

Asking Food Questions

Purpose

To learn about the health, environmental, and economic benefits and impacts of different food choices made by individuals, communities, and organizations

Intended Audience

All employees

Suggested Activities

- Place table tents on tables in kitchens, break rooms, worksite cafeterias, boardrooms, photocopier rooms, and other key areas.
- Hand out and/or post fact sheets by elevators, on bulletin boards, in stairwells, and in other key areas.
- Arrange educational sessions with dietitians, local farmers, or other food service participants to discuss food topics.
- Arrange for a taste testers session/cooking demos of different organic/non-organic, local/imported, unprocessed/processed foods (for example, produce, macaroni and cheese, healthy snack ideas) and have employees rate them on taste, freshness, colour, appearance, etc.
- Provide information on food choices on the intranet and/or in newsletters
- Discuss questions about local production, consequences of different purchase choices (local, fair trade, farmers markets, etc.) and the impacts on the consumer (convenience, preparation time, teaching children about food, etc.) Some examples of questions to be discussed are given below:
 - What is Fair Trade?
 - What are the benefits of eating local or organic food? What are the challenges? How can we overcome the challenges?
 - How do the seasons affect our food choices? What are some of the benefits of eating with the seasons? Celebrate each season with a meal made from food available from your area.

- What food options are available within 100 miles of you? Check out the 100 mile diet <http://100milediet.org>.
- Can local food be healthier? (http://nsfarmersmarkets.ca/index.php?option=com_content&ask=view&id=43&Itemid=96)
- Think about the ingredients in last night's supper. Where did they come from? Who was involved?
- What are some readily available local food resources? (www.selectnovascotia.ca/)
- Look at <http://foodthoughtful.ca> for other activities/ fact sheets

Materials

- Diversity Checklist
- Table tents
(See the attached CD and inserts at the back of this binder.)
- Fact sheet: *Are Organic Foods Better for My Health?* (Public Health Agency of Canada) (See p. 151)
- Fact sheet: *Top Ten Reasons to Buy Local* (Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture) (See p. 153) (www.selectnovascotia.ca)
- Fact sheets: *Healthy Eating Nova Scotia-Food Security* (The Healthy Eating Action Group of the Nova Scotia Alliance for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity, in partnership with the Office of Health Promotion.) (See p. 154-158) (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/repPub/HealthyEatingNovaScotia2005.pdf>)
- Fact sheet: *Fair Trade* (TransFair Canada) (See p. 159-162) (www.transfair.ca/download/Questions+and+answers+about+Fair+Trade+.pdf) (www.transfair.ca/en/fairtrade/)
- Brochure: *Organic* (Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network [ACORN]) (See sleeve inserts at the back of this binder.)
- Chart: *Nova Scotia Fresh Fruits and Vegetables: What's Available Now* (Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture) (See p. 163)
- Website: *Select Nova Scotia: Buy Local. Eat Fresh* (Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture) (www.selectnovascotia.ca/)
- Website: *Food for Thought: A Buyer's Guide to Nova Scotia Food Products* (Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture) (www.gov.ns.ca/agri/marketing/contact/agriculture/foodft/index.shtml) (See p. 165)

- Website: *Quick Facts about Canada's Organic Sector* (Canadian Organic Growers) (<http://cog.ca/orgquickfacts.htm>)
- Website: *Fresh Local Food and So Much More*: Interactive map of Nova Scotia farmers' markets (Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia Cooperative) (www.nsfarmersmarkets.ca)
- Website: *Find Local Organic Food*: Searchable database (Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network [ACORN]) (www.acornorganic.org/acorn/databaseregional.html)
- How to Access a Dietitian in Nova Scotia (See Additional Resources, p. 244)
- Intranet/newsletter messages (See Communication Materials, p. 205)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Action Plan Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 221)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Participant Evaluation Form* (See Additional Resources, p. 225)



Canadian Health Network

Health info for every body

Brought to you by the Public Health Agency of Canada and major health organizations across the country.

