

# Building a Healthy, Just and Sustainable Food System:

**Food Secure Canada's Recommendations  
for *A Food Policy for Canada***

September 2017



**FSC**

Food Secure Canada

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# Summary of Food Secure Canada's Recommendations for *A Food Policy for Canada*



*A Food Policy for Canada should position our food system as a driver of positive social outcomes by increasing food access, improving human health and increasing sustainable economic development, leading to a more healthy, just and sustainable food system that ensures everyone's right to food.*

## To realize this vision, *A Food Policy for Canada* should:

### **Invest in collaborative governance and leverage social innovation in food.**

- Establish a National Food Policy Council (NFPC) to bring diverse stakeholders together to oversee the implementation and evaluation of *A Food Policy for Canada*. Our research suggests the NFPC should have an initial annual budget of \$3 million, eventually increasing to \$5 million.
- Leverage and scale up community-led innovations through a Food and Social Innovation Fund of \$65 million over five years.

### **Increase food access** by realizing the human right to food for all Canadians.

- Develop a roadmap for the progressive realization of the right to food, including income supports.
- Ensure that adequate and comprehensive national data on food insecurity are collected and analyzed by making the Household Food Security Module of the Canadian Community Health Survey mandatory for all provinces and territories.

**Improve health and food safety** through population health programs and dietary guidelines that integrate nutrition and sustainability, address the social determinants of health and encourage public procurement of healthy, local and sustainable foods.

- Work with provinces and territories to create a cost-shared national Universal Healthy School Food Program and work with Indigenous Services and Indigenous leadership to create a Universal Healthy School Food Program for schools within First Nation reserves.
- Encourage institutional food purchasing of healthy, local and sustainable food to leverage the full health, economic and sustainability impacts of public dollars, and support local producers by establishing a sustainable procurement framework.
- Review food safety protocols and assurance systems to better support local, small-scale and sustainable food systems and include a consideration of health and food accessibility objectives in their implementation.

**Conserve our soil, water and air** by encouraging food production and provisioning practices that enhance, rather than deplete, the natural environment, including the protection of foodlands and biodiversity.

- Establish more supports and training opportunities for farmers and fishers to transition to more sustainable and agro-ecological practices.
- Make a direct policy statement in support of protecting Canada's farmland as a matter of national interest, and work with provincial, territorial and municipal partners to establish mechanisms to protect farmland and monitor its use.
- Work with provincial, territorial and municipal governments to develop a National Food Waste Reduction Strategy to monitor food waste across the supply chain, establish targets and implement innovative solutions.

**Grow more high-quality food** by investing in regional and local food systems and increasing supports for more sustainable production and harvesting practices.

- Ensure agri-food policies and programs are inclusive of a diversity of farmers and fishers and prioritize agro-ecological and organic food production as strategic investment areas for sector growth.
- Invest in social innovations and infrastructure needed for local and regional food economies to grow and flourish, especially in Northern, remote and Indigenous communities.

## Introduction

Since its inception in 2001, Food Secure Canada's main priority has been the development of a national food policy that integrates health, environmental, economic and equity goals. This has been the focus of many campaigns and research initiatives over the past 10 years. This includes Food Secure Canada's 2015 *Eat Think Vote* campaign calling for a 'joined-up' national food policy, with sixty-nine events across Canada involving over 4,000 participants, and *Resetting the Table: A People's Food Policy*, a grassroots policy initiative (2008 - 2011) that involved 3,500 Canadians collaborating on a bold and inspiring vision for Canada's food system.

More recently, Food Secure Canada has organized a deep and multifaceted engagement process with its members and food-system stakeholders, setting the stage and feeding into the consultations for *A Food Policy for Canada*. At the beginning of May, we published a discussion paper, *From Patchwork to Policy Coherence* (Food Secure Canada 2017), on

the principles and priorities of a national food policy. Coinciding with the announcement of the consultation period for *A Food Policy for Canada*, we shared our *Five Big Ideas for a Better Food System*, outlining the key themes we believe should inform the development of this policy. Many of these can be matched to the federal government's own key themes. We have also consulted with our membership and supported them in hosting *Recipe for a Good Food System* events across Canada to bring diverse grassroots and practitioner perspectives to the consultations. Some initial feedback from these events is included in this policy brief, and a full report will be submitted separately to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Finally, we co-led several multi-stakeholder processes with other key actors from industry, government and academia, building common ground around several key areas, notably governance.

