

The Good Food Box

Feasibility Study Report and Recommendations

District of Thunder Bay 2011



The Good Food Box is a fresh food distribution system that aims to increase access to healthy affordable food for those in need.

The program aids in the reduction of food insecurity in order to build healthy communities.



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Superior Greenstone District School Board

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Introduction

The **Good Food Box** Program is a fresh food distribution system that aims to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables and promote healthy eating.

The **Good Food Box** Program provides individuals or families the opportunity to purchase a box of fresh fruits and vegetables once a month at lower cost through partnership with a local grocer. Typically each individual or family would order and pay for the box in advance at the beginning of the month with pick-up closer to month end. This program assists individuals, families and communities that may be food insecure by increasing access and intake of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Healthy Eating is a core priority of “**The Northern Family Food & Fitness Revolution**” Healthy Communities project as it aids in disease prevention and impacts optimal overall health. It is also a concern for many residing in the District of Thunder Bay as the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables is significantly higher in the area and access is an issue for many.

Why should access and intake of fresh fruits and vegetables be a priority for those living in Northwestern Ontario?

According to... Canadian Community Health Survey data from 2005, the **prevalence rates for hypertension (18.5) and heart disease (6.5) were significantly higher than the provincial rates for the same conditions (15.4 and 4.8) in the North West LHIN (Local Health Integration Network)** (Bains et al., 2007) Significantly higher rates of mortality than the province for major chronic conditions including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and hypertension were also reported. **Thunder Bay District (TBD) has one of the highest rates of diabetes in Ontario with approximately 10,168 people living with diabetes.** The incidence rate is 6.74%, ranking TBD 10th in the province out of 49 districts (ICES, 2003). **Diabetes prevalence rates are even higher in communities along the North Shore and Nipigon, Red Rock, Greenstone** (Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research/ICES 2004 -5).

The leading causes of death in the NW LHIN were cardiovascular disease and cancer while related modifiable behavioural risk factors (obesity, poor diet, and smoking) were significantly higher than the provincial average. The population aged 12 and older were significantly more likely to have poor diets (less than 5 servings a day of fruits and vegetables),

smoke (daily or occasional), than the province overall, although they less often reported being physically inactive. More of the region’s adults, aged 18 and older, however, were either overweight or obese. Reduction of these risk factors could prevent a considerable proportion of the chronic disease common in the NW LHIN (Bains et al., 2007)

Prevalence of common modifiable risk factors in the NW LHIN (per 100,000 population) (Bains et al., 2007)

Risk Factor	NW LHIN	ON
Poor Diet 12+ (less than 5 servings vegetables or fruit/day)	59.9%	53.3%
Smoking 12+ (daily or occasional)	25.7 %	20.8 %
Physical Inactivity 12+	41.1 %	46 %
Obesity 18+ (BMI 25 – 29 kg/m2)	22.3 %	15.2 %
Overweight 18+ (BMI > than 30 km/m2)	36.9 %	33.6 %

Children’s Health Information

It is well known that the rate of overweight and obesity among children is increasing affecting 1 in 3 Canadian children. The increased prevalence of overweight and obese young people is of concern because overweight and obesity may persist into adulthood leading to chronic disease (Ministry of Health, 2009).

Physical inactivity and unhealthy eating are behaviours related to increasing rates of obesity and chronic diseases. Research has shown that diets containing substantial amounts of vegetables and fruits are associated with reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and obesity and may prevent certain types of cancer (Ministry of Health, 2009). Among district 3 – 5 year olds assessed for nutritional risk in 2009, 40% ate vegetables less than twice a day (Thunder Bay District Health Unit, 2009). Additionally, 22% of area preschoolers assessed to be at moderate and high risk for poor nutrition ate no vegetables at all, 10% had milk once a day or less and 8 % consumed no meat (Thunder Bay District Health Unit, 2009). The NutriSTEP data also showed that 1 in 5 preschoolers eat fast food once a week, with those children assessed to be at high risk eating it most often. Additionally, 18% of children come to the table not hungry due to drinking too much between meals and 41% eat in front of the TV sometimes. As well, it is concerning that more than 1/3 of local preschoolers spend over 3 hours in front of screens daily, with 40% spending at least 2 hours (Thunder Bay District Health Unit, 2009). Recommendations limit screen time to 1 hour daily for 3-5 year olds (Active Kids Canada, 2009). National reports note that only 12% of

children and youth are meeting Canada's guidelines of 90 minutes of physical activity a day (Active Kids Canada, 2009)). However, physical activity rates in Thunder Bay District are slightly higher than the provincial average.

Social Determinants, such as income and education, impact access to healthy foods and opportunities for regular physical activity. Compared to the province, TBDHU (Thunder Bay District Health Unit) has lower rates of post-secondary education with almost one third of adults (age 45 – 64) having less than a high school diploma (2001 Census). **A barrier to food security in most rural areas and remote First Nations within the NW LHIN, is the lack of availability of fresh products and the unaffordable cost when produce is available** (Willows et al. 2008). Food insecurity also affects off-reserve Aboriginal people, with three times as many Aboriginal households as non-Aboriginal reporting that they could not afford food for themselves or had days on which they did not have food for their children (Willows et al., 2008). In 2007, at least 9% of people in households with children under 25 reported food insecurity in Thunder Bay District (CCHS, 2007) while 14.8 % of children aged 17 and under lived in families with total incomes below the low Income cut-off (CCHS, 2005). That means that at least 4,415 children were living in poverty in our region in 2005. According to the 2001 Census, the poverty rate for our District is 13.1% and over 15,400 people live in poverty (Statistics Canada, 2001). This rate has likely increased with the recent loss of local jobs in the forestry industry. Food bank use was also up 25% from March 2008 to March 2009 in the District of Thunder Bay (Ontario Food Bank Association, 2009). As well, lack of access to affordable and safe recreation has also been cited as contributing to lack of physical activity among Aboriginal people living in Northwestern Ontario (Northern Diabetes Health Network, 2006). Of the total population in the TBD 25% are First Nations (Health Indicators, 2009). This population has an increased tendency for diabetes.

The cost of food in TBD has been consistently higher than the provincial average for more than a decade by an average of \$60/month for a family of four (Nutritious Food Basket Reports 1998 - 2009). The monthly cost of feeding the family of four in 2009 is \$ 775.63 (Nutritious Food Basket Reports 1998 - 2009).

Negative health impacts linked to communities challenged by forest industry changes may be countered by maintaining strong networks of community support, promoting healthy lifestyles and keeping food security intact (NW LHIN Forest Industry Rpt).

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Benefits of the Good Food Box Program

Health

The program encourages individuals and families to incorporate a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables into their diet. Diets rich in these foods have been found to aid in the prevention of cardiovascular disease and some forms of cancer and may also help prevent obesity.¹ An evaluation conducted through the Thunder Bay District Health Unit in 2009, revealed that the Thunder Bay Good Food Box program has made a positive impact for many participants, with 68% reporting an increase in consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables and for others an increased variety in their diet.²

Affordability

This program purchases produce at “cost plus” through a partnership with a local grocer and uses volunteer resources to coordinate and distribute the boxes each month.

Accessibility

This program provides access to fresh fruit and vegetables in communities which do not have a local grocery store. It also increases access in communities that may have access to a grocery store that offers fresh fruit and vegetables, but at a higher retail cost.

Building Community Capacity

This program provides opportunities for volunteers to learn new skills, become engaged and active in making a positive difference in their community.

¹ Produce for Better Health Foundation. National Action Plan to Promote Health Through Increased Fruit and Vegetable Consumption, 2005.

² Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Does the Thunder Bay Good Food Box Program Increase Fruit and Vegetable Consumption?, 2009.

Research Materials and Methods

Goals

This report aims to assess the need, demand and viability of a Good Food Box Program in the District of Thunder Bay. This includes the communities of Dorion, Red Rock, Nipigon, Schreiber, Terrace Bay, Marathon and Manitouwadge, as well as Beardmore, Geraldton, Nakina and Longlac within the Municipality of Greenstone. Data from individuals or agencies in smaller communities located within close proximity to those listed above, including First Nations communities, is included with the closest community's data.

Target Population

The Good Food Box Program aims to service people and families living in low income situations or those with difficulty accessing fresh produce.

