

Food Security Hub Project



PROJECT REPORT
AUGUST 2019



United Way
Bruce Grey
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GREY BRUCE
SustainabilityNetwork

Bruce Grey
POVERTY
TASK FORCE



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Executive Summary

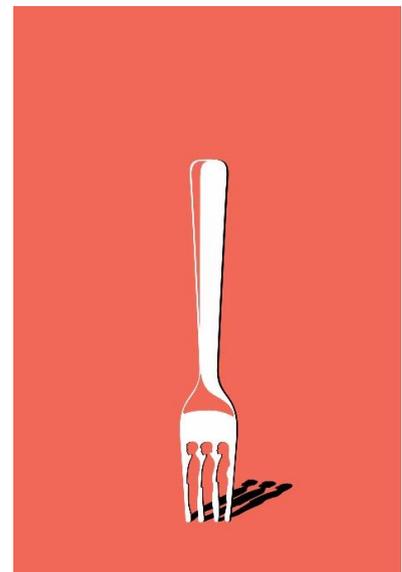
Project Objective: Building on the success of past community food conversations, this project aimed to encourage further collaboration between food security players in Grey Bruce communities to improve food security. The conversations also aims to build knowledge of local food security activities to enhance the content of the Grey Bruce Food Asset Map.

This report is written as both a documentation of the process as well as a resource tool for community members.

The Food Security Hub Project facilitated meetings that strengthened networks of local food security agencies, community partners and community members at a community level in Bruce County and Grey County. Through this collaborative work communities identified key goals and outcomes and the steps necessary to take action. The relationships established at the meetings will allow each community to continue to act beyond this project's scope to advance community food security projects.

Local goals, outcomes, and actions varied from on-the-ground action projects to big picture thinking and advocacy. It is recommended that local food hubs examine the best practices of larger urban community food centres and adapt this practice to meet the unique needs of a rural setting.

With appropriate supports the Food Security Action Team of the Poverty Task Force could expand the Community Food Hub project to additional communities in the region, assisting in follow up action projects and supporting further collaboration.



Introduction

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1996)



(source: CCHS, Stats Can 2017)

Twelve percent of Canadians experience food insecurity (Canadian Community Health Survey Data [CCHS], Stats Can 2011 to 2014). While food insecurity can occur at all income levels, it is most prevalent for those with lower incomes. When a person or household has low income, the fixed expenses such as housing and utilities are advised to be paid first as maintaining housing is a priority. The remainder of any funds is used for variable expenses such as food, clothing, transportation and recreation. For many families, when faced with a budget shortfall, it is the food budget that gets cut. This means that families and individuals are eating poorly or not at all. In Grey and Bruce Counties, almost 1 in 5 children live in a low income household (CCHS, Stats Can 2017), and 20% of households are food insecure (CCHS, Stats Can 2017).

“Food insecurity negatively affects human physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development throughout the life course and is a major social and environmental disruptor with serious repercussions for planetary health (i.e., the health of human civilization and the state of the natural systems on which it depends).”

Rafael Pérez-Escamilla, Food Security and the 2015–2030 Sustainable Development Goals: From Human to Planetary Health: Perspectives and Opinions, *Current Developments in Nutrition*, Volume 1, Issue 7, July 2017, e000513

Defining the issue

Household food insecurity is very tightly tied to income and the lower the income, the greater risk of food insecurity ([PROOF](#), 2018).



On 25 September 2015, United Nations adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) (UN General Assembly, 70th Session, 2015). **Figure 1** depicts how a reduction of food insecurity would contribute to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). SDG #2 specifically calls for ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture globally.

Nationally, Canada has acted towards these goals by developing the Food Policy for Canada ([Canada](#), 2017). This policy will help Canada meet its commitments to the SDGs and includes specific action on food insecurity.

