

Community Food Assessment for Thunder Bay: A Closer Look at our Local Food System



Thunder Bay Food Action Network

September 2004



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Or see Food security section on our website
<http://www.tbdhu.com/food/security/default.htm>

September 2004

**Community Food Assessment –
Thunder Bay Food Action Network**

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Executive Summary

Community Food Security is a strategy for ensuring secure access to adequate amounts of safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate food for everyone, produced in an environmentally sustainable way, and provided in a manner that promotes human dignity. It features co-operation among all contributors in a regional food system. It addresses issues in economic, environmental and social aspects of the food system.

This report provides a mere glimpse of the inadequacies of the local food system. Despite numerous food programs many people are still going hungry, with those at the highest risk being recipients of social assistance; single parent households; and First Nations people. Annual increases in the numbers of people at food banks and other meal programs attest to this. The increase in food costs of 9% in Thunder Bay since 1998 has had a significant impact. Individuals and families on low-incomes are especially concerned with the cost of meat, dairy, vegetables and fruit - foods recommended by Canada's Food Guide.

Health is greatly influenced by nutrition. In addition to increasing the risk of chronic disease, inadequate nutrition is known to be a factor in increased incidence of low-birth weight babies. In focus groups, adults living with inadequate access to food voiced feelings of isolation; a "sense of hopelessness"; and elevated levels of stress and illness. Healthy eating in childhood helps to promote optimal growth and intellectual development and plays a role in preventing disease. Families reported that their children were tired, cranky and had a hard time concentrating when they were inadequately fed.

The citizens of Thunder Bay are very generous. They donate abundantly to food banks and other food programs, helping to provide the over 250,000 meals served, and more than 27,000 hampers distributed in 2003. However, the existing food programs can be seen only as a *band-aid* solution to the problem of hunger. Factors such as lack of transportation and ineligibility proved to be barriers to accessing many programs; in addition, often the amounts of food provided are inadequate.

"Community Kitchens" and "Community Gardens", though they create great skill building and social environments they may not contribute as much direct food supplementation as needed by program participants. However, knowledge gained in these programs is key to increasing skills associated with growing, cooking and preserving a person's own food.

The "Community Mapping Project", together with development of a list of food resources in our community will be of value to service providers and the general public. Mapping of income levels of the population in Thunder Bay with the food action programs showed that many programs are concentrated in low-income areas. Fewer programs are available outside the downtown cores.

Thunder Bay citizens are fortunate to have farmers who provide the community with fresh produce: a variety of meats; milk; and cheese; fruits and vegetables. However, the farming community faces many obstacles: a short growing season; high costs of production; new rules and regulations; children leaving the farm; and difficulties getting products to market. Members of the farming community feel that the public is unaware of the difficulties experienced by them to provide their products – or indeed, even where their food comes from. This is a concern that must be rectified through public education.

In summary, food is no longer seen as a **human right**, but a commodity. No longer is it a political or a societal priority. The main barrier to community food security is **poverty**. **Poverty – insufficient money for food = inadequate nutrition = a variety of health and social problems. Focus on local food production and consumption is a key part of the solution.**

Recommendations

1. Food and Nutrition Skills

- Provide education focused on budgeting, canning and preserving and general cooking and shopping skills.
- Ensure sustainability of Community Nutrition Promoter to aid in providing resources to individuals and families on food related programs.
- Develop more Community Gardens to provide opportunities for local residents to develop skills, meet new people, and grow their own food.
- Encourage increased Dietitian hours to provide counselling services to the general public.

2. Promote and Support Local Food

- Promote local food production and consumption through education such as continuing to publish the Farm Fresh Products handout
- Promote the existing Country Market and Farmer's Markets and encourage them to operate more often.
- Work with local grocery stores and farmers to encourage more local food availability in stores
- Invest in the food industry/system through increased employment in our area.
- Explore the idea of establishing a federally inspected abattoir in Thunder Bay, or work with stores to encourage use of products from the provincial abattoir
- Support the continuation of the research station position in Thunder Bay

3. Needs in the Community

- Increase the number of child nutrition programs making them universal in all schools
- Develop public policies and increase the number of supports to make breastfeeding more acceptable and possible for mothers
- Improve access to fruits, vegetables and other perishables at food banks/hamper programs.
- Explore solutions to issues surrounding transportation to and from food programs or grocery stores (i.e. are shuttle, co-op, bus tickets)
- Continue with partnerships such as the Food Action Networks "Grow Local committee"; and possibly expand the pizza project
- Develop partnerships with grocery stores and city planners in regards to placement of stores to benefit low income neighbourhoods

4. Building Advocacy and Strategies

- Work together to change policies to ensure that Social Assistance and minimum wage are adequate to support health and well-being.

- Present assessment results to the City of Thunder Bay Community Services Committee to increase action and awareness of issues around food
- Share results with the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce to encourage involvement by the private sector in local food security initiatives.
- Community-based food and nutrition programs could create employment opportunities for presently unemployed individuals to help address the food insecurity they face (i.e. urban agriculture, small catering businesses, farming).
- Share assessment results with community organizations and groups that are working with low-income families.

Part 1 - Introduction

The Food System in Thunder Bay

Background

The intent of this Community Food Assessment (CFA) is to develop a profile of general community characteristics and community food resources as well as assess household food security, food resource accessibility, food availability and affordability and community food production resources. This assessment will provide necessary information to guide, support and raise awareness for Food Action Network activities. The assessment was done in collaboration with a variety of partners including students at Lakehead University, service providers, food program users and farmers. Funding has been provided by the Ontario Trillium Foundation to support a coordinator for the project from January until September 2004.

On February 4th, 2004 community stakeholders came together to outline the goals and objectives of the report:

Goal/Purpose

To develop a community profile of the local food system in Thunder Bay, and to act as a benchmark for improvement in local community food security.

Community Food Security is a strategy for ensuring secure access to adequate amounts of safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate food for everyone, produced in an environmentally sustainable way, and provided in a manner that promotes human dignity.

It features cooperation among all contributors in a local/regional food system, including growers and producers, citizen groups, community agencies, governmental organizations, businesses, academic researchers and environmental advocates.

Its actions are based on those of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion: building personal skills, strengthening community action, building healthy public policy and creating supportive environments (including the general principles of food safety that are ensured by monitoring and enforcement activities).

It addresses issues in the economic, environmental and social aspects of the food system, and promotes adequate incomes for consumers and producers; local and diverse food production; environmental sustainability; protection of local agricultural lands and fish habitat; widespread access to healthy food; and food-based community economic development and social cohesion.

-OPHA Food Security Workgroup, 2002

Community Food Assessment Project Objectives:

1. To communicate the CFA findings to all stakeholders.
2. To identify key community food resources by developing an inventory.
3. To act as a catalyst for positive impact in the local food system.
4. To encourage community residents to participate actively in the local food system.

Information Collection

This project began in the winter of 2004, as an undertaking of the Thunder Bay Food Action Network. The Food Action Network is a coalition of groups and individuals established in 1996 with an aim of achieving food security in Thunder Bay.

Information was collected by several methods including a literature review of key documents and reports which reflect local or regional data. A meeting was held with a group of key community stakeholders to help define the goals and objectives of the report.

Key Informant Interviews Focus Groups

Interviews and focus groups were held with a variety of key stakeholders including those living in poverty (3 groups), service providers (2 groups) and the farming community (1 group). The interviews and focus groups helped identify available services; number of community members reached through programs; as well as challenges and barriers they or their clients are experiencing. Other discussions provided a picture of the current farming and the retail situation.

Mapping and Databasing of Programs Available

As a part of the report a list of the current food-related programs and resources was created (Appendix A). This was designed in MS Excel. The program data was then able to be geocoded into ArcView 3.0a to create a series of separate point database maps. Also, all sites were geocoded onto one map. Each program point data set was overlain onto the City of Thunder Bay map with census boundaries (Maps in Appendix B). A variety of geodemographic variables were chosen from the Statistics Canada 2001 Census such as lone-parent families and senior population and overlain with food program locations.

The Cost of Poor Nutrition to our Health

Good nutrition is required for the prevention of both deficiency diseases and, more importantly in North America, chronic diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, diabetes, and osteoporosis. Prolonged inadequate nutrition may have long term health implications.

Nutritional inadequacy among **pregnant women** increases the incidence of low birth weight **babies**, who are at a significantly increased risk of illness, disabilities, and death. Low intakes of folate can increase the chances of babies with birth defects (Child and Family Benefit Online Calculator, 2003-4).

Learning and productivity are reduced when people are hungry and/or malnourished. Undernourished **children** are especially susceptible to illnesses, such as colds, headaches and stomach-aches; and perform at lower academic levels; and have poorer psychosocial outcomes than their well-nourished peers. Studies have found associations between iron-deficiency anemia in children and poor cognitive and motor development and behavioural problems (Grantham-MacGregor, S. & Ani, C., 2001). Malnourished **Adults** are less productive in their work environments or while seeking work.

Inadequate nutrition is a factor in the development and treatment of **chronic diseases** such as cardiovascular disease and cancer. Cardiovascular disease is more common in people living

in poverty (Raphael, D. & Farrell, S., 2002). According to the National Health Population Survey (Che, J. & Chen, J., 2001), several health problems were more prevalent among residents in food insecure households, with 21% reporting at least three chronic conditions. Low-income people who suffer with chronic disease have the combined stress of being food insecure and dealing with disease.

Of particular concern, inadequate intake of fruits and vegetables is common among people on low income. People requiring emergency food commonly consume insufficient amounts of nutrients such as vitamins C and A which are necessary for a healthy immune system. Food insecure **seniors** experience significantly lower intakes of many essential vitamins and minerals, and have lower Body Mass Index than their food sufficient counterparts (American Dietetic Association, 2002).

There is also a paradox between hunger and obesity in North America. Researchers are now gaining a better understanding of how food insecurity can be related to obesity. Food insecurity is not limited to those whose energy supplies are always inadequate, which helps explain why those who are food insecure can also be overweight (Hunger and Poverty and Food Research and Action Center, 2002). This lack of food resources could result in weight gain in several ways:

- The need to maximize caloric intake – families may purchase foods of higher caloric value to help ward off hunger longer
- The trade-off between food quantity and quality – households reduce food spending by changing the quality or variety of food consumed before they reduce quantity of food eaten
- Overeating when food is available – obesity may be an adaptive response to counteract periods when people are unable to get enough to eat.
- Physiological changes- may occur to help the body conserve energy when diets are periodically inadequate. The body can compensate for periodic food shortages by becoming more efficient at storing calories as fat.

The 2002 Romanow Report (Romanov, R.J., 2002) strongly advocates for measures that prevent chronic disease. People of all ages living on a low-income have a reduced ability to learn and be productive, are more susceptible to infectious diseases, and are at greater risk for chronic diseases including cancer and heart disease. These diseases and health problems require more **tax dollars** to treat and manage than would be needed to prevent them by ensuring incomes allowing everyone to afford adequate and nutritious food.

Cost of Not Breast Feeding

Choosing to breastfeed exclusively for 6 months and continuing breastfeeding with complementary foods until at least 2 years of age (Canadian Paediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, Health Canada, 1998) can improve a family's economic situation and health status. Economic benefits: reduced food costs, reduced illness costs for infant and mother, fewer lost days of work for parents due to reduced infancy/childhood illness and improved education opportunities for the growing child. Young mothers, mothers with lower incomes, and mothers with less education are more likely to formula feed or prematurely wean their infants to formula. The most common reason for not breastfeeding is the belief that formula feeding is easier. The most common reason for premature weaning is perceived milk insufficiency. These issues can be corrected with targeted breastfeeding education and support programs (Canadian Perinatal Surveillance System, 1998).

Child Nutrition

Healthy eating in childhood promotes optimal health, growth, intellectual development, and assists in preventing immediate (e.g. eating disorders and obesity) and long term health problems (e.g. heart disease and cancer). The development of healthy eating habits in children rests with parents and the community. Findings of a recent study showed that diets were lacking in variety for 25% of children in Northern Ontario. (Northern Ontario Perinatal and Child Health Survey Consortium, 2002) This study also showed that almost 30% of children aged 2-6 years old, were overweight. All of which reinforces the importance of supporting healthy eating habits at a young age.

School is an important place where children learn about health and nutrition, both in and outside the classroom. As well, the school environment can model and reinforce healthy food choices by providing healthy food.

In 2003 a survey (Thunder Bay District Health Unit, 2003) highlighting the food choices available in elementary schools was conducted in the Thunder Bay District. The survey yielded several positive results and revealed a few areas that could be improved. Many schools should be commended on their efforts to provide their students with an environment that supports healthy eating. The number of schools that offer milk daily and the number of schools using non-food and nutritious foods as fundraisers was outstanding. There are however several concerns with the nutritional quality of foods served and sold in schools, and the small number of school meal and snack programs in place. For example, many schools sell sweetened beverages like soft drinks and fruit punch in vending machines, a large proportion of schools sell nutritionally poor calorie dense foods like candy in their tuck shops, and for special food days primarily involve selling pizza and hot dogs. In addition, very few schools have school food guidelines in place with respect to the types of foods served and sold. The most common concern schools expressed were that unhealthy food is being brought from home. Other concerns included waste, hunger, allergies and lunches that needed heating.

Part 2 - Profile of Food Security in Thunder Bay

Who Are The Most Vulnerable?

Statistics Canada's National Population Health Survey found that an estimated three million people in Canada, one in ten people, lived in households where a lack of money either prevented them from buying enough food or caused them to eat lower quality, less healthy foods (Che, J. & Chen, J, 2001). A recent survey of Ontario food bank recipients found an alarming number of children experiencing chronic food insecurity and large numbers of people with disabilities accessing food banks (Community Social Planning Council of Toronto, 2003). The key findings of these studies include:

- 58% of households relying on **social assistance** reported food insecurity
- One-third of all **single-mother** households were food insecure to some extent and 28% of mothers suggested that they had to compromise their diet.
- **Children** in nearly 40% of families accessing food banks experience hunger at least once per month, including more than one in ten families where children go hungry a couple of times a week.
- Two out of five food bank clients reported a **disability** that restricted their work and more than half of the clients with disabilities were not on the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

- 27% of the **aboriginal** population living off reserve experienced food insecurity, with one and a half times as many aboriginal as non-aboriginal people experiencing food insecurity. (6.7% of the Thunder Bay population claimed aboriginal ancestry in the 2001 census.(Statistics Canada, 2001)

Ontario Works

Ontario Works provides financial and employment assistance to people in temporary financial need. People receiving assistance through Ontario Works participate in a wide range of employment assistance activities, which help them prepare for, find and keep a job. In the City of Thunder Bay in the year of 2003 the total beneficiaries (including heads of households, dependants, and single persons) ranged from 4400-4700 a month (TBDSSAB, 2003). This number represents approximately 3.7% of our population (121,986 people in 2001).

