



WELCOME!

Building a Food Systems Network for Niagara

April 20, 2017



www.niagaraconnects.ca



People working in Niagara's food continuum developing...

- Shared understanding
- Common language
- Description of how a healthy, secure, sustainable food landscape contributes to Niagara's social, political, economic vitality



Food Systems in Niagara

“Food Systems” refers to a complex topic that represents the cycles of growing, distributing, eating and recycling of food

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A Niagara-wide network of people for collaboration, planning, learning, innovation and community action toward a stronger future for Niagara.

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Data plus Community Knowledge
informs Wise Decision-Making



3 Strategic Focus Areas



Build

community capacity to use Niagara-focused evidence (data, information, knowledge) to inform planning and decision-making



Facilitate

coordinated community action to create the conditions for a more vibrant Niagara



Strengthen

Niagara Connects as a value-add and sustainable enterprise in the Niagara-wide community

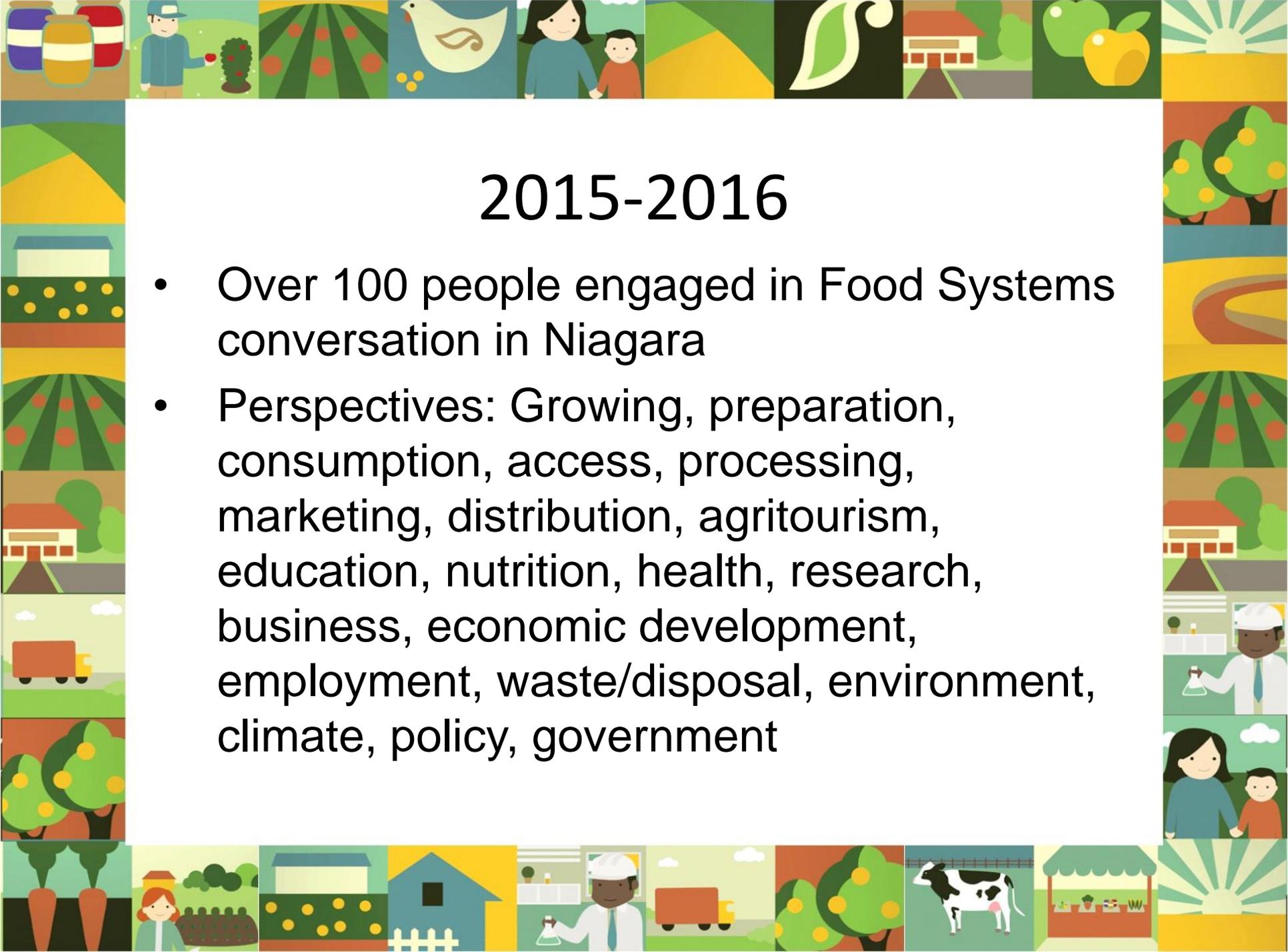
Mission



“Generating knowledge that drives community action”

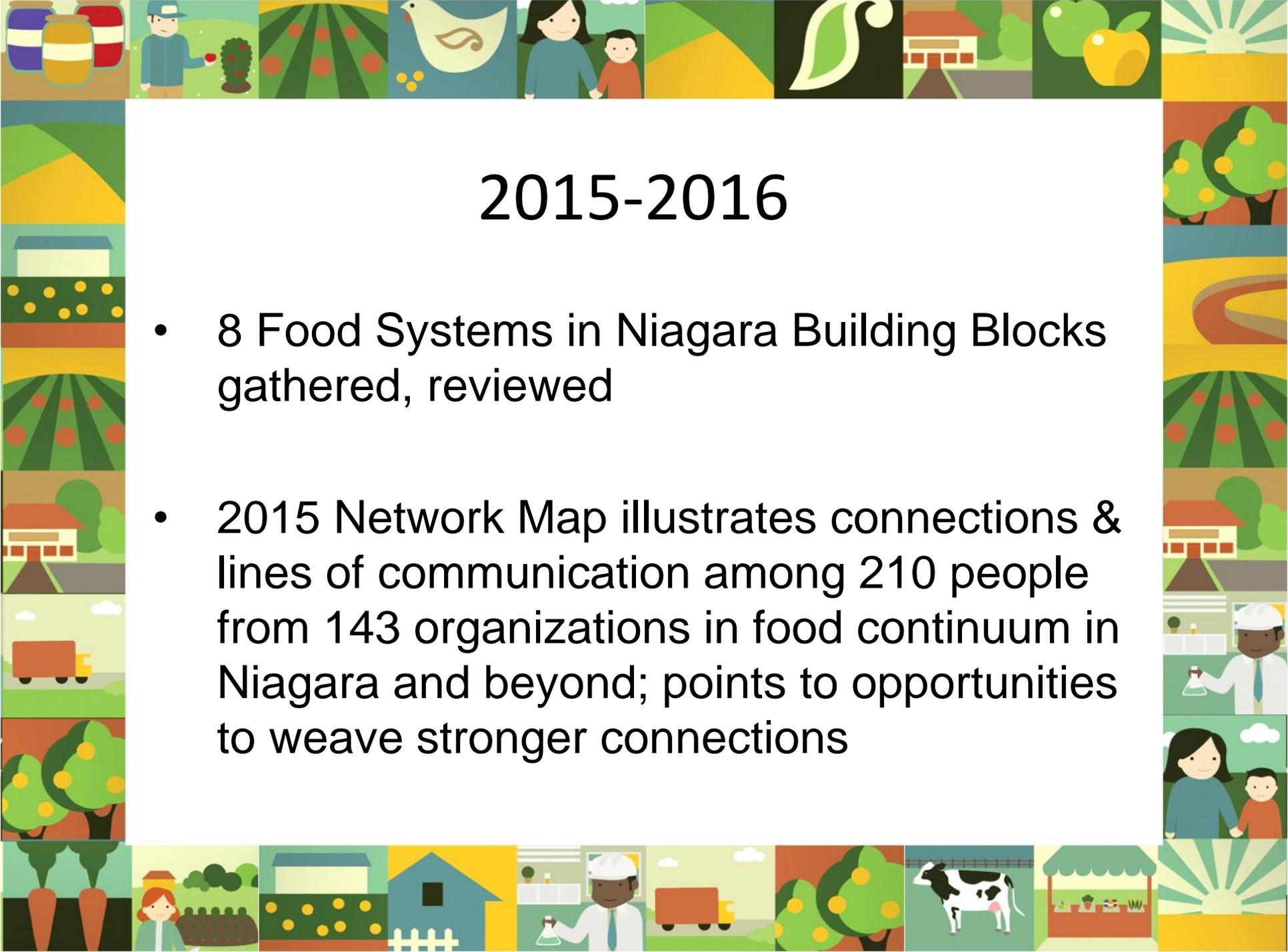
Guiding Principles:

