



Brochet Band office organizes traditional fishing derby for adults and children. Photo courtesy: Brochet Band Office.



Mrs. Phillamen Umperville, one of the elders of Brochet said, "Gardening and canning meat was our passion. We never ran out of food and we were very healthy in our time". At age 89 she hopes for the best. She wants the young generation to start gardening. Her nephew Mayor David Lapensee is involving youth of his family to take care of the nursing station greenhouse and community garden in Brochet.

Willson Halcott worried about the future of the youth in regards to access to affordable and healthy food. At age 75 he is still growing potatoes and other vegetables in his garden.

Brochet and Barren's Land seek local solutions from traditional foods and gardening to offset the high price of healthy food

Asfia Gulrukh Kamal, Mariah Mailman and Shirley Thompson
Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba
s_thompson@cc.umanitoba.ca

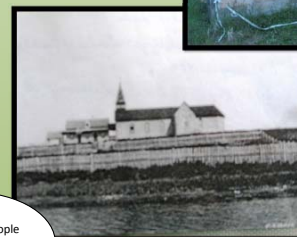
Getting the soil ready: David Lapensee along with another community member working in the Brochet community garden.



This is the greenhouse and community garden at the nursing station. Brian Cook is one of the nursing station gardeners in Brochet.



Many remember the community garden started by the Church. Photo below courtesy of Mrs. Philomene Umperville, Brochet.



Nurse Arlette Plessis is one of the master gardeners taking care of the community garden and the greenhouse by the nursing station. Ask her about gardening; she has lots of knowledge.



Background

The community was established during the Hudson Bay fur trade bringing together the Cree and the Dene Nations located on the north end of the Reindeer Lake. The community has limited access to other localities (no permanent road, accessed either by airplane, periodic winter road and a long journey from the south end of Reindeer Lake). Due to the extreme transportation issues, the cost of all goods, especially food, is very expensive and there are very limited supplies and varieties of fresh produce and dairy products. Cultivating food security locally was important. Brochet people were fond of growing. Over the years several priests popularized gardening in the community by growing plants in a greenhouse. Most of the gardening disappeared in the late 70s due to social programming/welfare as well as access to cheaper commercial foods. For the last several years Brochet school has been attempting to reinstate gardening with the help of Frontier School Division, Brochet nursing station and the Mayor and council. The mayor and council and the nursing station have been producing some vegetables and raspberries in the community garden by the Brochet nursing station. Also a small community greenhouse supplied by NACC is growing various vegetables. The Band council is planning to garden to help grow healthy food. With the help of nurse Arlette Plessis they started 20 new gardens on the reserve side of the community growing flowers and potatoes in summer 2009.

Introduction

This study asked:

- whether healthy food is accessible and affordable to people (Household Food Security Survey)?
- what are the barriers to putting healthy food on the table of Brochet community members?
- what gardening and other traditional methods of harvesting provide food in Brochet?
- what do Brochet people need in order to eat healthier?

Methodology

A door to door household food security survey and interviews of 51 Brochet households (random sample) was conducted in June 2009 by Asfia Gulrukh Kamal. The people interviewed ranged between 18 and 70 years of age. The survey findings were analyzed by Statistical Products and Survey Solution (SPSS). Open-ended qualitative interviews were conducted in order to get a holistic understanding of the problem and the solutions. Participatory video methods were used to record stories and community engagement.

Findings

Prices for healthy food are too high: 64% of Brochet households said they often worried that they would run out of money and not be able to buy food. Many households had hungry children because there was no money to buy food. People couldn't afford to buy healthy food and children were hungry because there was no money to buy food and the cost of healthy food is very high.

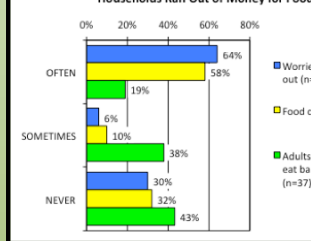
Survey Result

- ◆ 64% of community households said that they are often worried that they would run out of money to buy food. Food is costly and income is limited.
- ◆ 57% of community households could not afford to buy healthy food.
- ◆ 50% of community households garden to improve their access to healthy food.
- ◆ 50% of community households wanted training in gardening.
- ◆ 50% of community households wanted training for youth to get food from land and promoting local food will help the situation.
- ◆ 60% of households had to rely on a few low-cost food items to feed their children.
- ◆ 63% of the community member couldn't afford to buy healthy food for children and cannot afford to buy enough to feed children.