Table 1.0 Relationship between income of persons receiving Ontario Works/ODSP and the median annual income of Thunder Bay residents.

Category	Ontario Works/ODSP (National Council of Welfare)	Average Income in Thunder Bay (2001 Census)	Welfare income as % of average income
Single – employable	\$6833	\$23,361	29%
Person with Disability	\$11, 763	\$23,361	50%
Single Parent -1 child	\$13, 871	\$26,426	52%
Couple -2 children	\$18, 400	\$65,656	28%

From Table 1.0 above we can see that those living on social assistance receive only 30-50% of the income of the general population. Therefore, we can see how difficult it might be especially for the single person and the couple with children to meet all of their basic needs. This is made more significant when we consider that assistance rates have remained the same since 1993. A proposed increase of 3% for both OW and ODSP is meant to come into effect in February/March 2005.

The **Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)** was designed to meet the income and employment support needs of people with disabilities. The program provides income support and health-related benefits to people with disabilities who are in need of financial assistance. The employment support component of the program offers a range of goods and services to help people with disabilities to look for, obtain or maintain jobs on a volunteer basis. Approximately 4000 Thunder Bay and District residents rely on ODSP as a source of income every month and it often is not enough.

Food Insecurity in the Thunder Bay District

In **Thunder Bay District**, 11% of households with children under age six years have run out of food at least "sometimes" and 9% stated that they sometimes couldn't afford to eat balanced meals in the past twelve months (Northern Ontario Perinatal and Child Health Survey Consortium, 2002).

A recent study by Indian Friendship Centres in Ontario revealed that food insecurity was a big concern among study participants in local Aboriginal populations. Seventy nine percent of questionnaire respondents indicated that they worry about running out of food or money to buy food. Children go hungry in these families with 35% of respondents running out of money to buy food to feed their children. Aboriginal children (11%) are missing school says this report due to families not having food to send with them. As well, 7% of families said they had been involved with the Children's Aid Society due to food shortages (Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, 2001).

Good nutrition is important to maintaining the health of our population. Healthy eating not only improves resistance to disease but can help in reducing the risk of certain lifestyle-related conditions like diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, heart disease, and some type of cancers.

The recent Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) suggests that Thunder Bay has higher rates than the provincial average for some of these diseases. For instance, adults in Thunder Bay are more likely to have heart disease (6%) than adults in Ontario as a whole (5%). Rates of cancer (2.15% vs. 1.89%) and diabetes (4.7% vs. 4.25 %) are also higher in Thunder Bay than the province as well although not statistically significant. However, Thunder Bay has a higher rate of obesity amongst those twelve years and over (14.5 % compared to the province at 11.07% (BMI>30)). BMI which is used as an indicator of overweight (BMI 25-29) is higher in Thunder Bay than the rest of Ontario with 25.54% compared to 23.87% respectively (Statistics Canada, 2001).

To explore food insecurity further five focus groups were conducted in the spring of 2004. Most of the people in the focus groups said that they tend to run out of food in the middle of the month. Often they have non-perishables left such as rice, but run out of meat, milk, fruit and vegetables. There was a general consensus that Christmas was the worst time of the year because of higher heating bills and the need to save for gifts. On special occasions such as birthdays, and holidays, there is less money available for food. Many depend on their National Child Tax Benefit payment to pay for food part way through the month.

One working poor family apologizes for coming to the food bank but says they just have to 1 or 2 times a year. "I'm sorry that I have to come but I just don't have enough right now."
—Key Informant

Service providers felt that the percentage of people experiencing food insecurity within their client groups ranged from 10% to 99%. They felt that most of the people they see have food insecurity, and that people cannot get by on the money they have. Providers also suggest that some people with whom they are in contact have limited budgeting skills and lack cooking skills and/or facilities.

Contributing Factors: Issues that affect Food Security

Many of the focus group participants were on social assistance either ODSP or OW, or were employed in minimum wage jobs. Participants felt that after rent, hydro and all the other bills were paid there just isn't enough money leftover to purchase an adequate amount of food. There was a consensus among the 5 focus groups on two issues, that rent was too high; and food is expensive in our area. Additional costs such as medical expenses e.g. eyeglasses and dentures; children's clothing for children; unexpected bills such as appliance repairs; travel costs; home/vehicle insurance; helping out a family member all add to food insecurity.

Other significant contributing factors are: cost of food - especially fruits and vegetables - in the winter months; school lunches - especially when "peanut-free" is mandatory; change in employment status of any family member; lack of transportation to and from the grocery store - especially for families with young children.

Additional contributing factors listed were: Loss of good jobs; lack of cooking utensils and/or storage space; money spent on drugs and alcohol; gambling; mental health issues; distance to grocery stores; family breakdown; resultant change in lifestyle of First

"It's very hard for the people who live in one room who only have a microwave. You can only eat junk food which you pay lots for - with no fridge, stove or hot plated its very hard for a single person you must have a place to refrigerate food."

—Focus Group Participant

"E.g. A single mom I know working part-time has two children under the age of ten, because she did not give her receipt in with x dollars that she made they are holding her cheque."

—Focus Group Participant

Nations People when they leave reserves and move into town - lack of access to food from hunting and fishing; and the increased costs associated with living off reserve.

Social service cheques delayed for various bureaucratic reasons has led occasionally to people losing their apartment. In certain circumstances people felt the need to elicit help from MP, MPP's to advocate on their behalf. Others felt they were victims of discrimination.

Nutritious Food Basket Survey Results

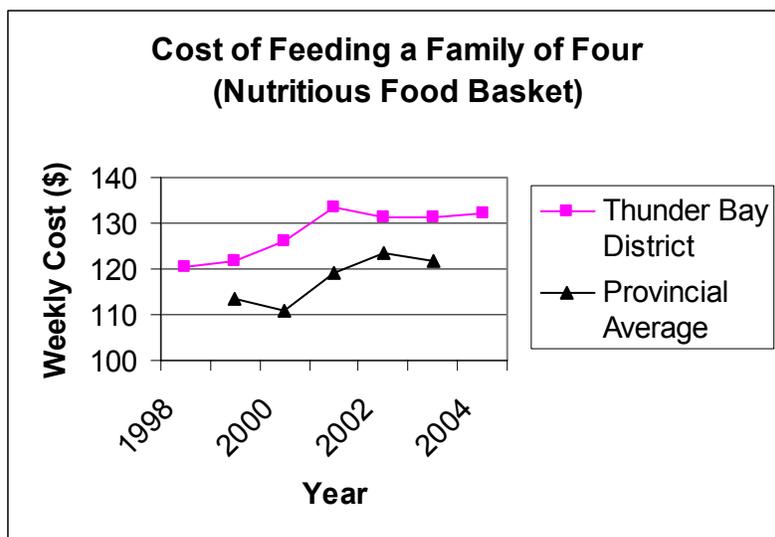
The Thunder Bay District Health Unit has been monitoring the cost of a Nutritious Food Basket (NFB) annually since 1998, as mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Results of the NFB for 2003 can be found in Appendix A. The NFB is a list of 66 foods based on Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating and Canadian food preferences. The items in the NFB are the lowest priced items available in each store in a specified purchase size, regardless of brand. An additional 5% is added to the cost of the food basket to cover the cost of miscellaneous foods used in meal preparation such as spices, seasonings, condiments, coffee, and tea. The NFB **does not** include diapers, formula or baby food, or household supplies such as soap, detergent, toilet paper, toothpaste or cleaning

"I've heard about Community kitchens but that's about it I know a couple but they make you pay \$5.00 and it's really unfortunate because you don't have that \$5 and in the meantime you just go hungry it's really unfair or its only targeted for specific groups young mothers with young children."

—Focus Group Participant

products.

In 2003, the cost of a healthy diet for a reference family of four (man and woman 25-49yrs, son 13 yrs, daughter 8 yrs) in the District of Thunder Bay was **\$572.60** per month or **\$132.24** per week. This cost has risen \$50.27 per month or 9% since the first costing was done in 1998 (see Figure 1). The monthly cost of food for a family of four in the district of Thunder Bay has also remained an average of \$60 higher than the provincial average over the past six years (Thunder Bay Food Action Network, 2003). Food costs have risen 8% over the last 6 years the rates of O DSP and OW have remained the same. (Budgeting for Food worksheet in Appendix C)



“That’s how I made it through. My Friends, family, church and neighbours help with moose meat, blueberries, money to help pay bills a brother has set it up to always pay my phone bill, another provided money for fuel. It’s all done under the table so they don’t take it off your cheque. A friend from health unit picked potatoes for me on the gleaning project.”

—Focus Group Participant

Where Our Food Is Coming From

At present the majority of the food ending up on our supper plate comes to us from warehouses in Winnipeg or Toronto. A couple of years ago during the Safeway strike, MacDonald’s Consolidated, a local food warehouse, closed. Since that time the cost of food has gone up due to the increased cost of transportation and insurance which have been passed on directly to the grocer (Personal Communication, David Stezenko, 2004).

Coping Skills

The people who participated in the focus groups are well practiced at coping with the problem of food insecurity. The tactics they use can be grouped into 3 main categories: 1) preplanning, 2) what is done at home and 3) services used outside the home.

Firstly, they use tactics such as planning what meals they will eat before shopping, writing up a monthly budget, buying in bulk and looking at the flyers for sales. Also, participants are more apt to buy starchy foods such as rice, pasta and oatmeal to fill them up. Another strategy was to only shop once a month to help decrease transportation costs.

Secondly, many participants were decreasing the number of meals they ate a day, serving children first especially vegetables and meat, and decreasing portion sizes which all helped to ration their limited food resources.

Lastly, people in the focus groups felt the need to go elsewhere to help make ends meet. Many accessed community food resources such as community kitchens, gleaning, pre/post natal programs that offered milk coupons. Food banks and hot meal programs were also essential in ensuring people had enough to eat. Staff working with clients who are food insecure mentioned that they offer a meal or snack at programs to help those who are struggling to feed themselves to attend programs.

Almost all participants felt that they had an informal help network that allowed them to “just get by”. Many mentioned the importance of family, friends and neighbours helping them out when they really needed it. It was also quite common for participants to provide help to their family when they were in need. Others said that they had help from landlords, VISA and overdraft at the bank. Another woman used credit at a Department store where they can get some food items in times of need.

“Sometimes things aren’t there for lunch to pack for your kids.”

Impact On The Individual/Family

“You can’t work without food in your stomach they call you in to work and you don’t have food in your fridge and you try to work you get depressed again you get headache or something like that.”

—Focus Group Participant

The toll taken by food insecurity on individuals and families is exhibited in a number of ways: people expressed concern about not being able to sleep; being “stressed out”; having no energy; and also feelings of isolation; aggravation; frustration; and guilt for not being able to provide for self or family. Families with children found that their children were whinier; crabby; lethargic; sick more often; and they had headaches and found it hard to concentrate when they had not had enough to eat.

At the first of the month participants running food programs found they had a decrease in participation in Community kitchens and other programs, but at the end of the month programs are full. They are seeing clients who lack fresh fruits and vegetables; are unable to pay their rent; kids are missing school because they don’t have food to send or cannot afford to pay for a “special food day”. As well, there is an increased demand for lunch programs and food banks. Finally, the increasing number of “Where to Get Food in Thunder Bay” pamphlets produced by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, that are given out every year is also an indicator of the problem.

“The fact that we need these types of programs is an indicator or that Kinna-aweya legal clinic is giving out food because the clients using there services need it. This is an example of informal food giving networks that we don’t have a handle on.”

—Focus Group Participant

“Child on fruit and vegetable program (Families are Munching) at school had hard time to ensure they had enough fruit and veg to fill 10 spaces – makes it hard for us when teacher sends that home.”

“There’s an overall sense of hopelessness when you’re speaking from a holistic perspective, taking into consideration all those different factors emotional, spiritual there comes a time when you say to heck with it –I’m tired and hungry and I am going to get drunk or do something stupid or go out and steal something I am not saying myself personally but you reach a point of frustration and it’s very fortunate that we have places such as this [Dew Drop Inn] where at least you get one meal ...”

—Focus Group Participant

Part 3 - Profile of Community Food Resources

Access to Nutrition Services

Dietitians play a vital and ongoing role in increasing skill levels and knowledge around the area of nutrition and food security. In Thunder Bay, the general public has limited access to nutrition professionals. People concerned about their nutritional health may have difficulty accessing a Registered Dietitian (RD) for counselling. Presently, there is only one Outpatient Dietitian doing counselling covered by OHIP and she works only 3.5 days a week. At this time the waiting list to see her is 3 months. She is able to book people within 2 weeks if it is an emergency medical condition. A few other RD's see clients on an outpatient basis but clients must meet certain criteria i.e. they have underlying renal or cardiac disease or live in a certain catchment area.

A few dietitians working in the community focus on health promotion and education, as well as working specifically in the area of food security. The majority of RD's are involved in treatment of clinically diagnosed health problems or work with specific populations i.e. older adults. The following is a breakdown of the areas in which dietitians are working:

- 3 Administration
- 1 Eating Disorder
- 5 Community and Public Health
- 6 Diabetes Health
- 1 Private Practice
- 10 Clinical (one general outpatient)
- 4 Homes for the Aged and Long-term care
- 1 Homecare
- 31 Total (Other RD's are in the area but are presently not employed in the field)



Community Food Advisors

Community Food Advisors are trained volunteers who are qualified to provide nutrition and food safety education. Trained and coordinated under the supervision of dietitians at the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. They are available to provide presentations or demonstration for groups of individuals on a variety of topics including; shopping skills; healthy eating on a budget; food safety and low fat cooking. CFA's have been active in our community since 1998 and last year alone they provided 315 volunteer hours and reached over 2000 people.

Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels program provides one home-delivered meal per day (Monday - Friday) and a security check to eligible individuals in the community. To be eligible you must be an adult within the City of Thunder Bay who is unable to prepare adequate meals on a daily

basis due to lack of physical disability; cooking facilities; or chronic illness. Meals cost \$5.35 each, limited subsidies are available to provide meals for \$3. Special diets such as renal, no added salt, and diabetic diets are available. The goal of the menu planning is to cover 40% of the recommended nutrient intake for an adult male, aged 70 years.

Thunder Bay MOW serves approximately 140 meals a day (down from 170 last year). In the past they were serving 44,000 meals a year but are now down to 37,000. This same drop in number of meals seems to be a trend across the province. The program could not function without over 180 registered volunteers who deliver the meals and provide daily social contact to recipients.

Charitable Food Programs

Communities have numerous ways of attempting to deal with the issue of hunger. Many food banks provide food hampers to supplement people's food intake, but most only provide a three-day food supply once per month. Hot meal programs including breakfast programs at schools and community centres, try to fill the gaps but the demand is increasing.