- Community strengths, research, and evidence are linked in order to plan for a stronger Niagara
- Different interests are engaged to work together mobilizing for change
- Research and activities are guided by communities



2015-2016

- Over 100 people engaged in Food Systems conversation in Niagara
- Perspectives: Growing, preparation, consumption, access, processing, marketing, distribution, agritourism, education, nutrition, health, research, business, economic development, employment, waste/disposal, environment, climate, policy, government



2015-2016

- 8 Food Systems in Niagara Building Blocks gathered, reviewed
- 2015 Network Map illustrates connections & lines of communication among 210 people from 143 organizations in food continuum in Niagara and beyond; points to opportunities to weave stronger connections

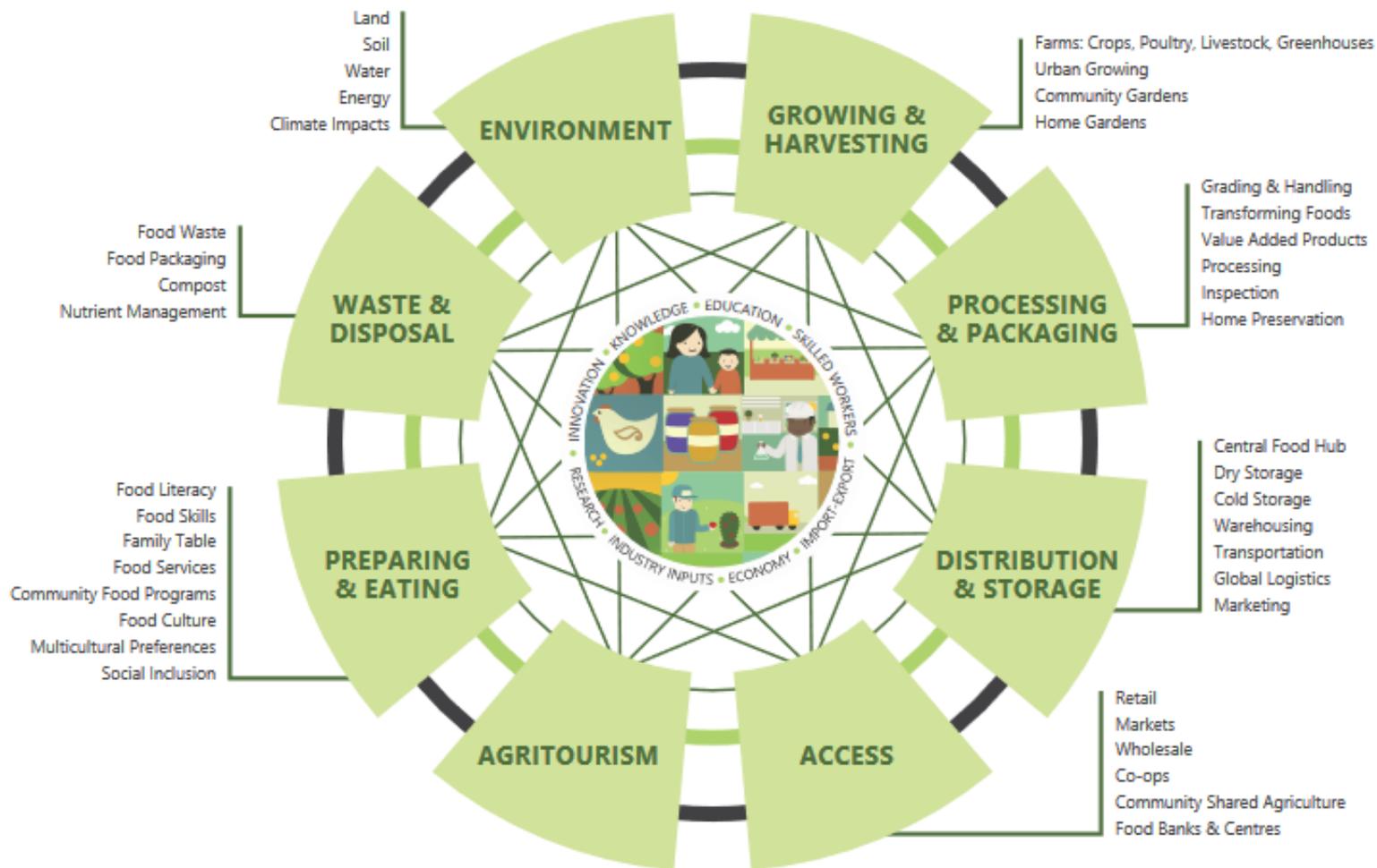


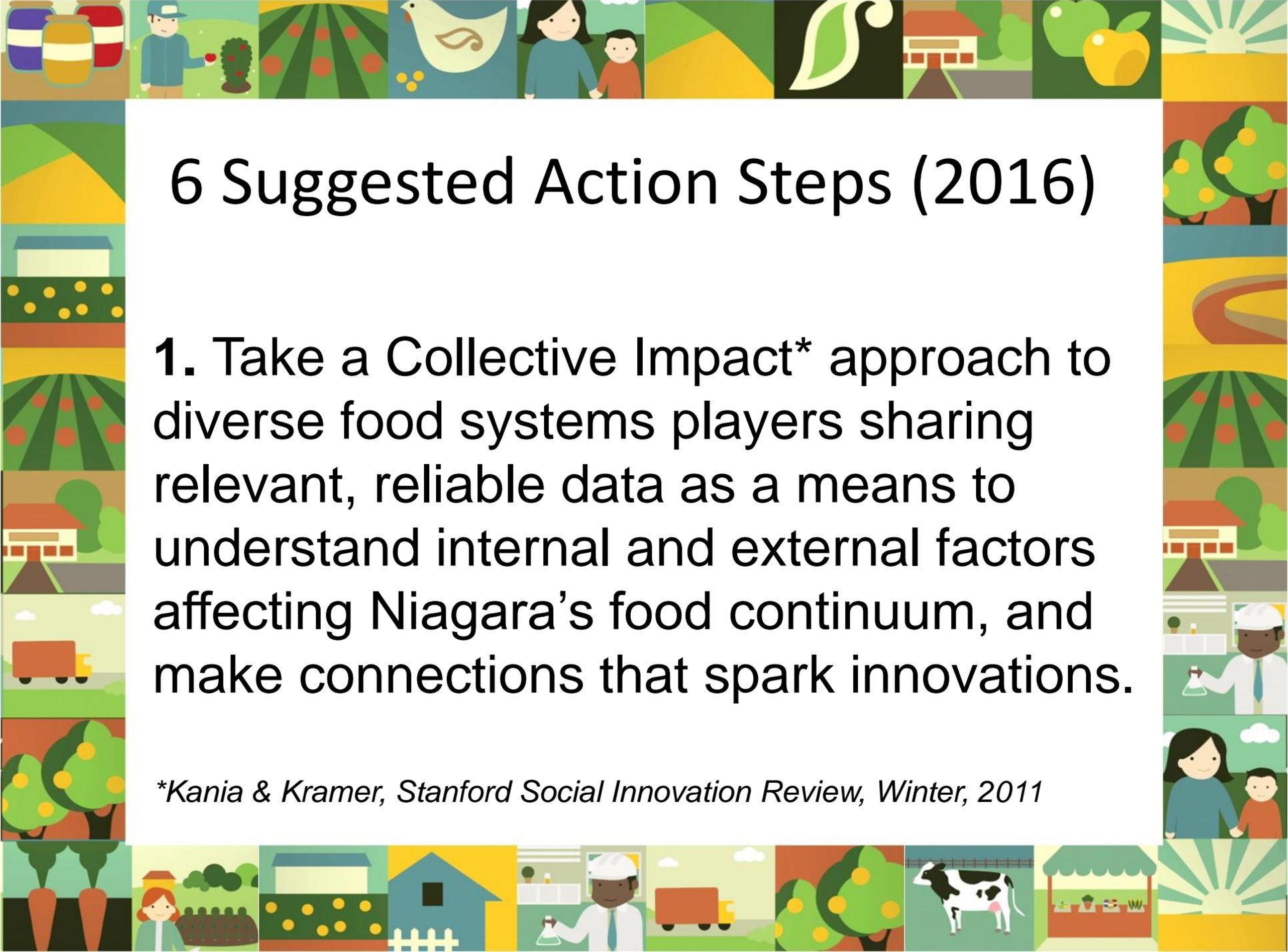
2015-2016

Food Systems in Niagara Map
was co-created, to show the inter-
connected, complex web of
assets that make up our food
system

Food Systems In Niagara is a complex topic that represents the cycles and interconnections of growing, distributing, eating and recycling of food.

