



From Waste to Well-being: Caring for People and Planet

*Understanding the True Costs of Food Waste and
Working Towards Zero Waste Kitchens*

2024 SYMPOSIUM

November 21, 2024

PARTICIPANT PACKAGE

OFC's Symposium & Annual Organizational Update Participant Package

The Ontario Food Collaborative's (OFC) is a unique collaboration bringing municipal public health and waste management professionals together to share resources and align education and outreach initiatives on food literacy, healthy eating, and food waste prevention.

OFC's 2024 Symposium, *From Waste to Well-being: Caring for People and Planet - Understanding the True Costs of Waste Food and Working Towards Zero Waste Kitchens*, and Annual Organizational Update is a virtual event with opportunities to learn from inspiring practitioners in the food system.

We would like to recognize and thank our members and contributors for helping to co-create this program. We hope it is of value to all.

Land Acknowledgment

We would like to acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands that we are on today. While we meet virtually today, the Ontario Food Collaborative acknowledges that its work and that of its members takes place on the traditional indigenous territories of many nations across the province. The area we refer to as Ontario includes lands covered by over 40 treaties and agreements as well as unceded territories. We are thankful to be able to work and live in these territories. We thank the generations of indigenous people who have taken care of this land for thousands of years and continue to do so, providing leadership and inspiration for our work. As we share thoughts and ideas today, we encourage you to reflect on how we can honour our collective commitment to make the promise and the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our communities through the work we do building a more sustainable future.

Program at a Glance

| Time | Session | Presenters |
|--------------------|---|---|
| 10:00 - 11:15 a.m. | Understanding the True Costs of Food Waste | Kiera Toffelmire, Second Harvest Andrea Thompson, FoodShare Toronto Claire van den Broek, True Price Andrew Fleet, Growing Chefs! Ontario Moderated by: Colleen Bell, Registered Dietitian |
| 11:15 - 11:30 a.m. | | Wellness Break |
| 11:30 - 12:00 p.m. | Ontario Food Collaborative's Annual Organizational Update | OFC Steering Committee Members |
| 12:00 - 12:45 p.m. | | Lunch Break |
| 12:45 - 2:00 p.m. | Working Towards Zero Waste Kitchens | Bellen Tong, LEAF Canada Getty Stewart, Professional Home Economist Suraya Hudson, Leftovers Foundation Regina Harmon, Food Recovery Network Moderated by: Clancy Harrison, Food Dignity Movement |

Session Descriptions

Understanding the True Costs of Food Waste

This session examines the connections between food and both our mental and physical well-being. Detailing how our food systems impact human long-term health, environmental sustainability, and global food security. This session aims to promote sustainable food sources for a healthier future, emphasizing nutritional value, ecological responsibility, and resilience against food insecurity.

Session Moderated by Colleen Bell, Registered Dietitian

The Avoidable Crisis of Food Waste

Kiera Toffelmire, [Second Harvest](#)

A stunning \$58 billion worth of avoidable food waste occurs in Canada each year, at a time when people are accessing charitable food programs in record numbers. In this brief presentation, Kiera will discuss the key findings of Second Harvest's recently released research report, The Avoidable Crisis of Food Waste: Update, and explore both what Second Harvest is doing to address it and what we as individuals can do in our everyday lives to be part of the solution.

Humane in the Food Chain: Reducing Overconsumption Through a Rights-based Approach to Food

Andrea Thompson, [FoodShare Toronto](#)

By sharing FoodShare Toronto's journey from a needs-based to rights-based approach to food and food justice Andrea will encourage folks to explore their own understandings of what we eat and how it makes its way to our plate. Tackling our society's wasteful relationship with food means recognising that each person involved in its production is owed dignity and respect. Getting there requires visualising the labour of food workers, and centring those who have been pushed to the margins through colonialism, racism, sexism, classism and other systems of oppression. Andrea hopes that Symposium-goers will leave with a sense that building a more equitable and just food system is not only urgently morally necessary, but entirely possible.

