

Food Security

Upper Lake Melville

Community-led Food Assessment: 2010-2011



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1. Background of Upper Lake Melville Community-led Food Assessment

1.1 Purpose of the Project

Northern communities across Canada continue to face challenges related to accessing adequate amounts of nutritional foods. Negative factors such as high cost of fuel to transport foods, distance from food sources, short growing season and unhealthy living practices significantly impact food security of the Upper Lake Melville Region.

The purpose of the project was to perform a regional community-led food assessment in the Upper Lake Melville Region, in order to assist the community to move towards better practices of food security.

1.2 Defining Food Security

Community food security exists when all people at all times have access to safe, nutritious, culturally pleasing food through self-reliant community sources. Increasing awareness of what food security actually means was the first task required to assist the community in their food assessment process.

1.3 Project Partners

The Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador hosted this project, along with a local working group/steering committee comprised of local residents along with the support of an advisory committee made up of provincial members. Involvement and commitment from the community is essential for the community food assessment to be successful. To ensure that community input is included in all stages of the project, the local steering committee worked closely with the project coordinator and project assistant. FSN provided ongoing administrative support and acted as a liaison between funding providers and project groups. The local steering committee members are listed in Appendix B

Food Security Network NL is a provincial, non-profit organization whose mission is to actively promote comprehensive, community based initiatives that seek to ensure access to adequate, healthy food for all citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador.

2. Upper Lake Melville Region Location and Geography

The Upper Lake Melville region is located in Central Labrador and is comprised of four communities- Happy Valley Goose Bay, Mud Lake, North West River and the Innu reserve of Sheshatsiu.

This area has been settled for thousands of years by the Innu and Inuit peoples, in the past 300 years by European settlers who came for the fur trading industry, and very recently by employees of the Air Base constructed in 1949.

The area population is approximately 10,000 and the four communities are situated on the shores of Lake Melville, which is serviced by a ferry system which connects to the coastal communities of Labrador. The trans-Canada highway connects the region to Quebec and Cartwright on the coast of Labrador. The highways of Labrador are mostly gravel and the highway from the south stretches 1,500 kms from Quebec.



3. Environmental Scan

The Upper Lake Melville Region consists of four communities; Happy Valley Goose Bay, Mud Lake, North West River, and Sheshatsiu. These communities have a unique and culturally diverse populace where traditional foodways play a strong role in the day-to-day lives of much of the population. Many residents of Innu, Inuit, Metis and Settler heritage still depend on the harvesting of traditional foods such as caribou, fish, small game and wild berries. At the same time, these communities face many challenges that impact access to adequate, healthy food such as high rates of homelessness, high levels of teenage pregnancies, and large income gaps, as well as high costs of fresh foods, and high dependency on outside, distant food sources.

3.1 Demographics and Economic Trends

Happy Valley Goose Bay and Mud Lake

Happy Valley Goose Bay, often referred to as the hub of Labrador, is centrally located and provides a wide array of services and amenities for Labrador.

The construction of the Goose Bay Air Base began in 1941¹. The Town of Happy Valley was created in 1943 to house the workers who came to build the air base. The two settlements amalgamated in 1974².

Population

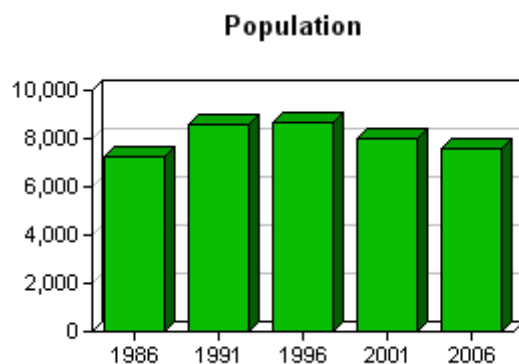
It presently has a population of 7,579³ people. There has been a decline in population of 4.6% due to the considerable downsizing of the air base as well as the overall population decline of the province of 1.5% as indicated in the chart below, which is from the 2006 census report.⁴ As you can see as of 2010, the population has continued to decrease from 7,600 in 2006 to 7,579 in 2010.

¹ Community Accounts, "Happy Valley Goose Bay Profile, Accessed 7/29/2010

² IBID, Accessed 7/29/2010

³ Happy Valley Goose Bay Town Office Statistics, 2010.

⁴ Community Accounts, "Happy Valley Goose Bay Profile", Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Accessed 7/29/2010

Table 1: Population of Happy Valley Goose Bay/Mud Lake⁵

Because the 2006 census considered Mud Lake and Happy Valley Goose Bay as one community they will be considered as such in this report.

There is a very small immigrant population at present that includes a floating group of immigrant medical staff who come to the region to complete their family practice internship. According to the 2006 census, there were 40 visible minority individuals living in Happy Valley Goose Bay. This group is also comprised of a multicultural influx of professionals who come for a year or two to gain work experience in a “Northern” community then move back to either their home communities or elsewhere. The number of Aboriginal people living in Goose Bay in the 2001 census was 2,730, and this population comprises 34% of the Town population.⁶

Employment and Economic Development

Lake Melville Region is the central hub of the Labrador, and it houses many of the current employment opportunities in the region. The future holds positive economic and employment potential due to the Trans-Labrador Highway Project, the Lower Churchill Hydro Development Project, and a number of mining industry projects. The potential for the development of the tourist industry is also expanding due to the recent extension of the Trans Labrador highway, which now connects Happy Valley Goose Bay to Cartwright on the coast.

Metis, Innu, Nunatsiavut and Canadian government offices of all levels abound in this community. These administrative entities have prolific, complex structures that require a large contingency of staff. Labrador Grenfell Health, the Provincial Judicial system, the Labrador Institute, the College of the North Atlantic, various NGO's, the Board of Education and the Correction Center are also have their provincial bases in Happy Valley Goose Bay.

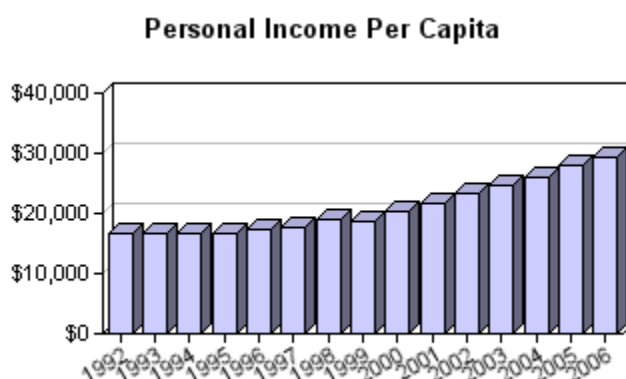
⁵ IBID, Accessed 7/29/2010

⁶ Community Accounts, “Happy valley Goose Bay Profile” Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. “Tables” 2001, accessed 10/19/2010

The government administration offices, as well as health and education agencies in the region employ a highly trained sector of the population. There appears to be a very wide gap of income between these professional workers and the rest of the working population in Happy Valley Goose Bay. The majority of the remaining of the working population is employed in the food or other service industries that usually require at most a high school education or less and minimum wage is the average pay for these positions.

Less than half of the population of Happy Valley Goose Bay had incomes of more than \$79,000 in 2006 compared to the provincial average of \$56,000⁷. Meanwhile, 59.7% of the population earned less than \$29,000 per year.⁸ These figures illustrate an alarming gap between one half of the community, which makes a significantly higher income than the rest of the province and those who make much less. Table 2 clearly demonstrates this split in income.

Table: 2 Income per capita in Happy valley Goose Bay⁹



Housing and Homelessness

In 2006, 59.2% of homes are owned versus rented in Happy Valley Goose Bay, compared to 78.7% owned versus rented for the province¹⁰. This statistic is significant because of an inflated rental market.

The overall lack of available housing and in particular subsidized and low income housing is a major issue in Labrador¹¹. The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing and the Melville Native Housing corporation units are full and have long waiting lists of 25-45 families.¹² Low income renters, living in housing pay a 25% portion of their total income for their rent. However, because there is no provincial rental cap, a large number of low

⁷ Community Accounts, "Happy Valley Goose bay Profile" Accessed 7/29/2010

⁸ IBID, Accessed 7/29/2010

⁹Community Accounts, "Happy Valley Goose Bay community Profile", <http://www.communityaccounts.ca/communityaccounts/onlineaccountselectionpage.a>. Accessed 7/29/2010

¹⁰ Community Accounts, "Happy Valley Goose Bay Profile" Accessed 7/29/2010

¹¹ Rumbolt, A., pers comm., 2010.

¹² Lichen Group. 2007. *Study on Homelessness in Happy Valley Goose Bay*, NL page 11.

income renters are paying rents that are far above this 25% ratio, leaving them with an inadequate food budget.

Invisible homelessness figures can only be surmised but there are many reports from community workers servicing vulnerable populations in Happy Valley Goose Bay. These “vulnerable” clients are moving in with relatives and friends and are experiencing very congested, unstable, sub-standard housing situations.