This food systems in Niagara Map (2016) was collaboratively developed by people working in diverse aspects of food in Niagara. The intent is to begin describing how a healthy, secure, sustainable food landscape contributes to Niagara's social, political and economic vitality.





6 Suggested Action Steps (2016)

1. Take a Collective Impact* approach to diverse food systems players sharing relevant, reliable data as a means to understand internal and external factors affecting Niagara's food continuum, and make connections that spark innovations.

**Kania & Kramer, Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter, 2011*

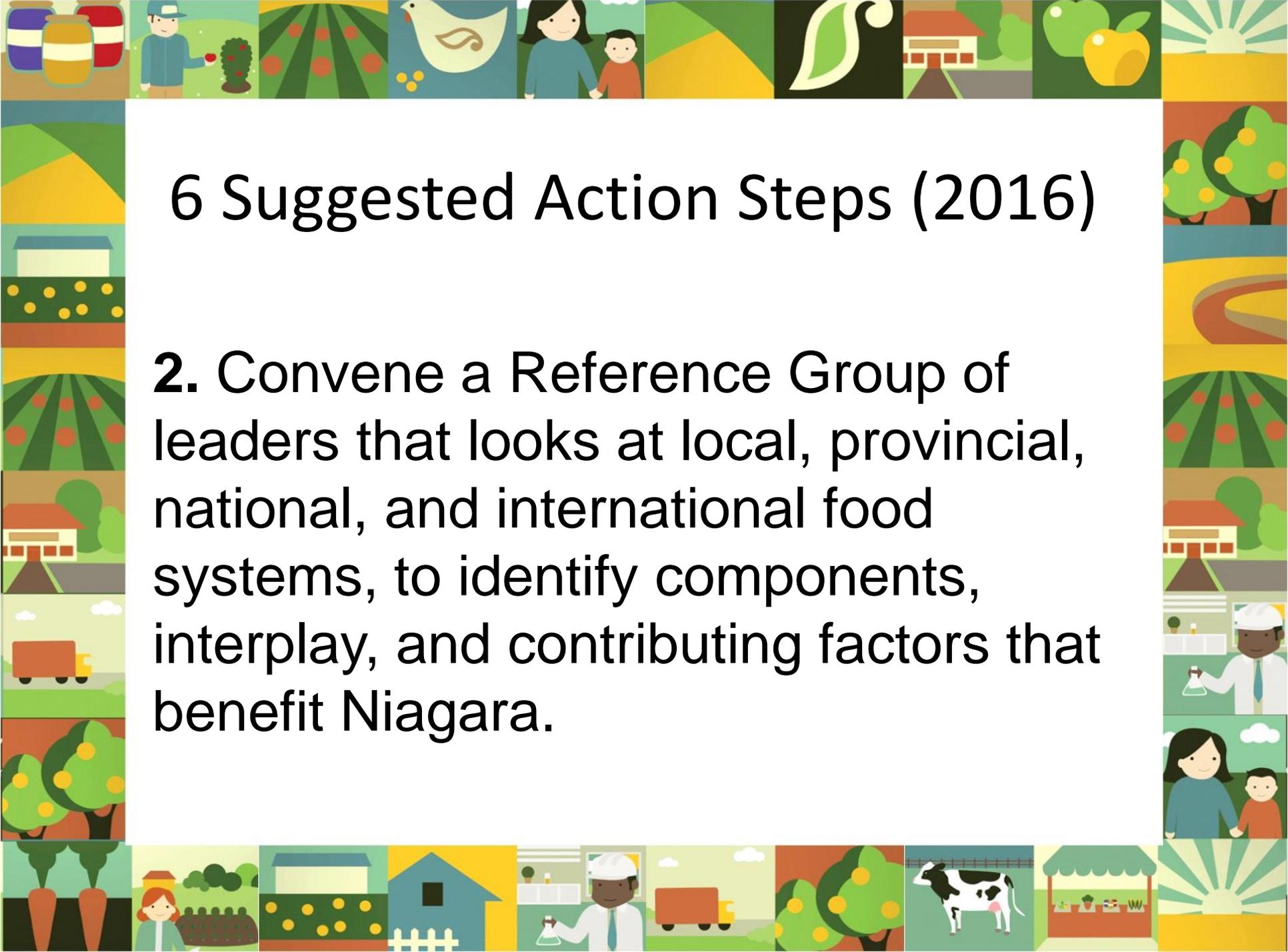


Our work together = Collective Impact*

Successful Collective Impact initiatives Share 5 Conditions:

- Common Agenda
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication
- Shared Measurement System
- Backbone Support Organization

*J. Kania & M. Kramer, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter 2011)



6 Suggested Action Steps (2016)

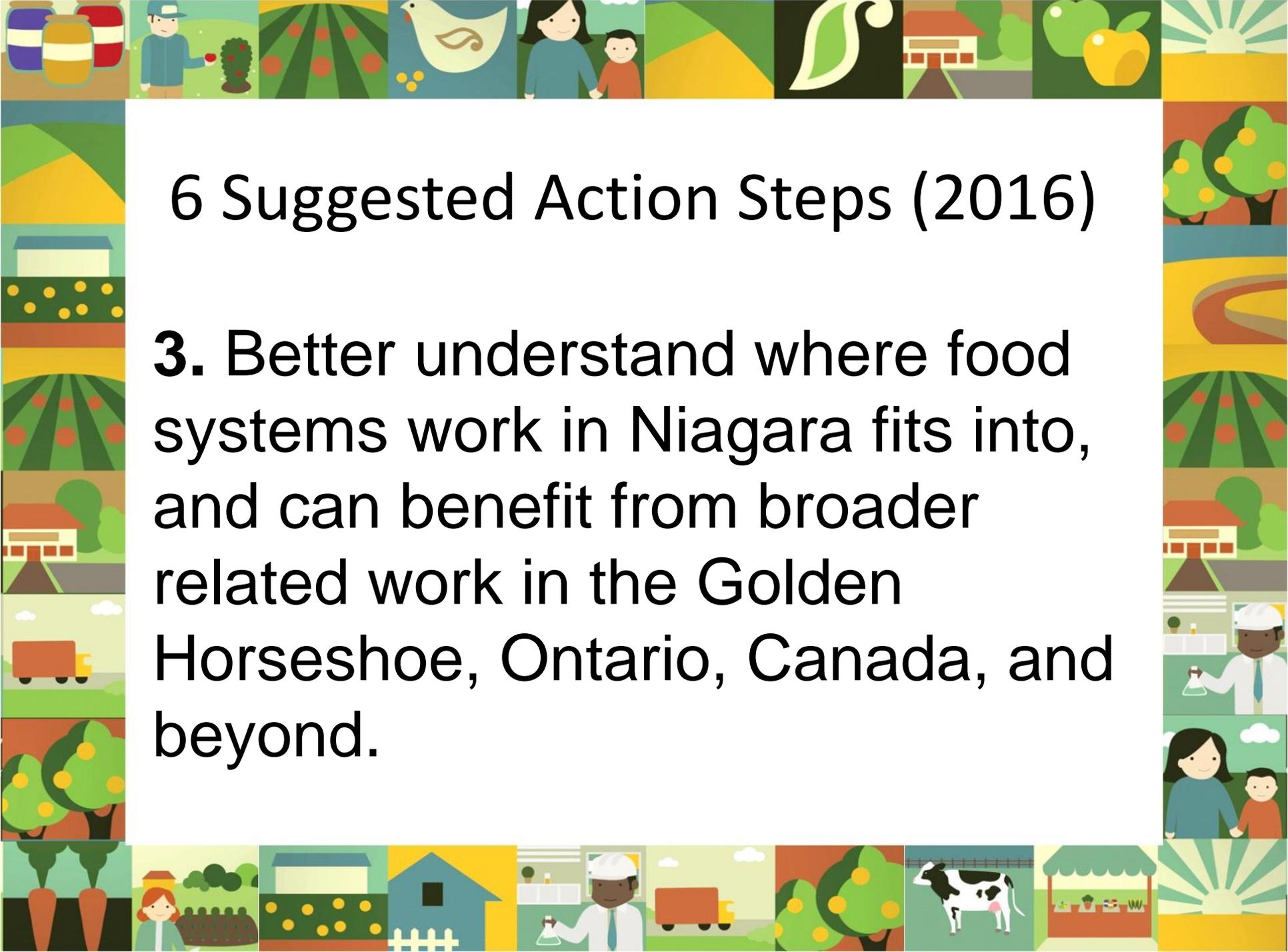
2. Convene a Reference Group of leaders that looks at local, provincial, national, and international food systems, to identify components, interplay, and contributing factors that benefit Niagara.

