systems (Figure 1) and generating new businesses and employment opportunities.²²⁻²⁴ Food Charters that promote a local food system help to develop a greater demand for products from local producers.¹ As a result, when consumers buy local products instead of imported goods, money is re-circulated throughout the regional economy which benefits producers, processors, distributors, and retailers at the centre of a community-based food system.



Figure 1: The community food system model highlighting the relationships between health, economic development, and natural resources.²⁵

While a Food Charter's support for a sustainable local food system fosters a strong regional economy, it can also benefit the environment. One method in which this can occur is through energy savings that occur as a result of local food production when fuel is saved due to the decrease in transportation required to get food from field to table.^{23,24} To add to this, sustainable waste management of organic waste is often considered an integral component of a sustainable food system which can be targeted through composting and gleaning.^{24,26}

In addition to the uses and benefits of Food Charters, there are limitations that must be recognized. For example, Food Charters do not address how to make the changes that are necessary to achieve the desired goals.²² Moreover, a Food Charter is a 'living document' that is intended to represent a community's current perspective of their local food system and may need to be updated over time.²⁷ However, a dedicated Food Council can overcome these limitations by fostering the activities to meet the Food Charter's goals and by keeping the Charter relevant to the goals and ideals of the community.

Aims and Objectives of Assessment

Overall Aim of Assessment

The overall aim of this assessment is to make recommendations to the Healthy Eating Working Group regarding the best methods for the development and implementation of a Food Charter in KFL&A.

Specific Objectives of Assessment

The specific objectives for this report are as follows:

- 1) To perform a content analysis of principles incorporated in existing Canadian Food Charters.
- 2) To provide recommendations of the best methods for the development and implementation of a Food Charter based on key informant interview and survey data.
- 3) To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Healthy Eating Working Group as well as opportunities and threats within the KFL&A region that will impact the success of developing a Food Charter through a SWOT analysis.

Methods

The research presented in this paper was gathered through a 16-week Master of Public Health practicum in collaboration with Queen's University and KFL&A Public Health. The research was supervised by a public health dietitian from the Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Division and was internally reviewed through the Research and Education Division at KFL&A Public Health. A content analysis was performed to quantify the most predominant principles within Canadian Food Charters. Key informant interview and survey data was utilized to further understand the methods used to develop a Food Charter and gain recommendations from people who have experienced the process themselves. A SWOT analysis of KFL&A's Healthy Eating Working Group was also performed in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Working Group and opportunities and threats within the community that can impact the success of a Food Charter.

Content Analysis of Canadian Food Charters

A content analysis of the principles incorporated in existing Canadian Food Charters was performed. The sample used was all Canadian Food Charters accessible through online search engines (e.g. Google and Yahoo) prior to May 2011. Documents similar to Food Charters, but utilizing a different name such as Sustainable Food Charters, were excluded in order to focus the search. The total sample included 24 documents (Appendix 1).

The principles of each charter were analysed by the primary investigator and preceptor based on their compliance with the operational definitions of the key principles set within the coding manual (Appendix 2). The final results of the content analysis were quantified by the percentage of Food Charters incorporating the principles (Appendix 3).

Key Informant Interviews and Surveys

Due to the investigative nature of this assessment, a concurrent embedded research design was utilized. This allows for both qualitative and quantitative data to be collected simultaneously, then analysed with greater emphasis placed on the qualitative data.²⁸

Potential key informants were identified as people who made major contributions to the development of a Canadian Food Charter. Thus a non-representative targeted population was sampled.

This population was encompassed by people who contributed to the documents included in the content analysis. However, two Charters were excluded from this population. Kingston's Food Declaration was not included because it is no longer utilized, as was Manitoba's Food Charter because it is a provincial food charter. This reduced the number of potential key informants to 22. These 22 people were contacted to participate in the study through email (Appendix 4).

The interview and survey questions were developed to address the needs of the Healthy Eating Working Group and to fill the gaps in the literature. The interview script (Appendix 5) and survey (Appendix 6) were reviewed by a member of the Research and Education Division of KFL&A Public Health who has experience in the field of food security.

Semi-structured telephone interviews were utilized to gather data from potential key informants representing a region that was similar to KFL&A in demographics or geography. Interviews were scheduled at the key informants' convenience. All interviews were audio recorded, with oral consent being attained for each interviewee. The primary investigator transcribed each interview and all transcripts were confirmed with the interviewee to ensure that their thoughts were portrayed accurately. Overall, five potential key informants were contacted for the purpose of an interview and four completed interviews. Thus, the response rate for the key informant interviews was 80%.

Electronic surveys were developed using FluidSurvey® in order to attain data from potential key informants across Canada. The survey questions were primarily open-ended, with some close-ended questions utilizing multiple selection methods. Written consent was gained from each respondent. Overall, 18 potential key informants were contacted for the purpose of the survey; however, one rejected the invitation. From the remaining 17 potential key informants, seven completed the survey. Thus, the response rate for the key informant survey was 41.2%. Data from the surveys and interviews was integrated. All data was manually coded for recurring themes within each evaluation questions. Results are presented by themes that occurred within each question.

SWOT Analysis for a Successful Food Charter

A SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threats) analysis was performed to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Healthy Eating Working Group and the opportunities and threats that exist in KFL&A that may promote or deter the success of a Food Charter. Data was attained through observations and discussions at Healthy Eating Working Group meetings, recommendations from key informants, organizational documents, and the literature. All data was formatted into a SWOT analysis chart to increase comprehension.

Results

Content Analysis

A content analysis was done of 24 Canadian Food Charters. Each document was assessed to determine its prominent key principle statements. The interrater reliability for the raters was found to be Kappa = 0.73 ($p < 0.001$, 95% CI=0.67, 0.79), indicating substantial agreement.²⁹

The most cited key principles were food security (95.8%), local food systems (87.5%), and celebration of food and food cultures (79.2%). To add to this, 70.8% of the examined Food Charters incorporated the principles of environmental sustainability, social justice, economic development, and education/awareness. Other common principles included within the sample of Food Charters included food skill development (66.7%), health and nutrition (66.7%), urban agriculture (62.5%), sustainable waste management (50%), and impacting school or work environments (50%). Less prevalent principles that are important to note are safe water (45.8%), urban planning (33.3%), evaluation of the Food Charter (33.3%), supportive breastfeeding environments (25%), emergency food preparedness (16.7%), and advertising (8.3%) (Figure 2).

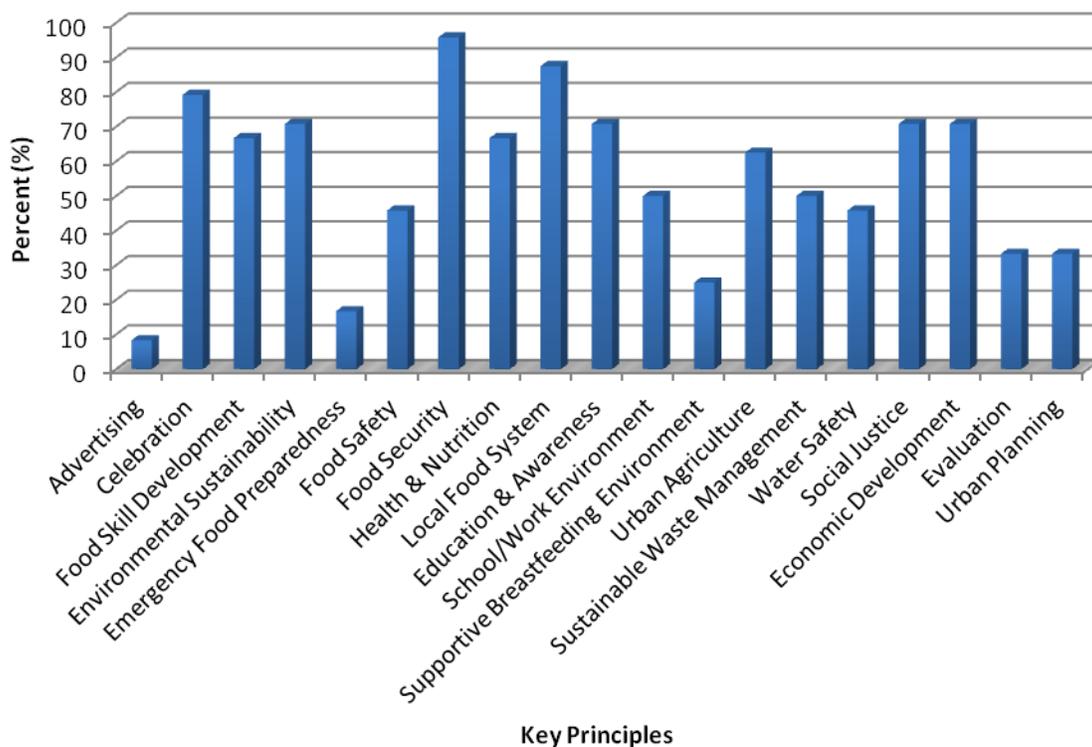


Figure 2: Key principles incorporated into Canadian Food Charters, by percentage (n=24).