Research Methods

Surveys were used to assess the need and demand for the program in each community.

1. Community Questionnaire

The Community questionnaire was distributed through partnership with Ontario Works regional offices, Children's Aid regional offices, local Best Start Centres and local Food Banks in each community. In some communities where the response was minimal, surveys were sent home from local schools with students.

Questions revolved around the challenges people face when it comes to the intake and accessibility of fresh produce. Participants were also asked whether they would participate in the program, whether they would volunteer their time to the program and whether they felt the program is needed in their community.

2. Agency Questionnaire

The Agency Questionnaire was distributed via email to community organizations or agencies offering existing support to "The Northern Family Food & Fitness Revolution" Healthy Communities project. It was also sent to agencies providing service to the target population.

A description of the program was provided along with an outline of program requirements. Questions revolved around the need for the program within the community as well as a section where each agency could indicate areas they may be able to contribute.

3. Consultations with local grocers

Consultations were used to assess the viability of the program in various communities. Five local grocers were contacted in six district communities to discuss the Good Food Box program. Produce costs and freight costs were compared with reported costs from a Thunder Bay grocer.

Analysis of Results

Results from each questionnaire were compiled by Brass Bell Family Resource Centre's Data Analysis Coordinator using customized spread sheets in Microsoft Excel. Responses from individuals and agencies are indicated by community.

Limitations of Research Methods

The community questionnaire was distributed through several local agencies in each community, completed on site and returned. The response was moderately successful with 138 questionnaires completed and returned. In some cases, conducting the survey over the summer months was difficult as programs and services were reduced or not offered. An extension was necessary to allow for additional questionnaires to be completed and returned. In addition, potential users of the Good Food Box Program, such as those on a fixed income, may not have participated in the survey if not attending or receiving service from the agencies distributing the survey.

The agency questionnaire was distributed online to existing community partners of "The Northern Family Food & Fitness Revolution", as well as agencies servicing the target population. The agency questionnaire was moderately successful with 34 completed and returned. In several communities the survey was taken up at local service provider meetings or town council meetings for discussion. This resulted in additional input from agencies that were not included in the initial distribution. All input and data was collected and compiled from these additional sources.

The interviews with the local grocers were done in person or over the phone by the Project Coordinator or regional Community Support Workers through “The Northern Family Food & Fitness Revolution”. This direct communication allowed for frank discussion and comparison of costs between Thunder Bay and the District. Although it was made clear to the respondents that the interview was only an initial investigation to determine interest and viability without commitment, those who participated responded quite positively.

Need Assessment Analysis

Description of Data Set

In total, 138 community questionnaires were collected from individuals across the District of Thunder Bay and analyzed for this study. In total 34 agency questionnaires were completed and returned by community organizations and agencies throughout the District of Thunder Bay.

Community Survey Analysis

Of the 138 community surveys collected, the number of responses generated per community is presented below in Figure 1:

Figure 1. Community Survey: Percentage of participation per location

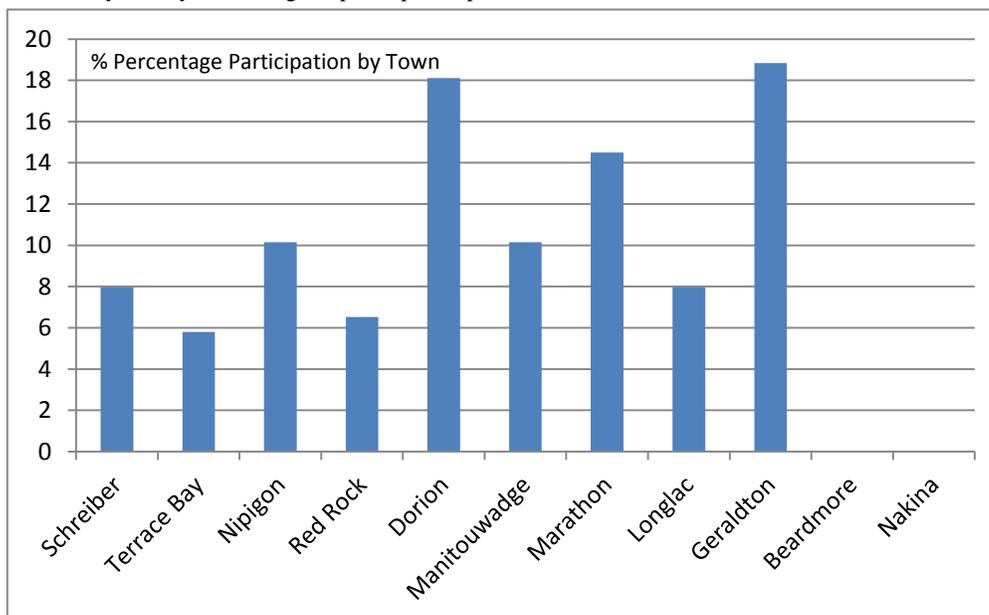


Table 1.1 Community Survey: Age of Respondent

What is your age?	Number	Percent
Less than 20 years	4	3
21 - 30 years	49	36
31 - 40 years	51	37
41 - 50 years	20	14
51 or more years	14	10
Total number of responses	138	100

Table 1.1 indicates the majority of respondents to the community survey were between 21 – 40 years old.

Table 1.2 Community Survey: Number of people in household

How many people live in your household including yourself?		
Total number of persons indicated	437	
Average household size	3.3	

The respondents to the community survey represent over 400 people throughout the district as indicated in Table 1.2.

Table 1.3 Community Survey: Barriers to purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables.

Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetable. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.		
	Number	Percent
a- I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce	31	13
b- I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce	20	8
c- I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy	19	8
d- fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive	66	28
e- I have to travel too far to get a good price	44	18
f- I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself	12	5
g- I don't have any challenges when accessing food	46	19
Total number of responses	238	100

As indicated in Table 1.3, the greatest barriers for those respondents who indicate challenges accessing fresh fruits and vegetables are the expense, (28% of respondents) distance to travel to a location where there is more affordable fresh fruits and vegetables, (18% of respondents) and transportation to a location that sells fresh fruit and vegetables (13% of respondents).

Table 1.4 Community Survey: Number of Respondents who think the Good Food Box (GFB) is a good idea for their community.

Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	138	100
No	0	0
Total number of responses		138

Table 1.4 indicates that all 138 community members who completed the Community Survey think the Good Food Box is a good idea for their community.

Table 1.5 Community Survey: Number of respondents that would try the Good Food Box.

Would you try the Good Food Box Program if it were offered in your community?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	124	90
No	14	10
Total number of responses		138

Of the 138 respondents to the community survey, 124 (90%) indicate they would try the Good Food Box as shown in Table 1.5.

Table 1.6 Community Survey: Number of respondents willing to volunteer

Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box Program?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	104	75
No	34	25
Total number of responses	138	

Table 1.6 indicates 75% of respondents would be willing to volunteer their time to the Good Food Box program.

Comments from the reverse side of the questionnaire:

- it would be perfect for low income families
- sometimes fresh produce is not available in our small town

Agency Survey Analysis

Of the 34 agency surveys collected, the number of responses generated per community is presented below in Figure 2:

Figure 2. Agency survey: Number of respondents per location

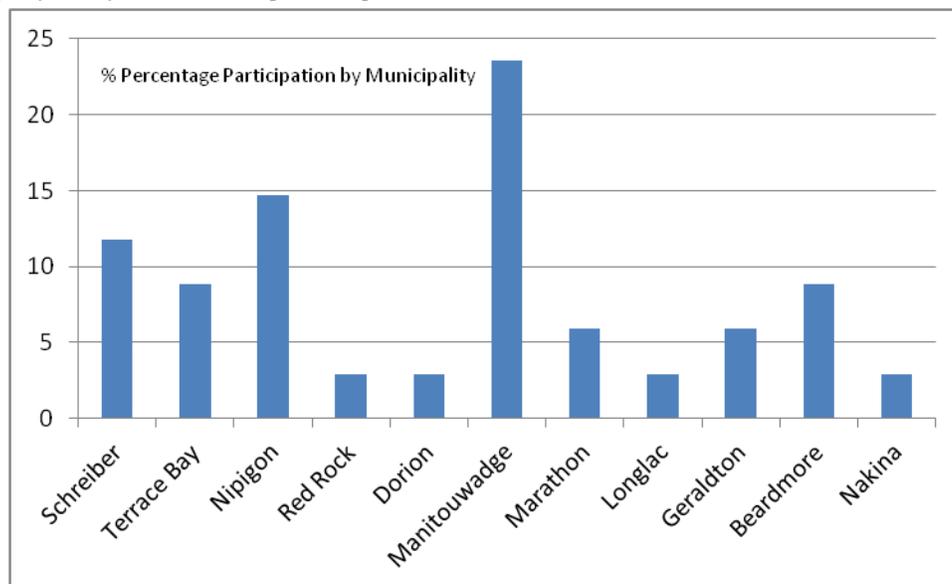


Table 2.1 Agency survey: Number of respondents that think there is a need for a Good Food Box (GFB) program in their community.