Enabling Solutions to Emerge in Niagara: Cascading Levels of Linked Cooperative Work

Common Agenda

Reference Group: Sensitive Navigation





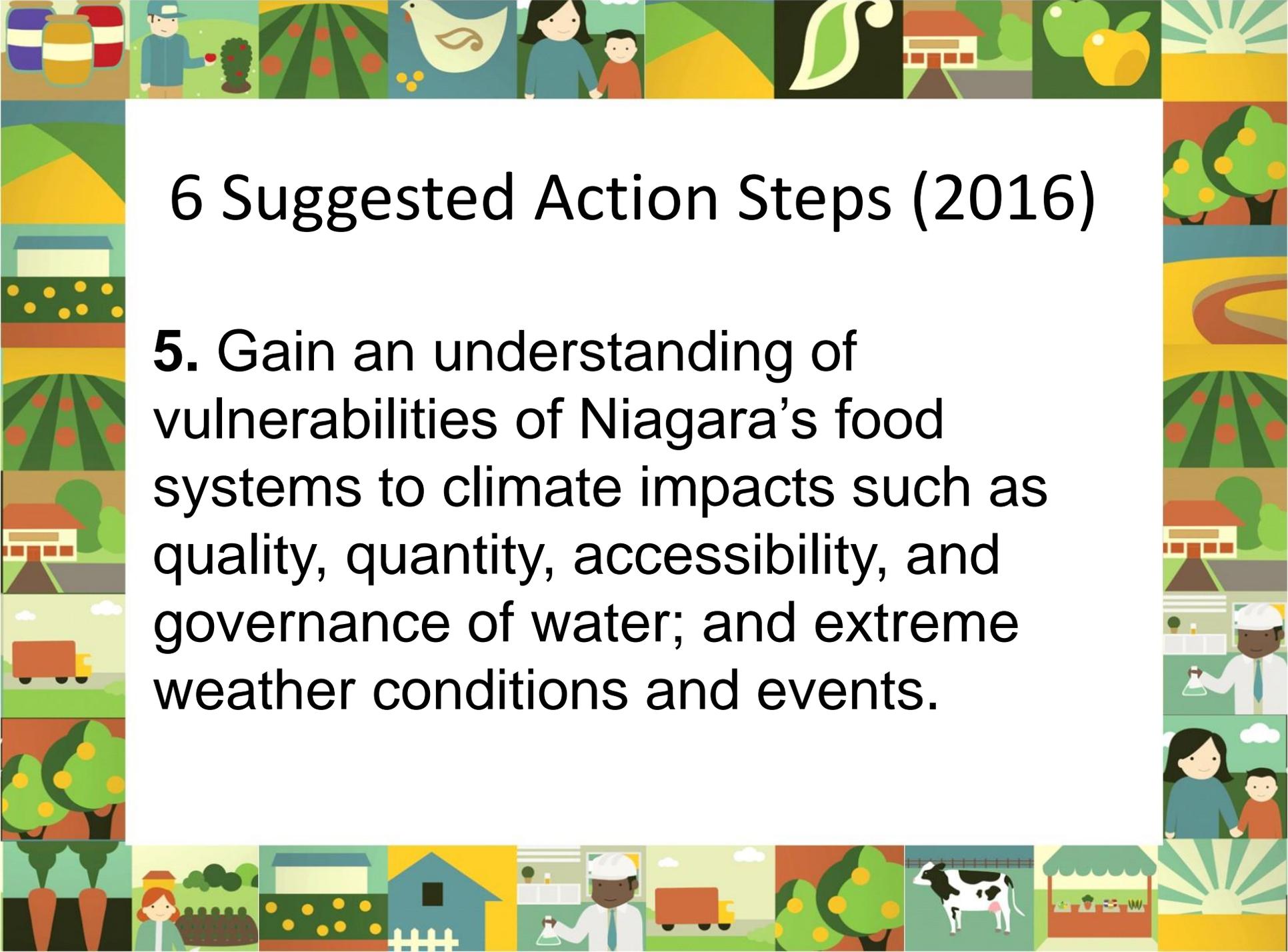
6 Suggested Action Steps (2016)

3. Better understand where food systems work in Niagara fits into, and can benefit from broader related work in the Golden Horseshoe, Ontario, Canada, and beyond.



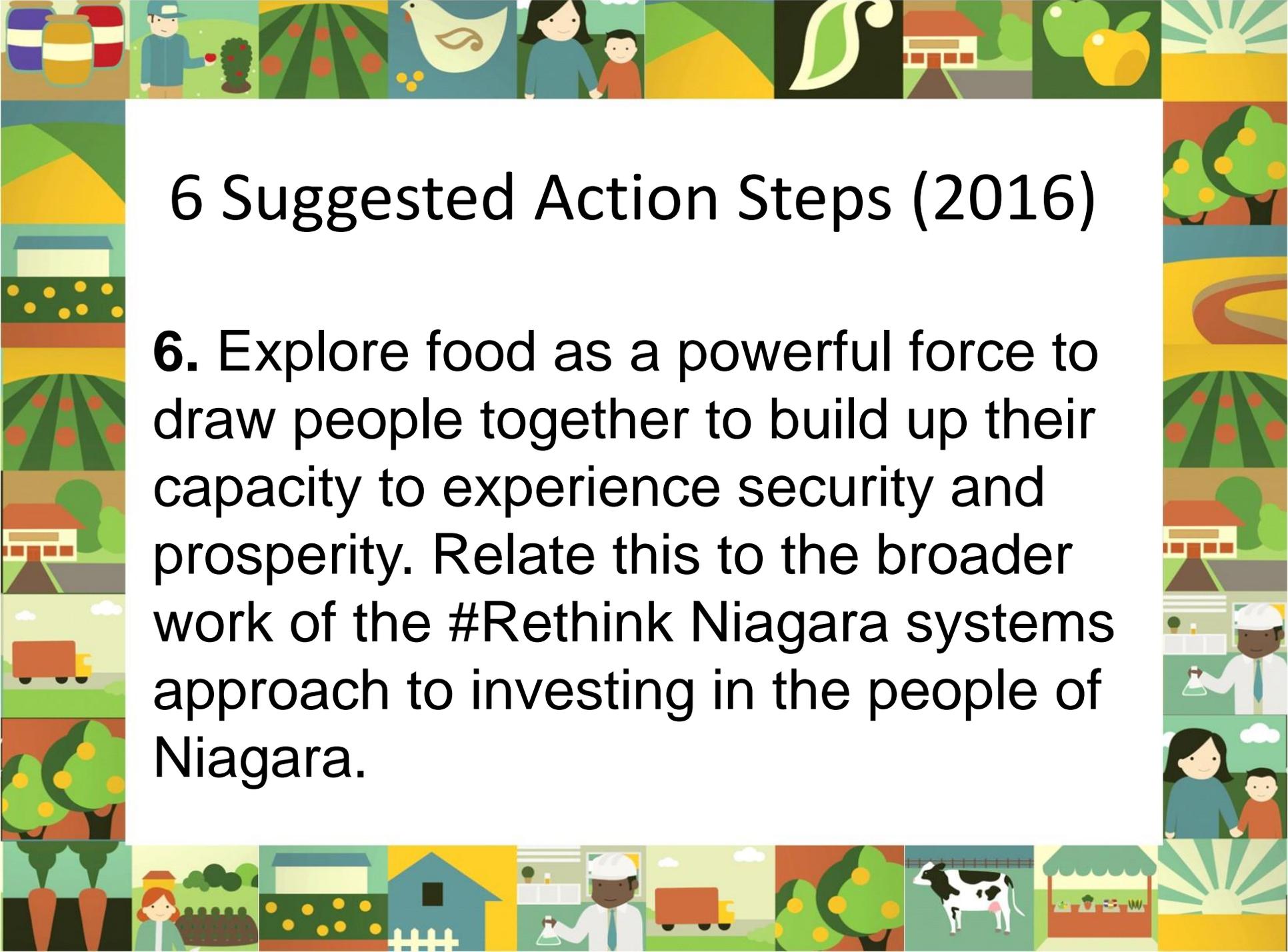
6 Suggested Action Steps (2016)

