

CIELAP's 4th Partnering for Sustainability Workshop
Achieving Resilient Agricultural Systems: Innovation, People and Partnerships
November 13 and 14, 2008 – 111 Sussex Dr., Ottawa, Ontario

Case Study: Eat Local Caledon

Name and Organization

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About the case study

Since launch spring 2007, the *Eat Local Caledon* Program has won tremendous support from all - including farmers and producers, residents, restaurants and food shops, Town Council, local media, The Peel Federation of Agriculture and the local environmental community. It is one of the best “feel good” environmental programs that enables all to take real action in a meaningful way. In keeping with the CCA's work to build a Sustainable Caledon, the economic, social and cultural pillars of sustainability are integrated into the program at a fundamental level.

As further testament to the wide spread support for the Program, in one short year and half, the Program has a long list of accomplishments including: Ontario's first *Eat Local Week* in 2007 (with a resident challenge, special dinners and events); Ontario's first Eat Local Month in 2008; Caledon Crunch (3000 Caledon students crunched a Caledon grown apple all at once on September 29th, 2008) Eat Local Caledon Monthly Newsletter (since October 2007); two Trade Connections Meetings; 2008 Field to Table Directory (for producers and buyers); four Eat Local dinners at Caledon restaurants; new Inglewood Village Farmer's Market (June to October 2008); and, the proposed 2009 Caledon Farmers' Market in Bolton (supported by Town of Caledon and other groups). This is all in addition to a pilot school program, speaking engagements and other work.

The Program focuses on three main components: promotion and engagement; building the middle (capacity and infrastructure); and, production capacity.

How this case study advances sustainable development and fosters resilience

Eat Local Caledon tackles the problem at the grassroots and works on re-developing the local food and farming system from the bottom up. By building support from consumers farmers, producers (including value add producers), restaurants, shops, institutions, local business, youth and government (elected and staff at municipal and regional level),

the program has enjoyed wide spread appeal. With that appeal, a market for local grown and produced food has developed.

A local food and farming system is environmentally, socially, economically and culturally sustainable – especially as strong and loyal relationships have developed between local producers and buyers. This system is less dependent on the global economy and fossil fuels for transportation. At every level, it promotes sustainable development. Further, the system has inherent resilience.

Barriers / Challenges

The biggest barrier has been gaining funding to develop the full program and roll it out over a number of years.

Interesting Lessons

This program has received wide-spread support from all, including all members of Council, the traditional agriculture community and the environmental community. It is a feel good second generation environmental program.

Moving Forward

Plans are underway to expand the Program once again for 2009 by building new relationships with local groups and forging additional ties between the rural and urban areas within Caledon.

Remaining Comments and Questions

This Program is being replicated throughout Ontario and the World as communities begin to understand the importance local food and farming systems. Many communities have the end goal of a sustainable and resilient agricultural system, a secure food supply for all and the return to celebrating food and farming.