



Cultivating Agriculture, Food and Health

June 19 – 21, 2013

Extended Learning

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Why are we here?

.... to forge the new relationships, linkages and paths necessary for effective, health-oriented change in our agricultural and food systems.....

We're pleased that you're at the table!



Forum Committee

- Jolene MacEachren, Rosaria Campbell
- Dr. Kathleen Kevany, Linda Jack
- Drs. Ji Lu, Derek Lynch, Leslie MacLaren, Raj Prithiviraj, Vasantha Rupasinghe, Chibuike Udenigwe





Special thanks to

CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF FOOD
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



INSTITUT CANADIEN DE SCIENCE
ET TECHNOLOGIE ALIMENTAIRES

Growing Forward 2 

A federal-provincial-territorial initiative



Canada 



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Extended Learning


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new ideas in food & agriculture



RCCN Rural & Coastal
Communities
Network



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Internationally

- LCIRAH....Leverhulme Centre for Integrated Research in Agriculture & Health)
<http://www.lcirah.ac.uk/>
“How do we achieve sustainable food and agriculture systems which promote health and well being for all people?”
- A4NH.....Agriculture for Nutrition & Health
<http://www.a4nh.cgiar.org/>
- Healthy Agriculture, Healthy Nutrition, Healthy People.....Bellagio Report 2012
<http://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/5/2/411>



Nationally

- Canadian Agricultural Policy Institute
 - Food & Wellness Dialogue
<http://www.capi-icpa.ca/health.html>
 - Municipal Food Policy Entrepreneurs analysis
http://www.capi-icpa.ca/pdfs/2013/Municipal_Food_Policy_Entrepreneurs_Final_Report.pdf
- Centre for Food in Canada
<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/cfic/default.aspx>



In our Region

- Provincial healthy eating initiatives
- Provincial agricultural strategies
- Provincial food security networks
 - NB food security action network
<http://nbfsanrasanb.wordpress.com/>
 - Food security network of NF and Labrador
<http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/about-food-security.htm>
 - PEI food security network
<http://peifoodsecurity.wordpress.com/mission-and-principles/>
 - NS food policy network
<http://nsfoodpolicy.wordpress.com/>
- Lots of concerned community organizations



