Spryfield, Nova Scotia
COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY RESEARCH REPORT - SUMMARY
February 2015

Produced by:

Chebucto Connections
Strengthening Community in Spryfield and District

St. Paul’s Family Resources Institute
“Committed to Community”

Community University Research Alliance
Activating Change Together for Community Food Security

With the support of:

FoodARC
research inspiring change

Mount Saint Vincent University

Nova Scotia Food Security Network

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Acknowledgements

The Community-University Research Alliance: Activating Change Together for Community Food Security (ACT for CFS) was made possible through the commitment and efforts of hundreds of individuals. It involved a team of nearly 70 organizational partners from across the province including communities, universities and government, along with students and staff, all committed to participatory action research, participatory leadership and a common vision for community food security.

This report, about the Participatory Community Food Security Assessment conducted in Spryfield, is one piece of the ACT for CFS project that would not have happened without this larger involvement of so many individuals and organizations. As well, the training, funding, and human resources we received made it possible for Spryfield to be part of this larger project.

It was a pleasure to work with the other three communities who participated in the assessments: Shelburne County Seeds and the Tri-County Local Food Network (Eastern Shelburne County); Kids Action Program (Northeastern Kings County); and Pictou County Food Security Coalition (Pictou County). In Spryfield, the lead organizations were Chebucto Connections and St. Paul’s Family Resources Institute.

We would also like to acknowledge the members of the Advisory Committee in Spryfield, as well as the many students and staff who contributed their passion and hard work to our community. We are enormously grateful to Satya Ramen as the Coordinator of ACT for CFS. She always found the time to answer all our questions, and provided the information we asked for with grace and patience. Many thanks also to Co-Directors, Patty Williams and Christine Johnson.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Willison
Chebucto Connections

Kristen Hollery
St. Paul’s Family Resources Institute
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUMMARY</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WHY</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WHAT?</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDICATORS AND METHODS</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOVA SCOTIA POLICY LANDSCAPE</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATA ANALYSIS</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO WHAT?</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AN INTERPRETATION</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDEAS</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMIC/MATERIAL RELATIONS</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ORGANIZATIONAL/INSTITUTIONAL FORCES</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOW WHAT?</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CALL TO ACTION</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MAKE FOOD MATTER</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONGOING KNOWLEDGE SHARING</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY PLANNING</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME AND COSTS OF LIVING</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLICY CHANGE</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MORE ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL FOOD DISTRIBUTION HUB/CENTER</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOBILE FOOD MARKETS</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHANGE THE CURRENT FOOD BANK MODEL</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY ORCHARDS, OVENS, AND ROOT CELLARS</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCALE-APPROPRIATE REGULATIONS</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENCOURAGE FARMING AS A PROFESSION</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENHANCED SUPPORTS FOR LOCAL PRODUCERS</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SUPPORTS</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REDUCE FOOD WASTE IN FARMS AND FIELDS</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GREATER POLITICAL ACTION</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COORDINATING BODY FOR COMMUNITY WORK</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOOD SKILLS DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOLS</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY SPRYFIELD</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spryfield Community Food Security Report

Summary

Why
Two big questions for Nova Scotia are, “What is community food security” and “How do communities become more food secure”. Activating Change Together for Community Food Security (ACT for CFS) is rooted in people’s lived experiences, real community needs and innovative solutions. It was founded on an alliance among universities, community-based organizations, and government, and was supported through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The project started in 2010, when FoodARC at Mount Saint Vincent University brought together a wide variety of partners to launch this five-year, participatory research project.

Spryfield started as a farming community and grew food for Halifax in the city’s early days. Today, food is still a strong theme in Spryfield, with active groups such as the Urban Farm Museum, community kitchens, Boys and Girls Club, food education programs, three food banks, back-yard gardeners, Spryfield Community Garden, and the annual Spryfield Village Harvest Festival.