True Pricing: From Transparency to Business Transformation

Claire van den Broek, [True Price](#)

During Claire’s presentation, we will explore the concept of true pricing, a method that captures the true social and environmental costs of goods and services. Through real-world examples, we’ll examine how businesses are adopting true pricing models to foster transparency and sustainability. We’ll also discuss the current state of the true pricing movement and its implications for the future of commerce, offering insights into how organizations can lead the way in creating a fairer and more responsible economy.

Improving Food Literacy and the Way We Teach Food Systems

Andrew Fleet, [Growing Chefs! Ontario](#)

Growing Chefs! Ontario provides food education to kids, families, and organizations to promote sustainable and seasonal foods, food history and equitable food systems. Addressing food literacy in London, Ontario and the greater area, the program aims to bridge the gap between food attitude and mindset to bring about behavioral change. This program provides children and communities with new food experiences and connections to build their generational knowledge of food literacy.

Working Towards Zero Waste Kitchens

This session addresses the challenges of food waste on both the individual and national levels. Looking towards initiatives at home, within community, and globally to redirect surplus food rather than discard it. This session highlights practical, sustainable food tips and programs that benefit families, businesses, and the environment, paving the way for more efficient food use and waste reduction.

Session Moderated by Clancy Harrison, [Food Dignity Movement](#)

Navigating the Path to Sustainable Foodservice

Bellen Tong, [Leaders in Environmentally Accountable Foodservice \(LEAF\)](#)

Explore actionable strategies for integrating sustainability into the foodservice industry. Bellen’s presentation will focus on waste reduction strategies in commercial kitchens, and how LEAF’s (Leaders in Environmentally Accountable Foodservice) Evaluation and Certification Program will help foodservice not only in reducing environmental impact but also in enhancing business values.

Smart Tips for Tackling Food Waste at Home

Getty Stewart, [Professional Home Economist](#)

Are you ready to look inside your own home to reduce food waste and lead by example? Let's explore the most commonly waste foods and uncover why we're throwing them away. Armed with this knowledge, we'll focus on practical, actionable tips you can apply at home to make a real difference. When we know better, we do better!

Challenging Food Security and Climate Change

Suraya Hudson, [Leftovers Foundation](#)

Food is not a commodity. It is Intrinsicly important and a human right. Suraya's presentation will include what Leftovers Foundations does, how the community can get involved, and how the organization complements other food rescue organizations.

Students are Leading the Way to Ending Food Waste

Regina Harmon, [Food Recovery Network](#)

How a student-led movement, working with partners across the food system, has led to over 18 million pounds of recovered food. Regina will offer action items anyone can take to join and help grow the food recovery movement from across the supply chain.

Presenter Bios

Kiera Toffelmire

Vice President of Innovation, Second Harvest



Kiera works to help rescue and redistribute more than 85 million pounds of surplus food to non-profit food programs each year. Kiera has been a member of various advisory groups including the Toronto Food Policy Council where she chaired the food waste working group, the circular economy working group and the Food Rescue Canadian Alliance, where she chaired the non-profit working group. In addition to her work in food redistribution, Kiera runs a rooftop micro apiary in Toronto's west-end and is passionate about urban biodiversity and urban agriculture.

Andrea Thompson

Director of Fundraising and Communications, FoodShare Toronto



As a white settler on stolen land who is also disabled and fat, Andrea is committed to mobilising her privilege and lived experience toward collective liberation. She has spent her working life in the non-profit sector, making her way from media development to reproductive health to immigrant inclusion and now to food justice. She believes communication is an integral part of social change and that, if we spent more time truly listening to one other, we could bridge gaps in understanding that would help us to work together to build a better world. Formally trained as a journalist, and later an educator, Andrea's most important qualification is lifelong learner. She loves big questions, deep conversations, people being kind to each other, and donuts.



