OURFOODFuture

GUELPH-WELLINGTON – Canada's first food smart community

A Smart Cities Challenge initiative

50x50x50 by 2025:

# Creating Canada's first circular food economy

foodfuture.ca

SMART CITIES CHALLENGE

The Corporation of the County of Wellington

CITY OF Guelph
Making a Difference

Contents

Imagine a food system where there's no such thing as waste and where every resident has access to the healthy, nutritious food they need. Imagine a living lab that promotes collaboration between food entrepreneurs, farmers, researchers and social innovators—and a rural-urban partnership that leverages smart technology to make it all possible.

A global transformation has begun—and Guelph-Wellington aims to lead the way. With our successful bid for a $10 million award through the Smart Cities Challenge, Guelph-Wellington is more equipped than ever to achieve our goals. Help us to create the food community of the future.
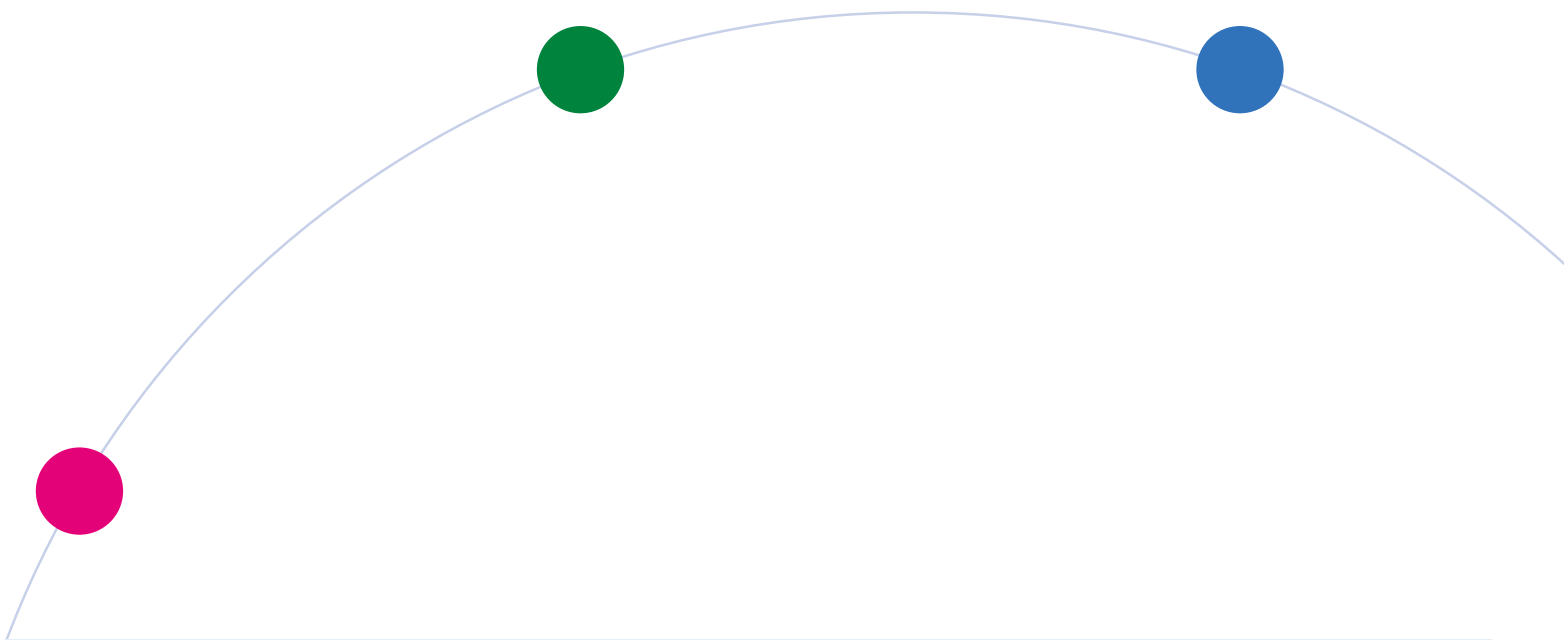
Message from the Mayor and Warden

Food is a fundamental human need and a building block for health, wellness, and quality of life. Together, the City of Guelph and County of Wellington are working to design the food system of the future—one that is better for people and the planet.

As a well-known agri-food location, we recognize that food plays a vital role in the livelihoods of many of our residents and local businesses. We are also aware that food insecurity and growing rates of preventable food waste remain prevalent throughout our municipalities. As our populations continue to grow, so does the need to improve our food system.

Our Food Future envisions a circular food system where everyone can access nutritious food, nothing is wasted, and the impact on our environment is minimal. The project re-evaluates our make-take-dispose approach to food production, consumption, and disposal practices.

There is no better place in Canada to achieve this vision than right here in Guelph-Wellington. We have some of the greatest minds when it comes to food. From farmers and producers, to processors and distributors, to researchers and scientists—this is where food innovation happens. Already, we have seen partnerships and projects come to life through Our Food Future. And with insights from residents and community leaders across the agriculture, food, education, and government sectors, Our Food Future is both innovative and inclusive.

We are very proud of our accomplishments so far. Guelph-Wellington has been awarded $10 million from Infrastructure Canada through the Smart Cities Challenge. We are thrilled to receive this funding, which will help enable us to implement the Our Food Future projects described in this booklet.

