

Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition



15 Year Report

May 6, 2025

City of Kawartha
Lakes

Committee of the
Whole

What is KLFC?

Established in 2013, the Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition (KLFC) is a community-based collaboration representing individuals, organizations and stakeholders interested in the food system, production, processing, and distribution through to consumption.

The Coalition fosters programs that ensure a just, sustainable food system, rooted in healthy communities, in which no one is hungry, and everyone has access to healthy, nutritious food.

The Coalition promotes an economically viable, diverse and ecologically sustainable food system, to grow, harvest, process, transport and distribute food while minimizing waste.

KLFC Mission Statement

The Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition implements the Kawartha Lakes Food Charter (2011) and the Kawartha Lakes Food Action Plan through discussion, collaboration and cooperation of organizations and individuals to build a just and sustainable food system for all in Kawartha Lakes.

KLFC Working Groups

Food Security Working Group

Mission Statement

Support all levels of government and community partners to achieve food security for all residents in the City of Kawartha Lakes.

Strategic Priorities

To help increase access to healthy food. This group encourages implementation of food security initiatives across the food security continuum. It includes support for strategies such as short-term relief, capacity building, and system change including policy development and redesign. Group's emphasis is on addressing the root causes of

Growth & Sustainability Working Group

Mission Statement

To facilitate the sustainable growth and development of Kawartha Lakes Food System

Strategic Priorities

Through the local agricultural community, develop initiatives to strengthen, promote and market local food; develop public awareness and commitment to local food use; develop a skilled, adaptable, available and sustainable workforce that supports the food system; and promote a healthy eco-system through the use of environmental farming practices.

Food Security Working Group



Focus on agency and community
engagement

Advocacy for income-based
solutions to end poverty and
food insecurity

Accomplishments since 2013

Strategic Priority #1 Advocate to the federal, provincial, and municipal government to develop policies and programs that take a comprehensive approach to address root causes of poverty and food insecurity.

1. Federal Election Campaign 2019:

Participated in the Cent\$less campaign: Local voters encouraged to visit the Cent\$less campaign website (www.odph.ca/centsless) to learn about the food insecurity problem, how it affects people's health, and why income-based solutions are the best fix for the problem.

- ✓ Letters sent to the leaders of the federal Liberals, Conservatives, New Democrats, and Green parties urging swift action to address the problem.
- ✓ Participated on the panel for the 'All Candidates Debate' in Lindsay. Income security, food insecurity, and employment related questions asked to all candidates.

2. Pre-budget Consultation 2019: Participated and prepared a submission for the 2019 Provincial pre-budget consultations advocating for income-based policies and programs to address food insecurity and

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3. Provincial Election Campaign 2018: Along with CKL Access to Permanent Housing Committee, Haliburton County FoodNet & the City of Kawartha Lakes & Haliburton County Poverty Reduction Roundtable developed the "Let's make poverty an election issue" campaign.

- ✓ **Questions to all candidates:** Sent a list of questions related to Income, food insecurity, housing, and health to local candidates. Their responses were published in local newspaper in the print and online editions so voters could make informed decision about voting.
- ✓ **Letters for the candidates: Online** copies of the letter (advocating for Basic Income, increase to minimum wage working towards a living wage, immediate increase to social assistance rate, and improvements to employment standards) were available on the rethinkpoverty.ca website where letter could be e-mailed directly to local candidates, as well as, to the party leaders.
- ✓ **Social media:** Social media posts related to advocacy message/elections were made.

Food Security Strategic Priority #1 Continued

4. Municipal Election Campaign 2018:

- ✓ Partnered with Access to Permanent Housing Committee, Haliburton County FoodNet & the City of Kawartha Lakes & Haliburton County Poverty Reduction Roundtable.
- ✓ An educational document was developed for all candidates to introduce them to key facts and evidence based best practices to address housing, food insecurity, transportation, and childcare issues. The document was sent to all candidates and our community partners.

