The Future of Food and Farming: Moving Forward

The Role of Grocery Stores in Supporting Buying Local

The Future of Food and Farming: Moving Forward

The Role of Grocery Stores in Supporting Buying Local

Background

In 2013/2014, a collaborative research initiative was undertaken by Transition Town, Farms at Work and Peterborough Social Planning Council supported by the Trent Centre for Community Based Education. The research looked at the barriers that grocery stores face in sourcing local products, and their perceptions on the meaning of *local*.

The purpose of this project was to learn more about the following:

- How to increase access to local food
- Practical barriers to implementing "buy local" strategies at grocery stores
- Grocery store perceptions on the definition of *local*
- Baseline figures for employment in the local food retail sector

The project involved interviewing grocery stores about their ability to buy/sell local food, their policies on buying/selling local food, their perception of the definition of *local*, and their employment figures associated with local food procurement. A literature review was also included.

Context: **"Local Food & What We Think About Buying Local: the Future of Food & Farming"**

The project built upon a community education and consultation process that commenced in 2012. The *Peterborough Social Planning Council* undertook a survey to gauge the public's purchasing habits and attitudes toward local foods in order to advance policy development efforts in this area. This survey had 538 responses, gathered in only 16 days (Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2013). Peterborough Social Planning Council released the results of its **"Local Food & What We Think About Buying Local: the Future of Food & Farming"** (for the complete report go to our website at www.pspc.on.ca)

The survey respondents identified lack of access at local grocery stores as the major perceived barrier to increased access to local food (Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2013).

The survey addressed topics pertinent to consumers such as:

- how they define local foods (in terms of distance travelled and region of production)
- how they see their role in the local food economy (consumer, producer, distributor, etc.)
- their access to and the availability of local foods from different food retailers
- demographic characteristics

The top five things that respondents identified that would make them more likely to purchase local foods are: 1) availability of local food in local stores, 2) wider availability of frozen local food products in winter, 3) wider availability of local food in big box stores or large grocery chains, 4) lower prices, and 5) clearer, more specific labeling (Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2013).

The following is a quotation from the survey analysis, highlighting the contentious nature of issues surrounding local food:

"The issue of having more local products in big box stores and large grocery chains was very contentious. Many said this would make it easier to access local foods, giving people more locations from which to buy local foods at stores that are open daily. On the other hand, many expressed strong opposition to this idea in the comments section, arguing that large corporate retailers would drive down prices for farmers and even put a downward pressure on quality. The needs to balance here are those of convenient and affordable access to local foods, adequate compensation for farmers, ensuring sustainable farming practices, and quality assurance." (Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2013).

Engaging the Grocery Stores: the methodology

After an inventory of all the grocery stores operating in Peterborough City and County, a combination of emails and phone calls were used to attempt contacting at least 30 stores. Researchers conducted seven phone interviews, representing eight grocery stores in Peterborough City and County. The final sample of eight grocery stores translates to a sampling success rate of 26.7 %.

Small, medium and large grocery stores were all represented in the interviews. Small stores included independently owned and non-franchised grocers, medium included independently owned franchises, and large included national brands. The research was set up in this way to distinguish whether there were differences as to which barriers to sourcing local food affected each size of grocery store, and to what extent. The researchers did not pursue an investigation into dry foods such as grains, oats, and wheat, and only included stores that carry produce. The research targeted stores in the city of Peterborough, as well as in the County of Peterborough. The interviewees were either the owner or the manager of the store.

Major findings were as follows:

- Research findings described the barriers for sourcing local foods for grocery stores include:
    - Seasonal and geographic challenges
    - Food and safety standards
    - The need to purchase in large volumes
    - The cost-competitiveness of local foods
    - Pre-existing supply contracts
    - Lack of a local food distribution centre
- Most grocery stores perceive the definition of local to apply to Ontario, whereas consumers perceive local as regional or within 100 km.
- There is no consensus among the grocery stores about the demand for local foods. Most rate the demand very high, but some rate the demand low.
- More barriers were identified for sourcing local meat and eggs than for any other food products.
- No grocery store had a formal policy on sourcing local foods, although most grocery stores carried out informal buy local campaigns.
- Most grocery store owners and managers deal directly with farmers in local food partnerships.
- There is no consensus amongst the grocery stores interviewed about local foods being cost-competitive

