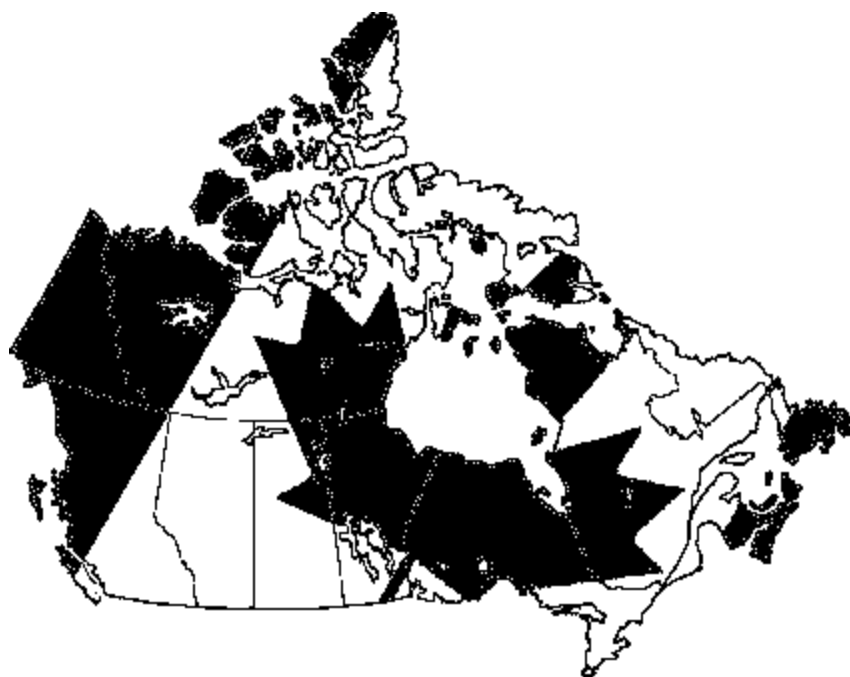


CROSSING BORDERS

**A special report detailing the experiences of the
Scottish Community Diet Project's Development
Officer and two local community food activists who
attended: Crossing Borders - Food and Agriculture
in the Americas, which took place in Toronto,
Canada, June 1999**



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Staff within Fort York's mess kitchen demonstrating how food would have been prepared last century for the stationed troops



Christine and Helen sampling some of the food prepared in Fort York Kitchen



View of Fort York with Toronto skyline and CN Tower

Introduction

“Crossing Borders: Food and Agriculture in the Americas” was the title of the 1999 joint annual conference of the Association for the Study of Food and Society, the Agriculture, Food and Human Values Society, and Food Choice. Each of these societies has an international membership largely drawn from a range of academic disciplines with an interest in food, feeding, and agriculture.¹

This year’s gathering of over 288 delegates was hosted by the Toronto Food Research Network from the 3rd to 6th June. The conference was held in Ryerson Polytechnic University situated in the heart of downtown Toronto.

Crossing Borders aimed “to provide an exciting, rounded, and far-ranging programme that will explore and debate the complex nature of food and agriculture in all its multifaceted forms.”

As this report will hopefully demonstrate, the conference programme was certainly far ranging with papers, presentations, workshops and provocative roundtable discussions from Canada, the United States, Europe, Australia, Guatemala and Argentina.

Topics were many and varied and ranged from food and agricultural public policy to food security and safety, land use, food culture, eating behaviors, and food and the media. As well as formal presentations, many innovative formats were also incorporated into the three days to balance the heavy schedule. Photographic displays, posters, story-telling, films, music, a celebratory organic meal, and visits to local community based food projects, historical sites, and farmers markets helped bring the event alive and more appealing to a wider audience than the academic community alone.

This report details the experience of three delegates at the event who attended as representatives of the Scottish Community Diet Project (SCDP). A Network Travel Bursary has recently been incorporated into the project’s budget with funding from the Scottish Office to enable volunteers within Scotland’s community food initiatives to participate in new learning opportunities within and outwith Scotland. The first of such opportunities was the chance for two experienced community volunteers to attend the Crossing Borders Conference in Canada with the SCDP’s development officer.

The two funded places for community volunteers were advertised to all community food projects on the SCDP’s mailing list in April and an application process was set in motion. To be shortlisted, applicants had to both live and work (paid or unpaid) in one of Scotland’s low income communities tackling the barriers to a healthy, varied and balanced diet. Applicants also had to demonstrate a commitment to sharing the conference experience both at local and national levels on their return. The SCDP was delighted by the response. All applicants were of a very high quality, making final selection an extremely difficult task. Two volunteers were finally asked if they would like to go in late April.

