



FOOD FORWARD FORUM

DECEMBER 3, 2015

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS REPORT

Working together to move the needle on healthy,
sustainable food systems





Food Forward (2015) Summary Report Horticulture Center of the Pacific, December 3, 2015

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Thank you to Michelle Colussi for her work in organizing the Forum and for supporting us as our Collective Impact Coach and Cheerleader! Also to the HCP and Haley at Nourish for the location and delicious food and to Jess for his logistics support.

Many thanks are also in order for the Victoria Foundation, Island Health and Vancity for making this event possible.



Vancity





Food Forward 2015



This report provides a summary of what happened at the Food Forward Forum and highlights potential implications and next steps that emerged from the presentations and discussions. We would like to recognize and thank the over 100 participants who came from the farm and food producer communities, health and education sectors, local and Provincial government, and community organizations. The active engagement of everyone made it a very interesting and productive day.

Purpose of the Event –Did it hit the mark?

Food Forward is the annual meeting hosted by CRFAIR, bringing together people who care about, and want to create a healthier, more sustainable, equitable food system in the Capital Region. Each year we host the event to promote networking within the sector, to increase our awareness of what is working and to celebrate our collective progress and successes. Another major focus of Food Forward is to work on shared strategies and to better understand how each of us are contributing to the long term outcomes we all care about (see Appendix 3 for more details). While we all recognize and face the challenges on a daily basis, the Forum provides a rare moment for us all to connect and see the breadth and diversity of people who care about and are working on food and related issues in our region. Our objective is for everyone to leave re-inspired and with confidence that the work we are doing together is making a difference.

Considered in terms of the key objectives of Food Forward, the feedback we received from attendees¹ was very positive. We learned that:

1. The networking opportunities provided were useful and appreciated. Seventy percent felt we supported **networking** “perfectly” on the day.
2. The event helped to increase awareness. Nearly 60% reported that their awareness of what’s working in the sector increased by a “great deal.” More specifically, the Food Champions Trade Show and Tour received significant praise for showing what is going on both “socially and commercially”.
3. Participants viewed the event as a celebration of **progress and our assets**. More than 80% indicated that we did really well in this respect. In particular, people felt the list of 15 accomplishments for 2015 was “very impressive.”

One of the most important things we wanted to achieve was to help people to understand how their individual work contributes to a shared purpose. Consequently, we were pleased to learn that over 75% felt the event helped to contribute to a sense of shared purpose:

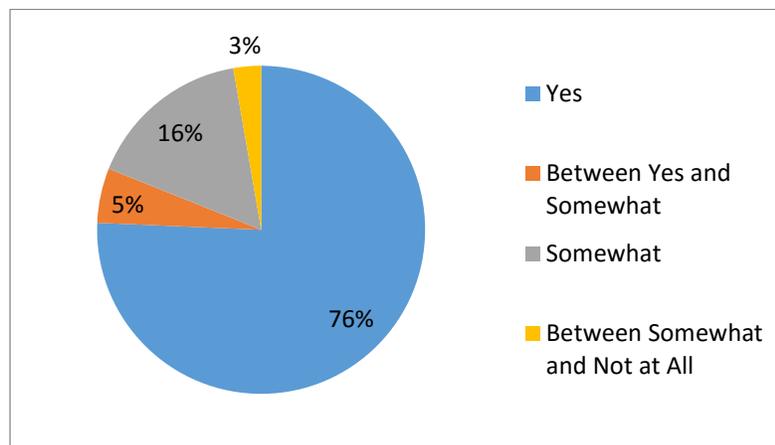


Figure 1: To what extent did we encourage a sense of shared purpose and help you see how your work contributes to that?

