

## Community Cooks

York Region Food Network is ecstatic to receive funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to launch a pilot program which started this September. Community Cooks incorporates three of YRFN’s key initiatives:

1. **Saving food.** We are seeking donations from farmers and grocers alike. These end-of-life shelf products and produce are collected and given one last chance to become a meal. Community Cooks participants work with YRFN facilitators to prepare and package meals to be frozen and distributed to community members through a network of like-minded agencies.
2. **Kitchen confidence and employability.** The weekly cooking sessions will help participants feel more confident in the kitchen by creating meals with food that is available and practicing various kitchen skills. Ancillary certificate programs such as Food Handler and Smart Serve will create further opportunities to explore employment in Ontario’s food industry; the second largest employer in the province. A letter of participation can assist in the contribution towards work-readiness.
3. **Meal distribution.** Continuing the community connection, we aim to build a distribution system to get these healthy, prepared meals to a variety of people that need easy to access, nutritional meals or snacks.



*Wendy Chiu creates Spaghetti Squash Caprese*

19<sup>th</sup> Avenue Farm in Markham has been essential to the success of Community Cooks thus far with their weekly donation of farm fresh vegetables. Winter is upon us and we need more partners! Please let us know if you have a grocer in your community that we should talk to about saving their end of shelf life products and creating more community connections as Community Cooks!

*Tricia Richens, Community Cooks Coordinator*



*YRFN is delighted to be a Good Food Organization*

350 Industrial Parkway S., Aurora, ON L4G 3V7

Phone: 905-841-3101 • Toll-free: 1-866-454-YRFN (9736) • Fax: 905-841-3789

4moreinfo@yrfn.ca • www.yrfn.ca • Facebook: York Region Food Network • Twitter: @YRFoodNetwork

## Food for Thought

2016 marks the 30th year in which York Region Food Network has been changing the conversation about hunger and food insecurity in our community. We have been expanding our programs and outreach to ensure that more and more people have dignified access to healthy food. In the past year, we've served over 1000 healthy, hot breakfasts on Tuesday mornings, sold over 1860 Good Food Boxes and provided garden space and programs for 365 community gardeners.

We all eat, so food programs are a great way to bring people together. By making our programs open to anyone, we can create real and diverse community connections. Newcomers share recipes and cooking techniques from their homeland and learn how to prepare 'Canadian' food. Participants can learn, share and build self-reliance. We're also seeing more interest in skills workshops like cooking on a budget, creating meals from scratch, and preserving the harvest.

But despite these wonderful programs, more and more people are food insecure. Food insecurity is a real harbinger of people having extreme difficulty making ends meet. We have learned the devastating effects of poverty and the by-products of poverty, like food insecurity and social isolation, from research around the social determinants of health. Our food programs can help people eat better and build social connections, but we will need to deal with poverty to ultimately succeed.

During the upcoming giving season, we are seeking your support to help ensure that healthy food is on the menu for everyone in York Region.

**Joan Stonehocker, Executive Director**

Support the causes you care about this

**GIVING TUESDAY™**

www.GivingTuesday.ca | #GivingTuesdayCA | Tuesday, November 29th, 2016



York Region  
**Food Network** presents

# Winter Fresh

## 5th Annual Trivia Challenge

Thursday, February 2nd, 2017  
At 6:30 pm  
Doors open at 6:00 pm  
Madsen's Greenhouse  
160 Bayview Parkway, Newmarket

Includes dinner from O'Malley's Catering.  
Craft beer, local wine and a silent auction will also be available.

**Tickets - \$50**

For tickets contact Kim Arseneault  
kima@yrfn.ca or 905-841-3101 x201 or online at  
<http://bit.ly/2f5gfst>



We're showing

**THIS  
CHANGES  
EVERY  
THING**

Watch our Facebook page  
for our upcoming movie series!