Table 2.0 Amount of food and/or total cost of service provided to residents in the City of Thunder Bay in the year 2003.		
Program	Total Food Given in 2003	Estimated Total Cost
Food Hampers (via Food Banks and Christmas Cheer, other food cupboards pre/postnatal)	27,771	
Milk Coupons	4849	\$19,347.51 (\$3.99)
Food Vouchers		\$17,500
Hot Meals	165,200	
Child Nutrition Programs	85,866	

Total number of meals served both at child and adult programs is 251,066, plus 27,771 hampers are given out to individuals and families. In addition, over \$36,000 was given out in food/milk vouchers to individuals in programs run by various social service agencies. However, the milk coupon budget for the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program has suffered a 50% cutback.

The Hunger Count 2003, an annual survey of Food Banks, revealed that food bank use in Ontario increased 4.5% since 2002, and 8.2% since 1997 and 42% of food bank users were children under 18 years of age (Canadian Association of Food Banks, 2003). There is a need in the Thunder Bay District to consistently collect and monitor annual usage statistics, including demographic data, for food banks and hot meal programs to support advocacy and policy efforts.

Food banks make every effort to meet the needs of their clients; however they cannot solve the problem of food insecurity for the following reasons:

- Food banks are not set up to meet the nutritional needs of their users. The majority must restrict access to once per month; they depend largely on donations from the community and the food industry; and food bank users more commonly receive heavily processed food, rather than fresh produce and dairy products,
- Many families who are in need of food do not access food banks because they do not want to rely on charity to feed their families,
- Accessing food banks is further limited because of transportation problems (OFIFC, 2003, 18),
- The charitable model does not develop capacity and self-reliance among its clients, nor does it promote human dignity.

A number of community programs exist which incorporate issues of food security into their programming, despite it not being a part of their primary mandate. Some examples include child nutrition programs, community kitchens and gardens.

Child Nutrition Programs

In Thunder Bay and District, 27 schools (35%) have a school meal or snack program. Breakfast programs are running in 19 schools (24%), with only 604 (3%) of students participating; 1 school runs a lunch program reaching 25 students; 9 schools have snack programs with 1105 students involved. The breakfast programs run an average of three times per week, the lunch program runs daily. Snack programs run an average of once per week. Fourteen schools felt they needed a program; lack of volunteers and funding were seen as the main barriers to having these programs (Thunder Bay District Health Unit, 2003).

A recent Community Needs Assessment sponsored by the United Way of Thunder Bay found that for respondents the single most significant poverty/hunger issue was related to funding for provision of nutritious food for all families, and particularly for children. The specific hunger needs identified in the community that are not addressed adequately by existing programs and services included the need for more breakfast and lunch programs for children, as well as ensuring that food is accessible by providing delivery services or funding for transportation (Seburn, L., 2003).

Food Redistribution

Another element of charitable food distribution is the idea of food that is cooked in a larger restaurant or institution (such as hospital or grocery store) that is donated to a food bank or soup kitchen. Often this type of program is called "Second Harvest". As a part of this study a small survey of local establishments found that some large institutions such as hospitals are providing food to various hot meal programs. Food goes to the garbage everyday that could be redistributed. This area needs to be explored but is not addressed by this study.

Whether it's a truckload or a partial case, Second Harvest anti-hunger groups across North America deliver food donations to where they are needed most. Such a concept may be possible to help get food that might otherwise go to landfill directly to people in Thunder Bay.

Community Kitchens

As of June 2004 there were about 20 community kitchens operating in the Thunder Bay community (Thunder Bay Food Action Network, 2004). Many of the present leaders would like to meet with other Community Kitchen leaders once or twice a year with the primary focus of sharing recipes and problem solving ideas, rather than educational workshops. The topic area most often identified was dealing with challenges and conflict resolution.

Some of the main challenges encountered by groups running a community kitchen included: finding healthy but economical food choices; dynamics of different combinations of individuals; running out of containers; attendance; and insufficient funding.

Key benefits of community kitchens to participants were identified as: improved cooking skills and knowledge of healthy eating, taking home large amounts of food to feed families, socializing and a sense of community.

Community Gardens

In the summer and fall of 2002 the Food Action Network completed a small community garden survey (Thunder Bay Food Action Network, 2002). At that time there were 6 gardens running in the City of Thunder Bay. Unfortunately, the gardens are not well distributed around the community. There are five gardens for those living in the northward and only one in the southward.

The results of the survey showed that 90% of the gardeners were either happy or very happy with their gardening year. Most had extra produce to share with friends or preserve for the future. Although, most were unsure about how much money was saved by growing their own food, gardeners were glad to meet new people and learn more about gardening. The problem most commonly faced by gardeners was getting enough water.

Recommendations for the future: assuring water access at the beginning of the year; more training for volunteer coordinators; investigate providing fences or doing community education to decrease vandalism; and decrease out of pocket expenses for gardeners by providing more funding.

Gleaning

The Gleaning project began as a partnership of the Food Action Network and local farmers in the summer of 2000. Gleaning is the traditional practice of gathering crops that would otherwise be left in the fields after harvesting. Between the years 2000-2003, 347 participants were able to pick produce at local farms, and at least 287 children benefited from this food (Personal Communication: Cathy Hollinger, 2004).

Since the project began individuals and their families have been able to access strawberries, corn, cucumbers, and potatoes donated by local farmers. Many participants have discussed the positive experience of gleaning beyond just getting food including the trip to the country, resources provided etc. In the past four summers a total of 17 trips to local farms have occurred. This project could not be successful without the generous donations of local farmers.

Amounts picked: 1883 litres strawberries
6250 pounds potatoes
128 doz. Corn
128 doz. Cucumbers
82 litres beans

Focus Group Results - Food Programs Used

Participants accessed a variety of community resources to help them feed themselves and their families. These included: food banks; hot meal programs (Shelter House, Dew Drop Inn, and Breakfast programs); and the Salvation Army soup van. Others accessed programs at a variety of agencies where food was served or available for taking home such as; milk coupons; community kitchens; and healthy moms and babies programs. Many participants re-iterated that they rely on family and will go to their mom's or in-laws at dinner-time.

Benefits of Food Programs

When asked which type of program works best the responses varied depending on the family circumstances. For those with young children, programs that provide childcare were helpful. They also liked that something like a community kitchen allows you to learn, participate, and get food. As well, they appreciated the benefits of meeting new people and trying new things. Some people mentioned that they were too embarrassed to access a food bank.

For those who were single or without young children, other things seemed to be more important, such as proximity of the resource, and knowing that a meal is served in the same place at the same time everyday. The group accessing hot meal programs came because of the social setting they felt that they had developed friendships over the course of time that they had been using the service. The respect that people got when using a food resource such as a food bank or hot meal program from the staff or volunteers was important to how they felt about that service.

Concerns were raised about the inability of food banks to provide for their needs either because of restrictions such as only able to access 3-4 times a year, or because of location of residence (north vs. south) or sometimes because of single person vs. family. Single people question why food programs would only serve families or why there are no Christmas hampers for single people.

There was a general feeling that many people in our community don't know that there are people in Thunder Bay who are food insecure. Also, many participants felt that programs

"At the food bank here you don't get very much all they have is macaroni and rice and a can of beans or something like that not enough to fill your belly. The best food bank I have seen is in Hearst where I'm from. They give you a big box - all the rich people in the community donate money and they actually go out and buy the stuff they give you fresh milk, bread etc and you can pick what you want, once a week. You go around and write down how many people it's for 1, 2, 3 whatever and they give it to you to last for a week, I know I used to do it all the time and it lasted."

—Focus Group Participant

"I've noticed people here (at the Dew Drop Inn) that I think qualify for meals on wheels but I would expect that they can't afford the meals on wheels and I think it serves a purpose coming to the dew drop in for them."

—Focus Group Participant

There was a general feeling that many people in our community don't know that there are people in Thunder Bay who are food insecure. Also, many participants felt that programs

were piecemeal and bandaid solutions that did not address the real problems. Since programs were not universal, many participants are left feeling stigmatized. Funding of programs was a concern because they rely heavily on donation, and are not a long term solution or part of community infrastructure. Many of the programs have criteria or hours of operation that exclude people for example who don't have children 0-6 years, or inconvenient hours not open on weekends. Finally respondents felt that there was not a value-based commitment regarding people's right to food and that perhaps a food policy council might help to incorporate that into the planning process and community as a whole.

The positive elements that were outlined included the fact that there is someplace to go to ensure you eat that day. As well, the aspect of bringing people together and providing social networking are benefits of many programs.

Certain programs allow participants to share their skills, eat together and build self-esteem. (such as Community kitchen, supper clubs) Others mentioned the importance of school breakfast programs for increasing school attendance and performance.

Mapping Analysis

The community mapping project and development of a list of food resources in our community will be useful to service providers and the general public. Mapping of income levels of the population in Thunder Bay with the food action programs showed that many programs are concentrated in low income areas. Less programs are available as you move away from the downtown cores. Grocery stores are also spread out quite evenly throughout most neighbourhoods and a couple of the lower income neighbourhoods lack a grocery store in the vicinity.

Table 3.0 Before-tax Low-Income Cut-Offs (LICOs), For Thunder Bay based on population in 2003

Population of Community Residence	
100,000-499,000	
Family Size	Low-Income Cut-off
1	\$16,979
2	\$21,224
3	\$26,396
4	\$31,952
5	\$35,718
6	\$39,483
7+	\$43,249
*Canadian Council on Social Development, 2002	

Alternative Food Sources

Some participants indicated they accessed alternative food sources in the community including: the Farmers Market; Country Market; Silver Mountain Food Group; the Gleaning Project; backyard and community gardens; hunting; fishing; gathering (wild rice, berries); community/family meals; soup vans and hot meal programs. Volunteers organize many of these programs making them vulnerable to volunteer life changes as well as funding.

What Needs To Be Done

When thinking on a more community level for strategies to address food security, participants came up with answers that fit into 6 main categories summarized below:

Money

There was a general consensus that people living on social assistance either OW or ODSP or those on minimum wage, needed more money to make ends meet. Some suggestions: social assistance cheques could be received every two weeks instead of once a month, in order to allow recipients to have money available at the end of the month; a voucher system could be used for food purchases; or a special food supplement be instituted similar to the housing supplement. Other concerns were the claw back on the child tax benefit and the lack of affordable housing.

Food Bank Concerns

People access food banks when they don't have adequate food, but many feel that they need to be more accessible (ie. Closer to where they live). Participants felt that access to fresh foods (such as milk and produce) through food banks would be helpful. Some organization around a central distribution of food and a special concern around the need for infant formula for families in need would be beneficial. There was a perceived need to address cultural issues.

Transportation

Transportation came up as a major concern with almost every question asked. Families and individuals find it hard to get to the grocery store without a vehicle or with the high cost of gas. Many therefore take public transportation, which they find is difficult with young children and arms full of groceries. Many participants then find that they are spending money that could go towards food, on taxi fare to and from the store; this limits their shopping trips to only once a month. Some suggestions for solving this dilemma are having grocery stores provide shuttles, or free delivery, or forming a transportation co-operative that helps get people to and from the store.

Grocery Stores

Grocery stores that are seen as having more inexpensive products are located far away from where people live and smaller neighbourhood stores have higher prices. The city planning department can keep this in mind when planning new food outlets. Stores could offer better sales at the beginning of the month to enable those on assistance to take advantage of them. Partnerships could be developed between stores that serve low-income residents such as allowing them special coupon offers etc. Shuttle service to and from stores may benefit both the store and the low-income resident in the end.

Reclaimed Food

Participants mentioned the possibility of reclaiming food from farmers, stores and hunters. This could be done by: harvesting animals seized by the MNR and animals killed on the road by traffic – how this could be achieved needs to be addressed; food which is nearing the end of its shelf life could be donated to food programs; running a "Second Harvest" program where food is reclaimed and a centralized system – a model for this already exists.

Local Food

Local food production should be promoted. Participants discussed the need to create awareness of growing your own food, either through community gardens or in your own yard; the need to continue the gleaning program and perhaps expand it; the need to increase support to farmers markets and encourage a new generation of farmers and growers; a discount hour during the local farmers markets could allow low-income people to purchase fresh produce and still create some income for farmers.

Part 4 - Local Food Production and Distribution

Local agriculture and food production resources play an important role in community food security. Farming began in Fort William and Port Arthur in the late 1800's; by the year 1911 there were 630 farms and nearly 110, 000 acres of land in production. Continuous growth due to increases in the pulp and paper, and mining and lumber industries occurred until the great depression when farmers began to abandon their farms (Bray, M. and Epp, E.,1984).

In the 2001 agricultural census 238 farms were listed for the Thunder Bay District. The farmers in our region produce a variety of products from honey, and herbs to milk, wild boar, and numerous vegetables and fruits. The majority of farms in the region belong to the dairy industry.

