

Seeds for Change

A Resource about Planting, Poverty

&

Food Security in Ontario



Girl Guides
of Canada
Guides
du Canada
Ontario Council

About this Resource

Food security, hunger and poverty do not just affect developing countries. They affect men, women and children in Ontario as well. A girl in your Unit may be affected. Before delivering the content of this resource be mindful how some of these activities could affect, girls and Guiders in your Unit.

Information in this resource is from: The World Health Organization, Health Canada, Food Security Network, FoodShare, Disabled World, Free the Children, National Council for Social Studies, Thoughtful Food.

In this Resource

Each topic has suggested activities for your Unit.

- **What is Food Security?**
- **What is Food Insecurity?**
- **What is The Food System?**
- **Hunger and Poverty**
- **Short Term vs Long Term Help**
- **Plant a Seed**
- **Community Gardening**
- **Advocate for Food Security**
- **Resources and further learning**



What is Food Security?

The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”.

Food security happens when all people at all times have access to enough food that...

- Is affordable, safe and healthy
- Is culturally acceptable
- Meets specific dietary needs
- Is obtained in a dignified manner
- Is produced in ways that are environmentally sound and socially just

Things affecting food security:

Global Water Crisis - Water table reserves are falling in many countries (including Northern China, the US, and India) due to widespread over pumping and irrigation.

Climate Change - Rising global temperatures are beginning to have a ripple effect on crop yields, forest resources, water supplies and altering the balance of nature.

Land Degradation - Intensive farming leads to a vicious cycle of exhaustion of soil fertility and decline of agricultural yields.

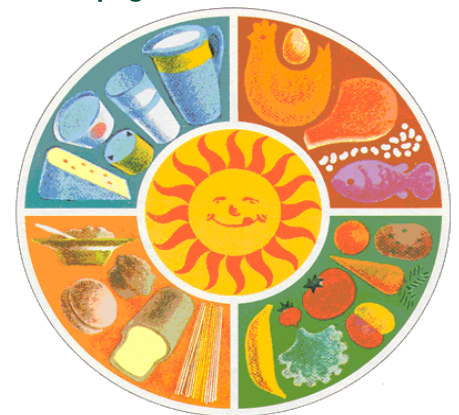
Land Deals - Corporations and Governments buying rights to millions of acres of agricultural land in developing countries to secure their own long-term food supplies

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR UNIT

- **Plan a healthy meal - use the [Canada Food Guide](#). Go shopping with your Unit to get the food, cook the meal the eat it.**
- **Go to a farmers market and purchase a snack then eat it**
- **Make a Food Security Poster or t-shirt or think about having the crest on page four created for your Unit**
- **Post a Food Security Poster**

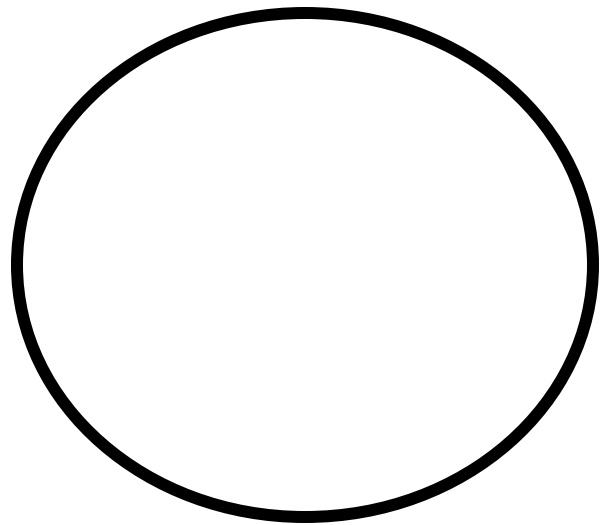
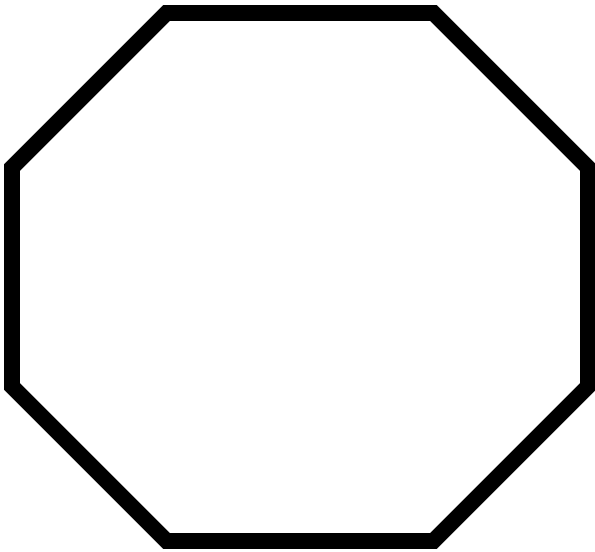
<http://partcfood.msvu.ca/pdf/poster.pdf>