The past Future of Food and Farming reports found that the Peterborough public defined *local* most commonly in order as "grown in my region, grown within 100 km, grown in Ontario, grown in my county, and grown on a family farm" (Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2013)

"Back then, when I first started, I would have defined local as purely from my immediate trading area. Now, as the years progress, and seeing the limitations of the area, I would define local as grown within Ontario. Our customers recognize and consider Ontario as local. For purely local, we do try to focus on supporting our neighbours, and the community... but mainly Ontario."

There were no significant differences between the perceptions of managers and owners from different grocery store sizes.

In general, the grocery stores were more likely to define a larger area as local than the consumers were. However, they seemed to generate very similar categories of how local was defined as those mentioned above from the consumer survey which was conducted. Many grocery stores expanded on the partnerships that they have with producers in the Peterborough area. One store noted that the geographical expanse of local has been growing in recent years as transportation becomes easier and larger corporations have taken over the food industry.

Grocery stores were asked about the demand for local food from their customers.

Their responses differed with some commenting that there was a strong and significant demand for local food, to others saying that there was little to no demand at all.

Degree of Demand	Strong Demand	Demand	Declining Demand	No Demand
# of responses	3	2	1	1

Here are some of the comments:

- Peterborough has a strong farming community and a vibrant presence of the farmers market.
- When customers buy their groceries at the market on Saturday and get to know the farmers, they like to see those same names in the store throughout the week. People demand to see where their food is sourced. This only pertains to produce, which is extremely seasonal in this part of the country.

> *"There is definitely a strong demand for local food from customers, because there is a strong farming community in Peterborough and the surrounding area, with a very vibrant downtown weekly farmers market, which does very well. If I can get some of those local products from those farmers in my store to sell the rest of the week, customers definitely recognize these growers and those names and those producers when they're in the store. People are demanding to see where something is sourced."*

- Another medium store mentioned that because non-local foods are available year-round, people are not demanding the local seasonal products as much. This suggests that a lot of consumers have lost touch with the seasonality of produce. In fact three stores brought up the fact that the demand for local is usually only for produce or unique products, but not for all food.
- Two stores responded that the demand for local food was declining or non-existent. These responses indicated their perception that there has been a decrease in demand for local food compared to several generations ago when access to food from other places was not as widely available.
- Five of the seven indicated that demand was an issue. This could be a result of the recent *Buy Local* campaigns that exist across the province. As consumers become more and more detached from the growers of their food through the long chain of middle men in the global food system, a trend towards farmers markets and farm to table initiatives has increased significantly. However, the sample size for this research is not large enough to extrapolate a clear understanding of the demand for local food from customers.
- Larger and some medium stores were more likely to perceive demand from customers for local food. The demographic of customer for each store could be explored further.

Grocery stores were asked what local foods they carried. Below are the most common responses.

Categories	Specific Products
Vegetables	Potatoes, Corn, Tomatoes, Peppers, Cucumbers, Squash, Cabbage, Beans, Peas, Pumpkins
Fruit	Grapes, Pears , Apples, Strawberries, Raspberries, Other berries
Condiments	Maple syrup, Honey
Meat	Chicken (Ontario, Quebec), Pork (Ontario, Quebec)
Dairy	Eggs (Ontario), Cow Milk (Kawartha Dairy), Goat Milk, Ice Cream, Butter, Cheese, Yogurt
Preserves	Jellies , Jams
Seafood	-
Baked Goods	Butter tarts, Bread, Bread baked in store, Pies
Other	Flowers, Bee pollen, Curry , Flour

Most stores carried many local vegetables and fruit when they were in season. They commented that fresh produce is the most available and easiest local product to source. All grocery stores carried at least some local foods and there were no major differences with the size of store. This list of products was generated fairly quickly by grocery store owners and managers and does not represent a detailed inventory of the local foods that stores actually carry.