¹ 41% of attendees provided feedback on the day

The Highlights of the Day: The Food Forward Program

- A **Food Systems Checkup** provided key statistics which allowed participants to reflect on the progress that has been made over time. More details on the **Food Systems Checkup** can be found in section 4. We also introduced a new **Food systems Report**, which will formally be released in early 2016, as a tool to provide information on our long term collective goals for food system change in the region including strategies for measuring and demonstrating progress.
- In order to build a stronger power base for our work there was discussion about, and direction given regarding the formalization of a **Food and Agriculture Network in the region**. One hundred percent of the respondents to our feedback form supported this concept as a strategy to move forward. Respondents also indicated that the most critical functions of the network should be to keep members informed and to support collective advocacy efforts. More is reported on this in Section 1 below.
- A **Food Champions Trade Show and Tour** showcased the fabulous work of ten food leaders in our region. Feedback on the networking opportunities this provided along with sharing of best practices was excellent. **A list of the Food Champions can be found in Section 3.**
- We shared a list of **15 Success Stories from 2015**. Feedback indicates this was a favourite of folks attending. **See Section 2 for more details.**
- People appreciated the **policy update** regarding the CRD's emerging Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy and there was good discussion with regards to its implementation. **More details are in Section 5.**
- We held some "Dig Deeper" discussions on themes that cut across the three impact areas: **Food Literacy, Food Access, and the Local Food Economy**. Each of the discussion groups provided reports on their work including next steps (see section 5). Key outcomes included:
 - **Youth and Food Security Initiatives**- a new community of practice was formed!
 - **Linkages with the CRD Food and Agriculture Strategy**-the need for close collaboration with all stakeholders in the region was highlighted.
 - **Demonstrating Progress, the Food Systems Report**-tools for measuring change over time were presented and discussed.
 - **Neighbourhood Food Hubs Strategy** –We talked in depth about what must be considered for a successful implementation, the related work that is already happening, and what the potential opportunities are moving forward.
 - **We received reports back on the key highlights of each discussion including next steps (see the Dig Deeper Discussions below in Section 5)**
- The final part of the day looked forward to envision what **success would look like one year from now**. The key things people wanted to see impact in were diverse. More is outlined in the final section on Next Steps and Looking Forward to 2016.

Section One: The BIG STEP: Formalization of the Food and Agriculture Network

Over the past decade, the actors that are working towards a healthy and sustainable food system have grown in diversity and number. These actors have come together to do many powerful things, from creating the Regional Food Charter and advocating for a CRD Food and Agriculture Strategy, to establishing a Farm2School program, to saving farmland. To date, all of this has been accomplished through roundtables, working groups, or other forms of collaboration. In fact, there are over 15 different “sub networks” and organizing forums that exist in the Capital Region. By connecting all of our networks, organizations, leaders and supporters into a “super network”, we can develop a stronger powerbase for advocacy, an avenue for sharing information and strengthening our work.



We heard very strong support for the formalization of the network at the forum. In fact 100% of respondents agreed it was time for a more formalized network.

What would a network do?

A network is really what its members make it. From canvassing the attendees, we learned the following about what services and supports would be important to member:

- Communications to keep me informed – 89%
- Support for collective advocacy efforts – 71%
- Support for resource development – 51%
- Workshops or training – 49%
- *Other – 25%

**Other Asks From a Food and Agriculture Network included:*

- Economic/Health research; knowledge from experts
- Better dissemination of the work we are doing
- Support for the development of Neighbourhood Action Teams
- A clearer view of service overlaps and joint development of strategies for collaboration (eg. shared distribution networks)
- More responsible action, less fingers crossed
- Branding for educational materials, local food labelling in food stores; support for food waste diversion/composting/recovery
- See the collective includes diverse people with lived experience
- State what is needed from government

Next Steps:

At the Food Forward Forum, we began to formalize the network based on some interim goals and purposes (below). The feedback that we received was positive and the time is right to move this

forward. In early 2016, CRFAIR will invite participants to provide additional information about the suggested directions, tools, and ways to best organize the network. CRFAIR will commit to organizing the Food Forward Forum to serve as an annual face-to-face meeting of the network on an ongoing basis. Stay tuned!

<p>Food and Agriculture Network</p> <p>Interim Network Goal:</p> <p><i>To align our efforts and work together towards a healthy and sustainable food system in the Capital Region</i></p> <p>Purpose:</p> <p><i>The Food and Agriculture Network connects and supports organizations and individuals across sectors working together for a healthy and sustainable food system</i></p> <p>A healthy and sustainable food system is defined in the Capital Region Food Charter as:</p> <p><i>a sustainable and secure local food and agriculture system that provides safe, sufficient, culturally accepted, nutritious food accessible to everyone in the Capital Region through dignified means.</i></p>
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Figure 2: Food and Agriculture Network Goals and Purpose

Section Two: 15 Success Stories for 2015! What is there to celebrate?