Challenges & Opportunities

Challenges

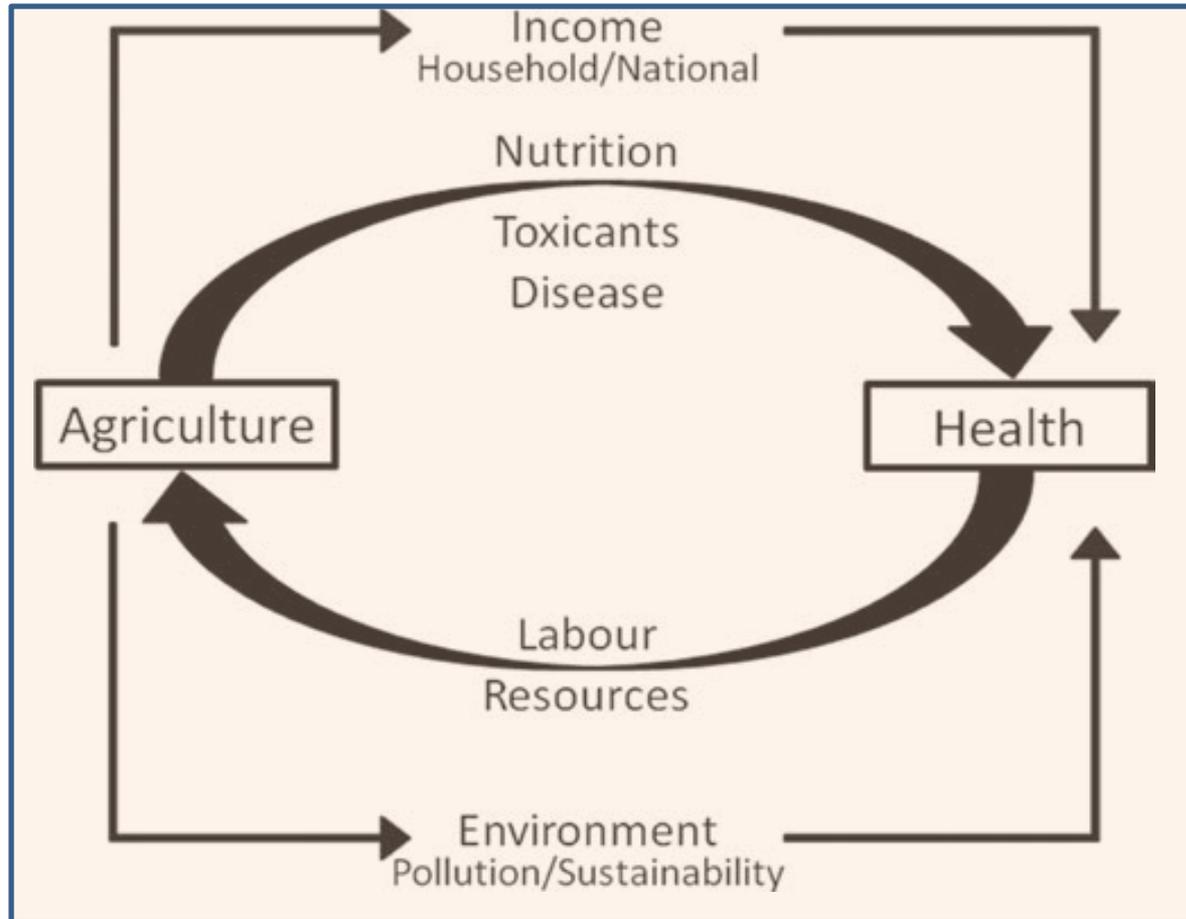
- There is concurrent widespread undernourishment and obesity in the face of a rapidly-growing human population.
- There is a high prevalence of, and a rapid rate of transition to, diets high in calories, processed foods and sugars, yet low in fibre, mineral & vitamin density (low in whole grains, fruits and vegetables). Salt and other nutrient imbalances are also health considerations.
- This transition is a major contributor to the increased incidence of chronic noninfectious diseases such as CVD, diabetes and diet-related cancer. .
- The transition is not merely a result of individual choice. The prevalence and predictability of the transition are related to agri-food and health policies, economic drivers, changing socio-economic models as well as to cultural factors.
- Agricultural policy and nutrition, education and health policies are housed in distinct 'towers' in most jurisdictions.
- Healthy food production models in a region such as Atlantic Canada can sometimes be impeded by the necessities of least cost production and global trade models.
- Healthy diet policies may have unexpected and far-reaching effects on the economy of both the initiating country and others, given the nature of the agri-food system.
- Relatively little is known about the effectiveness of policy interventions to promote healthy eating and food production.
- Agri-food and health systems have wide reach and built-in inertia that can make them resistant to change.

Opportunities

- There is a high prevalence of obesity and diet-related disease has increased public interest in food and nutrition, which in turn has increased the political interest and will to better link agriculture, food and health.
- Consolidation in the agri-food system means that theoretically at least, large changes are possible in short periods of time.
- Major food companies have shown leadership in providing healthier food options for consumers.
- If the political will is there, agricultural policy can be shifted to encourage the development of a healthier food system. Agricultural research investment can target sustainable systems for small and large farmers that support and complement nutrition and health initiatives.
- Agricultural bio-product innovation can result in new food products with enhanced nutrient and processing profiles that are more supportive of healthy eating.
- Public interest has supported the development of many diverse alliances across government and community groups interested in food, sustainability and healthy eating.
- This in turn has supported an emergence of local, direct-marketing agricultural production systems that complement the broader "industrialized" food system, particularly with respect to fruit and vegetable production and marketing.
- A number of jurisdictions have tried different policies to promote healthy eating – a wide variety of strategies are available for governments and communities to implement.
- All the provinces in the Atlantic region have health promotion initiatives through their provincial health departments – these include promotion of healthy diets, helping link food and health. The next step is agriculture!