Claire van den Broek
Managing Director, True Price

Claire works with her team on developing and managing partnerships with governments, universities, NGO's and social enterprises. She has working experience in various roles and sectors: from marketing and business development in telecom and retail to Partnerships management for an NGO. Claire is a hands-on team player with the conviction that together with partners and in coalitions, transformative change can be realized.

Andrew Fleet

Executive Director, Growing Chefs! Ontario

Andrew is an avid local food enthusiast. After 15 years in the restaurant industry, including managing national award-winning restaurants, Andrew founded Growing Chefs! Ontario, a London based charity with a mission to change the way children, youth, and families learn about and develop healthy relationships with food.



Over the past 16+ years, Growing Chefs! Ontario has established itself as a provincial leader in children's food education, operating a thriving social enterprise which generates over \$900,000 in annual revenue through its events facility, catering services and school lunch program. Growing Chefs!

Continues to expand their school and community-based food education programs which have been offered in partnership with over 100 schools and dozens of community organizations across London and area serving over 100,000 children and families.

In 2015 Growing Chefs! Ontario was a finalist for the Pillar Community Innovation Awards in the Impact category, and Andrew was named as one of the Top 20 Under Forty - Business London Magazine. In 2017 and in

2018 Growing Chefs! was the recipient of a S.W. Ontario Tourism Award for the innovative events hosted at Growing Chefs! Headquarters

Bellen Tong
Business Strategy & Development, Leaders in Environmentally Accountable Foodservice (LEAF)



Bellen is a passionate advocate for sustainable practices in the foodservice industry. Serving as a board member of LEAF, Canada's only nationwide non-profit foodservice certification program, Bellen plays a crucial role in revitalizing sustainable practices in restaurants across the country and provides essential educational training to promote sustainability within the industry.

Beyond her role at LEAF, Bellen is also the co-founder of Miss Bao Restaurant + Cocktail, an innovative dining establishment that launched in March 2020. Miss Bao has distinguished itself through its strong commitment to sustainability and community engagement, achieving a remarkable 98.5% waste diversion rate.

Getty Stewart
Professional Home Economist



Getty is a Professional Home Economist, writer and speaker with a passion for helping others to select, store and serve delicious seasonal food. She is the author of several cookbooks, writer for Love Food Hate Waste and creator behind @getgettys (Instagram) and www.GettyStewart.com.



Suraya Hudson

Executive Director, Leftovers Foundation

With a background in global food security and a complete love and respect for food, Suraya is a food enthusiast to the core. Her Masters' research in Environmental Sociology explored knowledge mobilization for sustainable food production in a remote farming community in rural Tamil Nadu. Now the Executive Director at the non-profit Leftovers Foundation, she is thrilled to be applying her global knowledge to the local level. She looks at exploring how food rescue is not only a social service, in that it ensures that food gets into the hands of community members who need it, but also an environmental endeavor because it keeps edible food out of the landfill.



Regina Harmon

Executive Director, Food Recovery Network

Regina has worked in the nonprofit sector for more than twenty years, committed to social justice issues because she believes it is in this sector that she can make the biggest difference and that people are the engines of positive change. At the Coro Center for Civic Leadership in Pittsburgh, she worked with employers in all sectors to establish internship programs and to match talented individuals with those opportunities. At Independent Sector and LIFT in Washington, DC, Regina worked to raise awareness of the nonprofit sector's abilities to solve our society's most complex issues. Regina received her MA in Literary and Cultural Studies from Carnegie Mellon University, and her BA in English Literature from the University of Maine at Augusta. Regina sits on the Board of Directors of FoodTank and RegenAll. Regina loves to garden, hike, travel and cook meals with friends. She also loves to collaborate to make big ideas a reality!

Thank You

This event was made possible through the efforts and contributions of OFC members, contributors, volunteers, and participants.

Many thanks to every one of you for your engagement with and commitment to our collective efforts towards advancing food literacy in Ontario.

For more information about the OFC, visit: ontariofoodcollaborative.ca