

11.0 FUNDING, FINANCING AND INVESTMENT



11.0 FUNDING, FINANCING AND INVESTMENT

11.1 Findings

A scan of the food funding and financial landscape in an area can help to shed light on the channels through which food funding is flowing into the area, the total amount of funds being allocated to its local food system, and the types of food projects that funders are prioritize when they allocate funds. This information can be used to assess whether or not the food funding being made available is able to support not only work being done on the ground floor by community-based food initiatives but also the systemic change that needs to take place to transform the local food system. For example, the proportion of dollars invested into an area's local food system may or may not be proportionate to the size and scale of the food system problems faced by community, such as infrastructure in the middle of the supply chain. In addition to illuminating where there are gaps in food funding to an area, the findings can be used to identify opportunities to align food funder and stakeholder perceptions of food system change. This alignment is required for the development of local sustainable and resilient food systems.

The objectives of this section are:

- To provide an overview of the funding available for community-based food system initiatives in Middlesex-London; and
- To provide a broad overview of investment, funding and financing options available to food system business in the area.

The variety of food projects taking place across the province and the diversity of stakeholders involved in these projects exposes just how much local food system activity is taking place. Therefore, this section begins with an introduction to food system project areas, with examples of activities taking place in each area. This helps one to understand the types of projects that exist along the spectrum of food system activity and how these projects are related, both to each other and the available funding. Next, this section reviews the total known dollars being injected into the Middlesex-London food system through grants to food system projects. These dollars, which are identified by project type and/or area, contribute to a broader picture of the food funding and financial landscape in Middlesex-London. This is complemented by a review of the financial options being made available to farms and food businesses in the area; however, the picture is not complete because private investors are not accounted for in the below findings.

Food System Project Areas

Food system projects can take on a variety of different forms, depending on where in the food system a stakeholder is located and the specific types of activities they are engaged in. On the one hand, local growers, producers, aggregators, processors, distributors, and marketers, to

name a few, are all directly involved in the food supply chain and its related value-add activities. On the other hand, organizations working on food security issues, growing awareness around healthy eating choices, and working to increase local food purchases, are all engaged in direct action to change the food system. The below table (Table 47) shows the breadth of food system project areas in Canada, as well as examples of the unique types of activities that are taking place in each of these areas.

Table 47: Food System Project Areas and Examples in Canada

Project Area	Example Activities
Food Marketing	Agriculture and local food tourism
Food Production	Animal, vegetable, vineyards, etc.
Food Processing or Manufacturing	Bakeries, meat processing, etc.
Food Distribution or Storage	Food hubs/aggregation facilities, distribution
Retail Food Outlets	Co-ops, CSAs, farmers markets, restaurants, etc.
Food Access and Nutrition	Food banks, community gardens, meal programs, transition towns
Education	Continuing education, technical education centres, out of school programs, food skills programs, etc.
Health & Nutritional Quality of Food	Food supply quality, children's nutrition, etc.
Workforce Development	Internship, apprenticeship, mentor programs, etc.
Business Planning and Technical Assistance	Access to capital, feasibility and planning, land access, packaging and safety, regulation and permits, human resources, etc.
Energy	Biodiesel, methane digester site, solar, wind, etc.
Institutional Procurement	Hospital purchasing policies, etc.
Regulations and Public Policy	Advocacy organizations, regulation authorities
Innovation & Research	R&D support
Social Enterprise Development	Food system related social enterprises

When compared to the project type and food system areas receiving grant dollars in Middlesex-London, one can better understand which project areas are the focus of funder's attention at the moment and what types of activities are being prioritized in the area.

Food Funding Landscape

The food funding landscape across Ontario has yet to be mapped out. As a result, there is a limited amount of information available on food funding in specific areas, such as Middlesex-London, which makes it difficult to assess the local food funding state. As an indication of how difficult it is to obtain information on the funds available for food system projects in Middlesex-London, two Access to Information applications—requesting a breakdown of grants allocated to food system projects in the region—were submitted for this section, one with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and one with the Community Futures Development Corporation of Middlesex County. While OMAFRA responded to the application

with relevant data, the Community Futures Development Corporation only acknowledged receipt of the information request but did not provide any information for this community food assessment on food funds allocated by them to projects in Middlesex-London.

