



## Northern Priorities for National Food Policy

*\*These draft policy recommendations are the result of a series of policy engagement conference calls held with members of the Northern Food Network, a joint initiative of Food Secure Canada and the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research, and a review of policy recommendations developed through previous consultation and engagement activities with Indigenous and Northern communities by Food Secure Canada.*

A *Food Policy for Canada* must acknowledge the history and ongoing legacy of colonialism, and prioritize reconciliation and decolonization as key guiding principles of our food system. This includes valuing Indigenous knowledge, respecting treaty rights and acknowledging hunting, fishing and gathering as key food-provisioning activities alongside farming.

While there are some common challenges facing Northern and Indigenous communities across Canada related to food insecurity and strengthening regional food systems, there is also great diversity that necessitates locally-adapted and community-driven policy solutions. For example, Northern food insecurity cannot be solved by one program. A revamped Nutrition North could play an important role however other programs and avenues must also be explored. Community members know best their realities and have knowledge and ideas about how to address food insecurity, but require support to implement them.

A *Food Policy for Canada* should allocate resources specifically for food programs in northern Indigenous communities that address the immediate needs of food insecurity while supporting the long-term development of northern and Indigenous food systems, including developing local agricultural growing capacity, hunting, trapping, fishing, and access to traditional foods.

Specifically, a *Food Policy for Canada* should:

Governance	<p>Work with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a <i>Food Policy for Canada</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commit to an inclusive and evolving governance process that enables continual and meaningful participation by Indigenous and Northern communities; and allocate resources to support this participation.</li> <li>● Implement and respect the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDRIP).</li> </ul>
Increasing Access to Affordable Food	<p>Overhaul Nutrition North Canada (NNC) program to improve access and affordability of food while strengthening northern regional food systems, including public support for programs enhancing access to traditional and community-grown foods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expand coverage and eligibility criteria as there are many communities not covered under NNC who also struggle with access to affordable food and other food security issues.</li> <li>● Build off of existing northern-developed and northern-led strategies and activities</li> </ul>

<p>Healthy and Safe Foods</p>	<p>Ensure that traditional and country foods are included in Canada's Food Guide and work with Indigenous leadership to develop dietary guidance tools for Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Work with stakeholders on increasing access to traditional foods and locally grown foods in hospitals, schools and other institutions.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Growing More High Quality Food</p>	<p>Work with provincial and territorial governments (through the Agricultural Policy Framework and other FTP agreements) to increase support for the growth and development of northern food provisioning, including agricultural production, harvesting and hunting. Support the development of regional networks across the North to increase capacity-building and address barriers to intra-provincial and territorial trade.</p>