*A Food Policy for Canada* is a unique opportunity to establish a long-term vision for our food system that promotes both prosperity and equality, while also identifying short-term priority actions to address pressing challenges.

## Guiding Principles

This brief is structured around the four themes outlined in the government consultation. However, before addressing these thematic areas, we feel it is important to highlight four core guiding principles, which we believe transcend these individual themes and should inform the overall development of *A Food Policy for Canada*.

### 1) A food-systems perspective

*A Food Policy for Canada* should take an integrated, systems-based perspective. We need to move from the current approach that divides health, environment, agriculture, social development and economic growth into different domains and shift to a systems approach that links them into a comprehensive framework. This will help to identify strategic leverage points for integrated solutions across the food system. For example, a systems perspective would seek to address high levels of diet-related disease among low-income groups by taking a social determinants of health approach and making linkages between health policy, income support programs, and nutrition and food access programs. The four themes proposed for *A Food Policy For Canada* need to be addressed in a systematic, integrated manner to tackle health, environment and equity considerations together, rather than to trade one off against the other.

### 2) Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

*A Food Policy for Canada* must acknowledge the history and ongoing legacy of colonialism and prioritize reconciliation and decolonization as key guiding principles. Reconciliation requires that the federal government work with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in the development, implementation and evaluation of *A Food Policy for Canada*. Space at the decision-making table needs to be created for Indigenous communities so that their voices and leadership are recognized and represented from the outset of policy development. First and foremost, this entails implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), respecting treaty rights and acknowledging hunting, fishing

and gathering as key food-provisioning activities. Indigenous knowledge, ways of knowing and cultural practices should also be respected and encouraged.

### **3) A rights-based approach to food insecurity**

*A Food Policy for Canada* should be founded on the recognition of the right to food of all residents and communities within Canada. The right to food was originally recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and subsequently enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which Canada ratified in 1976: “the right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.” The right to food is an acknowledgement that every person should be able to feed themselves in dignity and live in conditions that allow him or her either to produce or buy food.

This rights-based approach commits to the long-term goal of ending, not merely reducing, hunger and food insecurity. It requires that states refrain from activities that would hinder a resident’s ability to access or purchase food (including regulating the actions of third parties who may engage in such activities), and, secondly, that states provide access to, or the means to produce or procure, food for all its residents. While social and economic rights are not expected to be realized overnight, we can commit to core minimum standards as a starting point and work towards progressive realisation. A number of other countries have sought to implement the right to food through policies, legislation and frameworks, including India, Mexico, Belgium, Brazil and South Africa, which provide Canada with relevant examples to draw from.

### **4) Adaptive and socially innovative**

*A Food Policy for Canada* will have to navigate jurisdictional issues, regional differences, a variety of socio-cultural cleavages and unforeseeable circumstances. This level of complexity requires flexibility in how the policy is implemented and space for community-led social innovation. Technological and scientific developments have an important role to play in strengthening our food system, but a sustainable, viable, healthy and just food system also requires openness to new ideas, approaches and partnerships. Social innovations driven by collaboration and creativity are an important driver of positive social change and community development. Community programs and local policies that seek to solve problems in innovative ways should be identified and scaled up. Those on the front lines of our food system, including producers, people experiencing food insecurity, and food workers, often know best their realities and have knowledge and ideas about how to address the challenges they face, but require support to implement them.

## Responding to the Government's Four Themes:

### Increasing Access to Affordable Food:

*Food is a human right, and Canada has an international legal obligation to respect it.*

Canada is one of the world's largest food exporters and one of the wealthiest countries, yet four million Canadians have trouble meeting their food needs (PROOF 2015), and food insecurity rates alarmingly high in Northern and remote communities (Canadian Community Health Survey 2014). The federal government has an international legal obligation to ensure the full realization of this right for all those living in Canada. As was indicated by former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Olivier de Schutter during his 2012 mission to Canada, we have the capacity to ensure domestic access to nutritious and culturally desirable food for all and achieve zero hunger. What is needed now is the right policies, programs and national leadership to make it happen.

