

## **March 13, 2007 Growing Up Organic (GUO) update**

### **The Growing Up Organic conference in Toronto, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

Julie, Marnie and Janine attended the Growing Up Organic conference on behalf of OFCM in Toronto on February 17<sup>th</sup>. There were about 350 people present and a wide range of speakers. There were booths and the whole day session was held in one room.

There were a number of interesting speakers at the event, including a few that OFCM might want to bring in the future. The presentations from the conference are up on the website <http://cog.ca/growing-up-organic/speakers.htm>

I spoke with Dr. Rick Smith is Executive Director of Environmental Defence, the non profit that campaigns for project such as the Toxic Nation. You may have heard about the studies that involve testing people for measurable levels of pollutants in their blood on CBC or through the paper. Anyway, he did say that he'd be interested in coming. Just a thought, there are a number of organizations that we could partner with to bring folks. Also, I thought Thomas Pawlick who recently authored The End of Food: How the Food Industry is Destroying Our Food Supply--And What We Can Do About It is someone else we might consider bringing. He's a journalist. Here's a little write up about the book. Thomas Pawlick's book is full of very scary facts on how modern industrial farming techniques have reduced the available nutrients. For instance, since 1950 supermarket potatoes in Canada no longer contain Vitamin A, their iron quotient has been reduced by 57% along with their Vitamin C. Meanwhile, tomatoes have lost 61.5% of their calcium, 35.5% of their iron and 50% of their Vitamin A while gaining 200% more sodium! The End of Food shows how it's not enough simply to eat a salad, consumers need to think carefully about who grew the ingredients in it and how and where. And that's not even getting into what's put into our livestock.

### **The Growing Up Organic Workshop in Toronto, March 18<sup>th</sup>**

Janine, Marnie and Julie gave a PowerPoint presentation about the Growing Up Organic project in Manitoba. COG is in year 1 of the 3 year project and there are 4 chapters across Canada that have taken on the Growing Up Organic initiative for this year. Out of the 4 chapters, Manitoba is the furthest ahead on this work. We were able to answer a number of questions from chapters across Canada. Every chapter will have a different way of implementing the project and chapters will share materials and insights as they develop. COG will continue to support us where possible. The Sunday workshop has helped us to focus more concretely on what needs to be done here in Manitoba. If anyone is interested in the presentation that we made at the workshop, please e-mail me and I can send it without the photos.

### **What's happening with the Growing Up Organic project in Winnipeg**

Marnie has completed phase one of recipes, costing for full and partial menus for both snacks and lunches. She has created documents that are child facility friendly. She will provide a current pricelist with highlighted child care relevant items when initial contact with facilities is made.

We have completed the design of a PowerPoint presentation that is available to childcare facilities. It includes photos, statistics, health benefits section, among other slides.

We have made 2 presentations to date, one to the Network for Infant and Toddler Caregivers at the Canadian Wheat Board and the other to interested childcare facilities at LaVerendrye School. We will continue to make more presentations as requested by interested facilities.

Julie and Marnie are working on completing a package for those who have an interest in the program. We have a letter of intro, a FAQ sheet, a benefits sheet, a pricelist, business card and are in the process of working on a pamphlet.

Marnie and Julie are working on contacting the facilities that have indicated they have an interest. Once all of these locals have either received a package or viewed the presentation, we will begin to branch out with secondary contacts.

We need to further design and develop a “contract” or “pledge” between OFCM and the childcare facilities that are involved with the project.

We also need to prepare media correspondence, but will wait until the project is a little further underway.

We do have an e-mail address dedicated to the Growing Up Organic project. It's [guo-ofcm@cog.ca](mailto:guo-ofcm@cog.ca)

In terms of funding, we will need to secure further funding for consecutive years for the program. We have allotted for some grant writing with the funds that we have received.

### **Growing Up Organic Grants**

We have received the \$5000 from COG and a good portion of the funds have been used for the initial stages of the project. There are some funds reserved from the \$5000 for more grant writing. Of the \$15,000 from SDIF, we have received \$12,000. The remaining \$3000 will be held until more work has been completed on the project. We are still waiting to hear back on 2 grant applications – Assiniboine Credit Union and Altamira. The Altamira application will be several months, not until the beginning of September and the Assiniboine Credit Union should be sooner. We will need to get working on more grant funds in order to ensure that this project continues for the next little while. We will also need to solicit sponsors. Janine will be a great help with this. When Janine returns, we will put together a sponsorship package.