Based on your experience within your organization, do you think that there is a need for a Good Food Box Program amongst your clients?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	33	97
No	1	3
Total number of responses	34	

Table 2.1 indicates of the 34 agencies surveyed, 97% think there is a need for a Good Food Box program in their community.

Table 2.2 Agency Survey: Number of agencies that would consider being a host-site for a GFB program.

Would your organization consider being a host-site?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	4	12
No	30	88
Total number of responses	34	

Of the 34 agencies surveyed, 4 organizations indicated they would be willing to consider hosting a Good Food Box program locally.

Table 2.3 Agency Survey: Respondents indicate where they may support the program.

Please indicate all the roles that your organization may consider playing:		
	Number	Percent
a- a member of the steering committee	17	25
b- access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	10	15
c- provide space for volunteers to gather once a month to pack the boxes	11	16
d- provide volunteers to help pack the boxes	14	21
e- be a drop-off/pick-up site for participants to pick-up their boxes	16	24
Total number of responses	68	100

Table 2.3 indicates in which ways the 34 agencies would be willing to support or contribute to a local Good Food Box program.

Comments from the reverse side of the questionnaire:

- consider being a pick-up site only if during our regularly scheduled hours for food bank
- great idea!
- we would be very interested in participating in the Food Box Program, this is such a great program!! we look forward to working with your organization on such a well needed initiative!
- due to storage issues would be unable to be a host site but could provided support on distribution days, all programs share space and have limited access to refrigeration
- no space!
- I cannot speak for my organization but they definitely can assist as listed above, I am willing to volunteer any time, also, I would recommend pick in the middle of the month, a lot of elders or community members receive a monthly income
- mom participated in the program in Thunder Bay and considered it worthwhile, I am willing to help with the program and suggest using one of the schools for packing
- it is felt that there would be no one in the community who would take on the task of "host-site" nor that of volunteering for other jobs to bring this initiative to fruition, this being said it is a wonderful idea
- I could be a committee member & some of my clients could probably use the service or seniors as we have a host of individuals on fixed incomes

Comments continued:

- from the school's perspective I see that there is a need but I don't see us as being a hub because of our location in the community
- transportation- won't travel in winter and the cost of gas is expensive
- there may be a need within the community, but not among our "clients"
- we do see the "host site" role as being a major undertaking- one which we do not have the resources for at this point in time
- we see one of the biggest challenges as "convincing" the needy families to part with money weeks before receiving the box of food

The comments gathered from the agency survey are generally positive although it is clear that many communities will face challenges establishing a program. Many agencies do not have the capacity at this point to host a program. Partnerships will be key to the successful implementation of a Good Food Box program in district communities.

Local Grocer Consultation Analysis

Consultations were conducted in person or over the phone. Grocers were provided with sample pricing from a Thunder Bay grocer to compare costs to determine whether similar quality and quantity were feasible for a local Good Food Box program. Results are presented anonymously to ensure participants could provide feedback comfortably without pressure to commit to participating in a program.

Table 3. Local Grocer Consultation: Comparison of costs

	Question: In comparison to the spreadsheet from the Thunder Bay Grocer, are your costs significantly higher in this location?
Grocer 1	Yes – costs are higher although not much higher.
Grocer 2	Yes – Partly due to shipping but also prices are generally higher for them than compared grocer.
Grocer 3	Not significantly higher than prices from compared grocer. Costs fluctuate weekly and seasonal produce would need to be used to keep cost reasonable.
Grocer 4	Did not wish to participate in consultation at this time.
Grocer 5	Freight is a major factor.

Table 3 indicates that grocers face higher costs in the district, although some appear to be higher than others. One factor for this difference appears to be the distance each community is from the city of Thunder Bay. The farther up the North Shore, the higher the costs.

Table 3.1 Local Grocer Consultation: Comparison of Quantity

	Question: Please review some of the sample \$20.00 Good Food Boxes from the Thunder Bay program – would it be reasonable to expect the same quantity of fruits and vegetables for \$20.00 at this location? *
Grocer 1	The prices may be comparable in the summer months. Other times of the year the prices could be a little more to much higher.
Grocer 2	No, unfortunately we would not be able to provide same quantity of fruits and vegetables for that price. Prices do not compare so would not be able to offer the same produce.
Grocer 3	Costs fluctuate weekly...would take some planning to sort out what can be ordered each month in order to fill a \$20.00 box.
Grocer 4	Did not wish to participate in consultation at this time.
Grocer 5	Grocer provided a breakdown of their costs versus the sample costs demonstrating a cost differential of approximately 35% higher at this location at the current time (December 2011).

*the sample pricing used from the Thunder Bay Good Food Box was from the fall of 2010

Most of the grocers consulted agree that providing similar quantities of produce will be a challenge in the district due to higher costs, cost fluctuation and availability of seasonal produce. Communication and planning between the program lead and the partner grocer will be key to providing a successful Good Food Box program.

Table 3.2 Local Grocer Consultation: Incentive to take part

	Question: Do you see any incentive to take part in this program as a business? i.e Does ordering larger quantities reduce shipping costs?
Grocer 1	The program may expand their produce ie. If they know half the shipment will be gone, they have more incentive to order new produce.
Grocer 2	No, not as a business. Maybe in the cities where stores are competing for business but not at this location because there is only one grocer in town.
Grocer 3	No, there is no incentive as a business other than contributing to the community.
Grocer 4	Did not wish to participate in consultation at this time.
Grocer 5	No, shipping costs will always be the same.

Table 3.2 indicates that there is very little incentive for a grocer to take part in a local Good Food Box program from a business perspective. However, three of the respondents felt they may be able to offer support as indicated in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Local Grocer Consultation: Partnership

	Question: Would you consider participating in a pilot program if a lead agency could be recruited?
Grocer 1	Yes.
Grocer 2	No, not at this time.
Grocer 3	Yes.
Grocer 4	Did not wish to participate in consultation at this time.
Grocer 5	Yes.

Table 3.4 Local Grocer Consultation: Issues

	Question: Do you foresee any issues with the program in your community? Any concerns?
Grocer 1	No, could be a positive thing for the community.
Grocer 2	No, do not see any issues with the program in the community.
Grocer 3	No...suggest involving high school students as volunteers to assist with putting boxes together each month. Possibly simplify and have only one box available instead of a small and large box. Could try offering a fruit only box or a vegetable only box.
Grocer 4	Did not wish to participate in consultation at this time.
Grocer 5	No.

Some suggestions include offering one standard box to simplify the program instead of offering a family size and a single size. Another suggestion was to offer a fruit box or a vegetable box.

Recommendations

Across the District of Thunder Bay, individuals and community organizations and agencies have indicated a need for The Good Food Box Program.

To further support this statement, the need to “strengthen food systems through strategies that improve the supply, variety, freshness and affordability of food... and increase access to healthy foods among individuals who are food insecure” are recommendations included in the ‘Pathway to Healthy Communities in the Thunder Bay District’ Report published in March 2011.³ The research for the report was conducted by Healthy Communities – Thunder Bay District, coordinated by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, and funded by the Government of Ontario. The recommendations within the report were compiled using input from over 900 community members from email surveys and focus groups held throughout the District of Thunder Bay.

In order to create a successful Good Food Box Program the following recommendations should be considered:

Program Goals

In carrying out research for this report, it is clear that the program goals of the Good Food Box program vary by community. In some locations it is a goal to support local farming, to create employment opportunities, to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to a target population, or all of the above.