[Print](#) [Close](#)

Are organic foods better for my health?

Is organic food more nutritious?

There is no simple answer to this question. It is difficult to interpret studies that compare organic food to food grown by other methods because many factors such as the quality of soil, temperature and light during the growing season, and the type of seeds that are planted can affect the nutritional content of a food. In most situations, these factors are not controlled so accurate comparisons can't be made. However, research shows that organic food is usually higher in vitamin C than other food. Iron and magnesium levels are sometimes higher in organic food, but vitamin A, beta-carotene, and the B vitamins are generally the same. Therefore, some foods grown organically may have more nutritional value and some may have the same as those grown on non-organic farms.

What is different about organic farming and how could that affect nutritional content?

Organic farmers use techniques such as "green manures" and compost to enrich the soil. "Green manures" are special crops that are planted, grown, and then plowed back into the soil. Organic farmers also use both plant and animal compost to keep the soil fertile. Of course, non-organic farmers may also use mixed farming techniques such as using "green manures" as well as chemical fertilizers. Then, their crops may be of higher nutritional quality, lessening the difference between their crops and organic crops.

Is organic food as safe as other food?

The key to lowering food safety risks is to operate a well-managed farm, whether it is an organic farm or not. Organic farmers are good managers when they use properly composted animal manures and use preventive measures to protect crops from insects before damage occurs to the plants.

Is there an advantage to buying organic food?

Like any purchase, buying organic food should be a personal choice, dependent on factors like the food's availability, price, appearance and taste, as well as the personal values of the buyer, such as a preferring the way that organic foods are produced. Nitrate levels are always lower and usually the vitamin C content is higher in organic food.

But while some organic products may give consumers a small advantage, what's most important is that Canadians choose vegetables and fruit more often, whether they are organic or not.

Resources for Consumers:

<http://www.agr.gc.ca/>

<http://www.pwgsc.gc.ca/cgsb/>

Resources for Health Intermediaries:

<http://www.agr.gc.ca/>

<http://www.pwgsc.gc.ca/cgsb/>

Last Modified Date: May 2005

This FAQ was created for the Canadian Health Network by Milly Ryan Harshman, Ontario, member of Dietitians of Canada.



Did you know that over 3/4 of a billion dollars of food is purchased by Atlantic Canada retailers from Atlantic Canadian farmers and food processors?

- 1. SUN RIPE PRODUCE FRESH OFF THE VINE! DELICIOUS!**
Local produce is ripened on the vine and is offered at its peak flavour potential.
- 2. SUPPORT SMALL FARMS**
Every local product comes with a local story. Your choice to buy a fresh local product supports farm families, rural communities and our provincial economy.
- 3. REDUCE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT**
Think about how many "food miles" your ingredients travel to reach your plate. Local meat, dairy, produce and preserves are available in your own backyard.
- 4. BE SOCIAL**
Farmers' markets are a community event. While searching for fresh herbs and farm eggs, chances are you'll strike up a conversation with a vendor, or bump into an old friend.
- 5. GET IN TOUCH WITH THE SEASONS**
Eating locally means eating what's in season. Heart warming foods like root vegetable soups in the winter just makes sense!
- 6. EXPLORE YOUR OWN BACKYARD**
Countless adventures can be found at local farms, wineries and sugar shacks. Many local producers host festivals, tours and food samplings. Choose a destination and plan an inexpensive family adventure or a gourmet getaway for two.
- 7. TRY SOMETHING NEW**
Have you ever tried apple wine? Or maple smoked salmon? Asparagus is a great springtime treat and don't forget to boil those beet tops. Yum!
- 8. BE HEALTHY**
Eating local means healthy ingredients and access to fresh food at its nutritional peak. Eating well never felt so good.
- 9. CREATE FAMILY MEMORIES**
Do you remember making pickles with grandma, or picking berries for hours to make grandpa's famous freezer jam? Create a new family tradition and preserve your favourite seasonal products together. With a pretty bow your family's famous preserves will make a great Christmas gift!
- 10. PRICE**
Local products are comparably priced to products produced elsewhere.



