

Organizational Food Security Capacity Building and Network Development at FoodNet Ontario

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Background

FoodNet Ontario works to increase the capacity of organizations and communities across Ontario to achieve community food security and create sustainable local food systems by:

- Acting as a convener, bringing people, ideas and resources together;
- Facilitating dialogue and collaboration between organizations;
- Educating the public and key decision-makers;
- Identifying and promoting best (and promising) practices;
- Identifying and removing barriers to best practices;
- Encouraging diverse cultures to participate
- Collaborating with members and other organizations to provide forums for individuals and organizations to share knowledge and resources.

Learning Objectives

Relationship Building – Engage with the FoodNet Ontario member network or potential partners to assess interest and information needs

Knowledge Translation – Develop a range of resource materials that draw on research and advocacy tailored to needs of members

Innovation Stimulation – Synthesize knowledge and information to foster and support new ideas

Community Development – Respond to community needs and work to increase overall capacity

Knowledge attainment – Learn the most effective or efficient methods to lower food insecurity in communities.

Evaluation - Support the development and implementation of an evaluation plan of FoodNet Ontario initiatives

Key Definitions

Capacity building

Building partnerships, knowledge exchange, problem solving and infrastructure support in order to achieve a range of specific and generalized health outcomes

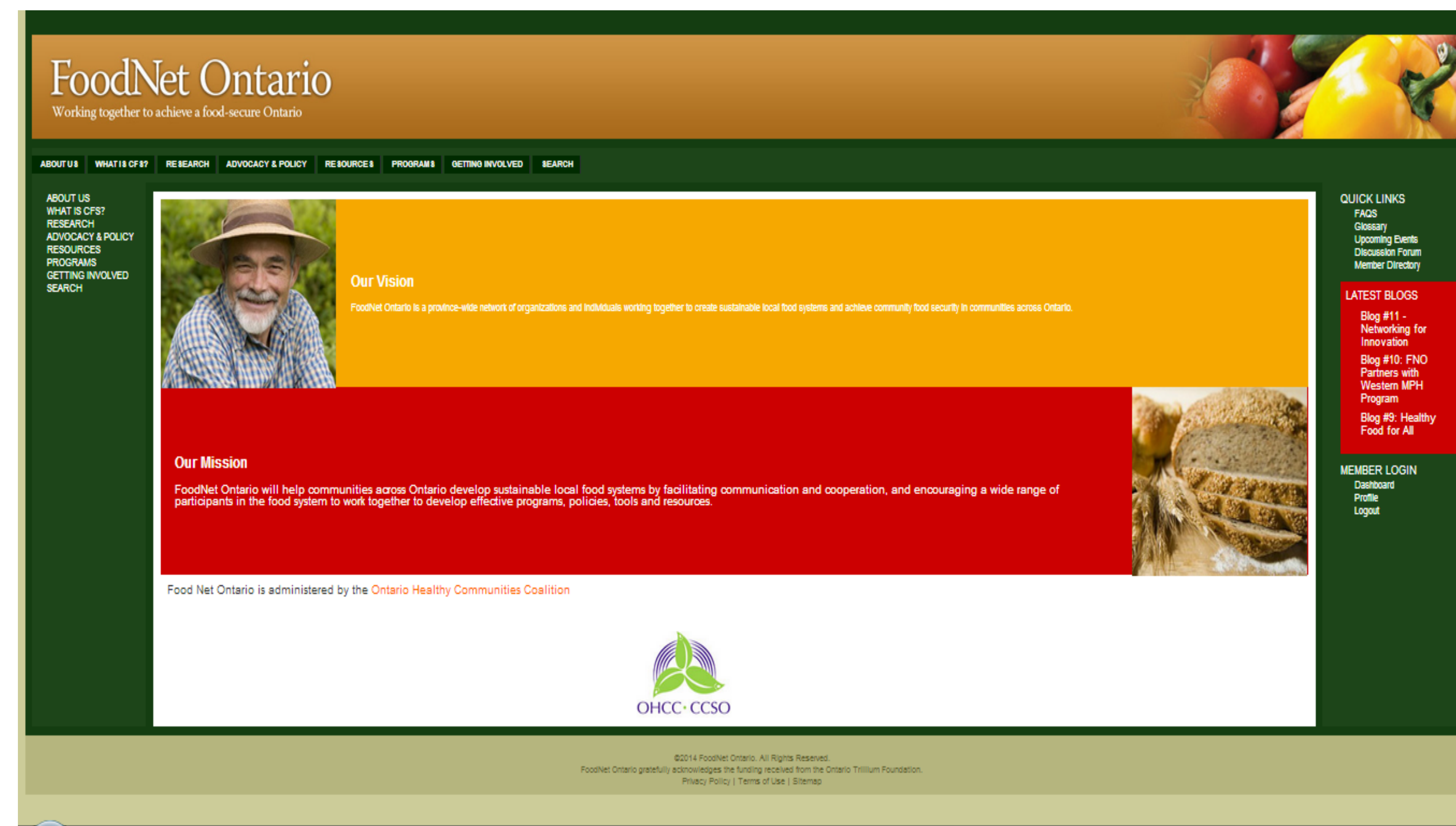
Community food security

A situation in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes self-reliance and social justice

Network

An association of individuals having a common interest, formed to provide mutual assistance, helpful information and the like for its members, who exchange information, contacts and experience for professional or social purpose.

References
Foodnetontario.ca., (2015). foodnetontario.ca. Retrieved 17 August 2015, from <http://foodnetontario.ca>
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Network Development

Social Media Revitalization

- Administered Social Media; specifically Twitter - @FNOntario
- Interacted with food security organizations and programs daily
- Promoted innovative and interactive food security projects
- Added over 200 twitter followers; promoting membership
- Published Food Security based blogs

Networking Events

- Urban Agriculture in London film viewing & food security panel
- Growing a Local Food Strategy: A Day of Dialogue among Community Leaders and Decision Makers
- Field-to-Table Farmers' Meeting: Getting Healthy Local Food Into Communities
- Community Food Solutions Resource Fair: Affordable, Healthy Options in Toronto



Capacity Building

Redeveloped Program Database

- Applied research strategy to identify current food security projects, programs & initiatives
- Engaged with leadership of organizations to understand scope of initiative
- Developed communication template to add programs & members
- Added over 200 projects, programs & initiatives from all across Ontario
- Developed new membership

Event Listing

- Supplied membership with food security and food system development events
- Shared resources from e-news and other food security news subscriptions
- Participated in webinars and social media campaigns

Types of Program/Project/Initiative

Anti-poverty	Food policies
Buy local campaigns	Food policy / security councils
Community / Good Food markets	Food supplements or coupons
Community gardens	Gleaning
Community kitchens	Good Food Box programs
Community panels or forums	Greenhouse growing
Community shared agriculture	Inventories of food programs
Emergency Food (e.g. food banks)	Nutritious Food Basket
Farm start-up assistance	Organic farming
Farmers' markets	Protection of agricultural lands
Food advocacy	Student nutrition programs
Food charters	Sustainable agriculture
Food co-operatives	Urban agriculture
Food literacy / farm to school	

Next Steps

- Coordinating Committee to execute Strategic Plan
- Advocate and champion FoodNet Ontario
- Continue to develop resources, program database & projects
- Utilize social media to re-establish FoodNet Ontario
- Enhance communications and engage members

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