In the face of limited information on the food funding landscape, two forward-thinking food system groups have been conducting national food funding landscape assessments and provincial financial mobilization scans, respectively. Eco-Ethonomics Inc. has been involved in facilitating both of these important projects to help food system stakeholders gain key knowledge on funder perceptions of food system change and specific information on food funding available to the sector.

The first project was led by the Pan-Canadian Food Funders Collaborative, “an informal group of Canadian funders mobilizing to build a more sustainable, resilient and equitable food system for the future.”³⁴¹ This project involved assessing Canada’s food funding landscape to identify which food system areas funders are supporting and the degree of support, as well as if there is potential to align their work to achieve greater impact. Community Foundations of Canada, the national network for Canada’s 191 community foundations, can be contacted for more information on this project.

The second project, which is currently underway, is the result of a partnership between Sustain Ontario and FoodShare Toronto, “a province-wide cross sectoral alliance that promotes food and farming” and “a non-profit organization that works with communities and schools to deliver healthy food and food education,” respectively.³⁴² This collaborative project involves both a financial mobilization scan of the local food funding landscape in Ontario and a collective impact mapping to align the unique perspectives and activities of food system funders and grantees towards creating greater and measurable impacts across the sector. The results of this work, which will include evaluation resources and tools, will be invaluable to local food organizations and food funders alike, working to create food system change across the Province. Either Sustain Ontario or FoodShare Toronto can be contacted for more information on this project.

Food Funding

Table 48 shows the funds allocated to food system projects in Middlesex-London by OMAFRA, from October 2013 to August 2015. Projects range in both size and scope, from small business planning projects to large business monitoring and logistics projects. This difference is reflected in the provincial share amounts allocated to projects, which ranges from \$1,190.00 to \$183,252.13. The total amount of funds allocated to 19 projects is \$1,198,272.97 and the average funding allocated to a project is \$63,066.99, which is close to the median, \$71,516.90.

³⁴¹ Community Foundations of Canada, “Food,” 2016, Web, at <http://communityfoundations.ca/our-work/food/>.

³⁴² Sustain Ontario, “About Sustain Ontario,” 2010, Web, at <http://sustainontario.com/about/about>; FoodShare Toronto, “About,” 2015, Web, at <http://foodshare.net/about/>.

“We need more funding and resources for food education projects and food educators.”

- Survey Respondent

Table 48: Food System Funding by Type of Project, from October 2013-August 2015, by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (Source: Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, 2015)

Project Title	Project Type	Provincial Share Amount (\$)	Description
Food Grade Soybean De-hulling System for the Export Tempeh Market	Market Development	75,000.00	The Recipient will receive up to \$75,000 for a soybean de-huller that will allow access to new and emerging markets by providing a new product.
Everspring Farms Ltd. GF2 Processors (Capacity) Project	Business and Leadership Development	4,197.50	The company will complete drawing and determine inspection costs for the new facility.
Labatt Breweries of Canada – London Brewery GF2C Processors (Capacity) Project	Environmental and Climate Change	29,700.00	The company will complete an environment and infrastructure energy audit.
Petit Paris Creperie and Patisserie GF2C Processors (Capacity) Project	Business and Leadership Development	1,190.00	The company will complete a capacity and risk mitigation assessment and plan.
Toboggan Brewing Company Ltd. GF2C Processors (Capacity) Project	Business and Leadership Development	6,684.50	This project will support process development, market development, recipe development, business strategy and marketing of the brand in order to make the brewery a food and beverage attraction.
File #GF21-000910 Single Serve Cookie Market	Labour Productivity Enhancement	8,400.00.	The company will purchase a conveyor belt washer, single-serve packaging machine and an inline check weighed to maximize labour productivity and reduce water usage.
File #GF21-001061 Continuous	Labour Productivity	52,045.00	The project will expand the sausage production line to

