

Edmonton Food Council Members 2015

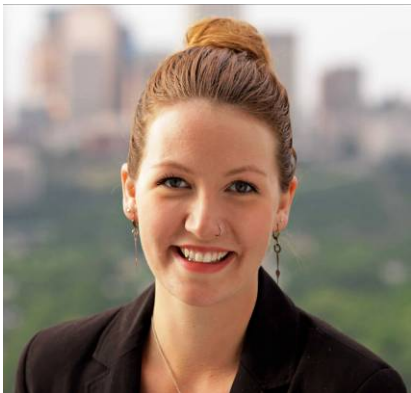
Dustin Bajer | Co-Chair



Dustin Bajer is a teacher, master gardener, and permaculture designer living and working in Edmonton. Since spring 2010, Dustin has been the driving force behind the permaculture program at Jasper Place High School. In this time, he has helped students work with ecological patterns and principles to establish multiple food producing forest gardens and Canada's first school aquaponics system. Passionate about education, ecology, and design, Dustin believes that a vibrant local food culture could not only build and nourish our communities but

increase biodiversity, capture carbon and water, and provide important project-based, hands-on learning opportunities.

Kirsta Franke | Co-Chair



A born and raised Edmontonian, Kirsta Franke has a decade of experience in the food and restaurant industry. Her work for the 124 Street Business Association as Communications Director has allowed Kirsta to bridge a gap between producers, local businesses and citizens. In 2012, Kirsta spearheaded and founded the 124 Grand Market, an evening farmers' market located in the heart of 124 Street. With a focus on connecting the rural to the urban, the 124 Grand Market has met resounding success in its two seasons and

through this, Kirsta has become an important voice within Edmonton's developing food scene. Kirsta hopes to bring a youthful, informed and creative perspective to the Edmonton Food Council and is keen to serve the interests of all Edmontonians, especially when it concerns what they have on their dinner tables.

Brent Swallow



Brent Swallow is Professor and Chair of the Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology at the University of Alberta. Dr. Swallow grew up on a Saskatchewan farm and earned bachelor and master degrees from the University of Saskatchewan and a PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Between 1991 and 2009, Dr. Swallow lived and worked in Kenya, first with the International Livestock Research Institute

and later with the World Agroforestry Centre. He moved to Edmonton with his wife and four children in 2009 and continues to be actively involved with research on food security in Asia and Africa. His newest research projects are concerned with the phenomena of 'food deserts' in Edmonton and farmland conversion and fragmentation in Alberta's Capital Region. He has authored over 150 books, journal articles, book chapters and research papers. For the last four years, Dr. Swallow has taught a class on agri-food systems in which students learn about food and agricultural issues in the Edmonton area through volunteer work with local organizations. He supports the Sustainable Food Initiative of the University of Alberta Students Union, including the new campus farmers' market.

Carley-Jane Stanton



Carley-Jane Stanton is the founder of the Alder Food Security Society, a non-profit organization aiming to make fresh, local food available to all, regardless of income. Carley-Jane has had many roles in the Edmonton food community, from a Market Manager with the Southwest Edmonton Farmers' Market to a farm hand with Riverbend Gardens, to an Agriculture and Resource Economics student at the University of Alberta. She is passionate about food security and equitable economic development and looks forward to serving Edmontonians on the Edmonton Food Council.

Cory Rakowski



A professional chef with over 20 years' experience, Cory is a passionate food advocate whose career has taken him through kitchens across Canada. Drawing on personal experiences, Cory has dedicated his career to bridging the gap between the hospitality industry and local charities. He has been a strong supporter of the Ronald McDonald House's Home for Dinner program & Y.E.S.S. He has also been an instructor for the City of Edmonton's culinary arts program at the City Arts Center, & has lectured in local schools about food security & careers in the hospitality industry.

An avid gardener, fisherman, & outdoorsman, Cory's connection to food and urban agriculture is deeply personal and rooted in his family's agricultural background. A strong and vocal supporter of Edmonton's food scene, Cory hopes to provide the citizens of Edmonton with an active link to the hospitality industry through his role on the Food Council.

Heather Shewchuk



Heather Shewchuk is the current Director of Agriculture at Northlands and has amassed 15 years of experience working with Alberta's agriculture industry. Since her graduation from the University of Alberta with a bachelor of commerce degree in April of 2000, she has devoted much of her professional life to the development of business relations within Alberta's agricultural sector. A true champion of the agriculture industry in Alberta and beyond, Heather has been instrumental in highlighting

our industry on the world's stage and ensuring the vitality of Alberta agriculture on a local, national and international scale.

Her passion for local food and the city of Edmonton has allowed her to give back to the community by sharing her wealth of knowledge and ensuring that the idea of "fresh" stays in our local food system for years to come.

Jimmy Shewchuk



Jimmy Shewchuk has worked as a consultant, concept-developer, trend expert, Owner and Operator in the Hospitality Industry in Edmonton and parts of Western Canada. For 15 years, Jimmy has been involved as an entrepreneur with many of his own individual restaurants, clubs and currently a catering company. He has worked on developing various hospitality boards and has helped shift policy and social responsibility around the industry.

In October of 2013 he joined the team at Edmonton Economic Development to assist in growing hospitality business in the Edmonton region. He is a former board member of the Old Strathcona Business Association.

Mack Male



Mack Male is a passionate Edmontonian and self-described geek. In 2009 Mack was named one of Edmonton's Top 40 Under 40 by *Avenue Edmonton*, and in 2010 he was named one of Alberta's Next 10 Most Influential People by *Alberta Venture*. His blog was named "Best Local Blog" in *Vue Weekly's* 2012 Best of Edmonton, and he was also named "Best Local Twitter". In 2013, Mack's blog was named "Best in Edmonton" at the first annual Edmonton New Media Awards. Mack is co-founder of What the Truck?!, Edmonton's food truck extravaganza; Eat Alberta, a hands-on food skills conference; and Blink, a series of pop-up restaurants and events.