With respect to the District of Thunder Bay, although made up of several small communities, each with unique needs and challenges; one consistent over-arching goal for the program should be to provide access to, and increased intake of, fresh fruits and vegetables. Any further program goals should be established on a program- by- program, community- by- community basis as determined by the steering committee in partnership with the program lead.

The Host Agency/Program Coordinator

It is recommended that each Host Agency undertaking responsibility for a Good Food Box Program establish a program lead or coordinator. Responsibilities and time commitment would vary depending on the size of the program.

³ Healthy Communities – Thunder Bay District. Pathway to Healthy Communities in the Thunder Bay District: A Summary of Community Recommendations, 2011 www.healthythunderbaydistrict.ca

The Program Coordinator will be:

- A liaison with the local grocer to determine what and how much produce to buy each month.
- A community liaison to work with community agencies that collect payment from participants and act as a drop-off/pick-up site.
- A volunteer recruiter/organizer to ensure volunteers are on hand to assist with packing boxes each month
- On –site to organize and oversee the packing of the boxes and distribution each month

The Box

The Good Food Box sounds simple: a box with fresh fruit and vegetables inside. However, there are several things to consider: what is in season, what is affordable, what staples should be included and how much of each item? As food costs and shipping costs fluctuate, what impact will that have on the quality and quantity of the contents?

As for the box itself, several considerations are:

- Durability; will the box/container be reusable and last for a considerable length of time
- A fee/deposit or system in place to ensure participants return/reuse the boxes
- Replacement boxes for those that are not returned
- A box that allows for breathability as produce may wilt between packing and pick-up

Obtaining the Food

A Good Food Box Program needs a food supplier to operate. In the District communities, the practical option is to establish a partnership with a local grocer. This relationship will be crucial to the success of the program as their input and expertise will be key to maintaining an affordable Good Food Box each month.

Packing Site

Each program will require space each month to organize and pack the Good Food boxes. A key consideration will be arranging for the sorting and transporting of the produce from the grocer to the packing site.

Another key consideration for some programs will be arranging to transport packed boxes to other nearby communities the program serves.

Volunteers

The Good Food Box is a volunteer driven program. Ideally the volunteers packing the boxes would also be those who are participating in the program. Of the 138 community members surveyed, 75% of respondents indicated they would be willing to contribute their time to the program. Many respondents to the agency questionnaire suggested involving the elementary and secondary school students as volunteers in some capacity.

Recruiting, managing and coordinating volunteers will be a critical component to the success and sustainability of a Good Food Box program.

Drop-off/ Pick-Up Site

In some circumstances where more than one community is being serviced by a single program or in a large community, access to the program may need to be considered. One or several community agencies may be required to act as drop-off and pick-up sites each month. These sites will also be responsible for collecting fees from participants and calling in the number of orders each month. Financial protocols will need to be established to keep track of fees and orders.

Participants

The needs assessment analysis indicates that the Good Food Box Program would be well received in the District of Thunder Bay with 100% of community members surveyed indicating the program is needed, and 97% of agencies indicating there is a need in their community. Additionally, of the community members surveyed, 90% indicated they would try the Good Food Box. **See Appendix B: Community Survey Results per Location** for a breakdown of community response.

Promotion of the program will be important, not only to ensure that the program is worth providing, but that the over-arching goals are met as are the needs of the target population.

Next Steps

Phase 1

Establish a local Good Food Box Steering/Planning Committee in communities that indicate a need/demand. **See Appendix C: Agency Survey Results per Location** for a listing of agencies willing to participate on a Good Food Box Steering Committee.

As a committee the following should be considered:

- Outline responsibilities of:
 - Good Food Box (GFB) Steering Committee
 - Host Agency/Program Coordinator
 - Pick-up/Drop-off sites
- Start up costs. **See Appendix D: List of Start-Up Materials and Considerations.**
- Program goals
- Promotion
- Target participants
 - Who and how to target

Phase 2

As a committee:

1. Locate an agency or organization in each community that is willing to act as a Host Agency. **See Appendix C: Agency Survey Results per Location** for a listing of agencies willing to consider hosting a local Good Food Box program.
2. Consult with a local grocer; establish a partnership.
3. Locate a packing site (s) **See Appendix C: Agency Survey Results per Location** for a listing of agencies that may offer space.
4. Establish drop-off/pick-up sites if required in the community (ies) **See Appendix C: Agency Survey Results per Location** for a listing of agencies willing to act as pick-up/drop-off sites.

Phase 3

Host Agency and GFB Steering Committee with input from Grocer:

- Design the box
 - Type of box
 - Determine food staples
 - Costs
- Determine how food will be sorted and transported from store to packing site(s).
- Design promotional materials

APPENDIX A: Survey Tools

The Northern Family Food & Fitness Revolution Healthy Communities Fund
 Sponsored by the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport
Good Food Box Community Survey



The Northern Family Food & Fitness Revolution Project is conducting a feasibility study on the Good Food Box Program which provides an opportunity for individuals or families to purchase a box of fresh fruits and vegetables once a month at a lower cost through partnerships with a local grocer. For example, a small box may cost \$ 12 - 15 and a family box approximately \$ 20. Depending on the season, some vegetables you may receive are: tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, peas, beans, carrots, onions, squash, rhubarb, spinach, potatoes, beets, strawberries and cantaloupes. Each individual or family would order and pay for the box in advance at the beginning of the month with pick-up closer to month end. Please complete this survey and tell us what you think. Your comments and feedback will help determine if a program such as this is wanted or needed in your community

1. Name of your town: _____ and postal code: **P O T** _ _ _

2. What is your age?

Less than 20 years	21 - 30 Years	31 - 40 Years	41 - 50 Years	51 or more Years
<input type="checkbox"/>				

3. How many people live in your household including yourself?

4. Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.



a- I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce	<input type="checkbox"/>
b- I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce	<input type="checkbox"/>
c- I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy	<input type="checkbox"/>
d- fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive	<input type="checkbox"/>
e- I have to travel too far to get a good price	<input type="checkbox"/>
f- I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself	<input type="checkbox"/>
g- I don't have any challenges when accessing food	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
5. Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Would you try the Good Food Box Program if it were offered in your community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box Program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for completing this survey. Any questions about the survey or the this feasibility and needs assessment can be directed to Sharon Dumonski at the Brass Bell Family Resource Centre, Dorion, Ontario, 807-857-2943
 Please add your comments on the reverse side of this page and return by Friday, September 30, 2011.



The Northern Family Food & Fitness Revolution Healthy Communities Project

Sponsored by the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport

Good Food Box Agency Survey



The healthy communities project is currently being implemented across the District of Thunder Bay by the Brass Bell Family Resource Centre in partnership with other community agencies. As part of this project, a feasibility and community needs assessment is underway to determine the demand for a Good Food Box Program in communities across the District.

The Good Food Box Program provides an opportunity for individuals or families to purchase a box of fresh fruits and vegetables once a month at lower cost through partnerships with a local grocer. For example, a small box may cost \$ 12 - 15 and a family box \$ 20. Depending on the season, the contents of a typical box may contain: tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, peas, beans, carrots, onions, squash, rhubarb, spinach, potatoes, beets, strawberries and cantaloupes. Each individual or family would order and pay for the box in advance at the beginning of the month with pick-up closer to month end. The goal is to provide increased access and intake of fresh fruits and vegetables in an effort to assist individuals or communities that may be food insecure.

In order to assess the demand and support for this program in your area, please complete the survey below and tell us what you think. Your comments and feedback will help determine if a program is needed or supported in your community.

Agency Name:

Location and Postal Code:

Please mark with an " X "

1. Based on your experience within your organization, do you think that there is a need for a good Food Box Program amongst your clients?

Yes

No

2. A successful Good Food Box Program requires a "Host-site" in each community. The host-site is an organization which volunteers to oversee the ordering of produce, collects payment for the boxes, deposits the money into the account, organizes volunteers to receive the produce, make up the boxes and distribute or have ready for pick-up by participants once per month. Would your organization consider being a host-site?