Project Title	Project Type	Provincial Share Amount (\$)	Description
Vacuum Filling Machine	Enhancement		improve manufacturing efficiency by investing in a continuous vacuum-filling machine.
File #GF21-001242 Enhancing the Breadcrumb Traceability System (Food Safety and Operational Efficiencies)	Assurance Systems	97,343.75	The company will further enhance the current traceability system.
File #GF21-001473 Labour Productivity Enhancement-Building Capacity	Labour Productivity Enhancement	81,878.00	The company will improve labour productivity in two areas of daily operations, which includes semi-automation of frozen packaging systems and staff training on the operation of the automated lines.
File #GF21-001473 Food Grade Soybean De-huller and By-product Pelletizer	Market Development	61,807.55	The company will add a soybean de-huller and a by-products pelletizer into production.
Labatt London Cooling Tower Installation	Environment and Climate Change	80,194.45	The company will improve process for water-cooling related to the refrigeration system, which will include design of the system, purchasing a cooling tower unit, rigging and installation, and programming.
Labatt London Glycol Chiller Upgrade	Environment and Climate Change	71,516.90	The objective of this project is to decrease energy consumption of the ammonia chilling system by making the glycol plate and frame chiller more efficient. In addition, energy efficient valves will be upgraded on the chillers.
File #GF21-006978 Steam Flaking Process	Market Development	100,000.00	The project will purchase and install equipment and make site modifications necessary to facilitate the introduction of a steam flaking process for grains

Project Title	Project Type	Provincial Share Amount (\$)	Description
			into it's operations
Project Crossroads	Labour Market Productivity	117,647.06	This project upgrades and expands four existing lines and moves an important high-capacity line from the US to London, ON.
ERP and Reefer Monitoring System Implementation	Labour Market Productivity	183,252.13	The company will implement Microsoft Dynamics NAV LinkFresh Enterprise Resource Planning system to address labour productivity and inventory traceability challenges. The company will be adopting the Inventory Control, Warehouse Management, and Manufacturing modules, as well as an iBright refrigerator monitoring system.
Acquisition of P12 Coffee Roaster to increase labour productivity and profitability	Labour Market Productivity	21,666.13	The project is to purchase and install a new roaster, grinder, weight scale and sealer.
Labatt London Brewery Air Dryer Upgrade	Environment and Climate Change	77,000.00	The company will replace its current compressed air dryer, as it does not consistently supply the quality of air, which is required in the production of beer. The proposed solution is a properly sized, energy efficient compressed air dryer. This will eliminate the risk of insufficient air, remove 44 kWh, and allow efficient air compression.
New Innovative Equipment	Labour Productivity Enhancement	100,000.00	The company will purchase and install a new mixer, swing loader, buggy washer and quick-cooling tunnel that will improve process efficiency and labour productivity.
North Middlesex Economic Development	Planning – Development Plans/Strategies	28,750.00	The municipality will develop an Economic Development Strategy to provide guidance to the

Project Title	Project Type	Provincial Share Amount (\$)	Description
Strategy			municipality and set out directions and key priorities for programming.
Total		\$1,198,272.97	

First, it is important to note here that at least 10 of the above projects are funded through a multilevel government initiative entitled Growing Forward 2 (GF2). GF2 is a federal-provincial initiative that encourages innovation, competitiveness and market development in Canada's agri-food and agri-products sector. In Ontario, the initiative offers cost-share funding assistance to producers, processors, organizations and collaborations.³⁴³ While small business leadership and development projects have received funding through GF2—like the Petit Paris Creperie and Patisserie's capacity and risk mitigation assessment and plan—the cost-share component of the GF2 funding initiative can help to explain why there is a lack of small businesses receiving GF2 funding. In short, small agri-food businesses may experience greater difficulty in mobilizing the funds necessary to match GF2 dollars, and this puts them at a disadvantage when competing against larger agri-food businesses that can easily rationalize cost-sharing programs as great for returns.