Prior to the conference, the SCDP’s Development Officer met with the successful applicants to help them prepare for the event. One of the main tasks for all the group was to become familiar with a whole new set of terms and jargon contained within the conference programme. Folders with information about community food activity in Scotland were also prepared to take on the trip for dissemination as an interest in Scotland’s experience of tackling food poverty was expected.

¹ Please refer to appendix section for more information about each society.

WHO *we are*

Accompanied by Lizanne Hume, the recently appointed Development Worker with the SCDP, Christine Hamilton and Helen Duffy were the community food activists selected to attend the conference.

Christine lives and works in the village of Polbeth, West Lothian. She is a mother of two young children, and as a result of her interest in children's health, she became involved with the Polbeth Health Initiative Group in 1997. Her most recent community food activity has been to help set up fruit tuckshops in local primary schools as part of a pilot scheme with West Lothian Council to promote healthy eating in primary schools. Christine is also active within the West Lothian Food and Health Working Group.

Helen is from Kelloholm in Dumfries-shire and has three young children. For two years she has volunteered with the Kelloholm Community Café and is a member of the National Children's Home Users Group. She is also the secretary of the Dumfries and Galloway Food Initiatives Network. Helen is currently working to develop a community garden to provide a safe play area for children and fresh vegetables for the café.

Lizanne trained as a community nutritionist and has worked with community health and community food initiatives on a national basis for the past three years. She joined the SCDP in January 1999 and soon after was entrusted with the daunting responsibility of organising their first international trip!

WHY we went

Of the many food conferences advertised nationally and internationally, the SCDP felt that *Crossing Borders* was an appropriate event for community representatives to attend. As Lizanne said: *“From the huge variety of presentations and workshops within the Crossing Borders programme the event seemed to offer something of interest and value to a wide audience. The excursions to local community food initiatives within Toronto seemed particularly relevant to both the project and the volunteers”*.

The conference organisers were also very enthusiastic about the SCDP being represented, and hoped that other groups would follow its example in the future. They described their annual meetings as being accessible and friendly events, which welcome a cross section of interests and backgrounds. As one delegate described it, *“No one reads your name badge first before deciding if you’re important enough to speak to or not”*.

As well as being a key source of new information, attending *Crossing Borders* was also a key opportunity to put the Scottish experience of community food activity on the international map. On behalf of the SCDP, Lizanne was keen to make links with both community projects and with workers and academics with an interest in community food work and food security policy on a local and national basis. She hoped the event would give her the opportunity to both learn from as well as share with others the SCDP’s experience of community food work and food policy in Scotland.

Both Helen and Christine were particularly keen to meet other volunteers in Canadian food projects and to bring new ideas and insights back to their own groups as well as sharing them with the rest of Scotland.

When asked why she applied to attend the event, Christine replied, *“I was looking for fresh ideas to bring back to West Lothian and to see how other countries deal with similar problems of food poverty as experienced in Scotland. I was encouraged to apply by the health development officer at West Lothian Council – but when she first mentioned it I thought it was a conference in Toronto Primary School in Livingston, not Toronto in Canada! I had no idea what to expect, and I am happy to say that the experience was less frightening than I had first anticipated. I thought it would be a formal, dressed-up affair, full of academics. When Bill Gray from the SCDP phoned to congratulate me on being selected, I just couldn’t take it in – in fact I was so shocked that I had to think it over before accepting the invitation. My family agreed to help out while I was away. With them behind me I thought this once in a lifetime opportunity was too good to miss. I’m glad I went.”*

When Helen was asked the same question, she replied *“I wanted to go in the hope of meeting new people with the same goals as I have about improving access and availability of food in all disadvantaged communities. I wanted to get ideas about merging community food activity with projects to improve health in its widest sense from protecting the environment to creating jobs and training for local people.”*

WHAT we saw

From leaving Glasgow airport at 6am on the Wednesday morning to returning home the following Tuesday, a huge number of memorable sights can be recalled, including a tornado during the journey home! However, when asked to select the key visual highlights from the conference programme, each gave the following responses.

