



Food Matters Manitoba

Home of the Manitoba Food Charter, Inc.

2008-09 Annual Report to the Community

Engaging Manitobans Toward Healthy, Fair, Sustainable Food for All

FOOD MATTERS MANITOBA (FMM) has completed its fourth year as an organization and continues to strengthen the food security of Manitoba individuals and communities. The organizations long term goal is to engage Manitobans toward healthy, fair, sustainable food for all. FMM focuses on three major objectives: public education and awareness; developing networks and partnerships; and increasing community and organizational capacity.



FMM had the opportunity to connect with over 52,000 Manitobans at more than 150 community displays and events. Many more Manitobans had the opportunity to learn about food security and FMM through media coverage in papers such as the Winnipeg Free Press and the Manitoba Co-operator. A total of 34 stories in publications across the province shared information about FMM and food security with the broader public, and there were over 233,000 hits on their website in 2008-2009.

In addition to implementing over 20 food security projects, FMM partnered with more than 125 organizations in 2008-2009 to bring skills, knowledge, programs and resources to groups and individuals that have identified needs related to food security. FMM's major events brought together large numbers of people who proved to be a very receptive audience, and they saw huge increases in public participation this past year - most notably at conferences, farmers markets, health and nutrition forums, and gardening events. The organization also benefited from nearly 4000 volunteer hours from its Board and other supporters.

Please see the website at www.manitobafoodsecurity.ca for a complete list of staff, directors, and partners. FMM is a registered charity. To donate please go to www.manitobafoodsecurity.ca.



Community food security is “a situation in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice”. (Hamm & Bellows, 2003)

Eat Local, Buy Local Project

The Eat Local, Buy Local pilot project involves a bilingual public education campaign that includes grocery store shelf signage of Manitoba grown and processed products, a store front display featuring educational materials on the benefits of eating locally, and local food request cards. The project can be found in 16 stores throughout urban, northern and rural Manitoba.



Food Miles School Workshops

This project delivered interactive workshops on food miles, local food systems, and sustainable agriculture to students at all grade levels and to community groups across the province. There have been more than 20 workshops at 12 schools and venues, reaching over 700 students and teachers. An interactive Food Miles Jeopardy Game was also developed and taken to farmers' markets across Manitoba.



Food Security & Northern Harvester Newsletters

The organization is in its third year of distributing quarterly newsletters that profile stories ranging from new Canadian urban farmers, university student gardens, northern community food champions, eating locally, heirloom vegetables and traditional plants, global food issues, and upcoming events. A second quarterly newsletter focuses specifically on food security projects in northern Manitoba. Both newsletters are an important connection for our geographically broad network of partners and stakeholders, and go out to over 1000 groups and individuals.



Food Security Network Website

In partnership with the Bayline Regional Roundtable, FMM maintains the Manitoba Food Security Network website at www.manitobafoodsecurity.ca. The website highlights upcoming events, features community food projects, and hosts resources. FMM plans to launch a public education website in 2010.





Growing Local 2009 Food Security Conference

The Growing Local, Getting Vocal food security conference was held February 20-21 at University of Winnipeg, with nearly 300 attendees, 30 workshop sessions, and 75 presenters. The conference was a chance to showcase existing food security projects and develop new skills, as participants worked towards greater food security in Manitoba. A highlight was a local food dinner featuring Manitoba cuisine from eight restaurants and eight farms, which provided an opportunity to increase rural-urban connections and consumer awareness of the availability of local food.



Northern Harvest Forum in Thompson

The Northern Harvest Forum included hands-on workshops featuring raising chickens in the north, food preservation, food dehydrating, traditional food production, gardening in the North, mobilization of communities, and strategic planning around food. The forum saw a 50% increase in attendees, with over 120 participants from across the north. The event was a chance to showcase existing nutrition, health, and food security projects in the North, as well as develop new skills and community capacity, with northerners growing good food for themselves.





World Food Day & Golden Carrot Awards

The 2008 Golden Carrot Awards recognized 40 of Manitoba's Own Community Food Champions in the Rotunda at the Manitoba Legislature on World Food Day, October 16. The awards honour Manitoba individuals or groups who are working toward a more just a sustainable food system for all. Award categories include Rural, Northern, Urban, Media, Business, and Education Community Food Champions. The same day, FMM partnered to host the play *Unequal Harvest: Voices from the Global Food Crisis*, containing eight first-hand accounts from around the world that highlight just how connected we all are in the global food system.



Northern Grocers' Forums in Thompson & The Pas

FMM partnered with Bayline Regional Roundtable to coordinate two northern grocer's forums to explore how to increase the availability of healthy, affordable food in stores in northern Manitoba. A variety of stores, from independent small grocers and convenience stores to larger chain stores and a food mail carrier were invited. Presentations included such topics as communities looking to start their own stores and food buying clubs, the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative, Healthy School Snack and Lunch programs, and the Freezer Purchase Program. The forum generated a report that outlined seven strategic opportunities to increase food security in the North.