Second, all but 3 of the projects funded by OMAFRA involve building capacity and increasing efficiencies in the food processing industry. In other words, the majority of funding allocated to food system projects in Middlesex-London is to purchase hard and soft infrastructure towards increasing the amount and quality of food being processed by businesses in the area. Market development is another key priority for OMAFRA. Two significant examples that relate to market development include: The Food Grade Soybean De-Hulling System for the Export Tempeh Market and the Steam Flaking Process project. Also worth noting here is that a significant amount of funds (\$564,888.32) was allocated to labour productivity enhancement projects that involved the purchasing of equipment to maximize labour productivity.

Finally, of the total \$1,198,272.97 allocated to Middlesex-London food projects, \$258,411.35 (21.2%) went to Labatt Breweries of Canada while only \$6,684.50 went to a small business in the same industry, Toboggan Brewing Company. In consideration of the food system project areas introduced above, it can be concluded that OMAFRA dollars are closely tied to hard costs associated with food processing and manufacturing in Middlesex-London.

Additional Provincial Food Funding

In addition to OMAFRA, the Greenbelt Fund supports food system projects across the province. The Greenbelt Fund is a non-profit with a mission "to permanently increase the amount of local

³⁴³ Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, "Growing Forward 2 – Helping You Reach Your Goals," 2015, Web, at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/growingforward/gf2-index.htm>.

food we consume in Ontario. With leading-edge grants, outreach and education, thoughtful policy, and networking initiatives, [they] seek to create sustained and systemic change to the food system.”³⁴⁴ Table 49 shows the types of food system projects that the Greenbelt Fund has supported from 2010-2014, including how many total grants were allocated in Middlesex-London compared to the province, and the total value (\$) of these grants.

Table 49: Type, Number and Value, of Grants Allocated by the Greenbelt Fund to Food System Projects in Middlesex County, from 2010-2014.

Source	Food System Project Type	Year	No. in Ontario	Total Amount \$	No. in Middlesex-London	Total Amount \$
Greenbelt Fund	Market Access	2014	3	70,455	0	0
	Broader Public Sector	2014	3	100,000	0	0
Total Number and Value of Grants 2014			6	170,455	0	0
Greenbelt Fund	Market Access	2013	17	1,842,600	0	0
	Broader Public Sector	2013	17	1,254,450	0	0
Total Number and Value of Grants 2013			34	3,097,050	0	0
Greenbelt Fund	Broader Public Sector	2012	17	1,251,471	1	25,325
Total Number and Value of Grants 2012			17	1,251,471	1	25,325
Greenbelt Fund	Broader Public Sector	2011	25	2,101,998	0	0
Total Number and Value of Grants 2011			25	2,101,998	0	0
Greenbelt Fund	Broader Public Sector	2010	11	1,739,656	0	0
Total Number and Value of Grants 2010			11	1,739,656	0	0
Grant Total			93	8,360,630	1	25,325

³⁴⁴ Greenbelt Fund, “About the Greenbelt Fund,” 2016, Web, at <http://www.greenbeltfund.ca/about>.

In total, the Greenbelt Fund supported 93 food system projects across the province, allocating \$8,360,630 in grants. Of the total number of grants the Greenbelt made, only 1 supported a project in Middlesex-London, and the value of this grant was \$25,325. While the number and value of grants from the Greenbelt Fund to food system projects in the area has been limited to date, its new Local Food Investment Fund, which includes a local food literacy stream, creates a great funding opportunity for Middlesex-London food system stakeholders.

Other sources of food funding relevant to Middlesex-London include the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation. In 2011, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation created a Regional Value Chain Program as part of their Sustainable Food Systems Initiative. According to the Foundation, the focus of this program is on “...strengthening the ability of regional producers, processors, distributors, food service providers and retailers to make healthy, sustainably produced food accessible to all Canadians, by whatever means appropriate in individual communities.”³⁴⁵ The only known Middlesex-London recipient of a grant from this program is London Training Centre, through the Southwest Economic Alliance; however, the value of this grant is unknown.