Libra House (providing short term shelter for women and children experiencing domestic violence), Mokami Status of Women Council, and the Labrador Native Friendship Center are all in the process of building new housing units to attempt to aid those who have limited housing opportunities. These housing projects are being developed separately. Libra House will be expanding their facility so that women and children can stay longer than the present one month stay. The Mokami Women's Center will be providing eight new apartments for women and children. The Friendship Centre will be providing two apartments for high needs individuals with wrap-around services. None of these housing projects will be completed immediately.

Of the 360 lone parent families in Goose Bay, at least half earn less than \$30,100.¹³ This amount of income makes owning a home virtually impossible so these families are at the mercy of an inflated rental market and limited housing opportunities.

The total number of children ages 0 to 17 who were living in families on income support in 2008 were 165 and the average income of individuals on Income Support Assistance was \$6,200 in 2008.¹⁴ As one can readily see, it would be almost impossible for these families to pay inflated rental rents and have enough money eat. The average rate for a two bedroom rental unit in 2010 is \$650 per month¹⁵

At the same time developers are purchasing and upgrading sub-standard rental units to develop higher income bracket of the population, and the anticipated influx of workers for the Lower Churchill Hydro Development Project. These newly renovated units are far beyond what low income families and individuals can afford.

There is no consistent or clear data base that allows community health workers to identify how many seniors live in Happy Valley Goose Bay and where they live. However, a new 50 bed senior's care facility was just completed in 2010 adjoining the hospital with the capacity to expand to 72 beds in the future.

¹³ Community Accounts, “Happy Valley Goose Bay Profile”, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. <http://www.communityaccounts.ca/communityaccounts/onlinedata/accountselectionpage.a...> accessed on 7/29/2010.

¹⁴ Community Accounts, “Happy Valley Goose Bay Community Profile”, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

<http://www.communityaccounts.ca/communityaccounts/onlinedata/accountselectionpage.a...>

Accessed 7/29/2010

¹⁵ Lichen Group. 2007. *Study on Homelessness in Happy Valley Goose Bay*, NL page 13

Child Birthrates and Teenage Pregnancy

14% of live births occurring in Labrador in the 2006 census were to women between 15 - 19 years of age compared to 7% for the province.¹⁶ Teenage pregnancies can lead to issues of poverty, interruption of education and social exclusion that impact outcomes of household food security.

The 2006 census reported that 22.0% of the adult population of Happy Valley Goose Bay did not hold a high school certificate.¹⁷ Of those who have graduated from high school, 50% are in receipt of a general diploma making them ineligible to attend a post secondary institution.¹⁸ CNA(College of the North Atlantic) offers well attended Adult Basic Education programs which are fully funded, as well as Aboriginal education bridging programs to encourage tertiary education.

Mud Lake

Mud Lake is considered as part of the Happy Valley Goose Bay in the 2006 census due to its proximity and dependency on Happy Valley Goose Bay for many amenities. Mud Lake currently has a population of 60 residents.¹⁹ The community has some infrastructure including a public school, a church and a community center.

North West River

North West River is the oldest community in central Labrador and is situated on the shores of Lake Melville. Inuit and Innu people have occupied this land area for 6,000 years. The first Europeans came in 1743. North West River then became known as Fort Smith and has a 250 year history as a Hudson's Bay Trading Post. Many European traders settling around the Post, and took Inuit women as wives, creating a rich cultural heritage.²⁰

According to Town Office statistics, there are 470 residents presently residing in North West River. Roughly 100 of these residents are seniors and 300 are registered Labrador Inuit members.²¹

According to the 2006 census statistics, the population is relatively evenly split between the youngest and the oldest cohorts, meaning that the majority of the population is between 15-64 years of age.

¹⁶ Jong, C. 2007. *Post-Secondary Education in Labrador*. Memorial University, St. John's, NL.

¹⁷ Aura Environmental Research and Consulting Ltd. 2008. *Community Health Study Happy Valley Goose Bay, NL*. Page 9-3.

¹⁸ Aura Environmental Research and Consulting Ltd. 2008. *Community Health Study Happy Valley Goose Bay, NL*. Page 9-8.

¹⁹ Community Accounts, "Happy Valley Goose Bay Profile" Accessed 7/29/2010.

²⁰ Community Accounts "North West River Profile"

<http://www.communityaccounts.ca/communityaccnts/onlineata/accountselectionpage.a..> Accessed 7/29/2010.

²¹ IBID

Employment and Housing

The personal income per capita in North West River was \$17,700 compared to the province personal income per capita of \$22,900²² 16% of the families are lone parent families with an average income of \$22,000²³

There are a few Newfoundland and Labrador subsidized low income housing units in North West River. There are 580 privately owned dwellings and 105 rental units.²⁴

Homelessness has not been identified as an issue by community service workers.

According to statistics from 2006 census, social assistance rates in 2006 were at 14.5% and unemployment rates were 25.0% in May of 2006²⁵²⁶ compared to Happy Valley Goose Bay rates of 10.6% and 18.4% respectively²⁷.

Sheshatsiu

Sheshatsiu became an Innu Reserve in 2006.

Housing

The Innu Band Council owns most of the homes in Sheshatsiu and residents pay rent to the Band Council. There is a community plan to build 100 new homes by 2011 due to the Land Claim settlement in 2006²⁸. 40 homes are near completion. Most of these homes are single detached dwellings. 42.5% of dwellings required major repairs in 2006 before building of the new homes began. On reserve Aboriginal homes have been found to have twice the density of residents of the Canadian average.²⁹

Community Service providers have not identified homelessness as an issue, although the quality of housing remains a significant issue. Overcrowding, coupled with high incidence of substance abuse, family violence, high unemployment, and poverty enhances already difficult family environments.

Population

According to 2006 census Aboriginal data for all of Canada, the Aboriginal population has increased dramatically over recent years. According to Innu Nation statistics, the

²² IBID

²³ IBID

²⁴ 2010. *Town of North West River Statistics*

²⁶ Community Accounts "North West River Profile" Accessed 7/29/2010

²⁷ Community Accounts "Happy Valley Goose Bay Profile" Accessed 7/29/2010

²⁸ Stapenhorst, A. pers comm., 2010.

²⁹ Clark, M., P Riben and E Nowgesic. 2002. The Association of housing density, isolation and tuberculosis in Canadian First Nations communities. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 31(5): 940-945.

population of Sheshatsiu has risen from 1000 in 2006 to 1,276 in 2009.³⁰ As you can readily see this is a significant population growth. It means that the population of Sheshatsiu has increased by 35% in just 3 years. According to 2006 census data only 4% of the population of Sheshatsiu is over 65 and 37% of the population is under 15. The median age is 20.4 which means that one half of Sheshatsiu is 20 or under³¹. This youthful population skew produces a very high dependency ratio of 69.5% on the productive working age group of 15-64³².

Table 3: Population Characteristics and Dependency Ratios for the Innu Community of Sheshatsiu in 2006

Region	Population	Median Age	%<15 yrs	%>65 yrs	DRa
Sheshatsiu	1,112	20.4	37	4	69.5

a= Dependency Ratio

Birthrates and Teenage Pregnancy

The % of live births for women under 20 in Sheshatsiu in 2006 was 25.71% as compared to the provincial rate of 7 %³³. From 2000-2005, 40% of the children born in Sheshatsiu were to mothers under 20 years of age³⁴. Therefore there are many teenage mothers living in the community with their own specific financial, educational and social stresses.

Employment and Income Rates

Median family incomes for lone parent families were 50% lower than couple families at \$22,000 and approximately 35% of families are lone parent families.³⁵ However, it is a common social practice for single mothers to live with their parents and the grandparents assist with child care.

According to the 2006 government census, unemployment rates are significantly higher than comparable communities in the Upper Lake Melville Region. Sheshatsiu has a 20% rate compared to Happy Valley Goose Bay where the rate is 14.8%.³⁶ Social assistance income support payment incidence is 21% as compared to the Upper Lake Melville overall incidence of 6.3%³⁷. The median annual family income for couple families is \$61,500 in 2004. This is considerably lower than the regional median level of \$72,000.³⁸

³⁰ Innu Nation Official Website, www.inn.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=108 Accessed 10/20/2010.

