

Local Food and the Grey Bruce Good Food Box

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Theme and objective

This project looked at the Good Food Box program in Grey Bruce and examined the feasibility of including more locally produced items. First, neighbouring Good Food Box programs (Huron County, Guelph, Simcoe County, Dufferin County) were researched to assess the use of local foods. Then site coordinators (14) in the Grey Bruce Food Box Program were interviewed, as well as distributors (2). Finally, potential local producers (34) were surveyed.

Results

Grey Bruce has an established and well-functioning GFB program. The program is quite large; in 2009, it supplied over 1100 boxes per month. Coordinators, participants and distributors are interested in local foods. In addition, numerous producers, who together can offer a broad palette of produce types and an availability that spans almost the entire year, are interested in becoming involved in the GFB program. Key challenges for incorporating more locally-produce foods in the GFB are:

- Organization of supply, demand and distribution
- Distribution from numerous sources to numerous delivery points

It was recommended that the GBACA develop and maintain a database of local producers that includes up-to-date harvest information and pricing information, which it could provide to distributors. The set-up and operation of such a system – an on-line food terminal – would require a significant input of resources. The investment would probably not be fully utilized if it were only used for the GFB program. However, if it were seen as a pilot project, then it would be a strategic investment into the infrastructure of our local food system.