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## Acknowledgments

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The planning partners would also like to acknowledge the many colleagues, stakeholder organizations, in particular the *Cocagne Sustainable Development Group*, businesses, municipalities and residents of SENB who provided their time and expertise to inform and participate in the process. The communities' commitment to learn together and act together is what will take this information from a report to an engagement and planning tool to long term sustainable actions impacting our local food system.

*It is important to note that the information in this report is but a snapshot of the different food related activities that were observed in Southeast New Brunswick (SENB) during the elaboration of this project. The planning partners fully recognize that there are organizations contributing to the enhancement of our region's food system that may not be highlighted in this report however their work is valued and integral to the growing partnerships necessary to achieve the objectives identified herein.*



# Executive Summary

***“Canadians increasingly understand that a resilient and sustainable food system must address not only the economic wellbeing of producers and consumers, but also environmental impacts and human health outcomes. Local, diverse, and ecologically sustainable food initiatives are multiplying across the country, including eco-certification, regionally focused restaurants and food markets, and healthy supply chain strategies that link informed consumers to local producers.”*** The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

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Undertaken by the *Really Local Harvest Co-op* situated in Dieppe, the *Rural Social Justice Research Centre* housed at St. Thomas University, and the *United Way of Greater Moncton and South Eastern New Brunswick Region* and in partnership with the *New Brunswick Food Security Action Network (NBFSAN)*, this report is a collective effort to amalgamate existing research and resources to better understand and enhance our regional food system. Our goal is threefold:

- to increase our knowledge and understanding of the assets and deficits currently contributing to our food system;
- to identify actions and solutions brought forth by the people and organizations living and operating within our food system;
- to provide a tool to continue to engage and support stakeholders in identifying and implementing mutually reinforcing actions to collectively address the challenges facing the realization of a sustainable local food system for the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of SE New Brunswick.

In 2011 it had been broadly accepted by community stakeholders that although various community groups, regional networks and government departments have been doing good work and capturing data, very little had been synthesized with community knowledge and experience to inform decision making or strategy aimed at creating a sustainable food system.

Between September 2012 and March of 2013, a series of Town Halls, focus groups and one with one interviews with producers, distributors, vendors and community members were held throughout the rural and urban communities of SENB bringing a variety of community knowledge, and expertise to the discussion. The results of these exchanges were captured within three areas of focus.

1. Increase local food production and distribution in SENB,
2. Facilitate access to local healthy food to all residents of SENB regardless of social, cultural, economic or geographic experience and
3. Improve and implement local food related promotion and education initiatives.

From these three focus areas stemmed 10 overarching objectives with 36 actions identified as critical to build the sustainable food system envisioned by the participants of this project. (Appendix A)

Section 1 of this report, *Setting the Stage*, profiles our region of SENB within NB.

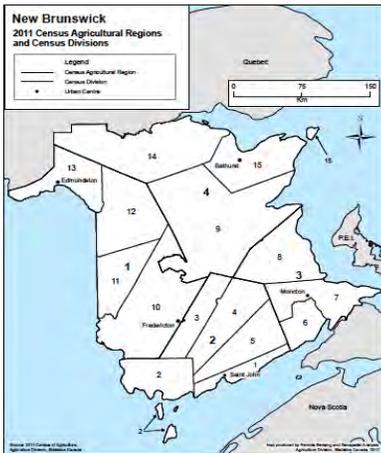
Section 2 *What We Learned*, provides the context for why we must address the state of our regional food system from both a national and provincial perspective. It highlights some of the major

influencing factors around demand, supply and access impacting our regional production and consumption habits.

Section 3, *Moving Forward Room to Grow*, introduces the recommendations and suggests how local, regional and provincial groups can use this information to enhance their current work; to identify and implement mutually reinforcing actions that help us collectively address the challenges facing the realization of a sustainable local food system for the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of SENB.



# 1. SETTING THE STAGE



SENB is referred to, by Statistics Canada, as agricultural region three (3) and it encompasses Albert, Kent and Westmorland counties. Each of these counties has a coastline bordering either on the Bay of Fundy and/or the Northumberland Strait, and each are entry points to and from the neighboring provinces of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

SENB's major urban area is the Greater Moncton area. This includes the communities of Moncton, Riverview and Dieppe, which combined, had a population count of 138,645 in the 2011 census.

Overall, the SENB region covers 10,021 square kilometers (14% of the province of NB's geographical area) and has a population of 203,837 people. Westmorland County is the most densely populated with 144,158 people; followed by Kent County with 30,833 and then Albert County with 28,846. This region is also home to 50.2% of the province's bilingual (French-English) population.



New Brunswick farms account for 1.27% of Canada's total farm operations. However with a population of 751,171, New Brunswick represents a mere 0.023% of the country's total population. The province's land mass is 71,377.18 square kilometers which gives a population density of 10.5 people per square km. This province has no metropolises, and urban areas are substantially smaller than those

to be found in central Canada. The City of Moncton, located in Westmorland County, has a population of 69,074 and has a population density of 489.3 per square km.

Understanding local demographics promotes an appreciation of the challenges food producers have when trying to distribute and market their foodstuffs. Food producers are generally located in more sparsely populated areas but they seek to sell their food in more densely populated ones. For precisely this reason 'exporting' food out of rural communities into urban ones is the *modus operandi* of our existing food system.

