



1. Participants

Approximately 30 people joined in this teleconference presentation and discussion session. Participants included dietitians representing each of the regional health authorities and representatives of various organizations including Kids Eat Smart, the Western Environment Centre, the Burin Peninsula Environmental Reform Committee, as well as several individual citizens with personal interest.

Participants were from both rural and more urban communities throughout the province, including:

Grand-Falls Windsor
Corner Brook
Carbonear

LewisPort
Clarenville

St. John's
St. Anthony

2. Introduction

After a round of introductions of all participants on the line, Kristie Jameson of the Food Security Network provided some introductory comments and information on the theme of 'Nutrition Month: Celebrate Food from Field to Table'. Key points included:

- **A summary of the Food Security Network NL (FSN)** as a membership based not-for-profit organization with the mission to actively promote comprehensive, community based solutions to ensure physical and economic access to adequate and healthy food for all.
- **Food Security** exists when all people, at all times, have access to adequate amounts of nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate foods. Food Security means that the people who produce foods are able to earn a living wage.
- **What's Happening in the Province** including Farmers' Markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), and Community Gardens across the province and Food Security Working Groups in Burin, Corner Brook, Gros Morne Area, Labrador City, and Goose Bay.

3. Keynote Presentations

Registered Dietitian Margie Coombes gave a presentation about the Dietitians of Canada National Nutrition Month 2010 Campaign. Key Points from the presentation include:

- **Concerns in NL** are low vegetable and fruit consumption, Food Insecurity, and high rates of overweight and obesity.
- **Stats on Nutrition in NL:** Based on 2008 data 32.6% of Newfoundlanders & Labradoreans said that they consume fruits and vegetables 5 times a day as compared to the national average of 42.7% (This is an increase from 2007's rate of 28.9%). A survey found that 10% of NL residents reported experiencing food insecurity and 71% were overweight.
- **The Goals of the campaign:** Helping Canadian families discover and engage in ways to eat and live well while learning where food is coming from, providing local nutrition resources, and translating nutrition advice into everyday food choices.

- **The Campaign calls** on Canadians to take their children to the market and get them involved in preparing healthy food. Exposing children to a variety of foods will improve their diet in later years. Canadians can preserve the fresh taste and nutrients of the local harvest by canning and freezing, and learn from a farmer about what foods grow well in their area and which foods are in season when.

Visit www.dieticians.ca/eatwell and www.nutrition2010.ca for more information.

Local farmer and Statistics Professor Matthew Atkinson presented on Why Supporting a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) is a Healthy Choice:

- **Climate Change:** The "traditional" (almost everything in the supermarkets) mass-market Food Sector accounts for about 1/3 of all GHG emissions.
- **Local, sustainable, organic agricultural projects** like Community Gardens & CSAs increase soil carbon & nitrogen ~25% per year, improve water & nutrient retention, promote natural disease & pest resistance, grow delicious food in a healthy work environment, and grow healthier communities.
- **Price and the Local Economy:** Local in season vegetables from a CSA cost less than the same vegetables at the supermarket, and more of your food budget stays in within the province, supporting local farmers.

Matthew Atkinson is part of the Seed to Spoon Collective, a CSA in Portugal Cove. Visit seedtospoon.blogspot.com or email seedtospoon@gmail.com for more information.

4. Key Themes/Information from Discussion

Following the presentations participants had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues around nutrition and local food. Some key themes that emerged from this dialogue include the following:

Other CSAs in the Province

- The Organic Farm, 42 Churchill Road, Portugal Cove
organicfarm@nl.rogers.com, <http://www.theorganicfarm.net/>
- Seed to Spoon, Lien Family Farm, Portugal Cove
seedtospoon@gmail.com, <http://seedtospoon.blogspot.com/>
- Eastport Organics, Eastport
eastportorganics@gmail.com, www.eastportorganics.ca

Organic Farming in NL

- Organic farming makes sense for any small farm. Newfoundland and Labrador has lots of good inputs for the soil such as **kelp and fish meal**.
- There are many more farms growing organically in NL than are certified organic because of the costs associated with certification. The Seed to Spoon Collective is an example.
- [ACORN-NL](#) (Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network) is working on starting a locally governed organic system to reduce that cost.

What Can We Grow?

- **Asian greens** are something everyone may not know does really well with our climate. Some varieties of tomatoes also do really well in NL (in particular a variety called Black tomato).
- It's best to get your seeds from growers who produce their seeds in a **similar climate** to our own.

- [Hope Seeds](#) in NB, [Mapple Farm](#) in NB, and [Vesey's Seeds](#) in PEI were all mentioned as good seed suppliers.

Community Gardening

- The Food Security Network is conducting research into best practices around Community Gardens.
- Contact Tony Brunetti at tony.brunetti@gmail.com if you have been involved in establishing any food projects of this kind, or are interested in getting involved.

Internships for New Farmers

- Participants asked if there were any summer internship programs for potential farmers or programs just to enhance your farming and gardening knowledge.
- Matthew Atkinson responded that farming has a huge learning curve and many are finding their own way. The speed to Spoon Collective will be hosting an intern this year and they are investigating some funding sources for doing this kind of training.
- There is a program called [World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms](#) (WWOOF - formerly Wiling Workers on Organic Farms) which connects farms and people who would like to work on them in exchange for room and board.

Environmental Impacts of Mass Market Food Production

- Nestle has recently pledged to stop Palm oil production in Indonesia because of the impact on the rainforest.
- Participants wondered if Palm oil is being produced more now because of the recent reduction in Trans Fats. It was suggested that Palm oil production for processed foods is increasing because North American land is being turned over to biofuel production.

Preserving Vegetables

- Learning techniques to preserve your own vegetables is a great way to get the **most nutrition** while supporting local farmers.
- **CSA vegetables last longer** because they're so much fresher when the consumer gets them.
- People are open to trying non-traditional things like zucchinis but they need recipes, directions, and education.
- It would be very helpful to have **workshops** on how to preserve vegetables held at community gardens. The St. John's Farmers' Market had workshops of that kind last year.