It is important to disaggregate the types of local foods into different categories, in order to identify which categories face the biggest barriers.

- Meat and eggs were repeatedly referred to as “complicated” to source. The quota system for eggs was cited commonly as a large barrier to sourcing local. Burnbrae Farms located in Lyn, Ontario was consistently mentioned as the main source of eggs for many of the stores. This was considered a local product. However, Burnbrae collects eggs from farmers all across the country, which contradicts the definition of local as being Ontario-produced.
- The requirement that meat must be federally inspected was cited commonly as a large barrier to sourcing local. Beef was for the most part the only meat that could be considered local and local was defined as from Ontario or Canada in this case. Many stores extended their geographical definition of *local* when it came to meat, and they claimed that Alberta beef is the most local they could procure. Many stores noted that the restrictions and regulations for meat have become significantly stricter following the 2008 Maple Leaf listeria outbreak. The storeowners did not seem optimistic about any prospective flexibility within the regulations.
- Milk and dairy products also posed challenges to the grocery stores interviewed. Five stores identified *Kawartha Dairy* products as their first choice for sourcing. Many had succeeded in ensuring that both *Kawartha Dairy* and other brands, such as *Natrel* and *Sealtest*, were present in the store. This is a unique situation in the Kawartha region however, where grocery stores have been successful at negotiating new terms to include local dairy products in larger volumes and consistently.

Grocery stores were asked to identify any local food campaigns that they participated in and what the consumer reception has been to these campaigns. The most common responses are discussed below.

Many of the medium sized grocery stores responded that they follow the corporate campaigns for local food and that they follow the advertising and marketing created by the brand which dictates what product can go on sale or be featured in the flyers. However, there were grocery store owners who said that they often go beyond the corporate campaigns and do their own informal local food initiatives.

Seven out of eight stores responded that they participated in informal local food marketing campaigns. This included things like marketing displays and flyers, product sampling, advertising through radio and print, innovative product labelling including information on specific growers, having an outdoor market in the summer, and supporting local initiatives with Food Not Bombs and Trent students. A few stores also mentioned that they participated in a contest between franchises, which compared the signage of local food in numerous stores around Peterborough County.

Grocery stores were asked to describe the partnerships that they had with local producers.

Six out of seven owners/managers said that they dealt directly with farmers on local food partnerships. There were a number of different strategies that they identified for ordering, transporting, and selling local products. Some owners/managers met with local producers annually to discuss what products they could provide for the following year, while others dealt with local producers on a week-to-week or seasonal basis. One store set up contracts with farmers to plant a certain number of fields of a particular product. All of the owners/managers were able to talk about specific partnerships with growers around the Peterborough County.

Methods of transportation also varied widely. Some stores said that they would go to the farms to pick up produce while others stated that farmers would come to them with produce.

> *"It is farm to store. We've had a lot of different ones throughout the years. We contact the farm, they will let us know when the product is ready to come to market. They actually deliver to the store direct from the farm so there's no middle man. A lot of the produce comes directly, doesn't go through the warehouse."* (medium grocery store)

Owners/managers also expressed that they had positive relationships with the farmers and that maintaining those relationships was really important to their businesses. They expressed that even though it was easier to order products through the warehouse, they thought it was very important to maintain these partnerships that they had established in person.

On the other hand, one store responded that they didn't have any partnerships with growers themselves. They went on to explain that a salesman comes to their store and they can order products from the list that the salesman provides. On this list there are a few local producers.

There wasn't a significant difference in the responses between small, medium, and large stores in terms of local partnerships. Many stores mentioned the same local partnerships, such as sourcing produce from Millbrook, Bowmanville, and the Kawarthas, fruit from the Niagara region, honey from Havelock, bread from Sticklings, and butter tarts from The Butter Tart Factory.

Grocery stores were asked about public and formal policies on local food.

There was consensus among all grocery stores interviewed that they had no public or formal policy on sourcing local food. However, as mentioned earlier in this report, almost all grocery stores carried out *informal* buy-local campaigns.