In spite of all this activity at the community level, many community members do not have access to “enough affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food, produced in socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable ways that promote self-reliance and social justice”. Think about it. One or more parts of this vision of “community food security” is missing or challenging for most individuals and communities.

It, therefore, made sense to Chebucto Connections to apply for Spryfield to be selected as one of four communities in Nova Scotia to participate in ACT for CFS. The project was looking to work with four communities from across Nova Scotia and aimed to engage diversity in physical location, previous food work, and the community’s readiness and capacity to be involved and work with other communities. The four areas chosen were: Northeastern Kings County, Pictou County, Eastern Shelburne County, and Spryfield. The purpose was not to compare communities, but rather to broaden our collective understanding of community food security in Nova Scotia.

This document is a summary of what we found in Spryfield about community food security, including opportunities for change. A more detailed report from Spryfield can be found at http://foodarc.ca/actforcfs/results-publications. These findings from Spryfield have also contributed to the provincial ACT for CFS report (titled Making Food Matter: Strategies for Activating Change Together), along with the findings from three other Nova Scotian
communities. For more information about the provincial report and the ACT for CFS project, please visit http://foodarc.ca/actforcfs.

**What?**

**Indicators and Methods**
The researchers in ACT for CFS and the four communities knew that community food security has many aspects to it. We also knew we needed to reach a wide variety of people who live and work in our communities. We wanted to hear from people of different ages and income levels, from different neighborhoods and cultural backgrounds, and with different experiences and levels of education.

With these thoughts in mind, the researchers and four communities went through a process together to decide which aspects of community food security to look at (we called these “indicators”), and consider various methods for hearing from different people. We started in the fall of 2011 by asking people in Spryfield, *“What do you think of when you think about food?”* We continued through 2012 and 2013 to May of 2014 to hear from local residents, using a variety of methods to help people feel more comfortable and capture a variety of perspectives (see Table 1 – Qualitative Research Methods). We combined this information with inventories of local, food-related resources, developed maps of potential food-growing areas in Spryfield, developed maps to identify areas in which residents may experience challenges accessing food, and gathered information on food affordability in Spryfield for different families. In total, information was collected on 10 indicators in each of four communities, in some cases using more than one approach, in order to create a full picture. Information was also collected on one food issue of particular interest in Spryfield.

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<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>One or two facilitators asked questions of small groups of people. Focus groups were held with:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>14 service providers in Spryfield were asked to provide information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 All research activities were reviewed by the Mount Saint Vincent University Research Ethics Board to ensure appropriate steps were taken to protect participants in the research.

2 Food insecurity refers to a situation during which someone might have difficulty accessing, or worry about not having access to enough, affordable, acceptable, and nutritious food needed for an active, healthy life, as defined by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in the 1996 Rome Declaration on World Food Security (http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/w3613e/w3613e00.htm).
about supports available to those vulnerable to food insecurity. Participants either filled out the surveys on their own, or they answered the questions over the phone.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Individual interviews were held with:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o 12 individuals involved in producing, processing, or selling local food were interviewed about opportunities and barriers to selling locally.</td>
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<td>o 15 individuals were interviewed about their experiences accessing foods needed for special diets (e.g., cultural or religious reasons, health reasons, or preferences).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Photovoice            | 3 participants answered a question about their experiences physically accessing food by going into the community and taking photos, then discussing their photos with other participants and a facilitator. |

| Storysharing          | 4 participants were asked a question ahead of time about their experiences in participating in community food-related activities, and then met with other participants and a facilitator to share their stories |

**Nova Scotia Policy Landscape**

At the same time as Spryfield and the other three communities were collecting data and hearing diverse views, researchers were interviewing people from across the province to better understand the policies and players in the Nova Scotia food landscape. In all, 41 interviews were conducted among a diverse range of health, agriculture, anti-poverty, and fisheries stakeholders. As well, researchers carried out a review of reports, media news articles, and academic literature related to community food security. (To see the results of this research, please refer to the full report.\(^3\))

**Data Analysis**

Research assistants in the project reviewed what participants said in interviews, focus groups, Storysharing, and Photovoice activities, as well as the results from the surveys, inventories, and maps from Spryfield and the other three communities. The four communities also had meetings, and talked about different ways of analyzing the data, so that we could:

1. Find information and ideas we were expecting to find.

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2. Find ideas and information that we hadn’t anticipated. In this way, we could combine the knowledge from various bodies of research with the lived experiences and views of residents.

