



PEI ADAPT Council Agri-Newsletter

Vol. VI; No. 7
March 20, 2007

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Report on PEI ADAPT Council Annual General Meeting/Conference:
What Does Local Really Mean?

ADAPT Council AGM/Conference: What Does Local Really Mean?

March 16, 2007 Slemon Park Convention Centre Summerside, PEI

Summary of Presentations

Chantale Courcy, Director Adaptation Division, AAFC

- Grateful for this opportunity to get together with industry.
- Regional Adaptation Councils are a model for program delivery
Impact has been tremendous
- Councils are flexible, accountable and efficient with client service
- AAFC delivers 80+ programs and like CARD, ACAAF is the 'pathfinder' for identifying the next generation of agriculture and agri-food policies and programs,
- In the 2007-2008 fiscal year, ACAAF will undergo an evaluation that will include the participation of all councils in preparation for exploring a next generation beyond the current program,
- The \$10 million Biofuels Opportunities for Producers Initiative (BOPI), which contributes to feasibility studies and business plans
for producer owned initiatives that lead to the production of liquid fuels for transportation. was so successful that the Minister recently announced an additional \$10 million, for a total of \$20 million, to cover the shortfall for this year and to conduct second round of BOPI funding next year
- The new, AAFC, Capital Formation Assistance Program was recently announced to encourage agricultural producers' equity investment
in the construction or expansion of biofuels facilities using agricultural feedstocks as inputs. It builds on BOPI's technical feasibility studies and business plans.
- Agri-Opportunities is a \$134 million program over 5 years to accelerate the commercialization of new agricultural products, processes and services currently not produced or available in Canada, and are ready to be introduced to the marketplace. The Councils will be key in identifying innovative pre-commercialization projects that have come through their doors are now ready to move into later stages of commercialization through Agri-Opportunities.
- The ACAAF program and the industry councils are at the heart of all these new

programs. It has helped position Canada's and PEI's agriculture and agri-food sector at the leading edge and act as a pathfinder for future government initiatives.

- The PEI ADAPT Council is also all about local - investing in projects to find local solutions to local emerging issues and to seize new local opportunities.

David MacKay and Pat O'Neill - Consultants

Report on Local Food Service for Hotels, Restaurants and Institutions

- The key to success is relationship building, quality and service.
- The major food service delivery companies (Sysco, and Gordon's MNS) are very interested in picking up and delivery local foods.
- Secondary players (Dolphin Village, Saputo, ADL and Harvest Wholesale) are also interested in supplying more local products.
- Time Magazine recently ran an article citing the growing interest in local foods; identifying that interest in local may surpass growth of organic.
- PEI restaurant market consists of approximately 2000 restaurants.
- Over 50% of food dollars are spent in restaurants.
- Seasonality of upscale tourists with larger amount of spendable incomes matches peak harvest season (August - November).

Recommendations:

- Probably best to not upset the local marketplace by encouraging new players to enter the delivery service.
The current food service providers will continue to jockey for market share.
- Promotional activities (similar to the annual Shellfish Festival) could have huge impact.
- Develop a culinary tourism product with PEI Tourism, farmers and restaurants partnering together.
- There is an opportunity for centrally located local foods depot where producers can deliver products and chefs could shop, daily.

**Christopher Moreland, Director of Food & Beverage Operations,
Delta Prince Edward Hotel, Charlottetown.**

- The typical PEI tourist is wine and food savvy.
- PEI produces the best beef in Canada - 'Atlantic Choice.'
- The Chef at Toronto's Royal York hotel is seeking an exclusivity agreement for Atlantic Choice beef.
- Ontario has a 10 year culinary tourism plan; PEI should do the same.
- PEI is well positioned to develop a first class culinary tourism product with agriculture, fisheries, wineries, inns and chefs all in close proximity to each other and all working together.
- A local foods website/blog would be a valuable asset to the tourism associations and chefs.
Producers could list daily what they have available and chefs could place orders.

Mark Winne, Community Food Security Coalition (USA)

- Know your friends (health sectors, neighbours) and develop relationships that can be assets.
- Be aware of those who pose as friends (brokers, global food service buyers) and don't get in a position of dependency that makes you a price taker rather than a price giver.
- Local food systems help farmers to work in cooperation with neighbours rather than in isolation.
- Growth in 'organic' is exponential. Growth in 'local' is even greater.
- Local food campaigns are not just about food on the plate. It also supports social justice, profitability and sustainability.
- Schools teach math and reading competency. They should also teach food competency.
- Surging growth of farmers markets (now over 4000 in USA) reflects consumers desire for purchasing from who they know so that they can support farmers who practice humane treatment of animals, are environmentally friendly and family friendly practices.
- On average, food in N. America travels 1500 miles before being consumed. This cannot be sustained.

Policies/Campaigns that Support Local:

- "Localvores" people who commit to purchase all they can within a certain distance from home. (Google: "localvore")
 - Local Heros: Consumers commit to spend \$10 per week on local food products.
 - Support for Farmers Markets.
 - Farm Maps - Published to show where local food products can be purchased/picked on-farm or at local markets.
 - Food Policy Council to unlock the potential of the food system and preserve farmland, support on-farm enterprises, develop local food system networks, culinary/agri tourism, family friendly agriculture, social justice (assistance for low income people to eat healthy).