Look for Select Nova Scotia promotions at participating retailers.

Food Security

Food security means being able to get enough healthy food and not having to worry about where your next meal will come from.

Objectives

1. To increase the proportion of Nova Scotians who have access to nutritious foods.
2. To increase the availability of nutritious, locally produced foods throughout the province.

What do we know about food security?

Food security has been defined as the ability of all people, at all times, to have access to nutritious, safe, personally acceptable and culturally appropriate foods, produced (and distributed) in ways that are environmentally sound and socially just.⁴⁶ The concept has many dimensions. It means being able to get enough healthy food and not having to worry about where your next meal will come from. It means that people involved in growing and handling food are able to make a decent living. It also means growing and producing food in ways that protect the resources so that there will be healthy food for our children's children.⁴⁷

At the individual level, food security is about access to food, which implies that food is available close to home, and that people can afford to buy it. Income, widely recognized as the single most important determinant of health, plays a major role in food security. Recessions and reduced social spending by governments during the 1980s and 1990s have resulted in increased levels of poverty, income inequality and food insecurity across the country.⁴⁸ According to latest figures from the National Council of Welfare, close to 144,000 Nova Scotians live in poverty. This figure represents 15.8% of all Nova Scotians. The rate of poverty among families led by single mothers is particularly alarming, at 48.8%.

Rates of poverty are consistently higher among immigrant, Aboriginal and visible minority populations. For example, approximately 20% of Nova Scotia children live in poverty, compared to 50% for children of new immigrants, 42% for visible minority children, and 38% for Aboriginal children. For children with disabilities, the latest poverty rate has been estimated at 32%.⁴⁹

Research tells us that people who live in poverty cannot afford to eat well, no matter how carefully they choose and prepare food. A recent study of the cost of basic foods around the province showed that Nova Scotians working for minimum wage or on income assistance are unable to afford a basic, healthy food basket that meets their family's nutritional needs. The cost of a basic diet would be a struggle even for families earning \$9.95 per hour, the average call centre wage at the time of the study. The study concluded that wages and income support programs in the province are too low.⁵⁰

As a result, food bank use is growing in this province. Close to 24,000 Nova Scotians used food banks in 2003, up 17% over the previous year.⁵¹ However, results of the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth have shown that only two-thirds of those who experience hunger seek support from food banks. For this reason, food bank use alone is a poor indicator of the prevalence of food insecurity.⁵²



More reliable indicators of food insecurity are provided by the Canadian Community Health Survey. The survey suggests that 17% of Nova Scotian households (over 133,500 people) experienced food insecurity at some time in 2000/01. Nearly 8% of households reported that someone in their household did not have enough to eat at least once that year, and nearly twice that many said they did not get the quality or variety of food they should have, due to lack of money. More than 11% worried that they would not have enough to eat.⁵³

Numerous studies have shown that families headed by single mothers are far more likely to report that their children are hungry. One recent study of 141 low-income single mothers in Atlantic Canada found that virtually all of them regularly experience food insecurity.⁵⁴

In addition to income, issues such as transportation and trends in the food industry also affect access to food. These can be particularly challenging for families in rural Nova Scotia. Rural families have fewer choices about where to shop. Supermarkets and farm markets, where food tends to be less expensive, can be very far from home. The most recent food costing study showed that the cost of a basic, nutritious food basket is considerably higher in smaller grocery stores and in rural Nova Scotia. The study concluded that food needs to be made more accessible in rural areas, through the development of local food systems and alternative transportation strategies.⁵⁵

On a broader societal level, food security requires that sufficient, safe and nutritious foods continue to be available for all Nova Scotians in the future. This involves changes to agricultural practices and food distribution systems. Food producers must be able to make a living farming or fishing in sustainable ways that protect the province's farmland, water supply, fishery and other resources for future generations.