This practice is occurring around the globe, sometimes resulting in great suffering and food insecurity for the world's food producers or the populations closest to them, but it is how most grocery stores and households in the industrialized North are stocking their pantry shelves. The amount of food imports into New Brunswick is staggering. The Conservation Council of New Brunswick reported that in the 1970s approximately 75 percent of what we ate in the province was produced here but at present, 95 percent of our food dollars leaves the province via food imports. An examination of provincial trends indicates that a significant portion of our food is being shipped into the region from other parts of Canada, the United States, Mexico, and beyond. Most of the food we eat is imported.

In many respects the birth of the local food movement is a rediscovery and embracing of what was. After all, most communities evolved and grew around local food sources. But over time reliance on food imports grew and grew, pushing local food production to the margins because it is hard for small landholdings to compete with the economies of scale of large industrial operations.

Food production and consumption practices in the region have changed over time and are continuing to do so. The following regional food assessment provides a snapshot of what's currently happening in southeastern New Brunswick. It provides statistical data coupled with narrative accounts of the challenges and opportunities for moving forward.

There is a keen interest in re-building the local food system and strengthening it to better meet today and future generations' needs.



## 2. WHAT WE LEARNED

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What is the local food market for the SENB region and where is it headed?

What is produced and distributed in the SENB region?

What issues are connected with food access in the SENB region?

*The following information presents a Canadian perspective, some provincial information as well as SENB regional data to help better understand the complexity of 'consumer interests, wishes and buying habits for local food'. It will also outline the existing production of, distribution of and access to, local food in the targeted region.*

### 2.1 DEMAND

Interest in local food in Canada is driven by a number of factors, including food quality, nutrition and health, food safety, economic development, and the environment. Evidence suggests that the number of local food systems in Canada is growing, and economic analysis suggests that the food systems in many provinces have a significant local component. If the diverse demands of Canadian consumers are to be met, local food systems must exist and thrive alongside and, in places, interconnected with a viable broader food system.

The domestic Canadian food market is considered mature as the rate of population growth is expected to result in minimal increases in food demand.

Given the current trends toward healthy diets and functional foods, consumer demand continues to trend towards foods with specific attributes related to nutrition, convenience and/or unique properties.

By 2017, it is estimated that visible minorities will constitute 20 per cent of the Canadian population. They will also represent 70 per cent of the growth in spending to the end of the decade. New product lines that respond to the demands of an increasingly multicultural population will position companies at the forefront. The opportunity in the domestic market will be in responding to shifting demand associated with ethnic preferences. The international market is being shaped by a growing, richer and more urban population which translates into more food requirements by populations in urban areas without the means to produce food.

An examination of NB trends indicates that a significant portion of our food is being shipped into the region from other parts of Canada, the United States, Mexico, and beyond. Our reliance on external food markets is staggering. We are importing seafood, poultry, meat, fruit and vegetables, flowers, coffee and tea and a whole plethora of foods that we've come to expect in our daily diet regardless of the season. We no longer eat a local diet; and the foods that can easily be grown in our climate and soils are not being grown in the quantities required by the local population. For example in July 2013 the province imported 154,463 kgs of carrots and turnips. Fresh carrots and turnips are not dietary staples in the middle of high summer when other fresh fruits and vegetables are in season yet we still need to import them to meet local demand.

In the SENB context, consumer food trends are themselves constantly changing. Food import data is not available at the county level, however, according to *My Community at a Glance 2014, NB Community Profile Report*, 31-43% of adults in Albert, Kent and Westmorland Counties, eat 5 vegetables or more per day.

A “survey of consumers’ attitudes toward consuming fresh fruit and vegetables” was conducted in eastern New Brunswick in 2009. The survey found that 63 per cent of the participants were not likely to purchase organically grown fresh fruit and vegetables. In contrast, 67 per cent reported that they would switch grocery stores to purchase specially advertised fruit and vegetables, and approximately, 75 per cent had visited farmer’s markets in the past five years. Overall, 60 per cent of the participants reported that they were not particularly enthusiastic to try newly introduced products, while 38 per cent were willing to pay at least a 10% premium to purchase organically grown fresh fruit and vegetables. The survey respondents prioritized personal health concerns over broader environmental externalities.

*Local products taste better, are healthier, fresher and better quality.... We chose what products we want to buy locally and get the rest elsewhere.*

*~Parent of child in Francophone sud School District*

## Key take away messages relating to consumer demand drawn from stakeholder consultations and literature review:

- The interest in local food in Canada is driven by a number of factors; consumer food trends, food production and consumption practices have changed over time and are continuing to do so.
- Demands for additional assurance of food safety, environmental responsibility and product traceability are considered a significant driver of change.
- Reliance on external food markets is staggering and aggravated by the fact we no longer eat a local diet.
- The top reason for purchasing local food is to support the local economy.
- Perceived barriers such as price and inconvenience reduce local food purchasing.
- The food industry is responding to demand for local food; developing local food systems can contribute to the viability of Canada’s food system as a whole.
- Minimal increases in food demand are projected over the coming years; significant growth is expected in the “ethnic food” sector.

- A majority of Canadian consumers indicate at least some desire to purchase local food.
- Locally produced food rates more important than fair trade, free range, or organic food.
- Food prices are on the rise with great price increases for vegetables and fruit. Some would switch grocery stores to purchase specially advertised fruit and vegetables, while some are willing to pay at least a 10 per cent premium to purchase organically grown fresh fruit and vegetables.
- More food volumes will be required by urban populations without the means to produce food.
- Food consumption trends are toward healthy diets and functional foods rather than processed and convenient foods because of concerns about the environment.
- People buy produce at farm stands, farmers markets, through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) initiatives and at various grocery stores. Fresh produce and products, not locally produced but having the potential to be produced locally, are also sold at these locales.