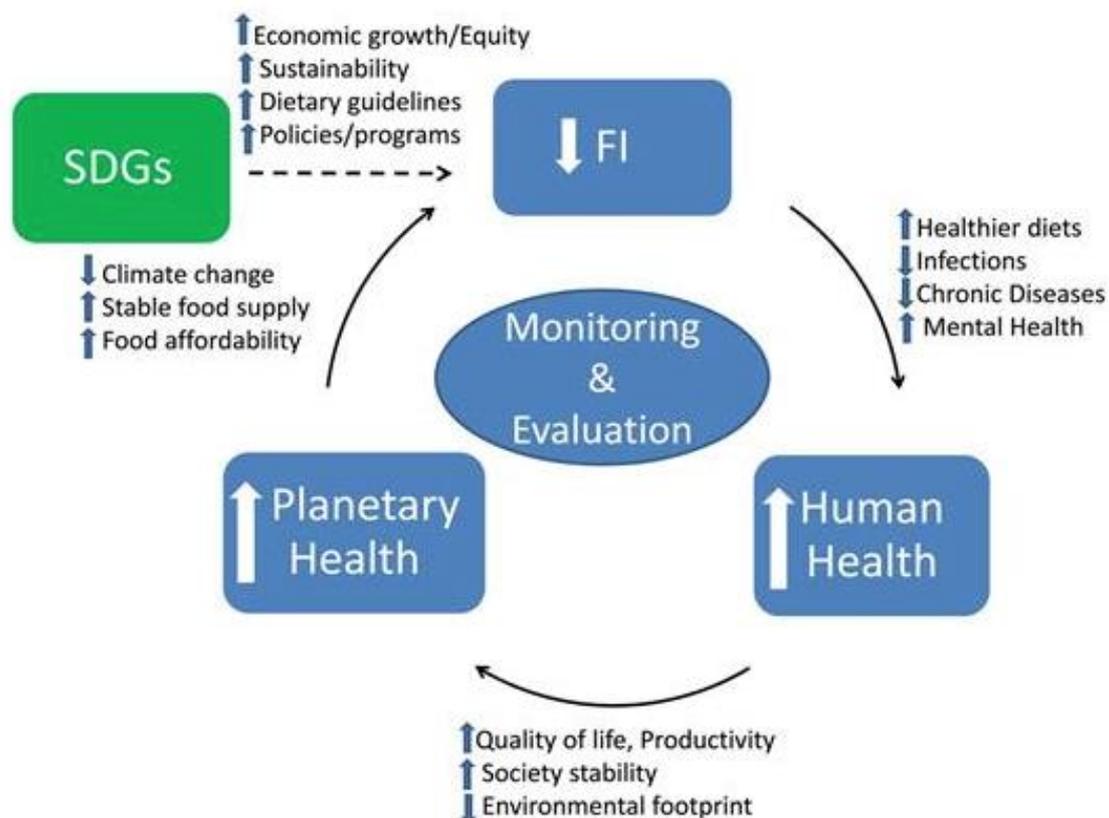


FIGURE 1. Conceptual framework of FI and the SDGs: from human to planetary health. (Source: Current Developments in Nutrition, Vol 1, Issue 7, Jul 2017)

Our Current Model

Food banks and related charity have become an ingrained strategy to feed the hungry in Canadian communities. When food banks began in the 1980's they were meant to be a temporary solution during that recession. Food banks, however, never closed and are not a long term solution to food insecurity.

Food charity does not address or solve the root causes of food. Food Banks are distributing record amounts of food, but the underlying causes of food insecurity are not being addressed, and cannot be addressed through a food charity model. Unfortunately, the charitable nature of these responses can worsen experiences of stigma and isolation related to food insecurity ([Ont Dietitians in Public Health](#), 2015).

The Food Security Hub¹ project was created in response to a call out by United Way of Bruce Grey for projects that would enhance food security. It is supported by the Food Security Action Group (FSAG), facilitated by the Grey Bruce Sustainability Network and funded by United Way of Bruce Grey. The FSAG created the Food Security Hub Project in order to facilitate networking across agencies and partners in Grey Bruce to identify local and common needs and opportunities in food security services. The FSAG, a working group of the Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force, promotes the Community Food Centre Model as a promising practice for community food programming and is committed to supporting local charitable food organizations in their adoption of the CFC principles.

A New Model

The model of Community Food Centers (CFCs) is demonstrating a more comprehensive response to food system issues as demonstrated by The Stop CFC (Toronto, ON), The Local CFC (Stratford, ON), and 9 other locations across Canada.

Community Food Centers are taking the food bank model to the next level by redesigning programs and services to operate on the foundations of health social justice, belonging and advocacy. See <https://cfccanada.ca> for more information.



¹ The term “hub” is being used to describe the nature of how food security service and program providers may collaborate and implement the best practices of the CFC model in a unique way for their community. This may manifest as a central location, similar to that of a CFC, or it may manifest as a strong network of a variety of services provided at various locations across a community.

Food Security Hub Project - Phase 1 and 2 Outcomes

In 2017, the FSAG facilitated meetings in Markdale, Meaford, and Tobermory that brought together stakeholders in local food security programs and services, community members and government officials. The South East Grey Community Health Center and the Flesherton Food Bank hosted the meeting in Markdale, Golden Town Outreach hosted the Meeting in Meaford, and The Meeting Place hosted the meeting in Tobermory.

These meetings prompted successful community projects such as a food gleaning program, community gardens and partnerships with the hosting food banks in Dundalk, Flesherton, Markdale and Meaford. Technical gardening and food gleaning support was identified as needed during the meetings and was offered by Jaden Calvert as a Food Security Coordinator funding by the PTF based on his skills from Golden Town Outreach. In Markdale, these meetings supported the ongoing work of the South East Grey Healthy Kids Community Challenge which aimed to support greater vegetable, fruit, and water consumption among children.