Food security is therefore an environmental issue as well as a social justice issue. Moreover, it is a chronic disease prevention issue. Unless people have access to healthy food, strategies aimed at encouraging them to eat more fruit and vegetables, breastfeed their infants and help their children develop healthy food habits can have only a very limited impact. Until recently, most efforts to promote healthier eating in Nova Scotia have focussed on influencing individual choice, without considering whether people have access to foods of sufficient quality and quantity. Research in other locations has shown that this kind of intervention can actually have a negative impact. Because campaigns focusing on personal choice are less effective with lower income populations, who have fewer options to choose from, they tend to effectively increase the health gap between the rich and poor.⁵⁶ Research consistently demonstrates that poverty is associated with poorer nutrition and higher rates of obesity. Reducing health disparity of this type is one of two overall goals of Nova Scotia's Chronic Disease Prevention Strategy. Achieving this goal will require addressing the social, economic and political forces that influence food security.

Because campaigns focusing on personal choice are less effective with lower income populations, who have fewer options to choose from, they tend to effectively increase the health gap between the rich and poor.



Healthy Eating
Nova Scotia

With increasing globalization, locally grown foods have become a rare commodity in supermarkets, restaurants and cafeterias.

What can be done to increase food security?

In general, action to address food insecurity in Canada has consisted of a patch-work of community-led efforts, using one of three broad approaches:⁵⁷

- programs that provide free or subsidized food, such as food banks, soup kitchens and breakfast programs
- health promotion / community development programs that focus on enhancing food buying and cooking skills, for example through group education programs and community kitchens
- approaches that move food directly from growers to consumers, such as farmers' markets, community gardens, good food boxes and community supported agriculture.

In spite of these efforts, food insecurity continues to grow in Canada. As a result, several policy options have been recommended for addressing the problem in a more comprehensive way:

- increasing real incomes, whether from minimum wage or income assistance
 - protecting the affordability of healthy foods, particularly staples such as milk
- increasing the availability of affordable housing, because current housing costs leave little money for food in the poorest households
- increasing the availability of affordable, high-quality daycare, which is currently a significant barrier to employment
- increasing the availability of employment support programs, such as work related supports, health and recreation services, and other forms of transitional assistance that have shown promise
- establishing a hunger and food insecurity monitoring system.⁵⁸

For increasing food security at the broader societal level, one essential change is reducing our reliance on imported foods. With increasing globalization, locally grown foods have become a rare commodity in supermarkets, restaurants and cafeterias. Increasing the availability of locally grown foods in all of these areas can occur through policies favouring local foods, and through partnerships with the agricultural and food service sectors. Farmers' markets and community supported agriculture, where food moves directly from farm to table, are two approaches that have been shown to increase food security at this level.⁵⁹

Currently available indicators:

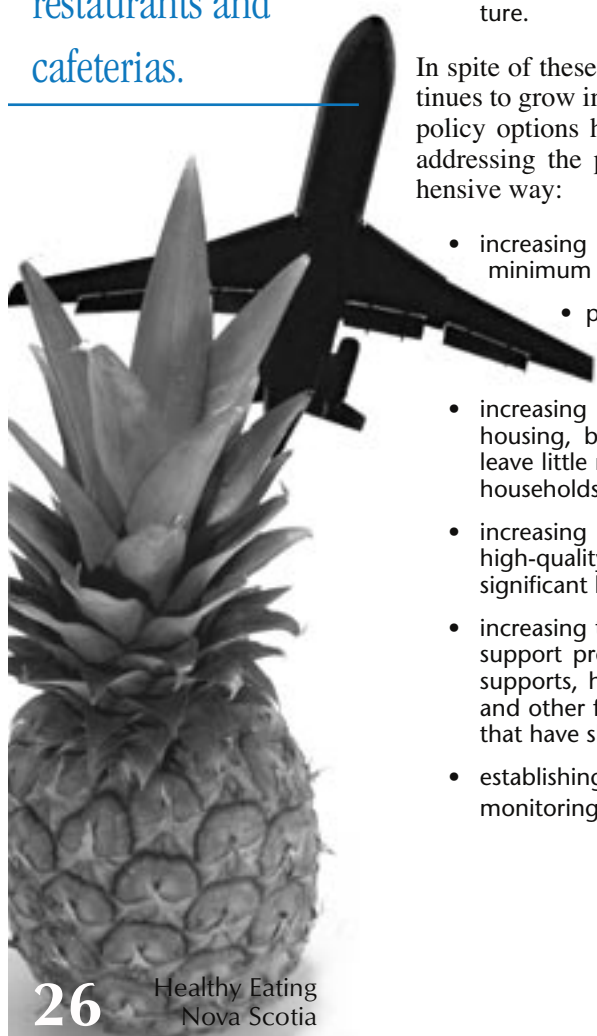
- percent of Nova Scotians living below Statistics Canada's low income cut off
- percent of Nova Scotians reporting food insecurity in the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS)
- cost, in Nova Scotia, of Health Canada's National Nutritious Food Basket.

