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# SmartAPPetite:

## USING INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY TO PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING AND STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY

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**Purpose:** Promote healthier eating and strengthen the local food system by using smartphone technology to share and expand local food knowledge

### Background & Rationale

- Several of the most critical health issues facing Canadians are linked to poor nutrition, such as obesity, heart disease, stroke, cancer, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes (Health Canada 2011)



- Only 2/5 of children and adults in Canada consume the recommended daily servings of fruit and vegetables (CCHS 2014)
- local food purchasing increases the share of profit that reaches the farmer, creating economic multiplier effects in the local economy (Kaufman 2009; Sadler et al. 2013)

**If every Ontario family shifted \$10 of their existing weekly food spending to local food it would increase Ontario food sales by \$2.4 billion and create 10,000 jobs.**

*Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario  
October 2012*

### What is SmartAPPetite?

#### Day in the Life of a SmartAPPetite User



SmartAPPetite promotes smarter, healthier eating and strengthens the local food system in Ontario, Canada, by using smartphone technology to share and expand local food knowledge. App users receive food tips that are personalized to their dietary goals, schedules, and locations; tips offer information about seasonal availability, nutrition, recipes, and local vendors. This map shows the food tips received by one user during a typical day traversing the city of London, Ontario. Users can choose to have locational messages appear on their smartphone when they enter a geofence, a virtual zone that encompasses a participating food vendor.

### Research & Development



#### PHASE 1 - Pilot Study (2013)

##### Purpose

To develop & test the effectiveness of a smartphone intervention for improving food literacy, purchasing, diet & self-rated health

##### Methods

- 208 adult participants received 2-3 messages/day for 8-10 weeks pre/post intervention surveys, interviews

##### Key Findings

- 46% believed messaging changed their food purchasing, eating habits, food knowledge, and/or health
- Significant increases in consumption of fruit & vegetables, significant decreases in fast food
- Smartphones are an effective intervention tool to improve healthy eating and shift purchases to local food



#### PHASE 2 - Stakeholder Focus Groups (2014)

##### Purpose

To engage local food system stakeholders to build collaborations and help determine content and functionality of SmartAPPetite

##### Methods

- 7 focus groups in 6 counties involving >200 farmers, processors, restaurateurs, dietitians, food activists

##### Key Findings

- Need to define what is 'local'
- Desire to increase transparency in the food system (e.g. how food is grown)
- Need to educate consumers on seasonality and variability of local foods

#### PHASE 3 - Building, Buzz & Testing (2014...)

##### Purpose

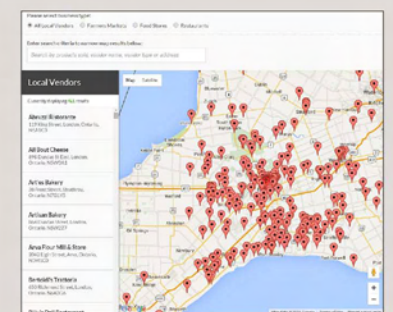
To improve functionality and ensure sustainability of SmartAPPetite

##### Methods

- Continuously adding new food messages, vendors and regions
- Focus groups and pilot study with adolescents (Fall 2015)

##### Key Findings

- App store release: ~10 mos, >900 users, >200,000 messages ...
- Must expand to other platforms (e.g. Android)
- There is a need and desire for SmartAPPetite!



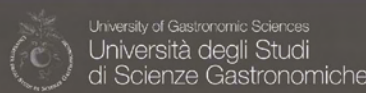
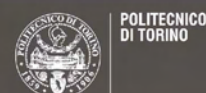
**For more information: [www.smartappetite.ca](http://www.smartappetite.ca), @smartappetite**

### Anticipated Outcomes

- improve (local) food literacy among Canadian population
- stronger connections among producers, vendors and consumers
- shift greater proportion of household food budget to local food
- improve eating habits and reduce diet-related health issues



**7<sup>th</sup> international AESOP SUSTAINABLE FOOD PLANNING CONFERENCE Localizing Food Strategies 2015 FARMING CITIES + PERFORMING RURALITY 8.9/10 TORINO**



**POSTER SESSION**