It is important to note that the results described the views, experiences, and ideas of people who came forward to participate in the research. The results may or may not capture the breadth of opinion in the whole population of Spryfield, but they do present a clear snapshot of the views and experiences expressed by a diverse range of research participants.

Understanding the Results

We usually think of food in very personal and individual ways, but the food system can be thought of in four parts:

- Individual factors
- Our social environment and networks
- Physical environments and settings
- Macro-level environments/sectors, or those factors operating on our community.

We used this framework to help us to identify and define key aspects of community food security. It helped us to organize the ideas and experiences emerging from the data, so that we could make sense of what the data were telling us. Each factor influences, and is influenced by, the others, rather like the way communities operate: individuals interact in their social environments and networks, within the physical environments and settings of the community, influenced by factors operating on the community from outside.

The purpose of the project was to increase community food security for all Nova Scotians by:

1. Understanding the components of community food security from many points of view
2. Increasing our capacity – as individuals, community members, and citizens – to address community food security through policy change.

In considering all of the information that was gathered, it is useful to think about power as part of social and political change. In particular, we focused on three forms of power in identifying opportunities and barriers to change. They are:

- Ideas
- Organizational/Institutional Forces

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• Economic/Material Relations.

Within each of these areas of power, there are competing forces. Some forces support the status quo, some support change, and others may be neutral. The current situation (status quo or norm) depends on the balance of forces at any given time and can be represented at the intersection (or convergence) of these three realms of power. Policy or social change can happen when these forces change direction and become the new norm. The results have been grouped and interpreted according to both of these approaches.

**So What?**

**An Interpretation**

**Ideas**

Ideas dominated the findings, sometimes with general agreement, and sometimes with opposite viewpoints. There were misunderstandings and stereotypes on one hand that create barriers to community food security, and shifts in thinking about food on the other hand that could move us toward greater community food security. What does this mean?

The concept of local food is viewed in different ways. There is a growing interest and greater awareness in healthy and locally-produced, high-quality foods, which is creating a trend in niche markets, as well as unmet demands. At the same time, people are often unaware of local food resources and outlets and expressed concern about costs and availability, particularly for people on low or fixed incomes, and people on special diets. The ideas of self-sufficiency, growing your own food, and land for agricultural gardening in Spryfield could contribute to community food security. For example, in assessing community agriculture suitability in Spryfield, Dalziel found “The general results showed that approximately 45% of Spryfield would be suitable for garden development, assuming soil is brought in.”

People generally are not used to eating or are not able to access local foods in season.

…and it’s not what I would call locally produced because it’s travelling more than fifty or a hundred kilometers in all likelihood.

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[Local Food Interview]

Spoiled, out-of-date, and unhealthy foods donated to food banks reflect a lack of respect for food bank users.

People who, for a variety of reasons, lack sufficient income to purchase enough food report feelings of shame and embarrassment, and they believe that other people hold misperceptions and make incorrect assumptions about them. For participants, it feels better to receive food that is given respectfully, rather than through a model that reinforces power imbalances and further marginalizes those vulnerable to food insecurity. Parents experience fears and concerns about losing their children if it is known that they have difficulty feeding their families. Low-income individuals, such as seniors and lone parents, are often creative in managing very difficult circumstances, and some receive help from family and friends. Social assistance funding and minimum wage levels are insufficient to meet the actual cost of food.

