

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations  
Environmental Scan- Public Policies Promoting Healthy Diets**

<b>TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>WHO'S DOING WHAT?</b>	<b>WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?</b>
<p><b>1. Intersectoral Collaboration:</b> The Task Force recommends that the government promote intersectoral collaboration between government and industry, including the agri-food industry, food retailers, and food services, to ensure the concerted implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies promoting healthy eating habits.</p>	<p>The following are examples of intersectoral collaboration between industry and the various levels of government:</p> <p>Federal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Canada has assembled three intersectoral advisory panels to review policies on Nutrition Labelling, The Addition of Vitamins and Minerals to Food and Health Claims.</li> <li>• Fight BAC! Campaign (food safety campaign)</li> <li>• ParticipACTION</li> </ul> <p>Provincial:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat Smart! restaurant program.</li> <li>• The Ontario Collaborative Group on Diet and Cancer<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• The Canadian Living Foundation works with schools, government and industry.</li> </ul> <p>Municipal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toronto Food Policy Council. (Although it is within it's mandate, there has been little representation from industry recently.)</li> <li>• Food 2002<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<p>Communicate simply and clearly to the public, health professionals, and educators about activities regarding policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies promoting healthy eating habits.</p> <p>Increase intersectoral collaboration on education programs promoting healthy eating habits.</p> <p>Develop and implement systemized monitoring and evaluation of policies promoting healthy eating habits at both the national and provincial level.</p> <p>The Ontario government needs to support initiatives regarding policies promoting healthy eating from a global perspective and consider the benefits in terms of reduced healthcare and social costs.</p> <p>The federal government should provide funding for ongoing updates and revisions to nutrient composition databases as an adjunct to the change in the policy concerning the addition of vitamins and minerals to foods.</p> <p>For this recommendation to proceed there needs to be increased public awareness of intersectoral collaboration as an issue, as well as concrete models and examples.</p> <p>Create or expand upon multisectoral community advisory panels such as the Ontario Produce Marketing Association promotion committee. The result is a coordinated effort amongst people with different interests and views to promote the consumption of produce.</p> <p>The federal and provincial governments and the food industry should increase coordination with the food advertising industry. Include agri-food sector in discussions on policy development.</p> <p>Improvements to the following policy areas are required: -Regulations, implementation strategies and enforcement of standards regarding the content of meals served in group settings such as day cares, lodging/retirement homes, meal programs. -Addressing the continued marketing and greater availability of large portion sizes and higher fat products that are not consistent with healthy eating guidelines.</p>

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<p>1. <b>Intersectoral Collaboration:</b> (continued) The Task Force recommends that the government promote intersectoral collaboration between government and industry, including the agri-food industry, food retailers, and food services, to ensure the concerted implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies promoting healthy eating habits.</p>		<p>All levels of government need to carefully evaluate the type of commitment they are willing to undertake and make that commitment very clear to stakeholders.</p> <p>Monitor and evaluate the impact of policies on social services and all barriers to healthy eating.</p> <p>Government and non-government organizations need to ensure that included in the intersectoral collaboration there is citizen participation and democratic decision-making regarding the safety of the food supply.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> Need to clarify what “policies” is referring to.</p> <p>When partnering with specific marketing boards and food industry, caution should be taken to not focus on a single food as the ‘magic pill’ in the prevention of cancer, but to focus on a specific relevant food group.</p>		

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<p><b>2. Access to a Healthy Food Supply</b> The Task Force recommends that the provincial government review its policies governing the production, storage and distribution of food products to ensure that all Ontario residents have access to a high-quality supply of nutritious food.</p>	<p>Food Security: The Toronto Food Policy Council discussion papers submitted to the Board of Health<sup>3</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Reducing urban hunger in Ontario: policy responses to support the transition from food charity to local food security”, January, 1995.</li> <li>• “Food Retail Structure and Food Security”, December, 1996</li> <li>• “Cutting Out The Fat”, May, 1998 (report on how agricultural subsidies encourage production and consumption of fat).</li> </ul> <p>Toronto Public Health report to the Board of Health on Standards of Food in Food Banks, October, 1999.</p> <p>In 1995, City Council provided a one time \$2.5 million in Food Access Grants through Toronto Public Health. The Toronto Food Policy Council and Toronto Public Health jointly determined who would be allocated funds. Much of it went to equipment for food pantries.</p> <p>Community Health Centres store food donated by food banks and use it for emergency use within the community.</p> <p>Food Safety: The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs has been addressing food safety issues.</p>	<p>Food Access: Analyze whether food access is an issue in Toronto due to policies governing the production, storage and distribution of food products.</p> <p>Conduct a market basket survey to look at regional differences in access to high-quality food.</p> <p>Advocate to City Council for food access to become mandatory in city planning. For example, quality retail food access should be an essential service.</p> <p>Increase the identification of consumer needs to producers. Consumers are dictated to a certain extent by what retailer's place in their stores and growers work to meet retailer demands. Consumers and growers seldom meet to find out what the other wants; case in point is apples. The size of apples (small) that parents want for their children under 12 are not available in the grocery store, yet there are a lot of these apples available.</p> <p>Keep the production, storage and distribution of food products in private hands and work to increase communication between growers and consumers.</p> <p>Food Safety: Analyze the risk or safety of foods contaminated by pesticides as well as genetically modified foods.</p>

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<p><b>2. Access to a Healthy Food Supply (continued)</b> The Task Force recommends that the provincial government review its policies governing the production, storage and distribution of food products to ensure that all Ontario residents have access to a high-quality supply of nutritious food.</p>	<p>Food and Agriculture: Canada is facing a farm crisis. Loss of family farms in Ontario is increasing.</p> <p>While there is growing need to ensure price stability and access to markets for local farmers, global trade negotiations and agreements question the viability of marketing boards and other protective mechanisms.</p> <p>The Ontario government launched the four year, \$90 million Healthy Futures for Ontario Agriculture program in December, 1999. The program is designed to encourage partnerships throughout the agri-food industry and in rural areas to carry out projects that will enhance the quality and safety of the food supply, safeguard rural water quality and quantity and increase access to domestic and global markets.</p>	<p>Food and Agriculture: Coalitions of farmers, environmentalists, food security activists and consumers can work together to pressure governments to support farm interests and restrict unchecked development of rural lands.</p> <p>The government should explore marketing boards as a way of protecting rural producers and guaranteeing stable conditions for farmers and rural communities.</p> <p>The government should develop long term policies and programs that protect farmers and rural life. Such measures might include support mechanisms, such as European and U.S. style direct subsidies.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

Many of the policies governing the production, storage and distribution of food products are federal. The provincial government should support the activity at the federal level.

