



Of Meat Pies and Pie Graphs: Findings from Santropol Roulant's Food Audit

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A History of Sustainability at Santropol Roulant



Santropol Roulant is situated in the heart of the Plateau Mont-Royal, one of North America's densest and most populous neighbourhoods. We are the largest meals-on-wheels program on the island of Montreal. Over one hundred volunteers offer up their time to the organization each and every week.

Our sphere of influence is broad. The surrounding community shapes our work and we in turn help shape it. We are a clear reflection of our membership, and so, as notions of sustainability seep into the public consciousness, they also find their way into our daily work. Such a holistic and integrated approach to sustainability is unique for an organization whose primary focus is the delivery of a social service, yet why should it be? It is not enough to simply deliver the meals. We must do so in a way that recognizes the systemic factors that result in the need for such a service in the first place. We will not solve the world's problem in day, but we can try.

Since its inception in 1995, Santropol Roulant has been a Meals-on-Wheels organization with an implicit environmental focus, encouraging sustainable transportation by delivering most of our meals by bike. Over the past ten years, our commitment to a more sustainable urban food system and a healthier urban ecology has grown with the addition of the Rooftop Garden Project, our large worm composting bins, the Santrovélo Community Bike Shop, as well as a myriad of smaller initiatives and behavioural changes amongst our kitchen and office staff.

A Renewed Focus on Sustainable Food

Food is at the heart of *what* we do, and so *how* we do it is something we take to heart. Santropol Roulant is conscious of the choices it makes in feeding its community and strives to work in a way that respects the delicate balance of the earth on which we all depend. We view serving ethical, healthy and sustainably produced food as an investment towards our common future. As such, strengthening the food cycle and working towards a sustainable urban food system will remain at the heart of our sustainability programming for the years to come, with a focus on quality over quantity.

The case for building a sustainable urban food system is strong. The disconnect between producer and consumer is ever growing, and consequently, warnings of a looming food crisis continue to fall on deaf ears. The average meal travels more than 2400km from field to plate, be it by plane, by truck, by ship or by train. Copious amounts of fossil fuels are burned in the process, contributing to the climate crisis through the emission of harmful greenhouse gases. Conventional agricultural remains highly dependent on petro-chemical fertilizers.

Characterized by large expansive monocultures, it is highly mechanized, burning even more fossil fuels to run the tractors and other farm equipment. The total global contribution of agriculture to climate change, including deforestation for farmland and other land use changes, is estimated to be equivalent to between 8.5 -16.5 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide or between 17- 32% of all human-induced greenhouse gas emissions (Source: Greenpeace Canada). The significant carbon footprint of our food choices are thus reason enough to favour the use local and organic options, while simultaneously growing our own produce and composting our kitchen waste as part of sustainable urban food cycle.

As urban agriculturalists, it is our responsibility to also support the peri-urban regions. We do this through our purchasing policies and by promoting the virtues of local and organic agriculture amongst our members. Supporting local economies, countering the heat island effect, reducing rainwater runoff, protecting the health of our client members and ensuring biodiversity serve only to strengthen the argument in favour of sustainable food. In spite of impressive growth, sales of certified organic products accounted for less than 1% of the \$46.5 billion Canadians spent in national grocery stores in 2006 (Source: Statistics Canada). Between 1961 and 2001, the total number of active farms went from 95, 777 to 30, 539 (a loss of 68%), while the average farm size and livestock yields have significantly increased.

Why a Food Audit?

There are many benefits to performing a food audit. Compiling a set of quantifiable results will help Santropol Roulant set targets and meet regulations for the future. A food audit can also help connect us to the source of our food and inform our future purchasing choices. It will also reflect positively on the Roulant as it demonstrates a strategic step towards environmental education and improvement.



It is also important to recognize that a single food audit will not demonstrate development over time. It is essential that the Roulant continue with yearly food audits in order to reassess and measure its progress. With numbers in hand, the next phase our plan will be to set a target for increasing the percentage of food items that fit within our definition of sustainable food. We will develop a plan of action specific to that target. As a first step, the action plan will necessarily include the continuation of our work towards the creation of a closed food cycle as defined above.

Above and beyond our work on the food cycle, we will seek to identify sustainable alternatives to our current suppliers, while respecting present budgetary realities. We will redesign our menu to account for seasonality and show creativity in preserving and storing food for use over the winter months. We will share all of this with our membership through an interactive blog, regular workshops, public events, and a summary report.