Yes

No

3. There are a number of ways in which your organization could contribute to the Good Food Box Program. Please indicate all the following roles that your organization may consider playing:

a- a member of a steering committee

b- access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site

c- provide space for volunteers to gather once a month to pack the boxes

d- provide volunteers to help pack boxes

e- be a drop-off/pick-up site for participants to pick-up their boxes

Thank you for completing this survey. Any questions about the survey or the this feasibility and needs assessment can be directed to Sharon Dumonski at the Brass Bell Family Resource Centre, 175 Dorion Loop Road, Dorion, Ontario, P0T 1K0

Telephone 807-857-2943 Fax 807-857-1318 Email sdoeycbb@tbaytel.net

You may also print then mail or fax this survey to Sharon at the address above.

Please add your comments below:

APPENDIX B – Community Survey Results Per location

Community Survey Results per Location

Location: **Dorion (includes responses from Pass Lake)**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **25**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 0 21-30 years 7 31-40 years 12 41-50 years 5 51 + years 1
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 98 Average household 3.92
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 1 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 7 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 2 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 7 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 9 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 2 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 11
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 25 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 22 No 3
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 16 No 9

Location: **Red Rock**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **9**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 0 21-30 years 1 31-40 years 6 41-50 years 1 51 + years 1
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 36 Average household 4.0
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 0 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 0 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 0 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 1 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 1 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 0 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 5
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 9 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 5 No 4
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 5 No 4

Location: **Nipigon**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **14**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 0 21-30 years 4 31-40 years 0 41-50 years 4 51 + years 6
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 39 Average household 2.78
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 1 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 0 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 2 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 6 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 5 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 3 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 6
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 14 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 10 No 4
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 9 No 5

Location: **Schreiber**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **11**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 0 21-30 years 2 31-40 years 8 41-50 years 1 51 + years 0
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 36 Average household 3.27
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 2 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 1 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 0 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 4 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 4 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 0 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 4
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 11 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 8 No 3
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 8 No 3

Location: **Terrace Bay**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **8**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 0 21-30 years 3 31-40 years 4 41-50 years 0 51 + years 1
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 27 Average household 3.37
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 1 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 1 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 0 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 4 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 1 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 1 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 3
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 8 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 8 No 0
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 7 No 1

Location: **Marathon**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **20**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 1 21-30 years 14 31-40 years 3 41-50 years 1 51 + years 1
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 63 Average household 3.15
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 1 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 2 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 1 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 15 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 4 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 0 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 6
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 20 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 20 No 0
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 16 No 4

Location: **Manitouwadge**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **14**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 1 21-30 years 8 31-40 years 3 41-50 years 1 51 + years 1
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 48 Average household 3.42
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 1 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 0 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 1 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 4 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 3 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 1 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 5
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 14 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 14 No 0
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 12 No 2

Location: **Geraldton**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **26**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 2 21-30 years 7 31-40 years 10 41-50 years 5 51 + years 2
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 61 Average household 2.34
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 17 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 5 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 8 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 17 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 9 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 4 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 5
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 26 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 26 No 0
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 22 No 4

Location: **Longlac**

Number of surveys completed and returned: **11**

Question	Response
What is your age?	Less than 20 years 0 21-30 years 3 31-40 years 5 41-50 years 2 51 + years 1
How many people live in your household including yourself?	Total 29 Average household 2.63
Below are typical reasons people give for not buying fresh fruits and vegetables. Please check all statements which apply to your situation.	a. I don't have transportation to places that sell fresh produce 7 b. I don't have enough time to shop for fresh produce 4 c. I am not sure what is healthy and don't always know what to buy 5 d. Fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive 8 e. I have to travel too far to get a good price 8 f. I grow my own produce and freeze/preserve it myself 1 g. I don't have any challenges when accessing food 1
Do you think the Good Food Box is a good idea for your community?	Yes 11 No 0
Would you try the Good Food Box Program if were offered in your community?	Yes 11 No 0
Would you be willing to volunteer your time once per month to assist with the Good Food Box program?	Yes 9 No 2

Appendix C: Agency Survey Results Per Location

AGENCY SURVEY RESULTS PER LOCATION

Community of: **DORION**

ONE AGENCY COMPLETED AND RETURNED SURVEY

Offer of Support	Agency offering support
Consider being a Host site	
Sit as a member of a steering committee	BRASS BELL FRC
Access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	
Provide space for volunteers to gather once per month to pack the boxes	
Provide volunteers to help pack boxes	
Be a drop-off/pick-up site	BRASS BELL FRC

Community of: **RED ROCK**

ONE AGENCY COMPLETED AND RETURNED SURVEY

Offer of Support	Agency offering support
Consider being a Host site	
Sit as a member of a steering committee	BEST START RED ROCK
Access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	BEST START RED ROCK
Provide space for volunteers to gather once per month to pack the boxes	
Provide volunteers to help pack boxes	BEST START RED ROCK
Be a drop-off/pick-up site	

Community of: NIPIGON

FIVE AGENCIES COMPLETED AND RETURNED SURVEY

Offer of Support	Agency offering support
Consider being a Host site	NIPIGON DISTRICT FAMILY HEALTH TEAM
Sit as a member of a steering committee	BEST START NIPIGON THUNDER BAY DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT GEORGE O'NEILL PUBLIC SCHOOL NIPIGON DISTRICT FAMILY HEALTH TEAM NIPIGON PUBLIC LIBRARY
Access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	NIPIGON DISTRICT FAMILY HEALTH TEAM
Provide space for volunteers to gather once per month to pack the boxes	GEORGE O'NEILL PUBLIC SCHOOL NIPIGON DISTRICT FAMILY HEALTH TEAM
Provide volunteers to help pack boxes	GEORGE O'NEILL PUBLIC SCHOOL NIPIGON DISTRICT FAMILY HEALTH TEAM NIPIGON PUBLIC LIBRARY
Be a drop-off/pick-up site	GEORGE O'NEILL PUBLIC SCHOOL NIPIGON DISTRICT FAMILY HEALTH TEAM

Community of: SCHREIBER

FOUR AGENCIES COMPLETED AND RETURNED SURVEY

Offer of Support	Agency offering support
Consider being a Host site	
Sit as a member of a steering committee	THUNDER BAY DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT BEST START SCHREIBER SCHREIBER PUBLIC LIBRARY
Access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	
Provide space for volunteers to gather once per month to pack the boxes	
Provide volunteers to help pack boxes	NORTH SHORE FAMILY HEALTH TEAM
Be a drop-off/pick-up site	BEST START SCHREIBER

Community of: TERRACE BAY

THREE AGENCIES COMPLETED AND RETURNED SURVEY

Offer of Support	Agency offering support
Consider being a Host site	
Sit as a member of a steering committee	BEST START TERRACE BAY
Access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	
Provide space for volunteers to gather once per month to pack the boxes	TERRACE BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL
Provide volunteers to help pack boxes	NORTH SHORE FAMILY HEALTH TEAM TERRACE BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL
Be a drop-off/pick-up site	BEST START TERRACE BAY

Community of: MARATHON

FOUR AGENCIES COMPLETED AND RETURNED SURVEY

Offer of Support	Agency offering support
Consider being a Host site	
Sit as a member of a steering committee	
Access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	
Provide space for volunteers to gather once per month to pack the boxes	
Provide volunteers to help pack boxes	
Be a drop-off/pick-up site	

Community of: MANITOUWADGE

EIGHT AGENCIES COMPLETED AND RETURNED SURVEY

Offer of Support	Agency offering support
Consider being a Host site	
Sit as a member of a steering committee	THUNDER BAY DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT BEST START MANITOUWADGE
Access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	
Provide space for volunteers to gather once per month to pack the boxes	ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH
Provide volunteers to help pack boxes	CONTACT NORTH MANITOUWADGE BEST START MANITOUWADGE
Be a drop-off/pick-up site	CONTACT NORTH MANITOUWADGE ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH BEST START MANITOUWADGE

Community of: MUNICIPALITY OF GREENSTONE (including Rocky Bay, MacDiarmid, Beardmore, Geraldton, Nakina, Longlac and surrounding communities)
SEVEN AGENCIES COMPLETED AND RETURNED SURVEY

