



# The Windsor-Essex County Community Food Matters Forum

October 6, 2010



**PATHWAY TO  
POTENTIAL**  
Windsor Essex County's  
Poverty Reduction Strategy



**United Way**  
Windsor-Essex County  
[weareunited.com](http://weareunited.com)



**Acknowledgements:**

**Food For Change Committee**

**Food Matters Committee**

**Pathway to Potential**

**United Way / Centraide Windsor-Essex County**

**All participants in the Food Matters Forum**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**“We are all at risk of becoming food insecure. In 2009, Windsor’s unemployment rate became the highest in Canada because of the disappearing manufacturing sector in our community” (Hungry for Change, 2009, p.6).**

The Windsor-Essex County (WEC) community is located on the busiest border crossing in North America (Crossing Made Easy, 2009). Highly dependent on the automotive industry, the global economic downturn has had a devastating effect on the WEC economy and the approximately 400,000 people living here (Windsor Essex Development Commission, 2009). With unemployment greater than 10% since 2007, WEC remains the area with the highest unemployment rate in the country. About 10% of the WEC population lives in poverty (Well-Being Report, 2009) and food bank usage in WEC rose 242% between 2006 and 2009 (Well-Being Report, 2009). In 2009 there were approximately 235,000 visits to Windsor and Essex County food banks (Well-Being Report, 2009).

The Food Matters Committee is a partnership of stakeholders that was created in order to address health and food issues in WEC. The mission is to engage agencies and individuals from various sectors to work together to increase access to healthy food for all residents.

On October 6, 2010, a Food Matters Forum was held with 56 participants representing a diversity of sectors including social service organizations, municipal government, education, public health, food banks, food suppliers, and organic farmers. The purpose of the Forum was to provide an opportunity for collaboration among local stakeholders and generate community action steps that would help advance food security in WEC by:

- Building on current initiatives in our community around food security
- Increasing awareness of the variety of food initiatives already occurring
- Identifying action steps to be taken over the next two years
- Identifying what mechanisms are needed to ensure the work continues

Participants self-selected into one of four working groups for the day:

1. Policy Development
2. Emergency Food Distribution
3. Alternative Food Initiatives
4. Urban and Rural Agriculture Initiatives

Each group participated in two activities. They completed an asset mapping of WEC current and upcoming initiatives in their working groups' area of focus. Second, after analyzing the gaps in these areas of focus, they generated Community Action Plans to address the identified gaps.

Participants reconvened into a large group and shared their key Community Action Plans. The following five actions were identified as the priority next steps toward food security in WEC:

**The information gathered at the Forum will be invaluable in the development of future food security initiatives, policy development, and in providing adequate services to the residents of Windsor-Essex.**

1. Acquire a Food Animator to lead the process of implementing the community plan.
2. Create a Food Security Steering Committee that will ensure continued progress towards our community goals
3. Ensure that Forum participants meet regularly to stay current on food security issues, discuss the community's needs, and invite other community stakeholders to participate
4. Engage the elected officials in the food agenda/platform to encourage their commitment to improving food security in WEC.
5. Engage elected officials in supporting the development of a Food Charter to propel the issue of food security to the forefront and develop policies to sustain the food system.

The information gathered at the Forum will be invaluable in the development of future food security initiatives, policy development, and in providing adequate services to the residents of Windsor-Essex.

## **A COMMUNITY NEED: BACKGROUND**

**According to the latest 2005 data from Statistics Canada, about 10% of the WEC population was considered low income, or below the poverty line.**

The Windsor-Essex County (WEC) community is unique; it is located on the busiest border crossing in North America (Crossing Made Easy, 2009) and the City of Windsor is the fourth most ethno-culturally diverse community in Canada (Windsor Essex Development Commission, 2009). Although the agri-food, tourism, education and service industries provide some economic diversification in the region, the local economy is predominantly dependent on the automotive manufacturing sector (Statistics Canada, 2006). Recently, the WEC region has been experiencing some dramatic changes that have had serious consequences for the 400,000 people living in the region (Windsor Essex Development Commission, 2009).

The global economic downturn has had a devastating effect on the local economy. With unemployment consistently greater than 10% since 2007, the WEC community continues to have the highest unemployment rate in the country (see Statistics Canada). Some of the consequences of high unemployment include declining standards of living and health. For example, according to the latest Statistics Canada data from 2005, about 10% of the WEC population was considered low income, or below the poverty line (Statistics Canada, 2006). In addition, in 2006, about 16% of the population of children under the age of 18 in WEC was living below the poverty line. Moreover, certain populations tend to be more likely to live in low income than others, such as seniors and female-led lone-parent families (Well-Being Report, 2009).

**Food bank usage in WEC has risen 242% between 2006 and 2009, and in 2009 there were approximately 235,000 visits to Windsor and Essex County food banks.**

People in WEC are also becoming less healthy and having more difficulty securing nutritious food. Chronic disease is on the rise, with annual increases in incidence of high blood pressure and diabetes since 2005. In addition, fewer people in WEC, when compared to the Ontario average, report that they eat five or more fruits and vegetables per day (Well-Being Report, 2009). Further, food bank usage in WEC has risen 242% between 2006 and 2009, and in 2009 there were approximately 235,000 visits to Windsor and Essex County food banks. These are staggering findings given the number of people living in this community.

As a whole, these statistics illustrate that many people in WEC cannot afford to purchase food on a consistent basis. Many people who previously donated to local food banks now find themselves in need of emergency food. Such community conditions require community action.

## BUILDING ON COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

### Food Security: *Hungry for Change*

Food security occurs “when all people can access adequate amounts of nutritious and culturally acceptable foods”.

In May of 2009, the Food for Change Committee released a report, *Hungry for Change: Working Towards a More Sustainable Food System in Windsor and Essex County* which outlined the state of food security in WEC. Community Food Security is a “condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound diet through an economically and environmentally sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance, social justice, and democratic decision making” (Bellows & Hamm, 2003). Thus, food security occurs “when all people can access adequate amounts of nutritious and culturally acceptable foods” (*Hungry for Change*, 2009, p. 9).

The *Hungry for Change* report outlined several conditions that can threaten food security including the following person-based factors:

- low income,
- high cost of nutritious foods,
- inadequate food preparation skills, and
- lack of grocers and supermarkets in low income areas which leads not only to food deficits but purchasing high-cost, low-nutrition food from places like convenience stores and fast food restaurants.

Given the statistics concerning unemployment and food bank usage cited above, it should be clear that these factors affect a significant number of people in WEC.

In addition to person-based factors, our dependence on global food markets leads to food system factors that can pose risks to food security such as:

- delayed or prolonged food transport which is associated with late deliveries, poor food quality, and environmental threats such as pollution,
- minimal market stock so that only two or three days worth of food is available, consequently in the event of a crisis or system breakdown, shelves could sit empty,
- increased reliance on production and processing of food outside of Canada resulting in a potential loss of control over safety standards of the food we import.

In order to determine the areas of focus that require community strategy to improve food security in WEC, the *Hungry for Change* white paper examined several aspects of food security in WEC and reported the following results:

- **Emergency Food Services:** There are serious challenges of emergency services in WEC to provide nutritious and culturally appropriate food.
- **Food Production:** With the increase in industrial farming which requires large machinery, our local farmers with smaller scale production are competing against these large corporations.
- **Food Processing:** Almost all of the local food processors in WEC are big corporations with only 0.5% of what is processed locally consumed locally (Essex County Federation of Agriculture, as cited in Food for Change Committee, 2009).
- **Food Distribution:** Food distribution in Windsor occurs largely through the grocery store chains. The few alternative food distribution methods that exist include the Windsor Market Square and the Downtown Farmer's Market, which operates seasonally.
- **Food Consumption:** A large amount of the food consumed locally is processed and unhealthy, leading to health concerns including heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. Community kitchens and cooking classes are needed in the community in order to teach valuable cooking skills.