There is great physical access to a healthy food supply in Toronto. The issue is financial access, not production, storage and distribution of food products.

In some areas of Toronto there is a shortage of accessible supermarkets. People without access to transportation have difficulty accessing healthy and affordable foods.

Trade is the major objective of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, not the supply of nutritious food for Ontario people.

Consumer demand drives production, storage and distribution.

Government already demands that growers belong to commodity associations and pay fees based on acreage, meet environmental standards, take training courses, etc. Further intervention is questionable in terms of perceived grower benefit.

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<p><b>3. Collaboration with the Food Industry</b> The Task Force recommends that government should seek collaboration with the food industry, in order to ensure the acceptance of policies ensuring access to a healthy food supply.</p>	<p>All intersectoral collaborations listed under recommendation 1.</p> <p>Food Safety: The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is working on food safety issues regarding the food supply chain (the process of food moving from the farmer's gate to consumer's plate), food safety issues and quality adaptation program. Canadian Food Inspection Agency is approaching stakeholders for input to their program to ensure high quality, safe food supply.</p> <p>The food industry is very involved in development, review and evaluation of policies around food safety and Canadian food supply.</p> <p>On farm safety procedures that pertain to good manufacturing practices have been developed and are in the process of being implemented. Good Manufacturing Practices and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point procedures have been developed and implemented for fresh cut processors. The wholesale and repacking trade are in the process of developing Good Manufacturing Practices and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point procedures. Industry is leading the way in these areas.</p>	<p>Industry and all levels of government should work together to develop a model for collaboration and consultation clearly outlining the role and accountabilities of each party.</p> <p>The municipal, provincial and federal governments should work together to ensure consistent standards. Each government should not develop its own food safety standards.</p> <p>Municipal, provincial and federal governments should provide bureaucratic and monetary support in the development of the Good Manufacturing Practices and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point programs.</p> <p>The food industry should partner with the media to communicate to consumers that systems are being developed and implemented to ensure a safe food supply.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> This recommendation is actually contingent on development of a government position on food security.</p> <p>This recommendation may not be desirable since it introduces the potential for conflict, e.g. mandate of food safety and trade</p> <p>This activity should be on a national scope with provincial participation on consultations.</p> <p>Collaboration with industry, not domination.</p>		

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<p><b>4. Community Involvement</b> To encourage the adoption of policies and practices promoting healthy eating, the Task Force recommends that the Ontario government should work with, and support the development of, community-based healthy eating coalitions and local food policy councils.</p>	<p>The Toronto Food Policy Council remains strong and has a very influential voice with City Council.</p> <p>Local coalitions/networks exist in each of the former municipalities of Toronto to support approximately 310 local child nutrition programs.</p> <p>Heart Health Coalitions have formed in each of the former municipalities of Toronto. Included in their mandate is to promote healthy eating. The Community Grants initiatives through the Heart Health Program have served as a mechanism to stimulate local agencies/groups to take action on healthy eating and to address food security issues.</p> <p>Toronto Public Health works in partnership with Health Canada (under the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Programs) and a number of community agencies in local prenatal coalitions to improve reproductive outcomes and to promote healthy eating among high-risk pregnant women in Toronto.</p> <p>The creation of the Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition to coordinate a program of primary and secondary prevention activities in the City of Toronto.</p> <p>Ontario Public Health Association, Food Security Workgroup was established to, among other activities, share knowledge and coordinate efforts regarding food security issues.</p> <p>Local community-based healthy eating coalitions<sup>4</sup> : Afri-Can Food Basket (North York) Davenport West Food Access Committee North York Basic Needs Action Network Food Security Working Group of North York Food Access Community Taskforce (East York and Toronto east) Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition West End Coalition Scarborough Hunger Coalition</p>	<p>Ask the Provincial government to provide professional facilitators to work in communities to develop coalitions appropriate to each community. This will ensure that initiatives undertaken are community-driven, co-coordinated, effective, far-reaching and not overlapping.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care should increase funding to community agencies for health and nutrition professionals to promote healthy eating.</p> <p>Make better use of nutrition programs already in place in public health departments.</p> <p>Activities of the coalitions should include public policy, education and advocacy around policies, practices and coordination of services promoting healthy eating.</p>

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<p><b>4. Community Involvement</b> (continued) To encourage the adoption of policies and practices promoting healthy eating, the Task Force recommends that the Ontario government should work with, and support the development of, community-based healthy eating coalitions and local food policy councils.</p>	<p>The West End Urban Health Alliance (Six Community Health Centres: Four Villages, Davenport Perth, Parkdale, Access Alliance, Lakeshore Area Multi-Services Project, Stonegate. and St. Joseph's Health Centre) created a Nutrition Steering committee in May, 1998 to advocate for increased access to healthy food and increased nutrition services and resources and to identify ways to avoid duplication of services.</p>	
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> All partners should be given an equal voice to ensure that the community takes ownership of agenda.</p> <p>Food policy councils need professional (Registered Dietitian) representation.</p> <p>Unlikely that this recommendation would ever lead to the adoption of policies and programs to promote healthy eating.</p> <p>Concern over too many players.</p>		

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<p><b>5. Nutrition Labelling</b> The Task Force recommends that the Ontario Ministry of Health work with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and other relevant ministries to develop an adequate nutrition labeling system that enables Ontario consumers to determine the nutritional value of all food products and to make informed, healthy choices. Educational efforts should also be undertaken to familiarize consumers with this new system.</p>	<p>Nutrition Labelling System: Health Canada is currently reviewing its policies on nutrition labelling, the addition of vitamins and minerals to foods, health claims and nutrient content claims. A number of stakeholders have responded to the consultation on nutrition labelling in support of mandatory nutrition labelling including the following: -Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition -Cancer Care Ontario, Ontario Collaborative Group on Diet and Cancer -Canadian Cancer Society - The Alliance for Food Label Reform, a coalition of 17 health and citizens groups formed by the Centre for Science in the Public Interest -Toronto Public Health has been active in providing recommendations regarding mandatory labelling, health claims and the addition of vitamin and minerals to food.</p> <p>The following Toronto Food Policy Council discussion papers were submitted to the Board of Health<sup>3</sup> : -“Making Consumers Sovereign: How to change food information systems so food shoppers are the informed consumers governments and businesses say they should be”, September, 1998. -“Cutting out the Fat”, May, 1998 (report on how agricultural subsidies encourage production and consumption of fat).</p> <p>The Ontario Ministry of Agricultural, Food Rural and Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care have looked at the research and existing programs for food labelling and have responded to the federal initiative on food labelling as a stakeholder.</p> <p>Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has a representative on the federal/provincial nutrition working group.</p>	<p>Continue to pressure the federal government regarding mandatory comprehensive nutrition labelling.</p> <p>Continue to pressure the federal government regarding mandatory labelling of genetically modified foods. Once labelling becomes mandatory, a consumer communication strategy needs to be developed and implemented.</p> <p>Harmonize the Canadian and U.S. nutrition labelling panels.</p>