"It takes time to build partnerships with farmers, they have to recognize you as a good customer, has to be worth while for the farmer." (medium grocery store)

Reasons given for not having a formal policy included:

- they are small and can therefore make the rules
- the manager directs the employees to buy local
- they have personal reasons to support local
- they do the best they can, local suppliers reach out to them instead, and not having a formal policy allows them more flexibility and adaptability.

Grocery stores were asked to estimate the amount of employment time devoted towards sourcing local foods.

The estimated time devoted to sourcing and procuring local foods was 80-120 hours/month for the large store, 45 hours/month on average for the medium stores, and 12 hours/month for the small store. These estimates of time were in reference to the spring and summer months, when more local products are available. In winter, only a few hours a month were estimated to be devoted to coordinating with farmers.

The time spent during the summer and spring included activities such as talking on the phone and in person to suppliers, writing orders, driving and unloading products. One interviewee commented that the extra time and labour spent on sourcing local food would hopefully be offset by the benefits of having local foods in the store.

One of the purposes of this project was to learn about baseline employment figures in the local food retail sector. Given that grocery stores are not the only retailers of local food, these interviews cannot be used to make generalizations about the entire retail sector.

Grocery stores were asked to describe the barriers to sourcing local foods. The responses have been broken into five categories below.

Seasonal and geographic barriers posed a large challenge in sourcing local foods for all the interviewees. These barriers were experienced with all sizes of grocery stores. Interviewees elaborated on what these barriers entailed. Seasonal barriers refer to the short growing season in Ontario, which limits the supply of local products, especially produce. Geographic barriers refer to the Ontario growing climate, which limits the variety of products available, as well as logistical problems in transporting local products.

Food safety and quality standards posed a challenge to sourcing local foods for all store sizes but to differing degrees. The small store expressed that these standards weren't really an issue and that the local products that they carry have always been of very high quality. However, they did mention that they are not able to sell local eggs because of health concerns.

"Ordering from the warehouse is pretty quick requires phoning this person. Make sure the back room is cleaned up for multiple deliveries. If it rained and the pickers couldn't pick, I will have to buy double tomorrow. More planning, more trucks to unload, more man power, more hours, more cost at store level. But we hope that having local product in the store will offset the cost." (medium grocery store)k and easy. It's just a matter of scanning items out of the book or off the shelf and sending them to the warehouse.

The medium and large stores had issues with their specific brands and the provincial health standards. The medium grocery stores seemed to find ways to work around these regulations but the large store was not able to and thus only sells products that have been pre-approved by their brand.

"An issue we have in our part of the world, as much as supporting local is extremely important, is our weather isn't consistent, produce depends on weather. For example, we've had years with next to no local strawberries." (medium grocery store)

The need to purchase in large volumes posed a challenge to sourcing local foods for all stores sizes.

The small store indicated that they were pressured to buy a minimum volume of product in order to have lower shipping costs. Medium and large stores stated that often the local producers simply didn't have enough product to supply to meet the demand of the stores.

One medium store contrasted the supply of local foods in the Leamington, Ontario area to the Peterborough area. They mentioned that Leamington produces vast amounts of produce that are cost-competitive to a lot of non-local producers..

Stores were asked whether local foods were cost competitive to similar non-local foods.

The interviews indicate that there is not a consensus between grocery stores about whether local foods are cost competitive. However, cost competitiveness was not indicated to be the largest barrier to sourcing local foods, as perceived quality was sometimes weighted above costs.

"If you have issue with your local vendor, who can't supply you, whether it's because of the quantity or the weather has limited your crop. It becomes a problem for sourcing."

The small and medium stores interviewed thought that local foods were not cost-competitive with non-local foods. They mentioned that transportation, time and other logistical issues increased the costs associated with local foods. Small-scale and local were often used interchangeably by the interviewees throughout the interviews. As a result, the logistical issues involved with sourcing local, were often associated with the logistical issues of sourcing from small-scale producers. This terminology becomes problematic when the Leamington area growers are considered local but are not small-scale.