Over the past year, CRFAIR was pleased to have hundreds of people come together to work on and articulate the long term shared goals and the key strategies in the Food Systems Collective Impact process. This is just one great achievement of 2015. Here are some others that were shared at the gathering-15 Success Stories worth celebrating for 2015.

1. The Victoria Foundation partnered with CRFAIR to develop the Food Systems Report - the first one in a decade. It is almost finished and will be published in early 2016.
2. FoodShare Network formalized and launched the Food Rescue Project, unveiling an agreement brokered by the Victoria Foundation with Thrifty Foods and the Rotary Club. Food that was formerly going to waste will be gathered and distributed at the neighbourhood level.
3. Farm2School Hub brought \$30k in funding to the region allowing 4 new Farm2School programs to be launched this fall.
4. The Fresh and Local study conducted by Susan Tychie on behalf of CRFAIR provided further evidence that local food demand is increasing with the greatest spike in the last two years.
5. Terry Mitchell from Mitchell Farms let us know that Overwaitea Foods, a commercial client of his, could not meet the strong demand for local products. In response, Terry let us know that he is going put 80 new acres into production next year.

6. Lee Herrin at Fernwood NRG informed us that they have grown their good food box program to over 5000 boxes in last year. With the launch of the Give the Gift of Food program, they were able to provide 25 families with over 2000 Good Food boxes.
7. The new Esquimalt Farmers Market had its first successful year.
8. The Vision Sandown Process is well underway, engaging over 500 people to date to create a vision for a publicly owned farm which has the potential to bring much of the 85 acre site into agricultural production.
9. ŁÁU, WELNEW Tribal School engaged primary and secondary school students to grow their new school garden “ The Blossoming Garden” and school-wide indigenous foods feast and celebration were held.
10. Almost a century after fishing practices unique to First Nations in British Columbia’s Salish Sea were outlawed, members paddled canoes back to traditional waters and dropped their full-sized reef net.
11. Over 100 students at UVic participated in community food projects and organizations.
12. The City of Victoria created a new Food Systems Coordinator position to support the Growing in the City project. They also provided an additional \$36,000 to fund volunteer efforts for neighbourhood food gardens.
13. FeedComox piloted an Institutional purchasing partnership where farmers supplied vegetables to St. Joseph’s Hospital, and now there is funding and interest in starting a pilot in the Capital Region.
14. Saanich just established a Food Task Force and committed resources to undertake a Food Security Plan.
15. LifeCycles Fruit Tree Project volunteers picked over 50,000 pounds of fruit for use in our community including by local emergency food providing agencies.

Section Three: Food Champions Tour and Trade Show: Work worth sharing!

Last year we did a Pechekucha style of 10 presentations by actors in the region who were doing important work. This year we tried a new format consisting of a tour of mini presentations and the feedback was great. Smaller groups had the opportunity to interact one-on-one with the presenters and people felt they could see a “diversity of what is going on across the sector.” This approach also encouraged interaction and networking between participants as they moved from station to station. Some people took advantage of the time to have a deeper conversation with one person. It really allowed everyone to learn something new and to meet their own needs! The following groups were featured:

DIY Fungi-Mushrooms in your Backyard	Danielle Stevenson	daniellestevenson@gmail.com
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Connecting to Indigenous Plants of this Territory	Fiona Devereaux	Fiona.Devereaux@viha.ca
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Sandown Land Use Planning-a publicly owned community farm	Rhianna Nagel	rhianna@uvic.ca
Food Wiki for mapping food assets	Nicole Faires	nfares@me.com
Food Rescue Project	Brenda Bolton FoodShare	Brenda@foodshare.ca
City Harvest Co-op-the urban farmer experience	Heather Parker	heather@cityharvestcoop.com
Farm2school and Fresh and Local-Institutional Purchasing	Susan Tychie and Aaren Topley	susantych@gmail.com
Volunteer Victoria supporting your work	George Colussi	george@volunteervictoria.bc.ca
Level Ground-Fair trade and farmer support and collaboration	Stacey Toews	stacey@levelground.com
Growing Young Farmers	Dave friend	davefriend@friendlyorganics.ca

Section Four: Food Systems Check-up?