Key Informant Interviews and Surveys

Representatives of the Food System that Contributed to Food Charters

The 11 respondents of the interviews and surveys reported that there were several forms of representation involved in the development of their Food Charter. 72.7% reported community member and producer involvement and 63.6% reported emergency food provider and health unit contributions. 54.5% of the represented Food Charters had input from businesses in the food system, community organizations, members of agricultural organizations, such as OMAFRA, municipal councillors, and municipal staff. Moreover, 45.5% of key informants reported education representatives, food security

groups, and healthcare professionals contributed to their Food Charters. Urban agriculture representatives (36.4%), non-governmental organizations (18.2%), funding agencies (18.2%), clergy (9.1%), stewardship councils (9.1%), and specific populations of the community (9.1%), such as youth or first nations, were also stakeholders that contributed to Food Charter development (Figure 3; Appendix 7).

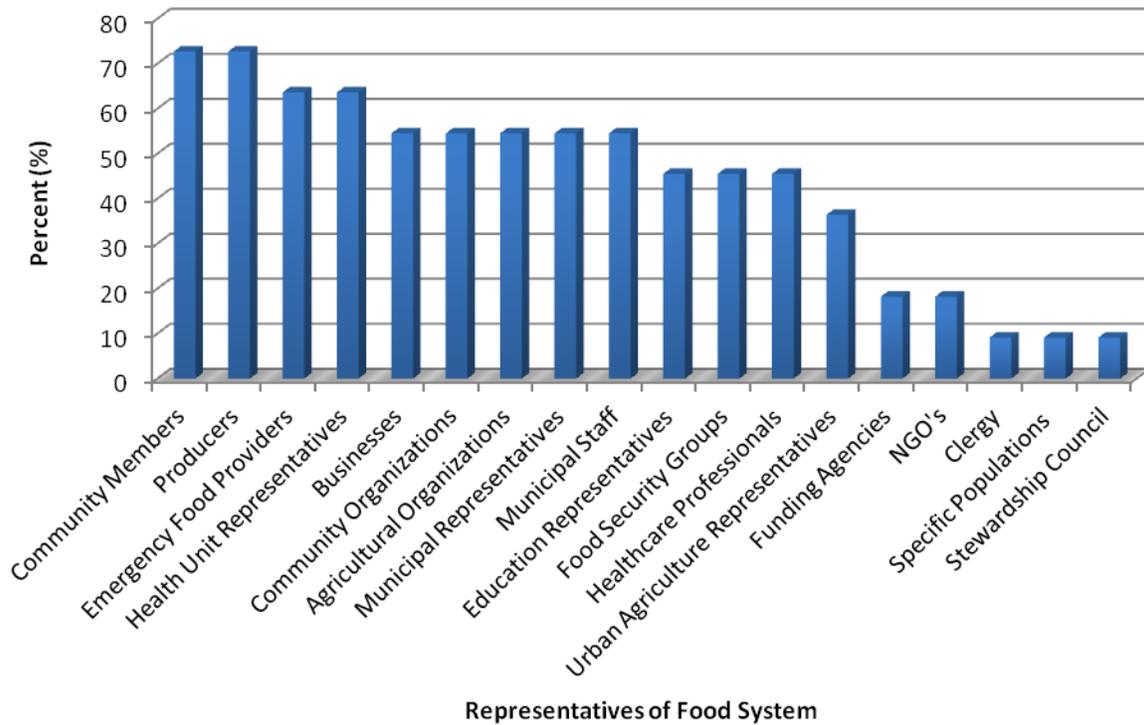


Figure 3: Representatives of food system contributing to Food Charters of key informants, by percentage (n=11).

Major Challenges Associated with Developing a Food Charter

The 11 respondents of the surveys and interviews noted the major challenges they experienced when developing their Food Charters. Three categorical themes emerged from the input: 1) the duties and dynamics of the Working Group, 2) municipal relations, and 3) community relations.

The majority of challenges reported relate to Working Group duties and dynamics. The most prominent challenge noted was conflicting perspectives within the Working Group. Other problems include maintaining interest in the project, collaborating with members of different sectors of the food system, having a lack of producer representation, low commitment in the Working Group, ineffective leadership, and difficulty including the interests of all stakeholders and regions. Further challenges noted in relation to Working Group duties included poor time management, lack of designated financial and human resources, and difficulties writing a credible and comprehensive Food Charter that encompasses all perspectives.

With regard to challenges related to municipal relations, the most common was gaining endorsement of the Food Charter from the municipal government. In addition, a lack of awareness of Food Charters and food security among city staff and councillors was also a major challenge.

The respondents also recognized that developing community relations was challenging when creating Food Charters. The most predominant difficulties in this category were a lack of community input in the development, and the feedback process. Moreover, a lack of awareness of Food Charters and food security within the community was also a barrier (Appendix 7).

Level of Municipal Endorsement of Food Charter

The 11 key informants discussed the level of endorsement the Food Charters received from the municipal government. The respondents indicated that 72.7% of the Food Charters represented have been endorsed by the municipal government, while 27.3% have not (Figure 4; Appendix 7).

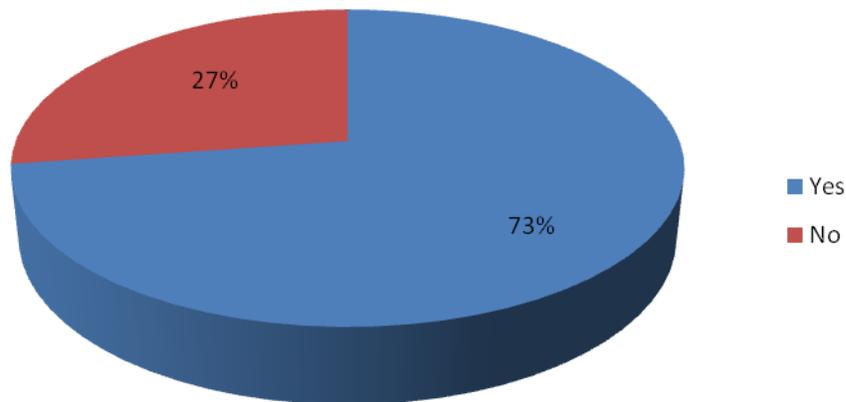


Figure 4: Level of municipal endorsement of Food Charters, by percentage (n=11).

Methods Used to Gain Endorsement of Food Charters

The 11 key informants described various methods used to gain endorsement for their Food Charters. Municipal representatives, stakeholders, and community members were targeted with these methods. However, many of the techniques were the same for all populations.

To gain endorsement or approval, the most common method involved holding a public forum for municipal officials, stakeholders, and community members where the Food Charter's development was discussed and an opportunity to provide input into the document offered. Community workshops that focus on a key principle of the document, such as sessions on food system sustainability or urban agriculture, were also utilized within these groups to increase awareness of concerns within the community's food system and the benefits of a Food Charter. Visioning days were another method used

to help gain buy-in as they allow people to build the Charter. In addition to these methods, some key informants noted that they distributed the Food Charter and supporting literature to municipal officials and stakeholders in order to improve awareness. Other methods included developing a strategic plan to gain endorsement from the municipality and developing multiple versions of the Food Charter to appeal to the municipal officials, stakeholders, and the community (Appendix 7).

Distribution of Food Charters

The 11 key informants described the various methods used to distribute their Food Charter. The respondents indicated that their Food Council website (72.7%) and public events (90.9%), like local food events or education sessions, were the most popular ways to distribute their Food Charter. In addition, 63.6% posted the Charter on stakeholder websites, 45.5% featured the document on municipal websites or at their offices, and 36.4% advertised their Food Charter in the newspaper. Other methods for distributing Food Charters include advertising and distributing the Food Charter at farmers markets (27.3%), using social media or marketing campaigns (27.3%), distributing the document in schools (18.2%), and developing brochures to advertise the charter (9.1%) (Figure 5; Appendix 7).