<http://partcfood.msvu.ca/pdf/insecurity.pdf>

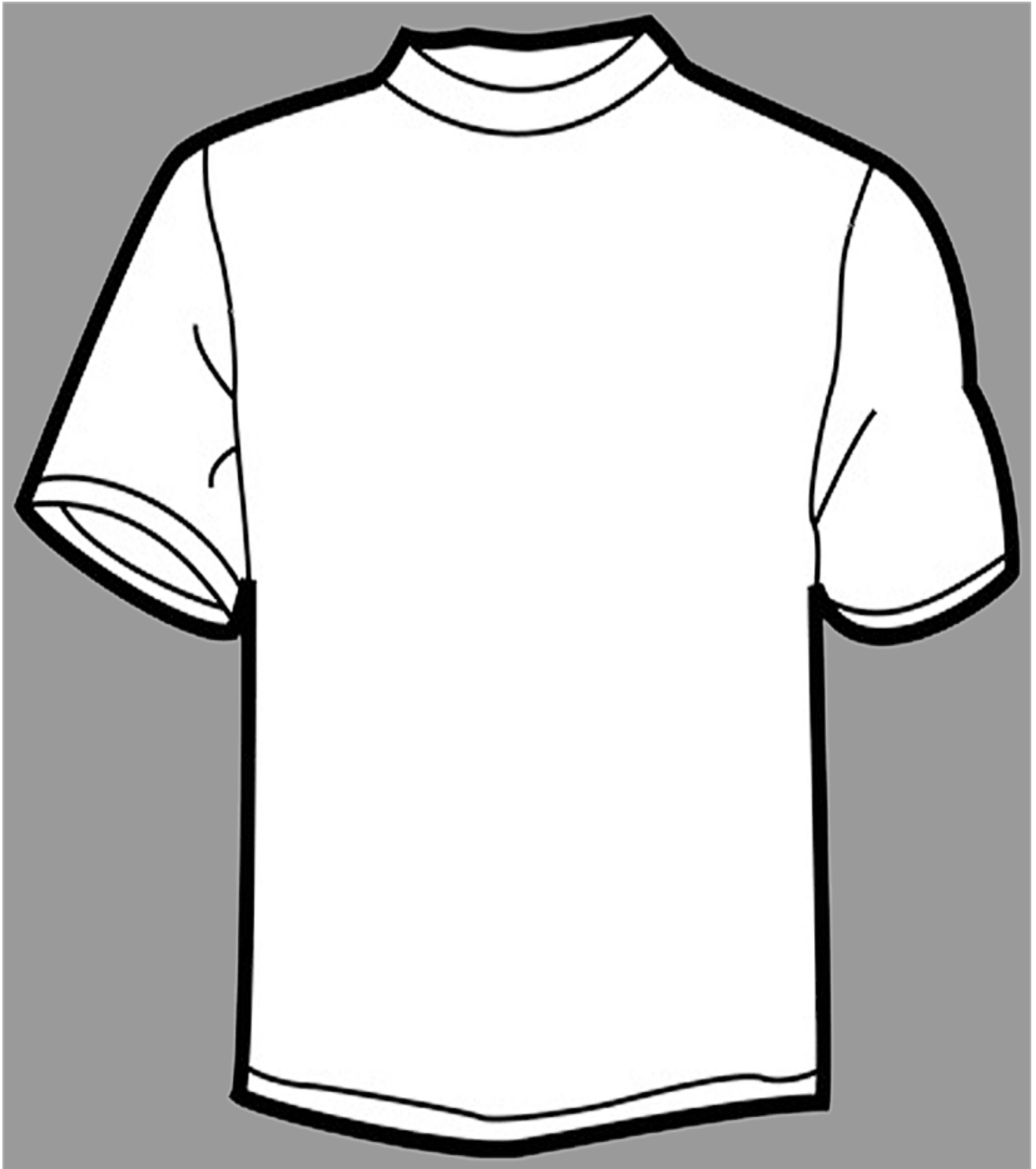


Design your own Badge for Food Security

Guides can connect this activity to the Design your Own Badge curriculum in the Guide Program book. Other branches can try this activity out too!