## 2.2 SUPPLY

Farming has been, and continues to be, an integral part of New Brunswick's rural economy. Even though farm numbers and the farm population have steadily declined over the years, agriculture continues to make a major contribution to the provincial economy. In 2011 the province had only 2,611 farms but they generated \$533 million in farm cash receipts. These farm enterprises supply approximately 150 processing plants in the province creating \$1.2 billion worth of processed agri-food products. Even so, most of the food we eat is imported.

If New Brunswick is to reverse the current consumption trend, it must grow substantially more food for the local population. Even growing the food does not mean there will be uptake. For the farm enterprise, the ultimate challenge is always to match the population's palate with the foodstuffs that can realistically be grown on the region's farms. Understanding what is already being grown, by whom and with what farming practices is a core dynamic of any community food assessment.

### How does it all add up?

With 588 farms (185,838 acres), almost one-quarter of New Brunswick's farms were situated in SENB in 2011. The county breakdown is as follows: 98 farms located in Albert County (29,684 acres); 323 in Westmorland County (108,261 acres); and 167 in Kent County (47,893 acres). In total, the farms in this region account for 185,838 acres of New Brunswick's farmland. Farm size in SENB ranges from less than 10 acres to 3,520 acres. Much of the production on farms in Kent County does not make it directly into the local market — in many instances the product will be grown here then shipped to adjacent regions (or beyond) for processing and packaging.

Fifteen of the 588 farms are organic operations, eleven of which are certified organic and the other four are in transitional stages working towards becoming certified organic.

The average age of farmers: Canada 54.0; New Brunswick 53.1; SENB: 52.2; Albert County 51; Kent County 55.2; Westmorland County 51.3.

The SENB region produces a wide range of foodstuffs and there are farms represented in all of Statistic Canada’s industry groups. The industry groupings represent a farm’s primary farming activity. Many of the farms could also be listed under various other food production sectors.

**Number of farm groups according to the 2011 census – PRIMARY OPERATIONS:**

Category	NB	Ag Region 3	Albert	Kent	Westmorland
Cattle ranching and farming	586	160	25	34	101
Hog and pig farming	16	3	0	0	3
Poultry and egg production	50	12	2	3	7
Sheep and goat farming	57	21	2	5	14
Other animal production	317	82	17	19	46
Oilseed and grain farming	59	6	0	3	3
Vegetable and melon farming	280	23	3	10	10
Fruit and tree nut farming	379	105	15	40	50
Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production	240	35	9	10	16
Other crop farming	627	141	25	43	73
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2611</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>323</b>

When we look at food producing farms in SENB *outside* of their primary operations grouping a more detailed understanding appears:

- **Vegetable** producing farms in SENB- 48; 7 farms in Albert County, 19 in Kent County and 22 farms in Westmorland County- 569 acres of variety vegetables. In terms of acreage the most prevalent vegetable crops in the region are green and wax beans, carrots, sweet corn, rutabagas and turnip, cabbage, pumpkin, squash and zucchini, tomatoes, cucumbers, shallots and onions, and green peas.

- The region has **fruit and berry operations** 136 SENB; 86 blueberry, 19 raspberries, 18 strawberries; and 13 apples.
- Variety of **poultry product** farms eggs, broilers, roasters... SENB- 152; Albert County 37; Kent County 38; Westmorland County 77
- **Cattle operations**(cow and beef) SENB 235; 35 Albert County; 59 Kent County; 141 Westmorland County



- **Sheep and Lamb production:** SENB 34; 3 Albert County; 4 Kent County; 27 Westmorland County
- **Boar production** 5 SENB; 1 Albert County; 1 Kent County; 3 Westmorland County
- **Pig farms:** 15 SENB; 1 Albert County; 5 Kent County; 9 Westmorland County

Important to note is that the Statistics Canada farm groupings does not capture the local product range available. An examination of market garden vegetable operations reveals that a range of products are grown locally from string beans and carrots to green onions and asparagus. The foods grown are most suitable to the region's climate and soil, but not necessarily of the consumer's palate. Consumer palates have expanded far beyond the hearty root vegetables typically grown in this area.

The farms in SENB are producing an extensive range of fruit, vegetables, dairy, egg and meat products. For the most part the products reach both local and national markets, in some instances they may also be destined for an international market. They are not, however, the only food growers in the region. It is very traditional to maintain kitchen gardens, especially in rural areas; and increasingly urban gardening is gaining traction in the area.

Locally produced fresh vegetables sold at farm stands include: beets, broccoli, carrot, celery, cherries, cabbage, Brussel sprouts, cauliflower, pumpkin, cucumber, squash, zucchini, strawberries, raspberries, bean (yellow and green), herbs (savory, basil, dill, parsley), lettuce, corn, melon, turnip, onion, potato, pepper, pear, leek, pea, apples, plums, rhubarb and tomato.