³¹ Aura Environmental Research and Consulting Ltd. 2008. *Community Health Study*, Happy Valley Goose Bay, NL. Page 4-3

³² IBID Page 4-3

³³ IBID Page 4-3

³⁴ IBID Page 4-3

³⁵ IBID Page 11-2

³⁶ Community Accounts, North West River/Sheshatsiu Profile” Accessed 7/29/2010

³⁷ Community Accounts, “North West River/Sheshatsiu Profile” Accessed 7/29/2010

³⁸ IBID

Education

70.1% of adults in Sheshatsiu over 25 have not graduated from high school.³⁹ By the age of 16, 66% of the children were at least five years behind the grade level for their age in 2004.⁴⁰ Innu children routinely go to school approximately 54% of the time and only 50% of Innu children have a goal to finish high school.⁴¹ The attendance rate at the new public school in Sheshatsiu has improved somewhat with the implementation of "Kids Eat Smart" breakfast program⁴², however, low attendance levels remain a barrier to educational progress. Language difficulties are a very real problem in that most children in Sheshatsiu speak Innu-Aimun as their first language. School is taught in English by teachers who do not have training in ESL and no cultural training to teach Innu children in a meaningful way.

Finally, children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder have many barriers to being able to learn and approximately 35% of Innu youth display learning difficulties consistent with FASD.⁴³ Teaching staff do not have adequate resources to deal with language, culture and learning problems. Therefore, teacher retention becomes a serious issue as well.

3.2 Health

Mental Health and Alcohol Abuse

Mental health issues have become much more acute in Labrador in the past five years⁴⁴. Alcohol abuse is reported as one of the most important social health problems in Labrador⁴⁵. Working with clients experiencing mental health and addiction problems has been identified as one of the most significant challenges facing Human Resources and Employment in Labrador. 18.9% of adults had in the previous year stated that they been drunk or hung-over while at work or school, or while taking care of children⁴⁶. Respondents engage in binge drinking more frequently in the Upper Lake Melville area with 38% admitted to drinking five or more drinks on one occasion more than once per month in 2006⁴⁷.

There have been many educational programs implemented to address the link between FASD and drinking. The problem does not seem to be changing in any significant way yet.

³⁹ Aura Environmental Research, 2008. *Community Health Study*, Happy Valley Goose Bay Page 9-7

⁴⁰ Philpot, D. et al. 2004. *An Educational Profile of the Learning Needs of Innu Youth: Brief Summary of Findings*. Memorial University, St. John's, NL

⁴¹ IBID

⁴² IBID

⁴³ Philpot, D and all 2004. *An Educational Profile of the Learning Needs of Innu Youth* St. John's, NL

⁴⁴ IBID, Page i

⁴⁵ Aura Environmental Research and Consulting Ltd., 2008. *Community Health Study*, Page i.

⁴⁶ IBID, page i

⁴⁷ www.communityaccounts.ca/CommunityAccounts?OnlineData.

Suicide is a public health concern for all of Labrador. It is the second leading cause of death for the 15-24 age group⁴⁸. Suicide rates in Labrador of this age group are four times the rate of the province⁴⁹. There is a significant link between levels of education and suicide in teens over 15. The incidence of suicide attempt is considerably higher for this age group when education levels are lower. In the Lake Melville area 33% of the population has less than a high school diploma.⁵⁰

Happy valley has only one room available for proper psychiatric treatment: most patients must be transported to St. John's. Wait times up to 9 to 10 weeks exist for mental health services.

Obesity and Diabetes

Only about 22.2% of residents of NL consume the recommended 5-10 servings of fruit and vegetables per day and currently, Newfoundland and Labrador have the highest rate of diabetes and obesity of all the Canadian provinces.⁵¹

The leading causes of death by disease in Labrador are diseases of the circulatory system and cancer.

Age adjusted mortality rates for Labrador are the highest mortality rates in the province. These rates are most pronounced in the infant population. The infant mortality rate for Labrador in 2004 was 10.4%⁵².

As mentioned, there is a very high rate of teenage pregnancies in the Upper Lake Melville area and babies born to teen moms tend to have lower birth weights than those born to older mothers. Babies born less than 2,500 grams can have a number of health concerns and these health concerns can sometimes result in death. It is also known that mothers who smoke while pregnant tend to have babies with a lower birth weight, are more likely to be born premature and can also have poorer long term health outcomes. There is a higher incidence of smokers 12 and older in the Upper Lake Melville area than the rest of the province and the incidence of young female smokers is twice that of young males in the same area.⁵³

⁴⁸ www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/82-221-XIE/2006001/tables/14193_01.htm

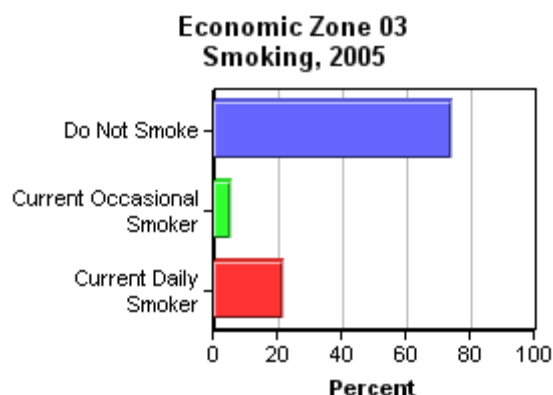
⁴⁹ IBID

⁵⁰ Based on NLCHI 2006. *Epidemiology of Suicide Attempts in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1998-2000*.

⁵¹ 2009 *Health Canada Report on Cardio Vascular Disease*

⁵² www.communityaccounts.ca/CommunityAccounts/OnlineData/charts_health.asp/whichacct=health&getcontent=charts&comval=zone2.

⁵³ 2008 *Aura Community Health Study* Pages 6-2

Table 5: Smokers in Upper Lake Melville Area 2005⁵⁴

Innu Health Issues

The Innu population of the Upper Lake Melville Area faces a unique set of health problems. Innu people are particularly affected by respiratory diseases because as much as 60% of on reserve Aboriginal people smoke between the ages of 18-34 and 52% started to smoke between the ages of 13 and 16⁵⁵. Young Innu people suffer more from pneumonia and require hospitalization for pneumonia more frequently than mainstream populations. The mortality rate of diseases of the respiratory system in residents of Sheshatsiu is 11.4% compared to Upper lake Melville at 6.8%⁵⁶.

The Innu people of Sheshatsiu were among the last Aboriginal people in Canada to give up their natural hunter gatherer nomadic lifestyle to become acculturated to mainstream European based culture, as they did not really become sedentary until the early 1970's. Since then, they have collectively undergone overwhelming lifestyle changes of dramatic proportions.

Among these are widespread community depression due to loss of identity with resulting severe alcohol and solvent abuse, a high suicide rate among youth, widespread neglect and physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children, a high incidence of family violence, and extreme barriers to accessing adequate education. Innu youth are 17 times more likely to commit suicide than other populations in Labrador with males being more common.⁵⁷

Child care services are overwhelmed and described as a system in crisis. During 2000 10.9% of the total number of children in Labrador received some type of protective intervention service⁵⁸.

⁵⁴ www.communityaccounts.ca

⁵⁵ www.hc-sc.ca/fnih-spn/substan/tobac/index_e.html#facts.

⁵⁶ 2006 census

⁵⁷ Aura Environmental and Consulting Ltd. 2008. *Community Health Study*, Page 6-11

⁵⁸ IBID Page 8-4.

As well as becoming more sedentary, Innu people are eating highly processed foods instead of their traditional diet. Very few Innu continue to hunt and fish.

There are serious health issues as a result. Type 2 diabetes is 3 times more prevalent in Aboriginal communities than in mainstream population.⁵⁹ Aboriginal women are 2 times more likely than Aboriginal men to develop this condition and 1 in 4 individuals living on reserve over 45 years of age have diabetes⁶⁰. Aboriginal people have the highest rate of diabetes among children 12 and over at 6.8% in this province which has the highest rate in Canada⁶¹.

Obesity is inextricably linked with type 2 diabetes. 89% of Innu women are overweight and of those women 50% are obese⁶².

3.3 Social/Cultural Impacts on Health and Nutrition

Although, it is difficult to ascertain individual value placed on healthy eating, there are a few local indicators. One in particular is that the school nutrition program deliverers observed that parents are in need of more education about healthy eating to increase understanding and value of maintaining a healthy diet.

More than 43.5 % of the population of Upper Lake Melville is overweight or obese and therefore has an increased risk of type II diabetes is present⁶³. A considerable increase in public awareness of the benefits of balanced nutrition, coupled with a more active lifestyle is required to change this dynamic.

Culturally relevant foods are readily available for seniors but young mothers have stated that they would like to offer wild foods to their young children but if their family members do not hunt they are not able to access the traditional foods. People have also expressed concern that the skills of harvesting of wild foods are not being passed on to the younger generation. People have expressed concern as well that food preserving methods are not being passed on and that young people are not being taught to cook whole foods.

The caribou population is now vulnerable and hunting for caribou will not be allowed in Labrador this season. This will have an impact on the community during the coming winter. Hopefully the herd will recover sufficiently over the next year for hunting to resume. The building of the highway into Labrador has made it much easier for hunters to access the caribou.

⁵⁹ Boyer, Y. 2006. *First Nations, Metis and Inuit Women's Health*. Discussion paper series in Aboriginal Health: legal issues. Native Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan.

