Information is needed on the challenges facing local food supply chains in the Guelph-Wellington region. Creating opportunities for stakeholder engagement is a key method of gathering information on potential partnerships and can aid in developing future engagement strategies. A student-run local food initiative, Garden2Table, has been established with the intention of closing the gap between producer and consumer, and includes an educational component as well as focusing on economic development along the rural/urban divide.

The Garden2Table program brings together the Guelph Centre for Urban Organic Farming (GCUOF) and the Ontario Agriculture College with Jean Little Elementary. Students participate in an experiential learning program based on local food. The hands-on educational program includes multiple trips to the on-campus organic garden to plant, weed, and harvest, as well as an opportunity to learn how to cook and prepare the healthy garden produce in the on-campus kitchen laboratories. Garden2table has also partnered with GCUOF in hosting a large-scale community open house event.

The partnership with the elementary school has been successful and there are plans to expand the program and to identify strategies to start food-producing gardens in schoolyards. Effective community partnerships have been formed and capacity-building strategies continue to be identified.