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<p><b>5. Nutrition Labelling:</b> (continued) The Task Force recommends that the Ontario Ministry of Health work with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and other relevant ministries to develop an adequate nutrition labelling system that enables Ontario consumers to determine the nutritional value of all food products and to make informed, healthy choices. Educational efforts should also be undertaken to familiarize consumers with this new system</p>	<p>Education: Health Canada is developing a consumer education program around the nutrition labelling system that will result from the policy review.</p> <p>Toronto Public Health provides consumers with resources on nutrition labelling, food labelling and nutrition information is provided in group presentations as requested. For example, "Skills for Food Shopping" is a Toronto Public Health educational program to familiarize newcomers to Canadian grocery stores, Canadian food products and nutrition labelling.</p> <p>Programs within Community Health Centres involve one-on-one counselling and group education on nutrition labelling, i.e. supermarket tours, skills for food shopping for newcomers.</p> <p>Community Food Advisor Program provides consumers with information about nutrition labelling.</p> <p>Many commodity boards have nutrition education material for consumers addressing food labels and their use.</p>	<p>Education: The federal government should take the lead on education regarding the new labelling policy. Education about using food labels to select healthy food choices could occur through: public health, Community Health Centres, media, school curricula and the food industry. For the education strategies to be effective they must reach many cultures in many languages.</p> <p>Continue to monitor the development of the federal government education strategy to ensure that it is comprehensive and timely.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> This is under federal jurisdiction.</p> <p>There is concern that the government is shifting the responsibility for education assuming that others will take on the task.</p>		

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<p><b>6. Ensuring Food Security for Low-Income Ontario Residents</b> Task Force recommends that the following measures be considered by the Ontario government to reduce socio-economic inequities in nutritional status:</p>	<p>The provincial government has actually introduced measures to increase the socio-economic inequities. Rates of poverty have increased. Provincial cuts to social assistance and the dismantling of social housing programs have exacerbated SES inequities in nutritional status.</p> <p>The Toronto Homeless Initiative Fund allocated \$250,000 in community grants to homelessness and hunger in 1999.</p> <p>City of Toronto Food and Hunger Action Committee<sup>6</sup>, consisting of five Councillors, is mandated to work to improve food security and nutrition and reduce hunger in the City of Toronto.</p> <p>“Best Advice on Effective Nutrition Interventions”, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Health, Health Promotion Branch, October, 1998 by Dawn Palin, Michelle Hooper, Susan Evers, includes a catalogue of Canadian nutrition programs, including food security<sup>7</sup>.</p> <p>In Ontario all Public Health Units are mandated to conduct a yearly report of the cost of a Nutritious Food Basket. The most recent report was available in June, 1999.</p>	<p>To increase food security it is key to reduce poverty through the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish basic minimum income standards so that everyone has enough money to purchase foods directly from the retail outlets of their choice.</li> <li>• Advocate to the province to restore the 22% cut from welfare in Ontario. This activity could use a research and communication strategy that shows the health impacts of welfare cuts on low-income people, and of the resulting increase in reliance on the often far-less-than-optimal food supplied by food banks.</li> <li>• Increase affordable housing.</li> <li>• Increase availability of meaningful work.</li> <li>• Develop policies that encompass and support the above issues.</li> </ul> <p>Continue to conduct a yearly update of nutritious food basket by all public health units across Ontario.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> It is a fundamental right to have access to healthy food.</p> <p>Lack of employment causing increased stress leads to decreased immune function and increased risk of cancer, heart disease and stroke.</p> <p>Many of the determinants of health impact socio-economic inequities in nutritional status.</p>		

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<p>6.1 expand alternative distribution channels such as community kitchens, food buying clubs, field-to-table programs and community gardens to increase access to food;</p>	<p>Toronto Public Health, FoodShare, Toronto Food Policy Council and non-governmental organizations have helped start and expand many of these programs including Community Kitchens, The Good Food Box and Collaborative Prenatal Programs. There are 40 community kitchens in Toronto.</p> <p>Toronto Food Policy Council provided the support needed so that community organizations could start or sustain community gardens, including sites in schools and on rooftops.</p> <p>The Second Harvest distributes surplus foods to agencies and food banks.</p> <p>Community Health Centres are involved in programs to increase access to food<sup>5</sup>.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care funded Metro Toronto FoodShare to document the Field to Table program, i.e. the Good Food Box model and Community Gardens manual, based on extensive review. A conference was funded to provide advice and problem solving on these programs.</p>	<p>Food programs should mobilize and organize their constituents in ways that are likely to influence public policy outcomes. They must commit to increasingly sophisticated public policy education and advocacy if they are to have any lasting impact on food security.</p> <p>The Ontario government should increase funding for alternative food distribution channels. With increased funding the government could:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take on the co-ordination and promotion of farmers markets, looking at innovative ways to promote them, how to use them as a site for the promotion of healthy eating and at ways to make them more accessible to low income people and more practical for farmers.</li> <li>2. Investigate alternative distribution channels that may be more effective in increasing access to food than those currently listed or re-work the existing ones to remove barriers and increase access to them.</li> <li>3. Subsidize grocery delivery to seniors or housebound individuals.</li> </ol> <p>The government should consider a radical shift in food policy to look at ways to provide food outside a market-based system.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

It is “nonsensical” to talk about addressing socio-economic inequities in nutritional status with programs like the ones described here. There is no evidence that demonstrates a lessening of SES inequities in nutritional status with these sorts of programs.

“Hungry for a home: Housing, hunger and food assistance in the Greater Toronto Area”, Daily Bread Food Bank, June, 1999. This research suggests that affordable, stable and secure housing options are needed to improve household food security. Food programs (such as food banks and community gardens) are helpful, but they are an insufficient response to household food insecurity in the greater Toronto area.

Food programs have benefits such as confidence in food preparation, sense of community, increased socialization, self-esteem, and physical activity in gardening.

Alternative food distribution channels are “grass roots” initiatives and need to be driven from the community up and not the government down; governments need to be able to support these initiatives but cannot successfully drive them.

