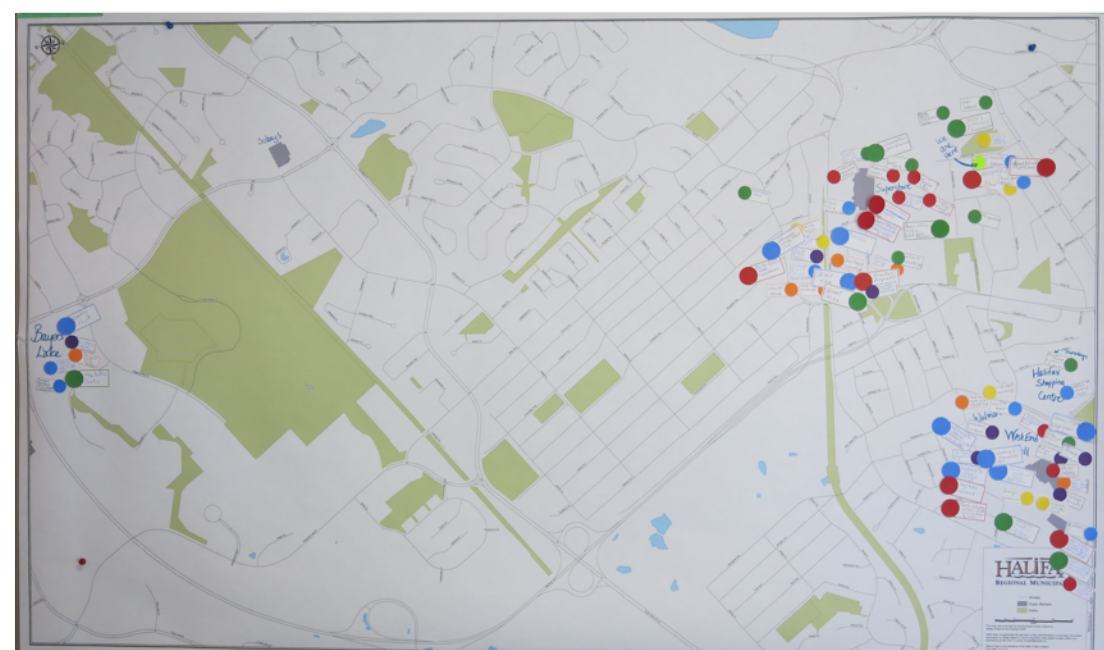


2013 Halifax Food Snapshot

Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre (BWFRC) & HUGS Garden



About the Bayers Westwood Community

The Bayers Westwood community is very **diverse**, consisting of **358 families**. It is comprised many newcomers, mostly single parent families, with many living on disability and social assistance. The neighbourhood encompasses Chisholm Ave, Micmac St, McAlpine Ave, Federal Ave, and Romans Ave.

“Food is the #1 issue”

The food environment is very challenging. There is never enough food, the food bank runs out, and there are hardly any fruit and vegetables available.

The food pies below are generalizations of sectors of the community dealing with heightened food insecurity. They do not represent all members of the community.

The HUGS Garden

Hilda's Urban Garden Society (HUGS) was founded in 2009 by residents of the Bayers-Westwood community in Halifax's West-End. The project evolved out of a growing interest in community food security amongst neighbours at the time, spurred by food and garden workshops run at the Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre, in conjunction with the Ecology Action Centre. The project began with a lot of momentum. Volunteers raised funds to build 24 raised beds and some other basic infrastructure. The project emerged out of a genuine need for green space and better food access in the neighborhood, but lacked the resources and basic infrastructure to ensure its success. Over the years with faltering leadership and limited resources the garden fell into a state of inactivity. Most of the beds were abandoned and the garden was infested with weeds. Recognizing the important role the garden played in the community, the Ecology Action Centre (EAC) in partnership with the Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre (BWFRC), agreed to revitalize the garden.