Table 4.0 Main Products being Produced and Sold in Thunder Bay Area

Vegetables	Fruit	Meat	Dairy and Other
Sweet corn	Rhubarb	Beef	Milk
tomatoes	Strawberries	Pork	Cheese
potatoes	Raspberries	Goat	Eggs
cucumbers	Apples	Lamb	Honey
green beans	Saskatoons	Chickens	
peas	Pears	Rabbit	
cabbage	Plums	Wild Boar	
cauliflower	Cherries		
broccoli	Grapes		
rutabagas			
beets			
radishes			
onions			
lettuce			
spinach			
various squash			

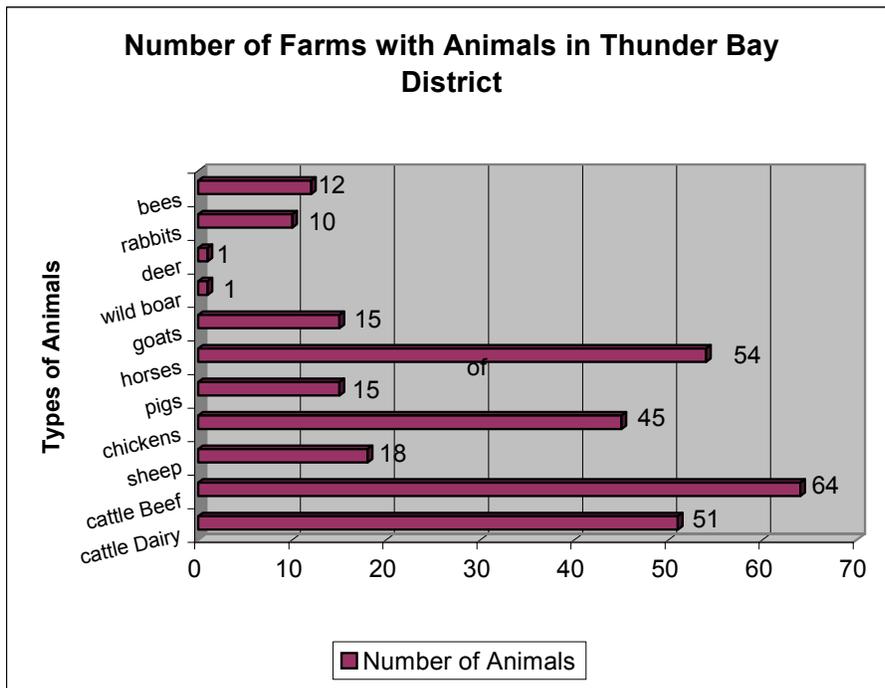
Table 5.0 Thunder Bay Farms classified by area in crops and summerfallow Census of Agriculture 2001

	Total Number Farms Reporting

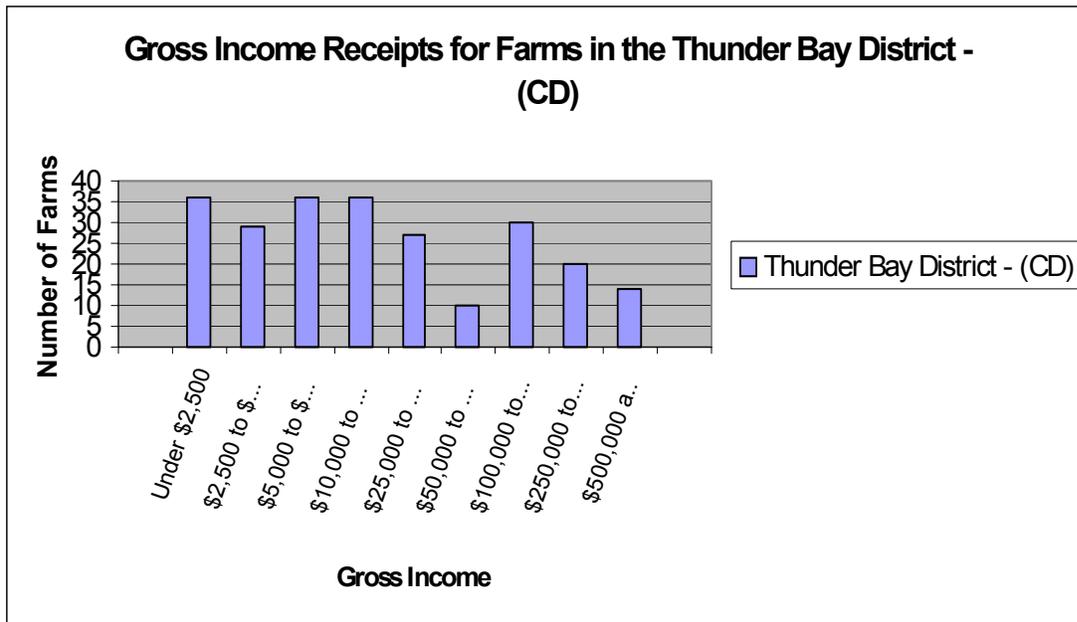
Thunder Bay District - (CD)	187
Neebing - (CCS)	25
Thunder Bay - (CCS)	17
Oliver Paipoonge - (CCS)	84
O'Connor - (CCS)	17
Thunder Bay, Unorganized - (CCS)	44

The above graph gives you an idea of the distribution of farms growing crops and summerfallow. The 2001 census reports show that the actual number of farms is higher, with 202 total farms for Thunder Bay District with gross revenues greater than \$2,499. A higher number of 238 farms would represent farms with lower income thresholds of greater than \$1,999 but less than 2,499.

Graph 1.0 Shows the number of farms with animals in the District of Thunder Bay (Agricultural Census 2001)



Graph 2.0 shows amounts of income farms in the District of Thunder Bay receive (Agricultural Census 2001).



Agriculture is a way of life and a means of earning income to many citizens in our region. The above Graph 2.0 and Table 5.0 highlight this by showing income levels, and number of

Table 6.0 Paid Agricultural Work in the Thunder Bay District Agricultural Census 2001

	Total Number of Farms Reporting	# of Weeks Paid Work Reported
Total Weeks of Paid Work (in past year)	98	12,806
Paid work, Year Round	43	6,477
Paid Work, Seasonal or Temporary	79	6329

weeks people are working, as a sign of the economic impact of farming in our community. The over 12,800 weeks of paid work was listed above would work out to about 245 Full Time Equivalents. In addition there would be unpaid work provided

by the owners and their families.

There are many challenges facing farmers today. All farm operators are feeling pressures to expand which leads to increased costs and the resulting lack of profit margin. Consumers continue to insist on low prices and high quality food. Some current issues causing concern include the new nutrient management guidelines; electricity costs; BSE and Avian Flu; as well as property assessment and wildlife damage (Debra Pretty Strasthof, 2004).

Focus Group Results

A focus group was held in the spring of 2004, which brought together vegetable and fruit growers, cattle and dairy farmers and egg producers to discuss some of their concerns around local farming.

“Beef stock was at 2000-2500\$ a pop now we’ve lost that income BSE. If you are looking at the past year we’ve probably lost \$30,000 just in the last year just on beef sales because of the BSE thing.”

—Dairy Farmer

The main challenges identified by farmers in the Thunder Bay area are as follows:

- Short growing season,
 - High production costs,
 - Infrastructure (parts hard to get),
 - Getting product to market,
 - Access to specialists,
 - Rainfall and crop insurance
 - Rules and regulations examples include: the nutrient management plan; water quality; handling gasoline storage; feed; and waste water; pesticides
- Kids leaving the farm for other jobs
 - Funding being cut to coordinate farm organizations
 - Federally inspected abattoir would allow cattle farmers to sell beef to grocers, restaurants and institutions, also unable to process chickens in Thunder Bay must ship to Manitoba
 - Decline in number of farms; there were 66 dairy producers in 1992 and only 44 in 2001.(Patterson, D. 2003)

“A good example is Dorion and Pass lake are producing hay and the government drew a line so now they can no longer sell their hay to farmers in Thunder Bay, because of these bugs that are in southern Ontario east of us so they drew the line not thinking that Pass lake is just a half hour from here and are a part of the Thunder Bay farming community and that cut off their sales of product and came into affect last summer.”

—Farmer

Farmers discussed some of the opportunities and benefits of farming in the Thunder Bay area listed below:

Benefits

- Farmer can sell directly to customer
- Cold climate and isolation decreases the number of diseases therefore less use of pesticides
- Easy to stay small here and I can run it on my own
- Property taxes are lower
- Cost of living is lower
- Country market does a great job at collaborating Co-operative advertising
- Specialized research via the Agricultural Research Station.

Opportunities

- BSE and Avian Flu is an opportunity for educating the public about where their food is coming from
- Land available for farming is inexpensive to buy, or to rent.
- Additional research on what crops can grow in our area
- Wood ash from Bowater can be used as a substitute for lime to increase production
- Wholesale greenhouses could diversify crops

"I see tremendous opportunity because so much of our food is being brought in by truck. I think we need to capitalize on some of those products. And some of it has to be done on a fairly large scale which is kind of hard for our young entrepreneurs to go into that. We need to have capital money available and the opportunities are here but we need somebody who is willing to take that risk."

—Farmer

Where Products are Being Sold Locally

Focus group participants from the farming community reported that their products are being sold at the farm gate, markets (farmers and country), grocery stores, door-to-door/home delivery, wholesaler (mainly for tomatoes, potatoes, eggs, and milk), and on a small scale to restaurants.

A small study was undertaken by a group of students at Lakehead University (LU) that looked at where local producers are selling their products as well as which stores in Thunder Bay are selling locally produced items. The findings reflected those of the farmer focus group with the addition of outlets such as convenience stores, hotels, local butchers and deli's; one farmer stated that they were selling their product in surrounding smaller communities.

This study also found that many retail food outlets in Thunder Bay are selling locally produced/grown items. Selling mainly bakery items, potatoes, eggs, milk, and a variety of seasonal vegetables. Retailers are also selling numerous products produced by local people, such as meat-balls, sausages, perogies, and cabbage rolls. One local retailer says they try to deal local as much as possible, but products have to be high quality at competitive prices. He finds that fewer farmers are coming to him with products to sell. He used to sell corn, cabbage, dill, strawberries, and blueberries. A complete copy of the results from this grow local study are found in the Appendix.

The Thunder Bay Country Market at the Food Fair August 2003

"The Country Market in a way is the yellow pages for agricultural community"

—Farmer



Creating new farming businesses or expanding present businesses in the Thunder Bay Agricultural region would require:

- Access to capital to buy land, equipment, etc
- Market research
- Information availability and education around starting a farming business
- Reinstatement of the Rural Organization Specialist (ROS) position

A survey done in 2002 by the Grow Local Committee of the Thunder Bay Food action Network found that 63% of those growers/producers who responded felt they would be interested in selling more product. And 69% felt they had the capacity to expand at this time but they felt they faced some barriers including lack of capital funding, lack of continuous farmers market (one day per week only); competition from cheap out of town produce; legal aspects; weather conditions limit supply; and labour availability and affordability.

Local food and the low-income population:

There are a number of activities which bring local food to low-income people:

- Dairy farmers can donate a minimum of 30 L of milk to the food bank and then the processors donate an equal amount. Milk comes directly off their monthly quota and is sent to a local food bank/program.
- The gleaning project low-income people are brought out to the farm to pick fruit or vegetables
- Donation of leftovers after the Country Market to hot meal programs
- Low end cuts of beef made available

Relationship between Citizens and Agricultural

Almost unanimously farmers felt that very few citizens in our area know that farming exists or about the challenges farmers face in Thunder Bay. However the group felt that there is a pocket of people who do, such as those attending the Farmer's and Country Market. A recent survey done by the Country Market found that the majority of shoppers at the market were 50 years and older. Others in the focus group identified a younger consumer aged 25-45. The marketing focus right now is to target younger people, which is why a group of farmers attended the trade show to distribute the new buy Farm Fresh brochure (Appendix D).

The future of agriculture in the Thunder Bay area

Some of the focus group participants felt agriculture in Thunder Bay would possibly disappear, where others saw tremendous opportunities here, such as – fish farming, using steam from industry for greenhouses. There was a general concern about maintaining the critical numbers of farmers (i.e.the dairy business) because of the funding they help provide to support things like the research station. In his thesis "A Long-term Viability Study of the Dairy Industry: A Case Study of Thunder Bay" Dennis Patterson a Lakehead University student, found that the dairy producers and experts he interviewed were optimistic about the dairy industry in the region (Patterson, 2003). He found that these farmers were willing to take risks with new technology and have the benefit of a fertile land base.

Everyone was concerned about the new rules and regulations and how they would be able to pay to implement them, and questioned whether consumers would be willing to absorb some

of the cost. As well, it was mentioned that net incomes are going down and farmers have to supplement with work off the farm, in addition insurance is increasingly hard to get.

“It is a fact that as long as there are people there is going to be a need for agriculture the only thing is, is whose going to provide it and ... you have to encourage people to get into it. Farmers are not stupid people, farmers have a lot of brains and it's just as respectable a job as being an engineer or a teacher and those kinds of things. In some ways being a farmer is really overwhelming the amount of responsibility and diversity of knowledge you have to have. We've had school groups through our farm, and I think that is one of the things that amazes them, the amount of things you have to remember when you run a dairy farm in some ways it's overwhelming but as a way of life it is something I enjoy.”

—Dairy Farmer

Hunting and Gathering

Another way people have traditionally fed themselves is through hunting and gathering practices. Gathering of fruits including wild strawberries, raspberries and blueberries have always played a tasty role in what people in our region eat. However, to define the amount of fruit harvested in a given year is outside the scope of this study.

Contacting the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to find out how many licenses/tags were sold for bird, fish, moose and deer might allow us to estimate the impact of these foods on the diet. However, at this time it was not possible for me to retrieve these numbers.

There is also the issue of animals that are seized by the MNR because people do not have tags or animals that are killed on the road. At present the MNR has a policy that is under revision around the use of these animals. In the past animals (approximately 12 moose per year) were donated to various agencies and they had only to pay for the butchering charge.

Part 5 - Conclusions

This report is but a small piece of the local food system puzzle.

Many people are still going hungry with those living on social assistance, single parent headed households, and aboriginal persons being at highest risk. We know this as we have seen the numbers of people at food banks and other meal programs rising every year. The increase in food costs of 9% in Thunder Bay since 1998, also has a significant impact. Individuals and families on low-incomes especially are concerned with the cost of meat, dairy, vegetables and fruit.

We know that health is greatly influenced by nutrition. Many people are affected by inadequate nutrition leading to chronic disease as well as an increased incidence of low-birth weight babies. Adults in the focus groups found that they felt a sense of hopelessness, increased stress and illness, as well as isolation. Healthy eating in childhood helps to promote optimal growth and intellectual development and leads the way to preventing disease. Families reported that their children were tired, cranky and had a hard time concentrating when they had not had enough to eat.

Another learning was that the people in our community are very generous in helping to respond to hunger via donations to food banks and other meal programs. In Thunder Bay in

2003 over 250,000 meals were served and more than 27,000 hampers were distributed. The food programs that exist can be seen only as band-aid solutions to the problem of hunger. Barriers such as accessibility (lack of transportation), eligibility, amount of food provided, and cost were associated with many programs.

Food programs like community kitchens and gardens create great skill building and social environments but may not contribute as much direct food supplementation as needed by those in these programs. Education gained in these programs is key in increasing skills around growing your own, cooking and preserving food. Participants felt that one of the most important things was confidentiality in programs and respect afforded them by staff or volunteers.

The community mapping project and development of a list of food resources in our community will be useful to service providers and the general public. Mapping of income levels of the population in Thunder Bay with the food action programs showed that many programs are concentrated in low income areas. Less programs are available as you move away from the downtown cores. Grocery stores are also spread out quite evenly throughout most neighbourhoods although a couple of the lower income neighbourhoods lack a close grocery store.

Farmers in the Thunder Bay area are presently offering local residents fresh produce, a variety of meats, milk and cheese etc. This allows local residents an opportunity to purchase food directly from a farmer and in turn allows farm families to make a living. The farming community faces many obstacles such as a short growing season, high costs of production, new rules and regulations, kids leaving the farm, the lack of a federally inspected abattoir, and getting products to market.

In conclusion, there was a general consensus among focus group members that food in our community was not affordable to everyone but it is accessible to individuals and families if they have money and transportation to get it. Food is no longer a human right it's a commodity and the feeling was that food was at present not a political or a societal priority. The main concern went back to poverty – without enough money people cannot afford to feed themselves especially with rising costs of food and transportation.

Finally, another concern expressed throughout the study was the fact that many people are just unaware of where their food comes from, a problem to be rectified by increased education and availability of locally produced food.