Defining Sustainable Food

The following report will discuss the results of a food audit that was conducted as part of our move towards a truly sustainable food cycle, yet what is meant by a sustainable food cycle? It means that outside inputs are few to none. The entire system is self-contained: from garden to kitchen to client and back again.

First, the scraps from the kitchen are sent to the basement, where our worms work hard to turn it into rich compost. Next, the compost is sent to the garden and used as fertilizer in the cultivation of assorted vegetables. Finally, the vegetables return to the kitchen to be used in our daily meals and the cycle is complete.

As a first step, we began by establishing a common definition for sustainable food. We defined sustainable food as meeting the following criteria:

1. Locally sourced: Food from small to mid-sized farms within the province of Quebec. It was realized early on that local does not necessarily mean sustainable. For example, most of our meats are produced locally, but on large factory farms incongruous with our other definitions of sustainable food.

According to Nicole Basque from Beyond Factory Farming (BFF), “sustainable meat” is an ongoing debate in the food movement. BFF opts out of putting a number on how many animals is too much because if it said that 10,000 chickens was considered industrial, then corporate farms would have 9,999 and call themselves “small scale”. The establishment of quantifiable criteria creates loopholes for industry to jump through. Also, the amount of animals 1000 acres of land can handle is much different than a small farm of 100 acres.

Instead, BFF use the principles of “socially responsible agriculture” to distinguish between an industrial farm and a sustainable farm.

Socially responsible meat production is an integrated approach to raising animals that respects the environment, treats animals humanely, supports local communities, and is economically viable for farmers. It can include: certified (and non certified) organic farms, farms under holistic management, on farm biodiversity that integrates crops and animals, farms that do not use hormone implants or injections of non-therapeutic antibiotics, family and cooperatively owned and operated farms, and animals raised in an environment where they are able to behave naturally.

Perhaps one of the most important distinguishing features is the way a farm handles manure. Manure is used as fertilizer for the surrounding land, so if the amount of manure being spread on the land is more than the soil can absorb (which causes a whole host of environmental issues), there are too many animals for that piece of land and the operation is out of balance.

Clearly, local is the most qualitative of all the criteria and should be evaluated on a case by case basis.

2. Certified organic or from a trusted organic producer: Organic agriculture does not allow the use of synthetic pesticides, including fungicides, insecticides, rodenticides; defoliant, desiccants and wood preservatives; synthetic fertilizers; materials and products produced from genetic engineering; sewage sludge; synthetic growth regulators (hormones); synthetic veterinary drugs, including antibiotics and parasiticides; irradiation; synthetic processing substances, aids and ingredients, and additions to food including sulphates, nitrates and nitrites; equipment, packaging materials and storage containers, or bins that contain a synthetic fungicide, preservative or fumigant; genetically modified organisms.



Canada has had a national organic standard in place since 1999. Under the new organic regulation, passed December 2006, organic certification bodies are to be accredited by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency based on the recommendation of approved accreditation bodies. Certification bodies are tasked with the job of ensuring that the organic farms or processing facilities that they certify as organic are in compliance with the organic standard.

3. Gleaned: Gleaning is the act of collecting leftover crops from farmers' fields after they have been commercially harvested or on fields where it is not economically profitable to harvest, in our case; recovered surplus from a neighbourhood grocer or wholesaler. In the modern world, gleaning is practiced by humanitarian groups which distribute the gleaned food to the poor and hungry. In a modern context, this can include the collection of food from supermarkets at the end of the day that would otherwise be thrown away.

Santropol Roulant currently gleans food from two organizations: Moisson Montreal and Fruiterie Mile-End.

4. Fairly traded: Fair Trade is similar to a normal supply chain model of business. There are producers, importers, processors, retailers and consumers. The difference is the monitoring and certification at the core of the system which guarantees that the supply chain is built on and functions according to standards of fairness, transparency and accountability.

5. A combination of any of these.

Methodology

Step 1

We began by reviewing the receipts for all food purchased during the twelve month period of January through December, 2007. We entered information into an Excel table as follows:

Table 1

Category	Item	Date	Converted Weight (kg)	Cost per unit (\$)	Total Cost (\$)	Local (Sustainable)	Local (Non-sustainable)	Organic
Fruits	Grapes	18/12/2007	1.82	5.27	9.6	No	No	No
	Grapes	2/10/2007	2.72	3.13	8.5	No	No	No

To facilitate comparison, we chose the **kg** as the standard measured unit, converting all items into kg. Items whose weight was unspecified were weighed at a local grocery store and an average weight calculated (in kg) for one unit of that item. We had originally considered using caloric value as our preferred unit of measure; however, determining a food's caloric worth proved to be impractical and so the more easily obtainable 'weight' was chosen as the ultimate unit of measure.