Marjorie Bencz



Marjorie began with Edmonton's Food Bank in 1987 as a volunteer. In 1989, she became the Executive Director of Edmonton's Food Bank. Marjorie became involved on a provincial and national level, serving on the Boards of Directors for the Alberta Food Bank Network Association and the national body, Food Banks Canada (formerly the Canadian Association of Food Banks).

Over the years, Marjorie's work and dedication to vulnerable Edmontonians has been recognized with a number of community awards such as an honorary diploma in *Health and Community Studies* from *Grant MacEwan Community College* and being named *Global TV's Woman of Vision*. In May, 2012 in the category of *Community Service*, Marjorie was honored with a *YWCA Woman of Distinction Award*. Also in 2012, she received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. In 2006, Marjorie was invested into the Order of Canada in the category of *Social Science*. Marjorie believes that this recognition is not for her role, but for the collective support she receives from Edmontonians, Albertans and fellow Canadians in reducing hunger in our communities.

Marjorie lives with her husband Mike and has three grown daughters and four grandchildren.

Mark LaRue



Mark is a professional landscape architect and has been providing broad-based landscape design and project management services for more than 29 years. As a Principal in the Stantec Urban Development group in Edmonton, Mark is part of the leadership team that manages their multi-disciplinary staff and is the Practice Leader for Landscape Architecture.

Many of Mark's most significant projects include administering the design and construction of large-scale public infrastructure improvements and private developments. Project types include master planned communities, multi-family housing, commercial and industrial development, urban design, streetscapes,

and park and recreational facilities. Mark is a LEED accredited professional and is passionate about seeking opportunities to apply sustainable design principles appropriate for each of his projects.

Mark attended The Ohio State University and graduated in 1984 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Landscape Architecture. He began his professional practice in San Diego, California where he and his wife Cindy lived for 27 years while raising their three children. Mark and Cindy relocated to Edmonton in 2011 and now live in Rossdale.

Meghan Dear



Meghan Dear is the founder of Localize, an Edmonton-based start-up that is testing ways to strengthen the relationship that consumers have with food producers through an innovative approach to grocery shelf and product labelling for local food. She has a degree in Biology and Agriculture, and is an accredited Professional Biologist.

Meghan has worked in a variety of agriculture sectors, including working on her family farm of Strawberry Creek Gardens, working for the Alberta Research Council in Crop Science research, and working overseas to delivering food security programs and to develop better agriculture marketing solutions in the developing world.

Philip Yu



Philip Yu is a born and raised Edmontonian who passionately believes that life happens around the dinner table. He strongly believes everyone should be able to enjoy a good meal with good wholesome ingredients. A self-admitted foodie, Philip enjoys spending time at local restaurants and farmers markets. As a Category Manager for a major grocery chain he has developed a strong

understanding of the food industry and is eager to use that knowledge to benefit his local community. Philip recently completed a Masters Degree in International Trade.

Shirzad Chunara



Shirzad Chunara is a registered dietitian, with a Master's degree in Community Health. She's been working with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development for the past 11 years, sharing information on funding programs and available resource to the Agri-processing industry. She also coaches companies, encouraging the development of healthier food options. The Earthbox Kids project she co-led allowed her to combine her passion for food and healthy communities by

implementing indoor gardens in over 100 schools throughout Alberta. Shirzad is also an active volunteer locally and the volunteer strategy coordinator on an international steering committee. She writes and edits articles promoting healthy eating and lifestyle behaviours by providing nutritional alternatives to traditional East African and South Asian recipes.

Simone Demers Collins



Simone Demers Collins is a professional home economist who has managed her private consulting firm for many years, during which time she was responsible for the province of Alberta's Farmers Markets program, planned the Alberta Horticultural Congress, was a sessional professor at the Faculté St. Jean/University of Alberta, did food styling for Toronto's Argyle Communications and Apex Public Relations, and taught adult education for Metro and Recreation Departments in the greater Edmonton area. Simone's volunteer efforts included being president of the national Food Safety Information Society.

Currently, Simone is the education, marketing & promotions coordinator for the Alberta Canola Producers, a project manager for the Canola Council of Canada, and publisher of 10 graphic books with lead character Chase Superman Duffy.

Thomas Lynch-Staunton



Tom Lynch-Staunton currently works at Livestock Gentec in the Faculty of Agriculture, Life, and Environmental Sciences at the University of Alberta as the Director of Industry Relations. He has strong practical and lifetime experience in the livestock industry, growing up on and eventually co-managing the family owned Antelope Butte Ranch (est.1885), a mixed 1000 head cow/calf operation, with his brother in Southern Alberta. Tom received a bachelor's degree in Marketing and International Business from Simon Fraser University, and completed a Spanish diploma in Mexico. Tom also volunteered as a delegate with the Alberta Beef Producers, and co-created the Todd Creek Watershed Group. Currently, Tom's role at the university is with the Livestock Gentec executive team working in strategic development of the genomics research program, coordination of research projects with industry, giving presentations and communicating the research and ideas, and application of genetic improvement tools in the beef industry. Tom is also now pursuing a part-time MBA at the UofA, specializing in Sustainability, as he continues working.

Tom continues to be very much engaged with the beef industry. Most recently, he has been chairing the Sustainability Assessment Working Committee in the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef, being led by the Canadian Cattleman's Association, and co-chairing the Alberta Beef Producers Annual General Meeting, held each year in December.