



School Food For All:
Nourishing Futures



L'alimentation scolaire pour tous :
Nourrir l'avenir



Growing a Local Food System

Karen Hutchinson, Albion Hills Community Farm

3 June 2026, 10:50 am

My Food System Work

- **Farmer, Educator and Food System Innovator** working to transform agri-food systems for equity, sustainability and to provide good, clean and fair food for all. Uses systems thinking, mapping, innovation and transition theory to develop pathways for change
- Graduate Diploma in **Social Innovation** from UW and Masters of Environmental Studies in **Transitioning Community Food Systems** from YorkU
- Coach with **Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC)** where system thinking unlocks innovation for a sustainable future
- Working for System Change at **Albion Hills Community Farm** in Caledon, Ontario

Big Ideas for Today

- **Learn about Community Farming -**
- **Think in Systems**
- **Look for Innovation and New Opportunities in Your Local Food System**
- **Use Partners and Collaborate**
- **Use Tools to Help with Your Journey**



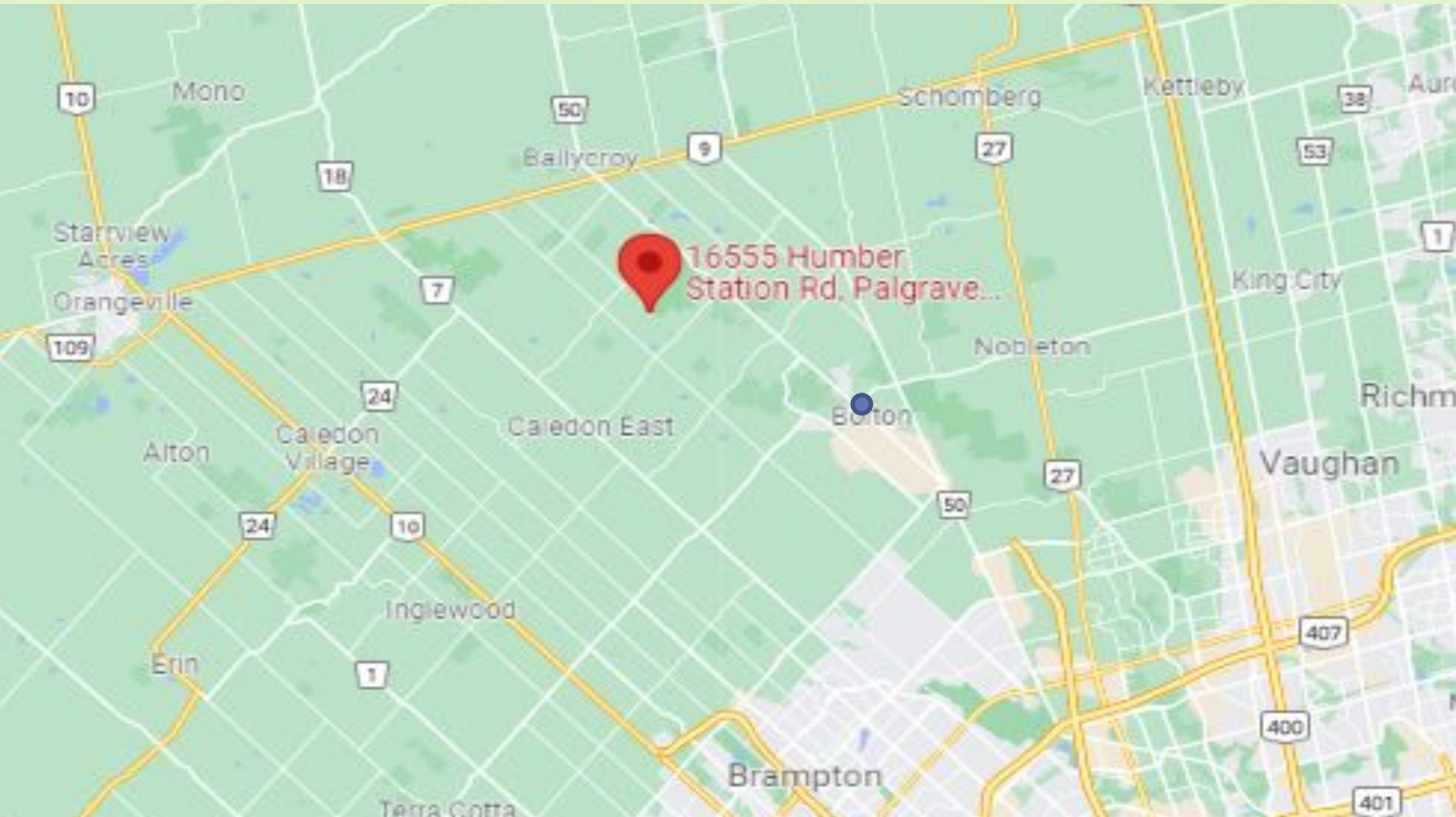
ALBION HILLS COMMUNITY FARM

**GROWING FOOD, GARDENS,
ECOLITERACY & COMMUNITY**

Learn more at albionhillscommunityfarm.org

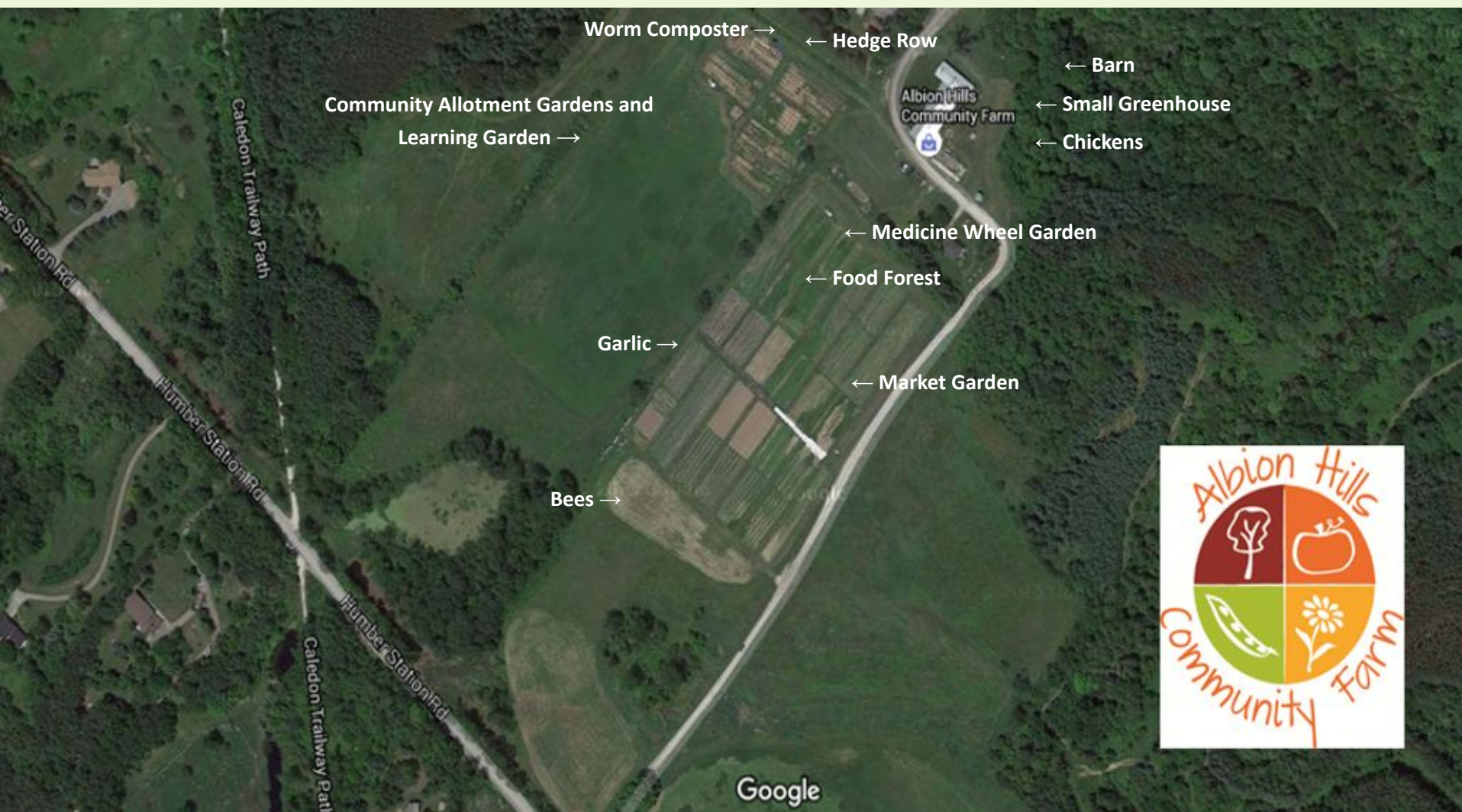


Farm Location @ Albion Hills Conservation Area





AHCF Farm Plan – 17 Acres



How We Farm/Operate

- **Organic practices** (not certified) for entire farm site
- **Sustainable** for people, animals, environment, energy, packaging
- **Regenerative Farming** for soil
- **Market** is local and community based
- **On public lands** (TRCA) in Albion Hills Conservation Area