**Only 5% of what is processed locally is consumed locally.**

**Five strategies for positive change:**

- **Collaboration**
- **Education**
- **Research**
- **Advocacy**
- **Action.**

Based on the identified gaps, the report recommended five strategies in order to bring about positive change to food security in WEC:

1. Collaboration: key agencies and individuals must work together
2. Education: key leaders must be educated about the extent of the problem
3. Research: gaps in service and other areas for improvement must be identified
4. Advocacy: a municipal Charter and by-laws must be enacted to support food security
5. Action: food matters must be a community initiative in order to sustain food security

The report also recommended that future initiatives focus on four specific food security areas of focus:

**1. Policy Development:**

Policy Development includes any established or developing policies that are occurring at municipal, provincial and federal levels relating to food initiatives, such as:

- A Food Charter
- Legislation to label nutrition contents and reduce trans-fats.

*Go for Health* is an example of the Policy Development focus area. *Go for Health* is a community coalition that is focused on developing health-related policies including healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. They were instrumental in the recent Healthy Schools Declaration, a pact between area school boards, Health Units and Go for Health, which will promote healthier living among students.

**Four areas of focus:**

- **Policy Development**
- **Emergency Food Distribution**
- **Alternative Food Initiatives and**
- **Urban and Rural Agriculture Initiatives.**

**2. Emergency Food Distribution:**

Emergency Food Distribution includes programs that address crisis food needs, such as:

- Food banks
- Food pantries/cupboards.

The partnership among Unemployed Help Centre of Windsor Inc., Windsor Homes Coalition Inc., and Drouillard Place is an excellent example of Emergency Food Distribution Initiatives. These agencies are collaborating to strengthen the network of emergency food programs to ensure access to food that is nutritious and culturally appropriate. Their commitment is to ensure that individuals and families are food secure across the WEC community.

**3. Alternative Food Initiatives:**

Alternative Food Initiatives includes innovative distribution of food aside from food banks, such as:

- Food voucher programs
- Good food boxes
- Food co-ops
- Meal programs
- Community kitchens.

The *Community Nourishment Partnership* is a great example of Alternative Food Initiatives. A collaboration among several organizations including the Youth and Family Resource Network, South Essex Community Council, Salvation Army Leamington, Cardinal Carter High School, and Amherstburg Community Services, this initiative will create a community garden and will offer a community kitchen for food preparation and preservation classes.

#### **4. Urban and Rural Agriculture Initiatives:**

Urban and Rural Agriculture Initiatives support the growing and distribution of healthy food, from field to table, such as:

- Community gardens
- Container gardens
- Community supported farms
- Urban/rural markets.

*County Connect* is a unique initiative in this focus area. It is an online farmers' market that provides both restaurants and households with fresh, healthy, premium local food. They have developed a Meat Share program where residents can share high quality, naturally raised, healthy, local meat. This ensures that consumers know where their meat is produced.

#### **Food Matters Committee**

**The mission of the Food Matters Committee is to engage agencies and individuals from various sectors to work together to increase access to healthy food for all residents.**

Established in 2010, the Food Matters Committee formed in order to continue the momentum gained from the *Hungry for Change* report and to carry forward the next steps outlined in the report. The Food Matters Committee is a collaboration of community members (Appendix A) who share a commitment to addressing health and food security issues. The mission of the Food Matters Committee is to engage agencies and individuals from various sectors to work together to increase access to healthy food for all residents. Members of the Food Matters Committee include those who work directly with people requiring emergency food, food cooperatives, and other food programs.

## A COMMUNITY PROCESS: FOOD MATTERS FORUM

**On October 6, 2010, 56 individuals from the WEC community participated in the Food Matters Forum to discuss food security issues in WEC.**

The Food Matters Committee developed their future direction from the *Hungry for Change* report, United Way's strategic direction, and Pathway to Potential. The Committee identified as its first priority the need for a community forum in order to develop a Community Action Plan and increase community collaboration.

On October 6, 2010, 56 individuals from the WEC community participated in the Food Matters Forum to discuss food security issues in WEC. The participants represented a diversity of sectors including local social service organizations, municipal government, education, health unit, food security initiatives, and local organic farmers. A list of the participants' organizations can be found in Appendix A. It is acknowledged that there were gaps in participant representation from the food production, processing, and distribution sectors, impacting the results collected in this community process. In the future, efforts to engage these groups will be a priority.

The purpose of the Forum was to develop a Community Action Plan and provide an opportunity for collaboration among local stakeholders that would help advance food security in WEC. Specifically, it was intended to:

1. Build on the work and momentum that is occurring in our community around food initiatives
2. Increase awareness of the variety of food initiatives already occurring
3. Identify action steps to be taken over the next two year
4. Identify what mechanisms are needed to ensure the work continues

The Agenda for the Forum can be found in Appendix B.

## Food Matters Forum: Inspiring Guest Speakers

Food deserts are defined as the lack of appropriate food within a ten minute walk from an individual's residence, and where food is more expensive, with less healthy options.

Five inspiring guests from differing sectors spoke about food security in Windsor-Essex County from their perspective. These presenters included Izabela Muzzin, Lesley Labbe, Lynne Phillips, Elizabeth Strachan, and Steve Green.

**Izabela Muzzin, County Connect** – As part owner of Aleksander Estate Winery, Izabela Muzzin, along with husband Mark, co-founded County Connect, an online local farmers' market that provides restaurants and households with fresh, healthy, premium local food (produce, meats and fish). A supporter of good farming practices, Muzzin discussed the importance of residents celebrating and having access to the abundance of fresh, healthy, quality local food that we have available in Windsor-Essex.

**Lesley Labbe, Organic Farmer** – Lesley Labbe, a local organic farmer, discussed the need to raise awareness not only about the issue of food security, but also the need for eating healthy and nutritious foods. Labbe discussed the need for the community to be aware of the growing food security initiatives in Windsor and Essex County. She shared her experience as an organic farmer and the benefits and challenges of remaining pesticide free. She concluded by encouraging the audience to start growing their own produce and purchasing local, organically grown food.

**Lynne Phillips, University of Windsor** – Lynne Phillips, a professor of anthropology at the University of Windsor, discussed how food security relates to social, economic, political, and cultural demographics. Phillips stated that for food security to exist, all residents must be able to afford food, transportation to purchase food, and have access to culturally appropriate food. In particular, she discussed the existence of “food deserts” in our community, defined by the lack of appropriate food within a ten minute walk from an individual's residence, and where food is more expensive, with less healthy options.

**Contribute to food security within Windsor-Essex by supporting local farmers and producers, participating in community gardens, and educating our children on healthy eating and cooking skills.**

**Elizabeth Strachan, Food Matters Committee** – Elizabeth Strachan is a public health nutritionist with the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit. Strachan co-chaired the Food Security initiative of the Community Sub-committee of Health Action Windsor-Essex. She also co-authored the *Hungry for Change* report. Strachan described the findings of the *Hungry for Change* report at the forum, highlighting the vulnerability of the WEC food system. Elizabeth’s presentation can be found in Appendix C.

**Steve Green, Windsor Essex Supported Agriculture Group** - Steve Green, creator of the Windsor Essex Community Supported Agriculture Group, gave a passionate presentation on the importance of food security in our community and how individuals can make a change. He outlined ways to contribute to food security within Windsor-Essex including supporting local farmers and producers, participating in community gardens, and educating our children on healthy eating and cooking skills. He emphasized the need for a Food Animator to coordinate and drive the community’s activities around ensuring food security.

