
TO: Chair and members of the Board of Health

MEETING DATE: November 1, 2017

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Original signed document on file

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Medical Officer of Health & CEO

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board of Health:

- 1. Endorse the Headwaters Food Charter and Action Plan.**

Key Points

- Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance (HFFA) is a collaborative initiative which oversees and supports activities to advance local food and farming in Dufferin County and the Town of Caledon.
- HFFA conducted a policy scan which identified the development of a community food charter as a priority.
- Launched in 2017, the Headwaters Food Charter and Action Plan (HFC+AP) is a statement of values, principles and priorities for the community when it comes to food and farming.
- The HFC+AP will be used to help guide planning, policy, and program development that will ultimately encourage a healthy food system.
- The HFC+AP includes six (6) key pillar areas of focus: (i) Health and Well-being; (ii) Food Access and Equity; (iii) Agricultural Sustainability; (iv) Culture and Celebration; (v) Economic Vitality; and (vi) Environmental Responsibility.
- Dufferin County and eight municipalities in Headwaters region have endorsed the HFC+AP.
- HFFA will continue to promote and obtain endorsements from community agencies and residents to increase awareness and support for the HFC+AP. HFFA will also work closely with community partners and interested individuals in moving forward the action plan.

- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) has provided support to HFFA that has played critical role of the success and sustainability over the last 5 years.
- WDGPH will continue to provide support to HFFA and the Headwaters community to encourage a healthier food system that is conducive to the health of all residents.

Discussion

Background and Rationale

Since 2012, the HFFA has existed as a project of Headwaters Communities in Action (HCIA). HFFA is a collaborative of various community partners and volunteers that support activities to enhance local food and farming in Dufferin County and the Town of Caledon (refer to appendix A for a list of the HFFA hub committee members). WDGPH has been integral to the success and sustainability of HFFA through provision of funding and staff time to lead and support strategic planning, chairing of committees, communication, community outreach and facilitation. HFFA convened two local Food Summits in Hockley Valley (2012) and in Caledon (2013) bringing together 238 stakeholders and community members.^{1,2} After the food summits, HFFA also conducted a scan of food-related policies and initiatives, which informed recommendations and priorities for HFFA.³ A key recommendation was the need to develop a community food charter.

A food charter is a statement of values, principles, and priorities for the community when it comes to local food and farming. The HFC+AP will help guide planning, policy, and program development that ultimately will encourage a healthy food system. Although HFFA helped lead the process to develop the food charter, the HFC+AP is owned by everyone in the community. Refer to the HFFA website for the full HFC+AP.⁴

The HFC+AP outlines six (6) key pillar areas to support healthier communities including: (i) Health and Well-being; (ii) Food Access and Equity; (iii) Agricultural Sustainability; (iv) Culture and Celebration; (v) Economic Vitality; and (vi) Environmental Responsibility. “Health and Well-being” and “Food Access and Equity” pillars aim to ensure healthy food is accessible to everyone in the community and that opportunities are available for nutrition education and food skill development. These two (2) pillar areas are strongly connected to public health’s mandate in supporting healthy lifestyles, healthy growth and development, preventing chronic disease, and addressing health inequities. Public health’s chronic disease prevention program standard #7 states that “The board of health shall increase the capacity of community partners to coordinate and develop regional/local programs and services related to healthy eating, including community-based food activities.” The food charter presents an opportunity to foster capacity building and collaboration among community partners to achieve a shared community goal of creating a healthy food system that is conducive to the health and well-being of all residents.

Process for development

HFFA’s HUB decided to undertake the development of a community food charter in three (3) phases: (i) stakeholder consultation; (ii) public consultation; and (iii) promotion and endorsement.

1) Stakeholder Consultation

Phase I of the development of the food charter ran from January through October of 2016. This work was supported by a consultant working with the HUB Committee. Four (4) stakeholder consultations and three (3) interviews were held with 86 participants. Participants provided input to the strategic direction of the food charter, the value statements, goals, and identified actions needed to work towards the established goals. Stakeholder input was reviewed and organized, resulting in the initial draft of the food charter and action plan.⁵ A report was generated which included 11 recommendations for moving the HFC+AP forward.⁵

2) Public Consultation

Phase 2 of the development of the food charter involved consulting with members of the public on the draft of the HFC+AP.

The public consultation phase of this project ran from October 1- November 5, 2016.

The public was asked to complete an online survey to review the vision and value statements and identify whether they share the same values. They were asked to elaborate if they did not share the same values. Participants were also asked to review the goal statements and to rank their level of importance.