⁶⁰ IBID

⁶¹ IBID

⁶² Lawn, J. 2002. *An Update on Nutritional Surveys in Isolated Northern Communities*. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Ottawa, ON.

⁶³ Data supplied by NLCHI 2007, compiled from Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey.

A local fish harvester and environmentalist, has stated that the Upper Churchill Dam has caused a significant loss in fish populations, due to several complex issues around fish spawning and artificial changes in river flow indicated by the low number of smelts available as compared to the past.⁶⁴

Residents of the area purchase all of the produce the local farmers provide and there is an increasing interest shown in learning about gardening, green house gardening and composting.

Many people complain about the condition and high price of produce by the time it reaches the region, and is available at the local retailers. Several residents of the area would really like to buy more locally grown produce, eggs and meat but currently local production does not meet the demand.

Of particular note, there is a definite social norm of food sharing that occurs with wild harvested foods. Those that are good hunters and fishers frequently share their harvest with their extended families, neighbours and seniors.

It would appear that the Upper Lake Melville Region is in the early stages of food security awareness and practice, although in the past, the area was quite self sufficient. It is almost as if people need to re-learn what they have forgotten, as well as building on past experience to enhance future food production.

⁶⁴ Davis, E. pers comm. 2010.

4. The Cost of Eating Healthy in the Upper Lake Melville Region

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) monitor the cost of healthy eating in isolated northern communities through the use of a standardized Northern Food Basket. The Northern Food Basket was updated in 2007 to reflect contemporary food consumption patterns. This revised Northern Food Basket includes a nutritious diet for a family of four for one week and is consistent with the recommended nutrient intake for Canadians, as per Canada's Food Guide. The cost of the Revised Northern Food Basket is based on the average price per item available in each community. The average is of a specific purchase size and all available brands. The INAC conducts price surveys in more than 75 communities to arrive at these nutritious food basket costs. Happy Valley Goose Bay is the food service center for the Lake Melville area and has a weekly cost of \$253.00 compared to Montreal at \$230.00. To calculate this on a monthly cycle, a family of four in Goose Bay spends \$ 1012 per month on food. For families and individuals living on government transfer payments or, among the working poor, it is almost impossible to afford a nutritious diet, pay rent and cover other living expenses. Some parents have stated that they skip meals or eat less so their children will have more food available to eat. Parents have also stated that there is often not enough food money toward the end of the fiscal pay period for government transfer money. Highly processed foods become the choice instead of nutritious foods because they are cheaper and more filling.

According to the Market Measure Costs of the Low Income system of Community Accounts in Labrador of 2007, including food (\$8,548), clothing and footwear (\$2,530), shelter(\$8,780), transportation(\$14,433) and goods and services(\$7,173), the annual cost of living in Happy Valley Goose Bay for a single adult would be \$32,684⁶⁵. The average income from EI payments per year in Goose Bay for a single adult would be \$12,480⁶⁶. The average income from Social Support payments for a single employable person in 2005 would be \$8,198⁶⁷. One can readily see that when you compare these government transfer payments with the Market Measure costs, it would be impossible to have an adequate budget for healthy, nutritious food, let alone live on these amounts.

⁶⁵ Giles, Dr. C and Reid, R., 2007. *Enabling a bottom up Approach for Understanding the Dimensions of Low Income in Labrador*, <http://www.canadiansocialresearch.net/nfbkmk.htm#n/bn> Accessed 28/12/2010

⁶⁶ IBID

⁶⁷ Community Accounts "Happy Valley Goose Bay Profile" Accessed 7/29/2010

Table 4: Revised Northern Food Basket for Family of Four⁶⁸

WEEKLY COST OF THE REVISED NORTHERN FOOD BASKET FOR FAMILY OF FOUR Community	Perishables	Non- perishables	Total
Montreal	\$156	\$74	\$230
Happy Valley – Goose Bay	\$177	\$76	\$253
Black Tickle	\$186	\$79	\$265
Rigolet	\$216	\$95	\$311
Makkovik	\$209	\$95	\$304
Postville	\$218	\$92	\$310
Hopedale	\$219	\$100	\$319
Nain	\$228	\$110	\$337

⁶⁸ Source: Indian and Northern Affairs, 2009.

5. Community Food Production and Initiatives:

Current Local farm production and Government Policy

Producing food in central Labrador can be very challenging due to low soil fertility, a short growing season, and severe winters. However, growers have been very successful here in the past. Labrador Grenfell Health and the Moravians have ample historic evidence of excellent agricultural results⁶⁹.

There are seven operating farms in the region that have great potential for increased food production. Currently, these farms are not producing enough food to support the local population. However, if four of these farms produced 4 additional acres of potatoes each, the Upper Lake Melville Region sustainability of a staple crop would be established.⁷⁰

Several land areas around Happy Valley Goose Bay contain contaminated water tables because of extensive dumping of hazardous entities by both American and Canadian Armed Forces since 1947⁷¹.

Agri-Foods Division conducted extensive soil testing in recent years and found areas that had the best soil fertility and no contaminants. These identified areas have been zoned as agricultural land and have been made available to individuals who want to farm as 50 acre agricultural leases on the Mud Lake road on the outskirts of Happy Valley Goose Bay.⁷² These identified agricultural areas are capable of commercial crop production of certain root crops that include potatoes.⁷³

Agri-Foods Division has also conducted some crop trials and at least two of the local farmers have been subsidized to grow these crops. Some of the farm machinery has been subsidized by Agri-Food Division grant money and is collectively owned by the Lake Melville Farm Association.⁷⁴ Agri-Foods supplies much of the lime required annually for the farmers free of cost. There is funding available through the federal "Growing Forward" program administered by the Agri-Foods Division aimed to support agricultural production in Newfoundland and Labrador. These grants can be useful in farm expansion, however, many of the programs do require some level of matching funds by the farmer.

The provincial funding system creates difficult barriers to novice farmers. The government policy states that farmers cannot live on these agricultural leases until the

⁶⁹ Them Days, 2010. *Labrador gallery*, Vol.34, No.2, Pages 23, 32

⁷⁰ Pye, F. pers comm.(Commercial Farmer), 2010.

⁷¹ Lake Melville Agricultural Association. 2004. *A Long Range Plan in the Central Labrador Zone*, Page 3

⁷² Lake Melville Agricultural Association, 2004. *A Long Range Plan for Food and Feed Sufficiency in the Central Labrador Zone*, page 4

⁷³ Wicks, J. 2004. *Commercial Potato Production in Labrador*, Agricultural Business profile, AgriFoods, Federal Department of Agriculture.

⁷⁴ Lake Melville Agricultural Association. 2004. *A Long Range Plan for Food and Feed Sufficiency in the Central Labrador Zone*, Page 5.

farm makes an annual profit of \$30,000⁷⁵. The philosophy of this dynamic is to ensure that the land is used for agricultural purposes only, but the farmers can never have clear title to the farm property lease.⁷⁶ Young would be farmers with families would have difficulty surviving in this policy structure and yet more farmers are needed for sustained local food production. There are other difficult challenges that are holding farmers back from substantial commercial production in Labrador and involve provincial marketing board quotas.⁷⁷

A very positive aspect of the government agricultural institution policy is that agricultural diversity is encouraged. In other words, farmers are encouraged to diversify their farm outputs.⁷⁸ This diversity is a very important piece for farming resiliency because if one farm output is poor or fails during the year, another output can help sustain the farm.

The farmers experience difficulties in finding part time seasonal workers for planting and harvesting. The challenge is to find workers that have adequate farm skills and are willing to do hard labour.⁷⁹

There are several producers that raise chickens, and sell the eggs and the meat. These producers are both in Town and on farms. There is one turkey producer, who has devised an "adopt a turkey" plan to successfully market the turkeys.

Community Food Production Initiatives

Community Outlet Stores

There is a local butcher who sells caribou in his outlet store in Goose Bay. He harvests around 500 caribou per season and hires local hunters to obtain the caribou.⁸⁰ He does not require a slaughter permit because the caribou are considered to be a cultural food.

Torngat is an Inuit cooperative of 100 members and has an outlet store in Goose Bay. Frozen, wild arctic char, Greenland halibut, Iceland sea scallops and snow crab pieces are available for purchase year round.

Community Freezer Programs

The Nunatsiavut Government in Happy Valley Goose Bay and North West River hire local hunters to obtain wild caribou, partridge, geese, and salmon for the community

⁷⁵ Wicks, J. pers. comm., 2010

⁷⁶ IBID Page 5

⁷⁷ Lake Melville Agricultural Association, 2004. *A Long Range Plan for Food and Feed Sufficiency in the Central Labrador Zone*, Page 6.

⁷⁸ Wicks, J. pers comm. (Agricultural Representative to Labrador), 2010.

⁷⁹ Pye, J. pers comm. 2010.

⁸⁰ Battcock, R. pers comm.. 2010.

freezers. Blue berries, bake apples, and some red berries are supplied by this program as well. These freezer programs supply seniors 60 and over free of charge.