4. Explore food literacy and how it relates to Niagara's health outcomes and personal and community economic prosperity. Examine how food literacy (and food skills) relate to people's broader levels of literacy, living conditions, life experiences, and access to food and facilities.



6 Suggested Action Steps (2016)

5. Gain an understanding of vulnerabilities of Niagara's food systems to climate impacts such as quality, quantity, accessibility, and governance of water; and extreme weather conditions and events.



6 Suggested Action Steps (2016)

6. Explore food as a powerful force to draw people together to build up their capacity to experience security and prosperity. Relate this to the broader work of the #Rethink Niagara systems approach to investing in the people of Niagara.



Niagara North Federation of Agriculture



Mission Statement

- The Niagara North Federation of Agriculture is an agricultural organization dedicated to achieving economic and social viability for all Niagara agricultural producers through strong, effective, unified lobbying and communication efforts.



Niagara North Board of Directors

- 14 Directors
- 2 OFA Policy Advisory Council
- President
- 1st Vice President
- 2nd Vice President
- Secretary-Treasurer
- Member Service Representative



Niagara North Membership

- 1026 Farm Family Members
- 38,000 Ontario Farm Family Members in the Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- 49 county and regional federations



Farming in Niagara

In 2011, Niagara had:

- 2,014 farms
- Total area of farms 232,817 acres
- Total land mass of Niagara is approx. 444,349 acres

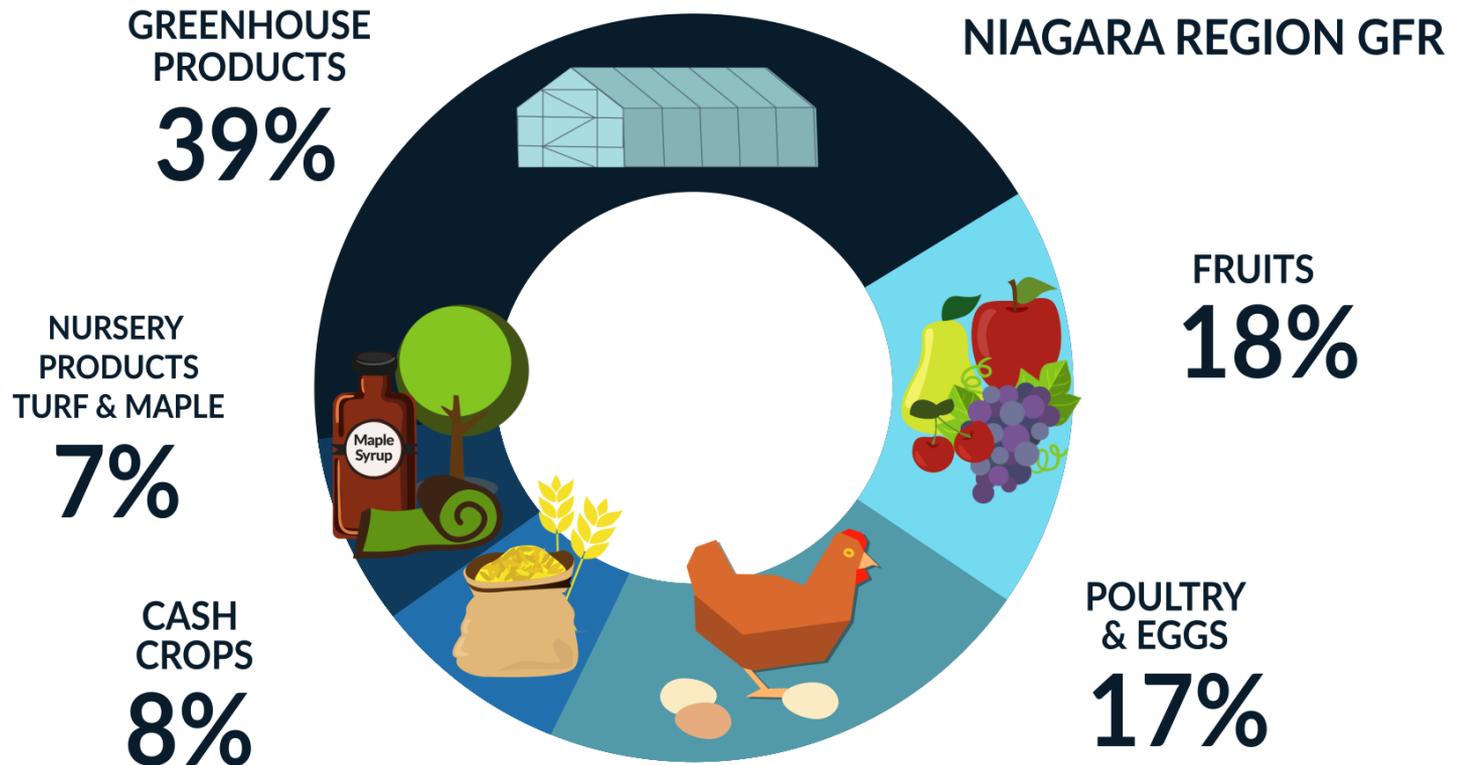


Farming In Niagara

- Gross farm receipts (GFR) increased from \$511.4 million in 2001, to \$725.8 million in 2012, a 30% increase.
- Average age of operators rose from 51.3 in 2001 to 53.1 years in 2006.

Source: Niagara Agricultural Economic Impact Study 2010

Top Commodities Grown in Niagara



Employment Impact



17,227
JOBS



Ag Education Day



West Niagara Fair



General Meetings



Niagara Young Farmer's Forum

The Niagara North Federation of Agriculture offered the following Niagara Young Farmer's Forum to producers 19-39 years of age. The objective of the forum was to offer young farmers an opportunity to network and learn about the agriculture industry. An average of 20 young farmers participated in each forum.

- Silversmith Brewing Company – The Trials and Tribulations of Value Adding
- Between the Lines Winery -- Young Bucks in Business
- Premier Equipment,– Farm and Equipment Safety
- Grimo Nut Nursery – tour and bbq



www.myniagarafarmer.ca





Celebrating Food Systems in Niagara

Project SHARE

Focusing on Food Security in Niagara Falls

Pam Sharp, Director of Community
Engagement

Project SHARE-Focusing on
Food Security in Niagara Falls





Quick Bit of History...

Project SHARE was formed initially as a temporary measure, known as Community Outreach Emergency Services.

We've been incorporated as Project SHARE for 25 years now and unfortunately the need for our emergency support services has continued to grow.

We offer over 12 programs & services to improve food security & reduce poverty in NF.

Community Gardens



We are one of 24 agencies who make up the Niagara Community Garden Network.