Thank you to all of our supporters and collaborators. We look forward to seeing how the Our Food Future initiative will continue to benefit our communities in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Cam Guthrie
Mayor, City of Guelph

Kelly Linton
Warden, County of Wellington

Executive Summary

Food is a fundamental requirement of life on this planet. However, the basic structure of today's linear "take-make-dispose" food system is unsustainable—economically, socially and environmentally. In Guelph-Wellington, one in six families experience food insecurity, and the cost of healthy food keeps increasing. Meanwhile, between a third and a half of the food we produce is thrown away. Much of that ends up in landfill, where it creates the greenhouse gases that drive climate change.

Guelph-Wellington aims to address these issues by creating Canada's first circular food economy, reimagining how we produce, distribute, sell and consume it. Instead of relying on today's linear model, we will minimize waste and extract more value by keeping as much energy, nutrients and materials as possible cycling through the system. This rural-urban partnership will enhance access to nutritious food, reduce our carbon footprint, turn "waste" into valuable resources and create new economic opportunities.

We call this initiative "Our Food Future." Our goals are to increase access to affordable, nutritious food by 50 per cent, create 50 new circular businesses and collaborations and increase circular economic revenues by 50 per cent by recognizing the value of "waste"—all by 2025.

Situated in the heart of Ontario's Innovation Corridor, Guelph-Wellington is a hub of food innovation and environmental sustainability, making us uniquely positioned to realize this vision. Leveraging local expertise, big data and the latest in digital agriculture and other smart technologies, we will transform our food ecosystem. The result will be a connected "living lab" where researchers, social innovators, farmers, entrepreneurs and other community partners collaborate to solve complex food problems.

To achieve our goals, we're undertaking nine Pathfinder projects grouped into three thematic workstreams.

Workstream: Nutritious Food

- assessing the Guelph-Wellington food environment
- creating a circular food security and health action plan

## Workstream: Circular Businesses and Collaborations

- establishing a circular food economy innovation hub (iHub)
- coordinating an impact fund
- fostering new food economy skills and training

Workstream: Waste as a Resource

- developing and sharing circular business tools and services
- launching a "reimagine food" awareness campaign
- increasing the circularity of carbon offsets
- increasing circularity in municipal waste systems to drive innovation along the food value chain
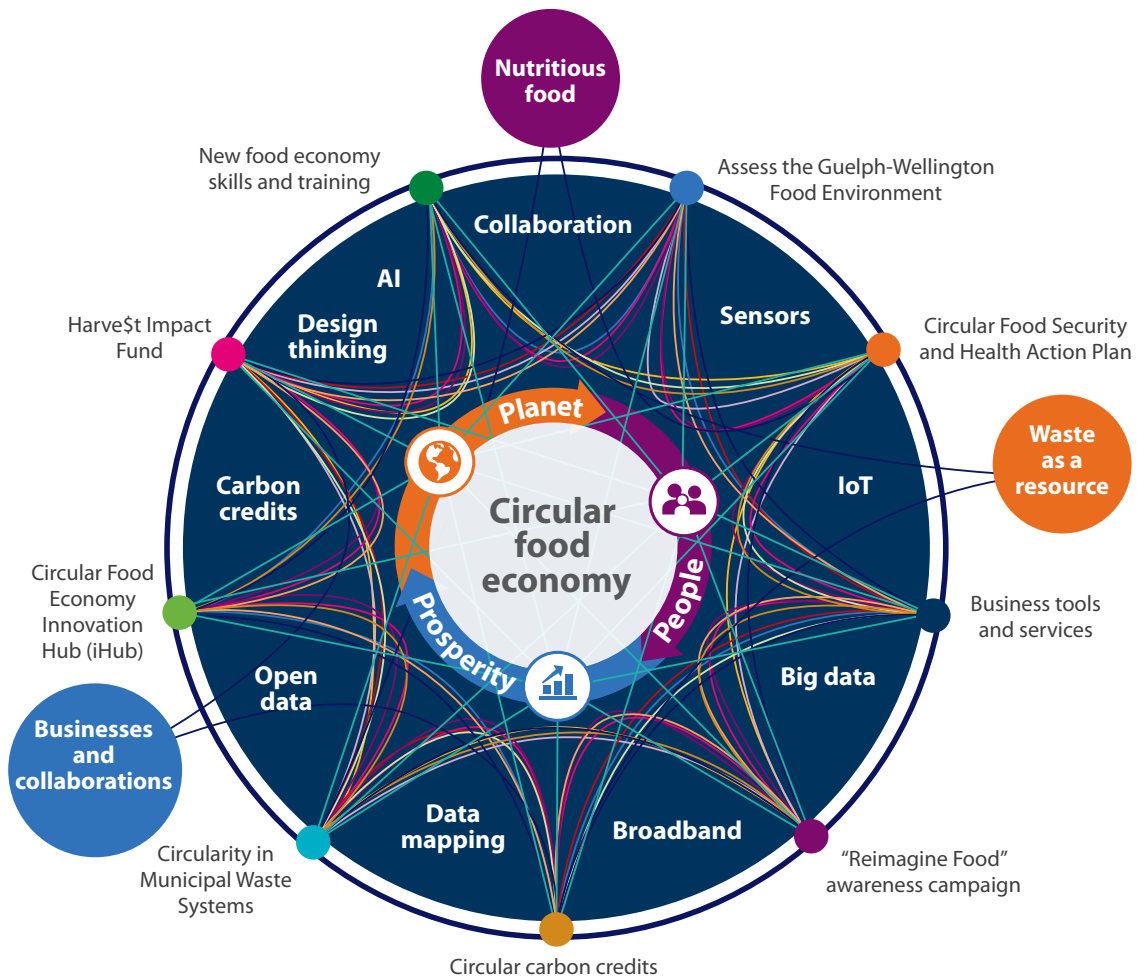
Our Food Future

In the process of implementing these projects, we'll create quadruple-bottom-line benefits. Our Food Future will contribute to **prosperity**, through economic growth. It will support the **planet**, through environmental sustainability. It will benefit **people**, creating greater social equity. And it will achieve **purpose**—a clear vision of an inclusive green economy of the future, valuing nutrition, health, diversity, equity and dignity.