*In SENB, local food products can be sourced from forestry, fisheries and farming. Forests allow us to forage wild foods and agro-forestry could be oriented to supply food. This local food production source is important in our area and would warrant a study in itself. Forestry food production has not been explored in this assessment. Fisheries are also a very important local food production source in the SENB area. Commercial fisheries, recreational fisheries as well as aquaculture production of fish, algae and crustaceans all provide an abundance of locally produced food. These food production sources have not been documented in this report.*

## Key take away messages relating to consumer supply drawn from stakeholder consultations and literature review:

- Existing laws and regulations do not support small operations. Small farms should be seen as viable enterprises. Farmers are hardworking and produce high quality products.
- Topsoil and arable farmland are not protected. We need to create a land registry of farmland available.
- Food distribution is a big issue for individual producers.
- Local production has diversified. More farms and farm products are available in SENB region.
- SENB has access to a great variety of foods: fish, seafood, grains and meats.
- Not many foods can be produced locally in winter but some foods have good storage capabilities: apples, pears, turnips, cabbage...
- There is an increase in greenhouse production all year; there are more wild foraged foods in the marketplace; frozen local fruits and vegetables are now available.
- There is a great need to support all farmers and food producers whether conventional, organic, biodynamic ...
- Farmers are aging; we need to encourage young people to take up traditional and non-traditional food production and access government programs that exist to help young farmers.
- Explore equipment sharing and farmers ordering together (seed, grain, feed...) Bouctouche Experimental Farm (closure): potential distribution center for local agri-products?
- CSA and buying clubs are good food distribution methods.
- Family and community learning activities are well attended and growing in popularity. We could create more opportunities to learn about biodynamic agriculture, community gardens, seed swapping and gardening.
- There is a growing interest in edible landscapes (municipalities) and community gardens.

### 2.3 DISTRIBUTION, ACCESS and SOCIAL EQUITY

*Food access is impacted by a variety of factors such as income, health and diet, geography, culture and agriculture practices; more often than not, a number of factors are at play at one time.*

The Southeast NB region is serviced by a **variety of outlets** providing organic, local, and/or specialty products: box stores, farmers markets, community supported agriculture (CSA's) initiatives, U-picks, alternative food markets, food banks and soup kitchens.

An estimated number of 89 **convenience stores, grocery stores and food markets**, has been identified for Kent(25), Westmorland(58) and Albert Counties(6) through telephone book and web listings (winter 2013-2014). In 2010, a demonstration project to highlight the benefits of a NB Food Atlas was completed by Mount Allison University's Geography and the Environment class.

Several **food distributors** such as JLB produce (Memramcook) and Apple a Day (Dieppe) distribute local southeast NB products during the fresh produce season to several retailers throughout the

region. Individual producers, such as Les Dignes and Springbrook Farm, supply several retailers such as Dolma Foods through direct sale and distribution.



A total of 13 **farmers markets**, occur in all 3 counties. Some operate year round like the Dieppe and Moncton markets, while others operate seasonally. Albert County has 2 seasonal markets in Alma and in Hopewell Cape; Kent County offers 5 seasonal farmers markets located in the communities of Rexton, Bouctouche, Richibouctou, Kouchibouguac and Bass River;

while Westmorland County has 4 seasonal markets located in Shédiac, Sackville, Riverview and Salisbury.



According to the Conference Board of Canada 2012, there are 27 farmers' markets in NB. The 13 farmers' markets in SENB account for approximately 48% of the NB markets.

**Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)** initiatives are growing in popularity and a number of local farms are pre-selling their crop and providing food baskets to their customer base during the growing season. Most farmers

using this distribution strategy indicated how important customer relations and quality product were for maintaining their reputations and growing their businesses. Some found it challenging to maintain the level of personal contact and relationships customers expect while in the midst of their busiest production period. They did, however, recognize this as a key dimension of long-term success.

A total of 7 CSA initiatives were noted in Kent and Westmorland counties, varying in size.

Ferme Pouce Vert (Acadieville) mixed vegetables	Windy Hill Farm (McKees Mills) mixed vegetables
Ferme ALVA (St. Maurice) mixed vegetables	M & S Farm (Sainte-Marie) meat
Hope Farm (St Norbert) mixed vegetables.	Nature's Route Farm (Point-de-Bute) mixed vegetables
Les Jardins Anicha (Melrose) mixed vegetables	

Fredericton based *Real Food Connections* has a food box program serving the greater Moncton area and *The Really Local Harvest Co-op* will be starting a gourmet "panier" program in the near future.

SENB also boasts a variety of **U-Picks**. At least 15 member-farms of the Really Local Harvest Coop ([reallylocalharvest.com](http://reallylocalharvest.com)) offer U-picks: raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, apples, cherries, currants, elderberries, gooseberries, rhubarb, tomatoes, beans, u-fish, pumpkin, squash and gourds. There are also 2 blueberry U-pick farms in Kent County.

Approximately 34 **farm stands and kiosks**, (some year round, some seasonal) offering a variety of products operate in SENB.

A total of **14 were noted in Albert County:**

Harper's Raspberry U-Pick	Tansy Lane Herb Farm
ANC Meats	Briggs Maples
Farm Life Studio	Waterside Winery
Hopewell Cape Farm stand	Flat Brook Farm
Liptay Farms	Maple Farm
R&J Honeybee Farm	Maplewood Farms
Shepody Pheasant Reserve	Farmer Brown's greenhouse and Market Garden

A total of **11 in Kent County:**

La Fleur du Pommier	Ferme Marcel Goguen
Ferme Michaud	M. Tomate
Pumpkin Lady	Marché Canisto,
Les Serres Haché	Uris Williams and Sons
Ferme Pouce Vert,	Richibucto River Wine Estates
Fromagerie au Fond des Bois	

A total of 7 in Westmorland County:

Les Dignes	Scoudouc River Farm
Verger Belliveau	Petits Fruits de Pré-d'en-haut
Magnetic Hill Winery and B & B	Ferme Vienneau
Corn Hill Nursery	

**Alternative food markets** such as Dolma Food Market, OMG Market, Sequoia and Corn Crib in Moncton; Cocagne Variety, Eudore Melanson and Sons, in Cocagne and the Elgin Country Market, Harbour View Market, Crooked Creek Convenience and Valu Foods in Albert County offer locally produced foods.