Our first community garden was built at Our Lady of Scapular church in 2006

We began with 25...5 X 10 foot plots for low income families to grow their own food

At this site we now have 40 individual plots for families & 10 large plots that grow over 3,000 pounds of food annually for our Emergency Food Program.



Glengate Gardens

In 2010 we were asked to help build a community garden at Glengate Alliance Church.

This garden presently hosts 60 garden plots. 20 are given at a cost of \$10 per plot to Project SHARE families (fee to help with the water bill).

An outdoor pizza oven is located at this garden for gardeners to use and share a healthy meal using the produce they've grown.

Community Roots



In 2016 we received an OTF grant to hire a Garden and Wellness Educator to coordinate the 2 community gardens, expand our garden and nutrition workshops, support the creation of backyard & neighbourhood gardens & provide educational resources for our emergency food room.

In 2015 we purchased a refrigerated vehicle to safely accept donations of fresh, perishable foods.

Fresh fruits & vegetables are now the **most requested** item in our food room, and make up **35%** of the food we distribute.



Garden & Preserving Workshops

Are held regularly throughout the season from how to start seeds, rotate crops, pest control & how to extend the season to grow into winter.

Planting days and harvest parties are held to build a sense of community and increase social inclusion.



Cooking & Preserving Workshops

Focus on preserving the produce and include topics like pickling, fermenting, freezing and canning.

Families learn the skills needed to feed themselves on a low income using the produce they grow in their garden.



Apple Quinoa Bread



Immune Boosting Soup

Winter Wellness Workshop Recipes



Sweet Potato Pies



Chocolate Tofu Mousse



Roasted Butternut Squash Soup



Sweet Potato Energy Bites



Veggie Summer Rolls

The Impact



"Without Project SHARE I would have an unhealthy lifestyle. I would not be able to afford the nutritious food I receive here since it is so expensive at the store" Joe

"I make three kinds of jam, relish, ketchup, mint jelly, salsa, can peaches and pears, and pickle cauliflower, beets, and beans. The kids like to watch me bake, and love eating fresh produce. They have learned lots" Sara Hamill

"I like the fruits and vegetables to make smoothies. I boil my bananas for about 5 minutes. The banana and the peel then go in my smoothie and I use the water to make banana tea with a bit of honey" Daniel Collee

Community Roots



In 2016 with the funding from OTF we launched a new program called Community Roots.

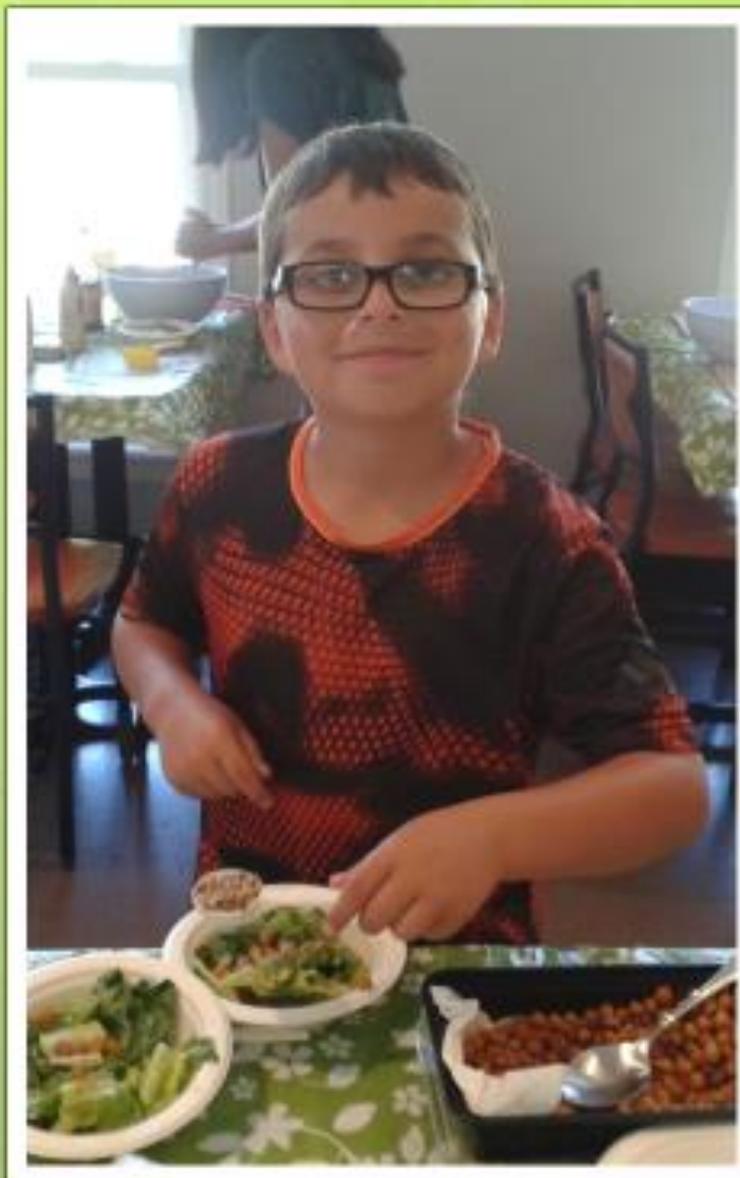
Workshops focusing on food literacy education were provided to **115** local youth at their school during the first year.

"This workshop was fantastic and enhanced my health unit on healthy eating. Jo covered locally grown produce as well as a variety of other veggies that were unfamiliar to the kids. It was wonderful and the kids loved it!" Grade 6 Teacher on Signature Salads Workshop

And 716 children in the Niagara Region

We partnered with many community agencies including Heartland Forest & the Branscombe Early Learning & Family Centre to share food literacy education with local youth.

Here's a youngster creating his **powered up** Caesar salad at Heartland Forest Summer Camp!





We delivered nutrition workshops to 419 women

We partnered with fellow community services including NTEC, Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre & Hannah House to provide hands on education to improve food security.

Many partner agencies expanded their involvement beyond workshops and had a plot at our community garden.



Created a new partnership with Strive Niagara

A regular partnership with Strive Niagara was created and we delivered:

“So you really want to drink that?”

“Food, Media & Marketing”

“All About Herbs”

workshops for pregnant women at risk & families with young children.



Niagara Falls Farmer's Market

We partner with the NF farmer's market once a month. We prepare a healthy treat/snack with donated ingredients (i.e. strawberry smoothies) and sell them for a donation which we use to purchase fresh produce from the farmers.

The produce is then distributed to families in need through our emergency food program.

Thank-You!





Celebrating Food Systems in Niagara

Welland Farmers' Market

Cassandra Magazzeni, Arts & Culture
Coordinator, Recreation & Culture
Division, Corporate Services,
City of Welland



Cassandra Magazzeni

Arts & Culture Coordinator,
City of Welland

Welland Farmers' Market history

- Established in 1907
- 70 Young Street
- Open Saturdays year round 6am-noon
- Largest, oldest, most well-known in Niagara Region
- City owned and operated



Mission and Vision

- Our Mission: To provide a community marketplace that encourages patrons to support a 'Buy Local' philosophy, while allowing them to experience the rich tradition of the Welland Farmers' Market.
- Vision: To raise community awareness about the benefits of eating healthy, and the importance of supporting a sustainable agricultural community.