Framing the solution to food insecurity as increasing access to affordable food misses the point. The problem is not necessarily that food is too expensive but that people do not have sufficient purchasing power and that the most affordable food is often unhealthy or unsustainably produced. Rather than a reliance on charity-based approaches to hunger, such as food banks and redistribution of wasted food, we need policies grounded in the right to food that deliver adequate social supports, benefits and protection of living wages. As poverty is an overwhelming contributing factor to food insecurity, policy solutions must address income levels. For example, one study found food insecurity levels are significantly reduced in seniors due to the provision of Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement, both forms of basic income (McIntyre et al 2016).

In addition, food security cannot come at the expense of farmers' livelihoods, as many farmers in Canada are already struggling to stay afloat in the face of stagnating farmgate prices (Venema 2008, Holtslander 2015). The accessibility and availability of wild harvested foods, an important component of healthy diets in northern and remote locations, is also being affected by climate change. Support should be directed to making healthy and sustainable foods more available by strengthening local and sustainable food systems, including hunting, gathering, fishing and harvesting.

## **Recommendations for *A Food Policy for Canada*:**

- Develop a roadmap for the progressive realization of the right to food and the evaluation of the full suite of policies that affects food insecurity, including the federal Poverty Reduction Strategy and Nutrition North. Establish benchmarks and design programs with which to reach them. Ensure these programs are properly resourced, monitored and accountable.
- Ensure that adequate and comprehensive national data on food insecurity are collected and analyzed by making the Household Food Security Module of the Canadian Community Health Survey mandatory for all provinces and territories and by using the analytical categories designed by PROOF (2014): food secure, marginal/moderate/severe food insecurity.

## **Related Recommendations**

- As part of Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy, improve social programs (e.g.. the Canada Social Transfer, Employment Insurance, Federal minimum wage, pensions, housing, child tax benefits) to ensure there is an income floor below which no Canadian will fall so that everyone can afford adequate, nutritious food.
- In collaboration with Health Canada and Indigenous Services, completely overhaul Nutrition North to improve food access and affordability by strengthening northern regional food systems, including support for programs enhancing access to traditional and community-grown foods. Ensure Northern voices from consultations are integrated and enhance community control.

## Improving Healthy and Safe Food:

*Canada needs health programming and dietary guidelines that integrate nutrition and sustainability, address the social determinants of health and encourage public procurement of healthy, local and sustainable foods.*

Alarming increases in diet-related disease over the last several decades (Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation 2010) show that the current constellation of programs and policies is not doing enough to encourage and enable Canadians to access and eat healthy diets. It is estimated that 30,000 deaths could be averted or delayed every year if Canadians adhered to dietary guidelines, particularly regarding the consumption of fruits and vegetables (Bélanger et al 2014). In addition, diet-related diseases account for \$26 billion annually in direct and indirect health expenditures (Health Canada 2016). Canadians who experience poverty are more vulnerable to these diet-related health challenges, and health care costs are higher for people living with food insecurity (Tarasuk et al. 2015). The way Canadians eat affects also impacts climate change and the environment.

In 2011, 84% of Canadians ranked “creating agricultural programs that increase population health” as a high priority for a national food policy (Environics Research Group 2011). Healthy diets are not only about food choices but also derive from socially and environmentally sustainable food systems. Since our health is intimately linked to the environment, we need to improve the sustainability of our food system and redefine healthy food as going beyond its nutritional qualities alone (Health Care Without Harm 2014). It is important to consider both the consumption and production of food if we are to lever change and take a whole-of-supply-chain approach in order to have a whole-of-society impact on health. This also means that what is considered healthy food is regionally and culturally dependant. For example, shifting to a more plant-based diet has been identified as an important lever to increase both health and environmental outcomes; however, this may not be feasible or appropriate in some Northern and Indigenous communities.