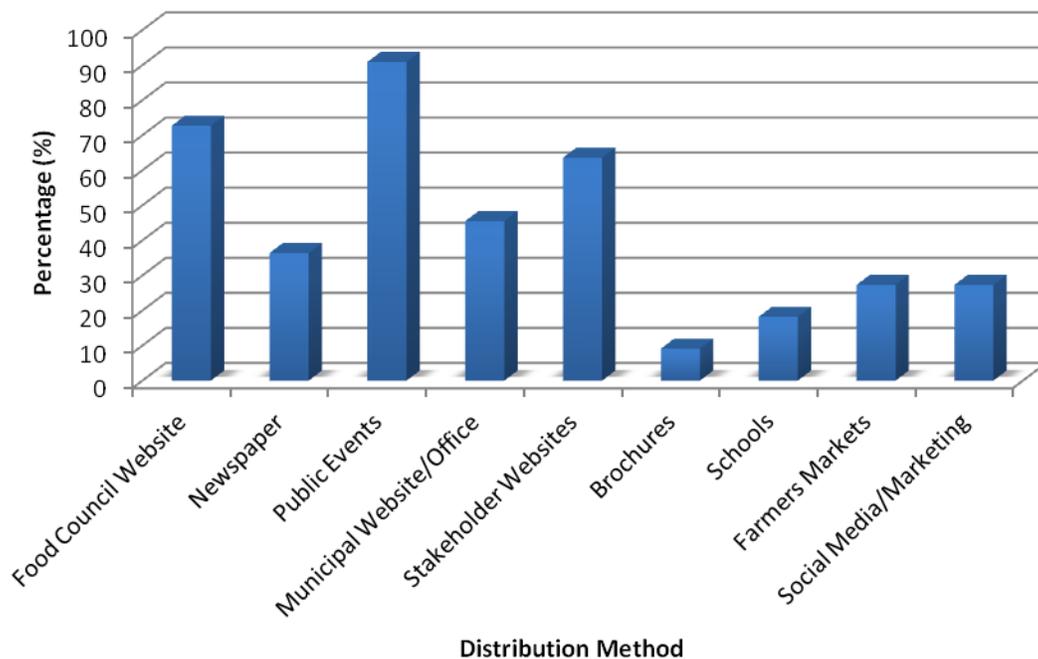


Figure 5: Methods used to distribute Food Charters, by percentage (n=11).

Utilization of Canadian Food Charters

The 11 key informants identified three populations that are influenced by Food Charters: 1) the Working Group or Food Council, 2) the stakeholders, and 3) the municipal officials.

Most key informants noted that a Food Charter affects the Working Group or Food Council who developed it. It can provide leverage to gain resources from the municipalities who endorsed the documents. The document can also direct the work of the Working Group or Food Council and allow it to provide input on municipal decisions related to food security, such as efforts to promote urban agriculture within communities.

The stakeholders who represent the food system can use the document to increase awareness of food sustainability. However, one key informant noted that anyone can use the Food Charter as it represents the ideals of the food system for all. Thus, the document is helpful in education, public health, organizations, and the general population as a reference to the community's vision for a food system and resource to support programming and policy.

For municipal governments Food Charters offer direction and context to respond to food system concerns. Some key informants stated that their region's Food Charter has been integrated into their municipality's official plan and is now impacting planning and policy for the region (Appendix 7).

Evaluation of Food Charters

The 11 key informants reported on the status of an evaluation for their Food Charters. 18.2% of respondents indicated that some form of evaluation had been completed for their Food Charter. 27.3% are in the process of developing an evaluation plan, while 54.5% have not performed an evaluation (Figure 6; Appendix 7).

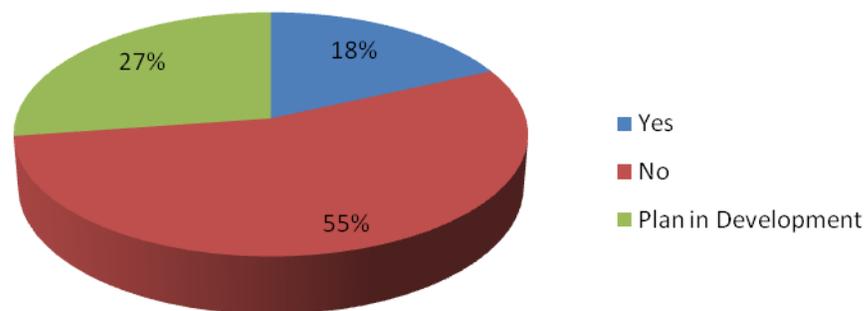


Figure 6: Food Charters implementing an evaluation plan, by percentage (n=11).

Results of SWOT Analysis for a Successful Food Charter

KFL&A's Healthy Eating Working Group has a multitude of strengths. Primary amongst these strengths is that they are a committed and motivated group that represents many of the key sectors of the food system. There is representation from the agriculture, anti-poverty, health care, and food supply sectors, in addition to a representative of the City of Kingston. This team represents some of the primary stakeholders who support food security and food systems in the region. There are members of the Working Group that were involved in developing a Food Declaration with *Food Down the Road*, a sustainable food system initiative in the region. To date, the team has produced clear and attainable goals, objectives, and timelines for this work. However, the greatest asset for this working group is the potential funding that was attained through the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport's Partnership Stream which allows them to work towards the goal of developing a Food Charter without financial restriction.

The Working Group's primary weakness would be that there is an over representation of stakeholders from Kingston compared to Frontenac and Lennox & Addington. It has also been noted that some sectors of the food system are under represented, such as urban planning, waste management, and consumers.

There are several opportunities in the community that can promote a successful Food Charter. The current political environment of KFL&A has several townships considering ways to ensure sustainable food systems.^{30,31} The City of Kingston's Sustainability Plan identified the need for a Food Council and support for locally sustainable agriculture, local farmers markets, urban agriculture, food skill development, and education within the city.³² As a whole, the current municipal environment could support this opportunity to develop a Food Charter.

In addition to having some political support, there are an array of community organizations that would support and advocate for a number of the key principals of a Food Charter. Within KFLA there are several agriculture organizations, food producers, farmers markets, community gardens, emergency food providers, food service providers, anti-poverty groups, economic development projects, and a Good Food Box program.³³

Financial support for projects such as Food Charters is also available. At the provincial level, the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport offers funding to support healthy communities,³⁴ which KFL&A Public Health has been successful in receiving a Partnership Grant. As well, the United Way Community Impact Grant and Community Foundation for Kingston and Area's Community Grant are other sources of funding for which this working group may be eligible.^{35,36}

There are also aspects of KFL&A that demonstrate the need for a Food Charter in the region. For example, KFL&A is currently dependent on a globalized food system that can result in food travelling a great distance from farm to table.³⁷ However, a Food Charter has the potential to improve the sustainability of the local food system. It is estimated that a sustainable food system supported by a Food Charter through local and urban agriculture in KFL&A has the capacity to contribute more than \$190 million per annum in economic, environmental, and health benefits.³³ Moreover, it can reduce the

vulnerability of the community in situations of natural disaster, political unrest, or other crisis that can disrupt food imports.^{33,38} A local sustainable food system can also improve the health and food security of residents, which is important as 7.9% (CI=5.5, 10.2) of residents 12 years of age and older have reported being food insecure within KFL&A compared to 7.1% (CI=6.9, 7.4) across Canada.³⁹ Moreover, it is evident that residents within KFL&A are not eating as nutritiously as they can, with only 48.2% of residents over 12 years of age meeting the fruit and vegetable recommendations of Canada's Food Guide.⁴⁰ If these trends continue, there is the potential for increased incidence of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and some cancers in the population.⁴¹⁻⁴³

While there are several factors that can promote the development of a Food Charter in KFL&A, there are also factors that may jeopardize its success. As a key informant noted, one of the greatest threats to the success of this Food Charter will be the inability to capture the interests of the population in a diverse region with both urban and rural interests. This could lead to the demise of the document if the Food Charter fails to gain endorsement from the municipalities or support from the public to make it a success. However, these threats are theoretical. If the Healthy Eating Working Group ensures that input and feedback is provided from all municipalities and residents of KFL&A for a secure and sustainable food system, the Food Charter has the potential to be a success (Appendix 8).

Discussion

This assessment attained information that can support and guide KFL&A's Healthy Eating Working Group in its aim to create a Food Charter. The information falls into five categories:

- 1) Food Charter Working group development and dynamics;
- 2) Developing municipal relations;
- 3) Developing community relations;
- 4) Food Charter development and implementation; and
- 5) Evaluation.

