



GEORGE MORRIS CENTRE

## A Different Perspective on Local Food

**Guelph, ON (October 16, 2007)** On the list of current catchphrases, ‘local food’ sits close to the top. There is a sense of satisfaction in supporting local economies, buying high quality products, ensuring food safety, and protecting the environment.

Does local food really offer all these benefits, and is it a viable solution to the woes of Canadian farmers? A think piece released today by the George Morris Centre cautions against putting all our eggs into the local food basket. “Local Food – The Untold Story” brings balance to the equation by examining consumer behaviour, demand drivers, market opportunities, and regulatory obstacles.

Martin Gooch, Senior Research Associate, and author of the paper, expresses concern over the lack of informed discussion on the local food movement. “We have worked with clients on local food initiatives, and are encouraged by their success. However, we want to ensure that people understand where the idea fits and where it doesn’t.”

Local food is not a large scale answer to the financial difficulties faced by farms of any size. Opportunities for the agricultural and agri-food sector as a whole to benefit from the movement are also definitely limited. Gooch would like to see a more reasonable approach taken to the idea of local food as an option. “As with any economic alternative, a thorough analysis of the costs and benefits is required to determine the impacts, positive or negative, for the participants. Jumping on the bandwagon is not a bad idea, as long as you know where you’re heading.”

The think piece is available on the George Morris Centre website: [www.georgemorris.org](http://www.georgemorris.org).

The George Morris Centre is Canada’s independent agri-food think tank, dedicated to provoking informed dialogue on policies and issues and fostering excellence in the agri-food sector.

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