We have an opportunity to address unhealthy diets while also reducing inequity, and building more resilient local food systems We can begin to do this by shifting diets toward whole foods that are locally and sustainably produced and ensuring all Canadians have physical and economic access to these foods. Creating healthier food environments will require a coordinated approach that includes building the capacity of individuals and institutions to access, prepare and serve healthy, sustainable and delicious food and working with food industry stakeholders to formulate healthier food and shift marketing practices. For example, a strong majority (91%) of Canadians would support the idea of doctors prescribing a subsidy for fruit and vegetables to low-income people vulnerable to diet-related illness as a way to treat and prevent these illnesses (Community Food Centres Canada 2017). Fruit and vegetable prescriptions are an encouraging social innovation, among many others, with the potential to address the social determinants of health while also supporting local producers.

Ensuring our food system is free of contaminants and potential hazards is an important aspect of healthy food, and, in some ways, food safety merits its own distinct discussion. However, in many instances food safety regulations pose barriers for regional economic food-systems growth, as they are not scale-appropriate for smaller producers or community food initiatives. Support is needed to establish new systems for scale-appropriate aggregation, distribution, marketing, processing and food

safety traceability systems to facilitate the increased sales of locally produced and harvested foods to local buyers - consumers, retailers and institutions. Health and food accessibility objectives also need to be considered in their implementation. Finally, strong public trust in our food system necessitates high-quality, evidenced-based data and decision-making in both food safety and health-related food policy.

### **Recommendations for *A Food Policy for Canada*:**

- In partnership with the provinces and territories, create a cost-shared national Universal Healthy School Food Program to ensure that all school children learn basic food skills and have access to healthy, nutritious meals every day. Work with Indigenous Services and Indigenous leadership to create a Universal Healthy School Food Program for schools within First Nation reserves.
- Encourage institutional food purchasing of healthy, local, and sustainable food to leverage the full health, economic and sustainability impacts of public dollars, and support local producers by establishing a sustainable procurement framework. Work with stakeholders on increasing access to traditional and locally grown foods in hospitals, schools and other institutions.
- Establish new systems for scale-appropriate aggregation, distribution, marketing, processing and food safety traceability systems to facilitate the increased sales of locally produced and harvested foods to local buyers - consumers, retailers and institutions. Health and food accessibility objectives also need to be considered in implementation.

### **Related Recommendations**

- As part of the Healthy Eating Strategy:
  - Integrate sustainability principles into Canada's Food Guide.
  - Implement taxes and subsidies to encourage healthy eating, such as a tax on sugar- and artificially sweetened beverages (Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology 2016) with revenues invested in public health initiatives.
  - Ensure that traditional and country foods are acknowledged in Canada's Food Guide and that planned engagements with Indigenous communities to develop dietary guidance tools result in meaningful and sustained participation with clear follow-up and support for implementation.
  - Improve the labelling of seafood products, both domestic and imported, to include common name, scientific name, location and method of harvest.

## Conserving our soil, water and air

*Encourage and scale-up food production and harvesting practices that enhance, rather than deplete, the natural environment, including the protection of foodlands and biodiversity.*

Unsustainable farming and fishing practices put a huge strain on our land, air, waterways and oceans, threatening the future of our food system and broader ecosystem services. Our current food system is a leading contributor to climate change,<sup>1</sup> and we do not properly recognize the environmental costs of food-production and distribution systems - namely water and air pollution, soil loss and contamination, and loss of biodiversity.

*A Food Policy for Canada* is an opportunity to further develop and strengthen food production and provisioning practices that enhance, rather than deplete, the natural environment. This requires not only the conservation of our soil, water and air but also extends to the protection and enhancement of agricultural land, forests and wetlands and biodiversity. For example, aquaculture is one of the fastest growing food production industries, but alongside its development are growing concerns about its environmental and social consequences. Many researchers and civil society groups caution that open net-cage fish farms threaten wild aquatic species, as well as the the culture and livelihoods of coastal communities (Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform, Morton). Stronger sustainability guidelines and a transition to more responsible and innovative closed containment and land-based technology would go a long way to building an aquaculture industry that contributes both economic and environmental dividends. Similarly, protecting and enhancing species and crop diversity will build economic resilience and climate change adaptation.