Food Charter Working Group Development and Dynamics

Food Charter Working Group Development

In order to have a Food Charter Working Group that is well developed, it is important to ensure that the Group has access to representation from a broad spectrum of the food system. This will help to assure that all perspectives are addressed within the final document. While this may be difficult to achieve, it is considered essential, with a key informant stating:

“Make sure that you have the right people at the table and you have as much representation in different areas as possible. When we did our membership drive, we tried to give some guidance on the kind of members and what we were looking for in terms of background.”

Producers were one of the main groups who assisted with the development of the Food Charters that the key informants represent. Yet, producers were also recognized as being difficult members to attain in a Working Group, with one informant noting:

“You really need to talk to the farmers...they are not the ones who are going to respond to a Charter going around by email typically, most of them would prefer to come out to a town hall meeting and voice their concerns.”

Based on the SWOT analysis, it is observed that KFL&A’s Healthy Eating Working Group has some producer representation; however, more may be desired. Another key form of representation to include in a Food Charter Working Group is community members. One key informant stated:

“I think one of the challenges is recognizing that Food Charters are for everyone...it is really important to bring the community on board and bring them along with you.”

Thus, a community representative should be considered for membership within the KFL&A Healthy Eating Working Group. Some representatives who have contributed to the Food Charters of the key informants and are already within KFL&A’s Working Group are community organizations, members of agriculture organizations, municipal staff, food security groups, and health unit staff. However, it should be recognized that one key informant recommended that health units do not lead such a project independently, stating:

“I have seen in some regions that when the health unit has taken the lead on developing a Food Charter that sometimes it has backfired because people in the community see that health unit as always coming in and telling us what to do.”

This is important to note, as the current chair of KFL&A’s Healthy Eating Working Group is a representative of KFL&A Public Health. As a result, it may be in the best interest of the Working Group to acquire a co-chair from another sector of the food system to support the health unit. However, as other key informants have recognized, it is essential that whoever is in a leadership position is an effective leader who is dedicated to the development of a Food Charter that is inclusive and comprehensive of the perspectives of both the stakeholders and the community.

In addition to the representatives of the food system that KFL&A has attained for their Working Group, there are other stakeholders recognized by the key informants that they have not yet recruited. For example, many informants noted that emergency food providers, education representatives, and municipal councillors assisted with the development of their Food Charter. Some people also noted that urban agriculture representatives, non-governmental organizations, such as the Heart & Stroke Foundation, clergy members, funding agencies, such as the United Way, stewardship councils, and specific populations, such as aboriginals or youth, supported their Food Charter development. Such contributions occurred through being a member of the Working Group, assisting with writing the Food Charter, or providing feedback on the document throughout the development process. As a whole, integrating a broad spectrum of stakeholders into the process of creating the Food Charter should be a priority for KFL&A.

Working Group Dynamics

In addition to having adequate stakeholder representation, it is important that KFL&A's Healthy Eating Working Group have strong group dynamics to ensure that the process of developing a Food Charter will be as smooth as possible. One major challenge noted by key informants was maintaining interest, motivation, and commitment within the Working Group throughout the process of developing a Food Charter. In fact, one interviewee noted that:

"A challenge was keeping people engaged in developing and writing the Food Charter...we started off with a huge group and then it ended up winding down to two or three in the end because people just weren't interested in writing a Charter."

It was noted in the SWOT analysis that KFL&A's current Working group is highly committed and motivated; however, precautions should be taken to ensure that level of interest and motivation are maintained throughout a process that may last well over a year. Another challenge noted among key informants was conflicting perspectives among Working Group members. This was particularly prevalent among producers and other populations who represent either organic or conventional farming. This is a potential weakness noted in the SWOT analysis of the Healthy Eating Working Group, as there are varying perspectives within the team. Thus, ensuring inclusiveness may reduce the potential for conflict. Overall, making sure that KFL&A's Healthy Eating Working Group is committed to the development a Food Charter and utilizes an approach that is engaging, effective, and efficient is important for their success.

Developing Municipal Relations

Municipal councillors and staff play an integral role in the success of a Food Charter. Without the endorsement of a municipality, the potential for impacting policy, programming, and planning to develop a more secure and sustainable food system is diminished.⁵ Gaining endorsement from the municipal government is considered to be a major challenge. However, it is also acknowledged to be essential. The SWOT analysis recognized that KFL&A's current political climate is supportive of projects that encourage sustainability. While the municipalities of Kingston, Frontenac, and Lennox & Addington

may be supportive of sustainability initiatives, there is a concern that one or more municipal councils will not endorse the document. Nonetheless, key informants recommended that KFL&A's Healthy Eating Working Group learn about the procedure of taking a document to be approved by council and develop a strategy to achieve endorsement. It was also noted that the municipality should be kept informed throughout the process of developing the Food Charter, with one interviewee stating:

"You want to start involving those people from the beginning . If they are well informed, they are well educated, they understand the process, you can really have municipal officials on board. If they are informed right at the end or when you just want to go to one of their council meetings to have they approve the Charter, you won't have a success."

Some key informants also recommended that KFL&A's Working Group increase public support in order to encourage support from municipal councillors and to identify political champions within the municipal government who have an interest in sustainability and may support a Food Charter. One or more of these recommendations should be taken into account when developing a strategy for gaining endorsement for KFL&A's Food Charter in order to ensure success.

Developing Community Relations

The stakeholders and community are crucial venues for feedback in order for a credible and comprehensive Food Charter to be developed. However, a lack of awareness of Food Charters and food security within the community is a major challenge. Without this understanding, the community will never be able to fully value such a project. As a result, it is recommended that public forums and information sessions are held to increase education and awareness within the community, with one informant noting:

"It is important that the community understand what we are talking about, that they understand what sustainable food systems are, what food policies are, and is this something people would like for this community."

It is also recommended that a region such as KFL&A, which is vast and composed of both urban and rural populations, hold these sessions in different towns to ensure access for all residents. If the public forums and information sessions are done correctly, it is hoped that the ideas for a Food Charter will come from the community. A second major challenge for developing strong community relations is a lack of community input in the development and feedback process. Thus, in addition to public forums, it is recommended that Working Groups keep everyone who shows an interest in the Food Charter informed in the process as it evolves. Utilizing these methods should help to ensure strong community relations throughout the development and implementation process of the Food Charter.

Development and Implementation of a Food Charter

Development of a Food Charter

The development of a Food Charter for KFL&A is one of the primary goals of the Healthy Eating Working Group. A major challenge that key informants encountered when developing a Food Charter was the amount of time it takes to develop and gather feedback on the document which often took two to three years. This was noted to affect both the quality of the document and the enjoyment of the Working Group. While there is a possibility that KFL&A's Working Group may not meet the timeline they have set, it is essential that Food Charter Working Groups take sufficient time to develop their document. In fact, one key informant stated that:

“We had some difficulties with the amount of time it was taking to pull all the pieces together, however, it’s really important to have the community involved...you cannot put a deadline on a Food Charter.”

In addition to time, another challenge that was noted was a lack of designated resources to support the process of developing a Food Charter. Although the Working Group at hand currently has funding, it is important to be aware of other possible funding sources. A final challenge for the development of Food Charters is the difficulty of writing a credible and comprehensive document. One of the primary factors to be considered when developing a Food Charter is the principles which outline the objectives of the document. Within the sample of 24 Food Charters utilized to conduct the content analysis, several key principles reoccurred throughout the documents. Food security, local food systems, celebration of food and food cultures, environmental sustainability, social justice, economic development, education and awareness, food skill development, health and nutrition, urban agriculture, sustainable waste management, and impacting school or work environments appeared in over 50% of the Food Charters that were analysed. While any of the principles listed may be incorporated into KFL&A's Food Charter, it is important to note that the key principles embedded in a Charter represent the community's unique vision for their food system. Therefore, community input should be gained to determine which key principles are most important for the people of this region as their Food Charter is developed. Whether it is through a public forum, visioning day, focus group, or email campaign, feedback from the municipality, stakeholders, and community is essential. These groups can provide insight into the content of the document, as well as provide feedback on drafts of the Food Charter. Not only does this process help to improve the credibility and comprehensiveness of the document, it allows for buy-in to occur throughout the development process.