Support for some of these projects was provided by the United Way through grants funded by the Community Foundation Grey Bruce.

In 2019, the Food Security Hub Project expanded the conversations to five additional local communities. With funding from United Way Grey Bruce, the FSAG was able to schedule meetings in Dundalk, Kincardine, Wiarton, Saugeen Shores, and the Town of the Blue Mountains.

The meeting objectives were to:

- I. Strengthen network of food security stakeholders/service providers to move towards “hub” model
- II. Discuss services, resource needs, service gaps, and whatever other issues are currently affecting attendees programs
- III. Share regional initiatives: Food Rescue, Grey County AgriFood Asset Map, Grey Bruce Food Charter, Fall Food Gathering
- IV. Take action - identify a local action project that is a next step to food security (ie. cooking program, community garden upgrade, etc).

The meetings brought together on average fifteen community members. This included service providers, private sector leaders, local government representatives, and people with lived experience (See Appendices: A, B, C, D, E). There was a general common expression that communication and collaboration between these groups is currently limited and that this was a valuable meeting.

The format of the meeting was to envision what a food secure future would look like in each town, to identify what food security/insecurity looked like today, and to identify steps towards the future. The key points from each community are listed in table A.

Table A: The Key Points

	TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS	KINCARDINE	DUNDALK (SOUTHGATE)	SAUGEEN SHORES	WIARTON (SOUTH BRUCE PENINSULA)
Population	8 025	11 389	7 354	13 715	8 416
Low Income Households	11.3%	9.7%	17.6%	9.3%	16.7%
Number of Meeting Participants	19	17	13	12	14
Local Action Project Ideas	Promote the Ontario Student Nutrition Program	Educational workshops at the Community Gardens	Include the voices of people with lived experience in the conversation more	Strengthen the connection between Saugeen First Nation and Saugeen Shores in terms of food security work	Form a Food Security Action Committee on the Peninsula
	Promote GFB	Connect Ontario Student Nutrition Program and the Bruce Botanical Food Gardens	Create a summer nutrition program for students	Bring this group together again	Advocate for creative strategies for a public transit system
	Reduce food waste through Food Rescue	Campaign municipality to support income security and attainable housing policies/programs	Meet with this group of stakeholders again	Support the creation of a community garden	Break down barriers that local small producers face when trying to sell direct to consumer
	Database to share available programs and services	Seek endorsement of the Bruce Grey Food Charter by Kincardine Council	Address the lack of public transportation		Collaborate on Food Security services i.e. The Agricultural society has access to the community centre
		Spread awareness of 211 as a resource			

Regional Themes

Across all 5 communities the Food Security Hub Project facilitators heard some recurring themes around food security/insecurity:

- **Transportation:** Lack of public transit and affordable transportation is a common barrier to people accessing healthy, affordable, and appropriate food in the relatively smaller communities of Grey County and Bruce County.
- **Good Food Box:** there is a desire to increase the participation in the Good Food Box and raise awareness that it is universal
- **Income Insecurity:** The lack of universal basic income and income security are a primary cause of food insecurity, especially in communities that depend on a seasonal tourism industry.
- **Stigma:** The stigma of accessing food charity is an ongoing challenge that some food charities work to address through reducing the income screening frequency, eliminating line-ups, and by maintaining discretion.
- **Access:** It is difficult and expensive to access fresh, local produce year round. Part of this is caused by smaller towns having a single grocer with no competition.
- **Ontario Student Nutrition Programs:** There is limited information available in the community about what is happening in the schools with the Ontario Student Nutrition Programs. There may be an opportunity for schools to communicate with their community and for schools to network amongst themselves to share methods/strategies.
- **Interpersonal Relationships:** At the organizational level of community groups and nonprofits, it is also worth noting that the history and dynamics of interpersonal relationships can have an affect on the ability of groups to collaborate. Third party facilitation is helpful in mediating these relationships and facilitating action. However there is also the feeling that a third party/regional facilitator is an outsider trying to “fix” local problems with which they hold no expertise in.

What's Next: Regional Project Recommendations

On a regional level, several projects emerged from synthesizing meeting results and further discussions with the Food Security Action Group. It is recommended that the Food Security Hub Project enter phase 3 and that the role of the coordinator include all or some of the following components.