What's happening now?

In 1998, Canada launched a national plan of action to achieve food security both here and internationally, in response to the World Food Summit held in Rome two years earlier. Canada's Action Plan for Food Security recognizes that poverty reduction, social justice and sustainable food systems are essential conditions for food security.

In Nova Scotia, the largest area of activity aimed specifically at increasing food security is co-sponsored by the Nova Scotia Nutrition Council and the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre. These two organizations, with a long list of partners, have conducted a series of projects aimed at increasing food security. Their current work includes:

- developing a model for ongoing monitoring of the cost of a nutritious diet in Nova Scotia
- supporting partners around the province in hosting community dialogues and forming local food security action groups



- developing a workbook and facilitator training program, aimed at helping communities take action to address food security
- producing a document that builds the case for a policy response to food insecurity
- developing a food security lens, a tool for use in assessing potential impacts of current or proposed policies on food security.

In addition, a few local or regional food security initiatives exist here and there around the province. Most often, these are associated with either schools or family resource centres. For example:

- In both the Annapolis Valley and Cumberland County, schools and food producers have joined forces to increase the sale of locally grown foods in school cafeterias. Students visit local food operations and participate in taste tests of local foods.
- The Lunenburg Queens Food Action Committee is raising awareness about food insecurity and working with the community to identify solutions.
- Community kitchens and low cost meal planning programs are offered by community-based organizations in a few areas.

Either regionally or provincially, Public Health Services is involved as a partner in one way or another in most of these initiatives.

Several organizations are addressing food security from the perspective of food production, for example:

- ACORN, the Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network, promotes food security by supporting organic growers in the region, with a variety of initiatives.
- The Ecology Action Centre’s Food Action Committee aims to increase food access and self-reliance in Nova Scotia. Promoting the consumption of locally grown food is a priority.
- The Taste of Nova Scotia Society, a group of restaurant owners, promotes the use of locally produced food in restaurants province-wide.

- The Taste of Nova Scotia Quality Food Program, an association of local food producers and processors, initiates joint marketing initiatives to promote the use of locally produced foods.
- Community supported agriculture programs, offered in a few areas, support local agriculture by connecting consumers directly to producers.
- Sobeys promotes foods grown in Atlantic Canada through signs, supermarket tours and cooking classes.

Next Steps

- Establish a provincial system to monitor food insecurity.
- Promote the use of the food security policy lens for assessing the impact of policy and budgetary decisions on food security.
- Increase public awareness of the extent and reality of food insecurity.
- Include food security in the curricula of health and education professionals.
- Advocate for public policies that increase the affordability of locally produced food.
- Advocate for public policies that support local food production and distribution systems.
- Advocate for municipal and provincial policies that permit the use of land for community gardens.
- Advocate for public policies that increase the use of locally produced foods in publicly funded institutions.



