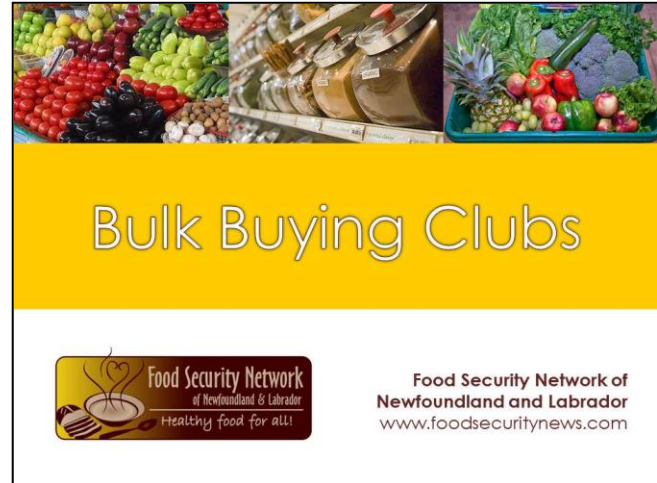


BULK BUYING CLUBS – SPEAKER’S NOTES

SLIDE 1: BULK BUYING CLUBS

Introduction

This presentation is based on the *Bulk Buying Club Best Practices Toolkit: A Guide for Community Organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador*. It is one in a series of best practices toolkits, which also cover community gardens, community kitchens, and farmers' markets, available through the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador.



Your audience should come away from this presentation with a basic understanding of what a bulk buying club is and how it works. Those who plan on actually starting a bulk buying club should consult the toolkit for more in depth information and resources.

This presentation should take between 30 and 40 minutes, depending on how much interaction there is between the audience and the presenter.

Materials Needed

- Projector & screen
- Flipchart or whiteboard & marker
- FSN E-News sign-up forms (available at www.foodsecuritynews.com)
- A copy of *Bulk Buying Club Best Practices Toolkit: A Guide for Community Organizations* (optional)

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SLIDE 2: AGENDA

Introduce the topic and list the information that is going to be covered during the presentation. This slide can be on the screen while welcoming the group and doing introductions and icebreakers.

Let the audience know how long you expect the presentation to take, and whether they should ask questions as they arise or wait until the presentation is over.

Bulk Buying Clubs

Agenda

1. What is a Bulk Buying Club?
2. Why Start a Bulk Buying Club
3. Forming a Group
4. Roles & Responsibilities
5. Partnerships
6. Funding & Sponsors
7. Location
8. Policies & Procedures
9. Sourcing Food
10. Equipment
11. Food Safety

Ice-Breakers

Consider introducing your audience to each other and the concept of food security by holding an ice-breaker. Ice-breakers are short games that get people talking, introducing themselves, and sharing information. Icebreakers can range from simply asking the group to introduce themselves and share their favourite vegetable, to more interactive activities or games.

FoodShare Toronto has a great list of food security related icebreakers at http://www.foodshare.net/toolbox_roots-rooftops-Support.htm

SLIDE 3: WHAT IS A BULK BUYING CLUB?

All Bulk Buying Clubs have the same underlying purpose: to **provide nutritious food at a lower cost for a group of people**. There are several common types of bulk buying programs:

- **Food box programs** are typically managed by a third-party agency that buys food in bulk and distributes food boxes

What is a Bulk Buying Club?

- A small group of people with similar food preferences
- All participants involved in the planning, shopping, sorting, and delivering of food
- Provide nutritious food at a lower cost

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to members for a fee.

- **Food cooperatives** are legally incorporated cooperative organizations where members are owners, which gives them access to lower priced food purchased in bulk by the cooperative.
- **Bulk buying clubs** are often smaller, more informal groups of friends or neighbours that come together to buy food in bulk to save money.

This presentation focuses on Bulk Buying Clubs.

SLIDE 4: WHY START A BULK BUYING CLUB?