But the benefits won't be limited to Guelph-Wellington. We'll also create resources and best practices that we can share across the country and around the world, helping other communities move towards a circular food economy.

Bold vision

The City of Guelph and the County of Wellington will create Canada's first circular food economy

Using data, technology and the wealth of expertise found in this region, we will reinvent how we produce, distribute and consume food—and provide a practical roadmap for others to follow.

Today, one in six families in our region lack food security, and the cost of healthy food keeps rising. Around the world, almost a billion people are hungry or undernourished. If consumption and population growth trends continue, by 2050 the global population will increase to nine billion and caloric demand will increase by 70 per cent.

Meanwhile, between a third and a half of all food produced is discarded or lost. Much of that "waste" ends up in landfill, where it creates methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times more powerful than carbon dioxide.

We believe something better is possible. Starting with a vision that comes from our residents and prompted by Canada's Smart Cities Challenge, we've decided to create a food system driven by a quadruple bottom line:

- Prosperity—economic growth
- Planet—environmental sustainability
- People—greater social equity
- Purpose—a clear vision of an inclusive green economy of the future, valuing nutrition, health, diversity, equity and dignity

To realize these benefits, we're using nature's circular approach as our inspiration.

Thinking in circles

For centuries, the world's linear approach to industrial production has meant extracting finite resources from the planet, using them to create consumer products and then throwing away the "waste." A circular economy rethinks that "take-make-dispose" approach by designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use and regenerating natural systems.

Increasingly, companies and governments are putting those principles to work: from Scotland's new circular economy strategy to the recycled automotive plastics that Renault is using to build new cars. Now, Guelph-Wellington is one of the first communities in the world to apply a circular approach to food.

Instead of the current linear economic model, a circular food system aims to eliminate waste by keeping as much energy, nutrients and materials as possible cycling through the system—and generating value as a result. It looks at everything from how we produce food to how we distribute, sell and consume it. So, for example, material discarded by one food processor can be used as raw material for another industry, or household organic waste can be turned into fertilizer to grow more food.

We want to ensure everyone in our community has access to affordable, nutritious food required to live healthy, productive lives. We want to create new jobs and vibrant economic opportunities within a circular, collaborative ecosystem. And we want to solve food problems using smart technologies, digital agriculture and strategies that find value in the material our current system treats as waste—the byproducts of an unsustainable linear food economy.

That's why we've set out to achieve three ambitious goals by 2025:

1. increase access to affordable, nutritious food by 50 per cent
2. create 50 new circular businesses and collaborations
3. increase circular economic revenues by 50 per cent by recognizing the value of "waste"

Our Food Future: 50x50x50 by 2025.

We've got what it takes

To achieve our vision, we'll draw on the many experts, entrepreneurs, innovators and community change-makers here in Canada's agri-food hub.

Guelph-Wellington is uniquely positioned to forge a new circular food ecosystem. Simply put, there's no better place to reinvent the food system than here—agri-food innovation is in our DNA. For more than a century, the City of Guelph and Wellington County have been at the forefront of designing practical, creative solutions to address food issues.

Consider just a few of our many strengths:

- A partnership that combines all the assets of a vibrant urban centre (the City of Guelph) with a hub of rural farming, production, manufacturing and distribution (Wellington County)

- A community dedicated to agriculture, food and sustainability innovation, boasting 10 farmers' markets, commercial test kitchens, an award-winning local food program and countless community partners and agencies addressing food-related social challenges

- 1,600+ food businesses and entrepreneurs, as well as many innovators in the areas of bio-tech, clean-tech, agri-tech and food processing

- The University of Guelph, Canada's top agriculture and food university, world renowned for its agri-food research and innovation

- Conestoga College, a Canadian leader in polytechnic education with specific strength in food processing technology

- The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; 40 agri-food research centres; plus the headquarters for most provincial agriculture and food organizations

- Guelph's long track record as a leader in environmental stewardship, with food waste diversion and reduction strategies already in place, and a Sustainability Board that promotes green initiatives

- Alectra Inc.'s Green Energy & Technology Centre, which will identify, evaluate, develop and deploy green energy solutions

- Close to 400,000 acres of agricultural land and over 2,500 farms

- Innovative food programs within the school system, including the Local Environmental Agriculture and Food (LEAF) program at Wellington County's Norwell District High School, the Food School at Centre Wellington District High School and the Indigenous Sweetwater Teachings program offered to local elementary and high school students

Guelph also boasts a strategic location in the heart of the 112-kilometre Innovation Corridor that stretches from Toronto to Kitchener-Waterloo, encompassing seven universities, 15,000 high-tech companies, a critical mass of incubators, a high-quality talent pool and access to significant capital. As a key partner in the corridor, Guelph's agri-food and clean technology assets complement the strengths other communities bring in finance and high-tech industries.