Catalogue of Primary Food Assets

These locations were mapped by Bayers Westwood residents & BWFRC staff.

Retail

Shoppers drug mart	3430 Joseph Howe Dr
Superstore	3601 Joseph Howe Dr
Bulk barn	3440 Joseph Howe Dr
Fruit truck	3531 Dutch Village Rd
Giant Tiger	3531 Dutch Village Rd
Lawtons	7071 Bayers Rd
Dave's on Main St	322 Main St, Dartmouth
Gateway	667 Main St, Dartmouth
Costco	230 Chain Lake Dr
Target/Walmart	220 Chain Lake Dr
House of Halal Groceries	14 Titus Ave
Halifax shopping centre	7001 Mumford Rd
Sobeys	6990 Mumford Rd
Walmart	6990 Mumford Rd
Dollar store	7001 Mumford Rd
Cash & carry	7001 Mumford Rd
Tian Phat Asian Grocery	209 Bedford Highway
Pete's Frootique	1515 Dresden Row
Taishan Asian Grocery	1312 Queen St
Atlantic Superstore	1075 Barrington St
No Frills	16 Dentith Rd, Spryfield
Gateway Meat Market	667 Main St, Dartmouth

Food Assistance

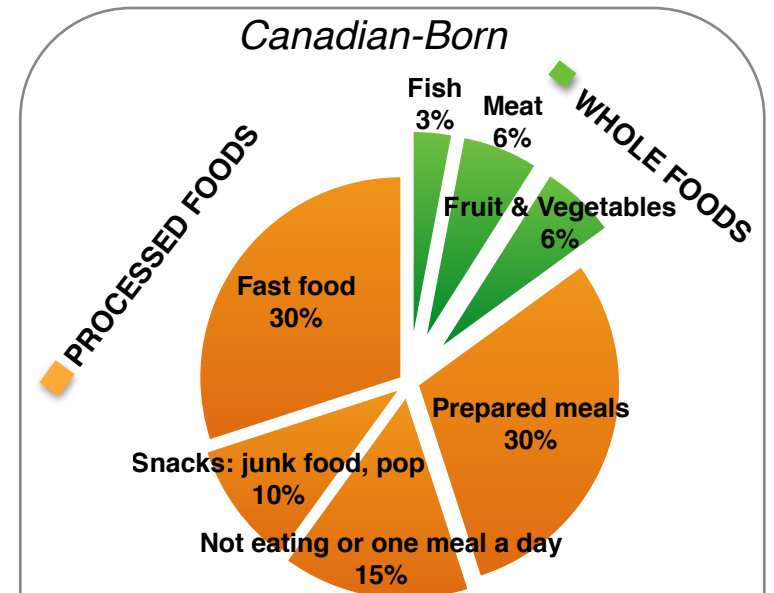
Ward 5 Neighbourhood Centre	5540 Russell St
St. Vincent de Paul	2435 Brunswick St
St. Andrews	6036 Coburg Rd
Trading Post (BWFRC, 3x a week)	3499 McAlpine Ave
Meals on Wheels (once a week)	1451 Edward St
Halifax Connects	955 Trollope St
Feed NS (summer, kids lunches)	BWFRC, 3499 McAlpine Ave

Produce Market

Fruit & veg from the valley (if access to a car)	
Farmers' Market (Thursday)	Halifax Shopping centre, 7001 Mumford Rd,
Avery's Farm Market	198 Beaver Bank Rd
Farmer Clem's	397 Bedford Highway
Seafood Trucks	Bedford Highway
Historic Farmers' Market	1496 Lower Water St
Seaport Farmers' Market	1209 Marginal Rd

Food Skills & Growing

H.U.G.S. Garden	Old Baseball Field off Chisholm Ave, next to BWFRC
BWFRC backyard garden	3499 McAlpine Ave
EAC garden, cooking, preserving programming at BWFRC	
Home/backyard gardens	(e.g., Romans Ave and Federal Ave)
St. Andrews recreation centre	3380 Barnstead Lane
Sobeys	6990 Mumford Rd