The range of the participants made it possible to capture a variety of local initiatives and stakeholders perspectives.

### Food Matters Forum: Working Groups

The 56 participants were invited to select one of four working groups and participate in two activities described below. The working groups were based on the four critical areas detailed in *Hungry for Change*. These areas require further development in order to bring positive changes in food security in WEC:

1. Policy Development
2. Emergency Food Distribution
3. Alternative Food Initiatives
4. Urban and Rural Agriculture Initiatives

Each group was facilitated by an individual who was familiar with the state of food security in WEC. The Policy Development group was facilitated by Lynne Phillips, a professor of Anthropology at the University of Windsor. The Emergency Food Distribution group was facilitated by June Muir, President of the Food Bank Association of WEC and Acting Executive Director of the Unemployed Help Centre. The Alternative Food Initiatives group was facilitated by Marina Clemens, Executive Director of Drouillard Place and a member of the Food Bank Association. Finally, the Urban and Rural Agriculture Initiatives group was facilitated by Jessica Sartori, Manager of Community Impact at United Way / Centraide of Windsor-Essex County.

The range of the participants made it possible to capture a variety of local initiatives and stakeholder perspectives. It should be noted that the forum was intended to generate a broad and not necessarily detailed plan. As a result, although the plans that were produced by the working groups are a direct product of the knowledge of the diverse participants in attendance, there may be initiatives in addition to those generated at the Food Matters Forum and not identified by the participants.

## Food Matters Forum: Activity 1 - Asset Mapping

**Participants documented current initiatives and policies in each of the four priority areas.**

In order to develop a Community Action Plan to strengthen food security in WEC, it was first necessary to document current initiatives and policies in each of the four critical areas. This made it possible to examine any gaps and opportunities and generate action items accordingly. At the beginning of the Asset Mapping exercise participants were provided with a Participant Guide to focus the group discussions. This guide included the following key questions:

1. What initiatives already exist in our community and where are they located (or where is the impact with respect to policy development)?
2. Is there work in progress and/or initiatives that are upcoming that should be captured?
3. What do the results of your asset mapping indicate with respect to gaps and/or opportunities?

The participants were given the opportunity to consider these questions individually and then discuss with the rest of their working group. Initiatives that currently exist and those that are upcoming or in progress were plotted onto large city and county maps according to where the initiative was located. The city map was divided according to municipal wards, and the county map was divided according to municipalities. Once completed, the groups were asked to analyze the results of the Asset Mapping to identify gaps and/or opportunities for the Community Action Plan activity.

## Food Matters Forum: Activity 2 - Action Planning

**Participants discussed the gaps and opportunities that were apparent after the Asset Mapping in order to generate Action Steps.**

To generate concrete Action Steps from this forum, participants in each of the four groups discussed the gaps and opportunities that were apparent after the Asset Mapping. Next, each group generated three concrete actions. Using a template, the facilitator recorded each group's responses to the following:

1. Consider what initiatives already exist and the opportunities – are there any initiatives that you can build on for the next action steps?
2. Consider the gaps – are there gaps that should be addressed as a next step?
3. Think about who makes the most sense to lead the action – is it one organization because it fits with their mandate, is it an existing group/coalition/committee, does a new group/committee/ coalition need to be created to move the action forward?
4. What other organizations/businesses/partners need to be at the table to achieve the next step?
5. Are there any specific resources required: information, data, financial support, volunteer support?
6. What is an appropriate time frame to accomplish the action – within 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, or 1 year?

## **FOOD MATTERS FORUM RESULTS: A COMMUNITY PLAN**

The working groups generated an incredible amount of discussion and sharing of ideas, creating an atmosphere of inspiration and commitment towards food security. Following is a summary of the rich results that came out of the working groups.

### **Food Matters Forum Asset Mapping Results**

Each of the four working groups documented current and upcoming initiatives in their respective areas. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list of the initiatives and policies in the area of food security.

**The Policy Development group generated ideas for specific food security policies that WEC should consider adopting.**

#### **Policy Development**

The Policy Development group indicated the need for a Food Security Policy Development Committee. This group generated ideas for specific food security policies that WEC should consider adopting. Due to the nature of this priority, the local policies in relation to food security could not be mapped according to geographic location. Rather, the policies this group generated are listed below.

## Results of Asset Mapping

## Policy Development

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Healthy School Policy</b>	Many school districts are developing and implementing a Healthy School Policy that focuses on nutrition, physical activity, and overall wellness.
<b>Healthy Meetings/Events</b>	Many working groups are implementing Healthy Meetings and events, facilitating healthy working (e.g., exercise breaks), raising awareness of food security, healthy eating, and other topics.
<b>Food Co-Ops</b>	Food Co-ops are local organizations that offer discounted nutritious food items to members for a nominal fee.
<b>Land/By-laws</b>	Land use, zoning, and by-laws are important policies to ensure that community land is being used safely and not contributing to water or land contamination.
<b>Food Charter</b>	A document that helps guide communities, local policy makers, and residents in developing a sustainable food system.
<b>Urban agriculture</b>	Urban agriculture methods are creative ways to grow food in limited space. These methods include community, gardens, and roof-top gardens.
<b>Linking at Provincial and Federal levels</b>	It is necessary to connect and link with all levels of government to ensure that food security is being addressed at the local, provincial, and federal levels. This is also an opportunity to network and share resources at all government levels.
<b>Support for local food and accessibility</b>	Supporting food that is grown locally will help to decrease food mileage, enhance the local food system, and support the local economy.
<b>Prison food contracts</b>	Contracts can be created to include the use of locally produced food in the prison system to support local production.

**The most common type of Emergency Food Initiative listed was food banks.**

### **Emergency Food Initiatives**

The most common type of Emergency Food Initiative listed was food banks. Emergency Food Initiatives were indicated in 7 of the 10 city wards. They were not explicitly present in wards 1, 7, or 10, however, several initiatives were identified that span the city. These include CLUCK, the Canadian Liberated Urban Chicken Klub-Windsor-Essex Chapter; WindsorEats, the online resource of Windsor and Essex County restaurants; Grown Right Here, the buy local campaign for Windsor-Essex; and Community-University Partnership, the University of Windsor's community engagement initiative. These initiatives were also indicated in all 7 of the county municipalities.

**The most common type of Alternative Food Initiative listed was cooking or food preparation classes.**

### **Alternative Food Initiatives**

The most common type of Alternative Food Initiative listed was cooking or food preparation classes. Other services listed include community kitchens, food voucher programs, and food co-ops. Alternative Food Initiatives were indicated in 7 of the 10 city wards. They were not explicitly present in wards 1, 6, or 10. In addition, the alternative food initiatives were explicitly indicated in 5 of the 7 county municipalities. They were not indicated in La Salle or Tecumseh.