The path to success

To help us shape Our Food Future, we consulted extensively with our community partners through a Theory of Change process. "Theory of Change" engages stakeholders in thoughtful conversations about the kind of difference they want to see in the world and what they think it will take to create it. In its simplest form, Theory of Change is a series of "if-then" statements that connect the dots between potential activities and the outcomes that stakeholders want to achieve.

We used this process to develop the nine Pathfinder projects described in the pages that follow. These projects form the framework for our plans going forward and capitalize on the very best Guelph-Wellington has to offer.
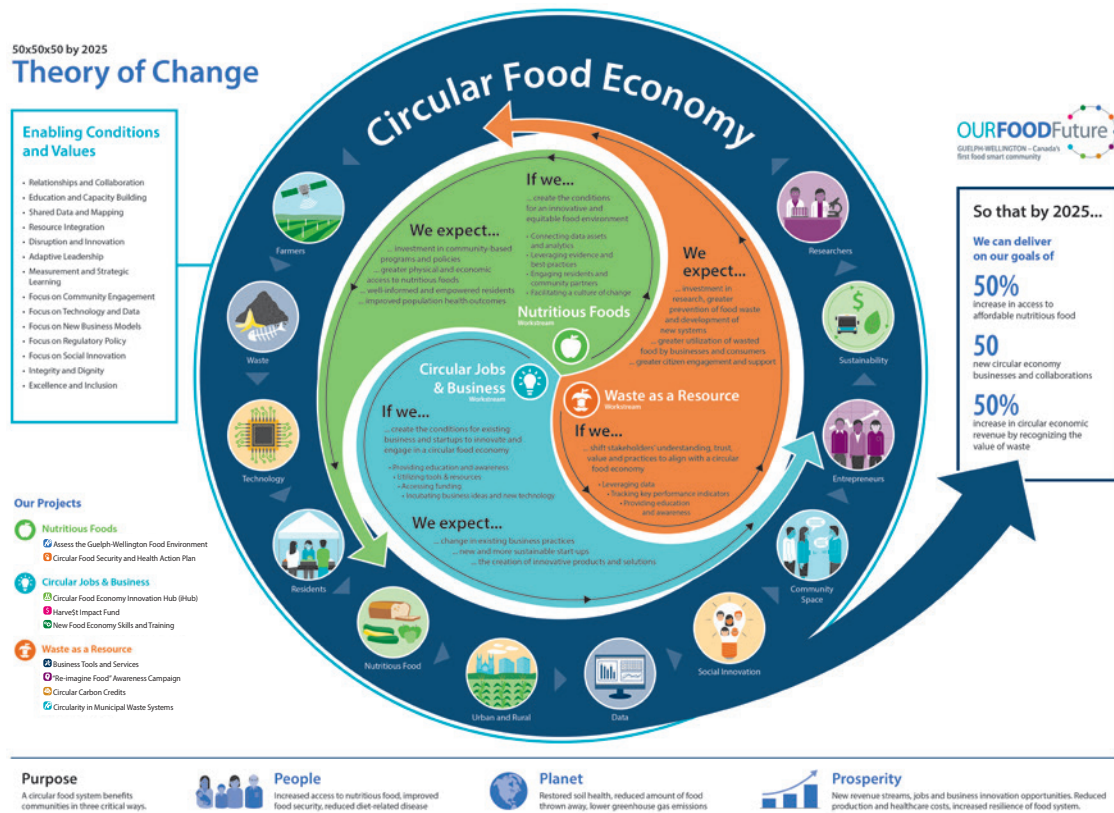
Pathfinder projects

Goal 1

Increase access to affordable, nutritious, local food by 50% by 2025

We want to reimagine a "smart" food system that better ensures food security and healthier outcomes—a system that also recognizes equity and dignity for all, better manages food resources to serve a diverse and vibrant community and celebrates the importance of good food in our everyday lives.

Project: Assess the Guelph-Wellington Food Environment

This project will provide baseline data by mapping the state of access to nutritious food and community food assets in Guelph-Wellington. We'll incorporate on-the-ground research, surveys and GIS mapping. We'll also take advantage of the Guelph Family Health Study, which is testing new ways for families and children to learn healthy habits early. By using big-data techniques to analyze all this information, we'll be able to understand what we have and where the gaps lie—and we'll make that information freely available through a public dashboard.

Project: Circular Food Security and Health Action Plan

We'll use the insights from our mapping project to develop a Food Security and Health Action Plan in collaboration with local agencies and community groups. This plan will establish new intervention models and evidence-based policies to create:

- effective investments in community-based programs and policies
- greater physical and economic access to nutritious foods
- well-informed and empowered residents
- ultimately, improved population health outcomes

Dashboard prototype:

Food Access: Our Community

OURFOODFuture

Distribution of Healthy Versus Unhealthy Food Outlets (2018)

Sub-Region: All   Municipality: All

mREFI Score
- Q1
- Q2
- Q3
- Q4
- Q5

To learn more about our community's access to nutritious, affordable food, click here!

Quick Facts About Our Community

1/6 families are food insecure.

The cost of healthy eating has increased 27% since 2009.

1/7 families use food banks.

Only 26% of residents live within walking distance of a healthy food outlet.

67% of adults and 83% of youth consume fruit and vegetables less than 5 times per day.

For every healthy food outlet, there are 6 unhealthy food outlets.

62% of adults and 22% of youth are considered overweight or obese.

