

## London & Main Community Garden

The London & Main Community Garden in Newmarket is unlike most community gardens. Rather than a subdivided piece of land where each gardener is assigned a separate plot, it is a large garden shared by the community. Volunteers of all ages do the planting, care and harvesting. Some of the produce is brought home by the volunteers, and some is given away at the garden to passersby or to local food programs.

Created in 2016 on Town of Newmarket land where London Rd. meets North Main St., the garden is in a prime location between two large residential areas and adjacent to a park and the Tom Taylor walking and biking trail. Though it is still relatively new, it has been welcomed by the community, with pot luck get-togethers and a partnership with the Newmarket Public Library's Newmarket Grows seed library established. Perennial crops such as garlic and asparagus were planted at the end of last season and a "bee hotel" for solitary (non-stinging) pollinator bees was added.

Plans for this year include working with Girl Guide groups, and classes and families from nearby Denne Public School to spend time in the garden learning some of the ins and outs of horticulture; the installation of a Little Free Library (which operates on

a "take a book, leave a book" principle – more information at <http://littlefreelibrary.org>) with attached "little free seed library;" and a permaculture-based approach to gardening, which will result in another successful summer of diverse, lush vegetables, herbs, and flowers.



*This garden "bee hotel" was built for solitary bees and mason bees using various pieces of scrap wood. These types of bees live in old beetle holes in wood, or in stems. The method of making one of these is to drill holes of various sizes in wood.*

The London and Main Community

Garden has a bright future as a continued community treasure and champion of affordable and nutritious food sustainability. Not to mention it's a great way for people to get outside and involved in the community while getting fresh air and exercise!

**Rob Caldwell**  
Newmarket Grows Seed Library

## Community Cooks

It has been eight months since we launched our pilot program Community Cooks and we have four more months to go. As is normal for any pilot, we have learned, adapted and tracked all of our successes and challenges. Participants have had an opportunity to get their Food Handler certificate, Smart Serve certification and CPR / First Aid training. While our participants have learned new skills, created new social networks and gained a more fulsome sense of community, Canadian Mental Health Association has happily distributed the meals created to their clients. All in all, a great success story. We have every hope that we will be successful in our endeavors to get another round of funding that will enable us to grow the program and increase our outreach and delivery to other community agencies.



One of the aspects of Community Cooks that is dearest to my heart is the initiative to save food and eliminate waste. York Region Food Network is a great resource if you would like to implement this initiative in your own home. Composting, vermicomposting, creative recipe adaptation and ingredient substitution are typical components of any program we facilitate. The largest proportion of food waste happens in our own households, therefore, we can create the primary solution in our homes. Please keep checking our website for upcoming workshops and program updates.

*Tricia Richens, Community Cooks Coordinator*



## Around and around

Fruit, vegetables and grains all come from the earth. Isn't it a little rude to call that productive space "dirt"? At YRFN we like to get the best value we can from the ingredients and inputs that we use, the "biggest bang for the buck". There are many ways of doing this, with recycling and repurposing being high on that list. As summer approaches, so does composting season. All winter we have been accumulating the leftovers from our programs, ready to process them into new earth which can then go onto our community garden plots to feed the vegetables planted there.

On Tuesdays, we have a drop-in breakfast program from 9:30 to 11. The plate waste and peelings, coffee

grounds and apple cores all go into the composting buckets.

On Wednesdays, we have our highly-acclaimed Community Cooks program. Participants cook a large meal to share together, with approximately 20 extra servings. These extra servings then go to CMHA in Aurora to assist their Housing First program.

CMHA have a plot in our community garden where they grow fresh vegetables for their own use. This year those vegetables and some on other plots will be fed by compost made from our kitchen "waste"!

*David Lightwood, Good Food Hub Coordinator*

## Food for Thought

The Ontario Government has announced a Basic Income Pilot project to investigate the impact of creating an income floor below which a person is not allowed to fall. Assessing the impact of a Basic Income on levels of food insecurity is possible because Statistics Canada has been gathering data about food insecurity through the Canadian Community Health Survey for over a decade.

In addition, the research project PROOF has spent the last 5 years producing reports and advancing food insecurity research across Canada. The findings of this research question the charitable response to food insecurity and challenge the ability of existing food programs to have any meaningful impact. Their research findings led to the definition of food insecurity as ***the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints***. In this country, income is the single largest factor in determining whether or not you have enough to eat.

The PROOF study highlights the existing evidence we have that increasing income works. We already have a kind of basic income in Canada and it's called the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for seniors. The data showed that rates of food insecurity among seniors fell by half simply by turning from age 64 to 65 and becoming eligible for the GIS. If there is such clear evidence that we can cut food insecurity in half with a single intervention, why we don't just get on with it? We can nibble away at food insecurity with other interventions but very few are effective, and none will take a bite out of the problem like increasing income.

*Joan Stonehocker, Executive Director*

# FOOD FIGHT

## Advocating for Health & Social Justice

with Keynote Speaker  
**Dr. Lisa Simon**

Associate Medical Officer of Health  
Simcoe Muskoka District Health

**Tuesday, June 20th at 9:00 a.m.**  
at  
**Newmarket Community Centre  
and Lion's Club**

This networking event will broaden awareness about the reality of food insecurity in York Region and provide opportunities to advocate for change.

*Lunch will be provided. For additional information about this event, contact [kateg@yrfn.ca](mailto:kateg@yrfn.ca) or call 905-841-3101*

## Join us for our Volunteer Appreciation Event and Annual General Meeting

**Thursday, June 15, 2017  
6:30 PM  
350 Industrial Parkway S,  
Aurora, ON**

**RSVP to [kima@yrfn.ca](mailto:kima@yrfn.ca) by  
June 12, 2017**



*Thank you to Miller Compost and Mayor Geoff Dawe from the Town of Aurora for their ongoing support of our community garden programs. Miller Compost has generously donated compost to our community gardens across York Region for many years now and we couldn't be more grateful. Their contributions have such a positive impact in our gardens.*

## Satellites: Food for Health, Food for All

This year my role as Good Food Hub Coordinator has been expanded to include more outreach work. To date this includes three groups, Blue Door Shelters, Rose of Sharon and Hospice King-Aurora-Richmond Hill (HKARH).

You may know Blue Door as a shelter for local homeless people. It has now expanded its role to house new Canadians, some of whom are refugees from war-torn countries. Once per month I will be coordinating community meals with the residents there. In April, that group included several ladies from Nigeria who made a

phenomenal fish stew to feed their families. Some of the ingredients came from our food reclamation arrangement.

Rose of Sharon is a centre for young moms in Newmarket. This summer, YRFN will be assisting in creating and maintaining their vegetable garden, making compost heaps and growing produce for their community kitchen. Through the summer vacation period I will be running workshops for moms on creating simple, healthy, economical meals. This will include all the recipes from our series "Make A Little Go A Long Long Way".

HKARH shares the building with us at 350 Industrial Parkway South in Aurora. They run a variety of programs which include Healthy Life activities. This year they will coordinate with YRFN to present a Food and Digestion program for hospice and YRFN clients, presented by nutritionist and Integrative Health Practitioner Marise Foster of numa wellbeing (benuma.com) in Newmarket. Marise takes a holistic view of life and, like YRFN, regards good food as the best foundation for good health.

**David Lightwood**  
**Good Food Hub Coordinator**

## Thank you to our funders

Canada



**United Way**  
Toronto & York Region

Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation



Fondation  
Trillium  
de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

York Region

### 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