The item's "Cost per unit (\$)" was determined by dividing the "Total Cost (\$)" by the "Converted Weight" (which is the quantity in kg). This "Cost per unit (\$)" column will be important in the "Recommendations" section when we will compare item prices as we try to increase the percentage of sustainable food purchases without overshooting Santropol Roulant's yearly budget.

Step 2

We collected information about the food purchases themselves: where the items were produced (locality), whether or not they were organic, and whether or not they were gleaned.

Locality: We contacted the suppliers for this information if it was not included on the receipt or packaging of the product. Unfortunately, Santropol Roulant's produce supplier did not know for certain which items were produced in Québec, because they select produce based on lowest market price. For example, they may receive Romaine Lettuce from Québec one week and Mexico another. The suppliers estimated that all the root vegetables are produced locally year-round and that most of the summer vegetables are local.

We found that all of Santropol Roulant's meat and dairy products are from Québec, yet from large-scale farms which do not fit our definition of sustainable. As a result, we created two columns for "Local": "Sustainable" and "Non-Sustainable", which allows us to distinguish between food items which, although produced within Québec, do not meet our definition of sustainable (please refer to the "Defining Sustainable Food" section on page 3 for our definitions of "Local" and "Sustainable" food).

Gleaning: Santropol Roulant keeps a rough tally of the food items which are gleaned

from Moisson Montréal and Fruiterie Mile-End every week. We used this tally to estimate the approximate monetary value of the gleaned items. This is the only case where we used dollars instead of kilograms for comparison. However, we kept this separate from our calculations because although gleaned food fits our definition of sustainable, this report's focus is on the Roulant's purchasing decisions.

Step 3

We calculated what percentage of Santropol Roulant's food purchases are:

Organic

Local (Sustainable & Non-Sustainable)

Both local and organic

Fair trade *

We also calculated the above for the just the summer season, so as to highlight the advantages of buying seasonally, and to make evident the contribution of our own rooftop garden to our sustainable food mix.

* Fairly traded goods such as cacao, sugar and coffee also fit within our definition of sustainable food; however, Santropol Roulant does not currently purchase fairly traded goods for its kitchen. Only its coffee, which is donated by the neighbouring Santropol Cafe, is certified fair trade.

Findings and Discussion

The following is a percentage breakdown by weight of Santropol Roulant's food purchases in 2007:

Figure 1a

This graph represents the percentage of foods which we know for certain are from sustainable local farms and organic local farms. We did not include any items which were estimated to be local, such as root vegetables. Nor did we include items from local farms which do not fit our definition of sustainable (i.e. meat from large industrial farms).

Food Purchasing Breakdown #1
(with local food from sustainable farms only)

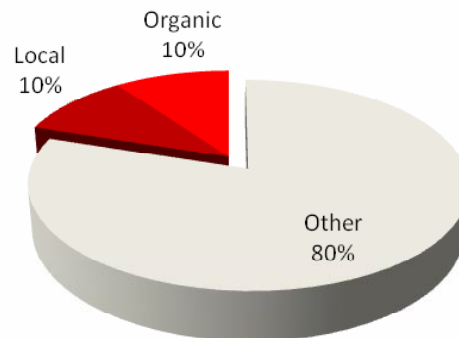
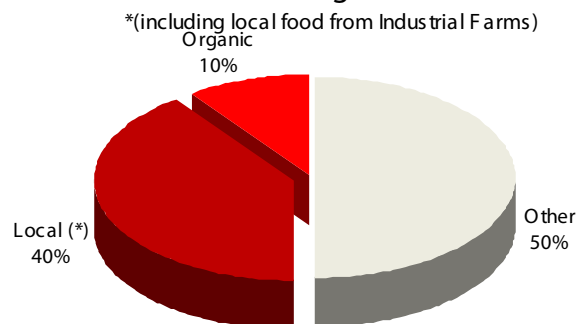


Figure 1b

This graph includes local food which does not fit our definition of sustainable, despite being from Quebec or estimated to be from Quebec though cannot be confirmed as such.