" I would love to be able to go to the farmers market, but I'd ask have you got this, have you got that, and they'd look at me like no, we just picked them yesterday. And I'd say sorry, I can't chance it. Because if anything happened at my store, that would be the end of me, I'd be gone in a heart beat. " (large grocery store)

The representative of the large store perceived local foods to be cost-competitive with non-local foods, and even said local was cheaper in some cases. Elaborating on why this was the case, the interviewee stated that since the store is not a franchise, there is no middleman and no overhead to increase the costs of buying local.

One medium store representative commented that they were prepared to pay more for local, especially when the product is better quality than non-local. Another medium store interviewee commented that customers are also prepared to pay more for local, especially when they perceive the produce to be fresher. This indicates that perceptions around the quality of local foods may counter their perceived higher costs of sourcing local.

Grocery stores were asked whether existing supply contracts posed a challenge to sourcing local foods.

Existing supply contracts were identified as a barrier by some stores and not others. Answers depended on whether the store was independently owned or a franchisee.

The small store said existing supply contracts were not a barrier in sourcing local. They had the most freedom and control over what was bought and sold as they were independently owned. They exercised 100% control with the exception of health and safety regulations from the city.

The large store representative said that existing supply contracts were a barrier, as agreements made by their corporation to buy a product override the agreements that they make with local suppliers. They also mentioned that products have to go through the main distribution centre before coming to the store. This means that strawberries grown near Peterborough would have to first travel to a centralized warehouse in another city, and then back to Peterborough. This begs the question of whether this system can actually be defined as "local". It also suggests that the definition of local might need to include "how far a product has travelled" and not just where it was grown.

The medium stores said that between eighty and ninety-nine percent of their products have to come from their franchisor's centralized warehouse first. The medium stores tended to have a bit more leeway in negotiating deals with local producers. This was a result of the fact that some were independently owned franchises.

"Our area has much smaller producers and so that makes it difficult, you go down Leamington way and they have massive local producers where the product is always available." (medium grocery store)

When asked what would encourage their stores to increase sourcing of local foods, answers differed widely.

Reasons for these differences include the possibility that the question was misunderstood, or that respondents were only focusing on an issue that stood out to them during the previous questions.

The small store representative suggested changes that suppliers would need to make. For example, they did not want to have to pay the extra costs for the delivery of local foods, when the cost of delivery is included in the price of non-local foods. They also mentioned that a more consistent supply would make local sourcing easier.

"[Our brand] has a big market share to protect obviously, and they make huge commitments to Ontario farmers as well. I'm a franchisee, so they know that in the franchise world it's important for us to support the local community and they do

The medium store representatives were for the most part interested in sourcing more local foods, with the exception of one representative who mentioned there was not really a demand for it. Another medium store representative also suggested the suppliers would need to make changes, by starting to think bigger. "Thinking bigger" was in reference to meeting health and food safety, packaging, and delivery requirements.

Grocery stores were asked about a no-charge online local food system.

All stores interviewed expressed much interest in the concept of a no-charge online system that would allow them to request products from local producers in the Kawartha Region. It was noted that this system would simplify the search process for local foods. One interviewee commented that this system has the potential to make prices more competitive if suppliers could see the prices of other suppliers for the same product. Another interviewee expressed hesitations about such a system, saying that if demand became too large for local foods, some smaller suppliers could be out-competed by larger producers, and the quality of the product would decline.

"Getting the smaller guys thinking a little bigger. They need to understand the requirements (health and safety). That's part of their responsibility, beyond producing a unique and quality local product, they have to be on board with all of those things, packaging, food safety, inspections, delivery etc" (medium grocery store)

It was mentioned several times that the system should not only be for retailers to request products, but for suppliers to display what they had available on offer. Two interviewees suggested the system could be set up so that grocery stores could be able to see every supplier that was selling a certain product, and see at what quantity and for what price the product would be sold.

Another grocery store representative directed attention towards the restaurants of Peterborough that are making businesses out of buying local. They commented that these restaurants have taken a lead on the local food movement, which has resonated with their customers, and has provided an example of how local foods can make businesses successful.