Offer of Support	Agency offering support
Consider being a Host site	DILICO ANISHINABEK FAMILY CARE, LONGLAC BIINJITIWAABEK ZAAGING ANISHINAABEK, ROCKY BAY
Sit as a member of a steering committee	BEST START GERALDTON BEST START NAKINA BEST START BEARDMORE DILICO ANISHINABEK FAMILY CARE, LONGLAC
Access to transportation to deliver produce to a packing site	BEST START GERALDTON BEST START NAKINA BEST START BEARDMORE DILICO ANISHINABEK FAMILY CARE, LONGLAC BIINJITIWAABEK ZAAGING ANISHINAABEK, ROCKY BAY
Provide space for volunteers to gather once per month to pack the boxes	GREENSTONE HARVEST CENTRE BEST START GERALDTON BEST START NAKINA BEST START BEARDMORE DILICO ANISHINABEK FAMILY CARE, LONGLAC BIINJITIWAABEK ZAAGING ANISHINAABEK, ROCKY BAY
Provide volunteers to help pack boxes	DILICO ANISHINABEK FAMILY CARE, LONGLAC BIINJITIWAABEK ZAAGING ANISHINAABEK, ROCKY BAY
Be a drop-off/pick-up site	GREENSTONE HARVEST CENTRE BEST START GERALDTON BEST START NAKINA BEST START BEARDMORE DILICO ANISHINABEK FAMILY CARE, LONGLAC BIINJITIWAABEK ZAAGING ANISHINAABEK, ROCKY BAY

APPENDIX D – List of Start-up Materials and Considerations

Start-Up Materials and Considerations; Tips from the Thunder Bay Good Food Box Coordinator

Key Items:

- Boxes to pack food into
 - Thunder Bay GFB uses 37.5 L Rubbermaid totes (approximately \$7.00 each)
- Scale; digital or mechanical
- Dollies or carts to move heavy produce
- Laptop (handy to track pickups and deliveries and packing site)
- A secure location to store collected fees prior to deposit
- Buckets, cloths, gloves for cleaning out and washing boxes
- Coffee pot, kettle, kitchen equipment/access for volunteer snacks/lunches

Frequently used and handy items:

- Calculator
- Pens/pencils
- Masking tape to sort and label tables
- Orange utility tape to mark single boxes from family boxes
- Scissors to open produce boxes
- Clipboards
- Receipt books, binders/folders

Things to consider when looking for a Packing Site:

- Large hall with sturdy, moveable tables
- A kitchen or space to serve lunch/snacks for volunteers
- A loading dock or barrier-free access to load/unload produce
- A storage space for supplies and empty boxes
- Accessible, central location with parking

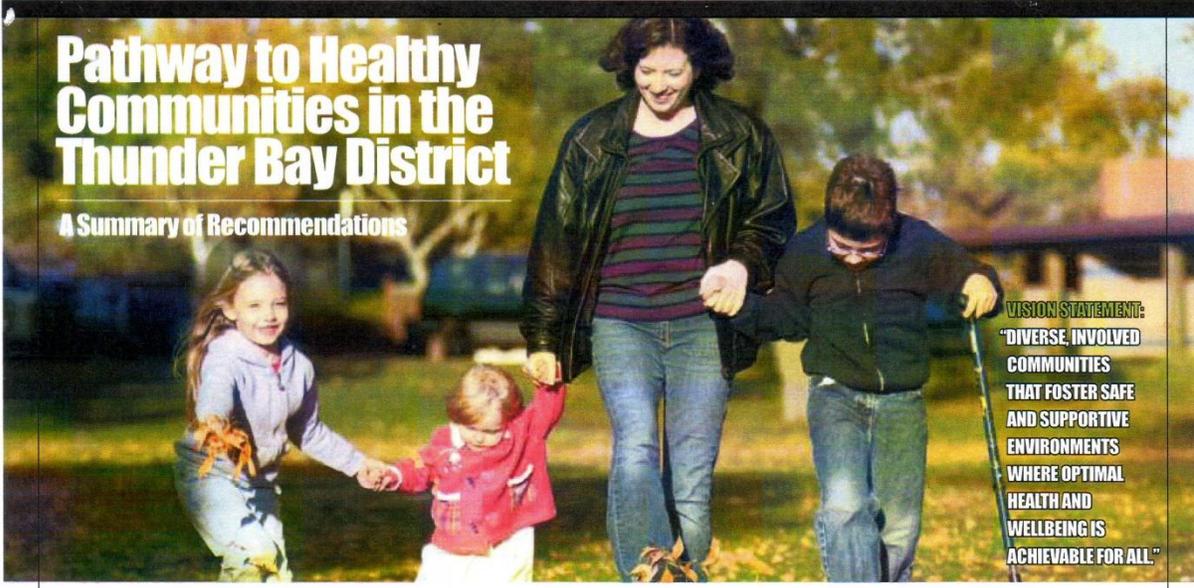
Key Partnerships:

- Grocer Store, ideally with a detail oriented Produce Manager
 - Understands the nature of the GFB program (ie. Need exact numbers/quantities or quick substitutions)
 - Can accommodate the schedule of GFB orders/deliveries
- Delivery Trucks (transportation)
 - From store to packing site
 - From packing site to pick-up sites
- Pick-Up/Drop-off sites
 - In high needs areas with direct access to target audience
 - Variety of hours of operation
 - Flexible – willing to share the responsibilities of the program
 - Willing to follow policies
 - Good communication
 - Reliable
- Administrative Support
 - Financial tracking/book keeping
- Volunteer appreciation and supplies (monthly costs)
 - Snacks/lunch for volunteers
 - Coffee cups, cutlery, dishes etc.
 - White vinegar, cloths and cleaning supplies needed periodically

APPENDIX E – Supporting Documentation and Reports

Pathway to Healthy Communities in the Thunder Bay District

A Summary of Recommendations



VISION STATEMENT:
"DIVERSE, INVOLVED COMMUNITIES THAT FOSTER SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS WHERE OPTIMAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IS ACHIEVABLE FOR ALL."

Introduction

This is a summary of the full "Pathway to Healthy Communities" report. Its intent is to assist people across the Thunder Bay district to work together for community change. The community consultations and planning behind the recommendations were made possible through monies from the Healthy Communities Fund, Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport. These recommendations would also align the Ministry's Healthy Communities Grants with local priorities.

A steering committee was formed to guide the planning process. 947 community members (mostly adults) participated in 24 focus groups and an email survey across the district. They were asked a number of questions, including, "what should we do create a healthy community?" The responses were grouped into common themes and combined with information collected from recent youth consultations and other local reports.

These themes provided the foundation for the "Pathway to Healthy Communities" recommendations. They are organized using a framework called "Results Based Accountability". Hopes, dreams and "conditions of wellbeing" emerged from the consultations. These are captured under broad statements called "Results". Each result has indicators that can be monitored for progress. While the recommendations are more specific than the results, they are still meant to be broad in scope. They are intended to provide direction for community leaders interested in developing more specific initiatives.

THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION IS 13.5%. THE FRANCOPHONE POPULATION IS 4.1%.

THERE IS A HIGH PROPORTION OF SENIORS ACROSS THE DISTRICT, EXCEPT IN THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION WHERE THERE IS A HIGH PROPORTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

HEART DISEASE, STROKE AND CANCER ARE THE LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH AMONG ADULTS.

SUICIDE AND MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISIONS ARE THE LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH AMONG YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS.

Overarching recommendations

Citizens recognize that there are underlying factors that have an impact on health, especially mental health. This is supported by growing evidence around the "determinants of health". Advocacy may be required at all three levels of government to address the following determinants of health identified locally:

- **Employment and income** Economic development strategies are key. Industry decline has eroded the tax base and fractured families as one parent is forced to move away to find work.
- **Culture** Aboriginal people and Francophones are at risk for poorer health. Successful health outcomes for Aboriginal people require solutions that address severe social problems rooted in colonialism and systemic racism. Francophones require services and supports in French.
- **Access to health services** Mental health and addiction services for all ages and cultures are limited in smaller district communities and First Nations communities.
- **Physical environments** Citizens value clean air and clean water. As well, safe and affordable housing is critical to addressing a variety of issues.
- **Transportation** Lack of transportation to grocery stores and leisure activities is a major barrier for seniors and people on limited income. Small communities have no public transportation system.

March 2011



Result One: All children and youth have optimal success and health.

Many sectors need to work together with parents and caregivers to provide seamless support for children at every age. Poor early child development leads to significant challenges in health and learning.