Mission and Vision

- Increase the **public's** understanding of **local food and farming** through the **operation of a community farm and learning centre** in Caledon
- **Focus** on education, food production, community gardens, allotment gardens, sustainable near-urban agriculture and eco-literacy.
- To work through **community partnerships** with government, business and other not-for-profits across many sectors to achieve this mission.

Farm Site – 7 Zones

1. **Sixty Plot Community Allotment Garden** with rented plots from 200 to 2000+ sq. ft.
2. **Community Gardens** including Pollinator, Perennial, Learning, Medicine Wheel, Butterflyway, Hedge Row, Food Forest, Compost Zones and Bee Yard/Apiary
3. **1.5 Acre Market Garden** including a variety of vegetables, fruits and value-add including a 19,000 bulb **Garlic Operation**
4. **Weekly Farm Stand**, sales to other farms and donations to The Exchange Food Centre
5. Three hive **Bee Yard** for pollination and honey
6. Backyard Hens – **Chicken Coop**
7. **Field Crops** (forage/hay)

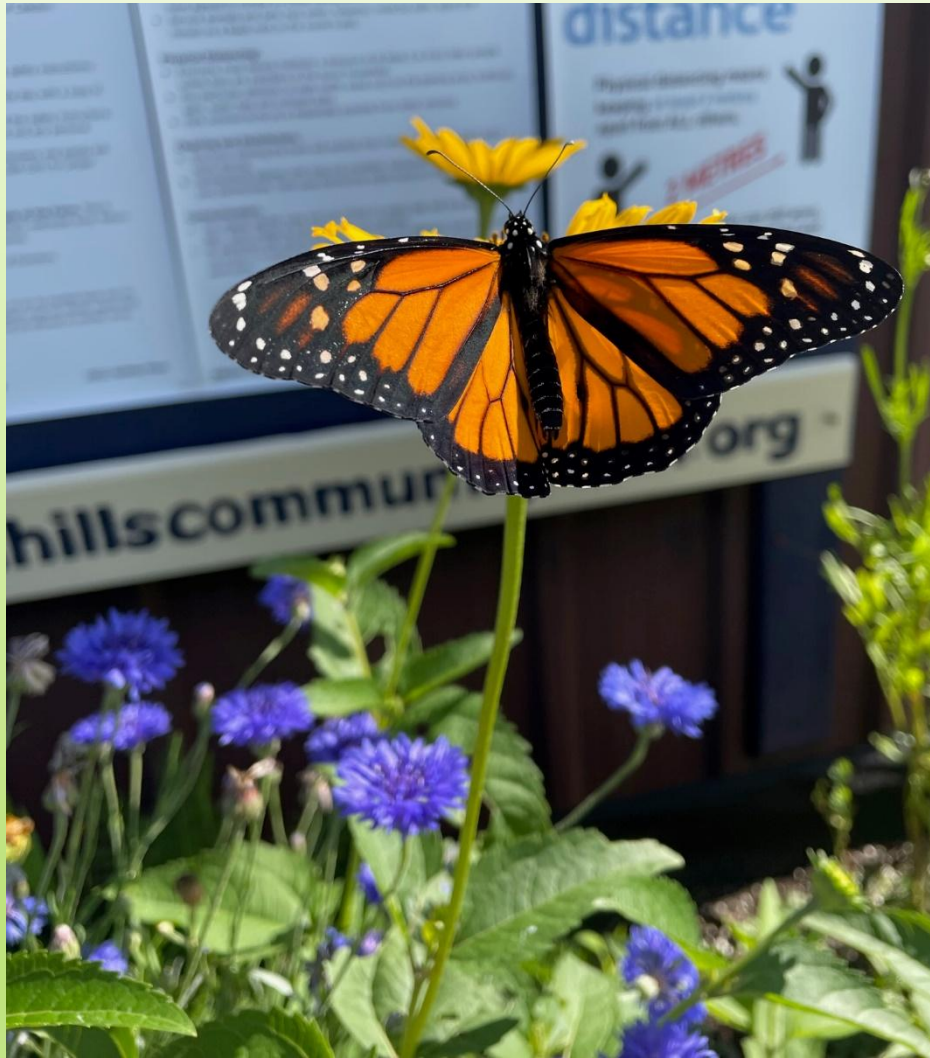
1. Allotment Gardens

- Sixty Plot **Community Allotment Garden** with **rented** plots from 200 to 2000+ sq. ft.