The Metis government also runs a community freezer program for seniors in Happy Valley Goose Bay. Both the Nunatsiavut and Metis freezer programs are well utilized and well funded through their Aboriginal government funds.

Community Gardens

There is a community garden in North West River that is tended by a paid employee of the Town. This garden is about 5 acres. All of the vegetables harvested are distributed free of charge to seniors in the community.

There is a community garden project in its beginning phase for children, sponsored by the Town of Happy Valley Goose Bay.

There is also a community greenhouse initiative started in the planning stages on the air base.

Farmer's Market and Farm Gate Sales

A farmer's market is held once per year in the autumn to distribute the produce from the community garden in North West River.

A group of community members on the air base in Goose Bay are planning a buyers club to support local farmers, where they will prepay the farmer directly for their produce for the 2011 growing season.

One of the local producers has a direct prepay system in place for their potato crop and has a small retail outlet on their farm.

Two of the local producers have pick your own programs for their berry crops.

One local food producer sells from their pick up truck at various locations in Goose Bay.

6. Community Food Access and Distribution:

Wholesalers, Grocery Stores and Convenience stores

There are two wholesalers in the area –Multifoods and Hamilton Wholesalers. They are located in Happy Valley Goose Bay.

There are two grocery stores – Terrington Consumers Cooperative Society Ltd. and North Mart. Both of these grocery stores are located in Happy Valley Goose Bay.

Before 1947, when the air base was built, there were only Hudson's Bay Posts in Happy Valley and North West River. Previous to that most people depended on family vegetable gardens and harvested wild meat, fish and wild berries. People bought tea, sugar, flour and other items they could not harvest or produce themselves at the Hudson's Bay Posts.⁸¹ These traditions are still strong in the community and people in the area still eat in this manner. Some older residents find the variety of foods available at the grocery stores overwhelming and usually only eat what they are accustomed to⁸².

There are 11 convenience stores in the area. These stores sell canned goods, bread, milk, processed frozen goods, cigarettes and beer. Milk and bread can be purchased at reasonable prices in these stores while most other items have inflated prices and often items can be found that are past their best before date. There are convenience stores in Goose Bay located close to the government low income housing developments. These stores are heavily used by residents of low income housing as they are within walking distance. The grocery stores are too far away to walk and carry groceries. Many residents of low income housing do not have cars. There is no local transit system and taxis are very expensive.

There are two convenience stores located in Sheshatsiu and one in North West River. These stores have very high prices and have poor quality produce. Most residents do their grocery shopping in Happy Valley Goose Bay. There are no stores in Mud Lake.

Restaurants

There are 12 restaurants in Happy Valley Goose Bay. There are no restaurants in North West River or Sheshatsiu or Mud Lake. Six of the restaurants are franchised – Tim Horton's, Pizza Delight, A&W, Burger King, Mary Brown's Chicken and Subway and have their own food distribution sources. All of these items are brought in by transport truck from New Brunswick and Montreal. Most of their fresh produce used for menu items is purchased from the local wholesalers. The Trans Canada highway, which is used to transport most of the goods into Happy Valley Goose Bay from Quebec, is approximately 1000 km. of gravel road. The winter road conditions can be very poor and there are times where the weather is so severe during the Labrador winter that transport trucks cannot get in for a few days. This is very challenging for restaurant owners, wholesalers and grocery stores because almost most of the fresh products they

⁸¹ Best, C. pers comm. 2010.

⁸² Best, C. & M. pers comm. (long standing members and 2nd generation residents of the area) 2010.

use depend on this transportation. Produce is ordered to be sold out by 3-4 days or twice per week. The trucks come in twice per week to comply with the ordering cycle. If the trucks miss a delivery during the winter months there is little fresh produce to be found for up to a week.

Food Distribution

The retailers of the two major grocery stores interviewed in Happy Valley Goose Bay, both stated that they work on a supply and demand principle. The local residents must demand what they want. For instance the grocery retailer would be willing to offer organic produce if they knew enough customers buy it before it passes its best before date. These retailers will only purchase products they know they can sell in order to make a profit and cover the high expenses of freight and operating a retail outlet. Retailers attempt to purchase the best quality food for what the customer wants and is willing to pay.

There are van services for seniors and wheelchair users available in North West River, Happy Valley Goose Bay and Sheshatsiu for more convenient access to retail stores.

7. Asset and Gaps Analysis for Upper Lake Melville Region

Short Term Relief

There are several well utilized short term hunger relief strategies in the region. Nunatsiavut (Labrador Inuit Government) offers fresh food supplements of \$ 25.00 vouchers to pregnant mothers, nursing mothers, families living on low incomes and diabetics twice per month to purchase fresh fruits and dairy. This supplement is only available to Nunatsiavut members and will not be available soon due to funding restraints.

There is also a provincial government food supplement of \$ 60.00 per month for women who are pregnant that increases to \$90.00 per month after the child is born to promote healthy eating while the mother is lactating. Women have to apply for this supplement and there needs to be more public awareness that this supplement is available.

The Family Life Center of Sheshatsiu offers a monthly food box program that includes eggs, milk and some fresh produce as well as clothing for families in need.

There is a food bank located in the Labrador Friendship Center in Goose Bay. According to the manager, the food bank offers 25 tons of food per year and it costs \$50,000 per year for the Labrador Friendship Center to run the food bank. Local food bank usage has increased dramatically in 2010. Individuals from the whole Lake Melville Area access the food bank.

Good Food Box and Gleaning

There has been some discussion by local poverty reduction strategists about creating a "Good Food Box" system where local produce could be "gleaned" and used for the food bank to supplement canned and dry food products presently offered by the food bank.

Capacity Building

Community Freezer programs

The Upper Lake Melville area communities in times past have been very food secure for many reasons. Among these is the ability of many community members to forage wild foods and to recognize the intrinsic value of this type of food. Through a local survey, it has been discovered that wild food harvesting is still practiced extensively in this area. As many has 22.60% to 34.93% or (22.6+34.93=57%) of the local mixed population place a high to very high value respectively, on eating wild food. This is quite an asset because wild game of caribou, fish, rabbit, geese, ducks, partridge, seal, beaver, fox, and porcupine are prolific, sustainable sources of protein in the Labrador environment. Good hunters frequently share what they glean with extended family members, friends who do not hunt or fish, and elders.

There are natural ups and downs in availability of wild game that is monitored and licensed for some species by Canadian government agencies. The caribou are not plentiful this year and so the hunting will be reduced this year. Apparently in the past, when caribou were scarce other game was used instead. Wild blueberries, red berries and bake apples are also very plentiful and easily accessible.

There are community freezer programs available to Labrador Inuit seniors in both Happy Valley Goose Bay and North West River that offer a wide array of these wild foods. These programs are well funded, fully utilized and seniors have easy access to them.

Nunakuavut (Metis Nation) in Goose Bay has a community freezer program for its senior members with good access as well.

Hunters are paid by Aboriginal governments to provide wild food sources for all of the local freezer programs.

Sheshatsiu does not have a community freezer program. However, there are government subsidized programs to encourage hunting and there is a culture of sharing where hunters share their harvest with elders and others in need.

A gap in the freezer program is that vulnerable families like single parent headed families or families living on government transfer programs cannot access the freezer foods. Another gap in the freezer program is that a wide variety of wild meats are not available commercially so that mothers wishing to offer these cultural foods to their young children cannot do so if someone in the family does not hunt.

Even if vulnerable families were included in these freezer programs there is still the problem of no public transport to access the freezer food. Transportation to local grocery stores can be challenging for people living in low income areas of the upper valley area of Goose Bay. There is no public transport, taxis are expensive, and many of these people do not have a vehicle.

People can purchase local fish from the Labrador Inuit Torngat Fish Cooperative which is located in Happy Valley Goose Bay. Prices for these products are fairly reasonable. There is usually enough fish to last the season until the next harvest.

Educational Programs

The Aboriginal Family life centers in Happy Valley Goose Bay and Sheshatsiu offer parenting programs, pre-school play groups and cooking classes as well as emotional support groups for single parents. Sheshatsiu also offers programs to teach teenage mothers how to cook and to play with their children. The cooking classes incorporate recipes where children can be very involved in the food preparation as well as incorporating traditional knowledge along with updated nutritional awareness in the recipes ie caribou stir fry for example. A cookbook is being created that unites traditional and contemporary nutritional knowledge.

A bread making course is being offered in Happy Valley Goose Bay and is very popular.

Another important asset is a “Kids Eat Smart” program presently functioning in all of the primary schools in the Upper Lake Melville area.

Breastfeeding programs are quite pronounced in this area and have a high degree of visibility. There are several public health initiatives in place to support breastfeeding moms.

There are monthly meal programs in Goose Bay and North West River for seniors and a weekly soup kitchen is conducted at the Labrador Friendship Centre.