Strategies are required to keep young people in school, connected to their neighbourhoods and engaged with their families. Different ages need different strategies to foster friendships, build self-esteem, positive self-identity and leadership skills. These resiliency factors are linked to reduced suicide, tobacco and substance use, and better physical activity and food choices.

The Thunder Bay district has high rates of chronic disease. It is critical that initiatives include both structured and unstructured opportunities to be physically active for all ages.

Recommendations to Achieve Result One:

- 1.1 Support parents throughout their reproductive years to give birth to healthy babies.
- 1.2 Support parents and caregivers to raise healthy and resilient children and youth.
- 1.3 Increase the number of accessible and affordable activities for children that appeal to a variety of interests and cultures.
- 1.4 Increase the number of accessible and affordable youth-friendly programs and activities that appeal to a variety of interests and cultures.
- 1.5 Incorporate positive child and youth development strategies into programs and initiatives in all sectors in order to build resiliency, e.g., early years, education, sport, recreation.
- 1.6 Develop strategies to support youth through their major life transitions, e.g., grades 7, 9, and 12.
- 1.7 Build on inter-sectoral strategies for youth attending high school away from home so they cope and thrive, e.g., housing, social services, education, recreation, employment, etc.
- 1.8 Support a “whole school” approach to promoting health and wellbeing, and shape a respectful, welcoming, and caring school environment.



Result Two: All people have enough healthy, culturally appropriate food.

Food security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life (World Health Organization, 1996). There is increasing evidence that links gardening, food preparation and cooking skills with improved food choices and diet.



Community design can improve access through the location of grocery stores, community gardens and support for local agriculture. Strategies that improve the system that supplies food benefits isolated communities where there is only one grocery store.

Most people know what healthy foods are. However, the healthy choice needs to be the easy choice when away from home. The nutritional value of food served and sold in schools, workplaces, recreation centres, and other places can be improved through policy development.

Recommendations to Achieve Result Two:

- 2.1 Strengthen food systems through strategies that improve the supply, variety, freshness and affordability of food, use of wild foods, and local food production, especially in small communities and First Nations communities.
- 2.2 Increase access to healthy foods among individuals who are food insecure (all sectors).
- 2.3 Increase access to affordable healthy food and decrease access to unhealthy food choices in public places through municipal planning and policies in a variety of sectors, e.g., schools.
- 2.4 Provide opportunities for people of all ages to learn more about healthy eating and where our food comes from, and to improve food skills such as cooking, budgeting, food preparation, gardening, food storage, preservation, etc.



Result Three: All citizens are included and connected to their community.

One’s level of mental and emotional wellness impacts healthy choices and all other areas of health. Opportunities to build spirituality, and take part in arts, cultural, sport and recreation activities are also important. Involvement in community groups and networks is critical, and accessible and affordable transportation enables participation. Given the aging population, intergenerational activities benefit all ages.

Living in a community free of racism and discrimination is also linked to improved mental health. For this document, the term culture refers to one’s heritage, ethnicity and unique way of life, e.g., the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community and Deaf culture.

The Thunder Bay district has high rates of chronic disease. It is critical that activities and community design enable both structured and unstructured opportunities to be physically active. Efforts to improve community safety are also important. When people feel that their neighbourhoods are unsafe, they are less likely to spend time outside or encourage their children to play outside.

Recommendations to Achieve Result Three:

- 3.1 Incorporate strategies in all sectors that build acceptance and address bullying and discrimination based on culture, gender, sexual orientation, appearance, special needs, income, etc.
- 3.2 Expand activities that provide opportunities for people of all ages to learn about and take pride in their culture and the culture of others.
- 3.3 Increase access to affordable activities, facilities, and groups or clubs that appeal to a variety of ages, interests, abilities, and cultures.
- 3.4 Implement strategies in all sectors to address barriers to participation in local physical activity, recreation and sport opportunities.
- 3.5 Use existing neighbourhood facilities (e.g., schools, community centres, churches) to create community hubs that bring people of all ages together.
- 3.6 Establish strategies that connect all ages to the outdoors and ensure communities, neighbourhoods, parks, trails, etc. are safe, accessible and well maintained.
- 3.7 Build on local strategies that focus on personal and community responsibility to address root causes of crime.

Result Four: All people have a reduced risk of preventable injuries.

According to emergency room statistics, the five most common causes of injury in the Thunder Bay District are motor vehicle collisions, ATVs, falls, sports, and suicide.

Motor vehicle collisions occur most in men ages 17 to 24. ATV injuries occur most in children and youth, and sports injuries occur most in young people ages 10 to 14. Falls occur mostly in older adults.



Community design and policy play an important role in injury prevention, for example, infrastructure that ensures pedestrians and cyclists are safe.

Recommendations to Achieve Result Four:

- 4.1 Work collaboratively to address current trends around motor vehicle collision rates.
- 4.2 Develop strategies to increase the safe use of ATVs among children and youth.
- 4.3 Sustain existing falls prevention initiatives targeting seniors.
- 4.4 Incorporate strategies that ensure sports trainers and coaches are equipped to meet the safety needs of the children and youth under their direction.
- 4.5 Develop outreach strategies, infrastructure and policies that support and improve Active Transportation safety in all sectors, and in all seasons. I.e. travel that is self propelled like walking, wheeling, cycling.





Building on Strengths

The "Pathways to a Healthy Communities" recommendations do not stand alone. Other planning efforts have produced reports on specific issues. While most are for Thunder Bay, they may provide a starting point for smaller communities. These include the following:

- Thunder Bay Drug Strategy
- Overcoming Racism and Discrimination in our Community: Thunder Bay Plan for Action
- Thunder Bay Youth Strategy
- Thunder Bay Crime Prevention Strategy
- Age Friendly Communities
- Thunder Bay Active Transportation Plan
- Earthwise Community Environmental Action Plan
- Best Start Strategic Plan
- Northwest Falls Prevention Strategy
- Tobacco Control Area Network (TCAN) Regional Action Plan

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who provided input and support:

- Thunder Bay District Healthy Communities Steering Committee
- Agency Stakeholders
- Community Members

Funded by the Government of Ontario



Coordination and administrative support provided by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit

Access the full report: www.healthythunderbaydistrict.ca

Get involved: contact Anne Ostrom, Healthy Communities

Coordinator anne.ostrom@tbdhu.com

March 2011

Finding solutions

Community Food Action Programs

In addition to the nutritional benefits, community food action programs such as community kitchens, the Good Food Box, community gardens, gleanings, and school nutrition programs provide social, psychological and community benefits.

But these types of programs by themselves will not solve the root causes of households not being able to afford a nutritious diet. They must ultimately be accompanied by a stronger social safety net that:

- Improves social assistance and minimum wage rates;
- Establishes affordable housing policies;
- Eliminates the National Child Benefit adjustment to social assistance for families;
- Improves employment insurance coverage and benefits; and
- Provides accessible and affordable child care.

What can you do to help?

- Educate yourself on the root causes of poverty.
- Volunteer in your community to support food programs and activities.
- Donate a variety of non-perishable food items or money to food banks on a regular basis.



Adapted from The Price of Food in the Hidden Region Health Dist.

Resources
Call the Thunder Bay District Health Unit to order the following resources:

- Where to Get Food in Thunder Bay
- Best Buys in Canada's Food Guide
- Eat Well for Less

Or go to www.nwofood.com to find out about food security in the Northwestern Ontario Region.

For more information about poverty and food security issues go to:

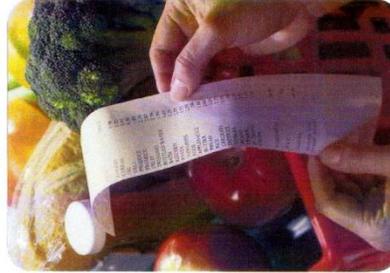
- www.thestop.org/put-food-in-the-budget
- www.campaign2000.ca
- www.25in5.ca
- www.toronto.ca/health/fipc_index.htm
- www.yerson.ca/foodsecurity
- www.foodshare.net
- www.FoodNetOntario.ca
- www.caftb-acba.ca
- www.caafb.ca
- www.foodsecure.ca

The Cost of Eating Well in the District of Thunder Bay 2011

There are people in the District of Thunder Bay who cannot afford a nutritious diet

Each year, the results of the Thunder Bay District Nutritious Food Basket Survey show that low-income households struggle to pay rent, the bills and to buy enough nutritious food for their families. The survey requires pricing 67 basic food items from five stores in the City of Thunder Bay and one in the District to determine the average price of a nutritious diet for the District of Thunder Bay. The survey was last completed in May 2011.