Part 6 – Recommendations

Collaborative actions among a number of key stakeholders are needed to address the food security issues outlined in this report. Our recommendations for action are summarized into four main categories:

1. Food and Nutrition Skills

- Provide education for community residents around budgeting, canning and preserving and general cooking and shopping skills.

- Ensure sustainability of Community Nutrition Promoter to aid in providing resources to individuals and families on food related programs.
- Develop more Community gardens to provide opportunities for local residents to develop skills, meet new people and grow their own food.
- Encourage more Dietitian hours that are available to provide counselling services to the general public.

2. Promote and Support Local Food

- Promote local food production and consumption through education such as continuing to publish the Farm Fresh Products handout
- Promote the existing Country Market and Farmer's Markets and encourage them to operate more often.
- Work with local grocery stores and farmers to encourage more local food availability in stores
- Encourage investments in the food industry/system for their role in increasing employment in our area.
- Explore the idea of establishing a federally inspected abattoir in Thunder Bay or work with stores to encourage use of products from the provincial abattoir
- Support the continuation of the research station position in Thunder Bay

3. Community Response

- Work towards increasing the number of child nutrition programs making them universal in all schools and available to all children.
- Work towards public policies and experts to help make breastfeeding more acceptable and possible to mothers
- Work towards improving access to fruits and vegetables and other perishables at food banks/hamper programs.
- Explore solutions to issues surrounding Transportation to and from food programs or stores (Some ideas are shuttle, co-op, bus tickets)
- Continue with partnerships like the pizza project possibly expand, the FAN and grow local group
- Develop partnerships with Grocery Stores and city planners to benefit low income earners

4. Building Advocacy and Strategies

- Work together to change policies to ensure that Social Assistance and minimum wage are adequate to support health and well-being.
- Present assessment results to the City of Thunder Bay Community Services Committee to increase action and awareness of issues around food
- Share results with the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce to encourage involvement by the private sector in local food security initiatives.
- Community-based food and nutrition programs could create employment opportunities for presently unemployed individuals to help address the food insecurity they face.
- Share assessment results with community organizations and groups that are working with low-income families.

Part 7 - References

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Appendix 1 - List of Food Resources

Food Banks	Address	Phone Number	Other
Thunder Bay Food Bank	129 Miles ST.	626-9231	Supplies food to those in need. Limit once a month, must bring ID with current address. Open Tuesday and Friday 9:00am-11:00am (except the first Tuesday and Friday of every month)
Lakehead Coalition Food Bank	394 Waverley ST	623-2712	Open every 2 nd Thursday, 1:00pm-3:00 pm. Provides food for anyone and maybe be able to help with special need requirements e.g. diabetes, pregnancy, lactation, etc. No ID required.
T. Bay Christian Community Centre	132 Dease ST	623-8184	Produce available every Tuesday at 1:30pm
Rural Cupboard Food Bank	Kakabeka Falls	935-2202	Open ever third Wednesday, 10:00am – 1:00pm, also open for emergencies. For anyone outside the city limits. Must show ID.
"People that Love" Crisis Centre	920 Sprague ST	623-3828	Food available on an emergency basis on Wednesday and Friday 9:00am-11:00am. Closed during July and August and other holidays.
St. Vincent North Ward	664 Red River RD	344-4898	Food hampers for families only living in the North ward. Limit 4 times a year. Phone for delivery (Mondays and Thursdays).
St. Vincent South Ward	1019 Brown ST	577-3464	Food hampers for families only living in the south ward. Limit once every 3 months. Must show ID. Call before 3:30pm to arrange an appointment.
St. Thomas Anglican Food Cupboard	1400 Edward ST S	623-3608	Westford area only. Limit once a month. Open Friday 10:30am – 11:30am. Closed July and August. Phone before coming.
Current River Churches Food Cupboard	494 Leslie AVE	683-6051	For people in Current River only. Open Tuesdays 10:00am –12:00pm. Can be accessed every two weeks. Must show ID.
Lakehead University Food Bank	955 Oliver RD	343-8850	For University students only. Limit once a month. Open also during summer Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30 pm. If no one at food bank, go to Student Union office.
Confederation College Food Bank	1450 Nakina DR	475-6110	Open to the members of the College community only. Open for emergencies. No limit-depends on needs and availability. Call for appointment.
Aids T.Bay Mother's Cupboard		345-1516	Emergency food strictly for AIDS Thunder Bay clients. Contact AIDS Thunder Bay for details.
Salvation Army	545 Cumberland ST		
Christmas Cheer Campaign	1000 Fort William RD	622-2531	
Shelter House	80 Simpson ST	623-8182	Daily meals provided. Breakfast 6am-7:30am, Lunch 2pm-3pm, Supper 7:30pm-9pm. No food hampers. Bagged lunches available.
Community Gardens	Address	Phone Number	Other
Academy Community Garden	80 Academy DR	346-6863	

Aboriginal Head Start Garden	1610 John ST RD	768-2342	
Castlegreen Community Garden	1000 Castlegreen DR		
County Fair Community Garden	370 County BLVD	768-9812	
Lakehead University Garden	955 Oliver RD		
Regent St. Community Garden	132 Regent ST	474-6794	
Westfort Community Garden	1315 Crawford AVE	475-0326	
Community Kitchens	Address	Phone Number	Other
Aboriginal Head Start Garden	1610 John ST RD	768-2342	9:00am-12:00pm, 2x a month, Wednesday morning 1pm-4pm, 2x a month Wednesday afternoon
T. Bay Christian Community Centre	132 Dease ST	623-8184	
Anishnawbe Mushkiki	29 Royston CT	343-4843	Thursday 1pm-4pm, one adult group and one youth group each twice a month
Beendigan	1111 Victoria AVE	623-9579	Thursdays 10am-2:30pm twice a month
Beendigan	541 Luci CT	622-5445	Flexible twice a month
Brain Injury Services	600 McKenzie St.	345-1188	
Canadian Hearing Society	600 McKenzie St.		
Indian Friendship Centre	401 Cumberland ST	345-5840	Bi- weekly
LACL	600 McKenzie St.	345-2551 #4	2 kitchens Wednesday mornings and Wednesday afternoons
LPH	600 McKenzie St.	343-4300 #4493	3 kitchens x once a month
Metis CAPC	226 May ST S	624-5012	Wednesday 1-3:30pm
NorWest CHC - Ogden Site	525 Simpson ST	622-8235	2 Kitchens; One on Wednesday 11am-3pm, Another on Fridays 10am-2pm
Operation Hope	257 Park AVE	767-1705	
Our Kids Count	159 Ravenwood CRES	346-6863	Thursdays 9:30am-12:30pm
Our Kids Count	517 Halton ST	768-9812	Mondays 9:30am-12:30pm
Our Kids Count	1315 Crawford AVE	475-0326	Mondays 9:30am-12:30pm
Salvation Army Single Parents Program	283 Pearl ST	345-9707	Twice a month Wednesdays 10am-2pm
Pre/PostNatal Programs	Address	Phone Number	Other
Pregnancy and Health	574 Memorial ST	577-1532	
St. Patrick's HighSchool Maternity	621 Selkirk ST S	623-5218	Program for teenage mothers to finish their education and learn about parenting.
Beendigan	1111 Victoria AVE	623-9579	Pre/postnatal programs for aboriginal mothers, including community kitchens, food packages and milk coupons. For program participants only.
Beendigan	541 Luci CT	622-5445	
Metis CAPC	226 May ST S	624-5012	
NorWest CHC - Ogden Site	525 Simpson ST	622-8235	Pre/postnatal services, community kitchens, food supplements and childcare. For people in Ogden East End
Our Kids Count	159 Ravenwood CRES	346-6863	Pre/postnatal programs, community kitchens. Milk and food vouchers for program participants only.
Our Kids Count	517 Halton ST	768-9812	
Our Kids Count	1315 Crawford AVE	475-0326	
Salvation Army Single Parents	283 Pearl ST	345-9707	Pre/postnatal programs including

Program			community kitchens and milk coupons. For program participants only.
Child Nutrition Programs	Address	Phone Number	Other
Claude Garton School	414 Grenville AVE	623-3073	
St. James School	243 St. James ST	344-7300	
NorWest CHC - Ogden Site	525 Simpson ST	622-8235	
Kingsway School	315 Empire AVE	623-3073	
Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School	315 Edward ST N	623-8914	
Forest Park School	270 Windsor ST	623-3073	
Heath Park School	1115 Yonge ST	475-5412	
Limbrick-James Resource Centre	87 Limbrick PL	623-3073	
McKellar Park School	301 Archibald ST	344-7300	
Ogden Community School	600 McKenzie ST	622-9513	
Our Lady of Charity School	370 County BLVD	623-0354	
SAM-MISOL	435 Balmoral ST	622-6412	
Sir Winston Churchill Highschool	130 Churchill DR	473-8100	
Sherbrook School	110 Sherbrooke ST	623-3073	
St. John School	380 Ray BLVD	623-3073	
St. Jude School	345 Ogden ST	623-5989	
St. Martin's School	115 Mary ST W	623-0354	
Vale Community Centre	420 Vale AVE	623-0354	
Whitefish Valley School	RR#1 Hwy 595 Kakabaeka Falls	475-3181	
Hot Meals	Address	Phone Number	Other
Salvation Army	545 Cumberland	345-7319	
Aboriginal Head Start Garden	1610 John St. Rd.	768-2342	
Shelter House	80 Simpson St.	623-8182	Daily meals provided. Breakfast from 6am-7:30am, Lunch 2-3pm, Dinner 7:30pm-9pm
Dew Drop Inn	286 Red River Rd.	345-0481	Provides daily meals, 2:30pm – 4:00pm
The Salvation Army Soup Van	Bay St	345-7319	
The Salvation Army Soup Van	Miles and May	345-7319	
Grocery/ Retail Stores	Address	Phone Number	Other
A & P	505 Arthur St. w	475-0276	
A & P	1101 Arthur St W	577-3910	
A & P	640 River St.	345-8342	
Bay Quality Meats	282 Bay St.	344-9501	
Bulk Zone	485 Memorial Ave.	346-2270	Bulk foods including spices, flours, pastas, candy, nut butters etc.
Bulk Zone	109 Regina Ave.	767-1203	Bulk foods including spices, flours, pastas, candy, nut butters etc.
Bulk Zone	131 Frederica St.	622-2855	Bulk foods including spices, flours, pastas, candy, nut butters etc.
George's Market	14 Balsam St.	345-7021	
Imported Oriental Foods	270 Cumberland St. N	344-5118	Japanese and Asian Food
Just Basics Skafs	470 Hodder Ave.	683-3930	
Kelly's Nutrition Centre	820 Red River Rd	345-1333	
Maltese Grocery	301 Pearl St.	344-5911	

Nature's Goodness	1020 Dawson Rd.	767-0161	
Northwood Foods	425 Edward St. N	577-3363	
Nutrition Corner	142 Centennial Square	623-4333	
The Odena	Kakabeka Falls	475-4573	
Olsen's Store	South Gilles	577-7071	
Quality Market	146 Centennial Sq.	622-2858	
Quality Market	1020 Dawson Rd.	768-1984	
Real Canadian Superstore	600 Harbour Expressway		
Real Canadian Wholesale Club	319 Fort William Rd.	346-4669	
Renco Foods	161 Court St. S.	345-3947	
Safeway	115 Arthur st. W	475-0301	
Safeway	70 Court St. N	345-0439	
Safeway	1015 Dawson Rd.	768-1632	
Tapak's Meats and Grocery	601 McTavish St.	623-5200	
Ward Grocery	500 Syndicate Ave. N	623-7807	
Westfort Foods Inc.	111 Frederica St. E	623-4220	
Workers Co-Op of Consumers Ltd.	955 Walsh St. W	475-3133	
Bakeries	Address	Phone Number	Other
Agostino Deli	230 Leland Ave S	475-0475	
Bennett's Bakery and Deli	899 Tungsten St	345-5951	
Carol's Cakes and Bakery	425 Edward St. N	577-0321	
Current River Bakery	301 Grenville Av	683-8911	
Dagwoods Bakery and Deli	290 Brock St E	623-8995	
Donato's Bakery	161 Court St. S	345-7273	
Eats and Sweets by Grace		767-8809	
European Bakery	640 Simpson St	623-2344	
Five Star Bakery	225 Pacific Ave	623-8463	
Five Star Bakery	310 Mountdale Ave	475-8945	
Golden Bakery and Pizza	1500 James St. S	475-5688	
Harri Bakery	223 Algoma St.	344-8588	
Holland Bakery	1016 Victoria Ave E	622-5011	
Kivela Bakery	111 Secord St	345-6233	
La Dolce Vita Pastries	76 Algoma St. S	344-5800	
Mom's Gluten Free Kitchen		623-0242	
Nucci's Bake A Deli	801 Red River Rd	767-4501	
Nucci's Bake A Deli	400 Balmoral St	622-5552	
Roma Bakery	401 Frederica St W	475-5313	
Sweet Interlude		625-0155	
Vienna Bakery	335 Cumberland St N	344-8791	
Gamma Mac's Bakery	RR#1 Kakabeka Falls	577-7772	
Murillo Bakery	RR#1 4552 Oliver Rd	935-2100	
Take the Cake	386 Cumberland St N	343-4859	
Weston Bakeries Ltd	650 Harold Cres	623-8385	
Butchers	Address	Phone Number	Other
Bay Quality Meats	282 Bay St	344-9501	
Brent Park Store	85 Brent St	345-6931	
Country Good Meats and Deli	310 Mountdale Ave	577-8413	
Country Good Meats and Deli	109 Regina Ave	768-0303	
European Meats and Deli	1149 Carrick St	623-6322	