Local Food Funding

Local sources of food funding have come from the London Community Foundation, “a charitable organization dedicated to improving communities across London and Middlesex County through collaboration, strategic leadership, and innovative solutions to charitable giving.”³⁴⁶ The total number of grants the London Community Foundation has made to food system projects in Middlesex-London in the last couple of year is 4, and the total value of these grants is \$49,900. All grants made were part of the Capital Grant Food Security Program—now the Maple Leaf Community Fund—have been to “support the capital-related needs of food security programs that promote dignity and build individual and community capacity.”³⁴⁷

Organizations that have received grants include: Easter Seals Ontario, Camp Woodeden; Youth Opportunities Unlimited in London; Growing Chefs! Ontario; and Investing in Children.

Table 50: Type, Number and Value, of Grants Allocated to Food System Projects in Middlesex County

Source	Food System Project Type	Year	No. in Middlesex-London	Total Amount \$
London Community Foundation	Food Security	2015	2	29,400
Total Number and Value of Grants 2015			2	29,400
London Community Foundation	Food Security	2014	2	20,500
Total Number and Value of Grants 2014			2	20,500
Grand Total			4	49,900

³⁴⁵ J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, “Regional Value Chain Program,” 2015, Web, at <http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/programs/sustainable-food-systems/regional-value-chain-program>.

³⁴⁶ London Community Foundation, “About Us,” 2016, Web, at <http://www.lcf.on.ca/about-us>.

³⁴⁷ London Community Foundation, “Maple Leaf Community Fund,” 2016, Web, at <http://www.lcf.on.ca/request/capital-grant-food-security>.

Financing and Financial Products

In addition to food system grants, food-specific loans are available to stakeholders along the Middlesex-London food value chain. Three financing bodies and their respective loan programs are worth mentioning here. They include: The Federal Government, the Agricultural Credit Corporation, and Farm Credit Canada.

The Canadian Agriculture Loans Act (CALA) Program, administered by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is “a loan guarantee program designed to increase the availability of loans to farmers and agricultural co-operatives.”³⁴⁸ Farmers and agricultural co-operatives can use CALA loans to develop their capacity to grow, process, distribute and market their farming products. Even though lenders, including banks and credit unions, “...must take the same care and prudence in issuing CALA loans as would be taken in conducting ordinary business,” the Government will repay 95% of a net loss on any eligible loan issued through the program.³⁴⁹ With this security, this means that banks in Middlesex-London have little reason not to loan money to new and developing farm and farm businesses.

The Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC), a not-for-profit farm organization comprised of 19 producer associations and marketing boards provides operating funds to Canadian producers. The ACC’s Commodity Loan Program, established in 1992, is designed to provide financial assistance to Ontario farmers planting, cultivating, and harvesting stages of food production. Loans of up to \$750,000 are available to farmers involved in everything from grain and oilseed production through to the processing of vegetables, including tomatoes, cucumbers, sweet corn, and peas to name a few.³⁵⁰

Finally, Farm Credit Canada (FCC), “Canada’s leading agriculture lender,” has a \$27 billion loan portfolio. Financing is available for primary producers, for crop inputs, equipment, land and buildings. Notably, primary producers can also apply for loans to support the movement towards environmentally sound practices and renewable energy sources. Farm Credit Canada also provides loans to agribusiness and agri-food businesses that directly support farmers to continue to add value to agricultural products after they leave the farm gate. Agribusiness and agri-food businesses that FCC provides loans to include: agriculture input suppliers, equipment manufacturers and dealers, food manufacturers and processors, wholesalers and distributors, and wineries. Last, FCC Canada has a Young Farmer loan, for qualified producers under the age of 40, to purchase, grow, or develop their farming business.

³⁴⁸ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, “Canadian Agricultural Loans Act Program,” 2014, Web, at <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/?id=1288035482429>.