5. Basic Income Pilot Advocacy and Implementation 2016-2018:

- ✓ Organized educational campaigns regarding Basic Income.
- ✓ Met with Provincial Government representatives and presented in support of Basic Income pilot at Queens Park to Ministry of Social Services Office.
- ✓ Once pilot started in Lindsay Ontario, participated on Ministry of

Food Security Strategic Priority #1 Continued

6. Basic Income Pilot Cancellation Follow up 2018-2020:

- ✓ After cancelation of the pilot, followed up with advocacy letter to the Provincial Government requesting continuation of the pilot.
- ✓ In support of the Pilot city Mayors' request, sent letter to the Federal government requesting that they assume oversight of the pilot for year 2 and 3 of the study.
- ✓ Met with MP Jamie Schmale in 2018, to discuss the cancellation of Basic Income Pilot, Mayors' letter, and how he can help with advocacy to the Federal Government.
- ✓ Sent advocacy letters to the Federal Minister of Finance, Federal Minister of Social Services and the NDP/Conservative budget critics and Ministry of Social Services critics.
- ✓ Sent letters to the four Mayors of pilot sites (including CKL's Mayor Letham) and provided them with an update of our advocacy work as well as requested that they send a letter to the Federal Minister of Finance as well.

Food Security Strategic Priority #1 Continued

7. Summer Lunch Program 2018-present

- ✓ In response to a local need related to student anxiety due to food insecurity during summer months, Food Security Working Group partnered with Food Source, Salvation Army, and Health Unit in development, coordination, and implantation of healthy summer lunch program.
- ✓ The menu for the program is developed by the health unit dietitian and the healthy brown bag lunch consists of with a chicken/veggie whole grain wrap, fruit, vegetable, yogurt or cheese, and a healthy baked treat. Over the last 6 years 4,912 meals have been prepared and served to the children.

Strategic Priority #2 Support initiatives that develop a just and sustainable food system.

- 1. Provincial Policy Statement Review 2023:** Prepared and made a submission on behalf on Food Security Working Group in support of protection of farmland, food security and climate change.
- 2. City of Kawartha Lakes Zoning Bylaw Review Project 2020:** Participated in zoning bylaw review project. Submitted bylaw suggestions that will help support local sustainable food system enhancement and increase access to healthy and local food.
- 3. Edible Fruit Tree Project 2018:** Partnered with community volunteer Liza Hancock (project lead), Kawartha North Family Health Team, City of Kawartha Lakes Parks and Recreation Department, Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Corp, Fleming College Urban Forestry Department, and Kawartha Lakes Food Source. Overall, 30 trees were planted at Orchard Park in Lindsay and another 70 trees were planted at the housing units in Lindsay, Fenelon Falls, Omemee, Minden, and Haliburton. Once ready to harvest, Kawartha Lakes Food Sources will support the harvesting efforts and fruit will be provided to individuals and

Strategic Priority #2 Support initiatives that develop a just and sustainable food system.

4. Plant a Row Grow a Row Program (PARGAR) 2015-2019: Supported community volunteer Liza Hancock (project lead) and Kawartha Lakes Food Source in development and promotion of the PARGAR program. This program encouraged gardeners to grow an extra row of fresh fruits or vegetables for the food banks. PARGAR also accepted surplus fresh produce from orchards and farms. Kawartha Lakes Food Source runs this program now.

5. CKL Local Food Forum 2015: Participated in planning and hosting the first Local Food Forum in partnership with CKL Economic Development Department, Fleming College, and HKPR Health Unit.

Strategic Priority #3 Support food literacy initiatives and programs that increase access to healthy, sustainable, and safe foods.

1. Herb and Vegetable Gardening Workshops 2015-2019: In partnership with Lindsay Master Gardeners and libraries hosted two Herb and Vegetable Gardening workshops every year. Approximately 30 participants participated in each workshop.

2. Food Preservation Workshops 2015-2019: Hosted a series of training workshops every year linked to food preservation to enhance food literacy knowledge and skills of residents.. Approximately 8-10 participants in each workshop. Some examples of the workshops include.