Endorsement

After a Food Charter is developed, endorsement is essential for the document's success.⁵ Endorsement from municipal council allows a Food Charter to be recognized as a municipal document. 72.7% of the 11 Food Charters the key informants represent have been endorsed by their municipal government. The majority of respondents utilized tactical methods to gain municipal endorsement. One method used was to distribute the Food Charter and background literature to municipal officials prior to

meeting with them in order to increase their awareness and gain their input on the document. Others presented their Food Charter to their Board of Health prior to presenting it to their municipality. In addition, it was recommended that Working Groups develop their Food Charter with their municipality's interests in mind. For example, a Working Group can personalize their Food Charter to support prominent municipality goals, such as sustainability, or develop multiple formats of the document to appeal to both the city officials and general public.

The process of developing a Food Charter from initiation to endorsement can be challenging, with the process being unique to each community. The key informants reported the process they took to develop the Food Charter they represent. The most common steps in the process of developing a Food Charter are presented below (Figure 7):

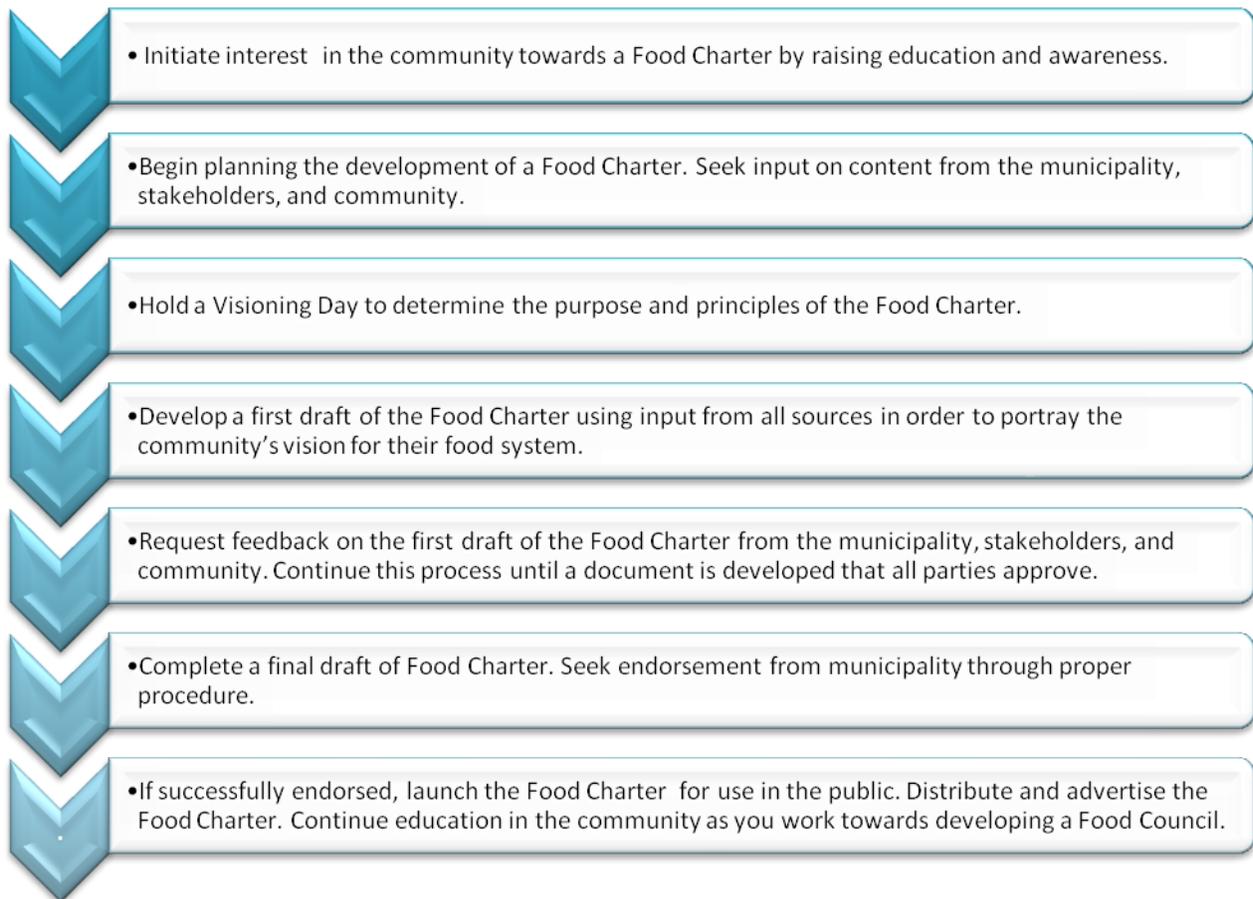


Figure 7: Summary of process for developing a Food Charter.

Distribution of a Food Charter

Once a Food Charter is developed and endorsed, it must be distributed to the community. While there are a multitude of methods to do this, it is an essential step because if the community is unaware of the document it will not be utilized. Some of the most common distribution sites are: agency or organization websites, public events, local food events, education sessions, newspapers, the farmers

markets, social media or marketing campaigns, schools, and brochures. The SWOT analysis for the Healthy Eating Working Group indicates that a multitude of community groups and agencies are involved in the Working Group or may have an interest in the project. These groups may be willing to distribute the Food Charter through their programs. Overall, the methods of distribution vary and depend greatly on the municipality, what is practical, what is affordable, and what will target the desired populations.

Uses of a Food Charter

While the main objective of a Food Charter is to direct policy, programming, and planning in a municipality,^{5,6} a Food Charter can be used by many groups in a community. For a Food Charter Working Group or Food Council, it directs their work and gives the group context to provide input on municipal decisions related to food. It can also act as leverage for resources from the municipalities who endorsed it.

Within the community at large, a Food Charter is an advocacy tool to increase awareness of food security and access. Moreover, health and education sectors can use it for programming and policy needs, with a key informant noting:

“Anyone can use the Food Charter, a teacher can use it, a dietitian can use it, a public health nurse can use it, a health promoter can use it...so what we did here was that everyone has the opportunity to print the Charter and sign it and say ‘this is our Charter, this is our guiding document to develop our programming and policies.’”

A municipality can also use a Food Charter to create awareness of food system concerns amongst its staff and the population as a whole. Some key informants noted that their Food Charter was integrated into their municipality’s Official Plan. Thus, it influences planning and policy within the region. However, it must be noted that all of these uses rely on the level of endorsement, distribution, and implementation of the Food Charter.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the final step in the process of developing a Food Charter, allowing Food Charter Working Groups to measure the impact of their document. Incorporating a form of evaluation into the development process can help to attract funding and support from decision makers.⁴⁴ According to the 11 key informants, less than 20% indicated that a form of evaluation has been completed for their Food Charter. However, some respondents report that they are currently in the process of developing an evaluation plan. With regards to the content analysis, 33% of the 24 Food Charters assessed incorporated a form of evaluation within their key principles. Many of the evaluations performed have measured the impact of Food Charters on food access or security using a Community Food Report Card to provide a baseline for measuring the impact of the Food Charter in the community. Such an

evaluation is designed to track which agencies endorse the Food Charter, which communities adopt the Food Charter, which key principles organizations have adopted, and what projects are being implemented to support the document. Moreover, other Food Councils orient their evaluations toward developments that are occurring within their region as a result of the Food Charter. It may be recommended that the KFL&A Healthy Eating Working Group establish a baseline measure in their community by completing a Community Food Access or Security Report Card prior to launching a Food Charter. On the whole, evaluations of Food Charters can occur in many forms and should be designed to measure the success of the document in the individual region.

Recommendations

The assessment process has resulted in several recommendations for KFL&A's Healthy Eating Working Group to guide them in developing an effective Food Charter Working Group, developing a Food Charter, and gaining endorsement for the final document.

Developing an Effective Food Charter Working Group

- Ensure that you have the right stakeholders at the table and you have as much representation as possible from different regions and sectors of the food system.
- Make certain that the Working Group has strong leadership that is distributed between two stakeholder groups.
- Ensure that members of the Working Group are dedicated and motivated to see the project through and advocate for it. Make an effort to maintain interest, commitment, and motivation in the Working Group throughout the process.
- Ensure that the Working Group understand that a Food Charter is not the end of the work, but the beginning of the work that will be happening around a sustainable food system. A Food Charter is a step on the path to developing a Food Council.