Note: some statistics are placeholders

Goal 2

Create 50 new circular businesses and collaborations by 2025

Solutions happen faster through collaboration. That's why we plan to convene people with diverse expertise, talent and resources through face-to-face and online collaborations. Together, we'll use data, technology and innovative thinking to solve food system challenges and create new circular businesses, jobs and social enterprises. We'll also create new training opportunities (particularly for women, youth and marginalized populations) to prepare local residents to work in the new food economy.

Project: Circular Food Economy Innovation Hub (iHub)

Powered by the iHub, Guelph-Wellington will become a rural-urban living lab where social innovators, researchers, industry, technology developers and the community converge to solve complex, challenging problems. As the innovation engine of Our Food Future, the iHub will drive the use of data and build the necessary technological capacity to support a sustainable regional food economy.

This will involve:

*   Accelerating the development of these solutions by facilitating collaborations, offering mentoring and ideation support, and prototyping and piloting projects
*   Helping bring solutions to market by connecting entrepreneurs to additional supports and collaborators within the innovation ecosystem, including the Harve$t Impact Fund (see next page))

The iHub will engage the entire ecosystem via:

*   Circular Economy Design labs to catalyze new purposeful businesses and collaborations that embrace people, planet and prosperity
*   Direct outreach to the social/health sector that serves our most vulnerable populations
*   Collaboration to develop social enterprises that employ disadvantaged populations
*   Public idea generation, competitive challenges and awards that involve the broader community in developing inclusive, innovative solutions

Challenge-based procurement

In 2019, the City of Guelph hosted an Innovation Challenge at Toronto's Globe Capital Exchange, an event that brings together more than 150 investors, cleantech companies, solution providers, government representatives and corporate leaders from across North America.

We invited cleantech innovators to propose solutions to minimize food waste, use food waste as a resource, or minimize the overall footprint of the food system. The winner was FoodCycler. This startup has created a countertop machine that transforms food waste into a nutrient-rich soil amendment that can be added directly to residential gardens.

As the winner of the Challenge Award, FoodCycler received $5,000 for further research and development, as well as access to the City's internal experts and the possibility of launching a pilot program at the discretion of relevant departments involved.

Project:
The Harve$t Impact Fund

Great ideas need funding to become reality. This project will help circular food businesses and collaborations attract financial support. The Harve$t Impact Project will act as a matchmaker, connecting investors with change-makers who are applying circular ideas, data and technology to food problems. A team of Harve$t Project Advisors will help entrepreneurs access grants, loans, prizes or venture capital. The Harve$t Impact Fund will also provide non-repayable start-up capital to high-potential projects.

Through this expanded and connected local financial marketplace, we will ensure a variety of businesses are developed, social goals are supported (and measured) and success leads to further success. Ultimately, the Harve$t Impact Project will enable the long-term sustainability of Our Food Future by offering innovative projects clear paths to investment. To support future generations of circular food businesses, we envision that all ventures involved in Our Food Future will invest in the Harve$t Impact Fund, either through a percentage of sales or profits or an annual contribution, membership or donation.

The Upcycle Kitchen example

One of the first projects to be supported by the iHub and Harve$t Impact Fund is the Upcycle Kitchen: a venture that produces value-added products made from food that would otherwise go to waste. The facility will be run by The SEED, a Guelph-based community food project, and staffed by youth who are currently out of school and unemployed. Profits generated by the Upcycle Kitchen will support youth employment and training programs.

The Upcycle Kitchen will provide commercial kitchen and processing facilities for food businesses that create value-added products from rescued food. The innovation model will leverage foodrescue.ca, a platform developed by Second Harvest that connects businesses that have food surpluses to agencies that can put them to good use.

Project: New Food Economy
Skills and Training

Capitalizing on the institutional resources, skills and talent in our community, we will provide food innovation education and training, as well as public learning labs to develop and promote innovative food policies and ideas.

At the elementary and high school level, this includes expanding existing models for sustainable food education programs such as the Centre Wellington Food School. At the post-secondary level, the University of Guelph will evolve its "Food from Thought" program with the Arrell Food Institute, which will see graduate students undertaking real-world challenge projects related to food security and/or agriculture. Meanwhile, Our Food Future provides new opportunities for Conestoga College's Institute of Food Processing Technology to deliver more education, training and research in food processing technologies, food safety, automation and robotics, packaging and plant supervision.

Goal 3

Increase circular economic revenue by 50% by 2025 by recognizing the value of "waste"

Our vision is to reimagine, reuse and revalue the inputs and outputs of our food ecosystem—maximizing their use, eliminating waste, optimizing economic value and reducing negative environmental impacts.

Project: Business Tools and Services

In this project, we'll develop, curate and share a suite of circular economy tools and diagnostics. The results will include:

- Baseline data and interventions for the processing sector, utilizing measurement and sensor technology
- A key performance indicators dashboard for waste
- Best practices for reducing municipal food waste

Together, they will help enterprises reinvent their processes and business models: minimizing waste, extracting more value from resources and reducing energy use.

