



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Market Brings Healthy Produce to Toronto's Food Deserts Second Harvest Launches Food Sharing Program in Flemingdon Park

Toronto, ON, August 17, 2011 – SHOP (Second Harvest Outreach Program) is an innovative food sharing program that, in partnership with community groups, brings healthy, excess food to Torontonians living in “food deserts”. The program launches in Flemingdon Park, next to the Community Centre at 150 Grenoble Drive, on Friday, August 19 at 3:30 p.m.

“SHOP is unique and exciting. It not only brings healthy food, free of charge, to people living in high need neighbourhoods in our city, but it also fosters strong relationships between community groups, food access groups, volunteers and hunger relief agencies such as ourselves,” says Jo-Anne Sobie, Executive Director of Second Harvest.

“Often there are a number of community groups all working towards the same goal, but independently of each other. Through these types of partnerships, we can pool our resources in order to achieve our shared vision - that no one be denied access to fresh, healthy food,” says Rev. Helena-Rose Houldcroft, Director of Flemingdon Park Ministry and member of the Food Access Project.

At SHOP, registered food recipients are invited to select quantities of produce based on the size of their families in a farmers' market-style environment. Those needing food assistance can register through their local community agency or food bank. All the produce is free to recipients and is donated by the Ontario Food Terminal, along with other food donors, and delivered by Second Harvest. The organization has partnered with Flemingdon Park's Food Access Project, under the stewardship of the Flemingdon Park Ministry and Flemingdon Health Centre for the first installment of SHOP.

Flemingdon Park has been recognized as a “food desert” because there is no affordable grocery store within walking distance in the community and a high percentage of the population lives below the poverty line. As the need for this program exists in other high priority neighbourhoods in Toronto, Second Harvest plans to expand SHOP throughout the city to further connect those in need with healthy, fresh food.

Volunteers, food recipients and other members of the community will join Second Harvest, and the Food Access Project Committee on Friday, August 19 at 3:30 p.m. in Flemingdon Park to launch SHOP. If you would like to see the market in action or learn more about the program contact Tonia Krauser at 416.625.6774 or toniak@secondharvest.ca.

About Second Harvest

Second Harvest is a charitable organization that takes a common-sense approach to hunger. For the past 26 years, Second Harvest has been picking up donated, perishable food, which would otherwise go to waste, and delivering that food to over 200 social service agencies in Toronto. Recognized for its efficiency and impact of services, independent research group Charity Intelligence Canada named Second Harvest a Recommended Charity in 2010.

About Flemington Park Ministry

Flemington Park Ministry is an Anglican presence in the Toronto community of Flemington Park and area, that ministers in Christ's name to the communities' spiritual, social, emotional and physical needs.

About the Food Access Project

The Food Access Project fosters individual and community capacity building as a strategy for change. The project envisions residents as being leaders and key players in the move towards sustainable and responsive community food programming. The ultimate goal of the food access project is to make Flemington Park a food friendly and food secure neighbourhood by facilitating the building of healthy and equitable food systems and programming. The Food Access Project is supported by Flemington Park Ministry, Flemington Health Centre and funded through the City of Toronto.

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