Developing a Food Charter

- Participate in knowledge exchange with other Food Councils to learn more about specific processes when developing a Food Charter if difficulties are encountered.
- Take the time to learn what your community wants in their Food Charter. It is also important to ensure the community is ready and accepting of a Food Charter. If they are not, raise more awareness.
- Ensure all members of the food sector have a voice in the development of the Food Charter, everyone is welcome, and all perspectives are respected. Go past the members of the Working Group and gain input from the community, municipality, and stakeholders that you envision utilizing the document.
- Keep people who show an interest in the Food Charter informed throughout the process. It is recommended that regular emails are sent to anyone who has attended a meeting about the document and would like to be informed.
- Due to the broad geography of the region, hold education sessions and public forums in a variety of locations. Distribute the sessions between urban and rural areas to ensure that

residents in rural areas have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Food Charter. These populations may have different food system concerns.

- Hold a Visioning Day to collaborate ideas and develop an outline for a Food Charter.
- Include a vision statement, values, goals, and key principles within the Food Charter. Examine the list of key principles incorporated in Canadian Food Charters (Appendix 3). Use this list to identify principles that are most important to the community along with those established among the Working Group, municipality, stakeholders, and public.
- Ensure that feedback is attained from the community, stakeholders, and municipal officials to make certain that the Food Charter is representative of the municipality's vision for a just and sustainable food system. This can be done through public forums, email campaigns, or other methods that would target the desired population.
- Ensure that the Food Charter goes through the right channels for municipal endorsement. Become informed on the proper procedures and develop a strategy to ensure that the procedures are followed.
- Distribute the Food Charter through several means to ensure a wide audience is reached. Refer to the methods utilized by the key informants of this assessment and determine what will work best for KFL&A.
- Begin planning and preparation for an evaluation early in the process of developing a food charter by performing baseline measures of factors that are expected to be influenced by the document, such as food access, urban agriculture, or local food sales.
- Ensure that the Working Group continues to educate the public after the Food Charter is released by advertising the document and informing people on how to implement it in their daily lives.

Gaining Endorsement for a Food Charter

General Endorsement

- Think of ways to implement the Food Charter to make it a "living document". Give the municipality, stakeholders, and public examples of how they can be active players and implement the document to show their support for the Food Charter after endorsing it (Appendix 9).
- Get the community on board and bring them along throughout the development of the document. It makes the document more representative of the community, it is easier to gain their approval if they are engaged, and it allows implementation along the way.
- If there is resistance to the document, ask people to endorse the document in principle and work towards improving on the components that apply to them.

Gaining Municipal Endorsement

- Attempt to get municipal staff and councillors on board early in the process to ensure they are aware of the concept of a Food Charter, informed on the process taken to develop the document, and given the opportunity to provide feedback.

- Meet with municipal councillors and administration to gauge their interest and the potential for resistance towards a Food Charter.
- Personalize the Food Charter to the region. Putting a greater emphasis on key concerns, such as sustainability, can improve the chances for municipal endorsement.
- When presenting the Food Charter to the municipal council, have as many people as possible attend the meeting. Councillors love to see people in the audience showing their support and ensuring strong public support can help to encourage municipal councillors to endorse the document as they will listen to the people who elect them.
- Try to get as much buy-in from the municipal government up front. Get a feel for what your municipality is willing to provide once the Food Charter is passed. Strategically think about what you want to ask them for and what you think they will commit to.

Limitations

While the best methods were applied to attain the data within this setting, there are limitations to this assessment that must be acknowledged. The largest constraint to this study is the small sample size. This sample may not be reflective of the entire Canadian population who have developed Food Charters. Therefore, while the results may be used to guide future Food Charter development one must be careful not to make definitive assumptions from these findings. Another limitation is the potential for response bias. However, it is unknown whether those who responded to the interview and survey requests differed from those who did not reply. The final limitation to be acknowledged is the potential for recall bias, as the key informants may have completed their Food Charters several years ago and their perspectives of the experiences or challenges may not be as accurate as possible. Although these limitations exist within this evaluation, the recommendations made for the Healthy Eating Working Group are still valid and can be useful to guide them in the development of a Food Charter.

Conclusion

This assessment of Canadian Food Charters was performed to make recommendations for KFL&A's Healthy Eating Working Group as they work towards developing a Food Charter for the region. Through interviews, surveys, a content analysis, and a SWOT analysis, recommendations for the developing a Food Charter, developing a Working Group, and gaining endorsement for a Food Charter were made. While many recommendations are offered, the Healthy Eating Working Group must critically assess how they envision their future and use these recommendations to help them achieve their goal of developing a successful Food Charter.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Food Charters assessed in this report and methods used for assessment

Methods used to assess each Food Charter			
Food Charter	Content Analysis	Online Survey	Telephone Interview
Alberta			
Medicine Hat	X	X	
British Columbia			
Capital Region	X	X	
Central Okanagan	X		
Cowichan	X		
Gabriola	X		
Kaslo	X		
North Saanich	X		
Shuswap	X		
Squamish	X		
Vancouver	X		
Manitoba			
Manitoba	X		
Ontario			
Durham	X		X
Guelph-Wellington	X		
Halton	X		X
Kawartha Lakes	X		X
Kingston (Food Declaration)	X		
London	X	X	
Sudbury	X		X
Thunder Bay	X	X	
Toronto	X	X	
Quebec			
Union of Consumers	X		
Saskatchewan			
Northeast Saskatchewan	X	X	
Prince Albert	X		
Saskatoon	X	X	

Appendix 2: Coding manual for content analysis

Operational Definitions	
Advertising	The Food Charter advocates for regulating food related advertisements
Celebration	The Food Charter advocates for the celebration of food or food cultures
Economic Development	The Food Charter advocates for increased growth and development of economy related to local food system
Education & Awareness	The Food Charter advocates for educating people or creating awareness about the key principles of a Food Charter
Emergency Food Preparedness	The Food Charter advocates for emergency food preparedness planning or offering support in the event of a food shortage
Environmental Sustainability	The Food Charter advocates practices that protect nature, reduce human footprint, and aid in promoting ecological stability
Evaluation	The Food Charter advocates for evaluation of the document or one or more of its key principles
Food Safety	The Food Charter advocates for actions to ensure that citizens have access to food that is safe to eat
Food Security	The Food Charter advocates for physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food
Food Skill Development	The Food Charter advocates for the development of programs that develop food skills in the community
Health & Nutrition	The Food Charter advocates for overall health through nutrition education and healthy eating practices
Local Food System	The Food Charter advocates for the development and maintenance of a locally sourced, self-reliant food system
Planning	The Food Charter advocates for policy that impacts municipal planning associated with the food system
Safe Water	The Food Charter advocates for actions to ensure that citizens and producers have access to safe water
School/Work Environment	The Food Charter advocates for supporting food policy, food programming, and food education within schools and workplaces
Social Justice	The Food Charter advocates for income, employment, and transportation policies that support secure and dignified access to healthy food
Supportive Breastfeeding Environment	The Food Charter advocates for establishment of supportive breastfeeding environments within the community
Sustainable Waste Management	The Food Charter advocates for sustainable waste management for organic materials
Urban Agriculture	The Food Charter advocates for the promotion of urban agriculture in the community
Process to Resolve Discrepancies	
Any discrepancies between coders were resolved by first consulting the coding manual, then discussing any further discrepancies to research a consensus. ⁴⁵	

Appendix 3: Content analysis results by Food Charter

	Advertising	Celebration	Economic Development	Education & Awareness	Environmental Sustainability	Emergency Food Preparedness	Evaluation
Alberta							
Medicine Hat	X			X	X		X
British Columbia							
Capital Region		X		X	X	X	
Central Okanagan		X	X	X	X		X
Cowichan			X				
Gabriola		X		X	X		
Kaslo		X	X	X			
North Saanich				X	X		
Shuswap		X	X				
Squamish		X	X		X		
Vancouver		X	X		X		
Manitoba							
Manitoba		X	X	X	X		
Ontario							
Durham		X	X	X	X		X
Guelph-Wellington		X	X	X	X		
Halton		X	X		X		X
Kawartha Lakes		X	X	X	X		
Kingston (Food Declaration)		X	X	X	X		
London		X	X	X			X
Sudbury		X	X	X	X	X	X
Thunder Bay		X		X	X	X	
Toronto		X	X				
Quebec							
Union of Consumers	X			X	X	X	
Saskatchewan							
Northeast Saskatchewan		X	X		X		X
Prince Albert				X			
Saskatoon		X	X	x			X
Total	2	19	17	17	17	4	8
Percent (%)	8.3	79.2	70.8	70.8	70.8	16.7	33.3