Miscellaneous	Address	Phone Number	Other
Thunder Bay Meat Processing	RR#1 Oliver Rd Murillo	935-2911	Beef-all year; goat-all year; lamb-all year; pork-all year
Country Market CLE Dove Building	425 Northern Ave	622-1406	April to May-Saturday 9am-1pm June to September- Saturday 8am-1pm October to December- Saturday 9am-1pm
Thunder Bay Farmers' Market		473-9597	<u>Victoriaville</u> : Tues-Friday 9am-4pm (all year) <u>Wilson St. Park</u> : Wed and Sat. 8am-11:30am (May 29-November 13) <u>Northwood Park</u> : Sat. 1pm-4pm (May 29-Nov. 13) <u>Labour Centre</u> : Thurs. 5pm-9pm (July 15-Sept. 23) <u>Westminster Church/Grandview Mall</u> : Wed. 1-4pm (Aug. 4- Oct. 27)
Parmalat Canada	134 Waterloo St. S	623-8233	
Farms/Market Gardens	Address	Phone Number	Other
B&B Farms	RR#5 Hwy 17 P7C 5M9	939-1446	Potatoes- all year
Oliver Lake Farm	132 Couch Rd Kakabeka Falls	475-9687	
Belluz	RR6 Candy Mountain Dr.	475-5173	Strawberries-July; Raspberries-July/August; Corn-Aug/Sept.; Pumpkins-October; vegetables- July/Oct; Straw and Hay-September/October; Preserves-July/Oct.; Tours- May-Oct.
Bill's Garden	RR#3 Boundry Road P7C 4V2	473-5754	Vegetables- July/October
Breukelman's Mountainview	RR#3 Boundry Road P7C 4V2	475-9584	
Breukelman's Potato Farm	RR#6 P7C 5N5	939-2020	Potatoes-all year
Candy Mountain Farm	RR#6 Candy Mountain Rd	473-8338	Beef-all year, Pork-all year
Debruins Green House	RR#3 Hwy 61 P7C 4V2	475-7545	Tomatoes-May/Nov.; Vegetables- June/Sept.; Flowers- May/July
Garden of Zsu Zsa	444 Mary St E P7E 4K3	622-3075	
Glenn/Ron Farms	186 Morrow Rd RR#1MurilloP0T 2G0	935-3362	
Goga's Garden	137 Nicholette Rd RR#1 Murillo P0T 2G0	935-2749	
M & M gardens	RR#3 Boundry Dr P7C 4V2	628-0203	
Mark's Good Food Farm	RR#1 South Gilles, P0T 2V0	747-5403	
Misty Springs Fish Farm Inc	443 John St. Bsmt P7B 1X6	762-4666	
Mountainview Farms	RR#6 Gellespie Rd P7C 5N5	475-5110	
Paradis Apiaries	RR#! South Gillies P0T 2V0	473-8202	Honey-all year; Preserves-all year
Tarrymore Farms	Box 9 RR#! Hwy 595 South Gilles P0T 2V0	475-3138	Lamb-all year; Eggs-all year
Thunder Oak Cheese Farm	RR#3 Boundry Rd P7C 4V2	628-0175	Cheese-all year
Vanderwee's Poultry Farm	RR 11 Townline Rd. P7B 5E2	935-2507	Eggs-all year
Wild Berry Ranch	RR#7 Hwy 61 P7C 5V5	964-2757	
Joanne Barrie	531 Barrie Dr, RR6 P7C	473-9597	

	5N5		
Clarence Heatwole	RR1 Stratton, ON PoW 1No	487-2370	
Sandra Johnstone	225 Pamona Dr, P7C 4T9	473-9336	
Joyce Kawesa	Victoriaville Centre Mall, 711 Victorai Ave E, P7C 5X9	344-6482	
Vera Kotalik	64 Prospect Ave P7A 5L2	344-0321	
Frank Kurchina	RR11, 505 Belrose Rd, P7B 5E2	767-2559	
Torsti Landvik	175 Peter St, P7A 5H8	964-2042	
Dorothy McDonald	106 Blaquier St P7A 6T9	628-5757	
Mary Migay	RR17 Site 21A #7, P7B 6C2	767-7814	
Jeanette Momot	RR6 Thunder Bay, P7A 5N5	939-1233	
Lucy Perry	2288 Rosslyn Rd, Thunder Bay, P7C 4T9	474-0854	
Elsie Petryna	RR6 Thunder Bay, P7C 5N5	939-1942	
Leila Pettigrew	1665 Meryle Ave, Vickers Heights, On POT 2ZO	577-8596	
Kristine Renda	RR15 Onion Lake Rd P7B 5N1	767-7535	
Tammy Salatino	524 Empire Ave, P7E 4S4	622-7371	
Sandpiper Trees	RR6 #801 Hwy 130, Thunder Bay P7C 5N5	476-0470	
June Wall	12G 1055 Chippewa Rd P7J 1J3	622-3316	
Isobel Webster	4060 Garden Ave P7K 1E2	577-3077	
Rutland Williams	1100 Lincoln St Apt 406, P7E 5V7	623-6391	
Producers	Address	Phone Number	Other
Both Hands Bread			bread
Park Avenue Catering	244 Gratton Rd P7B 6C2	767-2364	
Mama Lou's Sausages	597 Yale Crt P7C 5K2	577-8790	
M's Marvelous Muffins & More	742 Sprague St P7E 1V6	622-1575	
P'Sizzle Garden	1101 Victoria Ave P7C 1B7	623-3384	
Thai Kitchen	65 Secord St P7B 3C6	345-1707	
Seymoure's Roti & Curry Shop	Apt 406 400 Lincoln St P7E 5V7	623-6391	
Strawberry Creek Smoked Meats	RR#1 Kaministiquia POT 1X0	767-1917	
Food For Seniors	Address	Phone Number	Other
Herb Carroll 55+ Centre	1100 Lincoln Street	625-2316	For individuals 55 and over. Hot lunches served Monday-Friday 12pm-12:30pm (\$4.00-\$7.00)
Meals on Wheels- Southward		625-3667	Services available for seniors, convalescents and individuals with disabilities. Nourishing meals delivered Monday-Friday 10:30am-12:30pm at \$5.50 for eligible clients. Can provide most therapeutic diets.

Meals on Wheels-Northward		684-2862	Services available for seniors, convalescents and individuals with disabilities. Nourishing meals delivered Monday-Friday 10:30am-12:30 pm at \$5.50 for eligible clients. Can provide most therapeutic diets.
Seniors Lunch A Month-NorWest Community Healthy Centres-Ogden Site	525 Simpson Street	622-8235	Soup and sandwich lunch on last Monday of each month 11:30am-1:00 pm (register only). For people in Ogden East End Only. Call Lawni for transportation information.
Thunder Bay 55+ Centre	700 River Street	684-2795	For individuals 55 and over. Hot lunches served Monday-Friday 11:30am-1:30pm (\$5.75 for main dish)

Appendix 2 - Budgeting for Food 2004

Eating a nutritious diet is important to help ensure optimal growth and development and to help prevent some chronic diseases. The Health Unit conducts a food cost survey every year in local grocery stores to calculate the cost of eating well in the District of Thunder Bay. These costs are based on a healthy diet including a variety of foods from Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. Often the money available for food is used to pay for other household expenses. So, you need to make sure to budget money just for food.

How can this information be used?

- ❖ To estimate what it might cost to feed individuals, a family or a group of people (like in group homes, shelters, students sharing a house) and compare it to incomes.
- ❖ To make up case studies for discussion in budgeting or education programs.
- ❖ To discuss the difficulty those with a limited income may have with being able to afford a nutritious diet.

Weekly Costs of Eating Well in the District of Thunder Bay*		
	Age	Cost
<i>Child</i>	1 year	\$15.44
	2-3 years	16.37
	4-6 years	21.67
<i>Boy</i>	7-9 years	26.11
	10-12 years	32.22
	13-15 years	37.59
	16-18 years	43.78
<i>Girl</i>	7-9 years	24.97
	10-12 years	29.57
	13-15 years	31.69
	16-18 years	30.25
<i>Man</i>	19-24 years	41.59
	25-49 years	40.30
	50-74 years	36.48
	75+ years	32.93
<i>Woman</i>	19-24 years	30.95
	25-49 years	29.38
	50-74 years	28.83
	75+ years	28.03

Weekly Costs of Eating Well in the District of Thunder Bay During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding*		
Age	Stage of Pregnancy or Breastfeeding	Cost
13-15 years:	1 st Trimester	\$34.64
	2 nd Trimester	36.46
	3 rd Trimester	36.46
	Breastfeeding	37.57
16-18 years:	1 st Trimester	34.65
	2 nd Trimester	37.08
	3 rd Trimester	37.08
	Breastfeeding	38.07
19-24 years:	1 st Trimester	33.77
	2 nd Trimester	35.94
	3 rd Trimester	35.94
	Breastfeeding	36.80
25-49 years:	1 st Trimester	32.34
	2 nd Trimester	34.31
	3 rd Trimester	34.31
	Breastfeeding	35.01

*Based on average prices from 6 stores during June, 2004.

Estimate Your Food Costs

Sample Household Food Cost Sheet		
Person	Age	Cost
Man	41	\$40.30
Woman	39	29.38
Boy	14	37.59
Girl	8	24.97
Subtotal = \$132.24		
$\frac{\$132.24 \times 1}{\text{week}} = \underline{\$132.24}$		
$\frac{\$132.24 \times 4.33}{\text{cost per week}} = \underline{\$572.60}$		
$\text{cost per week} \times 4.33 = \underline{\text{cost per month}}$		

- 1) Write down the sex and age for each person in your household.
- 2) Write down the weekly food cost for each person according to the tables on the other page.
- 3) Add up the food costs for your household to get a subtotal.
- 4) Since it costs more per person to feed a small group than to feed a larger group of people, you should adjust the subtotal according to the adjustment factor in the box to the right. Multiply the subtotal by the adjustment factor that is right for your household.
- 5) The weekly cost can be changed to a monthly cost by multiplying the total by 4.33.

Sample Household Food Cost Sheet		
Person	Age	Cost
Subtotal =		
$\text{_____} \times \text{_____} = \text{_____}$		
$\text{Subtotal} \times \text{adjustment} = \text{cost per week}$		
$\text{_____} \times \text{_____} = \text{_____}$		
$\text{cost per week} \times 4.33 = \text{cost per month}$		

Adjustment Factor

If you are feeding:

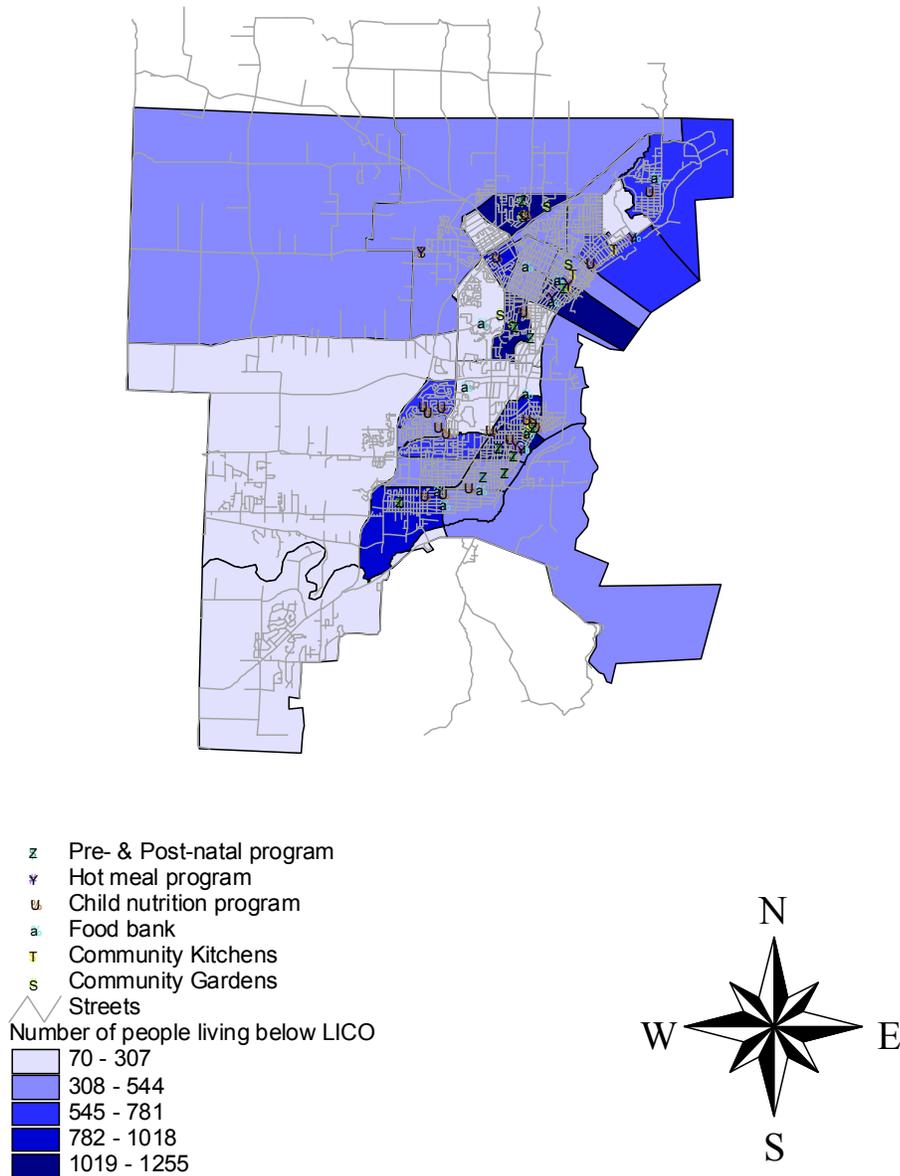
- 1 person – multiply by 1.15
- 2 people – multiply by 1.10
- 3 people – multiply by 1.05
- 4 people – multiply by 1
- 5 people – multiply by 0.95
- 6 people – multiply by 0.90

Caution!

- These calculations are a *guideline* for what you could be spending on food in order to stay healthy. It does not guarantee that you will be healthy by spending this amount. Eating a balanced diet based on Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating is the key to good nutrition.
- The food budget estimate does not include money for convenience foods, snack foods, eating out or for paper, personal hygiene and cleaning products. You need to budget extra money for these items.