Food Purchasing Breakdown #2



NOTE: Approximately \$200 per month is spent on extra groceries needed by the kitchen (such as eggs, tofu, extra lettuce, etc.) which is not represented in these calculations. Santropol Roulant often purchases local and organic eggs, but we do have information on how much or how often. The inclusion of these egg purchases would increase the percentage of organic and local food purchased.

Sustainable Food Breakdown

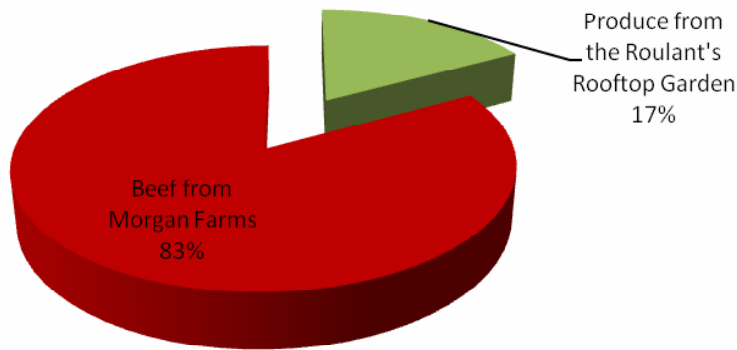


Figure 2a

Santropol Roulant's sustainable food purchases come from only two sources: Morgan Farms (contributing 83% of total organic and local food in beef) and the Roulant's Rooftop Garden (contributing 17% of total organic and local food in produce).

NOTE: We did not include fish in calculations of the organic percentage, as there is ambiguity around whether fish can be organic. However, Santropol Roulant makes an effort to purchase fish which are not endangered by using the resource: www.seachoice.org. Fish purchases comprise about 7% of the Roulant's total food purchases; when we include it in our calculations for what percentage of the Roulant's food is organic, it lowers the organic percentage by not even one percentile.

Local Food Breakdown

(*including local food from Industrial Farms)

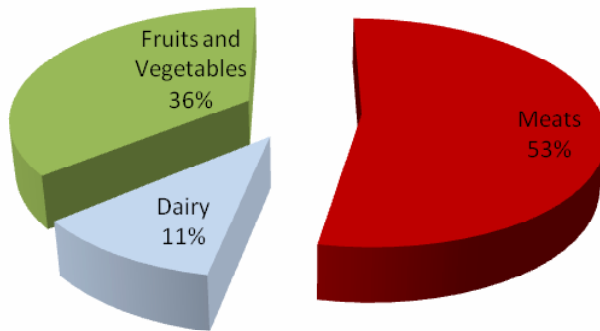


Figure 2b

All of Santropol Roulant's meat and dairy is from Quebec, yet not from farms we would consider sustainable (with the exception of Morgan Farms). Refer to our definition of "locally sourced" for more information on "sustainable meat".

Our fruit and vegetable supplier sources their products based on market price, and thus do not know where their products come from on any given week. They estimate that produce is mostly from Quebec in the summer and mostly from the US or South America in the winter. Root vegetables are estimated to come from Quebec year-round; while frozen vegetables are always from the US or China. Thus we included root vegetables, all meat and dairy, and summer fruits and vegetables which are potentially local (like cucumbers, but not kiwis) in this calculation, and the percentage of local food increased four times. Yet this 40% local food is an estimate, and does not meet our definition of sustainability.

Figure 3a

When we strictly apply our definition of “sustainable” food to Santropol Roulant’s food purchases in 2007, only 10% of purchases were sustainable. Recommendations to increase sustainable food purchases will follow in the latter part of this report.

% of Sustainable Food Purchased

in 2007

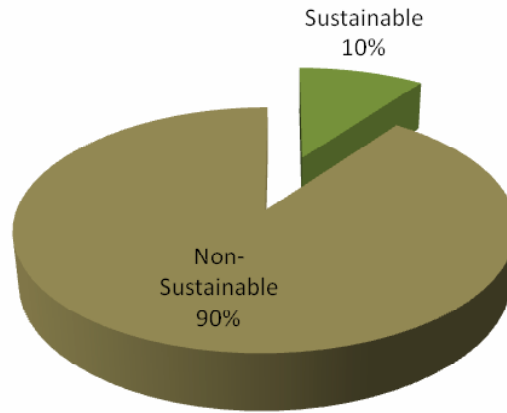
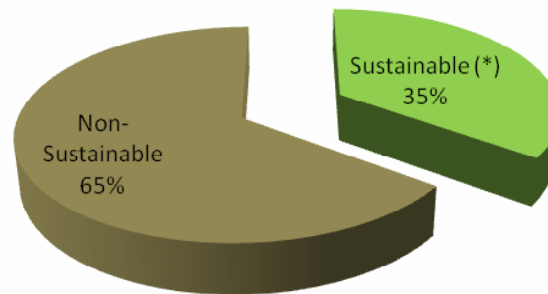


