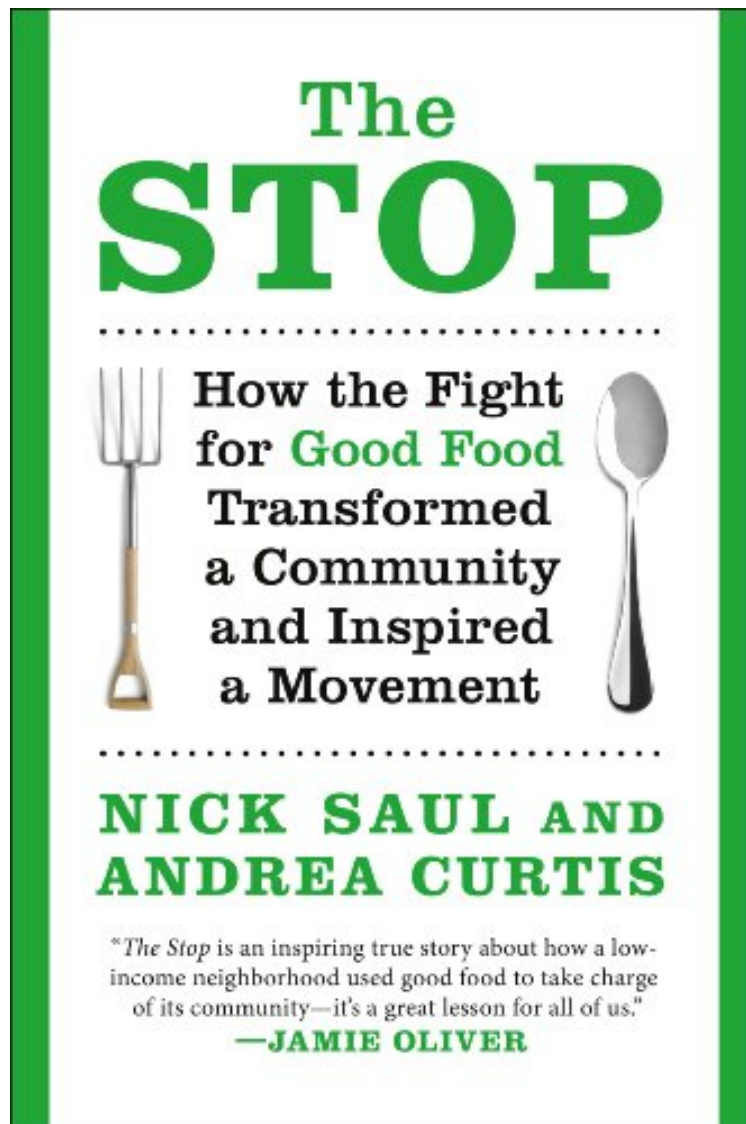


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The Stop: How the Fight for Good Food Transformed a Community and Inspired a Movement

Nick Saul, Andrea Curtis

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Nick Saul, Andrea Curtis : The Stop: How the Fight for Good Food Transformed a Community and Inspired a Movement before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Stop: How the Fight for Good Food Transformed a Community and Inspired a Movement:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I think this is a must read for everyone. ...By Farmer Laura I think this is a must read for everyone. The problem of hunger has reached all time highs in this country. This book

chronicles an approach truly dealing with the problem compared to a weekly band-aid approach. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great read. By J. Lund Nick Saul has provided a trenchant analysis of the food bank system while telling the stories of people who have turned to them for survival. While exposing the growing reliance on food pantries and soup kitchens to feed food insecure people, he shows a way forward to end hunger. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By nippymcsween An awesome tale. I found it inspiring and surprising - so much can be achieved!

ldquo;[A] terrific book about a visionary postndash;food bank project.rdquo; mdash;Michael Pollan THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER British super chef Jamie Oliver called it "amazing," writing that he'd traveled all over the world and never seen anything like it. New York Times food writer Mark Bittman called it "one of those forward-thinking groups pointing the way to the future of good food." Raj Patel, the critically acclaimed author of Stuffed and Starved, said he was "blown away" by it. So what is it? The Stop, a Community Food Centre that has revolutionized the way we combat hunger and poverty. Since community worker Nick Saul became the executive director of The Stop in 1998, it has been transformed from a cramped food bank to a thriving, internationally respected Community Food Centre. The Stop has flourished with gardens, kitchens, a greenhouse, farmers' markets and a mission to revolutionize our food system. In a voice that's "never preachy" (MacLean's), Saul and Curtis share what The Stop could mean for the future of food, and argue that everyone deserves a dignified, healthy place at the table. From the Trade Paperback edition.

