



FOOD FLOW FINDINGS

*A newsletter for the Food Flow project
promoting better food for all Toronto non-profits*

Welcome!

This is our first online update for the Food Flow project; we will send monthly short updates that include profiles of community food organizations, ideas and resources for agencies to access better food. To unsubscribe, just send us e-mail with “unsubscribe” in the subject line. For others to sign up, they can subscribe [here!](#)

Update on Food Flow project

The Food Flow project has collaborated with Toronto Public Health to produce several [reports and case studies](#) on food procurement at non-profit and charitable agencies in Toronto.

Key findings included the need for dedicated community food distribution. The partners are pursuing this opportunity with the development of an online portal, now in the preliminary stages of development, that would provide a cloud-based website for access to more healthy, fresh food at affordable prices for the community food sector.

Food Flow, based at the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre, has several complementary pilot projects under development. The pilots have developed based on the research. Agencies in the research indicated that storage is a primary barrier to good procurement practices, as well as the ability to handle, process and store surplus donations and products. Food Flow is investigating the community freezer model, as well as a social enterprise kitchen for commercial processing of surplus for the community food sector.

Contact us at parkdale.clt@gmail.com with any ideas, resources, interest. Community Food Advisory Group meetings for Food Flow are every few months, with lots of lively discussion and planning.

The Way to Better Food: the Online Portal project

The portal will provide one-stop shopping for all agency food needs, beginning with a short list of products and expanding to full distribution. The portal will also provide a platform for community chefs to exchange information, recipes, calls for equipment and other resources. What will the portal do?

1. Deliver the food you need to your door
2. Provide easy ordering through an online tool
3. Focus on food needs identified in the research (fresh, healthy food at good prices)

Interested in learning more and being first in line to use the portal? Contact Alvin Rebick at alvin@foodshare.net; office: [416-583-5416](tel:416-583-5416); cell: [416-553-7412](tel:416-553-7412)



Photo Credit: The West End Food Co-op

Sharing Space, Distributing Food

Community freezers have been used with some success in northern communities to provide access to the hunting harvest for people in town with food security challenges. In [Hopedale, Labrador](#), the community freezer provides the storage needed for distribution of community food. Another [beautiful one](#) is carved into the permafrost at Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories. In Parkdale, we are exploring a southern version of this shared infrastructure. Contact us at parkdale.clt@gmail.com for more information.

Profile of Organization

ArtHeart: Food Meets Art in Regent Park



ArtHeart began 22 years ago as an agency supporting creative arts for people of all ages. Their focus is support and materials for artists in need, and that includes making sure the artists have a good meal while they are there. The menus prioritize fresh ingredients, with a vegan or vegetarian option at every meal. Most of the food is donated for the 12,000 plus meals they provide annually.

They have a significant network of supporters in the neighbourhood; they started the community garden at Forty Oaks (at the Toronto Christian Resource Centre down the street); they receive regular donations from Ace Bakery, and food from the new social enterprise downstairs, Paintbox Bistro. One volunteer has been coming to prepare meals once a week since ArtHeart began.

There is even a nearby rooftop garden project that hopes to exchange fresh produce for garden art from ArtHeart. The organization regularly processes donations for storage that are too large to use immediately. The organization is benefiting from the food commitment the Regent Park developer has made during the Regent Park revitalization; their new space is part of the revitalization. For more on the Regent Park Food Partnership and the revitalization, check out [the case studies](#) published as part of the Food Flow project.

For more information on these projects, contact us at parkdale.clt@gmail.com. Food Flow is a project of the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre at 1499 Queen St. West. [Visit us on the web](#) too!