



Civil Society Input to a Renewed Food Policy for Canada

Discussion results Resilient Communities

On May 9th, 2023, Food Secure Canada (FSC) held an open consultation on the future of food policy in Canada. [Watch the plenary recording and explore results from all discussion groups here.](#)

To provide context for the discussion group on **Resilient Communities (2019 - 2023)**, FSC prepared a [backgrounder](#) summarizing current federal Food Policy language, instruments, and financing.

Language and Concepts

- 'Resiliency' is a concept that is relevant to individuals, communities, and across the whole food system. In the context of food systems, it is particularly linked to ensuring access to healthful foods (aligning with SDG 2: Zero Hunger) and responding to the climate emergency (aligning with SDG 13: Climate Action). It is also tied to food sovereignty for all and respecting cultural diversity, which aligns with the aim of reducing inequalities (SDG 10: Reducing Inequalities).
- As a result, working towards building community resiliency contributes to the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 2 and SDG 13 and SDG 10.



- The current focus on the concept of 'resiliency' is a belated acknowledgement that we have not managed to preserve the 'vibrancy' of our food systems.
- Black and Indigenous communities have questioned and rejected the concept of 'resilience' because their need for it arises from the inequality and marginalization resulting from colonialism, racism, and anti-Black racism. Instead of demanding resilience from their communities, systemic barriers to their advancement and sovereignty should be dismantled.

Recommendations to Government for 2023 Food Policy for Canada

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

Adaptation - Adjusting to the current and future effects of climate change

- Adopt a whole-of-government approach to integrate food security planning into emergency planning, ensuring local and regional resiliency during crises.
- Avoid exacerbating or creating environmental racism in climate adaptation strategies, and consider the most vulnerable populations while implementing systemic change.

Mitigation - Preventing or reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere.

- Implement preventive mitigation strategies throughout the food supply chain and across food webs, from production to consumption.

Production:

- Incentivize and support farmers as they transition from producing food for livestock to producing a wide variety of foods for human consumption;
- Support regenerative agricultural practices, including agroecology;
- Shift from a corporate, export-focused food production system to a community-focused approach that supports small and medium-sized farms growing for local consumption;
- Support community food resilience with community gardens.

Consumption:

- Promote nuanced and robust shifts towards plant-based diets in line with Canada's Food Guide, taking an equitable lens that respects Indigenous traditional foodways and access to cultural foods;
- Subsidize healthy, plant-forward diets.
- Implement targeted efforts for remote and Northern communities where food prices are especially high, while respecting their traditional foodways;
- Create stable demand for locally produced, healthful food through public procurement in institutions such as hospitals and school food programs.

Land, Soil, and Farmers

- Take care of the land that is taking care of us. Preserve agricultural land and prioritize the support and rebuilding of soil health, through incentivizing soil-friendly farming methods.
- Preserve agricultural land and formalize land-sharing agreements between current, new, and young farmers to increase access to land.
- Build back a vibrant and strong agricultural community that nurtures the skills development of new and potential young farmers.

Food System Resiliency Challenge

- Create a "Food System Resiliency Challenge" that mirrors the Food Waste Reduction Challenge, channeling federal funds to innovative food distribution and farming projects in local communities, as a step towards system-wide and scaled responses.

Best Practices/Successful Community Models to Scale or Replicate

- [Food Security Taskforce](#) (British Columbia) addressing food security issues related to climate change, supply chain disruption, and inflation, that could be scaled nationally, [as lessons are learned](#); as a result, provincial departments are better able to communicate and create whole-of-government responses; an emergency management division was incorporated into the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- [Cambridge Food Bank - Mobile Food Market](#) which purchases produce from local farmers at wholesale cost to increase food access in low-income neighborhoods.
- [Eat Local Grey Bruce](#) - a food co-op and warehouse distribution centre which sells and distributes produce, meat, and value-added farm products from local farmers to participating members through weekly mobile deliveries across a large rural catchment area.



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