2. Community Garden Spaces

- Pollinator Gardens,
- Monarch Waystation through Monarch Watch
- Perennial Gardens
- Learning Garden
- Medicine Wheel Garden
- David Suzuki Butterflyway Gardens
- Hedge Row and Food Forest
- Compost Zones
- Bee Yard/Apiary



3. Market Garden

- Deer fenced 1.5 Acre Garden
- Ten permanent plots with ten beds in each at 4 feet wide x 100 feet in length
- Drip line irrigation from farm well
- Variety of vegetables and fruits
- Some other perennial fruit and vegetable beds throughout property
- Large garlic planting



Value Add Products



11 Varieties of Garlic



Garlic – 16,000 Bulbs!

- **Harvesting Garlic Scapes**



4. Weekly Farm Stand

- **Weekly Farm Stand**, sales to other farms and donations to The Exchange Food Centre
- Sell our vegetables and fruits
- Value-add done at the Palgrave United Community Kitchen
- Includes honey from our bees, eggs from our chickens and maple syrup from our partnership with Etobicoke Outdoor Education Centre

5. Bees, Bee Yard, Apiary, Honey

- Five hive **Bee Yard** for pollination and honey



6. Backyard Hens – Chicken Coop





Chickens and Bees



7. Field Crops

- **Field Crops** of forage/hay harvested around the market garden and allotment garden fields working with a local farmer
- Our neighbour across the road has horses and he buys our hay and brings us his horse manure to make into compost

Six Core Program Components

1. **Four plus annual events:** Seedy Saturday, Spring Festival and Plant Sale, Monarch and Pollinator Festival, Honey Garlic Festival, and Holiday Market
2. **Education Programs** for Food and Eco-literacy with schools and community
3. Work with **Field Centres** (EOEC and AHFC) to provide food and farming education
4. **Caledon School Vegetable Garden Project** with sixteen schools in Peel District School Board
5. **Volunteer Opportunities** (community service hours, co-ops and internships), groups and corporate
6. Work with **Community Partners**



Seedy Saturday

Vendors
Book Sale
Seed Exchange
Community Groups
Café
Maker, Potting, Kid
Zones!
and so much more!

CASH EVENT

Saturday, March 2, 2024

10am - 2pm

Albion Bolton Community Center
Auditorium

Email programming@caledon.library.on.ca for Vendor information



Palgrave
United
Community
Kitchen



ALBION HILLS COMMUNITY FARM MONARCH & Pollinator Event

learn about monarchs & spend time on the farm

Saturday
August 12
2023
10-2

16555
Humber
Station Rd
Caledon



SAVE THE DATE!

Honey Garlic Festival
September 16



@albionhillscommunityfarm
albionhillscommunityfarm.org



Four Main Events

ALBION HILLS COMMUNITY FARM Spring & PLANT FESTIVAL & SALE

Saturday
May 13
2023
10-3

16555
Humber
Station Rd
Caledon



transplants
perennials
food&fun



@albionhillscommunityfarm
albionhillscommunityfarm.org



ALBION HILLS COMMUNITY FARM Honey & GARLIC FESTIVAL

vendors
bees&pollinators
food&fun
garlic

Oct 1
2022
11^a-4^p



16555 HUMBER STATION ROAD • CALEDON



@albionhillscommunityfarm
albionhillscommunityfarm.org



“Farmer for a day” curriculum-linked farm visits for schools

INQUIRE NOW AND BOOK YOUR FARM VISIT

info@albionhillscommunityfarm.org

FESTIVALS

Seedy Saturday (March) • Spring Fest &
Plant Sale (May) • Monarch & Pollinator (August)
• Honey Garlic Festival (September)

Farmstand Open Thursdays

12-7PM FROM JUNE TO OCTOBER



[@albionhillscommunityfarm](https://www.facebook.com/albionhillscommunityfarm)
albionhillscommunityfarm.org