There are several initiatives happening that are contributing to the **distribution and access of local food in the institutional sector**. The *New Brunswick Food Security Action Network* has recently hired a Farm to School Coordinator as a program under the National *Farm to Cafeteria* Canada Initiative. Farm to Cafeteria programs connect farm to fork bringing local, nutritious and sustainably produced foods into public agencies – places where we learn, work, are healed and play. Farm to School, Farm to University, and Farm to Hospital are all Farm to Cafeteria programs (differentiated primarily by their settings). These programs are an essential component of strong, resilient, and sustainable, regional food systems, – systems that contribute to the health of people, place, and the planet.

Several schools in SENB were chosen in Farm to Cafeteria Canada’s salad bar program that will be sourcing local food to supply new salad bars in their individual cafeterias.

*Local food is not easily accessible; there are some efforts in larger grocery stores but not clear what is local... more effort has to be made towards promoting where local products are available and when. Schools can be used towards this goal.*

*~Parent of child in Francophone-sud school district*

A total of 8 schools throughout New-Brunswick received grants to ‘kick-start’ their salad bars. Amongst these, 4 are located in SENB:

École Clément Cormier (Bouctouche)	Salisbury Elementary School
Bernice MacNaughton School (Moncton)	Elsipogtog First Nation School

In August of 2013, the *Francophone Sud School District* announced their partnership with The *Réseau des Cafétérias Communautaires* (RCC) (Community Cafeteria Network) and the *Really Local Harvest Co-op* to serve local foods in their cafeterias. The 2013/2014 school year saw 22 *Francophone Sud* school cafeterias ranging from Memramcook to Rogersville be serviced by locally produced food. The RCC is in charge of the management of the cafeterias themselves, including the staff and menus.

Through a partner non-for profit organisation called *Terroir Foods & Agrimarketing*, the Really Local Harvest Co-op created a new food hub or food aggregator and has repurposed a former fish market in Cocagne into a warehouse. Terroir Foods & Agrimarketing has also acquired a refrigerated vehicle to insure adequate distribution capacity and safe food handling. Several schools will be added to the program during the 2014/2015 school year.

While not in the SENB region, it is important to note that other provincial initiatives such as the *CÉ D'ICI* initiative taking place at Fredericton's *Centre Communautaire Ste Anne*, have adopted a similar local food sourcing cafeteria management systems.

Several organisations in SENB are actively working in the **promotion of local food products and producers**. In the Albert County region, *Foods of the Fundy Valley* (a volunteer based not for profit organization), has developed a Fundy Fresh brand that promotes both agricultural and seafood products grown in the region that is to be used by farmers, retailers and restaurants. The organization promotes local food products, educates consumers and farmers and hosts a variety of events to highlight the region's bounty.

Similarly, the *Really Local Harvest Co-op*, is a cooperative of thirty farms located throughout SENB. The RLHC's main mandate is to promote its members and their products through a variety of promotional activities such the Dieppe Harvest Festival, various campaigns such as the *Chef Bon Temps web series* as well as the management of the *Dieppe Market*.

**Other groups actively promoting local products in the area** include:

- *Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network (ACORN)* - promotes both local and organic food through a variety of activities, campaigns, conferences and capacity building workshops;
- *Slow Food Cocagne Acadie* - celebrates food culture and heritage;
- The Westmorland Albert and Kent Food Security Action Groups – a collective of food security stakeholders that brings support to a wide variety of activities ranging from agriculture to social equity;
- *Transition Cocagne* and *Post Carbon Greater Moncton* promote community resilience through local food, energy conservation and the adoption non-fossil fuel energy sources.

## Social Equity

When prices for basic foods go up, many turn away from fresh produce, a change that can increase sugar and salt consumption. Convenience foods are popular when money gets tight. At the meat counter, shoppers may select less nutritious cuts like hot dogs and other highly processed choices. Recent research has shown that the experience of hunger negatively impacts children's



physical and mental health resulting in greater likelihood of such conditions as depression and asthma in adolescence and early adulthood. Adults in food insecure households have poorer physical and mental health and higher rates of numerous chronic conditions, including depression, diabetes, and heart disease. Household food insecurity affected one in every six children in Canada in 2011.

**Nunavut, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick had the highest prevalence of children living in food insecure households at 57%, 27% and 25% respectively.** (Tarasuk, Mitchell, Dachner)

There are an estimated 20 **food banks and soup kitchens** in Southeast NB. Albert County has 4, Westmorland County has 12 and Kent County has 4. Since 2008, food bank usage has increased in NB by 27.8% (Hunger Count 2013). Some of these facilities distribute a mix of locally produced food and other products most of which are donated. Many barriers need to be addressed to increase access to healthy and local food from this access point; food banks, community meals providers and a selection of food security stakeholders are a part of a larger system that is working to get good food to people in ways they can enjoy it, prepare it and share it.

*The NB Common Front for Social Justice Inc. (CFSJ)* is a non-profit organization committed to greater solidarity within society, particularly with people living in poverty. In 2010, 2011 and 2012, the CFSJ carried out food surveys using the standardized tool developed by Health Canada, the Nutritious Food Basket (NFB).