> One of those tools is the Food Loss + Waste resource created by the Provision Coalition, a national non-profit organization in Guelph that helps food and beverage companies become more sustainable. Already, through Our Food Future, this toolkit helped a local brewery reduce $368,000 in food waste and avoid 275 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

Project: "Reimagine Food" Awareness Campaign

Through a public awareness campaign, we will educate Guelph-Wellington residents on the real costs of food waste, boost demand for the products of a circular economy and build stronger relationships between food producers and consumers. The multi-pronged campaign includes:

- Connecting with our community online, via FoodFuture.ca and virtual community activators, as well as through in-person activities across Guelph-Wellington
- Probing current behaviours and barriers to reducing food waste

- Using behavioural insights methodology to mobilize solutions and interventions that drive behaviour change
- Encouraging residents and stakeholders to reduce waste in the food system, improve nutrition, support broader community health and get involved in food system solutions

As a result, the campaign will mobilize solutions that reduce waste, create local jobs, strengthen environmental resilience, boost demand for the products of a circular economy and build stronger relationships between local food producers and consumers. It will also promote community ownership for Our Food Future, ensuring everyone can see themselves as stakeholders in the initiative.

Project: Circular Carbon Credits

The City of Guelph already produces carbon offset credits by capturing methane from its landfill. To leverage those credits, we're exploring the possibility of developing a carbon-backed digital social currency. Using blockchain technology or a similar distributed ledger technology, we'll create a currency that can be traded at the local level to increase awareness and reward sustainable food choices.

We're also examining the feasibility of aggregating carbon credits from food and beverage companies. Our vision is to sell those credits and then use the proceeds to fund further waste-reduction initiatives within the processing sector.

Project: Circularity in Municipal Waste Systems

How could we make better use of food "waste"? We'll work with local partners to identify opportunities for synergies to divert as much organic material from landfill as possible. To facilitate that process, we'll establish a Value Stream Mapping lab. Here, stakeholders can come together to pinpoint where we can reduce food loss and waste at each stage of the food value chain, from raw inputs to the final consumer, and design opportunities for appropriate reuse.

We're also planning to equip municipal waste collection trucks with advanced sensors and AI technology to audit organic waste on a household-by-household level. The resulting data could be used to generate customized reports that homeowners receive on their smartphones, outlining their waste patterns and providing practical suggestions on how to reduce their avoidable waste, costs and carbon footprint. Meanwhile, aggregating the data will allow us to design targeted waste-reduction interventions for particular neighbourhoods.

Finally, we'll create a public dashboard that offers up-to-date stats on the levels of avoidable food waste in the community, the percentage of organics contaminating other waste streams and our progress toward reduction targets.

Value of food wasted by sector in Canada
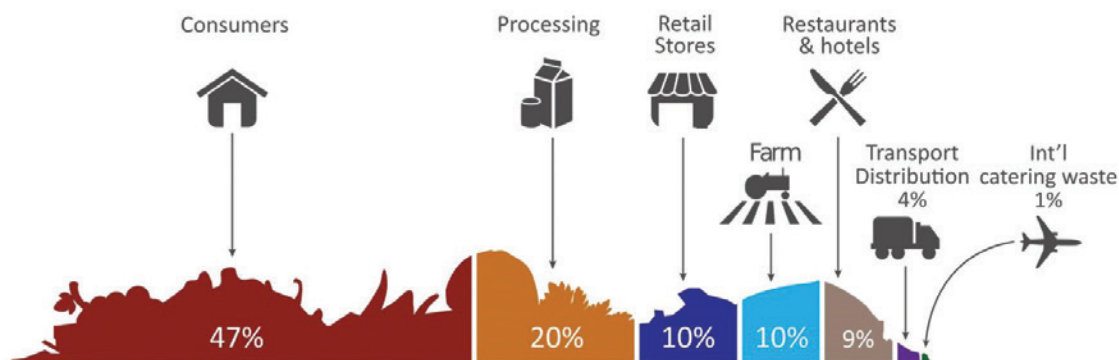
By focussing on the processing and consumer stages, our strategy directly influences the vast majority of food waste generated. Additionally, our strategy creates the opportunity to further influence the food value chain by creating access though the consumer stage to retailers, restaurants and hotels for examples, as well as through direct linkages on-farm and distribution practices through the processing stage.

Investing in the technology to make it happen

By taking advantage of smart technology and big data throughout the agri-food system, we can drive significant innovation—giving businesses, residents, social innovators and collaborators the tools they need to create Our Food Future.

Smart City initiatives procure and use data- and technology-driven innovation to tackle challenges. Our Food Future will do the same, building on the work already underway by the City of Guelph and others.

To decide on the best technologies for each of our projects, we will create public challenges based on the needs of a project and then invite the private sector to propose a variety of innovative solutions. This problem-based challenge process has been developed and refined through the City of Guelph's **Civic Accelerator** and will also leverage the procurement work done by the **Municipal Innovation Exchange**.

Examples of technology solutions for Our Food Future include:

Geographic information systems (GIS) mapping

GIS technology will allow us to map the food assets in Guelph-Wellington, identifying where food outlets are located. Using that data, we'll design evidence-based policies and programs that ensure access to healthy, nutritious food.

Digital agriculture

Smart technologies are already helping farmers produce more food with fewer inputs—by optimizing seeding, fertilizer use, herd health and more. But we see opportunities to do more, using smart technology throughout the food system. We'll start with a research and demonstration project, working with farmers to test new digital technologies that will measure and record crop yields and quality.

Rural broadband access

Currently, 57 per cent of households, farms and businesses in Wellington County lack high-speed internet service. To support digital agriculture and enable our farmers and rural residents to participate in the circular food economy, we'll conduct a pilot project to test the viability of bulk-purchasing high-speed internet connectivity.

Machine learning and data analytics

Machine learning (artificial intelligence) can extract patterns and trends from large volumes of data without requiring significant human interaction.