What are people saying?

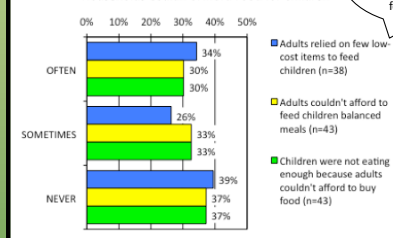
The community elders remember when they, along with their families, used to garden. They grew mostly root vegetables and preserved their vegetables in root cellars (basement area in the house to keep vegetables and canned meat). Almost every house had a garden growing potatoes. People were active and healthier. By getting training in gardening and a good supply of plants, seeds, bedding plants and soil, Brochet people think they can have more gardening in the community. This might be a solution to deal with poor access to healthy fresh vegetables.

Households Ran Out of Money for Food



68% of community households often ran out of food and money.

Households Couldn't Afford Food for Children



60% of the community people rely on a few low-cost food items to feed children.

Price of milk, tomatoes and oranges in the Brochet Northern Store are too high for people to afford. Prices were recorded June 25th, 2009.



Milk 4 L
\$12.99

4 tomatoes
\$12.39

Oranges
\$8.95 per LB

One of the community members said, "In Brochet if one doesn't know how to grow or get food from land he/she has to go for low-cost unhealthy meals. We have limited options."

Conclusion

Brochet people are trying to do more gardening, which was once a regular practice. This local food production is important as most community households cannot afford to buy healthy food from the Northern Store. Gardening material and teachings about traditional land activities, food preservation and gardening are wanted. However, most people didn't know there was training, materials and programs that could make food production more sustainable and generate community development at Brochet.

Programs and Contacts

Programs are by request, to help actions in communities. Contact for help and supplies:

1. Northern Healthy Food Initiative (NHFI), Manitoba Government funds groups like Northern Association of Community Councils (NACC), Bayline Regional Roundtable (BRR), Four Arrows Regional Health Authority and Manitoba Food Matters to increase access to healthy food and to support food projects. Contacts: Jennell Majeran, Manager, Northern Healthy Foods Initiative (204-677-6677, Jennell.Majeran@novmb.ca) and Jessica Paley, Northern Healthy Foods Initiative, (204-945-0569, Jessica.Paley@gov.mb.ca).
- Programs in other communities include:
 - ◆ chicken, turkey (with chicks and feed provided but not coop) goat and other small livestock production,
 - ◆ freezer loans for people to buy freezers to store healthy food,
 - ◆ community or school greenhouse and households receiving plastic for building a greenhouse, and
 - ◆ provision of vegetable seeds, berry and other bedding plants, and school grow lights.
- ◆ an annual workshop in Thompson called the Northern Harvest Forum to provide free teaching to northern community members about food production and preservation.
2. Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) provides gardening support to communities giving workshops on gardening and chicken production. Contact: Brian Hunt (204-856-9255, Fax: 204-745-5690, brian.hunt@gov.mb.ca).
3. Northern Association of Community Councils (NACC) provides seeds, plants, gardening and loans tools for community and household gardens, as well as chicken and goats. Contact: (204-947-2227, nbhfo5@mts.net or nacc@mts.net).
4. Frontier School Division provides Veggie Adventure school activities and greenhouse and gardening expertise for northern climates. Contact: Chuck Stensgard (204-473-2332, chuckstensgard@hotmail.com).
5. Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative (CDPI) provides some funding for traditional activities and gardening through the Brochet nursing station. Contact: Arlette Plessis (204-323-2759).
6. Burntwood Regional Health Authority could provide community visits by a dietitian to teach community people, particularly pregnant women and diabetes patient, about healthy diets and how to cook healthy meals. Contact: (204-677-5350).
7. Apply for Green Team, a 100% government-funded program that employs youth to start community gardens, market gardens or help with household gardening. Fill out the application form at: <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/youth/employers/hometown.html>.
8. View your participatory video called Growing Hope at <http://home.c.umanitoba.ca/~thomps04/Movie.html>.

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