Follow up has already occurred with several of the above listed projects to encourage local action. In particular:

- The coordination of a meeting of interested parties in Dundalk to consider a student nutrition program in the summer
- Consultations with Warton Salvation Army on their community garden expansion plans
- In Port Elgin, local restaurateur Pier Donnini is very enthusiastic about building a new community garden
- The Food Security Action Group is working to schedule a date to present the Grey Bruce Food Charter to Kincardine council in the fall 2019
- Discussions with Beaver Valley Outreach (Town of the Blue Mountains) about next steps
- A Community Gardens session has been included in the 2019 Fall Food Gathering program

Food Security Hub Project – Next Phase

Expanding the Reach

Based on the positive response and outcomes from this project, it is recommended that an additional 3-4 meetings be facilitated to grow and connect Food Hubs in interested communities of Grey County and Bruce County. These meetings bring together stakeholders from many community partners, as well as people with grounded expertise and engaged community members. To determine the locations some initial outreach could be done and the Food Security Action Group should be consulted. It is also recommended that the Food Security Hub project host a follow up meeting in the community of Dundalk and a follow up meeting for the Peninsula – inclusive of the North and South Peninsula Municipalities and Nawash First Nation.

Additional Project Recommendations

Community Gardens Network

There are many community gardens operating across Grey and Bruce Counties and few of them are connected. Input at several meetings indicated that there is an interest in connecting with each other and sharing best practices as well as successful models. It is recommended that the Food Security Hub Project Coordinator facilitate a network of community gardens coordinators/volunteers through face to face meetings, garden tours, and an online communication platform. There are known community gardens in: Kincardine, Dundalk, Owen Sound, Flesherton, Meaford, Port Elgin, Wiarton, Town of Blue Mountains, Tobermory, Brockton,

Food Waste Diversion Project

There are many examples of food waste recovery programs from both retailers and restaurateurs happening nationally and globally. It would be advantageous to have a regional project manager who can guide retailers, charities, producers, and restaurateurs around Grey Bruce in safely and responsibly managing and diverting their food waste.

Bridges Out of Poverty Training

Bridges Out of Poverty is a program that promotes an active partnership between people of different economic backgrounds – based on mutual respect – to address poverty in a systematic way. This program has been run in several communities of Bruce County by the Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force. In Dundalk and Kincardine some participants expressed a need/interest to work more closely with people with grounded expertise in food insecurity. A community partner who may be helpful in assisting with this programming is the interministerial networks in each town/community.

Current Projects

The Food Security Action Group includes members from across Grey and Bruce Counties. This group meets monthly and welcomes representatives from any organization/interested party to join. The FSAG spearheads and supports many projects in the region that include both on the ground action such as the Good Food Box and policy level change such as the Bruce Grey Food Charter. At the meeting, the FSAG presented these projects to all stakeholders in hopes that they would be of use to the participants.

Bruce Grey Food Charter

“The Charter is a commitment to work together to build a vibrant, sustainable, food secure community, in acknowledgement of the basic right to food.” “It is a guiding document to assist in the development of policies and programs to promote a healthy and just food system in Grey and Bruce Counties.”

<https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Portals/0/Topics/Eating%20Well/GB%20Food%20Charter.pdf>

FoodRescue.ca

The FSAG is working with Food Rescue to bring this excess food donation tool to Grey Bruce. Groups who can rescue food and groups who can donate food sign up online at no cost. Food rescue organizations are screened to ensure safe food handling happens from pick up, transport, and distribution. “This is a **free** online tool that offers the flexibility for any organization to rescue any kind of food from any type of business anytime you need it.” - Food Rescue. Easy to use, easy to sign up for, and comes with perks such as free large cooler bags for the rescuing organization to use for safe food transportation. The more groups that sign up in each community, the better this tool will be.

<https://www.foodrescue.ca>

Grey County Agri-Food Asset Map

A map “designed to connect and strengthen our agriculture and food community by making it easy for you to find exactly what you’re looking for.” This online map has a Food Security sub-map that lists service providers including meal programs, food banks, food education, and affordable food boxes. The FSAG hopes to update this map with data collected through these meetings and groups are encouraged to create their own listing on the map.

<https://maps.grey.ca/pages/agrifood>

Fall Food Gathering

The Fall Food Gathering is an annual event that is an opportunity for all food system players to connect, collaborate, share and learn. This year’s Fall Food Gathering is on Wednesday September 25th at the Harmony Centre in Owen Sound. The theme of this years’ gathering is “Moving toward Community Food Centres Practices”. The day will include speakers from the Community Food Centre movement, a summary of outcomes from the Food Security Hub Project, discussions, activities, and more. The Fall Food Gathering has grown over it’s 3 years and has built on the strong historical participation of the United Way biannual Food Bank Summit. All stakeholders are invited to attend! For more information keep your eye on your inbox and the Grey Bruce Sustainability Network website <http://gbsusnet.com>.

