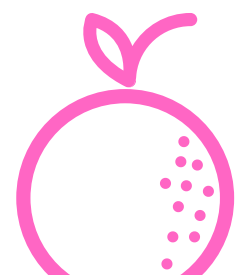
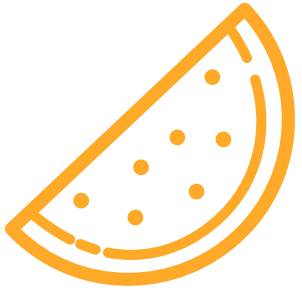
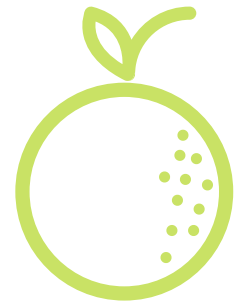
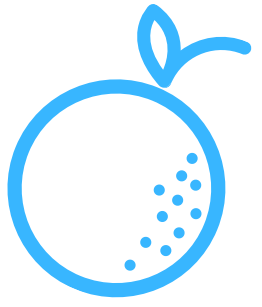
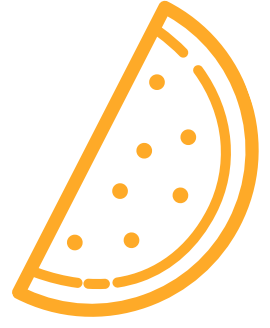
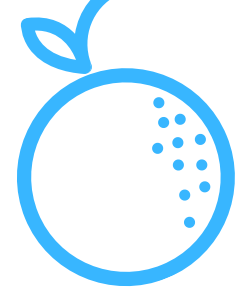
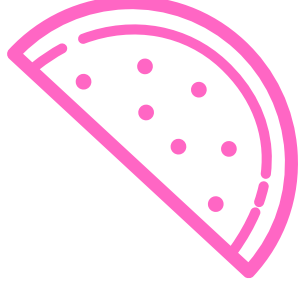
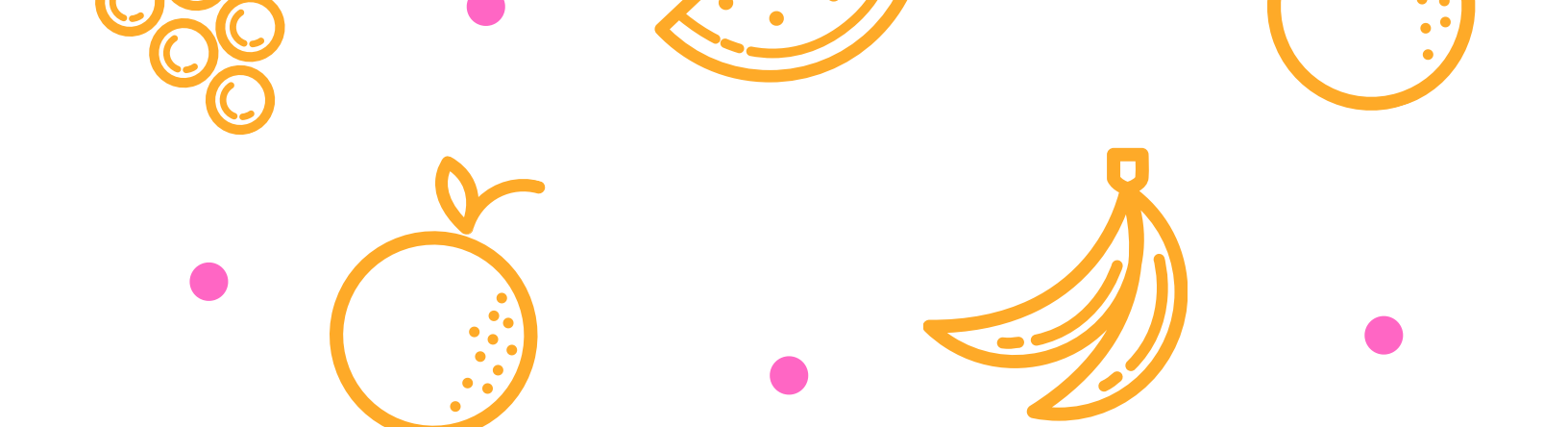


**TOGETHER,
LET'S CREATE
FOOD
ALTERNATIVES
FOR THE
SOUTH WEST
ISLAND**





This summary presents the pilot project *Together, Let's Create Food Alternatives for the South West Island* which aims to improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables in the city of Pointe-Claire, as well as the results of the *Let's Talk Food survey* conducted during winter 2019. The project is funded by the Mesure 1.2 - Programme de soutien à l'accès aux fruits et aux légumes à Montréal 2018-2021, from the Direction Régional de Santé Publique (DRSP).

Starting point of the project

According to geographical studies conducted by the DRSP the West Island is considered to be a food desert, meaning that 83.5% of the residents have very limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. A food desert is a geographic area where nutritious and affordable food is not accessible within 500 meters of walking distance or 3km by car. It particularly affects the populations living on a low-income.