**The most common type of Urban/Rural Agriculture Initiative listed was community gardens as well as container gardening and local farmers.**

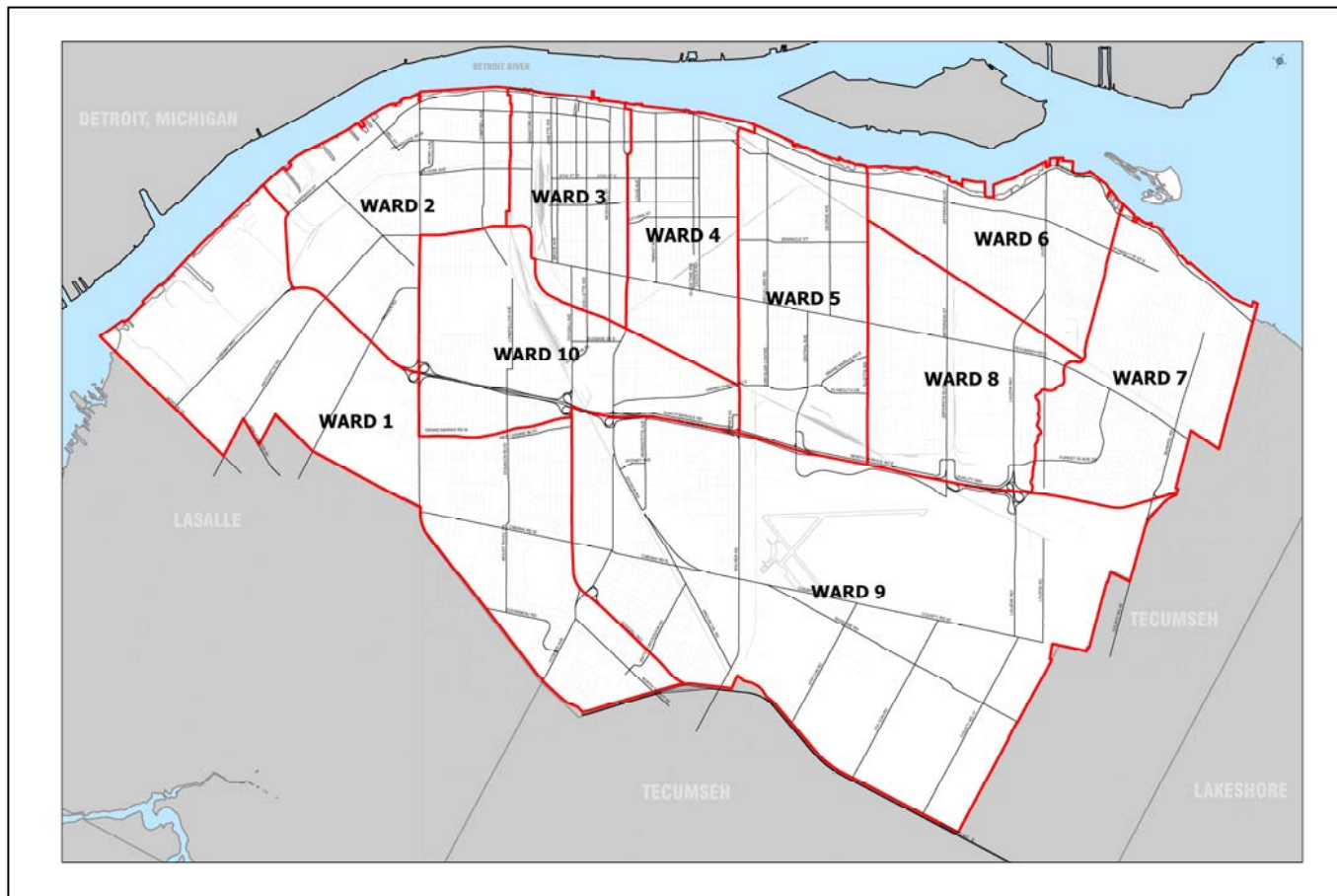
### **Urban / Rural Agriculture Initiatives**

The most common type of Urban/Rural Agriculture Initiative listed was community gardens as well as container gardening and local farmers. Urban/Rural Agriculture Initiatives were explicitly indicated in only 4 of the 10 city wards. They were not indicated in wards 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10. Finally, Urban/Rural Agriculture Initiatives were indicated in 6 of the 7 county municipalities, with the exception of La Salle, which the working group identified would be expected to benefit from the city-wide initiatives the group identified above.

To follow are the results of the asset mapping exercise for the three other groups, Emergency Food Initiatives, Alternative Food Initiatives, and Urban/Rural Agriculture Initiatives.

## Results of Asset Mapping for City of Windsor

## Emergency Food Initiatives

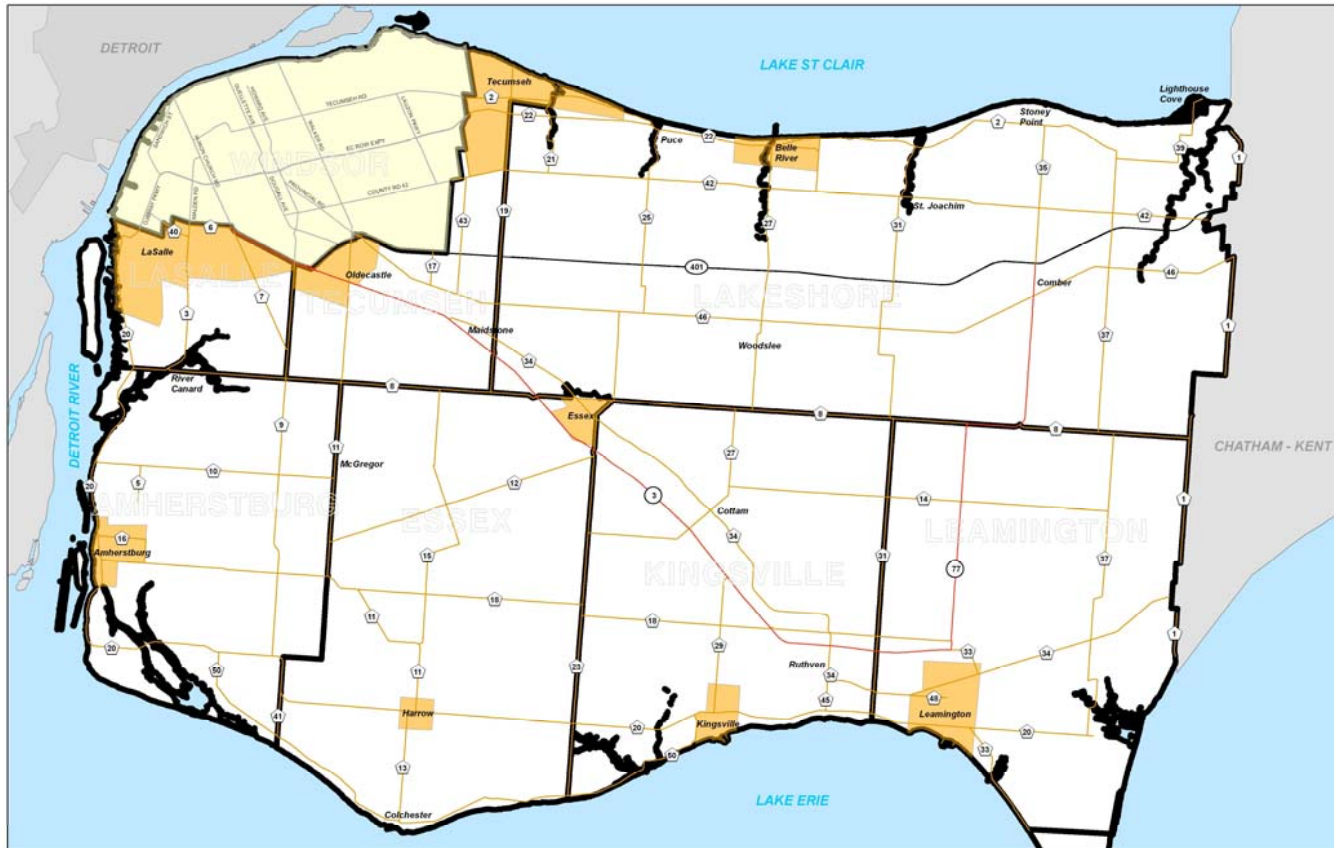


- Ward 1:** None Identified
- Ward 2:** Ambassador Baptist Church; St. John Anglican Church West; Homes Coalition (Central); Well-Come Centre
- Ward 3:** Downtown Mission; Men United for God; Goodfellows; Salvation Army; Grace Baptist Church
- Ward 4:** St. Mary's Gate; Vineyard Community Church
- Ward 5:** New Song Church; Drouillard Place; St. Mary's Cupboard (Central); St. Vincent de Paul Windsor (Central); Parkwood Gospel
- Ward 6:** Peace Lutheran Church
- Ward 7:** None identified
- Ward 8:** 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist Church; Unemployed Help Centre; St. Vincent de Paul (East)
- Ward 9:** Windsor Lifeline Outreach
- Ward 10:** St. Luke In-The-Fields Anglican Church Food Bank