- a. Train the Trainer Advanced Food Preservation: This workshop was geared towards organizations that offer or plan to offer cooking skill development programs in CKL. Eight organizations who worked with youth and clients with mental health issues and low income attended the session.
- b. Spring Jamming Workshop: Designed for individuals living in low-income situation.
- c. Preserve Your Harvest Workshop: Organized for community gardeners.

Strategic Priority #3 Support food literacy initiatives and programs that increase access to healthy, sustainable, and safe foods.

3. Kirkfield Library "Food Culture" Garden 2015: Supported development of the Kirkfield Library "Food Culture" Garden. The goal of this project was to develop an edible and educational garden that will empower individuals to grow/harvest & manage their own food.

4. Community Garden Database 2015: Developed a database of existing/new community gardens in CKL. 25 community gardens were identified in CKL, 19 of these gardens were run by community organizations and 6 gardens were at schools involving students, staff and parents.

Sustainability Working Group

To facilitate the
sustainable growth of
development of Kawartha
Lakes Food System

Accomplishments since
2013



Strategic Priority 1: Develop initiatives to strengthen, promote and market local food.

- 1) Communicated and **marketed the availability of local food** to the local food consumer through website, printed map guide, printed brochure advertising, tourism guides, trade show presence, etc.
- 2) **Conducted baseline survey of productive and market capacity** for local agri-food within Kawartha Lakes done through the 2015 Food Hub Feasibility Study
- 3) Created awareness and engage industry partners to participate in **local networking events**
- 4) Encouraged local adoption of **farm-to-institutions procurement practices**
- 5) Maintained **calendar of networking opportunities** for stakeholders through the City and KRCA website events calendars
- 6) Identified, developed and shared resources and sources of information to **support local food processing, value-added and other activities**, including stewardship and sustainability activities.
- 7) Supported project initiatives that **explored innovative local food production** to meet market needs.
- 8) Educated local producers about opportunities for developing value-added

Strategic Priority 1: Continued

- 9) Facilitated the development of **value-chain opportunities with processors and distributors**
- 10) Identified and **promoted funding programs** and assist businesses and organizations in accessing funding
- 11) Guided local food processors through the SIAL and Restaurants Canada Show to market their products.
- 12) Shared the results of **Kawartha Lakes Food Hub Feasibility Study**
- 13) Engaged businesses and individuals with interest in launching a food hub
- 14) Connected businesses and individuals with available sources of funding
- 15) Sought alliances through Kawartha Choice FarmFresh in partnership with Peterborough Economic Development for an **Aggregation/Distribution system.**
- 16) Celebrated **20 years of Kawartha Choice FarmFresh** at Woodleigh Farms with a tour of the farm operation and their field-scale composting program aimed at improving organic matter inputs with a field-crop operation.
- 17) Held the **20th Annual Kawartha Farmfest** on Saturday, October 1, 2022 with 850 people participating, and over 4,000 person visits across a variety of 10 farms

Strategic Priority 2: Develop public awareness and commitment to local food use.

- 1) Promoted initiatives for the **public to get to know their farmers** through social media and farm member profiles on Kawartha Choice FarmFresh, etc.
- 2) Developed and shared communication materials to **build loyalty and awareness** of the benefits to the community and the environment.
- 3) Supported social media marketing efforts to **promote buying local food**.
- 4) Determined best **use of publicly owned agricultural lands** and opportunities for utilization.
- 5) Maintained linkages with Real Estate Association to **inventories of available agricultural lands**
- 6) Supported the preservation of agricultural lands and limited non-agricultural uses to support farm viability by **maintaining protective land use policies and regulations**, and the development application commenting processes.
- 7) Support the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) Peterborough and encouraging producers to connect with them to initiate **projects to restore and protect agricultural lands**.
- 8) In partnership with Peterborough & The Kawarthas Economic Development initiated project titled **"Growing the Local Food Wholesale** Market in Kawartha Region". This is

Strategic Priority 3: Develop a skilled, adaptable, available, and sustainable workforce that supports the food system.