	Food Safety	Food Security	Food Skill Development	Health & Nutrition	Local Food System	Planning
Alberta						
Medicine Hat	X	X	X	X	X	X
British Columbia						
Capital Region	X	X	X	X	X	X
Central Okanagan	X	X	X		X	
Cowichan		X	X		X	
Gabriola		X	X	X	X	
Kaslo	X	X			X	
North Saanich	X	X	X	X	X	
Shuswap		X			X	X
Squamish		X	X		X	
Vancouver		X			X	
Manitoba						
Manitoba	X	X		X	X	
Ontario						
Durham	X	X	X	X	X	
Guelph-Wellington		X	X	X	X	X
Halton		X		X	X	
Kawartha Lakes	X	X	X	X	X	
Kingston (Food Declaration)		X			X	
London		X	X	X	X	X
Sudbury		X	X	X	X	
Thunder Bay		X	X	X	X	X
Toronto	X	X	X	X		X
Quebec						
Union of Consumers		X				
Saskatchewan						
Northeast Saskatchewan	X	X		X	X	X
Prince Albert			X	X		
Saskatoon	X	X	X	X	X	
Total	11	23	16	16	21	8
Percent (%)	45.8	95.8	66.7	66.7	87.5	33.3

	Safe Water	School/Work Environment	Social Justice	Supportive Breastfeeding Environments	Sustainable Waste Management	Urban Agriculture
Alberta						
Medicine Hat	X	X	X	X		
British Columbia						
Capital Region	X		X		X	X
Central Okanagan	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cowichan	X	X	X			
Gabriola	X					
Kaslo	X				X	X
North Saanich	X	X			X	
Shuswap				X	X	X
Squamish			X			
Vancouver		X	X		X	X
Manitoba						
Manitoba			X			
Ontario						
Durham	X	X	X		X	X
Guelph-Wellington		X	X			X
Halton						X
Kawartha Lakes		X	X		X	
Kingston (Food Declaration)		X	X			X
London						X
Sudbury		X	X		X	X
Thunder Bay	X		X		X	
Toronto			X		X	X
Quebec						
Union of Consumers			X			
Saskatchewan						
Northeast Saskatchewan	X		X	X		X
Prince Albert		X		X		X
Saskatoon	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total	11	12	17	6	12	15
Percentage (%)	45.8	50.0	70.8	25.0	50.0	62.5

Appendix 4: Letters of information to potential key informants



June 21, 2011

Dear (Given Name),

As a Queen's University, Master of Public Health student, I am completing my practicum at Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington (KFL&A) Public Health under the supervision of a KFL&A Public Health dietitian. One of my responsibilities is to gather information on Canadian Food Charters in order to learn about their development and implementation processes.

In order to collect gather information, we are asking people who contributed to Canadian Food Charters to complete a survey. We estimate the survey should take approximately 25-35 minutes of your time. We hope you will be willing to share your thoughts about the processes, challenges and successes. These "learned lessons" will improve the chances for success as the KFL&A Healthy Eating Working Group works towards the development of a local Food Charter.

We would greatly appreciate your response to this survey. Results from this survey will be compiled thematically with information collected from literature, key informant surveys, and key informant interviews to create a comprehensive review of Food Charters.

On the survey you will find the opportunity to:

- 1) Tell us if you agree to have the name of your Food Charter included in the report,
- 2) Inform us if you would like to receive a copy of our final report, and
- 3) Enter a draw for a President's Choice gift card.

To access the survey, please go to the following link:

<http://app.fluidsurveys.com/surveys/cdip/canadian-food-charters/>.

Your response to this survey is appreciated by July 15, 2011.

If you have any questions about this study, do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Megan Jaquith, BPHE/BA(H)

MPH Candidate



June 21, 2011

Dear (Given Name),

As a Queen's University, Master of Public Health student, I am completing my practicum at Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington (KFL&A) Public Health under the supervision of a KFL&A Public Health dietitian. One of my responsibilities is to gather information on Canadian Food Charters in order to learn about their development and implementation processes.

We are interested in conducting an informal telephone interview with you. We estimate the interview will take approximately 25-35 minutes of your time. We hope you will be willing to share your thoughts about the processes, challenges and successes. These "learned lessons" will improve the chances for success as the KFL&A Healthy Eating Working Group works towards the development of a local Food Charter.

We would greatly appreciate your participation. Results from this interview will be compiled thematically with information collected from literature, key informant surveys, and key informant interviews to create a comprehensive review of Food Charters.

During the interview you will find the opportunity to:

- 1) Tell us if you agree to have the name of your Food Charter included in the report, and
- 2) Inform us if you would like to receive a copy of our final report.

After completing the interview, you will also be entered in a draw for a President's Choice gift card.

Interviews can occur at your earliest convenience. If you would like to participate, please reply to this email to schedule a time.

If you have any questions about this study, do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Megan Jaquith, BPHE/BA(H)

MPH Candidate

Appendix 5: Semi-structured telephone interview script

Canadian Food Charter Assessment Interview Script

Note: Questions in italics are potential questions that may be brought up within conversation.

- How has your region's Food Charter been used with you community? (E.g. increasing municipal commitment to sustainable food policy, program development, etc.)
 - If your region's Food Charter has not been used within your community, what do you believe are the main reasons?
 - Is it being used equally in all regions?

- What challenges or barriers were faced in the process of developing your region's Food Charter? How were these challenges overcome?
 - Were special considerations made in developing the Food Charter based on the fact that the Food Charter represented both urban and rural areas?
 - Were urban-rural divides evident in the process of developing the Food Charter?
 - Has the Food Charter been evaluated?

- Has the Food Charter been endorsed by municipal government(s)? If so, what processes were used to gain official endorsement from municipal officials?
 - Who were key stakeholders in the process of developing the Food Charter?
 - What processes were used to gain endorsement from key stakeholders?
 - What processes were used to gain endorsement from the public?

- What methods were used to distribute and promote your region's Food Charter?

- What recommendations do you have for a Working Group that is beginning to develop a Food Charter?

Appendix 6: Online survey questions

Canadian Food Charters Survey

KFL&A Public Health is conducting this survey as a method to gather information on the development and implementation of Canadian Food Charters. This survey can be completed in paragraph or point form. This survey will take approximately 25-35 minutes and can be saved at any time. Any personal information collected in the survey will remain confidential. The name of the represented Food Charter is requested for referencing purposes only. Research records will be stored securely and only KFL&A Public Health staff associated with this project will have access to the data. All collected information will be safely discarded after five years. Please remember that completion of this survey is voluntary. You do not have to answer all questions on the survey and you may stop this survey at anytime.

I agree to have the name of the Food Charter I am representing included in the report for referencing purposes.

Yes

No

What is the name of the Food Charter you are representing?

Who were some of the representatives of the food system who contributed to the development of the Food Charter you represent?

What major challenges were faced in the process of developing the Food Charter you represent? How were these challenges overcome?

Has the Food Charter you represent received endorsement/approval from the following groups?

	Yes	No	Somewhat
Municipality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What were some methods or approaches used to gain endorsement for the Food Charter you represent?

How has the Food Charter you represent distributed to the public?

Please provide more detail or examples if desired.

- Food council/coalition website _____
- Food Charter website _____
- Municipal website _____
- Municipal offices _____
- Public Health Unit _____
- Community Health Centres _____
- Schools _____
- Farmers market _____
- Social media campaign _____
- Social marketing campaign _____
- Public forum/Town hall _____
- Other _____

How has the Food Charter you represent been used in your community?

Has the Food Charter you represent been evaluated?

- Yes
- No

If the Food Charter you represent has been evaluated, what questions were included in the evaluation. If you are willing to share the Food Charter evaluation, please provide the source (e.g. website address or postal address).

If the Food Charter you represent has not been evaluated, is there an evaluation plan?

What key recommendations do you have for a Food Council that is beginning the process of developing a Food Charter? What should we do? What should we avoid?

May we contact you in the future if further information is necessary?

Yes

No

Would you like to receive an electronic copy of the final report?

If yes, please provide an e-mail address.

Yes _____

No

Appendix 7: Results data presented in chart format

Representatives of the food system that contributed to the development Food Charters

Survey/Interview Question: Who were the representatives of the food system that contributed to the development of the Food Charter you represent?

