

October 7, 2010 - For Immediate release

**School Children Descend on Queen's Park October 8 to Enjoy Fun with Food:
700 Students from JK-Grade 12 Celebrate Fall Harvest with Food Literacy Activities
Just in Time for Thanksgiving!**

On Friday October 8, 700 students will descend on Queen's Park for a fun-filled gathering to celebrate the fall harvest with hands-on Food Fun. It's a great news story about how easy it is to harness the power of food in Ontario schools, just in time for Thanksgiving, and the perfect antidote to the negative outlook making the rounds with diabetes and obesity numbers soaring. Ontario students are active and eager participants in innovative food literacy programming that will lay the foundation for their healthy future.

Eat-In Ontario will fill the front lawn of the Legislature with Food Fun, with school children from Kindergarten through Grade 12 joyously engaging in 52 hands-on activities that put them back in touch with healthy food, reminding them where food comes from, how it is grown, and how to prepare it. The event highlights intersections for food education in the existing curriculum, and why our schools are the perfect place to do this work, which 95% of Canadians feel is the answer to rising rates of obesity and diabetes according to a national poll to be released later this month by FoodShare Toronto.

"Eat-In Ontario is a fun, celebratory way for us to explore the great, creative connections to food running all the way through Ontario's school curriculum," says FoodShare Toronto's School Programs and Student Nutrition Senior Manager. "We've been working in schools with teachers and students for years and have proven that hands-on food literacy education can be simply and easily integrated into the school day, creating the foundation for a healthy future. The educators and students and all attending Eat-In Ontario - including Minister of Children and Youth Services Laurel Broten, who we are delighted to have with us - are in the vanguard of an important new movement."

After many years of mapping curriculum connections to food and creating innovative workshops, tools and resources for teachers and students in our Field to Table Schools program, FoodShare Toronto is taking this work to a new level, leading the charge to embed food education in the Ontario curriculum and make food literacy a requirement of graduation for our students.

"Food is delicious and fun and important in so many ways for all of us, but it has particular power for our school children in all stages of their development," says Debbie Field, FoodShare's Executive Director. "In FoodShare's schools programming, we have learned that food improves attendance, gets kids focussed, active and moving, and can be the perfect creative way to get students involved in any subject area, providing a whole new set of tools for teachers. Food is the answer to all the terrible stories we are hearing about pandemics like diabetes and obesity. We know that kids want to get involved, and they like being involved with their food. It's easy to harness this power, teaching school children about healthy food choices within our great school system and FoodShare is invested in proving that, supporting our education system in making it happen."

Eat-In Ontario is the official launch of FoodShare's **Recipe for Change** initiative, which will mobilize students, educators, families, farmers, policy-makers and key decision-makers to become involved in integrating cooking, gardening, composting, nutrition and food literacy into the provincial curriculum and school practices from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12.

LOCATION: Queen's Park South (entire South Lawn bordered by Queen's Park Crescent and Legislative Building)

TIMING: Friday, October 8, 10:30am-2:00pm

→ Minister of Children and Youth Services Laurel Broten joins students from 11:30am-12:00pm

→ Fun Food Activities run continuously from 11:30am-1:30pm

→ Synchronized apple crunch (FoodShare's Great Big Crunch) at 1:40pm, dignitaries, 700 students

→ Additional Media opportunities with FoodShare Toronto and supporters 2:00-2:30pm in Media Tent

VISUALS: Diverse and excited students engaging in fun activities: Apple Dance Party, Composting Family Feud, Pollination Patrol Relay Race, Plant Art, Vegaquarium, File-a-Sprout, Schoolbus Kitchen, Harvest Tastings, with the day culminating in a synchronized local apple crunch at 1:40pm.

FoodShare Toronto (www.foodshare.net) is Canada's largest community food security organization. Now in its 26th year, FoodShare works with communities to improve access to healthy, affordable, sustainably produced food through community-based programs and policy recommendations, with a vision of Good Healthy Food for All. FoodShare Toronto created the model for student nutrition programs in the City of Toronto, which works hand-in-hand with our Field to Table Schools program, the educational complement that returns food education to schools through curriculum connections from Junior Kindergarten through Grade 12 to cultivate food literacy. Our "Good Food Café" is a successful healthy cafeteria, which the Toronto Star has called "the future of school lunches."

For more information, interviews or media opportunities, or photos from our extensive galleries please contact:

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