The survey resulted in 261 responses. Across all of the value statements, 97-100% of the respondents reported sharing the same values. In addition, all of the goals were given a rank of high importance (1 being low importance and 5 being very important). All of the scores were in the range of 4.5-4.9. The results showed that the public strongly supported the values and goals within the food charter.⁶

3) Promotion and endorsement

Phase 3 of the development involved promotion and endorsement of the HFC+AP from local municipalities. HFFA committee members presented to the County of Dufferin council and nine different municipal councils from April –June 2017. The County of Dufferin council and the following eight municipal councils have endorsed the HFC+AP to date:

- Town of Caledon
- Town of Orangeville
- Town of Mono
- Town of Shelburne
- Town of Grand Valley
- Mulmur Township
- Melancthon Township
- Amaranth Township

HFFA will continue to promote and obtain endorsements from community agencies and residents to increase awareness and support for the HFC+AP. HFFA will also work closely with community partners and interested individuals in moving forward the action plan. HFFA will be considering the recommendations outlined in the report produced from the stakeholder engagement as action moves forward.⁵

Conclusion

The HFC+AP is a statement of values, principles, and priorities for the community when it comes to food and farming. This food charter will help guide planning, policy, and program development that ultimately will encourage a healthy food system. The County of Dufferin and eight municipalities in Headwaters region have endorsed the HFC+AP. HFFA will continue to promote and obtain endorsements from community agencies and residents to garner further awareness and support. HFFA will also work closely with community partners and interested individuals in moving forward the HFC+AP. Over the last 5 years, Public Health's support has been integral to the success and sustainability of HFFA. WDGPH will continue to provide support to HFFA and the Headwaters community to encourage a healthier food system that is conducive to the health of all residents.

Ontario Public Health Standard

Chronic Disease Prevention Program Standard:

7. The board of health shall increase the capacity of community partners to coordinate and develop regional/local programs and services related to:

- Healthy eating, including community-based food activities.

WDGPH Strategic Direction(s)

Health Equity: We will provide programs and services that integrate health equity principles to reduce or eliminate health differences between population groups.

Organizational Capacity: We will improve our capacity to effectively deliver public health programs and services.

Service Centred Approach: We are committed to providing excellent service to anyone interacting with WDG Public Health.

Building Healthy Communities: We will work with communities to support the health and well-being of everyone.

Health Equity

One of the six (6) key pillar areas of the HFC+AP is food access and equity. Community stakeholders and community members recognize the need to ensure everyone is able to afford and physically access healthy food in Headwaters. The HFC+AP includes five (5) key actions to ensure that the food access and equity goals are achieved. These actions include:

- Evaluate and, where appropriate, improve food programs and services that support community members who face barriers in accessing healthy food.
- Explore the establishment of a community food centre that would offer programs and services for the community to grow, cook, share, and advocate for healthy food
- Work with municipalities to provide input into planning and policy decisions to ensure access to healthy food in the built environment.
- Advocate for income based policy solutions to address the underlying causes of food insecurity.
- Engage with community members to raise awareness of food insecurity and poverty.

References

1. Headwaters Food Summit & Local Food Trade Show. Working together to build our food future: recommendation for action. [Internet]. 2012. [cited 2017 July 31] Available from: <http://www.headwaterscommunities.ca/Food/Headwaters%202012%20Food%20Summit%20Full%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>
2. Headwaters Food & Farming Alliance (HFFA). Second annual food summit report. [Internet]. 2013. [cited 2017 July 31] Available from: <http://headwaterscommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Headwaters-2nd-Annual-Food-Summit-Report.pdf>
3. Headwaters Food & Farming Alliance (HFFA). Growing a local food system in Headwaters: recommendations and priorities for HFFA. [Internet]. 2014. [cited 2017 July 31] Available from: http://headwaterscommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Growing-a-Local-Food-System-in-Headwater-Recommendations_280714.pdf
4. Headwaters Food Charter and Action Plan. Headwaters Food & Farming Alliance. [Internet]. 2017. [cited 2017 October 24]. Available from: <http://headwatersfoodandfarming.ca/food-charter-food-policy/>
5. Dubois N. Headwaters Food & Farming Alliance food charter & strategy report. 2016.
6. Needham L. Headwaters Food & Farming Alliance public consultation report. 2016

Appendices

Appendix “A” - A list of the current HFFA Hub Committee members

Appendix “A”

Listing of Current HFFA Hub Committee Members

Lisa Needham, Public Health Nutritionist, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

Ruth Phillips, Economic Development Manager, Town of Orangeville

Sandra Dolson, Economic Development Officer, Town of Caledon

Shirley Boxem, Lead Consultant, Headwaters Communities in Action

Karen Hutchinson, Project Consultant, Headwaters Communities in Action

Diana Morris, General Manager, Dufferin Board of Trade

Shannon Carto, Climate Change Specialist, Town of Caledon

Jacalyn Dryland, Registered Dietitian, Dufferin Family Health Team

Branka Gladanac, Public Health Nutritionist, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

Janet Horner, Executive Director, Greater Golden Horseshoe Food & Farming Alliance

Marci Lipman, Dufferin Farm Fresh