Education System Impacts and Changes

The issues of high numbers of teen moms as well as low achievement levels of education, lack of adequate wage levels, lack of meaningful employment and a severe shortage of low income housing for the Upper Lake Melville area are strong contributing factors to food insecurity. Many of these issues listed are the direct impact of low levels of education achievement and much work is being accomplished in the Lake Melville region to assist individuals to succeed in higher levels of education.

Several different programs are being implemented in the area to assist the local population with opportunities and support to access education through the Labrador Friendship Center, HRLE(Human Resources, Labour and Employment) and the College of the North Atlantic campuses in Happy Valley Goose Bay, and North West River. There is an Innu trade programs available for young mothers in Sheshatsiu as well.

The Labrador Institute, which is an out reach extension of MUN, has been instrumental in creating a transfer year program, where students can stay in Labrador to complete their first year of university studies. Many students are now attending these classes and tertiary education is gradually becoming more accessible to Labrador youth.

Also, Nunatsiavut(Labrador Inuit Government) in partnership with MUN(Memorial University) has created a special program so that several individuals are able to obtain a social work degree here in Labrador. This program offers a possible solution to not having enough social workers to cope with the overwhelming mental health and addiction issues so prevalent in the area as well as providing educational opportunities that have not been available so far. It is hoped that this program will continue and that more degree programs will be offered through the Labrador Institute.

The College of the North Atlantic created an Aboriginal bridging program in recent years to support and assist Aboriginal students to succeed in school. As many as 69 % Of students from Sheshatsiu presently do not graduate from high school and 22% of Upper Lake Melville residents have not completed high school.

Farmer's Market

The local Big Land Fall Fair attendance is diminishing every year and a group of community members are beginning to plan a weekly farmer's market to commence in the summer of 2011 to replace the fair for a more repeatable, systematic format in order to encourage a local culture of buying direct from food producers.

Suggestions were made of creating social marketing and bartering systems, that include individuals contracting with local food producers at the beginning of the season to purchase a specific quantity of produce throughout the growing season.

Community gardens

Community gardens were well supported in those surveyed. People have frequently stated that children and youth gardening and nutritious cooking programs are very important. Community gardens aligned with school and youth programs were considered to be important for future food security. A children's community garden plot has already been designated by the Town. Members of the local Green Team will be assisting the children to plant and maintain the garden. Staff from the children's summer recreational program will be working with the children as well throughout the summer of 2011.

At present, Town Council members in Happy Valley Goose Bay have requested that the Town Technician locate some land within the town boundaries for a community garden. It was suggested that an attempt be made to find land within easy walking distance of a more vulnerable neighborhood that could also give access to a cooking facility (ie church kitchen), for a community kitchen project.

Community Kitchens

Presently there are two community kitchen projects in their formative stages.

Public Education

A number of community members stated that they wanted to garden and to compost but did not know how. These people stated that they wanted more gardening, green house management and composting education offered with follow up support. There are many experienced gardeners in the area that could offer their knowledge. Perhaps a gardening blog would be helpful as well as a resource list for gardening information. There was a suggestion as well as of a demonstration garden and a team of experienced gardeners to do hands on support with new gardeners.

Root cellar storage was also mentioned as a gap in this community. Many homes do not have basements to store produce. Two of the local food producers have cold storage on their farms.

System Redesign

We have quite a ways to go before we will achieve basic food security from local growers. It has been suggested that some discussion about policy change with government agricultural agencies would be helpful as well as working with the Town Council of Happy Valley Goose Bay to provide space for a farmer's market. The farming industry needs to develop policies that are more encouraging to new farmers.

Farm labour is also an issue. Food producers in the area have identified that they are not able to secure enough adequately trained labour to help harvest their crops.

Working with the Board of Education in the region to include growing practices, cooking, preserving skills and wild food harvesting as part of school curriculum has been suggested by a significant number of community members.

Public Awareness

More awareness of what food security means is required as well as what people can do to create more food security. The Upper Lake Melville Region could easily be described as a vibrant community that has already been tackling issues of food security indirectly. Government strategies to reduce poverty have also been helpful in addressing some issues around food security. However, the importance of addressing it as a separate entity appears to be timely and the community is presently responding with enthusiasm and vigor.

Priority Chart

A chart on the following page has been included to highlight the essence of identified gaps in the Upper Lake Melville Area food system. Suggestions of priorities of action can also be found in the chart. It is hoped these specific actions, based on informed decision making, will assist the region to attain better food security practices.

8. Gap Analysis Chart for Upper Lake Melville Region Community Food Assessment

Printing in red signifies priorities set by dotmocracy process.

Type	Gap Priorities
Short Term Relief Programs providing food to relieve hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Food Box – suggestion of offering a fresh produce program through food bank • Gleaning- organized gleaning to help those in need of food and reduce food left to waste in the fields
Capacity- building Programs developed by the community to improve the availability and access to nutritious food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Gardens – significant support of establishing community gardens • Community Kitchens – 2 programs in planning stages for vulnerable populations • Farmer's markets – significant interest shown by community to establish a market • Educational and awareness programs – community wants more educational opportunities
Redesign Actions designed to enhance the community food system, integrating key elements and improving the potential for long term sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's gardening and nutritious food prep back in school system • Remove barriers to local farmers – suggestion of a committee to work with government officials • Wild foods access & preserving skills in schools

9. Community Priority Setting

Increasing awareness

We discovered that in order to move the community through the assessment process, increasing awareness about food security was pivotal. One of the ways of engaging the community that proved to be successful was to host events. We had a public showing of the video "Fresh" that was widely advertised by radio interviews, newspaper, Face Book, and a community online calendar.

After the video was shown, a discussion was conducted, whereby participants were asked to comment on the local food system and to identify the top priority of what they thought needed to change to make a better local food system. These comments were written down and compiled.

Information gathering

At least 50 one on one interviews were conducted with stakeholders of the food system as well as with a wide array of community members. The individuals interviewed included wholesalers, retailers and local food producers, environmentalists, dietitians, health care providers, seniors and those who work with seniors, operators of food freezer programs, food bank providers, food bank users, spiritual leaders, students, youth and youth workers, teenage moms, aboriginal elders, aboriginal leaders, community members living on government transfer payments, economic development workers, seniors, educators and government workers including Town Council members of Happy Valley Goose Bay and North West River.

Each of these interviews included a discussion of all past and present food security related programs and/or issues that directly pertained to those individuals. A survey (See appendix: A) was conducted with each of these individuals and their opinion was sought regarding priorities for change in the food system. Records were kept of all of these interviews.

Community Engagement Strategies

An online survey was created and was circulated by an online community calendar. Newspaper interviews and radio interviews were conducted frequently to inform the community about the project and to engage them in the process. Close working relationships were established with media representatives.

A critical strategy of the community-led food assessment was to build positive, encouraging and collaborative partnerships with as many community members as possible. New contacts that showed a passion for food security issues were supported in their efforts and asked to join the working group and/or join in activities of the project. An enthusiastic sharing of food security activities took place at the beginning of each working group meeting. This sharing time highlighted the work that group members

were accomplishing and helped to create a cohesive, nurturing and happy working environment.

Group consultations were held after the completion of the food report which included the environmental scan and the asset, gap analysis. The information from the report and the methods of gathering information, were organized into a power point presentation.

Priority Setting Process

A separate meeting was held with major stakeholders including government representatives, aboriginal government representatives, food bank workers, dietitians, health promotion workers, health care officials, women's centre representatives, poverty reduction workers, farmers, and the food security coordinators. These people were all personally invited by e-mail with an explanation of what the meeting was about.

Two other group consultations took place with the community at large and were advertised by the online community calendar, newspaper and radio.

We started the group consultations with a fun, warm up exercise where participants were able to share a personal story about food memories from childhood. We also provided several delicious snacks that were made from locally produced foods and found that taking care to create a friendly environment really helped to animate the discussion.

The power point presentation was then shown with the results of the environmental scan and gaps and asset analysis.

A discussion followed that included the use of a chart that encapsulated an inventory of past and present food security programs organized into three levels and clearly identified assets and gaps in the local system.

After some very insightful discussion which included many perspectives, the participants were asked to vote on the top three priorities they thought needed to be worked on to improve the local food system. The voting was done through a dotmocracy process. Typed priorities were placed on the walls and participants simply placed a star beside their choices.

A report of the meeting was typed up and sent out to all of the participants after the results were compiled. A newspaper article and a radio interview also disseminated the results of the group consultations.

Community food security priorities

Throughout the priority setting process a pattern of several key themes arose with consistency. The following list highlights these themes that focus on challenges of the local food security.