Many projects across the province exist, but the numbers reached are small compared to degree of the problem of unequal food access. Programs are under funded and rely heavily on volunteer labour.

This is an education, self-help and cost issue for people and each of these issues needs to be addressed collectively through public health and marketing associations.

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<p>6.2 encourage the food industry to donate all fresh produce (fruits and vegetables) and other nutritional food products that do not meet aesthetic grading criteria to food banks or community kitchens.</p>	<p>A grant through the Ontario Public Health Association Building Bridges project helped initiate gleaning projects with local farmers in Scarborough and North York<sup>8</sup>.</p> <p>Food banks, community agencies and local food access coalitions have worked in partnership with farmers on an ad hoc basis (e.g. gleaning trips to farms) to increase access to fruits and vegetables among Toronto residents.</p> <p>At the Ontario Food Terminal the Ontario Produce Marketing Association encourages the wholesalers to take this action when product cannot be marketed through conventional channels.</p> <p>FoodShare, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs and Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association are in the development phase of a strategy to be able to provide low cost fruits and vegetables to child nutrition programs.</p> <p>Around 80% of the Daily Bread Food Bank's food resources come from the food industry. Manufacturers, producers, wholesalers and farmers donate "surplus" product (unsaleable but still wholesome and edible).</p>	<p>The federal government should investigate the American model for food re-distribution to breakfast programs, prenatal programs and food banks.</p> <p>The federal government should develop, implement and evaluate a national system for gleaning. For example, the federal government could buy products and distribute to Child Nutrition Programs, food banks and soup kitchens at no profit.</p> <p>Increase the awareness of this option with producers and marketers. For example, increase the linkage of grocery/food industry to community programs by implementing a central registry of food programs</p> <p>Investigate tax incentives for farmers who participate in food access initiatives.</p> <p>Raise the social conscience and social responsibility of food corporations to ensure food security for all Ontarians. For example, non-government organizations and community representatives could lobby industry regarding this issue.</p> <p>Include food banks in discussions to ensure consistency in vision.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

The wording of this recommendation should be revised. Currently, it institutionalizes the notion of "2<sup>nd</sup> class food for 2<sup>nd</sup> class people"

Food banks are the starkest example of nutritional inequities we have in this country. Putting "aged, rotting perishables" in them does nothing to equalize access to good nutrition. The food industry saves dumping fees, but food bank users typically still experience food shortages because food banks can't keep up with the demand for assistance, especially in Ontario.

Fresh produce available at food banks is still very scarce and often of poor quality due to time restrictions in terms of freshness. This contributed to a lack of inclination by food bank users to consume fresh fruit and vegetables.

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<p>6.3 work with local school boards and community organizations to ensure that school breakfast and/or lunch programs are available to all children who need them;</p>	<p>There is provincial and municipal funding for child nutrition programs and recognition by the Canadian Living Foundation that these programs should be universal and require ongoing funding. Canadian Living Foundation provides funding to 2000 breakfast programs across Canada.</p> <p>The Ontario Produce Marketing Association has been working with Canadian Living Foundation, Breakfast For Learning, to improve and increase access to fresh produce for child nutrition programs.</p> <p>Local coalitions/networks exist in Toronto to support approximately 310 local child nutrition programs. There is collaborative support between Toronto Public Health, Toronto District School Board, Toronto District Catholic School Board, and other Foundations/organizations. Nutrition Liaison Officers have been hired by Toronto District School Board to support child nutrition programs.</p> <p>The Children and Youth Action Committee has proposed in the Action Plan for the Children's Report Card, 1999 that Council reaffirm its commitment to healthy children and good nutrition by increasing its funding to cover 24% of the expanded Child Nutrition Program<sup>9</sup>.</p> <p>Community Health Centres work with local schools to develop child nutrition programs.</p>	<p>The federal government, through Health Canada and other research funding, should invest in more comprehensive research on the effectiveness of current child nutrition programs in meeting the goal of reducing immediate hunger, and improving the long term health and success of students.</p> <p>The federal, provincial, and municipal governments should commit to sustained financial support for child nutrition programs beyond current levels to ensure that programs are available to every child, so that all children can reap benefits of healthy food, and the consequent learning on nutritious eating.</p> <p>Increase local business and community support. Implement employee incentives/company incentives to be involved in child nutrition programs.</p> <p>Continued education of educators regarding the importance of breakfast for their students to gain or maintain educators support.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education should encourage School Boards and school participation in child nutrition programs.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

Canada is the only G8 country that does not have a national child nutrition program. This combined with the policies of the Ontario Conservative government has created a hostile environment to anyone who needs a helping hand.

A greater emphasis should be placed on menu planning and decreased emphasis on being surrogate moms. The entire program should be run as a business that makes a difference by people who care.

Recent research into programs offered in Nova Scotia suggests that these programs reproduce nutritional inequities, not reduce them.

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<p>6.4 design communities with consideration to access to food stores that provide adequate choices of nutritious and inexpensive foods, and the means for residents to grow their own food if they wish to do so, as in community gardens.</p>	<p>There is a growing movement within the City of Toronto to support community gardening. The Toronto Food Policy Council has been working with the Housing Department and Planning and Development Department on new building and community designs. The Council has been working collaboratively with other departments to promote community gardens. Toronto Food Policy Council has done significant lobbying on community gardens, advocating for one community garden in each ward by 2001.</p> <p>Toronto Food Policy Council discussion paper, "Food Retail Structure and Food Security", December, 1996 was submitted to the Board of Health<sup>3</sup>.</p>	<p>Conduct research to establish the extent of the problem of access to food stores for low-income groups.</p> <p>Investigate activities regarding access to food stores in other provinces, for example, Alberta Council on Aging.</p> <p>The municipal government should commit to the importance of this planning principle, and to make a political commitment to considering it in all planning processes and documents. For example, institute planning, land use and zoning policies that take physical access to food into account and that make land available for urban agriculture and community gardens.</p> <p>Toronto Community Gardening Network, FoodShare, the municipal government, local businesses and grass roots groups should develop a Toronto model for community gardens.</p> <p>City Council should provide a budget for community garden development.</p> <p>Provide ongoing support (preservation/ education) gardening instruction, if needed.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

Government cannot control where stores will locate (e.g. Loblaws vs. Price Chopper). Stores will locate where it is demographically profitable to do so.

This is a long-term objective that requires public support.

