

Always in SEASON

TRAVELLING THE BUY ALGOMA, BUY LOCAL FOOD TRAIL

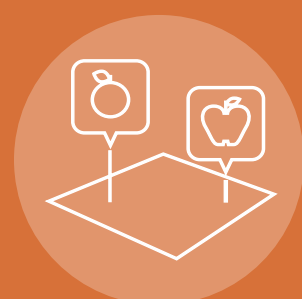


From July to October 2020, the Rural Agri-Innovation Network (RAIN), a division of the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre, developed a Buy Algoma, Buy Local Food Trail.

The Trail was a self-guided local food adventure which encouraged people to get outside and explore the many local food businesses around Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma Region. The trails included farm gate businesses, recreational trails, beaches and cultural sites.

HOW DID IT WORK?

Visitors to the Trail could upload pictures from the trail stop locations to the Buy Algoma, Buy Local website to enter a draw for a prize. The initiative built local food and local business awareness during the pandemic and encouraged people to get outside and explore their community in a safe manner.



525

contest entries

29

people made

172

individual trail stops

More than

60

locations along the trail

Positive feedback from the public; people enjoyed exploring new places and sharing photos

THE RESULTS

How did they accomplish this, and what did they learn?

TAPPING INTO EXISTING RESOURCES

The team used [ArcGIS StoryMaps](#) which geolocated all the trail stops in a blog format with multimedia content. The [ZOHO CRM platform](#) was used for visitors to upload photos and testimonies from the Trail stops so that they could enter the contest draw.

A large group of farm businesses already partner with RAIN's Buy Algoma, Buy Local marketing platform so engaging businesses was easy to do.

RAIN recommends having at least one part-time staff member (20 hours/week) for two to three months prior to the campaign to lead the planning, outreach and coordination of the trail and partners.

PARTNERSHIPS

RAIN had 10 sponsors that contributed to create three prize packages worth \$250 to \$500 each.

Working with the local federation of agriculture made connecting with farm businesses simple.

- Giving back: RAIN raised \$900 for food security initiatives through the United Way Sault Ste. Marie & Algoma District by matching a portion of sponsor donations.

MARKETING IS KEY

RAIN developed a marketing plan to curate the messaging for the project. The marketing plan included:

- Goals and objectives of the trail
- Tailored messaging
- Creative concepts to promote the trail
- A promotional plan including sponsor testimonials
- Measurable marketing goals such as number of website views, social media reach, social media subscribers and likes, and the number of contest entries during the campaign.

WHAT DOES RAIN WANT YOU TO KNOW?

- Advertising using traditional media can be expensive. Try engaging with local 'foodies' and social media influencers to participate in the trail to generate exposure.
- Seamless check-ins can be accomplished with good software – but subscriptions can be pricey. Try collaborating with other like-minded organizations or nearby communities to explore these platforms for everyone's benefit.



For more ideas to support local food, including how to design, coordinate, and assess activities, check out OFA's Always in Season Toolkit! <https://ofa.on.ca/alwaysinseason/>

Always in
SEASON

TOOLKIT

The Always in Season project is funded by the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (the Partnership), a five-year investment by governments.