At Food Forward one of our goals is to provide a status report on how our food system is doing. What can we use to demonstrate change? What should we measure, and do we have the means? How do we make sure we are measuring what matters most? Guided by an expert advisory, in partnership with the Victoria Foundation and CRFAIR, Janelle Hatch, is working on the development of a Capital Region Food Systems Report. The last report of this nature was done over a decade ago. The purpose of this work is to:

- Identify strengths, opportunities and challenges in the system
- Provide tools for shared measurement
- Mobilize resources by providing information on strategic interventions
- Direct a research agenda
- Impact policy
- Be used as a communications tool

We shared the following highlights with participants and explored some of the implications of the data, the surprises and what else is needed to begin to measure change. This session acted as a very preliminary (and important) introduction to this new stream of work. Some of the highlights of the research to date are:

Area One: The Local Food Economy

- number farms and farmers is up 11% & 14% respectively since 2001
- 35 of 1093 farms completed EFPs
- Average age of farmers 57 years
- Total farm area is down 12%
- Fish processing number of plants (44), number of fish and seafood wholesalers (15) average annual number of jobs (804)with \$23.2 million in wages

Area Two: Food Access

<p>Availability In 2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 615 restaurants ○ 140 food stores ○ 10 farmers markets 	<p>Today</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 998 restaurants ○ 540 take-out, mobile food (trucks) ○ 237 food stores ○ 13 farmers markets
<p>Equity-In Years Past</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12% food insecure in 2007/08 ○ 25 food banks and community meal programs in 2004 	<p>Today</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14% food insecure in 2011/12 ○ 27 food banks and community meal programs ○ 97 schools on the BC Fruit and Veggie Snack Program

Area Three: Food Literacy

We need to find ways to measure changes in food skills and knowledge and there are discussions underway to discover how we can work together to align our measures to generate a bigger composite picture. Currently we don't have these tools in place, but the number of programs that include related initiatives may provide some insight. Currently in the CRD we have:

- Farm to School Programs - 11
- School Gardens – 25
- Youth programs – 5 organizations with innovative programs

Section Five: Summary of the Dig Deeper Discussions

The purpose of the “Dig Deeper Discussions” was to explore some key areas of interest and also some of the strategy areas that had been identified in the Regional Food Systems Collective Impact development that could benefit from some more discussion. Below is a short summary of what was discussed and some of the follow up actions identified. In Appendix 3 you will find more detailed notes. Many participants wanted more time for these discussions.

Next Generation Food Champions: Supporting Youth and Food Security.

Participants in this discussion group included representatives from organizations that currently run or develop programs that are youth led as well as individual youth involved in food security related projects. This group wanted to see how they could better support the goal of food security through the way they deliver their programs and share assets. They also wanted to know how they could ensure more youth voices are present at the organizing and policy tables.

The big outcome for this group was a commitment to establish a more formal “Community of Practice” focused on this topic and to spend the next year identifying what they want to learn while undertaking activities to increase youth capacity and leadership.

The Food Hubs Strategy: Developing Neighbourhood Food Hubs.

In this discussion group, the key focus was on getting a better understanding of what we mean by food hubs, what is the need and opportunity for the development of food hubs, and what is already happening that we can learn from and build on both in our region and beyond.

The key outcome for this group was to ensure better coordination of the research about what we know in terms of demographic and socioeconomic data and how that might better inform food hub development. Participants also emphasized the need to include diverse actors in assessing resources, capacities and opportunities as each neighbourhood is different (and the FoodShare Data Maps and Food Wiki could be useful for this). It was determined that we should formalize a Working Group of key actors to drive the strategy forward.

CRD Food and Agriculture Strategy

The participants in this discussion wanted to explore how we could support the CRD to ensure their initiatives are meaningful/impactful, useful and inclusive? How do we organize ourselves to communicate, collaborate, learn and continuously improve efforts around a regional strategy? How do we integrate the work done on the Regional Food Systems Collective Impact Framework and the Regional Food Strategy?