**City-Wide Initiatives:** CLUCK, Windsor-Eats, Grown Right Here, and Community University Partnership

## Results of Asset Mapping for County Municipalities

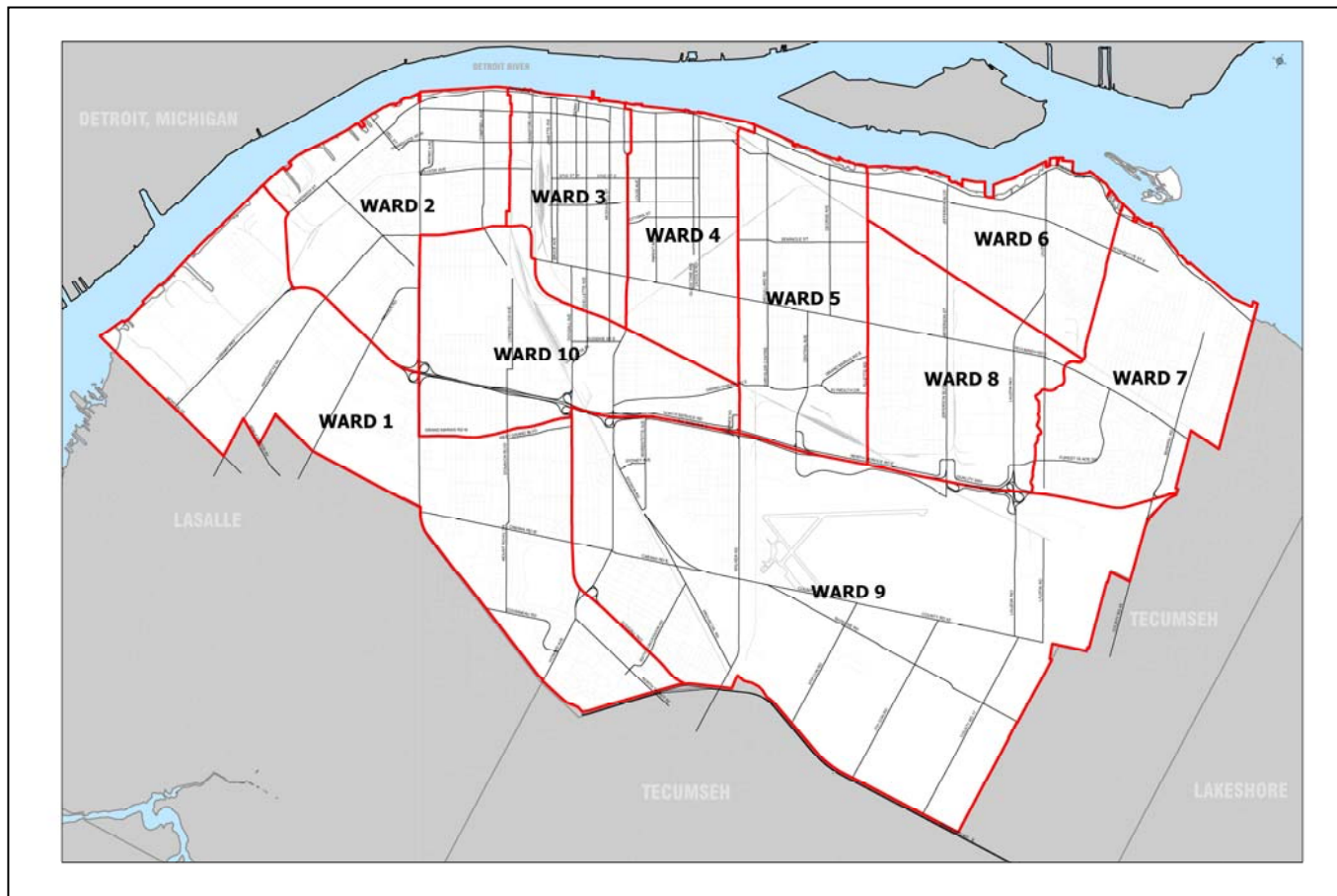
## Emergency Food Initiatives



- La Salle:** St. Andrew's Anglican Church
- Tecumseh:** Goodfellows (Maidstone & Tecumseh)
- Lakeshore:** Lakeshore Community Food Bank
- Amherstburg:** Amherstburg Food and Fellowship; Amherstburg Food Bank
- Essex/Harrow:** Essex Area Food Bank; Salvation Army Essex
- Kingsville:** Bethel Christian Church (Cottam); Kingsville Community Food Bank; St. John de Brebeau Church; Youth and Family Resource Network
- Leamington:** Salvation Army Leamington; Youth and Family Resource Network; Wheatley: Wheatley Church; Tilbury: Tilbury Info and Help Centre
- County-Wide Initiatives:** Windsor-Eats, Grown Right Here, and Community University Partnership

## Results of Asset Mapping for City of Windsor

## Alternative Food Initiatives



- Ward 1:** None Identified
- Ward 2:** Sandwich Teen Action Group- Community cooking classes and community garden; Windsor West- Cooking classes for kids with community garden items; Well-Come Centre- Shelter shopping budget and menu planning.
- Ward 3:** Glengarry- Drop-in Food Co-op; Namaste Non-Profit Café Food Co-op; Windsor Downtown Mission- Culinary Arts Training Program
- Ward 4:** Aboriginal Child and Prenatal Centre- Social Kitchen
- Ward 5:** Drouillard Place- Food Co-op and Community Garden
- Ward 6:** None identified
- Ward 7:** County Connect- Cooking
- Ward 8:** Zehrs Community Centres- Free/low cost cooking classes; Unemployed Help Centre
- Ward 9:** Windsor Christian Fellowship
- Ward 10:** None identified
- City-Wide Initiatives:** CLUCK, Windsor-Eats, Grown Right Here, and Community University Partnership