References, Resources & Links

Community Food Program Donation Tax Credit for Farmers

<https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/credit/cfpdct/index.html>

Bruce Grey Food Charter

<https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Portals/0/Topics/Eating%20Well/GB%20Food%20Charter.pdf>

Food Rescue <https://www.foodrescue.ca>

Grey County Agri-Food Asset Map <https://maps.grey.ca/pages/agrifood>

Community Food Donation Tax Credit for Farmers

<https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/credit/cfpdct/index.html>

Public Health Food Bank Toolkit

<https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Portals/0/Topics/Eating%20Well/Final%20Food%20Bank%20Toolkit.pdf>

The Cost of Eating Well in Grey Bruce

<https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Portals/0/Topics/Eating%20Well/cost%20of%20eating%20Well%202018%20-%20infographic.pdf>

Food Insecurity in Grey Bruce

<https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Portals/0/Topics/Eating%20Well/Food%20Insecurity%20in%20Grey%20Bruce%202018.pdf?ver=2018-11-15-143424-923>

Ontario's Donation of Food Act (everyone is protected from risk when food is donated in good faith)

<https://secondharvest.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Donation-of-Food-Act.pdf>

Community Food Centres Canada – Good Food Organizations – resources, network, and grants available

<https://cfccanada.ca/en/Our-Work/Good-Food-Organizations>

Food Policy for Canada <https://www.canada.ca/en/campaign/food-policy.html>

Ontario Dietitians in Public Health Position Statement on Responses to Food Insecurity

<https://www.odph.ca/centsless>

Poverty Task Force Infographics

From Band-aids to Bridges - Moving Forward with Community Food Centres

<https://povertytaskforce.com/from-band-aids-to-bridges-moving-forward-with-community-food-centres/>

We All Live Here <https://povertytaskforce.com/we-all-live-here-toward-diversity-inclusion-and-engagement-in-municipal-decision-making/>

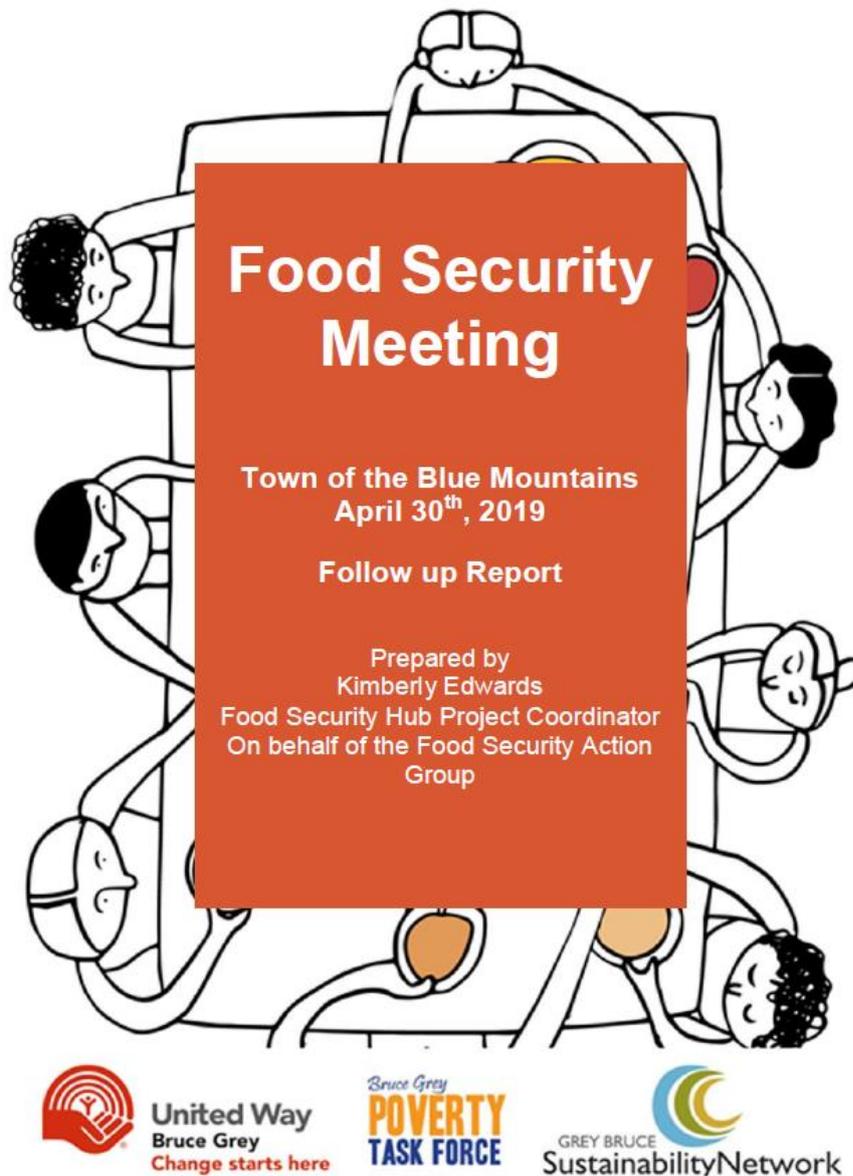
Enough to Thrive On <https://povertytaskforce.com/enough-to-thrive-on-income-security-solutions-for-strong-communities/>