In December 2013, the Common Front issued a report titled: *Limited revenue, if yes, where to shop?* The report highlighted that "eating well on a small salary, or on a low fixed income, skims off an important percentage of the monthly revenue."

Scenarios cited in the report:

- For a Family of four the NFB cost per month is \$819.50. If this family relies on only one source of revenue coming from a minimum salary of \$1,720 a month, it will have to spend 48 % of its revenue in order to eat healthy.
- For a single mother with a 9-year-old son the NFB cost per month is \$459.58. If this family is on welfare, its revenue will be \$945 and will have to spend 49% of its revenue in order to eat healthy.
- For a single male the NFB cost per month is \$318.39. If this man is on welfare, his revenue consists of \$537 a month and he will have to spend 59% of its revenue in order to eat healthy.

## Key take away messages relating to distribution, access and social equity drawn from stakeholder consultations and literature review:

- Local food is not easily accessible: supply is not year round and proximity of local food outlets for urban and rural residents can be a barrier as well as limited hours open for sale.
- Supply to food banks is limited and food banks interested in growing their own food require support (resources and partners) in building their capacity to do so.
- The price of local foods is high for the average consumer; low for farmers; not accessible to low income and competing with subsidized food.
- Marketing is an issue. There is lack of NB logo; lack of info about available food location; lack of signs designating outlets; lack of info about Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and food purchasing clubs; lack of local producer promotion by businesses and lack of local business repertoire. A NB logo program has already existed; we could build on that and still be inclusive of regional branding efforts.
- Changing Food Bank and Community Meal experience: Increase in food quality; better hours of operation (would help with volunteers, partnerships and meet the need for growing demographic of working poor); a more dignified experience for participants; need for training for volunteers and staff.
- Education is important. We need to understand meaning of 'local food' and need to counter the notion of cheap food. There is a lack of certified facilities to conduct education activities and lack of encouragement to grow our own food.
- There is an openness of large grocery stores to sell local products and retailers are open all week long. Farmer's markets are good but could be open more hours. Restaurants are willing to serve local foods. Opportunity to explore the European style of shopping with a variety of food shops in one mall.
- Food transformation and storage facilities are problematic. Restaurants face restrictions; food banks lack storage; there is a lack of community storage, lack of collective kitchens, lack of certified kitchens, lack of mobile freezer and lack of organized gleaning volunteers; many people in SENB have limited cooking skills and equipment. Some people are willing to forage and glean foods; there are food surpluses on farms and in gardens and collective kitchens in certified facilities would be useful for transformation and education.
- Income food insecurity continues to be a significant issue in our region and province.

### **3. MOVING FORWARD: ROOM TO GROW**

The number of stakeholders in southeastern New Brunswick interested in food issues ranging from sustainable agriculture to food security and social equity has grown substantially over the past 10 years. The *District Scolaire Francophone Sud*'s partnership with both the *Réseau des Cafétérias Communautaires (Community Cafeteria Network)* and the *Really Local Harvest Co-op* as well as the partnerships between farmers, fishermen and retail outlets part of the *Foods of the Fundy Valley* initiative, are a few examples of how collaborations are essential to the growth and resilience of this region's food system.

One of this assessment's main objectives was to highlight the diversity of work that is presently taking place in the region. The identification of common points of interest and benefit can facilitate food security stakeholders in communities, organizations and government in targeting resources to create a sustainable regional food system.

The recommendations listed in Appendix A were derived from the different stakeholder meetings and consultations that took place during the development of this project as well as the literature review. Although no formal mechanism for applying these recommendations has been identified, the aim is that they will contribute to the development of collective and individual actions that will help build a more sustainable local food system in SENB.

In conclusion, there are several information gaps that were identified during this process. Increasing our data and knowledge on these issues would further our understanding of food issues in SENB:

- Sub-provincial data on local food systems could enhance our understanding of the differences between local food systems in urban and rural areas, and southern and northern areas. While there is some information about the number of farmers markets in Canada, there is a lack of data on their economic impact and how this has changed over time. There is even less data on the amount of local food sold through other channels, such as farm stands, Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) programs, retail chains, and restaurants.
- Better data on local food sales, including how much local food is sold through different sales channels and what products, would enhance our understanding of the economic impact of local food systems. It would also improve our understanding of barriers to further enhancing local food systems.
- Data on the socio-economic benefits of local food systems are also limited. We know little about the extent to which local food systems can improve food literacy, food security, and help build communities. While there is some evidence that local food systems can have positive impacts on socio-economic issues, we lack information on the extent to which socio-economic issues directly benefit from local food systems, and strategies and policies to maximize potential benefits. Local

food initiatives should be evaluated to better understand if there are direct links between local food and socio-economic benefits, as well as to establish best practices that can be applied elsewhere.

- It has not been in the scope of this project to look at the food production potential of the SENB region however that information would be of great use.