- 1) Delivered presentations to build awareness amongst youth of **food system career opportunities**
- 2) Promoted and advised Fleming College **Sustainable Agricultural program**
- 3) Coordinated **agricultural employment fairs** with VCCS
- 4) Facilitated training opportunities through the **development and implementation of training plans**
- 5) With Workforce Development Board as lead, reviewed **agri-food system labour market**.
- 6) Surveyed agri-food businesses regarding labour issues and applied results to updated **2020-2024 Agriculture and Food Action Plan**
- 7) Facilitate dialogue with **agriculture and food sector employers** and fostered alignment between the needs of the food system and **career development and training programs** within the Kawartha Lakes SkillsAdvanced Ontario project
- 8) Applied to Ministry of Colleges, Training & Universities for **up-skill training** funds from SkillsAdvance Ontario Program for job seekers and incumbent workers.
- 9) **Delivered two Online Workshop Series'** as a regional collaborative including "So you think you want to farm" and "So you think you want to diversify" attended by over 400 registrations across the 4 sessions held.

Strategic Priority 4: Promote a healthy eco-system through the use of environmental farming practices.

- 1) **Researched stewardship methods** and technology applicable to local food systems
- 2) Promoted the **economic benefits of stewardship** to increase use of sustainable farming methods
- 3) **Hosted workshops and events** to disseminate best practices information including workshops on soil and water conservation and innovative stewardship technologies available to farmers including 2016 Water Conservation Workshop, 2017 Agricultural Water Workshop: Dealing with Drought, 2018 Agricultural Soils Workshop, 2019 Working Together to Improve Soil & Water Quality of the Farm
- 4) Identified and **promoted funding programs** and assist businesses and organizations in accessing funding through the Kawartha Lakes Farm Stewardship Fund (2015-2019), Eco Action funding through East Central Farm Stewardship Collaborative, and the CKL Water Fund.
- 5) **Kawartha Lakes Farm Stewardship Fund Advisory Committee received the 2016 Community Conservationist Award**
- 6) Engaged farmers in the development of the municipal climate change strategy the **Healthy Environment Plan with specific actions for agricultural**

Strategic Priority 4: Continued

- 9) Provided opportunities for **farmer to farmer learning** to encourage broader adoption of practices
- 10) Increase **consumer awareness of the environmental stewardship work done by farmers** through videos and testimonials.
- 11) Within the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Partnership with Kawartha Region Conservation Authority (2021-2022): Invested grant funding in 4 agricultural landowner projects to improve water quality and improve farm operations, with a Lunch and Learn and a brief video capturing landowner projects on Barnyard eaves troughs and stormwater diversion; Barnyard eaves troughs and stormwater diversion; Stormwater retention pond; and a Tile drain control box system. A webinar: "Stewardship Project Support for Producers in the Kawartha Watershed and Beyond" held in February 2022 included presentations by three Conservation Authorities and the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Agency.
- 12) The OMAFRA partnership (2022-2023) invested grant funding to five agricultural landowner projects to improve water quality and improve farm operations with riparian planting, solar powered alternate watering systems, livestock exclusion fencing, manure storage and vegetated filter strip, and included a fall farm tour to visit the 5 demonstration projects.
- 13) The Landowner Incentive Program in Kawartha Lakes awarded \$13,314 of grant funding



Next Steps

Change is inevitable over time and much has changed since embarking on the early work of the Kewartha Lakes Food Coalition.

- Recognize that new and evolving structures are in place to address the same work as being undertaken by the Food Coalition.
- To avoid continued duplication of organizational structures, dissolution of the Kewartha Lakes Food Coalition
- Food Security Working Group to continue as an independent community partnership
- Agricultural Growth and Sustainability work to continue through City of Kewartha Lakes, Conservation Authorities, General Farm Organizations and Commodity

Thank you

Through the 15-year collaboration, the Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition has made positive impacts in our local food system. The Coalition is very grateful for the pioneers of this work and to those who have continued to collaborate to achieve our goals.

We would like to acknowledge all the agencies, organizations, farmers, and individuals who have engaged with the Coalition and who contributed collectively to this work. We appreciate all who helped progress the mission and purpose of the Food Charter as well as increasing access to and awareness of local food.