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<p><b>7. Marketing Board and Producer Association Practices</b> Task Force recommends that the practices of all Ontario's marketing boards and producer associations encourage the greater production and availability of low-fat foods.</p>	<p>Toronto Food Policy Council discussion paper "Cutting out the Fat" May, 1998 was submitted to the Board of Health<sup>3</sup>.</p> <p>The creation of public demand for lower fat foods through public nutrition education drives the production/availability of low-fat foods in the market. Most marketing boards are small and don't have education and promotion centres. The beef, pork and dairy industries promote lower fat choices through consumer and health professional education initiatives.</p>	<p>Increase the education activities around low fat options.</p> <p>The federal government should pass legislation to allow health claims for foods (if certain criteria are met) to encourage the production of healthier foods.</p> <p>Lobby the federal government to change the supply management system, while safeguarding the family farm.</p> <p>Increase the affordability of low-fat foods to all consumers.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> In 1995 it was believed that there was a stronger link between dietary fat and cancer than currently is believed to be the case. There is now a de-emphasis on fat and increased focus on increasing the consumption of fruit and vegetables.</p> <p>Marketing boards have increased their product lines that offer lower fat choices. It cannot be expected that all their products become lower fat.</p> <p>This is a much bigger trade issue. For this recommendation to occur, government supply managed product system would need complete overhaul. The target of discussions should be the federal government not marketing boards and producer associations. For example, farmers are paid based on the amount of butterfat in milk for industrial milk.</p> <p>This recommendation shows a lack of understanding of agriculture systems and farming practices in Canada. The role of most marketing boards, with few exceptions, is to standardize prices.</p>		

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<p><b>8. Taxation</b> The Task Force encourages the Ontario government to recognize the importance that the application of differential taxation levels has on healthy food consumption. The Task Force further recommends that differential taxation systems be investigated as a means of promoting consumption of lower-fat foods and fruit and vegetables and discouraging consumption of high-fat foods.</p>	<p>The Toronto Food Policy Council discussion paper "Cutting out the Fat", May, 1998 was submitted to the Board of Health including a recommendation to change taxes on food so that fresh foods are not taxed and processed one (clearly defined) are.</p> <p>Currently, foods are selectively taxed by channel. Under current rules, a takeout salad will be taxed, but french fries may not be. Such anomalies should be eliminated, to ensure that purchase of fresh foods are favored by the tax system.</p>	<p>Conduct research to establish whether differential taxation can change eating patterns. Investigation should not be limited to promotion of low fat vs. high fat foods.</p> <p>Identify the level of public support for this recommendation.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> How would it be determined which foods would be taxed and which would not? No one food has been identified as a killer, like tobacco. This strategy does not fit well with the "all foods fit" message.</p> <p>This is a valueless recommendation. It is frightening to think anyone would recommend increasing prices for food when so many Ontarians struggle to get enough to eat now.</p>		

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<p><b>9. Alternative Food Preparation Practices</b> To minimize the health risks associated with the consumption of popular, high-fat food products, healthier alternative food preparation practices should be promoted. The provincial government should work with the food industry to facilitate the adoption of healthy food production and manufacturing practices.</p>	<p>“Cooking with Heart” is a training program about healthier preparation practices for chefs and cooks.</p> <p>The Toronto Public Health “Cooking Healthy Together” is a nutrition education and food skill program using a train-the-trainer approach.</p> <p>Eat Smart!, Ontario’s Healthy Restaurant Program awards restaurants and cafeterias for high standards in nutrition, food safety and non-smoking seating capacity.</p> <p>Health Check™ is a food information program developed by the Heart and Stroke Foundation. One of the benefits is that industry may reformulate food products to meet the criteria resulting in a healthier food supply.</p>	<p>The federal government should pass legislation to allow health claims on foods, if certain criteria are met, to encourage the production of healthier foods.</p> <p>Work with food manufactures to encourage the production of ready to/easy to serve foods with healthier nutrient profiles (not just low fat).</p> <p>The food industry should balance nutritional/ health value of food and its taste first and then consider profitability.</p> <p>Implement an education strategy targeted at food service establishments to increase the awareness of the benefits of offering healthier food choices, increase skills for preparing healthier food choices and marketing techniques for promoting these items. This should be a future component of EatSmart! Restaurant program.</p> <p>The federal and provincial governments should create agricultural policies that provide real incentives for farmers to reduce potentially harmful pesticide and chemical fertilizer use. Agricultural groups should be included in these discussions.</p> <p>The federal government should permit the use of a modified graphic of Canada’s Food Guide on labels of foods meeting strict criteria.</p> <p>The federal government should increase legislative control of manufacturing practices, not just around fat, but other issues like caffeine, salt and sugar. As knowledge about the relationship between diet and chronic disease grows the government should be strongly involved in the management of the food supply and legislate healthier manufacturing practices.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> The food industry would look at this at the national level, but Ontario would be involved in these discussions.</p> <p>This is an area that is largely driven by consumers.</p> <p>Mandatory nutrition labelling on all foods will encourage manufacturers to produce more healthful products to meet the consumer demand.</p> <p>Many food companies are doing this to meet consumer demands. Products already available include Baked Lays potato chips, many lower fat cookies, baked goods, and meat and dairy products.</p>		

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<p><b>10. Availability of Healthy Food Choices in Institutional and Workplace Settings</b> All community institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.) and workplaces that currently provide food products should be required to provide healthy food choices on their premises and post nutritional information about the foods served.</p>	<p>The <i>Eat Smart!</i> Provincial Restaurant Program awards restaurants and cafeterias for high standards in nutrition, food safety and non-smoking seating capacity. The Eat Smart! Program will be developing a cafeteria module for worksites and schools to be launched in 2000.</p> <p>Congregate Dining Programs for Seniors and Child Nutrition Programs are examples of Toronto Public Health programs that promote healthier food choices in community institutions such as schools, rooming houses and senior's buildings.</p> <p>Meals on Wheels provides healthy meals to the homes of Toronto residents who are unable to shop, cook and prepare meals for themselves.</p> <p>In some areas, Toronto Public Health consultation has been offered to worksites that provide food on premises.</p> <p>Schools and universities appear to be making deals with food companies for the provision of food services in exchange for exclusive market access in these community institutions.</p> <p>The food service industry is starting to include fresh items available for selection by the Hotel and Restaurant Industry trade.</p>	<p>Generate public support to increase the availability of healthy food choices in institutional and workplace settings.</p> <p>Develop more programs to promote voluntary compliance and implementation in co-operation with the non-government organization sector. For example, broaden the adaptation of Eat Smart! Program.</p> <p>Provide financial support for nutritional analysis of foods served so that nutritional information can be available or allow nutrition information to be taken from a database at no charge.</p> <p>Provide funding for Registered Dietitians to provide nutritional expertise to assist with menu planning and food policies.</p> <p>Implement environmental support initiatives to encourage healthier food choices by students. For example, implement school food policies that encourage healthier food choices (vending machines, cafeterias, fund-raising activities).</p> <p>Continue consumer education initiatives in the workplace.</p> <p>Companies that produce and deliver meals to homes should be mandated to provide healthy food choices and nutrition information.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

The federal Nutritional Labelling Policy review and recommendations will most likely address this issue.

