

**GOOD FOOD  
ORGANIZATION**



In alliance with Community Food Centres Canada 2017

# Annual General Report 2016

*For fiscal  
period ending  
December 31, 2016*



**York Region  
Food Network**

*Food for Health ... Food for All*

## The Year in Review

2016 was transformational for York Region Food Network. Both programming and staff changes tested and rewarded our adaptability and resourcefulness. We started off the year moving the last of our tilapia from our upStream project in Newmarket to our small demonstration aquaponics unit at the office and we fully integrated Seeds for Change programs into our Urban Agriculture endeavours in the spring. In the fall we started Community Cooks, a program that combines three key initiatives: use of end-of-life food products and produce, kitchen confidence and employability, and meal distribution.

Our staff team brings a wide range of skills and interests to our organization. This spring we said good-bye to our Urban Agriculture Coordinator, Bronwen Fitzsimons and welcomed Marissa Wiltshire into the role. Our Good Food Box and Community Garden programs were enriched with youthful exuberance in the summer with students Taylor, Catherine, Sydney, Erin and Nicole.

Community partners, volunteers and supporters are vital to the success of our organization. We have farmers and gardeners donating produce, corporate groups taking on projects in the kitchen and in the gardens, and volunteers cooking, sorting produce for our Good Food Boxes, and sharing their expertise in our food skills workshops.

We welcomed several new Board members in 2016 and their enthusiastic participation is seen in many accomplishments from fundraising to organization branding. We have a new, updated logo that better reflects our commitment to healthy eating with a green pea replacing the sheaf of wheat. The 'snap' pea provides a mnemonic to help people understand what we do. 'S' is for skills – you can learn food skills like how to start seeds or make sushi. 'N' is for nutrition – healthy food is foundational in all of our programs. 'A' is for access – sharing good food and advocating so that people can exercise their right to food. Finally, the 'P' is for policy, working to embed healthy food policies in our government, businesses and communities.

York Region Food Network offers programs and education to ensure that the people of York Region have healthy and sustainable food. This Mission guides our daily activities as we continue to strengthen our programs and broaden our influence using food as a lever to build healthy citizens and vibrant communities.

*Rebecca Kopel, Chair*

*Joan Stonehocker, Executive Director*



## Skills



York Region Food Network's Seeds for Change Urban Agriculture Program offered 51 workshops on food growing in 2016, attended by over 300 participants.

From August to December 2016, over 20 individuals participated in Community Cooks. This group received weekly classes in our commercial kitchen, and participated in York Region's YorkSafe food handling training.



**Meals in Under 30**  
Thursday June 16, 11am - 1pm  
York Region Food Network, 300 Industrial Pkwy S., Aurora  
Looking for dinner inspiration? Pressed for time? This free workshop offers fun and healthy tips and recipes to get delicious, healthy and beautiful dinners on the table in under 30 minutes. Enjoy lunch on-site and use our chefs' advice for you and your family.

**Summer Salads**  
Tuesday June 21, 11am - 1pm  
York Region Food Network, 300 Industrial Pkwy S., Aurora  
Salads can be so much more than just lettuce. This free workshop offers seasonal salads & dressings - perfect for every occasion and BBQ season. Salads will use the best of what's grown locally.

To reserve your place at Meals in Under 30 or Summer Salads, contact Kate at [kate@yrfn.ca](mailto:kate@yrfn.ca) or 905-460-3000 ext. 200.

**Composting Basics**  
Saturday, June 25, 11am - 12:00pm  
Vaughan's Floral Garden, 835 Clark Ave. W.  
Learn about composting basics and the different methods you can use to incorporate composting in your garden plan. Whether you are a new or advanced gardener, there are many creative to choose from. Free workshop.

To reserve your place at Composting Basics, visit [info@seedsforchange.ca](mailto:info@seedsforchange.ca) or 905-460-3000 ext. 200.

**GOOD FOOD WORKSHOPS**

For more information about YRFN's programming, visit [www.yrfn.ca](http://www.yrfn.ca)



Over 175 residents participated in our Good Food workshops in Vaughan, Aurora, Newmarket and Georgina.



## Nutrition

Our pilot program, Community Cooks, prepares ready-to-eat healthy meals for social service agencies in York Region. From the launch of this program in August until December, 200 individual meals were prepared and served in the community. An additional 50lbs of bulk prepared food was shared.



7 community gardens in York Region nourished over 475 food-growing residents.

Over 17,700 lbs of fresh produce was donated by York Region farmers to our programming.



## Access



Over 12 months, 1795 boxes of fresh fruits and vegetables were sold through our Good Food Box Program.

In 2016, we offered 4 gleaning trips, with 128 participants and 11,194 lbs of food harvested.



We offered a weekly breakfast. 51 breakfasts were served throughout the year to over 135 individuals.



## Policy

### ***Health and Wellbeing:***

A new York Region Youth Food Council is using food as a tool to get their peers and communities excited about health, environmental and social justice issues.

### ***Economic Opportunities:***

*Food for Change: Making Cents of the Local Food Economy* was hosted at The Link in Sutton. Attended by 62 local residents, including representatives from government, business and community organizations, this networking event also offered a visit to a nearby farm social enterprise.

### ***Environmental Sustainability:***

In a 12-week composting project, YRFN diverted 1468 lbs of food waste via our 3-bin composter and barrel systems, vermi-compost, and local pig and chicken farms.

### ***Health and Social Justice:***

*What's the BIG idea 2.0?* dove deeper into the current social assistance models and potentials of a Basic Income Guarantee to address food insecurity Ontario. 35 people attended this Newmarket event and learned about the realities of implementing a basic income pilot and model.

### ***Education and Skills:***

York Region's fourth annual Seedy Saturday at the Toronto Waldorf School in Vaughan hosted 3 workshops and 12 vendors. New and experienced gardeners dug into the world of food growing with lots of local, heirloom seeds, food and education.



## Funders



**United Way**  
Toronto & York Region

Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation  
An agency of the Government of Ontario



Fondation  
Trillium  
de l'Ontario  
Revenu du gouvernement de l'Ontario



**Ontario**

**Canada**

**York Region**

THE  
**Great-West Life**  
ASSURANCE  COMPANY

## At a Glance

	2016	2015
Total Assets	189,587	139,415
Current Liabilities	111,529	57,536
Net Assets	78,058	81,879

Total Revenue	262,719	308,496
Total Expenditures	266,540	353,148
Excess (Deficiency)	(3,821)	(44,652)

*Complete Audited Financial Statements  
are available on request.*



## Thank You

York Region Food Network would like to thank the more than 350 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:

***19th Avenue Farmers Market***

***Brooks Farms***

***Homestead Orchards***

***Kinsmen Club of Newmarket***

***Nature's Rainbow***

***Norbram Group Insurance Benefits Inc.***

***Norseman Inc.***

***Oak Ridges Retirement LP***

***Ontario Power Generation Inc.***

***Round the Bend Farm***

***Steve and Sally Stavro Family Foundation***

***Sutton Group - Heritage Realty Inc. Brokerage***

***The Cutting Veg***

***Toronto Foundation***

***York University***