Grants and Funding Sources for Food Security Projects

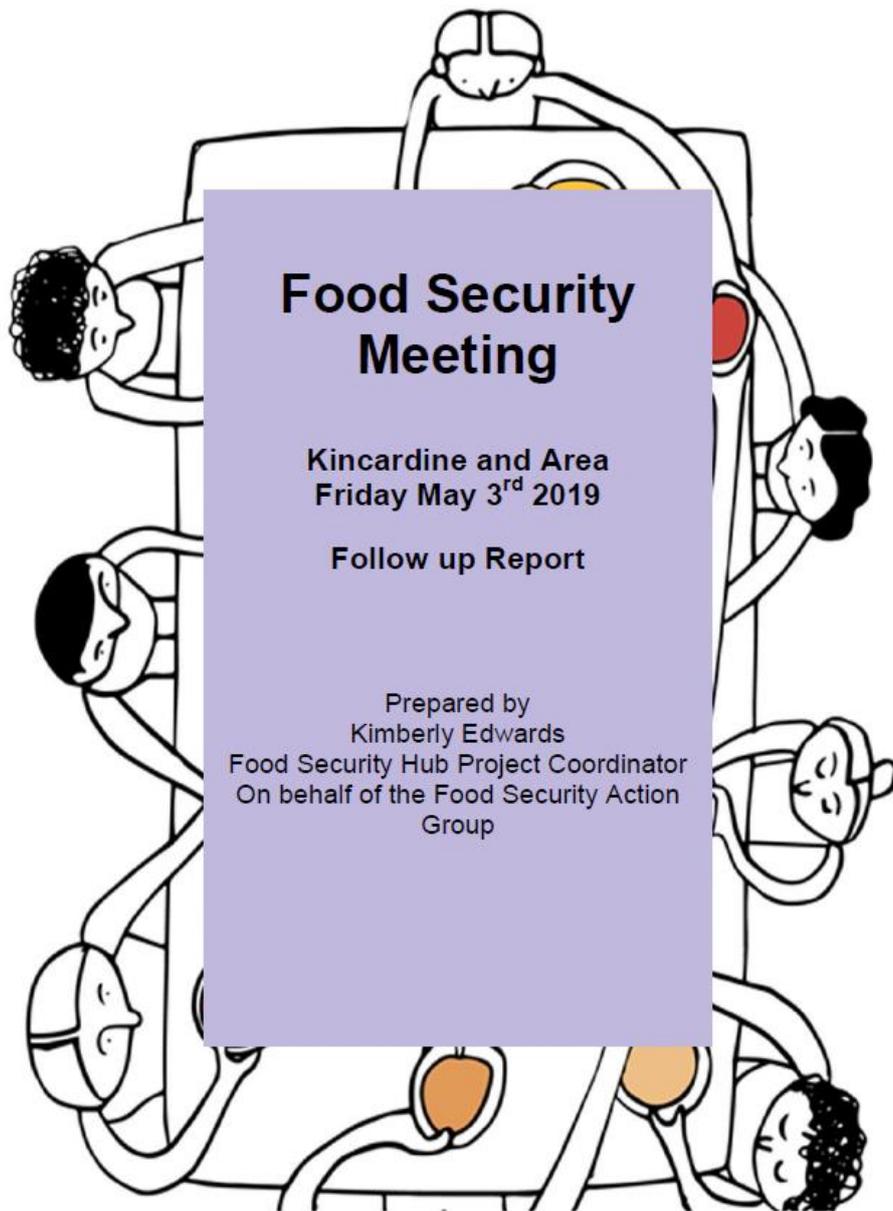
Grant	Website	Deadline	For (if specific)
FCC Agrispirit Fund	https://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/in-your-community/giving-back/fcc-agrispirit-fund.html	29-Mar	Community gardens
Carrot Cache	https://www.carrotcache.com	16-Jun	
Greenbelt fund - local food literacy	https://www.greenbeltfund.ca		
Greenbelt fund - Broader public sector	https://www.greenbeltfund.ca		
Greenbelt Fund - Market access stream	https://www.greenbeltfund.ca		
Fiskar Project Orange Thumb	https://www2.fiskars.com/Community/Project-Orange-Thumb	Jan	Community gardens
Canada post	https://www.canadapost.ca/web/en/pages/about-us/communityfoundation/default.page	05-Apr	Community gardens
Scotts Canada Gro for Good	https://scottsmiraclegro.com/responsibility/scotts-canada/	Feb	Community gardens
Honda	http://www.hondacanadafoundation.ca	ongoing	
Whole kids foundation	https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org	Oct. 15	Gardens
Presidents choice	https://www.presidentschoice.ca/en_CA.html	spring	School based nutrition programs
Seniors Community grant program - gov ON	https://www.ontario.ca/page/information-seniors-organizations#section-2	27-Jun-19	
TD Friends of the Environment	https://www.td.com/corporate-responsibility/fe-grant.jsp	Jan 15 and July 15	
Bruce Power	https://www.brucepower.com/in-the-community/	May2019-Sept2019	
Bruce County	https://brucecounty.on.ca/business/not-profit-community-grant	01-Jun	
Meridian	https://www.meridiancu.ca/About-Meridian/Community/Investing-in-Our-Communities.aspx	6 weeks before program/event	