³⁴⁹ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, “Canadian Agricultural Loans Act Program,” 2014, Web, at <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/?id=1288035482429>.

³⁵⁰ Agricultural Credit Corporation, “Commodity Loan Program,” 2015, Web, at https://www.agccreditcorp.ca/commodity_loan_program.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) and Scotiabank have formed a partnership to offer preferred rates and special discounts on banking services for OFA members.

This partnership offers OFA members an exclusive package of personal and business banking products, plus services that provide more financial solutions, advice, tools and resources for your farm business, including: 15% discount on monthly plan fees for ScotiaOne™ Account Plan for agriculture or ScotiaOne™ Account Plan for business; Five month fee waiver for Credit Line for agriculture or Overdraft Protection for business; 0.25% discount off of standard rates for approved credit products (Credit Line for agriculture, Scotia Farm Mortgage Loan, Scotia Farm Improvement Loans/SFIL); Interest rate of Scotiabank prime for the first 6 months on approved ScotiaLine® for business VISA card; Reimbursement of legal/appraisal costs for a Farm Mortgage or Scotia Flex® for agriculture product; 0.25% bonus on posted rates for new personal or business (GICs); and Additional discounts for OFA members switching to Scotiabank.

Source: Ontario Federation of Agriculture, <http://www.ofa.on.ca/join-ofa/benefit-program/scotiabank.aspx>

In addition to the loans mentioned above, there are various types of financial products made available to different size businesses within the food system, many of which are specific to agri-food businesses. In fact, banks and credit unions often have either departments and/or officers dedicated to working with the agricultural sector. Table 51 captures some of the unique financial products available to agri-food businesses in Middlesex-London. Some of these financial products are the result of working partnerships between the food and financial sectors. One example of a partnership, between the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) and Scotiabank, offers preferred rates and special discounts to members of the OFA.

Table 51: Types of Financial Solutions/Products Available Specifically to Agri-Food Businesses

Institution	Solutions/Products
BMO Bank of Montreal	AgriInvest Account
	Agri Readiline Line of Credit
	Canadian Agriculture Loans Act
	Dairy Farms
	Farm Equipment Readiline
	Farm Mortgage
	Agriculture Affinity Cards
CIBC	Loans and Lines of Credit
	AgriInvest Program
Libro Credit Union	AgriInvest Account
	Agriculture Rates
RBC Royal Bank	AgriInvest Account
	RoyFarm Mortgage
	RBC Farm Management Line

Institution	Solutions/Products
TD Canada Trust	Agriculture Operating Line
	Canadian Agricultural Loans Act
	Agriculture Term Loan

11.2 Gaps in Knowledge

With limited knowledge on the funding available for food system projects in Middlesex-London, the opportunity presents itself for community-based food businesses and organizations to support the funding and financial landscape work that is currently being undertaken by such organizations as Sustain Ontario and FoodShare Toronto. For example, in communication with potential funders, stakeholders can encourage them to align their grant streams and funding with the impact areas that are collaboratively being identified by the sector. In addition, further research into the number and value of grants allocated to food system projects in the area will contribute to finding the total dollar value of food system funding in Middlesex-London. This information would be complemented by research into the total number of loans awarded to farms and food businesses in the area, as well as research into perceptions of access to credit along the food system value chain. The number of unique investors that finance food system activity in Middlesex-London and how much they are investing is another important research topic.

11.3 Strengths and Assets

It should come as no surprise that the food funding assets in Middlesex-London are all financial assets. These financial assets include the Provincial and Municipal grants being allocated to food system projects in the area. They also include the financial products, as well as government supported financing options or programs, being made available to food and farming business through banks, credit unions, not-for-profits and Crown corporations working in Middlesex-London. The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association's "Grow Your Farm Profits program," which couples the Environmental Farm Plan program (see 3.2.1) with OMAFRA's Growing Forward 2 program, is another financial asset that was identified by key informants during the interview process.

Table 52 lists all of the strengths and assets identified through the community food assessment process that pertain to this section of the report (please see 1.2 for Asset Legend).