System Thinking

TOOLS OF A SYSTEM THINKER



DISCONNECTION



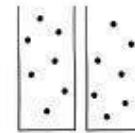
INTERCONNECTEDNESS



LINEAR



CIRCULAR



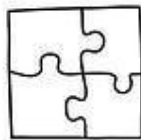
SILOS



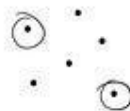
EMERGENCE



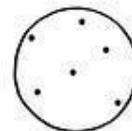
PARTS



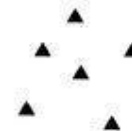
WHOLES



ANALYSIS



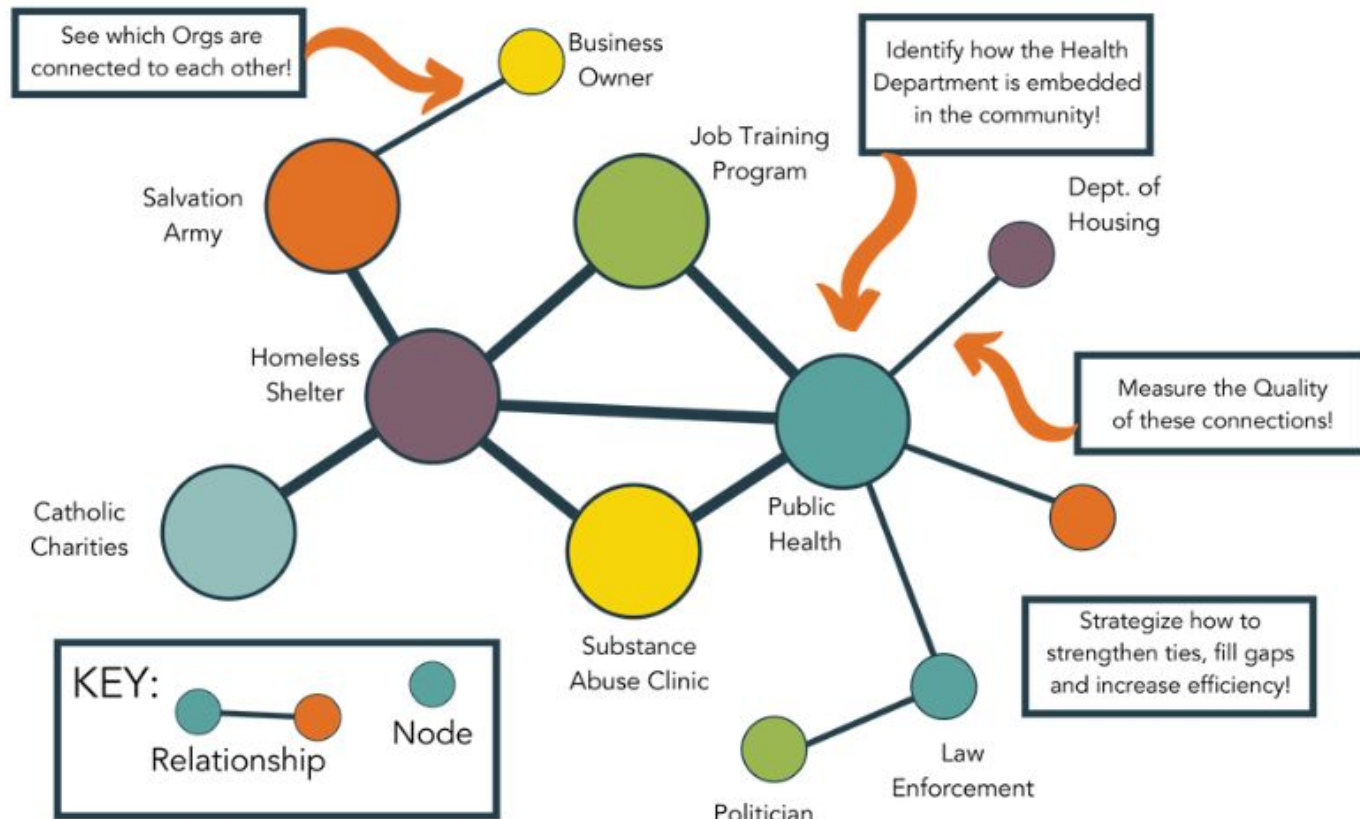
SYNTHESIS



ISOLATION



RELATIONSHIPS



<https://visiblenetworklabs.com/ecosystem-map-template-for-community-collaboration/>