... but I do what I do for people because the thing that I've noticed over the years is that people will tell you if they’re struggling with rent, people will tell you if they’re struggling with the lights, people will tell you if they’re struggling with children, the phone, but very few people will tell you that they don’t have enough food to feed their kids. There’s this real secrecy and pride around food, and lack of it, that people have.

[Storysharing]

The low visibility of breastfeeding in public, the sexualization of breasts, a general lack of acceptance, and misperceptions and self-blame create barriers to breastfeeding. On the other hand, support and reassurance from family, friends, and other mothers, as well as from programs and professionals, and a growing acceptance of breastfeeding by the public, support women. Cost-savings (avoiding the purchase of formula), bonding with baby, and the health of baby and mother were cited as reasons to breastfeed. Some mothers found bottle-feeding more convenient, so that others may participate in and support baby care, and some mothers faced significant challenges and overwhelming odds against breastfeeding. Women need to feel respected and supported in their choices.

Spryfield has a strong social fabric, and food plays a social role. People give and share food, and do things together around food, whether growing it, distributing it, consuming it, or educating people about it. Dietary habits and food preparation skills have the potential to increase community food security.

There’s also...well, there’s also community support – we have a bunch of friends that collect in the day time, most people work, but others...well, I’m at home with my children
and she comes over and ‘bring your leftovers and bring your whatever’ and then we just kind of...so making more potlucks with your neighbors actually makes more food for your table – everybody eats. You might have half of something leftover but that'll go great with a salad that I have leftover. And we end up eating a meal, right?

[Vulnerable Populations Focus Group]

**Economic/Material Relations**

Economic forces operating outside of Spryfield impact community food security in many ways. We are affected by global markets and free trade policies, and the Nova Scotia economy needs to change (“One Nova Scotia” Ivany report, [http://onens.ca/](http://onens.ca/)). This could also be an opportunity to use economic development as a way to address vulnerability to food insecurity.

... I think it just has more to do with the way the whole economy has been going.

[Local Food Interview]

The current emphasis on government policy support and subsidies for large scale production in farming, and the consolidation and centralizing of food production and distribution, make it very difficult for small scale and local production, distribution, and processing of foods. Small scale producers also face challenges in meeting consistency and availability demands, acceptable prices for consumers, and difficulty competing with what research participants referred to as “big business” (grocery stores with national and international supply chains and associated lower food costs and year-round availability). For example, fish that is locally produced should be locally available.

... But when everything is mechanized and subsidized so heavily and they can do that, it makes it impossible for farmers. You look at the cost of living, or real estate, and all this stuff and how the cost of everything has gone up so much. I mean, farmers, unless they own their properties, and I mean they can make two dollars an hour when they equate it all out by the time their transportation to the local markets and growing it. And, again, its money ruling the world so it crushes out the smaller operations because they can’t keep up. So, local barriers – I think – it’s hard to isolate local from the bigger picture. I don’t mean to be doom and gloom – this is the reality of how I actually see things.

[Local Food Interview]

Businesses wanting to access local foods faced two significant challenges: the time and planning it took to find sources of local food; and their need for small amounts which did not fit the large volume requirements of food distributors. In spite of wanting to use local foods, they felt they couldn’t do it easily and still keep a business alive.

On the plus side, local businesses share resources to help each other; the rise in residential development brings more customers that could increase the population base and interest for
local foods; and there is growing interest in farm markets at the same time as grocery stores are working to provide more local foods. Large institutions that work to access local foods are contributing to community food security. Consumer dollars spent on local foods are in local businesses keep circulating in Spryfield and Nova Scotia to strengthen our economy.

... They’ll call them and say, ‘listen – I want to make cabbage rolls and I don’t know how to go about it’ and they’ll say, ‘well you have to cook them in a provincially inspected kitchen’, and he goes, ‘well how do I find that out?’ and he goes, ‘well why don’t you just call [name of local café]? Cause apparently they don’t use their kitchens in the night times’, and this is how this all started. And it helps my rent, and because I sell their product because they aren’t from me, it’s a win-win situation.