Objectives

The main objective of this project is to improve accessibility to fresh fruits and vegetables by developing and implementing sustainable, inclusive and adaptive services for and by the residents of Pointe-Claire, with the possibility of scaling up and replicating the project throughout the West Island, while keeping in mind that the chosen initiative has to be adaptive to the needs of the residents.

Steps of the project

2018-19

Portrait of the situation

- Through the Let's Talk Food survey on access to fresh fruits and vegetables, which was distributed in Pointe-Claire
- Through Focus groups discussions
- Through Door-to Door activities
- Through consultations with organisations that provide food or food related services
- Through observations during group discussions

2019

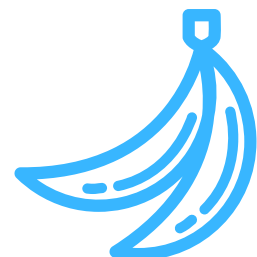
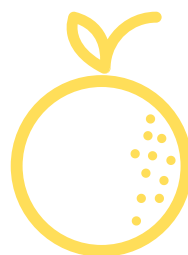
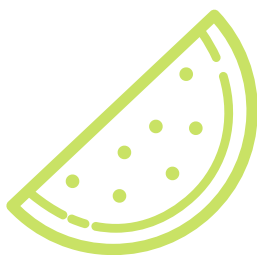
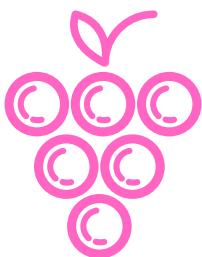
Create and support working group

- Mobilize citizens, form citizens working committee
- Mobilize key stakeholders, develop partnership and collaboration

2019-20

Development of the pilot project

- With the working committee, identify criteria and conditions for success, in order to select a pilot project
- Identify actions to be taken collectively to implement the project
- Elaborate the action plan
- Establish partnership agreements with collaborators
- Secure additional funding if needed
- Identify a backbone organisation that will support the project



Steps of the project

2020-21

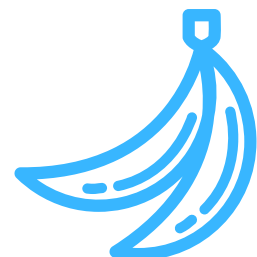
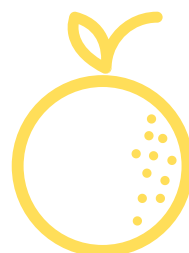
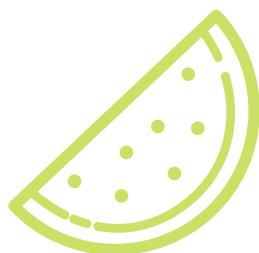
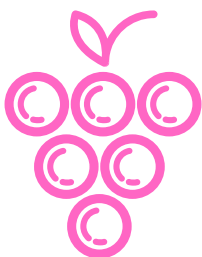
Implementation of the project

- Collaborate with residents
- Collaborate with key stakeholders and backbone organisation
- Coordinate and support activities as per action plan
- Secure permanent funding for the continuation of the project

2021

Evaluation of actions and strategies taken

- Documentation and evaluation activities
- Scaling up analysis
- Reporting





Portrait of the population

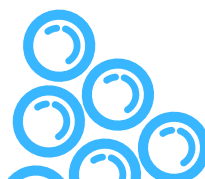
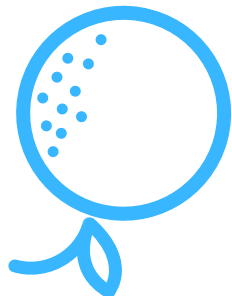
The aim of this study was to better understand the state of food security in Pointe-Claire, by looking at existing food-aid services, schools offering food-aid related services and the needs and challenges of these organisations, as well as the level of residents' access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Moreover, we wanted to identify whether residents are using the existing services and if not, what are the obstacles. Additionally, the residents were asked what services they thought would help to improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

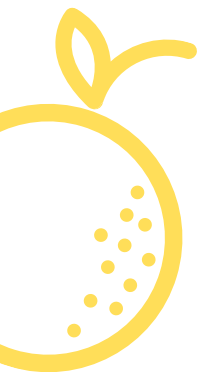
Data collection

Through the *Let's Talk Food* survey and Focus groups
Between January and February 2019

494 surveys were completed by citizens of the West Island, among which there were 240 residents of Pointe-Claire and 68 respondents from organizations and schools.

4 focus groups were conducted bringing together 58 people
3 observations of community meals took place





The *Let's talk Food* survey helped us establish a diagnosis of the community needs and portrait of the existing services regarding access to fresh fruits and vegetables (F/V) in Pointe-Claire. What we learned was put together in a report in June 2019 (to be published). Below you will find the most relevant information. All stats and statements below are taken from the data that was collected through Let's Talk Food survey and Focus groups.

