

## **Transcript of Plain Language Podcast: Campus Food Systems Initiatives Study**

Meal Exchange, in collaboration with Ryerson University, as part of the Community First: Impacts of community engagement project (CFICE), conducted a study a study on Campus food initiatives across Canada. The report was written by Louisa Hawkins, a research assistant at Ryerson University at the time.

The report studied 6 food initiatives and gave some insight into what it takes for students to start and run food initiative on campus. The case studies mentioned in the report are divided into two categories. Garden Initiatives and Farmer's market Initiatives. For the garden Initiatives, the authors studied Ryerson University, University of Toronto and Vancouver Island University's Nanaimo campus.

Garden Initiatives include: A children's garden for the children's center at Ryerson, and a full garden which students tried to have a complete cycle of within the campus. That means that the food grown there is to be consumed on campus and then composted on campus as well. U of T have a sky garden on a rooftop, which 80% of the food is donated to campus food bank. Vancouver Island University have a garden in which students are free to help themselves to any 'product' from the garden. In addition to the main garden space, there are about twenty boxes in this garden for people to rent for their own personal growing at the low cost of ten dollars per year.

With regards to the Farmer's market initiatives, the authors studied initiatives from Simon Fraser U, McGill University, and University of Northern British Columbia. Simon Fraser U has the oldest market of the three, dating back to 1996. Food is bought and delivered to campus from farmers in advance, so that there wouldn't be any extra strain on farmers to sell their products. There are several pricing options for food at the Market to accommodate people of different incomes. McGill's farmer's market takes place only in the fall months with heavy involvement from McGill food and dining (Main campus food provider). University of Northern British Columbia's market operates in a Manner similar to McGill's but faces challenges as it's not in one of the main buildings on campus. However it does have an edge because faculty members also heavily involved at the market.

Overall, the most common challenges that these initiatives face are: volunteer involvement, bureaucracy. Permits are often needed to expand and operate. Financial struggles and low volunteer turnout were often mentioned as challenges although some to a greater degree than others. Most student leaders expressed a concern in continuity of the initiatives as it is often the same people running the initiatives. The student leaders with these projects strongly emphasize communication and fostering healthy relationships with partners, team members, and university administrators. They said that these relationships are vital to an initiative's success.

This plain language podcast is brought to you by the Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement project, a 7 year action-research project that investigates how to improve community-campus partnerships. For more information, please visit our website at [Carleton.ca/communityfirst/](http://Carleton.ca/communityfirst/)

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