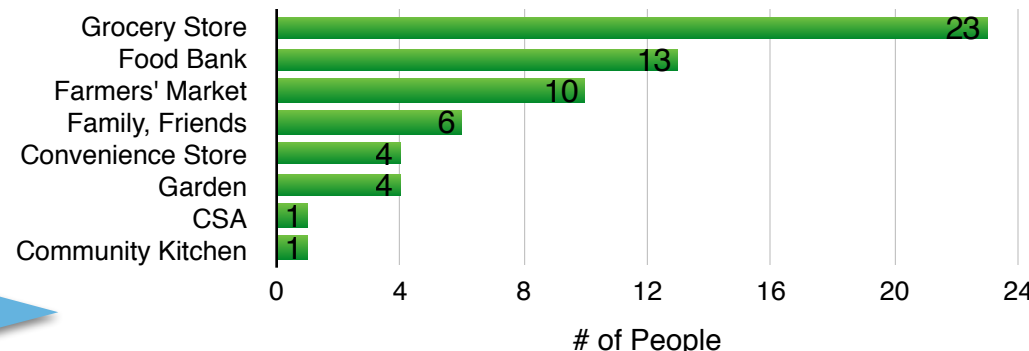


Canadian-born low-income families have a 'culture' of processed foods, often passed down from the past generation. There is a low level of food skills such as cooking with whole foods, growing food and preserving. When these skills are present, other factors such as lack of time, lack of social supports, and mental health challenges limit capacity to eat healthy.

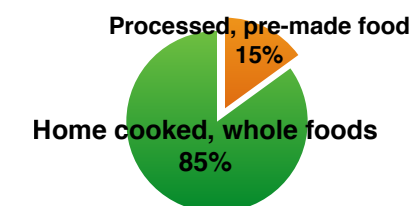
About this document

This snapshot is part of the research and evaluation work of the *Our Food Project* to measure the impacts of food systems interventions. It includes information shared through 25 surveys, 2 food mapping workshops with 20 Bayers Westwood community members, and two in-depth interviews with BWFRC staff. A comparative snapshot will be conducted in 2016.

Where do you get your food from?



Newcomers



Many newcomers have strong food traditions. Food is central to socializing amongst family and friends. Skills for cooking with whole foods and gardening are more prevalent than in Canadian-born residents. The longer the family is here the more they begin to eat like Canadian-borns, often through the influence of children's eating habits.

2013 Halifax Food Snapshot: BWFRC & HUGS Garden

SUPPORTS for healthy food access

Listed in order of importance in the community.

- Growing Space:** HUGS garden and private backyards.
- Knowledge & Skills:** going through fliers, using coupons and price matching between stores to get lowest prices. EAC food skills workshops.
- Transportation:** walking is easy and good, stores are close-by. Taking the bus or a taxi.
- Social Supports:** friends and family that help with childcare; drive me to the store; help with groceries; son that built a raised garden bed. Daycare in BWFRC.
- Food Assistance:** food banks, churches, BWFRC (programs, help with coupons), and the EAC's Our Food Project (garden spaces & workshops).
- Time:** I have time.
- Finances:** I have enough, no problems managing money. Coupons are a big help.

BARRIERS to healthy food access

Listed in order of importance in the community.