#1 NATIONAL BESTSELLER WINNER 2014 ndash; Taste Canada Awards mdash; English-language Culinary Narratives Category FINALIST 2014 ndash; Heritage Toronto Award FINALIST 2014 ndash; Toronto Book Awards FINALIST 2014 ndash; OLA Evergreen Award "A superbly smart, engaging book." mdash; The Grid (Toronto) "Never preachy, it's full of wisdom, empathy and smart, practical thinking.... Amid a glut of food manifestos and local-food edicts, this title stands out as an important contribution to the discussion around food and social justice. What's more, its publication comes at a critical time: Saul and his crew are taking the model on the road with plans to make it a national movement." mdash; Maclean's About the Author NICK SAUL was executive director of The Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto from 1998 to 2012 and is a recipient of the prestigious Jane Jacobs Prize and the Queen's Jubilee Medal. He is now president and CEO of Community Food Centres Canada, an organization that will bring the innovations of The Stop to communities across Canada. www.cfccanada.ca ANDREA CURTIS is an award-winning writer and editor. Her family memoir, Into the Blue: Family Secrets and the Search for a Great Lakes Shipwreck, won the Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction. Curtis's first children's book is What's for Lunch? How Schoolchildren Eat Around the World. www.andreacurtis.ca SAUL and CURTIS live with their two boys in Toronto. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. My hands are covered in toner from our finicky photocopying machine when the garden assistant opens the door, the sounds of the busy street racing inside with her. Everyone in the open space looks up. She's tanned after a summer in the sun and seems excited. You have to come into the back, she says. We're making callaloo. I've never heard the word, but I'm glad of a reprieve from the maddening machine. We head out the door, around the side of the apartment building and into the food bank. Rhonda is inside the community space. With more staff, we're now able to use it regularly, including for the new community kitchen groups that Rhonda has started. A cluster of people is sitting at one of the round tables. And I can see through the small pass-through into the cramped kitchen that there are more inside. The smell wafting out is thick with garlic. We all sit down, and Herman, our garden neighbour, emerges wearing an apron, carrying a tray covered in leafy greens that she's steamed and cooked with salt fish, garlic, onions, salt and pepper, and sweet red peppers. Callaloo, he says proudly. Rhonda tells us the story as we take our tentative first bites. One day recently Herman came into the garden and saw some volunteers pulling out what they thought was a weed. That's no weed, he told Rhonda. It's callaloo. So she asked Herman to show everyone how the Caribbean specialty is cooked and eaten, and today a group of volunteers is trying out his favourite vegetable. The verdict is good. It looks and tastes a lot like spinach or kale. Herman is pleased, proud to show off his Jamaican roots. Rhonda did a bit of digging and discovered that Jamaicans aren't the only ones who love this plant. People all over the world know it and its different varieties as "amaranth" and eagerly eat the tender leaves, stalks and seeds. She also found that farmers north of the city call one variety of the plant "pigweed" and consider it a scourge. The seeds spread easily in the wind and they struggle to contain it on their farms. I look at the faces around the table - Herman and Rhonda; Francesca and Dorino; Gordon, who's been working at

the plot since the first day we dug the fence posts; a woman who lives in a rooming house nearby and suffers from severe diabetes. One person's weed, it seems, is another's delicacy. In fact, as I'm beginning to realize, food is never just food. Some people have argued that teaching people to cook from scratch is actually the answer to hunger and poor health in North America. Such cookery advocates argue that cost, or income, is not the major barrier to eating nutritious food. Frugal food bloggers chronicle their attempts to live on a dollar a day; Slow Food USA hosted the \$5 Challenge with the cheeky tagline "Take back the value meal." Mark Bittman, the celebrated New York Times columnist and cookbook author, writes regularly about health and sustainability as linked to "the all-but-vanished craft of cooking and associated thrift." They're right, of course. Acquiring food skills is essential for anyone who wants to break the habit of relying on processed food. But for many people at The Stop, like those on low incomes everywhere, it's not so simple. Lack of income is a major barrier to buying fresh food and making meals out of it. Shopping, prepping and cooking time is often extremely limited for people who might be working several minimum wage jobs just to make ends meet. And many who use our programs don't even have a stove or a kitchen to cook in. Trying to live on a social assistance check of less than six hundred dollars a month in a rooming house or jammed in with others in a one-bedroom apartment means proper cooking facilities are frequently unavailable.

And you can't discount the social exclusion faced by people living in poverty. Sharing a great meal with others can help you feel connected and alive, as it does for Rosa and the rest of the Meals Made Easy crew, but if you're on your own in a dingy, miserable room, cooking a meal by yourself can simply serve to highlight your

solitude. While we can't claim community kitchens—and the food skills learned there—are going to end the poverty or hunger of participants, they can definitely help low-income community members eat more healthily, have greater control over their personal circumstances and break out of their isolation. For Rosa and her family, the kitchen was a gateway to The Stop's other programs. They soon became involved in the Earls Court garden. Rosa had some farming experience from back home in Italy, and they already grew beautiful roses as well as some vegetables and herbs in their backyard. Their mint even won a gardening contest Rhonda organized. As she's grown older, Tony has become involved, too. "I have two green thumbs," he says proudly, holding up his hands. "Except when you first started, you couldn't plant straight," his mother laughs. "I tell him, 'Plant it like the CN Tower, not the Tower of Pisa!'"

Tony shrugs. "Now I know." The Stop has become a huge part of Tony and Rosa's family life. They volunteer and also drop in for meals, taking part in programs whenever they can. "I was raised in this place," says Tony, who lives at home and works for a major big box retailer. "I'm one of The Stop kids." Some staff and volunteers, in fact, know Rosa as Mamma. She hasn't forgotten what it felt like to be a newcomer in the big city and she's glad to help those people who come from far away and still feel like "little birds." When she's introduced to people new to The Stop, those who are scared and nervous and worried about saying the wrong thing, she offers up her big, warm smile and says, "Welcome home."