Both Helen and Christine's personal highlight was the Food Security Tour. Toronto is well known for its innovative community based food projects, including over 80 community gardens. This optional tour gave delegates an opportunity to visit an organic home delivery business called Toronto Organics, two community gardens, and Foodshare Toronto. Foodshare is located in a downtown Toronto warehouse and is home to the Toronto Community Kitchen, the Good Food Box Scheme, and an urban agriculture project with a rooftop garden and greenhouse.²

The experience of visiting these projects was a very useful one as Christine explains. *"The tour was a welcome part of the conference since it provided us with lots of practical ideas that can be adapted back home. We could relate to the activities and the workers brought the activities alive in a way that an academic paper can not. We could see ourselves mirrored in the volunteers and could relate to their own personal commitment and reasons for becoming involved in the community projects. Food share made the whole process of setting up food box schemes seem so straightforward! The workers are keen to continue links with Scottish community food projects via the SCDP. Lizanne made sure Foodshare was added to the SCDP mailing list and vice versa. As well as leaving some information about community food work in Scotland, we gave the project workers some aprons with the SCDP logo to use in their kitchen. They were delighted with them, and said it was a great way of remembering our visit. We've certainly been inspired by the enthusiasm and energy of FoodShare to keep plugging away with our own work as well as try some new ideas."*

Helen found the community gardens in Toronto particularly interesting, as this is something she hopes to develop within her own community. *"Before I went on the food security tour I expected Toronto's community gardens to be on a far bigger scale and more structured like Gorgie City Farm in Edinburgh, which I recently had the chance to visit. However, having now visited some gardens in Toronto, I've discovered how long it takes for community garden projects to get off the ground. I realise now that my plans for Kelloholm were a bit too ambitious for the immediate future. Starting small like the gardens in Toronto and expanding gradually would seem to be a better way ahead than starting too big and collapsing within 6 months. I'm glad to have learned this lesson while in Canada rather than finding out 6 months down the line in Kelloholm!"*

Lizanne's highlight was the Historical Tour, which was one of two optional pre-conference tours. *"The changing role and nature of food throughout the 19th and 20th centuries was the theme of this very interesting day, which was organised for us by the Ontario Historical Society. We visited a range of historical sites in Toronto including Fort York, the Gibson House Museum, the John McKenzie House, and Black Creek Pioneer Village. Founded in 1793 and built by the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, Fort York is Canada's largest collection of original War of 1812 buildings and is the earliest restored garrison in Toronto. Costumed staff offered us tasty samples of authentic military rations and*

² Please refer to appendix section for more information about FoodShare.

recipes including apple charlotte and raspberry shrub cordial. All the food we sampled had been traditionally prepared for us in the restored mess kitchen where kitchen staff would once have cooked for the officers and enlisted men stationed at the fort in the early 19th century.

Food again was aplenty at our next stop. This time Scottish Fare was sampled at the Gibson House Museum, which was once home to David Gibson, a young land surveyor and farmer from Forfar who immigrated to Canada in 1825. Staff had prepared an assortment of brickoven baked Scottish cakes and puddings for us using original recipes from the Cook and Housewives Manual, which was published in Edinburgh in 1833.

An Edwardian-era lunch was soon after served in the house of John McKenzie, built in 1913, which is now the headquarters of the Ontario Historical Society. The 'Bill of Fare' comprised a traditional assortment of foods that would have been served at the turn of this century including devilled eggs and tomato jelly. The full menu of this mouth-watering spread is contained within the appendix complete with a few common rules of table etiquette and the Robert Burns' Grace Before Meat!.

The rest of the day was spent at the Black Creek Pioneer Village, a typical crossroads community that might have developed in Upper Canada prior to 1867. We spent a brilliant afternoon visiting the restored working kitchens and other historic shops and houses, culminating in a Victorian Afternoon Tea in the Village Inn. To complete this historic gastronomic tour platefuls of scones with jam and cream, fruit pies, chocolate eclairs and home-made cookies filled every table – and we managed to find room to sample the lot!"

Another of the many highlights enjoyed by the group was visiting the St. Lawrence Farmers Market in the early hours of Saturday morning. Lizanne describes the experience:

"From fresh fish to fresh fruit, every stall of the indoor market was overflowing with an abundance of local produce of every colour and aroma imaginable. Local historians led us through the lively market, which dates back to 1844, and introduced us to some local farmers delivering their produce to the market stalls. We also had a chance to sample some of the stallholders' wares for breakfast as well as visit the surrounding art galleries and antique shops before returning to the university campus for the remainder of the conference."

