



**FLEdGE**  
*Food: Locally Embedded, Globally Engaged*

# **FLEDGE**

**(FOOD: LOCALLY EMBEDDED,  
GLOBALLY ENGAGED)**

Consolidated Summary

**2015-2023**



## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Food: Locally Embedded, Globally Engaged, more commonly known as FLEdGE, was a collaborative and community-based research partnership that fostered sustainable food systems that are socially just, ecologically regenerative, and economically localized.

The project included over 130 individuals from more than 90 Canadian and international organizations. FLEdGE research took place in **seven Canadian nodes**, where practitioners and researchers explored the role of community food initiatives as pillars of sustainable transformation, and in **three thematic international working groups** exploring agroecology, sustainable food system metrics, and innovative food system governance.

At the outset of FLEdGE, research was organized around three key themes: integration, scaling up, and innovative governance. As the project evolved in response to community partner needs and the changing landscape of food systems research, FLEdGE researchers developed six **Good Food Principles** to act as a guide for researchers and practitioners working together towards sustainable food systems.

## NODE LEADS



Dr. Charles Levkoe and Dr. Connie Nelson (Northwestern Ontario)  
Dr. Mary Beckie and Dr. Kent Mullinix (Alberta and British Columbia)  
Dr. Peter Andréé, Dr. Patricia Ballamingie, and Dr. Irena Knezevic (Eastern Ontario)  
Dr. Alison Blay-Palmer and Dr. Andrew Spring (Northwest Territories)  
Dr. Alison Blay-Palmer, Dr. Karen Landman, and Dr. Theresa Schumilas (Southern Ontario)  
Dr. Anna-Liisa Aunio and Nii Addy (Quebec)  
Dr. Catherine Mah and Dr. Irena Knezevic (Atlantic Canada)

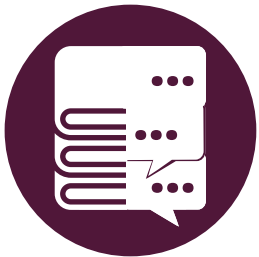
# SNAPSHOTS

## 2015-23



FLEdGE supported nearly **63** undergraduate students, **81** master's students, **28** doctoral students, **15** postdoctoral researchers, **2** community researchers, **5** research assistants and associates, **1** research fellow, and **42** other Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP).

FLEdGE members participated in nearly **298** presentations and gave **43** interviews.



FLEdGE produced **71** open-access and **16** subscription based journal articles.

FLEdGE published **5** books and **20** book chapters.



FLEdGE created **6** conference publications, **29** articles in popular media, **105** reports, and **85** other pieces of grey literature.

FLEdGE members hosted and participated in **1** conference, **57** workshops, and **60** meetings and consultations.





## PRESENTATIONS

Over the course of the FLEdGE project, partners from all seven research nodes gave nearly **298** presentations across ten countries, seven Canadian provinces, and one territory. Key topics and themes covered in the presentations include food policy and governance; health and nutrition; Indigenous self-determination and food sovereignty; food security and sustainability; climate change adaptation and mitigation; place-based and bioregional food systems; and food justice and social equity.

Notable presentations include:

- Three public presentations on The Future of Farming in Hastings County: Report for the community and local policy-makers, by Dr. Peter Andrée, Kim Bitterman, Ken Meter and Louise Livingstone.
- Abra Brynne's 2016 "Food Law Crash Course" presentation at the Future of Food Law & Policy in Canada conference.
- The 2017 FLEdGE and Food Secure Canada policy scan, presented as a series of six themed papers, maps, and summary tables to inform and contribute to a conversation on building a national food policy in Canada.

## INTERVIEWS

FLEdGE partners gave **43** interviews over the course of the project. Key topics and themes covered in the interviews include COVID-19, northern food initiatives, student food insecurity, national and provincial food system policy, and urban farming. Notable interviews include:

- *Climate Change Fuels Food Security Concerns*, an interview with chief Lloyd Chicot and Andrew Spring on the disruption of climate change on food security in the North.
- *A new generation of farmers: Eating local vegetables part I and II*, two interviews with Caroline Chiu on OMNI TV in 2017.
- *How do online sales affect grocery stores?*, a 2018 interview with Alison-Blay Palmer on CTV News.