[Local Food Interview]

People vulnerable to food insecurity may purchase unhealthy, low-cost foods high in fats and/or sugars because they cannot afford healthier choices. Low-cost foods such as these fill hungry bellies and also contribute to obesity. Retailers have expressed concern about providing affordable, nutritious food. Many people who most need access to our two grocery stores often live farthest away, forcing these people to depend on corner stores for their food. Mothers returning to work to support their families may be challenged to continue breastfeeding, and so a source of free, healthy food for babies may be lost. Some people struggle with high cost of the foods they require or prefer for special diets and experience challenges finding food sources that they can access.

It’s not worth it. You know really, it’s not worth it. By the time you come home it’s outdated, it’s wilted. You know, four onions and three of them are rotten.

[Vulnerable Populations Focus Group]

Actually, ...The food bank on [Street Name], over in Dartmouth. Awesome! They were always giving out meat and eggs and milk. And they were giving out fresh, fresh fruit ...

[Vulnerable Populations Focus Group]

If transportation, child care, housing, and other supports are in place, then people with low or fixed incomes would have more resources to purchase food. In short, a variety of supports unrelated to food can contribute to community food security. Lack of transportation to and from grocery stores and food banks is a major barrier to food security. Some people have found ways to stretch their dollars by bartering for goods and services, and sharing food, in their informal networks.
Participant 1: I find it’s—for me I go to [community organization]. It’s a long walk and I do take the bus home as long as I have a bus ticket because it’s too far to walk with groceries.

Participant 2: It’s all up hill.

[Vulnerable Populations Focus Group]

Participant: I was bartering – because we had an overabundance of lettuce and dill weed, maybe? So I was trading it off so I could get beets.

Facilitator: That’s a good trade, beets take a while.

Participant: Beets are really good! Or I’d trade them off and get Swiss chard.

[Storysharing]

Organizational/Institutional Forces

Government involvement is seen as both a barrier to, and an enabler of, community food security through its policies and programs. Connecting residents to policies that affect them would be a step towards community food security.

Spryfield is blessed with a strong sense of community, which is reflected in the wide diversity of programs and services available to residents; the high level of co-operation among agencies, businesses, community groups, and institutions; and the partnerships that are built within and between sectors. Funding sources were identified as inadequate to fully support community development and co-operation.

Despite many food programs and other supports, which are well received by people who use them, some people who could use them either do not know about them, or cannot access them. Access may be difficult because of transportation barriers, unsuitable hours of service, or challenges related to child care.

People are being well served by particular programs, but it's putting pieces together that's important. Parenting support, education, childcare, personal wellness – all of these pieces are necessary, and they need to be strung together effectively.

[Survey]

Food banks, while appreciated by people who use them, may themselves be inadvertent barriers to community food security because of the many concerns expressed about them. If food banks are seen as “the solution” for vulnerable populations, then other avenues that could lead to long term solutions for community food security may be left unexplored, not only for food bank users but also for the residents of Spryfield generally.
Women who breastfeed outside of the home feel supported when there are designated places for breastfeeding in the community, and when businesses make them feel welcome. They suggest that people look away if they are discomfited by seeing a woman breastfeeding in public.

*People just stare. I know what they’re doing and it’s just like, you kind of walk back and you’re like what’s she doing over there? I think it’s just—you don’t see enough people doing it in public to kind of be like oh she’s breastfeeding and just to walk by—I think if more people did it in public you wouldn’t be so—*

[Breastfeeding Focus Group – Goals Not Met]

**Now What?**

**Call to Action**

Spryfield’s many networks, and its long history of people working together, can bring power to creating social change and increasing community food security. There is also strength in the diversity of perspectives, so that different pieces of the community food security picture can be brought together to effect change.

Now it is up to people who live and work in Spryfield and district to decide next steps. Do we want to continue with the status quo, or do we want to come together and decide what we will do collectively to increase community food security in the Spryfield area? Five over-arching fields of influence were identified from the province-wide research\(^7\) (included below) and resonate with what we heard from research participants in Spryfield about local opportunities and recommendations for action and change.