Welland Farmers' Market vendors

- Most farmers are generational, carrying on the traditions of their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents
- 80+ vendors at peak season
- Busiest time is May to October
- Year round



Welland Farmers' Market vendors

- Bakers
- Florists
- Meat/dairy farmers
- Produce farmers
- Crafters/artisans
- Take out
- Eat while you shop

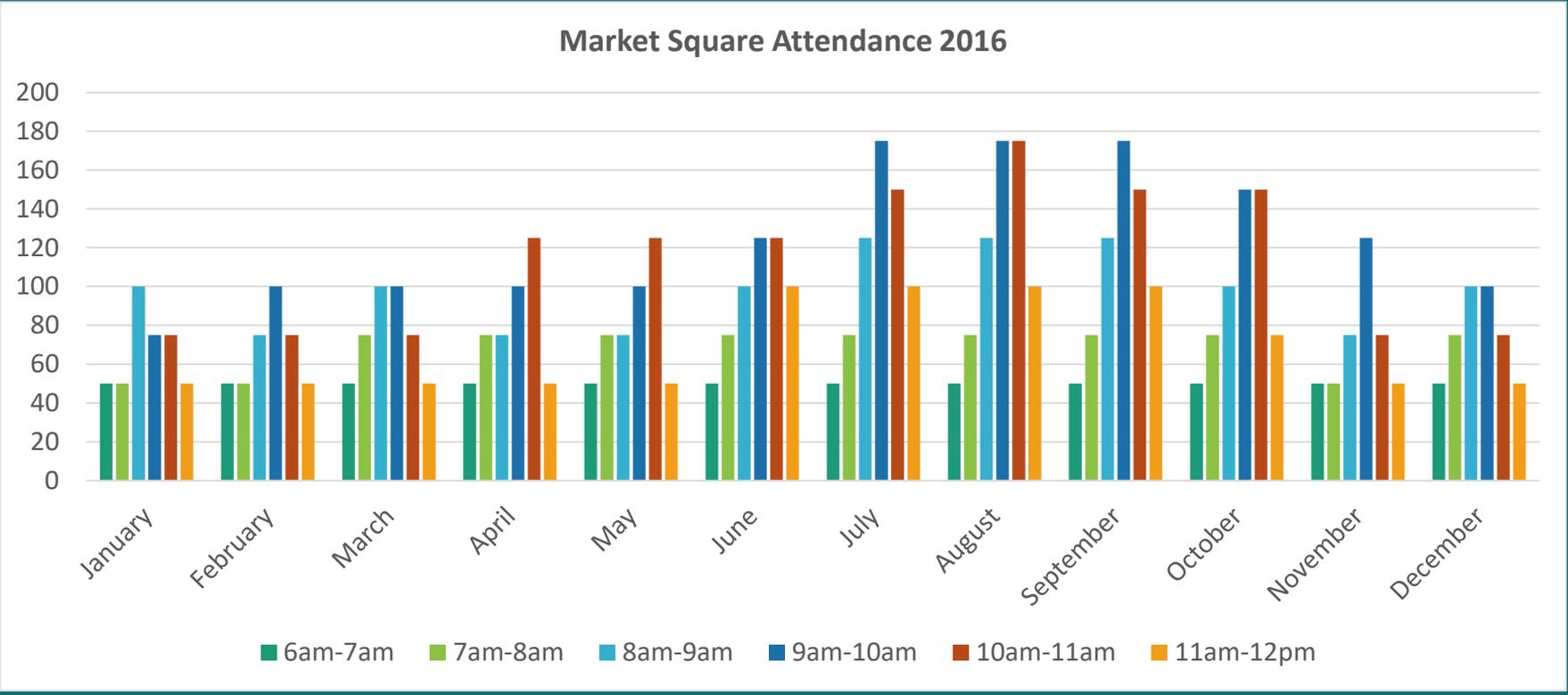


Welland Farmers' Market shoppers

- Family tradition
- More and more young people
- Average visit is 30 minutes to an hour
- Enjoy breakfast in the Market Square Restaurant
- Participate in events
- ATM onsite-95% of vendors are cash only



Welland Farmers' Market shoppers



Welland Farmers' Market expansion

- City purchased property along Division Street in 2013
- Expansion complete late 2016
- Included concrete replacement in market center

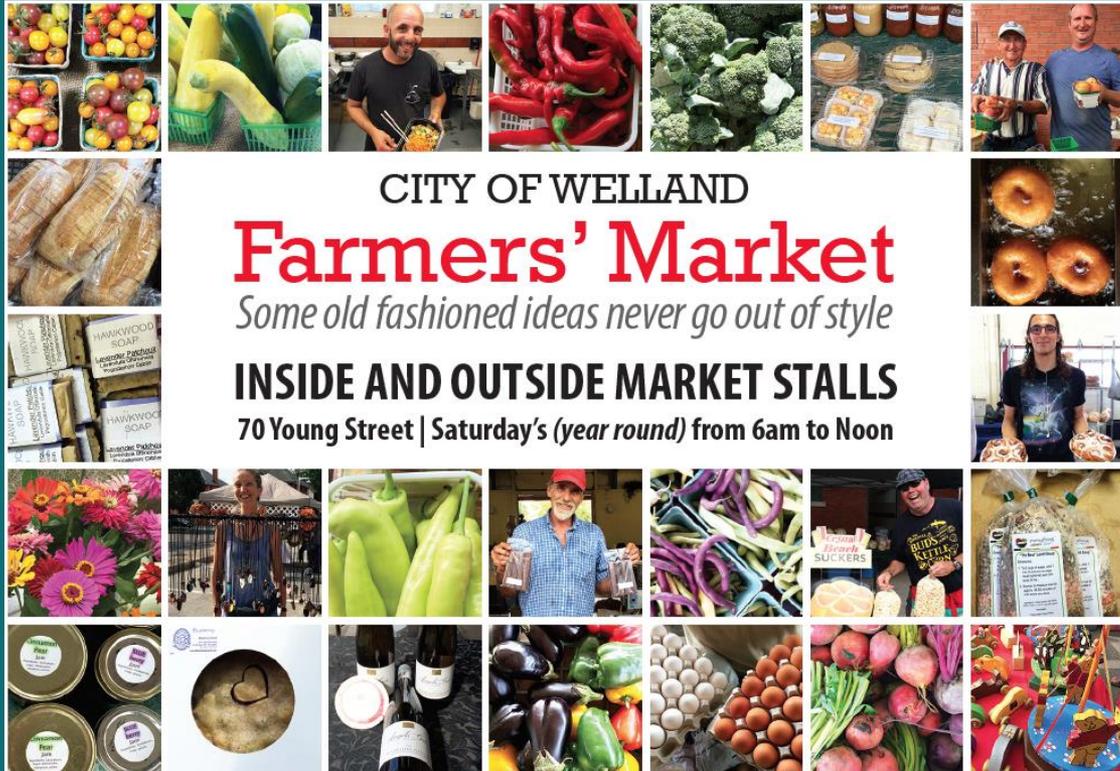


Market Square Advisory Committee

- Purpose: To serve in an advisory capacity to City Council and staff on matters pertaining to the facilities, programs and services at the Market Square in the City of Welland.
- Membership: Five (5) Vendors from Welland Farmers' Market
Five (5) Members at Large
One (1) City Councillor



Welland Farmers' Market advertising



CITY OF WELLAND

Farmers' Market

Some old fashioned ideas never go out of style

INSIDE AND OUTSIDE MARKET STALLS

70 Young Street | Saturday's (year round) from 6am to Noon

The collage features a variety of market goods: fresh produce like tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, and broccoli; baked goods such as bread and donuts; handmade items like soap and jewelry; and photos of vendors and customers interacting at their stalls.

Welland Farmers' Market advertising

Upcoming events include:



LUCK OF THE IRISH

March 11, 2017

9:00 to 11:00am

Fun, food and entertainment



EARTH DAY EXTRAVAGANZA

April 22, 2017

9:00 to 11:00am

Gardening & fun!