WHAT we heard

From informal chats to formal presentations, talking, and listening were central to the trip. At any one time during the conference, four different sessions ran parallel to each other on a wide range of different food related themes. Days began early and finished late without scheduled lunch and dinner breaks – so the organisers had planned the event to be no holiday!

The key to surviving the event was to be selective. Attending too many sessions would have been as unproductive as attending too few!

At registration each delegate was given a full conference programme with summaries of each presentation over the three days. This was useful as delegates could then plan their own programme according to their own interests.

The conference organisers encouraged delegates to cross borders of knowledge during the event by attending sessions they knew little about so as to increase links between sectors and promote cross fertilisation of ideas and expertise. The Scottish delegation tried to do this as much as possible, but was keen to attend sessions, which bore some relevance to the work being undertaken in Scotland.

Christine most enjoyed listening to a paper presented by Larry Levine from an American Organisation called *Kids Can Make A Difference*. This is a programme designed to educate young people about the root causes of hunger and poverty, and to help them understand that they can make a difference in the world. Larry is also a member of World Hunger Year (WHY?), whose mission is to work for just policies creating a more secure world, and to support initiatives to help create sustainable environments for all.

“I enjoyed this session so much that I actually waited to speak with him afterwards. His ideas were inspiring – using music, poetry and film to get difficult messages about food poverty across to young people certainly made sense to me. Due to his work in schools I thought he would have been interested in hearing about the fruit tuckshop programme in West Lothian. He was delighted to receive a copy of our fruit tuckshop report and Lizanne bought his book so we can bring his ideas back to Scotland.”³

Helen enjoyed listening to a paper about breakfast clubs for children in Guelph, Ontario. *“The title of the paper was very misleading – ‘A qualitative analysis of food and nutrition programmes in low-income communities: benefits and barriers’ - in fact you wouldn’t have known it was about breakfast clubs at all! However, it turned out to be very interesting and highlighted similar problems to groups in Scotland when setting up breakfast clubs such as lack of funding, and reliance on too few volunteers. Rich parents felt that breakfast clubs were not for their kids, while poorer parents were afraid of the stigma if their kids attended – it was interesting to hear that these problems are universal. Maybe we need to share ideas more across countries if lasting solutions to these issues are going to be reached.”*

Lizanne, Helen and Christine all participated in a Food Security Workshop on the final day of the conference, but were all greatly disappointed with the outcome. Lizanne begins to describe why. *“The term Food Security has been defined as a condition in which all people at all times can acquire safe, nutritionally adequate and personally acceptable foods that are accessible in a manner that maintains human*

³ Book list contained in appendix

dignity. This really sums up what community food initiatives in Scotland also strive for, so we felt it would be a useful discussion to get involved in. In Ontario alone, we found out that food banks support more than 250,000 individuals each month and over 450 food banks exist throughout Canada. Food bins sit at the doorways of most supermarkets inviting customers to donate spare food purchases for redistribution to the hungry. Delegates at the workshop acknowledged that food banks, like food stamps in the US, are short-term solutions to hunger and poverty and do not constitute a personally acceptable or dignified way of acquiring food. The workshop was seeking an alternative way to put an end to hunger by tackling its root causes.

The purpose of the workshop was 'to initiate a process to establish a common and unified domestic (Canada and USA) agenda for food security with the goal of being food secure by 2005.' The session aimed to initiate a framework for action and build support for implementing a common food security agenda at local, regional and national levels in the Americas. Workshop organisers hoped that this shared agenda would be carried forward and lead to the creation of a Canadian Food Security Coalition, which would act as a national networking body for community food activity and policy throughout Canada.

The session began with a panel discussing divergent perspectives on food security policies and programmes along a continuum from individual/household to community, regional, national and global elements. The panel consisted of some high profile researchers in this field of study including Graeme Riches from the University of British Columbia, and Rod MacRae from the Toronto Food Policy Council. Participants then split into smaller groups to discuss one of the five different perspectives in greater depth.

The group I joined was charged with the role of discussing the community perspective of food security. I thought this would be a good opportunity to explain the role of the SCDP and share the Scottish experience of networking and working with community groups. Unfortunately, however, the group only seemed interested in the Canadian experience and was reluctant to learn from other countries. This was very disappointing, as the structure being proposed for the Canadian Food Security Coalition was almost identical to that of the SCDP. The situation was also ironical since the whole reason behind the international conference was to cross borders of ideas and knowledge. It was useful to have participated in the discussion, however, even if only to appreciate how fortunate we are in Scotland to have national community food networking with government support unlike in Canada."