Networks and Partnerships

Perhaps FMM's greatest strength is its ability to foster collaboration and build partnerships with other organizations, leading to tangible outcomes and increases in the food security of Manitobans. FMM partnered with more than 125 organizations in 2008-2009 to bring skills, knowledge, programs and resources to groups and individuals that have identified needs related to food security.

Under the guidance of the Community Liaison, FMM also nurtured the development of six new networks, for a total of nine across the province, including: *The North End Food Security Network*, *United Urban Growers Network*, *The Brandon Food Security Network*, *The University of Manitoba Food Security Network*, *Urban Farmers' Market Network*, and the *Newcomers Inner City Growers Network*. The most successful of these is an active food security network in Winnipeg's North End, with more than 40 participating organizations.



Local Food Projects

FMM completed its second year of work on local food projects in communities across the province. Resources were made available for small-scale food production and nutrition projects that built community capacity and focused on diabetes prevention.

WILLIAM WHITE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Thirty container gardens at three sites in Winnipeg's North End were set up.

ABORIGINAL VISIONING FOR THE NORTH END

A learning kitchen for Aboriginal women at Aboriginal Visioning was developed. Participants met on a weekly basis and learned nutrition and cooking skills and were able to take home food to their families.

FLIN FLON CHARTER CHAPTER

Over 100 community members participated in a community container gardening vegetable project.

WINNIPEG COMMUNITY GARDENING NETWORK

A total of 23 community gardeners attended two water barrel workshops. Participants learned how to make and maintain the barrels, which were then distributed to community gardens for everyone's use.

ROBLIN NETWORK

More than 100 people attended a Taste of Roblin Local Food Market and Festival held in the community last summer.

100 MILE MANITOBA

Approximately 40 participants attended six workshops focused on food preservation, solar food dehydration, and canning and preserving.



WINNIPEG BEACH COMMUNITY & SCHOOL GARDENS

With students playing an integral role, the Winnipeg Beach School created a community garden for students and the general public. More than 80 students have participated in gardening workshops and classes at the site so far.

FARMER'S MARKET ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA

Sixteen producers from farmers markets throughout the province got to attend a direct marketing conference. The project also supported the production of FMAM's stickers promoting farmer's market products.

THE THOMPSON ZOO

Thompson Zoo initiated a small-scale chicken production facility. Zoo visitors were able to see the chickens from the chick stage on, and more than 50 people participated in chicken production workshops.

CAMPERVILLE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Six community leaders participated in lasagne garden and compost building workshops. The site is on the grounds of Camperville's Community Council building.

RESEAU COMMUNAUTAIRE

A food safety workshop was offered and healthy eating and community garden info sessions are planned.

THOMPSON COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens are being developed in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club, Baby's Best Program, Thompson Personal Care Home, and Thompson and Area Home Schooling Families Group.

CRANE RIVER

A community garden is planned, and they prepared the site this year.

DAUPHIN RIVER

Committee members are learning how to garden and use traditional plants.

CAMPERVILLE FOOD BUYING CLUB

A community animator is developing a food buying club and is working towards its first order with 15 people or groups participating.

WEST BROADWAY GOOD FOOD CLUB GOOD FOOD BOX

This project supports the delivery of a monthly box of fresh fruit and vegetables to about 30 families, from a farm just outside the city. Vegetables are also sold at a market at reasonable prices.

SPENCE NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY BASED FOOD RESEARCH PROJECT

Food Resilience – A Low Income Goulash, undertook interviews with 25 residents about their food needs.

GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY GARDEN

This is being developed with the Grand Rapids' Head Start program.

NORTHERN HEALTHY FOODS INITIATIVE COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS

In partnership with other organizations, FMM is supporting 15 communities in northern Manitoba who want to develop local food projects.



Provincial, Municipal, and Pan-Canadian Policy Analysis

During a six month internship a Local Food Policy Analyst Intern produced three key reports.

Manitoba's Local Food System: Growing Healthy Communities

This report outlines challenges that Manitobans are facing and current government action to address food security issues. It also offers 37 opportunities for all levels of government to make Manitoba more food secure. The report provides a practical roadmap for government policies that will promote food security for all Manitobans.

Provincial Approaches To Food Security: A Scan of Food Security Related Policies in Canada

This report, a first for food security in Canada, scans policies, programs, and reports from provincial and territorial governments across the country. It is a valuable guide for anyone interested in comparing provincial food policies across the country, developing policy based on interest and precedent in other jurisdictions, or promoting policy change.

Manitoba Municipal Policy Guide: Growing Food Security in Our Communities

This report highlights numerous opportunities for action at the municipal level, with a focus on the City of Winnipeg in particular. It provides tools to create jobs, reduce landfill costs, raise citizens' quality of life, develop healthy communities, and provide opportunities for recreation and physical exercise, all while increasing the economic prosperity and environmental sustainability of our food system.