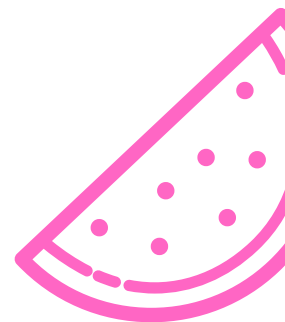
Access to fresh fruits and vegetables in Pointe-Claire

Regardless of income, about 1/5 of the surveyed residents of Pointe-Claire consider they don't have sufficient fresh F/V in their meals. For almost 1/2 of the people living under the poverty line and 3/4 of single parent family the presence of fresh F/V in their meal is considered insufficient. On the other hand, 79% of the residents of Pointe-Claire consider it very important for them to have access to fresh F/V.

The residents of Pointe-Claire supply themselves in fresh F/V mostly from supermarkets, but a 1/3 of the ones living under the poverty line buy them from local stores. Grocery shopping is done mostly by car.

The two main obstacles in accessing fresh F/V were identified as:

- The price (70% of respondents)
- Mobility (for about 1/3 of people living under the poverty line).





*General information on residents who are
using food services*

923 people receive food services in Pointe-
Claire

Most of them are

Women

Single

About 1/2 live under the poverty line

More than 1/2 are 61 yrs old and older

About 1/2 are retired



About 1/2 of the residents living under the poverty line don't know the services and out of the ones who do, about a 1/3 know them by word of mouth

The most used services are:

- Community meals

It is important to mention that the residents who are using these services consider community meals to serve their social needs, rather than the food needs, therefore they did not identify themselves as food services users.

- Cooking/nutrition workshops
- Food basket delivery

In general, services are used once a month

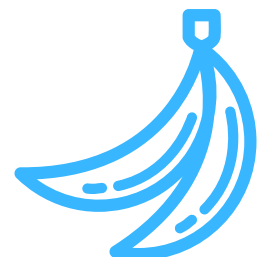
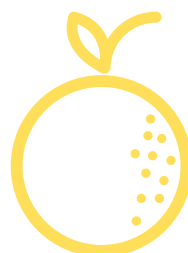
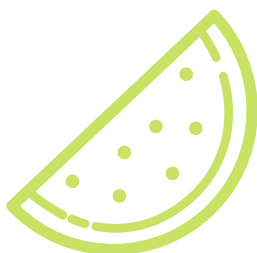
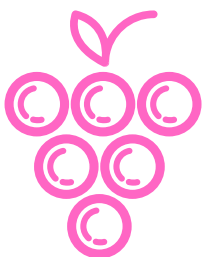
The main reason for not using the services are:

- The poor quality of the food received by the services (lack of variety or lack of knowledge on how to use/cook the products)
- The stigma associated with having to prove their income or the lack of sufficient revenue to pay for food and medication

The top 3 services identified by respondents which would improve their access to fresh F/V

- Street markets (for about 1/2)
- Collective farms
- Shuttle bus

It is important to mention that a vast number of respondents commented that the conditions of the services is what concerns them the most, i.e. as long as they are not accessible, affordable and available, the residents see themselves as less likely to benefit from any of the mentioned services.



On Organisations offering food services

Based on responses from 17 community organisations

- About 1/2 of organisations claim they do not have sufficient fresh F/V to serve their clients, while fresh F/V are about 1/3 of the food they provide
- Only 1/3 of the fresh F/V they provide to their clients comes from donations, the rest is bought in supermarkets and from local farmers
- Donation sources are unreliable and storage spaces are lacking

On Schools

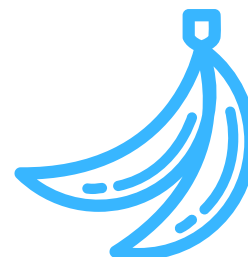
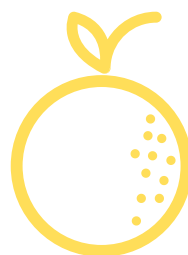
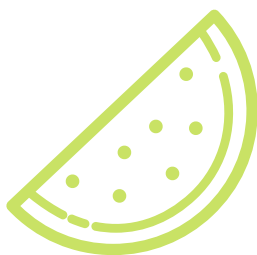
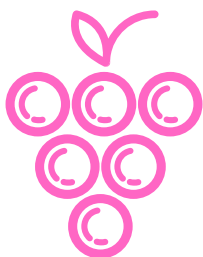
Based on the responses of 7 schools

- More than 1/2 answered that they have children who come to school hungry
- More than 1/2 don't have breakfast/snack/lunch program
- 3 out of 7 receive financial support for food security programs

Both organisations and schools find that the main obstacle to offering fresh F/V is the lack of resources

The top 5 services identified by organizations that would help improve their services:

- List of existing resources
- More resources
- Accessible and affordable transportation services
- Adapted programs and services
- More workshops in multiple locations





We hope that the data that we collected during this study will not only allow to better shape the pilot project in Pointe-Claire, but will also serve key stakeholders in the development and delivery of the programs and services that aim to improve food security in the community.



Published on October 7th 2019