Helen, who was also part of the same workshop added, "The food security workshop was not what I expected. It was very theoretical and full of jargon. As a community volunteer I felt excluded of the discussion, despite trying to contribute. No one seemed interested in hearing about the community perspective from someone actually living and working in a low income community, which was ridiculous considering the workshop was supposedly to discuss this very issue. Even when the facilitator was challenged about the language being inappropriate for all participants still no effort was made to make the experience more inclusive. Things went from bad to worse when one participant spent almost ten minutes deliberating over whether community representatives should be described as 'citizen eaters or eater citizens' as if we were cannibals! I couldn't believe time could be wasted in this way when such an important discussion should have been taking place".

WHAT we read

Prior to setting off for Canada, the group had lots to read about the conference programme, much of which was available via the Ryerson University Internet site⁴. This site was found to be particularly useful due to the high quality of up-to-date information it gave as well as its links to other related sites to help plan the trip. While in Canada, there was also no shortage of reading material. The group attended a book fare and met the authors of a number of recent publications covering a multitude of food topics from the social history of popcorn in America to food rationing and the politics of domesticity.

Christine met Thelma Barer-Stein, the author of *“You eat what you are: People, Culture and Food Traditions”*

and describes what she thought about her book. *“When I saw the book, I immediately went to the section about Scotland to find out what the author had researched about Scotland’s food culture, but I wasn’t very impressed with her findings. She had depicted all Scots as still eating a diet of porridge and haggis as the norm! I used the opportunity, however, to set the records straight and explained to her how our kids are exposed to as much junk food advertising as American and Canadian children. She seemed surprised and shocked as if I had shattered her illusions about Scotland being a quaint, historic country. It just goes to show how stereotypes die hard!”*

Helen brought back a wide range of reading materials from academic journal articles to community group newsletters picked up during the conference. *“It will take months to wade through all the papers and books I brought back! Most of them seem useful, even if just to highlight the differences between Scotland and Canada in terms of its approaches to community food activity.”*

Lizanne found the newsletters from FoodShare particularly interesting as the SCDP also produce a newsletter, Fare Choice. *“Field to Table is a project of FoodShare Metro in Toronto. It produces a monthly double-sided sheet for its contacts. Like Fare Choice it uses graphics and cartoons to bring the content alive and more appealing to a wider audience. The print size of the Canadian newsletter is much smaller, however, and it contains recipes, which Fare Choice so far has not included as a feature. It was useful to read another project’s ideas and compare approaches to similar issues.”*

Another interesting book previewed at the conference, which was *“For Hunger-proof Cities – Sustainable Urban Food Systems”*⁵ edited by Mustofa Koc, Director of the Centre for Studies in Food Security at Ryerson Polytechnic University in Toronto. Lizanne describes the book: *“For Hunger-proof Cities claims to be the first book to fully examine food security from an urban perspective. It looks at existing local food systems and ways to improve the availability and accessibility of food to urban communities as well as exploring methods to improve community-supported agriculture and co-operation between urban and rural populations. It includes contributions from farmers, academics, experienced business leaders, students, policy makers, and community activists and workers, and is the content is appealing to as wide a range of readers. The underlying structures that create food poverty and inequality are also discussed together with an examination of the role of emergency food systems, such as food banks and food stamps. The book is to be launched very*

⁴ Please see appendix x section

⁵ Published by IDRC 1999, ISBN 0-88936-882-1

soon and I look forward to reading it to build on the information I learned during the conference.”

A full list of the books and other reading material from the trip is listed at the end of the report. Further information can be given by contacting the SCDP.

WHO we met

Lizanne, Christine and Helen each brought back an assortment of name cards and delegate addresses of new contacts made at the event. Many of these have been added to the SCDP mailing list so links can be maintained. As Helen noted, *“nearly everyone we met was really friendly and keen to find out more about our work in Scotland. I couldn’t pick out just one person for the report as many people contributed to making the event such a worthwhile experience. In particular, I’d mention Neil Coulson from the University of Plymouth in England, Dorothy Duncan from the Ontario Historical Society, Lotte Holm from the Royal Veterinary and Agriculture University in Denmark, and Nina Dutton who was an Edinburgh University student on placement with Foodshare in Toronto. I found them all to be particularly helpful and welcoming.”*