- A bulk buying club can help improve **food security** for participants by increasing physical and economic access to adequate amounts of healthy food.
- Bulk buying clubs can provide **economic, health, educational, and social benefits** to participants.



Participants can:

- **Save money** on healthy foods by purchasing with others
- Learn about the benefits of **healthy eating** and low cost cooking
- Develop important **health and food safety skills**
- Learn how to read **food labels**
- Build **organizational, budgeting, and shopping skills**
- Learn how to use **Canada’s Food Guide**
- **Get to know other families** and learn about new cultures and their food
- **Try new foods** and **learn about new recipes**
- **Work in a social atmosphere** and meet new friends!

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SLIDE 5: FORMING A GROUP

The first step in forming a bulk buying club is to organize a group of like-minded people who want to work together to save money and buy similar, nutritious foods.

- Many **community organizations** are already involved with groups of like-minded people who may be interested in joining a bulk buying club, such as: families, students, seniors, single parents, youth groups, or members of a local church.
- The **size** of a bulk buying club can range from as small as 5 people to as large as 100. The size of your group will depend on the community, their needs, and the type of bulk buying club the group plans to develop. It is a good idea to **start small and simple with a group of 7 to 10 members**.
- If you do not already have a group, you can hold a **community meeting** to discuss the idea of a bulk buying club and recruit participants.
- Think about how you will design and structure your bulk buying club to **meet your participants’ unique needs and circumstances**. For example, if the bulk buying club is for single parents, food purchases will need to be child-friendly and the shopping, packaging, and delivery schedule will need to be organized around day-care and work schedules.



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SLIDE 6: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

A coordinator is a very important role for a bulk buying club. Coordinators can help establish the bulk buying club and organize ongoing activities. A coordinator should be a caring person who has some experience facilitating groups and working with a diverse group of people. This position may be filled by a volunteer from the community, or may be a paid employee.



There are many other important roles in a bulk buying club that the group will have to decide how to share. Potential roles and responsibilities include:

- **Coordinator**
 - Responsible for overall organization of the group
 - Coordinates communication with members
 - Arranges educational workshops or other special events.
- **Membership Coordinator**
 - Keeps membership list up to date
 - Orients and trains new members and volunteers
- **Job Coordinator**
 - Makes sure jobs are fulfilled
 - Keeps track of members and volunteers
- **Order Manager**
 - Collects food orders from members
 - Compiles order lists for each distributor or store
 - Keeps track of what comes in on each order
- **Packaging Coordinator**
 - Organizes the unpacking and re-packaging of food for members
- **Invoice Coordinator**

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- Ensures member and distributor invoices are organized and paid.
- **Treasurer**
 - Keeps track of the budget and money

SLIDE 7: PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with community agencies, non-profit organizations, and businesses can help support your bulk buying club. These might include:

- **Stores and distributors** which can offer discounts or donations for food, materials, and space.
- **Regional Nutritionists (Dietitians)** with your **Regional Health Authority** who can provide expert knowledge about healthy food and nutrition.
- **Churches, service clubs and non-profit organizations** which can offer resources, guidance, donations, and networking opportunities.
- **Funding agencies** which can cover expenses for materials, programming, or sometimes staffing.
- **Municipal and provincial governments**, which may be able to provide funding, space, and materials.
- **Adult educators or professional facilitators** who can offer support for group education and facilitation.



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SLIDE 8: FUNDING & SPONSORS

Many bulk buying clubs in Newfoundland and Labrador purchase food costing about a total of \$30 per participant per month. Bulk buying clubs use a number of different approaches to get the financial support they need to run their program. This can be done through participant fees, sponsorships, fundraising, grants, or a combination of approaches.



Funding & Sponsors

- Participant fees
- Sponsorship
 - Monetary
 - In-kind
- Fundraising
 - Flea markets
 - Bake sales
 - Community events
 - Recipe book sales
- Grants

Participant fees

- In many bulk buying clubs the participants pay some or all of the cost of food.