<https://blog.kumu.io/a-toolkit-for-mapping-relationships-among-the-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs-a21b76d4dda0>

Community Connections

- **Groups** you have a natural or fixed relationships with...landlord, municipality, etc.
- **Schools** - look at all school boards in area
- **Potential Partners** doing similar work in your area who are like minded
- **Local Business**
- **Farm Organizations, Fair Boards, 4-H**

Community Partners

- Toronto and Region Conservation
- Palgrave United Community Kitchen
- Etobicoke Outdoor Education Centre
- Albion Hills Field Centre
- Town of Caledon and Caledon Public Library
- Stan Cameron, Trustee (Caledon), Peel District School Board
- Headwaters Food and Farm Alliance, (Farm to School and Local Food Directory)
- Glen Echo Nurseries
- Davis Farm
- Ecological Farmers of Ontario
- And many other local individuals, groups and businesses

Community Connections

- **Toronto and Region Conservation Authority**
 - Landlord
 - Located in Park
 - Albion Hills Field Centre
 - Peel Engagement Programs with schools (Native Plant Program), Girls Can Too, Conservation Youth Corps, Ontario Monarch Teachers' Network and more
- **Palgrave United Community Kitchen**
 - Dirt to Delicious Camps, Baking Camps,
 - Food skill building workshops
 - Value Add products for certified kitchen
 - Events – Seedy Saturday
- **Etobicoke Outdoor Education Centre (TDSB)**
 - Chicken care in off-season
 - Maple Syrup Program
 - Field To Table

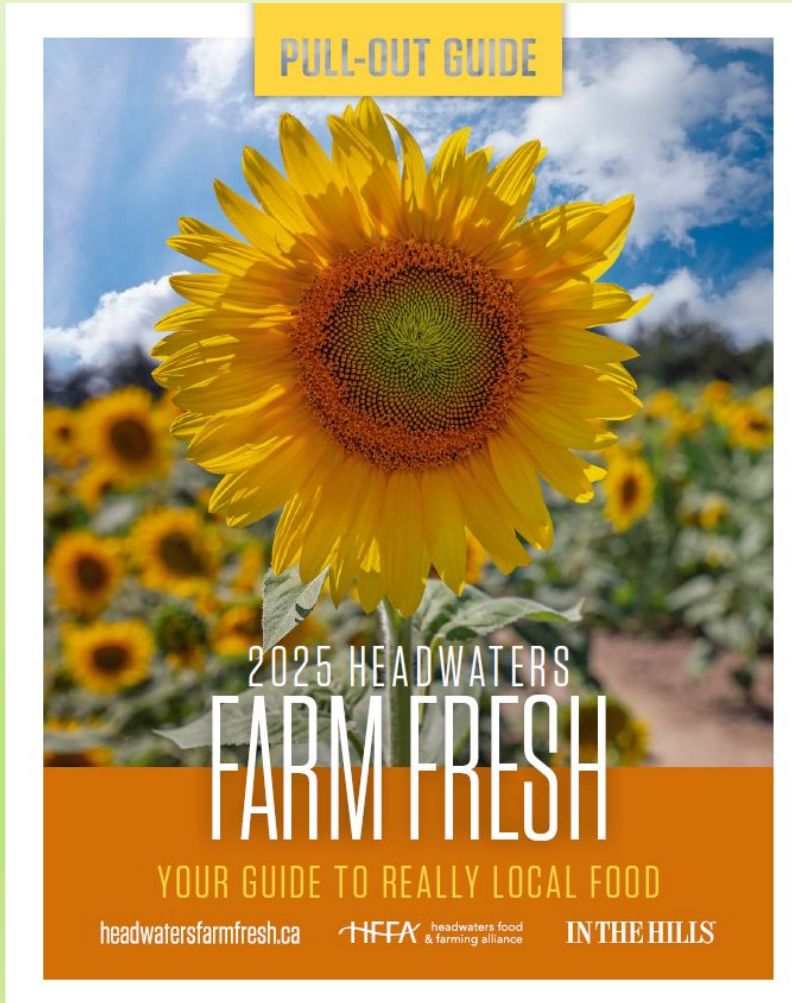
Community Connections

- **Town of Caledon and Caledon Public Library**
- Funding – municipal grants and climate change grants
- Library for events (Annual Seedy Saturday) and Workshops
- **Caledon School Vegetable Garden Project**
- 16 plus PDSB Schools – staff, students and school families
- Stan Cameron, Former Trustee (Caledon), Peel District School Board
- Davis Farm
- Glen Echo Nurseries
- Home Hardware and Home Depot
- EcoCaledon
- Town of Caledon –Climate Change Fund
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Caledon Crunch