Figure 3b

When we consider the total food used in Santropol Roulant’s kitchen: not only food purchased but also food gleaned (a category of food we consider sustainable since it involves using food which would otherwise be sent to the landfill), we see that gleaned food provides one-quarter, or 25% of Santropol Roulant’s food needs. Though this report’s focus is on the Roulant’s food purchasing decisions, it is interesting to note the huge benefits that gleaning food provides the Roulant: not only does it save money; it saves produce from the landfill, and creates mutually rewarding partnerships with community grocers.

% of Sustainable Total Food

*in 2007 (*including Gleaned Food)*



Recommendations

1. Increase Vegetarian Meals

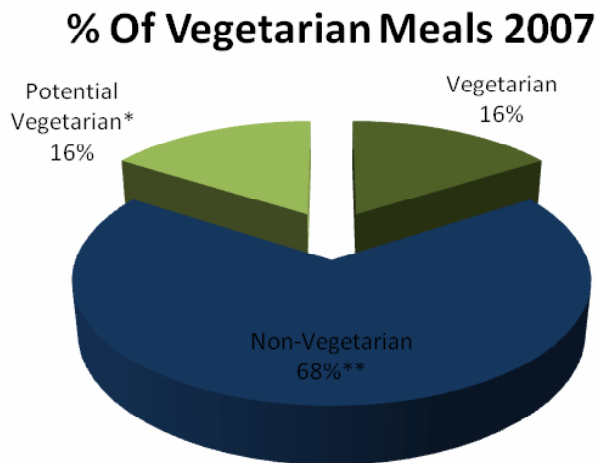


Figure 4

Potential vegetarian meals are meals which are not currently vegetarian, but could easily become so (i.e. chilli con carne, lasagne,).

Currently only 16% of meals are vegetarian, 84% non-vegetarian. If potential vegetarian meals were made so, 32% of meals served for the Meals-On-Wheels program would be vegetarian.

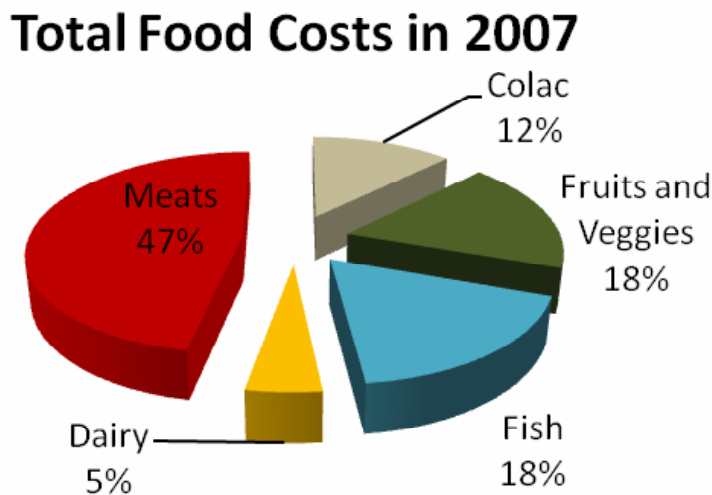


Figure 5

Meat substitutes include beans (lentils, chickpeas, black beans for e.g.), tofu, cheese and vegetables. These products typically are significantly less costly, both financially and ecologically, than meat products, as exemplified by the table below. Colac is our dried goods distributor. Buying dried beans instead of canned beans will save money, as well as the extra energy used in processing and packaging.

