

# Responses to Food Insecurity in our Communities



**Food insecurity means not having enough money to buy healthy food.**

In 2016 Queen's University researchers and the Gananoque and Area Food Access Network (G&AFAN) asked local people from low income households about how they managed food insecurity and their experiences with accessing community food programs. We listened to participants and the progress made so far is highlighted in the table below.

Participant Recommendations	Progress
 <p>Increase the amount of fresh produce available to food bank clients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subsidized plots are available at the Gananoque Community Garden with tools, seeds and people to help. The R.O.L.L. Aid Centre also has gardening opportunities.</li> <li>The Gananoque Food Bank and the Salvation Army provide fresh fruits and vegetables all year round through donations from local farmers, Community Garden, or purchased locally.</li> <li>The Good Food Box fresh produce program is available from the Gananoque Salvation Army and the R.O.L.L. Aid Centre.</li> </ul>
 <p>Increase the choices for special dietary needs at food banks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many local food banks now use the client choice or points system so clients can pick their own food.</li> <li>Food banks and local agencies are raising awareness of healthier food donations, like lower salt foods.</li> <li>The Salvation Army's Manna Café is now open five days a week. A trained cook is working on portion sizes, foods with less added sugar and gluten free choices.</li> </ul>
 <p>Increase transparency in food bank processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Gananoque Food Bank provides information on the sources of their food.</li> <li>The R.O.L.L. Aid Centre and the Gananoque Food Bank explain their point systems.</li> </ul>
 <p>Increase accessibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The steps at the R.O.L.L. Aid Centre are too narrow for any accessibility installation. A shopping buddy can get client's food choices and then carry the food to the client's car. Orders can be delivered to clients who cannot get to the R.O.L.L. Aid Centre.</li> <li>The Gananoque Food Bank can meet individual client needs.</li> </ul>
 <p>Provide affordable public transit in Gananoque and area and to Kingston and Brockville.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Gananoque Salvation Army is looking into a vehicle/transportation service for hospital, medical or justice related appointments as well as home from the emergency food pantry.</li> <li>ODSP and OW assistance offer clients a benefit to help with transportation costs to medical appointments. Clients should speak to their Case Manager about this benefit and can appeal decisions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Where to go for more information about community food</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to the library about accessing the internet for free. Go to the Food Inventory at <a href="http://www.foodcoreLGL.ca">www.foodcoreLGL.ca</a> to learn about community gardens, community/school meal and snack programs, food banks, food skills and other food programs.</li> </ul>

## Next steps:

It is important that people can get healthy food when they are hungry but we know that food insecurity is a result of not having enough money. Here are some actions to improve access to nutritious, safe, and personally acceptable food.

- The G&AFAN will be bringing the recommendations above to the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands and the Town of Gananoque Councils.
- Learn about Ontario's plan to test the Basic Income Guarantee (BIG). <https://www.ontario.ca/page/finding-better-way-basic-income-pilot-project-ontario>
- Please join us at the next Conversation about Food on April 5, 2017 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Gananoque Secondary School to enjoy a snack and share your ideas about food programs in the area. Contact [gan@keys.ca](mailto:gan@keys.ca) to receive an invitation to this free event.