- Finances:** "things are getting worse." The cost of living is increasing but social assistance levels aren't meeting that change. It's getting harder and harder for families to access food. Cost of growing a garden (e.g., seeds, soil, tools). Cost of taxis and gas to get groceries. There is not enough food assistance or other options to meet the needs.
- Transportation:** in winter it's more difficult to walk or bus to retail outlets.
- Growing Spaces:** need for more growing spaces, as well as broader community awareness and buy-in for the existing garden. Lack of growing spaces for apartments.
- Social Supports & Mental Health:** lack of sufficient childcare. Those living alone don't cook for themselves as often. Depression causing lack of motivation to take care of oneself.
- Knowledge & Skills:** lack of education and food skills. Lack of awareness of the garden.
- Special Diets:** harder to support on income assistance budgets.
- Lack of Transparency in the Food System:** knowing what food has chemicals, what is organic, and what is not going to cause harm.
- Time:** gardening is time-heavy. "My children want to come to the store, but they waste my time, they don't understand I am trying to save money."

OPPORTUNITIES for Positive Food Environments

"In my ideal world... I don't have to make a decision between chicken and detergent"
 "... I feel better about myself"
 "... I am able to buy necessities"

Price: less expensive produce, other healthy foods and seeds.

HUGS Garden: there is room for growth for more beds and season extension infrastructure (coldframes, greenhouse). More community outreach, awareness and involvement. Growing produce for the community.

Access & Supporting Local Economy: more access points to high quality, fresh, healthy food, such as neighbourhood Market Stand/Farmers' Market from local sustainable farmers.

Transportation: getting to the valley and farms to harvest fresh vegetables and fruit.

Youth & Senior Engagement: youth are an untapped group in the community. Raised beds for seniors.

Knowledge & Skills: how to buy bulk food and share. How to use unknown foods from the food bank (e.g., different grains).

BWFRC: cross-pollinate garden and food skills into various BWFRC program streams. Build root cellar in the basement of the food bank.

Personal Well-being & Mental Health: eat healthier, be independent, positive outlook.

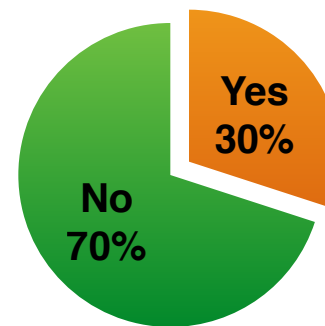
"We certainly have a community that's very resourceful and resilient when it comes to food matters"

Why is food important to you?

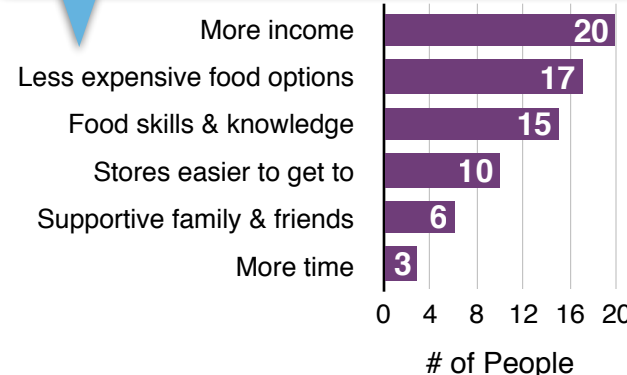


health

Are you able to access all the food you would like?



It would be easier to eat healthier with...

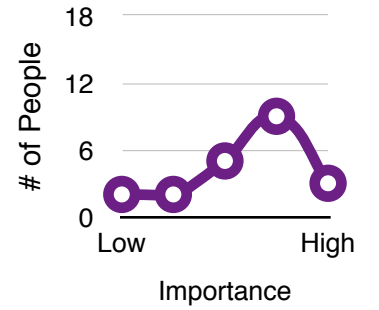
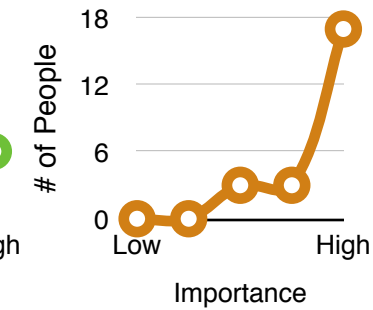
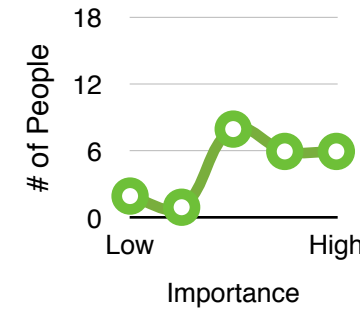


How IMPORTANT to you is.... ?

