TCCBE Local Food Sourcing Project

Includes:

Final Report

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Seasoned Spoon
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In Partnership with the Seasoned Spoon and the Rooftop Garden, Trent University

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Introduction

The Seasoned Spoon (herein called "The Spoon") is Trent University's own local, organic, student-run café serving up fair-trade, vegetarian and vegan food; a much appreciated contrast to the Aramark cafeteria food otherwise served at Trent. Aramark is a multi-national corporation that provides food for universities, hospitals, and other hosts...even jails. Aramark, although having a mandate to provide nutritious food to it's patrons, is felt to be unsatisfying to a percentage of the Trent University student and faculty body because of it's high prices, lack of fair-trade, as well as vegetarian and vegan options, and it's processed and "fast-food-like" offering of dishes. Thankfully, there is another option at Trent: The Spoon. The Seasoned Spoon's mission statement is as follows:

- To serve healthy, organic, locally grown, affordable food
- To be a student-run, co-operatively structured, not-for-profit organization
- To offer student learning opportunities through paid staff, volunteer work, and Community Based Education (through the Trent Centre for Community Based Education, or TCCBE) courses
- To encourage the diverse use of preexisting student space on campus
- To strengthen university links with the Peterborough community
- To increase community awareness of food issues through educational outreach
- To be accountable to our members by continuing to serve their interests and remaining true to our mandate
- To be as accessible and inclusive as possible. This will include active outreach to inform our membership of our services and to seek their input.
- To have a decision-making process that is based on consensus and that promotes respect
- To respect the diverse opinions that will exist within the group and encourage active debate.

The Spoons Food Sourcing and Analysis

The Spoon sources its food locally, or as locally as possible, from a variety of sources around Peterborough and the Kawartha's, including directly from producers (farmers, CSA's*, etc), and from Trent itself. It may sound interesting in the least to hear that Trent is a supplier of this local, organic food they are serving at the spoon, even though Trent itself generally relies on an outside source (Aramark) for its food needs, but it true. How you may ask? Well, it's grown right on campus. Yes, one of the many benefits to being such an environmentally-friendly university, Trent has a rooftop garden! On-top of the Enviromental Science building is an intensive rooftop garden that provides produce for The Spoon, as well as opportunities for employment and volunteering, as well as opportunities for learning about vegetable growing by students and others. Trent also has a new, 1 acre plot of land in a field that was new last year. Many details about how these new growing lands are still unclear, which is one of the reasons this project was created: to attempt to begin to work out some of these details. Last year less than one half of the field garden was used for produce cultivation, a figure that will hopefully go up this year.

The following is an overview on the food-sourcing at The Spoon, this year to date:

Name of Food Source	Location and Other Details	What it provides (this year*s data)	Additional Info.
Sun Root Organics	Peterborough-area CSA*; Paula Anderson and Ava Richardson	-leeks -squash -chard -collards	#3 producer source.

		-Jerusalem artichokes -celery ~~-parsnips~~ -cucumbers -salad greens	
Chic-a-bitty Acres	Peterborough-area CSA*; Sherry Patterson	-collards -beets -parsnips -cucumbers -Jerusalem artichokes -squash carrots -celiac -Brussel sprouts	#1 producer source
Bill and Doreene VanDerplyume	Peterborough-area farm	-kale -onions turnips -squash -carrots	The majority of The Spoon*s carrots come from here. Also, =2 producer source.
John Wood	Peterborough-area farm	-potatoes -onions -turnips -squash -cucumbers	
Ontario Natural Food Co-op (ONFC)	Natural food distributor based out of Etobicoke, ON	-corn -legumes (beans) -flour	No food is grown directly; ONFC distributes food from a variety of producers and transports it to users, usually restaurants and food services.
Jackson Farm	Peterborough-area farm; Doug and Cindy Jackson	-squash -heritage tomatoes	
Jan Laurier	Peterborough-area farm	-sprouts	