"I think if companies, local suppliers, small guys, if they had a site that we log on, see what their availability wa what their pricing was, see what their quantities available were, I think it would be something that everyone could benefit from." (medium grocery store)

Directions for Change

Directions to be considered to address seasonal challenges:

- Government policies that provide support and incentives for this infrastructure are recommended.
- Research into hardier crop breeding can also help to address seasonal challenges, and should be a priority of local educational institutions. For example, the Sustainable Agriculture programs at Trent University and Fleming College could undertake this research.
- Initiatives could be undertaken to help restore the anticipation consumers once experienced about foods coming into season. These initiatives could be undertaken by grocery stores, through advertisements and marketing that promotes local and seasonal foods.
- Transition Town should continue to conduct events like the Purple Onion Festival and Dandelion Day that promote consumer enthusiasm for local products. Skills-building workshops that teach how to cook with seasonal and local foods are also suggested for Transition Town.

Directions to be considered for food safety and quality challenges:

- To address the challenges posed by food safety and quality standards, policy changes need to occur at the level of grocery store headquarters. For example, the three major grocery store chains in Peterborough will only source meat from federally inspected processors, which poses a barrier to sourcing from small or local producers.
- Grocery store headquarters should be more flexible in their meat sourcing, and should source from provincially registered meat slaughter and processing facilities, which also meet stringent safety and quality standards.
- Many grocery stores identified that smaller producers most likely meet the health and safety requirements set out at the federal level but do not pursue licensing because of the small volume of their products. If this is in fact the case, then measures to decrease the barriers that producers face in getting proper licensing should be put in place. However, more research should be done on this subject before any solid recommendations can be stated.
- For non-meat products, we recommend that suppliers and their employees receive more training on how to adhere to quality and quantity standards, such as sizing, grading, packaging etc. (Ernst & Woods, 2012). Farms at Work already provides on-farm food safety workshops, and should continue to do so.

Directions to be considered for challenges of sourcing in large volumes:

- To address the need of grocery stores to purchase in large volumes, review/consider local procurement policies in Europe that have been successful in the area of local food retail. Grocery stores allow small producers to bid on parts of contracts, instead of the entire contract (MacLeod & Scott, 2007).
- Explore how both independent and franchise grocery stores in Peterborough could change their contract process, to accommodate smaller producers, and allow bidding on small parts of contracts.
- Given that grocery stores identified that the process for making contracts tend to vary widely between local small producers consideration should be given to a streamlining of the contracting process on the grocery store side that would make negotiating contracts with small producers more efficient and less time consuming and guarantee small producers more sustained business with larger stores.
- Collective, cooperative and third party aggregation arrangements should be encouraged (Ohberg, 2012). The co-operative model has the potential to combine the harvests of suppliers as well as combine resources in order to purchase equipment that may help access larger markets or add value to products (Ohberg, 2012). This addresses issues of volume and consistency.
- Continue to explore the "Food Hub" model which supports small and midsized farms, by aggregating the marketing and distribution of products (Merrigan, 2012). This would allow producers to supply retailers that they could not reach on their own and would help retailers to access large volumes of local products (Merrigan, 2012).
- *Farms at Work* should continue working on an online food sourcing system that connects retailers and suppliers. Under this model it might be possible for farmers to split produce orders that have been posted by grocery stores.

Recommendations for challenges associated with supply contracts:

- Given that many grocery stores expressed that they were required to source a large percentage of their product from a regional warehouse as part of their contracts with their corporate brands. This posed a challenge to sourcing local, as the flexibility within these contracts was usually quite small. Therefore explore how former Sobeys franchises in southwestern Ontario addressed this challenge re. A number of franchises left Sobeys in 2009 to form an independent co-op with each other in order to have more flexibility and freedom in their sourcing of local foods (Crawford, 2009). These stores retained wholesale relationships with Sobeys for some products, such as dog food, spices and breakfast cereal, and gained control of their other food sourcing (Crawford, 2009).
- Explore how grocery store owners of franchises negotiate with their store headquarters to increase flexibility in sourcing local foods.
- Discuss locally if there is an ability for the municipal government to create incentives to promote independent grocery stores and co-operatives of grocery stores by offering loans for buildings and equipment. Research has shown that with greater control over

the building and equipment, grocery stores are able to better negotiate their sourcing contracts with larger brands.