Sponsorship

- Sponsors can be community organizations, service clubs, or local companies that provide both monetary and in-kind support.
- Sponsors can be sought to match the funds participants pay each month to cover the cost of purchasing food.
- Sponsors can also contribute by donating space for sorting and distributing food; providing money to purchase equipment; lending staff or volunteers; providing participant training or expertise; or providing transportation for shopping days.

Fundraising

- Fundraising is most successful when money is being raised for a clear and tangible purpose, such as fundraising to purchase a specific piece of equipment.
- Successful fundraising initiatives include flea markets, bake sales, Bingo and card games, recipe book sales (compiled from recipes collected within the group), and community events.

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Grants

- There are numerous agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, that provide funding to non-profit organizations. These opportunities generally require an organization to submit an application for funding, maintain financial and activity records, and provide a final report at the end of the funding period.
- If your bulk buying club is not part of an already incorporated agency, you may need to consider incorporation in order to apply for grants.
- **Regional Wellness Coalitions** across the province offer a Regional Wellness Grant of up to \$1,000 for initiatives focusing on community wellness promotion, and are accepted 2-4 times per year.
- **Department of Health and Community Services** offers Provincial Wellness Grants in the amounts of \$5,000 to \$50,000 to community initiatives that focus on improving health and wellness, and are usually accepted once a year in the fall.

See the *Bulk Buying Club Best Practices Toolkit* for more information and resources about grants and fundraising.

SLIDE 9: LOCATION

Bulk buying clubs do not need an industrial kitchen, so long as the space has all the appliances and equipment you need. A club can operate out of a home, a community centre, or a large specially-designed building.

- The location should have a **fridge** for storing food (even briefly), separate **sinks** for washing food and hands, and **shelving** for storing items off the floor.
- It will be important that your location has appropriate **storage facilities** in case food needs to be stored for even a short while.



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- A location must provide adequate space and counter tops or tables to set up a **‘sorting centre’**. This space will be where food is dropped off, sorted, re-packaged and prepared for pick-up or delivery.
- The **distribution or pick-up** of foods can be made easier if you have trolleys or carts waiting at a large door near your sorting centre. Although these are not necessary they can relieve the weight of carrying packages and make distribution and pickup quicker and easier.

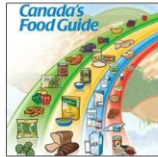
SLIDE 10: POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Some key questions the participants need to decide upon include:

- **What kinds of food will they purchase?**
 - low-cost food
 - healthier food options
 - specialty food
- **How will the responsibilities be shared amongst the group?**
 - Shopping, dividing, and distributing food.
- **Who are your suppliers? Will they be able to meet your needs?**
 - grocery stores
 - bulk food stores
 - wholesalers
 - farms
 - farmers’ markets
 - online stores
- **How often will the group meet?**
 - Monthly, bi-monthly, bi-weekly, etc.
- **How and when will money be collected?**
 - For example: before or after shopping or distribution.
- **Food Sorting and Packaging Procedures**

Policies & Procedures

- What kinds of food will they purchase?
- How will the responsibilities be shared?
- Who are your suppliers? Will they be able to meet your needs?
- How often will the group meet?
- How and when will money be collected?
- Food Sorting and Packaging Procedures
- Food Pick-Up and Delivery Practices
- When and what workshops will be offered?



BULK BUYING CLUBS – SPEAKER’S NOTES

- How will different bulk goods be divided up?
- **Food Pick-Up and Delivery Practices**
 - Is there a vehicle available for deliveries?
- **When and what workshops will be offered?**
 - food safety
 - reading food labels
 - nutrition

SLIDE 11: SOURCING FOOD

One of the most important things a bulk buying club will need to determine is where the food will come from.