Why not have each of your girls design a t-shirt about Food Security? Print this template and use markers and pencil crayons or think about purchasing a white t-shirt and fabric paint and get really creative!



What is Food Insecurity?

Food insecurity happens whenever food is hard to get, such as when:

- There are no farms or grocery stores nearby
- Our food travels great distances to get to us
- There isn't enough money
- Healthy & safe food is not available
- Healthy foods cost more than unhealthy foods
- Our rivers are polluted so fish don't survive
- Our traditional foods are not available or accessible

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR UNIT

- Together as a Unit create a picture or write a list of all the vegetables that grow in Ontario or Canada; then think of the season they grow in
- Together as a Unit think of other food sources available to us in Ontario or Canada
- Together as a Unit think about fish that live in our oceans in Canada
- Together as a Unit think about the food you eat that does not come from Canada
- Together as a Unit take part in *Recipe for Change – Eat in Ontario* - <http://www.foodshare.net/upcoming-Eat-in-Ont.htm>
- Food can grow almost anywhere, figure out what you need to grow a container garden. (tomatoes, peppers and herbs do really well in containers) Ask girls to research it on the internet and inform parents of the request.

SOME HINTS FOR FOODS IN CANADA/ONTARIO

Apples	Beets	Zucchini
Peaches	Peas	Arctic char
Carrots	Chives	Haddock
Celery	Lettuce	Salmon
Onions	Radishes	Beef (cow)
Tomatoes	zucchini	Chicken
Potatoes	Squash	Milk (cow and goat)



What is The Food System?

Food security is not just an issue of poverty; it is a much larger issue that involves the whole food system and affects every one of us in some way.

The food system includes...

- Everyone who grows or catches food, like farmers, fishers, and hunters
- Earth, air, water, energy (the physical environment)
- Food processors, packagers, distributors, marketers, and advertisers
- Food wholesalers and the warehouses where food is stored
- The transportation system: trucks, planes, boats, trains
- Places that sell food: grocery stores, markets, bakeries, farm stands, co-ops, restaurants
- Places where food is served: hospitals, nursing homes
- Governments, policies, taxes (the political and economic environment)
- The health care system, the workforce, schools, technology (the social, educational and cultural environment)
- Everyone who eats!

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR UNIT

- Visit a Farmer, girls can think of interview questions for the farmer. You can use the worksheet on page nine.
- Visit a Grocery Store and complete the “Where in the World check list” (Pg. 8 of this resource)
- Have your Unit create a ‘Food System Flow Chart’

Farmer-> Seed -> Plant-> Truck to bring it to the market -> Market to Sell the Food -> Customer with money to buy the food

- How far has your food travelled? Take a few of the food items you’ve found in grocery stores and on the internet search or “Google” the distance your food has travelled. Make a start line on the sidewalk/field. Take 1 step for each 100km the food has travelled. Put a marker down for each food. Compare the distance, and discuss the implications.
- Pick what you had for supper last night (or plan a tasty dinner menu). Write down all the ingredients in your dinner. Track down what countries the ingredients come from and colour the countries they came from on a map. Whose dinner created the most colourful map? Discuss...



Where in the World?

In Canada we purchase food from all over the world. Visit a local grocery store and check the labels to see where the food was made/imported from. Once you have found all the countries below you have completed this challenge!

Hint – on the package it will say: “Product of”

- America Food: _____
- Canada Food: _____
- China Food: _____
- Brazil Food: _____
- Jamaica Food: _____
- Thailand Food: _____
- Switzerland Food: _____
- South America Food: _____

BONUS:

Find three other Countries:

- Other Country Name: Food: _____
- Other Country Name: Food: _____
- Other Country Name: Food: _____



Food Security Interview

My Questions:

1.