Guelph already uses GPS technology and radio frequency ID tags installed in its household waste bins to collect real-time data on waste, recycling and organics. Looking ahead, we'll leverage our existing technologies further and develop new technologies to enable very granular data analysis. For example, by equipping our municipal waste collection trucks with sensors and machine-learning capabilities, we can gather detailed information about how much residential food waste is going to landfill, what it consists of and how much is avoidable.

Armed with that information, we'll be able to develop targeted, evidence-based

interventions. We'll also create an "Orange Button" standard for waste, similar to the Green Button application that enables households to access personal energy usage data. Residents will have easy and secure access to their household waste data through a smartphone app, which can generate reports on personal waste patterns and practical suggestions on how to reduce avoidable food waste.

Social currency and distributed ledger technology

Currently, the City of Guelph generates carbon credits by capturing methane from the municipal landfill. We'll build on that. Through a distributed ledger technology such as blockchain, we'll develop a digital social currency based on those carbon credits. By spending those "dollars" within our circular food economy, businesses can drive even more local benefits.

Creating a Data Utility

Increasingly, cities around the world are recognizing the critical role data plays in creating smart solutions to complex problems. That's why we plan to develop a public Data Utility, similar in concept to public utilities that provide core infrastructure services, such as electricity and water, to manage this valuable resource.

The Guelph-Wellington Data Utility will operate as a public trust. It will be designed and governed according to the core proposition that access to public data is a service provided to the community to enable engagement, transparency, value creation and ongoing community improvements. It will perform two key services.

First, the Data Utility will provide secure access to data through a Data Collaboration Platform, connecting data providers with data consumers through standardized, open protocols. The platform will not copy data to a central location; the data will always remain within the control of the data provider. Instead, it will allow data users to transparently access data according to permissions they are granted by the data providers. In doing so, the collaboration platform will break down data silos between organizations in Guelph-Wellington and give entrepreneurs access to appropriate data sets.

Secondly, the Data Utility will facilitate the development of digital applications by providing an Application Platform. Using this development platform, entrepreneurs can develop, share and monetize value-added tools, solutions and apps to fuel further innovation.
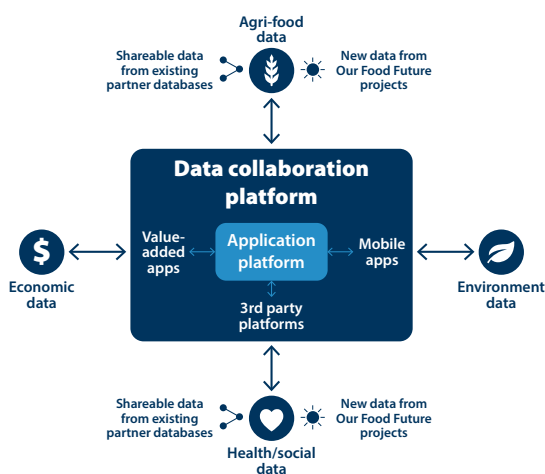
Leveraging big data while safeguarding privacy

Big data can help us accelerate the creation of a circular food economy and all the benefits that come with it. At the same time, we have to be scrupulously careful to manage that data in a way that protects the privacy of individuals and complies with all relevant provincial and federal legislation.

We'll proceed slowly and deliberately, designing privacy into our data management plans from day one and developing a set of policies, standards and procedures that ensure security and reliability. Guelph-Wellington residents will help shape those plans through in-depth conversations about the appropriate use of personal data, consent, control, accountability and more.

We'll start by focusing on publicly available data, gradually expanding into more sensitive datasets as we work through different scenarios and establish appropriate plans and policies. From there, we'll progress to applying the data to well-defined, real-world test projects. Ultimately, based on our experience, we'll establish templates and best practices that we'll share with other communities around the world.

Shaped by community

Our Food Future will touch everyone within Guelph-Wellington, so it's crucial that this initiative reflects the needs and values of the entire community.

To create a shared vision and ensure broad-based buy-in from stakeholders and the public, we launched an extensive engagement process in 2018. Using a "theory of change" approach (see page 7), we worked with our community to create a shared understanding of what we collectively wanted to achieve and how to achieve it.

We used print, video and social media to invite Guelph-Wellington residents to shape Our Food Future. We held dozens of community outreach events across the region. We surveyed local farmers and local food and beverage companies. We convened meeting after meeting with key community partners to align our goals and projects with local needs.

And most of all, we listened. A lot.

Our engagement revealed that Our Food Future's vision resonates with the Guelph-Wellington community. We heard very clearly that residents believe in the importance of ensuring everyone has access to affordable, nutritious food. Businesses are on board: in a Guelph's recent online Community Plan survey about Guelph's economy, respondents ranked Our Food Future as one of the three biggest opportunities for local enterprises. Meanwhile, according to a Wellington Federation of Agriculture survey, almost 70 per cent of farmers would be willing to pilot new technologies on their properties.

In the words of one of our stakeholders: "I am proud to be a part of this collaborative process—where leaders in the community are coming together to empower the lives of citizens and businesses."

Driving meaningful change

This initiative was shaped by community—and its success depends on that same community. To create the changes required for a truly circular food system, we need to continue reaching out and engaging with Guelph-Wellington residents.

