

# Eat Where You Live:

## Building a Social Economy of Local Food in Western Canada

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### Research Objectives

The subjects of this research project are social enterprises engaged in the production and distribution of local food in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. This includes community farms, community gardens, farmers' markets, and co-operative food distribution networks. The research objective is to assess the possibilities for expanding the social economy of local food as an alternative to the dominant global food system. It will also examine the obstacles faced by social enterprises in the food sector and suggest means by which they may be overcome and food security increased.

The methodology will be essentially qualitative, relying on interviews with key actors committed to developing and maintaining social enterprises in the food sector. Members of these community organizations will be actively involved as participants in the research. The goal is to achieve an understanding of their day-to-day experiences.

We expect to shed light on some of the daunting challenges faced by community organizations attempting to produce and distribute food to their clients and patrons. We also hope to highlight the success stories — those social enterprises that have succeeded in the food sector and the lessons that can be derived from their success.

From a policy point of view, we will specify the obstacles that must be overcome if the social economy of local food is to flourish. We hope to suggest concrete measures that can be put in place by government that will directly benefit social enterprises engaged in the food sector.

**Community Partners:** Manitoba Food Charter / Mount Carmel Clinic

**Term of Project:** July 2007 – May 2008

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