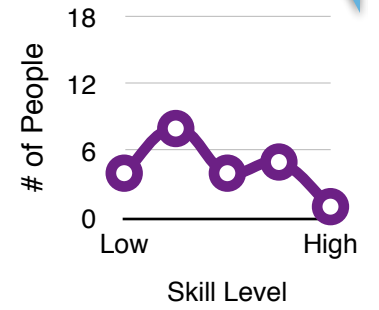
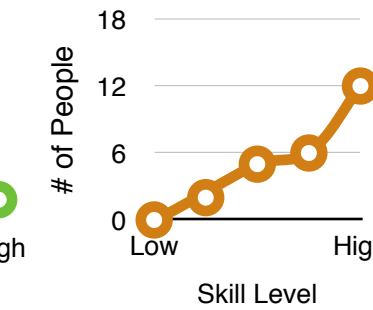
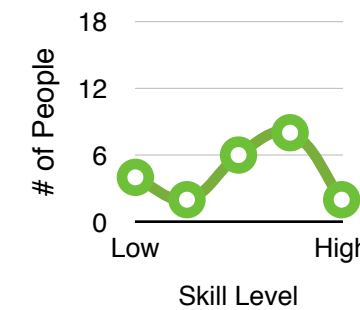
Growing food

Cooking

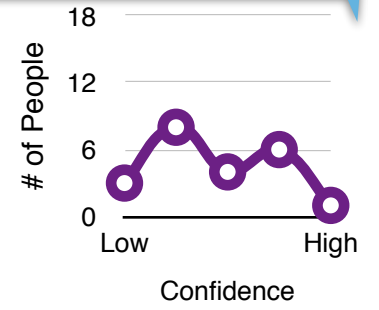
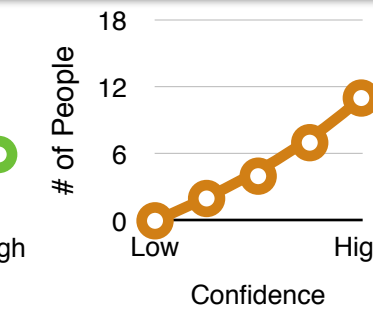
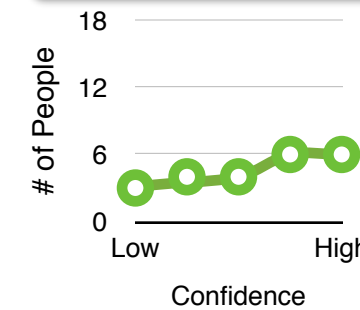
Preserving food



What is your SKILL LEVEL... ?

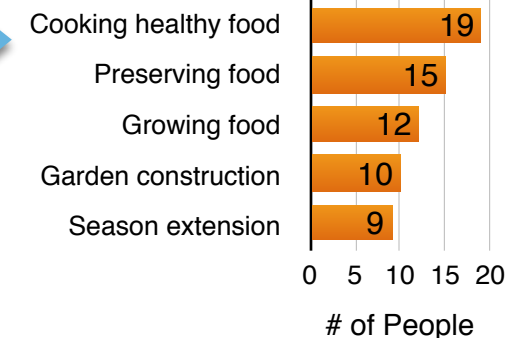


How CONFIDENT are you at... ?



The level of importance for all three activities is higher than the skill level and confidence level. One thing this data tells us is that there is an appetite to learn how to grow food, cook healthy food, and preserve (among other food-related skills).

I want to LEARN about:



"Feeding my kids processed food makes them act differently than when they've had real food for a few days"