

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KINGSTON, ONTARIO – May 8, 2007

### FOOD DOWN THE ROAD SPRING SERIES FINALE

How do you fit into a sustainable local food system? What are the next steps for Kingston and countryside? Do you have a role to play?

***Food Movements with Momentum: Building Structures that Support Vibrant Local Food Systems*** will bring together farmers, eaters, local leaders -- all citizens with an active interest in sustainable local food. The event takes place on **Thursday, May 10, in two sessions, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.** at Kingston City Hall.

The National Farmers Union (NFU) Local 316, the Kingston Economic Development Corporation, St. Lawrence College, and the Frontenac Federation of Agriculture are partners for this event, the last in a four-part spring series. The sessions continue the long-term efforts of ***Food Down the Road: Toward a Sustainable Local Food System for Kingston and Countryside***. The NFU Local 316 initiated ***Food Down the Road*** with the aim of involving a broad range of local food system participants in bringing fresh, healthy, sustainably grown, local food from field to table in our region.

The afternoon and evening events will feature local food system builders Wayne Roberts, director of the Toronto Food Policy Council, and Mike Schreiner, vice-president of Local Flavour Plus. Roberts is Canada's leading pioneer of food policy council and food charter structures that have been founded in cities/countrysides from Boston, to Ottawa, to Seattle, to Vancouver. Schreiner recently lined up a six-figure contract ensuring that approximately 10% of food used in University of Toronto cafeterias will be grown locally and sustainably by Toronto area farmers.

The 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. workshop will bring together people from a broad range of sectors involved in Kingston and countryside's farm and food system to learn about successful development models from across North America. They will discuss where they each fit into our food system, the support structures that will enable their various organizations to grow, buy, process, cook, and sell sustainable local foods, and what their individual and collective next steps should be as organizational leaders. (Contact Andrew McCann at (613) 767-4127 to register for the afternoon workshop)

The ***Food Movements with Momentum*** 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. public event is the grand finale of the ***Food Down the Road*** spring series. Roberts and Schreiner will share their success stories from Toronto, followed by a question and answer period. Everyone will have the chance to discuss what lessons can be learned for Kingston and countryside, what is unique about our region's farm and food system, and what needs to be done to support and build it.

"The spring series has brought eight sustainable local food advocates from other regions to educate, inspire and challenge us," says Peter Dowling, farmer and director of NFU Local 316, adding, "but the central theme has been local participation. Every one is a speaker, and a listener. The future of farming and food in Kingston and countryside depends on the relationships and exchanges between us. We are all food citizens."

Hundreds of people in the Kingston area have actively engaged in this momentum building process, and thousands more have heard or read about ***Food Down the Road*** in newspapers, on the radio, on television, on the internet, through mail outs, and at presentations across the city and region. Local food citizens have raised a diversity of questions, concerns, and opportunities that lay the basis for the **Local Food Summit this Fall 2007**. The Summit will carry forward the momentum built during the spring series, gathering issues, research, resources and the people who want to develop a sustainable local farm and food system in Kingston and countryside for discussions, planning and decision making.

All are welcome to May 10's spring series finale! Tasty local treats will be served. Donations will be gratefully accepted.

***Food Down the Road***, initiated by the NFU Local 316, relies on the generosity and participation of many supporters and volunteers. It is funded in part through contributions by the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario under the Agricultural Management Institute (AMI), an initiative of the federal-provincial-territorial Agricultural Policy Framework designed to position Canada's agri-food sector as a world leader. The Agricultural Adaptation Council administers the AMI program on behalf of the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario.

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For further information, please contact: [http://www.nfu.ca/on/misc\\_files/FoodDownRoad.html](http://www.nfu.ca/on/misc_files/FoodDownRoad.html)

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