There is a need to define healthy food choices. We must be careful of the use of the outdated "good food/bad food" concept.

Is regulation on this an appropriate or feasible goal? Consider if the public would support this idea. Many hospitals do provide healthy choices and the cafeteria is empty and closes because their client base went elsewhere. There should be a variety of foods available as people are free to and will make their own food choices.

It should not be mandatory for cafeterias/ restaurants to offer lower fat and higher fibre food choices. It should be voluntary but promoted as a great way to boost business. Positive reinforcement should be used.

Public education will create demand. For example, Wendy's has revamped their menu to include healthier meal choices.

The posting of nutritional information in restaurants and cafeterias except by large chains is still far off, likely due to cost and expertise.

Rather than 'post' the nutrition information in a restaurant, it should be 'available' upon request.

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<b>TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>WHO'S DOING WHAT?</b>	<b>WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?</b>
<p><b>11. Dietary Guidelines for Cancer Prevention</b>            The Task Force recommends that educational efforts undertaken by the government to raise public awareness of the importance of a healthy diet emphasize Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoy a variety of foods.</li> <li>• Emphasize cereals, breads, and other grain products, vegetables and fruits.</li> <li>• Choose lower-fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat.</li> <li>• Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight by enjoying regular physical activity and healthy eating.</li> <li>• Limit salt, alcohol, and caffeine.</li> </ul>	<p>Canada's Food Guide and Canada's Guidelines to Healthy Eating is accepted as standard and forms the basis of nutrition education programming by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toronto Public Health</li> <li>• Community Health Centres<sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Toronto-Sunnybrook Regional Cancer Centre Community Cancer Education Program.</li> <li>• Heart Health Networks<sup>10</sup></li> <li>• Ministry of Health, Health Promotion Branch strategies (i.e. Eat Smart, The Healthy Eating Manual, the Food Steps Program)</li> <li>• Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in conjunction with the Ontario Ministry of Health coordinates the Community Food Advisor Program.</li> <li>• Health Canada, Health Promotion Branch</li> <li>• Food companies<sup>11</sup></li> <li>• Ryerson Polytechnic University School of Nutrition and University of Toronto.</li> <li>• The Heart and Stroke Foundation educational materials and cookbooks<sup>12</sup>.</li> <li>• Canadian Cancer Society, priority messages.</li> </ul> <p>Catalogue of Canadian nutrition programs<sup>7</sup>.</p> <p>Inventory of Existing Nutrition Resources and Services<sup>13</sup>.</p> <p>The Canadian Produce Marketing Association, Canadian Cancer Society and Heart and Stroke recently launched a social marketing campaign to promote fruit and vegetable consumption "Five to Ten A Day ... Are You Getting Enough?".</p>	<p>Nutrition programs need to be sufficiently funded to ensure appropriate duration and allow for proper evaluation.</p> <p>Conduct regular Canada-wide comprehensive nutrition surveys and yearly Canada-wide comprehensive community based nutrition surveys. These surveys will provide baseline data on the nutrition habits of Canadians to be used for evaluating the effectiveness of nutrition policies and programs/ interventions.</p> <p>Increase the funding for research on the relationship between diet and health and chronic disease prevention to determine the diet and cancer message.</p> <p>Broaden healthy eating messages to reflect the current understanding of healthy eating and to be more inclusive of the diversity of healthy eating patterns in our society.</p> <p>Investigate the need to revise Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating to reflect the new Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs).</p> <p>Increase the funding for nutrition interventions by Registered Dietitians.</p> <p>Increase the emphasis on physical activity as it is key to promoting healthy weights and goes hand in hand with healthy eating.</p> <p>Lobby Health Canada for more flexibility in using Canada's Food Guide and Canada's Guidelines to Healthy Eating. Currently, the language and graphic are fairly restrictive.</p> <p>Increase collaboration between programs promoting the same message.</p> <p>Invest more money, time and staff with nutrition education expertise in schools. Teach Canada's Guidelines to Healthy Eating in all grade levels. By teaching the children in a generation we will be healthier.</p>

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<p><b>11. Dietary Guidelines for Cancer Prevention (continued)</b></p> <p>The Task Force recommends that educational efforts undertaken by the government to raise public awareness of the importance of a healthy diet emphasize Canada's Guide to Healthy Eating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoy a variety of foods.</li> <li>• Emphasize cereals, breads, other grain products, vegetables and fruits.</li> <li>• Choose lower-fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat.</li> <li>• Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight by enjoying regular physical activity and healthy eating.</li> <li>• Limit salt, alcohol, and caffeine.</li> </ul>	<p>Educational programs and resources developed by Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc. and their partners are available for Ontario students and teachers<sup>14</sup>.</p> <p>Currently, Health Canada and a number of U.S. government agencies are sponsoring the review of the scientific data concerning our needs for nutrients and other food components. The results of this process will be used to establish new nutrition recommendations and dietary guidelines in Canada, including an updated Food Guide.</p> <p>The Office of Educational Services, Health Protection Branch, Health Canada provides a focal point for consumers, health professionals, educators and media to obtain information on branch policies, programs and current issues.</p> <p>The Ontario Collaborative Group on Diet and Cancer is reviewing existing recommendations and conducting a literature review to determine the diet and cancer message.</p>	
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b> Health Canada will address this in its Education Strategy – Nutrition Information on Food Labels</p>		