Table 52: Strengths and Assets within Food System Funding, Financing and Investment

FOOD SYSTEM FUNDING, FINANCING AND INVESTMENT						
						
126. London Community Foundation grants (e.g. Capital Grant – Food Security)						
127. Community Futures Development Corporation of Middlesex County (grants and loans)						
128. Government supported farm financing options available at local banks						
129. LondonSOUP micro-funder						
130. Grow Your Farm Profits program through Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association						

11.4 Areas to Cultivate

No database exists of harmonized information on local food funding in either Middlesex-London or Ontario. The main data about food system project grants comes from grantors themselves, and even this information is difficult to source and find; therefore, it is difficult to know the types and amount of financial resources available to food system projects in Middlesex-London. Stakeholders noted that, while limited financial resources are set aside for local food projects, the majority of grants are small and they neither focus on systemic problems within the food system nor solutions that can help to build a local and sustainable food system. In addition, food system applicants and recipients mentioned that, because food system funders are not working collaboratively with the sector, projects often do not fit well into existing funding streams because there are no standardized food system categories that funders make grants in. As a result, the human resource and time costs associated with searching and applying for funding are high. In combination, the findings, gaps in knowledge, and stakeholder feedback, all point to the need to cultivate more information on and grow food system funding in Middlesex-London.

11.5 Opportunities for Change

While any food system initiative moving forward will need to consider funding as part of the planning process, there are a number of opportunities that are unique to food funding. A few examples that were shared during the community engagement sessions include:

- Involving big food businesses to fund food system projects;
- Collaborating with corporations in the area;
- Generate local funds that can be matched by Provincial or Federal dollars;
- Work with funders to educate them on the types and needs of food system initiatives and activities;
- Create a resource list or database of existing food system funding;

- Trial a local investment fund for food system projects; and
- Help local food projects to clearly identify how their project meets the specific objectives as set out in the grant streams they apply to.

Ontario Investing \$6 Million to Bring More Local Food to the Table

Support of Greenbelt Fund Will Encourage Consumption of Ontario-grown Food

October 8, 2015 4:45 P.M. | Office of the Premier

Ontario is providing \$6 million over three years to increase sales of local food by making it more widely available and building awareness of the variety of food grown and produced in Ontario.

Premier Kathleen Wynne announced this investment today, during Ontario Agriculture Week, while visiting Fresh City Farms in Toronto's Downsview Park. The government will provide the funding to the Greenbelt Fund, a non-profit organization that helps encourage consumption of local food in the Greenbelt and across Ontario.

The investment announced today will support:

- Projects for institutions in the broader public sector, including schools and hospitals, to buy and use more Ontario foods
- Marketing activities, such as workshops and advertising in print and trade media, to celebrate local food champions for their success, leadership and innovation
- Projects to improve food literacy and access to local food
- New tools on Ontariofresh.ca, the Greenbelt Fund's online platform, to help connect local food buyers and sellers.

The economic and health benefits of a thriving agriculture sector and locally produced food were two of the reasons that led the province to create the Greenbelt in 2005. The Greenbelt permanently protects almost 2 million acres of environmentally sensitive land and farm land in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) from urban development. As the GTHA continues to grow, the government is committed to enhancing and expanding the Greenbelt to protect this resource, helping to ensure that Ontario continues to grow fresh food to be served at tables across the province and around the world.

Supporting local food, the agri-food sector and Ontario's Greenbelt is part of the government's plan to build Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history, creating a dynamic, innovative environment where business thrives, and building a secure retirement savings plan.

11.0 FUNDING, FINANCING AND INVESTMENT Funders:

Project Areas: Marketing

Financial Products: 

Production Processing/Manufacturing

Lines of Credit **OMAFRA**

Distribution/Storage  Retail

Account Access & Nutrition

Greenbelt Fund

Education Food Quality 

Mortgage Workforce Dev

Biz Planning  Procurement

Regulation & Policy  Preferred Rates

Innovation & Research

Social Enterprise Dev 

Community Foundation