## Results of Asset Mapping for County Municipalities

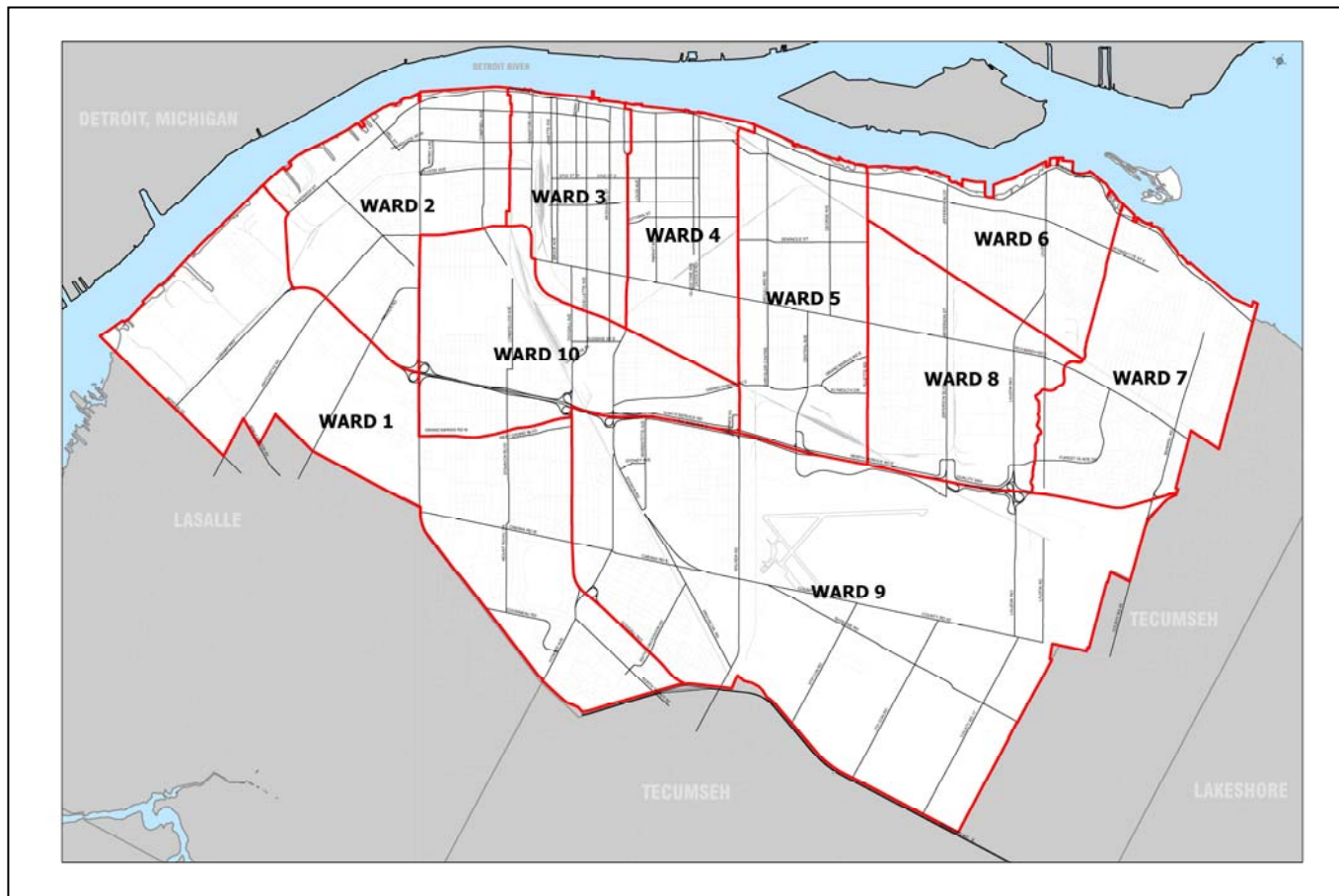


## Alternative Food Initiatives

**La Salle:** None identified  
**Tecumseh:** None identified  
**Lakeshore:** St. Andrews Presbyterian Church- Community Garden  
**Amherstburg:** Youth and Family Resource Network  
**Essex/Harrow:** Youth and Family Resource Network- Food vouchers  
**Kingsville:** Youth and Family Resource Network- Food vouchers  
**Leamington:** Youth and Family Resource Network- Food vouchers  
**County-Wide Initiatives:** Windsor-Eats, Grown Right Here, and Community University Partnership

## Results of Asset Mapping for City of Windsor

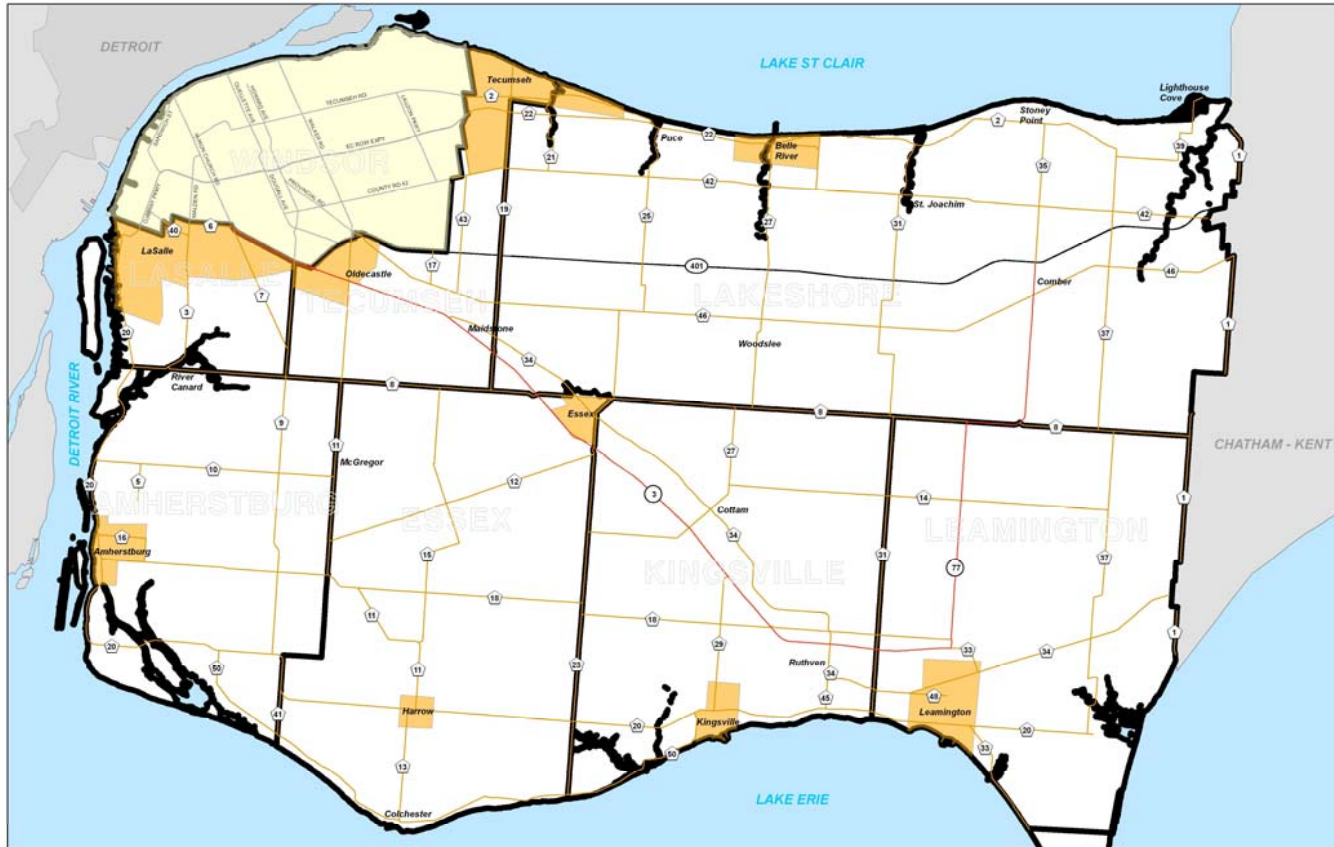
## Urban / Rural Agriculture



**Ward 1:** None Identified  
**Ward 2:** Windsor Housing- Low income gardens; Fed-Up' University of Windsor Community Garden (Sunset/California); Sandwich Community Health Centre- Community Garden  
**Ward 3:** Downtown Mission-Community Kitchen and Food Bank; All Saints Church-Community Kitchen; Ready Set Go- Container Gardening and Cooking on a Shoestring  
**Ward 4:** Citizens Env't Alliance-Community Garden  
**Ward 5:** Ford City- Community Garden (coming soon); Drouillard Place- Food Co-op and Community Garden  
**Ward 6:** None identified  
**Ward 7:** None identified  
**Ward 8:** None identified  
**Ward 9:** None identified  
**Ward 10:** None identified  
**City-Wide Initiatives:** CLUCK, Windsor-Eats, Grown Right Here, and Community University Partnership