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<p><b>12. Population-Based vs. Targeted Approaches to Educational Programs</b>                      The Task Force recommends that educational initiatives promoting healthy diets should be population-based, focusing on the promotion of healthy habits among all Ontario residents.</p>	<p>The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Mandatory Health Programs And Services Guidelines for Public Health include a number of population-based strategies.</p> <p>Examples of Toronto Public Health population-based educational initiatives include Nutrition Month (March) and Eating Well campaign.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care have funded population-based initiatives for awareness of healthy eating practices, for self-help programs and small group education. Strategies of the Health Promotion Branch include Eat Smart, the Community Food Advisor, the Healthy Eating Manual and the Food Steps program.</p> <p>Cancer Care Ontario has secured the services of a consultant to conduct a review of the literature and recommend best practices to support planning for food and nutrition interventions for the primary prevention of cancer. The focus will be to recommend best practices for interventions in the areas of programming, policy and media. This review will lay the foundation for planning and implementing a broad food and nutrition strategy for cancer prevention. This will be completed by February, 2000.</p> <p>The Canadian Produce Marketing Association, Canadian Cancer Society and Heart and Stroke recently launched a social marketing campaign to promote fruit and vegetable consumption "Five to Ten A Day ... Are You Getting Enough?".</p>	<p>The government should provide adequate funding for nutrition personnel to implement the Ministry's of Health Mandatory Health Guidelines and Services and Community Health Centre Programs.</p> <p>Continue to evaluate the level of implementation and consistency across Toronto of the Mandatory Health Programs and Services for Public Health.</p> <p>Increase funding for research and evaluation of community-based food and nutrition programs and policies. Based on research results, develop programs and policies for Toronto that incorporate its multi-cultural diversity.</p> <p>Increase resources to strengthen nutrition education in the school system.</p> <p>Nutrition education campaigns should focus on specific healthy eating behaviours such as decreasing salt consumption or increasing fruit and vegetable consumption.</p> <p>Increase resources to build on current and implement new education initiatives.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**  
 What does this recommendation mean in terms of communities whose cultural framework, food habits, practices and language are not those of the dominant culture?

A major gap exists since these campaigns and initiatives are not able to reach the culturally and linguistically diverse population of Toronto.

Non-governmental organizations must find a way to deliver population health programs – not "information " materials.

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<p><b>13. Food Preparation and Shopping Skills Workshops</b>            The Task Force recommends the increased provision of healthy food preparation and shopping classes at the community level.</p>	<p>The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Mandatory Health Programs And Services Guidelines for Public Health include the provision of healthy food preparation and shopping classes at the community level.</p> <p>Toronto Public Health is involved in several initiatives regarding healthy food preparation and shopping classes, including Cooking Healthy Together, the Nutrition Teaching Manual for Ethnoracial and Ethnocultural Communities and the accompanying three-day workshop, Eating Well, the Community Food Advisor Program, Skills for Food shopping and Collaborative Prenatal Programs. Many of these programs are offered in partnership with Community Health Centres.</p> <p>Community Health Centres and some community agencies conduct supermarket tours and cooking classes as part of their ongoing programming.</p> <p>For example, Black Creek Community Health Centre runs a “Cook and Talk” group, an African women’s support group that meets once a week to cook and learn about nutrition, healthy lifestyle and food security.</p> <p>FoodShare does some work with street kids and agencies on cooking and nutrition, as well as periodic workshops for the general public (i.e. making baby food from scratch course for parents).</p> <p>The Toronto District School Board offers the Heart and Stroke Foundation HeartSmart Cooking Course. This course provides nutrition information and cooking demonstrations.</p>	<p>Request ongoing funding to develop and implement an overall comprehensive, population based strategy with multiple components including evaluation. To reach people on a significant scale, this type of program would have to be offered on a large scale.</p> <p>Increase resources to strengthen nutrition education in the school system. For example, family studies classes should become mandatory in the high school system.</p> <p>Increase the partnerships with Community Food Advisors, home economists, Health Units and Community Health Centres. Make greater use of home economists in Ontario to promote the healthy eating message.</p> <p>The non-governmental organization community should raise the visibility of this issue and offer programs on a provisional basis.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b>            Due to budget cuts few home economists remain at Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.</p>		

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<p><b>14. Requirements for Educational Material</b></p> <p>The Task Force recommends that all educational initiatives promoting healthy diets – brochures, media appeals, etc. – should use simple, easy-to-understand language (Grade 6 reading level). Special efforts should be undertaken to convey nutrition information to people with low literacy levels.</p>	<p>Social marketing techniques have been effective through Heart Health, the Eat Smart program and nutrition month campaigns.</p> <p>The Provincial Healthy Eating program was developed for lower literacy levels and tested by non-government organizations in factory/blue collar settings.</p> <p>Food Steps Self Help materials had a clear language edit, were focus tested and pilot tested before provincial release.</p> <p>Clear language and design, illustrations, and translations are used in all Toronto Public Health nutrition education strategies where possible, but resources are limited.</p> <p>Most nutrition education programs for the community involve strategies such as audiovisuals (slides, videos) or hands-on participation in food preparation, label reading, etc., for people with low literacy levels.</p> <p>Community Health Centres offer nutrition education sessions to clients with low literacy skills. Instructions/resources are provided in simple language as much as possible.</p> <p>The social marketing campaign to promote fruit and vegetable consumption “Five to Ten A Day ... Are You Getting Enough?”.</p> <p>The Consumers Association of Canada has produced a series of fact sheets on the different food categories that were specially designed for people with low literacy skills.</p>	<p>The government should offer, possibly in partnership with Dietitians of Canada, a professional development course for dietitians and other professionals to learn to develop educational materials at low literacy levels.</p> <p>The government should provide resources to rewrite materials at a lower literacy level.</p> <p>Healthy eating messages need to be developed that are easy to translate so that all cultures receive the same message as the issue is not just literacy, but also different cultures and ethnic diversity.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b></p> <p>This is difficult because of complicated cancer vocabulary.</p> <p>Nutrition can be used to teach literacy, as foods are familiar items to link to words.</p>		