2.

3.

4.

His/Her Answers:

Hunger and Poverty

Food must be affordable, safe and healthy ~ people must be able to afford food

- ❑ Today, nearly half the world's 6 billion people lives on less than \$2 a day
- ❑ Poverty affects rich and poor countries
- ❑ In developed countries it is estimated that 1 in 10 children live below the poverty line
- ❑ In the year 2000 alone, 1.7 million children were needlessly lost because countries around the world failed to reduce poverty levels.
- ❑ In Canada 1,400,000 of its children live in poverty (almost one and a half million)
- ❑ Food banks: A U.N. Human Rights committee noted that the number of food banks in Canada grew from 75 in 1984 to 625 by 1998.
- ❑ Children of full-time working parents make up almost 30% of poor children in Canada. Their parents do not get paid a living wage

The [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) Canada has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In doing so, it is obligated to provide basic human rights to all children. The Convention, for example, obligates Canada to provide an adequate standard of living for all children.

<http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf> is a good resource for discussion with girls

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR UNIT

Pathfinders and Rangers - As of September 2010 the minimum wage is \$10.25 in Ontario. This means the bi-weekly wage for 40 hours a week is \$820. After taxes most people will take home \$732. Total food and drink is usually budgeted at 14% of a person's income. That means a family, 3 children and 1 parent will have \$102 dollars for 2 weeks to spend on food.

Read this scenario to the girls then have them try and plan a nutritious menu based on the four food groups for this family for two weeks. Use the Activity sheet on page 11. Also think about bringing in local grocery store flyers to help the girls plan the menu or use the links to flyers provided on page 11.

Brownies and Guides

- Print the map on page 12 and have the girls colour half of the map one colour to symbolize "half the world's 6 billion people lives on less than \$2 a day".
- Make a meal for your Unit for under \$1/person.
- Go to your grocery store (or check flyers) to compare food prices between processed (unhealthy) foods and healthy foods (we would need a list of items to find and compare).
- Go to your local food bank and learn what tips they give to people trying to feed families on reduced income. Volunteer your time sorting food while you're there.
- Read one of the books suggested in the Resource Section.



MEAL PLANNER

Week One

Write down what the family will eat:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							

Week Two

Write down what the family will eat:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							

Cost of food

2 Litres of Milk (8 servings)	\$3.99	Pasta Sauce	\$1.49
Cereal (8 servings)	\$3.49	Pasta (8 servings)	\$1.49
Loaf of Bread (20 slices)	\$2.99	Hamburger (serves 4)	\$3.99
Peanut Butter	\$2.69	Juice Drink	\$2.49
Frozen Pizza	\$4.99	Juice	\$3.49
Bunch of Carrots	\$1.99	Bananas (each)	\$0.35
Cucumber (25 slices)	\$0.99	Apple (each)	\$0.35
Lettuce	\$0.99	Peach (each)	\$0.45
Yogurt 500g (5 servings)	\$2.49	Sandwich Meat 1 g (serves 3)	\$1.49 per gram
Chicken Breast (4 breasts)	\$6.00	Fish Sticks (serves 4)	\$3.99

Links to Flyers

- METRO: <http://www.metro.ca/en/on/available-flyers.html?method=getAvailableFlyers>
- SOBEYS: <http://director.flyerservices.com/SOB/PostalCodeEntry.aspx?OrganizationId=83f1a551-da15-4775-9da1-5381bd94c11a&BannerId=0f69e65d-a96e-4871-8f86-a5fe7dde96c0&BannerName=SOB&pubtype=1&Language=en&SessionId=ufzjfwntzkb4kg45xn03w345>
- No Frills: http://www.nofrills.ca/LCLOnline/store_selector.jsp;jsessionid=batiEo+3TdqPNCDiZbC+cQ**.node2?_requestid=318494
- All Flyers: <http://www.flyerland.ca/>

“Half the world’s 6 billion people lives on less than \$2 a day”



Short Term Relief vs. Long Term Strategies



Short Term Strategies

- 794,738 Canadians walked into a food bank looking for help during the month of March 2009.
- Use of meal programs are surging:
 - In addition to providing grocery hampers to their clients, many food banks offer meals to those in need through soup kitchens
 - school breakfast and lunch programs, shelters, drop-in centres, and other venues.
- While 2.4% of Canadians are assisted by a food bank each month, the most recent Canadian evidence shows that 8.8% of the population – 2.7 million people – will experience household food insecurity at some point during the year.