## Results of Asset Mapping for County Municipalities

## Urban/Rural Agriculture



**La Salle:** None identified  
**Tecumseh:** EWCHIE Mart-Organic Food (Provincial/Walker Rd.)  
**Lakeshore:** County Connect-Local food out to county/accessibility  
**Amherstburg:** Amherstburg Farmer's Market  
**Essex/Harrow:** Land-Mauser Foundation- Community Gardens? Organic Farmers Start?  
**Kingsville:** Youth and Family Resource Network- Community Nourishment  
**Leamington:** Leamington Road Side Stands; Wheatley- Organic Beef and Pork (William and Louise Taves)  
**County-Wide Initiatives:** Windsor-Eats, Grown Right Here, and Community University Partnership

**Patterns within specific geographic locations are evident. It is clear that many of the food security initiatives are clustered in certain geographic areas of the city and county, and other areas in WEC lack services.**

## **Asset Mapping Summary**

Several themes are readily apparent from the results of the mapping of the above four working groups. The Policy Development group listed very few food security policies currently implemented in WEC suggesting that this area of food security may need further attention.

There was notable consistency in specific types of social service organizations across the three mapped areas of focus, emergency food initiatives, alternative food initiatives, and urban/rural agriculture initiatives, as many were frequently repeated. The most commonly listed initiatives included food banks, community gardens, and cooking classes. Patterns within specific geographic locations are evident. It is clear that many of the initiatives are clustered in certain geographic areas of the city and county areas, and other areas in WEC lack services including the following:

- Wards 1 and 10 lack any identified food security resources across all critical areas of focus. Ward 1 may be considered more economically prosperous than some other wards, but ward 10 would be considered more economically disadvantaged than some other wards.
- Wards 6 and 7 had very few assets mapped, particularly in the area of Urban/Rural Agriculture. These wards are not considered to greatly differ economically from the other wards.
- Of the county municipalities, La Salle had few assets mapped in the areas of Alternative Food Initiatives and Urban/Rural Agriculture. La Salle is very close to Windsor compared to some of the other county municipalities and may benefit from the city-wide initiatives.

Finally, another noteworthy finding was that across the city and county, only Ward 4 was identified as having a population-focused food security program. Ward 4 has an Aboriginal Child and Prenatal Centre. The centre provides a culturally appropriate community kitchen. No other location was listed as having a population-specific food security program. This is interesting given that the City of Windsor is the fourth most ethno-culturally diverse community in Canada (Windsor Essex Development Commission, 2009). This suggests there may be a lack of culturally appropriate food security initiatives in WEC for other cultural groups.

## Food Matters Forum Action Planning Results

**There was overwhelming consistency across the four groups in their assessment of the gaps and subsequent Community Action Plans.**

After considering the results of the Asset Mapping exercise, the groups discussed the gaps in food security initiatives in WEC. There was overwhelming consistency across the four groups in their assessment of the gaps and subsequent Community Action Plan. A summary of the action planning is presented below and the complete results from this exercise can be found in Appendix D. It should be noted that the lead and partner agencies listed by the groups in this action planning exercise are not exhaustive and those listed may not be best suited for these identified roles. The results are limited by the individuals and agencies represented at the forum.

### 1. Leadership

The Forum participants identified the lack of strong, consistent leadership in moving the food security initiative forward in WEC. A clear priority for a Food Animator was expressed. This person would coordinate and drive the initiative. A Food Security Steering Committee was also discussed as a means to bring together the Forum participants and other community stakeholders in order to coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Community Action Plan.

**The four main areas  
of action:**

- **Leadership**
- **Collaboration**
- **Awareness**
- **Education**

## **2. Collaboration**

Collaboration was also identified as a gap among food banks and other food security service providers. Participants stressed the need for a comprehensive and collaborative approach to identify other gaps, minimize duplication of efforts, improve the referral system, and develop shared practices. Collaboration across the community will begin to eliminate barriers experienced by service users. On-going collaboration will also aid in developing additional programs that are needed throughout the community.

## **3. Awareness**

An important aspect of remediating food insecurity is to raise awareness throughout the community. The Forum participants recognized the need for a Food Security Awareness Campaign that will not only shed light on food security issues within the community but also highlight initiatives across the community.

## **4. Education**

To continue to develop a sustainable food system in WEC, it is important to develop a strategy to educate the next generation in sustainable and healthy food practices. Educating parents and children about eating locally and nutritiously is essential in developing a successful local food system that is inclusive and sustainable.

## NEXT STEPS: TOWARD FOOD SECURITY IN WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY

**Five priority  
next steps  
were  
identified by  
Forum  
participants.**

At the conclusion of the Food Matters Forum, the participants came together for each group to present their results. The large group then participated in a discussion of the next steps for the food security initiative and reached consensus. The following are the activities that the whole group indicated were the priority next steps.

1. Acquire a Food Animator to lead the process of implementing the Community Action Plan.
2. Create a Food Security Steering Committee (with municipal representative) that will meet regularly to ensure that next steps are being implemented and collaboration is taking place.
3. Ensure that this group comes together regularly to stay current on food security issues, discuss the community's needs, and invite other community stakeholders to participate.
4. Engage the candidates running in the upcoming municipal election about their food agenda/ platform to encourage their commitment to improving food security in WEC.
5. Engage elected officials in supporting the development of a Food Charter to propel the issue of food security to the forefront and develop policies to sustain the food system

## CONCLUSION

The release of the *Hungry for Change* Report and the formation of the Food Matters committee were powerful catalysts for the Food Matters Forum. The information gathered at the Forum will be invaluable in the development of future food security initiatives, policy development, and in providing adequate services to the residents of Windsor-Essex. Most importantly, with the input gained at the Food Matters Forum, community stakeholders will continue to collaborate and move forward in implementing the Community Action Plan outlined by the Forum participants. There is a great deal of momentum growing the area of food security in WEC; therefore participants will need to reconvene to track progress made, update participants on the implementation of the Community Action Plan, and identify new priorities to ensure a comprehensive food security system.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Food Matters Forum Attendees**

#### **FORUM PLANNING GROUP**

Mary Lynn Biggley (Jump Start Student Nutrition, Greater Essex County District School Board)  
Marina Clemens (Drouillard Place)  
Lorraine Goddard (United Way / Centraide of Windsor Essex County)  
Thom Hunt (City of Windsor)  
Talia Kleinplatz (Pathway to Potential)  
Colleen Mitchell (Community Consultation Services)  
June Muir (Unemployed Help Centre)  
Jessica Sartori (United Way / Centraide of Windsor Essex County)  
Catherine Shanahan (Family Respite Services)  
Adam Vasey (Pathway to Potential)

#### **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS**

Steve Green (Windsor Essex Supported Agriculture Group)  
Lesley Labbe (Organic Farmer)  
Izabela Muzzin (County Connect)  
Lynne Phillips (University of Windsor)  
Elizabeth Strachan (Windsor Essex County Health Unit)

