

Goals of Food Security Strategy

A resolution adopted at the 1995 OPHA Annual General Meeting

Code: 1995-04 (RES) *Status:* Active

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS The Ontario Public Health Association endorsed the development of a discussion document outlining a food security strategy for Ontario; and

WHEREAS the Food Security Workgroup, in response to this endorsement, developed a discussion paper; and

WHEREAS the discussion paper, Food for Now and the Future, outlines three goals for an Ontario Food Security Strategy: to ensure that Ontarians have the means to access affordable, nutritious and personally acceptable foods; to ensure a sustainable, safe and high quality food supply in Ontario, and to promote food consumption patterns that maximize health and minimize disease in Ontario; and

WHEREAS the OPHA Food Security Workgroup has revised the content of this document as a result of extensive consultations and discussions undertaken with key stakeholders and OPHA members.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT OPHA adopt the three goals of Food for Now and the Future as a framework for a provincial food security policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OPHA Food Security Workgroup will work with the OPHA Board, Executive and Membership in advocating a comprehensive food security strategy for Ontario.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Association's Food Security Working Group will work with the Board in advocating a comprehensive food and nutrition strategy for the province. The Food Security Working Group will continue to dialogue with a variety of stakeholders and sectors, including the provincial Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs and Community & Social Services, as well as agri-

food organizations and associations, environmental groups and the community/public health sector. This dialogue will also assist in coalition-building at both the local level and provincial level.

BACKGROUND

At the recent International Conference on Nutrition, held in Rome under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization, all nations were called upon to develop and implement measures to ensure food and nutrition policy “which affirms access to nutritionally adequate and safe food as a right of each individual” (1). In response, Canada has developed a National plan of Action for Nutrition, and provincial governments have been encouraged to be part of this process (2).

In 1988, the OPHA adopted *Healthy Public Policy: A Framework*, which in part, called for a comprehensive approach to food and nutrition policy making, integrating agricultural, economic and environmental factors (3). In 1992, the Association defined food security as:

“People have food security when they can get enough food to eat, that is safer that they like to eat, and that helps them to be healthy. They must be able to get this food in ways that make them feel good about themselves and their families” (4).

A resolution was passed for the Association to develop an advocacy strategy to ensure that food security for all residents of Ontario was addressed (4).

In 1993, the Association’s Food Security Working Group was formed. Their approach to date has involved writing a paper entitled *Food for Now and the Future: A Food and Nutrition Strategy for Ontario*, in order to stimulate discussion on the complex issues associated with food security policy. The goals of this strategy are:

1. To ensure that all Ontarians have the means to access affordable nutritious and personally acceptable foods
2. To ensure a sustainable, safe, high quality food supply in Ontario
3. To promote food consumption patterns that maximize health and minimize disease in Ontario (5).

Additionally, a parallel advocacy plan based on principles of social justice and equity, environmental sustainability, and health as it relates to issues of nutrition and food was developed. In order to implement these goals, the strategy calls for a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach to policy. The membership of the Association has been kept informed about food security issues through workshops at the Annual Conference, a HealthBeat article (Winter 1994), and discussions with the Board and Constituent Societies. As part of the implementation strategy, the document was circulated to key stakeholders within the public and community health sector, as well as being sent to a variety of government, nonprofit, agri-food and environmental representatives for comment. This process will also assist in identifying the potential players who could support or oppose the issues within food security. The effort, as part of our advocacy plan is to establish common ground

to build a groundswell of support. Due to the range of issues, this discussion will assist in formulating a plan of priority actions, in moving toward a comprehensive and food and nutrition strategy. It is the intent of the Food Security Working Group to create a synthesis document for the review and endorsement of the membership in 1996.

REFERENCES

1. World Health Organization, and Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. World Declaration on Nutrition. International Conference on Nutrition, December 1992.
2. Health Canada, Nutrition for Health: An Action Plan for Canada (Draft). June 1995
3. Ontario Public Health Association. Position Paper: Healthy Public Policy: A Framework. November 1988
4. Ontario Public Health Association. Resolution #2: Food Security. November 1992
5. Ontario Public Health Association, Food Security Work Group. Food for Now and the Future: A Food and Nutrition Strategy for Ontario Discussion Paper. March 1995.

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Status: Policy statements (resolutions, position papers and motions) are categorized as:

ACTIVE, if:

1. The activities outlined in the policy statement's implementation plan have not yet been completed; or
2. The policy statement addresses an issue that is currently relevant to public health in Ontario.

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1. The activities outlined in the policy statement's implementation plan have been completed; or
2. The policy statement addresses an issue that is not currently relevant to public health in Ontario or is not based upon the most current evidence. The statement remains the position of the OPHA until a new statement is adopted that effectively reverses or essentially negates all or major elements of an earlier statement. In this instance, the former supersedes the latter

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