Connect with us:

on Facebook: York Region Food Network

on Twitter: @YRFoodNetwork

by email: [4moreinfo@yrfn.ca](mailto:4moreinfo@yrfn.ca)

## Gleaning Program

In 2016, YRFN had 5 Gleaning trips. 136 people participated and over 11,000 lbs of produce, including apples, kale, strawberries, and root vegetables was harvested. An Aurora participant had this to say:

*"Thanks for inviting me to this event. It was so much fun and the produce was amazing. My family and extended family are so grateful. As soon as I got home I steamed up a huge bowl of Brussels, broc, cauliflower and butternut squash, sprayed on some olive oil and dusted with pink salt and pepper. It was so good. Roasted beets, squash and cauliflower are next, with baked potatoes and maybe later some diced cabbage with sautéed onion and garlic. Next week red cabbage steamed with , apples, onions, bay leaf and apple cider vinegar with a touch of brown sugar. So many plans. No meat for a few weeks.*

*I couldn't believe how full the bus was on the way home. All the under the bus compartments were full and I sat with someone on the way to the farm, but on the way home we each needed a whole seat for our 4 bags and we sat with our legs in the aisles. No room under the bus. It was a good thing it was not a full bus as far as people goes. Anyway, just wanted to thank you and Round the Bend Farm for the opportunity".*



# Why join a Community Garden?

It's no wonder many of us feel disconnected from our food

The average Canadian family spends **\$8000** a year on food, but wastes **1/8<sup>th</sup>** of it

The cost of produce is rising...

Food bank visits are up **45%** in the suburban GTA since **2008**

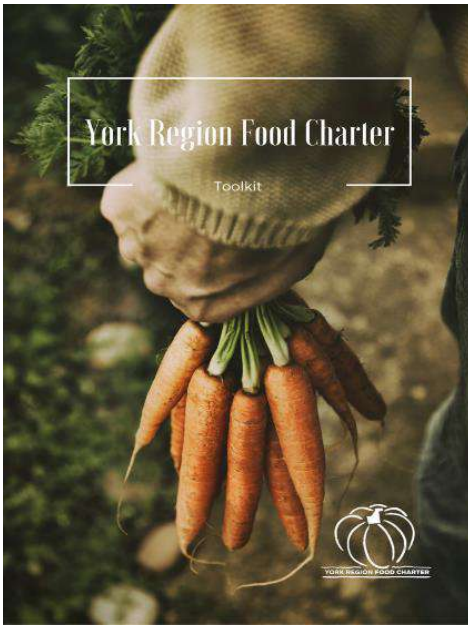
Community gardens reconnect us

- to local, seasonal food
- to the knowledge of our neighbours
- to sustainable habits like composting

Toronto Food Bank Report 2015, CBC  
 Paying for Nutrition, 2016, Food Secure Canada  
 Canada Washing Tonnes of Food, 2016, Toronto24Hours

Visit <http://yrfn.ca/programs/community-gardens/> to learn more about community gardening in the York Region

## Food System Alliance in York Region



We want to see every resident in York Region take at least 1 action that will help build a healthy food system for all. So, we've made it easier to take that leap with the release of the York Region Food Charter Toolkit. This short guide compliments the York Region Food Charter by offering ideas and insights to help you incorporate more good food into your daily life through the acts of eating, growing and sharing food at home, in the workplace, at school and within the community.

From how to eat seasonally and locally to tips on how to compost and healthy fundraising in schools, this toolkit arms you with links, initiatives and research that are suitable for our York Region communities. Every moment, decisions are made that can support a healthy food system. The resources and actions you find in this toolkit will help you identify how to enact each of the 5 values of the York Region Food Charter – Health and Wellbeing, Economic Opportunities, Environmental Sustainability, Social Justice and Equity, and Education and Skills. Check out the toolkit at [www.yorkregionfoodcharter.com](http://www.yorkregionfoodcharter.com).

**Kate Greavette, Food Charter Coordinator**

### THANK YOU!

York Region Food Network would like to recognize and thank the following for their generous support of our urban agriculture programs:

*The Cutting Veg and the Elmgrove Collective*

*Round the Bend Farms*

*Homestead Orchards*

*Brooke's Farm*

*Rent Source*

*Holland Valley Nursery*

*Nature's Rainbow*

*Canadian Tire (Richmond Hill)*

*TD Friends of the Environment*

*United Way Toronto and York Region*

*Friends of the Greenbelt*

*City of Vaughan*

*Town of Newmarket*

*Town of Aurora*

### 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](http://www.yrfn.ca) and click on the link to [CanadaHelps.org](http://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.*

**350 Industrial Parkway S., Aurora, ON L4G 3V7**

**Phone: 905-841-3101 • Toll-free: 1-866-454-YRFN (9736) • Fax: 905-841-3789**

**4moreinfo@yrfn.ca • [www.yrfn.ca](http://www.yrfn.ca) • Facebook: York Region Food Network • Twitter: @YRFoodNetwork**