#### **LEAD FACILITATOR**

Colleen Mitchell

#### **GROUP FACILITATORS**

Marina Clemens  
June Muir  
Lynne Phillips  
Jessica Sartori

#### **FORUM LOGISTICS**

Anjana Jacob

## **PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATIONS**

Aboriginal Child Centre  
Aids Committee of Windsor  
Can-Am Indian Friendship Centre  
City of Windsor  
Community Living Windsor  
Community University Partnership  
County Connect  
Downtown Mission of Windsor, Inc.  
Drouillard Place  
Family Respite Service  
Family Service Windsor-Essex County  
Jumpstart Student Nutrition Program  
Municipality of Leamington  
New Beginnings  
New Canadians' Centre of Excellence Inc.  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Our Farm Organics Downtown Farmers Market  
Pathway to Potential  
RDEE Ontario  
Ready Set Go  
Salvation Army Windsor Community and Rehabilitation Centre  
St. Leonard's House  
St. Luke in the Fields Anglican Church  
St. Vincent De Paul  
Town of Essex  
Unemployed Help Centre of Windsor  
University of Windsor  
Vidmer Funghi Ltd  
Voices Against Poverty  
Victorian Order of Nurses - Ontario Student Nutrition Program  
Windsor Essex Community Supported Agriculture  
Windsor Essex Economic Development Commission  
Well-Come Centre for Human Potential  
Windsor Essex County Health Unit  
Windsor Essex Community Foundation  
Windsor Essex Community Health Centre  
Windsor Homes Coalition Inc.  
Windsor Workers Action Centre  
Windsoreats.com  
Youth and Family Resource Network of Essex County

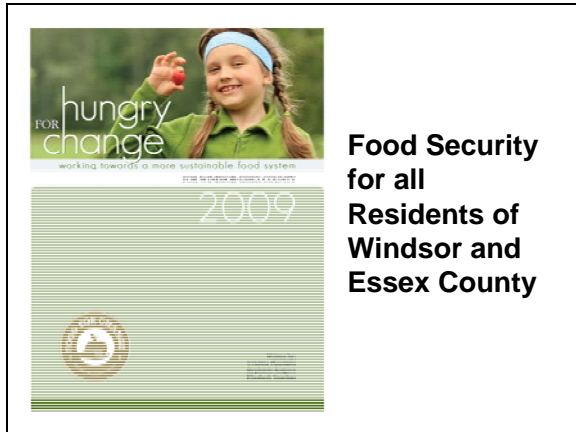
**Appendix B**  
**Food Matters Forum Agenda**  
**October 6, 2010 8:30am - 1:30pm**  
**Fogolar Furlan Club of Windsor (Windsor Hall)**

<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Presenter(s)</b>
8:30 – 8:50	Registration and refreshments	
8:50 – 9:00	Introductions	Colleen Mitchell, Facilitator
9:00 – 9:30	Inspiring Food: Panel	Izabela Muzzin, County Connects Lesley Labbe, Organic Farmer
9:30 – 10:00	Context: Food Matters Committee Report  Food Deserts Research	Elizabeth Strachan  Lynne Phillips, Professor, Anthropology, University of Windsor
10:00 – 10:15	<b>BREAK</b>	
10:15 – 11:00	Showcasing and Mapping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Development</li> <li>• Emergency Food Distribution</li> <li>• Alternative Food Initiatives</li> <li>• Urban and Rural Agriculture Initiatives</li> </ul>	Small Group Facilitators Lynne Phillips / Andrea June Muir Marina Clemens Jessica Sartori
11:00 – 11:45	Priorities for Moving Forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any significant gaps?</li> <li>• What are the opportunities for moving forward? (Partnering, sharing materials/knowledge, etc)</li> <li>• Identify 2 priorities within your group that will be addressed over the next 1 – 2 years</li> </ul>	Small Group Facilitators Lynne Phillips / Andrea June Muir Marina Clemens Jessica Sartori
11:45 – 12:00	<b>WORKING LUNCH</b>	
12:00 – 12:30	Report Back	Small Groups
12:30 – 12:45	Inspiring Individual Action	Steve Green, Food Passionist / Community Supported Agriculture
12:45 – 1:15	Where do we go from here? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering Committee</li> <li>• Community Involvement</li> </ul>	Colleen Mitchell, Facilitator

## Appendix C

### *Hungry for Change* Presentation at Food Matters Forum

#### Elizabeth Strachan



**Food Security for all Residents of Windsor and Essex County**

### Food for Change Partnership

- 2006 - 2010 Health Action Windsor-  
Essex invests in food security
- 2007 - 2009 Several workshops held  
with community partners
- 2009 Food For Change partnership  
created
- 2010 Hungry for Change document  
launched



### Hungry for Change

- Extent of the need
- Food Security is not just about food banks
- Vulnerable food systems
  - Agriculture
  - Processing
  - Transportation
  - Distribution

### Five Strategies For Change

- Collaboration: we need to work together
- Education: we need to inform the community
- Research: need to collect information
- Advocacy: need a Food Policy Charter for WEC
- Action: need to create opportunities for people to obtain healthy foods

### Call to Action

- Invest the project with community partners to continue the work done to- date by the Food For Change partnership
- United Way- the emergency food and distribution systems
- University of Windsor- the development of a food policy charter.

**Appendix D**  
**Food Matters Forum Community Action Steps (1 of 2)**

Next Steps	Lead(s)	Partner(s)	Resources	Time Frame
<b>Emergency Food Distribution</b>				
Consider gaps in service: Know what each food bank is doing, services offered, and responsibilities Important to share information	Windsor Essex Food Bank Association (WEFBA)	- Members of the WEBFA - 211	- Staff/ Volunteers to make phone calls	6 months (database)
Invite 211 to next WEFBA meeting to provide accurate information	WEFBA	- WEFBA - 211 - Any agencies interested in this information as well	- Each food bank to have their updated information, services, hours, programs to submit	6 months
Better accommodation to different cultural needs, provide information with food that may be new to these clients (recipes)	WEFBA	- Members of WEFBA	- Get this information out to other food banks that are not members of the WEFBA	6 months
Contact County Connect to meet with Farmers Association	WEFBA	- County Connect - WEFBA subcommittee	- Need to know what is needed (produce)	6 months
<b>Alternative Food</b>				
Identify geographic gaps in WEC to decide whether gap exists	- Health Communities - Pathway to Potential	- Voices Against Poverty - WEFBA	- 211	--
Outcome: "We Know" Awareness-Advocacy to the development of: AFI (gardens, kitchens)	- Collaborative efforts of H.S.C. of Pathway to Potential	Many	- People	April 2011
Development of WEC Food Voucher Program	- Pathway to Potential Health Committee	- WEFBA, Food Co-Op, Groups already using voucher programs	- Other existing programs - Finances: Weston Foundation, Windsor Community	Pilot Project June 2011

## Food Matters Forum Community Action Steps Continued (2 of 2)

Next Steps	Lead(s)	Partner(s)	Resources	Time Frame
<b>Urban and Rural Agriculture</b>				
Develop leadership to move the entire agenda forward (collaboration & obtain funding)	Pathway to Potential (coordinate the network) - WEDC - United Way - Municipalities - Tourism	Any stakeholders Schools Seniors Organizations People in the community	- MPs - People - Access Point	Start now, continuous
Education Strategy (educate parents, young children about food growers, eating nutritious, buying is long-term, sustainable strategy)	- Representative from Public Health - School Boards	Schools Industry WEDC Committee to do the program (UHC, City, Health Unit)	- People - Space - Program development - Funding	Start now, continuous
Ease of Distribution (affordable, transportation, childcare)	A coordinator - MSW student overseen by United Way - Social Services in the county		- School buses - Study on how to bring the food to people - Incentives - Existing resources	Start now, continuous
<b>Policy Development</b>				
Increase community stakeholders in Food Advisory Working Group	None identified	None identified	None identified	None identified
Food Advisory Council (with counsellor)	None identified	None identified	None identified	None identified