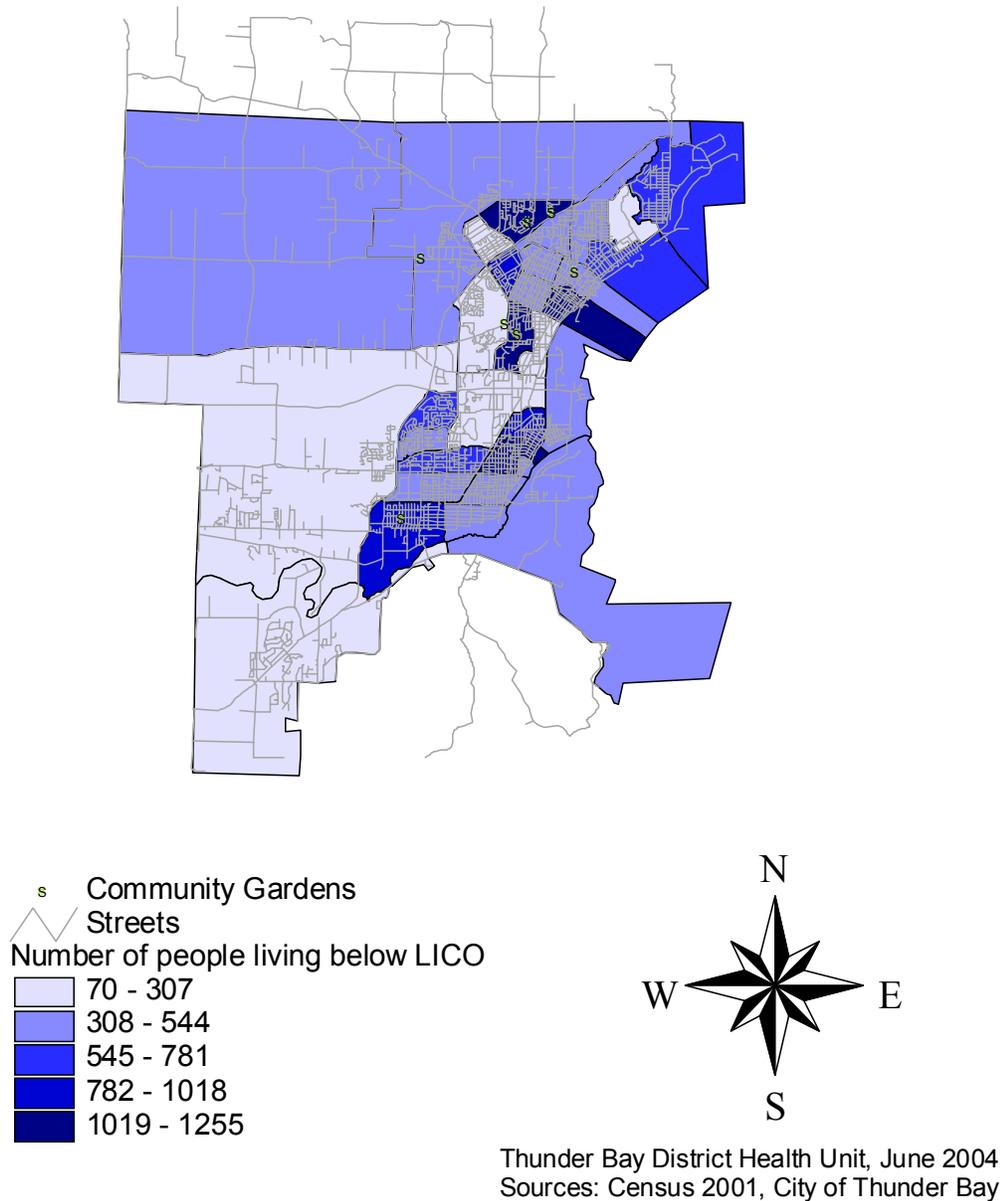
Distributed by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, 2004.

Total population below LICO in relation to community food programs, City of Thunder Bay, 2004

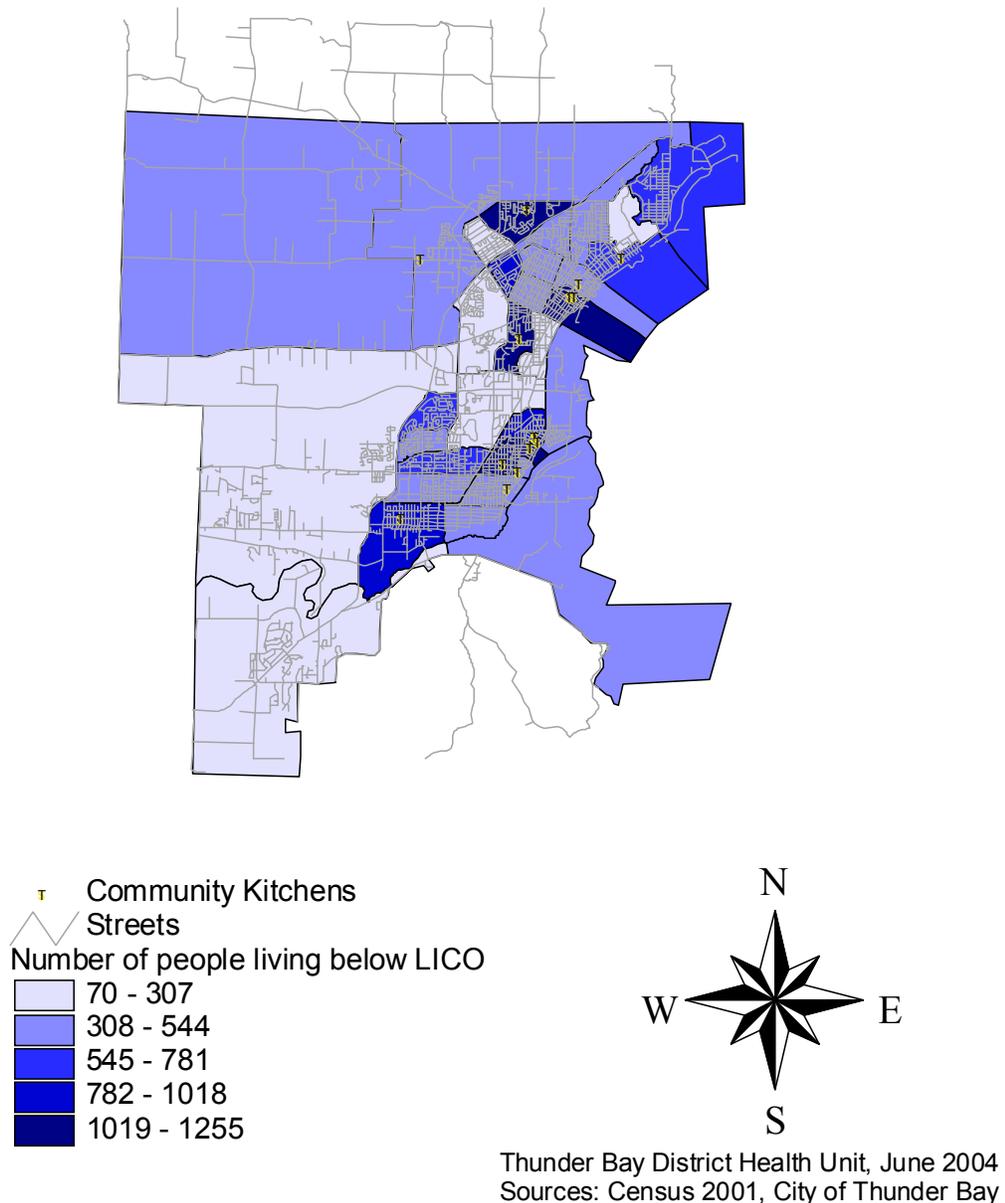


Thunder Bay District Health Unit, June 2004
Sources: Census 2001, City of Thunder Bay

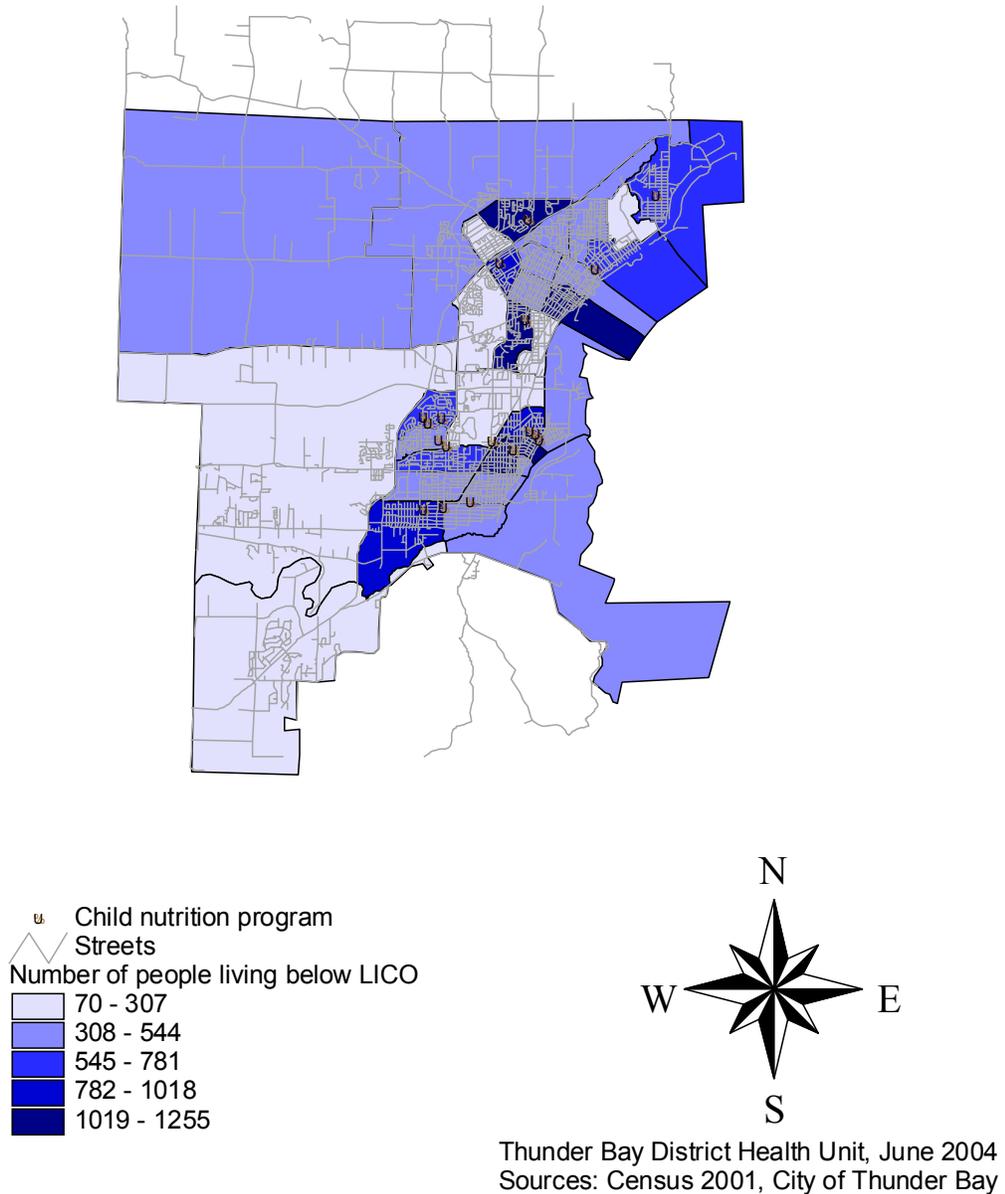
Total population below LICO in relation to community gardens, City of Thunder Bay, 2004



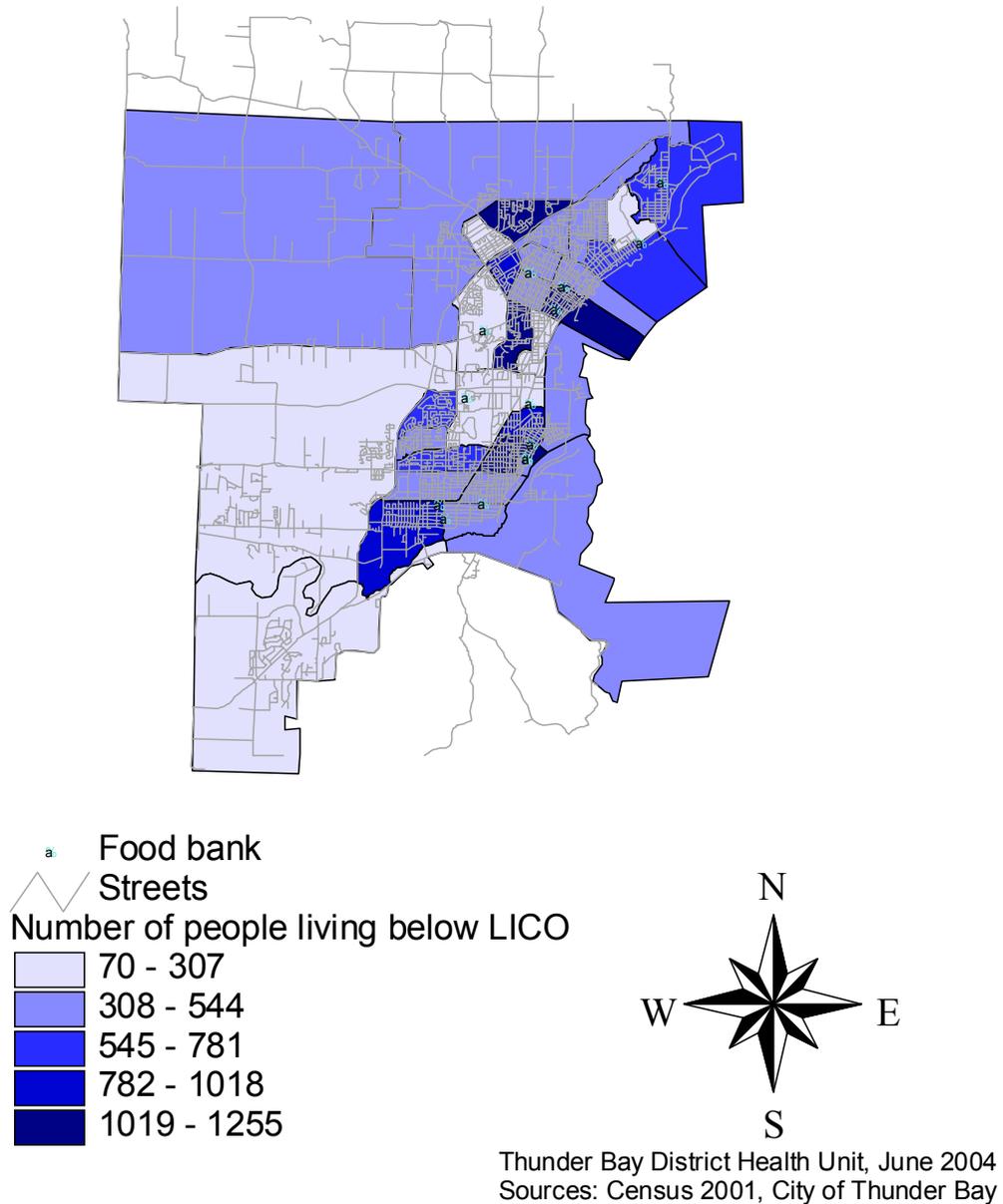
Total population below LICO in relation to community kitchens, City of Thunder Bay, 2004



