

I Have a Gut Feeling Something Has To Change

You may remember Morgan Spurlock's "Supersize Me" experiment a few years ago where he ate only supersized McDonald's meals for some time to discover what health implications there may be in eating a lot of fast food. He survived, but his health went downhill.

A more recent and scientifically robust experiment was carried out by the University of Pittsburgh where researchers asked people to swap diets for two weeks.

Twenty American volunteers moved to a low-fat, high-fibre diet containing lots of pulses and beans, and twenty volunteers from rural Africa were asked to eat a diet more like Spurlock's. All the participants had a range of medical tests before and after the diet change.

Although the swap was only for two weeks, its impact was easily measured. The Americans benefited from less bowel inflammation, while the African volunteers' bowel health deteriorated. The dietary swaps appeared to cause significant changes to the cells lining the gut as well as the bacteria that live in the bowel. Lead researcher Dr Stephen O'Keefe, said: "In just two weeks, a change in diet from a Westernized composition to a traditional African high-fibre, low-fat diet reduced these biomarkers of cancer risk, indicating that it is likely never too late to modify the risk of colon cancer." Much research has shown that a high intake of dietary fibre from vegetables and whole grains reduces bowel cancer risk while eating red and processed meat increases the risk.

The diet swap in this experiment was drastic and unlikely to happen outside of an experiment, but we know that **making small changes you can stick with in**

the long-term is an effective way to a healthier lifestyle. This was the message of the very successful Food and Digestion program run by YRFN in conjunction with Hospice King-Aurora and co-presented by Marise Foster, Holistic Nutritionist of Foster Healthy Lifestyles, Newmarket and David Lightwood of YRFN.



Over the course of four three-hour sessions Marise explained a variety of measures participants could take to improve their overall health and reduce the likelihood of degenerative illnesses in the future through improved digestion. The starting point is to remember that food is the fuel that keeps us alive, it should be treated with respect up to and including thanking not just those who cooked it but also those who produced it. Sitting down at the table to eat a mindfully created meal is light years away from

zooming through a drive-thru and bolting down an industrially produced Spurlock.

It is not just the ingredients, but also how they are combined and turned into a meal and how they are eaten that is important. The Food and Digestion program focusses on improving digestion; transitioning to wholefoods; healing with superfoods, and juicing/fasting. Marise talks about how food and supplements are absorbed in the body, what to eat and what to avoid. The program will be repeated in the fall.

If interested, contact Marise at 905-960-LIFE (5433) or through her website fosterhealthylifestyles.com

David Lightwood, Community Food Hub Coordinator
Reference on diet swap information from Michelle Roberts, BBC.



Have you seen what's growing at upStream? Come visit York Region Food Network's urban agriculture facility in Newmarket. We grow a variety of greens using aquaponics; a fascinating example of how to use plants and fish to create a small eco-system to grow your very own nutrients and proteins in your backyard, basement and beyond.

upStream is also the Newmarket site for York Region Food Network's Good Food Box program. That's two great reasons to visit 28 Main Street North in Newmarket on the third Thursday of every month. Doors open from 3pm to 6pm. See you then!

Stay connected:

<http://facebook.com/pages/Upstream-Aquaponics/638842859462817>

Twitter: @upstreamAP

Garden Expansion Brings New Life to Newmarket

There will be even more growing in the garden in 2015. Last year, Town Council in Newmarket agreed to expand the Newmarket Community Garden by 22 plots, bringing the new total to 107 plots.

This is exciting news because there is strong demand in Newmarket for community gardens. The waiting list sits at 3-4 years, and with few other options in the area, gardeners have little choice but to wait. With this expansion, we are able to offer a significant portion of the waiting list a chance to get growing. And with so many new faces joining us this year, it will certainly be an exciting time for everyone.

There are costs associated with the expansion, however. New taps need to be installed in the new eastern section of the garden within easier reach for the new plots. The Town of Newmarket has partnered with YRFN to help cover the cost, but it still means that YRFN must come up with \$1500 to make the project happen.

If you would like to contribute to the water line extension, you can mail cheques or donate online. Please clearly indicate 'Newmarket garden water extension' in your donation so that it is properly attributed.

Bronwen Fitzsimons, Urban Agriculture Coordinator

Growing Food Literacy in School Gardens



On Friday, May 1, our first workshop of the season took place at Wesley Christian Academy! Their Senior Kindergarten class joined us in the garden to learn all about soil composition and vermicomposting. After discussing the components that make up soil and exploring examples of minerals such as gravel, clay and sand, we created a fun recipe to reinforce our lesson.

Students put together a "Dirt Dip" recipe while identifying each ingredient as a representation of water, mineral materials and organic materials before stirring it all together to recognize the way that air and water move through each layer of soil!



We had an excellent time working with such an enthusiastic group. It was a great way to start off our season!

