towards a more sustainable Buffalo Niagara

Food Access and Justice Working Team

Meeting #1
April 2, 2013
Agenda

Introductions and ice breaker

Project scope

Working team’s charge

Working team’s process

Review of key issues related to food access

Goal setting discussion

Next steps
How Can we ensure a secure supply of healthy food right here in our own region using one sentence?

#oneregionfwd
A common definition to food access...

When nutritious, affordable, and culturally acceptable food is available to all people in a region; when farming is economically and environmentally viable; when farmers and people in a region are sovereign over their food system.
Our Approach to this work...

*Stakeholder driven; working team in collaboration with researchers*

*Evidence-based research using quantitative and qualitative data; numbers, observations and best practices*

*Action oriented; concrete steps for policymakers based on sound research and team priorities*
Tasks you will help us with...

**ESTABLISH GOALS**
for a sustainable regional approach to food access

**FRAME STRATEGIES**
Align strategies to match our regional goals

**IDENTIFY ACTIONS**
Policies, programs, and projects and the actors to implement them

**CONSTRUCT INDICATORS**
Create metrics and geographic areas to concentrate investment
Deliverables you will help create...

*Our Regional Plan for Sustainable Development*

Document outlining a strategy for pursuing a sustainable approach to food access - “Regional Food Access Assessment”

*Government tool kit – Indicators and Checklist for Local Governments*
Who will implement our recommendations?

Local municipalities, county governments, state or regional agencies (i.e. NFTA)

Community Based Organizations and private citizens

Private sector actors or businesses (developers, business decision-makers)

Collaborative partnerships across these groups
Working Team Process and Timeline

**SPRING**

- 1 Establishing Goals

**SUMMER**

- 2 Frame Strategies

**FALL**

- 3 Identify Actions

- FALL 2013
  - Council and Community Congress Meetings

- 4 Construct Indicators

**WINTER**

- +2 Additional Meetings

- REVIEW & REFINE

#oneregionfwd
Research supporting this work...

Assessment of current state of food production and food access in Buffalo Niagara

A summary of barriers and opportunities

Review of national best practices

Research on key policy levers/strategies for change
Some key issues to frame our discussion...
Key Issues...

State of food production
Supply factors
Demand factors
Regulatory framework
...Other?
State of Food:

Production

In **1969**, **40%** of our land was used for farming.

In **2007**, just **30%** of our land was used for farming.

Over **4 square miles** of agricultural land is converted to other uses **every year**.

Supply Factors:

Under-utilized Resources

100 SQ MI

711 square miles of land in Buffalo Niagara is classified as “Prime Farmland”.

#oneregionfwd
Supply Factors:

Under-utilized Resources

Only 24 percent of fertile land is used for agriculture.
Since 1970, annual temperatures (avg.) across the Northeast have warmed by almost 2°F.

Plants are flowering earlier

Extreme heat in summer is becoming more frequent
Demand Factors:

Food Insecurity in Numbers

Recipients of public assistance for food procurement:

- **SNAP** – 54,359 people
- **WIC** – 20,000 people per month
- **NSLP** – 33% in Erie; 29% in Niagara

There are a lot of people who qualify but aren’t enrolled in food assistance programs.
Demand Factors:

Inequitable Access to Fresh Food

Percentage of households who lack a private vehicle **and** are outside walking distance to supermarkets:

**Niagara Co. – over 10%**

**Erie Co. - over 12%**
Regulatory frameworks:

Food Access and Local Governance

Up to this point food has been addressed in county plans focused on production.

A comprehensive approach to food access has not been tackled by many governments in the region.

Currently, food is regulated primarily through permitting and licensing at the municipal level.
Key issues related to food access?

Are these data telling the story of where we are today in a compelling fashion?
Goal Setting, a starting point.

Do they align with our region’s vision?
Are they current/relevant?
Are they long term/resilient?
Are they attainable?
What’s missing?
What shouldn’t be there?

Draft goals
Draft Goals: Food Access & Justice

- Protect farmland from “sprawl” and for food production.
- Promote sustainable agriculture, reducing water, energy, and chemical inputs to the growing process.
- Connect local farms to local markets (e.g. food hubs, CSAs).
- Develop value-added processing of local food products for local consumption and export.
- Promote agritourism to create jobs and educate the public.
- Promote careers in agriculture through education and otherwise.
- Support urban agriculture (not just community gardens).
- Improve access to healthy food for urban and rural families.
Food Access and Justice Working Team

Get Started as a Working Team Member at www.oneregionforward.org

Recruit a Working Team Contributor

Provide Online Feedback on Our Regional Vision and Values
TeamWork Site: https://oneregionforward.teamworkpm.net
TeamWork Site: https://oneregionforward.teamworkpm.net

Food Access and Justice Working Team » One Region Forward

Overview

Activity: Upcoming milestones

Upcoming milestones

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13th March

Project: Food Access and Justice Working Team

Milestone: First Working Teams Meeting (02 April)

Link: One Region Forward

Notebook: Preliminary Goals

Project: Food Access Working Team

Created by Teresa B., Renamed by Teresa B., Created and assigned by Teresa B. to Teresa B., Created by Teresa B., Created by Teresa B.
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us

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Thank you!