Christine found meeting up with other people from the UK during the conference a useful experience. *“From the moment we got on the bus for the pre-conference tour, we all spoke to many different people from many different walks of life and interests. It was fantastic! In particular, meeting up with other UK delegates helped put the conference into some sort of perspective as we could discuss how to take the lessons learned in Canada back home. Getting to know these delegates made me realise that academics can be down to earth too, and we met many great ones who filled that category during our trip.”*

After the Food Security Workshop, Lizanne met up with Herb Barbolet; co-ordinator of the Vancouver based charity *Farm Folk City Folk*⁶, and Linda Elswick, the Washington representative of the *Community Food Security Coalition*⁷. The purpose of the meeting was to share experiences of national community food networking as Lizanne explains.

“This unplanned meeting proved to be very interesting and helped me appreciate the policies and structures we already have in Scotland to help support community based food activity such as the Scottish Diet Action Plan and the consequent SCDP. Herb drew comparisons between the situation in Scotland with his work in Vancouver, British Columbia. He had previously met Damian Killeen, Director of the Poverty Alliance, at another event and was familiar as a result with anti-poverty activity in Scotland. Herb was keen to learn more about the SCDP and keep us informed about developments in British Columbia, which currently does not have a community food networking body. Linda Elswick spoke about the US Action Plan on food security released in March 1999, an idea, which originated from the World Food Summit, held in Rome in 1996. This Action Plan, which all countries were asked to produce, identifies domestic and international priority strategies and actions in seven key areas including food and economic security in the US. The Community Food Security Coalition has recently produced an action guide for community groups to use the US plan as a basis for developing their own local priorities and actions to achieve food security. Linda was also interested in the Scottish experience of community food networking and asked to be added to our mailing list.”

⁶ Please refer to appendix for more information

⁷ Please refer to appendix for more information

WHAT we ate

“Crossing Borders was not only a feast for our minds, but also our appetites. As one experienced and well traveled food researcher told us at the conference, ‘food is always an integral part of any conference about food and food issues.’ This could not be closer to the truth at Crossing Borders!”

In accordance with Lizanne’s sentiments, Christine and Helen were also very impressed by the range and quality of foods tasted during the course of the conference. All agree that the most *“enjoyable”* food was shared during the historic tour of Toronto on the first day of the Canadian trip. The most *“memorable”* food sampled, however, was during Saturday night’s *‘Knives and Forks’* dinner held within the University of Toronto’s magnificent Howard Ferguson Dining Hall.

This multi-course extravaganza was prepared by the volunteer chefs from *Knives and Forks*, an organisation of local farmers and restaurateurs working together to prepare food using only organic ingredients from the region. The focus of the menu was to reflect Toronto’s dynamic and multicultural character, and a copy of the menu is at the end of the report. The result was certainly a work of art and delicious, but the range of flavours and unusual ingredients meant the menu was not suited to everyone’s taste. As Helen said, *“although the meal was not to my personal taste, it was a once in a lifetime chance to sample foods that aren’t readily available at home.* Christine added, *“If not to taste, it was certainly beautiful to look at”.*

WHAT we felt

Some reflections from the three Scottish delegates on return to Scotland after the conference.

Lizanne

“The conference did succeed in crossing geographical and professional borders by bringing together a wide cultural mix of delegates from a rich mix of backgrounds: folklorists archaeologists, nutritionists, sociologists, psychologists, art therapists, and community activists to name only a few. However, events like this one highlights that not only geographical borders need to be crossed for our shared goals of international food security to be reached. Less obvious borders still need to be challenged and crossed at both national and international level - particularly intellectual and professional borders. The uncrossed borders of knowledge, language and jargon can often isolate community groups from the academic and policy-making fraternities. This isolation serves only to intensify feelings of inadequacy and frustration for community representatives and does nothing to help forge stronger link between the different sectors.

The experience of visiting another country struggling with similar food poverty issues as Scotland, helps reinforce that food insecurity is a global issue and that we have a lot to learn from each other. Closer liaison at an international level is one way of sharing both the positive and negative lessons across borders and may help breakdown the powerlessness that can often prevail when working in isolation of each other”.

Much can be learned from Canada’s community food activity, particularly from organisations like Foodshare and its community garden movement. The projects we visited certainly seem to have a very positive outlook about their work and have no hesitation in telling you how vital their contribution is to developing a more sustainable and equitable food system.