- Encourage that In the Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that grocery stores write when seeking suppliers, they incorporate criteria for local procurement, to make contracts more accessible to local producers (Ohberg, 2012).

Directions to be considered for food distribution challenges:

- *Farms at Work continue to develop its online system of connecting producers with retail clients to facilitate partnerships*

(Local Food Plus, a matchmaker organization in Toronto, used to facilitate partnerships between producers and retailers through the use of branding and certification (Egbers &Markell, 2009). This is a role that we recommend *Farms at Work*, and possibly Transition Town could be involved in.)

Directions to be considered for consumer education and awareness:

- *Transition Town* continue to integrate this education process more fully into their workshops and events.
- Local grocery stores continue participate in marketing strategies geared specifically towards local food. Grocery stores should continue this practice and try to provide as much information to consumers as possible about where their food is coming from.

Directions to be considered for supplier education and training:

- Local and small-scale producers and processors of food should receive education and training on business/marketing/customer service skills, certification processes, and the contracting process (Ohberg, 2012).
- Promote suppliers to have better understanding of retailer expectations surrounding quality and safety standards, marketing and consistency. This education process could be executed through government programs, as well *Farms at Work* in this community which is working with suppliers on these issues already.
- Producers also need to understand how to price their products for grocery stores (Ernst & Woods, 2012). Grocery stores profit off of the margin between wholesale and retail. Therefore, local goods need to be priced at wholesale not retail prices in order to make sourcing local profitable for grocery stores (Ernst & Woods, 2012). One interviewee expressed concerns over this issue and recommended suppliers be aware that grocery stores cannot buy at retail prices and compete against the supplier's own retail outlets such as farmers' markets and farm stores.

Suggestions for future research

From this initiative came further areas that require more research and consideration. In order to gain an extensive understanding of the barriers grocery stores in Peterborough face in sourcing local foods, further research could be conducted by expanding the sample size of this project.

Therefore it is recommended that:

- More small and large grocery stores should be contacted in order to draw conclusions that can be generalized. A demographic understanding of their customer base may also be an area of interest in the future. For large grocery stores it would be necessary for researchers to have the resources to do the paperwork necessary to attain interviews and to conduct the interviews in person in order to meet the standards of the public relations departments for these stores. For smaller stores the interviews could be done in person and some of the questions could be changed that do not pertain to smaller independently owned stores such as the question about pre-existing contracts.
- Contact the grocery store owners and managers interviewed in this study in order to gauge whether the recommendations outlined in this report, specifically for grocery stores, are realistic or useful.
- topics for future research or thoughts into the local food movement in Peterborough, which are relevant to this topic should include the following:

Questions to consider include:

- Is the rise of local foods in grocery store chains a threat to the integrity of farmers markets?
- Can the local food movement mesh with the grocery-store model?
- What are the alternatives to the grocery store and farmers market models for the retailing of local food?