While the provincial and federal governments make adjustments to minimum wage and various benefits and credits, low-income families still do not have enough income to meet their financial responsibilities.



The scenarios on the following page illustrate that households with social assistance and minimum wage incomes have little, if any, money left over to cover basic monthly expenses such as:

- Heat and hydro
- Telephone
- Laundry
- Toiletries and cleaning products
- Insurance
- Transportation (bus pass, taxi or ex-hicle)
- Clothing
- Debt payments
- Gifts
- Non-prescription drugs and dispensing fees for prescription drugs
- Banking service charges
- School costs
- Money to cover unexpected expenses

In reality, people usually choose to pay rent and other fixed expenses such as heat, hydro, and transportation. Food becomes a "flexible" expense, resulting in a diet of poor nutritional value.



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Comparison of Household Income and Expenses

Low-income households often live in rental housing. Using the average costs of renting in Thunder Bay for 2011, here are seven scenarios outlining monthly income and expenses.

	Households on Social Assistance					Households with Employment Incomes	
	Ontario Works Single man age 40	Ontario Works Single mother age 40 with a daughter age 8 and a boy age 14	Ontario Works A family of 4: A man and woman age 40, a boy age 14 and a girl age 8	Ontario Disability Support Program Single man age 40	Old Age Security/ Guaranteed Income Supplement ^a Single woman age 70+	One full-time Minimum Wage Earner A family of 4: a man and woman age 40, a boy age 14 and a girl age 8	Ontario Median Income ^b A family of 4: a man and woman age 40, a boy age 14 and a girl age 8
Income	\$592.00	\$971.00	\$1,124.00	\$1,053.00	\$1,192.00	\$1,777.00	\$6,175.00
Additional Benefits and Credits ^{c,d}	\$43.00	\$865.00	\$887.00	\$50.00	\$53.00	\$948.00	
Income Deductions ^e						-106.00	-408.00
Total Monthly Income	\$635.00	\$1,836.00	\$2,011.00	\$1,103.00	\$1,245.00	\$2,619.00	\$5,767.00
Rent ^f (not including heat + hydro)	(Bachelor) \$493.00	(2 bdrm.) \$762.00	(3bdrm.) \$978.00	(1 bdrm.) \$632.00	(1 bdrm.) \$632.00	(3bdrm.) \$978.00	(3bdrm.) \$978.00
Cost of a Nutritious Diet ^g	\$267.00	\$601.00	\$795.00	\$267.00	\$196.00	\$795.00	\$795.00
Amount remaining to cover other basic expenses including heat + hydro	-125.00\$	\$473.00	\$238.00	\$204.00	\$417.00	\$846.00	\$3,994.00
Percentage of Income required for rent	78%	42%	49%	57%	51%	37%	17%
Percentage of Income required to purchase healthy food	42%	33%	40%	24%	16%	30%	14%

a. OAS/GIS rates May 2010.

b. Based on the Ontario Median Income, 2005. Reference: Statistics Canada, 2007. Ontario (table), 2006 Community Profiles, 2006 Census.

c. Basic and maximum shelter allowance. OW and ODSP rates effective May 2010.

d. Where applicable, includes maximum Canada Tax Benefit, National Child Benefit Supplement and Maximum monthly Ontario Child Benefit from July 2009 - June 2010.

e. Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan, July 2010.

f. Based on Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Private Apartment Average Rents in Thunder Bay, Spring 2010.

g. Based on Nutritious Food Basket for the District of Thunder Bay, 2010.

What effect can this have on health?

Not being able to afford a nutritious diet can affect health.

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT

Poor diet among pregnant women increases the likelihood of low birth weights. Those babies who survive are at greater risk of developing health problems and disabilities than babies of normal weights. Also, low intakes of folate before and during pregnancy can increase the chances of babies with neural tube defects.

REDUCED LEARNING AND PRODUCTIVITY

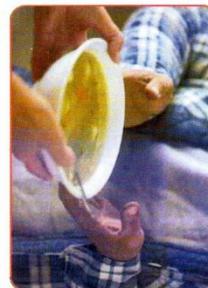
Learning and productivity are reduced when people are hungry and/or malnourished. Adults are less productive in their work environments or while seeking work. Undernourished children are especially susceptible to illness, perform at lower academic levels, find it harder to concentrate in school, and have poorer psychosocial outcomes than their well-nourished peers.

CHRONIC DISEASES

People in low-income households are more likely to suffer from chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure. They have difficulty managing these chronic conditions since they do not have enough money for therapeutic diets.

LACK OF NUTRIENTS FOR GOOD HEALTH

Several studies have shown that people who live in households that can't afford a sufficient nutritious diet often do not get enough of certain nutrients including folic acid, iron, zinc, and vitamin A. This is more common in mothers because they compromise their own diets to make sure their children are fed.



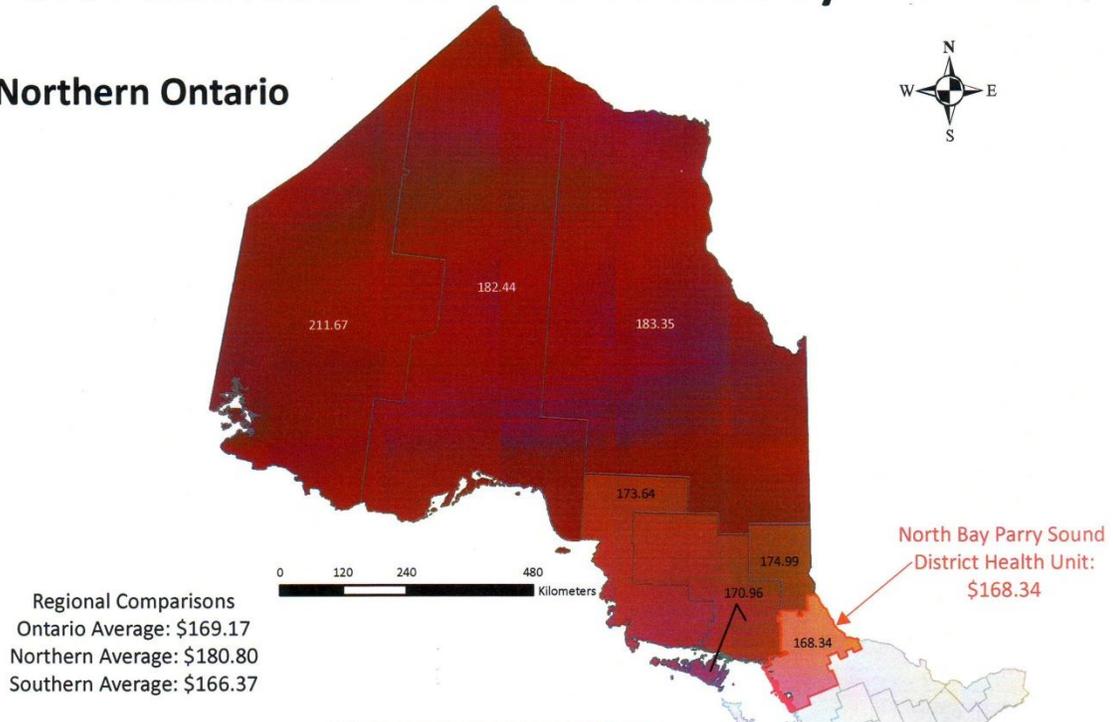
BEYOND FOOD BANKS AND CHARITY

Many people think that food banks are the solution to this problem. Food bank operators try very hard to address this need, but they cannot because:

- They have a limited selection and amount of food since they rely on donations and drives.
- They often do not have the facilities to store fresh food such as fruits, vegetables, milk, and meat.
- They must restrict the number of times recipients use their services because their supply is limited.
- Most people who cannot afford to feed their families will not access food banks, and
- They are not a long-term solution because they do not address the root causes of poverty and food insecurity.

2010 Nutritious Food Basket Costs by Health Unit

Northern Ontario



Southern Ontario