Potential partners

Achieving food security objectives will require working with a variety of partners, in addition to those currently involved in the Healthy Eating Action Group. Health and nutrition-related organizations from the government, non-government and private sectors should be involved, as well as new partner organizations concerned with income adequacy, social justice and the sustainability of food production.

A formal partnership to address food insecurity currently exists among the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre, the Nova Scotia Nutrition Council, and the province's family resources centres (specifically, those funded through CAPC and CPNP). Health Canada, provincial departments of health and of community services, Public Health Services in some districts and several universities are also involved. This partnership should be supported and maintained.

The following organizations concerned with income adequacy and social justice are suggested as potential new partners:

- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Nova Scotia
- Food Security Action Group, Oxfam Halifax
- Human Resources and Social Development Canada
- Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers
- Nova Scotia Department of Community Services
- Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
- Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group.

The following organizations concerned with the sustainability of food production are also suggested as potential new partners:

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network (ACORN)
- Food Action Committee, Ecology Action Centre in Halifax
- Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture
- The Taste of Nova Scotia Society
- The Taste of Nova Scotia Quality Food Program

Questions and Answers about Fair Trade

1. What is Fair Trade?

Fair Trade is an international system of doing business based on dialogue, transparency and respect. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions for producers and workers in developing countries. Behind the principles and goals of Fair Trade is a rigorous international system of monitoring, auditing and certification.

The international Fair Trade system is structured to produce the following outcomes for farmers and workers in developing countries:

- Fair compensation for their products and labour
- Sustainable environmental practices
- Improved social services
- Investment in local economic infrastructure

Fair Trade is about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world. By requiring companies to pay above market prices, Fair Trade addresses the injustices of conventional trade, which traditionally discriminates against the poorest, weakest producers. It enables them to improve their lot and have more control over their lives.

2. When and why did the Fair Trade movement start?

Fair Trade began 50 years ago in Africa and Europe. It started with small-scale farmers and artisans, working in conjunction with international aid organizations from industrialized countries. The farmers and workers in Africa were struggling with a combination of low market prices for their produce and a high dependency on unscrupulous intermediaries. It entrenched their families and local economies in a cycle of poverty. Together with aid organizations the producers laid the foundation for a trading system that ensured a fair price for their produce and a direct road to European markets.

From the aid organizations evolved a new type of non-profit business structure known as alternative trade organizations or ATOs. Most were run by volunteers. They set up what were known as World Shops in Europe and Ten Thousand Villages in North America. Parallel to the ATOs, a new group of entrepreneurs also arose and created for-profit companies that were driven by the principles of Fair Trade. This latter type of company was and is particularly common in Canada.

3. What is TransFair Canada?

TransFair Canada is the certification body for Fair Trade products sold in Canada. It is the only national, independent, not-for-profit certification organization in Canada, and the only one affiliated with the Fair Trade Labelling Organizations International (FLO).

4. Which products are Fair Trade Certified in Canada?

As of May 2006, the following products were certified by TransFair Canada: coffee, tea, sugar, cocoa (chocolate and other cocoa products), bananas and mangoes, rice, quinoa, spices, roses, soccer and volley balls, wine, and cotton.

5. How can I be sure that a product is Fair Trade Certified?

Only the TransFair Canada logo guarantees that a product is Fair Trade Certified. The logo must be displayed clearly on the front of the packaging of the product, or with a sticker in the case of fresh produce.

6. What is the guarantee behind the logo?

The Fair Trade certification system begins at the production level in countries where the source products and ingredients originate. All Fair Trade Certified products come from certified producer organizations. Beyond the source, the entire supply chain is monitored to ensure the integrity of labelled products. This chain of certification, monitoring and licensing ensures that the integrity of the supply chain cannot be compromised. It ensures that only a product or ingredient certified at the source can be labelled as Fair Trade Certified, and not just by anyone. Only licensees can use the Fair Trade Certified label on their products.