## BOOKS

The FLEdGE project produced **5** books, ranging in a variety of topics from civil society to social movements, sustainable food systems, and food governance and policy.

Noteworthy publications include:

- *Food Studies: Matter, Meaning, Movement*, an open education resource written in 2022 by David Szanto, Amanda Di Battista, and Irena Knezevic, aims to help teachers and students understand and address numerous issues within food, food culture, and food systems.
- *Civil Society and Social Movements in Food System Governance*, edited by Peter Andrée, Jill K. Clark, Charles Z. Levkoe, and Kristen Lowitt, offers insights into the governance of contemporary food systems and their transformation by social movements.
- *Sustainable Food System Assessment: Lessons from Global Practice*, co-authored by Alison Blay-Palmer, Damien Conaré, Ken Meter, Amanda Di Battista, and Carla Johnston, provides insights into the growing interest in and response to measuring food system sustainability.

## BOOK CHAPTERS

FLEdGE partners completed **20** book chapters over the course of the FLEdGE project on various topics, such as impact pathway mapping, community-based food systems, Indigenous self-determination and food sovereignty, food policy governance, and agroecology. Most noteworthy include:

- Seven node members and collaborators edited or contributed their expertise on governance to the book *Civil Society and Social Movements in Food System Governance*.
- Ten node members and collaborators edited or contributed their expertise on food system sustainability to the book *Sustainable Food System Assessment Lessons from Global Practice*.



## ARTICLES IN POPULAR MEDIA

FLEdGE partners completed **29** articles in popular media (university and news websites, online magazines, journals, and other food research platforms). Topics and themes include local food communities, food systems, northern food sovereignty and insecurity, climate change adaptation, urban food systems, gender, and food policy. Notable publications include:

- "A Tale of Many Ewes", an article in *Edible Ottawa* by Patricia Ballamingie outlining the expertise of Denise Bonin-Mount and Phil Mount at Flat Earth Farm in Osgoode.
- "A Call for Transformative Actions on Gender and Inequality", an editorial in *Urban Agriculture Magazine* by Jess Halliday, Deepa Joshi, Laine Young and René van Veenhuizen addressing the significant barriers to participation in food value chains.
- "Wild Bees Need Our Protection", an article in the *Waterloo Record* by PhD student Jennifer March outlining how Kitchener, Waterloo, and Wellesley Township were designated "Bee Cities" by Bee City Canada in 2019.
- "In defence of Canada's Food Guide", published in *The Conversation* in 2019 by Catherine Mah, J. Nicole Arsenault, Nathan Taylor, and Rebecca Hasdell, provides feedback on Canada's new food guide during its development.

## CONFERENCE PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

The FLEdGE project produced **6** conference publications, ranging in a variety of topics from food security in Canada to city-region food governance, changing water futures and community capacity. Noteworthy publications include:

- *Learning From and Enhancing Community Capacity for Climate Change and Food Security*, co-edited by Kelly Skinner, Andrew Spring, Sonia Wesche, and others, was published for the ArcticNet Annual Science Meeting to highlight community capacity for climate change and food security in the Northwest Territories.
- In 2021, PhD student David Bysouth published their research, *Agriculture in the Boreal Forest*, outlining the impact of land use change on soil carbon for the purpose of supporting sustainable food systems in the EGU General Assembly Conference Abstracts.



## REPORTS, BRIEFS, AND OTHER GREY LITERATURE

FLEdGE partners completed **105** reports, briefs and other forms of grey literature over the course of the FLEdGE project on various topics, such as stakeholder engagement, food governance in Canada, local food procurement and policy, food system resilience, food sovereignty and sustainability, and regionalized food systems. Notable publications include:

- *Economic Impacts of a Regionalized Food System in the Okanagan Bioregion*, a 2021 research brief from the Okanagan Bioregion Food System by Mariko Wijekoon, Walapak Polasub, and Kent Mullinix.
- *Adopting a food systems approach: a case study of Just Food, Ottawa*, an executive summary by Nadia Ibrahim and Just Food.
- *Agroecology and Seed Sovereignty in Northern Ontario*, a 2022 report by Charles Levkoe, Rachel L. W. Portinga, Jordan Lees, and Evalisa McIlffaterick.

## PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

Over the course of the FLEdGE project, partners produced and published nearly **71** open access and **17** subscription based peer-reviewed journal articles. Key topics and themes covered in the articles include food policy and strategy in Canada, food systems transformation, urban resilience, COVID-19, regional food systems, settler colonialism, equitable and sustainable food systems, nutrient flows, agroecology, and food sovereignty. Notable articles include:

- [“Serving up food studies online: teaching about ‘food from somewhere’ from nowhere”](#) by Charles Levkoe, Irena Knezevic, Donna Appavoo, Andrea Moraes, and Steffanie Scott became the journal’s most-downloaded article of the year and the winner of its Best Paper Award for 2020.
- *On the Front Lines in Food Policy*, produced by Anna-Liisa Aunio and Laurette Dube, addresses the issues, challenges, and innovations faced by the Montreal food polity in transforming food systems.
- *Integrating a Food Systems Lens into Discussions of Urban Resilience*, by Patricia Ballamingie, Alison D. Blay-Palmer, Irena Knezevic, André E. B. Lacerda, Evelyn R. Nimmo, Lori Stahlbrand and Rotem Ayalon, reflects on ways policies and governance might better articulate across scale and argues that deep adaptation to climate change must frame all work moving forward.



## COMMUNITY AND RESEARCH TOOLS

FLEdGE partners created **18** community and research tools over the course of the FLEdGE project. Noteworthy tools include:

- Ka'a'gee Tu Atlas Community-based Mapping Tool, 2017.
- Farm Hub Breakdown Analysis Tool, produced by FLEdGE student Margaret Mills, 2017.
- The Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op: A Case Study, a tool developed by Allison Streutker with Charles Z. Levkoe and Connie Nelson for the Nourishing Communities Sustainable Local Food Systems Research Group.
- Young City Growers: Practices in Stakeholder Engagement as an Emerging Urban Food Project, a digital story by Laura Ames, 2017.
- FoodsShare Good Food Market Expansion Explorer, a project and organization mapping tool created by Amanda Jekums, 2017.

## OTHER (BLOG POSTS, WEBINARS, PODCASTS, ETC.)

FLEdGE partners completed **85** other publications, including blog posts, webinars, and podcasts. Key themes and topics covered in the publications include reconciliation, social movement engagement, food hubs, urban resilience, and traditional knowledge. Notable materials include:

- *Making the FLEdGE video, "Voices from the Network", and Discovering the Patterns that Revealed Themselves*, a 2020 blog post by David Szanto.
- *Tweeters and Eaters, Hackers, and Snackers: Digitally-Enabled Inspiration for the Food Movement*, a FLEdGE blog post by Tanis Schumilas.
- *Food Hubs 101: Learning From Others - What Works and What Doesn't*, a webinar by Jennifer Temmer, 2021.
- Six episodes from the **Handpicked: Stories from the Field** series feature several FLEdGE node leads and community partners who showcased both their research and efforts to make food systems more economically, environmentally and socially sustainable. Handpicked was featured in the Laurier CLA awards in 2022 and was the subject of an invited guest lecture given by Dr. Alison Blay-Palmer and Amanda Di Battista at the "Educational Pedagogies and Technologies for Sustainable Development - Translating Sustainable Innovation for Communities" international symposium.

# EVENTS



## CONFERENCE

FLEdGE co-hosted **1** conference in February 2017 alongside Alberta Food Matters called *Alberta Regional Food Systems Forum: Cultivating Connections*. The forum brought together three hundred and forty-two people (teachers, farmers, chefs, researchers, health practitioners, students and members of the public), as well as delegates across Alberta to discuss food-related issues, Alberta's food culture, and the future of its food system.

## WORKSHOPS

Over the course of the FLEdGE project, node members participated in, co-hosted or hosted **57** workshops on the topics and themes of food security, sustainability, agroecology, climate change, national food policy, food system design, community asset mapping, community gardening, and pollinators. Notable workshops include:

- Two Digital Storytelling Workshops hosted by The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems in 2016 and 2017.
- The Agroecology Knowledge Exchange Workshop, also held in Waterloo, Ontario, was organized by FLEdGE's Agroecology Working Group in August 2016. The workshop brought together leaders in agroecology research and practice from Cuba, Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica and Canada.
- The Northwest Territories node also co-hosted two youth on-the-land camps in 2016 and 2017 to facilitate vital Indigenous teaching practices and ways of knowing with scientific tools in traditional languages.