

Program Highlights

Food Hub

Our Community Food Hub programs bring people together to prepare and share food and friendship.

On Tuesdays is the popular **Drop-In Breakfast** running from 9:30 to 11:00am. A hot fresh breakfast is prepared by volunteers and offered to anyone who turns up. The kitchen is a social hub with both regulars and occasional visitors. The food focus is healthy eating and a range of fruits and vegetables is always on offer.

Our Community Kitchen is also known as “**Common Stock**” because participants bring a small contribution to the lunch which is cooked and shared by the group. Participants come from many countries and bring their recipes and techniques with them. Everyone learns from everyone else. The second language in the kitchen is Spanish.

Thursdays see the **Food Reclamation** program where goods in broken packaging is sorted by volunteers and distributed to housing co-ops, food banks and other groups.

Each month we run the **Good Food Box Program**. The aim is to provide healthy food at an accessible price. Volunteers help to fill approximately 100 boxes with fruits and vegetables which are sold for \$10 or \$15 and widely distributed.

upStream Aquaponics

The community is excited about this project! Approximately 20 people attended our Spring 2014 Training event. One couple travelled from Buffalo! Word is catching on about aquaponics being the future of food: in your home or as a commercial venture. York Region Food Network’s upStream is in the enviable position of being a teaching, research and demonstration facility. We are showing people the opportunities available to them and acting as a resource towards understanding food system, waste management and growing food. We will be opening our doors on the first Wednesday of every month to continue to teach and train people about aquaponics.

On the business side, we have a local café purchasing our lettuce and interest from a catering company as well as a mail order seedling business. We continue to research hardier more nutritionally dense greens to grow. The learning curve continues and the journey is fascinating! Produce really is just the beginning.

Urban Agriculture

2013 was a transitional year for YRFN’s Urban Agriculture program. We wished Catherine Cook, our Community Garden Coordinator, well as she moved on to new opportunities and welcomed Bronwen Fitzsimons as our Urban Agriculture Coordinator. 231 families took part in the community garden program and growing food for their families and communities. The Newmarket Community Garden received a donation of 4 apple trees to start our community orchard.

Neighbours donated fruit from their backyards, so we held several jam preserving classes with community members. We also made jams, salsas and pickles with gleaned produce from trips to the farm with our gleaning participants. After consulting with Not Far From The Tree, we created The Ripe Idea, a community fruit picking program where homeowners and businesses can register their fruit trees to be picked by volunteers. The program was launched with an apple tree pick in Markham; we plan to expand the program into Newmarket and Aurora in 2014.

Annual Seedy Saturday Events at Vaughan City Hall are wonderful examples of the value of partnerships and collaboration, bringing people together at the start of the gardening season and generating excitement around growing healthy food.

Food Policy

The York Region Food Charter continues to gain traction in our communities. In 2013, over 17 presentations on the York Region Food Charter were given to schools, community groups and government officials to educate and build awareness about municipal and regional food policy. Our second annual Food for Change event took place in March 2013. With 87 people in attendance and 10 speakers at this event, we launched the finalized York Region Food Charter. The City of Markham officially endorsed the Food Charter in June 2013. Since then, the Town of Aurora, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Township of King have followed suit, endorsing the York Region Food Charter in early 2014.

Baseline research was conducted in York Region schools and recreation centres to gain an understanding of what projects, policies and pilots can be developed in order to supporting a healthy, just and resilient food system for York Region.

Treasurer’s Report

This past year proved to be a significant one for YRFN as we made strides in raising awareness and helping to promote access to affordable and nutritious food for the greater community. Our move to the Aurora location has proven to be successful, allowing us to take full advantage of the commercial kitchen.

In terms of our financial performance, our revenues were stable with continued support from York Region, United Way, Trillium and Healthy Communities. We also maintained ongoing and diligent monitoring of our expenses throughout the year.

With regard to our Statement of Operations, we had an insignificant deficiency in our profits of \$7,692. That said, our balance sheet continues to be healthy with our current asset balance more than enough to cover our current liabilities.

In the upcoming year we look forward to gaining momentum on the Aquaponics projects, and building upon our fundraising initiatives. Thanks to all our supporters and donors as we move forward into another year!

Aarti Patel, Treasurer

At a Glance

	2013	2012
Total Assets	330,445	265,846
Current Liabilities	145,985	73,698
Net Assets	184,460	192,148
Total Revenue	440,150	483,565
Total Expenditures	447,842	453,323
Excess (Deficiency)	(7,692)	30,242

Complete Audited Financial Statements are available upon request

350 Industrial Parkway S.
Aurora, ON L4G 3V7
Phone: 905-841-3101
Toll-free: 1-866-454-YRFN (9736)
Fax: 905-841-3789
Email 4moreinfo@yrfn.ca
Website: www.yrfn.ca
Facebook: York Region Food Network
Twitter: @YRFoodNetwork



Food for health ... Food for all

The year in review

It was another great year at YRFN with new initiatives and projects. upStream, an exciting social enterprise, was created as a result of a partnership between YRFN and Steven Looi, a local social entrepreneur. upStream promotes innovative methods for food growing as we cultivate community by providing opportunities for engagement, education and inspiration.

The finalized York Region Food Charter was launched in March 2013 at our *Sprouting Healthy Local Food Systems* event in Richmond Hill. In addition to promoting Healthy Food System policies, the Board has worked internally on strengthening YRFN with the development and implementation of revised policies and procedures.

We continue to work with other like-minded organizations in York. Our two collaborative Trillium projects are supporting food rescue with LifeCorps Foodshare and more community gardens with Seeds for Change.

Our strong staff team was bolstered with the addition of David Lightwood as Community Food Hub Coordinator. We also appreciated the energy of our two summer students: Bao Luu supported programs in Aurora and Newmarket and Kari Dengerink worked with community garden programs in Thornhill.

Students and volunteers are vital to our programs. We are grateful for their contributions cooking and serving healthy breakfasts for the drop-in, packing Good Food Boxes, sorting and distributing reclaimed food, working in the community gardens, and keeping our lettuce and fish at their best. Our Seneca Students, Torey Kehoe and Diana Cappa, researched food choices at municipal recreation facilities and markets for upStream lettuce. Steven Looi led the team of volunteers that built the upStream facility including Fitness 101, Home Depot, Mark Pollari and Taylor Kuzniar.

The Board of Directors has now had two successful WinterFresh fundraising events thanks to the leadership of Ashaw Shewchenko. In 2014, we will develop a new strategic plan for the organization as we continue to foster collaborative and integrated approaches that will create a healthy and resilient food system in York Region.

*Rebecca Kopel, Chair
Joan Stonehocker, Executive Director*

Food for health ... Food for all

Thank You

York Region Food Network would like to thank the more than 200 individual donors who supported our operations and administration. Without your support, day-to-day operations would be impossible.

We would also like to thank the following for their financial and in-kind support:

605485 Ontario Limited
Acushnet Canada
Carrot Cache Community Resource Inc.
Christ Church ALW
CN
Fitness 101
Home Depot Newmarket
Infomaxium
McKesson Canada
Nature's Rainbow
Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation
Pine Tree Potters' Guild – Empty Bowls Event
Richvale Lioness Club
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
The Pampered Chef
Tides Canada Initiatives Society
Whole Foods
York Dairy Producers
York Region Basketball Officials



Charitable Registration B/N 87044 7315

York Region
Food Network
Food for health ... Food for all

Annual General Report 2013

*For fiscal period ending
December 31, 2013*

York Region Food Network offers programs, raises awareness and promotes policy changes for increased access to affordable and nutritious food produced within a sustainable food system.