- It is useful to develop an agreement with your supplier that provides your group with discounts on prices, delivery, and sale items to help you maintain your budget.
- Farmers and other food producers may be interested in selling their products directly to your group, which will ensure that you are receiving the freshest, healthiest food possible.
- Be sure to keep healthy local options in mind when you’re sourcing vegetables, fruit, dairy, eggs, fish and meat.
- A wholesaler or other supplier may be willing to offer reduced prices or transportation rates if your group will commit to buying a certain amount of food each month.



BULK BUYING CLUBS – SPEAKER’S NOTES

SLIDE 12: EQUIPMENT

There are some basic pieces of equipment that every Bulk Buying Club should have in order to run effectively. These include:

- **Cash box and receipt book** for keeping and recording money as it comes in.
- **Calculators** to add up monies given, to total each person’s account, to calculate spending while at the store, and to determine if any money will be left after each shopping trip or order.
- A **first aid kit** which is kept filled at all times. It is recommended that one or more people in your group have first aid and CPR training.
- **Cleaning materials** for counters, utensils, food containers and hands are needed to keep food cutting and sorting areas and hands sanitized.
- **Scales** for dividing up bulk packages between participants fairly.
- **Knives, cheese wires, cutting boards** etc., for cutting foods. All items and counters must be washed and disinfected before and after each use.
- **Hair nets and gloves** for any food handling, particularly cutting of foods.
- **Cloth bags, plastic boxes or bins, paper bags, or cardboard boxes** for putting food in once it is sorted. To be environmentally friendly, re-usable boxes, bins or bags are the best choices. You will need to make sure they are all cleaned after each use by each participant or by a designated volunteer in the group.
- **Food containers or plastic wrap** for wrapping cut foods such as cheese, meat, etc.
- A **filing cabinet** where personal records, money, receipts books, and other information may be securely kept.

Equipment

- Cash box & receipt book
- Calculators
- First aid kit
- Cleaning materials
- Scales
- Knives, cheese wires, cutting boards
- Hair nets & gloves
- Cloth bags, plastic boxes or bins, paper bags, or cardboard boxes
- Food containers or plastic wrap
- Filing cabinet



BULK BUYING CLUBS – SPEAKER’S NOTES

SLIDE 13: FOOD SAFETY

Food-borne illness is a widespread and potentially dangerous threat which can be reduced with some basic awareness and education. Some **training** will be required for participants on **food safety and hygiene** while shopping, sorting, and distributing food.

Every bulk buying club will have participants **handling foods, dividing up orders, re-packaging items, and storing food** for pick-up or delivery. There are a few simple guidelines on the slide that will help in addressing food handling and food safety issues that can arise.

Appendix F: Food Safety Guidelines in the *Bulk Buying Club Best Practices Toolkit* provides more details on food safety guidelines for not-for-profit organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador.



The slide features a yellow header with the title "Food Safety". Below the header is a photograph of hands being washed under a stream of water. To the right of the photo is a bulleted list of food safety guidelines.

- Hand washing with soap and hot water prior to handling food
- Cold foods stored below 4°C
- Smooth surfaces that are easy to clean
- Surfaces cleaned and sanitized
- Foods stored in proper containers
- Wear hair nets and gloves

SLIDE 14: THANK YOU

Thank the audience for participating and take this opportunity to encourage discussions and questions about starting a bulk buying club in your community.

You can use FSN's Food Security Initiative Inventory to help you find farmers' markets in your area (see www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources).



The slide features a yellow header with the text "Thank you!". Below the header is a photograph of various fresh produce and jars of food. At the bottom, there is a logo for the Food Security Network of Newfoundland & Labrador, along with contact information.

Food Security Network
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Healthy food for all!
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If members of the audience are interested in starting a farmers' market, direct them to FSN's Best Practices Toolkits (www.foodsecuritynews.com/resources).

Try to continue the momentum from the presentation by starting an email list or a working group to work on improving your community's food security.

BULK BUYING CLUBS – SPEAKER’S NOTES

Collect any FSN E-News sign-up sheets and return them to FSN, along with any feedback about the presentation.