RBC	https://www.rbc.com/community-social-impact/apply-for-funding/index.html	Rolling	
Spruce the Bruce	https://brucecounty.on.ca/services/planning-development/spruce-the-bruce	End of month	Downtown revitalization
Food Banks Canada	https://www.foodbankscanada.ca/Our-Work/Building-Capacity.aspx	Fall/winter	Community gardens and more
Feed Ontario	https://feedontario.ca/feed-possibility/rural-kids-program/	Capacity and Rural kids grants open late summer	
United Way	https://unitedwayofbrucegrey.com/about-us/member-agencies/		
Community Food Centres Canada	https://cfccanada.ca/en/Our-Work/Grants	Dec-19	Children and FoodFit (food skills/literacy for ppl with low income)

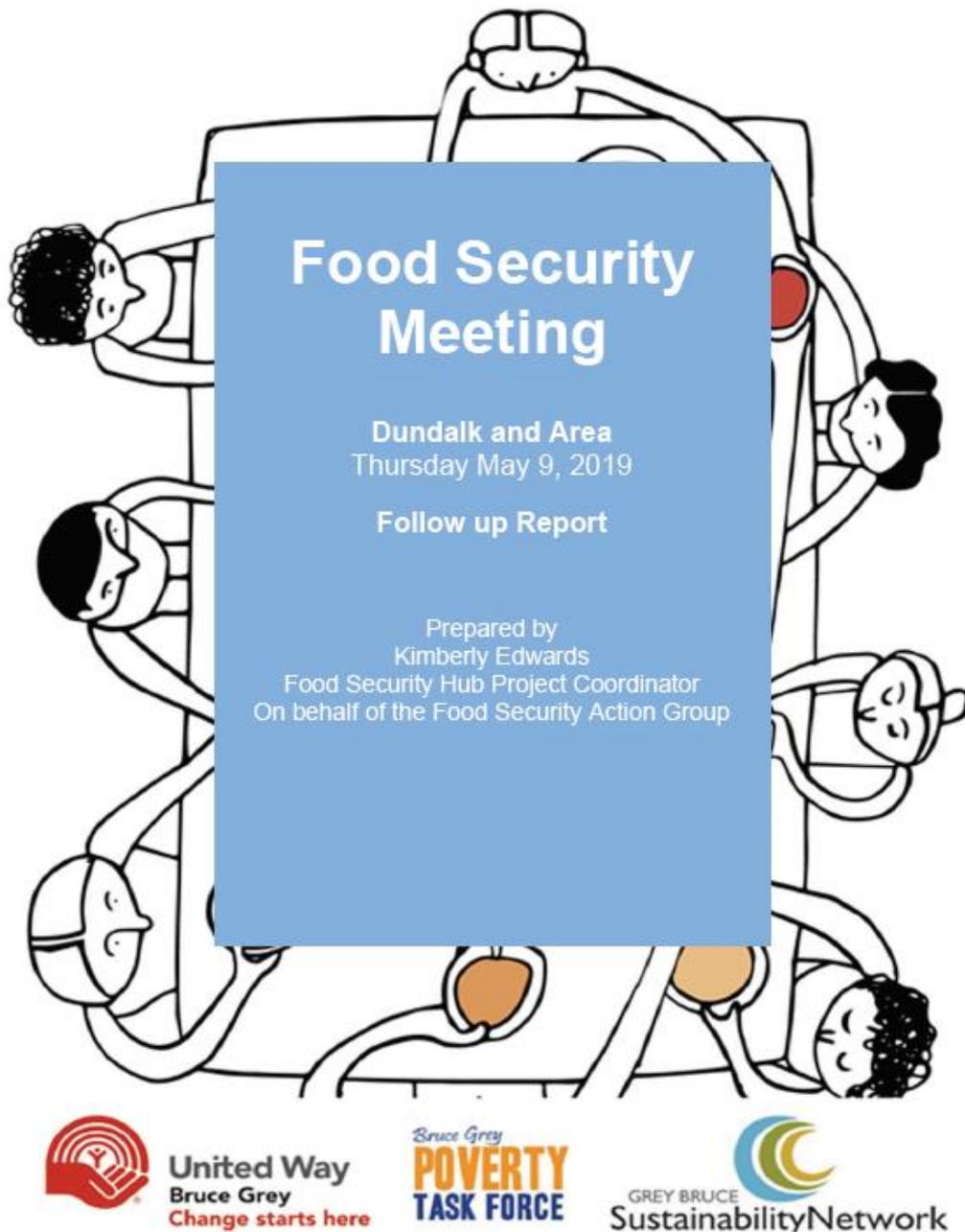
Appendix 1:
Town of Blue Mountains Food Security Meeting Report