The group felt that it was critical for the CRD to connect with and ensure buy-in from both the public and local municipalities. There were concerns raised about the decoupling of the Food and Agriculture Strategy from a broader Regional Sustainability Strategy for integrated planning. It was important that the priority strategy initiatives have funding to enable action. Coordination with other levels of government would also be key to moving multijurisdictional issues forward. The group discussed the need for a “carrying capacity” study to be done that would help establish targets for critical resources such as farmland and water. Finally, participants expressed very clearly that any plan that is developed should be clear, agreed-upon by stakeholders and coherent, including specified lines of accountability and implementation strategies.

Next steps identified were to formalize the Food and Agriculture Network to provide a stronger voice in the process while providing input to the CRD to ensure a broad-based food system perspective is considered in the further development of a Food and Agriculture Strategy and any accompanying initiatives.

Demonstrating Progress: The Food Systems Report

At the Food Forum we introduced the Capital Region Food Systems Report. It is a joint initiative of the Victoria Foundation and CRFAIR to try to provide a systems view of how food moves from seed to plate, including production, processing, distribution and consumption. The lens for the report is looking at health, ecological, social, and economic implications for our region and its residents. The last report the Baseline Assessment on Food Security in BC’s Capital Region was completed in 2004. We wanted to look at what has changed over the time, as well as how might we demonstrate progress going forward. The report hopes to identify strengths, opportunities and challenges in the system, and provide a tool for shared measurement towards the long term outcomes identified by the Capital Region Food Systems Collective Impact process. It is also believed the report may help to mobilize resources through providing information on strategic interventions, including impacting policy and also research.

The Dig Deeper Discussion explore what could be some of the uses for the report as well as looked at what the participants thought in terms of the most valuable data-what is most important to measure. The next steps identified are to share the report widely.

Section Six: Next Steps and Looking Forward 2016

Summary of the 2016 Aspirational Goals from the Participants

At the Forum we had participants write down the things they would like to see us achieve by working together and committed to report back on these items at the next annual Food Forward Forum in 2016. This exercise was designed to re-examine and verify the support for the Regional Food Systems Collective Impact Strategy by cross-checking it with the items participants identified as priorities. The hope is that the more clearly we can identify the principles we need to align our work behind, the more we will be able to make progress towards our shared objectives. This input also provided us with guidance around what we need to be working to assess and report back on next year.

Some feedback was overarching and included things like better coordination, establishment of the Food and Agriculture Network and adoption of the CRD Food and Agriculture Strategy. Below we have grouped the dominant themes expressed by participants into the three major areas of the Collective Impact Strategy. As you will see, the feedback is fairly consistent with what have been priorities in the past.

IMPACT AREA: LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY:

- **Increase Young/New Farmers** through access to land, start-up funding and mentorship.
- **Increase land access for farming.** Establishment of a Food-land Trust to protect farmland for local growers and increase local food production. Create another incubator farm in the CRD. **Let's make Sandown happen!**
- **Increase access to capital for growers:** Create a funding pot for farmers to access funding (scholarship/award) for investing into their farm.
- **Promote Food Hubs and Local Foods distribution infrastructure:** eg. abattoir, storage, processing
- **Move forward Institutional purchasing policies and contracts.** Bring more local food into Island Health and our schools!
- **Measure increase in market supply.**

IMPACT AREA: FOOD ACCESS:

- **Decrease in food insecurity:** Reduce the % of people who have food access issues in CRD, especially in children. .
- **Connecting the opportunities of food recovery and decreasing waste to food insecurity:** Channel food recovery programs into food access projects to effectively meet the nutritional needs of low-income families and individuals, turn waste into compost for building soils.
- **All students** in the CRD have access to local, fresh food during school hours.
- **More access points:** establish farm cart and food where they are needed
- **Need Affordable Housing** –as a key way to increase resources for obtaining high quality food.