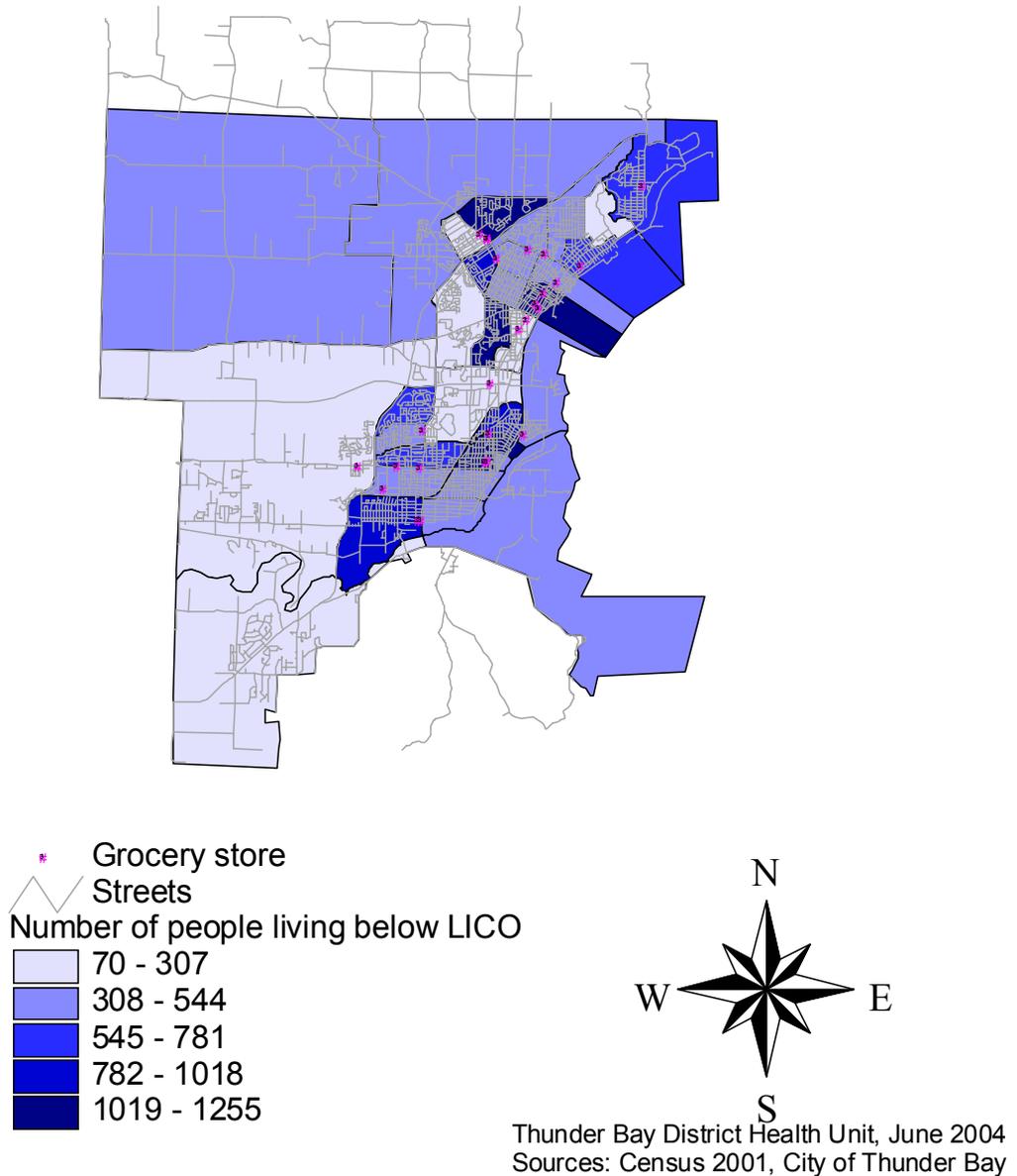
Total population below LICO in relation to child nutrition programs, City of Thunder Bay, 2004



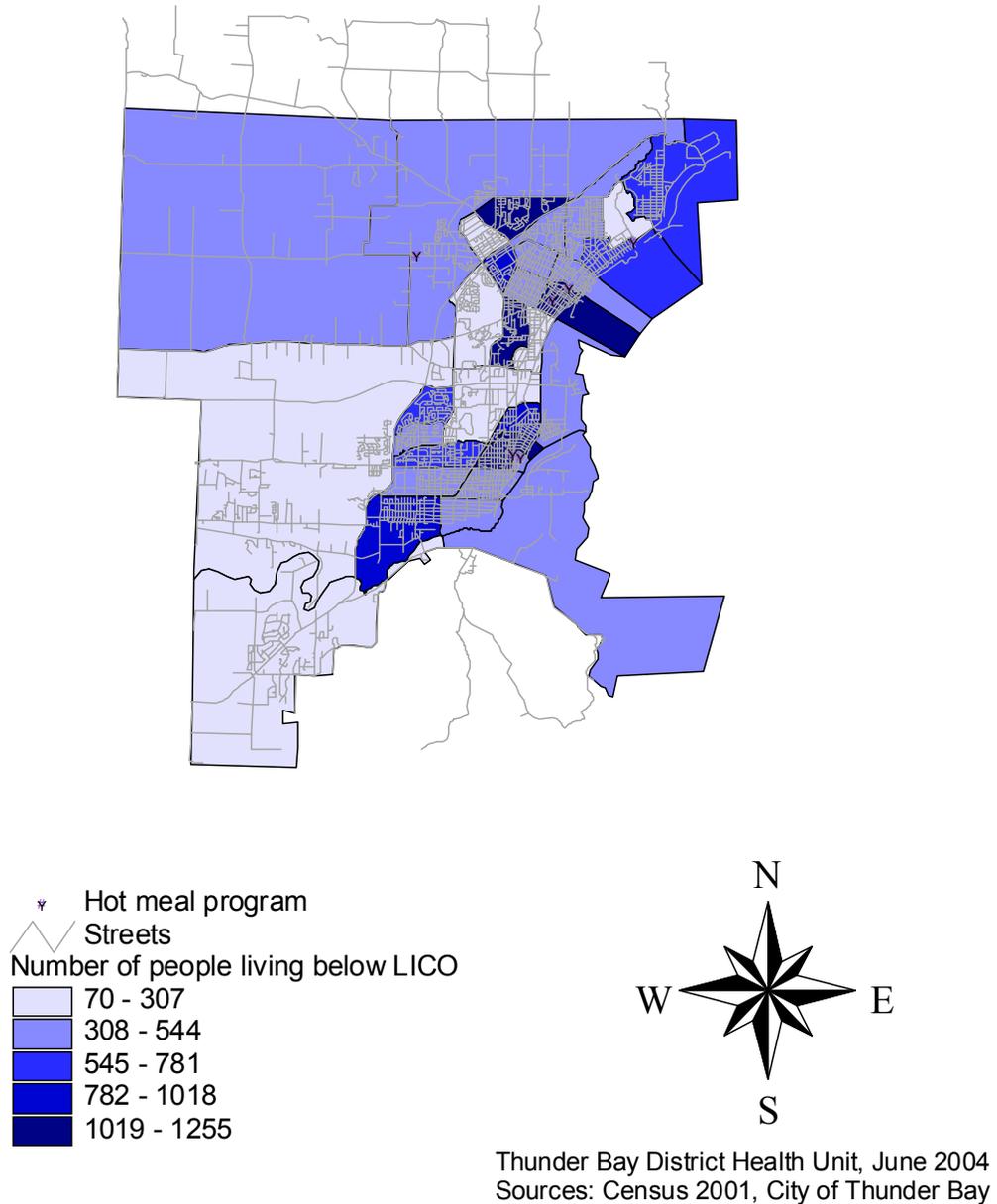
Total population below LICO in relation to food banks, City of Thunder Bay, 2004



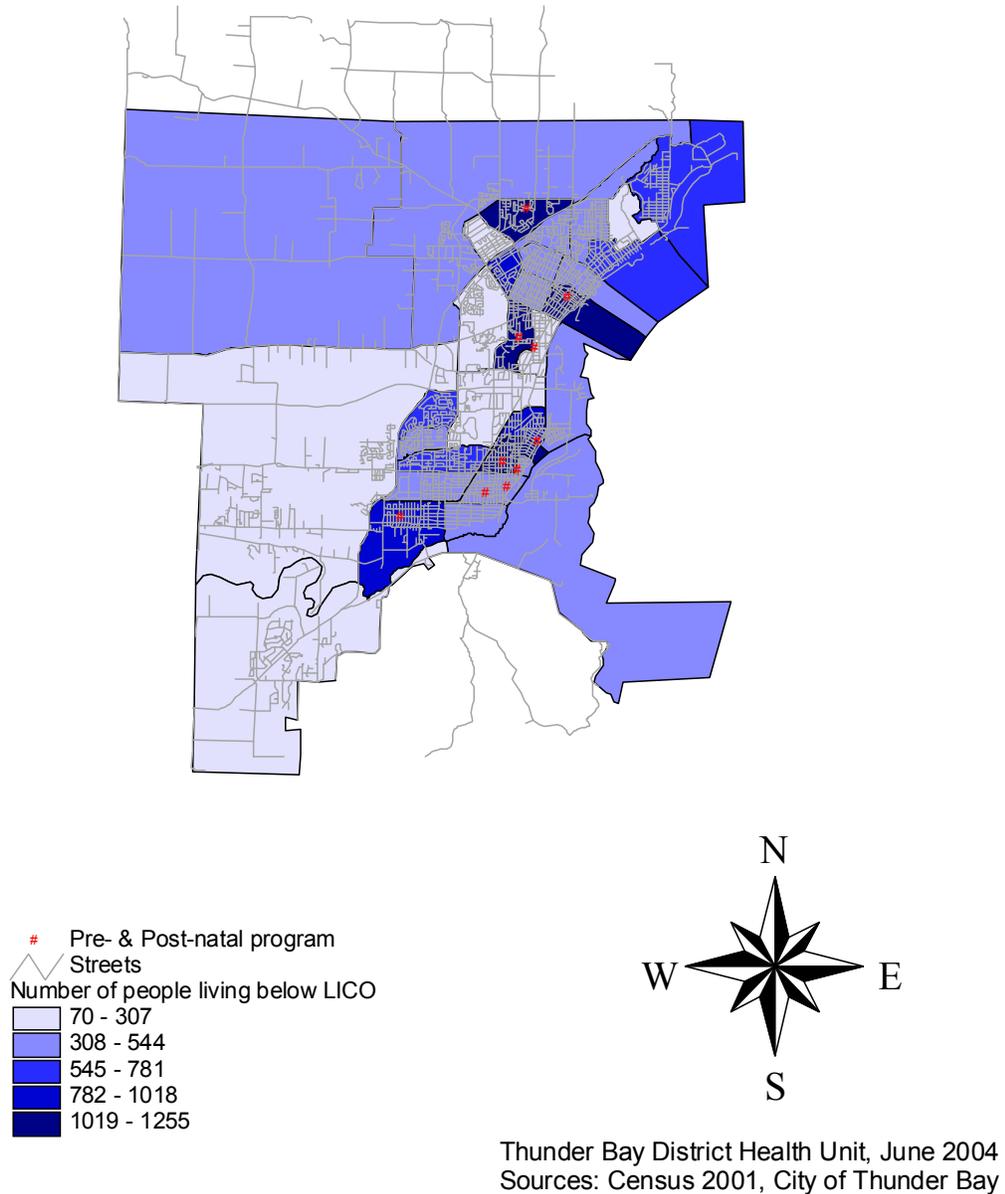
Total population below LICO, with grocery store locations. City of Thunder Bay, 2004



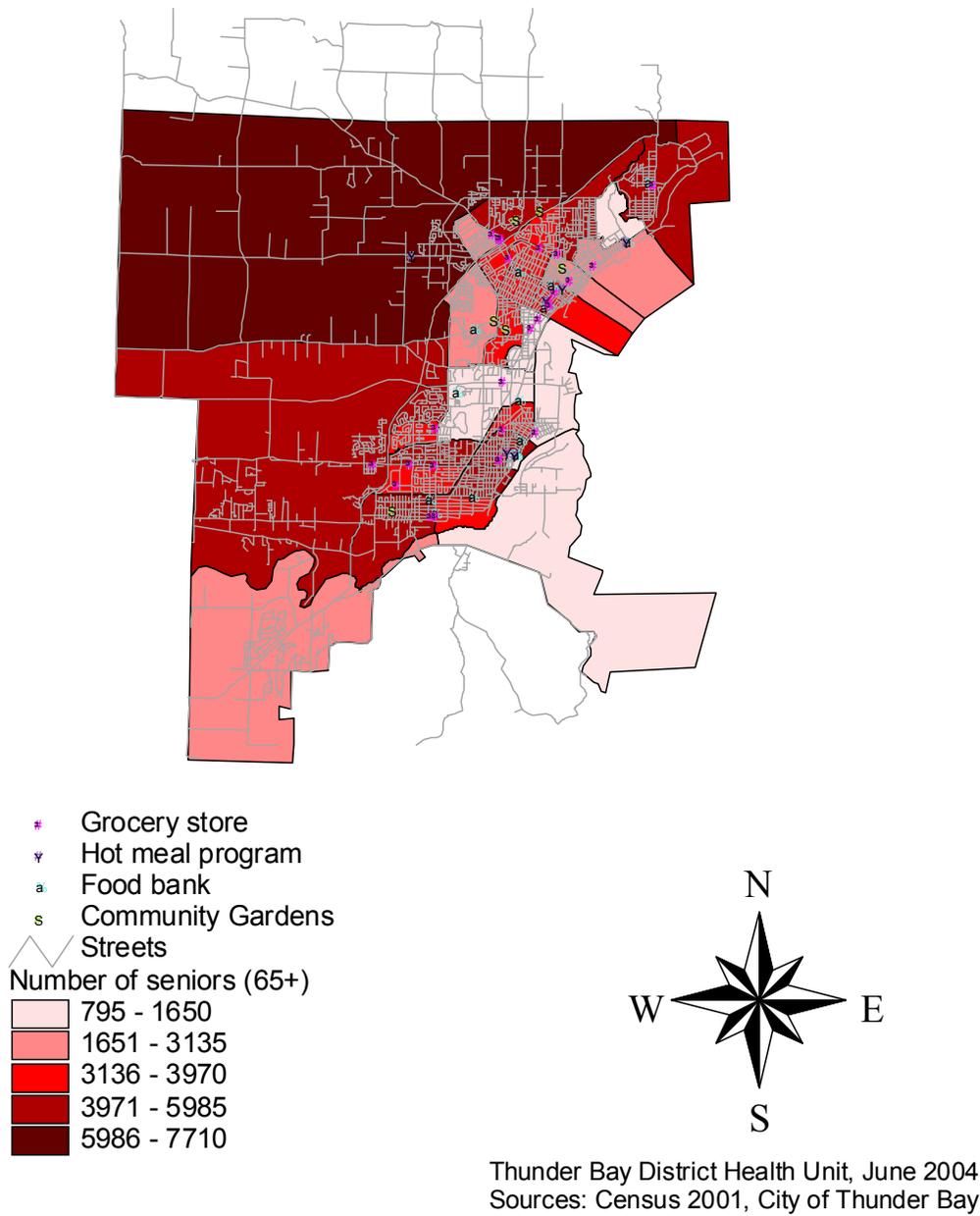
Total population below LICO in relation to hot meal programs, City of Thunder Bay, 2004



Total population below LICO in relation to prenatal nutrition programs, City of Thunder Bay, 2004



Senior population in relation to selected community food programs, City of Thunder Bay, 2004



Aboriginal population in relation to community food programs, City of Thunder Bay, 2004