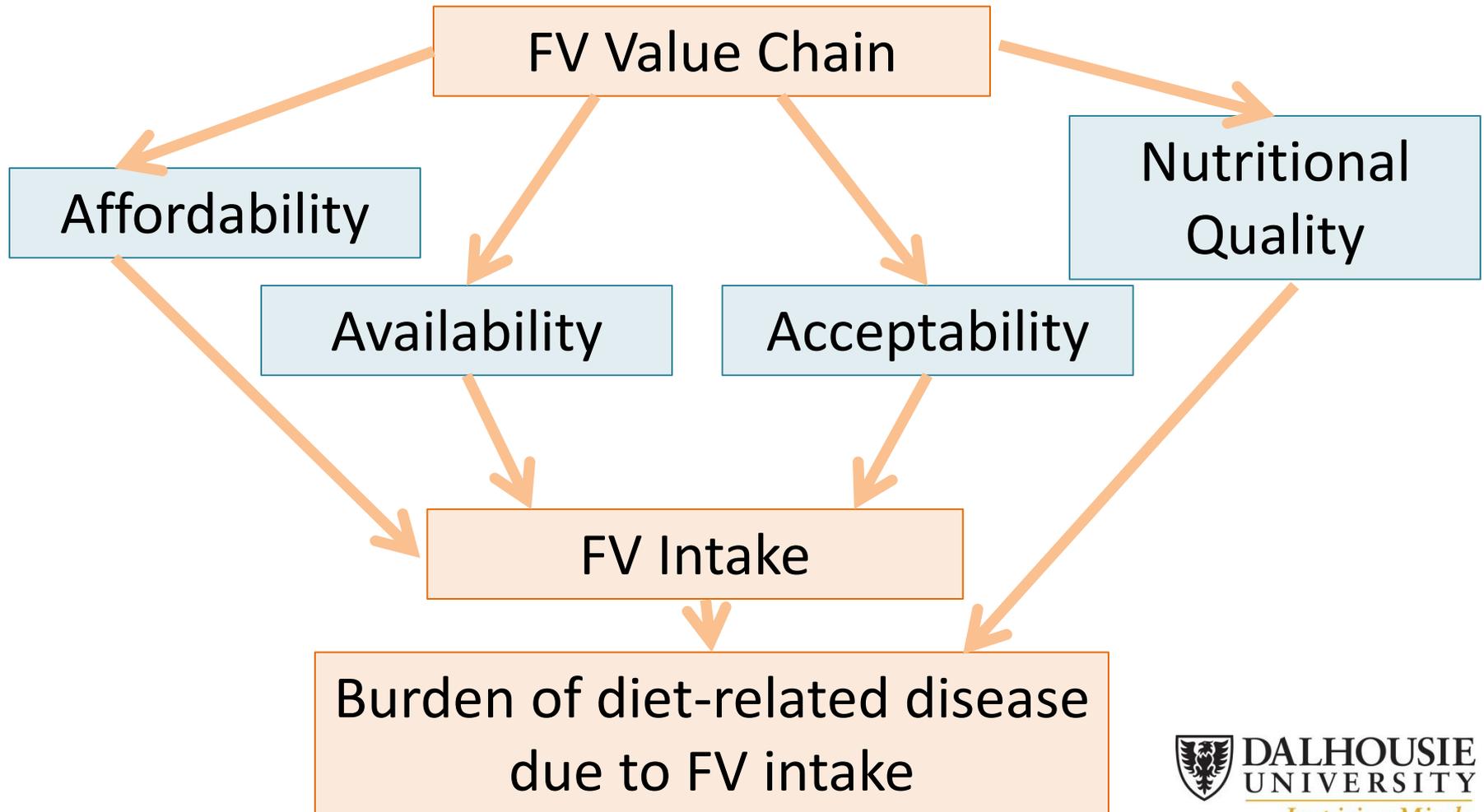
Agriculture & Health



from Dangour AD, Green R, Hasler B, Rushton J, Shankar B & Waage J; *Proc Nutr Soc* (2012), 71, 222–228



Example: A Health-oriented Fruit & Vegetable Value Chain





What questions?

- current issues and linkages between agriculture, nutrition and health in Atlantic Canada
- opportunities for agriculture to have a more positive impact on human health
- technology and innovation to ensure agriculture and food production support better health outcomes
- using choice and values to influence ag, food and health outcomes
- go-forward strategies to better link agriculture, food and health for improved outcomes for Atlantic Canada



Learn, Contribute, Collaborate.....