- **Community farmer's market** – community desire to have a market place in Happy Valley Goose Bay near the centre of town to generate a venue for community members to buy direct from the food producers and establish relationships with their food producers, to provide a social meeting place at the market, to have a venue for people to sell crafts, preserves, and home baking as well as eggs, meat and produce. Also want to have higher quality, fresh produce. The market could strengthen the local economy and provide a tourist attraction as well.
- **Food growing skills and nutritious food preparation skills in the education system** – community awareness of high levels of obesity and diabetes in population. Want to see children learning to have a healthy relationship with good, whole foods where they learn where their food comes from, how it is produced, how to grow their own food and how to cook nutritious food. Want children to learn these skills in school.
- **Community gardens** – growing interest in establishing community gardens in the region. The gardens were viewed as providing educational opportunities, beautification of the community, as well as a food source. Many people possess good gardening skills in the community.
- **Wild food harvesting and preserving skills** – Community wants to find ways to teach people how to harvest wild foods and then how to preserve. Many community members possess these skills presently but need to find ways to pass knowledge to youth. Approximately 40% of region still values or highly values eating wild foods. Possible expansion of food freezer programs to include more community members.
- **Increasing community capacity** – importance of developing capacity in the community ie workshops for gardening, food preserving, and cooking skills.
- **Gleaning and good food box program** – farmer's would like to coordinate with a group of volunteers to glean produce harvest and distribute gleaning to food bank users. Discussion of a group of volunteers to add on a fresh produce component to the food bank during the growing season.

10. Community Food Action Plan Upper Lake Melville

Using the community priorities that were set during various meetings that occurred in autumn and early winter of 2010 in the Upper Lake Melville Region

Goal 1: To enhance short term, hunger relief strategies in the Upper Lake Melville Region.

Goal 2: To develop programs and education in the community to improve availability and accessibility to nutritious food.

Goal 3: To enhance and develop the local food system in Upper Lake Melville for long term sustainability.

Goal 1: To enhance short term, hunger relief strategies in the Upper Lake Melville Region

Priority addressed	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Community Kitchen (CK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - location - tenants association of government housing units - food, local farmers - community kitchen manual - funding and administrative support NL housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organize members to participate - secure venue - print and distribute CK manual - plan and host CK - secure training for food prep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - food for families - ongoing community kitchen 	<p>Short term – prepared meals for families, increased food prep skills</p> <p>Long term – community empowerment, better fed families</p>
Gleaning – use a local tenants association to glean farmer's fields and then clean and prepare food in the community kitchen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - farm produce, tenant association time, Salvation Army van and kitchen - funding from NL Housing - administrative support social worker NL Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organize event – field to fork chain of food - phone tree of volunteers to help pick food (CK group) - connect with Farmers for access to land - arrange transportation - distribution of food to vulnerable neighborhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - community kitchen meals - properly gleaned farm fields 	<p>Short term- folks reconnect with food, nutritious local foods added to community kitchen, food preparation and harvesting skills</p> <p>Long term- expand to include other community kitchens in region, better practices of food security</p>

Priority addressed	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Good Food Box – community supported agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - two farmers will pilot test with 15 families - money \$500.00 up front for season -farm produce - community champion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - farmers to connect with families - get commitment from 15 families -customize food box to suit tastes - organize agreement (\$ up front, produce after) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - good food box delivered to families weekly throughout 2011 growing season 	<p>Short Term- healthy food for families, farmer and consumer relations, a market for farm produce.</p> <p>Long Term- sustainable agriculture, more families eating, better quality local foods</p>
Community Gardens	<p>Food security Network volunteers, Town of Happy Valley Goose Bay- land Lake Melville Agricultural Association – consultation and soil amendment</p> <p>-government soil testing facilities</p> <p>-Green Team in North West River</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Get commitment for land -identify community champions - clear land and upgrade soil 2011 - organize volunteers - prepare to plant in Spring 2012 - fundraise locally and submit applications for funding to initiate gardens - host a series of educational events to stimulate interest - use media to promote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - land available for gardening -garden produce - develop green space in Towns of region <p>-increased food production of community gardens of North West River</p>	<p>Short term- garden available to community, gardening skills, locally produced foods.</p> <p>Long term- community cohesiveness, better local food security Increased community resiliency</p> <p>More food for seniors in North West River</p>

Priority Addressed	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Community Gardens for Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Green Team -Town of Happy Valley Goose Bay- land, fencing, water source -Board of Education -Food Security Network -Volunteers -Lake Melville Agricultural Association consulting and soil amendment -Child Youth and Family Service workers in Sheshatsiu -Grow stations for seedling propagation -local Wellness grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -community champions to initiate local food lunch and seedlings program on Earth Day - FSN to liaise with Town on location and prep - train volunteers and organize work -organize one field to fork event during summer -host a planting event and harvesting event in children's garden - use media promotion for events - initiate a children's garden in Sheshatsiu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's community garden in Happy Valley Goose Bay and Sheshatsiu - trained volunteers - interest in gardening - increased knowledge and awareness of food production 	<p>Short term - establish children's community garden in Goose Bay spring 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -conduct seedling programs at 2 schools in region -create and conduct gardening program in Goose Bay 2011 <p>Long term – seedling and garden programs continue annually and expand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -school system integrates growing programs into curriculum
Canning and Preserving skill building workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - funding -location for workshops - knowledgeable presenters -Food Security Network information kit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -secure a location, get presenters, advertise and host workshops - contact local expert for model of classes -make starter kits with basic supplies. - World Food Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - workshops - starter kits - enhanced ongoing celebration of World Food Day -educational opportunities at Farmer's Market 	<p>Short term – more canning and preserving skills in community</p> <p>Long term- annual running of workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase of stored food

Priority Addressed	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Farmers Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding - tent structure - volunteers - farm produce - coordinator -board of directors -market manager -guidelines for vendors -vendors permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have presented the concept to Town Council - applied for grants - outline rules and get buy in - hire market manager - work closely with farmers to get buy in as well as accommodating their concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - farm fresh produce readily available - a farmers market structure - promote more activity in centre of Town - food source for centre of Town residents -more visibility of farmers -closer interaction between farmers and community 	<p>Short term – local produce available to community, gathering spot for community,</p> <p>Long term – permanent structure and set up for Farmers market, expanded farmers market, a tourist attraction for the Town Increase local economic development and sustainability</p>

Goal 3: To enhance and develop the local food system in Upper Lake Melville for long term sustainability.

Priority addressed	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Healthy food preparation in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kids Eat Smart - School Food Guidelines - partnerships and organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find some good models of this to adapt - Lobby Dept of Ed - Doing a pilot project- litterless lunch using local foods on Earth day - contact provincial nutritionist - School Food Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More food prep in schools - salad and sandwich bar days implemented and evaluated - partnerships with school board 	<p>Short term- salad days tested and adopted, schools make more food prep available to students</p> <p>Long term – Board of Education embraces idea of more healthy food prep available to students</p>
Barriers to Farming and new Farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with agricultural association - investigate the possibility of a food policy council in ULM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have an FSN member join the LMAA - investigate a food policy council and its roles - bring issues forward to Dept of Agriculture - Agriculture rep in Labrador 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more new farmers - more contented farmers - more farms - better accessibility to government agricultural agencies 	<p>Short term- more farms, thriving farms, permanent local link to Agrifoods</p> <p>Long term – more local foods produced ,and more variety of foods produced</p>
Wild Foods :Gathering and Preserving Wild foods; gathering and preparing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aboriginal Elders and Governments - Board of education -Hunters, Teachers -resources to harvest ie. Ski-doo, guns, bait... 	<p>Wider access and support of land programs of Aboriginal governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local experts to run programs at Aboriginal Family Life Centres and College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expanded workshops on gathering and preparing gathering wild foods 	<p>Short term – community access to wild food gathering, cooking and preserving skills</p> <p>Long term – community knowledge& skills-ongoing</p>

Priority Addressed	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Wild Foods; Freezer program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - community freezer model - community buy in, -Aboriginal government funding -Hunters and gatherers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contact existing freezer programs for ideas to expand - lobby government to put money towards program - expand population that can access foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more hunters and gatherers - more freezers - more people accessing wild foods i.e. single moms 	<p>Short term – expanded freezer programs, vulnerable families accessing wild foods, young children exposed to wild food tastes</p> <p>Long term – wild food traditions upheld, continued community access to benefits of wild foods</p>

11. Community Evaluation Plan

Goal 1: To enhance short term, hunger relief strategies in the Upper Lake Melville Region.

Community Kitchen (CK) Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
Short term – prepared meals for families, increased food prep skills, Long term – community empowerment, better fed families	ST- 8 complete meals offered via the CK, participants learn new skills LT- community members; take on new roles, engage enthusiastically, develop new working relationships, are sharing - more community members want to take part - children have more energy, less reliance on fast food, access to good food is improved	ST- Number of complete meals served - participants report improved skills LT- Number of new people involved, number of spin off events, people report stronger and happier social relationships - families more active and socially involved, people report better food practices in home,

Field to Fork Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
Short term- folks reconnect with food, nutritious local foods added to community kitchen, food preparation and harvesting skills Long term- expand to include other community kitchens in region, better practices of food security	ST – folks know about their food and where it comes from - local harvested foods used in CK - participants learn new skills - 1 harvesting event takes place each year. LT- at least 1 CK involved - gleaned food is used instead of wasted - low income families have better access to local produce	ST- Satisfaction and knowledge survey LT- number of CK's involved - number of gleaning events - Number of families served by CK

Goal 2: To develop programs and education in the community to improve availability and accessibility to nutritious foods.