The federal government has acknowledged the importance of shifting Canadian agriculture to more ecological and climate resilient practices as part of the *Canadian Agricultural Partnership*. This prioritization needs to be strengthened and applied to the full value chain of food production and harvesting, distribution, processing and waste management. Climate change is a key consideration of environmental sustainability, but it is not the only pressing concern. To create a truly sustainable future for food, we need to re-orient our agri-food policies to embrace a more diverse and ecological approach that will ensure prosperity for farmers, fishers and ranchers for generations to come.

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<sup>1</sup> Agriculture accounted for 10% of all industry greenhouse gas emissions in Canada in 2012 (ECCC 2014); however, globally, 30%-50% of total greenhouse gas emissions are thought to be a product of food systems (European Commission 2006, Vermeulen et al. 2012, GRAIN 2011)

## **Recommendations for *A Food Policy for Canada*:**

- Make a direct policy statement in support of protecting Canada's farmland as a matter of national interest, and work with provincial, territorial and municipal partners to establish mechanisms to protect farmland and monitor its status.
- Work with provincial, territorial and municipal governments to develop a National Food Waste Reduction Strategy to monitor food waste across the supply chain, establish targets and implement innovative solutions. Consider the introduction of mandatory food waste targets in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 12.3.
- Establish a National Highly Hazardous Pesticides Reduction Strategy that includes research and development, regulation, knowledge transfer and fiscal incentives to make Canada a leader in sustainable low-risk pest management.

## **Related Recommendations:**

- Work in partnership with Indigenous communities and leaders to resolve Indigenous land claims and recognize their leadership in protecting the land and natural resources.
- Establish more supports and training opportunities for farmers and fishers to transition to more sustainable and agro-ecological practices.
  - Increase public funding for R&D and knowledge-transfer specific to the needs of the organic sector, and ensure adequate funding is available to review and update the Canadian Organic Standards every five years.
  - Ensure a high standard for eco-certification of fisheries and aquaculture operations.
- As part of the current review of Canada's Fisheries Act, strengthen the protection of fish habitats and prioritize owner-operated sustainable fisheries.
  - Complete a licensing review with the aim of ensuring that new entrants into the independent fleets are not priced out of the system and that intergenerational transfer is enabled.
  - Expand monitoring and assessment of fish habitats and include a legal requirement for rebuilding and recovering depleted fish populations.
  - Initiate nation-to-nation dialogue with Indigenous government bodies to respect treaty and Indigenous fishing rights.
  - Set a timeline to end open net-pen fish farms in Canada.
- Improve the independent assessment and transparency around the genetically modified foods approval processes and address the pollution of non-GM crops by GM producers.
- Protect and enhance biodiversity by implementing the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

## Growing more high-quality food

*Strengthen regional food systems and increase supports for more sustainable production and harvesting practices.*

A strong and vibrant agriculture and agri-food sector is an absolute necessity to Canada's continued prosperity, as are robust fisheries and other food-provisioning sectors. Only 43% of Canadians believe our food system is headed in the right direction; while this is an increase from just 30% in 2016, we still have a ways to go (CCFI 2017). Enabling small- and medium-scale farmers, fishers, processors and retailers to thrive will be an important part of a truly sustainable and resilient food system. The definition of high-quality food should include reference to environmental sustainability, health, level of processing, labour rights and animal welfare. Through innovative policy that supports the positive contribution of agriculture and fisheries to health, the environment and food security, we can strengthen public trust and enhance sustainable growth. While overall growth and revenue for the agricultural sector gives the impression of a stable and robust industry, many smaller farms struggle to stay afloat in the face of rising input costs and stagnant food prices. Barriers to accessing farmland and other supports for the next generation of farmers threaten the long-term future viability and sustainability of our food system. National leadership is needed to spearhead a collaborative strategy with provincial and municipal partners to protect prime agricultural land.

A similar strategy is required to ensure Canada's fisheries remain sustainable and viable in the decades to come. Only a quarter of Canada's fish stock are considered to be at healthy levels, and the lack of species diversity in Canada's seafood industry leaves many coastal communities vulnerable to further stock declines (Oceana 2016). With the review of Canada's Fisheries Act currently underway, now is an ideal time to work with fishers, Indigenous communities and fisheries experts to create a policy environment in which a diverse commercial fishery continues to grow and prosper, particularly small-scale fisheries and Indigenous fishing communities, while protecting fish stocks and fish habitats.

