

**Case Study Number One**

**The Farm to School Manitoba**

<http://www.farmtoschoolmanitoba.ca/>

**Key Informant:**



*“Our growers were enthusiastic – they support the project with vegetables at a lower cost, we supply the transportation – but we all win because this is about making Manitobans healthier.”*

Larry McIntosh  
President and CEO  
Peak of the Market  
<http://www.peakmarket.com>

**What is it?**

**The Farm to School Manitoba Healthy Choice Fundraiser** (school and daycares) is a non-profit fresh, local, healthy way for schools to raise money. It is a great way to promote healthy food choices. A school or daycare centre enters in to an agreement to use fresh produce from Peak of the Market as a fundraiser rather than, for example, chocolate bars. All produce used in the fundraiser is locally grown by Manitoba farmers, ensuring the quality of vegetables is fresh and locally produced and supplied by Peak of the Market. 50% of the money raised is returned to the school for their local/school use. Peak of the Market, is a grower-owned "not for profit" vegetable supplier and operates in Manitoba under the Farm Products Marketing Act. The vegetables are delivered to the school. Materials to support the use of the vegetables and their role in a healthy diet are developed by the Manitoba Association of Home Economists and distributed to the schools and day cares through sponsorship by government.

**Who are the partners**

There are four partners in any site:

- **The school or daycare** which supplies the labour, the local organization and the individual order distribution

- **The Province of Manitoba**, provides funding, resources and supports
- **Peak of the Market** provides Manitoba grown vegetables and coordinates all the logistics related to taking orders and delivering veggies to participating schools. Peak providing these services at cost and uses its extensive delivery system to ensure great deals for families and great profits for fundraising committees.
- **Manitoba Association of Home Economists (MAHE)** develops and coordinates the overall program: resources, forms and support materials.

### ***How did the partnership start?***

Peak of the Market was approached by the government of Manitoba about an innovative approach to helping schools (and later daycares) to choose healthier alternatives for fund raising. It was clear that the MAHE had the knowledge and expertise about how healthy choices could be made easier and Peak of the Market had the rest – knowledge about distribution and delivery. MAHE had the passion about healthy eating. Government had great connections and the Department of Education was very helpful in the beginning.

### ***How did the partnership foster understanding?***

It took us the first year to understand what each other was doing. For the first three years we were into ‘dealing with issues’ – focused on ‘making it work’. In early 2016 all parties sat down and developed a more formal vision/value statement.

Communication has been key – for Peak of the Market that means keeping growers informed. The Board of Directors gets an update once a month and growers get one once a year. There is regular reporting, there is an advisory committee to make sure that the initiative continues to meet the ‘healthy choices objectives; the partnership is driven by the work that needs to be done rather than by any formal agreements.

### ***Celebrate, Evaluate and Review***

“We know this is working – we have more demand each year; we are raising more money and selling more vegetables. We return more of a percentage of the profits to the schools than they ever received from – for example – the sale of chocolates. The sale of vegetables is more work BUT the rewards are greater – both in the money raised, the percentage of the fundraising that is returned to the schools and in the achievement of overall better understanding of how healthy choices contribute to healthier students.”

The Farm to School project has an objective of increasing partnering schools in the core area of Winnipeg.

### ***Overall***

This is a great example of a partnership where everyone is working together – understanding each other’s role and learning how to support each other.

***“We are very proud of this project – it has a high visibility across Canada and a number of other jurisdictions are following Manitoba’s lead.”***