IMPACT AREA: FOOD LITERACY

- **Encourage Food Security policy in institutions:** local governments, schools and other institutions create their food security policy to include embedded literacy targets
- **Focus on children and youth:** Increase food literacy in the next generation.
- **More Indigenous Youth and Indigenous Food Knowledge Holders** sharing their work and attending Food Forward.
- **Public Campaign and Awareness Raising:** Execution of a comprehensive and coordinated food education campaign. Inspire and inform CRD residents with visual tools such as Power Point/pictures/movie of new plantings; new acreage on farms; food hubs; outlets; market stalls; with statements from the producers and providers.
- **Increase land access for growing and learning on public land:** Establishment of a Farm Trust and dedicated Community Garden spaces at all local government recreation centers.
- **Help and encourage homeowners** to grow their own food.
- **Promote specific skills and knowledge:** Soil education and ecology to retain water – rainwater harvesting – composting toilets – water conservation,

Food Forum 2016-What could we do better?

We heard that most were well satisfied with the program and that this was the “best Food Forum yet” however, there were some excellent suggestions for improvement. This included having more diverse speakers, perspectives and styles, and more “formal” networking exercises. While some favoured the size of the event for networking, we also were asked to look at a new space to accommodate the growth in participation and have better acoustics as it was at times difficult to hear in the break out groups. While reflecting on the need for a formalized network, a number of participants also asked for a list of attendees on the day. People also commented that they would have liked to have coffee and tea in the afternoon to keep us fueled up and productive.

The mapping activity as people entered needed to be curated. The strategy streams were taken to be generic rather than seen as attached to a particular impact area, and the tendency was for people to put their organizations name in as many streams as possible. This effort - to identify who is working in what areas and in with what mandate - is still important, but it needs to be more discrete and focused on specific programs and services where the goal is linked to a specific impact area.

Likewise, the experiment to gather revenue data and report the collective buying power in the room was not completed. Early feedback indicated very large numbers for private sector and commercial farmers, with very small numbers for many of the home-based or community programs. In some cases, organizations deliver a food program but their mandate is much broader. The food program revenue was typically tiny. A frequent comment was “we just rely on donations and grants”.

Appendix 1: Program Summary-What Happened?

Appendix 2: Summary of the Dig Deeper Discussions

Appendix 3: Regional Food Systems Collective Impact Framework

Appendix 1: Program Summary-What Happened?

Registration, Networking and morning coffee-thank you Level Ground

Welcome –Looking Back and Looking Forward

*Linda Geggie, CRFAIR, Overview and Purpose of the Meeting, history of Food Forward
Who is in the room?*

Pop up Tour: each table circulated to 10 stations to learn about promising work in the region.

Food System Checkup-what do we know about our progress?

Linking with the CRD Regional Food Strategy-Progress Update and Next Steps

Local Lunch by Nourish-Thank you to Elmarie Roberts for the Blessing

Digging Deeper Conversations

- **Youth and Food Security Initiatives**
- **Neighbourhood Food Hubs Strategy**
- **Demonstrating Progress, the Food Systems Report**
- **Linkages with the CRD Food and Agriculture Strategy**

Formalization of the Food and Agriculture Network

Top Things for 2016

Next Steps and Thankyous

Appendix 2 – Detailed Notes on Dig Deeper Discussions

Next Generation Food Champions

What we wanted to explore:

In this group discussion we explored what are ways we can build a community of practice that supports youth taking an interest and role their food system. How as a group of organizations who deliver programs for and are invested in the future of youth support each other through knowledge, skill, resource and asset sharing to avoid redundancies and have better strategic outcomes for our work.

What did we learn?

That people are interested in developing a community of practice. We all have skills and knowledge that we bring to table and can share and learn from each other. People and organizations are interested in building new partnerships and relationships.

Any Next Steps?

From our meeting we have developed a listserv (next-gen-food-champs@googlegroups.com) and a facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/181355068878618/>) to better collaborate and coordinate our efforts. In the new year, we will hold a meeting to begin to dig into the areas we have interest in exploring.

Neighbourhood Food Hubs

What did we want to explore?

In this discussion group the key focus was on getting a better understanding of what we mean by food hubs, what is the need and opportunity for the development of food hubs, and what is already happening that we can learn from and build on both in our region and beyond.

What did we discuss/learn?