Table 2 Cost Comparison of Meat and Meat-Substitutes

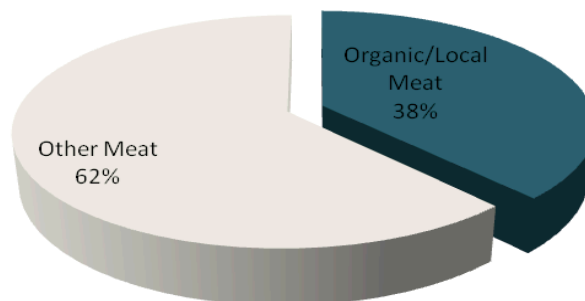
Product	Quantity	Price
Pork Chops	20 kg	\$150
Ham	20 kg	\$90
Chicken (thighs)	20 kg	\$120
Chicken (breasts)	20 kg	\$160
Turkey	20 kg	\$160
Veal	20 kg	\$85
Organic Ground Beef	20 kg	\$270
Roast Beef	20 kg	\$140
Beef cubes	20 kg	\$110
Trout	20 kg	\$260
Sole	20 kg	\$140
Aiglefin	20 kg	\$120
Tuna	20 kg	\$110
Bass	20 kg	\$123
Chickpeas	20 kg	\$22
Lentils	20 kg	\$20
Red beans	20 kg	\$18
Frozen Mixed Vegetables	20 kg	\$35
White Mushrooms	20 kg	\$70
Tofu	20 kg	\$40
Cheddar Cheese	20 kg	\$220

Calculations were made using the average cost of the product over the past year from our suppliers.

Figure 1

The graph “Meat Purchasing Breakdown” represents the significant percentage (nearly 40%) of local organic meat purchased. This is significant because eating meat (beef in particular) has large environmental (and other) impacts.

Meat Purchasing Breakdown



We recommend: INCREASING THE NUMBER OF VEGETARIAN MEALS on the menu, or alternately, highlighting options to make certain meals vegetarian (i.e. meatless chili).

The rationale: Meat production is resource intensive (requires both more acreage and water) and comparatively expensive. Switching to a greater number of vegetarian meals will reduce the kitchen's ecological footprint, while saving it money.

2. Increase Local and Seasonal Purchases

Seasonal Menu

We recommend: REDESIGNING THE MEAL SERVICE MENU to prioritize the use of certain meats during certain times of year. Grass fed beef is healthier and more ecologically sound. It is sometimes difficult to find, most readily available in the fall, as cattle have spent the summer grazing the pastures. Fish, poultry and pork can be served over the warmer months. Of all meats, beef production has the greater ecological impact and so REDUCING THE NUMBER OF MEALS IN WHICH BEEF IS A PRIMARY INGREDIENT is encouraged, regardless of whether or not it is obtained from a sustainable source.

We recommend: USING LOCALLY GROWN BERRIES, APPLES AND MELONS IN THE FRUIT SALAD over summer/fall months when they are readily available, moving away from imported fruits, such as pineapples and oranges.

We recommend: GREATER COORDINATION BETWEEN KITCHEN AND GARDEN STAFF AROUND HARVEST TIMES to assure efficient use of garden produce. The kitchen's cold salad days, currently offered during the months of July and August, should be extended into September when harvest is most bountiful.

Food Transformation

The rationale: the sourcing of food by the large distributors is dictated mainly by market price. They cannot guarantee us local foods. Currently, the selection of frozen vegetables available to us through our distributor K.B. Fruits are imported mainly from China and the US. Fruits and vegetables, imported from foreign countries when available locally, unnecessarily increase our food mileage, emitting greenhouse gases and exasperating the problem of climate change.

We recommend: BUYING LOCAL VEGETABLES WHILE IN SEASON AND FREEZING THEM FOR USE OVER THE WINTER MONTHS. We believe this to be an area for potential cost savings. The main things to consider are the securing of extra freezer space and the extra labour required in preparing the food for freezing (chopping, blanching, sealing, etc). Eventually, the kitchen should consider investing in proper sealing equipment and more ample freezer space, so as to assure the quality of its frozen foods.

Local producers in the business of frozen foods

ARTIC GARDEN

offers frozen vegetables produced here in Quebec. Their vegetables are not necessarily local. The kitchen may want to ask its current supplier, KB Fruits, whether they would be interested in distributing vegetables from Artic Garden.

www.arcticgardens.ca

ROBERT DESMARAIS,

a farmer in Actonville, is entering the food transformation business.