Statistics from: Hunger Count 2009 <http://foodbankscanada.ca/documents/HungerCount2009NOV16.pdf>

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR UNIT

- **As a Unit talk about ways that hungry people receive food in Canada and in other countries**
- **As a Unit visit a food bank and volunteer your service**
- **As a Unit visit a food program and volunteer your service**

Long Term Strategies

- Include programs where individuals develop skills to grow, produce or prepare their own food. examples: cooking classes, composting, vegetable gardening
- Give people a chance to come together and develop social support networks. examples: community gardens, community kitchens, farmers' markets, food co-ops, "buy local" campaigns, food buying clubs, sharing traditional food customs
- Aim to make changes to policy that will build food security. This will tie into the 2011 millennium goal of advocacy.

Examples: provincial or municipal food charters, food policy organizations, participatory food costing, participatory research

Adapted from the national resource "Thought About Food? A Workbook on Food Security and Influencing Public Policy", **downloadable at** www.foodthoughtful.ca.

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR UNIT

- Visit a Community Garden (check out page 15 for links)
- Plant a garden or start by planting a pea (check out page 16 for help)
- Decorate bags for meals on wheels
- Do a cooking-class style video instructing other kids on how to make healthy, easy, low-cost snacks.
- Advocate for change (check out page 18 for ideas!)
- Create and post a video about an issue related to global or local food, or food security
- Create a 100 mile cookbook to share with other Units
- Host a 100-mile dinner for friends of family members where you share what you've learned



What is Community Gardening? A community garden is a single piece of land gardened collectively by a group of people. With your Unit visit a Community Garden.

Community Gardens information – Google your municipalities website to see if you live near a community garden!

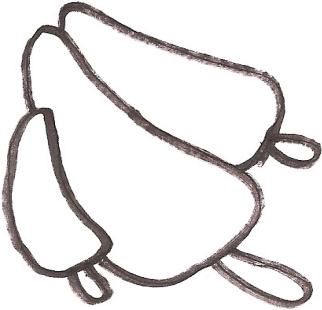
How to Plant a Seed

1. Peas will grow on most soils
2. You can grow your own peas or beans, whether in a garden or a pot, or even outside
(25cm) pot will hold one or two plants
3. Choose a good location. For the peas, locate the pot or pots in a bright area but not in full sun
4. Prepare the ground - put dirt in the pot (ordinary potting soil, from any garden store, will work fine), or dig up the ground where you want to plant
5. You need about 6 inches (15 cm) of loose, rich soil
6. Plant two or three together, and then pull up all but one when it grows
7. Peas should be planted about six to eight weeks before the last killing frost
8. They're really a spring and fall plant, in most climates
9. Most peas and beans (except "bush beans") are twining plants. You will therefore, need something for them to twine on: a fence, a net strung between two poles, individual poles for each plant, or a bean tepee (made of 3-4 bamboo poles tied together at the top). It's best to have a support ready as soon as you plant and "plant" it when you plant the seeds. The support can help mark your seed locations.
10. Water the seeds
11. It can take 2 to 10 days for the first sprouts to show above the surface
12. As soon as the sprouts can reach (1 to 2 inches tall) attach them to their twining surface
13. Flowers will begin to show a couple weeks after the sprouts come up
14. When the flowers dry up, a pea/bean pod will begin to grow from the same place
15. Pick pods before they get too old
16. Leave a few pods to mature completely near the end of the growing season to save the seeds for next year



Planting a Garden? Have your Unit print, laminate and glue these signs on popsicle sticks.