As we move forward, that engagement will take many forms, including:

- Our digital engagement platform
- Our "reimagine food" campaign (see page 11)
- Behavioural interventions that "nudge" residents towards making healthier food choices and creating less food waste
- Experiential pop-up stations that raise awareness and serve as mini-research labs to test concepts and prototypes, gain insights and promote dialogue
- A community activator program that recruits and trains champions to conduct in-person and digital outreach
- Annual community change-maker events
- A pilot program to engage newcomers in growing culturally appropriate foods
- A digital panel that enables residents to provide input on Our Food Future

Managing inclusively

Transforming our food system demands fresh thinking—and an inclusive approach to governance that fosters innovation.

Smart City initiatives require testing and managing complex new approaches to governance and supporting project management structures that address risks. The City of Guelph has been working for several years on an inclusive governance approach, creating new platforms for citizens, community partners, local government and the private sector to collaborate, make decisions and deliver services.

Through this work, we learned a lot about open government, open data, civic innovation labs, "open for business" initiatives, civic accelerators, community energy plans, climate change initiatives, participatory budgeting and digital engagement.

Now we're applying that experience to Our Food Future. Our governance strategy for this initiative is based on a set of core principles:

- inclusive innovation
- strengthening democratic participation
- creating new approaches for engaging private-sector partners as expert advisor and collaborators
- working openly and transparently

During the initial phase of Our Food Future, we convened multisectoral roundtables to refine our vision, develop concrete plans, establish budgets and carry out test projects. These

roundtables brought together a wide diversity of community partners, with collaborators from universities, colleges, health organizations, food security and social innovation agencies, businesses and school boards, as well as residents, data and technology experts, food producers and more.

These collaborators contribute to the success of the initiative through their extensive networks, service delivery capacity and engagement channels with residents and client groups.

During the next phase, these same community partners will lead the implementation of our Pathfinder projects. We will also take advantage of the collaborations we've developed with recognized experts to address any issues that are beyond our local expertise. Meanwhile, in emerging areas such as data use and data governance, we will learn from the best practices that do exist, go slow, and work with experts to contribute to the growing international body of knowledge.

For a list of Our Food Future knowledge partners and steering committee members, please see the back cover.

Bottom-line benefits

Supporting prosperity, planet, people and purpose

Our nine Pathfinder projects provide the building blocks required to create and demonstrate Canada's first circular food ecosystem. Some will drive local prosperity, some will strengthen social equity, and some will contribute to greater environmental sustainability. However, all will support our ultimate purpose: creating and demonstrating a region-wide sustainable food ecosystem of the future.

Bottom Line →

Goals	People	Planet	Prosperity
Access Nutritious Food	▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦	▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦	▦ ▦ ▦
Job Creation	▦ ▦ ▦ ▦	▦ ▦ ▦ ▦	▦ ▦ ▦ ▦
Valuing Waste as a Resource	▦ ▦ ▦	▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦	▦ ▦ ▦ ▦ ▦

Projects

⊕ Assess the Guelph-Wellington Food Environment

◉ Circular Food Security and Health Action Plan

⚗ Circular Food Economy Innovation Hub (iHub)

$ Harve$t Impact Fund

⚙ New Food Economy Skills and Training

✗ Business Tools and Services

◉ "Re-imagine Food" Awareness Campaign

◎ Circular Carbon Credits

⊛ Circularity in Municipal Waste Systems

Transformative results

Together, we will build Our Food Future

Our Food Future will bring significant benefits to Guelph-Wellington. We'll shrink our environmental footprint by reducing waste. We'll create new revenue streams and new jobs by extracting value from the byproducts we currently throw away. We'll foster innovation, collaboration and skills. And we'll help ensure every local resident has access to healthy, nutritious food.

But the benefits aren't just local. By developing, testing and refining new thinking around circular food systems, we'll create a roadmap to share with communities across the country and around the world. Already, we're partnering with national and international organizations to build on the knowledge that already exists and to disseminate what we learn.

Help shape Our Food Future

Join the champions that are turning this vision into reality

In the months and years ahead, we'll continue connecting with Guelph-Wellington residents and stakeholders to ensure Our Food Future is inclusive and collaboratively built every step of the way. That's why we've launched a digital engagement platform where you can share your stories, complete surveys, ask questions, participate in discussions and learn how you can get further involved. To join the conversation, visit **foodfuture.ca**.

Steering Committee

BIOREM • GUELPH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE • CONESTOGA • Guelph CHC growing healthy together • Innovation Guelph • Waterloo Wellington LHIN • MAPLE LEAF • Ontario Agri-Food Technologies • POVERTY ELIMINATION

PROVISION COALITION • PublicHealth • THE SEED • Toward Common Ground • TruLeaf • UNIVERSITY of GUELPH • Upper Grand District School Board • Wellington Catholic

Knowledge Partners

alectra • ARRELL FOOD INSTITUTE • CAPI ICPA • Circular Economy Leadership Coalition • CONESTOGA • gen • Digital Public • Ellen MacArthur Foundation Food Focus City • Gehl • Guelph Family Health Team

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability • IDEO • INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE • MIX Municipal Innovation Exchange • MaRS • MK MICHAEL KEEGAN & ASSOCIATES LTD. • Ontario Centres of Excellence • PUBLIC SECTOR NETWORK • Smart Prosperity Institute • UNIVERSITY of GUELPH

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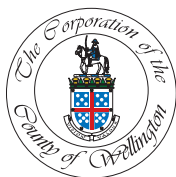
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Accessible formats available upon request.

Creating Canada's first circular food economy   City of Guelph • County of Wellington