The future prosperity of our food system relies on an investment in local and regional food systems, which create meaningful jobs producing food that is healthy for both people and the planet. A recent study estimated that if Ontario replaced just 10% of its top imported fruits and vegetables with locally grown produce, it would lead to a \$250 million increase in GDP and the creation of 3,400 new full-time jobs (Econometric Research Limited et al 2015). The ensuing reduction in transportation would be an added environmental benefit. Canada is, and will continue to be, an important player in international agri-food markets; however, our food policy should ensure that our food system meets the needs of Canada's population first and foremost. International trade agreements signed by Canada should protect against unfair subsidies and environmentally damaging practices of other countries that result in cheaper imported food.

### **Recommendations for *A Food Policy for Canada*:**

- Ensure agri-food policies and programs are inclusive of a diversity of farmers (type and scale of farming, in both commodity and non-commodity sectors, domestic and export markets, and in emerging, non-traditional sectors).
  - Prioritize agro-ecological and organic food production as strategic investment areas for sector growth.

- Invest in social innovations and infrastructure needed for local and regional economies to grow and flourish, including cooperatives, community-owned processing facilities and local market development and vertical integration.
  - Increase supports and incentives for vegetable and fruit production, particularly for season-extension and storage to increase the supply of Canadian fruits and vegetables year-round.
- Work with provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments to increase support for the growth and development of northern food provisioning, including agricultural production, fishing, harvesting and hunting and intra-provincial and territorial trade.

## **Related Recommendations**

- Develop a comprehensive farm renewal strategy to increase the number of small- and medium-size farmers and scale up programs to support harvesters and fishers.
- Ensure migrant workers have equal access to social benefit programs and protections under provincial employment standards, livable wages and pathways to permanent status.

# Implementation and Governance

*While the four themes outlined by the federal government provide a constructive starting point for A Food Policy for Canada, there are several issues crucial to the success of this policy that are outside the scope of these thematic areas.*

## Collaborative Governance

In discussions with Food Secure Canada's members and other agri-food system stakeholders, governance has emerged as a crucial issue for the success of *A Food Policy for Canada*. For the policy to bring about the needed changes in our food system, it requires mechanisms for diverse stakeholders to contribute to the creation of policy, the adoption of a common set of priorities and the continued stewardship of our food system. In particular, we need to listen to those on the front lines of our food system—community groups, farmers, fishers, workers, those experience food insecurity, municipalities, entrepreneurs—and bring them into the conversation to surface systemic barriers and innovative solutions being implemented across the country. An integrated, food-systems approach explained at the outset of this brief requires governance collaboration at two levels: across sectors (civil society, private sector, government and research) and across government (between departments and between levels of government). This will enable horizontal and vertical linkages, bringing voices from local, regional and national perspectives, as well as diverse stakeholders and government representation.

Food Secure Canada has taken a lead role in a multi-stakeholder working group to achieve consensus on options for a new governance mechanism for food policy. A separate submission is forthcoming from this group; Food Secure Canada's core recommendation for a National Food Policy Council is outlined below.

A National Food Policy Council would convene a group of stakeholders from across the food system to discuss and act on food issues, enabling democratic, systems-based policy processes. In addition, it would oversee the monitoring and evaluation of the progress being made on the *A Food Policy for Canada's* stated objectives, producing action plans and annual updates. This National Food Policy Council could be created by an Act of Parliament, with the ability to do its own appointments following guidance from Parliament. While industry and government are comparatively well-resourced to participate in such a process, it is far more challenging for the non-profit sector and traditionally marginalized groups to do so. It is essential that these actors be financially supported to participate if a co-governance process is to be credible. In addition, this new governance mechanism must have a long-term vision, measured in decades not years.

There must be a committed process for active reconciliation between the federal government and Indigenous peoples to discuss the implications of food policy to treaty rights and land claims. This should involve, at a minimum, the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the newly created departments of Indigenous Services and Crown-Indigenous Relations, Health Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

## Budget Allocations

A *Food Policy for Canada* requires dedicated funding to ensure its implementation, continued governance and evaluation. While some policy actions in this brief can be resourced through a re-orientation of existing programs and increased prioritization within FPT processes, new financial investments are necessary to ensure the promise of this food policy becomes a reality.