**MAKE FOOD MATTER** – Food is at the center of our health, our families, our cultures, and our communities. We need to shift our values and attitudes to reflect the importance of food. We need to work together – across geographies, sectors and differences – to critically challenge our own assumptions, listening and learning with others to achieve the vision of healthy, just and sustainable food systems. This is something within which every individual, organization and government plays a role.

**Related Spryfield Ideas**

**Ongoing knowledge sharing**
- Need effective sharing of the knowledge and research with the right people, paired with more voices around the table with influence, who need to be involved from the beginning, in order for greater cross pollination.

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• Share the assessment more broadly; host community forums to increase public awareness around the issues facing our food system to increase appetite for policy change.
• On-going community dialogues with new groups, ensure those directly affected by the issue are present.

Advocacy campaign
• Need a campaign to raise awareness and lead to change. We need to be united in our message.
• Encourage buying local!

Community planning
• Address food deserts through siting of housing near grocery stores (and vice versa)
• Ensure adequate land for food growing space, like green space.
• Require space to grow food with any new land developments.

INCOME AND COSTS OF LIVING – Adequate livable incomes need to be balanced against the increasing costs of living, particularly related to meeting basic needs. Food is the flexible part of a household budget and as costs increase, the amount available for food goes down, forcing people to make decisions between competing basic necessities. This field of influence relates to the social and economic policies that can help create sustainable livelihoods for all, including supports for income and expenses, such as childcare, housing, education, and transportation, as well as creating stable employment opportunities with fair wages for everyone in all communities.

Related Spryfield Ideas

Policy change
• Need to look at the big picture and address policy change through a closer look at the regulatory and policy environment.
• Prioritize and translate the assessment findings to appropriate policies and regulations and identify policy levers (e.g., Municipal by-laws around land-use, free bus service to social programs [with aligned start/end times], scale-appropriate policies for small businesses).
• Lobby for a change to social policies to improve situation for low-income families.
• Advocate for a guaranteed adequate income to ensure citizens can afford healthy foods.
• Create economic development related to food, such as a low-fat, low-sugar bakery in Spryfield, and a community restaurant serving low-cost meals.
More accessible transportation
- Free bus passes for people on social assistance.
- Volunteers provide transportation to take customers to and from grocery stores and food banks.

FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT – We need to pay attention to how and where our food is produced or harvested, processed, and how it gets to people in their homes, schools and childcare centers, workplaces, and communities. Food is a key opportunity for driving community economic development in rural and urban communities in Nova Scotia. Food systems infrastructure relates to all of the things that enable people to access and/or produce their own food (e.g., garden, hunt, or harvest), farm or fish for a living, distribute and sell food, and share food with others – now and for future generations.

Related Spryfield Ideas

Local food distribution hub/center
Create a community food center that includes:
- Community market for farmers, arts and crafts, and backyard gardeners.
- Food hub (farming and fishing) to gather food and redistribute it in the community (people pick it up or it is delivered to people).
- Infrastructure for local food storage and preserving foods as a way to add value to products and increase employment.
- Community kitchen and dining hall (for all ages) to learn, prepare, and eat together.
- Community industrial kitchen for food processing (e.g., business start-ups or community use) and to enhance food skills and knowledge in our community.
- Space for workshops and demonstrations.
- Support for child care for people attending programs.

Mobile food markets
- Create mobile farmers’ markets and more fresh food access points (e.g., sidewalk stalls) to help reduce food insecurity due to poor physical access.

Change the current food bank model
- Change the current food bank model to one with food vouchers for grocery stores, to make food access more dignified, and to increase access to foods infrequently found in food banks, such as meat, milk, eggs, and fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Offer skill-building workshops on preparing healthy food on a budget.
- Create a mobile food bank, so food comes to the people instead of people going to the food.
• Ask churches and food banks to provide transportation.
• A related idea was for Spryfield to transition from food banks to a food center for all residents, and have accessible transportation and food delivery for people who need it.
• Advocate for alternative means and methods for local families to donate excess food (e.g., soften food bank regulations).