7. What are the general Fair Trade standards?

For a product to obtain Fair Trade certification, it must meet the following criteria:

1. Direct trade: The product is purchased by a North American importer as directly as possible from the cooperative (with few or no intermediaries)
2. Fair price: The product is purchased at a constant and stable price, which can be 2 to 3 times over standard market price. An additional bonus is paid for products that are certified organic.
3. Long term commitment: When purchasing a product, the importer is also committing to a long term relationship with the cooperative.
4. Access to credit: Upon request, cooperatives representing producers may have access to credit of up to 60% of the purchase price or to pre-payment.
5. Democratic and transparent organizations: Fair Trade Certified products come from cooperatives that are managed democratically and with the utmost transparency.
6. Environmental protection: Producers abide by sustainable farming methods that also respect the environment. A large percentage of Fair Trade Certified products are also certified organic.

7. Local community development: In addition to the fair trade guaranteed floor price, a social premium is paid to the cooperative and is invested in projects meant to improve the local communities' health, education, environment and economy.

8. Who determines the standards?

Fair Trade Certified standards and procedures are set by Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO), in consultation with Fair Trade Certified stakeholders, such as producer organizations in developing countries and licensees, and 22 National Initiatives such as TransFair Canada, TransFair USA etc.

9. Where can I find Fair Trade Certified products?

There are mainstream grocery, specialty, and health food stores in addition to institutions such as universities, hospitals, government and office buildings all across Canada that offer Fair Trade Certified products. Check out www.transfair.ca for a listing of retailers across Canada.

10. How do you determine what price is a fair price?

A fair price for a product is one that covers the farmer/worker's Cost of Production and the Cost of Living. The price is not determined by bargaining, pressure tactics, or traders in commodity markets half way around the world. It is determined in a fair and systematic manner, and is periodically reviewed to ensure producers' basic needs are still being met.

11. Who determines the prices?

FLO International (Fairtrade Labelling Organizations) works with the representatives of farmer and worker cooperatives in each country to determine the minimum price paid to the producer for each product.

12. Why do Fair Trade products cost more?

Not all Fair Trade Certified products cost more than conventional products. Where the Fair Trade Certified products do cost more, there are many factors to be considered. Often they are of a superior quality due to their organic farming practices. There are other factors such as scale of economy. Production of smaller quantities can often cost producers and processors more at every turn (packaging, transport, etc) because they cannot benefit from a large enough scale to use as a bargaining position. Finally, retailers make the choice to set the final price to consumers. Retail pricing is not controlled or influenced by TransFair Canada. TransFair verifies the minimum guaranteed price has been made to the producer but the final price asked of the consumer is solely the decision of the retailer.

13. How big is the Fair Trade market globally?

As of May 2006, there are 550 certified producer organizations in 51 producing countries which are part of Fair Trade Certification, in countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia. That represents more than one million producers and five million people, including dependents, benefiting from Fair Trade. During 2004, Fair Trade Certification generated an estimated US\$100 million in producers additional income; this is a growth of 49% in comparison to 2003, demonstrating that for producers, the industry and consumers, Fair Trade is an attractive way to make the world a better place.

14. How big is the Fair Trade market in Canada?

As of May 2006, there is 160 licensed companies who import and sale Fair Trade Certified products in Canada. A majority of them is focused on coffee. The level of awareness and growth in sales have increased a lot in Canada in the past few years. Since 2001, there has been an average annual increase of 55% in sales of Fair Trade Certified products in Canada.

15. What is the impact of Fair Trade on developing countries?

Fair Trade is a pragmatic and powerful tool for poverty alleviation. Developing countries benefit from Fair Trade because it gives their farmers, workers and their families a living wage, helps the families to avoid debt, and it provides important investment in communities through the social premiums that Fair Trade provides. One practical example can be seen in the coffee market. In 2004 the conventional market price for coffee dipped to 60 cents/lb US. The Fair Trade market price was 1.26lb US. Many farmers selling to the conventional market have been forced into growing other crops. Some farmers in Columbia have even turned to illegal crops such as coca for making cocaine. Meanwhile, the farmers selling to the Fair Trade market have a stable income and are able to invest in community infrastructure such as schools and health facilities. This type of stability contributes to a country's well being.