REFERENCES

- Babington, G. (2013, August 6). *Survey on the definition of "local" food*. Retrieved from http://sustainontario.com/2013/08/06/18401/news/definition-of-local
- Beyond Factory Farming. (n.d.). *Food charters*. Retrieved from http://beyondfactoryfarming.org/build-alternatives/food-charters
- Berg, B. L., 2001. "A Dramaturgical Look at Interviewing" in *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences.* Allyn and Bacon, pp 66-98.
- Carter-Whitney, M. (2008, December). Bringing food home - legal, regulatory and institutional barriers to local food. *Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation Occasional Paper Series*,
- Chui, J., Graham, A., & Chen, D. (2011). *Mainstreaming "local" potential of integrating local food into supermarket chains in the kitchener-waterloo region*. Informally published manuscript, Environmental Science and Geography, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Waterloo, Canada. , Available from Google Scholar.
- Crawford, A. (2009, July 14). Buy-local push prompts ontario grocers to go independent. *CBC News*. Retrieved from http://www.cbc.ca/news/buy-local-push-prompts-ontario-grocers-to-go-independent-1.847614
- Egbers, A., & Markell, L. (2009). The lay of the land: Local food initiatives in canada. *Canadian Cooperatives Association*. Retrieved from http://www.coopscanada.coop/assets/firefly/files/files/The_Lay_of_the_Land_Final_June_16_2009.pdf
- Ernst, M., & Woods, T. (2012, June). *Marketing fresh produce to food retailers (grocery stores)*. Retrieved from http://www.uky.edu/Ag/CCD/marketing/grocers.pdf
- Feagan, R. (2007). The place of food: mapping out the 'local' in local food systems. *Progress in Human Geography*, *31*(23), doi: 10.1177/0309132507073527
- Guelph Wellington Local Food. (2010). *Guelph wellington food charter*. Retrieved from http://www.guelphwellingtonlocalfood.ca/guelph-wellington-food-charter
- Kucharsky, D. (2013, December 3). Metro introduces local organic meat products in ontario. *Canadian Grocer*. Retrieved from http://www.canadiangrocer.com/top-stories/metro-introduces-local-organic-meat-products-in-ontario-35231
- Loblaws. (2012, July 10). *Locally-sourced ontario corn fed beef now available at real canadian superstore® locations across ontario*. Retrieved from http://www.loblaw.ca/English/Media-Centre/news-releases/news-release-details/2012/Locally-Sourced-Ontario-Corn-Fed-Beef-Now-Available-at-Real-Canadian-Superstore-Locations-Across-Ontario1130121/default.aspx
- Merrigan, K. (2012, September 06). Beyond farmers markets: Why local food belongs on grocery shelves. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/09/beyond-farmers-markets-why-local-food-belongs-on-grocery-shelves/262064/

- Metro. (2012). *First corporate responsibility report*. Retrieved from http://corpo.metro.ca/userfiles/File/Corpo/Responsabilite/Metro_CSR_EN_ONLINE_121123.pdf
- MacLeod, M., & Scott, J. (2007, May). *Local food procurement policies: A literature review*. Retrieved from http://www.ecologyaction.ca/files/images/file/Food/LocalFoodProcurementPolicies.pdf
- Masi, B., Schaller, L., & Schuman, M. (2010, December).*The benefits if food localization for northeast ohio and how to realize them*.
- Moore, A. (2013, November 12). Ontario passes local food legislation. *Niagara This Week*. Retrieved from http://www.niagarathisweek.com/news-story/4205811-ontario-passes-local-food-legislation/
- Ohberg, L. (2012). *What's stopping us? identifying barriers to the local food movement using ontario, canada as a case study*. Retrieved from https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/33482/6/Ohberg_Lisa_A_201211_MA_thesis.pdf
- Ontario Government, Ministry of Agriculture and Food. (2013). *Bill to promote local food passes final vote*. Retrieved from website: http://news.ontario.ca/omafra/en/2013/11/bill-to-promote-local-food-passes-final-vote.html
- Opirg Peterborough. (2011). *The supermarket tour*. Peterborough
- Patton, M, 1982, "Thoughtful Questionnaires" in Patton, *Practical Evaluation,* Sage, 139-159
- Patton, M, 1990, Chapter 8, "Qualitative Analysis and Interpretation", in Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods,* Sage, pg 371-379.
- Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2013. *Local food and what we think about buying local: The future of food and farming.*
- Silverman, D., 1993, Chapter 7, "Validity and Reliability", in *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction*, Sage, 144-170.
- Sobeys Inc. (2010, September). Sobeys Inc. National Sustainable Seafood Policy.
- Sobeys Inc. (n.d.). *Sobeys sustainability - local sourcing*. Retrieved from http://www.sobeyssustainability.com/en/Customers-And-Communities/Local-Sourcing.aspx
- Ward, F. (n.d.). *Totnes and district: Local economic blueprint*.
- Wynn, K. Ministry of Agriculture and Food, (2013). *Bill 36 an act to enact the local food act, 2013 and to amend the taxation act, 2007* . Ontario: Legislative Assembly. http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&Intranet=&BillID=2754