

Markham Food Charter

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Recommendations:

1. That the Staff report titled “Markham Food Charter” and dated June 3, 2013 be received;
2. And that the Markham Food Charter, which aligns with the York Region Food Charter, be endorsed;
3. And that Sustainability Office staff continue to work with the York Region Food Charter Working Group to develop a food and agriculture action plan and establish a permanent governance body to oversee implementation;
4. And that the City of Markham request a seat on the permanent governance body;
5. And that Sustainability Office staff report back when the governance body is established for direction to identify the representative;

Recommendations:

6. And that Sustainability Office Staff continue to build and leverage partnerships with other levels of government, agencies, non-governmental organizations, businesses, community groups, and residents to advance the Greenprint Community Sustainability Plan;
7. And that Sustainability Office staff report back regularly on these initiatives;
8. And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

What is a Food Charter?

- A statement of values and directions to guide food and agriculture policy and action
- Developed by a broad spectrum of community interests and organizations
- Addresses a range of issues and opportunities related to food and agriculture
- Unique for each community
- Can be signed and endorsed by municipalities, organizations, businesses, and residents

What is the value of a Food Charter?

- A shared vision agreed to by key stakeholders working across the food and agriculture system
- A tool to leverage partnerships and funding to implement the Greenprint and other city plans and policies
- Key step of developing a food and agriculture strategy and action plan
- A lens for future decision making and policy development
- Markham's leadership in Food and Agriculture

Policy Background:

Agricultural Assessment Study (2009):

- 6.2 Optional Policy Actions for Further Consideration
 - 3. Local Food Charter

Greenprint (2011):

Recommendations:

- 71. Develop a Local Food Strategy and work with York Region and other partners to incorporate and implement it
- 73. Implement the recommendations from the Agricultural Assessment Study
- 228. Work with other partners to establish an initial series of working groups

Food Charter Working Group Founding Members:

- City of Markham Sustainability Office
- York Region Food Network
- Heart & Stroke Foundation
- Seeds for Change
- United Way of York Region
- York Region Federation of Agriculture
- York University (Knowledge Mobilization Unit and Faculty of Environmental Studies)
- HealthYork
- York Region Public Health

Terms of reference:

<http://www.yorkregionfoodcharter.com/Working-Group-Terms-of-Reference>

Food Charter Milestones:

- May 26, 2011 - Heart & Stroke Foundation - Knowledge to Action Workshop
- September 13, 2011 - Food Charter Working Group Established
- November 9, 2011 - Food For Change; Building a Food Charter for York Region
- February 2, 2011 - Food Charter Presentation to Markham Agricultural Advisory Committee
- March 1, 2012 - Food For Change Action Day: Cultivating a Healthier Food System in York Region
- Summer 2012 – Community Survey to identify resident priorities for food and agriculture
- September 28, 2012 - Draft Food Charter Released for Consultation

Food Charter Milestones:

- October 2012 – March 2013 - Community Consultation (including Markham Agricultural Advisory Committee and another Community Survey)
- January 18, 2013 - Working Group Strategy Session
- March 20, 2013 - Food for Change: Sprouting Healthy Local Food Systems
- May 29, 2013 – Food For Change: From Charity to Dignity
- Funding – As of June 2013 \$108,500 grants received to cover costs including:
 - a part-time Food Charter Coordinator
 - events and public engagement
 - website development and marketing materials
 - research on food charter best practices and permanent governance models

- **Food Charter discussed at Markham Agricultural Advisory Committee meetings:**

- February 2, 2012

- March 2, 2012

- January 10, 2013

- March 7, 2013

- April 4, 2013



YORK REGION FOOD CHARTER

A GUIDING DOCUMENT FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF COORDINATED
FOOD-RELATED POLICIES AND
PROGRAMS IN YORK REGION

We believe a collaborative and integrated approach is essential to create a healthy and just food system for all.

We value...

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Access to a variety of healthy and affordable food in all neighbourhoods and facilities.
- Food policies and practices to improve and inspire health.
- The importance of food for physical, mental, emotional and cultural wellbeing.
- Community ownership of healthy, locally-grown and processed food.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Rural and urban agriculture practices that protect biodiversity and improve the health of our land, soil, water, and air.
- Integrating agriculture and food into energy and climate change policies and strategies.
- Protection of agricultural lands and a streamlined regulatory framework.
- Reducing food and packaging waste among consumers, retailers, processors and producers.

EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

- The basic right of all residents to safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate, accessible food.
- Dignified access to food for all.
- Fair compensation and a safe and respectful work environment in the agriculture and food sectors.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- Food literacy and skills for all residents, with a focus on food growing, healthy cooking, and composting.
- Education that supports opportunities in the agriculture and food sector.
- Understanding the connections between food, farming, health and the environment.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

- Economic development plans that ensure robust and financially sustainable agriculture.
- Innovative food and related industries that unite producer, processor, distributor, health, tourism, education and hospitality sectors.
- Locally-grown traditional and world foods.



The York Region Food Charter aligns with a food movement across Canada, promoting a system from farm to plate that provides access to local, affordable and nutritious food. The York Region Food Charter is a vision of thriving urban and rural communities where residents, businesses, and governments are creating a resilient food system.

March 2013

Find us online at www.yorkregionfoodcharter.com



MARKHAM FOOD CHARTER

A shared vision statement to
guide residents, businesses, and
governments in creating a thriving
and resilient food system

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The Markham Food Charter aligns with The York Region Food Charter. The City of Markham is proud to be a founding member of the York Region Food Charter Working Group.



www.yorkregionfoodcharter.com



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We value...

Economic Opportunities

- **Economic development plans that ensure robust and financially sustainable agriculture**
- **Innovative food and related industries that unite producer, processor, distributor, health, tourism, education and hospitality sectors**
- **Locally-grown traditional and world foods**

We value...

Environmental Sustainability

- **Rural and urban agriculture practices that protect biodiversity and improve the health of our land, soil, water and air.**
- **Integrating agriculture and food into energy and climate change policies and strategies**
- **Protection of agricultural lands and a streamlined regulatory framework**
- **Reducing food and packaging waste among consumers, retailers, processors and producers**

We value...

Equity and Social Justice

- **The basic right of all residents to safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate, accessible food**
- **Dignified access to food for all**
- **Fair compensation and a safe and respectful work environment in the agriculture and food sectors**

We value...

Education and Skills

- **Food literacy and skills for all residents, with a focus on food growing, healthy cooking, and composting**
- **Education that supports opportunities in the agriculture and food sector**
- **Understanding the connections between food, farming, the economy, health and the environment**

Alignment with Sustainability Office Programs

- Community and Allotment Garden Manual and Pilots
- Organic Home Garden Pilot in Ward 7
- Markham Grows Seed Library
- Sustainability School Outreach
- Agri-Food Tent and Eco-Farm Model at Markham Fair

2013 Food Charter Work Plan

- Finalize the Food Charter
- Food Charter Toolkit
- Messaging and Media
- Community Food Assessment
- Permanent Governance Body Research