Tel: (450) 546-4434

We recommend: THE CONTINUATION OF CANNING AS A COLLECTIVE KITCHEN EXERCISE FOR THE SANTROPOL ROULANT COMMUNITY. The workshops have long been enjoyed by the organization's membership, whereas the resulting jams and pickled food items can be sold as merchandise as a part of Santropol Roulant's auto-financing ventures. That being said the exercise is time consuming and the products are of lesser nutritional value (high vinegar or sugar content), and so when it comes to food transformation canning is secondary to freezing or drying.

Connecting with Local Producers

When it comes to fresh produce, we serve mainly root vegetables (ex: winter vegetables such as potatoes, parsnip, beets, turnips, carrots, etc). These are most often served as a side dish to the principle meal of the day.

We recommend: that the kitchen participate in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) by PURCHASING A WINTER FOOD BASKET FROM A LOCAL FARM.

We recommend: USING MONEY FROM THE ADOPTION OF VARIOUS COST SAVING MEASURES TO INVEST IN PREMIUM FOOD ITEMS, such as organic or fair trade goods.

Local Alternatives

We recommend: EXPERIMENTING WITH LOCALLY AVAILABLE SUBSTITUTES WHEN AND WHERE POSSIBLE. Listed below are a few suggestions:

LEMON VERBENA or even lemon balm are potential substitutes for recipes where actual lemons or limes are called for, especially in recipes where a milder lemon flavor is sought, such as fish.

The plant called **STEVIA** has a sweetening agent that is many times sweeter than sugar with zero calories. Stevia can be used fresh to sweeten teas or lemonades or to sprinkle over fresh fruit. To dry stevia, just spread the leaves out on paper plates or newspapers until they're crisp and crumbly. They can then be pulverized into a powder with a mortar and pestle, or in a spice or coffee mill, and stored in a glass container with a tight fitting lid. Sweetness can vary, but figure that between 1 and 3 teaspoons will equal a full cup of sugar - and with no calories!

Local farms that offer winter baskets

LA FERME DE BULLION

**LA FERME CADET
ROUSSEL**

LE VERGER 4 VENTS

**LA FERME DES PETITS
TREMBLES**

See www.equiterre.qc.ca
for more details

Organic Distributors

SYMBIOSIS is a group of market farms seeking to sell the products in larger grocery store chains. It may be possible to strike a deal with them.

Contact: Germain Babin
Tel: (418) 392-2000

COURCHESNE LAROSE is a larger distributor of organic vegetables.

Flour Distributors

**LA MEUNERIE DU
MOULIN BLEU**

Tel: 450-588-2660

LA MILANAISE – not necessarily Quebec grains

Tel: 819-657-4646

MEUNERIE LAC ST-JEAN

Tel: 418-256-3622

**CERTIFICATION GRAIN
SANTÉ** – a new certification between the conventional and organic standard (i.e. Première Moisson flour)

www.ungraindesante.biz

APPLE SAUCE, HONEY, AND MAPLE SYRUP are three other examples of locally available sweeteners.

APPLE CIDER VINEGAR is preferable to balsamic vinegar or other grape based vinegars. It can also be used in certain recipes calling for lemon (i.e. hummus).

FLAX MEAL is a locally available egg replacer with high nutritional value and with a comparatively small ecological footprint. It is especially effective in baking, with no noticeable difference in taste.

3. In the Garden

We recommend: INCREASING PRODUCTION THROUGH SEASON EXTENSION AND THE ADDITION OF NEW CONTAINERS AND/OR NEW GARDENING SPACES. Spring and late fall harvests are possible. To this end, succession planting, cold frames and row covers should be considered.

The Edible Campus Garden has room for further expansion; however, volunteer capacity is a limiting factor. A return to the TELUQ site and a future rooftop garden on Santropol Roulant's own rooftop should also be considered. Extra produce could be sold to neighbouring restaurants or at a market stand as a self-financing venture. Productivity should be the main focus of any new garden, with plant varieties chosen based on how efficiently they can be cultivated, their usefulness to the kitchen (i.e. tomatoes versus hot peppers), and how resistant they are to pests and disease. The McGill Garden should remain the principle demonstration site for the Rooftop Garden Project, and so any experimental plants should be reserved for this site. Finally, Santropol Roulant's seedling room could be set-up to grow sprouts over the winter months.