However, having now spent a little time with delegates from other countries, I feel it is crucial for Scotland’s community food and health movement not to dismiss its own achievements. In many ways Scotland’s community food work seems far more progressive, organised and politically supported than elsewhere. All too often we can dwell on the negative – lack of funds, lack of support, lack of enthusiasm - and we tend to forget the many positive contributions that projects and agencies are making to tackling the barriers to a healthy, varied and balanced diet. The very fact that Scotland now has its own parliament and that communities are at last being recognised and valued for their efforts to combat inequalities at a government level, is something we should be proud of and share with others nationally and internationally.

I found that there is interest in what happens in Scotland and I think we all should respond to this call positively and proactively as well as still being keen to learn from others. Next time, Scottish community food projects should have the confidence to submit and present a paper detailing the work of initiatives from a community development perspective as this would seem to be the perspective that was lacking at the Crossing Borders Conference. I was just glad that I could accompany two people who had more than enough insight to balance the short-sightedness of a few delegates we met.”

Christine

"Having now attended an international conference, I feel more positive about attending large scale events and being able to speak about my work with confidence to groups of strangers. What surprised me most was how amazed many of the delegates were when they discovered Helen and I, like so many others in Scotland, do this work on a voluntary basis. In discovered that in some countries like Denmark most mothers work and voluntary work is practically unheard of!

The whole experience was a great opportunity, and I was very glad to have been able to go. I felt that much of what I heard and saw during the trip wasn't particularly new or radical. This made me realise that I'm not the complete novice that I first thought I was! Scotland is every bit as progressive as Canada in terms of its community food work – only after visiting Canada did this become a reality as before I thought Scotland was less advanced in this work. So far, I have shared my experience with the Polbeth Health Initiative Group – I've organised a taste and try day with them using some of the recipes we tried while on the Historic Tour. I also made a video of the trip, which I'm in the process of editing at the moment. I am happy to share my experiences with as many groups as possible throughout Scotland, and look forward to doing meeting more people in the process."

Helen

"I feel that visiting Canada was as much a personal achievement for me as well as a community achievement since I went with the attitude that I was not only representing my own local community of Kelloholm, but also the wider community of Scotland.

The fact that I got this opportunity to attend an international event generated a lot of publicity for the community café in Kelloholm via the local press. It got people talking and interested in what we are doing – and I'm glad to say a few more people have since got involved with the café simply because they see working voluntarily has its advantages!

It would be unrealistic to think that within a few weeks of returning from Canada, radical changes can be made within the café or at a national level. However, the lessons learned from the experience will be valuable for the future, as I am confident that positive change for community food initiatives in Scotland is coming – you can feel it! Meeting others involved in community food work and food research in the UK made me realise the importance of making links and networking with like-minded individuals nationally as well as internationally. I think it is important to maintain these contacts within the UK, and I am glad that the SCDP is here to help us network. It was a great idea of the SCDP to send community representatives to the conference. Although it was a fairly academic event and at times difficult to feel part of, more community volunteers should be give the opportunity to meet and work with professionals and academics in all fields as this is the only way that a better understanding of each other will develop. I hope more organisations will follow the example of the SCDP in the future."

Appendix Section

Organisation Information

The Agriculture, Food and Human Values Society (AFHVS)

AFHVS was founded in 1987 as an organisation of professionals dedicated to the study of ethical and value issues associated with the production, distribution, and consumption of food. From a basis of philosophers, sociologists, and anthropologists, its membership has now grown to include nutritionists, farmers, and social scientists. The society promotes linkages among scholars and practitioners working in cross-disciplinary studies in the broad areas of food, agriculture and rural studies. It encourages participation by the growing number of researchers exploring alternative visions of the food system, including regional food policies; community supported agriculture and participatory approaches to international agriculture research and development.

For further information, contact:

Fred Buttel (President of AFHVS)
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The Association for the Study of Food and Society (ASFS)

ASFS is an interdisciplinary organisation dedicated to the study of the complex relationship between food and society. It was founded in 1987 after a conference titled "*Solving Global Food Problems: A New Beginning*" took place, which drew together a wide range of social scientists, nutritionists, and public health specialists with an interest in food policy, food habits and eating behaviors.

The society publishes a bi-annual newsletter and journal *Food and Society*. For further information, please contact:

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Grand Valley State University
1 Campus Drive
Allendale, Michigan 49401-9403
United States

Email: Whitw@gvsu.edu.

Food Choice Conference

The food choice conference is an annual meeting of researchers who are interested in food selection of humans and animals. It promotes multi-disciplinary food research and meets with other organisations and groups to focus on various aspects of food and feeding.