Waymac Farms	Peterborough-area farm; Ann and Wayne McIlmoyle	-mushrooms	
Trent Valley Fruit and Vegetable Farm	Peterborough-area farm; Martin Oates	-specialty potatoes	
St. Thomas Organic Growers "Thomas-Utopia"	Guelph-area farm	-canned tomatoes	
Empire Cheese and Butter Co-op	Cambleford-area farm	-cheese -milk products	
Cameron's	Port Perry-area Farm	-coffee	Not Kawartha-local, but Ontario-local.
Stickling's Specialty Bakery	Peterborough-area farm; Hans Stickling.	-bread -baked goods	Flour used in their bread and baked goods is from Peter Leahy (Merry Lynd Organics), a local source as well.
Roof-top garden	Trent University Environmental Science Building Roof	*Vegetables, etc.:* -beans -beets -cabbage -cucumbers -kale -sweet peas -broom corn -Jerusalem artichokes -lettuce -radicchio -carrots -turnips -peppers -parsnips -onions	

		-endive -spinach -radish -peas -broccoli (+ late brassicas) -winter squash -potatoes -sweet potatoes -chard -Brussel sprouts -leeks -zucchini -summer squash -eggplant -celeriac *Fruits:* -grapes -melon -ground cherries -tomatoes -tomatillo *Herbs:* -dill -cilantro -sage -mustard -basil -oregano -anise-hyssop -tarragon -bergamot -thyme -lavender -Echinacea -parsley -horseradish	
New 1-Acre Plot	Northeast side of the Trent Campus, in a	-potatoes -Jerusalem artichokes	

farmer*s field	-squash	

*A CSA is community shared agriculture, and alternative way of providing consumers with locally grown (usually organic) produce. Consumers purchase shares of the year's harvest from a local CSA farm, receiving in return a box on in-season produce every week for the duration of the growing season. This arrangement allows producers and consumers to share both the risk and the year's harvest. There are three CSA's in the Peterborough-area: Sun Root, Cnick-a-bitty Acres, and Landroute.

The main source of The Spoon's food are, according to Anne Whitty, the co-ordinator of The Spoon, are about half-grown at Trent and half-grown off-site and bought through mainly producers. The main off-site producers are 1. Chick-a-bitty Farm, 2. Bill and Doreen VanDerplyume, and 3. Sun Root Organics, which, for the most part, provide similar produce to what is grown currently on the roof-top garden. Theoretically, with more space to grow more produce, the reliance on the off-site producers will decrease, which is cause for concern as to how this will affect them. Producers that rely most heavily on The Spoon*s order at the CSA*s, says Anne, who take The Spoon*s order in the early months of winter (January-ish).

In speaking with Aimee Blyth, the coordinator of the roof-top garden, it seems potatoes are the main focus for what is to be grown in the one-acre plot. The produce grown most successfully and in the highest quantities this year was Jerusalem artichokes, carrots, tomatoes, peppers, squash, beets, cabbage, beans, and basil. What did not succeed on the

roof was spinach and peas, possibly because of their high-water needs. Things that are already being planned to grow next year are basically everything that was grown this year, with the exception of peas and spinach, as well as the additions of cherry tomatoes and leeks and more tomatoes and potatoes. According to Anne; the most-needed produce is carrots, squash, and sweet potatoes, which are also the most difficult to source.

The following is a list of the produce grown at Trent, and an attempt at a representation of the amount grown:

* "I" corresponds to size, the more I's, the larger a size of growing area the produce item was grown on, and therefore the larger amount of produce that was grown of that item.