Community Connections

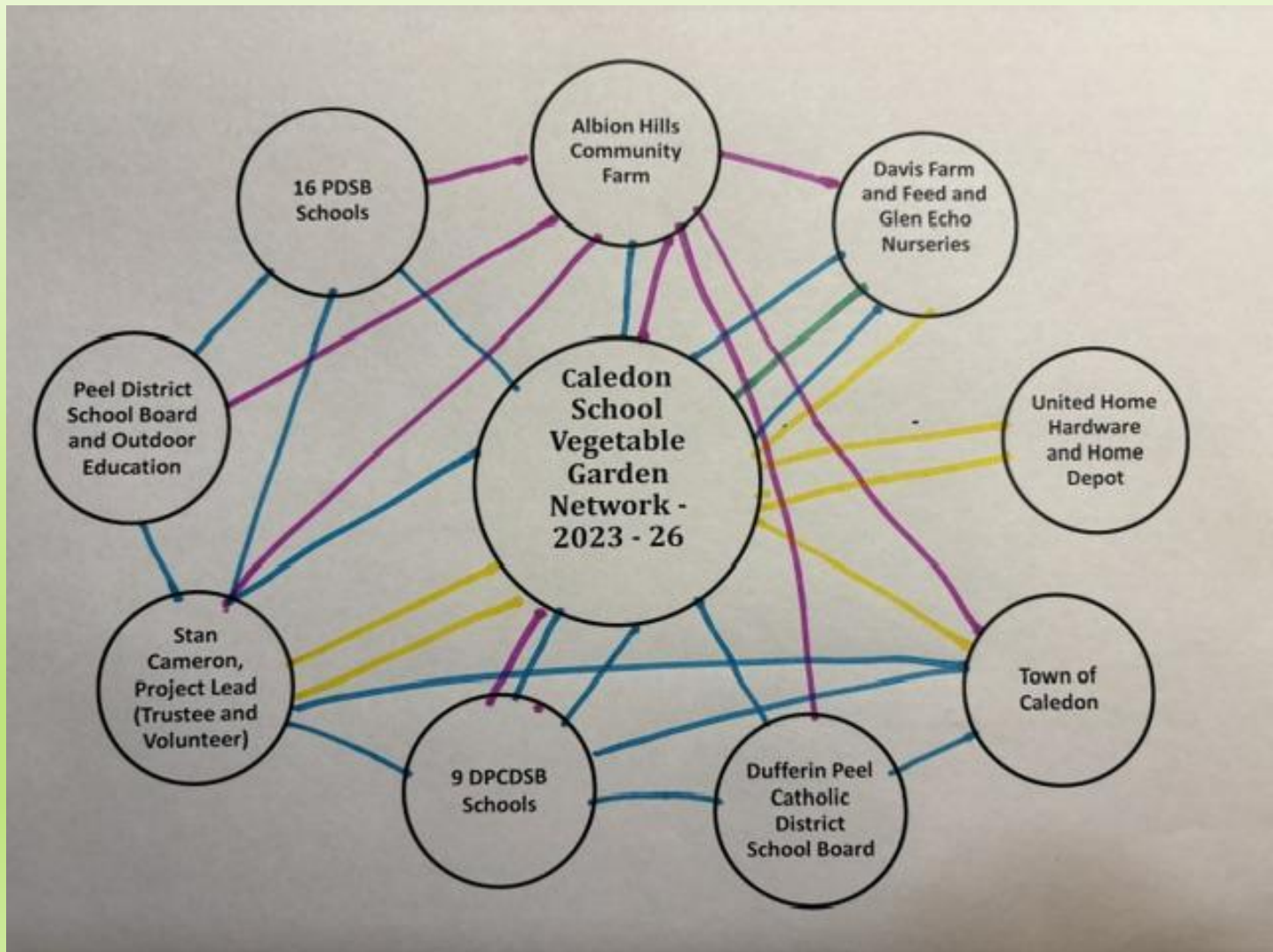
- **Headwaters Food and Farm Alliance (Farm to School and Local Food Directory)**
- Farm to School Programs, Leadership Circle, Big Fresh Goal, Pea Sprouts Project
- Headwaters Farm Fresh Directory with *In the Hills* Magazine
- **Research Projects:**
- Ecological Farmers of Ontario/Seeds of Diversity/Canovi Trials through UBC
- University of Toronto Scarborough – TOSustain project
- **Region of Peel**
- Peel Agricultural Action Working Group (PAAWG)
- Grown in Peel Guide
- Ontario Rural Clean Water Program
- Caledon Crunch Funding
- **And many other local individuals, groups and businesses**