Toronto Food Research Network (TFRN)

TFRN is made up of over 100 members, mainly from Toronto, drawn from universities; government and community based organisations concerned with food security. The group meets monthly to exchange information and organises joint working initiatives.

For further information, contact:

Jennifer Welsh
School of Nutrition
Ryerson Polytechnic University
350 Victoria Street
Ontario M5B 2K5
Canada
Email: jwelsh@acs.ryerson.ca

Foodshare

Foodshare is a Toronto based community food access project. Funding is derived from a number of sources, including money from United Way. Foodshare operates a number of programmes including a community kitchen, a community gardening project, a sprouting project and a baby food initiative as well as being actively involved in food policy work. Its largest project is called Field to Table, which operates a Good Food Box Scheme. The aim of this not-for-profit initiative is to promote closer economic and social links between urban communities and rural food producers. Currently over 4500 food boxes are delivered to customers throughout the city each month.

For further information, please contact:

Debbie Field (Executive Director)
238 Queen Street West
Lower Level, Toronto
Ontario M5V 1Z7
Email: fdshare@web.net

Reading Materials

A wide range of leaflets articles and books on food and food security were collected during the trip. For more information about any of the following, please contact the SCDP on (Tel) 0141 226 5261.

Practical Guides

The Food System – Building Youth Awareness through involvement
A guidebook for educators, parents and community groups.

Alison Harmon, Rance Harmon, Audreyt Marezki
Pennsylvania State University,

College of Agricultural sciences, 1999

Feeding the Hungry
A Guide for Food Service Professionals

David Newman and Christine Thompson
Jonson and Wales University, 1998

The Good Food Box Guide
How to start a program in your community

Kathryn Scharf and Mary Lou Morgan
FoodShare Metro Toronto

Hunger – Finding solutions - Kids can make a difference
A resource book for secondary school teachers

Stephanie Kempf
World Hunger Year, 1997

Reference Books

Consuming Passions
Eating and Drinking Traditions in Ontario

Dorothy Duncan, Glenn J Lockwood
The Ontario Historical Society, 1998

Newsletters

Farm Folk City Folk
Working together for social justice and a sustainable food system

This is a non-profit registered charity with its main offices in Vancouver, British Columbia. It aims to reduce the distance between field and table or food miles, and is committed to the development of a sustainable food system for both urban and rural communities.

For further information, or a copy of the newsletter, please contact:

Farm Folk City Folk
21#208 – 2211 West 4th Avenue
Vancouver
British Columbia, V6K 4S2
Canada

Web site: <http://www.ffcf.bc.ca/>

Community Food Security News

This is the newsletter of the Community Food security Coalition, which is active in a number of fronts from networking and information exchange on food security issues to developing a federal agriculture food policy in the US. It aims to build working partnerships between public and private sectors, and between consumers and producers to tackle the root causes of food poverty.

For further information, please contact:

Community Food Security Coalition
PO Box 209
Venice, CA 90
Canada

Web site: <http://www.foodsecurity.org>

Reports and articles

Food 2000 Roundtable Conference

A report of a conference held in 1998 by FoodShare in Toronto, The event aimed to create a dialogue between a wide range of sectors who attended the conference and develop policy recommendations that would ensure everyone in Ontario would have adequate access to affordable, nutritious food by the year 2002.

Discussion Paper on Domestic Food Security Carol S. Kramer-LeBlanc and Kathryn McMurray

USDA'S Centre for Nutrition Policy and Promotion

A paper discussing the need for comprehensive measures at a global level to addressing food security issues.

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A paper discussing the need for comprehensive measures at a global level to addressing food security issues.

The Forces and Events that shaped the Food Systems of New York's North Country Region

A Compilation of the Shared History Sessions from six conferences, which explore the possibilities for regional collaboration on food and nutrition, issues.

Vivica Kraak, David Pelletier, and Bob Rich
Division of Nutritional Sciences
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853, March 1999

Websites

Ryerson University Food Security web site

Working with community partners to facilitate dialogue, research and action to increase food security by addressing issues of health, income and the evolution of the food system.

<http://www.acs.ryerson.ca/~foodsec/foodsec/>



**The Alex Wilson
Community Garden,
Toronto**





Foodshare, Toronto



Toronto Organics Foodstore, showing staff and visitors around food box packing tables

Foodshare, Toronto community kitchens