## APPENDIX A: RECOMMENDATIONS: AREAS OF FOCUS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Increase local food production and distribution				
OBJECTIVES				
Viability of region's farms and agri-business	The entrance of new farmers in the region's agri-industry	Protect and maintain agricultural land	Increase urban food production	
ACTIONS				
<p>1. Develop new markets for local products through initiatives such as farm to institution programs (including schools).</p> <p>2. Encourage provincial and municipal governments to adopt local purchasing policies for government run events and institutions.</p> <p>3. Facilitate the development of on and off-farm value added products and infrastructure at the regional level.</p> <p>4. Encourage crop diversification and facilitate the adoption season extension technologies amongst growers</p>	<p>5. Provide industry support to producers by providing expertise on a variety of issues both technical and business related that can help increase profitability.</p> <p>6. Continue to support the development of new points of sale for farmers (including farmers markets and small scale grocery stores).</p> <p>7. Develop regional food hubs that include a local food distribution system that includes sales, transportation and warehousing.</p>	<p>8. Create a database of available farmland that can be accessed to new entrants and advertised at agricultural colleges and universities.</p> <p>9. Facilitate farm equipment sharing through various tools such as co-ops as to reduce expenses for new entrants.</p> <p>10. Facilitate mentorship between established producers, beginner farmers as well as those interested in growing their own food.</p> <p>11. Advocate for agricultural programs at Community Colleges and universities.</p>	<p>12. Encourage both rural and urban communities (both incorporated municipalities and LSDs) to adopt measures to conserve farmland (stop top soil stripping of high quality lands).</p> <p>13. Advocate for a provincial policy on farmland conservation.</p>	<p>14. Encourage communities and citizens groups to develop more community gardens.</p> <p>15. Encourage municipalities and businesses to grow "edible landscapes" on their properties.</p> <p>16. Advocate for paid community garden coordinators at the municipal level.</p>

**Facilitate the access to local healthy foods to all, including individuals and families living on low-incomes.**

**OBJECTIVES**

**Distribution**

**Infrastructure**

**Access (Income barrier)**

**ACTIONS**

17. Develop local food retail outlets that are open all week long and that feature a variety of products as to meet consumer demand.

19. Develop community local food buying groups as a means of supporting producers while saving through bulk purchase.

20. Develop local food storage capacity at the community level (on-farm or other) as to bridge the gap during winter months.

22. Encourage people to share garden surpluses with local food banks and other community aid agencies.

24. Develop strategies to supply cooking equipment to low-income individuals and families.

18. Evaluate the feasibility of establishing mobile farmers markets.

21. Develop certified kitchens for processing at the farm and community level.

23. Develop strategies to harvest local farm surpluses that are left in the fields for food banks and those in need.

## Implement and improve local food related promotion and education initiatives.

### OBJECTIVES

**Develop local-food orientated educational and promotional campaigns**

**Develop education initiatives that promote basic food-related skills such as growing, preserving (cook, can, freeze) and cooking.**

### ACTIONS

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| <p>25. Encourage the creation of promotional tools (social media &amp; other) that feature the benefits of eating local and that inform people on what local foods are available in the region, when and where.</p> <p>26. Encourage schools to adopt healthy and local food based menus in their cafeterias and to use healthy local foods during special events and activities.</p> <p>27. Encourage schools to develop curriculum uses farming and agri-food production as a way to explain various concepts ranging from math, entrepreneurship and biology, in partnership with individual farmers or regional farm groups.</p> <p>28. Encourage schools to develop interactive web based tools that list cafeteria menus and that help plan lunchbox meals.</p> | <p>29. Facilitate the identification of local and NB grown products at large chain grocery stores through labelling and branding.</p> <p>30. Work with municipal, regional and provincial tourism initiatives to promote agri-tourism and on-farm tours</p> <p>31. Include youth representatives on community committees and other initiatives that aim at engaging youth in healthy eating and the promotion local food promotion and food related skills.</p> | <p>32. Encourage the development of local food cooking classes and basic knowledge on how to eat healthy and local on a budget (link these with community gardens</p> <p>33. Program community level food preserving sessions (cooking, canning, freezing) that include bulk purchasing of local products.</p> <p>34. Establish certified community teaching and cooking kitchens (collective kitchens, partnerships with producers with value-added facilities)</p> <p>35. Encourage businesses to grow vegetable gardens on their properties.</p> <p>36. Develop tools or forums that permit people to share and exchange surplus garden products.</p> |
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## APPENDIX B: local, regional and provincial stakeholder groups working together in Southeast New Brunswick

This list does not include ALL the stakeholders actively working to create a sustainable local food system for the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of SENB. The following organizations are deeply entrenched in efforts taking place throughout our region's communities and are great first resources to connect with.