Diana Linder, Chef Owner Historic Maplethorpe Bed and Breakfast

- Grows her own food and purchases local for the restaurant,
- Organic grower and purchases local when available,
- Changes menu once per month to reflect seasonality of what is available,
- Menu features grower who grows the product(s),
- Buys more than just food locally, tries to access all local products and items to keep money circulating in the local economy,
- Customers enjoy the unique meal/experience.
- Fresh, Local, Organic - Pick at least two.

Why Local?

- Local tastes better (there are only 11 commercial varieties of tomatoes, most bred for transport rather than flavour),
 - Keep money in local economy,
 - Unique geographic product to market,
 - Environmental benefits to supporting local,
 - Highlights seasonal food,

- Supports local farmers.

Challenges

- Locating suppliers
- Lack of specific product (has to purchase whole chicken rather than certain cuts)

Resources: www.eatlocalchallenge.com, www.locavores.com

Laurie Jennings, Retailer, Masstown Market, Nova Scotia

What is Local?

Community (within 1 hour)

Province

Region

Canada

- The monoculture, commodity/export system separates consumers from farmers,
- If border with USA were to close, grocery store shelves would be empty within a few days,
- Buying local is essential for the survival of the agri-food industry - helps to maintain rural incomes and supportive infrastructure,
- Must educate the consumer of the importance of buying local to the regional economy,
- 20% of petroleum consumption in North America is used by agriculture mostly to ship food,
- One calorie of food eaten consumes 50 calories to ship it to consumer.

Marc and Krista Schurman, PEI Farmers (700 hogs, 300 cattle, 3/4 acre greenhouse)

- Opened farm market store and developing own brand - Spring Valley Farm,
- Transitioning from conventional to certified organic - natural protocols (no hormones/antibiotics),
- Premium farm products sold at farm market,
- Diversifying production to balance income and capture market opportunity by displacing imports,
- Community is very supportive,
- Seasonal customers (heaviest during tourism season),
- Farm market creates opportunity to grow new crops (i.e. flowers), which compliments the farm market image,
- Direct marketing is a continuous learning experience, networking and cooperating with others is the key to success.

Conclusions/Findings:

- Local foods are experiencing a renaissance, that may be developing in response to the globalization/corporate take over of the organic food trade.
- Marketing locally is an opportunity for producers to develop relationships with consumers, create niche brands and become price setters

rather than price takers.

- Local marketing reflects greater social responsibility, profitability, human rights and environmental stewardship (i.e fewer food miles).
- Marketing locally does not replace the need for some commodities to export (i.e. dairy) it simply recognizes that there is an opportunity to capture loyal, local markets and balance incomes by diversifying production.
- See: <http://100milediet.org/home> www.eatlocalchallenge.com, www.locavores.com
- Today's mounting social and ecological crises demand responses that will involve a fundamental change in direction - towards localizing rather than globalizing economic activity. In fact, 'going local' may be the single most effective thing we can do.
- Localization doesn't mean that every community would be entirely self-reliant; it simply means striking a balance between trade and local production by diversifying economic activity and shortening the distance between producers and consumers wherever possible.
- Small farms (as defined by gross farm revenues of less than \$50,000 annually) accounted for more than half of all farms in Canada in 2001.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture 2001, Farms by gross farm receipts, Catalogue No: 95F0301XIE.
www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/econ111a.htm
- Small farmers lead in a number of important trends, including organics, heirloom seed preservation, wildlife-friendly farming methods, and the fast-growing healthy food/healthy community movement. These small farms are countering the trend in Canadian agriculture and showing year-after-year growth.
- Nearly 95% of new farmers are small diversified producers who are direct marketing through farm stands or farmers' markets
(Cornell University Research, Small Farm Canada Magazine)
- There may be a business opportunity and growing demand for a central depot specializing in fresh local food to cater to chefs, innkeepers and tourists.
- There may also be an opportunity to develop a premium culinary tourism product on PEI; developing partnerships with Tourism PEI, chefs and producers.
- Campaigns and special events are needed to educate and raise awareness on the social, economic and environmental benefits of supporting a regional food system.

- An Internet daily blog could be developed to assist producers and chefs to network together. Farmers could list what products are available and chefs could place orders.

Evolving Trends and Implications (From: Fred Kirschenmann, PEI ADAPT's AGM 2006)

A Return to "Soul" Values

- The value of personal relationships.
- Importance of small and local.
- It is not nostalgia, but retrieval and re-appropriation. Nostalgia is the desire to return to the past.

Re-appropriation is the retrieving of elements from the past that are interpreted and integrated into today's world.

Local

- Local does not need to mean geographically local to appeal to consumers.
- Rather, it can be an attribute of a product with an unique narrative of an authentic place (i.e. Parmesan cheese from Parma, Italy).
- Consumers emotionally connect with products that have a story about the place where they were made.

Fresh

- The single most salient cultural distinction currently driving shopping behavior is the distinction between "packaged" and "fresh."
- Consumers are consistently turning to "fresh" products in pursuit of "healthy", "wholesome", and "high quality" products.
- The most important "fresh" cues for consumers usually have much more to do with the product's packaging, refrigeration and location within the store than the taste or texture of the product.

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