Headwaters Farm Fresh Guide

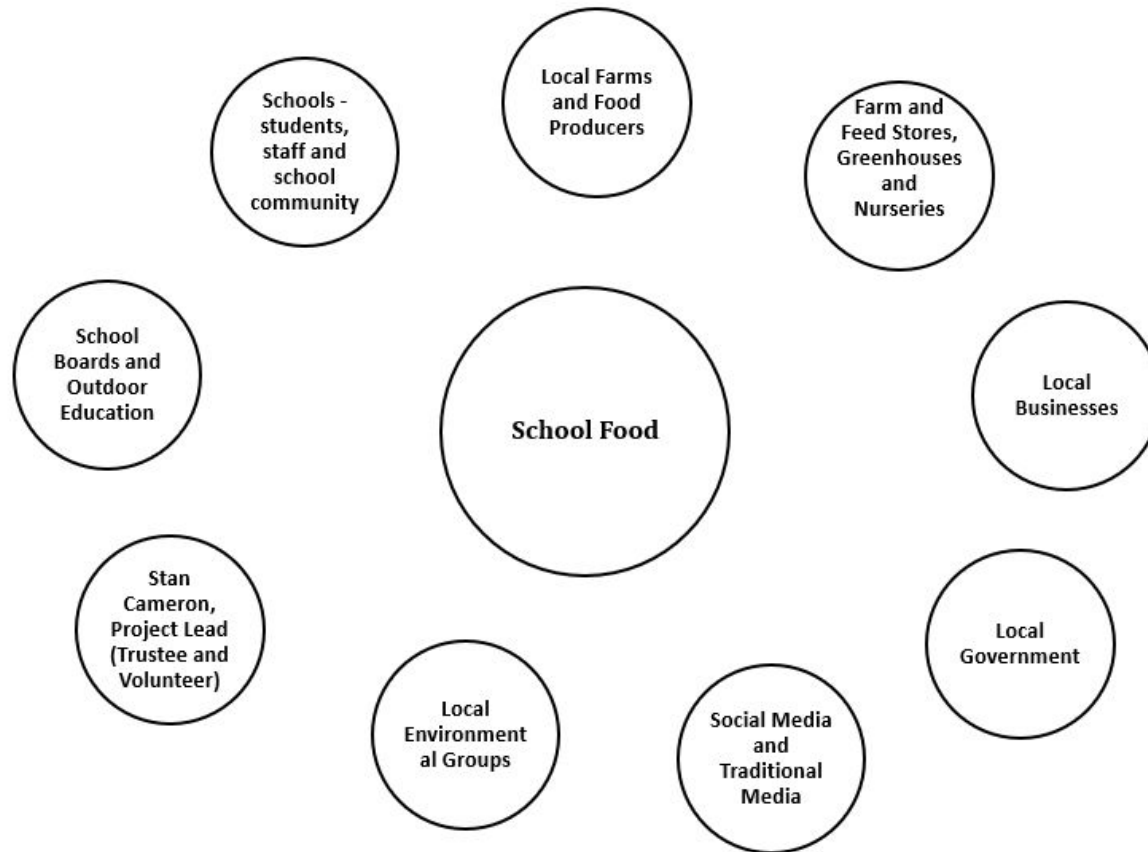


- In the Hills Magazine
- Headwaters Food and Farming (HCIA) and Farm to School (F2S)
- Marci Lipman
- Albion Hills Community Farm
- Local Municipalities and Dufferin County
- Farms
- Advertisers

CSVGN Ecosystem



School Food Ecosystem





How to Find Us

- **16555 Humber Station Road, Caledon - north of Old Church Road on East Side of Humber Station**
- **Web – www.albionhillscommunityfarm.org**
- **Facebook – Albion Hills Community Farm**
- **Instagram – Albion Hills Community Farm**