For more information on Fair Trade, consult:

www.transfair.ca (TransFair Canada)

www.fairtrade.net (FLO International)

www.equiterre.org (Québec based organization, good section on Fair Trade)



Nova Scotia Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

What's available and when:

Peak
 Good
 * Low
 Not Available

Month:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Apples	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Low	Low	Low	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Asparagus					Peak	Peak	Peak	Low				
Beans						Good	Good	Peak	Good			
Beets (Greens/Roots)						Good	Good	Peak	Peak			
Blueberries							Good	Peak	Peak			
Broccoli							Good	Peak	Peak	Peak		
Brussels Sprouts									Peak	Peak	Peak	
Cabbage	Good	Good	Good	Low	Low		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Cantaloupes								Peak	Peak			
Carrots	Good	Good					Low	Good	Peak	Peak	Peak	Good
Cauliflower							Good	Peak	Peak	Peak	Low	
Celery								Peak	Peak	Peak	Low	
Cherries						Low	Peak					
Corn (Sweet)								Peak	Good	Low		
Cranberries									Peak	Peak	Low	Good
Cucumbers (Field)							Low	Peak	Peak	Low		
Eggplant								Good	Peak	Peak		
Endive (Green)					Peak	Good						
Fiddleheads					Peak	Good						
Garlic							Low	Good	Peak	Low		
Grapes (Table)								Low	Peak	Peak		
Leeks	Good							Low	Good	Peak	Peak	Good
Lettuce						Peak	Peak	Good	Low	Low		
Mixed Melons								Peak	Peak	Low		
Onions	Good	Good	Good	Low				Low	Peak	Peak	Peak	Good
Parsley							Low	Peak	Good	Good	Low	
Parsnips	Peak	Good								Peak	Peak	Peak
Peaches								Good	Good			
Pears								Peak	Peak	Good		
Peppers								Low	Peak	Peak		
Plums							Low	Good	Peak	Peak		
Potatoes	Good	Good	Good	Good			Good	Peak	Peak	Peak	Good	Good
Pumpkins									Good	Peak	Good	
Radishes				Low	Low	Peak	Peak	Peak	Good			
Raspberries							Low	Good				
Rhubarb					Good	Peak	Low	Low	Peak	Peak	Peak	Peak
Rutabagas	Peak	Peak	Peak	Good	Good	Low	Low	Good	Peak	Peak	Peak	Peak
Spinach					Low	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Low	
Squash (Buttercup)	Low	Low	Low					Good	Peak	Peak	Good	Good
Strawberries						Peak	Peak	Peak				
Tomatoes								Peak	Peak	Low		

Food for Thought A Buyer's Guide to Nova Scotia Food Products

Published: 2005

Last Revised: February 14, 2006

- [Fruit & Vegetable Products](#)
- [Herbs and Spices](#)
- [Apple and Pear Packers](#)
- [Milk and Dairy Products](#)
- [Meat and Poultry Products](#)
- [Egg Graders, Packers and Distributors](#)
- [Bakery Products](#)
- [Specialty Foods and Snack Items](#)
- [Condiments and Gift Packs](#)
- [Grain Products](#)
- [Maple Syrup](#)
- [Honey](#)
- [Wine](#)
- [Beer](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Candy](#)

Last Update: May 1, 2007

[\[Industry & Service\]](#) [\[Consumer & Recreation\]](#) [\[General Information\]](#)

[Comments](#) and/or questions about this Web site. This page and all contents are [Crown copyright © 2007](#), Province of Nova Scotia, all rights reserved. Some files on this web site require the [free Adobe Acrobat PDF Reader](#) for viewing.

[Experience Nova Scotia at novascotialife.com](#)

[\[Freedom of Information\]](#) [\[Privacy Policy\]](#) [\[Routine Access Policy\]](#)