Response Rate=11/11

Form of Representation	Number of Food Charters with Form of Representation	Percentage of Food Charters with Form of Representation (%)
Community members	8	72.7
Conventional/ traditional/organic producers	8	72.7
Emergency food suppliers	7	63.6
Health unit representatives	7	63.6
Businesses in Food System	6	54.5
Community organizations	6	54.5
Members of agricultural organizations	6	54.5
Municipal representatives	6	54.5
Municipal staff	6	54.5
Education representatives	5	45.5
Food security/poverty advocate groups	5	45.5
Healthcare professionals	5	45.5
Urban agriculture representatives	4	36.4
Funding agencies	2	18.2
Non- government organizations	2	18.2
Clergy	1	9.1
Specific populations of community (e.g. youth, first nations)	1	9.1
Stewardship council	1	9.1

Major challenges in the process of developing Food Charters

Evaluation Question: What were the major challenges or barriers in the process of developing the Food Charter you represent?

Response Rate=11/11

Challenges or Barrier	Number of Food Charters Experiencing Challenge or Barrier		Percentage of Food Charters Experiencing Challenge or Barrier (%)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Conflicting perspectives within Working Group	6		54.5	
Lack of public input	6		54.5	
Gaining support/endorsement from municipal government	5		45.5	
Lack of awareness of Food Charters/food security	4		36.4	
Time management	4		36.4	
Collaboration of ideas from different food system sectors	3		27.3	
Lack of designated resources	3		27.3	
Lack of producer representation	3		27.3	
Maintaining interest in project	3		27.3	
Writing a credible and comprehensive Food Charter	3		27.3	
Being inclusive of all stakeholder interests	2		18.2	
Being inclusive of urban and rural interests	1		9.1	
Ineffective leadership	1		9.1	
Low commitment of Working Group	1		9.1	

Rate of endorsement by municipality, public, and stakeholders

Survey/Interview Question: Has the Food Charter you represent received endorsement/approval from the following groups?

Response Rate=11/11

Group	Number of Food Charters Endorsed			Percentage of Food Charters Endorsed (%)		
	Yes	No	Somewhat	Yes	No	Somewhat
Municipality	8	3	0	72.7	27.3	0
Public	6	1	4	54.5	9.1	36.4
Stakeholders	9	1	1	81.8	9.1	9.1

Methods used to gain endorsement or approval of Food Charter from municipal officials, stakeholders, and public
Survey/Interview Question: What methods were used to gain endorsement or approval of the Food Charter you represent from municipal officials, stakeholders, and the public?
Response Rate=11/11

Method	Number of Food Charters Utilizing Method	Percentage of Food Charters Utilizing Method (%)
Visioning day	2	18.2
Community workshops or focus groups	2	18.2
Public forums	8	72.7
Strategic plan for gaining municipal endorsement	5	45.5
Distributed Food Charter to stakeholders for input	5	45.5
Increase education and awareness	6	54.6
Distribute to Charter/information to municipality	10	90.9
Developed multiple Charter formats	1	9.1

Methods of Food Charter Distribution
Survey/Interview Question: What methods were utilized to distribute the Food Charter you represent to the public?
Response Rate=11/11

Method of Distribution	Number of Food Charters Using Distribution Method	Percentage of Food Charters Using Distribution Method (%)
Food council website	8	72.7
Newspaper	4	36.4
Public events	10	90.1
Municipal website/offices	5	45.5
Stakeholder websites	7	63.6
Brochures	1	9.1
Distributed Food Charter to schools	2	18.2
Advertised at Farmers Markets	3	27.3
Social media/marketing campaign	3	27.3

Uses of Food Charters within Communities
Survey/Interview Question: How has the Food Charter you represent been used within the community?
Response Rate=11/11

Uses	Number of Food Charters Using Food Charter in this Way	Percentage of Food Charter Using Food Charter in this Way (%)
Promote urban agriculture	1	9.1
Integrated into official plan	3	27.3
Provides leverage at municipal council to gain support/resources	6	54.5
Used by stakeholders	5	45.5
It is just being shared	2	18.2
Allows food council to have input of food security issues	5	45.5
Increased awareness of food security	8	72.7
Used by anyone because it recognizes the needs of the community	3	27.3
Used to direct work of food council	5	45.5

Implementation of evaluations for Food Charters
Survey/Interview Question: Has the Food Charter you represent been evaluated?
Response Rate=11/11

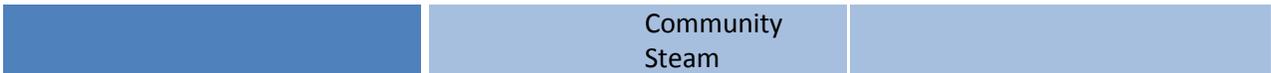
Response	Number of Food Charters	Percentage of Food Charter (%)
Yes	2	18.2
No	6	54.5
No, but plan in development	3	27.3

Key Recommendation for Developing a Food Charter		
Evaluation Question: What are key recommendations for KLF&A's Healthy Eating Working Group as they develop a Food Charter for the region?		
Non-response rate=0		
Recommendation	Number of Food Charters Making Recommendation	Percentage of Food Charters Making Recommendation (%)
Identify political champions within municipality	6	54.5
Engage municipality throughout process	5	45.5
Increase education and awareness	6	54.5
Participate in knowledge exchange with other organizations	5	45.5
Ensure Working Group is dedicated	2	18.2
Take sufficient time to develop Food Charter	4	36.4
Gain public input	5	45.5
Be inclusive	4	36.4
Ensure a broad representation of stakeholders	5	45.5
Ensure producer representation	2	18.2
Develop a strategy for municipal endorsement	5	45.5
Ensure community wants a Food Charter	1	9.1
Hold information sessions in urban and rural locations	2	18.2
Keep everyone who shows an interest in the project informed	3	27.3
Understand a Food Charter is a step on the way to a Policy Council	1	9.1
Have co-leadership	1	9.1
Gain public support to encourage political endorsement	1	9.1
Personalize the Food Charter to your municipality	1	9.1
Develop a strategy for implementation of Food Charter	1	9.1

Appendix 8: SWOT analysis for a successful Food Charter

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Healthy Eating Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation from key sectors of food system, including one producer • Some representation from rural municipalities • Motivated and committed Working Group • Well developed goals, objectives, and terms of reference • Funding attained from Ministry of Health Promotion & Sport – Partnership Stream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack full representation from rural municipalities and some sectors of food system • Would benefit from a co-chair • May not be able to collaborate well when writing • Food sector perspectives may conflict
	Opportunities	Threats
KFL&A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to increase food security in KFL&A • Political climate in all municipalities supports principles of a Food Charter • Many community organizations support principles of a Food Charter, can provide feedback, and help disseminate document • Potential funding from local agencies available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Foundation for Kingston & Area – Community Grant • United Way Community Impact Grant • Ministry of Health Promotion & Sport – 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KFL&A is a diverse region with both urban and rural interests • May not be able to gain endorsement or buy-in from municipalities, public or stakeholders • May not capture ideals of the community • May not meet timeline • KFL&A may not have capacity to support local sustainable food system • There is currently not a definition of ‘local’ food • May not have ongoing funding

How can I support my community's Food Charter...as the municipal government?



Appendix 9: Methods to increase community engagement towards Food Charters

- Support the right of all constituents to adequate amounts of nutritious, safe, accessible, culturally acceptable food.
- Advocate for income, employment, housing, and transportation policies that support secure and dignified access to food.
- Promote the safety of food and drinking water.
- Campaign for the convenient access to an affordable and nutritious food throughout the municipality.
- Encourage partnership programs that support urban-rural relationships and the availability of locally grown food through farmer's markets and the Good Food Box program.
- Preserve local rural and urban agricultural lands.
- Promote community gardens, urban agriculture, and the recycling of organic materials.
- Support training and income generating programs that promote food security within a local economic development model.
- Support nutrition education through the promotion of food skill development programs in the community.
- Endorse an annual food security report card for the region.
- Cultivate a civic culture that inspires support for healthy food for all.

How can I support my community's Food Charter...as a stakeholder organization?

- Implement the principles of the Food Charter into our organization practices as able.
- Promote local, seasonal, and sustainably raised food within your organization.
- Serve local, seasonal, and sustainably raised food at meetings and conferences.
- Implement a reduce, reuse, recycle program in the workplace.
- Use recycled disposables versus Styrofoam or plastic options.
- Provide a supportive breastfeeding environment.
- Promote the Food Charter to your clients.

How can I support my community's Food Charter...as an individual?

- Eat more local, seasonal, and sustainably raised foods
- Begin gardening at home or in the community
- Compost organic waste
- Celebrate food and food culture through cooking and sharing
- Learn about food justice concerns
- Advocate for more local food to be served in public places
- Promote local, seasonal, and sustainable eating among friends and family

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