BERRY BONANZA

June 17, 2017

9:00 to 11:00am

Family fun & 'berry' good food



HERITAGE MARKET

August 26, 2017

9:00 to 11:00am

*Corn roast, period costumes,
buggies and bushels*

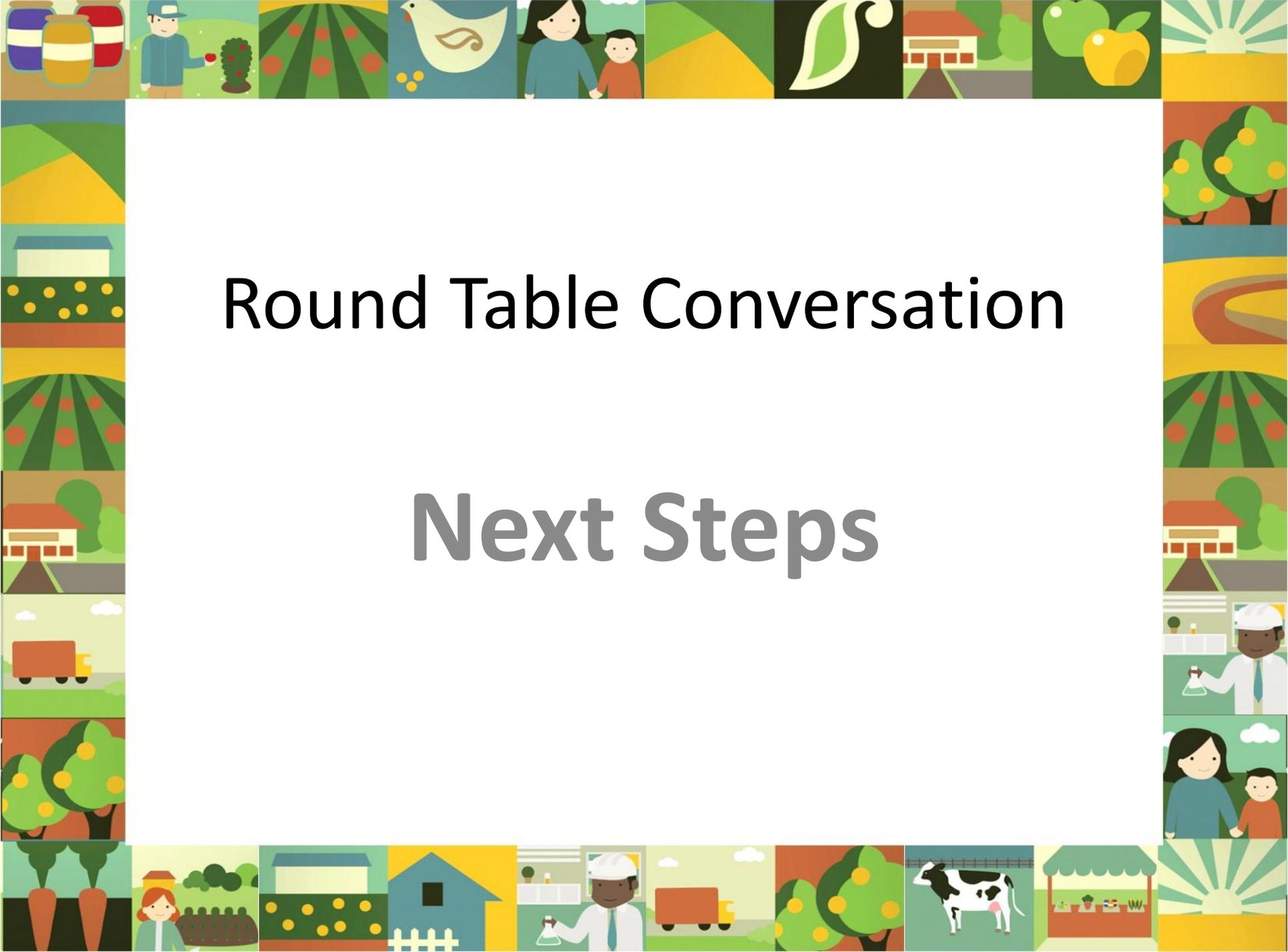


Welland Farmers' Market ♦ 905-735-1700 Ext. 4000 ♦ market@welland.ca ♦ bookings@welland.ca

Questions?

- market@welland.ca
- 905-735-1700 ext. 4000
- www.welland.ca





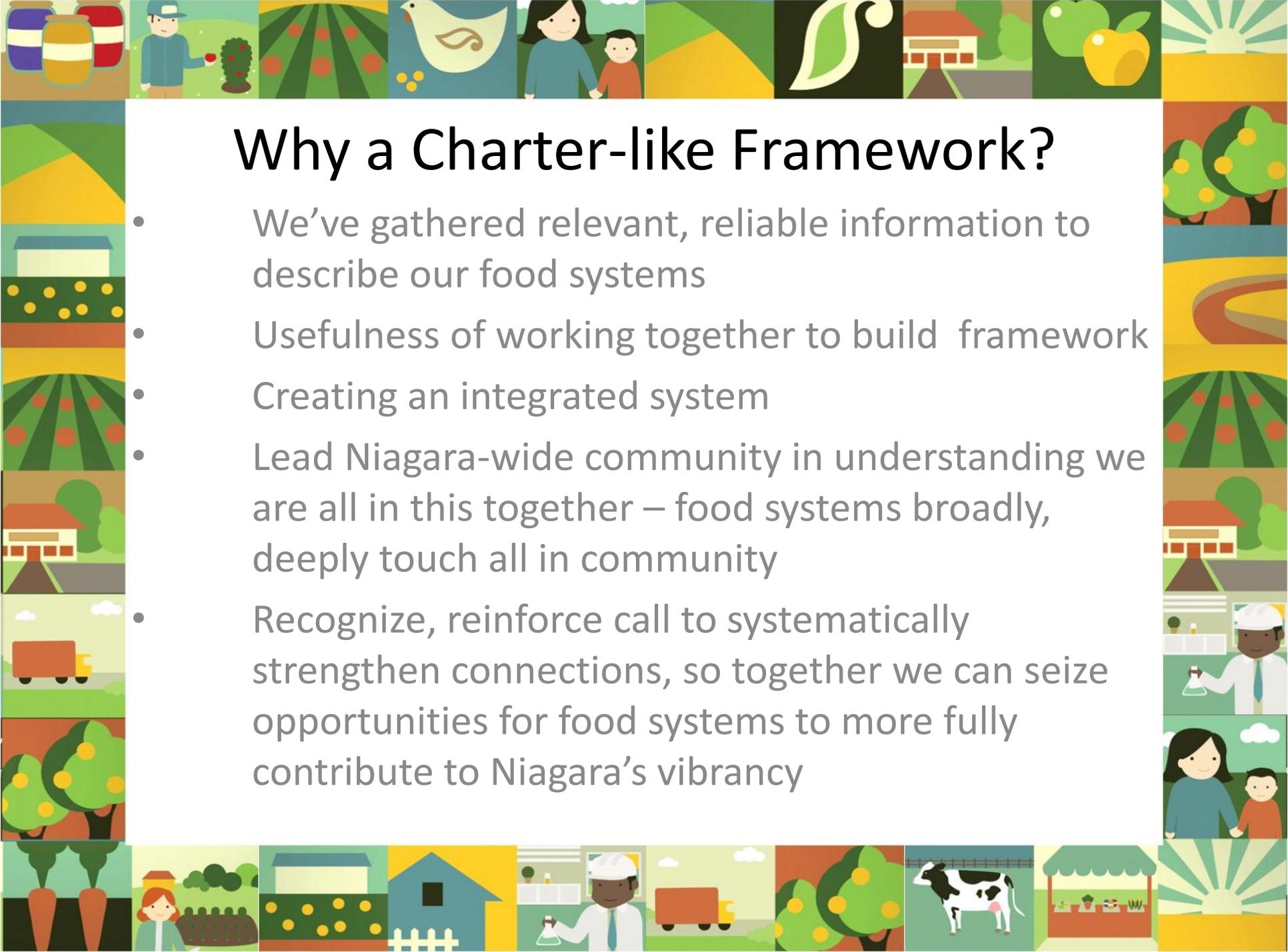
Round Table Conversation

Next Steps



Opportunities to move our work together forward

- What would a Niagara-wide food security system look like?
- What have other communities done to build successful food systems frameworks?



Why a Charter-like Framework?

- We've gathered relevant, reliable information to describe our food systems
- Usefulness of working together to build framework
- Creating an integrated system
- Lead Niagara-wide community in understanding we are all in this together – food systems broadly, deeply touch all in community
- Recognize, reinforce call to systematically strengthen connections, so together we can seize opportunities for food systems to more fully contribute to Niagara's vibrancy



What is a Charter-like Framework?

- Broad statement - focused summary of major issues; describes best practice; incorporates values; provides Call to Action
- Provide a philosophical framework
- Establish a vision
- Create awareness & inform
- Guide action & give direction
- Provide underpinnings for development of policy
- Unite organizations & individuals
- Provide expression of a commitment



Charter-like Framework and Shared Measurement

For framework to be effective:

- Describe goals in common language
- Report what we achieve, together, over time



Thank You for Participating!

Building a Food Systems
Network for Niagara

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