Vegetables and the like:

Beans	IIIII
Beets	IIII
Cabbage	IIII
Cucumbers	II
Kale	III
Sweet peas	I
Broom corn	II
Jerusalem artichokes	IIII
Lettuce	II
Radicchio	I
Carrots	IIII
Turnips	III
Peppers	IIII
Parsnips	II
Onions	I
Endive	I
Spinach	I
Radish	I
Peas	I
Broccoli (= late brassicas)	III
Winter squash	IIII
Potatoes	II

Sweet potatoes	I
Chard	II
Brussel sprouts	I
Leeks	I
Zucchini	I
Summer squash	I
Eggplant	I

Fruits:

Grapes	I
Melon	I
Ground cherries	I
Tomatillo	I
Tomatoes	IIII

Herbs (perennial):

Dill	II
Cilantro	I
Sage	II
Mustard	I
Basil	IIII
Oregano	I
Anise-hyssop	I
Tarragon	I
Bergamot	I
Thyme	I
Lavender	I
Echinacea	I
Parsley (biannual)	I
Horseradish	I
Celeriac	II

Cover crops:

Clover
Wheat
Oats

Currently, only less than one-half of an acre is being used of the one the one-acre plot of land, the rest is planted in the cover crops of wheat and oats, which are currently not used for food production, only to plow under and further enrich the soil for next years growing season. Eventually, hopefully this coming season, it will be filled with produce

to be used in The Spoon. With this increase in produce growing, harvesting and the like comes a increase in the demand for labour.

The Spoon has many opportunities educationally, including on a volunteer basis and through the TCCBE. If students are looking for an education and anything to do with food, whether formal or informal, The Spoon is and can be an excellent provider. The problem is the lack of knowledge that these opportunities exist, as well as probably some lack of interest. But if students want to learn about any aspect of food, including growing, harvesting, storing, preparation, serving as well as marketing, then outlet is there. Currently there are efforts being made to expand these educational opportunities, including making more formal education available though future TBBCE courses. The limitations are in the funding of The Spoon. Everyone knows that finding good help is tough, never mind good unpaid help. Since only 16 ~~kitchen~~ staff are hired yearly due to a limited budget, and only one person currently gardening all the food being prepared, more efforts are needed to find more resources for help to assist in this gardening, harvesting, and storing of the food grown on campus. That brings us to another limitation in The Spoon: storage. Currently there are very limited storage capabilities at The Spoon. One big freezer is all that is provided to The Spoon by Trent. An effort to attempt different methods of storing, including canning, drying, etc. are needed to be explored by The Spoon, but these methods need to be done by qualified, trained persons: normally not volunteers. This brings us back to the limitations in staffing and budgets.

Recommendations From Analysis

1. Carrots, squash and sweet potatoes to be grown at Trent in higher quantities next year in the new one-acre plot, due to their needs being the highest at the Spoon and the highest reliance on these crops being on outside producers.
2. Spinach and peas to be attempted to be grown in the new one-acre plot, due to their unsuccessfulness on the rooftop garden.
3. More TCCBE projects with the Spoon be made available to Trent Students, as well as volunteer positions.
4. More advertising of volunteer needs to be done by The Spoon.

Possible Newspaper Article

In walking past the Environmental Science complex in the early fall, looking up, you can sometimes see sunflowers growing on the roof. Seems like an odd thing to see growing on the roof, but you have to remember: this is Trent were talking about. Have you ever wondered why there are things growing on our school*s roof? Well, it*s actually a vegetable garden! Yes, a few special modifications on our ERS roof has enabled it to be able to grow such tasty treats as cucumbers, melons, summer squash, and artichokes for use by the Seasoned Spoon, Trent*s very own student-run co-op café. What better way to ensure your food is of the freshest quality and most local then growing your sandwich's lettuce, tomatoes, and onions right on campus, just a short walk over the bridge from where it is prepared and served! You definitely couldn't get that from Aramark (not to name-names). The Seasoned Spoon is located in the Champlain Junior Common Room, it is a warm and welcoming, environmentally-friendly space for everyone in the Trent community and is open Monday-Thursday, 10-5 serving all homemade organic vegan and vegetarian-friendly soups, salads, wraps, burgers, sandwiches, coffee, tea, juice, cakes, cookies, pies, muffins, and seasonal fruit. If you want to learn about growing your own food, and even lend a hand in the planting and harvesting, volunteers are always needed, especially in the Spring and fall. Contact Aimee at aimeeblythe@trentu.ca or stop into the Spoon to learn more.

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