Organisation	How they contribute
<p><b>Westmorland Albert Food Security Network</b> (WAFSAG) Réseaux sécurité alimentaire WA (RSAWA) <a href="mailto:wafoodsecurity@gmail.com">wafoodsecurity@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>The WAFSAG collective is comprised of food banks, non-profit organizations, community food mentors, producers, businesses, and government partners who have an interest in promoting an approach to accessing and consuming food that is healthy, just, and sustainable in Westmorland and Albert County communities.</p>
<p><b>Kent Food Security Network</b> Réseau de la Sécurité Alimentaire de Kent <a href="mailto:kcfscsak@live.com">kcfscsak@live.com</a></p>	<p>Supporting communities in Kent County in developing their own resources by providing educational programs while promoting healthy eating and self-sufficiency with food at heart.</p>
<p><b>La Récolte de Chez Nous</b> Really Local Harvest Co-operative <a href="http://www.recoltedecheznous.com">www.recoltedecheznous.com</a> <a href="http://www.marchedieppemarket.com">www.marchedieppemarket.com</a></p>	<p>Promoting the development of sustainable agriculture in southeastern New Brunswick. Really Local Harvest is a cooperative of about thirty farmers from the South East region of New Brunswick. Our members work hard to give you authentic, wholesome, fresh and great tasting local products.</p>
<p><b>Foods of the Fundy Valley</b> (FFV) <a href="mailto:foodsofthefundyvalley@gmail.com">foodsofthefundyvalley@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>The FFV is a stronger, more vibrant Albert County, where residents can enjoy the economic, healthful, and cultural benefits of consuming locally produced foods, and farmers and food producers are able to sustainably, responsibly and profitably grow the local food economy. Through education, innovation and strengthening of community ties, the FFV fosters an environment that promotes the production and consumption of local goods in the Albert County area.</p>
<p><b>United Way Greater Moncton and Southeastern NB Region</b> <a href="http://www.gmsenbunitedway.ca">www.gmsenbunitedway.ca</a></p>	<p>Recognizing that poverty is a complex set of stubborn, intertwined social issues, United Way works in partnership at the local, regional and provincial level to enhance food security in SENB in three identified outcome areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals and families have access to affordable, nutritious and appropriate food</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals and families experience decreased stress and life disruptions due to food insecurity</li> <li>• Individuals and families experience reduced stigma and greater dignity in relation to food access</li> </ul>
<b>Réseau des cafétérias communautaires Inc.</b>	<p>Le réseau des cafétérias communautaires Inc., manages the initiative «Back To our roots» which includes 22 school cafeterias in the Francophone South School District. They have 54 employees who serve healthy locally sourced home-cooked meals to close to 8000 students and staff from Kindergarten to grade 12 from Rogersville to Moncton to Memramcook.</p>
<b>Groupe de développement durable du Pays de Cocagne Sustainable Development Group</b> <a href="mailto:gddpc@nb.aibn.com">gddpc@nb.aibn.com</a> <a href="http://www.ecopaysdecocagne.ca">www.ecopaysdecocagne.ca</a>	<p>Programme alimentation; jardins de démonstration, Transition Cocagne, mentors communautaires en alimentation; Groupe de travail autonomie alimentaire</p>
<b>Mapleton Teaching Kitchen</b> <a href="mailto:janet.hamilton@monctonheadstart.com">janet.hamilton@monctonheadstart.com</a>	<p>Mapleton Teaching Kitchen (MTK) is part of the Moncton Headstart operations and supports Headstart families, agencies and community partners to enhance the food security of families and individuals living with limited financial resources in the Greater Moncton. Programs include <b>teaching kitchens; Fresh For Less; Collective Kitchens and Fun in the Kitchen</b> children’s summer camp.</p>
<b>Slow Food Cocagne Acadie</b> <a href="http://slowfoodcocagneacadie.com/about/">http://slowfoodcocagneacadie.com/about/</a>	<p>Slow Food Cocagne Acadie is the first Slow Food convivium in New Brunswick. Slow Food is a global, grassroots organization with supporters in 150 countries around the world who are linking the pleasure of good food with a commitment to their community and the environment.</p> <p><b>Bon, propre et juste – Good, clean and fair</b></p>
<b>Westmorland Albert Community Inclusion Network/ Réseaux d'inclusion communautaire Westmorland Albert</b> <a href="mailto:wa.riccin.coordinator@gmail.com">wa.riccin.coordinator@gmail.com</a>	<p>Ensuring that people in the Westmorland Albert Counties do not have to struggle to meet their basic needs because businesses, not-for profits, governments, and individuals are working, as a whole community, to address the reality of poverty. Community identified areas of focus: Transportation; Education and Employment; Food Security; Housing; Early Childhood Intervention</p>
<b>Kent Community Inclusion Network/ Réseaux d'inclusion communautaire Kent (KCIN/RICK)</b> <a href="mailto:kentriccin@gmail.com">kentriccin@gmail.com</a>	<p>The KCIN/RICK bring together community partners, government agencies, non-profits, businesses and private citizens to decide upon the priorities for reducing poverty in Kent County. In May 2014 the KCIN priorities for reducing poverty in Kent County include but are not limited to: Transportation; Food Security; Education and Essential Skills; Wellness; Social</p>

	Entrepreneurship; Volunteerism.
<b>New Brunswick Food Security Action Network/Réseau de la sécurité alimentaire du NB (NBFSAN/RSANB)</b> <a href="http://www.nbfoodsecurity.ca">www.nbfoodsecurity.ca</a>	<p>The NBFSAN/ RSANB facilitate networking among organizations and individuals related to the promotion, research, education and community engagement of food security throughout New Brunswick with the vision that all New Brunswickers have access to food that is healthy, local, and sustainably produced.</p> <p>For a comprehensive list of provincial and national programs and resources visit:  <a href="http://www.nbfoodsecurity.ca">www.nbfoodsecurity.ca</a></p>
<b>NB Farm to School – a Farm to Cafeteria program</b> <a href="mailto:kelsey@nbfsan-rasanb.ca">kelsey@nbfsan-rasanb.ca</a>	Working in partnership to increase access to fresh, locally and sustainably grown, nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate foods in New Brunswick schools.
<b>ACORN</b> <a href="http://www.acornorganic.org">www.acornorganic.org</a>	Since 2000, ACORN has been the key organization for information on organic agriculture, eating organics, and connecting all the parts together. From seed to farmer to consumer, ACORN works to bring the whole picture together—making food choices healthier and more environmentally responsible.
<b>Department of Healthy and Inclusive Communities</b> <a href="mailto:Nicole.leblanc2@gnb.ca">Nicole.leblanc2@gnb.ca</a>	New Brunswick Wellness Strategy’s vision: a healthy New Brunswick where, together, we learn, work, and live in a culture of wellbeing. The Community Food Action Program supports community-led solutions to increase healthy eating in New Brunswick, with a focus on increasing food security for people living in poverty, seniors, young people, and persons with disabilities.

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