- Bringing together food-related services, activities and education leads to greater knowledge, skills and connections within the community
- A Food Hub is a centralized place that could include: emergency food services; a community kitchen; a garden; research activities, food literacy workshops; markets; food recovery; and food processing and distribution.
- There are existing organizations running programs aligned with the Food Hubs strategy. Need to leverage and coordinate with the work that is already being done.
- Food Hubs could be grown from coalitions of community houses. Community services are already "hubs" that provide welcoming spaces and programs.
- Need to consider how best to harness public infrastructure
- Opportunities, needs and assets of each community can be assessed through dialogue with local businesses, community members and faith organizations
- Need to define neighbourhoods and not necessarily use city definitions
- The Food Share Network is conducting a capacity study of existing infrastructure and evaluating regional distribution of need
- A Food Wiki tool could be used to conduct neighbourhood assessments

- Partnership with Food Share Network should be considered. Distributed infrastructure would eliminate need for people to go downtown to pick up food.
- Food trucks could be harnessed as teaching aids to support decentralized food hubs
- Facilities and infrastructure to support small food processors should be assessed.
- Could use a social enterprise model to ensure the need and desire of community is there
- Need to create an advisory committee of key actors to drive strategy forward and avoid duplication
- Important to look outside the region to understand best practices

Any Next Steps?

- Coordinate research and data to inform the strategy development
- Form a working group of key actors to drive the strategy forward

Demonstrating Progress, Food Systems Report

What we wanted to explore?

- What are some uses for the Food System Report?
- What is the most valuable data and why?

What did we learn?

- A wide range of responses from people working in different sectors of the food system (eg. municipal government, Ministry of Agriculture, private business)
- Interest in food access (ie. Where are people accessing local foods, urban farming, amount of agricultural land)
- How could this report be used? Advocacy, program planning, resource planning

Any Next Steps?

- Share report findings broadly

CRD Food and Agriculture Strategy

What we wanted to explore:

- How do we support the CRD in their goal of ensuring that their initiatives are meaningful/impactful, useful and inclusive?
- How do we organize ourselves to communicate, collaborate, learn and continuously improve efforts around a regional strategy?

What did we learn?

- The CRD need to connect closely with members of the public to ensure their process delivers buy-in.
- Local governments need to be engaged in the CRD process and have buy in.
- There is concern about decoupling the Food and Agriculture Strategy from a broader Regional Sustainability Strategy. Food needs to be fully integrated into the larger planning context rather than being placed in a silo.
- A wide variety of local actors and stakeholders need to be involved. Food spans everything from preventative health to farmer issues to economic benefits of recirculating funds within the local economy.
- Any initiatives need to include resources to enable action rather than re-hashing issues that have already been identified.
- All levels of government need to be involved and coordinated to make a difference.
- The CRD needs to be cautious about making proposals to be implemented by local governments without providing commensurate funding.
- A carrying capacity study needs to be done to determine the population base that can be supported in our area. Loss of farmland to development both increases the population that needs to be supported and reduces capacity to produce food.
- Any plan that is developed should clear, agreed-upon by stakeholders and coherent, including specified lines of accountability and implementation strategies.
- Justification for funding should be viewed from an economic development perspective. Results in terms of local spin off benefits and reduced health budget through increased consumption of healthy local foods would speak for themselves
- Stakeholders are diverse and spread over a large area. Formalization of the network CRFAIR has proposed would connect all involved and enhance collaboration.
- All regional districts, not just the CRD should have food strategies and these should be interlinked.

Next Steps:

- Formalize Food and Agriculture Network: Formalization of the network CRFAIR has proposed would connect all involved and enhance collaboration.
- Provide input to CRD to ensure a broad-based food system perspective is considered in the development of a Food and Agriculture Strategy and any accompanying initiatives.

Appendix 3 – Regional Food Systems Collective Impact Framework

Context:

Over the past 15 years, many local actors have come together to address food system concerns. This has included looking at the sustainability and viability of food production, the ability of all people to have access to healthy food, as well as the role that food plays in our culture and our overall community wellbeing. We recognize that the global food system has many downsides, here and around the world, and know we can do better.