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<p><b>15. Requirements for Educational Material</b>            Educational initiatives encouraging the consumption of healthy diets need to recognize the ethnoracial diversity of the province. Where numbers warrant educational materials and/or healthy food preparation classes should be geared towards cultural preferences.</p>	<p>Toronto Public Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multicultural Nutrition Program includes a Nutrition Teaching Manual for Ethnoracial and Ethnocultural Communities and a three day workshop.</li> <li>• Infant feeding resources are available for some cultures, Caribbean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Somali, and Portuguese.</li> <li>• Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating has been translated into many languages.</li> </ul> <p>Community Health Centres often have diverse, multicultural clients. Some healthy eating resources have been translated and/or developed in languages other than English, including Polish, Spanish, Chinese, French, Somali, Italian, Portuguese, and Russian. Some Community Health Centres offer nutrition education sessions and individual counselling in languages other than English, for example, South Riverdale and Regent Park-Chinese, Centre Medico-French, Four Villages-Polish, Russian. Community Health Centres also offer Healthy Eating Workshops for English as a Second Language classes.</p> <p>With funding from Etobicoke-York Heart Health, Rexdale Community Health Centre in partnership with community members, Toronto Public Health, school boards, hospitals developed a recipe book targeted toward the South Asian community.</p> <p>Provincial divisions of the Canadian Cancer Society do some translation of resources and other provinces can request these.</p> <p>The Heart and Stroke Foundation has nutrition materials and cookbooks aimed at the South Asian and Chinese communities.</p> <p>The Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition Dietary Risk Factors Working Group project on ethnocultural perspectives on diet and cancer risk.</p>	<p>Request an allocation of resources from the City to research innovative, community-based food and nutrition programs to look at ways, other than media campaigns, to reach multicultural and low income populations with the healthy eating message.</p> <p>Request an allocation of resources from the City to develop, implement and evaluate specific programs targeting the diverse cultural communities in Toronto and to adapt, translate, design and pilot test culturally appropriate educational materials.</p> <p>Increase the resources to adequately deliver and expand the Toronto Public Health Multicultural Nutrition program. For example, rather than using a train-the-trainer approach, hire a team of multicultural trainers offering direct service to assure better outcomes.</p> <p>Develop a marketing strategy to promote the Toronto Public Health Nutrition Teaching Manual for Ethnoracial and Ethnocultural Communities and the accompanying three-day workshop.</p> <p>Request funding to increase the number of health and nutrition professionals from different cultures in Toronto.</p> <p>Health professionals should advocate to their respective Colleges for the development of equivalency programs between Canadian Colleges and the Colleges of other countries. This will allow individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds with appropriate training to maintain their professional designations in Canada. For example, Colleges could establish mentoring initiatives to provide pathways for individuals from various cultural backgrounds to attain professional designations in Canada.</p> <p>Include nutrition in all English as a second language classes. Nutrition can be used as an excellent tool for teaching English.</p> <p>Government materials to promote healthy eating should be made available in languages other than English and distributed through appropriate channels.</p> <p>Recognize community partners and unemployed health professionals who have contributed greatly to delivering healthy eating messages and teaching food skills to their communities.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**  
 The cost associated with dealing with numerous ethnic groups is cost and time prohibitive.

The issue is more than only translation. The issue is also understanding cultural differences.

Attempts to reach ethno racial communities are piecemeal and under funded. Large-scale campaigns clearly target white middle class English speaking audience.

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<p><b>16. School-Based Nutrition Education</b>            The Task Force recommends that the Ministry of Health work with the Ministry of Education to create school food policy and ensure that nutrition education be a mandatory component of comprehensive school health programs starting at the primary grades.</p>	<p>The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care sponsored a research project to summarize best advice and current programs for a comprehensive nutrition program. The purpose of this School Nutrition Initiative was to develop a School Nutrition Planning Framework for Ontario from Kindergarten to Grade 12, and to elaborate on the rationale and importance of each area suggested<sup>15</sup>.</p> <p>Catalogue of Canadian nutrition programs, including school nutrition programs<sup>7</sup>.</p> <p>Toronto Public Health Nutritionists were involved in Board of Education curriculum development and consultation relevant to nutrition.</p> <p>The newly released provincial curriculum includes nutrition. Toronto Public Health, York Region and Region of Peel developed "Discover Health Eating! A Teacher's Resource for Grades 1 – 6".</p> <p>Community Health Centre Dietitians and Community Food Advisors have worked with local public schools on nutrition education programs, including offering after school cooking classes. The Heart and Stroke Foundation has created the Heart Healthy Kids Toolbox to assist teachers in providing comprehensive school health programs, from kindergarten to grade 8<sup>16</sup>.</p> <p>The Canadian Living Foundation has just completed a survey of 251 schools across Canada looking at the current school policies and environment for school feeding programs.</p>	<p>The provincial government should fund the development and implementation of a Comprehensive Planning Framework for School Nutrition in Ontario, based on <i>School Nutrition Initiative Final Report</i>, by Rhonda Bell, H. Gayle Edward, Susan Evers, 1999<sup>15</sup>. Six areas comprise this framework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Policy for School Nutrition</li> <li>2. School Curriculum</li> <li>3. Healthful Choices and Selection</li> <li>4. Professional Development for Staff</li> <li>5. Parent/ Family involvement</li> <li>6. Links with Community Programs and Resources</li> </ol> <p>Increase public interest in school based nutrition education.</p> <p>Establish local food policy councils including a mandate to ensure that nutrition education and healthy food choices and selection are available in all schools. These choices and selections involve food provided and/or purchased in cafeterias and through other means, e.g. vending machines, tuck shops and fundraising efforts.</p> <p>Develop additional education resources to support the new curriculum. Curriculum resources are needed for grades 7, 8 and 10.</p>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

Nutrition education should be hands on "fun" ideas to prepare healthy snacks based on Canada's Food Guide.

It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to develop nutrition education resources to meet the specific expectations. The Ministry's responsibility goes beyond policy but includes money, time and resources so that appropriate nutrition education professionals can be in the schools teaching these life skills.

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<p><b>17. School-Based Nutrition Education</b>            The Task Force suggests that community mobilization efforts with parents be undertaken to encourage the provision of healthier food alternatives in the school. The Ministry of Health should also work with the Ministry of Community and Social Services to provide nutrition education for children in day-care settings.</p>	<p>Community Mobilization Efforts With Parents:            The Canadian Living Foundation has specific nutrition resources aimed at parents.</p> <p>Dairy Farmers of Ontario is in the process of developing a menu planning resource for parents.</p> <p>Nutrition Education for Children in Day-Care Settings:            “Best Advice on Effective Nutrition Interventions”, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Health, Health Promotion Branch, October, 1998 by Dawn Palin, Michelle Hooper, Susan Evers, includes a catalogue of Canadian nutrition education programs for preschoolers<sup>7</sup>.</p> <p>Mandatory Health Programs And Services Guidelines for Public Health includes provision of staff education for day-care.</p> <p>Toronto Public Health offers day-care providers and early childhood education students with continuing education and resources as requested.</p> <p>Dairy Farmers of Ontario offers five programs for educators in daycare settings and for teachers in Kindergarten through grade 10. Workshops are provided on demand.</p>	<p>Community Mobilization Efforts With Parents:            Work through the Parent-Teacher Associations to mobilize parents to become active in food issues within the school.</p> <p>Develop an education strategy for parents to support the curriculum learning. For example, develop a strategy to encourage parents to set a good example at home by making healthy food choices.</p> <p>Nutrition Education for Children in Day-Care Settings:            Mandate that all childcare providers to have minimum nutrition training each year.</p>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM KEY INFORMANTS:</b>            Concern about concept of “healthier food alternatives”. This perpetuates the outdated “Good food/ bad food” concept.</p> <p>Toronto Public Health is linked closely with social services in the new amalgamated city structure.</p> <p>Parent mobilization requires non-government organization effort and partnership with Health Units.</p>		