### Food and Social Innovation Fund

We are calling for an investment of **\$65 million** dollars over five years for the establishment of a Food and Social Innovation Fund. This fund should have distinct funding streams available to non-profit organizations and community groups, Indigenous and municipal governments, as well as businesses and co-operatives to develop, scale up and replicate innovative activities and networks to strengthen household and community food security and build sustainable food systems.

### National Food Policy Council

In addition, an initial annual investment of **\$3 million** is required to support the establishment of a National Food Policy Council, including the active participation of civil society, especially traditionally marginalized groups and Indigenous representation. This budget should increase to **\$5 million** annually and be guaranteed in multi-year installments. Additional funding could be provided through a contribution agreement program whereby a range of food-system decision-makers develop public action plans.

## **Conclusion: Our Vision of a Healthy, Just and Sustainable Food System**

Over the long term, we should strive towards a process that will lead to the application of the principles of food sovereignty, which has, at its heart, reclaiming public decision-making power in the food system. Food sovereignty is the right of all people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems (La Via Campesina). It is an articulation both of what our food system should achieve and the process through which we achieve it. Food sovereignty highlights the need for a democratic food system that involves input

from all actors. Through a food sovereignty lens, immediate needs such as food insecurity and diet-related disease can be addressed in the short term, while working to empowering communities to lead deeper food-system transformations over the long term.

*A Food Policy for Canada* offers an incredible opportunity to bring much-needed policy coherence to the governance of our food system. Through clear priority actions and long-term objectives, we can work together to build a healthier and more sustainable food system in which everyone enjoys the right to food.

## About Food Secure Canada

Food Secure Canada is a pan-Canadian alliance of 70+ organizations and hundreds of individuals working together to advance food security and food sovereignty through three inter-locking goals: zero hunger, healthy and safe food, and sustainable food systems (see Appendix: Food Secure Canada members).



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## Appendix A: Food Secure Canada members

Alberta Food Matters  
Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research  
Askew's Food Service Ltd  
BcD Workshop  
Blue Sky Truth Radio  
Canada Organic Trade Association  
Canadian Foodgrains Bank  
Canadian Feed The Children  
Community Building Resources  
Community Food Centres Canada  
Canadian Nutrition Society  
Conscious Eating Canada  
Dietitians of Canada  
Ecology Action Centre / Food Action Committee  
Ecology Action Centre / Marine Issues Committee  
Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario  
Edo Group Inc.  
Emmanuel United Church  
ETC Group  
Flex Alert  
FoodARC - Mount Saint Vincent University  
Food Banks Canada  
Food Matters Manitoba  
(Food First NL) Food Security Network of Newfoundland & Labrador  
Food Forward  
Food Secure Saskatchewan - REACH  
FoodPorter  
FoodShare Toronto  
Freedom 90  
Gloucester Emergency Food Cupboard  
Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society  
Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance  
Healthy Eating Team  
Heart and Stroke Foundation  
Inter Pares  
Just Food  
La cantine pour tous  
Localize  
Mamawetan Churchill River Regional Health Authority  
Meal Exchange  
NDG Food Depot  
National Farmers Union  
New Brunswick Food Security Action Network  
Nourish Nova Scotia  
Organic Matters  
PEI Food Security Network  
Real Food for Real Kids  
Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Québec  
Show Kids You Care  
Sources community resources society  
Sprouting World  
Sustain Ontario  
Sustainable Food Attainable Health  
Table de concertation sur la faim et le développement social de l'Outaouais  
The Nourish and Develop Foundation  
The Spratt Foundation  
The Stop Community Food Centre  
Thunder Bay District Health Unit  
TIDES Canada  
United Church of Canada  
USC Canada  
Vigilance OGM  
Yellowknife Farmers Market  
York Region Food Network  
Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition

## **Appendix B: Food Secure Canada Associates Organizations**

Action Against Hunger Canada  
Cape Breton University  
Edmonton's Food Bank  
The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation  
Toronto Food Policy Council

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