CRFAIR was formed in 1997 as a roundtable of organizations to work together to promote a more vibrant, sustainable and localized food system that is accessible to all members of the community. In 2008, a Regional Food Charter and a Food and Health Action plan were developed. Since that time, many of our local governments have embedded food and agriculture considerations into their policy and planning and we are close to completing a Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy.

Four years ago, in an effort to act more strategically, we created a **Regional Food Security Roadmap**. We also adopted a framework called **Collective Impact** to establish long term goals and devise strategies to align regional efforts behind. We also created a system to measure our progress and CRFAIR was named by the community to support this process. This work has continued through many forums, working groups and discussions across the region involving hundreds of people.

Attached are the key outcomes and strategies that have been identified to date.

***Collective impact** is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a complex social problem*

Where are we at right now?

Over the past year, three “**Impact Areas**” have emerged as the focal points for coordinating action: **The Local Food Economy, Food Access and Health, and Food Literacy**. These areas are not stand-alone but integrally interrelated. The attached strategies and outcomes are works-in-progress that we will continue to refine together. You will notice some strategies support more than one area and these are key ones we are mobilizing around.

With support of the Victoria Foundation, we are also creating a **Food Systems Report** that looks back 10 years to see what progress has been made, and how we can more effectively set goals and targets going forward. The report will be ready in early 2016, and is meant to provide evidence and support education, policy change and further coordination and alignment of work in the region.

What are the next steps?

- **Formalize the Food and Agriculture Network as the drivers for the strategy;**
- **Complete and disseminate the Food Systems Report;**
- **Refine and flesh out interim actions for each of the strategies; and**
- **Mobilize research, resources, and action in the strategy Impact Areas**



Food Literacy

Strategy 1: Food Hubs Network

Develop a Community and Neighborhood Food Hubs Network to support collaboration and innovation for healthy place based food

Outcome:
Each Neighborhood has an effective identified food hub(s) as part of the regional network

Strategy 2: New Generation Leaders

Schools are strengthening food knowledge skills and connections, and Youth have opportunities to engage in lead/community food action initiatives and at policy tables

Outcome:
All schools have a food philosophy in place and school based food literacy programs with supporting infrastructure. Increased youth participation and leadership in community based food initiatives

Strategy 3: Public Campaign

CRD residents have an increase understanding of and connection to food through a Public Campaign.
*An ongoing public campaign promotes environments and behavior change that supports healthy, local and traditional foods

Outcome:
Residents in the Capital Region report they grow or access healthy, fresh and local food regularly from 23% to 46%

Impact Area Outcome

Increased Food Literacy to improve health and sustainability in the CRD

Target

Double those who report they grow or access healthy, fresh and local food regularly from 23% to 46%

Food Access & Health

Strategy 1: Vulnerable Populations

Improved access and availability of healthy safe food including traditional foods to most vulnerable

Outcome:
Improved quality and suitability of healthy local food in community food programs by 30%

Strategy 2: Systemic Change

Systemic Change through collective advocacy

Outcome:
E.g. living wage policy, or local government support for food hubs in every neighborhood as part of health and recreation programming

Strategy 3: Collaboration & Communication

Enhance collaboration and cooperation among supporting programs, services and organizations

Outcome:
Establish and build effective FoodShare network meeting Action Plan goals

Impact Area Outcome

All residents in the capital region enjoy food security

(Defined as: all people have ongoing access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food from sustainable, non-emergency sources. (FoodShare Network Action Plan July 2014))

Target

Number of households reporting food insecurity (14%) drops by 25% by 2025 (this would take us to just over 10%)

Food Economy

Strategy 1: Community Food Systems

Increase in community food growing, harvesting, and sharing

Outcome:
Increase in community food production by 5%
(NOTE: no baseline/ way to measure established)

Strategy 2: Commercial Food Systems

Support regional commercial food producers and build land, infrastructure, and distribution capacity

Outcome:
Increase food produced and consumed from less than 10% to 20% by 2025

Strategy 3: Institutional Purchasing

Develop capacity and policies that promote Institutional Purchasing

Outcome:
Increase local food procurement by 25% by 2025 in public institutions

Impact Area Outcome

Strong regional community and commercial food economy supporting sustainable land and water ecosystems

Target

Increase in local food produced and consumed from less than 10% to 25% by 2025