Nicole Doray, Summer Student

Talking Trash

Imagine taking \$1500 and throwing it into the trash. You'd think that wouldn't be a common practice in households in York Region or across Ontario, but it is. On average, Canadian households are throwing approximately \$1500 worth of food into the trash bins every year. This is food that was forgotten at the back of the fridge, left-overs that were just never eaten, and fruits and veggies that never made it onto the kitchen table.

In 2014, the York Region Food Charter Working Group held an educational event on food waste. This year, we're moving some of the lessons we've learned into action with more community events;

- June 13 – 14, **Reclaiming Food** at Windfall Ecology Festival (Fairy Lake in Newmarket).
- September 26, **Markham Veggie Swap** at Applefest (Markham Museum in Markham)

Connect with **York Region Food Charter** on Facebook to learn more about these events. If you're interested in volunteering, contact Kate at kateg@yrfn.ca or 905-841-3101 ext. 206

Kate Greavette, Food Charter Coordinator

Board Members wanted!

Are you interested in food security and healthy food systems? We are looking for dedicated people with varied backgrounds to join our Board.

Fundraising skills are of particular interest at this time. If you want more information, please contact Joan Stonehocker at joans@yrfn.ca

Join us for our Annual General Meeting

Thursday, June 11, 2015
7:30 PM
350 Industrial Parkway S,
Aurora, ON

What's Growing On!

We are currently very busy facilitating workshops for both our school and community gardens for 2015, as well as promoting the **2015 New Food Garden Plots by 2015 campaign**. Check out our website www.seedsforchange.org for the calendar of events where you're all welcome to participate!



website, they can now receive 20% off over 120 varieties of open pollinated, heirloom and rare vegetables, herbs, flowers, seeds and seedlings.

Whether your three new edible plants are on your windowsill, balcony, added to an existing garden, rooftop, place of work or worship – don't forget to register!

We're also delighted to announce that Matchbox Garden & Seed Co. www.matchboxgarden.ca has become our newest partner in this campaign and when participants register their garden on our

Thank you again for helping us plant for Seeds For Change in York Region!

Lynne Koss, Seeds for Change Coordinator

Thank you to our funders!



WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

A Basic Income Guarantee (BIG): Towards a healthy and sustainable future

Food justice requires more than community responses. Come hear Dr. Elaine Power speak about **The BIG Push** campaign, a way to build health communities.

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Elgin West Community Centre
Palisade Room

1109 Bathurst St., Richmond Hill

To register, visit

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/w-hats-the-big-idea-tickets->

[16866824125](https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/w-hats-the-big-idea-tickets-16866824125) or

call 905-841-3101

We know that good food is a basic ingredient for good health. It is preventative medicine. A recent study called [Dollars and Sense: Opportunities to strengthen Southern Ontario's food system](#) says that the potential for local food systems to build healthy economies, protect the environment and strengthen social fabrics is far from being fulfilled. While a strong local food system has significant benefits, we still need to do more to address hunger and poverty in our communities.

We know that we have been supporting an ever-growing system of food banks that work to address emergency food needs in our communities. However, the recently released report **Low Income Trends in York Region: 2000 – 2012** shows that the number of people living on low income is growing faster than the general population.

We need to tackle issues of poverty and food insecurity from a systems perspective. We need changes that can improve the lives of the most vulnerable in our society, and make us all better off. A solution that is gaining traction is a Basic Income Guarantee.

There are many reasons why basic income is attractive. Some people are motivated by the idea because of its aspects associated with improving public health or eliminating poverty. Other people are supportive because of its association with improving efficiency in governance and support of entrepreneurial activity. So, support for basic income is found from many walks of life and a wide variety of people. Politicians known to support basic income are found in each of the major federal political parties in Canada. (<http://www.thebigpush.net/faqs.html>)

We can no longer sit idly by and accept the status quo – if society had done that in the last century, women would not be voting and we would not have universal health care. A Basic Income Guarantee offers a positive solution. Join us on June 3rd to hear Dr. Elaine Power from Queens University share more information about The BIG Push Campaign.

Joan Stonehocker, Executive Director

Join York Region Food Network's Fundraising Campaign

I support YRFN's work to improve access to affordable, nutritious food for all people of York Region.

I have enclosed my donation of: \$50 \$100 \$250 Other

Please make cheques payable to York Region Food Network.

YRFN will issue a charitable tax receipt for all donations over \$20. Registration 87044 7315 RR0001

Name: _____

Address: _____

To donate by credit card, visit our website at www.yrfn.ca and click on the link to CanadaHelps.org, a secure website where you can make a tax deductible credit card donation to YRFN.

Your privacy is important to us, and we are committed to protecting and safeguarding your personal information. We do not rent, sell or trademark our mailing list, but rather use it to keep you informed of York Region Food Network's activities, services and programs. Please contact our office to update your information or to be removed from the mailing list.

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