



Imagine...

Food Secure Saskatoon 2020

- **How could the City support the growing interest in community gardening in all parts of Saskatoon?**

*The City operates an allotment garden near the airport and subsidizes several of the plots. Since approving the Food Charter, the City has also modified its bylaws to allow food production in parks. Tilling, water connection and topsoil were provided to the City Park Community Garden, located in Wilson Park, and the City's urban orchards program has assisted with the planting of fruit trees. Residents in all parts of Saskatoon have expressed strong interest in community gardening. **How could the City assist community groups find and prepare suitable land for community gardening? Would you support the creation of an eastside allotment garden?***

- **How could the City further support community groups working to build food security in Saskatoon?**

*The members of the Saskatoon Food Coalition include CHEP, Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatoon Farmer's Market, Oxfam, Saskatoon Friendship Inn, United Way, National Farmers Union, Quint Development Corporation, and Saskatoon Food Bank. Many of these organizations receive grants from the City of Saskatoon's Community Development branch. **What would you do to ensure that this support is maintained?***

*The Saskatoon Food Charter recommends a yearly civic report card on how Saskatoon is achieving food security. **Would you support Food Coalition members by advocating that the City assign a staff person to develop and monitor implementation strategies for the Charter?***

Nancy is a new Canadian, recently arrived from Sudan. She is relieved to be in a city where hunger is not a problem. Assistance rates are high enough that she can purchase all the food her family needs to stay healthy, and she is reassured that when she has completed her language training, entry-level wages will further increase her food budget.

She is also pleased to find that all Saskatoon homes are within walking distance of a full-service grocery store. In lower-income neighbourhoods such as hers, the stores offer a subsidised delivery service. Her store carries many of the foods she and her family are accustomed to eating, including a wide array that are locally produced.

The adjacent community centre offers free monthly workshops on health and nutrition, as well as other food-related programming. Nancy joins a collective kitchen, where she makes new friends and learns a variety of cooking techniques and recipes. She also takes on a plot in the centre's community garden.

Her children love their time in the garden *almost* as much as they do their neighbour Don's urban farm. Don was a large-scale grain farmer until the farm crisis pushed him off the farm. His urban farm has helped him realize that bigger is not necessarily better. He now uses available urban land - and rooftops! - to recycle local food waste into rich compost that nourishes the delicious vegetables and berries he markets to neighbouring families and local restaurants.

Nancy and Don are living in a food secure Saskatoon. What would it take to achieve this vision?

In 2002 the Saskatoon Food Charter was adopted in principle by Saskatoon City Council. The Charter (available at www.chep.org/ff/food_charter.html) addresses food security in five key areas: Production, Justice, Health, Culture, and Globalization. The Charter's objectives can be achieved. Let's work together to make Nancy and Don's Saskatoon a reality!

Here are some questions to consider as you make your choices in the upcoming municipal election:

- **What can be done about the decreasing number of grocery stores in Saskatoon's core?**

In the late 1990s, a series of grocery store closures left a food desert in Saskatoon's westside core. Since then, other central stores have closed or are rumoured to be at risk.

The situation has been somewhat abetted by CHEP's Good Food Box program and seniors' stores, the opening of Giant Tiger, the "grocery bus," and the new reduced-price bus passes.

*However, access to food is still a challenge for many Saskatoon residents. Neglected by existing grocery retailers, the westside community has taken matters into their own hands by developing Good Food Junction Co-operative grocery store. **What will the City do to support this development and to ensure that other neighbourhoods do not lose access to a full-service grocery store?***



- **How could urban agriculture be expanded in Saskatoon?**

*Saskatoon is home to Wally and Gail Satzewich, leaders in the Small Plot INTensive gardening movement. Their urban plots exemplify a model of sustainable local agriculture that is gaining momentum here in Canada and around the world. In 2003, the mayor of Vancouver proclaimed November City Farmer month. **How could the City promote urban farming (including roof-tops) here in Saskatoon?***



- **How could the City promote eating healthy local foods?**

*Contracts for food vendors in civic facilities are awarded to the lowest bidder. A preference for locally produced healthy foods could be added to the criteria for successful tenders. The same could apply for catering for City meetings and events. **Would the City be willing to take this first step, then partner with other organizations to explore more ways to promote consumption of healthy local foods, improving the health of both Saskatoon residents and the environment?***