Appendix 2:
Kincardine & Area Food Security Meeting Report



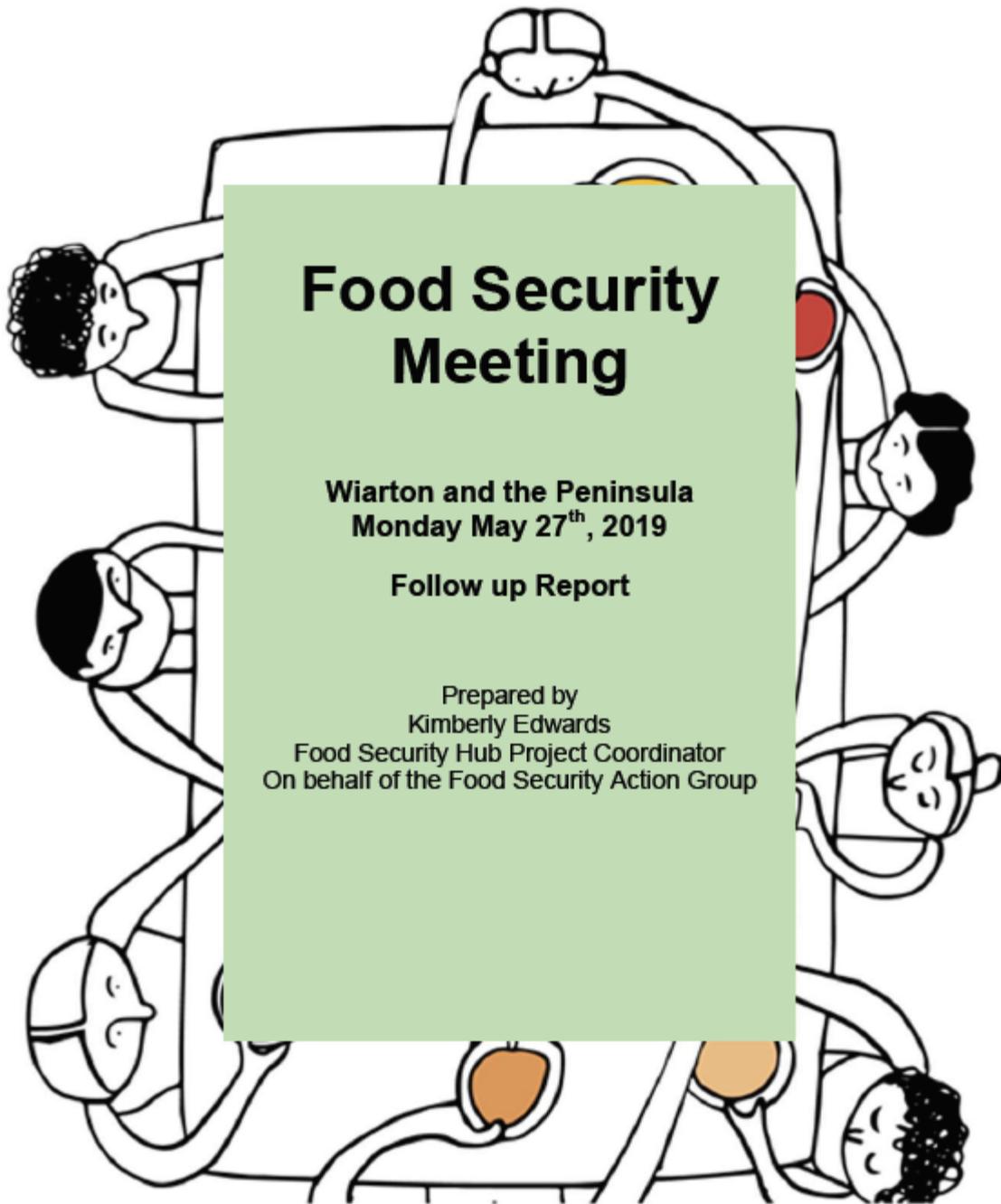
Appendix 3:
Dundalk & Area Food Security Meeting Report



Appendix 4:
Saugeen Shores & Saugeen First Nation Food Security Meeting
Report



Appendix 5:
Wiaraton and the Peninsula Food Security Meeting Report



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