Vendors of Various dried goods

COOP D'ALENTOUR

geared towards individuals
(www.alentour.qc.ca)

MILLE ET UNE SAISONS

– geared towards businesses,
cheaper than Alentours
auxmilleetunesaisons.com

HUILE TOURNESOL

CHAMPY

www.champy.ca

HUILE D'OLIVE

PALESTINIEN

www.mapcan.org

Vendors of fair trade products

EQUITA

COCOA CAMINO

CAFÉ RICO

Meat and Dairy Suppliers

REGROUPEMENT DE VIANDES BIOLOGIQUES DU BAS ST-LAURENT

Claude Pelletier
(418) 893-2716

FERME LA SOURCE

(eggs) Daniel Bélanger
(418) 359-3193

FROMAGERIE L'ANCÊTRE

Figure 2

During the summer (July through September) of 2007, Santropol Roulant's Rooftop Garden produced 10% of the produce (fruits and vegetables) used for the Meals-on-Wheels program. The garden produces salad greens, tomatoes, pepper, fine herbs, squash, melons and several other items; these are used to make salads, sides, and seasonings.

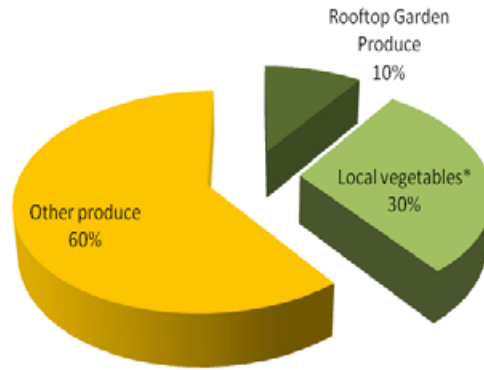
However, because the Rooftop Garden produces predominantly vegetables, we have represented just the vegetable needs of the Meals-on-Wheels program during the summer in graph 7b. When we look at it this way, the garden fulfilled 25% or one-quarter of the Meals-on-Wheels program's vegetable needs, an impressive number.

For more information on the Rooftop Garden Project:

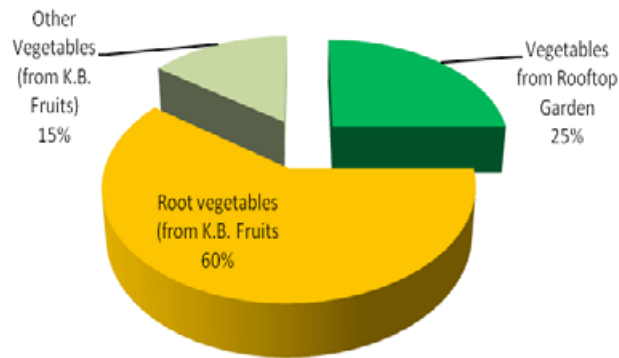
www.rooftopgardens.ca

Summer Produce Breakdown

(*Vegetables which are potentially local)



Summer Vegetable Breakdown



4. Gleaning

The Rationale: The inefficiencies of our food distribution system and the finicky nature of the typical consumer (i.e. demanding spotless produce) lead to large amounts of food waste. We currently work to divert this waste by partnering with a local grocer (Fruiterie Mile-End) and a food bank (Moisson Montréal).

We recommend: CREATING ONE NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH A NEIGHBORHOOD GROCER for the salvage of unwanted surplus produce. While gleaning is not represented in our breakdown of sustainable food purchases, it does represent significant cost savings, which can be used to purchase other items at a premium.

Conclusion

The findings from Santropol Roulant's first ever food audit show that when we strictly apply our definition of "sustainable" food to our kitchen's food purchases in 2007, only 10% of purchases were sustainable. We decided against setting arbitrary targets for increasing the kitchen's sustainable food purchases. Instead, we will soon be amending this report with an action plan, complete with several different scenarios on how to move forward. Each scenario will include a specific target (measured as a percentage) for sustainable food purchases.

The audit has demonstrated a few areas in need of improvement. The implementation of recommendations are akin to the shuffling of pieces in a puzzle. Certain measures represent cost savings, which can then be used to implement other changes that come at a premium. In order to accurately track progress and for audits to be really effective, they should ideally be performed on a yearly basis.

While we tried to make this report as comprehensive as possible, we fully recognize that it is lacking in certain areas, notably in the areas of nutritional health and the social impacts of our food purchases. Future audits should pay greater attention to these areas.

We hope that our audit will incite new initiatives and provide direction, as Santropol Roulant moves towards a truly sustainable urban food cycle.

We hope that our work will be useful as Santropol Roulant continues to evolve from strictly a meals-on-wheels service to one with a more overarching focus on sustainable food systems.

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