Community Supported Agriculture Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation methods
<p>Short Term- healthy food for families, good farmer and consumer relations, pilot test is successful</p> <p>Long Term- sustainable local agriculture, building local economy</p>	<p>(ST)-15 families take part - feedback from both parties via consultation at least 3 times during growing season -produce is received in a timely manner and is of expected value</p> <p>(LT)- program expands, is better managed and continues annually - farmers make an adequate living</p>	<p>(ST)- head count -Effective record keeping of consultations and action items -satisfaction survey (LT) – families sign up for another year, number of new families added to wait list. - farmers continue to offer good food box, more want to offer good food boxes</p>
Community Gardens in Upper Lake Melville Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
<p>Short term- garden available to community, gardening skills, locally produced foods</p> <p>Long term- community cohesiveness, better local food security, Increased community resiliency, More food for seniors in North West River</p>	<p>(ST)-Land is available and ready for planting - people gardening, good crop yield - local foods consumed (LT) – people taking part and working together, - more community gardens, - more local produce being stored and preserved - better crop yield = more food distributed to seniors NWR</p>	<p>(ST) – soil tested, amendments added - number of people involved and amount and quality of produce harvested - amount of food left in garden, (LT) – group functions well and continue to take part - expansion of community garden - amount of produce stored and preserved - compare quantity delivered to previous years.</p>

Children's Community Garden Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
<p>Short Term- establish children's community garden in Goose Bay spring 2011 -create and conduct seedling programs at 2 schools in region -create and conduct gardening program through summer recreation dept of Town in 2011</p> <p>Long Term- Seedling and garden programs continue annually and expand -school system integrates growing programs into curriculum</p>	<p>ST- plant seedlings with children in 2 schools on Earth Day - garden maintained and watered throughout summer -garden area prepared, fenced with water source connected in May 2011 - 8 classrooms from 2 schools plant seedlings and direct sow into garden mid June 2011 - program designed and implemented with Town Recreation</p> <p>LT- schools continue to engage in process with at least 4 more classrooms involved -more schools in the Labrador School Board engage in seedling program and establish own gardens</p>	<p>ST- Number of healthy seedlings transplanted. - success of harvest will evaluate volunteers efforts. - records kept of volunteers activities and visual monitoring of garden. - Fence installed, soiled tilled, water system connected, raised beds prepared, amendments added and soil tested. - number of classes and schools that took part. - consultation with Town employees on effectiveness of program.</p> <p>LT- number of classes involved increases from previous years. - number of new grow stations purchased - contact school board for list of schools offering grow programs</p>

Canning and Preserving workshops Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
Short term – more canning and preserving skills, Long term - Annual running of workshops -Increased food security with stored food	ST – 4 community workshops held in 2011/2012 - 2 trained workshop facilitators LT - workshops held 4 times every year - number of people attending workshops	ST - number of people who attended workshops, number of workshops, feedback surveys. LT - number of people who attended workshops, number of workshops, feedback surveys. - attendance lists
Farmers Market Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation methods
Short term – local produce available to community, gathering spot for community, Long term – permanent structure and set up for Farmers market, expanded farmers market, a tourist attraction for the Town Increase local economic development and sustainability	ST - Farmers market held regularly - success of farmers market based on community participation LT - attractive permanent structure allocated - more people and vendors taking part - vendors see a good volume of sales - market is included in tourist attraction pamphlets and tour packages	ST - number of local food producers taking part in farmers market - number of folks attending farmers market - number of new permits requested LT - permanent structure established and visible - number of new permits - number of folks attending farmers market - gross sales intake seasonally

Goal 3: To enhance and develop the local food system in Upper Lake Melville for long term sustainability

Healthy food preparation in schools Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
<p>Short Term – salad days tested and adopted, schools make more food prep available to students</p> <p>Long Term – board of education embraces idea of more healthy food prep available to students</p>	<p>ST- at least one salad day event during school year of 2011-2012 in at least one school</p> <p>-at least one food preparation event in after school program during school year 2011-2012 in at least one school</p> <p>LT- Board includes healthy food prep in classroom curriculum</p>	<p>ST- number of schools participating in salad day event</p> <p>- number of schools that have food prep event in after school program</p> <p>LT- number of schools that adopt a program to teach healthy food prep as classroom curriculum</p>

Barriers to Farming and New Farmers Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
<p>Short Term – new farmers, more farms, thriving farms, permanent local link to Agrifoods.</p> <p>Long Term – more local foods produced and more variety of local foods produced</p>	<p>ST- government protocol for crown leases streamlined</p> <p>- processing time for land use reduced to one year by 2015</p> <p>- at least 2 new farmers by 2012</p> <p>-government agricultural representative lives in Labrador and is knowledgeable of northern climate agriculture</p> <p>LT- Farmers market is ongoing and adequately supplied by local food producers</p> <p>-provincial government provides licenses and inspectors for livestock slaughter facilities</p>	<p>ST- farm applicants report faster processing of their farm plans</p> <p>-number of new farmers on land by 2012</p> <p>- permanent government agricultural rep installed in Labrador</p> <p>LT- consultation with farmers to ensure they can produce and sell regulated farm products</p> <p>- financial/usage reports from Farmers Market</p>

Wild Foods: Gathering and preparing Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
<p>Short Term- community access to wild food gathering, cooking and preserving skills</p> <p>Long Term- increased community knowledge and skills through ongoing workshops and land programs</p>	<p>ST- wild food gathering, cooking and preserving(land programs) in schools in region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aboriginal land programs combining elders, good hunters and youth take place - at least one workshop on wild food prep and preserving at CNA or local family life center by local expert <p>LT- at least one ongoing course on wild food prep and preserving skills offered by 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aboriginal land programs continue to be funded with good participation inside and outside schools -access to wild foods is increased by increased number of ongoing programs 	<p>ST-number of participants and number of programs in schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -participants surveyed - Aboriginal land programs remain ongoing - number of participants <p>LT- ongoing courses and land programs take place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased in number of participants and number of programs

Wild Foods: Freezer Programs Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
<p>Short Term- expanded freezer programs, vulnerable families accessing wild foods, young children exposed to wild food tastes</p> <p>Long Term-wild food traditions upheld, continued community access to benefits of wild foods</p>	<p>ST- required funding is accessed, more freezers purchased, -funding to freezer programs increased to pay hunter-gatherers to provide more volume of wild foods for freezers</p> <p>-</p> <p>LT- young families engaging in wild food traditions via programs -more hunter-gathers hired</p>	<p>ST- detailed project activity reporting takes place, including action items for expansion , scope and number of participants in expanded programs</p> <p>LT- detailed record of additional costs, number of participants, types of foods accessed –surveys of participants -ongoing consultations with Aboriginal government staff with good record keeping of consultations regarding effectiveness and concerns of expanded programs</p>

Appendix A: Community Food Security Questionnaire

1. Do you grow a family garden? Yes No
2. How available are your culturally relevant or traditional foods?
Very available Somewhat available Not available
3. What value do you place on healthy eating?
Very high High Medium Low Very low
4. What value do you place on growing your own food?
Very high High Medium Low Very low
5. What value do you place in hunting or fishing for your own food?
Very high High Medium Low Very Low
6. What value do you place in eating wild game and fish?
Very high High Medium Low Very Low
7. Do you recycle? Yes No
8. Do you compost? Yes No
9. Are you spending more money for good quality food than you think is necessary? Yes No
10. Would you like to purchase more locally grown foods? Yes No
11. Do you think community gardens are a good idea? Yes No
12. Do you purchase organically grown foods? Yes No
13. Are you vegetarian? Yes No
14. What are your concerns or suggestions about our local food system?

Appendix B: Working Group/Steering Committee - Upper Lake Melville Region

1. Kelly Janes- Health Promotion Labrador Grenfell Health Authority
2. Arlene Michelin- Town Council Member - Happy Valley Goose Bay
3. Kerry Saner-Harvey- Mennonite Central Committee
4. Charlotte Courage- Social Worker- Newfoundland Labrador Housing
5. Judy Norman- Teacher – Sheshatsiu
6. Patti Fleming – Community Worker Labrador Friendship Centre
7. Jim Purdy- Local Food Producer
8. Stephanie Flowers – Mokami Status of Women
9. Jon Beale – Community Worker – Lab Institute - Happy Valley Goose Bay
10. Ilana Alice – Researcher - Labrador Institute