Community orchards, ovens, and root cellars
• Explore the opportunity for a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program, and ensure CSA baskets are more affordable. [Customers pay farmers at the beginning of the season to share in the harvest and share in the risk.]

Scale-appropriate regulations
• Revise, change and create appropriate policies and regulations across sectors all along the food system to reduce barriers, support small scale producers and increase opportunities for food production (i.e., open space development, community gardens) and food donation.

Encourage farming as a profession
• Greater incentives to enter farming for business and/or personal use (e.g., tax credit).
• Increase the appeal to enter farming as a career by partnering with the Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture.

Enhanced supports for local producers
• Greater investments and supports for local producers.
• Lower costs for farmers to become certified organic (or no certification) so more money goes back to the farmer and could help with wider distribution.

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SUPPORTS – While we know we are not going to simply garden our way out of food insecurity, we cannot undermine the tremendous value of community and social supports. Food is a common and unifying force socially, culturally and spiritually. It brings people together, creating meaningful relationships and breaks down barriers to participation within communities. Food is related to how we take care of each other, particularly with respect to those who are marginalized or vulnerable, and includes creating healthy and inclusive environments to improve access to healthy, affordable and sustainably produced food. There are many examples of successful efforts in Nova Scotia to create the community and social conditions needed through collaboration, innovation, and transformational change.

Related Spryfield Ideas
**Reduce food waste in farms and fields**

- Learn from and model the creative example from France’s *Inglorious Fruits & Vegetables*, in which less-than-perfect fruits and vegetables are marked down 30%.
  
- Gather food left in farm fields and distribute it free to fixed and low-income families.

**Greater political action**

- Political action at municipal and provincial levels to address gaps in current social policies (e.g., Income Assistance rates meeting basic needs) and to play a greater role in addressing food insecurity.
- Develop a list of key departments and aspects of society with representatives from all sectors.

**Coordinating body for community work**

There is a clear need for a **coordinator for this work** to:

- Assist with policy development (navigate complex system).
- Who is connected and knows people making the decisions and can keep the politicians grounded.
- Who knows about all aspects of the food system.

An on-line “**Food System Matchmaker**” could provide a live and interactive platform for various food ideas that would:

- Act as a connector to opportunities, events and research.
- Share and build on what others are doing.
- Educate more broadly on food matters and seek out resources to support various initiatives.

**Food skills development**

- Community-wide education to build food, farming, and budgeting skills.
- Encourage and grow 4-H Programs for food and farming skills. Look into creating a fishing equivalent and ways to instruct other food production skills (e.g., baking, butchering, cheese and sausage-making, etc.)
- Increase education around food for the entire population, particularly youth, with a focus on food literacy, health, and gardening.
- Have community cooking sessions and shared meals.

**Schools**

- Partner with community organizations and use school green space to create community gardens.

**Breastfeeding Friendly Spryfield**
• Businesses, restaurants, and institutions make breastfeeding mothers feel welcome.

**FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD** – We need to respect and honor the rights of everyone now and for future generations to have access to healthy, just and sustainable food. This includes food as a basic human right for everyone, as well as labor rights for workers within the food system. These rights also extend to democratic rights for producers and citizens to civic engagement, dialogue, advocacy, action, and accountability within our food systems and civil society to build healthy, just and sustainable food systems, which is supported by the agro-ecology framework that preferences producer participation and participatory approaches. Associated with enhancing civic engagement is the need to remove barriers to participation and to foster individual and community capacity to critically examine power relations and advocate for change.

**Related Spryfield Ideas**
• [Food charter and food strategy](#) for Halifax to bring all these pieces together.

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For more information, call (902) 477-0964 or (902) 479-1015.