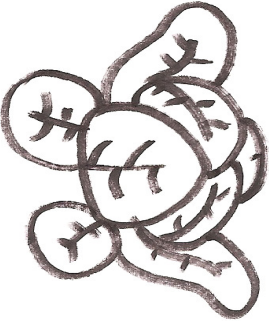
Peppers



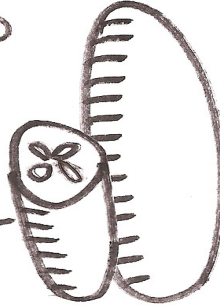
Broccoli



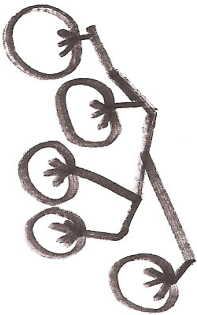
Lettuce



Cucumber



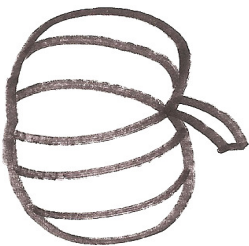
Tomatoes



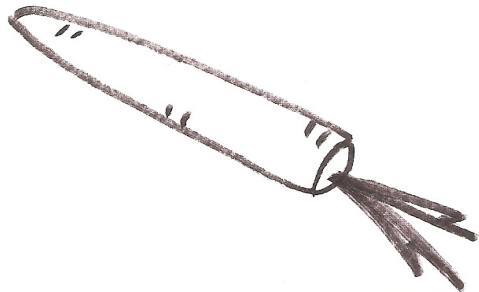
Potatoes



Pumpkins



Carrots



From: <http://www.yourhomeroom.com/craft/veggie-signs/>

How to Advocate for Policy Change for Food Security

As you develop the **content** of your advocacy messages, there are two rules to keep in mind.

1. **Know your audience.** Good messages sometimes require a little research. Try to learn how you can best influence each of your target audiences. Each message should take into account the interests, ideas, and knowledge of the people receiving the message.
2. **Keep it simple.** Messages should be short, just a few sentences or less. If you deliver too many messages, your audience might forget them. Limit it to one, and focus on your best supporting arguments, rather than a long list of reasons to support your proposal.

Then think about using the following mediums to help your Unit SHOUT OUT about their message:

- Write a letter to a local politician
- Write a play, then perform it for parents and friends
- Create a photography display of fresh foods and vegetables grown in Ontario
- Create a Facebook group
- Make a video for YouTube (Guiders remember IR1's)

For older branches – Want to learn more about Advocacy? Why not check out CARE's Advocacy Tool Book:

<http://www.care.org/getinvolved/advocacy/tools.asp>



Stand up for Policy Change – Advocate!

What is Policy?

Policies can be laws, rules, regulations, guidelines, principles, or directions. They say: “What” is to be done, “Who” is to do it and “How” it is to be done”

Policy occurs at various levels and points of interaction

Personal policy is the set of standards you use to guide your own decisions and actions.

Organizational policy guides how organizations and businesses operate

Public policy guides how federal, provincial and municipal governments operate and address specific issues or problems

How can your Unit influence policy?

Whether you are acting to influence policy on your own, as part of a group, or as part of a formal food policy organization, the process is the same.

Step 1 Know your issues, your goals and your opposition

Step 2 Know the policy process and the policy makers

Step 3 Engage stakeholders and develop networks. Make connections between different people and different groups.

Step 4 Take action!

Who are the key public policy makers?

Mayor
City Councillors
Members of special committees

Elected officials
Premiers
Department

Senators
Prime Minister
Members of
Parliament
Department

Chiefs
Councils
Minister of Indian Affairs

For some ideas visit: <http://standagainstpoverity.org>

Resource ~ More Information

Looking to further your Unit's learning? Try the WAGGGS Food Security and Climate Change badge: <http://waggggs.org/en/resources/document/view/3833>



Websites

- Food Secure: <http://foodsecurecanada.org/>
- Free the Children: <http://www.freethechildren.com/getinvolved/geteducated/childpoverty.htm>
- Food Costing Training: http://partfood.msvu.ca/pdf/Food_Costing_Training_Guide.pdf
- WAGGGS: <http://www.wagggsworld.org/en/povertycampaign1>
- Breakfast Clubs Canada: <http://www.breakfastclubscanada.org/home.aspx>
- Reducing Urban Hunger: [Reducing Urban Hunger](#)
- Food Banks Canada: <http://foodbankscanada.ca>
- Food Thoughtful: www.foodthoughtful.ca

Books

- Cups Held Out by Judith L. Roth
- Beatrice's Goat by Page McBrier

